

Shippensburg University's Provost Office Press

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Student Research Thrives at Shippensburg University



Hundreds of student researchers present their projects at the annual Celebration of Student Research Conference held at Shippensburg University.

Shippensburg University's annual Celebration of Student Research Conference was held on April 19, 2012. Around 400 undergraduate and graduate students, sponsored by over 100 faculty members, presented their research to the university community and the general public. The Ceddia Union Building was humming with activity as poster sessions, departmental panels, the honors symposium, and individual presentations were all taking place. The topics researched were as varied as the researchers themselves, but there did seem to be one constant: the student researchers found the

experience to be challenging, rewarding, and of great benefit to their future plans.

Caitlin Shanahan, a senior Social Work major, presented her work on the hypothesis that nursing home residents pass away in larger numbers during the holiday seasons than at any other time. She genuinely felt the experience of participating in faculty-sponsored student research really prepared her for her professional future as research is an important component in the social work field. In addition to gaining a "resume booster," she gained a deeper understanding of the whole

inquiry process. She also noted that she could see not only how her research results could be applied, but also where more research should be done. Heather Kundus, another senior Social Work major, echoed Shanahan's comments and agreed that understanding and being able to conduct research are essential skills in her profession. Kundus acknowledged that research is often challenging, but that achieving the end results makes it very worthwhile. Kundus' research on the customer satisfaction with the services of the Arc of

Celebration of Student Research, continued

Franklin and Fulton Counties has “real world” applications as it will help that organization better meet the needs of its clients.

Kelcie Zegalia, a junior Chemistry major, and Jordyn Lynch, a senior Business Administration major, were both very pleased with the research process. Zegalia, whose project was titled *Synthesis of Novel Nickel (II) 15-Metallacrown-5 Complexes*, really enjoyed the opportunity for extensive lab work and the one-on-one work with the professor. Lynch felt that her research, *A More Efficient Synthesis of Diphenylacetylene for Instructional Use*, gave her the chance to come up with creative solutions and procedures on her own – not just follow prescribed steps found in a typical lab class. They both agreed they ended with a more personal connection to what they learned in the course of their research than what students typically take away from more traditional classes.

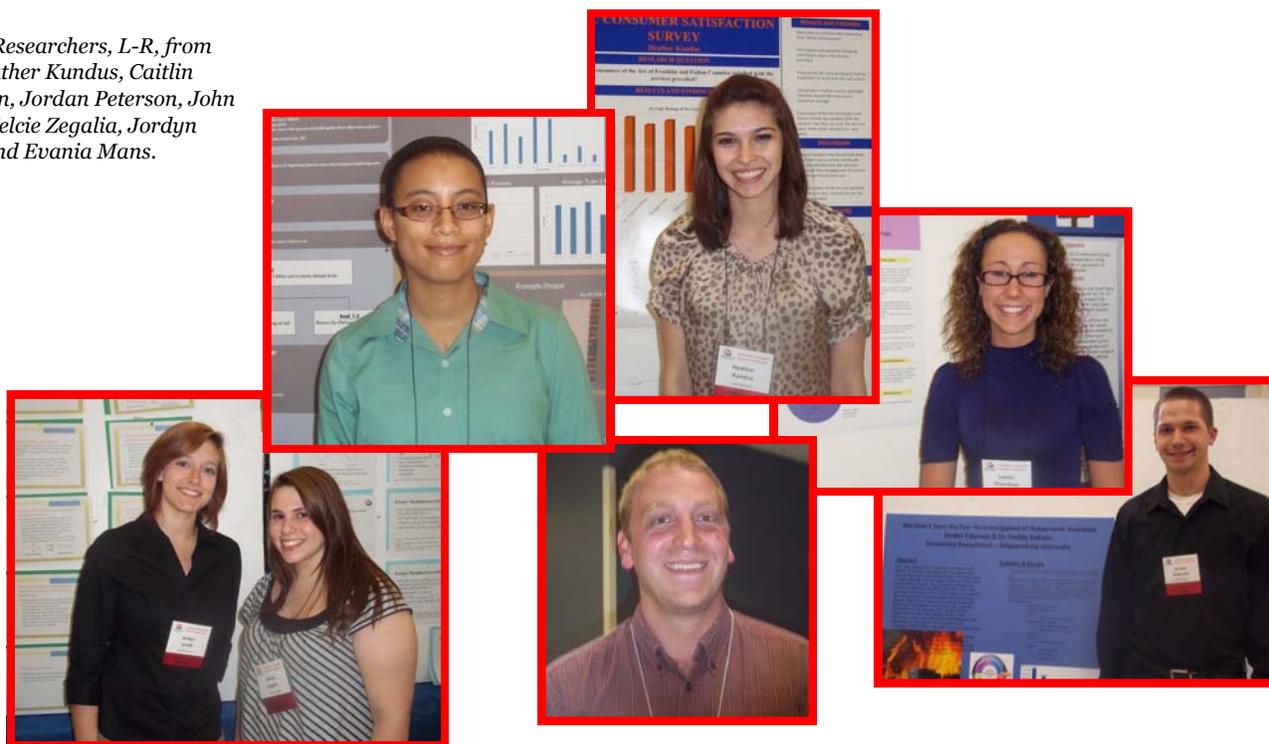
Jordan Paterson, a junior Physics major, presented research titled *We Didn't Start the Fire: An Investigation of Homeowners Insurance*. Paterson not only learned research methods and tools, he was also excited that his findings were applicable to real life situations, such as ways to identify reduced risk and thereby reduce premiums. Senior Human Communications Studies major John Dyson was also pleased to see applications for his research. Dyson was part of a departmental panel on *Understanding Media Communication: Altering Perceptions and Interpretations*. His project, *Framing Analysis: Cumberland County, Pennsylvania's 2010 Reassessment Project*, directly bears on his career as a local real estate agent.

