As 2012 moves forward, we reflect with pride on the many accomplishments the UMD ADVANCE Program for Inclusive Excellence has achieved to date, and look forward to the start of some new initiatives this year.

Since the beginning of the program, our ADVANCE Professors have engaged in over 400 individual meetings to support faculty in their colleges, our Seed Grants are supporting collaborative, interdisciplinary, and engaged research, and we have helped welcome many Distinguished Woman Scholars as seminar speakers in colleges across the University. Most recently, we launched two Learning Communities to support faculty advancement at the assistant and associate professor levels, and we engaged senior women faculty in Leadership Development. We have worked to increase understanding of Work-Life Policies at UMD and strengthen Family Leave Policies. In February, we launched our Dashboard project, providing faculty with college-level data on salary, time to promotion, and representation through an individualized online environment.

And yet....I am reminded of the quote by Paul Batalden: “Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.” This quote reminds us that when your goal is transformation, you have to have a healthy respect for the strength of the status quo. In Architecture of Inclusion, Susan Sturm observes that there are structures and cultures within academia that have been designed to systematically disenfranchise women and under-represented minorities. Each actor involved in ADVANCE is working to change policies and practices that have been a part of such designs for a very long time. Our goal is that each department, each college, and the university overall feels like a place where both individuals and the “system” are invested in faculty success.

Changing the systems we work in is long-term, complex work that requires us to challenge the assumptions embedded in our activities, stay focused on our key goals, and regularly assess the impact of our actions within our own spheres of influence. I challenge each one of us to commit to investing in the professional growth of at least one other person this year, and to push for the changes in local work practices that will better support professional growth. As ADVANCE moves forward, we ask for the help of the UMD community to assess and strengthen our efforts, and look forward to working with you in “Advancing women, transforming the University, investing in a culture of inclusive excellence.”

-KerryAnn O’Meara, Co-PI & Co-Director, ADVANCE
The UMD ADVANCE Program for Inclusive Excellence is supported through a partnership between the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). Through this collaborative agreement, our programs extend to all women faculty and across all colleges on the College Park campus. Our partners are therefore as diverse as our target audience, and our major players and their affiliates are provided below.

### Administration

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Ann Wylie</td>
<td>PI, Provost, University of Maryland, College Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Darryll Pines</td>
<td>Co-PI, Nariman Farvardin Professor, Dean, James A. Clark School of Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. KerryAnn O'Meara</td>
<td>Co-Director and Co-PI, Associate Professor, Higher Education Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Elizabeth Beise</td>
<td>Co-Director and Co-PI, Associate Provost, Academic Planning and Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Pam Lanford</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
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<td>Kristen Corrigan</td>
<td>Assistant Program Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corbin Martin Campbell</td>
<td>Research Assistant and Doctoral Candidate, Higher Education Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Lounder</td>
<td>Research Assistant and Doctoral Student, Higher Education Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Eliason</td>
<td>Research Assistant and Doctoral Student, Higher Education Program</td>
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### ADVANCE Strategic Team

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. KerryAnn O'Meara</td>
<td>ADVANCE Co-Director and Co-PI; Associate Professor, Higher Education</td>
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<td>Dr. Elizabeth Beise</td>
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<td>Dr. Pam Lanford</td>
<td>ADVANCE Program Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Juan Uriagereka</td>
<td>Professor and Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Rhonda Malone</td>
<td>Director of Faculty Mentoring &amp; Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Kumea Shorter–Gooden</td>
<td>Chief Diversity Officer, Office of University Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Carol Corneilse</td>
<td>Program Coordinator, Office of University Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Robert Waters, Jr.</td>
<td>Associate VP, Academic Affairs, Special Assistant to the President</td>
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ADVANCE Professors

Our first cohort of ADVANCE Professors has been comprised of distinguished women faculty who provide one-on-one mentoring to assistant and associate professors in their colleges. The ADVANCE Professors have worked with college administration to facilitate mentoring networks and we look forward to continued excellence in these areas through the work of our second cohort of ADVANCE Professors, who will be named in May, 2012. Contact information for each ADVANCE Professor may be found on our website: www.advance.edu under “People.”

