100 YEARS of LAS

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A longtime study abroad program in Japan nears a milestone.

Many alumni have similar stories to tell. Since the Year in Japan program launched in 1975, some 600 Illinois students have taken the opportunity to live a year in Kobe, Japan, and take classes at Konan University, a school of about 10,000 students. Though the program has evolved—for instance, students are now required to have at least one year of Japanese language courses before enrolling in the program—students still come away transformed by their experience.

Enjoy looking over the achievements of our past, and come step with us into our promising future.

Sincerely,

Brian Ross, Interim Dean
African American Studies Is Alive and Well in the U.S.
The field of African American studies on U.S. higher education’s “alive and well, and, in fact, growing and maturing” despite some reports to the contrary, says a new study published online by the Department of African American Studies.

Abigail Salyers, World-Renowned Scientist (1942 – 2013)
Abigail Salyers, the first female tenured professor in microbiology at Illinois (1983) and full professor (1986), died on November 6, 2013, in Urbana at the age of 70. She was a gifted and committed professor who taught classes in both the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Medicine.

During her 40-year career, Salyers revolutionized how we think about the bacteria that live in the human intestinal tract, help design antibiotics, and provided the voice of reason in discussions on bioterrorism, transgenic plant safety, and antibiotic resistance in medicine.

Historic Telescope Refurbished
As usual, they are looking up at the University of Illinois Observatory. The same goes for the mood at the historic, 117-year-old telescope that lies at the roots of the astronomy program has been renovated for the first time in almost 60 years. Bryan Driver, assistant chair and professor in the Department of Astronomy says the 12-inch Brashear refracting telescope is a “stately Senior in Urbana” and “a Plan for Transformation” (PFT) that promised the residents would be relocated to better housing. Petty—by this description by President George H.W. Bush as “a model for the nation.”

Does ‘Facebook Generation’ Need Limit on Screen Time?
There are media products that can certainly be educational and good for kids, and there is a “Plan for Transformation” (PFT) that promised the residents would be relocated to better housing. Petty—by this description by President George H.W. Bush as “a model for the nation.”

English Professor and Team Document Life in Chicago Public Housing
English professor Audrey Petty grew up about two miles from the Chicago Housing Authority’s (CHA) Robert Taylor Homes. Those 4,600 units contained more than 20,000 apartments, giving the complex the dubious title of largest public housing development in the nation. But though she could practically see the towers from her door, Petty regarded the Robert Taylor Homes as a foreign, mysterious, and intimidating place.

In 1999, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development required the CHA to conduct an inventory and inspection of its projects. When most were labeled unhabitable and scheduled for demolition, the city formulated a “Plan for Transformation” (PFT) that promised the residents would be relocated to better housing. Petty—by this description by President George H.W. Bush as “a model for the nation.”

“IT was the PFT that made me feel this urgent desire to become better informed about this plan and what was happening to people,” Petty says. That curiosity resulted in her book, High-Rise Stones: Voices from Chicago Public Housing, recently published by McClelland & Stewart as part of its oral history series, Voices of Witness. The book contains the personal narratives of a diverse former residents and who Petty and a team of Illinois graduate students (Michael Burns, Eric Tanayos, and Crystal Thomas) found by posting flyers in schools, libraries, and social service agencies. The subjects range from a former gang member who could steal and remove valuables by age five to the president of the Cabrini Green resident council, described by President George H.W. Bush as “a model for the nation.”

A Former Faculty Member Wins Nobel Prize
Former faculty member of the Department of Chemistry is one of three scientists who received a Nobel Prize for developing computer simulations for complex chemical processes.

The renovation made news last spring as parts of the telescope were lifted through the dome by crane before being returned to their place. The renovation included rebuilding the telescope tube, repairing the gearing and motors, replacing the telescope and improving its historic appearance.

The telescope, installed at the top of a winding flight of stairs that the Observatory opened in 1896, was used by Joel Stebbins in the early 20th century during his groundbreaking research on the brightness of stars. His work was so important that in 1999 the Observatory was named a National Historic Landmark.

The renovation is set to last some 25 years as part of the telescope were lifted through the dome by crane before being returned to their place. The renovation included rebuilding the telescope tube, repairing the gearing and motors, replacing the telescope and improving its historic appearance.

The telescope installed at the top of a winding flight of stairs that the Observatory opened in 1996, was used by Joel Stebbins in the early 20th century during his groundbreaking research on the brightness of stars. His work was so important that in 1999 the Observatory was named a National Historic Landmark.

Today’s teens are sometimes called the Facebook Generation, a reference to the ubiquitous presence of electronic media in their lives. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recently recommended that parents set children as a “media diet” by limiting total entertainment screen time to less than two hours per day for children ages ten and older, and discouraging all screen media exposure for children under two.

