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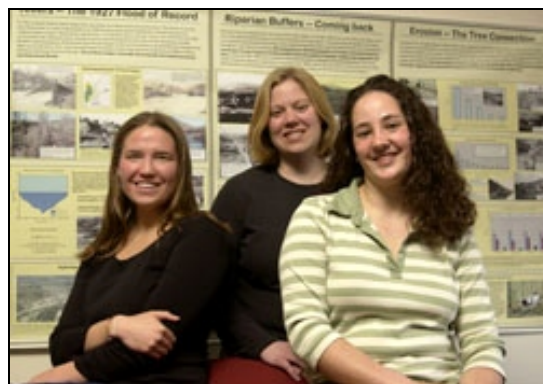
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Undergraduate Ink



Three and a crowd: Undergraduates (left to right) Jehanna Howe, Elizabeth Stanley-Mann and Michala Peabody pose with their poster (and now scientific paper) that created a stir at a scientific meeting. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

The large horizontal poster is push-pinned unceremoniously to a wall in Delehanty Hall, frameless, slightly off-kilter, a ripple bisecting its four color panels. It's a matter-of-fact presentation of a decidedly un-matter-of-fact piece of student work.

[FULL STORY ►](#)

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['Family Guy' Creator Seth MacFarlane To Speak](#)

Gift Endows

Lecture Series When 17-year-old Brooklynite Dan Burack '55 boarded a train bound for Burlington, he had no idea what to expect from a university he knew very little about in an unfamiliar state. That would change 10 hours later, when the city kid stepped off a railcar and into a place and time he still considers one of the most magical and significant of his life.

Brewing Hope It isn't the caffeinated buzz that draws economist and environmentalist Hector Saez to coffee — he usually drinks decaf, though he'd hate for his Costa Rican farmer friends to discover that secret — it's potential.

THE WEEK IN VIEW

March 17 3:30 p.m.
Lecture: "Private Guns, Public Health," with David Hemenway, Harvard School of Public Health. Lafayette, L108. Information: 656-3064.

March 17, 7:30 p.m.
Concert: UVM Lane Series presents, "A St. Patrick's Day Celebration with Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill. Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. Information: 86-Flynn or [Lane Series](#)

March 17, 4 p.m.
Lecture: "Complementary and Integrative Medicine: Current Trends and Future Opportunities," with David Eisenberg, Bernard Osher Associate Professor of Medicine and Director for the Division of Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies at Harvard Medical School. Carpenter Auditorium, Given Building. Information: 656-1108.

March 28, 4 p.m.
Reception: A celebration of the invention of the Jogbra by Lisa Lindahl, Hinda Miller and Polly Palmer Smith in the costume department at Royall Tyler Theater. Craftsbury Room, Royall Tyler Theater. Information: 656-2545.

March 28 5 p.m.
Lecture: "Auschwitz

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UVM HOMEPAGE

NEWS BRIEFS



Environmentalist Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., spoke passionately at a discussion panel on heroes honoring the late Vermont public servant and UVM instructor Charlie Ross. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

Panel Honoring Former UVM Teacher Discusses 'Civic Heroes'

Heroism matters and persists even as the term's meaning is sapped by repetition and our civic leaders are buffeted by an ever-present, sensation-seeking media, said speakers at the first Charlie Ross tribute panel, held March 14 in Ira Allen Chapel.

Two of Ross's former students, Scott Baldwin and Bill Wachtel, organized the discussion panel, which was titled "Politics and the Public Trust: In Search of the Next Generation of Civic Heroes." The group comprised environmentalist Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Senator Patrick Leahy, former Vermont Governor Madeleine Kunin, former *New York Times* Washington correspondent Adam Clymer and political science Professor Frank Bryan. The conversation was moderated by Norman Ornstein, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, a Washington think tank.

Ross, a long-time public servant who taught public policy at UVM for two years in the 1970's and died in 2003, was a gifted, enthusiastic teacher who "reveled in his students," says his son, Chuck Ross '78. Baldwin and Wachtel, now a financial services executive and New York City attorney respectively, themselves reveled in Ross's freewheeling classes, and helped convene the panel as a tribute to their teacher's life, work and spirit. The two plan four more similar annual events.

The panelists ran with the hero theme, mentioning names like Frank Wills, the sharp-eyed Watgate night watchman, and John Doar, a young government civil rights attorney who,

Admissions Effort Dials for Scholars

Nestled within the labyrinthine Grasse Mount basement is a narrow, L-shaped room housing 15 computer bays with telephone headsets. It's the kind of high-tech operation that makes telemarketing a near-universal fact of daily life, but pitching credit cards or condos is not the point here.

