**Saxena, Skrzycki Win 2012 Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Awards**

By B. Rose Huber and Patricia Lomando White

The University of Pittsburgh’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences has named Sunil Saxena, a professor in the Department of Chemistry, and Cynthia Skrzycki, a senior lecturer in the Department of English, winners of the 2012 Tina and David Bellet Teaching Excellence Award. The Bellet Award recipients will be honored during a by-invitation-only dinner at 6 p.m. April 5 in Pitt’s University Club.

The Bellet Awards were established in 1998 and endowed in 2008 with a $1.5 million gift from Pitt alumnus and trustee David Bellet (A&S ’67) and his wife, Tina, to recognize outstanding and innovative undergraduate teaching in the Dietrich School. A committee appointed by the Dietrich School associate dean for undergraduate studies evaluates teaching based on student teaching and peer evaluations, student testimonials, and dossiers submitted by the nominees. Full-time faculty members who have taught in the Dietrich School during the past three years are eligible. Each award recipient receives a cash prize.

Saxena joined the University in 2001. Previously, he served as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1999 to 2001. From 1997 to 1999, he was a doctoral scholar at the California Institute of Technology. Saxena’s work includes the development of pulsed electron spin resonance (ESR) methods and their application to otherwise inaccessible problems in biophysics and materials sciences. Through the use of ESR, Saxena and his team have been able to produce rich information about the electronic, structural, and dynamic properties of various types of molecules, including organic, inorganic, biological, solid state, and surface molecular species.

Additionally, Saxena’s lab creates methods to measure the precise distance between two units in a protein in order to determine the protein’s folding patterns—the ways in which a protein assumes its functional shape—and conformational dynamics. These studies could provide insight into allergies or diseases, as allergies are actually caused by the misfolding of proteins, and the immune system does not produce antibodies for certain protein structures. Saxena’s group is continuing to develop applications of these spectroscopic rulers, including capturing the essence of structural changes—such as misfolding—in proteins.

From 2004 to 2009, Saxena was selected to participate in the National Science Foundation’s (NSF) Faculty Early Career Development Program, which is the NSF’s most prestigious award in support of junior faculty who “exemplify the role of teacher-scholars” through outstanding research, education, and the integration of education and research within the context of the mission of their institutions. Saxena’s research has been featured in many publications, among them *Applied Magnetic Resonance, Biochemical Journal*, and *Biophysical Journal*.

Saxena earned a Bachelor of Science degree with honors from St. Stephen’s College in New Delhi, India, and his Master of Science degree from the Indian Institute of Technology in Kanpur. He earned his PhD in chemistry from Cornell University.


Skrzycki is also a business correspondent for *GlobalPost.com*, a news service based in Boston. Prior to joining Global Post in 2004, she was a business columnist for *Blumberg News*. Skrzycki was on staff at *The Washington Post* for 18 years, covering federal regulatory issues, management, and technology. Her special expertise in federal regulation and lobbying led to her writing a weekly column titled “The Regulators” for more than a decade. Before joining *The Washington Post*, Skrzycki was an associate business editor at *U.S. News & World Report*, specializing in transportation issues, and a Washington correspondent for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, where she covered the gamut of business topics. She also worked in the Washington bureau of *Fairchild News Service*, covering the steel industry, and was a business writer for *The Buffalo News*.


Last year, she was among 15 women in the media honored by the Women and Girls Foundation for “leading the way in print, radio, PR, TV, film, and on the Internet, and those utilizing multiple media to promote and amplify the voices of women and girls.”

**Eight Pitt People Win 2012 Carnegie Science Center Awards**

By B. Rose Huber

Eight University of Pittsburgh people are recipients of the 2012 Carnegie Science Awards, given annually by the Carnegie Science Center to celebrate the accomplishments of individuals and organizations that work to improve lives through their commitment and contributions to science and technology in Western Pennsylvania. In addition, one organization led by a Pitt alumnus is an awardee, and one Pitt graduate student with a Pitt undergraduate degree earned an honorable mention.

The honorees were announced Feb. 7, they were recognized in a formal ceremony at Carnegie Music Hall on May 11.

**Advanced Manufacturing Award**

Paul Ohodnicki (A&S ’05, ENGR ’05), senior research associate, PPG Industries. He and three PPG colleagues created, developed, and commercialized Solarban R100 glass, a novel solar-control low emissivity coated architectural glass.

