New BS in Nursing Program Off to a Healthy Start

At the Nursing Learning Center, students Kate McGuire (left) and Ruth Ware (right) practice health assessment skills on a simulation manikin, that is, a “virtual patient,” under the guidance of Assistant Professor of Nursing Stacy Christensen (center), MSN, APRN-BC.

The new bachelor of science in nursing program is moving along at a healthy pace. Fifty-eight students have been accepted into the major and are already taking challenging classes, practicing skills in a high-tech simulation lab, and going into the community for their clinical rotations.

CCSU launched the program in fall 2008 in an effort to help alleviate Connecticut’s growing shortage of health care professionals by providing an academic track to prepare nurses with strong critical thinking skills, cultural competency, and knowledge of emerging technologies in health care.

“What’s exciting about our new nursing degree program is that we’re in step with the most current research that calls for a more highly educated nursing workforce,” says Professor of Nursing Linda Wagner, who serves as chair of the department. She refers to a new Carnegie Foundation Report (January 2010) voicing strong support of high quality baccalaureate degree programs that transform how nurses are prepared for contemporary practice and leadership roles. “In addition to being a primary caregiver, today’s nurse must be educated as a leader who is...”
able to delegate, work on a team, and advocate for the patient,” explains Wagner.

The new BSN program was approved by the Connecticut Department of Higher Education and the Connecticut Department of Public Health in June 2008 to supplement and enhance CCSU’s existing RN-to-BSN program, which was established more than two decades ago and is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The new program is fully accredited by CCNE until 2016.

Students in the program, now all sophomores, have embarked on a rigorous four-year curriculum which prepares them, as nurse generalists, to sit for the National Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses upon graduation from CCSU. Nursing major Steven Korb has taken courses in nursing theory, nutrition, chemistry, health assessment, and biology. He says one of his favorites was “the Nursing Assessment course, because the ‘head-to-toe’ assessment skills we all learned will definitely be useful on a regular basis in nursing.”

Marine Bernadel (who in addition to majoring in nursing is a student/resident assistant and the president of the CCSU chapter of the NAACP) states, “In the Anatomy and Physiology I and II classes, I learned everything about the human body. From the top of the head to the soles of the feet; inside and out. I was taught how the body looks and works. As a nurse I’ll need to compare and contrast the normal with the abnormal and then to assess issues, if any, within the body.”

Practicing on Virtual Patients in the New Lab
In a new state-of-the-art Nursing Learning Center in Barnard Hall, students practice health assessment skills and interventions on virtual patients, that is, simulation manikins. Korb describes learning in the hospital-like setting equipped with adult, child, and infant manikins: “The professors set the SIM manikin up with certain vital signs, and students try to diagnose the problem or symptoms. It’s experience before real-life situations; it cannot replace the real thing—hospital situations—by a long shot, but it is a great tool in building skills without causing discomfort or danger to real patients.”

Bernadel says, “At first, it felt like I was a 10-year-old girl playing with her Barbie doll again, but when I really started to focus on heart rate, blood pressure, and listening to the differences in breathing and heart rhythms, I found that practicing on the manikin made it easier for me to practice with my lab partner.”

Wagner, taking an imaginative leap, says, “The faculty member behind the one-way mirror is the Wizard behind the curtain, programming the 3G manikin to cough or talk, gasp in pain, or make vomiting noises. The 3G can sweat and cry, and even has a blue light in its mouth to indicate a cyanotic condition in which a patient turns bluish from not getting oxygenated.”

First-year nursing students might begin with simple blood pressure checks and physical assessments. They can practice checking dressings, administering medications, or responding to patient complaints. Faculty can develop more complex scenarios by programming the virtual patient’s condition to change suddenly, as it develops a post-operative infection or an allergic reaction, so students get experience addressing medical crises.

A videotape is made of the interactions and played back for student evaluations. A scenario might involve a number of role players—the student nurse, a family member of the patient, a surgeon—to address the issue of communication. During a debriefing, students may be asked to consider their feelings/anxieties and to assess their strengths and any areas needing improvement. Students develop confidence, competence, and critical thinking abilities in a non-threatening environment that is better for “nurses” and “patients.”

Clinical Rotations Most Enlightening
Through four semesters of clinical rotations, students integrate classroom instruction with practice through affiliations with local hospitals and health care settings. Sophomores do clinical rotations in community placements at senior centers, daycare facilities, and schools. Junior and seniors have clinical rotations in such specialty areas as pediatrics, obstetrics, mental health, gerontology, and adult medical/surgical health care. “By next fall, we plan to have established contacts with such area hospitals as Hartford Hospital, Midstate Medical Center, Middlesex Hospital, the Hospital of Central Connecticut, the Hospital of Special Care, and Bristol Hospital,” states Wagner.

Bernadel remarks, “The most fun I have experienced in my courses thus far would be in my Clinical class. I get to go out in the real work force and shadow a nurse at a hospital or facility. I have learned so much through
observation, and I’m looking forward to learning much more throughout the semester.” Then she reflects, “Nursing to me is a field that I find heroic. You help people feel better, and you educate them to remain that way. It’s about caring, giving, and educating.”

Wagner elaborates that the baccalaureate degree in nursing aims to mold the identity of professional nurses by helping students to internalize such values as social justice, advocacy, and integrity. “We want nurses to be caring and competent, to develop connections with individuals in a caring manner, while providing expert, excellent care. — Geri Radacsi

Cheating on the Sisterhood: A Feminist Analysis

Dr. Lauren Rosewarne (right), associate director of the Centre for Public Policy at the University of Melbourne, spoke on campus about “Cheating on the Sisterhood” in early February. During the lecture Rosewarne examined what happens when all three parties—a man and two women—in a classic case of cheating are feminists who use various feminist arguments to justify and rationalize their actions. The event was reviewed by The New Britain Herald in an article titled “Speaker says cheating damages ‘sisterhood.’”

CCSU Hosts “Revealed” Exhibit

An exhibit, titled "Revealed: The Tradition of Homosexual Art," was featured at CCSU’s art gallery in Maloney Hall during March and April. Using artwork created over the past 110 years, "Revealed" sought to prove the existence of a consistent homosexual presence in Western art from the Renaissance period to the present day. Artists featured in the exhibition included Robert Maplethorpe and Andy Warhol—the first time work by either artist has been on display at Central. Stanley Stellar (above, right), a New York artist whose work appeared in the show, and Robert Diamond ’98 (left), who curated the exhibit and also had work on display, gave a lecture at the opening reception. After the exhibition at CCSU, the show traveled to a gallery in New York.

Corrections: Professor of English Stuart Barnett focuses on Alfred Hitchcock in classes offered as part of the new cinema studies minor.

Professor of History Jay Bergman was featured in The New Britain Herald in an article on his new book Meeting the Demands of Reason: The Life and Thought of Andrei Sakharov. In an article on MyRecordJournal.com in January, Professor of History Matthew Warshauer discussed letters from the time of the Civil War that were recently discovered in the Barnes Museum of Southington.

Associate Professor of English Ravi Shankar acted as a ring announcer at the Connecticut Young Writers Triple Knockout Event held at the Hartford Club in January.
Excellent progress is being made for an ambitious Connecticut commemoration to mark the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War—a project launched at CCSU by a planning committee headed by Professor of History Matthew Warshauer.