Evania Mans, a senior Computer Science major, really summed up the event when she commented that the Celebration of Student Research Conference was a good event for

students to showcase what they have learned over their time at Shippensburg University; it exposes their work to people beyond departmental faculty. Her comments on her own project, *Determining a Feature Set to Find Defects in Mortar*, ring true for all student researchers: “Research can be frustrating and tedious at times, but it is still worth pursuing. It is so rewarding to persevere and find that your work actually has an outcome!”

Congratulations to all of our outstanding student researchers and to their dedicated faculty sponsors. Thanks are also due to the Shippensburg University Institute for Public Service, the Dean of Arts and Sciences' Advisory Council for Undergraduate Research, and the Undergraduate and the Graduate Research Grant Advisory Committees for their efforts to ensure a successful conference.

Student Researchers, L-R, from top: Heather Kundus, Caitlin Shanahan, Jordan Peterson, John Dyson, Kelcie Zegalia, Jordyn Lynch, and Evania Mans.



AMP Progress Report

The Academic Master Plan Task Force had a busy year as they continued to **develop a blueprint for SU's academic future**. One of the major tasks tackled this year was to seek approval for the mission statement, goals, and objectives of the Academic Master Plan. To date, nearly all involved groups and constituencies have approved them; only a couple approvals are pending and are expected to be received shortly.

The Task Force also acted on the many suggestions made by the university community regarding the initial draft

of the AMP strategies. It split into smaller working groups to incorporate changes suggested by the feedback. The revised strategies and tactics, as well as the mission statement, goals, and objectives, were put into a narrative; a vision statement was also added to the document. This document is currently available for campus review and input.

The final task worked on this year was to start drafting recommendations as to how the AMP could be used on an annual basis for the various levels of planning as well as become a part of other periodic processes, such as

academic program reviews and accreditation.

“For needed change to happen requires a vision of what we can become, an academic strategic plan that describes how we will achieve the vision, and provision for reciprocal accountability whereby we regularly assess our efforts,” said Dr. Barbara Lyman, Provost and Sr VP for Academic Affairs. **“The Academic Master Plan addresses all three components of change.”**

MAWCA @ SU

The Mid-Atlantic Writing Center Association Conference (MAWCA) was held at SU this March. Dr. Karen Johnson, associate director of the Learning Center, hosted and helped to coordinate the event. The conference was a time for professionals to discuss issues and, along with peer tutors, attend various professional development workshops.