**Advancing Materials Award**

Eric Beckman, Bevier Professor of Engineering in the Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering, School of Engineering, and codirector of the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation. Beckman developed TissueGlu, a biodegradable surgical adhesive designed to complement traditional suture suturing techniques.

**University/Post-Secondary Educator Award**

Melissa Bilec (ENGR ’97, ’07G), assistant professor of engineering in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, School of Engineering. Bilec is assistant director for education and outreach of Pitt’s Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation; and director of the Construction Management Program and Green Construction Project at Pitt.

Amy Landis, assistant professor of engineering in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, inthe Swanson School of Engineering. Both Bilec and Landis promote sustainability as it relates to engineering issues in their research and the classroom. Bilec is currently conducting research on green building metrics with a team of students. Landis is performing biofuel research and environmental modeling.

**Catalyst for Professional & Community Education Award**

Evan Wasser, assistant professor of ophthalmology and vice chair of the medical and resident education program in Pitt’s School of Medicine. Wasser and his Pitt’s ophthalmology residents donate their time to conduct clinics and provide comprehensive eye exams to people in need in Western Pennsylvania.

**Emerging Female Scientist Award**

Lillian Chong, assistant professor in the Department of Chemistry in Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, who is an expert in computational biophysics, molecular dynamics simulations, and protein structure and function. Chong’s lab is pursuing protein-related research.
Pitt’s K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Celebration Honors Sculptor, Pitt Alumnus Thaddeus Mosley

The University of Pittsburgh celebrated the life and artistic career of Thaddeus Mosley, the renowned Western Pennsylvania sculptor who is a 1950 graduate of Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. The Feb. 1 program and reception at the Twentieth Century Club was cohosted by Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and Pitt Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs Robert Hill. The event was the University’s annual K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program, named to honor the memory of the legendary Pennsylvania legislative leader and Pitt alumnus (LAW ’54) and trustee. Irvis, who in 1977 became the first African American speaker of the House of Representatives in Pennsylvania and the first Black speaker of any state house since Reconstruction, sponsored in 1966 the bill that made Pitt a state-related institution of higher education. The 45-minute documentary was the work of filmmaker and Pitt alumnus Kenneth Love (A&S ’71).

1. Three wooden sculptures, created by the self-taught Mosley, were on display for the benefit of the 600 audience members who attended the reception following the documentary screening.

2. From left, Nordenberg, Love, and Mosley.


4. From left, Pitt Vice Provost and Dean of Students Kathy W. Humphrey, Hill, and Pitt School of Social Work Dean Larry E. Bono, who is also Donald M. Henderson Professor and director of the Center on Race and Social Problems at Pitt.

5. From left, Pitt trustee Herbert P. Douglas Jr. (EDUC ’48, ’50G); Nikki Nordenberg (EDUC ’88G); Arnold M. Sowell Sr. (BUS ’57); and Nordenberg. Both Douglas and Sowell were featured in the evening’s documentary.

6. From left, Nancy Bolden, widow of the late Pittsburgh Courier reporter and editor Frank Bolden (EDUC ’34); Crystal McCormick Ware, coordinator for communications and diversity, Hillman Library; Camara Watkins; and K. Chase Patterson (A&S ’07).
Black History Month

Pitt Chemical Engineering Student Empowers Young Scientists

By B. Rose Huber

More than once, University of Pittsburgh junior Brittany Chambers has been called a "motivator." Academically, she challenges high school students from underrepresented populations by tutoring them in engineering, math, and science through her involvement with Pitt's EXCEL and INVESTING NOW programs.

Spiritually, she ministers on and off campus through the Pitt chapter of Anointed Steps of Faith, a Christian step team.

Personally, she engages young people in harnessing the power of their own education, something she has done since high school. "In the beginning, there wasn’t a sense of urgency toward education in the students I tutored," Chambers says. "I’m working toward making sure they don’t miss out on opportunities just because they don’t know about them. That’s why I teach."

