Top poets praise, perform, inspire

By ELAINE JUSTICE

Emory’s salute to National Poetry Month got off to a joyous start April 2 with the debut exhibition of the University’s Danowski Poetry Library and opening of “A Fine Excess,” an aptly named gathering of some of the nation’s best loved poets, who graced audiences with readings, conversations and good humor.

One fortunate addition to the schedule was a Wednesday afternoon dialogue between Rosemary Magee, vice president and secretary of the University, and Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, one of the conference supporters. The talk was part of a series of campus dialogues Magee has been conducting with artists on creativity in her role as chair of Emory’s Creativity and the Arts strategic initiative.

Please see POETRY on page 5

Jobs look good for ’08 grads

By BEVERLY CLARK

Despite dismal reports about the national economy, Emory seniors are finding a strong job market and opportunities to use their hard-earned degrees and skills in the work force.

“This was one of our strongest recruiting seasons ever. It seems contrary to what we’re reading, but our students are getting hired,” says Kori Neville, associate director of the Career Center. Over the past two years, there has been a 60 percent increase in the number of companies recruiting on campus.

Although employers are not sure how the credit crunch will

Please see JOB MARKET on page 4
Destination Emory developer finds value in carpooling

By ELIZABETH ELKINS

Mountain biking along the Chattahoochee River is one of John Notarantonio’s favorite pastimes. In the evenings and on weekends, he pedals through the Supe Creek entrance to the river’s National Recreation Area, just a short ride from the Marietta home he shares with his wife and 3-year-old daughter. For Notarantonio, the proximity to nature is one reason he doesn’t mind his 42-mile round trip commute to Emory each weekday. Carpooling is another.

Notarantonio has himself to thank for finding a carpool partner. He developed Destination Emory, the software the University uses to help geographically match employees interested in carpooling to work. It’s an impressive accomplishment (one recently acknowledged with an “Innovation of the Year” award from the Office of Technology Transfer), considering Notarantonio began work as a data warehouse developer at Emory in June 2006, and saw his program go live just 10 months later. “When I first started work, my boss had some vacation time to take,” Notarantonio explains. “So I used that time to really learn the software tools Emory uses. The only data I had access to was employee demographics. I didn’t know this area very well so I also had some map software open to see where I could get lunch. I saw the two windows open on my screen, so I imported all 12,000 employees into the mapping software. I immediately realized this had potential as a great real-world application.”

Destination Emory has now recorded thousands of user inquiries, and is a vital part of the University’s commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. The concept has also been picked up by the Office of Technology Transfer and renamed EcoRide, to be marketed around the city of Atlanta. “Traffic in Atlanta is so bad now that we are losing corporate accounts,” Notarantonio says. “I’m hopeful EcoRide can be very successful across the city, and we will reap a huge benefit not only for the environment but for business.”

Before relocating to Atlanta from South Florida, carpooling wasn’t a part of Notarantonio’s vernacular. His first job after graduating from Florida State University was in health care in West Palm Beach — where he lived close enough to work that traffic didn’t bother him. He came to Atlanta to work for McKesson, settling in an apartment near the corporation’s Dunwoody office. Then — at the same time Notarantonio and his wife found a home in Marietta — McKesson relocated to Alpharetta. Notarantonio quickly learned how awful Atlanta traffic really is.

“My wife works in Marietta and we both wanted to stay in that location,” Notarantonio says. “I fortunately found a co-worker who lived near me, and we began to carpool to Alpharetta.”

“It was during those carpool sessions that Notarantonio learned what he considers the most ‘overlooked aspect of carpooling’ — the chance to network and make new friends. “That co-worker ended up becoming a great friend, and was one of the references that helped me land a job at Emory,” he says. Notarantonio is quick to point out some of the other misconceptions about carpooling — one, that it’s a life-time commitment (it’s not); and, two, that it does not make much of a difference in your budget (it does). Notarantonio is now also good friends with his Emory carpool partner, a biochemistry researcher. “We have almost an hour each way for shop talk. It’s a great way to learn what else is going on at Emory,” he explains.

In an information technology field also known as “business intelligence,” Notarantonio is a perfect example of a problem-solver who can impact many facets of life at both Emory and in Atlanta.

“I just enjoy solving problems with data,” he says. “We have a parking problem. We have an environmental problem. I am hopeful this will be part of the way to solve those.”

How much money can carpooling save?

John Notarantonio and his carpool partner alternate cars each day, and split gas costs equally.

“I estimate I save $3,600 annually by carpooling,” Notarantonio says. “I think people who don’t carpool get used to spending that money, and do not realize how quickly it adds up.”

