UI expert: Flawed deposit insurance programs need reform

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

G
overnment insurance programs that safeguard bank deposits should be reformed to ease taxpayers’ undue stake in propping up the nation’s banking system, according to research by a UI finance professor.

George Pennacchi says the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., created during the Great Depression to halt bank runs, is supposed to protect savings through premiums paid by banks, but is effectively subsidized by the U.S. Treasury, putting tax dollars at too much risk.

“We have a system where when things get bad, taxpayers end up being forced to pay for bank failures, not just the FDIC,” Pennacchi said.

Proof that deposit insurance has grown overly generous has surfaced amid a global economic meltdown, he said, with investment firms such as Goldman Sachs and insurance giant Hartford Financial becoming bailed out to get access to insured deposits.

“One of the reasons why that’s so, and I think this has been a long-standing problem, is that government has tended to subsidize deposit insurance, sort of through a back door,” Pennacchi said. “The savings and loan crisis is an example. Instead of premiums paid by thrifts covering the losses, about $124 billion came from taxpayers.”

He proposes reforms in a research paper that will be presented this month at an economic conference sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative-leaning, Washington-based think tank that seeks to influence public policy.

One reform, Pennacchi said, is veering away from an approach that provides nearly unlimited government financial backing for large institutions such as Bear Stearns that are on the brink of failure. The government, he says, deems some banks “too big to fail,” with so many connections to other financial markets that failure could not create a domino effect.

But he says the problem can be addressed without leaving taxpayers on the hook. He proposes a central clearinghouse requiring banks to put up collateral in derivative trading that would cover potential losses if one of the parties fails.

“That would get rid of the too-big-to-fail problem and is done all the time in exchange-traded derivatives,” Pennacchi said. “If you trade on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, there’s a clearinghouse that requires both parties to put up collateral, so if one of them fails it doesn’t cause a loss for their trading partners.”

He says the FDIC should also reform premiums for deposit insurance that have historically been artificially low, covering only average losses and heightening risks if one of them fails so taxpayers end up being forced to pay for bank failures, not just the FDIC.

“If there’s any reform that would be easy to do it would be to create this premium swap, which would lead to more stable premiums for banks because they wouldn’t face high premiums in bad years when they’re least able to pay,” Pennacchi said. His research will appear in a book that will be published this year by the American Enterprise Institute. The book will focus on government guarantees programs ranging from the FDIC to crop and terrorism insurance.

Mix of Taiji and counseling benefits those with dementia

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

Those diagnosed with early stage dementia can slow their physical, mental and psychological decline by taking part in therapeutic programs that combine counseling, support groups, Taiji and qigong.

Researchers are discovering that multi-disciplinary approaches – those that address patients’ physical, mental and psychological dimensions – show the most promise in treating people with dementia, Burgener said.

“Not only can we help people have a higher quality of life, but these treatments support neuronal function and have the potential for neuroregeneration,” she said.

Earlier studies have shown that such programs can work as well as anti-dementia drugs, Burgener said.

Qigong and Taiji combine slow physical movements and meditation. Qigong is a series of integrated exercises believed to positively affect the mind, body and spirit. Taiji is a type of qigong that melds Chinese philosophy with martial and healing arts, said Yang Yang, a professor of kinesiology and community health and a co-author of the study. He is a master Taiji and qigong instructor whose research focuses on the efficacy of Taiji and qigong for older adults.

Cognitive behavioral therapy is a form of psychotherapy that seeks positive alternatives to the beliefs and behaviors that can undermine a person’s health and happiness. Research has shown that cognitive behavioral therapy and support groups aid those who struggle with depression and other physical or mental health problems.

Participants in the program benefited in a variety of ways. After 20 weeks, those in the treatment group improved in several measures of physical function, including balance and lower leg strength, while those in the comparison group did not. There also were positive cognitive and psychological effects, Burgener said.

“We saw gains in self-esteem in the treatment group and pretty severe declines in self-esteem in the comparison group,” she said. “Those in the treatment group also had sustained and slightly improved mental status scores, which meant we were impacting cognitive function.”

Both groups saw increases in depression. Burgener said, but the increase for those in the treatment group was a fraction of that seen in the comparison group.

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Be a mentor
UI faculty and staff members make long-term commitment to mentoring programs.

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About Obama
A new book by a UI scholar provides insight into the cultural forces that contributed to Barack Obama’s victory.

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For Faculty and Staff, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

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Mix of Taiji and counseling benefits those with dementia
Award-winning professor Bruce Smith named law dean

By Jan Dennis
Business Editor

Bruce P. Smith, a noted legal historian whose research has focused on Anglo-American criminal procedure in the research university. Under the new policy, students repeat courses for grade replacement, so that in other words, the senate: acceptable: (In addition) the senate that in addition to the extant course repeat policy, will allow undergraduate students to repeat courses: (It is) the senate's concern to improve their grade-point averages. If students repeat courses for grade replacement, both grades earned would appear on their transcripts but only the second grade would count toward their GPAs. Under the current policy, a student can repeat a course once, and that grade will be used to determine the student’s GPA. The new policy, which will take effect with the fall 2009 semester, will allow students to repeat a course only once.
On the Job Diane Arnold

You may not know her face, but you’ve probably heard Diane Arnold’s voice. A communications service specialist III for Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services, Arnold is the voice behind many of the university’s telecommunication messages, including the university voicemail system and many of the automated answering services on campus.

Born in St. Louis, Arnold grew up in Urbana and attended Urbana High School and Parkland College. Before joining the university, she worked as a supervisor at a local restaurant and as assistant manager in retail sales. She and her husband, Alan, who works in the composing room at the News-Gazette, own two cats, a domestic longhair and a Maxx – both adopted from the Champaign County Humane Society – and a West Highland white terrier. They reside in Savoy.

In 2005, Arnold was awarded the Chancellor’s Distinguished Staff Award.

How long have you worked at the university?

I started in the telecommunications business office on March 23, 1987, which coincidentally was the first day after the switch from Illinois Bell telephone service to the university having its own wired telephone service. I worked in the business office for a year and a half. Eventually, I went to the customer service side, and I’ve been here ever since.

Originally, the telecommunications office started out as its own department. Then, in 1989, we merged with the Computing Services Office to form the Computing and Communications Services Office, which became CITES in 2002.

One of your colleagues called you the “Queen of Voicemail.” Why is that?

(Laughs.) Well, technically I’m the voicemail administrator, but what precipitated that, unfortunately, is when we had a major voicemail outage last August. When our voicemail vendor went to restore the system, virtually all of the automated attendants – the voice greeting that a caller receives instead of a receptionist or secretary when they call Willard Airport, for example – were lost. We had 114 at the time of outage, and 69 of them were in my voice. I had to re-record almost all of them again. I came in on a Sunday afternoon and re-recorded all of them.

How long did it take you to re-record all of those outgoing messages?

I came in at 1 p.m. and left at about 10 p.m., and then I came in at 6:30 a.m. the following morning to finish up the few that were left.

It sounds like you went above and beyond the call of service those days.

I don’t consider it that, I just consider it a part of my job. I was more concerned that everything would be up and running properly come Monday morning. It needed to be done, so I didn’t think of it in those terms.

So, chances are if someone calls a UI number, it’s your voice on the other end?

Yes. If you call McKinley Health Center, Willard Airport, the Office of Admissions and Records or even the Illinois State Police in Pesotum, that’s my voice answering the call. I’m also on the paging system. So if you call a UI pager, you’ll hear me as well. Someone recently asked me if I do the recordings for the MTG buses – I don’t.

