



## Transition plan a 'starting point' for Hogan

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

A presidential transition plan outlining 16 broad issues the University must address has been completed and presented to the Board of Trustees, President Michael J. Hogan, and senior University leaders.

The plan, prepared by Katzenbach Partners, a consulting firm specializing in organizational transitions and change, is intended to facilitate a smooth transition from former President Philip E. Austin to Hogan.

The consultants worked closely with both Hogan and Austin, and conducted 60 interviews with a range of representative members of the University community, including faculty, staff, student life, alumni, legislators, major donors, and local leaders.

The issues identified range from the academic mission, the research enterprise, and students, to the Health Center, the regional campuses, diversity, athletics, long-term funding, and the partnership with the Town of Mansfield.

It is available on the President's official web site at <http://president.uconn.edu/> and on a new 'blog' web site to which documents are posted, called 'PresRelease.' The blog URL is: <http://blogs.uconn.edu/president/>

"The plan establishes a process and tone for this administration, by receiving information from all important stakeholders," says Hogan. "It presents a coherent perspective that puts everyone on the same page, and establishes the channels of communication between the new administration and its stakeholders."

Although hiring consultants to assist with a leadership transition is more common in corporate settings, it is becoming more widespread in higher education, too.

"The role of a university president has become much more complicated in the past 15 to 20 years," says Jack O'Kelley III, a principal with Katzenbach Partners. "The average tenure of a university president is a little under seven years, and many end in fewer than five, so it's imperative to get off to a good start."

see [Transition plan](#) page 2



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Debbie Ruszczyk, a junior majoring in horticulture, decorates trees for sale in the Floriculture building.

## Winter commencement speaker, honorary degree recipient named

BY RICHARD VEILLEUX

Charlotte Bunch, an activist, author, and organizer in the women's, civil rights and human rights movement for 40 years, will deliver the commencement address during UConn's fifth annual winter commencement exercises on Dec. 16.

Bunch, who is the founder and executive director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University, will deliver her talk to nearly 900 undergraduates about to join the ranks of UConn alumni. The ceremony, to be held in the Harry A. Gampel Pavilion, begins at 2 p.m.

Also during the event, Gary Gladstein, who with his wife has donated more than \$3 million to the University, including a \$1 million gift to establish the Judi and Gary

Gladstein Distinguished Chair in Human Rights, will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Bunch, whose work has played an instrumental role in the development of feminist studies as an academic discipline, will receive an honorary Doctor of Laws.

Nearly 10,000 people are expected to attend the mid-year ceremony. The decision to add a December event to complement the traditional May Commencement was made several years ago, against the backdrop of increasing numbers of students who, due to work pressures, internships, study abroad programs, or for academic reasons were increasingly completing their studies at the conclusion of the fall semester. Research in-

see [December Commencement](#) page 6

## Alum's gift establishes endowed professorship

Alan R. Bennett '69 has donated \$750,000 to establish an endowed honors professorship in political science – the first for both the Department of Political Science and the Honors Program. The professorship is intended to enhance high-level course offerings and faculty research.

"Alan Bennett's gift is generous and well-targeted," says Ross MacKinnon, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. "The professorship will enrich the already fine scholarly climate that exists for undergraduate students in political science, and reinforce the close association between the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Honors Program."

Bennett, a former honors scholar, says he wanted to support the programs that helped prepare him for a successful career. Now a partner at Ropes & Gray in Washington, D.C., he previously served in the general counsel office of the Food and Drug Administration and was counsel to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. He is a member of the UConn Foundation Board of Directors.

"I remember a real esprit de corps and individualized attention within the University, and wanted to give something back in return for that," says Bennett. "Maybe this professorship can serve as something of a model for future contributions, and together, they can help make both the Honors Program and the political science department nationally recognized centers of excellence."

see [Endowed professorship](#) page 6



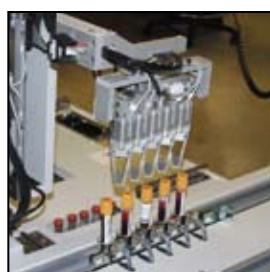
PHOTO BY DANIEL BUTTREY

Alan R. Bennett, '69

## Inside



5 New cultivar



5 Blood testing lab



8 Student blogs



PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

Robert Hudd, right, associate vice president of public and environmental safety, and Fire Chief Francis Williams, left, welcome two new firefighters, Elizabeth Holmes and Lawrence Bowden '04, to the UConn Fire Department. The new hires, made possible with the support of chief operating officer Barry Feldman, bring the force to 31 firefighters.

## Book on University history receives award

BY DAVID BAUMAN

A history of the University of Connecticut by emeritus professor Bruce Stave has won the Homer D. Babbidge Jr. Award for 2006.

Established in 1985 by the Association for the Study of Connecticut's History, the Babbidge Award is given to the scholar judged to have published the best work on a significant aspect of Connecticut's history during the previous calendar year.

Stave's book, *Red Brick in the Land of Steady Habits: Creating the University of Connecticut, 1881-2006*, tells the story behind UConn's rise from a small agricultural college to become the leading

public university in New England. Written in celebration of UConn's 125th anniversary, the book is organized chronologically by the administrations of UConn's 13 presidents.

Stave is Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of History emeritus, and associate editor of *The Journal of Urban History*, and editor of *The Oral History Review*.

The award was presented Nov. 3 at the fall meeting of the Association, held this year at the UConn School of Law.

It is the first time an individual has repeated as a winner. Stave was named the 1995 Babbidge Award winner for *From the Old Country:*

*An Oral History of European Immigration to America*.

Stave's *Red Brick in the Land of Steady Habits* also was a finalist for the Connecticut Center for the Book Award in Non-Fiction.

Stave's book "transcends the genre of public history with an incisive examination of the transformation of the University of Connecticut from an agricultural college to a major Research I university, warts and all," says Nancy Steenburg, a member of the awards committee of the Association for the Study of Connecticut's History and assistant professor of history at UConn's Avery Point Campus.

### Transition plan *continued from page 1*

Unlike at a corporation, however, "at a university, and a public institution in particular, there are many more stakeholders who have a voice," O'Kelley says, "and the process and the output are public information."

He says one of his observations based on the interviews is that the University of Connecticut has extremely strong support.

"The University has unusually strong support from the majority of its stakeholders," says O'Kelley. "There's a real love of the institution."

While the issues identified in the plan aren't new to members of the University community, it

is the first time they have been articulated in one document. Taken together, says Hogan, they convey the complexity of the tasks that face the University as a public higher education research institution.

The plan is intended to be a living document.

"It's important not to see this as a completed plan," Hogan says. "It's a starting point to help us get off the ground quickly. It gets us out of the blocks but not around the track."

The plan will be updated regularly on the web. Input is encouraged via the blog URL: <http://blogs.uconn.edu/president/>

"I want people to feel free to contact my office with their insights and concerns," Hogan says. "People on the ground often have great ideas."

He emphasizes that the plan is for the entire University community.

