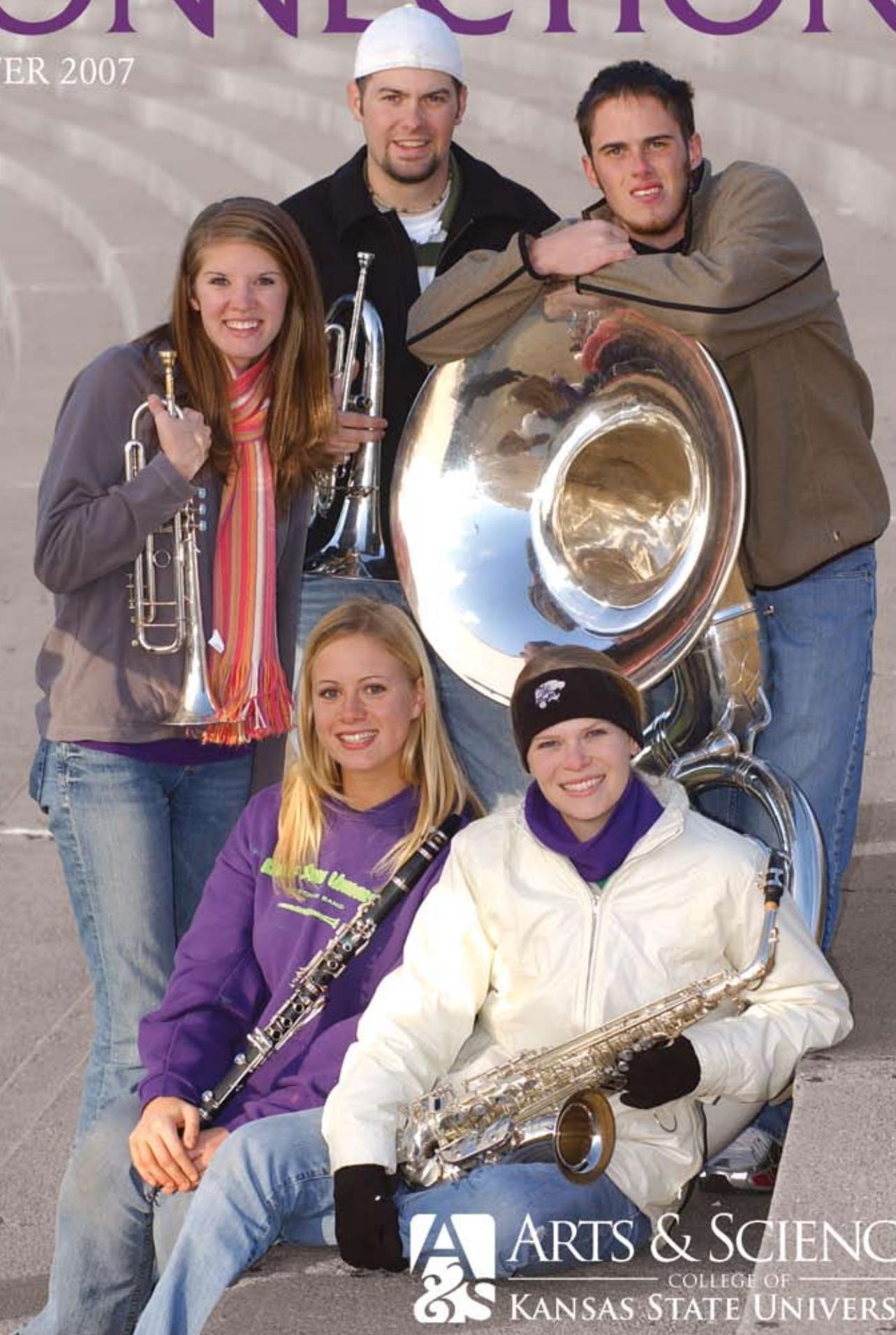


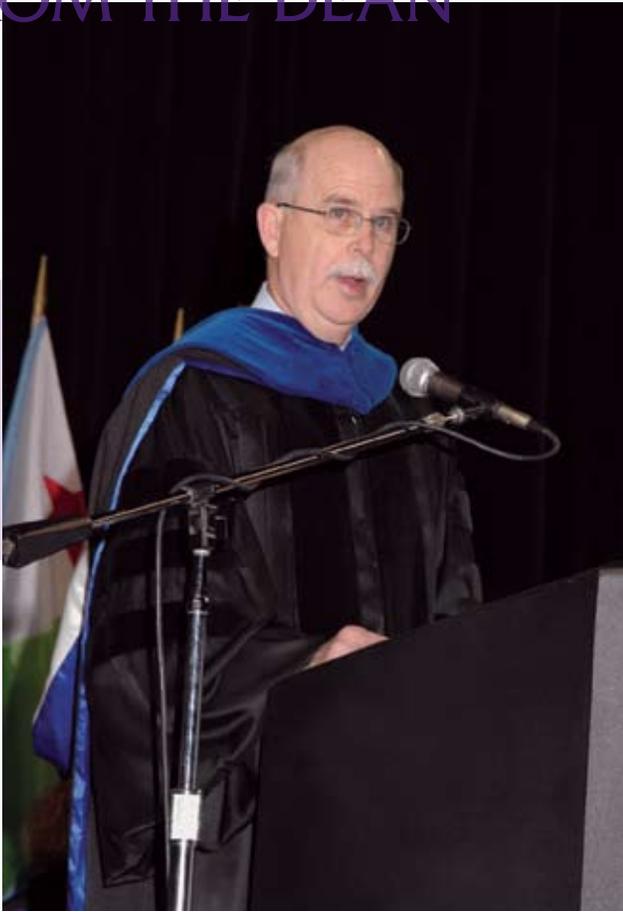
CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2007



ARTS & SCIENCES
COLLEGE OF
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FROM THE DEAN



Dear Alumni and Friends:

As I write this, it's mid-December and we're in the last week of the semester. A cold snap hit yesterday. Temperatures are well below freezing. The view from my window in Eisenhower Hall offers an endless parade of students walking between Anderson Hall and the library. They all seem to be carrying twenty-pound backpacks. The majority of them are either talking on cell phones or plugged into an iPod — or both! A few of them are wearing shorts and flip flops. If they're cold, they don't show it. Mostly, all of them look focused, preoccupied and a little more tired than usual.

Having lived through the rhythms of over three decades of university life, I've learned that the period just before final

exams is always interesting and full of surprises. Whatever problems have been simmering all semester seem to boil over this week. The stress of classes can make students rise to new heights; it can also make them behave in counterproductive ways.

All the students, from freshmen looking at their first final exams to seniors wondering what comes after graduation, are

“I'm very honored to have the opportunity to shake hands with every one of our graduates while we announce their names for our Bramlage audience.”

a little bit on edge. And I'm not surprised. We're asking a lot of them. They're finishing term papers and projects. They're pulling all-nighters to study for tests. The best students are shoring up strong grades; the struggling ones are looking for

ways to improve. They're on intellectual high-alert. Everyone is marking the days and hours until the holiday break, and, for many, commencement.

