IGNITE 2018
Future Flames see what UIC has to offer / pg. 6-7

Art exhibit questions, reimagines concept of blackness
Students showcase research, experiences
Plan outlines ways to enhance sustainability on campus

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Student’s art exhibit questions, reimagines concept of blackness

By Farooq Chaudhry — mchaud23@uic.edu

When he was 17 years old, UIC student Oluwaseyi Adeleke began to understand his calling. Quite literally, while sitting in a classroom in Nigeria, as his teacher translated his last name, Adeleke, to him.

Its meaning? Progression with the Krown.

Adeleke’s love of fashion and dedication to social justice led to the creation of his clothing brand PRGRSSN: a fusion of fashion and justice resulting in socially conscious clothing that pays homage to monumental moments, movements and leaders in black history, including Fred Hampton, Stokely Carmichael, Mae Carol Jemison, the Black Panther Party, and more.

“When I think back on the name of the brand, I think that has so much power. When you think about progress and what that word means, and to think, you know, you’re making progression with the crown. That kind of relates to how black people, and all people, come from this lineage of kings and queens that we should never forget, so that’s something I always try to push through my clothing,” said Adeleke, a senior in economics.

Some messages and moments are just too difficult to accurately convey and recreate on a t-shirt, though. But this did not pose a limitation on Adeleke; rather, it created an opportunity.

Adeleke’s first art exhibition, “Black University: A PRGRSSN Art Experience,” is on display through May 4 in the Montgomery Ward Art Gallery in Student Center East. Black University is an interactive art show featuring more than 10 artists, actors and visionaries who examine, question and reimagine the concept of blackness throughout American history.

Each artist being featured was given the creative freedom to highlight various black leaders while maintaining their own artistic integrity. This makes the exhibition multifaceted, intimate and raw by allowing visitors to experience both the emotions of the moments being recreated, and the experience of the artists who grappled with them.

Adeleke’s intentions for the exhibition are also multidimensional, as he aims to both teach and help heal.

“I want people to walk into the space and remember the leaders that came before them, and remember that while black people have had a history that always hasn’t been the best, we’ve also had this history that’s provided us with some of the greatest leaders that this world has ever seen. So, I really want people to take the opportunity to heal and also understand the importance of black art,” he said.

PRGRSSN’s goals to empower students is a main priority for the show.

“I want to let people know that if you have a dream, if you have a vision, you can do it,” says Adeleke (right).

“I just don’t see myself stopping giving out scholarships; I don’t see myself stopping designing, stopping creating,” he said.

“I’m doing this because I really want students to understand that you don’t need a lot of money, you don’t need someone famous to back you up to make a difference. All you need is a passion for something and execution. A lot of us are just too afraid to do what’s in our mind.”

Want to contribute a story? E-mail Christy Levy at christyb@uic.edu
UIC students showcased their capstone projects, research and impactful experiences April 11 at the UIC Student Research Forum and Impact Day.

During the event at the UIC Forum, 300 students presented their research projects for visitors and a panel of judges, and for the Impact Day portion of the event, about 60 students highlighted their work outside the classroom—from career development and internships to study abroad and service. The event was sponsored by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, in conjunction with the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs, Honors College and the Center for Student Involvement.

Stephanie O’Neal, a biomedical visualization graduate student, presented her work on the ways students absorb information using a diagram that showed how HDL cells are carried.

“Our group wanted to study the most beneficial way to teach students complicated material,” O’Neal said.

Sarah Malone’s work aimed to raise awareness of sexual assault, based on consent, communication and autonomy.

“Rape culture is prominent in all factions of our society,” Malone explained. Jolene Del Rosario, a kinesiology graduate student, worked on a research project measuring motivation among working students. She found that the numbers of hours worked does not affect the motivation in students, which was a surprising outcome.

“I read an article previously about achievement and work in students, which is where I found my influence to pick this topic,” she said.

