



**BUFFALO STATE**  
The State University of New York

# The Graduate School Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

FALL 2013

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The GSA embarks on their second year.
- New graduate programs!
- 2013-2014 will be...the Year of the Teacher
- Dr. Howard Cohen serves as interim president.

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## Graduate Student Association

The 2012-2013 academic year was both productive and memorable for graduate students. The formal establishment of the Graduate Student Association occurred during the spring 2012 semester. Four exceptional students were chosen, by their peers, to serve as the first executive board under the leadership of administrative liaison, Dr. Kevin Railey, Dean of the Graduate School. The team spent the summer months spreading the word about the GSA, its new role on campus, and the need for motivated student senators to serve the graduate student body. Early in the fall semester eight students were then elected as the first slate of student senators. During this election, history was made: Buffalo State be-

came the first comprehensive SUNY institution to house a stand-alone graduate student association. 76% of the voting students also approved a manda-



**2012-2013 GSA Executive Board with administrative liaison, Dr. Kevin Railey.**

tory fee of \$2.22 per credit hour. The budget from these fees assists graduate students with the expenses of conducting research, entering professional organiza-

tions, and attending conferences. Thanks to the assistance of the Student Accounts and Finance and Management teams a financial accounting system, with checks and balances, has been established to allow the GSA to operate smoothly and efficiently.

Higher Education student, President Thomas Waters, will lead the second class of executive board members. These students, along with the new senators, are charged with the continued development of the GSA on Buffalo State's campus.

Elections for the 2013-2104 student senators took place early in the fall 2013 semester. For more information about the GSA, please email:

[gradstudentassoc@buffalostate.edu](mailto:gradstudentassoc@buffalostate.edu)

## Great Lakes Ecosystem Science, M.A. & M.S.

The Great Lakes Center has received approval of two new master's degree programs. The master of arts in Great Lakes Ecosystem Science prepares graduates for research positions or academic careers in environmental science. The master of science program will be a professional science master's degree, designed to prepare its graduates for management and leadership

positions in these areas. Led by the director of the GLC, Dr. Alexander Karatayev, and program coordinator, Dr. Kelly Frothingham, the programs offer an interdisciplinary approach so students can choose electives based on areas of specialization.

The programs have begun accepting applications and will offer admission during fall, spring, and summer terms.



Welcome all to the first SUNY Buffalo State Graduate School newsletter!



## Message from Dean Kevin Railey

As you will find as you read through these short articles, our students and faculty are active and passionate about their pursuits and studies. Whether participating in international travel through the School of Education, conducting and presenting their research, or facilitating workshops for the Western New York Economic Development Council, Buffalo State graduate students are pushing themselves to learn as much as they can and to apply their learning in productive and rewarding ways. Our students are also finding more ways to con-

nect with each other through the new Graduate Student Association—an organization focused on supporting graduate student success. As demonstrated by our new degree programs in Ecosystem Science and the organizing of international ventures, our faculty members are committed to mentoring students and fully enjoy working side-by-side with their students in the pursuit of education and career. Because of the learning environment created by our faculty, our students can excel in their field after graduation. Our focus here at

Buffalo State's Graduate School is applied learning, and our students get the benefit of interacting closely with exceptional scholars who are connected to pursuits outside of academia.

So, again, welcome to our first newsletter. Welcome, too, to the Graduate School—where we are focused on transformational and high quality learning experiences.

## GRADUATE FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Dr. Hibajene Shandomo Associate Professor of Elementary Education & Reading



The 2013 student group giving gifts to the Chikumbuso Orphanage.

In collaboration with the Professional Development School Consortium, the Elementary Education & Reading Department has partnered with the University of Zambia to provide graduate students with the unique opportunity to conduct active research in Lusaka, Zambia.

Dr. Hibajene Shandomo was at the forefront of this collaborative project. In June, she accompanied her second group of students to Zambia where they enjoyed a cross-cultural experience and the opportunity to conduct research and collect data for their master's projects. Throughout the immersive initiative, students expanded their teaching repertoire while simultaneously gaining invaluable cul-

tural insights that will strengthen them as teachers and researchers. Thank you, Dr. Shandomo for all your efforts to assist graduate students and expand their learning opportunities. We wish you all the best in Zambia during the summer of 2014.

## A Celebration of SUNY Graduate Student Research

In February of 2013, graduate students gathered at the Legislative Office Building in Albany to present their unique research at the *Boosting the Power of SUNY and CUNY: A Celebration of Graduate Research*. Two students accompanied Dr. Kevin Railey to represent the exceptional research taking place at Buffalo State. Meghan Jensen, from the Biology department, discussed her research on the eastern hellbender, North

America's only giant salamander. Meghan's research examined the conservation efforts being made to assist in the preservation of hellbenders in and around Western New York. Tara Lyons, a student in the Museum Studies program, shared the reciprocal relationship museums and community members have with one another. Her research focused primarily on how programming for refugees encour-

ages the expansion of museum communities.



Meghan Jensen

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: ROY W. BAKOS

### Master of Arts in English

The Graduate School prides itself on attracting diverse, intelligent, engaged, non-traditional students into its graduate programs. Roy Bakos is one of those students. Having completed his undergraduate degree in English at Buffalo State and taking nearly fourteen years to explore various career options, Roy entered the M.A. in English program during the fall of 2011. He has enjoyed every moment.

