The University of Pittsburgh has recorded its best fundraising year ever, raising $183 million in gifts and pledges in fiscal year 2008, $64 million more than in FY 2007. Included in that overall total were record-setting gifts and pledges of $84.9 million from individuals and $72.1 million from foundations. This has brought total commitments to Pitt's $2 billion Building Our Future Together capital campaign goal to $1.273 billion.

“We are deeply grateful to the extraordinarily generous donors whose gifts have taken our ongoing campaign to record-setting levels,” said Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg. “Quite clearly, their well-targeted investments reflect both a strong belief in our mission and confidence that Pitt will continue to be an institution respected for the quality and impact of our work in education, research, and public service. We are committed to honoring the trust of our donors by building an even stronger university—for the countless individuals who do or will depend upon our programs and for the communities that we call home.”

The University also recorded its best year in terms of actual cash received, with a total of $128.6 million. Those gifts came from a total of 50,213 donors, the largest number of contributors to ever support the university in a single year. Since the beginning of the campaign, 136,742 donors have made one or more contributions to the University. Of these donors, 74,548 are Pitt alumni and 6,270 are Pitt faculty and staff.

“Both the members of our professional staff and our many campaign volunteers are very proud of the fundraising records set during this past year,” commented Albert J. Novak, Pitt’s vice chancellor for institutional advancement. “Our greatest source of pride, however, is the impact that this campaign is having in creating student opportunities, supporting important faculty, and elevating the quality of our campuses.”

Among the most significant gifts to Pitt during FY 2008 were the following:

- A $1.2 million gift to the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, the largest gift in the school’s 81-year history. Established through the generosity of a deceased alumna who wished to remain anonymous, the estate gift endows in perpetuity a commuter scholar- ship program that was established at Pitt-Johnstown in 2000. It is estimated that the gift will provide support for approximately 40 students annually; and
- Two grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation totaling $21.4 million: the first, $11.4 million to the University of Pittsburgh Center for Vaccine Research to develop new strategies to control tuberculosis (TB), which now infects one-third of the world’s population and kills almost two million people every year; the second, a $10 million grant to the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health to fund a vaccine modeling initiative that will create computer simulations of worldwide epidemics to find ways to stop the spread of infectious diseases.

“As we become an institution with a global reach and reputation, it is not only donors with a natural loyalty to Pitt who provide generous philanthropic support, but also those who conclude that Pitt has the greatest capacity to advance important work in their areas of interest,” said Clyde B. Jones III, Pitt’s vice chancellor for health sciences development.

“The Building Our Future Together campaign has funded 398 new endowed scholarship funds, 32 new endowed fellowship funds, several new endowed faculty positions, in addition to supporting educational and research programs, student-life initiatives, and numerous renovation, and restoration projects on all five Pitt campuses.

“The University’s fundraising success is tied to the broad-based support of University alumni and friends. The Building Our Future Together campaign is already the most successful fundraising campaign in the history of both the University and Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Pitt Researchers Get Nearly $4 Million From NIH for Kidney Center

By Maureen McGoffin

The Renal-Electrolyte Division in Pitt’s School of Medicine has been awarded a nearly $4 million, five-year Kidney Research Center grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of only eight such centers in the United States.

“The main objectives of our Pittsburgh-based Kidney Research Center are to develop and facilitate multidisciplinary research, training, and information transfer related to kidney physiology, cell biology, and nephrology,” said Thomas R. Kleymen, the center’s director. “The center will facilitate the translation of findings of basic kidney biology into studies that are truly translational or clinical in nature.”

Kleymen is chief of the renal-electrolyte division and professor of medicine, cell biology and physiology, and pharmacology and chemical biology at Pitt.

Ora Wenz, Pitt professor of medicine, cell biology, and physiology, will serve as the associate director. The center will support four main core facilities: cellular physiology, single nephron and whole organ physiology, imaging at a cellular and organ level, and the use of model organisms to clarify novel aspects of kidney function. All research cores are structured to serve as nationwide resources for investigators.

The Kidney Research Center also will support two-year pilot research projects that are currently led by Linton Taba, a professor of cell biology and physiology; Agnes Swiatecka-Urban, a professor of pediatrics; and Kenneth Hallows, a professor of medicine, cell biology, and physiology.

