

Fall 2010

Unraveled Fall 2010

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Tilstra Excited About Outdoor Education Opportunities

Psychobiology Concentration Helps Students Study The Brain



DEEP INTO DANGER

Assistant Professor and Graduate Student Featured on Caving Show

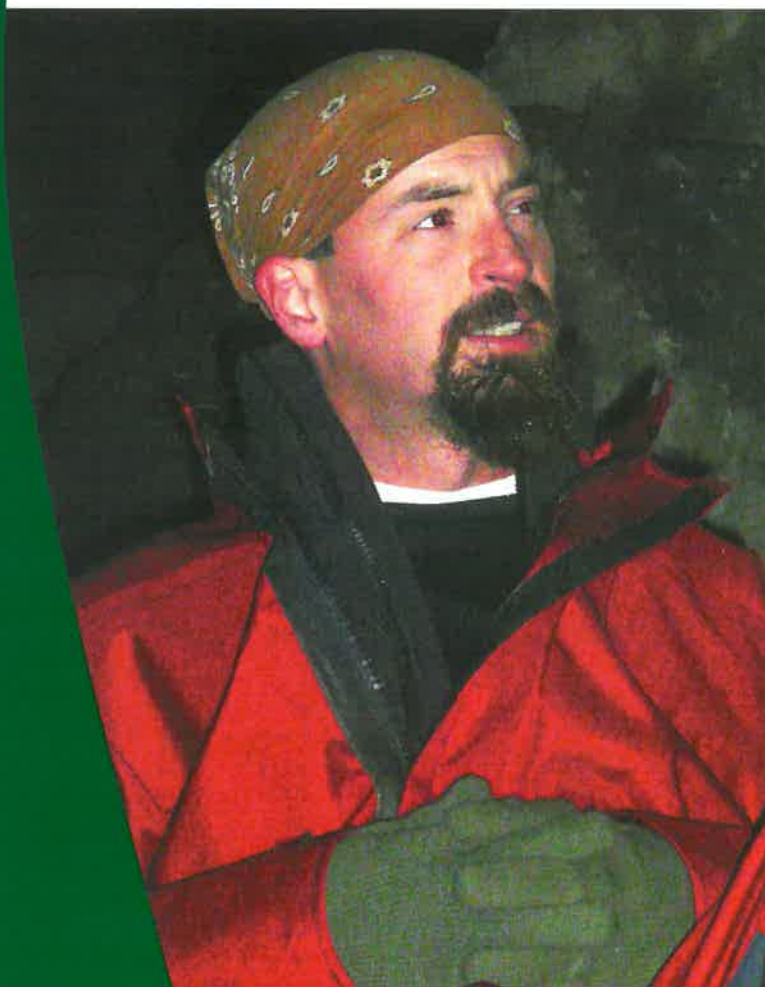


PHOTO COURTESY OF PYBURN FILMS

Ben Eudy was drenched and in the dark, and amid a deafening roar of water, he struggled to maintain his footing in the treacherous cave. Fighting mental fatigue and stomach flu, the experienced caver gripped the razor-sharp limestone formations that served as handholds.

“If I fell off the narrow ledge where I was standing, I would be pulled under the water and no one would ever see me again,” Eudy says.

Eudy, a graduate assistant in the School of Education and Psychology, was part of a caving expedition team in Puerto Rico that also included Michael Hills, an assistant professor in the outdoor leadership program.

But their adventure was no ordinary outing. The mission of this exploration was to secure a speleothem—a type of cave formation—for scientific research. Since speleothems are basically rain gauges in rock form, a limestone sample from the cave would permit a geological scientist to record previous hurricane activity and analyze patterns. Located in the tropical rainforest, the caves in Puerto Rico are frequently hammered by hurricanes and are ideal for such samples.

Assistant Professor Michael Hills served as the rescue specialist for a caving expedition in Puerto Rico that was produced as a pilot for the television program, *Deadly Descent*.