Dr. Rajshree Agarwal, Dean’s Chair, Entrepreneurship and Strategy; Professor, Management and Organization

Dr. Jane E. Clark, Director, Cognitive Motor Neuroscience Labs; Professor, Kinesiology

Dr. Avis Cohen, Founding Director, UMD ADVANCE; Professor, Biology; Institute for Systems Research

Dr. Allison Druin, Associate Dean for Research, iSchool; Director, Human–Computer Interaction Lab

Dr. Carol Espy-Wilson, Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering; Institute for Systems Research

Dr. Alison Flatau, Associate Dean of Research, Clark School of Engineering; Professor, Aerospace Engineering

Dr. Marie Howland, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Professor, and Director, Ph.D. Program, Architecture Planning and Preservation

Dr. Cindy Moss, Professor, Psychology; Institute for Systems Research

Dr. Debra Neubert, Professor, Special Education

Dr. Mary Ann Ottinger, Professor, Animal Sciences

Dr. Martha Nell Smith, Founding Director, Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities; Professor, English

Dr. Linda Steiner, Director of Research and Doctoral Studies and Professor, Journalism

Dr. Konstantina Trivisa, Director of Applied Mathematics and Scientific Computation Institute for Physical Science and Technology; Professor, Mathematics

Dr. Ruth Zambrana, Director of the Consortium on Race, Gender and Ethnicity; Professor, Women’s Studies

www.advance.umd.edu
The ADVANCE Mission and Framework

"Environments where faculty are retained have the following characteristics:

Learning: strategic and intentional opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, orientations
Agency: the ability to act on behalf of goals that matter to oneself
Relationships and Networks: the stuff of human capital, provide support and pull
Commitments: long term, conscious investments in specific scientific issues, programs, places"

(O’Meara, Terosky & Neumann, 2008)

All four of the characteristics cited above are integral to an institution’s ability to retain women faculty, but we believe the greatest of these is agency. Addressing factors that impact the agency women feel to advance in their careers is central to the way in which the UMD ADVANCE Program combats gendered challenges. Faculty assume agency in order to advance in their careers, balance work and life demands, participate in shared governance and pursue challenging research agendas and leadership opportunities. UMD ADVANCE has nine overlapping activities aimed at supporting the agency and overall professional development of women faculty by employing strategies such as: 1) using data to diagnose and inform, 2) supporting the development of relationships and networks among faculty, and 3) facilitating environments where women’s learning and achievements are witnessed, supported, and valued. The diagram below demonstrates the relationships between the outcomes we hope to engender and the inputs, activities and goals we are using to produce these outcomes.
Approximately a year and a half into our grant, ADVANCE has initiated a number of successful activities, all of which target one or more of our framework objectives of agency, long-term commitments, networks, and learning:

- **ADVANCE Professors** – Accomplished women faculty in leadership positions within their colleges are recruited to act as role models and mentors for their more junior faculty colleagues. These senior women faculty act as “uber-mentors” to junior faculty in all colleges, and serve as our liaisons to their college administrations. This year, our ADVANCE Professors have also been engaged in leadership training, through collaboration with the Robert H. Smith School of Business. ADVANCE Professors participated in workshops on faculty as university leaders, personal branding, and negotiation. Contact information for each ADVANCE Professor may be found on our website: [www.advance.umd.edu](http://www.advance.umd.edu)

- **Balance of Work and Family Initiatives** – The ADVANCE Program, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Ombuds Officer, has produced a set of FAQs on Work Life Policies at UMD, which can be found on our website, [www.advance.umd.edu](http://www.advance.umd.edu) under “Resources.” UMD ADVANCE is also working with the Provost’s Policy Review Committee, which is charged with examining existing work life policies on campus, and making specific recommendations for reform.

- **Seminar Series** – Annually, each college invites one prominent woman scholar to campus to give a lecture on her research and interact with women faculty. Many of this year’s seminars took place in the fall, 2011 and we are looking forward to several more coming up soon. Videos of some seminars may be found on the ADVANCE website (“videos”).

- **Dashboard Project** – This project, released in February, 2012, established an online resource for college–level information on salary, representation, and time to promotion for faculty in each college. Tenure–track faculty members who login to the resource may view information for their specific college along with university–wide data for comparison.

- **Interdisciplinary Seed Grants** – Individual grants, in the amount of $20,000 each, are awarded across the university each year to women faculty proposing projects with a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary and engaged research. A listing of the first cohort (2011 – 2012) seed grant PIs and their projects is provided on pages 7–8. Awardees of the second round of seed grants are in review now. Our Interdisciplinary and Engaged Research seed grant awardees have come together as a group several times over the past year to learn about each other’s work, establish support networks within the group, to hear discussion from panelists on multi-disciplinary research challenges, and to gain knowledge on new funding possibilities and the grants submission process. Founding director, Avis Cohen, and ADVANCE Professor, Mary Ann Ottinger, have been working with our seed grant awardees as they participate in these various activities.

