

together

EXPLORING WHAT CAN BE

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Social Sciences

FALL 2014 NO. 07



JENNIFER SYVERTSEN

READINESS

read-i-ness [red-ee-nis]

Noun: prepared or available for service, action, or progress



from the interim dean

The test of a robust organization—or a society for that matter—is whether it can gear up for new challenges. Some of these challenges can be anticipated. California will have earthquakes and wildfires. Budget crises in higher education are an artifact of life as public education relies more on tuition and donations, and less on state support.

Other situations catch us by surprise. When our longtime dean, Sheila Bienenfeld, retired in June our college fully expected to usher in a new dean in July 2014. Instead, the search is being extended and our college is under the stewardship of an

interim dean—me! I will be the interim dean until a search is completed that will bring us fresh talent and vision.

I served as Dean Bienenfeld's associate dean for three years. For nearly 20 years before that I taught anthropology and did research on silicon places—the places in the world that are reshaping our future, consciously creating new technologies and new social orders. Silicon Valley is such a place, poised to take advantage of opportunities as they come, and rebound from failures.

I am joined in the dean's office by Lynne Trulio, a distinguished Environmental Studies scientist and former chair. She will be acting associate dean while I serve as interim. She combines a dedication to students with a deep knowledge of the university that will serve our college well. During this time of transition, we will be reflecting on what makes our college strong, resilient and dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and communities around us. We will make ourselves ready.

The stories you will be reading in this issue of *Together* highlight how the social sciences prepare us to face difficult futures. How we face those futures, and what we do in the immediate face of an emergency or disaster, directly reflects how well we work together.

Several departments are highlighted in this issue, including the Department of Anthropology and the Department of Political Science, which houses the master in public administration degree. However, every discipline in our college contributes to our readiness for environmental and social emergencies. The snapshots you will be seeing capture compelling stories, but there are many more.

Frances Edwards, director of the MPA program, draws on global and national experience to prepare the next generation of emergency managers and those ready for disasters. Her colleague, alumnus Dan Goodrich, is joined by many other alumni in making us safer and more secure.

Their stories are paralleled by those of A.J. Faas and applied anthropology alumnus Kanhong Lin, in demonstrating that readiness is more than first response. How do cultures use their traditions and innovations to sustain themselves through recovery and societal stabilization? How can social scientists of all stripes help facilitate this resilience? How can we be better ready for the future?

Jan English-Lueck

Jan English-Lueck
Interim Dean

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READINESS



Lt. Richard Weger, left, and Det. Justin DeOliveira of the San José Police Department are MPA grads.

Justin DeOliveira pursued the MPA degree over three years while working as a patrol officer, but he was already used to juggling school and work. He got his B.S. in justice studies from SJSU in 2007 while he was a reservist in the U.S. Marine Corps, interrupting his studies for a year while he deployed to Iraq. Now a detective in the department's gang investigation unit, DeOliveira hopes having an advanced degree will help make him a more competitive candidate when he seeks a promotion within the department.

Prompted by an 80-officer layoff in 2010 in which DeOliveira came close to losing his job, he studied how staffing levels affect response times and field arrests in his department. He found that as the police force shrank, response times to calls increased and that as response times increased, the likelihood an officer would make an arrest in the field fell.

The police command asked for the report and can use his

data to improve how they serve a city of a million people even though the force has shrunk from about 1,400 officers in 2009 to about 1,000 today.

Jason Dwyer, also with a B.S. in justice studies from SJSU, decided to apply for the MPA program when he was a patrol officer to pick up management skills he might put to use down the road in his career. So he was pleasantly surprised to find that the coursework had immediate applications to his job.

"It's not just theory, it's practical as well," says Dwyer, who finished the degree in 2007 and is now a lieutenant. "I never thought

Taking It to the Streets

San José police officers apply degrees on the beat

The San José Police Department is using data from thesis-level research papers written by officers who recently went through the College of Social Sciences' master of public administration degree program—an example of how the advanced degree program enriches government agencies in the Silicon Valley.

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Humanitarian Mission

Anthropology grad finds niche in Red Cross

While Kanhong Lin was pursuing an electrical engineering major at San José State University, he knew he hadn't found the right fit. And when he decided to drop out and look into joining the Army during the summer between his sophomore and junior years, he also had the sense he wasn't following the right track.

Looking for a field more true to his interests in social welfare, Lin picked up the College of Social Sciences course catalogue. One of the top entries—anthropology—caught his eye and he started to research the discipline and the major.

