

February 12, 2020

UNIVERSITY-WIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The University is **closely monitoring developments related to the global spread of a novel coronavirus**. While there are no confirmed cases in this area, the University is now encouraging—across all five campuses—social distancing for two specific groups:
 1. Any individual who has returned from China since Jan. 21, 2020.
 2. Any individual who has reason to believe they were directly exposed to the novel coronavirus. These individuals should avoid the campus and campus functions for the full 14-day social distancing period. The latest guidance is always available on our Public Safety and Emergency Management webpage, www.emergency.pitt.edu/coronavirus.
- The University celebrates **Black History Month** with a variety of programming and activities across each campus throughout the month. A full list can be found at diversity.pitt.edu.
- Pitt's signature **K. Leroy Irvis Black History Month Program** will be a four-day festival from Feb. 26-29 celebrating art, music and poetry as a form of activism and social justice.
- The Office of the Provost and Office of Business and Operations have introduced the **Art on Campus** initiative to catalog public art on campus and make recommendations for future installations.
- Registration is open for the **2020 Mentoring and Advising Summit**, to be hosted by Pitt and CMU on March 5. The day-long summit explores the theme of Inclusive Excellence in Mentoring and Advising.
- **Pitt Day in Harrisburg** will be held March 17. The annual day of advocacy at the state capitol allows University supporters to speak directly to state legislators.

INSTITUTIONAL MILESTONES

- Pitt has been awarded the **Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement**, the most visible and selective recognition of community engagement efforts in higher education.
- The University has been named a **Fulbright Program Top Producing Institution** for the 2019-2020 academic year by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. This is the ninth time in 10 years that Pitt has been ranked in the U.S. Student Program category.
- The **School of Education** has received a \$1 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to elevate and promote the experiences of educators and students of color in academic research.
- With continued enhancements to the University's **safety management programs and employee training**, Pitt's Occupational Safety and Health Administration recordable injury rate decreased from 0.94 in 2018 to 0.83 in 2019, surpassing last year's record low.
- The Henry L. Hillman Foundation approved a \$1 million grant in support of the expansion of clinical facilities of the **Wellness and Integrative Oncology Program** at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center.
- **William K. "Bill"** (Trustee) and **Sissy Lieberman** pledged \$250,000 and **Michael G. Wells** (EDUC '90, G'92, Trustee) pledged \$250,000 in support of the Victory Heights project.

STUDENT MILESTONES

- **Thomas Freitag** (Dietrich School of the Arts), fourth-year student of neuroscience and psychology, has won the Kandlers Churchill Scholarship in Science Policy from the Winston Churchill Foundation of the United States. This is the second time in three years that a Pitt student has won this award.
- A new **graduate and professional student lounge** is open on the fifth floor of the William Pitt Union. The lounge is furnished with couches, chairs, work tables, a flatscreen television, and other amenities.

FACULTY AND STAFF MILESTONES

- Professor *emerita* **Toi Derricotte** (Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences) is the 2020 recipient of the Frost Medal for distinguished lifetime achievement in poetry.
- **Lisa Parker** (Pitt Public Health) and **Robert Arnold** (School of Medicine) were recently elected fellows of the Hastings Center, a nonprofit organization of research scholars studying ethical questions in medicine, science and technology that help inform policy, practice and public understanding.
- For the first time in the United States, School of Medicine faculty have implanted a patient with a wireless retinal device aimed at restoring partial sight to patients with age-related macular degeneration. **José-Alain Sahel** initiated the trial and **Joseph Martel** is the implanting surgeon and principal investigator.
- University researchers, led by **Kacey Marra** (School of Medicine), have created a biodegradable nerve guide filled with a growth-promoting protein that can regenerate long sections of damaged nerves without the need for transplanting stem cells or a donor nerve. The results of those experiments appeared Jan. 22 in *Science Translational Medicine*.
- **Allison Shertzer** (Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences) received a three-year, \$607,000 National Science Foundation grant to examine the evolution of real estate values and standard of living in the U.S. from 1880 to 1990.
- **Valerie Kinloch** (School of Education) will host a book launch event for her latest work, “Race, Justice, and Activism in Literacy Instruction,” on Tuesday, February 25, at 4 p.m. in 4303 Posvar Hall.
- **Kathy Humphrey**, senior vice chancellor for engagement, was awarded the Creating a Just Society Award by Equipoise, Pitt’s African American Affinity Group, at their annual Martin Luther King, Jr. luncheon.
- **E. Maxine Bruhns**, long-time director of the Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Program has announced her retirement. During her 54-year career at the University the Nationality Rooms flourished and she was instrumental in the expansion of the summer study abroad program.
- **Anjali Sachdeva** (Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences) is one of 36 writers awarded a 2020 creative writing fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.
- Pitt Jazz Studies Director **Nicole Mitchell** has been named a 2020 United States Artists Fellow. She is one of 50 artists across 10 disciplines to win the award this year.
- **Bopaya Bidanda** (School of Engineering) has been elected president of the Institute of Industrial and System Engineers, the largest professional society dedicated to industrial engineering. Bidanda, an IISE Fellow since 2002, will serve a three-year term.
- **Aurora Sharrard**, Pitt’s director of sustainability, will serve a two-year appointment on the advisory council of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.
- Pitt Johnstown wrestling coach **Pat Pecora** earned his 617th career victory on Friday night, breaking a 46-year-old record for most wins in college wrestling at any level. In his 44th season at Pitt-Johnstown, Pecora is 617-151-8. He passed former Oregon State coach Dale Thomas for the record across all NCAA divisions plus NAIA and junior college, with a 22-12 victory over Mercyhurst.

ALUMNI MILESTONES

- **Laura Watson** (A&S '95) has been appointed director of ecology for the state of Washington. Watson will oversee 1,700 state employees across 10 different environmental programs.
- **Kellie Ware-Seabron** (ED '06) has been named the executive director of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the NAACP. Ware-Seabron will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the local chapter of the historic civil rights organization.
- **Ryan McGarry** (MED '09) is the executive producer of a new Netflix documentary series “Pandemic: How to Prevent an Outbreak”. In addition to his work in cinematography, McGarry is an emergency medicine physician and a faculty member at Cornell University.