National Honor for Chatelain

Marcia Chatelain, double major in religious studies and journalism, was named one of 75 Harry S. Truman Scholarship recipients in the nation March 20.

The scholarship is a $30,000 award presented to college juniors who have demonstrated outstanding leadership potential and are committed to careers in government, advocacy, education or other public sectors. The award is for Chatelain’s senior year and graduate study.

“When you think of the millions of college students out there, even to be selected as a finalist, much less win the award, puts you among the best of the best,” says Rick Hardy, MU professor of political science and Truman Foundation faculty representative.

As an undergraduate at MU, Chatelain was named a Brooks Scholar, a McNair Scholar and a Proctor & Gamble Emerging Leader. She has served as a reporting intern for the Chicago Tribune, peer adviser for the cross-cultural journalism group and editor of the Hate Report, a study documenting intolerance at MU, directed toward sexual orientation, race, beliefs, affiliations and other characteristics.

“In the two years that I have worked with Marcia as her A&S mentor and as her McNair mentor, I have been deeply impressed by Marcia’s extraordinary maturity, her sense of timing, her diligence, her creative intelligence and her ability to speak and write precisely. Add to this a delightful personality and you have an (Continues on Page 2)

Changing Chairs
by Jill Raitt

This was a significant academic year in many ways for the Department of Religious Studies and for me as well.

On Aug. 1, I handed over the position of chair to Steve Friesen to lead the department into the new millennium! I officially retired on Aug. 31, but I have been rehired for 2000-01 to teach as an emerita professor. Theoretically, the word “emerita” means “on account of merit” and is intended to be an honor upon retirement. What it means in practical terms is that I continue to have an official status in the department and the University.

Over the years, the most significant developments in the department have been our degree programs and the changes in our faculty and staff. As some of you know, our first bachelor’s degree in religious studies was awarded in December 1986 to Patty Faber, who is now a counselor in Michigan. Since then, we have awarded more than 100 AB degrees.

Our first MA degree was awarded to Steve Blower in May 2000. We have 11 MA students this year, seven of whom are teaching assistants, allowing us to increase the size of many of our courses. Our majors this year number more than 25.

Our faculty members also have changed. Of the original four—Joel Brereton, Larry Sullivan, Bob Robinson and me—only Joel and I are still here for the rest of this year. In May, both of us will be leaving, Joel to join the Department of Asian Studies faculty at the University of Texas, Austin, and I to full retirement which means to undertake other endeavors.

(Continues on Page 2)
Religions, the Professions and the Public

This past year, Professor Emerita Jill Raitt has been deeply involved in developing Religion, the Professions and the Public (RPP) which could have long-lasting effects on the University and the field.

The basic concept is simple. First, professionals need to understand their own presuppositions with regard to religion in general and to various religions in particular to increase the effectiveness of professional service to their clients who come from increasingly diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Second, professionals need to have a basic understanding of how the different religious backgrounds of their clients affect their immediate professional relationship and service.

Although this rationale is simple, it is not quite so simple to implement the idea in professional schools and professional practice. Colloquia 2000 took the first steps.

From January to April, RPP sponsored four colloquia during which experts from health affairs (William F. May), journalism (Gustav Niebuhr, Martin E. Marty and Diane Winston) and law (Azizah al-Hibri) helped the department understand the issues better. During each colloquium, the speakers conducted two seminars for RPP committee members and for other professionals in the area. The public lectures were well attended, and the seminars helped the committee to write grant proposals that may come to fruition in a Center for Religion, the Professions and the Public on the MU campus.

To learn more about Colloquia 2000 and to stay abreast of RPP developments, check this web site: www.missouri.edu/~rpp.

(Raitt, continued from Page 1)

I shall conclude 20 years of full-time teaching at MU including 13 years as chair: 1981–87; 1990–95; 1998–2000. I was away at the National Humanities Center in 1987–88, so unless you, dear alumni, were here only one year, I know all of you who have graduated with a major in religious studies.

All of us are proud of you and your accomplishments since graduation. Please send us news such as new jobs, new family members and especially any moves with your new address.

