FOCUS interviews Susan Bassett

Editor’s Note: FOCUS had a chance to catch up with new Acting Director of Athletics, Susan Bassett, one year after her appointment.

FOCUS: Can you tell us about your relationship with Carnegie Mellon?

SB: I wasn’t in the job market, I wasn’t looking for a position when this came up. I had a phone call from someone who had graduated from my school, and my name had been brought up as a possibility. I was very excited about the opportunity to be involved with an athletics department, and it was clear in my interview process and my discussions with the director of athletics that this was a new position. I was excited about the opportunity to be involved with a building project, and it was clear in my interview process and my discussions with the school officials that this was a new position.

FOCUS: What is the most important thing that you learned from your experience at Carnegie Mellon University?

SB: The most important thing that I learned from my experience at Carnegie Mellon University is the importance of a consistent approach to athletics. The department is part of a university athletics association which is probably the most dynamic Division 3 conference in the country. We compete with Emory University in Georgia, Washington University in St. Louis, NYU, Brandeis in Boston, we go to the University of Chicago—so it is not like anything I had been involved with before. I was involved at a small private liberal arts college in Upstate New York where we competed with similar schools and our longest trips were four and five hour bus trips. It is a whole world of difference and that was exciting for me. I also was excited about the opportunity to be involved with a building project, and it was clear in my interview process and my discussions with senior level administrators including the president, in that this capital campaign there is a commitment to address facility needs for athletics, recreation and intramurals. That has been a particular interest of mine.

FOCUS: So, if I can back you up a bit, we are Division 3?

SB: Yes, we are NCAA Division 3 which means that we compete with other Division 3 institutions and that our student athletes do not receive athletic scholarships. The students who come here to play, if they receive financial aid, it is financial aid based on need and...continued on page 6.
Our United Way giving fell off last year, with half the number of people contributing less than half the amount of most years. In response to these results, our United Way materials this year, please give!

Q. – With Pitt’s fundraising announced to be in the billions, will we raise our goal?
A. – We’re not influenced by what other institutions are doing. Based on our results, we may go higher. Our donor base is the same, there is some overlap with the foundations, but our donor base is national. Interestingly, the goal isn’t really increased by what Pitt does. It tends to raise everyone’s sights, though, so it may have a psychic, emotional effect.

Q. – The Australian campus was news to me. Could you say a few words about that?
A. – In Australia, in the city of Adelaide, the University of Adelaide is a master’s degree in public policy and the Entertainment Technology Center is offering a master’s program in entertainment technology. It’s an extremely strong first group of students looks good. The number of inquiries and applications are beyond the chart even. I’m not sure if this was our first, but we’re the first foreign university authorized to offer a degree program in Australia. Further, the state of South Australia gave us money to support our studies. Both of these things gave us a tremendous amount of press, often in the form of angry op-ed columns from the press. One of many other universities asking why their government was supporting “a prestigious American university like Carnegie Mellon” – which is the best kind of news.

We sought to be internationally several years ago, going to places where our programs (largely masters’ degree programs) would be valued. We pledged to ourselves that we would not do that in any institution that had program money from Pittsburgh – in fact, we like to see international programs that return money to Pittsburgh. Carnegie Mellon is entrepreneurial, internationally, and a lot of these programs are a case of partnering with a college, and recognizing opportunities.

Mark Kamlet added: We also found that if you go right through the middle of the earth from Pittsburgh, where do you pop up? It’s Adelaide.

Q. – What kind of facilities are there?
A. – They provided us, as part of the package, with two facilities. One building was rundown and has been completely renovated, and it’s right in the middle of the downtown area, which is very nice and set up for walking. This is right next to the building where the Prime Minister’s house and various officials are located. It’s a two-story building, maybe 40,000 square feet. And about 3 blocks away is already existing, very fancy performing arts building, with lots of artists and cultural agents in tenancy, and that’s where the ETC is located.

Dr. Cohen – Adelaide is the capital of the state of South Australia, and it is part of the governor’s vision for Adelaide to be the educational center, not just of Australia but for Asia as well. They attract students from Asia, and it’s wonderful to be part of that vision. It’s similar to what’s happening in Qatar and Forbes? In the long term, we envision a “People Mover” like the one at West Virginia University.

Q. – In light of recent events, do you think it would be a good idea for University employees to wear visible IDs?
A. – You’re referring to the recent terrible tragedies in K-12 schools. It’s not a new idea; it comes up at times like this, such as with Columbine and 9/11. We cherish our freedom so much, and we believe that it’s so important to effective functioning at Carnegie Mellon, we would hate to do something that would materially affect that. There are other devices that have come up; the federal government has been pushing that, based on where someone is from, and we have resisted it very strongly. The only thing I’m talking about, which is not so obvious, continued on page 4

Letters and comments

President Cohen has sent the faculty a very strong message supporting freedom of expression at the university. This freedom is important not only for the education of the students but also for fostering creative interactions among the faculty. At this time when freedom is increasingly under attack in this country the university plays a very essential role for a democratic society.

It is with this in mind that I feel very concerned about the proposal to establish a Human Language Technology Center—a project supported by the Department of Defense. This center would conduct classified research and faculty members and graduate students would be members of the campus community, members who were not allowed to freely interact with other “unclassified” members. This is completely contrary to freedom of expression.

