Faculty & staff leaders applaud pay hike

Reactions from faculty and staff leaders to the recent news of an employee salary increase for the current fiscal year were complimentary.

Pitt trustees approved a 3 percent salary pool increase on July 16 as part of the operating budget for fiscal year 2011, which began July 1.

Following the trustees’ action, Chancellor Mark Nordenberg said information on the breakdown of the salary distribution would be released.

“Many of our expenses continue to rise and that necessarily brings pressure on tuition. We believe that we struck the best possible balance between containing costs and growing revenue, including tuition revenue, in this budget,” the chancellor said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 1

Plans for Salk addition progress

University officials plan to break ground this fall on an addition to Salk Hall, that will house pharmacy and dental medicine research labs.

Michelle Broado, associate vice chancellor for biomedical research, said of the project: “The building is critical to the needs of both schools as they’re increasing their research productivity and research visibility on a national level.” She said the addition is needed both to accommodate growth in the pharmacy and dental schools and because some of the existing lab space in Salk Hall would be difficult and expensive to bring up to modern standards.

A briefing on the project was on the city planning commission’s July 20 agenda and the plan is expected to be on the agenda for the commission’s Aug. 3 meeting.

Subject to city approvals, the $24 million, six-story Salk Pavilion structure is to be built on the R lot in the rear of the existing building. Construction is expected to take two years.

The addition will include four floors of laboratories, one floor with 6,000 square feet of lab space for dental medicine, 12,000 square feet of lab space on two floors for pharmacy, and another unassigned floor with 6,000 square feet of lab space for dental medicine, said University architect Park Rankin.

The new labs will have an open design, similar to the lab spaces in Pitt’s Biological Sciences Tower 3 and renovated labs in Chevron Science Center. The design aims to be conducive to interaction, with researchers sharing some production areas, Rankin said.

Pharmacy Dean Patricia D. Krobath said the Salk Pavilion project represents the first new construction for pharmacy programs in the school’s 132-year history. “We are thrilled at the opportunity for faculty and students to work in state-of-the-art research space,” she said, noting that the space currently allocated to pharmacy would accommodate 11 of the school’s 21 faculty members who conduct laboratory based research.

William E. Steinhauser, director of facilities and operations in the School of Dental Medicine, said the new research space would accommodate six full-time researchers plus their associated research teams.

“The new building is building excitement as our research is building excitement,” Steinhauser said. “It has offered our research groups in the dental school tremendous growth opportunities.”

“He fortunate dilemma,” as Steinhauser put it, is trying to find space to accommodate new researchers until the new addition is completed.

The Salk Pavilion will include an upper floor for support space and a ground-level floor featuring an atrium and commons area that will connect the pavilion to Salk Hall.

The commons will provide a much-needed space for studying, relaxing and eating, Krobath said, pointing out that there is no similar gathering space in the existing building. The schools will be seeking private, corporate and foundation funding for the construction of the space, she said.

The main entrance of Salk Pavilion will be on Sutherland Drive.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
Pitt gets $23 million training grant

A $23 million grant to the University will support the training and education of health professionals who care for the thousands of people in the United States infected annually with HIV. The five-year award from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration’s HIV/AIDS Bureau, through the Ryan White Comprehensive Care Act, goes to the continuing work of the Pennsylvania/Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC).

Led by principal investigator Linda Frank, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology, the AETC includes the Center for the Study of AIDS and the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Primary Care Program. The center’s purpose is to reduce barriers to HIV care by improving the knowledge and skills through education, consultation and technical assistance.

Training focuses on clinical treatment, prevention and support for people with HIV and emphasizes the medically underserved, including women, men who have sex with men, minorities, prisoners, youth and substance users.

Training is implemented through on-site, web-based and other distance-based training technologies. A primary goal of the center is to increase the number of physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, dentists, pharmacists and other health professionals who can provide care to HIV-infected patients.

Clarification

Researchers at Pitt’s Diabetes Prevention Support Center, part of the University of Pittsburgh Diabetes Institute, train health care professionals in a group lifestyle-style balance program, which they created and which was evaluated in the diabetes prevention program, a clinical trial conducted in 27 centers across the United States.

A June 24 story inaccurately represented the Pitt researchers’ role in the national clinical trial.

Correction

Pitt’s state appropriation for fiscal year 2011, which began July 1, totaled nearly $168 million (excluding medical school funding). It included $160.49 million from the state’s general fund and $7.4 million in ARRA stimulus funding. An incorrect total appeared in the July 8 University Times.
AEDs continue to get workout

In a June 21 call, Pitt police responded to the Kaufmann Medical Building on Fifth Avenue, where a man was found unresponsive in a workout building and a sociology faculty member arrived. The student was utilizing the AED until medics arrived.

A couple of earlier incidents in which AEDs were used, a campus Sodexo employee collapsed in a June 2 incident in the Library Science Building and a sociology faculty member was revived after collapsing on UDC’s North Campus on April 15. (See June 10 University Times.)

• In a Dare available in a number of University buildings and other public places and Pitt police routine, anyone portable AEDs on all calls for medical assistance, but the resuscitation devices were not used in any of the 295 calls reported in 2009.

• The AHA currently recommends CPR skills can be lost if not used, so it’s important to brush up on CPR regularly.

• Forney said it’s better to be fresh. If you’re comfortable with your skills you’ll react and do what you need to do,” Forney said.

Lab takes computational approach to public health issues

The model of AED used at the University “literally takes you step-by-step through the process,” Forney said. “It gives you feedback through every phase of the rescue effort.”

The AHA currently recommends recertification every two years. AEDs have been carried by personnel who have received CPR training review their course material.

In a highly stressful situation, “it’s better to be fresh. If you’re confident with your skills you’ll react and do what you need to do,” Forney said.

AEDs are located in Blaisdell Hall, Fisher Hall, Frame-Westerberg Commons, Hangar Building, Hanley Library, Seneca Building and Swarts Hall. In addition, police carry a portable unit and another portable AED travels with UPS sports teams.

