



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

# Advance

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## New program will boost data security on University computers

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

The security of personally identifiable data on University computers is being upgraded with a new encryption program.

UITs will begin rolling out the program April 1, initially on Windows-based University laptop and desktop computers. Over time, additional security measures will be implemented for other University computers and devices.

The encryption program will ensure that sensitive data, such as Social Security numbers and credit card numbers, remains secure, and that unauthorized people can not gain access to it, even if the device is lost or stolen.

"Currently, the University's computers have a basic lock, like on a door," says David Martel, associate vice president and chief information officer. "The encryption program is like adding a deadbolt."

The program the University is adopting renders all the data on the hard drive of an encrypted device unreadable to unauthorized users.

"It takes away the need for an individual to decide, 'Does this need encryption?'" says Elaine David, assistant vice president for security policy and quality assurance.

The implementation process is expected to take 18 months. The program will be launched in the areas of highest need, beginning with the units reporting to the Chief Operating Officer and other critical areas that work with sensitive data. Deans, directors, and department heads have been invited to identify critical areas within their units; and others with concerns about sensitive data may request an early installation by contacting Katherina Sorrentino (Katherina.Sorrentino@uconn.edu).

Users will be asked to select a new "strong" password comprising a minimum of eight characters, including upper and lower case letters, at least one number, and a symbol. The username – or NetID – will remain the same, but for added security, an individual's encryption password will differ from the password used to log in to University e-mail, WebCT, and other online services. An additional login screen will ap-

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PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

Vanessa Kafka '06 meets with a First Year Experience class. Kafka, a singer and songwriter, was on campus to give a performance on March 19 at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts.

## Library, museum hours reduced as cost-saving measure

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

The hours of the Homer Babbidge Library and two museums on campus will be cut, beginning March 30, because of budget concerns.

The cuts will lead to immediate savings of about \$40,000 a year and are part of ongoing efforts by the University to cope with a 3 percent rescission in this fiscal year and a projected \$35 million shortfall in the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Provost Peter Nicholls said he is also planning to cut the budget for the museums by \$300,000, beginning in Fiscal Year 2011.

"We are working to trim costs wherever we can," he said. "Coping with the budgetary environment will take efforts both large and small, and some services will have to be curtailed."

The cuts will result in a 50 percent

reduction in hours at the William Benton Museum of Art and a 40 percent reduction at the Museum of Natural History.

The Dodd Center will also have a 50 percent reduction and will be open 20 hours a week. Starting this week, the Homer Babbidge Library will open at 8:30 a.m., one hour later than it has been opening.

These cuts are in addition to \$7 million to be achieved in the next fiscal year, as recommended by the Costs, Operations, and Revenue Efficiencies (CORE) Task Force. Those recommendations include both revenue enhancements, such as increasing summer school offerings, and savings, including energy conservation, staffing reorganization, streamlined work processes, and a reduction in printing. The task force is expected to issue another report with further recommendations in June.

## Faculty committee to review graduate programs

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

A committee to review graduate and professional programs at the University has been established by President Michael Hogan and Provost Peter Nicholls.

The 18-member faculty committee, chaired by Suman Singha, vice president for research and dean of the Graduate School, is charged with reviewing Ph.D. programs to determine which ones should be supported and which sunsetted, in line with the provisions of the Academic Plan.

"It is prudent to identify programs that are distinguished and on the cusp of distinction, with the aim of shielding them – to the extent possible – from the adverse effects of likely budget cuts going forward," Nicholls said. "We also believe it is important to identify programs that are not performing well in terms of factors such as student demand, completion, and placement, and to ask difficult questions regarding whether we can continue to support those programs."

He says resources will be moved from discontinued programs to support those that have the potential for national recognition.

The Committee for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Programs, which began meeting earlier this month, is expected to make recommendations to the provost by the end of the semester. It will review all Ph.D. programs, including those in professional fields such as law and physical therapy, with the exception of those in medicine or dental medicine.

Singha says the criteria on which the programs are being reviewed include number of students, number of faculty, quality of students in terms of their GPA, GRE scores, and the institutions they came from, admission and acceptance rates, retention rates and time to degree, and placement following graduation.

A program's ranking in relation to its peers nationally, as well as grant funding and the publications of both graduate students and faculty in the program, will also be considered.

"The committee is developing metrics for evaluating the programs," says Singha. "Although there are some qualitative aspects,

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PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

From left, Capt. Herman Bulls, U.S. Army Cadet Command; Lt. Col. Christine Harvey, professor of military science; President Michael Hogan; Brig. Gen. Arnold Gordon-Bray, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Cadet Command; and Sgt. Daniel Pinion, senior military instructor, after a coin presentation to the President.

# Former Congressman Chris Shays to speak at Dodd Center on April 7

Former U.S. Rep. Christopher Shays will deliver a lecture titled, “Principles, Politics, and Leadership: The risks and rewards of staying true and speaking honestly in Washington,” on April 7, at 5 p.m. in Konover Auditorium at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center.

Shays recently donated his Congressional papers to the Dodd Center.

Shays spent 21 years representing Connecticut’s 4<sup>th</sup> District in Congress as a Republican. Known for his moderate views, he is considered by many to be a social liberal and a fiscal conservative, and often described as a “maverick” and an “independent thinker.” Some suggest these views helped in his 2006 re-election, which made him the only Republican to hold a seat in the House for New England.

In 1987, he was elected based

on his promise to “get our financial house in order” and worked hard throughout his political career to reduce spending and stimulate the economy. He helped establish the COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) program, which has helped reduce crime through the United States; helped lead the charge to end racial profiling and sexual discrimination in the workplace; supported a woman’s right to choose; and assisted in authoring the 1993 Gun Control Act and advocating for a sensible assault weapons ban reauthorization bill. His interest in speaking honestly also led him, in April 2005, to break with most of his party over House Majority Leader Tom DeLay’s alleged ethics violations, being the first Republican to say he should step down from his post.

He was the first U.S. Congressman to visit Iraq after the

war began, and by 2008 had traveled to Iraq more times than any other member of Congress.

Shays’ interests also include the Peace Corps, in which he served as a volunteer from 1968 to 1970, together with his wife Betsi. While in Congress, he helped establish the AmeriCorps national service program and co-founded the Congressional National Service Caucus. Some of his other roles included being a senior member of the Government Reform Committee, Ranking Member of its Subcommittee on National Security, and a member of the Homeland Security and Financial Services Committees.

A reception will follow the lecture, which is sponsored by Leadership Legacy Experience and the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center.

# Marine meteorologist to give talk on April 8

James Edson, associate professor of marine sciences at UConn’s Avery Point campus, will give a talk titled “Meteorological Investigations over the Open Ocean” on April 8 at noon, in Homer Babidge Library’s Class of ’47 Room. The talk is part of the library’s ongoing series “Research Highlights at Noon,” which showcases faculty research.

Edson will describe how marine meteorologists and oceanographers conduct investigations of atmosphere-ocean interaction to improve marine forecasting. He will discuss a research experiment

conducted in extreme wintertime conditions in the North Atlantic, with wind speeds averaging 30 knots, which drove waves that routinely exceeded 15 feet in height. He will explain how measurements are made from ships, buoys, and other platforms under these conditions, and what they tell us about marine weather.

Edson received his Ph.D. in meteorology from Penn State University. After a post-doctoral year in Nantes, France, he spent 14 years as a research scientist and educator at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. He joined the marine

sciences faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UConn in 2005, where he continues to conduct research in air-sea interaction and teaches courses in physics and meteorology.

A question-and-answer session will follow the talk. Those who plan to attend are invited to bring a lunch.

For further information, contact Frances Libbey, sciences bibliographer, at 860-486-2521 or Frances.Libbey@uconn.edu.

