



February 2, 2004

Alumni and Friends:

Here is the latest *Good News* from ULM. After reading this e-mail I hope you will forward it everyone on your ULM Buddy List. Each time we add an alumnus or friend to this list, we help spread the *good news* about our University.

ULM CHEERLEADERS BRING HOME NATIONAL TITLE

The University of Louisiana at Monroe is now home to a National Championship Cheerleading team. The 19-member ULM team won first place in national competition over the weekend. The ULM cheerleaders placed first in the Small Co-Ed Division I competition.

The cheerleaders traveled to Orlando, Fla. January 15-19, to compete in the Universal Cheerleaders Association's College National Cheerleading Championship. This is the first year the ULM team competed.

The team's coach, Jennifer Hyde, said, "This is a wonderful experience for everyone on the team. Everyone worked so hard for this. The team really focused this year and became committed to being one of the premier Division I cheerleading programs in the nation. We have accomplished that and are very proud."

The ULM Cheerleaders are composed of one squad, including male and female members. The squad carries twenty-four members and is responsible for cheering at all football games and home basketball games. In addition to the university-related activities, the ULM Cheerleaders are committed to competing at one of the major national cheerleading competitions during each season.

Members of the national championship team and their hometowns are: Treva Bankston - Loranger, LA, Carley Carter - Jena, LA, Lori Chervenak - Hillsboro, MO, Nick Gaspard - Plain Dealing, LA, Samantha Jones - Rayville, LA, Alex Kain - West Bend, WI, Crystal Kelley - Crossett, AR, Rebecca LeBlanc - Baton Rouge, LA, Nathan LeCloux - Pulaski, WI, Josh Lee - Waukesha, WI, Hayley Leone - Bossier City, LA, Crystal Lett - West Monroe, LA, Tiffany Luse - West Monroe, LA, R.B. Martin - Benton, LA, Kelly Patterson - Houston, TX, Billie Sue Roe - Appleton, WI, Robin Samuels - Apple Valley, MN, Ashley Springfield - Monroe, LA, and Jamie Ventrella - Pride, LA.

> Toxicology Receives Major National Awards

When asked about the accomplishments of the Toxicology Department, Dr. H.M.

Mehendale smiles, laughs, and talks excitedly about ULM 's award-winning students and top-notch faculty. A cursory glance at the thick file of published papers and awards shows why he is so proud. In 2003 alone, ULM toxicology students won top prizes from the National Kidney Foundation, Colgate-Palmolive, the Society of Toxicology, the American College of Toxicology, and Quintiles, Inc.

For the uninitiated, toxicology is the study of the adverse effects of chemicals and physical agents on the human body. Toxicologists study drugs as well as environmental hazards. They are often involved in risk assessment for agencies like the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency where they help determine the exposure levels at which chemicals become dangerous.

One student who is at the forefront of health research is graduate student Vishal S. Vaidya, who received a National Kidney Foundation post-doctoral fellowship of \$80,000 to work at Harvard University . Vaidya received his Ph.D. from ULM 's Toxicology program and is now working with renowned scientist Dr. Joseph Bonventre at Harvard to find an early detection method for kidney failure. Kidney failure is an enormous problem for the elderly, and often results in death or painful dialysis. Vaidya and Bonventre are developing a test to spot kidney failure in its earliest phases so that suitable clinical interventions may be developed to stop its progression.

For the second year in a row, a ULM student submitted the top paper at the annual Society of Toxicology meeting. Pallavi B. Limaye was awarded top honors for her paper in the mechanisms specialty. Dr. Mehendale is particularly proud that ULM students win so many awards for papers. He says that often in science, in addition to conducting thorough and high-level research, good writing and communications skills are not encouraged enough.

“Doing research is important, but we must also teach the students to communicate. If you cannot communicate the results of your experiments to other people, you might as well not have done it,” he said.

Another milestone for this department is that, for the third year in a row, a ULM student won the Novartis Graduate Fellowship award. Only one of these \$16,000 awards is given throughout the United States and Canada . ULM students were also the only ones to receive the Colgate-Palmolive awards for student research training.

> **ULM Sparkle Facts**

1. ULM experienced an enrollment increase in 2003
2. ULM experienced a rate increase for the ACT Student Satisfaction Survey surpassing all other universities in the UL-System.
3. ULM produces more health science graduates than any other Louisiana university.
4. ULM has the only state-supported School of Pharmacy . Starting salaries exceed \$70,000.
5. ULM students achieve a nearly 100% pass rate in education and health science professional examinations.
6. ULM 's alternative certification program serves as a model for teacher education programs throughout Louisiana .
7. ULM 's College of Arts and Sciences received \$1.75 million in nationally-competitive grants awarded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the National Institute for Health to enhance our Biology, Chemistry, and Geosciences programs.
8. ULM houses a state-of-the-art music facility and recital hall.
9. ULM 's College of Business Administration houses the Louisiana Small Business

Development Center , the Regional Small Business Development Center , the Entrepreneurship Studies Center , and the Center for Business and Economic Research.

10. ULM provides medical and social services to the underserved members of our community through its Dental Hygiene Clinic, Family Resource Center, Speech and Hearing Clinic, Marriage and Family Therapy Center, Institute of Gerontology, Louisiana Drug and Poison Center, Louisiana Institute of Toxicology, and the Louisiana Medicaid Prescription Drug Program.

GOOD NEWS is e-mailed around the 15th and 30th of each month by your ULM Alumni Association. This e-mail contains a brief sampling of all the good news surrounding our university. For a complete listing of all of the good news, please visit the ULM web site at www.ulm.edu If you would like to be removed from this list, please contact Tommy Walpole (contact information is below). Thanks for your continuing support of ULM and I hope you'll help spread the *good news*.

Good News Count: 474