Fasten your seatbelts, alumni and parents! We’re kicking off Fall Weekend by taking to the skies. Your charter flight on Hawk Air departs from Konover Campus Center on Friday evening, featuring an “in-flight” casino and four fun destinations with food, music, and many great prizes.

On Saturday don’t miss the Alumni Artisans Marketplace, the Alumni Musicians Spotlight, various Hawk athletic events, and the annual Alumni Anchor Awards, which recognize outstanding alumni.

COME ABOARD!

SAVE THESE DATES!
The University of Hartford welcomes your assistance in identifying prospective students with academic potential who could benefit from the small class size, caring faculty, and wide range of majors that we offer. Whether it's a family member, a neighbor's child, or the son or daughter of a co-worker, tell them about your experiences at the University and encourage them to apply.

The University is committed to meeting the financial needs of all our students, even in the current economy. Right now, more than 90 percent of our full-time undergraduates receive some form of financial assistance. Prospective students and their families can learn more about the University of Hartford by going to our admission website: admission.hartford.edu.

You Loved It Here. They Will Too!

“...I received my BS in engineering from the University of Hartford by attending night classes while working full time. My professors were great, and they were well versed in their subjects. Because of the education I received, my career has advanced, and for that I'm very grateful.

So grateful, in fact, that my wife, Claudia, and I encouraged our son, Dave, to attend the University. He's an engineering major too and is off to a great start. We'd also like to see our daughter, Rachel, go to the University in a couple of years.

I think we made the right choice.” —David L. Kurtz III '99

Be an Ambassador for Your Alma Mater

David L. Kurtz III '99 and Dave Kurtz '12
Dear Readers,

As a baby boomer myself, I know I am always on the lookout for signs of approaching physical decline. I go to the doctor more than I did 10 years ago, and I take prescription medication regularly. I wear reading glasses, and when I get out of bed in the morning, my joints creak.

Experts predict that we boomers and our age-related illnesses will severely tax the U.S. health-care system in the next 10 to 15 years at our current pace. Already the shortage of qualified nurses is reaching a crisis stage. It’s not hard to see that the same will occur in other health professions. The education of more and more health-care professionals to meet the growing demand is becoming a very important topic.

In this issue’s special section, “Body of Knowledge,” we take a look at some of the programs at the University of Hartford that prepare our students for jobs in health care—everything from nursing and physical therapy to psychology, neuroscience, and biomechanical engineering. In this economy, health care is one of the few areas where jobs are available, and the wide range of degree programs at the University is impressive.

My thanks go out to Robin Millet ’89. She told me about Albert “Skip” Rizzo ’77 and the amazing work he’s doing with veterans returning from Iraq who have posttraumatic stress disorder. Don’t miss his profile on page 17.

Trish Charles
Editor-in-Chief
pcharles@hartford.edu

Read the Observer online at www.hartford.edu/observer.
How the University Is Addressing the Health-Care Crisis

From the moment I stepped onto campus last May, it was evident to me that the University of Hartford is a vibrant, intellectual, artistic, and creative community. During the past year, I have come to understand even more fully the breadth of our expertise, the depth of our intellectual endeavors, and the extraordinary range of talent we have to draw upon.

Because one of my own areas of scholarship is medical ethics, I have paid particular attention to the burgeoning national health-care crisis and how the University is poised to address society’s needs through our academic programs and outreach as a “private university with a public purpose.” It is for this reason that President Harrison asked me to use his regular column in the Observer to highlight some of the current initiatives related to health care and technology—the focus of this issue’s special section.

Since the completion of the preliminary sequencing of the human genome in 2003, geneticists have made remarkable progress in identifying the function of each gene in the human body. The hope is that unlocking our genetic code will enable researchers not only to predict whether certain individuals will develop various conditions but also to advance technological responses to some of our most common and devastating genetically linked diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

University of Hartford faculty members and researchers Jacob P. Harney and Hemchandra Shertukde have been aggressive in taking up this challenge with their investigations. By providing support to such outstanding faculty, and through the hiring of new faculty at the cutting edge of their disciplines, the University has succeeded in creating increased visibility in the research arena throughout the state.

Two recent examples are the $125,000 Young Investigator’s Grant awarded to Aime Levesque, assistant professor of biology, by the Breast Cancer Alliance for her promising research on breast cancer, and a $75,000 grant to our nursing faculty to prepare nurses in the clinical specialty of community/public health. Through these and similar initiatives, the University is partnering with policy makers, health-care providers, and the public itself to confront the increasingly complex challenges of health care.

As a student-centered university, our primary emphasis continues to be providing hands-on instruction in labs and utilizing scholarship to inform classroom learning. The opportunity for both undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research teams alongside their professors strengthens the quality and competitiveness of our graduates.

An excellent model is the work Kevin Ball, assistant professor of physical therapy, is doing in the Human Performance Research Lab. There, students are engaged in data collection and analysis to support the development of assistive technology to help patients receive a fuller, more rapid recovery from injuries due to accidents or medical crises such as strokes. The mentoring relationship integral to these projects inevitably has a profound and lasting impact on students’ professional success.

Like the Human Performance Research Lab, the new Master of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics program will involve intercollegiate collaboration between the Colleges of Education, Nursing and Health Professions and Engineering, Technology, and Architecture in addressing increased demands for technological solutions to the physical and psychological needs of the growing elderly population, as well as those returning from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beyond the labs and classrooms, the service that the University provides to surrounding communities through programs like Project Horizon represents a unique dimension of liberal-arts learning that is central to our mission. By taking the classroom into the community, our students are offered insights into issues of cultural competence, diversity, and social justice that cannot be learned without direct interaction with the individuals we seek to serve.

I am immensely proud of all of the work being done at the University of Hartford to prepare students for jobs in the many aspects of health care and to foster a commitment to lifelong learning and civic engagement. I am confident that our students in the health professions will graduate with the academic skills necessary to play a leadership role in addressing both current and future health-care needs.

Lynn Pasquerella
Provost
The crowd of approximately 3,000 people enjoyed spectacular spring weather and some 50 free events and activities, including many that showcased the University’s programs, resources, and activities.

An Abraham Lincoln impersonator strolled the campus and read the Gettysburg Address in observance of Lincoln’s 200th birthday, while a Civil War encampment on Gengras lawn added to the historical theme. Members of the University’s President’s College and friends read all 49 poems by Edgar Allan Poe, who was also born 200 years ago.

Children with their faces colorfully painted rode lifelike mechanical animals, cuddled live animals in the petting zoo, and jumped just for the sheer joy of it in the bounce houses. Visitors filled the Gray Center Amphitheater for an outdoor concert by the Taubl family, who finished among the top 20 finalists on last summer’s hit NBC show, America’s Got Talent. The musical family includes two current Hartt School students and a Hartt alumna.

At top, Safari Bob Meyer takes Emma Quinn, 4 1/2, and Molly O’Keefe, 4, for a ride on the elephant; below left, the brothers of Zeta Beta Tau rolled a giant ball around campus collecting signatures to support the Children’s Miracle Network and cancer research; below right, Adonis LaFleur, 3, enjoys the petting zoo.
Two Colleges Welcome New Leadership
HARTT AND ENHP NAME NEW DEANS

Two new deans will join the University community on June 30. Aaron A. Flagg (left), a professional trumpet player and music educator who is executive director of the Music Conservatory of Westchester in White Plains, N.Y., has been named dean of The Hartt School. Ralph O. Mueller (right), a quantitative research methodologist and faculty member at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C., has been named dean of the College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions (ENHP).

Dean Flagg
Flagg has a dynamic career as a performer, music administrator, and music educator. As a professional trumpet player, he has performed in solo recitals and with orchestras, chamber groups, and jazz ensembles. He received his undergraduate and master's degrees from The Juilliard School in New York City and his doctorate from the University of Michigan.

At the Music Conservatory of Westchester, Flagg oversaw all aspects of this community school of the arts, including its individual and group instruction in music, musical theatre, music therapy for all ages, arts-in-education programs for area schools, summer programs, and the Live on Central concert series. He directed the school’s strategic planning process, secured the largest donation in the school’s history, and added innovative programs like a vocal academy and a hip-hop ensemble.

“I am honored to have been chosen to help lead The Hartt School at the University of Hartford. The history of excellence in music, the addition of theatre and dance divisions, the strength of the Community Division, and the excitement around the Handel Performing Arts Center all create an incredible opportunity to brand a unique educational experience,” Flagg said about his appointment.

Prior to his years in Westchester, Flagg was on the graduate faculty of The Juilliard School and served as its director of education outreach. While there, he developed eight educational and community outreach programs, including college fellowships in interactive performance and teaching and community engagement initiatives.

Flagg has been a teaching artist for 15 years with organizations that include the Lincoln Center Institute, Carnegie Hall Education, New York Philharmonic Education, Memphis Arts Council, Guggenheim Museum, and the New York City Opera. He has been a panelist and presenter for the National Endowment for the Arts, Chamber Music America, Bank of America Excellence in Orchestra Education, Mellon Foundation, Massachusetts Arts Council, the Joyce Foundation, Polyphonic.org, and the Center for Arts Education.

Dean Mueller
Mueller holds professorial rank in the Graduate School of Education and Human Development and the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration at The George Washington University.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities, he served six years as chair of the Department of Educational Leadership at the university and was responsible for educational, research, outreach, personnel, and financial matters of the unit. During his stewardship, the department grew by roughly one-third to almost 60 full- and part-time faculty members serving more than 800 graduate students in seven program areas. Mueller led the faculty through strategic planning and review, initiated schoolwide curriculum reforms, and held institution-wide leadership positions in the faculty senate and on other critical university committees.

“I am excited about building on retiring Dean Dorothy Zeiser’s many accomplishments and furthering the goal of shaping ENHP into a college known regionally and nationally for its demonstrated commitments to student learning, community engagement, and scholarship of the highest quality,” said Muehler about becoming dean.

Mueller was selected as a 2007–08 American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow and acquired enhanced leadership experience in vision formulation, strategic planning, advancement, and accreditation while participating in ACE leadership seminars and site visits across the United States and South Africa.

He has served as a consultant and reviewer for agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education, and the World Bank, and serves on the boards of several prominent methodological and applied journals. He has been an active leader in such professional organizations as the American Educational Research Association and continues to offer professional-development seminars on data analysis to national and international audiences.

Mueller came to the United States from Germany as a Rotary International Scholar and subsequently received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mathematics from Elon and Wake Forest universities, respectively, and a PhD in educational research and evaluation from Virginia Polytechnic Institute.
The Joseloff Gallery’s current exhibition, through June 28, brings together sculpture, drawings, and paintings by internationally acclaimed artist Nancy Graves—including some significant examples of her work from various phases of her career.

Graves, who died in 1995 of cancer, is considered one of the most innovative, inspired, and prolific artists of her generation.

A native of Pittsfield, Mass., the artist created a sensation in the art world in 1969 with her life-size, lifelike, handmade sculptures of camels at a show at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. That show was the first solo exhibition by a woman artist at the museum. In the early 1970s she concentrated on drawings, watercolors, and paintings, many of them based on maps, the sea floor, and the surface of the moon.

She is best known for vibrantly painted sculpture collages from the 1980s combining elements of nature—bronze casts of leaves, insects, crab claws, berries, and vegetables—along with rope, tools, and myriad household objects. A world traveler with interests in anthropology, paleontology, and archaeology, Graves also incorporated elements of other cultures and other times into her work.

Each piece’s source of support was an integral part of the sculpture, and issues of balance, weight, and counterbalance became important. The method of direct casting that Graves developed subverted the weightiness and rigidity of bronze, giving the illusion of fragility and lightness.

