Pitt extends health insurance option to employees’ qualifying adult children

University employees who want to take advantage of a new state law that will allow them to add qualifying children under age 30 to their health insurance plan will need to apply through the Benefits department before Dec. 31 in order to receive coverage when the new benefit takes effect Jan. 1.

Under the law, unless there is a qualifying change in status, participants would need to wait until next spring’s open enrollment period for coverage that would take effect in the upcoming plan year that begins July 1, 2010.

The option applies only to health plan coverage, not vision or dental care, according to Pitt’s Benefits office.

Senate Bill 189, signed into law last June and now known as Act 4, allows uninsured, single adult children up to age 30 to be covered by parent’s health insurance receive plan, at the parent’s expense.

To qualify, the adult child must not be married, have dependents of his or her own, must either live in Pennsylvania or be a full-time student, and be unable to get coverage through an employer or government program.

In a statement made at the time he signed the bill, Gov. Edward G. Rendell said the law would be “the answer for the parents of young adults whose kids will be graduating from college and will be kicked off their parents’ health insurance policies because they’ve reached the maximum age. ’ ’

“Parents and kids are stressed because the kids are now uninsured and are having trouble finding jobs with health insurance, due to the current economic situation,” Rendell stated.

According to 2008 state insurance department survey, the 19-29 age group accounts for 40 percent of Pennsylvania’s uninsured population. The survey estimated there are about 383,000 uninsured Pennsylvanians in that age range.

Employees are not required to offer the benefit, according to the governor’s office.

Pitt director of Benefits John Kozar said employees began inquiring about the coverage even before the state legislation was passed last June and interest has continued.

He estimated that Pitt’s health insurance currently covers 22,000-23,000 people through 11,000 employees. Roughly 10 percent of Pitt employee’s don’t opt for University coverage, he said, noting that Benefits has received some inquiries from employees who don’t currently participate in the Pitt health plan, but may be swayed by the new option.

Kozar said that employees who don’t currently participate in the health plan could opt in now, if they want to cover a qualifying adult child.

“We would consider that a family status change,” he said.

Among those who could benefit from the plan are parents of young adults who graduate from college, then find themselves uninsured. Currently, they may opt for COBRA coverage, which for Pitt’s Panther Gold plan would cost a single person almost $400 a month to continue health coverage.

Under the new option, insured employees with family coverage would be able to insure a qualifying adult child at no extra cost. For a Pitt employee currently covered as an individual, the addition of an adult child would prompt a change to a two-adult plan, Kozar said.

In that case, for Panther Gold, the employee’s monthly contribution would rise from $155 to $203 per month, a rate Kozar said likely would be tough to beat.

He said it’s impossible to know how many adult children of Pitt employees may qualify for the benefit. “We don’t track these young adults,” Kozar said, noting that there’s no way to know who in that age group may be married or have other insurance.

Employees opting for the coverage must complete the enrollment, certification and status change forms and submit them to the Benefits office by Dec. 31 along with a copy of the adult child’s current Pennsylvania driver’s license or identification card and a copy of his or her 2008-1040 tax form.

They will need to submit certification annually to the Benefits office, attesting that their adult child continues to meet the eligibility criteria.

Kozar said he doesn’t expect that adding these young adults will have a large financial impact on the University’s health plan, adding that any changes in premium rates wouldn’t be seen before the plan year that begins in July 2011.

“Not no one knows what the increase in utilization will be, but it’s not, not the insurers,” Kozar said. “The probability of it being a significant increase in utilization is very, very low.”

By the time the 2011 benefits costs are being negotiated, nine months’ worth of claims data will be available to review.

“Statistically their claims experience won’t be significant, but only time will tell,” Kozar said.

Tony Benevenuto, vice president for commercial products at UPMC Health Plan, said it is too early to gauge the impact of Act 4 on health insurance costs.

He said it is not yet known how many employer groups in the health plan will choose to offer the option.

“Because it would mean an additional cost in a time when many employers are concerned about trying to hold down health insurance costs, we do not believe a large number of groups will choose to do it, but it is too early to say. It will be entirely up the employer to decide,” Benevenuto said.

Kozar said Pitt is choosing to offer the benefit “because it’s the right thing to do.” At the same time, the University will pay attention to controlling costs should the change significantly add to utilization of the health plan, Kozar said.

If necessary, a new rate category for such users, with a different employee contribution, might be considered.

The Benefits office is developing the new forms that will be required and is compiling additional information to post online at www.hr.pitt.edu.

—Kimberly K. Barlow
Trustees approve new dorms

Pitt trustees approved three capital projects totaling $15 million, including an expansion of undergraduate student housing in Oakland and Bradford and a new wellness center in Johnstown.

The trustees property and facilities committee, which is authorized to approve construction projects costing more than $1 million, took the action at its Oct. 10 meeting.

Pitt is purchasing a three-quarter-acre parcel of land at 315 Oakland Ave., contiguous to the Bouquet Gardens residences, at a cost of $1.4 million. The property has a 2.2-acre, 1,000-square-foot building most recently used for UPMC Health Plan offices and an 80-space parking site for the former Children’s Hospital. A closing on the property is expected by the end of 2009, Pitt officials said.

“The University believes that the land is well suited for additional undergraduate student apartments. We are conducting zoning and design studies to advance the necessary planning for the project,” said Jerome Cochran, executive vice chancellor.

The project, which will parallel the design of the garden-style Bouquet Gardens apartments, will add 200 beds to the Pittsburgh campus total of 7,200; Bouquet Gardens currently houses 496 students.

Pitt also is considering a future residence hall expansion to add up to 700 additional beds on the lower campus at an as-yet unidentified location, Cochran said following the committee meeting.

That project is not expected to commence for at least two years, he added.

“In order to keep our commitment to provide a three-year guarantee of housing, we’re going to have to build another larger residence hall,” he said. “There has always been a desire — although I don’t know that we’ll get there — to offer a four-year guarantee [for on-campus housing],” he said.

“We also have a lot of transfer students who are concerned [about the current term], and we have no place to put them,” he added.

The trustees also approved construction of a new $5.4 million residence hall on the Bradford campus and a new $9.7 million fitness center on the Johnstown campus.

Pitt-Bradford’s three-story residence hall, with 30,300 gross square feet, will cost $5.4 million and house 103 students. The project is expected to be completed by December 2010.

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The three construction projects together are expected to generate 80 on-site jobs and 32 support jobs, officials said.

University Times letters policy

Letters should be submitted at least one week prior to publication. Persons contributing to the letter column will receive a copy of the letter so that they may prepare a response. If no response is received, the letter will be published alone.

Letters can be sent by email to njbrown@pitt.edu or by campus mail to 308 Beachcraft Hall.

The University Times reserves the right to edit letters for clarity or length. Individuals are limited to two published letters per academic term. Unsigned letters will not be accepted for publication.

Letters are reviewed for grammar, spelling, and other issues. Language, humor, or sarcasm should be removed from letters submitted for publication.

Workers put the finishing touches on the University’s new Humanities Center this week in preparation for an open house that will be part of the center’s inaugural conference, “Humanities in Crisis,” Nov. 14 and 15.

The center, located in the former Darlington Memorial Library in the Cathedral of Learning, includes office space for center staff and visiting fellows and remains many of the antique library furnishings bequeathed to the University in the early 20th century by the Darlington family.

The green walls duplicate a late-18th century color from the Pennsylvania governor’s mansion. The historic Darlington collection of books, manuscripts, rare newspapers and maps focused on early American and southwestern Pennsylvania regional history has been removed from the space and is being digitized through the University Library System.

Kimberly K. Barlow

Editor,

N.J. Brown

Writers

Kimberly K. Barlow

Peter Hart

Business Manager

Barbara DeRosa

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Susan B. Hansen is vice president of the University Senate.

University Senate Matters columns in the University Times are available on the Senate web site, www.pitt.edu/univsenate/index.html.
I t was not your father's Uni-
versity Senate plenary session
Oct. 21 when the spotlight veered from issues of shared gov-
ernance to the current generation of undergraduate students.

"Interacting With the 21st-
Century Student" featured a stu-
dent roundtable on academic and social expectations in our class-
room. Kathy Humphrey, vice provost and dean of students, asked the questions.