How did you get the job?

I don’t remember. (Laughs.) Years ago, when we first got voicemail and started doing auto-attendants, my boss used to be the voice for them. Then one day someone said that I should do it. I’ve been doing them ever since.

Beyond voicemail emergencies, what are your day-to-day duties like?

Well, I don’t really have a normal day because I do a lot of extra things. I process orders just like everyone in our office. I do consultations for clients either on the phone or on site when someone wants to move offices or hire new staff. I go out and meet with them to see what their requirements are, and then I work with them to meet their criteria. As well as doing a lot of reconciliation and training in our office, I also work with a lot of outside construction companies, retailers going into Illini Union, and Research Park occupants when they need service on campus.

What aspect of your job do you like the most?

That it’s never quite the same every day. I love solving our customers’ problems – figuring out the one little component that may not be working – and fixing it. I also like, when we get a new feature, figuring out how it works and how we can use it to help our clients.

What do you like to do off the job?

I like to read, and my husband and I like to travel and play with our pets. We’re big pet people. We also do stained glass, but that gets a little pricey. Mostly, we like to hang around at home with our critters and watch movies.

– Interview by Phil Ciciora, News Editor

Value of international math and science test questioned

By Phil Ciciora

Education Editor

Do no one’s surprise, Asian students outscored their American classmates on the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), a highly respected international assessment administered every four years to compare the mathematics and science test scores of fourth- and eighth-grade students from around the world. But according to a UI education professor, one standardized test should not be taken as a final verdict on the quality of math and science education in U.S. elementary schools.

TIMSS should be viewed with a huge grain of salt because there are a lot of ways to spin the data, positively and negatively,” said Sarah Lubinski, director of curriculum and instruction at the UI’s College of Education.

About one-seventh of the countries in the world participate in TIMSS, she said. “If you measured us against all the countries in the world, we would look better,” she said. “If you added in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test, it’s very possible we might look better, because we prepare kids for NAEP-like questions. So we can look better or worse depending on whom we compare ourselves to, and what test we use to test ourselves with.”

Lubinski said the recently released 2007 results, which showed an increase in math scores but only a slight uptick in science scores for U.S. students, are mostly good, though she doubts the value of such tests because “there’s really not that much evidence to say that doing well on TIMSS correlates with anything.”

“I really question whether these are the scores we want to worry about,” said Lubinski.

For most U.S. students, TIMSS is just another test in an ever-growing number of standardized tests they’re forced to take throughout the school year.

“In some sense, I’m surprised we do as well as we do,” Lubinski said. “If you look at the top-scoring Asian countries, they only have 100 percent school participation.”

In the U.S., we had among the lowest. In some countries it’s a point of national pride about what’s going on in TIMSS. Although Asian students are consistently the top-performing students on international math and science tests, Lubinski said that success on standardized tests comes at a price.

“Those kids are working very hard in classrooms, after their normal school day, because they have very high-stakes test that they take when they’re about 14 years old that determines the rest of their life,” she said. “There’s a loss of childhood when your child’s life revolves around cramming for a test, and some would argue a loss of creativity. I don’t think we want that for our kids.”

The most glaring piece of information that is gleaned from the reports, according to Lubinski, is the stark inequality between the richest and poorest schools is the U.S.

“The gap between the lowest- and highest-scoring schools in the U.S. is a much greater gap than the distance between the U.S. and the top-scoring countries,” she said. “To my mind, that suggests that President-elect Obama ought to worry more about what’s going on in Mississippi than competing with the Singapores of the world on one type of test. If we could bring those kids in our lowest-performing districts up to grade level, not only would we look a lot better on international tests, but more importantly, we would be a stronger, fairer country.”

Lubinski said that classroom time is the biggest factor in improving students’ science scores. But with the No Child Left Behind, we need to reevaluate how teachers into focusing almost exclusively on improving reading and math scores, science class, along with art, writing, recess and gym class, really ends up getting cut in favor of rote test preparation.

“I think if we just had more time for science in schools, we would see a difference in the scores,” she said, noting that science has recently been added to tests mandated by No Child Left Behind for fourth and seventh grade students.

“We might see a difference in science scores next time because of that,” she said, “but we’re still losing sight of the arts and of reading interesting books for the sake of reading reading books while shifting our focus almost exclusively to subjects that are testable. Yes, we can show results with that, which is a good thing. But when I go to teachers out in the field and they tell me they know they’re not teaching as well as they could because they have to stay on their pacing guide, then we’re not helping students.”

The disparity in the test scores between the wealthiest and the poorest school districts in the U.S. also throws into broad relief the lack of quality teachers in the communities where they’re needed most.

“We absolutely need better, more qualified teachers in our schools, and they need to be in the schools where they’re needed most – not in, say, the suburbs of Chicago, but in poor and rural communities,” she said. “Poorer districts have a hard time competing with wealthy districts in attracting and supporting the best teachers. If we’re serious about improving education in this country, we need to make these kids in the high-scoring schools have.”

On the Web

2007 TIMSS report http://nces.ed.gov/timss
A Minute With... Clark McPhail on the inauguration crowd

The crowd showing up Jan. 20 for the Obama inauguration could be the largest in U.S. history, according to some news reports. Estimates have run as high as 4 million. Clark McPhail, a professor emeritus of sociology at the UI, knows that size estimates before, during or after an event usually are "guesstimates," but often highly influential. "I've been following the Madding Crowd," he has been studying crowds and crowd behavior since the 1960s, and advising people who manage them. McPhail was interviewed by News Bureau social sciences editor Craig Chamberlain.

Just how many people can Washington accommodate for its inauguration day events? Up to 240,000 ticket holders will be seated on the West Lawn of the Capitol and on the East Front. The remainder of the National Mall extending west from the Capitol to the Washington Monument can seat an additional 450,000 people. One-third of the Washington Monument grounds face the Capitol; the remaining two-thirds, known as "The West Front," can accommodate 1.2 million people. Areas in these regions will be seen and heard the inauguration ceremony and parade on multiple television screens and by crowds of loudspeakers. The available sidewalks bordering the Pennsylvania Avenue parade route can accommodate 27,000 people. With all those taken into account – 249,000 people seated and an estimated 708,000 standing – we get a total of 957,000 people attending. The capacity of the Lincoln Memorial grounds could ac- commodate an additional 250,000 people standing and push the total estimated to 207,000, or a mass density of 5 square feet per standing person. If you increase the density to 2.5 square feet per person, you come up with 2,115,000. However, it is unlikely that this many people could safely or comfort- ably remain in such limited space for the several hours prior to and throughout the inaugural ceremony and the parade in what will likely be very chilly weather.

The second factor is the vantage point for those political activists or public officials who have worked diligently to organize and participate in the event. Bigger is better in our culture, and thus organizers are likely to exaggerate gathering size as evidence of its significance.

The third factor is the point of view from which observers see and estimate the distribution, density and size of the gathering. Estimates tend to be more densely packed at the front and middle than at the back or sides. Estimates made from the front of the gathering and from a vantage point at or near ground level are victim to the perceptual illusion that the entire gathering is as densely packed as it is at the front. This leads to the erroneous conclusion that the gathering is much larger than it more accurately appears when viewed from the back. Organ- izers on a stage, looking at the gathering spread out before them, often fall victim to this illusion. So inexperienced police ob- servers or with Facilities and the U.S. Park Po- lice take digital photos from their helicopter flying directly above gatherings.

