

Washington University

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March 2005

University News

RICHARD A. GEPHARDT INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ESTABLISHED: The newly established Gephardt Institute for Public Service's goal is to inspire a more involved and engaged citizenry. Plans call for the Institute to conduct programs and sponsor events aimed at helping individuals address important issues in communities and nations around the world.



File Photo
Barbara A. Schaal (left) examines a wild tomato plant with former graduate student Ana Caicedo. "Barbara Schaal is a premier scientist, and it is rewarding to the scientific community that she has been elected to such an important leadership role," Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton said.

SCHAAL ELECTED FIRST WOMAN VP OF NATIONAL ACADEMY OF

SCIENCES: The members of the National Academy of Sciences elected Barbara A. Schaal, Ph.D., the Spencer T. Olin Professor in Arts & Sciences in biology, as its vice president, making her the first woman elected to the position. "This is a tremendous recognition for Barbara primarily, but also for our department and University," said Ralph S. Quatrano, Ph.D., the Spencer T. Olin Professor and biology department chair.

OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH UNVEILED:

Arts & Sciences has announced the formation of an office to help promote undergraduate research projects. The Office of Undergraduate Research will help place students in research positions, promote their findings, and award scholarships.

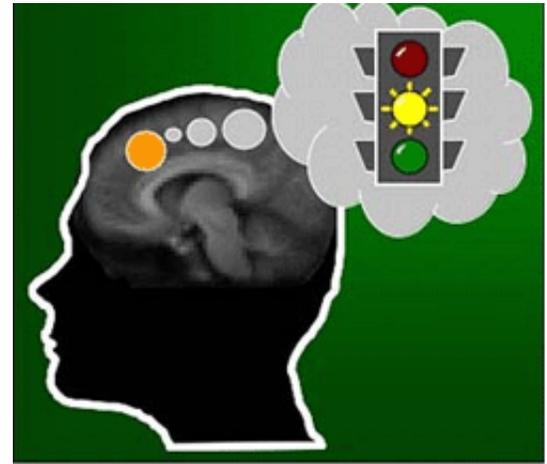
'GREEN' AWARD GOES TO EARTH & PLANETARY SCIENCES BUILDING: The U.S. Green Building Council recently designated the building as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) structure. The certification, "sets a precedent for the campus for building and running facilities in ways that minimize detrimental impacts on the environment," says Raymond S. Arvidson, Ph.D., the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor and chair of the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences in Arts & Sciences.

Research

OBESITY-DIABETES LINK SHOWS PROMISE FOR THERAPY: School of Medicine scientists have produced genetically altered mice that can't become obese but do develop early signs of diabetes. Reversing the alteration produced mice that can become obese but do not develop diabetes. These findings reveal a potentially important link between

diabetes and obesity that could help find new ways to manage the epidemic of obesity now spreading across the world.

DANGER WILL ROBINSON: Scientists can't explain reports of aboriginal tribesmen that sensed the impending danger of the recent tsunami and joined animals in the flight to higher ground. While some discount the existence of a sixth sense for danger, new research from Washington University has identified a brain region that acts as an early warning system, monitoring environmental cues, weighing possible consequences, and adjusting behavior to avoid dangerous situations.



■ Anterior Cingulate Cortex

Joshua Brown of WUSTL
A new theory suggests that the anterior cingulate cortex, described by some scientists as part of the brain's "oops" center, may actually function as an early warning system -- one that works at a subconscious level to help us recognize and avoid high-risk situations.

UNDERSTANDING IRREGULAR

HEARTBEATS: Washington University scientists have developed the first mathematical model of a cardiac cell incorporating a vital calcium regulatory pathway that has implications in life-threatening cardiac arrhythmias, or irregular heartbeats. Their model improves the understanding of the relationship between calcium handling in cardiac cells and the cell's electrical activity.

IMPROVED STEM CELL PROCEDURE

OFFERS SUPERIOR RESULTS: An improved stem cell transplant regimen that is well-tolerated and has a high success rate has been developed by School of Medicine researchers. The procedure holds promise for treatment of blood and bone marrow disorders, immune dysfunction, and certain metabolic disorders.

Features

THE JOY OF GIVING: Money going to faith-based organizations not only can help provide needed social services to communities, but it can also bring a financial benefit to donors. Planned giving can "help donors increase financial responsibility and build a stronger financial future," says Stephanie Boddie, Ph.D., assistant professor of social work in the George Warren Brown School of Social Work and noted community development expert.



Family structure may effect educational outcomes, according to a study by professor Robert Pollak.

BAD NEWS FOR THE BRADY BUNCH:

Educational outcomes of children in blended families are substantially worse than those of children reared in nuclear families, according to a study by economists Donna Ginther of the University of Kansas and Robert Pollak, Ph.D., the Robert E. Hernreich Distinguished Professor of Economics at Washington University. Both stepchildren and their half-siblings who are the joint children of both parents achieved at similar levels, well below children from traditional nuclear families.

MAN THE HUNTER THEORY

DEBUNKED: You wouldn't know it by current world events, but humans actually evolved to be peaceful, cooperative, and social animals. In a new book, *Man the Hunted: Primates, Predators and Human Evolution*, Robert W. Sussman, Ph.D., professor of anthropology in Arts & Sciences, poses a new theory that primates have been prey for millions of years, a fact that greatly influenced the evolution of early man.

LIBRARY ACQUIRES GILL COLLECTION: University Libraries recently acquired a collection of hundreds

of Eric Gill artifacts, including books, rubbings, correspondence, and woodblocks. The English sculptor, wood engraver, typographer, and writer is arguably best known for designing 11 different typefaces, including Gill Sans.

Heard on Campus

“Almost every significant case in the Supreme Court involves the intersection of the sliding planes of values, principles that are important to us.”

—Theodore Olson, former U.S. Solicitor General, delivering the Tyrrell Williams Lecture at the School of Law on February 8.

Kudos

R. Gilbert Jost, M.D., the Elizabeth Mallinckrodt Professor and head of radiology, has been named chairman of the board of directors of the Radiological Society of North America.

Katherine Jahnige Mathews, M.D., assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology, was awarded the Association of American Medical Colleges' Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship for 2004. The annual award honors an outstanding junior faculty member involved in addressing inequities in medical education and health care.

Jeffrey H. Miner, Ph.D., associate professor of medicine in the renal division and assistant professor of cell biology and physiology, received the American Society of Nephrology's 2004 Young Investigator Award.

Jennifer Neuwald, a doctoral student in biology in Arts & Sciences, is one of just seven students in the United States and Canada named a 2004 Canon National Parks Science Scholar.

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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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