Grad programs remain strong in U.S. News rankings

Employee named finalist in Janitor of the Year contest

UIC’s Lincoln Laureate has passion for giving back

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The UIC Graduate Council hosted the UIC Interfaith and Cultural Diversity Day Saturday to foster the community spirit at UIC. More than 25 groups represented their cultures during the event, which aimed to showcase the cultural/religious diversity of UIC. The representations culminated in unity in diversity.
UIC graduate programs remain strong in U.S. News rankings

By Jeffron Boynés — jboynes@uic.edu

The University of Illinois at Chicago continues to earn high marks nationally for its academic strength in the U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate Schools rankings.

The 2019 edition, published March 20, features information and rankings in business, law, education, engineering, medicine, social work, criminology, public affairs, sciences and nursing.

UIC’s master’s in nursing program moved up two places to No. 18 since last year. The Doctor of Nursing Practice program rose to No. 12, up from 15th.

“These rankings factor into the decision-making of many students trying to identify the best nursing programs,” said Catherine Vincent, the College of Nursing’s associate dean for academic affairs.

“We’re ready and eager to validate for those students everything our high rank implies: the rigor of our academic programs and specialties; the breadth of our clinical experiences; the stellar faculty who facilitate students’ development as leaders; and the world-class researchers who are discovering new knowledge for better health care outcomes.”

UIC’s part-time MBA program in the Liautaud Graduate School of Business improved 19 spots, from 86th last year to No. 47.

The MBA is a practical management degree that provides students with a solid foundation in the core aspects of business and management. Students can customize their degree from among a dozen concentrations or work toward a combined MBA/MS in accounting, business analytics or management information systems. The program allows students to take classes during the day, at night or on Saturdays. Students set their own pace and can finish the program in as little as 18 months — or as long as five years.

“The rise in positioning of our part-time MBA program is a reflection of recent top-tier faculty hiring and our commitment to our students’ success,” said Michael Mikhail, dean of the College of Business Administration. “Our combination of curriculum innovation and world-class faculty results in a high-value return on investment.

“We appreciate the need for flexibility, especially in today’s demanding and ever-changing business environment, and we offer our students program options at a convenient Chicago location.”

The latest rankings also placed the College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs’ public administration program at 34 nationally, up 11 spots from its 2016 position.

Other programs showing high marks are the College of Medicine (medical research), 52nd; the College of Social Work, 24th; the College of Engineering, 65th; and criminology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 27th.

Among the specialties, UIC was ranked as follows:

• Nursing specialties – nurse practitioner: adult/gerontology, acute care (13); nurse practitioner, family (12); nurse practitioner, psychiatric (12); and nursing administration (4)
• Education specialties – education administration and supervision (14)
• Public Affairs specialties – urban policy (6), and local government management (14)
• Science specialties – logic (4)

Not all programs are ranked every year, although the U.S. News website presents the most recent ranking for every program they rank, whether they were ranked in 2019 or not.

UIC Library of the Health Sciences receives Medical Library Association award

By Carlos Sadovi — csadovi@uic.edu

The UIC Library of the Health Sciences has earned the Medical Library Association’s 2018 Research Advancement in Health Sciences Librarianship Award.

The award recognizes health sciences libraries that have made significant contributions to the clinical, educational, research or administrative outcomes at their institutions by fostering a culture of research among health science librarians. In addition to UIC, the University of Saskatchewan was a recipient of the award.

“This award acknowledges the institutional responsibility that UIC fulfills to advance research in health sciences librarianship and celebrates the contributions to knowledge that scholars here have made for decades,” said Associate Dean of the University Library and Associate University Librarian for the Health Sciences Kathryn Carpenter.

The University Library consists of the Library of the Health Sciences in Chicago with locations in Peoria, Rockford, Urbana and the Richard J. Daley Library at UIC. The University Library supports health sciences colleges, including applied health sciences, dentistry, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health and social work.

The University Library also supports all other colleges at UIC, all administrative units, student services functions and members of the campus community.

