President Obama Comes to Campus
Here is just a sampling of the exciting events coming up on and off campus this summer and fall at the University of Hartford. Plan now to treat yourself to one. Visit hartford.edu/calendar regularly for details and the latest updates to our full calendar of events. Or go to https://www.anchoronline.org/events for the latest alumni programs and events in your area.

ALL-CAMPUS EVENT

Fri.–Sun., Oct. 18–20
Hawktober Weekend
Annual Homecoming and Parents Weekend celebration
Featuring a comedy performance by Paula Poundstone of NPR’s Wait Wait... Don’t Tell Me!

ATHLETICS

Check hartfordhawks.com for our fall game schedules.

Fri., Oct. 18
Men’s Basketball Draft Night
Hartford Golf Club
134 Norwood Rd., West Hartford, Conn.
Reception: 6 p.m.
Dinner: 7 p.m.
Contact Ellen Crandall, 860.768.5032,
ecrandall@hartford.edu.

Fri., Nov. 1
Women’s Basketball Tip-a-Hawk Dinner
Hartford Marriott
15 Farm Springs Rd., Farmington, Conn.
Reception: 6 p.m.
Dinner: 7 p.m.
Contact Ellen Crandall, 860.768.5032,
ecrandall@hartford.edu.

Fri., Nov. 8
Hartt Sinfonia and Philharmonia
Hartford Golf Club
134 Norwood Rd., West Hartford, Conn.
Reception: 6 p.m.
Dinner: 7 p.m.
Contact Ellen Crandall, 860.768.5032,
ecrandall@hartford.edu.

Sun., Nov. 10
Watson Morrison:
85th Birthday Concert
Hartford Golf Club
134 Norwood Rd., West Hartford, Conn.
Reception: 6 p.m.
Dinner: 7 p.m.
Contact Ellen Crandall, 860.768.5032,
ecrandall@hartford.edu.

MUSIC, DANCE, THEATRE

Sun., July 7
Hartt Community Division Summer
Latin Jazz Performance
Millard Auditorium
3 p.m.

Friday, July 26
Summer Theatre on Cape Cod
Monomoy Theatre
776 Main St., Chatham, Mass.
Presidential reception with Walter Harrison:
6:30 p.m.
Performance of She Loves Me: 8 p.m.
Registration: www.anchoronline.org/monomoy

Tues., Aug. 6
Hausmann Quartet
Millard Auditorium
6 p.m.

Thurs., Sept. 12
Lions Gate Trio
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: No charge

Thurs., Oct. 3
The Richard P. Garmany Chamber Music Series
Jaime Laredo, violin,
and Joseph Kalichstein, piano
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: $35; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Fri., Oct. 4
Hartt Sinfonia and Philharmonia
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Sat., Oct. 5
Hartt Wind Ensemble
and Symphony Band
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Thurs.–Sun., Oct. 17–20
Richard III
Roberts Theater
Handel Performing Arts Center
39 Westbourne Parkway, Hartford, Conn.
Thurs.–Sat., 7:30 p.m.
Sun., 3 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Mon.–Thurs., Oct. 21–24
Chamber Music Concerts
Berkman Recital Hall
7 p.m.
Admission: No charge

Thurs.–Sunday, Oct. 24–27
Barnum
Lincoln Theater
Thurs.–Sat., 7:30 p.m.
Sun., 3 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Sun., Oct. 27
Faculty Recital Series
David Westfall, piano,
and Robert Barefield, baritone
Millard Auditorium
3 p.m.
Admission: No charge

Fri., Nov. 1
Hartt Chamber Winds
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: No charge

Fri., Nov. 8
Hartt Sinfonia and Philharmonia
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Sun., Nov. 10
Watson Morrison:
85th Birthday Concert
Millard Auditorium
3 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Fri., Nov. 15
Hartt Big Band
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
Admission: No charge

Tues.–Sun., Nov. 19–24
GlenErrey Glen Ross and
Top Girls, in repertory
McCray Theater
Handel Performing Arts Center
39 Westbourne Parkway, Hartford, Conn.
Thurs.–Sat., 7:30 p.m.
Sun., 3 p.m.
Admission: $20; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Thurs., Nov. 21
The Richard P. Garmany Chamber Music Series
Andy Narell and His Ensemble
Millard Auditorium
7:30 p.m.
A rare East Coast appearance by Paris-based
Andy Narell, acknowledged as the world’s
leading exponent of the steel drum.
Admission: $35; discounts for students, seniors, and groups of 10+

Visual Arts

Tues., Sept. 3–Sun., Oct. 6
Lines & Spaces
Joseloff Gallery
Joseloff Guest Curator Series,
featuring John Yau
Thurs., Sept. 5
Panel discussion: 3:30 p.m., Wilde Auditorium
Opening reception: 5–7 p.m., Joseloff Gallery

Mon., Sept. 23–Tues., Oct. 8
Department of Architecture:
Guest Architectural Firm Display
Silpe Gallery
Reception and lecture: TBA

Mon., Oct. 14–Wed., Nov. 6
Hartford Art School Alumni Juried Exhibition
Silpe Gallery
Opening reception and awards presentation:
Thurs., Oct. 17, 5–7 p.m.

Tues., Oct. 15–Sun., Dec. 1
Hartford Art School Faculty Exhibition
Joseloff Gallery
Opening reception: Thurs., Oct. 17, 5–7 p.m.

Lincoln Theater, Millard Auditorium, Joseloff Gallery, Silpe Gallery, and Reich Family Pavilion are on the University of Hartford main campus at 200 Bloomfield Avenue in West Hartford, Conn.
Effective with this issue, the Observer will be printed twice a year, in late fall and early summer. Printing and mailing costs have risen over the last several years, and we believe our budget can be better used in electronic communication. You can keep up with University news every day by reading UNotes, the University's daily news website, at Hartford.edu/daily. You can subscribe to receive a daily UNotes email by clicking on “subscribe” at the top left of the webpage. You can also get news by liking University of Hartford News on Facebook and following twitter.com/UHartfordNews.

We hope you read, saw, or heard about President Barack Obama’s visit to campus in April. The University was mentioned in media coverage around the world as the president chose our Sports Center to make a speech to push for federal gun control legislation. He was the first sitting U.S. president to visit the University campus. See the Observer coverage that begins with President Walter Harrison’s letter on page 2.

The Observer traveled to Knoxville, Tenn., in June for the induction of head women’s basketball coach Jen Rizzotti into the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame. She was inducted for her performance as a guard playing for the University of Connecticut’s Huskies. We also traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to show you a different kind of March Madness. University chemistry professor Laura Pence let us see her in action as a Science and Technology Policy Fellow for Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colorado).

This issue also includes stories on alumni who work together at ESPN, undergraduate and graduate students who designed and built a subscale See-Thru Nuclear Power Plant, and an update on Miss Connecticut at the end of her reign.

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

Read the Observer online at hartford.edu/observer.
I have many reasons every day to be proud of the University of Hartford, but this year has brought me two moments in particular to be so proud that my heart felt as if it would burst through my chest.

One happened on April 8 during President Barack Obama’s wonderful visit to campus, which is chronicled in this issue of the Observer. This was the first visit of a sitting U.S. president to the University and a moment of great pride generally for all of us.

Preparing for and putting on the event was a massive undertaking. It required transformation of the Chase Family Arena in the Reich Family Pavilion into a setting for a presidential address that would honor families from Newtown, Conn., and focus national attention on the issue of gun control. The task was extremely challenging and required the help, expertise, and understanding of hundreds of people on campus and throughout the region. Our staff, our faculty, and our students all made sacrifices to make the event possible.

The event was emotional for me. I was seated just on the other side of the podium from Nelba Marquez-Greene ’97 and Jimmy Greene ’97, parents of 6-year-old Ana Grace, who died in the tragic Newtown shooting; and from Mary and Hannah D’Avino, mother and sister, respectively, of Rachel D’Avino ’07, a teacher who also died in the Newtown shooting. Memorial events for both Ana Grace and Rachel were held on campus, but seeing the two families being embraced by friends and honored by the president was very moving.

I knew everyone on campus was thrilled by the prospect of the visit, but I had also fielded expressions of concern after some students, faculty, and staff who waited in line for three hours were unable to get tickets. I also knew that everyone in the arena had waited in line for two hours to get in and then another hour or more for the president to arrive. So, as I looked around the arena, which was filled to capacity, I wondered what the reception would be.

Early in his remarks President Obama said, “I want to thank the University of Hartford for hosting us,” and a thunderous roar of cheering and applause rose from the crowd. It was a moment that will stay with me until the day I die. The pride we showed as a university and the enormous expression of support, revealed as we came together as a community for others who had suffered, are everything I have ever dreamed of for the University.

In late fall I experienced another moment, this one in Lincoln Theater, watching the Broadway musical Miss Saigon, directed by Kevin Gray, associate professor of theatre. Kevin had played the role of the lieutenant in the traveling company of Miss Saigon, and he brought his experience, his talent, and his deep understanding of the play to this production. I had seen the play in London 25 years ago, and as I sat there that evening, I realized that Kevin had managed to provide us with a production that was every bit as good.

During the standing ovation after the play, I thought about an experience I had had 15 years ago, when I was a vice president at the University of Michigan, cheering as Michigan’s football team won the national championship at the Rose Bowl. I remember thinking: Michigan has provided all of us with an experience few people ever have, experiencing something that is unmatched by most universities in the world. I had the same feeling about the University of Hartford’s theatre production during that standing ovation: you can’t experience something that moving on many university campuses.

A month later Kevin Gray died suddenly and tragically of massive heart failure, stunning our campus and all those whom he had touched throughout his life and brilliant career. We were blessed to share the last year and a half of his life here at the University. He changed our lives in ways grand and small.

Two events—one that reflects the substance and stature of a university that can attract a major speech by the president of the United States, and one that reflects what has always made this University great: the magic and majesty of a great teacher and his effect on students and community. These are moments we should all treasure. I am so proud to be a member of a university that can offer them.

Walter Harrison
President
“This is the most exciting thing that’s ever happened here!” one student exclaimed. “I can’t believe the president is coming to our school. It’s such an honor,” said another, as they stood at the front of a line outside the Sports Center for tickets to President Barack Obama’s speech that would take place on campus on April 8. It would be the first visit to the University of Hartford by a sitting U.S. president.

The excitement was palpable. More than 2,000 students, faculty, and staff lined up Friday afternoon, April 5, with hopes of getting one of the 1,500 tickets that the White House had set aside for members of the University community. After a more than four-hour wait, the tickets were all distributed in just 23 minutes.

It had been clear since Monday, April 1, when University of Hartford President Walter Harrison was first notified of the planned presidential visit that something big was about to happen on campus. Secret Service agents and White House advance teams arrived on Tuesday, and the campus buzzed for seven days as vendors staged Chase Family Arena with needed technology, the presidential podium, draping and American flags, and chairs and risers for media and seating behind the president.

On the day of the event, most parking lots on the residential side of campus were closed, traffic was routed one way, afternoon classes were canceled, and orange fencing was installed along campus roadways for crowd control. In addition to the University community ticket holders, about 2,000 tickets had been distributed to state and local dignitaries and residents of Newtown, Conn., including the families of the 26 people killed in the Dec. 14, 2012, shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.
President Obama’s visit to campus was a thrilling and historic event, but its purpose was somber. He came to deliver a high-profile speech on gun control in the wake of the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn.

Family members of the 20 children and six adults killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School were invited by the White House to sit directly in front of President Obama during his speech. Those family members included University alumni Nelba Marquez-Greene ’97 and Jimmy Greene ’97, whose 6-year-old daughter, Ana, was among those killed. Also in attendance were family members of University alumna Rachel D’Avino ’07, who was killed in the attack. D’Avino, 29, graduated from the University of Hartford with a BA in psychology and was working as a behavioral therapist.