Chambers came to Pitt on an engineering scholarship in 2008, immersing herself in the Swanson School of Engineering’s opportunities. Through EXCEL and INVESTING NOW, both of which help to educate underserved youth in the sciences, she has been able to add the role of tutor to her résumé. Thinking back to her own mentor at Penn Hills Senior High School—a teacher who taught her Honors and Advanced Placement Chemistry—Chambers says she has gravitated toward the challenges offered in tutoring. Twice a week, she meets with students for two hours to teach chemistry.

Chambers says she feels honored to be a tutor in INVESTING NOW—an organization whose Web site says that its students have a 99 percent success rate in enrolling in college and that 52 percent choose majors in science, engineering, and math. Seeking to emulate her own mentor, Chambers says she tries to spark an unquenchable interest in education in the students she tutors.

"I was lucky that I had people to help me navigate my education," says Chambers. "My parents and high school teachers were instrumental in getting me to this place. Not every child has that, so I hope to be that person for these students."

"Pitt gives you a unique sense of family that I’m not sure exists elsewhere. As soon as I opened myself up, I began noticing how many people were rooting for me. I have a handful of advisors whom I can look to for guidance at any given time."

—Brittany Chambers

Chambers credits the Pitt chapter of The Anointed Steps of Faith team for helping her to get more involved in student life. The troupe practices once a week and performs routinely on campus and in the Pittsburgh community. Most often, the members are asked to dance at churches around Pittsburgh. Chambers says she enjoys the opportunity to minister in a different motivating way and hopes to capture the attention of young people.

Chambers is also a member of the Pitt chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), and she plans to attend the organization’s 38th annual convention, which will be held in Pittsburgh March 28 through April 1.

Chambers says her fellow students provide a high level of comfort for her on campus. People associated with Pitt are moved to do “big things,” she says, and she hopes to be among their ranks. Chambers can’t pinpoint just one direction for her future right now. With her field of chemical engineering, there are numerous opportunities: She’s considering graduate school, working in her field, or teaching. Eventually, she says, she hopes to have done all three.

Inspired to achieve from an early age, Chambers gives credit to her father, an electrical engineer, who provided ample proof that many opportunities exist within engineering. Her mother, meanwhile, “instilled in me a sense of focus for which I am so grateful.”

"Pitt gives you a unique sense of family that I’m not sure exists elsewhere," Chambers says. "As soon as I opened myself up, I began noticing how many people were rooting for me. I have a handful of advisors whom I can look to for guidance at any given time."

Throughout high school, Chambers says she visited the University’s Pittsburgh campus through Urban League-sponsored events. When it came time to choose a college, Chambers, who was in the top tier of her high school class, selected Pitt because of its “home-like environment.” She says she visited so often that the University felt like a safe haven where she could learn, motivate others, and open herself up to a new academic journey.

Chambers says she feels honored to be a tutor in INVESTING NOW—an organization whose Web site says that its students have a 99 percent success rate in enrolling in college and that 52 percent choose majors in science, engineering, and math. Seeking to emulate her own mentor, Chambers says she tries to spark an unquenchable interest in education in the students she tutors.

"I was lucky that I had people to help me navigate my education," says Chambers. "My parents and high school teachers were instrumental in getting me to this place. Not every child has that, so I hope to be that person for these students."

A high school experience with The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh presented Chambers with another navigation tool. Through a career-shadowing opportunity offered by the league, she visited Bayer Corporation to better understand how medicines are produced and administered. That day in the laboratory changed Chambers’ life. She realized how much she enjoyed watching the process of ensuring that the compounds were manufactured to meet coded standards.

"Pitt gives you a unique sense of family that I’m not sure exists elsewhere," Chambers says. "As soon as I opened myself up, I began noticing how many people were rooting for me. I have a handful of advisors whom I can look to for guidance at any given time."

—Brittany Chambers

Brittany Chambers tutors an Oakland Catholic High School student in advanced chemistry.
Breakthrough Model Reveals Evolution of Ancient Nervous Systems Through Analysis of Seashell Color Patterns

By B. Rose Huber

Determining the evolution of pigmentation patterns on mollusk seashells—which could aid in the understanding of ancient nervous systems—has proved to be a challenging feat for researchers. Now, however, through mathematical equations and simulations, University of Pittsburgh and University of California, Berkeley, researchers have used 19 different species of the predatory sea snail Conus to generate a model of the pigmentation patterns of mollusk shells.