Already work is underway on an academic conference and on fundraising. A new book unveiling ground-breaking research on Connecticut’s role in “The Great Rebellion” has been completed. And a call has gone out statewide for teachers interested in developing a school curriculum on the Civil War. Planned events for the three-day commemoration (April 15, 16, and 17, 2011) also include a Civil War re-enactors encampment at Stanley Quarter Park, battle skirmishes, and exhibits from historical organizations and museums.

A distinguished speaker—Yale University History Professor David Blight—has been selected to deliver the keynote address at a conference inaugurating the commemoration on April 15, 2011 at CCSU. “Dr. Blight will examine in depth the slavery issue and the meaning of the Civil War,” states Warshauer. “We want the conference to be interactive, and we’re focusing on opportunities for participants to engage in lively dialogue.” He points out, “Many historians see this sesquicentennial as a propitious time to discuss slavery in an enlightened and open-minded manner. Far too many Northerners have internalized the idea that Connecticut was firmly anti-slavery and pro-abolitionist. Research indicates this was simply not the case.”

To fund numerous activities of the commemoration—art and history exhibits, lectures and symposia, curriculum development—Warshauer said he and CCSU’s Office of Institutional Advancement, along with nine community partners, have applied for a $400,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Warshauer met with NEH staff in Washington, DC and said, “They were most interested in the project and the fact that Connecticut serves as a microcosm of Northern society during the Civil War. This state provided 55,000 men along with uniforms, guns, munitions, and materiel to the conflict.” NEH will announce grant recipients in the fall of this year.

In time for the war’s sesquicentennial, Warshauer has just completed writing a book with a working title Connecticut and the American Civil War: Slavery, Sacrifice, and Survival (Wesleyan University Press, forthcoming 2011). The book—only the third ever written about Connecticut and the Civil War—explores the battles Connecticut soldiers fought, their views on race and slavery, the role of the state’s African Americans, and the state’s sharply divided political scene. The last book covering the broad spectrum of Connecticut’s Civil War experience—Connecticut for the Union: The Role of the State in the Civil War by John Niven—was published in 1965. Since then new materials have emerged; Warshauer and a team of five CCSU graduate students have researched newspapers, photographs, diaries, and other sources. The students presented original research at the Association for the Study of Connecticut History conference last November.

One aspect of the research connected to the commemoration project includes an investigation of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among Civil War soldiers. One of Warshauer’s graduate students, Michael Sturges, a high school teacher in Woodbury, pioneered the study and discovered the names of some 130 former soldiers treated at Connecticut Valley Hospital, formerly the Connecticut Hospital for the Insane, in Middletown. After being denied access to the patient files, Sturges and
Warshauer initiated a Freedom of Information Act request, presented their case before the Commission, and recently won a decision. The Hartford Courant followed the matter closely, running a series of articles, and the Connecticut Law Tribune also covered the story.

In preparation for the occasion are special issues of two state journals—Connecticut History and Connecticut Explored—offering in-depth articles illuminating such topics as Connecticut’s naval contributions to the war, its medical practices, financing of the war, its Civil War monuments, and secession.

To broaden the educational scope of the commemoration, 2,500 letters have been mailed to history and social studies teachers throughout the state inviting them to participate in a curriculum project being coordinated by John Tully, CCSU Associate Professor of History. The goal of the project is to teach students about the Civil War by instructing them on the use of primary source documents and by connecting them directly with community historical organizations and museums.

Warshauer has contacted re-enactor groups throughout the state for a “Sounds, Smells and Sights of the Civil War” re-enactment in an encampment to be staged adjacent to the campus. Horse-drawn carriages, re-enactors dressed in period costumes as soldiers and surgeons, free coffee and hardtack (a dried biscuit) will bring Connecticut’s Civil War history to life.

The commemoration is in collaboration with more than 40 organizational partners, including the Hartford Courant and many historical societies and museums. More details at: www.ccsu.edu/civilwar.

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ITBD and CCSU Selected as Program Training Provider

The WorkPlace Inc., one of five state workforce development boards within Connecticut, has $4 million and 24 months to get green jobs for 350 Bridgeport residents hardest hit by the recession.

“The green revolution is here in the nick of time,” Bridgeport Mayor Bill Finch said during a meeting to kick off the Green-Up Bridgeport program.

Funded through a federal grant, the program will educate and train some 500 residents in basic jobs skills to be used to do environmentally friendly work. Within two years, at least 350 graduates of the program must have landed jobs—and 275 of them must be employed for a minimum of 180 days. Because the money comes from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Pathways Out of Poverty Program, only residents living in those neighborhoods with the highest poverty levels are eligible to participate.

Faculty from CCSU’s School of Engineering and Technology and the Department of Manufacturing and Construction Management will provide some of the training, thanks to arrangements made by Business Development Manager Tom Lorenzetti of ITBD. Many of the jobs Finch and others said would qualify for the program are in the construction field.

Assistant Professor Robert Hickey and Associate Professor Jacob Kovel, both of the Department of Manufacturing & Construction Management, among others, will provide instruction in topics such as green construction, sustainable design, weatherization, and deconstruction, as well as building energy systems involving renewable energy and waste reduction. Other areas of training may include resource management and transportation technologies.

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in memoriam

Former Administrative Assistant, Biological Sciences Department, Maureen Des Chenes died January 21, 2010. Des Chenes was raised and educated in New Britain. Before working at Central, she was employed as an office manager for Flow Dynamics and worked in the development office/alumni relations at World Learning in Brattleboro, as well as at Marlboro College. Des Chenes was a member of the Phi Epsilon Sorority and served as a board member for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program in Vermont.

Professor of Political Science, Emeritus, Charles W. Kerr died February 2, 2010. Kerr served as chair and also managed the department’s internship program. Passionate about Connecticut politics, Kerr was active in the Legislative Electoral Action Program and was a strong supporter of the CT Citizen Action Group.
A Senior Capstone exhibit was held at CCSU’s Art Galleries from May 7–14. Students graduating with a studio art degree exhibited artwork done in a variety of media. Featured students included Claire Barber, Kate Bugracki, Molly Deming, Mary Derix, Sarah Eaton, Ilmika Kulla, Ashley Lodovico, Courtney Mangum, Tim Melechinsky, Tokuji Okamoto, Josh Parker, Lauren Pelletier, Lukasz Pikora, and Rohan Speid.

CCSU student Melissa Brousseau was awarded a scholarship during the Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Nursing gala in April. The event was created by VNA HealthCare, Inc., to support and encourage nursing students.

Assistant Professor of English Mary Collins was cited in a New Britain Herald article on the literary magazine CT Review. Editors for CT Review rotate among the faculty at Connecticut state universities, and Collins is scheduled to take over as senior editor for the coming year. Collins has worked as an editor for National Geographic and Smithsonian magazines. As senior editor, Collins will be responsible for managing the budget, scheduling events, and overseeing the release of the fall and spring issues.

The Elihu Burritt Library’s digital collection has been featured on OCLC’s website. Organizations around the world use OCLC’s CONTENTdm management software to create digital collections and provide easy access to them. CCSU’s collection includes materials from the Veterans History Project and the Connecticut Polish American Archives, among others.

Associate Professor of English David Cappella’s poem “Bob Dylan’s Vocal Chords” was named a finalist in the B.J. Rolfzen Dylan Days Creative Writing Contest. Entered in the open division poetry category, the poem will be published in the annual journal Talkin’ Blues.

The lighthouse site in People’s State Forest, located in Barkhamsted, CT, which Professor of Anthropology Kenneth Feder has been excavating with CCSU students, was recently named a State Archaeological Preserve. During April, Feder presented a lecture and tour at the lighthouse, followed by a signing for his new book, Barkhamsted Lighthouse.