Recently, the UIC Library of the Health Sciences became a partner institution in the MLA Research Training Institute and will provide the venue for the initiative for the next three years. The institute will enable practicing librarians to develop research skills through immersion in instruction, mentoring and work on an individual project. It will encourage them to better assess users’ needs and develop library services to meet those needs, as well as enhance the quality of research to support evidence-based practice.

“The library has worked hard over the years to provide our faculty with the support they need to balance exceptional service with exceptional scholarship,” according to University Librarian and Dean of Libraries Mary Case. “It is an honor to be acknowledged by the MLA for meeting those goals and for the contributions to the field our faculty have made.”

Carpenter will accept the Research Advancement in Health Sciences Librarianship Award at the 2018 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting on May 22 in Atlanta.
The University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System has renewed its contract with The Chicago Lighthouse, which provides call center services on behalf of the hospital.

The Chicago Lighthouse is a social service organization serving the blind, visually impaired, disabled and veteran communities with comprehensive vision care, employment opportunities and a broad array of support services.

The new contract will provide $8.2 million to pay for the services of more than 150 Chicago Lighthouse employees through August 2019.

“The partnership between UI Health and The Chicago Lighthouse began in 2014, when Lighthouse employees began taking customer calls for UI Health. This is the second time the contract has been renewed. “We are pleased to be able to continue our partnership with The Lighthouse, and to be able to provide quality employment opportunities for its clients,” said Dr. Robert Barish, vice chancellor for health affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago. “Lighthouse employees have been instrumental in helping improve access to UI Health services for our patients for many years.”

People with visual impairments and those who are blind have exceptionally high levels of unemployment compared with the general population. About 75 percent of the estimated 4 million adults in the U.S. who are completely or partially blind are not in the labor force.

UI Health’s Customer Care Center provides general information, scheduling, coordinating of patient appointments, referrals and pre-registration, appointment reminders and connections to nurses who can answer health questions. Last year, the Customer Care Center handled more than 1 million inbound calls.

“We are thrilled about the renewal of our contract with UI Health and extremely grateful to Dr. Barish and his team for the vote of confidence they have given to The Chicago Lighthouse,” said Janet Szlyk, Lighthouse president and CEO. “We commend them for opening doors to greater opportunities for talented individuals with disabilities and veterans.”

“I feel honored, humbled and proud,” Corona said about her nomination and status as a finalist. “I really like doing my work and doing it in the best way I can.”

Nominees are “those who work so hard year-round to make schools a safe, healthy, clean place for our children to learn,” said Jillian Baur, marketing manager for Cintas. “These janitors truly are a beloved part of their school!”

Corona, who has spent most of her time at UIC working in University Hall, is one of 10 finalists. Winners of the Janitor of the Year award receive $5,000 and another $5,000 in Cintas and Rubbermaid products and services for their school.

“I think that’s why I love my job so much, because of the people,” she said. “I feel honored, humbled and proud.”

Known for helping staff, students and guests find their lost or stolen items. She also gives small, impromptu Spanish lessons in the halls.

“Her favorite part about UIC is interacting with and learning about others. “I think that’s why I love my job so much, because of the people,” she said. “I feel honored, humbled and proud.”

– Carlos Sadovi contributed to this story
Lincoln Laureate finds passion in giving back to community

By Farooq Chaudhry — mchaud23@uic.edu

For UIC senior Mariel Rancel, service is part of being human.

“I think service comes from the recognition that because you are a human, you intrinsically need to depend on others,” said Rancel, a senior in biological sciences who is in the Honors College. “It’s that concept of interdependence. It’s the nature of being a human.”

Rancel is the 2018 recipient of the Lincoln Laureate award, which honors an outstanding senior at each undergraduate institution in Illinois. Service is a major component of the award, and Rancel’s tremendous record of service spans back to her experience volunteering for the Girl Scouts in seventh grade.

“My job was to help out the camp counselors, teach the girls about wilderness, fire safety, to be really goofy, and it was so fun,” she said. “I loved every second.”

Her experience with the Girl Scouts, combined with her passion for service, inspired her to pursue a career in education. She has guaranteed admission to UIC’s master’s in science education through the GPPA program.

Her love for serving others has taken her down many paths. Rancel has volunteered at the University of Illinois Hospital and Rush University Medical Center; served as mentor in the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program; and was a participant in the Urban Public Policy Fellowship program, where she helped women in Englewood learn about nutrition.

