Pitt in Europe

Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg leads a University of Pittsburgh delegation to Belgium and Luxembourg. Its mission: making Pitt an even stronger force in European studies.

To strengthen the University of Pittsburgh’s ties with Europe—and solidify the University’s reputation as one of the best places in the world to conduct research on the European Union (EU)—Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg led a Pitt delegation to Belgium and Luxembourg May 27-June 3.

The Pitt Chronicle recently interviewed Nordenberg about that trip and, more generally, his foreign travels on the University’s behalf.

PITT CHRONICLE: What is the process by which you make decisions about traveling abroad?

Nordenberg: In a sense, the decision-making process is straightforward. As you would expect, I exercise a key level of judgment myself, particularly in determining whether I can find the time to travel at all. Because there always is so much going on here, breaking away for extended periods of time is not easy.

Beyond that, I am guided to a very considerable extent by the director of the University Center for International Studies (UCIS). UCIS sits at the center of our international initiatives, and its director is best positioned to help develop travel priorities.

What made Belgium and Luxembourg priorities for summer 2007?

Strength in international studies is one of the distinguishing characteristics of our University, and, in planning a trip to Europe, the single-most important factor was our great strength in European studies and our desire to get even stronger. Our European Studies Center recently was redesignated a national resource center by the U.S. Department of Education, and our European Union Center of Excellence is one of just 10 such centers funded by the European Commission.

In this case, two other factors also had an impact. Professor Alberta Sbragia, who directs both of these centers, had just been named to the endowed chair created in my name, reflecting my own strong desire to further advance European studies at Pitt. Also, I had not been to Europe for several years, leading to a feeling that this might be a good time for what the people in UCIS call “a chancellor-level visit.”

What makes a visit by a team that includes the chancellor different from other visits?

Clearly, faculty members with relevant expertise and recognized records of accomplishment are the most important members of any such delegation. This visit, then, really was built around the work of Professor Sbragia and Professor Ronald Brand, who leads our Center for International Legal Education. Both Alberta and Ron are very well known and highly respected in Europe.

Timothy Thompson from our EU Center of Excellence did a magnificent job of planning the trip, and Larry Feick, who already was in Europe, joined us, even though his service as UCIS director would not formally begin until later in the summer.

My presence probably added to the visit in two main ways: It helped facilitate a higher level of access in terms of the meetings we were able to schedule, and it was viewed as visible evidence of the importance this University attaches to European studies.

In terms of access, it appears that you were able to schedule some very high-level meetings.

Frankly, our European colleagues seemed amazed at some of the meetings we were able to arrange. The clear high point of our time in Brussels was a private session with José Manuel Barroso, the president of the European Commission. President Barroso had visited Pitt, where he delivered an address to a standing-room-only audience, last fall. In addition to his distinguished record of leadership, he is a very engaging person who has thought-provoking perspectives on our changing world, so it was a real pleasure to reconnect with him.

Similarly, in Luxembourg we had a private meeting with Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker. The prime minister is another highly respected European leader who has visited our University, and it was nice to build on that existing sense of connection.

In each case, these are forward-looking leaders who place a high priority on relations between Europe and the United States and who have a real interest in what we are doing at Pitt.

We also had stimulating meetings with representatives of the European Parliament, the European Court of Auditors, and the European Court of Justice.
The University of Pittsburgh, which garnered a number of key institutional quality indicators reported in The Chronicle of Higher Education’s recently published Almanac Issue 2007-8, which ranks leading American colleges and universities in a number of categories.

In the category Top Institutions in Federal Research and Development Expenditures for Science and Engineering, Pitt is ranked 13th nationally in this year’s Almanac, up from 14th last year, moving ahead of Harvard University. Pitt continues to outrank Caltech, Cornell University, Duke University, Emory University, Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, the University of Minnesota, the University of Southern California, Vanderbilt University, Washington University in St. Louis, and Yale University, among many others, in this category, based upon information supplied by the National Science Foundation (NSF).

As part of a related survey, the NSF also has just reported that in Federal Expenditures for science and engineering research and development to the 100 universities receiving the largest amounts. Pitt is ranked 11th nationally, up from 12th last year.

In this latter ranking, Pitt moved ahead of Washington University in St. Louis, the University of California-San Diego and continues to outrank Cornell University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Yale University, among many other schools.

In the category College and University Endowments Over $200 Million, Pitt is ranked 26th in this year’s Almanac, up from 30th last year, moving ahead of New York University and Rockefeller University.

It continues to outrank Caltech, Indiana University and Foundation, the University of Illinois and Foundation, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Foundations, and the University of Wisconsin Foundation, among many others, in this category.

In the category Largest Endowments per Student, Pitt is ranked 12th in this year’s Almanac among public institutions, up from 15th last year, moving ahead of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and Foundations, among others. Pitt continues to outpace such other institutions as Ohio State University and Foundation, the University of Minnesota and related foundations, the University of Washington, and the University of Wisconsin Foundation.

In the category Top Institutions in Total Research and Development Expenditures for Science and Engineering, Pitt is ranked 23rd in this year’s Almanac, up from 24th last year, moving ahead of the University of California and Foundation; Pitt continues to outrank Emory University, Harvard University, Indiana University, Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, the University of Maryland-College Park, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, the University of Southern California, the University of Texas-Austin, Vanderbilt University, and Yale University, among many others, in this category.

Under Top Institutions in Awards for Basic and Applied Research within the category Defense Department Contracts and Grants to Nonprofit Institutions, Pitt is ranked 26th in this year’s Almanac, up from 36th place last year, moving ahead of Columbus University, Harvard University, the University of California-Los Angeles, the University of Maryland, and Virginia Tech. Pitt continues to outrank Northwestern and Princeton universities, among others, in this category.

# Briefly Noted

## Pitt Offers Wellness Incentive Program

Pitt faculty and staff members enrolled in the UPMC Health Plan recently were sent a mailing announcing the University’s wellness incentive program for 2007. Actively employed faculty and staff and their enrolled spouses or domestic partners are eligible to receive a $50 gift card/certificate for completing a health risk assessment and for reviewing their personal health records. The program is voluntary and confidential.

The Health Risk Assessment, called the My Health Questionnaire, asks a series of questions regarding health status and willingness to change to a healthier lifestyle. UPMC Health Plan, working in conjunction with Web MD, developed the assessment tool.

After completing the assessment, individuals will be given the choice of receiving a gift card from a Giant Eagle store or a University Book store. For campuses without local Giant Eagle, another gift card option will be provided.

