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UConn 2000 audit finds accounting changes effective

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

An independent audit of $900 million in UConn 2000 expenditures from 2003 to 2006 documents that structural and systemic processes and procedures implemented by the University in 2005 were highly effective.

The audit, done by UHY LLP, a large national accounting firm with offices in New Haven, shows no "reportable conditions," Anthony Scillia, a UHY partner told the Joint Audit and Compliance Committee of the Board of Trustees last week.

Reportable conditions involve significant deficiencies in the design or operations of internal controls that might adversely affect the University's ability to initiate, record, process, and report financial data consistent with the assertions of management, the report says.

The audit shows that there were problems in 2003 and 2004, but that systematic and structural changes were effective.

The changes were implemented by vice president and chief operating officer Linda Flaherty-Goldsmith and her successor, Barry Feldman, Lorraine Aronson, vice president and chief financial officer, and Bruce DeTora, chief financial officer.

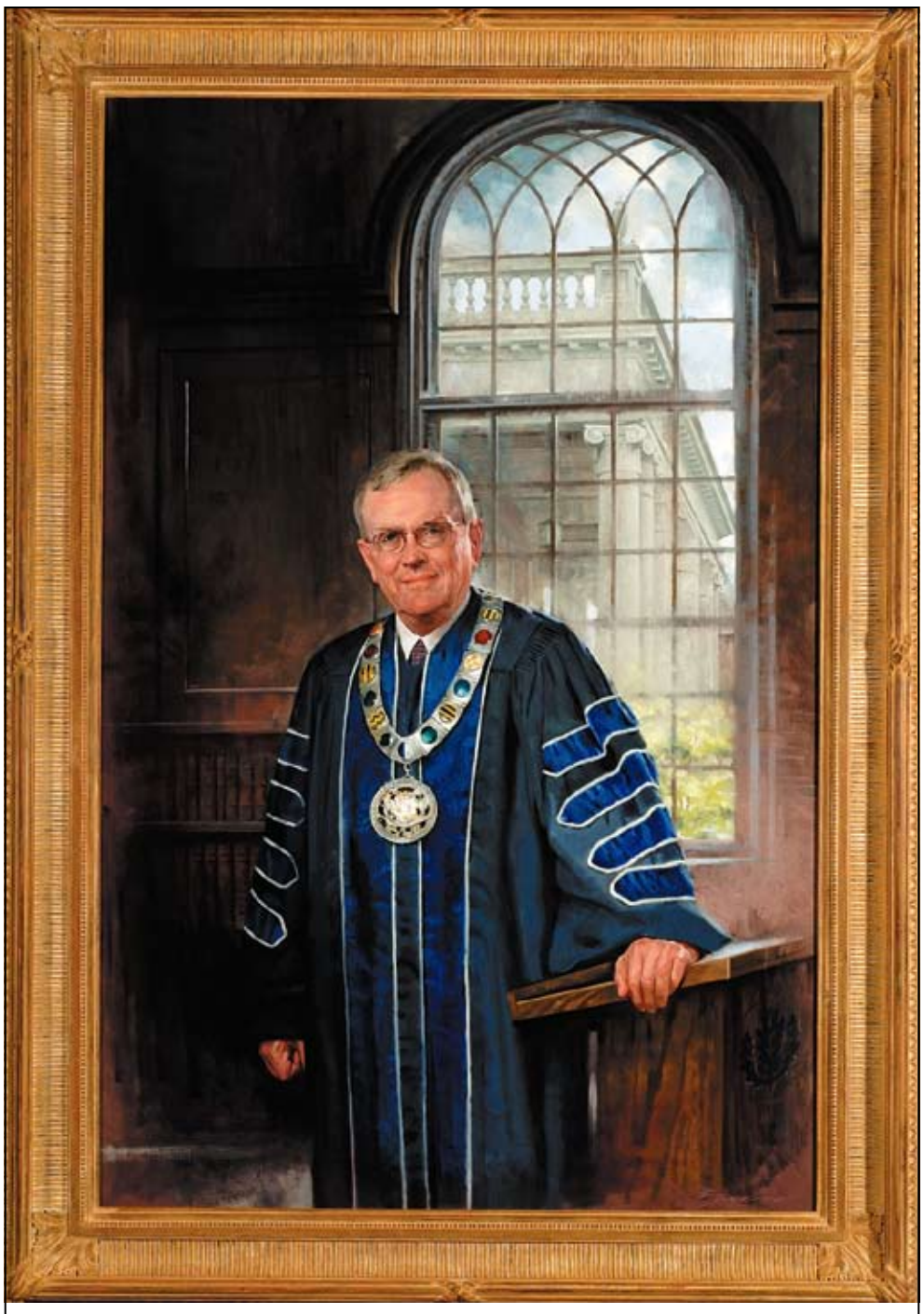
Those changes included separating UConn 2000 accounting from architectural and engineering services and merging it with other accounting functions; adding staff to oversee projects; and implementing other internal controls to address problems noted in the UHY audit of 2003 and 2004.

"The changes created greater transparency, made it possible to access information instantaneously, and ensured that the information would be accurate," says Kenneth Michael Walker, the University's director of audit, compliance and ethics.

Scillia said there has been steady progress in improving controls. "The University has a clean bill of health going into '07."

The auditors noted that the lull between the first two phases of UConn 2000 and

see **Accounting changes** *page 7*



PORTRAIT BY JOHN HOWARD SANDEN

A portrait of President Philip E. Austin now hangs in the North Reading Room of Wilbur Cross.

Feasibility of water recycling being studied

BY RICHARD VEILLEUX

UConn officials are beginning the process of analyzing and, if feasible, building a microfiltration plant that could help reduce the University's demand for potable water by 300,000 to 500,000 gallons of water a day.

The process, which has been used successfully in other states, would use non-potable, treated effluent to provide make-up water for the boilers and cooling towers at the Central Utilities Plant. The reclaimed water could potentially be used for irrigation purposes as well.

The Board of Trustees recently authorized $550,000 for engineering and initial construction of a plant, should the study indicate the idea is feasible.

"Before we fully commit to the project, we want the engineers to study the process and tell us what needs to be done, what could be done, and at what cost," says Thomas Q. Callahan, associate vice president for administration and operations.

Callahan says the plan involves initial processing and diversion of some of the effluent produced by the sewage treatment plant off LeDoyt Road to the cogeneration plant on Glenbrook Road. Currently, the effluent is returned to the Willimantic River, below the North Eagleville dam.

It would allow us to reduce the demand

see **Water recycling** *page 7*

University's new football facilities earn silver rating for environmental measures

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

The Burton Family Football Complex and Mark R. Shenkman Training Center have been named the first LEED-certified building at the University and the first athletic complex in the nation to earn the "green building" status.

The designation was granted by the U.S. Green Building Council, which noted that the complex meets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for green buildings. The project was granted a "silver" designation. The U.S. Green Building Council is a Washington, D.C.-based coalition of building industry leaders.

The two facilities, which opened in summer 2006, encompass 165,000 square feet.

The Burton Family Football Complex is the on-campus home for the UConn football program and includes an academic resources center, sports medicine area, coaches' offices, team meeting rooms, locker rooms, and video editing and production areas.

The Mark R. Shenkman Training Center is used by the football team, other varsity sports, and the University's recreational program. The nine-story facility features a 120-yard, multipurpose synthetic turf field, and an 18,000-square-foot, state-of-the art strength and conditioning area.

"There are unique challenges in constructing an athletic facility to meet LEED standards," says Rich Miller, director of environmental policy. "The Mark R. Shenkman Training Center is a large structure, with considerable open space, and there can be problems making such facilities energy-efficient, with their heating and cooling needs. These challenges inspired some creative ideas from our design professionals."

One of those features is infrared heat-

see **Green building** *page 2*

Inside

Photo by Daniel Buttrey

Roger A. Gelfenbien, right, former chairman of the Board of Trustees, with Board of Trustees member Thomas Ritter, during a dedication ceremony for the Roger A. Gelfenbien Commons in the Towers Residence Complex on Aug. 31.

Service learning topic of forum at Hartford campus

A Service Learning Forum for faculty and staff will take place at the Greater Hartford Campus on Friday, Sept. 21. The event, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., will be held in the Library Building, Room 404, 1800 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford.

