UConn 2000 bond issue highly popular with investors

BY RICHARD VELLEUX
Officials representing the University on April 16 closed on a $144.9 million bond sale for UConn 2000 projects in one of the most successful sales yet of UConn 2000 bonds.

The sale was so successful, says John Sullivan, UConn’s manager of treasury services, that the sales window was shortened from three days to two, and University officials, working with the State Treasurer’s office, were able to negotiate down the interest rate the state will have to pay buyers to 4.01 per cent — one of the lowest rates in the history of the program. Including original issue premiums, the bond sale will support $150 million in projects.

“The tremendous success of the sale demonstrates investor confidence in both the bonds as an investment and in the University as an institution,” Sullivan says.

Denise Nappier, the State Treasurer, adds, “The tremendous success of the sale demonstrates investor confidence in both the University and the renewal of our campuses’ infrastructures. Sullivan says.

“The sale was so successful, says John Sullivan, UConn’s manager of treasury services, that the sales window was shortened from three days to two, and University officials, working with the State Treasurer’s office, were able to negotiate down the interest rate the state will have to pay buyers to 4.01 per cent — one of the lowest rates in the history of the program. Including original issue premiums, the bond sale will support $150 million in UConn 2000 projects.

Alert systems working well

BY KAREN A. GRIFFIN
The test of the University’s Alert Notification System last week was very successful, with 88 percent of Storrs campus faculty, staff, and students saying they received notice of the test within 10 minutes.

The test was the first time all the components of the Alert Notification System were tested at the same time. The system includes sirens and code blue phones on the Storrs and Depot campuses, text messages, e-mail, the alert banner system on University Web pages, and voice mail and/or recorded messages on the emergency telephone line, 860-486-3768.

In a survey after the test taken by 2,719 people, 88 percent said they were notified by one or more forms of Alert communication.

Spring graduation speakers announced

BY RICHARD VELLEUX
Timothy Shriver, chairman and chief executive officer of Special Olympics, will deliver the commencement address to more than 2,500 students in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences during graduation ceremonies May 10.

Shriver, who earned his doctorate in special education from UConn in 1997, also will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree during the dual ceremonies in the Harry A. Gampel Pavilion, at 12:30 and 4:30 p.m.

On May 9, Robert Sternberg, dean of the Tufts University School of Arts and Sciences and an internationally recognized scholar and professor in the fields of psychology, education, and management, will deliver the commencement address to more than 1,700 graduate students. The ceremony begins at 1 p.m. in Gampel Pavilion. Sternberg will also receive an honorary Doctor of Science degree, and this year’s Board of Trustees Distinguished Professors will be recognized.

Overall, including the schools of law, medicine, and dental medicine, nearly 7,000 UConn students will receive degrees during ceremonies on May 9 and 10 in Storrs and May 17 in Hartford. Similar to last year, each school and college will host a ceremony for its graduating seniors, with its own speaker.

The CLAS ceremony, with 2,548 eligible for graduation, is by far the largest of the schools. Its speaker, Shriver, has led Special Olympics for 11 years. During that period, he has helped the movement grow to include more than 2.5 million athletes and their families in more than 180 countries.

He also created Special Olympics Healthy Athletes, the world’s largest public health screening and education program for people with intellectual disabilities.

After earning his doctorate at UConn Shriver created the New Haven public schools’ Social Development Project, and co-founded the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, the leading research organization in the country in the field of social and emotional learning. He currently chairs the collaborative.

Sternberg, the graduate school speaker, was formerly IBM Professor of Psychology and Education in the Department of Psychology at Yale. He is also a past president of the American Psychological Association.
Fire and building inspectors ensure safety of University structures

BY KAREN A. GRAVA
All University buildings are constantly checked to make sure they are safe for living and working, according to Robert Hudd, associate vice president for public and environmental safety. “Our inspection and remediation protocols exemplify current best practice,” Hudd notes. “The fire and building inspectors responsible for ensuring the safety of our buildings are among Connecticut’s most capable professionals in their respective disciplines.”