On most days, this is the headquarters of the UVM Fund, where a team of more than 70 trained students, supervised by professional staff, call alumni, parents, and friends six days a week, 31 weeks a year and are on track to raise \$1 million in the current fiscal year. Callers also establish relationships with donors that may result in a lifetime of giving. But in a pilot project last week that may well become routine in coming years, the fund lent its equipment and expertise — generously so, given the university's aggressive expectations for telephone fund-raising — to UVM's admissions effort.

From about 5:30 to 9:00 on March 10, five Honors College students and 10 faculty from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, including Dean Rachel Johnson, used the fund's phones and software package, Campus Call, to phone high school students accepted by UVM at their homes. Admissions staff were also on hand. In all (six honors students also made calls on March 8), faculty and students placed 518 calls.

The goal was to take a personal approach to answering questions and providing information to prospective students. This kind of touch, other institutions have found, can be a deal-maker for an on-the-fence prospect weighing offers of acceptance from several schools, giving UVM a chance to improve its all-important "yield," the percentage of admitted students who matriculate at the university, a measure with important implications for institutional planning and journalistic rankings of academic quality.

The effort was focused: Honors students called prospects who had been invited to join the Honors College. Faculty called students who had expressed interest in their discipline. Johnson, for instance, a nationally known nutritionist, called students planning to major in dietetics and nutrition. She appeared to be adept at coaxing conversations out of shy teens bowled over by getting a call at home from a professor.

If the faculty were skilled at using the Campus Call script as a point of departure for improvised conversation, the honors students, children of a marketing culture and completely sold on the Honors College, were masterly.

among other things, helped quell a riot in early 1960's Mississippi. More familiar figures like Nelson Mandela also came up prominently, as did Myanmar dissident and Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi. On the political side, the group cited individuals from Vermont Senator Robert Stafford to former President George H.W. Walker Bush to Eleanor Roosevelt. Lance Armstrong was mentioned, as were Muhammad Ali and Ted Williams.

But what is a hero, anyway?

They have, said various panelists, "imagination" to see a better way (Kunin) — or they lack it (Bryan, pace Hemingway, who argued that heroes separate themselves from cowards largely by suspending their imagination of danger). They rise, suddenly and mysteriously, to do something great in the heat of a moment (Clymer, discussing Willis) — or they devote their life to an important cause (Leahy, citing veteran Bobby Muller, founder of Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation and a crusader against land mines). They can build consensus — or buck it (Leahy, again, praising Senator Stafford, who fought his party on environmental regulations).

The panelists found it impossible to discuss heroes apart from the culture that produces them or, in some cases, tears them down. Decrying the current polarized tenor of public discourse seemed to inspire many of the panelists, especially Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., whose stentorian denunciations of the administration, "mainstream media" and the "prurient interest that all of us have in the reptilian core of our brain for sex and celebrity gossip" frequently roused the audience to applause. In Kennedy's view, a cowed press corps and the 1988 end of the "Fairness Doctrine," which required broadcast stations to air opposing viewpoints, has allowed talk radio and cable news to flourish, cheapening public discourse and politics.

Other panelists were unconvinced. Both moderator Ornstein and political journalist Clymer pointed out the often-lurid incivility that surrounded heroes like the Constitutional framers and Abraham Lincoln. Even the current winnowing of media outlets into specific ideological niches is a new manifestation of an old phenomena, said Clymer, recalling the "eight or nine" daily papers of varying political stripes in his childhood New York. And while he allowed that a gentler press might allow more heroes to flourish, that could come at a cost.

"If you relax, you don't know what you're facilitating," Clymer said. "A lot of the Washington press corps was relaxed about Watergate."

Leahy, comparing the disparity in coverage of genocide in Darfur and Michael Jackson's child-molestation trial, was also less inclined to blame the media, despite its problems. Paraphrasing Shakespeare, he said, "The problem is not in the stars, but in ourselves."

Charlie Ross, a lawyer and Middlebury native,

Honors student Heather McLaughlin, from Essex, spoke for nearly 25 minutes to a prospect named Chad, covering the waterfront from academic rigor to the honors curriculum to UVM's social life. Toward the end of the conversation, Chad's questions seemed to be taking a personal turn, which didn't appear to bother McLaughlin.

CALS Associate Dean Josie Davis, who organized the phone-a-thon, said it exceeded her expectations.

"I was almost dreading it," she says, fearing that telemarketing-plagued prospects would hang up after her first sentence. "But across the board, people were really glad to hear from us." The college helped its cause by sending an email out to prospective students in advance, giving students the option to remove themselves from the call list.

In the week since the event, faculty have received multiple e-mails from students and parents thanking them for the calls, Davis says. One high school student's message read, "I wanted to say thank you to the wonderful professor who took time to talk with me. The faculty is outstanding. It further reinforced my decision to come to UVM."

Ken Becker, lecturer of community development and applied economics, says he spoke with six parents. "Every one of them was impressed that a professor was calling them at their homes," he says.

CALS is planning a second night of calling within the next few weeks. The College of Arts and Sciences, which was snowed out of a recent calling session, is also contemplating a rescheduled event. Other academic units host their own calling events.

