Notice
Science 2016: Game-changers will be held Oct. 19-21 in Alumni Hall and the Wyndham Pittsburgh University Center. See page 10 and schedule on page 14.

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U N I V E R S I T Y
T I M E S

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Thoughts on the new senior vice chancellor for research position
University Senate President Frank Wilson told Laurie J. Kirsch, vice provost for faculty affairs, development, and diversity, at the end of an hourlong discussion at the Assembly’s Oct. 11 meeting, “Do you think that it would be practical to take those suggestions back to see what changes of language could be made that would not require going all the way back to zero?” he asked.

Kirsch, chair of the provost’s ad hoc committee, agreed to return after addressing the faculty comments with her group.

The committee, which has been at work since early 2015, took up the consensual relationships policy after drafting a new sexual misconduct policy that, with the faculty’s endorsement, took effect this summer. (See Sept. 7 University Times.)

Current policy addresses faculty-student relationships, but does not cover staff-student relationships or relationships between employees.

The draft (posted at www.utimes.pitt.edu/documents/Draftconsentpolicy.pdf) proposes expanding University policy on consensual relationships to limit intimate relationships between faculty, staff and students.

The existing University Policy (Policy 02-04-03), in effect since July 1996, prohibits intimate relationships between faculty and students “whose academic work, teaching or research is being supervised or evaluated by the faculty member.” It requires faculty to remove themselves from the supervisory role should a relationship exist or develop, or risk disciplinary action.

The updated policy would prohibit faculty or staff “from soliciting or having consensual relationships with any graduate or undergraduate student whose academic work, teaching, residence and research community and support

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Consensual relationship policy draft questioned

President Barack Obama is on campus today as Pitt and Carnegie Mellon University co-host the White House Frontiers Conference.

The daylong national science and technology conference will focus on advances in personal, local, national, global and interplanetary frontiers.

Attendance is by invitation only, but events will be streamed live at http://frontiersconference.org, starting at 8:30 a.m.

Conference exhibits in Alumni Hall are open to the public 9-11 a.m. Visitors should enter from Tennyson Street. For details, see http://frontiersconference.org/exhibits.

The appropriation request submitted Sept. 30 to the state Department of Education, the University asked for $154.11 million in general support (including rural education) in fiscal year 2018, an increase of $7.34 million over the current year’s $146.77 million.

In addition, the University is seeking $6.23 million for the School of Medicine and $6.5 million for public service through the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Pitt’s dental clinic and the Center for Public Health Practice — line items that are part of the state Department of Human Services budget and separate from Pitt’s general appropriation.

Overall, Pitt’s request adds up to nearly $166.85 million, an increase of $7.95 million over the current year.

The appropriation request is an early step in the annual state budget process. Following agency budget submissions, the governor presents a proposed state budget in early February. Appropriations committee hearings in the House and Senate follow, with a July 1 deadline for legislators to negotiate and approve a budget for the new fiscal year.

In a statement accompanying the FY18 budget request, Chancellor Patrick Gallagher wrote: “This funding would serve to offset some inflationary increases for operating expenses, expand our innovation programs to further drive economic growth for the region, and supply the means to manage tuition increases for in-state students.”

At the requested level of support, the University anticipates a 2.4 percent tuition increase.

In making the case for increased state funding, the chancellor cited Pitt’s educational value, its research and its contributions to the state’s economy.

The necessity for and value of high-quality higher education has never been more evident,” the chancellor wrote. “The Commonwealth benefits from having an educated populace, a globally competitive workforce, a vibrant research community and support for increasing Pennsylvania’s economic competitiveness in today’s knowledge-based global economy.”

In July, legislators increased Pitt’s general appropriation 2.5 percent for FY17, which began July 1. Academic medical center funding rose 8.8 percent. (See July 21 University Times.)

The chancellor acknowledged recent increases in state funding, but those increases, while welcome, do not fully address the inflationary impacts of the prior three years of flat funding,” he wrote. Pitt’s effort to “soften the impact of diminished state funding on students and families” by constraining tuition increases is not sustainable, Gallagher wrote.

“Pennsylvania lags behind nearly every state in the country in its investment in higher education funding, placing the burden of making up the difference on students and their families,” the chancellor wrote. “A sustained and adequate investment by the Commonwealth is needed to address affordability for students and to maintain the quality that has made Pitt a preferred institution among Pennsylvania’s highest achieving students.”

—Kimberly K. Barlow
Executive officers and backchannels

Every successful organiza-

Essentially, the excitement of new potential can sometimes pertain to informal channels and unof-

A pilot project was conducted this summer using a specific subset of research protocols. HRPO staff utilized a set of established rules to determine whether the assessment form was part of the specific subset of research protocols. Responses to the assessment form then determined whether the HRPO staff would recommend that the research protocol be used by the HRPO staff, the HRPO (hrpo.pitt.edu) site for review by the IRB, if the researchers request that a consultation meeting be held early, before submitting the project for review by the IRB, if the researchers is managed. We will always be willing to meet with your research team or depart-

The term "backchannel" came to the fore during the Iranian hostage crisis. It refers to informal channels and unof-

The University kicked off its United Way campaign October 1. Last year Pitt raised more than $666,300. The goal this year is to continue to collaborate with their IT

or data manager to address how electronic data related to their work is managed.

Additionally, with the increasing need to share data in research comes an increasing responsibility to make sure it is shared securely: Researchers, and the University, must ensure that human subject data is protected during collection, transmission and storage.

