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Softball ends run at NCAA Regionals

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How does one bring a literary and arts magazine to life? Red Shoes Review, UIC’s undergraduate literary and arts magazine, took on that very task at its annual publication release party recently.

Passersby created their very own collective piece of art — an 8-foot-wide mural colored with their brushstrokes and fingerprints. Students also collected their free copy of this year’s publication, which includes a diverse selection of literary works, fine art and photography from across the undergraduate student body. The magazine can also be viewed online at bit.ly/2KW5okn.

I have been working with Red Shoes Review since my freshman year. It was the first activity in which I was sure that I wanted to get involved and it has certainly been one of the most rewarding. Throughout the year, we go from stressing over not having enough submissions to stressing over having too many submissions that we unfortunately have to cut. Despite the ups and downs, having the final product in my hands always makes me so proud, not just of all the effort our board puts into the magazine, but also of all the creativity that UIC harbors. I hope eventually Red Shoes Review will be known by everyone at UIC and be read by people outside of the university so that they too can see just how talented our students are.

If you’re interested in getting involved or submitting to the magazine, email uic.redshoes@gmail.com.
UIC wins Green Ribbon Schools award

By Carlos Sadovi — csadovi@uic.edu

The U.S. Department of Education has announced that UIC is among the 2018 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Awardees.

UIC was nominated by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. UIC’s conservation efforts include a formal 10-year commitment to sustainability, known as the UIC Climate Commitments, and a Climate Action Implementation Plan that maps progress and next steps. By 2050, the campus community and partners hope to make UIC a carbon neutral, zero waste, net zero water and biodiverse university.

Illinois candidates were chosen by the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Green Alliance, a nonprofit that works to make the region sustainable, profitable and healthy.

The recognition shows how the campus collectively creates a more sustainable environment, says Cynthia Klein-Banai, associate chancellor for sustainability. (Photo: Anna Dworzecka)

Obama Foundation, UIC announce Chicago Community Conversation

The Obama Foundation and UIC will host the Obama Foundation Chicago Community Conversation, an event bringing together a diverse group of approximately 300 local grassroots leaders to discuss the role of citizens in creating stronger communities.

This one-day gathering, held June 19 at the UIC Isadore and Sadie Dorin Forum, will include short talks, performances, and interactive conversations celebrating and exploring Chicago — of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Additionally, workshops and breakout sessions will allow attendees to connect with one another, share their work and ideas, and collaborate.

“The mission of the Obama Foundation is to inspire people to change the world, and that starts right here in our hometown of Chicago,” said Michael Strautmanis, chief engagement officer of the Obama Foundation. “We are proud to work with the University of Illinois at Chicago on this event to pilot a new way of engaging local leaders to find community-based solutions to our common challenges.”

“As Chicago’s only public research university, UIC is committed to improving the quality of life in our neighborhoods and cities through scholarship, research and community engagement,” said UIC Chancellor Michael Amiridis. “We are delighted to host the Obama Foundation Chicago Community Conversation to bring Chicagoleans together as they share their knowledge and learn from each other.”

The Chicago Community Conversation will be guided by other successful Obama Foundation events, including the pilot Training Days and the inaugural global Summit last year. It will be an opportunity to hear from Chicago residents who are doing their part to create the communities they want to live in.
Summer camp for kids with ADHD starts June 18

By Sharon Parmet — sparmet@uic.edu

It’s not just a summer camp. For children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, Camp STAR can be a life-changing experience.

“At the end of camp, parents often describe their child as a brand-new kid,” said Janine Rosenberg, assistant clinical director of Camp STAR and University of Illinois at Chicago assistant professor of clinical psychology. “They can’t believe the transformation that takes place over the seven weeks of camp.”

Camp STAR (the name stands for Summer Treatment for ADHD and Related Issues), a partnership of UIC and the Jewish Council for Youth Services, is the only program of its kind in Illinois.

The camp, for children entering first through seventh grade in the coming school year, runs weekdays, June 18 through Aug. 3, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in Highland Park, Illinois.

Camp STAR director Kristine Kent says the camp helps boost kids’ self-esteem.

“Many kids come to Camp STAR having had negative experiences at other camps, or at school, but at Camp STAR they fit in — they meet other kids who have similar issues or struggles, and together they learn new skills,” Kent said. “Some kids may have had difficulty forming friendships, but we find that at Camp STAR, they do make friends, and our counselors use a lot of positive reinforcement to facilitate and encourage those new friendships.”