December 2006 marks the end of my 63rd K-State semester, and 63 commencements later I still look forward to the beaming graduates' faces, the smiling parents, friends, and relatives, the proud faculty members, the general atmosphere of festivity. I'm very honored to have the opportunity to shake hands with every one of our graduates while we announce their names for our Bramlage audience. As they walk across the stage (some wearing flip flops), those two hours make everything else during the year seem worthwhile.

We as faculty and administrators recognize that students are the heart of K-State. You'll find inspiring stories about our students in this issue of Connections, as well as some inspiration from those K-Staters who help our students along the way. If you read something you like, or just want to say hi, I'm an e-mail away. Let me hear from you. (sewhite@ksu.edu)

Best wishes,

Stephen E. White, dean





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Stephen White, Dean

Larry Rodgers, Associate Dean

Beth Montelone, Associate Dean

Alison Wheatley, Assistant Dean

Juanita McGowan, Assistant Dean

Mike Harders, Senior Director of Development,
K-State Foundation

Sheila Walker, Associate Director of Development,
K-State Foundation

Michelle Robben, Development Officer,
K-State Foundation

Dean's Office: (785) 532-6900

KSU Foundation Development Office:
(800) 432-1578 or (785) 532-6266

ON THE COVER

Arts and Sciences majors (and K-State Marching Band members) hang out in Old Stadium. Clockwise from top: Doug Niccum, junior in graphic design, Andover; Cody Wheeler, junior in music education, Wichita; Melanie Caster, junior in music education, Wichita; Ashley Smit, senior in biology/pre-vet, Wichita; Becki Ronen, freshman in trumpet performance, Buhler.

'92-'93



Up close with Emperor penguins



'92-'93

Blizzard at camp



'91-'92

Proud Kansan



'91-'92

96 days without a shower!

A Study In Isolation

Alumnus follows path from K-State to the South Pole to the classroom

by Jami Weisbender '01

Most people, if invited to go on a trip that promised three shower-free months, would decline immediately. Lucky for him, Charles "Chip" Lagerbom, '86 B.A. history, didn't follow those instincts. The Lyons, Kan., native never planned to head to Antarctica to explore the South Pole, but sometimes a person just has to seize the day. Lagerbom maintains that his time at K-State played a major role in all that he has accomplished.

“I wanted my eyes opened about the world and K-State started me out on that.”

After graduating from Lyons High School in a class of just 82 people, Lagerbom came to K-State partly because he had friends who planned to attend, but also because he hoped to connect with a larger world. Both Manhattan and the University seemed huge to him at the time.

“I think my college algebra class had something like 2,000 people in it,” Lagerbom laughed.

But Lagerbom found his way around, eventually choosing to major in history. Still, he didn’t know what he was going to do following graduation. Then one day during his junior year at K-State, he happened to see a poster in Eisenhower Hall for the historical archaeology program at the University of Maine. Having worked at times with K-State archaeology professor Patricia O’Brien on items excavated from General George Custer’s privy (“his outhouse at Fort Riley”), Lagerbom headed east.

“I landed on my feet in Maine without knowing a soul,” Lagerbom said. “I owe that all to my experiences at K-State. It was a great undergraduate experience.”

Lagerbom called his two sojourns in the South Pole “a study in isolation.” There were only five people on the first journey and two groups of three on the second.

“We never saw anybody else except every two to three weeks for a helicopter re-supply,” Lagerbom recalled. “When the re-supply was light on mail, sometimes the helicopter pilot would bring along a copy of Newsweek. It was like gold, because it was contact with the outside world.”

The psychological toll of being disconnected from other people and society was intense.

“Some days you’re hiking along and you hit what’s called ‘the wall.’ You make up your mind personally whether you’re going to make it or not,” Lagerbom remembered.

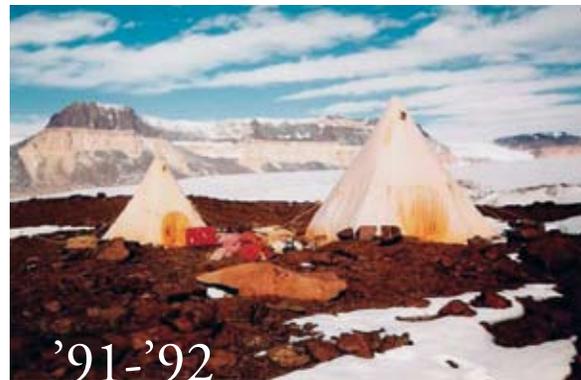
The physical hardships were equally great. “It never got above freezing the whole time,” Lagerbom said. “The deterioration of the body was gradual, but real.”

In addition to not showering or shaving for weeks, Lagerbom had to contend with a constant runny nose, grit in his food thanks to unceasing winds, and the necessity of thawing out his toothpaste before brushing his teeth.

Lagerbom (holding binoculars) aboard Holland America’s Rotterdam ship



Southernmost point of the journey



Dry Valleys camp

As a master’s student living in the University of Maine graduate dorm, Lagerbom watched a slideshow of his neighbor’s recent trip to Antarctica, appropriately entitled “96 Days Without a Shower.” Later, his neighbor, a glacial geology student, asked Lagerbom to be a field assistant on another trip to the Antarctic, so Lagerbom again took a chance and signed up for the adventure, which lasted from Oct. 1990 to Feb. 1991.

In his time in the Dry Valleys of Antarctica — the two percent of the continent that is not covered by snow — Lagerbom worked as a field assistant to the University of Maine glacial geology team. He spent his days setting up camp, preparing food and digging pits so the geologists could get rock and soil samples, all while encountering penguins up close and weathering blizzards. Lagerbom had such an incredible experience that he took a second trip from Oct. 1992 to Feb. 1993.

But there were distinct privileges that compensated for the struggles. At one point, Lagerbom hiked in a valley that had been traversed by only four other people. On such pristine land, he became extremely aware of the impact his actions could make. Lagerbom and the other field assistants refilled the pits they dug after the geologists finished taking samples, hoping to leave the environment as unspoiled as it was when they arrived.

Not surprisingly, the trips had a substantial effect on Lagerbom.

“It totally changed my life,” Lagerbom remarked. “I really fell in love with the history of the continent and early exploration. When I came back I started reading voraciously about the topic.”

Among his reading, he discovered the story of Henry “Birdie” Bowers, a polar explorer who died with famed Captain Robert



Antarctic Peninsula from the Rotterdam

Falcon Scott in 1912 while returning from the South Pole and who had rarely been written about. Lagerbom decided to do something about that lack of information, authoring a book about Bowers called “The Fifth Man,” which was published in 1999.

