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July 2006

University News



Robert Barrack (left), MD, the Charles F. and Joanne Knight Distinguished Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, is assisted by Derek McMinn, MD, of the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital in Birmingham, United Kingdom, and one of the developers of the Birmingham Hip™ resurfacing system, in the operating room at Barnes-Jewish Hospital.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE SURGEON PERFORMS FIRST HIP RESURFACING SURGERY IN U.

S.: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved a surgical procedure that helps resurface worn-out hip joints rather than completely replacing them. Robert L. Barrack, M. D., the Charles F. and Joanne Knight Distinguished Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Washington University School of Medicine, is the first surgeon to implant the Birmingham Hip™ system in the United States.

GOING GLOBAL: The Olin School of Business has been building its participation in and knowledge of global business in the past year. That goal applies to the school's curriculum as much as it does to the dissemination of professors' academic research.

HOWARD HUGHES MEDICAL INSTITUTE GRANT ENHANCES

SCIENCE LEARNING: Kathryn Miller, Ph.D., professor of biology in Arts & Sciences, has been awarded a four-year, \$1.6 million grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to fund undergraduate science education initiatives. The grant involves a large number of University faculty and staff in activities designed to enhance the learning of science and math by students from K-12 and at the undergraduate level. It also provides opportunities for undergraduates, graduate

students, and postdoctoral researchers to mentor younger students.

Research

BOOMERS' RETIREMENT COULD BE A BUST FOR WALL STREET: The impact of the baby-boomer generation's aging and retirement is already raising concerns when it comes to healthcare costs, employment, and social security. Add another reason to worry about the aging boomers: their impact on the stock market. According to research at the Olin School of Business, retirees don't invest as much as younger workers, which could mean a blow to Wall Street when boomers pull out of the workforce.

BACTERIA CAN MAKE YOU GAIN WEIGHT: Researchers studying mutually beneficial interactions between members of the community of friendly gut microorganisms have shown that two common organisms collude and collaborate to increase the amount of calories harvested from a class of carbohydrates. Scientists at the School of Medicine call the results an illustration of how understanding the menagerie of microorganisms that live in our guts can provide new insights into health.

TRIPLE THREAT POLYMER: A chemist at Washington University in St. Louis has developed a remarkable nanostructured material that can repel pests, sweeten the air, and some day might even be used as a timed drug delivery system — as a nasal spray, for instance.



David Kilper/WUSTL Photo
Karen L. Wooley (left), Ph.D., the James S. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor in Arts & Sciences; Brooke Van Horn, chemistry doctoral student; and Jinqi Xu, Ph.D., chemistry postdoctoral researcher, examine polymer samples. Wooley and her collaborators have mixed two normally incompatible polymers and have come up with nanoparticles that make a perfect host to serve guest molecules.

Features



STEPS FOR THE SUMMER: You know what they say — everything you really need to know in life, you learn in kindergarten. A preschool educator at Washington University says that with a little preparation this summer, your preschool child should be more than ready for that first big day of kindergarten in the fall.

WHY CHINA IS A THREAT TO AMERICAN COMPANIES: What company wouldn't want to attribute its profits to the quality product it produces? The answer might be: the company that competes on price. According to researchers



Photo by Mary Butkus

"Kindergarten is a big name, a big place, and there are a lot of big kids," says Andrea Atkinson, director of the Washington University Nursery School. She offers parents advice on preparing their children for the first big day of kindergarten.

at Washington University and Southern Methodist University, producers of lower quality products actually have better prospects for gaining market share and improving their bottom line. It's a lesson that should put American companies on guard against their supposedly low-quality competitors in China, says Panos Kouvelis, the Emerson Distinguished Professor of Operations and Manufacturing Management in the Olin School of Business.

HISTORIC SURGERY: While searching for answers to what it means to be Jewish — and at the same time completing a neuroscience course requirement — a doctoral student at Washington University in St. Louis came across what may be one of the earliest documented cases of brain surgery. And he found it in, of all places, the ancient texts of the Talmud.

Heard on Campus

"I can't think of a dumber investment policy than to have our states spend three times more on average per prisoner than per pupil... We don't really have a money problem in America, but a profound values problem and a profound priorities problem."

—Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, during her lecture "Stand Up for Children Now," on April 19.

Kudos

Dennis Des Chene, Ph.D., professor of philosophy in Arts & Sciences, has been awarded a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Des Chene is among 187 U.S. and Canadian Guggenheim Fellows selected this year from nearly 3,000 applicants.

James Hudspeth, a third-year medical student, has been awarded a fellowship from the Fogarty International Center/Ellison Medication Foundation to spend a year at the University of Natal in Durban, South Africa, assisting in clinical research on HIV/AIDS and shadowing physicians caring for patients.

A. Peter Mutharika, J.S.D., professor of law, has been appointed to the Panel of Arbitrators and the Panel of Conciliators of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. Some 143 countries are contracting parties to this World Bank center, which serves as the tribunal for resolving international investment disputes.

Eight Arts & Sciences students, six May graduates and two graduate students, have been awarded Fulbright Scholarships for the 2006-07 academic year. They will spend a full academic year in a host country. The graduate students, with their fields and locations of study, are Marc Fourrier, anthropology, Gabon, and Jennifer Wistrand, anthropology, Azerbaijan. The May graduates are Robert Gross, teaching English as a foreign language, Spain; Catherine Kelly, international relations, Belgium; Helen Pfeifer, history, Germany; Nicole Solawetz, teaching English as a foreign language, Chile; Jaime Thomas, teaching English as a foreign language, Malaysia; and Christine Whitney, teaching English as a foreign language, Argentina.

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