In the following article, 2012 Rhodes Scholar Cory Rodgers reports on his work in Tanzania. Funded by the 2011 Samuel Huntington Public Service Award, Cory’s participatory project assists people in the Manzese area of Dar es Salaam living with HIV and AIDS. Originally from Somerset, Pennsylvania, Cory will graduate from Pitt in April with a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in Africana studies and the history and philosophy of science, and a BS degree in biological sciences with a minor in chemistry. He will receive certificates in African Studies and in Global Studies. In addition to the Samuel Huntington Award and the Rhodes Scholarship, Cory is also a recipient of a Honors Tuition Scholarship from the University of Pittsburgh, a Chancellor’s Undergraduate Research Fellowship, a Brackenridge Undergraduate Fellowship from the University Honors College, the Helen Pool Rush Award from Pitt’s Nationality Rooms Summer Study Abroad Scholarship Program, a Foundation for Asia Pacific Education Scholarship, and election to membership in Phi Beta Kappa. This October, Cory will begin his studies under the Rhodes Scholarship in pursuit of a Master of Philosophy degree in Medical Anthropology at the University of Oxford. Read more about his educational career and accomplishments at http://www.news.pitt.edu/rhodes-scholar-cory-rodgers.

I arrived in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in early October 2011, armed with basic Swahili language skills and funding from the Samuel Huntington Public Service Award. My goal was to start a household poultry husbandry program to address food security and poverty among people living with HIV and AIDS. I established myself with Tumaini (which means “Hope” in Swahili), a small community-based organization composed of about 15 HIV-positive women. The group operates in Manzese, a low-income urban neighborhood where—until recently—sewage ran openly through the streets, and local gangs prevented people from walking safely at night. Security has improved markedly over the past five years, but poverty, poor sanitation, and high HIV occurrence persist.

My aim is to develop and facilitate a program through which Tumaini members can cooperatively raise chickens as a source of food and income. Achieving adequate nutritional intake is a challenge in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. This is particularly true for those infected with HIV, since their potent anti-retroviral cocktails, though necessary to delay the onset of AIDS, can be very harmful in the absence of adequate nutrition. With meat and eggs from our chickens, as well as with profits from selling these goods, Tumaini members can improve their food security and afford a more diverse diet. They will also be able to meet other financial demands such as rent payments, doctors’ bills, and children’s school fees.

I arrived with a detailed plan of action, but I’ve had to be flexible with the project due to unforeseen obstacles: Some members are sick every other week with malaria. Few people in the group own any land. For those who do, there is a threat of thieves breaking into the coop. Therefore, we decided to build one large coop for the entire group’s chickens in a secure location outside Manzese. Members take turns traveling to the site to carry out the necessary chores, such as collecting eggs. We’ve hired a man who lives nearby to keep watch over the site. Thus, we simultaneously solved the issues of security and landlessness, and only one member needs to be healthy at any given time to carry out the daily tasks.

Most of the innovative modifications to the project come from group members. For example, the group members found the project site, determined the best places to market their eggs, and discussed ways to deal with the dearth of water in the area (we’re installing large tanks which the government’s water agency will fill for a reasonable cost). I have been able to contribute different perspectives. For instance, members suggested that we use some of the eggs to cook local food items like samosas and fried bananas, which could then be sold for a higher return. I thought it was a great business idea, but I was concerned that it would add to the flood of deep-fried foods that predominate at Dar’s street-side cafes and vendors. I suggested we look for ways to use the eggs in more heart-healthy recipes. The group was receptive, but it will again be up to them to determine what might sell and what won’t. Something that a foreigner like myself can’t assess. I’m rooting for vegetable frittatas, but I might be the only customer for that.

Recently, I started another project teaching continued on page 2
The Value of Species in the UHC

We are pleased to announce that Edward McCord, Director of Programming and Special Projects, has become a published author thanks to Yale University Press. On April 24, his book, “The Value of Species,” will be available in bookstores throughout the country and marketed by Yale University Press both for academe and general audiences. The book is already available for advance orders at the Yale Press website and on Amazon.com, where prospective readers will find a promotional statement from the Press and four critical review endorsements. A lifelong naturalist, Ed has taught environmental studies at Pitt and directed the University Honors College summer field programs in Wyoming for many years. McCord, Director of Programming and Special Projects, has become a published author thanks to Yale University Press. On April 24, his book, “The Value of Species,” will be available in bookstores throughout the country and marketed by Yale University Press both for academe and general audiences. The book is already available for advance orders at the Yale Press website and on Amazon.com, where prospective readers will find a promotional statement from the Press and four critical review endorsements. A lifelong naturalist, Ed has taught environmental studies at Pitt and directed the University Honors College summer field programs in Wyoming for many years.

English classes with Nina Weaver, a 2011-2012 Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar who is studying education and development at the University of Dar es Salaam. In Saveli, the neighborhood where we live, we met some young people of approximately our age who wanted to learn English, so we started holding small evening practice sessions. As the class grew, and people of different ages and language levels joined, we wondered if this could be an opportunity to build a long-term program. We’re slowly moving toward a model in which the more advanced students can teach themselves to research and acquire language skills using available resources such as the internet, textbooks, and interactions with study abroad students from Europe and the US. The advanced students, in turn, are responsible for teaching the beginners’ class.

To help the advanced students capitalize on the available information technology, we’ve incorporated a computer-training segment into our classes. Sometimes we visit a local internet café to practice using basic software or searching the internet. I’ve realized how important these skills could be for Tumaini, as well. When a salesman told some group members that his breed lays up to 10 eggs per day, a quick internet fact-check helped to sort out fact from fallacy.

