**Pitt Alumnus and U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin to Speak at Commencement Ceremony May 1**

By Amanda Leff Ritchie

U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (A&S ’64), a renowned national leader regarding such issues as health care, retirement security, the environment, and foreign policy, will be the featured speaker at the University of Pittsburgh’s 2011 Commencement on May 1. The ceremony, which will include the presentation to the Senator of an honorary doctoral degree, will begin at 1 p.m. in the Petersen Events Center.

“Senator Ben Cardin began laying the foundation for a lifetime of leadership in public service during his years as a Pitt undergraduate,” said Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg. “A respected national leader on many of the most critical issues of our times, Senator Cardin has worked tirelessly to shape legislation that affords more Americans access to the American dream. It will be a privilege to welcome this distinguished Pitt honors alumnus back to campus as our University’s 2011 commencement speaker.”

Cardin was elected from Maryland to the U.S. House of Representatives (D-3rd District) in 1986 and to the U.S. Senate in 2006. Since 1993, he has been a member of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (also known as the Helsinki Commission), serving as cochairman in the 111th Congress and chairman in the 112th Congress. In the 112th Congress, he continues to chair the Environment and Public Works Committee’s International Development and Foreign Assistance, Economic Affairs and International Environmental Protection Subcommittee. Cardin currently serves on the EPW, Finance, Foreign Relations, Budget, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship committees.

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, Cardin brings with him the expertise he developed while serving for 17 years on the Ways and Means Committee in the U.S. House. During that time, many of the tax and budget decisions that affect Pitt’s ability to carry out its educational mission touched the committee.

“Cardin represents the highest standard of public service and dedication to our nation and our people,” said Chancellor Nordenberg. “The University is proud to welcome to our campus this distinguished Pitt alumnus.”

**Chancellor Says Pitt Willing to Accept “Fair Share Of Sacrifice” in Proposed Budget Cuts, but Asks PA Legislature Not to Abandon Higher-Education Funding**

(This is Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg’s written testimony that was submitted to the Senate’s Appropriation Committee on March 16, 2011. The Chancellor is making a presentation to the Pa. House’s Appropriations Committee today, March 20.)

In the preamble to the Act of Feb. 28, 1787, which established the academy that would become the University of Pittsburgh, the Pennsylvania legislature declared that “the education of youth ought to be a primary object with every government.” For nearly 225 years, state support for Pitt has been built on a basic belief in the power of education, not only as an essential element of individual growth but also as a key to building community vitality and economic strength.

Forty-five years ago, when Pitt became a state-related university, the Commonwealth assumed a more central role in supporting high-quality programs of higher education. That new role created larger numbers of reasonably priced opportunities to meet the higher aspirations of Pennsylvanias families. It also reflected the recognition that a competitive state economy would require an increasingly well-educated citizenry. The basic understanding was straightforward—the state would provide an appropriation large enough to enable Pitt to set a tuition rate for Pennsylvanians that was markedly lower than what it had been charging, and would have continued to charge, as a private university. In the process, the state also would provide support to an institution that would become increasingly central to the Commonwealth’s collective progress.

Unfortunately, levels of Commonwealth support have fallen significantly over an extended period of time—with our appropriation representing more than 30 percent of the University’s budget in the mid-1970s, less than 20 percent by the mid-1990s, and just under 10 percent today. Comparisons to the levels of support provided by many other states are striking. For example, most of the institutions that have been grouped with Pitt in the very

**Only the Weak Survive? Pitt-led Researchers Devise Model For Stronger Self-Healing Materials by Adding More Give**

By Morgan Kelly

Conventional rules of survival tend to favor the strongest, but University of Pittsburgh-based researchers recently found that in the emerging world of self-healing materials, it is the somewhat frail that may prevail.

The team presents in the journal *Langmuir* a new model laying out the inner workings of self-healing nanogel particles made of nanoscale gel particles that regenerate after taking damage and are being pursued as a coating or composite material. More specifically, the researchers discovered that an ideal amount of weak bonds actually make for an overall stronger material that can withstand more stress.

Although self-healing nanogel materials have already been realized in the lab, the exact mechanical nature and ideal structure had remained unknown, explained Anna Balazs, corresponding author and Distinguished Professor of Chemical Engineering in Pitt’s Swanson School of Engineering. The team’s findings not only reveal how self-healing nanogel materials work, but also provide a blueprint for creating more resilient designs, she said.

Balazs worked with lead author and Pitt postdoctoral researcher Isaac Salib; Chet Negi, a Pitt chemical and petroleum engineering sophomore; German Kolmakov, a postdoctoral researcher in Balazs’ lab; and Krzysztof Matyjaszewski, a chemistry professor at Carnegie Mellon University with an adjacent appointment in Pitt’s Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering.