The comprehensive program provides a fun camp environment with a focus on social rewards and positive reinforcement through sports and recreation. Campers express their creativity through arts and crafts, and they work on classroom behavior in a learning center. Other activities include weekly field trips, Friday cookouts, swimming and a graduation ceremony.

The approach has been shown to improve the behavior and social functioning of children with ADHD.

Every child receives an individualized treatment plan, to teach and reward social skills, improve attention and anger management, control impulsive behaviors and enhance self-esteem. A 1 to 2 ratio of staff to campers allows each child to receive individual attention from the staff, which includes advanced graduate and undergraduate students in psychology, education, and health-related fields.

Parents attend weekly group sessions to learn the techniques used at camp.

Scholarships are available, and many families are able to get insurance reimbursement.

For more information about Camp STAR call (847) 433-6001 or email campstar@jcys.org.

Making campus greener

By Francisca Corona — fcoron3@uic.edu

Twenty-five UIC community members and tree enthusiasts celebrated, planted and learned about trees and green efforts on campus for Arbor Day April 27.

The national holiday was recognized at UIC with a tree planting that was made possible by Robert Sargis, assistant professor of clinical medicine in the College of Medicine. The physician-scientist’s gift allowed UIC to purchase two trees for Arbor Day and plant them in the Medical Sciences Courtyard on the west side of campus, replacing trees that had been destroyed by a storm in 2016.

“[Sargis] believes very strongly that trees play an absolutely essential role in making cities habitable through innumerable ecosystem services, including filtering air, reducing heat island effects, sequestering CO2 and limiting stormwater runoff,” said Lisa Sanzenbacher, assistant director of the Office of Sustainability.

She thanked Sargis for the two saplings, a bald cypress tree and Kentucky coffeetree.

“Both are great as far as attracting wildlife, keeping things pollinated and attractive for all of the other plants in the area,” said Carly Rizor, superintendent of grounds.

Rizor added that all trees on campus have been inventoried, health assessed and valued — important steps that have helped UIC earn longtime recognition as an Arbor Day Foundation Tree Campus USA.

Camp STAR helps boost the self-esteem of children with ADHD.

Camp STAR

Youth Services Council for

Highland Park, Illinois.

Contact: Camper and Parent Resources

847.433.6001

campstar@jcys.org

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CONGRATS, GRADS!

More than 5,300 degrees were awarded at 14 college commencement ceremonies May 9-14 at the UIC Pavilion. Fourteen distinguished individuals, including accomplished alumni, visited campus to address the 2018 graduates and their families. Three guests were granted honorary degrees, the university’s highest award: Juan Salgado, chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago, from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; award-winning documentary filmmaker Steve James, from the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts; and Randall Grove, executive director of the Chicago Dental Society, from the College of Dentistry.
When political science meets medicine
UIC rotation teaches residents to be policy advocates

By Jackie Carey — jmcarey@uic.edu

A one-of-its-kind rotation for medical residents and public health students is helping to bridge the gap between practice and policy in health care.

"In the last 60 years, despite the increasing complexity of our health care system, health care providers have become less relevant in public policy decisions and discourse," said James Ronayne, assistant professor of clinical pediatrics in the College of Medicine, citing a 2014 article from the New England Journal of Medicine.

"At the same time, doctors are frustrated and are, more often than not, stuck practicing defensive medicine and asking the question: 'What else can I do?'" Ronayne said.

The answer, perhaps, is political advocacy, he says.

"IT GIVES US A CHANCE TO BUILD A SKILL SET THAT WE CAN'T IN ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCE."

"Only a small percentage of morbidity and mortality issues are being reduced by care in the clinic," Ronayne said, "the rest of it comes from other influences, and policies are a big part of that."

The Legislative Education and Advocacy Development course, or LEAD, is a two-week rotation designed to bring together different types of learners and teach the basics of the state legislative process, policy research and analysis, and preparing and presenting policy recommendations. Nearly 40 learners, from schools around Chicago, have participated in the program, which is offered in February — right before the Illinois General Assembly heads into session.

Ronayne says it is about empowering health care professionals to share "their voices and ears" and advocate for change.

Ronayne tapped UIC professor of political science Dick Simpson to help develop the course and teach about the legislative process in Illinois.