In December, I asked the president of the Tumaini support group if she had ever worked with academic researchers. When she gave me the contact information for a scholar from the UK, I was surprised to find that she was a lecturer at Oxford—not only that, but she will be teaching in my program: the MPhil in Medical Anthropology! I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to work with her, as well as with other renowned anthropological faculty, many of whom have authored influential articles that I read as an undergraduate. My “in-the-field” experiences from this year in Dar es Salaam will complement my studies as I build a solid theoretical foundation at Oxford.

Many of those new to community development, including myself, enter the field with the idea that community organizations serve as bastions of altruism in an increasingly individualistic world. However, my mentor, Pitt anthropologist Dr. Kathleen DeWalt, taught me to problematize the concept of “community.” While altruism sometimes motivates such cooperative efforts—and it can be beautiful to witness—in actuality most people join community organizations to improve their own lives and those of their families. They see cooperation as a way to achieve greater income, to deal with community-wide problems, or to make authorities listen. But there can be a great deal of tension within community groups when members debate resource allocations or the division of labor. I needed this experience in Tanzania to comprehend its complexity more thoroughly. I think that this will be one of the topics on which I focus at Oxford.

I applied to Oxford’s Medical Anthropology program to orient myself to the conception of health as a subjectively-assessed measure of wellbeing, as well as a practice that takes place in socially-, culturally-, and psychologically-layered contexts. I intend to bring this theoretical framework to my future medical studies, but I am also considering the possibility of a career in research and policy analysis. Realistically, I’ll probably incorporate aspects of all of these roles into my future work. Regardless of whether I lean more toward practice, policy, or academics, I want to continue to engage with people in cooperative groups as they work to improve the health and well-being of their communities.
Honors College Course News

by NATE HILBERG

UHC course offerings are ever-evolving. With this fact in mind, we like to provide occasional updates on our courses.

For many years, the UHC has offered a seminar for Chancellor’s Scholars. It began by being optional and was open to any student willing to put in the effort. It is a one credit seminar that affords students the opportunity to have fellowship with each other within the context of academic community. We have first-year students mixing with sophomores, junior and seniors. The recent history of this seminar is that it has been required of and restricted to Chancellor’s Scholars. In keeping with UHC goals to make opportunities maximally available, we have decided to open it again to any interested student.

In keeping with our goal of having students be knowledgeable across the disciplines, we typically read authors throughout the disciplinary spectrum. Stress on fundamental issues characterizes all UHC courses, often taking the form of engagement with primary literature. Like faculty, students are concerned about the quality of courses. They do not mind, and in fact enjoy, working hard especially when it is evident that the effort will be rewarded with an enhanced understanding of the material. Having engaged faculty is the key to achieving this level of quality: faculty for UHC courses teach harder because their students want to learn more.

In keeping with this spirit, the UHC has continued to add courses to our list of offerings. Next term new offerings include the following:

- ENGLIT 1360: Topics in 20th Century Literature
- ENGLIT 1610: Topics in Genre
- PSY 1057: Topics in Biological and Health Psychology: Tobacco in the 21st Century.

The UHC is always interested in increasing the number of high-quality courses. For faculty who would like to propose UHC courses, please see the following website:

http://www.honorscollege.pitt.edu/academics/courses/faculty-information.

The UHC is grateful for all faculty who dedicate themselves to enhancing the quality of undergraduate education.

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Fox Butterfield, former New York Times correspondent, discusses his witnessing one of the iconic images of the Vietnam War—a young girl, Kim Phuc, and her family being bathed in napalm. Cindy Skrzycki, senior lecturer, invited Butterfield to her class on Great Modern Journalists to talk about the effect the press had on the outcome of the Vietnam war.

“Stress on fundamental issues characterizes all UHC courses, often taking the form of engagement with primary literature.”

Summer Off-campus Research Awards by DAVE HORNYAK

Summer 2011 marked the first year for the University Honors College (UHC) Summer Off-Campus Research Awards. These awards are intended to support undergraduate scholarship under the direction of a faculty mentor. Last summer, twelve $5,000 awards were granted to provide students with funding to support travel for a minimum of four weeks to conduct an original research project off-campus during the summer. Applications were judged on the merits of the proposed project and degree of support from the faculty mentor. During the Fall Term, students presented their research findings at a symposium sponsored by the UHC.

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Fox Butterfield, former New York Times correspondent, discusses his witnessing one of the iconic images of the Vietnam War—a young girl, Kim Phuc, and her family being bathed in napalm. Cindy Skrzycki, senior lecturer, invited Butterfield to her class on Great Modern Journalists to talk about the effect the press had on the outcome of the Vietnam war.
Honors College Adds Brackenridge Hall to Housing Options

The newest addition to Honors Housing accommodations, Brackenridge Hall, will come online beginning in the Fall 2012 semester. The inaugural class of dedicated freshman and sophomore students, along with the four residential assistants, were recently selected and assigned to the building. Brackenridge will also have a full-time resident director to assist students with programming that develops intellectual and social community.

Brackenridge Hall is part of the Schenley Quadrangle, conveniently located in the center of the University of Pittsburgh campus. There are nine livable floors in the building, with 4- and 5-person suites on each floor; each suite features a MicroFridge and a private bathroom. There are also a few single and double rooms. Laundry facilities are located on the top floor along with a common room for studying and hosting building-wide events.

