



Once hidden musical composition will premiere at UConn

BY ROBERT FRAHM

A Chinese composer who hid his music from authorities during China's Cultural Revolution will realize a dream this week, when UConn musicians perform his lone surviving composition.

More than four decades after Lu Wei began work on *D-C-A-C: Variations on a Chinese Folk Song*, the University Symphony Orchestra will give the world premiere performance of the composition Oct. 10 at von der Mehden Recital Hall.

Because of his age and concerns about his health, the 88-year-old composer declined UConn's offer to bring him to Storrs for the performance, but he said the concert will fulfill a lifelong wish to have his music performed.

UConn officials learned of the composition from Yuhang Rong, an assistant dean in the Neag School of Education and a relative of the composer.

"I had it sitting in my study for a few years," says Rong, who had been given a copy of the musical score by his mother in hopes he could find someone to perform it.

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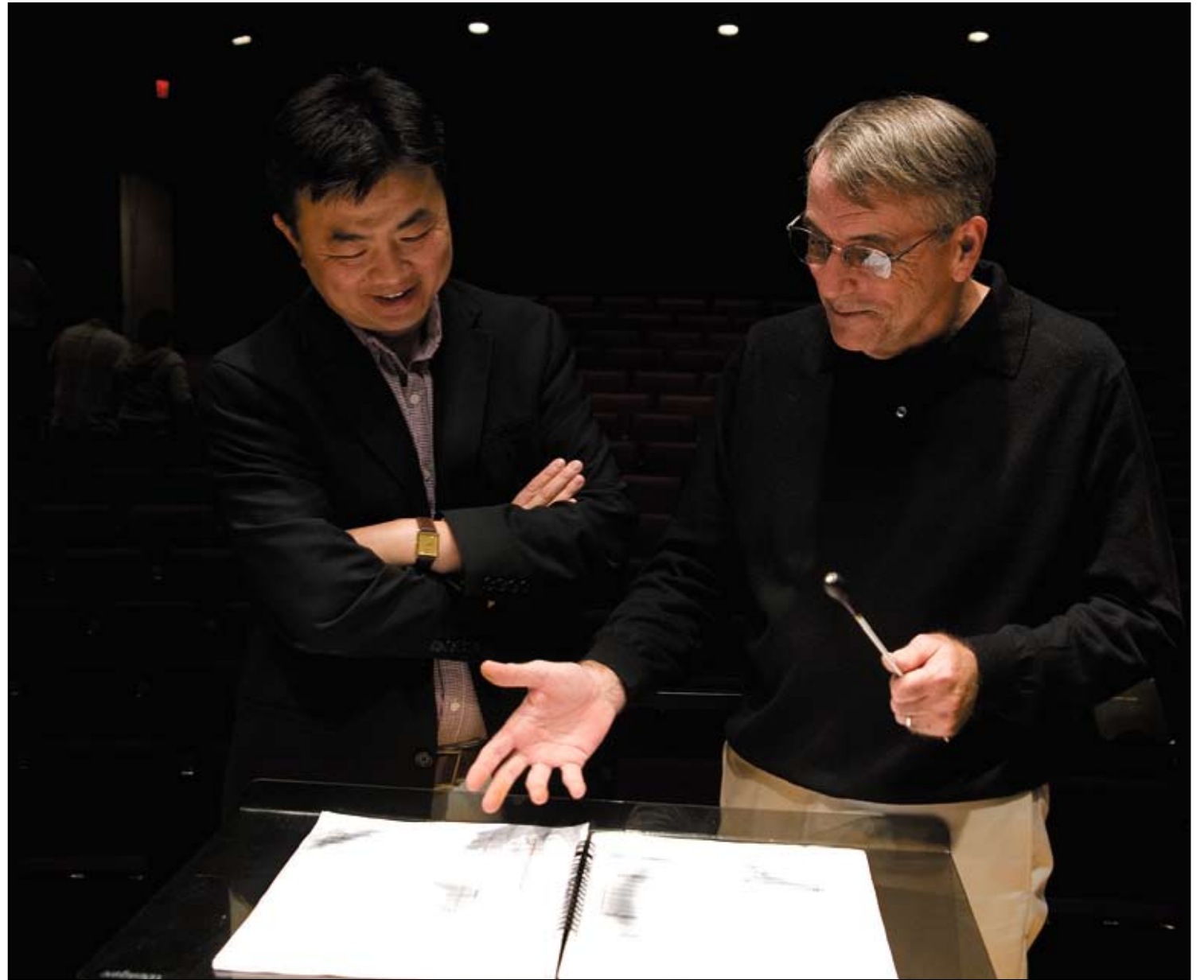


PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Yuhang Rong, left, associate dean of education, discusses a musical score written by his relative Lu Wei, with Jeffrey Renshaw, professor of music. Renshaw is conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra, which will premiere the work Oct. 10.

Economics panel predicts U.S. recession, not depression

BY CINDY WEISS

The Great Depression was "great" because of what happened after the initial financial crisis, a scenario that probably won't be repeated in the current financial meltdown, said several economics faculty members at a forum on campus Sept. 30.

Several of them predicted possible recession, but nothing on the scale of the 1930s.

After the stock market crashed in 1929, banks failed over several years. Unlike now, the Federal Reserve withdrew money, leaving banks with no liquidity, said Christian Zimmermann, associate professor of economics.

Over-regulation of banks, labor issues, and protectionism in the 1930s contributed to the problems, he said. "This is not the

environment we have now."

What we do have now is a solvency problem, according to Stephen Ross, associate professor of economics.

"We have put hundreds of billions of dollars of liquidity into the system," he commented after the forum, referring to the Fed's open market window loans and its loan guarantees to Wall Street banks. "I don't believe that anyone thinks these firms are not liquid enough to loan. Rather, the problem is that they are insolvent," he said.

"We have to do something to change the incentives they face concerning making loans. The hope is that more solvent firms will take more risks and make more loans," he added.

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New version of PeopleSoft to debut later this month

BY RICHARD VEILLEUX

A new and improved PeopleSoft system will be unveiled this month, full of changes that should make life easier for faculty, staff, and students.

"There are big benefits to the new system," says Registrar Jeffrey von Munkwitz-Smith. "The terminology is better, it's easier to navigate, and I think it will make planning and data gathering easier.

PeopleSoft Version 9.0 is expected to be active by Monday, Oct. 13. Its release comes almost exactly seven years after the system debuted at UConn in October 2001, with registration and student records. It was later expanded to other departments and more have been added since, but this is the first major upgrade to the system since 2002.

Among the major changes, he says, is a "Faculty Center" web page with links to enrollment and grading that makes it much easier for professors to do their work. The current system requires a series of clicks to enter grades or review class rosters. PeopleSoft 9.0 also lets faculty send e-mails to individual students, the entire class and advisees, or subsets of each. And, he says, it allows faculty access to much more information.

Work is also underway to make it possible for instructors to upload grades from HuskyCT or from spreadsheets. This function is expected to be ready in time for grade submission in December.

For students, there is a "Student Center"

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University joins effort to increase early childhood literacy

BY BARBARA LIPSCHÉ

Lots of people have read Don Freeman's book *Corduroy*. But on Oct. 2, a national event sponsored by Jumpstart for Children Inc. sought to set a record for the number of people reading it on the same day.

UConn's Office of Community Outreach and Department of Human Development and Family Studies participated in "Read for the Record," hosted by UConn's Jumpstart program. Jumpstart for Children Inc. is a national early education organization working to ensure that every child in America enters school prepared to succeed.

The event aimed to raise awareness about early childhood literacy issues by having more than 258,000 people read the book *Corduroy*, to beat last year's Guinness Book of World Records tally for the most people reading the same book on the same day.

