Chancellor Names 2008 Staff Excellence Awardees

By Anthony M. Moore

Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg has named the winners of the 2008 Chancellor’s Awards for Staff Excellence in Service to the community and to the University. Each awardee will receive a $2,500 cash prize and will be recognized during Pitt’s 32nd annual Honors Convocation on Fri., Feb. 29. Their names will also be inscribed on plaques to be displayed in the William Pitt Union.

The four winners of the Chancellor’s Award for Staff Excellence in Service to the Community are:

Peter J. Buchheit, director of facilities management at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford; John V. Collins, parking operations manager in Pitt’s Department of Parking and Transportation; Harriet R. Puchone, coordinator for the Office of Education and Curriculum in the School of Dental Medicine; and Harriet R. Watkins, special events coordinator for Pitt’s Office of Governmental and Community Relations.

The three winners of the Awards for Staff Excellence in Service to the University are: Nancy Gilkes, benefits relationship manager for the Department of Benefits; Carol J. Lynch, assistant to the associate dean for undergraduate studies in the School of Arts and Sciences; and Frances E. Nagy, graduate student coordinator in the Department of Chemistry.

Excellence in Service to the Community

Buchheit frequently offers his expertise in facility management to the Bradford community through volunteer work with professional and community organizations.

He has been a member of the Bradford Township Volunteer Fire Department for almost 20 years, serving in a number of positions, including president, station captain, and treasurer, while serving on the board of directors of the Bradford Family YMCA. Buchheit guided the organization through a $4 million renovation and expansion project. Buchheit is very involved with the St. Bernard Catholic Church in Bradford and received the Knight of St. Gregory the Great—the highest honor a lay person can receive from the Roman Catholic Church.

In a letter supporting Buchheit’s nomination, Rev. Leo Gallina, pastor of St. Bernard’s, wrote, “Peter is one who gives of his time, talents, and abilities whenever needed and is so generous to do so. He is willing to help out and never counts the time, which he gives so freely.”

Collins, who came to Pitt in 1993, is not only a well-respected professional but a humanitarian whose causes have enriched the lives of people in the local community.

Collins is president of the Pennsylvania Parking Association and a member of the International Parking Institute (IPI). He completed IPI’s Certified Administrator of Public Parking certificate program, a rigorous program requiring a minimum of two years of study. Collins has volunteered with charitable organizations, including the Plum Horn Athletic Association, the East Suburban YMCA, and The Businessmen, a well-known musical group. The Businessmen perform at a number of charitable events throughout the year and donate all proceeds from their performances and CD sales to charity. Through his work with the Businessmen Collins has helped to raise more than $150,000 for groups such as Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, The Autism Society of Westmoreland County, Conductive Education, and The Westmoreland County Alzheimer’s Association.

Puchone, who joined Pitt in 2001, has displayed a remarkable commitment to others in her relatively short time at the University.

Also a student in Pitt’s College of General Studies (CGS), Puchone chose to include an internship with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. She devoted more than 250 hours to her internship project, “Light Up A Child’s Life,” twice the number that is normally required to earn three credits. In addition to her work with the Make-A-Wish Foundation, she has volunteered at the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership Light-Up Night, Phipps Conservatory, Project Bundle-Up, and Special Olympics.

In addition, Puchone mentors fellow students, volunteers at numerous CGS events, and serves as vice president for Alpha Sigma Lambda, a national honor society for nontraditional students. She was nominated for the Chancellor’s award by a Pitt dental school student and a School of Arts and Sciences student.

Watts has used her skills in community relations to serve people in the Pitt and Pittsburgh communities.

Watts has been volunteering with Pitt since 1970 and her service to the University includes having served two terms as vice president of the Staff Association Council, where she was a driving force in raising funds and other financial awards for Pitt students whose parents or guardians are members of the Pitt staff. She serves as coordinator of the University’s Volunteer Pool and has organized blood drives, free holiday dinners for the homeless and needy, and collections of winter clothing for the homeless. She also served as organizer of Pitt’s annual Kennywood Day, overseeing everything from ticket sales to catering to door prizes and games.

