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INSIDE ESF

*The magazine of the SUNY
College of Environmental Science and Forestry*





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SUNY-ESF
1 Forestry Drive
Syracuse, NY 13210-2778
www.esf.edu

President:
Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr.

Vice President for Administration:
Connie S. Webb

Editor:
Jeri Lynn Smith
Director of News and Publications
jls@esf.edu

Graphic Designer:
Wendy P. Osborne
News and Publications

Photo Credits:
Page 4 (balloons) by Claire B. Dunn; page 5 (Bosch) by Cindy Bell; cover photo and all photos on page 15 by Dave Revette. All other photos by Jerry Klineberg.

Additional Assistance:
Kathleen A. Ciereck
Cynthia A. Gamage

Office of News & Publications
122 Bray Hall
315-470-6644
www.esf.edu/newspubs

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ESF President Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr.

The State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry offers a diverse range of accredited programs and degree options in chemistry, construction management and wood products engineering, environmental and forest biology, environmental resources and forest engineering, environmental studies, forest resources management, forest technology, landscape architecture, and paper science and engineering.

The College's mission is to be a world leader in instruction, research, and public service related to: understanding the structure and function of the world's ecosystems; developing, managing,

and using renewable natural resources; improving outdoor environments ranging from wilderness, to managed forests, to urban landscapes; and maintaining and enhancing biological diversity, environmental quality, and resource options. As such, ESF has maintained its unique status within SUNY's 64-campus system as one of only five specialized colleges and one of only eight doctoral-granting institutions.

ESF takes affirmative action to provide equal opportunity for all people and to build a campus community that reflects a wealth of diversity.

Alpha and Omega

by Susan H. Sanford



Susan H. Sanford

November 3, 2000, marked both a beginning and an end for me. For most of the several hundred people who gathered in Hendricks Memorial Chapel that day for the inauguration of our new college president, the joyous occasion marked the beginning of a new era: Dr. Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr.'s stewardship of one of the finest colleges in the land.

But for me and several others in attendance that day, the ceremonial installation of our third president also marked the completion of a long and intense process. I was honored to be one of the 15 people invited to sit on the search committee that helped find our new leader.

Curt Bauer, chair of the ESF Board of Trustees, asked me to be a part of that committee about two years ago, shortly after Dr. Ross S. Whaley announced he was stepping aside. My initial reaction to Ross' announcement was one of dismay. I had recently assumed the position of director of admissions and had come to rely on his steady, thoughtful leadership as the college prepared to respond to new enrollment challenges. But when Curt offered me a chance to participate in the selection process, I realized I had a rare chance to represent my colleagues and help mold the future of ESF. I accepted his invitation to be a part of this adventure.

The search committee quickly coalesced into a strong working group. At every step of the yearlong process, from the choice of the executive search firm to our last meeting where we made our selection from among the final candidates, our work centered on finding the person who best fit our vision of ESF's new president.

From the outset, we kept open the possibility that this person could come from almost any background: public or private sector, higher education, the corporate world, a nongovernmental organization, etc. We envisioned a team builder and role model. Our ideal president would be approachable, accessible, adaptable, balanced and bright.

We were looking for a responsible person with vision, solid abilities in fund raising and development, and strong administrative and budget experience. We wanted someone experienced

with entrepreneurship and technology transfer. We wanted someone who was politically astute, appreciative of scholarship and concerned about campus diversity.

It was quite a list. As I look back on that list now, I'm surprised we did not conclude with, "must be able to walk on water."

My initial trepidation at the responsibility of representing such a large and diverse ESF constituency eased as the search process played out. Ultimately, the extremely strong support that my staff colleagues expressed for Dr. Murphy's candidacy reflected their satisfaction that the Presidential Search Committee and, I hope, my representation had served their interests well.

In the months since his arrival on campus, Neil Murphy has demonstrated that he has heard our messages, taken them to heart, and formed a plan to address the challenges ESF must meet in the future. Even as he has taken on the transition from leadership in the corporate world to that of higher education, as practiced in the largest, most complex university system in the United States, he has:

- initiated an extensive visibility campaign for the college;
- begun a strategic planning effort; and
- organized three cross-campus, collaborative teams to focus on the challenges facing ESF in the near future.

These near-term challenges were identified by the campus community during the presidential search. The efforts center on boosting institutional advancement, increasing student enrollment, and enriching our sponsored research programs.

These accomplishments have been remarkable. Even more so, Neil has been able to make strong personal connections with many people associated with ESF, especially the students. One of my esteemed colleagues likened Neil's influence as president to that of a pebble dropped in a pond causing ripples to extend over the whole surface even though it only came in direct contact with a small area.

On his inauguration day, Neil talked about ESF's future, its mission, and the promise it holds. He sent ripples through that audience in Hendricks, thanking us, inspiring us and urging us on.

