Former Pitt Board of Trustees Chair J. W. Connolly Dies

By Sharon S. Bloke

The Pitt community paused last week to remember former Pitt Board of Trustees Chair J. W. Connolly, a man whose leadership led to a period of dramatic growth and progress at the University. Connolly died Aug. 19 at UPMC St. Margaret hospital. Connolly, who received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 1958, was elected in 1985 to the Pitt Board of Trustees and elected in 1995 to the Board, a position he held for six years.

Physical improvements to the main campus during Connolly’s tenure included the construction of the Bouquet Garden, dormitory complex and the John M. and Gertrude E. Petersen Student Center and the transformation of the former Masonic Temple to Alumni Hall.

During his first year as Board chair, Connolly led a series of Board retreats that resulted in five institutional priorities that were adopted by the Board in 1996. Those priorities—aggressively pursuing excellence in undergraduate education, maintaining excellence in research, ensuring operational efficiency and effectiveness, securing an adequate research base, and partnering in community development—have continued to provide a framework for the University’s recognition as one of the nation’s top public research universities.

When he stepped down as Board chair in 2001, the Board of Trustees and the University named the ballroom of Alumni Hall the J. W. Connolly Ballroom in recognition of his devotion and outstanding leadership. Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg said, “I first met J. in the spring of 1995. Within a matter of weeks, he had asked me to serve as Interim Chancellor. I was within a matter of weeks, he had asked me to serve as Interim Chancellor. I was elected as a Pitt director in June 1995 at the same meeting at which Mr. Connolly was elected Chairperson. Over the course of the many years we worked together, I came to know him well as a leader, as a mentor, as a partner, and as a friend. I had enormous respect for him as a person and as a professional. His contributions to the University’s progress have taken many forms and are immeasurable. He will be greatly missed by me and his many friends and colleagues at the University.”

In 2006, Connolly was elected a Pitt emeritus trustee. Throughout his tenure on the Pitt Board, he was one of the University’s most dedicated trustees. He served on numerous Board committees and also served as first vice chair of the UPMC Health System Board of Directors and as second vice chair of the UPMC Presbyterian/UPMC Shadyside Joint Board of Directors.

Connolly was a retired senior vice president of the H. J. Heinz Company, where his career began in 1961 and continued for more than three decades. One of his accomplishments there was helping to organize the effort to put Heinz ketchup into a plastic bottle when many other companies were still using glass containers. Connolly oversaw the effort to prove the ketchup would maintain its shelf life just as well in plastic as it did in glass. “J. will always be remembered for his loyalty, his humanity, his inspired leadership, and his commitment to the highest ethical practices,” said Heinz President William R. Johnson. “J. was a man of his word, he was objective, and he was principled,” he said.

Connolly was a recipient of the University Bicentennial Medallion and was honored as a Distinguished Alumni Fellow. Connolly and his wife, Shirley Connolly, were inducted into Pitt’s Cathedral of Learning Society in recognition of their extraordinary devotion and generosity, which included the establishment of the J. Wray Connolly Jr. Scholarship Fund and the Connolly Family Chair in the Stroke Institute, as well as contributions to many other important University programs.

Pitt Posts Strong Showing in 2010 U.S. News “Best Colleges” Ranking

By John Harvith

In the 2010 edition of U.S. News & World Report’s annual “America’s Best Colleges” listings—on newstands Aug. 24 in its magazine format and also available Aug. 25 in its guidebook format—Pitt has maintained its top 20 ranking among the elite U.S. public national universities while posting solid numbers in other categories.

In the Best National Universities category, the University of Pittsburgh ranked 51 this year among all institutions, public and private. Pitt maintained its top 20 ranking among elite public universities, public and private, tied with the Colorado School of Mines, Dartmouth College, Drexel University, the University of Delaware, and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Finally, in the Best Baccalaureate Colleges-North category, the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown was ranked 9th among public universities and moved up from a ranking of 33 last year to 28 this year among all institutions, public and private.

Pitt has maintained its top 20 ranking among the elite U.S. public national universities while posting solid numbers in other categories.

South Carolina-Columbia, and Virginia Tech. And in the category of Best Programs at Engineering Schools Whose Highest Degree Is a Doctorate, Pitt was ranked 29th among public universities, maintaining its ranking of 51 among all institutions, public and private, tied with the Colorado School of Mines, Dartmouth College, Drexel University, the University of Delaware, and the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Gonzalo E. Torres Receives Presidential Early Career Award

By Kristin Beaver

Gonzalo E. Torres, an assistant professor of neurobiology in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, will receive a 2008 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE). The PECASE is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. government upon young professionals in the early stages of their research careers. Torres is among 100 PECASE winners this year and one of 12 National Institutes of Health-supported PECASE recipients in the United States.

As a PECASE awardee, Torres will receive up to a five-year grant to further his research on the regulation of dopamine in the brain and its relationship to psychiatric disorders and drug addiction.

“Awarts such as the PECASE are particularly important to young faculty members like Dr. Torres who are still developing their laboratories and research teams,” noted Arthur S. Levine, senior vice chancellor for the health sciences and dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. “In Gonzalo’s case, his insightful work suggests that monoamine transporters have a more complex degree of organization than previously anticipated offers new leads for the development of therapies for diseases like schizophrenia, Parkinson’s, and drug addiction.”

The PECASE awards were established by President Bill Clinton in 1996 and are coordinated by the Office of Science and Technology Policy within the Executive Office of the President. Awardees are selected based on the following criteria: pursuit of innovative research at the forefronts of science and technology and a commitment to community service demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education, or community outreach.

“Early in their research careers, these individuals have already shown exceptional potential for scientific leadership. We can only look forward to greater discovery and contributions by these gifted biomedical researchers,” said Raynard S. Kington, acting director of the National Institutes of Health.

Torres and other PECASE awardees will be honored by President Barack Obama at a White House ceremony this fall.
The Innovation Culture
Pitt’s Innovation Practice Institute aims to educate law students in entrepreneurial outlook, services

By Patricia Lomando White

The seeds for Pitt’s new Innovation Practice Institute (IPI) were sown during the University of Pittsburgh School of Law’s commencement in 2008. Max Miller, a 1993 Pitt law school alumnus who serves on the school’s Alumni Board, attended the ceremony and talked with Pitt School of Law Dean Mary Crosley about the possibility of creating a new program in law and entrepreneurship. That discussion led ultimately to Miller’s being named director of the institute.

Miller joined the University in November 2008 as IPI director and was also appointed to Pitt’s adjunct faculty because he will be teaching classes as well. He has been working to design the IPI since his arrival.

According to Miller, the idea is to train lawyers to be effective counselors in business, but particularly in innovation—start-ups, early-stage ventures, and innovation spin-offs. The institute’s aim is to integrate the innovation culture into the study and practice of law.

“The marketplace is changing. Businesses are under pressure to reduce costs, and they are deciding whether they should be paying $400, $500, or $600 an hour for the services of an attorney. When it comes to skill sets, lawyers need to prepare for that new marketplace.”