The exhibition is funded by the Kohn/Joseloff Foundation and is made possible through the Nancy Graves Foundation in New York, N.Y.
On CAMPUS

Dr. Avital Fast (left) of the Montefiore Medical Center in New York demonstrates the recently patented Ambulatory Suspension and Rehabilitation Apparatus.

Back on Their Feet
CETA RECEIVES PATENT FOR NEW THERAPY DEVICE

It recently got easier for patients recovering from strokes and injuries to walk again.

After a nine-year journey that began at a medical center in New York City, the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture (CETA) received word in December 2008 that its patent application had been approved for a groundbreaking physical therapy device developed at the University of Hartford.

The Ambulatory Suspension and Rehabilitation Apparatus (U.S. patent no. 7,462,138) is an answer to a problem Dr. Avital Fast of the Montefiore Medical Center had seen all too often.

“Patients were sent to me by their insurance companies,” he says. “They had fallen and injured themselves during physical therapy. We had to find a way to prevent this. The suspension system holds patients upright in a harness while they learn to walk again and in case of falls. I came up with the idea. The University made it happen.”

Devdas Shetty, CETA’s professor of mechanical engineering and director of the University’s Engineering Applications Center, collaborated with the college’s research engineer, Claudio Campana, and teams of engineering students over the years to develop the system. It is the only patented device that allows patients to walk backward and forward and up and down stairs to build strength. It also relieves the physical burden on therapists of trying to support the patients or catch them if they start to fall.

A prototype of the device is in use at the Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine, where Fast is chair of the physical medicine and rehabilitation department.

The next step is finding a manufacturer for the device, which will be marketed to hospitals and rehabilitation centers.

An Evening with Hank Jones
Hartt faculty, students, and alumni in concert with jazz great

Legendary jazz pianist Hank Jones received an honorary Doctor of Music from the University on April 13 prior to an evening performance in Lincoln Theater with students, alumni, and faculty from The Hartt School’s Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz. Earlier in the day, Jones, a prolific American jazz pianist, bandleader, and composer, gave a jazz master class that was open to the public.

Jones, who is celebrating his 90th birthday year, has been a top pianist since the days of swing and bebop. He has recorded more than 60 albums under his own name and as a guest artist with countless others, including Charlie Parker and Ella Fitzgerald. In February 2009 the Recording Academy honored him with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 51st Annual Grammy Awards. Former President George W. and Mrs. Laura Bush awarded him the 2008 National Medal of Arts.

A National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master, Jones’s many other honors and titles include inclusion in the International Jazz Hall of Fame and the Living Legend Jazz Wall of Fame as well as a Congressional Achievement Award.
When Nelson Ebo ’12 performed his first solo opera recital in New Hampshire this past March, you would never know from listening to his powerful tenor voice and seemingly effortless delivery how difficult his journey was to that stage. The 24-year-old earned the recital by winning the prestigious Lakes Region Opera Idol competition in New Hampshire in November 2008.

Ebo and his 14 brothers and sisters grew up in the Republic of Angola in south-central Africa during the Angolan Civil War (1975–2002), which took the lives of some 500,000 people. When he was 13 years old, his family moved into a seminary to try to escape the violence. That’s where he discovered opera, thanks to music CDs belonging to the priests.

Ebo listened to famous tenors Luciano Pavarotti and Plácido Domingo, writing out the words phonetically because he did not speak Italian. After listening to the music just a few times, he was surprised to discover he could sing along with the opera legends.

“When I was in my room and I tried to sing opera, my family thought I was crazy,” Ebo says with a laugh. “They had never heard that kind of voice.”

Ebo fondly recalls those moments when his family was together. By the time he was 17, he had lost his mother and nine of his siblings to violence or disease. Two sisters and a brother died of tuberculosis with Ebo by their sides. His father died when he was 21.

At first, opera became a refuge from the hardships of life. But soon Ebo realized singing was a way to help his family. Already working as a fisherman for food, he began singing at a restaurant to earn more money.

One night, Alfonso Barragues, a United Nations human rights officer, visited the restaurant and heard Ebo sing. Barragues, an opera fan, sensed there was something special about the young tenor and invited him to listen to an opera recording. Barragues was amazed when Ebo sang along the second time he heard it.

“His voice was definitely more captivating than the tenor’s on the recording,” says Barragues. “In that very moment, I realized I was in front of a natural prodigy.”

Barragues helped Ebo secure a scholarship to Carlos III University in Madrid, Spain. At the age of 16, he made the difficult decision to leave Angola and his family to study opera. While in Madrid, Ebo was invited to sing for the king of Spain and one of his idols, Plácido Domingo.

“He was a very nice guy, very good to me,” Ebo says simply of Domingo. “He liked my voice.”

Ebo stayed in Spain for eight years, eventually deciding to come to the United States to study. While he was spending some time in New Jersey, a friend suggested Ebo audition at The Hartt School. He traveled to Hartford and sang for Wayne Rivera, Hartt’s chair of opera performance.

“The first thing you are impressed with is his amazing voice,” says Rivera. “That is coupled with a musical soul. Nelson is a person who is able to put a lot of the hurt he’s experienced in life into his singing.”

Ebo enrolled in Hartt’s vocal studies program in fall 2008 with the goal of becoming a famous opera singer. Add to that the fact that his surviving siblings are depending on him for support since none of them has steady employment. It is a lot of pressure, but Ebo says opera helps him get through the difficult times.

“I’m a very happy person,” he explains with a smile. “I don’t like to feel sad because I lost a lot of people. I try to get my mind off it and try laughing and singing. That helps me a lot.”
Keeping the Dream Alive

More than 600 people attended an event called “Keeping the Dream Alive,” held in Lincoln Theater in observance of Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday. The event took place on the eve of Barack Obama’s inauguration as the nation’s first African American president. President Walter Harrison, who introduced the keynote speaker, Joan Countryman, described Obama’s election as “a seminal moment in our history.”

Countryman, a noted educational leader and author, came out of retirement in 2006 to serve as interim head of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa. She held the position until the school opened in 2007. Countryman urged the members of the audience to work for change.

“Let’s make sure this election is not the end of what we do to change America, but the beginning. [Obama’s] invitation—to join one another to seek a better world for our time—keeps the dream alive.”

The planning committee for the event held an essay contest this year, asking students at the University of Hartford Magnet School, the University of Hartford High School of Science and Engineering, and the University of Hartford to answer the question “What is the status of Dr. Martin Luther King’s dream in 2009?” The winners of the contest are pictured at left.

The program also included musical performances by members of the University of Hartford Gospel Choir, a student chorus from the University of Hartford Magnet School, and Hartt School alumna Brandee Younger ’06, who played Duke Ellington’s “Come Sunday” on the harp.

A Blueprint for Growth

The University is developing a 10-year facilities master plan that will serve as a blueprint for growth and maintenance of the campus over the next 10 years.

According to Norman Young, executive director of facilities, the University has four main goals for the new plan: to optimize the use of space on campus; to define opportunities for physical growth; to maximize the impact of capital expenditures; and to promote a culture of sustainability.

The University has hired the S/L/A/M/ Collaborative of Glastonbury, Conn., to develop the plan, together with a steering committee made up of students, faculty, regents, and University administrators. John Harris, a University regent, is the committee’s chair.

In late December the University began preliminary work, including an inventory of space on campus and an inspection of existing facilities. In April members of the University community had the opportunity to provide input on what should be included in the plan. A final report, including an implementation plan and finalized concepts, is due at the start of the fall 2009 semester.

The University’s 2000 master plan paved the way for new facilities on campus, including the Integrated Science, Engineering, and Technology complex; new athletic fields; the Renée Samuels Center at the Hartford Art School; Hawk Hall first-year dorm; and the Mort and Irma Handel Performing Arts Center.
Abheypur Update

During the 2009 winter term break in January, Natacha Poggio, assistant professor in the Hartford Art School, and five of her students joined Associate Professor David Pines from the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture (CETA) and six engineering students on a trip to Abheypur, India. Also along was an assessment team lead by Marcia Hughes, assistant director of the Center for Social Research at the University.

Two years ago students in a sophomore design class in CETA designed a solar-power groundwater pump and storage system for a girls’ primary school in Abheypur. Since then, that pump and a water-storage system have been successfully installed, and the program has grown to include other projects and other schools and colleges at the University as well as the Hartford professional chapter of Engineers Without Borders.

This time around, the engineering students had come to install a rooftop rainwater-harvesting system to supply clean drinking water during the monsoon season when the solar panels would be less effective. The art students had created a visual campaign to help educate the villagers on water use and respect for the new technology. Hughes’s assessment team interviewed villagers to determine the impact of the solar well project on their lives.

Once their van arrived in the village, the students spilled out and headed in different directions. On the roof of the girls' school, student engineers assembled pieces of the recapture system while the design students began painting a mural on another building. The mural featured a smiling water-drop character called Droppy.

Jessica (Parker) Hu, a senior majoring in media arts in the Hartford Art School, says she was profoundly affected by her involvement in the project.

"After being involved in the Water for India project, I know that I want to work in that type of relationship with others while trying to learn more about our expansive and beautiful world.”

Sustainability Efforts on Campus

Students, faculty, and staff started off Earth Week on April 20 by participating in the semiannual Hog River Cleanup, now in its 25th year. Organized by Wick Griswold, assistant professor of sociology in Hillyer College, the cleanup calls attention to the careless attitude of some toward the environment. After collecting bags of trash and items like TV sets and computers, participants made sure that the material was properly disposed.

On April 21, Suisman Lounge in Gengras Student Union featured a display of 50,000 cigarette butts—all collected during the spring semester by students in Griswold’s Social Solutions class. Called the No Butts campaign, the display also provided information on why cigarette smoking is a health hazard to people and the planet. Griswold brings environmental issues into the classroom and pairs them with service-learning experiences for his students.

On Earth Day itself, Gengras lawn was the site of the Environmental Earth Fair, sponsored by the Faculty Senate Environment and Sustainability Committee, which is working with the University to find ways to incorporate sustainability into our curriculum, our interaction with vendors and suppliers, and our physical space. Displays at the fair sought to raise awareness about the use of bottled water and its impact on the environment and the amount of recyclable material that is tossed out in the dorms. The “Stash It, Don’t Trash It” campaign urges students to donate to charity the unwanted contents of their dorm rooms when they move out in the spring instead of putting items in dumpsters.
On that date the UofH lacrosse team earned a stunning victory over sixth-ranked University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), by a final score of 10-8 at home on Alumni Field. It was the Hawks' first conference win of the season and UMBC's first conference lost. It was also the Hawks' first conference win since the 2007 season and the first time they have won consecutive games since 2006. The Hawks defeated Presbyterian 14-5 earlier in the week.

Freshman goalie Scott Bement gave a stellar performance against UMBC with a career-high 19 saves while holding the nation's fifth-best offense to its second-lowest scoring output of the season. His performance earned him Player of the Week honors from the America East Conference, the New England Intercollegiate Lacrosse Association, and LAXnews the following Monday.

On Tuesday the Hawks learned that Bement had been named Nike/Inside Lacrosse Player of the Week. Bement is the first Hartford player to earn the award, for which all Division I players nationwide are eligible.

On the SCOREBOARD

**LAX: What a Week That Was!**

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2009, WILL BE LONG REMEMBERED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD

Flirting with Greatness

You beat the fifth-ranked team in the country, record 20 wins, and play in the postseason for the fifth consecutive year. A season to celebrate! In the land of Hartford Hawks' women's basketball, where one of the nation's top mid-major programs has been built and expectations are high, the answer is a resounding no.

"We were never quite able to play up to our potential, particularly at the end of the season," Coach Jennifer Rizzoti says. "We played a lot of close games but just couldn't find a way to win them. I'd say it was a bit of an eye-opening experience for us."

