University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg will welcome graduating members of the Class of 2010, faculty, trustees, alumni, staff, and invited guests, families, and friends attending Pitt’s 2010 Commencement at 2 p.m. today in the Petersen Events Center.

University of Pittsburgh alumnus and trustee John A. Swanson, founder, former president, CEO, and chairman of ANSYS, Inc., who earned his PhD degree in engineering at Pitt (1966), year later delivered the University’s 2010 commencement address. At the ceremony, Pitt will confer upon Swanson the degree of Doctor of Science Honoris Causa.

Chief University Marshal Michael R. Pinsky will open the ceremonies, leading a procession of members of the graduating class, faculty, staff, the Council of Officers, trustees, and administrative officers in full academic regalia; Pinsky is a professor of critical care medicine and bioengineering in the School of Medicine and president of the University Senate. The University Symphonic Band, under the direction of Pitt Director of Bands Jack R. Anderson, will provide music.

After the awarding of diplomas by Nordenberg, Pitt Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Michael R. Pinsky will hold their own commencement ceremonies. Swanson, who helped revolutionize computer-aided engineering four years after graduating from Pitt, has earned substantial recognition in the past 40 years, including two of the highest honors a professional engineer can receive. Last year, he was named to the National Academy of Engineering, one of 65 new members and nine foreign associates elected in 2009 for contributions to and innovations in engineering. In May 2004, Swanson received the American Association of Engineering Societies’ John Fritz Medal, widely considered the highest award in the engineering profession. Prior awardees of the Fritz Medal include Orville Wright, Alexander Graham Bell, Alfred Nobel, Thomas Edison, Guglielmo Marconi, Alfred Nobel, Thomas Edison, Guglielmo Marconi, John D. Rockefeller, and Henry Ford. In 2006, Swanson received the Society of Automotive Engineers’ highest honor, the Procter Medal, for his contributions to automotive engineering.

In addition, Swanson is a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the Institute of Mechanical Engineers (IME), and the American Society for Arts, Humanities and Sciences (ASAHS). He is a member of many other professional societies and is a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), the American Institute of Medical Research (AIMR), and the National Academy of Engineering (NAE).

As the University of Pittsburgh School of Education prepares to celebrate its 100th anniversary this fall, the school can point with pride to some notable achievements, including faculty members receiving a number of prestigious honors and, just this month, a significant jump in U.S. News & World Report’s America’s Best Graduate Schools rankings.

The School of Education is now among the top 25 schools of education in the country, advancing from 32nd last year to 23rd in this year’s rankings, which are published in the 2011 edition of the U.S. News & World Report newsletter and online at http://gradschools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-education-schools.

“The School of Education continues to excel at training teachers, specialists, and educational leaders and meeting the continually changing requirements presented by a global society, a complex economy, and the many challenges faced by the nation’s school systems,” said Alan M. Lesgold, Pitt School of Education dean and professor. “We are working diligently to ensure that our school’s students learn how to teach key skills that are most highly valued in today’s economy—teamwork, problem solving, self-management, and disciplined creativity—all while faculty and doctoral students research and develop better ways to foster and measure those skills.”

The seed for Pitt’s School of Education was planted by Edmund Burke Hay, who joined the Western University of Pennsylvania (later renamed the University of Pittsburgh) in 1904 as a professor of psychology and education. In 1905, the University offered its first two courses on education for practicing teachers; Hay promoted the idea of a Teachers College, prompting then-Chancellor Samuel Black McCormick to propose the establishment of a school of education. Hay eventually left the University to pursue research on mental retardation and was replaced by Will Grant Chambers, who became the founding dean when the School of Education was created in September 1910.

Today, the School of Education boasts several prominent faculty members and programs. Among the faculty are Professor Louis M. Gomez, the Helen S. Faison Chair in Urban Education, first director of Pitt’s Center for Urban Education, and a senior scientist in the University’s Learning Research and Development Center (LRDC); John M. Jakicic, professor and chair in the Department of Health and Physical Activity and director of its Physical Activity and Weight Management Research Center; Isabel L. Beck, professor emeritus in the school and senior scientist in LRDC, who is internationally known for her research in reading; Mary Kay Stein, director of the school’s Learning Policy Center and associate director...
Pitt Senior Finds His Passion in Theater, Wants to Devote His Life to Acting

This fall, Prentiss will enter Rutgers University’s prestigious Mason Gross School of the Arts, where he will work to earn his Master of Fine Arts in acting. Agents and casting directors routinely visit the school, which is a 30-minute train ride from New York City.

Prentiss takes with him some valuable experience—acting roles in Pitt Rep’s The Recruiting Officer and Angels In America: Perestroika; Kuntu’s The Dutchman and The Slave; a part as a featured extra in Warrior, a feature film starring Nick Nolte; and several TV and radio commercials. His next role at Pitt is the character of Roosevelt Hicks in August Wilson’s Radio Golf, which Kuntu presents May 27-June 12.

Working with Vernell Lillie, Kuntu founder and producing artistic director, was an experience Prentiss called “priceless.”

“Doc taught me to look at the characters who are acting opposite you,” he said. “Looking at how they perceive what’s going on gives you a better understanding of what you’re doing.”

Prentiss’ most recent acting experience was undertaking the role of the mouse in Pitt Rep’s Alice, a quirky, off-beat adaptation of Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland that played to sell-out crowds last month. From playing the part as a mouse/circus performer to manipulating huge puppets, the production was Prentiss’ most physically demanding.

Following the afternoon matinees, the Alice cast held tea parties for the children in attendance. When Prentiss felt a small child tugging at his costume and asking, “Mr. Mouse, would you come have a cookie with me?” he knew he had connected with the tiniest audience members.

“It’s when the audience feels something that you know you’re doing your job,” he said.

Pitt Theatre Arts faculty member Holly Thuma, who directed Prentiss in The Recruiting Officer, said Prentiss’ emerging talent can be defined as an openness and generosity of spirit.

“I think the magnitude of his sensitivity was always there inside of him, but now it is expressed,” said Thuma, adding that in the past year, Prentiss “became an actor.”

Pitt MFA student Tom Pacio agreed. He performed alongside Prentiss in Angels in America, in which he became his instructor and acting coach.

“Ruffin’s strongest suit is that he assumes nothing,” he said. “He brings no ego to the work and is open to trying anything that may help him grow and succeed.”

And how do Mom and Dad feel knowing their son, once destined to become a dentist, now may end up in Hollywood? “I think they both knew theater had become my passion,” said Prentiss. But he has just four classes to complete to be eligible to enter dental school, and he jokes that that might be his “postbaccalaureate plan.”

For now, Prentiss said he is looking forward to his upcoming role in Radio Golf and then embracing the Rutgers program. He hopes to ultimately act in feature films.

“I’m ready to go further in conservatory training and to become a complete actor,” he said. “Just living, breathing, sleeping, and eating—theater.”