Watts uses her considerable talents in service to her church, the Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church, and the Lott Carey Foreign Mission. As Katins Brown, minister of music at the church, observed, “[Watts] is one to share whatever she has with those in need. She is just that kind of person. It makes her happy to see others happy.”

Excellence in Service to the University

Gilkes has touched the lives of countless employees and retirees through her position as benefits relationship manager within the Department of Benefits.

In choosing Gilkes for this honor, the selection committee described her dedication to the University as “legendary.” In a relationship with Pitt that spans more than 40 years of study and service, Gilkes has displayed both the highest quality of work in the benefits department as well as a genuine concern for the well-being of those who rely on the offices’ services.

The University of Pittsburgh received a $1 million grant from the W.M. Keck Foundation to develop a groundbreaking method that will significantly advance nanoscale science and technology by allowing scientists to observe, probe, and control molecules.

The revolutionary technique involves probing a molecular structure with femtosecond—a billionth of a millionth of a second—temporal and atomic spatial resolution, leading to new knowledge on activating and harnessing matter at its most fundamental level.

The principal investigator for this research is Hervé Pelet, a professor of physics and chemistry in Pitt’s School of Arts and Sciences and codirector of the Petersen Institute of NanoScience and Engineering. Pelet is an expert in the fields of surface femtochemistry and ultrafast microscopy. He invented time-resolved photoemission electron microscopy, the enabling technique for this study.

In pursuit of this goal, several leading physics and chemistry research groups around the world are exploring different ways to combine the spatial resolution of electron microscopy with temporal resolution of femtosecond laser spectroscopy, Pelet said. “Our goal is to develop methods for interacting with single molecules in order to observe and control how they respond to stimulation by light or electrons to undergo chemical reactions or specific mechanical motion.”

Based in Los Angeles, the W.M. Keck Foundation is one of the nation’s largest philanthropic organizations. It was established in 1954 by the late William Myron Keck, founder of the Superior Oil Co.

Since 1988, the W.M. Keck Foundation has donated more than $4 million to support research in medicine, engineering, and science at Pitt. The latest grant is part of the University’s Building Our Future Together campaign, the most successful fundraising campaign in the history of both the University and Southwestern Pennsylvania. To date, the campaign has raised more than $1.2 billion.

Pitt Gets $1 Million Grant for Nano Science Research

By Jasmine G. Hoffman

Continued on Page 2

Honoring the Fly Boys

Lee Archer (left), a Tuskegee Airman, and Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg enjoy the Feb. 1 celebration honoring the airmen of Soldiers and Sailors Memorial National Cemetery, the airmen’s only confirmed ace, completed a finance certificate program at Pitt. Of the 71 Tuskegee Airmen known to have ties to Western Pennsylvania, 26 are Pitt alumni. (More photos on Page 4.)
Lawyer Who Represented Bin Laden’s Driver
Before U.S. Supreme Court to Speak at Pitt
By Amanda Leff

Charles Swift, a prominent lawyer best known for defending Osama bin Laden’s driver before the U.S. Supreme Court, will speak at the University of Pittsburgh’s Oakland campus at 6 p.m. on Thurs., Feb. 21.

The talk, “U.S. Sovereignty and the War on Terror After Hamdan v. Rumsfeld,” will be held in the Barco Law Building’s Teplitz Moost Courtroom. The event is free and open to the public.

The lecture is the 16th Annual McLean Lecture on World Law, presented by the University of Pittsburgh School of Law’s Center for International Legal Education and the Global Solutions Education Fund.

Swift, who is now acting director of Emory University’s International Humanitarian Law Clinic, acquired extensive experience in the practice of military and post-war criminal law, serving as an attorney for the U.S. military. Swift’s experience with the U.S. military, Swift is also known for defending Osama bin Laden’s driver, Hamdan, and the military commission that tried him.