The forum is intended to provide inspiration, models, and practical advice on developing and offering successful service learning courses, in which community engagement fosters significant service learning.

In addition to interactive sessions, two national leaders on using service learning to support learning in diverse disciplines will speak: John Saltmarsh, director of the New England Resource Center and a professor of higher education at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and Tom Deans, associate professor of English and director of the Writing Center at UConn.

To attend the forum, please RSVP to 860-570-9058 by Sept. 20.

Green building *continued from page 1*

ing units that can keep players on the field comfortable, but are more energy-efficient than heating the entire structure to a uniform temperature.

"The Burton Family Football Complex and Mark R. Shenkman Training Center are among the nation's finest athletic facilities," says Jeffrey Hathaway, director of athletics. "These facilities have certainly placed our football program in an outstanding position to be successful both academically and athletically. We're proud to be a leader, as our University strives to meet environmentally-sustainable goals."

LEED-certification is a process certifying that a building project meets a wide range of environmentally friendly criteria. The Green Building Council has four designations: certified, silver, gold, and platinum, each based on a point system.

Miller says there are more than three dozen components in the construction of the Burton Family Football Complex and the Mark R. Shenkman Training Center that promote environmental sustainability, from site selection to building design, selection of materials, energy and water conservation, and indoor environmental quality.

He says the University also earned points for creativity by using 7,000 cubic feet of peat excavated from the site to help restore and create wetlands affected by the cleanup and construction activity at the former UConn landfill site on the north side of campus.

The Burton Family Football Complex and the Mark R. Shenkman Training Center are the first buildings at UConn to be registered for LEED certification since the Green Building Council's standards were adopted in 2000. However, architects and designers involved in every building project at Storrs, whether new construction or renovations, are required to follow UConn's environmentally responsible, sustainable design guidelines.

Energy efficiency, water conservation, conserving materials and resources, improving indoor environmental quality, and land management are among the areas that must be considered when planning a project.

Earlier this year, the University adopted a policy that sets the LEED-silver rating level as a minimum performance standard for all larger construction and renovation projects.

Besides enhancing the environment, Miller says, following the Green Building Council guidelines eventually will save money, through reduced operational, maintenance, repair, and replacement costs.

COMING TO CAMPUS

Novelist Naeem Murr to give reading in Konover Auditorium Sept. 26

Novelist Naeem Murr, the Fall 2007 Aetna Visiting Writer-in-Residence, will give a reading in Konover Auditorium on Wednesday, Sept. 26, at 7 p.m.

Murr is the author of three novels: *The Boy* (1998), *The Genius of the Sea* (2003), and *The Perfect Man* (2007). *The Boy*, his first novel, was a *New York Times* Notable Book. It won a Lambda Literary Award and was translated into six languages. His latest novel, *The Perfect Man*, won the 2007 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for the Best Book of Europe and South Asia, and was long-listed for the 2006 Booker Prize.

Born and raised in the U.K., Murr has lived in the U.S. since his early 20s. He uses his knowledge of both countries to shape his stories. *The Boy* and *The Genius of the Sea* are set in London and its environs, while *The Perfect Man* is primarily set in the imaginary town of Pisgah, Mo.

Murr's awards include a Stegner Fellowship, a Lannan Residency Fellowship, and a Guggenheim

Dean of Yale law school to give Sackler human rights lecture Oct. 2

Harold Hongju Koh, the dean of Yale Law School, a leading expert on international law and prominent advocate of human and civil rights, will deliver the 13th Raymond and Beverly Sackler Distinguished Lecture in Human Rights on Tuesday, Oct. 2 at 4 p.m. in Konover Auditorium. The title of his talk will be "Repairing our Human Rights Reputation."

Koh, who is also Gerard C. and Bernice Latrobe Smith Professor of International Law, began teaching at Yale Law School in 1985, and has served since 2004 as dean. From 1998 to 2001, he served as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Previously, he practiced law at Covington and Burling and at the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice.

Koh has argued before the U.S. Supreme Court and testified before the U.S. Congress more than 20 times. He has been awarded 10 honorary doctorates and two law school medals, and has received many awards.

Koh is the author of eight books, including *Transnational Legal Problems* (with H. Steiner and D. Vagts), and *The National Security Constitution*, which won the American Political Science Association's award as the best book on the American Presidency.

He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford; a former Visiting Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford; a member of the Council of the American Law Institute; and a member of the American Philosophical Society. He has held fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the Century Foundation. He sits on the Boards of Overseers of Harvard University and on the boards of directors of the Brookings Institution, Human Rights First, the American Arbitration Association, and the National Democratic Institute.

He has been named one of America's "45 Leading Public Sector Lawyers under the Age of 45" by *American Lawyer* magazine, and one of the "100 Most Influential Asian-Americans of the 1990s" by *A* magazine.

A Korean-American native of Boston, Koh holds a B.A. degree from Harvard College and B.A. and M.A. degrees from Oxford University, where he was a Marshall Scholar. He earned his J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Peace activist Ela Gandhi to give Asian American Heritage keynote address

Ela Gandhi, a peace activist and former Member of Parliament in South Africa from 1994 to 2004, will deliver the fifth annual Mahavir Ahimsa/Nonviolence and Asian American Heritage Observance keynote address, "The Crises of the 21st Century – Some Gandhian Solutions." The talk will take place on Thursday, Oct. 4, in the Student Union Theatre, beginning at 4:30 p.m.

During apartheid, Ms. Gandhi was banned from political activism and subjected to house arrest for nine years. In Parliament, she aligned with the African National Congress party and represented the area of her birth in the KwaZulu Natal province near Durban.

Granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, she founded the Gandhi Development Trust; developed a 24-hour program against domestic violence; and currently serves as Chancellor of Durban University of Technology.

UNIVERSTIY OF CONNECTICUT
Advance

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A videographer captures members of the Marching Band for a scene in a new television commercial for the University. The concept and music for the commercial were developed by students, and all the scenes include UConn students as "actors." The piece, which highlights the University's varied academic, cultural, and recreational activities, will air during network televised football and basketball games.

Photo by Peter Morenus

More than $59 million raised last year to support University

Scholarships, faculty, programs benefit from philanthropy

by John Sponauer

The University of Connecticut Foundation Inc. received more than $59 million in philanthropic support during fiscal year 2007 to benefit the University's faculty, students, and programs.

The preliminary financial year-end results continue the decade-long trend of strong private support for UConn. The Foundation, the primary fund-raising vehicle to solicit and administer private gifts and grants that enhance the University's mission, announced that:

• The total amount raised during FY07 was $59.8 million, which included $49.6 million in new gifts and commitments, $3.4 million in revocable and deferred planned gifts, and $6.8 million in pledge payments.

• Of the funds raised, $2 million was designated for faculty support, $8.3 million for scholarships, $23.9 million for programs, and $4.9 million for capital improvements. Support for UConn athletics totaled $20.7 million.

• Approximately $13 million of the total was designated to support activities at the UConn Health Center in Farmington.

• The Foundation's annual fund, which is largely driven by direct mail solicitation, online donations, and a student-run phonathon, generated a record $4.6 million, which is a 17 percent increase over last year and double the amount raised in 2003.

• The number of donor households totaled 33,041, and giving from two critical groups – alumni and parents – increased by 52 percent collectively.

• Nearly 29 percent of the overall amount raised came from alumni. According to *U.S. News & World Report* data, UConn ranks in the top 13 percent among national public universities for alumni giving.

• As of June 30, 2007, the University endowment stood at $336 million, a $37 million, or 12 percent, increase over 2006. Endowment gains have outpaced relevant industry benchmarks for the past two-, three-, five-, and 10-year periods. The endowment has grown $139 million, or 70.6 percent, over the past five years. In 1996, the endowment was $60 million.

"Private giving is a catalyst for UConn to meet its potential."

John Martin
President, UConn Foundation

"As we prepare for a major capital campaign next year, we are seeing both the need for increased private support for UConn and the remarkable ways in which the support of our alumni and friends is already transforming the University," says John Martin, president of the UConn Foundation. "Private giving is a catalyst for UConn to meet its potential."

