Goals outlined in planning process

Strategic goals have been defined and working groups established as the University's strategic planning process moves forward.

In his June 19 report to the Board of Trustees, Chancellor Patrick Gallagher outlined five goals that will help frame the University’s direction over the next five years.

The administration has sought input from the University community over much of the past year to identify Pitt's strengths and areas for improvement and to define values and strategic priorities.

“We have solicited input from every part of the Pitt family that we can identify. We’ve heard from hundreds and thousands of voices in our planning efforts and we will continue to do this as we move forward,” the chancellor said.

“Building on the foundation of the strategic priorities that were established by this board, our mission and our planning framework, which we discussed at the last meeting (in March 5 University Times), we have now added strategic goals and supporting initiatives for those goals that will advance our vision of what this University can be,” the chancellor said.

“We will define our success by our progress toward these goals,” he said.

“Currently we have established working groups that have been tasked to create an implementation plan in the next several months. Over the next year, this implementation plan will be our roadmap for the work that we do and it will establish the metrics that we will use to measure our progress.”

Gallagher enumerated Pitt’s five strategic goals:

• We aspire to be a University that prepares students to live lives of impact through a holistic and individualized approach to learning that engages them inside and outside the classroom.

• We are going to be defined by our students’ success,” the chancellor said.

• We aspire to be a University that advances the frontiers of knowledge and makes a positive impact on the world by integrating the strengths across disciplines and focusing on areas of great societal need.

• We aspire to be a University that strengthens our communities, from the Pitt community to our region and the world around us, by expanding engagement, enrich.

• We aspire to be a University that strengthens our communities, from the Pitt community to our region and the world around us, by expanding engagement, enrich.

• We aspire to be a University that engages them inside and outside the classroom.

Peak days: Pitt dials down AC

Emailed “energy curtailment notices” have sparked some concerns on the Pittsburgh campus, but brownouts are not part of the plan for curtailing power usage on peak days, Facilities Management officials say.

Messages on June 12, 22 and 23 stated in part that Facilities Management would be “voluntarily curtailting electric consumption in most Pitt buildings” in response to a peak day notification from the University’s electricity supplier.

That means a 2-degree increase in some thermostat settings, said Dan Fisher, assistant vice chancellor for maintenance and operations.

The emailed curtailment announcements are new, but the University’s response to peak-day notices is not, Fisher said.

“We’ve been doing this for several years,” he said. A first-stage curtailment results in a 2-degree increase. A second-stage curtailment — which hasn’t been done in his memory, Fisher said — would raise indoor temperatures another 1 degree.

Most people on campus seem

Pitt budget on hold pending state action

The University’s budget for fiscal year 2016 — including salary pool and tuition rates — remains on hold pending agreement on a state general fund budget in Harrisburg.

Although funding for higher education is one area in which there’s more agreement now than under previous administrations, a lack of progress between the Republican-majority General Assembly and Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf on key issues, including state employee pension system reforms, liquor sales reforms and a Marcellus shale tax, has University leaders preparing for a wait, despite a June 30 state budget deadline.

Given the slow pace, “it’s likely to be protracted,” predicted Paul Sapowitz, vice chancellor for Community and Governmental Relations.

“The University’s budget is not finalized until Pitt’s state appropriation is announced. And the state appropriation isn’t set until there’s a state budget agreement.”

Because Pitt and its fellow state-related schools are not under complete state control, the bulk of their state funding support is provided through non-preferred appropriations. (Pitt’s medical school funding

Trustees seat 1st female chair

A saying is: “You go, girl!”

A dozen years after taking fellow board members to task over a dearth of female trustees, Catherine D. DeAngelis offered some enthusiastic encouragement to Pitt’s first female board chair.

“With all due respect and much admiration to Steve and all the other men who have served in this role throughout history at Pitt, it is so wonderful to finally have a woman chair. This is a giant step,” she said as Eva Tansky Blum took the gavel from outgoing chair Stephen R. Tricht at the June 19 Board of Trustees meeting.

