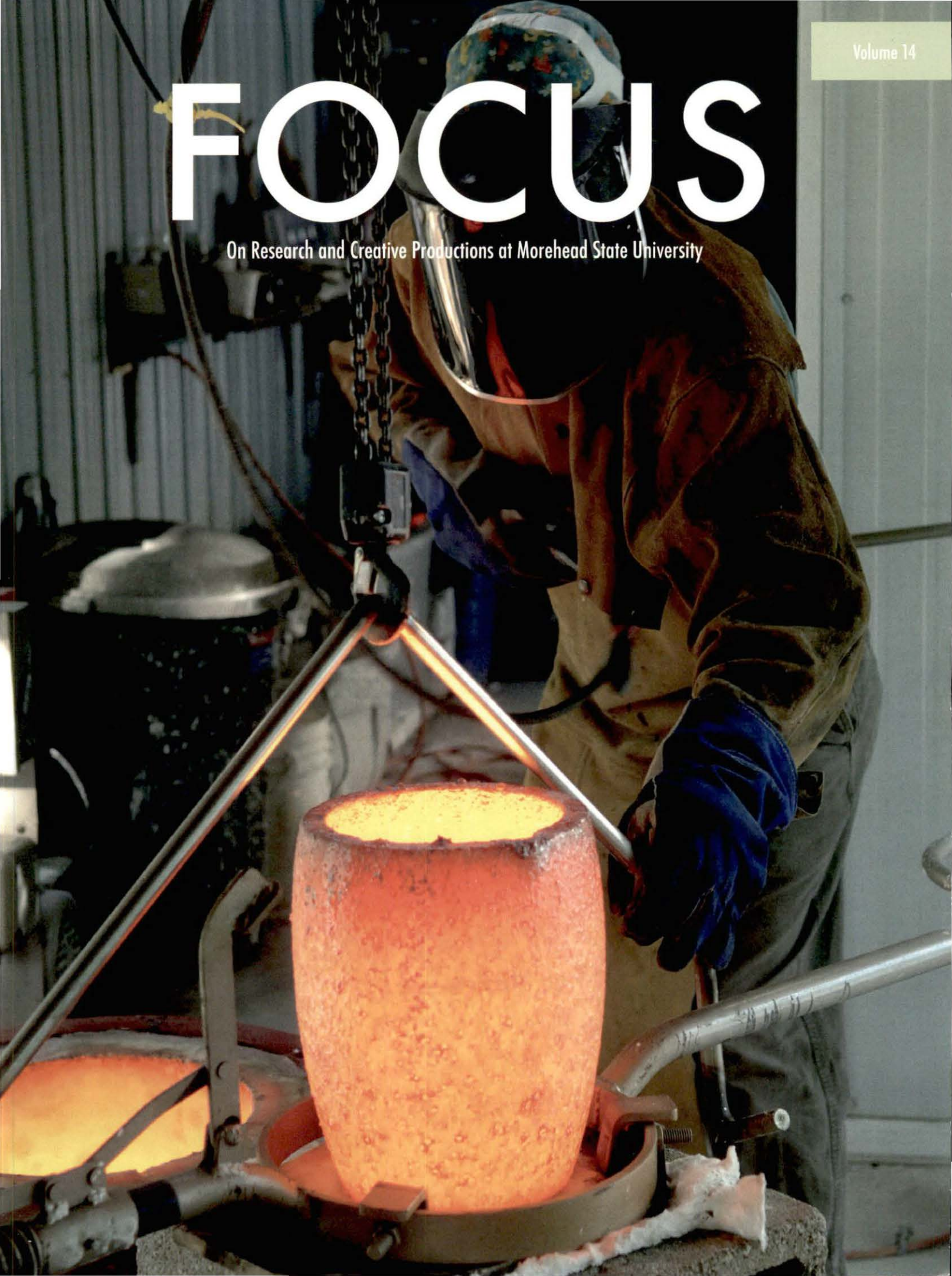


FOCUS

On Research and Creative Productions at Morehead State University



This issue of FOCUS magazine looks different from those of the last few years. Color photography and color graphics have been used from cover to cover to make the publication more attractive and to better reflect the value that Morehead State University places on research and creative projects.

Future plans call for additional pages so that more of the strong scholarship of our colleagues can be shared internally and externally.

Recognition of faculty and professional staff members for outstanding work honors those whose long-term efforts reflect dedication, talent, and solid evidence of academic professionalism.

We believe that the projects described herein and those to be featured in future issues will help make good teachers into great teachers and promising students into high achieving students.

FOCUS is a tangible expression of our pride in these scholar-educators and what they do each day to enhance this learning community. We salute each of them for a job well done.

