

orchestras for Medfield Public Schools.

Zaheer Samee (LAW'06) of Cambridge, Mass., writes that less than a year after being admitted to the Massachusetts Bar, he argued and won his first case before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (*DiLiddo v. Oxford Street Realty, Inc.*). Contact him at ezraeh@gmail.com.

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Sara Cechvala (CAS'07) of Quito, Ecuador, is a volunteer teacher in the Ecuador public school system through the nongovernmental organization WorldTeach. She was accepted to the program because of her commitment to education and to public service, according to WorldTeach.

Julia da Silva (CAS'07) of Hagerhill, Ky., is volunteering in the Appalachian region of Kentucky for nine months through the Christian Appalachian Project, a Kentucky-based nonprofit dedicated to serving Appalachian residents in need.

Yih-Sheng "Sid" Kuo (MET'07) of Taipei, Taiwan, recently joined SonoSite, Inc., as a sales development manager for China and Asia. He leads the region's product marketing and services teams. E-mail Sid at sid.kuo@sonosite.com.

Brian Pope (COM'07) of Brookline, Mass., **George O'Connor** (COM'07) of Malden, Mass., and **Jason Johnson** (COM'07) of Charleston, S.C., received Francis W. Hatch Awards for their student work in advertising. Brian received a bronze and a silver bowl, while George and Jason received a merit and a bronze bowl.

David Roth (CFA'07) of Boston, Mass., is a member of the 18-piece Beantown Swing Orchestra. The band's music will be featured in the upcoming movie *Bachelor No. 2*, featuring Kate Hudson, Dane Cook, and Jason Biggs.

FACULTY OBITUARIES

A PIONEER FOR FEMALE SCIENTISTS

BIOLOGY PROFESSOR MARY ERSKINE REMEMBERED FOR HER RESEARCH, TEACHING, MENTORSHIP

BY VICKY WALTZ

LONG AFTER Mary Erskine, a College of Arts and Sciences professor of biology, achieved tenure, she continued to be a hands-on researcher, conducting her experiments herself, rather than delegating the work to students. While that may be unusual for senior science faculty members with large labs, it was typical of Erskine, says her longtime colleague Michael Baum, a CAS professor of biology. "Mary was a brilliant but humble scientist," Baum says.

Erskine, former director of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), died on December 12, 2007, following a long battle with breast cancer. She was 61.

Best known for her research in the area of mating behavior in rats, the behavioral neuroscientist was "a pioneer for women in the scientific community," says Baum. "The Boston University community has lost an exceptional scientist, teacher, and dear friend."

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1946, Erskine earned a bachelor's degree from Ohio's Hiram College. An accomplished flutist, she had been awarded a music scholarship, but eventually switched her major to biology. She studied endocrinology and reproductive physiology at the University of Connecticut, earning a doctorate in 1978, and completed her postdoctoral training in UCLA's department of psychiatry.



Mary Erskine

PHOTO BY KALMAN ZBARSKY

She later moved to Baum's lab at MIT, where she received a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Institutes of Health for the study of neuroendocrine control of behavior.

In 1985, Erskine followed Baum to BU, and in 1990 she was appointed Clare Boothe Luce Professor of Biology — a professorship funded by the Luce Foundation to recognize outstanding women in science. Her research involved applying a wide variety of behavioral, neural, and physiological techniques to questions of how an organism's behavior brings about changes in its physiology. She achieved tenure in 1995 and was promoted to full professor in 1999.

Erskine was "a mentor and role model for

many female students and postdoctoral fellows who sought to establish careers in science," Baum says. "She proved that women could have both a family and a successful career."

Although she was diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in 1999, Erskine continued to work. She developed an entry-level course for biology undergraduates specializing in neuroscience. She directed UROP, a University program of faculty-mentored undergraduate research, from 2004 to 2006.

Contributions to the Mary Erskine Undergraduate Research Award may be sent to Deirdre James, CAS Biology Department, 5 Cummington St., Boston, MA 02215.