Study: La Casa’s beloved mural can be saved, but at a cost

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

The old house at 510 E. Chalmers St. in Champaign, the birthplace of La Casa Cultural Latina and former home of the I.U. Latina/Latino Student department, has never been big enough to contain the vibrantly colored room-sized mural inside.

The mural, with its bold depictions of heritage and social justice, of individual and community strength, has been a cornerstone and rallying point for the campus Latino community since alumnus and artist Oscar Martinez and fellow students painted it in 1974.

“The mural represents the legacy of Latino students on campus and their role in and importance to the student population here,” said Alicia P. Rodriguez, the academic adviser and administrative coordinator for Latina/Latino Studies.

Today the mural sits underappreciated, behind locked doors and out of public view, after the academic department offices were moved last year to a converted house at 1207 Oregon St. in Urbana. For now the house on Chalmers sits unoccupied.

But the first step in saving the mural and its legacy was realized earlier this month, after a consulting company presented a list of recommendation
dations following a university-commissioned feasibility study.

Brian Bundren, the capital construction project manager for Facilities and Services, said the consultants presented a two-stage process to save the mural: the first, making a 3-D scan of the artwork to create a digital archive and canvas re-creation; the second, meticulously removing the mural room’s 40-year-old lathe-mounted plaster and sending it away for preservation work.

“There’s the potential it could crack while they’re trying to remove the plaster from the lining paper,” Bundren said. “It wouldn’t be an easy task.”

He said the first stage of the process was estimated by the consultants to cost about $80,000, while the second stage, the more intricate conservation work, could cost more than $225,000.

“Right now I think everyone’s just excited to get to the point where there is something solid that they can move forward on,” he said.

“La Casa is obviously a very important piece that tells the history of a significant group on this campus.”

Rodriguez and Veronica M. Kann, La Casa’s assistant director, said they are hoping the campus can see the historical and cultural relevance of the mural and find a way to financially support both stages of the proposed preservation project.

“It’s very important to the history of Latino/a on campus, but it’s also an important part of our institutional history,” Kann said.

Breaking down walls

The mural inside the former La Casa Cultural Latina building, a converted house at 510 E. Chalmers St., Champaign, which is now unoccupied, has meant many things to different people. Depicted on the mural are the themes of heritage, social justice and strength all are reflected in the many scenes that make up the room-sized painting, which was created in 1974 by alumna and artist Oscar Martinez and fellow students. A recent study commissioned by the university recommends creating a digital archive of the artwork and removing it for full restoration and eventual re-displaying.

“It has led to a lot more planning and a lot more work, but we are confident the event is going to be better than ever,” she said.

This year’s Commencement ceremony will begin at 9:30 a.m. Memorial Stadium?

That’s right! Commencement on Saturday? Memorial Stadium? That’s right!

Group effort

It takes a campus village to pull off a successful Commencement weekend, and Laura Wilhelm-Barr, the director of special events in the Office of the Chancellor, said she has had no shortage of help coordinating this year’s activities. Some of the more prominent “helpers” include, from left: Julie McMahon, campus head designer for Public Affairs; Wilhelm-Barr; Anna Simon, the associate director of special events in the Office of the Chancellor; Holly Staley, the assistant athletic director of event management for the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics; Jodi Ferris, the office manager for the Office of the Chancellor; and Sue Walker, the associate director for event administration for State Farm Center.

Commencement on Saturday? Memorial Stadium? That’s right!
**University seeks amendment to pension law drafting error**

By Mike Helenthal  
Assistant Editor

Campus leaders are forming a committee to study employee hiring and grievance procedures.

Bessam Adesida, the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs, told members of the Senate Executive Committee April 28 that the committee would specifically address the recent case involving a lecturer whose contract has not been renewed, and generally review campus hiring and grievance procedures.

Adesida said employment issues applying to specialized faculty, the subject of a recent provost’s communication that codifying non-tenure track hiring procedures, would be a part of the committee’s charge.

“The committee will involve campus leaders as well as administrative staff members,” Adesida said. “Once we receive the

**New committee to address faculty housing, grievance procedures**

By Mike Helenthal  
Assistant Editor

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**BENEFIT CHOICE 15**

Plan the elimination of the out-of-pocket maximums in Tier 4.

Changes to health care and other bene-
fits—including medical care and dependent care—can be made during the Benefit Choice peri-
dod, which runs through June 2, and must be made by NESSIE, the U. of I.’s human resources employee website. All changes will be effective July 1. “Remember, mem-
bers that wish to stay with the same health and dependent care insurance do not need to complete a form,” Butts said. “Although if you want to

**BENEFIT INFORMATION SESSIONS**

To learn more about this year’s Benefit Choice options, employees should attend the Benefit Choice information sessions. No registration is required.

- May 6, 2–4 p.m., Ikenberry Commons, Student Dining and Residential Programs Building, Rooms 202, 5 and B
- May 14, 10 a.m.–noon, Beckman Institute auditorium (Room 1025)
- May 20, 2–4 p.m., Room 180 Bevier Hall

**University looks at non-tenure faculty hiring**

By Brenda Butts  
Associate Director, University Payroll and Benefits

The impetus for the resolution was the seven professors attending a special meeting of the U. of I. Board of Trustees on April 18, according to Adesida and the head of materials science and engineering.

The sudden wave of retirements result-

ing from an unspecified glitch in the pension law could affect planning for fall se-

**Inside Illinois**

Deductibles, copays to increase; premiums remain the same

Benefit Choice enrollment period ends June 2

Apoyments, deductibles and other health care costs will rise for U. of I. employees beginning July 1, although health insurance premiums will remain the same, the Illinois Department of Central Management Services has announced. The deductible for prescriptions and the dental plan, and copays for the vision plan also have increased.

“The FY15 insurance premiums did not change for full-time employees,” said Brenda Butts, the associate director of University Payroll and Benefits on the Urbana campus. “However, all copayments, plan deductibles and co-insurance payments have increased. Employees should pay special attention for among increases in maximums increases in the Open Access

**DEPENDENT ELIGIBILITY AUDIT**

CAMPUS

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arts, information science,

Phil Ciciora  
business, labor, law

Liz Ahlberg  
engineering, physical sciences, life sciences

L. Brian Stauffer  
photographer

Doris K. Dahl  
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L. Brian Stauffer  
articulation, information science, business administration

L. Brian Stauffer  
engineering, physics, mathematics, statistics

Phil Ciciora  
art, information science, humanities, library services

Dusty Rhodes  
art, information science, humanities, library services

Liz Ahlberg  
engineering, physical sciences, life sciences

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May 1, 2014

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- Central Management Services  
  benefitschoice.ill.gov
- University Payroll and Benefits  
  Henry Administration Building Room 177, 506 S. Wright 
  benefits@illinois.edu 
  Walk-in hours – 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Call center hours: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Cindy Masko doesn’t tiptoe around the fact she has found a home in her second career as an office support specialist for the U. of I.’s dance department.

“I had been working with a group of such talented and creative people,” she said. “It’s exciting to watch the whole process.”

Masko has been in her position since 2008 after starting in an extra help job with University Housing.

The years before that she had retired after working 25 years for the postal service and quickly found the retired life was not for her.

“I thought I was going to get to do all of these things, but I was bored,” she said. “I felt like doing something else,” Masko said. “I always thought I would get back to it, but life events always seemed to get in the way.”

Becoming a full-time student again to earn her degree was not easy.

“I was really scared when I first started going back to college,” she said. “I had been a long time since I had written a paper or taken a test.” But she soon found her fears were unwarranted and she was doing well in her classes.

She said it was exhilarating after all those years, to simply learn for the sake of learning things along the way,” she said. “Some of the things I didn’t understand, but you learn to enjoy the expression.”

She said she likes staying for the “talk-backs” held after dance events to learn even more about the art form.