Good communications are particularly important in times of change and it would appear we are entering a period of significant change. We are told that 70, 50 and 25 years into the era of computing, networking and the web respectively, we are nearing the end of the period of incunabula: the early stages of any major technol-

The University’s chief

We strongly recommend that researchers request that a consultation meeting be held early, before submitting the project for review by the IRB, if the researchers is managed. We will always be willing to meet with your research team or depart-

The world has grown orders of magnitude smaller based on new

The technology topics and trends from Computing Services and Systems Development (CSSD)

Both data and technology are proliferating at unprecedented rates of growth.

We quickly realized that a key challenge was development of a data security assessment form that would provide the necessary information for conducting a risk assessment and that could be used by the HRPO staff, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the research community. We held numerous focus group sessions with study coordi-

The project is managed by check, credit card or

As as researchers begin to use new technologies, the excitement of new potential can sometimes pertain to informal channels and unof-

University to shared governance. This is when random events like the 2001 terrorist attacks and the 2008 financial crisis become familiar with documents and information that outline those best practices:

What does this mean for Pitt researchers?

Some questions PIs may consider:

We must help researchers understand and manage risk.

Pitt-UV campaign kicks off

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We firmly believe the data study will be stored on a mobile device and, if so, how often? Might it be transmitted through a mobile device?

• If the research group is using a commercial app, are there provisions in the contract that could impact participant privacy or data ownership by the University?

• What security controls are in place when data is being transmitted outside the University: a third-party contractor, vendor or sponsoring agency?

• Where data collection is being conducted, how can we help to ensure the security form was both effective and user friendly.

The University is headquartered at 412-624-4755 or email irb@pitt.edu.

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Early FAFSA start date could mean incomplete aid offers

A
n earlier starting date for the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is designed to give students more time to apply for financial aid but could result in students across the country getting incomplete aid offers, Pitt officials say.
The changes to financial aid deadlines have a “really good intent,” says Marc Harding, chair of the University’s Board of Admissions and Financial Aid (OAFSA), but “the challenge is the details and the consequences that no one has thought through. And then how do you manage 4,000 universities doing it differently? That’s where it’s going to get interesting.”

Eight months ago, the Obama administration notified the country’s universities and colleges that it was moving the yearly starting date when students could access the lengthy online FAFSA form from Oct. 1 to Jan. 1. For the first time, the FAFSA also will allow students to upload the previous year’s tax return and their own and their parents’, if they are dependents. Previously, FAFSA users had to wait until April of the year they hoped to enter a college to upload just-completed tax forms from the IRS website. Only then could most schools make a final financial aid determination.
The change was instituted to give students a longer window to fill out the FAFSA, with the intention of attracting more of the form by those from a lower economic status. With a longer application window, such students, who historically have lower FAFSA participation rates, may have time to find the right funding through the right college.
The October start to FAFSA season also may give universities a chance to send out financial aid offers earlier, though the earlier offers could be incomplete.
National reports show at least 66 percent of institutions are planning to make changes to financial aid notifications or priority admission deadlines as a result of the new FAFSA rules.
The earlier FAFSA opening also gives students longer to consider and reconsider their college choices, including the choice to play one college’s offer of an aid package against another’s by negotiating with colleges.
In an Aug. 8 letter from under secretary of education Ted Mitchell to college chancellor and presidents, posted on the U.S. Department of Education website, he urged higher education institutions to “consider providing earlier award notifications in order to maximize the benefits to students and their families.”
“…I ask you not to move any priority financial aid deadlines earlier than your deadlines for recent years,” he added. “Moving institutional aid deadlines earlier could put undue pressure on high school seniors to rush through the financial aid and college admissions process, counteracting one of the main benefits of an early FAFSA — more time to explore and apply to schools.”

…Early priority aid deadlines most negatively impact students from low-income backgrounds and first-generation students who often have the least amount of information and support during college financial aid and admissions application processes.

Figuring out how to handle the changes has been a challenge, say Pitt’s Harding and Randy McCready, director of financial aid. Pitt already has moved up the date it sends financial aid notifications to students from March or April in previous years to Feb. 1. Harding says Pitt wants to make the awards early enough for students to consider them financial aid information before making their enrollment decisions, but not so early that students could put undue pressure on high school seniors to rush through the financial aid and college admissions process.

That’s where it’s going to get interesting,” says Harding. “Anyone who says they know what will happen,” Harding concedes, “is guessing that they will need to make more adjustments in their institutional deadlines next year.”

He is uncertain how the new FAFSA procedures will affect the number of students accepted by Pitt who ultimately decide to come here.

To help students through the changes, OAFSA is using all its communication channels, including social media and students’ campus visits, to talk about the changes.

“Anyone who says they know what will happen,” Harding concludes, “is guessing that they might have the help of a crystal ball.”

—Marty Levine

Finalists for the position of University Library System director began visiting campus last week. The schedule for candidate visits has been posted online, where streaming video footage and information about the candidates’ presentations is available and feedback can be provided: https://pitt.sharepoint.com/sites/ulsdirectorcandidates.

Candidate talks, open to the University community, will address “Challenges of Learning an Academic Research Library.”

Two of the candidates already have visited campus. Kornelia Tancheva, associate university librarian for research and learning services at Cornell University, delivered her public talk Oct. 6. Melissa Just, associate director of information services at Rutgers University, spoke here Oct. 10.

• Martin Hallbert, dean of libraries and associate professor, University of North Texas, is visiting campus today and tomorrow. He will deliver his public talk at 2 p.m. Oct. 14.

• Beth Namachchivaya, associate university librarian for research, associate dean of libraries and professor, University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign, will visit campus Oct. 17 and 18. Her public talk is set for 2 p.m. Oct. 17.

• Robert Fox, dean of university libraries at the University of Louisville, will visit campus Oct. 18 and 19. He will address the campus community at 2 p.m. Oct. 18.