Some measure of quantitative evaluation of the pilot program's success will come from comparing new enrollment numbers with the previous year's figures, when no calls were made. While not an exact science, the analysis could tell administrators if "the calls are worth doing again," according to Davis.

For now, though, she is willing to rely on more qualitative indicators. "In my gut, I think it made a difference," she says.

New Public Communications Major Attracts Interest

UVM launched a new public communications major this semester, and already nine students have declared "PC" as their major or minor.

"On the first day of class in mid-January, when students in the new 'Introduction to Public Communication' course introduced themselves, the first five of 31 students said they were public communication majors," says Thomas Patterson, Jr., senior lecturer of community development and applied economics.

was appointed to positions of public trust under presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter. He served as chair of the Vermont Public Service Board and as a commissioner on the Federal Power Commission and the International Joint Commission. Ross, an environmentalist and Morgan horse fancier, also taught public policy at UVM. His former student Scott Baldwin has said of Ross's teaching, "I never missed one of his classes. I only wish there had been more of them."

On the Internet, the Proctor's Sap Run Can't Hide

Some people will go to great lengths to try to experience that slushy northern rite of spring — the sap run that eventually boils down to sweet maple syrup. Huge lengths even, as staff at the Proctor Maple Research Center found when they installed a [sugarhouse webcam](#), wired a maple to the Internet and watched their Web traffic spike.

Senior research technician Tim Wilmot routinely monitors sap flow and pressure and air, soil and trunk temperatures with an array of sensors attached to or embedded in a 79-foot sugar maple tree in the center's 40-acre managed sugarbush. Wilmot's work supports maple scientists, and, he's discovered, curiosity seekers and amateur sugarmakers.

"I was collecting the data anyway, so I put it on the center's SITE four or five years ago — that made it much easier to check the numbers from home or wherever," he says.

Then Wilmot and others began to notice a sharp rise in their tally of website visits. Perhaps it's the lure of the multi-colored temperature graphs and sap-flow measurements. Or maybe it's because the PMRC is the number one of nearly 5,500 websites on a Google search of "maple research."

"We've had people log on from as far away as Oklahoma," Wilmot says.

But one key benefit of the monitoring site flows to those closer to home. "A lot of local people look at it, see the sap running and go home from work to do their own sugaring," he says.

Virtual visitors can check in on the [maple monitoring](#) any time. What they do with the information is up to individuals — and their supervisors.

International Photo Contest Entries Due March 30

Faculty, staff and students can enter up to three international images to the Office of International Education's annual photo contest, "Windows on the World."

Photographs will go on display in Bailey/Howe in May. Winners receive prizes; in the past these have often included dinner gift certificates to

located in the department of community development and applied economics, the new program builds on consumer affairs, advertising and public administration courses already offered in CDAE and will add four new courses during the next academic year in introductory and advanced communications, writing for public communication and public policy, according to Jane Kolodinsky, professor and chair of CDAE.

"Governmental, economic and civil institutions prosper because of clear communication," she says. "The demand for individuals who understand these organizations and can communicate their messages will continue to grow."

Kolodinsky points out that this is neither a journalism nor an advertising major, though she says students will become well versed in both. "It is public relations for the public sector," she says. "Our graduates will find careers as communications and public affairs specialists for government, research, nonprofit and public sector organizations."

Next semester, "Strategic Writing for Public Communication" will be taught by UVM Extension publications specialist Meg Ashman. The department is also working on a search for a new tenure-track position. The new program's current core faculty include Jay Ashman, Charles Ferreira, Kolodinsky, Christopher Koliba, Jonathan Leonard, Patterson and Jane Petrillo.

In the past, students seeking something similar created self-designed majors or combined a consumer studies major with an advertising minor.

"We expect this major will attract at least 100 majors — students who would not otherwise choose UVM," Kolodinsky says, "because there is nothing like it in the Northeast."

"Many prospective students ask if UVM has a communications major," says Susan Wertheimer, associate director of admissions. "I'm pleased we can at last say 'yes' to that question."

Burlington restaurants.

The rules:

- Photos must be taken personally by a UVM affiliate outside his or her home country
- Images must be no larger than 8x10 and no smaller than 5x7. No frames, please.
- Submit prints to the Office of International Education in Living/Learning B-161 by March 30. E-mail submissions are not acceptable.

Information: [Office of International Education](#)

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Nobel Laureate Tutu Visiting Campus

Human rights activist and Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa will visit Burlington later this month to deliver a lecture at UVM. Bishop Tutu will speak on race relations and world peace on March 29 at 3 p.m. in Patrick Gymnasium. The event is free and open to the public, but tickets are required.

UVM students, faculty and staff may get one ticket each with their identification card at the UVM Athletic Ticket Office in Patrick Gym. Note that the ticket office will be closed on Friday, March 18 and Monday, March 21.