Our work in the search process was over. But the next phase of ESF's future had just begun.

Sanford, director of undergraduate admissions since 1997, joined the college staff in 1985.

INAUGURATION UPDATE



Physical Plant staffers Robert McDonald, Paul Brown, Jayne Fust, Christine Langlois, Michael Rafferty and George Quinn deliver some balloons for the celebration.

Our Inauguration Update section this issue features brief anecdotes captured at the variety of inaugural activities that took place November 3, 2000.

Consistent Message

The new president's 24-year-old son heard a familiar message when he sat with his mother and three sisters, listening to the inaugural address. The president called for an emphasis on teaching personal accountability, sustainability and critical thinking.

"It was kind of what he preached to all four of us," said Michael Murphy, a financial analyst with M&T Bank. Michael Murphy's sisters — Tracy, Meghan and Maureen round out the foursome. "He was

more interested in the process of thinking than in the specific knowledge that we got.

"He's always been extremely supportive of all of our endeavors," Michael Murphy said.

Family Values

Brenda Geloff and James McGuiness served as delegates representing their alma mater, SUNY College at Fredonia. The husband and wife couple, residents of DeWitt in the Syracuse suburbs, both earned bachelor's degrees from Fredonia in 1980 and have maintained contacts at the college since.

And when Fredonia called, they were happy to comply.

"We're both products of the SUNY system," said Geloff, who earned a master's

degree from SUNY Cortland and her physician's assistant certification from Albany Medical College following her graduation from Fredonia. McGuiness has a master's degree from SUNY Oswego.

"We're proud to represent Fredonia at this inauguration. We know the value of a SUNY education — it's a great system."

Perfect Attendance

Rod Cochran, assistant to the president and professor emeritus, and his wife Sidney were delighted to attend the inauguration festivities.

"I thought I should come today," said Sidney. "I was here for Dr. Whaley's inauguration, of course. And, I was at Dr. Palmer's.

"So, I've got to keep my record intact."



Murphy family siblings Michael and Tracy.



Hendricks Chapel, site of the inauguration.



Murphy gets a little help from Mireya Porter, who assisted in designing the new president's academic regalia.

INAUGURATION UPDATE

By The Dawn's Early Light

Representatives from many campus offices arrived at work November 3 to find their telephone voice mail lights blinking.

The messages were from Connie S. Webb, vice president for administration, whose office coordinated plans for the presidential inauguration. Webb was confirming last-minute arrangements for the day's activities.

According to the voice mail's time stamp, the messages all were left between 4:10 and 4:30 a.m.



Undergraduate Student Association
President Roanne Bosch

"I couldn't believe it," laughed Elaine R. Irvin, director of personnel and affirmative action. "She's an early riser, but I thought this was pushing it."

It's Neil...

The chair of ESF's Faculty of Environmental and Forest Biology joined the festivities outside the reception tent on the quad. Neil H. Ringler is one of the few people on campus with the same first name as the president.

Ringler contemplated a recent phone call from the new boss. "The phone rang the other day," he said. "I picked it up. A voice said, 'Neil?' I said, 'Yeah.' He said, 'Neil.' I

said, 'What?' He said, 'Neil.' I said, 'Yes. Who's this?' He said, 'Neil.' I said, 'What?' We went through this about five times. It was sort of a disconnect. There are very few Neils around."

Spelling Lesson

Inaugural speaker Roanne Bosch, senior environmental studies major from South Wales, N.Y., and president of the Undergraduate Student Association, offered up a formula for success for President Murphy during her presentation on behalf of students.



The reception tent on the ESF Quad.

"Our formula is simple," Bosch said. "It involves only three letters and those letters are E-S-F."

"In our formula, the E stands for energy. Students here expect an active leader, one who is willing to take on the challenges that present themselves to a college like ESF. We are rarely content to just sit around but, instead, are driven to go out and do something...an energetic president inspires others to go out and work for a better community.

"S is for sincerity. We expect a president who is sincere in the desire to involve students. We want a president who knows what our values are and who is earnest in considering our ideals and beliefs.

"Finally, our F is for familiarity. We want a president we are not surprised to see around campus. We also want to be familiar to [our president] so that when he talks about 'ESF students,' he is talking about us."

The More Things Change...

Even while he was assembling with the inauguration dais party in the basement of Hendricks Chapel, former President Ross S. Whaley was on his way to somewhere else — and cutting his commitments close.



Former ESF President Ross S. Whaley

"I'm so excited for the institution," he said. "I think we have just the right person for the job [of president]."

"So if you see me sneaking out of the ceremony, it's NOT because I'm mad," he explained. "It's because I have to be on a 12:30 flight to Michigan!" Whaley was headed to Grand Rapids for a meeting of the board of directors for the Ausable Institute of Environmental Studies.

