Chancellor search
UPDATE
Board of Trustees chairperson Stephen R. Titch says the search for a new chancellor is on target to identify a successor before Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg steps down Aug. 1.
Titch, who heads the search committee, stated in a Jan. 6 University Update that the committee has a "very strong pool of candidates." Citing confidentiality, he offered no details on the individuals or the number of candidates, other than to say they "come from all over the world."
Search firm Storbeck/Pimentel and Associates is assisting the committee.
Titch’s update is posted at www.pitt.edu/chancellor-search.
— Kimberly K. Barlow

Econ lecturers form winning advising team

Women’s studies Program changing as focus expands

A
fter two years of contentious debate, the 41-year-old women’s studies program is about to gain a new name, its first male program head and the addition of courses signaling fresh directions.

The new name, the gender, sexuality and women’s studies program, has passed successfully through three committees, received a letter of support from Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Dean N. John Cooper and awaits the provost’s approval.

Says Irene Frienze, one of the program’s three original faculty and a psychology faculty member: “Many of us, including me, were really upset about the changes” being debated for the program name. Early suggestions included dropping “women’s studies” from the name, substituting “feminist studies,” adding “gender studies” and “sexuality studies.”

“Because some of us, especially the old-timers like me, angered so strongly” at the prospect of dropping “women’s studies” from the program name, Frienze says, there was a compromise to keep the long-used term.

But Frienze acknowledges that, because women’s studies has become well established in its 41 years at Pitt and across the nation, it has “become a well-integrated area within the humanities … so people have expanded their focus” from women’s studies to include examinations of gay and lesbian issues, and more recently the subjects of masculinity and transgender people.

By all accounts, once the new head, Todd Reesor — a faculty member in French and Italian languages and literatures — met with the program’s steering committee, they were convinced he was a suitable choice. In fact, he received their unanimous endorsement.

F
or economics department lecturers Jane Wallace and Kathryn Wolfe, being advised by more than 500 economics majors can feel like being the students’ parents at some of the toughest moments in life — and some of the best.

“There are 500 students who come to us when they don’t know what to do,” says Wolfe.

Wolfe encourages the students to ask as many of them as we can,” says Wallace.

Their job is to connect their charges with the right Pitt opportunities, and the best graduate schools and career paths after Pitt.

“I never thought I’d have a job like this, an interpersonal connection job,” Wolfe says.

The two veteran advisers in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences must be doing a good job as surrogate parents. They recently won the 2014ampo-Pittsburgh Prize for Excellence in Advising.

The $4,000 prize recognizes their work with the department’s 500+ majors across the past decade. The pair have received high marks from their own students, rating 4.7 out of 5 on the department’s internal survey, and ranking 2nd for satisfaction among economics students at 15 universities surveyed as part of the Student Experience at the Research University, a nationwide project.

Economics chair Jean-François Richard and associate chair for undergraduate studies Shirley Casing, in nominating both advisers for the award, wrote that, “They treat our students with much personal attention, utmost respect, considerable patience and compassion in dealing with tough situations … All in all, they are exceptionally dedicated, competent and truly outstanding advisers.”

Wallace began teaching at Pitt in 2001 and has been advising since the beginning. Wolfe began teaching in 2002 and started advising students the next year.

At the very least, each student must come to them for advice on class scheduling.

“The track is not very clear in economics,” says Wallace. After graduating, their advisees may teach high school, seek a government position, become a fashion merchandising planner or work as a data analyst for the CIA.

“We help them with their exploring,” says Wolfe, “connecting them to ways to get experience and explore their field. Pitt has so much to offer that one of our jobs is to know all the things that Pitt has out there. There are all these other things they can do to expand their degrees and explore their horizons,” such as training for internships, connecting with experienced alumni, applying for scholarships or other opportunities.

Of course, some students need more traditional help, including hints about how to develop core skills such as discipline. Sometimes, she says, helping certain students is simply a matter of telling them: “Let me make this clear — the reason you’re not doing well is. I hear you are not going to class.”

She credits the quality of the department’s faculty for easing the pair’s advising tasks: “We never get the students who come in to complain, ‘Why do I have to do this?'”

The two advisers pride themselves on being available every day to students, even though they teach multiple classes. Wallace teaches introductory courses in health economics and micro-economics, while Wolfe teaches game theory, public policy economics, economics in the media and a new course this spring on the digital economy. They will teach for the first time this semester as well, taking Intro to Econ for econ majors. They also supervise more than a dozen internships each.

Recalls Wolfe: “We were students many years ago. We remember — ‘what it’s like when your adviser is only available two hours...

Cont. on page 10
Debunking common assumptions about teaching

“Students have said they want more interaction in class, but there is just too much content to be covered!”

“Many of my students come to class unprepared; they haven’t done any of the readings I assigned.”

“Students complain that they don’t understand how I evaluate their papers.”

“Invite students to partici- pate in class discussion, but it’s the same three students who volunteer in each class!”

If you are a faculty member, you probably have experienced some of these classroom frustrations. While you’re qualified as an expert in your field of study, chances are you have had little formal preparation for teaching, and you may discover that your knowledge of teaching often doesn’t correlate with student learning.

The teaching consultants at the Center for Instructional Devel- opment and Distance Education (CIDDE) find that many faculty members share the same incorrect assumptions about teaching. This first University Times column about teaching debunks several of these assumptions and suggests ways for enhancing the teaching and learning experiences in your classes.

Assumption No. 1: I need to cover all of the content or stu- dents will not learn it.

You love your field and want to share as much information with students as you can fit into a semester. However, when you try to cover too much content, there is no guarantee that lasting learning will occur. Covering a lot of content can result in students missing the main ideas, trying to memorize everything and rec- all little after the test. Instead of trying to cover a wide breadth of information, try to focus on a few key ideas. By asking “What three or four main concepts do I want students to remember?” you might identify the specific skills associated with those con- cepts. Examples of skills could be producing a concept in your own words” or “produce examples of the concept.” With this strategy, the breadth of information is sacrificed for deeper learning and better recall.

