Two faculty members named AAAS Fellows

By Cindy Weiss & Kristina Goodnough

Two UConn researchers will be made fellows of the American Association of Arts and Sciences (AAAS) at its annual meeting in Boston in February.

The two are Sally McBrearty, a professor of anthropology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Laurinda Jaffe, a professor of cell biology.

The AAAS, the world’s largest general scientific society, announced its new fellows in the journal Science on Oct. 26.

McBrearty was cited “for distinguished contributions to the field of hominin origins and African paleolithic archaeology, and particularly for her work on the origins of modern human behavior.”

She is known in her field as the co-author of a landmark paper in the Journal of Human Evolution in 2008, “The Revolution That Wasn’t: A New Interpretation of the Origin of Modern Human Behavior.”

That issue of the journal was devoted to the article by McBrearty and Allison Brooks of George Washington University, in which they challenged the then-prevailing view that modern human behavior did not appear until some 45,000 years ago, far later than the appearance of anatomically modern humans.

McBrearty and Brooks reviewed what was known about early humans and concluded that humans were exhibiting modern behavior much earlier.

As McBrearty and co-author Chris Stringer from the Natural History Museum in London wrote in a recent commentary in Nature, “a competing interpretation is that beads, art objects, and other forms of technological and behavioral complexity emerged gradually over the course of the Middle Stone Age (some 285,000 to 45,000 years ago), tracking morphological evolution more closely.

“In this view, early Homo sapiens were essentially neurologically and cognitively identical to modern humans,” they wrote. The recent, highly publicized Nature commentary discussed new finds by other researchers at a South African cave that support an early origin for modern human behavior, including shellfish used as food and red pigment used as paint.

McBrearty has contributed an article about her views on early human behavior to an upcoming book, Rethinking the Human Revolution.

She is known also for finding the first fossil chimpanzee ever found. In 2004, she found fossil chimpanzee teeth in the Rift Valley of Kenya. That was the basis of a Nature article, “First Fossil Chimpanzee” in 2005, with co-author Nina G. Jablonski of Pennsylvania State University.

UConn’s Dempsey Hospital wins national quality award

Superior patient outcomes put hospital in top 1 percent

By Chris DeFrancesco

The UConn Health Center’s John Dempsey Hospital has been named to another exclusive group.

The hospital has won a 2007 Premier | CareScience Select Practice National Quality Award for superior patient outcomes in both quality and efficiency. Only 1 percent of U.S. hospitals earn this distinction from Premier Inc., the nation’s largest independent health care alliance. That makes UConn one of just 49 hospitals or health systems so recognized in the 2007 report.

“This is an enormous honor and a well-deserved tribute to our outstanding staff at John Dempsey Hospital,” says James Thornton, hospital director.

Hospitals do not apply for the Premier | CareScience Select Practice National Quality Award. The formula to determine the winners relies solely on the latest available

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Aztec Empire focus of Sackler symposium Nov. 2

"The Aztec Empire: Iconography and Ideologies of Power," will be the focus of the 2007 Beverly and Raymond Sackler Art and Archaeology Symposium on Friday, Nov. 2, at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center, beginning at 2 p.m.

The symposium will address issues including the Aztec promotion of hegemonic (vs. strictly military) control over a diverse group of quasi-independent city-states, and imperial integration of economics, religion, and politics in state rituals. Speakers will also examine the complex interactions between ruling metropole and subject peoples. Through these interactions, the central Aztec state negotiated economic and social stability with its neighbors to counteract political instability.

Speakers and their presentations include:

- Michael E. Smith, Arizona State University, "Mater Culture of the Aztec Empire in Central Mexico: Local, Regional, and Global Patterns," 2-2:15 p.m.
- Cecilia Klein, University of California, Los Angeles, "From Clay to Stone: The Role of Ceramic Figurines in the Formation of the Official Aztec Pantheon," 3 p.m.
- Elizabeth Brunfels, Northwestern University, "Cosmology at Home," 4 p.m.
- Eulogio Guzman, Boston Museum of Fine Arts School/ Tufts University, "Iconographic Variability: Shifting Meanings in Aztec Sculpture and the Political Expansion of the Mexican State," 4:45 p.m.

The event is open to the University community and the public. Admission is free.