—Max Miller

Miller, a Philadelphia native, certainly understands the training and education it takes to be effective in the current business and economic landscape. He began working at Federated Investors in the general corporate and securities practice after graduating from Pitt. In 1997, Miller moved to H.J. Heinz Co. as the company’s corporate counsel. While there, he handled international joint venture and distribution transactions as well as a myriad of domestic and international transactions as counsel to various business units. Heinz sent him to Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management in Evanston, Ill., where he earned his MBA in 2004. Miller worked as part of a specially selected internal project management team focused on logistics and warehousing while earning his MBA. When he graduated from Kellogg, he became a brand manager for Heinz ketchup, a position he held until 2005, when he started his own company, Raise Your Spirits, LLC, a marketing firm that promotes awareness of luxury brands.

Well versed in product branding and positioning, Miller wants to use the same skills in launching the IPI.

The marketplace requires people to be creative in their solutions,” Miller said, noting that the program will expose law students to marketplace realities through experiential learning, similar to the law school’s already successful law clinic program.

Crosley said the school’s creation of the IPI “advances multiple goals: Consistent with a broader revamping of the curriculum aimed at preparing practice-ready new attorneys, it will permit our students to develop skills that will be highly marketable in legal practice.”

“The number of large multinationals is ending while many countries, including the United States, are seeing growth in jobs, in profits, and in vitality coming from the entrepreneurial community,” said Dugan. “Attorneys of tomorrow will have to be trained to assist entrepreneurs because that is the future of our economy.”

The IPI begins this fall with two classes: “Understanding the Legal Services Administration in the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, and Understanding the Legal Services Marketplace,” taught by Miller in the law school.

The Commercializing New Technologies class will include both JD and MBA degree candidates who will work in cross-disciplinary teams in actual companies. Miller said that wherever feasible, IPI courses will include cross-disciplinary elements.

“It’s critical for students to learn to work in teams, and it’s important to translate classroom learning to the business environment,” said Miller. “This approach allows the students to develop a comfort level in dealing with others by working in cross-disciplinary teams.”

In addition, the IPI’s program will immerse students in the culture of a particular industry as well as the “innovation culture.” Miller wants students to interact with companies and also to attend industry events, symposiums, and venture fairs to get a complete picture.

Miller uses the “clean plate” analogy to illustrate the importance of understanding the culture of a particular company or industry.

“Every plate is different, and in our culture, that’s great: It means you enjoyed the meal,” he said. “But, in some cultures, it’s not a good sign because they didn’t get enough. Working in the entrepreneurial and innovation space requires the same sort of sensitivity to the nuances of that particular meal.”

Miller plans to introduce two courses each term comprising the strategies of understanding the culture of a particular company or industry.

Along with Dugan, Miller will work with Marc S. Malandro, associate vice chancellor for technology management and commercialization and director of Pitt’s Office of Technology Management.

The IPI’s larger goal is to develop students to be part of a regional community (whether on a management team as an attorney or as a business person) and to be a part of a pipeline of resources for the business innovation community.

“It’s most important to train students to have a broad view of the marketplace as they evaluate opportunities to stay and work in the Pittsburgh region,” said Miller. “Pittsburgh is a true innovation hub on the East Coast, and Pitt is in a good spot to be a core part of the innovative infrastructure in this region.”
The University welcomes a number of new faculty this year who bring a tremendous breadth and diversity of experience as well as a shared commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service. The profiles here offer an introductory sampling of those new faculty.

Jorge D. Abad, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Swanson School of Engineering

Abad is an assistant professor in civil and environmental engineering. Most recently, he was a postdoctoral fellow in the University of British Columbia at the school’s Urban Water Facility, where he completed his PhD. Abad’s research interests are a combination of fundamental and applied topics. Fundamental topics include the mechanics of sediment transport, the high-resolution description of hydrodynamic and morphodynamic in subaerial and submarine meandering channels, the long-term prediction of river morphodynamics, the development of computational fluid dynamics (CFD) models for environmental flows, environmental hydrodynamics, and transport and mixing processes. Applied topics include river restoration, bank protection using in-stream structures, development of geographic information systems (GIS) tools for river management, and the development of CFD models for hydraulic structures (drop shafts and fish passage/canoe chutes).

Geoffrey C. Bowker, School of Information Sciences

Bowker joins the University as a professor and senior scholar in cyberscholarship in the School of Information Sciences. Previously, he served as the executive director and the Regis and Dianne McKenna Professor at the Center for Science, Technology, and Society in Santa Clara University, California, where he was a professor of communication and environmental studies. He has also served on the faculty of the University of California, San Diego. He earned his PhD in the history and philosophy of science from the University of California, Berkeley.

Bowker has authored or coauthored numerous journal articles and three books, including Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences with Susan Leigh Star (MIT Press, 1999) and Memory Practices in Science, Technology, and Culture with Susan Leigh Star (MIT Press, 2006). He won the Ludwig Fleck Prize for Best Book in Science, Technology, and Society as well as the American Society for Information Science and Technology’s Best Information Sciences Book Award for Memory Practices in Science.

Robert L. Engelmeier, Department of Prosthodontics, School of Dental Medicine

Engelmeier is a professor and chair of the Department of Prosthodontics in the School of Dental Medicine. Previously, he directed the implant program and the graduate prosthodontic residency program in the University of Texas’ Dental Branch at Houston. Engelmeier, whom DMD from the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine, has served in numerous administrative and clinical positions in the military and in academia during the course of his career. Engelmeier is a nationally recognized teacher, having received the Dean’s Teaching Excellence Award in eight of the last 10 years at the University of Texas, and he has a distinguished record of publications in peer-reviewed journals. He has special expertise in implant research and in maxillofacial prosthodontics, which is the restoration of the face and hands through prosthetics. He serves as the civilian national consultant for prosthetics to the Surgeon General of the United States Air Force.

Mirit Eyal-Cohen, School of Law

Eyal-Cohen joins the School of Law as an assistant professor. She will teach courses in taxation law, including federal income tax and estate and gift taxes, as well as small business taxation. Her expertise is in small-business taxation and will contribute to the school’s new Institute for Business Law.

Chao-Hsing Yeh, Department of Health Promotion and Development, School of Nursing

Chao-Hsing Yeh is a professor in the School of Nursing’s Department of Health Promotion and Development. Previously, Yeh was a professor in Chang Gung University’s Graduate School of Nursing in Taiwan. She earned her PhD at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and has conducted research on the coping skills, quality of life, and symptom management for pediatric oncology patients. At Pitt, Yeh plans to continue her research in pediatric oncology and extend it to interventions for symptom management. She also will teach nursing research for undergraduate students.

Renã Sowell, Department of Chemistry, School of Arts and Sciences

Sowell comes to the University of Pittsburgh from the University of Kentucky, where she was a United Negro College Fund/Merck postdoctoral fellow. She completed her bachelor’s degree at the University of Louisville and her PhD in analytical chemistry from Indiana University.