Barbara Wilson, the Kathy Lee Bayes Distinguished Professor in the Department of Communications, is an expert on the social and psychological effects of new media. Wilson says the AAP recommendation encourages parents to think about how much time kids are spending with media and that tracking this time is important. However, Wilson also says parents shouldn’t put just the amount of time that children spend with media because there are positive, pro-social aspects of the media, such as Sesame Street and websites that are full of educational material.

She says the challenge is sorting out the content that kids spend time with and what kinds of TV programs, movies, video games, and social media they are consuming. There are media products that can certainly be educational and good for kids, and there are products that can be potentially harmful.

Wilson says some researchers have pointed out that the AAP recommendation that children under age two be discouraged from using screen media altogether “may be a little conservative because we don’t have a lot of data on what screen media exposure does to participation in face-to-face social interactions and if we see more of that type of research in the next five years. It’s difficult research because babies are pre-verbal, so it’s very hard to measure their cognitive and emotional responses to stimuli like television.”

Co-author of the report was Bailey; Sam Byndom, Co-Director of Research; and Joel Stebbins, a professor emeritus of chemistry at Harvard University who is also affiliated with the University of Strasbourg in France, was a pioneer and instructor of chemistry at Illinois from 1951 to 1960. During that time he carried out important theoretical work in nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometry (NMR). Karplus received the Nobel Prize in 2003 in an article Karplus wrote in 2005, he described a “Plan for Transformation” (PFT) that promised the residents would be relocated to better housing. Petty—by this description by President George H.W. Bush as “a model for the nation.”
Lincoln Hall is the most well-known building in the College of LAS, its next-door neighbor is perhaps the most mysterious—and not just because it’s rumored to be haunted.

Sure, ghost stories are the English Building’s claim to fame in many websites, YouTube videos, and other spooky accounts. Legend has it that long ago a female student died in the 108-year-old building, and she’s been slamming doors and flipping lights ever since. The fact that University of Illinois archivists have never uncovered record of such a death hasn’t put an end to the story. Almost always mentioned as a prelude to the ghost story, however, is that the English Building was once a dormitory for women, perhaps making the supposed tragedy more believable. For those on record making such a claim, however, it may come as a fright to learn that it never was a dorm.

Unlike doorknob-rattling spirits, the English Building’s history can be traced through blueprints and board minutes. None of the documented history of the University or the building suggests that it was ever a dormitory.

In its earliest days, after it was opened in 1905, it was called the Woman’s Building. After World War II, it was renamed Bevier Hall for about a decade before it was named the English Building in the 1950s. It has housed the Department of English ever since.

“The English Building in its early days housed women’s activities,” says Winton Solberg, professor emeritus of history who has written extensively about the development of the University. “The women in charge of students—not yet called a dean of women—had offices there, and female students had rooms in which to meet friends, rest, and so forth. Moreover, the English Building housed the academic work in domestic science.”

Not that debunking the myth of the dormitory makes the building any less colorful. According to the October 17, 1905, issue of the Illini (not yet the Daily Illini), the building’s dedication ceremony included 400 female students dressed in white marching from the since-razed University Hall to the gymnasium, where President Edmund James said the new building signifies the U of I’s commitment to “co-education; second, that the fathers and mothers of Illinois want the best possible care taken care of their daughters, and third, that physical culture is as necessary for the girls as for the young men.”

Indeed, the new Woman’s Building included a gymnasium and a pool (which figures into at least one theory of the aforementioned student’s death), along with sewing rooms and other amenities to teach women household science.

An October 8, 1975, article in the Daily Illini points out that an expansion in 1912 added the distinctive, towering white pillars facing the Quad, and that the building’s club rooms made it a major social center for meetings and formal events. Blueprints from the 1912 addition reveal that it did have a two-bedroom home management apartment on the third floor, where a handful of female students lived and learned the details of household science, but it hardly met the definition of a dormitory.

Other documents from the English Building’s early days reveal no sign that it was ever considered a dormitory. Women’s housing was a hot topic long before dorms were built, as many families were reluctant to send their daughters to a place where housing was uncertain (many women found residence in private boarding houses). That’s why an extensive history on housing at the U of I on file at the University Archives describes it as a landmark moment when Busey Hall opened as a residence hall for women in 1918—and never mentions the English Building as a dorm.

Does this mean a woman did not die inside the English Building? No, and for that reason it’s likely the rumor of a ghost will continue unabated. If she does exist, however, she might rest easier if the story begins a little differently.
When Colleges Collided

THE FORMATION OF THE COLLEGE OF LAS WAS AS UNCERTAIN AS IT WAS PROMISING.