"Most legislators are learning about the issues themselves and they don’t have health policy advisors," Simpson advised learners. "They need tailored advice tied to legislation — about how to vote and what bills to propose — not a medical degree."

The LEAD rotation advances the "knowledge translation" approach taught in traditional advocacy courses and instead teaches "knowledge interaction." This means the learners not only present their personal points of view, but they also develop recommendations that align public health needs with legislator values.

In addition to lecture, and unlike other rotations, LEAD takes learners out of the hospital and pairs them directly with Illinois legislators.

"The number one goal is to help learners engage in the democratic process, on either side of the aisle and on any issues that are important matters of public concern," Ronayne said. "What better way to do that than to connect them directly with the legislators who are proposing, debating and voting on health care policy in Illinois." For the course, each participating legislator issued a question: What are the potential impacts of establishing another casino in Illinois? What impact has a state bill in Maryland had on generic prescription drug prices, and should Illinois adopt something similar? What are the implications of legalizing recreational marijuana?

The learners worked in groups to research the topic and develop a policy brief. At the end of the course, the students met with the legislators and presented their findings and recommendations.

Representative Patti Bellock, deputy house minority leader, has worked with LEAD for the past three years and says working with the residents has been valuable.

"Their research and assistance in developing public policy proposals on important medical issues is of great value," Bellock said. "Their contributions will have a positive impact on legislative negotiations regarding various health care-related bills this spring and beyond."

LEAD learner Anna Rodenbough described the LEAD rotation as "immensely different" from any other residency rotation.

"It’s a really unique look at a very broad aspect of medicine — how medicine and policy interact," said Rodenbough, a third-year pediatric resident from the University of Chicago. "Medical education is very focused on the practice of providing care to patients and there is not a lot of context provided on how medicine fits into society and the framework of policy and government."

"The course really showed me how I can use my voice," she said.

Darian Esfahani, a sixth-year neurosurgery resident at UIC, said he opted to take the LEAD course because he wanted to become more comfortable talking to legislators.

"Doctors can get caught up in doctor language, but the key is how you translate that, especially when talking to legislators," Esfahani said.

Esfahani estimates that LEAD is one of up to 18 or 20 rotations he has participated in over the course of his residency.

"I haven’t been in any other program like this," Esfahani said. "It gives us a chance to build a skill set that we can’t in any other circumstance."

"I’ve participated in legislative advocacy events before, and plan to continue to do so throughout my career, but now, I feel much better equipped to speak about many of the issues," said Wendy Shue, a third-year family medicine resident at Northwestern University. "The LEAD course taught me how to systematically research, summarize and present a health care policy issue... I feel much more confident in my ability to advocate for legislation I believe in."

Ronayne says LEAD has worked with approximately 10 state legislators so far. "I am confident that each one of the residents in the LEAD program will go on to have promising and successful careers in medicine, thanks to the education and hands-on experience they are getting during the pursuit of their training at UIC," Bellock said.

Rep. Patti Bellock (center) poses with (left to right) James Ronayne, assistant professor of pediatrics at UIC; Andy Russell, fourth-year medical student at UIC; Clare Crosh, third-year resident at Advocate Children’s Hospital; Nahiris Bahamon, third-year resident at the University of Chicago; and Vidya Govind-Thomas, a fourth-year medical student at UIC, following a LEAD final presentation.
Can liquid metals help in nerve repair?

By Francisca Corona–fcoron3@uic.edu

Damaged nerves can be detrimental to a person’s health.
Unable to repair themselves or re-grow, degenerative neurons cause things like paralysis and problems with motor function. Available and common treatment options have downsides. Medications don’t reverse the damage, and many surgeries that address disabilities caused by these neurons are major and high risk.

Researchers Xuejun Li and Jie Xu may have a better idea. As part of a new collaboration, they plan to test whether human motor neurons and muscle cells can be linked using liquid metals.

Their approach, which uses microfluidics or miniature devices for manipulating cells and regents, isn’t new, but what’s novel are the materials that Li and Xu will use for electrical stimulation of neurons — electrodes in liquid metal form.

Traditionally, electrodes are solid, but they can break easily in the human body.
“It’s not really a feasible type of material for nerve repair,” said Xu, assistant professor of mechanical and industrial engineering in the College of Engineering.