"Electrical engineering focused so much on abstract concepts and theories," Lin said recently from his home in New York City. "I was always more interested in questions of how does what I'm doing impact society and benefit people?"

When he looked at the anthropology course work and talked to Professor Chuck Darrah, now the department chair, he found the major he'd been looking for.

"It opened my mind to how I could see the world," Lin says.

That was in 2003. By 2013 Lin had earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree in anthropology from San José State. Along the way he had spent two and a half years in the Middle East—in Qatar, Jordan and Yemen—studying Arabic and doing field study.

It's a good thing "anthropology" leads the alphabet in course catalogues, because Lin's major has led him to a burgeoning career in humanitarian aid. Today, he is applying the concepts of anthropology in his second year with the American Red Cross of Greater New York.

"It's been one of my lifelong goals to get a job at an international humanitarian agency," Lin says, and his job in New York just about fits that bill. He spent the past year responding to natural and man-made disasters throughout the five boroughs and helping immigrants from Nepal, Tibet, Jamaica, Russia, Haiti and a United Nations of other countries. He's even gotten to use his Arabic.

While he was an undergraduate, Lin took several classes with Professor Jan English-Lueck, who also reviewed his master's thesis, which examined the experiences of aging Arabic-speaking immigrants in the Bay Area.



"He was an amazing student," recalls English-Lueck. "Not just taking classes but really challenging the assumptions, really engaging."

English-Lueck, now the college's interim dean, wasn't surprised that Lin had found a place in the Red Cross.

"He had a passion to do something real in the world," she says, "and I think he's found his niche."

Lin entered the Red Cross through an Americorps program called the National Preparedness Response Corps and went to work in early 2013 as one of 120 Americorps members based in Red Cross chapters throughout the country.

On his first night on the job he responded to a two-alarm fire that had taken out the roof on the top floor of a duplex building in Brooklyn.

Lin remembers the scene like he remembers most of the disasters he has responded to in his relatively short stint at the Red Cross.

"When I arrived it was still quite chaotic," he says. It was in the early hours of the morning, still dark, and the people who lived in the side of the building declared uninhabitable had to be identified, comforted and helped with temporary housing, clothing and long-term housing assistance.

Building fires are the most common disasters the Red Cross responds to and they often happen in the middle of the night.

"People literally flee in their pajamas with no shoes," Lin says. His Red Cross truck is stocked with shoes and socks and blankets to keep people warm in the winter and bottled water to help them stay cool in the summer.



The Red Cross of Greater New York typically responds to 2,300 disasters a year and Lin's year on the response team reads like a news roundup: he was on site for a week after a gas line explosion in March 2013 destroyed two entire apartment buildings in East Harlem; he helped in the wake of the Metro-North train derailment in the Bronx just after Thanksgiving last year; and he helped out in back-to-back snowstorms in early 2014.

In between were the smaller daily catastrophes that rarely make the news but have devastating impacts on people's lives.

"It's challenging, absolutely," Lin says of the work. "It's kind of non-stop." Responding to natural disasters as well as human-caused ones, Lin is always concerned with immediate needs—food, clothing and shelter—as well as emotional support.

"A lot of the work is people work," he says, "Quickly building rapport, conveying information, calming them down."

Lin, like a lot of millennials, didn't know much about the Red Cross until he went to work for the agency.

"One or two generations before, the Red Cross was a very public organization that everyone knew about," he says. "Over time, they haven't been as public or as well-known."

His new job with the agency is as a disaster preparedness leader, a position that recognizes that in urban neighborhoods and with finite resources, the Red Cross can't just respond to disasters after they happen, it has to work in advance to help communities prepare to take care of themselves when trouble comes.

Since the beginning of this year he has been going into neighborhoods to train volunteers in emergency preparedness skills. The goal of the statewide campaign in New York is to train 20,000

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

during a class, 'Why are they making us do this?' It all made sense from a practical standpoint."

Dwyer credits the writing and public speaking skills he learned with his promotion to sergeant and then to the high-profile position as the department's public information officer in 2011.

Dwyer's master's research looked at how communication between different public safety agencies can affect safety during critical operations.

"It really improved my writing skills. You're doing it all the time and the standards are high," Dwyer says. "And when I was hand-picked by the chief to be our public information officer, I had already been inoculated against the fear of public speaking by presenting in class."

Richard Weger didn't look far afield from his job as the commander of the SJPd's Internal Affairs division when he was choosing his MPA research project.

His project attempts to design an early warning system for departments to identify problem officers.

