



Functional Food Programs Expand at UConn

Thanks to a recent major gift from the Esperance Family Foundation, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is planning to expand programs on functional foods, those which may convey health benefits beyond basic nutrition.

Examples of functional foods are antioxidants from fruits and vegetables and other bioactive compounds in whole grains and legumes which may prevent or delay onset of coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Some projections see a \$60-billion U.S. market for functional foods in the next three years.

In March 2006, the Department of Nutritional Sciences invited Dr. Roger S. Newton MS '74 and his wife, Coco Newton, MPH, RD, CCN (Registered Dietitian and Certified Clinical Nutritionist), to participate in a series of meetings and presentations on functional foods. Attracting a diverse audience of academic disciplines across the University community, the presentations revealed many common interests and aspirations.

The Newtons were particularly heartened by discussions between departments that have identified new ways of working more closely together, such as Kinesiology and Nutritional Sciences. Other topics presented by faculty and graduate students related to the roles of plant compounds in the prevention and modulation of disease.

Mrs. Newton was the featured speaker, presenting "Nutrition is Functional Medicine." She outlined an emerging medical system model within which the application of

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Health Center to be First in New England Offering New Cancer Treatment



Helical TomoTherapy Hi-Art technology is coming to the UConn Health Center in 2007

A gift of \$2.5 million from Carole and Ray Neag '56 will make the UConn Health Center the first facility in New England scheduled to offer a revolutionary new cancer treatment.

Thanks to the gift, patients and clinicians at the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center will have access to a Helical TomoTherapy Hi-Art system in the summer of 2007. There are currently only about 100 TomoTherapy machines in use worldwide.

Dr. Carolyn Runowicz, director of the Cancer Center and president of the American Cancer Society, says the addition of TomoTherapy is a tremendous asset to the UConn Health Center's patients and, increasingly, its internationally renowned medical staff.

"This technology fits in perfectly with our mission and vision to provide state-of-the-art care to the residents of Connecticut," she says.

TomoTherapy delivers radiation to a precisely mapped section of the body with an accuracy never before possible. This precision not only allows for more specific treatment of tumors, but also reduces the amount of healthy tissue exposed to radiation.

"What this means for our patients is more accurate treatment," says Dr. Robert Dowsett, division chief of Radiation Oncology at the UConn Health Center. "Precision and accuracy can make a big difference in treating some tumors that are adjacent to critical organs, for example, cancer in the head and neck, brain or prostate."

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Lea's Foundation Makes \$1.25-Million Gift to Support Hematology Care

A Hartford-based foundation has pledged \$1.25 million to establish a named center for hematologic disorders at the UConn Health Center.

Lea's Foundation for Leukemia Research is a longtime supporter of the Health Center, and this latest gift will expand hematological services through the Center's clinical care and translational research in the summer of 2007. Pending approval by UConn's Board of Trustees, it will be named the Lea's Foundation Center for Hematologic

Disorders. The Center will meet the needs of patients with benign and malignant blood disorders, and include dedicated space for the children of patients living with the diseases, allowing patients to come unencumbered with child-care issues.

"Through this center, we'll be able to translate the latest research directly into patient care, what we say is 'from bench to bedside' research," says James Thibeault, director of Signature Programs at the UConn Health Center.



Lea's Foundation For Leukemia Research Inc.

"There aren't too many blood centers affiliated with a cancer center, as we will be able to do here. There's just a tremendous demand for these services."

Dr. Carolyn Runowicz, director of the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive

Cancer Center at the UConn Health Center, says the synergy of research and treatment will attract top staff.

"This allows us to recruit high-level physicians and experts in hematological

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Health Center to be First in New England Offering New Cancer Treatment

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Carole and Ray Neag '56

Dowsett cites that even sophisticated existing treatment methods for head and neck tumors still expose the salivary glands to significant radiation. Over time, this leads to discomfort and dental problems as the glands dry out. By focusing the radiation more precisely, those side effects may be less severe.

Prior to treatment, detailed 3-D imagery is taken of the patient, and the doctor uses special software to “paint” on the image, identifying specific regions to receive radiation and those to remain untouched. Unlike previous technologies using wide bands of radiation from a limited choice of directions, TomoTherapy uses rotating narrow “pencil” beams of radiation to treat the tumor from all sides, with variable intensity.

The Neags say that their interest in TomoTherapy stems from Carole Neag’s own radiation treatments, as well as a desire to put the UConn Health Center at the forefront of cancer research and technology.

“This raises the UConn Health Center up another notch,” says Ray Neag. “The people of Connecticut should have the best care available to them, and it’s a wonderful opportunity now to upgrade the technology.”

