

Pitt Chronicle

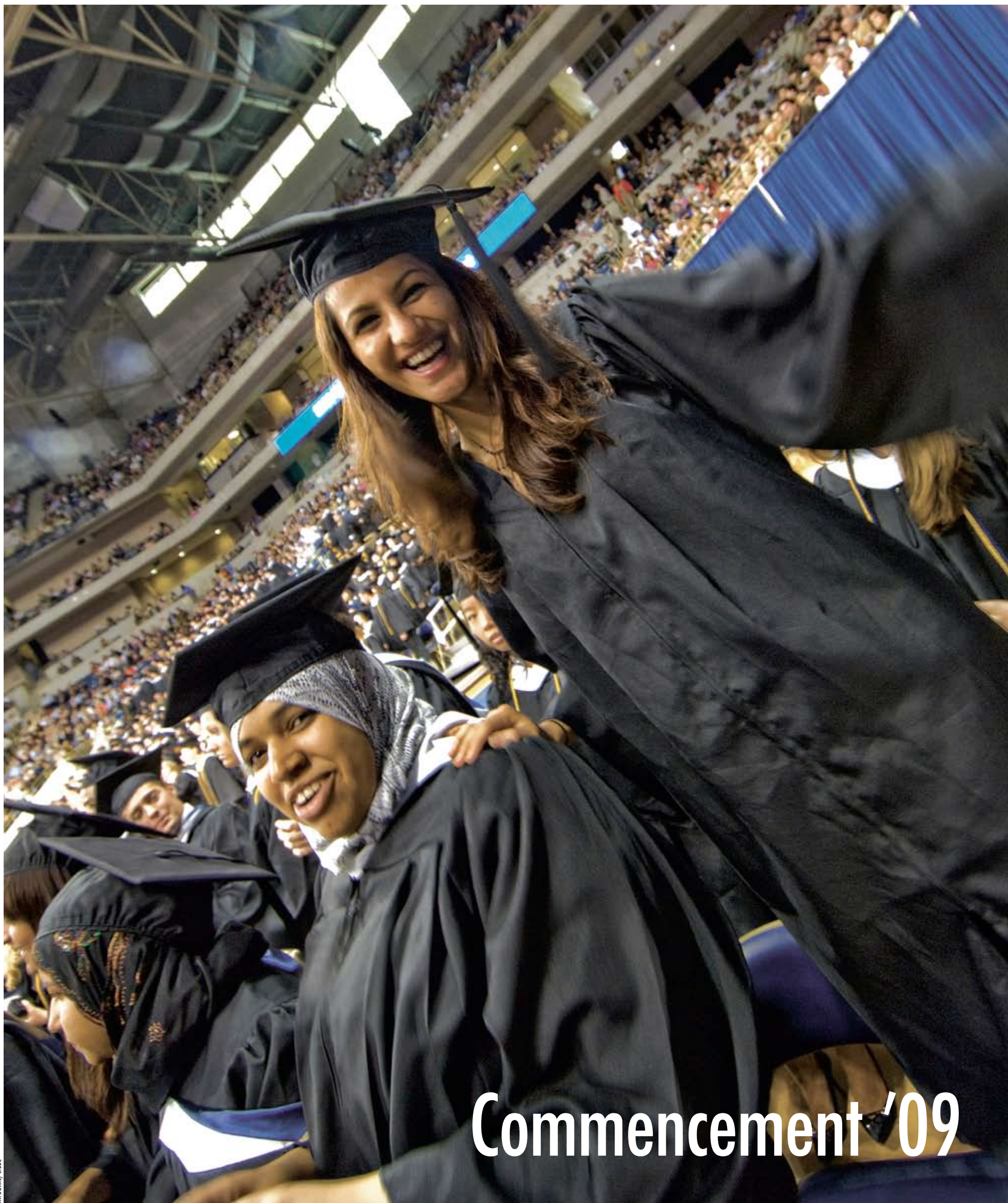
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Newspaper of the University of Pittsburgh

Volume X • Number 14 • April 26, 2009



Commencement '09



Health Librarianship Maintains No. 1 U.S. News Ranking

Other Pitt programs advance in new *America's Best Graduate Schools* edition

By John Harvith

In the latest edition of the *U.S. News & World Report* newsstand guidebook *America's Best Graduate Schools*, Pitt has maintained its No. 1 position in the Library & Information Studies Specialties category of Health Librarianship, last ranked in 2006. Other rankings in the book show advances in a number of Pitt graduate programs, according to the publication's 2009 methodology.

Highlights of these rankings will appear in the May print issue of *U.S. News & World Report* magazine. Both the guidebook and magazine will be available for newsstand purchase on April 28.

The book shows that within the Library & Information Studies Specialties rubric Pitt also ranked highly in Archives and Preservation, tied with the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor for 2nd place; in Information Systems, at No. 6; and in School Library Media, at No. 8, tied with the University of Hawaii-Manoa. The School of Information Sciences ranked No. 10 within the overall Library & Information Studies category, tied with Simmons College, the University of Maryland-College Park, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Within the School of Medicine Spe-

cialties category, Pitt advanced to No. 3 in Women's Health, up from No. 4 in 2008, and to No. 10 in Geriatrics, up from No. 11 last year. Pitt's School of Medicine moved to 13th place from its ranking of 14th last year in the overall Schools of Medicine-Research category, tied with the University of Chicago, and to 17th place from 20th last year in the overall Schools of Medicine-Primary Care category, tied with Baylor College of Medicine and the University of Nebraska College of Medicine.

In the overall Schools of Education category, Pitt's School of Education advanced to 32nd place from 36th place in 2008, tied with George Washington University and the University of Iowa. Within Social Sciences & Humanities Ph.D. Programs, last surveyed in 2005, Pitt ranked 35th in English, up from 36th, tied with the University of Maryland-College Park and the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and 36th in Psychology, up from 55th, tied with Arizona State University, Emory University, and the University of Oregon. The Swanson School of Engineering remained in the Schools of Engineering top 50 list at No. 49; this is the third consecutive year that the Swanson School has been in the top 50.

Highlights of these rankings will appear in the May print issue of *U.S. News & World Report* magazine. Both the guidebook and magazine will be available for newsstand purchase on April 28.



Clock tower on the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford campus

No Undergraduate Tuition Increases at Pitt Regional Campuses for 2009-10

The University of Pittsburgh said that there will be no tuition increases for the undergraduate programs offered at its regional campuses in Bradford, Greensburg, Johnstown, and Titusville for the 2009-10 academic year. Approximately 7,000 Pitt students will benefit from this decision.

In making this announcement, Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg stated, "Particularly in these difficult times, the University is sensitive to the difficult task of balancing our own financial uncertainties with the challenges faced by families who are budgeting to meet tuition expenses. As a result, we are redoubling our efforts to limit tuition increases."

In commenting on the likely level of tuition increases for programs offered at the University's Pittsburgh campus, Nordenberg further noted, "At best, it will be several weeks before the Commonwealth's budget has been approved, permitting us to make the revenue and expense projections necessary to determine the tuition increases that will be necessary for the more complex array of programs offered in Pittsburgh. Some increases seem inevitable, but we will do our best to temper them."

The University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC)—which is chaired by Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor James V. Maher and includes representatives of the administration, faculty, staff, and students—supported taking this action now, while recognizing that tuition decisions regarding programs on the Pittsburgh campus would have to await further information and analysis. The UPBC also had supported the recently announced salary freeze, which will be in place for the 2009-10 academic year.

In commenting on the challenges that still must be met in constructing the University's budget, Maher stated, "We are relieved that federal stimulus legislation has positioned the Commonwealth to restore Pitt's appropriation to the level approved for the current fiscal year. However, as our families know, inflation has continued to rise over the past decade, and state funding over that period has provided little relief from steadily increasing costs. Inevitably, then, there have been strong upward pressures on tuition."

Industry Studies Association Established at Pitt to Link Academia and Businesses

By Sharon S. Blake

A new multidisciplinary virtual research community—the Industry Studies Association—has been established at the University of Pittsburgh. The new association brings together, through a Web-based community, researchers from top universities nationwide who have extensive knowledge of a particular industry and its problems. The new member association includes scholars who study a variety of industries, including automotive, health care, and software, to name a few.

Launched April 15, the association's online presence is www.industrystudies.org. The community has more than 1,200 initial members and is being financed through membership dues, conference fees, grants, and charitable donations.

"Many issues facing industry—emerging technologies, restructuring, and globalization—go to the heart of the current economic crisis," said Frank Giarratani, founding president of the organization and a Pitt economics professor. "The Industry Studies Association creates an important resource linking academia and industry at a critical juncture of both national and international economic upheaval."

The association was conceptualized by faculty members affiliated with the Alfred P. Sloan Founda-

tion's Industry Studies Program, which was founded in 1990 on the premise that industries are sufficiently different from one another and that they individually deserve rigorous scholarship. The industry studies community comprises scholars at a number of universities who study individual companies and people of an industry through data and observations. Information about the Industries Studies Program can be found at www.industry.sloan.org/index.php.

