It’s almost impossible to tour the city of Newark and not come into contact with some part of John Cotton Dana’s legacy. Whether you are attending a museum exhibit, viewing the vast collection at the public library, or taking a class at Rutgers-Newark, it’s a good bet that you can thank Dana for the experience.

Dana is renowned for being a Newark visionary and is widely recognized as one of the most famous public librarians in United States history. But he also is noted for having the vision and commitment to make cultural events, the arts and education accessible to all individuals – regardless of race or socioeconomic status.

Dana’s vision helped shape Newark cornerstones such as the public library, Newark Museum and Dana College, which served as the predecessor to what is now known as the Faculty of Arts and Sciences-Newark (FAS-N). Dana College was one of five Newark institutions that helped form what is known today as Rutgers-Newark. Since Dana College’s formation in 1930, FAS-N has grown to become the largest college at Rutgers-Newark.

...continued on page 4
Penny Venetis was in her second year teaching at the Constitutional Litigation Clinic when she began getting calls about abuses being committed against those seeking political asylum in the U.S. That was 1996. Nine years later, a new precedent in international human rights law now exists as a result of the clinic and the involvement of nearly 150 Rutgers-Newark School of Law students. In November, U.S. Senior District Judge Dickinson R. Debevoise ruled that abuses committed in the U.S. against political asylum seekers can be considered human rights violations under international law.

DETAINED IN ELIZABETH, the asylum seekers, mostly from Africa and South Asia, were denied such basic necessities as toilet paper, given rotten food to eat and thrown into feces-infected isolation chambers. Many had been detained at the border and did not fall under the protection of U.S. law. So the case submitted on their behalf, Jama v. United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, et al, maintained they should be protected under international law.

“We work with the worst of the worst to let them know we want to help,” says Kelling.

NEW PRECEDENT SET IN HUMAN RIGHTS LAW
BY KATHLEEN BRUNET EAGAN

Over the next five years, New Jersey will release about 70,000 people from its prisons. Most will end up back in the cities where they came from. Few will have any job prospects.

Fortunately, New Jersey also has a model for helping ex-offenders to find a better way.

Formed in 2001, The Police Institute at Rutgers-Newark has worked with 300 ex-offenders, and only 23 percent have ended up back in prison, says George L. Kelling, professor at the School of Criminal Justice and chair of the institute.

The institute’s mission is to reduce violent crime in urban areas by bringing together municipalities, criminal justice agencies, and religious and social service groups. Using crime and other data, those most likely to become offenders or victims of violent crimes are targeted and presented with a choice: they can work with the social service agencies to attain a productive life style or get involved in crime and have the system come down on them.

“We work with the worst of the worst to let them know we want to help,” says Kelling.

Known as the Greater Newark Safer Cities Initiative, the program is being replicated in Camden and Trenton. Kelling and Michael Wagers, executive director of the institute, also are working with the City of Los Angeles on a similar initiative.

When New Jersey releases its 70,000, most will be “maxed-out,” meaning they will neither be on parole nor probation, making them harder to reach.

To connect with them, the institute plans to undertake a number of strategies, including one suggested by a group of ex-offenders. Known as “In Reach,” that effort consists of ex-offenders going to those places ex-offenders are most likely to congregate to let them know they have a choice, says Lori Scott-Pickens, director of community outreach.

“These are people who have shifted their focus,” says Scott-Pickens. “They want to use their experience to help others.”

DETAINED IN ELIZABETH, the asylum seekers, mostly from Africa and South Asia, were denied such basic necessities as toilet paper, given rotten food to eat and thrown into feces-infected isolation chambers.

“‘The case,’” says Venetis, now associate director of the clinic, “success fully has established that human rights travel with you no matter where you go.”

In its first five years, The Police Institute has developed an effective model for reducing crime in urban areas that is now being replicated in Trenton, Camden and Los Angeles.
Business School Receives $2 Million Gift

CIT Group Inc. and Albert Gamper Jr., a Rutgers-Newark graduate, current chairman of the Rutgers University Board of Governors and former chairman and CEO of CIT, have presented the Business School with matching $1 million gifts for an endowed chair in business.