“A great source of pride,” Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg said, “is having in creating student opportunities, supporting important faculty, and elevating the quality of our work in education, research, and public service. We are committed to honoring the trust of our donors by building an even stronger university—for the countless individuals who do or will depend upon our programs and for the communities that we call home.”

—Mark A. Nordenberg

“Both the members of our professional staff and our many campaign volunteers are very proud of the fundraising records set during this past year,” commented Albert J. Novak, Pitt’s vice chancellor for institutional advancement. “Our greatest source of pride, however, is the impact that this campaign is having in creating student opportunities, supporting important faculty, and elevating the quality of our campuses.”

“The main objectives of our Pittsburgh-based Kidney Research Center are to develop and facilitate multidisciplinary research, training, and information transfer related to kidney physiology, cell biology, and nephrology.”

Thomas R. Kleymen

Pitt Chronicle

Volume IX • Number 24 • September 15, 2008

By Morgan Kelly

The simple, hand-powered rock crusher that Pitt civil engineering graduate student Dave Torick built marked an evolution in his perception of how to help others. With multibillion dollar grants or sweeping economic reforms were needed. All it took was a 400-pound, steel-frame contraption perched atop four wheelbarrow tires and forged in the Swanson School of Engineering shop. The “crusher” is designed to help villages half-a-world away make some extra money in less time.

“Rock Crusher Eases Hardships in Uganda

The main objectives of our Pittsburgh-based Kidney Research Center are to develop and facilitate multidisciplinary research, training, and information transfer related to kidney physiology, cell biology, and nephrology. The center will facilitate the translation of findings of basic kidney biology into studies that are truly translational or clinical in nature.”

—Thomas R. Kleymen

Continued on page 2
Pitt's New Ensemble in Residence to Perform Sept. 20

IonSound Project, the University of Pittsburgh’s first music ensemble in residence, will perform in concert on Sept. 20 in Reifel Hall’s auditorium. The contemporary chamber ensemble will present a program titled “Marrors and Minimism,” featuring Peggy Pearson, flutist; Sarah Lennon, clarinet; Laura Matsuhashi, violin; Elisa Kohanski, cello; Rob Frankenberry, piano; and Eileen Reel, percussion. This program will feature the world premiere of Pittsburgh photographer Charles Biddle, programming inspired by Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra composer in residence John Adams and composer Philip Glass, Steve Reich, Erik Satie, and Arvo Pärt. Tickets are $10 general admission and $5 for senior citizens and students; they can be purchased at the door. For more information, call 412-624-4135 or visit www.pitt.edu/itunes.

In the past, Pitt’s music department has invited professional ensembles to perform in the Music on the Edge series; and its members have asked to stay for short residencies to work with graduate-student composers. IonSound Project is the first ensemble in residence status at Pitt.

IonSound Project was founded in 2004; its members have performed collectively with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Pittsburgh Opera, the Allegheny Symphony Orchestra, the Wheeling Symphony Orchestra, the Erie Philharmonic, and the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra, among others.

—Sharon S. Blake

Pitt’s GSPLA Seeks Submissions for Johnson Award for Best Papers

The Johnson Institute for Responsible Leadership in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs is accepting submissions for the 2008-09 Johnson Award for Best Papers in Ethics and Accountability in Public Service. At least one winner in the following two categories will be selected through a blind review process: papers already published or accepted for publication in refereed journals and student papers, including work by doctoral students prior to the awarding of their degree. Cash prizes of $2,000 and $1,000 will be awarded to first-place winners in the two categories, respectively. Young scholars and students are especially encouraged to apply.

Papers should have one of the following themes: international and civil security, human security, international development, public administration, and the management of governmental and non-governmental organizations. Themes are broadly interpreted. Most papers, with significant implications for public policy, public management, or nonprofit sector management, will be acceptable. All entries will be evaluated, and winner will be notified in spring 2009.

For more information, visit www.johnsoninstitute.pitt.edu or call 412-648-1336.