- **Peer–Learning Communities** – Two learning communities have been established this year – one for assistant professors, wherein they discuss tenure, publication, research, and networking, as well as brainstorm approaches to work life satisfaction. This early career community – “Keeping Our Faculties” – is facilitated by Associate Provost Dr. Elizabeth Beise and
The ADVANCE Program’s Research and Evaluation Team has two tasks to perform over the course of our five-year grant: First, we gather data to inform our various programmatic activities (ADVANCE Professors, Learning Communities, Interdisciplinary Seed Grants, etc.). We also collect and analyze data from grant-driven activities such as the UMD Work Environment Survey, which has provided us with the baseline from which our programs will be evaluated over time, and by which we will measure our success. The survey was designed to assess specific aspects of faculty work environment, such as faculty perceptions of their own professional growth, institutional and unit support for professional growth, climate for work–life balance, and other factors that have been linked to retention and advancement.

The second task our research team must carry out is the writing and publishing of original social science research based on a variety of other projects in progress at UMD. For instance, we are currently conducting two studies using case methods: The first involves qualitative interviews with full professors of both genders in order to learn how they have achieved the level of career success their title connotes. The second study examines junior faculty retention at UMD through interviews of both administrators (department chairs, deans, etc.) and early career faculty who have elected to either leave UMD or stay here, given the choice. From the administrative perspective, we hope for insights regarding the processes and information involved in retention decisions, who becomes involved and when, and which tools administrators have at their disposal. From faculty, we want to know how their experiences at UMD unfolded and their thought processes surrounding departure.

If you are interested in ADVANCE’s research and evaluation work, please keep an eye on the program’s website for updates (www.advance.umd.edu). Likewise, if you are interested in being interviewed as a research participant, or if you are able to suggest names of others we might invite, please contact Research Assistant, Andrew Lounder (alounder@umd.edu), and thank you!
2010 – 2011 ADVANCE Interdisciplinary and Engaged Research Seed Grant Recipients

Last year, UMD ADVANCE established its Interdisciplinary and Engaged Seed Grant awards, which target collaboration between women faculty at College Park, and their colleagues in other disciplines. Through the partnership between UMCP and the NSF, UMD ADVANCE awarded 15 $20,000 seed grants in 2010 – 2011 to faculty from a wide array of colleges and departments. We are pleased to present the projects and their PIs below.

“Mapping, Monitoring, and Modeling of Wetland Dynamics for Improved Resilience and Delivery of Ecosystem Services at the Landscape Scale”
In–Young Yeo Dept of Geography, BSOS
Megan Lang Agricultural Research Service, USDA

“Role of the Mechanical Environment in the Regulation of B Cell Receptor Activation”
Arpita Upadhyaya Dept of Physics, CMNS
Wenxia Song Dept of Cell Biology and Molecular Genetics, CMNS

“Developing Effective H1N1 Influenza Vaccine Risk Communication Messages to Improve Vaccine Uptake Among Older Adults”
Bo Xie Human Computer Interaction Lab, iSchool
Xiaoli Nan Dept of Communication, ARHU

“Integrating Public and Private Resources to Support Personalized Health Decisions”
Louiqa Raschid UMIACS, Center for Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, Dept. of Computer Science, CMNS; Information Systems, BGMT
Ritu Agarwal Informational Systems Decision, Operations and Information Tech., BMGT
Samir Khuller Dept of Computer Science, CMNS

“Cavefishes as Models for Sensory Evolution: Comparing Evidence from Extant Species and Fossils”
Daphne Soares Dept of Biology, CMNS
Lynne R. Parenti Dept of Vertebrate Zoology, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History

“Food Safety, Trader Practices, and the Role of Information in Kenyan Maize Markets”
Vivian Hoffman Dept Agricultural and Resource Economics, AGNR
Victoria Chanse Dept Plant Science and Landscape Architecture, AGNR

“Functional Roles of Palladin and α–actinin in actin Cytoskeleton Remodeling During Key Developmental Transitions”
Lisa Taneyhill Dept of Animal and Avian Sciences, AGNR
Carol Keefer Dept of Animal and Avian Sciences, AGNR
Arpita Upadhyaya Dept of Physics, CMNS