Public parking for the event will be at the Sheraton Conference Center, with shuttles to the campus provided by UVM.

Bishop Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his contributions to racial justice and the pursuit of racial harmony. His speech at the laureate ceremony made amply clear that injustice and violence still reigned in South Africa and in many other places throughout the world. He also decried nations engaged in "a mad arms race, spending billions of dollars wastefully on instruments of destruction, when millions are starving."

Lane Series Brings the 'Barber of Seville'

On Tuesday, March 29 at 7:30 pm at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, the UVM Lane Series will present Rossini's comic masterpiece: "The Barber of Seville." The Teatro Lirico D'Europa, a well-regarded international touring company, will perform the opera in its original Italian, with a full orchestra in the pit.

One of the world's most beloved comic operas, "The Barber of Seville" tells the story of dashing

Harvard Public Health Expert to Discuss Gun Safety

Harvard University Professor David Hemenway, an economist and author of *Private Guns, Public Health*, will speak on March 17 at 3:30 p.m. in L108 Lafayette.

Hemenway, whose visit is sponsored by the departments of economics and political science through the Florence Davis Dean lecture series, will argue for a public-health approach to gun violence, which claims almost 80 lives on an average day in the United States.

The researcher wants to frame gun violence as a consumer safety and health problem. He argues that this kind of approach — which emphasizes prevention over punishment, and has successfully reduced the rates of injury and death from infectious disease, car accidents and tobacco consumption — is also highly relevant to guns.

"The gun-control debate often makes it look like there are only two options: either take away people's guns, or not," Hemenway told *Harvard Magazine* in 2004. "That's not it at all. This is more like a harm-reduction strategy. Recognize that there are a lot of guns out there, and that reasonable gun policies can minimize the harm that comes from them."

Hemenway is the director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center and the Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center. The injury center is the coordinating center for the National Violent Injury Statistics System whose goal is to help improve available data on suicide and homicide.

Much of his research is in the area of injury prevention. He has investigated issues concerning motor vehicle injuries, fires, falls and fractures, suicides, child abuse and product safety. More recently, he's working on firearms

count Almaviva who is trying, with the help of his faithful servant Figaro (or, "Filiigaro," as the aria warbles), to win the hand of the lovely Rosina. The piece, a farce filled with lovely melodies and arias, is a great introduction to opera for newcomers to the genre, as well as a perennial favorite for opera buffs. Lloyd Schwartz, a *Boston Phoenix* critic, recently wrote that Teatro Lirico's version of the opera "may have been the best production of this familiar opera I've ever seen."

Teatro Lirico D'Europa is an international, multi-cultural company known for their superb singers, clever yet traditional staging, and wonderful sets and costumes. The company has presented over 2500 performances of full-scale opera productions world-wide since 1986, when it was founded in Paris by Bulgarian tenor Giorgio Lalov. Teatro Lirico travels with an orchestra of 50 members, a professional chorus of 45 singers, a professional ballet ensemble if required by the opera and international soloists, many of whom have performed major roles at venues like the Metropolitan Opera, Covent Garden, La Scala, Milan, the Bolshoi Opera and others.

Tickets, Information: 86-FLYNN or [Lane Series](#)

Upcoming Lectures Address Holocaust Topics

Jonathan Huener, associate professor of history, is the The College of Arts and Sciences's spring 2005 Dean's Lecture Award recipient. Huener will speak on "Auschwitz Remembered," on March 28 at 5 p.m. in Memorial Lounge, Waterman. A reception follows.

Sixty years after its liberation, Auschwitz remains the most compelling symbol of Nazi brutality and the Holocaust. Huener's lecture will reflect on the complex history of the camp and discuss some of the uses and misuses of that history over the past six decades, while considering the current importance of Auschwitz as a site of Holocaust memory and commemoration.

Huener teaches courses on the history of the Holocaust, German history and Polish history. He is author of *Auschwitz, Poland, and the Politics of Commemoration, 1945-1979*, which won the 2004 Orbis Books Prize in Polish Studies from the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies. He is also co-editor, with Francis R. Nicosia, of *Medicine and Medical Ethics in Nazi*

issues, studying the effects of gun carrying; how guns are stored and whether training can improve storage practices; the external costs and benefits of gun ownership; the use of guns in self-defense; gun use among adolescents; guns on college campuses; the relationship between gun prevalence and homicide, suicide and unintentional gun deaths; and the effects of changes in the legal drinking age on youth violence.

To learn more about Hemenway and his work, read this [Harvard Magazine article](#).

Information: 656-3064

Medical Dean's Distinguished Lecture to Feature Complementary Medicine Expert

Dr. David Eisenberg, Bernard Osher Associate Professor of Medicine and Director for the Division of Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies at Harvard Medical School, will present the next Dean's Distinguished Lecture in Medical Sciences. The lecture, titled "Complementary and Integrative Medicine: Current Trends and Future Opportunities," will be held Thursday, March 17, at 4:00 p.m. in Carpenter Auditorium, Given Building. A reception will follow in the Health Science Research Facility Gallery.