It is true that such a center could bring more money to the university, but more is not always better. It is essential to resist the temptation to betray the fundamental principles of our university. I hope this proposal will be withdrawn.

Lincoln Wolfenstein
University Professor of Physics Emeritus

FOCUS – in seven issues or a year — is a publication of the faculty and staff of Carnegie Mellon University. Many of the articles in FOCUS express the opinions of individual members of the Carnegie Mellon community; unless so indicated, they should not be construed as reflecting university policy. In the interest of a free press and process, FOCUS seeks a variety of opinions.

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Alan Kennedy, Professor, Department of English, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, plans to finish work on a book length study of the "rhetoric of fiction," drawing on the classic study by Wayne Booth. He also plans to get a new position teaching Shakespeare in a joint teaching with both Ernest Hemingway and Jack Kerouac to be called Two Stupid Writers, showing that both writers display a formal use of intelligence impacting on their work contrary to popular conceptions of them both as merely 'visceral'.

Anastassia Alamaki, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, School of Computer Science, will collaborate with both Eutel and Polytécnico Federale de Lausanne (EPFL) on Staged Software Servers project. It will demonstrate the potential for the future of web search, while benefiting from maintainability and extensibility for server software that closely follows computer architecture trends.

Angela Hung, Assistant Professor, H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Public Management, will spend the year at the RAND Corporation. She will continue her work in the development of innovative empirical methods for understanding of decision-making under uncertainty, focusing primarily on financial decision-making of aging individuals.

Brian MacWhinney, Professor, Department of Psychology, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, will work on the extension of the DeLtex model of word learning to children and adults who are learning a second language.

Carol Kumata, Professor, School of Art, College of Fine Arts, will work on her interest in developing the field of computer-aided design or CAD, and will continue a continuation of current conceptual issues that include the question of real versus artificial using live matter.

Chris Hendrickson, Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Carnegie Institute of Technology, will be on leave for the Academic Year 2006-2007 after stepping down as Head of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. He will work on a book project on the topic of 'Sustainable Infrastructure.'

Christopher Olston, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, School of Computer Science, will spend one year working on the foundations of new Research Laboratory in Sunnyvale, California. He will continue his ongoing research on web search, while benefiting from relevant resources and expertise internal to Yahoo.

David Danks, Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, will be on leave for the Fall 2006 semester.

Elaine A. King, Professor, School of Art, College of Fine Arts, will continue her position as Distinguished Art Historian in Residence in American University's International program in Corelia, Italy, for the fall term of 2006. In addition to conducting a seminar on contemporary issues in the arts, she will visit various cultural institutions such as art galleries as well as complete the manuscript for her book entitled In Your Face: Shifts in Muslim Likeness.

Gerald Costanzo, Professor, Department of English, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, will work on a collection of new and selected poems and edit a book on the writings of novelist Howard Norman.

Ingrid Sonnichsen, Associate Teaching Professor, School of Drama, College of Fine Arts, will be an observer for six weeks at the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon. She will also continue to pursue her work on organizing the notes of Alvin Krause, one of the nation's leading acting teachers, from the 1950's-1970's, with the goal of publication.

Irene Fonseca, Professor, Department of Mathematical Sciences, Mellon College of Science, will pursue the writing of the second book on Modern Methods in Continuum Mechanics and Applications to Continuum Physics with Giovanni Leoni. She will participate in conferences and intensive research periods in centers and institutes in the USA and Europe.

Jack Beeth, Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Carnegie Institute of Technology, will establish broad-based governmental, academic and industrial collaborations for mechanics projects in the areas of fuel cell interfacial durability and the modeling of electron beam-based manufacturing processes.

Jeff Dominitz, Associate Professor, H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Public Management, will spend the summer at the RAND Corporation. He will continue his work in the development of innovative empirical methods for understanding of decision-making under uncertainty, focusing primarily on financial decision-making of aging individuals.

Jery Griffin, Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Carnegie Institute of Technology, will be at Blate Diagnostics Corporation in Pittsburgh. Blate Diagnostics Corporation is a Carnegie Mellon technology spin-off for whom the purpose will be to make and then sell an aircraft saucer. Their approach uses Carnegie Mellon developed technologies to detect problems before they can cause a catastrophic failure in the engine.

Joel A. Tarr, Professor, Department of History and Policy, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and H.J. Heinz School of Public Policy and Management, has been selected to spend a year's leave to tentatively entitled: The City, Technology, and the Environment: Urban Infrastructure in Historical Perspective.

Jose’ M. F. Moura, Professor, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Carnegie Institute of Technology, will spend the 2006-2007 academic year at MET (EECS), Cambridge, MA, taking the opportunity to rethink his future research directions.

Joseph Mannino, Associate Professor, School of Art, College of Fine Arts, will develop a body of artwork for exhibition. He will vigorously pursue the underlying concepts in his artwork, as well as more varied professional opportunities.

Katherine Lynch, Professor, Department of History, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, will spend her leave in Pittsburgh and Paris working on a project examining poor relief and its impacts on household demography in nineteenth-century France.