Job Well Done

Several students who gathered around a reception table in the expansive, white tent said they attended the festivities because

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INAUGURATION UPDATE

they had met Murphy and like his open, accessible style. Julie Purdy '01 met him on a leadership retreat. Kate Howles '01 sees him frequently in Bray Hall.

"I think it's unusual at other campuses for students to see the college president so much, but not here. President Murphy's great about it. President Whaley was the same way," said Shannon T. Kress '01. Kress had just shed the academic robe she wore as a student marshal during the installation ceremony. It was the first time she had played such a role.

She glanced in Murphy's direction. "Next time, please, a bigger tree."

A Word from Our Sponsor

State University of New York Trustee Aminy I. Audi of Manlius, N.Y., conducted the installation ceremony that saw Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr. formally installed as ESF's third president.

Audi said Murphy's inauguration comes "at a pivotal moment for State University and the college."

But, she stated, "The College of Environmental Science and Forestry is extremely

"I am president of Stearns & Wheler," Burkly reminded the audience, "one of O'Brien and Gere's competitors." Before joining ESF as chief executive last May, Neil Murphy led the regional environmental consulting firm.

"Last week I was pleased to announce to my board that we've had the best six months in history."

Is There a Doctor in the House?

Every time a speaker mentioned "Dr. Murphy" during the 90-minute ceremony, a member of the audience looked up, out



ESF College Foundation
President Marion Fish



SUNY trustees Edward Nelson and Christopher Holland, and ESF trustee Thomas Burkly look on while SUNY trustee Aminy Audi adorns President Murphy with the college medallion.

Wanted: Bigger Trees

Marion Fish, the new president of the ESF College Foundation, Inc., met Neil Murphy for the first time during the summer of 1999. Although their encounter was somewhat forestry related, it had nothing to do with ESF, she told the inaugural assembly. Fish and her family were visiting friends on the west side of Skaneateles Lake. A tree on a neighboring property was weakened by a storm. It toppled over, landing on the Fishes' Dodge Caravan. The tree was on property owned by Neil and Joanne Murphy.

"Neil couldn't have been nicer about it," Fish said. "It was a very tiny tree and a very horrible car."

fortunate to have Neil Murphy at the helm. Along with his vision and proven leadership, Dr. Murphy brings to ESF a sense of commitment and pride that will inspire continued success for all who are associated with this fine campus."

Friendly Rivalry

ESF Board of Trustees Vice Chair Thomas C. Burkly stood in for Chair Curtis H. Bauer '50 during the installation and was an able performer. Bauer was home recovering from a minor illness.

Burkly said he was glad to have the opportunity to speak at Neil Murphy's inauguration as ESF president.

of habit. It was Dr. Francis Murphy, the new president's brother, who is the school superintendent in Rome, N.Y. Their father, Cornelius B. Sr., also held the title after earning his doctorate in chemistry. Having three Dr. Murphys in the family occasionally led to some confusion. When the Murphy brothers were young adults, their sister Kathy recalled, the siblings gathered one year at their parents' home during the Christmas holidays. "Somebody called on the phone and asked for Dr. Murphy," Kathy Murphy said. "I told him he had the wrong number and hung up. I thought he wanted a REAL doctor."

"The guy called back," said Fran Murphy, picking up the tale. "He asked for Dr. Murphy again. My sister said, 'Which one?'"

The guy said, 'Dr. Cornelius B. Murphy.' My sister said, 'Which one?'"

The caller finally got through to Dr. Murphy Sr., who was the first person in his family to continue his education beyond sixth grade.

"Neil is a lot like my dad," Fran Murphy said. "Despite being an eminent scientist, my father always seemed surprised that anybody noticed him. Neil is exactly who he appears to be and that's very rare."



The new president is flanked by his brother, Dr. Francis Murphy, and his sister, Kathy Murphy, during the reception on the ESF quad.

A Celebration of Academic Life

Inauguration Day at ESF not only feted the installation of Dr. Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr. as president. It celebrated a variety of aspects of academic life central to the core of the institution.

Beginning at 1:30 p.m., inauguration visitors could choose to attend one of two presentations featured in "A Celebration of Academic Life."

In the first, Dr. Betty Bernice Faust, the 2000 William J. Donlon Visiting Scholar, introduced attendees to "Indigenous Knowledge: Maya Environmental Successes and Failures." Faust is known internationally for her work on the interaction of the Maya in the Yucatan with their environment.

Faust, with CINVESTAV in Merida, Mexico, is among a team of researchers currently exploring local effects of global warming and Maya cultural knowledge about climate shifts and extreme climate events.