"The multidisciplinary research conducted by industry studies scholars generally employs a wide range of both quantitative and qualitative methods often conducted across multiple firms within a particular industry," explained Giarratani. "This leads to a contextually rich picture of business phenomena and a depth of understanding and insight that can uniquely inform both industry and public policy."



Frank Giarratani

PittChronicle

Newspaper of the University of Pittsburgh

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PittScholars&Stewards

A Love of Science

The Hartwell Foundation



Bruce A. Freeman and Marsha "Marcie" Cole

By Lori Spisak

Growing up in Beckley, W.Va., biochemist Marsha "Marcie" Cole had a love of all things scientific. When it came time to choose a career, satisfying her scientific curiosity became her passion and path: She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry and her PhD in nutritional sciences and toxicology, all at the University of Kentucky.

An ardent researcher, Cole arrived on the University of Pittsburgh's campus in 2006 as a postdoctoral fellow, looking to use both her scientific background

and her interest in improving human health to do research that could aid in the treatment of diabetes and obesity. The promise of her novel research was recognized recently when she received a prestigious award from The Hartwell Foundation.

The Hartwell Foundation provides funding for promising young scientists that is to be used for specialized training as a part of the scientists' career development. Awards are given to individuals for innovative and cutting-edge biomedical applied research that can potentially benefit children. Each year, The Hartwell Foundation selects 10

research institutes across the nation that can nominate deserving scientists to become Hartwell Fellows—and Pitt is one of them.

"Pitt was chosen because of the shared values the institution has with our foundation," said Fred Dombrose, president of the Memphis-based organization. "Pitt has a first-rate medical school and an established Department of Bioengineering. Plus, Pitt exudes such a commitment to technical support to the investigator, as well as support for translational approaches that promote rapid clinical application of research results, including technology transfer."

Once they receive the awards, Hartwell Fellows are supported by prominent faculty who serve as mentors. Cole's mentor, Professor Bruce A. Freeman, is chair of Pitt's pharmacology and chemical biology department. With Freeman's guidance, Cole is currently investigating how inflammatory signaling mechanisms induce chronic metabolic disorders. "From these studies," she explains, "I'm gaining insight and developing new therapeutic strategies for treatment

of metabolic disorders such as obesity and diabetes in adults and children."

The Hartwell Foundation recently announced that it has granted an award to another of Pitt's promising researchers, David J. Hackam, an assistant professor in the cell biology and physiology department and Department of Surgery in Pitt's School of Medicine. Hackam received a Hartwell Foundation Biomedical Individual Research Award, designating him—like Cole—as a rising-star scientist at one of the nation's top biomedical research institutions.

In addition to beginning a job as a research instructor at Pitt in 2009, Cole plans to expand her research to better understand the treatment of inflammatory-linked diseases. She knows none of this could be possible without help from benefactors like the Hartwell Foundation. "Receiving a fellowship award from the Hartwell Foundation is such an honor," she says. "The most exciting part is that I'm being recognized by a prestigious foundation for research that I enjoy doing!"

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Pitt Graduates 7,000 Students During 2009 Commencements

University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg welcomes graduating members of the Class of 2009, faculty, trustees, alumni, staff, and invited guests, families, and friends attending Pitt's 2009 Commencement at 1 p.m. today.

University of Pittsburgh alumnus Bert W. O'Malley, a pioneering researcher in the field of biological sciences who earned his Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine degrees at Pitt, will deliver the University's 2009 commencement address. At the ceremony, Pitt will confer upon O'Malley the *Doctor of Science Honoris Causa* degree.

Chief University Marshal John J. Baker will open the ceremony, leading a procession of faculty, staff, the Council of Deans, trustees, administrative officers, and graduating class members in full academic regalia; Baker is an associate professor of oral biol-

ogy in the School of Dental Medicine and president of the University Senate. The University Symphonic Band, under the direction of Pitt Director of Bands Jack R. Anderson, will provide music.

After the awarding of diplomas by Nordenberg, Pitt Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor James V. Maher, and the deans of the schools and colleges, Joseph L. Abbott III will speak on behalf of the graduating class. Abbott, a graduating senior in the College of Business Administration, will receive the Bachelor of Science degree during the commencement ceremony. His talk will be followed by an address from F. James McCarl III (CGS '73), president of the University of Pittsburgh Alumni Association, who will welcome the graduates as Pitt's newest alumni.

In all, Pitt is conferring approximately 6,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees this year to students on the Pittsburgh campus and approximately 1,000 undergraduate degrees to students on the Bradford, Greensburg, Johnstown, and Titusville campuses, which hold their own commencement ceremonies.

O'Malley holds the Thomas C. Thompson Chair in Cell Biology and chair of the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at the Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) in Houston. He also directs BCM's Center for Reproductive Biology and is associate director for basic science in the school's Dan L. Duncan Cancer Center.

He is highly esteemed in the fields of endocrinology, reproduction, genetic disease, and endocrine cancers.

Often referred to as the "father of molecular endocrinology," O'Malley is credited

with pathbreaking insights into the function of hormones in normal development and disease states. His lab discoveries are now being applied clinically to understand fertility regulation and reproductive tissue differentiation, as well as predispositions to reproductive cancers. He also initiated what is now called "team science" and has trained more than 250 students and postdoctoral fellows in his lab.

At a White House ceremony on Sept. 29, 2008, O'Malley received the 2007 National Medal of Science from former President George W. Bush. Administered by the National Science Foundation, the medal is the nation's highest honor for science and engineering.

O'Malley has served as president of the Endocrine Society and was instrumental in establishing the journal *Molecular Endocrinology*, one of the most-cited peer-reviewed biomedical science journals. O'Malley has written more than 600 scientific and medical publications and holds 19 patents for special techniques and inventions related to molecular and cellular biology.

Pitt has honored O'Malley with the Dickson Prize in Medicine, the Philip S. Hench Distinguished Alumnus Award, and the Bicentennial Medallion of Distinction. O'Malley has received numerous additional honors, including the Academia Nazionale dei Lincei Antonio Feltrinelli International Prize for Biology and the Brinker International Award for Breast Cancer Research. He also was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland.



Pitt Law School Awards First Disability Legal Studies Certificate

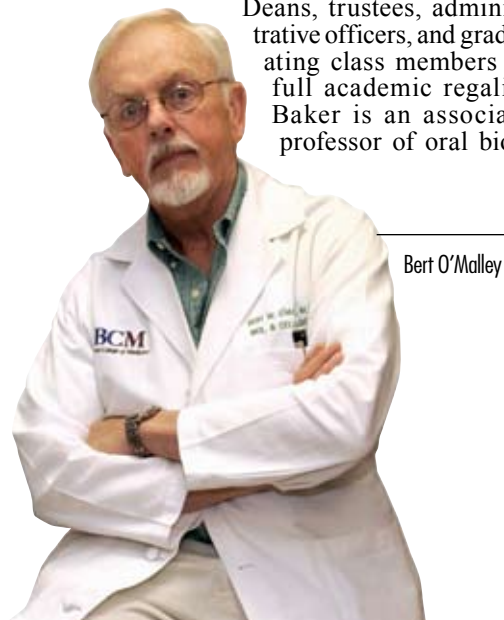
Lynnett Van Slyke is the first recipient of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law's Certificate in Disability Legal Studies Program. Van Slyke (EDUC '95G) is the director of disability resources and services for Pitt.

Pitt's School of Law established the certificate, a 15-credit course of study, in 2006.

The program allows law students and non-School of Law students alike to study and apply disability law to their degrees. The program is especially applicable to administrators, advocates, health practitioners, educators, social workers, and attorneys, among others.

For more information on the Disability Legal Studies Program and certificate, visit www.law.pitt.edu/academics/certificates/certificate-disability-legal-studies-program.

—Lauren O'Leary



Bert O'Malley

Graduating Senior Profile

For the Love of the Game

Ben Stirt shoots high with dream of becoming college basketball coach



Ben Stirt

By Sharon S. Blake

Ben Stirt's life has always revolved around basketball. His love affair with the sport began at age 3, when his father signed him up to play in a basketball league of 5- and 6-year-olds in his hometown of Gainesville, Fla. In the years that followed, so did participation in other leagues, basketball camps, and high school sports.

The love of athletics runs in Stirt's family. His father had coached him in baseball and basketball on community teams throughout his childhood. His father also taught sports journalism at the University of Florida and founded a newspaper called *Gator Bait*, which followed University of Florida athletics. His mother handles billing for his father's advertising and college sports consulting career.

But it was Stirt's personal experience at the University of Pittsburgh that led him to pursue his dream of becoming a college basketball coach.

"I want the opportunity to shape young people's lives, not only to help them become better basketball players, but to give them the skill set to succeed in life," he said.

"Basketball skills only take you so far. Life skills stay with you forever."

The 23-year-old Stirt graduates magna cum laude today with a bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in economics—two fields he says are important to developing a career courtside. This fall, he will begin pursuing a master's degree in sports management at the University of Florida.

Stirt, who is 6'1," began his college years at Carnegie Mellon University, where he played basketball and was a business major his freshman year. He was on track for a business career—until he received word

from his parents that his coach from his teen years had died of cancer in his 40s. Stirt began to flounder, and his grades dropped.