The Beverly and Raymond Sackler Art and Archaeology Symposium, now in its sixth year, fosters an exchange of ideas between scholars, faculty, and students across the University and throughout New England. The event is made possible by support from philanthropists Raymond and Beverly Sackler. For more information, e-mail Professor Robin Greerley at robin.greerley@uconn.edu.

Academic, cultural activities planned for International Week, Nov. 8-15

UConn’s Office of International Affairs will join the national celebration of International Education Week Nov. 8 through Nov. 15. The week-long series of activities includes lectures, films, music, performances, art work displays, storytelling for children, and other cultural events.

"International Week is a time to reflect on the importance of international education in the formation of global citizens, a key goal of the University," says Boris Bravo-Ureta, executive director of the Office of International Affairs.

The celebration opens with this year’s Robert G. Mead Jr. Lecture, presented by Kay Warren of Brown University. Her talk, “When Numbers Count: The Practice of Combating Human Trafficking from Colombia to Japan,” will take place on Thursday, Nov. 8, from 2 to 4 p.m., in the Student Union Theatre. President Michael J. Hogan will give welcoming remarks.

World Fest 2007, an international fair and cultural dance festival showcasing more than 17 student organizations, will take place on Sunday, Nov. 11, from noon to 6 p.m., in the Student Union Ballroom. Ethnic foods will be available.

For more information on events, visit: http://oa.uconn.edu/events.html.

Neuroscience conference speaker to discuss how changes in the brain may explain changes in behavior

Dr. José Delgado-García will present a lecture titled “Associative Learning as a Distributed Process,” during the fall 2007 “Neuroscience at Storrs” annual conference.

The lecture will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 31, at 5 p.m. in the Biology/Physics Building, Room 130.

Delgado-García, a professor of physiology and chairman of the Division of Neuroscience University of California, Irvine, is noted for his research on the changes in the brain that may explain changes in behavior.

The highly complex circuitry of the brain must be modified every time an individual learns a small detail about spatio-temporal relationships. Although the brain changes most during growth and development, that is not the time when people learn most. Most of the learning occurs after the developmental process, when the acquisition of new motor and cognitive abilities occurs through still largely unknown neural processes involving sub-cellular and molecular changes. Delgado-García’s presentation will address these issues and the new information he has obtained from neural recording techniques in mammals.

Emirites professor of English to read poems at UConn Co-op

Poet James Scully will give a reading at the UConn Co-op for the annual Creative Susanne event, to benefit the Covenant Soup Kitchen in Willmantic. The reading will take place on Thursdays, Nov. 1, beginning at 7 p.m.

Scully’s work is noted for its focus on the importance of music. Scully’s 11th poetry collection, Boxcars — Words Without Music, was published recently. His previous poetry collections include The Marches, Avenue of the Americas, Words Without Music, and Boxcars.

An emeritus professor of English at UConn, Scully won the 1967 Lamont Poetry Award. He has also received two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, an Ingram Merrill Foundation Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

The reading, which is sponsored by the University’s Creative Writing Program, is free and open to the public. Audience members are invited to make a donation or bring canned goods to support the Covenant Soup Kitchen.

For more information, go to the UConn Co-op’s website, www.bookstore.uconn.edu, or the Creative Writing Program website at www.longriver.uconn.edu.

Correction

A story in the Oct. 22 Advance reported that federal funding for sequencing four mouse genomes would be directed to Baylor College of Medicine Human Genome Sequencing Center. However, the National Human Genome Research Institute has not determined an appropriation or a center for sequencing four species of the Peromyscus mouse. In addition, the quotation by faculty member Rachel O’Neill, “We’ll be seen as taking the lead in getting four genomes sequenced in a very competitive process,” should refer to all collaborators on a paper accepted by the NHGRI for which she was the lead author and co-authors are from the Peromyscus Genetic Stock Center at the University of South Carolina, the Baylor College of Medicine Human Genome Sequencing Center, and the College of Medicine at the University of California Irvine.
The report has the capacity to read, under prescription directions, medical consent forms, and health insurance applications, as well as prescription medication instructions in brochures and pamphlets. Although ethnic minority groups are disproportionately affected by low health literacy, the majority of people with low health literacy skills in the United States are white and native-born, the report says.