The afternoon's second feature highlighted ESF's new learning community in a presentation by Dr. Robert H. Frey, dean of instruction and graduate studies; Julie L. Rawls, director of student activities;



Robert M. and Olive Silverstein

and more than a dozen undergraduates participating in the innovative learning-living arrangement.

The learning community blends classroom and residence hall activities to help students grow professionally and personally in addition to academically.

The day's final event, "A Celebration of Success," turned the spotlight on ESF Professor Emeritus Robert M. Silverstein, who was elected to the prestigious National Academy of Sciences last fall.



Betty Bernice Faust

Silverstein's contributions to chemistry, and particularly to the founding of the discipline of chemical ecology (with ESF collaborator John B. Simeone), were enumerated and celebrated by a series of former students and colleagues. Silverstein was joined on the stage by his wife, Olive.

The event, which included some funny and some touching anecdotes on Silverstein's work, was capped by a reception for family, friends and colleagues.

THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF CORNELIUS B. MURPHY, JR.

*The Responsibility of
Higher Education in the
Twenty-first Century*



*Old Friends,
New Beginnings*

I am blessed to have the opportunity to stand before you today. This is a very special responsibility that you extend to me: working with you to forge a sustainable future for a unique institution of higher education. Before I begin my remarks, I want to thank all of you for celebrating this singular opportunity for me and, I hope, for ESF.

I thank my family for being here with me today: my wife, Joanne; my children, Tracy, Meghan, Michael and Maureen; my brother, Fran, and sister, Kathy. I would also like to thank the spouses in attendance. They have provided me love and strength. And I can't forget my parents, they provided me values, a sense of person and their love.

I want to thank my colleagues here at ESF for accepting me — my strengths, as well as my weaknesses. I have to recognize Provost Bill Tully, Vice President Connie Webb, Vice President Jim Heffernan and the most awesome faculty and staff you could find anywhere.

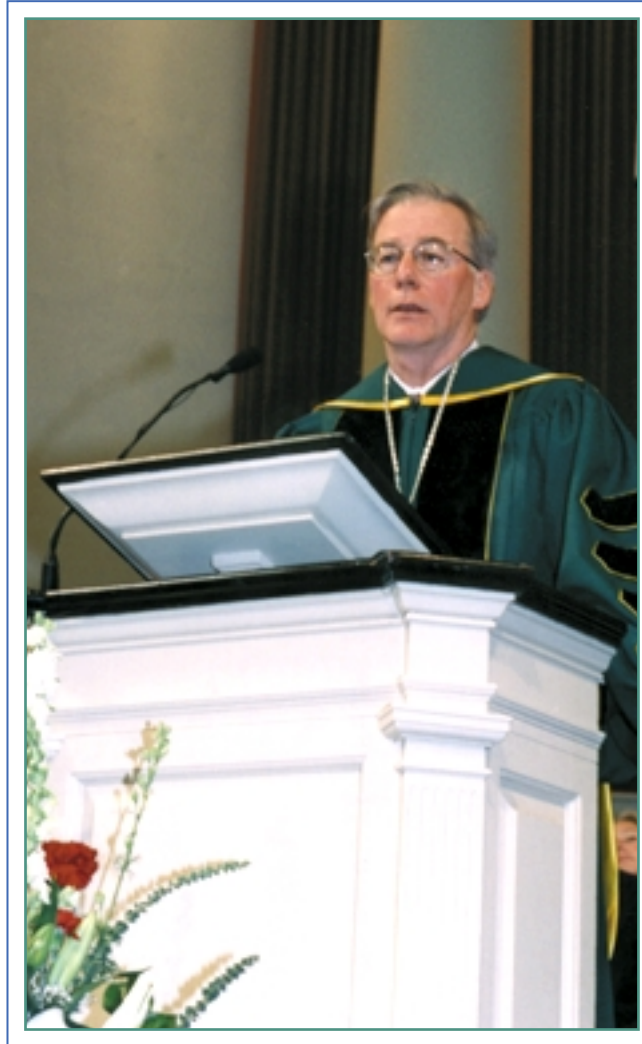
I want to thank my colleagues from O'Brien & Gere who put up with me and helped me grow over nearly 30 years.

I want to thank St. Michael's College, Syracuse University and their representatives here today for providing me with the foundation to do this job.

I want to thank representatives of the political community for their continued support for the college and me, and I would like to recognize:

Senator Nancy Lorraine Hoffmann for her support of the Tuition Assistance Program and the Higher Education Opportunity Program.

State Assemblywoman Joan Christensen for her support of the Tuition Assistance Program and service as a member of the Higher Education Committee.



County Executive Nick Pirro and Mayor Roy Bernardi. Both the county executive and the mayor have been longtime supporters of higher education and the college, in part through their service on our President's Council.

Bill Sanford, chair of the Onondaga County Legislature. Bill has been a strong supporter of ESF, SU and the University Hill community.