“Developing Value–Added Novel Nanomaterials from Chitosan and Soy Protein for Targeted Delivery and Controlled Release of Bioactives”
Qin Wang Dept of Nutrition and Food Science, AGNR
Lucy Yu Dept of Nutrition and Food Science, AGNR
Tongtong Wu Dept of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, SPHL

www.advance.umd.edu
“Associations of Social and Behavioral Factors in Markers of Inflammatory Risk: Evidence for the Latino Population”
Gniesha Dinwiddie Dept of African American Studies, BSOS
Ruth Zambrana Dept of Women’s Studies, ARHU
Robert Santos The Urban Institute

“Understanding the Appeal of Suboptimal Contracts”
Rebecca W. Hamilton Marketing, BMGT
Wedad Elmaghraby Management Science and Operations Management, BGMT

“Engaging Immigrant Women in Langley Park: Identifying Perceived Needs and Developing Community Resources”
Seung-kyung Kim Dept of Women’s Studies, ARHU
Julie Park Dept of Sociology & Asian American Studies Program, BSOS

“Classical Greek and Roman Literature: Gendered Perspectives in Reading and Reception”
Judith Hallett Dept of Classics, ARHU
Jane Donawerth Dept of English, ARHU
Caroline Eades School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, ARHU

Erin Eaker Dept of Philosophy, ARHU
Valentine Hacquard Dept of Linguistics, ARHU

“Leveraging Media for Mathematics: Exploring Instructional Collaboration Between School Librarians and Mathematics Teachers in Middle Schools”
Ann Ryu Edwards Dept of Curriculum and Instruction, EDUC
Mega M. Subramaniam iSchool

“Internal and External Labor Markets for Managerial Talent”
Yue Maggie Zhou Logistics, Business and Public Policy, BMGT
Vojislav Maksimovic Finance, BMGT

Seed Grant PIs are featured on the front page of our website on a rotating basis.

The 2011 – 2012 ADVANCE Interdisciplinary and Engaged Research Seed Grant recipients will be announced in April. We are excited to have received many compelling research proposals from applicants representing a diverse array of collegiate affiliations and professional backgrounds. Applicants will be notified when the review process has been completed for all proposals received.

www.advance.umd.edu
Distinguished Woman Scholar Seminars

Part of the UMCP in-kind contribution to the UMD ADVANCE Program was a commitment for every dean to bring in one Distinguished Woman Scholar each year and provide interfacing and networking opportunities with that scholar. We are thrilled with the outstanding women brought to campus so far this year and are looking forward to more Distinguished Scholar Seminars in the Spring Semester. Two of the talks, Meg Urry and Elizabeth Bird, were videotaped, and may be found on the UMD ADVANCE website under “Videos.” We hope to be able to provide more of these videos in the future.

Fall, 2011

**Evelynn Hammonds**, Dean of Harvard College, on “Intersectionality in STEM Fields: A Roadblock in Theory and Practice”; College of Arts and Humanities

**Meg Urry**, Yale University, on “Women in Science: Why so Few?”; College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences

**Rana Amirtahmasebi**, The World Bank, on “Innovative Funding for Preserving our Cities”; School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

**S. Elizabeth Bird**, University of South Florida, on “Media Audiences in the Web 2.0 World: Are We All ‘Produsers’ Now?”; Philip Merrill College of Journalism

**Cathy Trower**, Harvard University, on “Tenure in the 21st Century: What Underlying Assumptions Might we Revisit?”; College of Education

**Carla Shatz**, Stanford University, on “Releasing the Brake on Synaptic Plasticity”; College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences

**Elizabeth Churchill**, Yahoo! Research, on “Eye, I, Aye: The Internet as a Social Science Petri Dish”; iSchool

Spring, 2012

**Gabriela Chavarria**, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, on “Travel, Trials, and Tribulations: A Career in Natural Resources”; College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

**Pat Thiel**, Iowa State University, on “Quasicrystals: Their Importance and Their Impact on Surface Science”; College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences

**Wanda Jones**, Department of Health and Human Services, on “Remembering History, Casting the Future: Women’s Health – or Gender and Health?”; School of Public Health

[www.advance.umd.edu](http://www.advance.umd.edu)
Pat Thiel, Iowa State University, on “Quasicrystals: Their Importance and Their Impact on Surface Science”; College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences

Rachel Croson, National Science Foundation, on “Giving to Public Radio: Field Experiments in Public Goods Provision”; Robert H. Smith School of Business

Upcoming

For upcoming seminar details, please see the Events section of the UMD ADVANCE website.