Several major gifts in the past year helped expand academic opportunities, revitalize the state's natural history museum, and enhance Connecticut's health care services. The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History benefited from a transformational $1 million current and deferred private gift by Julia Budney. Maurice Farber, professor emeritus of psychology, donated $2 million to support scholarships and fellowships in his former department. A major new commitment from Foundation board member Alan Bennett, '69, will build upon his ongoing support for political science faculty and allow for the first endowed honors professorship at UConn.

In Farmington, a gift of $2.5 million from Carole and Ray, '56, '01H Neag made the UConn Health Center the first New England facility scheduled to offer TomoTherapy, a new cancer treatment available at only about 150 locations worldwide. The Health Center also benefited from a $1.25-million gift to establish the Lea's Foundation Center for Hematological Disorders.

The University of Connecticut Foundation Inc.'s mission is to solicit, receive and administer gifts and financial resources from private sources for the benefit of all campuses and programs of the University. It operates exclusively to promote the University's educational, scientific, cultural, and recreational objectives.

More information is available online at http://www.foundation.uconn.edu.

Steps taken to enhance pedestrian safety at Storrs

by Sherry Fisher

As part of the effort to foster safety and enhance the pedestrian environment, the University has placed fluorescent signs at crosswalks and has upgraded lighting on North Eagleville Road.

Higher intensity fixtures have replaced some of the black cast-iron poles along the sidewalks, according to Jim Bradley, associate vice president for architectural and engineering services. The lighting additions and upgrades are the combined effort of the University and Connecticut Light & Power, the company that owns the street lights on the road.

The University undertook a re-assessment of campus safety for pedestrians and motorists shortly after Carlee Wines, a UConn freshman from New Jersey, was struck and killed while crossing the road in the early hours of Jan. 20. The University has been working with EarthTech, an engineering consulting firm, to assistn in identifying needed improvements and determining how we make them.

In addition, a sidewalk was recently constructed from the buildings at College Square (just past the Police Department) to Hunting Lodge Road. North Eagleville is a state-owned road.

During the spring, the University commissioned EarthTech to examine the remaining 58 crosswalks on campus to determine whether they need improvements. The study has been completed and has been submitted to the Buildings and Grounds Committee. It will soon be presented to the Parking Committee, the Capital Projects Planning Advisory Committee, and the Department of Residential Life for comment.

The report's findings include: Crosswalk signs require updating (the current signs are intended for elementary and high schools, not pedestrian crossings); crosswalk signs are generally mounted too low on the posts; several of the crossings are missing handicap ramps; there is no sidewalk on a section of Route 195 and on Alumni Drive; and traffic speed is a concern on Route 195 and on Gilbert Road.

Bradley says the engineers have been asked to prioritize the improvements and provide cost estimates, so an upgrade plan can be developed.

Provost's research awards for 2008 announced

Recipients of the Provost's Scholarship Development Awards for calendar year 2008 were announced recently.

The Provost's Scholarship Development Awards program, previously known as the Provost's Research Fellowships, offers eligible faculty an opportunity for release time from teaching for one semester to engage in a long-term research project. This competitive program is designed to support and promote long-term research projects that cannot be funded via other, more traditional avenues.

The recipients for 2008 are:

Zeljko Boskovic, Professor, Linguistics
"Non Phrase or Determiner Phrase," Spring 2008

Michael P. Lynch, Associate Professor, Philosophy
"Truth as One and Many," Spring 2008

Thomas Recchio, Associate Professor, English
"The Cultural Uses of Cranford," Spring 2008

Altina Waller, Professor, History
"Sexual Politics in Andrew Jackson's Washington," Spring 2008

Engineering professor monitors safety of Connecticut bridges

BY NAN COOPER

The Minneapolis bridge collapse, which sent cars and trucks plummeting 60 feet into the Mississippi River during the evening rush hour on Aug. 1, brought the nation's bridges into the spotlight.

Behind the scenes for many years, a UConn professor of engineering has been working to help ensure the safety of Connecticut's bridges.

John DeWolf, a professor of civil and environmental engineering, has spent more than two decades on field research involving the monitoring of bridges in the state.

In 1985, he began research aimed at learning how existing technologies can be used to monitor in-service bridges on a variety of performance criteria, and how bridges perform and age over time.

Bridge safety is something most people take for granted. But the Minneapolis bridge collapse reminded Americans that parts of the nation's increasingly decaying infrastructure require attention and regular repair.

Connecticut's last bridge collapse took place in 1983, when a 100-foot portion of I-95 spanning the Mianus River in Greenwich crumbled, killing three people. The state has come a long way since that time, partly due to DeWolf's efforts.

In carrying out their research, DeWolf and his team selected a cross-section of the state's most important bridges and paired them with different sensor systems to determine which provided the most useful and reliable information. Each monitoring array is custom-tailored, based on the inspection concerns, traffic, age, and materials specific to the bridge. The monitoring apparatus includes a computer and hardware that operates various sensors. The data are collected at intervals and stored in the computer, from which they can be accessed remotely.

DeWolf uses sophisticated finite element analysis to make sense of the raw data. The resulting profile is then compared against the field inspection results. The points of convergence or deviation allow him to refine his analytical model and examine differences, to glean a better understanding of bridge behavior.

DeWolf conducts both short-term and long-term monitoring studies. He says the short-term monitoring is meant to complement the state's inspection system, and is conducted on selected bridges that have been targeted for some type of repair.

"For example, if inspectors find a crack, we can help them determine more precisely the nature of the problem and how it can be addressed for optimal safety while avoiding unnecessary repair costs," he says.

The National Bridge Inspection Standards call for every public bridge to be inspected a minimum of every two years. Currently, inspectors examine and rate bridges based on a "visual condition" rating system, with values ranging from 9 (best score) to 0 (worst). Since these ratings are observation-based, rather than discrete measurements, they involve a fair degree of subjectiveness.

DeWolf's studies involve quantifying metrics that reduce the subjective nature of the inspections and enhance bridge safety.

DeWolf has used as many as 52 sensors on any one bridge, and as few as 14. The arrays may include a combination of tilt meters, accelerometers, strain gauges, and thermocouples that measure tilt, vibration, strain, and temperature at various locations on a bridge. He currently has long-term monitoring arrays installed on six Connecticut bridges.

His objective with these long-term monitoring studies is to better understand how bridges perform and degrade over time, under different weather and temperature conditions, with varying use, and to develop assessment guidelines that can be applied uniformly and universally.

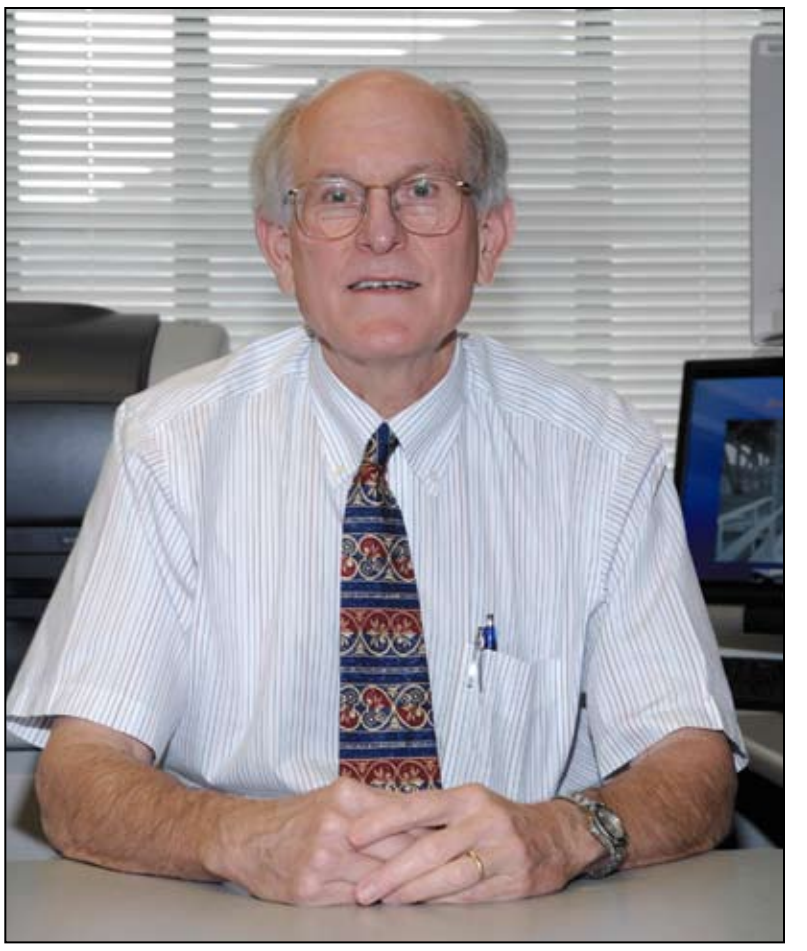


PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMEYER

John DeWolf, professor of civil and environmental engineering.