Wayne D. Andrews
President



On The Cover: Stephen Tirone

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Comments or questions to:
focus@moreheadstate.edu

About The Focus Edition

FOCUS—a point to which something converges or from which something diverges—illustrates the ideals of Morehead State University for bringing the best research together and encouraging new efforts in distinctly different areas. The goal of FOCUS is to recognize faculty and professional staff involvement in sponsored research and creative projects and to illustrate diversity in the University's mission of teaching, research, and service to the people of East Kentucky. Through the combination of teaching with research, scholarship, and creative activities, an environment in which knowledge may be discovered, integrated, and disseminated to educate students is created. FOCUS is intended to illustrate the breadth of research within the University and thus describes only a few of the on-going projects under way in a variety of areas.

Morehead State University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, Vietnam Era, recently separated, or other protected veteran status, or disability in its educational programs, services, activities, employment policies, and admission of students to any program of study. In this regard, the University conforms to all the laws, statutes, and regulations concerning equal employment opportunities and affirmative action. This includes: Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistant Act of 1974, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Kentucky Revised Statutes 207.130 to 207.240. Vocational educational programs at Morehead State University supported by federal funds include industrial education, vocational agriculture, business education, home economics education and the associate's degree program in nursing.

FOCUS

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Volume 14

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RESEARCHERS

MOVING OBJECTS

Spatial Distribution of Visual Attention Within Moving Objects

Studying how people pay attention when different objects are moving in different directions in a scene was the focus of a research project conducted by Morehead State University Assistant Professor of Psychology Dr. Cary Feria.

An example of when this type of scenario plays out in real life happens every day – driving in traffic. Dr. Feria said “motorists have to pay attention to the different directions and speeds of movement from pedestrians, other vehicles, cyclists, and any other number of objects.” Using a specially developed computer program, Dr. Feria used more than 100 human subjects to study how their attention was distributed among various moving objects.

The work for the study, titled “Spatial Distribution of Visual Attention Within Moving Objects,” was performed with a grant from the Kentucky National Science Foundation EPSCoR. Research took place between June 1, 2005 and May 31, 2007, with the help of 10 undergraduate students.

In her project summary, Dr. Feria noted that recent research has indicated that it’s possible for people to pay attention to selected moving objects in a visual scene, but she chose to investigate the nature of how people distribute their attention within an object in these circumstances.

“I think there were some interesting questions in this area that hadn’t been looked at yet,” Dr. Feria said.

Dr. Feria’s objectives included testing whether the attentional distribution focuses on the most stable point of a moving object, or on the most strategically advantageous

location on the object, and how the attentional distribution is affected by the characteristics of the scene, the objects themselves and the demands of the task.

The subjects for the study, who received course credits in Introduction to Psychology and other related subjects for their participation, viewed visual displays on a computer screen and responded to the displays using the computer keyboard. Their objective was to track several moving line segments or spheres and keep them apart from several distractor objects. While they were doing this, subjects also had to detect small dots that appeared briefly on the objects. Their accuracy at detecting these dots was used to help measure their distribution of attention within the objects.

Dr. Feria said data and statistical analysis were ongoing in early summer of 2007, and that she was compiling results to present as a manuscript for a journal article.

“The findings need to be taken into account in areas like airplane cockpit design and design of highways and street signs,” she said.

The project summary also notes that research may continue with future funding from the National Science Foundation or National Institutes of Health, with a future goal “to develop and test a model that reconciles the results on the relationship between object-based and space-based attention that have been found in single, stationary object paradigms and multiple, moving object paradigms.”



PARENTHOOD

Attachment as a Predictor of Adjustment to School Among Children in Eastern Kentucky

There are parents who are actively involved in their children's lives and are engaged with them daily on an emotional level, and there are parents who primarily attend to their children's basic needs. And, of course, there are those whose parenting styles fall somewhere in between these two descriptions.

Dr. Shari L. Kidwell, an associate professor of psychology at Morehead State University, has been studying how the quality of parent-child relationships (i.e. attachment) impacts students' school experiences. This research study, funded by the Institute for Regional Analysis and Public Policy (IRAPP), is titled "Attachment as a Predictor of Adjustment to School Among Children in Eastern Kentucky."

Dr. Kidwell said the children were first brought to campus at age four as part of the study and their attachment bonds to their parents were studied – 55 families in all. Data was collected through child and parent interviews, observations of parents working with their children and questionnaires completed by teachers. In 2006, the follow-up phase of the study was undertaken to explore how children were adjusting to elementary school. Children averaged 6 years of age in this most recent wave of the study.

Prominent in Dr. Kidwell's questions were her study participants' experiences in terms of academic skills, self concept,

peer and teacher relationships, emotion regulation and behavior problems. About 30 students have helped Dr. Kidwell collect data and complete standardized ratings of parent-child task.