Eyal-Cohen is a nationally recognized teacher, having received the Dean’s Teaching Excellence Award in eight of the last 10 years at the University of Texas, and he has a distinguished record of publications in peer-reviewed journals. He has special expertise in implant research and in maxillofacial prosthodontics, which is the restoration of the face and hands through prosthetics. He serves as the civilian national consultant for prosthetics to the Surgeon General of the United States Air Force.

Chao-Hsing Yeh is a professor in the School of Nursing’s Department of Health Promotion and Development. Previously, Yeh was a professor in Chang Gung University’s Graduate School of Nursing in Taiwan. She earned her PhD at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and has conducted research on the coping skills, quality of life, and symptom management for pediatric oncology patients. At Pitt, Yeh plans to continue her research in pediatric oncology and extend it to interventions for symptom management. She also will teach nursing research for undergraduate students.

Pitt Welcomes New Faculty for Beginning of 2009-10 School Year

Pitt’s Welcome for New Faculty for Beginning of 2009-10 School Year

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Renã Sowell is a professor and the Doreen E. Boyce Chair in Library and Information Science in the School of Information Sciences. She comes to Pitt from Santa Clara University in California, where she was a professor in the Center for Science, Technology, and Society. She has held academic positions at the University of California, Irvine; University of Caligari, Sardinia, Italy; University of California, San Diego; and University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Star earned her PhD in sociology at the University of California, San Francisco.

Star is coauthor, with Geoffrey C. Bowker, of Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences (MIT Press, 1999). She teaches information literacy, and her research interests include information worlds and naturalistic studies of information infrastructure; classification and standardization; sociology and the history of science, medicine, technology, and information systems; qualitative methods; feminist theory; and the sociology of work. Star will take a leadership role in the development of a research agenda and a revised curriculum on the changing role of libraries in the networked environment.

Chao-Hsing Yeh is a professor in the School of Nursing’s Department of Health Promotion and Development. Previously, Yeh was a professor in Chang Gung University’s Graduate School of Nursing in Taiwan. She earned her PhD at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and has conducted research on the coping skills, quality of life, and symptom management for pediatric oncology patients. At Pitt, Yeh plans to continue her research in pediatric oncology and extend it to interventions for symptom management. She also will teach nursing research for undergraduate students.

PITT OFFICIALS IN CHINA

Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and several other Pitt officials traveled to China in late April. Pictured here on China’s Great Wall are, standing from left, Nicole Ferrier Hefried, managing director of Pitt’s Confucius Institute; Elisa Soni Moersch, director of international advancement at Pitt’s University Center for Institutional Studies; John Dolney, dean of Pitt’s Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business and College of Business Administration; Nordenberg; and John Keeler, dean of Pitt’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. Kneeling, from left, are Siddharth Chandra, the former director of Pitt’s Asian Studies Center, and Theresa Gao, assistant to Katz alumnus Frank Ning (MBA ’85).
The University of Pittsburgh’s “Your Journey Begins Here” New Student Orientation 2009 will be held Aug. 25 to Aug. 30. The University will welcome 4,500 freshmen and transfer students and will include informational sessions, campus and city tours, social gatherings, and ceremonies to educate, entertain, and orient the class of 2013 and the new students’ families to college life.

Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and distinguished members of the University community will officially welcome Pitt’s newest students at the Freshman Convocation Ceremony in the Petersen Events Center from 3 to 4 p.m. Aug. 26. The Chancellor’s Welcome Picnic follows the ceremony from 4 to 5 p.m., giving students and their families the opportunity to mingle with University faculty, staff, and students.

The traditional Lantern Night Ceremony will be held in Heinz Memorial Chapel from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Aug. 30. The Student Activities Fair, from 2 to 5 p.m. that day, introduces students to the more than 350 student organizations at Pitt. The fair is held in David Lawrence Hall, the Skywalk over Forbes Avenue, and in Posvar Hall Galleria and Plaza.

Presentations, seminars, and open houses will be held on numerous aspects of campus life, including student organizations, health services, and campus safety. The University Counseling Center Open House will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 25. Several informational activities will take place Aug. 26: “Student Health Service: When, Where, and How to Get Help,” from 9 to 10 a.m.; “Student Life: The Importance of Getting Involved,” from 11 a.m. to noon; and “Get Culturally Crunk! A Block Party Presented by the Office of Cross-Cultural Education and Leadership Development,” from noon to 1 p.m. All events will be held in the William Pitt Union.

Pathway to Your Success at Pitt: A Pitt Tradition, led by Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor James V. Maher, from 10 a.m. to noon Aug. 27 in the Petersen Events Center, will provide an overview of the opportunities for a successful academic journey at Pitt.

Among the activities tailored exclusively for parents and guardians will be “Campus Safety: What Parents Need to Know,” from 3 to 4 p.m. Aug. 25, and “The Art of College Parenting,” a light-hearted educational program, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Aug. 26, both in the William Pitt Union; and “Educating the Whole Student: What Every Parent Should Know,” from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Aug. 26 in Frick Fine Arts Auditorium. Presentations will seek to answer questions and concerns of students’ parents and guardians as well as to provide information on University programs. In addition, parents will have an opportunity to socialize with each other at the Panther Parents Association Information Sessions from 4 to 5 p.m. Aug. 25 and the Continental Breakfast for Parents from 8:30 to 10 a.m. Aug. 27, both in the William Pitt Union.

During Pitt’s “Light of Learning” during Pitt’s Traditional Lantern Night Ceremony Aug. 30, more than 400 incoming freshmen and first-year transfer students will receive the “light of learning” from University of Pittsburgh alumnae “flame-bearers” during the 89th annual Lantern Night Ceremony at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 30 in Heinz Memorial Chapel.

The student participants will gather at 7 p.m. in the Cathedral of Learning Commons Room to receive a lantern and prepare for the 7:25 p.m. procession to the chapel.

With unlit lanterns, the women will process on the parallel sidewalks located between the Cathedral’s Bellefield Avenue entrance and the chapel to the 7:30 p.m. ceremony. During the event, Pitt alumnae “flame-bearers,” including several alumnae mothers and grandmothers of incoming students, will light the lanterns, which will remain lit for the remainder of the program.

Carrying the lit lanterns, the new students will process back to the Commons Room for a reception.

Lantern Night is one of the University’s oldest traditions. The Alumnae Council of the Pitt Alumni Association and Pitt’s Division of Student Affairs cosponsors the ceremony. For more information, call 412-624-8215.

Women to Receive “Light of Learning” During Pitt’s Traditional Lantern Night Ceremony Aug. 30

Scheduled entertainment and social activities will include student-produced plays, film screenings, and a h.au. “Discover Pittsburgh!” from 7 to 9 p.m. Aug. 25, will include a sampling of food from local restaurants and music by local entertainers. The Pitt Program Council will host “Get With the Program!” from 9 p.m. to midnight Aug. 28, and Nordy’s Place will be the scene for both the “Oakland Teahouse,” from 11 p.m. Aug. 28 to 1 a.m. Aug. 29, and “Open Mic Night,” from 11 p.m. Aug. 28 to 2 a.m. Aug. 29. Pitt’s “Music Extravaganza,” beginning at 10 p.m. Aug. 29, will feature karaoke, a dance party, and late-night snack. All events will be held in the William Pitt Union.