"I looked at whether there is a predictive component to determining if an officer is going to get in trouble," says Weger, who has completed his research and is finishing his paper.

Weger has served as the head of the training unit, as well as the field training unit. He is now a patrol commander.

"Police officers (on patrol) don't do a lot of policy work," Weger says, which limits them as they seek promotions, "This program allows us to analyze and develop policy, so that when you move up the ranks you have that experience."

Weger started the program in 2008 and was enrolled for three years while working full time. He found the program made him a better writer and gave him analysis and management skills that he finds useful every day in his job.

"You hope to have a better decision-making process," Weger says. "Think things through and make better decisions." ●

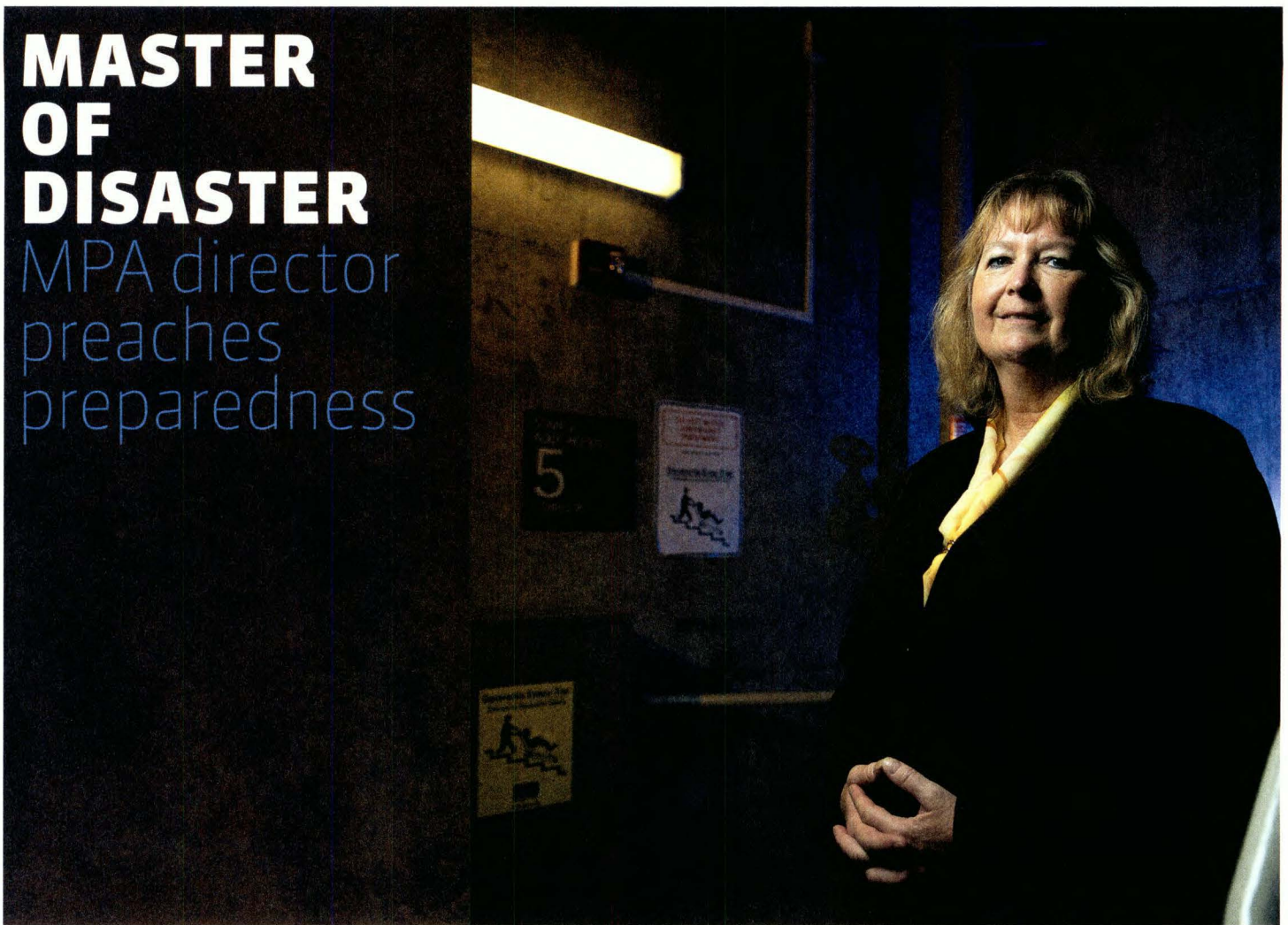
volunteers who can then take their knowledge back to their communities to have better outcomes when disaster strikes.