All of these individuals have supported higher education and I wish those of you up for re-election well in your bids for new terms.

I want to thank Adirondack Park Agency Commissioner Dick Lefebvre, who today is representing his alma mater Emerson College, for introducing me to the wonders of the Adirondacks this past summer and for so quickly becoming a friend and partner.

I want to thank my friends in the business community here today for their friendship and help over the years. I am sorry there are too many to recognize individually.

I want to thank the representatives here today from SUNY for helping and guiding me through the process; particularly, Vice Chancellor John O'Connor and Assistant Vice Chancellor Marianna O'Dwyer.

I want to thank SUNY trustees Aminy Audi, Ed Nelson and Chris Holland for their tireless support of higher education and taking their time to join us today.

I want to thank our donors for making the dreams of the college come true.

I want to thank my trustees, foundation board members and President's Council members for sharing their precious time with me and the college.

I want to thank the students for being so open and teaching me what education is all about.

Continued on next page

**...OUR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE NEEDS TO BE
ONE OF GREATER DEPTH, SUBSTANCE AND IMPACT.**



I want to thank our alumni and emeriti faculty for distinguishing the college and setting an example for both students and faculty.

I want to thank my colleagues representing other institutions of higher education for being here today. A large number of you have become friends over a very short period of time.

I want to thank Linda Tarolli and Ragan Squier for their tireless efforts in putting this event together.

I want to thank all my friends who took time out of their day to share this event with me. Thank you all.

Educating for Society's Future

Two weeks ago, I took a break from my first six months on the job with a long weekend in Vermont. My wife, Joanne, and I went to dinner at the Larue Farm in Waitsfield at a place called American Flatbread. Amid the 1950s surroundings are handwritten testimonials such as "make bread not war," a treatise on biological diversity, saving the local bear habitat and a plea for a sustainable world. And I asked myself, do youth have to consume organic pizza to learn some of the more powerful lessons of life?

It is my premise that it is the responsibility of higher education in the 21st century to teach the following elements as a prerequisite to earning a bachelor's degree:

1. the principle of personal and societal accountability,
2. the elements of sustainability, and
3. an experience in critical thinking.

It is my opinion that these tenets are far more important than the factual content of a general education or technical curriculum.

Let me describe to you what I mean by each of these essential elements of education.

The Principle of Personal and Societal Accountability

I am reminded of the "Oz Principle" written by Connors, Smith, and Hickman. The book postulates that in L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Cowardly Lion and the Tin Man are really on a journey toward awareness and personal accountability as they proceed down the yellow brick road toward Emerald City. It is the journey that empowers them, and there are clearly themes of personal growth:

- From ignorance to knowledge,
- From fear to courage,
- From insensitivity to caring,
- From paralysis to powerfulness, and
- From victimization to accountability.

From all of these emerge the central message of the book: Through their experiences on the journey the characters learn self-determination and personal accountability and are emboldened with a newly discovered sense of self-worth. The only gold to be mined in the yellow brick road is individual potential. The Emerald City does not exist except as the acceptance of personal accountability.

We in education have a responsibility to address what has been referred to as "the American character in crisis." Numerous authors have referred to this crisis in various ways: "an ideology of selfishness," the "cult of victimization," "a no-fault, no-pain philosophy" or "a nation of finger pointers."

When you think of issues that affect American society, you clearly have to be struck by our tendency to duck responsibility and our need to affix blame to others. Just look at any of several

...WE MUST PRODUCE GRADUATES WHO LEAVE OUR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS...PREPARED TO FILL THE VOID, TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY, AND IN THE END, MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

recent controversies and you see Firestone blaming Ford and Ford blaming Firestone, Bush blaming Gore and Gore blaming Bush. The 296 members of Congress exposed for overdrafts in the House banking scandal blamed their overdrafts on spouses, colleagues, “the system,” their religion, or a lack of information. Congress blamed the president and the president blamed Congress for the lack of a federal energy policy. To bring it back to this campus, I am reminded too frequently of faculty blaming “the black hole” of administrative offices in Bray Hall for a lack of support, while the administration suggests at times that faculty can’t see the big picture.

We must teach personal accountability because other institutions have, at times, even forgotten what the phrase means. We must teach leadership. We must encourage student leadership, and we must produce graduates who leave our educational institutions not in crisis, but rather prepared to fill the void, to accept responsibility, and in the end, make a difference. We need to demonstrate personal accountability, teach personal accountability, and encourage personal accountability.

The Elements of Sustainability

Our graduates also need to understand the important elements of sustainability. The reduction in the Arctic polar ice mass, the increasing expansion of the Antarctic ozone hole, the extinction of a primate in Western Africa over the last decade, the depletion of our nonrenewable petroleum-based resources, and the increase in the average global temperature by 1°F, all represent the non-sustainable impact of our generation on this earth. The practice of unrestrained consumer demand coupled with unsustainable production practices, narrowly focused natural resource management practices, lack of political and business leadership, and the

failure of educational institutions to teach sustainable management practices, have created depletions in our resources and a possible irreversible set of system responses.