Winners from the Student Research Forum include:

**GRADUATE STUDENTS**

**Art/Design/Humanities and Social Sciences**
First place: Angel Gao, biomedical and health information sciences

**Business/Computer Science/Mathematics and Engineering/Physical Sciences**
First place: Navid Saneie, mechanical and industrial engineering

**Life Sciences**
First place: Chun-Hao Huang, kinesiology and nutrition

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

**Art/Design/Humanities**
First place: Franziska Andonopoulos, gender and women’s studies

**Business/Computer Science/Mathematics and Engineering/Physical Sciences**
First place: Sindhu Konkapaka, medicinal chemistry and pharmacognosy

**Life Sciences**
First place: Usama Malkana, biological sciences
Second place: Efstathia Loukenas, anatomy and cell biology
Third place: Gelique Ayala, neurological sciences

**Social Science**
First place: Qaswa Hussaini, psychology
Second place: Mariel Rancel, chemistry
Third place: Yuwa Edomwande, environmental and occupational health sciences

**Spring 2018 Political Science Speaker Series Presents:**

“Trump’s America: Year Two”

Congressman
Danny K. Davis
7th Congressional District, Illinois

*in conversation with Professor Dick Simpson, UIC*

Mon. Apr. 23
11:00-12:00
Student Center East, 750 S. Halsted
Room 605

Co-sponsors include: Center for Student Leadership and Civic Engagement, Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement, Great Cities Institute, Jane Addams College of Social Work, Departments of African American Studies, History, and English.

Altha Alexander is the speaker series coordinator, althax@uic.edu

View more information on the winning Student Research Forum projects at research.uic.edu/srf/2018
Carmen Yulín Cruz, mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, will be the keynote speaker at, “Puerto Rico, Hurricane Maria, and the Crisis of Colonialism,” a daylong symposium hosted by the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Social Justice Initiative along with the Union for Puerto Rican Students, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and the Puerto Rican Agenda.

A series of panel discussions will serve to provide critical reflection on the future of Puerto Rico in the wake of Hurricane Maria last year.

The event takes place from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. April 20 in the Illinois Room, Student Center East.

Months after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, the majority of the island remains without clean water or electricity as several hundred thousand inhabitants have relocated to the U.S., continuing a decades-long trend.

The symposium is co-sponsored by the MacArthur Foundation and the Crossroads Fund.

“WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF FACULTY WHO REGULARLY GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO HELP THEIR STUDENTS GET THE MOST OUT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE.”

The event will place the current moment within a historical and political context, and raise awareness about the racial, colonial, environmental and economic underpinnings of the natural disaster.

The schedule includes:

- 9 to 9:30 a.m. – Welcome and introduction
- 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. – Puerto Rico, New Orleans, and Haiti: Environment, Race Class and Empire
- 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. – Puerto Rico in the Wake of Maria: The Politics of Survival and Sovereignty
- 3 to 5 p.m. – Behind the Lens, After the Storm: A Discussion with Puerto Rican Filmmakers
- 6 to 7:30 p.m. – Keynote Address: San Juan, Puerto Rico Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz

Tickets are available at bit.ly/2J5cFwL

Camil Chacon, professor of Chicano/Latino Studies and organizer of the symposium, said the event is aimed at meeting the needs of students who are coming from Puerto Rico to the mainland and working to make the transition easy.

“We want to make sure they are able to get the assistance they need to be able to keep on the path that they’re on so they don’t get stuck,” Chacon said.

For those on the mainland, Chacon said, the symposium will provide a deeper understanding of the complex issues facing Puerto Rico.

CAMPUS NEWS

Housing honors outstanding faculty members

Campus Housing hosted its third annual “Honoring Our Professors’ Excellence” (HOPE) Reception April 3 to recognize faculty who have made a lasting impact on the lives of Housing residents during a reception in the East Terrace of Student Center East.

Fifty-five residents nominated 72 faculty members in more than 30 different departments across the campus.

“We know that there are hundreds of faculty who regularly go above and beyond to help their students get the most out of their experience; often those efforts happen without much fanfare. So, we wanted to take a moment and let faculty know that their efforts are appreciated,” said Nick Ardinger, assistant director for residential education with Campus Housing.

“Campus Housing tries to make a big university feel smaller for our residents; these nominations help to point the way for other residents.”

The more than 100 people in attendance included student nominators and their faculty nominees, nominees’ guests and department heads, and housing staff.

The texts of all nominations were placed around the room for attendees to read as they mingled and enjoyed refreshments.

At the formal ceremony, nominees received a lapel pin and a certificate with the text of their nomination and had the chance to have a photo taken together with their nominator.