Lagerbom has now accumulated a polar book collection of over 1,200 titles. “I’m an avid reader. I call it my passion for all things polar,” Lagerbom declared.

In addition to reading and writing about the topic, Lagerbom also holds offices in both the American Polar Society and the Antarctic Society, where he bonds with people of all different ages and backgrounds through their love of the topic. “It’s a great field. It’s small enough where most people know each other. We all kind of help each other out,” Lagerbom enthused.

In January 2006, he served as a guest lecturer aboard a 1,300 passenger cruise ship, Holland America’s Rotterdam, traveling to the Antarctic Peninsula from Chile. He was able to see the side of the continent he had not encountered on his trips over a decade earlier.

Since moving to Belfast, Maine, in 1994, Lagerbom has landed in another role he never expected, but also loves: educator. A high school teacher of both world and U.S. history, Lagerbom developed an archaeology course, which

“I wanted my eyes opened about the world and K-State started me out on that.”

he teaches every other year. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two children, six-year-old son Charlie and three-year-old daughter Audrey. His kids already know about his trips to the Antarctic.

“Daddy’s brought his penguin pictures to their classes,” Lagerbom affirmed.

Though he hasn’t been back to Manhattan since the early 1990s, he remains connected to K-State. He keeps in touch with a couple of his roommates, and one of his former high school students even enrolled at K-State two years ago. Still, Lagerbom hopes to visit at some point.

“I would like to come back and see Bramlage Coliseum — our student fees paid for it!” he laughed.

If you want to contact Chip Lagerbom about his experiences in Antarctica, you can e-mail him at clagerbom@sad34.net.

A Guiding Hand:

Professor mentors hundreds into medical careers

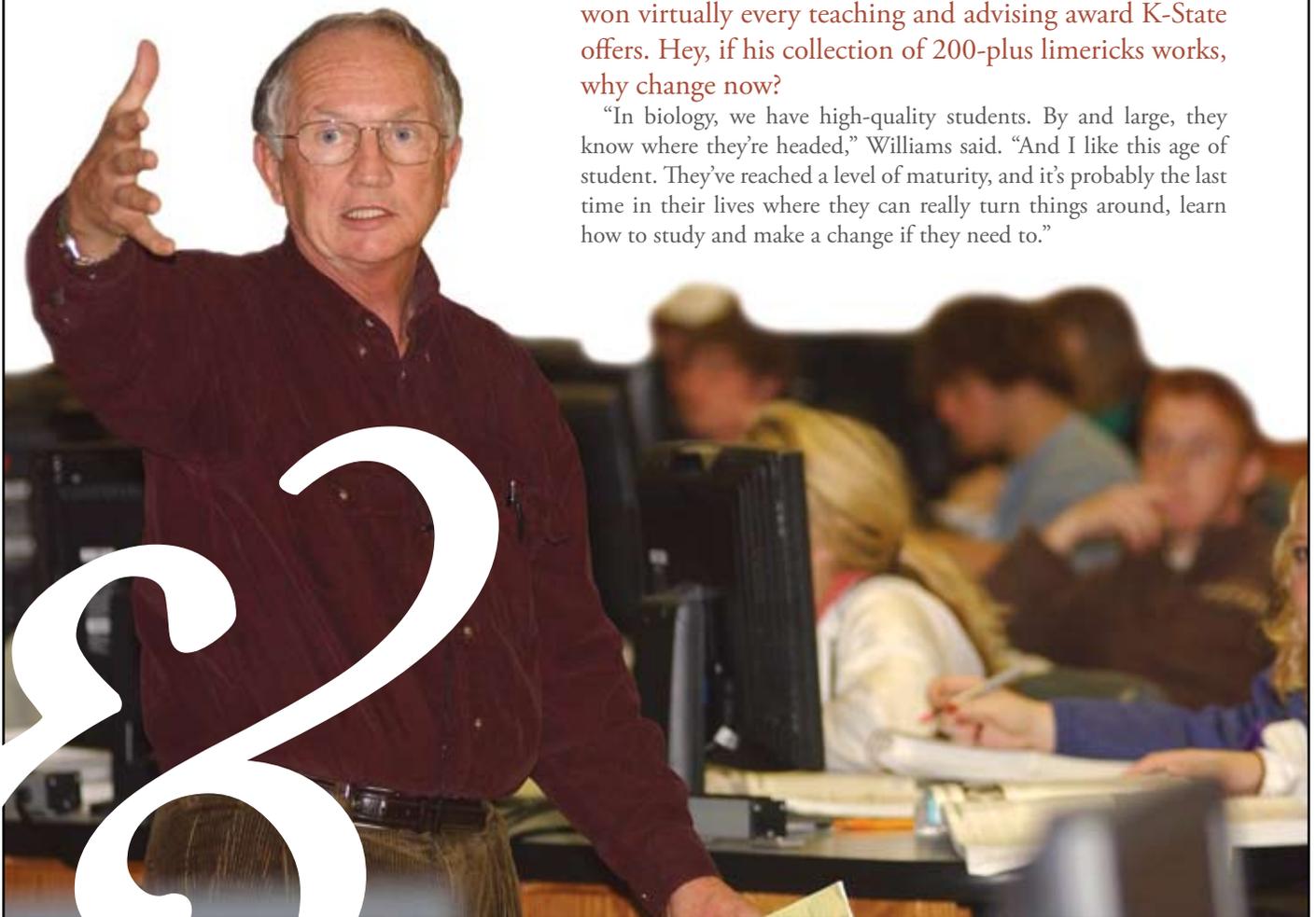
by Lisa Sisley '92

Osmosis Limerick

*A red blood cell of few words (laconic)
Said, "I'll swim in that drink (alcoholic)."
It is most sad to say,
That cell shriveled away,
For the gin was most hypertonic.*

Although biology-themed limericks may seem a little...odd, these and other unusual teaching tools have served Larry Williams well in his tenure as associate professor of biology and associate director of undergraduate studies for the Division of Biology. Williams, a legendary advisor to scores of students, has won virtually every teaching and advising award K-State offers. Hey, if his collection of 200-plus limericks works, why change now?

"In biology, we have high-quality students. By and large, they know where they're headed," Williams said. "And I like this age of student. They've reached a level of maturity, and it's probably the last time in their lives where they can really turn things around, learn how to study and make a change if they need to."



He added with a grin, “If I had become an elementary or secondary teacher, I probably would have gone insane. I can’t handle the little ones.”

Williams grew up on a farm in southeast Nebraska, about half-way between Lincoln and Beatrice. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in agronomy from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and his Ph.D. in biochemistry from the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena.

