Fourth-year medical student Aaron Case celebrates with third-year student Valeria Valbuena after reading his residency placement during Match Day festivities. He will train in internal medicine/emergency medicine at UIC. — Photo: Jenny Fontaine
Mary Pellettieri
Mixing up new tonics
By Jonathan Black

Not so long ago, Mary Pellettieri (95 AHS) had a big job at the giant Miller-Coors brewery in Milwaukee. She’s still in Milwaukee, but a little harder to find these days on the city’s south side. That’s because she’s on the third floor of an old industrial building called the Lincoln Warehouse that’s been converted into a maze of incubator spaces, many still construction zones that rattle with drilling.

“Six months of stress, but we’re almost done!” Pellettieri said, pointing to the small, but pristine, industrial kitchen.

What Pellettieri has brewing here is something like a revolution in mixers, a line of tonics she hopes will captivate drinkers who are tired of overly sweet colas and predictable fruit flavors. Top Note Tonics is a product of La Pavia Beverage, a company she launched about a year ago with her husband. It is a collection of concentrated syrups that can be mixed with soda water, all crafted with whole herbs and spices, and boasting half the calories of most commercial mixers.

The collection is based on “historical botanical tonics and Italian aperitivo sodas,” with the added plus of the digestive benefits of traditional tonics, Pellettieri said.

She’s not alone at Lincoln Warehouse, which is home to three other beverage start-ups, but she has no fear of competition.

“There is no competition,” Pellettieri said. “I’d always liked the idea of a slightly bitter soda, but I couldn’t find a good one. The few out there were mostly from Europe, all developed in the 1960s with ingredients that no one would use to design a drink today. The idea of a more sophisticated aperitivo soft drink was solid, but it needed to be innovated again with fresh materials.”

Pellettieri is no newcomer to the world of brewing. A native of Downers Grove, she earned a UIC master’s degree in environmental and occupational health sciences, capping a special interest in botany and plant biology. She worked for eight years at Chicago’s Goose Island Beer Co. before packing up for Milwaukee and MillerCoors, where she moved from quality services manager, overseeing the lab and packaging, to a senior corporate position in business operations.

“Working for a small company [like Goose Island] is very different,” Pellettieri said. “You have to wear a lot of hats; you’ve got to have] that entrepreneurial mindset. If no one else is going to do it, I have to do it. With big companies, you’re stripped of that identity — they don’t want you to think you can do it all.”

Pellettieri is comfortable with her entrepreneurial role with La Pavia Beverage, partly because her partner is also her husband, who has long managed the rental property the two own on Chicago’s North-west Side.

Ironically, Top Note Tonics may not have its strongest appeal in Milwaukee, “which likes a very sweet drink,” Pellettieri said. She sees its popularity and growth spreading out from the coasts, “where there’s more of a movement toward flavorings — sour, bitter, spicy. Those drinks are being produced and selling very well.”

Top Note Tonics is now available at select stores as a concentrated bottled syrup in five flavors — lime, orange, lemon, gin-ger beer and Indian tonic. Consumers can buy the syrup and mix it with non-flavored soda water in a five-to-one ratio, which is especially appealing to users of home carbonation products such as Soda Stream, Pellettieri said.

Her next goal is to offer a “bag-in-a-box” concentrate — the flavoring that’s dispensed at bar and restaurant soda fountains at the push of a button. Ultimately, they plan to make the product available in a ready-to-drink bottle on retail shelves.

Without corporate deep pockets, Pellettieri has had to be especially creative in finding ways to promote Top Note Tonics at restaurants and tastings. With her Milwaukee kitchen facility finished, she’ll now be able to host small events and demonstrations. That, she is confident, will help spread the word.

The key “is to get the product into consumers’ hands,” Pellettieri said. “Once they taste it, I’ve got a customer.”

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“Abstinence as a way of dealing with drugs was absolutely akin to the policy of the Reagan administration about AIDS. They’re both negative arguments — or calls for abstinence or not doing something — as opposed to acknowledging the reality.”

Jennifer Brier, associate professor and director of gender and women’s studies, comparing Nancy Reagan’s “Just Say No” anti-drug slogan to the Reagan administration’s response to the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s. March 13

Washington Post

“The ADA requires that public entities ensure that all programs, activities and services are accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. This, however, does not necessarily mean a public entity has to retrofit all existing buildings.”

Peter Berg, technical assistance coordinator for the Institute on Disability and Human Development, on a plan in Fishers, Indiana, to accommodate the needs of residents who have disabilities. March 18 Indianapolis Star

“She had been under fire for a number of things, but there’s no doubt that the Laquan McDonald case was the crystallizing factor.”

Dick Simpson, professor of political science, on the March 15 primary election defeat of Cook County State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez. March 17 New York Times
UIC graduate programs rise in rankings

By Sam Hostettler — samhos@uic.edu

Several colleges and specialty programs at UIC rose significantly in the latest U.S. News & World Report rankings of graduate schools.

