A new drug that prompts cancer cells to self-destruct while sparing healthy cells is now entering phase I clinical trials in humans. The drug, called PAC-1, first showed promise in the treatment of pet dogs with spontaneously occurring cancers, and is still in clinical trials in dogs with osteosarcoma.

The university was discovered and is being developed based on the hypothesis that most cancers have elevated levels of an enzyme called procaspase-3,” said U. of I. chemistry professor Paul Hergenrother, who discovered the enzyme, is elevated in cancer cells, it targets cancer cells over non-cancerous cells.”

Early tests of the drug’s effectiveness were begun at the University of Illinois by Tim Hergenrother, who tested PAC-1 in cancer patients. These clinical trials helped the researchers find the best way to deliver the drug — it is now in pill form for both human and canine patients — and led to new insights into the drug’s activity and potential, Fan said.

“PAC-1’s greatest strengths is that it synergizes with other drugs, increasing the anti-cancer effects of PAC-1 more than any of the other drugs,” Hergenrother said. “It also crosses the blood-brain barrier very well,” making it a good candidate for the treatment of brain cancer — in humans and dogs.

“Treatment for brain cancer is a huge area of need,” said Dr. Arshad Razvi, chief of the U. of I. Veterinary Clinical Hospital in Urbana. “We have a very different risk profile for brain cancer patients at the U of I. Cancer Center and at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore. The studies, which were written by prominent academics and based on discussions and conferences organized by the National Bureau of Economic Research, explore how various practices at institutions of higher education — such as the drawdown of endowment resources, the awarding of financial aid, and spending on research — responded to the most severe economic contraction since the Great Depression.

“The key takeaway from the book is the importance of looking at the finances of an institution of higher education holistically and through a risk management lens,” said Brown, also a research associate for NBER.

The studies also examine asset allocation strategies and investment opportunities, and demonstrate that universities’ behavior can be modeled using economic principles, Brown said.

“It appears that some of the decisions about endowment management and payout policy at some universities are made in a manner that is not sufficiently integrated with the strategic priorities and spending needs of the institution the endowment serves,” he said.

According to Brown, university leaders must first define their long-term vision and strategic priorities. Once that is accomplished, they should ensure that all financial policies of the university are consistent with that vision.

“If different institutions have different strategic goals and spending needs, or if different institutions face different risks, then they should probably have different financial policies,” Brown said. “For example, a public institution that is suffering from severe declines in public funding would probably have a very different risk profile than a private institution with a large endowment. As a result, it would be very surprising if the optimal financial management plans for these institutions were similar.”

The book also is relevant to the SIE BOOK, Page 8.
Faculty reflect on history, importance of shared governance

By Mike Helenthal

Dr. Burton, a well-respected professor of history, served as senate president during a time that had significant impact on the university's history. He taught the concept to others in workshops and seminars, highlighting its importance to the quality of the institution that he's served as a leader in.

Burton said he had been known as a leader in faculty governance, which he credits for the open and creative academic environment that exists today. He said the faculty is the university, and that shared governance is essential for the university to thrive.

For shared governance to work, everyone who hasn't been involved must participate, he said, with faculty members on campus who haven't become involved in local governance leading the way.

She said the campus already had a head start on such efforts, considering last year's adoption of a long-term financial strategy, which sets forth as some of its goals stewarding the university's most precious assets.

A healthy university is one that has a strong academic tradition, maintains open communication with stakeholders, and is able to adapt to changing circumstances. This is true not only for the university itself, but also for its students and faculty.

The future of higher education is uncertain, but universities like the University of Illinois have a bright future if they continue to innovate and adapt to the changing landscape. This is what faculty, staff, and students at the University of Illinois are doing now, both on campus and off, and it is a testament to their dedication and commitment to the institution.
On the Job

Rebecca Goben

By Mike Helenthal
Assistant Editor

Rebecca Goben, a business administration graduate from the University of Illinois, is the assistant director for recruitment for the College of Business. Goben works at the University of Illinois’ top-ranked business career services center, where she manages various recruiting programs and networking events, including the fall and spring business career fairs.