Carole Neag envisions the UConn Health Center taking a leadership role in cancer prevention and treatment across New England.

“As we better understand cancer, the UConn Health Center will be on the cutting edge. That’s what motivated us to make the gift,” she says. 🍷

Atkins Foundation Supports Kinesiology Research

One person’s successful diet plan could be a failure for someone else. Could this be linked to their genetic makeup?

With a \$450,000 gift from the Dr. Robert C. Atkins Foundation, faculty in the Department of Kinesiology will seek to provide answers to this important question and others.

The gift, providing \$150,000 for each of the next three academic years, recognizes the scientific contributions Jeff Volek, assistant professor of kinesiology, has made in the area of low-carbohydrate diets, and will further his work.

It will also enhance the research capability of the department’s Human Performance Lab by providing additional funding for program support, graduate assistantships and equipment.

For the past seven years, Volek has worked with kinesiology colleagues William Kraemer and Maria-Luz Fernandez of the Department of Nutritional Sciences, to compare the effects of a carbohydrate-restricted diet and a standard low-fat diet on weight loss, as well as a variety of risk factors for diabetes and heart disease.

“This gift will help us expand our research into the many facets of carbohydrate restriction for the treatment of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and related metabolic syndromes,” says Volek, who also holds an adjunct appointment in the department.

The Neag School is providing full funding for a graduate assistantship for each of the three years covered by the agreement.

Although low-carbohydrate diets continue to be controversial in the

media and among nutrition professionals and health organizations, Volek’s scientific studies and the work of others point to a complete reversal of understanding. Originally, carbohydrate restriction was seen primarily as a weight-loss stratagem that caused concerns about potential adverse effects on heart disease due to high dietary fat intake.

“However, it is now clear,” Volek says, “that carbohydrate restriction has beneficial effects on many risk factors, even in the absence of weight loss and even in the presence of higher fat and saturated fat intake.”

According to Volek, his findings point, again, to carbohydrate restriction as having a clear benefit on a large number of health risk factors. 🍷

Lea’s Foundation

(continued from page 1)

disorders to the UConn Health Center. Connecticut residents will benefit tremendously because they will be able to access the leading researchers in the field,” she says.

Thibeault adds that because of insurance and other restrictions, many patients with blood disorders “fall through the cracks,” and the center will be able to assist those who need the lengthy and complicated treatments required for the related conditions.

Michael Economos, Lea’s Foundation chairman, says the organization’s board of directors was impressed with the local services offered at the UConn Health Center.

“Since the majority of the funds were collected locally, we also wanted to identify and support a premier local institution like the UConn Health Center. It’s a diamond in the rough,” he says.

“Our commitment of \$1.25 million was a difficult decision, and at the same time an easy one. We believe Dr. Runowicz’s leadership and dedication will make this a success and an asset to the community.”

The board of Lea’s Foundation for Leukemia Research consists mostly of young adults and provides unparalleled dedication and energy for the eradication of leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma. The UConn Health Center’s plans further this mission and will offer a

state of the art treatment center for those with benign and malignant blood disorders.

“We share UConn’s aspirations and feel fortunate to be able to participate,” says Economos. 🍷

CANR Celebrates 125 Years

Dean Kirklyn Kerr cuts a celebratory cake during the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources’s 125th Anniversary event on September 8. Approximately 400 people attended the celebration, held in the courtyard of the W.B. Young building.





Dr. Thomas Taylor

Corporate Gift Supports Dental Implant Center

A leading manufacturer of medical devices and dental implants has made a significant gift to support the planned Center for Implant and Reconstructive Dentistry at the UConn Health Center in Farmington.

Astra Tech Inc., a Massachusetts-based subsidiary of the global company Astra Tech AB, pledged the gift to support the Center, part of the UConn School of Dental Medicine and UConn Health Center's Musculoskeletal Institute. The support will be used to promote clinical and translational research efforts, and educate dental students and dental practitioners to perform leading-edge procedures in a state-of-the-art environment.

The Center for Implant and Reconstructive Dentistry is scheduled to open in 2007 as a teaching, research and patient-care organization. It will also serve as a training center and regional support network for dental implant studies and practice. Dental implants are artificial replacements for

natural teeth, and alternatives to traditional crowns, bridges or dentures. They are surgically placed below the gums and fused to the jawbone.