In 1789, Thomas Jefferson said, “The earth belongs...to the living. No generation can contract debts greater than may be paid during the course of its own existence.” It is almost impossible to read these words without failing to be reminded of the basic premise of sustainable practices. We as a society, and we as an educational institution, have several debts to pay. We have a debt to pay to those who labored to teach us; and we have a debt to future generations that we will try to leave a world with resources roughly equal to those that were here when we arrived. Our tools to accomplish this as educators are to demonstrate sustainability, teach sustainability and encourage sustainability.

In a similar manner, President Theodore Roosevelt, in his Message on Conservation presented in 1908, called for sustainable management of our natural resources when he said, “We must ask ourselves if we are leaving for future generations an environment that is as good, or better than what we found.” We have to teach this 100-year-old lesson well, for our students must be disciples of it in order to reverse the continued trend of unrestrained consumer demand. Our students must develop management practices and technology to minimize waste, maximize byproduct synergy, and develop a more rational approach toward stewardship of our natural resources.

An Experience in Critical Thinking

We also owe it to our students to provide them with an experience in critical thinking, but what is it all about? Critical thinking is straying from the comfort of facts, figures and equations. It is about digging painfully deep to come up with solutions to critical

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**...ACCOUNTABILITY...SUSTAINABILITY [AND] CRITICAL
THINKING...ARE FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE FACTUAL
CONTENT OF A GENERAL EDUCATION OR TECHNICAL CURRICULUM.**

problems. It is the deliberate and uncomfortable process of peeling away what we know, or what we think we know, and immersing ourselves in what we don't know. It is about the struggle to find answers to questions that, by themselves, are difficult to understand. As we have all experienced, the path is never comfortable, but is ultimately rewarding and in the end profound. The experience can alter one's interests, direction, confidence and self-expectations for a lifetime.

It is not common for the undergraduate student to have an educational experience which involves critical thinking, the struggle for meaning and a solution. We in higher education have to provide these experiences. We have to define the problem, and we have to support the effort. Without such experience we have students who have command of the facts, understand the theory, but fundamentally don't know how to use the tools. They have been shortchanged in applying the tools. They haven't experienced failure. They don't know what it is like to succeed.

We have, in the past and even today, been exposed to the winds of elitist and general access models of higher education. At State University of New York institutions, we are modifying requirements for graduation. We want to ensure that all students have exposure to a minimum of 10 areas of study — study assumed to be basic to students' success and personal development. However, the critical issue should not be factual knowledge of the sophists, Peloponnesian wars, or the second law of thermodynamics. It is my premise that our educational experience needs to be one of greater depth, substance and impact.

Educating the Leaders of Tomorrow

If we can produce graduates who understand their responsibility for personal accountability, who understand their responsibility to adopt sustainable practices and a sustainable lifestyle, and who experience confronting and solving fundamental problems using critical thinking skills and not factual information bites, then we will have produced young people of substance prepared to provide leadership and prepared to address the increasingly complex problems of today's society.

We at ESF will provide our students with examples of institutional accountability and leadership, and we will teach principles of personal accountability and leadership. We do it today, but we will do it better tomorrow. We, the administration, and we, the faculty, will absorb the lesson and demonstrate the lesson in our daily practice.

We at ESF will provide our students with examples of sustainable practices and we will teach the concepts associated with global system dynamics and sustainability. We do it today, but we will teach it more thoroughly and more comprehensively tomorrow. We will be an example of the lessons well learned.

We at ESF need to teach our students from the perspective of experience with critical thinking. We must develop an educational process which ensures that every student is exposed to critical thinking before the student leaves the institution. We must ensure that our graduates are prepared to tackle and solve tough problems. Beyond that, we must whet the intellectual appetite to aggressively pursue the resolution of such issues.

We have started this process with our Learning Community initiative, a course on leadership, an evolving program on sustainability and biophysical economics, and a developing initiative in critical thinking. We are close, but are not yet there. If we as an institution challenge ourselves with our collective accountability, then we must be there within two years. I know that we are capable, but are we determined? Our future and that of society depend upon our response.

Frank Borman, commander of Apollo 8, the first mission to orbit the Moon, exclaimed upon his view of the Earth emerging from the rim of the Moon, "a magnificent testament to what we see and feel from space: Earth so splendid, Earth so fragile." We in higher education have a responsibility that transcends meeting enrollment projections, ensuring reaccreditation, and preparing our graduates for a successful professional future.

