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University News

Washington University campuses became tobacco-free on July 1:

All Washington University campuses became tobacco-free on July 1. Under the new University policy, smoking and tobacco use is prohibited on all University-owned and -managed properties. The School of Medicine has prohibited tobacco use on school property since 2007. "This is an important milestone for the Washington University campus community," says Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton. "The tobacco-free initiative helps the University provide a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment for students, faculty, and staff."



Mary Butkus
Decals communicating WUSTL's new tobacco-free policy were placed near university building entrances.

NSF program at Washington University helps local science teachers become leaders:

Through a \$631,000 grant from the National Science Foundation's Robert Noyce Master Teacher Scholarship Program, Washington University's Phyllis Balcerzak guides a group of local educators who study teacher leadership. The Noyce Fellows collaborate with Balcerzak and other Washington University faculty monthly. They develop leadership projects through professional organizations and other local school districts. Teachers accepted into the program have master's degrees and several years of experience. They also receive a stipend for the three-year program.

HHMI awards WUSTL \$1.6 million for science education:

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute has awarded Washington University a 2010 Research University Grant to support the development of creative, research-based courses and curricula. The University will receive \$1.6 million over a period of four years. HHMI also awarded Sarah C.R. Elgin, Ph.D., the Viktor Hamburger Professor of Arts & Sciences and a long-time HHMI professor, \$80,000 over four years to support her work on important problems facing science education.

Research

Beware the smell of bitter almonds:

In murder mysteries, the detective usually diagnoses cyanide poisoning by the scent of bitter almonds wafting from the corpse. The detective knows what many of us might find surprising — that the deadly poison cyanide is naturally present in bitter almonds and many other plants used as food, including: apples, peaches, apricots, lima beans, barley, sorghum, flaxseed, and bamboo shoots. There's a reason that cyanide exists in all these plants, and it is — to paraphrase Sherlock Holmes — evolutionary, suggests Kenneth M. Olsen, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology in Arts & Sciences.

Causes of the Collapse:

Across the United States (and globe), the Great Recession dispensed negative impacts that are hard to overlook. Massive personnel layoffs, hundreds of business and bank closings, and millions of home foreclosures now dot the country's map. Yet some people cannot help but see an economic downturn as an opportunity. Anjan V. Thakor, Ph.D., the John E. Simon Professor of Finance at the John M. Olin Business School, is one such person. Please be clear: Thakor does not rejoice in the difficulties people are facing during this global crisis. However, as a longtime scholar of banking and finance,



Wikimedia Commons
Could lima beans kill you? Probably not. Lima beans commercially grown in the United States are restricted to two varieties with low cyanide levels.

he recognizes the situation as a chance to study what caused the collapse, and whether or not it is something that could be avoided in the future.

Inhibiting fatty acids in immune cells decreases atherosclerosis risk:

Scientists at Washington University School of Medicine have found a way to significantly reduce atherosclerosis in mice that does not involve lowering cholesterol levels or eliminating other obesity-related problems. Atherosclerosis is the process through which fatty substances, such as cholesterol and cellular waste products, accumulate in the lining of arteries. The research team inhibited atherosclerosis in the mice by interfering with production of a substance called fatty acid synthase, an enzyme that converts dietary sugars into fatty acids in the liver.

Features

Anger drives support for wartime presidents:

It's no secret that Americans tend to throw their support behind a sitting U.S. president when the nation is thrust into a war or other potentially violent conflict with a foreign foe. But new research from Washington University is the first to show that these "rally effects" represent a collective reaction to a specific human emotion — anger. "It's about anger, not anxiety," says Alan Lambert, Ph.D., professor of psychology in Arts & Sciences and lead author of the study published this month in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. "Anger is the engine that drives these sudden spikes in presidential approval ratings."