(Chatelain, continued from Page 1)

unusually gifted young woman,” says Professor Emerita Jill Raitt.

Currently Chatelain is in London as a Coca Cola Ambassador working on a journalism internship. She will return to MU for the winter 2001 semester.

“All of these experiences are due, in large part, to the mentoring and guidance of the department faculty and staff,” Chatelain says. “Over the past three years I have acquired many mentors, friends and endless sources of encouragement and sound advice. I have learned from the very best scholars in a wide array of fields, but more important, I have been challenged to push limits and to think for myself.”

Chatelain’s postgraduation plans include attending Amherst College at the University of Massachusetts. She hopes to earn an MA with an emphasis in social justice education and later to do doctoral work in religious studies at the University of Chicago.
Rhodes Recipient Shares Experiences

An interview with Antwaun Smith
In September 1999 Antwaun Smith, AB '98, traveled to Oxford to begin his studies as a Rhodes Scholar; Smith was one of only 32 Americans to be selected as a Rhodes Scholar in 1999. The following is Smith's take on his experiences at Oxford.

Where are you living in Oxford?
Smith: “I live in a graduate dorm right off High Street, near my college—University College. It’s nice to be so close to High Street, where so much of the action is in Oxford. All the shops and pubs are seconds away from where I live. St. Mary’s Church is 50 yards away. It makes me feel like I’m a part of Oxford.”

What are you studying at Oxford? How does the academic system compare to our university system?
Smith: “The Rhodes Scholarship does not require certain courses. I am currently doing a two-year degree in politics and philosophy, but each scholar is more or less free to choose his or her own program. The British academic system as a whole seems much more individual-based. For most undergraduates there are no classes to attend. Your primary responsibility is to do a massive amount of reading each week, write a 6- to 8-page essay on that reading, and then meet with a faculty member (tutor) once a week to go over your essay and your understanding of the material.

Coming from the loving embrace of the religious studies department at MU to the sometimes indifferent stare of Oxford can be difficult. The fellows eat in the same dining hall as the students, but eat in a reserved section called High Table. There is a whole range of social customs that reminds students that they are separate and different. Certainly there are good aspects to this—a more cultivated respect for academic elders, for example—but I do think many students are less likely to feel that they have valuable opinions and insights to contribute.”

How is your experience affecting you so far?
Smith: “I’m having a great time at Oxford. It’s a love-hate relationship, but mostly it’s love. I love the architecture, and nearly every day I see some new nuance to a building that I hadn’t noticed before. And to imagine that for over 700 years students have been walking in the very places you are and probably talking about some of the very same ideas and questions is pretty cool.

There is also a nice pace to Oxford that allows for meaningful work to be done but also gives you time to have conversations with friends in coffee shops and pubs. I’ve spent hours talking about politics over beer with, of all people, Gary Hart. I’ve spent time talking about religion both with friends and with my college chaplain. Of course, not all my conversations are weighty. What Cuban cigars are best, which Oxford girl is prettiest, why those damn church bells won’t stop ringing are also important areas of discussion.”

It sounds as though you’ve adjusted well to the new setting.
Smith: “I feel pretty comfortable now at places like Harvard and Oxford. It can be intimidating at first, but I’ve quickly come to see that my professors at MU—most in religious studies—really did a good job of helping me develop critical thinking skills, which is all you really need to make it. I wouldn’t be where I am without the shaping and support of some amazing professors at MU. So I’m enjoying Oxford a lot. I’m making lifelong friendships and learning new things. I’m still unsure about my future career path, but I’m not desperate enough to start calling the Psychic Friends Hotline, yet. Cecil Rhodes—who started the Scholarship program—may not have lived well, but he certainly did bequeath well, and I’m grateful for the opportunity.”
Faculty Kudos

**Brereton continues work on translation**

Professor Joel Brereton has resumed teaching after a year of travel and translation. Brereton spent the 1999-2000 academic year working in person and via the Internet with Stephanie Janison, professor of Sanskrit and Indian Studies at Harvard University, to develop an updated translation of the Rigveda. Brereton and Janison did some of their work on the translation in Cambridge, Mass., and while there, Brereton gave a lecture on the Ribhus, a group of divine craftsmen in the Rigveda.