DeAngelis, who was the first female editor-in-chief of the Journal of the American Medical Association, spoke up at the June 2003 board meeting to point out that there were no women among 17 newly elected members of the Pitt and UPMC boards’ executive committees. (See June 26, 2003, University Times.)

At the time, there were seven women among 50 Pitt trustees. Their numbers have grown only slightly, to about 20 percent.

Blum, former executive vice president and director of community affairs for PNC Bank and chair and president of the PNC Foundation, is among 10 women currently serving on Pitt’s board.

Blum earned a bachelor’s degree in political science here in 1970 and a JD from the law school in 1973.

A trustee since 2004, Blum co-chaired the University’s $2 billion capital campaign and in 2014 led the chancellor search committee. A past president of the Pitt Alumni Association, she was among the University’s 2015 distinguished alumni fellows.

“I have said many times that the education I received here changed my life. Opportunities opened up that I never knew were possible. From the day I received a full scholarship to Pitt’s law school, I knew I had a responsibility to help future students have those same possibilities,” she said.

“Every year we send thousands of young people into the world. We help expand their thinking and curiosity. And our dedicated and inspired professors...”
University times

University trustees seat 1st female chair

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

certainly provide them with an enormous amount of information and knowledge, and include them in cutting-edge research," she said. "We can teach them a little bit about life. The staff works hard to help them cope with being away from home for the first time, guiding them as they move into the residence halls and learn to get along with lots of other people. They watch these young students to see if they're where they are supposed to be and coping with the stress of exams and papers. ... What a responsibility we all have to make sure that Pitt will continue in the great tradition of educating our future students in such important ways," she said. "I'm honored to become chair and to work with all of you as we support Chancellor Gallagher and help propel Pitt to even greater heights. I cherish the history and legacy and heritage. I look forward to the future ... the challenge we will conquer, and the opportunities we will embrace." Following the meeting, Blum said the board's goals being developed will work, but will focus on aligning with the strategic plans presented by Chancellor Gallagher. Following the meeting, Blum said the board's goals being developed will work, but will focus on aligning with the strategic plans presented by Chancellor Gallagher. "The goals are set now. The implementation plans will be brought to the board when it meets in October, he said.

Pitt budget on hold

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

come through the Department of Human Services as part of the permanent capital budget. Non-preferred appropriation bills are voted on separately after a state general fund budget is passed. The bills require a two-thirds majority for approval.

The proposal that Pitt be included in the current Capital budget was: $34.38 million for the second phase of expansions of the Schener and Crabtree halls, which house the Graduate School of Public Health. This phase of renovations to Parran Hall, total $127,000 square feet of space. The remaining $3.1 million will be used on new offices, classrooms and conference spaces.

The implementation plans will be brought to the board when it meets in October, he said.

Board members elected

On recommendation of the board's governorship and nominating committee, which met June 17, the board approved the re-election of 11 members: Continuing their service will be board members G. Nicholas Beckwith III, chairman and chief executive officer; Arch Street Management LLC; Michael A. Byrson (A&S ’68), retired executive vice president; The Bank of New York Mellon Corp.; James P. Crevier (A&S ’63), retired executive vice president for Transfusion Medicine; Robert G. Lovett (A&S ’66), partner, DeJong and Partners LLP; Martha Hartle Munsch (A&S ’70), partner, Reed Smith Shaw andcarr LLC (GSPY ’79), executive managing director of Holliday Fenoglio Fowler LP; William E. Strickland Jr. (A&S ’70), president and chief executive officer, Manchester Biello Chemical Corp.; Edward J. Trisch (ENG ’71, BUS ’77G), retired executive vice president for Technology and Management and Carl S. Zacharias (A&S ’64), principal of Gateway Financ.

Former board members who were re-elected were Emil M. Spadafore Jr. (A&S ’71), partner in Thomas, Spadafore & Walker LLP, and A. David Tilstone, president of National Towing and Machining Association and ADT International Consulting. (

Kimberly K. Barlow

Pitt budget on hold

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PHYSICIAN-SCIENTISTS

What's the solution to the looming shortage?