The conference is an annual event, but this time it was a little different. One difference was the number of attendees – there were at least 100 more attendees than at any previous

conference. The other difference was the international delegates that attended the conference, something that is rather unusual for this event. This year participants from Kenya and Saudi Arabia joined the hundreds of professionals from throughout the region. Dr. Beatrice Njeru of Strathmore University in Kenya has been tasked with establishing a writing center at her institution; when she saw the conference announcement, she saw an opportunity to get information which would help her reach that goal. A group of four delegates from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Higher Education also attended with the

intent of investigating the creation of a writing center in one of their schools. Dr. Zeid Addakkan, senior consultant in the group, was so pleased with the conference that he pledged a donation to MAWCA to express his gratitude. The organization plans to use the donation to establish a scholarship fund for tutors whose native language is not English.



Software Engineering Degree Gets BOG OK

The new software engineering degree program officially received approval from the PASSHE Board of Governors. Pending approval from the Council of Trustees, the program will start this fall.

Leading to a B.S. in software engineering, the program will provide a high-quality, low-cost alternative to students while using existing faculty and facilities. Graduates will possess a specialized skill-set, including developing large scale projects in a team environment and project management, that is in high demand by employers.

New Program for Undergraduate Research Created

There is a new opportunity for Shippensburg University students to participate in faculty/student research. The Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) pilot program will start this summer. There are two primary goals of the program. First and foremost is to nurture student researchers – selected participants will learn and hone the skills needed to effectively conduct research in their fields of study. SURE will also provide faculty members with paid student researchers. As a condition of participating in the program, the

student/faculty pair must participate in an Academic Day 2012 presentation **describing SURE's impact and benefit to academic growth and development.**

SURE is open to all undergraduate students expecting to graduate in December 2012 or later as well as all faculty members. Participants are selected through a competitive application process. Additional information on SURE can be found at http://www.ship.edu/student_research.

GBLUES: Experiential Learning in Action

“...it gives SU students the opportunity to have hands-on, in-classroom experiences starting their freshman year.”
- Jim Zullinger,
Associate Professor &
GBLUES
Kindergarten teacher

It is not unusual to find aquariums in classrooms. However, the aquarium in the Kindergarten class at the Grace B Luhrs University Elementary School (GBLUES) is a little different. The kindergarten students themselves, with help from Shippensburg University students in Dr. Richard Stewart’s Environmental Education Practicum class, hiked to a nearby stream and caught the fish and crawdads that now inhabit their tank. This is just one small example of the very special and mutually beneficial relationship between SU and GBLUES students.

Unique amongst PASSHE schools, GBLUES is a lab school attached to SU’s College of Education and Human Services in partnership with the Shippensburg Area School District. Having a lab school right on campus provides

tremendous opportunities for university students preparing for careers in education, counseling, and related fields to interact with and engage elementary students up through fifth grade. As Jim Zullinger, Associate Professor of Teacher Education and the GBLUES Kindergarten teacher said, **“One of the things that makes GBLUES so special is that it gives SU students the opportunity to have hands-on, in-classroom experiences starting their freshman year; they are able to get into the classroom sooner than students in similar programs elsewhere.”**

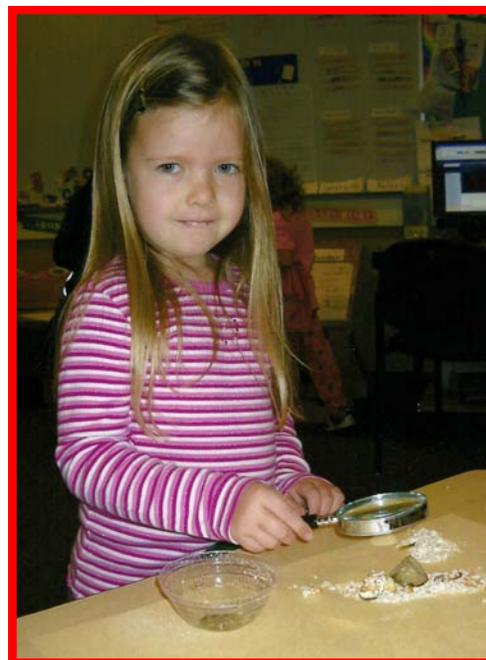
A perfect example of this early immersion is Early Education major Ronna Larson. Now a senior and the beloved student teacher in Zullinger’s class, she started her association with GBLUES during her freshman year as a work study student and

was able to immediately start building professional relationships with faculty, staff and students alike. **“As many people know, being a lab school, GBLUES is different than most. It fosters exploration and facilitates knowledge beyond what a textbook can teach. The children here have the opportunities to learn not only with children their age, but work together with the school as a whole. This has helped me not only get an understanding of what a Kindergarten class is like but also how grades 1-5 differ on intellectual, instructional, and emotional levels. This is a tool that I will take with me from GBLUES,”** said Larson. **“Also, I believe I have grown professionally here at GBLUES by the opportunity they provide to work collaboratively with the Shippensburg Area School District as well as GBLUES staff**



