The Ties That Bind

Pitt Community Bonds Are Strengthened As Many Join Hands in Challenging Times

Numerous people within the University of Pittsburgh community—students, faculty, alumni, staff, administrators, and friends—are looking inward and reaching out to one another during a time of uncertainty on the Oakland campus as a rash of bomb threats against campus buildings has occurred since Feb. 13.

• Students are actively watching out for one another during evacuations.
• The chancellor and other senior administrators are visiting with students at middle-of-the-night residence hall evacuation sites.
• More than 200 local alumni, upperclassmen, and concerned citizens have offered spare couches to those wanting off-campus accommodations.
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This coming together has reinforced for many Pitt people the intrinsic value of their University and the importance of learning during difficult, challenging times. Pitt police are being showered with praise by students, staff, and faculty for holding classes. The University has served as the University Police Department evacuation sites.

Visible Support for Pitt Police

Pitt students Alexander Rhodes and John Harvith created not only untold activity to the police, according to Kenyon Bonner, Pitt associate dean and director of student life as well as an SGB advisor. SGB members continue to spread the mottos on Facebook and Twitter accounts—and, soon, on T-shirts.

On April 9, SGB hosted a “Pitt Pride Day” event on the veranda of the William Pitt Union. Students wearing blue and gold were treated to free pizza and popcorn. More than 600 students emptied 45 boxes of pizza and signed a thank-you poster for the Pitt police.

“It helped students get their minds off everything,” said Pitt junior Richard White, a political science major who chairs SGB’s Student Government Board.

George E. Klinzing, Pitt Vice Provost for Research, to Return to Faculty

By John Harvith and B. Rose Huber

George E. Klinzing, vice provost for research at the University of Pittsburgh since 1995, has requested to return to the University’s faculty, Pitt Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor Patricia E. Beccon has announced. Klinzing—who has been Whitehead Energy Professor since 1990 and professor of chemical and petroleum engineering since 1986—will resume his faculty duties full-time in September 2012.

During his 17 years as Pitt’s vice provost for research, Klinzing has helped the University community navigate a period of tremendous growth in funded research and increased government regulation of the research enterprise.

“George’s personal and creative approach has helped shape the research enterprise at Pitt, and he has headed a number of initiatives that have brought the fruits of Pitt research to the marketplace,” the Chancellor added. “In 2001, for instance, he oversaw the development of the Technology Commercialization Alliance’s successful process to commercialize the research work of Pitt faculty, staff, and students. Since then, the number of invention disclosures at Pitt has increased six-fold. The University will always be grateful for the extraordinary range and impact of George’s service.”

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Continued on page 3

Nearby

Pitt Is 3rd Among Publics, 5th Among All Universities in Federal R&D Spending

By John Harvith

Pitt ranks third among the nation’s public institutions of higher education and fifth among all universities, public and private, in its federally financed research and development (R&D) expenditures, according to the latest figures from the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF).

The annual rankings, just released by the NSF, cover fiscal year 2010. Pitt’s federally derived R&D expenditures for that period totaled $594.7 million. Its total FY 2010 R&D expenditures added up to $822.5 million. The other two top public universities in the rankings of federally financed R&D expenditures were the University of Washington-Seattle and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor; the top two private institutions in the rankings were Johns Hopkins University and the University of Pennsylvania.

In rank order, the top five universities in the NSF’s annual survey were Johns Hopkins, Washington, Michigan, Penn and Pitt. The universities ranked in the second five were Stanford, the University of California at San Diego, Columbia, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and the University of Wisconsin.

The rankings also unmistakably demonstrate the enormous return on investment the Commonwealth receives through its support of this university as a public institution,” added Nordenberg. “The comparison of the Commonwealth’s expenditures with the state’s federal support of this university as a public institution, with which Pitt now keeps company, and it is widely recognized around the world that the kind of innovative research conducted at top research universities will be a key to economic success in the 21st century.”

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“The University of Pittsburgh’s remarkable success in attracting increasingly large amounts of federal support stems directly from the outstanding efforts of our world-class faculty in pursuing trailblazing research that has made and continues to make life better for millions worldwide, from the development of the Salk polio vaccine in the 1950s to today’s advances in the health sciences, basic sciences, and engineering,” said Pitt Vice Provost for Research George E. Klinzing. “All of this is as it should be, since Pitt, as our region’s premier public research university, not only makes it possible for its students to learn in an atmosphere alive with creative ferment, but also, as part of its public mission, acts as a powerful economic engine.”

Continued on page 2
Relyea Study Is First to Show That Pesticides Can
Induce Morphological Changes in Vertebrate Animals

The world's most popular weed killer, Roundup®, can cause morphological changes to show up within the animals that make up the March issue of Ecological Applications.

Professor R. Rick Relyea, University of Pittsburgh biologists are alert that certain genetically engineered Roundup®-tolerant crops are now available for less than $100 per acre. They believe it is possible for thieves to simply make a reader for NFC credit card and change purchase to it or extract pages from the computers.