"We have learned a great deal about how bridges perform over time. Our field research has allowed us to develop techniques for structural health monitoring of bridges that can be applied broadly to assess the bridge infrastructure," he says.

One of the new systems his team deployed is the first of its kind: an array that relies on solar panels for its power source. The introduction of solar energy will improve the team's ability to keep an array in place and capture critical data over long periods.

Benton Museum hosts exhibition of works by Auguste Rodin

BY SHERRY FISHER

A kiss is just a kiss – unless you are looking at Auguste Rodin's celebrated sculpture.

"The Kiss" is one of 68 of the artist's bronzes in the exhibition *Rodin: A Magnificent Obsession, Sculpture from the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation* at the William Benton Museum of Art. The show runs through Dec. 16.

The exhibition includes sculptures ranging from monumental to small scale models, works on paper, photographs, and other documents. Wall murals and panels explore Rodin's life and the process of sculpture, and provide other information. A video produced by the Cantor Foundation describes the process of creation of the artworks.

"Rodin was the greatest sculptor of his time," says Steven Kern, director of the Benton museum. "We're excited to have his work here."

The exhibit was organized and made possible by the Iris and B Gerald Cantor Foundation. Admission is $5.

"The exhibition is not just for those in art and art history – it's also for people in the humanities and sciences," Kern says. "I think this exhibit opens up a conversation, not only about artistic inspiration, but about bronze, metals, and casting. We can talk about both the technical and the aesthetic side of Rodin's work."

David Woods, dean of the School of Fine Arts, says the exhibit "opens new perspectives of art for students, faculty, and members of the community. It raises the artistic standards of the Benton Museum to even higher levels."

PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMEYER

"The Cathedral," a cast of Rodin's 1908 sculpture made by the Georges Rudier Foundry.

Rodin was born in 1840 and died in 1917. Like many artists, he struggled for recognition throughout his early career.

"He prevailed over negative criticism and persevered until his work finally reached acceptance," Kern says.

Sculpture became a large-scale enterprise during the later part of the 19th century. An expanding middle class, growing cities, and the Industrial Revolution created a strong demand for multiple casts of popular sculpture. Both the avant-garde and the bourgeoisie admired Rodin and demanded his art.

"His work entered into popular culture in his own time," Kern says. "The market for his sculpture was huge, and he met the demands by casting reductions and enlargements of his work."

Rodin believed that being true to nature was the source of beauty. He refused to idealize his models: Instead, he emphasized every contour of the human body.

He was one of the first artists to maintain that a part of a figure, such as a hand or torso, could stand alone as a complete work of art. He found inspiration and new creative energy in the power and formal beauty he saw in fragments.

During the time in which Rodin created his sculptural masterpieces, the visual arts in France were varied, innovative, and revolutionary. As a complement to the sculptures by Rodin, the Benton's curator selected 15 works from the Benton's permanent collection by artists of the same period. These include works by Theodore Ribot, Alphonse Legros, and Camille Pissarro. *Rodin's Contemporaries* is on exhibit in the Benton's balcony gallery.

Some of the works in the main exhibition were cast during Rodin's lifetime, while others were cast after he died, according to his explicit wishes and instructions to the French government, responsible for the administration of his estate.

The history of each sculpture is described on labels and further explained in other text and the video, says Kern, noting that there has been some controversy regarding the authenticity and originality of the sculptures.

"These issues are fodder for discussion," Kern says. "The exhibition offers an opportunity to understand the historical and continued casting of Rodin's bronzes reflecting the artist's instructions and embracing his wishes in accordance with French and international law."

There will be noontime gallery talks about Rodin and his work on Oct. 2, Oct. 16, Dec. 4, and Dec. 11.

The museum is open Tuesday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Expert on parasitic diseases named to international panel

BY KRISTINA GOODNOUGH

Dr. T.V. Rajan, a professor of immunology at the Health Center, has been invited by the World Health Organization to serve a four-year term on its expert advisory panel on parasitic diseases.

Rajan is an expert on the biology of human lymphatic filariasis, a parasitic disease that causes elephantiasis, a grotesque thickening and hardening of the skin. It is one of the leading causes of permanent and long-term disability in the world.

While studying the disease, Rajan was puzzled why mice used in his research could rid themselves of the filariasis-causing parasite and avoid long-term illness, while millions of people in certain areas of the world suffered chronically from the disease. His hypothesis was that children born to women infected by the parasite during pregnancy were more likely to get the disease later in life.

"Instead of developing protective antibodies to the illness, the child's immune system does not recognize the mosquito-born parasite as a threat, and tolerates its presence," says Rajan. That means the mother's infectious status could help determine whether the children are more susceptible to the disease.

The World Health Organization estimates that about one billion people in 80 countries are at risk of filariasis, which occurs most frequently in India and Africa.

"This is a high point of my career," says Rajan. "I come from India, where about 50 percent of the cases occur. My grandmother had the disease. I worked on this disease in the hopes that I could play a role in global eradication efforts. Now I believe I will have the opportunity to do that."

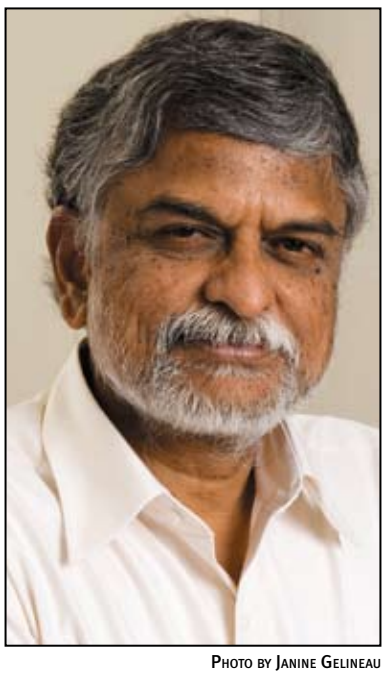


PHOTO BY JANINE GELINEAU

The Health Center's Dr. T.V. Rajan will serve on a policy-making panel.

Rajan is one of six members on the expert advisory panel on parasitic diseases. Two are from Asia, two from Africa, one from Europe, and one – Rajan – from the United States.

"I didn't solicit this," he says, "it just happened."

As a member of the panel, Rajan will be involved in policymaking related to the allocation of resources to eliminate the disease.

"Because of the work done in my laboratory over the past two decades, we now have the potential to predict whether a child one or two years old is likely to become infected," he says. "This information means we don't have to treat everyone. We can provide prophylactic measures just to those most at risk. The target population for those at risk of this disease is a billion people. With a fairly simple blood test, we can reduce that billion to a few million. That saves a lot of money for very poor countries."

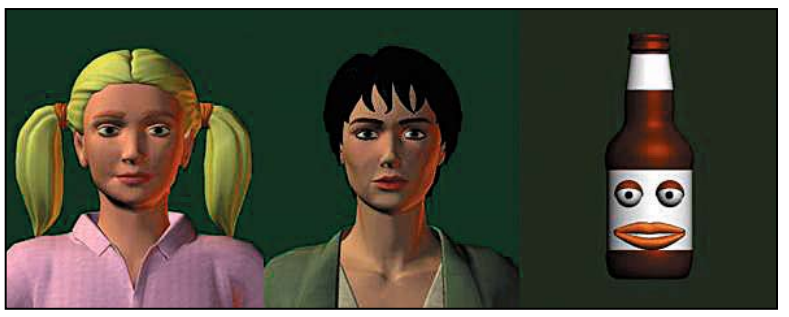
Rajan joined the Health Center in 1988. He received his medical degree from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and his Ph.D. from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University in New York City.