• $175 less on car insurance
• $530 in reduced parking fees
• $180 bonus from the Clean Air Campaign
• Gasoline bill decreased by 50 percent
• Car maintenance decreased by 50 percent

To find out how much you could save by carpooling each year, visit www.destination.emory.edu.
‘Dose of listening’ captures oral history

By KIM URRUHART

“Sound is evocative. It tempts the ear, rots the eye, fascinates the mind. It says. Lean in closer.” As Mary Loftus spoke, those gathered to celebrate the Oral History Project shifted imperceptibly forward. “When we chose to capture the memories and life stories of 30 amazing Emory women, we did so not with the latest technology, but with a sensitive microphone and a large dose of listening.”

Emory Magazine’s Loftus emceed the special Women’s History Month event on March 26. “The History of the Oral History Project” offered a behind-the-scenes look that brought together the cast and crew of the podcasts created by the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women.

The idea for the Oral History Project was born in 2005. Other oral histories had been under way in various corners of the University, but this would be the first to look across Emory, explained creator and PCSW Chair Susan Carin. Carin and her Emory Creative Group set to work on the two-year project. The result: a series of interviews and essays with women who have made indelible contributions to Emory history.

The project rolled out this fall, marking the 30th anniversary of the PCWS, and the 15th and 20th anniversaries respectively of the Women’s Center and Emory Women’s Studies.

The March 26 celebration provided an opportunity for interviewers and interviewees to reflect on intended, and unintended, benefits of the project.

They spoke of friendships, evocative moments, and unexpected twists on the path down which their own stories took them. “A life review is perhaps the toughest interview you can be asked to sit through,” noted Loftus. But each woman shared with equal parts candor and affection personal and professional failures and triumphs.

Susan Henry-Crowe, dean of the chapel and religious life, found in interviewer Dana Goldman a sympathetic ear, instant rapport and an ease that inspired a feeling of freedom. “There was a way in which you pulled from me the sort of things that were deeper in me,” said Henry-Crowe. “As a pioneer in her field, she is a veteran in giving interviews.”

And Goldman found in Henry-Crowe a role model as well as a great interview. “There’s a certain sense of pressure, as a relatively recent graduate from college, to know what my life is going to look like,” she told Henry-Crowe. “What really struck me was the story of your life. I remember you said something like ‘I’ve never had a plan,’ and I just left my whole body.”

The stories—which are inexorably linked to Emory’s story—will continue. Now under the auspices of the Center for Women, the project will feature more remarkable women each year. “We will do all in our power to keep their words echoing and reverberating across campus,” Carin said.

Tune into the Oral History Project podcasts at www.psaw.emory.edu.

Emory senior named first Jones Fellow

By BEVERLY CLARK

Senior David Abraham has been named the first recipient of the Robert T. Jones Jr. Fellowship at Emory for fully funded graduate study at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. St. Andrews, founded in 1411, is Emory’s sister institution. Abraham will begin his studies this fall in the School of Philosophy.

The Robert T. Jones Jr. Fellowship is a new award established at Emory this year that covers tuition and provides a living stipend for one to four Emory students for a year of graduate work at St. Andrews. Unlike the popular Robert T. Jones Scholarship awarded annually to four Emory students for a year of study at St. Andrews, the fellows are required to earn a graduate degree.

Abraham plans to seek a master’s degree in philosophy at St. Andrews, a two-year degree program and, study Thomas Aquinas and medieval philosophy. At Emory, Abraham is a philosophy and history major who is completing an honors thesis on the history of Edmund Burke.

Abraham is the recipient of numerous academic honors. At the end of his freshman year, he was selected to receive the Goodrich C. White Scholarship, the highest sophomore award at Emory, and Emory Law School alumni memorialized those who knew him as an extraordinary man of rare loyalty, compassion and integrity.

Her book takes the cake

Ann Freilisen, collections conservator for Emory libraries, won this year’s fifth annual Edible Book Fest contest in Decatur with “War and Peeps,” an imaginative mix of a Russian masterpiece and marshmallow chicks. It’s literature you can devour in one sitting.

Wordsmiths Books hosted the contest, put on by the Southeast Chapter of the Guild of Book Workers and Literacy Volunteers of Atlanta to raise funds for local literacy programs.

NEWSMAKERS

Biology recognizes student excellence

Senior Bhavya Doshi has won the first Darrell R. Stokes Award for Excellence in Biology. The annual $500 award was established to recognize a graduating biology student who has contributed both to the biology department and to the Emory community. Doshi was nominated in honor of professor Darrell Stokes, who has taught in the biology department for 34 years and is the director of undergraduate studies.