He was surprised to find that presentations were being given only in English, so he is rounding up volunteers who can spread the message in Russian, Haitian Creole, Spanish, Mandarin and other languages spoken in the communities of greater New York.

"We're developing partnerships, understanding communities and localizing the message to those networks," Lin says. "It's essentially anthropology." ●

MASTER OF DISASTER

MPA director preaches preparedness



When Frances Edwards saw images of shattered wine bottles and broken kegs in the aftermath of the earthquake that struck near the city of Napa in northern California in late August, she had an all-too familiar response.

"It could have been so much less destructive," Edwards said a week after the 6.0 magnitude quake, as cleanup was still underway and the area was estimating losses of \$1 billion.

"All of the wine bottles that broke—that could have been prevented. If an earthquake is big enough, everything will fall down. But Napa was a moderate quake. We know how to store materials safely. We know how to create racks that are seismically resistant. And many wineries did that and they had minimal losses."

Edwards can look around her own office on the fourth floor of Clark Hall and point to exactly the ways Napa vintners and wine merchants could have saved themselves money, time and heartache.

The bookshelves and filing cabinets that line Edwards' walls are bolted to the studs. Anything that is breakable is stuck down with one of the commercially available putties or Velcro systems that affix objects to desks and tables and counter tops. The same goes for heavy objects that could hurt someone if they fell during a temblor.

It's all more than academic to Edwards, who has carved out a niche as a nationally recognized authority on emergency management and disaster preparedness. As professor of political science in the College of Social Sciences, Edwards teaches a public administration course and also directs the college's master of public administration program, where she teaches disaster management courses.

Along with colleague Daniel Goodrich (*see Page 8*), she has literally written the book on emergency preparedness. *Introduction to Transportation Security* is the preferred textbook in the field of assessing threats to air, rail and highway safety.

While the MPA program turns out budget analysts, program directors and other government administrators, many of its gradu-

ates have gone on to jobs in fire and police departments and with the American Red Cross.

Recent graduates in Silicon Valley include William Kelly, chief of the Santa Clara Fire Department, Maya Esparza, who directs Santa Clara County's 2-1-1 help line, Curtis Jacobson, a deputy chief in the San José Fire Department, Christopher Moore, the recently retired San José police chief, and two San José Police Department lieutenants and a detective. (See Page 3).

Kelly, 53, who just received his MPA in May, said in addition to all of the benefits of a traditional public administration master's, he also found a cadre of public safety employees in the SJSU program, which helped him to connect with colleagues and future colleagues.

"As the leader of the fire department, I'm constantly looking to network with other public safety agencies and nonprofits and Frannie's enthusiasm for emergency management really drives that component of the program," Kelly says.

Edwards believes anyone who works in government—not only police officers and fire chiefs—and who gets training in emergency preparedness can help when disaster strikes.

"We think it's important for everybody who gets an MPA to have the opportunity to learn about emergency management so that when the time comes and they're working for a community in a public entity or a nonprofit they can make a positive contribution," Edwards says.

Because she's located in California—once referred to as "America's disaster theme park"—Edwards has her pick of potential mayhem causers. Avalanches, wildland fires, flooding and mudslides are all on the list of California disasters. But much of Edwards' research and government work has been focused on earthquakes, which in California are as predictable as rain.

"We can tell you with certainty you will never live through a hurricane in central or northern California (the water isn't warm enough)," she says. "With similar certainty I can tell you that the San Andreas Fault's likelihood of rupture is better than 80 percent in the next 100 years and 67 percent by 2030."

Preparing for the inevitable is just good government, Edwards believes. "I'm fascinated with it from a public policy perspective because one of the responsibilities given to government by the Constitution is the safety of the community," she says.

And money spent on preparing for disasters reduces money spent recovering from them.

"It seems to me that it's a smarter investment of scarce public dollars to help individuals to help prepare themselves, their families, their homes and their places of business to minimize the disaster's impact rather than do nothing and wait until the disaster happens."

Edwards starts to glow when she gets wound up talking about earthquakes. Her fervor for her work once sent her up and over

an industrial garbage bin outside San José City Hall, when she discovered someone had thrown out material she had prepared on mitigating damage in multi-story buildings with first-floor open spaces. Dumpster diving in the name of emergency preparedness is a mark of how strongly Edwards feels about her work and the field.

In the MPA program, Edwards works to light a spark for emergency preparedness under every future government administrator.

