Schramm selected as undergraduate commencement speaker

“For four decades, Harry Schramm has been changing the lives of WestConn students ...”

by Sherri Hill

Dr. Harry Schramm, professor of justice and law administration and of English, believes that commencement ceremonies are all about the students recognizing their degrees. “It’s their day, not my day,” said the speaker selected to address undergraduates at Western Connecticut State University’s 109th commencement at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 20. The ceremony will be in the Westside Athletic Stadium Complex on the university’s Westside campus, Lake Avenue Extension in Danbury. “It’s all about the students.” Schramm said. “I’ll be there to offer my congratulations and a bit of personal advice to help them make their lives and society better. And I promise to be brief,” he added with a smile.

President James W. Schmotter said his decision to invite Schramm to deliver the commencement address was an easy one. “For four decades, Harry Schramm has been changing the lives of WestConn students — as an inspiring classroom instructor, as an insightful guide to the law, as a mentor, as an advisor to student government, and as a friend and mentor,” Schmotter said. “There is no one who exemplifies our university’s commitment to students and their success more than he. And I can think of no better way for him to close out his distinguished career here than by addressing the 2007 graduating class with his typical wisdom and enthusiasm. We are in for a treat.”

Schramm said he was “honored and humbled” by Schmotter’s invitation to speak. “I’m a pro-student person so this is a recognition that students are important and the people who care deeply for students are important, too,” Schramm said. “I think my selection as commencement speaker also is a tribute to faculty, and I will simply be serving as a representative of lots of good people here who work in the trenches and make a difference and change the lives of our students.

“When I was asked to speak, I said yes immediately because I really wanted to do it,” Schramm continued. “And now I am thinking about whether I have something unusual to say and how much I want to make it relevant, because to me the day is all about the students.”

A constitutional scholar, Schramm plans to share his thoughts about the rights and responsibilities granted under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. “With liberty comes an equal responsibility to act responsibly,” Schramm explained. “In addition to the Bill of Rights, there really should be a Bill of Responsibilities.”

Among those responsibilities, Schramm said, is the obligation college graduates should feel to elevate exchanges with campus constituencies and the public.

Now, Schmotter said, the real work begins. “To ensure success, the plan must be a living, evolving expression of our journey ahead together, not a document to be celebrated and promptly placed into some obscure drawer,” Schmotter said. “It is a roadmap, not a check-off list of action steps to be implemented in a top-down fashion. As we follow this map, we will continue to depend on voices and insights from all segments of the university.

The trustees’ unanimous vote on the master plan, which calls for broad physical upgrades to both campuses, followed a presentation by Schmuter, who showed a slide show that is available for download at www.wcsu.edu/news/events/publication/bot.asp.

Strategic, master plans OK’d

by Paul Steinmetz

WestConn’s strategic plan and 10-year master plan both took strong steps forward as the Board of Trustees of the Connecticut State University (CSU) System approved the master plan on March 16 and the University Senate unanimously endorsed the strategic plan on March 28.

The strategic plan has been in development since 2004, when President James W. Schmotter called for members of the university and local communities to develop a vision and roadmap for WestConn to follow into the future.

Teams developed positions on WestConn’s comparative advantages; strategic enrollment management; student success; assessing costs of external partnerships, and issues involving summer and intersession programs. The process involved

Student projects in the spotlight on Research Day

Below is a sampling of mentions about WestConn that appeared recently in the local media. Unless otherwise noted, the articles appeared in The News-Times. March and April 2007

SPEAKER DISCUSSES EFFORTS TO TREAT 9/11 WORKERS

When the Twin Towers collapsed on Sept. 11, 2001, the air went black as a cloud of toxic dust and smoke mushroomed out and enveloped Lower Manhattan. Emergency workers ran into it, toward the center of the devastation. “Our feeling was that air you can see, air we could breathe,” said President James W. Schmotter of the CSU Chancellor David G. Carter to push through the agreement.

Herzog, chancellor of the state’s community college system, Connecticut, Southern Connecticut and Western Connecticut state universities. The partnership is “a competitive university,” according to Kwok. “Our vision is to feel like a private university at a public school cost.”
**Student projects in spotlight on Research Day**

by Robert Taylor

Students pursuing studies in disciplines ranging from chemistry and psychology to management and nursing will come together in an exhibition celebrating the diversity of research activity taking place at WestConn during the university’s third annual Research Day on Thursday, May 10.