“The study found that 36 percent of all adults – 87 million people – have a below-average ability to read prescription directions, medication, and health insurance applications, and to follow written instructions in brochures or pamphlets,” Vernon says. Being literate does not mean that a person is health-literate, he adds. “It is more difficult to read medical literature that is specifically health-related.” Using the U.S. Department of Education’s 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL), the report highlights two basic types of health policy interventions: the first is elimination of unnecessary barriers to appropriate health care; the second focuses on specific actions to improve the ways in which health insurers and health care providers relate to and interact with patients. Suggested ways to improve health literacy through public policy initiatives include:

• Offer incentives to health insurers and health care professionals to ensure that patients understand instructions.
• Encourage public and private health insurers to provide translation and interpreter services, in addition to developing oral instructions and written handouts that can be understood at all reading levels.
• Create federally funded health literacy centers to study innovative ways to improve literacy practices and programs at the state and local level.
• Provide federal support for education programs in the fields of medicine, nursing, and pharmacy that focus on health literacy skills among patients.

The UConn study was designed to yield a basic understanding of the effects of health illiteracy, says Vernon, adding that this year’s study can be used as a baseline for future studies, in order to determine whether specific initiatives — if adopted — are helping to improve health literacy.

“I hope the federal government will pay more attention to public health issues,” he says.

Besides Vernon, the research team included Antonios Trujillo of the University of Central Florida; Sara Rosenbaum of George Washington University; and Dr. Barbara DeBuono, executive director of public health and government at Pfizer Inc., which subsidized the research.

Conference examines impact of environmental issues on human rights

By SHERRY FISHER

In many locations around the world, native names are being ignored, thus denying people’s cultural pasts and histories, says Jim Enote, a Zuni tribal member, farmer, artist, and activist for the environment.

Enote was the keynote speaker Oct. 23 in the Student Union Theatre during the Eighth Annual UNESCO Chair and Institute of Comparative Human Rights Conference. The event’s topic was human rights and the environment.

“Indigenous people around the world have always had names of places, but in many cases those names have all been eliminated and replaced with other languages, other terms, and words that are foreign to us,” Enote said. “In many cases, these are a direct denial of our past and history.”

For example, Bear Spring in New Mexico is now called Fort Wingate, Enote said.

“What is embedded in our language is thousands and thousands of years of environmental monitoring,” he added. “It’s all part of these languages that are becoming extinct around the world.”

The Zuni are indigenous Americans living in New Mexico.

Indigenous peoples have a lot to contribute to the dialogue about the environment and human rights, he said.

“Somewhere in the lives of society and cultures, we all want a piece of the pie,” he said. “All want that security. We have always sought something better. Somewhere, from the time of our innocent birth to the time we grow up, we develop a sense of compassion, a sense of sharing. But what happens when our environmental resources are stretched?”

He asked “What about the ethics of helping each other, the ethics of sharing our resources? Which voices are being heard and which aren’t?”

He said that human beings have “an urge to get something you don’t have – to seek something better. But in that process comes about conquering and displacement. Many native communities around the world have been conquered and displaced.”

Enote urged the audience to “respect each other’s languages, respect where you come from. Everyone has something to contribute and no one would be left behind.”

Another speaker, Pam Dashiell, a community activist in New Orleans, said the U.S. government failed to deal with Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. She is from the Holy Cross neighborhood in the Lower Ninth Ward, where Katrina’s storm surge broke the levee at the Industrial Canal flooding dozens of homes.

“There are people who want to return, and haven’t been treated fairly, which is why so many left,” she said. Other issues, she said, are “the crumbling infrastructure, loss of housing, and toxic sediments.”

She said it is a human right “to be protected from the storms and the stresses. She also said that without the help of ordinary people, recovery in the Ninth Ward wouldn’t have come even as far as it has.

“We need to have fresh eyes on what exists. We need accountants, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and architects, and are appreciative of the help that has already been given,” she said. “The eye-opener is that there is no government will to fix it; only the will of the people.”