An exhibit of screenprints by Professor of Art Sean Gallagher, titled “Many Varied Hands from the Past Will Guide Our Child,” was recently held at New Britain’s Downtown Gallery. Gallagher’s show included images created after the birth of his daughter, Fiona, in March 2009. Reflecting his interest in religious symbols and the passage of time, the hands used in his works are taken from 30,000 years of art history. Gallagher notes that “the hands are derived from a vast geographical range and broad historical time frame. They represent a shared, collective history, incorporating a wide spectrum of humanity, from which I hope children will eventually learn.” The exhibit was featured in both The Hartford Courant and The New Britain Herald.

Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the School of Graduate Studies Paulette Lemma recently received the 2010 Excellence in Education Award from Pennsylvania State University. The highest honor granted to alumni of the College of Education, the award is given to those who have made significant contributions to the field of education.

Work by Professor of Art Cora Marshall was featured in an exhibit, titled “A Different Time A Different Place,” held at the Windsor Art Center in March and April. The exhibit, which also included work by Stanwyck Cromwell, focused on diverging and connecting perspectives of the artists. CCSU’s Natural Helpers program was recognized at the National Boosting Alcohol Consciousness Concerning the Health of University Students (BACCHUS) Conference for its creativity in the prevention of alcohol abuse and impaired driving at the 2009 Alcohol Awareness Fair. The Natural Helpers program consists of CCSU student-volunteers who have been nominated by faculty, staff, and their peers, based on leadership and mentoring skills. Students are trained to prevent substance abuse and promote wellness.

Assistant Director of the Student Center Maria Santilli won an award from the national office of the Association of College Unions International for a mentoring program she created for use at the regional ACUI Conference. As part of the program, undergraduate and graduate students interested in careers in Student Affairs were provided with an opportunity to meet with professionals in the field. Santilli received a bachelor’s degree from CCSU in 2004 and her master’s in 2007.

The Department of Athletic’s student advisory committee completed its second annual shoe drive in February. Worn-out shoes were collected throughout the year and donated to Nike’s “Reuse-A-Shoe” program. The used shoes are recycled by Nike and used to make indoor and outdoor basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts, as well as track and playground facilities.

Assistant Athletic Director/Event Coordinator, Intercollegiate Athletics, Stephen Villanti MS ‘87, MBA ’07 has been awarded the 2010 Boys’ and Girls’ Basketball Special Service Award by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC). The honor was presented to acknowledge Villanti’s efforts to make Central’s athletic facilities available to the CIAC for numerous state championship contests. He was also credited for his marketing, and the consequential growth, of the Precision Youth Football Camps program, in which over 20,000 athletes have participated since its inception 18 years ago.

continued on next page
Jacqueline Laramee is not the average student and she’ll be the first to say it. “I’ve never done anything totally normal,” she said. “I’m always looking for different things to learn and experience.”

This desire to learn new things increased after she decided to major in construction management at CCSU. While what she learns in class is important, Laramee says how she learns to apply it in the real world is just as important.

Laramee currently works part-time during the semester for Network Interiors, a sub-contracting company that prides itself on its reputation for customer satisfaction and safety. What makes it even more interesting to Laramee was the fact that the company was founded and operated by a woman, Melissa Sheffy.

“My boss happens to be a woman, which is a really cool experience. She’s a phenomenal individual,” Laramee said.

While some family members don’t understand why she decided to major in construction management, Laramee knows she can count on her parents and siblings for support. “They’re all for it. My mom, dad, brother, and sister think it’s the coolest thing ever,” Laramee said. “There’s no doubt in their minds that I’ll find success in it. I’m very happy and very passionate, so obviously it’s a good fit.”

Associate Professor of Manufacturing and Construction Management Jacob Kovel, who serves as chair of the department and acted as Laramee’s faculty advisor during her earlier internship at Network Interiors, notes that, traditionally, construction is not a female-oriented profession because most parents don’t understand the difference between construction and construction management.

He considers Laramee to be a success story for the department because she ranks at the top of her class for construction management and because of her interesting work experiences. “She represents what’s good in our program,” Kovel said. “She’s a dedicated learner and enthusiastic about the industry. That’s what we want to see in every student.”

Laramee notes two professors in particular who have made an impact on her during her time at CCSU. “Dr. Stuart Bennett (Professor of Construction Management, Emeritus) knows everything about everything and he’s just such a high-spirited individual,” she said. “He’s had such riveting experiences in life and construction, and I like the fact that he shares that.”

Assistant Professor of Manufacturing and Construction Management Linda Reeder also stands out as an important influence on Laramee. “I like that she’s a woman in construction,” she said. “She has her own company, and she can hold her own with guys. She’ll stand in front of a class of guys ranging in age from 18 to grown men, and she’ll teach them about construction. I think that’s really inspiring.”

Laramee enjoys learning from more than her professors and classes; she also learns from her fellow classmates. “I love construction. I love talking about it and learning about it, and I like the fact that the guys in class all work in construction,” she said. “We’re always talking projects. I think it’s cool to learn from other people—you get a lot of that in construction because you’re always working with a team—and the professors try to encourage that.”

— Heather Lusebrink

**extra credit continued**

Assistant Professor of Teacher Education Jacob Werblow coauthored a chapter in the new book *Analyzing School Contexts: Influences of Principals and Teachers in the Service of Students.*

Associate Professor of History Robert Wolff presented a lecture, “Remembering the Amistad,” in early February as part of the Old State House lecture series. Wolff, who has studied the case extensively, spoke about the differences between how history is told and how it really happened. Wolff’s lecture was featured in the *New Britain Herald* in an article titled “CCSU professor expands on the Amistad saga.”
Haoyu Wang: Diagnosing Wrist Injuries and Hunting Ideas

He almost fell off his chair, Haoyu Wang remembers and laughs. The measurement on his computer screen was a breakthrough. It would calculate the minimum distance between the carpal bones that signals wrist ligament damage. The software he had written to calculate the gap between two wrist bones could one day aid hand surgeons in the diagnosis of wrist injuries—and lead to interventions to relieve a patient of years of painful arthritis.

While a doctoral candidate at Syracuse University in 2000, Wang, who is now an assistant professor of manufacturing and construction management at CCSU, seized an opportunity to do research with SUNY Upstate Medical University collaborators. They were tackling a long-standing, intractable problem of diagnosing wrist injuries. MRIs and X-rays will not detect a torn ligament. If the wrist injury is not accurately determined and treated quickly—within two weeks in most cases—long-term damage results.

Though not a software expert, Wang says, “I majored in mechanical engineering, with a specialization in computer-aided design. Those areas helped me a lot in the biomechanics project. I spent days and nights in the lab. In two months, I wrote software—an add-in to the 3-D CAD software—so that the minimum distance between the scaphoid and lunate wrist bones would be automatically calculated, enabling surgeons to visualize the extent and nature of damage.” Wang continues to update the software; and while he and his colleagues are still refining data, they have already achieved over 85 percent accuracy in diagnoses based on experimental data.

Wang would like his students to experience, the way he did, “breakthrough moments.” His teaching philosophy has been shaped during a long and distinguished course of education. He joined CCSU in 2008 after teaching mechanical design and manufacturing for four years at Bowling Green State University Firelands College in Huron, OH.