As much as Rancel has given back to the community, UIC has given her a stronger understanding of herself. As an albino Puerto Rican woman who is visually impaired, Rancel has found communities on campus that have contributed to her growth.

“I think my disability politic really flourished here because when I was growing up, I always felt like it was burdensome to ask my teachers for accommodations,” she said. “But once I told people, I didn’t like the paternalistic treatment I got. I wanted the ability to self-determine when I needed help — and so I internalized these issues of ‘I’m different.’”

However, minoring in disability studies proved to be an enlightening and empowering experience for Rancel.

“Every time I went to class I was like, ‘Holy cow! I went through that!’ she said. “I didn’t understand how big of a part being visually impaired is in my life, and the role it played until I unpacked that in class. But now it’s like, ‘Yeah, I’m disabled.’ And this isn’t a negative thing.”

Rancel also found another home for herself in the Latino Cultural Center.

“I remember going to one event as a freshman, and it ended up with me going to 90 percent of their events,” she said. “I finally know (Latino) people who aren’t my family. And I’ve always struggled with that because I’ve never looked Puerto Rican.

“The inside, I’m a disabled brown person. On the outside, I’m an able-bodied white person. It’s funny how society doesn’t tolerate variance very well. We simplify, simplify, simplify, and it then leaves people like me who don’t fit into one category, and it makes you feel conflicted in my life. But I’m Puerto Rican. And it feels so good to be able to connect with that.”

Rancel feels like she’s just getting started with her service.

“Winning this award is nice, but I’m not done,” she said. “The work hasn’t even started. I’m not a teacher yet, so what service have I really done? We’re at like 5 percent, man.”
Learning to innovate, collaborate under pressure
Physical therapy launches inaugural Health Tech Jam

By Jackie Carey — jmcarey@uic.edu

The College of Applied Health Sciences’ physical therapy department took a page out of the tech industry’s video game development playbook when it launched a unique event meant to foster a sense of innovation and collaboration between two groups of students that would otherwise seldom interact.

The inaugural Health Tech Jam brought together nearly 40 students from the physical therapy and biomedical visualization programs and issued a challenge: develop a technological solution to a common health care problem — and do it in just six hours.

In a traditional industry “jam,” video game and mobile app developers come together with a host of interested parties — some are directly involved in game development and some are just passionate about video games — to “make something new, start to finish, in a 24- to 48-hour continuous block of time,” said Samantha Bond, visiting clinical assistant professor of physical therapy and biomedical and health information sciences.

“There is something about that magical mix of a fast-paced environment and the convergence of different backgrounds that creates amazing work,” Bond said, “and that is the energy we wanted to harness in our own jam.”

The Health Tech Jam took place over two days, three hours each day on March 6 and 7. Students first went through an ice-breaking activity meant to create a sense of team spirit between the two unacquainted groups.

“Even though BVIS and PT students have a lot in common, like the fact that they want to help people, they have very different skills and very few opportunities to interact,” Bond said. “To break the ice, we put a unique spin on a good old-fashioned rock-paper-scissors tournament.”

For each match, if a student lost, he or she was recruited to a cheering section for the winner. “By the last match, the whole group was involved by cheering for one of the two final players — the energy shot through the roof,” Bond said.

The students were then divided into eight teams and presented with a series of prompts about common health-related issues, such as healthy eating and avoiding falls. Following a brainstorm of potential tech-related solutions and consultation with participating faculty members, each team selected one idea to develop into a “Shark Tank”-style pitch they would present in competition for theoretical funding.

First-year physical therapy student Katie Kanturek’s group proposed a product call Utrition, a mobile app that provides a health score and associated warnings for foods when a user scans the foods’ barcodes, ideally in a grocery store or while making a shopping list. The idea, Kanturek said, is to help people who need support understanding how to choose healthy foods.

“I came into school thinking I would just be treating patients,” Kanturek said. “When I thought about tech in physical therapy, I thought about prosthetics and exercise equipment — it was rarely about social media, apps or websites.

