



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

# Advance

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## Unions voting on state employee concessions

BY RICHARD VEILLEUX

Representatives of the four largest labor organizations at UConn will join other unions from across the state on May 8 to share the results of local balloting regarding pay freezes and furlough days.

If the unions comprising the State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) report that their members agreed to some form of salary freeze and furlough days, that would bring to a conclusion a negotiations process that began in November 2008. The tentative agreement – signed by SEBAC and the state – increases employee health care costs, offers a retirement incentive, and allows the state to defer \$128 million in payments into the State Employee Retirement System, among a list of changes.

In return for an estimated \$730 million in statewide concessions, the state and the public employee unions, as well as University officials, agreed there would be no layoffs of permanent employees through June 30, 2011. The protection was not offered to University Health Professionals (UHP), however.

SEBAC represents all state employees at the bargaining table in contract matters concerning state employee pensions and health and dental benefits, but individual unions bargain locally on all other issues. Most state unions negotiate directly with the state Of-

*see State employee concessions page 2*



PHOTO BY SEAN FLYNN

A spring day on Hillside Road, near the Husky Dog statue.

## University offers information about swine flu prevention

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

As swine flu spread to at least 10 U.S. states and many countries around the world last week, the World Health Organization (WHO) raised its flu alert level to 5, the second highest level, indicating that the organization believed that a pandemic is imminent.

As of April 30, UConn had no suspected cases of flu, but officials were urging members of the UConn community to be mindful of their health.

Communicating via e-mails, Michael Kurland, director of health services, and Aliza Wilder, director of human resources, reminded the UConn community about the symptoms of flu, the need to exercise respiratory “etiquette,” and the need to stay home if sick.

The University is working closely with the local health department and the Connecticut Department of Public Health to provide updated advisories and follow the latest information on swine flu prevention and treatment recommendations.

The University already has a plan in place to respond to a pandemic flu.

For information on prevention, self care, treatment, and the status of local and national efforts to address the disease, members of the university community are advised to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site [www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu\\_you.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/swineflu_you.htm), and the state Department of Public Health site

*see Swine flu precautions page 2*

## Forum held to discuss possible changes to Academic Calendar

BY SHERRY FISHER

More reading days for students before finals, a mid-semester break during the fall semester, and a large University-wide Commencement were among the issues on the minds of faculty during a public forum April 29 about the University’s Academic Calendar.

The discussion, in Andre Schenker Hall, was led by co-chairs of the University Senate Calendar Task Force Jeffrey von Munkwitz-Smith, University Registrar, and Cameron Faustman, associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

A second forum was held April 30.

The task force was established when President Michael J. Hogan asked the Senate

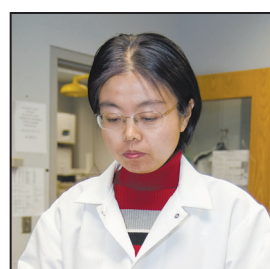
Executive Committee to review the calendar to determine whether it could be adapted to better meet the needs of the University. He has suggested starting the academic year after Labor Day, and offering a longer and more comprehensive winter session.

Hogan points out that a later-ending spring semester would improve the chances for better weather for a large, outdoor Commencement ceremony at Rentschler field in Hartford. He says a larger Commencement would not preclude schools or units from also holding their own receptions. A larger venue for degree conferral, however, would help attract major speakers and increase the University’s visibility.

*see Academic Calendar page 2*



4-5 Class of 2009



8 Microbial fuel cells



8 Armenian dig

Inside





PHOTO BY JESSICA TOMMASELLI

Bruce Cohen, director of the Counseling Program for Intercollegiate Athletes, reads from his newest collection of poetry, *Disloyal Yoyo*, at the UConn Co-op on April 20.

# Philosophers to debate nature of truth

BY CINDY WEISS

Philosophers from around the world will gather on the Storrs campus May 15-17 to discuss a basic question: What is truth? The “truthfest,” known formally as “Truth: Current Debates,” will test ideas that lead back to Socrates, Aristotle, and Plato but that still provoke argument. “‘What is truth?’ is the very paradigm of a philosophical question: It seems both important and yet dauntingly difficult to answer,” says Michael Lynch, professor of

philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Lynch is the author of three books on truth. While scholars often debate the truth at conferences and meetings, it is rare to have an entire workshop focused on it. The aim of the event is to examine current thinking and set the agenda for philosophers who focus on truth studies. The speakers include philosophers Crispin Wright from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, and Vann McGee from the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Other speakers are coming from Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and California. The workshop is organized by Lynch, together with philosophy professors Marcus Rossberg and JC Beall. Funding for the truth workshop was provided by an anonymous donor, the philosophy department, and the UConn Humanities Institute.

## Academic Calendar continued from page 1

In addition to the issues raised by Hogan, the task force was asked to consider the minimal number of reading days – a particular concern in the spring, when exams for undergraduates overlap with the graduate Commencement ceremony. The task force was asked to examine problems associated with the current fall calendar, including the effects of the Labor Day holiday early in the semester and the long stretch between that holiday and Thanksgiving. The short period of classes before finals after the Thanksgiving break makes it difficult for students to re-engage in their work. There are also problems with lab classes when breaks are shorter than a week. “The committee is looking for input,” said Hedley Freake, chair of the Senate Executive Committee, in a separate interview. “They want to make sure that all points of view

are taken into consideration.” Members of the task force have met with department heads, undergraduate education and instruction leaders, and associate deans. They will also meet with regional campus directors and associate vice provosts, the Dean’s Council, and the Enrollment Services Committee. Students can fill out an online survey via HuskyCT. The task force also met with Hogan. Von Munkwitz-Smith and Faustman said they have found that people are “passionate” how Commencement should be handled. Robert McCarthy, dean of the School of Pharmacy, said that students get far more out of small graduation ceremonies. “What is a student’s advantage of a single Commencement?” he asked. “Smaller commencement allows for more intimacy. They

remember mom and dad taking their pictures. This is the students’ day.” McCarthy said that finals running into Commencement is a problem. Also, from a student’s perspective, he said, the number of reading days is a problem. He also felt that the possibility of extending the fall semester up to Dec. 23 is unfair for faculty and staff, and would create problems for grading. Kathryn Ratcliff, assistant professor of sociology, said that having the Thanksgiving break so late in the fall semester is stressful for students. The task force will present a report to the Senate Executive Committee in late fall. Faustman said the earliest any changes could be implemented would be fall 2011. Comments on the Academic Calendar may be sent to <http://senate.uconn.edu/calendar.html>

## State employee concessions continued from page 1

fice of Policy and Management or representatives of the governor’s office. The University of Connecticut Professional Employees Association (UCPEA), the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), and UHP negotiate with University officials. UCPEA and AAUP conducted their negotiations jointly, resulting in a tentative agreement for a pay freeze and furlough days, in return for a no-layoff agreement from UConn. UHP officials negotiated with management representatives at the UConn Health Center. UCPEA members supported the agreement with the University, which includes the pay freeze originally due in July and seven furlough days – one on May 22 and the other six spread evenly during the next two years. The vote was 861-194. UHP members supported their agreement with a vote of 1,075-269. Their agreement includes two options, one that includes furlough days and a pay freeze in July if the state legislature includes the cost of the fringe benefit differential in the Health Center’s biennium appropriation (currently \$13.5 million each year), and one that gives members their regular increase and includes no furlough days should the legislature not appropriate the fringe benefit funding.

