UI economist: Proposed bank tax targets revenge, not reform

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

A proposed $90 billion tax on the nation’s largest banks is more about revenge than regulation, a UI banking expert says.

Charles Kahn, an economist and the head of the UI finance department, says the Obama administration’s tax plan is flawed as a long-term safeguard against risk-taking by banks that fueled the nation’s deepest economic crisis since the Great Depression.

But he says the call for a temporary, 10-year tax is “astute politics” that would feed the public’s thirst to punish Wall Street without imposing a permanent levy that could ultimately damage the financial system.

“Perhaps the political logic is this: If we make the fat cats howl loud enough, then public opinion will be assuaged,” Kahn said. “The pound of flesh will have been extracted and financial institutions can return to normal, without subjecting the system to a new, overheating tax structure.”

“In other words, it’s a balancing act,” he said. “How do you stage the maximum of perceived revenge with the minimum of damage to the financial system itself?”

A tax is appealing to outraged Americans who want to punish banks for their role in the economic meltdown, the taxpayer-supported bailouts that followed and the hefty pay handed to bank executives as the public struggled to make ends meet, he said.

“All of these explanations will be satisfying to voters,” Kahn said. “But in reality they will be poor justifications of any permanent program.”

A tax that seeks to reimburse taxpayers is pointless, he says, because banks that received bailout money will likely reimburse the government for their role in the crisis.

Kahn also says imposing a tax to limit executive compensation could be counterproductive in a financial industry that operates globally. While banks would likely absorb the taxes in the short run, businesses could move offshore in the long run.

He questions the effectiveness of collectively punishing the financial industry after the fact. He also worries that the move could set a dangerous precedent if approved by Congress, leading to future taxes for behavior that merely runs afoul of lawmakers rather than being clearly bad for the economy.

“This tax cannot successfully discriminate between institutions that caused the crisis and institutions that ameliorated the crisis,” Kahn said. “Indeed, on the same grounds, you might as well tax members of Congress for their role in the crisis.”

He says regulators around the world are examining taxes and fees to discourage risk-taking that could net another financial downturn and that are already starting to be imposed in some countries.

Flawed plan

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UI economist: Proposed bank tax targets revenge, not reform

TAX
Six professors at Illinois elected as 2009 AAAS Fellows

By Phil Cicora
News Editor

Six faculty members of the UI Urbana-Champaign campus have been awarded the distinction of AAAS Fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science: Gary S. DeMoss, the Paul A. and Julia F. Hewitt Distinguished University Professor; Tondeur, an emeritus professor of mathematics; and the Urbana campus. “We are proud of all they have accomplished and all they will continue to do in the coming years. They inspire all of us, including our students.”

The Mellon Foundation announces grants

Kannert Center for the Performing Arts is among the three-member consortium to support collaborative strategies for securing new funds to extend the impact of the foundation’s investment in contemporary society. “The Mellon Foundation for this extraordinary support will enable Kannert Center for the Performing Arts — alongside its distinguished counterpart institutions — to expand its ambitious commitment to excellence in classical music programming and related educational engagement efforts at a moment of protracted financial challenge,” said Mike Ross, director of the Kannert Center. “I am also thankful for the support such grant represents to its commitment to living composers and in elevating the national dialogue surrounding classical music in contemporary society.”

Kannert Administration Building – that opened in September 2009, which was $2.5 million more than projected.

By Anna K. Herkamp
Assistant Editor

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Ruprecht now says consumption data shows the university is down 11.5 percent from previous levels by November 2009, the first five months of the current fiscal year. “It’s pretty clear the cold weather in January will off-set (the lower consumption), but nevertheless we’re quite pleased about those freed-up dollars.”

The election of AAAS Fellows began in 1874. This year’s fellows will be recognized during the AAAS annual meeting in February. AAAS, which publishes the journal Science, was founded in 1848; it is the world’s largest scientific society.

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On the Job

Bob Douglas, inventory specialist for Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services, has worked at the UI since 2006. Douglas was born in Tuscola, raised in Urbana and graduated from Urbana High School. He worked for the U.S. Postal Service. He worked for the Postal Service for 37 years, spending the last 14 years delivering mail on campus south of Green Street.

He retired in January 2006 and started as a distribution clerk at CITES one week later. In 2008, he was promoted to inventory specialist. Douglas attended Parkland College, where he took “six years to earn a two-year degree,” he says.

What do you do on the job?

I mainly keep inventory for our campus across campus. It’s a job where you have to be very detail-oriented. We have about 4,400 items that we have to account for. You gain new appreciation for spreadsheets.

Sometimes one of our external auditors will call and ask to see a certain piece of equipment. It’s my responsibility to take them to the building and show them the piece of equipment. It helps to keep everyone honest.

When do I inventory, I’m out of the office most of the day because we have stuff all over campus. Sometimes it’s like trying to find a needle in a haystack. I feel like I’m a detective some days. Previously, when I was a distribution clerk, I handled incoming packages and made sure our equipment had property tags. So when the inventory specialist position opened up, it was a natural transition.

What’s your typical day like?

I might do 10 things one day, and then 10 different things the next. So it just changes from day to day, which I like. And then one day there’s a 5,000-pound container that needs to be unloaded from a semi – I don’t do that every day, but it’s certainly something you don’t plan for. You never know what you’re going to get with the job. I have certain duties, but I just never know which ones are going to pop up. If nothing else, it keeps me on my toes.

What do you like most about your job?

Dealing with all of you for 27 years planted the seed that this might be a good place to work, and it turns out I was right. The people here, especially my colleagues at CITES, are great to work with. I got real lucky. Someone took a chance on hiring me, and I think it’s worked out pretty well.

It’s just a pleasant job to have and a pleasant environment to work in. Even when I’m doing inventory, I run into a lot of nice people all over campus.

What’s the most challenging aspect of your job?

Tracking down all of our auditable pieces of equipment while trying to make deadlines is definitely my biggest challenge. There have been a lot of things I’ve had to learn on the job since I transitioned from my old position. Sometimes I just have to go to my boss and say, “I don’t know how to do this.” Sooner or later, I figure it out.

What’s your favorite aspect of working at CITES?