Above: Ronna Larson, SU senior and current student teacher at GBLUES, reviews some concepts with one of her students.

Right: A kindergarten student practices her investigative and observational skills on her mealworms. GBLUES stresses experiential learning for its students as well as SU students. {photo courtesy of R. Larson}



GBLUES, continued

and members of Shippensburg University. I believe it helps the students and teachers excel further. I have learned a lot about my duty as an educator and it is a privilege to have been part of the GBLUES family for **four years!**"

Dr. Mark Moilanen, Associate Professor of Art & Design, has students from his Contemporary Methods in Art Education and Social Structures of Aesthetic: Philosophy & Criticism in the Arts classes share their work with the GBLUES students. The most visible project is the annual **"Big Heads" Visit to GBLUES**. Moilanen's students make giant papier-mâché heads of historical figures. They also design grade-appropriate **"pre-teaching" packets of biographies** that are distributed

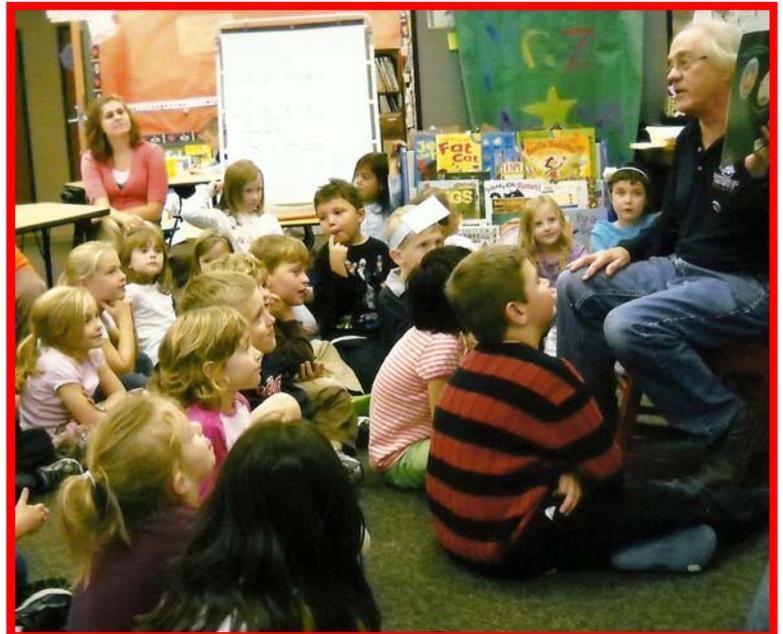
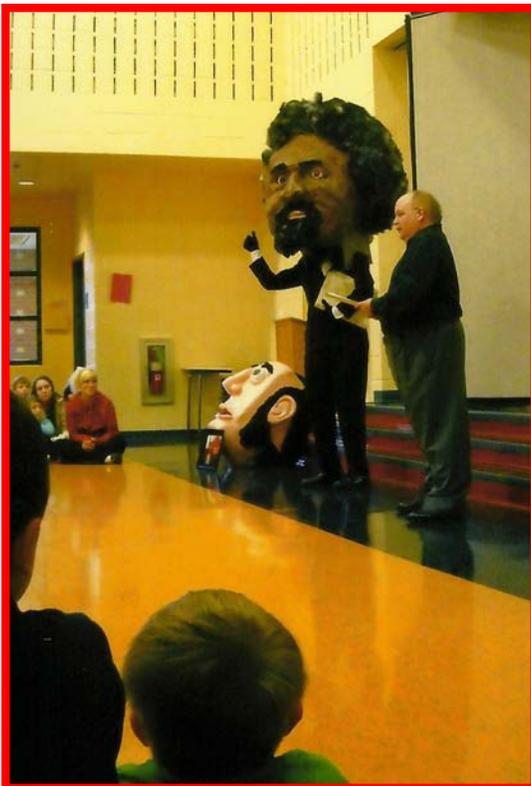
to GBLUES teachers prior to the visit. These biographies allow the GBLUES students to be prepared when the Big Heads come to visit. This experience is not only enjoyed by SU and GBLUES students alike, it has also received national recognition by being juried into **state and national art teachers' annual conventions**. **"Having my students experience the sheer joy, excitement, and love for learning so freely expressed by elementary-aged students, especially through art, is something I want my college students to not only remember, but include, in each day lived as an adult,"** commented Moilanen.