In 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the military commission used to try Hamdan was illegal and therefore lacked the protections provided under the Geneva Conventions and U.S. Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Known for his dedication to preserving the rule of law during wartime, Swift has been honored by the American Civil Liberties Union with a Medal of Liberty and named by the National Law Journal as one of the most influential lawyers in America. With more than 12 years of litigation experience with the U.S. military, Swift is also a visiting professor at Emory.

The McLean Lecture on World Law honors the memory and contributions of M.W. McLean, a founder, executive director, and executive vice president of the Pittsburgh World Federalist Association chapter, now Global Solutions Education Fund, Pittsburgh.

This lecture has been approved by the Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education Board for one hour of substantive Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits. There is a $25 fee for credit. For CLE details, call 412-648-7023 or e-mail clee@law.pitt.edu.

Chancellor Names 2008 Staff Excellence Award Recipients

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In February 1953, Jonas Salk and his associates began to inoculate 1,000 consenting children and adults in the Pittsburgh area with the experimental polio vaccine.

According to Robert C. Albert’s “Pitt: The Story of the University of Pittsburgh 1787-1987,” the positive results from the localized testing paved the way for the national inoculation of 1.8 million children in the spring and summer of 1954—the largest field-testing program in the history of preventive medicine.

Salk came to Pitt in 1947 as associate research professor of bacteriology and head of the Virus Research Laboratory, located in the basement of the Municipal Hospital (now Salk Hall). There he began extensive research into the poliomyelitis epidemic. Salk believed that humans could be immunized from polio through exposure to a killed strain of the virus that retained enough strength to stimulate antibodies within the bloodstream. Salk’s research, conducted almost entirely at Pitt, culminated in 1955 with a vaccine that helped rid polio from the modern world. By 1957, some 70 million Americans under the age of 40 had received one or more injections of the Salk Vaccine.

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BlackHistoryMonth

Canard Grigsby

Building Pitt’s Future

Canard Grigsby is vital link in high-profile construction projects at Pitt

By Sharon S. Blake

When Canard Grigsby cresses Pitt’s 132-acre campus on any given day, he doesn’t necessarily see the bricks and mortar of the buildings facades. Instead, he may be remembering the negotiating sessions that took place to keep the building’s construction cost within budget. Or the planning involved in the creation of a glass door transom that bears the signature of an esteemed Pitt alumnus.

As project manager for planning and design in Pitt’s Department of Facilities Management, Grigsby is thoroughly familiar with many details of campus construction, from the pre-design phase to the last finishing nail. He and seven other project managers oversee three critical components of any Pitt building project—scope of work, budget, and schedule.

“No two days in this position are the same,” said Grigsby, 48, a soft-spoken, energetic man who works out of the Eureka Building’s third floor. Since coming to Pitt in 2004 as the first African American to hold a project manager post in Pitt’s facilities management, he functions as an important liaison between a project’s outside consultant and the Pitt department on the continuous stream of new construction and upgrades under way all over campus. State-of-the-art facilities “enhance or develop the skill sets individuals bring with them when they arrive at Pitt,” Grigsby has managed several key projects in Oakland, including construction of the new Richard L. Thornburgh Room in Hillman Library and Panther Hall, as well as improvements to Salk and Ruskin halls.

Currently, he’s juggling a number of projects, with funding close to $6 million, which include a major addition to Salk Hall, physics laboratories in Old Engineering Hall, and several upgrades at the Bradford campus. Those range from new auditorium seating and lab renovations in Fisher Hall to a new campus chapel. Each undertaking is meticulously planned and carried out under Grigsby’s watchful eye.

“I have artistic ability and proficiency in math and science, so I thought it was a good fit,” he recalled with a smile. “He told me what he did and how he did it. I have artistic ability and proficiency in math and science, so I thought it was a good fit.”