Details of the incentive program may be found on the Wellness for Life Web site, www.pitt.edu/benefits. Members may also go directly to the Health Plans Web site at www.upmchealthplan.com. The incentive program will continue through Oct. 31.

## Law, Social Work Launch Cooperative Degree Program

Pitt’s Schools of Social Work and Law have launched a cooperative degree program through which students may earn both the Master of Social Work (MSW) and Juris Doctor (JD) degrees. The MSW is the primary professional degree in social work; the JD is the first professional degree in law.

“On real-world situations, it is fairly common for the two fields to overlap professionally,” said Lambert Maguire, associate dean for academic affairs and a professor in SSW.

“Students with training in both law and social work will be better equipped to play an effective role in making and influencing public policy, whether through positions in government or nonprofit organizations or through impact litigation,” said Liu-Wang, associate dean for academic affairs and a professor in Pitt’s law school.

The MSW-JD program will emphasize such areas as children’s rights, juvenile and criminal justice, and low-income housing. The program will enable students to engage in a highly integrative educational experience that will include academic courses, field placements, and research opportunities in both professions.

Potential students for the MSW-JD program would apply and be accepted to both of the schools as well as complete a joint-degree application. The program will follow a four-year curricular in which students will register as full-time law students for five terms and full-time social work students for three.

For more information, contact MSW-JD program faculty associate, Kevin Deary in the law school at 412-648-6542 or Jeffrey Shock in the social work school at 412-648-7955.

---Anthony Moore
Summary of University’s Pandemic Preparedness Plan Released Today

By Maddy Ross

At the height of an avian flu pandemic reaching Western Pennsylvania, Pitt’s campuses might officially be closed to all but essential personnel and those students who could not leave; the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) could utilize campus facilities for medical treatment; and some research might be interrupted. Those are among the elements of Pitt’s Pandemic Preparedness Plan, a summary of which is being made public today.

The plan calls for increased communications to the University community via e-mail, a Web site, text messages, and phone messages; methods to preserve the integrity of research in progress. It also describes a timetable for social distancing and the orderly evacuation of campus; working conditions for employees deemed to be essential; the purchase of masks and safety equipment; and on-campus housing arrangements for students unable to go home.

The Pandemic Preparedness Plan, completed over the summer, was commissioned by Pitt Emergency Executive Jerome Cochran, who also is the University’s executive vice chancellor. The plan is the work of a University-wide committee with input from more than 60 Pitt experts in student issues, academic affairs, research, continuity, medicine, public health, communications, and administration. The committee, chaired by Pitt Environmental Health and Safety Director Jay Ferrotte, has been meeting periodically since April 2006. Even though there has been no widespread human-to-human transmission of avian flu, periodic episodes of human sickness in Asia, most often contracted through contact with sick birds, led the U.S. Centers for Disease Control to recommend that institutions, including universities, develop contingency plans.

A 12-page summary of Pitt’s plan can be found on Pitt’s Web site. The complete plan is part of the University’s comprehensive Pandemic Preparedness Plan, available at www.pitt.edu/avianflu/plan.html.

Inside the War Room: Amid Many Unknowns, An Avian Flu Battle Plan Emerges Here

By Maddy Ross

The conference room in the basement of Pitt’s housing department was suitably grim for the task. With its laminated table and white-clothed chairs, it was no historic vista or architectural grandeur to distract. The ceiling was 10 feet to the beam, but the room expanded to the open air through a skylight.

How many people might get sick? If the virus becomes known, how virulent would it be—would it spread human-to-human transmission, sustained human-to-human transmission anywhere in the world except near Pitt facilities; human-to-human transmission near Pitt’s campuses, requiring social distancing; widespread human-to-human transmission throughout Western Pennsylvania; and cases of illness on Pitt campuses. Each of those stages requires coordinated decision-making and actions across the University, to reduce health risks and operational interruptions.

For example, in the third stage of a pandemic (when social distancing is needed to control contagion), some students, especially those from foreign countries, might not be able to get home on short notice. The plan, therefore, must minimize risk to staff but at the same time provide services to those students who remain. Likewise, in the fifth stage (when illness is identified on campus), the plan must provide for housing in which to isolate sick students from healthy people who remain on campus.

The Pandemic Preparedness Plan was commissioned by Pitt Emergency Executive Jerome Cochran, who also is the University’s executive vice chancellor. The plan is the work of a University-wide committee with input from more than 60 Pitt experts in student issues, academic affairs, research, continuity, medicine, public health, communications, and administration. The committee, chaired by Pitt Environmental Health and Safety Director Jay Ferrotte, has been meeting periodically since April 2006. Even though there has been no widespread human-to-human transmission of avian flu, periodic episodes of human sickness in Asia, most often contracted through contact with sick birds, led the U.S. Centers for Disease Control to recommend that institutions, including universities, develop contingency plans.

A 12-page summary of Pitt’s plan can be found on Pitt’s Web site. The complete plan is part of the University’s comprehensive Pandemic Preparedness Plan, available at www.pitt.edu/avianflu/plan.html.

For example, in the third stage of a pandemic (when social distancing is needed to control contagion), some students, especially those from foreign countries, might not be able to get home on short notice. The plan, therefore, must minimize risk to staff but at the same time provide services to those students who remain. Likewise, in the fifth stage (when illness is identified on campus), the plan must provide for housing in which to isolate sick students from healthy people who remain on campus.

The Pandemic Preparedness Plan was commissioned by Pitt Emergency Executive Jerome Cochran, who also is the University’s executive vice chancellor. The plan is the work of a University-wide committee with input from more than 60 Pitt experts in student issues, academic affairs, research, continuity, medicine, public health, communications, and administration. The committee, chaired by Pitt Environmental Health and Safety Director Jay Ferrotte, has been meeting periodically since April 2006. Even though there has been no widespread human-to-human transmission of avian flu, periodic episodes of human sickness in Asia, most often contracted through contact with sick birds, led the U.S. Centers for Disease Control to recommend that institutions, including universities, develop contingency plans.

A 12-page summary of Pitt’s plan can be found on Pitt’s Web site. The complete plan is part of the University’s comprehensive Pandemic Preparedness Plan, available at www.pitt.edu/avianflu/plan.html.
NIH Awards Pitt $16 Million to Establish HIV Research Center

By Jim Sowers

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded Pitt’s School of Medicine a $16 million, five-year grant to establish an HIV research center. The grant is expected to give researchers new insights into the life of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and have important implications for developing new drug targets.

One of three centers being funded jointly by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the Pitt center will specialize in developing methods and tools for understanding how HIV enters cells and develops the ability to evade the host immune system. The center will work with researchers nationally and globally to help scientists better understand the structure of HIV and the host cellular components with which it interacts.