Dr. Kidwell said the main challenge was finding families several years after they'd first participated in the study, as some had since moved and left no current contact information. "Each and every family was very important to us," she said.

Consistent with existing research, Dr. Kidwell's findings suggest that parental relationships are important to the future success of their children as they grow. Some had high family stress and the children in these cases weren't doing as well, particularly in terms of behavior in school.

"A number of the parents in our study were depressed and that probably affected their parenting and the attachment their children had with them," she said.

Dr. Kidwell's intentions are for this research to inform the development of programs aimed at preventing behavioral and learning difficulties. The study's ultimate findings will be critical in helping determine intervention needs for children. Studies of such interventions are likely to be successful in securing future federal grant monies, she added.



a healthy road

Transportation Modeling of Accessibility to Appalachian Health Services

Does the distance to health care services like hospitals and clinics have an effect on people's health?

That's the question that anthropologist Dr. Timothy Hare with the Institute for Regional Analysis and Public Policy at Morehead State University asked in his research project "Transportation Modeling of Accessibility to Appalachian Health Services."

The project was funded by MSU with a \$5,000 grant, with the research taking place from 2005 to 2006, Dr. Hare said.

He used mapping and computer technology to estimate how many minutes it would take people to travel between their home and the nearest hospitals.

He used U.S. Census data to determine the characteristics of people living in these gaps between facility services areas in terms of age, sex, ethnic and racial makeup, education, economic sector and wealth.

The results were clear cut, he said, and disturbing. "The end result is that yes, the longer the travel time to hospitals for various services, the worse people's health gets," Dr. Hare said. "More people were actually dying from heart-related conditions who were traveling longer distances."

Poverty is another major indicator of poor health, he noted, and people who live further from hospitals tend to be poorer and less educated, compounding the problem. One publication, *Southeastern Geographer*, has already accepted Dr. Hare's research findings for publication and he expects others to follow.

He also wants policymakers to understand the message behind the study's results. If legislators can better understand the needs of their constituents, the health care industry could shift its resources to better serve areas with otherwise limited access to health care facilities.

"It really is important information for anyone who's involved in making decisions about health care, in making decisions about road construction, in making decisions about where to locate new facilities."

EYE ON THE STORM

Monitoring Forest Response to Ice Storm Damage Using Time Series Satellite Imagery



Many people's recollections of ice storm damage are limited to experiencing the effects of icy branches falling and snapping power lines, leaving them temporarily in the dark. But the lasting effects of these storms on the natural landscape are something that people like Dr. Christine McMichael are studying to help meet the research needs of forest managers and scientists.

With a \$4,660 internal grant from Morehead State University in 2004, Dr. McMichael, an assistant professor of Geography in the Institute for Regional Analysis and Public Policy (IRAPP), began working on a project called "A Remote Sensing-based Assessment of Recent Ice Storm Damage in Eastern Kentucky Forests." In her research, she learned that between January 1990 and December 2002, Kentucky had 18 ice storms with variety in types and levels of icy precipitation as defined by the National Weather Service.

Remote sensing involves analysis based on aerial photography and satellite imagery. Dr. McMichael became interested in how it could be used to assess ice storm damage following an ice storm in February 2003 that lasted more than 30 hours. That's nearly five

times the average storm length, and after that particular storm, two inches of ice covered tree limbs in some areas. Subsequent United States Forest Service aerial photography and field verification efforts revealed that about 20,000 acres of forest on the Cumberland Ranger District in the Daniel Boone National Forest were negatively impacted by this storm.

Dr. McMichael wondered whether a forest's recovery could be monitored using multi-spectral 30-meter spatial resolution imagery. She sought to determine why damage varied across the landscape and whether it was due to differences in soil, terrain, type of forest community or forest management practices. She also wanted to learn what would be the best time of year to collect image data for this type of analysis.

"Landsat Thematic Mapper satellite imagery acquired prior to and following the ice storm were obtained from the United States Geological Survey and then pre-processed to remove errors due to satellite, sensor and atmospheric effects," Dr. McMichael explained. The project involves using a set of six Landsat images taken in June and September 2002, 2003 and 2004,

with forest conditions analyzed in satellite images taken prior to and following the February 2003 ice storm.

Her work has continued with a \$4,977 grant in 2005-06 from the Kentucky Space Grant Consortium for the project "Monitoring Forest Response to Ice Storm Damage Using Multi-temporal Satellite Imagery." In the official project description, Dr. McMichael described the forested lands of eastern Kentucky as "one of the Commonwealth's most valuable assets, providing economic and recreational opportunities for local communities and habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species."

She also noted how the condition of a forest impacts other natural processes such as flooding, soil erosion and the diffusion of non-native plant species.

From the outset, Dr. McMichael enlisted the help of Jeffrey Lewis at the U.S. Forest Service, Daniel Boone National Forest – Cumberland Ranger District Office.

