Thomas V. Inglesby
Named Director of UPMC Center for Biosecurity

The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) named Thomas V. Inglesby to be the new director and chief executive officer of the Center for Biosecurity of UPMC. He succeeds Tara O’Toole, who was recently appointed Under Secretary for Science and Technology in the Department of Homeland Security.

Inglesby is a professor of medicine and public health in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and Graduate School of Public Health and has been the chief operating officer and deputy director of the Baltimore-based Center for Biosecurity since its founding in 2003. An infectious diseases physician by training, Inglesby was one of the founding members of the Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies, where he was the deputy director from 2001 to 2003.

Inglesby has been an advisor to numerous government, scientific, and academic organizations on issues related to biosecurity. He has served on committees of the Defense Science Board and the National Research Council of the National Academies of Sciences. Most recently, he was appointed to the Technical Committee on National Health Security Strategy and as a member of the Maryland Governor’s H1N1 Flu Advisory Board.

“Building on the center’s already strong foundation, it is my intention that the center will continue to provide insightful, constructive, and respected policy analysis and practical recommendations aimed at preventing and mitigating the effects of biological threats and other serious health challenges,” said Inglesby. “I will place a particular priority on improving the nation’s response to H1N1, on strategies to address the evolving biological weapons threat, and on international partnerships to confront these issues.”

The Center for Biosecurity is an independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to strengthen national security by reducing the risks posed by biological attacks, epidemics, and other destabilizing events, and to improve the nation’s resilience in the face of such events.

NIH Awards $12.5 Million for Center on Sexually Transmitted Infections

By Marc Lukashik and Anita Srikaneswaran

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine have received a $12.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to establish the UPMC Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) Cooperative Research Center.

The center will be led by principal investigator Toni Darville, a professor of pediatrics and immunology in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and chief of the Division of Pediatric Infectious Diseases at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. Darville’s laboratory at Children’s Hospital is internationally recognized for its research related to chlamydial infections.

Scientists in the center will focus their research, based at Children’s Hospital, the Magee-Womens Research Institute, and the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences in Pitt’s School of Medicine, on the prevention of female reproductive tract complications caused by sexually transmitted infections. Their research will be funded through a five-year grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

“This center will bring together many promising research initiatives already under way at Children’s Hospital and the Magee-Womens Research Institute. And the center is led by scientists with many years of experience leading basic science and clinical research trials related to sexually transmitted diseases,” Darville said. “Through our collaboration, we hope to speed the development of interventions that will limit or prevent genital tract disease in millions of women worldwide and ultimately limit ectopic pregnancy.

Continued on page 3

Pitt 2008 Truman Scholar Eleanor Ott Named 2010 Rhodes Scholar

“Her decision to pursue graduate work at Oxford’s Refugee Studies Centre is indicative of what she values: knowledge that she can provide a glimmer of hope in the perplexingly catastrophic lives of refugees. Through her personal journey, she has taught us that, for her, change through empowerment takes heart, stamina, and the ability to lead on an international level. It is remarkable what this young lady from Pitt is achieving.”

—Alec Stewart

Eleanor Ott, a University of Pittsburgh Honors College graduate who received a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and French and a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from Pitt, has been named a 2010 Rhodes Scholarship winner.

Ott is the only public institution in Pennsylvania with a 2010 Rhodes Scholar. Swarthmore College is the only other institution in the state with a 2010 Rhodes Scholarship winner.

Ott, who is a Lawrence, Kan., native, is the sixth Pitt undergraduate-degree recipient to win the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship. A former Pitt Chancellor’s Scholar, Ott was a 2008 Truman Scholarship winner.

Ott’s interests are human rights, refugee issues, and the use of evidence-based policies to ease the plight of refugee populations. At the University of Oxford, she will study forced migration and evidence-based social intervention, refugee and migration issues, and social-science research methods.

Rhodes Scholarships, the oldest of the international study awards available to U.S. students, provide two or three years of study at the University of Oxford in England.