“HIV is so challenging to treat because the virus is extremely adept at evading resistance against therapies that target individual HIV proteins. Efforts by Dr. Gronenborn and her colleagues to identify and image viral proteins and sites of cell interactions could forge new avenues for drug discovery,” explained Ravi Hasawpaya, the National Institute of General Medical Sciences program director for the new centers.

In addition to understanding the structure and interactions of HIV using advanced techniques, another focus of the center will be to engage virologists, cell biologists, and structural biochemists in collaborative efforts toward deciding which of these interactions make the best drug targets.

“For many years, structural biologists and virologists have not worked closely in the area of HIV-targeted drugs,” Gronenborn said. “This center will allow the two to work collaboratively and help them to determine fairly quickly whether their hypotheses about what happens at the molecular and atomic levels of HIV infection are accurate.”

Science & Technology

Spending on Direct-to-consumer Advertising by Drug Companies More Than Tripled in Past Decade, According to Study by Donohue and Colleagues

By Frank Raciwicz

Spending on direct-to-consumer advertising by the pharmaceutical industry has increased dramatically over the past decade despite a growing chorus of criticism and regulatory actions leveled against it, according to a study published Aug. 16 in The New England Journal of Medicine.

The study, conducted by researchers in Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH) with collaborators at the Harvard School of Public Health and Vanderbilt University, suggests that calls for Congress to institute a longer moratorium on such advertising for new drugs would represent a dramatic departure from current practices.

The marketing of prescription drugs directly to patients, in addition to primary care or specialty physicians, has come under scrutiny in light of recent revelations about problems with adverse drug reactions that became apparent only after the drugs had been on the market and aggressively advertised for several years.

“Our analysis found that the trend toward increasing spending on direct-to-consumer advertising is likely to continue and efforts to enforce more stringent guidelines on such practices would require not only significant changes by the pharmaceutical industry but by the FDA as well,” explained Julie Donohue, an assistant professor of health policy and management in GSPH.

Two influential agencies—the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine—have called for increased scrutiny of direct-to-consumer advertising campaigns. The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine concluded in a 2006 report that the industry was insufficiently regulated.

In addition to examining the number of FDA enforcement actions directed at such promotions from 1997 to 2006, their analysis found that the pharmaceutical industry’s total real spending on drug promotions more than tripled—from just over $11.4 billion to almost $30 billion—between 1996 and 2005. They also found that the overwhelming majority of drug advertising was targeted to physicians. However, over the last nine years spending on direct-to-consumer advertising and free samples has risen as a share of the total promotional budget, whereas promotional investment in professional journals has fallen.

Notably, 17 of 20 advertisements for individual drugs were targeted to primary care or specialty physicians, has come under scrutiny in light of recent revelations about problems with adverse drug reactions that became apparent only after the drugs had been on the market and aggressively advertised for several years.

The marketing of prescription drugs directly to patients, in addition to primary care or specialty physicians, has come under scrutiny in light of recent revelations about problems with adverse drug reactions that became apparent only after the drugs had been on the market and aggressively advertised for several years.

The apparent decline in spending on direct-to-consumer advertising was concentrated among a relatively small number of brands. The 20 drugs with the highest spending made up more than half (54.4 percent) of total industry spending on advertising in 2005. Most of these drugs were predominantly new drugs used to treat chronic conditions; 10 of the top 20 drugs, as ranked by advertising spending, were introduced in 2000 or later. Notably, 17 of 20 advertising campaigns for the most heavily advertised drugs began within a year of receiving FDA approval.

Meredith B. Rosenthal, associate professor of health economics and policy in the Harvard School of Public Health, said, “The apparent decline in FDA enforcement of direct-to-consumer drug advertising regulations calls into question the FDA’s ability to prevent misleading messages about drug risks and benefits from reaching the public and heightens concerns about the potential adverse consequences such advertising might engender.”

This study was supported by a grant to Donohue from the National Center for Research Resources, part of the National Institutes of Health; NIH Roadmap for Medical Research; and an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant to physicians over the past decade. They also talked into industry data to analyze which drugs were being advertised and to whom, as well as the timing of such advertising campaigns. Finally, they examined grants to research institutions from the pharmaceutical industry’s research division.

According to Study by Donohue and Colleagues

The marketing of prescription drugs directly to patients, in addition to primary care or specialty physicians, has come under scrutiny in light of recent revelations about problems with adverse drug reactions that became apparent only after the drugs had been on the market and aggressively advertised for several years.

The apparent decline in spending on direct-to-consumer advertising was concentrated among a relatively small number of brands. The 20 drugs with the highest spending made up more than half (54.4 percent) of total industry spending on advertising in 2005. Most of these drugs were predominantly new drugs used to treat chronic conditions; 10 of the top 20 drugs, as ranked by advertising spending, were introduced in 2000 or later. Notably, 17 of 20 advertising campaigns for the most heavily advertised drugs began within a year of receiving FDA approval.

Meredith B. Rosenthal, associate professor of health economics and policy in the Harvard School of Public Health, said, “The apparent decline in FDA enforcement of direct-to-consumer drug advertising regulations calls into question the FDA’s ability to prevent misleading messages about drug risks and benefits from reaching the public and heightens concerns about the potential adverse consequences such advertising might engender.”

This study was supported by a grant to Donohue from the National Center for Research Resources, part of the National Institutes of Health; NIH Roadmap for Medical Research; and an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant to physicians over the past decade. They also talked into industry data to analyze which drugs were being advertised and to whom, as well as the timing of such advertising campaigns. Finally, they examined grants to research institutions from the pharmaceutical industry’s research division.

According to Study by Donohue and Colleagues

The marketing of prescription drugs directly to patients, in addition to primary care or specialty physicians, has come under scrutiny in light of recent revelations about problems with adverse drug reactions that became apparent only after the drugs had been on the market and aggressively advertised for several years.

The apparent decline in spending on direct-to-consumer advertising was concentrated among a relatively small number of brands. The 20 drugs with the highest spending made up more than half (54.4 percent) of total industry spending on advertising in 2005. Most of these drugs were predominantly new drugs used to treat chronic conditions; 10 of the top 20 drugs, as ranked by advertising spending, were introduced in 2000 or later. Notably, 17 of 20 advertising campaigns for the most heavily advertised drugs began within a year of receiving FDA approval.

Meredith B. Rosenthal, associate professor of health economics and policy in the Harvard School of Public Health, said, “The apparent decline in FDA enforcement of direct-to-consumer drug advertising regulations calls into question the FDA’s ability to prevent misleading messages about drug risks and benefits from reaching the public and heightens concerns about the potential adverse consequences such advertising might engender.”