“At first I thought it was more work than I wanted to sign up for,” she said. “I never considered myself very organized, but the job kind of expects that. It didn’t take long to realize I liked what I was doing and this is really a great place to work. I love being here and I feel like I’ve found a home.”

She said her greatest skills are that she likes to interact with people and has learned to do things that don’t go perfectly.

The job also has expanded Masko’s cultural horizons as she gets to see many of the dance events that occur on campus.

“I’ve always liked dance but didn’t know much about it, especially modern dance,” she said. “Some of the things I haven’t understood, but you learn to enjoy the expression.”

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“Just keep watching and listening and learning things along the way,” she said.

Masko, born and raised in the region, has been married for 31 years. She and her husband, Frank, met while they worked at the post office. They now raise bird dogs together in rural Fisher.

She said navigating a workplace romance was not easy.

“We worked together, became good friends and eventually began dating,” she said. “We had to keep it secret for a long time.”

Masko and her husband recently lost their 29-year-old daughter following her long battle with cystic fibrosis. The couple is still adapting to life without her.

“She was the most important thing in our lives,” Masko said.

To relax, Masko likes to crochet and knit and makes scarves, hats and afghans.

She also likes to read, especially mysteries written by James Lee Burke, Michael Connelly and Gillian Flynn.

On the Job features U. of I. staff members. To nominate a civil service employee, email nhelenthal@illinois.edu.

Three elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Three U. of I. professors have been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the longer-standing honorary societies in the nation.

Tere R. O’Connor, a professor of dance; John A. Rogers, the Swanland Professor of Science and Technology and holds joint appointments in the departments of bioengineering, and mechanical science and engineering; and Wilfred A. van der Donk, a Nobel laureate in chemistry, have been elected.

O’Connor, a choreographer since 1982, has created commissioned work for the U. of I. and other companies around the world.

Rogers, a founding faculty member of the U. of I. Institute for Genomic Innovation, is a pioneer in the use of synthetic biology for fundamental research.

van der Donk, a Nobel laureate in chemistry, is an expert in the development of new materials.

For more information, contact the Office of Public Affairs at 217-244-3636.

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The Faculty/Staff Emergency Fund, now in its 10th year, is available for employees facing a temporary financial crisis.

Supported exclusively by employee donations, the fund can be accessed by employees facing a temporary financial crisis.

The fund is available for things such as medical emergencies, car repairs, lost wages, and more.

For more information, contact the Office of Public Affairs at 217-244-3636.

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Faculty/Staff Emergency Fund in need of donations

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For more information, contact the Office of Public Affairs at 217-244-3636.

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More about the fund and how to apply for help

For more information, contact the Office of Public Affairs at 217-244-3636.
Alumnus Hopkins talks about being an astronaut

By Mike Helenath

Michael S. Hopkins, the U. of I. aerospace engineering alumnus who recently spent 166 days orbiting Earth on the International Space Station, wasn’t just along for the ride. Hopkins, who will give the U. of I. Commencement address May 17, was both the researcher and the subject of the research.

“We’re really guinea pigs when we’re up there,” he said, noting the raft of health-related tests that NASA astronauts must undergo during a mission.

Scientists continue to use astronauts for testing the affects of space on the human body – effects Hopkins can personally attest to.

“When I first got up there everything was generic enough for its passage, I was a little disoriented and I felt like I was falling.”

He said for the first 24 hours or so it felt like the space station was flying on its left side even though it was in its normal orientation.

And when he returned, the differences were just as stark. For example, immediately after landing in the descent capsule, he had to hand the flight procedures book to search and rescue personnel because it felt unnaturally heavy.

Astronauts are given comparative spiral ultrasonic and other tests before and after their flight and are monitored during daily two-hour exercise sessions, meant to maintain muscle function in the near-zero gravity of low Earth orbit.

“...On a long list of experiments, including one that focused on how capillary flow forces work in space. This experiment used differently shaped containers to test changes in the wicking behavior of a wetting fluid, and how that information can be used to passively separate liquids and gases.”

The results of the capillary flow experiment could lead to improved water purification; fuel storage and supply; and even the transport of liquid cargo between spacecraft. Earth-bound applications include improving the ability of miniature medical devices to draw human fluids for testing.

“(The experiments) improve our understanding of how capillary forces work in a variety of system geometries, including the open spaces within porous materials such as sand and soil, wicks and sponges,” according to a description on the NASA website.

While in orbit, Hopkins worked closely and communicated directly with the experienced principal investigator on the ground.

He said astronauts are asked to monitor a variety of general research projects and must be prepared to fix anything that breaks inside or outside the spacecraft.

Hopkins participated in two space walks, the first to repair a pump module.

“I don’t really have the right words to describe what was like except incredible. ‘I said, ‘There’s nothing obstructing the view of Earth and it’s all right there and you’re just hanging out. I was a ball of emotion.’

“Being an astronaut has been the perfect career for Hopkins, giving him the opportunity to pursue his love of physical activity with technology.”

Research with gravity

Astronaut and U. of I. alumnus Michael S. Hopkins wasn’t just along for the ride during his 166 days aboard the International Space Station. Here Hopkins works in the station’s Kibo laboratory conducting a session with a pair of bowling-ball sized free-flying satellites known as SuperFinsched Position Hold, Engage, Rotate, Experiment, Satellite, or SPHERES. Surrounding the two SPHERES was ringshaped hardware known as the Benefactor Inductive Near-field General System, or BINGO. The two components, when combined, are used to demonstrate wireless power transfer between satellites at a distance for enhanced operations.

He said his biggest influence in becoming an astronaut was watching space shuttle missions when he was in high school.

Richard P. Wheeler, an English professor and the visiting associate vice president for academic affairs, said the administrative review revealed that the U. of I. is the custodian of the statewide fund and that the surplus was being saved for system upgrades.

He said plans to reduce the reserve are now off the table and that the committee’s resolution in support of it was not necessary.

He said the consortium’s fee structure would be studied in the future once the system upgrades are complete.

“I think the committee was acting in good faith,” he said, referring to the committee’s resolution. Malleray said the resolution’s wording was generic enough for its passage, despite Wheeler’s assurances the issue was resolved.

“I don’t feel like I can do that without consulting with the rest of the committee,” she said, noting that off-campus members of the consortium also need to be informed that the initial CARLILI recommendations in an administrative review had changed.

COMMENCEMENT, FROM PAGE 1

that in the past we’ve not had to factor in as extensively,” she said, noting that campus emergency professionals have been consulted for appropriate guidelines and procedures.

Although Memorial Stadium security checkpoints will be set up similar to football season (even graduates will have to reveal what lies under their robes), the audience will be allowed to bring umbrellas inside, contrary to normal game-day security rules.

Adjusting to the size of the ceremony – 10,755 students are eligible to graduate this year – has led to several Commencement accommodation adjustments as well, including a special field covering, an outdoor stage designed to seat the deans of every college and new pole-mounted banners identifying college seating locations.

“There were many extra elements that we hadn’t needed in the past,” Wilhelm-Barr said. “It has involved a lot of meetings and a lot of focus on communication.” She credited the staff of State Farm Center for helping anticipate some of the needs of this year’s events and countless building managers for helping accommodate alternate plans for the smaller ceremonies.

“They have helped us every time we’ve needed it,” she said of the many university employees who have assisted in planning.

With all of the changes, Wilhelm-Barr said keeping parents and students up to date has been imperative. To ensure Commencement plans go smoothly, the university for the first time has asked attending students to register. She said planners have sent numerous update letters and emails to parents reminding them of important details, and have posted additional information on the Commencement website.

“We have doubled up this year on the information we send to the graduates and their families,” she said.

As usual, in addition to the campuswide Commencement ceremony during which students are recognized in groups by college, various units sponsor convocation ceremonies and receptions May 16-18.