“My first opportunity to meet with Eleanor Ott to discuss her work in chemistry, history, and French occurred in 2008, when she was the only student from a Pennsylvania public university to be named a Truman Scholar,” said Pitt Chancellor Mark Nordenberg. “Ellie’s exemplary record as an outstanding Pitt student and a highly effective leader made her the ideal candidate for that prestigious honor. Her selection as a Rhodes Scholar is further testament to her distinguished record of academic excellence, overall high achievement, and wide-ranging humanitarian commitment.”

“At the very beginning of her undergraduate career, Eleanor Ott stood out,” said Alec Stewart, Honors College dean. “Her decision to pursue graduate work at Oxford’s Refugee Studies Centre is indicative of what she values: knowledge that she can provide a glimmer of hope in the perplexingly catastrophic lives of refugees. Through her personal journey, she has taught us that, for her, change through empowerment takes heart, stamina, and the ability to lead on an international level. It is remarkable what this young lady from Pitt is achieving.”

After graduating from Pitt in April, Ott, a Truman-Albright Fellow, took a position as a social science research analyst in the Office of National Intelligence.

Continued on page 3
Continued from page 1

sexually transmitted pathogens, especially common and serious complication of some disease (PID). According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, PID is a common and serious complication of some sexually transmitted pathogens, especially chlamydia and gonorrhea. It can damage the fallopian tubes and tissues in and near the uterus and ovaries and can lead to serious consequences, including infertility, ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy in the fallopian tube or elsewhere outside of the womb), abscess formation, and chronic pelvic pain.

Each year in the United States, it is estimated that more than a million women experience an episode of acute PID. More than 100,000 women become infected with PID every year as a result of PID, and a continuation of the ectopic pregnancies that occur every year are because of PID complications.

The UPMC STI Cooperative Research Center will consist of four projects. The first project will be led by Harold Wiesenberg, director of the Division of Reproductive Infectious Diseases in the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Medicine and associate investigator at Magee-Womens Research Institute. The goal of this project is to determine the importance of new reproductive infectious disease research in the treatment of women with PID.

The second project will be led by Shiva Hillier, professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive sciences, and of microbiology and molecular genetics in Pitt’s School of Medicine and director of reproductive infectious disease research at Magee-Womens Research Institute. The goal of this project is to identify novel bacteria that might play a role in the development of PID.

The third project will be led by Darville. The goal of this project is to determine the role of Toll-like receptor 2 signaling in innate and adaptive responses to chlamydia. Toll-like receptor 2 is a protein important in the innate immune system.

Project four will be led by Thomas Chergey, assistant professor of obstetrics, gynecology, and reproductive sciences in Pitt’s School of Medicine and a researcher at Magee-Womens Research Institute. The goal of this project is to identify the specific lymphocyte-mediated immune responses most strongly associated with protection against Chlamydia trachomatis infection and containment of the pathogen to the lower genital tract in a cohort of women at high risk for PID.

Darville is considered one of the world’s foremost researchers of Chlamydia trachomatis, a bacterium that is the most frequently reported cause of sexually transmitted disease in the United States. Because symptoms are usually mild or absent, it can damage a woman’s reproductive organs and cause irreversible damage, including infertility, before a woman ever recognizes a problem.

which it is named.

For more information about the Open House, contact the Nationality Rooms Programs office at 412-624-6000 or visit www.pitt.edu/~nationality.

—Kristin Shearer

Donations of Hat-and-Glove Sets Needed for Pitt Annual Christmas Dinner

Pitt’s Volunteer Pool and the Salvation Army are collecting new hat-and-glove sets to distribute to adults and children during the 4th Annual Salvation Army Christmas Dinner on Dec. 25. Invited guests include the homeless, the needy, and foreign students who may not have an invitation for a Christmas meal. The dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering Activities Center, lower level.

Each guest will receive a gift bag that will include, among other items, a hat-and-glove set. Pitt’s Volunteer Pool is seeking donations of the sets for male and female children and adults, which can be dropped off at 710 Alumni Hall until Monday, Dec. 14.