This year's selection, *Corduroy* tells the story of a teddy bear purchased by a little girl named Lisa, who visits the toy store where he lives. Originally published by Viking Press in 1968, the book has



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

University President Michael J. Hogan reads the story of *Corduroy* to pre-schoolers at the Child Development Laboratories as part of Jumpstart's Read for the Record event on Oct. 2.

been produced in a special edition by Jumpstart partner the Pearson Foundation

Readers at UConn on Oct. 2 in-

cluded not only UConn students, faculty, and staff, but also Gov. M. Jodi Rell, Rep. Joe Courtney (D-2nd District), University Presi-

dent Michael J. Hogan, Mansfield Mayor Elizabeth Paterson, and members of the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet.

"I'm very impressed with the national Jumpstart effort, and grateful that our Community Outreach office and other members of the UConn family are involved in it," said Hogan.

The main goals for this event were to highlight the importance of early childhood literacy and to let people know about the Jumpstart program, said Meg Marshall, Jumpstart site manager. Since the program was launched at UConn last year, volunteers have provided one-on-one assistance to children at local pre-schools.

Jumpstart was launched in 1993 at Yale University with three main goals: achieving school success for low income children; involving children's families in school; and training future teachers. The organization has grown into a national program serving more than 15,000 children through a network of partnerships with colleges and universities.

"A majority of UConn's volunteers have an interest in being educators in the future," Marshall said. "They have a love for children, and an interest in community service."

English professor still runs marathons at 72



PHOTO BY JESSICA TOMMASELLI

English professor David Sonstroem trains on the track at the Sherman Family Sports Complex. He will run in the Hartford Marathon on Oct. 11.

BY COLIN POITRAS

When he's not grading papers or teaching undergraduates the finer points of grammar, longtime English professor David Sonstroem is usually out running.

The 72-year-old Sonstroem has been taking daily runs for more than 30 years. In 2006, he was named the second fastest over-70 marathoner in the United States and 12th fastest marathoner in his age group in the world. Last year, *New England Runner* magazine named Sonstroem Connecticut's top male runner in the 70-79 age category.

On Oct. 11, Sonstroem will put his skills to the test once again, when he joins thousands of other runners in his sixth appearance in the ING Hartford Marathon.

Sonstroem trains with his longtime UConn running buddies:

Harry Johnson and George Scott, professors emeriti of business, and Thomas "Tim" Weinland, an emeritus professor of education. For many years, they were joined by J.A. Cameron, a professor emeritus of molecular and cell biology who died in 1999. John Johnson, a local insurance representative and another running partner, also makes trips to the track when his schedule allows.

They're a rowdy bunch. With a 10-mile run taking a little under two hours, there's plenty of time for some good-natured razzing, in between discussions of world events, national politics, University news, and updates on people's personal lives. Sonstroem, a Harvard-educated expert on Victorian literature, usually brings a 'daily word' to share. Recently, it was 'elevenses,' a British expression

for a light refreshment or snack taken mid-morning.

"It's fun to move and to be outside with good people," Sonstroem says. "We are constantly ribbing each other as we go along. But it's all in good fun. It's really the camaraderie of running together every day that I enjoy most."

Sonstroem started at UConn as an assistant English professor in 1965. After a dismal start trying to play tennis with his colleagues, he put down his racquet and hit the track.

He is well known for his brisk pace. It's one his running mates have come to expect from such a dedicated athlete.

"David the runner is tireless - 10 miles a day," Weinland says. "He's always experimenting with his stride, while the rest of us are still trying to move forward at a pace faster than a brisk walk!"

Sonstroem and his buddies figure they've logged roughly 305,000 miles together over the years, enough distance to take them from Earth to the Moon. Now they are, so to speak, on their way back. Sonstroem figures at their current pace they should return to Earth when each of them is approximately 120 years old.

The 73-year-old Harry Johnson, who started running before Sonstroem and has three Boston Marathons and four Bay State marathons under his belt, is a little more cautious in his assessment.

"I can only hope gravity pulls us in," Johnson says. "I'm not so sure our wheelchairs will make it."

Meetings scheduled to solicit ideas for spring weekend

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

The Student Life Committee of the Board of Trustees will hold hearings on Thursday, Oct. 9 and Wednesday, Oct. 15 to solicit ideas on spring weekend.

The committee has been charged by the Board of Trustees with refocusing spring weekend so that students can celebrate their academic achievements and the end of the term but "demonstrably and significantly" reduce alcohol and substance abuse, risky behavior, injury to people, and damage to property.

The committee is also expected to complete a survey of students, faculty, and staff on the topic of spring weekend, and to report to

the Board of Trustees on Nov. 18.

The hearings will take place from 4 to 9 p.m. Invited speakers include representatives from the Mansfield Campus Community Partnership, Senate Executive Committee, Student Alumni Association, Undergraduate Student Government, Community Standards Office, Off Campus Student Services, Windham Community Memorial Hospital, Student Health Services, and the police and fire departments.

The hearing on Oct. 9 will be in Student Union Room 320; the hearing on Oct. 15 will be in the Student Union Room 410.

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Two centers closed as part of review process

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

Two centers will be discontinued and 11 renewed, as a result of a review undertaken by a committee appointed by Provost Peter J. Nicholls.

The centers were reviewed as part of a process that annually looks at centers and institutes on a five-year cycle.

The centers this year were reviewed using criteria outlined in the new academic plan. The plan notes that centers that duplicate other work, involve only a single discipline, or fewer than three tenured faculty, are financially insolvent, or are not consistent with a top-ranked university should be discontinued.

"Investments in centers and institutes can be measured by their vitality, solvency, and substantial and unique contribution to the University," Nicholls said. "We began a very careful review process in 2005 to ensure that our

funds are spent wisely."

This year, the committee found that two centers, the Center for Geographic Information and Analysis and the Center for Health Promotion, should be discontinued.

Two centers, the GE Global Learning Center and the Wildlife Conservation Research Center, were renewed for two years.

The Centers for Conservation and Biodiversity; Land Use Education and Research; Food Marketing Policy; and Applied Research in Human Development were renewed for five years.

Also renewed for five years were the Bioinformatics and Bio-Computing Institute; the Connecticut Institute of Water Resources; the Connecticut Transportation Institute; Booth Engineering Center for Advanced Technology; and the Institute of Materials Science.

Information technology services to put spotlight on computer security

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

The next time you visit a coffee shop with your laptop, you may want to think twice before you start paying your bills online or checking your bank balance. At least find out what security is available for your information.

Likewise, when you sign up for a new telephone, you may want to reconsider providing your social security number, which ends up on a piece of paper or in a database you have no control over.

"Security is getting more and more complicated and it is important to know what we can do to protect ourselves," said Elaine David, assistant vice president for information services and director of information technology security, policy, and quality assurance for University Information Technology Services (UITS). "Things people have done for years without thinking twice can create problems and the opportunity for identity theft now."

Tips on how to protect your

identity are part of a week-long look at the issue, "Protecting Your Personal Information and Identity," beginning Oct. 13. The events are sponsored by UITS.

From Oct. 13 to 17, there will be a booth at the Student Union from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to demonstrate Spider software and answer questions. Spider software can scan a hard drive for social security numbers, particularly important for faculty who may have stored student information by social security numbers years ago. That type of information should be deleted from laptops and stored on hard drives or wiped clean.