Shuttle buses for students and spectators will run through weekend days in a loop around campus, with an emphasis on the larger receptions and ceremonies.

The charter buses, which operate starting in Lot E-14 at the corner of First Street and Kirby Avenue, will run from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday.

“There are still a few details left, but everything is pretty much ironed out,” Wilhelm-Barr said. “Even the Alma Mater sculpture returned to campus in time to help celebrate. I think it’s going to be a memorable time.”

Heavy hitter

Astronaut and U. of I. alumnus Michael S. Hopkins made the grade in the classroom during his time on the U. of I. campus, but also was a hit on the football field. He joined the football team as a freshman walk-on player and finished his career as a team captain in the 1991 John Hancock Bowl.

SEC. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

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Now and then

Michael S. Hopkins in a recent NASA portrait, left, and his photo from the football program from his time on the Illinois football team.
SISTERS program puts students on the path to good health

By Sharita Forrest
Newspapers Editor

A mong the athletes lacing up their sneakers for the 5K To End Plumpness at the Christus Health Clinic Illinois Marathon on April 25 was a special group of SISTERS. They are seven women and faculty members at the U. of I. who are not family, they share a common bond, which they forged while participating in a program that promotes healthy lifestyle choices among African-American women.

Called the Lifetime Health Initiative or the Sport Intervention for District students, the program was developed by faculty member Jacqueline McDowell in collaboration with Kimberly Shinew and other campus experts in nutrition and fitness.

McDowell and Shinew are professors in the department of recreation, sport, and tourism, unit within the College of Applied Health Sciences.

The goal of SISTERS is to increase women’s physical activity levels through recreational sports participation, and enhance their knowledge and adoption of healthy lifestyle choices through weekly educational and sport programming.

The educational curricula, designed by health educators at the campus health center, included written and written versions that addressed factors such as the challenges, pressures and barriers to women’s lifelong health, physical activity levels and set themselves up for health benefits of exercise, and gauging appropriate portion sizes.

Participants learned strategies for adding fruits and vegetables to their diets and went on a grocery shopping tour to learn how to make better food selections. In a hands-on workshop, which was held in the instructional kitchen of the Activities and Recreation Center, participants learned how to cook healthier “soul foods,” such as baked rather than fried chicken and rice, and a whole-grain pasta.

Graduate student Courtney Dars (2003-2005), the “Mahnert representative from the U. of I. Tennis Association-Midwest, developed and led a cardio tennis training program for the women. Dorsey is McDowell’s research assistant and a former collegiate tennis player.

Cardio tennis incorporates intervals of aerobic exercise such as running as well as toning exercises, which boost players’ heart rate and burn calories significantly.

When not practicing tennis, the women trained to run or walk a 5K event.

Although the program was designed with twice-weekly workouts, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the participants voluntarily added a third exercise session, on Saturdays, because they enjoyed the activity and the group support, Shinew said.

Some of the students continue to run together regularly, even though the initiative concluded in mid-March.

“When we run around campus, everybody’s staring at us because we go in packs,” said Tristin Marshall, who is a sophomore from New Jersey majoring in media and cinema studies. “And it’s like, ‘Yes, we’re black, and we do exercises, and we are in shape, and we’re not lazy.’ And I think a lot of people are surprised by that. We love the attention. It’s bringing an awareness to people who don’t know.”

Young adults, including college students, are overlooked by many of the targeted interventions to promote healthy eating and exercise.

But when many young adults enter college, they become more sedentary, exercise less often and less vigorously, develop unhealthy eating habits, gain weight and set themselves up for health problems later in life, McDowell said.

African-American women are at even greater risk of obesity and related health problems than white women, McDowell said. “We told the ladies that we would like to make changes that they can continue for a lifetime instead of just for six weeks or three months or whatever period of time. ‘We can do it on our own.’”

“Everyone is down 12 pounds and one pants size,” Washington said. “I didn’t work out a lot when I first got to campus, or I could do it in binges for like three weeks – and then completely stop,” said Washington, who was very active in high school but stopped exercising regularly when she got to college. “The program really encouraged me to make changes that I can continue for a lifetime instead of just for six weeks or three months or whatever period of time we’re going to do a ‘health kick’.”

“We’re all black girls and the ‘I-don’t-want-to-sweat-my-weave-out’ concern – that is so real,” Washington said. “But when we really wanted to weave it out, we wanted to be flawless,” Washington added. “I can tie it up, go run my miles at the gym and call it a day.”

Freshman and seniors were recruited for the program so that the researchers could study the effects of the initiative to evaluate the intervention’s long-term impact.

Data collection for the study is ongoing, but the preliminary analyses indicate that all of the women improved their cardiovascular fitness, increased their physical activity levels and developed confidence in their ability to make better nutritional choices, McDowell said.

McDowell plans to recruit another cohort of participants and offer the program again in early 2015.

The pilot program was funded by a grant from the Center on Health, Aging and Disability in the College of Applied Health Sciences.

Illinois dance professor receives Doris Duke Impact Award

By Dusty Rhodes
Arts and Humanities Editor

Jennifer Monson, a professor of dance at the U. of I., has been awarded a Doris Duke Impact Award. The honor included a unrestricted cash grant of $60,000, plus up to $10,000 for audience development and another $50,000 for creative projects during what are usually retirement years, according to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

Monson – a choreographer and performer who specializes in experiential dance – is known for “Bird Brain,” a project following the migratory paths of birds and gray whales for five years (2000-2005), the “Mahnert Aquifer Project” (2009), a series of public dance performances, panel discussions and workshops; and most recently, “Love Dancing Archive,” named Best Dance of 2013 by Time Out New York. She is the founder and artistic director of the Doris Duke Foundation for the Arts. She received two New York Dance and Performance Awards (“Bessies”) – one for sustained achievement in the dance field (1997) and one for “BIRD BRAIN.”

Impact” awards are a new honor created by the foundation, which also bestows about 20 Doris Duke Artist Awards annually to artists who have previously won at least three designated national accolades during the preceding decade. This year, Doris Duke Dance Award recipient with the final program award, Jennifer Monson was awarded a Doris Duke Impact Award. Monson earned her B.A. in dance at the U. of I. in 2008. Pictured, Monson danced at the 2007 dedication of “Darwin’s Playground.” The three colorful sculptures, formerly known as “the bees,” were created by Tony Tasset and were in the plaza in front of the U. of I. Institute for Genomic Biology.

Big impact

Jennifer Monson, a professor of dance at the U. of I., has been awarded a Doris Duke Impact Award. Monson earned her B.A. in dance at the U. of I. in 2008. Pictured, Monson danced at the 2007 dedication of “Darwin’s Playground.” The three colorful sculptures, formerly known as “the bees,” were created by Tony Tasset and were in the plaza in front of the U. of I. Institute for Genomic Biology.

ON THE WEB

ddei.org

photo by L. Brian Stauffer

Photo by L. Brian Stauffer

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Although the program was designed with twice-weekly workouts, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the participants voluntarily added a third exercise session, on Saturdays, because they enjoyed the activity and the group support, Shinew said.

Some of the students continue to run together regularly, even though the initiative concluded in mid-March.

“When we run around campus, everybody’s staring at us because we go in packs,” said Tristin Marshall, who is a sophomore from New Jersey majoring in media and cinema studies. “And it’s like, ‘Yes, we’re black, and we do exercises, and we are in shape, and we’re not lazy.’ And I think a lot of people are surprised by that. We love the attention. It’s bringing an awareness to people who don’t know.”

Young adults, including college students, are overlooked by many of the targeted interventions to promote healthy eating and exercise.

But when many young adults enter college, they become more sedentary, exercise less often and less vigorously, develop unhealthy eating habits, gain weight and set themselves up for health problems later in life, McDowell said.