Communication sciences prof studies interactions in cyberspace

BY KAREN SINGER

In the online world, as in the offline world, first impressions set the stage for social interaction, according to UConn researchers.

Recent projects by Kristine Nowak and Christian Rauh found avatars – images representing humans in cyberspace – are perceived as more humanlike and more trustworthy when they have clear male or female characteristics than their androgynous counterparts.



A story about their research, which appeared in the July 5 issue of *New Scientist,* drew widespread national and international press attention.

Nowak, an assistant professor in communication sciences, and Rauh, a Ph.D. student, say research has shown that physical appearance influences perception in face-to-face communication, but little research has been done on how the visual characteristics of the avatar influence person perception online, or on what motivates people to choose particular avatars for various online interactions.

The *New Scientist* article, which summarizes a soon-to-be-published article, "Computers in Human Behavior," gives an account of two studies. In one study, participants were instructed to "get to know their partner," but asked not to disclose their name or physical characteristics, such as gender or race. Participants were represented by one of eight avatars during the interaction and interacted with one another by typing text messages using an Instant Messaging software. Avatar images included two male and two female human-like characters, a blonde girl with pigtails and a ketchup bottle with a face.

Participants in both studies rated the androgynous avatars as less credible than either masculine or feminine avatars.

"What we found was androgynous avatars are perceived as less anthropomorphic (human-like) than distinctly male or female avatars, and the perception of the avatar's credibility is driving the perception of the person's credibility," says Nowak, who has been studying avatars since she was a graduate student. She has been teaching at UConn since 2000, and currently supervises the Human-Computer Interaction Lab in the communication sciences department, where her research concentrates on how people use computer media, and how avatars affect the person perception process.

The most recent study, Nowak says, "has implications for how people use the Internet and avatars," especially at a time when avatars are proliferating on social networking and e-commerce websites.

Avatars range from simple images used for text messaging to highly imaginative and sophisticated digital creations in Second Life, a virtual world with five million individuals and more than 7,000 businesses.

Nowak notes that businesses are increasingly using avatars for virtual meetings, and some companies are even conducting job interviews with them.

Though press coverage of the UConn study tended to focus on the avatar angle, Nowak says, the results of her research are contributing to an understanding of how people communicate both online and offline.

"Discovering that communication processes do not substantially change in cyberspace isn't shocking," she says, "because people follow the same rules and processes for getting to know people on and offline."

In initial interactions, she adds, "We want to reduce uncertainty about how the other person is going to behave. The desire to reduce uncertainty is central to most interpersonal interactions."

Because reducing uncertainty appears to be more difficult when interacting with androgynous rather than clearly male or female-looking virtual images, Nowak advises people to craft their avatars carefully.

"Spend at least as much time thinking about your online image and the avatar you select to represent you as you do when you present yourself to the offline world, such as when you decide what clothes you're going to wear for the day," she says. "Think about the message you're sending with the avatar you're choosing, and consider how that might influence what others perceive."

PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMEYER

Kristine Nowak, assistant professor of communication sciences. Above are some of the avatars – images with human features – used in her research.

Nowak says she finds it strange, however, that people think they can get to know someone much better when they can see them face-to face rather than interacting online.

"Judgments of others in face-to-face interactions are made in an instant, with little cognitive thought," she says. "People are rarely consciously determining the factors they use in perceiving others, or in detecting deception, but we are very confident in our accuracy and ability to get to know others. When meeting someone face-to-face, such as at a bar, a person may feel confident enough to give another person a phone number after a 15-minute discussion.

"On the other hand," she adds, "we may meet someone online, chat with them for six months, analyzing the text of these messages and think very carefully about who this person is, but still have very little confidence and high uncertainty when we finally meet them face-to-face."

Nowak and her colleagues are seeking additional funding to continue their research.

"We next want to use avatars in different ways," she says. "We want to animate them and put them in different contexts.

"We'd also like to put them in an online learning context or marketing context and look at how the avatar credibility ratings change."

Jenny Barrows, left, a freshman, and Kathryn Levasse, a graduate student, study at Café Muse in the William Benton Museum of Art.

Photo by Peter Morenus

GRANTS

The following grants were received through the UConn Health Center's Office of Grants and Contracts in May 2007. The list represents new awards as well as continuations. The list of grants is supplied to the *Advance* by the Office of Grants and Contracts.

Federal Grants

Department	Prin. Investigator	Sponsor	Amount	Award Period
Oral Health & Diagnostic Sciences	Litt, M.	National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research	$302,248	7/03-3/08
Brief Focused Treatment for TMD: Mechanisms of Action				
Molecular Medicine	Rosenberg, D.	National Cancer Institute	$243,043	5/04-4/08
Molecular Characterization of ACF (Aberrant Crypt Foci)				
Immunology/Center for Immunotherapy of Cancer & Infectious Diseases	Srivastava, P.	National Cancer Institute	$309,344	3/04-2/08
Receptor for GP96 on Macrophages and Dendritic Cells				
Surgery	Sarfarazi, M.	National Eye Institute	$316,800	5/04-4/08
Functional Analysis of Optineurin in Glaucoma				
Genetics & Developmental Biology	Carmichael, G.	National Cancer Institute	$309,430	6/05-4/08
Processing and Function of Polyoma RNA				
Information Technology	Shapiro, L.	National Cancer Institute	$277,154	6/05-4/08
CD13 as a Biomaker for Chemoprevention of Breast Cancer				
Immunology/Center for Allergy & Infectious Diseases	McElhaney, J.	National Institute of Immunotherapy of Cancer & Infectious Diseases	$413,917	7/05-3/08
T-Cell Responses Predict Influenza Risk in Older Adults				
Immunology	Cone, R.	National Eye Institute	$359,270	5/06-4/08
Thymic Influence on Ocular Immunoregulation				
Center for Vascular Biology	Hla, T.	National Heart, Lung, & Blood Institute	$359,270	4/06-3/08
Sphingolipid Modulators of Vascular Growth & Homeostasis				
Cell Biology	Wolgemuth, C.	NSF, Physiology, Cellular, & Molecular Biology	$23,026	5/06-4/08
SGER: A Two-Phase Fluid Model of Prokaryotic Collective Swimming				
Psychiatry	Kranzler, H.	National Institute on Drug Abuse	$766,884	6/06-3/08
Genetics of Cocaine Dependence				
Neuroscience	Hewett, S.	National Institute of Neurological Disorders & Stroke	$291,009	7/06-4/08
IL1 and Hypoxic-Ischemic Insults				
Psychiatry	Kadden, R.	National Institute on Drug Abuse	$522,689	9/06-4/08
Contingency Management for Marijuana Dependence				
Immunology	Lefrancois, L.	National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases	$1,215,884	3/07-2/08
Modulation of Biodefense Response to Bacterial Pathogen				
Medicine	Koeppen, B.	National Center for Research Resources	$2,516,028	4/07-3/08
GCRC-Program Direction and Administration				
Psychiatry	Trestman, R.	National Institute of Mental Health	$82,750	2/07-1/08
Mental Health Research Infrastructure in Corrections				
Oral Rehabilitation, Biomaterials, & Skeletal Development	Kosher, R.	National Institute of Child Health & Human Development	$750,222	4/07-3/08
Genetic Control of Limb Development (Project 1)				
Neuroscience	Schiller, M.	National Institute of General Medical Sciences	$288,025	5/07-4/08
Building Motif Lexicons				
Oral Rehabilitation, Biomaterials, & Skeletal Development	Reichenberger, E.	National Institute of Arthritis & Musculoskeletal & Skin Diseases	$429,498	5/07-4/08
Genetic Analysis of Keloid Formation				
Neuroscience	Barbarese, E.	National Institute of Neurological Disorders & Stroke	$323,750	5/07-4/08
Oligodendrocyte Ontogeny and Differentiation				
Molecular, Microbial, & Structural Biology	Hoch, J.	National Center for Research Resources	$2,000,000	5/07-4/08
An Open-Access 800 MHZ NMR Spectrometer For Central New England				

