William E. Strickland Jr., Pitt Alumnus and Trustee, Is Recipient of the 2011 Goi Peace Award

By Sharon S. Blake

The Goi Peace Foundation has honored Pitt alumnus and trustee William E. Strickland Jr. (AAS ’70) and chief executive officer of Pittsburgh Bidwell Corporation, with its 2011 Goi Peace Award. The annual award recognizes individuals and organizations in various fields that have made outstanding contributions toward the realization of a peaceful and harmonious world for humanity and all life on earth.

Previous recipients have included Microsoft chair Bill Gates, former Costa Rican president and Nobel Peace Prize recipient Oscar Arias, social entrepreneur Bill Drayton, and former medical doctor Deepak Chopra.

Strickland recently accepted the award at the Goi Peace Foundation Forum 2011 in Tokyo.

Strickland founded the Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild while still a Pitt student in 1968 to bring arts education and mentorship to inner-city youth in his North Side neighborhood. In 1972, he assumed leadership of the Bidwell Training Center and molded it into a successful jobs training program for disadvantaged adults. Manchester Bidwell—a nonprofit corporation comprising these two main operations—has proven to be a successful model for change.

Calling Strickland a “social innovator,” the Peace Award selection committee praised him for his “visionary social work to help the underserved population transform their lives” and for “inspiring others to dream bigger.” The committee added: “By offering innovative educational and cultural opportunities with emphases on the arts, beauty, and respect, Mr. Strickland has energized thousands of youth and adults to restore hope and dignity and become creative contributors to their communities.”

“Strickland used the power of a Pitt education to help build his own life and is now doing special work everyday and throughout the world to help others build better lives.” —Mark A. Nordenberg

Strickland graduated cum laude from Pitt with a bachelor’s degree in history and foreign relations. He serves as a consultant, grant evaluator, and mentor in the fields of the arts and education, community development, and workforce development training. Strickland’s Manchester Bidwell model uses the philosophy that environment shapes people’s lives. His institution is known for providing an empowering atmosphere of art, light, music, and respect. The model has been replicated in San Francisco; Cincinnati; and Grand Rapids, Mich., and other centers are planned.

Strickland has been accorded numerous honors, including selection as a MacArthur “genius” Fellow; being named a Pitt Distinguished Alumnus Fellow; being inducted into the University’s inaugural Legacy Laureate class; and being named 2007 Pittsburgher of the Year by Pittsburgh Magazine. Strickland is the author of Make the Impossible Possible: One Man’s Crusade to Inspire

Pitt Celebrates Black History Month With World Premiere Screening of Thaddeus Mosley: Sculptor

By Sharon S. Blake

University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and Pitt Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs Robert Hill will cohost a private program and reception Feb. 1 for the world-premiere screening of Thaddeus Mosley: Sculptor—a documentary chronicling the life and artistic career of the renowned Western Pennsylvania sculptor and 1950 graduate of Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

The 45-minute documentary is the work of filmmaker and Pitt alumnus Kenneth Love (A&S ’71). The Feb. 1 event, which will take place at the Twentieth Century Club, 4201 Bigelow Blvd., Oakland, is the Pitt 2012 Black History Month Program.

Thaddeus Mosley: Sculptor explores Mosley’s creative processes and provides unique insight into the sculptor’s background, individual style, and artistic influences. Love and fellow Pitt alumnus Barbara McNulty (MED ’75, A&S ’71), the documentary’s executive producer, capture Mosley working with rose and chisel in his studio on Pittsburgh’s North Side and teaching at the Touchstone Center for Crafts in Farmington, Pa.

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Pitt Astronomers Determine Color Of the Milky Way Galaxy

By Rose Huber

A team of astronomers in Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences announced Jan. 11 the most accurate determination yet of the color of the (aptly named) Milky Way Galaxy: “a very pure white, almost mirroring a fresh spring snowfall.” Jeffrey Newman, professor of physics and astronomy, and Timothy Licquia, a PhD student in physics at Pitt, reported their findings during a presentation at the 219th American Astronomical Society (AAS) Meeting in Austin, Texas.