The team worked from a computational model that Negi, Kolmakov, and Salib created based on a self-healing material Matyjaszewski developed known as nanogel—a composite of spongy, microporous polymer particles linked to one another by several tentacles-like bonds. The nanogel particles consist of stable bonds—which provide overall strength—and labile bonds, highly reactive bonds that can break and easily reform, the core of self-repair.

The computer model allowed the researchers to test the performance of various bond arrangements. The polymers were first laid out in an arrangement similar to that in the nanogel, with the tentacles linked end-to-end by a single strong bond. Simulated stress tests showed, however, that though these bonds could recover from short-lived stress, they could not withstand drawn-out tension such as stretching or pulling. Instead, the team found that when particles were joined by several parallel bonds, the nanogel could absorb more stress and still self-repair.

The team then sought the most effective concentration of parallel labile bonds, Balazs said. According to the computational model, even a small number of labile bonds greatly increased resilience. For instance, a sample in which only 30 percent of the bonds were labile—with parallel labile bonds placed in groups of four—could...
**Pitt Jazz Ensemble to Hold Annual Spring Concert**

March 29

The Pitt Jazz Ensemble—a University of Pittsburgh student ensemble of 27 musicians—will hold its annual spring concert at 8 p.m. March 29 in the Assembly Room of the William Pitt Union.

Larry Coryell, one of jazz guitar’s masters, will open as a special guest. Other performers will include local jazz musicians Cecil Washington, Latin drums; Jeff Grubbs, bass; Craig Davis, piano; and Roger Humphries, drums.

Ticket concerts are $10 general admission and $5 for students and are available at the WPU box office or at the door the night of the concert. For more information, call 412-647-4187.

—Sharon S. Blake

**Noted Biochemist, Former Pitt Professor to Discuss DNA Research April 4**

Renowned biochemist and former Pitt professor Nigel Grindley will deliver the 2011 Tasimou-Laufer Distinguished Lecture sponsored by the Department of Biological Sciences in the School of Arts and Science. A professor in the Department of Molecular Biophysics and Biophysics at Yale University, Grindley will discuss his ongoing study of the enzymes that initiate DNA replication and rearrangement. His lecture, “Holding Hands While Doing the Twist: A Nano-Scale Rotational Bearing in DNA Recombination,” is open to the public and will be held at 4 p.m. April 4, Room 149, Crawford Hall. A reception will follow in Room 2199B, Langley Hall, which is connected to Crawford.

Grindley’s noted career began during his doctoral studies at London University where he contributed to the discovery and characterization of transposons—at jumping genes—that facilitate the spread of bacterial resistance to antibiotics. This discovery initiated a long and productive quest to discover the molecular mechanisms through which transposons can jump from one part of a genome to another. Grindley’s work has led to both an atomic-level description of the specialized proteins that are involved and a nanoscale understanding of the dynamic process of DNA strand exchange.

Grinley earned his PhD degree from London University in 1974 and conducted his postdoctoral research at Carnegie Mellon University and at Yale. He joined Pitt’s biological sciences department as an assistant professor in 1978 before taking his position at Yale in 1980.

—Morgan Kelly

**Health Book Center Relocates To The Book Center**

The Health Book Center has relocated from its location at 3527 Forbes Ave. to inside The Book Center, 4000 Fifth Ave., effective Monday, March 28.

General books from the Health Book Center are located alongside other general books on The Book Center’s first floor, while textbooks for health sciences courses are located in the textbook department. The Book Center will also continue to offer health-related supplies and gift items.

This change comes in response to the rapidly changing book/publishing industry, said Debra Fyock, director of The Book Center. With an increased variety of delivery methods, such as eBooks and rentals, and the rise of Internet book sales, the Health Book Center no longer required the amount of space it had needed in the past. In addition, Fyock said, the convenience of one-stop shopping at The Book Center was an added incentive to relocate.

—Alex Russell

**School of Pharmacy, Steeltown Entertainment to Showcase Competition’s Polio-Related Videos April 3**

The University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy and Steethown Entertainment Project will showcase a number of videos that are part of a competition involving the region’s middle-school and high-school students. The event, which is open only to students who have submitted their work to the competition, will take place from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. April 3 in the School of Pharmacy, Room 402, Salk Hall. Titled “Take a Shot at Changing the World,” the competition was launched last year and invited students to create videos connecting the collective effort that fostered the development of the Salk polio vaccine at Pitt 55 years ago to current efforts to eradicate polio from the planet.