African-American women are at even greater risk of obesity and related health problems than white women, McDowell said. “We told the ladies that we would like to make changes that they can continue for a lifetime instead of just for six weeks or three months or whatever period of time. ‘We can do it on our own.’”

“We’re all black girls and the ‘I-don’t-want-to-sweat-my-weave-out’ concern – that is so real,” Washington said. “But when we really wanted to weave it out, we wanted to be flawless,” Washington added. “I can tie it up, go run my miles at the gym and call it a day.”

Freshman and seniors were recruited for the program so that the researchers could study the effects of the initiative to evaluate the intervention’s long-term impact.

Data collection for the study is ongoing, but the preliminary analyses indicate that all of the women improved their cardiovascular fitness, increased their physical activity levels and developed confidence in their ability to make better nutritional choices, McDowell said.

McDowell plans to recruit another cohort of participants and offer the program again in early 2015.

The pilot program was funded by a grant from the Center on Health, Aging and Disability in the College of Applied Health Sciences.
Expert: Next 15 years is ‘crunch time’ for climate change

By Phil Ciciora
Business and Law Editor

Timeline is running out to implement a mitigation strategy that would avert severe global damage from climate change, a U. of I. energy policy expert says. Although we still have time to stabilize future temperature levels and minimize potential negative outcomes created by climate change, that time is rapidly dwindling, says Don Fullerton, a finance professor and former deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Treasury Department.

“When you have to get serious over the next decade. Otherwise, it’s going to be unstoppable,” said Fullerton, the associate director of the U. of I. Institute of Government and Public Affairs and a faculty associate in the Center for Business and Public Policy in the College of Business.

“People may not realize that observed increases in temperature and sea level are nothing compared to what will happen with the existing increases in carbon dioxide concentrations already in the atmosphere,” he said. One of the biggest risks is that we don’t know exactly what will happen, and when it will happen, Fullerton said.

“We look at all we want at expected sea levels, expected temperature changes and expected storm severity. Yes, those are all going up, but it’s a lot easier to predict the problem is just the great unknowable nature of it all – and the possibility that we have to move much more drastic could occur,” he said. According to Fullerton, who co-chairs the committee on the social, ethical and economic concepts of climate change for the recently released Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s fifth assessment report, the next 15 years are “crunch time,” but the global community is moving within the next 10 years.

“International negotiations are continuing, but the problem is that they are simply not enough,” he said. “Imagine trying to get more than 200 nations with differing views to sign off on anything.” The main sticking point in international negotiations is the divide between rich, industrialized nations such as the U.S. and rapidly growing and industrializing nations such as China and India.

“Even if most of the current emissions are coming from the rapidly growing nations, the major source of greenhouse gases for the past 200 years has been the rich, industrialized nations,” Fullerton said. “So where does the responsibility lie? China and India have high emissions, but they cry foul because they haven’t shared in the wealth that the U.S. and other industrialized nations achieved over the past 200 years.”

An isolationist position for the U.S. wouldn’t work very well, either.

“If the polar ice caps melt faster and sea levels submerge half of Bangladesh, a populous, low-lying country that is very poor – then that would create tens of millions of refugees,” Fullerton said. “So it’s just not accurate for people to think that’s not going to affect us. Sure, we have a rich country and if we wanted to, we could put up higher levees around New Orleans. But it’s not true that flooding in poor countries such as Bangladesh wouldn’t affect us. We see 100 million refugees with nowhere to go and nobody to help them, the U.S. is not going to sit idly by and watch all of those displaced people starve to death. It’s not true that flood damage is limited, but they cry foul because they think something now than if our hand is forced in the future.”

From an ethical standpoint, another question is what our responsibility to future generations, Fullerton said.

“On the one hand, we don’t want to leave future generations with all of our pollution,” he said. “On the other, economic welfare around the world is improving. So you could argue that they’re going to be better off already.”

But if the current projections hold, and it’s thought that future generations are going to be better off, then a different moral calculus might say they could bear the cost more easily than we could, Fullerton said.

“But that doesn’t suggest waiting,” he said. “It suggests doing something now but maybe going partially into debt to do it. We can’t wait and have future generations do it all later, because it could be too late. If starting now is necessary, that doesn’t mean we need all of the costs now, especially if most of the benefits are going to future generations. But there is an ethical argument for taking on some debt to do it now, in order to do it more efficiently than what could be done from years now.”

Even if the U.S. government does nothing, new technology is moving in the right direction, Fullerton said.

“The biggest initial step is moving from coal-fired power plants to natural gas power plants,” he said. “Ironically, that’s been driven already, because all of the advances in fracking technology – it’s a major improvement for climate change, but we could be endangering our water supply. That is a good argument against doing things too fast. It’s possible that we get better at fracking. We just don’t want to build any new coal-fired plants. The new power plants we build should be natural gas plants. But at the same time, we need to continue to work on the technology for wind and solar power.”

If we were to have an energy efficiency crash-program – the equivalent of this generation’s Apollo program, as some critics have advocated – that could be very costly in its own right, Fullerton said.

“Reducing emissions quickly would mean shutting down coal-fired power plants, which is very costly because billions of dollars are already invested in those plants,” Fullerton said. “For better or worse, because of coal-fired plants produce nearly half of the electricity produced in Illinois. So you can’t just shut them down – although that would certainly be the fastest way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Or we could undertake extremely expensive carbon capture and sequestration, which is an untested technology. So doing it quickly makes it more expensive than, say, continuing to work on technologies and phasing in changes more slowly.

“It doesn’t have to be zero emissions – solar, wind and nuclear, all of which are expensive. We would get way more than halfway there simply by switching from coal to natural gas, on the basis of carbon per kilowatt hour.”

Fullerton also notes that substantial efforts are already underway to switch to low-carbon fuels and to embrace high-efficiency technology.

“We see plenty of efforts, both policy- and technology-based, to develop low-carbon fuels, biofuels, make cars more efficient, make houses and appliances more efficient,” he said. “Those efforts are all having an impact and should not be discounted.”

But it’s not enough.

“It’s necessary but it’s certainly not sufficient, which is why we need a price on carbon, via a tax or cap-and-trade,” Fullerton said. “Either option would provide an incentive to firms to make more energy-efficient technologies, to produce energy more efficiently and to use less carbon. And once electricity and gasoline become more expensive, that would also provide incentives for households to use less of it.”

Such a price has two different effects. Reduce the carbon per unit of output, and raise the cost of those carbon-intensive products, Fullerton said.

“And both of those effects would reduce carbon emissions,” he said. “But the current policy-makers in the U.S. and other countries do not want to raise the cost of carbon-intensive output like electricity and gasoline, instead they prefer to hand out subsidies for energy-efficiency incentives. But we need both – to become more efficient, and to use less.”

But above all else, we need a wake-up call, Fullerton said.

“Because it’s only with a rude wake-up call that we’ll change our habits, and that’s what the IPCC’s report hopes to accomplish,” he said.
By Diana Yates

Life Sciences Editor

It is better to give than to receive – at least if you’re an adolescent and you enjoy giving, a new study suggests.

The study found that 15- and 16-year-olds who feel pleasure from prosocial activities, such as giving their money to family members, are less likely to become depressed than those who get a bigger thrill from taking risks or keeping the money for themselves.

The researchers detail their findings in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The study focused on the ventral striatum, a brain region that regulates feelings of pleasure in response to rewards. Previous research has shown that ventral striatum activity tends to be more pronounced in adolescents compared to adults, suggesting that people at this age experience the pleasure of rewards more intensely than younger children or adults.

A functional brain scan, the researchers measured ventral striatum activity in adolescents who engaged in tasks that involved either giving money to others, keeping the money or making risky financial decisions in the hope of earning a reward. The team tested the subjects’ depressive symptoms and the size of the accrued gain – or loss – in that stock.