"It's for all of us," he says. "This transition isn't about one person, it's about the entire institution and the state. The plan is a tool to get us all moving in the same direction, with a common understanding and shared optimism about what's ahead for both the University and the state of Connecticut."

## Retired music professor Juel-Larsen dies at 78

Petter Juel-Larsen, professor emeritus of music, died Nov. 11. He was 78.

Juel-Larsen, who lived in Storrs, taught at UConn for 33 years. A popular lecturer, attendance in his music appreciation course sometimes topped 500 students.

He was well-known for giving his courses a dramatic flair, by turns pacing the aisles or sitting at the piano demonstrating a melody. He claimed never to have repeated a lecture. After retiring from the University in 1992, he turned his attention to dramatic productions.

Glenn Stanley, professor of music, remembers Juel-Larsen as a "wonderful colleague with a wry sense of humor" and a "wonderful mentor to me. He provided great intellectual stimulus, took an active interest in my research and teaching, and guided me through some turbulent waters from time to time."

Stanley says Juel-Larsen's community service contributions equaled his university work. "About these, he was exceedingly modest, but that was typical of this distinguished man who I will greatly miss."

Juel-Larsen grew up in Albany, N.Y. He graduated from Yale University in 1951 and the Eastman School of Music in 1955.

He enjoyed traveling; London and Scotland were his favorite places to visit. He lived in London for a year and took several sabbaticals there.

He was an accomplished concert pianist from an early age,

and performed in the U.S. and Europe.

He served in the army for three years and was assigned to the U.S. Military Academy Band at West Point, where he became the band's pianist. He studied for a year at the Royal Academy of Music in London before joining the UConn faculty in 1959.

During the 1960s, Juel-Larsen narrated a weekly radio program called "Night Themes" for WTIC-Hartford and then WQXR-New York. The show blended contemporary music and poetry with short meditations.

He narrated Christmas programs with the Boston Pops and the Hartford Symphony orchestras. He also planned and performed several solo dramatic readings, including a Christmas program at the Hillstead Museum in Farmington and, more recently, two programs at the Hartford Public Library.

Juel-Larsen was an avid book collector. He read the dictionary for pleasure and was conversant in French, familiar with German and Italian, and remembered snippets of Norwegian from the pre-war European summers of his childhood.

He is survived by Ann, his wife of 24 years; and his three children, Petter Niels, Michael, and Sara. Contributions may be made to Joshua's Trust, the St. Mark's Chapel Organ Fund, or Amnesty International.

## UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Advance

Elizabeth Omara-Otunnu  
Editor

Contributing Writers.....David Bauman, Sherry Fisher, Michael Kirk, Beth Krane, Mark J. Roy, Richard Veilleux

Health Center Writers.....Chris DeFrancesco, Kristina Goodnough, Maureen McGuire, Carolyn Pennington

Designer.....Betsy J. Surprenant

Calendar Editor.....Christian Shank

Photo Editor.....Peter Morenus

Student Photographers.....Frank Dahlmeyer, Andrea DiNino, Jessica Tommaselli

Manager, Media Communications.....Karen A. Grava, APR

The *Advance* is published weekly during the academic year, except during breaks. It is distributed free to faculty, staff, and students at the University of Connecticut. Published by University Communications, 34 North Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06269-3144. Phone: 860.486.3530.

Periodical permit (ISSN 0746-3170, USPS 703-730) at Storrs, CT.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the *Advance* at the above address.

Advance website: <http://www.advance.uconn.edu>  
E-mail: [advance@uconn.edu](mailto:advance@uconn.edu)

# Environmental sciences, engineering fellowships boost research

BY CURRAN KENNEDY, CLAS '08

If life is about being in the right place at the right time, geosciences graduate student David Hoover was in the right place – the Center for Environmental Sciences and Engineering (CESE) – in time to take advantage of a program to fund his summer research.

Hoover, who is in the second year of a master's degree program through the Center for Integrative Geosciences in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, last summer received one of 25 Multidisciplinary Environmental Research Awards for graduate students.

Proposals are now being accepted for graduate summer research awards for 2008.

"This grant funded my research through the summer, which was great," says Hoover, who is studying the effects of climate change. "There's a tendency towards specialization in the sciences, but

this award's multidisciplinary approach allowed me to take ideas from different fields and put them together."

The CESE grant enabled him to travel to Kansas to do field work on the ecological effects of rainfall changes on tallgrass prairie.

"This project examines how predicted changes in the timing and intensity of precipitation may affect plants in the tallgrass prairie," Hoover says. "Understanding this response to climate change is important because grasslands cover 40 percent of the world's land surface, feed the world's wild herbivores and livestock, and remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere."

This summer, CESE expects to award 20 to 25 new multidisciplinary environmental research awards. The awards of around \$5,000 are intended to support research that is not currently funded.

To be eligible, a student must be in good standing in a graduate program at UConn at the time of application and in summer 2008. Applicants must identify two graduate faculty mentors who will collaborate in the conduct of the research, and the mentors must be from two different disciplines – preferably from two different departments.

Last summer, CESE gave awards to 25 students from 17 departments in CLAS, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the School of Engineering. Their research involved such diverse fields as anthropology, ecology and evolutionary biology, marine science, materials science, and chemical engineering.

The deadline for submitting proposals is Feb. 1, 2008. More information and proposal instructions are available at CESE's web site, [www.cese.uconn.edu](http://www.cese.uconn.edu).



PHOTO BY TERESA PHILLIPS, '08

Graduate student David Hoover received a CESE research fellowship last year.

## Taylor joins in discussion on blending multicultural, international education

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

A national movement is afoot to bridge the gap between internationalization and multicultural education in higher education, and the University of Connecticut is involved in the discussions.

The American Council on Education (ACE) is proposing to launch a three-year, multi-institutional initiative to model good practice for promoting greater collaboration between internationalization and multicultural education.

In late October, ACE invited officials from 15 higher education institutions to Washington, D.C. to serve as an advisory group to help refine the proposal and to plan for a national symposium to be held in summer 2008. UConn was represented by Ronald Taylor, vice provost for multicultural and international affairs.

In a paper, ACE says the human tendency to create dichotomies has meant that multiculturalism, loosely defined as domestic diversity, has been contrasted with and separated from international issues.

"Few institutions have brought internationalization and multicultural education together in synergistic and complementary ways and, consequently, the educational approaches for teaching about difference do not truly reflect the pluralism of American society, nor do they adequately prepare students for this global era."

UConn is among a handful of institutions that have combined multicultural and international affairs.

When the administration put international affairs under the same umbrella as multicultural affairs five years ago, the move was little

understood, says Taylor, but "it was really very forward-looking."

Since that time, he says, "we've been melding philosophies and the way we operate. It took us a fair number of years to get people to understand that we're all heading in the same direction and share many of the same assumptions."

"The risk of doing things in our separate silos is that it perpetuates what we perceive to be the correctness of our own perspective," he adds.

Boris Bravo-Ureta, executive director of international affairs, says he has become increasingly enthusiastic about the move.

He says the Department of International Services and Programs, in particular, has changed significantly since it was relocated to the Student Union, along with the other cultural centers.