Assumption No. 2: Students should do all of the readings assigned.

You want to expose your students to as many ideas as possible and regularly assign sec- tions from the textbooks as well as supplementary articles. When deciding what readings to assign, first decide how the materials will contribute to learning.

Explain to students how the readings will add to their under- standing.

Ask students to study questions that ask students to summarize the content or explain ideas in their own words.

• Ask students to suggest dis- cussion questions for class.
• Assign only readings that will support the skills you are focusing on and that the readings should be added as optional.
• Ask students to complete “difficulty statements” about the readings and to post them in CourseWeb and respond to one another.
• Have students write a brief summary and personal response for the assignment.

Assumption No. 3: Students should know what I expect in an assignment.

As faculty, we tend to overlook the fact that bite-sized assignments take on different courses in different disciplines, and each course has different expectations. Students cannot anticipate what is required for each course. For example, one instructor may stress technical writing. Another instructor expects students to prepare an argument prior to class discussion. Style manuals also vary between disciplines, you may want to tell students which style you expect.

When developing an assign- ment, begin by explaining the purpose for the assignment and how it fits into the overall course.
• Be specific. Tell students what you want them to demonstrate.
• Evaluate the merits of ….
• Compare and contrast the events of ….
• Identify a research question and prepare a literature review.

Assumption No. 4: If I invite students to ask and answer questions, everyone in the class should participate.

Many students feel threatened by the idea of speaking in class, especially when “cold-called.”

Perhaps some people ignore any mention of FISMA as just one more red tape to add to their academic work. But Pitt researchers cannot ignore FISMA and its effects on research and academic shorthand. While FISMA language can be a challenge, some researchers may have concerns about the Pitt FISMA environment for their projects.

On the customary side, com- pliance with FISMA is a must for research involving federal mon-ies. Failure to meet FISMA compliance requirements after an audit, for example, could lead to contract termination and revocation of funds (best case scenario) or criminal penalties (worst case scenario).

While CSSD has prepared a secure environment for hosting research projects that need FISMA infrastructure, researchers, educators and project managers are already responsible for their projects’ compliance with the federal law. Pitt’s FISMA environment should comply with FISMA requirements. This may not be as easy as it sounds.

Pitt FISMA environment

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The NOC provides the space, secure networks, data storage and other IT services. This environment provides the policies, procedures and administrative support that are required in the FISMA certification process.

Because this has been done — by CSSD, as a centralized University service — individual researchers or research groups do not have to invest their own time, energy and capital into the process. Researchers now can concentrate on the research, while CSSD and the NOC handle the FISMA environment.

All data in the Pitt FISMA environment is encrypted, and the entire environment is monitored and maintained by the NOC. The FISMA environment provides the policies, procedures and administrative support that are required in the FISMA certification process.

The NOC, with CSSD support, certifies that project data is protected from unauthorized access and provides the policies, procedures and administrative support that are required in the FISMA certification process. This means that researchers don’t have to worry about working with FISMA sensitive data.

FISMA and you

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Today, many long-time and newer faculty members alike see the appointment of Reeser, and the program's expanded focus, as part of a natural evolution in women's studies here and elsewhere in academia.

English faculty member Marianna Neve, who helped form the women's studies teaching committee in the mid-1970s and has been a member ever since, says, "I thought it was really important that we change the name and that we recognize the important changes," such as expanding the subjects of research by program faculty. Before the advent of women's studies programs here and across the nation, she notes, "Scholarship used to look at the experience of men and assume this was human experience." More recently, women's studies programs have been opening to research about gender and sexuality.

Having a male program head, she adds, "really emphasizes that we are really taking the experience and what we're doing is not just relevant to women.

"We certainly don't want to lose people who have always been interested in the fact that the program focuses on women's experience," she adds. However, the expansion of the program's emphases will give its faculty the chance to create new courses "that make the program unique and how more issues are relevant to them."

"Frayda Cohen, a program lecturer and her undergraduate adviser. "Part of what makes a women's studies program really special, even more than other departments, like anthropology, is that it's more comprehensive. That is very multi-disciplinary." Cohen has been teaching in the program for seven years, on sex, race, popular culture and on gender and the politics of food. She found the two-year internal deliberation about the changes to be "a long, really thoughtful process," which examined what other university women's studies programs are doing as well. The recommendation from the committee, she says, "has been a long time coming. For anybody who has been involved in a program like the women's studies program … to just focus on women as social groups is fairly narrow. Thinking of masculinity as socially constructed is an equally important idea."

Reeser has a number of goals for the program, including his top goal of creating a gender, sexuality and women's studies major. He and program faculty are in the process of creating required courses and plan to send their proposal to the dean's office this spring.

He also hopes "to continue to create an interdisciplinary research profile that reflects the various wings of gender and sexuality [and] highlights research in gender and sexuality that is going on at Pitt, by faculty, by grad students and by undergraduates."

"The program already has begun this effort by bringing in scholars from other schools, and faculty are discussing the creation of an interdisciplinary conference, Reeser says. A program-wide theme for this school year, gender and the Global, is being reflected in lectures, reading groups, research and course content, while next year's theme, Embodiment, Experience, Representation, Politics, will "emphasize the program focus on the manner in which different kinds of bodies are represented in literature, politics and elsewhere."

"We don't talk as much as we say," he says of the two-year debate about the current changes. "Not everyone agrees perfectly with the name, of course, but everyone I've talked to agrees that it's good for the program and good for Pitt to have a name that represents a new period of teaching gender, sexuality and women's studies."

—Ted Reeser

SAC wants analysis of staff salaries

Technology Corner

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sean Sweeney is the University's information security officer.

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According to Ron Frisch, associate vice chancellor for human resources, following SAC's previous meeting, Golwell said, and were shown confidential data about staff raises. "Staff did well," Golwell said, receiving fairly distributed raises during the University's annual salary adjustment—-a salary-increase pool of 2.5 percent, divided as 1.5 percent for salary maintenance for employees earning less than $12,000, 1.0 percent for merit and other units-level adjustments.

