

## **Specialist in international women's health to deliver Riley Lecture**

4/03/02

Dr. Victoria E. Wells, director of the ENABLE Project that seeks to help women in underdeveloped countries make informed decisions about their own reproductive health and pregnancies, will deliver the annual Riley Lecture at 4:30 p.m. Monday, April 15, in the Knight Club, Powell Campus Center, on the Alfred University campus. Her topic is "Population, Power and Progress: How Women in Developing Countries are Champions for Change." "Dr. Wells was selected to deliver the Riley Lecture this spring because her work cuts across many disciplines of interest to AU students, including biology, anthropology, environmental studies and women's studies," said Dr. Diana Sinton, assistant professor of geography and environmental studies, who arranged for Dr. Wells' visit to Alfred. Wells, an epidemiologist who specializes in women's health issues, particularly the spread of AIDS in Africa, became director of ENABLE, part of the Centre for Development and Population Activities, United States Agency for International Development, in 2001. ENABLE, a five-year, \$50 million project is now working with women's health networks in 10 countries to "strengthen women's capabilities for informed and autonomous decision-making to prevent unintended pregnancy and improve reproductive health." ENABLE works with men and women of reproductive age, as well as youth ages 10-24 to provide access to an expanded package of services to meet the needs of women, couples and youth; and to strengthen organizations' capacity to plan, manage and sustain quality gender-sensitive reproductive health services in those countries. Wells, a graduate of Harvard University with an AB in history and science, earned her MD degree from Case Western Reserve University; and a master's and Ph.D. in public health, both from the Harvard School of Public Health. She came to ENABLE after nine years as director and an instructor for the Applied Statistics Training Institute, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Wells, who has lectured, written and taught extensively on women's health issues and epidemiology, has more than 25 years' of public health experience in countries around the world. The Riley lecture series is made possible by a gift from Pamela Riley Osborn '62; Patricia A. Riley '65; and Melissa Riley in memory of their parents. The late Elizabeth Hallenbeck Riley, a member of AU's Class of 1936, was a local activist involved in issues such as pay equity for women. The late Charles Riley was a 1935 graduate who supported his wife and her efforts. They were married in the Seventh Day Baptist Church in Alfred in 1938.