Liquid metals, which are alloys of a few metals, are flexible, stretchable and can self-heal. Some, like gallium, are non-toxic, he explained.
“We can use that to connect a stem cell, nerve cell and muscle cell together,” added Li, who holds the Michael A. Wercle, MD, Endowed Professorship in Biomedical Sciences.

If outcomes for their testing are successful, the researchers will examine their approach on animal models and human subjects — another first in the field — to validate the method, which could become a treatment option for people suffering from things like paralysis and other peripheral nerve injuries.

Li and Xu have already won $10,000 in seed funding from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) to gather preliminary data over the next 10 months.

“This project showed that two people with very independent, strong research programs could find one very, very focused arena to apply their efforts,” said Lyndon Cooper, associate dean for research in the College of Dentistry. Cooper is a leader of functional and regenerative materials at UIC.

The group was formed to inspire discovery and cross-disciplinary work related to the university’s research strengths and priorities, which were identified in 2016 by OVCR, the university’s Research Advisory Council, Dean’s Council, Senate Research Committee and faculty, at the request of Chancellor Michael Amiridis. Other strengths include social justice, community disparities, urban infrastructure, the brain, personalized medicine/genomics and big data.

Li and Xu met at a speed networking event in January hosted by OVCR for functional and regenerative materials. They came up with their project idea in about six minutes.

“This project showed that two people with very independent, strong research programs could find one very, very focused arena to apply their efforts,” Cooper said. “It has the potential to generate important information and create a new avenue of self-sustaining research.”

Li and Xu will apply for grants from the National Institutes of Health or Department of Defense later this year to continue their work.

“During this time, we are going to produce important data,” Li said.
UIC students run health, wellness program for Chicago schools

By Jackie Carey — jmcarey@uic.edu

"Today we're going back to breakfast," Lindsey Strieter tells a group of middle school students in the Altus Academy cafeteria.

"Do you remember why breakfast is important?" asks Michelle Reich.

The second- through eighth-grade students answers are, for the most part, correct. "It makes you healthy," says one student. "It keeps your body strong," says another. A third student interrupts to ask, "What's that green stuff?"

Strieter, a clinical instructor in the College of Applied Health Sciences, and Reich, a registered dietitian and UIC alumna, are kicking off the day's lesson in the UIC Health and Wellness Academy, a program of the college's physical therapy department that collaborates with schools in Chicago to teach kids about healthy decision-making and encourage healthy behaviors.

Eating breakfast is the focus of the lesson because Strieter and the 13 UIC students running the wellness academy have noticed that this healthy behavior is one many of the Altus students ignore.

The "green stuff," the kids learn, is the spinach they will use to make a healthy breakfast smoothie.

"The lessons we teach in the Health and Wellness Academy are built by UIC students to address the needs, likes and dislikes of the kids from partnering schools," Strieter said.

And it's exactly that — the personalized lessons — that makes the wellness academy such a valuable program for the participating schools and the UIC students.

"There are so many programs out there for teachers and after-school programs that focus on weight and BMI, but those programs have two problems," Strieter said. "First, they lack a focus on actually improving behavior. Second, they place a significant burden on school teachers, who are already overworked."

"This program looks different in every school," she said. "And it's based off an educational model that is specific to learners. It also leverages our UIC students as program instructors — this is valuable experience for the UIC students in developing educational materials and communicating about health, and it's necessary help for partnering schools."

Altus Academy, an independent, not-for-profit school, is the second school to work with UIC's Health and Wellness Academy, which first launched in 2016 with Smyth Elementary School, a public Magnet school in Chicago. Thirty-two UIC students are currently involved in the program at Smyth.

Altus, which does not charge its students tuition, serves the North and South Lawndale communities.

Altus principal and founder John Heybach says the wellness academy fits nicely with his school's focus on the community and family unit and the needs of his students.

"Our students often face many barriers to success," Heybach said. "They live in low-income, challenging neighborhoods and they are members of underrepresented communities — our responsibility is to create a better pathway to success for them, and we take that to heart in our holistic approach to education."

Just one floor below the breakfast lesson in the cafeteria, another group of Altus students is participating in similar wellness and physical activity lessons.

Kathryn Marie Garrido, a senior in the kinesiology program, asks a small group of students to sit in a circle. "Please look at the person next to you. I want you to write down one nice thing about that person and pass your paper to them," Garrido says. Julie Niewiadomska, also a kinesiology student, helps the kids plant vegetables for the Altus garden.