Konnie Serr, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education and the first grade teacher at GBLUES,

summed up some of the multiple benefits and opportunities GBLUES offers SU students.

"GBLUES is a place to observe not only elementary students, but master teachers at work," she said. "There are always ways students can volunteer – in the classroom, playground, cafeteria, or school office. GBLUES is also a place students can do research with teachers as well as a place to do a project, teach a lesson, or tutor a student. It is an ideal place for SU students to have hands-on, professional experiences that will better prepare them for their chosen careers."

"It is an ideal place for SU students to have hands-on, professional experiences that will better prepare them for their chosen careers"
- Konnie Serr, Assistant Professor & GBLUES 1st grade teacher



Left: Dr. Mark Moilanen, Associate Professor of Art & Design, and his students present their "Big Heads" project to GBLUES students.

Above: Jim Zullinger, Associate Professor of Teacher Education & GBLUES Kindergarten teacher, conducts a literacy lesson with K-1st graders. {photos courtesy of R. Larson}

SU Students Research on Display in DC

This spring, research done by SU students will receive national attention as it is displayed in two different events in Washington, D.C. Kayla Reed, a senior history major, will be presenting at the Posters on the Hill event. The Shippensburg University Women in Computer Science (WiCS) club will be participating in the USA Science and Engineering Festival.

Posters on the Hill is held by the Council on Undergraduate Research, the **nation's leading voice in fostering undergraduate research. Reed's research, "Through the Eyes of a Woman: The Impact of Nature on a Pioneer Woman's Life," in which she examined the impact nature had on the lives of women traveling the Oregon Trail from 1840-1860, is one of only 74 (out of 854 applications) to be selected through a competitive process to participate in the national conference. Once there, Reed's work will be viewed**

by federal government officials, agency personnel, and others involved in national policymaking, as well as fellow researchers. **Reed's advisor is Dr. Allen Dieterich-Ward, Associate Professor of History.**

WiCS will be showcasing the Wonderfall, a programmable waterfall that they created. They were invited to the USA Science and Engineering Festival when their work was seen at the New York Makers Faire last **summer, where it won the Editor's Choice Blue Ribbon.** The USA Science and Engineering Festival is designed to increase public awareness of the importance of science as well as to encourage students to pursue careers in science and technology. It is a free, family-friendly event that draws roughly 500,000 participants as well as leading scientists, authors, and science-related celebrities, so the Wonderfall is sure to receive a great deal of attention. WiCS is advised by Dr. Alice Armstrong, Assistant Professor of Computer Science.

Students Participate in Local Outreach Projects

Service-learning projects allow students to apply what they learn in the classroom to the real world through volunteer and service activities. A number of students participate in projects that are benefitting families and youth in Chambersburg, PA, located just south of Shippensburg.

SU students in Felicia Shearer's

Introduction to Human Communication class chose a project which aids youth in the Boys and Girls Club of Chambersburg. The students, in coordination with the director of the Club, organized an event to introduce college life to the teenagers in the Club. Along with chaperones, twenty teens visited campus this April. Once here, they toured traditional residence halls, met with student life personnel, experienced the dining hall, and spent some time in a college classroom. The visitors also came prepared with questions about things they wanted to

know about college life. All of these activities helped to show the youth what one could expect if attending college, and perhaps even showed them that college could be a part of their future.

