The Hartt School traces its beginnings to 1920, when Julius Hartt and Moshe Paranov formed Julius Hartt, Moshe Paranov, and Associated Teachers in a building on Collins Street in Hartford, Conn. From this humble start, what was to become the Hartt School of Music grew, offering master’s degrees in music (1948) and music education (1951) before becoming a founding member of the University of Hartford in 1957.

In 1993 the Hartt School of Music became The Hartt School to include the addition of dance and theatre divisions to the music and music education programs. Today, The Hartt School is a world-class performing arts conservatory whose students and artist-faculty participate in more than 400 instrumental and vocal performances, recitals, plays, master classes, dance performances, and music theatre productions each year.

To celebrate its 90th anniversary this year, Hartt has invited two well-known artists to be in residence in fall 2010 and spring 2011.

Innovative dancer, choreographer, and theatrical director David Gordon is leading the senior dance class and 12 student actors in a joint composition class this fall. Gordon will return to the University in the spring with his dance company to prepare a new work based on Pirandello’s Six Characters in Search of an Author. He will also host open rehearsals for the public and speak about the creative process and his new work.

Also in residence is Eugenia Zukerman, celebrated flutist, author, CBS News Sunday Morning classical music correspondent, and entrepreneur. Zukerman will reach across several colleges and schools while on campus, teaching master classes in flute and meeting with broadcast journalism students in the School of Communication, creative writing students in the College of Arts and Sciences, and health sciences students in the College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions. Hartt Dean Aaron Flagg says he hopes that Zukerman’s example will inspire students to develop their talents more fully across conventional boundaries.

“The Hartt School is proud of its rich history, engaged in setting directions for its future, and thrilled by the present quality of its students and faculty,” says Flagg. “Our 90th year finds us reflecting on our unique identity as a school of performing arts and how we can better inspire excellence in all our students to help them realize their artistic, intellectual, and human potential.”

For updated information about events throughout the school year, go to www.harttweb.hartford.edu for a complete performance calendar.
Maurice Greenberg Center Turns 25

As part of its 25th anniversary celebration, the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies has organized an exhibition and a series of four lectures on the art of the Polish-American Jewish artist Arthur Szyk (1894–1951) that will be held both at the New Britain Museum of American Art and at the George J. Sherman and Lottie K. Sherman Museum of Civilization at the University.

“It is very fitting that the 25th anniversary programming of the Greenberg Center feature collaborative exhibitions and lectures in participation with major local museums and institutions like the New Britain Museum of American Art, the Mandell Jewish Community Center of Greater Hartford, and the Charter Oak Cultural Center in downtown Hartford,” says Professor Richard Freund, director of the center. “Exhibitions and lectures for the public and collaboration with local institutions have been a hallmark of the Greenberg Center’s programming since it was founded in 1985.”

The center was founded with a $1 million gift from Arnold C. Greenberg (Hon. ’89) and his wife, Beverly, and was named for his father.

In October an exhibit of the artist’s work, titled A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Swords: The Art of Arthur Szyk, opened at the New Britain Museum. Avinoam Patt, the Philip D. Feltman Professor of Modern Jewish History at the University, is the curator of the exhibit, which will run at the museum through Jan. 27, 2011.

Szyk earned an international reputation during his lifetime for his richly detailed illustrations and illuminations of Jewish themes. He was a skillful caricaturist and a passionate crusader for political causes starting in his days in his native Poland and continuing through World War II.

During the war Szyk devoted his art to defeating Nazi Germany and its allies and calling the world’s attention to the mass murder of Europe’s Jews. His wartime cartoons and caricatures filled the pages of American newspapers and magazines, earning him a reputation as a “one-man army” in the Allied cause.

By 1943, Szyk had become perhaps America’s leading artistic advocate for Jewish rescue from Nazi Europe. He was also beloved for his illustrations of the leaders of the United States and his series on behalf of the nascent State of Israel in the late 1940s. A selection from these series is featured at the New Britain Museum.

