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(l-r), Dwight Braswell, Tiffany Peng and André Keeton, of the Class of 2010.

HAIL AND BEST WISHES TO THE CLASS OF 2010

By Carla Capizzi

Behind every name listed in a commencement program is a success story about how each graduate reached for and obtained his or her degree. Here we profile three outstanding graduates.

A Musical Multitasker — Tiffany Peng, B.S., Newark College of Arts and Sciences

If you can't find Tiffany Peng on the Newark campus, go to the Rutgers Stadium on the Busch campus; she'll be the bio major with the trumpet performing with the Rutgers Marching Band.

Tiffany has divided her time at Rutgers between her love of biology and love of music, especially jazz trumpet, managing to earn a 3.9 GPA while also performing with the Marching Band, Pep Band, Jazz Ensemble and Concert Band. Despite an auto accident last year that temporarily slowed her academic and musical activities, Tiffany still managed to complete four years of college in three years, all while participating in the Honors College. What's more, Tiffany has already been accepted at two medical schools, further moving her toward her goal of becoming a cardiologist.

Tiffany says she thrived in the "very nurturing environment" of the Newark campus and credits that environment, as well as a supportive faculty, with helping her through her most difficult semester following the car accident.

A Traveling Man of Letters — André Keeton, Ph.D., Graduate School-Newark

It's a long way from Texas to Newark, both geographically and culturally. It's also quite a journey from prosecuting defendants accused of sex crimes, to teaching college students while completing a Ph.D.

André Keeton was a Texas boy to the bone. He had two degrees in 1998 – a bachelor of arts and a master's in public policy from the University of Texas-Austin – and was still in Austin, winding up his law degree, when recruiters from the Bronx District Attorney's office came to Texas. André, who already loved trial work, interviewed for – and won – a position. "I never looked back," he recalls. The New York lifestyle was "a bit of a change," but one he likes. "There are so many different types of people, and each brings his or her own viewpoints and insights."

After seven years, André was ready for new challenges; he found the urban systems Ph.D.

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A Pillar of Rutgers Says Farewell

By Carla Capizzi

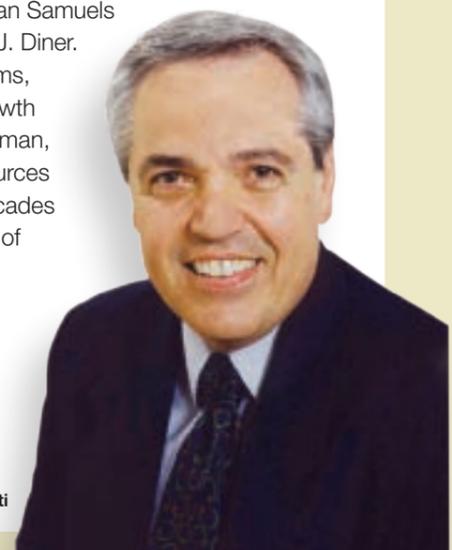
This spring Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration Gene A. Vincenti will begin a new life chapter: retirement with his wife, Regina, at his side. But his impact on the campus will be felt long after he is gone.

Vinenti arrived on campus in 1967, part of the first generation in his family to get a college education, the fourth son of an Italian immigrant father. Most of today's buildings did not exist, a few were under construction, and the gravel parking lots became mudflats when it rained. After earning a bachelor of arts degree, Vincenti remained on campus to earn a master's in business administration.

His Rutgers work life began in New Brunswick in 1973, but he returned to Newark in 1976 as assistant provost under Provost James Young. Over the decades, Vincenti was also a key member of the leadership teams of Provost Norman Samuels and Chancellor Steven J. Diner. As part of the three teams, he helped spur "the growth of Rutgers-Newark's human, fiscal and physical resources over the last several decades in service to the people of New Jersey," he notes.