Eisenberg is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Medical School. In 1979, under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, he served as the first United States medical exchange student to the People's Republic of China. In 1993, he was the medical advisor to the PBS series, "Healing and the Mind" with Bill Moyers. More recently, Eisenberg has served as an advisor to the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration and the Federation of State Medical Boards with regards to complementary and alternative medicine research, education and policy.

The Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series in Medical Sciences brings internationally recognized scholars in the biomedical sciences to the UVM College of Medicine in a forum where students, faculty and members of the community can learn from and interact with these world-renowned physicians, scientists and teachers. Information: 656-1108

Germany: Origins, Practices, Legacies and Business and Industry in Nazi Germany.

On Wednesday, March 30, the Center for Holocaust Studies will present a lecture honoring Gabrielle Tyrnauer, a former board member of the organization. Susan Tebbutt, of Mary Immaculate College at the University of Limerick, Ireland, will discuss "Romanies and Genocide: Records, Memories, and Reconstructions of Romany Experiences Under the Nazis" at 8 p.m. in B106 Angell.

Huener lecture information: 656-1297

Tebbutt lecture information: 656-1492

Event Celebrates the On-Campus Creation of the Jogbra

Jogbra, the first women's sports bra, was created by Lisa Lindahl, Hinda Miller and Polly Palmer Smith in the costume department at the University's Royall Tyler Theater in 1977.

UVM, in part of its celebration of Women's History month, is honoring that history by hosting a reception celebrating the invention of the sports bra and its contribution to women's physical fitness on March 28 at 4:00 p.m. in the Craftsbury Room, Royall Tyler Theater. The reception will feature comments from the inventors and other speakers in the sports field.

Information: 656-2545

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Awards and Honors

Four UVM undergraduates will be inducted into Sigma Xi national honor society for their accomplishments in physics. They are **Alaina Dickason** of Starksboro, Vt.; **Jennifer Gagnon**, of Newington, Conn.; **Brendan Kennedy** of Evanston, Ill.; and **Tracy Owen** of Kingsport, Tenn.

UVM was named the overall university champions at the Northeast Student Affiliates animal science competition held at Rutgers University on Feb. 25-27. Participants competed in teams of four in livestock judging, a "quiz bowl" on animal science topics and paper presentations. The UVM students involved in winning the championship were: **Alyse Henderson**, **Andrew Book**, **Adrienne DiCerbo**, **Jessica Scillieri**, **Ladan Karimian**, **Amanda Kissell**, **Gavin Hitchener**, **Christine Coe**, **Jason Weinstein**, **Megan Richmond**, **Sarah Messmer** and **Keeley McGarr**.

Publications and Presentations

David Jones, assistant professor of business administration, has had five papers accepted for presentation at three conferences this year. He is presenting two papers at the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology conference, one of which is titled "Workplace Revenge: A Calculated Response to Mistreatment." In this study, Jones focuses on situational variables and individual differences that may explain why some revenge responses are carefully planned, yet others are more immediate or impulsive. Jones is presenting two other papers at the Canadian Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology conference. In one of these papers, he and his co-author tested a practical approach for identifying job applicants who try to appear more favorable by distorting their responses in an employee selection context. Professor Jones and two co-authors will also be presenting a paper at the Academy of Management meeting. In this study about attributions and performance appraisal, Jones and his colleagues trained managers to consider situational constraints on employee performance and found that, relative to a control group, the trained managers were better able to consider situational constraints while evaluating employee performance.

Two students presented research at the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography Aquatic Sciences Meeting in Salt Lake City Feb. 20-25. Post Doctoral Research Associate **Mazeika Sullivan** presented "Connecting Physical and Biotic Thresholds in Streams." Masters student **Kelly McCutcheon** spoke on "Considering Scale in the Design of Stream and Watershed Classification Systems."

March 9, 2005

Awards and Honors

Marianne Burke, Director of the Dana Medical Library, has been elected to the board of NELINET, a member-owned, member-governed cooperative of more than 600 academic, public, and special libraries in the six New England states. She will serve a three-year term starting immediately.

Jeanene Light, the medical library's coordinator of document delivery and interlibrary loan, has been awarded an Association of Academic Health Science Libraries Leadership Scholarship to support her participation in the Association of College and Research Libraries Harvard Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians in August.

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Major Gift Celebrates Class of 1955's Fiftieth

Alumnus's record-setting reunion gift will endow the President's Distinguished Lecture Series and honor his "unbelievable" experience at UVM

By Jon Reidel

Article published Mar 16, 2005



Dan and Carole Burack made a generous gift to endow the President's Distinguished Lecture Series, which will now bear their names. (Photo: Sally McCay)

When 17-year-old Brooklynite Dan Burack '55 boarded a Burlington-bound train, he had no idea what to expect from a university and state he knew very little about. That changed 10 hours later, when the city kid stepped off a railcar and into a place and time he still considers one of the most magical and significant of his life.