Hunt Down and Land Ideas

After earning his BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1994 from Hebei Institute of Technology (in Shijiazhuang, the capital of Hebei Province in China), he emerged as one of only a handful of students accepted for graduate work, after a highly competitive process, to Harbin Institute of Technology (in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, China). There he majored in mechanical and electronics engineering and benefited from the teaching of outstanding scholars, such as Professor Hegao Cai, an icon of robotics in China. “Professor Cai was a big-picture person,” remembers Wang. “He encouraged us to pursue a promising research idea and, however illusive, to hunt it down and land it successfully.”

Similarly, Wang reinforces big-picture thinking in his classes. “People can remember ideas better if they are connected to a practical application or if theories are connected to other theories or courses taken,” says Wang. “Students can visualize where they are and, importantly, where they are going, if they have a road map in mind. So at the start of every lesson, I present them with a road map of what I expect them to know. Then, I keep reminding students where they are, because I don’t want to lose anyone.”

Senior Persis Oware, a technology management major, is a product of Wang’s teaching approach. For eight months last year, Oware worked in a Co-operative Education experience at Inertia Dynamics, a manufacturer of
brakes and clutches. Concurrently, he was taking Wang’s tool design class. He relates, “At that time I was designing a fixture at my co-op job. Everything I was experiencing at the job became clearer and clearer with every chapter and exercise we did in class. Whenever I had a question about a project at work or in the class, Dr. Wang was always available to help me understand. This experience helped me to see more career options. I realized I can do many things with my career, from designing all the way to management. Now I feel like I am one giant step into my future.” Oware is currently working part time at the company.

Scholarly Work
While inspiring students in his classes, Wang has also published in scholarly journals. A paper written with his SUNY collaborators on the wrist-injury diagnosis project appeared in the Journal of Orthopedic Research (October 2008). Last year he and his colleagues gave a presentation on this research at the Conference of the Engineering Design Graphic Division in Berkeley, California. Two years ago they made national and international presentations on their success before orthopedic and biomechanics research groups, including at the International Hand and Wrist Biomechanics Symposium in Taiwan and at the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand in Sydney, Australia.

Under a School of Engineering and Technology student-faculty research grant, Wang has involved his students in his wrist-injury diagnosis project, as well as in studying computer-aided tolerance specification and analysis and in developing a firefighting robot. Most recently, he and colleague Associate Professor of Manufacturing and Construction Management Ravindra Thamma have engaged students in a project to design a fixture capable of holding together parts with different geometric forms.

Where will Wang’s own road map lead him? While committed to opening up vistas for his students with hands-on projects that put theory into action, Wang continues to pursue his research interests. Down the road there may be new “breakthrough moments” as he delves into CAD and manufacturing, computer-aided tolerance specification and synthesis, injury biomechanics, and robotics. His revered teacher Dr. Cai is still whispering in his ear to track down ideas with tenacity until new knowledge emerges.

— Geri Radacsi

Discussing the Impact of Jailed Parents
CCSU’s Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMPR) hosted a day-long conference on the Children of Incarcerated Parents in February to increase awareness of the effects of incarcerated parents on children and families. During the morning session, personal accounts, along with state and national data, were presented in an effort to accurately portray the situation. The afternoon session focused on how the knowledge and understanding gained in the earlier session could be disseminated to the public, as well as how regional and statewide policy actions could positively impact children of incarcerated parents.

Director of IMPR Andrew Clark noted, “It’s through events like these that people realize that incarceration also impacts children, caregivers, neighborhoods, and even communities. It has a ripple effect.”

Ann Adalist-Estrin (above), director of the National Resource Center on Children and Families Incarcerated at the Family and Corrections Network, gave the keynote lecture. The conference concluded with a town hall-style discussion led by a panel of policymakers, agency representatives, and community leaders with hopes of “planting the seeds” for further action.

Celebrating Chopin
In honor of the bicentennial of the birth of Polish composer and pianist Frederic Chopin, the Connecticut Virtuosi Orchestra, conducted by Adrian Sylveen Mackiewicz, presented the Chopin Bicentennial Piano Concert in late February. Pianist Ewa Poblocka (right) performed music by Chopin, Lutoslawski, and Mozart. The event was made possible by CCSU’s S.A. Blejwas Endowed Chair in Polish and Polish American Studies, the Polish American Foundation of Connecticut, and the Embassy of Poland in Washington, DC.

She’s a Boy I Knew
Gwen Haworth (right) speaks before the screening of her documentary, She’s a Boy I Knew, on campus in February. Using interviews with family and friends, the film tells the story of Haworth’s transition from male to female and provides an in-depth look at the emotions that can accompany a transgender transition.
Women’s History Month at CCSU

March was Women’s History Month and Central hosted numerous events to discuss women’s issues and celebrate accomplishments with the theme “Writing Women Back into History.”

Judy Norsigian, executive director and co-founder of the Boston Women’s Health Book Collective, was the keynote lecturer at the 2010 Women’s History Month Luncheon. Her talk on “Women’s Health and the Media: Sorting Fact from Fiction” focused on stem cell research and other pertinent issues in the media, such as breast implants, plastic surgery, and the influence of pharmaceutical companies on the consumer.

Norsigian is a co-author of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, a book series on women’s health and sexuality. She is a graduate of Radcliffe College and has appeared on numerous television and radio programs, including *Oprah*, *The Today Show*, and *NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw*.

For the past 40 years, the Boston Women’s Health Book Collective, a non-profit organization, has been dedicated to inspiring the women’s health movement through education, advocacy, and consultation.

Later that day, Norsigian delivered a second speech on “The Women’s Health Movement: Accurate, Accessible Information on Health, Sexuality, and Reproduction” in which she discussed how the women’s health movement has influenced the public’s ability to access and utilize accurate health information. Both lectures were sponsored by the Ruthe Boyea Women’s Center and the Committee on the Concerns of Women.

In recognition of International Women’s Day, Central hosted Rwandan Minister of Gender and Family Promotion Jeanne d’Arc Mujawamariya who lectured on “The Role of Rwandan Women in Peace Building and Social Reconstruction after the Crisis.” In her role as minister, Mujawamariya promotes the implementation of the National Gender Policy and Plan of Action by encouraging full participation of women in the political and socio-economic development of Rwanda.

An International Women’s Film Day, also held in March, featured two films, *Belfast Girls* and *Calling All Ghosts*. In *Belfast Girls*, Swedish director Malin Andersson portrays a city in Ireland in which neighbors are separated by physical (and mental) walls. By focusing on two young women, Andersson demonstrates how the divided community has more in common than it may at first appear. The documentary *Calling All Ghosts*, directed by Mandy Jacobson and Karmen Jelincic, is a first-person account of two women held in the Serb concentration camp of Omarska. Once freed from the torturous camp Jadranka Cigelj and Nusreta Sivac successfully lobbied to include rape in the international lexicon of war crimes.

Other Women’s History Month events included a Health, Wellness and Fitness Fair, sponsored by the Ruthe Boyea Women’s Center, and the display of rare and historic photographs and other ephemera in the Costen Cultural Exhibit.

— Luke Albertson

New Staff Appointments

**Jacquelynn Bonesio-Peterson** will serve as CCSU’s Interim Chief Information Officer until a search committee, chaired by Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Carl Lovitt, identifies a permanent replacement. Most recently, Bonesio-Peterson was the enterprise resource planning manager in Information Technology; she joined CCSU in 1990.