"My parents wanted me to come home," he said. "I realized I didn't want to be a business major anymore. I had seen the impact my coach had had on everyone, and I realized that was what I was meant to do."

Stirt returned home to Gainesville and ran basketball camps for preteens while maintaining a 4.0 GPA at Santa Fe Community College. As head coach for the Gainesville Stampede, he supervised a team of 12-year-olds in tournaments across the state. Eventually, he headed back to Pittsburgh, took a few courses at Community College of Allegheny County, and then enrolled at Pitt. Through his Carnegie Mellon contacts, he befriended Orlando Antigua—who was then the Pitt men's basketball assistant coach. Soon, Stirt was spending every spare minute watching the Pitt team practice and talking to the student managers, who assist the coach with many facets of the program. By the time he became a Pitt student in January 2007, he was a shoo-in for a spot as a student manager.

The timing couldn't have been better.

The Pitt Panthers made it to the Sweet Sixteen that year, under the leadership of Pitt Men's Basketball Coach Jamie Dixon. In 2008, the Dixon-led Panthers won the Big East Championship, and this past spring, they advanced to the NCAA Tournament's Elite Eight. Earlier this month, the Atlanta Tipoff Club named Dixon the 2009 Naismith Men's College Basketball Coach of the Year, a top national honor.

Stirt, who by this past season had advanced to head student manager, was

in the inner circle of all the excitement—helping run drills on the court, staying up until the wee hours of the morning editing video for the coaches, and traveling with the team. He recalled with a smile the antics on the bus, the charter flights to various cities, setting up study halls for the squad, and his job of waking up the players for breakfast that sometimes involved "jumping on them or ripping the sheets off the bed."

Stirt says it is this familial spirit that he loves—the camaraderie among team members and between the players and their coach. It is unique to high school and college basketball, he said.

"A coach is a father figure to kids in high school and college," he said. "The players look up to you and care about you as a person." He says at the NBA level, it's "grown men dealing with other grown men" and not the same kind of relationship.

Stirt plans to use his background in psychology and economics, as well as what he has seen in the Pitt locker room, to forge relationships in his career. He already uses it when coaching preteens. "You have to know: Is the reward fitting for what the person is doing?" he explained. "If a player does well in practice, not saying anything might fire them up and make them perform even better.

Another player might need constant reinforcement." The idea, he said, is to motivate each player individually.

Assistant Men's Basketball Coach Brandin Knight says Stirt has all the tools to become a good coach. "He's a good people person, able to communicate well and process information quickly," he said. Knight says Stirt excels at analyzing numbers and statistics. "He marks the opponents' tendencies through analysis. He's very insightful when it comes to the game."

But for Stirt, his main philosophy as a head coach will be the relationship with his players and assistant coaches. A good rapport, he says, stems from mutual respect. He envisions himself giving the players a schedule and a good routine and helping them set and reach small daily goals, which will lead to bigger ones. "You can't say 'We're going to win a national championship.' Your job is to show them how to do it," he said.

"Coaching is really in-depth," he said. "People think, 'Oh, he runs good plays.' But, to get a player to run that play, you start with the relationship ... then the respect ... then harnessing that energy. The play is the last piece of the puzzle."

Networking is also a big part of the road to success. It was networking that landed Stirt his student manager job at Pitt. And as one of the Pitt men's basketball team's first student managers to work with video, he has used his contacts to track down opposing teams' videos while on the road.

The night following the announcement of the NCAA tournament bracket last month, the Pitt coaching staff had trouble finding video of Pitt's first-round opponent, East Tennessee State. Stirt contacted a coaching friend in Florida who was able to give him access to East Tennessee State's entire season of game film. "That got me some high-fives from the coaches," Stirt said, smiling.

Working these contacts has already landed Stirt a job at the University of Florida as a graduate assistant video coordinator for the men's basketball team.

Stirt said that working alongside coaches Dixon and Knight and the Pitt players has definitely been a highlight of his Pitt experience. In addition, the University's faculty was "awesome," Stirt said, and he was impressed by their accessibility—an important attribute for student athletes, who sometimes miss several

straight weeks of classes.

He has a vivid memory of being in the Panthers' locker room after the team lost in the final seconds of a game this spring against the Villanova Wildcats. A victory would have advanced them to the Final Four.

"They wanted it so badly. They had worked so hard," he recalled. But Stirt says even in that moment, the care and emotion they all felt for one another was almost palpable. "That love everyone has for one another is really why it's such a great career. That's why I want to do it so much."

"I want the opportunity to shape young people's lives, to not only help them become better basketball players, but to give them the skill set to succeed in life. Basketball skills only take you so far. Life skills stay with you forever."

—Ben Stirt

Graduating Senior Profile

Quite the Track Record

Ugochi Okoroafor grows, volunteers, and excels at Pitt

By Patricia Lomando White

The devastation of Hurricane Katrina uprooted Ugochi Okoroafor before she even had the chance to begin her freshman year at Tulane University. But as good fortune would have it, the drama of Katrina propelled Okoroafor to the University of Pittsburgh.

In between the 2005 natural disaster and her graduation from Pitt's College of General Studies today, she has covered an impressive amount of ground. Okoroafor, a native of Atlanta, Ga., holds a 3.98 GPA, is a University Scholar and the 2009 Emma W. Locke Award winner, has been on the Dean's Honor List every term, and is the College of General Studies Class of 2009 class marshal. She is receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in natural sciences and a Bachelor of Arts degree in administration of justice.

Next stop? Medical school. Okoroafor has been accepted by the 14 medical schools she applied to, among them Baylor, Columbia, Harvard, Vanderbilt, Washington University in St. Louis, and Yale.

A track athlete, Okoroafor arrived in New Orleans in August 2005, a few weeks before her classes at Tulane were set to begin, to practice for that university's track team. When she learned that Hurricane Katrina was approaching New Orleans, Okoroafor returned to Atlanta to wait out the storm. At the time, she thought the hurricane would most likely be over in a few days and she would be able to return to school.

"If I hadn't left, I would have probably ended up in the Superdome," she said.

When Okoroafor received word that Tulane would close for the semester, she said she was initially upset—until she watched the news and realized how fortunate she was compared to so many people who had lost so much.

After about a week in Atlanta, Okoroafor called Pitt to inquire about admission, and she was told she could come immediately. Okoroafor said she was a bit disoriented when she arrived.

"I didn't know how things worked and had to figure it all out and play catch-up," she said. "It was difficult to adjust, but the New Orleans experience motivated me. I knew that I needed to focus and do my best."

Because her focus was on her studies, Okoroafor decided not to join Pitt's track team even though track is one of her passions. She hasn't given up the sport entirely, however, and runs three to four miles every other day.

But academics weren't her only focus. As a Pitt freshman, Okoroafor joined the College After School Team (CAST), directed by Robbie Ali, CAST advisor and an assistant professor in the Pitt Graduate School of Public Health's Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences. Ali created CAST to mentor Peabody High School's students.

"I liked working with the students and saw that I could make a difference in people's lives," said Okoroafor, who helped

to inspire the students, especially when they found out that she started college when she was 17.

"Ugochi worked with CAST for several years, beginning when she was a freshman, and was really one of our best mentors," said Ali. "I was impressed with her maturity, her ease in relating to the high school students, her intelligence, and most of all her enthusiastic commitment."

Through Ali's encouragement, Okoroafor said she saw how her interest in science could lead to medicine and health. She began to volunteer at hospitals, shadowed doctors on their rounds, and joined the American Medical Student Association's (AMSA) premedical chapter, eventually becoming the group's vice president. Okoroafor coordinated various projects through AMSA.

Okoroafor has proven she is equally motivated. She is the recipient of several other awards, including the Helen Faison Scholarship, the Robert C. Byrd Scholarship, and the 2006 Quest Scholars Award for Undergraduate Research.

A first generation American, Okoroafor has Nigerian-born parents. A trip she took to Nigeria with her family a few years ago, in fact, spurred one of her recent service projects. While there, her brother became ill, and they took him to nurses

who care for the sick in the village. Her brother was given the wrong medicine, and Okoroafor's family had to take him to the hospital, which was three hours away.

"Access to health care is limited in many of the villages," Okoroafor explained. "I wanted to organize a medical mission project to address this dilemma."

She undertook the effort on her own and gathered donations to send medical supplies to the village. The support came primarily from NANIUSA—a group formed by people from her parents' hometown in Nigeria who settled in the United States—which helped to get the project going. For her efforts, Okoroafor was recognized as an outstanding youth member by NANIUSA.

She also began an ongoing book drive to provide scientific textbooks and research journals to the University of Nigeria.

"Many of those who donated books to send to Nigeria were students and faculty at the University of Pittsburgh," said Okoroafor, whose parents are graduates of the University of Nigeria and leaders of its alumni association.

She credits George Bandik, senior lecturer and director of undergraduate studies in Pitt's chemistry department, for helping with the book drive. Okoroafor calls Bandik "one of the most mentoring faculty members I've had at Pitt." As a teaching assistant under Bandik's direction, Okoroafor taught organic chemistry.

Her scientific abilities are no accident. Both of her parents, who now live in Wexford, are PhD chemists who used to work in the chemical industry. Her mother, Ngozi, is a retired professor, and her father, Michael, works for H.J. Heinz Co.