Since the late 1970s, physician-scientists — scientists with medical degrees who are engaged in discovery-driven research — for clinical research — have been labeled a dying breed.

For almost every day since that time, various leaders have predicted their demise, and with greater and greater urgency," said Withka Kapoor, F All, Professor of Medicine, who spoke June 11 on "The Looming Shortage of Physician-Scientists and What Academic Medical Centers Can Do" and received a medal in recognition of his appointment as Distinguished Service Professor of Medicine (Aug. 29, 2015, University Times).

Kapoor is chief of the Division of General Internal Medicine and vice chair of the Department of Medicine. He holds secondary appointments in health policy and management and clinical and translational science.

He is director of the Institute for Clinical Research Education and of the Center for Research on Health Care and a co-director of the RAND-University of Pittsburgh Health Institute and of Pitt's Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI).

Kapoor came to Pitt as an assistant professor in 1979 after earning his MD degree at the Washington University School of Medicine and completing his internship and residency at the University of Miami. He earned a master's degree in epidemiology at Pitt in 1986.

He was promoted to associate professor here in 1985 and rose to full professor in 1994 and Falk Professor of Medicine in 1994.

Kapoor has also served as Pitt's physician-educator, which provided both the opportunity for teaching and for seeing patients. Observations from his clinical practice led him to research the evaluation and management of patients with syncope, or sudden loss of consciousness. His proposed evaluation strategies led to clinical guidelines that remain in use today.

He later led a large study on outcomes in patients with parasomnia. That research led to case recommendations that have been put into practice.

"When you get your first paper published in the journal of the American Medical Association, you get hooked on research," he quipped, adding that when he became division chief, one of his major interests focused on developing research faculty, "particularly physician-investigators.

"Physician-scientists are very important in academic medicine," said Kapoor, noting that they are well represented at Nobel laureates. Last year, the National Academy of Science members, pharmaceutical companies, chief scientific officers and directors of NIH institutes. And while they haven't been driven to extinction, as some have feared, their numbers are not growing.

The physician-scientist workforce is older than a decade ago: 75 percent are white, 20 percent Asian American and Hispanics are underrepresented.

Women remain underrepresented, "said Kapoor, adding that, as a percentage of the overall biomedical workforce, the ranks of physician-scientists have declined.

"As today's physician-scientists exit the workforce, there may not be an apparent replacement," he said.

A National Institutes of Health (NIH) physician-scientist workforce working group 2014 report found disincentives for MD students to want to become physician-scientists, including financial concerns over work-life balance, increasingly complex training, balancing clinical duties and research activities, the availability of research funding, as well as poor off medical school debt on a residency.

"Having a lot of debt prevents a basic scientist," Kapoor said, noting that the average debt for MD students who graduated in 2013 was $175,000.

Adding to that was a stagnant, median age at which MDs or MD/PhDs receive their first NIH research grant, which is 31 years.

The problem has not gone unnoticed. The Association of Professors of Medicine (APM), a professional organization for chairs of departments of medicine in medical schools, has called for retaining promising physician-scientists, transitioning, advancing and retaining women and physician-scientists in identifying and preparing investigators with an enduring commitment to research careers.

NIH took heed of the trend decades ago, establishing a panel in the mid-1980s to find ways to bolster the physician-scientist workforce. It recommended: all of which have since been implemented, Kapoor said — called for maintaining proportions of NIH funding for clinical research developing investigator clinical research for medical students as a pipeline for research faculty establishing additional training grants (NIH K30s for developing didactic courses, I23s for innovation); including more physician-investigators in patient-oriented research studies; implementing loan repayment programs; undertaking diversity efforts, and encouraging collaborative among clinical investigators and basic scientists with pharmaceutical companies, with pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies.

Pitt has received funding through various mechanisms, including 25 positions initially funded in 2005 through the Roadmap K12 program. The small center later received NIH's Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program, he said. In addition, Pitt's Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) was funded in 2006 with funding renewed in 2011, he said.