• Paul Constantine, associate dean of university libraries for distinctive collections and director of special collections at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, will visit campus Oct. 19 and 20. He will deliver a public address at 2 p.m. Oct. 19.

All public addresses will be held in the Digital Scholarship Commons Room, G49 Hillman Library.
A series of town hall meet-
ing between Pitt’s vice chancel- or, with a clearer focus on the qualities and experience of a new senior vice chancellor for research should have.

Chancellor Patrick Gallagher said several key characteristics of potential candidates have emerged.

• Experience in research, to support engagement with the faculty.
• A gifted administrator who can work with the internal bureaucracy and with outside stakeholders.
• A collaborator who will bring people together, rather than build- ing turf or separation.

“The very nature of this position is one of enabling and working with others—not about empire building,” the chancellor said.

He and search committee chair N. John Cooper, dean of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, were accompanied by Provost Patricia E. Beeson and School of Medicine Dean Arthur L. Levine, senior vice chancellor for the Health Sciences, at the town hall.

Gallagher said administrators have studied how Pitt’s Asso- ciate Vice Chancellor for Devel- opment and Oversight, senior vice chancellor for the Pittsburgh campus. 

“Your frequently hearing people make a distinction: This isn’t about empire building, this is about our mission.” Pitt in attracting research dollars, particularly from the National Institutes of Health, to be safeguarded. He credited the “major relationship, more than any other university,” between Pitt’s academic medical center and the rest of the University.

“Most universities don’t have a cohesive environment,” the chancellor said. “We hope there are outstanding internal candidates as well. Our goal is to find the best person we can in this position.”

Jim Becker of psychiatry had the consensus of collabo- ration. Most crucially, he added, the holder of this new post will need to understand the different financial structures between upper and lower campus management to make the job work.

Kacey Marra of public sur- veys, chair of Pitt’s Year of Diversity, asked how the search committee will ensure a diverse pool of candidates.

Cooper assured that the exter- nal consultants already have a number of contacts with a varied candidate group. “Getting a strong and diverse pool means making sure the search committee reaching out to people that they know,” Cooper added.

He added that, as chair, he was cognizant of “the danger of implicit bias when you are review- ing profiles.”

Gallagher said the search committee members will receive training concerning implicit bias.

T he chancellor said he hopes to finalize the search committee by February. Balancing the breadth of Pitt’s research activities in a committee of 15 will be difficult, he said, adding that he will aim to include perspectives from a range of research areas, faculty, staff and other key stakeholders.

Cooper said the search commis- sioners will receive an unranked list of three candidates for the chancellor’s consideration by February.

Cooper said questions, com- ments or suggestions on the search should be sent to him at Cooper@pitt.edu.

—Kimberly K. Barlow and Mary Levine

Information on the search, including links to video of the Sept. 29 town hall session, is posted on the senior vice chancellor for research candidate search page at www.pitt.edu/SVResearch.

Town halls gather input on candidates for new position

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Med school ends FY16 in the black, Levine tells faculty

Pitt’s medical school, which encompasses a budget of approximately $2 billion, finished the fiscal year 2016 with a net income of $47.4 million.

“The point is we ended the year in the black, rather than in the red,” Arthur S. Levine, senior vice chancellor for the Health Sciences and dean of the School of Medicine, told faculty last week in a wide-ranging annual state of the medical school address that highlighted the school’s integration with UPMC operations.

He pointed to investment by UPMC in Pitt’s medical school, citing support in FY15 totaling approximately $2 billion, “the largest contribution by a single private agency to any foreign country.”

“There is not another medical school in the country that gets this kind of largesse from its associated hospital system,” Levine said, adding the funds are directed to a variety of endeavors including teaching and training; scholarships; startup packages for new U.S. and foreign professors; and infrastructure.

Working together in an integrated system is important, the dean said, noting, “This is the only hospital system in the United States associated with a University that has its own insurance plan.”

He elaborated: “If we as physicians know how to keep people from getting sick, or at least how to make the length of their illness shorter, then the insurance company saves money and can reinvest its retained premiums into health care. This is a critical dimension of how UPMC operates and how we operate as a consequence of our relationship with UPMC.”

He made note of the new UPMC Enterprises division, which focuses on commercial enterprises like discovery and invention. The shift is unfortunate, he said. “If you haven’t discovered or invented something, there’s nothing to translate.”

Board of Visitors “in awe”

“Our peers see us as being fantastic institutions,” Levine said, reflecting on a recent Board of Visitors meeting that included leaders from such institutions as Penn, UC-San Francisco, University of Washington, Albert Einstein Medical School and Yale.

“My own impression was they not only admired what we have accomplished, one or two of them said they were in awe of our stability, our success, productivity and our relationship with our hospital system,” he said.

Vice Dean Ann E. Thompson concurred. “They obviously face some of the same challenges that we face, including perhaps most importantly, the pressures on our clinician-educators trying to find time to educate when the pressure to generate RVUs (relative value units) is great, and for investigator-educators who are partnering to bring in grant money instead of teaching.”

She noted the discussion yielded no solutions to the problem, but said the Board of Visitors members were “in awe” of the resources here.

“When we are feeling pampered by our environment, I think we can be aware that, compared to some other excellent places, we are doing pretty well,” she said.

Levine’s full state of the School of Medicine address is posted at: https://pitt.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=7d7dd884-a077-4ebf-8eef-5f4b4f7fe802

—Kimberly K. Barlow

Funding is underway to expand and renovate the medical school’s home in Scaife Hall. A $100 million multiphase project that would include the addition of a seven-story west wing is envisioned.