"Implants are state-of-the-art technology today," says Dr. Thomas Taylor, head of Oral Rehabilitation, Biomaterials and Skeletal Development at the UConn Health Center. "They last longer than most traditional dental bridges anchored to natural teeth, can be installed with minimal discomfort and bruising, are not susceptible to tooth decay and are resistant to infection. Implants offer a much more conservative solution for missing teeth than more traditional methods of tooth replacement."

Despite the advantages of implants, many community dentists have not yet embraced the technology because they haven't been trained in their use, something that Taylor says the Center will address both through training for community dentists and by serving as a resource center for ongoing professional development. Focusing on translational research, the Center will bridge the gaps among the community, academics and ongoing dental research.

Taylor says the Astra Tech gift provides a vital boost during the Center's formative development and opening stages.

"This is really a win-win for everyone," Taylor says. "This kind of academic/corporate partnership is so important and allows for an incredible potential of growth in the entire field." ■

"This kind of academic/corporate partnership is so important and allows for an incredible potential of growth in the entire field."

Fundraising Numbers Show Strong Private Support for UConn

The University of Connecticut Foundation received more than \$43 million in new private giving in the past year to benefit the University.

The financial year-end results continue the recent trend of strong private support for UConn students, faculty and programs.

The total amount raised in new gifts and pledges during FY06 was \$43.65 million. Of this amount, \$11.5 million was raised for the UConn Health Center, nearly \$15 million for UConn Athletics and the remaining amount of \$17.2 million was received for the Storrs and regional campuses as well as the School of Law.

The Foundation's Annual Fund, which is largely driven by direct-mail sollicita-

tion and the student-run phonathon, generated nearly \$3.8 million, which is a 23-percent increase over last year and 15 percent above the goal for FY06.

The Foundation exceeded its \$50-million goal in cash-basis gift receipts, totaling \$51.5 million. This amount represents cash gifts and payments on pledges from FY06 and previous years.

The number of households contributing stood at 34,006, which represented 97 percent of the Foundation's goal for the year and an increase from FY05.

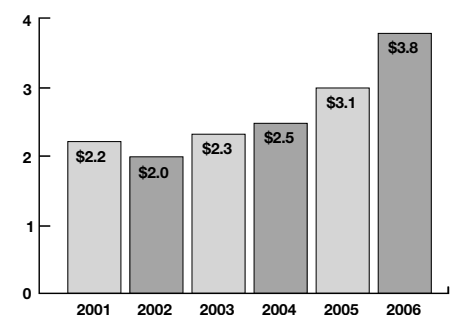
Nearly 25 percent of the total amount raised came from alumni. According to a 2006 *US News & World Report* ranking, UConn ranks seventh in the nation among public universities for alumni giving participation rate.

The University's endowment grew to a value of \$299 million, approximately a 10 percent increase over 2005 and up from \$42 million at the start of 1995.

A wide range of scholarships, fellowships, endowed chairs and programs were created or enhanced with this year's fundraising, impacting every one of the University's schools and colleges as well as the UConn Health Center.

"Private giving is a fuel that powers the public mission of the University," says John K. Martin, President of The University of Connecticut Foundation. "Our donors see the importance of their gifts to research, education and public service at UConn, and by extension the impact that the University has on the entire state." ■

Annual Fund Giving
(Dollars in millions)



ONLINE ENCYCLOPEDIA TO CATALOG STATE'S HISTORY

UConn to Develop, Co-fund

Founded in the early seventeenth century, Connecticut played an integral role in shaping U.S. history. UConn is now cataloging the state's rich history in a new online encyclopedia.

"The project is a joint venture among the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Office of the State Historian [based at the UConn Greater Hartford campus], and the Connecticut Humanities Council," explains project director Walter Woodward, state historian and professor of history at UConn.

UConn and the state-run Connecticut Humanities Council of Middletown will share the cost of creating the Connecticut Encyclopedia of History Online (ECHO), estimated at \$700,000. The council recently provided the seed money to kick off production.

The success of the council's pilot program (the Laptop Encyclopedia of Connecticut History (www.ctheritage.com)) is evidence that ECHO will be well received by students and educators at all levels, according to Woodward and Bruce Fraser, executive director of the council.

"The pilot version is receiving 30,000 to 40,000 visitors per month who come to it for information. It's clear there's not only a significant need, but also a demand for it," says Woodward.

UConn faculty and graduate students from various disciplines will produce much of the content, constructing a comprehensive and up-to-date history of the state. Woodward anticipates that, in addition to being an educational tool, the encyclopedia may inspire patriotism toward Connecticut as residents learn more about significant local historic figures and events.