Consistent with the two current Honors residence halls, Sutherland West and Forbes-Craig, Brackenridge will strive to be an engaging community of motivated students from diverse social and academic backgrounds living and learning together in their own community.

Pizza and ... Proust?

The UHC continues to support unique academic projects that give students opportunities not found in the classroom. Toward that goal, last year the UHC initiated the reading group “Pizza and Proust.” The composite article below explains the project and allows students to reflect on their experiences.

Some works of literature are remarkably important yet nearly inaccessible. Marcel Proust’s semi-autobiographical novel À la recherche du temps perdu (translated as In Search of Lost Time or Remembrance of Things Past) is one of those works. Written between 1909 and 1922, this work’s pervasive influence on the modern novel is vast, yet the text’s physical size (six volumes containing nearly 1.5 million words) makes it impossible to read in any normal course. Forewarned with this knowledge, an intrepid and academically diverse group of 24 current students, recent graduates, and myself set out in May of 2010 to read an English translation of this work in its entirety. This voluminous meditation on time, memory, experience, writing, art, beauty, and relationships provided much fodder for discussion.

We met once a month. Almost everybody finished the first volume, which was an accomplishment in itself. We lost people along the way, but nine of us made it to the end of the book by the end of the summer of 2011.

One of Proust’s biggest themes was that of subjectivity, the way that experiences occur differently to different people, or differently in reality as opposed to in memory. In keeping with that theme, several of the group’s members provide their impressions of the reading experience below.

Of the nearly 1.5 million words Marcel Proust used to compose his epic journey into self-exploration, none resonates more with me than time. The world Proust lived in was just entering the modern era, and few aspects of modernity constituted a sharper break from the past than the changing meanings of time. As I read, for instance, Proust’s description of the changing meanings of communication as first the telegram, and then the telephone replaced letters, I could not help but wonder what Proust would have made of email and instant messaging. Time has become more precious than ever; perhaps no one understood this better than Proust, who was scrambling frantically to finish his masterpiece on his deathbed. In the end, it seems, time consumes even the best of us. Or perhaps not. It took our “little clan” over a year to read In Search of Lost Time, and if anything, Proust’s legacy is secured by his novel’s continual defiance of the time-compressing effects of the instant age. I enjoyed reading the book for this very reason. There are no quick answers with Proust, no shortcuts; one must take the time to understand him. I count every ignored email and text message while I read as a posthumous victory for Proust. Neither I, nor I suspect Proust, would label these encroachments on and of time and its effects on our lives as entirely “bad”; rather, as Proust says, the “infinity alone makes us take notice and learn, and enables us to analyze mechanisms of which otherwise we should know nothing.” By reading Proust, I learned a new way to appreciate time, not as a lifeless, abstract philosophical concept or fleeting moment of respite from the modern world, but as a window to the very essence of existence.

Andrew Ramey graduated from Pitt in 2009 with a B Phil, majored in history and philosophy, has a MA (2010) in history from Carnegie Mellon University and is studying for his PhD in history there.

Most of your life is spent doing one thing: absolutely nothing. After work and class, when you are walking around or driving or sleeping, you aren’t always with it. And no, I don’t think Angry Birds is exactly being with it.

In most books, you don’t see people in this mode of doing nothing—you see people engaged, even if it is only in their thoughts. Russians torment themselves about their murders, children question racism, and students swim in loneliness; characters have a driving thought to their thinking.

Not here, though. Reading Proust was like how we think in real life: in messy tangents during all those times between real events.

And unlike in most books, the thoughts are long, messy, and peripheral. They are contradictory and repetitive: Very often they aren’t that interesting. Most of the time they aren’t direct, and you don’t finish with a nice pro/con list. You end up more confused than before.
So did I like this? It wasn’t really satisfying the way similar books are. And the long eighty page asides on steeples were more effective than the strongest Ambien.

But I’ll call it a net positive. Moving past the bourgeois turn-of-the-century French witticisms, it was unique seeing somebody else’s thoughts during that time of our days when we disengage—all captured in real time.

Of course, from now on, I’ll probably stick to books that aren’t entirely about this, but I’m glad I did it once. Seeing another’s thoughts as they actually are is something everybody should try.

Nicholas Stamatakis will graduate in 2013 with majors in Industrial Engineering and Music

I was reading *In Search of Lost Time’s* Book Two at a time when the news, blogs, and just plain folks were all abuzz: Facebook changed its privacy policy (again). People were angry and scared: What are they doing with my photos? Why can’t I guard my past as easily anymore? Like many Facebook users, the narrator of *In Search of Lost Time* has elements of his past of which he might be ashamed if somebody dug it up on the internet. From the neglectful to the obsessively controlling, some of his interactions with other characters are nothing to be proud of. In short, he is a real jerk at times. In book two a painter, Elstir, advises our narrator that everybody—no matter how wise or accomplished—has elements of their past that might cause a twinge of regret or shame when recalled. And yet, Elstir assures us, we ought not to disavow these elements, nor wish that they never happened. The wisdom we have today is inextricably a product of those elements and others. How can we know that we have grown and gained wisdom if we do not remember those opinions we espoused, those people we admired, those people we hurt, those times we let ourselves be hurt, where our present self would not have done the same?