The Hawks certainly opened the nation's eyes at the start of the season. On November 21 in Chicago, at a tournament hosted by DePaul University, the Hawks defeated Duke University, then ranked fifth in the country, 53-51. It was one of the landmark victories in school history and the first time the Hawks had knocked off a team ranked among the nation's top 10.

That win also got the attention of the Hawks' upcoming opponents.

"Maybe it was the pressure from beating Duke, or teams would come extra-prepared to play us because we beat [Duke]," says co-captain Lisa Etienne '09. "We should have been able to move on from that game, but we seemed stuck on the fact we beat Duke."

The Hawks lost six of their next eight, finishing a nonconference schedule ranked third-toughest in the country by collegerpi.com. They regrouped by winning 13 of their next 16 games before heading into the America East tournament. Yet the team was unable to find the magic of recent years, falling in the semifinals to Vermont. Then, after receiving an at-large bid to the WNIT, the Hawks saw their season end with a home loss to St. John's a week later.

Hartford's 20-12 record marks the fifth-straight season of 20 or more victories. The senior class (MaryLynne Schaefer, Katie Kelley, and Lisa Etienne) graduates with a 101-30 overall record (.771), only the second in school history to graduate with 100 or more wins.
Health care is a world that’s constantly changing. Medical research and technological discoveries combine to form a steady stream of new diagnostic tools, new techniques, new drugs, new procedures—even unmanned robotic surgery. But 21st-century medicine isn’t all about the hardware.

It’s also about those caring and highly trained health-care professionals who keep you healthy—the people your insurance company calls “providers.” As the approximately 76 million baby boomers in the United States continue to age, nearly every health care–related field predicts a shortage of these professionals.

Students at the University of Hartford who have an interest in health care can choose from a wide array of programs and degrees at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This special section highlights some of the ways in which the University is preparing students for careers in this booming field.
According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the allied health professions will grow faster than any other occupation in this country over the next decade. This growth creates a need for trained professionals at all levels of the health-care system.

“Right now, we have around 100 health science majors, which is an increase of about 25 percent over our numbers for the last four or five years,” says Peg Ciarcia, director of the health science program. “Applications are way up for fall 2009, probably by close to 30 percent.”

The University’s Department of Health Sciences includes a wide array of undergraduate majors in the health professions, including four-year programs in clinical laboratory science, radiologic technology, and respiratory care as well as a health science major that prepares students for professional careers or graduate study in health-related fields such as dentistry or optometry. The bachelor’s in health science also is a good choice for graduates of hospital-based or community college programs who wish to earn a bachelor’s degree.

Academically outstanding students with an eye on a medical professions career often major in one of the department’s combined bachelor’s/doctoral programs offered in association with affiliated professional schools of chiropractic medicine, dentistry, optometry, osteopathic medicine, and podiatry. The accelerated 3+4 curriculum allows qualified students to enter professional school after completing their third year of undergraduate study. Course credits earned in the first year of graduate study also complete students’ undergraduate degrees at the University of Hartford. Majors must maintain an overall 3.0 to 3.5 grade point average, depending on program requirements, and take three one-credit premedical advising courses in which faculty guide students in becoming strong candidates for admission to their chosen schools.

Ashish Patel ’04, who chose the department’s bachelor’s/doctoral program affiliation with the NYU College of Dentistry in New York, tells why the program worked so well for him.

“I chose the 3+4 program for many reasons,” says Patel, an oral and maxillofacial surgery resident at NYU Medical School/Bellevue Hospital. He is also completing two years of medical school to get his MD. “I knew I wanted to be an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, which required me to complete both dental school and medical school as well as several years of residency. I took the health science 3+4 program as an opportunity to get a head start since I knew I’d be in school for a long time.

“I also knew that I wanted to complete my medical training in New York City, so the University of Hartford program was perfect for me. I felt very well prepared for dental school and was at the top of my class of 350 people. Within the three years at Hartford, I completed all of my prerequisites for dental school as well as the suggested nonrequired courses and still had plenty of time to take non-science courses. Even though my course load was heavier than my colleagues’, I didn’t have to worry much about getting into dental school since I was in the program.”

In 2007 the University also established an articulation with the Ross University School of Medicine in Dominica and the Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in St. Kitts. Under these agreements, students complete four years of study and obtain a bachelor’s degree before matriculating for either the MD or DVM degree.
The Age of Bionics
UNIVERSITY TO OFFER MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PROSTHETICS AND ORTHOTICS

BY KAREN HUNTER

South African sprinter Oscar Pistorius, a double amputee who wears custom-made running “blades” when racing, captured the world’s attention when he challenged officials for his right to compete in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. That’s the Olympics, not the Paralympics. Officials argued that Pistorius’s prosthetics gave him an unfair edge over able-bodied athletes. Eventually, he won the right to compete but missed the 400-meter qualifying time by a mere 0.7 seconds.

In forcing the world to reconsider “ability” versus “disability,” Pistorius’s story as the “fastest man with no legs” illustrates in the extreme just how far technology has pushed prosthetic devices beyond the wooden legs first whittled from barrel staves for amputees during the Civil War.

Innovation is offering dramatic benefits to people who require artificial limbs and to those who use orthotic, or supportive, devices because of weakened or injured joints and muscles. Bionic knees controlled by microprocessors allow patients to have a more normal gait. Braces equipped with Bluetooth devices send electronic signals to nerves. Prosthetic hands with individually powered fingers can pick up coins, type, and dial a cell phone.

Just as the technology has advanced, so has the challenge of training professionals in the prosthetics-and-orthotics field.

That’s where the University of Hartford comes in.

The Department of Physical Therapy and the Newington Certificate Program in Orthotics and Prosthetics (NCP) have developed a cutting-edge, two-year Master of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics program that will provide academic, research, and clinic opportunities for prospective students.

“The move is a reflection of the expanded body of knowledge, skill set, and core competencies required,” says Catherine Certo, chair of the physical therapy department. “It is also the result of the management of complex medical pathologies and multiple diseases seen in today’s populations.”

Prosthetics and orthotics (P&O) professional organizations expect the number of patients using orthoses and prostheses in the United States to reach nearly 9.7 million by 2020. In 2008 the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics, and Pedorthics reported that only 5,538 practitioners were board certified.

Although the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists reports that the employment rate is currently 100 percent for graduates of P&O educational programs in the United States, a 2006 “Workforce Demand Study” predicts that if practitioners continue to enter the field at the current rate, a number of factors—including aging baby boomers and an increased number of diabetics who have lost limbs due to their disease—could cause the demand for practitioners to overwhelm the supply.

Acknowledging the increased demands, the National Commission on Orthotic/Prosthetic Education in 2004 mandated that training programs in the field be elevated from postbaccalaureate certificates to master’s degrees by 2011 and that all new programs be offered at the master’s level starting in 2010.

Robert S. Lin, chief orthotist and prosthetist at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center in Hartford, Conn., and founder of NCP, approached the University in 2006 about developing such a graduate degree program.

“I had a long relationship with the University’s engineering school,” says Lin. “I approached Dean Lou Manzione, who was very enthusiastic, but when we looked at the curriculum for biomedical engineering, we didn’t find much crossover. When we looked at physical therapy, we found a good fit.”

The program will be taught on the University’s main campus and at Hanger Orthotics and Prosthetics, Inc., a manufacturer of prosthetic and orthotic devices in Newington, Conn. The interaction between physical therapy and biomedical engineering students will be a strong element for the clinical and research component of the program.

The first cohort will begin classes in the summer of 2011. The program will offer two paths. One will be the traditional master’s pathway, in which a prospective student with a bachelor’s degree applies to the two-year professional program. The other is a 3+2 program, in which students will earn a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and the Master of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics in a five-year program. Both paths include a post-graduate, two-year residency requirement as a prerequisite for the board certification exams.
"I’m Sleeping Beauty," Sammie announces in a clear voice to her teacher and me as we walk through a classroom at Soundbridge Early Learning Center for Hearing-Impaired Children in Wethersfield, Conn.

Her purple and pink crown and pink satin skirt match a twinkling device attached to her ear. When her teacher, Michelle Comporesi ’08, asks Sammie to show me the technology that has allowed her to hear for the past three years, the preschooler plucks a transmitter from a tangle of hair behind her right ear and holds it out for me to see, before popping it back in and skipping off to play with another princess who is dressed in blue.

If not for the twinkling cochlear implant, I wouldn’t have suspected that the 4-year-old was hearing impaired. It seems nothing short of a miracle that a child who was born profoundly deaf can speak so articulately and listen so easily. The implant differs from a hearing aid in that it bypasses damaged portions of the cochlea, which normally processes sound, to directly stimulate the auditory nerve.

At Soundbridge you get the sense that the remarkable is happening every day. The school uses a team approach to teach spoken language to children with hearing loss. The emphasis is on the latest technology in hearing devices, including hearing aids and the implants. Parents, classmates who can hear, audiologists, administrators, and teachers all play a part in giving hearing-impaired children at Soundbridge the opportunity to learn to talk by listening.

Since 2007, graduate students in the Department of Education and Human Services have also played a role. The master’s program in aural habilitation and education of hearing-impaired children is designed for certified teachers who are inspired by the possibilities technology offers hearing-impaired children. It is the only master’s program preparing new professionals in auditory-oral deaf education in Connecticut and one of two in New England. Soundbridge provides a learning and teaching laboratory for the master’s students.

A grant from an anonymous foundation allows the University to offer substantial scholarships to candidates who qualify.

Marietta Paterson is an associate professor in deaf education and coordinator of the partnership between the University and Soundbridge. “Sammie’s ability to listen to her peers when they talk to her,” Paterson tells me, “is going to affect her socialization as well as her spoken-language development. That’s what makes us different. We are training our teacher-candidates as interventionists and teachers. Our [graduate] students get a lot of knowledge about technology. To be effective, they must understand how all these technologies work and apply that knowledge in interactions with audiologists and in teaching the individual hearing-impaired child. There’s a shortage of professionals who are trained to do that.”

Soundbridge, which is part of the Capitol Region Education Council in Connecticut, serves nearly 650 deaf and hearing-impaired children and their families throughout the state.

Comporesi was among the first graduates of the deaf education program. As she explains it, the master’s program found her. After earning her bachelor’s degree in early childhood education at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Conn., she was looking for a master’s program while teaching a child whose learning difficulties were thought to be the result of hearing loss. As it turned out, the child’s hearing was not the problem, but the exposure to deaf education piqued Comporesi’s interest.

Nearly two years later, Comporesi juggles the seedlings sprouting in her students’ window gardens with routines that ensure that everyone’s hearing devices are in working order. It’s a demanding job, but Comporesi tells me the rewards are obvious.

“The University of Hartford program was intense. But then you are here in the classroom with the children and it’s amazing. With intensive work, the children make fantastic progress, just like Sammie. Next year she’ll be thriving in a regular class in her home school district.”
Eye-opening Experiences Outside the Classroom

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Census 2000, Hartford, Conn., is the second-poorest city in the United States, based on the percentage of people (31 percent) living below the poverty line. Project Horizon works to bring the University of Hartford’s resources to community residents in need.

A community outreach program in the Department of Nursing, Project Horizon seeks to improve the quality of life for residents of impoverished urban neighborhoods in Hartford. Designed in 2002, the program subsumed under one umbrella organization all the free community health and education services that had been carried out through the nursing department for more than 25 years.

Project Horizon brings nursing faculty and students to homeless shelters, soup kitchens, schools, neighborhood centers, and transitional living centers, where they learn firsthand about the local health and social concerns of poor families. With a focus on developing educational programs on wellness, the program includes community members in its research in order to design effective interventions.

