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September 2003

University News

TOP TEN! Washington University and Dartmouth College tied for ninth place in *U.S. News & World Report's* recent undergraduate rankings of "America's Best Colleges." The University climbed three notches from a tie for 12th last year among the 248 national universities ranked by *U.S. News*.

PLANT PATENT: Washington University and St. Louis-based Monsanto Co. have been awarded a patent for a technique that protects crops from devastating viral diseases. The technology has led to virus-resistant varieties of tomato, pepper, cucumber, squash, sugar beets, papaya, and plum, among other crops, for developing countries worldwide.



The Farrell Learning and Teaching Center, rendered by Steve Parker for HOK (Hellmuth, Obata + Kassabaum)

EDUCATING ENTREPRENEURS: Entrepreneurial ideas come not only from business students, but from students all across the Hilltop and Medical campuses. As part of the Kauffman Campuses Initiative, Washington University will work to infuse entrepreneurship into campus culture, making it an accessible experience for all students.

LEARNING AND TEACHING: The new, state-of-the-art Farrell Learning and Teaching Center will physically symbolize the School of Medicine and define its entrance. A striking six-story structure, it will be the main venue for medical education at the medical school and, for the first time, will establish a hearth for the medical school community.

Research

ANTIDEPRESSANT PROTECTANT: Antidepressant drugs appear to protect a key brain structure often damaged by depression by preventing the hippocampus, which is involved in learning and memory, from shrinking. That is the finding of School of Medicine investigators studying women with histories of clinical depression.

SOLID RESISTANCE: A team of University researchers recently obtained the first complete proof of a 50-year-old hypothesis explaining how liquid metals resist turning into solids.

FALSE MEMORIES: Research shows that memory skills tend to decline dramatically in old age as accuracy levels decrease and errors increase. However, new research by University scientists suggests age-related cognitive decay, including false memories and failing recall, may not be an inevitable consequence of aging.

Features

DOCUMENTING BLACKNESS: In this *Newsweek* article, Gerald Early, Ph.D., Merle Kling Professor of Modern Letters in Arts & Sciences, explores the question, "Is a national museum dedicated to African-American art and culture a good idea -- or another form of segregation?"

EXPERIMENTAL ECONOMICS: Experimental economics, which involves the creation of a microeconomic environment in a laboratory, is being widely used at the John M. Olin School of Business. Viewed as a pedagogic alternative to the traditional lecture, the experimental approach encourages learning by doing.

PICTURE THIS: An electrical engineer has devised a theory that could help disable terrorists' messages by detecting forgery or intercepting and interpreting messages hidden as data in a system, such as a photograph. This is just one important theoretical advance in the emerging field of "information hiding."



Should the Washington Mall have a museum dedicated to African-American art and culture?

Heard on Campus

"We must try first one plan, then another, until we learn the best plan. Our first working may be comparatively in the dark, but we shall gradually see in what direction to go."

- William Greenleaf Eliot, co-founder of Washington University, 1854, "Charter and Constitution of the Washington Institute of St. Louis"

Kudos

Philip D. Stahl, Ph.D., the Edward Mallinckrodt, Jr. Professor and chair of the Department of Cell Biology and Physiology in the School of Medicine, has been named the first male recipient of the American Society for Cell Biology's Women in Cell Biology senior award. The annual award is presented to "researchers who are distinguished scientists with a long-standing record of supporting women in science."

Peter H. Raven, Ph.D., the George Engelmann Professor of Botany and director of the Missouri Botanical Garden, has been named the recipient of the International Cosmos Prize for 2003. The award recognizes the efforts of researchers and scientists who support a holistic global perspective, a long-term vision, and the interdependent relationship of all living things. Raven will receive the prize, which includes a monetary award of approximately \$340,000, in Osaka, Japan, in October.

Barnes-Jewish Hospital, the largest of Washington University Medical Center's three primary teaching hospitals, has earned "Honor Roll" distinction in the 2003 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings of "America's Best Hospitals." Barnes-Jewish was ranked No. 8, placing among the top 10 hospitals in seven of the 17 specialties studied for the report and among the top 15 hospitals in six additional specialties.

Timothy E. Holy, Ph.D., assistant professor of neurobiology in the School of Medicine's Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology, is one of 20 of "America's most promising biomedical researchers" the Pew Charitable Trusts has chosen to be a 2003 Pew Scholar in Biomedical Sciences. He will receive \$240,000 over a four-year period to support his research, which seeks to understand how humans and other animals recognize patterns and form specific memories.

Announcements

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Washington University will celebrate its Sesquicentennial and kick off Founders Week with a 150th Birthday Party on Sunday, September 14. [Read more!](#)

"CHINESE CERAMICS TODAY: Between Tradition and Contemporary Expression" explores today's "new age" of

Chinese ceramics. The exhibit is open to the public at the Des Lee Gallery from September 5 - 30. [Read more!](#)

PARENTS WEEKEND and HOMECOMING 2003 will be October 17 - 19.

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About @ Washington University in St. Louis

This newsletter is prepared by the staff of the Office of Special Development Communications Projects and the Office of Alumni and Development Programs. It is intended to provide a summary of what is happening at the University. Alumni, parents, and friends of the University for whom we have valid e-mail addresses automatically receive @ Washington University in St. Louis as a service of the University.

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