Private Grants

Surgery	Albertsen, P.	CTRC Research Foundation	$1,320	9/01-5/13
Selenium & Vitamin E Chemoprevent				
Genetics & Developmental Biology	Rosengren, S.	University of California at San Diego Medical Center	$2,287	12/99-12/07
Medications in Pregnancy Project				
Oral Health & Diagnostic Sciences	Peterson, D.	UConn Foundation	$6,471	8/99-12/07
Mucosal Immunology Research				
Surgery	Kurtzman, S.	University of Pittsburgh	$9,525	2/97-1/08
NSABP Breast and Bowel Cancer Treatment				
Neurology	Felice, K.	Johns Hopkins University	$10,500	1/93-12/08
MDA – Sponsored Clinic				
Pediatrics	Salazar, J.	CT Children's Medical Center	$10,800	8/05-6/07
Immunity in Early Syphilis: Pathway to HIV Coinfection (Year 2)				
Hematology-Oncology	Mukherji, B.	University of California at Los Angeles	$23,000	7/06-6/07
Optimization of T-Cell Transduction with a Melanoma Epitope Specific TCR				
Cranofacial Sciences/Pediatrics	Hand, A.	University of Rochester	$23,720	4/06-3/08
Mechanisms – Anion Transport in Salivary				
Molecular Medicine	Tirnauer, J.	UConn Foundation	$25,000	7/06-6/07
Disruption of Spindle Positioning in Colon Cancer				
Medicine	Garibaldi, R.	UConn Foundation	$35,413	1/00-6/07
James E.C. Walker M.D./Primary Care				
Pediatrics	Lapin, C.	Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Therapeutics Inc.	$64,800	12/06-11/07
Clinical Research Facilitation Award				
Surgery	Choudhary, D.	CT Breast Health Initiative Inc.	$90,000	4/07-3/09
Mechanistic Effects of Cyp1B1 Variations in POAG				

State Grants

Pharmacology	Schenkman, J.	UConn-Storrs	$31,302	1/04-12/06
P450 Expression & Quantifying DNS Change				
Surgery	Kurtzman, S.	UConn-Storrs	$55,524	9/02-2/08
Near Infrared Diffused Light Imaging				
Center for Aging-Clinical Research	Gruman, C.	Dept. of Social Services	$177,262	4/05-4/09
Two for One Project				

CALENDAR Monday, September 17, to Monday, September 24

Items for the weekly ***Advance*** Calendar are downloaded from the University's online Events Calendar. Please enter your Calendar items at: http://events.uconn.edu/ Items must be entered by 4 p.m. on Monday for inclusion in the issue published the following Monday.
Note: The next Calendar will include events taking place from Monday, Sept. 24 through Monday, Oct. 1. Those items must be in the database by 4 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 17.
If you need special accommodations to participate in events, call 860-486-2943 (Storrs), or 860-679-3563 (Farmington), or 860-570-5130 (Law School).

Academics

Monday, 9/17 – Last day for students to make up Incomplete or Absence grades.
Tuesday, 9/18 through Tuesday, 9/25 – Examinations for course credit by examination.

Libraries

Homer Babbidge Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-2 a.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-10 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m.-2 a.m.
Dodd Center. Reading Room hours: Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed weekends.
Research Center hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; closed weekends.
Health Center Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-11 p.m.; Friday, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, noon-6 p.m.
Law Library. Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-11 p.m.; Friday, 1-9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, 1-9 p.m.
Torrington Campus Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Friday-Sunday, closed.
Stamford Campus Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday, closed.
Avery Point Campus Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends.
Waterbury Campus Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Sunday, closed.
Hartford Campus Library. Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

University ITS

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Help Desk Hours: Call 860-486-4357, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Ph.D. Defenses

Tuesday, 9/18 – Immunology. *Heat Shock Protein gp96 is Indispensable for Recognition of Multiple Pathogen Associated Molecular Patterns,* by Yi Yang (adv.: Li), 1:30 p.m., Room EG013, Academic Research Building, Health Center.
Thursday, 9/20 – Nutritional Sciences. *Influence of HIV on the Onset of Lactation among Ghanaian Women,* by Gloria Ethel Otoo (adv.: Perez-Escamilla), 11 a.m., Room 219, Jones Building.
Friday, 9/21 – Physics. ***Effects of Strong Interactions in Ultracold Rydberg Gases,*** by Jovica Stanojevic (adv.: Cote), 9:30 a.m.
Friday, 9/21 – Cell Biology. *Metallothionein Gene Dose Effects on Metal-Mediated Immunomodulation: Traditional and Microarray-Based Assessments,* by Darryn Unficht (adv.: Lynes), 2 p.m., Room 131, Biology/Physics Building.

Lectures & Seminars

Monday, 9/17 – Particles, Astrophysics, & Nuclei Physics Seminar. "Lattice QCD Simulations with Theta Terms: Neutron's EDM and Eta," by Taku Izubuchi, Kanazawa University. 2 p.m., Room P121, Gant Science Complex.
Monday, 9/17 – Constitution Day. "Beyond the Connecticut Compromise: Politics and Principles in the Making and Remaking of America's Constitution," by Akhil Reed Amar, Yale University. 4 p.m., Konover Auditorium.
Tuesday, 9/18 – Neuroscience Seminar. 4 p.m., Room EG013, Academic Research Building, Health Center.
Tuesday, 9/18 – Immigration Discussion. Faculty panel. 4 p.m., UConn Co-op.
Tuesday, 9/18 – American Experience Lecture. "True Yankees: Americans' 'Discovery' of the Eastern World," by Dane Morrison, Salem State College. 7:30 p.m., Room 103, Marine Sciences Building, Avery Point Campus.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Out-to-Lunch Lecture. "Out and Aging: MetLife Study of Lesbian and Gay Baby Boomers," by Barbara Howard and Paul Frene. Noon, Room 403, Student Union.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Statistics Colloquium. "Abuse of the Mode and an Alternative Ensemble Based Estimator," by Charles Lawrence, Brown University. 4 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Women's Center Lecture. "Life on the Line," with Faye Wattleton, Center for the Advancement of Women. Reception to follow at the Women's Center. 7 p.m., Student Union Theatre.
Thursday, 9/20 – CHIP Brown Bag Lecture. "Act NOW? School Based Interventions for Overweight Children," by Jaci VanHeest. 12:30 p.m., Room 204, Ryan Building.
Thursday, 9/20 – Teale Lecture. "Corporate Environmentalism – Doing Well by Doing Good?" by Geoffrey Heal, Columbia University. 4 p.m., Konover Auditorium.
Friday, 9/21 – Polymer Science Seminar. "Functional Polymers via Self-Assembly" by Marcus Weck, New York University. 11 a.m., Room IMS20, Gant Science Complex.
Friday, 9/21 – Environmental Engineering Seminar. "Ecohydrology of Seasonally-Green Desert Landscapes," by Enrique Vivoni. New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. Noon, Room 212, Castleman Building.
Sunday, 9/23 – Museum of Natural History Lecture. "The Copperhead Snake in Connecticut: A Species at the Northern Extreme of its Range," by Charles Smith. 3 p.m., Room 130, Biology/Physics Building.
Monday, 9/24 – Fierberg Lecture. "The Woman Who Created the First Kibbutz and the Women Who Followed: Some Sociological Insights" by Shulamit Reinharz, Brandeis University. 5 p.m., Room 143, Monteith Building.

