

UAlbany in the News

by MEDIA RELATIONS STAFF

■ Hilde Hoogenboom, assistant professor of Slavic and Eurasian studies in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, appeared on the March 16 edition of A&E's "Biography" as an expert on Catherine the Great. In 2005, Hoogenboom published, with Mark Cruse, *The Memoirs of Catherine the Great* (Modern Library-Random House), which *Publishers Weekly* called a "fresh, clean translation."

■ A report on the supply of doctors in New York from the Center for Health Workforce Studies at UAlbany's School of Public Health was featured in the *Buffalo News* article "Physician shortage reaching unhealthy level" on March 21. The article noted, "The Buffalo Niagara region's disadvantages at keeping the doctors it trains and recruiting the physicians it needs is leading to shortages in some specialties and concern about the future . . . Buffalo Niagara was one of only two regions in the state that experienced a loss of doctors between 2000 and 2004, according to a recent report by the University at Albany's Center for Health Workforce Studies."

■ President Kermit L. Hall was quoted in a March 8 *USA Today* article "Alarms sound over athletes' Facebook time," concerning First Amendment rights for athletes using Facebook.com. Hall said schools are probably on safe ground to restrict athletes' Facebook usage, though probably not other students. "Students who join those teams submit to a certain degree of regulation that doesn't follow the rest of the student population," said Hall. "They're not public figures in the sense of *New York Times* v. Sullivan . . . but they are in the sense that they appear regularly on the sports pages."

■ The University at Albany Great Danes clinched the America East Championship and faced the top-seeded UConn Huskies March 17 in the first round of the NCAA Big Dance. The Great Danes dominated the court for most of the contest and captivated a nationally-televised audience that hoped to witness a record-breaking, historic upset. UConn won with a final score of 72-59, but the UAlbany men's basketball team and Coach Will Brown garnered attention and articles in *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, the *Washington Post*, *The Hartford Courant*, *New York Post*, *New York Daily News*, *USA Today*, *Boston Globe*, *LA Times*, CBS, ESPN.com, and SportingNews.com.

Partnership Between UAlbany and Community Celebrates 15th Anniversary



From left, Kathleen Rissberger, Laurie Lieman, Thomas Gebhardt, Julie Byron, the Rev. Vernon Victorson, and Karen Mink.

by AMY E. TUCKER

On March 21 the University at Albany honored individuals who shaped, strengthened, and ensured the success of the Committee on University and Community Relations — a partnership between UAlbany and area residents, businesses, local law enforcement, and colleges. The celebration at the First Lutheran Church Hall in Albany commemorated the 15th year of educating students and the community about alcohol, safety, and crime prevention.

Albany Police Department (APD) Officers Kathleen Rissberger and Karen Mink received the Public Official Award, Laurie Lieman received the Neighborhood Award, Thomas Gebhardt received a plaque from the APD for 15 years of leading the committee, Julie Byron (Michael Byron's daughter) accepted the Business Award on his behalf, and Reverend Vernon Victorson received honorable mention in the Neighborhood Award.

Created by a task force in 1990, the Committee on University and Community Relations began with its primary goal of addressing unrest in neighborhood communities attributed to UAlbany students. From there, it developed into a full-fledged educational and preventive program incorporating area businesses, tavern owners, the APD, and local colleges including The College of Saint Rose, Sage College, Albany College of Pharmacy, and Albany Medical College.

"The sustaining power of the Committee on University and Community Relations is realized through the active and enthusiastic participation from

neighborhood businesses, colleges, and community groups," said University at Albany President Kermit L. Hall. "We're proud to be honoring its successes, and look forward to continued collaborations for the benefit of our students, neighbors, and the city of Albany."

The key to the committee is a four-step process used to address problems called the Four Es: Education, Enforcement, Environment, and Evaluation. Committee chair Gebhardt takes to the streets regularly to distribute literature to off-campus students and area residents, meet with tavern owners, and discuss safety and quality of life issues. To date the committee has held 171 monthly meetings, distributed 15,000 off-campus Student Survival Guides, passed out 18,000 "good neighbor" packets door-to-door, and disseminated 66,000 door tags about off-campus parties, drinking, and noise.

"Grassroots partnerships involving universities, colleges, and neighborhood residents are vital to preserving the character and vitality of the city," said College of Saint Rose President R. Mark Sullivan. "We need to instill in our students a sense of responsibility in how they interact with the permanent members of our community; and the committee has facilitated a number of model programs that have allowed all the partners to coexist in our city."

The committee works closely with the APD, the New York State Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, and local tavern owners on enforcement issues including identifying "cooperating taverns" with special lights; tracking, following-up on and establishing proto-

col for house parties; and managing an off-campus hotline.

Changing the environment is another crucial part of the process and the committee participates in neighborhood clean-ups, promotes and communicates "good neighbor" tips to college student tenants, and established the Tavern Owner Advertisement Agreement program so that tavern advertisements aimed at college students do not promote irresponsible behavior and excessive alcohol consumption.

The final step in the process is evaluating the process and its impact on students and the community. The committee tracks off-campus hotline calls, gathers feedback from neighborhood representatives and tracks police reports involving university students. The Four-E process has been a successful approach and has consistently reduced instances of off-campus hotline calls and arrests in the following areas: off-campus noise ordinances, possession of a forged instrument, criminal impersonation, driving while intoxicated, and all alcohol-related arrests.

"The future success of the committee," Gebhardt noted, "depends upon meeting the challenge of maintaining its goals, through the established partnerships the committee has fostered over the years. These goals include improving town-gown relations, making life safer off campus, dealing with underage drinking and the abuse of alcohol by college students, and improving the quality of life in the neighborhoods where college students reside."

The committee has garnered a number of awards for its work. In June 2004 the State University of New York Council for University Advancement (SUNYCUAD) honored the committee with the "Best of Category Award for Excellence in Community Relations" for "Takin' it to the Streets: A Successful Social Norms Campaign Targeting Long-Term Neighbors in the Community". The committee and the Pine Hills & Beverwyck neighborhood associations received second place in the 1997 Neighborhood of the Year Awards by Neighborhoods, USA. And, in 1995, the Neighborhood Resource Center in Albany recognized the committee as the Organization of the Year.

The committee honored a few of its own for outstanding contributions and commitment to the mission. Award presentations included Michael Byron, owner, Washington Tavern and The Ginger Man; Officers Kathleen Rissberger and Karen Mink, APD, Center Station; the Rev. Vernon Victorson, First Lutheran Church; and Laurie Lieman, resident and member of the Pine Hills Neighborhood Association.