Goben said that she was more about engaging with employers to maximize their recruiting efforts, meaning she didn’t have as much contact with faculty and staff members as her current position.

"I really enjoyed working alongside my BCS family – and now I feel like I’ve been adopted by a new family," she said.

In 2011, she moved to the dean’s office in the College of Business as a business administrative associate, changing from academic professional to civil service classification. A year ago she was promoted to administrative associate, changing from the Office of the Provost.

Goben said she likes the varied work responsibilities of the job, which has her frequently working with other campus offices, including the Office of the Provost.

"There are lots of different tasks that need to be done, and I’m the extra hand that’s what is encouraged here. Everyone is willing to share their time and knowledge at any time."

Three faculty members awarded Sloan Research Fellowships

By Austin Keating
News Bureau intern

Three U. of I. faculty members are recipients of 2015 Sloan Research Fellowships from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

The recipients – Ryan J. Foley, Alison R. Fout and Thomas E. Kuhlman – stand beside 126 other early-career scientists and scholars from 57 colleges and universities chosen for the fellowship. The two-year program awards the fellows $50,000 to pursue their choice of research topics and gives the researchers flexibility in applying funds toward their research.

Foley, a professor of astronomy and of physics, studies exploding stars and other celestial transient objects. He discovered and characterized a peculiar class of exploding stars, Type Iax supernovae. He also uses Type Ia supernovae, more abundant and homogenous cousins of Type Ia supernovae, to measure the expansion and investigate the content of the universe. Foley uses more than a dozen telescopes around the world and in space, including the Hubble Space Telescope, to improve our knowledge of the universe.

Foley earned his doctorate in astrophysics from the University of California at Berkeley in 2008. Prior to coming to Illinois in 2013, he held a Clay postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

Fout, a professor of chemistry, focuses on addressing environmental, biological and energy problems by designing transition metal complexes and catalysts to understand the activation and transformation of greenhouse gases into novel compounds.

Fout earned her doctorate from Indiana University in 2009. Prior to coming to Illinois in 2012, she held a postdoctoral position at Harvard University. She also has received a 2014 National Science Foundation CAREER award.

Kuhlman, a physics professor, works at the intersection of theoretical physics and molecular microbiology, particularly studying gene expression in E. coli. He observes interactions of proteins with DNA in living bacterial cells, and then uses these theoretical models in further experiments.

Kuhlman earned his doctorate in physics from the University of California at San Diego in 2007. Prior to coming to Illinois in 2012, he held a postdoctoral fellowship with the department of molecular biology at Princeton University.
Some members of the campus community who contributed to the success of last year’s drive are listed here. This list was compiled from payroll and fund-drive records at the end of the 2013 Campus Charitable Fund Drive. We apologize if any names were inadvertently omitted. This list is also available at ccfd.illinois.edu.

**LEADER**

Michael Lindberg, members of the Lindberg Foundation, contributed $1,860,000, or above.

**FOUNDER**

Lewis and Susan Hopkins, members of the Hopkins Foundation, contributed $1,400,000.

**LEADER**

Jenny Zadeh, members of the Zadeh Foundation, contributed $1,000,000.

**FOUNDER**

Brian Anderson, members of the Anderson Foundation, contributed $1,000,000.

**LEADER**

Marianne Alleyne, members of the Alleyne Foundation, contributed $400,000.

**FOUNDER**

Mark Netter & Eve Harwood, members of the Netter Foundation, contributed $100,000.

**LEADER**

Kim Capron, members of the Capron Foundation, contributed $80,000.

**FOUNDER**

Campus Charitable Fund Drive
Thanks to a one-time program sponsored by the Office of the Provost for Excellence in Research, campus researchers will be able to use the latest in microscopes, wind tunnels, mass spectrometers, electron beams, surgical robots and a number of additional systems and tools that enable research and discovery.

One of those tools, a $600,000 small-animal optical imaging system, will arrive on campus this summer.

“Without this program, it is unlikely we would have returned this system out right,” said Stephen Boppart, the principal investigator on the proposal and the U. of I.’s director of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, who also is the Abel Bliss Professor of Engineering with appointments in the departments of electrical and computer engineering and bioengineering.