**Dr. Laura Tordenti** was recently named Vice President for Student Affairs. Tordenti has served as the Interim Vice President for Student Affairs at CCSU since June 2008. Prior to that, she was the Vice President for Student Affairs at Eastern Connecticut State University for eight years, and she has worked in the field of Student Affairs since 1981.
History Faculty Publish Impressive List of Books

Books are a crucial part of college life; students need to read them for class, and faculty write books on subjects they know well. The CCSU History Department, however, has recently raised the bar. Nine new books, all written or co-written by faculty from the History Department, will have been released by the end of this academic year.

Meeting the Demands of Reason: The Life and Thought of Andrei Sakharov, written by Professor of History Jay Bergman, focuses on the Soviet physicist, dissident, and human rights activist who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1975. Bergman’s work provides an account of Sakharov’s intellectual development and life, while placing emphasis on his political thought and the way his ideas affected Soviet society.

Professor of History Mieczyslaw Biskupski’s book, Hollywood’s War with Poland, 1939–1945, was released in late October. Using the letters, diaries, memoirs, and memoranda of actors, directors, and studio heads, Biskupski focuses on the negative portrayal of Poland in American movies during World War II and also examines the political climate that influenced Hollywood films.

The new book from Assistant Professor of History Leah Glaser, Electrifying the Rural American West: Stories of Power, People, and Place, takes a look at the cultural and social impact that electrification had on the western United States. The book uses three Arizona case studies to show how electrification impacted economies, places, and lifestyles.

Professor of History Glenn Sunshine released a book last August in which he examines the development of worldviews from a Western perspective. In Why You Think the Way You Do: The Story of Western Worldviews from Rome to Home, Sunshine discusses the transformation of pagan Roman culture by Christianity and the establishment of many of the positive characteristics of Western civilization.

Released in July 2009, Out of the Attic: Inventing Antiques in Twentieth-Century New England, by Associate Professor of History Briann Greenfield, follows the conversion of antiques from family keepsakes to artistic objects and examines the role of dealers, collectors, and museum makers. Greenfield also discusses the development of a retail structure for the buying and selling of antiques.

Professor of History Katherine Hermes and Professor of Communication Karen Ritzenhoff collaborated on a book titled Sex and Sexuality in a Feminist World. Released in March 2009, the book is a collection of essays which explore sexuality and sex in historical and contemporary contexts.

For centuries historians have debated whether Andrew Jackson was an effective politician or a loose cannon with no political vision. Professor of History Matthew Warshauer’s book Andrew Jackson in Context, which was published last September, offers a look at the varying opinions about Jackson in this biography of the seventh president.

The problem of Irish identity plays a prominent role in Associate Professor of History John Tully’s book Ireland and Irish Americans, 1932–1945: The Search for Identity. In the book Tully focuses on the interactions between Irish Americans and the Irish as the two groups struggled to create an identity before and after World War II.

A book by Associate Professor of History Mark Jones, Children as Treasures: Childhood and the Middle Class in Early Twentieth Century Japan, will be published in May. Jones examines the groups, institutions, and individuals that have reshaped the daily life of children and the idea of childhood in Japan.

— Heather Lusebrink
Phil Kurze ’72: Celebrates Olympic Gold with USA Bobsled Team

Through pelting cold rain and snow, Phil Kurze ’72 stood alongside the bobsled track as the jet-black Night Train barreled over the finish line to win Olympic gold. Though he developed a full-blown case of pneumonia at the Vancouver Olympics, it was a historic moment he had to experience in person.

“To see our men’s team win Olympic gold for the first time since 1948, and to know that in some small way I’ve had something to do with that, was extraordinary,” says Kurze, vice president of Motorsports for Whelen Engineering, based in Chester, CT. In his spare time, Kurze serves as president of Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project, designer and manufacturer of the Night Train, a four-man bobsled, and a two-person sled which earned the bronze medal in its division for the women’s team.

During the Night Train’s four runs at the Whistler Sliding Center in February, the sled reached record-breaking speeds of up to 95 miles per hour. Kurze remembers feeling “numb” as his team crossed the finish line at the Olympics. “In a split second, everything from the past 15 years came together; then, suddenly, it was all over. I didn’t want it to end; I wanted that very special moment to last longer. But, at the same time, I couldn’t wait for it to be over, so our team would have its gold.”

The pursuit for Olympic gold began in 1992 when NASCAR veteran Geoff Bodine had the idea of incorporating NASCAR technology into the bobsled’s design. According to Kurze, the race car driver was disgusted with the US team’s dismal performance.

“In a competition where the science of the sled is as critical as the skill of the team, Bodine couldn’t understand why the US team used borrowed sleds that were not American-made,” says Kurze, who is also well-known in NASCAR circles because of Whelen’s sponsorship of three NASCAR race series.

Bodine reached out to race car chassis builder Bob Cuneo of Chassis Dynamics in Connecticut, and the Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project was born (“Bo” for Bodine and “Dyn” for Dynamics). A couple of years into the project, Bodine approached Kurze and Whelen Engineering for additional help.

As Bo-Dyn’s president, Kurze led efforts to secure the needed financial backing and establish the bobsled project as a non-profit organization. Non-profit status made Bo-Dyn an attractive investment to a number of corporate sponsors, and Whelen Engineering became the biggest investor.

“I’m especially proud that John Olson, Whelen’s president and CEO, felt a synergy with Bodine’s ‘Made in America’ goal and was inspired to give the bobsled project $150,000. It came with a stipulation that $50,000 of the money was to go directly to the building of a sled that would outclass every other team in the world.”

As a thank you to Kurze and Whelen Engineering, the USA Bobsled Team arrived at the Connecticut facility in late March with their medals and bobsled in tow. The athletes presented Kurze with an autographed helmet to commemorate their gold medal win at the Olympics in Alberta. From left to right, Geoff Bodine, Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project founder; Steve Mesler, Team USA push athlete; Steve Holcomb, Team USA pilot; Phil Kurze, Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project president; Justin Olsen, Team USA push athlete; and Curt Tomasevicz, Team USA brakeman.

Right: Demonstrating his appreciation for support, John Napier, a member of the two-man USA Bobsled Team featured on the cover of PARADE magazine, poses for a photo with John Olson, president and CEO of Whelen Engineering and the largest contributor to the Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project.

Below: During a ‘thank you’ visit this spring to Whelen Engineering, the USA four-man Bobsled Team presented Phil Kurze ’72 with a special helmet commemorating their gold medal win at the Olympics in Alberta.

From left to right, Geoff Bodine, Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project founder; Steve Mesler, Team USA push athlete; Steve Holcomb, Team USA pilot; Phil Kurze, Bo-Dyn Bobsled Project president; Justin Olsen, Team USA push athlete; and Curt Tomasevicz, Team USA brakeman.

— Janice Palmer
John Pew ’80: 
Always in Motion, Always in Control

In 1996, John Pew ’80 and his family set out from New Zealand — where they had been living for about four years — on a voyage to Kodiak Island, Alaska. Pew, who had built their one-of-a-kind 70-foot sailing vessel with the help of a naval architect, had originally proposed a journey to Antarctica, but his wife, Stephanie, had nixed the idea. The seas were too rough and the journey too difficult; after all, their sons were only 12 and 5 years old. Little did she know that on their 6,500-mile trip to Alaska they would enjoy only one port of call — in American Samoa — before enduring a stretch of 24 lonely days at sea and experiencing a near miss with a hurricane-sized storm coming off the Aleutian Islands. Most of the time, they were nowhere near land and far from even the shipping lanes, with nothing in sight but the vast ocean and no one to rely on in case of emergency but themselves. “Most people don’t do that route,” acknowledges the adventurous Pew. With a laugh he adds, “I guess nobody does.”

