University of Pittsburgh Honors College students Benjamin Gordon, a junior majoring in mechanical engineering in the School of Engineering, and Stanley Steers, a sophomore majoring in physics and music in the School of Arts and Sciences, have been awarded 2007 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships for their exceptional independent research in the science and engineering disciplines.

“We are very proud of the exceptional record of high achievement being built by University of Pittsburgh undergraduates,” said Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg. “Earlier in the academic year, our students claimed 2007 Rhodes and Marshall Scholarships. For Benjamin Gordon and Stanley Steers to be named 2007 Goldwater Scholars extends that record of student success and is a real mark of distinction, for them and for our Honors College.”

“If you award a Goldwater Scholarship, it is the highest national honor for an undergraduate studying science or engineering,” said G. Alec Stewart, Honors College dean and Pitt’s Goldwater faculty representative. “It was particularly fulfilling for the University to have students win in both the applied and basic sciences.”

Many of Pitt’s recent Goldwater Scholars have gone on to receive prestigious postgraduate awards. For example, Pitt 2007 Rhodes Scholar Daniel Armanios won a Goldwater Scholarship in 2004, and Pitt 2006 Rhodes Scholar Justin Chalker received a 2009 Goldwater. Pitt undergraduates have won a total of 37 Goldwater Scholarships, 29 since 1995. The Goldwater Scholarship was established in 1986 by the U.S. Congress in honor of then-Senator Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona to encourage outstanding students to pursue careers in the fields of mathematics, the natural sciences, and engineering. The premier undergraduate award of its type in these fields, the Goldwater Scholarship is awarded in either a student’s sophomore or junior year. It covers tuition, room and board, fees, and books—up to a maximum of $7,500 per year—for each student recipient’s remaining period of study.

Growing up in a community plagued with poverty and crime, Gordon, who at age 15 was forced to become financially independent when his mother died, said it was a struggle not to become a statistic. “My mother always stressed that one of the keys to changing the condition of our communities is through proper education,” Gordon said. “As a child, she taught me about famous African American scientists such as Benjamin Banneker.”

At Pitt, Gordon has worked in the Vibration and Control Laboratory under the guidance of William Clark, a Pitt professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Under the direction of Jeffrey Vipperman, an associate professor in Pitt’s Departments of Mechanical Engineering and Bioengineering, Gordon now works in the Sound, Systems, and Structures Laboratory researching thermoacoustics, the conversion of sound energy into heat energy, and vice versa, with particular interest in improving the efficiency and performance of a prototype model for a thermoacoustical refrigerator.

Gordon plans to earn a Ph.D. degree in mechanical engineering and to become an engineering professor, teaching and conducting research in smart structures applications.

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—Mark A. Nordenberg
Pitt Hosts “Women Filmmakers In the 21st Century” Film Series

By Audra Sorman

Since the inception of cinema in the 1890s, commercial filmmaking has seen few women in directorial roles, with the exception of such women as Lois Weber, Dorothy Arzner, and Ida Lupino. However, in recent years, this trend has changed. Pitt will host a film series titled “Women Filmmakers in the 21st Century” April 11-12 and April 18-19. Screenings will be held at 7 p.m. in Alumni Hall’s 7th-floor Auditorium. The film series, hosted by Pitt’s Film Studies Program, Department of English, Women’s Studies Program, and School of Arts and Sciences’ Graduate Dean’s Office, will present films by four women. Screenings are free and open to the public.

A list of the screenings follows.

April 11
In the Mirror of Maya Deren (2002), 103 minutes, directed by Martina Kváleké, Austria/Czech Republic/Switzerland/Germany.

In her documentary on American filmmaker Maya Deren, Kváleké fashions a fascinating portrait of the woman whose creations throughout the 1940s are arguably some of the most important innovations in the history of avant-garde film.

April 12
Pit (2002), 101 minutes, directed by Coline Serreau, France.

A comedic satirical thriller, Pit pairs a biding look at the Paris bourgeoisie with the humiliating life of forced prostitution in the city’s criminal underworld.

April 18
Personal Velocity: Three Portraits (2002), 86 minutes, directed by Rebecca Miller, United States.

Daughter of the playwright Arthur Miller, Rebecca Miller wrote and directed Personal Velocity, which is based on her book Personal Velocity (Grove Press, 2002). The film chronicles the lives of three women seeking to escape their dysfunctional relationships with men.

April 19
In the Cut (2003), directed by Jane Campion, United States/United Kingdom/Australia.

