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University News

Washington University to expand financial aid programs:

Washington University will eliminate need-based loans as part of its undergraduate financial aid awards to students from low- and middle-income families. Beginning in fall 2008, entering and current undergraduate students with parental incomes of less than \$60,000 will not be expected to take out need-based loans and will instead receive grants from the University. Families with parental income somewhat higher than \$60,000 also may receive additional student loan relief.

Washington University School of Law launches transnational law program:

Washington University School of Law is launching a Transnational Law Program, a first-of-its-kind offering for students in both the United States and Europe. This program expands upon the law school's ongoing partnership with Utrecht University in the Netherlands. The new four-year combined degree program will be offered in association with four European universities: Utrecht, Queen's University Belfast (Northern Ireland), University of Trento (Italy), and Catholic University of Portugal, beginning in fall 2008.

Inspiring a new generation of scientists:

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) has selected Washington University as one of 12 colleges and universities to participate in the first major initiative from HHMI's Science Education Alliance, which seeks to enhance the teaching of science and inspire new generations of scientists. In fall 2008, first-year students at six undergraduate institutions and six research-intensive institutions will take part in a yearlong research course — the Phage Genomics Research Initiative — which is being developed by the Science Education Alliance.

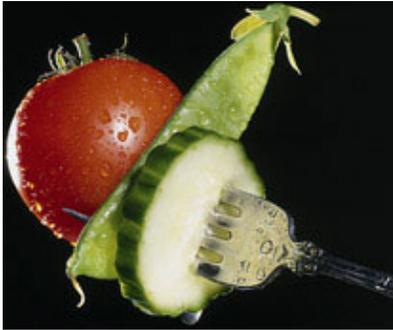
Engineering dean announces her intention to step down:

Mary J. Sansalone, Ph.D., dean and professor of the School of Engineering, who since July 2006 has directed the renewal of the school, has announced her intention to step down from her position as dean at the end of the academic year to devote herself to teaching, research, and other forms of University service.



Mary Butkus
First-year law student Kathryn Kutznietsky discusses plans for the new Transnational Law Program with Dorsey D. Ellis, Jr., J.D., the William R. Orthwein Distinguished Professor of Law, left, and Michael Peil, Assistant Dean for International Programs.

Research



Early tests showed the practitioners of the low-calorie lifestyle had virtually no risks of cardiovascular disease or cancer even though their medical records said they were less healthy when they started the program.

Health benefits of calorie restriction:

Washington University School of Medicine scientists want to find out if eating a lot less can improve your health to a nearly perfect condition. That is why they are conducting human studies of a movement called "calorie restriction." It is supposed to work this way: If you reduce your calorie intake by 25 percent to 30 percent, your physical fitness will improve to a nearly perfect level of health.

How looks and money factor into political campaigns:

If politics were like high school, Republicans would be the football stars and Democrats would be chess club captains. Those stereotypes are the easiest way to summarize part of the conclusions from a study by Michael Lewis, Ph.D., assistant professor of marketing in the John M. Olin Business School. He approached political campaigns from a marketing perspective to determine the effectiveness of branding and advertising. The goal of the research was to understand the relative effects of candidates' appearance and advertising spending strategies on election outcomes.

Practicing information retrieval is key to memory retention:

Learning something once, like the fact that "Berg" means "mountain" in German, and studying it over and over again may do little to help you remember it in the future. The key to future recall is how often over time you actively practice retrieving that information from memory, suggests a new study by researchers in Arts & Sciences.

Features



Image courtesy of NASA
Earth's orbit creates more than leap years.

Earth's orbit creates more than a leap year:

The Earth's orbital behaviors are responsible for more than just presenting us with a leap year every four years. According to Michael E. Wysession, Ph.D., associate professor of earth and planetary sciences in Arts & Sciences, parameters such as planetary gravitational attractions, the Earth's elliptical orbit around the sun, and the degree of tilt of our planet's axis have implications for climate change and the advent of ice ages.

Helium supply endangered, threatening science and technology:

In America, helium is running out of gas. The element that lifts balloons, spirits, and voice ranges is being depleted so rapidly in the world's largest reserve — outside of Amarillo, Texas — that supplies are expected to be depleted within the next eight years. This deflates more than blimps and party favors. Its larger impact is on science and technology, according to Lee Sobotka, Ph.D., professor of chemistry and physics in Arts & Sciences. "Helium's use in science is extremely broad, but its most important use is as a coolant," says Sobotka.

Heard on Campus

"In Sierra Leone..., the court goes out to the village on the weekend and will put up a screen and will show the local population the court proceedings from the week, putting it into their local language, which is incredible because for these people these monsters have been untouchable. To see them in court and being questioned and being grilled and being subjected to guards...is an amazing revelation to them. Obviously they aren't going to get into the fine tuning of the rules of criminal proceedings, but the very fact of seeing them and watching this process has a very positive effect on the population of Sierra Leone."

— Larry Johnson, Assistant Secretary General for Legal Affairs, in his lecture "U.N. War Crimes Tribunals: Do They Help or Hinder Achieving Peace and Justice?"

Law students travel around the globe to win international moot court crown:

Andrew Nash and Samir Kaushik, third-year law students, won the prestigious D.M. Harish Memorial International Law Moot Court Competition held in Mumbai, India. The two defeated teams from around the world en route to the championship and eventually defeated a team from Cornell University Law School in the championship round. In addition, Nash earned individual honors, winning second-best oralist in the competition.

Kudos

Sandor J. Kovacs, Ph.D., M.D., associate professor of medicine, was awarded the Medal of the

Swedish Society of Medicine at the Society's 200th anniversary in Stockholm.

Troy Ruths, forward for the Bears' men's basketball team, has been named the 2008 *ESPN The Magazine* College Division Academic All-American of the Year, as selected by the College Sports Information Directors of America. This is the second straight year the senior computer science major from Sugar Land, Texas, has been the Academic All-American of the Year in the college division.

About @Washington University in St. Louis

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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