By Sharon S. Blake

It seemed like a good plan at the time. Following his acceptance at five universities, Ruffin Prentiss III selected the University of Pittsburgh and moved from his family home in Richmond, Va., to Pitt’s campus in Oakland. His goal: to study dental medicine.

The idea of a dental career was an inspiration that struck him—quite literally—when, as a 10th grader, he was hit in the mouth with a baseball during a game with high school classmates.

“I remember being in the ambulance and asking ‘Why me?’” laughed Prentiss. But three root canals and two dental crowns later, his smile was back, and he found that he liked the idea of a professional using his skills to restore another person’s self-esteem.

After researching the dental profession, he made his decision, graduated from high school with an International Baccalaureate scholarship, and then embraced the Rutgers program.

Prentiss quickly immersed himself in the prerequisite science courses. He also began working on a certificate in Conceptual Foundations of Medicine, a program offered by Pitt’s Department of History and Philosophy of Science.

But Prentiss’ desire for a change of scenery altered everything.

He had taken some acting classes “to get a break from all the science,” and toward the end of his freshman year, Prentiss auditioned for—and won—a comedic role in Pitt Rep’s Alice, a quirky, off-beat adaptation of Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland that played to sell-out crowds last month. From playing the part as a mouse/circus performer to manipulating huge puppets, the production was Prentiss’ most physically demanding.

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When Cara Repasky graduated from high school, she accepted a full-tuition scholarship from the University of Pittsburgh’s Honors College and set her sights on making it to Wall Street. Now, just three years later, she’s on her way to becoming an institutional equity-trading analyst at Morgan Stanley, a global financial services firm headquartered in New York City.

The Petersburgh, Ohio, native is receiving her bachelor’s degree in finance today from Pitt’s College of Business Administration with a minor in economics from the School of Arts and Sciences. Graduating a year early, Repasky said she is grateful for the flexibility and opportunities Pitt has afforded her.

“The great thing about Pitt is that you can do what you want to here. If you want to graduate early here, you can do that. You can stay an extra year. You can have three majors if you want. Anything is possible here. Pitt is a great value.”

Robert Atkin, Pitt professor of business administration, says that he was convinced when he met Repasky three years ago that she was headed for Wall Street.

“She presents herself as professional, poised, and sharp—and that’s how she’s been since day one,” says Atkin. “You could sense there was something very special about her.”

Repasky is no doubt a go-getter both inside and outside the classroom. She is the founder of the Trading Pitt, the University’s first undergraduate investment club; a recruiter and regular contributor for the Bulls & Bears Press, the nation’s largest collegiate financial news publication; an executive board member for the undergraduate finance club; and a member of the Beta Alpha Psi and Beta Gamma Sigma honor societies.

While all of those activities might make an average student’s head spin, Repasky also managed to complete four internships—with UBS Investment Bank, Wachovia Securities, PNC Capital Markets, and UBS Financial Services—as a Pitt student. These experiences allowed her to hone her skills on the trading floor and behind the scenes, and they ultimately confirmed that this was the career that she wanted to pursue.

Her internship with UBS Investment Bank in Stamford, Conn., was a particularly rigorous and invaluable learning experience, Repasky says. “I was working 50 to 60 hours per week, and I spent half of the summer on the largest trading floor in the world; it’s the size of 2.5 football fields or 26 tennis courts. There they handle millions of dollars every day.”

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Repasky’s internship at UBS gave her the opportunity to see both back and front office operations. “I learned how a trader’s mistake can ripple through the entire office,” she said.

Repasky made such a good impression at UBS that she was offered a fixed-income trading junior role for the following summer. But Repasky had other offers to entertain.

She interviewed with Morgan Stanley hoping for an internship offer. Instead, the executives were so impressed that they made her an on-the-spot offer for a full-time position as an institutional equity-trading analyst. Repasky accepted immediately and will start in June following a two-week road trip around the country.

“If she’s good, she is likely to become highly visible in the trading or investment banking community,” says Atkin. “That’s a big statement to make at such a young age, but Cara has all of the talent, all of the drive. If she is successful at a young age, she will gain all of the confidence and all of the knowledge.”

Hopefully in time, Repasky’s growing confidence will help her handle stress, a constant companion to floor traders who have millions of dollars of equity flowing through their fingers.

“At Morgan Stanley, I will have time to learn and be trained for this environment, but at the same time, I will be expected to learn quickly and be ready to take on clients soon after my arrival,” she says.

Repasky says the best word to describe trading floors is energy; “Sometimes it’s good energy—people are making money and cheering. Sometimes its bad energy—people are losing money and swearing, and shouting matches are breaking out all over the floor. It’s extremely busy all the time. Everyone has four to six computer screens with information flashing and CNN on TVs on every wall. The atmosphere of the trading floor is always changing, always adapting to new information from the market.”

Repasky says it is important for everyone in the trading/investment/banking field to have personal interests to keep them grounded after work, especially considering the high levels of stress they constantly encounter.

“My favorite way to wind down is to spend time with friends and family, as well as to read and write,” she says. “I have started several novels but haven’t officially finished one yet. I also like to engage in ‘intense’ activities, which I think is pretty common among people in my field. I like to go rock climbing, and I plan to go skydiving after graduation.”

Repasky has her fingers crossed that her “extreme” profession and hobbies will teach her how to soar—and how to navigate through turbulence and achieve soft landings.
Jonathan Withers has an eye—and ear—for the minute components that form life’s invisible monoliths: the words that make a language, the musical tones that produce a song, and the invisible particles that give the universe structure. Withers graduated today with a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in music from Pitt’s University Honors College as well as a Bachelor of Science in physics from the School of Arts and Sciences and a certificate in Russian and Eastern European Studies (for Turkish) from the University Center for International Studies. As he sees it, these seemingly unrelated fields are connected by the significant and everyday influence their abstract parts wield—whether or not people are aware of it.

“Music and language convey whole worlds of meaning that people might not think about, but humans define and express themselves by what they listen to and the ideas they communicate,” Withers said. “As for physics, it’s almost meaningless to discuss how fundamental it is because it’s so much a part of everything.”

Withers will pursue his interest in music, language, and culture (in the end, physics isn’t that related) as a graduate student in ethnomusicology at Harvard University, where he will focus on the music of Turkey and its influence on Turkish culture. To prepare, he will spend this summer in Turkey studying under a 2010 U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship (CLS). Withers was one of 55 American students selected for the scholarship out of 5,300 applicants; he also received a CLS in 2009 to study in Turkey.

Withers’ academic career stems from a relentless curiosity about the function and effect of life’s intangibles, such as language and atoms. Withers admits that as a child growing up in Pittsburgh’s Regent Square neighborhood, he peppered any available adult with questions about why the world worked a certain way, vague and sprawling queries that “drove everyone crazy,” he said. “I asked and still ask myself questions that perhaps don’t get asked a lot. I suppose there is some aspect of having an analytical mind, but really it’s just that someone knows this stuff, and I want to know, too,” he said, laughing.