He also noted that his call for data from SAC members about raises in individual departments did not result in "a good response back … and I can certainly say that what the University said they were going to do by the raises … they did."

Colwell still pressed for the administration to undertake the same analysis of staff salaries that it performs for faculty salaries, comparing them to salaries at similar institutions.

Kathryn Trent, manager of grounds services, suggested that a gender gap in wages likely exists among staff salaries as it does among faculty salaries. "I'd like to see that addressed," she said.

The matter was referred to the health, safety, IT and transportation committee.

In other SAC news:

• Monika Losagio, vice president of finance, reported she received the recipients of the awards from the SAC Book Fund, which pays for textbooks for undergraduate students who are children of staff members.

• CBI, among 24 applicants, were recipients Rosalie Clements, daughter of Daniel Clements, of Computing and Information Services (CSSD), Alyssa Janosko, daughter of Yvonne Janosko of continuing education in the School of Nursing; Jenna Zaldonis, daughter of Diana Zaldonis of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery in the School of Medicine; Domenick Urban, daughter of Zsolt Urban of the Department of Human Genetics in the Graduate School of Public Health, and Kylee Cowa- lski, daughter of Paul Gowalski of the Department of Urban and Environmental Studies.

"It came as no surprise to us that the level of applications was so high," Losagio said. "It's our hope that we can continue and grow the SAC Book Fund so that we can continue to give more awards each year."

• Andrew Stein, chair of external relations, announced that his committee already was planning an "orientation day for new Pitt employees Day and would be soliciting sug- gestions for activities to retain and thrive in that cohort."

• SAC's next brown bag lunch presentation dates and subjects were announced: Jan. 23, Family Medical Leave Act and short- and long-term disability, Feb. 20, flexible spending, and April 17, medical benefits. All will take place this spring in the ballroom of the William Pitt Union.

• Samantha Stephens, SAC also commended her post because she is taking on a new job at Pitt: human resources and benefits coordinator in athletics.

—Marty Levine

JANUARY 9, 2014
A clinical dictionary goes world wide

Clinical dictionary goes world wide

Dr. Mathew Rosenblum, a member of the Department of Music, the QSU staff, and the Word of the Week for the week of December 16, 2013. Visit www.wqxr.org/#!/story/music-mathew-rosenblum/.

Lisa Fiorentino, faculty member in nursing, has been named an Institute of Electrical and Computer Engineering (IEEE) fellow in recognition of her contributions to the analysis of electric power distribution systems and lightning protection, which have led to greater integration of renewable energy sources and to more reliable operation of the electrical grid.

The IEEE board of directors confers fellow status—its highest honor—on individuals with an outstanding record of accomplishments in any of the IEEE fields of interest.

The total number selected in any one year cannot exceed 0.1 percent of the total voting membership.

McDermott's technical accomplishments include the development of widely used software tools for engineering design, contributions to the national standard for renewable energy integration, contributions to international standards in smart grid interoperability, and application guides for lightning protection of electric power lines.

McDermott recently joined Pitt's full-time tenure-track faculty in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering. He earned bachelor’s degrees and master’s degrees in electrical engineering from the Swanson School of Engineering and a PhD in electrical engineering from Virginia Tech. He’s also a licensed professional engineer in Pennsylvania.

He has received the IEEE Power and Energy Society Pittsburgh Chapter Outstanding Young Engineer award.

In addition to serving in several roles with IEEE, he also contributes to Cigre, the International Council of Large Electric Systems based in Paris.

Sommer Elliott-Disque has been named assistant dean of student development and student at Pitt-Timnick. She most recently was assistant director of Admissions at Venango Training and Development Center.

Elliott-Disque earned her undergraduate degree in psychology at Pitt-Timnick and her master's degree in mental health counseling at Widener University. She served an internship in the Pitt-Timnick counseling center 2012-13.

She is a member of Chi Sigma Iota, the Counseling Association and the American Mental Health Counseling Association.

Mathematics faculty member Michael Budny has won the Leslie Fox Prize in numerical analysis with the talk, “Conforming and non-conforming Elements on General Triangular Domains.” His talk was based on his paper, co-authored with Johnny Guzman of Brown University, which appeared in the journal Mathematics of Computations.

The biennial Fox prize, awarded by the Mathematics of Computation, is open to mathematicians under age 31, was established in 1985 by the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications in mathemat- ematician Leslie Fox (1918-92). A competition committee of established researchers reviews and invites shortlisted candidates to give lectures at the conference, then selects the award winners. This year the meeting awards first and second prizes based on “mathematical and algo- rithmic content in conjunction with plenary presentation skills.”

David Swigon has become graduate student director in the Department of Mathematics, succeeding Daniel Budny, who stepped down after serving for four years in the position.

Pat Markham is the math department's new graduate stu- dent administrator. Markham, a graduate of Chatham University, also has more than 20 years of work experience at Chatham, most recently as nursing program coordinator.

Pitt-Bradford has named two new ex-officio members to its advisory board and reappointed two others. Two faculty mem- bers serve on the advisory board because of the offices they hold. Newly appointed ex-officio members are Maryann Ander- son, superintendent of Kane School District; and L. Orris, executive director of the Bradford Area Chamber of Commerce.

Orris also is chairman of the board for Futures Rehabilita- tion Center in Bradford and the Bradford Water Authority and controller for the City of Bradford.


Larry E. Davis, dean of the School of Engineering and the Center of Race and Social Problems, will be inducting inductees into the National Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare Jan. 18.

The academy is an honorary society of distinguished scholars and practitioners dedicated to achieving excellence in the field of social work and social welfare through high-impact work that advances social work and social welfare.

Davis has been committed to social work research and scholar- ship for most of his career. He came to the University in 2001 from Washington University in St. Louis, where he had been a faculty member since 1977.