The initiative was inspired by the documentary “The Shot Felt ‘Round the World” produced in 2010 by Pitt Film Studies Program faculty member Carl Kurlander. The film tells the story of the Pitt research team’s and the Pittsburgh community’s roles in the creation of the Salk polio vaccine.

Kurlander said students from 55 schools are participating in the competition. During the April 3 event, a number of videos will be showcased for attending students as well as Peter Salk, a son of Jonas Salk and a featured interviewee in The Shot Felt ‘Round the World, who will attend as a special guest. Also expected to attend are other members of the documentary cast, including Randy J. Pult, Pitt’s vice chancellor for research and compliance and Distinguished Service Professor of Pharmacy.

The competition is co-sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy, the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC, the Magee-Womens Research Institute and the Pittsburgh Chapter of March of Dimes. The competition is also supported by the American Federation for Aging Research and assistance from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

—Alex Russell

**Katherine L. Wisner to Receive Prestigious 2011 Women in Science Award**

By Megan Grote Quatrini

The American Medical Women’s Association named Katherine L. Wisner, a professor of psychiatry, obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences, and epidemiology in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, as the recipient of the 2011 Women in Science Award. The award is given to a female physician who has made exceptional contributions to medical science, especially in women’s health, through her basic and/or clinical research, her publications, and through leadership in her field.

She is honored to have contributed to research in perinatal mental health over the last 25 years. She goes from being essentially unknown in the U.S. to a field of great interest among investigators and clinicians,” Wisner said. “I accept the award in honor of the many women who have participated in research studies so that our knowledge about perinatal mental disorders and treatments could advance.”

Wisner is director of the Women’s Behavioral Health Program in the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic of UPMC. She also serves as an investigator at the Magee-Womens Research Institute. Her research focuses on the psychiatric treatment of women of childbearing age, and she is internationally recognized as an expert in the treatment of depression during pregnancy and postpartum period.

Wisner has received funding from the National Institute of Mental Health as principal investigator since 1988. She studies the impact of both moderate to major depression during pregnancy, as well as treatment with a class of antidepressant medications called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors on maternal and infant outcomes. Wisner is also studying pregnancy outcomes for women with bipolar disorder and the pharmacokinetics of treatment with lithium during pregnancy. In an effort to increase treatment options for women with postpartum depression, she is currently conducting a clinical trial for postpartum depression that includes treatment with an antidepressant skin patch, the antidepressant sertraline, or a placebo. Her team has screened more than 10,000 new mothers at Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC for depression and found a 14 percent positive rate.

Wisner will receive the award at a presentation during the American Medical Women’s Association annual meeting in Washington, D.C., on April 2.

The American Medical Women’s Association is an organization of women physicians, medical students, and other persons dedicated to serving as the collective voice for women’s health and the advancement of women in medicine. The organization was founded by Bertha VanDyke from Chicago, at a time when women physicians were an underrepresented minority.

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AAAC President Linda Wharton Boyd Balances High Profile in D.C. and at Pitt

By Patricia Lamonde White

Linda Wharton Boyd, president of the University of Pittsburgh’s African Alumni Council (AAAC), has parlayed her doctoral degree in communication from Pitt into a career filled with high-profile executive positions.

Wharton Boyd (A&S ’72, ’75G, ’76G) is the founder and chief operating officer of The Wharton Group, a family-owned and operated communications company in Washington, D.C., that serves government agencies and educational organizations. In January 2011, she took a leave from her company to become the director of communications for the new mayor of the District of Columbia, Wharton Boyd has also served as chief communications officer for the Washington, D.C., Public Schools, interim director of the D.C. Office of Cable Television and Telecommunications, and director of communications for the Howard University Challenge Services Agencies under the D.C. Deputy Mayor for Children and Youth, D.C. Department of Human Services.

Similarly, Wharton Boyd has taken a high profile on her alma mater’s Oakland campus; her dedication to Pitt has led her to cofound the Selma Burke Art Center on Jan. 15, 1969, calling for the University to increase the number of Black students. Wharton Boyd became involved in Pitt’s new University Challenge program in communication, forging a plan to attend law school. About 10 years ago, in the thick of her demanding career, Wharton Boyd became involved in Pitt’s alumni efforts, beginning with Pitt’s Alumni Association. In 2005, she ran for and won the AAAC presidency.

Under Wharton Boyd’s leadership, the AAAC has made great strides, including a near tripling of AAAC-registered alumni. When she became president, the AAAC database had fewer than 6,000 alumni; it now has 16,000.