“Now, knowing that I can be someone who is an asset to creating new health tech products is really exciting to me,” she said, “because maybe I can help more...
people understand more about health than just the ones I will treat on a daily basis.”

Angela Gao, a second-year student in the biomedical visualization program, said working with the physical therapy students was very helpful.

“Without the perspective of the PT students, we wouldn’t have been able to design a tool with the practitioner in mind, as well as with a patient,” Gao said.

Gao’s team won the final pitch with their product Exerguide, a mobile app that teaches people about at-home exercises with normal household items, such as a chair or a water bottle.

“It’s designed for people who don’t have access to a gym, have gym fear, don’t know how to start exercising, or have other reasons why they need to stay at home,” Gao said.

As winners, Gao and her team members will have the opportunity to actually develop their product with faculty support.

“The energy and positivity of the Health Tech Jam was really encouraging,” Gao said, “and I learned that collaboration with people from diverse backgrounds gives birth to better ideas.”

Bond said the goal of the Health Tech Jam is not about preparing students for one specific situation. “It’s about preparing students to innovate in any situation, to work with people of different backgrounds and to solve problems,” she said.

In the future, Bond hopes the Health Tech Jam will grow to include other departments and colleges across campus.

Join us for a book talk
with The Good Fight author

Dick Simpson
UIC Political Science Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies and former Chicago Alderman

Thursday, April 12, 2018
3-4:30 p.m.

Richard J. Daley Library
Room 1-470

Autographed copies of The Good Fight will be available for purchase at the event for 20% off.

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**APRIL 4 SPECIAL EVENT**

**THE STATE OF UIC ADDRESS**
UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis will discuss UIC’s accomplishments, current challenges and future plans to be Chicago’s premier public research university.
3:30–4:30 p.m. / UIC Forum
RSVP, bit.ly/2Do8TLi

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**APRIL 6–14 EXHIBIT**

**AS WE RECOMPOSE**
Gallery 400 exhibit features work from MFA students Daniel Haddad Troconis, Sarah O’Neil, Jennifer Webster and Emme Williamson.
Exhibit Hours: Tues.–Fri.: 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Sat.: Noon–6 p.m.; and by appointment gallery400.uic.edu

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**APRIL 12 SPECIAL EVENT**

**BOOK TALK WITH DICK SIMPSON**
Simpson, author of The Good Fight, is a former Chicago alderman and UIC political science professor, director of undergraduate studies.
3–4:30 p.m.
Room 1-470 Daley Library

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**APRIL 18 SPECIAL EVENT**

**FIT4LIFE**
Annual health and fitness expo held at the UIC Rec Center featuring a wheelchair basketball tournament, fitness assessments, adaptive rock-climbing and vendors from across Chicago
3–6 p.m.
Student Recreation Facility

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**APRIL 13, 25 SPECIAL EVENT**

**CCSW WOMEN SPEAK**
The Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Women aims to ignite a campus conversation on what resources are needed on campus by female students and employees. Topics covered include opportunities for personal growth, mentorship, leadership, safety, networking and more.
April 13: Noon–1:30 p.m., Room 1-470 Daley Library
April 25: 3–4 p.m., Women’s Leadership and Resource Center, 1101 W. Taylor St., third floor

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**APRIL 13–21 UIC THEATRE PRODUCTION**

**FLORISSANT & CANFIELD**
UIC Theatre production of Kristiana Rae Colón’s work, directed by Derrick Sanders. At the intersection of tear gas and teddy bear memorials, a loose alliance of neighbors in Ferguson, Missouri, find themselves in the national spotlight. Documenting the wild, messy birth of a civil rights renaissance in a digital age and the vanguard of the Black Lives Matter movement, Colón’s drama is timely, powerful and real.
7:30 p.m. April 13–14, 19–21
2 p.m. April 15, 21
10 a.m. April 18
theatreandmusic.uic.edu

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**APRIL 4 SPECIAL EVENT**

**THE #METOO MOVEMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**
Part of the Campus Conversation Series, sponsored by the Office of the Provost. UIC professor Beth Richie will chair a discussion with UIC professor Paul A. Schewe; Natalie Bennett, director of the UIC Women’s Leadership Resource Center, and Scheherazade Tillet, executive director of A Long Walk Home, a Chicago nonprofit organization.
Noon–1:30 p.m.
Illinois Rooms, Student Center East

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**Send information about campus events at today.uic.edu/submit-an-event**
DEATHS

Robert Williams
Germanic studies and religious studies

Robert R. Williams, 78, professor emeritus of Germanic studies and religious studies, died March 10.