When the University discovered in 2000 that several of the residence halls built with UConn 2000 authority had fire and building code discrepancies, significant investments in code enforcement and organizational changes were made to prevent a recurrence. Although discrepancies remain, none jeopardizes the life or safety of building occupants, says Hudd. “If any condition in any University building constitutes a serious life-safety threat, neither the University’s building and fire inspectors, nor the state’s building and fire inspectors, nor I would allow the building to be occupied,” he says.

The University first became aware of code discrepancies four years ago when repairing gas water heaters at Hilltop Apartments. The discrepancies were reported to the trustees, state officials, and the governor. At the governor’s direction, all buildings built or renovated with UConn 2000 funds were then inspected for both building and fire code discrepancies. As part of the plan to accomplish this, the University made a significant investment to develop a strong and independent code inspection group, says Hudd. The group, based at the Depot Campus, includes UConn building code officials and fire inspectors and representatives of the state Department of Public Safety, including state building and fire code officials.

The inspectors work in concert with Department of Public Safety officials and meet at least every two weeks with UConn’s Office of Architectural and Engineering Services to monitor progress on resolving outstanding discrepancies. Any building discovered to have a code discrepancy that jeopardizes life-safety is remodeled immediately, Hudd says. Buildings with discrepancies that must be corrected but which are not a life-safety threat are subject to corrective action plans approved by both University and state code officials. Those problems are then referred back to the architect and the construction company to fix at no cost to the University.

In many cases, Architectural and Engineering Services officials are involved in designing state-of-the-art fire alarm systems, often consulting with the Fire Department to enhance the protection those systems offer by incorporating features that complement emergency response procedures. The alarm systems replace fire alarms that were in compliance when the buildings were originally constructed but which, while they may meet code, no longer provide the best available protection. Most UConn residence halls are equipped with fire sprinkler systems. Mansefield and Northwood Apartments are not, but sprinklers will be installed there this summer.

All residence halls have “addressable” fire alarm systems—alarms that ring in the fire station and indicate the type of problem and where it is. The Fire Department’s response time on campus is approximately two minutes, McGovern says. The combination of sprinklers, fire alarm systems, and the department’s rapid response time provide optimum safety to our community, he adds.

“The Office of the State Building Inspector and her predecessor have repeatedly assured the Construction Management Oversight Committee of the Board of Trustees that they are fully satisfied with the progress of UConn’s inspection and remediation actions,” Hudd says.

The Construction Management Oversight Committee reviews and approves University policies and procedures under which the UConn 2000 program operates, including the selection of design professionals and contractors, contract compliance, building and fire code compliance, deferred maintenance, project and program budgets and schedules, and change orders.

Fire and building inspectors ensure safety of University structures continued from page 1

Commencement plans of the American Psychological Association.

On May 17 at 10:30 a.m., nearly 300 students who will be eligible to receive Juris Doctor or Master of Laws degrees will be addressed by Sheila Bair, chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. since 2006. Bair was previously Dean’s Professor of Financial Regulatory Policy at the Isenberg School of Management at UMass–Amherst. She has also held senior positions at the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the New York Stock Exchange, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. At 2 p.m. on May 17, more than 100 students will be awarded medical or dental degrees during ceremonies at the Connecticut Convention Center. They will be addressed by Kent Batchelder, founder and chief executive officer of Genomic Healthcare Strategies, a company specializing in the changes in healthcare resulting from advances in molecular medicine.

Batchelder graduated from the UConn School of Dental Medicine in 1979. He holds a master’s degree in biomaterials from New York University.

In Storrs, the schools of fine arts and pharmacy, and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, will celebrate their students’ achievements on May 9. The schools of business, education, engineering, and nursing and the Center for Continuing Studies will hold ceremonies on Storrs on May 10. At 9 a.m. May 9, Victor Yanchek, dean of Virginia Commonwealth University’s School of Pharmacy, will address UConn’s doctor of pharmacy students in the Lewis B. Rome Ballroom. At 4 p.m., the School of Pharmacy will celebrate students who have earned bachelor of science degrees from the school, also in the Rome Ballroom. They will be addressed by Jennifer Osowiecki, a health-care and litigation attorney and a partner in the Hartford law firm of For Osowiecki.