So I got to wondering if I could face a regretful element of my past in this way — confront those memories and say, “Yes, that is who I was, and it is not who I am nor what I am proud of,” grow a little, and carry on without a twinge of remorse. This does not mean being above reproach or apology, but being without shame. Initially, I fancied myself able to simply swear shame off like a bad habit, but I quickly learned that this is about as easy as ceasing to love somebody, or putting a cold stop on grief. Emotions are not so easily commanded. Their development or disappearance can take time and at best only asymptotically approach completeness, but continued reflection can help to guide them. Reading the entirety of *In Search of Lost Time* allowed me ample reflection on my relationship to my past, in part because I was following the (seven-book-long) development of the narrator’s perceptions of his own memory. Thank you, narrator—I’d be ashamed, too, if you had your past. But I’d try not to be.

**Billy Epting graduated from Pitt in 2009 with a degree in mechanical engineering and German language certificate and is studying for his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering at Carnegie Mellon University**

The summer after sophomore year brought with it the distinction of being my first summer away from home as well as the news from my advisor that, from here on out, I could take “only-science-courses-if-I-so-chose.” This was appealing, though it brought the legitimate concern that my serious, academic humanities muscles would atrophy. Not to worry! I received an email: there was to be a book club! We would read the mammoth novel *In Search of Lost Time/Remembrance of Things Past* by Marcel Proust in a little over a year’s time, and, in addition, would I like pizza? I had heard of this novel, this lengthy creation, which had changed the literary field and thus permitted loosely, plotted works onto shelves and into minds. My response was sent and subsequently I found myself reading by the light of a computer screen as it worked away, trying to tell me how much protein was in my 75ug sample.

Throughout the year of our book club, Proust was an interesting companion. This was an author who thought a lot and had a lot to say—and if it took 10,000 words to precisely convey his ideas, then so be it. The subordinate clauses were sometimes absurdly long and truly there were some half-page long sentences, but I appreciated the older, more complex writing style and the strange omniscient third person/first person narrative. Furthermore, whenever someone invests so heavily in an endeavor, something is bound to result. In this case, the world was given one of its longest contemplations on life, history, art, time, memory-theory, people, and hoity-toity Parisian society. Undoubtedly, I could include more topics because Proust threw out a lot of ideas in this considerable piece of literature. Our book club became fertile ground for discussion.

To quote Orson Scott Card “…a writer will inevitably reveal in his story the world he believes he lives in, and the participatory reader will forever after carry around in himself …a memory that was partly controlled by that other human being.” Having finished the six volumes of *In Search of Lost Time*, I can say that the thoughtful, widely ranging observations made by Marcel Proust are not a bad companion to carry around with me.

**Jessa Tunacao will graduate in May 2012 with a Neuroscience major and a Chemistry minor.**

I cannot resist the call to peculiar literary challenge. There are only two novels purported to be longer than *À la recherche du temps perdu (In search of lost time)*, but no one reads them. (One may not be surprised to learn they are also both French.) I am not positive that anyone really continued on page 11
25th Anniversary a Day to Remember

By NATE HILBERG

Editor’s note: the UHC acknowledges and is grateful to all of the speakers for their time and effort at the 25th anniversary celebration. The speakers noted in this article are those whose comments connected to the unplanned and emergent focus on intellectual community through extra breadth and depth in undergraduate education. For a list of all the speakers and their titles, please see the included program. To access these talks in their entirety, please follow the link: http://www.tinyurl.com/uhc25

Whatever it was Chancellor Nordenberg commenting on “the magnetic power of the UHC” or that our goal since the founding of the University has been and remains “the education of youth,” several themes emerged during the presentations celebrating the 25th anniversary of the University Honors College in conjunction with the 225th anniversary of the founding of the University of Pittsburgh. Some speakers reflected these themes by describing how the UHC cultivates community by fostering depth without narrowness. Others did so by describing the role of the UHC in promoting liberal education, the kind of education appropriate for a free person, a person liberated from the constraints of ignorance such as narrow-mindedness and lack of perspective.

Several speakers emphasized the importance of being deep without being narrow, including Colin Stewart, son of the late founding Dean of the UHC, Alec Stewart. Colin spoke movingly about coming to visit the Cathedral of Learning with his dad. Despite there being only a big table, bookshelves, and a coffee pot, when he arrived at the space that housed what was then the University Honors Program, he could not help but feel he was “some-place special.” What made the Honors Program (and then College) special was that as much as his father was interested in ideas, he was more interested in people who had ideas. Colin also offered a fresh perspective on the Brackenridge Undergraduate Research Fellowship, which was mentioned by many throughout the day as representing UHC ideals of extra breadth and depth in undergraduate education. The cross-fertilization of ideas across disciplines characteristic of the Brackenridge program should not be remarkable, Colin noted, since it is not as though specializing is the natural state of students. Expressing a related thought, Lew Jacobson, faculty member in the Department of Biological Science, spoke about his numerous experiences mentoring undergraduate researchers, also extolling the virtues of becoming deep but not narrow. For Colin, UHC ideals could perhaps be summed up in the idea that social interaction matters for intellectual development.

As the friends, alumni, and faculty associated with the UHC were introduced by current students, the theme of community kept recurring. Alex Zimmerman, a senior politics and philosophy major, shared a sentiment with the man he introduced. Both he and former Governor Richard Thornburgh praised the UHC for its inclusive and vibrant intellectual community, an attribute of the UHC echoed by many. The UHC promoted the kind of community where you could “try out an idea,” said Nathan Urban, Pitt alumnus, Rhodes Scholar, and current faculty member at Carnegie Mellon University. Because of its uniquely rich and diverse intellectual community, the UHC is “the place to connect,” said Nancy Pfennig, former Chancellor’s Scholar and current faculty member in the Statistics Department. Peter Koehler, former Dean of the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, noted that the UHC community could provide especially fertile ground for the cultivation of integrated and interdisciplinary instruction in the natural sciences. Promoting such depth, the UHC reflects the goal of the University, a community in which, former Provost James Maher reminded us, “everyone should be learning.” As he explained, whether a professor is doing research or a student is doing homework, learning is foremost among Pitt’s objectives.