“Bhavya stood out because of the service she has performed,” said biology professor Barry Yedvobnick, who was on the judging committee.

Doshi is an elected member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and has been invited to join Psi Sigma, the biology honor society. She is also a Dean’s Achievement Scholar. Doshi served as a teaching assistant and tutor in the biology department. She also mentored students in chemistry and participated in SRE, conducting research in the biology lab that is up for honors consideration.

“Acclaim” recognizes the accomplishments of faculty and staff. Listings may include awards and promotions, research and service awards, and similar notable accomplishments at Emory or in the wider community. Emory Report relies on submissions for this column. Contact: Acclaim@emory.edu.
TAKE NOTE

Family Leave Act classes offered

Classes are scheduled on the Family Medical Leave Act to help faculty and staff understand the FMLA process, its legal requirements and how to complete the required reporting.

Three sessions in the 1599 Building have been scheduled: April 11 from 2 to 4 p.m., April 23 from 10 a.m. to noon, and May 6 from 2 to 4 p.m. Seats are available for each session and are updated online several times a day.

To register, sign into the PeopleSoft Employee Self-Serve at emsrye.edu/emory.edu/ClassDescriptions/training/calendar.jsp. Or call Randall Cumba at 404-727-1029.

Comments sought on urban design

A core principle of the Clifton Community Partnership’s Urban Design Guidelines is to improve accessibility and connectivity within the Clifton community by expanding transportation choices.

Join neighbors on Saturday, April 12 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Emory Presbyterian Church (3886 North Decatur Rd.) for the first public session of the Urban Design Guidelines project. The session will focus on pedestrian and bicycle lane enhancements on the north side, and play it 6 from 2 to 4 p.m. between Emory Presbyterian Church and the Rox line near Clairmont Road. Refreshments will be served.

Apply for grants in creativity and arts

The deadline for Emory College faculty, staff and students to apply for Emory College Center for Creativity & Arts project grants for summer and fall 2008 is April 18 at 4 p.m. The program is a deadline to apply to the CCA/Future of Evolution Conference Project Grants is April 25 at 4 p.m.

“Out There Arts,” arts field trip grants for Emory College classes, residence halls and student groups, are reviewed on a rolling basis. Contact the CCA at creativity@emory.edu for more information.

Symposium to look at influenza

Researchers and investigators of influenza virus pathogenesis and immunology are encouraged to submit abstracts by April 15 for the “Inmunobiology and Pathogenesis of Influenza Infections” symposium to be held June 1-3.

Nancy Kular, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s influenza division, will open the event with a keynote address.

Graduate and young scientists can apply for scholar- ships to cover the $300 cost. For more information, contact Tanya Cassingham at 404-727-3450, tcaasin@emory.edu.

EXHIBIT: Tour to reveal tomb’s treasures

The Carlos Museum at a special event April 2 unveiled with music and drama the news that Atlanta will be the first stop on a new Tut exhibition tour.

Continued from the cover

“Since this exhibition was one of the most important Egyptian exhibitions and one of the world’s greatest cultural legacies,” said Terry Adams, National Geographic Society’s executive vice president and Emory alumnus. Among the 130 treasures that span 2,000 years of Egyptian history will be legendary artifacts from King Tut’s tomb, including jewelry, furniture and weaponary. Visitors can also learn more about the life — and mysterious death — of the boy king through recent CT scans conducted on his mummy.

Included in the exhibit, the Carlos Museum will showcase the photography of Harry Burton, who documented the discovery of King Tut’s nearly intact tomb in 1922. The Carlos will also lead development of educational materials in conjunction with the exhibition.

Other events to elucidate the life and times of Tutankhamun include a January 2009 Candler Concert Series premiere of “Akhnaten,” composer Philip Glass’ libretto co-written with Professor of Middle Eastern Studies Shalom Goldman (see Emory Report, Sept. 5, 2009). That the Carlos was that Arthur could be land the all-new exhibition — with an expected $150 million economic impact on Atlanta — was due in large part to the friendship between Peter Lacovara, Carlos’ senior curator of ancient Egyptian, Nubian and Near Eastern art, and Zahi Hawass, secretary general of Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities.

“When we heard the first Tut show was circulating, we asked if Atlanta could possibly be a venue,” Lacovara recalled. “Hawass mentioned he was working on something else he thought would be an even better fit.”

The Carlos, known for its Eygptian collections and engagement in cultural cooperation when it loaned a Tut-identified mummy to Egypt in 2003, was able to offer the scholars and curators and understand those important artifacts.

“Our hope for the long term is that [the exhibition] will increase the prestige of Egyptology at Emory and help expand our resources,” said Lacovara.