I’m a member of the Meetingless Committee here at CITES, and we have a lot of fun organizing themed potlucks and various get-togethers. We’ve had international potlucks, pies for pi day and all the holiday get-togethers. At Halloween, we usually have a costume party, I think 25 or so people dressed up this year. We usually hand out awards for best, scariest and funniest costume, things like that.

We have a diverse group of almost 300 people who work at CITES, so it’s our little way of getting people to get out of their offices and socialize. It’s a very informal group, with a lot of e-mail discussion, but we had someone who once asked if they could come to one of our meetings. Obviously, they didn’t get the point of the Meetingless Committee. (Laughs.)

What do you like to do off the job?

I have a couple of pet birds that drive me nuts, or keep me company, depending on the day. I like keeping up with the yard work – gardening, flowers, put a little color out there in the summer.

I have a couple of pet birds that drive me nuts, or keep me company, depending on the day. I like keeping up with the yard work – gardening, flowers, put a little color out there in the summer.

I also like Boston. My daughter lives there, and I can see why she likes it, but you’ve got to be younger. They don’t really like cars out there. But once you figure out the subway, you’re good to go.

Field Guide to Insects and Spiders of North America.

“The wonder and uses of insects explored”

Although some may see insects as a general annoyance, Gilbert Wald- bauer wants the world to know that they are actually beautiful and intricate, as well as a necessary part of everyday life. Beautiful butterflies to beeswax candles to silk shirts, they or their by-products are everywhere. Worldwide, a professor emeritus of entomology and author of the book “Flower Honey: Expansion Silk” (University of California Press) wants readers to know the many ways insects en-rich our lives.

“People don’t have much of an apprecia- tion of how valuable insects are in di- rect ways,” Waldbauer said. “I don’t think people think about the direct impact of insects on us.”

He is referring to the products derived from the honey bee, such as soap and honey. In ad- dition, insects are used for therapy and even as jewelry, he said.

“Gilbert Waldbauer serves up a ver- tiable smorgasbord of insects from around the world whose lives directly intersect our whisks and desires,” said Arthur V. Evans, co-author of “National Wildlife Federation Paradoxes of Prosperity.”

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Mastery of physical goals lessens disease-related depression

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

Physical activity is known to reduce depression and fatigue in people suffering from chronic illness. A new study indicates that this effect may stem from an individual’s sense of mastery over – or belief in his or her ability to achieve – certain physical goals.

The study appears in the journal Psychosomatic Medicine.

“We base our arguments on fatigue being a symptom of depression,” said Edward McAuley, a professor of kinesiology and community health at the UI and lead author of the study. “Interventions to reduce depression have consistently resulted in reductions in fatigue. The opposite is not always the case.”

Depression and fatigue also are highly susceptible to changes in a person’s sense of his or her own ability to achieve a certain goal. This belief in one’s own abilities is called self-efficacy, McAuley said. The conviction that you can jog down the block or climb several flights of stairs without stopping is an example of self-efficacy.

Previous studies have shown that increases in physical activity also increase self-efficacy. The effect is almost immediate, McAuley said.

“The evidence is monumental that physical activity has some effect on well-being,” McAuley said. “The question is: Why?” He and his colleagues wanted to determine whether self-efficacy plays a role in the sequence that leads from physical activity to reduced depression and fatigue.

“Our argument was that physically active individuals would have higher self-efficacy, which in turn would result in reduced depression and reduced fatigue,” McAuley said.

To test this hypothesis, the researchers reanalyzed data from two previously published studies, the first involving breast-cancer survivors and the second focusing on individuals diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Both studies included self-report questionnaires, but the second used different measures of health status, physical activity, self-efficacy, depression and fatigue.

It also required that participants record their physical activity with an accelerometer worn during waking hours for seven days, and it tested them again on all measures after six months.

A statistical analysis showed that in both groups, higher levels of physical activity corresponded to higher self-efficacy and lower levels of depression and fatigue. But when the researchers controlled for the influence of self-efficacy on depression and fatigue, they found that the effect of physical activity on both depression and fatigue was significantly reduced.

This suggests, McAuley said, that physical activity influences depression and fatigue by increasing self-efficacy.

“What we’re showing is that the relationship between physical activity and reductions in fatigue in breast-cancer survivors and people with MS can be explained in part by the effect of physical activity on mastery experiences,” he said. “That sense of accomplishment, or situation-specific self-confidence, serves to reduce depression, which in turn reduces fatigue.”

Increased self-efficacy also has a direct effect on reducing fatigue, he said.

Physical activity programs can be designed to effectively enhance self-efficacy and, in turn, well-being, McAuley said.

Also on the research team were Siobhan White and Robert Motl, of the UI; Laura Rogers, of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine; and Kerry Courneya, of the University of Alberta, Edmonton.

The research was supported in part by the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine; the American Cancer Society, Illinois Division; and the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke at the National Institutes of Health. McAuley is supported by a Shahid and Ann Carlson Khan professorship.

Online gambling a threat to global economy, UI expert says

By Jan Dennis
Business & Law Editor

Legalized online gambling would fuel an epic surge of betting in the U.S., leaving lives in tatters and the world’s economy in jeopardy, a UI professor and national gambling critic warns.

John W. Kindt says U.S. Rep. Barney Frank’s renewed push to overturn the decades-old ban, saying online gambling “would put the nation at risk of an economic collapse” on individuals diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Both studies included self-report questionnaires, but the second used different measures of health status, physical activity, self-efficacy, depression and fatigue.

In today’s world, that money-laundering threat also applies to terrorist organizations,” said Kindt, a contributing editor and author of the United States International Gambling Report Series, a 3,000-page collection released this year that includes hundreds of pages on the perils of online betting.

He says online gambling also would yield steep social costs, including gambling addiction, bankruptcies and crime.

The threat of addiction is especially high among younger people, who studies show are already twice as prone to gambling problems as older Americans, Kindt said.
Team finds a better way to watch bacteria swim

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

Researchers have developed a new method for studying bacterial swimming, one that allows them to trap *Escherichia coli* bacteria and modify the microbes’ environment without hindering the way they move.

The new approach, described in a paper published in the journal *Nature Methods*, uses optical traps, microfluidic chambers and florescence to get an improved picture of how *E. coli* get around.