Students in a writing class taught by Dr. Laurie Cella, Assistant Professor of English, worked with the Franklin County Literacy Center to collect oral histories of the clients there. The histories were then turned into essays, which were compiled into the book, [Community Connections](#). The project taught the students ways to listen and emotionally connect with their subjects, and then use those connections when they wrote the essays. The project was coordinated by Jayda Coons, a senior English major and volunteer at the Franklin County Literacy Center. This service-learning project was highlighted at the recent Pennsylvania Association of Adult Continuing Education Conference, where the success and impact of the project, both on the students and clients

Students RISE to Success

Congratulations are in order for SU students who participated in the RISE (Redefining Investment Strategy Education) Symposium this March. Accompanied by Dr. Hong Rim, Professor of Finance, nine Investment Management Program students attended the conference in Dayton, OH. Once there, students gave a presentation before a judging panel and received excellent feedback on it. The SU team was awarded First Prize in Growth Investment Style. RISE has a reputation as the most prestigious student investment conference and regularly features the top players in the field.



involved, were shared with others.

In its second year of operation, the Trojan-Raiders Partnership brings secondary and elementary pre-student teaching students from SU to Chambersburg schools once a week in order to tutor students in a wide range of subjects. Co-directed by Dr. Janice Minetola, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education, and Dr. Susan Rimby, Professor of History/Philosophy, the Partnership has three main goals: to help the community, to give SU students practical experience, and to encourage Chambersburg students to attend college. In just two years, the Trojan-Raiders Partnership has already experienced success towards all three of those goals. With the success, there is hope that the Partnership will grow and go to more schools in the area in the near future.

And Now A Word From Our Sponsor....

Barbara G. Lyman, Provost & Senior VP for Academic Affairs



"To whom it may concern: It is springtime. It is late afternoon."

~ Kurt Vonnegut

Spring is always an exciting time for me. Even years like this, when my family in Texas may have had more snow than we did in Shippensburg, the move from winter to the sunny, breezy days of spring is most welcome.

In addition to the change in the weather, spring is always a bustling time on campus. Faculty and staff strive to complete projects and committee work before the academic year is over. The

grounds keeping crew can be seen all over campus repairing any winter damage and caring for the beautiful explosion of growth brought on by spring. Students are finishing the semester's work; those who are graduating are getting ready for life after SU. To better prepare our students for that post-SU life, numerous opportunities for hands-on, experiential learning are available to them – thereby transforming theory and idea to real experience. This edition highlighted a number of such opportunities, including the Celebration of Student Research, the SURE Program, service-learning projects, and the Grace B Luhrs Elementary School. I strongly encourage all students to participate in any of these or similar programs and I thank the faculty and staff who make these experiences possible.

Though spring brings to a close the traditional academic year, it by no

means closes down the university. Summer will find scores of classes offered, both on-campus and via distance education, to meet the various needs of our students. This summer, as has been the tradition for years, we will also welcome our incoming students, the class of 2016, to the Shippensburg University family during New Student Orientation. These sessions not only familiarize the students with the university, but also allow them, with the support of dedicated faculty and staff, to chart and launch their own academic journeys at Ship.

A Miracle in the Provost Office

The newest addition to the Shippensburg University Provost Office is administrative assistant Dynel Miracle. Prior to this position, Dynel worked in the Communications/Publications office; before working for SU, she was the Executive Assistant to the Director of the Scotland School for Veterans' Children. In addition to her "day job," Dynel has been a member of the PA Army National Guard for over 21 years. Quick to smile or break into a Jazzercise routine, Dynel has

already made herself a much-valued member of the Provost Office. "After being here for three months now, I am just as excited about working in the Provost Office as I was



on the first day," said Dynel. "The entire office staff is professional, helpful, caring, happy, and all-around great!"

Welcome aboard, Dynel!

Dynel Miracle,
Administrative
Assistant

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Dr. Christina Sax, *Associate Provost, Dean of Academic Outreach & Innovation*

Mr. Brian Johnson, *Executive Assistant*

Ms. Dynel Miracle, *Administrative Assistant*

Ms. Brenda Minges, *Secretary*
Ms. Tammy Pearson, *Secretary*
Ms. Heather Wadas, *Secretary*

About Shippensburg University

Shippensburg University is a member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). Located on 200 acres in south-central Pennsylvania, it is home to nearly 8200 undergraduate and graduate students. It has served as an institute of higher education in the region since 1871.

We're on the Web!

<http://www.ship.edu/admin/provost/>



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