Representatives from the FBI, McAfee, IdentiPHI, and Apple will make presentations during the week, including:

- "Coffee Shop Security: Top 10 Security Tips for Mac Users," by Devin McLaughlin, Apple senior system engineer, Apple certified system administrator. Tuesday, Oct. 14, 11 a.m., at the Dodd Center.
- "Data Protection Lunch and

Learn with McAfee," by Simon Hunt, vice president and chief technology officer, data protection, McAfee Inc. Wednesday, Oct. 15, noon, in the North Reading Room, Wilbur Cross Building. Lunch provided by McAfee for attendees.

• "Internet Awareness, Identity Theft, and Internet Fraud," by Thomas Lawler, supervisory special agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Thursday, Oct. 16, 11 a.m., in the North Reading Room, Wilbur Cross Building.

• "Preventing Identity Theft," by Jeff Panzer, IdentiPHI. Friday, Oct. 17, 11 a.m., in the Dodd Center.

There will also be a special student session, "Protecting Personal Information on Facebook," by Denielle Burl, director of risk management, on Thursday, Oct. 16, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bishop Center, Room 7.

More information on the week, which coincides with national Cyber Security Awareness Month, is available at <http://security.uconn.edu/SecurityAwareness.html>

New UConn commercial, web site promote Husky loyalty

BY RICHARD VEILLEUX

A new web site allows users to download the Husky fight song to their cell phones, post photos or videos, or join one of half a dozen UConn-related social networking groups.

The site, <http://alwayspartofu.com>, is featured in a new 30-second commercial that will run during UConn football and basketball games this year through March 2009. It debuted during the Huskies' game against Baylor on Sept. 19.

In it, a series of UConn alumni are seen proudly displaying UConn sweatshirts, a UConn diploma, license plate, and flags. Throughout the ad, the Husky fight song plays, but it swings from the familiar marching band version to variations featuring a soft piano, jangling guitars, and a soft Hawaiian lilt.

"We decided to use the fight song because if you've come through the doors of the University of Connecticut, you know it," says David Martel, director of marketing communications. "If fans are leaving the room for a commercial break during a game and hear the song, they're going to pause. They know their fight song."

"The commercial communicates that UConn isn't simply a four-year experience but rather, one that lasts a lifetime," Martel says.

The key to the effort is the affinity web site, which is chock full of features. Visitors can download the Husky fight song – in the versions heard in the commercial – as

a ringtone for their cell phone or iPod; there are several versions of wallpaper and screensavers for computers; photos and videos can be loaded onto the site or viewed; there are links to social networks that allow visitors to join groups for Husky football or basketball fans – men's or women's – or for people who would like to discuss any or all of UConn's 24 athletics

teams. There's another group for friends of the UConn Marching Band, one for the Student Alumni Association, and another for UConn alumni.

The alumni social networking group also allows alumni to access the alumni career network, the University's Career Services office, an online directory, and an events calendar. There is also a section

for class notes – small tidbits of information on what old friends are doing today.

"We're proud to have taken the University commercial and created an interactive experience for those who have an affinity for the University to be able to show it and express it," Martel says.

The Health Center has also launched two new televi-

sion ads this fall. One ad promotes TomoTherapy, a sophisticated and precise radiation oncology treatment that is recommended for several types of cancer. In Connecticut, TomoTherapy can only be found at the Health Center's Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center. The second ad promotes joint preservation and replacement services at the New England Musculoskeletal Institute, also at the Health Center. Joint preservation is a niche program that provides multidisciplinary care for younger patients with arthritis or other degenerative diseases who want to remain active.

"While both ads draw attention to very specific services within the Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center and the New England Musculoskeletal Institute, they also create a 'halo effect' for the entire Health Center," says Maureen McGuire, communications director at the Health Center. "They complement our ongoing efforts to differentiate the Health Center from its clinical competitors."

The Health Center ads will air on all major networks, as well as PBS and cable systems in northern Connecticut throughout the fall, and will resume in 2009. Both ads were shot at the Health Center campus in late August.

The ads can be found by visiting the Health Center's homepage – www.uchu.edu – and following the banners for TomoTherapy and the New England Musculoskeletal Institute.



Paper suggests patients supplement blood pressure readings

BY CHRIS DEFRANCESCO

Having your blood pressure checked in the doctor's office is not the only way to keep tabs on your hypertension. It may not even be the most precise way.

"Blood pressure readings should be taken both in and outside of the medical care environment," says Dr. William White, professor of medicine in the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center at the UConn Health Center. "Blood pressure values are highly variable throughout the day and night, so taking one or two measurements during an office visit often doesn't capture the truth about blood pressure behavior. Additionally, our research over the past two decades has made it clear that monitoring in the office alone isn't always the most reliable method for assessing blood pressure control in patients on antihypertensive drug therapy."

White and Dr. Thomas Pickering from Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York City are co-authors of an official American Society of Hypertension position paper on home and ambulatory blood pressure monitoring, published in the May-June 2008 issue of the *Journal of the American Society of Hypertension*. The paper provides guidance on when to supplement in-office blood pressure measurements with out-of-office techniques, such as self-monitoring at the home or worksite and ambulatory blood pressure monitoring.

"Self and ambulatory blood pressure monitoring can provide unique information that may be of help both for making treatment

decisions and for evaluating the response to treatment," the authors write. "The mainstay for the justifications of both procedures is that there is steadily increasing and substantial evidence that both measures give a better prediction of cardiovascular risk than office blood pressure measurements."

Self-monitoring devices enable patients to take their readings at home at several points throughout the day. Oscillometric blood pressure monitors, which use technology that senses pressure waves emanating from the brachial or radial artery, are available in drug stores and medical supply shops

and through catalogs, generally ranging in price from \$50 to \$150.

Ambulatory blood pressure recording involves wearing a cuff on the upper arm, typically for a 24-hour period. The cuff is attached to a monitoring device clipped to the patient's belt. A microchip in the monitor stores the data for analysis and display. The Calhoun Cardiology Center provides 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring upon referral from the patient's primary care doctor or medical sub-specialist. White's research and testimony led to Medicare coverage of ambulatory monitoring tests, starting

in 2002.

"Done properly, these methods increase the number of readings used to calculate average blood pressure, and therefore give much better estimates, yielding a better prediction of risk than the office measurement alone," White says. He emphasizes that only devices that have been independently validated for precision and reliability should be used for self- or ambulatory monitoring. Physicians and patients can determine grading from independent studies at the Dabl Educational Trust web site: www.dablededucation.org/

White, head of the Calhoun

Cardiology Center's Hypertension and Clinical Pharmacology Division, says these out-of-office measurements offer another advantage.

"One often hears the term 'white-coat hypertension' or 'white-coat effect' to describe a phenomenon when the patient's blood pressure is high in the medical care environment but relatively normal elsewhere," he says. "This can be a manifestation of anxiety in the doctor's office that does not occur anywhere else. However, we also have seen the converse to be true; that is, patients actually have a higher pressure outside of the doctor's office, particularly when medications are wearing off—a syndrome called 'masked' or 'hidden' hypertension. This is more problematic, as the doctor assumes the pressure control is acceptable, when actually hypertensive blood pressure values are occurring throughout the day and night—clearly a risk factor for cardiovascular problems, including heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease."

A call to action by the American Society of Hypertension, the American Heart Association, and the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association recommends that home monitoring become a routine component of blood pressure measurement in the majority of patients with known or suspected hypertension. It also recommends that health care providers advise patients to use monitors that measure blood pressure on the upper arm and show them how to use the devices. Additionally, it calls for health insurers to reimburse patients who purchase them.



PHOTO BY CHRIS DEFRANCESCO

Dr. William White, co-author of an American Society of Hypertension position paper on self-monitoring of blood pressure, demonstrates the use of an ambulatory blood pressure monitor and a home blood pressure monitor.

Chinese composer *continued from page 1*

Rong discussed the idea last year with David Woods, dean of the School of Fine Arts. Woods asked to see the manuscript.