"Connecticut is a state that has so much history to be proud of. It's history that has been disproportionately influential in the history of the United States in pretty clear and remarkable ways. As important as this history has been, its people and to a degree its students have lost sight of that," says Woodward. The new encyclopedia may "instill pride of place and of rootedness," he elaborates.

The encyclopedia will be posted in stages. The first portion is slated for early 2008, followed by the final portion in late 2009.

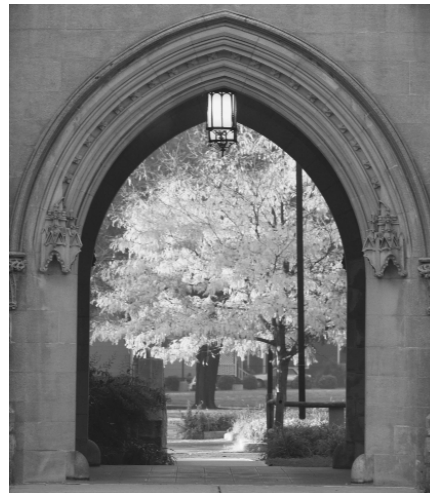
Gift to Support Diversity and Scholarships at School of Law

Bingham McCutchen, a 900-attorney law firm with 11 offices worldwide, including in Hartford, has donated \$50,000 to support diversity programming and a scholarship fund at the School of Law.

Bingham McCutchen will contribute \$25,000 each for a Diversity Programming Fund and its Scholarship Fund through 2010.

"Bingham McCutchen is proud to support the University of Connecticut School of Law in promoting diversity and expanding opportunities to the next generation of lawyers," says Bingham McCutchen partner Evan Flaschen '82, adjunct professor at the law school, former president of the University of Connecticut Law School Foundation and co-head of Bingham's financial restructuring/insolvency practice.

The Diversity Programming Fund, an endowed fund, will support programming sponsored by or hosted at the law school that seeks to further



racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, sexual-orientation or gender-identity diversity on campus and within the legal profession.

The Bingham McCutchen Scholarship Fund will award scholarships each year over the next five years at the discretion of the Admissions Office to an academically strong first or second year law student who has overcome significant economic, linguistic, cultural or educational obstacles, or who

belongs to a group historically under-represented in law schools and the legal profession. Candidates must present a record of leadership in diversity issues or particular promise of substantial and distinctive multicultural contributions to the law school and the legal profession, and express the preference to live and work in Connecticut following graduation.

The Bingham McCutchen scholars are in addition to the Bingham McCutchen International Scholarship Fund that the firm established in 2001, recently renamed the Anthony J. Smits International Scholarship in memory of Hartford partner Anthony J. Smits, a 1997 graduate of the Law School's LL.M. program, an adjunct professor at the Law School and a member of the board of trustees of the University of Connecticut Law School Foundation, Inc. The Smits Scholarship is awarded each year to an international student in the Law School's U.S. Legal Studies LL.M. Program. 🌟

Scholarship Fund Carries on Legacy of Fallen Officer

The tragic death of a UConn alumnus in the line of duty has been turned into strong, ongoing support for students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources through a named scholarship endowment.

On November 20, 1998, Conservation Officer James V. Spignesi, Jr. '75 was shot and killed while investigating illegal deer hunting in Scotland, Conn. A graduate of CANR, he had worked at the Department of Environmental Protection for more than 20 years as a wildlife biologist, and had been an officer since 1990. He was posthumously awarded the Officer of the Year award in 1999 from the Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association.

Shortly after his death, an endowment fund was created at UConn in his memory to provide scholarships for students interested in careers in wildlife conservation or conservation law enforcement. To support the UConn fund and several other high school scholarships, his family and his fellow DEP officers—many of whom

are also UConn alumni—have raised more than \$180,000 since 1999. An annual sportsmen's banquet in Spignesi's honor is held each spring, and raises approximately \$25,000 from ticket sales, raffles and auctions.

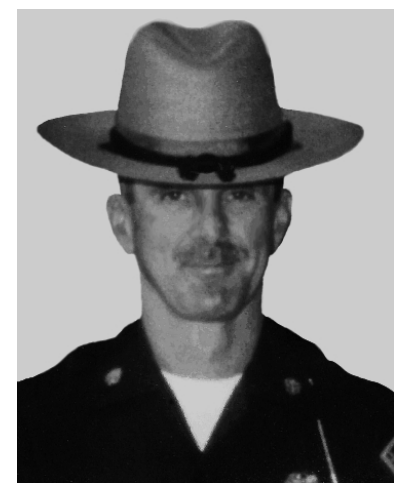
Captain Richard P. Lewis '81, a 24-year DEP veteran and Spignesi's sergeant at the time of his death, says the outpouring of support is in line with how Spignesi lived his life.