The microfluidic chambers provide a controlled environment in which the bacteria swim, and allow the researchers to introduce specific stimuli – such as chemical attractants – to see if the microbes change direction in response to that stimulus.

Optical traps use lasers to confine individual cells without impeding their rotation or the movement of their flagella. UI physicist Yann Chemla, who co-led the study with physics professor Ido Golding and graduate student Lance Min developed a technique that allows researchers to watch bacteria swim normally for up to an hour.

Optical traps “bacterial treadmills.” Movement of the bacterial cells alters the light from the laser, allowing the researchers to track its behavior. Fluorescent markers enhance visualization of the bacteria and provide information from their environment.

Optical traps have long been of interest to scientists because they allow researchers to follow individual cells moving in three dimensions for more than about 30 seconds, the researchers said. And it is nearly impossible to determine what cues are spurring a cell to move in a given direction.

The new method addresses both of these problems without altering the normal behavior of the bacterium, they said.

“Because the cell is immobile, what we do is change the environment around it,” Golding said. “We can set up a flow cell that has two different concentrations of some chemical, for example, and see how the bacterium responds. Technically we’re moving the swimming pool relative to the swimmer.”

The new approach allows the researchers to track a single bacterium as it swims for up to an hour. “That’s the typical way biology moves forward,” Golding said. “You develop a new measurement capability and then you can use that to go back and look at fundamental questions that people had been looking at but had no way of answering.”

The study is a project of the National Science Foundation’s Center for the Physics of Living Cells at the UI, which promotes collaboration across disciplines, the researchers said.

Ad removed for online version
Graphic designer wants to make his field ‘greener’

By Melissa Mitchell
Arts Editor

Fueled by a constant flow of ink, paper, CDs and other materials, the graphic design field hasn’t been the greenest profession on the planet.

But UI graphic design professor Eric Benson is on a mission to change that. His ultimate goal in educating designers, design studios, printers and other business owners and operators through a variety of means is to recast the graphic design field as one that will be dominated by more sustainable practices in the future.

Along with colleagues Jess Sand, a San Francisco-based freelance writer and designer, and Yvette Perullo, a teacher at the New England School of Art and Design at Suffolk University and a designer at Sage Systems, Benson has been promoting the development of sustainable design standards and practices through the group’s “Re-nourish” Web site. The trio also is working to assemble an advisory panel to write the standards, which he envisions as a tier-based system that allows anyone to immediately place a given printed piece into a sustainable context – including the studio that produced it.

Benson envisions the panel as including interested parties from an array of sectors, from independent designers, paper manufacturers and printing companies to non-profit and government organizations.

“We don’t want to control the outcome, but rather facilitate it,” he said.

While Benson and the others still have a fair distance to go before they succeed in revolutionizing the field, their showing in a recent competition confirms that they are headed in the right direction. The group’s sustainable design research site recently placed among the top three in the Cooper Hewitt People’s Design Award competition.

The site also was selected as the “Web pick” of the week by Communications Arts, one of the graphic design field’s top publications.

On the Re-nourish site is an essay by Benson, in which he explains the epiphany he had one day a few years ago when he noticed that several of the “beautiful direct mail pieces” he had devoted countless hours to designing had been unceremoniously deposited in a trash bin near a bank of apartment mailboxes.

“It dawned on me that warm summer evening that everything I had previously created and in the future will design would end up in the landfill or be incinerated into our atmosphere,” he writes. “During the seemingly innocuous process of choosing paper for the students’ paper-intensive assignment, the experience resulted in his current efforts to transform the field and its prevailing practices.

Benson’s “awakening,” as he describes it, led to a series of soul-searching exercises, followed by some intensive research, then feelings of disappointment and disillusionment with his profession. In the end, the experience resulted in his current efforts to transform the field and its prevailing practices.

Another prime target for his reform campaign is his own design students. On the Web site, Benson discusses the results of a project with senior graphic design students who chose to support more ecological practices by contracting with a printer that agreed to procure 100 percent recyclable paper for the students’ paper-intensive assignment. The students also specified that the job be printed using soy-based inks. In addition, they employed an electronic process for delivering data to the printer, saving both paper and CDs.

Sustainable design Graphic design professor Eric Benson is on a mission to recast the graphic design field into one that will be dominated by more sustainable practices in the future.

Last semester, Benson taught a course in which students created materials to promote the UI’s new Sustainable Student Farm, located south of the campus.

“We worked with farm manager Zack Grant, the Office of Sustainability and chefs in the residence halls (who are beginning to cook meals using produce grown on the campus farm) to create an entire branding and awareness campaign to promote the farm on campus,” Benson said. “We’ve made a Web site, posters, planned events and created two films about the project.”

On Dec. 8, the students – along with others from a course taught by new-media professor Ryan Griffis – exhibited posters, games, information graphics and other materials relating to the topic of food and sustainability in the Activities and Recreation Center. And they screened the film “Fresh,” which Benson said focuses on the growing trend of consuming food that is locally produced.

Benson said the screening is the first in a film series supported by the university’s sustainability office, the Design for Energy and Environment Laboratory and the Student Organization Resource Fee. The series will resume in this semester.

On the Web
www.re-nourish.com
Should profiling be used to screen passengers at airports?

While the terrorists remain the same, their tactics are always changing to adjust to our countermeasures. What we need to ask is, under what circumstances should each type of profiling be used?

All types of profiling have their positives and negatives. Profiling is all about collecting and synthesizing information. By asking questions and collecting data, 60 to 70 percent of all passengers could be deemed to have a negligible security risk. It's the remaining 30 to 40 percent of passengers who require the greatest scrutiny and attention from airport security who pose the greatest risk.

Can we afford “business as usual” in aviation security?

What we need is a reallocation of security resources, not more of them. Ironically, more screening can result in less security when it directs attention and resources to the 60 to 70 percent of people who are not a security threat. That, in turn, diverts attention and resources away from the people who are a legitimate threat.

For every non-threatening passenger, there is a minimal disruption to an airport’s security infrastructure. However, when that effect is multiplied over all the passengers who fly on a given day, the cumulative effect over time becomes overwhelming, resulting in the system we have today.