JOB MARKET: So far, demand undampened

Continued from the cover

play out, “they don’t want to make the mistake of freezing all hiring that they did after 9/11, and limit talent from Emory and other schools from their pipeline,” Neville says.

Government hiring also is strong, due in part to current and impending baby-boomer retirements. The biggest single employer remains Teach for America, which has hired 31 students.

For Goizueta Business School, the undergraduate class of 2008 “is doing better than you would expect. Current economic factors may have more of an impact on next year’s class, but our stance is that the job market is always competitive, so we take the proactive approach to cultivate more opportunities for our students,” says Kim Molee, associate director of the BBA Career Management Center.

Student internships, which often lead directly to jobs, are a high priority for Goizueta, which has a goal of 100 percent participation. A majority of students have internships lined up for this summer, which will help them next year, Molee says.

Liberal arts majors are in demand as well; more than 90 percent of the companies that recruit on Emory’s campus are looking for all majors.

For biology major Nicole Miller, a strong interest in statistics has led her to a job in Washington, D.C., with a consulting firm. She used the Career Center’s Eagle Opportunities Network to find the job posting, then took advantage of the center’s mock interview training and resume consulting to prepare. Phone calls to alumni working with the firm also helped her get her foot in the door. “Being proactive really made a difference. It was very competitive,” Miller says.

Miller is one of many students who are taking the right steps to land jobs with their liberal arts background, Neville says. “With their education and the critical thinking skills they have gained, liberal arts majors can work in multiple fields. The challenge for them is figuring out how to focus and tailor their talents for a particular industry or field.”

Emory’s formal and informal alumni networks are also an important factor in getting students placed. “Emory alumni are doing a lot of great work in making sure the Emory brand remains strong in the marketplace,” Neville says.

Employees to be polled on workplace opportunities

By KATHERINE HINSON

Emory has been invited to participate in The Chronicle of Higher Education’s “Great Colleges to Work For” program, a new initiative designed to recognize institutions that have built great workplaces.

The assessment includes an institution’s questionnaire, and an employee survey distributed to a randomized sample of each institution’s full-time faculty, administrators and professional staff.

The survey was designed specifically for higher education and measures the strength of certain organizational competencies and relationships that most directly impact and influence an institution’s culture.

The collected information will be combined to produce a detailed analysis of the strengths and opportunities of the participating institutions.

On Friday, April 11, the survey was e-mailed to a randomly selected sample of 600 employees.

Answers are anonymous and will be processed by research and consulting firm ModernThink LLC. Emory will not be given any, nor will it seek information that would enable the University to trace survey data back to any individual.

After the Chronicle publishes the findings this summer, Emory will receive a report that summarizes responses to the survey questions. This will allow Emory to compare its results to others, see best practices, and perhaps make improvements that will further enhance the University’s reputation as a great place to work.

Clinic, hospital site plan update

Over the past several months, Emory has gone through an in-depth review of possible locations for expansion of its clinical, educational and research space. More than 30 site plans have been analyzed and evaluated. Most recently, an analysis showed that the Clairmont Campus is not a viable site for relocation of Emory University Hospital and The Emory Clinic. Planning efforts are now focused on potential scenarios for Clifton Road and the Midtown Campus. Emory anticipates the facility and program plan to be presented to the Board of Trustees in early June.
Quality is not an act; it is a habit,” Aristotle wrote those words centuries ago, but they still ring true — especially here in the Woodruff Health Sciences Center. On Feb. 29, I had the special opportunity to join 700 of our faculty and staff who participated in the Emory Healthcare Quality Conference. This event, featuring three outstanding guest speakers, was part of a comprehensive, ongoing quality initiative that is working to ensure outstanding patient safety, outcomes and services.

For two days preceding the conference, I also participated in the Quality Academy, which is a series of courses aimed at helping leaders throughout the health sciences learn the concepts and tools needed to measure, assess and improve quality of care. Both the Quality Academy and the Quality Conference were enlightening and inspirational events, and what we learned at both is an undeniable truth: Health care is a high-stress, multi-tasking environment that is ripe with opportunities for error.

Of course, it’s only human to make mistakes. But many studies indicate that such mistakes are responsible for between 50,000 and 100,000 unnecessary patient deaths each year. That’s why we need to ensure that processes and systems are in place to help eliminate the potential for human error; that we deal fairly and justly with colleagues who make mistakes, and that we view each as an opportunity to learn and improve.

Taking its cues from industry, the quality initiative is building processes that would make it virtually impossible to do the right things. Process improvement techniques have helped the airline industry avoid a remarkable number of accidents in transportation, and they can help us achieve safety in our patient care.