After graduating from Temple, Grigsby worked for several years at private architectural firms. At Pitt, Grigsby is a critical component in helping to create the architectural image that Pitt presents to potential students and top-flight faculty and staff.

“The difference between getting that top athlete or top scholar could be the facilities you have to offer,” Grigsby said, commenting on the continuous stream of new construction and upgrades under way all over campus. State-of-the-art facilities “enhance or develop the skill sets individuals bring with them when they arrive at Pitt.”

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A native of Warrenton, Va., Grigsby grew up in Sewickley. By the eighth grade, he had set his heart on a profession in architecture.

“My Uncle Sherman was an architect in Washington, D.C.,” he recalled with a smile. “He told me what he did and how he did it. I have artistic ability and proficiency in math and science, so I thought it was a good fit.”

After graduating from Temple, Grigsby returned to Sewickley and worked for a small architectural firm. Before joining Pitt, he was with the New York-based architectural firm Perkins Eastman.

One of Grigsby’s more visible projects at Pitt is the Thornburgh Room, completed in fall 2006. The project involved a series of presentations to Pitt Trustee and former Pennsylvania Gov. Dick Thornburgh, representatives of the University Library System, members of the Board of Trustees, and others. Grigsby was also key in negotiations between the Pitt parties and the consulting architect, Strada, and subconsultant, Landsberg Design.

The resulting space, tucked into the northeastern corner of Hillman Library’s first floor, is a handsome tribute to Thornburgh, a 1957 Pitt law school alumnus. It is Thornburgh’s oversize signature that graces the glass over the front entranceway.

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An Evening With the Tuskegee Fly Boys
Pitt sponsors world premiere screening of Fly Boys documentary, the inaugural event of the K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month program

An estimated 1,100 people gathered at Soldiers and Sailors Military Museum and Memorial on Feb. 1 to pay tribute to the remarkable history of the Tuskegee Airmen, who were America’s first Black military flyers. They provided tenacious and ferocious escort cover to American bomber planes, helping the United States win World War II. After fighting for their country, they fought segregation and discrimination upon their return home. The evening featured the world premiere screening of Fly Boys: Western Pennsylvania’s Tuskegee Airmen, produced by WQED Multimedia and funded by the University of Pittsburgh, with additional support from the Alcoa and Pittsburgh foundations. The screening launched the University’s K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program, named for the legendary Pennsylvania legislative leader, Pitt law alumnus and former trustee.

For additional information about the event, see the Jan. 28, 2008, Pitt Chronicle, www.chronicle.pitt.edu.
“Mindfulness meditation focuses on letting go of struggle and accepting one’s condition without judgment. Participants have noted that the practice has a quieting effect and find that while practicing meditation, they can reduce their chronic pain by deflecting it and focusing on other parts of the body,” said Morone.

In the first study to directly compare a contraceptive vaginal ring and skin patch, more women indicated overall satisfaction with the vaginal ring, researchers report in the current issue of Obstetrics and Gynecology; a publication of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Using the same combination of hormones included in prescription birth control pills, these products became available in 2002 as an alternative to taking a pill every day. The ring and patch are left in place for three weeks at a time.

The study evaluated the experiences of 500 women who were randomly assigned to use the ring or patch for four consecutive menstrual cycles in 2005 and 2006. Of these, 249 used the ring and 251 used the patch. In addition to regular study visits for physical evaluation, participants completed a questionnaire and talked to investigators by phone following the study period.

“What we found is that more women are happier with the ring than the patch,” said Mitchell Creinin, professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive sciences in Pitt’s School of Medicine and the study’s first author. “On the whole, they report fewer complications, and a significant majority preferred the ring to their pill.” The University of Pittsburgh served as sponsoring institution for the trial, which was conducted at 10 centers nationwide.

