

# Multitalented LANL Star shines brightly



Alyson Niemeyer performs stretches in the dance studio at Trinity on the Hill Episcopal Church. *Photo by Sandra Valdez*

Alyson Niemeyer of Risk Analysis and Decision Support Systems is a scholar, dancer, student, and natural leader.

She's also a scientist who was named a Los Alamos National Laboratory Star by the Women's Employee Resource Group for her contributions to the Lab. "It really is an honor to be recognized as a LANL Star," Niemeyer said. "I enjoyed the awards ceremony—it was wonderful to be sitting in the same room with people who have made amazing contributions to the Lab and learn about how they became successful."

Niemeyer first joined the Lab in 2006 as a summer student in the Materials Physics and Applications Division, where she worked on fabricating and testing photoconductors made from organic materials that could be used for radiation detection applications.

She later worked with the Second Line of Defense, where she got hands-on experience working with radiation detectors. Her current project with T-1 (Physics and Chemistry of Materials) focuses on a different aspect of the detectors. "I am using computational methods to optimize materials properties for supercapacitors based on carbon nanotube forests," Niemeyer said. "These supercapacitors offer promise as an integral component of hybrid power sources for portable radiation detectors."

She holds a master's degree in materials science and engineering and a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering and is completing a doctorate in materials science and engineering, all from the University of Florida. She served as secretary and treasurer in the Lab Students' Association and won awards in the 2007 and 2008 Lab Student Symposiums.

When Niemeyer isn't conducting research or working on her dissertation, she choreographs tap, hip-hop, and ballet classes for Dance Arts Los Alamos. "Having dance each week helps decrease stress and helps me stay active instead of sitting at a desk all day," she explained.

Niemeyer said there are many women at the Laboratory who have inspired her. "Hopefully, I will be able to serve as a mentor for other women in the future," she said.

—*Erika Martinez*