

2007, at Great Escape Six Flags in Lake George, N.Y. The ceremony took place in front of the Tornado water ride, which the wedding party rode together after the wedding. "The ceremony, while not attended by any other BU alums, was well attended by friends, family, and Looney Tunes characters," Janis writes. She adds that she is happy to welcome Jeremy and his daughters, Nature and Miracle, into her family.

Karla Leandri Rider (CAS'01) of Portland, Maine, is assistant registrar at the Bates College Museum of Art in Lewiston. E-mail her at butterflymusic@hotmail.com.

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Sachiko Akiyama (CFA'02) of Reno, Nev., **Sedrick Huckaby** (CFA'97) of Burlleson, Tex., and **Carol Keller** (CFA'80) of Shutesbury, Mass., were featured in the exhibition *Sculpture Etc.* at the Nielsen Gallery in Boston this winter.

Devri (Watts) Davis (COM'02, CGS'00) of Los Angeles, Calif., earned an M.B.A. in marketing from California Lutheran University last May. Devri works in marketing at a leading fashion hair company. She is married and has a son. You can contact her at devrixaviera@netzero.com.

Liberty Gunter (ENG'02) of Dunbarton, N.H., was named the Outstanding New Hampshire Young Engineer for 2007 by IEEE, a professional association for the advancement of technology. Liberty joined BAE Systems in 2002, where she works in electrical engineering and semiconductors and volunteers as a mentor in the company's Women in Technology program for high school students. She also works with the FIRST Robotics and FIRST Lego League programs, nonprofits that inspire young people to be science and technology leaders and to solve real-world problems by applying math, science, and technology.



PHOTO BY GINA M. CARLONI

Doctoral student Luis Chavez (GRS'04) is working to rebuild his flood-damaged hometown in Peru, with the help of the BU chapter of Engineers Without Borders.

HOMETOWN HERO

LUIS CHAVEZ IS HELPING HIS PERUVIAN BIRTHPLACE RECOVER FROM DISASTER

THE TINY, remote town of Chirimoto was the jewel of Peru's northern Rodriguez de Mendoza province until devastating floods in the early 1980s wiped out many of the adobe brick houses and buildings. More than two decades later, the town's population has been reduced to 300, and the community still struggles with poor water quality, access to electricity, joblessness, inadequate health care, and only the most basic schooling.

Enter Chirimoto native Luis Chavez (GRS'04), a doctoral student and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences senior teaching fellow in Spanish, who is committed to getting his hometown back on its feet. Last summer, Chavez returned to Chirimoto to help build a community center. Now he has enlisted the aid of Boston University's newly formed chapter of Engineers Without Borders, a nonprofit that addresses engineering

needs in the developing world. With the students' help, Chavez says, "We are going to be able to develop projects that have been dreams of mine since I left my small town."

Chavez was eleven years old when he left Chirimoto for better educational opportunities in a nearby province. He continued his education in Lima and then came to Boston University to pursue graduate studies.

But no matter how far from home Chavez traveled, Chirimoto never left his thoughts. "Even before my application to BU, I had a lot of ideas to support my town," he says.

Chavez used his own money and some hefty loans to build the community center, which is large enough to serve as a meeting place, a school, a library, and an adult education center.

The BU chapter of Engineers Without Borders joined the effort last year, when one of Chavez's students mentioned the project to the group's president. The organization raised enough money to send five engineering students to Chirimoto in January to get an idea of how the group could help.

"Originally, we were thinking we could start with putting solar panels on the new community center," says Chris Spring (ENG'08), who helped organize the trip. Now, he says, the engineers are considering three projects: a water filtration system that would rid drinking water of parasites, a coffee roaster that would allow villagers to sell their beans at a higher price, and a solar-powered electrical system for a medical clinic.

"We are also looking at providing the resources for simpler projects, like ventilation systems for stoves and dry composting toilets," Spring says. The group has been assured of support from the national chapter of Engineers Without Borders and from the Peruvian state of Amazonas, which has promised to cover up to 80 percent of the cost of the selected project. Additional funding, says Spring, will come from events organized by the BU chapter, which plans to start work in Chirimoto this summer.

Chavez is grateful for the students' help. "Their presence creates the real possibility of developing basic services, like potable water and electric energy, which would be a tremendous change in this town's history — something like a big leap ahead in time," he says. "This generates feelings of hope and joy in a community that has suffered both from natural disasters and from the indifference of its own country's authorities." **JESSICA LEVING**