“With the advent of social media, we are able to reach more and more alumni,” Wharton Boyd noted. “AAAC’s programs have grown because its alumni have had great importance to the success of our efforts as well.”

One such effort involves Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg traveling to and meeting with its alumni to cities to meet with Pitt’s AAAC alumni, called Chancellor Connections. About 300 alumni attended the AAAC event in Washington, D.C., in May 2007, and similar events were held in Atlanta and Philadelphia in 2009. This year, AAAC alumni in Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago will have the opportunity to meet the chancellor.

“They were able to immerse myself in a Pitt family,” said Wharton Boyd, who attended the University on a scholarship as one of the first Malcolm-Martin Marcus (3M) scholars, part of a Pitt program, begun in 1968 to increase the enrollment of underrepresented groups at the University.

Wharton Boyd’s Pitt “family” included other 3M scholars and coordinators with whom she spent time when she was not attending class, studying, participating in the activities of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority or dancing at the Selma Burke Art Center. Her love of dance led her to found the Pittsburgh Black Theater Dance Ensemble with the late Bob Johnson, a professor of dance in the former Black Studies department and a professional dancer from New York City. Academically, Wharton Boyd also excelled. One of her mentors was Pitt Distiguished Service Professor of Communication Jack L. Daniel, a Pitt PhD graduate in 1969 and a leader of a group of African American Pitt students who occupied the University center on Jan. 15, 1969, calling for the University to increase the number of Black students, administrative staff at Pitt; to provide better academic support and resources for Black students; and to recognize the significance of African American life and culture on campus.

Daniel was eventually appointed interim director of Pitt’s newly created Black Studies Program. Wharton Boyd began her freshman year in the summer of 1969, and Daniel was her undergraduate advisor. Under his guidance, Wharton Boyd decided to enter Pitt’s PhD program in communication, forgoing a plan to attend law school.

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“Key to AAAC’s success is the partnerships we’ve formed with various entities at the University,” said Wharton Boyd. “I cannot say enough about Chancellor Nordenberg and his willingness and openness to support our efforts. It has been a true testament to our success, and his efforts have helped us in what we have done.”

In 2009, AAAC celebrated 40 years of diversity during Pitt’s annual Homecoming weekend and it launched its first major gifts campaign, a $3 million AAAC student financial assistance fundraising effort. About $2 million in gifts and pledges was raised in less than a year, prompting organizers to increase the goal to $5 million.

Each year, AAAC hosts a number of programs during its Sankofa Homecoming Weekend, including honoring alumni with the AAAC Distinguished Alumni Award and taking part in the Appleseed Program, in which alumni visit Pittsburgh schools to read to children and to talk about career and educational opportunities and life experiences.

In addition, AAAC is involved in helping new students get off on the right foot at Pitt. “Welcome Freshmen to Pitt” cookouts are held at the homes of AAAC alumni to offer new students from a given region opportunities to meet one another. The cookouts began in D.C. and the idea has spread to Baltimore, Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Cleveland.

As part of Pitt’s Arrival Survival activities for incoming freshmen and their families, AAAC holds a reception for families, said Wharton Boyd, who comes to Pittsburgh from D.C. to be a part of the festivities: “We have about 200 or 300 people attend. Programs like this help to alleviate the fears of students and parents.”

Wharton Boyd said she finds her AAAC volunteer work rewarding, and she believes it’s important to be involved, especially in student-support initiatives.

“Students need to have somebody that cares,” she said. “And it’s important to give them a good idea of what to expect.” She said. “Other African American alumni groups—[in Pitt’s schools of] pharmacy, engineering, medicine—are doing some of the things we’ve been doing to reach out to incoming students and their families. We’ve done trailblazing work at Pitt, and none of it could have been done without the support of Mark Nordenberg.”

Wharton Boyd’s advice for today’s African American undergraduates is to take advantage of every opportunity—she recalled her own travel to Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zanzibar as an undergraduate.

When asked which of her accomplishments she was the most proud of, Wharton Boyd said she can’t single one out, but that her AAAC work has been extremely rewarding in a number of ways, among them “seeing the organization grow as quickly as it has, knowing that we are touching so many lives, and realizing that I have given a major part of my life to the University. What is life if you can’t give back?” I tell students, “What I do for you, you should do for somebody else.”"
Chancellor Willing to Accept “Fair Share of Sacrifice” in Budget Cuts, but Asks PA Not to Abandon Higher-Education Funding

North Carolina—22 percent; Florida—32 percent; Berkeley—26 percent, but with support for higher education remaining flat. It has absolutely changed. If then, that Pitt’s no-growth appropriation did not contribute in any way to what some have described as the state spending run-up of the last eight years. In fact, when inflation is factored in, the University suffered significant losses to the purchasing power of its appropriation.