"I thought it really had a lot of merit—not only musical merit, but merit with UConn's commitment to human rights," Woods says. The concert coincides with the opening of a three-day conference organized by the University's Human Rights Institute.

Born in China, Lu Wei lived in France from 1946 to 1955, and taught composition at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music after returning to his home country.

Like many Chinese intellectuals and artists during the Cultural Revolution, Lu Wei risked persecution by Chairman Mao Zedong's Red Guards for any work deemed not to serve the interests of the state.

According to Rong, Lu Wei longed for the freedom to compose but knew that creative work could not be accomplished under the watch of the authoritarian regime. He began writing his composition in 1966, re-interpreting a familiar Chinese folk song as a song of hope for a brighter future.

Fearing his work could be seen by authorities as subversive, he asked a relative—Rong's uncle—to hide it.

Although the composition remained hidden, Lu Wei's house was searched, and he was imprisoned for "illegally listening to the enemy's radio broadcasts" from France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, according to biographical notes written by Rong. Later, Lu Wei was labeled a "counter-revolutionary class enemy" and ordered to work as a janitor during the 1960s and '70s at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music. It was there, in a janitor's closet, that he secretly finished orchestrating his composition, Rong said.

The composition is a challenging piece that "will be a bit of an unusual experience for most listeners," says music professor Jeffrey Renshaw, conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra.

"This is one of the things we do both with the orchestra and wind ensemble—a lot of premieres," he said. Part of the challenge is that Lu's score is a handwritten manuscript,

unlike the more precise computer-generated manuscripts commonly used by modern orchestras.

"There's a great deal of time figuring out what notes are on the page, and what notes did he mean to have," Renshaw says. "It's a lot of detective work."

Lu Wei's composition is an 11-minute piece, starting with the folk tune "stated in its original form and energy" and followed by variations ranging "from very serene and beautiful to something very dissonant," Renshaw says.

Friday's concert begins at 8 p.m. In addition to Lu Wei's work, the symphony orchestra also will perform Richard Wagner's *Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey* and Igor Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite*. Officials plan to send a recording of the concert to Lu Wei.

Earlier this year, Rong was in China and met Lu Wei to discuss plans for the concert. Through Rong, Lu Wei sent a message to Woods and the University: "Please tell the dean, UConn has filled this poor old man's heart with joy. I feel as if I am the richest person on earth."

PeopleSoft *continued from page 1*

which, among other things, allows students to track their progress toward a degree and, if they notice a course they're missing, they can click on the specific course and will be able to go into the registration function to sign up.

Students also will be able to grab an enrollment 'shopping cart' and load it with the courses they want. The carts are also accessible to academic advisors, who can see what the students are choosing. This should facilitate discussion when they meet, von Munkwitz-Smith says.

Because it's getting to the point where Oracle, the company that owns PeopleSoft, will no longer service the 8.0 version, von Munkwitz-Smith says, a number of other universities also are upgrading their systems. He says people with whom he has discussed the upgrade are generally pleased with the new system. They say faculty in particular are happy with the look and feel of PeopleSoft 9.0. More universities will be bringing the new version online between now and December.

Von Munkwitz-Smith says October was chosen as the best

time to launch the upgrade at UConn. "It's the least disruptive for all of our operations," he says, "a few weeks before spring registration, and a few months before faculty have to enter grades."

Dan Mooney, director of enterprise administrative applications at UITS, who is responsible for project planning, direction, and resource acquisition on the PeopleSoft project, says dozens of UConn staff have been involved in the upgrade.

"It's a large project by any standard," says Mooney.

Staff from University Information Technology Services are now conducting training sessions for administrative users of the system and instructional designers from the Institute for Teaching and Learning are developing online modules to help faculty and students adjust to the new PeopleSoft system.

Instructor/advisor help is available at <http://www.peoplesofthelp.uconn.edu/>

Student help is available at <http://www.peoplesofthelp.uconn.edu/studentindex.html>

Researcher to study breast milk's role in preventing food allergies

BY KRISTINA GOODNOUGH

Lynn Puddington, an associate professor in the Department of Immunology at the Health Center, has received a two-year, \$407,000 grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases as part of a new federal initiative to support research related to food allergy.

Her research project considers whether exposure to food antigens in breast milk can induce tolerance in newborns and provide them with long-term protection from inflammatory responses to food allergens in the gut.

Puddington is one of 12 investigators nationwide who have received grants totaling \$5 million over two years to lead high-impact, innovative studies of food allergy.

"Little is known about why only some people develop food allergy, and finding answers to that fundamental question is one of the key objectives of this initiative," says NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci, whose institute is contributing \$2 million towards the grants.

Funding is also provided by two advocacy groups, the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network and the Food Allergy Project.

In the United States, approximately 6 percent to 8 percent of children under age 4, and 4 percent of persons age 5 and older have an allergy to one or more foods. In a two-year period, about half of all children with a food allergy will have an allergic reaction from an accidental exposure to that food, according to NIAID statistics. Severe cases can result in anaphylaxis, a condition characterized by a drop in blood pressure and difficulty breathing. About 30,000 cases of food-induced anaphylaxis occur in the United States every year and as many as 1,450 food anaphylaxis-associated deaths.

Puddington's research strategy is based on the concept that the best way to prevent harmful immune responses to food is to maximize desensitization to potential allergens as early in life as possible, before any adverse immune reaction to them can be established.

"We know from our earlier studies that low doses of antigen delivered from mother to child in breast milk is recognized by allergen-specific T cells in gut-draining lymph nodes," says

Puddington. "The T cells express FoxP3, a genetic marker of cells that provide regulatory function and prevent inflammatory diseases. We hypothesize that the acquisition of food antigens in

breast milk provides the perfect context for generating focused protection by T regulatory cells in the exact site where it is needed, in the gastrointestinal tract."

Puddington hopes to determine whether the maternal breast milk antigen-induced population of T regulatory cells survives after weaning and helps to suppress development of food allergies. Her contention is that even if the protection were to last for a restricted period of time, it would be helpful in protecting infants and young children until their gut and digestive system are more developed and better able to block allergen exposure.

"Mothers, particularly those who are nursing, are highly motivated to improve the health of their children," says Puddington. "If it's possible to modify breast milk content to enhance the development of gastrointestinal T regulatory cells in newborns, this could be an effective strategy to prevent or reduce some inflammatory diseases in the intestine and perhaps other sites as well."



PHOTO BY LEO LEFRANCOIS

Immunologist Lynn Puddington in her laboratory at the Health Center.

Linguistics experts compile database to compare international sign languages

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

Two researchers in the Department of Linguistics are engaged in a comparative study of sign languages from around the world.

With support from a two-year, \$200,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, Professor Harry van der Hulst and Rachel Channon, a research specialist, have compiled a database that contains information on nearly 12,000 signs from six different sign languages.

The initial goal of the project, says van der Hulst, is to understand through quantitative analysis how sign languages differ in terms of the visual images they use. The next stage will be to draw theoretical conclusions from those differences.

The information recorded includes hand shape, movement, location of the movement, and other characteristics for each sign. The database, known as SignTyp, uses Excel software and will be posted to the Web as a resource available to any researcher interested in sign language.

"We tried to make it as user-

friendly as possible," says van der Hulst.

The database consists of collections gathered by sign language specialists around the world, the largest being a database of Sign Language of the Netherlands that van der Hulst compiled in his native Holland before coming to UConn in 2000. The others include American Sign Language (both current and historical), Finnish, Japanese, Korean, and New Zealand sign languages. Because they were developed independently, each collection used a different coding system.

One of the challenges of the project, says van der Hulst, was to design a universal coding system and then translate the information about each sign recorded.