"It used to be very much a separate operation," he says. "Now we are able to increasingly integrate it with the other centers."

Bravo-Ureta says he hopes to see an "ever closer connection" in terms of joint activities and programming, and also further integrated research efforts.

Jeffrey Ogbar, associate professor of history and director of the Institute for African American Studies, says that although the African American Studies program at UConn has had a longstanding interest in issues related to the African Diaspora, having the various units together has influenced the Institute's choice of programs, "to make connections with meaningful impact beyond the U.S."

For example, the Institute has been one of the University sponsors of the Amistad Study Abroad program, which took students to

Africa this fall and will head to the Caribbean in the spring.

Elizabeth Mahan, associate executive director of international affairs, says there is a case for combining multicultural and international affairs. "What makes society in the U.S. multicultural is no longer the traditional minorities but new immigrants who create new cultures and subcultures in the society. The U.S. is not a separate, coherent culture and that means we have to think about what is 'multicultural' in a different way, and think about what is 'international' in a different way, too."

Taylor points to 9/11 as one of the reasons the issue has now come to the fore in higher education.

"9/11 helped demonstrate that we were sorely lacking in knowledge of other cultures and other perspectives, and that needed to change," he says. "The focus on national as opposed to international is ultimately artificial."

"We're a country of different cultures," he adds, "but the irony is that over time, we've become so insular in our perspective. We've not invested much in thinking about the rest of the world."

He notes that UConn's revised general education requirements, which took effect in 2005, recognize the need for students to be exposed to international as well as domestic diversity.

The issue of integrating multiculturalism and internationalization is now being pursued not only by ACE but also by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. "These are the two biggest higher education organizations in the U.S.," says Taylor. "I think we can be sure this notion will take root."

## Barreca invited to join Chronicle of Higher Ed blog

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

Regina Barreca, professor of English, is one of seven academics around the country who will be writing a new blog for the *Chronicle of Higher Education* three times a week.

Barreca, an expert on women's writing and feminist theory and 20th-century British literature, will be writing about culture and humor.

The writers are featured in a column called "Brainstorm, Lives of the Mind" and will appear on the *Chronicle's* web site and in its daily news update.

"Blog sounds like an expletive, something muttered under the breath when a jerk steps on your foot in an overcrowded, wet-wool-smelling, Ph.D.-burdened elevator at the MLA," Barreca wrote in the first installment on Nov. 19.

But her students are excited about it, she wrote. "Usually, they're only proud of other undergraduates dressed in blue-and-white uniforms, the ones with a white-dog mascot clapping nearby. But when the ones hanging around my office heard I'd be part of a blog, they made sounds of approval of the sort that nurses make when a patient begins eat-

ing solids."

Since the first installment, Barreca has written about graduate school, academic jealousy, holiday shopping, and watching *Law and Order* on television.

"I like to analyze everyday things that happen and write about them," she says. "Most of what I write will be about my students."

Barreca is in good company. The other "Brainstorm Bloggers," as the *Chronicle* calls them, are Mark Bauerlein, professor of English at Emory University; Laurie Fedrich, a painter who is director of the Comparative Arts and Culture Graduate Program at Hofstra University; Dan Greenberg, an observer of science policy and politics; Stan Katz, director of the Center for Arts and Cultural Policy Studies at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School; Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, former president of both the University of Hartford and George Washington University; and Bob Zemsky, chairman of the Learning Alliance at the University of Pennsylvania.

## Publication notice

This is the last issue of the *Advance* for the fall semester. We resume weekly publication on Jan. 22. Happy holidays!

# English professor's novel explores Russian immigrant experience

BY KENNETH BEST

Like Masha, the central character in her debut novel, *The Last Chicken in America: A Novel in Stories*, Ellen Litman came to the United States from Moscow and faced the challenges of assimilation into a new culture.

And like her character, Litman also initially pursued studies in computer science and mathematics before following her dream.

"I think the first years of adjusting, assimilating, and coming to terms with this new life were very close to what I actually experienced," says Litman, assistant professor of English and associate director of UConn's Creative Writing Program. "The events themselves were different – Masha is not a writer, although she ends up studying literature – but the major theme is true. My teachers and parents explained there was not a place to study writing in Russia and no future in it."

After arriving with her family in Pittsburgh, where her aunt lived, Litman was finally able to begin writing, after working as a computer programmer and earning a master's degree in English from Syracuse University. She eventually began to write about Squirrel Hill, the Russian immigrant community within Pittsburgh.

"I always knew I was writing these stories as part of a collection," she says. "I didn't know how closely linked they would be, or

that it would become a novel of stories. I did know they would have a theme (Russian immigrants), they would be set in the same neighborhood and, to some degree, there would be recurring characters."

*The Last Chicken in America* (published by W.W. Norton Co.) follows the life of a young woman who struggles to synthesize multiple generations and cultures within a community of families trying to do the same. The book has been well-received, with *Publisher's Weekly* describing it as "less like a novel than a coherent set of mostly first-person character studies by a very promising writer," and a favorable review in the Oct. 21 *New York Times* Sunday Book Review.

Litman's talent has also been recognized within the writing community. She received the 2006 Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Award, which is presented to "women writers who demonstrate excellence and promise in the early stages of their careers" – a stellar achievement for someone who arrived in the United States 15 years ago without fluency in English.

"It took years to come to this idea that I could even take a class in writing, because I didn't think I'd be able to write in a second language," Litman says. "I studied English in Russia, but I wasn't fluent. I started getting fluent after I moved away from my family and

had no interactions with anybody Russian."

She says she discovered that overcoming the barrier of writing in a second language was a matter of thinking in terms of stories.

"No matter what language, you'll still be thinking of stories and characters. It's more or less universal," she says. "I've been reading all my life. I've read so much Russian literature, and I'm reading a lot of contemporary American literature. My writing happens to be influenced by growing up in Russia, just as someone growing up here in the South might draw on the traditions of Southern writing and culture."

Litman is part of a group of young Russian writers who have arrived in the U.S. in recent years and are emerging with their own style and following. She has been compared to Gary Shteyngart, the Leningrad-born writer who grew up in New York City and teaches at Columbia University, who last year published his second novel, *Absurdistan*.

"There's been quite a few Russian immigrant writers whose books either just came out or are coming out in the next year, which is quite exciting and really interesting to watch," says Litman. "I went to New York to do a reading and I was talking to another Russian writer, Anya Ulinich, who just had her novel, *Petropolis*, published. We were saying how great it would



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Ellen Litman, assistant professor of English, who recently published her first novel, is associate director of the Creative Writing Program.

be if there were this huge new movement of Russian-American writers."

Even as she continues to travel around the United States to promote her book this fall, Litman is busy teaching a graduate fiction workshop and organizing events for the Creative Writing Program. In the spring, she will teach a course on producing literary magazines – in this case UConn's

*Long River Review* – as well as continuing work on her next novel, set in Russia during the mid-1980s, the years of the break-up of the Soviet Union known as perestroika. Litman says after that novel is completed, she will change topics.

"I think my next project will not have anything to do with Russia. I do want to look at other things," she says. "It will be an interesting challenge."