# Day-long conference April 3 will highlight media literacy

A one-day conference, “Re-thinking Media Literacy Priorities in a Changing Information Age,” will take place at the Bishop Center in Storrs on Friday, April 3, from 8:45 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The Northeast Media Literacy Conference is designed for teachers, health care professionals, counselors and prevention specialists, media leaders, parents, and others interested in exploring the great impact of today’s mass media upon children and youth.

Conference presenters and participants will focus on several of the new media literacies, including health literacy and financial literacy, in light of current economic and social concerns.

Keynote speakers include Melinda Hemmlegarn, health nutritionist and television host, who is a strong advocate for using media literacy to help combat obesity in young people; and Lou Golden, chair of the Connecticut Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy.

Hemmlegarn will discuss how

media literacy – as applied to food, agriculture and environmental messages – can expose greenwashing, reveal unintended consequences, and identify the critical questions necessary to become “good” food citizens, grass-roots advocates, and agents of policy change.

Golden will discuss how many current national and personal economic problems can be traced back to mismanagement and misconceptions of basic economic and financial realities, and will explain why financial education and responsibility need to begin in early childhood.

The conference also includes 20 workshops on key media literacy-related areas.

For more information, go to <http://www.education.uconn.edu/conferences/medialit> or call 860-486-3231.

The event is presented by the Neag School of Education, the Action Coalition for Media Education and the National Association for Media Literacy Education.

# Wallace Stevens poet to give two readings

The 2009 Wallace Stevens Poetry Program will feature poet Heather McHugh.

Educated at Harvard University, McHugh is an award winning poet, translator, and educator. Her books of poetry include *Eyeshot* (2004), which was shortlisted for the Pulitzer Prize; *The Father of Predicaments* (2001); and *Hinge & Sign: Poems 1968-1993* (1994), a finalist for the National Book Award.

McHugh has won awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, PEN, and Wellesley College. She currently serves as the Milliman Distinguished Writer-in-Residence at the University of Washington in Seattle.

McHugh will make two appearances with the Wallace Stevens Program. The first will be on April 2 at 8 p.m. at the Thomas J. Dodd

Research Center on the Storrs Campus. The second reading, on April 3 at noon, will be held at Hartford Classical Magnet School, 85 Woodland Street, Hartford. Both readings are free and open to the public.

At the Dodd Center, on April 2, McHugh will be joined by the student winners of UConn’s annual Wallace Stevens Poetry Prize: Sean Forbes, Lori Carriere, and Nicole Rubin.

For more information about the Wallace Stevens Poetry Program, or other author events, go to the Creative Writing Program website: [creativewriting.uconn.edu](http://creativewriting.uconn.edu)

The program is presented by UConn’s English Department, in association with The Hartford Financial Services Group Inc. and The Hartford Friends and Enemies of Wallace Stevens.

## UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Advance Elizabeth Omara-Otunnu Editor

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# Foundation adapts to challenging economy

Faced with dramatic declines in investment markets, the UConn Foundation has taken steps to both stabilize its revenue sources and at the same time provide predictable spending allocations to the Schools and Colleges. One is to enact a gift fee on all new gifts, effective Feb. 1. Another involves changing how the endowment management fee is assessed.

“It was important that we take decisive action so we could continue fulfilling our mission despite the slump in the economy,” says John Martin, president of the UConn Foundation. “Even though year-to-date new gifts and commitments are running about even with last year, the uncertainty in the financial markets has raised the question about whether giving can be sustained.”

Like other institutions, the University of Connecticut relies on its endowment to provide a stable funding source for scholarships and graduate fellowships, faculty research, academic programs, and a host of student activities and facilities needs.

At the same time, most institutionally related foundations like the UConn Foundation depend on endowment management fees to support fund-raising activities and help pay the costs of professionally managing the endowment for the highest rates of return.

Because UConn’s endowment decreased in value by 22 percent from June 2008 through January 2009, there has been a corresponding reduction in the operating funds needed to provide services for which the Foundation is contractually obligated to the University.

Last June, the UConn Foundation reported an overall University endowment of \$317 million and total assets of \$397 million. Despite a slight decrease from the previous year and signs of a larger market decline looming, at the time these figures reflected a remarkable five-year period during which each had grown by more than 50 percent.

Since then investment markets have seen the value of most higher education endowments in the country fall by 20 percent to 30 percent or more.

In December, a decision was made to eliminate 12 positions from the Foundation’s approved headcount. Seven of these were currently filled, while the remaining five were being actively recruited to bolster fund-raising and

support staff in anticipation of the major fund-raising campaign that will be launched publicly this fall.

Now, the Foundation is taking further steps.

The fee on all new gifts is 3 percent on endowed gifts and 5 percent on non-endowed gifts. A recent Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) survey of higher education foundations in the U.S. found that 35 percent to 40 percent currently employ gift fees averaging 5 percent on all new gifts, while a majority of others are strongly considering such fees in the near term.

When the fee proposal was reviewed by UConn’s deans it was suggested that 25 percent of the non-endowed fee be returned to the School or College receiving the gift, to be used at its discretion. This provision was approved by the Foundation’s Board of Directors in February.

“Based on our calculations, we believe the gift fee will make us far less subject to the ups and downs in the financial markets,” says David Vance, the Foundation’s vice president for finance and controls. “The deans were fully supportive of these changes, because they recognize that the Foundation provides a valuable service to support their academic missions.”

A second decision changes the assessment of the endowment management fee. Previously, a fund was charged 1.7 percent of its average market value for a specified period, in exchange for managing the assets. This has been reduced to 1.25 percent, but will now be assessed against the fund regardless of whether the current market value is less than its historic value (contributions plus investment returns), due to market declines. The so-called “underwater funds” will be closely monitored according to prudent industry standards, to ensure that they remain a permanent source of funding for the University.

“Over the long term, the changes approved by our Board will greatly stabilize our operational funding and actually save the endowment money when compared to the old fee structure,” says Martin. “We’ll continue to monitor our budgets closely, but these decisions will enable us to continue providing UConn with increased levels of private fund-raising to support its academic mission. That’s the best result we could ask for.”

## Graduate programs *continued from page 1*

this will be a data-driven process.”

Singha says in the event a program is discontinued, students already in that program will be allowed to complete their degree.

“We are operating in exceeding-

ly difficult budget times,” he adds. “Given the budget constraints, we have no choice but to prioritize programs and do some reallocation.”

# Shelters play key role in helping domestic violence victims, study finds

BY COLIN POITRAS

As state lawmakers discuss a proposal to keep Connecticut’s 18 domestic violence shelters staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, researchers at the School of Social Work’s Institute for Violence Prevention and Reduction have stepped in to supply key information to the debate.

Institute Director Eleanor Lyon went to the Capitol earlier this month to supply lawmakers with the results of the nation’s first multi-state study of the effectiveness of domestic violence shelters in providing women with the services they need.

The study, *Meeting Survivors’ Needs: A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences*, was conducted by the Institute in collaboration with the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. It was based on a survey of 3,410 individuals served by domestic violence shelters in eight states, including Connecticut, during a six-month period in 2007-2008.

Overall, the study found that domestic violence shelters in Connecticut, as well as nationally, play a key role in helping protect victims and in providing important services. One hundred percent of the domestic violence survivors surveyed in Connecticut said they received all or some of the help they needed with restraining orders, understanding domestic violence, safety planning, and child custody and welfare issues. Ninety-four percent said the staff made them feel welcome, while 91 percent said the staff treated them with respect.

“This study shows conclusively that the nation’s domestic violence shelters are meeting both the urgent and long-term needs of victims of violence, and helping them protect themselves and their children,” says Lyon. “Victims attribute meaningful change to the help they received at the shelter, but they also see areas where there is room for improvement.”