The researchers have already begun to analyze which hand shapes are used in each particular sign language, and to explore issues such as how these building blocks are combined.

Van der Hulst says the study of sign languages is a relatively new field that emerged only in the past 50 years.

"Sign languages – languages used by deaf people – are in linguistic circles considered to be full-fledged human languages," he says. "But this view has not been around that long. And still, outside linguistic circles, people may think of them as gestural communication systems without grammatical structure."

Van der Hulst specializes in phonology, which strictly interpreted refers to the study of the sounds that are the building blocks of words.

"When I started studying sign languages, it changed my perspective on what human languages are," he says. "Sign languages are extra interesting in the domain of phonology, because the medium is not sound but visual display."

Van der Hulst says sign languages have comparable building blocks to those that make up words in spoken languages – visual images. They also have rules for combining words into sentences, known as syntax.

Linguistics, he says, has traditionally focused on sound: "It was once thought that language

has to be speech. Now we learn that language does not have to be speech, it can also be gesture. And the view that all languages have consonants and vowels no longer holds, because consonants and vowels are speech entities.

"So linguistic theories have to step up to a more abstract level," he adds. "That has had enormous implications for how I think about phonology, which we should now define as the study of the perceptible form of language."

The UConn linguistics department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is one of the few linguistics departments in the world where sign languages are a specialization. In addition to van der Hulst, Professor Diane Lillo-Martin studies the structure of sentences in sign languages. The department also collaborates with the Department of Modern & Classical Languages, which has an American Sign Language (ASL) program taught by Doreen Simons-Marques.

During the summer, van der Hulst and Channon hosted a conference at UConn that was at-

tended by about 80 scholars from 15 countries, including Australia, Brazil, Japan, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the UK. They engaged a team of four professional ASL interpreters to translate the spoken presentations; some of the papers were delivered in ASL.

"Because our project has comparative focus, we involved in our project an impressive forum of international researchers," says van der Hulst.

He hopes that by involving sign language specialists from around the world, he can expand the project to incorporate additional languages.

"Now they've seen the prototype of SignTyp and what can be done with it, we hope they will be willing to give us their inventories too," he says.

Van der Hulst says the number of known sign languages is in the hundreds.

Currently on a one-year 'no cost' extension of the original two-year grant, van der Hulst and Channon are applying to the NSF for a four to five-year renewal.



PHOTOS BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Harry van der Hulst, professor of linguistics, demonstrates the sign for "recognize" in American Sign Language. He is conducting research on sign languages from around the world.

New seminar available online to assist in course development



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Marny Lawton, Catherine Healy, Desmond McCaffrey, and Betsy Guala of the Instructional Design team in the Institute of Teaching and Learning.

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

Instructional design staff in the Institute for Teaching and Learning are offering a new online seminar to help faculty design and teach online courses.

The online seminar is an extension of the generally face-to-face services offered by the University's instructional designers to faculty wishing to develop a new course or revise a course they already teach.

"The Instructional Design team offers support to faculty in adopting pedagogical best practices in face-to-face, online, and blended courses," says Desmond McCaffrey, manager of instructional development services. "Many faculty members walk through the door and ask for help. This online seminar can be used as an alternative, or before or after working with one of us to develop or enhance a course."

The online seminar also models for faculty members what they would be doing in an online course, McCaffrey notes. "It demonstrates that online teaching and learning can work and be successful."

The seminar, launched on a pilot basis last spring with faculty from the School of Pharmacy, is now available to all UConn instructors, by going to <http://itl.uconn.edu/idd/>. There are two versions, one directly accessible on the Internet and the other in HuskyCT.

McCaffrey says he believes the seminar is timely. "Interest is growing, people are becoming more aware of the potential of online teaching and they want to do it well."

He says that as a percentage of the overall number of courses, the number of online courses at UConn is still relatively small. He notes that proportionately more online courses are offered in the summer than during the academic year, but faculty are increasingly beginning to teach online courses during the fall and spring semesters.

McCaffrey notes that designing a course

is a time-intensive process: "When you add in a new element – such as an online component – you add to the level of complexity by introducing something faculty have to become familiar with."

Adds Marny Lawton, an instructional designer who led development of the seminar, "You don't need to be an expert in technology to teach an online course, but you do need an understanding and a certain level of mastery to be comfortable doing it."

For those who already have some experience of using educational technology, say Lawton and McCaffrey, the seminar will be a tool enabling them to do what they envision online. For others, it will be an introduction to a new way of teaching.

The two hope the online seminar will also help advertise the University's instructional design and support services for faculty who are developing new courses or retooling existing ones, or looking for new technical skills.

Instructional designers have expertise in curriculum development, learning theory, educational technologies, and assessment tools. They also work as project managers, coordinating where necessary experts in network, graphics, media, and programming, as well as the library liaisons and administrators who deal with grading.

"We want faculty to realize they don't have to do it all themselves – that's what Instructional Design is here for," says Lawton. "The tools, the software, and the skills that may be needed are spread across campus. Instructional designers have the training and connections to bring them all together."

Adds McCaffrey, "Faculty are still the subject matter experts. That doesn't change. But we bring a whole array of coordinating tools and project management that help pull the pieces together, which is tough for one individual to do."