“There is no evolutionary record of nervous systems, but what you are seeing on the surface of seashells is a space-time record, like the recording of brainwave activity in an electroencephalogram (EEG),” said project coinvestigator G. Bard Ermentrout, Pitt Dis-tinguished University Professor of Computational Biology and a professor in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Mathematics.

Seashells differ substantially between the closely related Conus species, and the complexity of the patterns makes it difficult to properly characterize their similarities and differences. It also has proven difficult to describe the evolution of pigmentation patterns or to draw inferences about how natural selection might affect them. In a paper published in the Jan. 3 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) Online, Ermentrout and his colleagues attempt to resolve this problem by combining models based on natural evolution with relationships with a realistic development model that can generate pigmentation patterns of the shells of the various Conus species.

In order for UC Berkeley scientists to create simulations, Ermentrout and his collaborators developed equations and a neural model for the formation of the pigmentation patterns on shell surfaces. With the equations in hand, Zhenquiang Gong, a UC Berkeley graduate student in engineering, used a computer to simulate the patterns on the shells, hand fitting the parameters to create a basic model for the patterns of a given species.

The results of this study have allowed the researchers to estimate the shell pigmentation patterns of ancestral species, identify lineages in which one or more parameters have evolved rapidly, and measure the degree to which different parameters correlate with the evolutionary development and history of the organisms. Since the parameters are telling the researchers something about the circuitry of the mollusk’s nervous system, this is an indirect way to study the evolution of a simple nervous system.

“We’ve found that some aspects of the nervous system have remained quite stable over time, while there is a rapid evolution of other portions,” said Ermentrout.

“In the future, we hope to use similar ideas to understand other pattern-forming systems that are controlled by the nervous system. For instance, we would really like to develop models for some of the cephalopods like the cuttlefish and the octopus, which are able to change patterns on their skin in an instant.” —G. Bard Ermentrout

Mitral valve repair in the elderly is safe and should be considered not as a last resort but as a treatment option for patients older than 65 suffering from mitral regurgitation, according to findings of a large, multicenter study that analyzed more than 14,000 valve repair operations among this age group.

Mitral regurgitation, or a leaking mitral valve in the heart, can significantly limit long-term life expectancy and reduce quality of life because of its secondary effects. Young patients suffering from mitral regurgitation have their valves repaired as a first course of treatment. However, current treatment guidelines in elderly patients call for medical treatments to be tried first because advanced age was believed to put these patients at high risk for complications and little was known about their long-term outcomes. Mitral valve repair often was only done in the elderly once symptoms worsened.

“We found that mitral repair in older individuals is well tolerated, with low mortality and low morbidity, and that reoperations are uncommon. Most importantly, following mitral repair, a patient’s 10-year survival is restored to the normal matched U.S. population,” said Vinay Badhwar, a professor of surgery in the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery in Pitt’s School of Medicine and the study’s lead author. Badhwar presented the findings as the J. Maxwell Chamberlain Memorial Paper for Adult Cardiac Surgery at the opening of the annual meeting of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on Jan. 30.

Researchers in the study analyzed clinical data from The Society of Thoracic Surgeons Adult Cardiac Surgery Database matched to longitudinal claims data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services; they identified 14,604 isolated nonemergent primary mitral valve repair operations between 1991 and 2007. The cases were studied for mortality, mitral reoperation, and readmissions for heart failure, bleeding, and stroke.

The number of patients who died during or soon after surgery was only 2.6 percent and survival during follow-up was 74 percent. After adjusting for the statistical impact of late mortality, the researchers found that mitral repair was durable, with reoperation occurring in only 5 percent of cases.

“The results indicate that age alone should not be a marker of high risk in isolated mitral valve disease, and that there should be some careful thought given when medical therapy is considered over mitral repair in older patients,” said Badhwar, who is also codirector of both the UPMC Center for Mitral Valve Disease and the UPMC Center for Atrial Fibrillation. “Based on these data, guideline recommendations for medical therapy for symptomatic mitral regurgitation based on age alone should be re-evaluated.”

Also participating in the study were researchers from All Children’s Hospital, Cardiac Surgical Associates of Florida, The Congenital Heart Institute of Florida, The Duke Clinical Research Institute, Massachusetts General Hospital, the University of Colorado, the University of Florida, the University of Maryland, the University of Michigan, and the University of South Florida College of Medicine.