To often picture a crowd as a collection of individuals all thinking or acting alike, capable of being easily swayed by a dynamic speaker, or "turning ugly" for reasons you can't re- search, what's wrong with that picture? First, the word "crowd" implies a uniformity of individual members, their abilities and their actions that's contrary to the facts. Many will come to this inauguration to hear the president, others to hear the vice president or advocate on multiple issues, others to see souvenirs, food and beverages, others to record and report, still others to protect. People in second- and third-row seats may not get the same views, listen to the same speakers, or, for that reason, be as engaged in the event. In other words, to use the terminology of individuals all thinking or acting alike is an illusion. Those concepts are long-standing myths created and perpetuated by arm-chair psychologists and sociologists who have not been to these events. The myopic vision of the individual as a self-organizing and self- directing actor. The assumptions of those who have worked diligently to organize and participate in the event. Bigger is better in our culture, and thus organizers are likely to exaggerate gathering size as evidence of its significance.

The second factor is the vantage point. A Minute With...™ is provided by the UI News Bureau as a venue for Illinois faculty experts to comment on current topics in the news. To view archived interviews, go to http://linnus.gov/a/minutewithth.htm.
Students and adults benefit from local mentoring programs

By Sharita Forrest
Assistant Editor

I t takes a village to raise a child, ac-

according to an African proverb. And

mentoring programs in local schools are

recruiting villagers to help do that.

The Rev. Harold Davis, a former elemen-
tary school teacher, founded the TALKS mentoring program 14 years ago after hear-
ing “there was a massive need.” Davis re-
cruited several friends to mentor and wrote

letter

"at risk" academically and/or behavior-
social skills, one average student who might
cels academically but may be shy or lack

each group comprising one child who ex-
vive.”

all the problems that adults have. We give

adult problems while (the children) are

cared life issues and sought to build lead-
ership skills.

TALKS – Transferring a Little Knowl-
edge Systematically – is used in 19 area

and is being replicated in institu-
tions around the country. TALKS currently

has 60 adults mentoring in local schools

and has separate curricula for boys and

girls; the curricula was written by Ol-

io Watts Davis, a professor in the school

of Music who also is the Rev. Davis’ spouse.

James Hannum, a professor of educa-
tional psychology in the College of Educa-
ducated psychology in the College of Educa-

tory psychology in the College of Educa-

36 years and now is in his fourth year as a TALKS mentor, although three of the students he mentored initially have since moved out of the district and other boys have joined his group.

Liking, Greg Moen, an electrical

member of the senate, he rallied for

amendment – which established the severe

camens to agree on the exact

as involved with the senate, he rallied for

mentors is important to life success. That’s why

mentors are so important in the lives of stu-
dents.”

Most children enter the program as

fourth-, fifth- or sixth-graders, and mentors are encouraged to make a long-term com-
immitment, staying with their students for at

least two or three years. Students meet with

their mentors for an hour each week dur-
ing school hours and engage in activities of

their choice.

“I think it’s fun,” said Moen, who is the

father of three girls and always has enjoyed

working with young people. “There are
days when it’s tougher, but it’s never like

I don’t want to go. It’s not instant gratifica-
tion. It’s like planting a tree; you might not

be around to see the fruits of your labor.”

Finding common ground, showing inter-
est in the student without being intrusive, and

and finding activities of mutual enjoyment

be a challenge at first for mentors, who

may know little about the students’ back-
grounds, interests or the academic and per-
sonal obstacles they face. Hannum initially

relied on the TALKS readings and teaching

format to work with his students but found that

mixing in other activities improved his

mentoring. He and his two students, Evan

and John, often spend time in the game room

at Urbana Middle School, playing Ping-

Pong or board games, shooting baskets in

the gym or tossing a football outside.

“I think what makes a difference is if you
don’t try to have too direct a conversation with

these boys, they’re much more will-
ing to talk,” Hannum said. “It’s easier to

mentors. Page 7

Mathematician continues research, travel during retirement

Editor’s note: This is the second instalment of a two-part series about five faculty members who were recently honored by the department of math-
ematics last year. The department is minus

more than 200 years’ experience following the

department of mathematics last year. The depart-

ment is minus

ments, “So I started pushing

Loeb said that between his thesis and reviewing papers for the

American Mathematical Society, Loeb, who retired last August after 40 years on the UI faculty, is still active on

campus. For the spring semester 2009 he is

teaching a graduate course in real analysis, working with a graduate student on the stu-
dent’s thesis, and reviewing papers for the

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Online racial discrimination linked to depression in teens

By Phil Ciciora
Social Work Editor

I n the early days of the Internet, some scholars once predicted a lessening of race-related victimization and discrimination online. The abundance of research on this topic in online interactions thanks to the anonymity and race-neutral nature of the medium. But according to a new study published by a UI professor who studies race and the Internet, adolescents are increasingly experiencing both individual and vicarious discrimination online, which in turn triggers stress, depression and anxiety.

Brendesha Tynes, a professor of educational psychology and of African American studies at the University of Illinois, suggested that adolescents are increasingly experiencing race-related victimization not only as an Internet safety issue, but also as a public health concern for parents.

“The whole goal of this study was to see if there are associations between race-related victimization and offline race-based discrimination and its effects on adolescent emotional well-being.”

Tynes, along with co-authors Michael T. Giang, David R. Williams and Geneene N. Thompson, published her findings in an article titled “Online Racial Discrimination and Psychological Adjustment Among Adolescents” in the December 2008 issue of the Journal of Adolescent Health.

For the study, Tynes created a measure for race-related online victimization. She noted that while previous studies suggested that American adolescents, along with 71 percent of white and 67 percent of multiracial/other adolescents, experienced vicarious racial discrimination online at least once, only 24 percent of African-American adolescents and 20 percent of white and 42 percent of multiracial/other adolescents also reported experiencing individual discrimination directed at them while online, according to the published findings.

Tynes’ research indicated that, regardless of a victim’s racial background, increased exposure to online racial discrimination was significantly related to increased depression; females were found to experience significantly more depression and anxiety than males. Victimization occurred in the usual online mediums — instant messaging, discussion forums, online games and social networking sites — and in text messages received by the victim.

Tynes’ findings depart from previous research in the field, which had shown discrimination was emotionally and physically harmful to residents of color. The variance in her findings could be attributed to the sample size and measures used in her study, she said, since the discrimination gap between whites and blacks is profoundly different, both online and offline.

“More research is needed to determine the impact of those differences,” Tynes said.

Tynes said that another disturbing finding in her research was discovering online hate groups actively who try to recruit new members by creating child-friendly Web sites.

“There are white power groups who, for example, lure teens and kids by creating Web sites that are advertised as being for kids,” she said, citing the Stormfront “White Pride For Kids” (sic) Web site.

That site differs from the main site in that it’s only tinged with negative language, not outright racist language, she said. “It’s masked racism that’s easy to switch to ents unsuspecting kids.”

While the Internet can be seen as an open marketplace for ideas, Tynes said it also can function as an echo chamber of false information, noting that some children and Web sites intended for hate groups are created as phony information clearinghouses about historical figures linked to the Martin Luther King and Barack Obama or historical events such as the Holocaust. These Web sites encourage children to propagate historical canards in their research papers.

As part of their recruiting efforts, hate-mongers will not only congregate in Web sites and disperse in forums related to their own ethnic groups, but they also will lurk in forums created for a specific ethnic group, like the forum on “troll” (deliberately post a taunting, usually inventive-laden message for the sole intention of causing chaos) those messages.