That statement — and the insouciant chuckle that goes with it — just about sums up John Pew’s penchant for charting his own unconventional course in life. A Dostoevsky fan, helicopter skiing enthusiast, and supporter of local public schools (he’s vice president of a family foundation created for that purpose), Pew pursued interests in music and business, as well as sailing and boat-building, before becoming what he is now — a part-time racecar driver.

Pew, who resides in Florida, drives a Daytona Prototype sports car — at top speeds of 200 miles per hour — in about a dozen Grand-Am series races per year. Each car has two drivers, and Pew’s partner is a full-time professional driver. But on the day before a race, it is often Pew who races against the clock in the qualifying heats to secure his team’s start position for the next day. During a race, he’ll do a 30- to 90-minute stint at the wheel, before making a pit stop and switching out to let his partner finish. In a pro-am contest, an amateur driver must work very hard to be at all competitive. But Pew’s team has placed well — and even won some races — in the 10 years he’s been driving. He relishes the challenge and the difficulty level of the undertaking. He says, “It’s very satisfying to compete at such a high level with pro drivers.”

Between races, Pew can sometimes be found at a special go-kart track, where he drives a go-kart at 80 mph to maintain the concentration skills and stamina needed to be in top racing condition. And, to some degree, go-carts are where it all began.

Pew grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he remembers driving go-karts on neighborhood streets, back when there were no tracks available. A self-described “handful” as a kid and a ski racer in high school, he always knew he wasn’t cut out for a traditional education or career path. A few years after high school, he came east to pursue his love of music — specifically, to study jazz bass guitar — at the Hartford Conservatory of Music. He later found work at an office furniture business, got married, and decided that going back to school and majoring in business might be a good idea. But after enrolling at CCSU, he took an introductory economics course with Professor of Economics, Emeritus, Paul Altieri and promptly changed his major.

“I loved economics, and I still do. It’s become a lifelong passion,” says Pew. “Economics teaches you a way to think, a way to look at things, which I still find very interesting and use to analyze things. A small variable can have a large effect.”

This analytical way of thinking helped Pew plan and prepare for several trans-oceanic...
Artistic Tribute—and a Check—to Haiti

In March the CCSU student organization DanCentral presented the New Britain chapter of the American Red Cross with a donation of over $400 to aid in Haitian relief efforts—pictured below, from left: Professor of Physical Education and Human Performance/Theatre Catherine Fellows, DanCentral president Nicole Carano, Red Cross representative Becky Johnson, and DanCentral secretary Meaghan Schekner. The funds were raised during the club’s benefit performance “Helping/Healing Haiti,” which took place on February 9 in Welte Auditorium. CCSU dance and theatre students collaborated on the two-hour event, which featured songs, poetry, and dance.

Fellows, director of CCSU’s dance program, conducted the performance. “I feel we paid artistic tribute to Haiti,” she noted. “In a disaster such as Haiti’s, it takes teamwork, love, trust, and compassion to persevere. Every piece rang all of these virtues.” After the January earthquake struck Haiti, Fellows recalls being inspired by an elderly woman who was seen rising from the rubble singing and praying. Fellows knew she wanted to include some sort of connection to the devastated country in the annual spring performance to be held in April, but, she says, the catastrophe and its much-needed relief efforts were too pressing. So she had the idea to invite the CCSU community to view a rehearsal. From there, the benefit performance quickly developed.

President of DanCentral Nicole Carrano choreographed “Brother John,” a piece inspired by her Marine sibling and performed by company members at the benefit. “It portrays the struggles of dealing with the terror and destruction of war,” she says. She found the piece fitting, for, as she notes, “Haiti has such widespread disaster that it’s almost as if it were involved in a war.”

The benefit program concluded with an emotional dance performed in white costumes—a continuation of the evening’s theme of inspiring hope. “I’m continually impressed by the maturity of students’ level of commitment to work, whether it be in the classroom or on the stage,” says Fellows. She was particularly touched by the students’ post-performance reflections; one student noted that throughout the night, “inspiration and optimism resonated strongly.”

NorthStar Takes a Shine to CCSU Athletics

NorthStar Wealth Partners, a financial planning firm founded by two CCSU alumni, has committed to a yearlong sponsorship of the CCSU Blue Devils athletics program. According to Robert Laraia ’86 and Brandon Marinelli ’01, “We embrace the leadership opportunities and strength of character the athletics program instills in its students. The future of business and industry in central Connecticut rests on the efforts and successes of programs like CCSU Athletics. We are proud to be an active supporter of their efforts.” The sponsorship was launched on January 14 at an after-game party hosted by NorthStar following the men’s basketball game against Quinnipiac.

alumni in the news

Director of University Relations, Emeritus, Peter Kilduff ’67 was profiled in The Hartford Courant for his writings on German aviation during World War I. When Kilduff retired from Central two years ago, he was unanimously voted an honorary member of the History Department. Kilduff’s latest book, Black Fokker Leader, features the German flier Carl Degelow who forced his enemies to land their aircraft rather than shooting them down. Kilduff has published 13 books on German aviation and is planning to continue writing in retirement.

CCSU alumna Holly (Lasker) Maiorano ’74 was the focus of a Hartford Courant article in January after announcing her retirement as the principal of Buckley Elementary School in Manchester. Seventeen years of Maiorano’s 35-year career as a teacher and administrator were spent in Manchester.
Paul Schlickmann Named Director of Athletics

CCSU President Jack Miller named Paul Schlickmann (at left in photo on right) as the new director of intercollegiate athletics in April. Schlickmann, 44, comes to New Britain from Stony Brook University, where he was the executive associate director of athletics. He is charged with running the Blue Devils’ 18-sport Division I athletics program. This announcement comes as the University celebrates a milestone—the Blue Devils obtained NCAA Division I status 25 years ago.

Long-time Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Charles “CJ” Jones retired in July of 2009 after 14 years at the helm of his alma mater; Professor of Manufacturing and Construction Management Paul Resetarits has served in the position for the past year.

“Paul Schlickmann comes to Central at an exciting time,” Miller said. “We are confident that he can lead us in the direction we are looking to go—competing to win the Northeast Conference Commissioner’s Cup every season. Paul comes from a program that has grown tremendously during his time, and we are confident that his leadership and experience can bring Central back to the top of the NEC.”

“Central has an impressive history of success,” Schlickmann said. “And there is a palpable sense of pride about athletics throughout the campus community. I am excited to work with President Miller in achieving his vision for Blue Devil Athletics to be the premier program in the Northeast Conference.”

Schlickmann has over 19 years of experience in intercollegiate athletics as an administrator and a coach. As the Chief Operating Officer at Stony Brook, he managed the daily operations of the athletics department and oversaw some 30 full-time professional staff. As a member of the senior management team, he managed department strategic planning initiatives, policy and procedure development and implementation, and all facets of fund raising, corporate development, and revenue generation. Schlickmann was responsible for a dramatic overhaul of Stony Brook’s athletic facilities during his tenure. In addition to successfully completing facility renovation and improvement projects totaling more than $8 million, he also managed the planning and design of another $30 million in capital projects.

A native of Worcester, MA, Schlickmann earned his Bachelor of Arts in American Studies in 1989 from Trinity College, where he was a four-year member of the men’s basketball team. He earned his Master of Science degree in Sport Administration from Springfield College in 1995 and is a 2008 graduate of the highly regarded Sports Management Institute. Schlickmann will officially begin with the Blue Devils in June.