Okoroafor said her parents led by example, not pressure, in encouraging her and her three brothers to study and do well.

Her brother, Onyi, is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis who now works for the United Bank of Switzerland in New



Ugochi Okoroafor

York; Okechi is a freshman at Washington University in St. Louis; and Chinedu, the youngest, attends Sewickley Academy.

"My parents were excellent role models: Both came from small villages and grew up during a civil war, yet they were able to overcome many challenges to achieve their goals," she said.

Okoroafor has proven that she is equally motivated. She is the recipient of several other awards, including the Helen Faison Scholarship, the Robert C. Byrd Scholarship, and the 2006 Quest Scholars Award for Undergraduate Research.

Her extensive research experience includes clinical research pertaining to the cardiovascular manifestations of lupus conducted in the Lupus Center of Excellence

at Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC and two summers conducting molecular genetics research at the University of South Carolina with a fellowship award from the National Science Foundation.

These experiences helped to solidify her decision to attend medical school. One day, she hopes to practice as a physician in underprivileged U.S. communities and start a nonprofit organization to fund, construct, and staff clinics in rural Nigerian villages.

"I will be forever grateful for the opportunity I was given to attend the University of Pittsburgh, and I believe the education I received here has provided a solid foundation for my future medical career."

Graduating Senior Profile

A Journey of Learning

Shannon Black dedicates herself to promoting women's rights



Shannon Black

By Anthony M. Moore

Whether she is advocating for women's rights on the University of Pittsburgh's Oakland campus or in a small village in Tanzania, Shannon Black is a trailblazer.

Just ask her—and the outspoken, articulate Pitt graduating senior will gladly share her opinions and experiences.

"My friends used to make fun of me all the time in the 8th grade because I was that *weird* girl who was angry about wage discrepancy and gender discrimination," Black recalls with a chuckle. "I don't know where it comes from. I think it's always been a part of who I am as a person and what I feel strongly about."

The 21-year-old Bethel Park native graduates from Pitt today with a bachelor's degree in English writing and a minor in political science and religious studies. She recalls having an awareness of women's rights issues for as long as she can remember.

A self-described "determined and outspoken feminist," she views women's rights as an ongoing worldwide fight—and one to which she would like to dedicate her life.

While at Pitt, Black received a 2008 Nationality Rooms Scholarship to go to Tanzania, where she helped local villagers gain better access to water supplies while she learned about issues affecting women and families in Africa. She has been very active in Pitt's Campus Women's Organization (CWO), serving as president for the past two years. She was also the 2008-09 president of Pitt's campus-based Student Volunteer Organization, a community service group, and a member of Pitt's Rainbow Alliance, an organization dedicated to the interests of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered communities.

Black credits Pitt with playing a major role in focusing her passions. She says the

University provides an open atmosphere where students from all walks of life can develop their belief systems within a diverse population. In addition, Pitt encourages creative expression among its students, she says.

"Pitt has helped me to become more confident in myself and more comfortable in my beliefs," said Black. "I have so many friends who are involved with different organizations around campus. It's very inspiring to be surrounded by such positive energy."

The campus' intellectual and student diversity helped spur Black's interest in volunteering in Tanzania. "I had never thought about going to Africa before, but the more I studied Tanzania and its culture and people, the more appealing it became," said Black. "I went to Tanzania to learn—about myself and my limitations, as well as how people in a completely different culture work on the conditions they are trying to change."

In Tanzania, Black discovered that many problems facing women in the United States are universal and, in many cases, much worse in developing countries. Domestic violence, widespread poverty, and AIDS were very much a part of the picture in Tanzania. The most frustrating aspect of the trip, Black says, was her realization that her efforts could not fix any of the institutional problems facing most Tanzanians. However, she also realized that the absence of things that she takes for granted can be life-changing.

"Tanzania opened my eyes to things that I'd never even thought about before—like water not being available whenever you want it to be."

According to Black, retrieving water from the local creek could be an all-day affair for many Tanzanian women. To relieve this strain, she and other foreign volunteers worked to install fresh-water tanks within the homes of local villagers.

"It's nice to see how three to five hours of work setting up a water tank or just listening to people's problems can benefit someone's life for the better," says Black. "I think we made a genuine difference, because having the water tanks will mean that a young Tanzanian girl won't have to leave school early just to get water for her family. A lot of young girls' potential to get educated and get jobs is squashed by the fact that they have to trudge up and down a hill all day just to get water."

E. Maxine Bruhns, director of Pitt's Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Programs, said the Nationality Rooms Scholarship Committee was quite impressed by Black's desire for hands-on knowledge. "With Shannon Black, you see a young woman who realized that there was not enough time or resources to make a permanent change in Tanzania, but she went anyway, knowing that the summer experience would prepare her for future work with cultures in America and abroad. [In awarding the scholarship,] we were impressed by the fact that she wasn't going to Africa for the purpose of learning a language or doing library research. Shannon had an innate desire to lend her time and energy toward helping others."

Black's desire to help has played out here at home, as well. For example, when the federal Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 ended student discounts on contraceptives at university health centers around the country, contraceptive prices skyrocketed on college



RACHEL MOLENDI

Above, a member of Shannon Black's volunteer group interviews a local villager while many other villagers gather around to watch. Below are students from Amizade, the global service-learning and volunteer program, through which Black traveled to Tanzania.

campuses, and Black fought hard to help get the relevant portion of the law reversed.

"Birth control is a fundamental part of the lives of many college-age women. This wasn't some trivial issue that [female students] viewed as a lost luxury item," says Black.

"Going from \$15 a month [for contraception] to \$60 or \$70 may not seem too extreme to some people, but for women my age, that could be the difference between buying birth control, purchasing a text book, or paying a gas bill."

Black, who was the president of CWO for the past two years, stepped into action. Working alongside Pitt's Student Government Board as well as such national organizations as Choice USA and the Feminist Majority Foundation, CWO began collecting signatures on petitions at area colleges, organizing rallies, and lobbying local Congressional representatives. Black and other advocates even met this past fall with U.S. Congressman Michael Doyle in a bid to convince him to support to the Prevention Through Affordable Access Act, which seeks to restore discounted drug prices at university-based health centers. The bill awaits consideration by the U.S. House.

This desire to help others will not end once Black graduates from Pitt. In the short term, she is investigating teaching opportunities in Asia before pursuing graduate study in California with a focus on Native American Studies. She has decided to keep her long-term options open as she explores the best way in which to direct her socially active energies. For Black, life is a journey of learning while living, and she is seeking to define her life as that of a feminist.

"I've always looked at feminism as a woman's freedom to do what she wants to do, not what society expects her to do. That could be staying home with the kids or it could be traveling the world. More than anything else, feminism is about the ability to make choices."

Graduating Senior Profile

"I Know These People Now"

Swanson School's Emma Baillargeon, Victoria Kennedy are part of team designing a fish farm in Mali

By Morgan Kelly

At some point, while rumbling across 200 miles of scorching African savanna in a nine-passenger van crammed with 12 people—including a doorman whose job was not to open the door but to hold it shut—Pitt engineering seniors Emma Baillargeon and Victoria Kennedy suspected their project would be quite different than they expected.

Last May, the two women, who graduate today from the Swanson School of Engineering, joined two other Pitt students and three Pittsburgh engineers for the first phase of a student-run project to design a fish farm in Makili, Mali, a 1,400-person village in the sweltering borderland between North and Sub-Saharan Africa. Since then, the students have produced two possible designs and have raised \$30,000 in support for the project. Baillargeon will join a second group of Pitt engineering students returning to Mali this month to collect more information.

Nonetheless, the project has proven to be far more challenging than Baillargeon and Kennedy had anticipated—and a more valuable experience because of it. "We thought we just had to dig a hole and throw some fish in it," Baillargeon said, laughing. "It's been so much more than that. A design is more difficult when the client is halfway around the world with no means for direct contact."

She and Kennedy are members of the Pitt student chapter of Engineers Without Borders (EWB), a three-year-old offshoot of the national chapter founded in 2000. The nonprofit EWB undertakes various infrastructure projects in developing countries. The Pitt chapter took on the Makili fish farm in October 2007, a few months after a Peace Corps volunteer in the village suggested it to the national EWB.

Before then, students in the Pitt chapter had primarily helped clean up abandoned lots in Pittsburgh, and they were craving their first real project, said Baillargeon, a Rochester, N.Y., native who joined EWB in Spring '07 and served as chapter president this year. "The students who started this chapter thought we could do more than clean abandoned lots," Baillargeon said. So, the fledgling group, with no money and only a few professional mentors, applied with EWB to build a fish farm in Makili.

In truth, the project was to improve the fish farm already in Makili. But the active definition of "fish farm" proved to be a dusty depression in the ground, as Kennedy found when the group reached Makili. She and Baillargeon had traveled with Pitt physics junior Jeffrey Fein, since-graduated Pitt civil engineering senior Michael Bozek, and three professional engineer mentors from the Pittsburgh EWB chapter established in 2007.

