

March 31, 2005

## UCI People

**Natalia Komarova, Frances Chance and Thorsten Ritz** were awarded Sloan Research Fellowships. All three researchers are associated with the Center for Complex Biological Systems, an interdisciplinary center that focuses on the study of biological processes as whole systems instead of isolated parts.

The fellowships are intended to enhance the careers of young faculty members in specified fields of science. A total of 116 fellowships are awarded annually in seven scientific fields.

Komarova's research interests are in the interface between mathematical and life sciences. She tries to apply mathematics to the most fascinating question so natural science.

Chance combines two techniques in her research, recordings from individual neurons and theoretical studies of networks. She uses these to try to understand how the brain processes information.

Ritz uses theory and computations to study how the structures of biological molecules relate to their functions.

**Sue Trumbore** was elected a fellow of the American Geophysical Union. She is a professor of Earth system science.

The designation is confirmed no more than 0.1 percent of the organization's members in any given year and acknowledge eminence in the field.

Trumbore researchers the use of radiocarbon to trace the global carbon cycle, greenhouse gas production and consumption of ecosystems. She studies soil and plant life to better understand how human activity alters natural carbon cycles and how that impacts global climate.

**James T. Randerson**, assistant professor of Earth system sciences, was awarded the American Geophysical Union's James B. Macelwane Medal. The award recognizes significant contributions to the Earth and space sciences by a young scientist. Only two other young scientists received the medal this year.

Randerson's work focuses on several biogeochemical themes, including understanding the effects of fire on ecosystem processes, the imprint on El Nino on the global carbon cycle and controls on trace gas exchange between the biosphere and the atmosphere.