A capacity crowd filled the bleachers on both ends of the arena, and additional chairs were added on the floor until the fire marshal said no more could be admitted. At approximately 5:45 p.m., Connecticut Gov. Dannel Malloy, one of the many local, state, and national dignitaries in attendance, delivered welcoming remarks after very special moments for two University of Hartford students. Maria Arroyo ’13, president of the Student Government Association, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Aja Wilson, a 2010 graduate of The Hartt School and current graduate student in the Barney School of Business, sang a stirring rendition of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” President Obama was introduced by Nicole and Ian Hockley, whose first-grade son, Dylan, died in the Newtown shooting.

The atmosphere in the arena was electric, and the enthusiastic crowd was quick to cheer and applaud. A boisterous roar went up when the president thanked the University for hosting the event. In his remarks Obama called on Congress to pass “common-sense” measures to reduce gun violence. He praised the gun control legislation that was approved by the Connecticut General Assembly a week before his speech with bipartisan support, and he said it is time for Congress to do the same. When the president suggested that some opponents of gun control legislation might use political maneuvering to block a vote on the issue, the audience began loudly chanting, “We want a vote! We want a vote!”

After his speech Obama came down from the podium to speak quietly and give emotional hugs to many of the Newtown family members. Upon flashing a huge smile and wave to attendees seated in the west bleachers—which gestures were acknowledged with cheers, shouts, and cellphone photo-taking—the president left the arena.

Several Newtown family members flew back to Washington with him to lobby members of Congress on gun control.

1. The enthusiastic crowd was diverse in age, race, and gender. 2. President Obama spoke for about 27 minutes. 3. After the speech, the president hugs the father of a child who was killed in the Sandy Hook shooting as Hannah D’Avino (wearing white headband) and Mary D’Avino look on. They are the sister and mother, respectively, of Rachel D’Avino ’07, who worked at Sandy Hook Elementary School and was killed. 4. Alumni Jimmy ’97 and Nelba Marquez-Greene ’97 lost their 6-year-old daughter, Ana, in the Sandy Hook shooting. 5. Nelba Marquez-Greene ’97 shows a “Love Wins” sign following the speech. 6. Students seated in the bleachers near where the president exited cheer, wave, and take pictures. 7. President Obama waves and acknowledges the students’ cheers.
Dozens of ticketholders for Obama's speech were asked by White House and University staff to sit on the flag-decorated risers behind the president’s podium. Here are some reactions from University staff members who sat on the stage:

“It was a historic moment for the University of Hartford, and to be that close to a sitting president made it even more historic and exciting for me personally. That is something I will be able to look back on for the rest of my life.

“My wife and daughter and I kept getting calls and texts from people saying, ‘I can see you on TV! What are you doing up there?’ I got so many calls and texts that I couldn’t answer them all. Eventually, when the president came in, we had to shut our phones off.

“We continued to get calls for many days after that, and friends sent newspaper articles with our pictures in them. We heard from friends in Florida, New York, New Jersey—they were just stunned to see us up there, right behind the president!”

— Ackley Beaumont, Director of Facilities

“The entire experience was amazing. I am sure that I could have been sitting anywhere in the room and been overwhelmed by President Obama’s words and overall message, but being so close made it all the more worthwhile and memorable. The president of the United States of America was literally only feet away from me.”

— Torshia Maxwell, Resident Director C and D Complexes

“It was so exciting to be sitting so close to the president, and to be at an event of this magnitude was incredible. The seats were fantastic!”

— Shelby Ballard, Resident Director Hawk Hall

“It was incredible. President Obama is a great rhetorician. Sitting behind his podium made the experience even more electrifying than it already was. I will never forget the conviction in his voice or the moment when he turned around to wave at us.”

— Michelle Huston, adjunct faculty member Department of Rhetoric and Professional Writing, A&S

“It was a very surreal and unforgettable moment. The energy of the group behind the president was incredible. If there had to be a disappointment, it was that we were only allowed to take pictures when he was exiting the stage. Through Twitter and Facebook, I was able to tell people they would be able to see me and my peers. A lot of people did see me on TV, especially family on the West Coast. It was an unforgettable experience.”

— John Hernandez, Resident Director E and F Complexes

See full coverage of the president’s visit to campus, including photo gallery and video of his speech at hartford.edu/president-obama.
"Building Bridges" was the theme of the University's celebration of its 56th Founders Day, in recognition of the newest addition to the University campus—a replacement road bridge between The Hartt School and Lincoln Theater.

The University community bundled up and came out for a ribbon-cutting ceremony, float contest, birthday cake, and lots of school spirit! The charter establishing the University of Hartford was signed on Feb. 21, 1957.

Past, present, and future were represented as the ribbon was cut by Dave Schupp ’63 (right), a University regent; Emily Audibert ’13 (center), a senior in the Barney School of Business and the reigning Miss Connecticut; and Courtney Payne ’16 (left), a first-year student and resident of the Hawk Spirit Residential Learning Community in Hawk Hall. After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Schupp, Audibert, Payne, and Hillyer College Dean David Goldenberg judged a float contest held on the bridge. The winning entry, created by the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, was called "Bridging Athletics and Academics." President Walter Harrison was master of ceremonies for the Founders Day celebration held on the new bridge. The old bridge spanned a 50-year-old dam that was demolished during the complex construction project that began last June 2012. The road between The Hartt School and Lincoln Theater was closed to pedestrian and vehicular traffic until January 2013. After the festivities, participants paraded to Gengras Student Union to warm up, eat birthday cake, listen to music by the Pep Band, and receive T-shirts and giveaways. Cutting the birthday cake are (l–r) Courtney Payne ’16, Howie the Hawk, and Emily Audibert ’13. Spirits were high despite the frigid temperature, thanks in large part to the University of Hartford cheerleaders, the Pep Band, and Howie the Hawk.
University of Hartford women’s basketball coach Jen Rizzotti distinctly remembers the last time she set foot in Knoxville, Tenn., before this year. It was January 1996, and she and her University of Connecticut teammates were booed off the court after ending the University of Tennessee’s 69-game home winning streak.

Her return trip to Knoxville 17 years later would prove just as memorable—and this time she would receive two standing ovations.

Rizzotti was inducted into the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame on June 8, along with five other honorees, in a two-hour ceremony in downtown Knoxville’s historic Bijou Theater. Inducted for her accomplishments as a player, Rizzotti is joined in the Hall of Fame’s 2013 class by former players Annette Smith-Knight (Texas), Peggie Gillom-Granderson (Mississippi), and Sue Wicks (Rutgers), and coaches Gary Blair (Texas A&M) and Jim Foster (Chattanooga).

Among the crowd were two dozen Rizzotti supporters, including four of her former players; legendary coach Pat Summitt, whose vision led to the establishment of the Hall of Fame 15 years ago; and Rizzotti’s mentor and college coach, Geno Auriemma, who was present in the theater as well as part of a witty taped video introduction for Rizzotti that also featured former teammate Rebecca Lobo.

In her acceptance speech, Rizzotti gave much of the credit for her success as a player and person to her family. She noted that her father gave her the athleticism and drive and “never let me win at anything until I was able to truly beat him”; her mother handed down her work ethic and competitiveness.

Rizzotti also talked about her newest family. “The people I have met in the last 14 years at the University of Hartford have enriched my life more than I could possibly have imagined,” she said.

Since taking over the coaching reins 14 years ago, Rizzotti has turned the UHart women’s basketball program into one of the nation’s top mid-major programs. She has led the Hawks to six NCAA tournaments and multiple appearances in the national Top 25 polls. Her coaching success has extended onto the international stage, where she has guided two U.S. national teams to gold medals in the FIBA world championships.

“Although I am in the Hall of Fame as a player, and I’m certainly proud of all my accomplishments,” Rizzotti says, “I feel like I was really meant to be a basketball coach. I do hope, when all is said and done, that I’ll be recognized for my contributions to the sport from a coaching perspective as much as I impacted the sport as a player.”

See a tribute video and photo gallery at hartford.edu/observer.

Bottom left: The Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame Class of 2013 is (l–r) Peggie Gillom-Granderson, Gary Blair, Sue Wicks, Jen Rizzotti, Jim Foster, and Annette Smith-Knight. Bottom center: On April 11, a tribute dinner to support the Hawks women’s basketball program was held at the home of UHart friends Frank and Pat Longobardi (far left). Joining Rizzotti (center) in the celebration were her UConn coach, Geno Auriemma (second from right), and All-American teammate, Rebecca Lobo (far right). Bottom right: The first recruit whom Rizzotti attracted to UHart, Bridget Murray Narcisco ’04 (left), was reunited with her former coach at a send-off reception on May 18 at the Governor’s Residence in Hartford. More than 100 of Rizzotti’s family members, friends, former teammates and players, and campus colleagues attended.
“Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the best-looking, most intelligent, and by far the sexiest class ever to graduate from the University of Hartford.” That was the last line of the Commencement address to nearly 1,100 undergraduates and their families, friends, and guests on May 19. British novelist Bernard Cornwell, author of 50 historical novels including the Sharpe novels, urged students to think for themselves in a humorous speech that included a constant stream of witty remarks and anecdotes. Cornwell received an honorary Doctor of Letters from the University and a standing ovation from the audience during the undergraduate ceremony.

While not verified as the “most” intelligent graduating class, the Class of 2013 was certainly intelligent. More than 40 percent of the undergraduates in the class graduated with honors: 129 cum laude, 172 magna cum laude, and 138 summa cum laude. Additionally, a record 37 students graduated with University Honors, which means they completed 18 credits of honors courses as well as a senior-year thesis or research project.

This was the second year the University held a full Commencement Weekend, with the graduate ceremony on Saturday and the undergraduate ceremony on Sunday.

The speaker for the more than 400 students who received master’s and doctoral degrees on Saturday was Christopher M. Dadlez, president and CEO of Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford, Conn., who told them to “be courageous.” Since joining Saint Francis in 2004, Dadlez has worked to eliminate healthcare disparities in underserved communities. He received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters during Saturday’s ceremony.

Saturday’s graduates included the first graduating class of the Master of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics program. The 11 graduates will continue their training in individual residency programs in Connecticut and across the country.

Top: More than 1,500 graduates received degrees on Commencement Weekend 2013. Nearly 100 wore legacy medals to denote that they have grandparents, parents, siblings, cousins, nieces, nephews, aunts, or uncles who also attended the University. Above left: Hospital administrator Christopher Dadlez told graduates receiving advanced degrees that every time they do a courageous thing, they become a better person—and the world becomes a better place. Above center: Members of the 50th anniversary graduating class (1963) honored as Golden Hawks were (l–r) Bob Carto, Bill Storey, Professor Emerita Virginia Hale, Jim Keane, and University regent Dave Schupp. Above right: British historical novelist Bernard Cornwell acknowledges a standing ovation for his humorous speech telling the undergraduate Class of 2013 that the most important skill they have learned at the University is to be critical thinkers. Opposite page, bottom: Graduating Hartt theatre students enjoy the ceremony.
1. Composer John Corigliano received an honorary Doctor of Music. His body of work includes more than 100 scores that have won him the Pulitzer Prize, the Grawemeyer Award, three Grammy Awards, and an Academy Award. He serves on the composition faculty at the Juilliard School of Music and holds the position of Distinguished Professor of Music at Lehman College, City University of New York.

2. Richard D. Fain received an honorary Doctor of Commercial Science. He oversees the development and growth of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. for 25 years and, since 1988, has been chairman and CEO of the global cruise company that owns Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Pullmantur, Azamara Club Cruises, and others.