After a century of togetherness, it's hard to imagine a time when the liberal arts and sciences weren't mentioned in the same breath at the University of Illinois. Prior to 1913, however, when the College of Science merged with the College of Literature and Arts to form the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, a happy marriage between the two did not seem likely.

Indeed, marriage was the analogy used in 1912 by an exasperated Arthur Daniels, acting dean of Literature and Arts, in a letter to E.J. Townsend, dean of Science, where faculty were uncertain over the implications of a union with their counterparts across the quad.

"Of course I realize that there are many problems which will be consequent upon the decision to unite," wrote Daniels. "The course of proceedings reminds one of being married. The first thing to be decided by the individuals is whether they want to be married or not. I fear there would be very few marriages if the subsequent problems were raised and discussed before the first step had been taken."

The exchange was just one of many debates that occurred for years before 1913. A prevailing question on campus was whether the sciences—which then included, in part, physiology, zoology, geology, chemistry, mathematics, botany, bacteriology, and astronomy—should combine with the liberal arts, which included art and design, economics, English, French, German, Greek, history, Italian and Spanish, Latin, pedagogy, philosophy, political science, psychology, and rhetoric, among others.

The question was the subject of heated discussion by some of the most influential names in all of I history—some of whom have buildings and prestigious programs named after them—such as David Kinley, Thomas Burling, and Edmund James, who served from 1904-1920 and is considered one of the University’s most visionary presidents.

"Among the first matters brought to my attention after I became president of the University," wrote James, "is the question of administrative organization, involving a College of Science and a College of Literature and Arts as separate administrative entities, served by the best interests of the University."

Some thought that uniting the liberal arts and sciences might be more costly and effective, and also that a larger college might draw more consideration during budget time. Some of the strongest voices in favor of union, however, were those of students, who complained that a division between liberal arts and sciences created too many administrative hurdles between disciplines that were increasingly overlapping.

For example, the College of Science offered a bachelor of arts degree that required 16 hours of foreign language courses, which were housed in the College of Literature and Arts. Meanwhile, Literature and Arts had a stated goal of offering an education in the sciences as well as human culture. Both strove to offer an education in culture and fundamental principles as opposed to merely their practical applications.

"We have thus substantially two competing colleges in the same University," read one memorandum that emerged in favor of the union during committee debates prior to 1913.

It wasn't always this way. In 1871, the liberal arts and sciences had grown to 324, up from just 73 in 1904, according to Sixteen Years at the University of Illinois, a study of the James administration. And the number of students in the liberal arts and sciences almost doubled in the seven years following the union, to 2,547. Those numbers include the faculty and students that were lost to the College of Commerce and Business Administration, which broke off from LAS in 1915.

"The requirements for admission and for a degree in the two colleges differed considerably and the organization of curriculum procedure has been a slow and sometimes difficult process," reported Sixteen Years at the University of Illinois, "but at the end of seven years, the complete unification of the college has been accomplished." Today, with some 600 faculty, nearly 14,000 students, and more than 60 departments and academic units in the College of LAS, with numerous examples of collaboration across fields in research and education, it's fair to say that the union of liberal arts and sciences has made both disciplines stronger.

By Dave Evensen
LAS Unveils Initial Selections for Centennial Gallery of Excellence. First group includes 25 prominent people and discoveries from the first 100 years of the college.

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is creating a Gallery of Excellence in honor of its 100-year anniversary. This virtual gallery features people and events throughout LAS history, which dates back to 1913.

With the college’s broad range of academic disciplines (more than 60 departments and units are housed in LAS), the gallery features those who have made breakthroughs in research, education, and culture, in fields ranging from mathematics to anthropology.

The people and developments listed in the Gallery of Excellence have been selected by a college committee after a call for nominations within LAS. Those included in the exhibit are highlighted with photos and biographical sketches. The initial group includes:

**Joseph Leo Doob**, a pioneer in mathematical probability;

**Nina Baym**, a leading American literature critic and historian;

**Carl Shipp "Speed" Marvel**, a chemist whose discoveries have aided generations of soldiers, firefighters, and astronauts;

**Freeman Hrabowski**, an alumnus who is now a leading figure today in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education;

**Carl Woese**, the microbiologist credited with discovering a third domain of life;

**Robert Copeland**, a beloved figure who served as the first African American college dean at Illinois;

**Ralph Fisher** and the establishment of highly respected international studies centers;

**Robert Emerson**, who is recognized as making a pivotal discovery in our modern understanding of photosynthesis;

**Marie Hochmuth Nichols**, a pioneer in communications research;

**Charles Osgood**, who created several new psychological research disciplines;

**Joel Stebbins**, a resourceful astronomer who revolutionized how we look at the stars;

**Richard Scanlan**, a wildly popular teacher of the Classics;

**Michio Suzuki**, whose discoveries in group theory shook the mathematical world;

**John “Jack” F. Welch, Jr.**, an alumnus who is recognized as one of the top CEOs of the 20th century;

**St. Elmo Brady**, who inspired countless African Americans to enter the field of chemistry;

**Eugene Odum**, the “father of modern ecology”;

**David Blackwell**, the first African American inducted into the National Academy of Sciences for his brilliant work in mathematics;