Additional information is available by contacting Gwen Watkins, community activities coordinator for Pitt’s Office of Community and Governmental Relations, 412-624-7702.

NIH Awards $12.5 Million for Center On Sexually Transmitted Infections

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded $12.5 million to the University of Pittsburgh to establish and support a new Sexually Transmitted Infections and Iatrogenic Infections Center of Excellence. The center will bring together a broad range of researchers from throughout the university to address major problems in sexually transmitted infections.

The research projects will focus on bacterial infections of the female upper genital tract that produce pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, PID is a common and serious complication of some sexually transmitted pathogens, especially chlamydia and gonorrhea. It can damage the fallopian tubes and tissues in and near the uterus and ovaries and can lead to serious consequences, including infertility, ectopic pregnancy (a pregnancy in the fallopian tube or elsewhere outside of the womb), abscess formation, and chronic pelvic pain.

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U.S. Senate Confirms Pitt Alumnus as Director of National Institute of Standards and Technology

By Morgan Kelly

The U.S. Senate, in a Nov. 5 vote, confirmed University of Pittsburgh alumnus Patrick Gallagher as the 14th director of the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Gallagher will direct the agency that supplies and oversees the nation’s standards of measurement, including the official time; has an annual budget of approximately $800 million; and employs nearly 3,000 people, including scientists and engineers.

Gallagher earned his master’s and PhD degrees in physics at Pitt in 1987 and is a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In recognition of his work, Gallagher was awarded a Department of Commerce Gold Medal, the department’s highest award, in 2006.

Patrick Gallagher (center) stands with two fellow NIST physicists and Pitt alums during a reception after his Nov. 20 swearing in ceremony as NIST director. At left is Ronald Tosh (A&S ’70G, ’92G) and on the right, Paul Bangstrom (A&S ’86B, ’92G).

Ott Named 2010 Rhodes Scholar

Continued from page 1

By Morgan Kelly

The University of Pittsburgh’s 2010 Rhodes Scholar is Jamie Ott, a junior from Lincoln, Neb., majoring in German and French. Ott is Pitt’s 19th Rhodes Scholar, and its first since 1991. The Rhodes Scholar program began in 1902 with a bequest from Cecil J. Rhodes, a British colonial pioneer, statesman, and philanthropist, who died in 1902. Although intellectual distinction is a necessary requirement for selection as a Rhodes Scholar, it is not alone sufficient. The selection process seeks excellence in qualities of mind and of person, which, in combination, offer the promise of effective service to humanity and to the world in the decades ahead.

Jamie Dixon

University of Pittsburgh men’s basketball head coach Jamie Dixon has been named the 2009 USA Basketball National Coach of the Year.

USA Basketball, based in Colorado Springs, Colo., is the national governing body for men’s and women’s basketball in the United States. Among its members are the National Basketball Association, the Women’s National Basketball Association, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). It oversees U.S. teams in a number of arenas, including the Olympic Games and the Pan American Games. It also fields men’s and women’s national teams for play- ers 19 years old and younger (U19), as well as a U17 team for players 17 and younger.

Dixon’s USA Basketball team won a gold medal at the 2009 FIBA U19 World Championship this past July. His USA squad compiled a perfect 9-0 record during the games, which were played in Auckland, New Zealand. The victory ended an 18-year drought for USA Basketball, which hadn’t won the men’s U19 World Championship since 1991.

“Jamie Dixon has established himself as one of the finest collegiate coaches in the game today, and this past summer, he proved himself on the international court, too,” said USA Basketball Chair Jerry Colangelo. “In leading the USA Men’s U19 Team to the World Championship, he not only accomplished something that the U.S. has not done since 1991, but to do so, he had to quickly form a team from 12 individual players and earn their respect and confidence. He obviously did so, and his team responded by winning its nine games in an impressive team manner.”

The USA Basketball National Coach of the Year title was previously awarded to Duke University’s Mike Krzyzewski in each of the last three years (2006-08). Other prominent award winners have included Larry Brown, coach of the Philadelphia 76ers, in 1999, and of the Detroit Pistons, in 2003; and Syracuse University’s Jim Boeheim, who won the title in 2001.