While color is one of the most important properties of galaxies that astronomers study, it has been difficult to make the measurement for the Milky Way, as our solar system is located well within the Galaxy. Because of this, clouds of gas and dust obscure all but the closest regions of the Galaxy from view, preventing researchers from getting the “big picture.”

“The problem is similar to determining the overall color of the Earth, when you’re only able to tell what Pennsylvania looks like,” Newman noted.
Briefly noted

**Measuring Poverty is Topic of Jan. 25 LSEP Lecture**
The University of Pittsburgh at Rose and Social Problems (CASP) launches its Reed Smith Spring 2012 Speiker Series Jan. 25 with a noon lecture by Kathleen Short, research economist with the U.S. Census Bureau.

Short’s talk, titled “The Supplemental Poverty Measure: Taking Account of Taxes and Transfers,” will take place in the School of Social Work Conunference Center in room 249th floor of the Center of Learning. It is free and open to the public, and registration is not required; lunch will be provided. For more information, call 412-244-7392.

Short’s work with the Census Bureau made news last fall when the bureau released its first supplemental poverty measure, which took into account the impact of many forms of noncash public assistance, such as food stamps, housing subsidies, and energy assistance. Under the new measure, the poverty threshold for a family of two adults and two children in 2010 was $24,343, more than $2,000 higher than the official threshold of $22,133.

After earning a PhD in economics from the University of Michigan, Short joined the Census Bureau in 1984. She has worked primarily in the area of measuring economic well-being and developing an international database on children’s well-being.

—Sharon S. Blake

**Poets Wayne Koestenbaum, Myung Mi Kim to Give Reading Jan. 26**

Noted poets Wayne Koestenbaum, Distinguished Professor of English at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, and Myung Mi Kim, professor of English at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York, will read from their works as part of the Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series at 8:30 p.m. Jan. 26 in the University of Pittsburgh’s Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. The event is free and open to the public.

The reading will be followed by a conversation about life, work, and literary friendship moderated by poet Dawn Lundy Martin, assistant professor of English in Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. This year’s 2011-12 Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series season is sponsored by Pitt’s Writing Program in Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences.

**Pitt to Present Premiere of Thaddeus Mosley: Sculptor**

Harris (2001), Love’s documentary newspaper of record: The Pittsburgh Courier (2009), which premiered as Pitt’s 2010 K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program, will be aired on WQED-TV Feb. 2, 2012. Love has worked on more than 50 award-winning National Geographic television specials and garnered Emmy Awards for Serengeti Diary (1989) and Realm of the Alligator (1986). He earned an MFA degree in film and television from Carnegie Mellon University.

**About Pitt’s K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program**

Pitt began its annual Black History Month program in 2004 with the world premiere of the documentary K. Leroy Irvis: The Lion of Pennsylvania and renamed the observance in 2008 the K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program to honor the memory of the legendary Pennsylvania legislative leader and Pitt alumnus (LAW ’74 and trustee, Irvis, who in 1978 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.

**About Black History Month**

Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950) — who earned a Harvard University Ph.D degree and was a celebrated American author, educator, and historian—initiated what he called “Negro History Week” in 1926. At the heart of the annual February observance, which in 1976 became Black History Month, is honoring African Americans who have struggled and achieved in their effort to advance in all walks of African American life.

**Call for 2012 Baranger Teaching Award Nominations**

The University of Pittsburgh’s Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Organization is accepting nominations for the 2012 Elizabeth Baranger Excellence in Teaching Award.

The award, named after Elizabeth Baranger, a professor emeritus in Pitt’s Department of Physics and Astronomy and a former vice provost for graduate studies, honors outstanding teaching by graduate students in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. The deadline for submissions is Feb. 1. Nomineations may be submitted by Pitt faculty, teaching assistants, and teaching fellows, as well as by graduate and undergraduate students. To be eligible for the $250 award, an instructor must have been enrolled as a graduate student in the Dietrich School and have taught a class in an any semester of the previous calendar year. Winners will be notified on April 2. Nomination forms are available at http://asgso.pitt.edu/teachingAwardNomination.html. Questions may be addressed to Gwen Watkins, assistant teaching professor, at gwatkins@pitt.edu.
Toi Derricotte, an English professor in the University of Pittsburgh’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, has been elected to the Academy of American Poets Board of Chancellors, the academy’s advisory board of distinguished poets. Derricotte was elected along with poets Jane Hirshfield and Arthur Sze.