"He has provided valuable field-based, remote sensing and geographic information systems data sets as well as his forestry expertise and knowledge of this area," Dr. McMichael said.

Others assisting with the project include undergraduate students Matthew Faust and Grant York. Dr. McMichael is working to establish a collaborative research endeavor with Clark University in Massachusetts and Ryerson University in Toronto to compare and contrast post-ice storm forest damage and recovery in the northeastern United States with that in eastern Kentucky.

In the end, Dr. McMichael said results are expected to make it easier for forest managers and private forest land owners in areas impacted by the February 2003 ice storm to rehabilitate and make plans regarding the forested areas for which they're responsible, while also improving the ability to use satellite imagery to assess and monitor forest response following ice storm events.



DOWN FROM THE MOUNTAIN:

Cultural and Educational Outreach in East Kentucky

Reaching thousands of students and community members in rural Appalachia, a comprehensive educational outreach program of the Kentucky Folk Art Center at Morehead State University has been sharing the region's rich cultural heritage since 2004.

The KFAC has been in its current location, an extensively renovated former grocery warehouse, for the past decade. Matt Collinsworth, director of the center for the past four years, determined early in his career at KFAC that a museum education program was tops on his to-do list and began seeking grants and planning programming. The resulting project is "Down From the Mountain: Cultural and Educational Outreach in East Kentucky."

Money to fund the project soon followed, Collinsworth said. "By fall of 2004, we had been awarded a \$46,000 grant from the Steele-Reese Foundation and a \$50,000 grant from the MetLife Foundation's Museum Connections Program," he said. "We've been able to squeeze out more than two full years of programming from this relatively small amount of funding, and we have applied to other funders to expand the program."

The Kentucky Folk Art Center, the only art museum in East Kentucky, according to Collinsworth, had a museum education program in its early years, which was eliminated for funding reasons. But the need remained.

"We knew from regular contact with teachers and school administrators that the program was much needed in our region, and we learned over those years that the program needed to be

flexible, have multiple components, and clearly address Kentucky's core content requirements," he said.

The program was formally designed in the latter half of 2004 with the help of officials with the Kentucky Center for Traditional Music and since that time, Collinsworth reports, traveling exhibits have been touring schools for the past two years, reaching more than 15,000 students.

"Hundreds of middle school students have participated in oral history and photography projects, and thousands more have attended educational concerts and toured the museum," Collinsworth said.

The museum offers the region's teachers and students unique resources and support in arts and cultural education, giving young minds the inspiration and tools to think and act in creative ways, he noted.

"Basic skills like reading, writing and arithmetic are certainly important, but America, its culture and its economy are all about invention and imagination," he said. "Without solid arts, cultural and music education programs, we will struggle as a nation. There will be no more Steven Spielbergs or Walt Disneys, Bill Monroes or Charlie Parkers, Steve Jobs or Henry Fords. Creative thinking is the key to improving life in East Kentucky and throughout America."

BRONZE TECHNIQUE



Visitors, students and faculty at Morehead State University have undoubtedly noticed the Stephen Tirone Sculpture Concourse just outside Rada Hall, with bronze sculptures featuring children studying and playing.

Tirone, a Department of Art faculty member who recently finished his 25th year with the university, donated his time and skills toward the project during the past five years, outside of his normal teaching responsibilities. The concourse was dedicated in his honor in October 2006. An inscription on the nameplate of the concourse bears a quote from Tirone that reads, "Each work I complete has demanded my highest level of imagination, determination, skill, knowledge, experience and willingness to work hard to accomplish the best possible piece."

It also required some selflessness on his part. Tirone wasn't paid to make the sculptures — donors supplied funding for the materials to create them, with the remaining funds used to purchase equipment for Tirone's art students and the art department.