“Physics is a feast of abstract yet relevant occurrences, and that is what Withers entered Pitt in 2005 to study. (He started out in engineering physics.) The smallest particles—some that have never actually been observed—have a determinable hand in the universe.

“When I found out that that field exists, it piqued my interest toward studying music more,” Withers said. “Pitt’s various music ensembles let me know there’s a world beyond orchestra, and I started playing some old European staples. At first, I was guilty of having the attitude that science is more legitimate, and that made it difficult for me to admit to myself that I wanted to go to the other side—to study music. And I worried whether I would be as adept at music as I was at physics.

“But I knew it would be hard to find something that combined music and physics after I graduated, so I had to choose. I still love physics, but gradually I started to focus more on music.”

Language made an unexpected entrance into Withers’ extensive repertoire of interests all tied to a desire to satisfy a nascent curiosity about the country’s culture and history. Withers happened into the middle of a nationwide struggle over head scarves that pitted Turkey’s long-standing secular ethos against a burgeoning religious conservatism. There, he witnessed an important difference between speaking Turkish and being Turkish. A constitutional amendment to overturn an 80-year-old ban on women wearing head scarves in public universities was making its way through Turkish Parliament, but to Withers, it yielded little more than David Smoke. Withers liked physics, and he was good at it. But starting with a Pitt music class during his sophomore year, Withers began to see the same invisible intertwining he loved about physics, this time involving music, culture, and language.

Although a fancier of music (he is a clarinet hobbyist, high school band member), Withers initially thought that the pursuit of music would be of limited educational and practical value. Smoke recalled Withers’ growing interest in music and eventually helped Withers as he grappled with choosing music over physics for his graduate study. Despite Withers’ promise as a young physicist and his reservations about pursuing music, Smoke sensed that it was what he really wanted.

“Jonathan is a deep thinker with diverse interests,” he recalled. “I remember talking with him when he was thinking about switching from engineering physics to physics, and he was interested in many larger questions,” Smoke said. “I have no doubt he also could have done well in grad school in physics if he had set his mind to it. But he fell in love with musicology, and I encouraged him to do what he loves, even if he is not sure what job it will lead to.”

Withers added music as a second major and became involved in Pitt’s African Music and Dance Ensemble playing drums. He also joined the Carpathian Ensemble and played the guitar-like bouzouki, not only studying the music but also the culture associated with it. He became fascinated by the role of music in forging and reinforcing a community’s cultural identity—and the study of that role, which is ethnomusicology.

“Even the most complex phenomena are real and based on physical laws that actually happen, not just ideas on a chalkboard,” Withers said. “Physics is not a scene; it’s a science of generalization where we say, ‘This is kind of what’s going on here.’ There’s a process and formula, and the ability to make these guesses about details is important to understanding an event.”

Withers was inducted into the physics honor society, Sigma Pi Sigma, and won the Department of Physics and Astronomy’s inaugural Thomas-Lain Fund essay contest in 2004, which included a $5,000 prize. The contest is open to undergraduate or graduate students in the department, and the winners are chosen by a committee. Withers wrote about research being conducted in the laboratory of his advisor, Pitt physics and astronomy professor David Smoke.

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By Morgan Kelly
Nancy and James George, Mother and Son, Don Caps and Gowns Today

By Anthony M. Moore

Graduating Pitt senior James T. George will receive his bachelor’s degree in information science today alongside his mother, Nancy S. George, who will receive a master’s degree in library and information science.

The timing of receiving the dual diplomas is more coincidence than the result of long-term planning, said James George, explaining that he and his mother realized only last fall that they were on course to graduate together. “We never had any grand plan to finish school at the same time,” he added.

For both graduates, Commencement marks not only the culmination of their academic careers but also a step in a long journey of personal growth that the two have undertaken together—with Pitt playing an important role throughout.

For Nancy George, earning a second master’s degree fulfills a personal dream and reflects at least the family values passed down from her mother, Alice Shimrak, a homemaker, and her father, Steve Shimrak, a railroad worker. Nancy grew up in the small railroad town of Conway, Pa., an area where many immigrants and first-generation Americans settled. Looking back, the can-do attitude of both her parents and peers in the community greatly influenced her, she said.

“Both of my parents grew up during the Depression, so education was seen as important in the sense that they themselves were never able to attain a formal one. They wanted their children to at least have access to educational opportunities,” said Nancy.

Nancy first entered the University of Pittsburgh in the fall of 1974. She said Pitt was the ideal place because “all the elements of an outstanding education were there, and I had a very fine college experience.”

She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in language communication from Pitt in 1978 and a Master’s degree in equivalency in education, awarded by the state Secretary of Education, in 1985.

From there, Nancy sought to impart the importance of education to her students. She has taught 7th-grade language arts in the Ambridge Area School District for more than 30 years.

Along the way, she met and married James H. George Jr., a principal in the South Butler County School District.

Nancy said she chose to earn a master’s degree in library and information science, because the curriculum is “directly related to what I already do: making information available so students have what they need to learn.”

“Teachers have always been managers of information, but over the years, student learning styles and techniques have changed considerably because of rapid changes in technology. To be successful in the classroom, it is essential that these technologies become integrated into my teaching methods, especially with research and writing. … I believe that library and information science is generating the classroom of the future, and I am excited to be part of it.”

—Nancy S. George

Nancy George has been continuously employed by the South Butler School District for more than 30 years, but the kids started to leave home, it felt like the right time to devote myself fully to finishing what I had started years ago,” said Nancy, acknowledging that she felt a tad overwhelmed during her first year of as a high-tech major. “I should almost identify with people who move to a foreign country and cannot speak the language because I didn’t grow up with this level of technology.”

Fortunately, she said, James was able to assuage her initial concerns. “I think that is the natural order of things when you grow up with two parents who are educators. My parents emphasized that education was a lot more than books and tests, and they presented a picture that made us want to be a part of an educational environment.”

While James credits his mother with making him the man he is today, Nancy credits him with providing the inspiration to continue with her own educational career. Her decision to return to college after a 20-year hiatus came shortly after James’ high school graduation.

“I had taken some classes over the years, but with the kids starting to leave home, it felt like the right time to devote myself fully to finishing what I had started years ago,” said Nancy, acknowledging that she felt a tad overwhelmed during her first year of as a high-tech major. “I should almost identify with people who move to a foreign country and cannot speak the language because I didn’t grow up with this level of technology.”

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Bidding Farewell to a Difficult Decade

T
ough some purists might argue that the first decade of the new century did not begin until January 1, 2001, and will not end until December 31, 2010, the great mass of humanity marked the end of that decade last December 31. Most observed its passing with relief.

The last 10 years have been called, without affection, the no-name decade, the lost decade, and the decade of zeros. Floyd Norris, writing in The New York Times, declared that the decade “richly earned the name ‘the zero decade.’ For the entire developed world, that was just about the decade’s total return.” Time magazine pushed things even further, saying, “Goodbye (at Last) to the Decade from Hell” and calling the last 10 years “as awful as any peacetime decade in the nation’s entire history.” Paul Krugman, in his New York Times column, proposed that we “bid a not at all fond farewell to the lost decade, and the decade of zeros. Floyd Norris, writing in the New York Times, declared that the decade “richly earned the name ‘the zero decade.’ For the entire developed world, that was just about the decade’s total return.”