By lavishing billions of dollars on screening the wrong passengers, we’re not spending those dollars on the right passengers. Since it takes only one successful act of terrorism for the system to fail, we cannot afford to allocate our finite amounts of time, money and technology in the service of a failed strategy. By focusing on disrupting the terrorists’ tactics rather than stopping the terrorists themselves, the aviation security system will never achieve a sufficient level of security. We simply can’t afford the status quo.

Is there a more socially acceptable solution than profiling?

Any technologies, procedures and information that allow us to keep potential terrorists off of airplanes are likely to be cost-effective, timely and secure. For example, we can introduce some unpredictability into the screening process, which would help keep terrorists on the defensive. But the challenge is achieving all of those goals within acceptable societal norms, in ways that won’t offend our values as an open society.

One solution is to use information about passengers that is voluntarily provided and readily assessable to quickly sort through and eliminate those passengers who are not terrorists. For the remaining pool of passengers, about which less information is known, we subject them to the highest level of security screening, and in some cases, bar them from flying altogether.

We can call this behavioral profiling, information profiling, or whatever term of art or euphemism we wish to employ. But the bottom line is, until we deploy security resources appropriately, we will never achieve a secure air transportation system, and the recent events on Christmas day will become all too common – except on the one occasion when an attack succeeds.

Editor’s note: As a result of the attempted bombing of a Detroit-bound airliner on Christmas Day, the Obama administration announced that citizens of 14 “terrorism-prone” countries, along with those who fly through those countries, would be the targets of increased scrutiny by airport security.

Is racial profiling secure enough to allay civil liberty concerns, or would behavioral profiling be more effective and just? Sheldon H. Jacobson, a UI computer science professor, is an expert on aviation security. He was interviewed by News Bureau news editor Phil Ciciora.

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that although a parent’s influence – for better or for worse – a considerable influence on our social and emotional development as adults. Siblings are closer to the social environments that children find themselves in during the majority of their day, which is why it’s important not to overlook the contributions that they make on who we end up being,” Kramer said.

“Growing up just with parents is a different environment for young people,” she said. “Parents of only children might not think about how they can help their child have social experiences with other children, whether that’s through day care, preschool or friends.”

Do single children establish surrogate siblings with cousins and friends? “They may be encouraged by parents to develop deeper relationships, and that’s a good thing because it provides them an opportunity to develop some of these social competencies that they lack,” she said.

**Ul expert: Mandates of new bank capital**

By Jan Deniss

A n old-but-new-again line of hybrid securities could solve the “too-big-to-fail” problem that spawned trillions of dollars in unpopular government bailouts to prop up the nation’s banking industry, a UI legal expert says.

But Robert Beard warns that the retooled securities could strain banks if Congress approves a proposed regulatory overhaul that would force big banks to sell their bonds rather than letting free markets determine their worth.

Beard, a visiting professor in the UI College of Law, predicts CoCos will work fine without government intervention, but only if they are well designed.

He says contingent convertible bonds, known as CoCos, hold promise as a safety net during another market meltdown. “We know from longitudinal studies that if kids start off their relationship with a sibling on a positive note, it’s more likely to continue positively over time,” he said.

Variables such as gender and age difference don’t make much of a difference between siblings. “It’s not all that important whether you’re spaced closer together or farther apart, or if you have a brother or a sister,” Kramer said.

“What’s really much more important are the social behaviors that children learn in their early years that they can use to develop a positive relationship with a sibling. That’s why it’s important for parents to encourage siblings to be engaged with one another and develop a relationship where there is a positive nature and the ability to manage problems,” Kramer said.

Kramer said children who grow up with siblings are not necessarily less socially competent than children who grow up with siblings, but they are more likely to have developed social skills through friends as opposed to brothers and sisters.

“Growing up just with parents is a different environment for young people,” she said. “Parents of only children might not think about how they can help their child have social experiences with other children, whether that’s through day care, preschool or friends.”

Do single children establish surrogate siblings with cousins and friends? “They may be encouraged by parents to develop deeper relationships, and that’s a good thing because it provides them an opportunity to develop some of these social competencies that they lack,” she said.

**Siblings have influential role as ‘agents of socialization’**

By Phil Ciciora

W hat we learn from our siblings when we grow up has – for better or for worse – a considerable influence on our social and emotional development as adults, according to an expert in sibling, parent-child and peer relationships at the UI.

Laurie Kramer, a professor of applied family studies in the department of human and community development at Illinois, says that although a parent’s influence on a child’s development shouldn’t be underestimated, neither should a sibling’s.

“It’s not all that important whether you’re spaced closer together or farther apart, or if you have a brother or a sister,” Kramer said.

“What we learn from our parents may overlap quite a bit with what we learn from our siblings, but there may be some areas in which they differ significantly,” Kramer said.

Parents are better at teaching the social niceties of more formal settings – how to act in public, how not to embarrass oneself at the dinner table, for example. But siblings are better role models of the more informal behaviors – how to act at school or on the street, or, most important, how to act cool around friends – that constitute the bulk of a child’s social experiences.

“Siblings are closer to the social environments that children find themselves in during the majority of their day, which is why it’s important not to overlook the contributions that they make on who we end up being,” Kramer said.

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Changes to FOIA expected to make access easier

By Shariha Forrest

S

ignificant changes to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act went into effect Jan. 1 that affect all public bodies, including the UI and how they respond to requests for public information. Hailed as the most sweeping changes since Illinois enacted its FOIA law July 1, 1984, the revised act is expected to make it easier for the public to access information. The changes narrowly define what information is exempt from release, shorten the time allowed for responding to requests and increase the penalties for noncompliance.

The revised statute marks a new era for dissemination of public information, said Ginny Hudak-David, the associate director of the Office for University Relations. “Under the revised law, there are fewer exemptions, and they’re harder to apply in some cases because preapproval now is required by the public access counselor in the Illinois Attorney General’s office. The assumption is that if you have records, you’re going to be providing them,” FOIA requests for public bodies make their records available to any person for inspection or copying, based upon the premise that public disclosure fosters transparency and accountability in government.

The act defines public records as “all records, reports, forms, writings, letters, memos, books, papers, maps, photographs, microfilms, cards, tapes, recordings, electronic data processing records, recorded information and all other documentary information prepared, used, received, possessed or under the control of any public body.”