The Sherman Museum on campus is featuring a satellite exhibition of the illustrations of Szyk and Theodore Geisel (“Dr. Seuss”), another illustrator who took on the issues of the day, including the effort to defeat the Nazis and the fate of the Jews of Europe. The exhibit opened on Nov. 8 and continues through Jan. 27, 2011.

Contact the Greenberg Center at mgcjs@hartford.edu or call 860.768.4964 for more information or to reserve a place in a special docent-led tour at the New Britain Museum.
Hartford Scholars and EMS Turn 20

In the past two decades, much has changed on the University of Hartford campus, but fundamentals like the University’s commitment to the city of Hartford have not. In 1990 then—University President Humphrey Tonkin initiated two programs to benefit the citizens of Greater Hartford: Hartford Scholars and Educational Main Street. Twenty years later, both are still going strong.

The Hartford Scholars program gives half-tuition scholarships to Hartford resident students who graduate from a Hartford public high school or a suburban high school that participates in Project Choice. (Project Choice is a state program designed to increase racial, ethnic, and economic diversity in Connecticut schools.) In the two decades since the scholarship program began, 300 Hartford Scholars have received degrees from the University, and nearly 100 Hartford Scholars are currently enrolled.

Four members of the first Hartford Scholars class, which entered the University in 1990, attended a 20th-year celebration this fall, as did dozens of current and past scholars, University President Walter Harrison, deans, regents, faculty, staff, and corporate and individual donors.

Speakers at the event included Tonkin, now University Professor of the Humanities and president emeritus. In 1990 fewer than 50 percent of Hartford high-school graduates continued their education at a time when businesses were seeking job applicants with the strong academic and interpersonal skills developed in college. Tonkin said the Hartford Scholars program was begun because the University wanted to do something for both city of Hartford residents and for businesses.

“It was apparent that expanding the financial aid program and making scholarships specific to Hartford residents would be doable. So I said, ‘Let’s do it,’” Tonkin said.

The emcee for the celebration was Daylon Martin ’96, a member of the first Hartford Scholars class and the first member of his family to receive a college degree. He is the current owner of Daylon Martin and Associates Real Estate and director of the Bethany Early Learning Center in Macon, Ga. Martin told the audience, “My degree broke a cycle of poverty and academic hopelessness in my family and now provides us with knowledge, wisdom, wealth and financial security, and most importantly, hope and opportunity for our future generations.”

In February, Educational Main Street (EMS) also marked its 20th anniversary with a celebration attended by faculty, staff, former tutors/coordinators, and President Walter Harrison.

As Tonkin writes in the University’s history, A University for Hartford, A University for the World, “[The partnership was] intended to make it easier for young people to move from educational level to educational level, to open up the schools to tutoring and mentoring by University of Hartford students, and to pool the intellectual resources of the teachers in the schools and the professors at the University.”

The program brought together Weaver High School, Annie Fisher School, Fox Middle School, and the University of Hartford into a four-institution partnership in 1990.

In its original focus, University students were trained as tutors to help youth in Hartford’s North End neighborhood improve their academic performance in order to graduate from high school and continue on to college. More than 6,000 University of Hartford undergraduates have tutored in the partner schools since the program began in 1990. Today’s tutors serve more than 5,000 Greater Hartford students.

Since 2001, the mission of EMS has broadened from service to just the children of the North End of Hartford to include service-learning opportunities for University of Hartford students. Student tutors earn course credits for their tutoring efforts in Bloomfield and West Hartford as well as Hartford schools while putting into practice many of the skills and principles they acquire in their classes.

“Our tutors remark over and over again how much their service-learning experience at the partner schools has supported their understanding of their course work and how it was an important and rewarding part of their college experience,” says EMS Director Mary Christensen.

L-r: Humphrey Tonkin, Hartford Scholars founder and University president emeritus, with members of the first Hartford Scholars class: Llonia Jackson-Gordon ’97, Daylon Martin ’96, Tamara Thomas ’94, and Curtis St. Brice ’97.