—Amanda Lefkowitz

Rock Crus...
CHANCELLOR’S AWARD FOR STAFF EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY 2009

Nominations are being solicited for this Universitywide award to recognize staff members whose dedication and effort have made their community a better place to live and improved the quality of life for others. This award is given annually to part-time or full-time staff members who have been employed at the University for a minimum of five years. Nominations can be made by individuals, groups, or self-nomination. Self-nominations are allowed. If you know of a staff member whose work in the community surpasses the expectations of the organizations or he or she serves, whose commitment and effort have made a significant impact on the community while also demonstrating a consistent pattern of dedication to the University, please submit a nomination to Jane W. Thompson, Chairperson of the Selection Committee, 1817 Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. The nomination deadline is Sept. 29, 2008. The nomination should include: the nominee’s name, campus address and phone number, responsibility center and unit, date employed at the University, present position, and supervisor’s name and campus address. The nomination will be reviewed to confirm that the nominee is eligible, after which the nominee’s supervisor, and nominator will receive notice of the nomination, along with a request for additional information.

A committee appointed by the chancellor will review the nominations and materials submitted and will select up to five persons to be honored. For more information, call 412-624-6756.

CHANCELLOR’S AWARD FOR STAFF EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY 2009

Nominations are being solicited for this Universitywide award to recognize staff members who have made outstanding contributions to the University. This award is given annually to part-time or full-time staff members who have been employed at the University for a minimum of five years. Nominations can be made by individuals, groups, students, or self-nomination. Self-nominations are allowed. If you know of a staff member whose work demonstrates a consistent pattern of extraordinary dedication to the University, often above and beyond the responsibilities of the nominee’s position, please submit a nomination to Jane W. Thompson, Chairperson of the Selection Committee, 1817 Cathedral of Learning, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260. The nomination deadline is Sept. 29, 2008. The nomination should include: the nominee’s name, campus address and phone number, responsibility center and unit, date employed at the University, current position, and the nominee’s supervisor’s name and campus address. The nomination will be reviewed to confirm that the nominee is eligible, after which the nominee, supervisor’s, and nominator will receive notice of the nomination, along with a request for additional information.

A committee appointed by the chancellor will review the nominations and materials submitted and will select up to five persons to be honored. For more information, call 412-624-6756.

University of Pittsburgh
The University of Pittsburgh was awarded a $200,000 state grant to help launch new businesses and create jobs in the Oakland area.

The award is one of 23 Keystone Innovation Grants given to universities and colleges across the state by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The grants total $3.4 million in new state investments and were announced Sept. 5 during Collaboration 2008, a two-day seminar convened in Harrisburg by DCED.

The seminar brought together Pennsylvania’s various technology partners from the Life Sciences Greenhouses, Ben Franklin Technology Partners, Keystone Innovation Zone staff and board members, and university executives. They discussed best practices, issues important for the state’s growth, and competitiveness, among other topics.

The Keystone Innovation Grant program is a companion to the Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ) program. Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell created KIZs to align the combined resources of higher education institutions, private business, commercial lending institutions, venture capital companies, and foundations. Pitt’s KIZ comprises the Greater Oakland region. The commonwealth funds the KIZ program through the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority.

DCED Secretary Dennis Yablonsky said the Keystone Innovation Grants awarded last week to universities and colleges “will be used to provide seed capital for faculty and students to aid in creating new technologies and business opportunities. Through past experience with these investments, we’ve learned that our academic institutions are a tremendous resource and can serve as a catalyst for creating new opportunities in advanced technology industries.”

Since the inception of the KIZ program in 2004, 29 zones have been established, partnering with 91 institutions of higher education, creating 2,769 jobs, and leveraging $440 million.

The grants encourage technology transfer and commercialization of intellectual property between Pennsylvania’s technology-oriented businesses and entrepreneurs and KIZ-participating institutions of higher education. Specifically, the grants provide seed capital for faculty and students to conduct business plan and marketing analysis, prototyping, patent research and filing, intellectual property and licensing, and royalty agreements.

Two previous rounds of the grant program leveraged nearly $86 million through a $6.5 million investment, created 235 jobs, retained an additional 252 jobs, and created 71 start-up companies, resulting in the development of 565 new technologies and the awarding of 242 patents.

Yablonsky also announced that the State Science and Technology Institute, the national organization for technology-based economic development, has selected Pittsburgh as the host site for its 2010 annual conference. The meeting is the nation’s premier event for sharing ideas on the best ways to encourage technology-based economic development and fostering regional prosperity in a global economy. DCED’s deputy secretary for technology investment, Rebecca Bagley, was appointed recently to the State Science and Technology Institute’s board of trustees.