AEDs continue to get workout

Where to find an AED at Pitt

• On the Pittsburgh campus

• At Pitt-Bradford

• At Pitt-Greensburg

• At Pitt-Johnstown

• At Pitt-Titusville

• At Pitt-Bradford

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Registry benefits volunteers, researchers

Pitt’s Research Participant Registry reached a landmark last month by enrolling its 10,000th individual in less than two years. Participants have the opportunity to learn about or take part in Pitt and UPMC health studies.

One of the first of its kind, the registry is a component of Pitt’s Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), which was established in 2006 with an $83.5 million five-year National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant. (See Nov. 6, 2008, University Times.)

Pitt’s CTSI is one of the first dozen established with NIH funding. Now there are 55 such institutes.

Having 10,000 registered participants thus far has translated into the registry’s staff receiving more than 1,500 requests about specific studies. More than 300 participants, after completing the registry office’s pre-screening process, have been referred to study coordinators, according to Laurel Yasko, CTSI administrative director of operations.

“The way it is set up, you agree to be contacted about potential research studies. If you are interested, then you contact us. This is very participant-driven,” Yasko said.

When a participant calls, registry office staff describe the specific study requirements to the participant, pre-screen the person for eligibility prior to referral to a research coordinator, who will do a more comprehensive screening.

“We have about 100 studies in the registry that are actively recruiting participants, and a quarter of those are looking for healthy volunteers,” she said.

“Most of these studies are being conducted by researchers in the School of Medicine, but every school on campus is represented in the registry.”

Recruiting subjects for clinical research studies is an age-old hurdle for researchers, Yasko said. For example, fewer than 7 percent of people with cancer enroll in clinical oncology trials, she said.

With the registry, research coordinators have access to people they wouldn’t have had access to otherwise,” Yasko said. “We consider the registry a success because of the response rate from participants,” which is running at about 15 percent, she said. “Mass mailings, for example, historically get only a 2-5 percent response rate.

Another measure of success is a comparison with Vanderbilt’s national registry, which was launched prior to Pitt’s and has enrolled about 8,000 participants, Yasko said.

CTSI recruits subjects in two ways. At UPMC’s 19 hospitals and outpatient locations — currently 106 of the total 307 outpatient facilities in the 15 counties in the 350-mile radius where people can register, a number that is growing all the time — and at community events such as the Race for the Cure, Yasko said.

Individuals also can sign up at www.researchregistry.pitt.edu.

“The big thing with the registry is that it’s almost like having one study per person,” she noted.

To access the registry, we were able to recruit older adults at risk for chronic depression, whether they have multiple illnesses like arthritis or other conditions such as stroke — in other words, people who have a number of risk factors for chronic depression, many of whom are in difficult-to-reach environments,” Reynolds said.

He added that he is looking forward to using the registry resource to recruit a Pittsburgh cohort for a new national study on prolonged or complicated grief. “Interestingly, all our collaborators in this study are from other CTSI sites around the country,” Reynolds said.

Gadi Wollstein, associate professor of ophthalmology and director of the Ophthalmic Imaging Research Laboratories, has noticed an uptick in referrals for his longitudinal glaucoma study since the study was listed with the CTSI participant registry.

“The major study I’m working on is an epidemiology study now in its 11th year. We’re looking for better ways to diagnose glaucoma and to follow patients over time. Glaucoma is hard to diagnose because it is an asymptomatic disease,” Wollstein said. “If we improve our ability to diagnose glaucoma, the study could affect clinical decisions in the future, which is our hope.”

Local subjects contact the clinical coordinator, visit Wollstein’s lab and receive a comprehensive eye examination that includes all the requirements that her staff then share with inquiring participants.

Charles Reynolds, UPMC Endowed Professor in Geriatric Psychiatry and director of the UPMC/Pitt Aging Institute, said:

“The recruitment of research subjects is the single most difficult challenge in clinical research, especially for those RO1 (NIH research grant)-funded projects that don’t necessarily have the resources to recruit in vulnerable or underserved populations. That’s why the infrastructure, or the resource, of the CTSI registry is simply invaluable, because it enables researchers to meet recruitment objectives and fulfills the NIH mandate that clinical research include a broadly representative sample.”

Reynolds and colleagues worked with the CTSI Research Participant Registry staff on recruiting subjects for a study titled Prevention of Depression in Older Adults, which focuses on both African Americans and Caucasian Americans. Specifically, the study recruited 240 subjects, about 15 percent of whom are older African Americans.

“Before the CTSI registry existed, our rates were 10-12 percent of African Americans — that’s a threefold increase. The registry allows us to more efficiently recruit and retain participants, not only subjects of color, but also those who may be from vulnerable social and economic circumstances,” Reynolds said.

The registry allows us to fulfill the public health mandate to do clinical research with broad relevance to all Americans and the public health mission to relieve the burden of illness on the nation’s health and well-being,” Yasko said.

A limitation in our study is when we try to generalize about the general population, it’s difficult because most of our subjects are from clinics. But we’ve been able, with the help of the registry, to increase the pool of volunteers, of healthy subjects,” he said.

“I think we are a nice example of why this registry is a good idea. First, we’ve noticed that the number of potential participants has picked up lately — maybe three-five calls a week, which is far more than usual — from the registry. I think our study has been somewhat under the radar, and having it in the registry helps get the word out,” he said.

“Even more, just two weeks ago, we had a woman from the registry come to us with the designation ‘healthy subject.’ But after a battery of tests we realized she had undiagnosed glaucoma, and finding that out when we did
Faculty & staff leaders applaud FY11 pay hike

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The chancellor determined the salary increase distribution as the percent directed for satisfactory performance; the percent for merit, market, and equity adjustments at the unit level, and the percent to be distributed by senior officers to address market imbalances among units in the University.

The chancellor’s update had not been published when the University Times went to press.

(For updated salary distribution information as it becomes available, go to the University Times web site, www.utimes.pitt.edu)

In press materials released at the July 16 trustees meeting, Nordenberg stated, “Our annual benchmarking of peer institutions confirms that we have been losing ground on the salary front. To recruit and retain the caliber of employees whose work is essential to our continued success in attracting both the best possible students and the highest possible levels of research support required that we make a commitment to end our salary freeze and provide for at least modest salary increases this year.”

University Senate President Michael Pinsky said, “As I’ve said many times, the most important part of the University is its faculty. Therefore to compensate faculty even modestly, especially under the current economic situation, is favorable, because we need to remain competitive.

