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# @ Washington University in St. Louis

September 2005

## University News

### ART AND ARCHITECTURE

**RECONFIGURED:** The Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts has reconfigured its nationally recognized programs in architecture and art, creating distinct units for the graduate and undergraduate programs in art and architecture. A national search is also being conducted for a dean of the Sam Fox School. Reporting to the new dean, Jeff Pike will continue to lead programs in art, and Jerome J. Sincoff, FAIA, will direct the programs in architecture.

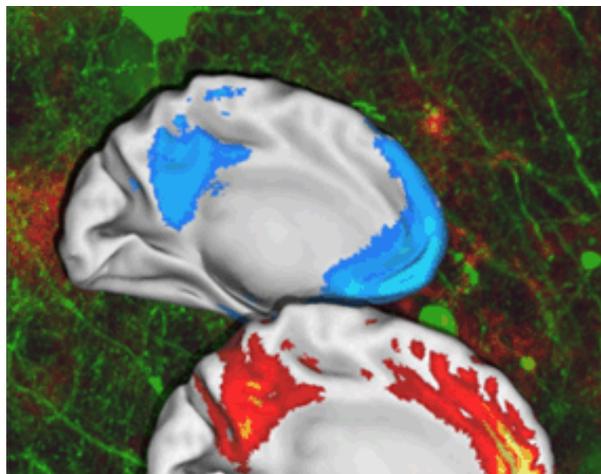
### AMERICA'S BEST COLLEGES:

Washington University in St. Louis is ranked 11th for undergraduate programs among the nation's best 248 national universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. In *U.S. News'* annual guide, Washington University ranks fourth in financial resources, fifth in faculty resources, sixth in student selectivity, and ninth in alumni giving.



photo by Stan Strembicki, professor of art  
Two new buildings, the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum and Earl E. and Myrtle E. Walker Hall, both designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Fumihiko Maki, are being constructed for the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts. When completed in fall 2006, the new buildings will be integrated with three historic structures to form a comprehensive, five-building arts campus.

## Research



**DAYDREAMS AND DEMENTIA:** A team of researchers, led by Randy L. Buckner, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology in Arts & Sciences and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator at Washington University, used five different medical imaging techniques to study the brain activity of 764 people, including those with Alzheimer's disease, those on the brink of dementia, and healthy individuals. They found that the areas of the brain that young, healthy people use when daydreaming are the same areas that fail in people who have Alzheimer's disease.

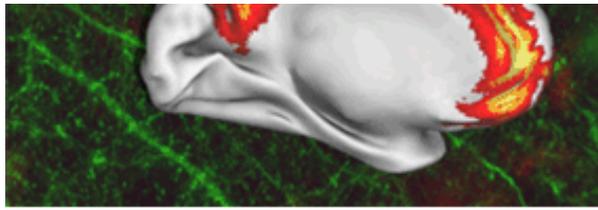


Image courtesy of Benjamin Shannon, John Cirrito, and Robert Brenda Washington University in St. Louis

**Brain regions active during default mental states in young adults (shown in blue on the background brain) reveal remarkable correlation with those regions showing Alzheimer's disease pathology as observed by novel human molecular imaging techniques that can visualize amyloid plaques (shown in red on the foreground brain).**

characteristics partly determined by variations in our genes, pharmacogenetics researchers at the School of Medicine are finding ways to personalize cancer treatments. Their research program has received a \$10 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health to continue their innovative approach that began in 2001.

### GAMERS ARE MADE, NOT BORN:

A recent study by Alan Castel, Ph.D., postdoctorate fellow in psychology in Arts & Sciences, found that the difference in reaction time between video gamers and non-gamers is not due to different "wiring" in their brains, rather because gamers have conditioned themselves through hours of gaming. These findings could have implications in rehabilitation for stroke patients with motor disorders, memory in old age, and monitoring child development.

### GENE-GUIDED CHEMOTHERAPY:

Taking into account that each of us has unique physical

## Features

**THE SHOES MAKE THE MAN:** Those high-tech, air-filled, light-as-a-feather sneakers on your feet are a far cry from the leather slabs our ancestors wore for protection and support. But believe it or not, our modern day sneakers are direct descendents of the first supportive footwear that came into use in western Eurasia between 26,000 and 30,000 years ago, suggests Erik Trinkaus, Ph.D., the Mary Tileston Hemenway Professor in Arts & Sciences.

**FIRST RELATIONSHIPS:** Most parenting books recommend singing and reading to your baby even before birth, talking to your newborn, and making eye contact. According to Dr. John Constantino, M.D., assistant professor of child psychiatry, these activities do not just help your child's brain make early connections that can enhance language skills for later in life. You are actually teaching your child how to establish and maintain his/her first relationship.

**FUTURES STARS:** This summer, 54 academically talented high-school juniors and seniors participated in the 2005 Pfizer-Solutia Partnership of Universities' Students and Teachers as Research Scientists (STARS) program. For six weeks, students conducted research in laboratories, working alongside medical researchers, biologists, chemists, computer scientists, earth scientists, engineers, and other scientists from Washington University, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and Saint Louis University.

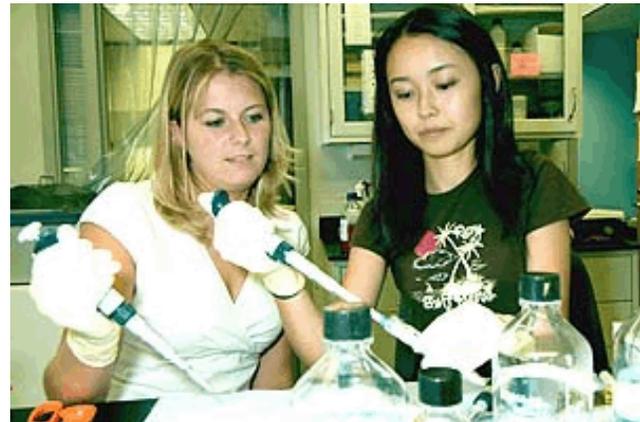


Photo by Robert Boston

**Danielle Scheidenhelm (left), an M.D.-Ph.D. student, and Diane Ma, a student in the STARS program, prepare solutions for their studies of the cytoskeleton.**

## Heard on Campus

"The University that Eliot founded and Brookings so notably developed is moving forward today in the ennobling cause of truth. It is only through truth that man can build with strength. As the University motto has it, "Per veritatem vis."

— Ethan A.H. Shepley, tenth Chancellor of Washington University, in an address to the Newcomen Society, October 14, 1958

## Kudos

David Van Essen, Ph.D., the Edison Professor of Neurobiology and head of the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology, has been elected president of the Society for Neuroscience, the world's largest organization for scientists who study the brain.

Washington University and the St. Louis Cardinals have appointed Rick W. Wright, M.D., assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery, as the new head team physician. Wright has been an assistant team physician with the Cardinals since 1998.

The National Collegiate Scouting Association (NCSA) announced its third annual Collegiate Power Rankings, and Washington University finished fourth on the list of the top academic and athletic colleges/universities in the country at the NCAA Division III level. Williams College ranked first with Amherst College, Middlebury College, Washington University, and Bowdoin College rounding out the D-III top five. Washington University placed sixth in the overall Collegiate Power Rankings, which compares all schools at the Division I, II, and III levels.

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This newsletter is prepared by Special Development Communications Projects staff in Alumni and Development Programs. It is intended to provide a brief 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.

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