In Haiti for the long haul:

After an earthquake rocked Haiti in January, members of the University community answered the call to serve, assisting our beleaguered neighbors to the south. And their work continues. On January 12, Steve Taviner, MSW '08, operations officer of the nonprofit Meds & Food for Kids, was sitting with two other staff members in the house they share in Cap-Haitien, 80 miles north of Port-au-Prince. It was the end of a long day, filled with the routine problems of running a factory in Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. For about 90 seconds everything began to shake, though not hard enough to upset furniture. "When the shaking ended," Taviner says, "we sat back down at the table and said 'Guess what! There has been an earthquake.'"

Heard on Campus

"If I can do it, if I can start from meager beginnings as I did, and rise to the point where I can get above the atmosphere and see the earth like not many people have, then they can, too."

— Bernard A. Harris, Jr., M.D., former NASA astronaut and the first African-American to walk in space, during his visit to the fourth ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Summer Science Camp, a two-week camp for underserved middle schoolers, in Holmes Lounge on June 30



Alan Lambert, Ph.D., professor of psychology in Arts & Sciences

Gesture, Scrape, Combine, Calculate:

In the decades following the Second World War, European and American artists developed a wide range of strategies and approaches to abstract painting and sculpture. This summer, the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum is presenting *Gesture, Scrape, Combine, Calculate: Postwar Abstraction from the Permanent Collection*, showcasing more than a dozen large-scale yet rarely seen works that span gestural and lyrical abstraction, color-field painting, hard-edge abstraction, assemblage, and other movements.

Kudos

Philip E. Cryer, M.D., the Irene E. and Michael M. Karl Professor of Endocrinology and Metabolism in Medicine, received the American Diabetes Association's Albert Renold Award in Orlando, Florida, in June. The Albert Renold Award is presented to an individual whose career is distinguished by outstanding achievements in the training of diabetes research scientists and the facilitation of diabetes research.

Susan Deusinger, Ph.D., executive director of the Program in Physical Therapy and professor of

physical therapy and of neurology, and **Bob Deusinger**, Ph.D., associate professor of physical therapy and of orthopaedic surgery, received the Charles M. Magistro Distinguished Service Award from the Foundation for Physical Therapy. The award honors an individual or individuals for outstanding service and personal commitment toward promoting the foundation's goals.

Matthew J. Gabel, Ph.D., professor of political science in Arts & Sciences, has been awarded a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. The award will support his work on judicial decision-making in the European Union.

Three School of Law faculty members have received Fulbright Scholarships for the 2010-2011 academic year: **Leila Nadya Sadat**, the Henry H. Oberschelp Professor of Law and director of the Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute, is the first Washington University faculty member to receive the Distinguished Alexis de Tocqueville Chair of the Fulbright Scholarship program, and will teach at the University of Cergy-Pontoise in France in spring 2011; **Dorsey D. Ellis, Jr.**, dean emeritus and the William R. Orthwein Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus, will teach at the Catholic University of Portugal in spring 2011; and **David Law**, Ph.D., professor of law and of political science in Arts & Sciences, will teach at National Taiwan University in fall 2010. **Jo Ellen Lewis**, professor of practice and director of the Legal Practice Program, returned in May from teaching at Fudan University in China as a Fulbright Scholar.

Fifteen current or former Arts & Sciences students have been awarded Fulbright Scholarships for the 2010-2011 academic year. The graduate students, and their fields and locations of study, are: **Lisa Haegele**, language and literature, Germany; **Kavya Naini**, business management, Mexico; **Shane Peterson**, language and literature, Germany; **Steven Schrum**, history, Netherlands; **Abigail Smith**, archeology, Mali; and **Anna Weyher**, anthropology, Zambia. The May graduates are: **Adina Appelbaum**, urban development and planning, Egypt; **Lauren Barry**, ecology, China; **Samantha Kalish**, English teaching assistantship, Argentina; **Katherine Kerschen**, English teaching assistantship, Germany; **Emily Levitt**, women's studies, Croatia; **Leah Marks**, English teaching assistantship, Germany; **Elizabeth Slalter**, anthropology, Argentina; and **Marcus Walton**, English teaching assistantship, Egypt. **Emily Reisman**, who graduated from the university in 2009, has received a Fulbright to study anthropology in Togo.

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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