"When I came here from Brooklyn I was very naive. I didn't even know what Vermont was," says Burack, who

went on to found a New York real estate investment firm. "We did all these new things like skiing. I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. I think most of us came out of the city or suburbs, and to come into a rural environment like this — and it was much more rural back then — was something special. I met friends that have remained my friends for life."

Burack's bond to the university played a major role in his decision, along with his wife Carole, to give the largest individual 50th reunion gift in university history. The donation will endow the Dan and Carole Burack President's Distinguished Lecture Series, as well as create a scholarship fund, "probably in the College of Education and Social Services," according to Burack. The couple's son Adam graduated from UVM in 1985 and is currently a high school teacher. Carole, a graduate of Yale, is also a former teacher.

The President's Distinguished Lecture Series was launched by President Daniel Mark Fogel during his first year at UVM in 2002 and was included as a naming opportunity in the ongoing \$250 million Campaign for the University of Vermont.

"Before we decided (to make the gift), we met the president and of course I think he's got a tremendous head of steam up, and he said this is something that would be good to do, along with the scholarship," says Burack.

Burack adds that his decision to earmark the bulk of his gift for the lecture series was also based heavily on his exposure as an undergraduate to a similar program. The Visiting Professor Program facilitated by Professor Milton Nadworny in conjunction with his "Real World Economics" course brought practitioners from the business world to the university to give students a sense of what life was like outside the comfy confines of UVM.

"Everyone loved that professor. We called him Uncle Miltie after Milton Berle, who was big at the time. He would bring in speakers to talk about their professions. The point was that we were learning theory, so he would bring in

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The large horizontal poster is push-pinned unceremoniously to a wall in Delehanty Hall, frameless, slightly off-kilter, a ripple bisecting its four color panels. It's a matter-of-fact presentation of a decidedly un-matter-of-fact piece of student work.

[Brewing Hope](#)

It isn't the caffeinated buzz that draws economist and environmentalist Hector Saez to coffee — he usually drinks decaf, though he'd hate for his Costa Rican farmer friends to discover that secret — it's potential.

a guy in business, for example, who would spend a day on campus and teach us about the real world."

Education and life

The exposure to these speakers played a role in Burack's decision to go directly from UVM to Harvard Business School.

"It turned me on to the business world. I didn't want to go to a graduate school that was just books because I saw the importance of getting practical experience through these speakers. Harvard used the case study method, so it was perfect for me," Burack recalls.

Supporting similar interactive education initiatives is something that the Burack family has been doing for many years at home in Harrison, N.Y. They funded the high school library there through the Harrision Educational Foundation and purchased SMART Board interactive whiteboards (touch-sensitive display boards that connect to computers and digital projectors) for the school's science department. "Education is changing so fast, especially the technology," Burack says. "Every teacher has their project, but there's not always the resources to fund them."

Burack's connections with UVM are also strong. He served the UVM Alumni Association in a number of volunteer capacities over the years, including three years as National Alumni Chairman, and he received the Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award in 1986. He and Carole have also agreed to serve on the university's national campaign steering committee.

Burack is organizing a 50th reunion event for his fellow Phi Sigma Delta alums and expects the majority of graduates from Fern Hill to attend. Each "Phi Sig" alum will tell one story about their UVM experience. Burack says the high turnout is indicative of the passion many UVM's graduates have for their alma mater, which he believes is tied to its personable size, the environment and a mutual respect among fellow students, faculty and staff.

"I love coming here, and I didn't even go here," Carole Burack says. "If you're having a good experience at that time in your life, all your life you want to recapture that wonderful time, so you come back to the place where you had that wonderful experience."

That notion inspires the spirited Burack to jump back into the conversation.

"Carole makes an important point. I mean, you're 17 years old and you come into this environment and you're given freedom and all these new things," he recalls. "Nobody had any money back then, but it didn't matter because we all came together. It was an unbelievable time. I just can't believe it's been 50 years."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Brewing Hope

By Kevin Foley

Article published Mar 16, 2005



Hector Saez (left) and two students talk with a farm family in Costa Rica as part of the economist's field research. (Photo courtesy of Hector Saez.)

It isn't the caffeinated buzz that draws economist and environmentalist Hector Saez to coffee — he usually drinks decaf, though he'd hate for his Costa Rican farmer friends to discover that secret — it's potential.

"The issue is not coffee. The issue is rural development," says the assistant professor of environmental studies and community development and applied economics.