Public affairs officials at each campus and in University Relations and their staff members are the UI’s appointed FOIA officers (see box), and are the only staff members designated to respond to FOIA requests.

During 2009, the UI’s FOIA officers fielded more than 500 requests for records under FOIA.

Likewise, FOIA officers, for example, Jean B. Bausier, office administrator in Public Affairs, said that she handled about 260 last requests last year at the Urbana campus - mostly for construction contracts, police reports and coaches’ contracts.

Under the new law, people requesting records cannot be required to use special forms to file requests.

As of Jan. 1, FOIA officers have five business days - shortened from seven days under the prior law - which begins the day after they receive requests to respond to them, either granting access to the records, denying the request or notifying the requester that an extension of five business days is needed to fulfill it.

Penalties for failing to respond to requests within the mandated time periods include possible civil penalties of between $2,500 and $5,900 per violation and relinquishing the rights to charge for reproduction costs at a later time or to treat a request as unduly burdensome.

Certain types of information are exempt from disclosure under FOIA, including information protected by federal or state law; academic information such as test questions and scoring keys; private identifiers for employees and students, including Social Security numbers and I.D. numbers; and peer evaluations by faculty members for tenure purposes.

However, the new law does not specifically exempt “personal files and personal information,” stating instead that information that is “highly personal or objectionable to a reasonable person in which the subject’s right to privacy outweighs any legitimate public interest in obtaining the information” is exempt.

While files related to the adjudication of employee discipline and grievance cases are exempted, the final outcomes of cases in which discipline was imposed are not exempt.

Under the new law, the public access counselor in the Illinois attorney general’s office must preapprove exemptions that are made to protect personal privacy or information in draft form.

“One thing we run into a lot on campus is people sending us documents that are stamped ‘draft’ or ‘confidential,’ and they think that requests should be denied because of that,” said Robin Kaler, associate chancellor for public affairs at the Urbana campus. “What you stamp on it doesn’t matter; it’s what the law says that determines whether you have to release it. The information has to truly be representative of a stage in the deliberative process that is not final to qualify for exemption as a draft. Once you reach the final stage and the document was used, it’s not a draft, and it’s subject to release under FOIA.”

The revised statute requires FOIA officers to provide information in electronic format if requested, and they can charge only for the cost of the disc or other media used, not for personnel or other costs. The first 50 pages of letter- or legal-sized paper documents must be provided free, and the charges for additional pages are limited to 15 cents per page. If color copies or abnormal-sized copies are required, FOIA officers can charge for actual copying costs.

Units supplying copies of documents to the Public Affairs offices for FOIA requests are not reimbur sed for those copying charges and may not charge the requester for the staff time needed to handle the request.

The new law also requires FOIA officers to undergo an annual training program provided online by the Illinois Attorney General’s Office.

Information, please: Jaelyn Bausier, office administrator to Public Affairs, is shown next to a stack of Freedom of Information Act forms received by the campus. Changes to the Illinois FOIA that went into effect Jan. 1 reduced the amount of time that FOIA officers have to respond to most records requests and limit what public bodies such as the UI can charge for records.

Handling FOIA requests

Public records officers are the only officials who may respond to Freedom of Information Act requests made to the UI. University Relations is responsible for responding to requests that span two or more campuses.

If your office receives a request under FOIA:
• Fax, e-mail or mail a copy of the request immediately to the appropriate public records officer, as the “clock” on the request begins running as soon as the request is delivered to you.
• Read through the request to familiarize yourself with the records being requested.
• Begin looking for records that may be responsive and discuss them with the public records officer or their designee.
• As soon as the public records officer processes the request, you will receive an official notice to provide documents to the public records office as necessary.
• Forward copies (one-sided copies with paper-clipped) of responsive records to the records officer or their designee promptly, and at least a few days in advance of the deadline.
• Concerns about information that should not be released should be discussed with the public records officer or their designee, who will consult with legal counsel about whether portions of documents or entire documents are exempt. Copies of the documents - without redactions - should be forwarded to the public records officer or their designee.

SPRINGFIELD
Robin Kaler, associate chancellor for public affairs
217-333-5010 • http://publicaffairs.illinois.edu/media/foia/

CHICAGO
Mark Rosati, associate chancellor for public affairs
312-996-6546 • www.uic.edu/index.html/admin/FOIA.shtml

URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
Derek Schnapp, director of public relations
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New visible photocatalyst kills bacteria, even after light is off

By James E. Kloeppel

On the battle against bacteria, researchers at the University of Illinois have developed a powerful new weapon – an enhanced photocatalytic disinfection process that uses visible light to destroy harmful bacteria and viruses, even in the dark.

Based upon a new catalyst, the disinfection process can be used to purify drinking water, sanitize surgical instruments and remove unwanted fingerprints from delicate electrical and optical components.

“The new catalyst also has a unique catalytic memory effect that continues to kill deadly pathogens for up to 24 hours after the light is turned off,” said Jian Ku Shang, a professor of materials science and engineering at Illinois.

Shang is corresponding author of a paper that is scheduled to appear in the Journal of Materials Chemistry, and posted on the journal’s Web site.

Shang’s research group had previously developed a catalytic material that worked with visible light, instead of the ultraviolet light required by other catalysts. This advance, which was made by doping a titanium oxide matrix with nitrogen, meant the disinfection process could be activated with sunlight or with standard indoor lighting.

“Getting worse and worse as gambling spreads and would soar if online gambling is legalized,” he said. “Internet gambling is known as the crack cocaine of gambling because it’s so accessible.”

Kindt disagrees, saying the costs far outweigh the benefits.

Frank says bankruptcy and crime rates also would balloon as people deplete family finances or raid their employers’ accounts to cover online gambling debts.

Hearing on Frank’s bill resumed in early December, less than a week after the Treasury Department and Federal Reserve postponed the effective date of new regulations that would strengthen the existing ban.

The new rules, which had been set to take effect Dec. 1 but were pushed back until June 1 of next year, would prohibit U.S. financial institutions from accepting payments from credit cards, checks or electronic fund transfers to settle online wagers.

U.S. bettors have been estimated to supply at least half of the revenue of the $16 billion online gambling industry, which is largely hosted overseas.

Frank said the delay will give Congress time to overturn the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act. He also sought to repeal the act but failed in 2007, just a year after Congress approved the measure.