That option would likely lead to job cuts. It is expected, however, that the fringe benefit costs will be included in the final budget. Meanwhile, AAUP members are currently voting, with results due May 7. Results of the Connecticut Employee Union Independent (CEUI) vote are expected the same day. Members of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) vote May 5. CEUI and AFSCME, along with the faculty and professional staff unions, are the largest of the seven unions at UConn. Results from the local balloting will be delivered to SEBAC May 8, when the pact with the state is expected to be finalized. However, under SEBAC bylaw provisions, if several unions that hold a vote with SEBAC do not approve their financial concessions, the entire deal could be voided. While the University agreed to job protection language with AAUP and UCPEA, the two unions agreed to consider further discussions with the University should the economy continue to decline or if the governor uses her authority to order more rescissions. SEBAC’s agreement with the state also includes an option to reconvene for further discussions in the event of a worst case economic scenario.

## Swine flu precautions continued from page 1

[www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch/cwp/view.asp?a=2533&q=439092/](http://www.ct.gov/ctfluwatch/cwp/view.asp?a=2533&q=439092/) UConn will also post updates on the Student Health Services web page: [www.shs.uconn.edu/](http://www.shs.uconn.edu/) To help prevent illness, people are advised to cough and sneeze into an arm or elbow, not into hands; wash hands often with soap and water, especially after a sneeze or cough; sing the “ABC Song” while washing to make sure hands are thoroughly washed; use alcohol-based hand sanitizers; avoid touching eyes, nose, or mouth; avoid contact with others who are ill; stay home from work or school and avoid contact with others if ill; get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food. Symptoms of the flu include

fever, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, cough, and runny nose. If anyone has these symptoms, consult a healthcare provider and keep a distance from others. A health provider should be consulted to determine when it is safe to return to the University. “The health of the university community requires each of us to do our part to prevent and control the spread of illness and disease,” the notices said. “We will continue to closely monitor the situation and keep you advised in the event further precautions are necessary.” If considering travel outside the U.S., check with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for health recommendations and the U.S. Department of State for any travel warning or advisories.

# UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT Advance Elizabeth Omara-Otunnu Editor

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# Academic program changes approved by Trustees

BY KAREN A. GRAVA

The Board of Trustees has voted to approve a master's degree in financial risk management in the School of Business at the Stamford campus and to rename the Department of Plant Sciences.

The new financial risk program will focus on current issues in worldwide financial markets, said Provost Peter J. Nicholls.

Home to a number of financial services firms and two large banks, the Stamford area is considered home of the hedge fund industry and interest in the new program is expected to be strong, Nicholls said.

In other business, the trustees voted to rename the plant sciences department the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture. The department encompasses two of UConn's oldest concentrations – agronomy and horticulture – but in recent years has also focused on landscape architecture.

Nicholls noted that the department supports the state's \$1 billion a year green industry, and in recent years has also focused on biotechnology and on turf grass and soils.

"Our landscape architecture program trains students to obtain professional licensure and work

in fields as diverse as land use planning and landscape design," he said.

The trustees also voted to discontinue:

- the M.A. in education studies in the Neag School Education, which Nicholls said shows inconsistent enrollment patterns and, according to a market study, is no longer current or viable;
- the Ph.D. in professional higher education administration in the Neag School of Education, which duplicates courses offered in educational administration;
- the Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in biobehavioral sciences in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which have substantial overlap with concentrations offered in behavioral neuroscience, neuroscience, and developmental psychology, all within the Department of Psychology;
- the Ph.D. and M.S. programs in botany, entomology, and zoology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which will be consolidated into Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. The ecology field of study will be renamed ecology and evolutionary biology; and
- the African studies concentration and M.A. in international studies, which have been inactive for several years.

## Winners of teaching awards announced

This year's winners of University awards for excellence in teaching and advising were announced on April 21, during a recognition dinner held at the Alumni House.

The award recipients are:

### First Year Experience & Learning Communities

Marie McCain, Center for Academic Programs

*Outstanding First Year Experience Teaching Award*

Kathleen Holgerson, Women's Center

*Outstanding First Year Experience Teaching Award*

### Advising

Hedley Freake, Nutritional Sciences

*Outstanding Student Advisement and Advocacy Award*

Matthew Farley, Student Activities

*Outstanding Student Advisement and Advocacy Award*

### 2009-10 Teaching Fellows

Wendy Glenn, Curriculum & Instruction, Neag School of Education

Jane Kerstetter, Allied Health Sciences, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

### 2009-10 Teaching Scholar

Kevin McEvoy, Marketing, School of Business

### 2009-10 Outstanding Adjuncts

Tamarah Kohanski, English, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Sydney Plum, English, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

### 2009-10 Outstanding Teaching Assistants

Martina Lücke, Modern & Classical Languages, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Oscar Levin, Mathematics, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

### The John T. Szarlan Memorial Outstanding Student Mentors

Chelsea Anderson, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Danielle Jones, Center for Academic Programs

### Honors Program

Robert Gross, History  
*Honors Council Faculty Member of the Year, 2009*

## Publication notice

This is the last weekly issue of the *Advance* for the 2008-09 academic year. The next issue, which will include coverage of

Commencement, will be published on Thursday, May 21. During the summer, the paper is published on a reduced schedule.



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Chris Donovan '69, longtime director of the Golden Globe Awards and a graduate of UConn's fine arts program, speaks to a class in the School of Fine Arts on April 27.

## Pharmacy professorship established to honor popular faculty member

The Board of Trustees has established a professorship in community pharmacy practice in honor of Henry A. Palmer, a popular teacher, scholar, and mentor in the School of Pharmacy for more than 40 years.

The Henry A. Palmer Professorship was created in recognition of Palmer's extensive scholarship in community pharmacy and patient care. His teachings have prepared many generations of pharmacy students for their vital day-to-day role in community pharmacies across the nation.

The University of Connecticut Foundation Inc. and the School of Pharmacy received more than \$756,000 from donors to support the professorship. A committee of alumni volunteers is pursuing additional gifts this year in order to raise the minimum \$1.5 million needed to establish an endowed chair in Palmer's honor.

Robert McCarthy, dean of the School of Pharmacy, says the professorship will help the Department of Pharmacy Practice recruit a nationally renowned scholar and researcher to the faculty. McCarthy says he hopes to fill the position in the coming months.

"The School of Pharmacy has been around for nearly 85 years," says McCarthy. "If you look at those eight plus decades, two individuals have really dominated the history ... It was Dean Harold G. Hewitt in those first 40 years. And

in the past 40 years, Henry Palmer has been that dominant person. You just hear his name again and again as someone who has had an effect on students and faculty."

Palmer began his career in the School of Pharmacy in 1958 as a graduate teaching assistant while he completed his master's degree (1960) and Ph.D. (1965). He was named assistant dean in 1979, clinical professor in 1981, and associate dean in 1985. From 1988 to 1996, Palmer served as director of the School's Alumni Association.

Palmer received the Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1999 and the first Distinguished Emeritus Faculty Award in 2004. After retiring from teaching in 2000, Palmer continued to serve as clinical professor emeritus and director of the School of Pharmacy's Office of Continuing Education for a number of years.