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From the dean's desk

While wintertime might summon images of hibernation, the halls of Summerour have been filled with liveliness. From preparing for accreditation to hiring new faculty to promoting our programs, the School of Education and Psychology seeks to strengthen their academic offerings.



Jeanette Stepanske, Ed.D.

The faculty and staff have worked diligently to prepare the School of Education and Psychology for a visit from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. A special thanks to liberal arts education senior Riley Kirkpatrick. She has coordinated accommodations for the state and NCATE teams while also organizing the Sunday night poster session.

The outdoor leadership program was in the spotlight as Associate Professor Michael Hills and graduate assistant Ben Eudy starred in a nationally televised production of their caving exploration in Puerto Rico. The story about their dangerous underground adventure starts on the cover and continues inside.

We are excited that Cheryl Des Jarlais and Doug Tilstra have joined our School of Education and Psychology team. Read more about their talents and interests on pages 4 and 5.

The psychobiology concentration is an excellent stepping stone for students planning to pursue neuroscience or clinical psychology. Learn more in the major profile on page 6.

Anthony Handal is an example of a Southern graduate who uses the knowledge he acquired from our outdoor education program. More information about his work and picturesque office in the alumni spotlight on page 7.

Thank you for reading *Unraveled*. We hope you find this issue to be engaging and informative.

Stepanske Steps In as Interim Dean

For Jeanette Stepanske, Ed.D., serving as interim dean of the School of Education and Psychology seemed like the right thing to do.

"I know the faculty. I know that achieving accreditation in February is critical to the success of the teacher education program," says Stepanske, who was previously an education professor at Southern for 17 years and at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga for 12 years before retiring in 2007.

Guided by the previous dean, John Wesley Taylor V, the education faculty and staff have been preparing for a visit from the National Council for the Accreditation of

Teacher Education (NCATE). When Taylor took a position with the General Conference Education Department last summer, an opening was created that Stepanske agreed to fill for one year.

"The education faculty and staff have done the hard work in preparing for accreditation," says Stepanske, who also serves on Southern's Board of Trustees. "I wanted to support their efforts."

The search for the next dean of the School of Education and Psychology is ongoing.

"It's important to find the right person who will stay and support the faculty for many years," Stepanske says.

School of Education Ready for Joint Accreditation Visit

The education professors at Southern hear the clock ticking toward accreditation.

The School of Education and Psychology has been preparing for a joint visit in February from the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Tennessee State Board of Education to ensure the quality of their education program.

"We have to show that all our decisions in the education program are based on data," says Jeanette Stepanske, interim dean.

The professors have worked diligently to gather data for various assessments, which include examining the students' GPA, analyzing their early field experiences, and demonstrating teaching proficiencies relating to diversity.

NCATE will examine the efficiency of six standards that prepare educators to effectively work in a school setting. The Tennessee State Board of Education will inspect syllabi, descriptions of courses, and the qualifications of Southern's faculty.

Danger: Cavers Struggled During Risky Expedition

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The exploration was being filmed by the Discovery Science Channel as a pilot for their new show, *Deadly Descent*. The program seeks to share the stories of experienced cavers who venture more than a mile underground to obtain materials for scientific study.

Dozens of cavers across the Southeast went through the rigorous interview process, vying to be part of the production. Eudy and Hills were selected to be part of the five-man exploration team; Eudy was the trip leader, while Hills served as the rescue specialist.

"I was excited about the great opportunity," says Hills, who has participated in televised caving projects for NBC, The Weather Channel, and National Geographic. His caving résumé includes trips to Mexico, Romania, Ireland, and the Bahamas.

When the exploration team arrived in Juan Nieves, Puerto Rico, they discovered another mission awaiting them. Two local cavers were missing; they had entered the cave beforehand to leave batteries since the exploration team would be unable to carry all the equipment and batteries necessary for their 24-hour trip.

The exploration team rappelled 200 feet into the cave and slowly maneuvered the difficult terrain, which included narrow openings, powerful current, and falling rocks. The team—playing the part of rescuers—found the local cavers, and everyone returned safely to the surface.