Ilesanmi Adesida, the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs, said securing funding for equipment can be challenging, in part because of the scarcity of federal programs that specifically support equipment purchases.

“Doing cutting-edge research requires cutting-edge equipment,” he said. “We know that without the the support of the best faculty and other research staff isn’t simply about salaries and benefits. It’s about access to the infrastructure and tools that enable discovery.”

Boppart, also a full-time faculty member of the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology, said faculty members supported his imaging equipment proposal.

“This is a relatively small, compact imaging system that allows for three-dimensional imaging of small animals (rodents), samples and biospecimens,” he said.

The system can detect various types of emitted light and create 3-D images, even if the light is coming from inside the sample or speciment. It is commonly used in cancer, neuroscience, and infectious disease research to visualize the disease process and provide funding of at least 50 percent of the purchase price of the equipment. The percentage was considered an integral part of the proposal – purchases just those benefiting dozens of researchers.

In all, 33 of the 45 proposals were funded through a program sponsored by the Office of the Provost. The program requires that the equipment be installed and functional by the end of calendar year 2015.

Peter Schiffer, the vice chancellor for research, said details about how to qualify for access to the equipment would be announced once the equipment is delivered. "This is a relatively small, compact imaging system that allows for three-dimensional imaging of small animals (rodents), samples and biospecimens." He said this is about creating transformative infrastructure that will significantly enhance the work of the Illinois research community and position us to be more competitive in securing sponsored funding.

The OVCR website has a list of the facilities that offer access to this equipment and additional resources for researchers.

Animated videos bring Ebola education to West Africa

By Diana Yates, Life Sciences Editor

In early 2014, just before Ebola surged in West Africa, leaders of Scientific Animations Without Borders visited with faculty members and students at Njala University in Sierra Leone. The SAWBO team was looking for potential collaborators to help create and distribute its animated health and agricultural videos in Sierra Leone. A few months later, the Njala team asked SAWBO to work with them on animated videos about Ebola.

Today, the Ebola animations are in the hands of teams at Njala University and the Sierra Leone YMCA for distribution within their country. The videos are available in several West African languages and can be distributed on the Web, shared between several West African languages and can be downloaded on tablets and cellphones, and pushed out to cellphone to phone via Bluetooth technology, even in areas of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea without plumbing or electricity but with solar-powered cellphone chargers. They have solar-powered cellphone chargers.

Another challenge facing those trying to bring Ebola education to people in remote areas is in September 2014, in one of several incidents in which health care workers were attacked. Villagers killed eight visitors, including health care workers and journalist.

International collaboration Working with international collaborators, Scientific Animations Without Borders created an Ebola prevention video that is now being shown in West African hospitals and clinics.

Cellphone animations have the potential to reach more people than teams of health care workers can, sharing information from phone to phone via Bluetooth technology, said Pittendrigh.

"Cellphones are very common in Africa," he said. "It is not unusual to find villages without plumbing or electricity but with solar-powered cellphone charging stations.

SAWBO makes the videos available in SAWBO Page 7.

Ads removed for online version

ON THE WEB

ONLINE VIDEO

See SAWBO, Page 7
Long-term fertilizer use disrupts plant-microbe mutualisms

By Diana Yates
Life Sciences Editor

W hen exposed to nitrogen fertilizer over a period of years, nitrogen-fixing bacteria called rhizobia evolve to become less beneficial to legumes—the plants they normally serve, researchers report in a new study.

These findings, reported in the journal Evolution, may be of little interest to farmers, who generally grow only one type of plant and can always add more fertilizer to boost plant growth. But in natural areas adjacent to farmland, where fertilizer runoff occurs, or in areas where nitrogen oxides from the burning of fossil fuels settle, a change in the quality of soil rhizobia could have “far-reaching ecological and environmental consequences,” the researchers wrote.

“The nitrogen that we apply to agricultural fields doesn’t stay on those fields, and atmospheric nitrogen deposition doesn’t stay by the power plant that generates it,” said U. of I. plant biology professor Katy Heath, who worked with Jennifer Lau, of Michigan State University. “So this work is not just about a fertilized soybean field. Worldwide, the cycle is off. We’ve changed it fundamentally.”