Angela Davis, University of California, Santa Cruz, on “A Conversation with Angela Davis”; College of Arts and Humanities: April 18th, 2012

Courtney Coile, Wellesley College, on “The Great Recession: Impacts on Workers and Retirees”; School of Public Policy: April 24th, 2012


Mildred Dresselhaus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on “Why Are We So Excited About Carbon Nanostructures?”; A. James Clark School of Engineering: April 30th, 2012


Marcia McNutt, U.S. Geological Survey; College of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences: September 28th, 2012

Jane Goodall, The Goodall Foundation; College of Behavioral and Social Sciences: October 13th, 2012
Dr. Bo Xie Works to Understand and Improve Older Adults’ E–health Literacy

Through an R01 grant from the National Institute on Aging of the NIH, Bo Xie, Assistant Professor, College of Information Studies, is working with the Prince George's County (PGC) Memorial Library System in Maryland and the District of Columbia Public Library System to identify learning styles of older adults. The 3–year R01 grant will explore collaborative vs. individualistic learning styles and environments in an attempt to discern optimal ways for helping seniors access reliable health information on the Internet. By tapping into the well–established public library infrastructure and NIH online resources, this intervention research has great potential for scaling up and significant social and economic implications. Congratulations, Dr. Xie, on this prestigious award! To read more about this story, see: http://www.advance.umd.edu/html/news/news_story.php?id=6064

Dr. Michele Gelfand Receives Humboldt International Research Prize

Professor of Psychology Michele Gelfand was awarded the Anneliese Maier Research Award from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany for her work in comparative cultural and conflict research. Dr. Gelfand studies tolerance levels for behavioral deviation from social norms as indicators of conflict. Her research can be applied on an international scale, and received wide media attention last May following the publication of her research in the journal Science. Dr. Gelfand was awarded approximately $335,000 to further her research, which she plans to use toward collaborative endeavors between University of Maryland, Jacobs University Bremen, and academic institutions in Germany. Through Dr. Gelfand’s insightful work, she is affiliated with University of Maryland’s National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). She will be working with colleagues to apply her research about attitudes concerning cultural differences and immigrants to study how radicalization occurs withinations. For full news story, see: http://www.newsdesk.umd.edu/uniini/release.cfm?ArticleID=2577

Congratulations on NSF Funding, Dr. Karen Lips

Dr. Karen Lips, Associate Professor of Biology, received NSF funding on a 4–year grant titled “Collaborate Research: Genetic and Demographic Determinants of Population Responses to Emerging Infectious Disease.” Dr. Lips’ work examines the decline/extinction of amphibians across Central America. In particular, she is focusing on the spread of chytridiomycosis, a disease caused by the fungus Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis, in amphibians in the Darien region of Panama. Through this work Dr. Lips aims to provide important an foundation for the conservation of amphibian species.
Dr. Deborah Speece Named Commissioner of the National Center for Special Education Research

Dr. Deborah Speece, Professor in the Dept. of Counseling, Higher Education and Special Education, was named Commissioner of the National Center for Special Education Research, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education. Dr. Speece is “a well regarded and well known special education researcher” according to the Institute of Education Sciences’ Director, John Q. Easton. She is nationally known for her research into the classification and diagnosis of learning disabilities and special education strategies. Dr. Speece will be on a 2-year leave of absence from the university while she serves in this prestigious position. For full news story, see: http://www.education.umd.edu/news/news2011/wnr110831Speece.html

Corbin Martin-Campbell to Join Faculty at Teachers College, Columbia University

Corbin Martin-Campbell, Higher Education doctoral candidate and research assistant working with Dr. KerryAnn O’Meara for ADVANCE, has recently completed her Ph.D. at UMD and will join the faculty at Teachers College, Columbia University. Mrs. Martin-Campbell accepted a tenure track position as an Assistant Professor in the Higher and Postsecondary Education program within the Department of Organization and Leadership. She is in the fifth year of her program here at UMD. She is also the winner of the prestigious 2011 President’s Commission on Women’s Issues Outstanding Graduate Student award. We at ADVANCE extend our best wishes and congratulations to Corbin Martin-Cambell as she embarks on this exciting new opportunity!