Many of the speakers extolled the UHC for championing the value of critical thinking associated with liberal education. Alumna and current faculty member at Adelphi University, Nicole Rudolph, articulated how educational trends often reflect fundamental practices in fostering intellectual community in the classroom. She noted how UHC practice has long utilized what are now called “HIPs”: High Impact Practices. These include first year seminars, learning communities, undergraduate research, and experiential learning. Clarifying the idea of experiential learning, she reminded us that, “As a humanist, the classroom is my lab.” Often what occurs in the classroom, especially in the humanities, is experiential learning. Such experience fosters contemplative communities presumed to be crucial to a healthy democracy. Peter Machamer, faculty member in the Department of the History and Philosophy of Science, noted that the intellectual breadth promoted by the UHC helps its participants understand that knowledge is necessarily contextual and that learning is a lifelong occupation in coming to an understanding so that we might “ask the right questions.” Our ability to ask the right questions can be facilitated, noted Cindy Skrzynski, 2012 Tina and David Bellet Teaching...
Excellence Award winning English faculty member, by utilizing the UHC as a "catapult," launching us across disciplinary boundaries.

"Knowledge without criticism is impotent," said Christopher Stokum, exhibiting the kind of critical thinking that he learned from Paul Bové, faculty member in the English Department whom he was introducing. Professor Bové then offered salient observations, tying together the themes that emerged throughout the day. Echoing sentiments expressed by Provost Beeson, Bové stated that, "The Honors College is a sign and symbol of the university's values and an instrument for helping to realize them." Bové extolled the importance of promoting depth without narrowness by noting that the UHC maintains our "obligation to keep specialized instruction within a larger pedagogy." Such pedagogy transcends disciplinary boundaries and specialized training. "The Honors College, as Provost Beeson says, signals the university's values. The formation of leaders and citizens is central to the university's mission [and]... education is not professional training but the formation of humans...." Bové concluded aptly, noting that the UHC "is the place where education's values, the university's values, reside—not uniquely, but specially."

Videos of all presentations are available online at our website  http://www.tinyurl.com/uhc25

Edward Stricker, Dean of the University Honors College
Introduction

Mark Nordenberg, Chancellor of the University
Introduction by Nina Sabiak, A&S '13
Welcome

Colin Stewart, Managing Director, Bank of America
Introduction by Edward McCord, PhD, JD, Honors College Director of Programming and Special Projects and Director, Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law and Public Policy.
"Community College: Observations on Place, Culture, and Companionship in Pitt's Honors College"

Music Performance: The Honors College Quartet
Wil Sneed, ENGR '13
Jennifer Hess, A&S '15
Andrew Macgregor, ENGR '15
Eric Gratta, A&S '15

The Honorable Dick Thornburgh, Counsel, K&L Gates LLP
Introduction by Alex Zimmerman, A&S '12
"The Dick Thornburgh Forum for Law and Public Policy: A New Dimension in Honors College Studies"

Daniel Armanios, ENGR, A&S '07, PhD Candidate, Stanford University
Introduction by Andrea Richards, A&S '12
"Faces of Development"

Janelle Greenberg, Professor of History
Introduction by Jay Myerson, A&S '12
"The UHC Contribution to Undergraduate Research"

Nathan Urban, A&S '91, Head, Dept of Biological Sciences, Carnegie Mellon University
Introduction by Daniel Holohan, A&S '13
"Benefits of Diversity: Lessons from the Brain"

Nancy Pfennig, A&S '78, Senior Lecturer, Dept of Statistics
Introduction by Christian Fagan, A&S '12
"UHC Connections: An Elevator Speech"

Music Performance: Members of the Pitt Jazz Ensemble
Ben Clifton, A&S '15
Matt Volk, A&S '15
Glenn Strother, A&S '13
Will Middleton, A&S '13

Peter Koehler, Former Dean, Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences
Introduction by Micah Toll, ENGR '12
"Looking Ahead: Some Challenges for the UHC to Take Up Next"

Lewis Jacobson, Professor of Biological Sciences
Introduction by Siyu Xiao, A&S '14
"Undergraduate Research – The Sorcerer's Apprentice"

James Maher, Provost Emeritus
Introduction by Matthew Stoffregen, A&S '12
"Dreams for Pitt’s Future: Building on Pitt’s Recent Past"

Mary Ellen Callahan, A&S '90, Chief Privacy Officer and Chief Freedom of Information Act Officer, U.S. Dept of Homeland Security
Introduction by Megan Aull, A&S '12
"When Can You Expect Privacy? How Technology, Social Norms, and Case Law Impact Reasonable Expectations of Privacy"

Nicole Rudolph, A&S '90, Assistant Professor of French, Adelphi Univ.
Introduction by Kara Henderson, A&S '14
"Classroom Learning "Is" Experiential Learning"

Music Performance: Barbershop Quartet
Eric Markley, A&S '12
Tyler Kirkland, A&S '13
Josh Niznik, PHARM '15
Evan Moncuso, A&S '12

Kathy Humphrey, Vice Provost and Dean of Students
Introduction by Michael Deckebach, A&S '14
"Students: What They Haven’t Seen, But What They Do See"

Peter Machamer, Professor of History and Philosophy of Science
Introduction by James Simkins, A&S '13
"How is Learning Possible in a Complex World Where There Can Be No Absolutely Correct Answers and Our Questions Are All Simple-minded?"