“We know that having a connection with a faculty member correlates to being more likely to graduate, so we want to make it easy for our students to connect with faculty,” Ardinger said. “We are constantly looking for ways to develop collaborations between faculty and housing students and staff.”

UIC hosts discussions on future of Puerto Rico, post-Hurricane Maria

By Carlos Sadovi — csadovi@uic.edu

Carmen Yulín Cruz, mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, will be the keynote speaker at, “Puerto Rico, Hurricane Maria, and the Crisis of Colonialism;” a daylong symposium hosted by the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Social Justice Initiative along with the Union for Puerto Rican Students, the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and the Puerto Rican Agenda.

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The Office of Sustainability presented UIC’s progress and goals to improve environmental performance during a talk April 10 in the Latino Cultural Center.

The talk’s focus was the Climate Action Implementation Plan, a decade-long model of resource planning made for updating UIC’s formal Climate Action Plan.

The action plan outlines specific steps for implementing the UIC Climate Commitments, which include becoming a carbon neutral, zero waste, net zero water and biodiverse campus. The implementation plan includes seven strategies that will help UIC reach those aspirational commitments and more.

“[This plan is actually economically based and proposes the investments that are needed to get to the goals],” said Cynthia Klein-Banai, associate chancellor for sustainability.

Klein-Banai presented a graph with past greenhouse gas emissions and a forecast of future emissions, which include the university’s energy use and transportation to, from and around campus. Growth information was based on projections within the Campus Master Plan.

“Those additional buildings, the growth in the student body, if we do nothing to address our carbon emissions, [they] would increase and then it levels off,” Klein-Banai said.

Doing “business as usual” would also hike up energy consumption and costs.

The graph was one example of how the implementation plan models and evaluates potential solutions for issues related to making UIC a more sustainable university. Focus areas and solutions were prioritized based on their financial and environmental impacts.

Klein-Banai touched on developments and key goals for some strategies. The new Bigbelly Solar compacting trash and recycling containers on the east side of campus, for example, have increased the outdoor recycling capacity on campus and reduced emissions. The containers will be expanded to the west side.

Energy efficiency and conservation has a greater reduction potential: about 54,000 MTCO2e, or greenhouse gas emissions, by 2050. Quick payback projects include steam trap replacements and building energy retrofits. The plan proposes a Green Revolving Fund as a mechanism by which the implementation of cost-saving projects would generate more funds for green projects through returning the initial savings to the fund.

Building green and efficient facilities is another potential area for carbon reduction. Klein-Banai said that building standards for the university are currently being updated. She said that the campus also has reduced total energy use by 23 percent since 2004.

Informing people to do things like turning off lights, computers and more could have a cost reduction of 1.5 percent annually, which would allow the university to hire a staff member who could teach the UIC community about other energy-saving methods.

The talk then switched to ideas for renewable energy sources.

“We’re looking at indirect power purchase or some kind of power purchase agreement for off-site power,” Klein-Banai said. On-site options are also proposed. For natural resources and ecosystem services, retaining stormwater is important. The university has about 4 acres of green infrastructure that retains or slows stormwater down to avoid getting into the city’s Combined Sewer Overflow system. Increasing green infrastructure to 32 acres, and partnering with agencies who own the storm sewers could help UIC be more sustainable.

Other ongoing initiatives are keeping the campus green.

A tree inventory with Bartlett Tree Experts is ongoing, and UIC is finalizing a Campus Habitat Pollinator Plan. Food production spaces are being supported through Heritage Garden and the College of Applied Health Sciences, which houses a Nutrition Teaching Garden.

For recycling, the campus rate is at 45 percent, thanks to initiatives such as increased food scrap collection.

Food recovery efforts include student organizations and Dining Services collecting food after events and a plan to get new contracts with food waste collectors. UI Hospital is piloting a program and has plans to expand. About 50 tons of food scraps are collected annually.

CAIP’s solutions would help UIC reach a greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal of 40 percent by 2028.

“We believe we can get there with the investment,” said Klein-Banai.

The implementation plan was prepared by the Office of Sustainability in conjunction with the Chancellor’s Committee on Sustainability and Energy.
UIC IGNITE

Admitted students preview UIC experience

By Christy Levy — christyb@uic.edu

About 3,100 admitted students and their family members visited campus Saturday for the fifth annual UIC Ignite to see what the campus has to offer before they make their college decisions by May 1.