—Tom Pincince

Communication Senior Honored

Senior communication major Jana Baseel was named the 2010 Student Chapter Leader of the Year by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). The award is presented annually to a student-president who has demonstrated outstanding dedication, initiative, and leadership in his or her respective chapter. The IABC Connecticut chapter funded Baseel’s trip to San Diego, CA, for the 2010 IABC Chapter Management Awards Reception. Baseel was also featured on the IABC website and in the student magazine, as well as in The Hartford Courant. The IABC CCSU chapter connects communication students with relevant professionals and provides workshops to enhance business communication skills.

new book

Assistant Professor of Manufacturing and Construction Management Linda Reeder’s new book, Guide to Green Building Rating Systems: Understanding LEED, Green Globes, ENERGY STAR, the National Green Building Standard, and More, was published by Wiley in March as part of its “Series in Sustainable Design.” In the book, Reeder takes an in-depth, comparative look at various national rating systems used to determine the environmentally friendly “green” levels of residential and commercial construction.
In April the International Studies lecture series presented 1912: Breaking the Silence, a documentary film by Gloria Rolando focusing on the massacre of the Party of Independents of Color in Cuba. The event was sponsored by the Office of the Provost, International and Area Studies, the Africana Center, African Studies, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

This year’s Careers in Aging Week, sponsored by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, was held as part of CCSU’s General Career Fair. Hosted by the Center for Advising and Career Exploration (CACE), the event gave students the opportunity to speak with representatives from the Jerome Home and West of Hartford® Home.

Don Shubert, president of the Connecticut Construction Industries Association, spoke at a February meeting of the CCSU Construction Management Student Club about how federal stimulus money is being spent in the state.

The Center for Africana Studies’ Amistad Committee recently sponsored a Film Series on Haiti which featured two prominent films—Aristide and the Endless Revolution (Baraka Productions, 2005), which detailed the 2004 Haitian rebellion, and The Agronomist (Clinica Estetico and HBO/Cinemax Documentary, 2003), which profiled Haitian radio journalist and human rights activist Jean Dominique who was assassinated in 2000.

In January CCSU hosted “College Goal Sunday,” a workshop designed to help college-bound students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Financial aid officers at Central worked with accounting and tax professionals to ensure students had completed the necessary forms to apply for federal financial aid, as well as a plethora of other scholarships.

Human Resources offered two CPR/AED Training Programs this semester to faculty, staff, and volunteers in the CCSU community. Participants in the workshop, sponsored by the CCSU CPR/AED Task Force, earned certification by the American Heart Association to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and use an automated external defibrillator (AED).

The Connecticut chapter of the ACLU gave a presentation at CCSU in late February. “Eternal Vigilance in Connecticut,” presented by Dan Noel, chair of the Connecticut ACLE, addressed four situations a student might encounter. Attendees discussed the scenarios and considered how the law and Constitution applied in each case. The event was sponsored by the Arts and Sciences Public Policy Committee and the departments of Political Science and Philosophy.

Pauline Park, chair of the New York Association for Gender Rights Advocacy, and Diana Lombardi, who serves on the steering committee of the Connecticut Anti-Discrimination Coalition, spoke at CCSU in late April. The event, “Gender Identity and the Law: An Act Concerning Discrimination,” focused on the fact that Connecticut currently has no explicit laws prohibiting discrimination because of gender identity or expression.

Dr. Mark Lynch, of the Worcester Art Museum and Massachusetts Audubon Society, presented “The Painted Bird: An Example of Using Art Museums as Resources in Natural History” in February.

National Poetry Month was celebrated at CCSU during the 5th annual Poetry Marathon, featuring poetry readings by students and faculty, on April 29.

The Center for Advising and Career Exploration is hosting a series of webinars on “Reaching and Retaining Students.” One session, held in February, focused on advising students on academic probation. Another, on effective academic advising strategies, took place in March. The webinars, created by the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), are sponsored on campus by the Office of the Provost.

Five students from CCSU—Jeremy Bradford, Michael Martin, Filis Coba, Mikalai Filon, and Zachary McGuirk—competed against 42 students from ten schools in the Regional Mathematics Competition hosted by CCSU on April 10. The competition was sponsored by CCSU’s Math Club.

CCSU students, faculty, and staff took part in “Snapshot: One Day in the Life of Connecticut Libraries” in February. The event aimed to capture the impact that libraries around the state have on their communities and campuses on a typical day. Members of the CCSU community submitted photos as well as comments explaining what they liked about the Elihu Burritt Library and how they used its resources.

The International Studies Lecture Series brought Dr. Marjorie Agosin, professor of Spanish at Wellesley College, to campus to lecture on “Threads of Hope and Justice: The Story of the Chilean Arpilleras.” Agosin, who was raised in Santiago, Chile, discussed how the arpilleras—three-dimensional appliqué textiles—created by Chilean women focused international attention on the murder and torture of their loved ones during the oppressive government of General Augusto Pinochet.

Acclaimed novelist Tim Wendel, professor of writing at John Hopkins University, visited CCSU in April to read from his new book, High Heat: The Secret History of the Fastball and the Improbable Search for the Fastest Pitcher of All Time. A question and answer session followed the reading.

Bruce Arnold, professor of classics at Mt. Holyoke College, gave a lecture at CCSU on “Where Does the Bible Come From and How Can You Trust It?” in March. The event was sponsored by Christian Students at Central (CSAC).
Students Win Prestigious Prize at International Student Research Competition on Computer Science Education

Two CCSU computer science students brought home first prize in the undergraduate division of the international Student Research Competition, organized by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) in early March. Seniors Tommy Carpenter and Caleb MacDonald won the first-place cash prize of $500 for their work on incorporating iris recognition as a safety feature on mobile devices.

The competition took place at the 41st ACM Technical Symposium on Computer Science Education (SIGCSE) on March 10–13, 2010, in Milwaukee, WI. SIGCSE is the largest international conference dedicated to computer science education and is attended each year by well over 1,000 faculty and students from around the world.

Professor of Computer Science Stanislav Kurkovsky, who acted as a faculty mentor for the students’ Independent Study project, said that he initially approached the students with the idea for the project because he thought it would be a good exercise for them.

“I think it’s awesome,” Kurkovsky said of the project. “A mechanism like this could provide a safeguard against unwanted access to mobile devices.”

This is especially important as more people use mobile devices to store important information. While there are already safety features that can be utilized, such as entering a PIN to gain access to a cell phone, iris recognition is much more secure and simpler to use.

“With iris recognition all you need to do is look into the camera, push the button, and you’re in,” Kurkovsky said. As irises are unique, this makes their use in authentication much more secure.

Carpenter and MacDonald’s proposal was accepted before the event, and they presented a poster on their work at the competition. “The tricky part was that the judges mingled with the rest of attendees,” MacDonald said. “This probably made it easier for students than speaking directly to someone they knew was a judge.”

From all of the posters, only five finalists were selected. Each finalist then made a 15-minute presentation to the judges. Carpenter and MacDonald, who received the highest score, took home first place. Carpenter, who presented the pair’s work in the final round, said, “I had been to the conference the year before as a spectator and the questions were hard! Overall I think the speech went well, but there was one question that I had to wing because it caught me off guard.”

In fact, both students had attended the conference with Kurkovsky and another student the previous spring. “I wanted them to see what it was like so they knew what to expect,” Kurkovsky said. The idea certainly seems to have paid off. Now Carpenter and MacDonald have something else to look forward to—a paper they co-authored with Kurkovsky on the project is set to be presented in Las Vegas this year. And their victory in Milwaukee places them in a “virtual competition,” during the next few months, with the top three winners from other computer science competitions.