Eric Shiner, A&S '94, Director, The Andy Warhol Museum
Introduction by Laura Dempsey, ENGR, A&S '12
"What Makes Our World Go Pop?"

N. John Cooper, Dean, Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences
Introduction by Mark Kozlowski, A&S '12
"Once More, With Feeling! Reflections on Teaching Passionately"

Paul Bové, Distinguished Professor of English
Introduction by Christopher Stokum, A&S '12
"Words, College, and the Educated Mind"

Music Performance: Members of the Pitt Men's Glee Club
Cindy Skrzypski, Senior Lecturer, Dept of English
Introduction by Benjamin Robinson, A&S '12
"The Honors College: The Classroom as Catapult"

Edward Stricker, Dean of the University Honors College
Closing
Dean’s Message

On February 25th, the University Honors College (UHC) celebrated the 25th anniversary of its founding in 1987. Because that day, 25 years ago, also marked the 200th anniversary of the founding of the University of Pittsburgh, we actually celebrated a double anniversary last month.

The mission of the UHC, then and now, was and is to provide a special education to undergraduate students through courses that are especially stimulating and challenging and through academic programs that are unusually broad and deep. The UHC provides these opportunities to all undergraduate students at Pitt. All students may not want them, and they all may not be able to handle them very well when they matriculate as freshmen. But they may seek such opportunities with time, as their interests expand and their abilities develop, and when they do the UHC is there for them, to encourage and promote their education.

In planning the celebratory event, we decided to represent these ideals of the UHC and of the University generally in a series of talks that would put on display our thoughts and values about delivering quality education to undergraduate students. Invited speakers were asked to give brief talks about issues that they find interesting. We saw those talks as spoken essays, or thoughtful reflections on subjects of their choosing.

Eighteen talks were given. The speakers included faculty, members of the University administration, and “alumni” of the UHC, by which I mean former undergraduate students at Pitt who had especially meaningful interactions with the UHC. The presence of the “alumni” added tremendously to the program. After all, it’s one thing for us to talk about the ideals of the UHC, but it’s a better thing to put on display the products of such an education.

Among the highlights of the day were the reflections of former Governor Dick Thornburgh, a friend of the UHC whose programs on campus enrich the academic environment, and Colin Stewart, son of Alec Stewart, the founding Dean of the UHC who served for 23 years before passing away two years ago. In a sense, the whole day was a tribute to Alec’s inspirational vision of quality education, the enormous positive impact he had on the lives of students and faculty here, and his continuing influence on our work within the Honors College.

I thought the talks were wonderful, individually and collectively. And the students who introduced the talks also were wonderful, as were the students who provided the four musical interludes that punctuated the series of talks.

We had been planning this event for months and then suddenly it was over. So, in retrospect, what did we accomplish? Primarily, we celebrated an anniversary that was worth celebrating, and in doing so we provided a fitting tribute to the UHC, to Alec Stewart and his family, and to the University. During the 25 years since its founding, there is little doubt that the UHC has contributed substantially to the emergence of the University of Pittsburgh as a prominent top-tier institution. It has done so in practical ways such as by helping to recruit superb undergraduate students who raise the average entrance scores, who win prestigious national scholarships, and who increase the University’s national ranking. Those are real benefits, but that’s not nearly the sum of it. The UHC also fosters the best educational standards and values while preparing students to become learners and thinkers for the rest of their lives, all while providing numerous opportunities for students and faculty members to do their best work.

I’m sure that the proceedings were a morale-booster to everyone who participated in them or who witnessed them. Despite the unwelcome reappearance of traditional winter weather, a good turnout of interested and curious folks was in attendance. When added to the large numbers who viewed the recorded proceedings subsequently (http://www.tinyurl.com/uhc25), the total audience amounted to a substantial crowd. Given the present uncertainty about how the proposed decrease in the state’s contribution to the University budget will be resolved, it would have been nice if Governor Corbett and his staff were at our celebration too, or could view the recordings, and thereby understand our commitment to quality education and appreciate what our students and “alumni” look and sound like. They are a very impressive and inspiring group.

Finally, I want to say something else. The most conspicuous goal of an anniversary celebration is to draw attention to past successes or to some singular event that had occurred. Thus, the 25th anniversary celebration was an occasion in which to reflect on where we came from, how we started, and what has been important to us. But it was also a time to rededicate ourselves, to think about what we want the UHC to be, what we want the University to be, and to resolve that the UHC will remain a great academic unit within a great university. But to remain great we have to continue to aspire to more quality and higher achievements than we have already attained. We cannot simply be content with our present status. In education as in life generally, either you are moving forward or you’re losing ground to someone else who is moving forward.