WestConn Research Day (WRD) will showcase undergraduate and graduate student research achievement in a poster exhibition running from 2:30 to 4 p.m.beginning at 2 p.m. in the Swasey Center last floor at 4 p.m. The public session of Research Day will begin at 2 p.m. in Room 125 of the Science Building with a keynote talk by Cornell University Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Matthew Spivey, whose pioneering studies in the fields of psychology and neural science have challenged traditional theories of information processing. Admission to the keynote lecture, the poster display session and the closing award ceremony will be free and the public is invited.

Spivey’s new book “The Continuity of Mind,” published by Oxford University Press, “draws on cognitive science, biology, mathematical modeling and dynamic systems to take a paradigm shift in how we think about human thought,” WestConn Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Robin Flanagan observed.

Spivey holds a Ph.D. in brain and cognitive sciences from the University of Rochester, and currently serves as co-director of the Cognitive Studies Program and principal investigator of the Language Action Perception Dynamics Laboratory at Cornell. He has received grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation to study cognitive linguistics, sentence comprehension, interaction between language and vision, and related subjects that contributed to his conceptualization of the “dynamic systems” theory at the core of “The Continuity of Mind.”

“Spivey lays bare the fact that comprehending a spoken sentence, understanding a visual scene, or just thinking about the day’s events involves the serial coalescing of different activation patterns in the brain’s neurons,” the Oxford University Press book summary noted. “As a result, your moment-by-moment experience of the world around you, even right now, can be described as a continuous trajectory through diverse mental states.”

“With a keen sense of history, a twinkle in his eye, and a clear focus on the challenges ahead, Spivey takes us on a fascinating voyage of exploration in this new, continuous and dynamically changing world.” — Stanford University Professor of Psychology Dr. Jay McClelland wrote in his review of the book.

WestConn Research Day 2007 attracted several hundred guests from the university and local communities to view nearly 70 research presentations by students majoring in diverse fields ranging from the physical and social sciences to business and the arts. Assistant Professor of Chemistry Dr. Jennifer Frederick, chairperson of the WRD 2007 faculty organizing committee, said the event’s emphasis on the university’s breadth in student research is an important feature of the annual event.

“This year we hope to encourage even broader participation by increasing the number of academic disciplines represented,” Frederick said. “WRD events have a unique energy fueled by showcasing the remarkable efforts of WestConn students, and it gives the university a chance to recognize them and experience pride in the fruits of our collective efforts.”

Flanagan noted WRD provides an opportunity to “build on” and continue the growing buzz about research and scholarly activity at the university.

**New book explores mathematician’s early works**

by Robert Taylor

WestConn Professor of Mathematics Dr. C. Edward Sandifer has returned often during his academic career to the inspiration and insight of Leonhard Euler’s pioneering works — so often that he has come to know the 18th century mathematician’s output, a role model, and the subject of his newly released book.

“IF I met him today and we could get past the general differences between his century and mine, I feel as though I would like him,” Sandifer said as he reflected on the personality of the Swiss-born giant whose wide-ranging and prolific works have shaped the development of modern-day mathematics. “He worked well with his students, and I could never hope to be more of a student than Euler”.

Sandifer’s book “The Early Mathematics of Leonhard Euler,” published this year to mark the 300th anniversary of Euler’s birth, provides an overview of his remarkably diverse mathematical work during his first tenure at the Imperial Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg from 1727 to 1741. This 14-year period of research, which yielded some 50 papers on mathematics, laid the foundations for his important contributions to mathematical notation and analysis and breakthrough discoveries in number theory, functions, differential calculus, geometry, trigonometry, mechanics, optics, acoustics, astronomy and other fields.

“Much of what he did in his later life was based on what he did in that early period in St. Petersburg so, to get a better appreciation of his later work, I had to understand how he started out,” Sandifer said. Beyond the sheer brilliance of Euler’s insights, he discovered an intellectual passion and clarity of thought that his subject brought to each of his papers, whether his historic solution to “The Basel Problem” or his applied mathematical research to solve diverse problems of fluid and structural mechanics.