Participating students were Lucas Briggs, a senior major in health and physical activity, Molly Humphrey, a senior dual-major in business and mathematics, Katlyn Jennings, a junior electrical engi-
neering major; Kevin Morrison, a senior history major and Student Government Board president; Amanda Reed, a senior philosophy major, and Kari Rosenkaimer, a sophomore who has yet to declare a major.

Morrisson also joined two faculty members and an adminis-
trator as a panel at the plenary session.

(Oct. 29 University Times for the first part of this two-part series.)

A packed William Pitt Union Assembly Room observed the students' conversation, which focused on attitudes toward academic and social issues. This is a condensed version of that conversation.

Students, for example, defended texting as a part of their culture. They debated whether students should be treated as equals or as adults, and whether the two categories are the same. They offered tips for faculty on how to better engage students.

In their lifetimes, Humphrey asked, students today have not shared the same influential life experiences as their elders.

"Who are these millennials?" Humphrey asked. "This year's freshmen were born in 1990 or 1991. Let's just let that sink in for a minute.

In their lifetimes, Humphrey said, members of the class of 2013 have known only three presidents. They are too young to remem-
ber the space shuttle exploding. Neil Armstrong has always been free. Their lifetime has always included AIDS. Wal-Mart has always been a larger retailer than Sears.

Atari predates them. They grew up with mini-vans. They do not care who shot J.R.

"They are the second largest generation after baby boom-
ers. They are wireless, yet fully connected," Humphrey said. "They have been坡niculated through the television and books, biographies can happen in real time. The Soviet Union has already existed, and there's almost as scary as the student union. They have grown up in a politically correct universe in which multi-culturalism has been ever-present, the world has been organized around globalization and everybody knows the news before the TV evening news comes on."

Kathy Humphrey: What encounters in the classroom have engaged you in the educational process and to be on your best behavior?

Amanda Reed: I would point to one of my professors with whom I've had a great relationship. She told us where she was from, where she went to school, how she got into her field. She treated us as if we were equals, not lecturing down to us, so we could feel comfortable. She related to us on a generational level, too, talking about things in pop culture.

Molly Humphrey: I like faculty who have made an effort to help you out. They treat you, not really as equals, because they are the professor, the experts. But they recognize that you're giving up your free time and that they want to be there. They try to make you feel welcome.

Katlyn Jennings: I like profes-
sors who make you feel comfort-
able in the classroom, because that makes you pay attention a lot more. If you tell a few jokes, and you start relaxing and then the learning process is fun instead of them just giving you notes after notes after notes.

Do you mean they entertain you?

Katlyn Jennings: Not in the sense of entertaining, but in the sense that I'd rather have [hearted moments] and not have just a monotonous voice cover-
ing material. If they would give notes, or dive into a topic or something, that helps.

Lucas Briggs: I agree. Be more enthusiastic about the topic.

Kevin Morrison: We know what they're experts. But are we excited about the material? Can they communicate that? The best public speakers, the ones who get rid of technology and you have an actual interaction [student-faculty re-
lation-ship]. The best instructors are the ones that speak effectively, engage the students in conversation and are enthusiastic.

Molly Humphreys: I also like the ones who get there ahead of time, are accessible to talk to, follow the class schedule.

Katlyn Jennings: I really like it when the teacher knows every-
one's name. One of my professors already knew a lot of my previous classes, and he would say, "Oh, hi, you're here now, but you were over there last year." It's nice to see them want to know you on a personal level.

Kevin Morrison: Especially in upper-level courses. For one thing, it recognizes that you're legitimate. If you're taking a real-
stone course, for example, you've been in the major a while, you're serious about the subject and you should be respected for that.

How about your least favorite class? What creates a psycho-
logical distance between you and your instructor?

Molly Humphreys: I hate when you never see their eyes. When they're constantly reading down things on a blackboard, it seems like they're more interested in the facts on the blackboard than in the students.

Amanda Reed: Part of it is the different style between classes versus those in our inter-
est. If we're already interested, it's easier to feel engaged. I've had required classes where it's been real interactive and I loved it and it made me want to take more classes in that subject.

Lucas Briggs: I don't like it when there's an overuse of Pow-
ePoints — no conversations, no examples. We would actually sit in class and raise our hands just to see how long it took for the professor to look up and see us.

Kari Rosenkaimer: I had a teacher in urban sociology and they did not take advantage of the fact that we are in an urban setting, going out to neighborhoods, etc. That didn't make sense to me. I've also had graduate students teaching. You'd think they'd be able to relate to us more, being closer in age and [career path], but there is a language barrier.

How do you deal with the lan-
guage barrier? It's part of our world, right?

Kevin Morrison: Students can accommodate. The Univer-
sity has language requirements for instructors, but it doesn't always work you need to talk with the professor. Usually the professor will do something, take some steps to improve or be clearer.

Regarding the use of technol-
y in the classroom: If you were the professor, what rules would you enforce?

Lucas Briggs: It depends on how big the class is. In a large class, there is no way to enforce no texting. But I'd rather much allow texting in class than have students talking during class, which actually is more disruptive.

Kevin Morrison: I would allow texting in my class. I think for students today, it doesn't bother us, and talking is more disruptive.

But do you have to pick your battles. I'll let you text, but there's no way I'll let you use your iPods or go on Facebook.

You have to set your rules, and the syllabus is part of that. Set your expectations of behavior.

But I also think our definition of acceptable behavior is very dif-
ferent. Professors are always going to say that we behave in class, but it's not always going to be what we find acceptable.

I see no conflict from text-
ing messaging while you're having a regular conversation. I'm great at it. I think some professors here would find it insulting, but a lot of times we don't realize that. It just doesn't occur to us.

But why do you need to be texting?

Kari Rosenkaimer: Just because I'm texting doesn't mean I'm not paying attention. We are a multi-tasking society where we can do more things at once. It just means that our message and [texting etiquette] insists that I have to respond immediately.

What are you texting about?

Amanda Reed: Usually, it's about something that needs to be done right now. Can you forward me that information, I need it for my next class? Or it might involve plans for this evening. Or about something that has to do right away for an event. Usually it's important.

You know that a lot of folks feel disrespect by texting in their class? Why would it take you to get not to do it?

Lucas Briggs: It depends on how big the class is. In a large class, there is no way to enforce no texting. But I'd rather much allow texting in class than have students talking during class, which actually is more disruptive.

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What are the guidelines for good communication?

Katlyn Jennings: Text mes-
sages to a professor? No, that shouldn't happen. It just doesn't seem right.

If not text messages, what is appropriate? Kevin, you said you felt you were an equal to your professors. How does that affect the way you communicate with them?

Kevin Morrison: I think it depends on the professor. I've had a professor say, "If you're going to send me an email, make it be worded in a professional, proper manner, with capitalization and your teacher's appropriate. That can also prevent communication after college.

But if it's an email and it con-
forms to the professor's wishes, I don't want a one-message response! That's very annoying. I understand, especially in say, a large biology class, no professor wants 75 emails the week before the exam. In that case, maybe the professor can send a group email that says something like, "I'm not going to answer the common questions I've got; here are the answers for the benefit of everyone." I think it's nice to have the time to write out an email properly, and get back a "yes," or "I'm going to show up in class," that's frustrating. So it's a two-way street.

What is your reliance on email and not face-to-face interactions — our professors see that as the biggest deficiency in our genera-

Lucas Briggs: I would address my email to a supervisor or boss, formally at first, but after a feel-

What are you texting about? Kevin, you said you really engage your professors. How does that affect the way you communicate?

Kevin Morrison: I would address my email to a supervisor or boss, formally at first, but after a feel-

Do you agree that starting out view-
ing your professor as a boss works?

Kari Rosenkaimer: Yes, there should always be a line there, between mentor and professor. In my mind, the professor is the teacher. They are the ones who taught me, teaching me, and I feel if the professor becomes too lax in the situation, that line is crossed and a lot of students become disrespectful when they cross the line, too.

Kevin Morrison: It's the tone-setting: how they introduce themselves.
Did you expect to earn the same grade here as you did in high school and if so, why?

Kathryn Jennings: I feel like our generation is different in so many ways. Everything’s not a choice. Yeah, college is harder, but at the same time we’re still expected to get good grades. That does mean that you have to work harder, but it’s assumed you will.