Variety’s Todd McCarthy wrote of In the Cut: “An intensely sexual exploration of the nature of a woman’s desire in the guise of a murder mystery, this high-strung adaptation of Susanna Moore’s bestselling novel is beautifully crafted and is highlighted by an arresting change-of-pace performance by Meg Ryan as an English teacher erotically awakened by a homicide detective.”

For more information on the film series, contact Jennifer Florian at 412-624-6564.

Pitt Visiting Art Lecturer Weissberger Receives 2007 Guggenheim Fellowship

University of Pittsburgh Visiting Lecturer Barbara Weissberger, whose dynamic contemporary art has been exhibited internationally, has won a 2007 Guggenheim Fellowship.

Weissberger has taught in Pitt’s Department of Studio Art since 2004. The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation announced the Guggenheim awards on April 5.

Guggenheim Fellows are appointed on the basis of distinguished achievement in the past and exceptional promise for future accomplishment. The 2007 Fellowship winners include 189 artists, scholars, and scientists selected from almost 2,800 applicants for awards totaling $7.6 million. The Guggenheim program considers applications in 27 different fields, from the natural sciences to the creative arts.

Weissberger received the Master of Fine Arts degree from the San Francisco Art Institute and the Bachelor of Art degree from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Her work has been exhibited in Tokyo, Zurich, New York, Cleveland, Miami, and elsewhere. Her 2005 installation in Pittsburgh’s Mattress Factory titled “Did you find everything you were looking for today?” was said by a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (P-G) review to lift “one into a curious realm that fires the imagination.”

“Her oversized hamburger with floury of pickle chips covers a wall, its fixings dripping onto the floor, initiating thoughts of health and environment. It’s sobering that it’s such an embedded cultural emblem that each component may be easily read by color and sketchy suggestion,” wrote P-G reviewer Mary Thomas.

Pitt was the only institution of higher learning in Western Pennsylvania to be represented in this year’s Guggenheim awards. In eastern Pennsylvania, the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University had winners.

A Case of a “Cowgirl” Crying Wolf?

Hillman lecture examines O’Connor’s views on threats to judicial independence

Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor has cited three major threats to judicial independence: acts or threats of violence against federal judges, proposals to impeach federal judges, and political moves to strip them of jurisdiction over some classes of cases.

“Unfortunately, though, in describing the threats to judicial independence, [O’Connor] presented a picture that in some respects is overstated and in others incomplete,” Pitt law professor Arthur Hellman said in a March 27 lecture. “First, she painted with too broad a brush in identifying what I would call the external threats. Second, she has not adequately emphasized what I would call the internal aspects. And, finally, she hasn’t said anything about the confirmation process for federal judges, which, in my view, poses a threat.”

Hellman’s lecture in 2501 Posvar Hall marked his formal installation as holder of the Sally Ann Smenko Endowed Chair in Pitt’s School of Law. The lecture was titled “Justice O’Connor and ‘The Threat to Judicial Independence’; The Cowgirl Who Cried Wolf?” Hellman took the title from O’Connor’s description of herself in retirement as “just an unemployed cowgirl.”
Undergraduate Research

Cory Tamler

A junior triple-major in the history, philosophy, and science of science, physics, and astronomy, Tamler has performed research on scientific experiments.

Dr. Tamler was inspired to write Not Eureka by a list of popular science experiments, of which he selected three.

Tamler's play is a traditional play combined with elements of a work of visual art. It includes a garden symbolizing the transition from a disordered one.

Tamler was inspired to write Not Eureka by the “10 Most Beautiful Experiments” list published in the September 2002 issue of Physics Today.

In writing Not Eureka, Tamler was inspired by such popular science-based dramas as Michael Frayn’s Copenhagen, about a 1941 meeting between the Danish physicist Neils Bohr and his German protégé, Werner Heisenberg, and two plays by Tom Stoppard, Haygood (which combines themes of espionage and quantum physics) and Arcadia (which explores the overgrowth of a garden symbolizes the transition from a neat Newtonian universe to a disordered one).

Stoppard, with his characteristic mix of philosophy, wordplay, and physical humor, is a particular favorite of Tamler’s. In February, she directed a Pitt Rep Laboratory production of his The Real Inspector Hound in the Cathedral of Learning’s Studio Theatre.

Rather than write a traditional play with a traditional story, Tamler conducted the experiments described in Physics Today. Tamler created characters who embody three of the experiments.

They include:

- The Magician, who represents “Foucault’s pendulum,” a celebrated experiment demonstrating the Earth’s rotation. It was named after French physicist Jean-Bernard-Léon Foucault, who in 1851 gave the most famous public demonstration of the experiment by setting in motion an iron ball suspended on a wire from the dome of the Pantheon in Paris. As an invited audience watched in amazement, the direction along which the ball-pendulum swung rotated over time, proving that the Earth was revolving on its axis.