## Six projects to benefit from Provost's research equipment grants

BY CINDY WEISS

Six proposals from researchers in the sciences and engineering won a total of \$2 million of equipment funding in the recent Provost's Research Equipment Competition.

The six, chosen from 31 proposals submitted, include a total of 62 researchers who are on the teams that will use the equipment. The winning principal investigators (PIs) say their new equipment will be available to other researchers at UConn, too.

The funded proposals and their faculty PIs are: Mark Aindow, C. Barry Carter, and Lei Zhu from chemical, materials, and biomolecular engineering for a scanning transmission electron microscope; James Cole from molecular and cell biology for a fluorescence detector for the analytical centrifuge; Senjie Lin from marine sciences for a cytobuoy and fast repetition rate fluorimeter; Joseph LoTurco from physiology and neurobiology for an intravital multiphoton imaging system; Steve Suib from chemistry for a tandem mass spectrometer; and Adam Zweifach from molecular and cell biology for a flow cytometer.

The cost of the equipment to be purchased ranges from \$145,000 for the fluorescence detector to \$800,000 for the scanning transmission electron microscope, which engineers hope to be able to

purchase at a discount for about \$500,000.

The new equipment, which must be bought by May 2008, will enable scientists and engineers to better understand such things as the biodiversity and environmental stresses on Long Island Sound and to study materials such as metals, ceramics, semi-conductors, and polymers at an extremely fine scale.

**"The ability to perform these types of experiments will place us in a strong position to secure new support for our research programs."**

**Mark Aindow, professor of chemical, materials & biomolecular engineering**

It will allow chemists to do much more sensitive analyses and enable molecular biologists to study in detail one protein in a complex mixture.

Seventeen users from nine different departments are listed on one successful proposal to purchase a flow cytometer.

Adam Zweifach, associate professor of molecular and cell biology, the PI, says the instrument will aid the study of tumor

and virus-infected cells and will streamline their ability to make stable cell lines.

It will help stem cell researchers on the Storrs campus and will eliminate the need to travel to the Health Center, which has several flow cytometers, to bring back live cells to Storrs for further study.

"This is certainly going to make it easier to apply for my competitive renewal," says Zweifach, whose research is funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

That was one of the intents of the competition, says Suman Singha, vice provost for academic administration and co-chair of the competition committee.

"The committee was looking at what was best for moving the University's research enterprise forward," says Singha. "We strongly expect this will enhance our ability to get external grants."

In many cases, lacking one piece of equipment has hindered researchers from obtaining competitive external grants, he notes.

Senjie Lin, associate professor of marine sciences and PI on one of the successful proposals, will purchase a \$190,000 cytobuoy and fast repetition rate fluorimeter. These two pieces of equipment can be towed through the ocean, pumping a narrow stream of water through the instruments. That will allow scientists to study at a cellular level the tiny living organ-

isms in Long Island Sound, an area of focus for the marine sciences department.

"This will substantially strengthen our ability to make high time-resolution observations in the sea," says Lin. "These instruments will enable us to gain an understanding of biodiversity, environmental stress and ecological adaptation, population dynamics, and oceanographic processes that regulate fisher productivity, hypoxia, and water quality."

Obtaining a new scanning transmission electron microscope (TEM) will enable 21 engineers and chemists on one of the winning proposals to look at the size, shape, and features of a variety of materials at a very fine scale, says Mark Aindow, professor and director of the materials science and engineering program and one of three PIs on the proposal.

The new equipment will replace a 25-year-old TEM housed at the Institute of Materials Science. It will be digital – the old instrument uses film – and will allow researchers to strain materials and see how they deform as they are looking at them.

It will also allow them to look at soft materials, using frozen samples, without damaging them.

"The ability to perform these types of experiments will place us in a strong position to secure new support for our research pro-

grams," says Aindow.

James Cole, professor of molecular and cell biology, says the fluorescence detector for the analytical centrifuge will reinforce UConn's reputation as a leading national center for analytical ultracentrifugation and biophysics. Cole is PI on that proposal. Very few institutions have a fluorescence detector for their analytical ultracentrifuges, he says.

His research group will use it to study the behavior of a protein that is important in anti-viral defense.

The \$2 million equipment competition was funded by reallocating \$1 million for 2008 faculty hires that is now in the budget, before the new faculty have been hired, with matching funds made available by the University's chief financial officer.

Gregory Anderson, vice provost for research and graduate education and dean of the graduate school and co-chair of the competition committee, says he hopes the large equipment grants awarded in past years might be offered again in the future.

Previously, these were sponsored by the Research Advisory Council, which is funded through indirect cost returns on researchers' grants.

The committee's work in selecting the winning proposals was hard because of the high quality of the submissions, says Singha.

# UConn horticulturalist develops new variety of poinsettia

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

The Floriculture Greenhouse is colorful at this time of year: flame red, rose pink, cream, and burgundy poinsettias pack the benches as far as the eye can see.

Tucked in among them is a golden gem.

The plant, named Cinnamon Stick, is Bob Shabot's baby, and he has been nurturing it since its infancy. Its color and shape make it unique among poinsettias.

After five years of careful propagation and small-scale testing, the plant is now undergoing trials in Germany and Colorado. Shabot, a horticulturist in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, is working with UConn's Center for Science and Technology Commercialization and may apply for a patent on it soon.

The poinsettia, an herbaceous perennial native to Mexico, was introduced to the United States in the 1800s. It is named after Joel R. Poinsett, the first U. S. ambassador to Mexico. The winter-flowering plant has since become inextricably linked with the holiday season. Poinsettias have undergone extensive breeding and selection to produce the hundreds of cultivars that exist today.

"Everybody wants something new," says Shabot. "Every year, there's a subtle change."

UConn has been growing poinsettias for many years for teaching and research and for sale through the Floriculture Greenhouse. In the past 10 years, the University has also served as a trial site for new varieties.

Suppliers – there are about half a dozen in the U.S. – send new cultivars free of charge to various trial locations around the country, where they are evaluated for their response to regional growth conditions.

The trials give retail and wholesale growers in the area an opportunity to look at the plants and decide on their options, says Richard McAvoy, a professor of plant science who oversees the trials.

"Poinsettias are an important crop in floriculture," he says. "As an extension specialist, I deal with commercial growers. They're always interested in new plant material, but don't always have space to grow different cultivars side by side and evaluate them. We do the trials as a service."

Trial plants are grown for a season and then mostly offered to local customers through the greenhouse. In addition to finding out the plant's hardiness, the suppliers and the growers are interested in how consumers respond to different colors and shapes.

This year, the UConn greenhouse is growing more than 1,000 plants of about 90 different varieties.

"That's just the tip of the iceberg in terms of what the suppliers have available," Shabot says.

It was five years ago that Shabot first noticed something different about two branches of a particular specimen, Cinnamon Star, a variety originated by Fischer USA and being grown at UConn for teaching purposes.

The parent plant is a creamy golden color, with horizontal bracts. What caught Shabot's eye was not only the color – a deeper gold, almost russet – but also the shape: Cinnamon Stick has bracts that point upward, giving the flower a vase-like shape.