Exhibits

Monday, 9/24 through Friday, 11/28 – Health Center. *Flowers, Fruits and Fungi: Explorations in the World of Nature,* art by Marilyn Pet. Main and mezzanine lobbies. Daily, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Health Center.
Through Friday, 10/12 – Babbidge Library. *Believers,* paintings by Carol Foley depicting the faces of victims of the 2005 tsunami. Gallery on the Plaza. Also, *Glimpses of Nature*, prints by Barbara Hocker related to her study of Wabi Sabi aesthetics and Asian philosophies. Stevens Gallery.
Through Friday, 10/12 – Dodd Center. *The Cow Jumped Over the Moon,* illustrations by Salley Mavor. Research Center Gallery.
Through Sunday, 10/28 – Alexey von Schlippe Gallery. *I-Park,* by Pamela Zagarensky, and works by other American and Bulgarian artists. Gallery on the second floor of the Branford House, Avery Point Campus. Open Wednesdays, noon-4 p.m. $3 admission for non-members. Opening reception, 9/21.
Through Saturday, 11/17 – Jorgensen Gallery. *Moku Hanga,* woodcuts by Lynita Shimizu. Lower level of Jorgensen Center. Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Through Saturday, 11/17 – Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry. *Shadows & Substance,* 20th anniversary exhibit. Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday, noon-5 p.m., Weaver Road, Depot Campus. Free admission, donations accepted. Docent-led tours available during museum hours.
Through Wednesday, 12/5 – Celeste LeWitt Gallery, *Movement and Light Series,* by Kelly James Carrington; and *Revelations and Realities,* by John Lazarski. Daily, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Health Center.
Through Sunday, 12/16 – William Benton Museum of Art. *Rodin: A Magnificent Obsession,* sculpture from the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation. $5 admission charge for this exhibit; museum members, UConn students, and children under 18 free. Also, through 12/16, *Rodin's Contemporaries*. Also, through 11/4, *42nd Annual Faculty Art Exhibition.* Gallery talk by Thomas Bruhn, Tuesday, 9/18, 12:15-1 p.m. Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, 1-4:30 p.m. General admission to the museum is free.
Ongoing. State Museum of Natural History & Connecticut Archaeology Center. *Human's Nature: Looking Closer at the Relationships between People and the Environment.* Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sunday & Monday, closed. Free admission, donations accepted.

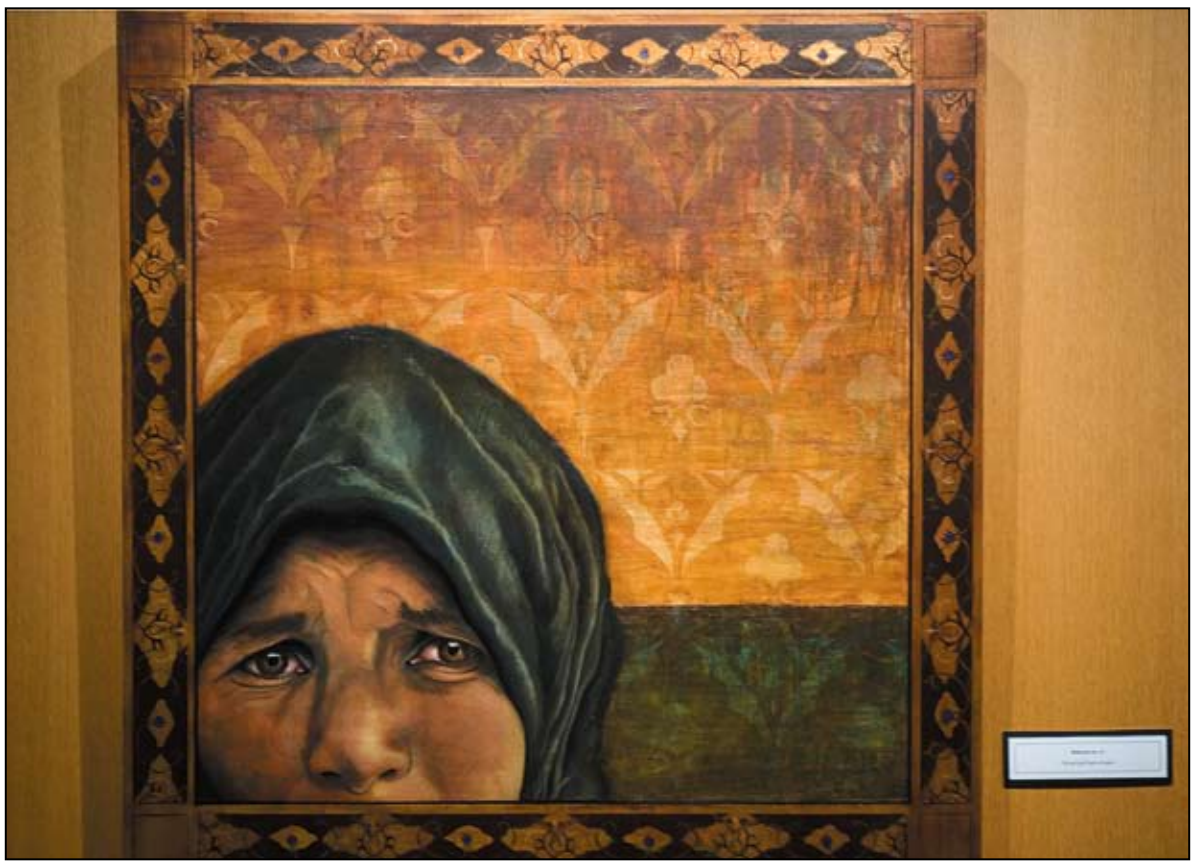


Photo by Frank Dahlmeyer

A painting by Carol Foley depicting a victim of the 2005 tsunami, part of the ***Believers*** exhibition on display in the Stevens Gallery at Babbidge Library. See Exhibits.

Performing Arts

Sunday, 9/23 – Winnie the Pooh. Tickets $11 and $13, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., Jorgensen Center of the Performing Arts.
Sunday, 9/23 – Music at the Benton. A performance of French Songs by soprano Constance Rock and tenor James Ruff, accompanied by pianist Minyoung Lee. Admission $10 for general public, $5 for Benton members, free for UConn students. 5 p.m., Benton Museum of Art.
Monday, 9/24 – Jazz Showcase. Admission $7; students and children free with ID. 8 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall.

Sports

Wednesday, 9/19 – Men's Tennis vs. Sacred Heart. 3 p.m., Tennis Courts.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Field Hockey vs. Harvard. 7 p.m., Sherman Family Sports Complex.
Saturday, 9/22 – Field Hockey vs. UMass. 1 p.m., Sherman Family Sports Complex.

Film

Tuesday, 9/18 – Human Rights Film. *Goodbye Hungaria* (2003), 6 p.m., Konover Auditorium.

Potpourri

Monday, 9/17 – Free HIV/AIDS Anonymous Rapid Testing. 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Room 403, Student Union.
Monday, 9/17 – Long River Reading. Bring a poem, short prose piece, or music to share at the open mic. Enjoy coffee, tea, snacks with other members of the UConn creative writing community. 7 p.m., Room 217, CLAS Building.
Tuesday, 9/18 – Publication Party. Wally Lamb, *I'll Fly Away: Further Testimonies from the Women of York Prison.* 6:30 p.m., UConn Co-op.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Yiddish Tish Discussion. Noon-1 p.m.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Welcome Reception for Dean Anne Bavier. 5 p.m., Conference Room, Foundation Building.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Women's Self Defense Workshop. 5:30 p.m., Schreiber Reading Room, Stamford Campus.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Free HIV/AIDS Anonymous Rapid Testing. 6 p.m.-9 p.m., Room 403, Student Union.
Wednesday, 9/19 – Publication Party. Leigh Grossman, *The Green Lion.* 6:30 p.m., UConn Co-op.
Thursday, 9/20 – Publication Party. Ellen Litman, *The Last Chicken in America.* 6:30 p.m., UConn Co-op.
Saturday, 9/22 – Natural History Museum Workshop. *Connecticut Herps!* Hands-on introduction to the reptiles and amphibians of Connecticut. Adults and children ages 6 and above. Advance registration required, $10 for Museum of Natural History members, $15 for non-members. 10 a.m., Connecticut State Museum of Natural History & Archaeology Center.
Monday, 9/24 – Publication Party. Jamie Trecker**,** *Love and Blood: At the World Cup with the Footballers, Fans, and Freaks.* 6:30 p.m., UConn Co-op.

Accounting changes *continued from page 1*

21st Century UConn allowed time to revise procedures and correct past problems.

"We were aware that there were problems through 2004," says Walker. "The question was whether there was sufficient progress made, beginning with 2005.

"It's clear from these audits that a lot of positive changes have been effectively implemented," he adds, "and the University is now better able to account for how our taxpayers' money is being spent."

The audit included some projects completed in 2003; projects completed in 2004, 2005, and 2006; and an audit of deferred maintenance and equipment projects from 1996 until 2005.

The reports were characterized as "unqualified," Scillia said, which in accounting terms means there are no significant issues.

Water recycling *continued from page 1*

for potable water withdrawn from the University's groundwater wells and would be particularly beneficial during prolonged dry conditions, Callahan says.