The conference was co-sponsored by the Office of the Vice Provost for Multicultural and International Affairs, the Office of the Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, and the Department of Residential Life.
New book offers educators techniques to train teaching assistants

BY SHERRY FISHER

Graduate students need to be prepared for success in their teaching and mentoring responsibilities, says Catherine Ross, director of Faculty and Teaching Assistant Programs in the Institute for Teaching and Learning. Ross has co-edited a new book that offers ideas and techniques to those who train graduate teaching assistants. She and Jane Dunphy of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have published Strategies for Teaching Assistant and International Teaching Assistant Development: Beyond Micro Teaching.

The book includes the ideas of some 50 educators from a variety of programs throughout the U.S. that can help teaching assistants and international teaching assistants learn the skills to become effective teachers of undergraduates, Ross says. “The book is for anyone who works with graduate students to support their teaching efforts at research universities,” she says. “You may work as a program director who serves as an institute-wide resource, responsible for developing fall orientation workshops or seminars for TAs. You may be a department-based teaching expert—even a head TA who works with new TAs in a particular discipline. Or you may be a person whose focus is international teaching assistants and you address language and cultural issues.”

Graduate students “need to know how to present information, manage a classroom, lead a discussion and conduct lab sessions,” Ross says. “They also must learn to be comfortable in one-on-one interactions. Oftentimes, the TA will be the person the student meets with for help, and his or her success depends on that TA. Our commitment is to make sure that our teaching assistants feel prepared to do the best job they can do.”

The first part of the book focuses on teaching assistant development. The section “Getting Started” includes exercises for new teaching assistants.

“These are workshops where we felt would be most effective with brand new TAs who really haven’t had much teaching experience,” Ross says. “There is an exercise on identity and authority in the classroom, for example. TAs may struggle with establishing their authority in the classroom. They’re almost the same age as their students, and that can make them uncomfortable.”

An exercise on impromptu speaking skills is included. “Teaching assistants are going to have to stand up in front of students and talk,” she says. “That’s another thing they’re fearful of.” Other exercises include engaging students in active learning, planning and facilitating a discussion, and teaching in lab settings.

A section on “Advanced Skills” includes exercises for the more experienced TA, including classroom management skills, online teaching and learning, group problem solving, and effective feedback.

The second half of the book is devoted to international teaching assistant (ITA) development. Here, there are exercises that deal with cultural adjustment and diversity awareness.

Ross says ITAs have “very specific needs. They’re adjusting to the culture of higher education in the U.S. They’re also thinking about their own cultures, how they were taught, and what their educational systems valued. There’s often not a match there.”

“For example, the idea that undergraduate students would interrupt a professor and ask a question is odd to many of our international students,” she says. “Many come from cultures where students listen to a professor and take notes, but would never question them.”

Ross contributed an exercise that she uses with ITAs: A high school visit. “I take them to O.E. Smith High School (in Storrs) so they can see an American high school. High schools in the U.S. are even more different than universities across countries. It helps ITAs understand where our students are coming from.”

Endowed chair continued from page 1

may even lead to death. Though extremely rare, such reactions are unpredictable and may prompt drug withdrawals from the market and halt the development of promising future drugs, he says.

Boelsterli specializes in understanding the cellular and molecular mechanisms that cause this type of idiosyncratic drug-induced liver injury. He is working to develop tests to help determine which patients are at highest risk for such adverse drug reactions and to identify chemical compounds that could protect mitochondria—regarded as key mediators of cell death—against these dangerous effects.

“I was drawn to UConn by the excellent reputation of its toxicology program both nationally and abroad, and by the unique research and teaching opportunities presented by the creation of the first endowed chair in my field,” Boelsterli says.

Ultimately, our research could open new avenues to potential therapeutically helpful interventions and aid in the design of safer drugs,” he adds, “but that kind of progress will only be possible through close collaboration with other national and international research institutions and the pharmaceutical industry. Those are precisely the kinds of collaborations the Boehringer Ingelheim Chair will facilitate.”

In addition to fostering multidisciplinary research collaborations at UConn and beyond, Boelsterli will develop a course in mechanistic toxicology, and will encourage faculty and students to present their research findings nationally and internationally.

“Attraction of a researcher of Urs Boelsterli’s caliber to our endowed chair in mechanistic toxicology—the first of its kind nationwide—raises our profile nationally and internationally and cements our standing among this country’s elite schools of pharmacy,” says Robert McCarthy, dean of pharmacy.