The study was supported by The Society of Thoracic Surgeons Research Center through the Adult National Cardiac Database and the Duke Clinical Research Institute.
Pitt’s School of Education Receives Nearly $4 Million to Fund Three Special Education Projects

The University of Pittsburgh School of Education has been granted nearly $4 million from the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Programs for three separate five-year projects that focus on personnel development designed to improve services and outcomes for children with disabilities.

Faculty in the special education program of the Pitt School of Education’s Department of Instruction and Learning received funding for the three projects, whose titles are “Apprenticeship in Special Education Instruction, Research, and Leadership” (ASPIRE), “Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education Autism Specialization,” and “Restructuring and Improving Special Education” (RISE).

ASPIRE, funded for $1.25 million, focuses on the preparation of leadership personnel in special-education research. Beginning in Fall 2012, a cadre of full-time doctoral candidates will be trained to provide in-service and preservice preparation for teachers of high-needs students with disabilities. The project’s design emphasizes an apprenticeship model in which fellows are mentored into the field of special education by supportive training and opportunities for supervised independence in research, teaching, and leadership. Additionally, the program requires a leadership internship in which fellows will spend a minimum of one semester being mentored by special education leaders who work in a high-poverty, high-needs school.

ASPIRE coprincipal investigators are Naomi Zigmond, Distinguished University Professor; Louise Kaczmarek, professor; Christopher Lemos, assistant professor; Douglas Kostewicz, assistant professor; and Amanda Kloo, research assistant professor, all in Pitt School of Education’s Department of Instruction and Learning. Applicants interested in learning more about the program can visit http://dl.dropbox.com/u/16700889/ASPIRE_Pitt_SPED_Doc-Study.pdf or contact Christopher Lemons at lemons@pitt.edu.

The second project, “Early Intervention/Early Childhood,” also awarded $1.25 million, will provide support for master’s degree students specializing in early intervention for children with autism. It will address state and national needs for more appropriately trained early interventionists and early childhood special educators to work with children under age 5, primarily in urban and suburban settings. This preservice program will prepare 40 early interventionists and early childhood special educators who also will receive specialized training in intervention strategies for young children with autism, including parent-implemented interventions.

“Early Intervention/Early Childhood,” coprincipal investigators are Louise Kaczmarek and Diana Knoll, research associate in the Department of Instruction and Learning.

RISE, funded for $1.495 million, is designed to revise and redesign Pitt’s Special Education Pre-K-Grade 8 program, developing a new dual certification master’s level program in special education and secondary content areas. A minimum of 100 teaching candidates will fulfill a field experience enhanced by collaborative general and special education mentors. Program graduates will participate in an intensive induction program for multiple years while working in high-needs schools.

RISE coprincipal investigators are Christopher Lemos, Sheila Conway, clinical assistant professor, Amy Srisc, program coordinator; Douglas Kostewicz; and Steven Lyon, professor, all in the Department of Instruction and Learning.

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2012 Carnegie Science Center Awards

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questions that cannot be addressed by traditional laboratory experiments, developing approaches for accurate computational analysis of protein structure and function.

Leadership in STEM Education Award

The Math and Science Collaborative, which provides innovation and evidence-based, regional approaches to the teaching and learning of mathematics and science from preschool through university levels. The collaborative was formed in 1994 at the Carnegie Science Center and supports all schools in 11 Southwestern Pennsylvania counties. Pitt alumnus Nancy Bunt (EDUC ’94, ’97G) is the collaborative’s program director.

Life Sciences Award

Joel Schuman, Eye and Ear Foundation Professor and chair of ophthalmology in the Pitt School of Medicine and director of the UPMC Eye Center. A leading expert on glaucoma, Schuman has been recognized for making contributions to science and technology in Western Pennsylvania. Schuman was selected specifically for improving lives through his scientific innovations.

University/Post-Secondary Student Award

Douglas Nelson (A&S ’09, ENGR ’09), graduate teaching assistant in the University of Pittsburgh Simulation and Medical Technology R&D Center. Nelson’s research includes 3-D tracking technologies, gesture-based interfaces, and methods to incorporate intelligent tutoring systems into medical training.