“The University also is raising tuition,” Pinsky continued. “The administration didn’t want that, but they knew it was necessary in order to stay competitive and balance the budget. And I think they struck a good balance between the 3 percent salary increase and the 5.5 percent tuition increase.”

He added, “This does not mean that faculty aren’t cognizant that tuition increases are a burden on students and their families, but if you look at the cost to go to the University of Pittsburgh compared to any other university in the Pittsburgh area, we are still a good bargain given the quality of education that occurs here. As the father of three college-aged children, only one of whom attends Pitt, I’m very grateful for the reasonable costs here.”

John Baker, who chairs the University Senate budget policies committee, said, “In view of last year’s salary freeze, one might, at first thought, be disappointed with this year’s 3 percent salary pool increase. However, the increase must be viewed in the proper context: The U.S. has not recovered from its current bad recession; there was no increase in Pitt’s state appropriation for the 2011 fiscal year; many families are struggling to make ends meet, and the economic outlook for next year is not looking good.”

Baker continued, “Inflation continues to rise and we are all affected by it. For the year ending Dec. 31, 2009, inflation was 2.7 percent as measured by the government’s CPI-W. The administration had to balance giving a needed pay raise to its faculty and staff with the potentially harmful effect that a tuition increase might have on students and their families. A 3 percent salary pool increase and 5.5 percent tuition increase for in-state students on the Oakland campus is a good balance between these competing concerns.

Baker added that “the 3 percent pool increase is slightly higher than the [University planning and budgeting committee] recommendation, which was based on a slightly lower tuition increase than 5.5 percent.”

The provost-chaired UPBC includes administrators, faculty, staff and students who annually make recommendations to the chancellor on salary.

“However,” Baker noted, “UPBC and Senate budget policies both recommended a higher salary pool increase if additional revenues could be found, which occurred with the decision to set the tuition increase at 5.5 percent. In discussing these recommendations, we wanted the salary pool increase to be high enough if at all possible to maintain cost-of-living expenses for most faculty and staff.”

Registry benefits volunteers, researchers

To place an ad in this special issue: 412/624-4644 or delraso@pitt.edu.

The deadline for ad insertion is Aug. 26.
6
The Staff Association Council (SAC) is dedicated to the history of the speakers at its 40th anniversary celebration July 14. The Staff Association Council is dedicated to the history of the speakers at its 40th anniversary celebration July 14.

Guest of honor Chancellor Mark Nordenberg opened a narrative dating back to SAC’s founding year.

“Our University in 1970 was an institution in transition,” he said. “In fact it might be said that Pitt, though it already was 183 years old, was moving into a modern period, growing into the University that we know today,” Nordenberg said.

Pitt had a state-related university for fewer than five years, he said. “In 1970, we were only six years into their existence in 1970,” Pitt-Johnstown, founded in 1971, was still dealing with protests, taking a range of different forms that focused on racial equality, women’s rights and the war in Vietnam. Those activities not only shaped the larger society but I think had an enduring impact on the campus culture,” he said.

“I’ve known Mark,” Nordenberg, who came to Pitt in 1977 as a law school faculty member, said he learned respect for the staff in his home school right from the get-go. After he became interim chancellor in 1994, that respect expanded due to his dealings with SAC, he said.

“My first meaningful connection to SAC came in 1994 when Brian Hart served as the staff representative to a search committee recruiting the country’s next worthy successor to Tom Deter as the senior vice chancellor for the Health Sciences, a committee that I chaired,” Nordenberg recounted.

“The following year, Brian became president of SAC and I became the interim chancellor, and we were really the beginning of an unbroken streak of entirely constructive relationships with your organization.”

Nordenberg said that, partly as a result of staff support, Pitt has become a leading public research university that ranks fifth in the nation in funding attracted from the National Institutes of Health, and in the top 10 among universities in total federal science and education research development support.

Pitt’s student body has also improved steadily since the 1970s, he said.

“We’ve become a magnet for hard-working, high-achieving students from this region and from far more distant locations,” Nordenberg said.

“Our four regional campuses now represent not accomplished academic units in their own right, making important contributions, in particular, to our mission of delivering high-quality undergraduate education.

“In addition, Pitt’s in the heart of the so-called ‘eds and meds’ sector, which plays an increasingly important role in the regional economy of the 21st century, and is the only sector that has added jobs in the region every year since 1995, the chancellor noted.

“We have crafted this record of progress in the face of some daunting challenges,” he said. “In the past year alone those challenges included the governor’s threatened attempt to reclassify Pitt, Penn State and Temple as non-public institutions, the mayor’s proposed tuition tax, also defeated, and the protracted legislative delay in receiving the commonwealth fiscal year 2010 appropriation.

“Of course, maintaining our momentum did require collective sacrifice, particularly on the compensation front, which I know has been painful to everyone,” the chancellor acknowledged.

“But if you look at all this great recession has taken, in many great universities and in many other fine and presumably strong organizations, we have done quite well in terms of maintaining program quality and by functioning, ultimately, as an anti-recessionary force within the communities that we serve,” Nordenberg said.

“I marvel every day at the importance of work that [staff] do,” he said.

“Pitt is a very special place, and it is such a special place at no small part because of you. So, I thank you from the bottom of my heart and I congratulate you on your 40th anniversary. Let me say very directly how proud I am that for 15 of those 40 years it has been my privilege to work with SAC and its leadership in my role as chancellor.”

Long-time SAC member Steve Zupcic, who appeared at the July 14 event via videotape, said, “A few months ago in preparation for this event, we went over back issues of the University Times and I discovered that I am one of the very few remaining members of SAC’s founding organization who remains with the Staff Association Council today.”

Reflecting on his many years of service on SAC, Zupcic said, “Over the years we made it clear that we were not in the business of organizing a labor union or an association of dissidents. Over the years we proved not to be proponents of anti-intellectualism. And over the years we earned the respect of faculty and senior staff of our University.

“Pitt is proud of the leadership of the Staff Association Council,” said Zupcic. “Most particularly, I am proud of the leadership of past president Jo Rosol, to whom we dedicate today’s program. She provided elegant guidance during some of our University’s most challenging days. And I am proud of our accomplishments,” as evidenced by the timeline distributed at the 40th anniversary event. (See sidebar.)