NIH has a "great mechanism" for the entire pipeline, with a variety of awards, loan repayments and research project grants including ROI funding, Kapoor said. "We think of success as moving in a horizontal direction toward the ROI," but the pipeline remains a leaky core, with physician-scientists leaving for careers in industry, non-academic career or government jobs, or for clinical practice.

"Interventions have been started but they have not been retained in the role," said Kapoor, adding that the process has been exacerbated by the challenges that face academic medicine, including financial pressure on clinical revenues and difficulty in NIH funding," said Kapoor.

Pitt's efforts to support physician-scientists touch on many of the recommendations: The University offers academic programs including a PhD in clinical and translational science, as well as master's degrees and multiple certificates; there is support for mentoring, and there are career development programs, including some for underrepresented minorities.

Why they give

Through the Faculty and Staff Campaign, University employees can help Pitt do more by contributing to any of more than 2,000 scholarship, fellowships and professorships that have been established. Payroll deductions are available, and donors of $1,000 or more are recognized through the Challenge Circle program.

Annually, nearly 3,000 Pitt employees take part in the campaign, from every part of the University. Their backgrounds, and reasons for giving, are as diverse as the Pitt community.

The University Times is pooling some Faculty and Staff Campaign donors.

—Martha Levine

The desire to give back has long been evident in Michael Spring, School of Information Science faculty member and outgoing University Senate president.

"My parents believed in contributing to church, to community, to country, to the lesser fortunate," he says. "A little of that sense of responsibility has rubbed off on me. Pitt is one of the places that has played a big role in my life and for which I am very grateful.

His 39 years of contributions to the Faculty and Staff Campaign have honored his mentor and friend James G. Williams through his scholarship, the late G. Alec Stewart and the student loan program, as well asChancellor Emeritus Mark A. Nordenberg through his scholarship fund.

"I honestly had to choose where to have the money go each year," Spring says. "What is never in doubt is the date that I owe this great institution that has done so much for me and many others.

His children chose Pitt — happily for him, Spring says — "after a tour of 10 or other schools.

As Spring concludes: "I am proud to be a small part of such a great institution as Pitt and honored to be able to make a small contribution to its future."
Physical activity can bulk up brain

Does physical activity help your brain?

Research says yes, psychology department faculty member Kirk J. Erickson told an audience at the Hill House Kaisersbaum Centers recently.

That may not be surprising, given that physical activity is known to be beneficial in staving off myriad physical ailments.

What may come as a surprise, however, is that exercise can bulk up the brain, particularly in areas associated with memory and cognitive function, said Erickson in a June 4 Walter Allen Memorial Seminar Series lecture sponsored by Pitt's Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, Alzheimer Outreach and the Alzheimer's Association Greater Pennsylvania Chapter.

Erickson, of Pitt's Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition and the Center for Neuroscience, studies brain function and has published extensively on cognitive changes that occur as a function of physical health and aging. His research has shown that activity and exercise can enhance cognitive function across the lifespan, and that it doesn't require long hours of grueling workouts.

"We have a lot of options," he said. "We can sit around the house eating doughnuts or we can go for a walk. And this will influence the size of our brains. There's more and more evidence."

Regular walks at a brisk pace can result in measurable brain improvements. "Moderate intensity exercise several days a week is sufficient," said Erickson, adding that studies have shown that starting late in life is not futile. "There's no excuse," he said. "You can become more active and reap the benefits."

It's an important issue as an aging population is projected to reach higher rates of age-related diseases, including Alzheimer's disease.

"We expect to see a higher proportion of adults over 65 in the coming decades," he said, noting that 5.3 million people in the United States are living with Alzheimer's disease in 2015, up from 5.1 million in 2010. Those numbers are expected to rise to 13.5 million by 2050, assuming no changes in treatment and prevention techniques.

"Our health care system is wildly unprepared for this increase," he said, adding that the cost is enormous. The Alzheimer's Association estimates the cost of treating Alzheimer's disease and caring for patients with the disease at $250 billion in 2015. That cost is expected to rise to more than $1 trillion by 2050. Alzheimer's disease by itself could bankrupt our health care system," said Erickson. "We need to do something and we need to do something soon." A 2011 study estimated that about 13 percent or 14.3 million people in the United States with Alzheimer's disease cases worldwide are attributable to physical inactivity, with about 1.1 million, or 21 percent of U.S. cases linked to inactivity.