The rankings are intended to help prospective professional and graduate students research academic programs at different institutions and evaluate the potential return on their investment.

One of the largest jumps was made by the College of Pharmacy, which moved up eight spots to No. 6. “We feel that a ranking of sixth is much more reflective of the world-class education that is available at the UIC College of Pharmacy,” said its dean, Jerry Bauman.

Between our impactful research programs, large array of innovative clinical practice experiences, and our amazing residency opportunities, there is really no other college that can match us,” he said.

The College of Education moved up two spots, to 41st, while the College of Engineering rose one spot, to 60th. The College of Medicine (research) improved to 47th from 49th, and UIC’s part-time MBA program improved to 78th from 109th.

The College of Nursing ranked 23rd, and had six specialty programs ranked even higher: family nurse practitioner (7th), nursing administration (8th), midwifery (10th), gerontology nurse practitioner (10th), pediatric nurse practitioner (12th) and psychiatric nurse practitioner (13th).

Two programs in the College of Applied Health Sciences ranked in the top 20: occupational health remained at No. 4, while physical therapy rose one spot, to 15th.

“The U.S. News & World Report rankings reflect our increasing national reputation and our commitment to research, education and clinical excellence,” said Dr. Robert Barish, vice chancellor for health affairs.

Students can pursue their research interests in leading laboratories, said Susan Poser, provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs.

“Research at UIC is reshaping educational policy — developing cleaner, more sustainable energy; helping to make sense of today’s vast amounts of computer-generated data; and driving economic development by moving research to practical application, among other things,” Poser said. “We are pleased that U.S. News is beginning to recognize the extraordinary and varied research at UIC and the high quality of education and opportunity that our outstanding student body receives.”

Research leader steps down

By University Relations

University of Illinois Vice President for Research Lawrence B. Schook announced March 16 that he would step down from the university-wide post in August to return to his research and faculty work on the Urbana-Champaign and Chicago campuses. U of I President Tim Killeen said a national search would be conducted to select Schook’s successor.

Vice president of research since 2011, Schook has played a central leadership role in management of the university’s nearly $1 billion per year sponsored-research portfolio and has overseen the university’s technology commercialization and economic development activities.

“The University, its research faculty and staff are a powerful engine of discovery, innovation and entrepreneurship,” Schook said. “I was fortunate to work with colleagues of enormous vision and talent, and with university presidents who challenged us to exceed expectations,” Schook said.

Schook helped spearhead creation of UI LABS, a U of I spinoff for research and development that partners universities and industry. UI LABS led a consortium in 2014 that won a $70 million Department of Defense grant to create a digital manufacturing and design institute in Chicago, designed to transform American manufacturing.

During Schook’s tenure, University research-based royalties grew from $19 million to $34 million annually, operations at the two university research parks accelerated, the university’s venture capital funds grew and offices of technology management processed research-based patents in 2015 that ranked the U of I eleventh in the world.

“Larry’s research and economic development acumen, as well as his stature among stakeholders in this arena, raised the University of Illinois’ performance, and he has been a valued member of the leadership team,” Killeen said.

The Office of the Vice President for Research is critical to the University’s multiple missions and will remain “open for business,” Killeen said.

Schook said he intends to return to research. A faculty member of the Urbana-Champaign campus since 2000, Schook is the Edward William and Jane Marr Gutgsell Professor of animal sciences in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. A world-renowned biomedical researcher, Schook led the international pig genome-sequencing project, which led to critical insight into diseases, particularly cancer, that afflict humans as well as pigs.

Trustees approve ‘sheltered market’ contracts for IT services

By University Relations

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees approved the state’s first contracts under a new Illinois purchasing initiative enacted to attract more minority and female-owned businesses as vendors for state agencies and universities.

Under the groundbreaking awards, 28 minority- and female-owned companies will receive three-year contracts to provide information technology services on an as-needed basis, augmenting existing staff on the university’s campuses in Chicago, Springfield and Urbana-Champaign. The contracts take effect July 1, 2016.

The university’s Office of Procurement Diversity will host its fourth annual Professional Services Diversity Symposium Thursday at the UIC Forum. The event seeks to build new vendor relationships with businesses owned by minorities, females, people with disabilities and veterans.

The contracts were approved at the board’s March 16 meeting on the Urbana campus.

The university received bids from 45 companies after issuing the state’s first request-for-proposal last April through the new “sheltered market” initiative, which followed years of work by the state to address disparities in contracting IT and telecommunications services by state entities.

The “sheltered market” initiative allows certain state contracts to be set aside specifically for businesses owned by minorities, females and people with disabilities, and was established after an Illinois Business Enterprise Program Council disparity study found that sectors of the IT/telecommunications industry were being unfairly excluded from state business.