Kevin Morrison: I think it’s different for each student. One attribute that we all have, I think — some students see themselves as a paying customer and because they are a paying customer they deserve good grades all the time.

Kari Rosenkaimer: The thing about it though is what’s expected by our future employers, they expect good grades.

In high school you needed good grades to get into a good college and now in college you need good grades to get into a good school or be employed. It’s not necessarily that you’re expecting it, it’s that you have to.

Kathryn Jennings: I think there’s more diagnosis, not necessarily more people.

Kevin Morrison: This whole obsession starts in the 8th grade when you take the math test to see which section of math you’ll be in. It continues in high school.

If you don’t get into the honors class freshman year, you’re not going to get in the honors class sophomore year. You’re not going to get into AP classes and you’re going to die old and alone. It’s a full cycle. If you screw up early on, that’s it.

They say this generation is a little more emotional and more depressed. Do you think that’s true?

Kathryn Jennings: I think there’s more diagnoses, not necessarily more people.

Kevin Morrison: There are more mental health categories today.

Lucas Briggs: If you see TV ads there are like a million conditions you can have.

Kathryn Jennings: There’s also more diagnosis. We’re turning into a generation of hypochondriacs.

Much has been made of this generation having “helicopter parents.” What about your parents?

Amanda Reed: I’ve always been independent. I worked during the summers, I paid my own bills, and I managed my credit card. I didn’t want to go out to eat every day. They can’t help themselves.

Molly Humphreys: I talk a lot to my parents. Frequently. They’re my support group outside of college. I don’t think it’s a bad thing.

Lucas Briggs: Parents need to chill out. When I first came here my parents wanted to call every day, and I said, “No, you call not more than once a week.” I told them I didn’t want to turn into a momma’s boy.

Kevin Morrison: I do think our generation is more sheltered, and not as mature as a result. I think the difference is when your parents start calling your professors.

What would you do about that?

Kevin Morrison: I’d tell my professors to hang up on them.

Can you summarize tips on what faculty can do to help students in the classroom?

Kari Rosenkaimer: Don’t get offended by our texting.

Lucas Briggs: Treat us with respect.

Molly Humphreys: Yes, a class in logic. It think it’s on a personal level. I would like to learn that, you do. What I would advise you is to make it fun.

Lucas Briggs: You can make tests so that students have to explain how they get the answers, explain the process they went through.

Molly Humphreys: Learning problem-solving is very important to me as a math major. If I don’t know how to do it, I try to teach myself, and Google can help with that.

Another questioner asked: Is there a difference for the students between being treated with respect and being treated as equals by them?

Kathryn Jennings: I think when you say “equals” a lot of people cringe. I think adults is better.

Kari Rosenkaimer: As college students, we are 18 and we are adults, but I do treat students as equals is the same thing. I just don’t want to be bullied.

Kevin Morrison: I guess what I meant before is to treat us the way you would in a professional working environment. Compare and contrast what each of your students said about the work they did.

If you didn’t do the work, I’m going to write that down. I’m not going to allow you to get away with it. I think that helps.

Kevin Morrison: I’ve had group work assignments and I’m totally against them. I see the argument that small groups are useful because in the workplace you’re going to have to work in groups.

But there’s a huge difference. In the workplace you have to work in groups because it’s your job and if you don’t do the work, you get fired. But for students, if you don’t do the work, chances are someone else will pick up the slack. There’s no incentive.

Also the workplace is just that: a place where you work. For students to have to work outside with classmates is a nightmare.

I don’t think group work reinforces good group behavior because there’s no incentive. Every time I get in that situation I tell myself: “If I just leave them alone and I’ll do it.” I just don’t want to do it. I don’t think group work is good for group behavior, because it’s not teaching them to work together.

Another questioner asked: What about your attitude that their generation is different? Is there a difference?

Kari Rosenkaimer: “Gen-ed” classes are extremely important, because that’s where freshmen figure out what your interests are. The more engaging you are, no matter what the subject, the more learning becomes important.

One audience member questioned whether the students’ attitude that their generation is different is a realistic one.

Molly Humphreys: I think we take our cues from our professors. I’ve had a professor answer a cell phone in class. If he’s texting, it’s okay, he’s telling me it’s okay to text. We learn from them. In terms of asking for respect, we mean being treated as adults, and recognizing our differences.

Amanda Reed: I don’t see the attitude. I want to be treated like I treat others. Most students do respect their professors, it’s what we’re used to.

I had a professor call me out in class and say, “Oh, Amanda is just trying to earn her participation points for the day.” I was taken aback by that, to be embarrassed in front of my peers, and for the rest of the semester I was in a bad mood in that class. I didn’t want to be there, because the professor treated that relationship with me in front of my peers.

We just expect to be treated with respect. I don’t think it’s a generational thing.

— Peter Hart
Pitt developing new tool to help prospective students estimate the bottom line cost of coming to the University.

"All NIH-funded research now [is required to go] into PubMed Central, and Pitt’s librarians are working on ways to automatically disseminate that work," said Adam Shear of the Provost’s office, the task force had made four broad recommendations for Faculty Assembly and Senate committee to consider, adding that after gathering feedback on the committee’s recommendations, the University will meet the October 2011 deadline, Porter said. "If it's not ready to go early, we will post it out and come tenure time tell us it's ready," Shear said.

"I do not know where this will end but I do believe that it needs to be addressed in a generic fashion openly.""It is developing a new tool to help prospective students estimate the bottom line cost of coming to the University.

"We need to defend the sanctity of the classroom that allows for free and open debate," he said. "We think speaking out in class if it matters will end up on YouTube," Pinsky said.

"Other students in the class room were upset, saying that they were being labeled as controversial," said Kimberly B. Barlow, vice provost for Student Affairs, who was in the meeting. "I do not know where this will end but I do believe that it needs to be addressed in a generic fashion openly.,"
Maher draws praise as provost

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“My view is that Jim Maher is one of the most highly regarded individuals with whom I’ve had the privilege of working and he has had a profound impact on this University. His support for academic development has been enormous. We’ve benefited tremendously from the tremendous progress made in the ULS during his [tenure] as provost,” said Kim Stahl, director of the Center for Philosophy of Science. “He has published numerous papers in the fields of nuclear physics and statistical condensed matter physics, as well as presenting at professional conferences and serving as a visiting scientist at a number of other universities. He is an elected fellow of both the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

As provost, Maher serves as chair of both the University’s planning and budgeting committee and the Council of Deans. He also serves as co-chair of the University’s facilities planning committee.

Also serving as co-chair of the planning and budgeting committee is University Relations office has posted legislators’ contact information and a sample letter online at www.govtrel.pitt.edu as part of a call to action aimed at Pitt supporters.

Supowitz, who was in Harrisburg earlier this week to speak with local legislators and legislative leaders, said the grassroots effort is being held. “The legislators are hearing from our alumni, students and others. They’ve let us know they receive those letters and emails.”

Legislators continue to say an agreement is near, Supowitz said. “In the past, the University has been reluctant to sign legislation that would affect its status, but this time the sentiment of the legislators is different.”

Significant levels of state support have been a sore spot with administrators in recent years, the continuing delay in the release of the current fiscal year’s appropriation drew additional criticism from Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg.

In comments during the briefing, Provost of Trustees, Nordenberg said, “We have made a number of key decisions recently where we’ve seen our funding level hold on because they’re not preferred, what they also are saying in the most practical sense is that our 161,000 students, including 122,000 of the highest, highest-achieving Pennsylvania students, students who have opted to stay in the commonwealth for their education, means they’re even more likely to stay in the commonwealth and contribute after receiving their education, it’s saying that these 122,000 students are not preferred.

It’s also in a time when preserving jobs is the biggest challenge in the economy, saying that Pitt, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln appropriations all are being held up because we are ‘non-preferred’ appropriations. In the legal sense, we are non-preferred, which typically means that when your bill comes to a vote, you need more votes to get it passed, it does not typically mean that your bill will not be ‘vetoed’ or overridden.”

The chancellor continued: Legislation authorizing support for the group of universities that are the largest. The law requires that Pennsylvania students in proportion to the number of students that attract research funding for tax purposes in the commonwealth, and most of whom care about their university and the work that it does, are not preferred.