In Connecticut, currently only two domestic violence shelters have staff on duty 24 hours a day. Part of the problem is funding. The state of Connecticut provides about \$3 million in annual funding for its 18 domestic violence shelters. Of the \$3 million, about half comes from the federal government’s Family Violence Prevention and Services Act. Individual programs must raise the rest of the money needed for their operations themselves. Funding has not kept pace with the increasing cost of operations in recent years, forcing many shelters to reduce staff.

A bill proposed by Rep. Ger-



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Eleanor Lyon, associate professor-in-residence of social work and director of the Institute for Violence Prevention and Reduction.

ald Fox III, D-Stamford, calls for funding the shelters so staff can be on site 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The state Office of Fiscal Analysis estimates it would cost about \$3.8 million to expand staffing as proposed. Fox and shelter advocates recognize it will be a difficult, but important, fight.

“Those of us who work with domestic violence survivors have long known that shelters play a pivotal role in saving the lives of women and children,” says Erika Tindill, executive director of the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence. “The *Meeting Survivors’ Needs* study confirms that shelters are on the right track. Ensuring sufficient funding and resources for shelters in Connecticut is more important than ever.”

The study was funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and administered by the National Institute of Justice.

The Connecticut study participants were very similar in many ways to those from elsewhere in the country, in terms of their needs, their overall rating of the help they received during their time in shelter, and most of the demographics. Nationally, 78 percent of survivors reported that they had children under the age of 18, and 68 percent had minor children with them at the shelter. National data shows that 99 percent of domestic violence survivors said they

got the help they wanted with their own safety, and 95 percent had assistance with safety planning.

In some aspects, Connecticut differed from nationwide trends. Connecticut study participants who had survived domestic violence were more likely to be Hispanic than those in other states. Connecticut study participants had more positive first impressions of the shelter in several areas, and had higher ratings of outcomes for both adults and children. Connecticut survivors were more likely to report a need for housing at the time they entered the shelter than survivors in other states.

The study surveyed shelter residents in Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Washington between October 2007 and March 2008. Surveys were available in 11 languages, and were distributed at the time of shelter admission and exit. The survey questions addressed survivors’ entry experiences, their needs and the extent to which those needs were met, whether they encountered any conflicts or problems, changes survivors attributed to the shelter stay, and a rating of the help they received. Participating programs provided information about staff, volunteers, bed capacity, and the services provided.



# Mathematician receives award to fund collaborative research

BY CINDY WEISS

Maria Gordina, associate professor of mathematics in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will spend a semester in residence at

Cornell University as the winner of the Ruth I. Michler Memorial Prize awarded by Cornell and the Association for Women in Mathematics.

The award will fund her residency to study infinite dimensional spaces, a research project that involves collaborations with a physicist and two other math-

ematicians, one of whom was her Ph.D. adviser at Cornell.

Among the questions she will study are the geometry of infinite dimensional curved spaces and random processes in these spaces, such as Brownian motion, a mathematical model used to describe the random movement of particles suspended in a liquid or gas. A typical example of an infinite dimensional curved space is a “loop group,” which can be visualized as many loops drawn around a sphere or any other curved object.

The Michler prize is named in memory of a young mathematician at the University of North Texas who died in 2000 in a tragic accident when she was a visiting scholar at Northeastern University.

Ruth Michler’s parents established the prize at Cornell because Michler was born in Ithaca when her father, a German mathematician, was visiting the university.

The \$45,000 prize honors mid-career faculty women in mathematics and provides an opportunity for them to focus on research, with no teaching obligations.

Currently, Gordina is teaching

a graduate class in CLAS on Lie algebras and Lie groups, one of the topics that she studied for her Ph.D. at Cornell under Professor Leonard Gross.

She came to UConn in 2003 after postdoctoral fellowships at McMaster University in Canada and the University of California at San Diego. Before coming to the U.S. from Russia in 1992, Gordina, who is also known as Masha, was an assistant professor at the Lenin-grad Electro-Technical Institute.

While at UConn, she has been a Humboldt Research Fellow for three summers. Alexander von Humboldt Foundation fellows are chosen to conduct research at a university in Germany. Gordina worked with Professor Michael Röckner at Bielefeld University.

Gordina’s husband, Alexander Teplyaev, who is also an associate professor of mathematics at UConn, is currently a Humboldt Fellow.

Gordina’s research has been funded by the National Science Foundation.

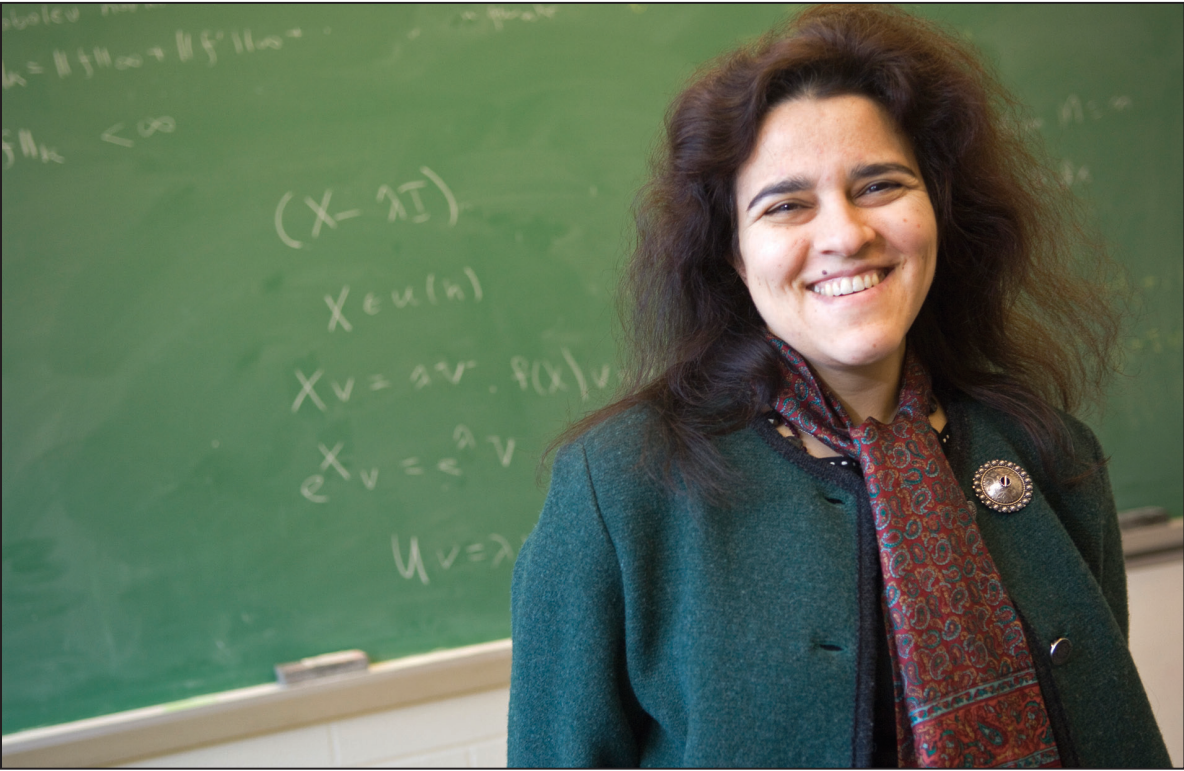


PHOTO BY DANIEL BUTTREY

Maria Gordina, associate professor of mathematics.

# Medical students encouraged to consider careers in primary care

BY CHRIS DEFRANCESCO

In an American health care system that some would argue needs them more than ever, primary care physicians are becoming a relatively rare commodity.

Medical schools generally aren’t graduating enough would-be practitioners of family medicine, general internal medicine, and pediatrics to keep up with the rate at which today’s primary care physicians are retiring or leaving the practice.

The UConn School of Medicine is working on several fronts to encourage medical students to consider pursuing a career in primary care.