New med school courses, programs

Arthur S. Levine, senior vice chancellor for the Health Sciences and dean of the School of Medicine, elaborated on the most recent class of Pitt medical students and some changes in medical education at Pitt as part of his annual state of the School of Medicine address.

Class of 2020, by the numbers

The medical school Class of 2020 is made up of 71 men and 77 women, representing 82 schools and universities from 14 different medical schools. Eighty men with a foreign medical degree.

Fifteen percent come from underrepresented groups.

Nearly all — 94 percent — of the first-year class have relevant experience in research; 87 percent have medical or clinical community service experience; and 76 percent have non-medical community service/volunteer experience.

In-state students for first-year students is $32,510; for out-of-state students, $54,036. Including living expenses, the average annual cost of attending is $77,276 for in-state students; $78,802 for out-of-state students.

Many will leave with a debt exceeding $300,000, Levine said. “That in fact is a gigantic national problem, particularly as it’s growing.”

Beth Piraino, the medical school’s director of admissions and financial aid, said the school’s financial aid has doubled in the past decade, currently standing at just over $9 million a year.

New course for 4th year students

This year’s fourth-year medical students will be the first to take a new course, Changing Science, Changing Society.

Levine said, “The science of medicine is changing with such rapidity now that whatever they learn in the first and second year won’t be out of date by the fourth year.”

The course will cover developments in such fields as genetics, precision medicine and neuroscience, as well as in social determinants of health and health care. “In the wake of the Affordable Care Act in particular we have to be focused on the psychosocial and social determinants of health and health care. “In the wake of the Affordable Care Act in particular we have to be focused on the psychosocial and social determinants of health and health care. “In the wake of the Affordable Care Act in particular we have to be focused on the psychosocial and social determinants of health and health care.”

In medical schools and other educational institutions, “students are often given some other opportunity,” usually a leadership role as they near the end of their education and begin the practice of medicine.

For a med school whose six-year program was designed to train primary care physicians, Kanter said, UPMC has turned out a disproportionate number of graduates in leadership positions in the profession.

Kanter said, “Because they stand out, they are often given some other opportunity,” usually a leadership role as they near the end of their education and begin the practice of medicine.

For a med school whose six-year program was designed to train primary care physicians, Kanter said, UPMC has turned out a disproportionate number of graduates in leadership positions in the profession.

Still, many will graduate with a heavy debt, but that is increasingly not the case.

“Physicians are rich so therefore they do not get forgiven this debt, but that is increasingly not correct,” he said. “A big concern among students is the money for scholarships, helping our students in every way possible so they don’t have these humongous debts.”

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Graduate program changes

Levine noted that the medical school’s graduate programs are changing. “Large changes are ongoing, based on a five-year average of how UPMC operates and how we operate as a consequence of our relationship with UPMC Enterprises division, which focuses on commercial enterprises like discovery and invention. The shift is unfortunate, he said. “If you haven’t discovered or invented something, there’s nothing to translate.”

Board of Visitors “in awe”

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—Kimberly K. Barlow
... are beginning to say to faculty, "We don't need you any more as a source of knowledge, given online resources, faculty aren't necessarily authorities on the latest information anyway. Instead, students are saying, "We need to know what to do when we are uncertain, when we are struggling with information and we can't see our way forward." 

Students want faculty to help them assess the quality of information, Kang said.

To chart a better, more sensible course for medical education's future, he said, U.S. medical schools should:

• Create a student-centered, not state-centered, admissions program — perhaps a national admissions program along the lines of the national match for medical residents.
• Institute more six-year BA/MD programs.
• Allow students to use modern technology to gather more information, freeing instructors to focus in better forms of teaching.
• Create ways to assess clinical reasoning.
• Track students' emotional and moral development; and
• Assess whether unhealthy behavior comes among people who live nearby.

"Standing in the way of such improvements, Kanter said, are a variety of issues, including "a failure to correctly define the problem." Among the faculty members from Pitt Health Sciences who highlighted the latest in medical education techniques during Med Ed Day's afternoon session were:

• Lori Grive, a School of Pharmacy instructor, presented RxPedition, a drug development game that students play to understand the drug development 1 class. The semester-long game places students into the role of a drug company's research scientist. Each team possesses all the language is concerning," he said. "Some of those relationships could be nice if those relationships had a boundary. So, chances are, the relationships in your lab are not going to end well, so it becomes disruptive for others." As a parent of an undergraduate here, she said, "should befall in love with his professor ... it would be nice if those relationships had a boundary.

"Even if it is a professor who is not currently his professor, it could still lead to a relationship. So, chances are, the relationships in your lab are not going to end well, so it becomes disruptive for others." As a parent of an undergraduate here, she said, "should befall in love with his professor ... it would be nice if those relationships had a boundary.

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Academic visitor pacts on hold

New identity theft protection offered

Academic visitor pacts on hold

Drug collections set for Oct. 21

Pitt no. 80 in THE world rankings

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As part of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA's) national prescription drug take-back event on Saturday, Oct. 21, Pitt will accept medications that are being replaced due to a change in a doctor's prescription, are unwanted or expired medications Oct. 21. The University Pharmacy will have the necessary facilities to collect and store the medication, with the DEA taking the medications to a licensed pharmaceutical company for disposal. Residents are encouraged to bring medications to the University Pharmacy on the first floor of Nordenberg Hall. Pitt will collect medications from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The service is available to all Pitt faculty, staff and students, and no identification is necessary. The service can be continued after an employee’s retirement at the request of the employee. Drug collections are free of charge.