Multiple guided tours of the University and the city of Pittsburgh also will be available. Tours include such landmarks as Pitt’s Nationality Rooms, Heinz Memorial Chapel, Phipps Conservatory, and the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History.

University staff will be available to answer questions and provide information at “Orientation Station,” open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Aug. 25-27 and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 28 in the William Pitt Union’s Lower Lounge. Students will be able to sign up for social activities and find out about programs offered through the New Student Orientation.

For more information or a complete schedule of events, call 412-648-1074 or visit www.orientation.pitt.edu.

Pitt Issues Traffic Alert for Aug. 25-28

The expected influx of University of Pittsburgh students returning to the Pittsburgh campus residence halls from Aug. 25 through Aug. 28 has prompted Pitt’s Department of Parking and Transportation to issue the following traffic advisory.

Bigelow Boulevard will be closed between Forbes and Fifth avenues from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 25, and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday through Friday, Aug. 26-28. Port Authority Bus Route 54C will not service the Carnegie Museum/Forbes Avenue stop during these times.

Lothrop Street will be closed between Fifth Avenue and Victoria Way from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday through Thursday, Aug. 25-27, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 28.

University Place will be closed between Fifth Avenue and O’Hara Street from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 25, and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday through Friday, Aug. 26-28. Vehicles using the University Place exit from Soldiers and Sailors parking garage will be required to turn right onto University Place toward O’Hara Street.

University Drive B will be closed between Allegheny Street and University Drive A from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, Aug. 25-28.

From Tuesday through Saturday, Aug. 25-28, parking on Rusklin Avenue will be restricted to individuals moving into Rusklin Hall.

The Schenley Quadrangle will be closed to all vehicular traffic on Friday, Aug. 21, through Sunday, Aug. 30.

University of Pittsburgh Police will be stationed at Allegheny Street and University Drive B to assist with traffic control.

By Patricia Lamanda White

By John Fedele
Serving Those Who Served
Pitt's new Office of Veterans Services offers one-stop shopping approach

Ann Rairigh, (left) director of the Office of Veterans Services, and Pete Lahoda, a Pitt junior and Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran who is a work-study student in the new office.

By Sharon S. Blake

Just three years ago in Iraq, U.S. Army specialist Pete Lahoda routinely faced dangerous situations. On some days, he conducted house raids in the intense Iraqi heat; on others, he was jarred when his vehicle hit roadside bombs.

When his 15-month tour of duty ended, the 24-year-old Lahoda headed back to his home neighborhood of Regent Square and eventually re-enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh, where he had been pursuing a degree in engineering. Surrounded by traditional college students in a typical classroom, he felt strangely out of place.

"The other students were all good people," he said. "But I felt we didn’t have a lot of common interests." It’s an experience shared by many returning veterans who decide to pursue higher education. And it’s one of the main reasons there is a new Office of Veterans Services at Pitt—a project that was high on the priority lists of Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor James V. Maher. The new office is located in the McCarl Center within the College of General Studies on the Cathedral of Learning’s fourth floor.

Pitt and other institutions of higher learning are anticipating a rise in enrollment among veterans, reservists, and National Guard members because the new GI Bill is offering $78 billion in educational benefits and living allowances over the next decade.

Pitt’s Office of Veterans Services uses a one-stop shopping approach to help the vets. Preadmission college planning sessions, assistance with paperwork, career counseling, networking, as well as help dealing with stress, lack of sleep, or depression—all of that and more are available under one roof.

“Veterans can feel a little lost in the shuffle sometimes,” said Ann Rairigh, director of the new office. Compounding many veterans’ situations is the fact that they are usually balancing school, a job, and a family.

“We want to make sure we have programs available that address all of those issues,” Rairigh said, adding that some programming will be tailored to the veteran’s spouse or dependents.

Rairigh speaks from experience. Her husband, Matt, 27, is on his third tour in Afghanistan and is scheduled to return next spring. She says when he came home the first time and re-enrolled in college, he was frustrated that there was no one available to help him with getting adjusted to campus life or filling out the stack of benefit forms. That also was true for Nathan McNeil, 27, who put in five years of active duty in Iraq before enrolling at another local institution of higher education in 2005.

“It was a totally different environment,” said the Marine sergeant and aircraft mechanic, now a chemical engineering major at Pitt. “You had to have your own drive to get things done. No one was there to really help you.”

McNeil said it wasn’t easy going from fending off scud missile attacks to sitting at a classroom desk. He was diagnosed with a slight case of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and saw a therapist briefly to resolve the problems that kept him up at night.

PTSD is actually quite common among veterans, according to Rairigh. She plans to attend some Veterans Affairs workshops about the condition as she shapes the office’s programming. Each veteran who comes to the Cathedral’s fourth floor is asked to fill out a short survey on what programming he or she thinks would be of value.

Last month, the office hosted two open-house events that provided information on many Pitt schools and departments. And Rairigh has scheduled an orientation session from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Aug. 29 that is specifically for veterans, their spouses, and their children. The new student veterans will learn how to handle their tuition bills, set up e-mail accounts, and navigate key departments at Pitt, including disability and counseling services.

People who have been calling the office have usually been greeted on the phone by Lahoda or McNeil. The two former servicemen put in about 25 hours a week as “veteran liaison” help him with getting adjusted to campus life or filling out the stack of benefit forms.

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The problems that kept him up at night.

“Anything they need—any question—we can handle,” she said.

Once they are enrolled, Rairigh hopes they find a “home” at the Office of Veterans Services, where the McCarl Center offers quiet space to study, read, watch TV, or check e-mail. The goal is to develop a cohesive community of veterans on campus. Rairigh says her door is always open—she is easily accessible.

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Scott Morgenstern Awarded $685,000 Grant to Evaluate USAID’s Political Party Development Program

By Patricia Lomando White

Scott Morgenstern, a University of Pittsburgh professor of political science, recently received a $685,000 grant from Higher Education for Development, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), to update and evaluate USAID’s work in supporting political party development worldwide.

As part of its overall goal of building democracy in countries throughout the world, USAID began in 1991 to fund programs aimed at strengthening political parties. Morgenstern and his research team will evaluate USAID programs by conducting eight to 12 case studies in selected countries to assess how well they achieved their goals.

“We are thrilled about working on this important project,” said Morgenstern, whose expertise is in comparative politics, political institutions, and political parties. “It combines our academic interests with USAID’s experience to develop practical approaches for aiding political party development around the world.”

Specifically, the team will develop a conceptual framework for party and party system development, examine party and party system requirements under different situations, and evaluate the effectiveness of USAID programs. The goal is to help guide future USAID political party programs by providing them with an analytical tool to determine needs and evaluate programs.