“I saw many examples of trolls going to sites devoted to a specific ethnic group and deliberately post taunting and inflammatory messages to the site,” she said.

Despite all the dangers that lurk online, Tynes still thinks it’s important for adolescents to spend time on the Internet.

“When we’re not participating in the sites that the kids at your school are participating in,” she said, “you can run the risk of feeling isolated from your peers. In a lot of ways, the Internet is sort of an informal classroom for teens.”

Tynes is not a proponent of strict parental monitoring or restricting teens from exploring the Internet.

For the study, Tynes created a measure for race-related online victimization, which in turn triggers stress, depression and anxiety.

‘Coaches’ help reduce number of babies exposed to drugs

By Shantia Forrest
Social Work Editor

A bout 11 percent of the 4 million babies born in the U.S. each year have been exposed to alcohol or illegal drugs in the womb, according to a June 2006 report by the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare. If removed from the home by a child protection agency, these children tend to remain in foster care longer, and chances are very low that they will be reunited with their parents.

However, a groundbreaking study led by Joseph P. Ryan, a faculty member in the School of Social Work at the UI, indicates that recovery coaches can significantly reduce the number of substance-exposed births as well as help reunite substance-involved families, saving state child-welfare systems millions of dollars in foster-care and other placement costs.

The study, part of a larger collaboration among the UI, the Department of Children and Family Services, and Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, appeared in the journal Child Abuse and Neglect.

The study included 245 cases of drug-affected newborns divided between an experimental and a control group during the five-year study. Mothers assigned to the experimental group had given birth to at least one substance-exposed infant, whereas mothers assigned to the control group during the study had given birth to at least one substance-exposed infant in the five-year period.

Although several characteristics — age, race, and cocaine or heroin use among the mothers were held constant — the highest risk factor for giving birth to a substance-exposed infant, mothers who have at least one prior substance-exposed infant are significantly more likely to deliver additional substance-exposed infants.

The study made use of an experimental design where two groups were more likely to experience race-related victimization online, it can serve as a buffer to help them feel a sense of racial pride and a positive racial identity.

Reunification rates for substance-involved families typically are the lowest for all families involved with the child-welfare system. “One reason that they don’t achieve reunification is that they are unable to dress the core problem of substance abuse, and that really presents an obstacle toward judges making decisions to have children return home,” Ryan said. “A recovery coach increases the reunification rate by about 6 percent, which is a small but significant gain.”

Often, substance-involved families are grappling with several major problems such as mental illness, inadequate housing, domestic violence and unemployment.

“No single intervention is going to solve the complex array of problems that these families face. But if we chip away at it — increase reunification rates, close out foster-care placements at a higher rate, decrease the likelihood of additional substance-exposed infants — it produces gains for families and for the state.”

It is important to note that one obstacle to identifying substance exposure at birth is the lack of federal or state laws that mandate testing newborns for drug exposure. A recent nationwide study found that there are no standardized testing practices or criteria for testing infants in most hospitals, and the decision to test a newborn is left to the discretion of the attending physician or the hospital.

“Co-authors of the study, which appeared in the November issue of the journal, were professor Christopher R. Larrson, research specialist Pedro Hernandez and graduate student Jun Sung Hong at the UI, and Sam Choi, a postdoctoral scholar in the School of Social Service of Administration at the University of Chicago.”

Substance abuse services

Social work professor Joe Ryan says recovery coaches can significantly reduce the number of substance-exposed births as well as help reunite substance-involved families, saving state child-welfare systems millions of dollars in foster-care and other placement costs.
talk with them when they’re shooting bas-
kets than it is to sit across the table from
them and say, ‘How’s your day going?’ and
‘What’s happening in your life?’ I find it
best to sort of weave in an interest in them
without appearing too blunt or direct about
it.

“It’s nice having a relationship with
them where you don’t have to be their
teacher, their parent or their disciplinarian.
They’ve gotten to know me, and I’ve got-
ten to know them, and the relationship is a
pleasant one.”

Mentoring the boys has afforded Han-
num the opportunity to be involved with
youth and watch them grow and develop,
which he’s missed since his own children
became adults.

A “quiet, very courteous” boy, Cortez
was a little hard to get to know at first,
Moen said. But they shared an interest in
sports and were able to connect through
that, sometimes shooting hoops or tossing
a football around during their weekly ses-
sions.

Moen, whose hobbies include working
with stained glass, shared his skills with
Cortez and helped him create a stained-
glass window hanging for Cortez’s mother
as a Christmas gift.

Developing relationship  Evan Brown, left, and John Gream, students at Urbana
Middle School, meet weekly with their mentor, James Hannum. When not discussing
the readings and lessons that are integral to the TALKS program, Hannum and his
students play games in the school’s game room, shoot baskets in the gym or play
football outdoors.
Athletes gain increased agility, dexterity through dance class

By Melissa Mitchell
News Bureau Staff Writer

When Illinois athletes Adam Davis, Mikle LeShourie, Whitney Merчис and Troy Pollard signed up to take Kate Kuper’s Dance 100 class, they knew they would probably learn to bust a few new moves.

What they didn’t know was that by the end of the semester, Kuper’s curriculum might end up boosting their writing skills as well.

Kuper, an adjunct professor of dance with many years of community-based experience teaching dancers of all ages, is the instructor for the only course section of this Freshman Discovery course reserved for students in the university’s Transition Program. Discovery courses, limited to 20 or fewer students, are intended to provide new students a taste of what’s to come in lower-level courses, to have the potential to excite at the university.

After her experience last year teaching Dance 100 for the first time, Kuper realized that many of her incoming freshmen could benefit not only from the physical exercises on the dance floor, but also from writing exercises.

“That’s my emphasis because that’s where they’re weakest (academically),” she said. “This year, it’s less reading, more writing.

Dance 100 classes meet twice a week. The writing and other intellectives and Troy Pollard takes place in the lecture session, in which students receive an introduction to the history of modern dance. For the second “lab” Monday morning, less-fitting clothes and kick off their shoes in a dance studio for some hands-on/feet-on training.

Earlier in the fall, in a basement studio in the Kranert Center for the Performing Arts, Kuper – dressed in capri pants and heels and kicking her feet really fast, sometimes in a pair – was shouting out moves to lines of dancers taking turns moving up and down the floor.

“Reach into the space ... get into the flow, students,” she would say. “REACH! EXPLODE! EXPLODE! EXPLODE!” The students moved gracefully forward, backward and side-to-side before falling into the air with arms and legs outstretched in their own interpretation of Kuper’s final directive.

No small feat for the most coordinated feet at 10 o’clock in the morning.

And yet, most of the 19 class members participating were not only gung with the moves, they were clearly finding their groove thing.

Perhaps even more surprising was the fact that some of the most unathletic and free-spirited movers were a couple of the athletes – Pollard, a running back on the football team, from Jacksonville, Fla., and Davis, a catcher on the baseball team, from Bloomington, Ill.

“Troy is interested, hungry to move, adaptable physically,” Kuper said. “I suspect he is used to memorizing patterns with his feet anyway.”

It turns out, Kuper was right-on with her observation.

“When I’m working my feet really fast, sometimes it’ll look like I’m doing football moves,” he said. “Dance is helping me with my flexibility and being nimble.” Pollard signed on for the class because he had heard some of the players took it last year and enjoyed the experience.

“I thought I’d take it and see what all the big fuss was about,” he said.

Davis also took the class at the recommendation of teammates.

“Being a catcher, I need good foot work, and dance helps me with my feet work,” he said.