To put the matter in more concrete terms, we can begin to ask what we want to say about the UHC after another 25 years, at our 50th anniversary. And if that’s too long in the future to consider, how about some time sooner, such as next year at our 26th anniversary? In fact, we have many plans for new initiatives that build on the inherited strengths of the UHC by expanding the remarkable programs that have been functioning famously well for years, as well as by initiating new programs that will further enrich the educational experience both for undergraduate students and for faculty. I invite everyone to gauge our progress over the coming years and see how we are doing.
A symposium on the Future of Nuclear Power stands distinctly apart from others because of the attention that the Pittsburgh region commands as the birthplace of commercial and naval nuclear power and as a hub of energy industries. Moreover, Pittsburgh is uniquely postured by the Three Mile Island accident as a case study of nuclear crisis management under the administration of Governor Dick Thornburgh. The experience at Three Mile Island was thrust to the forefront again last March by the Fukushima Daiichi disaster. Thus, the month of March marked both the anniversary of the Fukushima Daiichi accident and the 33rd anniversary of the Three Mile Island accident. This alliance of factors positions the symposium to make a distinctive contribution to public awareness of critical policy issues through a series of tightly organized presentations involving leading experts in nuclear, fossil fuel, and passive energy sources across dimensions of engineering technology, public health, emergency management, insurance, and financing.

An impressive list of prominent figures are scheduled to participate in the symposium. Although this noteworthy event was scheduled to occur after our publication date for the Spring Newsletter, we would have been remiss not to call attention to it at this time. Interested readers can see the recorded proceedings in their entirety at the website listed above.

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**Spotlight on Student Research**

“Understanding the Conflict Between African American and Somali Bantu Refugee Youth In the Context of Pittsburgh Public Schools.” by Ryan Gayman

Pittsburgh was built on a diverse immigrant community that came from across the world to labor in our city’s steel mills and other industries. Today, neighborhoods with rich ethnic traditions reflect this proud immigrant heritage. However, Pittsburgh’s immigrant diversity is not confined to these historically ethnic neighborhoods. Richly diverse resettled refugee communities are the most recent immigrants to a city founded on immigrant labor and tradition. One such community is that of the Somali Bantu.

As an undergraduate student at Pitt, I have become familiar with the Somali Bantu resettled refugee population through a student-driven organization called Keep It Real (KIR). KIR was created in 2004 to address the lack of adequate services to aid in the education and acculturation of the newly arrived Somali Bantu youth. My exposure to the Somali Bantu primarily occurs within a Pittsburgh Public Middle School and in the homes where I tutor. Since I became involved with the Somali Bantu community, I have witnessed continual tension and physical violence between African American and Somali Bantu students.

This conflict is not isolated to Pittsburgh Public Schools. Newspaper articles suggest that this conflict between African Americans and African refugees is occurring in public schools across the US. However, current literature on this conflict lacks a deeper analysis. The goal of my research is to fill in this gap by exploring the relationships between the Somali Bantu and African Americans through the voices of students, parents, teachers, and staff at a particular local public school.

In my research, I argue that the Somali Bantu’s daily interactions with their African American peers in school are the strongest driver for determining what necessary behavior traits are needed to survive in America. Ultimately, these interactions acculturate the Somali Bantu to become black Americans in our racialized society. Whereas in the US blackness has a history of socioeconomic discrimination, in Somalia and in the subsequent refugee camps, blackness was not a racial category of major significance.

As the Somali Bantu emulate the behavior, speech, and dress of African Americans, the distrust between the two groups is exacerbated by negative perceptions from both communities. As these negative perceptions reinforce the distrust between these groups, physical and verbal abuses perpetuate the conflict between the Somali Bantu and African Americans. Additionally, when the Somali Bantu emulate the aggressive behaviors associated with African Americans, this fulfills prejudices that “blacks” are violent and aggressive, thus conflating the place of the Somali Bantu and African Americans in the perceived racialized hierarchy of the US.

Continued conflict within the African continent makes it very unlikely that the influx of African refugees like the Somali Bantu to primarily African American communities will slow or stop. Educators and communities, therefore, need a framework to understand the complexities of the conflict between African American and Somali Bantu so that a “working toolbox” can be built to address the complex facets of the issue effectively. Addressing this conflict helps us create more integrative spaces for students to learn and build relationships, regardless of their country of birth.

Ryan Gayman is majoring in anthropology and urban studies. He plans to graduate with a BPhil in August 2012.
The Honors College Welcomes New Staff

Peter Koehler joined UHC in February 2012 as Academic Assistant to Dean Stricker, interrupting his most recent career phase as Professor emeritus which began in September 2009. He came to the University of Pittsburgh in August 1986 as Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (recently renamed the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences). After stepping down as dean in 1998, Koehler devoted the next 11 years to the teaching phase of his career in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. He specialized in the introductory physics courses for scientists & engineers and for students in the life sciences. Jointly with colleagues from the departments of Chemistry and Neuroscience he also developed and taught a two-semester integrated introduction to the natural sciences for non-science majors. These

Nour Abdelghani joined the UHC staff in April as an administrative assistant to the Dean’s office. Born and raised in Alexandria, Egypt, Nour earned a B.S. from Pitt in 2010, majoring in psychology and English writing. As an undergraduate student, she edited Three Rivers Review Literary Magazine, a publication of the Honors College that focuses on student poetry and fiction. The experience brought her to the 35th floor and introduced her to the Honors College family. She says, “It is great to have a job that promotes a program that shaped my undergraduate experience in a way I could not have dreamt of.” While working, Nour hopes to attend graduate school in Psychology.

Angela Illig joined the UHC in February as a Health Professions Advisor. A Pennsylvania native and former Pitt employee, Angela was happy to return to the Pittsburgh area and to the University of Pittsburgh community. Angela most recently served as Coordinator for Career Education at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA, where she managed courses, curriculum, and instructors for a university-wide program offering senior transition courses called College to Graduate School and College to Career.