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The impact of our work as educators is seen not only in such notable forms of recognition but also is captured, day after day, by the tens of thousands of hardworking Pitt students who are crafting their own records of academic achievement while laying the foundation for lives of real meaning and impact. And many of them have expressed their gratitude for Pitt’s abundance of learning opportunities and for a University environment that fosters shared values and individual growth.

The student-sponsored I Love Pitt Day and designation of the student social and recreation center in the William Pitt Union as Nordy’s Place—which was less an individual tribute than it was a testament to our entire leadership stream and especially to our student life professionals—are two relatively recent illustrations of student appreciation for Pitt’s nurturing community. This past year, to give one telling example of our successes in creating a culture built around the right values, we earned top recognition from a coalition of six secondary education organizations for our efforts to promote “a vibrant intellectual and social climate that deemphasizes the role of alcohol.” We also were recognized as one of the nation’s most veteran-friendly universities for our committed efforts to enhance the Pitt experiences of servicemen and servicewomen who are transitioning from the military to campus life.

In the past decade, University of Pittsburgh graduates claimed, among many other honors, the Nobel Peace Prize, the Nobel Prize in Medicine, the National Medal of Science, the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, the John Fritz Medal in engineering, the Shaw Prize and Albany Medical Center Prize in medicine, the Grainger Challenge Prize for Sustainability, and the Templeton Prize.

Pitt graduates also were elected to such prestigious organizations as the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, the National Academy of Engineering, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. And our alumni applied their special talents in such wide-ranging roles as chair of the National Science Board and music director of the New York Philharmonic.

Any institution of higher learning makes many of its most important contributions through the work of its graduates. And any university would be proud to claim Pitt’s list of high-achieving alumni.

Of course, we also are proud to claim the many tens of thousands of Pitt graduates whose careers may never carry them to these levels of national and international recognition but who lead productive lives and are contributing members of their home communities. In this regard, it is important to note that more than 80 percent of our undergraduates and more than 75 percent of our entire student body come from Pennsylvania and that 60 percent of our nearly 270,000 living alumni make their homes in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a number that would be even higher if the state enjoyed more robust job growth.

Leaving in Education

When our University was founded 233 years ago, its chartering legislation declared that “the education of youth ought to be a primary object with every government.” More than two centuries later, education—of both the young and the not so young—remains our most fundamental mission.

Our enrollment continues to grow and currently stands at about 35,500. In a typical year during the last decade, more than 33,500 students would have been enrolled in the undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs offered on Pitt’s five campuses. Those students are drawn from an increasingly talented and accomplished applicant pool.

In developing that talent, our educational programs have regularly produced students earning the very highest forms of national and international recognition. We saw

Pioneering in Research

Pitt’s high-achieving faculty also have led the University in an internationally respected center of pioneering research. At the close of the decade, we ranked fifth nationally in terms of the funds annually attracted by members of our faculty from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—joining Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Penn, and the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF) in the NIH top five. We also rank in the top 10 nationally in total federal science and engineering research and development support. The other fine universities in that top 10 are Johns Hopkins, the University of Washington, Michigan, Stanford, Duke, Columbia, Stanford, and UCSF.

Pitt’s research expenditures during the past year totaled $66.54 million—and having claimed some $150 million in stimulus-supported grants, we expect to pass the $700 million mark in research expenditures this year. Over the course of the past decade, our research expenditures totaled an astounding $5.33 billion. Those largely imported, but locally spent, funds are an accepted sign of institutional stature, support research of impact, and have provided the fiscal foundation for tens of thousands of very good jobs right here in our home region.

During the past year, both before and after Pittsburgh’s G-20 Summit, this region attracted national and international attention for effecting an economic rebirth tied to university-based research. Over the course of the past decade, Pitt’s research prowess has been an essential factor in the launch of a wide range of technology-driven economic development initiatives. These include the Pittsburgh Life Sciences Greenhouse and The Technology Collaborative—as well as the Tech Collaborative’s predecessors, the Pittsburgh Digital Greenhouse and the Robotics Foundry.

Supporting such initiatives is a natural extension of the University’s own technology commercialization efforts, which still are of relatively recent vintage but have produced enviable results in recent years. During
the past decade, our Office of Technology Management received 1,550 invention disclosures and filed 709 new U.S. patent applications. In addition, 303 new patents were issued, 44 license options or option agreements were executed, and 59 start-up companies tied to Pitt technology were formed.

Of course, the University also has made significant contributions to the growth of the local economy through companies founded and led by its graduates. Consider two key examples: the rapid growth of the information technology sector, and the creation of a major regional employer and a force in its area of specialty around the world.

More recently, Pitt graduates—such as Pitt Alumnus Keiron Ngu, a man from Illinois, who came to Pitt to do graduate work in engineering, stayed in the region, and founded Advanced Natural Solutions, becoming a major regional employer and a force in its area of specialty around the world.

Supporting a World-Class Faculty

Of course, we would not be able to offer educational programs of distinction, engage in pioneering research, or drive regional economic development without an outstanding faculty. During the past decade, senior faculty colleagues were elected to membership in such prestigious groups as the National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Engineering, American Association for the Advancement of Science, National Academy of Education, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, American Society for Clinical Investigation, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Philosophical Association.

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Supporting a World-Class Faculty

of outstanding achievements in improving health care.

• the Charles S. Mott Prize, widely regarded as the highest honor in cancer research, awarded to the American Cancer Society Research Professors;

• the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Distinguished Achievement Award for exemplary contributions to humanistic studies, one of the country’s largest and most prestigious awards of its type, and the Aquinas Medal of the American Catholic Philosophical Association;

• the MetLife Foundation Award for Medical Research in Alzheimer’s disease and the American Academy of Neurology’s Potamkin Prize, often labeled “the Nobel of neurology”;

• the Chauvenet Prize from the Mathematical Association of America and the David P. Robbins Prize from the American Mathematical Society, both awarded for pathbreaking success in solving the 400-year-old mathematical mystery known as the Kepler conjecture;

• the National Institutes of Health Director’s Pioneer Award, supporting novel investigator-initiated research even if it might carry a greater-than-usual-risk of not succeeding;

• the American Medical Association Foundation Award for efforts to help poor, disabled, and disadvantaged patients and for outstanding contributions to public health;

• the Olga E. Teague Award and the Paul B. Magnuson Award, the highest honors of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, for work with disabled veterans and for outstanding contributions to rehabilitation research, respectively;

• the Frederick Douglass Book Prize from the Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition at Yale University, the Merle Curti Award from the Organization of American Historians, and the Guggenheim Fellowship, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Scholar award for extraordinary mentoring;

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community—does depend upon the guidance and support that they receive from their teacher-coaches. During the last year, head men’s basketball coach Jamie Dixon was named the 2009 Naismith Men’s College Basketball Coach of the Year. He then coached the U.S. under-19 team to its first gold medal since 1991 at the International Basketball Federation World Championships in New Zealand. For that success, he also was named the USA Basketball National Coach of the Year.