Williams, who also was an affiliated professor in philosophy, had teaching and research interests in continental philosophy and German thought from Immanuel Kant to Friedrich Nietzsche, specializing in G. W. F. Hegel.

In 2017, Oxford University Press published his last book, Hegel on the Proofs and the Personhood of God: Studies in Hegel’s Logic and Philosophy of Religion. It will be the subject of a special memorial issue of the Owl of Minerva, the journal from the Hegel Society of America, which Williams led as president from 1998 to 2000.

Some of his other books include Tragedy, Recognition, and the Death of God: Studies in Hegel and Nietzsche, Recognition: Fichte and Hegel on the Other, and Hegel’s Ethics of Recognition. He also published two translations, and numerous journal articles and book chapters.

His career awards include a Fulbright senior research professorship in Germany during the 1981-82 academic year, several National Endowment for the Humanities grants, and a UIC Institute for the Humanities fellowship during the 2002-03 academic year.

He was hired as professor at UIC in 2000 and retired nine years later. He also taught at DePaul University, Hiram College, Northland College and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Williams, who was born in Cleveland, Ohio, received a bachelor’s degree from DePauw University and his doctoral degree from Union Theological Seminary at Columbia University.

He is survived by his wife, Irma Olmedo, associate professor emerita of curriculum and instruction in the College of Education; and two children, Diana and Daniel.

A memorial service will be held at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago at 3 p.m. April 21.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to JourneyCare Hospice (journeycare.org); The SelfHelp Home (selfhelphome.org), or Fourth Presbyterian Church (fourthchurch.org).

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COMPREHENSIVE: CONVENIENT AND COVERED
Majority of mining-related injuries and illness in Illinois go unreported

By Sharon Parmet — sparmet@uic.edu

Illnesses and injuries associated with working in Illinois mines are substantially underreported to the federal agency tasked with tracking these events, according to a study published in the American Journal of Industrial Medicine.

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration requires reporting of injuries and illness sustained while working in mines in the U.S. But according to previous research, their reporting program, called the Part 50 program, did not effectively capture cases of injury in Kentucky, spurring concerns about underreporting in other states.

In 2015, Illinois ranked fourth among the 50 states in coal production, with 23 coal mines producing 56,101,000 short tons of coal (a short ton is 2,000 pounds). That year, there were 4,171 workers employed in the mining industry in Illinois, according to the Mine Safety and Health Administration. Mining remains hazardous and is associated with an increased risk for injury, as well as several health conditions, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema and black lung disease.

The Part 50 program provides the Mine Safety and Health Administration the authority to investigate accidents, injuries and illnesses occurring in U.S. mines.

Operators of coal, metal and nonmetal mines are required to notify the agency of occupational accidents, injury and illness of their employees. However, underreporting is a common occurrence.

Researchers led by Robert Cohen, clinical professor of environmental and occupational health sciences in the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health, looked at Part 50 reports of injury and illness in Illinois from 2001 to 2013, and attempted to link each report to a corresponding Illinois Workers’ Compensation Commission case. Workers’ compensation cases that didn’t have a corresponding Part 50 report were considered unreported to the Part 50 program.

The researchers identified 1,923 cases of injury or illness in the Illinois Workers’ Compensation Commission reports from 2001 to 2013 that were captured by the Part 50 program. These cases represented just 34 percent of the 5,653 cases of injuries and illnesses to mining employees identified by the Illinois Workers’ Compensation Commission database. They found that the Part 50 program did not capture about 66 percent of Illinois workers’ compensation cases among mining employees from 2001-2013.

“Underreporting to the Part 50 program really hinders the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration’s ability to enforce safety and health standards,” Cohen said.