He has written, edited or co-authored five books and is the founder and chairman of the editorial board of the journal Race and Social Problems.

Davis also is the founder and leader of REAP, a consortium of race, ethnicity and culture organizations across the United States.

New York public radio sta- tion WQXR named the Boston Modern Orchestra Project album, “MiloLoop,” composed by associate professor of civil and environmental engineering and academic director of Pitt's fresh- man engineering program.

He earned his BS in civil engi- neering from the University of California, Berkeley and his MS in mechanical and aerospace engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he continued his studies in thermal design and thermal management.

His research and educational efforts focus on solid oxide fuel cells, solar thermal to electrical conversion and advanced materials.

Based in Beijing, China, these efforts are part of a broader program on the development of clean energy technologies at Pitt.
Bruce Hall renovations

The committee approved preliminary project development

Advisers form winning team

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a week,” Wallace finishes. “I think the best thing about our partnership...”

“—or walk them to the counseling center,” Wolfe adds. “It’s not just to give them an idea to try...”

You’re a general advising, such as career events or scholarship announcements, the pair maintains a Facebook page and of course answers student emails. 11,500 a year by last count. Links gained often foster alumni success stories, giving current students visible paths toward specific careers.

“We like the students, that’s the crux of it,” says Wallace. “And we like watching them succeed.”

“The same way that you’re proud of your own achievements...”

“The new lease will begin Jan. 1, 2015, with initial annual rent of $277,091.25 or $23.75 per square foot.” —Kimberly K. Barlow

University of Pittsburgh

JANUARY 9, 2014

Pitt's Board of Trustees meet Dec. 12

The committee approved a 10-year lease of 11,667 square feet of office and lab space at Rivertech Works to house the Department of Sports Medicine and Nutrition.

The department currently leases 7,790 square feet in two separate buildings at the Rivertech complex. The move will enable the department to expand into a single space in Building 7, located on South Water Street in the South Side.

Among the research programs housed in the Rivertech space are the Neuromuscular Research Laboratory (NMRL), which focuses on injury mitigation and performance optimization needs of the military’s special operations forces, and the Warrior Human Performance Laboratory (WHPL), which studies the human body’s physiological response to and recovery from various forms of physical stress.

According to trustees documents, the department has received research funding from the Office of Naval Research, the U.S. Army Medical Research and Material Command and the Air Force Surgeon General/Air Force Material Command since 2007. It currently is funded in excess of $44.21 million through fiscal year 2018, with additional growth expected.

The new lease will begin Jan. 1, 2015, with initial annual rent of $277,091.25 or $23.75 per square foot.

—Kimberly K. Barlow

Bruce Hall renovation approved

I n a Dec. 12 meeting of its property and facilities committee, Pitt’s Board of Trustees approved renovations to Bruce Hall housing and okayed a 10-year lease at the Rivertech Office Works to house the Department of Sports Medicine and Nutrition.

Bruce Hall, which houses 198 undergraduates, was built in 1923. According to project documents, the building has outdated bathroom fixtures and creation of handicapped-accessible bathrooms, replacement of obsolete air handling units, upgraded door security hardware, new flooring and paint.

The project will be funded through auxiliary reserves.

The committee is authorized to approve all University construction projects in excess of $2 million and to report its actions to the trustees budget committee for inclusion in the University’s operating and capital budgets.

Rivertech lease for SHRS

The committee also approved a 10-year lease of 11,667 square feet of office and lab space at Rivertech Office Works to house the Department of Sports Medicine and Nutrition.

The department currently leases 7,790 square feet in two separate buildings at the Rivertech complex. The move will enable the department to expand into a single space in Building 7, located on South Water Street in the South Side.

The renovations project will upgrade Bruce Hall’s interior and infrastructure.

The project will upgrade 52,440 square feet of space as part of ongoing improvements to University housing. Renovations will include replacement of storm and sanitary piping infrastructure, the addition of airway pressurization for fire safety, replacement of bathroom fixtures and creation of handicapped-accessible bathrooms, replacement of obsolete air handling units, upgraded door security hardware, new flooring and paint.

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The committee is authorized to approve all University construction projects in excess of $2 million and to report its actions to the trustees budget committee for inclusion in the University’s operating and capital budgets.
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded a five-year grant of more than $1.5 million to Herbert J. Zeh III, surgery faculty member and chief of the Division of Gastrointestinal Surgical Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) for research on the effect of tumor cells use to avoid apoptosis, a form of programmed cell death.

“Tumor cells use to avoid apoptosis, a pathway called autophagy, a form of programmed cell death,” said Herbert J. Zeh III, surgery faculty member and chief of the Division of Gastrointestinal Surgical Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI). They are partnering with the Cancer Center to study a novel treatment for pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma (PDA), the most common form of pancreatic cancer.

PDA is the fourth-leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. The five-year survival of patients suffering from PDA is less than 5 percent.

The pair hypothesize that the cancer progresses and is difficult to treat because of a biological pathway called autophagy, a form of programmed cell survival that tumor cells use to avoid apoptosis, or cell death.

Another high-priority research area is to address the unmet need for new HIV prevention products. “The federal government has awarded nearly $80 million to Pitt HIV/AIDS researchers,” said Zeh.

The Microbicide Trials Network (MTN) has received $70 million in new funding from the NIH’s National Institutes of Health (NIH). The MTN will continue through 2021 to develop and test products that aim to reduce the spread of HIV. The virus that causes AIDS. The program, begun in 2006, is based at Pitt and Magee-Womens Research Institute (MWD). It has completed 13 trials since 2006, 11 more are in progress or will begin within the year, and several new studies will be designed and implemented during this new funding period.

The MTN is focused on developing products to address the unmet needs to address the HIV epidemic in young women, we currently are conducting a large phase III trial of a vaginal ring that women use for a month at a time. Moving forward, we are committed to developing products that could prevent both HIV and unwanted pregnancy, which would empower young women to take charge of their own reproductive health."