President Tim Killeen said the first-of-their-kind awards reflect a deep, broad-based commitment to diversity that extends from student enrollment and faculty/staff hiring to the companies that provide goods and services. “I am proud of our leadership on this important issue and the opportunities we are providing for minority- and female-owned companies to grow and prosper, through their new relationships with the university and additional contracts that their track record of success will foster,” Killeen said.

The new initiative builds on university efforts that also include standards that exceed state guidelines under the Business Enterprise Program for Minorities, Females and Persons with Disabilities (BEP), which sets goals to ensure that firms owned by minorities, women and people with disabilities are included in the procurement process.

Contracts — awarded to 14 minority-owned businesses, 10 female-minority-owned businesses and four female-owned businesses — will provide as-needed IT staffing and services from July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2019.

The contracts, which include options for two one-year renewals, will provide IT services in a variety of categories, from system planning and security services to website development and classroom applications.

Companies will collectively be paid up to $30 million per year over the course of the three-year contracts, based on need for services and availability of funds. University officials said spending for temporary IT services over the last three years has ranged from $22 million to $41 million annually.
CONFERENCE EXPLORES LATINO ART

By Brian Flood  — bflood@uic.edu

The Inter-University Program for Latino Research, a UIC-based national Latino research consortium, and the Smithsonian Latino Center will host the fifth biennial Latino Art Now!, a conference examining issues related to contemporary Latino art in the U.S. and cultural influences from around the world.

The three-day event, from April 7 to 9, will bring together an international mix of artists, scholars, museum professionals, collectors, critics and students for sessions exploring Latino art production in the U.S. and its relationship to contemporary art and visual culture.

Visit uicnews.uic.edu for details on registration fees, agenda and presenters.

Conference highlights include:

The Chicago Conversation Series, supported by a grant from the Chicago Community Trust, presenting specific sessions centered on the city’s Latino art and its local and global impact.

• A free panel discussion featuring artists Antonio Martorell (San Juan), Inígo Manglano-Ovalle (Chicago), Tania Bruguera (New York/Havana), Scherezade Garcia (New York), and Maria Gaspar (Chicago).

• Plenary lunch sessions exploring art as a catalyst for economic and social change and new meanings of U.S. Latino art and Latin American art.

• Spring of Latino Art, a conference-affiliated cultural series with an estimated 200 artists and more than 60 community-based exhibitions and events highlighting Latino art in Chicago.

• Visits to the Art Institute of Chicago, the Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum and UIC’s Rafael Cenitón Ortiz Latino Cultural Center.

• Presentation of the Tomás Ybarra-Frausto Award to Carlos Tortolero, founder and president of the National Museum of Mexican Art.

The Inter-University Program for Latino Research consists of 25 university-based Latino research centers that aim to promote policy-focused research and advance the Latino intellectual presence in the U.S. Founded in 1983, the group supports research and programs that foster greater understanding of U.S. Latinos in politics, economics, culture, art, history and immigration.

CHANCELLOR ADDRESS

UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis will discuss UIC accomplishments, current challenges facing the campus, and future plans to be Chicago’s premier public research university during “The State of the University of Illinois at Chicago” address today.

The event takes place from 3 to 4 p.m. at the UIC Forum.

RSVP at chancellor.uic.edu

BLACK LIVES MATTER TALK

Outraged by the 2013 acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, Alicia Garza took to social media to express her anguish and love for the black community.

Garza — together with Opal Tometi and Patrisse Cullors — turned the powerful words “Black Lives Matter” into a social media phenomenon and an organizing network that has more than 26 chapters internationally.

Garza will be on campus April 5 to give a talk sponsored by the department of African American studies. The event takes place at 5 p.m. in the Illinois Room, Student Center East.

For information, call 312-996-2950.

WORLD HEALTH DAY

The Center for Global Health hosts a World Health Day presentation April 6. “Community and Public Health Approaches to Violence Prevention,” takes place from noon to 2 p.m. in the Molecular Biology Research Building auditorium.

Lunch will be served.

Speakers include Brent Decker, Cure Violence; Christian Picciolini, Life After Hate; and Stefan Weine, UIC Department of Psychiatry and Center for Global Health.

For information, email jburian@uic.edu

PYRO PADDLERS

UIC’s dragon boat team, the Pyro Paddlers, is looking for paddlers to race with the team in summer races.

The Pyro Paddlers is made up of UIC students, alumni, staff and faculty. Paddling experience is not required.

Fill out an online interest form at tinyurl.com/uic-dboat

GLOBAL HEALTH GALA

The department of medicine hosts the third annual Urban Global Health Gala April 15.

The event features food, drinks and a silent auction from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Metropolitan Club at Willis Tower, 233 S. Wacker Drive.

All proceeds benefit the Urban Global Health Initiative in support of its clinical, educational and scholarly activities in India and the Dominican Republic.

