Although Michael J. Auerbach was just appointed dean of the College of Charleston’s School of Sciences and Mathematics in November 2010, he is by no means new to the College. He served as the chair of the Department of Biology at the College of Charleston for four years and as the acting director of the Grice Marine Laboratory before leaving for the Desert Research Institute (DRI) in Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada, 10 years ago.

Auerbach – whose main research interests are in population and community ecology – has over 20 papers published and has been invited to present his findings at nearly 50 institutions nationwide. In addition, he has served in many different professional capacities, including director of the Nevada Renewable Energy Consortium and on the board of directors of the International Arid Lands Consortium, the Association of Ecosystem Research Centers and DRI Research Parks, Ltd. He has also served on numerous review panels for the National Science Foundation, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the National Academy of Sciences, as well as 30 different committees for organizations such as the Great Basin Cooperative Ecosystem Study Unit, the Nevada Development Authority, the Ecological Society of America and the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Between 1986 and 2010, Auerbach raised $11 million in funding from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense. He has served on the Council of Colleges of Arts & Sciences Workshop for Department Chairs and on the editorial boards of Biotropica and Ecological Entomology. He has also served as the director of the DRI Tech Transfer Office since 2008.

Auerbach’s return to the College is an exciting step forward for the School of Sciences and Mathematics, where his experience as an active researcher, administrator and facilitator of multidisciplinary teams will serve the faculty and students well.