"That was an attention-getter," Shabot says.

He says this type of mutation in plants – known as a sport – occurs naturally.

"Sports are very common," says Shabot, who has worked as a horticulturist for nearly 40 years, "but they are rarely of any consequence. Cinnamon Stick was a once-in-a-lifetime find."

"The vast majority of commercially viable cultivars are the result of breeding work," he adds. "The chances of finding a commercially acceptable cultivar as a sport are one in a million."

Once a promising sport is found, it is propagated vegetatively to accumulate a block of genetically identical plant material that can be studied. Shabot says one of the primary concerns in ascertaining whether the new plant could ultimately be commercially viable is whether the mutation will maintain its characteristics consistently.

Each year for the past several years, Shabot has grown 20 to 30 plants of the new cultivar. So far it has performed well, and has drawn favorable attention from local growers, as well as from individuals who've been asked to try it out at home.

For now, Cinnamon Stick mostly remains in the greenhouse,

where Shabot can continue to observe and, as he describes it, "tinker" with it.

Come Christmas, most of the other poinsettia plants will be sold, leaving the greenhouse growing tables bare.

But Shabot is already planning for next year's holiday season.

"Christmas begins in January," he says.

Before the end of January, he must place the University's order for the poinsettia cuttings that will arrive in August.

Not only that, the Easter lilies have just been planted.



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Horticulturist Robert Shabot examines the unusual vase-shaped flower on a new poinsettia cultivar known as Cinnamon Stick.

# Health Center's blood testing laboratory now fully automated

BY CAROLYN PENNINGTON

A new automated clinical laboratory is adding another level of patient protection at the Health Center, as well as cost-savings and safety benefits for staff.

"This is a state-of-the-art system that has not been implemented to

the extent we have in any other hospital in Connecticut," says Dr. Sidney Hopfer, professor of pathology and laboratory medicine.

Over the past several years, the Health Center has changed incrementally to automated systems. Now with one small tube

of blood, 88 different tests can be analyzed in a matter of minutes. Those results are immediately sent via computer to the hospital staff or physician's office that requested the tests. In the emergency room, where the time factor is really crucial, instead of hours, complete the

usual battery of tests is completed in less than 15 minutes.

The new automated equipment fills one large room and is made up of a track system that transports the tubes of blood through a complicated network of testing stations. The automation is able to handle up to four times the current test volume, enabling the laboratory to grow and provide more test results faster without the need for additional staff. Since 1999, the volume of blood tests performed has doubled to nearly two million tests a year.

A quick answer for worried patients is always a bonus, but the new system brings other benefits. Less blood is collected during the phlebotomy, and because the specimen is handled by human hands less often, the integrity of the specimen is more likely to remain intact.

There are also fewer transcription errors due to the paperless environment and an entire year of results can be placed on one CD so storage area is saved. If the patient's blood has been tested before, those results are saved and can be used to compare to current test results using sophisticated algorithms in the computer.

For those who work in the lab,

there are safety and ergonomic benefits. Fewer tubes need to be drawn and decapped (about 10 percent of specimens require removal of the tube cap) which means less chance of spillage or breakage and less risk of exposure for the staff.

Hopfer says in the long run, total laboratory automation has produced significant cost savings for the Health Center. "One of the biggest expenses we had was sending out samples to other labs for testing. Now we can virtually avoid that added cost. We also save money because we utilize our staff more efficiently and negotiate better deals on instrument and equipment expense because of the high volume of tests we do."



PHOTO BY CAROLYN PENNINGTON

Dr. Sidney Hopfer, a professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, checks the progress of blood vials as they pass through the Health Center's automated system.



PHOTO BY CAROLYN PENNINGTON

Vials of blood begin their journey through the testing process.



State Rep. Pamela Sawyer, right, meets with Ann Bavier, dean of nursing, left, and Barbara Koerner, professor and former dean of nursing, during an event at the School of Nursing Dec. 3, honoring the former dean.

PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

## GRANTS

The following grants were received through the UConn Health Center's Office of Grants and Contracts in September 2007. The list represents new awards as well as continuations. Additional grants received in September were published in the Dec. 3 *Advance*.

Department	Prin. Investigator	Sponsor	Amount	Award Period
<b>Private Grants</b>				
Immunology	Srivastava, P.	Lea's Foundation for Leukemia Research Inc.	\$15,000	9/99-12/06
<i>Treatment of Indolent B-Cell Lymphoma and CLL Patients (HSP70)</i>				
Cell Biology	Epstein, P.	Lea's Foundation for Leukemia Research Inc.	\$34,500	8/06-12/07
<i>Phosphodiesterase as a Target for Leukemia Treatment</i>				
Psychiatry	Steinberg, K.	Children's Trust Fund Council	\$216,667	6/07-6/08
<i>Nurturing Families Program</i>				
Community Medicine & Health	Bailit, H.	University of the Pacific	\$398,563	9/07-7/10
<i>California Pipeline Phase II Grant</i>				
Psychiatry	Briggs-Gowan, M.	University of Illinois	\$32,000	3/06-1/08
<i>Observe &amp; Measure Preschool Behavior Prob. DHHS MH68455</i>				
Psychiatry	Ford, J.	Medical University of South Carolina	\$673	9/06-5/08
<i>Vocational Outcomes for Youth with Substance Abuse Problems &amp; High HIV Risk</i>				
Genetics & Developmental Biology	Graveley, B.	University of California-Berkeley	\$192,723	5/07-3/08
<i>Comprehensive Characterization of the Drosophila Transcriptome</i>				

Medicine	Storey, E.	Univ. of California-Berkeley	\$49,883	9/06-9/07
<i>Berkeley Center for Environmental Public Health Training</i>				
Oral Health & Diagnostic Services	Nichols, F.	The Forsyth Institute	\$37,000	4/07-3/08
<i>Disruption of Innate Immune Function BYP. Gingivalis Phosphatidylethanolam</i>				
Psychiatry	Tanev, K.	University of Rochester	\$4,125	7/05-6/07
<i>Cooperative Huntington's Observational Research Trial</i>				

## State Grants

Cell Biology	Peluso, J.	Department of Public Health	\$281,016	7/07-2/09
<i>PGRMCI SIRNA as an Adjunct Therapy with Cispatin to Kill Human Ovarian</i>				
Community Medicine & Health	Gregorio, D.	Department of Public Health	\$107,409	7/07-2/09
<i>Biomedical Research</i>				
Medicine	Ferris, A.	UConn-Storrs	\$26,918	7/07-9/07
<i>Food Stamp Nutrition Education: Food Stamp Connections</i>				
Community Medicine & Health	Schensul, S.	Department of Public Health	\$220,281	1/06-12/07
<i>National HIV Surveillance</i>				
Medicine	Meyer, J.	Department of Public Health	\$8,000	7/07-6/08
<i>Occupational Health Surveillance</i>				
Psychiatry	Huey, L.	Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services	\$175,006	3/07-3/08
<i>MOA Between DMHAS and UCHC</i>				

## December Commencement continued from page 1

icated that few of the December graduates attended the May event.