“The event went really well, and every year we seem to be drawing bigger crowds,” said Oscar Rodriguez, director of recruitment and outreach. “It felt like a really productive day.”

Students had the chance to connect with students, faculty and staff members from their academic college, explore campus and meet classmates. Participants learned more about undergraduate research opportunities, campus housing, orientation and financial aid at UIC.

This year’s class of admitted students includes nearly 600 students with perfect GPAs, Rodriguez said. Students admitted to campus represent all 50 states and two U.S. territories, as well as 89 other countries.

“It’s diverse, it’s academically strong and they’re coming from different parts of the country and world,” Rodriguez said.

During Ignite, the Center for Student Involvement hosted UIC Live with music, giveaways and opportunities to meet with representatives from student organizations.

Students who commit to UIC will also be invited to Center for Student Involvement activities throughout the summer.

“The event went really well, and every year we seem to be drawing bigger crowds.”

Admitted students and their family members visited campus Saturday for the fifth annual UIC Ignite event. (Photo: Julie Jaidinger)
The 2018 class of admitted students is “diverse, it’s academically strong and they’re coming from different parts of the country and world,” says Oscar Rodriguez, director of recruitment and outreach. (Photos: Julie Jaidinger)
GARDEN FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE
Community-driven participatory public art project created by artist Jenny Kendler that uses a traveling garden of local plants to give Chicagoans a dynamic and tangible experience of the effects of climate change.
For information on exhibit locations, visit gallery400.uic.edu

APRIL 20 SPECIAL EVENT
TRUMP’S AMERICA: YEAR TWO
Talk by Congressman Danny Davis. Part of the Political Science Speaker Series. Co-sponsors: Political Science Department, Center for Leadership and Civic Engagement, Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement.
11 a.m.-noon
605 Student Center East

UI HEALTH EARTH DAY FAIR
Join the UI Health Green Team and outside organizations focused on sustainability to help ensure that environmental stewardship and sustainability are at the forefront of patient care and hospital operations.
11:30 a.m.–2 p.m.
UI Hospital, Rooms 1130 and 1135

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

APRIL 18 SPECIAL EVENT

APRIL 23 SPECIAL EVENT

APRIL 23-AUGUST 25 EXHIBIT

OUT OF EASY REACH
Gallery 400 exhibit curated by Allison Glenn, in collaboration with DePaul Art Museum and Rebuild Foundation. Exhibit presents 24 artists from the Black and Latina diasporas through artworks created from 1980 to 2018 who use abstraction as a tool to explore personal and universal histories, with an emphasis on mapping, migration, archives, landscape, vernacular culture, language and the body.
Exhibit hours:
10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tues.-Fri.
Noon-6 p.m. Sat., and by appointment
Gallery400.uic.edu

APRIL 27-AUGUST 4 EXHIBIT

THROUGH APRIL 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 hurled into 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, Colon’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

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

**Howard Ozer**  
**Former cancer researcher, clinician, professor**

Howard Ozer, former cancer researcher, clinician, professor and leader at UIC, died April 6. He was 71.

Ozer, who specialized in treatment of blood cancers, is internationally known for his work on biological therapies for cancer. He made significant developments in research related to blood cell growth factors and cytokines. He also conducted clinical trials in leukemia and lymphoma.

**“HOWARD WAS A GREAT COLLEAGUE, ALWAYS SMILING, WILLING TO COLLABORATE, AND ALSO TO SHARE HIS PASSION FOR AFRICA AND HUNTING.”**

Ozer’s leadership role at UIC began in 2010, when he joined the faculty as the Eileen Lindsay Heidrick professor in oncology and chief of hematology/oncology. Soon after, in 2012, he assumed the role of director of the UI Cancer Center for two years.

In 2017, Ozer was named a Fellow of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. Only ASCO members who show extraordinary dedication and service to the field of cancer and cancer patients are awarded this title.

He was grateful for the title and the support. “In my 37 years in oncology and hematology, I’ve been able to witness and participate in clinical trials that cure and ameliorate many different kinds of tumors, and save many patients’ lives,” Ozer said in an interview last year. “To be recognized in this fashion by the American Society of Clinical Oncology whose membership was responsible for so many of these advances is truly an honor.”

