

## Welcome to WaTER Drops!

Beginning with this very first issue, the OU WaTER Center will be sending out a bi-monthly newsletter of research, events, and happenings in our world of water and sanitation for emerging regions. This is our way of both saying "thank you" to our many friends and partners and providing a format for updating you periodically on our work and wanderings across the globe. Founded in 2006, the mission of the WaTER Center is to promote peace by advancing health, education and economic development through sustainable water and sanitation solutions for impoverished regions, using innovative teaching, research, and service/leadership activities. We hope you enjoy this inaugural edition of WaTER Drops.

## 2011 International WaTER Conference



The 2nd Biennial University of Oklahoma Water Technologies for Emerging Regions Conference was held October 24-26, 2011. The conference theme, Synergy at the Interface: Integrating Technology, Social Entrepreneurship and Behavior Change, was designed to bring together participants from multiple disciplines responding to the UN Millennium Development Goals of bringing water and sanitation to emerging regions and to allow participants a forum for sharing experience and discussing challenges and solutions.

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## Fawcett Wins 2011 OU Water Prize



The 2011 University of Oklahoma International Water Prize was presented to Mr. Ben Fawcett, co-author of the milestone book, The Last Taboo: Opening the Door on the Global Sanitation Crisis, on October 24, 2011 at the International WaTER Conference Banquet. The Prize was presented by Dr. Berrien Moore, III. Following the presentation of the award, Fawcett delivered a plenary address to conference attendees entitled "Another 'Great Stink' is Needed: Sanitation and Hygiene in Poor Urban Areas," which emphasized the importance of improved sanitation for public health and the global economy.

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## Visit and Seminar from Dr. Kara Nelson



On January 27, Dr. Kara Nelson spent a full day of meetings, talks and lunches with both students and faculty at the University of Oklahoma. She awed students with her personal account of how her current career evolved in response to various stimuli - intellectual, geographic, and romantic! Kara is an associate professor in civil and environmental engineering at the University of California, Berkeley (Ph.D., U.C. Davis). Her research program addresses critical issues at the intersection of public health and the environment, with a focus on reducing the threat posed by waterborne pathogens by improving our engineering infrastructure to make it more effective, affordable, and to maximize its environmental benefits. She currently conducts research in the United States, Mexico, Ghana, India and Bolivia.

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## Laura Brunson Takes a Passage to India



Skeletal fluorosis in India was the subject of a research trip by a University of Oklahoma Ph.D. fellow in Environmental Science and a master's student in Public Health and Industrial Hygiene.

In December 2010, Laura Brunson was awarded the T.H. Lee Williams International Travel Scholarship from the OU Graduate College. The award made it possible for her to travel to Nagpur, India, where she presented research at an international water conference.

Brunson is a Ph.D. student in Environmental Science at OU's Norman campus. She also is an EPA STAR fellow and a Robert Hughes Centennial fellow. Brunson was accompanied on this trip by Aimee Barrett, a Master's student in Public Health and Industrial Hygiene at OU's Health Sciences campus in Oklahoma City.

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## Ganga Goes to Ghana



Ganga Moorthy, a senior at OU, recently completed David Sabatini's honors course on "Water for Health, Education, Development and Peace in Emerging Regions". Little did she know how quickly she would be putting the information into practice!

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## New Field Methods Course Offered in May



Many health problems can be ameliorated by simple drinking water and sanitation systems, making life more comfortable for millions of people across the globe. A new course, Field Methods, will be offered this May, providing a hands-on practicum covering skills necessary for construction and implementation of water and sanitation projects in developing countries. Course modules are chosen to reflect the typical projects and types of skills needed by development workers in organizations such as Peace Corps, USAID, Engineers Without Borders and non-governmental organizations.

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## Hong Receives Grants



CEES associate professor Yang "Eric" Hong, Ph.D., leads the Remote Sensing and Hydrology Lab at The National Weather Center and also serves as a co-director of the OU WaTER Center. He is an affiliated faculty member of the Atmospheric Radar Research Center, the Center for Spatial Analysis and the Center for Analysis and Prediction of Storms. Hong's expertise is in remote sensing (primarily satellites), hydrology, water resources and climate variability. Several of his projects focus on hydrological hazard prediction and water resources in emerging regions.

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## About the Water Center

Developing Countries are replete with interventions that fail due to:

1. use of inappropriate technologies,
2. failure to consider cultural/human factors, and
3. failure to mobilize local entrepreneurs.

The WaTER Center seeks to develop sustainable solutions that we believe are only possible through integrating technology, business and social understanding.

**Vision:** The vision of the WaTER Center is to pioneer integrated solutions that revolutionize development and adoption of sustainable water and sanitation technologies for developing countries through teaching, research and service innovations. We will do this through integrating technological, business and human factors in pursuit of sustainable water and sanitation solution.

**Mission:** The mission of the WaTER Center is to promote peace by advancing health, education, and economic development through sustainable water and sanitation solution for impoverished regions, using innovative teaching, research, and service/leadership activities.

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