We need to teach our youth that the Earth is splendid and yet so very fragile, and that they have an awesome responsibility for its care and tending.

Thank you very much.



Christine Langlois

Christine's 'Thing'

by Claire B. Dunn

Her mom says Christine A. Langlois honed her management skills as a little kid.

"She's one of the middle children in the family. By not being the oldest or the baby, and getting all that extra attention, she had to cope on her own," said Langlois' mother Eleanor Bush. "It gave her the ability to manage herself and anybody else who got in her way."

Now that she's a grown-up, Langlois, a staff associate in ESF's physical plant department, has made a career out of managing people and events on campus. The biggest assignment in her five years at the college came in November, when she oversaw the setup preparations for the inauguration of ESF's third president, Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr.

The daylong celebration focused Langlois' attention on an incredible series of details:

How would visitors find their way from the ESF campus to Hendricks Memorial Chapel at SU and back again? That was easy: balloons. But the answer raised more questions. How many balloons? What colors? How much helium? What could be used to anchor them so they wouldn't float away?

Once back on the ESF campus, how would the 500 people expected to attend the reception find restrooms? A sign in the tent would direct them to the lobbies of the four closest buildings. But where could the sign be placed so it didn't appear, well, tacky?

"These are all the things I didn't go to college to learn how to do," Langlois said.

At the SUNY College at Oneonta, Langlois studied nutrition and business. After a short stint in the restaurant business, she spent 10 years at Cazenovia College, working as a residence and dining hall director before becoming assistant dean of students. She has been on the staff at ESF since 1995. She oversees the grounds and custodial staffs, the mailroom, the shipping and receiving operations, and the physical plant stockroom.

Her entire career has been spent in management, a role that comes easily to her.

"All my children were involved in 4-H from the time they were young," Eleanor Bush said. "It gave them an ability to step forward and speak up. And in Christine's case, to manage things. She's had more to handle in her life than some people."

Bush was referring to her daughter's bout with breast cancer in 1997. Through the ordeal, Langlois came to work nearly every day, ignoring the queasiness and exhaustion that were part of the treatment package.

"Well, you can't just sit home," she said. "That's one thing about me. I don't like to sit and do nothing."

She said her mother credits her with "a strong constitution."

"What could I do?" Langlois said. "I didn't have any help at home. I just did it. A lot of it was in my head, too. I just made up my mind I wasn't going to be sick."

She credited her mostly male colleagues with helping her cope.

"Everybody here knew. They were very, very supportive. I explained to them, 'It could be your wife, your sister, your child. You need to know about this,'" she said. "They were great. They all offered me their baseball caps."

Langlois is accustomed to being just about the only woman in her work environment. When 12 to 14 people gather for physical plant staff meetings, everyone else is male. The thought makes her laugh.

"I hold my own. I think I see things from a different perspective than they do. Plus, I bring in baked goods all the time, so I know how to bribe them."

Continued on next page

Langlois grew up in Homer, a small community south of Syracuse. In addition to the 4-H training, she picked up some skills at several leadership conferences in junior and senior high school.

“It just became part of what I did,” she said. “In high school, I was vice president of my class. But no one told me that when you’re class vice president you’re going to be an officer for the rest of your life. I just finished planning my 20th high school reunion.”

The reunion was in August, at the same time she and other members of the physical plant staff were overseeing renovations at the Syracuse home that serves as the official residence for the college president.

“It wouldn’t have been done if it wasn’t for Christine,” said Neil Murphy’s wife, Joanne. “She has great taste and she’s very efficient.”

Nearly every room in the house, which sits atop a drumlin in the city’s outer university neighborhood, was repainted in preparation for the Murphys’ arrival. Floors were refinished throughout the house and bathrooms were updated.

“Christine just had a super feeling for what’s involved in setting up a home this size, and for what we needed for entertaining and for a fairly good-sized family,” Joanne Murphy said.

All four of the adult Murphy children, one of whom is married, gathered at the home for Thanksgiving. The house was ready for them.

“Christine appears very laid-back and easy-going,” Joanne Murphy said. “But she gets things done. And they’re done on time.”

“On time” became a major issue in the days leading to the inauguration.

Two days before Neil Murphy officially said, “I do,” Langlois headed up the hill toward the ESF quad, where a cavernous tent was being erected in preparation for the post-inaugural reception.

The workers wanted to know what day the cocktail tables should be set up. Langlois’ colleague in the physical plant department told them, “We’ll have to wait on that. That’s Christine’s thing.”

On her way up the hill, Langlois noticed graffiti on the sidewalk. She used her ever-present mobile radio to call a

staffer and ask that it be removed before the big day. She checked the tent’s progress, left instructions that the cocktail tables should be set up the next day, and headed to Moon Library to check the setup plans for an event to be held in conjunction with the inauguration. On the way, she noticed a need for more bike racks outside Illick Hall.