"I never would have imagined such an honor would be bestowed on me," Palmer says. "This honor clearly reflects on the support of my family throughout my teaching career, as well as the many students with whom I've had the pleasure of being involved as a teacher, colleague, and friend."

McCarthy says the response from donors so far has been impressive. "Folks have just readily wanted to participate. They were more than happy to give," he says. "That's the kind of person that Henry is."

The new faculty position will focus on all aspects of community pharmacy practice, including patient care, medication management, research, statistical analysis, and consultations with health care providers.

"More important than personal honor is what this chair means to the School of Pharmacy and how it will impact on pharmacy practice," Palmer says. "I'm happy to know there is going to be an exclusive focus on community pharmacy practice and patient care in the future with a dedicated professorship or chair."

He notes that candidates for the position will have successfully demonstrated the skills to create and evaluate innovative approaches to patient care.

"Research demonstrating the value of the community pharmacist in today's health care system will result in more beneficial and safer patient care," Palmer adds. "Additionally, practicing pharmacists and students will benefit from the resources this faculty chair will provide."

*Those interested in making a donation to the Henry A. Palmer Endowment Fund may contact the Lisa D. Brown, assistant director of development for the School of Pharmacy, at 860-486-9342 or via e-mail: lbrown@foundation.uconn.edu*



# Class of '09 Graduating Students

## Chandrika Garner



PHOTO BY JANINE GELINEAU  
Chandrika Garner, Medicine

BY CHRIS DEFRADESCO

Chandrika Garner is looking forward to her first “respectable” job.

Garner has been a full-time student almost her entire life. Now, at age 28, she’s on the verge of leaving school—in this case, the UConn School of Medicine—with an M.D. to her name and a career as an anesthesiologist in her future.

Just don’t tell her she’s anywhere near done learning yet.

“Residency in large part is still an educational experience,” Garner says. “And I really think to be a good physician you have to always be in an educational mindset. So in some ways I hope I never leave this place.

“But at least getting paid for it will be a nice change.”

The first year, or clinical base year, of her

residency will be in medicine at Yale-New Haven Hospital. She plans to return to the UConn Health Center for three years of residency training in anesthesiology.

Garner grew up with similar aspirations to those of her father, Dr. T.V. Rajan, a physician-scientist on the Health Center faculty.

“I always went back and forth between wanting to do research and being a doctor,” Garner says. “In college, I decided that I wanted to do research, but after three years of graduate-level research, I decided that clinical medicine might be a better fit for me.”

She graduated from the University of Chicago with a Bachelor of Arts in biological sciences. Before starting medical school she earned a master’s in pharmaceutical sciences at UConn.

“Medical school is a pretty big time commitment, but here at UConn the faculty are so supportive,” Garner says. “My family is right here, and I’m married, which I also think makes life a lot easier.”

Garner believes the School of Medicine’s Class of 2009 will be instrumental in changing the way American health care is delivered.

“I feel like there’s so much that we’ve learned in the past four years here at UConn that I’m confident all of us are going to give back, and all of us are going to be great doctors,” Garner says. “Of course, I get a little nervous thinking about the fact that in a couple months I’m going to be the one writing the orders, but I really feel well prepared for it.”

## Brian Bell

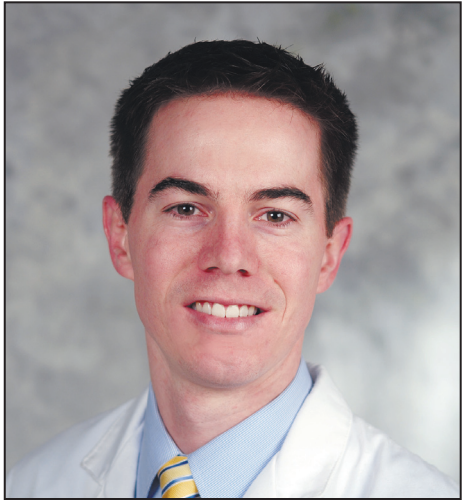


PHOTO BY JANINE GELINEAU  
Brian Bell, Dental Medicine

BY CAROLYN PENNINGTON

When Brian Bell was a young child, becoming a dentist hardly appealed to him. A career as a firefighter, astronaut, or professional athlete seemed more exciting than following in his father’s footsteps and becoming a general dentist.

But by high school, Bell’s attitude had changed. In fact, whenever his father received an emergency phone call at home from one of his patients, Bell beat his father to the door, with car keys in hand, enthusiastically accompanying him to the office and acting as his assistant.

“I’ll always remember the patients – often with mouths swollen and in terrible pain – who were so gratified and relieved to have their problem taken care of,” says Bell.

After high school, Bell attended Boston

College and during summer breaks worked in his father’s dental office. The exposure to day-to-day dentistry convinced him to apply to the UConn dental school, where he has excelled academically and been a leader.

Bell has been elected into the Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Dental Honor Society. He also received the Health Center’s Dr. Gilbert LeVine Mellon and Ruth Berman Mellon Award for academic excellence.

Bell has been a class representative for three years, a clinic team leader, and served as a student member of the dental school’s education council.

As a third-year student, he organized a trip to Belize, where students and faculty provided dental care to underserved children.

He also participated in the Connecticut Mission of Mercy, an event that involves hundreds of Connecticut dental professionals and student volunteers. During a single weekend, the volunteers collectively provide care to more than 1,000 patients.

It was these volunteer efforts, as well as his dental school clinical rotations, that demonstrated to Bell the diversity and allure of general dentistry. That’s why Bell has decided to do a general practice residency at Hartford Hospital, rather than specializing.

“If I specialized, I feel like I would be missing something,” he says. “I like providing comprehensive care to patients – a little bit of everything.”

Adds Bell, “Each day I gain a new appreciation for the opportunities and experiences the field of dentistry will provide me.”

## Sylvie Tchumtchoua

BY SHERRY FISHER

When Sylvie Tchumtchoua knew she would be studying at UConn, she had some concerns.

“I’m from Cameroon, and it was my first time studying outside my continent,” says Tchumtchoua, who came to UConn in 2003 to earn a master’s degree. “I was afraid I might not be able to meet the standard.”

This month, she will graduate with a Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, with a 4.07 GPA.



PHOTO BY JESSICA TOMMASELLI  
Sylvie Tchumtchoua,  
Agriculture & Natural Resources

Rigoberto Lopez, professor and head of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, says Tchumtchoua is “the best graduate student I’ve met in at least a decade. Her ability to combine analytical skills with a keen sense of communication makes her an exceptional scholar, and she already has three published journal articles, with more under submission to top journal outlets.”

He adds, “Her work provided the flawless statistical backbone on a multidisciplinary study we worked on together that assessed food security in Connecticut towns.”

Tchumtchoua says she loves statistics. “I’m very quantitative,” she says, “and I’m interested in statistical methods that apply to economics.”

She praises the faculty for their encouragement and knowledge. “You know somebody cares about how you are doing,” she says. “The faculty follow up. If you’re working on a paper, for example, they e-mail you

and ask you how you are doing. I like that because you’re just not left to yourself.”

She adds, “The faculty are like family. There’s no barrier between students and faculty members. I also like that they are really accessible.”

Tchumtchoua, who says she has always enjoyed mathematics, will be staying at UConn to finish another Ph.D. next year – this time in statistics.