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Gene A. Vincenti



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Renowned Scientist, Author and Playwright Carl Djerassi to Receive Honorary Degree

By Ferlanda Fox Nixon

An Honorary Doctor of Science degree will be bestowed upon Carl Djerassi during this year's commencement ceremony for the Newark College of Arts and Sciences and University College-Newark. Djerassi also will deliver the commencement address.

Djerassi, emeritus professor of chemistry at Stanford University, is a renowned scientist, educator, author, playwright and philanthropist who has achieved excellence in both science and the arts. He was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1923, and moved to the U.S. in the 1930s. He attended high school and junior college in Newark. After receiving his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin, he worked in the private sector before becoming a professor.

Perhaps best known as the first to synthesize a steroid oral contraceptive – norethindrone, commonly known as “the Pill,” for which he received the National Medal of Science in 1973, he also has

conducted path-breaking work in the areas of steroid anti-inflammatory agents and antihistamines. He is credited with pioneering research in synthetic organic chemistry and medicinal chemistry, and made contributions in the insect control field for which he received the National Medal of Technology in 1991. He has published more than 1,200 articles and seven books on organic chemistry.

For the past 20 years, Djerassi has turned to fiction writing, mostly in the genre of “science-in-fiction” novels and “science-in-theater” plays that examine the human side of scientists and the conflicts they face in their quest for scientific knowledge, personal