Davis’ moves haven’t been lost on his teacher.

“He’s very comfortable with his body, and he’s not afraid to try things,” Kuper said.

For other athletes, the transition from artificial turf to dance floor has been more challenging.

“I’m kind of shy dancing in front of other people,” said Mercчис, a defensive lineman from Akron, Ohio. “He was reluctant because he doesn’t like to be laughed at. But he soon learned that’s not tolerated in Kuper’s class.

“I try not to ever put a person in a position where they’re feeling embarrassed,” she said. “My philosophy is to create an environment where it’s safe to solve problems courageously.”

Sophomore Matt Eller, a kicker on the football team from Jacksonville, Fla., who took the class last year with dance coordinator Philip Johnston, believes the dance experience helped him on the field.

“Now I work out and don’t bounce around as much,” he said. “I watched these guys. By then, most of the inhibitions are gone.

Dance 100 is to create and perform their own dance. By then, most of the inhibitions are gone.

But they’re both about highly coordinated movement,” he said.

“If you watch ‘Dancing With the Stars,’” he said, “among those who are most successful are football players: Emmitt Smith, Jerry Rice, Jason Taylor, Warren Sapp.”

Hernandez said when the topic came up, most people – including the athletes – may ask, “Are you kidding me?”

But they’re both about highly coordinated movement,” he said.

Political science major Anthony Davis, a former Fighting Illini football coach, artificial turf and using the space around them,” Kuper said. “His pedagogical technique is grounded in ‘developmental work: crawling, rolling, tumbling – everything that involves the human body in motion.’

Since he began teaching and administering the course, Johnston said athletes in his classes have included former UI basketball player Sergio McClain and 2008 U.S. Olympic gymnastics team member and bronze medal winner Justin Spring.

“With non-majors, I have evolved a way of working with dance and using the space around them,” Johnston said. “My instructional technique is grounded in ‘developmental work: crawling, rolling, tumbling – everything that involves the human body in motion.’ And often, the exercises are executed with partners.

“In one class, I had a footballer who was 6 feet 6 inches tall – a giant of a lad, who was partnered with the most petite woman in the class. He treated her like porcelain. He was really a gentle giant.”

Johnston said he’ll never forget another class, which included an unusually agile trio of dance newbies.

“On the first day, they’re rolling and crawling,” he said. “I watched these guys and it was extraordinary. They were like lizards on the floor.

Later, when the students invited Johnston to attend their gymnastics meet, their extraordinary, reptilian moves on the first day of class suddenly made sense.

The final assignment for students in Dance 100 is to create and perform their own dance. By then, most of the inhibitions they come into the experience with usually are gone.

That’s a stark contrast to how many start out on the first day of class, when Johnston tells them they stand a good chance of getting an A if they fulfill the requirements outlined in the syllabus. Many, he said, protest: “But I’m not a dancer.”

However, Johnston isn’t so concerned about whether a student can execute a perfect plié or become a master of fancy footwork. He treats his Dance 100 students like they’re part of a university-level community.

“When I see people participating, if you go for it, and are not standing in the corner, you’ve done it.”

ON THE WEB
Dance 100 video
illinois.edu/goto/danceclass/
By Jarbi Asim

By James E. Kloeppel

By Craig Chamberlain

New polymer coatings prevent corrosion, even when scratched

The new coatings are designed to better protect materials from the effects of environmental exposure. Applications range from automotive paints and marine varnishes to the thick, rubbery coatings on patio furniture and park benches.

“Starting from our earlier work on self-healing materials at the UI, we have now created self-healing coatings that automatically repair themselves and prevent corrosion of the underlying substrate,” said Paul Braun, a University Scholar and professor of materials science and engineering. Braun is corresponding author of a paper accepted for publication in the journal Advanced Materials, and posted on its Web site.

To make self-repairing coatings, the researchers first encapsulate a catalyst into spheres less than 100 microns in diameter (a micron is 1 millionth of a meter). They also encapsulate a healing agent into similarly sized microcapsules. The microcapsules are then dispersed within the desired coating material and applied to the substrate.

“By encapsulating both the catalyst and the healing agent, we have created a dual capsule system that can be added to virtually any liquid coating material,” said Braun, who also is affiliated with the university’s Beckman Institute, Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory, department of chemistry, and Micro and Nanotechnology Laboratory.

When the coating is scratched, some of the capsules break open, spilling their contents into the damaged region. The catalyst and healing agent react, repairing the damage within minutes or hours, depending upon environmental conditions.

The performance of the self-healing coating system was evaluated through corrosion testing of damaged and healed coated steel samples compared to control samples that contained no healing agents in the coating. Reproducible damage was induced by scratching through the 100-micron-thick polymer coating and into the steel substrate using a razor blade. The samples were then immersed in a salt solution and compared over time.

The control samples corroded within 24 hours and exhibited extensive rust formation, most prevalent in the scratched regions, but also extending across the substrate surface, the researchers report. In dramatic contrast, the self-healing samples showed no visible evidence of corrosion even after 120 hours of exposure.

“Our dual capsule healing system offers a general approach to self-healing coatings that operates across a broad spectrum of coating chemistries,” Braun said. “The microcapsule motif also provides a delivery mechanism for corrosion inhibitors, antimicrobial agents and other functional chemicals.”

With Braun, the paper’s co-authors are UI aerospace engineering professor and Beckman researcher Scott White, and former Beckman and materials science graduate student Soo Hyoun Cho. A company formed by Braun, White and other UI researchers is exploring commercialization of the self-healing coatings technology.

The work was funded by Northrop Grumman Ship Systems, the U.S. Air Force Office of Scientific Research, and the Beckman Institute.

Polymer coatings Illinois researchers Paul Braun, right, and Scott White have created self-healing coatings that automatically repair themselves and prevent corrosion of the underlying substrate.

Scholar’s book examines cultural forces behind Obama victory

By Jarbi Asim

Jan. 15, 2009

For the election of President Barack Obama, Jabari Asim argues in his book “What Obama Means,” that the Obama victory was the result of a “harmonic convergence” of trends in media and market forces, as well as in the electorate and in black leadership, that made the Obama victory possible.

The younger voters who broke heavily for Obama in the election “grew up watching Will Smith movies, watching the Cosbys on television, cheering for black baseball, football, basketball players, having black posters on their walls,” Asim said.

Advertising, as well, “has really advanced the image of African Americans,” he said. Television commercials have become “a bastion of diversity.”

Negative portrayals of blacks in the media are still widespread, Asim said, but often overlooked are the numerous positive portrayals that are out there at the same time. “And white people have demonstrated that they are judicious enough to know the difference,” he said, despite long-held black fears to the contrary.

His prime example, perhaps, is that of “gangsta” rappers often decried for their violent and misogynistic lyrics, but who sell most of their albums to white teenage boys, pitch products, and are “very welcome in America’s living rooms.” By comparison, he argues, “how threatening can a black guy with a Harvard Law School accent and Stiltsk Obama Book”.

Ad removed for online version
Consumer doubts can aid rebranding efforts

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

ost consumers crave a clear understanding of brand images, making them more receptive to new marketing messages if anything clouds their vision of companies or products, according to a new study by a UI marketing expert.

Sharon Shavitt says the findings are good news for companies seeking to retool the image of seemingly ingrained brands, such as McDonald’s efforts to promote salads and other healthful menu options.

“Anything that makes it hard to think can create a sense of difficulty that can extend to our perceived understanding of the brand,” Shavitt said. “You could be listening to a radio ad in the car while horns are honking and you’re watching street signs to make a turn.”