In spring 2000, Brereton traveled to Pune, India, where he studied principally Vedic ritual, which forms the context for the Rigvedic hymns. He also spent some time on the back roads of Maharashtra state to visit significant pilgrimage places and other holy sights around Pune.

**Callahan is visiting instructor at MU**

Richard “Chip” Callahan is a visiting instructor for the year. He comes to MU from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and he is completing his doctoral dissertation on religion and the labor movement in the eastern Kentucky coal industry of the early 20th century. This study brings together Callahan’s interests in American religion, material culture, work and folk life. He is teaching Religion and Culture, and Modern Perspectives.

**Clart traveling in Germany, Canada, cyberspace**

In the 1999-2000 academic year, Professor Philip Clart had an article accepted for publication in the 2000 issue of the *Journal of Chinese Religions* and has contributed three articles on Confucianism to the fourth edition of the German theological dictionary *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*.

Clart rounded off the school year with two months at the University of British Columbia as a visiting research associate at the Centre for Chinese Research. There, he worked on Daoist influences on traditional Chinese entertainment literature. A key part of this project is the first-ever translation of the early 17th century Daoist novel *The Complete Story of Han Xiangzi*.

After much hesitation, Clart ventured into cyberspace with an online bibliography for Western language publications on Chinese popular religion, which he is updating at web.missouri.edu/~religionpc/bibliography_CPR.html. This new resource has been included in major link listings, including the WWW Virtual Library.

**Crowley serves department, Honors College, campus**

The high point of last year for Adjunct Instructor Sue Crowley was the moment her nominee for the Truman Scholarship, Marcia Chatelain, won the award. All she could do during the television interview was mop up her “tears of joy.” As associate director of the Honors College, Crowley is responsible for the Scholar in Residence Program, which focuses this semester on medical ethics with Edmund Pellegrino from Georgetown University Medical Center. In teaching, she leads an honors undergraduate seminar, Modern Literature and the Quest for Values. When she’s not busy on campus, Crowley loves being a “soccer granny.”

**Flanagan in 13th year as minister**

Along with teaching for the department, Adjunct Instructor Bob Flanagan has been involved in several forms of ministry and service. He is in his 13th year as minister of the Sturgeon Christian Church and his fourth year of teaching for the Missouri School of Religion’s Center for Rural Ministry in its program of education for ministry. He also participates in the Religious Programming Advisory Council of the Missouri Department of Corrections, helping that group decide such issues as what is a “legitimate” religion, and what is “legitimate” religious physical contact for persons in a prison context. During the past year, he took his hypnotherapy skills off the shelf and began practicing again.

**Friesen receives grant for database**

Associate Professor Steve Friesen was awarded a Society of Biblical Literature Technology Grant to begin a database on early churches. The database will include all known references to people from the first-century churches and will assist searches, such as the percentage of men and women, the number of Roman citizens and the church offices people held. Friesen hopes to make the finished product available on the web. He also had an edited volume accepted for publication in the *Religions of the World* series (Harvard University Press). The volume is titled, “Ancestors in Post-Contact Religion: Roots, Ruptures, and Modernity’s Memory.” His book *Imperial Cults and the Apocalypse of John* will appear in 2001 with Oxford University Press.