The argument is that the roughly 10 universities that have campuses or other key facilities that do help drive local economic development are not preferred. “We have campuses or other key facilities that do drive local economic development,” said Kimberly K. Barbier and Peter Hart.
The Great American Smokeout - November 20th

Thursday, November 20th, is the American Cancer Society’s 33rd Great AmericanSmokeout. The Great American Smokeout was launched to inspire and encourage smokers to quit for just one day, and it remains a great opportunity to support people to commit to a long-term plan to quit for good. It usually takes more than one attempt to successfully quit smoking, but the University believes the Great American Smokeout is a great time to start. The University understands the struggle many faculty and staff and/or their family members experience when trying to quit smoking, and supports those trying to quit by providing smoking cessation benefits through the Fitness for Life initiative.

Since the Fitness for Life program was initiated in July 2004, there have been numerous faculty and staff success stories as a direct result of the smoking cessation program. The smoking cessation benefits provided include coverage for:

- Telephone-based health coaching
- Face-to-face smoking cessation counseling
- Smoking cessation prescription medication, such as Chantix and generic Zyban
- Nicotine replacement products, such as nicotine patches, gum, lozenges, nasal spray and oral inhalers

In addition, reimbursement of the copayments for the covered smoking cessation medication will be provided for up to two courses of medication during each benefit plan year to faculty and staff members and their adult dependents who are covered under the University’s medical plan and who participate in the MyHealth Ready to Quit™ program. This reimbursement is contingent on the participant completing the 90-day follow-up assignment as part of the MyHealth Ready to Quit program. Participation in the smoking cessation program may be completed:

- Online
- By telephone
- In person through LifeSolutions

If you smoke and are thinking about quitting, please visit the Fitness for Life Web site to learn more: [www.hr.pitt.edu/fitness/](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/fitness/)

University of Pittsburgh Retirement Savings Plan

Certain changes in Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations require organizations to update or amend Plan Documents and Summary Plan Descriptions (SPD). This applies to all of the University’s Retirement Savings Plans. The documents have been re-stated and re-filed in compliance with IRS regulations and are now available for review:

- Summary Plan Descriptions (SPD)
- Plan Documents

If you smoke and are thinking about quitting, please visit the Fitness for Life Web site: [www.hr.pitt.edu/fitness/](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/fitness/)

The University of Pittsburgh Retirement Plan continues without any changes to the existing plan design, including the schedule of contribution rates, vesting rules and eligibility.

The new SPDs include an overview of the Plans with explanations of participation, vesting, contributions and allocations, and benefits. Applicability of these provisions is subject to final determination of eligibility.

The complete text of the Plans and SPDs are available to you by visiting the Benefits Department Web site: [www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/contributory.htm](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/contributory.htm)

If you do not have access to the documents online, please contact the Benefits Department at (412) 624-8160 to request a hard copy.

A letter announcing the availability of the re-filed Plans and the new SPDs will be sent to the campus addresses of faculty and staff in November.

If you have questions about the Plans or SPDs, please contact:
- Stan Charle: pause5@pitt.edu
- Laura Phillips: lauraph@pitt.edu

Flexible Spending Account Deadlines

As another reminder...

For the 2009 benefit plan year which ran from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009, the claim submission deadline for Health Care and Dependent Care expenses is December 31, 2009.

File your claims now to avoid the loss of any funds remaining in your account! The Benefits Department will not grant extensions for any Plan Year 2009 Health Care and/or Dependent Care claims submitted after December 31, 2009. A brief listing of eligible flexible spending account expenses may be found at:

[www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/flexible.htm](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/flexible.htm)

A more detailed explanation of eligible expenses may be obtained by logging on to your flexible spending online account on EBDS’s Web site at:

[www.healthstylesnavigator.com](http://www.healthstylesnavigator.com)

Please note that EBDS has been acquired by Highmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Over the next few months, the name of HM Benefits and Highmark will begin to appear on correspondences.

Important Vendor Contact Information

Benefits Department
Office Hours: 8am-5pm EST
2008 Craig Hall
412-624-8160 - Main Line • 412-624-3485 - Fax
[www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits)

Please visit our Web site for more FAQ’s, downloadable forms and other benefits information.

Medical
UPMC Health Plan
1-888-459-6885 • [www.upmchealthplan.com](http://www.upmchealthplan.com)

Dental
United Concordia
1-877-215-3616 • [www.ucci.com](http://www.ucci.com)

Vision
Davis Vision
1-800-999-5431 • [www.davision.com](http://www.davision.com)

Retirement/Savings
TIAA-CREF
1-800-444-7610 • [www.tiaa-cref.org](http://www.tiaa-cref.org)
Vanguard
1-800-523-1188 • [www.vanguard.com](http://www.vanguard.com)

Flexible Spending Accts.
EBDS
1-800-207-9310 • [www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/flexible.htm](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/flexible.htm)

LifeSolutions
1-866-647-3432 • [www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/lifesolutions.htm](http://www.hr.pitt.edu/benefits/lifesolutions.htm)

Payroll
412-624-8070 • [www.bc.pitt.edu/payroll/index.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/payroll/index.html)

Faculty Records
412-624-4232

UPMC Health Plan

Call a tobacco cessation specialist when you are ready to quit

1-800-807-0751

American Cancer Society
1-800-784-8669

University of Pittsburgh
Student Health Service Q.U.I.T. Program
412-383-1830
Direct-to-consumer genetic tests:

Risks, benefits & inadequate regulation

Thanks to recent advances in understanding of the human genome, today’s consumers can purchase their own genetic tests online or on pharmacy shelves, no doctor needed.

Tests kits are advertised to assess one’s genetic predisposition for conditions ranging from restless leg syndrome to breast cancer.

And Jerry Springer and Maury Povich could find themselves out of the babay mama drama business — consumers can buy genetic test kits for paternity and other non-medical issues such as ancestry.

The rise of direct-to-consumer genetic testing has both risks and benefits, and regulation has not kept up with the technology, according to an expert in law and genetic policies who spoke here recently.

“If you read the newspapers, it seems like a new gene and its function and its effect on health are being discovered every day,” said Gail H. Javitt, who delivered the annual Mark A. Nordenberg Lecture in Law, Medicine and Psychiatry, “Direct to Consumer Genetic Testing,” Nov. 5.

Javitt is professor of law at the John Hopkins Genetics and Public Policy Center and curator of the Center for the Study of the Berman Institute of Bioethics at Johns Hopkins and attorney in the food and drug regulatory practice of Sidley Austin.

Citing recent headlines purporting to find genetic links to obesity, schizophrenia and addiction, and even to fidelity or belief in God, she said the completion of 2003 of the Human Genome Project (which identified all the genes in the human DNA and the order of the chemical base pairs that make up the genes) has “led to a whole range of debate over what is genetic and what is not.”

The vast majority of a person’s DNA — 99.9 percent — is the same between any two humans, but the remaining 0.1 percent accounts for differences in appearance, health and risk of disease, she added.

The testing made possible by our increasing understanding of the genome has many uses. Individuals may seek testing to find whether they have inherited a genetic condition, are predisposed to an illness or risk passing one along to their offspring. Genetic testing also may be used in tumor typing because understanding a tumor’s genetics can help doctors determine the most effective treatment.

Other genetic tests can help determine ancestry or be useful in forensic testing for law enforcement.

Among the newest are pharmacogenetic tests that can determine which drug and what dosage may be best for a particular individual, based on his or her genes.

Javitt noted that a voluntary registry (at genetests.org) used by traditional labs lists genetic tests for more than 1,800 diseases.

She noted that an underscoring of the tests available because the listing typically doesn’t include the direct-to-consumer (DTC) tests that are available.

At one time, to obtain genetic testing, an individual would meet with a geneticist who would take a family history and decide whether to order the test and where to send it for analysis. There would be pre-testing counseling to inform the person what might be discovered.

When the test was completed, the doctor received the results and the patient received additional counseling on what the results meant.

Many factors have contributed to the change in the Federal Government bypassing and individuals can order their own tests, Javitt said, labeled “direct to consumer” testing the result of a “perfect storm” of technology combined with a lack of oversight.