**Clifford Ladd Prosser**, a pioneer in the field of comparative physiology;

**Herbert Gutowsky**, a chemist whose work made nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy a standard tool in scientific research;

**Carol Stack**, an alumna and anthropologist whose intimate examination of African American communities expanded our understanding of social networks under poverty;

**Friends and alumni** who have stepped up to partner with the College of LAS to help meet the demands of higher education;

**Jean Driscoll**, an alumna who turned a legendary career in wheelchair racing into one for advocacy and inspiration;

**James G. Randall**, a renowned historian who brought deeper understanding to Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War;

**The Four Color Theorem**, proven by LAS mathematicians Kenneth Appel and Wolfgang Haken;

**Robert Copeland**, a beloved figure who served as the first African American college dean at Illinois;

**Ralph Fisher** and the establishment of highly respected international studies centers;

**Robert Emerson**, who is recognized as making a pivotal discovery in our modern understanding of photosynthesis;

**Marie Hochmuth Nichols**, a pioneer in communications research;

**Charles Osgood**, who created several new psychological research disciplines;

**Joel Stebbins**, a resourceful astronomer who revolutionized how we look at the stars;
The world of Ken and Ann Slaw changed forever in 1996 on the day their four-year-old son Andrew slammed his hand in the sliding door—and felt little pain. “Andrew showed no reaction to the pain or any surprise,” says Ken Slaw, a 1979 LAS alumnus in psychology. “He should have been screaming.”

This incident led the Slaws to Rush St. Luke’s Hospital in Chicago, where Andrew saw Dr. Peter Heydemann, a pediatric neurologist. In no time, Dr. Heydemann determined that Andrew had Familial Dysautonomia (FD)—a truly amazing genetic disease. Only an estimated 300 people in the world have it.

“Andrew was born in 1992, and challenges emerged in the first hours, when his heart rate would mysteriously disappear during labor contractions,” he says. With a pediatric intensive care unit on hand, ready for anything, “Andrew came into the world exhausted and a bit blue from poor oxygenation, but intensely alert and curious,” Slaw says. “You almost get the sense that if he could have, he would have raised his hand and asked a question or two. His birth was all at once a mystery, a roller coaster ride, and an overwhelming joy.”

For the first four years of his life, Andrew displayed “grit and creativity as he played cat and mouse with his developmental milestones,” he adds. Andrew was consistently six months behind the physical milestones but far ahead in verbal development. He also showed perplexing symptoms, such as passing out if he laughed too hard.

Then came the hand-slamming incident, and the mystery illness was unmasked. However, many mysteries still remained, such as the cause and treatment of this rare disease. So Ken and his wife, Ann, who is also an LAS alum in psychology, hit the books and became involved in an FD Foundation, which supported research on the disease.

But then the bottom fell out. For the next few years, Andrew regularly went into “autonomic crisis,” in which his blood pressure and heart rate soared, and other systems crashed. Between birth and age 10, Andrew was hospitalized 30 times for life-threatening autonomic crises, with one hospital stay lasting over six months. “After a couple more years, we became frustrated with the lack of urgency and the slow bureaucratic pace of research,” Slaw says. In fact, they did not think Andrew would survive long enough for answers to arise from current research, so Ken and Ann took action. Ann gave up her law practice so she could run a new foundation that they created—the Familial Dysautonomia NOW Foundation, or FD NOW (fdnow.org).

Ken, meanwhile, used all of the medical connections he could from his job with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). At AAP, he helped to launch successful programs like the Neonatal Resuscitation Program that has saved millions of lives of newborns struggling in the first hours of life. This program, which set resuscitation standards in 34 countries, hit close to home since their own son faced the same kind of challenges at birth and beyond.

Ken says he and Ann see themselves as “opportunity catalysts” who try to make positive things happen no matter what challenges they face. FD NOW became their catalyst for action, bringing together committed researchers and many parents of FD children.

Over the past 13 years, the foundation has raised roughly $3 million and funded the research of Fordham University’s Berish Rubin, who went on to pinpoint the gene behind FD. Rubin also found the root cause of FD—the failure of the body to produce the critical IKAP protein.

“Because of the lack of production of this protein, children are born with only half of the functional neurons in their autonomic nervous system,” Slaw points out. Children with FD also have low levels of a neurotransmitter that “basically swims around in your bloodstream collecting all of the garbage byproducts of our metabolism.”