Dr. Peter Farina, senior vice president of development at Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc., says the company “has a long-standing commitment to academic excellence. It is important for us to support universities, so they in turn can develop highly trained and academically well prepared scientists. We also seek to support universities that pursue cutting edge science and provide scientists who will serve mankind through discovery and development of breakthrough medicines. We are convinced that UConn is the right place to accomplish this, and are pleased with the University’s selection of Urs Boelsterli as the first professor to fill the Boehringer Ingelheim Endowed Chair in Mechanistic Toxicology.”

The company’s gift to the School of Pharmacy is the third significant donation the school has received from a major Connecticut-based pharmaceutical company in the past three years. Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc. previously donated $230,000 to name a laboratory in the new Pharmacy/Biology Building that specializes in dosage forms. And in 2004, Pfizer Global Research and Development, a division of Pfizer Inc., created a distinguished endowed chair in pharmaceutical technology.
Contributions to the field of de
the National Science Foundation.

Archaeology, and African prehist
ums of Kenya. She is
in the Kapthurin Formation, a
years and has worked since 1990
re, old-fashioned word
In addition to the technology
system, to be as safe as we can.
there's a new web site: http://alert.
One each at the Greater
pus, one at the Depot campus, and
sirens throughout the Storrs cam
communications systems. We've purchased
danger.
What mechanisms have
been put in place so far?
A We decided to invest not in
but in one in a variety of communi-
systems. We've purchased
and installed nine public address
stereos throughout the Storrs
ampus, one at the Depot campus, and
one at each in the Greater Hartford
campus and the Law School. We've
e working with the blue phones,
text messaging, e-mail, voice mail,
and web/banner activation. And
there's a new web site: http://alert.
ou can call up the site instantly on a
phone. Blackberry or web-enabled cell
s can call up the site instantly on a
phone.

In the most extreme situa
tions, we're using, old-fashioned word
mouth is going to be an im-
portant factor in spreading the
information too.

Which of the systems have
been tested and what was learned
from the tests?
A We tested the text messag-
ing system and the blue phones to
determine how well they perform.
We're also going to test the sirens in
the next few weeks.
The test of the blue phones ear-
er this semester was successful.
There are 220 of these phones. All
but seven functioned in the test,
and all of those have now been
repaired.
The phones not only transmit an
audible message, they provide a
visual cue – a light flashes and
that tells you there's an emergency
event.
We found that text messag-
ing performed slower than we anticipated. The University has
nearly 16,000 students, staff,
and faculty who've registered their cell
phones – perhaps one of the high-
est percentages of any university. We
intended to send a message in a
relatively brief time, but our ex-
pectations so far have been greater
than the technology's ability to
perform.

University Information Tech-
nology Services is now working with
the vendor, Reverse 911, to
reduce the time it takes sending
it. We'll test again in a couple of
weeks.

Text messaging was designed
for one-to-one communication. It
wasn't intended for instant mass
communication. The issue is one of
capacity. When the message ar-
vives at the gateways for text mes-
saging, it might experience delays,
especially if there's a high volume
of people using their cell phones at
that time.
Another limitation is that the
message has to be very brief – 160
characters maximum – so we're
limited in what we can say in the
message. We're also working to make the alert uconn.edu site
mobile-device accessible, so people
can call up the site instantly on a
Blackberry or web-enabled cell
phone.

We ask faculty, staff, and stu-
dents to participate in the continu-
ting tests and offer feedback. We
expect that when a system is tested
for the first time, it may not oper-
ate at optimum effectiveness. The
key is to identify the problems and
work to fix them quickly. We may
test the various systems a number
of times before we're fully satisfied.

What remains to be done?
A There is going to be an
emergency banner that automati-
ically appears on every University
web site that uses the University's stan-
ard web template, when an
emergency occurs. We plan to
have this functioning by mid-
November.

We're also investigating adding
all classroom telephones to the
blue phone system, so the same
message being broadcast on the
blue phones will be heard in the
classrooms.
We're still considering mes-
sage boards, but given the size of
the campus, we recognize that a
centralized location may not be the
most effective way to commu-
nicate.

Who will decide whether an
emergency communication will
be sent out?
A The University's public safety
department will determine the
extent and severity of a situation
and decide whether to activate the
systems.