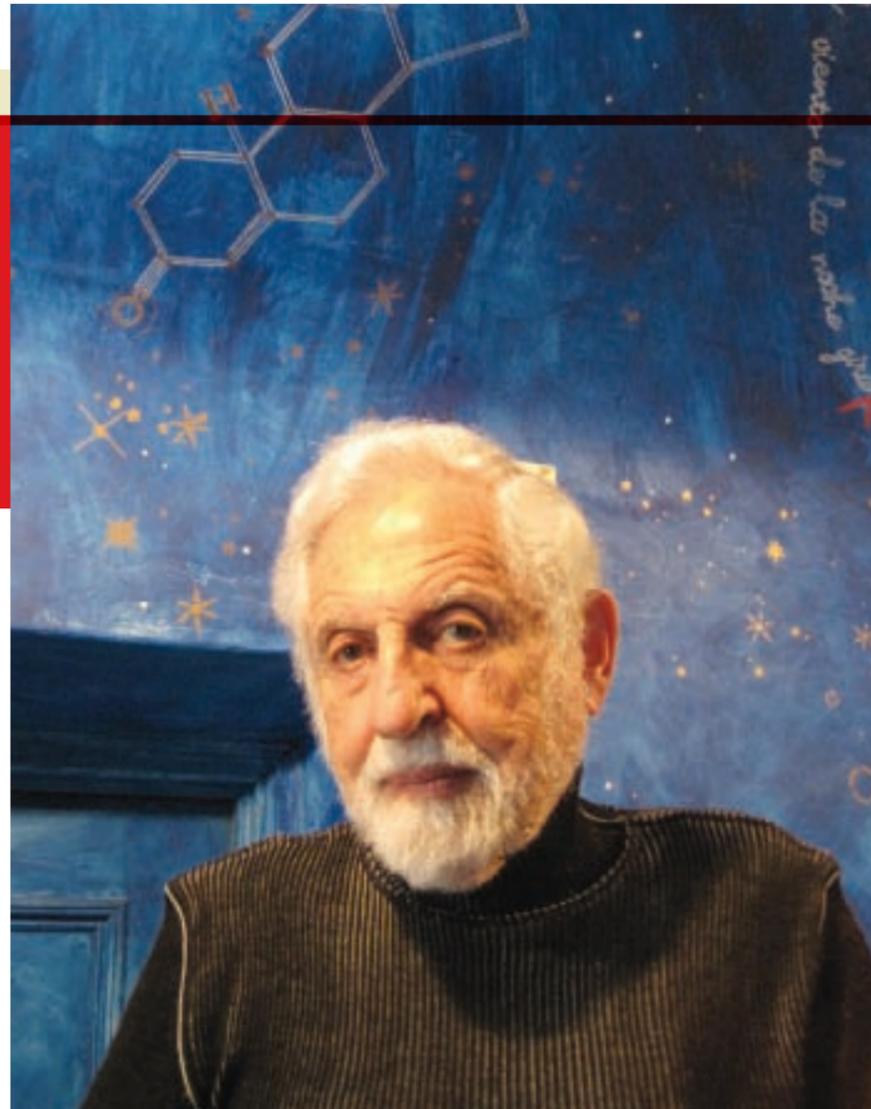


Photo: Kristen McCalab

recognition and financial reward. His works on the culture and behavior of scientists include five highly successful novels and eight plays that have been presented on stages from New York, to London, to Tokyo.

The recipient of many honors and awards and more than 20 honorary degrees, Djerassi was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 1978. An Austrian postage stamp honoring him was issued in 2004.

Former Governor Christine Todd Whitman Presents SPAA with Scholarship Gifts to Advance Women Studying Public Service

By Ferlanda Fox Nixon

The School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) has received two very generous gifts from former New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman and her husband, John Whitman. The largest gift, in the amount of \$100,000, establishes the Christine Todd Whitman Endowed Scholarship. The second gift of \$5,500 establishes the Christine Todd Whitman Annual Scholarship. Both gifts will be used to provide financial assistance to women enrolled at SPAA.

“John and I are passionate about giving back to the community and especially committed to supporting women and women’s education,” noted Whitman. “Study after study has shown that advancing women is one of the best things any society can do, and we’re pleased to play a small part in that quest at Rutgers.”

Whitman served as the 50th governor of New Jersey from 1994-2001. She was the first, and to date, only female elected governor in New Jersey. A champion of diversity, Whitman, as governor, appointed the New Jersey Supreme Court’s first African-American justice and female chief justice. She also appointed New Jersey’s first female attorney general.

“We are sincerely grateful to the Whitmans for their generosity and desire to further the educational aspirations of our students,” said Marc Holzer, dean of SPAA. “These gifts will allow us to continue to attract talented women interested in pursuing careers in public service. Who knows ... it’s very possible a recipient of the Whitmans’ beneficence may one day find herself elevated to the rank of governor of the State of New Jersey.”

Governor Christine Todd Whitman



**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY,
NEWARK**

**2010
COMMENCEMENT-
AT-A-GLANCE**

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commencement](http://www.newark.rutgers.edu/commencement)

**Rutgers Business School
Monday, May 17, 10 a.m.**

New Jersey Performing Arts Center
Speaker: to be announced

**Newark College of Arts and
Sciences and University College
Monday, May 17, 2 p.m.**

New Jersey Performing Arts Center
Speaker: Carl Djerassi, writer and
emeritus professor of chemistry at
Stanford University

College of Nursing

Tuesday, May 18, 10 a.m.

Golden Dome Athletic Center
Speaker: Beverly Louise Malone, RN, FAAN,
chief executive officer of the National League
for Nursing and Rutgers-Newark alumna
(College of Nursing, 1972)

**Graduate School-Newark and School
of Public Affairs & Administration**

Tuesday, May 18, 2 p.m.

Golden Dome Athletic Center
Speaker: Glenn Shafer, Board of Governors
Professor of accounting, business ethics
and information systems

School of Criminal Justice

Friday, May 21, 10 a.m.

Golden Dome Athletic Center
Speaker: to be announced

School of Law

Friday, May 28, 10 a.m.