“As we re-engineer the present dysfunctional health care system, the role of the primary care physician will be central to assuring a high quality, affordable-cost system that will meet the needs of the American public,” says Dr. Bruce Gould, associate dean for primary care and professor at the UConn School of Medicine.

But compared with many subspecialties offering better reimbursement rates, less demanding schedules, fewer administrative hassles, and in some cases more prestige, the appeal of primary care medicine as a career is waning. And medical students are well aware of it.

“Part of the problem is that our reimbursement system in this country does not value primary care as it does specialties,” says Angela Stein, a fourth-year student at the UConn School of Medicine who is considering the primary care career path. “This is a concern, because medical students

graduate with a substantial debt burden, and the ability to pay back these loans is an important consideration in career choice.”

One way UConn is trying to encourage more students to consider careers in primary care medicine is through the Urban Service Track, a special mentorship program designed to produce doctors, dentists, nurses, and pharmacists committed to serving Connecticut’s urban underserved populations.

“Generally that translates into primary care,” Gould says. “The way we’re going to get more affordable and quality care is not through the Lone Ranger approach [the doctor working alone], it’s through integrated teams of health care professionals. We’re training medical, nursing, pharmacy, and dental students to have a broader view of the practice of health care.”

Of the 74 members of the UConn School of Medicine Class of 2009, 33 have been matched with a primary care residency program. Within the primary care specialties are paths to subspecialties, so it’s unlikely all 33 will end up as primary care practitioners.

Michael Cszasz, a fourth-year student planning to practice family medicine, says, “A lot of primary care is about prevention of disease, and it’s about developing relationships with patients. These things take patience and time. It’s easy to see why students may spend six weeks on an outpatient family medicine rotation and not catch on to it.”

The attrition in primary care can have severe implications, particularly in the area of preventive medicine.

“Without primary care physicians, we will be relying on specialists with focused interest to become responsible for preventative care that may fall outside their scope,” says Dr. Adam Silverman, chief of the Division of Internal Medicine at the Health Center. “If we lose our primary care docs, patients will get patchwork care, and there will be no overall coordination of care. This is especially important for patients with multiple complex medical problems.”

Second-year student Jennifer Bordonaro says, “Prevention is the key to health and primary care is the specialty that truly focuses on this.” Bordonaro serves on a committee looking into ways to increase the number of primary care graduates from the UConn School of Medicine. Still, she says, “I do have concerns over how long it will take me to pay back my loans, and I am concerned that I may have to work to supplement my salary at the expense of spending time with my family.”

Silverman believes many of the answers lie in reforming the health care system.

“We need to reimburse docs for thinking as well as doing,” Silverman says. “We need a unified medical record and a unified or single payer, so that there is one set of rules for everyone. We also need tort reform to reduce the amount of waste expended in defensive medicine.”

Until that happens, Gould urges tomorrow’s physicians to consider a primary care career for other reasons.

“If you want to have an impact on individual patients, their

families, and their communities,” he says, “and, on the national level, affect the health care status of the entire population, then primary care – using the medical home

model, with its focus on improving and optimizing health status and outcomes – is the way to go.”

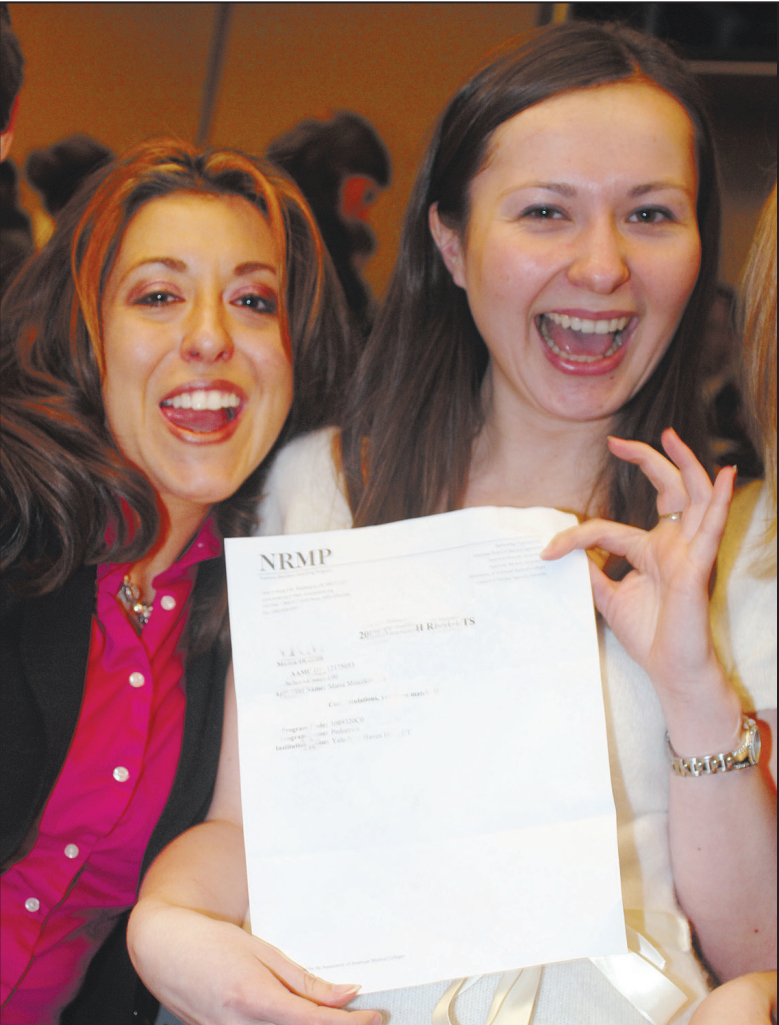


PHOTO BY JANINE GELINEAU

Marta Mieczkowska, right, a fourth-year student at the UConn School of Medicine, celebrates her residency program assignment with a friend at the school’s traditional Match Day ceremony March 19. Mieczkowska was matched with her first choice, a pediatrics residency at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Nearly half of the school’s Class of 2009 have been matched with a primary care residency program.



# Tissue regeneration research team moves to Health Center

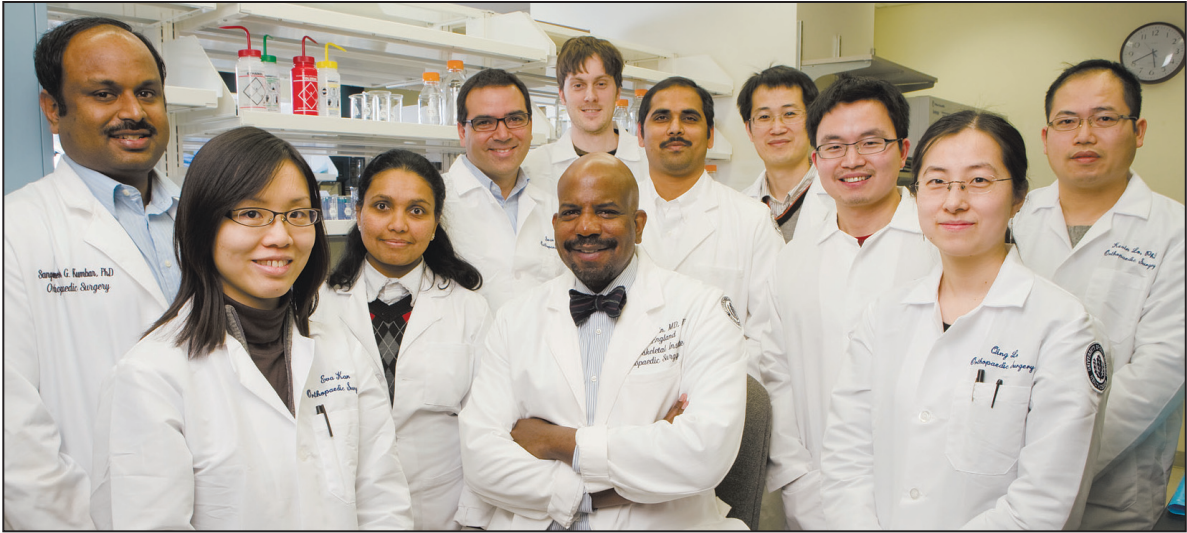


PHOTO BY LANNY NAGLER

A team of researchers moved from the University of Virginia to the UConn Health Center this year to continue tissue regeneration work. The team includes Dr. Cato T. Laurencin, center, vice president for health affairs and dean of the medical school.

