Alumni, Students Come Together For Homecoming 2007

By Patricia Lomando White

Alumni, students, and friends will celebrate Homecoming 2007 this week with a fireworks and laser show, a homecoming extravaganza, a career-networking event, school reunions, theater performances, and Saturday’s football game between the Pittsburgh Panthers and the Cincinnati Bearcats.

Homecoming festivities begin with a ‘50s Reunion for all 1950-59 Pitt graduates at 5 p.m. Wednesday in the Twentieth Century Club, 4201 Bigelow Blvd. Highlights will include the Alumni Dance Band, a 1957 class photo, and memories from alumni who attended the Elsworth Center, a building that served the post-World War II overflow of Pitt students from 1947 to 1951.

Notable events for Thursday include a 2-5 p.m. Legacy Laureate Leadership Panel Discussion in Posvar Hall’s Provost’s Suite with this year’s Legacy Laureates—alumni recognized for their outstanding personal and professional accomplishments—and Pitt alumni and student leaders participating.

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The Nov. 3 concert is a one-of-a-kind performance, given the diverse playing styles and show’s impromptu nature. Tickets are $18; students with a valid ID pay $8.

Tickets are available at any Ticket Master location, by phone at 412-532-1999, online at ticketmaster.com, and at the Pitt William Pitt Union (WPU) box office. For more information, call 412-624-4187.

William R. Robinson, District 10 representative on the Allegheny County Council and a former state representative, will serve as the evening’s master of ceremonies. While in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, Robinson helped obtain funding for a state-of-the-art, 32-track digital recording facility in Pitt’s Music Building. That facility will host the annual Sankofa Weekends this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to welcome home alumni and honor five distinguished graduates during the University’s Homecoming 2007.

Honorees are Yasse M. Barnwell (FAS ’75), Charlene Mckinnons Dukes (EDUC ’87G, ’92G), Henry “Model T” Ford (CBA ’55), Margaret D. Garner (CAS ’86), and Ludwig Hayden Jr. (CAS ’66, EDUC ’68G).

The AAAC Sankofa weekend begins at 9 a.m. Friday with the Apple Seed Project, a community service initiative that gives alumni the opportunity to share their time and talents with students in Pittsburgh Public Schools. A Sankofa Marketplace from 5 to 11 p.m. and the AAAC Welcome reception, “It Ain’t Nothin’ but a House Party!” from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m., will be held at the Omni William Penn Hotel, Downtown.

The AAAC Sankofa Awards Reception and Banquet, “Honoring our Partners in Progress” at 6 p.m. Saturday at the Omni William Penn Union will include the AAAC Distinguished Alumni Awards presentation, honoring the five outstanding African American alumni who have achieved recognition in their chosen profession and have demonstrated support for the University and the AAAC.

Other AAAC homecoming festivities include the AAAC board and advisory committee meeting at 9 a.m. Saturday in the Omni and the AAAC’s football game against the Cincinnati Bearcats.

A Sunday worship service, “Rejoice in the Miracle” from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and fellowship brunch, “Until We Meet Again” from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., both at the Omni, bring AAAC’s activities to a close.

The idea for an African American alumni association originated with a small group of Pitt graduates in the early 1980s. The group met in the intervening years and sponsored several events, generating the interest and participation of an increasing number of African American graduates. The increased interest and growth led to the group’s recognition as an affiliate group of the Pitt Alumni Association.

The AAAC’s mission is to support African American alumni, students, faculty, staff, and administrators and to strengthen their connection to the University through its many programs and activities. For more information, call 412-624-8229 or visit www.alumni.pitt.edu.

By Patricia Lomando White

International Stars Gathering for Pitt Jazz Week

Jazz enthusiasts from throughout the region will converge on campus Oct. 30 through Nov. 3 for the 37th annual Pitt Jazz Seminar and Concert, the longest-running event of its kind in the United States.

Under the theme “Jazz Meets the World,” a stellar group of international jazz musicians will hold free on-campus lectures and demonstrations, visit area schools and community venues, and convene for the annual concert at 8 p.m. Nov. 3 in Carnegie Music Hall, 4400 Forbes Ave., Oakland.