3. Walter Wick received an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts. The Hartford, Conn., native is an award-winning photographic illustrator and author. For two decades, millions of children have enjoyed the search-and-find series I Spy and Can You See What I See? that he created.

4. Miles Aron ‘13 received the John G. Martin scholarship, which provides two years of study at the graduate level at Oxford University. Aron majored in acoustical engineering and music, had several challenging internships, and presented and submitted research on nonlinear partial differential equations with two University professors. He will study biomedical engineering at Oxford.

5. Peter Bowers ‘13 received the John G. Lee Medal that recognizes academic achievement and a deep commitment to community service. He majored in mechanical engineering with a concentration in acoustics, had a part-time job and an internship, volunteered in the community, and maintained a 3.99 GPA. He will continue his education in the Harvard/MIT Program in Speech and Hearing Bioscience and Technology.

See full coverage of Commencement Weekend 2013, including photo galleries and video of the speeches, at hartford.edu/commencement.

6. Dana Eckstein ‘13, winner of the Belle K. Ribicoff Prize for academic excellence, was a double major in cinema and English. She began winning University-wide writing awards in her freshman year and was editor of the Aemae literary journal. She will continue working on her writing portfolio for a Master of Fine Arts program.

7. Malcolm Morrison, University Professor of Theatre and former dean of The Hartt School, received the University Medal for Distinguished Service, which is infrequently given to an individual or group who has had a profound impact on the University. Morrison oversaw Hartt’s continued expansion from a distinguished music conservatory to a performing arts school.

8. Susan H. Diehl, associate professor in the Department of Health Sciences and Nursing, College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions (ENHP), was this year’s recipient of the Roy E. Larsen Award for Excellence in Teaching.

9. Robert H. Davis, professor of theatre in The Hartt School, was the recipient of the James E. and Frances W. Bent Award for Scholarly and/or Artistic Creativity.

10. Donn Weinholtz, professor of educational leadership, ENHP, received the Oscar and Shoshana Trachtenberg Award for Sustained Service to the University.

11. David Pines, associate professor of civil, environmental, and biomedical engineering in the College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture, was presented with the Donald W. Davis All-University Curriculum Award.

12. Joshua Russell, assistant professor of music education in The Hartt School, was the recipient of this year’s Belle K. Ribicoff Junior Faculty Prize.

13. Bryan Sinche, associate professor of English in the College of Arts and Sciences, was awarded the first-ever Belle K. Ribicoff Endowed Professorship in recognition of outstanding teaching.
A visit to ESPN’s 123-acre, 18-building campus (the station’s common term for its grounds rather than headquarters) finds Heather Donahue ’02 heading the editorial design operations for ESPN.com. She majored in visual communication design in the University’s Hartford Art School and was hired by ESPN just after graduation. At the time, ESPN.com was moving from Seattle, Wash., to Bristol, and openings for entry-level Web designers were available.

“I knew I wanted to pursue a career in Web design. My senior design thesis was a website I created, which gave me a strong foundation for Web design,” Donahue says. “I played sports throughout high school, loved sports, and always watched ESPN, so I felt I would fit into the company’s culture.” Donahue was hired as a junior designer and is currently an associate art director, working with sports editors to bring new features to ESPN.com, the company’s official website.

There are nearly a million square feet on ESPN’s campus, but just a few cubicles from Donahue sits Chris Jason ’04. Jason majored in interactive information technology (now multimedia Web design and development) in the University’s College of Arts and Sciences. He is director of ESPN’s API (application programming interface) program, a platform that authorizes and delivers data and content to Web developers both inside and outside ESPN to create and construct new ESPN apps and products.

Jason applied to ESPN right out of college but worked elsewhere for two years—first, at a small marketing firm and, later, at an online start-up marketing company—before getting a call from ESPN, which had pulled up his application from two years earlier. He was hired as an entry-level Web developer, and while working on a Web project for *Monday Night Football*, he met—you guessed it—Heather Donahue.
After moving up to product manager and managing all of ESPN.com’s search technology and Web analytics, Jason became the first director of the API program just one year ago. “Technology is a highly competitive industry, and we have to constantly learn and evolve to stay current. The program I’m heading didn’t exist when I graduated from college, so our team really had to start from the ground up.”

If you hop on the ESPN shuttle and travel to the operation’s north campus, past the on-campus football field and basketball court, you will find Scott Connor ‘05, another interactive information technology major from the University. As senior manager of project development for WatchESPN, he is part of the development team that makes it possible to view live-streaming ESPN broadcasts on mobile devices like laptops, smartphones, and tablets.

Connor interned at ESPN his senior year, but the company wasn’t hiring when he graduated. He worked for 18 months at a local Web-development company. In 2006 he got a call from his friend Chris Jason saying ESPN was hiring. “The interactive IT program at the University had only 25 students at the time Chris and I attended. We were a really tight-knit group who worked together, knew each other’s skills, and kept in touch. That networking helped me land a job here at ESPN,” Connor says.

Across the office from Connor sits digital media designer Ron Pezzullo ‘06, another visual communication design major. Connor and Pezzullo work on two separate teams who work hand in hand to create and design WatchESPN interfaces and apps. Pezzullo and his team design the product’s appearance and develop front-end coding. Each project is then handed over to Connor’s team for back-end Web development.

“I didn’t think it was possible [to work at ESPN] coming right out of college. But it happened and I’m glad it did.”

For the centerpiece of my exhibit, I created a fictional Minor League Baseball team, so I was hoping someone from ESPN would be present.” Pezzullo’s invitation was received by none other than Donahue, who delivered it to her creative director.

The creative director came to the senior show, was intrigued by Pezzullo’s work, and asked him to follow up for an interview. Not long after, he was hired as an assistant designer, with a focus on production design. “I came into a digital design job with a print background portfolio,” he said. Since then, Pezzullo has spent most of his time in editorial design, with a one-year stint designing for the ESPN fantasy team. Now he’s doing Web and user interface design for desktop and various mobile devices. “I didn’t plan on working for ESPN. I didn’t think it was possible coming right out of college. But it happened and I’m glad it did.”

The four alumni say they run into each other often as they walk through the sports mural-covered hallways of the ESPN campus. And occasionally, while eating lunch alongside superstar athletes and popular television personalities, they reminisce about their time at the University of Hartford because they all know that the connections made and learning acquired on the school campus helped put them on the ESPN campus. 

Right: Pezzullo (seated on ball), Jason (leaning on pole), and Donahue (in front of ball) pose with one of the many sports-related art installations (this one, tennis) on the ESPN campus, which also has a football field and basketball court.
Edward “Rick” Rozie ’76, artist teacher in jazz, strolls the crowded halls of The Hartt School’s Alfred C. Fuller Music Center radiating a warm vibe that instinctively finds the student in need of attention at the moment.

Just outside his office he stops long enough to hear a student’s rambling excuse for missing class. At the bottom of a stairwell he helps another student struggling with awkwardly large theater props. After a few more steps, still another student, obviously anxious about a looming senior recital, approaches him. He straightens the student’s collar and promises that they will go over a tape of the performance. The student’s anxiety disappears.
Rozie, who is just as distinguished in a red shirt and black slacks as he is in the white tie and tails he wears as a principal bassist with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, began teaching jazz at Hartt in 1982 with renowned bass player Nat Reeves. "Because of Rick's knowledge of classical music and jazz," Reeves says, "he brings a lot to the school. Rick grew up around Jackie McLean, so he comes from the same method of teaching. He gives a lot of himself to the students."

Reflecting on what inspires him, Rozie reveals a passion for the school. "What I am really proud of is our department. The Jackie McLean Institute is by nature always changing, the way jazz changes with each performer's interpretation.

"We don't teach to churn out student after student," Rozie explains. "We mentor them all to make sure that they succeed. We teach in the oral tradition, in the way that griots do. The students here learn through example and from a historical perspective."

A historical perspective seems especially appropriate in Rozie's case. The adjunct professor was well into his own musical career when he learned of his ancestor, Joseph Antonio Emidy, who was the first black classical music composer in Great Britain to emerge from the African diaspora.

As recounted in the autobiography of 19th-century journalist James Silk Buckingham, Emidy was born in West Africa circa 1775 and enslaved by Portuguese traders as a child. With an apparent natural gift and an owner with foresight, he would take violin lessons and earn a spot in the Lisbon Opera orchestra by the time he was 20, only to be kidnapped to serve as a fiddler in the British Royal Navy. Emidy finally became a free man in 1799, settling in Cornwall, England, where he earned a living as a celebrated virtuoso violinist, composer, and teacher until his death in 1835.

Rozie's ancestors arrived in the United States in the latter part of the 19th century. "I knew my great grandmother Julia [Emidy] when I was a child," Rozie recalls. "Julia said she traveled with the circus as a child. She came to America with her uncle, James Emidy, another musician."

If Rozie's musical gene pool runs deep, opportunity has also served him well. He taught himself to play the piano at age 5 because, he says, "my mother played and the piano was there." He also played the drums, but his career really began to take shape at East Hartford High School in Connecticut. "When the band director said he really needed a bass player, I figured, why not," Rozie explains.

The director also played in a jazz group that he asked Rozie to join "probably because he didn't have to pay me that much," Rozie jokes. "I always listened to both jazz and classical music as a child because my family had a diverse record collection. My two favorite records—78s [rpm], of course—were "Cool Blues" by Charlie Parker and the "Sabre Dance" by Aram Khachaturian. Strangely enough, I played with him near the end of his life." Rozie studied double bass with Bertram Turetzky '56, M’65; William Rhein; and Orin O'Brien. Not unlike Joseph Emidy, Rozie has blazed his own trail in the classical music arena. The former member of the Kansas City Philharmonic and the Philharmonica de las Americas in Mexico recalls that "in 1968, when I was hired to play in the orchestra in Kansas City, I was the first musician of color to be hired. At that time there were almost no minorities and very few women in the major orchestras in the United States. I wasn't the first person of color to play in the Hartford Symphony, but I was the first to become a principal player."

After years of performing at premier jazz festivals from Montreux in Switzerland to St. Lucia in the Caribbean, Rozie says he now mainly plays orchestral works. "I gave up a lot of the touring when I decided time with my family was more important." His wife, Carolyn Pelkey, is head of the art department at Watkinson School in West Hartford, Conn. His son, who plays the cello and saxophone, is pursuing a degree in biology and environmental science.

Finding his history has been especially empowering for Rozie. He says knowing all that his African ancestor accomplished has made a difference in his own life. "It proved that no matter how great the obstacles you face, if you have the will, you can prevail over anything."

“We don’t teach to churn out student after student... We mentor them all to make sure that they succeed...”

Above: Rick Rozie ’76, Hartt faculty member and Hartford Symphony Orchestra principal bassist, plays with intense focus for a National Public Radio broadcast in remembrance of the December shooting victims at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Photo: Chion Wolf / WNPR.
DISTINCTIVE FACULTY

PROFESSOR PENCE GOES TO WASHINGTON
The Observer traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to shadow Professor Laura Pence for a frenetic couple of days on Capitol Hill.

It’s called March Madness, but on Capitol Hill the controlled chaos has nothing to do with college basketball. The frenzy in the halls of Congress in March is all about more meetings, more special-interest briefings, more constituents, and, this year, a spending bill that needs to pass the House and the Senate before the two-week Easter recess.

In the middle of it all is the University of Hartford’s own Laura Pence, professor of chemistry in the College of Arts and Sciences, who is basking in the excitement of a fellowship during the 113th Congress. Since the fall, Pence, as a Congressional Science and Technology Policy Fellow, has been contributing her scientific expertise to the federal legislative process in exchange for an unvarnished view of American government and politics at work.