Karen Breda, associate professor of nursing and director of Project Horizon, says working with the poor and the homeless is a stretch for many of the nurses, who find themselves in a setting very different from the familiar. “All of the myths about the people who are homeless or poor are just dismantled one by one. They [the nurses] are no longer afraid of the environment,” she says.

Registered nurses who are completing their Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees at the University make more than 2,000 contacts within the community annually.

Where’s My Nurse?

UNIVERSITY ADDRESSING NATIONAL NURSING SHORTAGE

“We’re facing a major crisis in the nursing profession today,” says Mary Jane Williams, chair of the Department of Nursing at the University of Hartford. Williams is referring to the shortage of nurses in the United States as well as the equally concerning shortage of nurse educators. Faculty shortages in nursing programs are limiting student capacity at a time when the need for nurses continues to escalate.

Williams is working diligently, both inside and outside the University, to meet these critical needs.

As chair of government relations for the Connecticut Nurses Association, Williams has a major leadership role in Connecticut. “We’re working closely with the state legislature to develop innovative programs that will make it easier to recruit and educate new nurses and continue the education of nurses prepared at the associate’s-degree level,” says Williams.

The Department of Nursing, in collaboration with the University’s Center for Professional Development and the Nursing Career Center of Connecticut, has received several grants that focus on enhanced mobility for nurses. The goal is to increase the number of nurses moving into bachelor’s and master’s programs.

“The United States will need more than 800,000 new nurses in the next decade as millions of baby boomers retire,” continues Williams. “We’ll need thousands of qualified nursing educators to prepare nurses to succeed and prosper in a health-care system that’s becoming more complex every day.”

Currently, the Department of Nursing offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, for those who already hold their RN licenses, and a Master of Science in Nursing with specializations in community/public health nursing, nurse education, and nurse management.

“We’re looking at ways to encourage experienced nurses to become educators so they can pass their knowledge and experience on to the next generation,” says Williams. “The University of Hartford has wonderful programs to educate nurses at the baccalaureate and master’s levels,” she continues. “Graduates of our master’s program with a specialty in education are well prepared to assume teaching roles in hospitals and/or community colleges.”
When the Brain Needs Help

MASTER’S PROGRAM STUDIES NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS AND THEIR TREATMENT

While Professor Jacob Harney was completing his PhD in reproductive physiology at the University of Florida, his grandmother was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. It was a tragic development, but it inspired Harney to turn his attentions to brain development and physiology, foundations of the field of neuroscience, which expanded dramatically during the 1990s.

Harney joined the faculty of the University of Hartford in 1997, attracted by the opportunity to contribute to a graduate program in neuroscience. Now chair of the program, he says, “The master’s in neuroscience program was started in the 1970s by Professor Robert Wallace. It was initially housed in the Department of Psychology but moved to the Department of Biology in the late 1990s, reflecting increasing emphasis on brain physiology research during that decade.”

One year after Harney arrived at the University, another family health problem compelled him to shift his research focus again. His infant son was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. For most of the past decade he has been investigating the effects of high-fat diets on brain energy metabolism, seizure susceptibility, and blood-sugar regulation in both diabetes and epilepsy.

The neuroscience program emphasizes opportunities for students to do hands-on research with real-world applications in Harney’s and other professors’ laboratories. David Butler M’04, PhD, is currently doing research on pharmaceuticals for the treatment of Alzheimer’s disease at the University of Connecticut and will soon accept a postdoctoral appointment at Harvard University.

While in the program, Butler worked with Harney on drugs for the treatment of seizure disorders like epilepsy. “It was a great learning experience,” he says. “I wanted to do research on brain behavior, and Jake provided a really meaningful opportunity. I learned things that still have direct applicability to my research.”

While many neuroscience students enroll in graduate programs with the goal of obtaining a doctorate, Harney notes that the University’s program gives master’s graduates the advanced knowledge necessary to find rewarding careers in both academic and industrial research laboratories.

Feeling Stressed Out?

DOCTORAL-LEVEL CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS ARE IN DEMAND

We live in a complex world. Add in the stresses of the current economic situation, and the results are predictable. According to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, 58 percent of Americans reported having trouble coping at the end of 2008.

The University’s Graduate Institute in Professional Psychology (GIPP) offers a doctoral program that addresses the growing need for doctoral-level psychologists in our communities.

“I knew early on that I wanted to stay in Connecticut and work with the Latino community. The PsyD program was local, offered a full range of clinical training opportunities, and prior to my internship, I was able to complete work with Latino child and adult populations in high-need and economically impoverished urban areas,” says Michelle Silva PsyD ’05. “As a result, when I left for my one-year internship, I felt prepared to work in community mental health settings and with a historically underserved population.”

Silva is now associate director of the Connecticut Latino Behavioral Health System, a collaborative of 13 agencies primarily in the New Haven, Conn., area, working to promote culturally competent mental health and addiction treatments. She is also an associate research scientist in the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University.

The PsyD program, now more than 20 years old, is the only one of its kind in Connecticut and one of three in all of New England. It is offered through GIPP, which is part of the Department of Psychology. This year GIPP received more than 200 applications to the program and interviewed some 90 applicants before accepting the 24 most qualified students for admission in 2009.

“The PsyD program places primary emphasis on preparing students for the clinical practice of psychology in settings in both the private and public sectors,” says John Mehm, director of GIPP. He adds that the program is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association.
With his long hair, stud earring, and love of rugby, Albert “Skip” Rizzo ’77 is not your typical clinician or academic. But once upon a time, before he built his first virtual therapeutic world, this University of Hartford alumnus was a traditional clinical psychologist.

Rizzo, who received his PhD from SUNY-Binghamton, was working as a neuropsychologist at a California brain-injury rehabilitation center in 1990 when his career took a surreal turn. He was struggling to persuade a young male patient to do the pen-and-paper drills needed to retrain his brain.

“I couldn't get this kid to do more than 15 minutes of traditional cognitive rehabilitation, but he spent every second of break time playing on his Game Boy,” Rizzo recalls. “He was a real Tetris warlord. That's when I first realized how powerful game-based therapy could be.”

Now, after two decades of exploring the nexus of psychology and game technology, Rizzo is developing virtual worlds to distract sick children in pain, train psychiatrists, and treat veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

“Virtual reality is no longer science fiction or an expensive toy,” says Rizzo, who is a research scientist and professor at the University of Southern California Institute for Creative Technologies. “It’s a great tool for teaching, diagnosing, and treating.”

His success using virtual worlds to help people with Alzheimer’s disease and children with attention deficit disorder led Rizzo to consider their therapeutic potential for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

PTSD is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to traumatic stressors like combat or physical assault. Symptoms include flashbacks, hyperarousal, sleep problems, nightmares, and emotional numbness.

A 2008 study by the RAND Corporation found that 20 percent of veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan experience PTSD or major depression. Of those, about half won’t seek treatment, mostly due to fear of being stigmatized.

Rizzo created the first Virtual Iraq prototype in 2004 by adapting a USC-developed video game, Full Spectrum Warrior, designed for the military to teach soldiers about leadership and tactics. Several versions later, Virtual Iraq is a three-dimensional computer simulation that allows a participant wearing virtual-reality 3D goggles to patrol an Iraqi market town or drive a Humvee down a desert highway.

A trained clinician can add other sensory elements to the visual experience—the sound of a baby crying, the vibrations from a tank, or the smell of diesel fuel—to gradually recreate the environment in which the patient’s trauma occurred. This approach, called exposure therapy, helps the patient recall, relive, and work through emotions caused by the trauma.

Clinicians at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego, Calif., found that 16 out of 20 veterans diagnosed with PTSD who underwent exposure therapy with Virtual Iraq had overcome their diagnosis after five weeks of treatment. Researchers also found that many service members who said they would not seek out formal psychological help said they would be willing to participate in virtual reality sessions. Rizzo hopes it will also become a standard postcombat assessment tool to identify people at risk of PTSD.

Virtual Iraq is now being used to treat about 100 veterans and active military with PTSD at 32 sites across the United States, Rizzo says. An Afghanistan version of the program is under development, as well as retooled versions for use by other NATO countries.

When he enrolled at the University of Hartford in 1974, Rizzo planned to study engineering and join the family business. But all that changed after his first semester. He credits the close-knit psychology department for nurturing his love of the field, giving him a sound academic foundation and encouraging a lifelong love of research.

And the strong liberal-arts curriculum enabled him to blend his scientific training with his love of the arts, especially photography.

“My appreciation for both art and science began at the University,” Rizzo says. “I got a good education, definitely, but more importantly, the University of Hartford made creativity a permanent part of my mental toolbox.”

His success with Virtual Iraq is proof of that.
The Human Body—PLUS
Biomedical engineering designs improve health care

Biomedical engineers are the people who bring us much of the new health-care technology. Pacemakers, insulin pumps, and prosthetic limbs are just a few examples. Thriving at the intersection where medicine meets engineering, biomedical engineers combine knowledge of both fields to offer health-care professionals and patients the latest options.

The University’s biomedical engineering program was launched in the mid-1990s. “We saw a growing need in the health-care field for qualified engineers,” says Associate Professor Michael Nowak, who directs the program. “We created a program to train the biomedical engineers of the future. Our program was approved by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology in 2003,” continues Nowak. “It was the third collegiate program approved in New England, the first in Connecticut.”

The course work is challenging. All students are expected to have a strong foundation in basic engineering before concentrating on the specifics of biomedical engineering. Students study anatomy and physiology, joint mechanics, prosthetics and orthotics, biofluids, and a host of other related topics. In their senior year, they put their knowledge to work in internships at nearby health-care facilities such as the U.S. Veterans Medical Center in Newington, Conn., and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center in Hartford, as well as at medical-device manufacturing facilities. In their required senior capstone project, they design an actual device to address a medical need.

As her senior project, Sara Zajac ’04 worked on a device to test tissue properties in the feet of patients with diabetes. Many diabetics suffer injuries to the soles of their feet that go undetected due to loss of feeling in their extremities. These injuries, if left untreated, can lead to amputation.

Now a development engineer at Texcel, Inc., a Massachusetts contract manufacturer of medical devices, Zajac credits the program with preparing her well for her current position.

“I loved the biomedical engineering program. We worked on many different projects and there were lots of hands-on application opportunities.”

The Future of Medicine

PROFESSOR’S WORK A BENEFIT TO STEM-CELL RESEARCHERS

Hemchandra Shertukde gives his wife, Rekha MPA’96, credit for changing the focus of his research, a change that has led him to the world of stem-cell research.

“I asked him to use his knowledge and expertise in a positive way to help people,” she says.

A professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Shertukde has been developing a technique to help researchers identify a stem cell’s stage of differentiation. Stem cells are unspecialized cells that over time develop into specific types of cells with very specific characteristics.

The need to properly identify stem cells as they differentiate into specific cell types has become critical because the implantation of misidentified cells can lead to disaster. For example, if a stem cell has begun developing the characteristics of a liver cell but is implanted in the heart, the result can be a tumor.

Because a time frame for stem-cell maturation has not been established, scientists around the world have used different methods to measure the amount of DNA in a stem cell’s nucleus. The amount of DNA is an indicator of where the cell is in its growth cycle.

“The problem,” says Shertukde, “is that currently used techniques have a success rate of only around 65 percent. Our identification accuracy is about 85 percent, with specificity and sensitivity numbers very close to 90 percent.”

Using a near-infrared camera (NIC), Shertukde is able to take digital images of stem cells in a much more microscopic condition. Markers corresponding to different proteins within the cells generate specific light frequencies that can be used to more precisely determine cell differentiation.

To avoid negatively impacting the University’s federal funding due to prohibitions set up by the Bush administration on stem cell–related research, Shertukde has been working off campus. His current lab space is at his wife’s company, Diagnostic Devices, Inc. (DDI), in Simsbury, Conn., which develops diagnostic devices for the electrical power industry. Thus far, DDI has been investing in the work he began in 2005.