SAC’s 40th anniversary luncheon was held July 14 in the William Pitt Union.

The Staff Association Council (SAC) distributed a timeline of its accomplishments with highlights of its history at the 40th anniversary celebration July 14.

Monica Couleson, a member of SAC’s program and planning committee, said which the event, said, “The timeline you’re presented with today showcases the magnitude of SAC’s accomplishments at Pitt. As you may know, Pitt has experienced significant change since its founding in 1970. SAC has been a force behind change. Among the important accomplishments are disability insurance expansion, payment of accrued sick leave, the staff recognition program and the ever-popular Pitt Kennywood Day. Yes, I did go through all 40 years of the University Times,” to create this timeline, she added.

Among the accomplishments SAC cited were:

1970s
• Tuition benefits are increased; staff grievance policies and procedures are added to the staff handbook (1974).
• A life insurance plan is made available (1977).
• The employment and transfer program is created, CPR classes are offered (1979).
• Pitt ID cards are made available to staff family members (1980).
• The first SAC newsletter is published (1981).
• Pre-retirement planning is offered to employees 55 and older (1982).
• The Faculty and Staff Assistance Program is created (1983).
• The University Child Development Center opens (1984).
• The Vanguard pension plan is made available; library privileges are extended to staff family members (1985).
• A wellness program is developed (1986).

1990s
• The first internal blood drive is organized; the first Pitt Pirates Day is sponsored (1992).
• Select benefits are extended to employees’ domestic partners (1993).
• An early retirement plan is developed (1994).
• The first Chancellor’s Awards for Staff Excellence are presented (1997).

2000s
• A short-term disability policy goes into effect (2000).
• The Endowed Fund Book for Children of Staff is established (2001).
• Long-term care insurance is offered (2002).
• Health benefits are extended to domestic partners of employees (2004).
• Prescription delivery services from Fulk Pharmacy are offered (2006).
• The re-employment policy is modified (2008).
• SAC launches its electronic newsletter (2009).

—Peter Hart

(See sidebar.)

The regional campuses in Bradford, Greensburg and Titusville, founded in 1970, had recently moved to its current campus location.

“The construction of the still relatively new Litchfield Towers was the most visible sign of the ongoing transformation of this campus from a community college to a more residential center,” Nordenberg said. “As the senior vice chancellor for Academic Affairs, I was dedicated to the late Joanne Wilds, assistant vice chancellor for Governmental Relations; John Wilds, assistant vice chancellor for Community Relations and former head of Human Resources, and campus police Officer Ron Bennett.

At the 40th anniversary celebration, SAC presented awards to Nordenberg and past presidents of the staff council, Raymond Clark, Brian Hart, Barbara Mowery and Rich Cobwell, as well as to current president and vice president for service regarding staff concerns. The 40th anniversary event was dedicated to the late Joanne M. Rosol, who was elected to SAC membership in 1984 and served as SAC president from 1988 to 1992. (Rosol’s obituary appeared in the June 26, 2003, University Times.)

Pitt, though

—Peter Hart

Looking back on 40 years to partner together to create the best working environment for staff at the University of Pittsburgh. The Staff Association Council will continue to make an impact that can and will be celebrated for years to come.

Other invited University officials in attendance included Ron Frisch, associate vice chancellor for Human Resources, Paul Supowitz, vice chancellor for government relations, John Wilds, assistant vice chancellor for Community Relations and former head of Human Resources, and campus police Officer Ron Bennett. (Continued on page 2.)

The Staff Association Council (SAC) distributed a timeline of its accomplishments with highlights of its history at the 40th anniversary celebration July 14.
Trustees OK $182.45 million capital budget

The two top projects in Pitt’s $182.45 million fiscal year 2011 capital budget are $70.1 million in renovations to Benedum Hall, home of the Swanson School of Engineering, and $14.2 million for the first phase of renovations and an addition to Parran/Crabtree Hall, which houses the Graduate School of Public Health.

The budget and executive committees of Pitt’s Board of Trustees approved the capital budget July 16.

Arthur G. Ramicone, vice chancellor for Budget and Controller, said $65 million of the combined $104 million cost of the two projects comes from several years’ of capital project funding from the state.

In addition, $21 million of the total capital budget will come from education and general (E&G) funds, $17.2 million in auxiliary debt, $8.9 million in auxiliary reserves, $3.75 million from Senior Vice Chancellor, Health Sciences funds and $72.57 million from gifts and other sources.

In addition to the Benedum and Parran/Crabtree renovations, the capital budget includes the following E&G construction projects:

- $7 million for an office and classroom building at Pitt-Greensburg
- $56.5 million for preservation/programmatic/utility infrastructure
- $51.5 million for Conordia Club renovations
- $4.7 million for Chevron Science Center 5th-floor renovations
- $3 million for the Barco law school student lounge
- $2.8 million for Pittsburgh campus programmatic renovations (excluding Health Sciences)
- $1.5 million for classroom renovations
- $1.33 million for Victoria Hall renovations
- $1.32 million for regional campus preservation/programmatic renovations
- $1.14 million for information technology upgrades to various buildings
- $921,000 for the information technology backbone
- $904,000 for general campus security upgrades
- $350,000 for the Schools of the Health Sciences, including programmatic projects.

Budget includes compensation hike

Obviously we wish that our tuition increases could have been lower, but believe that these increases will prove to be moderate in the marketplace while also being adequate to maintain program quality and to meet the needs of our employees.”

Looking toward the following fiscal year’s budget, Nordenberg noted there are efforts in Congress to provide additional support for public education even though the current federal stimulus funding is scheduled to expire this fiscal year. “It’s difficult to predict because we don’t know what is going to happen. Certainly the prospect of losing that stimulus money at the state or at the federal level is a very serious challenge for us,” he said.

Other operating budget revenue line items are $52.4 million in state construction grants, $52.59 million in gifts and pledges, $25.35 million in endowment/investment income and distributions and $129.7 million in sales and services/other revenue.

Other expenses are $117.8 million for utilities, $17.6 million for Senior Vice Chancellor, Health Sciences projects.