Gary English, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor, artistic director of the Connecticut Repertory Theatre, and head of the Department of Dramatic Arts will deliver the commencement address to graduates of the School of Fine Arts. The ceremony will be held in Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts on May 9, beginning at 5 p.m. William Finch, mayor of Bridgeport, who holds a master’s degree in agricultural economics from UConn, will deliver the commencement address to students from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The ceremony will be held in Gampel Pavilion on May 9, starting at 6 p.m.

On May 10 at 9 a.m., John Kim, president and chief executive officer of New York Life Investments, who earned his MBA from UConn, will be keynote speaker during the graduation ceremony for the School of Business. The event, honoring more than 600 graduates, will be held in Gampel Pavilion.

Also at 9 a.m. May 10, in the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts, Richard Schwab, the outgoing dean of the School of Education, will address students graduating with degrees in education.

The School of Engineering will hold a ceremony on May 10 at 12:30 p.m. in Jorgensen Auditorium for more than 300 graduates. Sharon Nunes, vice president of Big Green Innovations at IBM, will address the graduates.

At 2:30 p.m. May 10, the Center for Continuing Studies will honor more than 300 students who have earned bachelor of general studies degrees. The event, to be held in the Lewis B. Rome Ballroom, will feature an address by Chan- dred Howard, president and chief executive officer of Liberty Bank, who earned a BGS from UConn in 1992.

And, at 4 p.m. on May 10, Eleonor Kohn, hermeneutic curator of the School of Nursing’s Josephine A. Dolan Collection of artifacts and emeritus professor of nursing, will deliver the keynote address during the school’s ceremony in Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts.
The Connecticut Repertory Theatre (CRT) will restart its summer series with a presentation of the musical show *Crowns* June 11-21, in the Harriet S. Jorgensen Theatre. The Nutmeg Summer Series is a highly popular summer theater series that featured musicals and plays presented in the Harriet S. Jorgensen Theatre during the summer as far back as the late 1940’s. The series was suspended for the 2002 season for financial reasons, but a new financial format that includes major support from the University and private donors has enabled the series to return with one show this season. CRT intends to return to a full season Summer Nutmeg Series of three or more shows in 2010.

*Crowns*, by Regina Taylor, adapted from the book by Michael Cunningham and Craig Marberry, is an exploration of history and identity. The story of one young woman’s return to the South, where she dramatizes her education into the ritualized world of hats as an expression of cultural identity. A young woman in tragedy, a Brooklyn teen is sent to her grandmother’s house in South Carolina. Her journey of cultural and self-discovery is timed to a church day, from morning to the evening processional, featuring a wedding, a funeral, and a baptism. The hats, or "crowns," are worn by six women whose stories are woven into their headwear. The show features music ranging from freedom song to hip hop. The production is being co-produced by CRT in collaboration with Indiana Repertory Theatre and Syracuse Stage. It will feature a full professional cast and professional musicians who will perform the show in Indianapolis and Syracuse before arriving in Storrs June 11.

Tickets to *Crowns* are now on sale and can be purchased by calling 860-486-4226 or online at www.crt.uconn.edu. For specific show dates and times, please call or visit the box office because performances schedules vary and are subject to change.

CRT is the professional production arm of the Department of Dramatic Arts at the University of Connecticut, Storrs. CRT productions are directed, designed, and cast with visiting professional artists, including Equity actors, faculty members, and the department’s most advanced student artists. The Open Sports Medicine Journal has been named editor of widely used exercise reference guide

**by Robert A. Frimm**

Known for her expertise on exercise and fitness, Linda Pescatello has been named editor of a prescriptive exercise guidebook widely used in medicine, athletics, and fitness programs. Pescatello, a professor of kinesiology, becomes the first woman to be named senior editor of the *Guidelines for Exercise Testing and Prescription*, a reference guide published by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). Pescatello has focused her career on examining the connection between exercise and health — an interest that evolved after her days playing softball, basketball, and tennis as an undergraduate at UConn in the 1970's. The guidebook is considered the bible of exercise protocol for professionals in clinical exercise testing and rehabilitation, exercise science, and other health-related fields.

Pescatello has been a contributor and associate editor of the guidebook’s eighth edition. She now will head the production of the ninth edition, scheduled for publication in 2013.