For more information, visit urbanglobal.eventbrite.com

CELEBRATING ARMY ROTC

All ROTC alumni are invited to an alumni reception April 21 celebrating 100 years of Army ROTC.

The event takes place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Cardinal Room, SCE.

RSVP at ljmeyers@uic.edu
By Francisca Corona — fcoron3@uic.edu

Fifteen minutes before 11 a.m. on March 18, UIC medical students sat and waited to be handed their future in white envelopes.

“This is only the beginning of your journey,” Dr. Robert Barish, vice chancellor for health affairs, told students as they sat on the edge of their seats alongside their friends and family on National Match Day, when students from 155 medical schools across the nation learned where they will complete their residencies.

“There will certainly be many challenges in front of you as you begin your residencies. My hope is that each of you will learn and grow from these challenges as your career unfolds in the years ahead.”

“We’re feeling nervous, scared and inspired,” said Megha Shankar, a student who participated in a flash mob during the ceremony with other seniors.

About 800 guests, including students, their families, alumni and administrators, counted down the final 10 seconds before envelopes were torn, hugs were shared and students yelled their envelopes were torn, hugs were given, and congratulations across tables. The matching process is done by the National Resident Matching Program. This year, more than 34,000 students registered nationally to compete for 30,000 available residency positions; 176 of registered students were from UIC.

Pedro Alvarez lifted his hands and shouted in celebration after learning that he would complete his obstetrics and gynecology residency at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

“I cried a little bit,” he said happily. “It’s going to be hard and challenging, but it’s going to be amazing.”

California is just one of 29 states that students from the Chicago campus will be head to, including Hawaii, Florida and Washington.

Almost half of the class will stay in Illinois, and UIC is the No. 1 training facility for students from the Chicago campus.

Specializing in internal medicine and pediatrics, Ana Mauro said her match at UIC was a “dream come true.”

“It’s so surreal,” she said. “UIC was such an integral part of my education as a physician and I am ecstatic to be here and to continue growing here.”

The top specialty for students at the Chicago campus was internal medicine. Other popular specialties included family medicine and pediatrics.

Fifty students from the Rockford campus matched to programs in 16 specialties and 20 states. Twenty-eight percent of the class will stay in Illinois. Family medicine and internal medicine were the most popular medical specialties.

A quarter of Peoria’s Class of 2016 was matched to residencies in Illinois. Forty-nine students matched to 19 specialties at residency locations across 21 states. Top specialties for student matches were internal medicine, anesthesiology and radiology-diagnostic.

Twenty-nine graduating seniors from the Urbana-Champaign campus will complete their medical training in residency programs for 16 specialties — top areas included internal medicine, family medicine and neurology — in 16 states; seven students were matched in Illinois.

Darshana Bhattacharyya matched in family medicine/psychiatry.

“She couples matched,” said Harty who matched to the UC Medical Center’s emergency medicine residency program. Harty and Bhattacharyya met on the first day of medical school. They’ve been married two years.

“We wouldn’t be here without UIC and what we’ve learned,” Harty said.
Grant expands history project of HIV-positive women

By Brian Flood — bflood@uic.edu

UIC has received a grant in support of an oral history project featuring women's personal histories of living with HIV and AIDS in the United States.

The $70,000, one-year grant from the MAC AIDS Fund will expand "I'm Still Surviving," a pilot program developed by the UIC-based History Moves project and the Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS), a 23-year-old clinical research study of women living with HIV.

In 2014, History Moves and WIHS paired participants to interview each other and share their histories. They also worked with the women to collect personal items to accompany their narratives and develop a public exhibition, book and film.

With the grant, the Chicago-based initiative will expand to include women living with HIV/AIDS in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and Brooklyn, New York.

Jennifer Brier, the project's director, says expanding the program geographically will help to highlight critical subjects related to HIV/AIDS in diverse female populations, as well as social and health care inequities.

“Their histories, when coupled with the narratives we have collected in Chicago, promise to expose new narratives about women and HIV in the 21st century that center women's experiences of physical and mental health, racial and economic segregation over the course of their lifetime, and barriers they face to comprehensive care,” said Brier, associate professor and director of gender and women's studies.

“I'm Still Surviving” is on view through April 2 at Pop Up JUST Art Center, 1255 S. Halsted St.

Future goals of "I'm Still Surviving" include a new curriculum for medical and nursing students to learn about the connection between social and physical health through the public history of women with HIV; and HIV/AIDS public engagement and awareness campaign in underserved neighborhoods.

Brier, a historian who studies the intersection of gender, race and sexuality, says the stories and exhibition presented via the pilot program merge the history of the HIV/AIDS epidemic into the history of Chicago.

"The stories often share similar themes of heartbreak and courage, loss and pain, and tales of redemption, determination, and spirit," she said. "This project seeks to make women with HIV communicators of their history.”

UIC to lead $13M clinical trial of medications for COPD

By Sharon Parmet — sparmet@uic.edu

UIC has been awarded a four-year, $13.7 million contract from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to lead a multi-center clinical trial of two drugs used to treat chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD.