“If you gave me a book without formulas, I’d fall asleep right away,” she says. “I love working with formulas, especially when you know that a crazy little formula can actually help solve a practical, real-life problem.”

Her future plans include teaching and doing research.

## David Blair

BY CAROLYN PENNINGTON

It’s fitting that David Blair has immersed himself in the field of immunology research. The 35-year-old Shelton native has first-hand experience of an immune system gone awry. He grew up with severe allergies and asthma, and has suffered from wheezing and shortness of breath most of his life.

“Since I was two or three years old, it seemed like I was allergic to everything – pollen, ragweed, dust,” says Blair.

Even so, after receiving his undergraduate degree from UConn, studying immunology wasn’t at the top of his list when he decided to come to the Health Center for graduate school. His top choices were cell biology and neuroscience, while immunology ranked at the bottom.



PHOTO BY JANINE GELINEAU  
David Blair, Medicine

That changed when Blair did a rotation in an immunology lab.

“It just clicked – I knew right away that I wanted to stick with immunology,” he says. “The more I learned about the immune system, the more I was intrigued at what an amazing, intricate biological process it is.”

Blair spent the next five years researching the body’s immune response against microbial infections. He zeroed in on a specific subset of T cells and tried to determine how they differentiate into long-lived memory cells that respond quickly upon infection.

“Our ultimate goal is to better understand some of the basic principles involved,” he says, “which could lead to development of a vaccine or better therapies for fighting infection or, alternatively, inhibiting the response in autoimmune disorders.”

Blair defended his dissertation in December and is currently doing post-doctoral

work at New York University School of Medicine in New York City.

He hopes ultimately to go into academia, so he can continue doing research but also start teaching and mentoring students.

He notes that it is basic science research that will help lead to much needed cures for diseases such as asthma.

Blair’s own immunological tolerance has increased after years of allergy shots, so he can now enjoy his two favorite pastimes – tennis and mountain biking – nearly inhaler-free.

He is well aware that his research could provide a piece of the puzzle that will some day lead to a vaccine or cure for the increasing number of people being diagnosed with allergies and asthma.

Says Blair, “It would be extremely rewarding to see my findings in the lab used clinically to help people live better lives.”



# Class of '09 Graduating Students

## Fernando Alfonso



PHOTO BY DANIEL BUTTREY

Fernando Alfonso III, CLAS

BY CINDY WEISS

Fernando Alfonso III, a senior English major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will pursue a career that some would say is headed for extinction. Alfonso wants to be a staff writer at a newspaper.

But even as layoff notices at newspapers pile up, Alfonso is guaranteed a job.

He recently was awarded one of two Newhouse Graduate Newspaper Fellowships and Apprenticeships for Minorities. After he completes an 18-month master's degree program at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University, he will be placed in a professional apprenticeship at a Newhouse publication, earning a competitive entry-level journalist's salary.

Newhouse publishes *The Post-Standard* in Syracuse, where Alfonso will intern during

his fellowship, and owns 35 other newspapers around the country. It is owned by Advance Publications, which publishes *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, and Condé Nast magazines, including *Vogue* and *Wired*.

Not a bad prospective career field for a 22-year-old writer, who came to UConn unsure of what career he wanted to pursue.

He did know that he wanted to major in English, however. After being placed in a writing internship at *Hartford Magazine* as part of the English Department's internship program, he "fell in love with the atmosphere of writing," as he describes it.

He pursued it with a vengeance.

He wrote a blog for University Communications, giving prospective students insights into what UConn is like. And he took a fiction writing independent study.

During a Study Abroad semester in London, Alfonso worked under the tutelage of former English professor and novelist Scott Bradfield. He tried his hand at screenplays and creative stories.

Last fall, he interned with the *Hartford Courant's* features department, where he contributed more than 30 stories to its entertainment guide. That was followed by another internship, still underway, at the *Journal Inquirer* newspaper in Manchester.

He also tried his hand at a first-person feature, volunteering to give blood for the first time and tell about it.

At Syracuse he will gain exposure to magazine, newspaper, and online journalism. And while he is veering toward hard news, his interests are broad.

Says Alfonso, "I like talking with people and writing their stories."

## Krystyna Blakeslee



PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

Krystyna Blakeslee, Law

BY MICHAEL KIRK

After high school, Krystyna Marie Blakeslee enlisted in the United States Marine Corp and spent five months serving in Iraq in 2003. She now believes that the discipline, self-confidence, and perseverance she learned there played a big part in who she has become.

"I have always made an effort to take the chances that have come my way, and to continue to do that is probably one of my biggest challenges," says Blakeslee, who will graduate from the School of Law on May 17.

Blakeslee says her most rewarding experiences in law school were the opportunities she had to participate in the larger Hartford community. She volunteered for the Connecticut Unemployment Action Center, an organization that assists individuals of

limited means who need help obtaining their unemployment benefits. Blakeslee also worked with a faculty member to start the law school's Volunteer Domestic Assistance Information Program in the Hartford Family Court. The program assists individuals of limited means who need information in order to fill out forms for a temporary restraining order or an uncontested divorce.

Additionally, she took advantage of the law school's many clinical programs, participating in both the tax clinic and the mediation clinic.

"Both of these clinical experiences were a valuable opportunity to help me develop my practical skills in different ways," she says.

In 2008-09, Blakeslee served as managing editor for the *Connecticut Law Review*.

"I had a tremendous experience as managing editor of the *Law Review*," she says. "I thoroughly enjoyed reading and editing articles, working with my peers and talking with authors."

She also developed strong public speaking skills through participating in mock trials and moot court competitions.

After graduation, Blakeslee will have a year-long position clerking for Judge Alan H.W. Shift, a U.S. Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Connecticut. Following that clerkship, she will be an associate at the Hartford office of Dechert LLP.

"While I certainly have a vision for how I'd like my career to go," she says, "I also know that life does not always go as planned."

## Meghan O'Leary

BY SHERRY FISHER

Meghan O'Leary says her experience at UConn has been "more than any actor could ever ask for."

"There's a strong sense of community with your fellow actors, a sense of home with the Connecticut Repertory Theatre and you work with professionals in the business," says O'Leary, who is graduating in May with a bachelor of fine arts in acting. "The training is amazing."

O'Leary, who researched other New England schools that offered acting, says she chose UConn because the program worked in conjunction with CRT, a professional theater company.

"It has been a privilege to audition for CRT and get cast and work in main stage shows," she says. "I've been fortunate enough to get cast quite a bit and it's great because we're allowed to join the equity membership candidacy program. Right now I'm in a position to join the union. I've gotten to work with professional directors and equity actors, and I have shows on my resume that are really powerful. I can go to New York with confidence."

She adds, "CRT isn't afraid to take artistic risks. Last year, we did *Pentecost*, one of my favorite shows. The majority of the play is in five or six different languages spoken in the Middle East. The fact that we did it here was great."

O'Leary has praise for the faculty. "They all have wonderful histories," she says. "They're wise, experienced, and offer excellent training."

She has also enjoyed the close-knit relationships among the students. "We're a little



PHOTO BY THEO &amp; JULIET PHOTOGRAPHY

Meghan O'Leary, Fine Arts

community and we're all best friends," she says. "It's a wonderful support system."

