A performance of Euripides’ tragedy The Bacchae at von der Mehden Recital Hall Sept. 21. One of 17 shows in a U.S. tour, the production in Storrs featured a chorus played by UConn students and women from the community.

Achievements of 40 UConn alumni celebrated

BY KENNETH BEST

Forty outstanding alumni, all under the age of 40, were recognized by the University during the weekend of Sept. 19-20.

The 40 alumni will be featured in the fall/winter edition of UConn Magazine, and were recognized during a halftime ceremony at the UConn-Baylor football game on Sept. 19. The magazine, scheduled for publication on Nov. 1, is sent to 195,000 alumni, as well as parents of students and friends of the University, for a total circulation of 200,000.

“The achievements of these remarkable UConn alumni demonstrate the ability of our students to make a real difference in their professions, their communities, our nation, and the world,” says University President Michael J. Hogan.

“All of these talented young alumni have distinguished themselves in a wide range of disciplines within just a few years of earning their degrees,” Hogan says. “We are proud of the role the University of Connecticut has played in their exciting and successful careers. They set a great example for our next generation of UConn students.”

The 40 Under 40 group returning to campus participated in a variety of activities, including interactions with student groups about their careers, experiences, and achievements. The 40 alumni represent graduates from each of UConn’s 14 schools and colleges.

Several of the young alumni being recognized by UConn are familiar names to the public – such as U.S. Rep. Christopher Murphy (D-5th District) of Connecticut and basketball star Emeka Okafor of the Charlotte Bobcats – but many are known as prominent figures within their professional worlds of science, education, business, the arts, law, engineering, social services, medicine, agriculture, health care, philanthropy, government, and athletics.

The 40 under 40 are:

Klaus Abels, 37 (’02 M.A., ’03 Ph.D. in linguistics), London, England: lecturer and leading researcher in the Department of Phonetics and Linguistics at University College.


Jennifer Barnhart, 36 (’94 B.A. in acting), Brooklyn, N.Y.: actress and puppeteer featured on Broadway in Avenue Q.

Keith Belluzzi, 38 (’03 Ph.D. in human development and family studies), Berlin, Conn.: assistant professor of human development.

The 40 Under 40 group returning to campus included Emeka Okafor, a UConn basketball star who is now a professional player in the NBA. Other notable alumni featured in the group included a range of professionals from various fields, including science, education, business, the arts, law, engineering, social services, medicine, agriculture, health care, philanthropy, government, and athletics.

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President forgoes bonus

By KAREN A. BRAVA

President Michael J. Hogan's first year at the University was a resounding success, Dr. John W. Rowe, chairman of the Board of Trustees, said at a meeting Sept. 23. He reported that the Board unanimously assessed Hogan's performance as "outstanding."

Hogan was evaluated informally over the past several months and formally last week against the goals set for him when he was hired last year. His outstanding performance is worthy of a "substantial" bonus – probably in the range of $100,000, said Rowe.

But Hogan has asked the board to waive the awarding of the bonus and instead direct it back to the University budget in areas that will help sustain and advance outstanding graduate and professional programs.

"This in no way diminishes President Hogan's outstanding performance," Rowe said. "It is in recognition of the difficult economic environment that currently exists in the state and at UConn that President Hogan asked us to waive the bonus."

Hogan said he has enjoyed his first year at UConn and has never worked with a board as professional and competent as UConn's Board of Trustees.

"I'm grateful that the board was willing to consider a bonus," he said, "but I'd like the funds instead to be directed to graduate education."

Speaker from India offers perspective on U.S. presidential campaign

By MICHAEL KIRK

The 2008 U.S. presidential election is generating enormous interest in India, according to Ramesh Babu, a former professor at the University of Bombay, one-time mayor of that city, and longtime researcher on American elections.

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He spoke on Sept. 15 at Homer Babbidge Library as part of an ongoing lecture series organized by the India Studies Program. Babu, who has written a book on the relevance of American elections to India, is in the U.S. for several months to closely follow the 2008 presidential election. He recently attended the Republican National Convention in Minne-

to.

Babu said the 2008 primaries and general election are receiving unprecedented press coverage in India. In part, he said, this is because what the U.S. does and says has a tremendous effect on India, but it is also related to the groundbreaking nature of the race, with a black man and a woman competing for the Democratic nomination.