Marketers also can plant a sense of struggle, she said, such as contests or online surveys with new information that runs counter to a brand’s traditional image. McDonald’s, one of the brands included in the study, could instill doubt by asking consumers how many salad varieties are on menus or the sodium content of its burgers and fries, she said.

“I think you can lead people to doubt their sense of understanding and in so doing be more open to the ideas you want them to embrace,” Shavitt said. “So I think McDonald’s can reinvent itself, as can other brands. And this shows it might not be as difficult as once thought.”

Shavitt says some findings may appear surprising, such as consumers adopting a more favorable view of brands despite confronting seemingly negative experiences such as furrowed brows and blurry print.

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Office of the Provost hosts 2009 Annual Faculty Retreat on Feb. 6

"In the 21st century, the world itself is setting very high expectations for knowledge and skill ... educators and employers have begun to reach similar conclusions -- an emerging consensus -- about the kinds of learning Americans need from college." -- "Liberal Education and America’s Promise" (LEAP), by the National Leadership Council (established by the Association for American Colleges and Universities).

The 2009 Annual Faculty Retreat will take place Feb. 6 in Illini Union rooms A and B focusing on the theme of "Preparing Students for the Global Century," presenters and participants will begin answering the question of what we are doing to prepare Illinois graduates for the challenges of an increasingly complex and diverse world. The retreat will draw upon the findings about the "Essential Learning Outcomes" and "Principles of Excellence" from the LEAP report.

The event brings faculty members from across campus to share and explore best practices and innovations. Joanne Munroe, a Fullbright scholar and cultural consumer and family economics educator based in Edwardsville, Illinois, is the principal investigator. Items #4050-4053 show the number of thesis students supervised in a department who have a home department elsewhere. Both of these items were developed in an effort to support and measure growing interdisciplinary research and teaching efforts.

The new profile is currently considered to be in draft mode because a few colleges have yet to complete the data entry for their metrics and targets as well as a few administrative units that have yet to submit their data. There are plans to develop additional graphs in upcoming weeks in support of the campus strategic planning initiative.

As part of the Senior Academic Leadership development series hosted by Training for Business Professionals, three hands-on "Data Savvy Department Head" sessions are being offered to help administrators learn how to use the Campus Profile and other Web resources provided by the division. Reservations can be made at http://illinois.edu/goto/cpseminars.

For more information, contact Carol J. Livingstone, 333-3851 or livngstn@illinois.edu.

To register, go to www.conferences.uiuc.edu/engagement symposium or call Conferences and Institutes at 333-3880 to register by phone. Final proposal deadline is Feb. 2 and can be submitted online at http://illinois.edu/goto/proposal.

For questions regarding the proposal process, contact Kris Campbell at kjc@illinois.edu or 333-9525. Notification of acceptance will be e-mailed by Feb. 10.

UI Extension

Web site offers ways to cope

UI Extension has created a Web site to help consumers cope with the economic downturn. “Getting Through Tough Financial Times” (www.ToughTimes.illinois.edu) is the Web site. The site will be updated as the economic situation warrants.

“The driving idea behind this effort is to help consumers identify ways to manage their resources wisely during this financial crisis,” said Lois E. Smith, a UI Extension consumer and family economics educator based in Edwardsville who is contributing information.

“All disciplines throughout UI Extension have been asked to contribute to the Web site so there will be a wide variety of perspectives and topics covered.”

The Web site considers topics such as avoiding money traps, setting spending priorities, managing debt, talking with creditors, saving and investing in turbulent times, and others. Each category is organized around common concerns and situations as well as information on how to avoid problems.

A news section contains updated information on timely topics related to the economic situation and offers practical advice for families.

Dates, times and locations of Extension workshops, addressing issues covered on the Web site also are included.

ON THE WEB

- 2009 Annual Faculty Retreat www.conferences.uiuc.edu/facultyretreat/

- Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) www.aacu.org/leap/vision/htm

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BRIEFS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11
drew Stot and Benjamin Van Dyke, New York; Tuan Phan, Texas; and Jim Stevens, Michigan. More information about the exhibition is available at www.dimensionaltype.com.

The gallery, located at 230 W. Superior St., Chicago, is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Preserving heirlooms and family treasures

Preservation Emporium will be Feb. 21

The UI Preservation Working Group will host “Heirlooms, Artifacts and Family Treasures: A Preservation Emporium” from noon to 4 p.m. Feb. 21 at the Spurlock Museum. This free event is open to the public, and visitors are welcome to bring small, hand-held items or images of larger items in order to discuss specific preservation questions with specialists. Experts will be available in a variety of specialties ranging from antiquities to modern digital media.

There will be a keynote address from 1 to 2 p.m. by Mary Parker Bakewell, a preservation consultant and a specialist in photohistory. The address, “The Camera and Abraham Lincoln,” will describe the photographs of Lincoln the first extensively photographed president, and the first for whom the media helped sway an election. Through vivid, large-scale projected images, Pohl will trace the images of Lincoln and his circle while describing the nature and challenges of photography in the mid-19th century.

The Preservation Working Group, created in 2003 as a subcommittee of the University’s Cultural Engagement Council, has organized activities that have focused on educating the university community and the public on issues concerning preservation. Participating members include the University Library, Spurlock Museum, WLL, AM-FM-TV, Krannert Art Museum, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and the Illinois Transportation Archaeological Research Program.

For more information about the Preservation Working Group, visit http://will.illinois.edu/pgw/.

University Primary School

2009-10 enrollment begins

University Primary School will accept enrollment applications through March 20 for the 2009-2010 academic year. For more information, parents may contact Nancy B. Hertog, director, at 333-3996, or visit the Web site at www.engagement.illinois.edu/pgs. Applications are available at 51 Griswold Drive in Room 95 of the Children’s Research Center or they may be downloaded from the School Web site.

University Primary School is an early-childhood program that serves preschool, kindergarten and first-grade students in a project-based curriculum. Children must be 3 years old on or before July 1 for the preschool classroom and 4 years old by Sept. 1 to be considered for the kindergarten enrollment.

An informational meeting about the program will take place from 7 to 8 p.m. Feb. 12 in Room 26 of the Children’s Research Center. Child care will be provided.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Events commemorate King’s vision

Jolette Law, the coach of the women’s basketball team at the UI, will discuss “Students and Community Engagement: Fulfilling Dr. King’s Vision” in a keynote speech Jan. 22 at the Illini Union.

A panel discussion on local community outreach and engagement will take place the next day, which begins at 7 p.m. in Room 314.

Law’s speech, sponsored by the Illini Union Board and the Campus MLK Planning Committee, is one of many events scheduled in conjunction with this year’s community commemoration of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. “Four Score and a Dream Ago,” a community celebration, will begin at 10 a.m. Jan. 24 in the lobby of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Among the events scheduled for the event are musical performances, dancing, and children’s art-making. The celebration, like all the King events, is free and open to the public.

Other events planned throughout the commemorative celebration – titled “Four Score and a Dream Ago: Weaving Our Common Destinies” – include a Jan. 26 screening of “Brother Outsider,” about the life and legacy of civil rights leader Bayard Rustin; a youth festival (Jan. 19); and a unity breakfast (Jan. 19).

Go to http://will.illinois.edu/mlk/ for a complete schedule.

Citizen police academy

Course covers all areas of police work

Champaign County residents interested in getting an inside look at how local law enforcement works are invited to participate in the Champaign County Citizen Police Academy.