This study was supported by a grant to Donohue from the National Center for Research Resources, part of the National Institutes of Health; NIH Roadmap for Medical Research; and an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant to physicians over the past decade. They also talked into industry data to analyze which drugs were being advertised and to whom, as well as the timing of such advertising campaigns. Finally, they examined grants to research institutions from the pharmaceutical industry’s research division.

According to Study by Donohue and Colleagues

The marketing of prescription drugs directly to patients, in addition to primary care or specialty physicians, has come under scrutiny in light of recent revelations about problems with adverse drug reactions that became apparent only after the drugs had been on the market and aggressively advertised for several years.

The apparent decline in spending on direct-to-consumer advertising was concentrated among a relatively small number of brands. The 20 drugs with the highest spending made up more than half (54.4 percent) of total industry spending on advertising in 2005. Most of these drugs were predominantly new drugs used to treat chronic conditions; 10 of the top 20 drugs, as ranked by advertising spending, were introduced in 2000 or later. Notably, 17 of 20 advertising campaigns for the most heavily advertised drugs began within a year of receiving FDA approval.

Meredith B. Rosenthal, associate professor of health economics and policy in the Harvard School of Public Health, said, “The apparent decline in FDA enforcement of direct-to-consumer drug advertising regulations calls into question the FDA’s ability to prevent misleading messages about drug risks and benefits from reaching the public and heightens concerns about the potential adverse consequences such advertising might engender.”

This study was supported by a grant to Donohue from the National Center for Research Resources, part of the National Institutes of Health; NIH Roadmap for Medical Research; and an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant to physicians over the past decade. They also talked into industry data to analyze which drugs were being advertised and to whom, as well as the timing of such advertising campaigns. Finally, they examined grants to research institutions from the pharmaceutical industry’s research division.
Gamma Globulin Highly Effective in Treating Pinkeye, According to Study Led by Pitt’s Andrea Gambotto

By Jim Swoyer

Gamma globulin, a type of antibody isolated from blood samples that used to be routinely given to health care workers and international travelers to protect them from infectious diseases, is a highly effective treatment for pinkeye, with little apparent toxicity, according to a study by researchers in Pitt’s School of Medicine.

The results of the study, published in the Sept. 1 issue of the journal Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science, have significant implications for the treatment and prevention of eye diseases caused by adenovirus infections such as conjunctivitis.

Conjunctivitis, commonly known as pinkeye, is an inflammation of the conjunctiva, the clear membrane that covers the white part of the eye and the inner surface of the eyelids. Although typically a mild, self-limiting disease in children and adults, newborns are particularly susceptible to pinkeye and can be more prone to serious health complications, even blindness, if it goes untreated.

The most common cause of conjunctivitis is adenovirus infection. Unfortunately, current treatments for conjunctivitis are not specifically targeted to the virus, and there is no FDA-approved therapy for treating adenoviral-mediated eye infections.

In the Pitt study, led by Andrea Gambotto, an assistant professor of surgery, researchers investigated the antiviral activity of gamma globulin (Ig) on human “wild-type” adenovirus as well as adenovirus subtypes isolated from patients diagnosed with viral eye infections. Specifically, they investigated the ability of Ig to neutralize these various adenovirus strains in both cell cultures infected with adenovirus and in rabbits with conjunctivitis.

In the cell culture (in vitro) studies, less than 10 milligrams per milliliter (mg/ml) of Ig significantly neutralized all of the wild-type strains of adenovirus, and the same concentration of Ig also neutralized almost 90 percent of the various adenovirus subtypes isolated from patients with eye infections.

In the animal (in vivo) studies using topical Ig, all of the animals tested tolerated the Ig extremely well, without displaying any irritation even at high dosages.

More importantly, Ig neutralized adenovirus at least as well as cidofovir, another antiviral drug that proved to be a potent inhibitor of adenovirus eye infections in early trials but was never approved by the FDA because of unacceptable side effects.

Although this is the first study ever to demonstrate Ig’s ability to block adenoviral-mediated eye infections, Gambotto is only slightly surprised by the results. “We use this compound in our laboratory on a regular basis to block the activity of the adenoviruses that we use in gene therapy experiments,” he said. “So, we were pretty sure it would have some antiviral effects. We were not prepared, however, for it to be effective against so many strains and to demonstrate almost no toxicity.”

The research was funded by the National Eye Institute, the Eye and Ear Foundation of Pittsburgh, and Pitt’s Office of Technology Management.

Pitt-lead Research Calls for Testing Hospital Water Supplies for Legionnaires’ Disease Bacteria

By Michele D. Baum

A new study spearheaded by Pitt’s School of Medicine has determined that environmental monitoring of institutional water systems can help to predict the risk of hospital-acquired Legionella pneumonia, better known as Leg”s disease.

Reported recently in the journal Infectious Disease and Hospital Epidemiology, the 20-hospital study also calls for reconsideration of the current national infection-control policy to include routine testing of hospital water systems for Legionella, the bacterial group associated with Legionnaires’ disease.

“Only those hospitals that had high levels of Legionella bacteria in their water systems had patients who contracted Legionnaires’ disease,” senior author and Pitt Professor of Medicine Victor L. Yu said of the study, which involved hospitals in 14 states. “Proactive monitoring of the hospital water supply alerted physicians to the hidden risk of Legionnaires’ disease for their patients.”

Legionella bacteria first were identified as causing pneumonia in 1976 following an outbreak among attendees of an American Legion convention at a Philadelphia hotel, resulting in the name Legionnaires’ disease. There are an estimated 20,000 cases of Legionnaires’ in the United States annually, many of them hospital-acquired, with an average fatality rate of 28 percent.

Currently, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that hospitals and other health care institutions monitor patients for pneumonia incidence before doing environmental surveillance of water systems that can harbor the bacteria.

“Based in part on our work, and in collaboration with the Allegheny County Health Department and the Three Rivers Association for Professionals in Infection Control, the development of proactive guidelines for hospital-acquired Legionnaires’ disease prevention has led to the virtual disappearance of this infection in Pittsburgh,” said study first author Janet Stout, a research assistant professor in the Pitt School of Engineering’s Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. “We first reported the connection between hospital water supply and these infections in 1982.”

For this investigation, Yu, Stout, and colleagues evaluated samples of hospital-system water at 20 facilities across the country from 2000 to 2002. Water samples were retrieved from at least 10 separate sites at each hospital on multiple occasions over the two-year period. Veteran cases of Legionnaires’ were identified, patient and sputum samples from 12 of the hospitals were tested to determine classification of Legionella, which has at least 48 strains.