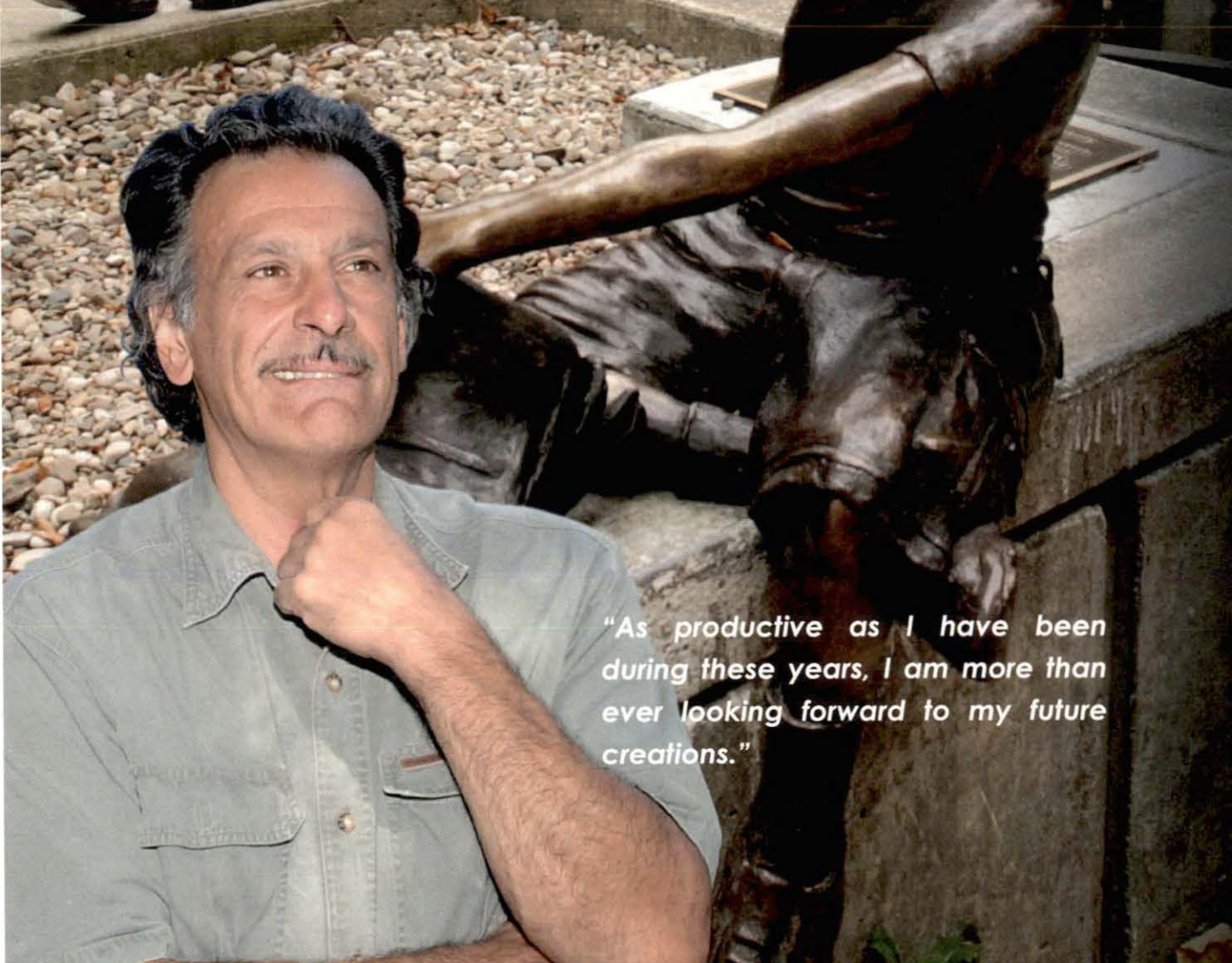
For his work on the sculptures, Tirone received the 2006 Outstanding Fund Raiser of the Year distinction by the MSU Foundation Inc. He also was the 2006 Distinguished Creative Productions Award recipient. The annual award, typically presented to a faculty member at MSU, includes a check for \$2,500.

"Personally, it made me feel very good that my efforts merited such recognition," Tirone said. "Professionally, I purchased a new welder, which cost the entire amount of the award. I used it to finish three bronze sculptures after receiving the award."

For the past decade, Tirone has worked mostly in bronze, though he has experience working with other materials — he spent six months in Italy carving marble, for instance.

In a written statement detailing his professional career, Tirone said his first creation was completed at age 9 or 10, and from then, he has continued to create and pursue his artistic ambitions.

"I am constantly attending galleries and museums and reading as much as I can about my life's passion," he writes.



"As productive as I have been during these years, I am more than ever looking forward to my future creations."

"As productive as I have been during these years, I am more than ever looking forward to my future creations."

Tirone said his students also have been encouraged to assist him in the studio, observing his techniques and learning from the way he tackles any challenges that arise.

"Students are able to learn from real life participation in what being an artist can be like outside of the formal classroom," he says. "They have been able to watch me solve complicated problems presented by some intricate pieces and watched as some pieces failed during their construction."

Tirone has exhibited and lectured regionally, nationally and internationally in both ceramics and sculpture and has received creative production grants to further his work and artistic development.

"Creating work in both of these areas has been enormously satisfying for me," he said.

Tirone wants to instill the same artistic passion in his students as he is able to explore and express in his work.

"I bring experience to my students and try to facilitate their goals and dreams as they become artists themselves," he said.





The Kentucky Appalachian Higher Education Network Center

The Kentucky Appalachian Higher Education (AHED) Center at Morehead State University is helping more and more high school students discover ways to get “AHED” through higher education.