The academy, which meets Thursday nights from 6 to 9 p.m. for 10 weeks beginning Feb. 19, will cover crime prevention, community-based policing, drugs, gangs, school safety, DUI enforcement, citizen-police contacts, use of force and firearms safety, crime scene investigation, a tour of the Champaign County Jail, and a patrol ride-along with your local department.

The meetings are held at the Police Training Institute, the fire ring and Willard Airport. Starting its 23rd session, the academy strives to help local residents better understand police work. In addition, the police agencies involved in the academy seek feedback from participants about law-enforcement issues.

For more information or to enroll in the program, call your local law enforcement agency or contact the Police Training Institute at 333-2337.

‘Women in Physics’

Physics conference is Jan. 16-18

The second annual Midwest conference for undergraduates in physics, sponsored by the physics department at the UI, will be held on the Urbana campus Jan. 16 through 18 at Loomis Laboratory.

Shelia Tobias, a feminist activist and advocate for women in science, will discuss “Women in Physics: From Mainstream to Beyond” in a keynote speech that begins at 9:30 a.m. Jan. 17 in Room 141.

Tobias’ speech is one of many events scheduled in conjunction with the conference. Other events include talks by faculty members; panel discussions about graduate school and career opportunities in physics, with current Illinois graduate students; presentations and discussions about women in physics; laboratory tours; student research talks; a student poster session and several networking opportunities.

The conference, sponsored by the UI’s Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, the Office of the Provost and the College of Engineering, is one of three such conferences focusing on women in physics being held simultaneously across the country this weekend. The other two conferences are being hosted by the University of Southern California and Yale University.

Go to http://physics.illinois.edu/conferences/wip/schedule.html for a complete schedule.

“Harry Potter Hogwarts Feast”

Spice Box season begins Feb. 6

“Harry Potter: A Traditional Hogwarts Feast” will kick off another season of themed meals prepared for the public by hospitality management majors at the UI Spice Box. The feast – the first of 17 themed meals planned for the second semester – is scheduled for Feb. 6.

The Spice Box, located on the second floor of Bever Hall, is a working laboratory for students majoring in hospitality management in the department of food science and human nutrition.

Additional meals feature an array of themes, including “Viva Las Vegas,” “A Spice Box World Tour” and “Caribbean.” Meals will be served on Wednesday and Friday evenings throughout the semester.

A complete list of the meal dates, themes, and guest chefs is available online at www.spicebox.illinois.edu. Menus will be posted as they become available. E-mail jnorr@ illinois.edu if you would like to be placed on an e-mail list to receive updates about upcoming events.

Each dining event offers either a four-course meal, including salad, appetizer, featured entrée and dessert, or a two-course salad and entree combination. A specialty alcoholic beverage and a wine list also are offered. Price varies and the meals are available by reservation only. Reservations are available at 5:30, 6:30, 7, and 7:30 p.m.

To reserve seating for any of the fine dining experiences, call 333-6520. ♦

ON THE WEB

Lincoln Bicentennial

http://engagement.illinois.edu/lincoln_program.html

ON THE WEB

http://will.illinois.edu/pgw/
Charles E. "Chuck" Cagley, a UI Extension profes- sor, has been named a recipient of the AIA-CREF, a career professional advancement association, and was recognized for his contributions to the Iowa State University and for his state service at the State Department.

Kammel, a professor of chemistry and biochemistry, was cited for his "profounding contributions to thelocking of quantum fluids and to the application of modern quantum physics in molecular physics.

Delacruz also was awarded the 2009 B. Brandon Curry, senior geologist, was recognized for his outstanding contributions in the development of the karst aquifer model.

Socialist and Postsocialist Hungary," published in the Illinois Journal of History, was awarded the 2009 Social Science Book Award by the Midwest Political Science Association.

"A Year of Probation," an album by the Wisconsin-based band, has been recognized for its "overall excellence and quality of music, and to the application of modern quantum physics in molecular physics.

..."Polar Bear God" monologue – which is based on the life of a bear – was performed on the Illinois campus.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{Jan. 15, 2009 InsideIllinois PAGE 13} \\
\text{agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences} \\
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\\
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\text{locking of quantum fluids and to the application of modern quantum physics in molecular physics.}
\\
\text{Delacruz also was awarded the 2009 B. Brandon Curry, senior geologist, was recognized for his outstanding contributions in the development of the karst aquifer model.}
\\
\text{Socialist and Postsocialist Hungary," published in the Illinois Journal of History, was awarded the 2009 Social Science Book Award by the Midwest Political Science Association.}
\\
\text{"A Year of Probation," an album by the Wisconsin-based band, has been recognized for its "overall excellence and quality of music, and to the application of modern quantum physics in molecular physics.}
\\
..."Polar Bear God" monologue – which is based on the life of a bear – was performed on the Illinois campus.
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Jan 15 - Feb 8

Women in Physics. 8:30 a.m. 141 Loomis Lab. Info/registration.

CITES Security Orientation.

Women's Basketball. 8 am. 10-11 a.m. 404 Illini Union. Campus Sustainability Seminar.

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CALENDAR

Tangle 2:30-3 p.m. Spurlock Museum Spurlock Museum.

exhibits

“Children Just Like Me” Through May 3 Five galleries featuring the cultures of the world. Spurlock Museum, 600 S. Gregory St.; Urbana, Noon-5 p.m. Tuesday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Friday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday; Noon-4 p.m. Sunday.

“The Archaeological Heritage of Illinois” Through May 3

“Collecting East Asia: The Lee Wonsik Collection” Through July 26

“Something That Happened Only Once”

Jean Luc Myalane “Audubon at Illinois: Selections From the University Library’s Birds of America”

“Postcards and Portraits: A Photographic Legacy of Andy Warhol”


ongoing

Arboretum Tours To arrange a tour, 333-7759. Tuesday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Beckman Institute Tours: Open to the public, 3-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Lunch served 12-12:30 p.m. For menu, call 333-0690. Information Desk (second floor, main library).

Bevier Café 8-11 a.m. coffee, juice and baked goods; and 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. lunch.

Bevier Café Too 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays in the IGB building. Gourmet coffee, drinks, snacks, light lunch items and more.

Campus Recreation ARC, 201 E. Peabody Drive, Champaign. CRCE, 1102 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana. See www.campusrec.uiuc.edu for complete schedule. 8-11 a.m.-12:45 p.m. (Noon Skates), Monday-Friday; 7-9 a.m. Wednesday; 7:30-10:15 p.m. Friday (when there are no Illini hockey games); 1:30-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For more info, go to www.campusrec.uiuc.edu/dining/publickate.html.

Center for Teaching Excellence Campuswide service unit responsible for assisting faculty, academic units and teaching assistants in improving instruction. The staff consults and advises on a wide variety of instructional issues. For more information, visit www.c-te.uiuc.edu.

English as a Second Language (ESL) 8-8:30 a.m. LID Institute Building, 402 S. Lincoln Ave., Urbana. Weekly on Thursdays. Faculty/Staff Assistance Program 8-9 a.m. 1011 W. University Ave., Urbana. 244-5112. 24-hour crisis line: 244-7739.

Illini Union Ballroom 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday. Colonial Room. For reservations, 333-6090; walk-ins welcome.

Japan House For a group tour, 244-9934. Tea ceremony: second and fourth Thursday of each month. $5/person.