**Johnson nears completion of book**

Assistant Professor Paul Johnson returned to the Caribbean coast of Honduras in summer 2000 to continue his study of the Garifuna, a Carib-speaking group who are also of African descent. The Garifuna’s main ritual event is the dugu, a two-week ceremony featuring elements of African religions (spirit possession by ancestors), Amerindian religions (tobacco smoke as a purifying element used by shamans) and Catholicism (recitations of the Hail Mary and the Lord’s Prayer at the outset of rituals). Johnson is looking in particular at the eclectic mixing of religious traditions in this group. Meanwhile, his book on the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomblé is nearing completion. The book is about how an ethnic religion organized around secret knowledge became a public and national religion. In January 2000, Johnson married Genevieve Zubrzycki, who is finishing her doctoral dissertation in sociology at the University of Chicago.
Lawless brings major journal to MU
Adjunct Professor Elaine Lawless, an English professor, has been named editor of the *Journal of American Folklore*, the signature journal for the American Folklore Society, in continuous publication since 1899. She released her new book, *Women Escaping Violence: Empowerment Through Narratives*, in fall 2000 through the University of Missouri Press. The book is based on Lawless’ two years of ethnographic research in a Midwestern women’s shelter. The book demonstrates how the narratives that women tell about violence and abuse empower them to move out of violent relationships and toward independent lives for themselves and their children.

Raitt attends AAR, interviews for television, heads fund raising
In November 1999, Emerita Professor Jill Raitt attended the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Boston with McNair Scholar Marcia Chatelain. While there, Raitt served on a panel for department chairs discussing the AAR's draft of a Guide to Program Reviews and Evaluations. In Boston, Raitt was interviewed about the Reformation for an Arts and Entertainment TV series that is scheduled to air this fall.

While chairing and teaching two courses in academic year 1999-2000, Raitt found time to raise funds for Colloquia 2000 from the AAR, the Missouri Humanities Council and from supporters in Columbia and on campus. In June 2000, she was once again a mentor in the Collegium program, this time at St. John’s University in the heart of Minnesota’s Lake Woebegone country. She learned to say a few phrases in Minnesotan and was privileged to work with marvelous academicians for eight days in the prayerful setting of St. John’s Abbey.

Welch has two essays in press

She has lectured and led workshops on the ethical challenge of multiculturalism: a workshop on Claiming Our Power to be Agents of Social Justice, and a lecture on ‘Truth, Justice and Jazz: Aesthetics, Ethics and Social Change, both at Emory Ethics Center in Atlanta; and a workshop, Expanding Extension Programs by Building Leadership in Ethnic Communities, at North Carolina State University.

Welch is involved in a research project with faculty from theater and the College of Education on the applicability of the techniques of Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed for teaching undergraduates about cultural diversity.

Graduates Making News

Monica Cawvey, AB ’94, has returned to Chicago to start a new career after serving on the department staff during the 1999-2000 academic year. In July, she began her position as associate director of development and alumni relations at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Hyde Park.

Tish Duncan, AB ’97, and her husband, Brandon Cline, AB ’98, are entering their second year of the master of divinity program at the University of Chicago Divinity School. In addition to regular course work, they will be serving as student pastors at First Christian Church of Downers Grove, Ill., during the academic year. Last summer they traveled to Israel, where they participated in an archaeological field school at Caesarea Maritima.

Jawad Qureshi, AB ’99, took a year off from school to work and to catch his breath. In the process he also did some traveling. Qureshi went on pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj), and he spent time in Istanbul, Jordan and Jerusalem on the return trip. He is now in Athens, Ga., working on his thesis, which will be a critical edition, annotated edition and commentary on Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami’s book, *Ghalatat al-Sufiyyah* (The Mistakes of the Sufis), from original Arabic manuscripts.

Marie Overstreet Reynolds, AB ’87, sends greetings from Atlanta, where she and her husband, Kyle, live. Their son, Bryce, was born on Aug. 9, 1999, weighing an appropriate 9 pounds. Marie continues to work on her art and to teach from her studio at home.

Robyn Ricks, AB ’98, has returned to the department after two and a half years of post-baccalaureate travel and exploration. While wandering the nation, she took up residence in Ashland, Ore., where she was immersed in alternative and new age religions.
Making the World a Better Place

by Jennifer Stanley, AB ’98

Stanley recently returned from two years in the Balkans

OK, we’ve all heard it before. What are you going to do with a degree in religious studies? I joined the Peace Corps.

