



# @ Washington University in St. Louis

July 2010

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## University News

### BJC Institute of Health at Washington University School of Medicine dedicated:

The BJC Institute of Health at Washington University School of Medicine was formally dedicated at a Collaboration Celebration June 16. U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius made remarks prior to the dinner, and Francis Collins, M. D., Ph.D., director of the National Institutes of Health, was the featured speaker at the dinner. In addition, Maya Lin, designer of the Ellen S. Clark Hope Plaza surrounding the building, attended.

### Washington University Chancellor speaks on global energy future at Shanghai Forum:

Washington University Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton delivered a keynote address May 29 at the [Shanghai Forum](#) on global energy demands and energy options that are economically and environmentally sustainable. In addition to attending the forum, a summit focused on economic and political progress in Asia, Wrighton received an honorary doctorate from the Chinese Ministry of Education and Fudan University.

### Clean energy:

In conjunction with a speech delivered by President Barack Obama at the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences on April 27, 2009, the White House announced Washington University would be home to one of 46 Energy Frontier Research Centers (EFRCs) at universities, national laboratories, nonprofit organizations, and private firms. Washington University's five-year, \$20 million award is the largest in the history of the Danforth Campus. EFRC work at Washington University takes place in the Photosynthetic Antenna Research Center, which includes three School of Engineering & Applied Science faculty members working to understand light harvesting and energy funneling as applied to natural photosynthetic, biohybrid, and bioinspired antenna systems.



Robert Boston  
U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius spoke in the Ellen S. Clark Hope Plaza June 16 prior to the dedication of the BJC Institute of Health at Washington University School of Medicine.

## Research

### Platypus hunter studies the bizarre mammal's venom:

When Camilla Whittington was a child "in the land Down Under," her dad decided it would be fun for them to go look for platypuses. These animals, found only in Australia, are technically mammals, yet they are like no other mammals around — sure, like all mammals, they produce milk for their babies, but they also lay eggs and have a bill like birds do, and, most oddly, the males shoot venom from spurs in their hind legs that causes pain even the strongest painkillers can't alleviate. Whittington, a Ph.D. candidate in the Faculty of Veterinary Science at The University of Sydney, was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship last year and chose to use it to come to The Genome Center at Washington University to study the genetics of platypus venom.

### Memory links to 40 winks:

When it comes to executing items on tomorrow's to-do list, it's best to think it over, then "sleep on it," say psychologists at Washington University. People who sleep after processing and storing a memory carry out their intentions much better than people who try to execute their plan before getting to sleep. The researchers have shown that sleep enhances our



Camilla Whittington and a live platypus being held by its tail.

ability to remember to do something in the future, a skill known as prospective memory.

### New model suggests feared side effect of Alzheimer's drugs is unlikely:

The first trial of a new model for testing Alzheimer's treatments has reassured researchers that a promising class of drugs does not exacerbate the disease if treatment is interrupted. Scientists at Washington University School of Medicine and Merck & Co. Inc studied the effects of a class of drugs known as gamma secretase inhibitors. Researchers had worried that these drugs might cause a build-up of proteins linked to Alzheimer's disease and that this build-up could be unleashed in a surge when patients went off the medications. But the new study suggests that they do not.

### Features

#### Doing business on the Danube:

Entrepreneurship is a global phenomenon, and to prove it 11 John M. Olin Business School students traveled to Hungary in May to work with start-up companies in Budapest. The trip is an integral part of Clifford Holekamp's course "Danube Venture Consulting Program," which was offered for the second time this year. Holekamp is a senior lecturer in entrepreneurship at Olin and initiated the consulting project with a private equity firm in Hungary.



Olin Business School students take some time off from their consulting projects to tour Budapest. Pausing on the banks of the Danube, with the Royal Palace in the background, are left to right: Nicole Lindenbaum, MBA11, Venkatesh Kannan, MBA11, and Harvey Multani, BSBA11.

#### In elevated carbon dioxide, soybeans stumble but cheatgrass keeps on truckin':

Scientists once thought the fertilization effect of rising carbon dioxide concentrations would offset factors such as higher temperatures or drier soils that would reduce crop yields. This view is turning out to be overly optimistic. A new study shows that soybeans switch into unproductive metabolic activity at higher carbon dioxide concentrations. The invasive cheatgrass, on the other hand, has no switch, or control system, and continues to efficiently transport water and assimilate carbon dioxide. Plants might need to be equipped with similar traits to survive future arid, high carbon dioxide environments.

### Heard on Campus

"Identity is totally your call. No one gets to tell you who you are."

— Kip Fulbeck, professor of art at the University of California, Santa Barbara, during his Assembly Series talk, "What Are You? The Changing Face of America," in Graham Chapel on March 2, 2010

### Washington University's Lifelong Learning Institute celebrates 15th anniversary:

The Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) — a community outreach education program for seniors aged 55 and over that offers a variety of non-credit academic courses for senior adults — celebrated its 15th anniversary in June. LLI courses emphasize peer learning and active class participation. "Being involved with the Lifelong Learning Institute has expanded my horizons and my knowledge," says Bert Talcoff, 80, a retired businessman with degrees in mathematics and business administration, who is a co-facilitator for a course on World War II. "It's remarkable how bright those involved with Lifelong Learning truly are." Sponsored by University College in Arts & Sciences, LLI currently has more than 850 active members.

### Kudos

Douglas Char, M.D., associate professor of emergency medicine and residency director of the Washington University School of Medicine/Barnes-Jewish Hospital Emergency Medicine Program, received the Residency Director of the Year award from the Emergency Medicine Residency Association June 4 at the Society of Academic Emergency Medicine conference in Phoenix, Arizona. This award is given annually to one residency director of emergency medicine programs in the United States.

Theodore J. Cicero, Ph.D., professor of neuropharmacology in Arts & Sciences, received the 2010 Nathan B. Eddy Award from the College of Problems of Drug Dependence for his pioneering research efforts in

the field of drug addiction, research, and treatment. The Eddy Award is presented annually to a scientist who has made outstanding contributions in drug abuse research.

Linda B. Cottler, Ph.D., professor of epidemiology in Arts & Sciences, received the Marian W. Fischman Memorial Lectureship Award at the 72nd annual meeting of the College of Problems of Drug Dependence. The award was established to recognize the contributions of outstanding women scientists in drug abuse research.

Steven A. Edmundowicz, M.D., professor of medicine, received the Distinguished Educator Award from the American Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy May 2 at the society's Crystal Awards dinner in New Orleans, Louisiana. The award goes to a physician educator and recognizes contributions to the education of fellows through endoscopy seminars, participation in national postgraduate courses, and published scholarly reviews or educational materials, including videos.

Katherine Henzler-Wildman, Ph.D., assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular biophysics, has been named a 2010 Searle Scholar, one of 15 scholars in the chemical and biological sciences to receive the \$300,000, three-year awards. The award will fund Henzler-Wildman's research into the molecular mechanisms of multidrug resistance in bacteria.

Tzyh-Jong Tarn, D.Sc., professor of electrical and systems engineering and director of the Center for Robotics and Automation, received the American Automatic Control Council's 2010 John R. Ragazzini Award. The award is given to recognize outstanding contributions to automatic control education.

John Watts, EN10, captured the 2010 NCAA Division III singles national tennis championship May 30 in Oberlin, Ohio, with a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Chris Goodwin of Emory University. Watts is the first national champion in Washington University men's tennis history. He also earned 2010 Intercollegiate Tennis Association Division III national senior player of the year honors.

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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