Our new design integrates an antenna with other electrical circuitry that can be interfaced with a simple switch, like turning off the lights in the home or office. The RFID or NFC card is disabled if left in a pocket or purse near an area of vulnerable by thieves.

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An English professor recently convened a few students to post the text of lectures and daily assignments in real time, using a conferencing and collaborative platform. Students can access them from home and communicate with other students in the class, in a class session, to ask questions or ask questions that the professor has been given. It is not uncommon for any of the students to be part of such a wonderful university. just a thought :)

A Pitt community member recently created a “We Support the Faculty” page on Facebook (www.facebook.com/WeSupportthePittFaculty). The page by the end of the first week, the page had been shared more than 9,000 times by users around the world, including more than 50 Pitt professors, the student body, and the student body and faculty.

The Division of Student Affairs, under the leadership of Vice Provost and Dean of Students, has town hall meetings 30 or 40 years ago. But this is not uncommon for any of the students to be part of such a wonderful university. just a thought :)
4TH ANNUAL INCLUSIVE VOICES

Sooner than later, robots may have the ability to “feel.” In a paper published online March 25 in advanced Functional Materials, a team of researchers from the University of Pittsburgh and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) demonstrated that recording gel made of a photosensitive molecule, a photosensitive protein and a photosensitive enzyme could serve as a small-scale “holy grail in robotics.”

“A team of researchers at Pitt made predictions regarding the behavior of Belousov-Zhabotinsky (BZ) gel, a material that was first fabricated in the late 1950s and proposed to print images via light exposure,” said Brent Doiron, assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics and statistics. “In fact, under certain conditions, the gel swelling in a piston device resembles a beating heart.”

Along with her colleagues, Anna Balazs, Distinguished Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering at Pitt, predicted that BZ gel may potentially be used in mechanical pressure. The prediction was actually a breakthrough for BZ gel because until now, the gel has been manipulated by mechanical compression, a process that’s beyond a critical stress. A video from the MIT group showing this unique behavior can be accessed at http://vgn uphold.2020/jh/445753, courtesy of the National Regulatory Commission’s Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (40 CFR 50.41), Vernon County-based Angelina Balazs (GSPH ’05), director, Office of Health Sciences Diversity Programs, University of Pittsburgh.

Pitt Chancellor (and British Honorary Consul in Pittsburgh) Mark A. Nordenberg hosted a breakfast for a visiting British governmental delegation seeking information on how Pittsburgh became a model for achieving an economic Renaissance. The March 29 breakfast, held in the O’Hara Student Center Ballroom, also included as guests Pittsburgh Mayor Luke Ravenstahl and members of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, among others.

Two points of view: Pitt Chancellor Nordenberg, The Right Honorable Lord David Trimble, Member of Parliament (MP) (centre), and Paul M. Cottrell, III, director of the Regional Enterprise Institute.

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C.F. REYNOLDS MEDICAL HISTORY SOCIETY

“The C.F. Reynolds Medical History Society proudly recognizes Jennifer Eder. Final exams left for her longest son to the microscope, including his site in financial affairs, membership applications, and, for the past 25 years, the society’s meetings schedule. The courtesy is a part of the top-rated medical history-scoliosis conferences in the United States. Game on from left, are David C. Carson, who’s currently an assistant professor and cochair of the Pitt Psychiatry Department; Jenifer Johnston, society president and professor of medicine in the Renal-Electrolyte Division of the Pitt-UPMC Thomas E. Starzl Transplantation Institute; James Johnston, from left, are David K.C. Cooper, the society’s immediate past president and a professor of medicine in the Department of Surgery; and Georgia Duker, society president-elect and an assistant professor in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Science. The society presented Eder with the award. In his concluding and also stated his diagnosis on his annual lecture in his career.

NUCLEAR CONFERENCE

Pitt’s Ski Tooronga House for Law and Public Policy and Swanson School of Engineering organized “From Mr. Benthall, a Symposium on the Future of Hydroelectric Power” March 27-28 in the William Pitt Union Ballroom.

1. Pitt’s Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law and Public Policy and Swanson School of Engineering addressed the audience.

2. Pitt Chancellor Nordenberg, The Right Honorable Lord David Trimble, Member of Parliament (MP) (centre), and Paul M. Cottrell, III, director of the Regional Enterprise Institute.

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Oscillating Gel Acts Like Artificial Skin, Giving Robots Potential Ability to “Feel”

By Roza Hakob

A team of researchers at the University of Pittsburgh is using computational models to better understand how the oscillation of remnant variability relates to such functions as short-term memory and decision making. In a paper published online April 2, Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. (PNAS), the Pitt team examined how natural brain rhythms could impact the dynamics of competitive tasks.

Previous recordings of natural activity during simple cognitive tasks show a tremendous amount of trial-to-trial variability. For example, when a person is instructed to make decisions based on working memory, short-term memory, or other cognitive functions, the brain cells involved in the task showed very different activity during the two trials.