Before coming to UIC, Ozer held many other leadership roles. At the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, he was Eason chair and section chief of hematology/oncology. He was also director of Oklahoma’s cancer center. During his time there, the center received a planning grant and grant renewal from the National Cancer Institute.

At Roswell Park Cancer Institute, he was associate professor of medicine. He moved after to become division chief of oncology for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and associate director for clinical affairs at the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

He was director of Emory University’s Winship Cancer Center and director of the Cancer Center at Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia.

Ozer graduated from Yale University, where he earned an M.D. and Ph.D. and completed a training program in microbiology/immunology. He interned and completed his residency in internal medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital.

He received fellowship training in hematology/oncology at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

Colleagues Patricia Finn, head of the department of medicine, and Damiano Rondelli, division chief of hematology/oncology, reflected on Ozer’s successful career and life.

“Dr. Ozer’s passion for research and clinical studies made him also a senior leader of the Gastrointestinal Cancer Working Group at UIC and the director of the UI Health Tumor Registry,” Finn and Rondelli wrote in an email. “Howard was a great colleague, always smiling, willing to collaborate, and also to share his passion for Africa and hunting. He will be sincerely missed.”

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**Richard (Dick) Guminski**  
**Former associate director of physical plant administration**

Richard (Dick) Guminski, former associate director of physical plant administration, died Feb. 22.

Guminski joined UIC in 1966 as architectural electrical engineer and became superintendent of heat, power and light utilities and chief operating engineer in 1976. He was named associate director of physical plant administration in 1984, and retired in 1992. He was a devoted employee of the university system.

Before he came to UIC, he was an electrical engineer at Link-Belt Co. and electrical designer for the Chicago Park District.

He enjoyed traveling with his family. Among his favorite travels was Alberta, Canada, and Hawaii.

He leaves behind his wife of 65 years, Helen; daughter, Barbara (Gene) Weiler; son, Gregory Guminski; and granddaughter Kimberly (Dan) Conley.

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**Ellen Ann BeGole**  
**Associate professor emerita of orthodontics**

Ellen Ann BeGole, associate professor emerita of orthodontics, died April 2. She was 83.

Born June 16, 1934, BeGole, an internationally known biostatistician, served on the faculty of the department of orthodontics beginning in 1975. After retiring from her full-time duties in 2000, she returned to the college as a part-time faculty member. She was a frequently published researcher and was a former president of the UIC chapter of the Phi Kappa Phi honor society.

She received her Ph.D. in educational and biostatistics at the University of Pittsburgh.

BeGole was the mother of Jane (James) Waidanz; grandmother of Melanie; and sister of Janet (the late Russell) Gage.

Funeral services have been held.
Researchers to test promising treatment for triple-negative breast cancer

By Sharon Parmet — sparmet@uic.edu

A unique cell surface protein found on triple-negative type breast cancer cells called JAG1 is a promising new therapeutic target for this hard-to-treat and highly metastatic type of breast cancer, according to UIC researchers.

Jan Kitajewski, professor and head of physiology and biophysics at UIC, and his colleagues are working on developing a small drug molecule that can block JAG1.

Kitajewski, who is also associate director for basic science of the University of Illinois Cancer Center, has received a three-year $1.17 million Department of Defense grant to develop this new therapy to treat triple-negative breast cancer, so named because it does not contain three of the most common types of receptors that fuel most breast cancer growth — estrogen, progesterone and the HER-2/neu.

About 40,000 women in the U.S. are diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer each year. African-American women are most likely to develop triple-negative breast cancer, which is typically treated with aggressive chemotherapy or radiation, not with hormone therapy, the traditional course of action to fight hormone-positive breast cancers. New targeted therapies for triple-negative breast cancer are “badly needed to improve the quality of life for patients, and many of them reside in our community,” Kitajewski said.

“Triple-negative breast cancer is more likely than other breast cancers to recur and spread to other parts of the body, such as the brain, lungs, liver or bones,” he said. “We need to find a way to block metastasis, because it is often difficult or impossible to treat once it spreads. In many cases, this leads to death.”

The presence of JAG1 on the surface of triple-negative breast cancer cells typically means poor outcomes for patients. When a receptor called notch binds to JAG1, it activates a form of cellular communication through what is known as the notch signaling pathway. Notch signaling is believed to help tumors grow by attracting new blood vessels to supply oxygen and nutrients to the tumor.