The day of the installation, Langlois was at work an hour earlier than usual. She checked on the staff members who were inflating 216 green, white and gold balloons. She supervised the distribution of signs directing visitors to various inaugural events. She attended to details in Bray Hall, Hendricks Memorial Chapel and the tent on the quad. Then she made a circuit of the buildings around the quad, hanging signs that pointed out restroom locations.

Less than an hour before the ceremony began, her staffers were still mulching the mums that had been planted near ESF’s main roadway, Forestry Drive, and placing balloons along the route to Hendricks Chapel.

That Friday morning, it had all come together. Even the sun was shining, a rarity for a November day in Syracuse. As the first guests climbed the steps to Hendricks Chapel, Langlois stood in the lobby watching them, radio in hand.

“I’m glad we only do this once every 16 years,” she said.

Off campus, there was a last-minute scramble to repair a water heater at the Murphys’ house, and some nail-biting because of a missing dining room chair.

The night of the inauguration, the Murphys planned to host a dinner for members of the search committee that led the effort to find ESF’s new president. With 30 people coming for dinner, the house had to be ready. There was no room for error.

The dining room chairs, however, presented a problem. One arrived broken and had to be replaced. Langlois had received distressing news a few days before the inauguration. “The company called and said, ‘All the furniture’s not going to be there this week.’ I said, ‘Wait a minute, that’s not going to happen. You don’t understand. This is my job. It has to be here.’”

The eighth chair was delivered the day of the inauguration, just in time for the dinner.

Dunn is assistant director of news and publications at ESF.

“Dr. [Cornelius B.] Murphy’s inauguration opens an exciting new chapter in the history of the College of Environmental Science and Forestry.”

*Aminy I. Audi, member
SUNY Board of Trustees*

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Great times are ahead. President Murphy’s vision for ESF includes:

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History in the Making



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

ON CAMPUS

Awards and Honors

Conway, Heather '03, named recipient of the first Ross S. Whaley Endowed Scholarship.

Doble, Cheryl S., Second Annual Foundation Award for Excellence in Teaching, ESF College Foundation, Inc., November 2000.

Hassett, James M. and **Robert M. Silverstein**, named recipients of the first SUNY Chancellor's Award in Science and Medicine. January 22, 2001, Albany, N.Y.

Pack Demonstration Forest, 2000 Community Service Award, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Warren County, October 13, 2000.

Sloan, Stephen F. '67, '69, appointed member, ESF Board of Trustees, December 2000.

SUNY-ESF, named "Strong Performer: Academic Challenge" for doctoral-intensive universities by the National Survey of Student Engagement.

View, John E., Leadership Award, Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

Look for additional information on recent college news in the "Campus Update" section of the Spring 2001 issue and for a profile of the ESF Board of Trustees.

CAMPUS CALENDAR

February 2

- ESF College Information Session, Syracuse Campus. Also: February 23, March 9, March 23 and April 16. Additional information: Office of Undergraduate Admissions, 315-470-6600.
- Symposium on Teaching and Learning, Alumni Lounge, Marshall Hall and 8 Moon Library. 11:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Additional information: IDEaS, 315-470-6727.

February 8

One World Week. Additional information: Office of Multicultural Outreach, 315-470-4815.

February 10

Alumni Basketball Reception prior to SU vs. Seton Hall, Alumni Lounge, Marshall Hall. Reception, 5 p.m. Additional information: Office of Alumni Affairs, 315-470-6632.

February 14

ESF in the High School Orientation, Syracuse Campus. 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. Additional information: IDEaS, 315-470-6727.

February 17-18

Winter Weekend, Syracuse Campus. Additional information: Julie Rawls, 315-470-6658.

February 21

Festival of Places, Syracuse Campus. Additional information: Faculty of Landscape Architecture, 315-470-6544.

February 24

Spirit and Essence Banquet. 6 p.m. Additional information: Office of Multicultural Outreach, 315-470-4815.

March TBA

New York State Wetlands Forum Spring Meeting, Albany, New York. Additional information: Richard Smardon, 315-470-6636.

March 11-18

Spring Break, ESF, Syracuse Campus.

March 16-17

Great Lakes Research Consortium Student-Faculty Conference, Syracuse Campus. Additional information: Great Lakes Research Consortium, 315-470-6816.

March 19

Undergraduate Admissions Accepted Student Reception, Syracuse Campus. Also: March 30, April 9 and April 28. Additional information: Office of Undergraduate Admissions, 315-470-6600.

March 24-25

Florida Alumni Reception, Hollywood, Florida. Alumni brunch and/or golf outing. Additional information: Office of Alumni Affairs, 315-470-6632.

March 24-April 1

Spring Break, Ranger School, Wanakena Campus.