"It’s an honor," she says. "In terms of having an impact, it’s really nice to be able to do that in your field." The guidebook is used by physicians, nurses, physical therapists, exercise specialists, athletic trainers, health fitness professionals, and others. Pescatello notes that the guidelines are often used in clinical settings where people are stress tested, or exercise is used as a healthy lifestyle intervention — for example, cardiac rehabilitation.

It is also the primary reference for ACSM certification of health and exercise professionals working in preventive and rehabilitative programs.

One of the goals of the eighth edition, Pescatello says, was to condense the hardcover book. Instead of the large, inclusive resource book it had become in earlier editions, editors pared it down, making it a quick, easy-to-read guide containing references to other more detailed scientific resource documents and manuals published by the ACSM. The editorial board sought to create “something you could stick in your lab coat,” she says, “short and sweet and to the point.” Her appointment as editor is the latest recognition of Pescatello’s status in the field of exercise and health. She is an authority on a range of issues, including ongoing research funded by the American Heart Association on the effect of exercise in lowering high blood pressure. She has authored or contributed to hundreds of articles in professional journals, and has worked on the editorial boards of publications such as ACSM’s *Health & Fitness Journal, The American Journal of Medicine & Sports, and The Open Sports Medicine Journal.*
Study to look at effects of smoking on high blood pressure

BY MAUREEN MCGUIRE

Health Center researchers are looking for smokers who want to kick the habit and have also been diagnosed with high blood pressure.

The researchers are seeking study participants diagnosed with either pre-hypertension or stage one hypertension.

Co-investigators Drs. William White, Nancy Petry, and Sheila Alessi and a team of researchers will measure the impact of smoking and smoking cessation on blood pressure, using a 24-hour blood pressure monitoring device, and at the same time, compare two approaches to helping smokers quit. The four-year study is supported by a National Institutes of Health grant to the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center.

Dr. William White, right, confers with a patient. White is a co-investigator on an NIH-funded study that will look at the relationship between smoking, quitting, and high blood pressure.

Engineer’s research targets wireless networks and security

BY NAM COOPER

Appoios Kiayias, assistant professor of computer science & engineering in the School of Engineering, has received three new grants from the National Science Foundation for research aimed at improving the security of data transmitted and stored electronically. The grants, which total more than $400,000, build upon Kiayias' ongoing cyber-security research.

One project focuses on wireless networks. These networks, commonly found in Internet cafes, hotels and meeting facilities, offices, universities, and homes, permit the use of laptop computers, Bluetooth devices, and the like without the need for plug-ins. The system relies on interface cards housed within the computing devices that permit data transmission via radio waves. While these systems feature some degree of security, they are far from immune to the dangers of data breaching.

Together with Bülent Yener of Rensselaer and the ITI Institute, Kiayias is seeking to develop better encryption methods to combat the widespread problem of data breaching, which carries with it significant risks of identity theft and costs businesses and individuals billions of dollars each year. Their work will focus on the relationship between the channel characteristics and the cryptographic protocols that use them, and will consider the economic trade-offs between the costs of adding greater cryptographic security to a network and the costs of communicative operations. They expect to develop methods that rely less on computational encryption and require less energy, thus extending the life of the battery or alternative power source.

By building effective security measures, Kiayias and Malkin will focus on better understanding how algorithmically based encryption methods can be improved so that they are easier to implement, offer better rates of data transfer, and are more effective in combating common cyber attacks.

Kiayias says many cryptographic methods are analyzed in isolation, without taking into account real-world attack scenarios, and that this leads many security-conscious companies to install external tamper-resistance methods that are typically costly or unreliable.

To build effective security measures, Kiayias and Malkin will extend existing models of cryptographic attacks to include various forms of private data tampering and access, thereby allowing them to construct encryption methods that permit easy data sharing while offering affordable security.

Kiayias is also co-principal investigator, with RPI’s Yener, on a third NSF-funded project involving secure and auditable privacy contracts. The grant was awarded under NSF’s Small Grants for Exploratory Research program.

“Millions of users pass their personal information daily over the Internet to their health-care providers, banks, insurance companies, and other service providers,” Kiayias says. “Once this information is transferred, in many cases it is outsourced to other parties, some of whom may even reside in foreign countries, for storage and processing. The data may then be sold or resold for data mining.”