Dixon is Pitt’s second USA Basketball coach, following Mike Roll, who was named USA Basketball’s head coach for the U.S. Olympic Committee’s 2009 National Coach of the Year award, which is expected to be announced in January.

Dixon’s impressive performance as a USA coach came on the heels of a record-setting NCAA season in 2008-09. The Panthers finished 28-6 overall and went 16-2 in the ACC, the school’s first No. 1 national ranking, and the program’s first No. 1 seed upon entering the 2009 NCAA Tournament. He was rewarded with being named the 2009 Naismith National Coach of the Year, college basketball’s most prestigious national award.

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The 3rd Annual Shyne Awards were held Aug. 6 in the Byham Theater, Downtown. The awards showcase the positive achievements made by young adults between the ages of 13 to 19. Among the awards’ sponsors were Pitt’s Office of Public Affairs and the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business’s David Berg Center for Ethics and Leadership.

Members of a Zambian research team joined the Pitt School of Medicine’s Department of Family Medicine for an Aug. 30 dinner held in the home of Robert Hill, Pitt vice chancellor for public affairs. The Zambian researchers were invited to Pittsburgh through a University Center for International Studies and Center for Global Health-funded grant that supported a Maternal Health Disparities Conference and seminars for undergraduates, law students, and faculty. Clinicians and scientists from the University of Zambia and Pitt have formed a collaborative to address factors that enhance the continuum and quality of care for maternal and child health in Zambia as well as in Western Pennsylvania. From left, Jeannette South-Paul, the Andrew W. Mathieson Professor and Chair in the Pitt School of Medicine’s Department of Family Medicine; Michael Paul, Zambian researchers Obed Lungu, Getrude Tshuma, Fastone Goma, Beatrice Zulu, and Dhally Menda; and Hill.

Rachel Rosnick, a third-year student in Pitt’s School of Law, won a new 16GB iPod as part of UPMC’s Dignity and Respect Campaign, which ran throughout October and encouraged dignity and respect in the workplace. Participants from companies and organizations in Southwestern Pennsylvania made online Dignity and Respect pledges and also registered to interact on the campaign’s Facebook page, making them eligible to win the iPod. Rosnick, who stands beside campaign mascot “Dr. Diggy” in the William Pitt Union, received her prize from Carol Mohamed, director of Pitt’s Office of Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Inclusion; Erica Metzger, an intern with the UPMC Center for Inclusion; and Dawnita J. Wilson, the center’s chief of staff.

Pitt students interested in health-sciences careers gathered Oct. 3 in the William Pitt Union for a daylong conference, Graduates of 2013 (G-2013) Pre-health Summit—Freshman Year: Laying the Pave-ment for Health Professionals’ School Acceptance. The event addressed the expanded skill base necessary to succeed as a prehealth student at Pitt. From left are Marvin Roth, director of career services within Pitt’s Division of Student Affairs; Paula K. Davis, assistant vice chancellor of health sciences diversity; Candii Castleberry-Singleton, UPMC’s chief diversity officer; and Ryan Parker, director of Pitt’s Office of Health Sciences Diversity and conference coordinator. The event was sponsored by Pitt’s COACH (Creating Opportunities and Access to Careers in Health) Program, Office of Health Sciences Diversity, University Honors College, Academic Resource Center, and UPMC.

Pitt’s new Humanities Center held its inaugural conference, Humanities in a Time of Crisis, in the Frick Fine Arts Auditorium on Nov. 13-14. The center is located in 300 Cathedral of Learning, and its director is Jonathan Arac, a Pitt professor of English. John Cooper, the Bettye J. and Ralph E. Bailey Dean of Arts and Sciences (left), and Arac (right) delivered opening remarks for the conference.