The2017U.S. News & World Report ranks Pitt’s medical school as No. 26 among research universities. The school received $526 million in external funding in 2015-16, including $1.5 million in National Institutes of Health grants. Pitt’s total external research funding for 2015-16 was $1.14 billion, compared to $1.02 billion in 2014-15.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

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The MTN is focused on developing products to address the unmet needs to address the HIV epidemic in young women, we currently are conducting a large phase III trial of a vaginal ring that women use for a month at a time. Moving forward, we are committed to developing products that could prevent both HIV and unwanted pregnancy, which would empower young women to take charge of their own reproductive health."

The2017U.S. News & World Report ranks Pitt’s medical school as No. 26 among research universities. The school received $526 million in external funding in 2015-16, including $1.5 million in National Institutes of Health grants. Pitt’s total external research funding for 2015-16 was $1.14 billion, compared to $1.02 billion in 2014-15.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded a five-year grant of more than $1.5 million to Herbert J. Zeh III, surgery faculty member and chief of the Division of Gastrointestinal Surgical Oncology at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) for research on the effect of tumor cells use to avoid apoptosis, a form of programmed cell death.

The pair hypothesize that the cancer progresses and is difficult to treat because of a biological pathway called autophagy, a form of programmed cell survival that tumor cells use to avoid apoptosis, or cell death.

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Possible pharmacological mechanisms for cocaine addiction

A study led by neuroscience professor Yan Dong in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences suggests that a method of biologically manipulating certain neurocircuits could lead to a pharmacological treatment that would weaken post-withdrawal cocaine cravings. The findings were published in Nature Neurosciences.

Dong’s team used rat models to examine the effects of cocaine addiction and withdrawal on synapses in the nucleus accumbens, a small region in the brain that is associated with reward, emotional motivation and addiction. Specifically, they investigated the roles of normally silent synapses and groups of nerve cells that relay signals.

When an individual uses cocaine, some immature synapses are generated, which are called silent synapses because they send few signals under normal physiological conditions. After that individual quits using cocaine, these silent synapses go through a maturation phase and acquire the ability to send signals. Once they become active, these synapses will send craving signals for cocaine if the individual is exposed to cues that previously signaled use of the drug.

The researchers hypothesized that if they could reverse the maturation of the synapses, the synapses would remain silent, thus rendering them unable to send craving signals. They examined a chemical receptor known as the 

When the virus binds with the microRNA in certain cells involved in triggering an immune response in a human, it restricts its own replication. This allows the virus to evade an immune response because the viral replication in these cells is what normally tips off the host immune system and induce it to mount an attack to rid the body of the virus.

Meanwhile, the virus is able to replicate and spread undetected in the cells of the host’s neurological system and cause overwhelming disease.

EEEV causes inflammation of the brain that begins with the sudden onset of headache, high fever, chills and vomiting and can quickly progress to disorientation, seizures and coma.

There is no treatment for the disease, but it is rare, with about 50 cases reported in the U.S. annually according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It has a 30-70 percent fatality rate, the highest of any North American mosquito-borne virus, with significant brain damage in many survivors.

It does not transmit easily to humans, and the mosquito species that typically carries it usually is found in swampy areas that aren’t highly populated, though it has been found in more common mosquitoes, spurring pesticide spraying, curfews and outdoor event cancellations in recent years in states such as Massachusetts, where EEEV is more frequently found.

In the laboratory, Klimstra and his colleagues created a mutant version of EEEV without the microRNA binding site, which allowed them to discover that the binding site is key to the virus evading detection. When this manufactured mutant version was tested in the laboratory, the researchers found that the host’s immune system was able to mount an effective response to the mutant virus. Klimstra added that the studies mostly were done in the Regional Biocонтamination Laboratory at Pitt, a unique, high-security facility constructed with Pitt and NIH funds.

"Viruses are constantly evolving and changing," said Klimstra. "However, the genetic sequence that allows EEEV to bind to our microRNA has persisted. We find it in samples from the 1950s, which indicates tremendous evolution over the years. It’s a huge threat."

Ultimately, these results suggest that the mutant virus could be used as an EEEV vaccine.

Possible pharmacological mechanisms for cocaine addiction

A mosquito-borne virus that kills about half of the people it infects uses a previously undocumented mechanism to "hijack" one of the cellular regulatory processes of its host to suppress immunity, researchers from the Center for Vaccine Research (CVR) found.

The discovery, which will be published in Nature and was funded by NIH, could help the development of vaccines and treatments for eastern equine encephalitis virus (EEEV), a deadly disease that is found primarily in the Atlantic and Gulf coastal regions in the U.S. It also may be helpful in efforts to inhibit other diseases, such as West Nile virus, dengue, rhinovirus and SARS.

Said senior author William Klimstra, microbiology and molecular genetics faculty member and director of the CVR. "Anytime you understand how a virus causes a disease, you can find ways to interrupt that process. And this discovery is particularly exciting because it is the first time that anyone has shown a virus using this particular strategy to evade its host's immune system and exacerbate disease progression."

EEEV carries ribonucleic acid (RNA) as its genetic mate-

The University Times Research Notes column on funding awarded to Pitt researchers and on findings arising from University research.

We welcome submissions from all areas of the University and invite information via email to: umes@pitt.edu; by fax to 412/624-4579 or by campus mail to 308 Bellefield Hall.

For submission guidelines visit: umes@pitt.edu/?page_id=6807.
vaccine and that microRNA blockers could have potential for use against certain cancers. "For EEEV-infected patients who currently can be treated only with supportive care," she said.

Co-authors on this research were Derek W. Trobaugh, Cristina F. Piñol, R. Sunil Venna and Kate D. Rymann of the CVR and microbiology and molecular genetics faculty from the University of Texas and the Weizmann Institute of Science.