He told the audience early on that he was an American citizen, he would vote for Sen. Barack Obama.

Babu said he felt Indians would like to see an American president who has a "broad world view, rather than just an American view."

While not sparring his home country criticism, he discussed what he perceived as the flaws in U.S. political campaigns.

"There's too much oversimplification of elections in this country," he said, suggesting that campaigns and their coverage in the media often lack substance, focusing on personal narratives like family and personality instead of issues.

He observed that many Americans are against "big government," unless some aspect of it benefits them. The same, he said, seems to be true with so-called pork barrel spending – funds appropriated by Congress for specific projects in states and congressional districts. While candidates often run against those that are needlessly and wildly expensive, many are important to members of Congress and the communities that receive them.

Babu also discussed the U.S. financial meltdown and commented that the vocabulary shifts according to context when it comes to government intervention. "Rescu- ing companies, that's alright, but to rescue a welfare recipient is socialism," he said.

In an odd paradox, Babu said, although Indians are generally opposed to many of President George W. Bush's policies, he is one of the most popular American presidents in India, owing to an impending nuclear deal between the U.S. and India that would lift the morato-

ry on nuclear trade between the two nations.

With regard to what election outcome would be best for India, Babu said, "India should be ready to act like a global power," he said. "Then it does not matter who wins."

Ramesh Babu, a former professor of politics at the University of Bombay, speaks in the Class of 47 Room about the Indian perspective on this year’s U.S. presidential election.

Academic Plan continued from page 1

• improve the retention rate for first-year students from 93 percent to 95 percent and the six-year graduation rate from 74 percent to 78 percent,
• increase the number of classes with less than 20 students from 44 percent to 47 percent,
• increase the size of the Honors Program from 290 students to 550;
• increase the number of graduates and professional programs ranked in the top 25 among public institutions from nine to 14;
• decrease the median time to earn a master's degree from three years to two years, and a Ph.D. degree from six years to 5.5 years;
• increase the number of doctoral degrees awarded per 100 faculty members from 19 to 23;
• recruit 145 new faculty members;
• grow external research expenditures per faculty member from $90,000 to $100,000;
• increase the number of books, articles in refereed journals, pat- ent applications, and participa-

tion in juried shows and curated exhibits;
• increase the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty from underrepresented groups from 8 percent to 13 percent, and the number of international grad-

uate and professional students from 17 percent to 22 percent;
• enhance the number of fine and performing arts events on and off campus from 1,000 to 1,200, increase consultancies to public and private sector organi-

zations from 941 to 1,100, and increase outreach programs to schools and businesses from 449 to 530; and
• grow the market value of the endowment from $316 million to $385 million, and the alumni giving rate from 21 percent to 25 percent.

The plan also includes pro-
visions for closing programs that do not sustain high levels of demand, address workforce needs, have potential for national and international prominence, produce outstanding graduate or professional students who can compete successfully for fellow-

ships, tenure-track positions, and post-doctoral positions, provide visionary leadership, or have the potential to generate extramural funding or contribute in concrete ways to the strategies outlined in the plan.

The plan, "Our World, Our People and Our Future" has six goals:
• Engage undergraduates in an intellectually challenging and diverse learning environment;
• Sustain and develop select graduate and professional programs of national and interna-

tional distinction;
• Enhance UConn's contributions to the state, nation, and world;
• Ensure a diverse community that recognizes and celebrates individual differences;
• Collaborate with partners in the public and private sectors;
• Establish administrative, in-

frastuctural, and budget systems designed to efficiently realize the goals of the plan.

The six goals and 23 strategies outlined in the plan will guide the University in investing its re-

sources, Nicholson said. "The plan recognizes the challenging fiscal times and changing demograph-

ics that affect higher education, assumptions that have been incor-

porated into the plan through an environmental scan.

"To the extent the environment changes," he added, "we may need to make adjustments to the plan."
Health Center marks Primary Care Week with focus on prevention

Hee Seop Shin, a second-year medical student, takes a blood pressure reading at C-Town Supermarket in Hartford, part of a day dedicated to community service during National Primary Care Week.