"Getting a small portion of people more active could go a long way in reducing the rates of Alzheimer's disease," he said, noting that a 10 percent reduction in these figures could prevent 300,000 cases worldwide, including 90,000 cases in the U.S.

Even in individuals without dementia, cognitive declines generally begin to be seen around age 60, with decreasing performance in such cognitive domains as spatial orientation, numerical and verbal reasoning.

Such declines are preceded by changes in the hippocampus — a part of the brain involved in memory formation — and in the prefrontal cortex. Both these regions of the brain shrink with age.

But is memory decline an inevitable consequence of getting older? Or can it be delayed or even prevented? "These are important questions we still debate today," Erickson allows.

"The lack of variability among individuals: Some people show stumpy, some people show significant decline. Other people don't," he said.

What factors contribute to the variations? Is it simply good genetics? Or might diet, activity and intellectual engagement play roles.

And if we can identify those factors, can we develop interventions?

"This is where physical activity really emerges on the scene," Erickson said.

"We've known for a long time that being physically active is important to your muscles, your strength, for balance, for walking ability, for your heart and cardiovascular system — it reduces the risk of heart disease," he said. "It's important for metabolism, for type 2 diabetes, for different cardiovascular diseases."

The heart and brain are closely linked, Erickson said. "If there's something going on with your heart, it's likely something is happening in your brain as well."

So, if exercise is good for the heart, does it benefit the brain, too?

Research is mounting to show that exercise indeed is good for the brain.

A 2006 study found that people who reported being more physically active (exercising at least three times a week) show lower rates of dementia and remain dementia-free longer than those who are physically inactive, Erickson said. "It doesn't stop dementia from occurring, but it does significantly reduce the rate of dementia," he said.

"It's shown now over and over again: Engaging in some physical activity is a very effective way of reducing your risk for dementia," he said. "It's important for people who are more physically active have almost half the chance of developing cognitive impairment compared with people who are inactive," he said. "There's a very large effect." The National Institutes of Health found that exercise can help improve memory and thinking skills and delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease.

"Exercising can help build new brain tissue and slow the rate of brain shrinkage," he said. "It's not a substitute for other forms of treatment, but it's a complement to other treatments, and it's cheap, free and effective."

For information on how to exercise and the benefits of exercise, see www.alz.org or call 1-800-272-3900.

"How much exercise is needed to save your brain? Generally, more is better," but walking a mile a day can make a difference. "You don't have to add much calories to gain a lot for your brain," Erickson said.

Walking is the only exercise that can improve cardiovascular health and improve balance, gait and coordination all at once.

Erickson added that he is currently recruiting subjects for a study on the effects of African dance on brain function.

"We want to develop a fun, engaging type of activity that might have some positive effect on keeping people adherent to a workout routine and possibly people keeping engaged — but also for improving memory and cognitive function," he said.

"I don't know of any pharmaceuticals that have the potential to have the same effect," he said. "That's what we've been shown by simply getting a good workout."

But is this not paying a lot of money for pills or computer games? This is just a good pair of walking shoes."

Details on Erickson's current studies can be found at www.Pitt.edu/aging-and-cognitive-health-llab.
Endowment distribution up again

Pitt reduces AC on peak-use days

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

not to fuel a 2-degree boost to the thermostat, Fisher said. Still, in the past, Facilities Management’s work control center would get calls from people who noticed their office was getting warmer. “So, we thought it was time to get the message out to the campus,” said Laura Zullo, senior manager of energy center operations. Thermostats can be adjusted by room, but office buildings that are not curtailed as part of the University benefit by reducing high demand,” she said, adding that Facilities Management is looking more closely at building occupancy schedules in order to identify any savings. In addition, faculty, staff and students are encouraged to help reduce power use by turning off unnecessary lighting and electron- ics when not in use. —Kimberly K. Barlow