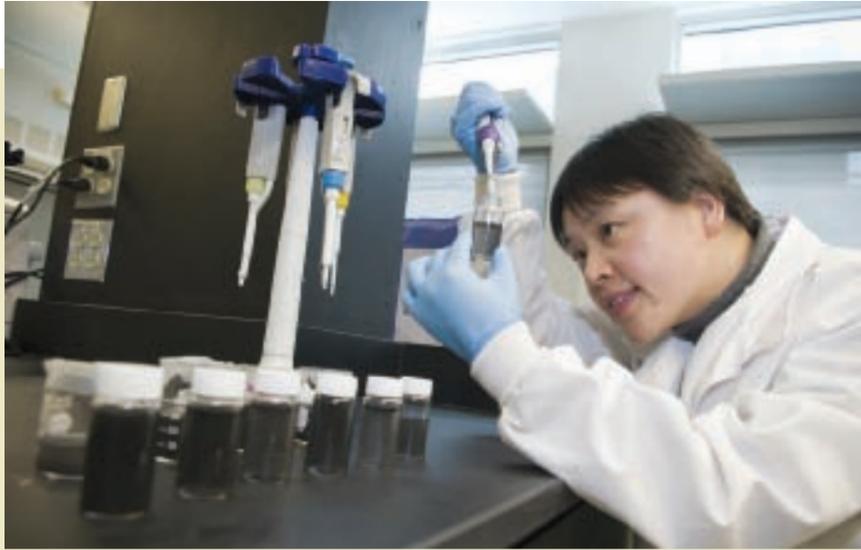
New Jersey Performing Arts Center
Speaker: The Honorable Stuart Rabner,
chief justice of the New Jersey Supreme
Court



www.rnphotos.blogspot.com

GlassBook Project — New Class, New Collection





Nanochemist Huixin He, recipient of the 2009 Rutgers Presidential Fellowship for Teaching Excellence, works on some samples in her lab.

A highly regarded nanotechnology researcher whose focus is on practical applications, He teaches “Analytical Chemistry” for undergraduates, “Electrochemical Analytical Chemistry” for graduate students, and a new course she developed – “Scanning Probe Microscopy–Nanoscience and Nanotechnology” – for seniors and graduate students.

Asked about her teaching methods, she responds, “I think the most important thing for teaching is enthusiasm and inspiring others; I try to connect the theoretical work with practical applications students can relate to.” For example, her current research is focused on developing nanotechnology for early cancer diagnosis and for more targeted cancer treatments that eliminate the problems of side effects and drug resistance.

As reported in the December 21, 2009 issue of *Small*, He and her co-researchers, including Tamara Minko from the Rutgers School of Pharmacy, have designed nanomaterials that allowed for the targeted, simultaneous delivery of a chemical drug to destroy cancer cells and a genetic drug to prevent drug resistance.

“The drugs are loaded into the pores of silica nanoparticles and we modified the surface so the chemical drug can only be released inside the cancer cells; this novel drug release mechanism can dramatically eliminate side effects associated with anticancer drugs to normal tissues,” explains He.

In related research, He and her co-researchers have developed nanotubes that hold the potential of detecting and destroying an aggressive form of breast cancer. Her other research focuses on the development of nanotechnology as a molecular diagnostic tool for Parkinson’s disease, and as devices to detect the presence of chemical warfare agents for homeland security and to measure iron ions in remote ocean areas for the study of climate change.

Huixin He Presented with Rutgers Presidential Fellowship for Teaching Excellence

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan

Nanochemist Huixin He deals in the world of the small to provide solutions for a wide array of areas ranging from cancer detection and treatment, to environmental protection, to homeland defense. She also is a well respected

teacher known for her ability to make challenging scientific topics understandable and relevant to her students, for which she was awarded the 2009 Rutgers Presidential Fellowship for Teaching Excellence.

On the PLAZA

Showcasing Faculty Scholarship

On April 22, 12 Rutgers researchers will gather in the Paul Robeson Campus Center as part of a prestigious showcase of faculty scholarship. The dozen, representing all eight schools at Rutgers in Newark, will be challenged to condense their research into presentations lasting only several minutes each, as part of Chancellor’s Research Day.

The program evolved from the 2002 Norman Samuels’ Research Day, a tribute upon Samuels’ retirement as provost, recognizing his role in developing R-N as a strong research center during his two decades as provost. His successor, Steven J. Diner, has continued the tradition, embracing it as an opportunity for faculty to share their work with colleagues and students, and “open the door to collaboration.”