Armed with my AB, I went off to make the world a better place. With very short notice, I learned I was going to be posted in Vratsa, Bulgaria. Like anyone in this situation, I had many preconceived notions of what I was getting into. As a young post-Cold War American, I believed the people of the former Soviet bloc would eagerly embrace democracy and Western ideals. In short, I thought they would be just like me. What I discovered is that only personal experience could help me to understand the reality of Bulgarian life.

After 50 years of communist rule, democracy and individual responsibility are still novel ideas in this part of Europe, and ordinary Bulgarians are still learning to use their newly acquired tools for their own benefit. As a secondary school teacher, I encountered widespread lack of organization and discipline, uninterested educators and bribery on a daily basis. Despite all these problems, there were some who were making an obvious effort to try to improve their system.

Although Bulgarians have been slow to emerge from authoritarian rule, there has been a vital resurgence in religious life. The timeworn monasteries and beautiful churches are once again thriving. Religious texts that were kept hidden until recently are now open for public viewing.

I was fascinated to see people involved in intricate rituals such as lighting a candle and walking around the outside of a church three times on Easter. I personally took part in baptisms and remembrances of the dead. At Christmas, I assisted in the blessing of a home, which is thought to bring luck in the coming year. Given that these practices were forbidden under communism, it is amazing how important they are to modern Bulgarian life.

As a religious studies student, I had the opportunity to learn about the diversity of religions in the world. Through my experience as a Peace Corps volunteer, I discovered that orthodox Christianity, at least in Bulgaria, is a much deeper and richer tradition than I ever expected. The tranquility of the monasteries and the beauty of the frescoes mesmerized me. I am fortunate to have caught a glimpse of this post-communist revival. It has enriched my view of the world and my own life.

Editor’s note: Stanley is working at MU’s International Center as an international student adviser.

Lecture on Islam

Rahul Peter Das gave the first of this year’s Paine Lectures in Religion. His topic was Islam in South Asia, both the many forms that Islamic life and practice have taken and the changing nature of Islam in contemporary India. In addition to the lecture, Das also met with graduate students for lunch and a wide-ranging discussion of Indology and other matters.

Das is professor of modern Indian philology at the Martin-Luther-Universität in Halle-Wittenburg, Germany. In addition to Islam in India, his interests include Sanskrit medical and horticultural texts, Bengali literature and culture, and devotional sects in Bengal.
Recognizing Achievement

Elizabeth MacKenzie endows Good Samaritan Fund

Elizabeth MacKenzie established an endowment in August to create a Good Samaritan Fund to honor her late father, John H. Pattrick, whose interest in religion continued all his life and was inherited by his daughter. Pattrick graduated in 1912 with degrees in arts and science, and education.

MacKenzie made the gift to the department to express her thanks for the many ways that she benefited from her father’s MU education. She allowed the department to decide how the fund would be used.

The faculty elected to create a scholarship to assist students who dedicate themselves to community service and to excellence in their studies. The scholarships will be available for undergraduate and graduate students.

In 1999, George M. Landes of Schnecksville, Pa., provided funding for two annual scholarships for graduate students. The first two recipients are Mark Clark, AB '00, a summa cum laude graduate in religious studies and English, and Heather Hignite, a master’s student who plans to graduate in May 2001.

Every year since 1995, two department majors have received the Paul and Larry Chapman Scholarships. In addition to the $250 award, the students’ names are inscribed on a plaque in the religious studies office. The most recent Chapman Scholars are Justin Arft, AB '00, and Jeff Bell, AB '00.

The department also announces a new Alumni Fund, created through the generosity of Brenda Brunner, BS Ed ’81, who was the department’s first secretary. Brunner lives near Dallas with her husband and their two teen-age daughters.

"Major" honors highlight student achievement

Stacey Specht, a junior and former recipient of the 1998 Hesburgh Award for Excellence, received a $1,000 memorial scholarship from MU for the 2000-01 academic year. She will study in Florence, Italy, during the winter semester.

Senior Matt Blazer, who will graduate in December, has post-graduation plans that may include traveling, working in a church and pursuing a master of divinity degree.