Not that long ago, before the advent of industrial fertilizers and the widespread use of fossil fuels, soil nitrogen was a scarce commodity. Some plants, the legumes, found a way to procure the precious nitrogen they needed from rhizobia: “The rhizobia fix nitrogen—from atmospheric nitrogen that we’re breathing in and out all the time—to plant-available forms,” Heath said. “Plants can’t just take it up from the atmosphere; they have to get it in the form of nitrate or ammonium.”

In return, legumes shelter the rhizobia in their roots and supply them with carbon. This partnership benefits the bacteria and gives legumes an advantage in nitrogen-poor soils.

Previous studies have shown that nitrogen fertilizers can affect the diversity of species that grow in natural areas, Heath said. In areas polluted with fertilizer runoff, for example, legumes and other plants become more common.

In the new analysis, Heath and her colleagues looked at six long-term ecological research fields at Michigan State University’s Kellogg Biological Station. Two experimental plots were located in each of six different fields. One plot in each field had been fertilized with nitrogen for more than two decades; the other, a control plot, had never been fertilized.

The researchers isolated rhizobia from the nodules of legumes in fertilized and unfertilized plots. In a greenhouse experiment, they tested how these bacteria influenced plant growth and how the researchers found that the plants grown with the nitrogen-exposed rhizobia produced 17 to 30 percent less biomass and significantly less chlorophyll than plants grown with rhizobia from the unfertilized plots.

A genetic analysis of the rhizobium revealed that the composition of the bacterial populations was similar between fertilized and unfertilized plots: The same families of rhizobia were present in each. But rhizobia from the fertilized plots had evolved in a way that made them less useful to the legumes, Heath said. “This study tells us something about mutualisms and how they evolved,” she said. “Mutualisms depend on balance of trade between the partners, this special nitrogen-carbon economy in the soil, for example. And when the economy changes—say when nitrogen is no longer scarce—these mutualisms might go away.”

The research team also included Dylan Weese, of Michigan State University and St. Ambrose University; and Bryn Dentinger, of the Royal Botanic Gardens, in Surrey, U.K.

The National Science Foundation supported this research.

SAWBO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6
Various formats so they can be displayed on many types of electronic devices, he said.

Because the videos are animated and narrated in local languages, they can deliver information in a culturally neutral context, said SAWBO co-founder Julia Bello-Bravo, the assistant director of the Center for African Studies at the U. of I. “We are a sort of crowd-sourcing operation,” Bello-Bravo said. “Once the videos are done, other groups will take the content and put information in the proper cultural context, and translators and voice-over volunteers step up to help with new languages,” she said.

“Eboho is only one of dozens of health and agricultural topics SAWBO addresses. All of the animated videos are available online at no cost for other groups to use in their educational programs.”

Helen M. Birdsell, 76, died Feb. 24 at her Champaign home. She worked at the U. of I. for 22 years, retiring in 1999 as an account technician for physiology and biophysics. Helen Burnsmont, 95, died Feb. 16 at Mason Point Nursing Home, Sullivan, Illinois. She worked at the U. of I. for 22 years, retiring in 1988 as a typist clerk III from the agronomy department.


Portia Ailyn Smith, 89, died Feb. 23 at her Champaign home. She worked in technical files at the Illinois State Geological Survey in the 1940s, and then as a research assistant in mineral economics from 1964 until retirement in 1975.
Symposium looks at music and the Great War

By Jodi Heckel
Arts and Humanities Editor

A two-day symposium hosted by the U. of I. School of Music will look at creative responses to World War I, starting with the musical interpretations of the iconic poem “In Flanders Fields.”

The symposium “1915: Music, Memory, and the Great War” takes place March 10-11. It is part of the U. of I.’s cross-campus initiative, “The Great War: Experiences, Representations, Effects,” which marks the 100th anniversary of the start of World War I. The event is free and open to the public.

The symposium was organized by Gayle Magee and Christina Bashford, both U. of I. professors of musicology, and William Brooks, a professor emeritus of composition at the U. of I. and at the University of York in Great Britain. The event tied to the 100th anniversary of the writing of the poem “In Flanders Fields,” draws upon the music being made at the time.