Callahan says microfiltration is routinely used in several areas of the country, notably Florida and Arizona. It is also used on some golf courses in Connecticut.

If the analysis indicates the project is feasible, Callahan says the University will likely require the support of state regulatory authorities before construction could begin. But, he added, with determination, cooperation, and some luck, the project could be operational in two to three years.

Youth Health Service Corps making positive impact across U.S.

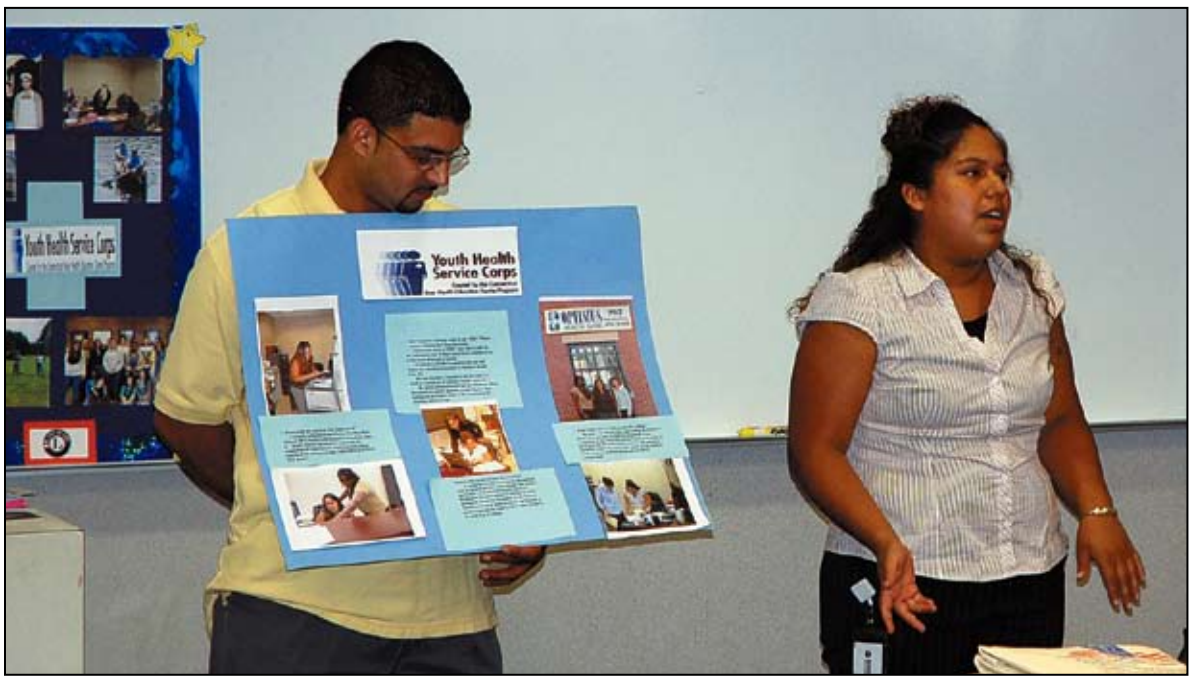


Photo supplied by the Center for Public Health & Health Policy

Neli Rivera, right, a Youth Health Service Corps student from Harding High School in Bridgeport, explains her service learning project to conference participants from around the country, as staff member Rick Cruz looks on.

by Carolyn Pennington

Youth Health Service Corps, which took root at UConn's School of Medicine, is now branching out nationwide.

Created by the Connecticut Area Health Education Center nearly three years ago, the Corps mobilizes diverse high school students to provide volunteer service in health care agencies. Its long-term goal is to help recruit these students into health care careers.

"I've always wanted to become a registered nurse, and since I've been volunteering, I've come to realize just how much I really want to be an RN," says Alicia White of Watertown, who volunteered at a nursing home. "This program changed my life."

Staff from Area Health Education Centers across the nation recently came to the UConn Health Center to receive training, materials, and support so they could replicate the Youth Health Service Corps in their home states.

The training was funded by a $1.1 million grant to the Northwestern Connecticut Area Health Education Center from the Corporation for National and Community Service.

"The conference was a great success," says JoAnn D'Avirro, associate director for service learning training and site development for the Youth Health Service Corps. "We now have Area Health Education Centers in eight states that will replicate our program this fall."

During the conference, students in the Corps discussed their projects. They explained how their volunteer work helped them develop a sense of civic responsibility and, at the same time, addressed unmet health care needs in the community.

Lashaya Collins from Waterbury, who volunteered at a soup kitchen and shelter, says, "I was happy to know I was putting a smile on someone's face. Helping others who are less fortunate than you is a great feeling."

Aulona Hoxha from Waterbury helped teach elementary school children about good oral care and healthy eating.

"I really enjoyed teaching the kids about dental hygiene and nutrition," she says. "I loved teaching them because they were so ready to learn and interested. I can't wait to do this again. I loved the whole experience."

Since December 2004, 730 Connecticut high school students have received training. They have performed more than 5,000 hours of volunteer service at about 50 health care agencies, including community health centers, homeless shelters, migrant farm worker clinics, and long-term care facilities.

Student volunteers complete a curriculum that includes modules on vulnerable populations; ethical and legal issues; applied health services; cultural competency; CPR and AED (automated external defibrillator) certification; health education and disease prevention; observation and data collection; emergency preparedness; and peer education and leadership.

Three Youth Health Service Corps students have been awarded the President's Volunteer Service Award recognizing outstanding volunteer service achievement.

New training helps students lead organizations effectively

by Sherry Fisher

Leaders of some 400 student organizations on campus will be better equipped to handle their jobs, thanks to a new training program.

The Student Organization Leaders Intentional Development program was developed by the Department of Student Activities to ensure that leaders of student groups are prepared to lead their organizations successfully and use all the resources available at the University.

Attendance at workshops, which run about 90 minutes, is mandatory for chief organization officers, secretaries, and chief financial officers. Attendance at an event planning workshop is mandatory for groups that host events.

Organizations that complete the program are eligible for services including access to facilities, organizational and financial advice, and may apply for funding from the student government.

"We're trying to make sure everyone is trained and can succeed," says Christine Wilson, director of student activities. "The organizations are already doing well, but we want to help students run them more effectively. The program provides a consistent foundation for all organizations to get started, and maximizes their success during the year."

Short-term and long-term learning assessments have been established to evaluate what students gain from their workshop experiences.

"Students can graduate being good leaders, but if we train them, they'll be even better ones," Wilson says. "We also believe that what students learn in the workshops will prepare them for leadership roles in the future."

Workshops for chief organization officers offer information on risk management; strategies for managing the transition of officers; suggestions for developing and leading effective groups; and strategies for recruiting and retaining members. Secretaries learn how to develop agendas, maintain records, and correspond effectively. Financial officers focus on financial planning, contacts, reimbursements, equipment inventories, and fundraising. Those who plan events learn about publicity, fundraising, budgeting, catering, and arranging for speakers and entertainment.

Samantha Sherwood, president of the Honors Council, was a participant in "How to Lead an Organization." She says she enjoyed learning about her personal leadership style: "I found some of the exercises to identify your individual leadership personality interesting and insightful. We learned how to use those qualities to benefit our organization."

Sherwood adds, "Before this program, the burden was on individual organizations. If you didn't have strong communication from year to year, it was difficult at the beginning of the year. I'm glad they've organized this program."

Jacqueline Guzman is involved in many student organizations. As vice president of administration in the Student Entrepreneurial Organization, she attended a workshop for secretaries.

"The workshop provided a lot of information, such as how to take minutes, plan an agenda, and keep records," she says. "It provided a lot of information that doesn't get passed down."

Guzman says student organizations will now have the guidance they need. "I think it's an exceptional program."

Jane Duffy, a graduate assistant in career services, presents workshops and is involved in assessing the program.

"We want to help students realize that the skills they acquire are transferable," she says. "Whether it's taking effective minutes, balancing a budget, or organizing an event and following through, the skills will be useful as they venture out into the workplace. The University is presenting a special opportunity for students that will make their organizations stronger and their leaders and members more confident. It's one more way UConn is on the cutting edge."

Photo by Frank Dahlmeyer

Melissa Arroyo, program director for student activities, gives a presentation on planning events as part of a new training program for leaders of student organizations.