A progressive lung disease that makes it hard to breathe, COPD disproportionately affects the elderly, people of low-income and minorities. Smoking is the leading cause of COPD, which affects approximately 15 million Americans and is the third-leading cause of death in the U.S., after heart disease and cancer.

COPD can be managed with medications, but most patients will experience occasional breathing attacks with shortness of breath, coughing with phlegm and wheezing. These exacerbations can be disabling for days or weeks at a time, and severe attacks result in about 700,000 hospitalizations and 150,000 deaths each year.

The new clinical trial, at 50 U.S. centers, will be led by Jerry Krishnan, professor of pulmonary care in the UIC College of Medicine, along with co-principal investigators Robert Wise of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and John Walsh, co-founder and president of the COPD Foundation.

The trial will compare the benefits and risks of two medications currently used to treat COPD — roflumilast, an anti-inflammatory, and azithromycin, an antibiotic.

Recent clinical trials and guidelines indicate that long-term use of roflumilast or azithromycin, together with commonly prescribed inhaler-based medications, significantly reduces the incidence of dangerous exacerbations. But no studies have compared roflumilast to azithromycin.

“This will be the first head-to-head trial of these two drugs and it will help determine which treatment is best for current or former smokers and which is best able to help patients maintain their physical, mental and social well-being,” Krishnan said.

The RofLumilast or Azithromycin to preveNt COPD Exacerbations — or RELIANCE study — will enroll 3,200 current smokers, and most of the rest are former smokers, Krishnan said. The study will help determine which treatment is best for current or former smokers and which is best able to help patients maintain their physical, mental and social well-being.

“We congratulate Dr. Krishnan and his colleagues on receiving this prestigious research award from PCORI,” said Dr. Robert Barish, vice chancellor for health affairs at UIC. “COPD is common among the patients we serve, and we look forward to the study results so that patients and their clinicians can make more informed decisions.”
Theresa (Terri) Thorkildsen has spent her career studying students’ social and motivational development as it aligns with learning. So what is the best way to help students learn?

“Start with where the learner is and push them as far as you can get them to go,” said Thorkildsen, professor of educational psychology and winner of the UIC Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Thorkildsen has taught primarily graduate students during her 25 years at UIC, but has also earned a Silver Circle Award for her work with undergraduates.

“I have stayed at UIC because of the students,” Thorkildsen said. “Our students are worldly. I learn from them as often as they learn from me.”

It is crucial to identify students’ individual goals, Thorkildsen said.

“I like to imagine where students are going with their degree instead of assuming that everybody is heading in the same direction,” she said. “I try to tailor the curriculum and design teaching activities to help students further their goals in constructive ways. Having that connection to long-term goals is really crucial for success.”

Thorkildsen evaluates her students by determining whether they meet course standards and how well they align the course material with their personal goals. She encourages students to make evidence-based decisions and understand the quality of the evidence.

“Students should look at the quality of the data and not only at the names of the researchers,” Thorkildsen said. “Data-driven logic can be difficult for a lot of students. We usually talk about who influences us but we also need to decode the evidence.”

One successful teaching method Thorkildsen uses is to create small interest groups in large classes. Students work with members of these smaller groups for 16 weeks.

“Many students make lifelong friendships with their classmates,” she said. “The strategy has transformed my classes because students think more deeply and engage in constructive controversy rather than destructive competition.”

A developmental educational psychologist, Thorkildsen studies the development of K-12 students, particularly adolescents. Her research focuses on how students understand and join society. A book she wrote on the topic, Adolescent Self-Discovery in Groups, will be published in August.

Thorkildsen is currently on sabbatical at UCLA, working with her mentors and discovering new areas to study in her field.

“My book is closure on almost 30 years of research and I have to ask the question, ‘What next?’” she said. “My own self-discovery will keep me vital and help me stay excited about doing new things.”
CALENDAR

THROUGH APRIL

02 HYPHEN MAKINGS
UIC MFA Thesis Exhibitions features work by Kate Calleri, Jessica Pierotti, Bailey Ro- maine and Aaron Walker
Tues.–Fri.: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Sat: Noon–6 p.m. and by appointment
Gallery 400

MAR 30 THE STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO ADDRESS
Chancellor Michael Amiridis discusses UIC’s accomplishments, current challenges facing campus, and future plans to be Chicago’s premier public research university
3–4 p.m. / UIC Forum
RSVP at chancellor.uic.edu

EXHIBIT

MAR 30 RETHINKING THE MODERN CITY: BROOKLYN AND DETROIT
Larry Bennett, political science professor at DePaul University. Part of the Department of Political Science Spring 2016 Speaker Series
Noon–1 p.m. / 1115 BSB