He argues that online gambling should be legal as a matter of personal liberty and that the federal government could gain tax revenues if Internet gambling is allowed and regulated.

Kindt disagrees, saying the costs far outweigh the benefits.

“Online gambling should not be legalized for the same reasons that hard drugs remain banned,” he said. “The social and crime costs are enormous and if gambling is easy to access more and more people will get hooked.”

Powerful process Jian Ku Shang, a professor of materials science and engineering, holds a sample of a new photocatalytic material that uses visible light to destroy harmful bacteria and viruses, even in the dark.

“In a sense, the material remembers that it was radiated with light,” Shang said. “This ‘memory effect’ can last up to 24 hours.”

Although the disinfection efficiency in the dark is not as high as it is in visible light, it enables the continuous operation of a unique, robust catalytic disinfection system driven by solar or other visible light illumination.

In addition to environmental applications, the new catalyst also could be used to remove messy, oily fingerprints from optical surfaces, computer displays and cell phone screens, Shang said.

The work was supported by the National Science Foundation through the Center of Advanced Materials for the Purification of Water with Systems at the UI. Some of the work was performed at the UI’s Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory, which is partially supported by the U.S. Department of Energy. ☎

Photograph by L. Brian Stauffer

Inside Illinois

Jan. 21, 2010
Parents who have children who are spaced closely together in age may not see much of a need to have children over to the house once a week because their children are already having significant social experiences within the family unit, Kramer said. But children whose siblings are spaced further apart in age are most likely to have different sets of friends and different social experiences because they may be in distinct school contexts or involved in unique activities. “It’s possible that siblings who are spaced further apart and very connected within the home, but their social experiences outside the family may be pretty different,” Kramer said.

And, Kramer notes, having Wally Cleaver for an older brother doesn’t necessarily mean the younger sibling will turn out like Wally — they may end up like Beaver.

“We know that not all younger children resemble their older siblings,” Kramer said. “There are many cases where younger siblings work very hard to carve out their own unique path and be different from their brothers and sisters, a process researchers refer to as de-identification. They may choose a different path in which to excel or make their mark to base their own identity on. That child may choose to focus on sports, the arts or being the social one. It relieves them from the pressure to be seen or compared to their elder sibling, particularly if they’re afraid that they won’t be able to measure up. “So they figure out who they are, what they believe in and what’s important to them, in reaction to how they perceive their siblings.”

Kramer cautions that while we don’t know all of the implications of sibling influence, “we do know that growing up in a family where there is another child can influence a child socially, cognitively and emotionally.”

“Kramer said. Funding for this research was provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences
David Riecke, a photographer for ACES Information Technology and Communication Services, was named a Library of Congress ‘Pioneer of Digital Preservation’. The award reflects his work with photo metadata standards, promoting the cause of photography, but also working to improve the technology.

He chaired the Digital Photography Standards & Practices committee of the American Society of Media Photographers, was a founding member of the Universal Photographic Digital Imaging Guidelines coalition and participated in the International Press Telecommunications Council Core metadata schema and wrote the IPTC Core Users Guide for photographers.

The Library of Congress program began in 2000 and seeks to recognize pioneers in the digital-information management, which relies on people and organizations willing to embark on cutting-edge programs that will inspire others.

Engineering
Yoram Bresler, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, has been elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering. Michael Heath, a professor and Fulton Watson Copp Chair in the department of computer science, has been selected to receive the 2009 Taylor L. Booth Education Award from the IEEE Computer Society.

William P. King, a Krizter Faculty Scholar and professor of mechanical science and engineering, has received the 2009 Bergles-Roshenow Young Investigator Award in Heat Transfer from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. The annual award, presented to the top researcher in heat transfer under the age of 36, was given for “substantial contributions to the field of mechanical engineering through the development of nanometer-scale thermal processing and thermal measurement techniques, and the new physical insights made possible by these techniques.”

Arif Masud, a professor of mechanics and structures in the department of civil and environmental engineering, has been elected a fellow of the U.S. Association for Computational Mechanics.

Moshe Matalon, a College of Engineering Caterpillar Professor in the department of mechanical science and engineering, will receive the 2010 Poudry Aerospace Literature Award from the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. The award recognizes “outstanding contributions to aerospace literature, most notably seminal papers in the area of reacting flows.”

Karen S. Bridge, a professor of electrical and computer engineering, has been elected to the class of 2010 IEEE Fellows. The title of fellow is conferred upon a person with an extraordinary record of accomplishments in any of the IEEE fields of interest. It is the highest grade of membership and is recognized by the technical community as a prestigious honor and an important career achievement. IEEE is the world’s largest professional association advancing innovation and technological excellence for the benefit of humanity.

Fine and Applied Arts
Kathryn H. Anthony, a professor of architecture, was recognized by the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture with its 2009-2010 ACSA Distinguished Professor Award. Each year, the association honors an outstanding individual who has sustained creative achievement in the advancement of architectural education through teaching, design, scholarship, research or service. Anthony will receive the award at the association’s annual meeting in March in New Orleans.

Liberal Arts and Sciences
Brian H. Ross, a professor of psychology, was elected 2010 chair of the governing board of the Psychonomic Society, a 2,500-member organization for the promotion of research in psychology and allied sciences.

Library
Lori Miller, Sue Searing and Sandy Wolf, library and information sciences librarians, received the Distinguished Service Award from the Library School Alumni Association at the university’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science. The annual award recognizes friends of GSLIS (including faculty, staff, alumni and non-alumni) who have served the alumni association or school in an exceptional way. Award recipients ensure the quality of the LIS Library’s collection. They developed strategies to serve remote users, implemented e-mail reference, piloted electronic reserves, enhanced the Web site, increased instructional offerings, and initiated a new service model for the LIS Library.

The pictorial history of Urbana is the latest in the “Images of America” series, which began in 1993 to share the history of hundreds of individual communities around the country. The “Urbana” volume is unique in the series in that the authors combined images of historically important buildings with photographs of the designers, builders and owners.