New guide helps faculty, staff ‘work green’

By Richard Velleux

Kill the screensaver, turn off your power strip before you go home, and get around campus, and turn that air-conditioning unit down or off. Those are just four of the dozens of ideas in a new guide to help UConn faculty and staff ‘work green.’

University of Connecticut Sustainable Office Guidelines: A Guide to Working Green at the University of Connecticut, was produced during the summer by Alissa Becker, a student sustainability coordinator, and staff in the Office of Environmental Policy. The booklet of tips and ideas, complete with photos and charts, is available online (printing the 30 pages would violate at least one of the guidelines) at www.ecohusky.uconn.edu.

"A number of the tips are reminders about familiar things like recycling and reusable coffee mugs, but others, such as reducing a printer's default page margins or starting a departmental bike sharing program, take the concept of working green a step further," says Richard Miller, director of the Office of Environmental Policy.

"Many UConn staff and faculty are concerned about the environment and have asked us what they can do to make a difference." Noting that the University has more than 4,000 employees, Millers says, "If every one of us adopt just a few of these ideas, UConn could save thousands of gallons of water a day or thousands of kilowatt hours of energy a year, which translates into tons of greenhouse gas emissions avoided!"

Since UConn President Michael J. Hogan signed the American College and University President’s Climate Commitment in March, saving energy and reducing our carbon footprint have become more important. That’s because, by signing the document, UConn committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050. The University is currently calculating its 2007 emissions inventory, but estimates the Storrs campus emits about 120,000 tons of greenhouse gases annually.

Besides the online guide, Miller says his staff are available to visit individual departments to discuss the sustainable office guidelines, and are recruiting departmental eco-representatives to help staff to review the guidelines and the plan. Environmental policy staff will later revisit the department to see whether the score has changed. Participating offices will be recognized on the Office of Environmental Policy web site.

The online site’s main sections include tips on reducing, reusing, and recycling, energy use, meetings and events, purchasing, transportation, and water conservation. Each includes several sub-sections. One of the subsections under reducing paper use suggests working on drafts electronically, rather than printing the material, proof-reading, then printing it again. The section also suggests that employees set their default printer to double-sided, and set printer margins wider.

The section on energy use, which includes everything from coffee makers to computers, has a chart showing that using "sleep software" on computers (which is already installed on most UConn computers) can decrease the amount of carbon dioxide emissions per computer per year, from 1,935 pounds to 199 pounds, and save approximately $75 annually per computer.

“This distortion in payment for care devolves primary care and prevention, and compromises care for vulnerable populations," Lewis said. "There’s a need to align incentives for primary care that match the potential cost savings. For example, reimbursement for prevention and a change in focus from illness to health can go a long way in achieving the tremendous benefits that primary care has to offer.”

Dr. Bruce Gould, associate dean for primary care at the UConn School of Medicine and director of the Connecticut Area Health Education Center, said preventive medicine is neglected when health coverage is inaccessible or health care is unaffordable.

"As a cost of health care skyrocket, the first thing to go is the basic prevention and care of minor problems that can prevent progress or more serious conditions," Gould said. "When people forego preventive care, not only do they suffer, but it also places an added burden on the health care system. A lot of people think it as though as a society we’ve lost our sense that we have a responsibility to our neighbors.”

A survey published in the Sept. 10 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association found only 2 percent of graduating medical students saying they plan to pursue general internal medicine. A similar survey in 1990 found 9 percent with plans to work in primary-care internal medicine.

Family medicine and general pediatrics fared only slightly better, with 5 percent and 12 percent of first-year medical students planning to pursue those areas of primary care practice. The study’s authors suggest that factors keeping future doctors away from primary care include time demands and the more attractive salaries available to specialists. The average medical school graduate earns $160,000 in student debt last year, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges.

In that context, one of the goals of National Primary Care Week is to appeal to students’ sense of the importance of community-respon- sive primary care by celebrating the institution of primary care to the country’s health.

"The students are encouraged to collaborate as members of future primary health care teams and work to reduce preventable deaths and healthcare access that underserved populations experience," Gould said.

Charles Huntington, associate dean for community and continuing education at the UConn School of Medicine and a former federal health official, said effective advocacy is an important part of the effort to improve the current state of health care.