A renowned poet, Derricotte has had more than a thousand poems published in anthologies, journals, and magazines. She is the cofounder of the Cave Canem Foundation, which has been offering workshops and fellowships for African American poets since 1996.

In discussing Derricotte and her poetry, Pitt alumni and Academy Chancellor Gerald Stern (A&S ’47), who served as the inaugural poet laureate of New Jersey from 2000 to 2002, said, “She is a deeply courageous, open and wise poet, a master of the lyric, but only as it combines with the narrative and moves—through pain—into the vision of the redemptive. But the journey towards that is always earned, as she spares nothing, including herself. To read through her poetry is to discover not just a void, but a person—and a world.”

Established in 1946, the Academy of American Poets’ Board of Chancellors elects the recipients of the Wallace Stevens Award and the Academy of American Poets Fellowship. They also act as consultants to the organization on matters of artistic direction and programming and serve as ambassadors of poetry in the world at large. Previous Chancellors of the Academy have included Marianne Moore, W. H. Auden, Robert Lowell, Elizabeth Bishop, John Berryman, Robert Penn Warren, among others.


The steering committee overseeing Pitt’s 2012 reaccreditation process by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education has completed its report.

Every 10 years, Pitt determines whether its reaccreditation process by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education has completed its report.

Pitt’s steering committee chose the “selected topics” option, and focused on how Pitt uses assessment as a vehicle for continuous improvement.

“The selected topics model provides an excellent opportunity for us to reflect upon a culture of continuous assessment at the University of Pittsburgh; to evaluate its contributions to the institution’s emergence in recent years as a leading public research university; to identify its strengths, challenges, and effectiveness in identifying opportunities for improvement or change, and to consider how it might be used to further our ambitions,” the committee wrote in submitting its topic to Middle States.

The 20-person steering committee, chaired by Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Patricia E. Beeson and Vice Chancellor for Educational Affairs, John Fedele, comprised faculty, staff, and students. The steering committee delegated much of the project to three working groups:

• Using Assessment to Improve Institutional Effectiveness, cochaired by Richard Schulz, professor of psychiatry and director of the University Center for Social and Urban Research, and Jane Thompson, associate vice chancellor for management information and analysis; and
• Demonstrating Compliance through Document Review, chaired by Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Andrew Blair.

The final self-study report, “Using a Universitywide Culture of Assessment for Continuous Improvement” is available as a downloadable pdf on the my.pitt.edu portal.

Nancy Condee Wins MLA’s Scaglione Prize for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures

By Patricia Lomando White

Nancy Condee, Pitt professor and director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, won the 2010 MLA’s Scaglione Prize for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures for her book The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema (Oxford University Press, 2009). The prize—awarded biennially for an outstanding scholarly work on the linguistics or literatures of the Slavic languages—was presented Jan. 7 at the MLA’s annual convention in Seattle.

MLA’s citation for The Imperial Trace reads: “Condee brilliantly accomplishes two pressing goals at once. The book is an insightful guide to six major post-Soviet filmmakers whose work it explores aesthetically as a function of cinematic style and cultural ideology and as an imaginative response to the decay and collapse of the Soviet Union and to the turbulent post-Soviet aftermath. If these films’ Russian’s imperial and national identities has been dominated by historians and social scientists, then The Imperial Trace insists on the pertinence of cultural production even as it engages in a dialogue across disciplines. Condee succeeds in her goal, not by converting insights into his or her context, but by exploring the more oblique tricks of the imaginative trade by which a world—foreign movies, novels, or transfigures its own time.”

The Imperial Trace was also one of the Special Paper Stop Presses for MA and PhD Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures. Condee is a specialist in contemporary Russian culture and cultural politics, Soviet cultural politics, late-Soviet and post-Soviet cinema, imperial and post-imperial theory, and Soviet and post-Soviet popular culture. She also is a Pitt Film Studies Program faculty member.