Coffee is, in some ways, a magical commodity: It's relatively well-valued on the world market, but it grows best at a very small scale, often on farms of one acre or less. Unlike many other export crops, it coexists with food plantings, meaning that hard-pressed rural areas don't necessarily have to have to sacrifice their food security for the world market's cash. And coffee performs well as an organic crop, saving farmers and their land from the expense and potential danger of agrochemicals.

Chemicals, as it turns out, are what originally drew Saez to study organic coffee. While living and teaching in Costa Rica in 1999, he interviewed about 150 farmers about the way they managed their land, labor and pesticides. He was interested in a central irony of Costa Rica: the country, which is in many ways an environmental model, is the world's leading per capita and per-acre consumer of agricultural chemicals.

He learned that, in the context of a volatile world market for coffee, Costa Rican farmers were eager to control whatever they could to improve their crop yields, in this case eliminating weeds. As the size of farms increased, farmers were more likely to use chemicals than manual labor to clear their land. As he broke down the data, Saez became convinced that governmental policies could assist small farms and farmers, and in the process reduce pollution. But something else interesting struck him as he continued his research and met more farmers — some didn't use chemicals at all.

"I got very interested because I saw kind of future there," Saez says, explaining that the organic coffee farmers seemed to produce high-quality, saleable crops.

Obstacles and opportunity

Saez broadened his project and area of study, returning to the country frequently even after joining UVM in 2000, often in the company of undergraduates funded by university research grants. As he met, studied and interviewed more farmers, he became more convinced that organic coffee was environmentally and socially sustainable, and economically viable. But even in "green," democratic Costa Rica, farming organically is challenging.

Government programs, Saez says, aren't tailored to small farmers, especially



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The large horizontal poster is push-pinned unceremoniously to a wall in Delehanty Hall, frameless, slightly off-kilter, a ripple bisecting its four color panels. It's a matter-of-fact presentation of a decidedly un-matter-of-fact piece of student work.

[Gift Endows Lecture Series](#)

When 17-year-old Brooklynite Dan Burack '55 boarded a train bound for Burlington, he had no idea what to expect from a university he knew very little about in an unfamiliar state. That would change 10 hours later, when the city kid stepped off a railcar and into a place and time he still considers one of the most magical and significant of his life.

small organic coffee farmers, so they receive very little help and advice. Opening a small coffee mill, for example, requires a complicated series of permits and actions often beyond the reach of a rural producer. Even if a small farmer can clear local and national obstacles, they are then faced with roadblocks at the international level.

"Only a few people are buying organic coffee, and they are often fulfilling orders from big companies, which have very specific requirements," he says, noting that those requirements are often arbitrarily limiting and squeeze small farmers and their diverse products out of the market. This is perhaps why only about two percent of Costa Rican coffee is organic, though Saez sees the situation improving as the country's government begins to shift its regulatory posture.

But here's where we — those of us who drink more than just a little bit of decaf, anyway — come in. Saez carefully measures the economic effect of coffee trade for small farmers, and while that work leaves him excited about its potential, the reality isn't always so glowing. Even an organic certification does not guarantee that your chosen grounds are doing good on the, well, ground.

"Buying organic coffee per se turns out not to help the people you want to help on the ground," he says. "Having said that, if you are careful of what kind of organic coffee you buy you can do lots of good. The way to be certain, or at least have a pretty good clue about what's happening with the money you're paying, is to research a little bit the companies you're interested in."

Saez realizes that this can seem absurd ("I buy a hundred different commodities, and I don't go to the Web site for every one," he says), but he is convinced that making the effort is especially worth it in the context of coffee. "Coffee can do something different," he says, "it can help."

As a starting place, Saez ticks off the names of a few local and regional firms that do "good work" on the ground with their farmers: Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, the Vermont Coffee Company, Forest Trade of Brattleboro, Equal Exchange, Dean's Beans and others. He also cautions that while organic and fair trade coffee is currently hip, it represents only a tiny share of the world coffee market, and yet the supply still often exceeds the current demand. He'd like to see that change as more consumers make informed choices with their cups, increasing prices, livelihood and production thousands of miles away.

Assessing the large potential in small acts or experiments, animates Saez's research and personal agendas.

"We can find ways to increase both economic and environmental well-being," he says. "But it's going to take a lot of careful and very focused work, by a lot of people... to study each of these opportunities very carefully. It's going to take a lot of effort to show that we can have an economy that is environmentally and socially sustainable with these little experiments that are happening all over the world."

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UVM HOMEPAGE

Undergraduate Ink

UVM's research environment lets students publish — and cherish

By Jeff Wakefield

Article published Mar 16, 2005



Three and a crowd: Undergraduates (left to right) Jehanna Howe, Elizabeth Stanley-Mann and Michala Peabody pose with their poster (and now scientific paper) that created a stir at a scientific meeting. (Photo: Bill DiLillo)

The large horizontal poster is push-pinned unceremoniously to a wall in Delehanty Hall, frameless, slightly off-kilter, a ripple bisecting its four color panels.