Chronic injuries and illnesses were less likely to be reported to the Part 50 program than acute events, like accidents. “Ninety-four percent of chronic conditions, like pneumoconiosis, weren’t captured by the Part 50 program,” said Kirsten Almberg, research assistant professor of environmental and occupational health sciences in the UIC School of Public Health and a co-author on the paper.

Mine size was also correlated with reporting. The lowest rates of injury and illness reporting were associated with employees working in the smallest mines. “The underreporting by small mines may be due to lack of resources or established workplace safety programs,” Cohen said.

“Employees may not report their occupational injuries or illnesses to their employer or file a workers’ compensation claim out of fear of losing their job, or because they are unfamiliar with the system,” Almberg said.

“Programs that educate both mining operators and employees about the Part 50 program and workers’ compensation, and policies designed to protect reporting workers from being punished or even fired, would help improve reporting rates, but more importantly, improve safety for those working in mines.”
By Brian Flood — bflood@uic.edu

Four UIC students have been awarded U.S. State Department Benjamin A. Gilman scholarships to study abroad this spring.

The UIC recipients, all from Illinois, are among more than 800 American undergraduate students from 386 colleges and universities across the U.S. selected for the honor.

The Gilman International Scholarship Program, sponsored by the State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, aims to diversify the group of students who study abroad and their destinations. To be eligible for the award, students must demonstrate financial need by receiving a federal Pell Grant for their studies.

Scholars receive up to $8,000 to apply toward their study abroad program costs. Since 2006, UIC students have won more than 160 Gilman scholarships totaling approximately $640,000.

The latest UIC recipients, representing the colleges of applied health sciences, business administration, and liberal arts and sciences, and their destinations are:

- Willieka Moore, sophomore undeclared major in business administration from Chicago, studying in London, England; Rome, Italy; and Madrid, Spain
- Megan Weger, senior in biological sciences from Robinson, Illinois, studying in Copenhagen, Denmark
- Regina Witherell-Poe, junior in biological sciences from Chicago, studying in Atenas, Costa Rica
- Ovidiu Zdrentman, junior pre-physical therapy in rehabilitation sciences from Evanston, Illinois, studying in Brisbane, Australia.

The Gilman program is funded through the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000 and is administered by the Institute of International Education’s Southern Regional Center in Houston. The program honors former U.S. Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman of New York, who was chair of the House Foreign Relations Committee.

Students changing the future of oral health through research

By Christopher Bevel — cbevel@uic.edu

At the College of Dentistry’s 31st annual Clinic & Research Day, current and prospective students, as well as post-grad residents, presented more than 100 posters covering a variety of oral sciences research topics, including oral biology, regenerative science, clinical translation and community-based studies. The event was a great opportunity for students to learn, network and present their hard work to advance knowledge in the oral sciences.

“Presenting at Clinic & Research is extremely rewarding, especially as a pre-dental student,” said Polina Gubareva, an undergrad in biological sciences, psychology and pre-dentistry. She’s also in the UIC Honors College and is vice president of the UIC Pre-Dental Club.

“Not only did I get to proudly present my work to classmates and faculty, but I also learned how to synthesize a whole year of work into a poster and five-minute presentation,” she said.

Visitors from other colleges and fellow classmates and faculty spent a half-day at the College of Dentistry, where dozens of students transformed the fourth and fifth floors into the annual research event.

Research occurs at the college from the “bench to the chairside” (and the reverse) — to accelerate diagnostic and interventional therapies in not just dentistry, but also other medical fields. Clinic and Research Day allows the postgraduates, students and their faculty mentors to share their research with the dental and medical communities.

“We have an amazing group of very talented researchers here, covering a wide range of interests in the basic, behavioral, clinical, and applied sciences,” said Lyndon Cooper, associate dean for research at the UIC College of Dentistry.

Training across disciplines

Several of the students who presented are working on a dual degree, the DMD/Ph.D. as part of the College’s Multidisciplinary Oral Science Training (MOST) Program. The MOST program offers several tracks for both undergraduate and graduate/post-graduate researchers, including a Ph.D. program and a combined DMD/Ph.D. program, and a postdoctoral fellowship. MOST fellows gain valuable knowledge through independent multidisciplinary research projects with close faculty mentorship combined with an innovative clinical training curriculum.