Nathaniel Montgomery enrolled in the MPA program to burnish his knowledge and credentials in administration after earning a B.A. in photography from San José State and setting his sights on a career in non-profit management.

"I didn't know what emergency management was, had never really heard of it," Montgomery says. But before he had completed the program in 2012, he had heard enough about emergency management that his interest was piqued.

He interned under Kelly at the Santa Clara Fire Department's Office of Emergency Services and he decided to sign up as a volunteer for the American Red Cross in San José.

"It lit the fire under me," Montgomery says, "and I went full force."

After graduation, Montgomery, 33, got hired by the American Red Cross Southern Nevada Chapter. One of the country's largest chapters, it serves more than two million people in four counties, including the city of Las Vegas.

"It's ever-changing," says Montgomery, who works as a disaster program manager and recently finished a seven-day operation to feed and shelter victims of flooding in northeastern Clark County and is also spending his time coaching and training volunteers and going into communities to talk about how to prepare for disasters.

Montgomery is just the type of graduate Edwards hopes to turn out.

"They are the future," she says. "I'm not going to live forever and I won't be able to keep doing this forever, so I try to turn them all into evangelists too."

How did Edwards get so captivated by and deeply immersed in such an arcane field?

"Oh, that's a long story," she says.

The short version is that after receiving her second master's degree and Ph.D. from New York University (her degrees are in international relations and urban planning) she moved to Japan with her husband, a naval officer, and their two small children.

"They have a lot of earthquakes there. We used to say we had one every Sunday," Edwards says. "And I learned from my Japanese neighbors how to prepare, what to do during an earthquake."

Back in the States, she went to work as a budget analyst for the Irvine Police Department and, because of her experience in Japan, was called on to develop earthquake preparedness materials

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

for crime prevention presentations. That led to a position as that city's emergency manager, which led to a similar position for the City of San José, which led to an active role in developing statewide emergency management systems.

In 2005, she made the leap to teaching. "I decided I would come to the university and raise the next generation," she says.

San José State has many programs in the field. In addition to the MPA coursework, the university's Mineta Transportation Institute offers a master's of science degree in transportation management; the Geology Department offers a course in natural disasters and the Geography Department offers courses that address issues of disasters in terms of geographical distribution.

Edwards makes the case that emergency preparedness connects with a host of social sciences. "It's related to anthropology—how do people respond to their environments, sociology—how do people respond to each other, geography, psychology, public policy."

Edwards still lectures on emergency preparedness out in the community as she fights an uphill battle to persuade people to spend time now making preparations for events they'd rather not think about.

"People who've thought about what they're going to do and have made a get-away kit with their critical documents and know how to reunite with their families have much less stress and a much better outcome than people who are suddenly confronted with a disaster and in the moment of highest stress now have to figure out what to do about it," Edwards says.

One of the first things she tells people is to keep an old pair of jogging shoes and a flashlight under their bed.

It's a lesson she learned from the Northridge earthquake, a 6.7 magnitude quake that hit Southern California's San Fernando Valley in 1994, killing dozens and injuring more than 8,000 people.

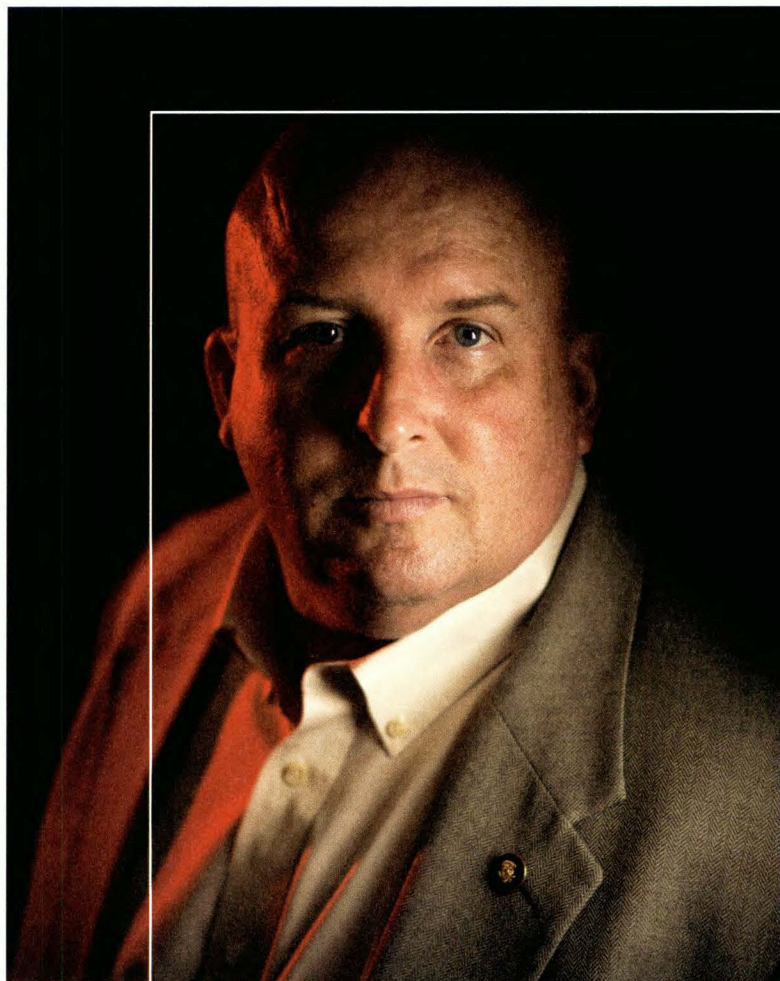
"The No. 1 injury from the Northridge earthquake, as big as it was, was glass in the feet. People showed up at hospital emergency rooms by the hundreds with glass in their feet," Edwards says.