Marcus, H.	Institute of Materials Science	Dept. of Defense/Air Force Office of Scientific Research/Conn. Center for Advanced Technology Inc.	\$91,880	6/08-5/09	<i>Support for the Application of Lasers to Materials Processing</i>
Mason, R.	Marine Sciences	National Science Foundation	\$60,186	8/08-7/10	<i>Collaborative Research: A GEOTRACES Intercalibration of Collection, Handling, and Analysis Methods for Mercury Species in Seawater</i>
Mason, R.	Marine Sciences	Nat'l. Institutes of Health/Nat'l. Institute of Environmental Health Sciences/Dartmouth College	\$373,247	4/08-3/13	<i>Toxic Metals in the Northeast: From Biological to Environmental Implications</i>
McCartney, R.	Computer Science & Engineering	National Science Foundation	\$27,058	8/08-7/10	<i>Collaborative Research: Commonsense Computing: What Students Know Before We Teach</i>
O'Neill, R.	Molecular & Cell Biology	National Science Foundation	\$809,998	7/08-6/11	<i>The Impact of Retroelement Expression on Centromere Determination in Marsupials</i>
Papadimitrakopoulou, F.	Institute of Materials Science	National Science Foundation	\$200,127	9/08-8/11	<i>Collaborative Research: Diameter and Chirality Control Through Regrowth of Single Wall Carbon Nanotubes</i>
Quinn, D.	Psychology	Nat'l. Institutes of Health /Nat'l. Institute of Mental Health	\$480,638	8/08-5/11	<i>Predicting Psychological Distress for People with Concealable Stigmatized Identities</i>
Schlichting, C.	Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	National Science Foundation	\$12,000	6/08-5/10	<i>Dissertation Research: Do Egg Size Effects Cascade through Salamander Ontogeny? Allometric Engineering of Maternal Provisioning</i>
Seery, T.	Institute of Materials Science	American Chemical Society/Petroleum Research Fund	\$100,000	9/08-8/10	<i>Dynamic Light Scattering from Light Absorbing Solutions</i>
Settlage, J.	Curriculum & Instruction	Conn. Science Center	\$30,000	8/08-5/09	<i>Doctoral Candidate at Connecticut Science Center</i>
Simonsen, W.	Public Policy	Conn. Dept. of Economic & Community Development	\$23,477	8/08-5/09	<i>Internship Program</i>
Smirnova, A.	Conn. Institute of Fuel Cell Research & Innovation	United Technologies /UTC Power/UTC Fuel Cells	\$2,500	5/08-8/08	<i>Synthesis of Carbon Aerogels</i>
Suib, S.	Chemistry	National Science Foundation	\$303,191	7/08-6/11	<i>GOALI – Microwave Reactor Applications for Biomass and Green Technologies</i>
Swadlow, H.	Psychology	Nat'l. Institutes of Health/Nat'l. Eye Institute	\$1,164,458	8/08-7/11	<i>Cortical Processing of Visual Information During Alert and Non-Alert Brain States</i>
Tehraniipoor, M.	Electrical & Computer Engineering	National Science Foundation	\$250,000	9/08-8/11	<i>CPA-DA: Dealing with Voltage Variations and Supply Noise During Performance Verification in Nanometer Technology Designs</i>
Tufts, J.	Communication Sciences	Dept. of Defense/Navy	\$16,879	5/08-8/08	<i>Enabling Tech for Prediction of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss Incidence and Economic Cost</i>
Ulloa-Beal, S.	ISS-Academic Programs Center	Conn. Dept. of Higher Education	\$127,313	7/08-6/09	<i>Conn. Awareness Preparation Program (ConnCAP)</i>
Valiquette, E.	Extension	J.C. Penney Afterschool Fund Inc./Nat'l. 4-H Council	\$77,400	8/08-6/09	<i>Danbury Afterschool</i>
Vokoun, J.	Natural Resources Management & Engineering	Conn. Dept. of Environmental Protection	\$24,528	6/08-3/09	<i>Determining Swim Speed Performance Characteristics for Fish Passage of Burbot using an Experimental Flume and Nature-Like Fishway</i>
Volin, J.	Natural Resources Management & Engineering	Conn. Dept. of Environmental Protection	\$150,000	6/08-7/10	<i>Evaluating Multiple Control Methods for Hydrilla verticillata in the Silvermine River System</i>
Westa, S.	Extension	Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor Inc.	\$70,000	7/08-6/09	<i>Cooperative Agreement between the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor Inc. and the Univ. of Conn. for the Green Valley Institute</i>
Willet, P.	Electrical & Computer Engineering	Dept. of Defense/Navy/Office of Naval Research	\$69,256	6/08-12/08	<i>Tracking Primer</i>
Worthley, T.	Extension	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/Forest Service/Conn. Dept. of Env. Protection	\$63,173	4/08-4/10	<i>Monitoring Protocol for Forest Ecosystem Health</i>
Yan, J.	Statistics	National Science Foundation	\$150,000	7/08-6/11	<i>Unified Dynamic Modeling of Event Time Data with Semiparametric Profile Estimating Functions: Theory, Computing, and Applications</i>
Yao, X.	Chemistry	American Cancer Society Inc./Univ. of Conn. Health Center	\$20,000	8/08-7/09	<i>Novel Methods for Identification and Quantitation of Phosphotyrosinyl Proteins in Head and Neck Cancer Cells Responding to EGF Stimulation</i>
Zhu, L.	Institute of Materials Science	Dept. of Defense/Air Force/Agiltron Inc.	\$112,500	11/07-8/08	<i>Nanodielectrics for High Power Capacitors and Passive Applications, Phase II</i>
Zinn, S.	Animal Science	Quebec-Labrador Foundation	\$750	6/08-9/08	<i>Using the Somatotrophic Axis as a Model to Predict Nutritional Status in Free Ranging Harbor Seals Pups in Southern New England</i>

GRANTS

The following grants were received through the Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) in July 2008. The list represents only new proposals awarded, and excludes continuations. The list is supplied by OSP. Additional grants received in July were published in the Sept. 29 *Advance*.

P.I.	Department	Sponsor	Amount	Award Period
Li, Y.	Plant Science	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture	\$293,705	7/08-7/09
				<i>New England Center for Invasive Plants, Connecticut, Vermont, and Maine</i>
Little, C.	Educational Psychology	Conn. Dept. of Higher Education	\$35,922	6/08-5/09
				<i>Evaluation of Teacher Quality Partnership Grants</i>

CALENDAR

Monday, October 6, to Tuesday, October 14

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: The next Calendar will include events taking place from Tuesday, Oct. 14 through Monday, Oct. 20. Those items must be in the database by 4 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 6. 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).

Libraries

Homer Babbidge Library. Monday-Thursday, 7:30 a.m.-2 a.m.; Friday, 7:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-2 a.m.
Dodd Center. Monday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturday, noon-4 p.m.; closed Sunday.
Health Center Library. Monday-Thursday, 7 a.m.-11 p.m.; Friday, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, noon-10 p.m.
Law Library. Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-11 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m.-9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday, 1-9 p.m.

Ph.D. Defenses

Tuesday, 10/7 – Philosophy. *The Limits of Ethical Disagreement: A Davidsonian Approach to Ethics*, by Brian Rockwood (adv.: Wheeler). 2 p.m., Room 227, Manchester Hall.
 Thursday, 10/9 – Curriculum & Instruction. *The Implementation of a Media Literacy Curriculum in the Public Schools: Three Case Studies*, by Belinha De Abreu (adv.: Irwin). 1:30 p.m., Room 246, Gentry Building.

Meetings

Monday, 10/13 – University Senate. 4-6 p.m., Room 7, Bishop Center.

Lectures & Seminars

Monday, 10/6 – Celebrate Women. "Understanding Epilepsy: Diagnosis and Treatment," by Lara Schrader. Noon, Henry Low Learning Center, Health Center. Call 860-486-8899 for registration. The program can be viewed live at www.celebrate.uconn.edu/webcast.
Wednesday, 10/8 – Stem Cell Seminar. "25 Years in the Making: Germline Competent Rat Embryonic Stem Cells," by Qi-Long Ying,



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Puppets from *ChucheQhalin*, a film designed to teach Afghan children how to keep safe in war and avoid landmines, are part of the *Puppets Through the Lens* exhibit at the Ballard Museum. See Exhibits.

University of California. 10:30 a.m., Room CG076, Henry B.C. Low M.D. Learning Center, Health Center. Video at Storrs, Room 109, Advanced Technology Laboratory.
Wednesday, 10/8 – Rainbow Center Lecture. "Miscegenation and the 'Homosexual Agenda'," by Phoebe Godfrey. Noon, SU Room 403.
Wednesday, 10/8 – Statistics Colloquium. "Estimation of Space-time Point Process Models in Seismology and Model Assessment," by Alejandro Veen, IBM. 4 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.
Thursday, 10/9 – Comparative Pathology Seminar. "Wildlife Diseases in Africa and Management Thereof," by Woudter van Hoven, EcoLife Expeditions. 11 a.m., Room A001, Atwater Laboratories.
Thursday, 10/9 – African American Studies Lecture. "Jimi Hendrix, Yukio Mishima, and the Queerness of Patriotic Critique," by Reggie Jackson, Yale University. 4 p.m., Room 421G, Women's Center.
Thursday, 10/9 – Atomic, Molecular, & Optical Physics Seminar.

"Controlling the Center-of-Mass Motion of Ultracold Atoms," by Daniel Steck, University of Oregon. 4 p.m., Room P121, Gant Science Complex.
Thursday, 10/9 – Rainbow Center Lecture. "Always Present Necessity – One Woman Show," by Sarahi Yajaira. 7 p.m., Room 437, PRLACC.
Friday, 10/10 – Polymer Science Seminar. "Nanoscale Semiconductor Assemblies for Photovoltaics," by D. Venkataraman, UMass-Amherst. 11 a.m., Room IMS20, Gant Science Complex.
Friday, 10/10 – Center for Environmental Science & Engineering. "Ecological Scarcity: The Global Economic Challenge," by Edward Barbier & John Bugas, University of Wyoming. 3 p.m., Room 130, Physics/Biology Building.
Friday, 10/10 – Marine Sciences Seminar. "Antarctic Copepod Life Cycle Studies," by Tim Shank, Woods Hole. 3 p.m., Marine Science Building, Avery Point Campus.
Friday, 10/10 – Humanitarianism Lecture. "A World History of

Genocide," by Ben Kiernan, Yale University. 4 p.m., Konover Auditorium.