New data from the Kitajewski lab suggests notch also promotes metastasis, the spread of cancer to other organs. Researchers have tried to block notch signaling with chemical compounds, but these cause severe gastrointestinal toxicity.

Kitajewski and his laboratory have developed a new class of therapeutic proteins, called notch decoys. They work by binding to JAG1 and preventing it from binding to true notch receptors, thereby dampening down the activation of the notch signaling pathway. Tests have been conducted using notch decoys on human tumors implanted into mice. Results have shown that JAG1-specific notch decoys reduce tumor growth, tumor blood vessels, and the ability of those vessels to carry blood and oxygen to the tumor, Kitajewski said. The treatment also did not cause gastrointestinal toxicity in the animals.

A new, more advanced JAG1-inhibiting notch decoy, optimized for use in humans, has been developed by Kitajewski and his colleague, Naiche Adler, a research scientist in his laboratory. The new grant will support the testing of the advanced notch decoy in mice with human triple-negative breast cancer tumors. “We believe the JAG1-notch decoy will have fewer side effects than aggressive chemotherapy, radiation, or other notch inhibitors,” he said. “Most importantly, this therapy may block metastases to new organs, which would substantially reduce breast cancer mortality. We’re excited to receive this new funding as it will facilitate the fight against this aggressive form of breast cancer.”

BE IN THE KNOW
READ UIC TODAY

UIC today — a new internal communications platform for the campus community — provides a one-stop web-based site for all news, information, events and announcements for UIC. It is an up-to-the-minute source for all information of interest to the campus community.

To submit content for UIC today, or if you have an idea for a story, video or photo you would like to see in UIC today, visit today.uic.edu
Researchers win grants for education-related studies

By Brian Flood — bflood@uic.edu

Three UIC researchers are recipients of Spencer Foundation grants designed to advance education-related research.

A Midcareer Grant award to Danny Martin will expand his investigation of math learning among African-American students; a Small Research Grants program award to Federico Waitoller will advance his research on how parents of students with disabilities perceive school choice in urban settings; and a Small Research Grants program award to Amanda Roy will support her work studying education and work decisions among low-income, racial/ethnic minority youth.

Martin, professor of curriculum and instruction and mathematics, will receive $130,000 to support his project, “Theoretical and Methodological Considerations in Studying the Mathematical Lives of Preschool-Aged Black Children in Everyday Settings.”

The award will allow him to extend his work into the early childhood education context, focusing on research and policy issues, particularly as they relate to mathematics education that is responsive to the needs of black children. As a part of his project, Martin will engage in a nine-month apprenticeship within Erikson Institute’s Early Math Collaborative, as well as other professional development opportunities and conferences nationally.

Martin’s previous research has focused on understanding the role of race and identity in black students’ mathematical experiences, taking into consideration sociohistorical and structural forces, community and school issues, and individual agency. His work, which has been funded by the National Science Foundation, has covered education levels from middle school through college and has examined black parents and families.

At UIC since 2004, Martin holds a joint appointment in the College of Education and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He teaches mathematics courses for pre-service teachers, elementary math methods, and graduate courses in mathematics education. He previously taught mathematics for 14 years at Contra Costa Community College in San Pablo, California, where he served as department chair.

Martin, who was a National Academy of Education postdoctoral fellow, earned his Ph.D. in mathematics education and a master’s degree in mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley, and bachelor’s degrees in mathematics and physics from Carroll College.

Waitoller, associate professor of special education, earned $50,000 through the Small Research Grants program at the Spencer Foundation for his project, “Leveling the Landscape through School Choice? Urban Parents of Students with Disabilities Charting the Education Marketplace.”

Waitoller, who joined UIC’s College of Education in 2011, said his study will use an innovative mixed-methods approach that merges geographical analysis and in-depth ethnographic interviews. The aim is to understand how perceptions of urban social landscapes shape the ability of parents of students with disabilities to engage with school choice.

His research focuses on urban inclusive education. In particular, Waitoller’s work focuses on policies and practices that generate or reproduce inequities for students of color with disabilities. He is also interested in examining how these inequities are affected by the production of space in urban economies and the role of teacher learning and school/university partnerships in developing capacity for inclusive education.

