

## Project Play

Michael Mitchell (BA 1982) served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Niger in West Africa, from 1983 to 1985. He traveled light, but brought a suitcase of soccer balls at the suggestion of his good friend Pat O'Malley. He was stationed in Zinder, Niger and joined the local rag tag club soccer team Equipe Espoir (Team Hope). The soccer balls he brought had an immediate impact on the team, and they went on to win the Niger National Championship for the first time.

When Mitchell was being congratulated by Nigerian President Souni Kouchi after the championship game, Kouchi said, "This is how the world should get to know each other." This is how the idea for Project Play was born.

Mitchell returned to Chico, completed a masters in Physical Education (MA 1992), and wrote his thesis on "Global Understanding Through Sports." He promised his advisors that he would put his ideas into action in the future, and he was true to his word. Michael founded Project Play ([www.projectplay.me](http://www.projectplay.me)) to provide soccer equipment for children in Africa. In February of 2008 he

and his staff (Dave Stahl, also a Chico State grad, BA 1976) distributed over 2,000 soccer balls to children in Niger with the help of the Peace Corps.

The photos in this newsletter can only hint at the excitement and joy these young people felt as they were able to play with a real ball rather than surrogate balls of plastic bags or socks full of sand. Peace Corps volunteers continue help the children weave plastic bags into cords to create crude nests for the goals at their schools. Project Play is committed to enriching the lives of children and adults in African nations through the world's most popular sport. Project Play provides educational incentives and promotes both self-esteem and community pride while generating hope and happiness in some of the world's poorest nations.

Mitchell is looking for a film editor who can take the video they shot during their trip to create a promotional video. The video will be helpful in approaching foundations and corporations (Nike, Adidas, Puma, etc.) to expand the project. The 2009 trip is being planned for Togo.

When not reaching out to new friends in Africa, Mitchell runs a fitness and wellness resort in Brazil ([www.bodysouladventures.com](http://www.bodysouladventures.com)). Contact him if you would like to get involved in Project Play or can help him make contacts for corporate sponsorship to expand this sports outreach.

If you know of other Kinesiology alumni who are making a difference in a community or the world please let us know. We will be glad to share their stories about the impact of sport and human movement.

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## Welcome New Faculty

This fall the department welcomed two new tenure-track faculty. We were fortunate to be able to recruit faculty with tenure track teaching experience and strong scholarship in the field. Dr. Kevin Patton joins us as an Assistant Professor in the area of Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE), and Dr. Chentu Hsieh joins us in the area of biomechanics.



Dr. Chentu Hsieh was an assistant professor at the University of Texas-Pan American. He earned his PhD in biomechanics from the University of Northern Colorado. He is a former volleyball player and coach. His research interests are in the biomechanical factors related to jump performance in volleyball skills. He has also published research on how student behaviors influence their leaning of biomechanical concepts. Chentu is married and enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, swimming, and jogging. His other hobbies include learning about nature and designing aquatic landscapes.



Dr. Kevin Patton earned his master's from Chico State and his PhD in physical education pedagogy from the University of Massachusetts. He has served as an assistant professor at the University Northern Colorado. His research is focused on how physical education affects children's physical activity and teacher development in physical education. Kevin is married and has three children.



## Chair's Corner

Dear Alumni and Friends,

On behalf of the Department of Kinesiology I am delighted to share with you our Fall 2008 newsletter. These are difficult financial times for the country, and especially for the State of California. The department presses onward toward our vision despite these problems, and we are proud of the achievements of our alumni, faculty, and staff. I hope you enjoy reading about some of these achievements and our new tennis facility in this issue. Once again we would like to thank the generous alumni and friends who have provided financial support for our programs.

The department is pleased to welcome two new faculty, Dr. Chentu Hsieh and Dr. Kevin Patton. They bring new perspectives and expertise in the areas of biomechanics and physical education pedagogy.

Our alumni spotlight this fall is focused on Michael Mitchell (BA 1982, MA 1992) and Project Play. Michael turned his Peace Corps and master's thesis into a major program fostering sport and international understanding. Among our faculty, Dr. Jacequie Medina presented invited papers in Taiwan on implementing outdoor education in the physical education curriculum.

Our fall tennis classes are scheduled for our new tennis courts. The six tennis courts were a collaborative project of donor, university, and department funding. Thank you again to all who supported this project, and especially the nearly \$200,000 kick-off donation from an anonymous KINE donor. I also want to thank our tennis instructors who had to be creative in using the gym for a few weeks while the courts were being finished. Keep an eye on our Web site for information on a grand opening event.

You are invited to several fall KINE events. Our advisory board will be meeting and hosting a Kinesiology Careers Convocation Friday November 21st at 2:00 PM. You are also invited the annual Gobble Wobble Fun Run that raises funds for charity and the movement studies program. The run will be held on November 15th. Check the department Web site for details.

Please feel free to contact us at the department office about any of these activities or opportunities at 530-898-6373 or check in with our updated Web site at: <http://www.csuchico.edu/kine/>. Our new motto "Moving bodies, moving minds" expresses how we contribute to the science of human movement—Kinesiology. Our department was one of the founding members of the American Kinesiology Association. (<http://www.aka.org>).

