Ching, Svec earn Fulbrights; Matthews receives AAUW fellowship

Furman University
New look

People strolling around the Furman lake in recent months have no doubt been wondering, “Where’s the Doughboy?”

The venerable Furman landmark, located at the south entrance to the lake, had been ravaged by vandalism in recent years; its face had been painted and its left (rifle-wielding) hand had been chopped off. Had it now been damaged beyond repair?

No. The Doughboy, originally erected on the downtown campus in 1920 as a tribute to Furman students who died during World War I, is safe, says Jeff Redderson, associate director of facilities services. The copper statue was removed in March and is in storage while Furman raises funds to provide an identical bronze replica that will be placed on the current statue’s pedestal along a pathway between Paladin Stadium and the Lay Physical Activities Center/Bryan Center for Military Science.

In recent years, bronze statues of university benefactor A Lester G. Furman, Jr., and his great-great grandfather (and university founder) Richard Furman have been installed, respectively, at the administration building and at Cherrydale, the university’s Alumni House. Redderson says that bronze statues are more durable than copper ones.

If fundraising goes well, the Doughboy project could be completed in time for a Veterans Day (November 11) dedication. Redderson says that the university also plans to display the original Doughboy at a location to be determined.

Furman’s Doughboy is one of numerous such statues that were erected throughout the nation during the 1920s to commemorate veterans of World War I. According to Redderson, Furman’s version is significant because it was the second manufactured and the first dedicated in the United States.

During World War I, the term “doughboy” was used by European soldiers to describe their U.S. allies. At the time many U.S. soldiers filtered into the European campaign from a training base in Texas that was known for its white adobe soil. The soil often covered the U.S. soldiers and discolored their uniforms, giving them a doughboy-like appearance.

Five hundred and forty Furman men, almost the entire student body of the then all-male school, volunteered for service during “The Great War.” Pvt. Thomas J. Lyon, Jr., Pvt. Otis Brodie, Lt. John H. David, Lt. Charles S. Gardner, Sgt. Charles E. Timmons, Jr., and Cpl. Talmadge W. Gerald died during the war. Their names are inscribed at the base of the statue. In the late 1940s a plaque bearing the names of Furman students lost during World War II was added to the base.

— John Roberts

Ching, Svec earn Fulbrights; Matthews receives AAUW fellowship

Furman professors Erik Ching, Michael Svec and Shelly Matthews earned prestigious honors this spring.

Ching, an associate professor of history, and Svec, an associate professor of education, were awarded Fulbright scholarships to teach and do research internationally in 2005. Ching will spend the spring and early summer of 2005 teaching at the National University of El Salvador in San Salvador. Svec will lecture in science education at Palacky University and Ostrava University in the Czech Republic during the winter and spring of 2005.

The Fulbright Program, the U.S. government’s flagship program in international educational exchange, is named in honor of the late Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. The Fulbright Scholar Program sends 800 scholars and professionals each year to more than 140 countries, where they lecture or conduct research in a variety of academic and professional fields.

Ching teaches Latin American and African history. He is a graduate of Pacific Lutheran University and holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California at Santa Barbara. He received the 1999 Conference on Latin American History Prize for an article he co-authored on “Indians, the Military and the Rebellion of 1932 in El Salvador.”

Svec previously taught at Rockhurst College in Missouri and in the QUEST Program at Indiana University. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois and holds a Ph.D. in science education from Indiana. He is a board member of the Roper Mountain Science Center in Greenville and president-elect of the Southeastern Association for Education of Science Teachers.

Matthews, an associate professor of religion, has been awarded a 2004-05 Postdoctoral Research Leave Fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW). The AAUW awarded 20 postdoctoral fellowships this year in the arts and humanities, social sciences and natural sciences.

The $30,000 award will provide funding to help Matthews complete a manuscript on violence in the New Testament and early Christian literature titled Whose Blood on Which Hands? Violence in the Early Jesus Tradition. She will spend the 2004-05 school year as a scholar in residence at the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Collegeville, Minn.

Matthews, who like Ching and Svec has taught at Furman since 1998, is a graduate of the University of North Dakota. She received her master’s degree from Boston University School of Theology and a Th.D. from Harvard Divinity School. She is the author of First Converts: Rich Pagan Women and the Rhetoric of Mission in Early Judaism and Christianity (Stanford University Press, 2001).