Nearby, Mariana Reyes is helping the middle school students put together skits that highlight healthy behaviors. Reyes, a UIC senior entering the occupational therapy program in the fall, has passed out three prompts to the students, who have broken into groups and developed and performed the skits.

"Remember the skit about the jumping jacks app — what things were influencing you?" she asks. "Was it peers? Was it technology? What else?"

Reyes' questions relate directly to the lessons she is learning as part of her UIC coursework.

"We are teaching our UIC students how to be health advocates and educators, and one of the elements we teach is how to leverage established educational standards," Strieter said. "One in particular we use to develop the wellness academy lessons is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Health Education Standards."

Standard Two from the CDC advises that students should learn to analyze the various influences on health behavior, from media and technology to friends and family.

Students in the College of Applied Health Sciences participate as mentors and facilitators in the Health and Wellness Academy by registering for the elective course, which provides three credit hours toward their degrees. The course, offered in fall and spring semesters, consists of one day of lecture and three different lab practicum options in which the students work with Chicago schools.

Reyes says working with the program is helping her figure out what age patients she would like to work with as an occupational therapist.

"I'm not sure yet if I want to work with kids in my career, but this experience is helping me to understand what that might be like and gain needed hours interacting with the community," Reyes said.

"The kids love it," said Heybach, "because they get to have fun."

Strieter says the department hopes to expand the program in the future.

"As long as we have interest from students and from schools this is a powerful way to impact the health and longevity of our community," Strieter said. "The program was built to be scalable, and we're excited to see where it takes us."

When asked what his favorite class is, Isaiah, a second-grade Altus student said, "Math. No wait. Is this a class? This one is my favorite." Maybe, he'll even start eating breakfast.
Nanoscale-level imaging of living cells has become a reality in the past few years using transmission electron microscopy and sealed sample holders that keep cells alive in a liquid environment. But do the high-resolution images obtained using these tools truly reflect the structures and functions of cells, or do they show cells damaged by the high-intensity electron beam used in transmission electron microscopy?

“We really have had no way of knowing if what we see in images obtained through liquid cell transmission electron microscopy show the natural state of cells, or if the morphological changes we see are actually the result of radiation damage,” said Tolou Shokuhfar, associate professor of bioengineering at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Engineering.

“The images of cells exposed to higher levels of radiation were clearly different from cells imaged with no previous radiation exposure.”

Shokuhfar and colleagues describe a device that works with most transmission electron microscopes that would significantly reduce the exposure of live samples to the electron beam used in transmission electron microscopy. They report their results in the journal Science Advances.

Transmission electron microscopy produces incredibly detailed images of cells that can show structures as small as one or two nanometers across. But for a long time, samples used in transmission electron microscopy had to be dead or frozen because the sample chamber of a transmission electron microscope is a vacuum.

The new field of liquid cell transmission electron microscopy emerged in recent years enabling scientists to study biological, chemical and materials science samples in their near-native environments. This is achieved by placing the sample in liquid inside a tiny sealed chamber that protects it from the high vacuum environment to allow dynamic imaging.

However, currently-available devices that hold samples only allow for a single chamber to be placed under the microscope at a time. “Because you place just one sample at a time under the microscope, you need to perform your pre-imaging focus and setting adjustment on that one sample,” said Trevor Moser, a graduate student at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Washington and a co-author on the paper. “By the time you are ready to take pictures, the sample has already been exposed to significant amounts of radiation, so you just never know if the pictures you get show the unaltered cell, or if what you see on the pictures is because of damage from the electron beam,” continued Moser, who has previously worked in Shokuhfar’s lab.

The research team solved this problem by developing a device with 25 transparent windows rather than the single window sample holders currently provide. With more windows, the researchers expose samples to less radiation by getting closer to the settings and focus they need using one of the windows and then switching to another window where cells haven’t yet been exposed to the radiation from the microscope’s electron beam. Researchers still need to focus on samples in the ‘fresh’ window, but they don’t have as many adjustments to make, significantly limiting total exposure to the electron beam before images are taken.

Next, the researchers proved that their device could prevent alteration of samples caused by overexposure to electron radiation. They imaged a bacterium called Cupriavidus metallidurans, a small single-celled organism that produces solid gold nanoparticles from aqueous gold tetrachloride, a potent heavy metal toxin to most organisms.