**Lung lesions variants give hope for TB treatment.**

The lung lesions in an individual infected with tuberculosis (TB) are surprisingly variable and independent of each other, whether the patient has clinically active disease, according to a new animal study led by School of Medicine researchers. They found that a mouse model in which tuberculosis is caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis, the world's population is infected with TB, can point to new vaccines to prevent the hard-to-treat infection.

More than 30 percent of the world's population is infected with mycobacterium tuberculosis, the bacterium that causes TB, yet only 5–10 percent of those infected develop active pulmonary treatment with symptoms of coughing, chest pain, night sweats and weight loss. The remaining 90 percent are "latent," infections that are not contagious, but could become active under the wrong conditions.

When the lungs become infected with M. tuberculosis, the body's immune system calls the bacteria into battle, causing granulomas, clumps of infected immune cells that form in an area of the body. In the past, TB has been thought that the patient with active TB disease has a weakened immune system or that the patient has just been exposed to TB. But recent research suggests that even if a person has a strong immune system, some bacteria may still be able to persist.

The results of this study show for the first time the extent of bacterial replication within the lung of a mouse with TB and that bacterial replication continues for at least four weeks before the body's innate immune system kicks in to kill the invaders. If this response was sufficient to kill all the bacteria and sterilize some granulomas, but bacteria persisted in others and spread to create new granulomas, Flynn said. "You need only one granuloma to 'go bad' in order to get active TB."

Even when an animal had a severe active infection, some of their granulomas were sterile, which suggested that the innate immune system was capable of killing bacteria, the researchers found. "That's the only way we know that the immune response produced different results in different lesions," Flynn said. "And when we develop a deeper understanding of why the immune response produced different results in different lesions, we will be closer to harnessing the right mechanisms to develop effective treatments for TB.

The research team included team faculty members read for the University of North Carolina.

**NCP supports pharm prof**

"Pharmaceutical sciences fac-ulty member Song Li has received a grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to develop the "Combination Therapy for Breast Cancer.

"The goal of this five-year study is to develop a dual functional drug carrier that can achieve synergistic anti-tumor activity with codelivered anti-cancer agents to improve the treatment of breast cancer.

**Inoculation with pathogenic bacteria triggers the immune response in mice.**

The research team included team faculty members Robert A. Welch Foundation Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering, Steven R. Little and John H. Parkinson faculty member in chemistry; John M. Morrison, Alexander Star, L. Glimcher Associate Professor of Microbiology and Immunology; and Daniel T. Hewitt, M. Teresa Cole - Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine researchers were from Harvard Medical School and the School of Pharmacy, for her work in industrialization and Informal Caregiver A National Perspective."

**Synthetic, man-made cells and ultrathin electronics built from carbon nanotubes**

Synthetic, man-made cells and ultrathin electronics built from a new form of "zero-dimensional" carbon nanotube may be possible through research at the Swanson School of Engineering at the University of Pittsburgh, published in Angewandte Chemie.

Principal investigators are Swanson School of Engineering Fellow and chair of the Department of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering, Professor Amin Akbari of the Robert A. Welch Foundation Distinguished Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering.

Swanson School of Engineering Fellows, Department of Chemical Engineering, Assistant Professor R. Schink, Distinguished Robert R. v. Duff Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering.

The research team included figure's discovery, we can prepare the possibility to build ultrathin, superfast electronic devices, for solar cells, to make stronger and lighter self-repairing cars, and it could be possible to build strong and ultralight cars, bridges and airplanes.

One of the most difficult hurdles is processing the carbon nanotubes into smaller forms. However, previous research at Pitt has managed to cut the length of these nanotubes to the smallest dimensions ever to overcome this problem. We hope that the miniaturization of the atoms within nanotubes makes them particularly interesting materials because they are extremely small but work instantly. They can be made to be a highly soluble, making industrial processing difficult. One aspect of the current research is that we can use existing nanotubes to create new and therefore more usable carbon nanotubes. These shorter nanotubes have the same dimensions as many proteins that make the basic machinery of living cells, presenting the potential for use in cell- or protein-level biomedical imaging, proteins or the creation of vaccines, drug delivery vehicles or even components of spacecraft and jet engines.

The overall impact is a significant improvement in the treatment of breast cancer and a gain for cancer patients. This technology is expected to be useful in the construction of new and therefore more usable carbon nanotubes. These shorter nanotubes have the same dimensions as many proteins that make the basic machinery of living cells, presenting the potential for use in cell- or protein-level biomedical imaging, proteins or the creation of vaccines, drug delivery vehicles or even components of spacecraft and jet engines.

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Infectious disease specialist Monto Ho died Dec. 16, 2013, at UPMC Presbyterian of complications following a fall.

Ho, chair emeritus of the Graduate School of Public Health Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology and former chief of the School of Medicine Division of Infectious Disease, was 86.

Ho was internationally recognized for his research on smallpox vaccination and polio and was well known for his contributions to the understanding of cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection.

Charles Rinaldo, chair of the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology, noted Ho's extraordinary capacity to serve in three leadership positions concurrently: not only as a public health department chair, assistant dean of Medicine division chief, but also as medical director of the clinical microbiology labs at UPMC Presbyterian.

Ho’s leadership qualities included a firm but gentle handle on authority and a nurturing style. The statement that Ho’s unique experience gave him a broad-based perspective as a medical clinician and researcher. He had a broad vision of what needed to be done to address problems, Rinaldo said.

A native of China, Ho earned a bachelor's degree in pharmacy and government at Harvard in 1949 and graduated in 1954 from Harvard Medical School, where he studied under Nobel laureate John Enders.

While Ho's undergraduate education was not in medicine, it nevertheless aided his later work, Rinaldo noted. "This more diverse background helped him see the world more clearly, to see hypotheses and get answers."

Rinaldo characterized Ho as a clear thinker with a systems approach to research. "He stood even above other giants in that Rinaldo had a very serious approach to research. "He considered the foremost expert on the clinical pathogenesis of CMV infection, and wrote a book on the subject that was for many years the main source of information on CMV infection. After retirement in 1997, he initiated a national surveillance program of antibiotic resistance in Taiwan that led to a significant decrease in the use of antibiotics," Burke wrote.