With a mission of “Helping Students Focus on the Future,” the program was modeled after a successful initiative of the Ohio Appalachian Center for Higher Education. The shared goal is to provide Partner School Access Program grant money to participating high schools to expose the students to the idea of attending a university, college, community college or technical school as reality, not just a dream.

In doing so, it builds students’ confidence and self-esteem, helping them and their parents explore a variety of college opportunities and career possibilities and help them overcome any personal or financial barriers along the way. It also positions the area to foster a better educated workforce to further economic development in Eastern Kentucky.

Dr. Dale Duvall, special assistant to the president for the P-16 Program at Morehead State University, originally wrote the grant to get the program underway at MSU at the invitation of officials with the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington, D.C., a federal-state partnership that works to improve the quality of life and economic development in Appalachian states.

Dr. Duvall said 15 public school systems in the region are currently participating in KY AHED. Of these, 10 school districts have joined the effort within the past year, and four new districts are expected to come on board this year, for a total of 19, he added. Cathy Powers, KY AHED program director, emphasized that this

year’s program is targeted to kids who are currently undecided.

She further stated that KY AHED also has partnered with four community and technical colleges – Ashland, Hazard, Big Sandy and Southeast.

KY AHED is funded by the ARC through the Governor’s Office for Local Development, with renewable grant awards available of up to \$5,000 per year to develop new ways to improve students’ access to and success in higher education. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis with written proposals submitted by districts. When considering where to allocate grant dollars, KY AHED officials look at such issues as need, current college-going rates among students, unemployment and poverty levels, as well as the levels of dedication, enthusiasm and initiative those schools, school districts and community members display.

Examples of activities that participating schools are undertaking with Access Program grant dollars include encouraging students to visit higher education institutions that interest them, engaging parents in the college selection and financial aid process, holding college and career fairs, hosting motivational speeches given by college students and successful adults who overcame barriers to completing their own postsecondary education, encouraging teacher and staff visits to schools and industries, and networking with business alliances and partnerships. Others include assigning essays to students on such topics as college costs, programs and economic advantages, and recognizing students who have applied to college by displaying their names conspicuously in the schools.



THE NEXT STEP

According to KY AHED data, high schools receiving these grant dollars through AHE centers in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia are reporting higher numbers of students enrolling in postsecondary educational facilities, often increasing the percentage of students with college plans in their futures to 65 percent, the national average, or in some cases 80 or 90 percent.

Several school district officials have noted that with the price of gas and other expenses

"This project has been a lifesaver for high schools who chose to participate in the program."

it would commonly take for students and their families to visit colleges and universities out of town, the KY AHED funding has made finding the right fit for students and these educational facilities not just easier, but in some cases, possible.

"This project has been a lifesaver for high schools that chose to participate in the program," Dr. Duvall said.

The aim isn't to channel all participating students to MSU but to any college or university that interests them, Dr. Duvall said. "When students from participating districts come to Morehead, they're given all the information they need and a warm welcome.

"We do make as friendly an environment for them as possible while they're here," he said.

The KY AHED Program's goal is to promote an environment of high expectations from high school students in relation to their

postsecondary plans and experiences by helping local districts find ways to encourage students through career exploration and awareness, and to promote greater student achievement and higher rates of learning enrollments.

It also helps students learn what academic skills will be needed in their first year of college and how they can be best poised and prepared for their career of choice. It also has established a network between the high schools and area higher education institutions to help students prepare for college success, with a particular emphasis on math and science. This program, which began in September 2005, was extended by two years to 2009 with an additional \$250,000 in funding expected from the Governor's Office of Economic Development.

Dr. Duvall and Powers praised the effectiveness of the program and its impact on students' lives and futures.

"This has been a wonderful opportunity to partner with a federal agency, with state government, with community and technical schools and high schools all working toward the same goal."

A Novel Idea

A Chronicle of Higher Education: Representations of the "University in Ruins" in Contemporary Fiction



Reading a 1985 National Book Award-winning publication inspired Annie Adams, an associate professor of English in the Department of English, Foreign Languages and Philosophy at Morehead State University, to

launch a new research project in the summer of 2005.

The project, titled "A Chronicle of Higher Education: Representations of the 'University in Ruins' in Contemporary Fiction," was a study of academic fiction for which she received a \$5,000 summer fellowship. Her 32-page analysis is currently under consideration for publication.

Adams decided to pursue this project after reading the postmodern classic "White Noise" by Don DeLillo. Online sources describe the book, set at a Midwestern college, as the tale of a professor facing his own mortality after a cloud of toxic chemicals engulfs his town.