Lecture

MAR 30 COUNTING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY
“Segregation, Jim Crow & the People’s Health — Racism & Embodied History.” Part of the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy’s Embodied Inequality lecture series
Noon–1:30 p.m.
Thompson Rooms, SCW
irrpp.uic.edu

MAR 31 “MOVEMENT AND STASIS: POLITICS, LITERATURE AND THOUGHT UNDER FRANCOISM”
Tatjana Gajic, assistant professor of Hispanic and Italian studies. UIC Institute for the Humanities Fellows’ Lecture
4 p.m. / Lower level, SH

MAR 31 THE CRYSTALLINE REGIME
UIC MFA Thesis Exhibitions features work by Nicholas Ballesteros, Timothy McMillan, Monica Nydam and Jimmy Schaus
Tues.–Fri.: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Sat.: Noon–6 p.m. and by appointment
Gallery 400

LECTURE

MAR 31 ON THE URGENT NEED TO REFRAME OUR DIVERSITY AGENDA
Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Duke University. Annual Phillip Bowman Lecture sponsored by the Institute for Research on Public Policy
3–5 p.m.
302 SCE

SPECIAL EVENT

APR 5–9 BUILDING AND CREATING BETTER COMMUNITIES: ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH
Illinois African American & Latino Higher Education Alliance Diversity Dialogue and Research Forum
10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Illinois Room, SCE
go.illinois.edu/IALHEA

LECTURE

APR 31 \THE STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO ADDRESS\Chancellor Michael Amiridis discusses UIC’s accomplishments, current challenges facing campus, and future plans to be Chicago’s premier public research university
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Send information about campus events to Christy Levy, christyb@uic.edu

FOR MORE UIC EVENTS, VISIT EVENTS.UIC.EDU
Cesar A. Medina felt the call to be a part of something bigger than himself, so he decided to join the Army. “What we do in life will forever echo in eternity — we have to make it a loud one,” said Medina, a graduate student in public administration.

After completing basic training in 2011, Medina had the tools to succeed. After a few years in the Army, he was promoted to Sergeant (E-5). He was a transportation, logistical, postal and operations specialist during his time in the service, which included a 10-month deployment to Afghanistan.

He now serves in the Army Reserve’s 200th Military Police Company as a Human Resource Specialist (42A), providing guidance to soldiers and their families.

Medina was awarded the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, NATO Medal, Order of the Combat Spur, Army Commendation Medal and Army Good Conduct Medal, among others.

“Being in the military has helped me become an adaptable person and make the most out of the obstacles life throws and will continue to throw at me,” Medina said. “In today’s Army and in life, I believe that we must learn how to innovate; otherwise, we become obsolete.”

Although Medina continues to actively serve in the military, he also finds time to organize events with UIC’s Student Veterans Association. He’s also an Army ROTC cadet, pursuing a career as an Officer.

He’s working his way toward a graduate degree in the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs. “I chose UIC because I was raised here and after traveling around the U.S., I’ve realized there is no place like home,” he said. “I love this city because it is very diverse and unlike any other in the world.”

Medina’s time is usually consumed with hard work, research and classes. He spends his leisure time learning about international economic development, global affairs and local government.

Medina is a strong believer that knowledge is meant to be shared. “Those young men and women who are moving up the ranks, they are the future and you never know when you’ll have an impact on someone’s life and that is ultimately what defines you as a leader,” he said.

Friends, family and fans of local bands gathered in Student Center East March 16 for UIC Radio’s third annual Battle of the Bands.

Featured performers included The Jades, Goin’ Dark, The P.E.A.S, Splor, and guest performer Flames of Funk. The five bands that took the stage showcased one of the most musically diverse lineups yet.

“I really liked the bands that performed this year. Everyone had something unique to bring forward,” said Sonia Vavra, blog director of UIC Radio and an emcee of the event.

The night began with a soulful, acoustic performance by The Jades, a duo consisting of UIC students Kathleen Lieffers and Katie Krenning. With their blues and rock-influenced powerhouse vocals and witty humor, the two won over the hearts of the audience.

Goin’ Dark, an alternative-rock quintet, was the youngest band in the competition, with members ranging in age from 14 to 18. But their musicianship and drive went beyond their years — they won the fan favorite award.

The P.E.A.S, a four-man band, exerted unparalleled energy, immersing the audience in their pop-punk tunes. Their fun and energetic set got the audience members inching closer to the stage and dancing along.

Splor closed the competition and made an impression immediately. As three of the band members began playing the intro to their first song, frontman Jonathan Dombro jumped onto the stage from within the audience, instantly commanding the attention of the crowd. During their set, the band shared their unique style of music — a genre they dub “adventure music.”

The evening wound down with a special performance by UIC School of Music’s funk band, Flames of Funk. Despite this being the group’s first live performance, the musicians performed with ease. The band jammed out and the crowd swayed along as the judges deliberated.