Pitt no. 80 in THE world rankings

In the Times Higher Education (THE) 2016-17 World University Rankings, Pitt tied for No. 80 with the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. The University was No. 79 in the 2015-16 rankings. The annual rankings list the top 580 universities in the world. The University of Oxford ranked No. 1, followed by Columbia University. Pittsburgh was No. 36 in clinical, preclinical and health; No. 43 in arts and humanities; and No. 97 in social sciences. Rankings are based on 13 factors, grouped into five categories: teaching, research, international outlook and industry income. Teaching, weighted as 30 percent of the ranking, is based on a reputation survey (15 percent); staff-student ratio (4.5 percent); doctorate-to-bachelor’s ratio (2.25 percent); doctorates awarded to academic staff ratio (6 percent); and institutional income (2.25 percent). Pitt isaluarter in international collaboration, each weighted at 7.5 percent of the ranking, includes international-to-domestic student ratio; international-to-domestic staff ratio; and international collaboration, each weighted at 2.5 percent. Industry income, which rates institutions’ knowledge transfer by examining research income earned from industry, scaled by the number of researchers involved, weighed at 7.5 percent.

Should a subscriber become an identity theft victim, McCulloh added, the company offers full-service remediation. This includes a privacy advisor to contact at any time for help, and to whom you may give a limited power of attorney to handle some of the issues on your behalf. The service will pay for many of the expenses associated with the effort to clear up an identity theft, including child care costs, and legal and CPA fees.

Employees can sign up for InfoArmor’s PrivacyArmor through my.pitt.edu, by clicking on My Resources in the Human Resources tab, then choosing identity theft protection under Voluntary Benefits. Payment via payroll deductions after taxes can be arranged, and the service can be continued after an employee’s retirement at the request of the employee.

More information is available at PittPerks.com or by calling 800-725-2736.
Early Zika viruses effective in newborn mice

Two vaccines against Zika virus that researchers at the University of Medicine have conveyed immunity from female mice to pups born to the mother after the mother’s vaccination. When challenged with Zika virus infection, both vaccines protected the pups against neurological damage better than the standard vaccine conferred immunity. The results are published now and scheduled for the November issue of EBioMedicine.

A senior author Andrea Gambotto, professor and chair in the School of Medicine, said, “This work demonstrates that a ‘microneedle array’ to deliver the vaccine just below the surface of the skin can prime and protect the developing embryo against the virus.”

The other vaccine uses the traditional needle delivery format and adenovirus, a type of common cold virus, to present Zika antigens to the immune system.

Both vaccines used proteins on the “envelopes,” or outer shell, of the Zika virus to infect the developing embryo and cause severe neurological birth defects, including microcephaly, or abnormally small head.

One of the vaccines uses a “microneedle array” to deliver the vaccine just below the surface of the skin. Both vaccines have since developed a promising, second-generation vaccine. “We are hopeful, now that Congress has approved the $1.1 billion bill to provide funding for Zika prevention and research, that we’ll be able to do larger-scale studies to evaluate and develop this vaccine for possible human clinical trials.”

Faculty receive early career awards

Two faculty members received awards for their innovative work. Pembroke A. Tumouopoulos has been awarded a National Institute of Health (NIH) aimed at early career investigators who demonstrate potential for innovative research. William R. Stauffer, neuro- logic and neurological condition most frequently characterized by ringing in the ears when no actual noise is present, but little is known about the physiology underlying the condition. Allergan, a global pharmaceutical corporation, and Pitt have agreed to a research partnership to help understand the molecular and cellular mechanisms that sustain tinnitus once it has developed.

Researchers at the Swanson Biomedical Engineering, School of Engineering, and the Swanson Biomedical Engineering are developing a new mechanism for the treatment of hearing loss.

Researchers from the School of Medicine and Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh have discovered a new mechanism governing the integ- rity of capillaries, the smallest branches of the circulatory system. The study was published in Cell Reports. Capillaries are lined by endothelial cells, which can maintain a wall that prevents leakage of plasma into surrounding tissue. However, under certain conditions, these cells can lose their integrity and cause a rapid but temporary increase in the leakiness of this barrier. This allows fluid and immune cells to exit the bloodstream and accumulate in tissue leading to a condition known as “edema,” a cornerstone of the body’s inflamm- atory response.

While this acute increase in permeability is important for normal inflammation, it can become a problem if not left unchecked. In a broad range of conditions, from acute hyper- tension to sepsis and trauma, a stiffening reaction or asthma attack, to brain swelling in trauma patients, or organ failure, edema can become life threatening.

A lack of knowledge about how the integrity of the perme- ability has resulted in current therapies being mostly supportive in nature, directed at overcoming the consequences of edema and inflammation. This study high- lighted a new role for an enzyme, MALT1, in mediating endothelial permeability, which could affect several key inflammatory stimuli.

To study the role of MALT1, researchers used a mouse model that mimicked a state of septic shock, a life-threatening inflam- matory condition that can lead to excessive fluid accumulation in the lung. Mice genetically engineered to lack MALT1 were highly sensitive to the injury, while MALT1 knockout mice survived the injury.

“This work demonstrates that a ‘microneedle array’ to deliver the vaccine just below the surface of the skin can prime and protect the developing embryo against the virus.”

“We are hopeful, now that Congress has approved the $1.1 billion bill to provide funding for Zika prevention and research, that we’ll be able to do larger-scale studies to evaluate and develop this vaccine for possible human clinical trials.”
Healthy lifestyle shortens end-of-life disability

Leading a healthy lifestyle not only extends one’s lifespan but also shortens the time that is spent disabled.

An analysis of a quarter-century of data by scientists at the Graduate School of Public Health and their colleagues nationwide revealed that older adults with the healthiest lifestyles could expect to spend about 1.7 fewer years disabled at the end of their lives, compared to their unhealthy counterparts. The study results were published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society.