“Thanks to President Obama’s rescinding of restrictions on stem-cell research,” says Shertukde, “I think we will see a huge blossoming of different types of stem-cell identification research that will lead to many medical miracles.”

A Type II diabetic himself, Shertukde says he has a personal interest in helping to advance the successful use of stem cells.
A month to six weeks. It’s not much time. But for babies developing in utero in the final trimester, it is the difference between prematurity and full-term development. And it can define their chances of survival. Babies born before 37 weeks of gestation arrive early for a host of reasons and often suffer from health problems that are much less likely to afflict full-term babies.

For example, since “preemies” have low birth weights, they have insufficient body fat to keep themselves warm. Their brains and autonomic nervous systems are also underdeveloped, putting them at high risk for apnea, the cessation of breathing.

Through the Center for Life Support and Sustainable Living (LSSL), students from the University of Hartford and several other area colleges and universities have been involved in developing a device that could save the lives of premature infants with apnea. “Babies with apnea may stop breathing several times a day,” says Dr. Leonard Eisenfeld, a professor of pediatrics at the UConn Health Center who practices medicine at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center (CCMC) in Hartford, Conn. “In a neonatal intensive care unit (ICU), nurses are alerted by sensors when a baby stops breathing, and they gently massage the baby so that it will resume breathing.”

Those facts are not lost on Ron Adrezin, former professor of mechanical engineering at the University and now a professor of mechanical engineering at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in Groton, Conn. Adrezin met Eisenfeld when his own son, Peter, was born prematurely and hospitalized at CCMC, where he suffered from apnea. The two men began to discuss the need for special equipment to enhance care for babies with apnea. Those 2001 discussions were the inspiration for the LSSL center.

“The device we began working on is a sensor that will detect when babies stop breathing,” explains Adrezin, who continues to be involved with the center. “It will then gently vibrate, reminding the baby to breathe.”

“Most of the time when these tiny babies stop breathing, you don’t have to actually wake them,” adds Eisenfeld, “although that often happens when nurses touch them in neonatal ICUs. Our device vibrates at about the frequency at which nerves fire—not enough to awaken the baby, but enough to cause resumption of respiration.”

In the ensuing eight years, many engineering students at the University have contributed to the development of a prototype for the device. If it survives government safety testing, the team hopes it could be produced within the next few years.

But the sleep apnea monitor is not the only product for premature babies that students in the LSSL are working on. Another useful tool is a prototype stethoscope that allows health-care professionals to monitor premature infants’ bowel sounds more effectively. By monitoring these sounds, hospital staff can determine whether the baby is hungry, the amount of food received, and whether health issues, such as a bowel obstruction, are present.

“Right now there is no specialized stethoscope for this purpose,” says Jonathan Hill, associate professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University and a collaborator and technical advisor to the center. “The project presents several significant challenges. The frequency range of infant bowel sounds is very different from that of adults. The stethoscope needs to be able to detect those sounds and filter out the ambient noise of neonatal ICUs. It also needs to actually attach to the baby, but that’s a challenge because preemies have extremely delicate skin.”

“My experience in the Center for Life Support and Sustainable Living was extremely valuable,” says Shalane Regan ’07, who spent two years in the center as a team leader on both the apnea and bowel-sounds projects, which provided the information for her senior thesis.

Now a project engineer at Air-Lock, Inc., in Milford, Conn., Regan adds, “The work I did on those projects was very valuable when I was looking for a job.”
Education—A Gift That Touches Many Lives

BY PETER H. CONGLETON, DIRECTOR OF PLANNED GIVING

Joyce MacKenzie graduated from the Hartt School of Music in 1955. She went on to teach music to junior high school students in Connecticut, and after a brief stint selling real estate in Arizona, she retired in Franklin, N.C. She planned to leave her retirement plan and her house as a legacy to her favorite nonprofits, including the University of Hartford.

She once said, “When I think back on my years at Hartt, I remember how supportive we were of each other—like a family. And that attitude didn’t end with the students and the staff, because the faculty were not only good teachers, they were good friends as well. I still carry on friendships that started there. It was a wonderful environment that I don’t believe can be found at a larger school. I want to give back in support of Hartt and the University, and my bequest will allow me to do just that.”

In the summer of 2008 I called Joyce. We had a friendly conversation and agreed to meet soon to discuss her gift plan. Unfortunately, Joyce passed away before we could meet. Still, the University received a check from her estate. I sat down at my computer to create the Joyce R. MacKenzie Memorial Fund for Music Education with a heavy heart because of memories of our conversation. I decided to open up my e-mail first and, unbelievably, I found the following message:

Dear Mr. Congleton:

This morning, I heard a performance of the piece on public radio and wanted to thank Ms. MacKenzie for encouraging us to strive for excellence in such a demanding composition, even though we were only eleven or twelve years old at the time. Would you have any way of putting me in touch with this remarkably dedicated teacher? My thanks are 45 years late in coming, but they are sincere and heartfelt and I would love to tell her so. I hope it is not too late.

Joyce’s gift of teaching obviously touched people’s lives. The memorial fund in her name will continue her legacy here.

For more information about how you can plan a gift, please visit our website: www.hartford.edu/plannedgiving, or you may contact Peter H. Congleton at 860.768.2415 or congleton@hartford.edu.

Ribicoff Scholar Announced

Michael Robinson, assistant professor of history in Hillyer College, has received the inaugural Belle K. Ribicoff Junior Faculty Prize. The prize, which includes an award of $10,000, was presented to Robinson at Commencement on May 17.

Robinson’s critically acclaimed book, The Coldest Crucible: Arctic Exploration and American Culture, was published by the University of Chicago Press in 2006. It received the 2008 Book Prize from the Forum for the History of Science in America. In it, Robinson examines the wave of “Arctic Fever” that struck America in the late 1800s, when dozens of expeditions headed north to reach the North Pole.

Robinson, an exceptional teacher, also has helped revitalize the history curriculum at Hillyer and has brought new technologies into the classroom.

“Professor Robinson is an outstanding teacher and researcher who uses his scholarship to create an engaging learning environment,” Provost Lynn Pasquerella said in announcing the award. “He represents excellence in every aspect of University life—teaching, research, and service.”

The Belle K. Ribicoff Junior Faculty Prize, together with an endowed chair for junior faculty, were established this year through a generous gift from Belle K. Ribicoff, a longtime supporter and life regent of the University.

The prize will be awarded annually to a junior faculty member who has not yet received tenure. Every three years, beginning in 2011-12, one of the prize recipients from the previous three years will be chosen to hold the Belle K. Ribicoff Professorship for a period of three years.

Assistant Professor Michael Robinson
The eighth annual Scholarship Appreciation Luncheon on April 13 gave student scholarship recipients an opportunity to thank scholarship donors face to face. In the photo are Catherine Preston ’09 (left) and Celia R. Duke Lofink ’79. Preston is the recipient of the Herbert J. Duke Endowed Scholarship established in 1979 to honor Herbert Duke, Lofink’s father. Preston received a Bachelor of Science from the College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions this spring and begins studies in the University’s graduate physical therapy program this summer.

Duke Lofink was the donor speaker at this year’s scholarship luncheon. She earned a degree in early childhood and special education from the University, then continued her education at Boston College and the University of Connecticut. She serves on the University’s alumni association board, is a partner and learning and development leader at IBM Business Consulting Services, and holds a patent as the inventor of an information-filtering system.

Preston, from Shelton, Conn., is very grateful for the financial support provided by the Duke scholarship. Each year, named endowed scholarships and annual scholarship awards provide valuable financial assistance to students by allowing them to pursue their dreams.

Catherine Preston ’09 (left) and Celia R. Duke Lofink ’79 (right) took the request to meet face to face quite literally at the eighth annual Scholarship Appreciation luncheon. Preston is the recipient of the scholarship established to honor Duke Lofink’s father. Duke Lofink was a speaker at the luncheon.

Trane High-Performance Buildings Scholars

Trane, a world leader in air-conditioning systems, created a scholarship fund in 2006 for students in the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture (CETA). Recipients must major within CETA and maintain a grade point average of 3.5. Susan Ozcelik ’10 and Amy Scherma ’09 each received a $1,000 scholarship for 2008–09.

CETA Dean Lou Manzione (center), with (left to right) Dan Wendt, vice president for the Northeast for Trane; Susan Ozcelik ’10; Amy Scherma ’09; and Bill Harris, district manager for Trane.
On Feb. 10, 2009, the Hartford Art School (HAS) held its first-ever phone-a-thon in the Campus Call Center in Hillyer Hall. Members of the art school’s board of trustees and corporators and faculty members joined student callers to telephone alumni, parents, and friends in response to a generous challenge gift made by an anonymous HAS trustee to match funds raised.

Mentored by Jennifer Keyo, annual fund director, and Kristin Sadowski, assistant director, as well as Grant Smith, senior development officer, participants included HAS development chair Ellen Blumberg; HAS Dean Power Boothe; HAS board president Cecilia Calhoun; Ellen Carey, HAS professor of photography; and Janet Bruner, Marge Morrissey, Renée Samuels, Susan Shechtman, and John Wheat, all board members.

The group raised more than $5,000 that evening to benefit the Hartford Art School’s dean’s discretionary fund and its scholarship funds and programs, bringing the grand total of the trustee’s challenge to more than $10,000.

Clockwise, top right: Renée Samuels, HAS board member, and Amanda Reyes ’12; Susan Shechtman, HAS board member, and Ryan Nihill ’12; Power Boothe, HAS dean, and Serena Green ’11; John Wheat, HAS board member, and Ellen Blumberg, HAS board member.

Hartford Art School phone-a-thon raises $10,000+

Up to the Challenge
Jim Ford ’04 is on fire—sometimes literally

Maybe you recall Jim Ford ’04 from basketball games in the early 2000s. He was the especially audacious Howie the Hawk who leaped off the bleachers to stir up fans.

“I was Howie the Hawk for two full years, almost three, from around 2000,” Ford, a Hartt School alumnus, says. “It was great. I was going to basketball games, having the time of my life. Eventually, though, I was let go. I was jumping off bleachers and things like that. I was taking Howie to the next level. But I had a good run.”

Ford is still having a good run by taking things to the next level. Now, he’s doing it as an actor and stuntman in movies and on television. Maybe you’ve seen him eating a Snickers bar in a TV commercial with basketball Hall-of-Famer Patrick Ewing that began running during March Madness.

After earning his BFA in actor training, Ford took his athletic abilities and performance skills to New York City to pursue his craft.

“Hartt was great with all the classical training, studying in England, and things like that, but what I really wanted to do was action movies,” Ford says. “As a kid, I was always playing sports. I played baseball, basketball, football, soccer, skateboarding, BMX, snowboarding. I would build ramps in the backyard. My mother will tell you that I was the one who always wanted to build the ramps and jumps higher.”

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“After earning my BFA in actor training, Ford took his athletic abilities and performance skills to New York City to pursue his craft.

“Hartt was great with all the classical training, studying in England, and things like that, but what I really wanted to do was action movies,” Ford says. “As a kid, I was always playing sports. I played baseball, basketball, football, soccer, skateboarding, BMX, snowboarding. I would build ramps in the backyard. My mother will tell you that I was the one who always wanted to build the ramps and jumps higher.”

Ford refined his athletic acting at the International Stunt School in Seattle, Wash., the summer before his third year at Hartt. His stunt skills include falls, car crashes, fire scenes, and, of course, fighting. He has appeared in commercials for Intel, Toyota, Sam Adams beer, and the New York Lotto. His big-screen credits include Pride and Glory, I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry, Across the Universe, and The Maiden Heist. His television credits: Gossip Girl, The Sopranos, Law & Order, CSI: NY, Ugly Betty, and five episodes of the HBO miniseries John Adams.