O'Leary says she has also learned about the business side of being an actor. "It's show business and you have to understand that part of it," she says. "At UConn I've learned how to wear a business hat as well as an artistic hat."

As a recruitment contact for the dramatic arts department for two years, she was a liaison between prospective students and their parents, helping them through the application and audition process.

"When I came to UConn, a couple of the juniors and seniors at the time were the nicest people in the world to me, and I remembered that," she says. "I wanted to do for others what they had done for me."

O'Leary has been approached by a bi-coastal agency that has offered to represent her in the professional world of performance.

## Shazia Chaudhry

BY SHERRY FISHER

Shazia Chaudhry says the School of Social Work has been a perfect fit for her.

"I love the diverse community of students," says Chaudhry, who is graduating with an master of social work degree with a concentration in administration. "The School is small, I've gotten to know people on a very personal level, and I've made lifelong connections. It's been an amazing experience."

She says the faculty has been "phenomenal. There are so many professors who really care and who are passionate about what they teach. They have so much knowledge to share, and give so much of themselves. I have really enjoyed that."

She says her experience at the School of Social work has been far reaching.

"It's not just a degree that you're earning here," says Chaudhry, whose GPA is 4.0. "You're getting information that you really use and need. Some of the courses have been tough, but they're full of practical knowledge."

"An example is the internships," she says. "This year's internship has been incredible. I've been working in the Superintendent's Office of the Cheshire Public Schools and it has been dynamic, building on my administrative skills. I've absorbed so much."

Chaudhry, who has four young children of her own, is also working at a middle school as part of the internship.

She says the international social work courses are "amazing. The courses connect you on a global level. They're not just about our little worlds. There is so much we can do to build bridges across many communi-



PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

Shazia Chaudhry, Social Work

ties. I like looking at the big picture, taking it out from the community, and looking at how you can effect change on a global level."

Chaudhry says the School has empowered her to do just that. "The professors, courses, lectures, and other programs show you that what you're doing is meaningful and important."

For her excellent academic performance, service contributions, and future potential, Chaudhry has been awarded the 2009 School of Social Work Alumni Association Student Award. The award will be presented to her during a ceremony on May 9.

*Over a period of several weeks, the Advance is publishing short profiles of some of this year's graduating students.*

*Those featured were selected from among those recommended by each school and college.*





PHOTO BY SEAN FLYNN

Seniors in electrical engineering work on their senior project, a solar energy device known as a pentabeam. From left, Andy Gumkowski, Peter Bowden, and Fred Wilkins.

## GRANTS

The following grants were received through the Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) in March 2009. The list represents only new proposals awarded, and excludes continuations. The list is supplied to the *Advance* each month by OSP.

Principal Investigator	Department	Sponsor	Amount	Award Period
Barnes-Farrell, J. <i>2009 National Society of Black Engineers Student Survey</i>	Psychology	Nat'l. Society of Black Engineers	\$24,045	2/09-10/09
Behuniak, P.	Educational Psychology	Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services/Conn. Dept. of Education	\$665,588	10/07-9/10
<i>Validity General Supervision Enhancement Grant Consortium for Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Achievement Standards</i>				
Cao, C.	Mechanical Engineering	Nat'l. Aeronautics & Space Admin./United Technologies-Pratt & Whitney	\$100,000	3/09-3/10
<i>Fast-Response Engine Research (FastER) Adaptive Control</i>				
Carstensen, F. <i>Fairfield Project</i>	Economics	Biggins Lacy Shapiro & Co. LLC	\$12,613	6/08-9/08
Christenson, R.	Civil & Environmental Engineering	Nat'l. Science Foundation/Engineering	\$200,000	3/09-2/11
<i>NEESR-SD: Development of a Real-Time Multi-Site Hybrid Testing Tool for NEES</i>				
Chun, O.	Nutritional Sciences	American Heart Association	\$113,834	8/08-6/10
<i>Total Dietary Antioxidant Capacity Associated with the Risks of Cardiovascular Disease Mediated by Oxidative Stress</i>				
Cornman, D.	Center for Health, Intervention & Prevention	Dept. of Defense/Navy	\$100,000	1/09-1/10
<i>Expanded ARV Adherence Program and Prevention-with-Positives Program in Uganda 2008-2009</i>				
Cornman, D.	Center for Health, Intervention & Prevention	Dept. of Defense/Navy	\$150,000	12/08-11/09
<i>Prevention with Positives in Military Settings in Mozambique</i>				
Cornman, D.	Center for Health, Intervention & Prevention	Dept. of Defense/Navy	\$425,000	08/08-07/09
<i>Prevention with Positives in Military Settings in Ethiopia &amp; Increasing ARV Adherence in Military Settings in Ethiopia</i>				
Cornman, D.	Center for Health, Intervention & Prevention	Nat'l. Insts. of Health/ Centers for Disease Control & Prevention / Nat'l. Center on Birth Defects & Developmental Disabilities/Family Planning Council	\$115,509	9/08-8/11
<i>Family Planning &amp; Preconception HIV Testing</i>				
Faghri, A.	Mechanical Engineering	Dept. of Energy	\$1,290,362	9/08-12/11
<i>Research and Development for Novel Thermal Energy Storage Systems for Concentrating Solar Power</i>				
Ferris, A.	Center for Public Health & Health Policy	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/ UConn Health Center	\$456,659	10/08-6/11
<i>Effectiveness of an IBM-based Intervention for Reducing Sweetened Beverage Consumption in Preschool Children</i>				
Gao, R.	Mechanical Engineering	Nat'l. Science Foundation/Engr./Univ. of Massachusetts-Amherst	\$400,102	8/08-10/11
<i>Emerging Frontiers in Research and Innovation (EFRI): Event-Driven Sensing for Enterprise Reconfigurability and Optimization</i>				
Garey, A.	Human Dev./Family Studies Instr. & Rsrch.	Nat'l. Insts. of Health/ Nat'l. Inst. of Child Health & Human Development/Brown Univ.	\$32,037	7/08-7/09
<i>Measuring Social Connection Using Multiple Data Sources</i>				
Gray, P.	Extension	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/ Univ. of Hawaii	\$30,000	10/08-9/09
<i>CT Military 4-H Clubs</i>				