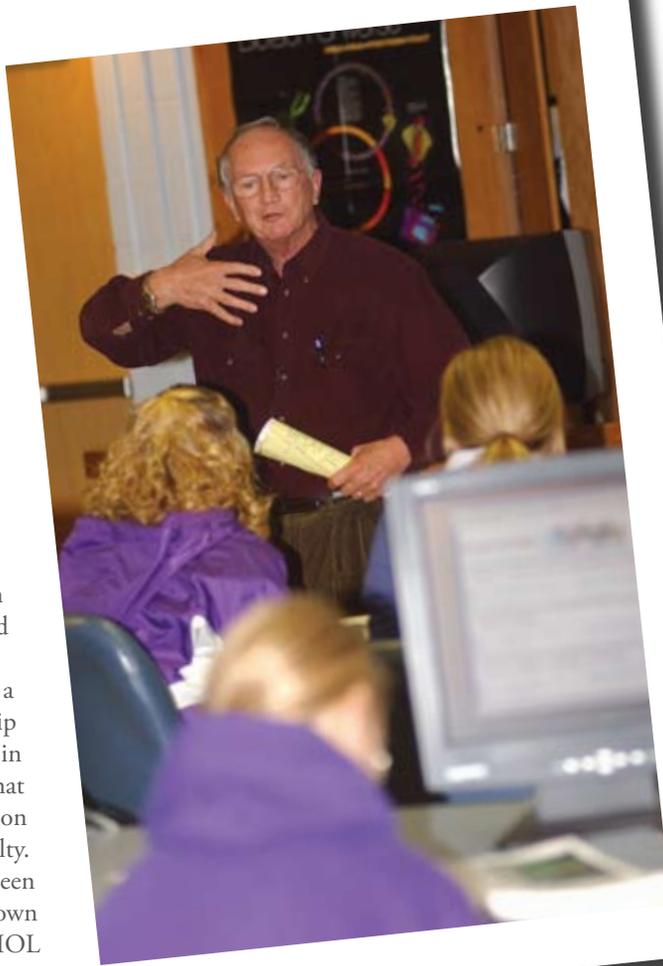
“My advisor at Nebraska had gone there (CalTech), and I knew it was a premier science school,” Williams recalled. “I didn’t know I only had a one-in-a-hundred chance of getting in — it was the only school I applied to! But it all worked out.”

Williams then completed a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan in genetics. In 1970, he heard that K-State was expanding the Division of Biology, so he joined the faculty. From the beginning, he’s been involved with the most well-known biology course on campus, BIOL 198 Principles of Biology.

“Starting in 1969 or 1970, it was an audio-tutorial course, in a central room, with benches and tape players with headphones,” Williams said. “Students did their experiments in there and the staff wandered around. It was open all day and students went in when they wanted to; there were no assigned class periods. It was a good format for the mature student, but not so good for some others.”

Now, Principles of Biology is still taught in one big room, but the \$1 million investment the Division of Biology recently made in upgrading resources for the course is evident. Students have assigned class periods, which are a mix of lecture, computer work and discussion. Williams works with students in that class, and he teaches Modern Genetics and Biology of the Aging as well. The limericks — which are imaginatively if not expertly illustrated — along with songs he uses to demonstrate important points, have become staples of his teaching style.

“Students today are part of the TV generation and they’re used to (here he mimes clicking through channels with a remote control). I need to keep their attention, and I really enjoy it when my little technical productions help somebody ‘get it,’” Williams said.



Wendy Reeves, Ph.D., still recalls the impact of his unique teaching methods. Reeves, ’98 B.S. microbiology, had Williams as an advisor and was a student in his molecular biology class.

“He took a subject that could be very dry and technical and found a dozen ways to keep it interesting, and he taught in ways that made everybody understand the material,” Reeves said. “He could gauge when people were learning and when they weren’t, even in a big lecture class.”

Williams’ approach seems to be working. He was named the University Distinguished Teaching Scholars Chair (now the Coffman Chair for Distinguished Teaching Scholars) in 1999. He won the Presidential Award for Teaching Excellence in 1996 and the Conoco Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award in 1994. He has twice won the William L. Stamey Award for Teaching Excellence from the College of Arts and Sciences. Just this year he won one of the first Putting Students First Awards, offered by K-State’s Division of Institutional Advancement.

Williams is also in charge of undergraduate advising for the Division, overseeing the record keeping for about 650 biology

majors and personally advising about 150 students, a task he first assumed in 1978.

"I've had lots of good conversations with students over the years. I've found out a lot of good stuff about courses and faculty members all over campus. If you listen to faculty members, they're all very good teachers. If you listen to students, it's a much smaller, more select group!"

Former advisee Scott Rottinghaus, M.D., credits Williams with helping him choose his career path. Rottinghaus, '95 B.S. biology and B.A. modern languages, researches HIV vaccines and conducts molecular biology research.

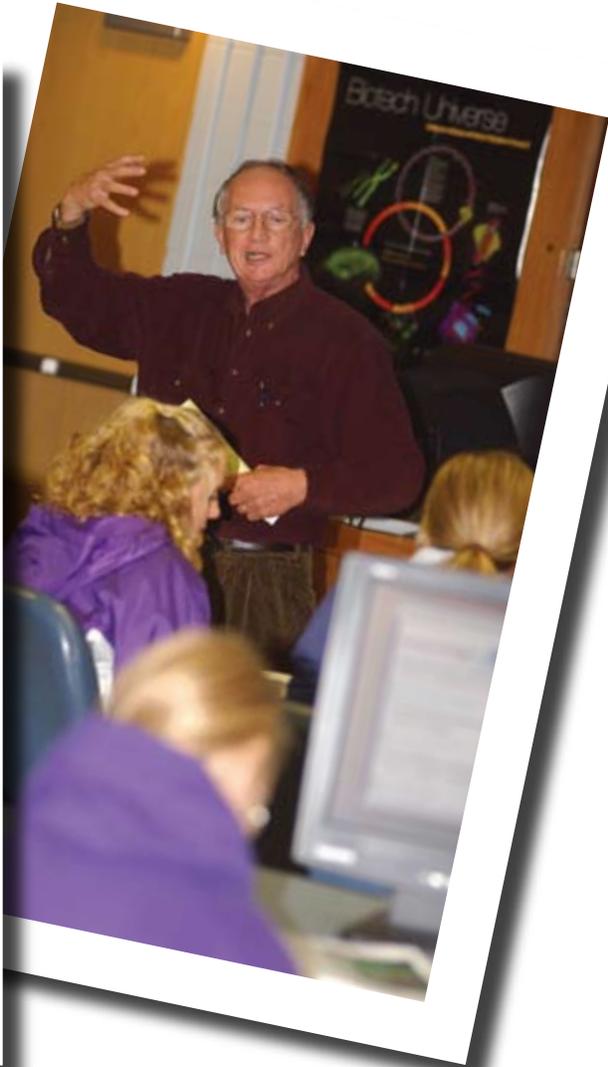
"I met Larry Williams at my orientation and had a great talk with him. I was very impressed," Rottinghaus said. "He was the best advisor imaginable. I haven't had such good advising before or since! He encouraged me to go work in Dick Consigli's [distinguished professor emeritus of biology] lab, for four years. That experience really inspired me to pursue my career in medical research."