Different types of emer-
gency trigger different communi-
cation mechanisms?
A In the most extreme situa-
tion, we will activate everything,
but some situations might require
us to use only some of our com-
unications options.

Vice President discusses emergency communications systems
In response to the tragedy at Virginia Tech this past spring, a
committee was established to
develop the University's emer-
gency communications plan. Vice
President Barry Feldman, the
University's chief operating officer
who convened the committee, dis-
cussed the University's emergency
communications systems recently
with Advance editor Elizabeth
Omara-Oruanu.

Q How is the University ap-
proaching the potential need to
communicate with faculty, staff,
and students in the event of a
crisis?
A We established a committee with representatives from Storrs,
the Downtown Campus, the Health Center, and the Law School, and
we have been meeting weekly
since May. We've developed an
emergency communications plan for
contacting students, staff, and
faculty in the event of an emer-
gency. If that should happen, our
plan would be to use a variety of
communication methods to let
people know of the event and what
to do next. Let me take this op-
portunity to remind everyone that
while a strong communications
strategy can mitigate the potential
for harm, it cannot completely
eliminate risk.

Q What sorts of situations are
being considered as emergencies?
A We're defining an emergency as a life and death situation – an
event where people's lives are in
danger.

Q What mechanisms have
been put in place so far?
A We decided to invest not in
one but in a variety of communi-
sation systems. We've purchased
and installed nine public address
stereos throughout the Storrs
ampus, one at the Depot campus, and
one at each in the Greater Hartford
campus and the Law School. We're
e working with the blue phones,
text messaging, e-mail, voice mail,
and web/banner activation. And
there's a new web site: http://alert.

Q What is the message that will
be sent out?
A It will notify them that there is
an emergency situation and
recommend that they check the
alert uconn.edu web site for more
information. It may also identify
certain places to avoid.

Q After the initial emergency
message, how frequently will the
University issue updates, and how?
A Updates will be through the web – the alert uconn.edu site – as
often as necessary.

Q Will there be training in
what to do in the event of an
emergency?
A Yes. Over time, we hope to
do exercises that simulate a major
event happening. But first we need
to make sure all the systems we've
put in place are operable.

Q How will the University
keep the system up to date?
A The first thing is for people to
update their cell phone number if
there's a change. They can do
that any time on the web at http://alert.

Q What will the University
communicate in this update?
A Faculty, staff, and students
will receive an audible message,
and we expect the sound to
be heard in the local community, but
not necessarily throughout the
University locations.

Q How will people who might
be on their way to campus be
contacted?
A Text messaging is one way. Also, if we want people to stay
away from campus, we would con-
tact the media – radio and TV.

Q Will a message be sent lo-
cally to the Town of Mansfield,
E.O. Smith High School, and area
businesses?
A We expect the sirens will be
heard in the local community, but
if there is danger to the surround-
ing area, we will also contact town
officials.

Q What will the message tell
people to do?
A It will notify them that there is
an emergency situation and
recommend that they check the
alert uconn.edu web site for more
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that any time on the web at http://alert.

Q What will the University
communicate in this update?
A Faculty, staff, and students
will receive an audible message,
and we expect the sound to
be heard in the local community, but
not necessarily throughout the
University locations.

Q How will the message be
conveyed to outlying buildings,
such as those at Horsebarn Hill
or the Depot Campus?
A The Depot Campus has a
siren, and we expect the sound
from the Storrs campus will carry
to Horsebarn Hill. We'll confirm
the system we establish for the
sirens. Of course, the electronic
communications can be used at all
University locations.

Q How will people who might
be on their way to campus be
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certain places to avoid.
Hospital recognized
continued from page 1


The honor is the second national award for John Dempsey Hospital. In March, Solucient, a leading source of health care information, named John Dempsey Hospital a “Top 100 Hospital” for 2006, another mark of prestige in health care.

“We have a tremendously skilled, dedicated group of professionals who provide the finest care every day,” says Ellen Leone, director of nursing at John Dempsey Hospital. “They’re the reason for this kind of recognition. They deserve every bit of it, and more.”


Dr. Joseph Palmsino, center, with from left, Dr. Julia Biernot, nurse practitioner Rosemary Swanke, nurse Jennifer D’Amico, and Dr. Raja Pullat, in John Dempsey Hospital’s intensive care unit.