The MLA, the largest and one of the oldest learned societies in the humanities, promotes the advancement of literary and linguistic studies. The more than 30,000 MLA members and affiliated associations come from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, as well as from Canada, Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Nancy Condee

1. The Black Notebooks
2. The Undertaker’s Daughter
3. The Imperial Traces
4. The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema
5. The Undertaker’s Daughter
6. The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema
7. The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema
8. The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema
9. The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema
10. The Imperial Trace: Recent Russian Cinema

While Pitt’s Middle States Commission on Higher Education has completed its reaccreditation process, the University of Pittsburgh is expected to have a new president in place this summer.

By John Fedele
University of Pittsburgh Astronomers Determine Color of the Milky Way

To circumvent this problem, Newman and Liequia set out to determine the Milky Way’s color by using images from other, more distant galaxies that can be viewed more clearly. These galaxies were observed by the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (SDSS), a project in which Pitt had an instrumental role that measured the detailed properties of nearly a million galaxies and has obtained color images of roughly a quarter of the sky. Without the large set of galaxies studied by SDSS to compare to, an accurate color determination was not possible. The new color measurement is allowing Pitt researchers to better understand the development of the Milky Way Galaxy and how it is related to other objects astronomers observe.

The problem we faced was similar to determining the outside climate when you are in a room with no windows,” said Newman. “You can’t see what’s happening, but you can look online and find current weather conditions someplace where they should be about the same—the local airport, for example.”

The Pitt team identified galaxies similar to the Milky Way in properties that were able to be determined—specifically, their total amount of stars and the rate at which they are creating new stars, which are both related to the brightness and color of a galaxy. The Milky Way Galaxy, the Pitt researchers realized, should then fall somewhere within the range of colors of these matching objects.

“Thanks to SDSS, the large, uniform sample needed to select Milky Way analogs already existed. We just needed to think of the idea for the project, and it was possible,” said Newman. “Although it is a relatively small telescope, only 2.5 meters (100 inches) in diameter, SDSS has been one of the most scientifically productive projects in history, enabling thousands of new projects like this one.”

Newman described the overall spectrum of light from the Milky Way as being very close to the light seen when looking at spring snow in the early morning, shortly after dawn. Michael Ramsey, a Pitt professor of geology, notes that new spring snow is the whitest natural thing on Earth. Many cultures around the world have given the Milky Way names associated with milk—human vision is not sensitive to colors seen in faint light, so the diffuse glow of the Galaxy at night appears white. That association has proven to be very appropriate, given the Milky Way’s true color.

Astronomers divide most galaxies into two broad categories based on their colors—relatively red galaxies that rarely form new stars and blue galaxies where stars are still being born. (The brightest stars are generally blue, but they are very short-lived on cosmic scales and die out quickly.) The new measurements place the Milky Way near the division between the two classes. This adds to the evidence that although the Milky Way is still producing stars, it is “on its way out,” according to Newman. “A few billion years from now, our Galaxy will be a much more boring place, full of middle-aged stars slowly using up their fuel and dying off, but without any new ones to take their place. It will be less interesting for astronomers in other galaxies to look at, too. The Milky Way’s spiral arms will fade into obscurity when there are no more blue stars left.”

The Milky Way’s color is closest to the “cosmic color” measured by Ivan Baldry, a professor of astrophysics at the University of Oxford in England, and his collaborators in 2002; these researchers measured the average color of galaxies in the local universe.

“This close match shows that in many ways the Milky Way is a pretty typical galaxy,” said Newman. “This also agrees well with the ‘Copernican Principle’ embraced by the field of cosmology—that, just as the Earth is not in a special place in the Solar System, we should not expect to live in an unusual place in the Universe.”

The light from the Milky Way closely matches the light from a D48.4 standard illuminant, or a light bulb with a color temperature of 4700-5000K. “It is well within the range our eye can perceive as white—roughly halfway between the light from old-style incandescent light bulbs and the standard spectrum of white on a television,” said Newman.