—Kimberly K. Barlow

Cleaning up at Pitt-Titusville

Faculty, staff and students at Pitt-Titusville spent part of Friday, July 9, helping to spruce up the campus at the annual clean-up day. Bags, gloves, shovels and rakes were provided and everyone was assigned an area to clean. Following the morning’s work, the campus community gathered for a picnic lunch.

At right: Kaylee Kachik, Financial Aid counselor; left, and Debbie Smith, continuing education assistant.

Below, from left: Nicole Neely, director of Student Accounts; Stephanie Feely, director of Student Life; Saundra Tracey, administrative assistant to the director of Facilities Management, and student Kassy Harroun.

Above: Tammy Knapp, director of Public Relations.
Conversely, endothelial dysfunction and increased blood flow.

Thermal and visible images of New Mexico’s White Sands Dust Field captured by NASA’s Earth-observing ASTER (Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflectance Radiometer) instrument reliably indicated where moisture levels were low enough to result in a dust storm, the team recently reported in the Journal of Geophysical Research, Earth Surface.

Lead author Stephen Scheidt, a research associate with the Department of Geology and Planetary Science, Michael Ramsey, a former Ph.D. student, and planetary science and member of NASA’s ASTER science team, and Nicholas Lancaster of Nevada Desert Research Institute further determined that this approach could be expanded to a worldwide system to monitor areas prone to dust storms or to track drought in regions threatened by desertification.

The group analyzed daytime and nighttime images of White Sands ASTER captured between May 2000 and May 2008. By examining images, they assessed variations in moisture content and albedo — or sunlight reflected by the land — at White Sands. The team found that the sand became drier and more reflective until it was unable to capture the same moisture levels, and thus became susceptible to winds.

ASTER images from the website available on Pitt’s Web site at www.pitt.edu/news2010/White_Sands_slides.pdf illustrate the increase in albedo and decrease in soil moisture preceding the 2008 White Sands dust storm. In the March 14, 2008, storm, the desert dust plume emanated from a darkened area that corresponds with the driest areas indicated by ASTER.

The paper is available at www.pitt.edu/news2010/White_Sands_paper.pdf.

Researchers to explore key component of ‘smart grid’

Researchers in the Swanson School of Engineering have received a $200,000 grant from Westinghouse Electric.

A team led by Gregory Reed, a professor in electrical and computer engineering and director of the Swanson School’s Power and Energy Initiative, will design an interface to integrate national power and other low-emissions energy resources more efficiently into the nation’s larger grid power. Their work will contribute to better management of the power infrastructure as part of the development of the “smart grid” network that can monitor power generation and delivery and respond to customer demand in real-time.

A key feature of the smart grid is the integration and automated flow of electricity from a variety of energy resources, including nuclear, wind, solar and fossil-fuel powered sources.

The interface to be developed at Pitt will let consumers access information directly from the electrical supplier and allow them to control and manage how much electricity is flowing in and out of a facility.

The intent is to improve overall energy management, which can save energy and reduce costs. As it applies to nuclear power, the new interface would balance nuclear power with renewable energy resources and eventually could influence future nuclear reactor designs by managing electrical output more efficiently.

Artificial cells developed

Researchers developed tiny artificial interactions of ants and slime molds, Pitt engineers have designed artificial cells and self-organizing into independent groups that can communicate and cooperate. Researchers of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), the research is the first to demonstrate artificial cells that behave like natural organisms and could perform important, micro-scale functions in fields ranging from the chemical industry to medicine.

The team presents in the PNAS paper computational models that provide a blueprint for developing artificial cells — or microcapsules — that can communicate, move independently and transport "cargo" such as chemicals needed for reactions. Corresponding author Anna Rahmanian, a Pitt professor of Chemical Engineering in the Swanson School of Engineering, and her team developed a microfluidic system that can separate two different devices function entirely through simple physical and chemical processes, behaving like complex natural organisms but without the complicated internal biochemistry.

The microcapsules interact by secreting nanoparticles in a way similar to that used by biological cells to communicate and assemble into groups. And with a nod to ants, the cells leave chemical trails as they travel, prompting fellow microcapsules to follow. Balazs worked with lead author German Kolmakov and Victor Yashin, both postdoctoral researchers in Pitt’s Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering, who produced the cell models, and with Pitt professor of electrical and computer engineering Steven Levitan, who devised the ant-like trailing alan.

The researchers write that communication hinges on the interaction between microcapsules exchanging two different types of nanoparticles. The “signaling” cell-secreted nanoparticles known as agonists that prompt the second “target” microcapsule to emit nanoparticles known as antagonists.

Once the signaling cell goes dormant, the target cell likewise stops releasing antagonists, making the signaling cell start up again. The microcapsules get locked into a cycle that equates to an intercellular conversation, dance function could control by adjusting the capsules’ permeability and the quantity of nanoparticles they contain.

Video simulation of this interaction is available at www.pitt.edu/~balazs/CellTalks.

Locomotion results as the released nanoparticles alter the surface underneath the microcapsules. The cell’s polymer-based walls begin to push on the fluid surrounding the capsule and the fluid pushes back even harder, moving the capsule. At the same time, the nanoparticles flow off the miniature power plant.

Infrared pics predict dust, sandstorms

Pitt researchers have developed a way to use infrared satellite images to predict dust storms and sandstorms. The technique, used to forecast a 2008 New Mexico duststorm, could be implemented globally.

There’s a new way to get technology help at Pitt. You can now chat online with an analyst from the Technology Help Desk.

University of Pittsburgh

Just click the Chat button in the right column of any page on technology.pitt.edu to start a chat session. You will also find Live Chat icons on the Webmail community and the Technology community at my.pitt.edu.
Circumcision is thought to reduce the risk of HIV transmission by removing cells in the foreskin that are most susceptible to infection by the virus. Clinical trials in Africa have found it reduces the risk of HIV in heterosexual men, yet there is little evidence that it can reduce transmission among gay African men.

The study was based on surveys of 521 gay and bisexual men in San Francisco: 115 men (21 percent) were HIV-positive and 327 (64 percent) had been circumcised. Of the remaining 69 men (11 percent), only three (0.5 percent) said they would be willing to participate in a clinical trial of circumcision and HIV prevention, and only four (0.7 percent) were willing to get circumcised if it were proven safe and effective in preventing HIV.