Morgenstern has conducted research throughout Latin America, Spain, Israel, and Canada. He earned a BA degree in political science and economics at Occidental College in 1985 and MA and PhD degrees in political science at the University of California, San Diego, in 1993 and 1996, respectively.

Morgenstern is author of Patterns of Legislative Politics: Roll Call Voting in the United States and Latin America’s Southern Cone (Cambridge University Press, 2004) and coeditor of and contributor to Legislative Politics in Latin America (Cambridge University Press, 2002) and Pathways to Power (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).


Patricia Lomando White
Pathway to the Head of the Class

Academic Resource Center offers tutoring, study groups, and skills-building workshops

By Amanda Leff

University of Pittsburgh undergraduates looking to carve their niches at the head of the class can find numerous free resources at the Academic Resource Center (ARC).

Along with a seemingly never-ending supply of freshly popped corn, several other things are on ARC’s menu, including walk-in and by-appointment tutoring, study groups, skills-building workshops, and access to the PittNet wireless network.

The center, based in the Gardner Steel Conference Center, has dozens of trained peer tutors as well as numerous study-skill workshops, including essay exam preparation, time management, and stress management.

Gail Austin, director of the center, says high achievers are the most likely to take advantage of the ARC’s tutoring services. “By definition, the students who come to us are high achievers,” says Austin. “We hope students understand that this is not a place you come to when you are in trouble or not doing well academically—though we can cater to those students as well.”

Austin says the ARC can help students adjust to college. “Sometimes, when students have a hard time with fall semester and realize, come spring, that there are services available to help them experience a smoother transition,” says Austin. “And then some students hit the ground running and are looking for services to help them from day one—immediately engaging the institution and taking advantage of the counseling that is offered here.”

The ARC is open for walk-in tutoring and scheduled appointments Monday through Thursdays from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Fridays from 8:30 to 5 p.m. For students whose schedules don’t accommodate a visit to the center, satellite tutoring is now available after hours in collaboration with the Office of Residence Life in Litchfield Towers, Lothrop and Sutherland halls, Hillman Library, and the William Pitt Union.

The ARC plays a central role in providing high-quality programs in the arts and sciences and professional fields for our outstanding students,” says Manfredi. “As the quality of our undergraduate student body continues to rise, coupled with the University’s growing reputation, the ARC is positioned to support our students to meet the challenges of a premier research university.”

The academic subjects that bring the most students to the center for tutoring are biology, chemistry, physics, statistics, and economics, says Austin.

Students who schedule appointments will receive ample quality time to engage with tutors, according to Austin. Tips on how best to utilize the ARC tutors are available on the center’s Web site (www.pitt.edu/~arc). “Students need to come prepared with a number of questions for the peer tutor to help them address,” says Austin. “Some students expect to just come in and have the tutors give them all the answers. But we work toward the goal of students mastering their own course materials.”

The ARC also offers peer-led study groups, where student-centered and managed groups are available for students taking introductory courses in biology, chemistry, and physics. These voluntary small group sessions, facilitated by undergraduate peer leaders, enable students to have detailed discussions about class issues, concepts, and study strategies.

“With all of these resources available through the ARC, there is no reason why students can’t get the help they need or have their questions answered,” says Austin.

Tutoring is the ARC’s most-used service, but there is much more to the center. It also houses Facilitating Opportunity and Climate for Underrepresented Students (FOCUS), a peer-mentoring program that helps students make successful transitions from high school to college life; Upward Bound, which provides foundational support to high school students preparing for college by helping them improve their grades and social skills and identify interests and potential career paths; and Student Support Services, a college retention program that assists students with college requirements and motivates them to complete their postsecondary education.

For more information about ARC services or to make an appointment with a tutor, call 412-648-7920 or visit www.pitt.edu/~arc.
Mascaro Center’s New Home Takes “Green” Design, Engineering to Heart

By Morgan Kelly

The new home of the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation is not only an expansive hub for Pitt’s “green” design and engineering center, but also the latest product of the University’s embrace of efficient and sustainable construction.

The revamped Mascaro Center occupies the overhauled second floor of Benedum Hall and the Benedum’s newly built addition—the gleaming appendage of Benedum looming over O’Hara Street.

With a U.S. Green Building Council LEED™(Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification pending, the Mascaro Center strikes a different architectural chord than the original Benedum Hall. Opened in 1971, the 12-floor Benedum tower and accompanying auditorium were cavernous manifestations of Brutalism, a modernist style prescribing massive angular buildings typically made of concrete. Pitt launched a $60 million update of the aged hall in spring 2008 that’s expected to last until at least December 2010.

The cost of the $16 million Mascaro Center was split by Pitt and alumni John C. Mascaro (ENG’66, ’80G), founder and chair of the Mascaro Construction Company. The Mascaro Company is the project’s general contractor, working with architects from Pittsburgh-based EDGE Studio and the global outfit NBBJ, as well as engineering firms H.F. Lenz Company, based in Johnstown, and Pittsburgh-based Atlantic Engineering Services.

The Mascaro Center space is slated to open this semester. The old layout of a cement-block hallway encircling a central bank of windowless labs and classrooms has given way to an open plan: adaptable lab spaces unrestrained by walls, offices with large frosted windows for natural light, and sweeping hallways that offer a clear view from one end of the floor to the other. Spaciousness is as central to sustainable construction as minimal-finish floors and new insulated windows, explained project superintendent Nate Martin and project engineer Bill Derence, both of the Mascaro Construction Company. Open, easily adaptable spaces equal less waste when a space inevitably needs to be changed, Martin said. Plus, LEED considers the psychological perks of ample light and unconstrained workplaces, Derence said: “It’s open, bright, and inviting. People will want to work here and be more productive as a result.”

The borderless lab restyles the traditional arrangement of academic departments, explained Eric Beckman, codirector of the Mascaro Center and the George M. Bevier Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering in the Swanson School of Engineering.

The 42,000-square-foot building coalesces wet and dry labs for 18 faculty members and 94 graduate and postdoctoral researchers into a single interdisciplinary space.

“One of the most important advances is that researchers will be mixed together rather than segregated by discipline,” Beckman said. “Segregation by discipline is highly traditional yet old-fashioned in that it tends to create scientific silos and hold back progress. By relinquishing the usual four walls and a door, we induce students to interface with each other, and we hopefully foster new collaborations and innovation.”

Meanwhile, the building’s green features and pending LEED certification lead the Mascaro Center’s credibility, Beckman said. The H.F. Lenz Company estimates that the new Mascaro Center will save 179 percent more in energy costs than a similar structure of standard design. That stems from such features as high-efficiency LED lights and sensors that regulate the lights and heating and cooling systems. In addition, unused laboratory fume hoods automatically reduce exhaust volume; sensors adjust indoor lighting by the level of incoming natural light; the supply of outdoor air pumped into the building is contingent on the carbon dioxide level inside; and all mechanical equipment features efficient motors that alone will save $600 a year each in energy costs.