University/Post-Secondary Student Honorable Mention

Sam Rothstein (ENG ’11), PhD candidate in the Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering of Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering. Rothstein invented a more efficient method for designing time-release medications and championed its development through successful preclinical testing of several dosage forms. With these patent-pending formulations, a drug that would normally require daily doses could be taken safely just once a month or even once a year.

FRENCH AMBASSADOR VISITS PITT

French Ambassador Francois Delattre (right) visited the University of Pittsburgh campus on Jan. 18 and spoke to an invited audience of 150 gathered in the second-floor ballroom of the University Club. Delattre said that France is inspired by the ability of American cities like Pittsburgh to reinvent themselves. The breakfast briefing, titled “New Opportunities for the Franco-American Partnership and for the Transatlantic Relationship,” was sponsored by Pitt and the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh. Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg (left) welcomed the ambassador and delivered opening remarks.

Rupert Putzar

A WARM WINTER GREETING

No doubt someone’s love of newly fallen snow—and a touch of creativity—produced a Panther salute atop Pitt faculty, staff, and students who looked out the windows on the eastern side of the Cathedral of Learning one recent morning. “Go Pitt!” the footstep track read: Hail to Pitt! A posting of the photo on Pitt’s official Facebook page garnered more than 100 comments, including “Hail to Pitt! Memories of my wonderful years at Pitt … fun times!” Two other women separately reminisced about their long-ago weddings in Heinz Chapel. And one poster jokingly credited the snow art to a Peregrine falcon.
**Awards & More**

**Camillus Receives Distinguished Alumnus Award From Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad**

By Audrey M. Marks

John C. Camillus, Donald R. Beall Professor of Strategic Management in Pitt’s Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, and College of Business Administration, has been awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A), where Camillus earned his diploma (the equivalent of an MBA degree) and was a gold medalist in the school’s Post Graduate Programme. IIM-A, which has been ranked as the top business school in India, is listed as No. 11 in the Financial Times Global MBA Rankings 2012. The Economist has identified IIM-A as the most selective business school in the world.

Camillus recently accepted the IIM-A award during a ceremony that coincided with the school’s 50th anniversary; traditionally, the first alumnus to obtain a faculty position at the school—he had served there as a professor of management—Camillus received IIM-A’s first-ever Best Teacher Award. At Pitt, Camillus—a member of the Katz faculty since 1977—has been honored with the Center for Distinguished Teaching Award and the Chancellor’s Distinguished Public Service Award. He is an authority on strategic planning and management control.

IIM-A transformed my professional life,” Camillus says. “My two years as a student were a marvelous and energizing time. Three professors, in particular, were wonderful mentors during my time at a school and even afterwards. They taught me how to analyze complex problems, how to visualize and affect organizational outcomes, and how to seek and find simple solutions that work.”

Camillus received his Bachelor of Technology degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, and earned his Doctor of Business Administration degree from Indiana University’s Kelley School. He is devoted to the Pittsburgh community, serving as a trustee of the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh and executive vice chair of the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council.

The University of Pittsburgh’s Office of Public Affairs won four awards—including one Gold—from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) District II in that organization’s 2012 Awards Program competition. The honors were presented during the Jan. 22-24 CASE District I and District II annual conference in New York City.

Pitt Med, the Pitt School of Medicine magazine, won a Gold Award in the category of Visual Design in Print, Covers, for the cover of its Spring 2011 issue, featuring the story “None of My Memories Are My Own,” an article about traumatic brain injury. Pitt Med also received a Silver Award in the Staff Writing category.

Another Silver Award, in the category of Visual Design in Print, Multiple-Page Publications, was given to the Office of Public Affairs’ 2010 Blue Gold & Black, a biennial publication dedicated to chronicling the achievements of Black Pitt students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

Receiving an Honorable Mention in Community Relations Programs, Projects, and Special Events was Pitt’s 20th Annual 11/26-Jan. 1 K. LeRoy Irvis Black History Month celebration of African American History in the Allegheny Valley: A Century of The Pittsburgh Courier, an exhibit at the Senator John Heinz History Center that explored the nationwide impact of The Pittsburgh Courier newspaper throughout the past 100 years. Pitt and the History Center launched the exhibition’s opening with a Feb. 10 private reception and program at the History Center, 1212 Smallman St., Strip District. The exhibition ran from Feb. 11 through Oct. 2, 2011. The District I is CASE’s largest division, which includes 700 institutions and 3,000 individual members. From Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Canadian Province of Ontario.