While the Quality Conference and Academy addressed the issues of quality and safety primarily in the health care setting, the principles they taught are really applicable more broadly. Efforts include providing superior customer service, eliminating waste, and continually seeking ways to improve. Whether we are faculty, staff or students, we can all adapt many of these same principles to improve the quality of our own performance.

Here’s a small story about our quality initiative, a series of excellent poster presentations originally shared at the conference and on display in the Woodruff Health Sciences Center Administration Building through April 11. I encourage you to come by and see some of the many ways our faculty, staff and students are working to improve quality and transform health and healing.

We welcome your feedback on our quality initiative. Please share your thoughts with me at evphasedback@emory.edu.

Go-ING the distance

Rivka Elbein, a clinical research nurse at the School of Medicine, was one of the more than 15,000 participants in the March 29 ING Georgia Marathon. For the second year, Emory Healthcare served as an official sponsor of the event and the leading medical provider.

Classses give support staff tools to improve processes

By AMYE Walters

Last year Emory College launched a pilot program to provide employment education to its administrative staff. To date, nearly all of the College’s support staff have completed the Program Administrative Assistant Learning and Development Certificate. Given this success, Human Resource’s Learning Services Department “looked to scale it out across the University,” says Wanda Hayes, director. “It’s rare for any organization to invest to this degree at the administrative level,” she adds.

When interest exceeded expectations, Learning Services approved running two cohorts for the inaugural campus-wide Administrative Professional Program. One is already under way, having begun orientation on March 19. Another will begin in June with compressed summer courses. Both groups will graduate in March 2009. “The Administrative Professional Program is part of a larger strategy to support the University’s mission of employee development,” says Hayes.

To be eligible, employees must provide support services to any facet of Emory’s operations. In addition to administration roles, program coordinators and executive assistants can participate. Hayes stresses that the main requirement is full-time status and that the employee must have their supervisor’s support for the year-long program.

Coursework totals about 80 hours, comprising 10 class sessions and a process improvement project. After the third class session, enrollees work with a leader to apply a learned topic. In essence, this hands-on experience allows the administrator to improve an actual process they have encountered within their department.

Administrative Professional’s Day Conference

What began as Secretary’s Day has evolved into a time for educational opportunity. On April 23, Emory Professional Learning Programs at the Center for Lifelong Learning will host a day-long conference for administrative professionals.

The Administrative Professional’s Day Conference will take place in the Cox Hall Ballroom from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Presented with the International Association of Administrative Professionals, the conference provides continuing education credit for those with prior IAP certification. A $150 fee covers two meals, program materials and parking.

For more information, visit www.cll.emory.edu/adminpros/registration.htm or call Jennifer John at 404-727-5413.

SNAPSHOT

Among Gioia’s comments: He called the Danowski collection “the King Tut of American and British poetry.” His allusion to the just-announced King Tut exhibit seemed all the more on-point at the opening reception of “A Fine Excess.” Later that evening, a delighted Raymond Danowski stood amidst the exhibition of his life’s collection to obtain, preserve and share some of the world’s great archival treasures.

“You’re creating one of the great literary research libraries in the world, certainly for modern poetry,” Gioia said of Emory. That development, he predicted, will benefit every student and faculty member in the humanities either directly because of the research they can do, or indirectly “because of the kind of people that an archive and a library of this quality will attract and keep.”

As sunlight slanted across the Quad, Pulitzer Prize winner W.D. Snodgrass began “A Fine Excess” with a reading in the Carlos Museum reception hall. And although he railed against critics’ label of him as a “confessional” poet, listeners were treated to an array of his work, both early and recent, that embraced both the personal and profound. His topics — and often humorous commentary — ranged from his vocation as a poet to a Princeton University meeting in Iowa (“April Inventory”) to the irony of his family life (“For the Third Marriage of My First Fiddle”).

Later, Snodgrass joined other poet luminaries and attendees as Kevin Young, director of the Danowski Poetry Library, gave an overview of “Democratic Vistas” and thanked a long list of Emory professionals who made it come to life, including exhibition director Julie Delligatti, John Kington of the Schatten Library, Terry Burk of MARBL, and Ann Frellsen, Kirsten Wehner and Julie Newten of Woodruff Library Preservation Department.

It was Klinger, said Young, who helped fashion a unique keepsake for Danowski: a tiny, fold-out book that is a facsimile of a 24-page hand-written letter Danowski penned at the time he placed his collection at Emory, explaining the motivations behind his fabulous collection. “It’s a beautiful gift,” Danowski said as he picked it up.