"The range of advocacy tools offers health professionals the op- portunity to choose their level of involvement in the legislative pro- cess,” said Huntington, who spoke about health care advocacy at a luncheon seminar during Primary Care Week. “The most effective model for political advocacy is one of relationship-building with legisla- tors and their staff members.”

In remarks at UConn’s Primary Care Week banquet, State Sen- ator Pro Tem Donald Williams Jr. (D-Brooklyn) told the students they are filling a critical need.

"Primary care is the backbone of our healthcare system," he said. "Without a primary care system we will have a difficult time to im- prove our quality and reduce costs." National Primary Care Week is observed by institutions throughout the country, with the dates varying by school.

Freshman class diverse, academically well prepared

By Kagen A. Dorda

The freshman class that arrived at the Storrs campus this fall was the most diverse and best prepared in university history, eight points higher than the class that entered last fall, and up 88 points since 1997.

The class that arrived on campus comprised 3,604 students, a 13 percent increase over last fall. Each of the regional campuses also experienced enrollment growth. UConn had planned to ex- pect a record 88 points over 2007-2008, eight points higher than the class that entered last fall, and up 88 points since 1997.

"The demand this year reflects the improving economy and the rising cost of education," says M. Dolan Evanovich, vice president for enrollment, planning, management, and institutional research. The freshman entering class at Storrs modestly this fall, since its push to graduate students in four years has been so successful it created space for more students, says M. Dolan Evanovich, vice president for enrollment planning, management, and institutional research. UConn students historically graduate in 4.3 years, the fifth highest rate among publics in the country, behind only the Universi- ties of Virginia, North Carolina, Michigan, and Illinois.

"The students are encouraged to co-host a breakfast or lunch meeting – catered with sustain- able fare – for staff in the office to review the guidelines and the plan. Environmental policy staff will later revisit the department to see whether the score has changed. Participating offices will be recognized on the Office of Environmental Policy web site.

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Expert on risky behavior in kids recommends increase in driving age

Dr. Yifrah Kaminer, co-director of research in the Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry at the Health Center, says that in teenagers, the area of the brain essential for critical thinking is not yet fully developed.

Development and family studies, University of Connecticut, formerly with the National Cancer Institute’s Office of Cancer Survivorship.

T. Scott Case, 38 (’92 B.S. in computer science and engineering), Wilton, Conn.: co-founder of PriceLine.com and Rewards for Reading.

Kevin Clarke, 34 (’95 B.A. in political science), Granby, Conn.: broadcaster for ESPN, Wilton, Conn.: co-founder of Friends of Zambian Orphans.

James Hormuzdiar, 38 (’94 B.A. in political science), Rochester, N.Y.: associate professor of optics and pioneering researcher in black metals, University of Rochester.


Dr. Yifrah Kaminer, co-director of research in the Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry at the Health Center, says that in teenagers, the area of the brain essential for critical thinking is not yet fully developed.

Administration showing that the rate of crashes per mile driven by 16- and 17-year-old drivers is almost 10 times the rate for drivers ages 30 to 39.

New Jersey, the only state with a minimum driving age of 17, has reported a reduction of teen driving fatalities. It has 4.4 deaths per 100,000 youth attributed to driving, compared with Connecticut at 20.7 deaths.

As young people reach puberty, they say no to their car-loving teen.


Kristin Hoffman, ’38 (’98 J.D. in law), Marlborough, Conn.: attorney with a practice in federal immigration law, member of the Board of Governors, and Connecticut chapter chair of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

M. Scott Holcomb, ’35 (’94 B.A. in political science), Atlanta, Ga.: general counsel, J.P. Turner & Co. LLC and former chief of international and operations law, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps in Kuwait.

James Hormuzdiar, ’38 (’94 B.S. in electrical engineering and mathematics), Hayward, Calif.: co-founder of Robot Genius, security software company in Oakland, Calif.

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The proof lies in the fact that accidents involving cars driven by 16- to 19-year-olds account for the deaths of 13 teenagers every day.

Kaminer notes that the minimum age for renting a car is 25 years.

