Dr. Sylvio Codella, Associate Professor Biological Sciences
2004 Schering-Plough Research Mentor Honoree

Presentation at Kean Hall, April 19, 2004
Christine Fahey, Secretary, Schering-Plough Foundation
Gail Fraser, President of the Kean University Foundation

Dr. Sylvio Codella has been inspiring students at Kean University since September 1996. During this time and under his guidance, over 65 students have successfully completed undergraduate research projects in the area of biology. Dr. Codella involves students formally and informally in his research and guides them to develop research projects on their own. The work on which they have collaborated has been presented in a number of professional and scholarly venues. Many of Chip’s students have continued their education by joining graduate programs around the country. His efforts exemplify the kind of student-faculty scholarly interaction that Kean University values.

As Associate Professor of Biology, Dr. Codella has taught courses in zoology and animal behavior, and mentored students in independent research. As an evolutionary biologist, his specific interests have focused on evolutionary ecology, entomology, biodiversity, biogeography, and animal phylogeny. His main interest is in how plant-feeding insects defend themselves against their natural enemies in forest habitats.

Dr. Codella earned a Bachelor of Arts in Zoology with High Honors and a Master of Science in Zoology from Rutgers University, Newark. The topic of his Master’s thesis was the “Intersexual Comparison of Mimetic Protection in the Black Swallowtail Butterfly.” In 1994, he earned a Ph.D. in Entomology, with a Zoology minor from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. This time, he focused on “Ecology and Evolution of Defense Strategies in Conifer Sawflies, with particular reference to wood ant predation.” Topics in Dr. Codella’s research have included the foraging behavior in wood ants, pine susceptibility to conifer sawflies, the feeding behavior of swallowtail caterpillars, and the impact of predation on roosting butterflies.

His current research program addresses interactions between conifer sawflies and predaceous wood ants. He has a great love of the outdoors and an appreciation of the evolutionary relationships among all organisms. Over the past 8 years, Dr. Codella has continued to instill an appreciation of the natural environment and a love of research in biology students at Kean University, as well as among high school students through the Kean Bridge program, and the Kean Kids “BugsMe” summer program for elementary and middle school kids.

We are pleased to recognize his efforts with this first Schering-Plough Research Mentor of the Year Honor. Congratulations.