The poem was written by a Canadian military officer, John McCrae, in response to the fighting during the Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium, in spring 1915. The battle marked the first mass use of poison gas by Germany. The poem was later set to music by dozens of composers.

“As the war gets more and more brutal, and there is the use of gas against the troops, it really is interesting to see how art responds to that,” Magee said, noting soldiers saw the brutality of the front lines, while the narrative on the homefront was concerned with maintaining morale.

The keynote speaker for the symposium, Kate Kennedy, is a research fellow in English and music at the University of York. She is the public a Center for Advanced Study/MillerComm lecture, titled “Music’s War Poets,” at 4:30 p.m. March 10 at the Spurlock Museum. (“(Kennedy) will be talking about early moments in the war when some of the most promising young composers and poets in Great Britain went off to fight: F.S. Kelly, William Denis Browne and Rupert Brooke. All of them were killed within the first two years,” Magee said.

A concert by the Kronos Quartet, “Beyond Zero: 1914-1918,” in coordination with the symposium, will be at 7:30 p.m. March 10 at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. The multimedia work will feature new music and an accompanying film reflecting the outbreak of World War I.

The symposium will include discussions of the creative responses in popular and classical music to the war, including reaction to the sinking of the Lusitania in 1915; performances and discussions of musical settings of “In Flanders Fields” and Vaughan Williams’ “Dona Nobis Pacem”; a re-creation of wartime entertainment by a Canadian music and comedy troupe; and “A Night at the Cinema,” featuring silent films with live piano accompaniment. Magee said the popular films of the time moved from the Keystone Cops to a French horror film Charlie Chaplin.

“At the start of the war, things were still light. You can see the change, and the environment people were living through,” she said.

The symposium will focus on British, French, Canadian and American artists. A sister symposium was held in late February at the University of York.

“In the last few years, promising young composers and poets in Great Britain went off to fight: F.S. Kelly, William Denis Browne and Rupert Brooke. All of them were killed within the first two years,” Magee said.

“We wanted this not to be just England during the First World War or the United States during the First World War. We wanted people who were thinking about music transnationally,” Magee said.

A full listing of events is online.

http://publish.illinois.edu/music1915/

For more information, contact Gayle Magee or Christina Bashford at arts-music@illinois.edu.
“There needs to be a large array of relations of all sorts, with a good many intelligent and savvy people involved who have the interests of the institution at heart.”

—Richard Schacht
Citizen police academy begins April 9

Champaign County residents interested in getting an inside look at how local law enforcement works are invited to participate in the Champaign County Citizen Police Academy. The academy, which meets Thursday nights from 6 to 9 p.m. April 9 to June 11, will cover crime prevention, community-based policing, drugs, DUI enforcement, citizen-police contacts, use of force, firearms orientation, crime-scene investigation, a tour of the Champaign County Jail and a patrol ride-along with the local department. The meetings are at the Police Training Institute and other local sites. Starting its 29th session, the academy strives to help local residents to better understand police work. The police agencies involved in the academy also seek feedback from participants about law-enforcement issues. For more information or to enroll in the program, contact Mike Schlosser, director of the Police Training Institute, at 217-333-2337.

Beckman Institute

Beckman open house is March 13-14

Scientific and technological discoveries await at the biennial Beckman Institute Open House from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 13 and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 14. Held in conjunction with the Engineering Open House, Beckman’s open house highlights the work taking place at one of the nation’s leading centers for interdisciplinary research. Features include Bert, the iCub humanoid robot; infrared imaging; materials that heal themselves; 3-D printing; and much more. The Beckman Café will be open for meals, snacks and beverages. Schools, clubs and other large groups are welcome. For more information and a full list of exhibits, visit beckman.illinois.edu/events/open-house.