Ho joined the Pitt faculty in 1959 as an assistant professor of epidemiology and microbiology and in 1962 received a joint appointment in the School of Medicine. There, in 1973, he became chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases and was named professor of medicine.

At the public health school, Ho was promoted to professor of microbiology in 1965 and was named chair of the epidemiology and microbiology department (now the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology) in 1969.

Rinaldo succeeded him as chair when Ho left the University in 1997 to direct the division of clinical research in Taiwan’s National Health Research Institutes. In addition to authoring many publications, Ho wrote a memoir in 2005. "Several Worlds. Reminiscences and Reflections of a Chinese-American Physician" described his life from childhood as the son of a Chinese diplomat in Taipei, to graduate career in Pittsburgh and Taiwan.

Ho had an easy smile and infectious laugh, Rinaldo said. "He had the same laugh at 85 that he must have had at age 10," he said. "One that grabs you and makes you feel good, too."

While Ho's demeanor was conservative, he appreciated a good joke, Rinaldo said, adding that Ho once surprised colleagues by appearing at the school’s Halloween party clad in full snorkeling gear “For the first time in a long time like that was memorable.”

While Ho’s life was devoted mainly to his own family, Rinaldo said he enjoyed world travel and was an avid tennis player.

His ongoing dedication to the department was further demonstrated in 2006 when Ho and his wife, Carol Tso Ho, a former librarian in the public health school’s provostial period (5 million dollars to endow the Monto and Carol Ho Chair in Infectious Diseases and Microbiology at the Robert Morris University, St. Lawrence University, and Jefferson College and Duquesne University.

—Kimberly K. Barlow

Monto Ho

EDUCATION BENEFITS

SAC seminar reviews details

A packed house for the Staff Association Council’s (SAC) fall seminar on Oct. 23 brought 80 people to the Open Forum Room in the Doherty Building to hear employment law expert, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Human Resources John Kozar and benefits specialist Jennifer Pavlincic outlined eligibility requirements and the extent of the education benefits for the 150 staff members in attendance; Kozar noted that faculty benefits are administered through a separate office, so he didn't address them specifically, although he allowed that they were “very similar.”

Full-time staff members receive the full education benefit, Kozar said. "It covers tuition for up to two full months into the semester, leaving Pitt can retain the benefit for one academic year, which is a portion of tuition for both undergraduate and graduate courses.

Benefits for dependent children attending other universities must fill out the form for education benefits. Those who are not eligible may appeal the decision. Newly hired personnel, said Pavlincic, must complete their first year of employment (at least six months of full-time employment) to receive education benefits. Those leaving Pitt may be eligible for a reduced rate on a pro-rated basis, depending on each staff member’s percentage of effort. Spouses and children of part-time staff members are not eligible for education benefits.

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**Endocrine Grand Rounds**

"OST & Type II DM: Current Evidence & Future Research.", Patrick Strollo & Eileen Chum-sen, 1195 BTR, 17:30 am (call 412-628-5880)

**CIDD Workshop**

"CourseWeb: Communication Tools," B26, 11am-3:30 am, "EI: Services Leading Effective Classroom Discussions," 11am, 1pm, "CourseWeb: Collaboration Tools," B26, 11am, 1pm; (register: www.cidd.pitt.edu/news/weekworkshops)

**Biomedical Informatics Lecture**


**Psychiatry Lecture**

"Understanding Intimate Partner Violence on Women: Consequences, Processes for Behavioral Change & How Health Providers Can Help," Judy Chang, medicine, WPIC, aud., 3 pm

**Sc’s Research Seminar**

"Targeted Therapies for KRAS Mutant Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer," Timothy Burns, medicine; Scaife lect. rm, 6, noon

**Health Equity Discussion**

"Income Inequality in Health at All Ages: A Comparison of the United States & England," A215 Crabtree, 1pm (db476@pitt.edu)

**Greensburg Joan Chambers Lecture**

"PM Woodwind Project," Campus Chapel, UPCI, 7, 7 pm

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**Monday 15**

**Hematology & Oncology Grand Rounds**

"ASH, ASTRO & San Antonio Breast Conference Presentations;" Brant Gill, Peyman Kabo-rookh, Rohitas Mehla & Attila Soran, Herberman Conf. Ctr. aud. 3, 11am (millerc5@upmc.edu)

**HSLS Workshop**

"Painless PubMed," Jill Foust, Falk Library classrm. 1, noon (ge@pitt.edu)

**Artful Wednesdays Performances**

"Bastard Bearded Irishmen;" Nordy’s, WPU, noon (pittarts@mail.pitt.edu)

**Philosophy Seminar**

"Implications of the Recent Advances on Molecular Pathology of Lung Cancer for Risk Assessment, Diagnosis & Treat-ment;" Ignacio Wistuba; 1104 Alumni, 2 pm

**Office of Academic Career Development Workshop**

"Postdoc to Professor," Sergio Cortezza, geology & planetary science, 5123 B, 10 am

**HSLS Workshop**

"Locating Gene/Protein Information 2: Databases;" Ansuman Chatterjee, Falk Library classrm. 2, 1-2 pm (scottdl@upmc.edu)

**CIDD Workshop**

"TA Services: Cheating & Plagiarism;" 11am, 2 pm (register: www.cidd.pitt.edu/news/workshops)

**UHC/Law & Public Policy American Empire Conference Forum**

"The Price of Justice," Laurence author, ACU Ballrm. B, 7:30 pm (www.thomasburnhof@pitt.edu)

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**Bowling Tournaments**

The Pitt bowling league will begin the second half of its season Jan. 21. The league is open to Pitt staff, faculty, graduate students, retirees and UPMC employees. New members are welcome, no experience or skill is needed. League bowling takes place 5:30-7:30 pm on Tuesdays through April at the Pittsburgh Athletic Association (PAA). The weekly cost is $10. Bowlers pay only when they bowl.