"Said senior author Anne B. Newman, chair of the Department of Epidemiology in Public Health and Katherine M. Dettre, Professor of Population Health Sciences: ‘The duration of the disabled period near the end of one’s life has enormous personal and societal implications, ranging from quality of life to health care costs.’"

Newman and her colleagues examined data collected by the Cardiovascular Health Study, which followed 5,888 adults for 25 years. All of the participants were aged 65 or older and were not initially disabled or wheelchair dependent when they enrolled.

"The participants reported their illnesses for various lifestyle factors, including smoking habits, alcohol consumption, physical activity, diet, weight and their social support system. The researchers took into account and adjusted results for such factors as participants’ age, sex, race, education, income, marital status and chronic health conditions.

Across all the participants, the average number of disabled years directly preceding death was 7 years when the person had difficulty eating, bathing, toileting, dressing, getting out of bed or a chair, or walking around the home. — averaged 4.5 years for women and 2.9 years for men.

For each gender and race group, those with the healthiest lifestyle (those who were non-smokers of a healthy weight and diet and getting regular exercise) lived longer and had fewer disabled years at the end of their lives. For example, a white man in the healthiest lifestyle group could expect to live 4.8 years longer than his counterpart in the unhealthiest group, and at the end of his life, he’d likely spend only two of those years disabled, compared to 3.7 years for his unhealthy counterpart.

Lead author was Mini E. Jacob, who completed this project during her Pitt doctoral studies and is currently at Boston University School of Public Health and Harvard medical school.

Additional authors are from the University of Washington; Seattle Veterans Affairs Medical Center; Florida International University; Stanford University; University of California-Davis Medical Center; and New York Academy of Medicine.

This research was supported by the National Institute on Aging, NIH, the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke and the University of Pittsburgh Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center.

Pitt joins vaccine surveillance network

Children’s Hospital will join a group of academic medical centers nationwide that survey for communicable diseases in children and evaluate vaccine effectiveness. The data collected and studied conducted, led by School of Medicine faculty, will help detect emerging disease outbreaks and be used to make health policy decisions regarding vaccination and investment in drug development.

Through a $5 million, five-year grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Children’s will become a New Vaccine Surveillance Network (NVSN) site and collect information on respiratory and gastrointestinal viruses circulating, in Allegheny County.

Said John V. Williams, pediat- ric faculty member and principal investigator of the new NVSN site: “There are few or no effective antiviral therapies, and therefore vaccination is the most promising intervention. Active disease surveillance is necessary to establish the effectiveness of existing vaccines and provide the data needed to guide policymakers and pharmaceutical industries in the development of new vaccines. We intend to provide that critical information.”

Acute respiratory illnesses are caused by viruses that include respiratory syncytial virus, human metapneumovirus and influenza, and may interfere with normal breathing. Acute gastroenteritis is caused by viruses including rotavirus and can cause diarrhea and dehydration.

Said Marian Michaels, pediatri- cs and surgery faculty member and co-principal investigator of the new NVSN site: “Together these are the leading causes of disease among children in the U.S. and globally. These infections can require hospitalization and can be deadly. They also are quite costly, both in terms of treatment as well as indirect costs, including parental leave from work.”

The Children’s site of the NVSN has three aims:

• To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of current or upcoming vaccines and other proactive disease prevention strategies, and then analyze the results to inform pediatric vaccine-related policies;

• To assess the burden of acute gastroenteritis and acute respira- tory illness via voluntarily enrolling children seen at the hospital, along with healthy children enrolled at child care centers, to perform laboratory tests to confirm or rule out viral infection; and

• To gain new insights into the evolution and transmission of pediatric diseases, the impact of vaccines on targeted and vulnerable populations and the socioeconomic and microbiologi- cal factors that relate to public health interventions.

The NVSN has been funded by the CDC since 2004, serving as a core component of national influenza surveillance. Additional NVSN partners at the new NVSN site are Robert Hickey, Judith Martin, Bala Goundappu and Heather Eng.
Evidence-based cancer treatments encouraged

We saw that treatment pathways implemented by UPMC 15 years ago to guide cancer care have become integral to ensuring that each patient receives the most up-to-date course of treatment specific to his or her cancer.

That’s the conclusion of a recent University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) analysis showing the high physician compliance rate with the pathways, a systematic, evidence-based practice that allows stroke patients and therapists to monitor and improve rehabilitation.

• VasoMag: A novel engineered biodegradable metallic vascular stent technology to allow current advanced wearable device called Purrr Stent Technology.

• Ventriculo-Annular Shunt for Fetal Aneuploid Aneurysm: A device to drain excess fluid from the fetal brain and prevent progressive brain injury during pregnancy.

Finalists and semifinalists can be viewed on the PInCh website.

PT or surgery for rotator cuff tears?

Rotator cuff tears are one of the most common injuries seen by orthopaedic surgeons, occurring in 30 percent of all visits to orthopaedic surgeons and over 150,000 surgical procedures per year in the United States. The preferred initial treatment is six to 12 weeks of physical therapy (PT), but 25.5 percent of those cases still require surgery. Researchers at the Swanson School of Engineering added a $2.79 million award from NIH to develop diagnostic methods to determine whether PT or surgery is the most effective treatment for this injury.

Principal investigator of the five-year study is Richard E. Debski, bioengineering faculty member and co-director of the Orthopaedic Robotics Laboratory. Co-principal investigators are James J. Irrgang, chair of the Department of Physical Therapy, and Jonathan Shi, assistant professor and color of the University of Texas Health Science Center.