“In some ways, I feel like it’s the ultimate ownership of being a citizen,” says Pence. “I’m giving everything I have—all that I have learned, all of my background, all of my experience—to help the country.”

**Science Comes First**

Pence is sponsored by the American Chemical Society as one of 34 fellows in a program administered by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. All are PhDs, including engineers, medical doctors, nutritionists, and veterinarians. “I know the science but not the politics,” Pence says. “I was intimidated when I got here. But I’ve decided that courage is a habit. When you use it a lot, it becomes something you can depend on. I just kept saying, ‘Well, here we go.’”

With a Blackberry embedded in one hand and a cellphone glued to the other, Pence has been on the go since October, when she accepted an offer to work in the office of the junior senator from Colorado, Michael Bennet. “It’s the luck of the draw who ends up with which senator,” Pence explains. “The interviews were like speed dating. I interviewed with close to two dozen offices over three weeks in September and ended up with five offers.”

Pence says she picked Bennet’s office because she was impressed with the staff. “I was not aware of his increasing national status. But I got lucky. Some in Congress are showmen, some are workhorses. Bennet is a workhorse. He rolls his sleeves up and works behind the scenes to get things done.”

Sean Babington, Bennet’s legislative assistant on energy and environmental issues and Pence’s supervisor, says the office was equally impressed with her. “We interviewed several potential fellows. Laura was head and shoulders above the rest in terms of demonstrated experience and enthusiasm for the work.”

A member of the “Gang of Eight” on immigration reform, Bennet, a Democrat, is chair of the agriculture subcommittee on Conservation, Forestry, and Natural Resources. Pence’s expertise in environmental chemistry and her leadership in sustainability efforts on the University of Hartford campus and on the national level with the American Chemical Society fit well with her assignment. She is the office resource on energy, environment, forestry, water, and cybersecurity issues.

“Whether it’s stepping up to her role as Bennet’s lead staffer on the Water Resources Development Act, or helping craft background descriptions for dozens of amendments during the Senate budget ‘vote-o-rama,’ Laura has been a tremendous asset to the office,” Babington says.

Bennet “has the broad brush. I have the details,” Pence explains. “I have to figure out what is important about an issue, who the special interests are, who is for an issue, why some are against it. I have to condense all of it into one page so he knows the talking points before he goes in for a vote.”

**March Madness**

March is the busiest month on Capitol Hill, Pence says. Indeed, on the two days in March that the Observer spent with Pence, her calendar was filled with hearings on endangered species, briefings on renewable fuel, and meetings with constituents concerned about the environment and energy efficiency.

Bennet’s weekly Colorado Coffee, for instance, was moved from a cozy conference room to a larger, marble-and-gilt-trimmed hearing room to accommodate the 50 or so Coloradans looking to meet their senator. Most weeks, about a dozen constituents are on the guest list. Pence attributes the uptick in activity to the number of conferences held in D.C. in March. Visits to the Hill are inevitably on the agenda.

Adding to the hectic pace the week before recess were votes on the budget and a continuing resolution that would prevent the federal government from shutting down at the end of the month. Televisions in offices across the country may have been tuned to college basketball, but in the suites of the Russell Senate Office Building, all TV’s—and they are everywhere—were monitoring the Senate floor on C-Span.

**The Takeaway**

Pence’s great adventure ends in August. She is sure her time on Capitol Hill will have an impact on both how and what she teaches when she returns to campus.

“Some of my students would give me pushback about writing,” explains Pence, who is admired by her University colleagues and students for rigorous teaching standards and wise mentoring. “Now, I’m not just saying writing skills are important. I know they’re important. I’ve lived it. You have to be able to write well. You have to be able to assimilate information.

“As far as the environmental chemistry class, I know what’s current,” she says. “Topics covering renewable fuel, especially, will be added. I teach using examples, and now I have a lot more examples to tie back to the real world.”

Editor’s note: A particularly engaging aspect of Pence’s fellowship is the blog she writes at drpence.wordpress.com, in which she covers the nuances of her work on the Hill. She also takes readers on her weekend explorations of the extensive culture and history in the D.C. area.
DISTINCTIVE LEARNING

Graduate student Jason Smith remembers chuckling as he read a proposal from Professor Thomas Filburn in the fall of 2011. “I was thinking to myself, ‘They want to do what?’ Then I read further and found it a bit startling that he thought we could do this.”

“This” is a subscale See-Thru Nuclear Power Plant, which was indeed designed and built over the ensuing 16 months by roughly a dozen undergraduate and graduate students in the University’s College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture (CETA), with direction from mechanical engineering professor Filburn. During the University’s brief winter-break term in January 2012, a handful of area community college students also helped out.

As CETA’s newest teaching tool, the miniature nuclear plant provides students with a hands-on feel for the routine and off-normal operation of a pressurized water reactor nuclear power plant. The students who worked on the project say it was unlike anything they have ever done in the classroom. “This was real-world engineering,” said senior Ryan Powers. “On this project, if you got something wrong, you didn’t get a red X on a piece of paper. Here, if it didn’t work, you had to keep working at it until you fixed it.”

“There was a lot of troubleshooting involved in this project,” added Smith, who served as the project manager. “In the classroom there’s not a great way to teach troubleshooting. Here, it was all about troubleshooting and finding solutions to the problems.”

The students started with plans from a similar model built at the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant in Waterford, Conn., but those limited technical documents were quickly modified and adapted. Filburn says the unusual, highly educational aspect of the completed power plant is that it is made of glass tubing, so students can see how the plant generates steam and converts that steam into power to turn a turbine, just as an actual pressurized water reactor power plant does. The model also features computer display screens that are replicas of the control panels in working nuclear power plants.

The subscale See-Thru Nuclear Power Plant was made possible through a $121,000 grant from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), a $10,000 grant from Dominion Energy (owner of the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant), and $5,000 from Westinghouse Electric Company. The University is now seeking a grant to purchase the supplies to build a turbine that can be connected to the steam-generating model.

When the plant was unveiled in February 2013 for representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy, the NRC, and nuclear power industry representatives, Peter Lyons, who is the U.S. Department of Energy assistant secretary for nuclear energy, said there will be a growing demand for engineers to work in nuclear power plants in the years ahead, and this training tool will give CETA students a tremendous advantage.

Filburn says, “We tell high school students and their parents that if the student comes to the University of Hartford and is a top performer, he or she will have opportunities to work on projects that only graduate students do at UConn or Michigan.”

The value of this undergraduate experience isn’t lost on Powers, who says he will highlight the experience to potential employers. “None of us had all of the skills that a project like this requires when we started; so we worked hard and gained a lot of those skills during this process.”

Top: Christopher Brunner ’13 (left) and Ryan Powers ’13 (right) discuss a function of the See-Thru Nuclear Power Plant that they and about a dozen undergraduate and graduate students designed and built as a teaching tool.
Above: (L–r) Steve Sheak ’13; Peter Hill, a nonmatriculated student taking engineering courses; and Christopher Brunner ’13 show off the See-Thru Nuclear Power Plant, which features computer display screens that are replicas of the control panels in working nuclear power plants.
better now, but especially coming to school, that was a big thing for me and something I guess I didn’t really address or hash out with myself. I knew it was a problem, but I didn’t want to deal with it personally.”

Seminar students were required to participate in class discussions that were often extremely personal. The class forced Wojcik to consider the emotional and physical impact a negative body image can have on women. “I saw that happening in myself,” says Wojcik. “The whole time I was taking the class, I could relate. I never harmed myself physically, but I cared about dieting so much that I started hating it, but I couldn’t get away from it.”

Matacin’s class led Wojcik to rethink her own behavior and inspired her to fight to change society as a whole. Matacin encouraged her to join Women for Change, a campus group that provides education, open dialogue, and support among people of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, and sexual orientation around body-image issues, feminism, and sexuality. Upon joining Women for Change in October of her freshman year, Wojcik immediately became a member of the group’s executive board. She remained committed throughout her college career.

That commitment was instrumental to the success of two projects that Wojcik says particularly affected her. The first was Women for Change’s annual calendar to combat stereotypical images of women. The 2013 edition, the fourth and largest ever, had the theme “Free to...” Dozens of women across the University of Hartford campus submitted photos and stories about what they are free to be, do, think, feel, live, and embody.

“We are trying to take back the typical calendar-girl pin-up model image where the woman is solely there to be looked at and nothing else,” Wojcik says of the calendar. “This is giving people a voice alongside their picture.”

The other Women for Change undertaking was Project Weightless, in 2012, which protested mandatory weigh-ins and body-mass-index checks in high schools across the country. Women for Change believes these types of weigh-ins stigmatize people because of their weight. So they took turns bashing a scale with a sledgehammer on the lawn outside Gengras Student Union. They also created a video of women saying, “My weight does not define me. I am ______.” They filled in the blank with their own words: “I am smart, beautiful, the future, a college professor, statistician, strong, intelligent,” and so on. The video is on YouTube (ow.ly/k6ZwH).

Now that she has graduated, Wojcik does not intend to stop her activism. She will work for a year before going to graduate school to study sociology. She knows her research will have something to do with gender, and she hopes to become a professor eventually.

“I’m sure a lot of that has to do with my experience with Women for Change and especially [Professor] Matacin,” says Wojcik. “She’s the greatest mentor I’ve ever had. She’s so passionate about everything she does. She just helps everyone. She and other professors have gotten me to recognize myself as being a person worthy of success and worthy of recognition, and I want to be able to do that for other people.”
When she meets with school children, Emily Audibert ’13 often tells them that when she was little, she wasn’t very good at anything. Today, that’s hard to believe.

Audibert, who completed her reign as Miss Connecticut 2012 on June 22, has had a whirlwind year that included competing in the Miss America pageant, graduating from the University of Hartford’s Barney School of Business with a highly unusual triple major, and serving as executive vice president of the Student Government Association. During her four years at the University, Audibert has also been a student regent, a member of the dance team, and an organizer of the Hawks Helping Hartford Day of Service.

But none of those accomplishments came easily, she tells children. “I tell them that if you’re really dedicated and you’re willing to work hard, you can do anything,” Audibert says. “There will always be people who put you down, who tell you you’re not good enough. You have to never give up, never stop trying.”

Working with children has been a favorite aspect of her yearlong reign as Miss Connecticut. Her platform—a cause that each state titleholder promotes during her reign—is the fight against childhood obesity. Audibert has visited many schools all across the state to talk to children about nutrition, exercise, and healthy lifestyles.

In fact, as an accounting, entrepreneurial studies, and economics/finance major, Audibert would love to open her own business someday to help promote physical and emotional health. But for now, she is looking forward to taking a few months off, studying for the Uniform CPA Examination (Certified Public Accountant), and starting a new job this November at an accounting firm in Farmington, Conn., where she had an internship last summer.

The past year has been life changing and extremely challenging, says Audibert, who had to balance the demands of her academic and extracurricular activities with public appearances as Miss Connecticut and intense preparation for the Miss America competition.

In January she joined 52 other Miss America contestants in Las Vegas, Nev., for 10 jam-packed days of rehearsals, photo shoots, public appearances, preliminary competitions, and a highly stressful interview before a panel of judges. Audibert was not among the 16 semifinalists chosen during the pageant’s national broadcast, but she says the experience is one she will carry with her for the rest of her life.

“I will always be Miss Connecticut 2012,” she says, and hopes that title will allow her to continue to pursue her platform and work with children long after her reign ends. “I’ve always said that the crown doesn’t define me; it just helps open doors.”