WILL-TV

Great BritCom Vote will be March 7

WILL-TV will host “Great BritCom Vote: All Star Edition” Saturday March 7, to determine which program will win a spot in the BritCom Saturday night lineup on WILL-TV. This year’s contest – the 16th – has a new twist: of the first two shows, the one with the fewest votes by 9 p.m. will be dropped from consideration. At about 9:40 p.m., the next lowest in generating votes will be cut, leaving just three contenders for the crown to be awarded around 10:30 p.m. The programs begin at 7 p.m. with “Waiting for God,” following the adventures of Diana Trent and Tom Ballard, two spirited residents of Bayview Retirement Village, a stuffy seniors’ home where stepping out of line is strictly frowned upon. “Chef!” begins at 7:40 p.m. Having realized his dream of becoming proprietor and cook at the prestigious Le Château Anglais restaurant, Gareth’s obsessive perfectionism pushes the restaurant to the financial brink and plunges his personal and professional life into chaos. At 8:20 p.m. is “May to December,” revolving around the romance between a widowed solicitor, Alex Callender, and a much younger woman, Zoe Angell. “Mulberry,” which follows at 9 p.m., is the story of a mysterious man who appears at the household of a cantankerous woman, Miss Farnaby, and applies for an unadvertised position as her manservant. Last, at 9:45 p.m., is “Good Neighbors.” On his 40th birthday, Tom Good decides that he’s had enough of the rat race, and that he and his wife, Barbara, will convert their city garden into a farm, complete with pigs and chickens. The situation gets even more interesting as their neighbors object to the idea.

Sudden Sound Concert Series

Avant-garde jazz featured March 19

The series opens 7:30 p.m. March 19 with a special reunion performance featuring progressive jazz veteran and poet Elliott Levin on saxophones and flutes with Rick Ianaccone on electric guitar, who together share decades of union performance featuring improvisation and avant-garde jazz at the U. of I. since 2005, the Sudden Sound Concert Series at Krannert Art Museum celebrates its 10th anniversary with two groups rooted in East Coast musical attitudes. The series opens 7:30 p.m. March 19 with a special reunion performance featuring progressive jazz veteran and poet Elliott Levin on saxophones and flutes with Rick Ianaccone on electric guitar, who together share decades of collaboration in Philadelphia-based groups including Interplay and New Ghost. Levin is a noted regular member of Cecil Taylor’s Sound Vision Orchestra and Odean Pope’s Saxophone Choir. Now based in Oregon, Ianaccone has recorded as a featured member of Jamaaladeen Tacuma’s electric groups and in projects by Bobby Zankan. Chicago-based drummer and percussionist Arveoyal Ra, noted for his work with the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, will be a featured special guest. At 7:30 p.m. April 23, the series continues with Gerald Cleaver’s Black Host, an improvising “super” quintet from New York City featuring Cooper-Moore (keyboards, synthesizer), Brandon Seabrook (guitar), Darius Jones (alto saxophone), Pascal Niggenkemper (bass) and Gerald Cleaver (drums). The concerts are presented admission-free at Krannert Art Museum and Kinkead Pavilion. The series is curated by Jason Finkelman, the director of Global Arts Performance Initiatives, and is sponsored in part by Edwards Foundation Arts Fund, MMS Rentals and Production, Analog Outfitters and Krannert Art Museum, with in-kind support provided by WEFFT-FM (90.1).

Nutrition Symposium

Sleep, obesity expert to speak March 19

Is there a relationship between sleep and obesity? Michael A. Grandner, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, will answer this question in his keynote address at the 2015 Illinois Nutritional Sciences Graduate Student Association Nutrition Symposium, from 4 to 5 p.m. March 19 in Room 180 Bever Hall. The event is open to the public. According to the expert, more than 60 studies have reported an association between short sleep duration and obesity. He will examine a number of physiological, behavioral and dietary factors that may contribute to this association.

A mini-symposium, “Nutritional Sciences: Impacting Health at Every Age,” featuring world-class U. of I. faculty researchers, will lead up to the keynote address. That event will take place 12:45 to 2:45 p.m. March 19 in the Monsanto Room at the ACES Library. The faculty member panel will include Yuan-Xiang Pan, speaking on “Mature Nutrition Programs: Physiological Consequences through Epigenetics in Animal Models”; Sharon M. Donovan, on “Breastfeeding Reduces Circulating Inflammatory Cytokines and Inflammatory Gene Pathways in Immune Cells Compared to Formula Feeding in the First Six Months of Life”; Margarita Teran-Garcia, on “Emerging Adulthood: An Opportunity to Prevent Chronic Disease”; and Karen Chapman-Novakofski, on “Nutrition Sci BRIEFS, PAGE 11
BRIEFS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10 and the Older Adult.”