The researchers found that 14 (70 percent) of hospital water systems tested positive for Legionella species, and that six (43 percent) positive-testing hospitals had high-level colonization. Legionnaires’ cases were found among the 633 patients with hospital-acquired pneumonia whose urine or sputum samples were tested for Legionella bacteria.

All were traced to hospitals with high-level colonization.

“Our study provides much-needed evidence to support a national policy change to include routine environmental surveillance of health care facility water systems along with stringent clinical monitoring of patients,” said Stout, who estimates that 39,000 people have died of Legionnaires’ since 1982. “We think this long-overdue approach should be adopted by infection-control and infectious disease practitioners nationwide.”

This study was based on the Pittsburg methodology of routine testing of hospital water systems that also has been adopted by New York, Maryland, France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and Italy.

Other authors and members of the Legionella Study Group included researchers at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, Mich.; the VA Medical Center, Omaha, Neb.; Southern Arizona Healthcare System, Tucson, Ariz.; the VA Medical Center, West Haven, Del.; the Louis Stokes VA Medical Center, Cleveland, Ohio; the VA Medical Center, Dayton, Ohio; Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany, N.Y.; the VA Medical Center, Butler, Pa.; VA Medical Center, Iowa City, Iowa; the VA Medical Center, Gainesville, Fla.; the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, Palo Alto, Calif.; and the VA Medical Center, Long Beach, Calif.

The study was funded by a Department of Veterans Affairs Merit Review grant.
The European Company We Keep

The following are among the European political leaders, diplomats, and EU officials who have visited Pitt’s European Union Center of Excellence/European Studies Center:

1992—Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, foreign minister of Denmark
1993—Peter Dyvig, Danish ambassador to the United States
1995—Michael Tappin and Edith Müller, members of the European Parliament (MEPs)
1996—Manfred Zuleeg, former judge on the European Court of Justice
1997—Jürgen Chrobog, German ambassador to the United States
1997—Laurence Brinkhorst, MEP
1998—Helmut Tuerk, Austria’s ambassador to the United States representing the Austrian EU Presidency
1999—David McAllister, German ambassador to the United States
1999—Erato Kozakou-Marcoulis, ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the United States
1999—Marc Haag, director-general, competition, European Commission
2000—Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, Danish ambassador to the United States
2000—Jean-Claude Juncker, Luxembourg’s former prime minister of Luxembourg
2000—Andreas Schoutheete, special advisor to European Commissioner Dacian Cioloș
2000—Michel Ayral, judge on the European Court of Justice
2001—Martin Butora, ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States
2002—Sorin Dumitru Ducau, Romanian ambassador to the United States
2006—José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission

In addition, the following officials have visited Pitt’s Russian and East European Studies Center (REES) and Center for International Legal Education (CILE) cosponsored by EUCE/ESC:

1999—Martin Butora, ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States (REES)
2000—Fidelma O’Kelly Macken, the first woman judge on the European Court of Justice (CILE)
2001—Ivan Grcišec, Croatian ambassador to the United States (REES)
2002—Fausto Pocar, judge and vice president, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (CILE)
2002—András Simonyi, Hungarian ambassador to the United States
2006—José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission

Belgian permanent representative to the EU
Member of the Group of Policy Advisors for the President of the European Commission
Austrian ambassador to the United States (Nowotny makes a return visit in 2007.)
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
Austrian ambassador to the United States
1994—Manfred Dammeyer, president of the Committee of the Regions
1996—Manfred Dammeyer, president of the Committee of the Regions
2004—Sylvie Goulard, member of the Group of Policy Advisors for the President of the European Commission
2006—José Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission
2006—András Simonyi, Hungarian ambassador to the United States
2006—Martin Butora, ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States
2008—Josep Borrell Fontelles, vice president of the European Commission

Pitt in Europe

Continued from Page 1

European Court of Justice.

What key messages did you and others from Pitt attempt to convey at these meetings?

Most fundamentally, we wanted to highlight both the overall momentum of our University and our strength in European studies. Pitt is very highly regarded in Europe, but it always helps to be able to enhance those impressions with specific information conveyed in a face-to-face setting.

Perhaps because people in other parts of the world, as in this country, seem almost obsessed with rankings of any sort, those with whom we met were particularly taken with the examples we used to support our use of the theme, “We all are judged by the company we keep.”

We also were able to share some items of “late-breaking news” that were of special interest to European colleagues. Two key examples were our library system’s selection to receive the entire European Union depository collection from the Delegation of the European Commission to the United States and our recruitment of John

Continued on Page 7

How Pitt Got to Be an EU University

University of Pittsburgh

1974: Pitt’s University Library System designated an EU Depository Library, which receives one copy of most EU periodical and monograph publications.

1985: Pitt’s Program for West European Studies (WES) begins.

1991: WES is awarded its first Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships. WES receives grant from the U.S. Department of Education.


1993: Slingo becomes chair of the European Community Studies Association (later renamed the European Union Studies Association) for a two-year term; the association moves to the University Center for International Studies at Pitt.


Jan. 1, 1973: Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom enter what is now known as the European Union (EEC), or common market.

June 7-10, 1979: Citizens of 12 member countries directly elect the members of the European Parliament for the first time.

Jan. 1, 1981: Membership in the EU reaches double figures when Greece joins.

May 9, 1950: French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman proposes a plan for closer cooperation between Western European nations. Since then, May 9 has been celebrated as “Europe Day.”

April 18, 1951: Based on Schuman’s plan, six countries—Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg—sign a treaty to run their coal and steel industries under common management.

March 25, 1957: The six countries sign the Treaty of Rome, creating the European Economic Community (EEC), or common market.
Keeler—a widely respected scholar of European politics, comparative public policy, and transatlantic relations—from the University of Washington to serve as dean of our Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

Besides generally elevating impressions of Pitt, were there other goals for this trip?

Some of our goals were programmatic. For example, we met with colleagues from two major Belgian universities—signing an agreement of cooperation with the Université Libre de Bruxelles and conducting discussions toward that same end with the Vrije Universiteit Brussels. We also had very informative discussions with the executive director of the Fulbright Commission in Brussels.

The theme central to many of our discussions was our strong desire to create additional internship opportunities for our students in Europe, and we received some encouraging offers of help toward advancing that goal.

Did any of the meetings involve broader issues, including some that were not Pitt-specific?

We had an extended and very substantive discussion with the U.S. Mission to the European Union about European perceptions of the United States and about the challenges still being faced by international students hoping to study in this country, a situation that we believe will work to our long-term national disadvantage.