- The Detective, a.k.a. “Millikan’s oil-drop experiment.” American scientist Robert Millikan devised the experiment in 1909 to measure the electrical charge of the electron. He did so by measuring the force on electrically charged droplets of oil suspended against gravity between two metal electrodes; and

- The Criminal, who embodies “Thomas Young’s double-slit experiment applied to the interference of single electrons”—not a catchy title, maybe, but a dizzying illustration of quantum mechanics.

And a dangerous one, according to the Detective, whom Tamler describes in her stage directions as being “older, ruddy.”

While searching the Magician’s dressing room for the Criminal, the Detective warns that the latter has murdered reason by “shamelessly renouncing the virtues of logic” and “breaking the laws of physics.”

DETECTIVE: He has warped the human mind until it can no longer perceive the difference between a particle and a wave. According to everything that’s logical, a thing can’t be both a particle and a wave at the same time.

MAGICIAN: I should think not.

DETECTIVE: But this fellow’s got everyone in such a twist that they’ve stopped trusting their powers of reason. He takes a beam of electrons, you see, and passes it through two tiny little slits

Continued on Page 7
Androgen deprivation therapy (ADT) is a treatment for a variety of conditions, including prostate cancer. It is often used to control the growth of tumor cells that are not sensitive to hormones. However, this therapy can also lead to a variety of negative side effects. One of these effects is the development of periodontal disease, which is a type of gum disease that affects the soft tissue and bone that support the teeth.

In a recent study, researchers at the University of Pittsburgh found that men receiving ADT are at greater risk for developing periodontal disease. The study, published in the Journal of Urology, analyzed data from 68 prostate cancer patients who were undergoing ADT.

The study found that 41 of the patients who received ADT developed periodontal disease within 18 months of starting the therapy. This was in contrast to 10 of the patients who did not receive ADT, with periodontal disease developing within the same time frame. The researchers noted that this was a statistically significant difference.

The study also found that men who received ADT were more likely to develop periodontal disease than those who did not. This was true even after accounting for other factors, such as age, smoking status, and the presence of other medical conditions.

The researchers concluded that men receiving ADT should be monitored for the development of gum disease, and that early intervention is key to preventing tooth loss and other complications.

“People are at risk of this disease because of the therapy,” said Pouran Famili, professor and interim chair of the Pitt dental school’s Department of Periodontology.

The study’s results have implications for the treatment of prostate cancer, as well as for other conditions that may be affected by ADT. The researchers hope that their findings will lead to more targeted treatment approaches for men receiving this therapy.

“By identifying men at risk for periodontal disease, we can tailor their care more effectively,” said Famili.

For more information, contact the Pitt School of Dental Medicine at (412) 624-3600.
Aye, Aye, Professor

Students to earn academic credits, learn seamanship skills aboard replica of War of 1812 ship

By Katrina Cavanaugh and Bruce Steele

Students enrolled in a new Pitt summer course will earn four credits and a sail-training certificate while living, studying, and working aboard a replica of a wooden-hulled, square-rigged War of 1812 warship.

During the three-week course, titled Maritime History and The Great Lakes and offered by the Pitt School of Arts and Sciences' Department of History, students will serve as a "crew-in-training" aboard the U.S. Brig Niagara. Docked at the Erie Maritime Museum in Erie, Pa., the Niagara is the official "tall ship" of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It was built in 1988 to closely resemble the U.S. flagship in the Battle of Lake Erie.

Depending on weather and other factors, the course will include day sails, overnight passages, port visits, and tours of historic sites. In addition to studying the historical development of maritime power in the Great Lakes and their environs, students will work alongside the Niagara's crew of 16 professional sailors to learn seamanship skills.

The crew is U.S. Coast Guard-certified, and the ship is inspected by the U.S. Coast Guard and fully insured.

"This program is a mix of adventure and academic work," said Pitt Professor of History William Chase, who helped to develop the course. "Students are really going to understand what it was like to be a sailor during the 1800s. I think the idea of experiencing how people in the past lived is really neat."

There are no academic prerequisites for the course, but Chase said participating students must be willing "to engage in physical labor and forego the comforts of the modern home." Students and crewmembers will sleep in hammocks and eat meals prepared in a wood-burning stove.

Chase emphasized that both male and female students are encouraged to enroll.

"We are hoping to draw a diverse group of students to participate," he said. "If you're adventurous and you've got an interest in history, this course is for you."

Maritime History and The Great Lakes will be taught by Timothy Walker, who is an adjunct faculty member in Pitt's history department as well as an assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, where he teaches courses on maritime history.