“Every time I read one of his papers or articles, I feel like this was his favorite subject,” he said. The breathtaking reach of Euler’s scientific inquiries has made his work relevant to researchers in virtually every branch of mathematics, he said, and many findings of these studies are still applied to tasks as diverse as calculating water flow through a pipe, roller movement of a Professor of Psychology Dr. Robin Flanagan observed.

There are about 120 mathematical concepts today that are named after Euler: Euler formulas, Euler identities, Euler constants, Euler series, Euler methods,” he said. “They define the way we do things. They have become a part of our culture.”

Sandifer’s research interest in Euler dates back more than a decade to his decision to specialize in the history of mathematics, which has proven a perfect complement to his first love of teaching mathematics as an undergraduate and graduate levels at WestConn. He soon discovered that many of his historical
Open-air ‘classrooms’ provide abundant learning opportunities

by Ariel Jaquez

When visiting a foreign country, it is important to understand its history, its people and its culture. “Understanding a culture on its own terms is imperative, especially when providing humanitarian assistance,” said Jessica Harding, who accompanied Adjunct Professor of Anthropology Jeannie Hatcherson and Professor of Education Dr. Darla Shaw to Cambodia on a volunteer mission with Hearts and Hands for Cambodia, a nonprofit organization co-founded by former Newtown resident Gwendolyn Taylor.

While there, the group volunteered at a rural Cambodian school and an orphanage. They fulfilled daily tasks like bathing the children and feeding them. Also, with Shaw’s guidance, the student volunteers worked with a Cambodian school building with the child-miniders, utilizing every item available to create a functional day care plan.

“It was great to make a difference in their education program,” Shaw said. “It was amazing how in just one week, they were able to implement that program and embed it into their culture.”

Hatcherson, who in January 2006 took WestConn students on a medical mission in Bangladesh, said the trip was a powerful learning experience for students. “They are collecting mosquitoes and sand flies, and they bring them back and look at them, analyzing them as vectors of disease,” Hatcherson said of Munstermann’s research. The main diseases they are looking are at yellow fever and malaria.

“Another problem is pollution — the plants don’t grow in pollution. As a biologist, it’s important to learn about all the species that exist there for different evolutionary studies. You can see how the plants change and adapt.”

How did she benefit from her field experience? “I have a better focus on what I want to do now,” Tkacik said.

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Professor of Anthropology Dr. Laurie Weinstein at the Valley Forge historic site in Pennsylvania.

If you happen to see Professors Laurie Weinstein and Bethany Morrison walking through the woods this summer with a group of students equipped with maps and compasses, don’t tell anyone their location.

The reason is that the professors and their students will be mapping a long-forgotten Revolutionary War campsite, and they don’t want collectors, looters or anyone else tampering with a potentially rich historical site. “It’s a real pristine site and help preserve it,” said Dr. Weinstein, professor of anthropology and chairperson of the department of social sciences at WestConn.

Weinstein and Morrison, adjunct professors of anthropology, were asked by local Revolutionary War experts, Kathleen von Jenna and Dan Cruson to map and study the campsite that was used by the Continental Army. Interestingly, the campsite first came to the attention of the WestConn community about 40 years ago. At that time, two professors visited the site and completed a small dig over a brief period, Weinstein said. But no extensive study of the area has ever been completed.

From May 29 through June 29, Weinstein, Morrison and 15 students will participate in the 2007 WestConn Summer Field School at the campsite. Field school participants will include WestConn students and archaeology students from across the country who will learn mapping, archaeological reconnaissance and subsurface testing and excavation.

The field school is part of the Cultural Resource Management program at WestConn. The program, which offers an 18-credit minor, was developed by Weinstein and is the only program of its kind in Connecticut leading to a bachelor’s degree.

Weinstein said local experts learned of the camp’s existence through the discovery of remains such as “firebacks.” When the Continental Army constructed large wooden huts at the site, they heated the buildings with fireplaces. At the back of the fireplaces, stones were placed at the back to increase their efficiency and to protect the fireplace from heat damage.

The camp, which held 800 to 1,200 soldiers from the 1st Connecticut Brigade under the command of Gen. Samuel H. Parsons, was strategically important to the war effort. The location enabled the Continental Army to protect supplies held in Danbury and the coastal towns along Long Island Sound.