## GRANTS

The following grants were received through the UConn Center’s Office of Grants and Contracts in July 2007. The list represents new awards as well as continuations. Additional grants received through the Office of Grants and Contracts in July were published in the Oct. 22 issue.

### Department
- **Prin. Investigator**
- **Sponsor**
- **Amount**
- **Award Period**

### State Grants

**Psychiatry**
- Ford, J.
- Dept. of Children & Families
- $66,854
- 5/07-6/09

**Trauma Clinic for Emily/Targeted Children**
- Kochel, G.
- CT Office of Policy & Management
- $55,000
- 7/07-6/08

**MOU Between UConn Center on Aging and the Office of Policy & Management**
- Liu, B.
- Dept. of Public Health/CT
- $50,000
- 4/07-4/09

### Analysis of 138 kV Cable System Operated for 10 Days without Solid Ground**
- Boggs, S.
- Institute of Materials
- Consolidated Edison
- $12,500
- 7/07-8/07

**Berkowitz, G. Plant Science**
- Nat’l. Science Foundation
- $208,798
- 8/07-8/08

**SGER: Engineered Microclimates for Enhanced Biomass Production**
- Bergman, T.
- Conn. Global Fuel Cell Company
- Nat’l. Science Foundation
- $80,000
- 8/07-8/08

**Northeast Utilities Western Division Safety Project Phase I Managers**
- Barnes-Farrell, J.
- Psychology
- Northeast Utilities
- $20,771
- 8/07-6/08

- D’Andrade, R.
- Anthropology
- Nat’l. Science Foundation
- $3,000
- 9/07-2/09

- Daniels, M.
- Geography
- Nat’l. Science Foundation
- $139,998
- 8/07-7/10

**Bucklin, A. Marine Sciences**
- Dept. of Defense/Navy
- Office of Naval Research
- Woods Hole Oceanographic Inst.
- $69,000
- 8/07-10/07

**Charter of R/V Connecticut for MQCC Operations**
- Burdette, S.
- Chemistry
- Nat’l. Science Foundation
- $4,000
- 9/07-9/08

**Investigation of O2 Activation with Metallodendrimer Models of Copper Monoxygenases**
- Burgess, D.
- Pharmacology
- U.S. Pharmacopea
- $92,000
- 8/07-8/09

**Mechanistic Bases for the Reciprocal Interaction Between Lipid Oxidation and Myoglobin**
- Faustman, C.
- Animal Science
- American Chemical Society/Petroleum Research Fund
- $369,276
- 9/07-8/10

**Understanding the Use of Satellite Rainfall in Flood Prediction for Complex Terrain Basins**
- Prin. Investigator: Dr. Joseph Palmisano, center, with from left, Dr. Julia Biernot, nurse practitioner Rosemary Swanke, nurse Jennifer D’Amico, and Dr. Raja Pullat, in John Dempsey Hospital’s intensive care unit.

Dr. Joseph Palmisano, center, with from left, Dr. Julia Biernot, nurse practitioner Rosemary Swanke, nurse Jennifer D’Amico, and Dr. Raja Pullat, in John Dempsey Hospital’s intensive care unit.
Monday, October 29, to Monday, November 5

**CALENDAR**

**Monday, October 29 – History Lecture.** “Yi-Smulian Roles in Primary Health Care,” by Cengunu Vergara and Louise Reagan. Noon, Room 320, CUE Building. 4-5:30 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.

**Tuesday, 10/30 – Women’s History Event.** “The Renaissance Origins of Feminism: Women Intellectuals and Patriarchal Culture in Italy and England,” by Sarah Ross, Princeton Society of Fellows. 4 p.m., Class of ’47 Room, Babidge library.

**Tuesday, 10/30 – Latin Studies Lecture.** “Factors and Variables: In Africa,” by Megan Vaughan, University of Cambridge. 4:30-6 p.m., Koonor Auditorium.

**Tuesday, 10/30 – Health Care Lecture.** “Transplantation Roles in Primary Health Care,” by Cengunu Vergara and Louise Reagan. Noon, Room 320, CUE Building. 4:30-6 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.

**Tuesday, 10/30 – Health Care Lecture.** “The Evolutionary Framer: A View from the United States,” by Barbara Balzar, University of California. 4:30-7:15 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.