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Eleven faculty members, four academic professionals and five graduate teaching assistants at the U. of I. were honored April 22 for excellence in teaching and advising. The group was recognized during the campus’s annual Celebration of Teaching Excellence reception at the Alice Campbell Alumni Center.

Faculty members honored with the Campus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching:

Christopher D. Benson, journalism and African American studies, is described by his students as “transformational.” They develop critical thinking skills and a keen sense of social context for the work they will undertake as professionals. His goal is to “provide a solid foundation for social responsibility and media literacy.” To achieve this, Benson teaches his students how “to provide information that is fair, accurate, balanced and contextual in order to facilitate more enlightened public choices.”

A “mesmerizing presence on the lecture stage,” Tamara Chaplin, history, seeks to instill in students “the kind of insatiable hunger for learning that propels all inspired scholarship.” Her lectures and discussions continue to shape the thinking of her former students, in large part because she shows students what they are capable of. In short, Chaplin teaches her students to learn how to learn.

Ollie Watts Davis, music (choral division), provides students with instruction that brilliantly blends intellectual understanding with professional experience drawn from her successful career as a soloist. Davis values the educational diversity of her students, and by recognizing each student’s particular strengths, personal career goals, cultural background and learning style, she tailors her methodology to best instruct them.

Alan C. Hansen, agricultural and biological engineering, serves as a model teacher and has provided leadership in curriculum development that has led to major changes in the program. He oversees the senior capstone design program, serves as adviser to student clubs and organizes a unique project-centered study abroad program in South Africa. Hansen approaches instruction by pursuing active learning, developing thinking and problem-solving skills and establishing respectful relationships with students.

Institutional staff members who received the award:

Donald DeCoste, a specialist in education in the department of chemistry, has the ability “to capture the imagination of young people and to make his courses truly memorable.” His goals in teaching are that students should understand the materials at a conceptual level and understand the nature of science as a discipline. “His highest compliment from a student: ‘I am trying to teach myself how to ask the same questions you do in a lecture, so that I don’t need you anymore.’”

Jean-Paul Yeh, an instructor and the director of the Merit Workshop Program in the department of mathematics, teaches scores of undergraduates but also trains graduate teaching assistants for undergraduate mathematics courses, leads sessions on pedagogy for math teachers around the state and “virtually single-handedly” been responsible for the growth and achievements of the Merit Workshop Program during the past 10 years. Continually reflecting on the effectiveness of her formal teaching and office-hour consultations, she incorporates student feedback when designing new courses and lectures. For her, “good teaching is prepared teaching.”

Mardia J. Bishop, the director of public speaking instruction in the department of communication, manages to make public speaking manageable and enjoyable—even for those terrified of it. She has a way of bringing all students, who come from a variety of backgrounds, up to the same level, and presents the material in a way that makes her class interesting and accessible. She embodies “everything a student would want and need in a professor: intelligence, passion and affordability.”

Graduate teaching assistants who won the award: Katherine Anders, mathematics; Joseph Donovan, food science and human nutrition; Emily Dworkin, psychology; Jeremy Robinett, recreation, sport and tourism; and Melanie B. Tannenbaum, psychology. The awards recognize professors, instructional staff members and graduate teaching assistants who display consistent- ly excellent performance in the classroom. Take innovative approaches to teaching, provide a comprehensive set of their students, and make other contributions to improve instruction, including influencing the curriculum.

Faculty members and instructional staff members selected for the awards each receive $5,000 cash and a $3,000 recurring salary increase; graduate teaching assistants receive $3,500. Other winners honored:

Neil D. Pearson, a professor of finance, and Jeremy Robinett, a professor of music (harp), received the Campus Award for Excellence in Graduate and Professional Teaching. Each receives $5,000 and a $3,000 recurring salary increase.

Pearson believes in teaching a demanding course in which his students are expected to think and work hard. He has a reputation for being “tough” and “he doesn’t tolerate slackers,” but he is generous with his time for those willing to put forth the effort. He is described as being very patient as he follows through with students to ensure that they understand fundamentals.

Robinett is an energized and gifted teacher and is described by her students as “an excellent musician, a respected scholar, a dedicated teacher and mentor.” Her reputation and world-class performances on and off campus not only enhance her recruiting efforts, but also more importantly, provide a performance model for her students.

Philippe H. Guebelle, a professor of aerospace engineering, received the Campus Award for Excellence in Guiding Undergraduate Research. The $2,000 award is designed to foster and reward excellence in involving and guiding undergraduate students in scholarly research. Guebelle fully sets CAMPUS AWARDS, Page 9

Faculty and staff members honored for excellence at Illinois

EXCELLENCE IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING: FACULTY MEMBERS

Dale Bauer English

Christopher D. Benson journalism and African American studies

Tamara Chaplin history

Ollie Watts Davis music (choral division)

Alan C. Hansen agricultural and biological engineering

EXCELLENCE IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING: INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Donald DeCoste chemistry

Jennifer McNeilly mathematics

Mardia J. Bishop communication

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GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL TEACHING

Neil D. Pearson  finance

Ann Bung  music (harp)

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Philippe H. Geubelle  aerospace engineering

GRADUATE STUDENT MENTORING

Scott R. White  aerospace engineering

Charles D. Wright  English

UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING

Tonya Swink  integrative biology

Walter Hurley  animal sciences

PENSION, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Revenues System to a percentage pinned to U.S. Treasury rates, currently about 4.5 percent.

He said that change would have significantly reduced benefits. For example, an employee who would have received a $2,540 monthly annuity on June 30 would see benefits drop to $1,640 the next day when the new formula took effect—a 35 percent decrease.

So a clause was added to the new pension law that sought to guarantee that employees eligible to retire on June 30 would be locked in under the old formula. Ghosh said. Employees eligible for $2,540 on June 30 would have received that amount even if they retired months or years later.

But as currently drafted, the monthly annuity is set as the level on June 30, 2013, rather than June 30, 2014, Ghosh said. That eliminates a year of pension contributions, meaning the employee eligible for a $2,540 monthly annuity would receive $1,310, or about 28 percent less.

"Unless the language in the bill is corrected, faculty and staff members have an incentive to retire on June 30, whether they want to or not," he said. "They'd have to work another two to three years just to get back to the monthly benefit that they'd get if they retire on June 30." The problem affects not only the U of I, but all Illinois public universities.

Doug Baker, the president of Northern Illinois University, told trustees NIU could lose 20 percent of its workforce because of this provision.

"This will have a fiscal impact; it will impact our admissions, our morale and our community," he said.

"The unintended consequences of what is widely accepted as a drafting error in the law is causing irreparable harm to this institution that will ultimately cause irreparable harm to the state," Easter said.

"Our excellence is at risk, and we need to act quickly to assure faculty and staff that the retirement benefits they have earned will be preserved. Every day we wait, we lose a few more people."
Study recalculates cost of combination vaccines

By Liz Althberg

Physical Sciences Editor

One of the most popular vaccine brands for children may not be the most cost-effective choice. And doctors may be overlooking some cost savings by not fully understanding how the competition is driving the market toward what is actually a more expensive option, according to a new study from a team of researchers at the University of Illinois.

“The choice of vaccines to administer can be driven by numerous factors,” says Sheldon H. Jacobson, a co-author of the study and professor of computer science and of mathematics at the U. of I. “In an environment where vaccines are under growing public scrutiny, we have yet to fully understand how to better inform and advise all stakeholders.”

Only two vaccines are available now that immunize against five diseases with a single injection: Pediarix and Pentacel. Both are administered in three doses, and both immunize against polo, diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis. However, Pediarix immunizes against hepatitis B (HepB) while Pentacel immunizes against Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib). One or the other – but not both – can be used as the backbone for the Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule stipulated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Children also must receive either the HepB or Hib shot, depending on which one is missing from their combination vaccine.