“It’s much easier to interpret DNA sequences and the cost is declining,” she said, making for a low barrier to market entry for companies who want to market such tests. In addition, there is little governmental regulation, and the Internet has made it easy for individuals to shop for their own genetic tests.

In direct-to-consumer testing, she said, the buyer requests the test and receives the results without a health care provider as an intermediary. Javitt said, DTC also can refer to the advertising campaigns run by test providers who want to encourage people to request a particular test from them.

Javitt said about three dozen businesses currently offer DTC testing for a total of about 50 conditions. The process is simple, she said. The customer receives a collection kit for blood, saliva or cells from inside the cheek. The company analyzes the sample and sends the customer a report.

“Tests range from recreational — ‘Do you have wet or dry ear wax?’ — to serious — determining one’s risk of getting diabetes, cancer or heart disease, for example.

Some such testing already is passé. So-called “nutrigenetic” tests that advised individuals about what to eat based on their genetic profile have given way to broader profiles of a person’s genome and pharmacogenetic testing.

Javitt cautioned that there is no standardization among these companies: Some stick to offering either health-related or non-health related tests; others do both. Some may offer counseling, others send only a report. Some do their own lab analyses, others do not. Privacy policies may vary as well.

Pros and cons

The new market for such tests has both risks and benefits, Javitt said.

On the positive side, “It’s clearly lowering the bar to access,” she said. Those who prefer to undergo testing on their own or have privacy concerns can order tests themselves. “It gives personal control over your health, over your destiny,” she said.

The results can provide additional knowledge and insight about one’s self and family and can inform lifestyle changes.

Javitt noted that Francis Collins, who led the Human Genome Project, discovered through research that he carries two copies of a risk factor for diabetes, which prompted him to lose 20 pounds.

Negative concerns about genetic testing aren’t limited strictly to the direct-to-consumer tests. Lab quality, test accuracy and validity are among the potential question marks for any genetic testing.

But in the case of direct-to-consumer tests, buyers also may be confused and unable to properly interpret complicated results. They may be victimized by exaggerated claims, or perhaps fail to consider the consequences of testing on themselves and their families.

“We really don’t know whether any of these things are happening,” Javitt said, noting that there is no profile of who seeks this information, what they’re doing with it and how their lives are impacted, although the Genetics and Public Policy Center is undertaking a survey to find out.

A U.S. Government Accountability Office report on nutrigenetic tests purchased online concluded that the tests can mislead “by making predictions that are medically unproven and so ambiguous that they do not provide meaningful information to consumers,” Javitt said.

And a recent research project submitted by individuals genetic samples to seven test firms to test for 13 diseases, Javitt said. It found that while 11 of the seven test results were the same across all seven companies, “Not ready for prime time was the conclusion,” she said.

Privacy concerns over what the lab might do with one’s genetic sample and potential discrimination should information be released without one’s consent also are genetic tests. The decision to have a genetic test may impact not only the individual, but also his or her ancestors and descendants, she noted.

Concerns about privacy go beyond one’s own request for testing.

“Not only can you find out information about your genome, but can other people,” Javitt noted, adding that the use of so-called “abandoned DNA” that could be found, for example, on a discarded cigarette butt, tradition- ally has been used by law enforcement but now could be in anyone’s hands. There has been particular societal concern about employers’ or health insurance companies’ potential use of such information, she said.

Last year, the law passed last year prohibiting genetic discrimination by employers.

“Some genetic tests may not be the only ones interested in their genetic testing results. Some people want to know, perhaps in the case of infidelity testing and its correla- tion of those results and infidelity testing. ‘In theory, anybody can purchase that kit and do paternity testing,” she said.

Regulation

Regulation of this new realm has not kept pace with the technology.

The Food and Drug Administration regulates the tests labs purchase to do the testing, although that, too, applies only to medically related tests and doesn’t cover tests created in-house by a lab.

But the current Food and Drug commis- sion regulates deceptive trade practices, such as false advertising claims.

“Yes, there is oversight,” Javitt said, but the regulations that exist are not specifically meant to regulate genetic testing. “Retrofitting them can be a challenge,” she said.

So what approaches can be taken? Should it be the status quo, which essentially is “buyer beware”? Or should there be a voluntary certification process or rules of Good Housekeeping seal for test providers? Should there be heightened enforcement for false or misleading claims or require some type of third-party review of tests?

It remains to be determined.

“Clearly genetic science has moved faster than policy, which is not a surprise,” Javitt said. “The current regulation framework doesn’t fit. There are gaps in oversight for all genetic tests, but that is particularly apparent and worrisome when you talk about genetic testing directly to consumers.

“There is no protection for the privacy of genetic information with the exception of the genome, and we don’t really know the impact of genetic testing on the patient, but we hope to get updated soon.”

—Kimberly K. Barlow
Is technology making the classroom less central to learning?

There’s a dramatic shift in education happening right under our noses and now’s the time to re-think the American educational system, according to an educational researcher who lectured here last month.

“All around us people are learning with the aid of new technologies. Children are playing complex video games, workers are taking online courses to get an advanced degree, students are taking courses at commercial learning centers to prepare for tests, adults are consulting Wikipedia,” said Allan Collins, emeritus professor of education and social policy at Northwestern University.

“We have home schooling, distance education, workplace learning, computer-based learning environments and online technical certification programs.”

These new technologies are creating learning opportunities that challenge the educational delivery system of try 9th-grade schools and colleges, said Collins, drawing on the theories advanced in his book, “Rethinking Education: From Competition to Cooperation,” which he co-authored with Richard Halverson.

“These new learning niches enable people of all ages to pursue learning on their own terms,” said Collins in an Oct. 22 lecture sponsored by the Learning Policy Center, part of the Learning Research and Development Center.

“People around the world are taking their education out of schools into homes, libraries, Internet web-sites and work-spaces, where they can decide what they want to learn, when they want to learn and how they want to learn.”

In 1831, Alexis de Tocqueville came to America to see firsthand what the new democracy was all about, both the good and the bad, Collins said.

“In some sense that’s what Richard Halverson and I were trying to do in the book. Look at this technological revolution and its impact on education and figure out what’s going on and what’s bad about it,” Collins said.

“I come here not as an advocate for uniformity or lack of it, or for home schooling. I come as a sociologist trying to figure out what’s going on.”

He related several anecdotes that illustrate the changing nature of education delivery, including the story of the 3-year-old boy who by watching videos about dinosaurs became an expert on them before he learned to read.

Collins also cited the story of the retired marketing executive who began to follow the stock market online, eventually, through self-teaching, she was able to make money for herself and her family.

He related how a middle school student, whose father needed a student, whose father needed a web site for his business, built the web site for her father after learning how from a group of digital artists who trained her online.

“The point is that a lot of the most impressive education is happening through technology all over the place, but particularly outside the school,” Collins said.

“We argue that there are really deep incompatibilities between schools and technology. Technology is a simple example of education for uniform learning — We want everybody to learn the same learning. At the same time — whereas technology empowers customization, allows you to pursue your own personal learning, and will also give you immediate feedback.”

In addition, the culture of schooling is built on the idea of the teacher as the expert who passes on wisdom, whereas technology affords a lot of diverse sources that a teacher often isn’t aware of. “This also leads kids to question the authority of the teacher who doesn’t have access to all the same resources,” he said.

Furthermore, the goal of traditional schooling is an accumulation of memorized knowledge, so “we don’t let kids have books when they take tests, or calculators, or anything, and certainly not the web,” Collins said. “But technology provides people with the web as a tool to accomplish their learning goals. It’s a different relationship.

“In other words, you don’t have to have everything in your head, because you can access it easily through the web or through tutors on the web.”

Traditional schooling is driven by absorption and emphasizes breadth coverage of knowledge. “We want you to learn all the big theories, good ideas, facts, works of art, works of literature, philosophy, religion,” Collins said. “But technology takes you much more into a learning-by-doing paradigm, putting you into a community, or helping you interact with other people in a web community. In sum, we fall into an in-between just-in-case learning, technology, into just-in-time learning.”

As a result of these incompatibilities, Collins argued that schools have become a much less important community. “They’re not going to go away. We will have schools well into the future, but they won’t be central to everything,” he said.