The annual Chancellor’s Research Day will take place April 22, from 2 – 5 p.m., in the Paul Robeson Campus Center Multipurpose Room. It is open to the campus community. Vice Dean Ronald Chen, Rutgers School of Law-Newark, and Asela Laguna-Diaz, professor, Classical & Modern Languages and Literatures, will act as moderators as faculty members present research in disciplines ranging from the sciences, to the arts, to public affairs and law.

Help for Haiti

The Rutgers community has responded on a number of fronts to assist the people of Haiti following the January 12 earthquake that left thousands homeless and destroyed much of the capital city.



Arthur B. Powell (left photo, right), chair of the Urban Education Department, guides a professional development workshop for teachers in Haiti. (Right photo) Haitian students learn mathematics while playing with colorful rods.

Located in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, the Haiti Relief Center is collecting relief supplies, as well as cash donations, from the campus community and greater public. Clothing, first aid supplies, and toiletry/hygiene products can be brought to the center from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Cash contributions are being directed to the American Red Cross, UNICEF and Doctors Without Borders. The New Jersey for Haiti organization is handling distribution of material donations.

The campus center is also being made available, free of charge, for Haitian fund-raising events by outside organizations. Meanwhile, several campus organizations have been conducting fund-raising efforts.

Leading one of those efforts is Arthur B. Powell, associate professor and chair of the Urban Education Department, who is helping to raise money to rebuild one of the grade schools destroyed in Port-au-Prince. Powell is co-founder of Elevating Learning Above Teaching (ELAT). Since 2008 he and others from ELAT have taught teacher development

sessions in mathematics to elementary school teachers and administrators in Port-au-Prince at the Bon Patriote K-8 school, which was completely destroyed by the quake. The institutions that partner with ELAT on its teacher development programs are also partnering in the project to rebuild the school: Educational Solutions Worldwide Inc., Rutgers University, LTL Strategies, and Mona Foundation.

For more information on the campus’s Haiti Relief efforts, go to www.newark.rutgers.edu/haiti/.

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program at Rutgers, which incorporated what he already knew in law, public affairs and criminal justice, with a new field: urban educational policy. His teaching fellowship clinched his decision to start a new career as a college professor.

An Actor Who Means Business — Dwight Braswell, B.S., Rutgers Business School

Dwight Braswell’s life could never be called dull. He is

one of the stars of HBO’s “The Pacific,” Tom Hanks’ and Steven Spielberg’s latest WWII miniseries, portraying PFC Steve Evanson (<http://tinyurl.com/yb2eaf8>).

Dwight also sings with the rock group Mere and writes music (one of Mere’s songs was part of the soundtrack for the 2008 Olympics), and has appeared in numerous commercials. A “military brat,” Dwight sang in churches at military bases around the world, at services conducted by his father, an Air Force chaplain, now retired.

Dwight took classes part-time this spring to care for his son Noah, born last September, while his wife Maritza, a recent graduate of Rutgers School of Law-Newark, worked full-time. The couple moved from Colorado to this area in 2004 so Dwight could concentrate on his acting career. He has done just that, but also finished his last two years of college at Rutgers-Newark, majoring in management, after being impressed by the “great learning environment” he experienced whenever he visited Maritza on campus.

MILESTONES

School of Law's Clinical Program Proudly Celebrates Its 40th Anniversary

By Ferlanda Fox Nixon

"[A] lawyer without books would be like a workman without tools." *Thomas Jefferson*

Given the complexities of today's global society, books alone fall significantly short of converting law students into well-trained lawyers. Contemporary law students need more than written materials. They require a comprehensive education that includes practice-oriented, hands-on, skills-training opportunities.