The book also includes many lesser-known facts and images. Readers will find out why an escaped alligator made news on Main Street in 1898, and can see the tree under which Abraham Lincoln addressed a rally of more than 5,000 citizens. Read about how Clark Robinson Griggs’ political savvy and oyster and quail dinners contributed to the location for the Illinois Industrial University, now known as the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The archival research for “Urbana” was made possible with the help of Anne Voss, director of the Champaign County Historical Archives at the Urbana Free Library and an adjunct professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, and Chris Prom and Bill Mahler, at the University Archives.
University Primary School
Enroll now; meeting set for Feb. 18
University Primary School will accept enrollment applications through March 19 for the 2010-11 academic year. The school is an early childhood program that serves preschool, kindergarten and first-grade children in a project-based curriculum. Children must be 3 years old on or before July 1 for the preschool classroom and 5 before Sept. 1 to be considered for kindergarten enrollment.
Applications are available in Room 506. For the Children’s Research Center, 51 Gerty Drive, Champaign, or may be downloaded from the school’s Web site: www.ed.uiuc.edu/upsc/. More information also is available from director Nan- cy J. Hettinger at 333-1900.
An informational meeting about the program will be held 7-8 p.m. Feb. 18 in Room 26 of the Children’s Re- search Center, 51 Gerty Drive, and will be provided.

Community Informatics
Funding for curriculum development
The Community Informatics Initiative in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science and the Illinois Informatics Institute invite applications from Urbana facult- y members and professional staff members for seed fund- ing for research and/or curriculum development related to community informatics.
Projects are encouraged to propose projects in the ar- eas of citizen science, community health, youth and media, and technology applications for social inclusion. Applicant must submit a proposal to Paul Adams at pada@illinois.edu. Deadline for application is March 15. Details are online at www.cii.illinois.edu.

Women at Illinois
Proposals sought to increase awareness
The Council on Gender Equity, with support from the Office of the Provost, is seeking proposals for seed fund- ing to initiate action-oriented interactive or multi-media displays that spotlight contributions of women at the UI. Funding typically will be between $5,000 and $8,000, and no more than $15,000. The goal is to increase aware- ness of gender equity issues and of women’s contributions to various academic disciplines, especially those in which women are traditionally underrepresented. Proposals will be evaluated on their long-term impact and visibility. Propos- als are due by 5 p.m. Feb. 1. For additional details, go to http://uiuc.uiuc.edu/vgs/GenderEquity.shtml.

Cinema Gallery, Springer Cultural Center
Community exhibitions feature faculty art
Work by UI faculty artists will be featured in two exhibi- tions.
Featured at the Cinema Gallery, 120 W. Main St., Urbana, “Gimme Fiction” comprises drawings by Ron Kovatch and ceramics by Tammie Rubin and Catherine Wiesener. All are faculty members in the School of Art and Design. The show runs through Feb. 20.
Work by mixed-media artist Dr. Charles Wiseman, a faculty member in the department of pathology in the Col- lege of Medicine, will be exhibited at the Springer Cultural Center, 301 N. Randolph St., Champaign, through Feb. 21. A reception will be held at the Springer Cultural Center 6-8 p.m. on Jan. 22, with music and refreshments beginning at 6 p.m. and comments from Wiseman and other artists beginning at 7 p.m.

International entries now welcome in e-waste design competition
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International entries now welcome in e-waste design competition

The University of Illinois, along with other institutions of higher learning around the world, are home to the students who rep- resent the future of industrial de- sign and engineering, marketing and business, arts and design and other areas,” Built Aply said. “This competition gives them the chal- lenge of doing something positive and showing how they can design to extend the life of electronics and create new uses for electronic waste.
Along with the competition, a communitywide e-waste collection will be held to help people dispose of unwanted electronic items and provide UI students participating in the competition with materials for their creations.
The competition and the industri- al design e-waste course that Bul- lock teaches are educational compo- nents of the Sustainable Electronics Initiative (www.sustainableelectronics. illinois.edu), a consortium of lead- ers in the public and private sectors dedicated to developing sustainable designs and production, remanufac- turing and recycling practices for electronic devices.
Registration for the competition is free; participants must submit their registration by Feb. 18.
Details about registration, sub- mitting entries and judging criteria are available on the competition Web site: ewaste.illinois.edu. Ques- tions can be directed to Bullock at wbullock@illinois.edu or 265-0873, or to Joy Scrogum, an information specialist at the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, at jscrogum@ illinois.edu or 333-8940.

The competition originated last year in conjunction with a class on sustainability and e-waste issues taught by William Bullock, a profes- sor of industrial design in the School of Art and Design at the UI. Again this year, students in the class will be encouraged to submit their class projects to the international compe- tion, and their projects will be ex- hibited locally.
At the competition, participants can choose from one of two categories: “designer/ artist,” for entries that focus on the aesthetic elements and human fac- tors of design; and the “technical/ geek category,” for entries that cre- ate functional devices from elec- tronic components.
Participants will submit original video compositions to the competi- tion Web site for judging. A panel of judges comprising representatives from Fortune 500 companies will select winners from the six monetary awards: a platinum award of $4,000, a gold award of $3,000 and a silver award of $1,000 in each category.
Honorary mention awards may be given as well at the judges’ discre- tion.
Finalists will be presented to the public and awards announced April 20 as part of the International E- Waste Video Festival to be held at the UI.
Participants must be 18 years or older and be current college students who have graduated in May 2006 or later.
The competition is open to teams and individuals, and collab- oration across disciplines, back- grounds and ages is encouraged.
Dell Computer and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. are sponsoring this year’s competition.
The competition originated last year in conjunction with a class on sustainability and e-waste issues taught by William Bullock, a profes- sor of industrial design in the School of Art and Design at the UI. Again this year, students in the class will be encouraged to submit their class projects to the international compe- tion, and their projects will be ex- hibited locally.

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Much of this information is drawn from the online Campus Calendars on the UI Web site at http://illinois.edu/find/calendars.html. Other calendar entries should be sent 15 days before the desired publication date to insideil@uiuc.edu.

calendar of events

Jan. 21 - Feb 7

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**Cultural Journey** Krouos Quartet (above) and Windas (inset) will take the audience back 100 years to the mountainous, isolated Anhui Province with *Yin Yu Tang: A Chinese Home* at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 28 in the Tryon Festival Theatre in the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. The staged work with video for string quartet and pipe—a Chinese plucked instrument—sometimes called the Chinese lute—was co-commissioned by Krannert Center. The inspiration for this exploration of Chinese music and culture is the Huang family dwelling that had been abandoned in China and was dismantled piece by piece and reconstructed in Massachusetts by the Peabody Essex Museum.