“This endowed chair will provide a lasting tribute to Al Gamper’s leadership, generosity and unwavering support of Rutgers University,” said Rutgers University President Richard McCormick. “We are grateful to Al and to his colleagues at CIT for creating this chair, which will contribute to the continued excellence of business education at Rutgers.”

Gamper received his B.A. in economics from Rutgers-Newark in 1966. He joined CIT in 1987, serving as president and CEO until last year. Under his leadership, CIT grew to become one of the world’s leading diversified finance organizations.

“A business school is an appropriate investment for a business leader,” said Gamper, in presenting the gift. “If it encourages others to put their money into a chair for the school, I think it could make a big difference.”

R-N Research Featured in Nature

When a baby kicks from within the womb, the mother may joke that the baby is destined to become the world’s next great soccer player. But such movements, besides being wondrous and playful, also may hold the key to how the brain develops in its earliest stages, according to researchers at Rutgers-Newark.

In a paper published in the Dec. 9, 2004 issue of Nature, György Buzsáki, professor of neuroscience; Rustem Khazipov, visiting professor from the Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale, Marseilles, France; and their research team contend that critical information may be provided to the sensory areas of the developing brain through an individual’s own movements rather than just sensory inputs, as was previously believed.

By studying the relationship between movements and neuronal activity in the cerebral cortex in developing rats, the researchers determined that information provided to the developing brain by random movements are critical for creating the proper representation of the body in the sensory cortex. Additionally, the research may offer clues as to how the brain determines that the world around us is three-dimensional.

“It is our conclusion that the developing brain never learns to sense anything unless it is able to move the sensors in the environment,” said Buzsáki. “Think about what you would see if neither your eyes nor your body could have moved since you were born. You would not be able to tell what is closer or what is distant, whether an object is the same when it is near or far from you or when it is partially covered by something. It is the movement of the eyes and body that verifies those relationships.”

A College of Nursing Diva

Professor Geri Dickson, founder and executive director of the New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing, recently received a Diva award from the Institute for Nursing of the New Jersey State Nurses Association Foundation for her contributions to nursing science.

The institute presented her with the award at its fifth annual Divas and Dons gala in Princeton Dec. 2.

R-N CALENDAR

FEB. 24-APRIL 29
Portuguese Ceramics in the Art Deco Period
The exhibition will showcase 180 pieces of pottery and porcelain produced by 18 Portuguese factories between 1922 and 1947. The library’s first traveling exhibition will then journey to the Museu de Ceramica Sacavem in Lisbon. The exhibition is curated by visiting professor Antonio Joel, who teaches in the campus’s Portuguese and Lusophone World Studies Program. It is the latest of Dana Library’s efforts to promote the culture of Portugal in support of the activities of the program and the Instituto Caimoes.

LOCATION: John Cotton Dana Library, Fourth Floor, 185 University Avenue.
Free admission

MARCH 2-6
“One Evening at the Rainbow Bar and Grille”
A production of the Rutgers-Newark and New Jersey Institute of Technology Theatre Arts program.
March 2-5 7-9 pm
March 6 2:30 pm
LOCATION: Bradley Hall Theatre, Bradley Hall, 110 Warren Street.
TICKETS: $5 students/seniors, $7 other.
INFO: Michele Rittenhouse, rittenhouse@adm.njit.edu, 973/596-3457
Reservations: 973/353-5119, ext. 17

APRIL 7
Julianne Baird, soprano
“The Jane Austen Songbook”
LOCATION: John Cotton Dana Library, Dana Room, Fourth Floor, 185 University Avenue, 12:30 p.m. Free admission

www.newark.rutgers.edu/events

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On the Plaza... from page 3

The Collaborating Center for Nursing, based at the College of Nursing, serves as an information resource for the formulation of health policies that have a positive impact on nursing care, nursing education and patient outcomes. The center, funded jointly by the State of New Jersey and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, builds upon Dickson’s previous work as project manager for the Colleagues in Caring project, one of 20 national sites for addressing nursing workforce issues.

Dickson’s research focuses on nursing workforce stress and the development of solutions to address the nursing shortage. While serving on the faculty at the College of Nursing, she was a principal investigator for a research study, “A Women-Centered Grounded Theory of Menopause,” funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research, National Institutes of Health.