Green, J.	Psychology	Nat'l. Insts. of Health/ Nat'l. Inst. of Child Health & Human Development/ Univ. of Minnesota	\$53,944	9/08-7/10
<i>Quantifying Children's Emotions with the Emotion Intensity Linkage Function Model</i>				
Grillo, M.	Extension	New Haven Board of Education	\$15,000	1/09-6/09
<i>4-H Horticultural Program</i>				
Harel, O.	Statistics	Conn. Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Servs./UConn Health Center	\$9,634	1/09-5/09
<i>An Evaluation of Connecticut's Statewide Suicide Prevention Plan</i>				
Jordan, E.	Mechanical Engineering	United Technologies-Pratt & Whitney	\$60,000	3/09-12/09
<i>Life Prediction for Ceramic Coating</i>				
Kraus, C.	Center for Survey Research & Analysis	Town of Lebanon, Conn.	\$12,500	8/08-11/08
<i>Lebanon Land Preservation Survey</i>				
Les, D.	Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	Nat'l. Science Foundation/ Biology	\$430,140	3/09-2/12
<i>Completing a Virtual Herbarium at the University of Connecticut</i>				
Les, D.	Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	Nat'l. Science Foundation/ Biology	\$297,040	3/09-2/12
<i>Collaborative Research: Systematic and Ecological Studies of North American Najas L. (Hydrocharitaceae)</i>				
Liu, L.	Civil & Environmental Engineering	City of Avalon, California/ University of California at Irvine	\$9,810	1/09-1/10
<i>Two-Dimensional Electric Resistivity Tomography for Assisting Characterization of Sewage Water Contamination to the Avalon Bay, California</i>				
Malla, R.	Civil & Environmental Engineering	Nat'l. Aeronautics & Space Admin./Honeybee Robotics Spacecraft Mechanisms Corp.	\$33,500	4/09-5/10
<i>Finite Element Analysis of Percussive Systems for Planetary Exploration</i>				
Malla, R.	Civil & Environmental Engineering	Nat'l. Aeronautics & Space Admin./Univ. of Hartford	\$20,000	6/09-8/10
<i>Analysis and Design of a Lunar Base with Regolith (Soil)-Structure Interaction</i>				
Martinez, M.	ISS-Academic Programs Center	Community Foundation of Southeastern Connecticut	\$3,950	8/08-4/09
<i>Kids and Books/Let's Read</i>				
Murphy, K.	Mechanical Engineering	Dept. of Defense/Navy/ Office of Naval Research	\$159,967	5/09-6/11
<i>Predicting Structural Integrity of Naval Vessels Using a Bayesian Approach: Modeling and Practical Implementations</i>				
Nadeau, J.	Animal Science	American Youth Horse Council	\$750	4/09-3/10
<i>Horse Environmental Awareness Program: Youth Outreach: Horses and Humans for a Healthy Habitat</i>				
Naples, N.	Sociology	Nat'l. Science Foundation/ Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences	\$162,017	3/09-2/11
<i>Family Policy, Social Movements, and the Law: A Comparative Study of Australia and the United States</i>				
Pikal, M.	Pharmaceutical Sciences	Nat'l. Insts. of Health/ Dept. of Commerce/Nat'l. Inst. of Standards & Technology	\$126,253	10/08-9/09
<i>Ambient, Dry State Preservation of Therapeutic Macromolecules</i>				
Robinson, V.	Molecular & Cell Biology	Nat'l. Science Foundation/ Biology	\$934,500	4/09-3/14
<i>The Influence of ppGpp on the Cellular Action of BipA</i>				
Sabatelli, R.	Human Dev./Family Studies Instr. & Rsrch.	Nat'l. Council on Family Relations	\$138,719	1/09-12/13
<i>Family Relations: Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Sciences</i>				
Shea, D.	Connecticut Transportation Institute/	Dept. of Transportation Federal Highway Admin./Conn. Dept. of Transportation	\$340,000	1/09-12/09
<i>Technology Transfer Center</i>				
Singh, P.	Chemical, Materials & Biomolecular Engr.	Dept. of Energy/Pacific Northwest Nat'l. Lab./Battelle Memorial Inst.	\$50,975	3/09-8/09
<i>Direct Boron Fuel Cell Feasibility</i>				
Swadlow, H.	Psychology	Nat'l. Insts. of Health/ Nat'l. Inst. of Mental Health	\$420,125	2/09-11/10
<i>Spike-Triggered Current Source-Density Analysis: The Synaptic Impact of a Single Neuron on a Cortical Domain</i>				
Tufts, J.	Communication Sciences	Phonak Communications AG	\$31,481	1/09-5/09
<i>User Satisfaction with Phonak Serenity Hearing Protection Systems</i>				
Vadiveloo, J.	Mathematics	Watson Wyatt Worldwide	\$10,000	12/08-2/09
<i>Best Reinsurance Actuarial Services</i>				
Wang, B.	Computer Science & Engineering	Dept. of Defense/Navy/ Qualtech Systems Inc.	\$64,940	3/09-7/10
<i>Prognostics and Health Management for Afloat Information Technology and Network Services System (Phase II)</i>				
Warner, G.	Natural Resources & the Environment	Dept. of Interior/U.S. Geological Survey	\$92,335	3/09-2/10
<i>Water Resources Technology Transfer Initiative</i>				
Willis, B.	Chemical, Materials & Biomolecular Engr.	Dept. of Defense/Navy/ Office of Naval Research	\$313,321	1/09-9/11
<i>Next Generation Biochemical Sensor Based on Tunneling Spectroscopy</i>				
Willis, B.	Chemical, Materials & Biomolecular Engr.	Dept. of Energy/Pacific Northwest Nat'l. Lab./Battelle Memorial Inst.	\$78,262	1/09-2/10
<i>Development of Alternative, Low-Cost and Durable High Performance Cathode Supports for PEM Fuel Cells</i>				



## CALENDAR

Monday, May 4, to Thursday, May 21

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 Thursday, May 21 through Monday, June 8. Those items must be in the database by 4 p.m. on Monday, May 11. 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, 5/4 –** Finals begin.  
**Saturday, 5/9 –** Finals end.  
**Saturday, 5/9 – Graduate School Commencement.** Master's, Au.D., DMA, Ed.D., and Ph.D. degree candidates, 1 p.m., Gampel Pavilion; D.Pharm. degree candidates, 9 a.m., Rome Ballroom, South Campus.  
**Saturday, 5/9 – Undergraduate Commencement Ceremonies.** College of Agriculture & Natural Resources and Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture, 6 p.m., Gampel Pavilion; School of Pharmacy, 4 p.m., Rome Ballroom, South Campus.  
**Sunday, 5/10 – Undergraduate Commencement Ceremonies.** School of Business, 9 a.m., Gampel Pavilion; Center for Continuing Studies, 2:30 a.m., Rome Ballroom, South Campus; Neag School of Education, 9 a.m., Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts; School of Engineering, 12:30 p.m., Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts; School of Fine Arts, 5 p.m., Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts; College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, 12:30 & 4:30 p.m., Gampel Pavilion; School of Nursing, 4 p.m., Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts. For a complete list go to: <http://commencement.uconn.edu/>  
**Sunday, 5/17 – Health Center Commencement.** 2 p.m., Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford.  
**Sunday, 5/17 – School of Law Commencement.** 11 a.m., Law School Campus.  
**Tuesday, 5/12 –** Deadline for submitting spring semester grades via Student Administration System.

### Libraries

**Homer Babbidge Library.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/9, open 24 hours; 5/9, closes 6 p.m.  
Starting 5/10, Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday & Sunday, noon-5 p.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.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/9, 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.  
Starting 5/10, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-noon & 12:30-4:30 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**Music & Dramatic Arts Library.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/10, Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-10 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, 1-5 p.m.; Sunday, 1-10 p.m.  
Starting 5/11, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**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.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/10, Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends.  
Starting 5/11, Monday-Thursday,

8:30 a.m.-7 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**Greater Hartford Campus Library.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/10, Monday-

1 p.m., Room 107, Music Building.  
**Monday, 5/4 – Mathematics.** *Separating the Degree Spectra of Structures*, by Tyler Markkanen (adv.:



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

A costume designed by Laura Crow for the production *Prudence*, part of an exhibit *The Heywood Legacy: Twenty Years of Costumes for the Connecticut Repertory Theatre*, on display at the Benton Museum through May 10.