In November 2005, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a warning regarding estrogen levels in the contraceptive patch and related risk of blood clots, changing the package labeling to reflect the warning. Participants enrolled in the study, regardless of study product assignment, were given standard, written information about the warning. Five women who used the contraceptive patch said they were influenced by the FDA labeling change, opting to discontinue use at the conclusion of the study.

“Overall, however, patch users were twice as likely to discontinue using the product by the end of the third cycle, and seven times more likely to say they had no wish to continue once the study was over,” said Creinin, who also is director of family planning at Pitt and a senior investigator at the Pitt-affiliated Magee-Womens Research Institute. The most commonly cited reasons for discontinuation were adverse effects, including longer periods, cramps, nausea, mood swings, skin irritation, or problems with the patch falling off. The most common reasons for discontinuation among women who used the ring were discomfort and more frequent vaginal discharge.

“Although oral contraceptives are the most commonly used reversible form of contraception in the United States, continuation rates are only 40 percent at six months of use,” the authors wrote. In addition, prior studies have shown that in the third month of use, about half of women miss three or more pills each cycle, likely decreasing contraceptive effectiveness.

“The two alternative delivery systems for combined hormonal contraceptives had not been evaluated in a single randomized trial, making it difficult for clinicians to compare and contrast these options for their patients,” Creinin said. “But now we can provide more accurate counseling to patients who might be interested in a nondaily birth control method.”

Additional participating centers for the study were Boston University, Columbia University, Eastern Virginia Medical School, Johns Hopkins University, Oregon Health and Science University, University of California, Los Angeles, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Wisconsin.

Other authors included Leslie A. Meyn from Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health as well as researchers from the nine other participating centers. The study was funded in part by Organon U.S.A. Inc., manufacturer of the Nuvaring vaginal contraceptive, but the money was provided as part of an investigator-initiated, nonrestricted grant from the company. Organon had no role in study design, data acquisition, analysis, manuscript preparation, or study supervision. Creinin also reported additional research funding from Bayer Healthcare Pharmaceuticals and Galen Holdings PLC.
Historic Districts.

The University Club is a case in point. The eight-story, 83-year-old structure at 123 University Place, designed by renowned turn-of-the-century architect Henry Hornbostel, is about to get a $20.2 million face-lift. HVAC systems in the building are being modernized and new elevators are being installed. The finished product will house a faculty and staff club, fitness facilities, and three floors to be leased by Family House, Inc., a local nonprofit group.

“To tear it down, we would have lost an historic piece of architecture,” said Grigsby, who works on the project on an interim basis. “Now, it will make a tremen- dous statement along University Place, linking the upper and lower campus.”

Creating a cohesive environment, preserving history, reflecting campus diversity, Grigsby works to keep it all together. No doubt, Uncle Sherman would be proud.

By Patricia Lomando White

Universities from across the state will be getting “Back to the Basics,” the theme for the Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education’s (PBCOHE) 38th annual conference to be held from Feb. 27 through March 1 at the Marriott City Center, Downtown.

The four-day conference will feature various luminaries, including Esther Bush, president and chief executive officer of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, who will be the guest speaker at the opening plenary session. Journalist, poet, and activist Kevin Powell will give the luncheon lecture Feb. 28, and Antoine M. Garibaldi, president of Gammon University, will deliver the keynote address at the banquet Feb. 29.

Conference highlights include educational exhibits from participating schools, a career fair, workshops, a presidential forum, a service learning project, and several social events.

Among the workshops, to be held Feb. 28 and 29, are “Creating Change through Multicultural Affairs Officers: Working Smarter not Harder,” and “Back to the Basics—Reteaching and Rethinking Ourselves.” The universities involved in the exhibition, which focuses on graduate enrollment, are Carlow University, California University of Pennsylvania, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, ITT Technical Institute, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University, Point Park University, Robert Morris University, Saint Vincent College, and Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania.