A double major in civil and environmental engineering and architectural studies, Kennedy worked on the team conducting land surveying and site assessment. The situation: The depression filled during the Malian rainy season, which lasts approximately from June to September. The villagers fill the pond with fish captured from irrigation ditches. The pond vanishes in six months from absorption and evaporation. The Pitt group was there to make the pond last longer.

"None of us knew a thing about fish farming, and it turned out we didn't have a lot to work with when we got there," Kennedy said. "We had limited resources and had to make a lot of assumptions. It was trial and



1. Victoria Kennedy (center) said she felt oddly at home in Africa because she wasn't a minority. "It was strange to be around so many people who looked like me. When you're suddenly in the majority, it can be 'opening.'" 2. The chief of Makili (left) told the Pitt group that the fish farm will help his village survive. He's pictured with his heir apparent, who is sporting a Pitt T-shirt. 3. The village children helped Pitt engineering graduate Michael Bozek (CEE '08), in rear, and Kennedy with land surveying. Kennedy was amazed at the number of children in Makili: "I gave one kid a soda and then other kids came pouring out. I've never seen so many kids in my life." 4. Emma Baillargeon (center) said that knowing the people of Makili changed her view of the project's importance and the poverty in which the villagers live. "You can go into a situation like that fully prepared for it, and meeting the people makes you realize you never really understood it."

error. I think we took for granted the tools we have here. In class, we have everything we need. Out there, we didn't."

The Pitt EWB technical team used the survey information to design a deeper pond with a smaller surface area, which would reduce evaporation, explained tech team member Brian Lucarelli, a Pitt civil and environmental engineering senior graduating in December. "We thought we could implement it in a week," he said.

Then one of their professional mentors returned to Makili in March to vet the design with the villagers. It was way too small. The deluge Makili receives each year would flood the pond, something the students wouldn't have known in May during the 115-degree dry season. The group going to Mali this year will collect data on the local watershed, ground slope, and rainfall, Lucarelli said.



The current ideas are a variation of the first idea or to construct a reservoir that would regulate the pond's depth.

"There are always a lot of lessons when you screw up and have to start over," Lucarelli said. "It was a dose of real-world engineering. Instead of starting with standards, you have to get the unique specifications for that area, and we have a better idea now of the information we need. We wavered over building it or doing another assessment. We didn't want to let the community down, but we didn't want to build something that would make its situation worse."

Mali ranks among the world's poorest countries. Kennedy, from Lansdale, Pa., has experienced developing-nation poverty in her parents' native Trinidad and Jamaica. Makili was even more shockingly basic, she said: buckets and holes in the ground for toilets, no electricity, legions of children, and full-on exposure to the elements, at once harrowing and enchanting.

"I'd never been camping, so on the first night I tried to prove myself by sleeping directly on the ground—that's a bad idea," Kennedy said. "I don't know what bit me, but it stung for an hour. But the stars seemed

huge out on the dark plain. That first night, I couldn't sleep anyway. There was a wedding celebration. People were drumming for six hours."

Baillargeon particularly struggled with moving ahead or returning to the drawing board. A bioengineering major, she worked on health assessments and quality-of-life surveys to help gauge the effectiveness of the fish farm once it's complete. She had little involvement in collecting the technical data. What struck her was the village chief, a man in his 70s who gratefully explained that this project would help his poor village survive.

"That's when I realized how major this is," Baillargeon said. "I felt the pressure to really do our best. Our biggest success was to get their input, but it was hard to accept that our original plan didn't work. I'm looking forward to seeing them again, but now there's a lot more pressure."

"Last year, Makili was another place on the map, but I know these people now. I know what this means to them, and I feel like they'll want to know what we've done. This isn't a project we can take lightly—it's about their lives."

Graduating Student Profile

Mastering the Art of Education

Carlena Gatewood cites sheer will, faith, and friends as keys to her success



Carlena Gatewood works with a student in her classroom at University Prep in the Hill District.

By Amanda Leff

In the summer of 2008, Carlena Gatewood, a single mother and former vocal artist, packed her bags and moved with her two-year-old son, Zion, from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, where she knew hardly a soul. While she didn't realize it then, her journey toward securing a master's degree in education at the University of Pittsburgh would bring her many sleepless nights, envelop her in the kindness of strangers, and crystallize her career plans into a calling.

The 27-year-old Gatewood credits her religious faith and friends—like fellow Pitt graduate student Chante McBride, a doctoral student in the School of Education—with making it possible for her to complete a one-year teaching certification program in Pitt's School of Education. Following commencement, she will remain at Pitt to work on her master's degree in teaching.

A teaching career was far from Gatewood's mind in 2000, when she graduated from high school and moved to Philadelphia,

filled with hopes of building a career in music. She enrolled in a theater arts program at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, the oldest of the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and began singing in clubs during the evenings.

The allure of a singing career pulled strongly at Gatewood, and in 2001, she found a manager and left college to focus on performing. Soon after, she produced a locally distributed album, released in 2002. That same year, her manager decided to leave the business, leaving Gatewood without support for the sale of her album. What followed was a series of professional and personal ups and downs. She continued to perform, supporting herself as a waitress, bartender, photographer, and bank teller for the next few years. Marriage came in 2005 followed by the birth of her son, and then, eventually, a divorce.

Gatewood says it was during her pregnancy with Zion that she realized her

priorities had changed. Instead of wanting a musical career, she wanted a formal education.

"My pregnancy helped me realize it was no longer just about me," she says. "It was about him."

Gatewood returned to Cheyney on a full scholarship as a communications major. Professors recognized her excellent writing skills, and soon she began tutoring freshmen during weekly writing labs. By her senior year, she had landed a full-time job at a small Christian high school, where she taught criminal justice, college planning, and grammar to students in the 8th through 11th grades.

That same fall, Gatewood volunteered at a Cheyney graduate school fair, and it was there that she met Pitt student Chante McBride, who was representing Pitt's School of Education. While talking to McBride, Gatewood realized she had never considered pursuing a degree in education, despite her years of experience in the classroom. But, with a baby and a lack of support, she could not envision moving across state to attend school.

McBride, who was also a young mother with a strong faith, told Gatewood that God would bring her to Pittsburgh. Gatewood shrugged off McBride's comment, but was amazed to learn just a few days later that McBride had arranged for her to visit Pitt. Although impressed with the University's campus, Gatewood wondered how she and Zion could survive there without support.

Gatewood recalls that McBride told her, "My husband and I are here to help you." McBride promised to pick up Zion, now 3 years old, from day care and make sure that Gatewood and her son would have everything they needed.

"Chante and her husband didn't have any reason to do these things for me," comments Gatewood. "But I felt that God made it clear that I was supposed to go to Pittsburgh."

Gatewood graduated magna cum laude from Cheyney in spring 2008, and that summer, trusting her faith and the kindness of strangers, she enrolled in the Pitt School of Education's Professional Year (PY) English secondary teaching certification and master's program on a full scholarship.

Required to student-teach for a semester, Gatewood has spent her mornings as an instructor at University Prep, a partnership between the Pittsburgh Public Schools and Pitt; attended classes late into the evening; and come home to juggle her responsibilities as a mother and student. This hectic lifestyle left her eager for her graduation from the PY program.

"Zion is obviously very important to me, but I've had to stay focused on finishing my program," she says. "I'm constantly conflicted between being a good mother and being a good student."

And after her experience at Pittsburgh



Gatewood and her son, Zion

Prep, Zion is no longer her only child; she says she considers her students to be her "kids."

"I love seeing the kids do well, and I really will miss them," she says.

Though she believes she still has a few albums waiting to be created, she is at peace with her decision to pursue teaching as a career.

"The class that was the most eye-opening and beneficial for me was Education and Society. I was both fascinated and devastated to discover how many Americans are not educated," she says. "The class helped me to realize how important it is to be an educator during these times."

"Unfortunately, in African American communities, not everyone believes that he or she has the same opportunities as other people. And the truth is—they do. Teaching allows me to step in and say, 'Wait a minute. It is possible. How do I know? Because I did it.' I explain to my students that education is possible and it is cool!"

A teacher by nature, Gatewood says she learned her initial teaching strategies by trial and error in the classroom. Her Pitt education has shown her that many of her strategies are valued in the teaching community.

"Pitt also broadened my mind as to what education is," she says. "Inquiry-based learning has become very important to me."

Gatewood believes she would not have been able to succeed at Pitt without the McBride family or her spiritual roots.

"Chante is my sister! I would do anything for her and her family. I feel very blessed to be a student at Pitt. The ideas here are fresh and innovative, and I am proud to say that I attended."

The 27-year-old Gatewood credits her religious faith and friends—like fellow Pitt graduate student Chante McBride, a doctoral student in the School of Education—with making it possible for her to complete a one-year teaching certification program in Pitt's School of Education.



Timothy M. Adamo

Pitt Honors College Senior Gets Award, Scholarship for Study at Oxford

By Patricia Lomando White

Timothy M. Adamo, a University of Pittsburgh Honors College senior who will receive the BS in mathematics, physics, and psychology today, has been awarded a University Clarendon Fund Award and The Dervorguilla Scholarship from the University of Oxford to study for a PhD at Oxford's Balliol College in England.