Debski has said, “Rotator cuff injuries are one of the most common injuries for people aged 40-70, and can be caused by an injury but often occur simply from wear and tear as we age. Over the years, a combination of studies have shown that the first preferred treatment, most patients still require surgery, which prolongs recovery time and increases costs. Our goal is to utilize new methods to perform a biomechanical analysis to determine whether a patient is more suited for PT or surgery, and thereby improve overall recovery.”

Over the first two years, Debski and his group plan to enroll 100 patients with isolated full-thickness tears of the supraspinatus tendon, the most basic type. The biomechanics analysis will measure shoulder motion and tear size before and after physical therapy. The study will use a new technology, a bimetallic X-ray system, to provide quantitative measurement of shoulder motion during activities of daily living. The group also will track the tear size longitudinally out to one year. The long-term goal is to perform a clinical trial to determine whether the predictions made a difference in treatment outcomes.

—Compiled by Marty Levine
Barbara L. Porter

Christina Bratt Paulston

Herschel J. Frey

Barbara L. Porter, former assistant dean and director of student services in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), died Sept. 29, 2016, of pancreatic cancer. She was 80.

She was the first woman to hold the position of assistant dean for student services at Pitt. Porter began her career at the University in 1963.

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Irving Wender, Distinguished University Research Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering in the Swanson School of Engineering, died Sept. 16, 2016. He was 101.

Wender, born June 19, 1915, in Bronx, New York, earned a BS in chemistry from City College of New York, an MS from Columbia University, and a PhD in chemistry at Pitt in 1950. Prior to earning his PhD he worked on the Manhattan Project in Chicago to develop the atomic bomb during World War II. Wender was appointed to several positions in the Pittsburgh Energy Research Center (PERC) of the Department of Interior’s U.S. Bureau of Mines project coordinator, research director and finally head of the chemistry division.

His work focused on every- thing from mine safety to converting carbon monoxide and hydrogen into low-sulfur diesel fuel and renewable hydrogen for fuel. Later in his career he also served as special assistant to the PERC for all fossil energy in the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), as well as director of the DOE’s Pittsburgh Energy Research and other government posts in Washington, D.C.

In 1981, after retiring from government service, Wender joined the Pitt faculty as a research professor in the chemical and petroleum engineering department and as an adjunct professor in chemistry.

He was the author or co-author of more than 200 papers and the author or editor of five books. He also had 51 patents.

Among his awards and honors were the H. H. Storrs Award from the American Chemical Society’s fossil division for distinguished contributions to science and utilization of coal; the Pittsburgh Award of the American Chemical Society for outstanding contributions to chemistry; the Homer H. Lowry Award in Fossil Energy from the DOE for integrating fossil energy technology; and the Department of Chemistry’s Distinguished Alumni Award today encompasses PERC, praised Wender’s “outstanding contribu- tion to the Pittsburgh energy industry as an innovative researcher, energy leader and dedicated educator.”

Says Eric J. Beckman, faculty member in chemical and petro- leum engineering in the Swanson School of Engineering in 1994.

“His work focused on everything from mine safety to converting carbon monoxide and hydrogen into low-sulfur diesel fuel and renewable hydrogen for fuel. Later in his career he also served as special assistant to the PERC for all fossil energy in the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), as well as director of the DOE’s Pittsburgh Energy Research and other government posts in Washington, D.C.”

Irving Wender

Adrian Lee has been named director of the Institute for Preci- sion Medicine (IPM) at Pitt and UPMC to move biomedical research into personalized wellbeing and clinical care. He succeeds Associate Vice Chancellor Jeremy Beng, who will remain as a senior advisor to the IPM, which was founded in 2013 and formerly known as the Institute for Personalized Medicine.

Lee is a faculty member in the Department of Genetics, Development and Cell Biology, and director of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute. In addition to studying the hormonal regulation of metabolic disease, he and his team are working to implement the technology infrastructure needed for precision medicine.

Arthur S. Levine, senior vice chancellor for the Health Sciences and dean of the School of Medi- cine, stated, “Under Adrian’s lead- ership, the IPM will help to ensure the continued development of innovative research programs, efforts to reduce administrative costs, and the education of physicians in the area of personalized medicine.”

Compiled by K. Barlow

Hicks memorial event set

A memorial event will be held Oct. 11 in honor of Pitt staff member Ann St. George, who was struck by a car on Forbes Avenue while she was riding her bicycle home from the Oakland campus.

The memorial event will begin at 4:30 p.m. on Forbes Avenue near South Bellefield Avenue, followed by a memorial bike ride leaving Oakland at approximately 5:30 p.m. The ride will end at the 20th Floor, checkout, on Fifth Avenue, where there will be a happy hour fundraiser 5-8 p.m.

To contribute to the Susan M. Hicks Memorial Fund, which aids students in Russian and East European studies, go to www.givetop Pitt.edu/hicks.
**Thursday 13**

**FSDP Workshop**

“Baby Boomer to Millennials: Respect & Productivity in the Workplace,” Warren McCoy; 342 Craig, 9 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**FSPD Workshop**

“Using Lynda.com for Professional Development,” Kurt Smith; 817R CL, 12:05 pm

**Global Studies Lecture**

“Epic in Action! Student Poster Symposium”; O’Hara Johnston; 2000 Posvar, 3 pm

**SAC Mtg.**

“Pain at Pitt: Hot Topics in Palliative Care,” Stephen Siler, 1105 A&B, noon

**FSPD Workshop**

“Microsoft Word 2013 Fundamentals,” Vernon Franklin; 302 Bellefield, 10 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**HSLS Workshop**

“My Pet Video Quick Start,” Vernon Franklin; 302 Bellefield, 10 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**Biomedical Informatics Seminar**