Our men’s and women’s basketball teams play their home games in the spectacular Petersen Events Center, considered by many to be the best place in the world to watch college basketball. “The Pete” is one of many key athletics construction projects completed in the last decade. Others include Heinz Field and the Duratuz Athletic Complex in the UPMC Sports Performance Complex, facilities that our football team shares with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Major renovations to Fitzgerald Field House and Trees Hall and its pool were completed, and construction is well under way for our new Olympic sports complex, which also will be named after the extremely generous John and Gertrude Petersen.

Constructing a Better Community

Speaking more broadly, one characteristic of any vibrant region is physical growth. During the past decade, the University also made significant contributions to physical development of the region. More specifically, the University completed 1,751 projects, involving construction expenditures of $1.142 billion and adding 2,191,739 square feet of space to University facilities. The contention that nonprofit construction has been taking property off the City of Pittsburgh’s tax rolls is frequently asserted but seldom supported. An examination of key Pitt projects from the past decade suggests that this simply is not the case:

• The Petersen Events Center was constructed on the former site of Pitt Stadium, entirely within the footprint of the campus, and has been a source of increased amuse- ment and parking tax revenues for the City;
• Pennsylvania Hall and Panther Hall, with a combined residence hall capacity of about 1,000 students, also were built on the former Pitt Stadium site and have helped to meet what had been identified by the City itself as its highest Pitt priority—building more on-campus undergraduate housing;
• The Sennott Square academic center was constructed within the accepted borders of our campus in Oakland on the most-blighted block of the Forbes Avenue business corridor. It includes both public parking and first-floor retail facilities that generate tax revenues on a site that had been tax exempt; and
• Our newest biomedical science tower was constructed on the least-attractive parcel of the Fifth Avenue business corridor, also within the accepted borders of the campus and also already tax exempt. It has become, as we intended, a magnet for the research dollars that now are so central to this region’s economy.

Key construction projects undertaken outside our traditional Oakland footprint most typically involved some form of partnering with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), very often with UPMC taking the lead construction role. They include some of the era’s most stunning examples of community revitalization:

• UPMC built its Sports Performance Complex, part of which is occupied by Pitt, and Pitt constructed the headquarters building for the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine, a joint venture of the University and UPMC, at the south end of the Hot Metal Bridge on the site of an abandoned steel mill. For many years, there had been nothing there. Those projects became early anchors for the entire SouthSide Works redevelopment, one of the city’s most celebrated successes;
• UPMC also reclaimed the campus of the former St. Francis Hospital, obviously already off the tax rolls, and constructed a magnificent new campus for Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, including a pediatric research tower occupied by Pitt faculty members. That site otherwise would have been abandoned, and the Lawrenceville community would have suffered a devastating blow;
• It is hard to imagine what today’s Pittsburgh region would be like without “eds and meds” developments of this type. It is even harder to imagine that anyone who has thought about the future of the region would not encourage such examples of growth.

In fact, the power of the “eds and meds” in driving economic development was underscored in three separate, but clearly related, news stories from this week [the week of February 21]. The first was the report that our Property and Facilities Committee had approved some $46 million in new capital projects spread across a number of campuses, but with the bulk of the work here in Oakland.

The second article, featured in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette business section, was headlined, “No Vacancy: Office Space in Oakland Is Tighter than Ever.” That article reported a zero vacancy rate for Class A space in Oakland during the last quarter and quoted the president of a New York-based real estate holding company, who said, “In 20 years of doing commercial real estate, I don’t think I’ve seen a zero vacancy rate in a significant market comparable to Oakland.” That rate, the article went on to note, is even more unusual given what is happening in other markets as we move through the recession. As the article further points out, the key reason for the demand is clear: People want space near Oakland’s universities and medical institutions.

The third directly relevant news item was the report that Allegheny County is seeking a public-private partnership to develop a new mass transit system connecting downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland, the state’s second- and third-busiest commercial districts, and opening up new development possibilities for all of the flat land that lies between them. Creating such a link will not be easy. We already have lost out on one round of potential federal funding. However, making that mass transit conne-
Government officials and computer scientists around the world were shocked. Was this the beginning of a massive Y2K computer meltdown? Actually, it wasn’t. As it turned out, an isolated event, one of a handful of glitches to occur (including the failure of 90% of the nation’s two race tracks in Delaware) as the sun rose on a new decade, was not the end of the millennium meltdown never happened.

Indeed, it was the American Dream that was about to dim. Bookended by $1.4 trillion in federal government debt, the financial crisis seemed to have come out of nowhere, and if you believe the headlines, it seemed to have come out of the blue. But as we will see, the events that led to the financial crisis were not as sudden or as severe as they were portrayed. In fact, many of the key players in the financial crisis had been warning the public about the dangers of the American Dream for years. But the public, and in particular the financial sector, ignored the warnings and continued on with business as usual.

And so, in the weeks and months and years ahead, we will keep pushing forward not only dealing with problems but also seizing opportunities, building momentum, enhancing our quality, extending our impact, and enjoying the fact that we are doing it together.
Weilu Tan, Fluent in Four Languages, Is First Pitt Student to Win Carnegie Endowment Junior Fellowship

By Patricia Lomando White

Weilu Tan received her American citizenship just in time to become a citizen of the world.

“I feel very spoiled,” said Tan, a Wexford resident who was born in China, came to the United States as a teenager, and graduated from North Allegheny High School in 2005. “Not being a citizen until now, I think I was lucky to have benefited from so many opportunities at Pitt.”

Tan, who became a U.S. citizen in March, is receiving a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in political science and Japanese from Pitt’s University Honors College and School of Arts and Sciences. She also is the first Pitt student—and one of only eight students in the country—to win a Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Junior Fellowship. Each year, the Carnegie Endowment offers 8 to 10 one-year fellowships to college seniors who have graduated during the past academic year. Winners are selected from a pool of nominees from about 400 colleges. Carnegie Endowment Junior Fellows work as research assistants to the endowment’s senior associates.

Beginning in August, Tan will spend one year as a research assistant in the Carnegie Endowment’s China program in Washington, D.C., conducting research on China-U.S. relations and Asia-related foreign policy. She also will review literature and coauthor publications about the U.S.-Japan security alliance.

Tan’s preparation for a future in international relations began as a child. Her parents, who are molecular biologists, moved Tan’s family to Japan for work-related reasons when Tan was in primary school. The family returned to China when Tan entered middle school and came to the United States when she was in high school.

Initially, Tan applied for Pitt’s premed program, but she began to have second thoughts, particularly because the major wouldn’t make the best use of her language skills. Tan is fluent in Chinese, Japanese, English, and French.