The decision was unanimous: Splor was named the winner. “Winning was one of the things that just told us our hard work is paying off,” Dombro said. “We practice a lot even when we don’t entirely want to. It’s nice to know we’re growing as a group.”
UI Health recognized for treatment of rare blood vessel disease

By Sharon Parmet — sparmet@uic.edu

The Sturge-Weber Foundation has designated the University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System a “Center of Excellence” for patients living with Sturge-Weber syndrome, a rare vascular disorder that can cause neurological abnormalities and glaucoma.

The syndrome is characterized by a large, red facial birthmark called a port-wine stain. Patients are at elevated risk for progressive cognitive impairment, caused by calcification of tiny blood vessels in the brain. “The blood vessels in Sturge-Weber syndrome are very leaky,” said Akira Yoshii, assistant professor of pediatric neurology and anatomy and cell biology in the UIC College of Medicine. “This leads to the coalescence of tiny calcium deposits on the internal surfaces of the blood vessels that grow larger over time.”

The calcifications, which look like railroad tracks on x-ray images, damage nerve tissue. Patients may suffer seizures and even strokes as a result of brain lesions. Severe headaches are another common symptom.

UI Health’s multidisciplinary Sturge-Weber team, which Yoshi co-leads with Dr. Jeffrey Loeb, the John S. Garvin Chair and professor of neurology and rehabilitation, includes neurologists, ophthalmologists, psychologists and other clinicians who evaluate and treat patients from birth through adulthood. UI Health may be unique among all U.S. centers recognized by the foundation in its ability to treat patients across the age spectrum.

“As patients with Sturge-Weber syndrome age, the symptoms and complications they face change, and so does the medical care they need,” Loeb said. “Here at UI Health, we have the expertise to be able to provide a continuum of high-quality care for these patients throughout their lives.”

Karen Ball, president and chief executive officer of the foundation, said the Center of Excellence designation will “let patients know that the University of Illinois at Chicago is a place where they can get comprehensive, expert care” and be able to participate in research in the foundation’s national network of collaborators.

Loeb and his team will conduct clinical research into Sturge-Weber syndrome with a focus on developing new drugs to prevent and treat the brain calcifications that are associated with headaches and seizures.

The University of Illinois NeuroRepository, a bank of neurological tissue samples from patients with epileptic and other brain and nervous system disorders, will also be an integral part of the center.

Correction
Two photos of University Scholar Tonda Hughes in the March 9 issue of UIC News had the wrong photo credit. The photo was taken by Alicia McConnell-Hatch.
Engineering faculty members receive NSF CAREER Awards

By Bill Burton — burton@uic.edu

Two young faculty scholars in civil and materials engineering are recipients of Faculty Early Career Development awards from the National Science Foundation. The prestigious awards provide support to junior faculty who exemplify the role of teacher-scholars through the integration of education and research.

Didem Ozevin and Sybil Derrible, assistant professors in the UIC College of Engineering, will each receive a $500,000 NSF CAREER grant to fund their research for five years.

Ozevin is looking for ways to design bridges and other critical structures that incorporate integrated damage-detection capability.

Ozevin’s grant will include revising undergraduate courses to introduce damage-detection concepts; developing Honors College research projects; introducing high school and undergraduate students into research, and developing a mentoring program for female civil engineering students.

Ozevin received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in civil engineering from Bogazici University in Turkey and her doctorate in civil and environmental engineering from Lehigh University.

Derrible, who is a research assistant professor in UIC’s Institute of Environmental Science and Policy and director of the Complex and Sustainable Urban Networks Lab at UIC, will use his NSF CAREER grant to study how location and lifestyle determine energy and resource consumption. The research “will directly assist in the development of effective policies for more sustainable communities that consume less energy and resources,” he said.

Derrible studies urban metabolism, or the flow of material and energy in cities. “Urban metabolism follows distinct mathematical laws at the community scale that can be captured using elements of complexity theory,” he said. He will use mathematical laws and agent-based modeling techniques to generate a theoretical space that will include every possible community profile of energy and resource consumption. The laws will be tested for fit to actual communities using data from municipal open-data portals.

A better understanding of urban metabolism will enable planners and engineers to design smarter and more resilient infrastructure systems, Derrible said. But not all of his projects are aimed at professionals. For the general public, he plans to develop a smartphone application that will enable anyone to calculate their daily carbon footprint and track their improvement.

Originally from St. Pierre and Miquelon, a French-owned territory off the south coast of Newfoundland, Derrible received a master’s degree in mechanical engineering from Imperial College in London and his doctorate in civil engineering from the University of Toronto. He came to UIC in 2012 after spending a year in Singapore as a research fellow at the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology.

Art professor’s colorful monument enlivens Grant Park

By Anne Brooks Ranallo

An 80-foot-long block full of color enlivens the landscape of southern Grant Park these days, thanks to artist and art professor Tony Tasset.