We also hosted a very well attended reception for “friends of Pitt” in Brussels. That group included academic partners, alumni, and colleagues from within the various offices and agencies we had visited. In a setting like that, of course, the conversations are wide-ranging. I was left with the impression that events of that type are not common in Europe, and everyone seemed pleased—including one Pitt graduate from the United States who just happened to be staying in the same hotel and “crashed the party” when he saw the sign directing people to our reception.

In that way and in so many others, this trip underscored the basic message that this is a very small world. In that sense, the mission of our University Center for International Studies—to enhance understanding of that world—is absolutely critical.
Pathway to Success

“This is a real opportunity, and these years will go by fast… Do everything you can to leave the University of Pittsburgh having achieved all that you dreamed of,” Pitt Provost James V. Maher tells students and their families during the University’s New Student Orientation, Aug. 23 in Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall.

The following is the text of Maher’s orientation address:

“I’m delighted to be here to welcome all of you. I come to you on a mission, and it’s a mission that means a lot to me as a person who showed up as a freshman for college myself a lot of years ago, and as a person who brought my children to college not quite as many years ago—and who is now watching grandchildren grow up to the point where I can see that it won’t be too many more years before they go to college. I realize what an important event this is in the life of a family.

The people admitted to this University are students of real attainment. You have competed successfully for rare places in this freshman class by being very, very good as students and as well-rounded people through the first 18 years of your life. But you are not the only ones to be commended for that, for it’s very hard to get to this point without a support system. You almost certainly come out of a family that has worked very hard to help you succeed, and they’re here with you, too. I like the opportunity to have an event like this where all of us—both in this room and in the hallroom, where there is another large group of people watching this on TV—can be together and talk about how to make the coming years years of great success for you, the student.

Your family wants you to succeed. You want to succeed. And we at the University of Pittsburgh want you to succeed. That’s something we all have in common.

The coordinating of that success, however, is extraordinarily difficult for a number of reasons. For instance, this is the only country in the world that expects two very difficult things to happen at the same time.

One is that you will begin the most demanding academic period in your life. You will be faced with very high expectations that you have not, in the past, had to meet. And even though you more than merited the opportunity to meet these challenges—and we’re very confident that if you work with us and try you will be successful—there are two very difficult things to happen at the same time.

There are freshmen, like you. There are juniors and seniors, there are graduate students, there are postdoctoral associates, and there are faculty members. One thing that unites all of us is that we are all striving to learn. Learning is a lifelong thing. It’s a part of a person’s makeup. It’s part of being human.

When you struggle this year with your coursework, we’ll call what you’re doing “homework.” When my colleagues in the physics department strive to learn more about advanced physical topics, we will call that “research.” But it’s all really about learning, and it’s about learning together in this community of learners.

So let’s talk in a serious way now about how we can coordinate all this, how we can make it work so that you succeed. There will be some grim business to get out of the way, and then there will be some exciting opportunities. I’ll dispense with some of the grim business to start with.

First: You—the students here—didn’t get here without a support system. You’re going to be moving out of that support system into another one that we form, but you don’t want to lose that old support system totally. You want to stay in touch. In the expression of, I believe, the Old West, “You want to dance with who brung ya.”

Stay in touch with your family.

Parents, there’s a law called FERPA (the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) that protects students’ records; you may not know about that law yet. I don’t want you to find out about that law only when you first really need to talk to us. That law says that without your student’s permission, we can’t “talk” to you. We can talk to your parents, of course, but we can’t tell you anything about how the student is doing without the student’s permission. Don’t let it get to that.

There’s a standard way the student can give us permission to talk to you about his or her progress when you call with concerns; the student needs to check the box on the relevant form that gives us that permission.

I love my own two children, have always loved them, always got along well with them, but at this stage in my relationships with them, I was perfectly clear with them. I said, “Yes, you have the legal right not to check that box. And I have the legal right not to sign the check for the tuition. Now, let us discuss this.” [laughter]

So, there’s one piece of grim business out of the way. On to our second piece of grim business—and this is “grim” in that it’s another source of student/family misunderstandings: the likelihood that you freshmen will graduate four years from now.

We want you to graduate four years from now. We work at making it possible for you to graduate four years from now. But you won’t graduate four years from now if you don’t work with us on this.

There are so many ways to go wrong. Let me give you a very common and absolutely rotten reason for failing to graduate in four years. The federal government considers you a full-time student as long as you’re taking 12 credits. That’s nice of the federal government to do that, because under federal law, things like federally guaranteed student loans would not be valid if you weren’t a full-time student. So, if you go down to 12 credits, you can still be a full-time student as far as the federal government is concerned. But a lot of people get trapped on that one. They think, “Well, I’m a full-time student, so I’ll graduate in four years.” No. You’re not really a full-time student in the sense of any major university in this country if you’re only taking 12 credits.

All of our programs require 120 credits or more to get a bachelor’s degree. Some take more, but for most of them, 120 does it. Figure in four years there are eight terms; divide eight into 120, and that’s 15. You have to average 15 credits per term to graduate in four years—and there are some programs that you have to average a little more than that. It’s a terrible idea to take fewer than 15 credits unless you’ve talked it over and decided as a family that you want to do it that way. It’s a terrible idea to just drift into a late graduation because you thought, “Twelve credits is enough, and I’ve got a lot of fun to have.” Those four years will go by, and your parents are going to call and say, “So, when do we come to graduation?”

Now let me tell you some good reasons
and what fits your plans for your life, then I hope you will realize that this is a sensitive time in your child’s life. Even if you don’t suspect, what’s going on, try to be receptive to your student’s anxieties. Growth comes painfully in many cases.

A reasonably common but painful experience for some students is that their first major has an unusually wide-ranging curriculum. This is perfectly natural if you or another of your students do study abroad. We would like every University of Pittsburgh student to have some international experience before they get their bachelor’s degree. We do what we can to make that possible in four years, but some international programs involve serious curricular issues of what really can’t be pursued during a semester abroad and that, therefore, do result in delayed graduation. If you are in one of those programs and talk it over as a family and decide that a study-abroad experience is important to you and imperative to your student’s development as a student and as a person, and if you’re willing to defer graduation, then that’s a great reason for delaying graduation.

Another good reason for taking more than four years to graduate: internship opportunities. We want you to buy into your own development program. While we recognize that investment comes not just with what you’re getting in the classroom, but what you get out of an internship. While most internships can be done during the semester, some good internship opportunities end up being into the summer months which may delay graduation a little bit.