As a result, those with FD are more likely to have dangerous reactions from toxins building up in their bloodstream. It sounds dire, but knowing the cause led to treatment ideas—primarily changes in diet. The Slaws discovered that Andrew had to avoid food that is fermented, aged, smoked, and highly processed. Instead, he had to eat fresh food and take supplements. Thanks to such treatments, 25-year-old Andrew has joined his sister Emily in college, and he experiences autonomic crisis symptoms only on very rare occasions.

With so much focus on Andrew’s condition over the years, Slaw says the family had little opportunity for vacations, which was what made the trip to Disney World so special when Andrew was age seven.

“The trip came through the Make-a-Wish Foundation “during some very dark days, and it was the first time we were able to get away together as a family,” Slaw says. “It was a profoundly life-changing experience. After all of the time battling, it was like the first ray of light that we had in a long time.”

Desiring that other families could experience the positive power of a wish, Slaw became a leader in the Make-a-Wish Foundation, both nationally and statewide. He even served two years as chairman of the board of the Make-a-Wish Foundation in Illinois.

Today, their son Andrew still has plenty of wishes to fulfill. According to Slaw, Andrew hopes to merge his love for art and comedy through animation, and he “continues to move forward with humor and a positive attitude. Andrew says his FD is just a nuisance he has to deal with, and that everybody has got something to deal with.

“He is, in every sense of the word, remarkable,” Slaw adds. “Whatever I have accomplished in my life and career pales in comparison to what he has endured—and overcome.”

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“HE is, in every sense of the word, remarkable,” Slaw adds. “Whatever I have accomplished in my life and career pales in comparison to what he has endured—and overcome.”
What's so appealing about Bollywood? Rini Bhattacharyya Mehta, a professor of comparative and world literatures, has a few thoughts on that topic. But consider this translated excerpt from a 1950s letter to the editor in the Russian magazine Sovetskii Ekran, from a reader who discovered Indian cinema: “Seriously, one is able to see beauty only in Indian films,” the letter states. “Life is gloomy, dull, tedious, but in Indian films one sees so much beauty, love, music! Indian films are incomparable among the cinemas!”

Kate Lyons, a graduate student in linguistics focusing on Indian studies Lyons would like to do in India, on modern developments in Hindi and English, for example.

For Mehta, the old letter drives to the heart of what makes Indian cinema so enduring and interesting. For a century it's found a way to thrive, despite everything from unfriendly government censors to politics and economic hard times. Now she sees it striking a chord with what may be the toughest crowd of all: college students.

As Mehta teaches her course, “Indian Cinema in Context,” for a third year, one of her biggest questions is of space—that is, whether she should find a classroom that can hold more people, because fire safety regulations seem to be the only thing keeping the course from growing beyond the 100 students who typically enroll. Each year the course has a long waiting list, with the only publicity coming by word of mouth amongst students themselves.

Mehta, who grew up in India, says the idea for the class arose from earlier courses, in which students displayed deep interest in Bollywood. Eventually she pitched the idea to teach the course in conjunction with the College of Media, which was excited about the idea, she says, because Indian cinema is the largest film industry in the world and nobody at Illinois had yet taught about the topic.

Has become the film industry today is the result of all these different interactions. And it has been indomitable. No one has been able to tame that.”

Through the 1920s, she says, about 80 percent of the films in India were exported from Hollywood. France, or elsewhere. The rise of films with sound in the early 1930s, however, meant the industry became defined not by big Hollywood-esque studios (which could not survive, and were largely gone by the 1990s) but by small independent producers and movie stars who could demand big paydays for their wildly popular appearances on screen.

Add to that another 60 or 70 years of development, along with the complexities of Indian culture, and the result is today's Bollywood, complete with dancing and music—and lots of it. Bollywood fans are willing to forgive a loose script, Mehta says, but they pay to see big stars in closely choreographed, spectacular performances. It's proven to be a compelling formula with worldwide appeal, with some Hollywood studios lately investing in Bollywood productions.

Kate Lyons, a graduate student in linguistics focusing on Indian culture, heard of Mehta's course from a friend and was able to land a spot in the class this fall. She says they watch a film each week, and then write about it within an economic and cultural context that they learn in the course. Until a Bollywood film director best known for the movie My Brother...Nikhil was scheduled to be visited.

The course has provided valuable information for the linguistics studies Lyons would like to do in India, on modern developments in Hindi and English, for example.

The relationship to first the British government and then the Indian government—frowned upon the Indian film industry, and subjected it to censorship, regulations, and heavy taxation. “The more contextual information you have, for me as a researcher, (that) helps me get more exposure to the references that I might miss just because, well, I don’t know about this movie,” she says. “So it’s definitely been helpful in that respect.”