Data producers – customers and patients – have no control over access to and use of such private and sensitive data. To enhance the security and transparency of these operations, Kiayias and Yener will introduce a mechanism known as secure and auditable privacy contracting, a method that can be used to define a tradeoff between privacy and data mining.

Kiayias says this type of tradeoff can be negotiated and customized between data sources and data miners, by allowing the company to set permissions and define the specific functions that can be performed with personal records.

“IT aims to bridge the need for privacy with the need for data collection, transfer, marketing, and processing, thus enabling sensitive private data to be treated as a commodity,” he says.

Kiayias heads the School of Engineering’s Crypto-DRM laboratory, which is dedicated to studying the cryptographic aspects of copyright technologies and digital rights management systems. He joined UConn as a visiting assistant professor in 2002 after receiving his Ph.D. from the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and took up a tenure track position here in 2003. In addition to the three new NSF grants, he also currently holds an NSF CAREER award.
Impact of apologies on world politics focuses of historian’s book

BY SCOTT BRINCKERHOFF

Offering and receiving apologies are part of everyday life, but when apologies involve – or don’t – on the international scene, they may trigger a whole new round of friction.

UCONN’s Alexis Dudden, an associate professor of history, is studying the forces at work when citizens, politicians, or pressure groups demand that a government apologize for acts that often go back decades.

Her new book, Troubled Apologies Among Japan, Korea, and the United States, looks at the phenomena of apologies “from a northeast Asian perspective.”

She uses the case of several tiny islands claimed by both Korea and Japan to illustrate how symbolic issues can stir up historical resentments, add to regional instability, and undermine the potential benefits of diplomacy or apologies.

The uninhabited islands, about 100 kilometers from the mainland, are variously known as Dokdo, Takeshima, or the Liancourt Rocks. Other than hosting a weather station and serving as a rocky lookout, they have no special value.

Yet, Dudden says, they are the subject of “quite violent rhetoric” between Tokyo and Seoul “because they aggravate pre-World War II memories of Japanese imperialism.

The United States has also been dragged into the conflict because of its alliances with both nations.

“War over these islands is unlikely, but an accidental conflict is likely, but an accidental conflict is

The issue of whether to apologize, and how, is not necessarily confined to the parties directly involved. Having assumed responsibilities for the region after World War II, the United States found itself under pressure to apologize or take public positions on several issues, including the internment of Japanese-American citizens on U.S. soil, the comfort women, and the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

On the internment issue, President Reagan signed a Congressional resolution of apology, much to the dismay of then-Vice President George H.W. Bush, who was shot down by a Japanese fighter plane during the war. The U.S. government, with Dudden’s prompting and counsel, also formally asked the Japanese government to issue a suitable apology to the comfort women and their heirs, despite the anger the move caused on both sides of the political spectrum in Japan, a valued ally.

Much of that anger, Dudden says, stems from the U.S. refusal to apologize for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. When House Speaker Nancy Pelosi joined other lawmakers in laying wreaths at Hiroshima in 2008, Dudden notes, she did not say a word.

Art historian explores social dimensions of Asian American art

BY SHERIDY FISHER

A new book by Margo Machida explores the work of contemporary Asian American visual artists.


“Unsettled Visions grew out of my involvement with contemporary Asian American artists and artists’ groups over several decades,” says Machida, a curator, writer, and activist scholar.

“I examine how these Asian American artists conceptualize the world and position themselves as cultural and historical subjects through the language of visual art,” she says. “I think of art as being a social product, coming out of lived experience and peoples’ times and their relationship to those times. That’s the starting point of my research 1 do.”

Pioneering role

Machida’s interest in Asian American art blossomed in the 1970’s, when she was living in New York’s Chinatown.

“There was a flood of Asian migration to New York,” she says. “I started to write about Asian American art and began to curate shows. One thing led to another. It’s a long and complex history.”

She says that her work as a curator and her writing, teaching, and historical research on Asian American visual culture are all interrelated: “They feed one another, and this book is the result of all my interests over the years.”