In addition, she co-chaired the Governor’s Advisory Council for the Promotion of Nursing in New Jersey and was actively involved in guiding the development of the first university-based nursing program in Romania.

Women’s Studies at Rutgers-Newark is moving in exciting new directions.

Today’s program encompasses the study of gender, race, class, ethnicity, religion and sexuality, says Jyl Josephson. Since becoming director in January 2004, she has built upon the 34-year-old program – the first within Rutgers and one of the oldest in the nation – through partnerships with other R-N departments and schools, student organizations, and the Rutgers New Brunswick Department of Women’s and Gender Studies. The result of Josephson’s labors: a speakers’ series and other public programs examining how gender impacts women’s daily lives at home, at work, in school and in society, and how women’s complicated identities mean different things in different countries.

A first-ever Women’s Studies website (http://womenstudies.newark.rutgers.edu) and newsletter, as well as expanded internship opportunities, are other new directions. The program, which offers both an undergraduate major and minor, and a graduate-level concentration in Women’s Studies, graduates its first master’s class this spring.

Celebrating... from page 1

FAS-N will honor Dana’s legacy as a visionary and his contributions to the liberal arts and sciences at Rutgers-Newark by hosting a special conference, “Imagining Change: A Conference in Celebration of Dana College’s 75th Anniversary,” on Sat. April 9, in the Paul Robeson Campus Center’s Multipurpose Room. The conference will examine how today’s technology has broadened the scope and capabilities of liberal arts education. A host of distinguished panelists will take part, including poet Dana Gioia, chair of the National Endowment of the Arts; Robert Pinsky, U.S. Poet Laureate from 1997-2000; and Adam Clayton Powell III, visiting professor of Journalism and Senior Fellow of the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy.

For more information about the conference, contact phaigney@andromeda.rutgers.edu.

WOMEN’S STUDIES GROWS AT R-N

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WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

(all are public and free) http://womenstudies.newark.rutgers.edu

MARCH 2

A TALK BY RUTHIE BERMAN AND CONNIE KURTZ, stars of the documentary, “Ruthie and Connie: Every Room in the House,” 2:30 p.m. Screening of the film to be scheduled. LOCATION: Paul Robeson Campus Center, 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

MARCH 25

“The Last Public Place: Saving Public Education and the Fight for Democracy in America,” a talk by Professor Mari Matsuda, Georgetown Law School, 11:15 a.m. LOCATION: Center for Law and Justice, Baker Trial Courtroom, 123 Washington St.

MARCH 31

“Women’s Symposium,” addressing health, legal, feminist and other issues, 9 a.m.– 5 p.m. LOCATION: Paul Robeson Campus Center, 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
We buy it, cook it, eat it, but rarely do we consider the social implications. On March 5, the 6th Annual Applied and Urban Ethics Conference will do just that when it addresses the “Ethics of Eating: Surfeit, Want and Health” with guest lecturer Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation* (Houghton Mifflin 2001).

Conference organizers Pheroze Wadia, professor emeritus, and Nancy Holmstrom, professor of philosophy, explain that a culture and its values are both reflected in the food it eats. That’s a disturbing thought when you consider that there are now as many people who suffer from obesity around the globe as there are those who are underfed.

The conference will feature three panel discussions:
- “What We Should Eat: Vegetarianism and After” with Christine Cuomo, professor of ethics, University of Cincinnati, and Peter Hoffman, chef/owner of the Savoy Restaurant, NYC.
- “Genetically Modified Foods and the World’s Food Supply” with Michael Sligh, director of the Just Food Program RAFI-USA, and C. S. Prakash, director of the Center for Plant Biotechnology Research, Tuskegee University.
- “Economic Disparity and Food Consumption” with Kamili Williams, director of Agency Services, Community Food Bank of New Jersey.

Schlosser will give the closing lecture, with Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition, New York University, serving as commentator.

The program is sponsored by the Rutgers-Newark Department of Philosophy and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) Medical School, in association with Rutgers’ Prudential Business Ethics Center and the Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies.