Since 2003, when about 650 students graduated, an increasing number of students have taken advantage of the extra ceremony. This year, 874 students are eligible for the Dec. 16 Commencement, more than half of whom will earn their degrees from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

A native of New Mexico, Bunch has worked at Rutgers since 1987, where she now holds the title of Board of Governors Distinguished Professor in Women's and Gender Studies. She has directed the Center for Women's Global Leadership there since she founded the group in 1989.

Bunch also has served as a fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., where she founded and edited *Quest: A Feminist Quarterly*, and she established Interferm Consultants in New York, which worked for women's rights across the globe.



PHOTO SUPPLIED

Charlotte Bunch

She also was national president of the University Christian Movement.

Gary Gladstein, a 1966 UConn graduate who retired as partner and chief operating

officer for Soros Fund Management LLC, and his wife have helped boost UConn's aspirations to be a leader in the field of human rights through their generosity and encouragement.

Besides the chair, the Gladsteins' support for the University has included the Marsha Lilien Gladstein Visiting Professorship in Human Rights, the Gladstein Endowment for the MIS Research Laboratory, the Gladstein Professorship in Information Technology and Innovation, and the Marsha Lilien Gladstein Human Rights Fund.

The Gladsteins also have contributed to the UConn Health Center, the School of Business, and the Morris N. Trachten Kosher Dining Facility. Gary Gladstein serves on the Board of Directors of the UConn Foundation.

## Endowed professorship

continued from page 1

The professorship will be used for an outstanding scholar, researcher, and educator who will contribute to the department's profile and mentor students.

"We would look for an accomplished scholar with a record of distinguished research and publication, but who is also committed to teaching our best students," says Howard Reiter, head of political science.

The new faculty position will enable the department and the Honors Program to collaborate on expanding advanced courses, enrichment programs, and one-on-one research opportunities.

"Honors students are choosing UConn over some of the most prestigious institutions in the country," says Lynne Goodstein, director of the Honors Program. "Having the opportunity to study and work closely with a distinguished faculty member reinforces their confidence that they have made the right choice."

## CALENDAR

Monday, December 10, to Tuesday, January 22

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 in the database by 4 p.m. on Monday for inclusion in the issue published the following Monday. **Note:** This is the last issue of the *Advance* for the fall semester. We resume weekly publication in January. The next Calendar will include events taking place from Tuesday, Jan. 22, through Monday, Jan. 28. Those items must be in the database by 4 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 14.

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, 12/10** – Final examinations begin.

**Saturday, 12/15** – Final examinations end.

**Sunday, 12/16** – Undergraduate Commencement ceremony, Gampel Pavilion, 2 p.m.

**Tuesday, 12/18** – Deadline for submitting fall semester grades via Student Administration System.

## 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. 12/7-12/15, open 24 hours. 12/16-12/21, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, noon-5 p.m. 12/22-12/25, closed. 12/26-12/28, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, noon-5 p.m. 12/28-1/1, closed. 1/2-1/18, Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, noon-5 p.m. 1/19-1/21, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, noon-5 p.m. **Dodd Center.** Reading Room hours: Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed weekends. 12/9, closed. 12/10, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. 12/11-12/14, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 12/15, noon-4 p.m. 12/16, closed. 12/17-12/21, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 12/22-1/1, closed. 1/1-1/18, 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. 12/9, closed. 12/10, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m. 12/11-12/14, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. 12/15, noon-4 p.m. 12/16, closed. 12/17-12/21, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. 12/22-12/31, closed.

**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. 12/23, 2 p.m.-6 p.m. 12/24, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. 12/25, closed. 12/26-12/28, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. 12/29, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 12/30, 2 p.m.-6 p.m. 12/31, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. 1/1, closed. **Law Library.** Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-midnight; Saturday & Sunday, 9 a.m.-noon. 12/22-12/25, closed. 12/26-12/28, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. 12/29-1/1, closed. 1/2, resume normal hours: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-midnight; Saturday & Sunday, 9 a.m.-noon.

**Avery Point Campus Library.** Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends. 12/10-12/13, 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m. 12/14, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. 12/17-12/20, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m. 12/21, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. 12/24, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m. 12/25-1/2, closed.

**Greater 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. 12/10-12/13, 8:30 a.m.-9 p.m. 12/14-12/15, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 12/17-12/26, closed. 12/27, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. 12/28-12/29, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 12/30-1/1, closed. 1/2-1/18, Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, closed. 1/19-1/21, closed. 1/22, resume

normal hours.

**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. 12/15-12/26, closed. 12/27-12/28, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. 12/29-1/1, closed. 1/2-1/20, Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; weekends, closed. 1/21, closed. 1/22, resume normal hours.

**Torrington Campus Library.** Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; Friday-Sunday, closed. 12/17-12/20, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. 12/21-1/1, closed. 1/2-1/17, Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; Friday-Sunday, closed. 1/21, closed. 1/22, resume normal hours.

**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. 12/25, closed. 1/1, closed. 1/21, closed.

## 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. 12/25, closed. 1/1, closed.

M215, Gant Science Complex.

**Tuesday, 12/11 – Mechanical Engineering.** *A Novel Method for ICSI: Rotationally Oscillating Drill, Design, Control and Monitoring*, by Ali Fuat Ergenc (adv.: Olgac). 9 a.m., Room 476, United Technologies Engineering Building.

**Wednesday, 12/12 – Chemical, Materials & Biomolecular Engineering.** *Advancement of Support Vector Clustering and Interval Analysis Technologies in Bioinformatics*, by Ozlem Yilmaz (adv.: Achenie). 10 a.m., Room 324, Engineering II Building.

**Wednesday, 12/12 – Civil & Environmental Engineering.** *Improving Traffic Simulation Models and Emissions Models Using On-board Vehicle Dynamics Data*, by Eric Jackson (adv.: Aultman-Hall). 1:30 p.m., Room 320, Center for Undergraduate Education.

**Thursday, 12/13 – Nutritional Sciences.** *Regulation of ZNC Homeostasis in Cultured Cells*, by Amrita Dutta (adv.: Freake). 10 a.m., Room 207-208, W.B. Young Building.

**Friday, 12/14 – Physics.** *Development*

**Wednesday, 12/12 – Molecular Medicine Lecture.** “Diacylglycerol Signaling: PKC and Beyond,” by Marcelo Kazanietz, University of Pennsylvania. Noon, Room EGo52, Academic Research Building, Health Center.

**Wednesday, 12/12 – Health & Wellness Lecture.** “Dental Implants: Smiles of the Future,” by Dr. Jacqueline Duncan. 6 p.m., Health Center.

**Thursday, 12/13 – Engineering Lecture.** “Fundamental Approaches to Catalyst Design for Selectivity: Lessons from Olefin Epoxidation,” by Mark Barteau, University of Delaware. 11 a.m., Room 336, Information Technology Engineering Building.

**Thursday, 12/13 – CHIP Brown Bag Lecture.** “Evidence-based Practice for HIV Prevention: Research Synthesis and Translation,” by Nicole Crepaz, U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. 12:30 p.m., Room 204, Ryan Building.