Williams won the 2004 Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising. He gets right to the point when asked why he's stuck with advising for so long.

"I really get a rush when a student wins an award, or gets accepted into medical school or grad school. I feel as good about that as if it happened to me."

Williams, who has been married for 44 years to Ruth Williams and has a son and a daughter, will retire effective January 2008.

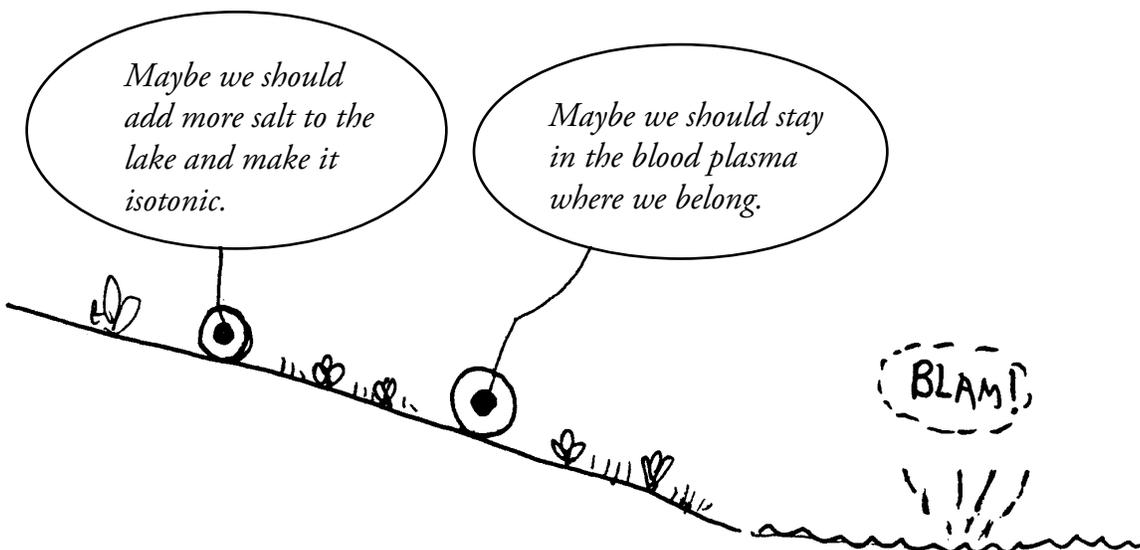
"He was just a magnificent advisor, an outstanding teacher and an all-around great person," Rottinghaus declared. "His retirement will be a great loss to K-State and to the Division of Biology."



An Osmosis Limerick

*A red blood cell with lifestyle bucolic
Said, "I'll swim in this lake hypotonic."*

*Net flow of water was in
Membrane stretched way too thin.
The explosion was classed subatomic.*



Suppose you have a younger sister and brother, and your brother's in college. Let's say you're a chemistry major, hoping to become a doctor. Your parents are farmers and sometimes things are tough, but they want opportunities for you that they never had. So they scrimped and they saved and they sent you off to college.

Sounds like a fairly typical K-State student's story, doesn't it?

Well, now suppose that your parents farm in Kenya, and they know nothing about K-State except what they read in an out-of-date college selection guide. Your

little brother studies electrical engineering in Russia. And you want to go to medical school at Johns Hopkins because you once read an inspirational book written by a doctor there.

Please meet junior Cecilia Ariga of Kisii, Kenya: honors student in chemistry, certified nurse aide, and lab assistant extraordinaire. And how she landed at K-State is quite a tale.

"My dad had a friend who had studied abroad briefly, and he talked a lot about schools in other countries," Ariga recalled. "He had a book about schools all over the world. I applied to more than 20 of them, and K-State replied right away."

Most of us are so accustomed to simply hopping on the Internet whenever we need to know something, and it's difficult to remember that this just isn't possible in many places.

"I couldn't do a lot of research about K-State because we had no free (public access) computers to browse with. The information I got in the packet from K-State was all I had," Ariga said. "I liked K-State the best because of the testimonials from students. And I really liked that K-State promises scholarships to students who do well. I knew that if I did well, I would have help paying the tuition."

Once she formally applied, K-State immediately sent Ariga the paperwork she needed to get a student visa, but it still took about a year to secure all the necessary permissions and documents. Ariga first arrived in Manhattan in January 2003 — for the so-called "spring" semester.

"You hear 'spring semester' and you think it will be warm!" Ariga laughed. "I didn't worry about a coat before I got here. One of the first things I did was buy some winter clothes."



Cecilia Ariga helping Don and Jane Good around the house

by Lisa Sisley '92

NO OBSTACLE TOO BIG:

International student undaunted by challenges

“As Good as Their Name”

Ariga took classes that semester and in the fall term. However, she couldn't afford to enroll for spring 2004, so she worked full time as a certified nurse aide at St. Joseph Village, a nursing home in Manhattan, to eventually earn enough for tuition. In May of that year, she met Jane Good, who was recuperating from a broken ankle at St. Joseph. Jane and her husband Don Good, former head of the Department of Animal Sciences and Industry, became quite taken with Ariga. When Jane, who has Parkinson's disease, left St. Joseph, the Goods made Ariga a proposition.

“I could tell she was a jewel,” Don Good said. “She needed a new place to stay because her roommate was graduating and she would have to move. We were afraid she'd return home to Kenya and not be able to come back. We offered her an apartment in our home, in exchange for some help around the house.”

“It didn't take her long to decide she'd like to be part of our home,” Jane Good added with a smile.

Don Good drives Ariga to campus on most days and she and Don grocery shop together. Ariga helps with laundry, housekeeping and some of the challenges Jane faces because of her health. When the Goods realized that Ariga still couldn't afford to enroll for the fall 2004 semester, they even assisted her financially. And thanks to Don's influence, the College of Agriculture's Livestock and Meat Industry Council contributes significantly to Ariga's tuition as well.

“Our son and daughter thought it was a wonderful idea, to help her out like this,” Don Good said. “Cecilia plans to go back to Kenya when she becomes a doctor. We wanted to help her with that goal.”

Of the Goods, Ariga has only one thing to say: “They are as good as their name!”

Excellence and Inspiration

Ariga has a 3.9 grade point average and now receives some of those scholarships that drew her to K-State in the first place. She continues to work the night shift every weekend at St. Joseph Village. She also works about 10 hours a week for the Department of Chemistry, mixing solutions for the chemistry lab classes. And those solutions have to be perfect, or the experiments are bound to fail.



“We're very picky about who we hire for this position,” Earline Dikeman, director of undergraduate laboratories, said. “This is the third semester we've had Cecilia, and she has never made a solution incorrectly. She's extremely conscientious.”