Even with this erosion in state support, Pitt has continued to honor its end of the tuition-differential agreement that sits at the heart of its state-related status. Pennsylvania is home to four universities that are members of the Association of American Universities, widely regarded as the top 63 research universities in the United States and Canada. Two—Pitt and Penn State—are public, and two—Carnegie Mellon and the University of Pennsylvania—are private. At Pitt, the tuition charged an undergraduate student enrolled at the University’s main campus is slightly in excess of $14,000 per year—which is high by national public university standards, reflecting comparatively low levels of state support. Penn State’s tuition is comparable. However, charges at our private AAU counterparts exceed $40,000 per year—a gap of more than $25,000. Put another way, that single-year gap between public and private university charges is almost enough to pay for two full years of Pitt’s in-state tuition.

Unfortunately, the proposed budget for the next fiscal year would dramatically accelerate this pattern of erosion by slashing state support for public higher education, disadvantaging Pennsylvania families and putting the collective good of the Commonwealth in jeopardy. From our review of that proposal, the steep and sweeping cuts in support for Pitt would include:

• 45 percent, or $80 million, reduction to our general education appropriation, funds that are used mainly to support the education of the next generation of Pennsylvanians;

• the complete elimination of nearly $17 million of support for programs in the health sciences, including our top-ranked School of Medicine, the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, our Dental Clinic, and our Center for Public Health Practice;

• the apparent (because here the budget documents may be confusing) loss of annual biomedical research support, competitively awarded, of more than $9 million from the tobacco settlement fund; and

• the anticipated loss of more than $7.5 million in stimulus funding.

The short and sad message is that Pitt has been targeted for cuts in excess of $100 million.

To be clear, the daunting budget deficit that Pennsylvania now faces was not created by the current administration, just as it was not created by Pitt, and it has been said that when seeking to close a $4 billion budget deficit there are no good choices. Even if that is true, however, there are better choices—or at least “less bad” choices—and the stunningly deep cuts proposed for higher education are not among them.

To frame the responsibilities of government in everyday terms, it has become customary to draw an analogy to the basic constraint faced by every family—the need to live within its means. But the comparison almost never extends to the even more telling aspects of the analogy—the values that shape family spending priorities and the parental struggles to advance those priorities once set. The families whose approaches to life we traditionally have honored are those in which the highest parental priority is helping to build the foundation for better lives for their daughters and sons—their next generation. As a society, we always have celebrated, in particular, the efforts of parents who sacrifice spending on themselves, or who find ways to generate more family income by taking on additional work, in order to provide their children with a college education.

Today, the application of the family analogy to governmental budgets rarely seems to reach that second stage. Elected officials do regularly say that they cannot, in good conscience, leave our children and grandchildren to deal with the crushing government debt that continues to grow, and it would be hard to disagree with that. But little attention is paid to the crushing personal debts that may be incurred by many members of our society’s next generation if public support for public higher education is further slashed. It also is rare for there to be any acknowledgment of the fact that our children and grandchildren will be less well equipped to deal with the world that we leave them if public higher education moves beyond the means of large segments of society.

In the 1960s, the Commonwealth became an active partner in creating broader access to higher education. The most direct beneficiaries of its actions were the young people of my generation and their parents. We now seem on the verge of retreating from the responsibility to make such opportunities available, on at least roughly equivalent terms, to the young people of today.

Of course, as noted, this is not just a matter of supporting the educational aspirations of individual citizens. It also is a matter of building collective strength, because Pennsylvania itself has been a major beneficiary of its investments in public higher education. In arguing for the creation of an academy in Pittsburgh some 225 years ago, our founder, a member of this Legislature, observed that “the strength of a state greatly influences the arts, sciences, and the prosperity of individual citizens. It also is a matter of supporting the educational aspirations available, on at least roughly equivalent terms, to the young people of today.

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Continued from page 1
nomic anchors in their home communities of Bradford, Greensburg, Johnstown, and Titusville, as well as Pittsburgh; and
• the impact of Pitt as a research powerhouse that imports more than four dollars in research funding for every one dollar of state appropriation (probably an unequal return on state investment) and that is recognized as a primary source of the ideas that will define our economic future.