Kavita Ramanan, Associate Professor, Department of Mathematical Sciences, Mellon College of Science, plans to work on problems at the interface of probability and analysis, with the hope of developing new probabilistic techniques for solving some interesting, open problems in analysis that are inspired by studies of random walks and the study of physical phenomena such as heat conduction. She also hopes to extend long-term collaborative efforts with Indian mathematicians to improve synergies between research in pure and applied probability in India.

Kevin Kelly, Professor, Department of Philosophy, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, will write a book presenting a new foundation for the role of simplicity in scientific inference. He proposes that Occam's razor minimizes the 'opinion' of science and converges in time to convergence to the truth, in a worst-case sense closely analogous to the one commonly assumed in discussions of algorithmic efficiency in computer science.

Limor Golan, Assistant Professor of Technology, Tepper School of Business, will be a visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania Economics Department. During this period she will conduct research for the purpose of publication and teach.

Linda Petau, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry, Mellon College of Science, plans to work at Los Alamos National Labs where she will be a member of an interdisciplinary team investigating the health effects of fullerenite-based nanoparticles.

Lorenz T. Biegler, Bayer Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, Carnegie Institute of Technology, will focus on advances in the optimization of differential-algebraic systems and produce a monograph on the same topic at the University of Heidelberg, Germany.

Lynn Berard, Principal Librarian, Science Libraries, intends to work on a book on the bibliography of sciences. The book will be a textbook-style treatment that includes the fundamentals of science librarianship and how it can be used as a training tool for engineering and science librarians or as a guide for practicing professionals.

Lynn M. Walker, Associate Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering, Carnegie Institute of Technology, will spend her leave at the University of Leeds in the UK. She will work with researchers at the National Centre for Food Engineering and Technology to develop nanostructured materials and researchers in the Polymer IIRC to develop theory to improve models of the dynamics of self-assembled systems.

Manuela Veloso, Professor, Department of Computer Science, School of Computer Science, will conduct research at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. She aims to (i) further define integrated intelligence in single robots and in teams of robots, and (ii) explore how the theory may broadly apply to other problems requiring complex information processing, decision making, teamwork, and learning.

Mariana Achurch, Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Languages, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, will focus on an ongoing project on the development of bilingual professional identities in the only Bilingual Creative Writing Program in the U.S. She will be writing a monograph of this case study describing an additive model of bilingual program design and demonstrating the theoretical account of language plays in the construction of a professional identity.

Marvin A. Sirbu, Professor, Department of Engineering and Public Policy, Carnegie Institute of Technology and Tepper School of Business, intends to spend the Fall of 2006 at Ecole Polytechnique and the Centre d'Etudes des Telecommunications,Paris,France,studying trends in European telecommunications regulations and particularly the deployment of municipal broadband networks.
Open Forum on Health Benefits

nevertheless would have a chilling effect. So not now, but we'll keep talking about...

President’s Forum

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President’s Forum
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Q. - As a student who came two years ago from China, I feel that in my home country the reputation of Carnegie Mellon has been significantly raised, especially through the statue of [first Ph.D. graduate and Chinese engineer] Miss Vihang, right? She seems back in Beijing doing an internship in an IT company, and people in the Silicon Valley in Beijing are very, very good of the school. But Carnegie Mellon’s reputation in China is still mainly about computer science and engineering, and I think it’s the same in other countries. How do we find a lot of the programs – economics, music – are very impressive. How is the school developing and market our academic strong points?

A. - Thank you so much for those comments. One of the things we’ve done in the last three years is to be more active in reaching out to alumni. Our first ever alumni dinner in China was last December; we also have major concentrations of alumni in India, Korea, Taiwan, etc. Not surprisingly, our alumni are in key positions, and they are our most important spokespersons. When they talk about Carnegie Mellon, they talk about the professional success and social settings, it goes a long way toward spreading the word.

We don’t just set up degree programs like we did in Australia; we travel internationally making relationships with local and national governments, with companies, and with other universities. Singapore is one of the countries that fund their children to come to Carnegie Mellon to study. We’re on their engineering list, their computer science list and the business list; every time I travel there I encourage them to go to the programs.

When I first came as president, I think our marketing theory was to build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door. That’s not the way it works; you’ve got to market yourself and be proactive. And it’s happening; people say, “I heard about your creative writing program, your economics program,” and so on.

A. - Only do we envision continuing this benefit to staff and students, we want to expand the options. There’s a new head of the Office of Student Life Policy, and some reduction of the routes is possible, hopefully not affecting us because we’re on a well-travelled route. This also helps us to get our students out into Pittsburgh. When I first came nine years ago, the standard question I had for graduating students is, “Are you staying in Pittsburgh?” and most would say no. Now I ask them and it’s rare that a student doesn’t say, “I would love to stay,” and it’s mostly due to Pittsburgh but it’s also due like this commuter program getting them to see Pittsburgh.

Q. - In terms of our strategic plan, how do new building fits into the Green Building plans?

A. - For us, environment is a comprehensive issue. Every new building and every major renovation has at least a silver level certification. Five years ago, we decided to purchase 6% of our electricity in wind power. It turned out that was the largest retail purchase of wind-generated electricity in the history of the region. Since then, every major university in Pennsylvania buys at least 5% of their electricity in wind power.

Q. - In talking about our economy, some people at the university want to create a little city on the campus. Is that something you would want, or do you prefer to let students explore the Waterfront, and so forth?