**Tuesday, 10/30 – Connecticut Law Review Symposium.** “Unconscious Discrimination 20 Years Later Application and Evolution.” 8:15 a.m. - & Optical Physics Seminar. “Heavy Rydberg Systems: Large Molecules of Rydberg Atoms” by Gregor Schaf, Trenton University. 4 p.m., Room Pizz, Gantz Science Complex.

**Exhibits**

**Friday, 11/2 – Art and Science.** 

- **Friday, 11/2 – Art and Science.** “The Evolving American Census,” by Ben Zion Weintraub. 4:30-7:15 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.

- **Through Saturday, 11/2 – Ballad Institute & Museum of Puppetry.** “Shadow & Substance,” 10th anniversary exhibit. Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday, noon-5 p.m., Weaver Road, Department of Art History.

- **Promotion.** 

  **Monday, October 29 – Health Care Lecture.** “Transplantation Roles in Primary Health Care,” by Cengunu Vergara and Louise Reagan. Noon, Room 320, CUE Building. 4-5:30 p.m., Room 344, CLAS Building.

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Quick response at Health Center saves faculty member’s life

BY CHRIS DEFRANCESCO

For more than four years, Leo Lefrancois and Sara-Jayne Nocera have been reporting to work on the third floor for the UConn Health Center’s main building. If their paths crossed in the hallway, it was never long enough for them to formally meet, even though their offices are around the corner from each other.

They finally met last month – in the emergency room at John Dempsey Hospital. Nocera, a transportation aide, had gone there to check on a stranger whose life she tried to save moments earlier.

The stranger was Lefrancois, head of the Division of Immunology in the School of Medicine. Lefrancois was entering the building one morning in September, when he started feeling dizzy.

“I stepped aside, thinking ‘I’ll recover in a minute or two,’ he says, “but at that point, I was going down. I woke up looking into the face of some paramedics and wondering what happened’.”

He didn’t find out until later that his heart had stopped. With help from Nocera, however, he was out for less than three minutes, and within an hour, he was in the Health Center’s cardiac catheterization lab getting stents to open three arterial blockages.

Nocera remembers hearing commotion as she came to work that morning. When she saw a man fall to the floor, she checked his pulse and began CPR.

Transportation aides are required to have CPR certification, but this was the first time Nocera had put that training to use. She and a colleague continued administering CPR until paramedics from the fire department arrived.

“Sara’s quick reaction and initiation of CPR helped prevent a lack of blood to the vital organs,” says nursing manager Debra Abromaitis. “His quick and complete recovery is a direct result of her training and health care team’s intervention.”

From a base at the Haitian Mission Baptist Church in the town of La Romana, the students worked with Haitian immigrants. They visited the baray – villages where sugar cane cutters live – to provide health education, and taught English in local schools.

In preparation for the trip, the students studied the social history of the Dominican Republic, the epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, and some Spanish and Creole. While there, they kept journals and participated in daily sessions reflecting on how their activities related to their reading. On their return, they had to write a sociological paper.

Ratcliff says the students were full of idealism and the desire to help. Yet she encouraged them to look beyond the helping model to understand the need for more fundamental change.

Arnaldo Perez Jr., a senior majoring in anthropology, says “This was probably the best three weeks of my life. The experience made us all grow.” Poletauwy wrote a paper titled “Haitian Workers in the Dominican Republic: Facing International Apathy and Human Exploitation.” He hopes to go to graduate school and become involved in international development.

For others, the experience changed or cemented their plans for the future.

“I was playing with ideas for a major,” says Krombel, who wrote a paper about the sugar industry titled “Sweet Deal.” “Now I know I want to be a part of human rights or political science-related.”

Asked whether they would recommend the program to others, the participants are enthusiastic.

“Every student should have the opportunity to go,” says Czajkowski. Arnaldo Perez Jr., a senior majoring in human development and family studies, wrote a paper about the education system and how it perpetuates various types of discrimination. He hopes to pursue a career working with inner city teens, and says he would definitely recommend the program.

“You can learn a lot about yourself,” he says. “Your strengths and weaknesses, getting along day-to-day in close quarters, learning how to collaborate with a group, and how to get information across to people.”

Reporting by Sherry Fisher is included in this article.