“I also realized that I didn’t quite have science,” said Tan, who had initially wanted to be a cartoonist until she began high school. “It didn’t stimulate my curiosity.”

She switched gears and chose a career in international studies, immersing herself in her academic work and taking classes in world affairs and political science. Her parents have fully supported her decision.

Tan’s international focus received a major boost during her sophomore year, when she was selected for a United Negro College Fund Institute for International Public Policy (IIPP) Fellowship for underrepresented students majoring in international affairs and public policy. The fellowship provides funding for internships, summer studies in policy or language, studies abroad, and graduate school, totaling $100,000 per fellow.

“Oftentimes, the experience helps to solidify my choice of a career in international relations.”

With the IIPP Fellowship, Tan completed summer institutes at Spelman College, a historically Black liberal arts college for women in Atlanta, and the University of Maryland. During her junior year, she also completed an IIPP study abroad at the Institut d’Études Politiques de Paris, also known as Sciences Po and one of the most prestigious universities for political and social sciences in the world. Tan chose the Parisian location because of a Pitt-Sciences Po student exchange program.

Through a teaching assistantship program with Sciences Po, Tan was assigned to Paris to teach English to French students ages 5-13. She spent half of her time teaching and the other half doing course work.

“My teaching experience helped to improve my French language skills,” Tan said. “Oftentimes, the students corrected me, and I got a French grammar lesson. Sometimes I felt I was getting paid to learn French while teaching English.”

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Tan says that she particularly treasures her newly adopted country for its acceptance of people with different cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.

“I’m Chinese,” said Tan, “but I have multiple cultural identities. Being an American citizen allows me to say that.”
Omicron Delta Kappa

Marc Schutzbank

University of Pittsburgh seniors Max Greenwald, majoring in politics and philosophy with a minor in history in the School of Arts and Sciences, and Marc Schutzbank, majoring in politics and philosophy in Arts and Sciences and finance in the College of Business Administration, have been named the 2010 Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) Seniors of the Year, announced at Pitt’s annual Honors Convocation in February. The winners are both Honors College students.

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

Greenwald, from San Antonio, Texas, has supported a number of national and international efforts during his time at Pitt. He is cofounder and president of STAND (Students Taking Action Now in Darfur), an antigeneocide coalition; founder and copresident of Plant to Plate, an urban farm designed to be a model for local agriculture and sustainability; a leader of the Sudan Divestment Task Force; and former vice president of Mission Acceptance, a tutoring organization. A member of numerous clubs, Schutzbank has worked closely with the Hillel Jewish University Center and the Human Environmental Alliance.

Schutzbank, who has a full-tuition scholarship at Pitt, has received two Brackenridge Scholarships through Pitt’s Honors College. In 2007, he used the Brackenridge for “Genocide: Finding a Way to Protect the Innocent,” a study of genocide-prevention policies, their failures, and potential solutions; and, in 2009, he created a Web site exhibiting a South African photo voice project and radio documentary. He spent the summer of 2008 in South Africa, researching and collecting data for the project. In the fall of 2009, Schutzbank was a research assistant with Global Witness, an advocacy firm reporting on resource-linked conflict, in London.

Pitt Chancellor’s Scholar Named Emma Locke Award Winner

By Patricia Lomando White

University of Pittsburgh Chancellor’s Scholar, Kamesh Krishnamurthy—a Chancellor’s Scholar, a bioengineering major in the Swanson School of Engineering and a political science major with minors in neuroscience and chemistry in the School of Arts and Sciences—was named the 2010 Emma Locke Award winner at Pitt’s Honors Convocation earlier this semester.

Established in 1946 by Charles A. Locke in memory of his mother, the Emma W. Locke Award is presented annually to a graduating senior in recognition of high scholarship, character, and devotion to the ideals of the University. The student must have a 3.83 GPA and plan to continue his or her education after graduation.

Krishnamurthy will pursue a combined MD/PhD in neurobiology at Duke University.

Since his freshman year, Krishnamurthy has been involved in undergraduate research most recently with the Sudanese Diaspora Research Group, whose purpose is to develop engineering tools for neurobiology research. He has given presentations on his research at the National Biomedical Engineering Society Conference in Pittsburgh and the Northeast Bioengineering Conference in Boston, both in 2009, and at the National Biomedical Engineering Society Conference in Los Angeles in 2007.

NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Given to 13 Pitt Graduating Seniors, Current Graduate Students

University of Pittsburgh graduating seniors and current graduate students have been named recipients of National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowships (GRFP); the 13 fellowship awards go to six new Pitt graduates and to seven students who are pursuing graduate studies at any accredited U.S. or foreign institution.

The fellowships have been designed to ensure the vitality of the human resource base of science and engineering in the United States and reinforce its diversity. The program recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students in NSF-supported science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines who are pursuing research-based master’s and doctorate degrees in the United States and abroad.

As the oldest graduate fellowship program of its kind, the GRFP has a long history of selecting recipients who achieve high levels of success in their future academic and professional careers. The prestige of the GRFP fellowships helps support recipients to become life-long leaders who contribute their expertise both to scientific innovation and teaching.

Fellowships receive a three-year annual stipend of $30,000 along with a $10,500 cost-of-education allowance for tuition and fees, a one-time $1,000 international travel allowance, and the freedom to conduct research at any accredited U.S. or foreign institution of graduate education. Pitt winners in the undergraduate category are:

Joshua Warren Cannon, an anthropologist and linguistics major with a Spanish minor, who this month earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and will attend the University of California, Berkeley, this fall to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master’s degree in linguistics and anthropology.

Eunae Lee, a linguistics major with a French minor, who this month earned a Bachelor of Arts degree and will attend the University of Pennsylvania, this fall to pursue a Master’s degree in linguistics.

The fellowships have been designed to ensure the vitality of the human resource base of science and engineering in the United States and reinforce its diversity.

While at Pitt, Krishnamurthy completed the Fessenden Honors in Engineering Certificate. He is a recipient of a Bruckner Scholarship and a Freshman Chemistry Achievement Award. He is also a member of Alpha Eta Mu Beta, a national biomedically focused honor society. He has been on the Pitt School of Arts and Sciences and Swanson School of Engineering’s dean’s lists every term.

In involved in many leadership roles, Krishnamurthy has served as an Honors College ambassador and orientation leader, Alpha Epsilon Delta secretary and business manager, Asian Students’ Alliance business manager and political action chair, and Pitt Greening task force vice chair. He is also a member of the Students Taking Action Now in Darfur divestment task force.