Thursday, 8 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday & Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Sunday.  
Starting 5/11, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**Stamford Campus Library.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/10, 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.  
Starting 5/11, Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed weekends.  
**Torrington Campus Library.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/10, Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.; closed Friday-Sunday.  
Starting 5/11, Monday-Thursday, noon-6 p.m.; Friday-Sunday, closed.  
**Waterbury Campus Library.** Exam hours: 5/4-5/10, Monday-Thursday, 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; closed weekends.  
Starting 5/11, Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-4p.m.; Friday, 10 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

**Monday, 5/4 – Nursing.** *Exemplary Presence in Emergency Nursing: A Focused Ethnography*, by Kathleen Walsh (adv.: Jacobs). 9 a.m., Room 303, Storrs Hall.  
**Monday, 5/4 – Communication Sciences.** *Binaural Middle Latency Response in Noise (BMIN): The Influence of Age Related Changes in [Central] Auditory Processing*, by Jeffrey Weighing (adv.: Musiek). 10 a.m., Class of '47 Room, Babbidge Library.  
**Monday, 5/4 – Microbiology.** *Genomic and Proteomic Analyses of Extracellular and Symbiosis-Related Proteins in Frankia*, by Juliana Mastronunzio (adv.: Benson). 10 a.m., Room 201, Biology/Physics Building.  
**Monday, 5/4 – Ecology & Evolutionary Biology.** *Systematics, Biogeography and Character Evolution in the Tapeworm Genus Acanthobothrium Van Beneden, 1850*, by Carrie Fyler (adv.: Caira). 11 a.m., Room 129, Pharmacy/Biology Bldg.  
**Monday, 5/4 – Music.** *A Comparison of Schumann's Fourth Symphony with its Reorchestration by Mahler*, by Howard Hsu (adv.: Frogley).

Solomon). 2:30 p.m., Room M215, Gant Science Complex.  
**Tuesday, 5/5 – Kinesiology.** *Organizational Change: An Examination of Factors Influencing Resistance in an Intercollegiate Athletics Department*, by Jon Peachey (adv.: Bruening). 2 p.m., Room 142, Gentry Building.  
**Tuesday, 5/5 – Mathematics.** *Evolution Systems of Measures for Non-Autonomous Ornstein-Uhlenbeck Processes with Levy Noise*, by Bob Wooster (adv.: Gordina). 2 p.m., Room 215, Gant Science Complex.  
**Tuesday, 5/5 – Chemical, Materials & Biomolecular Engineering.** *Automated Autocorrelation Function Analysis for Detection, Diagnosis, and Correction of Underperforming Controllers*, by Rachelle Howard (adv.: Cooper). 2 p.m., Room 324, Engineering II Building.  
**Wednesday, 5/6 – Educational Psychology.** *A Gift for All? Examining the Effects of Gifted Programming on All Students*, by Jill Adelson (adv.: Gavin & McCoach). 10 a.m., Room 12, Tasker Building.  
**Wednesday, 5/6 – Economics.** *Three Essays in Financial Economics*, by Biplob Ghosh (adv.: Dharmapala). 2 p.m., Room 339, Monteith Building.  
**Wednesday, 5/6 – Music.** *Classical Training of Musical Theater Singing: Registration Issues in the Female Voice*, by Tamara Hardesty (adv.: McClain). 2:30 p.m., Room 219A, Drama/Music Building.  
**Wednesday, 5/6 – Adult Learning.** *Measuring and Enhancing Clinical Decision-Making Ability Among Associate Degree Nursing Students*, by Bonnie Edelen (adv.: Bell). 5:30 p.m., Room 246, Gentry Building.  
**Thursday, 5/7 – Clinical Psychology.** *Does Resolution of Prior Stressful Events Predict Adaptive Coping and Adjustment in Young Cancer Survivors?* by Juliane Fenster (adv.: Park). 2:30 a.m., Room 109, Bousfield Building.  
**Thursday, 5/7 – Linguistics.** *IP Internal Movement and Topicalization*, by Pei-Jung Kuo (adv.: Boskovic). 3 p.m., Room 311, Arjona Building.  
**Friday, 5/8 – Accounting.** *Lease Accounting and Cost of Equity Capital*, by Fei Han (adv.: Seow). 10 a.m., Room 127, School of Business.

**Friday, 5/8 – Social Psychology.** *HIV/AIDS Disclosure Decision-Making and Outcomes: A Longitudinal, Event-Based Analysis*, by Stephenie Chaudoir (adv.: Quinn). 11 a.m., Room 160, Bousfield Building.  
**Friday, 5/8 – Developmental Psychology.** *Rejection Sensitivity*

Jacob Saunders, Elizabeth Talbot, and Erin Wiersma; and *Luigi Lucioni's American Countryside*, etchings; *The Heywood Legacy: Twenty Years of Costumes for the Connecticut Repertory Theatre*. Museum hours: Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1-4:30 p.m. Open by appointment for classes and tours, Monday-Wednesday.  
**Through Friday, 5/15 – Babbidge Library.** *Portraits in Glass*, by Debbie Tarsitano, Gallery on the Plaza; *Connecticut Wilderness*, sculptures and mixed media installations by Randall Nelson, Stevens Gallery and West Alcove. For hours see Libraries section.  
**Through Friday, 5/15 – Dodd Center.** *Indigenous Voices*, Aztec, Mayan, and Incan codices; Also through Monday, 4/20, *Transitional Spaces in Post-Soviet Estonia*, photos by Sarah Rhodin, West Corridor. For hours see Libraries section.  
**Through Sunday, 6/7 – Alexey von Schlippe Gallery.** Works on paper by Alida Ferrari; mixed media/found object pieces by Peter Leibert; oils on canvas by Richard Nazzaro; and mixed media/installations/drawings by Connie Pfeiffer. Wednesday-Sunday, noon-4 p.m. Members and students free, others \$3 donation. Avery Point Campus. Wednesday, 5/13 – Artist talk by Connie Pfeiffer. 7 p.m.  
**Through Wednesday, 7/29 – Health Center.** *A Contemporary Exploration*, paintings by Shirley Mae Neu; and *Kindergarten Masterpieces*, by students from Norfeldt Elementary School. 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.-9 p.m., Main and Mezzanine Lobbies.  
**Through Monday, 11/30 – Ballard Institute & Museum of Puppetry.** *Toy Theaters of the World and Títeres y Máscaras*, puppet and mask traditions from the Americas and Europe. 6 Bourn Place, Depot Campus. Open Friday-Sunday, noon-5 p.m. Suggested donation \$3 adults, \$2 children.  
**Ongoing – State Museum of Natural History & Connecticut Archaeology Center.** *Human's Nature: Looking Closer at the Relationships between People and the Environment*. Hours: Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free admission, donations welcome.

### Performing Arts

**Wednesday, 5/6 – Student Recital.** Mark Verrette, cello. 7 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Friday, 5/8 – Student Recital.** Janet Pohli, soprano. 8 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 5/9 – Community School of the Arts Recital.** Tiny Trebles, Junior Trebles, and Treblemakers. 1 p.m., von der Mehden Recital Hall. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 5/16 – Community School of the Arts Recital.** Piano students of Dorothy Bognar. 1 p.m., Vernon Building, Depot Campus. Free admission.  
**Saturday, 5/16 – Community School of the Arts Recital.** Guitar students of Nick Cutroneo. 3 p.m., Vernon Building, Depot Campus. Free admission  
**Saturday, 5/16 – Community School of the Arts Recital.** Piano students of Minyoung Lee. 5:30 p.m., Vernon Building, Depot Campus. Free admission

### Athletics

**Saturday, 5/9 –** Men's Baseball vs. Pittsburgh. 3 p.m., J.O. Christian Field.  
**Sunday, 5/10 –** Men's Baseball vs. Pittsburgh. 1 p.m., J.O. Christian Field.