## Exhibits

**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



PHOTO BY JESSICA TOMMASELLI

A children's book in the Dodd Center's exhibit *The Connecticut Children's Book Fair: Celebrating Children and the Books They Read*. See Exhibits.

## Meetings

**Monday, 12/10 – University Senate.** 4-6 p.m., Room 7, Bishop Center.

**Tuesday, 12/11 – Joint Audit & Compliance Committee Meeting.** 10 a.m., Room EGo13, Academic Research Building, Health Center.

**Wednesday, 12/12 – Code of Conduct/Ethics Training Session.** Staff only. 9 a.m., Konover Auditorium.

**Thursday, 12/13 – Code of Conduct/Ethics Training Session.** Faculty only. 9 a.m., Konover Auditorium.

**Thursday, 12/13 – Capital Projects Planning Advisory Committee.** 3 p.m., Room 3, Bishop Center.

**Wednesday, 12/19 – Code of Conduct/Ethics Training Session.** Staff only. 9 a.m., Konover Auditorium.

**Thursday, 12/20 – Code of Conduct/Ethics Training Session.** New employees only. 2 p.m., Konover Auditorium.

## Ph.D. Defenses

**Monday, 12/10 – Mathematics.** *An Eigenvalue Problem for Some Nonlinear Transformations of Multi-Dimensional Arrays*, by Sawinder Pal Kaur (adv.: Koltracht). 11 a.m., Room

*of Ultrafast Laser Systems with Applications to Carotenoids in Photosynthetic Energy Transfer*, by Hong Cong (adv.: Gibson). 10 a.m., Room M121, Gant Science Complex. **Friday, 12/14 – Molecular & Cell Biology.** *Evaluation of Genetic Instability in Eutherian Hybrids*, by Judith Brown (adv.: O'Neill). 10:30 a.m., Room 209, Beach Hall. **Friday, 12/14 – Skeletal Craniofacial Oral Biology.** *Characterization of Shbp2 Knock-In Mouse: A Model for Cherubism*, by Padma Mukherjee (adv.: Reichenberger). 11 a.m., Room LM036, Building L, Health Center. **Tuesday, 12/18 – English.** *Milton and the Gospel of Black Revolt*, by Reginald Wilburn (adv.: Semenza). 11 a.m., Room 217, CLAS Building.

## Lectures &amp; Seminars

**Monday, 12/10 – Health & Wellness Lecture.** “Women and Addictive Behaviors,” by Edie Thompson. Noon, Henry Low Learning Center, Health Center.

**Tuesday, 12/11 – Neuroscience Seminar.** 4 p.m., Room 13, Academic Research Building, Health Center, Farmington.

for this exhibit; museum members, UConn students, and children under 18 free. Also, through 12/16, *Rodin's Contemporaries*. Also, through 5/11, *Rome & Italy*. Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, 1-4:30 p.m. General admission to the museum is free. Tuesday, 12/11, gallery talk on Rodin, by Steven Kern, 12:15 p.m. Free with exhibit admission. **Through Sunday, 12/16 – Alexey von Schlippe Gallery.** Works by Gar Waterman, Joanne Schmalz, Alston Stoney Conley, and Kim Sobel. Exhibit hours: Wednesday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m., Branford House, Avery Point Campus.

**Through Friday, 12/21 – Homer Babbidge Library.** *Federal Depository Libraries: Safeguarding Access to Government Information*, Gallery on the Plaza; *Altered Focus*, paintings by Melissa Smith, Stevens Gallery; *The Connecticut Industry Mural*, by Michael Borders, Plaza West Alcove. For hours, see Libraries section.

**Through Friday, 12/21 – Dodd Center.** *His & Hers: New Yorker Cartoons*, by Michael Maslin & Liza Donnelly, Gallery; *The Connecticut Children's Book Fair: Celebrating Children and the Books they Read*, West Corridor. For hours, see Libraries section.

**Through Wednesday, 2/13 – Health Center.** *Meet Mixus – Mixed Media Artists.* Daily, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Main and Mezzanine lobbies, Health Center.

**Through Wednesday, 3/12 – Celeste LeWitt Gallery.** *Morocco at a Glance*, paintings by Emese El Bissatine Pasztor, and *Wild America*, photographs by Gary Melnysyn. Daily, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Health Center. **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.

## Sports

**Sunday, 12/16 – Men's Basketball vs. Quinnipiac.** 2 p.m., Hartford Civic Center.

**Monday, 12/17 – Women's Basketball vs. South Carolina.** 7:30 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.

**Saturday, 12/22 – Men's Basketball vs. Maine.** 1 p.m., Hartford Civic Center.

**Saturday, 12/29 – Women's Basketball vs. Hartford.** Noon, Hartford Civic Center.

**Saturday, 12/29 – Toyota UConn Men's Hockey Classic: UConn vs. Army.** 7:15 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Sunday, 12/30 – Toyota UConn Men's Hockey Classic: Consolation Game.** 4 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Sunday, 12/30 – Toyota UConn Men's Hockey Classic: Championship Game.** 7:15 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Monday, 12/31 – Women's Basketball vs. Army.** Noon, Hartford Civic Center.

**Friday, 1/4 – Women's Ice Hockey vs. Princeton.** 7 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Saturday, 1/5 – Men's Indoor Track and Field Alumni Invitational.** Noon, Field House.

**Saturday, 1/5 – Women's Ice Hockey vs. Princeton.** 4 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Tuesday, 1/8 – Men's Basketball vs. St. John's.** 7 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.

**Wednesday, 1/9 – Women's Basketball vs. West Virginia.** 7:30 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.

**Wednesday, 1/16 – Men's Basketball vs. Quinnipiac.** 2 p.m., Hartford Civic Center.

**Thursday, 1/17 – Men's Basketball vs. Providence.** 7 p.m., Hartford Civic Center.

**Friday, 1/18 – Men's Ice Hockey vs. Mercyhurst.** 7:05 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Saturday, 1/19 – Women's Basketball vs. Cincinnati.** Noon, Hartford Civic Center.

**Saturday, 1/19 – Men's Ice Hockey vs. Mercyhurst.** 7:05 p.m., Freitas Ice Forum.

**Sunday, 1/20 – Men's Basketball vs. Marquette.** 1 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.

**Monday, 1/21 – Women's Basketball vs. North Carolina.** 7 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.

**Performing Arts**  
**Wednesday, 12/16 – Music on a Sunday Afternoon.** Violoncellist Pansy Chang and cellist Kangho Lee perform string chamber music by Bach and Britten. 5 p.m., Benton Museum. Tickets available at the door. Public \$10, members and UConn students \$5.

## Potpourri

**Saturday, 12/15 – Saturday at the Museum.** Drop in any time between 1 and 3 p.m. Saturday afternoon for cultural and natural history activities at the museum. Connecticut State Museum of Natural History & Archaeology Center.

# Student bloggers give insiders' view to prospective students, families

BY SHERRY FISHER

How can prospective students and their families learn about life at the University first hand without setting foot on campus? It's simple: Head to UConn's admissions web site and read the student blogs.