As important as building the economy of the future may be, these research initiatives also have the potential to produce other benefits that can only be described as amazing. Consider, for example, recent headlines announcing that Pitt researchers would receive nearly $7 million in federal support over the next three years to test two different types of brain implants designed to advance work that would permit paralyzed individuals, including our “wounded warriors,” to control prosthetic limbs through the power of their own thoughts. As we think about the world that we hope to leave to the next generation, are we really prepared to say, as a society, that work of this type will no longer be a priority? What would we think of our predecessors if they had not supported the

Pitt-based efforts that led to the Salk polio vaccine or the development of the surgical techniques and drug therapies that made human organ transplantation possible?

As we engage in the process of setting the priorities that will shape more constrained public investments in the years ahead, we should return, again and again, to the wisdom of Benjamin Franklin. The man considered by many to be the greatest Pennsylvanian of all once said, “An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.”

More than two centuries of intervening history have shown that Mr. Franklin was right about his civic investment strategy, just as he was right about so many other things. And Pitt’s recent history adds 21st-century meaning to Franklin’s 18th-century advice. Pioneering research advances, public service initiatives of impact, and programs that permit current students to use the power of education to build better lives have become broadly recognized and widely respected hallmarks of the University of Pittsburgh.

To be absolutely clear, the University stands ready, as it always has, to accept its fair share of the sacrifice that will be required to rein in the deficit. Evidence of that fact can be found in the existing record. As noted above, the University’s appropriation has been cut in six of the last 10 years. However, the cuts now proposed are disproportionately deep and would not only do damage to the dreams of young Pennsylvanians and to the plans of their families but would undermine much of the progress that has been made to position the Commonwealth for future success in the emerging innovation economy.

As we enter a new era of government, we must work together not only to find ways to shrink our accumulated budget deficits, which we know must be done. We also must search for ways to secure the progress that is the key to our shared future. For nearly 225 years, Pitt has been a powerful force in building brighter futures. As we move further into a new century characterized by a rapidly changing and highly competitive world and faced with the need to nurture a vibrant society and to rebuild a strong and sustainable economy, Pennsylvania cannot afford to let that light go dim. Regrettably, the dramatic budget cuts that have been proposed would do just that.

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Letting Their Voices Be Heard …
Benjamin L. Cardin to Speak at Commencement Ceremony May 1

Continued from page 1

his proposals were enacted into law, including increasing the amount Americans can save for retirement, expanding Medicare to include preventive benefits, and improving the foster care system.

During the 111th Congress, Cardin supported the Affordable Care Act and was successful in getting a guaranteed dental benefit included in the reauthorization of the Children’s Health Insurance Program. The America Recovery and Reinvestment Act included his amendments to provide first-time homebuyers with an $8,000 tax credit and to raise the cap on surety bonds for small businesses from $2 million to $5 million. He also introduced the Chesapeake Clean Water and Ecosystem Restoration Act to give states and local governments new enforcement tools to restore the Chesapeake Bay.

In 2001, Worth Magazine named Cardin among the top “100 people who have influenced the way Americans think about money.” In 2004, he was named to Treasury and Risk Management’s list of “100 Most Influential People in Finance.” In the 110th Congress, he received an “A” grade from the NAACP and a score of 100 from the Human Rights Campaign. In both the 110th and 111th Congress, Cardin received a 100 percent rating from the League of Conservation Voters.

From 1987 to 2007, Cardin represented Maryland’s 3rd Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition to serving on the House Ways and Means Committee, he served on the Judiciary and Budget committees, the Committee on Standards and Official Conduct (the Ethics Committee), and the Select Committee on Homeland Security. He also served as the senior Democrat on the Trade and the Human Resources subcommittees of the Ways and Means Committee.

In addition to receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree (cum laude) from Pitt’s School of Arts and Sciences, Cardin graduated first in his class from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1967. He holds honorary degrees from the University of Baltimore School of Law (1990), University of Maryland at Baltimore (1993), Baltimore Hebrew University (1994), Goucher College (1996), and Stevenson University (formerly Villa Julie College) (2007). Cardin currently serves on the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Naval Academy and is a trustee of the James Madison Fellowship Foundation and the Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs. He is a former trustee of St. Mary’s College of Maryland and Goucher College. In addition, Cardin has served on the St. Mary’s Center for Study of Democracy Advisory Board and on the Johns Hopkins University’s Institute for Policy Studies’ National Advisory Board.

Cardin has received many awards, among them the Congressional Leadership Award, American College of Physicians; Legislative Leader Award, Humane Society of the United States; Anti-poverty Award, UNESCO Center for Peace, Frederick County Community Action Agency; Lifetime Achievement Award, University of Maryland School of Law’s Law & Health Care Program; Congressional Voice for Children Award, National PTA; Leadership Award, Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition; Congressional Champion Award, National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems; and Congressional Advocate of the Year Award, Child Welfare League of America.

