

The DEAN'S MESSAGE

The Christmas season has finally arrived, and we here at CPMS have already put up our Christmas lights and poinsettias. And with this newsletter, we also send you our warmest holiday wishes. I hope that the season finds you and your family happy and warm this year.

Some of you may already know that we have finally moved into our new suite this semester. All summer long, we deans were spread across campus, but we have now been reunited in our new offices in the Eyring Science Center. We are so grateful to have this new space in which we can work more effectively together to help our students and alumni. If you're in town for the holidays, we encourage you to visit us and take a peek!

This year has been one of growth for us. We were astounded at how much we grew as a college during 2012 in every aspect: students, faculty, funding, and alumni. Across the board, the number of students majoring in our college has increased by about 10%—with significant increases in every department! Also, we have had new

faculty join us who will bring new expertise and opportunities to our college.

We have implemented another new addition to the college team: a group of research developers. Conrad Monson and his team of students have begun to significantly help faculty and students to find funding for their research. With their help, we are confident that grant funding will increase, and that means that more students will have better opportunities ahead of them because of the funded research experience they gain in their undergraduate and graduate programs. Our alumni are also progressing in their careers and research. We have alumni across the nation who are winning awards and demonstrating that their education at BYU was a vital part of their success.

We look forward to even more progress and growth for next year. And we hope to continue to include you in our progress. Thank you for your continued support of the college, and we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

.....➔ **Scott Sommerfeldt, Dean**

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Photo: courtesy of Summer Rupper

TO BHUTAN AND BACK

There they were, more than 7,000 miles from BYU, with pounds of snow gear and weather equipment in their backpacks.

Dr. Summer Rupper, of the Department of Geological Sciences, traveled last summer with graduate student Josh Maurer and a team of scientists to Bhutan, a small country in Southeast Asia, to study uninvestigated glaciers in the Himalayas.

Their research of these glaciers could greatly affect the lives of many people in the region because so many people in the region depend on these glaciers and their runoff.

"These glaciers generally form the headwaters for some of the major rivers of the world," Rupper said. "And as they retreat, some of the big questions are, what will the impact of that retreat be on water resources?"

The water flow coming from these glaciers could flood villages downstream, as well as affect the use of fresh water, hydroelectric power, and agriculture in the area.

Satellite images show the glaciers retreating, but scientists don't know the magnitude of the melt rates or the mass index of the glaciers themselves. Much of the information of these glaciers remains unknown, making studies like this one all the more important.

Rupper led a portion of the crew of 21 scientists and mountaineers to find more answers for the Bhutanese people. The crew risked freezing temperatures and altitude sickness just to put up their makeshift weather station.

"Most of the time was spent hiking," Maurer said. "The air's really thin up there, so you take a couple of steps, and you're out of breath."

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