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THE REWARDS OF DIGNITY AND RESPECT

ACROSS THE GLOBE

TEENS WHO ‘SHYNE’

HUMANITIES CENTER LAUNCH

LAYING A HEALTHY FOUNDATION

THE REWARDS OF DIGNITY AND RESPECT

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Developmental biologists at the University of Pittsburgh have been chosen to participate in a $100 million federal Bench-to-Bassinet network that is dedicated to learning about the formation of the cardiovascular system and applying that knowledge to create new diagnostic and intervention strategies for congenital heart disease.

The Pitt team, headed by Cecilia Lo, chair of the Department of Developmental Biology, School of Medicine, will use the mouse as a model system to identify and describe the core set of genes that play an essential role in producing structural heart defects. Such defects include holes in the heart walls, transposition of major blood vessels that connect to the heart, and other cardiac-development problems that can affect as many as 1 percent of live births.

Ultimately, we want to build a diagnostic system that can rapidly and accurately identify the genetic root causes of specific heart defects,” Lo explained. “That could enable us to examine how these genes influence disease progression, correlate them with long-term outcomes, and better tailor treatment.”

To find the genetic determinants of congenital heart disease, Lo’s $8.6 million project will expose fetal mice to a chemical that increases the likelihood of gene mutations and use noninvasive fetal echocardiography to spot any heart defects that result. Then the DNA of the affected mice will be examined to identify the gene changes that caused the abnormality. A zebrafish model will be used as a quick biosystem to validate the findings.

Lo is particularly interested in mutations that affect the function of cilia, which are hair-like projections on cells that are best known for moving fluids along tissue surfaces. “We now know cilia are critical to heart development in the fetus,” she said. “For example, they help to correctly orient the heart, which is a left-right asymmetrical organ. This asymmetry is crucial for normal functioning and allows for efficient oxygenation of blood.”

One of only a handful of similar academic departments nationwide, the Department of Developmental Biology was established in April at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine; Lo was named its founding chair.

“As the Bench-to-Bassinet consortium indicates, the study of fetal organ and tissue development will not only teach us about fundamental biological principles, but also could yield the treatments of the future,” said Arthur S. Levine, dean of the School of Medicine and senior vice chancellor for the health sciences at Pitt.

“Dr. Lo’s research techniques also can be applied to similar exploration of birth defects in other organ systems.”

The Bench-to-Bassinet program was devised by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, which is part of the National Institutes of Health. Lo’s project is in the Cardiovascular Development Consortium, which includes research teams from the University of Utah, Harvard University, and the University of California, San Francisco. Another consortium comprising five research centers will focus its work on translational research in pediatric cardiac genomics. Both will work with an existing clinical pediatric heart disease network.

“Congenital heart defects are the most common and life-threatening problem for newborns in the United States,” said NHLBI director Elizabeth G. Nabel. “Our Bench-to-Bassinet research efforts will offer new insights into how the human cardiovascular system develops and help speed the transition of promising laboratory discoveries into treatments that can save young lives.”

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Iowa will lead a $9 million, five-year initiative to study the development of facial birth defects. The FaceBase Consortium will create an encyclopedic database of how the faces of children develop and what goes wrong to cause malformations.

FaceBase will build a list of the genes and proteins that drive embryonic cell differentiation around the forming face. These cells become bone, cartilage, ligament, nerve, and soft tissue, which are visible as the developing face in the first sonogram of a fetus. However, questions remain about how this development occurs.

“FaceBase will bring together data that have never before been in the same location,” said Mary Marazita, coprincipal investigator of the FaceBase Management and Coordination Hub and director of the Center for Craniofacial and Dental Genetics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine.

“The hope is that this database will help us to piece together the information needed to intervene when facial development starts to go wrong— or prevent it from going wrong in the first place.”

Marazita and colleague, Seth Weinberg, a research assistant professor in the Pitt School of Dental Medicine, also have received one of independent FaceBase research and technology grants. This $1.5 million, five-year research grant will focus on acquiring 3D facial images and a large number of genetic markers from participants in Pittsburgh, Seattle, and Houston. The resulting data will be available through FaceBase and will allow discovery of genes related to facial features.

Jeff Murray, a professor at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, will serve as coprincipal investigator of the FaceBase Management and Coordination Hub.