"Jimmy was a very giving person, and expected nothing in return. We hope that we are giving in the same way he would have."

Spignesi's brother, Dr. Thomas E. Spignesi '83, believes the scholarship is one way to keep his memory alive.

"Jim was devoted to wildlife, so by supporting a scholarship in that area, we're carrying on what he believed in. He'd really happy if he had learned of this. And the community response has been wonderful."

Brian Hiller MS '06 is a Ph.D. student and the 2006 Spignesi scholarship recipient. His current research is



James V. Spignesi, Jr. '75

focused on the effects of the metal cadmium on American woodcock, a shorebird that lives in forests and has been declining for nearly 40 years.

"The scholarship has allowed me to conduct research this spring, something I really would have financially struggled with otherwise," he says. "I've worked closely with many DEP staff and they speak so highly of Officer Spignesi. It's an honor to have my name associated with his." 🌟

Those interested in contributing to the James V. Spignesi, Jr. Memorial Endowment Fund should contact Amy Hanaburgh, director of development for the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, at 860.486.1763.



Connecticut State Museum of Natural History

Reconstruction Brings Exhibit Space, Classrooms to Museum Grand Re-opening Set for Spring '07

The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, part of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, is nearing the end of phase I of renovations to its Hillside Road facility. Reconstruction on the second floor, which will triple the museum's square footage, is expected to be completed by the end of the calendar year, followed by a grand re-opening of the museum in spring 2007.

The museum also incorporates the Connecticut Archaeology Center and the Office of State Archaeology (OSA), which oversees state archaeological sites and maintains a complete library of historic state records and site maps.

The museum has collected nearly \$500,000 in donations from hundreds of committed members. With matching funds from the state through the 21st Century UConn program, approximately \$1 million was raised to bring classrooms and permanent exhibit space to the museum for the first time in its 21-year history.

"The thing that we're most proud of is that half of it has come from private donations," says museum Director Leanne Kennedy Harty. "We have the College, the UConn Foundation and a long list of donors to thank."

The museum is now developing modern exhibits that will take advantage of the new space and reinforce its mission to explore the dynamic relationship between human culture and the environment through history.

"We're very excited," notes State Archaeologist Nicholas Bellantoni.

While the museum plans its grand re-opening, Harty and Bellantoni are already looking forward to the next

step in completing the long-term \$4.5-million reconstruction plan. They are counting on momentum from phase I to gather support to begin building a much-needed collections storage facility, an archaeology lab and a library to house the OSA's 8,000-volume holdings, which are now stored in a small facility across campus, within the next few years.

"Logistically, getting access to [the OSA's] materials right now is difficult... We'd love to have more students, teachers and researchers using them," says Bellantoni.

"When we're able to bring all of our resources together, it will help us more effectively do our jobs, but also certainly help students more." ■

The museum has collected nearly \$500,000 in donations from hundreds of committed members.

'LEARNING COMMONS' PLANNED FOR BABBIDGE LIBRARY

A state-of-the-art "Learning Commons" is under development at the Homer D. Babbidge Library, thanks to a commitment of private giving from the classes of 1957 and 1997.

A learning commons is an integrated learning space that brings together, in one convenient environment, tools and support services that enable students to fully research, develop, enhance, produce and finalize their academic work assignments. These include computer workstations, printers and scanners, research databases, academic software programs, collaborative work spaces and on-demand tutoring assistance.

Designed for group collaboration and self-directed research, the Learning Commons will be located on Level 1 of the Homer Babbidge Library, where many of these elements are already in place, including a computer lab offering access to a

variety of academic software, Internet cafes for information exploration and retrieval, hands-on information technology training rooms, and reference and research services.

Several tutoring areas for computer competency, writing, math and statistics are still under development.

When the project is complete, students will be able to meet in glass-walled i-Studios with large plasma displays, white boards, and other tools for group learning and collaboration; utilize a multi-media center for creating image, video and audio presentations; and take advantage of new lounge furniture for study or casual conversation.

The University of Connecticut libraries form the largest public research collection in the state, with more than 2.6 million volumes, 6,000 currently received print periodicals, 41,000 electronic journals,

2.8 million units of microform, 35,000 reference sources, 200,000 maps, sound and video recordings, musical scores, and a growing array of electronic resources including eBooks, eSound recordings and image databases. Approximately 1 million patrons visit the Babbidge Library every year.

"A library is so much more than simply a collection of books and materials, but really a hub of discovery and learning," says Brinley Franklin, vice provost for University libraries. "The Learning Commons will allow students and groups to easily collaborate, learn interactively and complete their academic work using the latest technology."