Ford aspires to be more than a stunt double, however. Ultimately, he wants to star in action films doing his own stunts. “I’m an all-around athletic stunt guy,” Ford says, “and it’s a bonus to have real acting training from Hartt.”

Editor’s note: As we go to press, Ford has a speaking part in the movie Salt, which stars Angelina Jolie.
Alumni Connections

BY KANDYCE AUST
DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Alumnae Council for Women News
by Kerry L. Beckford A’84 (HCW), ’88, M’89

Hartford College for Women Alumnae, Mark Your Calendars!
A dynamic group of Hartford College for Women alumnae is planning a memorable gathering for fall 2009. This festive event will include enriching dialogue and discussion as well as a social reuniting former friends, faculty, and classmates. Planning is under way.

Committee members include
Cheryl Chase A’95 (HCW), ’99
Rebecca Danchak A’70 (HCW)
Susanne Davis A’80 (HCW)
Jan Klein A’70 (HCW)
Pat McKinley A’72 (HCW)
Eileen Peltier A’86 (HCW)
Sharon Scorso ’02 (HCW)

Sports Chairs for a Cure
Pink sports chairs complete with a cooler and a comfortable shoulder strap will be available this spring. These lightweight yet sturdy chairs are available for $50, with $5 of the purchase price going to the American Cancer Society and $5 to the Alumnae Council for Women. An individual’s name, college, or university can be embroidered on the front panel (as shown in the photo) at no charge. What a perfect gift!

If you would like to order your chair, contact Kandyce M. Aust, director of alumni relations, at aust@hartford.edu or 860.768.2409. There are a limited number of chairs available.

Alumni website closed for renovations
Get ready for a revitalized alumni online community! We’re working hard to provide valuable tools for alumni, including a user-friendly online directory, online class notes, interactive message boards, online galleries, and much more. We apologize for any inconvenience this transition from the old site to the new may cause you. But we guarantee that it will be worth the wait. Look for our new site to go live later this summer!

September 2009
Join the Alumni Association as we celebrate the start of the soccer season and cheer men’s soccer coach Dan Gaspar and the Hartford Hawks on to victory. This celebration will include a barbecue, game ticket, and lots of prizes. Stay tuned for date and time.

Fly Hawk Air!
Fall Weekend, October 2–4, 2009
Don’t miss this action-packed weekend. Friday evening begins with our Hawk Air “in-flight” experience, featuring great food and music, our famous casino games played with Hawk dollars, and prizes galore. Be sure to be on board when we depart for some exciting destinations!

Saturday there is shopping for handcrafted items at the Alumni Artisans Marketplace, the Alumni Musician Spotlight, and our new–and–improved children’s activities (fun for the whole family). Worn out? Rejuvenation Station with added spa services and amenities. So much more is in store for our alumni, parents, and friends. Invitations are on their way.

2009 Hartford Art School Alumni Show
October 6–21, 2009
Opening Reception, Friday, October 9, 2009, 5:30 p.m.
Be part of Work It! Measure It! 120, the Hartford Art School Alumni Show 2009. This year we have elected to increase the dimensional sizes of submissions for our annual show; all works with a perimeter of 120 inches or less are eligible. Not an artist, but an art lover? Attend the opening reception, where many works will be for sale.

If you have any questions or would like to receive an entry form, please contact Aaron Masthay at 860.768.2426 or masthay@hartford.edu.

December 5, 2009
Take in a show on Broadway, stroll down the Museum Mile, or finish off your holiday shopping on this Saturday in the Big City. This is always a popular trip and space is limited, so contact Samantha Cahill today at 860.768.2452 or sacahill@hartford.edu to reserve your seat on the bus. $30 per person.

Congratulations to the Class of 2009 and welcome to the University of Hartford Alumni Association! It has been an exciting spring semester, and planning is well under way for an eventful fall. Please don’t hesitate to contact us to become involved.
1953
Gil Perlroth (HARTT) of Gulfport, Fla., has written and composed more than 20 musicals in his career. Among his current commissions is Gulfport: The Musical for the city’s centennial celebration in 2010.

1963
Rose Fichera-Eagen (A&S, M’85 BARNEY) of Hartford, Conn., was the third recipient of the Reverend Canon Clinton R. Jones Award. The award was established in 2005 by the Friends of Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford to honor an individual whose life and work exemplify values, accomplishments, and passions similar to those of Jones, whose 40 years of outreach to people on the margins of society made him a national legend.

1966
Gail C. Champlin (A&S) of North Canton, Conn., retired as senior director of the University’s Center for Professional Development. In honor of her 27 years of service, the center has established the Gail Champlin Annual Speakers Program, which will present local experts on issues of concern to women.

1970
Stephan P. Barnicle (HARTT, M’74 BARNEY) of Fayetteville, N.C., was inducted into the Worcester, Mass., Boys’ and Girls’ Club Hall of Fame in recognition of his achievements in music and music education. The Cumberland Oratorio Singers and the Methodist University Chamber Singers performed Barnicle’s polychoral work, “The Gates of St. Mark’s,” in March concerts in Fayetteville and Lumberton, N.C.

1972
Thomas O. Barnes (BARNEY) of Bristol, Conn., was presented with the 2009 Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Star of Hope Award for his outstanding commitment to the foundation’s mission of finding a cure for diabetes and its complications.

1973
Michael B. Ditkoff (A&S) of Lantham, Md., was honored with the Chief Financial Officer’s Management Award for Exemplary Performance from the Department of Homeland Security. Ditkoff developed and launched a successful national training program to correct processing and reporting problems in personnel payroll and budget data. He is a senior budget analyst with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Christine Danylik Ivers ’73 (HAS), No Smoking Allowed (pastel on paper, 17” x 22”), 2008. The winner of numerous awards for her works in pastel and oil, Ivers was chosen by the International Association of Pastel Societies as one of eight finalists worldwide in two competitions. She is also one of this year’s exhibitors in PaintAmerica Association’s Top 100 exhibition and will be published in the 2009 edition of Best of American Artists II for Pastels. The artist broke from the pack in 1986 to established Ivers & Associates Advertising, LLC, working with fellow artists to promote themselves better by bridging the gap between fine art and digital photography. Ivers and husband David Ivers ’71 make their home in central Connecticut.

Jeffrey C. Brown M’79 (HAS), Lunch (found objects on wood panel with acrylic and varnish, 7” x 10”), 2009. With keen appreciation for the indigenous folk art elements common to many cultures, Brown’s creations with found objects bespeak his fascination with “objects whose faces reflect a process of time and the elements… This world of the worn and eroded is reborn to express an aesthetic that does not fit with our culture’s traditional value system for art.” Exhibiting in multiple venues in the Colorado Springs, Colo., area last fall, Brown has taught art for 26 years at the Fountain Valley School of Colorado in Colorado Springs. Among his private collectors is Walter Harrison, president of the University of Hartford.
1976
EDWARD R. EVANOUSKAS (M, ENHP; M’82 BARNEY) of Bristol, Conn., has accepted the position of business manager in the Winsted, Conn., public school system.

1978
PAUL P. BISACCIA (HARTT) of Hartford, Conn., gave a piano recital of Gershwin compositions, both popular and rarely heard, for the Music on Main series at First Church in Amherst, Mass.

1979
ANNA M. GIZA (A&S) of Somers, Conn., played the title role in the musical Hello, Dolly! at St. Michael’s Community Center in East Longmeadow, Mass. Giza is the promotion director at WWLP-22 News and one of the hosts of 22 Showcase in Springfield, Mass.

1980
CHESTER J. DAVIS (M, HAS) of Paxinos, Pa., had his work featured in an exhibition titled Collective Paintings at the Mansfield University Gallery in Mansfield, Pa.

THOMAS G. WOODMAN (C, HARTT) of Fairfield, Conn., performed an evening of opera and musical theatre at the Mark Twain Library in Redding, Conn. His performance featured the music of Vaughan Williams, Copland, Ravel, and Rogers and Hammerstein.

1981
SUZANNE CLARK (HAS) of Essex Junction, VT, exhibited her detailed portraits of raptors at the Vermont Fine Art Gallery in Stowe, VT.

DAVID T. CULLEN (HARTT) of Reading, PA, accompanied the group Duo Terlano on the guitar for a selection of works by Piazzolla and Assad at Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pa.

FRANK J. D’AMBROSIO (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., performed his show, “Hollywood: Songs from the Silver Screen,” at the Grand Theatre Center for the Arts in Tracy, Calif.

DANIEL A. FOLEY (CETA) of Marlborough, Mass., is a telephone solution strategist and sales representative at Prism Sound.

MELISSA D. SMITH (M, HARTT) of Somersworth, N.H., is pleased to announce her engagement to Douglas Hunt. An April 2009 wedding is planned.

1983
NANCY A. STULA (HAS, ’83 A&S) of Old Lyme, Conn., was appointed director of the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London, Conn.

1985
KATHLEEN M. BEHRENS (ENHP) of Irvington, NY, was promoted to executive vice president for social responsibility and player programs by the National Basketball Association.

1986
AHMAD M. MUSTAAL (ENGINEERING, M’88) of Selango Darul Ehsan, Malaysia, was promoted to professor of computer science at the National Defense University of Malaysia, where he is also director of graduate studies.

Father Knows Best
Alumnus wins $16,000 on Millionaire

What started out as a father-son trip to New York City led Michael Geller ’76 to wrack his brain for the lyrics to the nursery rhyme “One, Two, Buckle My Shoe” while sitting in the hot seat on Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?

Geller, a Barney alumnus from Marlboro, N.J., never expected to be facing host Meredith Vieira on the popular ABC show in which contestants answer a series of questions of increasing difficulty in an attempt to win $1 million.

Last June, Geller took his 23-year-old son, Ryan, into Manhattan so the younger Geller could take the general-knowledge test used to screen applicants for the show. Ryan didn’t score high enough to participate, but he convinced his father to take the test as well. The elder Geller made the cut, from a group of 500 millionaire-wannabes.

Geller; his wife, Randy Tunichek Geller ’78; son, Ryan; and 20-year-old daughter, Alyson, all made the trip to ABC Studios on West 66th Street for the Sept. 24 taping of the show. Unlike the hero of the recent Academy Award–winning movie, Slumdog Millionaire, Geller decided to walk away with $16,000 in prize money after answering the first 10 questions correctly.

Fellow alumni Howie Weinberg ’76, Debbie Sonnen Weinberg ’79, and Mike Cohn ’76 helped Geller and his wife celebrate his win. Other than a family vacation to Mexico, Geller says he plans to “pay some bills (and taxes),” adding, “Hope the economy gets better. Go, Hawks!”
Inhabiting Barclay

Marie-Louise LaFond M’93 and her husband, Steve, of Virginia Beach, Va., breathed new life in 2003 into this gracious 1895 bed-and-breakfast (inset). Variously a summer guest house and an elementary school, the inn, still called Barclay Cottage, offers an elegant setting in its latest incarnation for small corporate retreats and team-building sessions in addition to more personal getaways. Under the capable and caring hospitality of the LaFonds, the award-winning Barclay (www.barclaycottage.com) has been featured in several national publications.

1988
DOUGLAS D. CASAVANT (BARNEY) of Chesapeake, Va., was in command of a U.S. Navy ship on an international outreach and maritime security mission to the Caribbean. As a civil service mariner for the U.S. Navy’s Military Sealift Command, Casavant is currently in command of the rescue-and-salvage ship USNS Grasp.