More than 100 people from all over the country and overseas registered to attend the three day celebration of poetry, and judging from the comment cards, says Lea Delliquanti, John Kington’s assistant, “it was a success.” The three day celebration of poetry, and judging from the comment cards, says Lea Delliquanti, John Kington’s assistant, “it was a success.”
Gary Laderman, professor and chair of the religion department, says the site is getting positive feedback, a growing number of visitors and lots of links with other sites. Supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation, ReligionDispatches.org aims to enhance public understanding and debate about religion," says Laderman. The site's goal is to respectfully and critically examine the role of religion and values in the most vital issues of our day.

Laderman serves as co-editor of ReligionDispatches with Linell Cadle, director of the Center for the Study of Religion and Conflict at Arizona State University. Together they preside over a growing list of one-time and regular contributors and two full-time managing editors: Evan Dorkacz, formerly from AlterNet, and Lisa Webster, formerly of Tricycle: The Buddhist Review.

"Religion is central to the most significant events we face, on a personal as well as global scale," says Laderman. Yet religion, religious motivations and religious actors remain among the least understood subjects in the media and public culture in general, he says.

ReligionDispatches covers a broad range of issues, from war to stem cells, political change to sexuality, poverty and human rights. The site's mission statement says that "rigorous, open and respectful debate about central issues of the day is essential if democracies are to survive and flourish." That debate is fostered by a diverse group of writers who are not just from theological and religious studies, but from journalism, politics, law and science, says Laderman. So far, the combination seems to be getting attention.

"The first article we posted was on the movie, There Will Be Blood," says Laderman. Surprisingly, Newsweek.com picked up on the story and ran an article on the author of the piece. "We seem to be getting into the blogosphere as the go-to site for more progressive views on religion and society," he says.

ReligionDispatches, already has begun focusing attention on a range of current issues. From the controversy over Sen. Barack Obama's pastor the Rev. Joseph Wright, to the activism of Buddhist monks and nuns in Tibet, ReligionDispatches advisory council includes: Daisy Khan, executive director, American Society for Muslim Advancement; Robert Franklin, president, Morehouse College; Ruth Messinger, American Jewish World Service; Juana Ponce de Leon, executive director, Independent Press Association; Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, author; and Diane Winston, Knight Chair in Media and Religion, University of Southern California.

ReligionDispatches.org is a new online magazine dedicated to the analysis and understanding of religious forces in the world today.
Challenges issued at Employee Town Hall

By E leanor E lkins

When I began my Master of Divinity degree at Candler in 1999, I had just returned from eight months of full-time volunteer work in Johannesburg, South Africa. One of my professors that semester was Archishop Desmond Tutu, and listening to his voice each week took me back to the streets, pews and communities that had become so familiar during my stay in South Africa. Although he spoke on subjects ranging from sociatology to organizing, what I found most resonant with my experience with the people of Johannesburg was his being in a context.

As he describes in “The Words of Desmond Tutu,” Africans believe in something that is difficult to render in English. We call it ubuntu, both. It means the essence of being human. It speaks of humanity, gentleness, hospitality, putting yourself out on behalf of others, being vulnerable. It embraces compassion and toughness. It recognizes that our humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together. Or, as he summed it up frequently in class, “people are people through other people.”

Sitting in those classes, I would never have guessed that 10 years later, I’d be back at Emory, seeing ubuntu theology in practice every day. But as the director of Volunteer Emory, I get to watch the amazing opening-up that happens with students when they put themselves out on behalf of others, and become more human — and more themselves — in the process.

When students volunteer, their eyes are opened to new and fun ways to be in the world. Academically pressured students get outside of their heads and see the world as centered on something besides the next exam. Running with a third-grader or socializing an abused dog gives them space to experience something new, and the energy to take it all in. They meet others who share their passions. A Volunteer Emory staff member described the new volunteers who join a trip: their faces brighten and they say “I had no idea! This is really awesome!”

As volunteers’ vision broadens, their minds are opened wider. Issues now have faces, so educational inequality, inadequate health care and environmental degradation are no longer just issues in a political science class. They’re reality. While volunteering, students learn about and contribute to what nonprofits and creative groups of hard-working people are doing to address those challenges. They expand their skill base, too. Where else do students practice the fine arts of cold-calling for donations, advocating for women’s rights, differentiating psychoanalytic and bargaining dyrwail, all in the course of a month? Service makes students better, because you can always find something you appreciate, and it makes you a better person to know that. Students get more in touch with themselves, and in some ways, grow into their own skin.

Another student shared how service is no longer just an activity for her. “Volunteer Emory has helped me realize that serving isn’t about something I do; it feels like I am.” It connects you to yourself and to others, and may even have broad-reaching impacts. A volunteer talks about the simplicity of connecting in human relationships, saying, “With each second we put in service, we are pushing the world a step closer to harmony and peace.”