Audibert says her dance teacher, a former Miss Connecticut, is a role model who has had an enormous impact on her life. “I’m just hoping I can make that kind of difference in people’s lives,” she says. “And that makes me want to give back for the rest of my life.”

Above left: With a smile as dazzling as her crown, Emily Audibert ’13, the then reigning Miss Connecticut, competes in the evening gown segment of the Miss America preliminary competition in Las Vegas, Nev., in January. Above center: Audibert, a lifelong dancer and a member of the University’s dance team, performs her routine in the talent portion of the Miss America preliminary competition. Above right: Audibert crosses the stage during the swimsuit portion of the Miss America preliminary competition. All photos courtesy of Steve Smith/Miss Connecticut Organization.
Eating insects, playing with robots, and designing video games are activities not normally seen on a college syllabus. But University of Hartford students tackle these assignments in Guerrilla Food, Fundamentals of Computing, and Video Game Theory and Analysis in order to learn about real-life situations.

This year, Katharine Owens, an assistant professor of politics and government, required students in her first-year seminar, Guerrilla Food, to complete a bug-eating project. Students prepared more than 600 chocolate-covered crickets on sticks, with side cups of mealworms among the Chex Mix, and served them to classmates in Gengras Student Union. It was all part of learning about the impact a high-protein diet has on the environment.

“One of the things we are exploring is food and sustainability,” says Owens. “The high amount of protein Americans eat isn’t environmentally sustainable. Some people believe that pursuing insects as food, called entomophagy, could help sustain our desire for protein.”

While many students did not want to try the insects, those who did seemed pleasantly surprised, describing them as “crunchy chocolate.” Others claimed they could not even tell they were eating bugs.

Robots, not bugs, help convey the fundamentals of computing, in the introductory course of the same name for computer science majors. Assistant Professor Brian Dorn, who studies human-computer interaction, gave each student a small robot to work with over the course of the semester.

“Students who are learning computer science today come from a very different technological world than when I went to college,” Dorn explains. “They are looking for ways to make computing more personal. Robots are novel, so they have a lot of curiosity about them.”

The robots are not preprogrammed; students must write the code for all of the machines’ functions. Their first assignment was to make a video of a dancing robot, programming the choreography and synchronizing the dance moves with music. The robots’ digital cameras and sensors are used to film the videos. Dorn admits the robots are fun but says they are also very useful tools to help teach code, computations, and other elements of computer science.

“Hands-on learning makes computer science more realistic,” says Dorn. “In the real world, we don’t just solve little problems. We work with hardware, we interact with sensor data. In class we solve all sorts of interesting problems—using the same sort of computer science knowledge we would normally teach in intro courses—but [we solve] them with a robot.”

Lauren Cook, an assistant professor of cinema, also uses technology to help her students relate to actual situations in Video Game Theory and Analysis, an honors-level class that examines the cultural, political, and economic impact of gaming. There is much more to this class than simply playing the latest game.

For a final project, Cook’s 13 students either wrote a paper or designed a video game that focused on the interactive aspect of gaming, known as emergent gameplay. Connor Howard ’15, a communication major, created a spin-off of the popular Pokémon game. Max Irvine ’14, a music production technology major, designed his game based on the action-adventure game Dante’s Inferno, which forces players to build their own paths to the game’s different levels.

Cook says it is the interactive elements that makes the study of video games so valuable. She points out that video games, such as Tetris, have been used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder in soldiers. EteRNA, an RNA sequencing game, allows crowd sourcing. Cook says the game’s designers want the players to collaborate and make discoveries about major diseases that would be too complicated for computer models to uncover. The hope is that these discoveries could lead to potential cures.

“There are a lot of really incredible interactive, experimental games that deal with political situations and human-rights situations,” says Cook. “As we’re seeing, video games are actually solving major, real-world problems.”
A New Chapter for Fairfield-Sonn

Dean James Fairfield-Sonn will step down this summer after nine years at the helm of the Barney School of Business and more than 30 years at the University. Following a leave in the fall of 2013, Fairfield-Sonn, a noted scholar of management, will return as a member of the Barney faculty.

During Fairfield-Sonn’s tenure as dean, the Barney School’s academic environment was enriched by the addition of an actuarial science minor, the implementation of a choice between online or in-classroom MBA classes, increased numbers of students enrolled in honors courses, and recognition of the work of top students through the Beta Gamma Sigma and Beta Alpha Psi honor societies.

The Barney Alumni Hall of Fame was established in 2008 to recognize Barney graduates for their outstanding achievements. The Mali Global Center, a state-of-the-art videoconferencing facility that enables students to interact with other students around the world through live broadcasts, opened in 2009.

In 2011, Fairfield-Sonn was awarded a prestigious Fulbright Scholar grant to participate in a two-week cultural exchange in Germany.

Board of Regents Election Makes History

Lucille M. Nickerson was elected chair of the University of Hartford Board of Regents in May, becoming the first woman chair in the University’s history. Nickerson succeeds Thomas J. Groark Jr., who has headed the board of regents for the past five years.

Nickerson has been a member of the board since 2006, serving as vice chair for the past three years. She served on the board of trustees of Hartford College for Women (HCW) and currently chairs the board of the HCW legacy, the Women’s Education and Leadership Fund, at the University.

A former vice president and corporate secretary of Aetna, Inc., Nickerson is the cofounder and president of Nickerson-Zegarelli Consultants. She is also executive director of the Children’s Educational Opportunity Foundation of Connecticut.

In vice-chair positions, Roger Klene ’90 was reelected and Dominic Fulco III ’81 was newly elected. It is believed to be the first time that both vice chairs of the board are alumni of the University.

Sports Shorts

Giuliani and Alves Named Top Hawks

Caitlin Alves (women’s soccer) and Bobby Giuliani (men’s track and field) have been awarded the Coaches’ Top Hawk Award for the 2012–13 year. The award honors a well-rounded male and female student-athlete in his/her final year of eligibility who works hard in each respective sport, excels in the classroom, and is a quality leader.

Alves helped lead the women’s soccer team to a 37-26-11 overall record in her four years at Hartford, including a 13-2-3 mark in 2011, the Hawks’ best single-season winning percentage since 1997. She earned National Soccer Coaches Association All-America distinction in 2011 and was named to All-Northeast and All–New England Teams.

As a four-year member of the cross-country and track-and-field teams, Giuliani set school records in the medley relay and 4x800-meter relay teams. He was named to the America East Commissioner’s honor roll five times and was a two-time All-Academic Team honoree.

Alves and Giuliani graduated in May with health sciences degrees.

A New Hawk Flies into America East

UMass Lowell’s athletic teams, nicknamed the River Hawks, will join the America East Conference on July 1. This will keep the conference membership at nine schools, following Boston University’s departure at the end of the spring season.

You Can Play at Hartford

University of Hartford student-athletes are working in conjunction with the America East Conference and the You Can Play project to change the culture of athletics to one that is accepting and welcoming of all people, and to put a stop to the use of homophobic language in sports.

In April members of various Hawks athletics teams released a video illustrating that student-athletes should be judged on talent, heart, and work ethic, not sexual orientation.

To see the video, “If You Can Play, You Can Play at Hartford,” go to hartford.edu/observer.

Sunrise Special

The University of Hartford men’s basketball team has been selected to participate in ESPN’s 24-hour Tip-Off Marathon on Tuesday, Nov. 12. The Hawks are scheduled to play a 7 a.m. road game against a team that advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament this past March.

This is the sixth year for ESPN’s Tip-Off Marathon, which features games from midnight to midnight on its multiple networks during the first week of the regular season in November.
Pioneering Businesswoman Endows New Scholarships

The generosity of a pioneering Hartford businesswoman will help deserving students earn a University of Hartford education. Marion Bills (1890–1970), was a longtime Aetna employee who became the first woman officer of a Hartford insurance company. Her estate recently gave the University approximately $2.3 million to form an endowment to fund need-based scholarships. The gift will also help support the existing John G. Martin Scholarship, which sends one University graduate to Hertford College of Oxford University each year.

“Marion Bills left a legacy that reflects her distinguished career as one of the earliest women leaders of the insurance industry in Hartford,” said University President Walter Harrison when announcing the gift. “The Marion Bills scholarships that her gift has created will help provide a University of Hartford education to deserving students for years and years to come.”

This gift is just the latest contribution Bills made to life at the University. From 1937 to 1954 she was a trustee of Hillyer College, one of the three founding institutions that became the University of Hartford; she received an honorary Doctor of Laws from Hillyer in 1954. Scholarships bearing her name were given to University students in the 1960s.

Bills began working at Aetna in Hartford as a consultant in 1925. Until she arrived, women employees were not allowed to walk through the front doors at Aetna, a practice common among companies during that era. She became an officer in 1926, the first woman to do so at any Hartford insurance company. She retired as Aetna assistant secretary in 1955 after a distinguished career in personnel research and administration.

IN MEMORIAM

David Komisar, Provost Emeritus

Provost Emeritus David Komisar, the University of Hartford’s longest-serving chief academic officer and an integral figure in its history, died on March 19. He was 95.

A psychologist by training, Komisar became the first chairman of Hillyer College’s Department of Psychology in the early 1950s. In 1957, when Hillyer joined with the Hartt School of Music and the Hartford Art School to form the University of Hartford, Komisar began his long affiliation with the University, where he worked until his retirement in 1984.

Rising through the administrative ranks, Komisar served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (1966–67), dean of faculties (1967–70), vice president for academic affairs (1970–71), and provost (1972–80).

Among his many accomplishments, Komisar played a key role in the creation of Mortensen Library, which opened in 1971. After his retirement, he became one of the founders of the University of Hartford Emeriti Association. In 1990 he was awarded the University Medal for Distinguished Service.

“David Komisar played a leading role in making the University of Hartford what it is today,” said University President Walter Harrison. “He cast a long shadow as an academic leader and helped shape our profile as an institution devoted to teaching and research.”

Dear Fellow Alumni,

It is with great enthusiasm that we welcome Heather Corbett, our new director of alumni relations, to the University of Hartford. I’m sure you’ll join me in making her feel right at home on our beautiful campus.

Heather joined us in April and brings with her a wealth of experience in both alumni relations and development, having served as director of alumnae/i at Wheaton College in Massachusetts and at Newcomb College in Louisiana. Heather hit the ground running and is making plans to expand the reach and effectiveness of the Alumni Association—locally, nationally, and internationally. We are eager to see what the future brings.

The Alumni Association has been very busy over the last several months. We have had the wonderful opportunity to join with other alumni, family, and friends at a variety of special events that spanned the globe, as well as having raised the University of Hartford flag close to home at several events in the Hartford area. We’ve met with alumni in New York City, Boston, Chicago, Albany, Atlanta, Florida, Arizona, and even London, reconnecting with old friends and making some new ones. We would love to get together with you the next time we are in your area.

Commencement Weekend was a memorable occasion, as the Class of 2013 became the newest members of the University of Hartford Alumni Association. Representatives of the Alumni Board hosted the graduates at a reception in their honor on May 18. We were joined by members of the Class of 1963, who celebrated the 50th anniversary of their graduation by being inducted into the ranks of the Golden Hawks. A special highlight of the weekend was the presentation of the Distinguished Alumnus Award to Nancy Stula ’83, ’85. This award honors graduates of the University who have made an exceptional impact on their profession, their community, and/or the University of Hartford. It is the highest award bestowed on our alumni (see p. 25).

Each year, the Alumni Board makes it a priority to have 100 percent participation in support of the Anchor Fund from our board members. We recognize how vital these dollars are to ensuring the sustainability of the University, and, once again, we have attained this important milestone. We invite you to join us and make your own gift to the Anchor Fund in 2013. Remember, every gift counts.