1989
MARK LOMBARDO (A’87, HILLYER; A&S). See AMY LOMBARDO ’90.

1990
KENNETH J. BOUCHER (HARTT) of West River, Md., and his choral students at the Sutland High School Center for the Visual and Performing Arts in Maryland were selected to perform in December in Turner Network Television’s Christmas special, Christmas in Washington. On Jan. 18, Boucher and his group merged with two other schools to form the Washington Youth Choir, which performed at the opening ceremonies of President Barack Obama’s inaugural celebration at the Lincoln Memorial. The choristers shared the stage with Garth Brooks, Bruce Springsteen, and Beyoncé.

AMY LOMBARDO (A&S) of Ridgefield, Conn., who received her master’s in counseling from Pace University, is a contributing author to Chicken Soup for the Soul: Twins and More. She and her husband MARK LOMBARDO A’87, ’89, make their home in Ridgefield, Conn., with their two sons.

DAVID YEAGLEY (AD, HARTT) of Oklahoma City, Okla., a symphonic composer, was commissioned by the Oklahoma Historical Society to score a 1920 silent film titled Daughter of Dawn. As a Comanche, Yeagley is the first American Indian to be professionally commissioned to write a movie score.

1991
CINDY W. BOUCHARD (M, BARNEY) of Troy, N.H., has earned the professional insurance designation of chartered property casualty underwriter (CPCU) from the American Institute of CPCU. She is a middle-market commercial lines underwriter for Acadia Insurance Company.

REGINALD W. MARTIN (BARNEY) of Rockaway, N.J., a senior vice president at Morgan Stanley, has been tapped to relocate to Morgan Stanley Asia in Hong Kong to create and manage the company’s newly formed virtualization practice. Martin earned his master’s from the Pace University Ivan G. Seidenberg School of Computer Science.

1992
GREGORY A. WHITE (M, BARNEY) of South Windsor, Conn., is chief financial officer, treasurer, and executive vice president at Farmington Savings Bank in Farmington, Conn.

1993
CAREN A. KITTREDGE (M, BARNEY) of Glastonbury, Conn., was named chair of the Bradley International Airport Board of Directors by Gov. M. Jodi Reil.

JEANINE TOUSIGNANT (HARTT) of Manchester, N.H., is vice president for advancement at Manchester Community Music School in Manchester.

1994
SCOTT E. LAMLEIN (HARTT) of Bristol, Conn., re-released his first solo CD, In Quiet Joy: Music of Advent and Christmas, to mark its 10th anniversary.

1995
CAREN A. KITTREDGE (M, BARNEY) of Glastonbury, Conn., was named chair of the Bradley International Airport Board of Directors by Gov. M. Jodi Reil.

JEANINE TOUSIGNANT (HARTT) of Manchester, N.H., is vice president for advancement at Manchester Community Music School in Manchester.

1996
CHARLES A. AMERSON (HARTT, M’99 A&S) of Bronx, N.Y., is the new student activities director at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, N.C.

ANTHONY B. PRICE (M, BARNEY) of Waterbury, Conn., is senior economic development director at Economic Development Corp. in New Haven, Conn.

REKHA SHERTUKDE (M, BARNEY) of Simsbury, Conn., received a 2009 Women of Innovation Award in entrepreneurial innovation and leadership. The awards pay tribute to Connecticut’s outstanding women in the fields of science and technology. Shertukde is a CETA faculty member at the University.

1997
LATANYA FARRELL (M, ENHP, M’98 ENHP) of West Hartford, Conn., a teacher and popular local entertainer, was a concert headliner for the University’s Music for a Change benefit series.

JAMES S. “JIMMY” GREENE (HARTT) of Hartford, Conn., critically acclaimed tenor saxophonist and Hartt faculty member, has released his seventh CD, Mission Statement (Sunshire/Raddaz Records).

MORGAN B. ROBERTS (HARTT) of Newmarket, N.H., is the owner of At Your Front Door Music, which provides music lessons to families in their own homes. Through the group’s website, www.atyourdoormusic.org, clients can browse information on teachers, read their biographies and credentials, and register and pay for lessons.

1998
CHOTSANI E. DEAN (HAS) of Windsor, Conn., showcased her ceramic artwork in an exhibition titled Chotsani Elaine Dean: Clay Quilts/Post-Emancipation at the Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton, N.J.

1999
CLIFFORD A. RANKIN (M, BARNEY) of Bristol, Conn., is the new manager at Gallagher, Flynn & Company, LLP, in Burlington, Conn.

RACHEL L. TAC (M, ENHP) of Newington, Conn., received her doctorate in education from Walden University. She teaches computer technology in the Newington public school system.

ALEXANDRA ZACHARELLA (HARTT) of Fort Smith, Ariz., performed in “Polished Brass: Trumpet and Trombone” at the University of Arizona-Fort Worth. She is assistant professor of low brass, director of the Lions Athletic Band, and a low-brass instructor for the Academy of the Arts at the university.

2000
LAUREN M. COLLINS (A&S) of Manchester, N.H., is the New Hampshire bureau reporter for New England Cable News.

SETH MCCLELLAN (HARTT) of Crete, Ill., premiered his feature-length documentary, King in Chicago, on a Chicago PBS affiliate. The film chronicles Dr. Martin Luther King’s 1960s collaboration with the Chicago Freedom Movement.

NICHOLAS A. OLIVER (A&S) of Beverly, Mass., earned his MS in public affairs from the University of Massachusetts-Boston. He graduated with the Carol Torto Memorial Award for Academic Excellence for his thesis, “No Dollar Left Behind: Massachusetts Municipal Medicaid Program’s Transition from Blended-per-Diem Rate Billing to Fee-for-Service Rate Billing.” Oliver also received the designation of certified association executive from the American Society of Association Executives.

MAXWELL D. WILLIAMS (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., directed the play Dying City in his MainStage debut at Hartford Stage in Hartford, Conn. Dying City tells the story of Peter, a self-involved actor, who shows up unannounced and unwelcome at the apartment of his brother Craig’s beautiful young widow, Kelly. The evening shifts back and forth, unfolding an uneasy triangle that surrounds the central mystery of the drama: What happened to Craig?

2002
TIMOTHY K. ADDIE (ENHP, M’04 ENHP) of Manchester, Conn., competed in the Ironman Florida competition in Panama City, Fla. The Ironman consists of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bicycle ride, and a 26.2-mile run. Addie completed the race in 11 hours, 46 minutes, and 36 seconds.

EVELYN T. GARCIA (C, HCW; A’04 A&S; ’04 US) of Lake Worth, Fla., was elected as one of 10 Floridians to the Democratic National Committee.

S P R I N G  2 0 0 9
ALUMNI Connections

Top to bottom:
Maria E. Mikhail '99 (A&S) and Gregory Volpe celebrated their marriage on Jan. 17, 2009, at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville, Conn. The bride is the founder and owner of A Dog's Day, a pet-sitting company.

Monique S. Farias '03 (Ward) and David Rodrigues were married in Cumberland, R.I., on Aug. 9, 2009. Amanda Schmidt '03 joined the wedding party as a bridesmaid. Other Hartford guests were Vanessa Reda '02, Sarah Bezanson '03, Andevelle Chisholm '03, Bradley Parsons '03, Julianna Sakoian '03, Alyssa Topp '03, Christopher Wilt '03, Angelina Lopez '04, Tamar Juda '05, Elisabeth Neary '05, and Timothy Ryan '05.

Barbara A. Monroe '99 & Eric Truax (11.2.08)
Amanda Crockett '00 & Colin Ryan (8.23.08)
Leigh A. Stuart '00 & Brian E. Coughlin M'00 (7.26.08)
Pamela Lygate & Jeffrey M. Boccia '01 (7.26.08)
Michele A. Redvanly '01 & Joshua Keller (11.08)
Victoria Gorham & John L. Ywasky '02 (10.11.08)
Erika L. Graul '03 & Colby Williams (8.31.08)
Ann Marie Mancini '03 & Justin Rehli (7.08)
Jenna R. Mitton '04, M'05, & Eric Milman (9.7.08)
Sarah Luckenbach & Allan L. Schuilenburg '04 (10.11.08)
Rita J. Garvin '05 & James Quigley (7.12.08)
Elizabeth E. Provence '05 & Everett McMillian (1.17.09)
Nikki Quinn '05 & James M. Calabro '06 (4.26.08)
Amanda Stevens Griffin & Takeshi J. Sergel '06 (9.27.08)
Laurel Killough & Gustavo F. Fernandez M'07 (7.26.08)
Katherine A. Laptik M'07 & Theodore Arzt (6.21.08)

Weddings

SCOTT E. JAMES (M, BARNEY) of Manchester, Conn., was named the recipient of the 2008 Critical Care Ground Award of Excellence by the Association of Air Medical Services. He is the administrative director of trauma and emergency care services at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center in Hartford, Conn.

IAIN J. QUINN (HARTT) of Albuquerque, N.M., was a featured composer at the prestigious John Armitage Memorial Concerts, held at St. Bride’s Fleet Street, London, and Manchester Cathedral in England. His work Toccata on Victimae Paschali Laudes for organ was performed. Quinn served as the editor of the previously unpublished Prelude and Fugue in B minor (organ) by Samuel Barber, which was published by G. Schirmer, New York, this year. Quinn is composing a commissioned Missa Brevis for St. Luke in the Fields, New York City. This year will also see the publication of several of his recent choral works by Encore Publications and GIA Publications.

CHRISTIAN V. SIEGEL (HARTT) of Bristol, Conn., is the K-12 fine-arts coordinator for Regional School District 6 in Litchfield, Conn.

JOFFREY A. SMITH (BARNEY) of Worcester, Mass., was a representative of the area’s District 1, became the youngest person ever elected to the Worcester City Council in November 2005. He won reelection in 2007 on a second term and is running for a third term this year. Smith is the founder and CEO of the Group Insurance Exchange, which he formed as a start-up company that operates an online reverse-auction platform for large companies, governments, and colleges to save money on their group employee benefit plans.

SHEILA SOLERNOU (M, ENHP) of Waterbury, Conn., was inducted as president of the Connecticut League for Nursing. She is director of nursing at Gateway Community College.

2003

SURAJ S. AFSHAR (A&S) of Methuen, Mass., earned his Doctor of Optometry from the New England College of Optometry. He is a licensed optometrist practicing in several locations in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

DANIELLE C. FRENK (A&S) of New York, N.Y., is the director of communications for Central Synagogue in New York, N.Y.

2004

MELINDA S. FORMICA (M, A&S) of Cheshire, Conn., received her certificate in fundraising management from the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. She is the director of development for the School of Business at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn.

STEPHANIE KNUTSON (M, ENHP) of West Hartford, Conn., has joined the Connecticut State Department of Education as a school nurse consultant in the Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services, and Adult Education.

MEREDITH C. MORRIS (ENHP) of Silver Lake, N.Y., announces her engagement to fellow alumnus CHRISTOPHER M. MACDONALD ’06, ’06. A December 2009 wedding is planned.

FLANNERY E. O’BRIEN (A&S) of Malden, Mass., was accepted into the accelerated BSN program at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions in Boston, Mass.

2005

JOSEPH S. BARROS (HARTT) of Pacifica, Calif., is the producing artistic director for the New York Theatre Barn.

STACEY E. DYER (HAS) of Middletown, Conn., owns and operates Triple Frog, LLC, a full-service design firm in Middletown, Conn. She is pleased to announce the company’s expansion with the hiring of a new art director.

ELAINE YU (A&S) of Glastonbury, Conn., is pleased to announce her engagement to ADAM THYSE ’05 (CETA). An Aug. 29, 2009, wedding is planned in Haddam, Conn.

2006


BONNIE A. HAUPT (M, ENHP) of Bethany, Conn., is an assistant professor of nursing at Fairfield University in Fairfield, Conn.