A full-color view of the Milky Way, with gas and dust obscuration, is available at http://home.arcor.de/AXEL.MELLINGER/

Funding for this project was provided by the National Science Foundation. For more information on the SDSS project, visit www.sdss.org.

To read the technical notes, visit http://www.cfa.harvard.edu/cfa/news/technical-notes.

Teen Brains Have Increased Vulnerability to Addiction, Other Disorders, Moghaddam-Led Study Finds

By B. Rose Huber

Teenagers are more susceptible to developing disorders like addiction and depression, according to a paper published by Pitt researchers Jan. 16 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.

The study was led by Bita Moghaddam, coauthor of the paper and a professor of neuroscience in Pitt’s Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. She and coauthor David Sturman, an MD/PhD student in Pitt’s Medical Scientist Training Program, compared the brain activity of adolescents and adults in rats involved in a task in which they anticipated a reward. The researchers found increased brain-cell activity in the adolescent rats’ brains in an unusual area: the dorsal striatum (DS)—a site commonly associated with habit formation, decision-making, and motivated learning. The adult rats’ DS areas, on the other hand, did not become activated by an anticipated reward.

“The brain region traditionally associated with reward and motivation, called the nucleus accumbens, was activated similarly in adults and adolescents,” said Moghaddam. “But the unique sensitivity of adolescent DS to reward anticipation indicates that, in this age group, reward can tip directly into a brain region that is critical for learning and habit formation.”

Typically, researchers study the correlation between different behaviors of adolescents and adults. The Pitt team, however, used a method they call “behavioral clamping” to study whether the brains of adolescents process the same behavior differently. To that end, the researchers implanted electrodes into different regions of rat adolescent and adult brains, allowing the researchers to study the reactions of both individual neurons and the sum of the neurons’, or “population’s” activity.

The researchers’ predictions proved accurate. Even though the behavior was the same for both adult and adolescent rats, the researchers observed age-related neural response differences that were especially dramatic in the DS during reward anticipation. This shows that not only is reward expectancy processed differently in an adolescent brain, but also it can affect brain regions directly responsible for decision-making and action selection.

“Adolescence is a time when the symptoms of most mental illnesses—such as schizophrenia and bipolar and eating disorders—are first manifested, so we believe that this is a critical period for preventing these illnesses,” Moghaddam said. “A better understanding of how the adolescent brain processes reward and decision-making is critical for understanding the basis of these vulnerabilities and designing prevention strategies.”

The Pitt team will continue to compare adolescent and adult behavior, especially as it relates to stimulants—such as amphetamines—and their influence on brain activity.

The National Institute of Mental Health funded this project.

Bita Moghaddam

Jeffrey Newman
Pitt Green Fund Sponsors Multiple Sustainability Projects on Campus

By B. Rose Huber

With almost a dozen sustainable projects on the docket and a small budget, members of the Green Fund Advisory Board (GFAB) have learned the importance of penny-pinching.

“We want to work on the projects that students want to see, and although we don’t have a large amount of financial resources, we have the capability to do all of them,” said Seth Bush, coordinator of the Pitt Green Fund and a Pitt senior majoring in electrical and computer engineering in the Swanson School of Engineering.

After a review in October, the nine-person GFAB determined that all project proposals submitted by students to the Pitt Green Fund were possible, with many of the ideas possibly reaching fruition this spring.

Among the projects completed in 2011—the Green Fund’s first year—were a Sustainable Pittsburgh Handbook for new students, Go Green signs featuring facts about water and energy consumption in residence halls (with expansion to academic buildings in the future), and a water-bottle refill station located within the William Pitt Union.

“This hydration station was so popular that the Pitt Union has taken on the cost and maintenance of the machine,” Bush said. “Two more hydration stations will be installed in the Hillman Library [sponsored by Facilities Management] and one in Sutherland Hall [sponsored by the Department of Housing] as early as this spring.”

The Green Fund has an annual budget of $5,000, which is provided by the Student Government Board from Pitt’s Student Activity Fund. Several projects will be undertaken during 2012:

• Compost Tea—Green matter (nitrogen-rich composted material from food scraps) will be collected from Sodexo, which handles food services at Pitt, and mixed with brown matter (dead leaves, paper towels) and a catalyst to create a liquid fertilizer. The resulting fertilizer is safer than chemical fertilizers because it does not contaminate water and reduces waste.