The experience of performing and presenting their research is something that MacDonald feels can be beneficial for students. “If anybody else here at Central gets the opportunity to do student research, I say to go for it,” he said. “It did have its ups and downs, but the benefits of attending the conference and competing with other students far outweigh any negatives.”

Carpenter and MacDonald’s success was made possible in part by the Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics (CSMP) Scholarship Program, which receives funding from the National Science Foundation’s Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program. The scholarship supported the students’ educational expenses, enabling them to focus on academics and their research.

“The CSMP Scholarship was my greatest achievement as an undergraduate,” Carpenter said. “There’s a good chance that this project never would have occurred without the scholarship.”

— Heather Lusebrink
Rob Cavener: A Transatlantic Transition

Rob Cavener had only been in the United States once—a five-day stint in Florida for a soccer tournament—before he received the recruiting call from Head Men's Soccer Coach Shaun Green. Cavener, a native of Tynemouth, England, lived down the road from where Green grew up and notes, “so straight away...there was a connection. Being from my area, he knew a lot about where I came from. People I spoke to who had played for Central spoke highly of him.”

Cavener is now a junior captain of the men’s soccer team, and, since making his journey across the Atlantic, he has never looked back. “It was a big leap of faith,” he says, “but it paid off.”

Since Cavener arrived at Central in 2007, he has garnered a collection of impressive accolades. This past season he received the National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) All-North Atlantic Region honors—for the second straight year—and was named the Nike New Hampshire Classic Tournament MVP after assisting Central to win their season-opening tournament. The finance major also earned a spot on the CoSIDA/ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District I First Team as acknowledgment of his prowess both on and off the field. He was given First Team All-Northeast Conference (NEC) honors following the 2009 season when he led the Blue Devils and the NEC with eight assists, three of which came in a single game during CCSU’s 3-2 home victory over Robert Morris.

Cavener remembers feeling a little apprehensive when he first came to the States, but, he says, he soon found a welcoming team. He met future teammate and fellow countryman and midfielder Connor Smith at the airport and the pair quickly bonded. “We’ve roomed together ever since,” notes Cavener. “We’ve gone through everything together. The good and the bad.”

The first semester was a trying experience for Cavener, but he was able to emerge a stronger student, athlete, and individual. “I struggled a bit, but I was eventually able to settle into the American way of life,” he notes. “I had difficulty fitting practice, lifting, and games in with my academics, but you eventually find when and where you work best. You have to find that balance.”

He credits the coaching staff for making his initial transition as smooth as possible: “The coaches are brilliant. I suffered from homesickness, but they made me feel wanted here. I don’t know if I could have made it through the first semester without them.” He praises Green and assistant coaches Paul Wright and Christian Benjamin for their hospitality, remarking that he “could always go to them; they always had an open door.” The captains also helped, he says, and notes that he is now returning the favor by helping the younger recruits adjust.

Cavener quickly made Central history his freshman year as the Blue Devils were berthed into their first-ever NCAA Sweet Sixteen Tournament. He recalls initial struggles, but says that the team was able to pull through: “We were a new set of lads and didn’t really know each other, but as the season went on we bonded together. We started winning games, and it was a snowball effect—we kept rolling. We were beating teams we weren’t expected to beat; history making, I suppose.”

Cavener notes that he had to transition from the quicker-paced English style of play to the more drawn-out American method. “The style of play here is a lot different,” he says. “It’s more ‘keep-ball,’ with the focus on breaking your opponents down over time. It gets more technical. And in the US you have to have a winner, while in England you can tie.” Cavener, who has tried out all positions during his soccer career, eventually settled on midfield. He says of this multifaceted position, “It puts you right in the thick of things. You’re involved in shooting, crossing, attacking, and defending—it takes everything into account. You also get to play, at some level, with everyone. As a captain, that’s a great thing.” Cavener was elected captain this year and says that the role has sharpened his leadership skills.
“I’ve played the sport now for over 10 years, and it has helped to improve my discipline and time management skills, as well as my ability to keep my cool under pressure,” states Cavener, who also credits athletics for honing his dedication and commitment. He says that “being out there every day training, even if the rewards don’t come that season” has helped him to fully commit to other aspects of his life, including academics. “It’s about getting back out there and doing it all over again.”

Cavener looks to continue his play post-collegiately but says that he is “not ruling anything out. My main reason for coming here was to get a degree. If I can play for a club somewhere, that would be great. Otherwise I’ll go into some aspect of business.” By demonstrating his multi-continental talents in academics and athletics, Cavener has laid the groundwork for a successful future in both fields.

— Luke Albertson

in the news

Adjunct Lecturer of Philosophy Stephen Balkaran was interviewed on WFSB about his new African American studies course on the civil rights movement. The course, titled “Tracing the Civil Rights Movement,” will take 19 students to Alabama and Tennessee this summer to explore historical sites and cities, including Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma, and Memphis.

CCSU graduate students Jane Derasadourian, Carrie Hayden, and Kathleen Simoneau were mentioned in a recent article in the Journal Inquirer. The students taught a series of activities, designed to help parents get their children to read, as part of a literacy program at O’Brien Elementary School in East Hartford.

Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Philosophy Ned Lamont was featured in a Connecticut Business Journal article about his gubernatorial campaign. Lamont emphasized his business and economic background, pointing to a Connecticut fiscal blueprint he authored with a nonpartisan group at CCSU.

Examiner.com ran an article by the Hartford skepticism examiner concerning a presentation on the 2012 myths given by Professor of Physics and Earth Sciences Kristine Larsen at the joint meeting of Geological Society of America’s Northeastern and Southeastern Sections in March. During the lecture, titled “The 2012 Hoax: A Geological Call to Arms,” Larsen examined how geological science is distorted by myths surrounding the “end” of the Mayan calendar in 2012.

John Pew ’80: Always in Motion, Always in Control

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journeys, including the first one he and his wife took to New Zealand after his graduation. At the time, there was no such thing as GPS, and they had to navigate using a compass and the stars.

Today, a methodical approach comes in handy when he and other trustees are considering what grants the Robert and Mary Pew Public Education Fund—established by his parents—will make. The foundation has supported the professional development of teachers and administrators, as well as educational opportunities for students in underperforming schools in Palm Beach County, Florida. Says Pew, “We all realized as a family how important education is for everybody. You can’t really have a good democracy if people aren’t educated.”

Pew’s training in economics has also helped him become a savvy investor. When he is not racing, he spends much of his time online, meticulously researching and managing his investments, an occupation that has enabled him to support his less conventional pursuits.

John Pew may appear to be a classic speed-loving risk-taker, but in fact he considers himself to be cautious and careful, a guy who really believes in doing one’s homework. “It’s funny because I don’t see what I do as being risky,” he says. Racecars are safer than they’ve ever been, he points out, and a good driver knows his own physical limits, as well as those of his equipment. Pew notes, “Even in the middle of the ocean in a small boat with my wife and two kids, thousands of miles from anywhere, I don’t feel that it’s risky. I was very confident in the way that I had prepared the boat and in my own skills with the boat.”

So if he is not a risk-taker, does he consider himself an adrenaline addict, a restless wanderer, or perhaps some kind of Renaissance man? “I don’t know,” Pew says with a laugh. “I’m still trying to figure that out.”

— Leslie Virostek
The CCSU Courier is published during the year to present a variety of news stories of interest to faculty, staff, friends of the University, leaders of Connecticut higher education, state school districts, and the University’s other diverse constituencies.

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