“Pediarix will gravitate toward the combination vaccine that provides the best value,” said graduate student Banafsheh Behzad, the first author of the study. “From the perspective of a health care provider, the important question to ask is which combination vaccine should be used to attain the maximum overall cost, given a fixed cost of an injection?”

In a previous analysis, the researchers found that Pediarix is the most cost-effective combination vaccine. Yet in the public sector, Pentacel’s sales have been significantly higher. The new study explores whether other factors may be influencing this market response.

The researchers found two complicating factors: Pediarix and HepB immunization can affect health care providers’ decisions when comparing combination vaccines. In the United States are given a dose of HepB vaccine at birth, so only two more doses are required. Therefore, children who receive three doses of Pediarix get “extra-immunized” against HepB. However, if the Merck Hib vaccine is used, one less dose is required, so children who receive Pentacel may be extra-immunized against Hib.

“Our analysis suggests that the relative uptake of the two combination vaccines Pediarix and Pentacel can be explained by health care providers either recognizing the birth dose of Hepatitis B (and hence, choosing to administer Pediarix) or ignoring the fact that H. influenzae Type B (and hence, choosing to administer Pentacel),” Behzad said.

When the costs of extra immunizations are added to the costs of the combination vaccines, Pediarix ultimately is the lower cost. The prevalence of Pentacel, however, suggests that other factors may be affecting this market response.
May 1, 2014

Veterinarian James Lowe
on the porcine viral epidemic

Editor’s note: The porcine epidemic diarrhea virus has killed at least 4 million young pigs since being identified in the U.S. one year ago. A research team led by U. of I. veterinarian James Lowe recently concluded and published a study investigating how the devastating virus is being spread. Lowe is a clinical instructor in the department of veterinary clinical medicine, where he teaches production medicine. He also conducts a private practice and assisting livestock producers with strategic decision-making and process improvement through his firm Lowe Consulting Ltd. Lowe spoke recently with News Bureau writer Shariita Forrest about the research team’s findings.

What was the nature of the study that your research group conducted and what did you find?

We did some work last summer to investigate the role that livestock transportation – the trucks that take pigs to market – has played in the spread of the disease early in the outbreak. We had a great collaboration of practicing veterinarians in six Midwest states who went out to packing plants and sampled 100 trucks at each plant before and after they unloaded. We wanted to determine if the trucks were contaminated with PEDV before they arrived or were they contaminated at the plants.

The data indicate that for every truck that entered the plants contaminated, two trucks were contaminated when they existed. That was consistent across all the plants.

There are people who walk on and off between the trucks and the loading docks, such as truck drivers and people who work in the plants. We had some evidence to suggest that the more contact between the people in the plant, the inside of the trailer and the truck driver, the more likely the trucks were to be contaminated at departure. We surmised that they were carrying the virus on their boots.

Are decontamination measures in place to prevent the spread of diseases in this manner?

Currently, we wash, chemically disinfect and then dry those trailers – and drying is the critical step. There are a couple of ways to dry them. We allow them to sit, or, commonly, we heat the trailers by putting them in a room with a giant furnace and blowing hot air into them so they heat up to 160 degrees F.

But, really, the “trailer baker” method isn’t any more effective than allowing the trailers to dry on their own. It’s just that in cold weather, it’s hard to get a spot inside, and the trailers tend to freeze instead of dry when sitting outdoors.

In the U.S. today, we currently don’t have enough trailers and enough truck washes to wash all the trailers that transport livestock. It takes about two hours to wash a truck, and another hour for it to dry. If every time we hauled a load of pigs we had to dry the trailer in between, the trucks couldn’t get as many pigs hauled in a day; therefore, we would need many more trailers.

It takes a lot of money to buy trailers, build truck washes and hire enough drivers. Until now, it did not appear that the returns – the reduction in potential disease spread – on washing and drying trailers were high enough to justify the investment for all of the pigs that were moved to market.

It costs about $1.50 per pig – or about 1 percent of the total production cost – to wash and dry a trailer. So producers tend to not get much of a financial return in washing and drying every trailer that’s used to move pigs to market.

However, it is common practice to wash and dry all the trailers that haul pigs between farms. As an example, all the trailers that move baby pigs between farms – or those that move replacement-breeding stock – are routinely washed and dried. We knew that we had a system that was at high risk, but in the study we wanted to see how high a risk that is. Our data suggested that it’s a real issue.

How can the system be fixed and the disease outbreaks controlled?

The way around it long term will be building more truck washes, buying more trailers and changing some internal procedures so that the sites with baby pigs don’t ever have contact with the market facilities.

We need to start thinking about how to separate the systems that breed pigs from the facilities that raise them. We share a lot of people and things among the facilities for both herds – trucks, trailers and drivers; maintenance personnel; and people who deliver supplies.

The devastation with this disease is in the breeding herd. The virus affects all pigs, but in older pigs it’s pretty mild. In pigs under 7 days old, PEDV is basically 100 percent fatal. There’s nothing we can do to save those piglets.

We’ve made a lot of progress in the past year, but there’s still a lot that we don’t know.

Are researchers any closer to knowing the origins of the virus and its path into the U.S.?

We know that the first case was diagnosed in Ohio, and that the genetic origins of the virus are Chinese. But we don’t know how it got from Asia to the U.S. or exactly when it was introduced. It could have been here for months before we actually got lucky and found it.

PEDV could have gone undetected in finishing barns for months before the Ohio case was diagnosed because it looks very similar at first to another disease, transmissible gastroenteritis. TGE is very common in finishing barns, and because it’s very mild and not fatal, we tend not to test for it, and rely on clinical signs to make diagnoses.

Was the U.S. just caught unprepared for the PEDV outbreak?

PEDV is not a disease that’s regulated by the federal government or part of the bucket of diseases that the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s veterinary service deals with. So they did not have a formal response plan when the disease showed up and didn’t move very quickly at the beginning.

See AMW: LOWE, PAGE 13
Scientists have long sought to track interactions between small molecules in solution, said Rienstra, an ecules in solution,” said Rienstra, a standard technique. “By developing several new NMR experiments to study amphotericin in the presence of membranes,” said Rienstra. “We are very excited about this discovery,” Burke said. “But a great deal of work lies ahead to see if this compound has the potential to serve as a less toxic treatment for fungal infections in human patients. At this point, we just have a very promising compound. Most importantly, thanks to the collaboration between these two labs, we now know where to look for solutions to this longstanding problem.” Preclinical trials of the new compound have begun, the researchers said. The National Institutes of Health and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute supported portions of this work. ◆

Drug trial

U. of I. chemists developed analog of a new tuberculosis drug that could treat many other diseases and defy resistance. (from left, research scientist Lici A. Anderson, chemistry professor Eric Oldfield, graduate students Grant Hisao, Kai Li and chemistry professor Martin Burke. Photo by L. Brian Stauffer)

Fungal findings

A new collaboration solved a decades-old medical mystery involving an anti-fungal drug. Pictured, from left: graduate student Grant Hisao; chemistry professor Martin Burke; graduate students Alex Cioffi, Katrina Diaz, Marvas Tuttle and Mary Clay; chemistry professor Chad Rienstra; and researchers Brian Uus, Tom Anderson and Matt Eno. (Photo by L. Brian Stauffer)

Team discovers how anti-fungal drug works

By Diana Yates

Scientists have solved a decades-old medical mystery – and in the process have found a potentially less toxic way to fight invasive fungal infections, which kill about 1.5 million people a year. The researchers say they now understand the mechanism of action of amphotericin, an antifungal drug that has been in use for more than 50 years – even though it is nearly as toxic to human cells as it is to the microbes it attacks.