• Java Farm—Coffee grounds will be collected from Sodexo and taken to the student-run urban garden on Oakland Avenue. Plant to Plate, a Pitt student organization, will use the grounds to grow oyster mushrooms, which will be donated to Sodexo, and

• E-Cycling Drive—On move-out day in the spring, students will be able to donate unwanted electronics, appliances, and devices to eLoop, a local electronics recycling group that helps organizations manage “hard to recycle” waste. GFAB also hopes to partner with Pitt’s Surplus Property department in managing the electronic waste. This project is being merged with Pitt’s clothing bin project to create a program tentatively called Clutter With a Cause. Each residence hall will have one or more collection sites set up during the last two weeks of class for the donation of unwanted clothing to Goodwill, electronics or responsible recycling to eLoop, and unwanted nonperishable food items for donation to a food pantry.

In addition, participating students can receive hands-on experience with project management and build their interpersonal skills through their work with other students, organizations, and administrators.

For more information on the Pitt Green Fund, visit www.pittgreenfund.com.

Pitt PACC Researchers Play Role in Higgs Boson Search

By B. Rose Huber

Researchers around the world, including those at the University of Pittsburgh, have long been playing a game of hide and seek with the existence of the Higgs boson—a never-before-seen particle that is thought by many to be the “fundamental building block of the universe.” Researchers at the Large Hadron Collider particle accelerator in Geneva, Switzerland, reported in December that they may have seen hints of the Higgs boson.

Tao Han, a Pitt professor of physics and astronomy in the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, began his work at Pitt in Fall 2011, bringing with him a center that is focused on the study of the Higgs boson, among other phenomena within physics. The Pittsburgh Particle Physics, Astrophysics, and Cosmology Center (Pitt PACC) comprises researchers from Pitt and Carnegie Mellon University who are exploring one fundamental idea: how nature works—from different aspects of cosmology.

“Most of what we’re searching for, especially in relation to the Higgs, has no real-life application yet. But eventually, when it’s found, it will have the potential to explain many of the universe’s mysteries,” said Han, director of Pitt PACC.

Other professors in the Department of Physics and Astronomy are involved with ATLAS, a particle detector that is part of the Large Hadron Collider and is used to recreate conditions just after the Big Bang. This device helps researchers better understand the interactions between elementary particles at the world’s highest energies, which were prevalent for a fraction of a second after the Big Bang.

Joseph Boudreau, James Mueller, and Vladimir Savinov, all professors in Pitt’s Department of Physics and Astronomy, contributed to the construction of the experiment’s instrumentation and software; some of the images distributed through national media in December were the product of scientific visualization programs originating in the Pittsburgh group, which is active in the search for exotic phenomena and the determination of heavy quark properties.

“The range where the Higgs is hiding has now been narrowed,” said Boudreau. I predict a conclusive discovery could come in summer 2012.”

In addition to pursuing research, Pitt PACC organizes a series of joint seminars and workshops on “hot topics” within physics. It also hosts an annual lectureship as well as short-term and long-term visiting researchers. The center provides support for postdoctoral positions, and it involves graduate students in its projects.

For more information on Pitt PACC, visit www.physicsandastronomy.pitt.edu/pittpacc.
Edward M. Stricker, a renowned neuroscience scholar who took the helm as dean of the University Honors College (UHC) last July, laid out his vision for the college during his Jan. 11 Inaugural Dean’s Lecture in the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. Stricker, who also is Distinguished University Professor of Neuroscience at Pitt, asked the audience to keep in mind three general UHC principles: First, he said, the UHC is not a membership organization—no student is admitted and no student is excluded; second, the UHC’s primary goal is to help the University provide to undergraduates the best quality education imaginable; and, third, the UHC can certify by conferring the Bachelor of Philosophy degree that students have obtained a uniquely outstanding undergraduate education. In closing, Stricker said, “I believe our job at the University is to educate students so they can become excellent citizens of the United States and of the world—not only informed, but responsible and caring, with the intelligence to know what has to be done and the character to get it done honorably and respectfully. In pursuing that goal, I intend to build on the outstanding work that was done by Alec Stewart, the founding dean of the UHC, and to maintain and expand the programs that have worked so well in the past while introducing new programs that will make the UHC even more effective in the future.”