The UConn libraries are traditionally the beneficiary of the tenth and fiftieth anniversary class gifts. While the libraries impact every graduate of the University, they have no alumni of their own.

Gifts Help Support 'Teachers for a New Era' at UConn



An initiative to improve teacher education has received major support from a Stamford-based foundation.

The McLeod Blue Sky Foundation has pledged a \$250,000 endowment for the Teachers for a New Era (TNE) project at UConn to sponsor an annual TNE Faculty Fellow in math or science who will support the enhancement of those curricula for education students.

TNE was created in 2002 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to improve K-12 teacher preparation and pupil learning through evidence-based research, the integration of education and liberal arts studies, systematic clinical experiences and extending support of new teachers. UConn is one of only 11 colleges and universities selected to participate. UConn's TNE program is a

broadly supported University initiative, with full backing from the Board of Trustees, a requirement from Carnegie to demonstrate institutional support.

TNE seeks to identify the best methods of classroom instruction through measurable evidence-based research, and the integration of liberal arts and education curriculum so that all students receive a practical, thorough education in pedagogy and subject matters.

"TNE ensures that the next generation of teachers is prepared in the arts and sciences," says Dr. Scott Brown, project director of TNE at UConn. "When you have, for example, math majors and education majors sitting in the same advanced math class, you're creating a richer education and conversation for both."

The program also aims to improve new teachers' work experience and effectiveness through systematic clinical placements in K-12 schools during their training.

The \$5-million Carnegie grant required that a dollar-for-dollar match be raised in outright contributions. Of the \$5 million in matching funds, \$1.5 million is required in endowed funds to support the project in perpetuity; the Blue Sky Foundation joins other donors, including Christine '67 and Philip '66, '67 Lodewick, in building toward that goal.

"Our country is at risk for losing its competitive advantage since too few students are pursuing advanced technical degrees. We hope that with our support TNE will be able to identify how to keep students interested in studying math and science and better prepare teachers for those critical subjects," says Elaine McLeod SON '78, vice president of the McLeod Blue Sky Foundation. "I had great teachers who prepared me for my career and am grateful that we can establish this endowment to encourage the next generation of educators."

UConn's efforts are centered on several endowed chairs in educational assessment, urban education and liberal arts and sciences, as well as initiatives to increase the use of technology for professional mentoring, tracking assessment and outcomes, and helping new teachers seek assistance and receive guidance early in their careers. 🍎

More information about the TNE program is available at www.tne.uconn.edu or by contacting Lisa Baronio, VP for development at the UConn Foundation at 860.486.5000 x4618.

Functional Foods Research

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functional foods in clinical medicine can benefit outcomes. Functional medicine is making inroads in clinical practice among physicians and other healthcare providers who understand that biochemical individuality and a patient-centered approach is more curative than a disease-centered approach.

"Our conventional medical system today doesn't really take nutrition seriously, but instead regards it as ancillary to the primary treatment with pharmaceuticals," Mrs. Newton says. "Similarly, we are limited by the conventional dietetics approach, which focuses more on diets for disease states, rather than an individual's nutritional biochemistry. What we need is a system that uses nutrition as a 'cornerstone' to medicine that gets at underlying causes and dysfunctions in metabolism, not just the suppression of symptoms."

For his part, Dr. Newton credits a successful career in the pharmaceutical industry in part to the mentoring of two UConn professors in the Department of Nutritional Sciences, the late Robert Jensen and Hamilton D. Eaton. He has never forgotten his "nutrition roots" and believes that functional medicine and functional foods research and application are important solutions for much of what is lacking in today's healthcare system. 🍎

CHANGES TO IRA LAW ALLOW TAX-ADVANTAGED GIFTS

A new federal law designed to secure pensions also includes provisions that allow new ways to make tax-advantaged direct gifts to charities.

The Pension Protection Act of 2006, signed into law in August, contains Individual Retirement Account rollover provisions that may enable a tax-advantaged charitable gift directly from an IRA account.

To qualify, the donor must be 70½ years of age or older, and the transfer must be made directly from the IRA (including Rollover IRA and Spousal Rollover IRA accounts) to a qualified charity, such as The University of Connecticut Foundation, Inc. The gifts must be outright and must be made in 2006 or 2007, up to \$100,000 each year per donor.

"The change in the law may be ideal for many people," says Hal C. Reed, J.D., CFRE, assistant VP for planned giving at the UConn Foundation. "Those who are required to take a minimum distribution from an IRA, but who don't actually need the additional income, can instead transfer

the amount to charity tax-free. At the very least, those who take mandatory withdrawals and also give to charities should consider this new opportunity as an option."