Guest performers include Monty Alexander, piano; Randy Brecker, trumpet; Jon Faddis, trumpet; Peter King, alto sax; Benny Golson, sax; Abra- ham Laboriel, bass; Idris Muhammad, drums; Claus Reichstaller, trumpet; and Yotam Silberstein, guitar.

They will perform under the direction of Nathan Davis, saxophonist, professor of music, and head of Pitt’s Jazz Studies Program, and founder of the annual event.

The Nov. 3 concert is a one-of-a-kind performance, given the diverse playing styles and show’s impromptu nature. Tickets are $18; students with a valid ID pay $8.

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AAAC to Honor Five During Sankofa Weekend

By Patricia Lomando White

The University of Pittsburgh African American Alumni Council (AAAC) will host the annual Sankofa Weekend this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to welcome home alumni and honor five distinguished graduates during the University’s Homecoming 2007.

Honorees are Yasse M. Barnwell (FAS ’75), Charlene Mckinnons Dukes (EDUC ’87G, ’92G), Henry “Model T” Ford (CBA ’55), Margaret D. Garner (CAS ’86), and Ludwig Hayden Jr. (CAS ’66, EDUC ’68G).

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GSPH to host forum on aging..............................

Pitt pitches in for United Way............................
First in National Series of Forums on Aging to Be Held Here Wednesday

By Jason Togner

The first in a planned nationwide series of roundtable discussions on designing healthy, “livable” communities for older Americans will be held Wednesday at the University of Pittsburgh, hosted by the Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH).

State and local officials will join Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg; Donald S. Burke, dean of GSPH; Neil Resnick, professor of medicine and director of the University of Pittsburgh's Institute on Aging; Steven M. Albert, professor of behavioral and community health sciences and associate chair of research and science for Pitt's GSPH; and other community leaders and educators at the Governing Summit on Livable Communities.

Events are scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. in the Schenley Lounge of the Pittsburgh Athletic Association, with remarks from Nordenberg. During an executive roundtable discussion at 9:45 a.m., participants will discuss the Pittsburgh region's status as one of the nation's most livable communities and examine why so many people have remained here after retirement.

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According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 17 percent of residents of Allegheny County are over the age of 65. The national average is 12.4 percent. Pennsylvania Governors Tom, Edward G. Rendell, Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl, and Pittsburgh City Council President Doug Shields are among those expected to participate.

The new series of forums is sponsored by the AARP (formerly the American Association of Retired Persons) and is being organized by Congressional Quarterly and its sister publication, Governing, a monthly magazine for governors, mayors, legislators, and others involved in municipal and state affairs.

Congressional Quarterly spokesperson Amanda Springmann said the summit is to “identify and understand” the factors that contribute to making communities more livable for people over age 50. The findings will be compiled into a study that will be published in both Congressional Quarterly and Governing, she said.

CQ chose Pitt’s GSPH to host the first meeting in the belief that the University’s traditional leadership role in studying public health issues both regionally and nationally will “enhance and enrich the discussion,” Springmann said.

Pitt has made a concerted, interdisciplinary effort to research the problems confronting senior citizens since 1999, when Arthur S. Levine, senior vice chancellor for the health sciences and dean of the School of Medicine, and James V. Maher, provost and senior vice chancellor, convened a “council on aging” that included representatives from each of the University’s 16 schools.

The University’s initiatives include the Institute on Aging, which links clinical, educational, and research efforts between Pitt, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and government and community agencies.

Other ongoing projects include GSPH’s Center for Aging and Population Health, which connects its host school to other schools within the University to promote demographical and clinical research into ways to maintain or improve the quality of life for people as they age.
invited to join the world-renowned a cappella ensemble Sweet Honey in the Rock.

Barnwell’s Last Acts: As a sign-language interpreter, brought about the inclusion of an interpreter as part of the ensemble. As aastate and chorale clinician in African American cultural perfor- mance, Barnwell conducts the workshop “Building African American History: Singing in the African American Tradition,” which has been presented across the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Singapore, and Australia.

She has been a commissioned compos- er on numerous choral, film, video, dance, and theatrical projects and won the Bessie Award for her score Safe House. Still Looking, commissioned by Liz Lerman Dance Exchange. As a sign language interpreter, Barnwell has appeared in Jonathan Demme’s Beloved and the TV show A Man Called Hawk.