“Isn’t it ironic that the industry reached that conclusion a long time ago, even before brain-imaging technology became so pervasive and persuasive?” he asks.

“Why is the legal age for drinking alcohol 21 years, while the legal driving age is 16 and even lower in some states?”

Kaminer is reaching out to state legislators in hopes of garnering support in the General Assembly. He has also been talking to community groups about the issue, and has speaking engagements planned at the University of Massachusetts and Yale.

When he speaks to parents, he points out the obvious safety benefits, as well as saving on hefty insurance rates, car payments, and fuel costs. He also suggests an aggresive awareness campaign to inform or empower parents to “just say no” to their car-loving teen.

Outstanding alumni continued from page 1

Stacey Violante Cote, 36 (’00 M.S.W. in social work, ’01 J.D. in law), Collingsville, Conn.: staff attorney at the Center for Children’s Advocacy Inc., and project director for the Center’s Teen Legal Advocacy Clinic in Hartford.

Margaret Drozdowski, 35 (’98 D.M.D. in dental medicine), Farmington, Conn.: dental director, Community Health Center Inc. of Connecticut.

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Communications professor studies dark side of relationships

BY SHERRY FISHER

Melissa Tafoya has always been drawn to the dark side of human behavior.

"I study the real-life stuff – infidelity, jealousy, aggression, and conflict," says Tafoya, an assistant professor of communication sciences.

Tafoya, who joined the UConn faculty in 2007, earned her bachelor’s and Ph.D. degrees in communication from Arizona State University’s Hugh Downs School of Human Communication. She has a long-standing interest in behavioral research.

"Interpersonal communication is an interdisciplinary science, and since I was interested in psychology, sociology, and family studies, communication was a good fit for me," she says. "The field is broad and diverse."

Tafoya, who describes her research interests as eclectic, is working on several different studies.

In one project, she is examining the variations in siblings’ experiences and interactions across different relationship types, including half, full, and step-siblings, in nuclear, divorced, and remarried families.

"Siblings are your longest lasting relationship," Tafoya says. "You’re stuck with your full siblings. They’re your siblings no matter what. But with step-siblings there is more of a choice in terms of the kind of relationship you can have with them."

She also conducts research on the experiences of jealousy, envy, and rivalry in families, friend-ships, and romantic relationships.

Her most recent study examined infidelity in romantic relationships. She conducted a study with a researcher from San Diego State University on what is called ‘communicative infidelity’. The term was coined to describe an infidelity committed to send a message to a partner.

"The person is unhappy but doesn’t want to divorce or have an affair or anything. They are considering another relationship without telling the partner about it," Tafoya said.

"We found that participants’ stress levels were significantly reduced when they wrote a letter of affection to somebody they cared about," she said.

Tafoya says much of her research is in areas that are under-studied.

"I’m interested in the things that we just don’t know too much about," she says, "or where there are large gaps."

Tafoya says teaching is one of her passions. This semester, she is teaching undergraduate courses on conflict management and negotiation, and interpersonal communication.

She also teaches graduate courses on interpersonal communication theory and interpersonal communication.

The interpersonal communication course includes an examination of identity, attraction, and love, as well as jealousy and infidelity.

In that course, she tells stories about her own life, and has the students write about concepts and theories, then apply them to their own experiences.

"I’ve had students tell me they left abusive relationships after taking my interpersonal communication course," she says, "and others who’ve said it changed their lives. Everything I teach is applicable. The students take what they’ve learned in class and really think about it and talk about it."

For one of the assignments in that class, students have to find an article about relationships published in a magazine like Cosmopolitan or Maxim. They then compare and contrast the advice given in the magazine article to scholarly journal articles.

"The students learn that the majority of articles in these magazines are oversimplified, and much of the time there are no similarities between the articles and the scholarly research," Tafoya says. "For example, in magazines like Cosmo, there are articles about what a man finds attractive in a woman. They’re very sexist, and promote stereotypical gender roles. That’s just not what the research is showing."

The focus of her conflict management and negotiation class is on positive aspects of conflict. "When most people think about conflict, they think about how it makes us and us negative," she says, "but we don’t spend much time on that."

Instead, she teaches students ways to manage conflict constructively – in their own relationships, in organizations, and in intercultural interactions.