Please note that our spring newsletter will be only available online at our department Web site: <http://www.csuchico.edu/kine/>. If you would like an e-mail reminder for the spring newsletter with a specific url send Cathy Turner ([cturner@csuchico.edu](mailto:cturner@csuchico.edu)) your e-mail address.

Duane Knudson, PhD  
Interim Chair



## Outdoor Education Professor Speaks in Taiwan

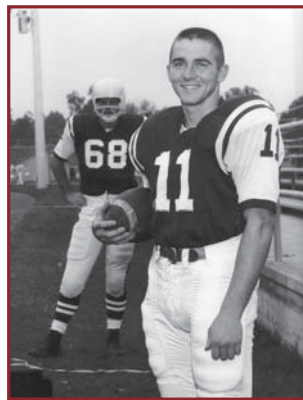
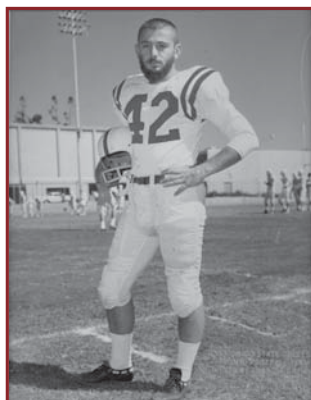


In early July 2008, Dr. Jacquie Medina, assistant professor of outdoor education traveled to Taipei, Taiwan to be the keynote speaker at two separate conferences. Dr. Medina addressed faculty and graduate students throughout Taiwan at the Physical Education Teacher and Coaching Conference on the topic of integrating outdoor education in the physical education curriculum and managing outdoor education settings at the Sport Management and Recreation Conference. Dr. Medina's visit included an immersion into Asian culture with visits to numerous monuments and museums as well as hiking in Yangmingshan National Park and a visit to one of northern Taiwan's challenge ropes courses.



Interest in outdoor education is rapidly growing in Taiwan. The island landscape provides numerous locations for outdoor pursuits with beautiful mountain, river, and coastal environments. Educators in Taiwan's universities and colleges are excited to learn more about the field of outdoor education and explore ways to prepare students for leadership and employment opportunities in outdoor education.

Developing a better understanding and appreciation for the Taiwan culture and people was the highlight of Dr. Medina's trip. She looks forward to continued collaboration Taiwan's universities and colleges to promote outdoor education.



## Spotlight: McConnell-Tolette Scholarship

Every year the Department of Kinesiology is fortunate to award more than 13 scholarships to deserving majors, thanks to the generosity of alumni, faculty, and friends of Chico State. This column is about one of those scholarships that honors two former physical education graduates who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country in the Vietnam war: The Bill McConnell—Richard Tolette Scholarship.

Bill (in photo above right) and Richard (in photo above left) were physical education majors, roommates, and teammates on the football team. They were well known for their smiles, friendliness, willingness to help others, sense of humor, and a love for life that was infectious. They graduated in 1964 and earned their teaching credentials the following year. Bill and Richard both volunteered for military service when the Vietnam war broke out. Bill was a medic and Richard was an officer in the 101st Airborne Division. They served with distinction, but tragically both were killed in action.

Their parents and numerous friends established the scholarship to remember these wonderful men and honor their belief in service to others. We invite you to visit Yolo Hall and take a look at the Scholarships display that honors Bill and Richard and their service to our country. Your contribution to their scholarship fund or any of our scholarships is greatly appreciated. You can send donations to the University Foundation or visit the following Web site for a secure link to make a donation. Remember to specify the Department of Kinesiology scholarship fund of interest (<https://secure.grizzardonline.com/csuchico/donations.cfm>). The 2007/2008 recipient of the McConnell—Tolette Scholarship was Stephanie Passmore.



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## Kinesiology Facilities Aid in Disaster Relief



Last summer will go down in history as one of the worst fire seasons in California. The University and the Department of Kinesiology did their part by making facilities and equipment available to assist those affected by the fires. The national Red Cross set up a regional command center in the biomechanics labs for both the Humboldt and the Camp fires. Almost 100 evacuated people stayed in the pedagogy lab and used shower facilities in Acker Gym during the Camp fire. The wireless Internet access in the building and the opening of our second floor computer lab helped fire victims stay in contact with family and the latest on the fires.

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In keeping with our commitment to be good stewards of your tax dollars and the environment, we are moving our spring newsletter to an electronic format. We would like to e-mail the newsletter and have it available on our Web site. The fall newsletter will remain the print edition to ensure we keep everybody connected with our program. We would love for those of you who want to directly receive the electronic spring newsletter to send your e-mail address to Cathy Turner ([cturner@csuchico.edu](mailto:cturner@csuchico.edu)). You can access an electronic copy of our newsletters any time at: [www.csuchico.edu/kine/alumni.php](http://www.csuchico.edu/kine/alumni.php)

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