Students who get into an internship find that they are using the skills that they learned in the classroom. They find that what they’re studying or what they’re doing is very relevant to their job, and they would hate their job. Students may realize that their talents truly lie elsewhere.

Nobody who’s been admitted here is without talent, but what that doesn’t mean is that everybody here is equally talented in every endeavor. Students who major in the wrong wrong career will set themselves up for failure in the classroom. If your student calls and says, “Look, I just have to change majors,” and that means that you would not graduate in four years, then as a parent you need to look ahead carefully. Realize that if they please you by graduating in four years with their original majors, then they may be absolutely miserable in their jobs for the following 40 years. Reach out to your students. Encourage them to find something that makes their interests and their needs, and then try to deal with the fact that it may mean that the graduation in the four years that we just traditionally will not be possible.

Changing a major is not a bad reason to take more than four years to graduate, but again, the worst way to do it is to make the impression that you’re just one more person who’s paying the tuition checks—now know that it’s going on. We all have to make sure that everybody is on the same page.

So now I’m finished with the grim business. We can move on to the fun part, what I call the “stimulating insight.” Let’s talk about what we’re about here.

What does the University of Pittsburgh want your students to get? Well, you get our undivided attention, we want you to have a very meaningful life. And we want to set you up for that life. The question is, what are we doing to try to make that happen?

First, by the time the orientation week is over, you will have heard of a program that we call the Pitt Pathway. The Pitt Pathway tries to make it easy for you to think about your goals and to reach your goals. We’re starting the conversation early here. Every time you go to register for classes, we want you to sit down with an advisor and discuss your interests, and then make sure you are reaching your goals, and your academic goals. We want you to discuss what the courses you might take that semester are likely to do for you in reaching those goals.

After your first semester, you will start talking to your advisor about what the courses you took last semester did, in fact, help you reach your goals and about which course in the taking those courses you might have changed a little bit—because as you learn more, you’re better able to define what those goals are. Are there goals changing? If the goals are changing, should you and your advisors change the course selection a bit? Similarly, what are you doing outside of class to help you achieve your lifetime goals? The entire University is set up around this Pitt Pathway program to help you with your goals. The residence hall advisors, the academic advisors, the faculty members who teach you, and you are all supposed to be partners talking about the status of your reaching your goals.

At many universities, the career services people only become important when you’re a senior and you’re looking for a job. At the University of Pittsburgh, we want them engaged with you in the first year. We want them engaged every semester. We want to know who they are. We want you to begin thinking about what you’re doing now prepares you for what you’re going to do later. Not because we want you to be narrowly-focused. We want you to be wide-ranging in your interests. But we want you to be thinking of yourself and the way that society will look at you, and we want you to be thinking about how you are going to need to present yourself to society.

One question that the career services people might start raising in your sophomore or junior year: Is this the kind of job you think you’d want to have when you get out of here? That’s a worthwhile activity to undertake before you’re looking for either a job or an admission to professional schools.

Secondly, as you think about your academic opportunities here at the University…[pause], I can carry on indefinitely about academic opportunities. I’m a career counselor, and I love it. And I know that one of the things that I could do to please the students here now is to make this relatively short. [laughter] So, let me point out a couple of things that I bet you haven’t thought about. One: general education requirements. In fact, if you’re a typical undergraduate student at almost any major American university what they think about general education requirements, they probably think it’s not worth your time to give you a pained look. The answers may vary depending on the institution, but I can guarantee you that your attitude of the student, but the answers tend to boil down to one: you’re taking a class to fulfill a general education requirement, and it’s boring.

Now, let me tell you what I think about general education requirements. If you survey employers, admissions officers for professional schools, and admissions officers for graduate schools about what they’re looking for in a graduate employee or graduate student, it’s remarkable how consistent the answers are. All of them look at the major, of course, that you’re going to have. Do you do something in x or y or z, and they don’t look at that? No! What they’re looking for is general education requirements, and it’s boring.

And that leads me to my next point: Minimize your reliance on bad advice. Talk to your advisor and take time to reflect on your own interests, goals, and achievements. For instance, ask the advisor and faculty members you respect whether you are writing as well as you can. If the answer is no, then ask what you can do this term to write better.

Final note. [loud applause] This is a real opportunity, and these years will go by fast. Get to know other members of your class to help you achieve all that you’ve dreamed of. We appreciate you choosing us, and we want to see you next year.

Thank you.
Take Charge: Develop Your Intellect. Make Good Choices. Develop A Game Plan. And Always Be Willing to Fight One More Round.

Kathy Humphrey, Pitt vice provost for student affairs and dean of students, delivered the following address Aug. 23 during Freshman Convocation in the Petersen Events Center.

“Good afternoon. What a privilege it is to welcome you to one of the finest institutions in the world.

We are thrilled that you have chosen to be a part of our community. We are also committed to being in union with you as you begin your journey. We will stand upon the foundation that you have been given by your family, friends, teachers, and mentors.

As I reflected on what your senior year might have been like, I thought about the many experiences you might have enjoyed. Let us face it, many high school seniors are seen as the kings and queens of the hill. Like the last drop of something good, high school seniors often savor the last football or basketball game. They give their final curtain call on stage. In addition, in the yearbook they pen their goodbyes to friends, some of whom they have known since elementary school. They take their last exams, get dressed to kill for the prom, and the whole family attends the graduation ceremony. What a year you have had!

While reflecting on your year, I could not help but think about the summer of my own senior year in high school. I remember that summer being filled with great anticipation for my first year in college. I thought about many things that summer. However, if you engage in some of the many activities and organizations that will be provided for you, I am sure you will develop your new relationships. If you make up your mind that you are going to become connected to our diverse community, I know that there is a great chance that those feelings of homesickness will subside.

I also thought about my new roommate. Now, the first time I ever saw or spoke to my roommate was when I arrived on campus. At first, we struggled a bit because we never had a conversation about how the two of us could best live together. Once I mustered up the courage to ask her to sit with me and establish some ground rules, our room became a much better place for the both of us to live in.

However, the thought that truly thrilled me was that summer was that I, Kathy Wilson, was finally going to be for the first time totally in control. Anytime I wanted to be, emotionally or physically, I wanted to be in control. That summer, helping in a big deal to me, for whenever my parents were not home, the oldest child in charge was a big deal to me, for whenever I was home that summer was that I, Kathy Wilson, could best live together. Once I mustered up the courage to ask her to sit with me and establish some ground rules, our room became a much better place for the both of us to live in.