**Pitt Undergraduate Receives 2012 Woodrow Wilson-Rockefeller Brothers Fund Teaching Fellowship**

By Patricia Lomando White

Christrell Boyd-Abner, a University of Pittsburgh senior in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences who is majoring in psychology with related studies in sociology, has been selected to receive the 2012 Woodrow Wilson-Rockefeller Brothers Fund Fellowship (WW-RBF). She is among 25 individuals nationwide selected for the third cohort of WW-RBF recipients.

Chosen through a competitive selection process, each WW-RBF aspirant teacher receives a $30,000 stipend to complete a master’s degree in one year, prepare to teach in a high-need public school, support throughout a three-year teaching commitment, and guidance toward teaching certification.

The Pitt School of Education’s Master of Arts in Teaching program is among the graduate school programs Boyd-Abner, of Philadelphia, is considering. As a first-generation college student, Boyd-Abner is an active member of Pitt’s Reaching Inside of Yourself for Excellence (RISE) Mentoring Program, which works to boost retention and graduation rates of underrepresented groups in postsecondary institutions. She received RISE’s Stand-Out Student Award given to those who exemplify hard work and dedication to “upholding the standards of a RISE student.”

Boyd-Abner has served as a volunteer teacher from Philadelphia Freedom Schools and, prior to transferring from the Pitt-Bradford regional campus to the University’s Pittsburgh campus, tutored Bradford students in College Algebra 2, Through WeDoBigThings-Philadelphia, whose mission is to “socioeconomically diversify post-secondary institutions.” Boyd-Abner mentors inner-city youth who are aspiring college/university enrollees. This past fall, she was inducted into Psi Chi: The International Honor Society in Psychology.

Established in 1992 by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), the fellowships for Aspiring Teachers of Color were created to help recruit, support, and retain individuals of color as public education teachers and administrators. Since the program’s inception, RBF has awarded nearly $8 million in grants and financial assistance to 400 fellows. In January 2009, it transferred the program to the Woodrow Wilson Foundation.

There are two opposing views of violence in human affairs. One contends that violence is an ingrained propensity and, therefore, there are inherent problems in peacemaking. This other contends that people are inclined toward cooperative and peaceful behavior and violence represents an abnormal breakdown of this state of relationships. In Peacemaking and the Imagination: Papua New Guinea Perspectives (University of Queensland Press, Penguin Australia, 2011), Andrew Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart from the Department of Anthropology at Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences argue that in communities where violence must be paid for through compensation, violent conflict can be contained.

“A new direction for the study of violence, this book provides a primary reference to the Highlands of Papua New Guinea and by drawing comparisons to South Africa, Pakistan, and other areas of tribal social formations, the authors explore how rituals of sacrifice, wealth redistribution, oath taking, sacrifice, and formal apologies are often used as a means of averting or transcending acts of revenge after violence. Strathern is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Anthropology and Stewart a senior research associate at Pitt.”

“More than 40 years of field research and writing have informed writing and making of this book,” the authors said. “Writing Peacemaking and the Imagination was the occasion for us to revisit and rework many themes from our earlier work on violence, but this time with the focus on peace, not war.”

The book is the third title in the University of Queensland Press’ New Approaches to Peace and Conflict series, which publishes new theory, research, and strategies for effective peace building and the transformation of violence.

Strathern and Stewart are a husband-and-wife research team with a long history of joint publication and research. They are frequently invited as international lecturers and have carried out long-term field research in Papua New Guinea, the Pacific, Asia, and Europe in a wide range of subjects, including conflict and violence.
**Concerts**


The University of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, performance of Robert Schubert: Legend for string orchestra and Brahms’ Symphony No. 2. 8 p.m. Feb. 8, Free, Bellefield Hall Auditorium, Music at Pitt Series, Pitt Department of Music, 412-624-4125.

Julieta Ugarte Medina, singer and clarinetist, accompanied by pianist Tom Rob and the Tangueros de Ley ensemble, performing tangos and other Argentinian music, 7 p.m. Feb. 9, Free, Frick Fine Arts Auditorium, Pitt’s Center for Latin American Studies, 412-647-7394.