The researchers extrapolated these findings to the entire gay and bisexual male population of San Francisco, an estimated 65,700 people, and determined that only 500 men potentially would benefit from circumcision.

Study author Chongui Wei, a post-doctoral associate in behavioral and community health sciences, said, “Any potential benefit may likely too small to really implement circumcision programs as an intervention for HIV prevention.”

Abuse, shame in gay boys linked to lower HIV risk

Gay and bisexual men who reported sexual abuse and social shaming in childhood experience psychosocial health problems later in life that could put them at greater risk for HIV, according to a study of more than 1,000 HIV-positive and negative men.

Almost 10 percent of the participants reported that they had been victims of childhood sexual abuse and nearly 30 percent had experienced gay-related victimization between the ages of 12 and 14, including verbal insults, bullying, threats of physical violence and physical assaults. Men who experienced childhood sexual abuse and a sense of masculinity failure were more likely to use illicit drugs and to engage in risky sexual behavior in adulthood.

According to study authors, these health issues combine to create a “syndemic,” or linked cluster of problems, that together may be driving the AIDS epidemic in gay men.

“The study shows that the early socialization experiences of gay men can be deeply stigmatizing and increase their risks for these syndemic conditions in adulthood,” said study author Sin How Lim, a post-doctoral associate in behavioral and community health sciences.

Co-authors included Amy Herrick, Thomas Guadamuz, Mark Friedman, Michael Marshall and Ronald Stall, all of behavioral and community health sciences.

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Sentencing hearing set for former Pitt researcher

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No sentence hearing is scheduled for a former Pitt neurologist researcher arrested outside the Quality Inn University Center in 2008. According to court documents, he had arranged with an undercover agent posing as the uncle of a 10-year-old girl to meet the child at the hotel for sex. (See March 20, 2008, University Times.) Roger Wesley Farris II pleaded guilty in federal court July 7 to coercion or enticement of an individual to engage in prostitution or other illegal sexual activity.

The charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison, a maximum $250,000 fine and a supervised release period of five years to life.

According to the complaint filed in federal court in Pittsburgh, Farris, 40, of Fox Chapel, agreed to pay the “uncle” $750 to bring the fictitious girl to the hotel. Farris was arrested outside the hotel when he approached the agent’s vehicle to look at the child. There was no child, but a female agent was in the vehicle.

Robert S. Cassar, acting United States attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, said Farris would be required to register as a sex offender under the laws of any state in which he lives or works.

Farris’s attorney Paul D. Boas, did not respond to a request for comment.

Farris, who has three young children, had been a faculty member in the Department of Neurology and a physician and geriatrics researcher at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. He specialized in Alzheimer’s disease and dementia research.

Following his arrest, Farris, 40, was released on bond to electronic monitoring and home detention in the Virginia home of his parents.

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Freshman Convocation and Chancellor’s Picnic

Join Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg and the University community in welcoming the Class of 2014 at the Freshman Convocation.

Wednesday, August 25, 2010
3:00 pm
Petersen Events Center

If you are interested in participating in the Freshman Convocation as a member of the academic procession, please contact the Office of Special Events.

Office of Special Events
(412) 624-7100
sjm@pitt.edu
UPMC, Children’s win U.S. News honors

UPMC and Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh both have won honors in recent U.S. News & World Report rankings.

UPMC was again the region’s only medical center named on the annual U.S. News & World Report Honor Roll of America’s Best Hospitals. UPMC was one of 14 hospitals nationwide that made the honor roll of the “nation’s best” in the 2010 survey.

UPMC was ranked in 15 of 16 specialty areas, including seven specialties for which UPMC is in the top 10. Only 15 hospitals of the nearly 3,000 nationally eligible hospitals were ranked in any specialty area. This year marks UPMC’s 11th appearance on the list.

According to U.S. News, the honor roll lists those institutions that demonstrate excellence and breadth of expertise by ranking at or near the top in at least six specialties.

UPMC’s ranked specialties were: Ear, nose and throat, 3rd; cardiology, 6th; respiratory disorders, 7th; geriatric care, 8th; orthopedics, 8th; psychiatry, 9th; urology, 20th; heart and heart surgery, 22nd; diabetes and endocrinology, 30th. And two rankings in cancer, 31st for UPMC Presbyterian Shadyside and 42nd for UPMC Magee-Women’s Hospital of UPMC.

In eight of the 10 specialties, and Children’s was ranked in the top 10 in three specialties: diabetes and endocrinology, 3rd; gastroenterology; heart and heart surgery; neonatology; neurology and neurosurgery; orthopaedics; pulmonology, and urology.

For the 2010 publication of America’s Best Hospitals is accessible online at www.usnews.com/besthospitals and will be at newsstands July 27.

Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh was one of eight pediatric hospitals in the country named to U.S. News & World Report’s Honor Roll of America’s “Best Children’s Hospitals.”

Children’s Hospital was ranked in all 10 of the pediatric specialties on the magazine’s annual Best Children’s Hospitals list. Hospitals that ranked in all 10 specialties made the U.S. News Honor roll.

The magazine’s annual ranking lists the top 30 children’s hospitals in 10 pediatric specialties. The specialties are: cancer; diabetes and endocrinology; gastroenterology; heart and heart surgery; kidney; neonatology; neurology and neurosurgery; orthopedics; pulmonology, and urology.

Compared to last year, Children’s Hospital’s ranking improved in eight of the 10 specialties, and Children’s was ranked in the top 10 in three specialties: diabetes and endocrinology; 3rd; gastroenterology; 6th, and pulmonology, 6th.

The 2010-11 publication of America’s Best Hospitals is available online at www.usnews.com/besthospitals and will be at newsstands July 27.

Lina Insana, a faculty member in the Department of French and Italian Languages and Literature, has been recognized by the American Association of Italian Studies, The association named Insana’s book, “Arduous Tasks: Primo Levi, Translation, and the Transmission of Holocaust Testimony,” a Best Book published in the field, in 2009 in the 20th Century category.

The members of the jury, scholars serving on the editorial board of Italian Culture — the official journal of the American Association of Italian Studies — praised Insana’s work and commented on the important contribution it makes to Italian studies.