That pattern has been repeated in subsequent earthquakes, leading Edwards to become an advocate of having shoes and light within reach in the event an earthquake strikes when people are most vulnerable—in bed, barefoot and in the dark.

"That way, when the earthquake happens you put your shoes on first, you turn your flashlight on second," Edwards says. "And now you don't cut your feet and you don't fall over your furniture, because that's the second cause of injury—tripping over things because they aren't where they belong."

It's a simple lesson worth repeating, especially in earthquake country. "But what did we hear from the Napa earthquake?" Edwards asks. "Most people who were injured had glass in their feet."

It should come as no surprise what Edwards has under her bed at home in Cupertino: Her old jogging shoes and a flashlight. ☉



Dan Goodrich, 47, studies weapons of mass destruction, deadly chemical agents, white-collar thievery and bridge explosions, among other nefarious threats to security.

Goodrich laughs a lot and he relishes telling a good story—about the guy who can tell you how to turn a household washing machine into a centrifuge, or the Boy Scout in Michigan who built a nuclear reactor in a backyard potting shed. (“Google ‘radioactive Boy Scout!’” he suggests.)

“I usually don’t get invited back to parties after I start talking about this stuff,” Goodrich says, laughing again. “‘What do you do?’ ‘Oh, I write about how to wipe out half the population.’”

As a double graduate of San José State and the College of Social Sciences (B.A. in political science in 1998 and MPA in 2002), Goodrich now teaches and serves as a research associate at the Mineta Transportation Institute on campus.

In his research, Goodrich has examined how to make disaster drills more effective and the role of police officers and military transportation vehicles in disasters.

In the classroom, Goodrich tries to open the eyes of transportation engineers and public administrators about the security hazards that surround them and their organizations.

When Goodrich teaches in the master’s of science in transportation management program, he begins every class by shaking up students’ definitions of security.

“For the first three or four weeks,” Goodrich says, “I ask them to suspend their morality and start looking at everything they touch and start thinking about how it can be leveraged against them and their organization.

“I have some of them call me up in the middle of it and say, ‘This is really disturbing.’ And I say, ‘Yes, I know it is.’”

Another key to Goodrich’s approach to security is something he calls “Think like a perp.” The perpetrator, or “perp” in police lingo, thinks differently than the law-abiding citizen, whether he’s a global terrorist or a pickpocket or an Internet thief. Goodrich asks his students to look at systems through the lens of the bad guys. He assigns them to read terrorist manifestos, examine lock-picking tools and research how to make bombs on the Internet.

“The idea is to put a seed in their mind and let it germinate,” he says. “If you have a lot of people that are exposed to how perps think and how they work, you’re in a greater position to be able to detect that behavior both inside and outside of an organization. That’s the core of what I try to teach.”

Learning to think like a perp also means looking at the world as a potential threat and Goodrich acknowledges that he scares a lot of students in those first few weeks.

“I don’t do it intentionally,” he says, “but yeah, that happens.”

Goodrich, a Southern California native, had already spent 10 years in the U.S. Marine Corps before he came to SJSU as an undergraduate. He had an idea he would go into government work, but found an interest in security, safety and emergency management. He came to the Mineta Institute in 2006.