“It’s an exciting challenge to help produce a database that brings together biochemical, molecular, genetic, and imaging findings related to human facial and skull development,” Murray said. “FaceBase will essentially create a ‘how-to’ manual of all the instructions that are needed to properly develop the mid-face, which includes the nose, upper lip, and palate, or roof of the mouth.”

Development of the FaceBase portal and database will be in collaboration with coinvestigator Michael Becich, chair of the Pitt Department of Biomedical Informatics. A prototype is expected to be ready within the next year followed by a fully functioning portal and database soon thereafter. FaceBase will be free and publicly accessible to the scientific community.

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“FaceBase is funded by the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, part of the National Institutes of Health.”
Primack's project, “Waterpipe the motives for monetary Transfers,” seeks to expand Exchange in Intergenerational Family Motives: Altruism vs. project, “Heterogeneity of Murtazashvili's award-winning in Pitt's School of Medicine. death in September 2000. director from 1989 until his 1974 and served as its assistant began working at UCSUR in Manners, a sociologist who named in memory of Steven ing research and infrastructure awards, which honor promis- hookah smoking. The Manners waterpipe-related studies, including low response rates and a lack of focus on Primack's project, “Waterppee Tobacco Smoking at the Uni- versity of Pittsburgh: A Long- itudinal Study,” will address some limitations of his earlier waterpipe-related studies, including low response rates and a lack of focus on first-year students, who seem to be the most impacted by hookah smoking. The Manners awards, which honor promising research and infrastructure projects on campus, were named in memory of Steven Manners, a sociologist who began working at UCSUR in 1974 and served as its assistant director from 1989 until his death in September 2000. Alec Stewart, the Bernice L. and Morton S. Lerner Chair and dean of the University of Pittsburgh Honors College, was selected for The Simon Award for Excellence in Edu- cation by the Kiwanis Club of Oakland. Stewart received the award for his outstanding contributions in teaching and administration. He was recog- nized during a reception at the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children (WPSBC) in Oakland. The Kiwanis Club makes a donation in honor of the awardee to the charity of his or her choice, and the recipient of this year’s contribution was WPSBC.

Edward Krenzalore, the Dr. Gordon J. Van Scoy Chair of Pharmacy at Pitt and director of the Pittsburgh Poison Center and Drug Information Center at UPMC, received the American Academy of Clinical Toxicology Career Achievement Award. The award is presented to an Academy member in recogni- tion of a lifetime of dedication to and distinction in the field of clinical toxicology.

Dezi Liu, a professor in the School of Pharmacy's Depart- ment of Pharmaceutical Sciences, received a two-year $485,889 grant from the National Institutes of Health to assess the efficacy of a hydrodynamic procedure for liver gene delivery. The project is an extension of his work on the development of a computer-controlled gene-delivery system for gene therapy.

Michael Shullo, an assis- tant professor in the School of Pharmacy's Department of Pharmacy and Therapeutics, was selected to serve on the International Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation task force on heart transplantation. He will help to develop guidelines for immunosuppression and rejection management in heart transplant recipients.

Janice Pringle, a research assistant professor in Pitt's School of Pharmacy, and William Johnjulio, chair, Department of Family Medicine UPMC Mercy, are coprincipal investigators on a five-year, $1.8 million grant from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration. The grant will be used to develop a statewide training program to educate medical residents about the importance of identifying substance issues within their patient populations. The initiative is a collaborative effort among several institutions, including UPMC.
Pittsburgh Opera Piano Recital, by Glenn Lewis, Pittsburgh Opera head of music and assistant conductor, 5 p.m. Dec. 6, free, Pittsburgh Opera, 2425 Liberty Ave, Strip District, www.pittsburghopera.org.

Exhibitions

Hillman Library, Brazilian Caravaca Eagles, Audubon print, Audubon Exhibit Case, through Nov. 30, Selected Prints Exhibition From the Barry Rosensteel Japanese Prints Collection, through Dec. 19, Special Collections Department, third floor; Historical Exhibition of African-American Progress at Pitt, ongoing, ground floor, 412-648-8190.


