UNIVERSITY-WIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Association of American Universities will administer an online Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. All Pitt students can participate when the survey launches on Feb. 11; feedback from the survey will inform Pitt’s continued efforts to prevent and address sexual assault and misconduct on campus.
- Faculty and staff members across all Pitt campuses may submit 2019 Pitt Seed Project proposals that reflect a clear vision for advancing The Plan for Pitt. Selected proposals can receive up to $50,000 in funding support. A letter of intent, due Feb. 8, is required to start the application process.
- Jay Darr will step into the role of University Counseling Center director on Feb. 18. Darr will provide clinical and administrative leadership and oversee the strategic direction for the center.
- Jinx Walton will retire as chief information officer in February after more than 40 years with the University. Walton has been named a Pittsburgh CIO of the Year and one of Computerworld’s Premier Top 100 IT leaders.
- Nicole M. Mitchell will join the University on July 1 as director of the Jazz Studies Program and the William S. Dietrich II Endowed Chair in Jazz Studies in our Department of Music [Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences].

INSTITUTIONAL MILESTONES

- Approximately 200 volunteers from the University community served more than 2,000 meals during the 13th annual Christmas Day at Pitt. During the event, volunteers also distributed more than 1,000 gift bags filled with hats, scarves and gloves and about 500 gifts to children.
- The Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education ranked our Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business’ two-year MBA program No. 12 in the world. The ranking measures career outcomes, school resources, student engagement and learning environment.
- For the first time, Poets & Quants ranked our College of Business Administration among the Top 25 of all business schools in the United States. CBA was ranked No. 23 overall and No. 11 among public institutions. The ranking formula is based on admissions metrics, student career outcomes and an alumni survey that addresses student satisfaction.
- Our School of Education tied for No. 22 on U.S. News and World Report’s list of the Best Online Graduate Education Programs.
- The Mario Lemieux Foundation recently pledged $5 million to UPMC and Pitt to support immunotherapy programs and research, as well as renovation of the second-floor UPMC Hillman Cancer Center pavilion suite.

STUDENT MILESTONES

- The student-run group, Food Recovery Heroes, recovered 5.2 tons of food last year to distribute to those in need, helping the University earn recognition from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for its food recovery efforts.
Julie Shields [Swanson School] earned distinction as the 2019 National Co-op Student of the Year for her work with FedEx Supply Chain. The award, offered by the American Society of Engineering Education, recognizes an outstanding student engaged in a co-op experience.

Panthers Forward welcomed 150 seniors as members of the program’s first class. The program will offset up to $5,000 of each student’s eligible federal student loan balance and give students access to alumni ambassadors dedicated to the students’ professional success.

FACULTY AND STAFF MILESTONES

Joseph Alter [Dietrich School and University Center for International Studies] organized the Himalayan Environmental Education and Policy Conference in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand, India. The program, which took place from Nov. 29 to Dec. 2, brought together scholars of the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences to develop a multidisciplinary understanding of environmental problems in the Himalayan region.

Stephen Badylak [School of Medicine] is one of 148 academic inventors elected as a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors, the highest professional distinction accorded to academic inventors.

Our Department of Medicine appointed Naudia Jonassaint [School of Medicine] as its inaugural vice chair for diversity and inclusion.

Jennifer Laaser and Roger Mong [Dietrich School] each earned a 2018 National Science Foundation CAREER award. This award recognizes junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through research and education.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has awarded an interdisciplinary team of Dietrich School faculty $225,000 for a multiyear collaborative initiative titled: “Information Ecosystems: Creating Data (and Absence) From the Quantitative to the Digital Age.” The project will bring 14 field-leading international scholars to Pitt over the course of the 2019-20 academic year and create competitive research fellowships.

ALUMNI MILESTONES

Paula Kelly (MLIS ’09), director of the Whitehall Public Library in Pittsburgh, earned one of 10 “I Love My Librarian” awards in 2018. This is a collaborative award program of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the New York Public Library, The New York Times and the American Library Association.