# Collaboration advances microbial fuel cell commercialization

BY NAN COOPER

Professor Baikun Li and her industrial partners are seeking to harness the energy-production capabilities of microscopic bacteria to produce power and clean wastewater on a large commercial scale.

Li, an assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering who is also affiliated with the Center for Environmental Sciences & Engineering (CESE), is working with Connecticut-based engineering consulting firm Fuss & O'Neill to develop large-scale, efficient microbial fuel cells.

They have recently received funding for the project from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and New York State Energy Research & Development Authority. Fuss & O'Neill are subcontractors to HydroQual, a New Jersey-based environmental engineering company that serves as the prime contractor. The grant garnered matching funds from the Water Environment Research Foundation, an international water pollution research and outreach group. The Connecticut Clean Energy Fund has also shown keen interest in the team's work.

Although they have been studied since the early 1900s, microbial fuel cells are still in their infancy, says Li, noting that most research to date has focused on very small-scale lab units.

In a microbial fuel cell, a feedstock – in this case, carbohydrate-laden wastewater – is fed into a vacuum-sealed cell, where anaerobic bacteria embedded in a carbon tube dine on the fatty acids, glucose, and other organic carbons prevalent in wastewater. The bacteria degrade these organic

compounds and generate protons and electrons. The electrons are transported to an electrode – the anode – and conducted through a copper wire circuit to a second electrode, called a cathode. At the cathode, electrons and protons react with oxygen, generating electricity.

A microbial fuel cell operates at room temperature and requires only wastewater as its influent, in contrast with solid oxide fuel cells and most polymer electrolyte membrane fuel cells, which require higher temperatures and pressures, a costly catalyst (often platinum) in the case of polymer electrolyte membrane fuel cells, and additional hydrogen or nitrogen to operate.

But while solid oxide fuel cells and most polymer electrolyte membrane fuel cells are costly to operate in comparison with microbial fuel cells, they are considerably more efficient sources of energy, producing about 3,000 watts per cubic meter of energy, in contrast with the approximately 3 watts per cubic meter a microbial fuel cell may produce.

Li has been collaborating with Fuss & O'Neill since 2007, when UConn engineering alumnus Michael Curtis, senior vice president of the company's facilities and environmental systems division, foresaw the potential commercial applications of Li's work.

Fuss & O'Neill has focused increasingly on environmentally sustainable construction and building solutions in recent years, and is involved in the design and construction of dozens of industrial and municipal sewage treatment operations, primarily in the Northeast. Conventional sewage treatment plants rely on a mixture

of processes, including microbes, to produce clean water. In the process, they use huge amounts of power and release tens of millions of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year.

Curtis says microbial fuel cell technology takes a high-energy resource, such as the carbohydrates in sanitary sewage, and exploits it in energy production. "From a layman's point of view, it's like photosynthesis in reverse," he says. "A microbial fuel cell takes advantage of the seemingly unlimited supply of wastewater carbohydrates and converts it back into usable energy. The carbon supplying the fuel cell has effectively been sequestered from the atmosphere, making this a green, carbon-neutral process."

He adds that if the technological challenges to efficiently scaling up the devices can be addressed, microbial fuel cell technology could "turn a trillion dollar industry on its ear."

The microbial fuel cell under development in Li's lab uses wastewater as its feedstock. At a small scale, microbial fuel cells can produce a relatively large amount of energy. Their energy conversion capacity declines, however, as the scale is increased, rendering them inefficient power sources currently for most commercial applications.

Li and her colleagues seek to develop high-energy output microbial fuel cells and units suitable for various commercial applications.

In her UConn laboratory, Li has developed 250 ml and 1 liter microbial fuel cell units. With Fuss & O'Neill, she plans to build and test a 20 liter unit, and this summer, to install pilot scale units at a wastewater treatment facility in upstate New York. UConn's Center



PHOTO BY JESSICA TOMMASELLI

Baikun Li, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering, tests the voltage of a microbial fuel cell.

for Science and Technology Commercialization has filed a patent application on these new designs.

"Municipal wastewater treatment plants represent a huge energy 'sink' in the U.S., consuming an estimated 2 percent to 3 percent of the total power consumed each year across the nation," says

Li. "Ironically, the wastewater is concentrated with carbohydrates that are inherently high energy compounds. If we could harness this untapped resource to produce high quality energy and clean water, we could reverse the current energy balance of sewage treatment facilities."

## Study Abroad students head to Armenia for archaeological dig

BY MICHAEL KIRK

Seven UConn undergraduates will accompany anthropology professor Daniel Adler on a Study Abroad program to Armenia this summer to participate in archeological excavations at three Stone Age sites.

The trip is sponsored by UConn's Armenian Studies Program, and by a partnership between UConn and Yerevan State University in Armenia. The students, selected through a competitive process, will be in Armenia for the month of June. They will work at the archaeological sites under the direction of Adler and three anthropology graduate students.

For two years, Adler has been conducting research at several sites in Armenia that he estimates are between 25,000 and 200,000 years old. In time, he expects the sites to provide significant new information on Neanderthal evolution and behavior. To date, the sites have yielded stone tools and animal bones.

"This is a great opportunity for undergraduates who are interested in the field, providing them with very valuable field experience," Adler says. "It will also help create stronger ties between UConn and



PHOTO BY FRANK DAHLMAYER

Graduate student Beverly Schmidt instructs students on proper procedures regarding archaeological finds before a summer dig in Armenia. From left, Amy Destro, Danice Tatosian, Cathleen Hammel, and Maria Darr.

Yerevan State University, as well as highlighting the important work of our Armenian Studies Program."

Five of the students are juniors and two are sophomores. Four are anthropology majors, and the

other three are majoring in history, journalism with anthropology as a minor, and nutritional sciences.

Adler notes that the research is physically taxing work.

"They are going to be working

in a somewhat rugged, rural area several miles outside Yerevan, and they will be living in close quarters with one another," he says.

Junior Maria Darr, the journalism major minoring in anthropol-

ogy, says, "I have aspirations to become an archaeologist, and this seemed like an opportunity I did not want to pass up. I always knew I wanted to study abroad during my years at UConn, and when I saw this option, it combined everything I wanted in a Study Abroad program."

One student for whom the trip has special significance is sophomore Danice Tatosian, the nutritional sciences major, who is of Armenian origin.

"Spending a month experiencing the culture of a foreign country, while working on an extraordinary archaeological site, is a once-in-a-life time opportunity," says Tatosian. "When I first read about this trip my heart must have momentarily stopped, and I knew this was something I had to work for."

Tatosian says she applied because it is an opportunity to do something she had always dreamed of doing: working on an archaeological site, "sifting through and studying materials that haven't been touched in thousands of years" in a place she says she regards as home.

The students will earn six honors credits for their work.