“A big challenge in neuroscience is to understand how the brain’s oscillations are involved in such functions as short-term memory and decision making,” said Brent Doiron, assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

Recently, experimental neurosciences are getting a better understanding of how the brain is wired, through methods such as fMRI and PET. By DeJong’s group’s context for these findings underlies the computational framework. The DeJong group plans to apply the general principle of linking brain-circuitry to neural variability in a variety of sensory, motor, and memory decision-making frameworks.

For those interested in information on the Neuronal Systems and Information Sciences, please visit: http://www.math.pitt.edu/~hakob/Welcome.html.

Newsmakers!

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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Happenings

Graduate Student Composers Concert, with introduced recital. It's about time to rock on, performing new and traditional music. April 16, 1:00 p.m. Cathedral of Learning, Pitt Center for Music, 412-624-1052.

Cory Woods Quartet With Joey D'Allara, a transcendent meeting of two musical geniuses. April 17, 1:00 p.m. Memorial Chapel, University Hall, 412-624-4498.

University of Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra performing Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 with Rome and Juliet portions of Berlioz' Gia, through April 23.

Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra NEA Jazz Masters, features a 100-year time - frame of jazz history from 1910 through 1940. April 17, 7:30 p.m. Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave., Downtown, 412-624-1052, www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr.

Museum of the City, featuring Tropical Botanical Garden and Wildlife Sanctuary. April 17, 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. 10th Floor, UPMC Montefiore Hospital.

The Women in Concert, featuring composer Alina Bercovici, premiere of her new composition. April 16, 8:00 p.m. Henry Heytig Auditorium, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, 412-624-4498.

The Prague in Concert, a Gregorian chanting of liturgical texts by the monks of St. Vitus' Abbey, Prague. April 17, 7:30 p.m. Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave., Downtown, 412-624-1052, www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr.

Exhibitions


The Private in Concert, a ringtone celebration of musical icons past and present. April 17, 7:30 p.m. Heinz Hall, 600 Penn Ave., Downtown, 412-624-4498, www.pittarts.pitt.edu.

The World in the Struggle, Civil Rights and the Women's Movement in Pittsburgh. April 17, noon to 1:30 p.m. 307 Eberly Hall.

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Boardman, conducted.

Amidst the jazz and blues, Echoes of the Orient. April 18, 7:30 p.m. Peter Avi, Downtown, Robert Morris University, 412-392-3104.


National Geographic's "The B.S. Factor," a new look at how our brains process and misinterpret sensory cues. April 19, 7:00 p.m. National Geographic Society, 1140 17th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Pitt PhD Dissertation Defenses

Chi-Jung, Graduate School of Public Health's Department of Microbiology, "Hypoxia and Inflammation in the Pathogenesis of Tuberculosis." April 19, 1:30 p.m. 411A 403 Information Technology Building.

Lily Tensal, Sykes Theater, April 22


Pitt Men's Give Back, First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, April 21
Pitt Jazz Ensemble’s Annual Spring Concert April 19 to Feature International Guest Artists Jimmy Owens, Curtis Fuller

By Sharon S. Blake

The Pitt Jazz Ensemble—a student ensemble comprising nearly 30 musicians—will hold its annual spring concert at 8 p.m. April 19 in the Assembly Room of the William Pitt Union.

Featured guest performers will include legendary trumpeter Jimmy Owens and renowned jazz trombonist Curtis Fuller, both of whom have been frequent guests at Pitt’s annual fall Jazz Seminar and Concert. Accompanying Owens and Fuller will be Pittsburgh-area musicians Tony Depaolis (bass), Greg Humphries (drums), Alton Merrell (piano), and Cecil Washington (Latin percussion).

Concert tickets 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. They can also be purchased from ensemble musicians. For more information, call 412-624-4187.

The Pitt Jazz Ensemble will perform under the direction of interim ensemble director Ralph Guzzi. The group has played at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland and has toured the southern United States and Trinidad. Since 1990, the ensemble annually spends two weeks in residence in France.

Curtis Fuller, who was born and raised in Detroit, picked up the trombone at age 16. Soon, he was playing in a U.S. Army Band led by Cannonball Adderly. When he returned from the service in 1955, he settled in New York City, where word about his unique style and sound spread quickly. A month later, in his early 20s, he recorded his first album as a leader. He performed with Miles Davis, Jimmy Smith, and Bud Powell, and then recorded the celebrated Blue Train album with jazz legend John Coltrane. After only eight months in New York City, Curtis had recorded six albums as a leader and was featured on 15 others. He was an original member of the Art Farmer-Benny Golson Jazztet, and his career included stints with Dizzy Gillespie, Lester Young, James Moody, and Quincy Jones. But it was with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers that Curtis would reach the pinnacle of his career, contributing A La Mode and several other classics to the band’s repertoire.

With his legacy as one of the most influential trombonists in jazz well established, Curtis spent the following years performing with jazz greats Count Basie and Jimmy Heath, among many others.