“Artists Monument,” first seen in New York in the 2014 Whitney Biennial, can be seen at near the corner of Michigan Avenue and 9th Street through mid-July. It was unveiled Feb. 20 in a ceremony held by the Chicago Park District, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events and Kavi Gupta Gallery, which represents Tasset.

Tasset is known for monumental artistic production. Among his works range from household names like Pablo Picasso and Andy Warhol to emerging artists, some of whom had only a single exhibition to their credit.

Tasset listed the artists alphabetically in a democratic tribute to several centuries of artistic production.

“Most memorials commemorate a list of names lost in a tragedy. I wanted to celebrate creation instead of destruction,” Tasset said. “This work is an absurd attempt to commemorate a giant group of artists. I know someone who was in one group exhibition in a university gallery 15 years ago, and he’s on the monument.”

“Artists Monument,” created by art professor Tony Tasset, is on display at Grant Park through mid-July. The colorful block includes the names of 400,000 artists.
SPORTS

GIFT SUPPORTS YOUTH OUTREACH PROGRAMS

By Dan Yopchick — yopchick@uic.edu

UIC Athletics has received a $50,000 donation from the Alvin H. Baum Family Fund in support of its youth outreach program. “Both UIC Athletics and the Baum Family Fund share a goal to have a positive impact on our Chicago-land community,” UIC Director of Athletics Jim Schmidt said. “The support of the Baum Family Fund provides access to our campus for thousands of young people. It offers a fun experience watching the Flames, while learning about higher education and UIC.”

The outreach program is also supported by United Parcel Service and covers costs of transportation and attendance for community youth from the Chicago area, allowing them to visit the UIC campus and attend men’s basketball, women’s basketball or baseball games. While spending time at the institution, students receive information on the opportunities of higher education and UIC.

During the current academic year, more than 14,000 young people have participated in the outreach program, including a season-high of 2,000 who attended the men’s basketball game Feb. 19. UIC Athletics has supplied more than 300 buses to support its outreach efforts. The Alvin H. Baum Family Fund is committed to bettering the lives of those who predominantly live and work in the Chicago area.

The Baum Family Fund has previously supported UIC Athletics by making the lead gifts for the video boards at Flames Field and the UIC Natatorium, which are the homes of the softball and swimming and diving programs. Both facilities are also used frequently by community organizations and area youth for competitions and clinics throughout the year.

“Thousands of people benefit each year from the Baum Family Fund’s visible support of UIC Athletics,” Schmidt said. “We appreciate that the Baum Family Fund continues to aid in our athletic department’s ability to make a difference in Chicago.”

For information on participating in the UIC Athletics outreach program, call 312-996-5324.

Softball sweeps series versus Detroit

By Laura White — lwhite88@uic.edu

The softball team (17-10, 3-0 Horizon League) put forth a strong defensive effort behind solid pitching Saturday to sweep the Horizon League-opening series against Detroit (6-24, 0-3 HL) with 5-1 and 8-1 wins in doubleheader action at Flames Field.

“I was really pleased with our pitchers in both games and our defense did a really nice job,” head coach Michelle Venturella said. “Defensively, we scored in multiple innings and kept the pressure on. It was great to see the team play well together and play solid all the way around.”

Redshirt-junior Alice Fitzpatrick and redshirt-freshman Karissa Frazier took turns to throw their first complete games of the season. They each struck out five batters and held the Titans to seven hits through the two games.

On offense, the Flames combined for 20 hits and had six extra-base tallies off home runs from freshman Skylee James (2) and senior Laura Swan (1) and doubles from junior Kaleigh Nagle (2) and senior Dana Capocci (1). Capocci, Nagle, Swan and junior Savannah Soppet all had three hits each as freshman Lexi Watts picked up four of UIC’s eight walks. In all, 10 of the Flames’ 11 batters reached base at least once on the day.

On Friday, the Flames began Horizon League play with a 2-1 come-from-behind victory at Flames Field. Senior LaRi Mitchell posted the game-tying RBI on her fourth triple of the year and scored the winning run on a passed ball, as junior pitcher Elaine Heflin established a career-high 11 strikeouts.

It was nice to come away with the win after a hard-fought game,” Venturella said. “Hef and Kaleigh (Nagle) did a nice job to manage their offense. It was good to be able to play at home in front of our fans.”

The Flames continue Horizon League play at Cleveland State this week, with games scheduled for 2 p.m. Friday and a doubleheader Saturday that begins at 11 a.m.

FLAMES @ HOME

MARCH 30–APRIL 5

Wednesday, March 30
Women’s tennis vs. Valparaiso
11 a.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts

Saturday, April 2
Women’s tennis vs. Wright State
10 a.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts
Men’s tennis vs. Wright State
6 p.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts

Sunday, April 3
Women’s tennis vs. Northern Kentucky
10 a.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts
Men’s tennis vs. Northern Kentucky
3 p.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts

UIC students free with i-card

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