Mehta is considering developing another course on what's happened in Indian cinema during the past decade or so, as Bollywood has exploded along with the growth of India's influence around the world. For now, however, there is still much to learn about the history of Indian cinema. “There are things going on in these films that we know nothing about,” Mehta says. “Modern India, like any space, is so full of contradictions. And where do those contradictions come from? Is it of course from colonial history and all that. This is something I believe that students like. They get the back story, which they wouldn't get otherwise.”

By Dave Evensen
Core Beliefs
Alum Founds Service Organization and Discovers the Missing Piece of Multiculturalism

By Doug Peterson

It sounds like the beginning of a bad joke. “A man walks into a bar and meets a Catholic worker, a Buddhist leader, and a Muslim grandmother . . . .”

But it’s no joke.

For Eboo Patel, it really did take the Catholic Worker House, the Dalai Lama, and his own Muslim grandmother to rediscover the roots of his own religion. These three influences also inspired Patel to found the Interfaith Youth Core, a religious service organization that can be found on 500 American campuses. And it’s still growing.

Patel, a 1996 LAS alumnus in sociology, says he was an angry young activist on the University of Illinois campus when he first came to campus in 1993, he threw himself into various service organizations, such as the Men’s Emergency Shelter and the Center for Women in Transition. When he came to campus in 1993, he threw himself into various service organizations, such as the Men’s Emergency Shelter and the Center for Women in Transition.

And it was there he encountered the roots of his own religion. Patel was born in Bombay, India, but grew up in the Chicago area, attending high school in Glen Ellyn, where he was made keenly aware of his brown skin and cultural differences. He developed a heart for the underdog, and that’s where he was made keenly aware of his brown skin and cultural differences.

He noticed that serving others gave him the idea of bringing people together from different faiths around the common core values of service. The movement even includes those from secular faiths, such as secular humanists.

Although the trip to India gave birth to the idea for an interfaith service organization, the Interfaith Youth Core was not formalized until after he received his PhD as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in 2002. During his years at Oxford, he led service projects in Sri Lanka, South Africa, and India, laying the groundwork for the organization.

Interfaith Youth Core trains college students on how to lead interfaith service projects on their respective campuses. It holds interfaith Leadership Institutes in four different parts of the country each year, attracting well over a hundred students to each event. Diversity is also evident throughout the leadership team, for Patel’s co-founder was Jewish and their first full-time staff person was an evangelical Christian.

Patel says he is impressed with the work being done by the group on the U of I campus, Interfaith in Action, which coordinated Champaign-Urbana’s largest interfaith project ever. In 2010, they organized 5,000 people who packaged 1 million meals for earthquake victims in Haiti.

His grandfather proceeded to inform him that she had been taking in abused women for 45 years—more than twice as long as Patel had been alive at the time. When he pressed her for why she took in women, she said, “I am a Muslim. This is what Muslims do.”

Patel says they do not expect people to check their beliefs at the door when they participate in an interfaith service project; students are encouraged to talk about their beliefs, as long as it is done in a healthy, non-hostile way.

Today, Interfaith Youth Core has 35 staff members, a $4.5 million budget, and a footprint on about 500 college campuses in the United States. Patel also speaks on campuses and many other venues, such as the Clinton Global Initiative and the Nobel Peace Prize Forum.

Along the way, he even received encouragement from the Dalai Lama. During his Oxford years, Patel’s mentor arranged a meeting with the Dalai Lama. After Patel laid out his vision for interfaith service, the Dalai Lama smiled, then pointed to his secretary and himself and said, “We are not young. Can we still join?”

As Patel writes in his book, Acts of Faith, the Dalai Lama “sent us away laughing and floating and believing. No joke.”
Chemists, Vets, and Dogs Work Together for Cancer Cure

By Doug Peterson

When Kim Kliethermes noticed their dog, Hank, limping just before Christmas of 2012, she thought he had reinjured his right rear leg. After all, Hank had ruptured a ligament in the same leg three years earlier and had it repaired at the University of Illinois Veterinary Teaching Hospital. But when her local veterinarian in the Peoria area x-rayed the leg, he saw a shadow in the bone.

Hank, a 10-year-old black Labrador, had osteosarcoma—bone cancer.

The local vet immediately referred Kim and Craig Kliethermes back to the U of I, and over the past year their dog Hank has become more than man’s best friend; he has become humanity’s best friend by becoming part of two important drug trials. One of the trials is testing a promising new drug—discovered at Illinois—that could potentially help thousands of people suffering from cancer.

The drug, PAC-1, was discovered in the mid-2000s in the lab run by Paul Hergenrother, an LAS professor of chemistry. Not long after he discovered PAC-1, Hergenrother began a unique collaboration with Timothy Fan, a U of I veterinary oncologist. They began using PAC-1 with dogs that had already developed cancer and had no options left—dogs such as Hank. Illinois researchers have also been conducting tests in a collaborative study at Johns Hopkins University, and the results have been dramatic.