It's a matter-of-fact presentation of a decidedly un-matter-of-fact piece of student work.

Created by seniors Jehanna Howe, Elizabeth Stanley-Mann and Michala Peabody, the poster — which uses a series of historic and contemporary photos to

trace the effect of human actions on Vermont's "surficial" geology — was exhibited at the Geological Society of America annual meeting last November in Denver, where it prompted such buzz among professional geologists that geology Professor Paul Bierman, the students' advisor, decided to help prepare the poster's contents for submission to the society's professional journal, *GSA Today*. A paper bearing the students' names, along with Bierman's, will appear as the cover article in the April/May issue of the prestigious journal.

The poster and publication are high points for Bierman, who has mentored many undergraduates during his 12-year tenure at UVM, as well as for the students.

"It sends shivers up my spine," he says.

Small is bountiful

The poster, including its casual presentation (just outside Bierman's office, where he can show it off easily, he says), is a window on the world of undergraduate research at UVM, where student-faculty collaboration in the lab is commonplace, and scholarly papers co-authored by undergraduates are relatively frequent.

A recent unscientific survey revealed that scores of UVM students have co-authored papers with their professors, 40 with three biology faculty alone. Students in engineering, education, and natural resources, among other units, have also co-authored publications with faculty. In just one recent example, eight students co-published a paper with Gund Institute of Ecological Economics Director Robert Costanza in the December issue of *Ecological Economics*. The paper grew out of a class Costanza taught last spring.

UVM's hybrid teaching and research environment, which makes the university fertile ground for undergraduate research, is what drew Bierman to Burlington. "I wanted a chance to mentor undergraduates," he says, but in a research-intensive environment like that of his former employer, the University of Washington.



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It isn't the caffeinated buzz that draws economist and environmentalist Hector Saez to coffee — he usually drinks decaf, though he'd hate for his Costa Rican farmer friends to discover that secret — it's potential.

"It's what's special about UVM for students," he says. "We have serious grant-making capability, because we're a research institution, but undergraduates also have the opportunity to be mentored by professors" who are senior scientists because of the university's relatively small size.

"What we offer students are the research labs of a very active, well-funded faculty," says biology chair Judith Van Houten. Students, she adds, "have access to state-of-the-art equipment and a faculty mentor, as graduate students might at other institutions."

Undergraduates also benefit from research faculty who look out for them when they apply for competitive grants, says Van Houten.

The National Science Foundation, for example, provides supplementary funds for undergraduates through its Research Experience for Undergraduates program, which many UVM faculty have taken advantage of. Through REU, NSF provides stipends for undergrads to assist the scientists it funds, an activity the foundation has discovered makes it more likely that students will pursue graduate degrees and careers in science.

Undergraduate research at UVM is also funded by an alphabet soup of university programs, including HELiX in the life sciences, URECA across all disciplines, and APLE in the College of Arts and Sciences, as well as by a federal program new to UVM that sponsors first-generation undergraduates, the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.

Scanning the environment

Howe, Stanley-Mann, and Peabody all received REU grants to pursue their poster research, which was largely undertaken last summer and fall. During the summer the three scanned photos, a tedious process, wrote descriptions of the images with appropriate key words to aid searches, uploaded them to an online photo archives, and re-photographed scenes depicted in older photos to show how landscapes have changed over time.

The work is part of an ongoing project Bierman is spearheading called the [Landscape Change Program](#), an online photo archives that currently boasts 10,000 searchable images of Vermont over a 200-year period.

After scanning and uploading, it was on to the research. All three students came to their conclusions by searching the photo archives and comparing images over time. Howe demonstrated that "riparian zones" of vegetation alongside rivers have rejuvenated themselves in recent years, curtailing stream-bank erosion; Stanley-Mann showed how impacts of the 1927 flood that devastated Montpelier and environs have ameliorated over time; and Peabody demonstrated the causal connection between clear-cutting, road building, and other forms of development, on the one hand, and landslides and other erosion on the other.

After finishing their research, the three students completed the poster during a multi-day sleepless whirl. Before they knew it, the three students were a center of attention at the NGS poster session in Denver, engaging in long conversation with some of their field's most eminent figures.

"It was nerve-racking at first, talking to all these highly important geologists," says Peabody. "But it got to the point where we had our presentation down so well" — a graduate student observing the three calculated they gave their spiels about 1,000 times during the day — "we could go through it in about two minutes."

"It was a great experience," Peabody says, especially since the Worcester native is interested in graduate school. She says she now has "several big names" to follow up with.

That's part of the point, Bierman says. A major benefit offered by the undergraduate research experience, he believes, is that close proximity to students enables faculty "to really model what being a scientist is. (Students) see the boring stuff and the exciting stuff. When they get to know a scientist in the lab or at a meeting, they start to realize that they're people, too. They

could be one of these scientists.”

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