BY KRISTINA GOODNOUGH

Tissue regeneration research at the Health Center has received a substantial boost in manpower with the arrival of a team of researchers from the University of Virginia.

The researchers, who include five faculty members, 10 graduate students, and one postdoctoral graduate fellow, are colleagues of Dr. Cato Laurencin, vice president for health affairs and dean of the school of medicine, who joined the Health Center from the University of Virginia.

“The overall goal of our laboratories is to develop biodegradable materials into three-dimensional constructs, or scaffolds, to promote the regeneration of skin, cartilage, and bone,” says Dr. Syam Nukavarapu, assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and the Department of Chemical, Materials, and Biomolecular Engineering.

By developing biodegradable materials, the researchers hope to encourage growth of tissue in the spaces left as the materials degrade.

# Remote sensing can provide evidence of genocide, says grad student

BY ELIZABETH OMARA-OTUNNU

Prosecutions for major human rights violations have increased in recent years, since the establishment of the International Criminal Court in 2002. But the most heinous crime of all – the systematic elimination of an entire race or ethnic group – has been difficult to prove.

A UConn graduate student is developing a new form of evidence that would bolster the case against perpetrators of genocide.

Russell Schimmer, who is simultaneously pursuing a Ph.D. in natural resource economics in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and a J.D. at the School of Law, says images obtained through remote sensing techniques can provide evidence of genocide.

Remote sensing, he explains, uses the physics of light reflectivity to study conditions on earth from afar, either through satellite images from space or through images taken from the air.

“Everything on earth reflects light differently,” he says, “and that means remote sensing can detect the differences between objects.”

**Evidence of genocide**

Schimmer, who has previously worked with satellite images of East Timor, Guatemala, and Rwanda, all areas where genocide is alleged to have occurred, is now turning his attention to Darfur.

He says that while the course of events in that area is generally known, specific information is hard to come by, because many of the witnesses are now dead and those still alive may be too intimidated to testify.

In an effort to collect independent evidence, he has analyzed satellite images of the area showing changes to the landscape that corroborate what people on the ground have said.

Darfur, he says, is primarily an agrarian society that since 2003 has been totally disrupted by systematic violence involving the burning of villages, stealing of livestock, and displacement of people.

Schimmer hypothesized that these events would show up in changes to the landscape.

Before the violence broke out, livestock accounted for up to 80 percent of Darfur’s annual income. Because of declining rainfall caused by climate change and an increase in the numbers of livestock, prior to 2003 the environment was under considerable stress, he says.

By 2005, the genocide was underway and huge numbers of people had been killed or displaced and thousands of livestock looted or killed.

Working from hundreds of satellite images available on the Internet, Schimmer compiled data on the extent of the areas under vegetation and the health of that vegetation from 1999 to 2007.

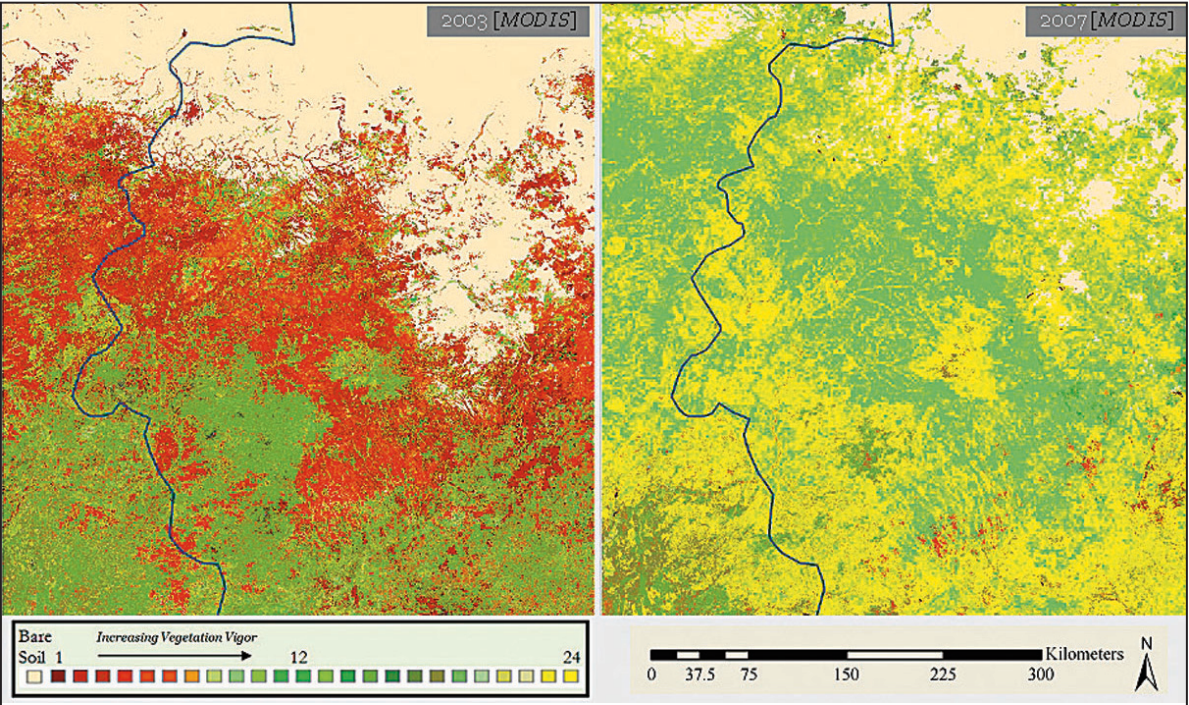
Images from about 2005 clearly showed that, even though rainfall decreased slightly, the amount of vegetation rebounded dramatically once the livestock were gone.

“It was amazing. Both temporally and spatially, the images matched what was already known,” he says.

“Is this proof of genocide?” Schimmer asks. “How else do you explain it? It shows there’s been a major change in population distribution, and corroborates what we know happened on the ground.”

He says the reason he is studying law is to try to make this type of data more acceptable as admissible evidence in international courts to show that genocide has occurred.

Genocide is hard to prove, he says. For judicial purposes, the prosecutors of genocide perpetrators must prove widespread and



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Satellite images of Darfur, Sudan, from 2003 through 2007 show a steady increase in vegetation coverage in former agrarian and livestock grazing areas. This suggests a significant reduction in the number of livestock, which correlates with systematic violence in the region during the same period.

systematic acts intended to destroy a particular group.

The images of Darfur clearly show changes that were widespread, he says, and there is no other target group in the area. But in order to demonstrate that the acts were systematic, he plans to use corroborating evidence from another part of the Sudan.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, he says, in an area just east of Darfur, a different nomadic group was used to remove people from the land in a similar way to the Janjaweed in Darfur. Once the land was cleared, the government sold it for oil concessions.

“If we can demonstrate the same pattern – with images that show the normalized situation before the violence, changes in land cover as a function of land use and climate the moment violence begins, and the perpetuation of those changes even after the violence is over – we can say there’s a system here,” he says. “There are the same three kinds of steps.”

Most of Darfur, Schimmer notes, has not yet been subject to oil exploration.

**Need for transparency**

The imagery Schimmer uses for his research is all available to the public without cost on the Internet. Most of it was collected by U.S. government satellites. Schimmer also analyzed images from a French government-sponsored satellite to cross-check his findings.