The camp will attempt to determine the size of the camp and also catalogue and map the remains of the encampment. “We’re going to go out and locate everything on the ground to get an idea of how big this encampment is,” Weinstein said. “There are questions as to who was there. We’re going to check muster rolls to determine if it were men or women. Are the long-Americans and women present. We don’t know where they lived and how they lived. Wouldn’t it be cool to find out about them?”

To prepare for the field school, Weinstein and two students who will participate in the field school, Laura Sullivan and Emily Siciliano, visited Valley Forge over spring break. Now a national park, Valley Forge was the camp used by Gen. George Washington and his 12,000 troops during the winter of 1777-78. More than 3,000 tents were constructed at the site, and the group from WestConn was able to tour Valley Forge to see firsthand the construction and layout of a Continental Army camp. Valley Forge museum technician Scott Houtz told the group samples of artifacts that they might be expected to discover.

Once the field school completes its work, the notes and data collected by the students will be used to develop a report that will be presented to the camp’s owner. What will happen next remains to be determined. “The future will depend upon the owners,” Weinstein said.

For more information about archaeology at WestConn or to register for the field school, visit http://westconn.edu/art/archaeology/summer_2007.htm and http://people.wcssu.edu/ weinst/laurie/summer_2007.htm.

Research Day (cont’d.)

excellent opportunity for “students across the university to present their research to faculty and colleagues,” offering a rare cross-disciplinary venue to share and exchange research insights. Participating students submitted their projects in advance to their faculty research advisers for endorsement, and faculty members in turn submitted approved studies to the WRD organizing committee for final review.

In addition to Frederick and Flanagan, members of the WRD 2007 committee include Associate Professor of Management Information Systems (MIS) Dr. Richard Bassett, Assistant Professor of English Dr. Emilio Colliar, Assistant Professor of Nursing Dr. Karen Crouse, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies Dr. Sarah Maskel, and Associate Professor of Nursing Dr. Catherine Rice. Frederick confirmed Provost Rardin and President James W. Schmortt for their generous support of WRD.

For more information, call Frederick at (203) 837-9865 or Maskel at (203) 837-8797.

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Neuwirth remembered in library donation, lecture series

Dr. Steven D. Neuwirth

The life and scholarship of the late WestConn Professor of English Steven D. Neuwirth will be remembered at the hometown public library where he spent many hours in reading and research, and in a new lecture series to be launched this fall at the university.

Kent Memorial Library, serving the western Connecticut town where Neuwirth and his wife Margaret Solomon settled in 1985, recently memorialized the longtime WestConn faculty member with the purchase of a round oak computer table for general use by patrons. Solomon’s memorial donation to the library financed the acquisition, and the table bears a bronze plaque with the inscription, “In memory of Prof. Steven D. Neuwirth, 1944-2004, with gratitude to the library staff.”

His scholarly legacy will live on at WestConn with launch of a new lecture series dedicated to Neuwirth during the fall 2007 semester. Dean of Arts and Sciences Dr. Linda Yaden-Goud said a committee has been established to select the speaker for the first lecture in the series, scheduled for Oct. 4.

A New York City native and graduate of City University of New York and Washington University in St. Louis, Mo., Neuwirth made significant contributions to academic program development at WestConn from the 1980s until his retirement in 2003. He died in February 2004 after a long struggle with a rare bone tumor disease known as chordoma.

Neuwirth helped to establish the university’s Honors Program and served as its first director. The Honors Council recognized his role in the program’s founding with introduction in 2005 of the annual Steven Neuwirth Honors Program Award.

A specialist in Early American literature and history, Neuwirth played an important role in the organization of a multi-disciplinary American Studies curriculum at WestConn. He served as a director of academic advisement services at WestConn, and visited the University of Lancaster on a Fulbright Fellowship during the 1992-93 academic year to assist in development of an American Studies program at the English institution.

In a recent interview with the Litchfield County Times, Solomon noted Neuwirth continued to spend hours in reading, research and writing at the Kent library even after his illness forced him to retire from the English department faculty in spring 2003. She said the memorial gift represented a fitting tribute to library staff members who sought to provide assistance and comfort to their lifelong patron as his illness progressed.

Citing the planning underway for a Neuwirth lecture series at WestConn, Solomon observed her husband’s academic career reflected a lifelong passion for teaching.