A reflective thermoplastic polyolefin, or TPO, roof on the addition minimizes heat absorption, as do newly seeded green roofs on the Benedum auditorium and in Benedum Plaza. Pitt gets LEED credit for outfitting an existing building with these green features, but getting the original hall produced quite a bit of waste. Of all the refuse, more than 95 percent was recycled, Derence said, with old concrete used for fill, lumber and sawdust repurposed into particleboard, and discarded metal melted down.

The Mascaro Center represents a University effort to reduce the campus’ environmental footprint via energy conservation, among other methods, explained University architect Park Rankin. “Our basic goal is to control our energy costs, and the University’s carbon footprint is derived largely from energy sources,” he said. “Our baseline philosophy for campus construction is to embrace the standards of the LEED and at least shoot for a silver certification.”

Given the age of many Pitt buildings—from the solid, century-old neoclassical styles to the unwieldy Brutalist forms—and the challenge of incorporating openness into controlled environments like laboratories, keeping green can be difficult, Rankin said. Nonetheless, Pitt’s efforts are recognized. Last year, the Allegheny County Health Department awarded Pitt its EnviroStar Award with a Three Star Rating (the award’s highest distinction) for adopting large-scale practices in pollution and emissions reduction, energy conservation, recycling, and campus greening. Among the most significant projects was the construction of the C switching to the interior steam plant, which is designed to eventually supply all steam requirements for Pitt and UPMC buildings.

If LEED certified, the Mascaro Center would join the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine Laboratory Building, which was gold certified in 2005. Also, in June, the Board of Trustees approved a $32 million expansion and renovation of the Chevron Science Center, which will feature a 31,331 square-foot, three-story addition above Ashe Auditorium. The project will pursue LEED silver certification, Rankin said.

Walking the Walk

The Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation’s new home includes several “green” and energy-saving features. A sampling follows.

A reflective thermoplastic polyolefin, or TPO, roof on the center’s addition that minimizes heat absorption; green roofs on Benedum auditorium and Benedum plaza.

More than 95 percent of construction refuse recycled: old concrete used for fill, lumber and sawdust repurposed into particleboard, and discarded metal melted down.

Estimated to save 17.9 percent more in energy costs than a similar structure of standard design.

Energy-recovery coil system that removes energy from the exhaust air stream and inserts it into the air stream serving the building, providing free energy.

Supply of outdoor air pumped indoors is contingent on the interior’s carbon dioxide level.

Premium efficiency motors for all mechanical equipment estimated to save more than $600 per year each in energy costs.

Sensors that adjust indoor lighting by the level of incoming natural light.

Highly efficient LED lights on exterior that contain no mercury and last 10 times longer than fluorescent lighting.

—By Morgan Kelly
Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg brought sunflowers to Marilyn Stubbs, the lead barista in the Cathedral of Learning’s Starbucks coffee, to recognize her for being named a regional and division winner of the Spirit of Sodexo Award. Sodexo holds the food services contract for Pitt. Stubbs, who has worked seven years in her current job, was nominated in the Service-Spirit category, and she will now be considered for the company’s national Service Spirit Award. She is known for greeting all of her customers with a smile and remembering the orders for her many regular customers.

Pitt Professors Tony Smith, Okwui Enwezor, and Nancy Canede hosted an April 16 reception in the Frick Fine Arts Building’s lecture theater to launch the book they edited, Antinomies of Art and Culture: Modernity, Postmodernity, Contemporaryity (Duke University Press, 2008). From left are Smith, the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Contemporary Art History and Theory; Nancy Canede, a film historian in Pitt’s Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; Jonathan Azen, the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of English at Pitt and director of the Humanities Center; W.I.T. Mitchell, the reception’s keynote speaker and the Gaylord Donnelley Distinguished Service Professor in English Language and Literature and Art History at the University of Chicago; and Professor James Knopp, a Pitt professor of English and the senior associate dean for the School of Arts and Sciences. Enwezor, not pictured, is a visiting professor in Pitt’s Department of the History of Art and Architecture.

The Pittsburgh NAACP honored its 2009 corporate sponsors during a continental celebration hosted by Urban Settlement Services and its CEO, Charles Sanders. The office of Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg was a sponsor of the event held May 7 at the Omni William Penn, Downtown. Pitt Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs Robert Hill introduced guest speaker U.S. Congresswoman John Lewis (Georgia), who spoke via satellite from Washington, D.C. Life Beth Eperson also delivered remarks; she is the daughter of David E. Eperson, dean emeritus of Pitt’s School of Social Work, and the wife of Benjamin Todd Jeordia, NAACP national president and CEO. Pictured from left are Jackia Huggins, a Pitt Computer Services and Systems Development communications staffer; Hill; and Vice Provost and Dean of Students Kathy W. Humphrey.

Four faculty members in the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Education have been recognized for their academic achievements and expertise.

Rita M. Bean, professor emeritus in the Department of Instruction and Learning, received the International Reading Association (IRA) Special Service Award for distinguished service to the association. Bean, who joined the University in 1971, also was inducted into the Reading Hall of Fame this year. Established in 1973, the Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have contributed to further improvement in reading instruction. An IRA member for more than 40 years, Bean was a member of the IRA board of directors from 2002 to 2006. During that time, she served as a member of the Research on Teacher Education Committee. Bean also chaired the Commission on the Role of the Reading Specialist, which conducted a national study on the role of reading specialists that resulted in an IRA position statement in 2000.

Nancy S. Elman, associate professor emeritus in the Department of Psychology in Education, was elected a fellow of the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Society of Counseling Psychology Division 17. A member of Pitt’s faculty since 1965, Elman joined the University as an assistant professor in the Counselor Education Program. She has taught in Pitt’s doctoral program in counseling psychology and Department of Applied Developmental Psychology and was a faculty member in the School of Social Work’s Family Therapy Certificate Program. A licensed psychologist in Pennsylvania, Elman has had a private practice in Pittsburgh since 1974.

Roger D. Klein, a professor in the Department of Psychology in Education, received the 2009 Award for Distinguished Professional Contributions to Media Psychology. The award was presented by the American Psychological Association’s (APA) Division of Media Psychology at the APA annual convention held in Toronto earlier this month. A member of the Division of Media Psychology since 1988, Klein joined the University in 1969. He has worked as a freelance health reporter for WPXI-TV, CNBC, and PBS. Since 1999, Klein has produced a twice-weekly radio series for KQV 1410 AM, originally called The Psychology Minute and, in 2007, renamed The Healthcare Quality Minute. The Jewish Healthcare Foundation has sponsored the segment since 2000. Among Klein’s honors are a 2001 Pitt Chancellor’s Distinguished Public Service Award and the annual media award from the Pennsylvania Psychological Association in 1982 and in 2007.