The course costs $2,892 and includes tuition, room, board, and fees. It will run from July 12 to Aug. 1 and is limited to 20 students. For more information or to register, contact the history department at 412-648-7431 or visit www.pitt.edu/~phihis.

HPS Faculty Hold Half the Seats On Governing Board of National Philosophy of Science Association

Sandra Mitchell, John Norton elected to join two Pitt faculty members and one alumnus on board

Already the top-ranked scholars of their kind in the country, faculty in the Pitt School of Arts and Sciences' Department of History and Philosophy of Science (HPS) now hold four of the eight positions on the governing board of the national Philosophy of Science Association (PSA). Another PSA board member is an alumnus of Pitt's HPS program.

The PSA publishes Philosophy of Science, the field's premier scholarly journal; organizes conventions; awards prizes for notable work; and promotes discussion and research. In February, association members elected HPS professor and chair Sandra Mitchell and professor John Norton, director of Pitt's Center for Philosophy of Science, to the governing board. They join HPS professors Ken Schaffner and Laura Ruetsche, whose terms on the PSA governing board will expire at the end of 2007.

Another PSA board member, Heather Douglas, an associate professor in the University of Tennessee at Knoxville's philosophy department, earned her doctorate in the history and philosophy of science at Pitt in 1998.

Such a presence in PSA governance further speaks to the favorable reputation HPS faculty members enjoy among their colleagues and the extent to which HPS faculty participate in the philosophy of science field and professional community.

Continued on Page 7
Four Professors Honored for Mentoring Doctoral Students

By Michele Gilvar

Four Pitt professors will receive the 2007 Provost’s Award for Excellence in Mentoring, which recognizes faculty for their contributions to the professional development of doctoral students. This is the second year the awards have been granted.

The awardees are Kathleen Blee, Distinguished Professor of Sociology in the School of Arts and Sciences; Nancy Day, professor and chair of anthropology in the School of Law; Alexander Labrinidis, assistant professor of computer science; and Robert Drennan, professor of psychiatry in the School of Medicine. Ten of her students have received prestigious training awards. In letters supporting her nomination, Day’s students wrote that she encouraged them to pursue independent research and present papers at national conferences and took the time to introduce students to her colleagues at conferences. Students credited these activities with opening up career opportunities for them following graduation.

Robert Drennan is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has chaired 30 dissertation committees and currently is advising 16 doctoral students. His doctoral students have an outstanding record of funding their dissertation research, winning 25 National Science Foundation Grants and eight Wenner Gren Foundation Grants. His students have obtained tenure-track positions at universities throughout North and South America. One former student wrote that Drennan’s high expectations and dedication to students’ learning “propelled my colleagues and me to excel to the best of our abilities.”

Noreen Garman has supervised 28 doctoral dissertations, and she is currently advising 11 students. She pioneered a longitudinal dissertation study group that brings together current and former students as a way of enriching the dissertation process, and she has published two books on dissertation writing. Several of her students have won Outstanding Dissertation Awards from the American Education Research Association, and her students have been placed in tenure-stream positions in both national and local universities. One former student wrote that she now practices mentoring techniques she learned from Garman. “Noreen’s work lives on in my students and in theirs; her contribution to generations of scholars is powerful,” the former student wrote.

The very existence of this award underscores the high institutional priority that must be assigned to our mentoring responsibilities. The intellectual and personal leadership provided by mentors helps to support, encourage, and promote a student’s personal and professional development. This year’s awardees are an inspiring example of excellence in the role of graduate mentor. They have clearly touched the professional lives of many students and graduates of this University.”

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to let it make a pattern on the other side. Now, everyone knows that electrons are particles, but when he passes them through these slits he makes them appear to interfere with one another just like waves would. So the pattern on the other side, instead of being uniformly bright, like it should be with particles, is in bands. Bright bands where the crests of the waves meet up and reinforce one another. Dark bands where a crest meets a trough and they cancel one another out. As if the particles are waves.

Do you see?

MAGICIAN: Think so. But if that’s the case, isn’t it possible?

DETECTIVE: Wait.

MAGICIAN: How do you know it’s a trick?

DETECTIVE: That I don’t know. All that I know is: It only works if you don’t watch. You must set up the apparatus and let it run in blindness. If you watch an electron, it will only go through one of the slits and there will be no bright and dark bands. But if you don’t watch, the trick works. It seems to go through both.

MAGICIAN: How do you know it’s a trick?

DETECTIVE: What?

MAGICIAN: How do you know he isn’t showing you the truth?