Remarkably, the delay had been providential.

"This expedition was the closest I have ever come to dying," Hills says. "If it had not been for the rescue mission,



Ben Eudy (left) and Michael Hills (second from left) discuss their plans with the exploration team during a caving adventure in Puerto Rico that was filmed by the Discovery Science Channel for the television show *Deadly Descent*.

we would have been in a location where there was no way we would have survived the flash flood that struck."

Consequently, the producers were concerned about the cavers' safety if they continued. While exploration in this cave is always a calculated risk, the tremendous rainfall jeopardized the team's safety due to the potential for further flash flooding.

After discussion, the producers opted to continue with the shoot while keeping an eye on the impending weather. So the exploration team returned into the cave, accompanied by members of the production team, including cameramen and technicians.

"It was like having an entourage with us," Eudy says.

In addition to Eudy and Hills, two members of the production team had ties to Southern. Kellan Feyerharm, an outdoor leadership graduate, was one of the production staff in the cave. Above ground was Clem Akins, an adjunct professor at Southern; he served as the outside safety officer and relayed weather reports to the cavers.

"The caving program at Southern is so respected and advanced," Hills says.

"When something this big comes along, a lot of resources come from Southern."

The team battled adverse conditions

in their attempt to locate an ideal speleothem. The jagged limestone formations in the cave could slice through layers of protective clothing. Ingesting the filthy water was unavoidable, and the cavers battled stomach flu due to their intake of bat dung. Plus, the constant roar of water dulled their senses; the cavers had to cup their hands and shout to be heard.

Deep in the cave, the team located an ideal limestone formation. Using a handsaw, they carefully removed the speleothem—usually a no-no in cave exploration, but permission was granted in order for the geological scientist to continue his research.

"We were excited to find the unique formation and have viable footage," says Hills, after their 14-hour trip. "We wanted to make a TV show and not have our expedition be a waste of time."

Eudy and Hills anticipate more underground adventures. The *Deadly Descent* production team plans to produce five more shows.

"The appearance of Eudy and Hills enhances the credibility of the outdoor education program," says Marty Miller, an associate professor in the outdoor leadership program. "They are recognized as experts in their field."

Hills agrees with that assessment.

"Southern is a respected organization in the caving community," he says. "Our students receive world-class instruction and training."

Cheryl Des Jarlais, Ed.D.

Education Professor Promotes Creativity In the Classroom

From treasure hunt exams to art museum field trips, Cheryl Des Jarlais has combined education and creativity in the classroom.

"My philosophy on teaching is student-centered and theme-oriented," says Des Jarlais, Ed.D., associate professor of education.

Des Jarlais was raised in Asia—first in Burma, where her parents were missionaries, then in the Philippines. She attended a one-room school where her education extended beyond textbooks and involved interactions in the community.

Des Jarlais moved to the United States as a teenager. She attended Takoma Academy in Maryland, and then she ventured to Southern. By taking correspondence and summer courses, she finished her degrees in early childhood development and elementary education in three years.

Des Jarlais planned to kick back and enjoy her senior year at Southern. Instead, a professor convinced her to attend Andrews University and obtain her master's degree.

"I wanted to teach overseas where they let the teachers do what they wanted," Des Jarlais admitted.

After earning her master's degree, Des Jarlais received a teaching position in Indonesia, where she packed creativity into the classroom curriculum. Her students created plays and performed them at the local orphanage. Their performances included science-minded skits, one of which involved students dressing as red blood cells to explain infection. Students also designed their own Bible



Cheryl Des Jarlais, Ed.D., (left) talks with Cecilia Simmons in the Teaching Materials Center in Summerour Hall. Des Jarlais previously taught on Native American reservations in Montana for 23 years.

studies and gave them to neighbors.

After several years of teaching overseas and in the United States, Des Jarlais was burned out due to the quantity of preparation work required to instruct in this creative manner.