Pitt's 2012 Student Government Board (SGB) was sworn in during a Jan. 5 ceremony in the William Pitt Union's lower lounge. SGB President James Landreneau (back row, fourth from left) and eight other newly elected board members—many responsibilities include oversight of the Student Activities Fund, to which all students except those in the College of General Studies contribute. Front row, from left: 2011 SGB elections chair Kari Rosenkaimer and 2012 board members Megan McGrath, Zoe Samudzi, and Julie Hallinan. Back row, from left: Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg, 2012 board members Helin Genius and Alex Murdoch, Landreneau, 2012 board members Ohlwe Armstrong, Gordon Leeder, and Natalie Rothenderber, and 2011 SGB President Molly Stieber.

Elizabeth Anderson, John Roels: Collegiate Professor of Philosophy and Women’s Studies and Arthur F. Thomas Professor at the University of Michigan, delivered a lecture Dec. 9 as part of the Pitt Center on Race and Social Problems’ Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC Fall 2011 Speaker Series. The talk, “The Imperative of Integration: Race and Education,” was held in the School of Social Work’s conference center in the Cathedral of Learning.

During a Dec. 6 reception in the William Pitt Union Assembly Room, Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg honored staff members who had reached 20, 30, 40, 40-plus, and 50-plus years of employment at Pitt in 2011. Among the honorees was Madalyn Turner-Dickerson (A&S ’70, EDUC ’75G ’97G, GSPIA ’85), assistant University registrar, who began working at Pitt in 1971 and went on to earn master’s degrees in education and in public administration, as well as a doctorate in education. Pictured, from left, are Chancellor Nordenberg, Turner-Dickerson, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Patricia E. Beeson, and University Registrar Ralph Herrel.

Pitt fraternity and sorority members presented a $500,000 check to the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute during a Dec. 8 reception at the O’Hara Student Center. The Greek organizations pledged in 2005 to raise the funds and held a variety of fundraising events, including the Pitt Dance Marathon, to reach their half-million-dollar goal. “I am so proud of our fraternities and sororities for their dedication to this cause,” said Pitt Vice Provost and Dean of Students Kathy W. Humphrey. “Each one of our organizations contributed to achieving this very ambitious goal.” In the front row, from left, are Pitt students Ashley Hazeltine, Christine Monaco, Kari Rosenkaimer, Megan McGrath, and Alexandra Conlon (wearing teal blouse). In the second row, from left, are Shannon Krohe; Summer Rothrock, the coordinator of Fraternity and Sorority Life at Pitt; Lauren Jefferson; Pitt Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Patricia E. Beeson; and Humphrey. In the back row, from left, are Andrew Hansen, Kaster Walz, Nick Raffige, Christopher Fetter, and Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg.

Greeks Help in Fight Against Cancer

2012 Student Government Board

HonorinG Employee Loyalty

Center on Race and Social Problems

Greeks Help in Fight Against Cancer

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Happenings

Concerts


The Overtones, Cup & Chaucer Cafe, January 27

Exhibitions

University Art Gallery, exhibition of work produced by PITT Department of Studio Arts and Honors College students during PITT’s third-annual Wyoming Field Study at the University’s_dns~home-brew~rich~Cook Ranch, through Feb. 3, Frick Fine Arts Building, 412-624-2405.


Lectures/Seminars/Readings

TIES Informational Luncheon for Researchers and Research Assistants, talk on Text Information Extraction System (TIES) open to Pitt and UPmc faculty, staff, and students, Rebecca Crowley, director, Department of Biomedical Informatics Graduate Training Program, Pitt School of Medicine, 11 a.m. Jan. 23, Conference Room CR231, Magee—Womens Hospital, registration required at tues.upmc.com/regis- ter/index.html, 412-624-4753.