That shift, Collins said, is akin to the way the knowledge came to the American education. “The parallel equation is that the industrial revolution took us from an apprenticeship system-based school to a school-based system in the 1800s. Now the digital revolution or the knowledge revolution is taking us toward a lifelong learning system,” he said.

“What happened with the introduction of universal schooling was that the role of authority, control and responsibility for learning away from the parents and the master. When we look at what we see are individuals taking back responsibility for their learning away from the parents and schools, changing the things they care about.”

Collins tracked the changes in three eras of education — the apprenticeship era, the schooling era and the emerging lifelong learning era of the future.

“Apprenticeship was a pedagogy where there was close interaction between master and learner. Often it was just learning to farm or work in the family business. It was teaching the culture. It was a form of social reproduction,” Collins said.

By contrast, a peer culture arose in the schooling era. “It’s a culture of belonging to a house of friends,” he said.

“But as we move into home schooling and distance education, we see a lot of the peer cultures changing. There is much less peer culture. Often individuals are learning on their own. They’re learning in groups that are web based that attract all ages. It’s a culture based on common interest and how you can teach yourself,” he added.

Assessment in the apprenticeship era was done by observation of the master; in the schooling era, assessment is done through standardized testing.

“It seems we’re moving more toward a pedagogy of interaction, whether it’s through simulations or with people in a common group. Assessment is becoming more embedded. In other words, trying to see what feedback you can give to you as you interact,” Collins said.

“So what’s lost and what’s gained? He asked.

“The peer big, Equity is really being hurt as the middle and upper classes are buying up more individualized text books and handheld devices for their kids and they have all sorts of interactive educational content.”

“Poor minorities can’t afford to spend a lot of money on technology. These new computers may be carrying educational advantages. So this technological revolution is really making equity much more important.”

The arguments behind the establishment of traditional schooling include Thomas Jefferson’s notion that universal schooling was necessary for good citizenship, because the king of England no longer was making all the policy decisions. That fell to the people. So the people had to be educated to make wise policy decisions, Collins explained.

“But when people are taking up home schooling or distance education, they are pursuing their own interests or career goals. They’re not pursuing political policy issues,” he said.

“Horace Mann argued that we needed universal schooling because we had all these illiterate immigrants coming in. We needed to re-educate the immigrants in the language and values of the American culture.”

But with home schooling networks, for example, the cultural values are localized, such as the religious right teaching one set of values and the environmentalists teaching another set of values, Collins said.

“So social cohesion tends to go down the drain. The book argues that as a society are settling into our own little cultural niches. In fact, the technology revolution is helping that along,” he said.

Also, diversity is becoming diluted in the lifelong learning era. “One of the things schools are doing is bring people together from diverse backgrounds. With home schooling or distance education or even participating in web communities, you’re not learning as much from people of different backgrounds,” Collins said.

On the other end of the spectrum, the gains of technological advances include promoting more engagement whether in a simulation environment, gaming environment or interactive web environment.

“The people playing these multi-player games are learning all sorts of entrepreneurial skills like how to form coalitions, how to negotiate with partners or enemies, how to recover from a business failure,” Collins maintained.

Interactive web communities, of course, with which we’re all familiar, for example, are growing exponen-tially, he noted. “I think this will be the way of the future. We see this in the future, where people are participating in communities organized around their shared pas-sions and getting feedback, trying out their ideas and producing things. And they get criquitized in that world,” Collins said.

With home schooling you get less competition for classrooms, which are very competitive environments. You get customization, you get the chance to pursue their interests and more immediate feedback and help. So the people who said why you failed. The technological environment puts far more of the burden on teachers, but also provides many more options for learning, Collins said.

“So where do we go from here?”

“This is a time of flux so it is a time when we can have an impact. To succeed, they need to understand the imperatives of technology. We need to see technology as customization, interaction and learning control,” Collins said.

“We need to re-think high school. High schools are in trou-ble. Most kids feel like they’re in prison and they don’t want to be there,” he said.

Instead, Collins advocates giving 9th- and grade schools the choice whether to remain in school or begin specializing in an area leading to a trade. “We need more training for vocational counselors, he noted.

“It would be terrific to try to improve education, instead of always asking. How do we improve the school system? There’s no single new set of questions, such as: How can we make learning technology resources available to everybody? What kind of tools can support people to learn on their own?”

“We also need to re-think motivation, because the current system is running on tradition and motivation. We need more self-directed learning. We need more technology to support people in areas that teaches them reading and arith-metics,” he said.

“More free online tutoring programs are needed, he said, as are more technical certification programs.

“I would also like to see specialized certification in more than just technical areas. You would have to have the equivalent of the 9th-grade level, reading at the 9th-grade level, and so on,” Collins said.

Educators need to re-evalu-ate what’s important to learn. “We’re going to have to learn a lot of new things, things we need to know. The web is a great substitute-memory device. What people need to do is be able to find information, so learning to negoti-ate the web is becoming more and more important.”

In the lifelong learning era, careers will change more rapidly. “People are going to go back and forth between work and learning all their lives. We don’t think that way. We need to re-think the way that because career transitions is very difficult. How do we support people?” Collins said.

“We need to re-think educa-tional delivery systems. This is the time for a new system, and leaders need to integrate all the disparate ele-ments,” he said.

“Finally, we need to start re-thinking systemically how to pull it all together. We need to address equity issues where parts of the population are getting all the educational benefits and we need to understand the importance of all this new technol-o gy how it could fit into our educational system.”

—Peter Hart

These new technologies are creating learning opportunities that challenge the educational delivery system of traditional schools and colleges.

—Allan Collins

(470x501)
RESEARCH NOTES

Two new CAREER awardees announced

Faculty members Gurudev Dutt of the Department of Physics and Astronomy and Michael Grabe of the Department of Biological Sciences are the most recent Pitt recipients of National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) awards this year.

The five-year awards fund junior faculty members’ emerging careers and include an education component that encourages outreach to women and underrepresented groups.

Dutt studies quantum systems, which show potential in next-generation technologies, particularly for transistors as well as information processing and storage devices. With his $550,000 grant, Dutt will explore how to control the quantum coherence (the phase of electron waves) and quantum entanglement (linking of atoms for combined power) of these systems. Coherence and entanglement would allow the atoms in quantum systems to function cooperatively, increasing an electronic device’s power and speed.

Dutt will use diamond-based materials and nanostructures to test how coherence and entanglement behave in a solid-state environment similar to that of an electronic device. Graduate and undergraduate students working on the project will learn advanced experimental techniques used in modern physics laboratories to study quantum properties. Dutt and his group also will develop computer simulations and learning games that explain important physics topics and current research, which will be made available to the public to motivate aspiring scientists.

Grabe received a $922,252 grant to explore the correlation between cell function and the proteins contained in the cell membrane. Membrane proteins dictate a cell’s ability to sense and respond to its environment. They also regulate essential cell activity, such as the flow of molecules in and out of a cell.

Unstable membrane proteins may function incorrectly, be targeted for removal from the membrane or accumulate in the wrong place in the cell. Improperly functioning proteins are linked to a number of nervous system and heart disorders and displaced or absent proteins can result in cystic fibrosis and related conditions.

Grabe seeks to better understand the basic physics and chemistry of how these proteins meld with the membrane and the roots of protein malfunction.

He and his group will create computer models that simulate the insertion of these proteins into the membrane and their removal. Grabe plans to make the software associated with his work freely available.

For the educational component, Grabe will develop a mathematical biology course and textbook to train undergraduates in the mathematics needed to understand new technologies in biology. He also has been developing a summer course in basic mathematics for high school students in Pittsburgh’s school-to-career program.

Dutt and Grabe join four other faculty members whose CAREER awards previously were announced. They are Lilian Chong and Megan Spence of chemistry, Lance Davidson of bioengineering and Jung-Kun Lee of mechanical engineering and materials science. Funds for Grabe, Dutt and Lee’s projects come from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Together, the six faculty members have been awarded more than $3.73 million in CAREER awards granted in the 2008-09 award cycle.

Lighter smokes result in fewer quitters

Smokers who switched to a low-tar, light or mild brand of cigarette had about a 50 percent lower chance of giving up smoking, according to a School of Medicine study published in the November issue of Tobacco Control.

