On their recent trip to Russia, President Ferrall and wife Linda Smith had dinner with Yuri Afanaseyev and his wife, Hinel Alexseyeva. Afanaseyev, rector of Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow, was Beloit’s Commencement speaker last May.

The United States department of education has awarded Beloit College a Ronald E. McNair grant worth nearly $1 million over a five-year period.

McNair grants will help academically strong low-income, first-generation, and minority students at the College prepare for future academic work in graduate schools. Working with faculty mentors, the students will develop their research skills on independent summer projects and present their reports at symposia.

“McNair was the black astronaut killed in the explosion of the Challenger space shuttle.”

One of the goals is to encourage students to work toward doctorate degrees, which will ultimately help diversify college faculty.

“Minority students face societal discrimination and have limited mentors and role models,” says Gail Pizarro, program director. “The mentor programs will attempt to motivate them and increase their goal-setting and self esteem.”

Networking alumni

Last summer and fall, more than 3,500 Beloiters responded to our request for career information from alumni. It all began during the strategic planning process in 1993, when many alumni suggested that the College assist in networking of alumni with one another and with students. All the respondents volunteered to talk with current Beloit students and alumni. Many also volunteered in very concrete ways—offering summer housing, sponsoring an intern, hiring a Beloit grad, sending job postings, or participating in on-campus career programs. The College is grateful to all those who volunteered.

A complete resource guide is being mailed to all respondents. Any alumni who did not respond but are interested in receiving a copy should send $5 for shipping and handling to the Alumni Office, 700 College St., Beloit, WI 53511. If you have questions call the alumni office (800-331-4943) or field and career services (608-363-2673).

“Opening Doors,” a conference to mark the centennial of women at Beloit College last November, drew eager participants to panels, readings, exhibits, and other events.

Professor Robert Salzer (second from right) shows Logan Museum artifacts to scholars attending the recent Midwest Archeological Society conference in Beloit.