Ariga laughs when asked why she chose chemistry and the pre-med path. (Actually, she laughs a lot. The phrase “sunny disposition” could have been coined for her.)

“I never liked the sciences until my last year of high school. Then we got a new teacher, Susan Lukano, and I understood things so much better the way she taught!

She really made a difference in my life. She saw potential in us and she really inspired me.”

The idea to become a doctor was planted when Ariga read a book, “Think Big: Unleashing Your Potential for Excellence,” by Ben Carson, M.D., director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins.

“The book was about his life and how he overcame so many obstacles to become a doctor,” Ariga said. “I would love to meet him someday. I read it right after high school, and it really made me aspire to go to Johns Hopkins. Then I want to go back home and help people in Kenya.”

Eric Maatta, professor and head of the Department of Chemistry, is grateful that excellent students like Ariga can be assured of some financial support at K-State.

“Many alumni and friends of the Department of Chemistry also deserve credit for helping Cecilia to realize her dreams, since her success has been generously aided by their contributions to scholarships within the department,” Maatta said. “All of us in the department are grateful to our many friends for enabling us to support and attract such fine young scientists.”

Maatta foresees a wonderful future for Ariga.

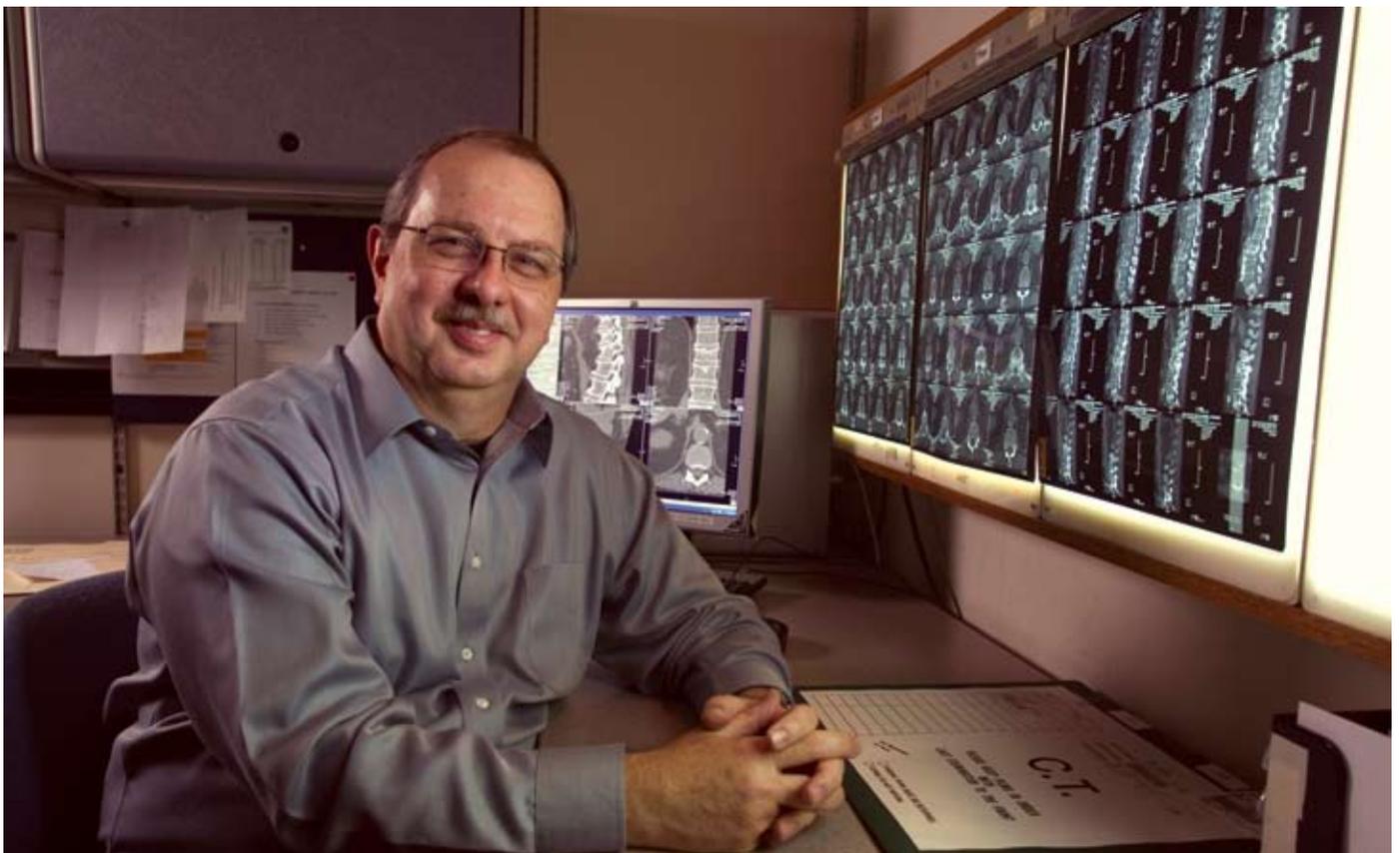
“Cecilia's remarkable journey from her parents' farm in Kenya to Kansas State is a testament to her intellect and her motivation,” Maatta said. “We are very proud to have her as a member of our department and are confident that great things lie ahead for her.”

If you'd like more information about how you can support scholarships for outstanding students, please contact Mike Harders, senior director of development for the College of Arts and Sciences, at 1-800-432-1578 or mikeh@found.ksu.edu.

LEADING the CAUSE

by Lisa Sisley '92

Topeka radiologist leads effort to develop more resources for pre-health Wildcats



R. Clay Harvey, M.D., B.S. '74 biology, looks right at you when he speaks, which he does eloquently and precisely. He has given a lot of thought to this, and he wants to be clear.

"How do you convince someone to do something altruistic? Many of us have the desire to help other people. If nothing else, it improves our own life by giving us a sense of satisfaction. But we can also improve the lives of others around us, and 'a rising tide raises all boats.'"

Harvey, a diagnostic radiologist in Topeka who also graduated from the University of Kansas School of Medicine, doesn't support 20 different K-State causes simply because it makes him feel good. He feels he owes a debt of gratitude to the university that prepared him for a profession that he loves. Three other family members earned their doctorates in biology from K-State as well.

His mother, Rosemary Boles Harvey, was a physician who worked in public health in Wichita. She graduated from K-State in 1945, and also did her medical training at KU. Harvey originally wanted to be a veterinarian, but eventually followed the family trend to biology and then medicine.

"Radiology has always been interesting to me. I'm visually and graphically oriented, and I enjoy making a diagnosis on a patient because it's like a puzzle," Harvey said. "You evaluate a number of symptoms, get additional information, and try to synthesize the results into a diagnosis."