Waitoller earned his Ph.D. in special education from Arizona State University, his master’s degree in special education from the University of Washington and his bachelor’s degree in psychology from Columbia College.

Roy, assistant professor of psychology, was awarded $50,000 as co-principal investigator of a project entitled “On the Brink of Adulthood: Understanding Education and Work Decisions Among Low-Income, Racial/Ethnic Minority Youth.”

Roy and Christine Li-Grining of Loyola University Chicago will examine data on post-high school plans, predictors of such plans, and related decision-making among low-income, racial/ethnic minority youth who participated in the Chicago School Readiness Project as Head Start preschool students.

They will also conduct focus groups and in-depth interviews with participants to learn more about teens’ decision-making processes related to goal-setting and pursuits, facing obstacles, and revising goals.

The study, which aims to inform policy and intervention efforts to reduce socioeconomic disparities in education, is an extension of Roy’s ongoing work that explores the ways that poverty and environmental risk factors, such as neighborhood poverty and crime, can influence health and development.

Roy, who came to UIC in 2014, is a former postdoctoral research associate with the Chicago School Readiness Project and the MacArthur Network on Housing Quality and Child Development. She earned her doctorate and master’s degree in community psychology from the New York University, and bachelor’s degrees in psychology and sociology from the University of Wisconsin – Madison.

The Spencer Foundation was established in 1962 to support education research, fellowship and training programs.
United States

UIC men’s gymnasts qualify for NCAA Championship meet

By Tim Hurley — thurley@uic.edu

Three members of the men’s gymnastics team have qualified for the NCAA National Championships, which will take place April 20-21 at the UIC Pavilion.

Asad Jooma, who will compete on the vault, had the highest qualifying score among individual qualifiers. Satchel Hudson is the first alternate in the all-around, and Colin Schwartz is the first alternate on the pommel horse.

“We’re really proud and excited to have those guys be part of the championship weekend,” head coach Charley Nelson said. “Of course we don’t wish any injuries on anyone, but hopefully the two alternates will get a chance to compete here on their home turf!”

Jooma was one of the Eastern College Athletic Conference’s top vaulters all season. He tied his career high of 14.350 three times, including at the ECAC Championships, where he finished fifth. After peaking with 14.350s in consecutive meets, he upgraded his vault and still progressed back to his career-high level on the more difficult maneuver. His qualifying score was 14.175.

“Asad is in a great position to have a great championship. He has a caliber of vault to qualify for day two and be in the top 10 in the country,” Nelson said.

Hudson’s career high 74.950 all-around score at the ECAC meet was good for seventh place in the conference. The Flames’ top all-arounder the whole season, Hudson set career highs on five of six apparatuses. He averaged 73.463 for his qualifying score.

Schwartz made the NCAA cut in his first season as a collegiate gymnast. He set a season high of 13.65 in the last meet of the regular season, which was also the top pommel routine by any Flame this year. With a qualifying score of 12.463, he will enter the national competition if one gymnast withdraws.

Softball team keeps winning streak alive

By Jenn Zoellick — jennz@uic.edu

The softball team (20-15, 9-3 HL) extended its win streak to six Saturday with a 7-3 win over Northern Kentucky (17-16, 4-7 HL). After a nearly two-hour rain delay in the bottom of the first, the Flames came back on the field and took control to secure their second-consecutive series sweep.

Up next for the Flames is a game at DePaul today.

Lexi Watts started the game with a leadoff single, moved over on a grounder to second from Skylee James, and scored on an NKU fielding error off the bat off Tiana Mack-Miller to give the Flames a 1-0 lead.

Maddie Spinks opened the second with a single up the middle. Taylor Cairns bunted to land runners on first and second, and a triple from Skylee James brought both runners, 3-1. Mack-Miller walked and Griman grounded out to bring in James and make it 4-1.

The Flames kept the offense coming in the third, as Cairns reached on an error and stole second. Watts grounded out to move Cairns to third, and a single up the middle from James allowed her to score. Mack-Miller drew another walk, and Alyssa Griman put a bouncer down the right line and outran the tag to load the bases. Kayla Wedl put one in the right field gap for a double, to grow UIC’s lead to 7-1.

In their final batting opportunity, NKU added a final run off after a pair of singles and a walk, ending the game by a final score of 7-3.