**Exhibitions**


**Conferences**


**Opera/ Theater/ Dance**

Uncommon, choreographed by Dwight Rhoden to the music of J. S. Bach, Feb. 11-13, August Wilson Center for African American Culture, 980 Liberty Ave., Downtown, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company, 412-624-7529, www.play.pitt.edu/content/gammage-project.


**Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses**


“The Transformative Power of Role Modeling and Coaching in Medical Education,” Scott M. Wright, professor of medicine and director of Miller-Cooley Academy of Clinical Excellence, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, noon Feb. 10, Lecture Room 3, 4th Floor Seifel Hall, Medical Education Grand Rounds, Office of the Vice Dean, Pitt School of Medicine, 412-646-9006, www.mege-pitt.edu.

“Women, Power, and Peace-making in Africa,” Alii Mari Tippo, professor of political science and of gender and women’s studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1:30 p.m. Feb. 10, Sociology Colloquium Room, 2032 Povall Hall, held in honor of the late 2004 Nobel Peace Prize recipient and Pitt alumna Wangari Mutu Mau Mau (A&S ’65C), Iris Marion Young Lecture Series on Civic Engagement, 412-624-6445, women@pitt.edu.


The Gammage Project by Antilo “Buck” Favorini, an original docudrama exposing atrocities that affect race relations in Pittsburgh, Feb. 9-9, Henry Heymann Theatre inside the Stephen Foster Memorial. March 2-4, August Wilson Center, 980 Liberty Ave., Downtown, Pitt Repertory Theatre, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company, 412-624-7529, www.play.pitt.edu/content/gammage-project.

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Pitt Repertory to Present World-Premiere Production of *The Gammage Project*

By Sharon S. Blake

Pitt Repertory Theatre will present an original docudrama, *The Gammage Project*, written by Attilio “Buck” Favorini, professor and director of graduate studies in Pitt’s Department of Theatre Arts. The world-premiere production will be directed by Mark Clayton Southers, founding and producing director of the Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company.

Produced in conjunction with Pittsburgh Playwrights, *The Gammage Project* initially will run from Feb. 9 to Feb. 19 in the Gammage Project with Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company.

The play is based on actual events from 1995 that drew national media attention. Jonny Gammage, a cousin of former Pittsburgh Steeler defensive end Ray Seals, was in town for a visit. Driving along State Route 51, Gammage was stopped by a Brentwood police lieutenant, because, according to court trial testimony, he had been repeatedly applying the car’s brakes. The Brentwood police lieutenant was assisted by four other officers, all of whom are White. Gammage was Black. Gammage died at the scene; the cause of death is listed as asphyxiation caused by pressure applied to the chest and neck.

A coroner’s jury recommended that homicide charges be brought against the five officers, but only two were charged with involuntary manslaughter. After two mistrials, the charges against the two were dropped. A third officer was tried separately and found not guilty.

Following every performance, Favorini or a guest will moderate talkback sessions between the audience, one or two of the cast members, and individuals who have a connection to the Gammage case. Performances are at 8 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays, except for the Sunday, March 4, matinee, which begins at 1 p.m. For tickets or for more information, call 412-624-PLAY (7529) or visit www.play.pitt.edu/content/gammage-project.

“Our hope is that *The Gammage Project* will bring to light the suppressed facts and feelings that continue to affect race relations today,” said Favorini. “No less important, we look to position our play in the millennia-old tradition of deploying drama to address issues of civic consequence. We want to create a play that invites all to think deeply and to feel honestly.” Favorini, who served as founding chair of Pitt’s Department of Theatre Arts, was also founder and producing director of this region’s Three Rivers Shakespeare Festival (1980-92). He wrote the grant that helped establish the City Theatre at Pitt, and he served as its executive producer from 1979 to 1988. A PhD graduate of Yale University, he is the former editor of *Theatre Survey*, the American journal of theater history.

Southers is an award-winning playwright, photographer, set designer, producer, and stage director. His roots in theatre go back to 1980, when he was a photographer, actor, and playwright for Pitt’s Kuntu Repertory Theatre. He has produced more than 100 full-length and one-act plays for Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company, including eight consecutive plays from August Wilson’s Pittsburgh cycle of dramas. In November 2010, Southers was named the August Wilson Center’s artistic director for theater initiatives.