She is the author of the children’s book No Mirrors in My Nana’s House (Harcourt, 1998) and the forthcoming We Are One, to be published by Harcourt in the spring of 2008. Barnwell earned a PhD degree in speech pathology at Pitt.

As a professor of black history and master’s degree in speech pathology at SUNY Geneseo and a Master of Science degree in public health from Howard University.

Charlene Mickens Dukes

President of Prince George’s Commu- nity College in Largo, Md., Dukes has 26 years of leadership experience and admin- istrative responsibility in higher education. She is a member of several professional organizations, including service as a founder and lead faculty member for the Community College Student Development Leadership Institute under the auspices of the National Council on Student Development, an affilia- tion of the American Association of Commu- nity Colleges.

Dukes also is a member of the National Academy Board of the National Student Personnel Administrators; the Council of Law in Higher Education; and the Maryland Network, an affiliate of the Office of Women in Higher Education/American Council on Education.

From 2002 through 2006, Dukes served on the Appointed Board of Education of Prince George’s County and chaired the Student Support, Student Appeals, and Person- nel committees. In 2003, she accepted an appointment from Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley to serve a three-year term on the State Board of Education. Dukes has been an adjunct faculty member at the Community College of Allegheny County, Prince George’s Community College, and Morgan State University.

A graduate of Pitt with a master’s degree and Doctorate in administrative policy, she has conducted studies, Dukes also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in secondary education with a concentration in English from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Henry “Moldy” T Ford

Ford, the first Black quarterback at the University of Pittsburgh, was one of several Panther players competing for that position in 1953, a position that few Blacks held at the level of college at that time. After leading Pitt to its only score in the opening game against West Virginia, the head coach gave Ford the starting position for the next game and he remained the regular quarterback for the remainder of the season.

He moved to the position of tailback in his senior year at Pitt. Ford grew up in Pitts- burgh’s Hill District and starred in football at Schenley High School. After college, he was drafted by the Cleveland Browns in 1956 and served as a member of the club’s 1955 NFL championship team. He played for the Pittsburgh Steelers the following season. In 2004, at age 69, he invited Pitt to its only score in the opening game against West Virginia, the head coach gave Ford the starting position for the next game and he remained the regular quarterback for the remainder of the season.

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Other AAAC events include the Apple Seed Project in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, a board and advisory committee meeting, and a worship service and jazz fellowship brunch. For more details about the AAAC events, visit www.alumni.pitt.edu/homecoming/sankofa.html.

The Homecoming football game festivities begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday in the Pitt Alumni Association pregame tent near Art Rooney Avenue into Heinz Field. The Homecoming Court will ride in the parade, and the king and queen will be crowned during halftime activities.

Additional homecoming events include: the Department of Bioengineering 10th anniversary event, Engineering Homecoming reception, College of Business Administration/ Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business “S1 Luncheon,” Pitt School of Dental Medicine Dental Dash, School of Education lecture, School of Information Sciences Distinguished Alumni Awards, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and College of General Studies receptions, and an event to honor Pitt Alumni Association scholarship recipients.

Throughout homecoming, Pitt Reperatory Theatre will present The Recruiting Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Officer, a revival of George Farquhar’s classic Restoration comedy, and the Kuntu Offi...
Pitt People Pitch in During Day of Caring

By Jason Togyer

More than 400 Pitt faculty and staff members worked on community service projects Sept. 28 as the University marked its 17th annual United Way Day of Caring.

Fifteen events took Pitt people to neighborhoods throughout the city, including Point Breeze, Lemington, East Liberty, and Highland Park, as well as Oakland.

In addition to providing valuable public services each year, the Day of Caring helps promote the University's United Way Campaign. This year's campaign began on Oct. 11 and continues through Nov. 30.

According to Pitt's Office of Institutional Advancement, the University's United Way collection is among the largest workplace campaigns in Allegheny County. Last year, 2,300 Pitt faculty, staff, and retirees pledged more than $553,000 to United Way.

This year's Day of Caring borrowed the slogan "For The Greater Good" from TIAA-CREF, a nonprofit retirement planning and investment manager for University faculty and staff that oversees Pitt's defined contribution retirement plan.

Steve Zupcic, assistant director of Pitt's Office of Community Relations, said TIAA-CREF sponsored two Day of Caring projects: the upgrade of a computer system at Lemington Community Services (LCS) Senior Center and the transformation of a vacant lot in South Oakland into a parklet. The latter project was completed in cooperation with Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC).