The Dervorguilla is complemented by the Clarendon Fund Award, which covers full university and college fees and also may provide an additional grant for living expenses, up to a combined total of approximately \$20,000 per year. The Clarendon is sponsored by Oxford University Press and is only available for study at Oxford.

Balliol awards two Dervorguilla Scholarships—one to a candidate in the mathematical, physical, and life sciences division and the other to any division of the University—for study beginning at Balliol College in October 2009. The scholarship provides an additional grant of \$8,952 per year for living expenses.

A Maryland native, Adamo is a University of Pittsburgh Chancellor's Scholar with a 4.0 GPA whose plans for Oxford are to pursue a PhD in mathematics, focusing on differential geometry and twistor theory. His career goal is to become a professor of mathematics at a research university.

"A distinguishing feature of Adamo is his desire to make math interesting for other people," said Alec Stewart, Pitt Honors College dean. "Popularization is a serious interest, and he articulates clearly to all who will listen that mathematics has much to say about many areas outside of formal mathematics."

Adamo says he likes showing friends the parallels for the unity of mathematics in places as disparate as the movie theater, rugby field, and concert hall.

Although early in his career, Adamo has a significant list of accomplishments. Two papers "The Gravitational Field of a Radiating Electromagnetic Dipole," and "Electromagnetic Induced Gravitational

Perturbations," with Ezra T. Newman, Pitt professor emeritus of physics, have been accepted for *Classical and Quantum Gravity* (2008). He is collaborating with Newman and Carlos Kozameh, University of Cordoba, on a review article on asymptotically shear null geodesic congruences for *Living Reviews in Relativity*, to be published soon, and he has collaborated with other professors in work on game theory.

Adamo studied a semester abroad at the University of Cape Town in South Africa from July to December 2007. He is a member of Sigma Pi Sigma national honor society in physics, Psi Chi national psychology honor society, the American Physical Society, and the National Society of Collegiate Scholars; he also was selected by Pitt's mathematics department for membership in the Mathematical Association of America.

Among Adamo's other honors are the 2008 and 2009 Pitt Department of Mathematics Culver Prize, given to an outstanding undergraduate mathematics student; the 2009 Department of Physics Halliday Award, for outstanding undergraduate research; and selection for the University's delegation to the 2008 National Conference on Undergraduate Research, where he gave an oral presentation on game theory and differential equations modeling for arms races. Adamo also is a three-time winner of the Brackenridge Undergraduate Research Fellowship, allowing him to perform independent research during the summer. His Brackenridge projects included original work on game theory and differential equations for arms race modeling, the graceful exit problem in superstring cosmology, asymptotically flat spacetimes, and topological phase transitions in braneworlds.

Outside the academic realm, Adamo serves as an escort coordinator for Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania, plays on Pitt's intramural soccer team, and was a member of the city's Pittsburgh Rugby Football Club and the University of Cape Town Weight Lifting Club. He has done solo and team backpacking in Maryland, Washington, and West Virginia.

Pitt's Phi Beta Kappa Inducts 79 Students

The University of Pittsburgh chapter of Phi Beta Kappa inducted 79 Pitt students into its 2009 class.

The initiation ceremony was held April 25 in the Teplitz Memorial Moot Courtroom of the Barco Law Building.

Founded in 1776 at the College of William & Mary, Phi Beta Kappa is America's oldest college honor society. Election to Phi Beta Kappa is considered by many to be the most prestigious honor of academic excellence that can be conferred upon students majoring in one of the liberal arts and sciences. Among the organization's membership are 17 U.S. Presidents, seven of the nine current U.S. Supreme Court Justices, and 131 Nobel Laureates.

Local chapters work within the organization's national guidelines to establish their own criteria for admission. At Pitt, eligibility requirements include, among others, proficiency in a foreign language as well as the completion of a demanding, broadly distributed program of course work spanning the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Completing a well-distributed program of course work is more important than a 4.0 grade point average. Grade point requirements range from 3.5 to 3.9, with the lower criterion applying to students who have earned at least 90 liberal arts credits at Pitt and the higher criterion applying to those who have earned only 60 liberal arts credits at Pitt.

The following students comprise the 2009 class of Pitt's Phi Beta Kappa:

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Andrew Abbott | Andrew Hryckowian | Sean Rinella |
| Valeri Anukem | Peter Innacola | Brianna Rossiter |
| Autumn Aul | Bridge T Kane | Lauren Salesi |
| Patrick Berger | Frank Kowalkowski, Jr. | Jason Saltzman |
| Monica Bhattacharjee | Ashley Lafata | John Schmidt |
| Alexis Carulli | Mackenzie Lawson | Sameer Shakir |
| Steven Cassady | Max Lichtenstein | Phillip Sharrow |
| Stacie Ci Frulak | Mary Ellen Li Sman | Caitlin Shay |
| Erica Ciminelli | Holly Lovasik | Ryan Simmons |
| Corey Clyde | Brian Mead | Ranjodh Singh |
| Eric Conlon | Benjamin Mericli | Daniel Smith |
| Willi E Costello | Robin Monteverde | Kelly Snow |
| Sudipta Devanath | Kelsey Moore | Erin Stacy |
| Shanna Duffy | Kevin Morrison | Julie Steinbrink |
| Carrie Dumars | Nikiya Natale | Ilana Stol |
| Chelsea Fitzgerald | Amy Nedley | Andrew Trifan |
| Laurel Friend | Teresa Nichols | Daniel Todd |
| Kathryn Fritzdixon | Caroline Nilsen | Tiffany Todd |
| Kelley Gallagher | Eleanor Ott | Hilary Tomaswick |
| Daniel Gosselin | Ravi Pandit | Susan Warshafsky |
| Max Greenwald | Konstadin Petrov | Shannon Watkins |
| Amanda Gregg | Benjamin Pollock | Lindsey Webb |
| Rachel Grubbs | David Punihaole | Valerie Wilson |
| Kanika Gupta | Margaret Pusateri | Kevin Yavorcik |
| David Hanna | Sadhana Rajamoorthi | Michael Yazvac |
| Angela Hattemer | Kaitlynn Rausch | |
| Alexander Heitman | Rajiv Reddy | |

HISTORY MAKERS AWARD



Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg (left) was honored during the 17th annual History Makers Award dinner, which benefits the Sen. John Heinz History Center. He stands beside Thomas Detre, a past awardee of the History Makers Award as well as Pitt Emeritus Distinguished Senior Vice Chancellor for the Health Sciences and Emeritus Distinguished Service Professor of Psychiatry in Pitt's School of Medicine. The dinner was held at the Westin Convention Center Hotel, Downtown, on April 17.

Student Honors



Sesi Aliu



Daniel Gore



Benjamin Mericli

Three Honors College Students Win 2009 Humanity in Action Fellowships

By Patricia Lomando White

Three University of Pittsburgh Honors College students have been selected to receive 2009 Humanity in Action (HIA) summer fellowships. Sesi Aliu, a sophomore majoring in international affairs and area studies in Pitt's University Center for International Studies and French in Pitt's School of Arts and Sciences, and Daniel Gore, a junior majoring in political science and history in Arts and Sciences, will participate in the HIA European Programs in Copenhagen, Denmark, and Paris, France, respectively; Benjamin Mericli, a senior majoring in engineering physics, philosophy, and linguistics in Arts and Sciences, will take part in the HIA American Program in New York City.

The University's winning students were among 57 selected from a pool of more than 600 applicants. This is the fourth consecutive year that Pitt has competed successfully in the HIA Fellowship program.

The HIA European Programs—based in Denmark, France, Germany, The Netherlands, and Poland—focus on European issues of historic and contemporary importance, among them challenges from immigration, the integration of minorities, and the formation of international human rights doctrines. The HIA American Program, based in New York City, explores how Americans understand, practice, and manage diversity, including the role of the public and private sectors in addressing social problems.

"The HIA Fellowships are the foremost collegiate program for desirably integrating the production of thinkers and leaders," said Alec Stewart, Honors College dean. "It is a remarkable initiative that engages student leaders in the study and work of human rights, a program that emphasizes responsibility and democratic values in the context of trans-Atlantic and intra-European dialogue. Aliu, Gore, and Mericli are proven exemplars of what the HIA represents."

Aliu is a resident of Austin, Texas, whose family emigrated from Nigeria to the United States. In addition to pursuing his majors, Aliu has a minor

in chemistry and is working on a certificate in African Studies. His long-term career interests include public-health policy. Last summer, he spent one month in Malawi as part of a student-led initiative to learn about and collaborate with community-based health and social service organizations, noting that the experience showed him the potential of grassroots movements to effect change and achieve social goals.

Aliu served as a research assistant in Pitt's First Experiences in Research Program and is a member of Pitt's Emerging Leaders Program and Student Leaders in International Medicine, serving as the latter group's secretary and, most recently, as its copresident.

In 2007, Aliu was named a Helen S. Faison Scholar and, in 2008, he was inducted into the Golden Key International Honor Society. His other interests include journalism, basketball, world music, nature documentaries, and photography.