For information, contact Howard Goodstein in budget and financing support (hgoodman@cfo.pitt.edu) or Dan McCue at the PAA (Dan.McCue@paaclub.org, 412/386-2075).

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**CLASSIFIED**

**MARKETS-ELDER LAW**

Wills, estate planning; trusts; nursing home/long term care; medicaid; probate; guardianship; PAA property & estate administration; real estate; assess-ment appeals; 3501 Fifth Ave., PPA, 412-249-9144. (michele@markets-elder-law.com) Free initial consultation. Fees quoted in advance.

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**SERVICES**

**UNIVERSITY TIMES publication schedule**

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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: utcal@pitt.edu, by FAX to: 412-624-4579, or by campus mail to: 308 Bellefield Hall. We cannot guarantee publication of events received after the deadline.
Continued from page 20

Geology & Planetary Science College of Arts & Sciences Andrew Newman, GA’Tech, 11 Thursday, 1-5 pm

Preventative Medicine “Some Reflections on Epidemiology, and Gupta, philosophy, 2:00 pm

Neural Basis of Cognitive Function “Teaching Science in Rats,” Pamela Reinagel, U of CA-San Diego, 12/8 Mellon, 4 pm (blop@ pitt.edu)

Women’s Basketball vs Notre Dame, 7:00 pm

Friday 17

• Spring term add/drop period ends.

Biomedical Informative Lecture “Pain Genetics: Pathway to Personalized Pain Management,” Inna Reilfe, anesthesiology-407A Baum, 11 am (tt188@pitt.edu)

Metabolic Disease “Addressing Diabetes Disparities on the South Side of Chicago: Engaging Students in Service & Scholarship,” Monica Perla; Scal 4th fl. lect. rm. 3, noon (www.pep.pitt.edu)

Bradford Campus Exhibit Opening Reception 50 & Beard”, KOA Gallery, Baldwin, UB, noon, UPRP, noon (register: www.cidde.pitt.edu/ news/workshops)

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Saturday 19

Women’s Basketball vs Syrsaco; Petersen, 2 pm

Monday 20

• University closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Tuesday 21

MMIR Seminar “Regulation of Proteasome Activity by Ubiquitin Chain Subterfuge,” and Laura Butler, academic advisory

Stitt earned a BS in rehabilitative services from Pitt in 2003 and has been school counseling from the University of Scranton in 2005, when she joined the Pitt-Bradford TRoG program at its inception. TRoG is a federally funded program that supports students who may have a difficult time succeeding in college, specifically those who are first-generation students, have a disability or meet income-eligibility guidelines. The TRoG program serves 160 students at Pitt-Bradford.

The program provides individual academic support through one-on-one guidance, leadership development, financial literacy education, career and graduate school planning assistance. During their time in the program, students take a series of one-credit courses that help them tackle subjects appropriate to their standing, such as making the transition to college and exploring majors.

The American Urological Association (AuA) named Timo- thy D. Averch, faculty member in urology and director of endo- urology at the School of Medicine, its 2014-15 Gallagher Health Policy Scholar.

Averch spent a year learning health policy through national conferences and meetings, AUA mentoring a one-weeklong seminar for surgeons.

Averch, who also is director of UPMC’s Kidney stone Research, earned a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from Penn and his medical degree at Pitt.

Chris F. Kemerer, David M. Rodenick, Professor of Informa- tion Systems at the Katz Gradu- 

ate School of Business, is among 50 leaders in the INFORMS Information Systems Society’s 2013 class of distinguished fellows.

The ESS is dedicated to the Observation Research as the transition occurs.

Recruitment for a new director for the Office of Research will begin early in 2014, Redfern said. Paggy Miller Dunklin is leaving the Office of University Communications Jan. 17 to become director of the budget and human resources in the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid. She has served as chief of staff managing the communications services division since 1997, serving most recently as director of operations and new business.

Kim’s Nov. 11 order dismissed the case “without prejudice,” U.S. District Judge Kim R. Gibson dismissed Johnston’s com- plaint, stating, “... there is no benefit to continuing this matter as

Lesbian Rights had agreed to represent him, contingent on finding counsel to help amend his complaint to Jan. 14, Johnston stated that the National Center for Lesbian Rights has agreed to represent him, contingent on finding counsel to help amend his complaint to Jan. 14, Johnston stated that the National Center for Lesbian Rights had agreed to represent him, contingent on finding counsel to help amend his complaint to Jan. 14.

On Nov. 7 requested extra time to secure counsel to help amend his complaint to Jan. 14.

Johnston, who is a female John, was banned from the campus in 2011 and later expelled for refusing to stop using men’s restroom and locker room facilities at UPJ.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Keith A. Pesto on Oct. 29 recommended the complaint be dismissed for failure to state a claim. Johnston on Nov. 7 requested extra time to secure counsel to help amend his complaint. In a Sept. 16 pro se claim, Seamus Johnston argued the University discriminated against him on the basis of sex.

A federal judge in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania dismissed a claim brought by a transgender woman who was apparently denied access to the campus of a Pennsylvania university in violation of Title IX.

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In 2013, did you:

Write a book?
Edit a journal?
Produce a play, CD or film?
Exhibit art?
Publish a musical composition?

Tell us about it!

Important guidelines:

- Furnish information on peer-reviewed books, journals, CDs, electronic publications, art exhibitions, films, plays or musical compositions written, edited or produced during 2013 only.
- Books must have a 2013 copyright.
- No journal articles, short stories, poems, book chapters or self-published works can be accepted.
- Submission deadline is Jan. 31.
- All fields of the submission form must be completed.
- Complete a separate electronic form for each submission.
- Questions? Contact 412/624-4644 or delraso@pitt.edu

Fast and easy submission form on the University Times website:

www.utimes.pitt.edu

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Jan. 31