Lectures/ Seminars/ Readings


“Science, Supposition and Refer ences: The New Program,” Robert Rynasiewicz, professor, Department of Philosophy, 412-624-1052, pittcsci@pitt.edu.


Pitt Nationalities Rooms’ Holiday Open House, free, noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 6, Cathedral of Learning Commons Room, 412-642-6150, www.pitt.edu/natrooms.

Opera/Theater/ Dance


In Search of Mozart, Pitt Fine Arts Auditorium, December 5

Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses
Blaine Connors, School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Anthropology, “Traders and the Private Lives of Public Servants in Japan: Teachers in Nagara-shiki’s Okinawa Islands,” noon Dec. 2, 306 Posvar Hall.

Ahmet Beken, School of Medicine’s Joint Program with Carnegie Mellon University in Computational Biology, “Dynamics of Protein-Degrub Interactions Inferred From Structural Ensembles and Physics-Based Models: Application to MASP Kinase Phosphorylation,” 2 p.m. Dec. 3, 3073 Biomedical Science Tower 3.

Jen Eun Song, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences’ Department of Communication Science and Disorders, “The Effects of Location on Sentence Comprehension in Persons With Aphasia and Normal Individuals,” 2 p.m. Dec. 4, 600 Forbes Tower.

Bebraghang Mohit, School of Arts and Sciences’ Intelligent Systems Program, “Locating and Reducing Translation Difficulty,” 10 a.m. Dec. 5, 3107 Sennott Square.

Richard Stoner, Swanson School of Engineering, “Engineering Approaches for Neurobiology,” 9 a.m. Dec. 6, 4073 Biomedical Science Tower 3.
By Sharon S. Blake

Today, music, as both a cultural practice and a commercial product, is enmeshed in a contentious debate concerning international law and the rights attached to individual creativity.

This controversy will be examined at the University of Pittsburgh in a symposium on music and cultural rights from 2 to 5 p.m. Dec. 4 in the Kurtzman Room of the William Pitt Union.

The symposium is a follow-up to an April 2005 conference at Pitt that offered global and local perspectives on the study of cultural rights through music. The papers presented at that conference are chapters in Music and Cultural Rights (Univ. of Illinois Press, 2009), a new book coedited by Andrew Weintraub and Bell Yung, Pitt professors of music. The symposium celebrates the publication of the book, which provides individual case studies that demonstrate how musical aspects of cultural rights play out in the specific cultural contexts of China, Hawaii, Peru, Brazil, and others.

According to Weintraub and Yung, “cultural rights” refer to a group’s ability to preserve its culture, raise its children in the ways of its forebears, continue to communicate in its language, and not be deprived of its economic base by the globalized environment in which it is located.

Yung, the symposium’s speakers will include Beverley Diamond, Canada Research Chair in Music and Ethnomusicology, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Michael Madison, professor of law, University of Pittsburgh; and Damien Pwono, executive director, Global Initiative on Culture and Society, The Aspen Institute.

Presentations to be given during the afternoon symposium are titled “Introduction to the Book Music and Cultural Rights,” “Traditional Indigenous Protocols and Property Concepts in a World of New Media,” “Melayu Music and Cultural Rights in Indonesia and Malaysia,” “Gift and Ownership in Popular Music,” and “Culture and Security: Implications for Music Diversity and Rights.”

Following the presentations, there will be a 5 p.m. reception featuring music by members of the University of Pittsburgh Gamelan Ensemble. The ensemble plays the gamelan music of the Sundanese people, an ethnic group that inhabits part of the island of Java.

In addition to Pitt’s music department, sponsors include Pitt’s Asian Studies Center, Center for Latin American Studies, Center for Russian and East European Studies, School of Law, and Office of the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.

For more information, contact Andrew Weintraub at anwein@pitt.edu or visit www.ucis.pitt.edu/mpac/conferences/music.html.
Clockwise from above: Schenley Plaza during construction, some of the new food concessions lining the walkways, and the carousel at the south end of the plaza.