He says using publicly available information creates a transparency that is an advantage both in research and in the sort of international legal applications he envisions, where the data may be used in highly politicized situations.

Although related, Schimmer’s genocide research is not the focus of his Ph.D. For his doctorate, he is using remote sensing to study the environmental and human impact of large-scale mining.

Schimmer says his passion for human rights comes from his family background. His father grew up in Holland under Nazi occupation and was a prisoner of war during World War II; his mother grew up in Puerto Rico and immigrated to New York City.

“My interest in human rights came from people who lived their lives trying to create change,” he says, “who were willing to take on adversary forces but create change peacefully.”

*Schimmer will give a presentation on his work titled “Genocide, Environment, and Agricultural Sustainability, on Sunday, April 5 at 3 p.m. in Room 130 of the Biology/Physics Building, as part of the Natural History of Food lecture series.*





Students on the steps inside the Chemistry Building.

PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

## PATENTS & LICENSES

The following lists of patents received and licenses and options granted were supplied to the *Advance* by the Center for Science and Technology Commercialization.

### U.S. Patents Granted to the University from July through December 2008

Inventor(s)	Title	Patent#	Date Issued
Makriyannis, A., Liu, Q., Thotapally, R.	<i>Pyrazole Analogs Acting on Cannabinoid Receptors</i>	7,393,842	July 1
Taylor, G., Cai, J., Upp, D.	<i>Integrated Circuit for Programmable Optical Delay</i>	7,409,120	Aug. 5
Javidi, B., Esmail, A., and Zhang, G.	<i>Optical Security System Using Fourier Plane Encoding</i>	7,428,099	Sep. 23
Taylor, G.	<i>Imaging Method Utilizing Thyristor-Based Pixel Elements</i>	7,432,539	Oct. 7
Suib, S., Yuan, J.	<i>Manganese Oxide Nanowires, Films, and Membranes and Methods of Making</i>	7,438,887	Oct. 21
Makriyannis, A., Nikas, S., Khanolkar, A., Thakur, G., Lu, D.	<i>Bicyclic Cannabinoids</i>	7,446,229	Nov. 4
Javidi, B., Matoba, O.	<i>Method and Apparatus for Secure Ultrafast Communication</i>	7,447,312	Nov. 4

Srivastava, P., Binder, R.	<i>Complexes of Alpha 2 Macroglobulin and Antigenic Molecules for Immunotherapy</i>	7,449,557	Nov. 11
Fanson, P., Hirata, H., Ibe, M., Suib, S., Makwana, V.	<i>Process Using Microwave Energy and a Catalyst to Decompose Nitrogen Oxides</i>	7,468,171	Dec. 23

### Licenses & Options Granted by the University from July through December 2008

Inventor(s)	Technology	Company
Suib, S.	<i>Voltage-induced Catalyst Augmentation</i>	Catelectric Corp.
Brand, M.	<i>'Raise the Roof' Trademark for Certain Rhododendron Plants</i>	Monrovia Nursery Co.
Sotzing, G.	<i>Conductive Polymers</i>	Sekisui Chemical Co. Ltd.
Michel, L.	<i>Constraint-based Search Models</i>	Dynamic Decision Technologies Inc.
Sotzing, G.	<i>Conductive Polymers</i>	MC10 LLC
Zhou, S.	<i>Underwater Communications</i>	Aquatic Sensor Network Technology LLC
Mazzocca, A.	<i>Stem Cells in Shoulder and Knee Surgery</i>	Athrex Inc.
Mains, R., Eipper, B.	<i>Antibody to Mouse ATP 7A</i>	Hycult biotechnology bv

# Emeritus professor of education Martha Fowlkes dies

BY SHERRY FISHER

Martha Fowlkes, emeritus professor of education, died March 17 in Worcester, Mass. She was 68.

Fowlkes came to UConn in 1986, serving as dean of the School of Family Studies until 1993. She was a professor of educational leadership in the School of Education from 1993 to 1998.

Her major areas of scholarly interest included women and education; race, class, and education; school and community; and society and sexuality, intimacy, and emotions.

“Martha Fowlkes was a dedicated professional who was deeply committed to women’s rights,” says Steven Wisensale, professor of human development and family studies. “She was particularly supportive of junior faculty throughout her tenure as dean of family studies.”

Jane Goldman, associate professor of human development and family studies, says, “Martha was very committed to and an

advocate for the well being of women and children.” She says Fowlkes was instrumental in the expansion of the Child Development Laboratories to include a new infant center.

Mary Galante-DeAngelis, a lecturer in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, took a course about women and work with Fowlkes in the 1980s.

“She was a strong, brilliant woman,” says Galante-DeAngelis. “Dr. Fowlkes had a wonderful gift for engaging students with divergent opinions in discussions by asking deceptively simple questions that would lead us to unravel much more complex thoughts and emotions about the subject at hand.

“The point of each discussion was to be challenged by our peers and the readings, and to learn to think about the topic in new ways that would either change or strengthen our own positions,” she adds. “I try to use this technique with my own

students.”

Fowlkes graduated from Smith College in 1961. She earned her master’s degree in anthropology from the London School of Economics, and her Ph.D. in sociology from UMass-Amherst in 1976. She taught in the sociology department of Smith College for many years, and served as dean of student affairs at Smith.

Fowlkes co-founded the first Memphis, Tenn. chapter of the National Organization for Women in 1969.

An avid reader and gardener, she also enjoyed bird watching and traveling.

She is survived by four daughters and their spouses: Lisa and Stuart Pollack; Anne Bladen and Jill Barton; Abigail Fowlkes; and Maggie Fowlkes and Jon Shirland. She also leaves three grandchildren.

Services will be private. In lieu of flowers or donations, Fowlkes’ daughters request that friends perform a good deed for someone in need.

## Encryption program

*continued from page 1*

pear each time an encrypted computer is rebooted.

Trained technicians from UITs, or from particular units, will install the program on each device that needs it.

Sorrentino, UITs assistant director for customer support and relations, says that the installation takes about half an hour, and then, while the computer’s data is being encrypted, users may find some functions run more slowly. Once the encryption process is complete, there will be little difference in the computer’s speed.

Martel notes that the encryption program must be installed one machine at a time. “In the meantime,” he says, “we urge members of the University to take appropriate steps to ensure they are not storing sensitive information where it can be accessed by others.”

For more information, go to encryption.uconn.edu



## CALENDAR

Monday, March 30, to Monday, April 6

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 Monday, April 6 through Monday, April 13. Those items must be in the database by 4 p.m. on Monday, March 30. 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, 3/30** – Last day to drop a course.  
**Monday, 3/30** – Last day to convert courses on Pass/Fail option to letter grade option.

### Libraries

**Homer Babbidge Library.** Monday–Thursday, 8:30 a.m.–2 a.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.–10 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.–10 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.–2 a.m.  
**Dodd Center.** Reading Room hours: Monday–Friday, noon–4 p.m.; closed weekends. Research Center hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**Pharmacy Library.** Monday–Thursday, 8:30 a.m.–10 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Sunday, 1–9 p.m.  
**Music & Dramatic Arts Library.** Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m.–10 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.; Saturday, noon–5 p.m.; Sunday, noon–10 p.m.  
**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.  
**Avery Point Campus Library.** Monday–Thursday, 8:30 a.m.–7 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**Greater Hartford Campus Library.** Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m.–9 p.m.; Friday & Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; closed Sunday.  
**Stamford Campus Library.** Monday–Thursday, 8 a.m.–9 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; closed Sunday.  
**Torrington Campus Library.** Monday–Thursday, 9:30 a.m.–6:30 p.m.; closed Friday–Sunday.  
**Waterbury Campus Library.** Monday–Thursday, 8:30 a.m.–7 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.; closed weekends.