Philosophy, medicine high in QS world rankings

Two Pitt subject areas rank in the top 50 worldwide, according to a new QS World Universities Rankings by Subject 2015 — including a second-place ranking in philosophy. Pitt also ranked 42nd in medicine. A total of 36 subject areas were ranked for 400 colleges and universities, based on each institution’s academic rating, reputation as an employer and research impact. QS Quacquarelli Symonds, which specializes in providing information about higher education and careers, only ranked the top 50 universities individually. Beyond that, schools were ranked in groupings. Other Pitt subject areas ranked in the following categories:

• 51-100: Pharmacy and pharmacology.
• 101-150: English language and literature; chemical engineering; biological sciences; psychology; materials sciences; communication and media studies; education.
• 201-250: Modern languages; chemistry.
• 201-300: Mechanical, aeronautical and manufacturing engineering; mathematics; environmental sciences.
• 51-100: Pharmacy and pharmacology.
• 101-150: English language and literature; chemical engineering; biological sciences; psychology; materials sciences; communication and media studies; education.

Staff Association Council President Rich Collwell, at left, of engineering operations, and Vice President of Finance Monika Losagio, of both Hispanic and French and Italian languages and literatures, ran unopposed and were re-elected June 17, while external relations committee chair Amy Williams was re-elected vice president of public relations. Lindsay Rodzwicz of bioengi- neering, vice president of public relations, and Amy Williams were re-elected vice president, and Fiona Seels of the School of Education took the chair of the external relations committee, will be parliamentarian.

—Kimberly K. Barlow

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Neighborhood quality linked to cellular aging

McGill University, the University of Guelph, and the University of the West Indies have received a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to investigate how neighborhoods may influence the cellular aging process.

The researchers, who are led by University of Guelph earth and environmental sciences professor Charles F. Reynolds, are studying the role of social and environmental factors on cellular aging. They will be examining how factors such as social cohesion, community safety, and access to green spaces may affect cellular aging.

The project, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, aims to understand how these factors may influence the aging process at the cellular level.

The researchers will use a combination of cell-based and computational approaches to study the effects of these factors on cellular aging. They will be examining how factors such as social cohesion, community safety, and access to green spaces may affect cellular aging.

The project will be led by Charles F. Reynolds, a professor in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Guelph. The team will include researchers from the University of Guelph, the University of the West Indies, and the University of Mississippi.

Genotype therapy prevents Parkinson's in animal study

A new study has shown that a genetic therapy can prevent Parkinson's disease in animal studies. The therapy uses a viral vector to deliver a gene that encodes a protein that protects the brain from the damage caused by the disease.

The study, published in the journal Cell, shows that the therapy can prevent the progression of Parkinson's disease in mice. The researchers believe that this approach could be used to prevent the progression of the disease in humans.

The therapy is based on the viral vector AAV-2, which has been used in a number of clinical trials to deliver genes to patients with genetic diseases. In this study, the researchers used the vector to deliver a gene that encodes a protein that protects the brain from the damage caused by Parkinson's disease.

The therapy was tested in a mouse model of Parkinson's disease, in which the animals were given a drug that mimics the symptoms of the disease. The results showed that the therapy was able to prevent the progression of the disease in the animals.

The researchers believe that this approach could be used to prevent the progression of Parkinson's disease in humans. They hope to conduct clinical trials in the future to test the therapy in people with the disease.
**John Wesley Williams**

John Wesley Williams, disting-
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us in the Department of History
of Art and Architecture (HAA),
died June 6, 2015, at his home in
Point Breeze. He was 87.

Wayne B. Potts, dean of the
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<br>Planning at the University of
Pittsburgh, and a former HAA
faculty member, was senior
advisor to Professor Williams.

"Both as his student and in
later years, I found John's authori-
ty, his probing intellect and a pas-
tion for his research," he said.

"He didn't settle for facile con-
clusions," and "He approached
his research with integrity, always
focusing on the generation of new
knowledge at every step," said
Phil E. Sadovsky, current HAA
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"John held strong opinions, was
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