A Johnstown, Pa., native, Gore has worked in the political arena, having served as an intern for U.S. Congressman and Pitt alumnus John Murtha (PA-12) in the summer of 2007 and, in the fall of 2006, for "PA Victory '06," the coordinated campaign of Governor Edward G. Rendell and Senator Robert P. Casey Jr. He was a campaign volunteer for Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl and founded Students for Barack Obama at Pitt in 2007. He also was a delegate to the National College Democrats convention and served as a student advisor on college grassroots outreach on the Obama for America College Democrats Steering Committee.

In addition to pursuing his majors, Gore is an economics minor who is working on a certificate in Russian and East European Studies. He serves as an academic tutor in economics and is a resident assistant in Honors Freshmen Housing. Under a Brackenridge Summer Research Fellowship, Gore studied Russian democracy, particularly election irregularities and media bias in that nation's 2008 presidential election.

A Pitt University Scholar, Gore serves as Student Government Board representative to the University Educational Policies Committee, won a John P. Bracken Undergraduate Political Science Award at Pitt, and was selected to the National Conference on Undergraduate Research.

A Beechview native, Mericli is interested in the sciences and humanities and has aspirations for service in the U.S. diplomatic corps. Mericli has had an internship at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, and last summer, as a National Security Education Program Boren Scholar, he continued his study of the Turkish language and began learning Persian in Istanbul.

Mericli serves as a volunteer caseworker at the Welcome Center for Immigrants and Internationals in Pittsburgh, assisting clients and certifying translations of Turkish and Spanish. He served as community interactions coordinator of the Pitt chapter of Engineers Without Borders and managed logistics for a site assessment trip to Pitt's sustainable fish farm project in Mali last May; as campus campaign manager for Teach for America, he has encouraged other students to work for educational equity in the nation's poorest schools.

A Pitt Chancellor's Scholar, Mericli enjoys blues piano and guitar; studies and teaches *ney*, the reed flute of Ottoman court music; and plays the flute for the local band Kirik Hava.

Participation in the HIA's core programs provides the foundation for further involvement with HIA. Upon completion of summer fellowships, participants may proceed to international internships to continue their training in human rights issues. Past fellows have used their experiences with HIA to further careers in such fields as education, civil service, journalism, law, and art.

Rachael Dizard (A&S '06) was a Pitt 2007 HIA winner. She is now a project employee at ACTION-Housing in Pittsburgh, working on the greening of existing affordable housing units. She recently received the Root-Tilden-Kern Scholarship—a public interest scholarship for those who plan on dedicating their careers to working in public interest law—from New York University's School of Law.

"I'm delighted that three University of Pittsburgh students will be participating in 2009 HIA Summer Fellowships; it really attests to the quality of both the education and the students at Pitt," said Dizard. "The HIA fellowship was a challenging and enriching experience for me that has positively impacted my life in more ways than I ever expected, and I don't doubt that it will be the same for these students."



Two Pitt Students Win ODK Senior Of the Year Award

By Patricia Lomando White

University of Pittsburgh seniors Robert Sumter Link III, majoring in civil engineering with a minor in economics, and James Ostendorf, majoring in history and political science, received the 2009 Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) Senior of the Year Award during Pitt's annual Honors Convocation Feb. 27 in Carnegie Music Hall, Oakland.

ODK, founded in 1914 at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va., is an honorary society that recognizes students who maintain a high standard of leadership in collegiate activities. The award is given to students who possess and exhibit outstanding leadership qualities in service to the University.

Link, who graduated in December, is originally from Columbia, S.C. He served as Pitt's Student Government Board (SGB) president in 2008 and was previously an active member of SGB. He used his position to set an example and worked to improve Pitt programs for future students. Link demonstrated a desire to give back to the community by participating in such groups as the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Keep It Clean Oakland, Ronald McDonald House, and Shadyside Boys and Girls Club. During his term as president, he helped create Pitt Make a Difference Day, when Pitt students give back to Pittsburgh by taking part in service projects around the city. In addition, Link recruited potential engineering students as a member of the Freshmen Engineering Leadership Team. He also worked to have Pitt's chapter of Triangle Fraternity, an engineering fraternity, rechartered to give students a community that provides lasting positive influence.

Ostendorf, who hails from Seekonk, Mass., has dedicated his time at Pitt to helping students acclimate to campus life through his leadership positions. He has been actively involved in Pitt's Residence Life, serving as a programming coordinator and resident advisor in the residence halls. His membership in groups like Pitt Arts, Student EMS club, Free the Planet, History of Art and Architecture Club, and Phi Theta Alpha Honors Society have allowed him to have contact with and to support students. Ostendorf also has a strong interest in environmental issues and belongs to the Sierra Club, Save the Bay: Narragansett, and Pitt's Geology Club. He will spend this summer working as a teaching assistant in Pitt's Honors College Yellowstone National Park Field Studies Course.

Happenings



Matsubara: A Celebration in Pittsburgh, Carnegie Museum of Art, through June 7

Opera/Theater/Dance

One Shot, dance performance by Evidence, choreographed by Ronald K. Brown, **May 1-3**, August Wilson Center for African American Culture, Liberty Avenue and 10th Street, Downtown, Pittsburgh Dance Council, 412-456-6666, www.pgharts.org.

The Italian Girl in Algiers, by Rossini **May 2, 5, 8, and 10**, sung in Italian with English supertitles, Benedum Center, 719 Liberty Ave., Downtown, Pittsburgh Opera, 412-281-0912, www.pittsburghopera.org.

Rock 'n' Roll, by Tom Stoppard, **May 7-30**, Henry Heymann Theatre in the Stephen Foster Memorial, 4301 Forbes Ave., Oakland, Pittsburgh Irish & Classical Theatre, 412-561-6000, www.picttheatre.org.

A Moon for the Misbegotten, by Eugene O'Neill, **through May 17**, O'Reilly Theatre, 621 Penn Ave., Downtown, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, 412-316-1600, www.ppt.org.

Human Error, by Keith Reddin, drama about aftermath of a plane crash, **through May 10**, City Theatre, 1300 Bingham St., 412-431-CITY, www.citytheatrecompany.org.

My Way: A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra, **through May 10**, 719 Liberty Ave., Downtown, CLÓ Cabaret Theatre, 412-281-3973, www.pittsburghclo.org.

Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses

Joshua C. Snyder, School of Medicine's Molecular Pharmacology Graduate Program, "Epithelial Reparative Capacity Regulates Extracellular Matrix Dynamics and Innate Immunity," 2 p.m. **April 30**, 1395 Starzl Biomedical Science Tower.

Adam Menzies, School of Arts and Sciences' Department of Anthropology, "Craft Specialization and the Development of the Chiefly Central Place Community of El Hatillo (He-4), Central Panama," 1 p.m. **May 4**, 3307 Posvar Hall.

Scott Palumbo, School of Arts and Sciences' Department of Anthropology, "The Development of Complex Society in the Volcán Barú Region of Western Panama," 3:30 p.m. **May 4**, 3307 Posvar Hall.

Margaret Kerr, School of Arts and Sciences' Department of Sociology, "The Autism and Vaccine Link Controversy: A Health Social Movement," 1 p.m. **May 6**, 2431 Posvar Hall.

Pitt and Pittsburgh Filmmakers to Host 11th Russian Film Symposium



By Anthony M. Moore

The University of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Filmmakers will present the 11th annual Russian Film Symposium, titled *The New Positive Hero: Masculinity and Genre in Recent Russian Cinema*, May 4-9 on Pitt's Oakland campus as well as at the Pittsburgh Filmmakers' Melwood Screening Room (MSR), 477 Melwood Ave.

According to press coordinator Margaret Barton-Fumo, this year's symposium is an examination of the interrelationship between two recent, seemingly unrelated developments in the Russian film industry: the emergence of genre cinema and the reconfiguration of masculinity on the screen.

Film scholars from Europe and the United States will present brief introductions to each film, and a discussion session will be held at the conclusion of each screening. Speakers will include Pitt alumnus Petre Petrov (A&S '06G), a professor in Princeton University's Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; Jeremy Hicks, a senior lecturer in the Queen Mary, University of London, School of Languages, Linguistics, and Film; and Alexander Prokhorov, a professor in the College of William and Mary's Department of Modern

Languages.

Pitt-campus screenings will be presented in Room 106 of David Lawrence Hall (DLH). Pitt screenings are free and open to the public. Admission to Pittsburgh Filmmakers' MSR is \$7. All films contain English subtitles.

The film symposium's screening schedule follows.

May 4 *Vanished Empire* (2008), directed by Karen Shakhnazarov, 10 a.m., DLH; *Paper Soldier* (2008), directed by Aleksei German Jr., 2 p.m., DLH;

May 5 *Live and Remember* (2008), directed by Aleksandr Proshkin, 10 a.m., DLH; *Once Upon a Time in the Provinces* (2008), directed by Katia Shagalova, 2 p.m., DLH;

May 6 *Four Ages of Love* (2008), directed by Sergei Mokritskii, 10 a.m., DLH; *Wild Field* (2008), directed by Mikhail Kalatozishvili, 7:30 p.m., MSR;

May 7 *Mukha* (2008), directed by Vladimir Kott, 2 p.m., DLH; *12* (2007), directed by Nikita Mikhalkov, 7:30 p.m., MSR;

May 8 *Captive* (2008), directed by Aleksei Uchitel, 10 a.m., DLH; *Russia-88* (2009), directed by Pavel Bardin, 2 p.m., DLH; *Shultes* (2008), directed by Bakur Bakuradze, 7:30 p.m., MSR; and

May 9 *Morphia* (2008), directed by Aleksei Balabanov, 7:30 p.m., MSR.