### University ITS

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

### Ph.D. Defenses

**Tuesday, 3/31 – Educational Leadership.** *Effective Principal Preparation: The Accelerations and Amplification Effect on Learning and the Development of Proficiency*, by Paul Freeman (adv.: Sheckley). 9:30 a.m., Room 246, Gentry Building.

### Meetings

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

### Lectures & Seminars

**Tuesday, 3/31 – Toxicology Colloquium Lecture.** “Pathology of Hepatotoxicity Related to Drug Development,” by James Popp, Stratoxon LLC. 1 p.m., Room 338, Pharmacy/Biology Building.  
**Tuesday, 3/31 – Sackler Lecture in Human Rights.** “The Last Best

Hope of Earth? American Democracy and the Right to Vote in Historical Perspective,” by Adam Fairclough, Leiden University. 4 p.m., Konover Auditorium, Dodd Center.  
**Tuesday, 3/31 – Physics Lecture.** “The GBEC Hamiltonian and its Diagonalization,” by Manuel de Llano, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico. 4 p.m., Room P121, Gant Science Complex.  
**Tuesday, 3/31 – John and Valerie Rowe Lecture.** “Remembering the Past While Creating the Future,” by Joan Reede, Harvard Medical School. 7 p.m., Student Union Theatre.  
**Wednesday, 4/1 – Stamford Faculty Colloquium.** “Autism and Language: How Enactment and Gesture Contribute to Narrative Coherence,” by Elena Levy. Noon, GE Global Classroom, Stamford Campus.  
**Wednesday, 4/1 – Rainbow Center Lecture.** “House of Cards: Advocacy for GLBTQ Community,” by Barry Schreier. Noon, Room 403, Student Union.  
**Wednesday, 4/1 – Jane Addams Forum on Election Reform.** With keynote speaker Miles Rapaport of Demos, and panelists Fernando

**Lecture.** “Sun Tzu and the Art of War: How the Battle of Museums to Survive Has a Negative Impact on Nature and the Environment,” by Michael Mares, University of Oklahoma. 3 p.m., Konover Auditorium.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Black Law Students Association Symposium.** “The Future of our Children in Connecticut: Juvenile Delinquency and the Juvenile Justice System.” 8:15 a.m.–4:15 p.m., William Starr Hall, Hartford Campus. Call 860-570-5186 for more information.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Polymer Seminar.** “Statistical Mechanics of Knots in Polymers,” by Alexander Grosberg, New York University. 11 a.m., Room IMS20, Gant Science Complex.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Environmental Engineering Seminar.** “The Impact of Stabilized and Non-stabilized Nickel Hydroxide Nanoparticles on Mesquite Plants,” by Jorge Gardea-Torresday, University of Texas–El Paso. Noon, Room 212, Castleman Building.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Geography GeoSeminar.** “People, Plans, and Profits: Human Capital



PHOTO BY GERRY GOODSTEIN

Connecticut Repertory Theatre’s production of *Icarus*, an adaptation of the Greek myth, incorporates acting, puppetry, music, and movement. See Performing Arts.

Betancourt, community activist, and State Sen. Gayle Slossberg. 12:30 p.m., Zachs Community Room, School of Social Work Building, Greater Hartford Campus. RSVP required: 860-570-9262.  
**Wednesday, 4/1 – Peace and Social Justice Lecture.** “Peace and Social Justice Initiatives for Our Time,” by the Rev. Peter Millar, Church of Scotland. 7 p.m., St. Thomas Aquinas Center, 46 North Eagleville Road, across from the Chemistry Building.  
**Thursday, 4/2 – Comparative Pathology Seminar.** “Epidemiology and Ecology of North and South American Arenaviruses,” by Charles Fulhorst, University of Texas Medical Branch. 11 a.m., Room A001, Atwater Laboratories.  
**Thursday, 4/2 – Assessment Colloquium.** “‘It’s Not Just What We Know, But How We Know and Why We Believe It?’” by Arthur Eisenkraft, UMass Boston. 11:30 a.m. Register at <http://www.education.uconn.edu/assessment/colloquia.cfm>. Participants will be notified of the location in a confirmation e-mail.  
**Thursday, 4/2 – Edwin Way Teale**

and Commodification in Urban Revitalization,” by Robert Lake, Rutgers University. Noon, Room 434, CLAS Building.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Marine Sciences Seminar.** “Zooplankton Toxin Resistance,” by Hans Dam. 3 p.m., Room 103, Marine Sciences Building, Avery Point Campus.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Litchfield County Writers Project Discussion.** Readings by Cady McClain, actress, poet, and musician, and a discussion of her career with Davyne Verstandig. 6:30 p.m., Hogan Lecture Hall, Torrington Campus.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Graduate Human Rights Conference.** Keynote speaker, Joshua Rubenstein, Amnesty International USA and Harvard’s Davis Center for Eurasian and Russian Studies. 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Konover Auditorium, Dodd Center.  
**Sunday, 4/5 – Natural History of Food Lecture.** “Genocide, Environment, and Agricultural Sustainability,” by Russell Schimmer. 3 p.m., Adults and children age 10 and over; children must be accompanied by an adult. Room 130,

Biology/Physics Building.

### Exhibits

**Through Friday, 4/3 – Student Union Gallery.** *S.H.A.P.E.* Body image art exhibit. Monday–Friday, 11 a.m.–7 p.m. Opening reception Wednesday, 3/25, 7 p.m.  
**Through Friday, 4/10 – Jorgensen Gallery.** *Beyond a Boundary*, exhibits by Michael Gellatly, Adam Niklewica, and Kevin Van Aelst. Monday–Friday, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.  
**Through Friday, 4/10 – Contemporary Art Galleries.** *Simultaneous Contrast*, works by Peter Waite. Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., Fine Arts Building. Free admission.  
**Through Wednesday, 4/15 – Health Center.** *Art as a Healing Process*, pastels by Rozanne Hauser, and *Moments in Time*, pastels by James Sheehy. Daily, 8 a.m.–9 p.m., Celeste LeWitt Gallery. Also, through Wednesday, 5/6, *Small Towns, Car Shows, and Gardens on My Days Off*, by April Aldighieri. Daily, 8 a.m.–9p.m., Main and Mezzanine Lobbies.  
**Through Sunday, 4/19 – Alexey von Schlippe Gallery.** Paintings and other works by Judith Osbourne; mixed media works by Val Kropiwnicki; and canvases and

*Post-Soviet Estonia*, photos by Sarah Rhodin, West Corridor. For hours see Libraries section.  
**Ongoing – State Museum of Natural History & Connecticut Archaeology Center.** *Human’s Nature: Looking Closer at the Relationships between People and the Environment.* Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Free admission, donations welcome.

### Performing Arts

**Through Sunday, 4/5 – Connecticut Repertory Theatre Production.** *Icarus*, directed by Stefano Brancato. Harriet Jorgensen Theatre. Tickets \$11–\$29. For performance times and tickets, call 860-486-4226.  
**Tuesday, 3/31 – Tuva Day.** Alash Ensemble. 8 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Thursday, 4/2 – Chanticleer.** *Wondrous Free.* 7:30 p.m., Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts. For tickets call 860-486-4226. Tickets \$28, \$30.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Student Recital.** Emily Nolan, violin, and Dan Balint, baritone. 7 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Student Recital.** Michael Paglione, clarinet. Noon, von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Student Recital.** Ann Samuelson, violin. 3 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Student Recitals.** Woodwind and brass quintets. 7 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Latin Fest.** Salsa, meringue, bachata, reggaeton, and more. 8 p.m. Admission \$30, \$40, \$50. For tickets call 860-486-4226.  
**Sunday, 4/5– Choral Performance.** Amelia Nagoski and Mark Singleton, directors. 3 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Admission \$7, students and children free.