Also with assistance from OPDC, Pitt volunteers worked on beautification projects in Oak Hill and Oakland Square.

In addition, Pitt's Equipoise, an association of Black faculty, staff, administrators, and students, helped with four of the projects, including the transfer of furniture, cubicle dividers, and other donated office equipment into the LCS building.

Founded in 1882, LCS provides home care, meals, education, health information and referrals, and other programs to elderly residents in Pittsburgh's East End.

In addition, Pitt Day of Caring volunteers rolled up their sleeves to clean and landscape the former Union Baptist Church near the corner of Stanton and Negley avenues in East Liberty.

Once abandoned, the sanctuary and grounds of the circa-1903 church are being transformed into a community center serving East Liberty, Highland Park, and neighboring areas with space for artists, entrepreneurs, and cultural and educational events. The Union Project also houses "Glass Action," which offers classes in stained-glass restoration while repairing and restoring stained-glass windows for churches, homes, and other customers.

Other Day of Caring events included a "fix-it day" at Family House, which provides lodging in Oakland for the families of patients at local hospitals; and cleaning and maintenance at Roselia Center, which offers counseling and education for pregnant women in Oakland, and at Gwen's Girls, an educational and mentoring program for girls in Point Breeze.

Pitt volunteers also helped package medical supplies for shipment to local and international clinics at Global Links in Point Breeze; taught job interviewing skills to youth at Shamir Juvenile Detention Center in East Liberty; helped clients at United Cerebral Palsy in North Oakland practice life skills; and read to students at the Urban League Charter School in East Liberty.

In addition, volunteers worked with the Oakland Business Improvement District to train local business owners for a new United Way campaign and provided interior maintenance and cleaning help at People's Oakland.
Pitt’s GSPH Takes Key Role in National Child Health Survey

By Michele Baum

Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH) has been selected to be part of a national study assessing the effects of environmental and genetic factors on child and human health in the United States.

The University of Pittsburgh is one of 22 new study centers of the National Children’s Study, a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Each study center will manage local participant recruitment and data collection in the largest study of child and human health ever conducted in the United States.

The Pittsburgh study locations will focus on communities in Westmoreland County, Pa., and Marion County, W.Va. In those counties, selected women of reproductive age will be invited to participate in this long-term assessment of their environment, their health, and the health of their future children.

“What we learn will help not only children and families in Pennsylvania, but will help children across the United States and shape child health guidance, interventions, and policy,” said Roberta B. Ness, chair of the Department of Epidemiology in GSPH and principal investigator of the Pittsburgh study center.

The National Children’s Study eventually will follow a representative sample of 100,000 children from before birth to age 21, seeking information to prevent and treat some of the nation’s most pressing health problems, including autism, birth defects, diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

Pitt’s schools of the health sciences are considered national leaders in maternal child health research. Previous contributions have included studies enhancing understanding of the determinants of preecampsia and prematurity; delivery in pregnancy; diabetes and delinquency in children and adolescents; and best treatments for otitis media and other childhood conditions.

The National Children’s Study began in response to the Children’s Health Act of 2000, when Congress directed the NICHD and other federal agencies to undertake a national, long-term study of children’s health and development in relation to environmental exposures.

In total, the study will be conducted in 105 previously designated study locations across the United States that together are representative of the entire U.S. population. A national probability sample was used to select the counties in the study, which took into account factors including race and ethnicity, income, education level, number of births, and number of babies born with low birth weights.
Concerts


Hillman Library, Rare Book Exhibition, through Oct. 31, 614-648-8191.


Lectures/Seminars/Readings


University of Pittsburgh Musical Theatre
4227 Fifth Avenue (between Lytton and Tennyson avenues)
Seventh Floor
Auditorium
412-642-7298
www.kuntu.org

Theatre/Opera/Dance
The Revolving Officer by George Farci, directed by Mark O’Strzelnik Memorial’s Henry Heymann Theatre, Pitt Department of Theater, 412-642-2647, www. play.pitt.edu.


Miscellaneous
Americans for the Arts Cultural Services, annual awards for emerging arts leaders, 5:30 p.m. Oct. 30, Cabinet at Theater Square, 655 Penn Ave., Downtown, 412-471-6079.