Dr. Pamela Abshire Wins Kent Teaching Award for Junior Faculty

Dr. Pamela Abshire, Associate Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and the Institute for Systems Research, was awarded the A. James Clark School’s 2011 Robert E. Kent Teaching Award for Junior Faculty. Dr. Abshire was chosen for this award for her engaged teaching methodology, her sustained commitment and development of the ECE capstone design curriculum, and her extensive involvement in advising undergraduate and graduate research projects. For full news story, see: http://www.ece.umd.edu/News/news_story.php?id=6196
Founding Director Avis Cohen Honored with Distinguished Scholar–Teacher Recognition

Introduction to Avis Cohen’s DST seminar delivered November 30th, 2011, by Dr. Martha Nell Smith, Founding Director, Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities; Professor, English.

If I were in the audience I might wonder why an English Professor is honoring this distinguished neuroscientist. To answer that question, I’ll draw on one of her references for this well-deserved and long overdue award. (By the way, an expert in several fields, Cohen’s recommenders were all Distinguished Professors of Engineering, Mathematics, Neuroinformatics, Neuroscience, and Organismal Biology and Anatomy, and from institutions such as Chicago and Princeton.) Anyway, one powerful letter of testimony acknowledges that she coaxed him out of a “certain disciplinary blindness,” and by doing so helped to make his most important work imaginable, and so possible. She is “one of the few who truly know how to reach across disciplinary boundaries” and as one “who has been successful in teaching others how to do the same.” Her admirers (and they are legion) go on to describe her “truly revolutionary idea” of “applying computational models to explain locomotor rhythms and coupling” and her prescient understanding of the crucial importance of using the study of simple organisms and mathematical models and techniques to analyze the far more complex human organism.

To declare this internationally esteemed interdisciplinary scientist as being ahead of her time, as “truly visionary,” and her work nothing short of “landmark,” none of her referees needed her numerous grants and awards nor her popularizing interviews with CNN, Wired, PC Magazine. (And I’ll point out here that some guy named Einstein touted the importance of explaining the most difficult theoretical concepts so that they are legible enough for their significances to be understood by the general public.) This English professor can definitely understand the importance of having been lead author on the paper that birthed “Computational Neuroscience,” of creating the Neuroscience and Cognitive Science, or NACS, program upon her arrival at Maryland. Cohen has long practiced the kind of interdisciplinary work widely regarded as key for all our intellectual futures. Even more importantly, this intellectual leader of the highest order is committed to transferring knowledge and cultivating its production. In fact, Avis sees research itself as teaching. No wonder, then, that she is characterized by her students and colleagues alike in terms such as “fabulous,” “intellectually stimulating,” “incredible.”

Though I knew of Avis Cohen since she arrived on campus in 1990 (her stellar reputation is one that travels across the university as well as across the globe), I came to know and work with her directly during the years I chaired the University Library Council. I make mention of this because she proved a most impressive and valuable councilor, a distinguished citizen who keeps her promises, who volunteers for difficult and timely tasks when she recognizes their importance, and who can be counted on to deliver thorough, first-rate work, and in a timely fashion. Obviously a team-player, and one who understands that the university cannot achieve the goals we have set for ourselves regarding excellence by remaining in our silos, Cohen’s ability to work effectively with diverse constituencies is as admirable as it is all too rare. A bridge-builder for people and for ideas, Avis Cohen is a force for making dreams a reality, for confronting the most formidable challenges, and for solving seemingly intractable problems in order to make our world and its conditions conducive to growth for each and all.
I cannot close without telling you about one of her most important initiatives, which is again one that has brought people together, specifically women scholars from all over the campus. Avis Cohen is the founder of the University's NSF ADVANCE grant, aimed at “increasing the recruitment and retention of women in academic science and engineering faculty.” Not surprisingly for anything which Avis is involved, the inclusivity of this high impact award has gone well beyond women in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and targets the advancement and retention of all women faculty on our campus.

OK, I’m an English professor and it won’t surprise many of you to know that I cannot close without citing Emily Dickinson, and in this case her words that the ADVANCE program has taken as a motto. She wrote, “I took my power in my hand / and went against the world.” A most generous visionary, one who had made a profound difference on this campus, across this country, and around the world, Avis is a truly Distinguished Scholar-Teacher and mentor to the world. Rather than going against it, she takes the world along with her, and, I will add, we are happy to follow. Please join me in honoring and congratulating Professor Avis Cohen.

UMD ADVANCE Program for Inclusive Excellence

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The ADVANCE Program for Inclusive Excellence is funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation in partnership with the University of Maryland, College Park

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