“Steve was all about the students,” Solomon said. She recalled that her husband once told her, “I have had such a wonderful life. I found myself in teaching.”

WestConn Society honors Hawley family, Hawkes

Members of the Hawley family (pictured) were honored by President James W. Schneider and the WestConn Society for their longtime support of the university. Dean of the School of Visual and Performing Arts Dr. Carol Hawkes (not pictured) also was honored at the event for her outstanding service to and support of the university.

Ervie Hawley began building homes in Danbury more than 50 years ago. He moved on to construction of shopping centers and office buildings, and over the years the Hawley Companies have been as responsible as any organization for the growth and business vitality of the region.

Harold C. Wibling, president of the Savings Bank of Danbury, presented the Hawleys to the luncheon guests.

With the Hawley family, Wibling said, “You get character, you get integrity, and a strong desire to help others. Over the years, I’ve found those traits demonstrated in all the works of the Hawley family.”

Gary Hawley accepted the award for his family. He noted that his parents “set the bar for us as far as civic involvement.” The Hawleys have always supported students, including those at Danbury High School. Immaculate High School and Abbott Technical High School. WestConn students in the Ance School of Business benefit from the Hawley Family Endowed Scholarship.

“It’s all about changing lives for the better and giving someone a chance to excel,” Gary Hawley said. Dr. Koryoe Anin-Wright, vice president for Institutional Advancement, introduced Hawleys, who joined WestConn as dean of the School of Arts and Sciences after serving as president of Endicott College.

“What her impressive resume doesn’t capture is her spirit and character,” Anin-Wright said. “Her resilience, creativity and strength have enabled her to excel at the many diverse positions and initiatives she’s undertaken. ... She is consistent in her beliefs, persuasive in her delivery, determined in her quest to work collaboratively to achieve results, and strong in her resolve to expect nothing but the best from herself and those who surround her.”

Hawkes described herself as “sort of the Ribbetgaardster—this wonderful award,” which she accepted on behalf of the artistic spirit that the School of Visual and Performing Arts represents.

“We need her kind of people,” Hawley said. “We really help ourselves as well as them when we support them. We need to draw upon what those people can give us.”

Social sciences graduates discuss life after WCSU

Students listened intently as alumnus from WestConn’s social sciences department returned to campus in April to tell them about the career paths they were able to choose as a result of their degrees. Vicki Hackett, who graduated in 1989 with a bachelor’s in sociology/anthropology, went on to earn a law degree and now works as a staff attorney for the State of Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel. Melissa Terri, a 2006 political science and justice and law administration graduate, conducts environmental, political and legal research for the Candlewood Lake Authority and will be entering a political science doctoral program in the fall. Chris Tinea, a 2005 political science graduate, is active in the Danbury Peace Coalition, Ship the Rauds and Connecticut United for Peace.
Qi publishes book of short essays

Associate Professor of English Dr. Shouhuai Qi has had his second novel published. “Red Guard Fantasies and Other Stories” is a compelling collection of short essays reflecting on the post-Cultural Revolution experience of China. Partially an autobiographical account of Qi’s own experiences, the book contrasts the traditional values and lifestyles of China against the urban, fast-paced culture it has become.

The novel has received positive reviews, and Qi has been interviewed by various media outlets, including The New York Times. The book is available in English and Chinese, and is expected to be translated into other languages in the future.

New York Times science writer extols science literacy

Cornelia Dean is on a mission to educate the American public about science and to build an informed electorate. She believes that science literacy is crucial for democracy.

Speaking at the Science Building on April 12 as guest lecturer in WestConn’s continuing “Science at Night” series, Dean observed that the demands upon the electorate to address complicated issues are increasing.

She said that WestConn has moved to fulfill the responsibility to provide a “decent grounding in scientific literacy.”

Dean pointed out that WestConn students are “engaged, bright, and eager to learn.” She added that the students are “reinforced” by the classroom and the teaching of evolution to global warming and missile defense systems.

Newfiel is an opportunity to schedule follow-up interviews. “We had very good feedback from employers,” Gernert said. “There are students who already have second interviews lined up. It’s the fastest follow-up we’ve ever had, especially since it was on a holiday weekend.”