As we sit across the table from the 15-year-old struggling with fractures, pull weeds from a garden, or comfort someone running from a community, or dish up coleslaw for women and children who are getting back on their feet, we end up doing more than tutoring, gardening and serving. We fall in love. And for me, that’s what it’s all about.

Because when you love people, you’re not just doing one issue. They’re no longer “homelessness,” or “immigration,” or “failing schools.” They’re sisters and brothers. And like family, they help us to make us who we are. People are people through other people.

By MELODY PORTER

When I began my Master of Divinity degree at Candler in 1999, I had just returned from eight months of full-time volunteer work in Johannesburg, South Africa. One of my professors that semester was Archishop Desmond Tutu, and listening to his voice each week took me back to the streets, pews and communities that had become so familiar during my stay in South Africa. Although he spoke on subjects ranging from sociatology to organizing, what I found most resonant with my experience with the people of Johannesburg was his being in a context.

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Sitting in those classes, I would never have guessed that 10 years later, I’d be back at Emory, seeing ubuntu theology in practice every day. But as the director of Volunteer Emory, I get to watch the amazing opening-up that happens with students when they put themselves out on behalf of others, and become more human — and more themselves — in the process.

When students volunteer, their eyes are opened to new and fun ways to be in the world. Academically pressured students get outside of their heads and see the world as centered on something besides the next exam. Running with a third-grader or socializing an abused dog gives them space to experience something new, and the energy to take it all in. They meet others who share their passions. A Volunteer Emory staff member described the new volunteers who join a trip: their faces brighten and they say “I had no idea! This is really awesome!”

As volunteers’ vision broadens, their minds are opened wider. Issues now have faces, so educational inequality, inadequate health care and environmental degradation are no longer just issues in a political science class. They’re reality. While volunteering, students learn about and contribute to what nonprofits and creative groups of hard-working people are doing to address those challenges. They expand their skill base, too. Where else do students practice the fine arts of cold-calling for donations, advocating for women’s rights, differentiating psychoanalytic and bargaining dyrwail, all in the course of a month? Service makes students better, because you can always find something you appreciate, and it makes you a better person to know that. Students get more in touch with themselves, and in some ways, grow into their own skin.

Another student shared how service is no longer just an activity for her. “Volunteer Emory has helped me realize that serving isn’t about something I do; it feels like I am.” It connects you to yourself and to others, and may even have broad-reaching impacts. A volunteer talks about the simplicity of connecting in human relationships, saying, “With each second we put in service, we are pushing the world a step closer to harmony and peace.”

As we sit across the table from the 15-year-old struggling with fractures, pull weeds from a garden, or comfort someone running from a community, or dish up coleslaw for women and children who are getting back on their feet, we end up doing more than tutoring, gardening and serving. We fall in love. And for me, that’s what it’s all about.

Because when you love people, you’re not just doing one issue. They’re no longer “homelessness,” or “immigration,” or “failing schools.” They’re sisters and brothers. And like family, they help us to make us who we are. People are people through other people.

By ELIZABETH ELKINS

The mood was immediately jovial at the Employee Council’s annual Employee Town Hall. More than 200 employees gathered at Emory School of Law March 27 to offer their feedback to President Jim Wagner and Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration Mike Mandl. When Emory Law Dean David Partlett quipped “the whole idea of free speech is vital to the law school, so now I know we will apply that today,” Mandl joked in reply, “I don’t think these people need encouragement to be more aggressive in their questioning.” This set the tone for a conversation-style dialogue that touched on topics from the location of the hospital (it will not move to the Clairmont Campus) to a 35-hour work week (worth considering, but not practical).

Mandl provided an update on the University’s strategic plan, noting highlights such as the funding of a work life resource center, the start of supervisory training classes and the steps taken toward the 2015 goal of consuming 25 percent less energy on campus than in 2006. Mandl also announced that a University-wide calendar system is being developed.

Wagner explained that the Town Hall’s theme, “Emory’s Excellence...A Role for Everyone,” means that each employee must strive for optimal performance, a “difficult” concept because it is “potentially offensive, boring and dangerous.” He challenged the audience by asking four key questions: Applying the “Lake Wobegon principle” — are we ready for every employee at Emory to be above average? What can be done to improve the work/life balance? What characteristics should be emphasized in new hires? And what changes would you make at Emory to enhance your life by more than just a paycheck?