A report of the new findings appears in Nature Chemical Biology. “This molecule is one of the most challenging to work with because it has a very complex structure, is poorly soluble and is sensitive to light, oxygen and acid,” Burke said.

Amphotericin also interacts with membranes, which are notoriously difficult to study. Many labs, including Burke’s, have tried to figure out the three-dimensional structure of amphotericin by crystallizing it, a standard technique. So far, all attempts have failed.

“We developed several new NMR experiments to study amphotericin in the presence of membranes,” Oldfield said. “Given its chemical structure, we thought that some of the enzymes that we study as cancer and anti-parasitic drug targets also could be SQ109 targets. We hoped that we could make some analogs that would be more potent against tuberculosis, and maybe even against parasites.”

By studying SQ109 for themselves, Oldfield’s team determined that SQ109 does indeed block other proteins involved in critical functions in bacteria, fungi and parasites – but not humans. They found it inhibits two enzymes that make the molecule menaquinone, which is needed by the cell’s energy. Then they found that SQ109 had a third action, called uncoupling, which essentially transformed the membrane from a wall to a screen door.

Then, the team created a dozen chemical analogs – molecules that are naturally and functionally similar, but tweaked to be more effective or less toxic – and tested them against cultures of bacteria, fungi, parasites and human cells. They found that they could make analogs with maximum effectiveness against certain classes of pathogenic bacteria – but conceded that the drug could have other actions within the cell as well since it was found to kill other bacteria and fungi that lacked the target protein. Oldfield believed he could identify those actions – and perhaps improve upon SQ109.

“I was reading Science magazine one day and saw a story about researchers who had developed new NMR experiments to study amphotericin in the presence of membranes.” Oldfield said. “Given its chemical structure, we thought that some of the enzymes that we study as cancer and anti-parasitic drug targets also could be SQ109 targets. We hoped that we could make some analogs that would be more potent against tuberculosis, and maybe even against parasites.”

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Drug trial

U. of I. chemists developed analog of a new tuberculosis drug that could treat many other diseases and defy resistance. (from left, research scientist Lici A. Anderson, chemistry professor Eric Oldfield, graduate student Shannon Bogne, graduate student Xiaxin Feng, research scientist Xin Li and chemistry professor Eric Oldfield.)

The drug could treat other diseases, evade resistance

By Liz Ahlberg

A drug under clinical trials to treat tuberculosis could be the basis for a class of broad-spectrum molecules that act against various bacteria, fungal infections and parasites, yet evade resistance, according to a study by U. of I. scientists and collaborators.

Led by U. of I. chemistry professor Eric Oldfield, the team determined the different ways that drug SQ109 attracts the tuberculosis bacterium, how the drug can be tweaked to target other pathogens from yeast to malaria – and how targeting multiple pathways simultaneously can render resistant pathogens ineffective.

Resistance in many cases arises because the pathogens develop resistance against a single drug. The team determined that SQ109 is multifunctional because it had a third action, called uncoupling, which essentially transformed the membrane from a wall to a screen door. Then, the team created a dozen chemical analogs – molecules that are naturally and functionally similar, but tweaked to be more effective or less toxic – and tested them against cultures of bacteria, fungi, parasites and human cells. They found that they could make analogs with maximum effectiveness against certain classes of pathogens; for example, one analog turned out to be five times more potent against the tuberculosis bacterium than the original SQ109. They also found analogs that kill the parasites that cause the most serious and common form of malaria.

Now, the researchers are working with international collaborators to apply SQ109 analogs against other infectious diseases rampant in the tropical world, such as Chagas’ disease, leishmaniasis and sleeping sickness. Oldfield believes that multiple-target drugs, like SQ109 and its analogs, hold the key to antibiotic development in the age of drug-resistant “superbugs.” Evidence supports that assessment. So far, in experiments with tuberculosis, no instances of SQ109 resistance have been reported. The National Institutes of Health supported this work. ◆

Making amphotericin less toxic, but cin, which kills the patient.” And so you’re stuck between powerful side effects,” he said. “It’s limited by its toxicity to human cells.” "For over 50 years, the mechanism by which amphotericin kills cells has remained a mystery,” Burke said. “But we are finally seeing the fog start to clear. This new understanding allows us to focus on how to make this molecule less toxic to human cells.”

"When I was a medical student, they used to call it ‘amphoterrible’ in the clinic. But it has very powerful side effects,” he said. "And so you’re stuck between having a drug that can kill an invasive fungal infection in their blood disease," said Burke.

"Invasive fungal infections are rampant in the tropical world, such as Chagas’ disease, leishmaniasis and sleeping sickness. Oldfield believes that multiple-target drugs, like SQ109 and its analogs, hold the key to antibiotic development in the age of drug-resistant “superbugs.” Evidence supports that assessment. So far, in experiments with tuberculosis, no instances of SQ109 resistance have been reported. The National Institutes of Health supported this work. ◆

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U. of I. expert: Income inequality partially driven by tax laws

By Phil Ciciora
Business and Law Editor

Income inequality is partly a self-inflicted problem, and elected officials have used the law to exacerbate the problem, a U. of I. expert on taxation issues says.

According to law professor Richard L. Kaplan, tax laws tilt the playing field in favor of the financial elites, making economic inequality a somewhat solvable problem if Congress were inclined to change things.

“The issue is how much do we care about inequality,” said Kaplan, the Peer and Sarah Pedersen Professor of Law. “Our politicians crafted and implemented these policies. If we want to steer a different course, we need to elect people who want to do so.”

For example, Congress could lower the federal estate tax exemption from $5.34 million to a smaller amount or raise the estate tax rate on larger estates – changes that could dilute the concentration of wealth, Kaplan says.

“That is, after all, one of the main justifications for the estate tax even though it was scheduled for complete repeal only a few years ago,” said Kaplan, an internationally recognized expert on U.S. taxation and tax policy. “In this context, the current debate about raising the minimum wage is largely symbolic in terms of reducing economic inequality.”

Kaplan notes that favored tax treatment of capital gains is the principal reason why some very wealthy people such as Warren Buffett and Bill Gates pay much lower income tax rates than the people who work for them.

“While President Obama has managed to raise tax rates on such gains twice in the past two years, capital gains are still taxed much less heavily than wages or interest income,” he said. “Unless Congress is willing to tax capital gains like other income, which last happened during the final years of the Reagan administration, the tax code will continue to favor very-high income individuals.”

In the recent best seller “Capital in the Twenty-First Century,” the French economist Thomas Piketty advocates an 80 percent income tax on income above $500,000.

Even though marginal tax rates under Obama have gone up, “We’re never going to go there,” Kaplan said. “That said, we could certainly add higher rates to income above $450,000, where our top rates now begin. After all, annual income of $5 million is very different from $500,000, but our tax code doesn’t distinguish between two surgeons who are married to each other and a corporate executive making $5 million a year.”

States could also pass higher income tax rates that kick in at higher levels of income, Kaplan says.

“Of course, Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan tried that recently by proposing a millionaire’s tax, but that idea quickly disappeared,” Kaplan said. “Ultimately, the issue of economic inequality is a question of social values.

“I’m not sure that inequality is a major American concern,” he said. “We still entertain the notion that people can rise up through a combination of personal effort and luck. Even if that narrative is somewhat overstated, it remains the reigning ethos of this country.”

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AMW: LOWE. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

There are a lot of conversations going on about how we weigh that up, which will be critical to preventing the next disease outbreak. With the amount of global trade, we are going to continue to have diseases that enter the U.S. from other countries. We’ve got to figure out how to build a data-capture system to help us understand where the virus is and how it’s moving.

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Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory

Materials research workshop is May 20

The Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory will host a workshop May 20 on the future of building better research environments.

Functional Materials workshop will be held at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Participants must register to attend the workshop, which focuses on the development of functional materials, including those used in electronics, electronics biology, and energy systems.