Don’t forget to mark this year’s Hawktober Weekend, Oct. 18–20, on your calendar and come back to campus—one your home away from home—for a fun-filled celebration of all that is great about the University of Hartford. Watch for more information and a full schedule in the coming months. We all look forward to seeing you and welcoming you back.

Thank you for your support of the University and for all you do to make a difference in the lives of our students, faculty, and staff.

Best,

Da’Rel J. Eastling ’99, M’11
President
Alumni Association
KEY
Alumni Connections entries are distinguished by types of degrees and certification:

A  associate's degree  
AD artist diploma  
C  sixth-year certificate  
D  doctorate  
GPD  graduate professional diploma  
M  master's degree

No letter designation before a degree year indicates a bachelor's degree. P indicates the parent of a student or alumnus/a.

1961
ROBERT Pawlicki (A&S) of Savannah, Ga., has published his second book, Fifty Ways to Greater Well Being and Happiness: A Handy and Inspirational Guide, based on a column he writes in a local magazine. His book may be purchased through his website, fiftywaystogreaterwellbeingandhappiness.com, or Amazon.com.

1965
KENNETH L. Boudreaux (A&S) of Farmington, Conn., was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Marines, serving for four years and ended his service as a captain. He went on to own his own staffing service in Connecticut for 30 years, then became vice president of JWB Travel Enterprises, Inc.

1972
THOMAS O. Barnes (BARNEY) of Bristol, Conn., has been named to the Champions Council at Our Piece of the Pie, Inc., an organization that serves urban youth through mentoring, education, and employment programs.

1973
CAROLE P. Kunstadt (HAS) of New York, N.Y., had three pieces from her Sacred Poems series in the exhibition Small Matters of Great Importance at the Edward Hopper House in Nyack, N.Y., last fall. Additional works from this series have been included in the Book Arts Collection of the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.

CLAUDIA Shuster (M, ENHP) of Lenox, Mass., exhibited her paintings last fall at the ArtOnNo Gallery in Pittsfield, Mass.

1974
EDITH S. Yeager (A&S) of Naples, Fla., was reelected chair of the Naples Airport Authority Noise Compatibility Committee. The committee helps monitor the impact of aircraft noise and makes recommendations about noise-mitigation procedures to the board of commissioners.

1976
MICHAEL Thomas Cicchetti (HARTT) of Farmington, Conn., is the new interim principal of Hurbut Elementary School in Weston, Conn.

1978
MICHAEL Gargano (BARNEY) of Baton Rouge, La., has been named vice president for academic, faculty, and student affairs for the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio.

1979
JEFFREY BROWN (HAS) of Colorado Springs, Colo., was invited by the Harwood Museum of Art in Taos, N.M., to contribute his piece Vision of Constantine to the museum’s permanent collection. The work (shown left) is an assemblage of found objects. Brown is artist-in-residence at Fountain Valley School in Colorado Springs, where he teaches art and photography.

1981
PATRICIA BARON CHARLES (M, ENHP) of Westbrook, Conn., is the new superintendent of Middletown Public Schools. Charles has served as principal at Farm Hill Elementary and Keigwin Middle Schools in Middletown.

ANNA M. ROBBINS (BARNEY) of Simsbury, Conn., has been appointed business manager of Canton Public Schools. Previously she was director of finance and contracted service of the Consolidated School District of New Britain.

1982
JEFFREY BECKER (A'81, WARD, WARD) of Easton, Conn., had his photography featured this winter in the Make Art Not War exhibit at City Lights Gallery in Bridgeport, Conn., as well as at the City-Wide Open Studios in New Haven, Conn.

SUE TERRY (HARTT) of Pocono Mountains, Pa., has released her latest CD, Sweet Sue Terry: Greatest Hits. She has also published For the Curious, her second nonfiction book.

1984
CHARLES E. Pagano (ENGINEERING) of Waterbury, Conn., an ESPN pioneer who joined the television network shortly before its inaugural broadcast in 1979, is now the company’s executive vice president and chief technology officer. In December, Pagano was inducted into the 2012 Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame.

1986
MARK R. Dion (HAS, Hon’02) of Beach Lake, Pa., gave a fall lecture at Loyola University in New Orleans, La. Dion’s work examines the ways in which dominant ideologies and public institutions shape our understanding of history, knowledge, and the natural world.

Fan of the Year
Former Alumni Board member David Dyson ’81 (Hartt) was chosen by the New England Patriots Football Organization and Bank of America as a semifinalist for the 2012 New England Patriots Fan of the Year. For the last nine years, he has raised more than $112,000 for Tabor House, an AIDS program in Hartford, Conn. Dyson and his 9-year-old son, Sean, were recognized at a pregame ceremony at Gillette Stadium in October, after which the video footage was broadcast throughout the stadium during the game against the Denver Broncos.

RICHARD Williams (HARTT) of Portland, Ore., is in his 24th season with the Westchester Symphonic Winds. This is his eighth season as principal trombone.

1985
ERIK G. WEXLER (A'83 HILLYER, A&S, M'87 BARNEY) of Shrewsbury, Mass., is president and chief executive officer of St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, Mass. He also serves on the Anna Maria College Board of Trustees.

WILLIAM E. Wrang III (M, BARNEY) of Middletown, Conn., has been promoted to executive vice president, commercial real estate group, at Webster Bank. With Webster since 1998, Wrang’s division has set records for originations, balances, and contributions to earnings, increasing its loan balances by $268 million.

Flying Home for Her Birthday
What better way to pamper yourself on a big birthday than to fly to your old college home for a Hawks basketball game and mini reunion. Alyse Rothstein Stoll ’83 (ENHP), left, flew back to campus from Boca Raton, Fla., to celebrate hers with other alumni friends, including daughter Cara ’11 and son Brad ’14. Howie welcomed her back at the game with a big Hawk hug.
David M. Hayes (HartT) of Philadelphia, Pa., made his debut as music director of the New York Choral Society in December.

1989

Glenn P. Burke (HartT) of Nashville, Tenn., taught classical saxophone at Belmont University for several years, then changed careers and was ordained by Joan Hunter Ministries. Burke and his wife, Abby, are both pastors and cofounders of Artist Revival Ministries, a Tennessee-based nonprofit ministry-arts training facility.

Susan T. Danis (M, Barney) of Miami, Fla., is the new general director and chief executive officer of Florida Grand Opera. She had served as executive director of Sarasota Opera since 1999.

John M. Reeves (M, Barney) of Fairfax, Va., has a new position as Virginia division president for Breazer Homes USA, Inc. He is a veteran homebuilding executive with prior experience leading the Washington, D.C., metropolitan divisions for two other national homebuilders, Pulte Homes and KB Home.

1990

Brendan Boyce (Ward) of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., played a thou in the film The Dark Knight Rises. He also appears with Oscar winner Melissa Leo in Something in the Water, due out in 2013.

Dave Christensen (Engineering) of Hartford, Conn., has been promoted to counsel at Cantor Colburn LLP, one of the country’s foremost specialty law firms focusing on intellectual property law.

Mark A. Grudzen (M, Enhp) of West Hartford, Conn., has been appointed interim assistant principal at King Phillip Middle School in West Hartford.

Weddings

Top: Jessica L. Fine A’05, ’07 (Hilyer, A&S), and Adam G. Sowalsky are surrounded by a sea of wedding guests on Aug. 19, 2012, in Cambridge, Mass. Flanking the happy couple are fellow alumni (from left) Ashley Violette ’06; Emily Johnson ’07; Candace DiCosmo-Byrne ’07; Emily Lebar; Amy Nathanson ’07; Brett Corbat ’07; Dana Nathanson ’09; Elizabeth Fisk ’07, M’09; Jackie Ouellette Shea ’08; Brian Shea ’08; Ally Levy ’05; Jessica Wexler Newman ’05; Michael Baruch A’03, and Carl Nehm ’07. Also in attendance but not pictured were Heather Wenarsky ’07, Richard Sowalsky ’07, Stephanie Fields ’08, and Aaron Budnick ’07.

Center left: Lisa Lyons ’92 (A&S) and Marc Reingold ’92 (A&S), who reconnected and became more than Facebook friends after 22 years, were married in January 2013 in Santa Monica, Calif. Hartford classmates in attendance included Lisa Rubel ’92; Stefanie Bleich Kelly ’92; Lisa A’89, ’91, and James Schwelb ’92; Nekole Bloom ’92; and Esther Newman’91.

Center middle: Michelle Harris ’04 (HartT) and Eric Thompson III took their vows on April 1, 2012, at The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture in Charlotte, N.C., then headed to Montego Bay, Jamaica, for their honeymoon. The bride, a string educator and performer, owns a studio with her husband, a bassist with the Charlotte Symphony.

Center right: Staring happily into their future are Sarah Richards-Kroll and Keith Brough ’00 (Has), who were married on Nov. 11, 2012. Both Connecticut residents, the bride is from Naugatuck; the groom, from New Fairfield.

Bottom: Alexandra E. Morley ’08, M’10 (Barney), wed John D. Coury ’08 (A&S) on June 2, 2012, in Buffalo, N.Y. As alumni softball and baseball student-athletes, the newlyweds welcomed many fellow Hawks and University staff as guests. The bridal party included Lataisha Jarrett Rainault ’08, D’10 (track and field); Courtney Gomez ’08, D’10 (women’s basketball); and Erik Price ’08 and Adam Bowser ’08 (baseball). Staff guests were Pat Meiser, Jim Keener, Ellen Crandall, Laurie Weinstein ’78, Dan Ruede, Sarah Boissonneault, Arline Robbins, and Nancy Olson. Other alumni guests included Amy Sullivan ’05, Mallory Raposa Reis ’05, Lisa Belval ’06, Michelle Mariano ’07, CJ Browne ’08, and Amanda Sais Littlejohn ’09.

Not Pictured:

Tremel Ann Faison and Thurston Spaulding Jr. M’94 (Barney) celebrated their nuptials on June 23, 2012, in New Bern, N.C.

Elisabeth A. Neary ’05 (A&S) and Joshua A. Butnick said their vows on Oct. 7, 2012, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

Engagements

Jason A. Santos ’05 (Ceta) is pleased to announce his engagement to Marissa C. Alarie. At press time, a Bermuda wedding was planned for June 1, 2013.

Edward S. Forman ’09 (Barney) is pleased to announce his engagement to Jennifer R. Feigen. At press time, the couple planned an April 2013 wedding.

Jennifer Polledri A’08, ’09 (Hilyer, A&S) is pleased to announce her engagement to Matthew Sollecito A’07, ’09 (Hilyer, Barney).

John Kennedy Hampton (A&f) of Simsbury, Conn., was elected to the Connecticut General Assembly in November. As a Democrat, he represents the 16th District (Simsbury) at the state Capitol, having served as a member of the Simsbury Board of Selectmen since 2003 and as a deputy first selectman since 2007.
Alumni Honored at Commencement

Two outstanding alumni received special awards on Sunday, May 19, at the 2013 Undergraduate Commencement.

Nancy Stula ’83, ’85 (right), director and curator of the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London, Conn., received the University’s Distinguished Alumni Award, given annually to a graduate who has made an exceptional impact on her/his profession, community, and the University. Stula earned a BFA in visual communication design in 1983 and a bachelor’s in art history in 1985 from the University of Hartford. She also received a PhD from Columbia University in art history. Her museum career began in 1991 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. In 1994 she began teaching at the University as an adjunct professor of art history. She joined the Lyman Allyn Art Museum as curator and deputy director in 2003, becoming director in 2009. Stula served as a trustee of the Hartford Art School from 2005 to 2009. As of July 1, Stula begins a new appointment as executive director of the William Benton Museum of Art at the University of Connecticut in Storrs.