A. - The latter, not the former. We certainly would like to see commercial and retail establishments near Carnegie Mellon, on Craig Street and along Forbes. But to create a commercial cocoon for students would be a mistake; we also want an inducement for students to explore Pittsburgh.

President’s Forum
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Q. - With regard to typical risk analysis, are you concerned about camps in America, and two or three events a year – it’s a tragedy, but the risk is higher of being hit by a car.

A. - Yes, but three shootings in a span of two weeks truly heighten everyone’s awareness. And I am compelling you to come to campus. You decide whether you want to be open-minded and open-hearted. So I have some obligation to protect you while you’re here, and that’s why we have certain policies, like no weapons on campus.

Q. - Do you have any opinion on the changes in Staff Council, and do you have any ideas to help Staff Council have the same clout as the Faculty Senate?

A. - Those are two separate things, really – the changes in Staff Council and having as much “clout” as Faculty Senate. There is a harsh reality that staff needs to hear: in every research university, especially, and every university, the faculty really is the core. They need staff, or they can’t get their jobs done, but the way they direct, setting policies, faculty really comes first. Now I’m hired by the Board of Trustees, but they would never hire me, nor would they hire my colleague, or my wife, without the advice and support of the faculty. Staff’s voice matters, too, but faculty comes first.

We have Staff Council reporting, so we don’t make any policy without consulting the Senate, Caucus, Faculty, Faculty Senate, votes, and in Staff Council you vote and decide for yourselves how you’re going to convey your opinion. The main thing to remember is we’re not going to accept this, is consultation. Staff Council would make a mistake if it thinks it’s not important. You’ve had very good leadership, and you’ve really made a difference.
If you’ve ever thought that most opera is bad literature set to music, you might want to read on, but the aficionados and cognoscenti should definitely stop here! If you are still reading, what follows is an unorthodox and highly personal review of the Pittsburgh Opera Theatre’s summer performance of Wagner’s epic “Ring” cycle (sung in English). As one who is enamored neither of opera nor of Wagner, I address my comments to folks who might be of the same ilk.

I grudgingly admit that “The Ring” ranks, next to Goethe’s Faust, as the preeminent monument of German culture from the 19th century. Partly for this reason, partly because I had never seen a live performance of a Wagner opera before, partly because all the operas were performed conveniently on a single weekend right here in Pittsburgh, partly because I was intrinsically by purported parallels to J. R. R. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings, and partly because the reduction of an eighteen hour performance to a “mere” ten hours seemed like a very good idea, I decided to take the plunge. Admittedly, this is a lot of “parlty,” but that’s what it took to get me there!

To avoid the $3.50 surcharge per ticket for phone orders, I decided to go downtown (using my Carnegie Mellon ID as a free bus pass!) to buy my tickets in person. To a fellow with old fashioned values like me, $107 ($28.75 x 4) is a lot of money, but I must admit that I would have likely paid that much for just one opera at the Met. (If you want to know whether I thought it was worth the money, you’ll just have to keep reading. If you really don’t care what I thought, this is now your second chance to quit!)

My operatic baptism by total immersion began at the Byham Theater on the evening of July 21 with Rheingold. The staging featured headless torsos and a luminous sphere hanging in the middle of the stage, likely representing the Rhine gold itself. Spikes attached to smaller spheres resembling both champs of ore and (for those in search of metaphor) desiccated human heads radiated from the larger sphere.

Having dutifully studied several synopses of the "plot" beforehand and with the helpful superscripts above the stage, I was basically able to follow the story of the “Nibelung” Alberich (sung by Nathan Brown), who unwisely exchanges love for material riches, steals the gold from the Rhine Maidens and sets in motion a cataclysmic series of events that soon have repercussions even for the gods themselves. Wotan (commandingly performed by Rod Nelman) and the god of fire Loge (Joel Sorenson) succeed in stealing Alberich’s treasure through trickery, but the giants do not remain in their hands long as Wotan must surrender their newly acquired wealth to ransom the goddess of youth Freia (Susana Hanson) from the giants Fasolt and Fafner (Eugene and Herbert Perry). Demurely Cooper, masterfully cast in the role of Erda (Mother Earth), warns of the dawn of a dark day. Fasolt kills his brother Fafner in a quarrel over the treasure, which has now claimed in first victim.

Checking my journal entry for July 21, I found only this comment on Rheingold: “Tomorrow, there will be two more operas.”

On Saturday the operatic marathon continued with The Valkyrie and Siegfried, both of which switched the rather heavy mood of the Rheingold into a somewhat lighter vein. Wotan must have been very busy overnight because we arrive in the theater to learn that he has fathered with Erda the famous Valkyries, who will take his slain warriors to Valhalla, as well as two mortal twins Siegmund (Gary Lehman) and Sieglinde (Pittsburgh’s own Anna Singer), whose incestuous union produces the legendary warrior Siegfried. Dido Palmur Gorton in the role of Wotan’s favorite Valkyrie Brünnhilde stule not only the show but the entire weekend. No 250 pound diva in a horned helmet is she! In lieu of the legendary “flight” of the Valkyries, she effortlessly twirls her formidable sword around her lithe and lean body in a show stopping dance number. How she could do this and sing at the same time boggles the mind. But her moment of fame is short lived indeed. She disobeyes the explicit orders of Wotan, protects her half brother Siegmund in battle and is banished to spend the rest of her days in a deep sleep on a rock.