The blogs are designed to give prospective students, their parents, and other audiences a dynamic snapshot of life at UConn. On the site, six bloggers write about their daily lives at the University.

Patricia Fazio, manager of marketing services, says, "Today's high school students use the web to get much of their information about colleges, and the blogs add a personal dimension."

The bloggers – three men and three women – were recommended by Maria Sedotti, coordinator of orientation services, for whom they served as leaders during the summer.

"Because they're already knowledgeable about UConn and the type of information incoming students are looking for, they were a natural fit for blogging," Fazio says. "They went through an interview process and were selected because they're representative of UConn's students. They are a diverse group, with a variety of interests, and are

actively engaged in the UConn community."

Each blogger has his or her own page, including a profile and photograph. They are encouraged to write briefly, several times a week, about their lives at UConn. They post under categories including: classes; class work; my friends; "funny stuff"; my job; and student life. Their entries are not pre-viewed or filtered.

"We ask the bloggers not to sugarcoat their experiences," Fazio says. "We've asked them to blog because we want them to articulate what life for them at the University is really like."

Those who read the blogs may post comments or ask questions. Blog writers are encouraged to respond to and engage their audience.

This is the second year blogs

have been used to share information with the public. Last year, the bloggers selected were student workers at the Lodewick Visitors Center.

"Prospective students are able to access the web from around the world, and get an insider's view of living and learning occurring at Storrs," Fazio says. "Each student has had a very different experience. Their voices complement the informational material that prospective students receive. While brochures and other promotional materials certainly are important, we think prospective students appreciate the honesty they get from a student who is already here."

The bloggers, who are identified only by first name on the site, agree.

"Blogging is a good way for students to learn about the University, because bloggers are going to give you the unadulterated, no-holds-barred look into the life of a real University student," says Fernando, a junior majoring in English. "Blogging is free writing, uninhibited by literary constructs. Its brevity and candor make it an appealing venue for young, Internet-savvy students who are always on the go."

Justine, a junior majoring in pharmacy, says she enjoys being a blogger.

"As one of the student orientation leaders, I was able to prepare incoming students for their first

year," she says. "Now, we have the opportunity to reach out to high school students before they even set foot on campus. I really love sharing my UConn experiences with those interested in reading about them."

She adds, "It wasn't that long ago that I was looking at colleges, and I remember it being a very overwhelming experience. If I had an outlet or way to see into what life was truly like as a student outside of the very structured tour, I would have jumped at that opportunity. With such a tech-savvy generation, blogs and other forms of Internet communication to reach out to incoming students are becoming more and more pertinent."

Philip, a junior studying physiology and neurobiology, says the blogs "act as a sort of instruction manual to being a student at UConn."

He also says blogging has given him an extra perk: his writing skills have improved. "I get a chance to try out different styles of writing, and it serves as a type of practice when I have to write for my classes. I've noticed that my grades on papers and writing samples have improved from last year, and I attribute that to blogging for UConn."

The student blogs are at: <http://www.blogs.uconn.edu/2007/>.



# Health Center Auxiliary seeks new volunteers to keep up good work

BY CHRIS DEFRANCESCO

The Health Center Auxiliary, a group of volunteers that over the past four decades has contributed scholarship funds, awarded a grant to purchase equipment, established an on-site child care center, begun a collection of artwork, and established an endowed chair, is seeking new members.

The Auxiliary is behind much of what has become part of the Health Center's fabric.

Dr. Peter J. Deckers, executive vice president for health affairs at the UConn Health Center and dean of the School of Medicine, says the Auxiliary is "critically important to the well being of the schools here at the Health Center, as well as the John Dempsey Hospital and our physician practice."

"They enable us to do things we wouldn't otherwise be able to do because of financial limitations," Deckers says.

The group hopes to become better known among the University community.

Irene Engel, Auxiliary facilitator and longtime member, says, "The work is rewarding in that you know you're making a difference for all who come here as patients, visitors, students, faculty, or staff."

She wants it to be known that the Auxiliary is for the entire Health Center, not just John Dempsey Hospital, and that membership is not just for women but is open to all.

"We are looking beyond Health Center employees as we seek to ex-

pand our membership," says Engel. "We'd like to have input as to the direction we should be heading, to get the new, younger generation interested in our work, and also friends and family members who may be retired and might want to volunteer for our Auxiliary."

A new color brochure and redesigned website are part of the Auxiliary's campaign to raise awareness and expand its membership.

The brochures are available at the Health Center and at the thrift shop. The website (<http://auxiliary.uhc.edu>) has information on how to join.

Despite the need for new members, the Auxiliary has made a significant impact. This year, for example, it awarded more scholarship money to more students than in any previous year.

Four medical students, two dental students, and a master of dental science student were each awarded \$5,000 scholarships, and two master of public health students and two nursing students were each awarded \$2,500.

Additionally, six Ph.D. students are sharing \$5,000 in educational travel money. This is a new Auxiliary award, providing financial support for Ph.D. students in biomedical science who attend advanced short courses at prestigious institutions. The master of public health, master of dental science, and nursing scholarships are also new this academic year.

A \$500 Medical Student Merit

Award and \$500 Dental Student Merit Award bring the total to more than \$50,000 in scholarships and awards.

"This support is very welcome and critical for the continued maturation of graduate programs at the Health Center," says Gerald Maxwell, associate dean of the School of Medicine Graduate School.

For many, the most visible Auxiliary contribution is the Connecticut Gift Shop, which has been in business in the lobby of the main building since 1975. The UConn Health Center Auxiliary Thrift Shop, at 290 Park Road in West Hartford, opened in 1993. Volunteers keep both shops operating.

The Health Center's collection of artwork, started by the Auxiliary, has grown to more than

1,500 paintings, sculptures, quilts, photographs, and murals.

Linda Webber, the Health Center's art curator, says, "The art supports the people who work here, the patients, the families, and the community. We think it gives the Health Center a visual power that makes people feel good."

This summer, the Auxiliary awarded a \$35,000 research grant to the Health Center's core labs to invest in basic science research at the schools of medicine and dental medicine.

The new equipment includes a nano drop spectrophotometer, which enables scientists to determine the concentration of DNA or RNA using a very small sample, and a G-box chemiluminescence, which enables them to detect light signals associated with proteins

and DNA extracted from cells.

"We are most appreciative of this grant to purchase equipment that will be of broad benefit to a broad spectrum of basic science and translational investigators," says Dr. David W. Rowe, director for regenerative medicine and skeletal development in the School of Dental Medicine's Department of Reconstructive Sciences.

And two years ago, the Auxiliary raised and donated \$900,000 to fund the Joseph M. Healy Jr. Memorial Chair in Medical Humanities and Bioethics, held today by Audrey R. Chapman.

According to Engel, the UConn Health Center Auxiliary may be the only volunteer group in the country to have established an endowed chair.



The UConn Health Center Auxiliary advisory committee, a volunteer group.

PHOTO BY CHRIS DEFRANCESCO



