Harrison Receives Gerald R. Ford Award

President Walter Harrison (left) receives the NCAA's Gerald R. Ford Award from NCAA President Myles Brand. The Ford Award is named in recognition of Gerald Ford, the 38th president of the United States and a member of two national championship teams at the University of Michigan. Harrison was named the NCAA's 2015 President's Award recipient.

University President Walter Harrison had a big week on the national collegiate athletics stage in January of this year. He was appointed to the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics on Jan. 14, and on Jan. 15 he was presented with the NCAA's prestigious Gerald R. Ford Award.

The NCAA's Board of Directors established the Gerald R. Ford Award in recognition of his leading role in re-emphasizing academics in intercollegiate athletics and of his work to improve the academic success of student-athletes throughout the country. Over the past 10 years, Harrison has spearheaded sweeping academic reform efforts while serving as the first and only chair of the NCAA's Division I Committee on Academic Performance.

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Appointment to the Knight Commission

Although he has stepped down from a position with the NCAA, Harrison will be able to continue his work to improve the academic success of student-athletes as a member of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. He was one of four new members appointed to the Knight Commission in the same week he received the Ford Award.

The other three new members are Penelope Ward Kyke, president, Radford University; G. P. “Bud” Peterson, president, Georgia Institute of Technology; and Nancy Zimpher, chancellor, State University of New York.

Following is an excerpt from the Knight Commission press release announcing the new appointments:

“The Knight Commission continues its work to promote a reform agenda that emphasizes the educational mission of college sports. Over the years, the NCAA has adopted a number of the Commission’s recommendations, including the rule that requires teams to be on track to graduate more than 50 percent of their players in order to be eligible for postseason championships.”

Walter Harrison has been particularly active on NCAA academic reforms, having chaired the NCAA’s Committee on Academic Performance since its establishment in 2004. That committee is most noted for its creation and establishment in 2004. That committee is most noted for its creation and oversight of the NCAA’s Academic Progress Rate, which tracks academic performance for all Division I sports teams and poses sanctions, including postseason bans, for teams that do not meet prescribed academic standards.

University Faculty and Staff Receive $4.2 Million Plus in Contracts and Grants

University of Hartford faculty and staff were awarded $4,246,967 in grants and contracts in fiscal year 2014 (July 1–June 30). More than half of the fiscal year 2014 money, or $2,270,333, came from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection as state funding for the Microgrid Project, part of the state’s plan to better prepare for destructive storms. UHart is one of nine state organizations and municipalities approved in 2013 to receive this funding for disaster preparedness.

The money is being used to connect the University’s entire electrical system to the emergency diesel generators installed in 2007 alongside East Hall. Connecting the Village Apartments, Rigants Park, and Park River residence halls and the Conover Campus Center to the emergency generators solves the possible issue that more than half of the University’s student residents might be without power in the event of a widespread outage caused by a major storm. All other residence halls, the Sports Center, University Commons, Lincoln Theater, and the academic side of campus are already connected to the emergency generators.

The Microgrid Project began in November 2014, and Norm Young, associate vice president for facilities planning and management, hopes it will be finished by the end of this summer.

Three of the state-funded preparedness projects are at universities: University of Connecticut and Wesleyan University. In the event of a widespread power outage, the emergency generators on these campuses and six other locations will continue to deliver power to critical facilities like police stations, supermarkets, dormitories, city halls, fire departments, gas stations, cell towers, and shelters.

In addition to providing emergency power, the generators on our campus can allow the University to operate independently from the region’s main electrical power grid when necessary. For example, in times of extreme heat, Eversource (formerly Northeast Utilities) has asked us to power up the emergency generators and take the campus off the power grid to increase capacity to the main electrical power grid during peak demand.

Hartford Art School Plans Helen S Kaman Print Study Center

Construction is expected to begin this summer at the University of Hartford’s Hartford Art School (HAS) to create the Helen S Kaman Print Study Center. The 500-plus-acres, it temperature- and humidity-controlled space will house the more than 2,000 prints, drawings, photographs, and artists’ books in the HAS collection that are now in storage and difficult to access. The center will provide secured print storage areas, exhibition and display cases, and a viewing area for the study and research of works from the collection.

The center will honor Helen Kaman (1918–2010), who was on the HAS board (1983–89) and was an artist herself, participating in many solo and group shows. She and her husband, Charles, founded Kaman Aircraft. A $300,000 grant was received from the Charles H. Kaman Charitable Foundation to create the center.

“We feel privileged to be able to honor Helen Kaman in this manner and support the University and the Hartford Art School in this very special project,” said Glenn Messimer, secretary and trustee of the Charles H. Kaman Charitable Foundation. Messimer is a former trustee of the Hartford Art School and a regent of the University. Messimer helped in the creation of the new space. Architecture graduate student Kayla Verbitsky ’12, M’15, created architectural design drawings for the space. Art school alumna Janice La Motta ’78 created the donor proposal that provided a comprehensive overview of the needs for the proposed print study center.

Nancy Stuart, dean of the Hartford Art School, hopes to have the center ready for 2016.

Inaugural Mark W. Lord ’79 Trumpet Award

Seth Bailey M’13, who is in the University’s Hartford School of Music’s Graduate Professional Division, received the inaugural Mark William Lord ’79 Memorial Trumpet Award—a custom-built C trumpet—at a brass concert at Hartt this spring. The award honors graduate and undergraduate trumpet players who demonstrate talent, leadership, and dedication to learning.

Bailey has performed in the Ivoryton Playhouse Orchestra as part of its summer-stock production of Dream Girls, All ’Bout Love, and La Cagou aux Folles. He also played with the Juilliard Wind Orchestra at Carnegie Hall for the 70th birthday celebration of classical composer John Corigliano (Hon. ’13).

The new award honors the memory and legacy of Hartt graduate and trumpet player Mark W. Lord ’79. Lord was a principal trumpet player of the Taipei Philharmonic Symphony in Taiwan for several years. He then moved to Rome, New, where he played in the band for the Fell, Hollywood Hotel show and freelance for virtually all area ensembles in the Rome-Tahoe area. Lord also was a faculty instructor for continuing education at the University of Nevada–Reno.
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The Ford Award is named in recognition of Gerald Ford, the 38th president of the United States and a member of two national championship football teams at the University of Michigan. The award honors an individual serving as the first and only chair of the NCAA's Division I Committee on Academic Performance.

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University Faculty and Staff Receive $4.2 Million-plus in Contracts and Grants

University of Hartford faculty and staff were awarded $4,246,967 in grants and contracts in fiscal year 2014 (July 1–June 30). Monies received supported faculty research, introduce new student programs, and enhance existing programs. Nearly $200,000 was received to support the Hartford Scholars program, which provides half-fellowship scholarships to University of Hartford students who live in Hartford and graduated from Hartford public high schools or from suburban schools that participate in Project Choice, a state program to improve diversity in suburban school districts.

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Nancy Stuart, dean of the Hartford Art School, hopes to have the center ready for use by 2016.

Mark on the Microgrid Project is well under way this summer as crews connect the University’s entire electrical system to the emergency diesel generators near East Hall.