CHRISTOPHER M. MACDONALD (A, CETA; ’06 CETA). See MEREDITH C. MORRIS ’04.

KENNETH W. QUESNEL (MART) of Manchester, Conn., announces his engagement to Catherine Runak. The wedding is planned for Aug. 14, 2009.

BRANDEE YOUNGER (HARTT) of Uniondale, N.Y., a member of the Hartt Community Division faculty, traveled to Guatemala in February as part of the Guatemala Teaching Project, teaching and performing for short periods at various venues.

Celebrate with the Observer!

Weddings, births, new jobs, promotions, performances, exhibitions, publications—these and so many other notable milestones and accomplishments are what punctuate our lives once we leave the University of Hartford campus. Send the Observer your news, and we’ll let old friends and, as well as the global University community, know what you’ve been up to since graduation. Announcements may be sent to alumni@hartford.edu or to the Office of Alumni Relations, 200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117.
2007
ANGELA CARRANO (M, ENHP) of East Haven, Conn., has accepted a full-time clinical faculty position in nursing at Quinnipiac University.

TODD D. ROSE (M, BARNEY) of Stafford Springs, Conn., is president and chief executive officer at Visiting Nurse and Health Services Center of Connecticut.

2008
JONATHAN SILVER (CETA) of Newtown, Conn., and ROBERT TANEN (CETA) of Harleysville, Pa., won first prize in the Acoustical Society of America’s Best Student Paper Award competition, held in Miami, Fla. The collaborators presented the results of their undergraduate research on the acoustic signatures of footfall noise.

ALEXANDER VINAUD (HAS) of Windsor, Conn., is the owner of Nautilus Tattoo in Newington, Conn. He has been tattooing since 2006 and specializes in realistic animal and nature tattoos.

Girl Scouts Go Green
Girl Scouts can now earn green merit badges, thanks to ENHP alumna Kathy Murphy M’07, who has developed an environmental badge available to older Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador scouts. In the photo, Murphy leads a session in the annual “It’s a Girl Thing” training event, presented last December by the Girl Scouts of Connecticut and hosted by the University of Hartford. Murphy’s badge, or interest patch, “Going Green, One Step at a Time,” teaches older girls about the effects of environmental toxins on their bodies and aids them in making safer, more informed choices in the health and beauty products they use.

Attention, Alumni Artists!
The Observer welcomes your art. Your work in any medium is a great addition to our Alumni Connections section. We’re proud to publish your work here for all to see.

Let us give your art a wider audience. Send in digital photos of your artwork from a recent or upcoming exhibition. Photos should be high resolution, less than 2MB each, saved in jpg format, and e-mailed as attachments to bkennedy@hartford.edu. Larger files may be mailed on CD to Observer, Office of Communication, University of Hartford, 200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117.

Births
First row (l-r): Sara Matteson and Christopher J. Matteson ’95 (Tessa Calais, 7.25.08, nestled against brother Xander, nestled against sister Leia)
Anne K. Miller ’03 and Mark A. Miller ’02 (Benjamin Allan, 5.9.08)
Angela Capinera and Daniel B. Ruskin ’91 (Adam Micah, 8.12.08, with big brother Darren)
Natalie DiMatteo Strahowski M’02 and Matthew Strahowski (Ryan Matthew, 2.11.09)

Not pictured:
Emily Oliver & Nicholas A. Oliver ’00 (Caelan Zachary, 1.27.09)
Michael Gonzalez ’02 (Kaeelyn Beth, 2.29.08)

ALUMNI Connections
Alumni Richard H. Booth ’69, M’77, and Gerald V. Vitkauskas ’64 led the way as inaugural members of the new Barney School of Business Hall of Fame in a January induction ceremony. Both honorees were selected from a pool of 18,000 Barney alumni for their “outstanding achievements to promote global awareness and social responsibility.” Pictured here are, from left, Barney Dean James Fairfield-Sonn, Booth, Provost Lynn Pasquerella, Vitkauskas, and David Gordon, chair of the Barney board of visitors.

Photo by Robert Thiesfield
Clark Smidt ’70, who as a student was one of the founders and the first station manager of WWUH, spoke at a campus reunion on Nov. 8, 2008, marking the beginning of the station’s fifth decade. Approximately 100 WWUH alumni, current staff, and friends attended the celebration. Smidt is now a consultant and owner of WCAP–FM, a full-time local talk and information station in Lowell, Mass.

While Smidt reminisced about the early days and expressed his pride in how the station has developed, current station manager John Ramsey focused on WWUH today.

“WWUH, now more than ever before, is serving a vital role by providing alternative music and news programming. . . . Thanks to the support of our listeners and the hard work of our volunteer staff, WWUH became the first station in the state to broadcast over the Internet in 1997, and today we offer 1,000 free streams and have listeners all over the world.”

Ramsey also reported that the station continues to enjoy strong financial support from its listeners. On March 1, President Walter Harrison kicked off the spring 2009 fundraising effort on the air. The marathon, which ran from March 1 to March 8, surpassed its $65,000 goal with more than 1,000 donors participating.

Ramsey closed his remarks by relaying a conversation with Smidt.

“I complimented him on the ‘Public Alternative Radio’ motto, which has been so important to the station’s success. Clark remarked that it was a good thing that they chose that phrase because our runner up was ‘UH Radio: Stick It in Your Ear.’ Hey, it was the sixties, you know.”

—Clark Smidt ’70, describing the birth of WWUH, 91.3 FM, on July 15, 1968

Clark Smidt ’70, who as a student was one of the founders and the first station manager of WWUH, spoke at a campus reunion on Nov. 8, 2008, marking the beginning of the station’s fifth decade. Approximately 100 WWUH alumni, current staff, and friends attended the celebration. Smidt is now a consultant and owner of WCAP–FM, a full-time local talk and information station in Lowell, Mass.

While Smidt reminisced about the early days and expressed his pride in how the station has developed, current station manager John Ramsey focused on WWUH today.

“WWUH, now more than ever before, is serving a vital role by providing alternative music and news programming. . . . Thanks to the support of our listeners and the hard work of our volunteer staff, WWUH became the first station in the state to broadcast over the Internet in 1997, and today we offer 1,000 free streams and have listeners all over the world.”

Ramsey also reported that the station continues to enjoy strong financial support from its listeners. On March 1, President Walter Harrison kicked off the spring 2009 fundraising effort on the air. The marathon, which ran from March 1 to March 8, surpassed its $65,000 goal with more than 1,000 donors participating.

Ramsey closed his remarks by relaying a conversation with Smidt.

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Alumni and staff enjoy each other’s sunny company at March’s Red & White Brunch at the Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables, Fla. (l–r, all photos): (1) Lauren Firtel ’03, President Walter Harrison, Gabriel Deutsch A’02, ‘02; (2) Mort and Irma Handel; (3) Evelyn C’02, A’04, ‘04, and Guy M’86 Garcia; (4) Bob ’69, M’72, and Linda ’72 Feld; (5) Doris Hencken, Pete Congleton, Marilyn Siadman A’63, Allyn Golub ’62; (6) Jeffrey and Susan Shoham.

(7) Alumni Relations’ own Samantha Cahill ’09 (center) is flanked by Ken Slade (left) and Pilar Cordero-Montalvo at the World’s Best 10K race, held in March in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Adrienne Milics (8), founder of Parnassum, an executive coaching firm, introduces “Effective Interviewing and Presentation Skills” to participants (10, 13) in our March workshop.

Jan Melnik (9) demonstrates how to “Revitalize Your Résumé!” to February workshop attendees (11).

(12) A capacity class attends “Conducting a Job Search in a Tough Economy,” presented in early February by Barney School faculty Susan Coleman and Ralph Braithwaite.
In Memoriam

Grace Carney, a life regent of the University, died on March 25, 2009. She was 97. A USO entertainer during World War II, Carney was a successful actress in the early days of television and on Broadway, then headed her family’s West Hartford–based company, United Tool & Die, for 13 years. Founder of the Carney Scholarship Foundation, which has awarded hundreds of scholarships to University of Hartford students since 1984, Carney received the University Medal for Distinguished Service in 1987.

Richard F. Donovan, former associate professor of electrical engineering, died on Nov. 15, 2008, at the age of 83. He joined the University’s College of Engineering after his retirement from the space program at Hamilton Sundstrand. At the University, Donovan initiated the chartering of the Iota Epsilon chapter of Eta Kappa Nu, the Electrical and Computer Engineering Honor Society.

Alexander Lepak ’50, professor emeritus at The Hartt School, died on March 25, 2009. He was 88. Founder of Hartt’s percussion program and longtime percussionist for the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Lepak was honored as the 1981 Hartt Alumnus of the Year and the 1991 Teacher of the Year. In 1997 he was inducted into the Percussion Arts Society Hall of Fame. His film soundtracks included Star Trek, The Jerk, Roar, and Shogun. Lepak also joined Frank Sinatra on his Trilogy album and had recently toured with Andrea Bocelli.

Richard S. Martin, professor emeritus, who played a key role in building the economics program in the Barney School of Business, died last November 2008. Serving two terms as chair of the Department of Economics (1968–80 and 1983–87), Martin was the author of many publications, including several projects completed during a 12-year period with General Electric Co.

James Sedalia Peters II, the first African American faculty member at Hillyer College in the late 1950s, died on Dec. 12, 2008, at the age of 91. Peters was inducted into the first class of the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame in 2005 for his role in integrating the U.S. Navy during World War II. He served as director of the state’s Vocational Rehabilitation Program, deputy commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Education, commissioner of the Hartford Housing Authority, and a member of The Hartt School Board of Trustees.
Mary-Selvi Ingoldsby ’10 (center) fell in love with the University of Hartford while still a Torrington, Conn., high school student and was thrilled when she was accepted. Without support from scholarship donors, she would not have been able to attend. “My single mother wouldn’t be able to pay the full tuition and room and board. I have another sister in college and two younger sisters.”

Mary-Selvi is the recipient of the Marion and Richard Keller Endowed Scholarship, established by Edward Herzig (left), Jane Keller Herzig ’81 (right), Peter and Minerva Keller, and Jim Keller and Mary Ellen Hoy in honor of their parents and to benefit a student with a physical challenge or other special need.

Mary-Selvi is hearing impaired. She is a drawing major and painting minor in the Hartford Art School and works with students in the University of Hartford Magnet School. “I love sharing my enthusiasm for art with young children. The experience is great for me because I have wanted to be an art teacher since I was in first grade.”

Jane Keller Herzig graduated from the Hartford Art School with a master’s in art education and works as a studio artist in both metal and mixed media. She and her husband have also established the Edward Herzig and Jane Keller Herzig ’81 Endowed Scholarship to benefit a student in the Hartford Art School.

Mary-Selvi is very thankful for the generosity of scholarship donors. “I hope alumni and friends of the University will continue to support scholarships because they really do make dreams come true.”

Give to the Scholarship Fund

To make a gift
Visit: www.hartford.edu/giving  Call: 860.768.2412
Mail: Use the convenient postage-paid envelope to mail your check, payable to the University of Hartford, Office of Development, 200 Bloomfield Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06117.
Up, Up, and Away—
Fly the Red-and-White Skies of Hawk Air

Fasten your seatbelts, alumni and parents!
We’re kicking off Fall Weekend by taking to the skies. Your charter flight on Hawk Air departs from Konover Campus Center on Friday evening, featuring an “in-flight” casino and four fun destinations with food, music, and many great prizes.

On Saturday don’t miss the Alumni Artisans Marketplace, the Alumni Musicians Spotlight, various Hawk athletic events, and the annual Alumni Anchor Awards, which recognize outstanding alumni.

For more information on Fall Weekend or to become involved with the planning committee, contact Kandye Aust, director of alumni relations, at 860.768.2409 or alumni@hartford.edu.