### Film

**Wednesday, 4/1 – Women’s Center Film.** *Lunafest.* 6 p.m., Konover Auditorium, Dodd Center. Admission: \$10 or \$7 for students.  
**Wednesday, 4/1 – India Film.** *Ardhangi.* 6:30 p.m., Room 107, Art & Art History Building.  
**Saturday, 4/5 and Sunday, 4/6 – Benton Art Film.** *The Miracle of Life.* 2 p.m., Benton Museum of Art.

### Athletics

**Monday, 3/30** – Men’s Baseball vs. Massachusetts. 3 p.m., J.O. Christian Field.  
**Wednesday, 4/1** – Men’s Baseball vs. Boston College. 3 p.m., J.O. Christian Field.

### Potpourri

**Thursday, 4/2 – Wallace Stevens Poetry Event.** Poetry reading by author, Heather McHugh. 8 p.m., Konover Auditorium, Dodd Center.  
**Friday, 4/3 – Benton Museum of Art Workshop.** Figure drawing, bring or purchase your own materials. 2:30 p.m. E-mail [tracy.lawlor@uconn.edu](mailto:tracy.lawlor@uconn.edu) to reserve a spot.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Tax Preparation Day for International Students.** 9 a.m. Must register in advance, see Laurie Tompkins, Room 307, Student Union.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Museum of Natural History Workshop.** “Drawing Nature Under the Microscope,” by Virge Kask. 10 a.m. Adults and children age 6 and over; children must be accompanied by an adult. Admission fee: \$20 members, \$15 non-members. Call 860-486-4460 for more information.  
**Saturday, 4/4 – Afternoons at the Museum.** Explore natural and cultural history. For children grades 1–5, accompanied by an adult. Free admission. 1 p.m., Connecticut State Museum of Natural History. For more information call 860-486-5690.



# As Fulbright Scholar, dramatic arts professor directs opera in Ireland



PHOTO SUPPLIED BY KAREN RYKER

Karen Ryker, right, a professor of dramatic arts, chats with from left, President of Ireland Mary McAleese, her husband Martin, and Paddy Maloney, founder of the Irish musical group The Chieftains, in Dublin after a performance of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* that Ryker directed.

BY SHERRY FISHER

When Karen Ryker was invited to direct a production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the Dublin Institute of Technology, she jumped at the chance.

"There was a natural crossover in technique from my previous experience of directing theatrical productions," says Ryker, a professor of dramatic arts in the School of Fine Arts who teaches speaking voice and acting. "I also thought it would be a wonder-

ful opportunity to investigate the intersections of drama and music, bring acting techniques to the opera singers, and help prepare them for their future careers."

Ryker spent a semester in Ireland as a Fulbright Scholar, working with Irish conductor William Halpin at the Institute's Conservatory of Music and Drama. She first met Halpin when he was working on his doctorate in music at UConn. In Ireland, in addition to directing the opera, Ryker also

taught acting classes.

Directing a Mozart production was "like falling off a log into really warm water," Ryker says. "Mozart is a lot like Shakespeare. He tells you exactly how to stage a performance. His music simply says: 'This is a light, airy moment. This is the time to pull out the dagger. This is when she falls.' It's all right there in the music."

But opera students aren't necessarily trained to think about these things, she says. They have other

concerns: "They're learning a craft and trying hard to get it all right. They're focusing on, for instance, the rib carriage they need, the way they have to open their mouths and lengthen their spines and produce a sound that has just the right amount of tremolo. How can they possibly think about what the music is telling them about acting?"

"It takes a certain amount of experience, and that's what they're here to get," she says. "I try to point their ears to it — just like a teacher would do in a music appreciation course. I'll say, 'Listen to this run. Listen to this crescendo. How does it make you feel? What is your goal in that moment? What do you do to accomplish your goal?' I ask them these questions in spite of everything else they have to do."

Ryker says the technique paid off. "The more they focused on what the music was telling them and on their objectives ... the more easily their sounds fell into place."

During one of the first rehearsals she had with the chorus, they were supposed to be joyous. "The emotion just wasn't coming from them," says Ryker, "so I tried to relate what they were singing about to their personal lives. I spoke of World War II, tickertape parades, and soldiers coming back home.

"I talked about how people thought that evil would be victorious," she says. "I also talked about the evil we fear today. What if we are afraid of being plunged into a destroyed world, and then suddenly we come into a moment of light ... and the good people win!"

When the chorus sang the piece again, there was a big difference, Ryker says: "They sang from their hearts."

Opera has changed over the last two decades, according to Ryker. "Today, there are more directors of stage and film directing operas," she says. "They expect that singers will know how to act. Opera singers not only have to inhabit their roles in a much more full way, but they might also be asked to sing while flying through the air on a trapeze. These physical demands were not placed on opera singers years ago."

She notes that at UConn there is a focus on greater collaboration between the music and dramatic arts departments, "because our acting students need to be able to sing, and our students in voice training need to be able to act."

Before heading to Ireland, Ryker spent almost two years preparing for the project. "The project was definitely a collaborative effort with lots of e-mailing, faxing, and Skype [Internet telephone] conference calls across the Atlantic," she says. She worked with a team that included Halpin's son, Baz Halpin, who created the lighting and scenic design, and a costume designer, Nell Knudsen, in London. She also spent a week at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts library, where she reviewed recorded productions of *The Magic Flute*.

The production was very well received by the Irish public and press, Ryker says. Audiences included the president of Ireland and several ambassadors.

## Alternative break on reservation expands students' horizons

BY SHERRY FISHER

Daniel Lupacchino has always been drawn to Native American culture. When he heard that there was a chance to spend spring break working on an Indian reservation, he signed up right away.

"I thought it would be a unique opportunity to help people and do some good," says Lupacchino, a junior studying anthropology.

Lupacchino was one of 12 students who spent a week on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in southwest South Dakota working with the Oglala Lakota People. The trip was sponsored by UConn's Community Outreach program.

Student volunteers helped build and repair houses, installed bunk beds and wheelchair ramps, and helped with clean up projects. They worked with Re-member, a nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the quality of life at Pine Ridge, one of the poorest areas in the nation.

"They have a huge overcrowding problem," says Lauren Young, a sophomore, a double major in psychology and human development and family studies. "Large extended families will often live in a single trailer. That's why they need three story-high bunk beds."

Young, who was assistant trip director, says the reservation, which encompasses several counties, is equivalent to a third world country. "It's extremely rural, has the lowest life expectancy in the nation, and health problems like alcoholism."

In preparation for the trip, the student volunteers were required to meet weekly for several months to discuss health care issues in the U.S. and participate in team-building exercises.

Young describes her experience on the reservation as "absolutely incredible."

"Seeing the difference in how we live here and the extreme poverty the people experience is hard to put into words," she says. "We saw people who lived with 25 others in one small house or a trailer."

Despite their difficult circumstances, the people were very welcoming, she says. "They wanted to share their lives and experiences with us."

Lupacchino describes the experience as life changing. He plans to work there again, and would recommend the experience to other students: "I know there is poverty all over the world, but as Americans, we neglect our own



PHOTO BY LAUREN YOUNG

A group of students on a wheelchair ramp they constructed at Arlene High Horse's house on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota during spring break.

indigenous groups. They deserve to have something back."

Jessica Muirhead, a senior majoring in psychology, was inspired to work with the Lakota People after taking classes in Native American studies at UConn. "I learned things that were disturbing and saddening," she says, "and I wanted to help remedy the situation."

She adds, "The people were so inspiring. They had so little and gave so much back. For example, there were two people who were homeless because black mold had infested their house, but they were trying to help others in need. I met a lot of role models."

Muirhead, who plans a future in the field of social services, says

the experience gave her a new perspective.

An unexpected blizzard and sub-zero temperatures didn't dampen the students' spirits or their work ethic. They wore layers of clothing and kept to their tasks.

"Everyone put forth amazing effort," says Young. "We got a lot done."