He is intensely committed to the success of a new organization called CPR (Cats for Pre-health Resources), a group of K-State graduates and friends who are investing in



*Dr. Clay Harvey and Zachary Jepson,
2006 K-State biology graduate*

Harvey is confident that the many K-Staters in the medical field will answer the call to help.

"The majority of people I went to medical school with had gone to KU for their undergrad degrees, but there were some from K-State as well," Harvey noted. "There are actually a substantial number of graduates of Kansas State University in the medical field. It's my thought that they are a potential resource to the University and the students that may not have been fully explored yet."

Harvey has also established the Division of Biology University Distinguished Professors Scholarship to honor those professors in the Division of Biology who have had that honor bestowed upon them. The scholarship provides financial assistance to deserving undergraduate and graduate students.

"There were two reasons I established the biology scholarship. I wanted to help K-State in general, and I wanted to recognize the Division of Biology. Most of my instructors have retired now, but not all of them, and they deserve recognition. Biology is an excellent area of the University, in regard to the quality of instruction and the quality of work."

Harvey also supports the Konza Prairie, the Beach Museum, the University Gardens, McCain Auditorium, the volleyball team, and several other K-State causes.

"You don't have to do something huge. Two hundred and fifty dollars for educational programs could be very useful to multiple students. Making a huge difference doesn't require a huge dollar amount."

If you are interested in learning more about CPR or if you wish to invest in scholarships for Arts and Sciences students, please contact Sheila Walker, associate director of development, sheilaw@found.ksu.edu, or call (800) 432-1578.

"Making a huge difference doesn't require a huge dollar amount."

the education of the 1,500 pre-health students at K-State. CPR aims to provide more and better study resources for these students, and to connect them with K-Staters who are already succeeding in the medical field.

"About 12% of K-State students are in the pre-health majors — future physicians, nurses, optometrists, dentists and physical therapists. They have limited special materials to help them study for the MCAT (Medical College Admission Test) and other tests," Harvey said. "They also need more opportunities for interaction with people in their field because they need to understand what they're getting into. Even though my mother was a physician, I didn't have a clue what I was getting into!"

THE HUGGINS FACTOR

Past basketball greats reflect upon new era for K-State hoops

by Mark Janssen '72

Kansas State basketball ...No. 1 in the nation!

No, not Duke. Nope, not the Tar Heels. The Kansas Jayhawks? No sir-ee.

It's the Huggins factor — the coach Bob Huggins influence that has this year's early signing period of Wildcat basketball recruits ranked No. 1 in the nation by Rivals.com and Scout.com.

It's Huggins, and "Hugs" alone, that has the 13,500-seat Bramlage Coliseum sold out on a season-ticket basis for the 2006-2007 Wildcat basketball year. That's roughly 7,000 season tickets more than recent seasons just because of one man: coach Bob Huggins.

Not even the staunchest Wildcat fan — Mr. Wildcat,

himself — believed that Huggins would mean this much, this fast after his hiring last March 23.

"I thought we would eventually get to sales like this because I know our basketball fans have been starved for winning basketball," said Ernie Barrett, '51 B.S. physical education (now kinesiology), '56 M.S. mass communications, a Wildcat All-American in 1951 and now the athletic department's director of development. "But I'm very surprised that it happened this first year. I really thought it would take a year of fans wondering what this guy was all about, but our fans jumped on the bandwagon early, which is just great."

Jack Parr, '58 B.S. physical sciences and an All-American for the Wildcats in 1957 and 1958, added, "Coach Huggins has really added a shot of motivation and adrenalin to the campus and the state. Players, and especially good players, really respond to that enthusiasm. For those who remember Ahearn (Field House), you know what I mean."

The fans who helped kick-start Huggins-mania will be treated this season to the talents of Bill Walker, and next year thrilled with the exploits of Michael Beasley. Rivals.com has Beasley ranked as the No. 1 prep player and Walker No. 6; Scout.com ranks Beasley No. 5 and Walker No. 8.

Those rankings aren't for the Sunflower State, or even the Midwest, but for the whole dang country!

It was the expectation of Huggins signing such high-profile recruits that turned Aggieville into Huggieville only hours after his hiring at K-State eight months ago. Normally dressed in black, and with a low Johnny Cash-like voice, since his opening press conference Huggins has asked the question: Why can't K-State be No. 1?

"I don't like to lose," the 53-year-old Wildcat coach said. "My goal is to win them all. I'm not a very happy person when I lose."

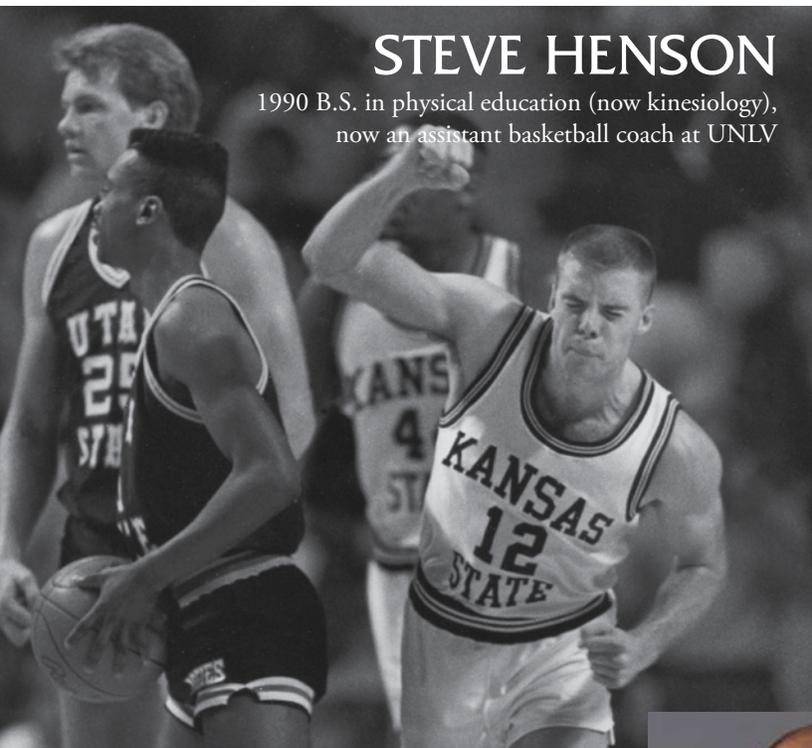
K-State has made a habit of losing in recent years. No K-State team has won more than 19 games since 1998-1999; the Wildcats' last trip into NCAA postseason play was 1995-1996; and the Purple and White's last NCAA tournament victory was 19 seasons ago — 1987-1988 — when Mitch Richmond and Steve Henson led the Wildcats to the Elite Eight in Pontiac, Mich.

"I'm still passionate about Kansas State," said Henson, '90 B.S. physical education (now kinesiology), who is now an assistant coach at UNLV under former Wildcat head coaching legend Lon Kruger. "It's hurt not to see the program win in recent years. I'm still very proud to be a Wildcat, and I'm pulling for coach Huggins to get the school back into the tournament."