Graduate students of nutritional sciences will compete in an oral research presentation composition at 9:15 to 11:30 a.m. March 19 in the Monsanto Room of the ACES Library, and poster research presentation and competition will be from 5:15 to 6:40 p.m. in the ACES Library Heritage Room. Both are open to the public.

For more information, contact the Division of Nutritional Sciences at 217-333-4777 or nutritionalsciences@illinois.edu.

University YMCA
HERstory on display through April 10

HERstory, a new work by CF McCarrick, will be on display through April 10 in the Murphy Gallery at the University YMCA. Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Referencing spiritual feminism of the ‘70s and ‘80s, McCarrick connects the representation of the Virgin Mary with the ideals associated with mother, healer, earth and fertility goddesses from around the world. McCarrick invokes these feminine forms to comment on their individual and independent power in a male-dominated society. McCarrick illuminates the commonalities between differing religions to reflect on how they define those cultures’ identities, their spiritual practitioners and their impact upon contemporary society. This work also highlights the influential roles women play within the global community. McCarrick, a Master of Fine Arts candidate in sculpture at the U. of I., has exhibited regionally, including Illinois and Michigan, and in a variety of group shows.

Research awards in climate change, public health
Research proposals sought by April 20

The department of natural resources and environmental sciences and the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment have announced two new research awards for U. of I. students: the 2014-15 Warren Lavey and Dr. Holly Rosencranz Research Awards in Climate Change and Public Health.

Interested undergraduate and graduate students must submit applications and a letter of reference by 5 p.m. April 20. Relevant research topics are defined broadly and include, but are not limited to:

- The impacts of climate change on incidence of cardiovascular, respiratory, infectious and other diseases.
- Public health infrastructure preparedness for climate-related events.
- Food and water security and safety in changing climates.
- Effectively communicating to the public the connection between climate change and health.
- Developing economic mechanisms targeting the public health impacts of climate change.
- Threats of climate change to parks as attractive spaces for healthy exercise.
- For more details on the call for proposals, necessary student qualifications and more, visit http://low.ly/EEeL5. To apply, go to http://low.ly/EEeQ0.

Parking Department
EV charging station now at alumni center

The U. of I. parking department announced it has installed one Level 2 electric vehicle charging station (two parking spaces) near the Alice Campbell Alumni Center, parking lot D-22.

This is the first Level 2 charging station on campus. There are 20 parking spaces with outlets for Level 1 charging across campus.

The Level 2 charging station provides 6.24kW of power from 208VAC@30A and is best for rapid two- to four-hour charging and half-day use. The charging fee is $2/hour for the first four hours and $8/hour for each additional hour.

The ChargePoint Level 2 dual charging station is easy to use and features an instructional video. Its interface is in English, French and Spanish, and it works in rain or ice and with gloves. The station also has 24-hour phone support.

For more information, visit the parking department’s electric vehicle charging link (under Parking) at www.parking.illinois.edu.

100-year-old time capsule found in Lincoln Hall gateway

By Julie Herman
Facilities and Services

The unearthing of a 100-year-old box in the wall of the Lincoln Hall gateway last month is thrilling to Melvin Skvarla, a Facilities and Services planner and the university’s campus historic preservation officer.

“This was unexpected,” Skvarla said of the 8-inch by 6-inch handmade copper box workers found inside the gateway’s walls while rebuilding the structure. The gateway, located along Wright Street to the south and west of Lincoln Hall, was a gift from the Class of 1913 and completed in July of that year.

“Gateways were very popular in the 1870s through the 1920s, especially around quadrangles,” Skvarla said.

The capsule contained 13 cards with names on them – some business cards, some handwritten – along with a 1912 Lincoln wheat penny, an 1894 Indian head wheat penny and a tag with the name of the metalsmith who crafted the box. (See photo, above left.)