For more information, a full schedule of events, and a synopsis of screenings, visit www.rusfilms.pitt.edu or www.filmstudies.pitt.edu/events/fy09/russianfilm09.pdf.

Concerts

Gotta Dance! A Film Salute to Gene Kelly, music performed in sync with Pitt alum Kelly's films, featuring *Brigadoon*, *Singin' in the Rain*, *An American in Paris*; Constantine Kitsopoulos, conductor; 2:30 p.m. **April 26**, Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave., Downtown, PNC Pittsburgh Symphony POPS! 412-392-4900, www.pittsburghsymphony.org.

The Mendelssohn Project, Pacifica Quartet performs Mendelssohn's complete string quartets, 8 p.m. **April 27**, Carnegie Music Hall, 4400 Forbes Ave., Oakland, Pittsburgh Chamber Music Society, 412-624-4129, <http://pittsburghchambermusic.org>.

Honeck & Bronfman, Manfred Honeck, conductor; Yefim Bronfman, pianist; 1:30 p.m. **April 30**; also 8 p.m. **May 1-2**, Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave., Downtown, BNY Mellon Grand Classics, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, 412-392-4900, www.pittsburghsymphony.org.

An Evening With Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, 7:30 p.m. **May 5-6**, Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave., Downtown, 412-392-4900, www.pittsburghsymphony.org.

Exhibitions

Society for Contemporary Craft, *Beyond Shared Language: Contemporary Art and the Latin American Experience*, **May 1-Aug. 29**, 2100 Smallman St., Strip District, 412-261-7003, www.contemporarycraft.org.

The Frick Art Museum, "The Road to Impressionism: Barbizon Landscapes From the Walters Art Museum," **through May 24**, Frick Art & Historical Center, 7227 Reynolds St., Point Breeze, 412-371-0600, www.frickart.org.

Carnegie Museum of Art, *Laboratory of Architecture*, exhibition about works of Mexican architect Fernando Romero, **through May 31**; *Matsubara: A Celebration in Pittsburgh*, woodblock prints by Matsubara Naoko, **through June 7**; 4400 Forbes Ave., Oakland, 412-622-3131, www.cmoa.org.

Mattress Factory, *Thaddeus Mosley: Sculpture (Studio/Home)*, **through July 19**, 500 Sampsonia Way, 412-231-3169, www.mattress.org.

Lectures/Seminars/Readings

"Grants Over Lunch," noon **April 28**, Room S100, Biomedical Science Tower 2, Brown Bag Lunch Series, Survival Skills and Ethics Program, Office of Academic Career Development, 412-579-3716, www.survival.pitt.edu.

"Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): What Parents Should Know," Oscar G. Bukstein, Pitt professor of psychiatry, 6-8 p.m. **May 6**, Carnegie Library, 4400 Forbes Ave., Oakland, WPIC 2008-09 Mental Health and Wellness Lecture Series, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC Presbyterian Shadyside, to register call 412-383-2732, www.clinical-research.pitt.edu.

Miscellaneous

2009 Nellie Leadership Awards Gala, Andrew Stockey, WTAE-TV, will host event celebrating community leaders; proceeds benefit the Rising Star Scholarship Fund, 5:30-9 p.m. **April 30**, The Twentieth Century Club, 4201 Bigelow Blvd., Oakland, Three Rivers Youth, 412-441-5020, www.threeriversyouth.org.

Pitt Graduate School of Public Health Annual Spring Sale, supports the Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Scholarship Award in Epidemiology, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **May 1**, First Floor Lounge, Room 118 Parran Hall, www.publichealth.pitt.edu/evelynwei.

25th Annual Great Plant Auction, silent auction 6-7:15 p.m.; live auction 7:30 p.m. **May 1**, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, One Schenley Drive, Oakland, reservations required, call 412-441-4442 ex. 3925, www.phippsconservatory.org.

Academic Achievement in Africa and Its Diaspora: Challenges and Solutions, Dubois-Nkrumah-Dunham International Conference, **May 1-2**, Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. May 1 dinner with guest speaker Pennsylvania Rep. Jake Wheatley (D), May 2, networking luncheon at 12:30 p.m. Full registration \$250, students and community \$50, Pitt Department of Africana Studies, 412-648-2276.

May Market, area garden clubs sell a variety of perennials, annuals, hanging baskets, herbs, environmentally friendly landscaping products, and organic produce, 9:30 a.m.-7 p.m. **May 8**; also 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. **May 9**, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, One Schenley Drive, Oakland, 412-622-6914, www.phippsconservatory.org.



25th Annual Great Plant Auction, Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, May 1

Pitt Slates Benefits Fairs for 2009 Open Enrollment Season

If you are a University of Pittsburgh faculty or staff member and want to change your benefits, now is the time.

The University's open enrollment period is April 23 through May 13—a period during which Pitt staff and faculty can make changes in their benefit selections. The period is the only time during the benefits year that IRS regulations allow such changes. Otherwise, benefit selection changes are permitted only if there is a qualified life event. The most common qualifying life events include marriage, divorce, birth/adoption of a child, and a significant change in or loss of a spouse's/partner's benefits coverage.

Benefits information sessions for faculty and staff are set for noon to 3 p.m. on April 29 and 30 in the William Pitt Union's Lower Lounge.

A session titled "Staying on Track in a Volatile Market" will be presented by TIAA-CREF from noon to 12:45 p.m. on April 29 and from 1 to 1:45 p.m. on April 30.

The Vanguard Group will present "Staying Calm in a Bear Market" from 1 to 1:45 p.m. April 29 and from noon to 12:45 p.m. April 30.

Representatives from UNUM Group will discuss Pitt's long-term care offerings from 12:45 to 1 p.m. on April 29 and 1:45 to 2 p.m. on April 30.

In addition, representatives from UNUM and Pitt's benefits department will hold five additional sessions on long-term care insurance. The benefit is being offered during the open enrollment period, which means faculty and staff can enroll in group long-term care insurance without completing an evidence of insurability application.

All sessions will be held from noon to 1 p.m. and will be available on April 27 in Room 4127 of the Sennott Square Building; May 1, William Pitt Union Ballroom; May 4, Room 4127 Sennott Square Building; and May 8 and 11, William Pitt Union Ballroom.

—Jane-Ellen Robinet



Harviths Give Talk on *Gabriel Over the White House* at FDR Presidential Library



Walter Huston portrait by Clarence Sinclair Bull

The feature film, starring Walter Huston, was made in the final depth-of-the Depression days of the Hoover Administration through William Randolph Hearst's Cosmopolitan production company. It was based on the American publication of the uncredited novel *Gabriel Over the White House*, which tells the story of a machine politician elected U.S. President who undergoes a miraculous transformation, becoming an enlightened dictator who solves the Depression's unemployment problem, rids the nation of gangsters, and ends the rearmament of foreign nations.

lecture and film presentation were in conjunction with the FDR Library's special exhibition *Action, and Action Now: FDR's First 100 Days*.

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was reportedly a favorite of the new President.

In their lecture, the Harviths placed *Gabriel* within the political and filmmaking context of its time, speaking about Hearst's role in Roosevelt's political career in 1932-33 and explaining censorship issues raised by the film and the internal controversy the film's production caused within MGM when studio chief and staunch Republican and Hoover supporter Louis B. Mayer first saw the completed film.

The Harviths are mass communications and arts historians who have worked together since 1971 in producing exhibitions and film series, writing books and articles, teaching, and doing oral histories of cultural and arts figures. They have coauthored, among other publications, the books *Karl Struss: Man With a Camera*, which documented their national touring rediscovery exhibition of the early art photography of the legendary Hollywood cinematographer, and *Edison, Musicians, and the Phonograph*, the first oral history of the phonograph that grew out of Susan's master's thesis, including interviews with 46 recording figures, from Thomas Edison's youngest son to Benny Goodman, Andre Previn, and Vladimir Ashkenazy. They also have done taped interviews with more than 50 legendary film figures, as well as interviews with dozens of early television pioneers that form the core of a television oral history archive at Syracuse University.

PUBLICATION NOTICE The next edition of *Pitt Chronicle* will be published May 11. Items for publication in the newspaper's *Happenings* calendar (see page 11) should be received six working days prior to the desired publication date. *Happenings* items should include the following information: title of the event, name and title of speaker(s), date, time, location, sponsor(s), and a phone number and Web site for additional information. Items may be e-mailed to chron@pitt.edu, faxed to 412-624-4895, or sent by campus mail to 422 Craig Hall. For more information, call 412-624-1033 or e-mail robinet@pitt.edu.

Pitt Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for University News and Magazines John Harvith and Susan Edwards Harvith, a film history faculty member in Syracuse, N.Y., gave a lecture March 29 in conjunction with a screening of the 1933 MGM film *Gabriel Over the White House* in the Henry A. Wallace Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, N.Y. The