In addition to the publication of her new book this year, Machida has been honored for her significant academic achievements: She was one of five recipients in the nation to receive a prestigious Women’s Caucus for Art Lifetime Achievement Award, given in conjunction with the College Art Association’s annual conference in February.

She was recognized for her pioneering role in defining the field of Asian American Art and visual culture.

Shifting identities

Machida’s research for the Unsettled Visions book included extensive interviews with Asian American artists.

“We co-interpreted their art and I analyzed and compared the raw material from the interviews,” she says. “It does reveal the experiences and the demographic and cultural shifts of people who are Asian American in this culture. It does reveal the experiences and the demographic and cultural shifts of people who are Asian American in this culture.”

Some of the artists are immigrants or refugees; others are fourth, fifth, and sixth-generation Asian Americans.

“What’s interesting is that these artists’ sense of Asian American identity is not fixed in any particular way,” she says. “Their conceptions of identity shifted continually over time and in relation to changing conditions, and that became a major premise of the book. There isn’t any particular idea about identity that necessarily defines Asian American consciousness.”

Social themes

Machida says the book is divided into three thematic chapters: representations of the other; social memory and trauma; and migration, diaspora, and sense of place.

The book focuses on artworks produced during the watershed period of the 1990’s.

“By that time, new migration from Asian diaspors, precipitated by the change in federal immigration laws in 1965, had transformed the demographics of the local contours of Asian America,” she says. “The Asian immigrant population eclipsed those who were American-born. There was a growing influence of Asian nations and things Asian. And the growing presence of foreign-born Asian artists was beginning to have a marked impact on the American art world.”

She says the book, which is extensively illustrated with color plates, is one of the first books of its length that deals with social themes in contemporary Asian American art and visual culture.

“I think it will expose people to images they haven’t seen,” she says. “On another level, because it does reveal the experiences and the stories of different individuals of Asian background, it gives the reader some personal insight into the many and often very different life trajectories that have brought these artists to the present moment.”

Photo by Frans G. Dauwe for Machida

Alexis Dudden, associate professor of history, outside Wood Hall.

Photo by Bruce Minnich
Upgrades, and renovations at most of the regional campuses.

The bonds were purchased primarily by retail, or individual, investors, says Sullivan.

“We’ve had tremendous retail demand – I mean tremendous,” Sullivan said. “This is rather a large bond issue for us, but we weren’t in the market last year so I think there’s a lot of pent-up demand for UConn bonds.”

In the end, about 75 percent of the bonds were sold to individual investors, many of them from Connecticut, one of the highest proportions since the UConn 2000 program began in 1996. Sullivan says retail investors are preferred because they tend to buy and hold the bonds, rather than trading them, as is likely when financial institutions purchase them. This tends to make the secondary supply of bonds scarce, which helps drive demand for new bond issues when they come to market and assists the University in obtaining favorable financing terms in the future.

### UConn 2000 bond sale continued from page 1

#### GRANTS

The following grants were received through the Office for Sponsored Programs (OSP) in February 2009. 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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<tr>
<th>P.I.</th>
<th>Department</th>
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#### Alert systems test continued from page 1

within 10 minutes. Most received the text message first.

The text messages were received by 99 percent of the registered telephones within three minutes of the message being sent, according to Rave, the University’s text messaging provider.

“We are very pleased with the outcome of the test,” says Barry Feldman, vice president and chief operating officer. “It demonstrates that all of the components are working in the way we anticipated and that we are able to get notice of an emergency out to the community quickly.”

The redundant systems are designed so that most people will be notified by one or more components of the system, he said. The components will be tested each semester in the future. Tests of the Alert Notification Systems at the regional campuses are also being scheduled.
Monday, April 20, to Monday, April 27

Items for the weekly Advance Calendar are downloaded from the University’s online Events Calendar: http://events.uconn.edu/. Items must be submitted by the Monday before Monday in order for inclusion in the published following Monday’s Advance Calendar. Note: Events subject to change or cancellation. Please call event contacts for more information. Those interested in participating in events, Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed weekends.