In keeping with my low budget approach to the weekend, I had dinner at Max and Erma’s on Stanwix Street and then returned to the Byham for Siegfried. While I was eating, Mime, the brother of Alberich, the prime mover of events about whom we have almost forgotten, apparently for the first time, took a walk on the woods as she was giving birth to Siegfried. But childbirth cost Sieglinde her life and Mime decided to raise Siegfried as his own son. This is where we, duly fortified from dinner, reenter the picture. Though Siegfried ends up killing his adoptive father, the interactions between the two as Siegfried is growing up bring many genuine touches of humor. Alas, Dan Snyder as Siegfried could not keep pace with Joel Sorenson as Mime easy on the eye, giving some of their scenes a somewhat unbalanced feel. To make a very long story very short, Siegfried kills Father, takes the ring, defeats his grandfather Wotan in battle—but of course he doesn’t know Wotan is his grandfather—and gives the ring to his aunt Brünnhilde—who he does not know is his aunt—after he rescues her from the rock. This guy Siegfried may not be especially clever, but he sure can get the job done! At the insistence of the other performers, Rod Nelman took a well deserved solo bow at the end of Siegfried since his role as Wotan had ended.

In both Valkyrie and Siegfried the theme of determinism versus freedom of choice comes out loud and clear. I sensed here a Nietzschean call for man to live against the “god.” (Nietzsche, famously, became “Contra Wagner,” as the title of one of his essays proclaims; but as far as I know, Wagner never became contra Nietzsche.)

It finally struck me toward the end of “Siegfried” that there are few if any tuneful melodies in these operas like one would expect in a typical Italian opera from the same period. The singers’ lines roam seemingly arbitrarily and without a distinct melodic structure, which makes the effect strikingly modern. Nor are there any arias as such, or continued on page 7

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Supporting our Community in a United Way

By David Drombak, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, 2006-2007 Chair, Faculty Organization

Since my arrival at Carnegie Mellon as an undergraduate in the late 1970s and my time on the faculty since the 1980s, I have always been proud of the concern about and commitment to Pittsburgh by our students, staff, faculty, and administrators. This is reflected in many ways, from students volunteering time at clean up Schenley Park or build local houses with Habitat for Humanity, to staff organizing regular food drives for families in need and regional hazardous waste collection events, to faculty in collaboration with other Pittsburgh institutions, to advance the educational, economic, social and cultural opportunities of the region for all its citizens.

Considering the community spirit and high degree of awareness of societal needs on our campus, I have always been perplexed by the relatively low rates of participation among faculty and staff in United Way giving. In the past few years participation has not exceeded 16%, and last year it was significantly lower than this amount. This is not a source of pride. We can and should do much better.

The United Way of Allegheny County encompasses more than 3,000 organizations providing vital health and human services throughout our region for your neighbors, your friends, and your family. These services include meals for the elderly person on your street who can’t get around, support for blood banks that ensure an adequate and safe blood supply for all of us, literacy programs for the people held down by an inability to read, summer camp opportunities for inner city kids, and many others. Last year, United Way touched the lives of more than one million people in Allegheny County. Six thousand families and 360,000 individuals were helped with critical needs such as disaster recovery assistance, finding housing and employment, and accessing health services.

In speaking with Carnegie Mellon friends about the United Way campaign over the years, on a number of occasions I have had individuals say to me that they would contribute if only United Way would include some particular organization, or if only United Way would stop giving to some particular organization. In regard to the first statement, I respond that it is very likely that the organization of interest to you is among the thousands of organizations in the United Way network. It is easy to find out by reviewing the organization list included with your pledge materials or by searching the comprehensive list of organizations on the United Way web site (www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org/codesbooksearch.aspx). In regard to the second point about exclusion from the United Way network whose mission does not appeal to you, it is important to realize that your gift can be directed entirely to specific organizations or service categories (e.g., at-risk youth, support for the elderly, etc) of your choosing.

The Carnegie Mellon United Way campaign began on October 16 and continues until November 17. You should have received pledge forms and additional information about the United Way in the mail, including information about how to donate fast and efficiently online at www.unitedwaypittsburgh.org/carnegie mellon . If you have not, please contact our 2006 United Way Campaign Chair, Barbara Smith of Human Resources (h2e@andrew.cmu.edu; x-8570).

Please consider making a donation to United Way this year at some level. Your $20 or $50 contribution will help. You can direct your gift to a specific organization or category of need of your choosing. Let’s try for a record participation rate this year, and demonstrate in yet another way the depth of our commitment to our community.
I acquired this novel two years ago in a Dickensian second hand bookshop on East Carson Street (near 13th). I'm...  Thank you Susan for spending time with us.  See you in the gym!

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accreditation, and physical education. They have been involved with intercollegiate athletics but I am a physical educator by training and education and I have a commitment to lifelong wellness and life-long sports skills. At a place like Carnegie Mellon, and certainly what was important to me in coming here, was that we had a commitment to a comprehensive program and we weren't just focusing on intercollegiate athletics. What I think we can be proud of is offering a program that really functions on a continuum and that meets the needs and interest of all students.