“My students have found that PAC-1 has a tremendous ability to synergize with other cancer drugs,” Hergenrother says. “That is what really got us excited about this compound.”

Another major benefit is that PAC-1 can penetrate the “blood-brain barrier” to reach brain tumors—a rare quality. Currently, the only approved drug that can get to tumors in the brain is Temozolomide, or TMZ, but if testing continues to go well, PAC-1 is poised to become the second.

With such success in the initial trials, human trials with PAC-1 are scheduled to begin in the summer of 2014. The potential of PAC-1 also led Hergenrother and Fan to team together to establish a Champaign-based company, Vanquish Oncology, to develop the drug. In addition, an anonymous investor has contributed $2 million to move the drug into human trials.

But how does PAC-1 work?

Normally, our body is programmed to kill off cancer cells, but as Hergenrother notes, “Some cancers are notorious for their ability to evade the cell death process.” PAC-1 confronts this problem head-on by activating cell death, or apoptosis, in cancer cells.

“It kills cancer cells fairly poetically, but not adjacent normal tissue,” he says. When Carle Hospital in Champaign supplied him with colon cancer tissue and healthy adjacent tissue, Hergenrother confirmed that PAC-1 goes after the cancer cells with a vengeance, but spares the healthy “margin tissue.”

Veterinary oncologist Fan says that in his collaboration with Hergenrother, they have so far used PAC-1 on about 20 dogs that had developed cancer. In 2010, they published the results with the first six dogs, and four of the animals showed a positive clinical effect—either stabilizing or shrinking the tumors.

According to Kim Kliethermes, when Hank was first diagnosed with bone cancer a year ago, U of I vets added him to a trial with Zometa—a drug that increases bone density. After that, Hank’s limp disappeared, he was not in any observable pain, and he beat the odds, for he was expected to live only about two to six months.

Another major benefit is that PAC-1 can penetrate the “blood-brain barrier” to reach brain tumors—a rare quality. Currently, the only approved drug that can get to tumors in the brain is Temozolomide, or TMZ, but if testing continues to go well, PAC-1 is poised to become the second.

With such success in the initial trials, human trials with PAC-1 are scheduled to begin in the summer of 2014. The potential of PAC-1 also led Hergenrother and Fan to team together to establish a Champaign-based company, Vanquish Oncology, to develop the drug. In addition, an anonymous investor has contributed $2 million to move the drug into human trials.

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However, about nine months after the diagnostic, Illinois vets found that he had a small mass in his lung; and when they restaged one month later, they found that the mass was growing. Cancer had entered his lung.

“I was sobbing uncontrollably when the doctor gave me the news, and he teared up as well,” Kliethermes says. “For him to be that compassionate, it meant the world to me.”

After the Kliethermes family received the bad news, they enrolled Hank in a second drug trial—an eight-week U of I trial with PAC-1. However, when Hank first began the PAC-1 trial, he experienced some chemotherapy-related side effects, including vomiting and loss of appetite for an entire weekend, Kliethermes says.

Illinois veterinarians theorized that his therapy-associated toxicity meant that PAC-1 was making chemotherapy more potent—the synergistic effect in action. Because PAC-1 had increased the treatment potency, they scaled back the dosage of his chemotherapy.

Other than that first weekend of discomfort, Kliethermes says the good news is that Hank has remained his usual happy-go-lucky self. “Labradors have such winning personalities,” she says. “Hank loves other animals. He loves people. He loves everybody. Our world is going to be a lot grayer when we lose him.”

But as hard as it is, they also see the contribution their dog is making. “We want to contribute to the science in any way we can, as long as it doesn’t reduce the quality of life for my dog to the point that it’s not worth it,” she says. Their family chose to help because they have seen the ravages of cancer firsthand. Craig’s mother died from breast cancer about a year and half ago.

“If my dog somehow contributes to an effective treatment method for humans down the road, imagine what a legacy that would be,” Kim Kliethermes says. “It’s exciting that Hank gets to be a part of that.”
Geology Field Camp Earns Reputation As One of the Best in the Country

When it comes to learning how the landscape was formed, nothing compares to being out among the dry creek beds and mountain lions of the American West to study rock formations. Illinois has known this for decades, and now it’s geology field camp is being recognized as one of the best in the nation.

Each summer, a caravan of Illinois students and faculty drives some 1,400 miles west from Urbana-Champaign to Park City, Utah, where they spend the next six weeks immersed in study at the Wasatch-Utah Summer Field Camp. Living out of a dorm-like hostel, they spend their days and nights observing, sketching, and mapping some of the most geologically diverse regions in the country, if not the world.