The Project Management Institute (PMI), a professional membership organization for project managers, honored David I. Cleland, professor emeritus in the Department of Industrial Engineering at the Swanson School of Engineering, with a lifetime achievement award at its 2010 research and education conference.

Recognized as the most published contributor in the field, Cleland is the author or editor of 40 books in the areas of project management, engineering management and manufacturing management. He has published numerous articles and handbook chapters and presented many papers on project management and leadership at professional meetings. In addition, he has served as a consultant for multinational companies.

According to Gregory Bal- estro, president and CEO of PMI, “Dr. Cleland was a driving force behind the adoption of project management as a professional competency and is a key contributor to the success of all organizations that use professional project management standards and methodologies today.”

Cleland is co-founder of Pitt’s Manufacturing Assistance Center, which provides manufacturing systems technology assistance to small and mid-sized manufacturer- ers in western Pennsylvania.

In 1997, Cleland, a PMI fellow since 1987, was honored with the establishment of the David I. Cleland Excellence in Project Management Literature Award.

Janet Grady has been appointed interim vice president for Academic Affairs at the Johnstown campus, effective July 1.

In 2007, she was named director of the UJP nursing program, having taught in the program from 1993 to 2008.

Grady was a faculty member in the School of Nursing who was instrumental in the development of a proposal to launch the baccalaureate degree at Pitt-Johnstown.

She has been involved in new course development, participated in the creation of the school nurse certificate program and served as a preceptor for master’s-level students.

Previously, she was an associate professor and associate academic dean at Mt. Aloysius College, chief nursing and principal, clinical services and performance improvement for Windber Medical Center, and an assistant professor and coordi- nator in the Conemaugh School of Nursing.

Grady replaces Alan Teich, who has returned to full-time teaching. In spring 2011, national research will be conducted to identify a permanent replacement.

An essay by Nancy McCabe, director of the writing program at Pitt-Bradford, is among those chosen for the Best American Essays 2010 notable list.


In addition to teaching at Pitt- Bradford, McCabe teaches in the brief residency master’s fine arts program in creative writing at Spalding University.

Brent Malin, a faculty member in the Department of Communication, has won the 2010 Pennsylvania Society of Windham Award from the National Communication Association for Outstanding Article in Media Ecology from the Media Ecology Association. Malin received the award for his essay “Mediating Emotion: Technol- ogy, Social Science, and Emotion in the Payne Fund Motion Picture Studies,” which was published in Technology & Culture in 2009.

Lester Olson, also a faculty member in the communication department, has received a Golden Anniversary M.P.H. Award from the National Com- munication Association for his essay, “Pic- torial Representations of British America Resisting Rape: Rhetorical Re-Circulation of a Print Series Portraying the Boston Port Bill of 1774.”

The People of the Times column features recent news on faculty and staff, including awards and other honors, accomplishments and administrative appointments.

We welcome submis- sions from all members of the University. Send informa- tion via email to: unimes@ pitt.edu, by fax at 412-624- 4579 or by campus mail to 308 Bellefield Hall.

For submission guidelines, visit www.unimes.pitt. edu/?page_id=6807.
CALENDAR
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.

PHYSIOLOGY/Biostatistics
“Rational for Choosing Explicit Correlation Structure in a Multilevel Analysis With Binary Outcomes,” Feleac Desire’ Atum, July 28, 108 Parran, 10 am
SHRS/Rehabilitation Science
“Effectiveness of Local Cooling on Enhancing Tissue Ischemia Tolerance in People With Spinal Cord Injury,” W-Ting Tsau, July 28, 4060 Forbes Tower, 1 pm
Education/Administrative & Policy Studies
“The Influence of Faculty Gender on Student-Centered Pedagogical Approaches to Institutional Tehnology,” Meghan Solomon; July 29, 5702 Pozner, noon
PHYSIOLOGY/Biostatistics
“The Randomized Placebo-Phase Design: Evaluation, Integer for natural Analysis,” Stephanie Shook; July 29, A622 Crabtree, noon
A&S/Biological Sciences
“The Effect of Ecological Diferentisation on Genetic Recom- bination in the Entero bacteria.” Adam Retchless; July 30, A219B Langley, 1 pm
Maseno Molecular Biophysics & Structural Biology “Investigations of Structures & Dynamics of Transmembrane Proteins & Implications in the Action of Inflammatotial Anesthetics,” battles on, July 10, 1118 BST, 2 pm
A&S/History & Philosophy of Science
“Phenomenal Consciousness as Scientific Phenomenon? A Critical Investigation of the New Science of Consciousness,” Justin Sysma; Aug. 3, 528 CRL, 1 pm
A&S/Biology/Chemistry
“Regulation of HTLV-I Oncoprotein Tax by PI-3K/Akt,” Pengrong Yan; Aug. 5, ground fl. conf. rm. Hillman Cancer Care, 1 pm
PHYSIOLOGY/Biostatistics
A&S/Geology & Planetary Science
“Strontium Isotope Systematics of Coal Utilization Byproducts & Their Interaction With Environmental Waters,” Tonya Brubaker; Aug. 10, 214 SRCC, 11 am
A&S/Pharmacy/Pharmacutical Sciences
“A Clinical Pharmakokinetics & Population Pharamacometric Analysis of Voriconazole in Transplant Patients,” Kelong Han; Aug. 10, 402 Niki, 1:30 pm
A&S/Chemistry
“Dipole Moments & Non-covalent Bonding in Gas Phase Molecules via Rotationally Resolved Electronic Spectroscopy Beyond the Rigid Rotor,” Diane Miller; Aug. 12, 102 Eberly, 1 pm
A&S/Medicine/Immunology
“Inflammatory Mechanisms of Chemokine Receptor 7 Express- ion in Metastatic Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the Head & Neck (SCCHN),” Yvonne Mbiru; Aug. 18, 5121 BST, 2 pm

HOUSING/RENT
SQUIRREL HILL/GREENFIELD

HOUSING/SALE
MULYR APT/CONDO
29 Ellistro Ave.—byng, 1.5-BR, 1.5-bath, SFE w/ large master, WIC, tons of storage & 2 integrated garage. Spectacular view of PfY! Minutes to Downtown & Oakland. $270,000. 0 C 278-785. K Josephine; Immediate L Barry; L Stella @ &in. Public 421-321-2222.