FOCUS: Is there a particular need you see on campus which is a particular aspect feature, material condition that needs urgently to be met—athletically speaking?

SB: Facility development is really a paramount need. Skibo Gym, which was built in 1924, at a time when the student body and faculty and staff were in terms of programming, intramurals, recreation, the fitness programs, and physical education programs. I have been involved with intercollegiate athletics but I am a physical educator by training and education and I have a commitment to lifelong wellness

You can almost probably say the novel is a "free download" to numerous "books" (1224 pages), and could well have benefited from a brave editor with a green light to prune the text and be able to minimize the digressions and the appalling depredation on coincidences and interconnections that I will not trouble you with further.

Why am I still reading it? I imagine this question will be asked of me by the ever-ready but well read, literate and informed student of early 19th century European history, sailing ships and navigation, colonial Spain and the slave trade. The evocation of Ibanian peasant life contrasted with the extravagant lifestyles of the aristos, the unemotional descriptions of slave trading in Africa at least seem real and interest me more than the rather unlikely narrative of Mr. Adverse. I was intrigued enough by this mixture of literacy, scholarship and male bodice-clipping to Google Mr. Hervey Allen. I should have known. William Hervey Allen was born in Pittsburgh in 1889 (or 1897 depending on which section of the same bio you read), left high school without graduating to fight in WWI and became a University of Pittsburgh professor of English in 1923 and was the head of the English department at the end of the war. In 1925 he married one of his undergraduate students, the 19 year old June Kaysner. Because of this, the trade, the literal, the trad of this celebrated poet of English literature, Pennsylvania’s own, with the baggage of her family’s money. It was there that he wrote Anthony Adverse between 1929 and 1933 and it was an instant best seller, making him rich beyond the dreams of English professors at a time when professors were plugging out of high buildings. The film followed shortly after. He wrote several other novels and books of poetry but none that had the success of "Anthony Adverse." We are told that he eventually settled in Florida in a house next to that of Robert Frost. His gothic opera also informs us, in rather unnecessary detail, about the contracting for the literary talent under the name of Robert Frost—"an ungodly end for an English professor to say the least. He is buried in Atlanta National Cemetery, clearly a fitting end for one of his fellow English professors.

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FOCUS: What’s the relation between top-level NCAA sports on a campus and other athletic activities for students, faculty and staff?

SB: One of the other things that really attracted me to this position was the commitment the University has made to the general student body and faculty and staff in terms of programming, intramurals, recreation, the fitness programs, and physical education programs. I have been involved with intercollegiate athletics but I am a physical educator by training and education and I have a commitment to lifelong wellness and life-long sports skills. At a place like Carnegie Mellon, and certainly what was important to me in coming here, was that we had a commitment to a comprehensive program and we weren’t just focusing on intercollegiate athletics. What I think we can be proud of is offering a program that really functions on a continuum and that meets the needs and interest of all students.

FOCUS: Is there a particular need you see on this campus which is a particular aspect feature, material condition that needs urgently to be met—athletically speaking?

SB: Facility development is really a paramount need. Skibo Gym, which was built in 1924, at a time when the student body and faculty and staff were in terms of programming, intramurals, recreation, the fitness programs, and physical education programs. I have been involved with intercollegiate athletics but I am a physical educator by training and education and I have a commitment to lifelong wellness and life-long sports skills. At a place like Carnegie Mellon, and certainly what was important to me in coming here, was that we had a commitment to a comprehensive program and we weren’t just focusing on intercollegiate athletics. What I think we can be proud of is offering a program that really functions on a continuum and that meets the needs and interest of all students.

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Would You Like Anything to Read? The bibliophile tangles with Anthony Adverse by Hervey Allen

By Lee White, Professor of Chemical Engineering
Student Health Services serves more than just students

Morewood Gardens offers nutritional counseling and outreach

By Aprile Smith, copy editor, FOCUS

If you asked, almost anyone on campus could give directions to the corner of Forbes and Morewood.

Everyday, countless students, staff and faculty pass the building on their way to class or their residence or the shuttle stop. Some might be able to tell you it houses Carnegie Mellon’s Student Health Services. Some may have even had reason to venture inside to drop off a health insurance form or get an allergy shot.

While many members of the Carnegie Mellon family might hazard a guess at medical school, there were relatively few who could tell you in on other types of health consultation and wellness outreach the staff and faculty provide free of charge.

Getting that message out to the public has been the growing goal of the staff at SHS. Health Educator Kristine M. Ceccheti and Registered Dietitian Paula Martin are among those who want faculty and staff to take advantage of the services at hand to improve their quality of life.

Health Services is not just for students, though its current clientele consists of more students than faculty—Martin estimates a ratio of 4:1, respectively. As the current general areas for high-risk behavior, it’s not just the students who are making less-than-ideal choices when it comes to their health.

“You’re not going to be as successful if you’re not taking care of yourself,” Ceccheti says.

Too few hours sleep or a diet lacking certain nutrients can affect concentrations levels, work performance and overall happiness. While it’s true that small details like a skipped lunch or a solitary cigarette can, over time, snowball into larger events, the equation works in reverse as well. Small, individual changes can influence more generalized possible changes.