As part of the study and faculty member in the Division of Internal Medicine, reported: “Forty-three percent of smokers reported a desire to quit smoking as a reason for switching to lighter cigarettes. While these individuals were the most likely to make an attempt, ironically, they were the least likely to quit smoking.”

“It may be that smokers think that a lighter brand is better for their health and is therefore an acceptable alternative to giving up completely.”

The findings are based on more than 31,000 smokers in the United States who participated in the National Cancer Institute- and CDC-sponsored Tobacco Use Supplement.

Participants were quizzed in 2003 about whether they had switched to a milder/low-tar brand of cigarette and why. They also were asked if they had attempted to give up smoking altogether during the previous 12 months, and whether they currently identified themselves as non-smokers.

The total sample included more than 29,000 people who were current smokers and almost 2,000 who reported having given up the habit for at least 90 days prior to the survey.

In all, 12,000 people, or 38 percent, had switched to a lighter brand, with one in four citing flavor as the primary reason. Nearly one in five of those surveyed said they had switched for a combination of better flavor, wanting to smoke a less harmful cigarette and the intention to give up smoking completely.

Those who switched brands were 58 percent more likely to have tried to give up smoking between 2002 and 2003 than those who stuck with their brand, but this group was 60 percent less likely to be successful in quitting smoking.

In the entire study group — including those who tried to quit and those who did not — the overall odds of giving up smoking were 46 percent lower among those who switched to a lighter cigarette for any reason than among those who stuck with their original brand.

Low-tar cigarettes deliver amounts of tar, nicotine and other substances that are comparable with regular cigarettes, yet they make up 84 percent of U.S. market share. “Previous research has shown that smokers interpret the term ‘light’ to mean less toxic, an association that manufacturers have sought to exploit in advertising,” said Tindle.

Pitt co-authors were Saul Shiffman of the Department of Psychology and James F. Bost of the Department of Medicine.
Patients were neutral about patients compared to lung cancer survival, there was a significantly on oncologists to be forthright with more often than black patients (74 and white patients preferred it males (76 percent to 66 percent), preferred this more often than elderly patients. Females also completed a satisfaction,
Chemistry, and Peter Wipf of the Library and Screening Center; 50 years.”

“Agents, which haven’t changed in effects,” he said. “Also, the organ mania parasite, but the treatments for the Walter Reed Army Institute of Parasitic infection.

3. There is no vaccine or preventive treatment for the disease, which lead to ulcers, and about 30% of treated patients develop complications.

4. Lazo noted, “In a million years, we wouldn’t have thought about using a compound such as diazepam for leishmaniasis. It has appeal because it has already been approved and is inexpensive, but in its current form, it might not be the best option to treat the infection. We plan to develop it further with our colleagues at Walter Reed to improve the compound’s potency and efficacy.”

5. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates worldwide each year there are about 15 million new cases of leishmaniasis skin infections, which lead to ulcers, and about a half million visceral infections, which lead to fever, weight loss and enlargement of the spleen and liver. There is no vaccine or preventative treatment for the parasitic infection.

6. “HILCES,” for high throughput enhanced small molecule screen testing more manageable.”

7. “A nanoparticle-based coating on the surface of the smaller fragments can simulate freezing rain. The researchers conclude that every type will have a different particle-size, which lead to ulcers, and about 30% of treated patients develop complications.

8. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates worldwide each year there are about 15 million new cases of leishmaniasis skin infections, which lead to ulcers, and about a half million visceral infections, which lead to fever, weight loss and enlargement of the spleen and liver. There is no vaccine or preventative treatment for the parasitic infection.

9. “HILCES,” for high throughput enhanced small molecule screen testing more manageable.”

10. The researchers also noted that they were underweight, whether accurate or not, were more likely to have had sex and to have had four or more sexual partners. Overweight Caribbean girls were less likely to use condoms.

11. Underweight African-American girls also were less likely to use condoms while overweight African-American girls reported more sexual partners. Latinas of all weights were more likely to engage in a variety of sexual risk behaviors — lack of condom or oral contraception use, sex before age 13, greater than four sexual partners and use of alcohol.

12. Akers also is an obstetrician/gynecologist at Magee-Womens Hospital and an investigator at the Magee-Womens Research Institute. Other Pitt researchers were Melanie Gold of Student Health Service, Willa Dowsett of cancer prevention and manage- ment in the School of Nursing, James Bost of the Division of Infectious Disease, Ronald J. Zboray and Harold Wiesenfeld of the departments of obstetrics, gynecology and reproductive sciences and medicine, and Wentao Feng, a former graduate student in biostatistics.

13. PTSD was associated directly with the presence of CUD and with having deviant friendliness among the girls involved in illegal activities. These findings suggest PTSD contributes to the development of CUD among teenagers, and therefore it is important to adequately assess for PTSD among young people at risk for CUD,” added Corneliu. Pitt co-authors included Duncan B. Clark of psychiatry, Levent Kirisci, Maureen Reynolds, Ronald F. Tarter of pharmacological sciences, and study coordinator Jeanine Beatty.
The People of the Times column features recent news on faculty and students of the University of Pittsburgh. Whether amoebae such as those of local high schoolers investigate WQED-TV. Tonight, Nov. 12, at 8 p.m. on Mission 101” will premiere on Pittsburgh Public Television. The program “will seek to tackle some of the most troublesome problems affecting the educational success of a large number of our nation’s students,” according to the foundation. Gomaz is the inaugural holder of the Faison Chair, the first director of Pitt’s Center for Urban Education and a senior scientist in Pitt’s Department of Biological Sciences and on the board of directors of Biological Sciences and on the board of directors of the Biomedical Engineering Society. BMEIS is a group of nearly 400 researchers and scholars, including agencies and corporations worldwide, as well as doctors and industry leaders in pharmaceuticals and related devices. The school holds academic appointments in surgery and bioengineering and serves as a director of the Center for Vascular Remodeling and Regeneration as well as the director of the Vascular Surgery and Vascular Biomechanics Research Lab. The People of the Times column features recent news on faculty and students of the University of Pittsburgh. The People of the Times column features recent news on faculty and students of the University of Pittsburgh. Whether amoebae such as those of local high schoolers investigate WQED-TV. Tonight, Nov. 12, at 8 p.m. on Mission 101” will premiere on Pittsburgh Public Television. The program “will seek to tackle some of the most troublesome problems affecting the educational success of a large number of our nation’s students,” according to the foundation. Gomaz is the inaugural holder of the Faison Chair, the first director of Pitt’s Center for Urban Education and a senior scientist in Pitt’s Department of Biological Sciences and on the board of directors of Biological Sciences and on the board of directors of the Biomedical Engineering Society. BMEIS is a group of nearly 400 researchers and scholars, including agencies and corporations worldwide, as well as doctors and industry leaders in pharmaceuticals and related devices. The school holds academic appointments in surgery and bioengineering and serves as a director of the Center for Vascular Remodeling and Regeneration as well as the director of the Vascular Surgery and Vascular Biomechanics Research Lab. The People of the Times column features recent news on faculty and students of the University of Pittsburgh. The People of the Times column features recent news on faculty and students of the University of Pittsburgh. Whether amoebae such as those of local high schoolers investigate WQED-TV. Tonight, Nov. 12, at 8 p.m. on Mission 101” will premiere on Pittsburgh Public Television. The program “will seek to tackle some of the most troublesome problems affecting the educational success of a large number of our nation’s students,” according to the foundation. Gomaz is the inaugural holder of the Faison Chair, the first director of Pitt’s Center for Urban Education and a senior scientist in Pitt’s Department of Biological Sciences and on the board of directors of Biological Sciences and on the board of directors of the Biomedical Engineering Society. BMEIS is a group of nearly 400 researchers and scholars, including agencies and corporations worldwide, as well as doctors and industry leaders in pharmaceuticals and related devices. The school holds academic appointments in surgery and bioengineering and serves as a director of the Center for Vascular Remodeling and Regeneration as well as the director of the Vascular Surgery and Vascular Biomechanics Research Lab.
CALENDAR