Krannert Art Museum and Krannert Pavilion Tours: By appointment, call 244-0516. Gallery hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday; until 9 p.m. Thursday; 2-5 p.m. Sunday. The Fred and Donna Giertz Education Center: 10 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m.-noon and 1-7 p.m. Thursday; 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. Paulette Café: 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Office hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts Interlude: Open at 4 p.m. most Thursday and Friday evenings. Close at 7 p.m. on non-performance nights and until after the performance on show nights. Krannert Uncorked: Wine tastings at 5 p.m. most Thursdays. Intermezzo Café: Open 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on non-performance weekdays; 7:30 a.m. through weekday performances; weekends from 90 minutes before until after performances. Promenade gift shop: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday; one hour before until 30 minutes after performances. Ticket Office: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily, and 10 a.m. through first intermission, on performance days. Tours: 3 p.m. daily; meet in main lobby.

Library Tours Self-guided of main and undergraduate libraries: to Information Desk (second floor) or Information Services Desk (undergraduate library).

Meat Salesroom 102 Meat Science Lab, 1-5:30 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday; 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday. Price list and specials: 333-3404.

Robert Allston Parks Open 8 a.m. to dusk daily. “Al- lerton Legacy” exhibit at Visitors Center. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Garden tours/more info: 333-3287 or www.continuinged.uiuc.edu/alferton.

Spurlock Museum Tours: By appointment with a three-week advance time. Call 265-0474.

Tours: Noon-5 p.m. Tuesday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday; Noon-4 p.m. Sunday. Free admission.

Yoga at Krannert Art Museum Fridays at noon.

Library Tours

Verbeek Art Museum and Krannert Pavilion Tours: By appointment; call 244-0516. Gallery hours: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday; Until 9 p.m. Thursday; 2-5 p.m. Sunday. The Fred and Donna Giertz Education Center: 10 a.m.-noon and 1-5 p.m. Tuesday-Friday; 10 a.m.-noon and 1-7 p.m. Thursday; 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. Paulette Café: 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday.

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Meat Salesroom

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Robert Allston Parks

Open 8 a.m. to dusk daily. “Allerton Legacy” exhibit at Visitors Center. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. Garden tours/more info: 333-3287 or www.continuinged.uiuc.edu/alferton.

Spurlock Museum

Tours: By appointment with a three-week advance time. Call 265-0474.

Tours: Noon-5 p.m. Tuesday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday; Noon-4 p.m. Sunday. Free admission.

Yoga at Krannert Art Museum

Fridays at noon.

organizations

Association of Academic Professionals

For events: www.seanet.org/local/aps/

Book Collectors Club – The No. 44 Society

3 p.m. First Wednesday of each month. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 346 Main Library. More info: 333-3777 or www.library.illinois.edu/rbcl/no44.htm.

Council of Academic Professionals Meeting

3:30 p.m. First Thursday of each month, location varies. More info: www.cap.uiuc.edu or mjreilly@illinois.edu.

UIUC Falun Dafa Practice group

2:30-5:30 p.m. each Sunday. 405 Illini Union. More info: 333-2371.

French Department: Pause Café


Illini Folk Dance Society

8-10 p.m. Tuesday and some Saturdays, Illini Union. Beginners welcome. 398-6806.

Italian Table

Italian conversation Mondays at noon, Intermezzo Café, KCFA.

Lifet ime Fitness Programming

6:30-9 p.m. Monday-Friday. CRCE, 1102 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana. Kinesiology and Community Health, 333-2461.

National Person’s Book Discussion Group

7 p.m. 317 Illini Union. More info: 333-3167 or www.illinois.edu/beauty.

PC User Group

For schedule, www.uiuc.edu/~pcug.

Secretariat

1-4:59 p.m. 1 p.m. third/Wednesday–day monthly. For location and more info: www.illinois.edu/rosecerc.

The Deutsche Konversationsgruppe

1-3 p.m. Wednesday. The Bread Company, 706 S. Goodwin Ave., Urbana.

The Illinois Club

Open to male and female facul ty and staff members and spouses. For more info: www.TheIllinoisClub.org.

VOICE

Poetry and fiction reading, 7:45 p.m. Third Thursday of each month. The Bread Company, 706 S. Goodwin Ave., Urbana.

job market

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Information about staff employment is online at www.pso.uiuc.edu.

Paper employment applications or paper civil service exam requests are no longer accepted by SHRM. To complete an online employment application and to submit an exam request, visit the online Employment Center:

www.uiuc.edu/goto/civilservicetest

www.pso.uiuc.edu.
Aging. May in the journal Psychology the study. sor Arthur Kramer, an author on game, said UI psychology profes- ed to the skills learned in the video game, multimedia and dealing with ambiguity.”

Aging. The research appeared last month in the journal Psychology & Aging. decades of laboratory studies designed to improve specific cog- nitive skills, such as short-term memory, have found that trainees improve almost exclusively on the tasks they perform in the lab – and only under laboratory conditions, Kramer said. “When you train somebody on a task they tend to improve in that task, whatever it is, but it usu- ally doesn’t transfer much beyond that skill or beyond the particular situation in which they learned it,” he said. And there are virtually no studies that examine whether there’s any transfer outside the lab to things people care about.”

Kramer and his colleagues wanted to know whether a more integrated training approach could go beyond the training environ- ment to enhance the cognitive skills used every day. Specifically, the researchers wondered whether interactive video games might benefit those cognitive functions that decline most with age.

“Older people tend to fare less well on things that are called ex- ecutive control processes,” Kramer said. “These include things like scheduling, planning, working memory, multitasking and dealing with ambiguity.”

After testing several video games, the researchers selected “Rise of Nations,” which gives gamers points for building cities and “wonders,” feeding and em- ploying their people, maintaining an adequate military and expand- ing their territory.

“This game stresses a lot on re- source management and planning, which I think for older adults is important because many of them independently plan and manage their resources,” said postdoctoral researcher Chandramallika Basak, lead author on the study.

The study included 40 older adults, half of whom received 23.5 hours of training in “Rise of Na- tions.” The others, a comparison group, received no training in the game.

Both groups were assessed be- fore, during and after the video- game training. The tests included measures of their ability to switch between tasks, their short-term vi- sual memory, their reasoning skills and their working memory, which is the ability to hold two or more pieces of information in memory and use the information as needed. There were also tests of the sub- jects’ verbal recall, their ability to inhibit certain responses and their ability to identify an object that had been rotated to a greater or lesser degree from its original position.

The researchers found that train- ing on the video game did improve the participants’ performance on a number of these tests. As a group, the gamers became significantly better – and faster – at switching between tasks compared with the comparison group. Their working memory, as reflected in the tests, also was significantly improved. Their reasoning ability was en- hanced. To a lesser extent, their short-term memory of visual cues was better than that of their peers, as was their ability to identify ro- tated objects.

However, the training had no effect on their ability to recall a list of words in order, their emo- tion management or their ability to inhibit certain responses.

There was a correlation be- tween their performance on the game and their improvement on certain cognitive tests, Kramer said. Those who did well in the game also improved the most on switching between tasks. They also tended to do better on tests of working memory.

The findings are meaningful, Basak said, because they show that multi-dimensional training can af- fect many individual components of cognitive function.

“This is one mode in which older people can stay mentally fit, cognitively fit,” Kramer said. “I’m not suggesting, however, that it’s the only thing they should do.”

Other activities, in particular socializing, exercising and eating well, also are important to main- taining healthy cognitive function in later years, he said. This research was supported by grants from the National Institute on Aging. The authors received no monetary or other support from the video-game industry.

Art Kramer is a full-time fac- ulty member of the Beckman In- stitute for Advanced Science and Technology at Illinois.