Alan Lesgold, School of Education dean and professor, was appointed chair of the National Academies’ Committee on the Learning Sciences: Foundations and Applications to Adolescent and Adult Literacy. A National Research Council (NRC) Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education committee, the group will produce a consensus summary of the state of research relevant to adult and adolescent literacy. It will meet at the NRC sites in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere over the next two years. The study is funded by the National Institute for Literacy in the U.S. Department of Education. Lesgold is a national associate of the National Academies. Prior to becoming the School of Education dean, Lesgold served as executive associate director of Pitt’s Learning Research and Development Center. He founded and directed Pitt’s interdisciplinary doctoral program in cognitive science and artificial intelligence.
Ann Dugan, founder and director of Pitt's Institute for Entrepreneurial Excellence (IEE), received Ernst & Young LLP's Entrepreneur of the Year award for the upstate New York, Western Pennsylvania, and West Virginia region. Through her work at IEE, Dugan has been instrumental in developing essential infrastructure for entreprenuers that enables the growth and sustainability of businesses.

Audrey Murrell, a professor and director of the University of Pittsburgh's David Berg Center for Ethics and Leadership, was recently awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration Minority Small Business Champion Award. The award recognizes Murrell's volunteer and research efforts to advance the small-business interests of underrepresented populations within the community, state, and beyond.

Yuting Zhang, an assistant professor in the Graduate School of Public Health's Department of Health Policy and Management, received the Excellence in Mental Health Policy and Economics Research Award from the International Center of Mental Health Policy and Economics. She received the award for her article "Cost-Saving Effects of Olanzapine as Long-Term Treatment for Bipolar Disorder," published in the Journal of Mental Health Policy and Economics.

Anthony P. Yates, an assistant clinical professor in Pitt's School of Medicine and a Pittsburgh Steelers team physician, was awarded the Jerry "Hawk" Rhea Award by the National Football League (NFL) Physicians Society. The award is present each year to an NFL team physician for distinguished years of service to the respective team, the NFL, and long-standing relationships with the members of the Professional Football Athletic Trainers Society.

Kathy S. Magdic, an attorney and past president of the Nurse Practitioner Association of Southwestern Pennsylvania. The organization's members comprise nurse practitioners who work in many clinical settings.

Stephen Strom, a professor of cellular and molecular pathology in the School of Medicine's Department of Pathology, was elected president of the Cell Transplantation Society, an international organization that promotes research and collaboration in cellular transplantation and regenerative medicine throughout the world. Strom also is the Hepatoceen section editor for Cell Transplantation: The Regenerative Medicine Journal.

Jinhua He, a postdoctoral research associate in the School of Pharmacy's Center for Pharmacogenetics, was selected to receive the American Liver Foundation (ALF) Irwin M. Arias, M.D., Postdoctoral Research Fellowship. Only eight scholars nationwide are selected for the fellowship each year. The ALF's mission is to promote education, support, and research for the prevention, treatment, and cure of liver disease.

Mark W. Ochs, a professor, associate dean, and chair, Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, School of Dental Medicine, received the American Dental Association's 2009 Golden Apple Award for Inspiring Careers in Dental Education. This student-nominated award is presented nationally to one individual each year.

Richard Henker, a professor and vice chair of Acute and Tertiary Care, School of Nursing, and nurse anesthetist, UPMC Presbyterian, received a 2009 Health Volunteers Overseas (HVO) Golden Apple Award. The award honors volunteers' extraordinary educational contributions to international program sites. Henker was recognized for his volunteer work in Cambodua's Angkor Children's Hospital, where he trained Cambodian nurse anesthetists to improve their anesthesia care and to share their knowledge with others. He also is responsible for the recruitment and design of a nurse anesthesia program in Bhutan that began earlier this year.

Eugene M. Myers, a professor in the School of Medicine's Department of Otolaryngology, received a gold medal from the International Federation of Oto-Rhino-Laryngological Societies for his international work with otolaryngology. This award was presented at the XIX World Congress of Otolaryngology in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Fadi G. Lukkis, a professor of surgery and immunology in the School of Medicine and scientific director of the Thomas E. Starzl Transplantation Institute, received the American Society of Transplantation (AST) Basic Science Established Investigator Award at the Professor Level. Recipients of AST's 2009 Achievement Awards were selected for the originality, innovation, and commitment they bring to the field of transplantation.

G. Kelley Fitzgerald, a professor in the Department of Physical Therapy, received the American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) 2009 Catherine Worthingham Fellow Award. A member of the orthopaedic and research sections of APTA, he also is the 2001 recipient of APTA's Dorothy Briggs Memorial Scientific Inquiry Award and the 2002 Manuscript Reviewer of the Year Award from Physical Therapy, the scientific journal of APTA.

Lewis Kuller, Distinguished Professor of Public Health and professor of epidemiology in the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, was named a 2009 American Heart Association Distinquished Scientist for Major Contributions to Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke Research. For more than 40 years, Kuller has studied risk factors for individuals with heart disease and the development of atherosclerosis and heart disease. He established and directed the Healthy Women's Study, the first and longest study of women from pre- to post-menopause. He also is nationally recognized for his contributions to the study of cardiovascular disease and the use of noninvasive techniques, such as ultrasound and coronary computed tomography, to detect early heart disease in people without symptoms.

University of Pittsburgh Honors College student Natalia Arutynov, a senior with a double major in economics and political science in the School of Arts and Sciences, has been named a 2009 National Security Education Program David L. Boren Scholar. Arutynov, a resident of Upper Holland, Pa., is a first-generation U.S. citizen of Armenian descent who was born in the Republic of Georgia.

Boren scholars are funded up to $20,000 to U.S. undergraduate students to study in areas of the world that are critical to U.S. national security interests. Scholars study less commonly taught languages, including Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, and Swahili. The award is funded by the National Security Education Program (NSEP).

This is the seventh consecutive year that a Pitt student has been named the honor, and Arutynov is the 19th Pitt student to receive a Boren Scholarship since 1997. She plans to continue her study of the language, history, and culture of the East European nation of Georgia during the 2009-10 academic year.

Alec Stewart, dean of the Honors College, says Arutynov is an ideal candidate for the award.

“Natalia's scholarship ability and Armenian background give her the international foundation and infrastructure to benefit from a year in Georgia,” said Stewart. "Upon her return, she will be a stellar resource for other students with an interest in Eastern European and foreign affairs.”

In addition to working on her majors, Arutynov is pursuing a certificate in Russian and East European Study from Pitt's University Center for International Studies. While in Georgia, Arutynov will attend the Tbilisi State University, where she will participate in 30 weeks of academic coursework focused on Georgian phonetics, grammar, composition, oral comprehension, and reading. She also will live with a local family throughout the year.

Arutynov's future plans include attending graduate school and focusing on foreign affairs, followed by a career in U.S. diplomacy involving East European countries. She said she views her year in Georgia as an opportunity to strengthen her knowledge of the complex issues surrounding the people of Eastern Europe.

“It is in the interest of the United States to understand what it means that many of these nation's citizens still possess a Soviet or post Soviet mentality, and that they are still struggling to regain their identity,” said Arutynov. “International diplomacy is an integral part of U.S. national security, and as Eastern European states continue to grow politically and economically, there is a great demand to extend and strengthen our ties with these nations.”