When the Detective finally tracks down the Criminal, the latter insists he’s innocent.

DETECTIVE: If you’re innocent, why are you running?

CRIMINAL: I live by the laws of quantum physics, not your outdated classical nonsense. Just because you never know where I am doesn’t mean I’m running.

To support his case, the Detective enlists an expert witness, Galileo. “I introduced Galileo as a character because he’s such an icon of reason in Western history,” Tamler explains. “Also, I thought the image of Galileo driving a car and using a cell phone was pretty funny.”

But Galileo, arriving on the scene after having just attended the Magician’s theatrical performance of Foucault’s pendulum, was changing direction because the Earth itself was moving.

“I have seen it, Detective, you would have known—that is a journey that no one could complete without reason,” Galileo declares. “Reason is alive and well, if you ask me.”

In applying for her summer 2006 Brackenridge fellowship, Tamler needed a faculty sponsor for her playwriting project. While theater isn’t among her majors, she has plenty of contacts in the University’s Department of Theatre Arts. In addition to taking department courses, Tamler is president and cofounder of the Redeye Theatre Project, a Pitt student club that writes, rehearses, and stages a series of one-act plays—all in 24 hours—each fall and spring.

But instead of seeking a Brackenridge sponsor among the theater arts faculty, Tamler looked for one in the Department of the History and Philosophy of Science (HPS). “I’d written plays before and done research before, but not so much on straight science,” she says. “I thought that if I could find a sponsor in HPS, it would help me.”

Not knowing any HPS faculty members at the time, Tamler searched their individual Web sites and found the page of Assistant Professor Paolo Palmieri, whose research includes using new technology to uncover precisely how Galileo performed his experiments, and with what materials and equipment. (Before modern times, scientists rarely documented such details.) Palmieri teaches a course, Galileo and the Creation of Modern Science, that makes use of Bertolt Brecht’s polemical drama, The Life of Galileo.

“I found Cory’s play to be interesting and highly original,” remembers Palmieri, who, like Galileo, was born in Italy. “The first time I told her was, ‘I’m not a native speaker of English, so I can’t give you any advice in terms of style. But I can help with the science.’ I ended up marking a few passages in the first draft of her script that I wasn’t sure were clear. In the end, the experiments themselves were, I thought, simply but correctly represented in Cory’s play.”

Unlike Galileo, who studied medicine and mathematics at the University of Pisa (failing to complete an academic degree), Tamler did not set out to attend a big university. Her first choice was Oberlin College, her parents’ alma mater. But then Tamler discovered Pitt’s Brackenridge Scholarship, where college dean G. Alec Stewart and others encouraged her to apply for a full-tuition Chancellor’s Scholarship.

“They were just awesome,” Tamler says of the Honors College staff. “After I completed my interview for the scholarship, they gave me all of these books that showed they had read the essays I’d submitted as part of the application process. One of the books was Tom Stoppard’s Arcadia.”

In applying for her project, Tamler won the Chancellor’s Scholarship.

“I’ve never regretted my decision to come to Pitt at all,” says Tamler, whose family moved from California to Pittsburgh from California when she was seven. She graduated from Baldwin High School, having enrolled as a sophomore after being home-schooled up to that point. “I found that I really like being at a big, urban university. One nice thing is that there are so many different niches here. Pitt’s theater community is where I’ve found a home, where I feel most comfortable and know people, but there are plenty of other niches.

“Certainly, Pitt is not a cookie-cutter school. From the very first day I came here and the same background, and they don’t come out with the same stamp on them. There’s tons of diversity here.”

“Contemporary philosophers rate schools and departments by faculty and reputation. Pitt ranked fifth among the top 50 schools for philosophy in the United States in 2006.”

Because some of the more highly regarded philosophers of science work in HPS, faculty members from that department naturally will end up on the PSA governing board, according to Mitchell.

“The premier professional organization, the premier faculty is going to be involved,” she said. “They’re both like magnets attracting the best in the field. I take the PSA elections as a mark of our reputation.”

“Overall, philosophers of science think about how science is done and the methods used in research to make scientific claims,” Mitchell said. “It’s an interrogation of claims in respect to logic and coherence. Philosophers of science think about how science is done and ask how it should be done.”

For example, in the debate over intelligent design, a philosopher of science could determine what claims can truly be called scientific evidence and how they support the overall thesis.

“Intelligent design raises the question of ‘What is science?’” Mitchell said. “We look at the assumptions that are implicit, the conditions under which those assumptions were made, and whether the evidence supports or fails to support the claims.”

“Overall, philosophers of science are interested in uncovering knowledge,” Mitchell added. “We want to know. What does knowledge look like?”