Jamie Dixon Honored as National Coach of the Year by Sporting News

University of Pittsburgh Head Men’s Basketball Coach Jamie Dixon has been named Sporting News’ 2010-11 National Coach of the Year, one of college basketball’s highest honors.

The 2010-11 season marks the third consecutive season—and fourth time—that Dixon has garnered a National Coach of the Year award. The other honors were the 2010 Jim Phelan National Coach of the Year, 2010 USA Basketball National Coach of the Year, and 2009 Naismith National Coach of the Year awards.

Dixon is only the second head men’s basketball coach at Pitt to garner Sporting News’ National Coach of the Year award. Former Pitt Head Men’s Basketball Coach Ben Howland received it for the team’s 2001-02 season.

Dixon guided his 2010-11 Pitt team to a Big East regular season championship with a school-best 15-3 league record, a 28-6 overall record, and the program’s second No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament (2009 and 2011). In addition, Dixon concluded the 2010-11 season as the winningest men’s basketball coach in Big East history with a current .783 winning percentage; guided Pitt to three Big East championships (2003-04 regular season, 2007-08 tournament, and 2010-11 regular season); led Pitt to two 30-win seasons (31 in both 2003-04 and 2008-09) and eight consecutive 20-win overall and 10-win Big East seasons;

• Directed the Panthers to one NCAA Elite Eight (2009) and three NCAA Sweet Sixteen appearances (2004, 2007, and 2009) and is the only coach in school history to guide Pitt to eight straight NCAA Tournament berths (as of 2011); and

• Propelled Pitt to its first-ever No. 1 national ranking (2009) and two No. 1 seeds upon entering the NCAA Tournament (2009 and 2011).

In addition, Dixon concluded the 2010-11 season as the winningest men’s basketball coach in Big East history with a current .783 winning percentage in league games (109-45). Following Dixon on that list are legendary names as Georgetown’s John Thompson (653), Syracuse’s Jim Boeheim (643), Connecticut’s Jim Calhoun (641), and St. John’s Lou Carneseca (635). His .783 overall winning percentage also rates third among active winningest men’s basketball coaches at the NCAA Division I level.

Jamie Dixon

Baton Art

An exhibition of Gambian artist Salihou Njé opened March 18 in the William Pitt Union’s Kinabo Art Gallery. Njé is a resident artist working in the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts’ Artist Residency Program. The exhibition runs through April 2.
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Happenings

Concerts

Jazz Ensemble Spring Concert, featuring Pitt student ensemble of 27 musicians and jazz guitarist Larry Coryell. 8 p.m. March 30, Assembly Room, William Pitt Union. Pitt Jazz Studies Program, 412-624-4187.


The Amish Project, written by and starring Jessica Dickey, based on the 2006 shooting at an Amish schoolhouse in Lancaster, Pa., April 2-May 9, City Theatre, 1300 Highland St., South Side, 412-431-2489, www.citytheatrecompany.com.


Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses

Maha Mohammad, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences’ Department of Physical Therapy, 9 a.m. March 30, “The Gaze Stabilization Test: Reliability, Performance Characteristics of Normal Subjects, Performance of Patients with Congenital,” 6050 Forbes Tower.

Jason Fitzgerald, School of Education’s Department of Instruction and Learning, noon March 30, “Comprehending Historical Narrative: Exploring the Relationship of Casual Language and Students’ Mental Representations of History,” 5140 Posvar Hall.

Meghan Wilson, School of Medicine’s Center for Neuroimaging and Biostatistics, Graduate Program, noon March 28, “Protein Biogenesis for Amyothrophic Lateral Sclerosis: Characterization and Implication for Disease Pathogenesis,” 4951 Swall Biomedical Science Tower.

Nemecia Valley, School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Music, 1 p.m. March 28, “A Confession of Literary Consensus in the Mass for the Dead From Its Origin Through the Fourteenth Century,” 114 Music Building.

Jeff Miller, The Cup & Chaucer Café, April 1

Miscellaneous

TIES Informational Lecture for Researchers and Research Assistants, talk on Text Information Extraction System (TIES), Rebecca Crowley, director, Biomedical Informatics Graduate Training Program, Pitt School of Medicine, 11 a.m.-noon, March 30, UPMC Cancer Pavilion, suite 301, Conference Room 341, open to Pitt and UPMC faculty, staff, and students. Information: http://uems.ups.edu/register/index.html, 412-623-4735.


11th Annual Pitt Integration Bee, open to all Pitt undergraduates, 7 p.m. April 1, 343 Alumni Hall, Pitt Department of Mathematics, contact jonathab@pitt.edu to enter competition, 412-624-6157.