Tuesday, 10/14 – 'Last Lecture' Series. "Bioshock in Plato's Cave: How Videogames Can Lead Us into the Light," by Roger Travis. 7 p.m., Buckley Lounge.

Exhibits

Through Friday, 10/10 – Babbidge Library. *Migration Route, a Journey Through Art*, collage photographs by George Jacobi, Gallery on the Plaza; *4 in Prints* by Claudia Fieo, Margot Rocklen, Kim Tester, and Carmela Venti, Stevens Gallery; *A Reason to Remember, Roth, Germany, 1933-1942*, West Alcove. Also Monday, 10/13 through Friday, 11/7, *The American President*, photographs from the Associated Press Archives, West Alcove.
Through Friday, 10/10 – Dodd Center. *Celebrating the Sculptural Book: The Challenge of Structure.*
Through Friday, 10/10 – Contemporary Art Galleries. *Alumni Biennial (One)*. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fine Arts Building.
Through Friday, 10/31 – Torrington Campus. *Empty Place at the Table*, domestic violence awareness display. Lobby, Eads Building.
Through Sunday, 11/2 – Alexey von Schlippe Gallery. Works by 38 Latin artists. Weds.-Sun., noon-4 p.m. Members and students free, others \$3 donation. Avery Point Campus.
Through Friday, 11/14 – Jorgensen Gallery. *Regarding India*, including *Walking Dreams of India*, photographs & digital montage by Neil Chowdhury; *Junctures & Constellations*, by Hanuman Kambli & Kathryn Myers; and works by students and alumni from the Goa College of Arts. Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
Through Thursday, 11/20 – Health Center. Oil paintings by Linda Tenukas. Daily, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Main and Mezzanine Lobbies. Also, through Wednesday, 1/7, abstract paintings by Tory Cowles, and photographs by Melissa Post. Daily, 8 a.m.-9 p.m., Celeste LeWitt Gallery.
Through Sunday, 11/30 – Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry. *Puppets Through The Lens*. Depot Campus, Friday-Sunday, noon-5 p.m. Free admission, donations welcome.
Through Friday, 12/19 – Benton Museum. *Sera: The Way of the Tibetan Monk*; also, *The Photographs of Sheila Rock*. Also, through Sunday, 10/12, art department faculty exhibit. Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sat. & Sun., 1-4:30 p.m.

Performing Arts

Friday, 10/10 – Symphony Orchestra. "Heroes and Heroism."

Jeffrey Renshaw and Howard Hsu, conductors. 8 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Admission \$7 for adults, free for students and children.

Friday, 10/10 & Saturday, 10/11 – Capitol Steps. Political satire. Tickets: \$34, \$38, \$45. 8 p.m., Jorgensen.

Sunday, 10/12 – Community School of the Arts Faculty Recital. Nick Cutroneo, guitar. 3 p.m., Vernon Building, Depot Campus.

Sunday, 10/12 – Songfest. Songs of the British Isles. Admission: \$25. 4 p.m., Jorgensen.

Through Sunday, 10/12 – A Man for All Seasons. CRT production of Robert Bolt's play. Nafe Katter Theatre. For performance times and tickets, call 860-486-4226.

Films

Monday, 10/6 – Library Documentary. *Freedom of Expression@: Resistance and Repression in the Age of Intellectual Property*. 2 p.m., Konover Auditorium. Co-producer Jeremy Smith will speak.

Monday, 10/6 – Rainbow Center Film. *Paris is Burning*. 7 p.m., Room 407, African American Cultural Center.

Monday, 10/6 – Puppet Film. *Handmade Puppet Dreams, Volume III*, by Heather Henson. 7:30 p.m., Student Union. Free admission.

Tuesday, 10/7 – Rainbow Center Film. *I Exist*. 5 p.m., Room 432, Asian American Cultural Center.

Wednesday, 10/8 – Rainbow Center Film. *If These Walls Could Talk 2*. 4 p.m., Room 421, Women's Center.

Sunday, 10/12 – Film Screening & Discussion. *Journey From the Fall*, with Ham Tran, director. Noon, Student Union Theatre.

Tuesday, 10/14 – India Film Series. *Om Shanti Om*. 6:30 p.m., Room 106, Art Building.

Athletics

Tuesday, 10/7 – Men's Tennis vs. Salve Regina. 3 p.m., Tennis Courts.
Wednesday, 10/8 – Men's Tennis vs. Bryant. 3 p.m., Tennis Courts.
Wednesday, 10/8 – Women's Volleyball vs. Hartford. 7 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.
Friday, 10/10 – Women's Ice Hockey vs. Colgate. 7 p.m., Sherman Family Sports Complex.
Saturday, 10/11 – Women's Ice Hockey vs. Rutgers. 2 p.m., Sherman Family Sports Complex.
Sunday, 10/12 – Women's Volleyball vs. Rutgers. 2 p.m., Gampel Pavilion.

Potpourri

Wednesday, 10/8 – Literary Reading. Readings by Steve Almond. 7 p.m., Konover Auditorium. Free admission.

Conference on humanitarianism, responsibility

BY CINDY WEISS

Historians, writers, artists, and filmmakers from around the world will gather at the Storrs campus Oct. 10-12 to consider what constitutes responsible action in the face of a humanitarian crisis.

"In the Balance: Humanitarianism and Responsibility," a conference organized by the Foundations of Humanitarianism program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will use panel discussions, a daylong "think tank," film clips, and conversations with novelists to come to grips with the topic.

The conference opens with a public lecture, "A World History of Genocide," by Ben Kiernan, author of a new book, *Blood and Soil – a World History of Genocide, from Sparta to Darfur*. His talk will take place on Friday, Oct. 10, at

4 p.m. in Konover Auditorium. Kiernan, the A. Whitney Griswold Professor of History and director of the Genocide Studies Program at Yale University, will be followed by Professor Achille Mbembe, senior researcher at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research in South Africa, who will respond to Kiernan's talk.

A daylong think tank, moderated by UConn faculty, will take place on Saturday at the Rome Ballroom. It will include artists, novelists, and filmmakers. Two African novelists, Nuruddin Farah and Zakes Mda, will lead a conversation facilitated by Joseph Slaughter, associate professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University and author of *Human Rights, Inc.: The World Novel, Narrative Form, and International Law*.

Sarah Nuttall, a renowned

scholar from South Africa, will participate in a conference panel on "Culture, Theory, Responsibility" on Saturday, Oct. 11, at 3:15 p.m.

Independent filmmaker Ham Tran will participate in a panel discussion on "Media, Morality, and Responsibility" at 1:15 p.m. on Saturday. On Sunday, Oct. 12, Tran's award-winning film, *Journey from the Fall*, will be shown at noon in the Student Union Theatre. The film is about the emigration of a Vietnamese family to America 13 years after the end of the Vietnam War.

All conference events are open to the public. They include a book fair and lunch at Rome Ballroom on Saturday. For the complete schedule and registration, go to <http://web.uconn.edu/uchi/conference.php>

Grammy-award winner to speak at physics colloquium Oct. 10

A Grammy Award-winning physicist who discovered the technology that allows you to download a song to your cell phone as a ring tone will give a lecture on Oct. 10 at 4 p.m. in the Gant Science Complex, Room P038.