“The Art of War During the Populace: The Ecology & Evolution of Nature’s Anthropic Fictions,” Erik Wright, U of WI Madison; 560 Baum Blvd., classrom, 407 A/B, 12 noon

**Monday 17**

**HSLS Workshop**

“Pakistan: A Profile,” Roberta Almirante, Pitt Film Library, 1, 1 pm

**Global Studies Lecture**

“Global Ethics in a Time of Global Changes,” Peter Singer, Princeton; U of Melbourne: FFA, 6-7:30 pm

**Friday 14**

**Psychiatry Grand Rounds**

“Deconstructing the Clinician’s Roles in Medical Education,” Susan Lieuf, U of Toronto; WPIC, noon

**Bradford Campus Concert**

“Family FUNKtion & Sitar Jams”; Bradford Campus Concert; 305 Parkvale, noon

**FSPD Workshop**

“International Scholars & Employees as an ‘In’ OR ‘Out’ Staff,” 342 Craig, 9 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**Friday 21**

**Ins. for Entrepreneurial Excel- lence Workshop**

“Developing a Business Plan’”; Merv; 7-9:30, 10 am (entrepre- neur.pitt.edu)

**Drug Take Back Day**

Pitcoll collection of expired or unneeded medications: University Pharmacy, Norbuling Hall, 9 am-3 pm; UPMC, 6th floor, Squirrel Hill, UPMC hospitals, Falk Pharmacy, Forbes Pharmacy, Hillman Cancer Ctr., Forbes Tower, 10 am-2 pm

**FSPD Workshop**

“University Archives & Records Management,” Zach Brosh & Alex Toner, 342 Craig, 9 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**Psychiatry Lecture**

“The Topography & Significance of Depravity: Dysfunction in Schizophrenics,” Anissa Darghim, 560 Baum Blvd., 12 noon

**Wheelchair Workshop**

“Resume Writing & Cover Letters,” Michael Kostman, Hillman; 9 am-3 pm (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**Global Health Student Assn./ Cr. for Global Health Film**

“Bach Nuns’ Turn for the Better” (Switzerland-European Parliament); 302 Bellefield, 10 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**Humanities Lecture**

“Everyday of the Beholder: Johannes Vermeer, Anton Van Leewensloch & the Reinvention of Seeing”; Laura Snyder, history & philosophy of science, Carnegie Museum of Art, 6 pm, 560 Baum Blvd.

**German Film Screening/Dis- cussion**

“Brigitte’s Win:sind:jung Wir Sind Stark,” Randall Hall; G24 CL, 6-7 pm

**2016-17 publication schedule**

- Events happening
- Submit by
- For publication

**Events occurring**

|-----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|------------------|

**Thursday 20**

**FSPD Workshop**

“Microsoft Word 2013 Fundamentals,” Vernon Franklin; 302 Bellefield, 10 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty-st)

**HSLS Workshop**

“Findostone Basics,” Pat Weisch; Falk Library classrom, 2, 10 am (www.pitt.edu)
Office of Academic Career Workshop


Classics Lecture

“Philosopher Kings & Stoic Sovereigns: Episteme’s Account of the Starting Points (epibasis) of Virtue,” San Magana; UC Berkeley; $30 CL, 3:30 pm

German Film Screening/Discussion

“Wahrm Ahmed’s Journey Into Europe,” Sabine von Ditfurth; CL 6, 6:00 pm

Thursday 27

Gal Lecture

“Endoscopy #1: Foreign Body Removal,” Kevin McGrath; Precl admin. conf., rm. M2 Caring, 7 am

Office of Academic Career Workshop

“Publishing in High-Impact Journals: An Editor’s Perspective,” Brooke LaFlumme, Nature Genes; $100 BST, 8:30 am (www.oasdh.pitt.edu/news-events/publications/publication-process-editor’s-perspective)

FSDP Workshop

“Wiring with Style: Fashionable University Style, Thalid!” Sarah Rosenson; 302 Belk, 9 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty)

Molecular Biology Research Seminar

“Probing & Enhancing Tissue Regeneration,” Rango Research Conf, Con., 10 am

Social Work Workshop

“Effective Interviewing: Art & Science,” Karen Khalils, Middlebury; 877 RTR, 1:25 pm

Family and Gender Studies Conference

“Refugee Crisis & the Daily Life of Refugees in Germany & Austria,” Viktoria Hamata & Jakub Kazda; 211 Lawrence, 3 pm

Pharmaceutics/Chemical Biology Seminar

“Targeting the EMT-like Phenotype in Invasive Lobular Carcinoma,” Emily Ross; UCB 313, 3:30 pm

Wednesday 26

Family Medicine Grand Rounds Lecture

“Primary Care & Health Reform: Decreasing Health Disparities,” Wanda Filer, American Academy of Family Practice-Seal beach, rm. 1, 8 am (412-383-2248)

Senate Benefits & Welfare Mgmt.

702 Benkman, 9 am

FSDP Workshop

“Compensation: Administration for Supervisors,” 211 Lawrence, 9 am (register: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty)

FSDP Workshop

“Influential Leadership,” Maureen Lazey; 302 Craig, 1:45 pm (reg- istration: www.hr.pitt.edu/training-development/faculty)

HSLS Workshop

“Gen’s Regulatory TRANSFAC, Needleless, Encode,” Anuman Chat-tophayal; Falk library, 2nd cl., 10 am (asumust@pitt.edu)

UCIS International Alumni Panel Discussion

“Journey to Prince, Epistemology & How Putin Prepared Them to Return Home?,” 548 WPC, 2 pm

Teaching Core Workshop

“Best Practices in Online Teaching,” B25 Alumni, 7pm (www.csid.pitt. edu/workshops/)