Exhibitions

University Art Gallery, Studio Arts Student Exhibition, March 30-April 30, Frick Fine Arts Building, Pitt Department of Studio Arts, 412-624-2430.

Frick Art Museum, Frick Art & History Center, through April 24, 11th Annual Pitt Integration Bee, 2 p.m. March 31, 6000 Forbes Ave., www.frickart.org.

The Cup & Chaucer Café, 4 p.m. April 1, “The Art of Citizenship: From the Spirit of Evolution: 100 Years of Social Pedagogy,” 114 Music Building.

Benjamin Breuer, School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Music, 3:30 p.m. March 30, “The Birth of Philosophy From the Spirit of Evolution,” 114 Music Building.
IBM’s Watson Comes to Pitt, Carnegie Mellon

Several students from the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) will have a chance to match their wits against Watson—the IBM computer that trumped Jeopardy! champions Ken Jennings and Brad Rutter in February—as that trumped wits against Watson—the IBM computer Thomas J. Watson, was built by a team of IBM scientists who set out to build a computing system that rivals a human’s ability to answer questions posed in natural language with speed, accuracy, and confidence.

The daylong event begins at 9 a.m. in Pitt’s University Club, Ballroom B, with a panel discussion titled “Natural Language Process in the World of Business, Law, and Medicine.” Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and Randy Bryant, dean and University Professor in Carnegie Mellon’s School of Computer Science, will deliver welcoming remarks.

Panelist include David Ferrucci, principal investigator of the DeepQA/Watson Project for IBM; Diane Litman, a Pitt computer science professor and a senior research scientist in Pitt’s Learning Research Development Center (LRDC) who is a leading authority on natural language processing; and Eric Nyberg, a professor in CMU’s Language Technology Institute. The discussion will be moderated by Bernard Meyerson, vice president for innovation and global university relations for IBM.

Three Pitt presenters also will discuss the real-world applications of natural language processing technologies: Donald Burke, dean of Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health, UPMC-Jonas Salk Chair of Global Health, and associate vice chancellor for global health; Brian Butler, a professor of business administration in the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business and in the School of Medicine whose research interest include information technology’s impact on food systems and other geographically embedded markets; and Kevin Ashley, professor of law, a research scientist in LRDC, and adjunct professor of computer science who is an expert on the use of computing for legal reasoning.

The Pitt symposium is open to all Pitt faculty, staff, and students.

Carnegie Mellon also will host its own symposium beginning at 11:15 a.m. in Rangos Ballroom of CMU’s University Center, titled “Deep Dive Into Deep QA and Natural Language Technology.” Welcoming remarks will be made by Daniel Mossé, chair of computer science in Pitt’s School of Information Sciences, and CMU’s Nyberg, which will be followed by a technical presentation by Ferrucci.

The afternoon session begins at 1:30 p.m. in CMU’s McConomy Auditorium, with a keynote speech by Ferrucci titled “Watson Has a New Job.” Welcoming remarks will be made by Ronald Larsen, dean of Pitt’s School of Information Sciences, and Rick McCullough, vice president for research at CMU.

The day’s capstone event will be the Pitt/CMU student practice session Wednesday afternoon beginning at 2:45 p.m. in McConomy Auditorium: “Let’s Play Jeopardy!”

Participating Pitt students are University Honors College undergraduates Danielle Arbogast, a junior majoring in political science; Richard Kester, a senior majoring in history and neuroscience with a minor in chemistry; and Brian Sisco, a junior majoring in computer science with a minor in math. Seating is limited and will be available to Pitt students, staff, and faculty on a first-come, first-served basis (Pitt I.D. required.)

Following the match, Eric Brown, a researcher on IBM’s Watson Project; Ferrucci; and Nyberg will field questions from the audience, along with Pitt’s Diane Litman and Scott Fahlman, CMU research professor of computer science and language technologies.

Pitt faculty and students are also invited to attend a Webcast of the matchup at the University Club, Ballroom A.

A closing panel discussion from 3:45 to 4:45 p.m. in McConomy Auditorium will wrap up the symposium. Panelists include Brown; Fahlman, a professor in CMU’s Language Technology Institute; Ferrucci; and Nyberg, which will be moderated.

Select symposium sessions and interviews will be webcast live from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at www.livestream.com/IBMWatson.

PUBLICATION NOTICE: The next edition of Pitt Chronicle will be published April 4. Items for publication in the newspaper’s Happenings calendar (see page 7) should be received at least two weeks prior to 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 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 412-624-3033 or e-mail robinet@pitt.edu.