“It’s fascinating work,” Goodrich says. “And every day is different.”

Goodrich likes to say he now wears two hats—one in security and the other in emergency management. Security deals with identifying and protecting against conscious efforts to undermine an organization—the mindset of a terrorist; while emergency management is concerned with unintentional threats that can be predicted—a hurricane or an earthquake.

He can spin terrifying scenarios while wearing either hat, and he has to guard against overwhelming students with too much doom and gloom.

“The people that step into this field of emergency management, I can tell you for the first few months you’re running on chocolate and caffeine,” Goodrich says. “Because you’re running all the what-if scenarios through your head. This could happen and that could happen. It cannot be a continuous conscious thought process because it will drive you nuts.”

Eventually, most people settle into a comfort zone of awareness without paranoia, he says.

“Finally at some point it just clicks,” he says, “and it’s like, yeah, all of this stuff is possible, but let’s put this stuff in real perspective.” ☉

'Disasters Guy' Finds Home

Anthropologist A.J. Faas examines the response to natural catastrophes

Anthropologist A.J. Faas would be the first to agree that he followed an improbable path to studying how humans interact in the face of disaster—one that started with a teenager's love of rhythm.

Faas was an accomplished professional drummer by the time he was in high school, commuting from his home in Montclair, N.J., to play in nearby New York City. His musical interest soon led him to learn West African and Caribbean traditional percussion.

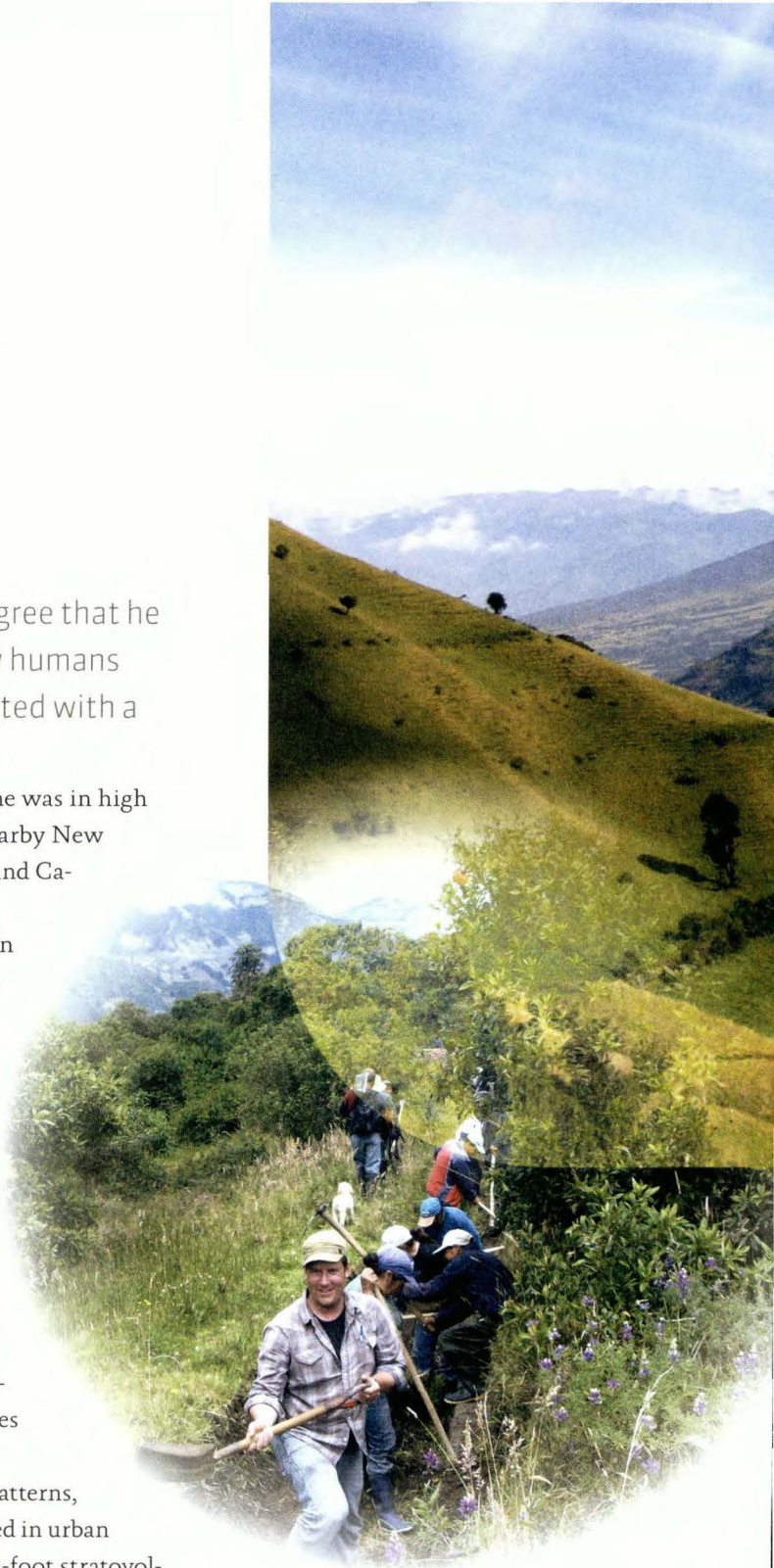
That opened the door to exploring ethnomusicology—which in turn contributed to his decision to enroll in a five-year B.A.-M.A. program in practicing anthropology at Montclair State University. Later, Faas did his Ph.D. fieldwork with farmers in Mexico and Ecuador who had been displaced by volcanic eruptions.