The workshop will feature talks by leading scientists in the field, including keynote speakers from the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the University of Minnesota.

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear about the latest research in functional materials and to network with other researchers in the field.

The workshop will be held at the Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory on the University of Illinois campus. Attendees must register in advance to attend.

For more information, please visit the Frederick Seitz Materials Research Laboratory website or contact the organizers at materials-research@illinois.edu.
The College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences honored outstanding faculty and staff members at the annual Paul A. Funk Recognition Award Banquet April 14 at Pear Tree Estate in rural Champaign.

Paul A. Funk Recognition Award is the college’s highest honor. The recipients of this year’s awards – Isaac K.O. Cann, a professor of animal science; Donald Lee Agans Sr., a professor of agricultural and biological engineering; and William J. Sherrick, a professor of agricultural and consumer economics – headlined this year’s event, which honored annually to faculty members for outstanding achievement and major contributions to the betterment of agriculture, natural resources and human systems.

The awards program was established in 1970 by the Paul A. Funk Foundation of Bloomington, as a memorial to Paul A. Funk, who attended the college as a member of the class of 1929 and devoted his life to agriculture.

The Faculty Land-Grant Professorial Career Excellence Award went to Sharon M. Donovan, a professor of food science and human nutrition, and the College Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching went to Michael J. Miller, a professor of food science and human nutrition.

The Senior Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching went to Nicole J. Engeseth, a professor in the department of vegetable science and advisory services.

The Team Award for Excellence was given to the Illinois AgriMedia team, which has been downloaded by thousands of individual employees and teams for their reference and training needs. The team’s materials are the most accessible on campus.

Kelsey McCoy, the coordinator of communications and media at the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, where she is responsible for internal and external communications. McCoy has a proven ability to get the job done and added stiffer penalties. Because of the new law, the response to contracts. In 2010, the U. of I. processed 100,000 pages of responsive documents. Act. The Illini Student Technology Board, which is relevant to the field and provides a forum for the exchange of ideas among its academic and professional members.

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The Fynaeth Professorial Career Excellence Award went to Sharon M. Donovan, a professor of food science and human nutrition, and the College Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching went to Michael J. Miller, a professor of food science and human nutrition.

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Library makes one-of-a-kind books freely available online

By Dusty Rhodes
Arts and Humanities Editor

A mong librarians and booksellers, hymnals and children’s books are infamous for their low survival rate, as a result of overuse and abuse. So when the staff at the U. of I. Rare Book and Manuscript Library found an eight-page unbound copy of the ABCs and common prayers published in 1536 — more than 450 years ago — they immediately ran the title through several international databases to see if any other libraries had a copy. None did.

That meant the lengthy titled little book, “The ABC with the Pater noster Ave, Credo, and x. conaundemuses in Englyshe newly translated and set forth, at the kynges most gracefull commandement” would be sent to the library’s Digital Content Creation lab to be scanned and uploaded to its Project Unica initiative to preserve and share books that exist as sole survivors.

Valerie Hotchkiss, the director of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, said Project Unica is already has more than 280 of these lone volumes online, with more scanned and waiting to be uploaded. She recently opened Project Unica to other university libraries to share their unique books on the site.

“The concept of a unicum is difficult for the average library user to understand, since books, by their very nature, exist in more than one copy. That’s the genius of Gutenberg’s invention, after all,” Hotchkiss said. “But fate and circumstance have sometimes led to the destruction of every copy, save one. And the U. of I. has quite a number of absolutely unique printed books.”

English literature is one of the Illinois library’s specialties, so most of the items in Project Unica originated in the United Kingdom. Many of the items are parliamentary acts, addressing issues ranging from murder to improvement of “flaxen and hempen” manufacturing, the regulation of chimney sweeps and the abolition of the death penalty for hanging the corpses of executed criminals “in chains.” Hotchkiss feels certain there are other copies of these documents.

If you’re in England, there’s got to be a collection of acts, but nobody’s cataloged it yet,” she said. “So for now, we’re the only ones.”

Besides these government documents, there’s an assortment of plays, poems, religious texts, satires, sermons and speeches. There are leather-bound trial transcripts, in-

cluded a ceiling portion — this time with a Victorian equivalent of today’s television crime shows — are already online in Project Unica. These broadsides, usually written in first person, ostensibly by the criminal, typically tell the story of some gruesome murder or other newsworthy offense and consequent punishment, always in verse.

“The Awful Sentience and Lamentations of Keene,” for example, begins:

“I am a sad and wretched man,
Am on the gallows doomed to die.”

“A cheerier example, “Beware of Ga-

Derners,” apparently meant to rouse London robbers preying on female pedestrians, begins:

“O! says the maid, don’t be afraid;
Stick ‘em, lick ‘em, pinch ‘em,
They’re cowardly rascals, villains base.”

The London police have got ‘em.
It will be a pretty long time before
They’ll go out again garrotting.”

Hotchkiss ensures each of these documents receives the same treatment, which includes a high-quality digital scan of the outside (front and back), the spine, the printed pages and the flyleaves, even if they’re totally blank.

“We show people everything,” she said. “We give them everything they would have if they held the book in their hands.”

Among the Rare Book and Manuscript Library’s unica is a bound copy of “The Solemn League and Covenant” — a landmark 1643 agreement between the English Parliament and Scotland meant to cement support for the reformed religion. The printer who assembled the copy owned by the RBML apparently used a medieval manuscript as scrap paper to add heft to the binding. The sheepskin flyleaves have small holes left by blemishes in the animal’s skin. Some pages have pencil marks made by booksellers and librarians over the centuries.

“you never know when that might be important to someone,” Hotchkiss said.

She predicts that Project Unica will eventually have more than 5,000 books from Illinois alone — all available free of charge, online, for anyone who wants to see these “supremely rare” items. The ability to share the library’s treasures so generously makes Hotchkiss happy.

“It makes me feel better about security, about preservation, all that,” Hotchkiss said. “And for somebody halfway around the world to have access to these books that exist in only one copy — I think that is terrific.”

By Alicia P. Rodriguez, the academic advisor and administrative coordinator for Latin/Latino studies, left, and Adrianna Gonzalez, a senior, show off a small section of the mural, created 30 years ago by a U. of I. student as an act of protest following rumors that the La Casa house was going to be demolished.

“The mural represents the legacy of Latino students on campus and their role in importance to the student population here.”

— Alicia P. Rodriguez

LA CASA MURAL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The fate of the house has been in question almost since day in 1974 it was offered to La Casa, which previously was meeting in the Illini Union. A year after La Casa moved in, Kann said, there were rumors that the university planned to demolish the house — though those plans never materialized.

Evolving the activist spirit inherent in Latino mural making, when Martinez learned of the possibility the house might be razed, he started painting on its walls. To him, it was more about cultural ownership than whose name was on the deed.

“It’s established not just identity, but a place on campus for Latinos to be together,” she said.

In 2003, Martinez was commissioned by the university to finish the work, which included a ceiling portion — this time with an artistic emphasis in its construction — painted on a removable canvas.

Adrianna Gonzalez, a senior in community health and Latino/a Studies who is an intern preparing an oral history of Martinez, said her recent interview with him revealed he still is passionate about the mural and its mission.

“It represents 40 years of trying to have our voices heard on campus,” Gonzalez said. “This mural shows the Latino struggle to be a valuable part of this university.”

“While I was a student, I found the mural to be a valuable part of this university.”

— Adrianna Gonzalez

Unifying theme: Alicia P. Rodriguez, the academic advisor and administrative coordinator for Latin/Latino studies, and Adrianna Gonzalez, a senior, show off a small section of the mural, created 30 years ago by a U. of I. student as an act of protest following rumors that the La Casa house was going to be demolished. Gonzalez is preparing an oral history of the artist.