But who knows where to even start? Both women agree that media sends a distorted message about what is “healthy,” and these messages can seem inapplicable to real life.

“We tell people to be thin and healthy, but we don’t tell them how to do that,” Ceccheti says. “It’s overwhelming.”

That’s why it’s important to mark the positive behaviors clients have already and then add on, adopting a more balanced lifestyle in steps.

"Let’s start with what you’re doing right and let’s build on that,” Ceccheti recommends.

Martin has individual appointments for issues ranging from nutrition assessment to diabetes or high blood pressure, from eating disorders to weight management.

Other topics include performance training, like how a marathon runner or someone just starting an exercise program should eat. Martin says she’s even made shopping lists for clients and taught them what food to buy, how to prepare it and how manage time to allow healthy meal preparation, etc.

Services like this outside the university could cost big bucks. According to Martin, a nutrition assessment can run anywhere from $75 to $120 and aren’t always covered by insurance. At SHS, most wellness services are free to faculty and staff. Two exceptions, risk and massage therapy, are still an exceptional savings at Morewood Gardens. An hour massage that cost $45 at SHS could be $90 elsewhere, Martin says.

Smoking cessation is another free service Ceccheti and Martin want employees to know about. The Hi, I Quit (HIQ) Smoking

Health Educator Kristine Ceccheti says her favorite thing to do for herself is walk her two black pups, Mable and Lola, in Frick Park, a daily activity for the trio. Paul Martin says her favorite thing to do for fun is go to concerts; recently, she went to the Three Rivers Festival several times this year as well as Lollapalooza. Here are the top five things they say you can do to improve overall wellness.

1. Listen to your body. It will tell you if you’ve had too much of something, if you’re hungry, if you’re full, if you’re tired, etc.

2. Be willing to change. They can only help you if you’re reading to be helped.

3. Have a positive stress reliever. Have friends who don’t just want to go out to drink, who will go play tennis or meet up for coffee.

4. Sleep. Don’t kid yourself into thinking you will be able to live on four hours of sleep a night.

5. Drink water and monitor portion control. Fruit is a very portable snack. For those who say produce is expensive, come on: you’re spending a $1.25 for a candy bar from the vending machine.

Round the Ring continued from Page 5

large choral numbers. Wagner called this “durchkomponiert,” and the effect certainly fits well the narrative emphasis of opera theater.

On Sunday afternoon I returned to the Byham Theater for Twilight of the Gods. Because of a Bon Jovi concert at Heinz Field, I had to pay the “Special Event” park rate of $15. So much for my low budget approach to the weekend. (I noted that Wagner without Bon Jovi was apparently not considered a “Special Event.”)

As if Wagner’s story line is not complicated enough, before Twilight begins we learn that powder keg program manager Albrecht has fathered a mortal named Hagen who lives with his half brother and sister Gunther and Gutrune. To make another very long story very short, Siegfried ends up stealing the ring back from Brünnhilde—but he doesn’t know she’s his Brünnhilde and she doesn’t know he’s his son. For me, I will mercifully spare you. Hagen later stabs Siegfried in the back—literally—and then fells Gunther with a mighty blow. Brünnhilde arranges a funeral pyre for Siegfried, throws herself onto the fire for good measure and Valhalla itself is enveloped in the blaze. The Rhine river overflows and the Maidens reclaim their ring from Brünnhilde’s body.

The bottom line? These performances did justice to the theater does best by letting the story line shine through the music. At no point in this hour mini-extravaganza did I find myself processing tedious; it held my attention throughout. This “reduced Ring” might be a travesty to the purists, but it was just right for an opera neophyte like me, and not just because I saved eight hours of my time and probably hundreds of dollars in the process.

And what about those purported parallels to Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings? I agree with the author himself, who said the only parallel is that the dragon is one of the main events.

What’s coming up at the Pittsburgh Opera Theater? In November, Carmen Jones, Oscar Hammerstein’s twist on Bizet, and in April, Philip Glass’ Sound of a Voice. Just maybe I’ll see you there!
Interpreting the Results of the Deliberative Poll on FCEs

Robert Cavalier, Campus Conversations Project, Department of Philosophy, Director, Center for the Advancement Political Philosophy Co-Director, Southwestern Pennsylvania Program for Deliberative Democracy

Detailed analysis of participant and observer behavior revealed a clear pattern. Campus Conversations on FCEs provides us with an interesting opportunity to interpret the deliberative poll report.

Over and over again participants noted the conflation of the nature of the FCEs as an instrument for feedback to professors and for improvement of the courses; and an assessment of teaching to be used in faculty Tenure and Promotion cases. Reviewing comments by faculty and students as well as reports from moderators and facilitators, a consensus seemed to emerge: Instruments for delivery mechanisms should emerge to handle each of these functions separately. FCEs of the kind proposed by the Faculty Senate plan and approved by the Faculty Senate would provide students with general information about courses and, perhaps, red flags to faculty and students about courses in trouble. This was major support for this to be provided by the University and delivered online. But the real issue in the comments was function and use, not online verses paper (even technology-enhanced scan sheets and PDF files to image comments).

B. Smith -- Prescription drugs are the fastest-growing part of our health-care costs, so we have a stake, as you do, in trying to manage those costs. We put in these provisions to try to keep that increase in check. We provided you with the third fill, that's not correct, and you can speak with me later about that.