Arutynov spent the first five years of her life in Georgia before immigrating to the United States in 1991. She said growing up in a home where multiple languages were spoken helped her to develop a passion for her native language. "I have always enjoyed language," Arutynov said. "I am really excited to return to Georgia."
Lectures/ Seminars/ Readings

**Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series to Launch 2009-10 Season**

By Anthony M. Moore

The Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series will be celebrating a decade of activism, critical thought, and literature as it opens its 2009-10 season with a reading by the 2009 Fred R. Brown Literary Award winner Aleksandar Hemon at 8:30 p.m. Sept. 17 in the JW. Connolly Ballroom, Alumni Hall.

The 2009-10 Writers Series season will feature a number of interviews and discussions focused on the future of book publishing and the literary world. Notable speakers will include Maud Newton, whose embrace of blogging and other Internet-based innovations has led her to be a commentator on major media outlets, and Patrick Mondy, whose book *The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age* (Faber & Faber, 1994) examines the decline in the reading of books as a result of overwhelming advances of the Internet and other technologies.

The season will commence with a reading by Hemon, a critically acclaimed journalist and writer. A native of Sarajevo, Bosnia, Hemon graduated from the University of Sarajevo with a degree in literature in 1990. While Hemon was visiting the United States in 1992, war broke out in his country, forcing him to seek political asylum in Chicago. He began writing, and his international experience—stories that eventually became his first book, *The Question of Bruno* (Doubleday, 2000).

Hemon is also the author of *The Lazarus Project* (Riverhead Books, 2008), which was a finalist for the 2008 National Book Award, as well as *Love and Obstacles* (Riverhead Books, 2009) and *Nowhere Man* (Doobleday, 2002). His work has appeared in such publications as *The New Yorker*, *Esquire*, and *The Paris Review*. Among Hemon’s many awards and distinctions are a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, commonly referred to as a “genius” award, the Kean Fellowship, and the 2008 Chicago Tribune Heartland Award in Fiction.

The most recent addition to the Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series, the Fred R. Brown Literary Award, rewards fiction writers in the early stages of their careers. It carries a financial honorarium and is underwritten by Pitt alumni Fred R. (A&S ’71) and Melanie (CGS ’86, KGSB ’90 and KGSB ’93) Brown of Bethel Park, Pa.

The complete schedule for the 2009-10 Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series follows.

**Sept. 17—Fred R. Brown Literary Award Reading and Interview**

8:30 p.m., JW. Connolly Ballroom, Alumni Hall

Aleksandar Hemon will give a reading and will be featured in a live interview titled “The Future of Fiction,” which will be conducted by Pitt creative writing professor Irina Reym. *author of* *What Happened to Anna K.* (Touchstone, 2005).

**Oct. 14—Drue Heinz Literature Prize Reading and Award Ceremony**

7:30 p.m., Frick Fine Arts Auditorium


**Nov. 5—C.D. Wright Reading and Interview**

8:30 p.m., Frick Fine Arts Auditorium

Wright is the author of 12 books of poetry, including her latest, *Rising, Falling, Hovering* (Copper Canyon Press, 2008). She will deliver a reading and will be featured in a live interview titled “The Future of Poetry,” which will be conducted by Pitt poetry professor Dawn Lundy Martin, author of *A Gathering of Matter/ A Matter of Gathering: Poems* (University of Georgia Press, 2005).

**Feb. 11—2009 William Block Senior Writer Presentation and Interview**

8:30 p.m., Frick Fine Arts Auditorium

Sven Birkerts, 2009 William Block Senior Writer, is the author of several collections of essays, including *The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age* (Faber & Faber, 1994).


**March 25—Nathanial Mackey**

8:30 p.m., Frick Fine Arts Auditorium

Mackey is the author of five chapbooks and four books of poetry, including the critically acclaimed *Splay Anthem* (*New Directions*, 2006), which won the 2006 National Book Award in Poetry. Mackey will be featured in a live interview titled “The Future of Poetry II,” conducted by Pitt poetry professor Ben Lerner.

The 2009-10 Pittsburgh Contemporary Writers Series season is cosponsored by Pitt’s Writing Program, Book Center, University Library System, and University of Pittsburgh Press.

All events in the Contemporary Writers Series are free and open to the public. For more information, contact Jeff Oaks at oaks@pitt.edu or visit www.english.pitt.edu.
PITT ARTS Launches 2009-10 Season, Tying University With City’s Cultural Life

By Sharon S. Blake

PITT ARTS, the University of Pittsburgh program designed to connect Pitt students, faculty, and staff to the city’s cultural life, will hold events on Sept. 9 and 17 to introduce the Pitt community to the program’s wide variety of cultural events.

From noon to 2 p.m. Sept. 9, Pitt ARTS will host the 6th Annual Attack of the Cheap Seats in the William Pitt Union Assembly Room. All of the Cultural District venues that participate in the Cheap Seats program will be represented, and patrons will have the opportunity to buy single tickets to shows or a whole season. A free lunch will be served.

The Cheap Seats program provides deeply discounted tickets to performances at a number of arts organizations. For example, the Pittsburgh CLO Cabaret series will feature Forever Plaid and Nunsense this year, among other shows. The Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre is offering such classics as Sleeping Beauty and Swan Lake.

And representatives from the Pittsburgh Opera will be on hand selling tickets to Carmen, Falstaff, and Eugene Onegin.

The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust is selling tickets to performances at the new August Wilson Center for African American Culture, featuring R&B singer Lalah Hathaway, spoken word artist Marc Bamuthi Joseph, and dynamic dance company Philadanco. Additionally, the Trust will sell tickets for performances by Stomp, Click, Clack, Moo and magician David Copperfield. Highlights of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra season this year include Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Vivaldi’s The Four Seasons, Holst’s The Planets, Mozart’s Requiem, and Pittsburgh Symphony Pops concerts featuring Music of the Beatles and Cirque de la Symphonie. The Pittsburgh Public Theater explores the classics this year with The Price by Arthur Miller and Lillian Hellman’s The Little Foxes; it also offers Ella: A Musical and others.

The following week, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sept. 17, Pitt ARTS will hold its 11th Annual Art Fair in the William Pitt Union Ballroom. Members of the Pitt community are invited to browse tables staffed by representatives from approximately 30 Pittsburgh arts organizations, including Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Andy Warhol Museum, the Mattress Factory Art Museum, the Carnegie Museums, Pittsburgh Public Theater, the Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild, the Guitar Society of Fine Art, the Pittsburgh CLO Cabaret, and many others. Attendees will be able to pick up free literature, talk with staff, sign up to win prizes and ticket giveaways, and enjoy another free lunch, which will be served at noon.

Funded by the Office of the Provost, Pitt ARTS also provides free outings for Pitt undergraduate students, free museum visits for Pitt students, and on-campus art experiences. Each year, Pitt ARTS engages approximately 43,000 Pitt students, including those who participate more than once. For more information, call 412-624-1153 or visit www.pittarts.pitt.edu.