Needing a change, Des Jarlais moved west, where she taught college courses for the Blackfeet, a Native American tribe based in Montana. The tribe members appreciated Des Jarlais's vein for originality while teaching. Des Jarlais taught the Blackfeet for 18 years. She then taught for five years at the Salish Kootenai College, located on a reservation in northwest Montana.

While attending the Seventh-day Adventist church on the Salish Kootenai reservation, Des Jarlais met her second husband, Del, who is

Chippewa. Des Jarlais already had four children, and Del had two children.

Des Jarlais recently attended the University of Montana and researched the shortcomings of the Western way of structuring education.

Armed with her doctorate, Des Jarlais has returned to Southern, where she enjoys teaching and sharing her educational values.

Her family has also followed in her footsteps. Two of her daughters, Heather and Angela Holloway, have graduated from Southern, and a third daughter, Sarah Holloway, will graduate from Southern in May.

Between family and teaching, Des Jarlais has found time to write and She has authored several devotional books and written "Western Structures Meet Native Traditions," a book about the interfaces of educational cultures.

PHOTO BY FRED BOETTCHER



Doug Tilstra, Ph.D.

Outdoor Education Coordinator Ready For An Adventure

From walking in the Redwood groves of California to hiking in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, Doug Tilstra, Ph.D., is fascinated with spending time in the outdoors.

"I have incredible memories from my childhood of spending time in the mountains, at the ocean, or even the Mojave Desert with my family," Tilstra says. "I especially loved Sabbath, because that meant we were usually outdoors."



Spending time in nature has always been an integral part of Tilstra's life. As a student at Pacific Union College, Tilstra would wake up early to walk in the majestic outdoors and spend time talking with God. He has enjoyed adventures of rock climbing, kayaking, and skiing with his family.

"My wife and I camped our way across the United States on our honeymoon—more of a matter of economy than anything else!"

says Tilstra, with a laugh.

Tilstra is the new outdoor education graduate program coordinator. He previously served for 11 years in the School of Religion, where he taught spiritual leadership and development classes.

"I'm ready for a new adventure," Tilstra says. "The outdoor education program at Southern is attractive



Doug Tilstra, Ph.D., is leaving Southern's School of Religion after 11 years to accept a new adventure. An avid hiker and backpacker, Tilstra will serve as the outdoor education graduate program coordinator.

and intriguing to me. I look forward to applying Biblical principles in

leadership to their excellent foundation."

While his experience is in leadership and church planting, Tilstra says he is prepared to switch gears slightly.

"The challenge of training spiritual

leaders in a different context—the outdoors—caught my eye," he says.

Before coming to Southern, Tilstra previously served as Ministerial Director

"I look forward to applying Biblical principles in leadership to their excellent foundation."

— Doug Tilstra, Ph.D.

for the British Columbia Conference in Canada. He moved to Tennessee in 2000 with his family, which includes his wife of 31 years, Lorraine; and their three children: John, Stephen, and Elisabeth.

Tilstra earned his Masters of Divinity from Andrews University. In 2007, Tilstra obtained his doctorate in organizational management with an emphasis in leadership.

When he's not teaching or spending time in nature, Tilstra enjoys traveling. He has previously taught religion classes abroad in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Colombia. This summer, he plans to travel to Russia to work with students who are doctoral candidates.

PHOTO BY DANIEL OLSON



PHOTO BY FRED BOETTCHER

Hyein Yoo (left) and Sarah Crowe, senior psychology students, examine a model of the human brain. The concentration in psychobiology is geared for students interested in neuroscience and clinical psychology.

BRAIN POWER

Psychobiology: For the Scientist and the Scholar

When she came to Southern, Sarah Crowe wanted to study biology. She planned to attend medical school after graduation and become a physician. However, her classroom experience at Southern inspired her to change her career direction.

"My first class was general psychology," Crowe says. "I fell in love with psychology immediately."

For Crowe, the psychobiology major offered an opportune blend of her interests in the medical field and mental processes.