Angela returns to Pitt having worked previously in counselor and advisor roles with students preparing for professional careers in medicine and law. Angela served as Pre-Law Advisor and liberal arts career counselor at the University of Pittsburgh, shortly before becoming Assistant Director of Career Services at GSPIA. Prior to working at Pitt, Angela served students interested in medical and health-related careers as Academic Advisor to science majors within the College of Arts and Sciences at Syracuse University.

Angela enjoys aiding students in achieving academic and personal success, and she encourages students to maximize their potential, capitalizing upon great opportunities in college. She is a strong advocate for study abroad, and fondly remembers studying in York, England and working in Galway, Ireland during her college years. She continues to volunteer as a Local Coordinator in Pittsburgh for the Council for International Educational Exchange.

Angela received her bachelor’s degree in Communication/English/Business from Juniata College, a master’s degree in Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs Counseling from Syracuse University, and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Conflict Resolution from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. At Syracuse, Angela worked with the Lost Boys of Sudan and Young Mothers organizations and taught career and mediation courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Angela enjoys traveling, cooking, and entertaining. She and her fiancé Bob share a home with their 12 yr-old old beagle, Lucy, in the South Hills.

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teaching experiences led him quite naturally into pursuing Physics Education research during those years. In the Spring of 2003 Koehler sailed as Academic Dean with the Semester at Sea. Koehler grew up on a farm in post-war Germany where he learned to work with his hands from a young age, disassembling mechanical devices to find out how they worked. He came to the US right after completing high school in 1957. A part-time job in the Harvard cyclotron laboratory during his junior year was his first exposure to particle physics research, the specialty area which he explored for his dissertation at the University of Rochester. The period from 1967 to 1986 was largely devoted to research in experimental particle physics. Koehler participated in a series of experiments at ever increasing energy and complexity, first at Argonne National Laboratory and then at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (both in Illinois); he also worked on an experiment at the DESY accelerator during a sabbatical year in Hamburg, Germany. During his years at Fermilab he also held a number of administrative positions, including Head of the Research Division. During his retirement years Koehler became actively involved as a volunteer algebra tutor and computer skills (Excel) instructor for the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council. He and his wife Sue like to travel, visit with their grandchildren, and attend concerts and plays. In his spare time Koehler reads and spends time building or repairing things in his workshop.

Education: BA, Harvard College (1960); MS, George Washington University (1963); PhD, University of Rochester (1967). 

I felt two things on the completion of the final volume: first, a decidedly French ennui and second, a desire to start over again with the first word of the purported 1,500,000. I am certain of one thing about reading Proust and that is that it makes one a little bit more like the man himself. The narrator’s reasoning transcends time; he creates inextricable stacks of memories that, though they happened in the past, could very well have happened in the future as well. It is as if spatial reasoning has entirely taken the place of the temporal and it only through objects in space that we can think and reason. Now, sometimes when I remember a smell or a taste I fall into a continuum of Proustian time where everything is related and is both simultaneously desirable and contemptible: I smell applesauce—My mother makes applesauce—Rotten applesauce. Now I want applesauce. I want my mother’s applesauce. My mother’s applesauce is rotten applesauce. This is a Proustian stack; Proust has ruined applesauce.

The accomplishment of this work is not that it is a great novel, but rather that Proust has captured in so many pages one aspect of the human condition; this is the slight insanity that exists in the human mind that allows us to make leaps and bounds of logic and to operate under the assumption of paradoxical dualities.

This book does not end, as such; it extends this confusion of the human condition far beyond the final page. The words on the final page could be found in any of the volumes: there is nothing final about them. Proust draws one into his world and then never satisfies the curiosity he arouses. This is the cycle, and why I must read Proust again. It will be my own recherche du temps perdu.

Beth Cook is graduating in May with a BA in music and Slavic studies.

This Just In ...

The UHC is pleased to announce great news that came in just before our publication deadline.

Keely McCaskie, a sociology and environmental studies double major planning to graduate in 2013, won a Udall Scholarship for her demonstrated commitment to a career related to the environment.

Three Pitt students won Goldwater Scholarships. They are Naomi Latorraca, a molecular biology and history double major planning to graduate in 2013; Paras Minhas, a microbiology major planning to graduate in 2013; and Matthew Schaff, a neuroscience and economics double major planning to graduate in 2013. These scholarships are given to outstanding college students who intend to pursue careers in science, mathematics, or engineering.

Three Pitt students also had their proposals accepted by the Clinton Global Initiative. The winners are Lauren Hasek, a neuroscience and political science double major planning to graduate in 2014; Pooja Patel, a political science major planning to graduate in 2014; and Robert Snyder, a political science, economics, and philosophy triple major planning to graduate in 2014. They will travel to Washington, D.C. to meet President Clinton and other people participating in the Initiative. This event brings together students and national youth organizations to create and implement commitments to action across five Focus Areas: Education, Environment & Climate Change, Peace & Human Rights, Poverty Alleviation, and Public Health.

Further details on this exciting news will follow in our next newsletter.
The UHC is pleased to announce that Kelvin Luu was a recipient of the Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) Student of the Year award. The award recognizes meritorious leadership in extracurricular activities, superior scholarship, and general campus citizenship, with the emphasis on the development of the whole person, both as a member of the college community and as a prospective contributor to a better society.

Kelvin is a bioengineering major planning to graduate in 2012. He has been active in the UHC throughout his undergraduate career, including having been a resident assistant in honors housing for three years. ODK, founded in 1914 at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va., is an honorary society that recognizes students who maintain a high standard of leadership in collegiate activities. The award is given to students who possess and exhibit outstanding leadership qualities in service to the University.

Kelvin Luu Named Senior of the Year