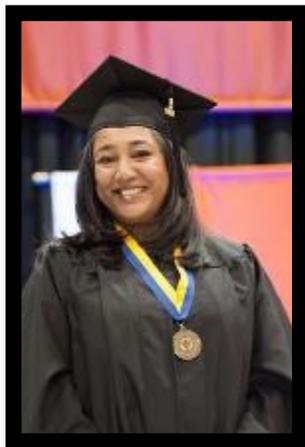
He credits the faculty of the English

department for providing an amazing and demanding experience. While reinforcing Roy's notions about the importance of critical thought, our faculty have encouraged him to examine and re-examine literature to fully develop himself as a scholar. Roy has presented his research on Postmodernism at multiple conferences and has become a part of the larger academic community. In an effort to support his fellow graduate students, Roy served as the student senator for the School of Arts &

Humanities on the Graduate Student Association. Roy plans to complete his thesis for December 2013 degree conferral and hopes to pursue a career as an English teacher at a community college.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Ismet Mamnoon, M.S. Creative Studies



On May 18th, all eyes were on Ismet Mamnoon during her commencement address. Anyone who heard her proclamation of hope, inspiration, and gratitude can certainly understand why she is a leader among her peers. The winner of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence as well as the recipient of the President's Medal for Outstanding Graduate Student, Ms. Mamnoon

provided her peers with an eloquent message.

Ismet completed her master of science degree in creative studies in May 2013 and has been honing her creative skills in an array of projects. She has worked as a facilitator for the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council, cofounded Camp UpRising (Beyond Youth Program), served on the Buffalo State Community

Task Force, and was a presenter at both the Anne Frank Project and the Student Research and Creativity Celebration. She has travelled internationally to provide training and to integrate creativity into curriculum design in the United Arab Emirates. She has become a highly sought-after professional in the field of creativity, and the Graduate School is proud to call her an alum.

## Graduation vs. Commencement

Each academic year, students have the opportunity to apply for graduation or degree conferral at four different times—December, January, May, and August. Applying for graduation means that you are completing the last requirements for your program and may be eligible for your degree to be conferred. Your application flags the attention of the Graduate School

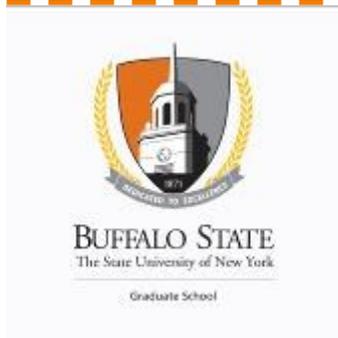
staff to review your student record and consult with your academic department. Based on the evaluation of your record, your degree may be posted for the semester of application. All students must apply for their record to be reviewed.

Commencement is the ceremony that takes place in May of each year. Students who have graduated

in December or January or plan to graduate in May or August may participate in this ceremony as a ritual and celebration of completion. Students must have applied for graduation to obtain tickets for this ceremony.



Graduate students are hooded during the Commencement ceremony. The color of the hood indicates the degree that is awarded.



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**Because of Buffalo State...**

## Important Dates

September 27th	Graduate School Meeting Butler 210   3:00—5:00 p.m.
October 1st	Graduation Applications for December 2013 Due
October 10th	Graduate Advisory Council Cleveland 418   12:15—1:30 p.m.
October 14th	Graduate Student Association Meeting Butler Library 210   6:30 p.m.
October 30th	Paul Bulger Lecture: José Antonio Bowen Rockwell Hall Performing Arts Center   4:30 p.m.
November 1st	Deadline for Fall 2013 Course Withdrawal Deadline for Removal of Incomplete Grades (Spring 2013 & Summer 2013)
November 4th	Graduate Student Association Meeting Butler Library 210   6:30 p.m.
November 6th	Registration for Spring 2014 Begins
November 14th	Graduate Advisory Council Cleveland 418   12:15—1:30 p.m.
December 12th	Last Day of the Fall 2013 Semester

# A New Year for SUNY Buffalo State



As Buffalo State turns its attention away from its official celebration of “The Year of the City” to the celebration of “The Year of the Teacher,” it clings warmly to the memory of Dr. Aaron Podolefsky. Our eighth president, Dr. Podolefsky left an indelible mark on our campus as he looked to inspire us to reach into a bright future. The entire Buffalo State community will think of him fondly as we embrace new leadership roles, further our work in

various community settings, and extend our impact to a wide array of students.

The Year of the Teacher celebration builds off Buffalo State’s legacy as a pre-eminent teacher preparation institution and extends to all the ways our professors and students engage with each other and our community. We will celebrate all the various ways people learn together to foster individual and communal success. Please come and join us at any of the events that will part of the “The Year of the Teacher.”

The Buffalo State community also wishes to welcome our new teacher and leader: Interim President Howard Cohen. Dr. Cohen will serve as president for the

2013-2014 academic year. He eagerly embraces his role in this time of transition and has already begun to inspire the campus to move forward. In his address to the campus he identified six major focal points for this year.

- 1) Enrollment Growth
- 2) Strategic Planning
- 3) Academic Program Array & Institutional Sustainability
- 4) All Funds Budgeting
- 5) Economic Development
- 6) Facilities Planning for the Southwest Corner of Campus

**The Graduate School  
welcomes Dr. Cohen and  
looks forward to the year  
ahead.**

**Year of the Teacher**