Junior Brandy Dodson spent six weeks of summer 2000 studying in Mexico before returning to the department for the fall semester.

Promotion and award for Kent

Those of you who have visited us on the fourth floor of GCB in the last few years probably were greeted by Wanda Kent’s cheerful smile. Her service to the faculty, staff and students has been recognized in two important ways. Wanda's contributions to the department and the campus earned her a promotion to the rank of administrative assistant in August, and in April, 1999, she won the Chancellor’s Outstanding Staff Award. You can congratulate her at kentw@missouri.edu or at (573) 882-4769.

First Master’s Graduate

The department’s master’s program has its first graduate, Steve Blower, who in April successfully defended his thesis in religious studies: a comparative study of the theme of expiatory suffering on behalf of others in 4 Maccabees and in the Gospel of Mark. Blower is a first-year law student at MU, where he hopes to develop a specialization in religion and law. He continues to work as a graduate teaching assistant in some department courses.

Four more students will graduate from the master’s program by the end of the year

Lisa Isaacs, PhD ’83 philosophy, is completing a portfolio of seminar papers on the theme of millenarian movements. She teaches at Columbia College. Rachel Haverstick, AB ’98 religious studies, began comparative research on three spirit-possession cults in the United States—Asatru, Wicca and Vodun—that will become the focus of her thesis.

Melissa Young, recipient of the Donald K. Anderson Graduate Student Teaching Award for 1999-2000, is working on apocalyptic themes in Appalachian folk music. Heather Hignite won two academic honors in 1999—the Superior Graduate Achievement Award, sponsored by the MU Graduate Student Association, and the George Landes Scholarship. Her research is on women and religion, with a minor in women studies.

Newer to the master’s program is Thad Horrell, whose work focuses on the conversion of Northern Europe to Christianity and on modern reconstructed religions based on these pre-Christian European traditions.

Six students entered the graduate program this semester

Justin Arft, AB ’00 religious studies, a Chapman Scholar of 2000, is interested in Second Temple Judaism. Chris Brink completed his bachelor’s degree in history at Truman State University with a specialization in the history of Christian thought and Medieval studies. Mark Clark, AB ’00 religious studies, graduated summa cum laude and is a George Landes Scholar.

Janet Dellinger graduated recently from Columbia College and plans to work on indigenous religions of the Americas. Kris Grice will do research on the roles women play in religious movements. Spencer Johnson, AB ’00 religious studies, is working on classical Hinduism.
It still feels a little odd sitting alone in the department chair’s office. My books are on the shelves, my clutter is already accumulating on the desk, but it’s still hard not to think of it as “Jill’s office.” Jill Raitt has exercised a profound and abiding influence on the department—not just by founding the department but also by the collaborative atmosphere she has created. How often have I heard colleagues in other departments or other institutions comment on the way we work together? There’s usually a tone of surprise in their voices and sometimes just a tinge of jealousy.

This collegiality is one characteristic of the department that we want to maintain and to nourish as the department heads into a time of transition. Jill is now professor emerita, and our colleague Joel Brereton will be leaving us for the University of Texas at Austin. They are the last remaining members from the original faculty when the department was established in 1982. Joel will be sorely missed, and we hope Jill will be here much longer in her new role. We will not, however, let go of their legacy of generosity and service.

Thanks to their efforts and the efforts of the rest of the department, we are seeing signs of growth. The undergraduate program includes 27 majors after the graduation of 12 seniors in May. The MA program begins year three, having awarded its first degree (to Stephen Blower). Five students are continuing in the master’s program, and six more are starting their first semester. The Landes Scholarship for graduate students in religious studies began this year, and the Good Samaritan Award will become available next year. We have initiated national faculty searches for Joel’s and Jill’s positions. So there is a lot to look forward to in the future. Who knows what the next Communique will report.

In the meantime, please keep in touch. As our circle of friends and colleagues continues to grow, we do not want to lose contact with any of you. We are glad to hear from you by letter, postcard, fax, e-mail, World Wide Web or dropping by the office in person. Any method works. The legacy of the department is growing, and you are a part of that story.