Women for Film and Media awards ceremony, 6-9 p.m. Oct. 16, Cabinet at Theater Square, 655 Penn Ave., Downtown, 412-325-0769, www.clockaware.com.

Steven Wright, comedian, 7:30 p.m. Oct. 17, Byham Theater, 10th Street.


Farmers’ Market, 9:30-6:30 p.m. every Friday through Nov. 16, Senior Street between Armstrong and Meyran Avenue, Oakland Business Improvement District, 412-683-6243, www.onoinkland.com.

Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses
Diane F. Brunke, School of Nursing, “Effect of Exercise on Subjective Maternal Mood, Maternal Functional Status, and Infant Crying,” 10 a.m. today, 446 Victoria Building.

Torn Tugmey, School of Medicine’s Molecular and Cellular Biology Graduate Program, “Envelope Determinants of HIV Vaccine Protection and the Effects of HIV Immune Recognition,” 10 a.m. today, 1290 Biomedical Science Tower.

Araon Tomnakoyokel, School of Information Sciences, “An Agent-based Model of User Behavior and Search Process,” 11 a.m. today, 512 Information Sciences Building.

John G. Luss III, School of Medicine’s Molecular and Cellular Biology Graduate Program, “Inhibition of Liver and Bone Wnt Signaling Pathway in Cholestasis and Manu ration and Function by Interleukin-10,” 2 p.m. today, 1290 Biomedical Science Tower.


Theater/Opera/Dance
The Revolving Officer by George Farci, directed by Mark O’Strzelnik Memorial’s Henry Heymann Theatre, Pitt Department of Theater, 412-642-2647, www.play.pitt.edu.


A new center at the University of Pittsburgh will be dedicated to researching innovative technologies designed to help people with spinal cord injuries. The Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) on Spinal Cord Injury will be launched with a $4.75 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The grant was announced Friday.

David M. Brienza, professor of rehabilitation science and technology at the University of Pittsburgh, will serve as the director of the RERC, which was designed by Pitt’s School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS) to address significant issues for people with spinal cord injury.

The RERC team and its collaborators will include Pitt’s Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine, and the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Pittsburgh.

Other partners will include Case Western Reserve University, Baylor College of Medicine, IBM, and Immuneetrics Inc., a company based on Pittsburgh’s South Side that creates computer models of human responses to inflammatory diseases.

Several University of Pittsburgh faculty members serve as advisors to Immuneetrics, which was founded by Timothy R. Billiar, George Vance Foster Professor and chair of the Department of Surgery at Pitt’s School of Medicine; Gilles Clermont, assistant professor of critical care medicine at Pitt; Mitchell Fink, chair of the Department of Critical Care Medicine; and Yoram Vodovotz, professor of surgery.

Spinal cord injuries result in a particularly debilitating array of conditions that compromise mobility, accessibility, social interactions, employment, and other important dimensions of life. One critical focus of the RERC’s research will be to create mathematical models of inflammation and healing, which can vary extensively among individuals, Brienza said.

These mathematical models may be used to develop novel technologies for detecting pressure ulcers and preventing shoulder injuries among wheelchair users, to improve evaluation of bladder function and musculoskeletal injuries, and to assess therapies for individual patients, he said.

“We believe that the occurrence of pressure ulcers, urinary tract infection, and musculoskeletal injuries that stem from spinal cord injury can be attributed to systemic inflammation,” Brienza said. “We also believe that it is necessary to understand and be able to predict responses to inflammation in order to develop novel, patient-specific therapies for spinal cord injury.”

In addition, the RERC will disseminate information, train future researchers, and transfer technology concepts to manufacturers.

Faculty from the Departments of Surgery and Critical Care Medicine at the University, collaborating with SHRS researchers, have pioneered the computational approaches to develop and calibrate models of the inflammatory process.

“We now have four substantial grants that are based on computational simulation and modeling inflammation,” said Clifford E. Brubaker, dean of the SHRS. “I believe that this research will have important and pervasive influences on the formulation of new therapeutic procedures and the practice of rehabilitation.”

The Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology (RST) was established within SHRS in 1994. RST was created to provide leadership in research, education, and clinical practice related to the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities.

The department currently houses a clinical center for assistive technology as well as several national research centers focused on improving critical technology that enables people with disabilities to go about their daily lives.