Monday, April 20 – Film and Discussion.
Monday, April 20 – Film and Discussion.
Monday, April 20 – Film and Discussion.
Monday, April 20, 2009

Performing Arts
Monday, April 20 – Brass and Woodwind Ensemble.
Tuesday, April 21 – Dr. Noriko Cho in Conversation.
Thursday, April 23 – Swing Band.
Alexandra Cooper

A violinist, Cooper performed with the UConn Symphony Orchestra for several years. She also plays the piano and flute – just for fun.

She welcomed the fact that she could pursue her many interests at UConn.

“I’ve really liked the different opportunities available here,” she says. “I was able to study engineering, German, and music – all in one location. That’s not something you can find everywhere. … At UConn, there are so many avenues you can explore.”

Cooper says she enjoyed the faculty: “They are supportive, helpful, and accessible.”

She also likes the diversity on campus.

“Being a state university, UConn attracts a wide range of people from different backgrounds and walks of life,” says Cooper.

“Had I gone to school someplace else, I might not have experienced that.”

She says she met a variety of people through her academic and musical pursuits.

“People who are music majors are very different from engineering majors, and they, in turn, are different from German majors,” she says. “I’ve really enjoyed meeting a mix of people, and I’ve made good friends.”

Cooper was accepted to six graduate degree programs, all with full support. She has decided to attend Cornell University, where she’ll earn a doctoral degree in chemical engineering.

In the future, she hopes to combine working with computers with her chemical engineering background.

Jean-Paul Atallah

Two of Jean-Paul Atallah’s personal goals as a UConn student were to get involved and make a difference on campus.

A finance major in the School of Business, Atallah has done just that.

“Becoming involved in the Student Entrepreneurial Organization, now as president, has allowed me to help other students” he says. He is also actively involved in the Multicultural Business Society.

The Student Entrepreneurial Organization connects students with entrepreneurs from the region, such as the president of Munson’s Chocolates.

“We want our members to learn from the local entrepreneurs’ successes and failures,” Atallah says. “We want them to learn about getting start-up capital, how they marketed their business, and other tips.

“When a student comes up to me and says, ‘I loved that speaker,’ or ‘that field trip was amazing,’ it makes me feel very good,” he adds.

Atallah says running the Student Entrepreneurial Organization is like operating a small business: “We’re engaged in human resources, because we interview candidates for officer positions. We charge dues because we have limited resources and have to staff a budget. We also do event planning and marketing.”

For the first time this year, the School of Business is giving its own senior class gift. As a member of the 2009 Senior Class Gift Subcommittee, Atallah worked with the technology office in the business school to design a web site where seniors could vote for possible class gifts.

Atallah, who has been working at the Bursar’s office since his freshman year, began his college career studying engineering, but switched first to studying management in the business school, and then to finance.

“I did an internship at a financial advising company during the summer, and that sealed the deal for me,” he says. “I knew that is what I wanted to become a financial advisor.”

He has already accepted a position at a financial company in Wethersfield.

Atallah’s advice to other students: “If you’re going to do something, it has to be something that you love. If you start a business, you’ll be spending 50, 60, or 70 hours a week at first. You really have to be committed.”

Benjamin Gruenbaum

Graduating senior Benjamin Gruenbaum plans to attend medical school. He has already tested his career choice.

He spent one summer during college as an emergency medical technician in Israel, as one of 40 students worldwide who were accepted into the Magen David Adom volunteer program.

He spent another summer as a fellow at Hartford Hospital, shadowing an anesthesiologist and observing a liver transplant, a heart transplant, and a Caissonian section delivery, among other things.

In between, the honors scholar and psychology major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was a three-time Babbidge Scholar (consecutive semesters of perfect 4.0 GPA) and a 2008 New England Scholar. Her GPA is 3.8.

Cooper has an honors student, a member of the academic honor society Phi Beta Kappa and the engineering honor society Tau Beta Pi, and a 2008 New England Scholar. Her GPA is 3.8.

Pi, and a 2008 New England Scholar. Her

Jessica Newcomb

She also likes the diversity on campus.

“Being a state university, UConn attracts a wide range of people from different backgrounds and walks of life,” says Cooper.

“She says she met a variety of people through her academic and musical pursuits.

“People who are music majors are very different from engineering majors, and they, in turn, are different from German majors,” she says. “I’ve really enjoyed meeting a mix of people, and I’ve made good friends.”

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