Kevin Short, a professor of mathematics at the University of New Hampshire, will speak on "Disassembly, Repair and Rebuilding of Music with Mathematics."

Short is known for his discovery of Chaotic Compression Technol-

ogy, which uses advanced signal processing methods and allows the stabilization of chaotic systems with very little information. His work on the mathematics of signal processing made it possible to produce music files four times smaller than mp3s – small enough to be downloaded onto cell phones.

His 2008 Grammy Award for best historical album recognized his work in restoring a 1949 recording of a live performance by folksinger Woody Guthrie.

Capital projects group to meet Oct. 15

The Capital Projects Planning Advisory Committee will meet on Wednesday, Oct. 15 at 3 p.m. in the Bishop Center, Room 7.

The agenda includes project updates on the Social Sciences and Humanities Building, the Gant

complex, a neighborhood study of the Fine Arts area, and Storrs campus beautification. There will also be a discussion of the University's water system and an update on the Mansfield Downtown Project.

Science program for minority students fosters leadership skills



PHOTO SUPPLIED BY JOY ERICKSON

Students in the LSAMP program at their Leadership Launch at Holiday Hill. From left, Mykel Mendes, Gina Guinta, Ricardo Lewis, and Samantha Henry.

BY SHERRY FISHER

Underrepresented students studying science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are better able to achieve success thanks to the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Leadership and Academic Enhancement Program.

The program, funded through the National Science Foundation, is part of an alliance of New England institutions designed to strengthen the preparation and success of historically underrepresented students in the sciences.

The LSAMP program was launched at UConn by Damon Williams, former assistant vice provost of multicultural and international affairs. It is now directed by Ruth Washington, professor of

molecular and cell biology.

Freshmen who fit the target population are invited to join the program. There are currently 56 LSAMP scholars at UConn; 24 have graduated since the program's inception in 2003.

"From the time they are freshmen, we want to help these students thrive and achieve at high levels," says Joy Erickson, coordinator of the program. "We want to help them learn how to handle the rigors of their studies, how to network and build relationships with peers and faculty, and enhance and develop their leadership skills."

The scholars have special advisors who help with any academic and social problems, and they are encouraged to engage in research internships after their first year.

Erickson says the program is working. "LSAMP scholars in their first year have an average GPA of 3.0," she says. "Our comparison group – students who were invited to join LSAMP but declined – had an average GPA of 1.6 after their first year."

Ronald Taylor, vice provost for multicultural and international affairs, says the program "has been a singular success and a genuine model for similar programs across the country. I think we can all be extremely proud of what we have accomplished here."

Leadership is a theme that runs through the program, Erickson says, noting that the fall semester is kicked off with a Leadership Launch at Holiday Hill in Mansfield. There, students take part in

team building and trust exercises.

Students, particularly in the sciences and engineering, do better when they study in teams, says Erickson, noting that underrepresented students often study alone.

"We're trying to change the culture and get them to study in groups," she says.

She also encourages them to work with tutors. "We try to get them to use tutors, because they often think that you only go to tutoring if you're 'dumb.' Special program assistants, who are upperclassmen, also work with the new students. It's all about networking and building trust."

Erickson says the program gives students a strong sense of belonging, a necessary ingredient for success.

"When researchers looked at reasons why one person is successful and another person is not, and why one person left a university and another stayed, one of the things that was quite apparent was their sense of belonging and being part of something," she says.

And that, she says, can be more important than money.

"Other programs may give students money, a ceremony, and a handshake," Erickson says. "In our program, they'll be involved in relationships. That's what they need: conversations, relationships, and one-on-ones."

Atinuke Oyeniya, a junior majoring in civil engineering, says she gained "valuable skills" as a LSAMP scholar.

"The leadership and team building experiences where we learned to do group projects were very helpful," Oyeniya says. "Joy was very helpful. I got good advice, and got to know people who are in the math and science areas."

Andrea Tovar, a senior majoring in psychology and Spanish, started as a pre-med major but ended

up on academic probation in her sophomore year.

"I was in transition," Tovar says, "and needed help."

She says tutors and mentors helped her turn things around. "LSAMP definitely opened opportunities for me," says Tovar, who is focusing on neuroscience in the psychology department, and plans to attend graduate school. "It was great to work and study with students who have similar interests."

LSAMP scholars are strongly encouraged to do research or an internship during the summer.

"We tell them that college is their job for the next four to five years, and summer should be spent working toward their goals," Erickson says.

Upperclassmen who are LSAMP scholars are encouraged to talk to freshmen about their summer experiences, as well as their leadership roles at the University.

LSAMP students take a First Year Experience class with Erickson, which focuses on the program. One of her main goals is to ensure the students get to know each other. They also learn about time management and study strategies, and discuss discrimination and stereotypes.

"Many underrepresented and first-generation students don't realize how exceptional they are," Erickson says. "I try to reinforce how smart they really are."

Erickson says one of the problems for underrepresented and first-generation students is the lack of role models. LSAMP students serve as role models for children, particularly in inner city schools. In a program called The Science Wizards, LSAMP scholars visited 10 middle schools in three weeks.

"It's so important for LSAMP students to give back to their communities," says Erickson. "It's an integral part of the pipeline."

Economics panel *continued from page 1*

Zimmermann said the issue of solvency – having the assets to back up claims – should not result in bank runs today. At this point, people are still working, factories are open, and the non-financial sector is still in good shape, he noted. But over time, if little credit is available and investment is reduced, the impact of the financial market's problems could spread.

"I'm reasonably optimistic there are solutions out there," he said.

Arthur Wright, professor emeritus of economics and a specialist in regulatory policy, said a large part of the current crisis has regulatory roots. "The regulatory system has not kept up with the rate of innovations," he said, especially with what he called "stealth banks," financial institutions that have behaved like banks but have not been subject to regulatory scrutiny.

Wright expects a recession.

The period of "the great moderation," from the Clinton years on, when the economy was characterized by growth, low interest rates, and moderate inflation, "may have led regulators to get lazy," he said.

This is a problem that won't be

solved before the presidential election, he said. After the election, Wright favors strengthening the Federal Reserve, perhaps consolidating regulatory power that now is scattered across agencies.

Steven Lanza, editor of *The Connecticut Economy*, a quarterly publication of the economics department, said the government has responded remarkably quickly to the crisis. By contrast, in the 1930s, it took years to buy up assets of companies and banks that failed and to prop up the housing market, where values dropped by half.

In some places now, property values have dropped as much as 20 percent, Lanza said. But Connecticut never experienced the speculation in housing prices that was seen in some other states – "a silver lining of the dark cloud of zero population growth in Connecticut."

The state depends more on the financial services industry than other states, however; 45 percent of the state income tax comes from Fairfield County, where many people are employed on Wall



PHOTO BY JESSICA TOMMASELLI

Stephen Ross, associate professor of economics, discusses the country's financial crisis during a panel Sept. 30.

Street and in the financial sector.

"We're not going to see the six and seven and eight-figure salaries we did before," he predicted. "The state is going to face some very serious budget problems."

The economists at the forum generally favored exploring alternatives to the \$700 billion buy-up of toxic assets recommended by Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson.

The Swedish solution, in which the government bought equity in firms that it propped up, was one of several models suggested.

Lyle Scruggs, associate professor of political science, pointed out, however, that a "partial nationalization of these banks" would be hard to sell politically in a capitalist society.

Ross worried that "the U.S. is no

longer seen as a safe place to put your capital" by foreign investors who have financed much of this country's deficit spending.

Ross also commented that student loans will see the effects of the financial crisis. Nine months ago, people stopped buying securities based on student loans, he said: "Clearly this is something to be worried about."