“Newton and Prudox on the Geometry of Absolute Space,” Mary Dominski, visiting fellows and associate professor of philosophy, University of New Mexico, 12:05 p.m. Jan. 24, 8178 Cathedral of Learning, Lunchtime Talk Series, Pitt Center for Philosophy of Science, 412-624-1052, pittcfs@pitt.edu.


Wayne Koestenbaum and Myung Mi Kim, award-winning poets and English professors at CUNY Graduate Center and the University at Buffalo, respectively, free and open to the public, 8:30 p.m. Jan. 26, Frick Fine Arts Auditorium, Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series 2011-12 Season, Pitt Writing Program, The Book Center, 412-624-6058, www.pghwritersseries.wordpress.com.

“Cooperation and Human Cogni- tion,” Michael Tomasello, visiting fellow and co-director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, 3:30 p.m. Jan. 27, G24 Cathedral of Learning, Annual Lect- ured Series, Pitt Center for Philosophy of Science, 412-624-1052, pittcfs@pitt.edu.


Miscellaneous

“The Janey from Jenny, What’s Changed?,” panel discussion and community talkback event looking at changes in police procedure and oversight from the time of the Janey Gannage case to the recent Jordan Miles case; panelists include David Harris, Pitt professor of law; Elizabeth Pittenger, executive director of Pittsburgh’s Citizen Police Review Board; Tim Stevens, chair of the Black Political Empowerment Project; and Wayne Babish, former Brentwood police chief, moderated by Attilio Favorini, author of the upcoming documentary, The Gannage Project, 7 p.m. Jan. 23, Charity Randall Theatre, 412-624-0933.

Opera/Theater/Dance


Through the Night by Daniel Beaty, six intersecting stories about what it means to be a Black man in America today, through Feb. 5, Pittsburgh City Theatre, 1300 Bigelow St., South Side, 412-341-2489, www.citytheatre.com/pamy.org.


Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses


Zhongfeng Zou, Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Chemistry, “DNA Replication in Escherichia coli,” 10:30 a.m. Jan. 27, 107 Library Hall.

Jason Sanders, Graduate School of Public Health’s Department of Epidemiology, “Leukocyte Telomere Length and Leukemia: Biomarkers in Population Studies of Human Aging,” 10 a.m. Jan. 27, 5th-floor conference room, Bellefield Professional Building.

Healing the iPhone’s Wounds
Balazs-led researchers propose “repair-and-go” method for small-scale cracks on digital device surfaces

By B. Rose Huber

Like the human body, a digital device often suffers a few bruises and scratches within a lifetime. As in medicine, these injuries can be easily detected and repaired (or healed). At other times, however, a digital device may sustain hard-to-pinpoint nanoscale scratches, which can cause the device as a whole to malfunction.

In a paper published Jan. 10 in *Nature Nanotechnology*, a team of researchers from the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass) propose a “repair-and-go” approach to fixing malfunctions caused by small-surface cracks on any digital device or part before it hits store shelves.

“Anything that has a machine with a surface is affected by these small-scale cracks,” said Anna Balazs, Distinguished Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering in Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering and co-investigator on the project. “These are surfaces that play a role in almost anything, especially functionality.”

The Pitt-Umass research team approach was inspired by the ability of white blood cells in the body to heal wounds on-site. Balazs and Pitt colleagues first came up with a theoretical “repair-and-go” method: A flexible microcapsule filled with a solution of nanoparticles would be applied to a damaged surface; it would then repair defects by releasing nanoparticles into them. Using nanoparticles and droplets of oil stabilized with a polymer surfactant—compounds that lower the surface tension of a liquid—the UMass team actualized the theory, showing that these microcapsules found the cracks and delivered the nanoparticle contents into them. Balazs proposes that manufacturers use this method as a last step in the building process.

“The repair-and-go method can extend the lifetime of any system or device,” she said. “Additionally, it could be used as a repair method after a crack has been found.”

Original research by Balazs and her team was published in *ACS Nano* and then reported on in *Nature Nanotechnology’s “News and Views”* section in September 2010. To read more about the healing process of devices, visit www.nature.com/nnano/journal/v5/n4/abs/nnano.2010.66.html.

To read the published paper, visit www.nature.com/nnano.