The Krakumurthy has worked as a volunteer experience, including assisting nurses in UPMC Presbyterian Hospital’s emergency room and Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC’s ICU and transplant floor care rooms. In addition, he has worked for Child Survival India in New Delhi, served as an American Cancer Society campaign volunteer, and completed a service-learning project for Pitt’s Office of Disability Resources and Services.
University to Gradute 7000 Students On Its Five Campuses

NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Given to 13 Pitt Graduating Seniors, Current Graduate Students

Pitt School of Education Marks Its 100th Anniversary, Jumps in U.S. News Rankings

continued from page 2

Arts degree, as well as a certificate in geographic information systems. He will study in the Energy and Resources Group and geographic information systems. He will earn a worldwide as well as regional reputation as a source of research and policy advice on early childhood programs and child development.

This past year, School of Education faculty members have received numerous awards and appointments, including, in November, the Distinguished Teaching Prize of Gomez as one of only five senior partners for a new program at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The Carnegie Foundation program seeks to address some of the most immediate problems affecting the educational success of a large number of our nation's students, beginning with the high failure rates among community college students in developmental mathematics. Also honored this past year were Rita M. Bean, professor emeritus in the Department of Instruction and Learning, who received the 2009 International Reading Association Special Service Award for distinguished service to the association, and Roger D. Klein, a professor in the school's Department of Psychology, who received the 2000 Award for Distinguished Professional Contributions to Media Psychology. Bean, who earned her Ph.D. in 1971, also has been inducted into the Reading Hall of Fame, which recognizes individuals who have contributed to further development in the field. Later this month, Suzanne Lane, a professor in the Department of Psychology in Education, and Margaret G. McKeown, a clinical professor in the Department of Instruction and Learning and senior scientist at LRDC, will be inducted as 2010 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Fellows at AERA's annual meeting in Denver, Colo.

Continued from page 12

Among the School of Education's many programs is the Center for Urban Education, which serves as a vital link to the Pittsburgh Public Schools by facilitating the school's initiatives in urban education research, training, and practice. The Center has partnerships with the Pittsburgh Public School's University School, which serves a national model for school district/education collaboration.

Gomez, the center's director, is the inaugural holder of the Helen S. Stein Chair, which was established in 2006 to honor Pitt alumna H. Jane Stein. Gomez, a trailblazer in the field of reading, was named a Pitt School of Education—-the BS degree in 1970, the MED degree in 1975, and the PhD degree in 1975. In 2004, Faison was named one among the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's "Top 12 Educators" making a difference in Western Pennsylvania. Faison also received the 2009 Award for Distinguished Professional Contributions to Media Psychology. Bean, who earned her Ph.D. in 1971, also has been inducted into the Reading Hall of Fame, which recognizes individuals who have contributed to further improvement in reading instruction.

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Pitt Seniors Receive Whitaker Scholarships For International Research and Study

Continued from page 2

an Albert and Olga Gazalie Endowment Scholarship. Freedman was a finalist for the Gates Cambridge Scholarship this year and has received the Fraternity and Sorority Life Outstanding Scholarship Award twice. Freedman is a former president of Alpha Eta Mu Beta Biomedical Engineering Honor Society and a member of the Biomedical Engineering Society, the Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honor Society, and the Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society. He also is a Pitt dean’s list honoree.

Freedman works as a researcher in Pitt’s Neural Tissue Engineering Laboratory and as a technician for a heart-lung machine at Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC. He is a member of Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity, having served as its philanthropy chair, internal vice president, and scholarship chair; and was president of Pitt’s Jazz Ensemble, traveling with the group to Jamaica in May 2006 and 2007 to play for underprivileged children in rural communities. In March 2009, Freedman went on a service trip to Guatemala to help build a water reservoir and renovate a schoolhouse.

Perich also will graduate today, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in bioengineering at Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering. He will begin his work on the Blue Brain Project in September.

Top photo: Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg (far right) hosted Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mimi B. Poehlman (center) on April 19 during a town hall meeting in Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum. Admrl Mullen addressed the audience prior to his participation in a discussion panel, which was moderated by Ryan A. Cooper, FSA-Pedestrian Veterans of America Chair at the University of Pittsburgh and Senior Career Scientist with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Discussion panel member U.S. Representative Tim Murphy (Pa-18th) is on the left. Lower photo: Admiral Mullen hands out “Challenge Coins” inscribed with his signature.

The University of Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Filmmakers will present the 12th annual Russian Film Symposium, titled “From Art-House to Cine-Plex: Russian Cinema’s Search for a Mass Audience,” from May 3-8.

The symposium’s films will be shown in Pitt’s David Lawrence Hall (DLH) as well as in the Melwood Screening Room (MSR), 477 Melwood Ave., Oakland.

This year’s symposium will explore the complex relationship between Russian art-house cinema and genre cinema as well as the balance between independently made films targeting small, niche audiences and Hollywood-style films aimed at mass audiences.

Renowned film scholars from Europe and the United States will present brief introductions for each film, and a discussion will follow each screening. Notable speakers will include Nikolai Izvolov, director of the sector of domestic cinema at the Russian Institute of Cinema Studies, Anthony Aremone, associate provost of foreign languages at The New School University; and Petre Petrov, assistant professor of Slavic languages and literatures at Princeton University.

Pitt’s DLH screenings are free and open to the public; admission to each of the screenings is $7. All films contain English subtitles. The symposium will feature, in addition to the screenings, two roundtable discussions, at 2:30 p.m. May 5 and 11 a.m. May 8, both in DLH.

A screening schedule follows.

May 5

Help Gone Mad (2009), 118 minutes, directed by Boris Khlebnikov, 10 a.m., DLH; Wolfy, 88 minutes, directed by Vasili Sigaev, 7:30 p.m., MSR;

May 6

Tale in the Darkness (2009), 77 minutes, directed by Nikolai Khomeriki, 10 a.m., DLH; Oxygen (2009), 75 minutes, directed by Ivan Vyryapaev, 7:30 p.m., MSR;

May 7

Crush: Five Stories About Love (2009), 92 minutes, directed by Boris Khlebnikov, Ivan Vyryapaev, Petr Buslov, Aleksei German Jr., and Kirill Serebrennikov, 10 a.m., DLH; Room and a Half (2009), 115 minutes, directed by Andrei Khrzanovskii, 115 minutes, directed by Valeri Todorovskii, 7:30 p.m., MSR; and

May 8

Taras Bulba (2009), 128 minutes, directed by Vladimir Bortko, 7:30 p.m., MSR

For a full schedule of events and a synopsis of the screenings, visit www.rusfilms.pitt.edu.

By Anthony M. Moore

Pitt to Host 12th Annual Russian Film Symposium May 3-8

Kira Muratova, 2 p.m., DLH;

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For a full schedule of events and a synopsis of the screenings, visit www.rusfilms.pitt.edu.
The Marriage of Figaro, Benedum Center, May 2


Musique Fantastique, Edgewood Symphony Orchestra, 7:30 p.m. May 15, Agnes and Joseph Katz Performing Arts Center, Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, 578 Duquesne Blvd., Squirrel Hill, www.edgewoodsymphony.org.