**Saturday** Pacifica Quartet, till. An evening of music that cuts across time and genres. 7:30 p.m. Foellinger Great Hall, Krannert Center. School of Music.

**Sunday** Junior Recital. Aaron Kaplan, cello. 2 p.m. Memorial Hall, Smith Memorial Hall. School of Music. Faculty Chamber Music: "Robert Schumann Celebration." Ian Hobson, piano; with Thomas Justisen, horn; Brand vanos, cello; Edward Roth, piano, and guests artists: Czaba Erdelyi, violin; Amy Flores, cello, and Eli Eban, clarinet. 7:30 p.m. Recital Hall, Smith Memorial Hall. School of Music.


**Tuesday** "Coppelia." Moscow Festival Ballet, Sergei Radchenko, artistic director. Based on two tales by E.T.A. Hoffmann, the fable of quaint inventor Dr. Coppelius, his amazing dancing doll and its effect on a small peasant village. Recommended for ages 10 and up. 7 p.m., Tryon Festival Theatre, Krannert Center. Mansur Series.

**Wednesday** Philadelphia Dance Company. 8 p.m., Krannert Center. School of Music.


**Friday** Illinois Reimagines Trisha Brown’s "Astral Convertible." A collaboration with the Institute for Advanced Computing Applications and Technologics, eDream, and Krannert Center for the Performing Arts brings cutting-edge performance technology complete with interactive costumes, lights and sound. Rebecca Nettl-Fiol and Mike Ross, producers. 7:30 p.m. Colwell Playhouse, Krannert Center. School of Music.

**Saturday** February Dance: Dance at Illinois Reimagines Trisha Brown’s "Astral Convertible." 7:30 p.m. Colwell Playhouse, Krannert Center. School of Music.
CALENDAR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

Thursday

Women’s Basketball vs. Iowa 7 p.m. Assembly Hall.

Friday

Women’s Basketball vs. Virginia 6 p.m. Atkins Tennis Center.

Saturday

Women’s Swimming vs. Ohio State 1 p.m. Atkins Tennis Center.

Monday

Women’s Basketball vs. Illinois State Noon. Activities Center.

Tuesday

Women’s Basketball vs. Michigan State. 8 p.m. Assembly Hall.

Wednesday

Women’s Basketball vs. Indiana. 1 p.m. Assembly Hall.

Friday

Women’s Tennis vs. Virginia 6 p.m. Atkins Tennis Center.

Sunday

Women’s Basketball vs. Wisconsin 1 p.m. Assembly Hall.

et cetera

Marathon Theater King Jr. Celebration Community Celebration Event Program includes art-making projects, recognition of essay contest winners and performances by Chaz Townsend, Voices Special Issue Theater, Juan Luis Guzman and Dancers and Soul Premiere. 10 a.m. Krannert Center lobby.

Sunday


Monday

Women’s Basketball vs. Iowa 7 p.m. Assembly Hall.

January 21, 2010

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InsideIllinois

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Miscanthus, a biofuels crop, can host western corn rootworm

By Diana Yates

The western corn rootworm beetle, a pest that feeds on corn roots and corn silk and costs growers more than $1 billion annually in the U.S., also can survive on the perennial grass Miscanthus x giganteus, a potential biofuels crop that would likely be grown alongside corn, researchers report.

Rootworm beetle larvae can survive to adulthood on Miscanthus rhizomes, and adult beetles will lay their eggs at the base of Miscanthus plants grown near cornfields, the researchers found. Their study, in the Public Library of Science journal PLoS ONE, is the first to identify Miscanthus as a host of the corn rootworm.

The research team, from the UI Natural History Survey, tested several rootworm beetle populations on Miscanthus, adding rootworm eggs to potted Miscanthus and corn plants in a greenhouse setting. Rootworm eggs to potted Miscanthus and corn plants in a greenhouse setting. Rootworm beetle larvae can survive to adulthood on Miscanthus rhizomes, and adult beetles will lay their eggs at the base of Miscanthus plants grown near cornfields, the researchers found. Their study, in the Public Library of Science journal PLoS ONE, is the first to identify Miscanthus as a host of the corn rootworm.

Adult rootworms feed on corn silks, while their larvae attack the roots. Adult rootworms feed on corn silks, while their larvae attack the roots.

Although the researchers found about 70 percent fewer adult rootworm beetles on the Miscanthus plants than on the corn plants grown in the greenhouse, the fact that rootworms could survive at all on this perennial grass was a revelation, Spencer said.

"That we can get as many insects as we were getting tells us that this plant is not a bad host for these insects," he said.

Some adults emerged from the Miscanthus slightly earlier than they appeared on corn. More emerged slightly later than those on corn, Spencer said, but the timing of their emergence was close enough that "there’s the possibility that adults coming off these two crops could interact."

This interaction could be good or bad for corn growers, Spencer said. If the rootworms that grow up on Miscanthus carry genes that make them susceptible to transgenic corn or to insecticides used on corn and they mate with rootworm beetles in a cornfield, it could help slow development of resistance to insecticides or transgenic corn among their offspring. On the other hand, the acres devoted to Miscanthus could function as a vast, perennial reservoir of rootworm beetles — with devastating consequences for corn growers.

To determine if the western corn rootworm would lay its eggs on Miscanthus and that the rootworm larvae can survive on Miscanthus rhizomes, the researchers placed potted Miscanthus plants in rows next to a cornfield during the egg-laying period. Late in the season, before the corn was harvested but after the rootworm adults were all dead, the researchers counted rootworm eggs in the soil around the corn and Miscanthus plants, and in the space between the rows of plants.

"There was no difference in the mean number of western corn rootworm eggs laid at the base of Miscanthus and maize in the field," the authors wrote.

The implications for corn growers are not yet known, "but these findings brought it home to us that much more study is needed," Spencer said. "Before we put something out in the environment that could result in pest problems increasing on corn, we need to more fully appreciate the ecology and potential interactions in the environment."