Robert Brubaker ’77 (far right) received the 2013 Hartt Alumni Award during an open presentation ceremony in Lincoln Theater. He earned a bachelor’s in music in 1977 from the University and has established himself as a leading tenor in opera companies throughout the United States and Europe. Recent engagements include the Kaiser in Die Frau Ohne Schatten with Deutsche Oper Berlin; Laca in Jenufa at the English National Opera; Boris in Katya Kabanova at the Theater an der Wien; Mephistopheles in the premiere of Busoni’s Doktor Faust at Teatre de la Maestranza in Seville; a return to the Glyndebourne Festival for the world premiere of the new opera, Of Love and Other Demons, composed by Peter Ebdon. Brubaker’s upcoming engagements include Mime in Siegfried at Seville, Mime in Das Rheingold and Siegfried at Teatro Massimo Palermo, Malatestino in Francesca da Rimini and Mime in the Ring cycle at the Metropolitan Opera, Luigi in Il Tabarro and Canio in I Pagliacci with Opera St. Louis, an appearance with Dallas Opera in 2014, and returns to the Met in upcoming seasons.

Barney Hall of Fame Honors Two

Scott Orenstein ’83, M’84, of New York, N.Y. (left), and Lee Ann C. Leahy ’84 of Rocky Hill, Conn. (right), have been inducted into the Barney School of Business’s 2013 Alumni Hall of Fame. The new honorees were selected from a field of 18,000 Barney alumni. Leahy has the added distinction of being the first woman inducted into Barney’s Alumni Hall of Fame.

ERIC G. MAULAVÉ (M, BARNEY) of Paris, France, was appointed vice president of sales for EOS Imaging. Maulavé brings substantial experience in international markets and high-tech medical technologies to EOS.

MICHAEL A. BROWNSTEIN (HARTT) of Easton, Conn., is the new assistant principal for Samuel Staples Elementary School in Easton. Brownstein has enjoyed a successful 21-year career in education.

HULUS A. ALPAY (BARNEY) of Morganville, N.J., was elected the 2013 chairman of the board of directors of the National Investor Relations Institute. Alpay is vice president, investor relations, for Medidata Solutions, a leading global provider of cloud-based clinical development solutions, headquartered in New York City.

CAROLYN A. PATTERSON (HAS) of Allen, Texas, and her husband, William, both contemporary realist painters, exhibited their work in a show titled The Still Life: His and Hers at Laura Moore Fine Art Studios in McKinney, Texas. The Pattasons also lead art workshops with a focus on Renaissance painting methods and on art appreciation. Their next workshop is scheduled for the summer of 2013 in Umbria and Rome, Italy.

PETER BOYER (M, HARTT; D’95) of Altadena, Calif., had a busy year collaborating with several Hollywood composers on orchestrations for the latest James Bond (007) film, Skyfall; “Pixar in Concert”; and The Amazing Spider-Man. Boyer conducted the premiere of his Symphony No. 1 with the Pasadena Symphony in April. The three-movement, 24-minute work was commissioned by the symphony and dedicated to the memory of the legendary composer/conductor/pianist Leonard Bernstein, who, Boyer says, had a profound influence on his work.

JACQUES RENÉ GAUDET (A&S) of Fleming Island, Fla., ran as a Democrat for the 3rd Congressional District in North Central Florida.

DEBRA R. VAZQUEZ (ENGINEERING) of Plainville, Conn., has launched a nonprofit organization called WISH, Inc. (Women Invigorating Sciences Hope), whose mission is to inspire young minds to explore cures for illnesses through research and technologies.

JASON P. CARON (HARTT, M’01 HARTT) of Hudson, Mass., is looking for musicians to join The River’s Edge Community Band. All instruments are welcome for the Thursday-evening rehearsals at Hudson High School, 69 Briggs Street, Hudson. Caron is director of the group, as well as director of bands at Hudson High School and principal bassoonist for the Metropolitan Wind Symphony.

MICHAEL J. PETRORO (M, ENHP) of Harwinton, Conn., is a school counselor at Oliver Wolcott Technical High School in Torrington, Conn. After visiting with many of his former students upon their return from military tours of duty in Afghanistan or Iraq, Petroro founded Forever Heroes, a nonprofit organization to assist veterans in adjusting back into civilian life.

REBECCA G. ROBBINS (M, ENHP) of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., has launched a public relations firm called Promote Yourself, Inc. As a writer, she is publishing Escape, a novel due out this fall.

TONY CONNAWAY (HARTT) of Ellington, Conn., has been honored as the 2012 Teacher of the Year for his work as a strings teacher at the Nayaug and Buttonball elementary schools in Glastonbury. Conn. Connaway’s story was featured in the November issue of Glastonbury Life.
Hawk Hatchlings

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

TOP ROW, L-R:
Mary Gaeta Johnston ’99 & Tom Johnston
(Benjamin, 11.9.12, held by big sister Molly, 6, and watched over by big brother William, 4)
Enid Viana O’Brien ’01 & Coley O’Brien
(Braden Quinn, 12.17.12)

MIDDLE ROW, L-R:
Danielle Meisen Poore ’06
& William Poore ’06
(William Joseph, 9.25.12)
Lisa & Christopher Davis ’02
(Jackson Scott Rhys Davis, 11.16.11)

BOTTOM ROW, L-R:
Kristen Powich Cronin ’01, M’04,
& Tucker Cronin
(Trevor Robert, 6.18.12)
Cassi Polk Kail ’04 & Joshua Kail ’02
(Talia Ruth, 9.13.12)

Ellis Island Medal of Honor

Steven Ortiz M’09 (Hartt), a lieutenant in the Massachusetts Air National Guard, has received the 2013 Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The medals are presented to American citizens who have distinguished themselves within their own ethnic groups while exemplifying the values of the American way of life. Commander of the Air National Guard Band of the Northeast, Ortiz is the first Costa Rican–American to receive the honor in its 27-year history.

1999

CLARE REED TAYLOR (M, ENHP) of West Hartford, Conn., is the recipient of the 2012 Connecticut Education Association’s John McCormack Award for Teaching Excellence. She will travel to Brazil in June as one of 38 national recipients of the California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence from the National Education Association. Taylor was also named Citizen of the Year by the West Hartford Fire Department. She is a 5th-grade teacher at Duffy Elementary School in West Hartford.

CHRISTOPHER SWIST (M, HARTT) of Enfield, Conn., is artist in residence at Keene State College in New Hampshire, where he teaches percussion, composition, music theory, and music technology. His latest orchestral work, Abaprima, was premiered by the Bard College Conservatory of Music Orchestra at Bard’s Fisher Center for the Performing Arts in Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y., this past December.

2000

JENNIFER M. ALLEN (HARTT) of Foxboro, Mass., was a featured pianist in November for All Jazz First Thursday at the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, Conn. Allen has taught jazz in numerous arts and academic settings. She was chosen in 2011 as one of only eight pianists from around the world to participate in the Mary Lou Williams Jazz Workshop at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

2001

ANDREW LEE SCHMIDT (CETA) of Norwalk, Conn., is a bassist for the band Honor Society. The group headlined at The Space in Hamden, Conn., in November.

2002


MARION HARLOWE MARTINEZ (D, ENHP) of Clinton, Conn., was named superintendent for the Binghamton City School District in Binghamton, N.Y.
HOLLY O’BRIEN (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., played the title role in Joanne de Simone’s Norma Jeane, Enlightened, a character study of the celebrated but tragic 1950s film star, Marilyn Monroe, in this year’s Midwinter Madness Play Festival in Manhattan. O’Brien was also a soprano soloist at the Wiener Musikseminar in Vienna, Austria.

IAN J. QUINN (HARTT) of Southport, Conn., is the new choir director at Trinity Episcopal Church in Southport, Conn.

2003

CHRISTOPHER COUTU (M, BARNEY) of Norwich, Conn., is a two-term Republican state representative and ran for the state senate 19th District in southeastern Connecticut.

JOHN J. DESILVESTRI (A&S) of Matawan, N.J., starred in The Mystery of Irma Vep at the Cortland Repertory Theatre in Cortland, N.Y.

ERICA GELLER GUILLAMA (HARTT) of Conshohocken, Pa., is being published in Teaching Tolerance magazine’s Activity Exchange section for her innovative work with students. Guillama, who teaches at Loring Flemming Elementary School in Blackwood, N.J., compiled choral arrangements and wrote dialogue for her fourth-grade choir’s concert, built on an antibullying/character-building theme.

MARGARET RUTH NEESE (M, ENHP) of Port Saint Lucie, Fla., received her PhD in nursing from Barry University in Miami Shores, Fla.

2004

DAVID R. BOSSO (M, ENHP) of Berlin, Conn., is the National Social Studies Teacher of the Year for his work at Berlin High School. In others honors, he was named the 2012 Connecticut Teacher of the Year as well as the Berlin Public Schools Teacher of the Year. Bosso is also an adjunct professor at Eastern Connecticut State University. He has traveled to Ghana, China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Egypt, and Israel with educational delegations working to develop greater cross-cultural awareness and foster global understanding.

2005

KATHRYN TENEYCK (M, HAS) of Middletown, Conn., is an art studio technician at Wesleyan University, where she has taught printmaking and drawing classes. Her fourth solo exhibition, Voids, Portals and Passageways, was held last fall at the Paul Mellon Arts Center on the campus of Choate Rosemary Hall in Wallingford, Conn.

2006

MICHAEL R. BRADLEY (CETA) of Tottenville, N.Y., graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

2007

CHRISTINE KORNACKI (HAS) of Fairfield, Conn., has published The Sparkle Box, a children’s book about how a little boy learns the true meaning of Christmas.

JOSEPH M. RICKER (HARTT) of Hartford, Conn., is one-half of the musical team of Duo Orfeo, named for the mythical Greek musician, Orpheus. Performed mainly on classical and vintage electric guitars, the duo’s repertoire ranges from Renaissance lute and French baroque harpsichord music to compositions by modern masters. For a preview of their work, visit duoorfeo.com.

WHAT’S YOUR PLAN?

Charlie and Marjorie Jolidon both grew up in Hartford during the Depression. After a six-year courtship that spanned World War II, they married. Charlie worked as a manufacturing service engineer. Marjorie earned a Certificate in Graduate Study from the College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions, then taught high-school music in Suffield and Bloomfield for 38 years. The couple retired to a cottage on the shore in Old Saybrook, Conn.

All the while, Charlie and Marjorie were annual givers to the University of Hartford. They also funded a charitable remainder trust, designating equal shares to six of their favorite charities, including The Hartt School.

Charlie died in 2001, yet Marjorie continued to receive payments from their trust until her death in 2012. Gifts like the Jolidons’ have an immense impact on the educational mission of the University of Hartford.

Founders’ Society

Visit our new planned giving website at hartford.edu/plannedgiving to learn more, or contact

Peter H. Congleton
Director of Planned Giving
University of Hartford
200 Bloomfield Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117
conleton@hartford.edu
860.768.2415

Hawtioneer on the Charles

Some alumni couldn’t get back to campus last October for Hawktober Weekend, so they decided to reunite at the Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston, Mass., rather than at the head of the Hog River in West Hartford, Conn. Arm in arm, with the Charles River behind them, are (l-r) Scott Rosario ’03 (Barney); Ken Kulas ’04, M’06 (Barney); Mike Orlinski ’04 (A&S); Jenn Scharf Orlinski ’02 (A&S); Karen Botcheller ’03 (A&S); Lauren Firtel ’03 (A&S); and Jill Adametz Johnson ’03 (A&S).
Herman Fonteyne, former University regent and trustee of the Hartford Art School, died on Oct. 11, 2012, at the age of 73. Fonteyne served two terms on the board of regents (1992–95, 2003–09) and one term as vice president of the Hartford Art School, Inc., Board of Trustees. He played a key role in the campaign to build the Renée Samuels Center at the art school.