First, they imaged the bacteria by exposing it to increasing levels of radiation over the course of focusing and adjusting their settings before taking pictures. Then, they imaged a second batch of bacteria using their novel 25-window device. The images they produced showed significant differences.

“We really have had no way of knowing if what we see in images obtained through liquid cell transmission electron microscopy show the natural state of cells,” says Tolou Shokuhfar, associate professor of bioengineering.

“The images of cells exposed to higher levels of radiation were clearly different from cells imaged with no previous radiation exposure,” said James Evans, a senior scientist at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and a co-author on the paper. “This proves that damage caused by being in the electron beam too long can cause artifacts that can yield false information. We saw much more pristine, undamaged cells using our multi-chamber device.”

Shokuhfar, a corresponding author on the paper, said the new device will also enable higher-fidelity imaging of nanoparticles using transmission electron microscopy. “Nanoparticles are also susceptible to damage from radiation, so this device will let us observe more accurately, how nanoparticles grow and change under different conditions, which has application in areas of new materials, nanoparticle interactions and medicine,” she said.

Hardeep Mehta and Ryan Kelly, from the Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory; and Chiwoo Park of Florida State University, are also co-authors on the paper.

This work was supported by the Department of Energy’s Office of Biological and Environmental Research Molecules to Mesoscale Bioimaging (project no. 66382) and was performed using Environmental Molecular Sciences Laboratory. Shokuhfar was supported by the National Science Foundation CAREER Award.
UIC researchers have discovered a way to turn pluripotent stem cells into atrial cells, which make up the upper chambers, or atria, of the heart. The discovery will enable them to better study atrial fibrillation, the most common heart rhythm disorder also known as AFib, which originates in the heart’s atria.

As reported in the journal Stem Cell Reports, the researchers obtained blood cells from healthy volunteers, activated genes to make the cells pluripotent — a type of stem cell that can become any cell type in the body — and treated the cells with vitamin A.

These cells responded to electrical stimuli like atrial cells. The researchers say this is notable because stem cells typically default to ventricular cells, which make up the lower chambers, or ventricles, of the heart when they become heart cells.

“There is a fundamental gap in our understanding of AFib, in part, because the condition is challenging to study at a cellular level,” said corresponding author Dr. Dawood Darbar, professor of medicine and cardiology in the UIC College of Medicine. “While science has provided much-needed insights into the causes of inherited arrhythmia syndromes that originate in the ventricles, thanks to the development of cellular models that act like ventricular cells, we have, until now, lacked fully-characterized cellular models of atrial-like stem cells.”

“There are a select number of cell types that conduct electricity — heart and brain cells are examples — but even among heart cells how they conduct electricity varies,” Darbar said. “This is the first time a study has shown that treating stem cells with vitamin A generates cells that are electrically like atrial cells.”

The researchers hope that this fully-characterized atrial-like stem cell model will not only improve our understanding of the causes of AFib and discover new treatments, but will also enable us to test whether a patient, based on their genetic makeup, is likely to respond to a particular treatment.

“We believe this model will enable more in-depth research on the elusive causes of AFib and will facilitate a more ‘personalized’ approach to treating AFib in the future,” Darbar said.
Students named Fund for Education Abroad scholars

By Brian Flood — bflood@uic.edu

Two UIC students have been awarded scholarships from the Fund for Education Abroad, which aims to increase study abroad opportunities for U.S. college students underrepresented in international education.

Jazmin Juarez, of Chicago’s West Town neighborhood, and Shamira Quiñones, of Chicago’s Humboldt Park neighborhood, are among 100 winners from various racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds to receive up to $10,000 in support of study abroad for a minimum of four weeks to a full academic year. They were selected from a pool of more than 2,300 applicants representing approximately 517 colleges and universities across the country.

Juarez, a first-year student majoring in Latin American and Latino studies and minoring in Chinese and international relations, will study Mandarin Chinese along with her UIC courses, have helped foster Juarez’s passion for international affairs and dedication to service that a career in this field requires.

“This experience will enable me to gain hands-on experience, which will enrich my current education and future career,” she said. “By the end of my study abroad program, I plan to have developed a deeper understanding and appreciation for Chinese international relations, culture and history.”

After graduating from UIC in 2021, Juarez plans to attend graduate school with a concentration in Chinese international relations.

Quiñones, a senior majoring in public policy, will spend the fall semester in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Santiago, Chile, to compare and contrast the educational structures in these countries with the U.S. education system.