Within driving distance of the camp are gold mines, oil fields, active faults, and a variety of rock formations that hold the Earth’s history. In the morning, students might examine debris dumped by a flood into a desert basin, and in the afternoon they can climb through an alpine meadow to see frozen lava left by a volcano 35 million years ago.

“Basically we see geological structures through the entire sequence of time starting about two billion years ago to the present,” says Michael Stewart, professor of geology who has accompanied students on the trip in recent years. “There are major events that occur in Earth history during this span of time, and evidence of these events are preserved in the rocks that we find in this area. Places that the students have read about in textbooks exist here.”

Field camp is required for most Illinois geology majors. Wasatch-Utah is run jointly with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Michigan State University, and University of Minnesota-Duluth, with students and faculty from all four universities attending at the same time and working together each year. Illinois alumnus Ed Franklin (BS ’56, geology), a former geologist with Standard Oil (now ExxonMobil), generously helps Illinois students pay for the course through the Franklin Summer Field Camp Endowment.

For the past several years, Illinois alumnus Kurt Burmeister (PhD ’93, English; PhD candidate, educational policy studies) has served as co-director of the camp, and program enhancements that he introduced led to this year’s Geological Society of America ExxonMobil Field Camp Award, which gapped the camp a $10,000 prize for field safety awareness and technical excellence. The award is recognized as the product of many years of giving students hands-on training to assume roles in oil, mining, and other industries.

There’s less need now to have students memorize a lot of things because so much information is available electronically,” says Tom Johnson, head of the Department of Geology. “Problem-solving is therefore the most important part of our undergraduate program, and field camp is key to that.”

Illinois joined the Wasatch-Utah camp in 1985, after having run a summer camp it’s own out of Sheridan, Wyo., for a few decades. The goal is the same, however. Each day during camp, the roughly 50-70 participants head out the door by 7:30 a.m. to clamber over the remote and rugged Utah terrain for measurements, rock and fossil identifications, and plotting data on maps—

...and all while taking care to keep hydrated in a landscape inhabited by scorpions, rattlesnakes, mosquitos, and mountain lions (the latter of which has been spotted only once during the past decade, though signs of the cat’s presence is common at nearby sheep ranges). The students return to the ski lodge in time for dinner, and they spend their evenings reviewing and correcting their work, writing reports, and preparing graphical images based on what they observed in the cliffs, valleys, and mountainsides surrounding them. By being immersed in the field, organizers say, students have their situation about how to predict what’s below ground given what they can see from above.

In addition to studying the land near Park City, the students also embark on longer field trips to places such as gold fields in Nevada, Antelope Island in the Great Salt Lake, the San Rafael Swell of central Utah, the Grand Tetons, and other features in this geologist’s paradise.

“Basically the purpose is to allow students to take what they learned in all of their courses and apply it to the real world,” says Stephen Marshak, professor of geology and head of the School of Earth, Society, and the Environment, who taught at the field camp for several years. “This is the stage in their career where they change from being geology students into geologists, because at the end of field camp they are able to look at rock exposures, look at landscapes, and understand what they’re telling us about Earth’s history.”

The question foremost in students’ minds, of course, is whether all the work is worth it, and by all accounts, it is. Aside from the deep knowledge students gain at field camp, many come away knowing which direction they want their career to go. Some even come back with job offers. Marshak says companies until the camp, and some graduating seniors land new jobs on the spot.

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JOIN LAS ALUMNI AND FRIENDS for an exclusive event at Trump International Hotel & Tower in the heart of Chicago. Enjoy panoramic views of Lake Michigan and the Chicago River while partaking of an extensive brunch buffet in the Grand Ballroom. Here is just a sampling of items to be offered:

- Individual yogurt and mixed berry parfaits topped with granola
- Yukon Gold potato and egg salad with crisp bacon
- Mr. Trump’s bibb wedge with Stilton, bacon, grape tomatoes, egg, and red onion
- Challah French toast with Grand Marnier and honey
- Smoked salmon and cream cheese

Executive chef Michael Fiddler, who previously worked with five-star chefs at luxury hotels such as the Ritz-Carlton in New Orleans and the Mandarin Oriental in Washington, D.C., will share the secrets to preparing his signature dish—duck confit roesti with poached eggs.

We’ll also learn more about the functional and beautiful corridor of public space along the Chicago River, a long-term work in progress in the city’s architectural landscape. An associate from Ross Barney Architects, developers of the Riverwalk Wabash Plaza, will provide an overview of the project and its planned expansion.

Registration fee: $90/person
Deadline for registration: Saturday, February 8, 2014
Register online or call toll-free: (888) 333-9644 or (217) 300-8575