Her work, which analyzes DeLillo's novel and a host of other texts, demonstrates how "university-themed postmodern fictions have reinvigorated the campus novel by eschewing the aesthetics of realism in their rendering of the contemporary academy, or what Bill Readings would call the 'post-historical university.'

"Now, I think I have a better understanding of some current trends in contemporary fiction," she said.

Adams has already given two presentations based on this project for the College English Association and the Midwestern Modern Language Association. She will continue to use these new insights in her classroom, applying them to other 20th century writers whose work represents the academy.

"I thought it was a worthwhile project, rethinking the academic novel," she said.



Meeting Demand

Empirical Comparison of the Effectiveness of Face-to-Face Teleconferenced and Web-Facilitated Meetings

With all the technology-based communications options business executives have at their disposal today, which ones set the stage for the best types of decision making? And do these pale in comparison to good old-fashioned face-to-face meetings and dialogue?

Those are some of the questions that Morehead State University Professor of Information Systems Dr. Donna McAlister-Kizzier has asked, and continues to answer, with years of extensive research.

One applied research project, titled "Empirical Comparison of the Effectiveness of Face-to-Face, Teleconferenced and Web-Facilitated Meetings," began with data collection in spring 2004 and the effort is still going strong.

According to the original project proposal, 26 validated effectiveness factors were clustered under six constructs for five meeting venues, including synchronous (or same-time, same place) face-to-face computer-enhanced meetings, both asynchronous (different-place, different-time) and synchronous Web meetings, synchronous teleconferenced meetings and synchronous face-to-face traditional meetings.

The research explored what meeting participants' perceptions are in each situation and what differences exist

among the meeting venues, as well as what types and quality of ideas result for each type of meeting venue, and the effectiveness of each meeting venue. Among other issues, the study explores such effectiveness factors as type and quality of ideas generated among the various meeting venues.

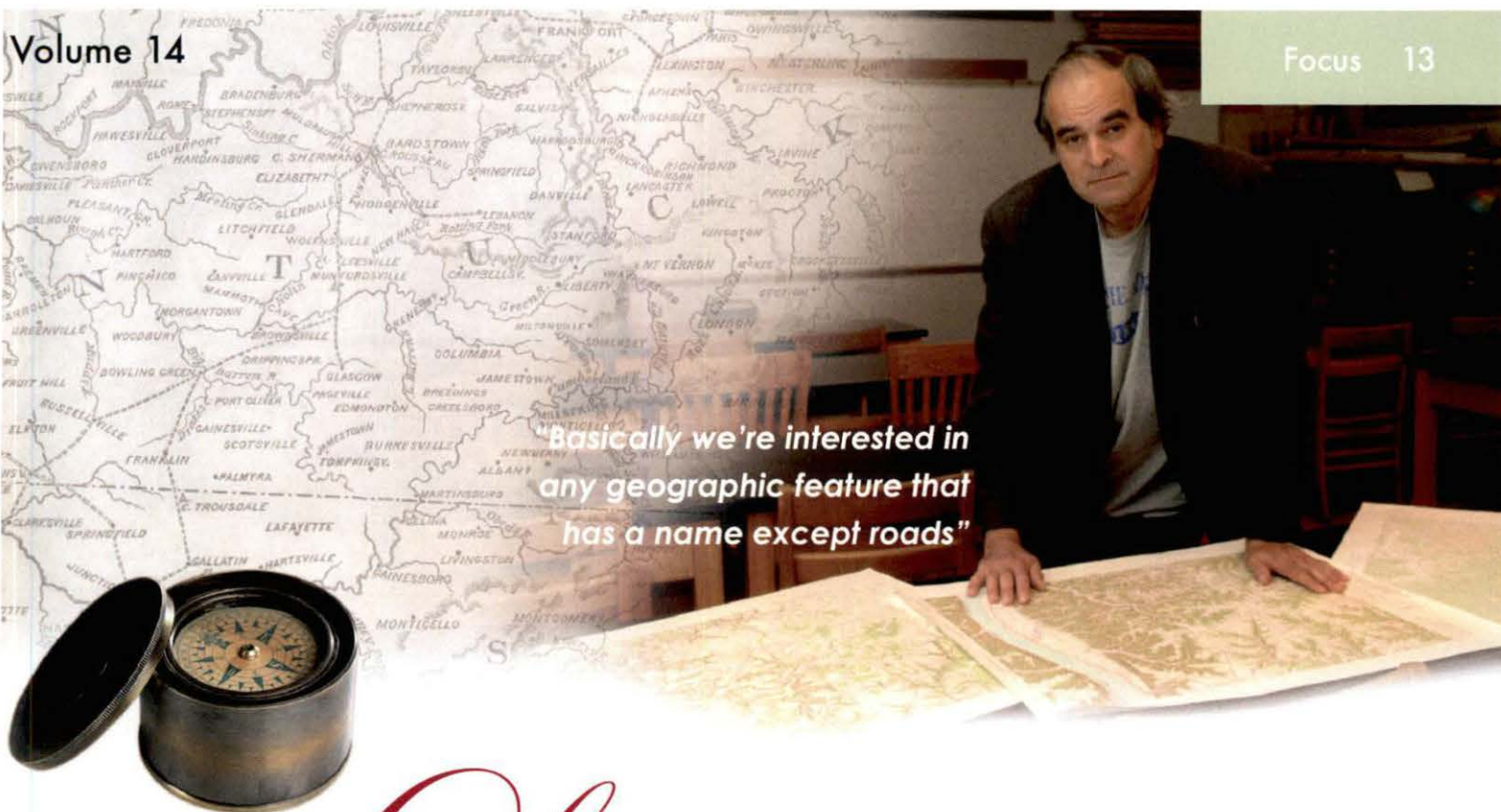
Dr. McAlister-Kizzier said in her career, which includes a senior professorship at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, she's conducted many studies about the effectiveness of decision making as impacted by technology and the various methods of teaching using emerging technologies.