"Psychobiology incorporated the things I love while opening up a broader spectrum of areas to pursue," says Crowe, who is a senior at Southern. She plans to attend graduate school and become a clinical psychologist.

The concentration in psychobiology is targeted toward students interested

in neuroscience, behavioral medicine, genetic counseling, and health psychology. The degree is also for students interested in applying to medical school.

"The psychobiology major provides an avenue for students who want to study the brain," says Ruth WilliamsMorris, Ph.D., professor of psychology. "The major is also for students who are interested in a medical career and want to get their feet wet with the human behavioral experience."

The psychobiology concentration was first offered to students during the 2004-05 school year. The concentration includes core psychology classes as well as science classes such as anatomy and physiology, genetics, and general chemistry. Students have two advisers, one from the School of Education and Psychology and one from the Biology Department.

"Psychobiology is not a popular concentration because the program is not for the faint of heart," WilliamsMorris says. "The degree is for the unique students—a combination of the scientist and the scholar."

Adrian Wasylyshen graduated from Southern in December 2010 with his bachelor's in psychology with the psychobiology emphasis.

"I wanted to learn about theoretical science and applied science," Wasylyshen says. "The psychobiology program gave me a solid background in two areas—both the behavioral and biological origins of behavior."

Wasylyshen plans to pursue clinical psychology and work with children and families. He agrees that studying psychobiology involves commitment.

"The program is challenging and requires focus, but it's definitely doable," he says.

MOUNTAIN MAN

Southern Graduate Ministers at Camp in Yosemite Park

Boasting granite cliffs, waterfalls, and groves of Giant Sequoias, Yosemite National Park is one of the nation's most popular parks. Located in eastern central California, the park receives nearly 4 million visitors annually.

This mighty wilderness is the office of Southern graduate Anthony Handal. He serves as the associate youth director at Camp Wawona, a summer camp within the borders of Yosemite National Park. Handal manages the year-round administration and helps with the running of summer camp.

"I love teaching summer camp classes," Handal says. "I also enjoy counseling and mentoring the camp staff."

Handal works closely with Derek Wright, a Southern graduate who serves as the outdoor education director at Camp Wawona. Campers can choose from classes such as rock climbing, horsemanship, and swimming. Handal and Wright also direct the leadership trips, which include more adventurous activities, such as backpacking, rock climbing, fly fishing, and water skiing.

"Between the activities and nighttime programming, we want summer camp to be spiritually centered and ministry focused," Handal says. "We want the campers to develop a deeper understanding of who Christ is."

Handal majored in religious education at Southern. He minored in



PHOTO BY DONNIE KEELE

Anthony Handal, the associate youth director at Camp Wawona in California, speaks to students about the environment at Yosemite Park. Handal graduated from Southern with a minor in outdoor education.

outdoor education and Spanish. He spent a year in Argentina and learned to speak Spanish fluently.

"The outdoor education program at Southern was an excellent springboard,"

Handal says. "The program helped prepare me for my position at Camp Wawona and helped me to think with a critical mind."

Michael Hills, assistant professor in the School of Education and Psychology, was impressed with Handal's dedication to the outdoor education program.

"Anthony is a quality man," Hills says. "He's smart and engaging, and he's people-oriented. He is the type of

person you want working for you."

Handal previously worked at Mount Aetna Camp in Maryland and Indian Creek Camp in Tennessee. He has worked at Camp Wawona during the summer since 2006; he was hired full-time in June 2009. However, he was not always a fan of his current career.

"I didn't like summer camp as a kid," Handal admits. "But my camp experience gave me a perspective of how to make camp a place that campers will enjoy coming back to."

Though he spent most of his life in Tennessee, Handal relished the move west.

"The mountains are nice and quiet and the environment here reminds me of Tennessee," Handal says. "The transition to Camp Wawona has been easy, especially since I spent several summers working at this camp."

"We want summer camp to be spiritually centered and ministry focused."

— Anthony Handal



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