Kevin Gray, Hartt School associate professor of theatre and a renowned Broadway performer, died unexpectedly on Feb. 11, 2013. He was 55. A faculty member at the University of Hartford since 2011, Gray had previously appeared in key roles in more than 8,500 Broadway and national-tour performances, including Phantom of the Opera, The Lion King, The King and I, Jesus Christ Superstar, Showboat, and Kiss of the Spider Woman.

Mark A. Jablonowski ‘77, M’85, an adjunct faculty member in the Barney School of Business, died on Dec. 14, 2012, following a brief illness. He was 57. In addition to teaching economics at Barney, Jablonowski was a prolific writer who was published in more than 100 journals and was the author of four books.

Of Special Note...

Alumna Alexandria Hubbard ’10, a former editor of The Informer, was running in her first marathon on April 15 in Boston to raise funds for the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute when the tragic bombing occurred. Although not physically injured, she expresses her emotional pain in her blog, “the saga of a twenty-something.” Her marathon bib (no. 23151) and medal are the opening graphic for an ABC World News report that aired on April 17.

The University community is happy Alexandria was not physically harmed and sends its best wishes for her future endeavors.

University Libraries Are Here for Alumni

You have graduated, but you haven’t stopped learning. Work, hobbies, and life events often require additional knowledge or assistance. With your University of Hartford alumni card, you have access to the resources and services of University Libraries:

- Borrow books, music, videos, and other materials.
- Ask for research or reference assistance.
- Use databases, scanners, printers, copiers, and other resources.

Learn more at library.hartford.edu; click on User Information. Don’t have your alumni card? Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at alumni@hartford.edu.

2008

PENNLOPE DAVIS (M, BARNEY) of Hartford, Conn., has been promoted to director of human resources at the State of Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services.

PATRICE FITZGERALD (GPD, HARTT) of West Hartford, Conn., gave a concert of jazz and Broadway favorites with her husband, Richard Leslie, to celebrate her 57th birthday at the Dragonfly Ranch, a resort in Captain Cook, Hawaii. Fitzgerald’s book, Running, a political thriller whose premise is that the next president is going to be a woman, has become a Kindle bestseller.

MARY ANNE MCCARTHY (HAS) of Unionville, Conn., exhibited her mostly pencil self-portraits in a show titled Reflections in Dust on the ArtWalk at Hartford Public Library last fall.

2009

ELSA CHIN (‘07 HILLYER, A&S) of Hartford, Conn., was honored with Hillyer College’s 2012 Outstanding Young Alumnus Award. As the associate director of Newman’s Own Foundation, Chin works with a variety of nonprofit organizations and government agencies. She is particularly engaged in the foundation’s work with veterans and military families.

JOHN ZION (HARTT) of Hartford, Conn., has been highlighted as a “rising star in the performing arts” for violin performance in a Musical America special report (musicalamerica.com/specialreports/stars_2012.pdf).

ROBERT CUNLiffe (HARTT) of Los Angeles, Calif., has been named a 2012 RAWards musician of the year as a member of the band Almost Claszy, with the premiere of its single and music video “I’m That Man.” See and hear more at almostclaszy.com.

ASHLEIGH KAY (HAS) of Windham, Conn., exhibited her paintings in a show titled Chromaphilia at Spirit Gallery Tattoo, a tattoo studio and art gallery in New London, Conn. View Kay’s portfolio and exhibit schedule at ashleighbjhay.com/home.html.

GEORGE ‘RON’ SPEARS (M, HAS) of Reno, Nev., was artist-in-residence at Utah’s Zion National Park last spring, which led to an inspired, 20-landscape exhibition for the artist in the fall of 2012 at Southern Utah University (SUU). Spears is an assistant professor of drawing/entertainment design at SUU. His diverse career as an illustrator and painter includes illustrating the children’s book Dad, Are You the Tooth Fairy?, written by actor Jason Alexander, as well as creating dozens of video-game and other entertainment illustrations.
ISAAC YOUNG (HARTT) of New Britain, Conn., and his Isaac Young Quartet were voted top honors by the 2012 Connecticut Music Awards and Grand Band Slam for Best Jazz in Connecticut. With tenor saxophone, electromechanical Rhodes piano, and EWI (electronic wind instrument), Young bridges the gap between jazz and rock idioms.

2010
ERIN PAUL (HARTT) of Waterford, Conn., was selected for a 10-month, international cultural exchange program in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Through July 2013, Paul is performing in opera, ballet, and symphonic concerts with the Sarajevo Philharmonic.

ALEKS STERNFELD-DUNN (D, HARTT) of Wichita, Kan., premiered several new works at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Hall in February. Works were performed by the Case Ensemble, a new group based at Kutztown University in Kutztown, Pa.

2011
NANCY Y. LEONARD (M, BARNEY) of Wethersfield, Conn., was named executive director of St. Luke’s ElderCare Services in Middletown, Conn. St. Luke’s is a nonprofit organization that promotes successful aging and independent living for seniors and veterans.

JEFFREY P. STANGO (A&S) of Torrington, Conn., working with Connecticut’s Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), is the narrator for the new online audio version of the state’s Driver’s Manual. Stango has worked with the DMV on several teenage-driving outreach projects.

AMANDA M. WEaver (ENHP) of York, Pa., is recovering from successful surgery to treat colon cancer. After undergoing six weeks of chemotherapy and radiation, Weaver has been declared cancer free. In September 2012, more than 1,000 participants raised $45,000 in the Walk for Hope, held on the University of Hartford’s Bloomfield Avenue campus. Weaver is a four-year member of the women’s basketball team, including leading the Hawks as team captain during her senior year.

2012
ANDREW GOLDSMITH (HARTT) of New York, N.Y., is an artistic associate for cellist David Finckel and pianist Wu Han at their Internet-based recording company, Artilied.

ADAM GROVER (HARTT) of Virginia Beach, Va., is a recording engineer at Georgetown Masters, located in Nashville, Tenn. In his first month alone, Grover worked on projects for Lady Antebellum, Neil Young, Dean Alexander, Ricky Skaggs, and Hunter Hayes.

SEAN HATCH (HARTT) of Stafford Springs, Conn., is dancing with the Mari Meade Dance Collection while also interning at Dance New Amsterdam, both in New York City.

KEYOKAH MARS-GARRICK (BARNEY) of North Stonington, Conn., has been named assistant women’s basketball coach for the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Conn. Mars-Garrick played women’s basketball for four years as an undergraduate, during which tenure she played in two NCAA tournaments for the Hawks.

2013
RYAN KOPREK (HARTT) of Ellington, Conn., began his new position as development associate at the Hartford Symphony Orchestra (HSO) immediately upon receiving his diploma this May. Managing the HSO individual donor database and acknowledging donor gifts are among his responsibilities.

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In February, 50 former players returned to campus for Men’s Basketball Alumni Day. They joined 2,500 others in the stands to cheer on the Hawks to a thrilling 66-58 victory over Boston University. The returning alumni players spanned every decade and represented every era, from the Fighting Hawks of the 1940s to our Division II NCAA Tournament teams of the 1970s to the pioneering Division I teams of the 1980s to our more recent Division I squads trying to break new ground. Athletics Director Pat Meiser (far right) and President Walter Harrison (second from right) were proud to stand with the former Hawks athletes.

Violinist David Dyson ’81 (right) entertains at an alumni networking reception in February hosted by TD Bank in downtown Hartford, Conn. The event was part of the TD Bank Business Leadership Series, which sponsors two-hour seminars exclusively for University of Hartford alumni throughout the academic year. Launched in 2012, the popular series has operated at full or near capacity for all six sessions.

Some Hartt School alumni celebrated their Hawktober Weekend in Minneapolis, Minn., joined by Dean Aaron Flagg and Associate Deans T. Clark Saunders and David Bell: (l–r) Michael Ackmann ’90; Saunders; Bell; Walter Cogswell ’59, M’61; James Frazier M’77; and Flagg.

Hartt Dean Aaron Flagg (second from right) flew across the pond this winter for dinner and conversation in London with (l–r) Colin Gold ’08, Vincent Kurutza ’87, Tina Cook ’94, and Kevin Sliwoski ’12, last year’s John G. Martin scholar, who is now studying at Oxford University.

(L–r) Jeff Wolf ’82, Susan Weltman ’81, and Audrey Arougheti ’73 swap stories over a University yearbook at an alumni reception in Scottsdale, Ariz., in early February.
At the beginning of his senior year at the University of Hartford, Edward Peltier ’68 was a business administration major who traveled back and forth from campus to classes at the business school that was on Hudson Street in downtown Hartford at the time. He was cocaptain of the baseball team, a player on the basketball team, and a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity.

Peltier felt he should begin searching for a job after graduation, but he was unsure about what he wanted to do. Upon discovering that the University had a cooperative student work program with the American School for the Deaf (ASD) in West Hartford, Conn., Peltier applied for a position. He was hired to coach basketball for hearing-impaired students at the junior high school level. He attended classes to learn sign language and how to teach and communicate effectively with deaf students.


Peltier wasn’t able to take a direct career path, however. After graduating in 1968, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. During the Vietnam War era, he spent one year in the United States and one year in Vietnam.

When he completed his military service, Peltier returned to West Hartford and was hired again by the American School for the Deaf, this time as a substitute teacher. Soon he left the state again to earn a master’s degree in deaf education at McDaniel College in Westminster, Md., after which he began his full-time teaching career at the Kentucky School for the Deaf, in Danville, Ky., where he eventually rose to become principal.

At the end of a decade at Kentucky, Peltier returned to the American School for the Deaf as assistant superintendent, a position he held for almost 20 years before moving to Vermont to become the chief executive officer of a state and school service provider of deaf services. In three years he was back at the American School for the Deaf, this third time as superintendent and executive director.

The school has the distinction of being the first school for the deaf in the United States and will celebrate its 200th anniversary in 2017. The faculty and staff serve more than 180 students on campus every day and more than 350 people in the community each month. Updating ASD’s historical facilities is Peltier’s top priority right now. He is the project liaison for a new, 62,000-square-foot educational building currently under construction.

Peltier still finds time to attend University athletic games and stay in touch with his fraternity brothers. And he says the career that began as a student employment opportunity has been very fulfilling.

“Most fulfilling are the students,” Peltier notes. “They bring a positive attitude to everything they do. They overcome communication challenges every day, and that’s something to admire.”

Edward Peltier ’68
Heeding the Call to Teach the Deaf

By Nick Frogameni ’12, M’14
When Brian Clemow was a child, the current University of Hartford campus was mainly farmland. Clemow’s father, Bice, played a leading role in bringing together those interested in starting the University 56 years ago. Today, Clemow is a partner in the law firm of Shipman & Goodwin LLP, representing employers, including the University, in labor matters.

A lifelong resident of West Hartford, Conn., Clemow watched his father’s vision of a university for Hartford grow into the reality of an internationally recognized institution. He proudly continues his family’s relationship with the University through the Anchor Fund, but his reasons for giving go far beyond family ties.

“Many of the things the University has accomplished are not things I would have thought of, and my reaction has been, ‘What a smart idea.’ Having the magnet schools on campus and building a performing arts center in an old Cadillac dealership, for instance, have had a great impact on the community. I admire the way the University has supported the community and vice versa. The community and the University complement each other well. The University of Hartford is an important asset to the community and the region. It deserves the support of all area residents.”

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