Exhibitions


SPACE, Artist Image Resource, and Fe Arts Gallery, Rock, Paper, Scissors, through May 23, one exhibition at three locations, comprising work ranging from video to installation and paper origami pieces by three Pitt Studio Arts faculty. SPACE, 812 Liberty Ave., Downtown, Artists Image Resource, 518 Foreland St., North Side; Fe Arts Gallery, 4102 Butler St., Lawrenceville, 412-624-4364.

Annual Research Symposium, featuring speakers Lawrence K. Talak, director, National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research, and student and faculty research and poster presentations, 9 a.m.-noon May 12, Lecture Room 5, Seate Hall, Pitt School of Dental Medicine, 412-370-3583, beaverke@upmc.edu.

Miscellaneous

Annual Spring Art and Jewelry Sale to support St. Wt Memorial Scholarship Award in Epidemiology, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. May 7, First Floor Lounge, Room 118, Parran Hall, Pitt Graduate School of Public Health, www.publichealth.pitt.edu/evenshows.

Shyadise Art Festival, featuring works from an eclectic mix of established artists and emerging talents, May 22-23, 739 Bellefonte St., Shyadise, 954-472-3755, info@artfestival.com.


Opera/Theater/Dance


Milo Zankina, School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, 11 a.m. May 14, “Between Philosophies: The Emergence of a New Intellectual Paradigm in Russia,” 1218 Cathedral of Learning.

Hayu Al-Khateeb, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, 10 a.m. May 17, “Evaluation of Young Adults’ Preferences, Needs, and the Understandability of the Personal Health Record Data Contents,” 6053 Forbes Tower.

Meghan Solomon, School of Education’s Department of Administrative and Policy Studies, 11 a.m. May 19, “The Intersection of Faculty Gender and Students’ Centered Pedagogical Approaches to Instructional Technology,” 5702 Povall Hall.

Aaron Serreth, Graduate School of Public Health’s Department of Epidemiology, 3 p.m. May 25, “Mortality Trends in a Population-Based Type 1 Diabetes Cohort: Longitudinal Analysis of a New Intellectual Paradigm in Russia,” 6053 Forbes Tower.


Pitt/PhD Dissertation Defenses

Molly Zankina, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, 2 p.m. May 3, “The Transformation of the Bulgarian Political Elite in the Period of Transition: Its Impact on the Transition Process,” 3400 Povall Hall.

Amelia Johnson, School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Geology and Planetary Science, 10 a.m. May 6, “Reconstructing Pittsburgh’s Pollution History with Dendrochronology: An Analysis of Trace Metal Concentrations in a Schenley Park Red Oak Tree,” 214 Space Research Coordination Center.

Julie Brodsky, School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, 11 a.m. May 14, “Between Philosophies: The Emergence of a New Intellectual Paradigm in Russia,” 1218 Cathedral of Learning.

Pitt Community Makes Impact in Efforts to Help Haiti Earthquake Victims

By John Fedele

The coordinated efforts of University of Pittsburgh faculty, staff, and students have made a difference in helping Haitians whose lives were devastated and homes destroyed by a Jan. 12 earthquake.

Pitt’s volunteer relief activities were coordinated by G. Reynolds “Renny” Clark, vice chancellor for community initiatives and chief of staff in Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg’s office; John Wilds, assistant vice chancellor for community relations; and Steve Zupcic, assistant director in the Office of Community Relations.

Just two days after the quake, Pitt’s community relations team formed partnerships with two Pittsburgh-based relief agencies: Brother’s Brother Foundation (BBF) and Global Links.

Pitt and BBF’s “Buckets for Haiti” campaign collected more than 1,200 buckets that were filled with soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes, washcloths, towels, sanitary wipes, hairbrushes, and combs in five-gallon buckets; an additional 120 were collected on the Greensburg campus.

Members of Pitt’s Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology assembled the items into smaller, individual personal care packages to facilitate distribution.

“It’s hard to imagine doing without personal care items that everyone takes for granted in this country,” said Joseph Pawlak, administrative coordinator of the Pitt Men’s Study and leader of the personal care items project. “Being able to wash your face or brush your teeth seems like a little thing, but it helps to restore dignity to people overwhelmed with stress.”

Once the buckets were filled, Pitt’s Department of Mailing Services collected them from around campus and stored them at its warehouse for pickup by BBF.

The buckets were more than just a clever way to collect the items. With much of Haiti’s Port-au-Prince population living in temporary relief camps, a single faucet is often the sole source of potable water for hundreds of families. The buckets served as a convenient way to collect water.

“We selected Brother’s Brother Foundation because it has a 40-year history of delivering humanitarian aid on the ground in Haiti,” said Zupcic, adding that BBF’s founder, the late Robert Hingson, was a professor in Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH) as well as a professor of anesthesiology in Pitt’s School of Medicine and director of anesthesiology at Magee-Womens Hospital.

“The Brother’s Brother Foundation is grateful to the University of Pittsburgh students, staff, and faculty who graciously supported the relief efforts in Haiti with donations of buckets filled with hygiene items,” said Luke Hingson, who succeeded his father as BBF president.

Pitt’s partnership with Global Links, the “Have a Heart for Haiti” campaign, involved GSPH faculty, staff, and students collecting mobility-assist devices such as crutches, walkers, and wheelchairs.

In late February and March, more than 200 crutches, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs were collected for Haitians who suffered catastrophic injuries in the earthquake. Volunteers from GSPH, led by Pawlak, and the School of Nursing, led by Building Manager Kathleen Zoldos, collected the items for Global Links.

“The donations by University of Pittsburgh students, staff, and faculty members helped address the severe shortages of crutches, canes, and walkers throughout Haiti,” said Global Links Deputy Director Angela Garcia.

“New crutches are expensive to purchase in Haiti because they are imported. Crutches cannot be made in Haiti due to the severe deforestation. The only available trees are young products of tree-planting efforts to help counter the environmental degradation. As our recovery efforts continue, we look forward to additional creative partnerships with the University community that convey our collective expression of concern for the people of Haiti,” she said.

In addition to the mobility-assist device collection, Global Links partnered with the Center for Global Health within GSPH to sponsor a series of panel discussions and conferences on the Haiti disaster and recovery efforts.

Clark, Wilds, and Zupcic published a letter on Pitt’s Department of Community Relations Web page thanking the Pitt community for its efforts. The letter is available at http://www.commrel.pitt.edu/.

“One Bucket at a Time

“It’s hard to imagine doing without personal care items that everyone takes for granted in this country. Being able to wash your face or brush your teeth seems like a little thing, but it helps to restore dignity to people overwhelmed with stress.”

— Joseph Pawlak

PUBLICATION NOTICE The next edition of Pitt Chronicle will be published May 17. Items for publication in the newspaper’s Happenings calendar (see page 15) should be received at least two weeks before the event date. Happenings items should include the following information: title of the event, name and title of speaker(s), date, time, location, sponsor(s), and a phone number and Web site for additional information. Items may be e-mailed to chron@pitt.edu, faxed to 412-624-4895, or sent by campus mail to 422 Craig Hall. For more information, call 412-624-1033 or e-mail robinet@pitt.edu.