Q: My doctor and I are trying to get the best combination of medications for my high blood pressure. My prescriptions are changing; in the last two years, I’ve taken six or seven different medications The PharmaCare three-month period came and went, and I didn’t know it, so I was penalized. A lot of people take medicine for less than five months. The health care savings are enormous, and it would be nice if we were told that up front.

A: (L. Bell) Formularies are going to become more personalized, for example, an employee contacted a medication formulary she needed that cost $28,000.00 for each dosage. So we need to try to manage these costs to manage these medications are for people who need them; we need to be as proactive as we can

Q: I appreciate PharmaCare taking the Social Security number off the cards, and I wanted to know if the vision and dental plan will take them off their cards too.

A: We wanted to move quickly, but a lot of these plans didn’t have adequate systems to process this. United Concordia, the dental plan, effective Jan. 1, changed the SSN to a unique member ID. The benefits are distributed on this ID and are uniform for all benefits across the plan. We have been working to include this on the ID, but we keep getting hung up on technical issues. We are working on this, and we will make this change as soon as possible.

Q: If I call my pharmacy by mail, does PharmaCare know my new mail address?

A: Yes.

Q: I called my UPMC doctor to get my prescription, and they called PharmaCare for help, and ordered it, so that was a nice surprise.

A: PharmaCare has a facility in Blawnox, so the mailings go back and forth pretty quickly. At times, if they run out of the prescription, you may have to wait a day or two before they are rephoned.

Q: I have Health America, and I never had any problem with them covering any prescription. My son and my daughter are both on maintenance medications that are not covered by PharmaCare. They suggested another drug. My son was okay, but my daughter needed this specific drug. Their material says “unusually medically necessary” for that drug. Is it true, I’ve been fighting with them for eight months.

Follow-up Q: Has your physician filed an authorization?

Yes. Every time I call PharmaCare, they say they never received it. I call my physician, and they say they faxed it on this date. I never hear anything from PharmaCare.

A: So PharmaCare is not acknowledging receipt of prior authorizations. We don’t know what their reaction would be beyond that. If you’ve tried all that you can do, and you’re having problems like this, see me, because I have connections with the carriers and can intervene on your behalf.

Q: Are all maintenance drugs subject to this penalty?

A: No. We have on our website, under pharmacy benefits, a link to the pharmacy. You can put in PharmaCare A or B, and your prescriptions, and it tells you if it’s maintenance or not, if there is a generic or not, and how much it costs. It’s an excellent tool.

Q: I don’t understand how a physical exam for preventive care is covered 100%, although some services are not covered by these guidelines.

A: A preventive care, routine physical can be very comprehensive; you may have services performed that are part of the preventive care schedule, and some that are not. So you must work out with your doctor or nurse, and sometimes with the Insurance carrier, for purposes of Tenure and Promotion. These suggestions would be made at the college or department level.

Speaking generally, the Faculty Senate’s recommendation to the deliberative poll’s majority desire for the University to provide some online assessment mechanism. But the deliberations also point to a future role for FCEs. Participant comments recognize other forms of assessment and these in turn address concerns by Clark Glymour and others that rating ‘course quality’ and ‘instructor quality’ puts pressure on faculty to adjust their courses and teaching to the outcome of the FCE. Under this interpretation of the content and delivery of FCEs, the other forms of assessment should trump ‘Rate-the-Professor’ results in cases of divergence.

A: They do try to be proactive when prescriptions go off the formulary and there’s a generic available, but if you’re not getting the appropriate customer service, that is another issue.

We can look into whether the customer service representatives need to be more tolerant of FCEs; we can see what reports they can give us on outcomes, and we can explore if there can be more cooperation, feedback for FCEs. We are going through a change in medications. We can check on the correlation between other outcomes in order to assure a generic can be used.

Q: UPMC has its own pharmacy plan. Can those of us who have UPMC join that plan?

A: We did that at some point in the past, but we are part of the Pittsburgh Business Group on Health to lobby PharmaCare for the best service. Most health plans have their own prescription plans, but we can’t have more than one prescription plan because it affects the cost.

Q: How often does PharmaCare change their formulary list?

A: PharmaCare reviews their formulary quarterly, and the list is sent out annually. They do make changes on a quarterly basis. It is updated on their website.

Q: Does PharmaCare keep your patient information?

A: Yes, they keep a patient profile that shows us how they get a mark-up on the drugs; with this, you save the mark-up.

Q: For office visits, my son sees a specialist. Every time I go there, we pay a co-pay – is there any kind of cap on office visits?

A: There isn’t a cap. For pregnancy, once you report to your specialist you pay a one-time fee and that’s it, and they are actually built into the full cost once the delivery occurs. For anything else, no. The Flexible Spending Account is a good way to relieve that burden.

Q: I’m not clear about the idea of being a hospitalist for the pharmacy.

A: It’s a matter of savings for you and the university. For a maintenance drug through your pharmacy, let’s say $10 a month, so you go to the pharmacy and pay it $10 each time, or $30. If you do the mail order, you get a three-month supply at one time for $20.

Local pharmacies in general are in business to make a buck on the drugs; with this, you save the mark-up.

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