The conference takes place at Alumni Lecture Hall, B-22, Medical Science Building, UMDNJ from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, contact Nancy Holmstrom, 973/353-1397, nholmstrom@aol.com.

THE ETHICS OF EATING

BY KATHLEEN BRUNET EADAN

In many ways, Corrado Gigante’s story is similar to that of thousands of Rutgers-Newark students over the decades. Gigante was the youngest in a family of Italian immigrants living in a working-class Hoboken neighborhood. When he came to R-N in 1967, he was the first in his family to attend college. He juggled the demands of classes and work, as he had since his first part-time job at age eight.

Rutgers in the 1960s was a time of activism and involvement for many students, Gigante among them. He rallied to restore budget cuts, was active in the Student Government Association, and became interested in civil rights issues and anti-war concerns. His Rutgers years both strengthened his resolve and showed him how to work within the political system to make a difference.

That might explain why someone who majored in Italian – and hoped to teach or write – has spent his career fighting for people’s rights, first with the Newark Human Rights Commission, then the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) department, and finally with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, where he is director of the Newark Area Office.

These days Gigante frequently finds himself back on campus, as alumni association president. He notes that today’s students look and sound vastly different than four decades ago, but are as hard-working, involved, and ambitious as ever. “And some are characters, just like we were,” he says.

CORRADO GI GIANTE, CLASS OF 1971, PRESIDENT, R-N ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

BY CARLA CAPIZZI

Corrado Gigante, Alumni Association president, says his years at R-N showed him how to make a difference.
MARION THOMPSON WRIGHT LECTURE CELEBRATES MILESTONE

The Marion Thompson Wright Lecture series will celebrate its 25th anniversary with its first-ever two-day program this month. This public lecture is annually attended by a large and enthusiastic audience of scholars, students and concerned citizens. It has grown to become New Jersey’s most prestigious Black History Month observance, and one of Rutgers University’s most successful programs in community service, life-long learning and historical literacy, according to co-founder Clement Price, Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor of History at Rutgers-Newark.

This year’s conference on “Lessons from the Past” takes place Feb. 18, 4–8 p.m., and Feb. 19, 9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

On Friday, Sterling Stuckey from the University of California at Riverside, Nell Painter from Princeton and David Roediger from the University of Illinois will discuss African-American historical scholarship. Saturday morning, James Oliver Horton, president of the Organization of American Historians and coauthor with Lois Horton of Slavery in the Making of American History, will deliver the keynote address. Saturday afternoon, Margaret Washington from Cornell will discuss the historiography of slavery and Michael Gomez from NYU will examine the African Diaspora.

LOCATION: Paul Robeson Campus Center, 350 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Free admission.
INFO: Marisa Pierson, 973/353-1871,
mpierson@andromeda.rutgers.edu.

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY
BY CARLA CAPIZZI

There are many ways in which Rutgers-Newark gives back to the community. Some highlights from last fall include:

Food, clothing and/or toys were donated to various Newark organizations by these student groups: Public Affairs Graduate Association; School of Criminal Justice Graduate Student Association; Rutgers College of Nursing; Housing and Residence Life staff and residents; and the Student Government Association for the College of Arts and Sciences – Newark.

Academic Foundations Center/Educational Opportunity Fund, EOF P.R.I.D.E. and the Student Social Work Organization raised money for battered women’s shelters though the RU Angel Program.

Human Resources organized Blumenthal Hall employees for two food, clothing and toy drives for Newark Family Emergency Services, while Campus Information and Conference Services collected toys for three Newark families who were referred by a local church.

The Social Work Student Organization’s talent show raised $1,000 for the Newark Literacy Program.

Writing Center Manager Patricia Bender and Newark city historian and R-N part-time lecturer Charles Cummings, both trustees of the Friends of the Newark Library, helped raise $11,000 for the library’s children collection.

The Combined Charities campaign for NJ state employees, organized at R-N by the Office of Campus Communications, raised $29,024 from 107 employees, including eight who each pledged more than $1,000.

Connections and Connections: News Digest are published by the Office of Campus Communications, Rutgers-Newark. Your comments are welcome. Please contact:
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