The Feb. 29 afternoon Presidential Forum, moderated by Joseph P. Grunewald, president of Clarion University of Pennsylvania, will address the “Back to the Basics” theme. Forum panelists are Tony Atwater, Indiana University of Pennsylvania president; Javier Cevallos, Kutztown University president; Tori Har- ing-Smith, Washington and Jefferson College president; Mary E. Hines, Carlow University president; and Barbara A. Simmons, assistant to the president for internal relations and social equity at Cheyney University.

Conference attendees will also have the opportunity to join the service learning project the morning of Feb. 29. Volunteers will read to children at several schools throughout the city, and PBCOHE will donate boxes of books to those schools. PBCOHE was founded in 1970, when the Honorable K. Leroy Irvis, then minority leader of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s House of Representatives, convened a conference of African American college officials and other political leaders and professionals to help form a master plan for higher education in Pennsylvania.

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Feb. 18-21 Roots, screenings, 8:45 p.m.-11 p.m., locations vary by date, hosted by Black Action Society, 412-648-7880.


**Happenings**

**Concerts**


**Exhibitions**

- Chihuly at Phipps Conservatory, through February 24, www.pittsburghparks.org.


**Lectures/Seminars/Readings**


**Miscellaneous**


**Operas/Theaters/Dances**


**Miscellaneous**


- The Big Bang, through April 7, Theater Square Cabaret, 655 Penn Ave., Downtown, CLO Cabaret Theater, 412-281-2822, www.clobar.com.

**Belgian Beer Theater Square Cabaret February 19**
By Megan Grote Quatrini

A third of the most popular songs in 2005 contained lyrics explicitly referring to drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, according to a study by University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine researchers published in this month's *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*. What's more, two-thirds of those references portrayed substance use in a positive light by associating it with such outcomes as peer acceptance and sex, researchers found.

"Adolescents listen to nearly two and a half hours of music each day. Since previous studies have shown that exposure to messages about substance use in popular media is linked to actual substance use in adolescents, we need to understand what our children are listening to and be aware of exposures such as these, especially when they are associated with potentially risky behaviors being portrayed in a positive light," said Brian Primack, assistant professor of medicine and pediatrics in Pitt's School of Medicine, who led the study.

The analysis of the 279 most popular songs of 2005, as listed in *Billboard Magazine*, breaks new ground in quantifying substance-use exposure in popular music. According to the study, a typical adolescent is exposed to 84 explicit references to substance use in popular music each day, totaling more than 30,000 references in an average year. The researchers also found that exposure varies widely by genre of music. The average adolescent listening solely to pop would be exposed to only five references per day, while one listening solely to rap would hear 251 references per day. One or more references to substance use occurred in 77 percent of rap songs, 36 percent of country, 20 percent of R/hip-hop, 14 percent of rock, and nine percent of pop.

Alcohol was represented in 23.7 percent of songs and marijuana in 13.6 percent, whereas tobacco was referred to in only 2.9 percent of all songs. Researchers also found that popular music lyrics frequently associated substance use with peer acceptance, partying, and sex. Consequences of substance use were portrayed mostly in a positive light: 68 percent of songs contained more positive than negative consequences, whereas 18 percent portrayed more negative than positive effects. Only four songs of the 279 studied contained explicit anti-use messages, and none portrayed substance refusal.

"It is important to note that this study does not say anything about the relationship between these exposures and behavior," Primack cautioned. "But for the first time, we have quantified substance use in popular music and determined that it's generally portrayed with positive consequences. The next step in our research will be to determine whether these media messages actually influence behavior."

Coauthors of the study include Mary V. Carroll and Aaron A. Agarwal from the University of Pittsburgh; Michael J. Fine from Pitt medical school's Center for Research on Health Care and the Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion at the VA Pittsburgh Health Care System; and Madeline A. Dalton from Dartmouth Medical School.

The research was supported by funding provided by the National Cancer Institute, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Maurice Falk Foundation.

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