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Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar
“Using Small Molecules to Target Infrastructure & Power Plants of Cancer Cells,” Sergey Kozmin, 456 Salk, noon
Senate Community Relations Committee Mtg.
272 Hillman, noon
Health Services Research Seminar
“Differences in Early Access to Liver Transplantation Services,” Cindy Bryce; 305 Parkvale, noon
Medicine Laureate Lecture
“Conserved Roles of Small RNAs in Genome Defense,” Gregory Hannon, Cold Spring Harbor Lab, Scaife aud. 6, noon
Information Sciences Colloquium
“Children as Designers of Technology,” Andrew Large, McGill; 1395 Starzl BST, 3:30 pm
Clinical Orthopaedics & Biomechanics Seminar
“Management & Biology of Germ Cell Tumors,” George Boul, Herberman Conf. 2nd fl., 3 pm
Johnstown Campus Seminar
“The Basics of Importing,” Robert Leo, Merks, Shepard, Lee & Pillsbury; Living/Learning Ctr. Heritage Hall, UPJ, 9 am-1:30 pm
Pathology Research Seminar
“Beta-Catenin Paradox in Liver Regeneration & Cancer,” Sandrai (Paul) Singh Monga; 1105 Lewis, biological sciences; 6014 Scaife, noon
Women’s Studies Seminar
“Can We Hold People Responsible for Their Implicit Biases Against Women & Minorities?” Richard Murcher, HPS, 2201 Posvar, noon
512 Alumni, 12:15-2 pm
Wednesday 18
Orthopaedic Surgery Grand Rounds
“Ethics & Sports Medicine,” Robert Statton, Yale; LHJS aud. 7th fl. Mountain, 7 am
Clinical Oncology & Hematology Grand Rounds
“Management & Biology of Germ Cell Tumors,” George Boul, Herberman Conf. 2nd fl., 3 pm
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512 Alumni, 12:15-2 pm
HSLS Workshop
“PowerPoint for Beginners & Advanced PowerPoint,” Sam Lewis, Falk Library classes. 2, 10 am-2 pm
Molecular Biophysics/Structural Biology Seminar
“Helices Interwoven: A Two-Part Story,” Andrew VanDenberg & Dr. D. Rees, Falk Library Seminar. 2, 11 am-1 pm
EOH Seminar
“Advancing a Mouse Model Toward Understanding Acute Lung Injury Survival,” Daniel Provost, 140 Bridge Studio Point, noon
Endocrine Research Conference
“West/Hedgehog Signaling in Pancreas Development & Disease: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly,” Matthias Hebrok, 1195 Alumni, noon
FRIDAY 20
SBDC Workshop
“The 2nd Stage: Developing a Business Plan,” Mervis, 7, 7:30-9 am

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

University of Pittsburgh

Designed for clinicians, lawyers, and students of the humanities and social sciences, this interdisciplinary program emphasizes the philosophical foundation of bioethics and offers opportunities for clinical experience and in-depth research. This program of the Center for Bioethics and Health Law and the School of Arts and Sciences allows students to combine study in ethical theory, philosophy and history of medicine, culture studies, health law, public law and social sciences.

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Friday 20

• No classes through Nov. 29 due to Thanksgiving recess for students.

Orthopaedic Surgery Grand Rounds
Antonio Chen, LHJS aud. 7th fl. Montefiore, 7 am

Tuesday 24

GI Fellows Lecture
“Journal Club: Case-Controlled Studies,” Kofi Clarke; M2 conf. rm. Presby, 7:30 am

Basic & Translational Research Seminar
“Characterization of Viral & Human RNAs Smaller than Canonical Micro-RNAs,” Bino John; Cooper Conf. Ctr. classroom. D, noon

Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar
“Epoxyenosamidomucin Signaling in Ileocolic Inflammation,” Nahel Alkayed; 456 Salk, noon

Health Services Research Seminar
“The Best Practice: An Intervention to Promote Evidence-Based Prescribing at a Large Psychiatric Hospital,” Frank Ghinassi; 305 Parkvale, noon

Faculty Assembly Mtg.
2700 Posvar, 1st fl.

Provost’s Inaugural Lecture
“Clinical Trials: Arocare Healthcare What O’s and D’s are,” Randy Juhl, pharmacy; FFA aud., 4:30 pm

Women’s Basketball
V. St. Francis, Petersen, 7 pm

Wednesday 25

Calendrical Sciences Seminar
“Bridging the Gap: Tips for Treating a Patient With Autism,” Karen Raposa; 2148 Salk, 9 am

GI Research Rounds
“Rectal Microbes for HIV Prevention: Next Update,” Ian McGowan, M2 conf. rm. Presby, noon

Medical Ed Grand Rounds
“Making a Diagnosis: New Models for Old,” Patrick Croshery, Daly U, Scaife Healthlecture rm. 3, noon (8-9000)

Film Studies Lecture
Yuri Skryer; 501 CL, noon

East Asian Colloquium
“Traucy, or Thought From the Provinces: Reading Inzaghi’s Platform,” Yuan Peng; 410 Posvar, noon (4-5568)

History/German/Philosophy Lecture
“Because It Was He, Because It Was I: The Good of Friendship,” Alexander Nehamas, Princeton; 324 CL, 1 pm

Comprehensive Science Workshop
“Francis Crick: Hunger of Life’s Secrets,” Brian Skrip; 4130 Posvar, 1-3 pm (registration: pitcrw@pitt.edu)

Women’s Basketball
V. St. Francis, Petersen, 7 pm

Saturday 21

CGS Town Hall Mtg.
McCrl Ctr. 4th fl. CH, noon, 1-3 pm

Latin American Studies Music Performance
“The Americas in Concert,” Octavio Brunetti Quintet; FFA aud., 7:30 pm (8-7194)

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CALENDAR
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PhD Defenses

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University Times classifieds.

NOVEMBER 12, 2009

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Details</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epidemiology Seminar</strong>&lt;br&gt;“An Update on a Syndemics Approach to HIV Prevention Among Gay Men,” Ron Stall, A115 Crabtree, 3-30 pm</td>
<td>Tuesday, November 10</td>
<td>WPU Kuczma Rm., noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness Workshop</strong>&lt;br&gt;“The Whole Body &amp; Healthfulness of Holiday Eating,” Rita Makkouk, WPU Kuczma Rm.</td>
<td>Thursday, November 12</td>
<td>noon</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Anthropology Lecture</strong>&lt;br&gt;“An Anthropological Perspective on the Emergence in Afghanistan, Religious &amp; Cultural Dimensions,” Ted Callahan, Boston U; 1:10 pm</td>
<td>Friday, November 13</td>
<td>1-10 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Career Development Postdoc Workshop</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Publishing Your CV &amp; Resume: Being Prepared for the Job Market,” Robert Milner; S123 Starld BST, 1-5 pm</td>
<td>Thursday, November 19</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Biosatistics Seminar</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Improving Data Quality &amp; Statistical Analyses With the Development of Prospective Patient Registries,” Laura Casal, Medical College of WI, A115 Crabtree, 3-30 pm</td>
<td>Friday, November 20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SRDC Workshop</strong>&lt;br&gt;“The 1st Step: Mechanics of Starting a Small Business,” Mervis, 7-10 am and 8-1542</td>
<td>Monday, November 23</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Endocrine Conference</strong>&lt;br&gt;“New &amp; Novel Therapies for Osteoporosis,” Chad Deal; 4:18 pm</td>
<td>Tuesday, November 24</td>
<td>8:30 am-1:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global Campus Lecture</strong>&lt;br&gt;“ABCs of Green Building,” Jenny Leach; 2-7 pm</td>
<td>Wednesday, November 25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SRDC Workshop</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Careers Over Lunch”; S100 Madden; noon</td>
<td>Thursday, November 26</td>
<td>12:30-2 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global Campus Lecture</strong>&lt;br&gt;“Marketing: Basics of Holiday Eating,” Rita Makkouk; 1195 WPU Kurtzman Rm., noon</td>
<td>Friday, November 27</td>
<td>6 pm (4-2918)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SRDC Workshop</strong>&lt;br&gt;“The Genetic Basis of Sudden Adult Death Syndrome,” Xiuying Zou, East Asian Studies Lecture</td>
<td>Tuesday, November 30</td>
<td>412/624-4579, by campus mail to: 308 Bellefield Hall. We cannot guarantee publication of events received after the deadline.</td>
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</tbody>
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