"We talk about the negative stuff too," she says, "but I want them to know that class being able to manage conflict situations in an effective and appropriate manner."

Outstanding alumni continued from page 4

member of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 5th Congressional district in Connecticut.

Ilia O’Hearn, 37 (’93 B.A. in business, ’04 J.D. in law), Manchester, Conn. – associate in the financial restructuring group at Bracellw & Giuliani, an international law firm, and president of the Connecticut Hispanic Bar Association.


Eric Owles, 34 (’98 B.A. in journalism and political science), Brooklyn, N.Y. – chief multimedia producer for NYTimes.com and war correspondent covering Iraq for the blog, “Baghdad Bureau: Iraq from the Inside.”

Dawn Plucker, 38 (’91 B.S. in chemistry; ’92 M.A. in special education), Bloomington, Ind. – prolific researcher and professor of educational psychology and cognitive science at Indiana University.

Althea Marshall Richardson, 38 (’91 B.S. in human development and family studies; ’91 M.A. in education, and family studies), New Haven: president and CEO of Empower New Haven, a nonprofit that administers more than $27 million in federally-funded development grants to low-income neighborhoods.

Craig Rodner, 34 (’00 M.D. in medicine), Simsbury, Conn. – assistant professor in the department of orthopaedic surgery in the New England Musculoskeletal Institute at the UConn Health Center, specializing in hand, wrist, and upper extremity problems.

Carlos Rodrigues, 34 (’95 B.S. in accounting), Naugatuck, Conn. – principal and chief financial officer of Pequot Capital Management and CFO of Pequot Ventures in Westport, Conn.

Richard Ruiz, 36 (’98 M.F.A. in acting), Astoria, N.Y. – actor who has performed at many of the nation’s leading repertory companies, including The Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, and the New York Public Theatre, and who has performed in leading roles with national touring theatrical productions.

Christine Sannesevera, 36 (’95 B.S. in Business Engineering), Rosindale, Mass. – senior enforcement officer in the Air Technical Unit of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Elizabeth Flynn Scott, 39 (’91 B.A. in psychology), Wynnewood, Pa. – co-founder of Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation, named in memory of her late daughter, which has raised more than $18 million to support research and awareness for childhood cancer.

Matthew H. Small, 36 (’08 M.B.A., ’09 J.D., combined business and law degrees), Washington, D.C. – chief legal officer and secretary, Blackboard Inc., provider of enterprise software and systems integration services to host online classes at universities and corporations.

Peter Tesori, 39 (’91 B.A. in political science), Greenwich, Conn. – First Selectman of Greenwich, after serving 18 years in the banking industry.

Anthony Uliano, 38 (’93 B.A. in finance), Richmond, Va. – co-founder, president and chief technology officer of AMC Technology, named one of the fastest growing young companies in the United States.

Fahd Vahidy, 34 (’93 B.S. in human development and family studies; ’98 M.A. in educational psychology), Bridgeport, Conn. – executive director of Public Allies of Connecticut, which prepares young adults for careers working for community and social change.

Marcela de Jesus Vergara-Jimenez, 39 (’98 Ph.D. in nutritional sciences), Cuilican Sinodal, Mexico: professor of nutrition sciences and department head of nutritional sciences at the Autonomous University of Sinaloa, Mexico.

Alicia A. Young, 36 (’95 B.A. in communication sciences), New York, N.Y. – executive vice president and head of the consumer technology division for Ruder Finn Group, the second-largest independent public relations firm in the world.
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<th>Principal Investigator</th>
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**GRANTS**

The following grants were received through the Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) in July 2008. The list represents only new proposals awarded, and excludes continuations. The list is supplied to the Advance each month by OSP.

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**Notes**

- **A** indicates Continuous Developmental Infrastructure Program (CDIP) funds awarded.
- **C.** indicates a Center or IDP award.
- **D.** indicates a Discontinuous Grant development award.
- **E.** indicates a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant.
- **F.** indicates a Federal Agency/Other grant.
- **G.** indicates a Graduate Fellowship award.

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**Photo**

Kerry Duffy, a sophomore majoring in civil engineering, studies near West Complex.
Admissions counselor helps students make UConn their choice

By SHERRY FISHER

Jayson Hodge, admissions counselor, won an award for excellence in college admissions counseling.