“This gives me the opportunity to explore in depth the education systems and how they work for low-income students from these countries, and this also allows me to have interdisciplinary views of public policy from all angles on what works and what doesn’t work,” said Quiñones, a 2014 graduate of Noble Street College Prep. “I also look forward to learning more about the Afro-Latino diasporas in these cities.”

Some of the subjects she will examine are the Haitian immigration crises in Santiago, the history of the slave trade in Rio De Janeiro, and the free education system in Buenos Aires.

“As an Afro-Latina, this is important to me because my ancestors faced racism not just from non-Latino communities, but from the biases in the Latino community,” she said. “To have the chance to explore the African diasporas in South America provides the opportunity to have a deeper understanding of my ancestors and my own identity.”

While at UIC, Quiñones has interned for several nonprofit organizations that advocate for education equality and founded March for MAP, a student-led group that marched in Springfield to encourage Illinois policymakers to find funding solutions for financial need-based grants and the state’s higher education system.

“I have devoted my college career to education activism and becoming a role model of what a young and educated Latina can achieve despite being a minority and low-income first generation college student,” said Quiñones, who plans to pursue a career in education advocacy after graduating from UIC in December.

Cheryl Ganz

Alumna to receive highest award in philately

UIC alumna Cheryl Ganz has been honored with the highest award in the field of philately – the collection and study of postage stamps.

Ganz, a Smithsonian Institution curator emerita, is among awardees invited to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, established by the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain with the approval of King George V, who was the first signatory. Since 1921, 380 philatelists from 40 countries have achieved the distinction. The signing ceremony will be held July 27 during the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain.

Ganz received a Ph.D. in U.S. history from 2005 and a doctor of humane letters from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in 2016. Ganz is on the LAS Board of Visitors and was a 2015 Alumni Achievement award winner.
**SPORTS**

**Softball ends run at NCAA Regionals**

By Jenn Zoellick — jennz@uic.edu

The softball team (33-21) closed out the 2018 season Saturday after taking a 6-0 loss to Michigan (44-12) in the NCAA Regional tournament. The Flames were held without a hit through the first six innings, until an infield single off the bat of Kayla Wedl ended the no-hitter opportunity for the Wolverines.

Michigan jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the first after a leadoff walk stole second and came around to score off a pair of UIC errors. The Wolverines put a two-out double into right field, and the next batter up put one over the left-field fence, extending the lead to 3-0.

A leadoff walk for Michigan stole second and crossed the dish off a single up the middle, making it 4-0.

Michigan added another two runs in the fifth. The leadoff batter singled, stole second, advanced to third on a sacrifice bunt and came home to score on a wild pitch. Three walks loaded the bases for the Wolverines, and a hit-by-pitch brought another run across the plate, 6-0.

The Flames earned the automatic bid to the Lexington Regional clinching its second-consecutive Horizon League Title May 12. UIC was 3-1 in the tournament, defeating Wright State, 2-1, May 10 and IUPUI, 7-4, May 11 to advance to the championship. The Flames got another chance against No. 2 Oakland after dropping game one, 7-3, and won the do-or-die contest, 3-1, to reclaim the crown.

Lexi Watts and Wedl have earned National Fastpitch Coaches Association All-Great Lakes Region recognition. Watts was named to the First Team, while Wedl earned a spot on the Second Team.

**Baseball team completes series sweep on Senior Day**

By Dan Yopchick — yopchick@uic.edu

UIC sent its seniors off in style with an 8-5 victory that helped the Flames finish off a three-game sweep of the Youngstown State Penguins Saturday at Granderson Stadium.

Dominic Smith, a junior, had two home runs and seven RBI to lead the charge offensively. Scott Ota, also a third-year standout, popped his fifth home run of the season in the top of the eighth for a bit of insurance.

Following the victory, the Flames (28-16, 15-9 Horizon League) honored its senior class — Bowen Ogata, Ryan Campbell, Wyatt Trautwein and special assistant Brandon Marshall — in an on-field ceremony.

UIC will be the second seed in the Horizon League Championship, hosted by Wright State.

The Flames will play the tournament’s highest remaining seed at 2 p.m. Thursday. All Horizon League Championship games will air on ESPN+. UIC seniors Brandon Marshall, Ryan Campbell, Bowen Ogata and Wyatt Trautwein were recognized during Saturday’s game.

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