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• $50 for up to 10 words, $5 for 15-31 words, $10 for 32-50 words.
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• Reserve space by submitting ad copy one week prior to publication. Copy and payment should be sent to University Services, 308 Bellefield Hall, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh 15260.
• For more information, call Barbara DelRaso, 412/624-4644.

C L A S S I F I E D
• $8 for up to 10 words, $9 for 15-30 words.
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PARKING
OAKLAND OFF-STREET PARKING

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PICT Pinter Performance “The Dumb Waiter” & “Betrayal,” Aug. 5-21, Heymann Theatre, Foster Mem., Aug. 5-7, 11, 14 & 21 @ 8 pm & for info & matinee times: www.picttheatre.org/index.php.


Exhibits
Hillman Library Andohub Exhibit “Orange-crowned Warbler,” through Aug. 2; “Wood Wren,” Aug. 3-16; “Pine Finch,” begins Aug. 18; Hillman Library ground fl. exhibit case, reg. library hours (6-7:30).

Pitt’s 2010 Friend and Patriot of the Year. The award will be presented Oct. 9. Casey Patterson, chief of staff, noted that the University has been named as one of the country’s most military friendly schools with 350 registered veteran students earning their undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees. Pitt’s new Office of Veterans Services has a mission of assisting veterans, guardsmen and reservists in receiving military benefits, facilitating their transition into University life and supporting their ongoing academic success. Starting this fall, Pittsburgh campus students can tour the museum at no cost through an agreement between the Pitt Arts program and Soldiers & Sailors.

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**July**

**Thursday 22**
- Deadline to submit monitored withdrawal forms for summer 4-week-3 session.

**GI Lecture**
- "Acute & Chronic Pancreatitis," George Papachristou; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am

**Thursday 29**
- GI Lecture
  - "GERD, H. Pylori & Peptic Ulcer Disease," Kenneth Fouad; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am
  - PancreasFest Conference Through July 31, U Club, 7:30 am (for info & registration: www.pancreasfest.org)

**EOH Seminar**
- "Interaction of Industrial Metal Oxide Nanoparticles with Cells of Different Origin," Harald Krug; 149 Bridgeside Pk, noon

**Friday 30**
- SBDC Workshop
  - "The 2nd Step: Developing a Business Plan," Mervis, 7:30-10 am (also Aug. 27; to register: 8-1842)

**Wednesday 4**
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Open House
  - 4th fl. GL, 10 am-noon (4-7308)
- HSLS Workshop
  - "Laseringe," Carrie Iervino; Falk Library conf. rm. B, 1-3 pm

**Thursday 5**
- Summer 12-week, 6-week-2, 4-week-3 sessions end; final exams during last class meeting.
- GI Lecture

**Tuesday 3**
- GI Lecture
  - "Inflammatory Bowel Disease: Evaluation & Management," Leonard Babcock; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am
- Innovation Oak­land Kiosk
  - UClub, 7:30 am

**Friday 13**
- SBDC Workshop
  - "The 1st Step: Mechanics of Starting a Small Business", Mervis, 7:30-10 am (to register: 8-1542)

**Saturday 14**
- Misperceiving Panel Talk
  - Power, Politics & Preconceptions: A Discussion About the Controversial Works of Harold Pinter," Ann Hall, Andrew Paul & Alan Stanford; Heymann Theatre, Foster Mem., noon (412/561-6000)

**Monday 2**
- Summer 12-week, 6-week-2, 4-week-3 sessions end; final exams during last class meeting.

**Wednesday 18**
- HSLS Workshop
  - "Literature Informatics," Carrie Iervino; Falk Library conf. rm. B, 1-3 pm

**Thursday 19**
- GI Lecture
  - "Acute & Chronic Pancreatitis," George Papachristou; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am

**Tuesday 24**
- Residence halls open.
- GI Lecture
  - "The ABCs of EUS," Aasthall; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am

**Wednesday 25**
- Freshman Convocation/Chancellor’s Picnic
  - Petersen, 3 pm (4-7100)

**Thursday 26**
- GI Lecture
  - "ERCP: Indications & Complications," Michael Sanders; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am
- HSLS Workshop
  - "PubMed Basics," Andrea Ketris; Falk Library classrm. 1, 10-11:10 am

**Friday 27**
- TA Orientation
  - 1st fl. Lawrence, 8:15 am-4:30 pm (for info: http://www.vlgd.pitt.edu/lds/ca_ntao.htm)

**Monday 30**
- Full term registration period ends; fall term classes begin.

**Tuesday 31**
- GI Lecture
  - "Fulminant Hepatic Failure: Evaluation & Management," Ohab Shaki; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am

**PhD Defenses**
- A&S/Physics & Astronomy
  - "Ultrafast Carrier & Lattice Dynamics Studies in GaAs With Intense Optical Excitation," Anil Kumar Basak; July 22, 119 Allen, 10 am
- A&S/Philosophy
  - "Wittgenstein on Subjectivity: The Metaphysical Subject in the ‘Tractatus’ & the Human Being in the Investigations," Hao Tang; July 23, 1001RB 2, 2 pm

**Monday 16**
- HSLS Lunch With a Librarian
  - "Making a Dustbin in Your Personal Paper Silt," Patricia Weiss; Falk Library conf. rm. B, noon

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**April 14-28**
- April 14-28
- April 28-May 12
- April 21
- April 28
- May 12-26
- May 5
- May 12
- May 26-29
- May 19
- May 26
- June 9-23
- June 2
- June 9
- June 23-July 7
- June 16
- June 23
- July 7-21
- June 30
- July 7
- July 21-Sept. 1
- July 14
- July 21

The University Times events calendar includes Pitt-sponsored events as well as non-Pitt events held on a Pitt campus. Information submitted for the calendar should identify the type of event, such as lecture or concert, and the program’s specific title, sponsor, location and time. The name and phone number of a contact person should be included. Information should be sent by email to: utcalt@pitt.edu, or by fax to: 412/624-4797, or by campus mail to: 308 Bellefield Hall. We cannot guarantee publication of events received after the deadline.