The change may also benefit other groups: those who donate up to 50 percent of their adjusted gross income to charity, individuals and couples who do not itemize and make charitable gifts less than the federal standard deduction and those whose major assets reside in their IRAs.

Because the direct transfer of \$100,000 from a donor's IRA will not be included in adjusted gross income subject to state income tax, the new change could also result in tax savings of up to \$7,000 in states like Connecticut, where a state income tax charitable deduction is not available.

For more information about the new IRA tax law changes, please consult your tax advisor. Hal Reed may be contacted at 860.486.5000 x6135 or via email at hreed@foundation.uconn.edu.

Chemistry Professor Receives Dreyfus Foundation Award

Jose A. Gascon, a new assistant professor of chemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, has received a prestigious New Faculty Award from the Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation of New York City. It is the first such award to a UConn faculty member.

The \$50,000, five-year award, one of only 12 in the country, will be used to further his research on the quantum mechanical nature of chemical and physical phenomena that occur in proteins and enzymes at the molecular level.

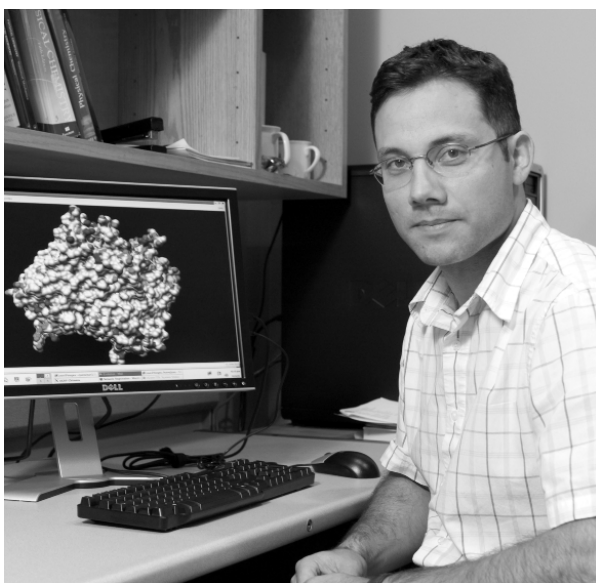
Gascon, a physical chemist, joined UConn this fall from Yale University, where he was a postdoctoral fellow. He characterizes his work as biochemistry with a theoretical or computation spin. He works at the interfaces of chemistry, physics and biology.

"The interfaces are diffuse. Sometimes what I do could be considered biophysics," he adds.

Like fellow chemistry faculty member Robert Birge, whose work also crosses the boundaries of scientific disciplines, Gascon is interested in the protein rhodopsin, present in the retina of the eye, which traps light and contributes to vision.

He also is interested in the study of enzymes that contain vanadium, a chemical element abundant in marine life. Vanadium-containing complexes have shown potential for use in diabetes therapy.

His main research tool is using a hybrid method that combines quantum mechanics and molecular



Dr. Jose A. Gascon

mechanics, or QM/MM, to compute and describe the interactions of atoms in the protein.

But he looks for new tools and methods to improve the description, and in collaboration with others he has come up with a new method, called Moving Domain QM/MM. It takes into account polarization phenomena, which means that the molecular charges within the protein are able to change according to their environment.

The method is practical, he says, because it is characterized by linear scaling, which results in computational efficiency.

The computations involved in his research are complex, and Gascon has time grants to work at two major super-computing centers, in Pittsburgh and California.

Gascon's work has many applications, from improving the understanding of the chemical reactions going on inside the protein, to drug design, such as designing a molecule to interact with and inhibit the enzyme of a disease-causing protein.

He was nominated for the Dreyfus award by his new department head, Steven L. Suib, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of Chemistry.

"Dr. Gascon has an impressive research record and deserves the recognition of this prestigious award," says Suib. "Such awards are rare and we are truly fortunate to have Dr. Gascon join our faculty."

Gascon, 34, a native of Villa Maria in the Cordoba province in central Argentina, started out majoring in physics as an undergraduate in Argentina. He earned a Ph.D. in chemistry at Louisiana State University, and then became interested in applying physical chemistry to biological problems, which he began working on at Yale.

At UConn, he hopes to interact with materials and polymer researchers, inorganic chemists and "wherever there's a problem that requires molecular detail."