Today, four years may seem like a lifetime away, but believe me, it is just around the corner, and unmanaged time will produce unnecessary stress in your life. Whether you go to graduate or professional school or head to the job market after graduation, we hope you make choices that will help you gain experiences that will make your resume’ and vita stand out from your national peers’. We hope you choose to manage your time well, for your choices often deter opportunities, for when you do, you will be creating a stronger you.

Questions that most college students ask themselves are “Who am I?” and “What am I to do with who I am?” Often, those who have spent time gaining a stronger sense of self are better prepared to begin creating the answers to these questions. We have many resources that will help you create a stronger you. Our goal is the education of the whole student, both inside and outside of the classroom. We will provide courses, workshops, services, programs, and activities that will attend to you intellectually, physically, culturally, spiritually, globally, and yes, even socially. However, it will be up to you to seize these opportunities, for when you do, you will be creating a stronger you.

Seed No. 1: Our choices often determine the quality of our lives.

Because you are now in charge, from now until the end of your life you will make choices that will create many of your life’s circumstances. We hope you make many choices. We hope you choose to strive for excellence in everything that you do, always performing at the highest level. We hope you choose to manage your time well, for your time here will pass very quickly.

Graduation is a whole lot of good things; it is an absolute necessity. Feeling good about yourself does not just happen. You have to work at it every single day. You have to remind yourself about all of your positive attributes so when you find an area that you need to work on, you will have the energy to work on it. With a stronger sense of self, you will also have the ability to realize that while you may not be perfect, there is a whole lot of good inside of you.

Questions that most college students ask themselves are “Who am I?” and “What am I to do with who I am?” Often, those who have spent time gaining a stronger sense of self are better prepared to begin creating the answers to these questions. We have many resources that will help you create a stronger you. Our goal is the education of the whole student, both inside and outside of the classroom. We will provide courses, workshops, services, programs, and activities that will attend to you intellectually, physically, culturally, spiritually, globally, and yes, even socially. However, it will be up to you to seize these opportunities, for when you do, you will be creating a stronger you.

Seed No. 2: Remember, if you do not believe in yourself, most will not believe in you.

J.K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter series, writes, “It is our choices that show who we really are...” We admitted you because we believed that you have gifts, talents, and skills to be more than successful here, but we believed that you could become a University of Pittsburgh graduate and play a significant role in our world. Now that you are in charge, you must be constantly creating, developing, and renewing a positive belief system for yourself.

A leading psychologist once said: "Feeling good about yourself is not a luxury; it is an absolute necessity. Feeling good about yourself does not just happen. You have to work at it every single day. You have to remind yourself about all of your positive attributes so when you find an area that you need to work on, you will have the energy to work on it. With a stronger sense of self, you will also have the ability to realize that while you may not be perfect, there is a whole lot of good inside of you."
**Pitt Rep Collaborates With Theater Rampe Stuttgart in World Premiere Sept. 12-15**

The Pitt Repertory Theatre will present Andreas Jungwirth’s Outside Inn Sept. 12-15 in the Charity Randall Theatre in the University’s Student Center Memorial. The production—featur-
ing a bilingual cast of actors from the United States, Germany, and Austria—represents a partnership between Pitt’s Department of Theatre Arts and Germany’s acclaimed Theater Rampe Stuttgart.

The production will include an English-language preview performance at 8 p.m. Sept. 12, a German-language preview at 8 p.m. Sept. 13, English-language performances at 8 p.m. Sept. 14 and 8 p.m. and a German-language matinee at 2 p.m. Sept. 15.

Ticket prices range from $12 to $22. For more information and to call 412-624-PLAY or visit www.play.pitt.edu.

**Non-Discrimination Notice**

The Pittsburgh Repertory Theatre is committed to providing equal access to its performances for our audience. It is our policy to comply with the U.S. Department of Justice’s regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) (the “ADA”). We follow the guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. To request additional accessibility information or to make specific accessibility requests, please call 412-624-PLAY or email info@pitt.edu.

**Performances**

- **Sept. 12**: 8 p.m., 2 p.m.
- **Sept. 13**: 8 p.m.
- **Sept. 14**: 8 p.m., 2 p.m.
- **Sept. 15**: 2 p.m., 8 p.m.

**Where**

Charity Randall Theatre, William Pitt Union, William Pitt University, 3925 Fifth Avenue, Downtown, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**Call for Auditions**

The Pittsburgh Repertory Theatre will hold auditions to finalize performances on video. She is looking for the following roles:

- **Female**—3 p.m. Sept. 12
- **Male**—3 p.m. Sept. 13

Auditions for Outside Inn—For more information, please call 412-624-PLAY or email info@pitt.edu.
Researchers in the Pitt School of Medicine’s Department of Emergency Medicine, in collaboration with the Allegheny County Fire Academy, have received a $222,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant to study the best way to reduce firefighters’ risk of heart problems from exposure to heat stress.

According to a July 2007 National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health report, sudden cardiac death is the most common cause of line-of-duty deaths among firefighters, killing approximately 45 each year. It is suspected that many of these deaths are triggered by heat stress. The report also found that, for firefighters, coronary artery disease and sudden cardiac death involve a combination of personal and work-related factors.

Personal factors can include age, gender, family history, diabetes, hypertension, smoking, high cholesterol, obesity, and lack of exercise. Work-related factors can include exposure to fire smoke, heavy physical exertion, heat stress, and other physical stresses.

The two-year Pitt-Allegheny County Fire Academy study, known as the Fire Ground Rehab Evaluation (FIRE) Trial, will assess the best methods for maintaining the health and safety of firefighters while in the line of duty; such health maintenance is called fire ground rehabilitation.

Currently, fire ground rehabilitation is inconsistent across the fire and rescue profession, in which taking a break can be viewed as a sign of weakness.

“During the FIRE trial, we will be looking for the right threshold at which fire ground rehabilitation should be administered and investigating the efficacy of different methods of rehabilitation that can be administered at fire scenes,” said David Hostler, a research assistant professor in Pitt’s emergency medicine department and a volunteer firefighter in the Guyasuta Volunteer Fire Department in O’Hara Township.

“The study is designed to improve firefighter health and safety by providing an improved understanding of the mechanisms of heat stress and its effects on the heart. We anticipate that the study will result in improved methods of prevention and treatment of heat-related cardiovascular stress that can be adopted by fire departments across the United States.’’

Firefighters from the Guyasuta Volunteer Fire Department and other departments across Allegheny County will be tested in the Pitt emergency medicine department’s Emergency Responder Human Performance Lab.

At completing the study, researchers will submit a list of recommendations to the FEMA Assistance to Firefighter Program for implementation by fire departments across the country.