TO: University Senate
FROM: Dennis N. Assanis, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
DATE: December 2, 2013

REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

SBU PROFESSORS MITCHELL AND SCHWARTZ APPOINTED TO SUNY DISTINGUISHED RANKS

Two Stony Brook University professors are among nine SUNY faculty appointed to distinguished ranks by the State University of New York Board of Trustees. By virtue of these appointments, Mitchell and Schwartz become members of the SUNY Distinguished Academy. Since the program’s inception in 1963, SUNY has appointed 975 faculty to distinguished ranks, as follows: 326 Distinguished Professorships, 294 Distinguished Service Professorships, 350 Distinguished Teaching Professorships and 5 Distinguished Librarian Professorships. Of these awards, 97 Stony Brook University faculty members have been appointed as Distinguished Professors, 28 as Distinguished Service Professors, 29 as Distinguished Teaching Professors, and one as Distinguished Librarian Professor.

Joseph S.B. Mitchell, a professor in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics and a research professor in the Department of Computer Science, has been named SUNY Distinguished Professor. The Distinguished Professorship, awarded to Mitchell, is conferred upon individuals who have achieved national or international prominence and a distinguished reputation within a chosen field. This distinction is attained through significant contributions to the research literature or through artistic performance or achievement in the case of the arts. The candidates’ work must be of such character that the individuals’ presence will tend to elevate the standards of scholarship of colleagues both within and beyond these persons’ academic fields.

A Distinguished Teaching Professorship has been conferred on Michael Schwartz, chair of the Department of Sociology and faculty director of the Undergraduate College of Global Studies. The Distinguished Teaching Professorship, awarded to Schwartz, recognizes and honors mastery of teaching. For this prestigious tribute to be conferred, candidates must have demonstrated consistently superior mastery of teaching, outstanding service to students, and commitment to their ongoing intellectual growth, scholarship and professional growth, and adherence to rigorous academic standards and requirements. Further, a faculty member must have attained and held the rank of full professor for five years, have completed at least three years of full-time teaching on the nominating campus, 10 years of full-time teaching in the System, and must have regularly carried a full-time teaching load as defined by the campus at the undergraduate, graduate, or professional level.
THREE SBU PROFESSORS Elected AAAS FELLOWS

Three Stony Brook University professors—James Bliska, Laszlo Mihaly and Dianna Padilla—have been elected Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) for their scientific and social efforts to advance science or its applications. This brings the total number of Stony Brook’s AAAS Fellows to 60. Our three recipients are among 388 newly elected members who will be honored at the Fellows Forum held during the AAAS Annual Meeting on February 15, 2014 in Chicago. All Fellows receive a certificate and a blue and gold rosette pin as a symbol of their distinguished accomplishments.

James B. Bliska was elected for distinguished contributions to the field of microbial pathogenesis, particularly for establishing new paradigms at the interface of bacterial virulence factors and host cell biology. The ultimate aim of Dr. Bliska’s research is to provide a framework for the development of novel vaccines and antimicrobial agents that can be used to treat or prevent bacterial infections in humans. During his tenure at Stony Brook, Dr. Bliska has received numerous National Institute of Health (NIH) research grants. In 2003, he was also named Director of a NIH grant that supports career development and training in Infectious Disease research for pre-doctoral students at the University. Dr. Bliska’s other accomplishments while at Stony Brook include a Pew Scholar Award in 1994, election to the American Academy of Microbiology in 2012, and an appointment as Editor of the journal Infection and Immunity in 2003.

Laszlo Mihaly was elected for major contributions in optical studies of high temperature superconductors and fullerene materials, as well as for developing far infrared methods to study electron spin resonance. Dr. Mihaly is the recipient of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in teaching and the SBU Dean's Award for Excellence in Service to Education by a Graduate Program Director. He is Fellow of the American Physical Society and he has been elected external member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Dr. Mihaly is the author of more than 120 publications in international journals, and he is co-author of a book about Solid State Physics.

Dianna Padilla was elected for distinguished work in marine and freshwater ecology, particularly in aquatic invasion ecology and the role of phenotypic plasticity in plant herbivore interactions. Dr. Padilla is also an Aldo Leopold Leadership Fellow, which works through the Ecological Society of America. Dr. Padilla is engaged in mentoring young students in research, including high school students from Brentwood High School. Many of these research students have received national and international recognition for their research.

UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED LECTURE IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Dr. S. James Gates Jr., the National Medal of Science Winner and popular PBS NOVA correspondent will present “On the Surprises at the Origins of SUSY” on Thursday, December 5, 2013 at 4 p.m. in Stony Brook’s Wang Theatre. James Gates is John S. Toll Professor of Physics at University of Maryland, College Park. He is the first African American to hold an endowed chair in physics at a major American research university. He co-authored the first comprehensive book on supersymmetry, Superspace. Gates has been featured extensively in NOVA PBS specials, including “The Elegant Universe” and “The Fabric of Cosmos.” In February 2013,
President Obama presented Dr. Gates with the highest award given to scientists, the 2013 National Medal of Science, in a White House ceremony. In May 2013, Dr. Gates became the first African American physicist to be elected to the National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Gates received his two B.Sc. degrees in Mathematics and Physics, as well as his Ph.D. in Physics, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The lecture is free and open to all. There will be a reception immediately following Dr. Gate’s presentation in the lobby of the Wang Center. For more information on this and future lectures, visit www.stonybrook.edu/sb/science_lectures.

PROVOST-STUDENT ADVISORY GROUP PRESENTS “GUNS 4 GREATNESS AND THE MUSIC INDUSTRY”

On Wednesday, December 4, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. on the Staller Center Main Stage, the Stony Brook University Provost-Student Advisory Group is pleased to present a lecture by Michael “Blue” Williams entitled “Guns 4 Greatness and the Music Industry.” With a career in entertainment that spans more than a decade and a half, Michael “Blue” Williams has managed the careers of some of hip-hop’s and R&B’s most prolific artists, including Outkast, Cee Lo Green, Jagged Edge, Macy Gray and Nick Cannon. As the head of Family Tree Entertainment, Williams oversees an independent record label, a management arm and a film and television division. Williams launched “Guns 4 Greatness” to help end the senseless gun violence that has destroyed so many lives in urban communities. “Guns 4 Greatness” combines a gun buy-back program with a mentorship program to save a generation of young men from a life of violence. Sponsored by the Office of the Provost, this lecture is free and open to the public. For more information, visit stonybrook.edu/provost/guns4greatness

ANNUAL WINDMILL LIGHTING AT SBU SOUTHAMPTON

Please join us for the annual lighting of the windmill at Stony Brook Southampton in celebration of the holiday season. A reception will follow in Chancellor’s Hall. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

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