Audience members answered these questions by discussing their concerns about the lack of diversity, the increasing costs which Mandl replied would be an emphasis in coming years, the lack of cohesiveness across units, and expressed their satisfaction with the “grandness” of co-workers, salary levels and the ability to work with students.

SOUNDBITES

Drug creation still empirical

Since most kept on clients, patients and noticed medicinal effects, humans have tried to treat problems with the brain and mind, said Donna Chin, executive director of the Comprehensive Neurosciences Initiative, in an April 2 Lundeub Commission. It’s only been since the 1970s that we’ve entered the age of proven value,” she said, noting that scientific testing of all drugs on the market was not completed until 1984. Pharmacy has yet to enter a non-empirical age, she said. “We don’t yet know enough about biology, including nervous system biology, to actually understand the dos. In fact, society’s hubris in believes that now at a point of true rational design ahead of time is actually reasonable and some of the lower performance of the drug development system in recent years.”

Press down on berates Iraq war

“Having watched presi- dents with a jaundiced eye, I can tell you — they should be watching Baghdad” Thomas told an overflow audience at the law school, where she gave the Women’s History Month keynote March 21. The First Lady of the United States observed, “If you want to drop to the Diplom- atric primary ‘She should run the good race — win, lose or draw,’ she said, adding, “Why should the White House be any different, really, to merit the presidency of the United States.”

Thomas saved her blunt- est remarks for the George W. Bush administration. “We won the Cold War in 60 years and kept our powder pretty dry” she said. “You cannot spread democracy with the barrel of a gun.”

Herstoy gathers health issues

“Gathering of Voices on Health Care: Physical, Men- tal, Spiritual and Holistic,” the National Black Herstory Conference and Awards Ban- quet, had a festive opening March 28 with a libation pouring ceremony and an en- ergy force performance by musical group Bateria. Robert Lee, associate dean of multicultural medical stu- dent affairs and director, is currently involved in “Empowering the Next Generation of Students” to connect all of the issues in the recruitment of students of color to the medical school. “We have heard the stories drawn from more than five decades as a White House correspondent. Thomas said Hillary Clini- ton should be asking for her to drop out of the Demo- cratic primary ‘She should run the good race — win, lose or draw,’ she said, adding, “Why should the White House be any different, really, to merit the presidency of the United States.”

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Events

**Navarro lecture series begins**
University of Chicago Professor Federico De Armas will inaugurate the Emilia Navarro Distinguished Lecture Series on Tuesday, April 8, at 4:30 p.m. in the Jones Room of the Woodruff Library.

De Armas will give a lecture titled "Drawing Desire: Giulio Romano, Correggio, and Vasari's "El castigo sin venganza." A reception will follow.

The annual lecture series is being instituted by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, in memory of the late Emilia Navarro, professor emerita of Spanish and Portuguese.

De Armas’ lecture will be sponsored by the John Gordon Storke Memorial Fund and co-sponsored by the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry and the Department of Women’s Studies.

**Saturn’s rings focus of event**
Saturn and its moons will be the stars of the Emory Planetarium open house on Sunday, April 13 from 8 to 10:30 p.m. The event is free, but timed tickets will be distributed, beginning at 8 p.m., at E100 in the Math and Physics Building.

“Saturn is always a big favorite,” says Richard Dietrich Stout, European Studies Seminars.

The physics department also invites the public to a talk on Friday, April 18 by Dr. Jon Minter, a renowned astronomy professor from Arizona State University.

The free lecture, titled “I Know,” starts at 8 p.m. in White Hall 208.

**Naked voices for a cause**
“Barefooted Voices: Fifth Annual Emory Student A Cappella Celebration” will be held Saturday, April 12, at 8 p.m. in the Schwartz Center Concert Hall.

Hosted by Emory’s director of choral studies, Eric Nelson, this showcase of student- and faculty-led a cappella groups will feature Aural Pleasure, No Strings Attached, Emory University Chorale, Emory University Concert Choir, The Gathering, Dooley Noted and A Cappella.

Donations will be accepted and directed to benefit Emory’s "HopeLine," a student-run telephone counseling and referral service, and “Active Minds,” a peer-to-peer organization dedicated to raising awareness about mental health and mental illness situations.

For information, see arts.emory.edu or call 404-727-5050.

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**Pianist Lei Ove Andanes will perform at Emory**

On Saturday, April 19 at 8 p.m. in the Schwartz Center.

Tickets ($52; faculty/staff/alumni, Friends of Music $39; Emory students $5) are available by calling 404-727-5050 or by visiting www.arts.emory.edu.

The program includes Bach’s “Incontri in E Minor,” Beethoven’s “Piano Sonata in E-flat Major” and selections from Debussy’s “Préludes.”