The original time capsule was replaced into the rebuilt Gateway’s wall Jan. 28 (photo above right). With it went a new plastic box that contained all the original items, plus additional ones, including a written history of the capsule, a 2014 penny, a 2014 Homecoming button, a photo CD of all the old and new items, and business cards with the names of those involved in assembling the 2015 box.

Because of the hand-signed cards and lack of other items, Skvarla guesses the insertion of the original time capsule was a last-minute addition to the gateway.

“Everyone wants to be remembered,” he said, “and that’s fun and interesting to see.”

Facilities and Services
Level 2 electric vehicle charging station now in place across campus

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For more information, contact the Division of Nutritional Sciences at 217-333-4777 or nutritionalsciences@illinois.edu.
Education ‘experts’ may lack expertise, study finds

By Sharita Forrest
Education Editor

The people most often cited as “education experts” in blogs and news stories may have the backing of influential organizations – but have little background in education and education policy, a new study suggests.

The findings are cause for concern because some prominent interest groups are promoting reform agendas and striving to influence policymakers and public opinion using individuals who have substantial media relations skills but little or no expertise in education research, say the authors of the study, Joel R. Malin and Christopher Lubienski, both at the U. of I.

To examine possible links between individuals’ media presence and their levels of expertise, Malin and Lubienski compiled a diverse list of nearly 300 people who appeared on the lists of experts prepared by several major education advocacy and policy organizations, including the conservative American Enterprise Institute and the liberal National Education Policy Center.

Malin and Lubienski also added to their sample a handful of scholars not on those lists but who are prominent and influential in the field of education.

Each person’s level of expertise was then scored using a formula that included their number of Google Scholar citations; their years of experience, calculated by subtracting the year they attained their highest degree from 2014; and whether or not the person had earned a doctoral or equivalent degree.

Each person’s level of media influence was calculated based upon the number of times they were quoted or mentioned in newspapers and blogs; every 1-point increase in an expert’s Google Scholar score was associated with a 1-percent increase in blog mentions.

Accordingly, each 1-point increase in years of experience corresponded with an increase of about 1 percent in newspaper citations, the researchers found.

However, affiliation with a policy or advocacy organization also substantially increased an expert’s media presence. People associated with the American Enterprise Institute were nearly 2.5 times more likely to be mentioned in blogs.

Experts were more likely to be quoted or mentioned in newspapers and blogs if they had higher scores on Google Scholar; Malin and Lubienski found. Every 1-point increase in a person’s years of experience. More than half of these people were connected to organizations such as Cato and Heritage.

While the three people in the sample who were affiliated with Cato each received the maximum number of points for blog mentions, these individuals’ average estimated expertise score was 4.67 – substantially lower than the average score for the full sample, which was greater than 20.

Perhaps the most startling finding was that possession of a doctoral degree was associated with 67 percent fewer blog citations and 60 percent fewer newspaper mentions, and fewer Klout points, which indicates that academic researchers with empirical expertise in education are often far removed from popular and policy conversations, Malin and Lubienski said.

“Our findings suggest that individuals with less expertise can often have greater success in media penetration,” said Malin, a curriculum specialist with the Pathways Resource Center and a doctoral candidate in educational administration and leadership at the university. “Although some individuals might not have formal training in research methods for analyzing the issues about which they are speaking, they possess skills and orientations that make them accessible and appealing to the media. And when these people are affiliated with organizations that have strong media arms or outreach efforts, they have the support and the incentive to engage broader and policy audiences.”

“Newer forms of media offer particularly useful opportunities for directly engaging audiences, while bypassing traditional forms of quality checks on expertise,” said Lubienski, a professor of education policy and the director of the Forum on the Future of Public Education at the university. “We believe caution and consideration of individuals’ expertise are warranted when reporters and bloggers are researching topics and seeking insights – and when policymakers and laypersons are consuming media.”

Researchers who want to see their work have impact beyond the academic community must become more adept at communicating via traditional and new media. Otherwise, policy changes in education will be guided more by ideology and agendas than by research, Malin and Lubienski said.

The study was published in a recent issue of the journal Education Policy Analysis Archives.