And no, Henson is not surprised at all about the immediate Huggins factor.

STEVE HENSON

1990 B.S. in physical education (now kinesiology),
now an assistant basketball coach at UNLV



"As a coach, it was important to understand some of the bio-mechanics of the sport I was playing, and would later coach. That's true whether it was free-throw shooting, or the intricacies of high jumping. As a coach today, we have people in charge of those areas, but I think it's very beneficial that I took the classes that I did for my own understanding."

JACK PARR

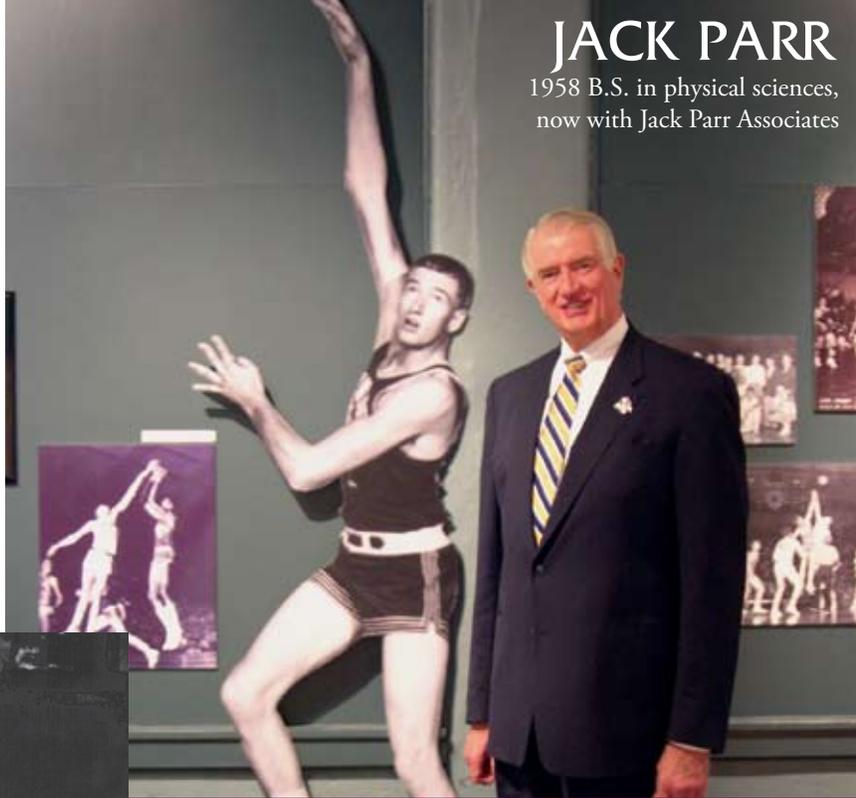
1958 B.S. in physical sciences,
now with Jack Parr Associates

“He’s had success and knows how to win,” Henson said of Huggins, who has 567 wins, 15 NCAA appearances, 3 Elite Eight showings, 1 Final Four and 12 NBA draft picks on his resume.

“I honestly don’t know too much about coach Huggins, but the man apparently knows how to produce a winner, and people love a winner,” said Parr, who now operates Jack Parr Associates in Salina, Kan.

It’s been two decades since Wildcat fans have shown real love for a K-State men’s basketball team. As for winning, the last championship banner that sways in the Bramlage rafters is from the 1976-1977 season, when talents like Mike Evans and Curtis Redding were roaming the court.

Those were the Ahearn Field House days with a floor-rattling atmosphere, one that members of the Wildcat Nation are hoping to create again in Bramlage Coliseum.



“My business of training and developing skills in relating to others has gone into 46 states and 14 countries. I will always remember Dr. Norma Bunton’s oral communication classes. She was always so encouraging, and some of the presentations I’m doing now in front of people around the world all started at Kansas State.”



“Those mass communications classes helped teach me how to write and get a point across in a variety of ways, which I still use today in closing (fund raising) deals.”

“What a thrill it was to watch a game in Ahearn,” reflected Henson, a native of McPherson, Kan. “I remember sneaking in there when I was a high school kid, and then running out on the court for the first time as a freshman was such a thrill.”

While Henson played in the last game in Ahearn on Nov. 26, 1988, against Missouri, it was Barrett who played in the first game in the storied on-campus limestone arena on Dec. 9, 1950, against Utah State.

“I’ve been embarrassed by our crowds in recent years,” said Barrett, who was a No. 1 draft pick of the Boston Celtics after the Wildcats placed second in the NCAA Final Four event in 1951. “We have a great tradition at Kansas State, and I’m so excited that coach Huggins is going to give us an atmosphere in Bramlage Coliseum that will rival what we had in Ahearn.”

Parr played on Wildcat teams from 1955-1956 to 1957-1958, and the Wildcats reached the Final Four and were ranked No. 3 in the nation in his senior season.



ERNIE BARRETT

1951 B.S. in physical education (now kinesiology), 1956 M.S. in mass communications, now K-State director of athletic development

“The best way to explain it was that Ahearn just had an unnerving effect on opposing players,” said Parr. “Coach Huggins seems to have fans excited to the point of maybe having that atmosphere again.”

Especially when those visiting players are opposed by the likes of Beasley and Walker.

“Past coaches have always told me what a tough place Kansas State is to recruit to, but I’ve always thought that was nonsense,” Barrett said. “Coach Huggins has gone out and sold himself and our school.

“I’ve heard players ask, ‘Where’s Manhattan?’ and he says, ‘Hey, I didn’t know where it was, either, but it’s a great place and we can win here.’

“It’s not the Big Apple,” Barrett said, “but it’s the Little Apple, and he’s getting the message out to those kids that coach Huggins is here, and we’re going to get this thing turned around.”

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323 Poyntz Avenue, Suite 202, Manhattan, KS
785.587.8185 • www.newbostoncreative.com

Lisa Sisley, '92 English
lisa@newbostoncreative.com

Kristin Brighton, '97 JMC & English, '99 English
kristin@newbostoncreative.com

Jami Weisbender, '01 English & Modern Languages
jami@newbostoncreative.com

Samantha Howard, '05 Art
sam@newbostoncreative.com

Photos by
Dan Donnert, '84 JMC, K-State Photo Services
John LaBarge, J&C Imaging



WANTED: WANDERING WILDCATS

You've heard of the Roaming Gnome. Now you can compete for the title of Wandering Wildcat! Take a good photo of yourself (the higher the resolution, the better) wearing your K-State purple while on your travels to cool places around the nation and the world. E-mail us the photo, along with details — your name, year of graduation and major; where you are; when you went there; who's with you — and maybe your next destination will be a feature in Connections! Send your entry to asconnec@ksu.edu.



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College of Arts & Sciences
113 Eisenhower Hall
Manhattan, KS 66502-1005

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