“Suzy has worked hard to better the management. But one of her achievements I like to read in front of the morning, “she says. “In the winter, I read anywhere.”

And what does she read? Science, history, novels, non-fiction, and lately, now she has grandchildren, a lot of children’s books.

In between reading and making pots and gardening at her home in Ashford, Staubach is a writer. Before her career at the Co-op, she wrote for magazines, including Parents, Seventeen, and the Farmers’ Almanac. Since then she has written two books, Clay (2001), and Connecticut, Driving Through History (2001). Now she is building a sunken garden in an old stone foundation on her property, and writing a book about that experience and about the history of sunken gardens.

In the 27 years she has worked at the Co-op, Staubach has watched bookselling become computerized. Today, book inventory is no longer recorded on index cards, and used books are not located by advertising – for $1 a line – in a special monthly publication and awaiting a response. Staubach says a recent trend that hasn’t been widely publicized is that young people and college students are reading more than they did five years ago.

We had it in mud huts. We have it in movies. You still have novels. When you read them, you are in your head and you are in the book. You still have novels. You’re buying classics and reading more than they did a few years ago.”

Hodge says his job offers him the opportunity to help others. “It’s an industry full of phenomenal people who are dedicated to making students’ lives better by giving them educational opportunities.”

“I especially enjoy getting a thank you letter from a student I’ve admitted, or seeing a student at an orientation session and knowing that they’re happy and made the right choice,” he says.

Hodge also trains recent UConn graduates to do recruiting, and has taught an FYE course on life skills for four years.

He recently received the William S. Neal Award for Excellence in College Admission Counseling. The award, from the New England Association for College Admission Counseling (NEACAC), is given to an individual in the field who has demonstrated a “true commitment to students, their institution, and career.”

He also served as an assembly delegate to NEACAC, taught new admissions counselors at the organization’s week-long summer institute, was planning committee co-chair of the group’s annual meeting, and has served on several committees.

Staubach weaves experience, interests into job of selling books

By KAREN A. GRAVA


All of them are intertwined into her head as head of the General Books Department at the UConn Co-op.

Staubach, honored Sept. 21 by the Connecticut Children’s Book Fair, a member of the board of Curbstone Press, past president of the Connecticut Center for the Book and the New England Booksellers Association, and has served two terms on the American Booksellers Foundation for Freedom of Expression.

“Suzy’s greatest crop consists of readers, few of whom know how long she has worked to interest others in books.”

Staubach says picking books to sell in the store is more of an art than a science. There are lots of catalogues and barrages of e-mails that come from publishers; advance reading copies; and trade shows where authors discuss their books and publishers provide galleys.

“We try to pick what we think audiences want,” she says.

Staubach, who began working at the Co-op as a cashier, moved into the book department once her bookaholic nature became apparent to the management. But one of the biggest misconceptions about her job is that she has time to read during work.

“I read at night and in the morning,” she says. “In the winter, I like to read in front of the wood stove. In the summer, I read anywhere.”

And what does she read? Science, history, novels, non-fiction, and lately, now she has grandchildren, a lot of children’s books.

In between reading and making pots and gardening at her home in Ashford, Staubach is a writer. Before her career at the Co-op, she wrote for magazines, including Parents, Seventeen, and the Farmers’ Almanac. Since then she has written two books, Clay (2001), and Connecticut, Driving Through History (2001). Now she is building a sunken garden in an old stone foundation on her property, and writing a book about that experience and about the history of sunken gardens.

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There are five other officers in freshmen admissions. Each officer tries to read about 60 applications a day, he says.

Hodge says his job offers him the opportunity to help others. “It’s an industry full of phenomenal people who are dedicated to making students’ lives better by giving them educational opportunities.”

“I especially enjoy getting a thank you letter from a student I’ve admitted, or seeing a student at an orientation session and knowing that they’re happy and made the right choice,” he says.

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Suzy Staubach, manager of general books at the UConn Co-op.

For a list of some of Staubach’s favorite books, go to www.advance.uconn.edu.

Jayson Hodge, admissions counselor, won an award for excellence in college admissions counseling.