The program allows students flexibility in designing independent tracks that match their research interests. Having this program at UIC — a Carnegie level-1 public research university — and within the College of Dentistry gives students unique access to patients and state-of-the-art resources. There is also the opportunity to find mentors and collaborators.

“Graduates from the MOST program will be highly qualified to pursue either clinical, scientific or academic career paths. With the strong foundation they receive in both clinical practice and fundamental science, they could choose to become a practitioner, an academic professional, or even become an advisor to industry or government,” Cooper said.
**SPORTS**

### UIC’s championship quest ends at Northern Colorado

By Dan Yopchick — yopchick@uic.edu

UIC’s tournament run ended Friday night as the Flames fell at Northern Colorado, 76-71, in the championship game of the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament.

The final score does not tell the whole tale of UIC’s never-say-die mentality throughout the title bout. The Flames (20-16) trailed by as many as 16 points with 7:33 to go before roaring back in a span of just over five minutes to cut the deficit to one with 2:03 remaining. The visitors could not get over the hump, however and Northern Colorado (23-15) took the title, 76-71.

UIC shot only 36 percent as a team in the season finale, but 47 during the furious second-half comeback. Marcus Ottey paced the Flames with 25 points on 10-of-18 from the field, while scoring 21 over 18 minutes in the second half. Tarkus Ferguson added his second double-double of the tournament behind 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Ferguson, Ottey and senior Tai Odiase were each named to the CIT All-Tournament team.

UIC finishes the 2017-18 season with 20 wins, most since 2003-04, and three postseason wins, most in program history.

Tai Odiase (center) was among Flames named to the CIT All-Tournament team. (Photo: Northern Colorado Athletics)

### Women’s tennis beats Northern Kentucky

By Jenn Zoellick — jennz@uic.edu

The women’s tennis team (8-6, 3-1 HL) soundly defeated Northern Kentucky (2-6, 0-2 HL) Saturday afternoon at XS Tennis. The Flames swept doubles and took four singles matches for a 5-2 win.

Miranda Rodriguez and Bianca Zuzu got their first call of the dual season at No. 3, defeating Katja Dijanezevic and Hannah Watton, 6-2. Georgie Sanders and Lejla Colic improved to 8-2 on the dual season with a No. 1 victory over Taylor Culbertson and Maria Koo, 6-3. The No. 2 match between Melika LeBlanc/ Rachel Le Comber and Margita Sunjic and Sydney Power had the Flames up 5-4, but went unfinished, as UIC had already secured the doubles point.

Le Comber won her fourth-straight singles match with a 6-3, 6-1 victory over Culbertson at No. 4, and Viktoria Seifert secured her sixth-straight individual victory with a 6-1, 6-4 win over Watton at No. 5.

LeBlanc endured three sets with Power, and landed on top, 2-6, 6-3, 6-1, to secure the win for the Flames. Koo defeated Sanders in the No. 2 match, 6-4, 6-1. Zuzu returned to the singles lineup at No. 6, defeating Dijanezevic, 6-1, 6-4. The No. 1 match between Sunjic and Colic landed in favor of NKU, 6-4, 4-7, 10-5.

The Flames will dual with Valparaiso at 10 a.m. Wednesday.

Bianca Zuzu won her singles and doubles matches Saturday.

Tai Odiase (center) was among Flames named to the CIT All-Tournament team. (Photo: Northern Colorado Athletics)

### FLAMES @ HOME

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4**
- Softball vs. Loyola
  4 p.m. Flames Field

**FRIDAY, APRIL 6**
- Baseball vs. Wright State
  5:05 p.m. Curtis Granderson Stadium

**SATURDAY, APRIL 7**
- Women’s tennis vs. IUPUI
  10 a.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts
- Men’s tennis vs. IUPUI
  2 p.m. Flames Outdoor Tennis Courts
- Baseball vs. Wright State
  2:05 p.m. Curtis Granderson Stadium

**SUNDAY, APRIL 8**
- Baseball vs. Wright State
  2:05 p.m. Curtis Granderson Stadium

More Sports at [uicflames.com](http://uicflames.com)