His wife, Fabiana Cardetti, assistant professor of mathematics, joined the UConn faculty last year after a two-year postdoctoral fellowship. They are from the same province of Argentina, and they attended graduate school together at LSU. Gascon is happy that they can once more meet for lunch.

He is also thrilled with the resources at UConn. When Gascon was at Yale, he followed Birge's work. "Being a few offices away from him is an honor," he says.

"This is a great school. This building is one of the best chemistry facilities in the U.S.," he adds. 🌅

"This is a great school. This building is one of the best chemistry facilities in the U.S."

New Board Members Bring Wide Range of Experiences to the UConn Foundation

Eight new members of The University of Connecticut Foundation Board of Directors were welcomed on October 20, expanding the body and helping to better reflect the university it serves.

"Our board is the driving force behind both our direction and our success," says John Martin, President of the Foundation. "We're pleased to see both new and returning members volunteer to lead us to the next level."

The board is drawn from volunteers from corporations and community organizations, and ex-officio members from the University administration, faculty and student body. This strong constituency reflects the set of professional backgrounds, skills and knowledge necessary to achieve its

ambitious goals. Its members give selflessly of their time, expertise and financial resources, setting policies for successfully raising, accountably managing and prudently investing private philanthropic funds on behalf of the University.

The newly elected members are:

David Barton '61 has held senior management positions at OSI Specialties Inc., International Specialty Products, GAF Chemicals Inc., Reichhold Chemicals Inc. and Loctite Corp. He and his wife, Trisha, are Storrs Circle lifetime members of the Founders Society.

Andy F. Bessette '75 is the Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer at St. Paul Travelers Companies, Inc. He and his wife, Cheryl, are

Constitution Circle lifetime members of the Founders Society.

Anthony Crosby '85 is an attorney in private practice, the Law Office of Anthony Crosby, LLC in Southington, representing commercial real estate companies and providing other legal services.

Keith R. Fox '80 was the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Brandsoft, Inc., an enterprise software and services company. He and his wife, Pamela, are 1881 Circle lifetime members of the Founders Society.

Coleman B. Levy '61, '62, '66 is a Founder and Senior Principal of Levy & Droney, P.C., a law firm with 35 attorneys. He and his wife, Judith, are Constitution Circle lifetime members of the Founders Society.

David P. Marks '69, '71 is Chief Investment Officer for both CUNA Mutual Group and the CUNA Mutual Life Insurance Co. He and his wife, Ann, are Constitution Circle lifetime members of the Founders Society.

William "Bill" C. Stone is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of SS&C Technologies, Inc., an enterprise applications software company.

Elise E. Wright '76 is the Senior Vice President of Human Resources at Aetna, Inc. 🌅

School of Business Alumnus Endows Need-Based Scholarships Recipients to Receive Full Tuition

Two new undergraduate scholarships will enable deserving students to attend UConn's School of Business. Alumnus Daniel Toscano '87 and his wife, Tresa, have established an endowment to fund need-based scholarships in their parents' names: the Joseph P. and Rose M. Toscano Memorial Scholarship and the Santos and Patricia Mercado Memorial Scholarship.

"This is about promoting education and honoring our parents," says Toscano.

The scholarships, which will cover tuition and room expenses, will be awarded to incoming freshmen enrolled in the School of Business. In the case of the Mercado scholarship, preference will be given to Hispanic candidates. Both scholarships will be renewable for four years, contingent upon maintaining a high level of academic achievement, ensuring support through graduation.

"Students coming from low socio-economic backgrounds may not be as well prepared as students from suburbs. They don't necessarily have the grades to compete for the merit scholarships," says Mohamed Hussein, interim dean of the School of Business. "That [the Toscanos] made this scholarship need-based is important."



Tresa and Daniel Toscano '87

Toscano, who worked his way through college, understands the burden tuition places on low- and middle-income families. Now a managing director and group head at Deutsche Bank Securities, he is pleased to be able to give promising students the same opportunities he had to build a strong foundation for future success.

There are students who "have everything going their way except the financial resources," Toscano explains.

"We want to reach out to students with potential who don't have the financial means to attend an institution like UConn, and do what we can to help them."

Hussein notes that students who have to work long hours or take on excessive course loads to complete their degrees faster are at a disadvantage when competing against their peers, both in college and when entering the job market. He emphasizes that scholarships, regardless of the amount, can have a significant effect.

"People who have been through this university, and have gone on to success in part because of the education they received, need to stop, look back and see how they can help," says Toscano.

He continues, "There are many different ways you can help. Financial assistance is the most obvious, but recruiting graduating UConn students, mentoring and getting involved with the School of Business or the UConn Foundation are other examples of high-impact contribution." ■

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