In today's global business climate, Dr. McAlister-Kizzier said, it's highly unusual for people in major corporations to fly everyone involved in operations worldwide to meetings in a certain location. "It's just too expensive," she said.

While at MSU, Dr. McAlister-Kizzier has incorporated technology for Electronic Meeting Systems (EMS), a type of computer software that facilitates group decision making, into her research and her teaching. She, other professors across the country and doctoral students, have studied the effectiveness of these systems. Dr. McAlister-Kizzier's research validated past research data and pinpointed seven different ways of conducting effective meetings using technologies such as speakerphone/teleconferencing, integrated Webcams with video and audio, text messaging and text/audio messaging. In the next phase of the project, she'll also take a look at integrating podcasting into meetings and decision making.

"It takes an extra layer of creativity to find out how to conduct meetings effectively," she said.

To date, her work has been funded through university resources, but as it continues, she expects to apply for external grant funding. Dr. McAlister-Kizzier was recently awarded a research sabbatical and is writing for submission to top journals in her field. She's integrated her study into a senior-level class at MSU, one that's now required for all students in the College of Business. The course provides her with "a powerful opportunity to achieve her professional mission to integrate teaching, research and service into her university-related work."



"Basically we're interested in any geographic feature that has a name except roads"

LATITUDES & LONGITUDES

Developing a Geographic Names Information System for the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Helping complete the first half of Phase II of the U.S. Geological Survey's Geographic Names Information System for Kentucky is the goal of Dr. Steven Parkansky.

Simply put, he's helping pinpoint locations in East Kentucky to enter into a database the USGS is compiling nationwide. All 50 states have been or are about to finish Phase II, but Kentucky was among the last, with 2 ½ years left on the current four-year contract that includes only the Eastern half of the state, Dr. Parkansky said. The western part of the state hasn't been put out for bid.

According to the USGS, the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) was developed by the USGS along with the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. The National Geographic Names Data Base is the largest of the GNIS databases, compiling records ranging from "populated places, schools, reservoirs and parks, to streams, valleys, springs and ridges," with a goal to standardize these types of features' names. The names of books and historic maps verifying the information are cited along with any

alternative names for the places listed.

During his service on the Governor's Geographic Advisory Committee, Dr. Parkansky learned Kentucky needed Phase II completion for the database project and put together a proposal for the public bid process. His proposal, with a total contract amount of about \$300,000 including MSU's matching funds in labor, equipment and transportation, was accepted in July 2005.

"Some aspects of the project have been easy," Dr. Parkansky said, "as there's a lot of modern data readily available and digitized with locations of schools and other buildings." But a task that was more difficult, yet very interesting for him, involved locating other places that aren't natural features like streams and valleys. For all locations, he has relied on a variety of sources, including government agencies, gazetteers, state and county map collections, atlases, specialized listings for natural or historical features, historical sources, electronic sources including those on CD-ROM and online and documents found in libraries, repositories and archives.

"Basically we're interested in any geographic feature that has a name except roads," Dr. Parkansky said.

The USGS also doesn't publish sensitive information involving national security like details about military installations or coordinates of caves due to their delicate ecological features, Dr. Parkansky noted.

The USGS database for the United States as a whole has 3 to 4 million places named, Dr. Parkansky said, and Kentucky's Phases I and II for the eastern part of the state will have between 60,000 and 70,000 places named with latitude and longitude coordinates. Individuals will have access to this information online, and searching and mapping engines on the Web can use it as a source, along with other government, business, planning, education and general applications. Dr. Parkansky uses the database when he teaches his cartography students.

"If someone wants to know where a place is, this is the database."

FOCUS

On Research and Creative Productions at Morehead State University