Recognizing this necessity, the Rutgers School of Law-Newark established its first law clinic 40 years ago, growing from two to seven clinics: Constitutional Litigation (1970), Urban Legal (1970), Environmental Law (currently inactive, 1985), Federal Tax Law (1995), Special Education (1995), Community Law (1997), and Child Advocacy (2000). Through it all, Professor Frank Askin, founding director of the Constitutional Litigation Clinic, has been there from the start.

Taking pride in the evolution of the program, particularly the development of the Constitutional Litigation Clinic, Askin notes, "Unequivocally, clinics are an integral part of the law school curriculum. They provide invaluable experiential education not otherwise available in the classroom."

In a law school clinic, students are immersed in the actual representation of real clients with real legal problems. Under the close supervision of experienced attorneys and faculty members, students begin to acquire essential lawyering skills and develop a sense of legal ethics and professional responsibility.

Clinics also offer students an opportunity to serve their community. For example, in a ruling recently issued



(l-r), Rob Michail, Matthew Colman, Nadi Rollins, Nicholas Parr, Professor Frank Askin and Nichole Siegel

in a lawsuit commenced by Clinical Professor Penny Venetis, co-director of the Constitutional Litigation Clinic, the judge sided with Venetis' clients and determined that computerized voting machines must be reevaluated to ascertain their accuracy and reliability. In that case, Rutgers law students conducted research, helped write portions of the brief, and assisted with preparing expert witnesses, among many other tasks.

What Askin finds most rewarding about his involvement with the clinical program? "It's been an honor to train a new generation of lawyers who are helping to change the world."

John Floreen Reflects on 30 Years Conducting the Rutgers University Chorus

By Kathleen Brunet Eagan



Photo: Arthur Paxton

When John Floreen arrived at Rutgers University in Newark in 1979 to serve as conductor of the Rutgers University Chorus, he was presented with a major challenge. The chorus, then 32 years old, was lacking one critical component. "There were almost no students for me to conduct," recalls Floreen.

Today, it is difficult to imagine the 50-voice chorus in such a state. Not only did Floreen recruit students, he developed the chorus into what has been described as a "veritable United Nations... with huge musical talent." Under his leadership, and with the assistance of Assistant Conductor Susan McAdoo, the chorus has delighted audiences in and around Newark for three decades, been on seven international tours and released five CD recordings.

The first international tour to Germany and the Czech Republic was arranged to coincide with the chorus's 50th anniversary in 1997. Since then, the chorus has performed in the Netherlands, France, England, Scotland, Wales and Italy, gaining glowing reviews

along the way. In May 2011, the chorus will perform in Spain.

Floreen, the recipient of numerous fellowships and grants, including three Fulbright Scholar awards for music research in Austria, also has taken what he has learned abroad and incorporated that into the classroom and choral rehearsals. Over the years, he has expanded the choral repertoire, too, as a result of the international tours.

In anticipation of the upcoming concert tour in Spain, the chorus will be singing three works by Spanish composers at this semester's spring concerts. Those concerts take place April 25 at St. Mary's Church in Newark at 3 p.m., May 2 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Montclair at 5 p.m., and May 3 in the Bradley Hall Lounge at 11:30 a.m.

To read more about Floreen's reflections as conductor of the Rutgers University Chorus, go to www.newark.rutgers.edu/chorus.



www.youtube.com/user/RutgersInNewark

Rutgers University Chorus Rehearsal, Italy Tour 2009 "Cantate Domino"



A Pillar of Rutgers... from page 1

Vincenti is especially proud of his contributions toward the "development of a network of green spaces, including the Norman Samuels Plaza and the New Street Plaza, that have helped to create the kind of welcoming environment so needed for students, faculty, staff and visitors to this major public urban research campus."

Vincenti also played a key role in the Council for Higher Education in Newark (CHEN) and its efforts to market Newark as a college town.

A celebration of Vincenti's career at Rutgers will be held on May 6; for information, please contact Cheryl Jackson at 973.353.5541.

KEEP CONNECTED

Connect is a quarterly newsletter published by the Office of Communications. Your comments are welcome.

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