"I never thought I would be the 'disasters guy,'" says Faas, who recently arrived as an assistant professor of anthropology at San José State University. "But here I am, and I'm very, very happy to be here."

This semester, he is teaching an introduction to cultural anthropology course, an upper-level course on organizational studies and a graduate course on anthropological theory. "When they brought me here, they were very clear that they wanted me to contribute to the applied anthropology master's program," he says. He hopes to continually find ways to integrate his research and teaching.

Disasters have long been known to disrupt traditional cultural patterns, Faas says. In Ecuador, people from farming communities were resettled in urban areas following the 2006 eruption of Tungurahua, a massive 16,483-foot stratovolcano. When Faas visited in 2009 and again in 2011, he found a cultural practice called *minga*, a traditional form of cooperation involving the reciprocal exchange of labor, was undermined when people entered the wage-earning workforce and no longer had time to help one another.

His fieldwork in Ecuador entailed both formal surveys and ethnographic interviews. He lived in the villages, at times working alongside the residents digging irrigation ditches, an important form of pooled labor. "I'm thinking about it now, and my back hurts!" Faas says.



Faas has always taken a full-immersion approach to his education. While at Montclair State he joined a service-learning program that provided after-school help to inner-city kids and soon became the program's director. After completing his master's thesis on the effects of gentrification in urban neighborhoods, he



A.J. FAAS

moved to Mexico “on a whim” to teach English in the state of Michoacan. At the time, he did not speak Spanish.

Faas says Linda Whiteford, the University of South Florida anthropologist who would become his mentor, accepted him into the Ph.D. program a year later in part because she thought he was Mexican and could help with Spanish-language fieldwork in the villages around Popocatepetl, the active 17,800-foot volcano in the state of Puebla. By then, he says, his Spanish-language skills had dramatically improved.

After finishing his dissertation, Faas did a postdoctoral fellowship at North Carolina State University, where he joined

Fire Chasers, a project that studied networks of inter-agency communication and cooperation in response to large wildfires in the American Northwest.

Faas served as a methodologist and project manager—and spent a lot of time at incident command posts during large forest fires. The experience highlighted an under-served area of anthropology, he says. While anthropologists have for some time studied how the choices people make leave them vulnerable to natural disasters, as well as how resources are distributed during the long-term recovery process, not much attention has been paid to the initial response to disasters. “That’s an area that I see myself carving out,” he says.

Without quite planning it out, Faas feels he’s moved into an important area of anthropology with tremendous topical relevance.

“Certainly, disasters and environmental crises are relevant to all of anthropology,” he says. “In the era of climate change there is scarcely anyone working in areas that are untouched by crisis. It’s a body of knowledge that is increasingly relevant to society in general.”

There’s one downside, however. “I don’t get to play drums at work anymore.” ☉

College of Social Sciences

One Washington Square
San José, CA 95192-0107

Change service requested



SETTING IT STRAIGHT In the Spring 2014 issue of *Together*, the generous scholarship that helps undergraduate history major Christian Rodriguez attend San José State University was incorrectly identified. Rodriguez received the Margery H. and Raymond W. Vernon College of Social Sciences Dean's Scholarship. *Together* regrets the error.

We're in this together

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Jan English-Lueck, Ph.D., interim dean

EDITORIAL CONSULTANTS

Michael Haederle

Leslie Linthicum

PHOTOGRAPHY

Karl Nielsen

DESIGN

Eunice Ockerman