WestConn hosts Bethel Middle School Science Fair

Do bulls bounce higher when warm? Will olives all present apples from browsing? Do pets have a dominant paw? These were just some of the many interesting scientific questions studied by Bethel Middle School 7th and 8th graders who presented their Science Fair projects in the Science Building Atrium.

The projects were judged by a panel of faculty and administrators who came together to celebrate Musical Arts Assistant Laura Piechota’s selection as Employee of the Semester. President James W. Schmotter said, “We're honoring the wonderful job Laura does, but we are also honoring the wonderful job the wonderful job Laura does, but also honoring the wonderful job Laura does.”

Piechota, who has been with the university for 20 years, has been instrumental in bringing the university’s arts and humanities programs to the forefront. She has been involved in many events, including the Arts and Humanities Center at UB.

“Miss Piechota is a wonderful person,” said Dean. “She gets involved in everything that is very public and brings the public into the university. Ives Concert Hall in White Hall is the front porch for the university and Laura keeps that porch clean and inviting.”

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“I'm so honored,” Piechota said. “I couldn’t do any of what I do without the cooperation of the music department, my students and everyone in this room who I’ve worked with at one time or another.”

Special guest speaker for the event will be Barbara A. Taylor, Ph.D., a professor at UB.

WestConn professor receives Distinguished Alumni Award

Professor of Education Dr. Darla Shaw will receive the Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Education and Human Resources at UB on Friday, May 18.

Shaw, who earned her sixth-year certification in reading and doctorate from UB, said she will speak about her teaching endeavors worldwide. The ceremony will be at 6:30 p.m. in the Littlefield Recital Hall of the Bernhard Arts and Humanities Center at UB.

“Congratulations!”

If you have an announcement about a recent appointment to a board, an award or other professional accomplishment you'd like to share in this section, please e-mail the information to pr@wcsu.edu.
Contract majors take charge of their own education

by Anil Jaquar

Some students enter college with a clear idea of what they want to study. But that idea can change, and many students find themselves changing majors once, or even multiple times. For some, finding a major is difficult. For those students who have an understanding of their varied interests, WestConn offers opportunities to create one’s own major. As contract majors, students can concentrate on what it is they want to study.

“For so long I’ve been an exploratory studies major, not knowing where I was going,” said Addison Larson, a sophomore and prospective contract major in forensic anthropology. “The contract major gave me something to focus on.”

As a contract major, Larson is rare — because most students at WestConn have no idea such a program exists, said Assistant Director of Advising Lisa Peck. “The contract major is not widely publicized, and students are preprogrammed to just look at the catalog and base their decisions off that,” Peck said.

“Dr. James Munz, chairperson of the philosophy and humanistic studies department and contract major adviser, noted faculty also are often unaware of the degree option.

“Most faculty members don’t even know what a contract major is,” said Munz, who works with students during the first stages of their contract major.

“I advise students in the direction they want to go by helping them fine-tune their ideas,” Munz said. “Then I explain the procedures, and tell them to choose an adviser they are comfortable with, so long as the adviser is in the department they will be working in.”

The student must write a proposal and sign signatures from the chairpersons of the departments in which he or she plans to take courses for the major. The student then meets with the Committee for Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards (CUS) to determine whether the proposal is appropriate for a degree. A student should have at least 75 credits prior to presenting their contract major for approval. If approved, CUS later sends notice to the provost for a final confirmation of the major.

“Some students enter college with a clear understanding of what they want to do, and others become aware of the contract major.

“The contract major is a nice opportunity for students,” he said. “It’s a way of using existing course work in creative ways.”

The author is a senior who designed his own contract major in anthropology and journalism.

Mathematician’s early works (cont’d.)

inquiries in math led back to Euler. As Euler wrote most of his original mathematical works in Latin — with additional important texts published in French and German — Sandifer found he owed an improbable debt of thanks to “a bad undergraduate adviser who botched the recommendations for my foreign language requirement” during his studies at Dartmouth College. His shifting academic goals, before settling on a major in mathematics, left him with a curriculum vita boasting courses in Latin, French, German and Spanish — more than his degree required, but precisely what he had needed to read centuries-old mathematical texts and papers. He currently is studying Russian to gain a better appreciation of Euler’s correspondence, his work in St. Petersburg period.

As a result, Sandifer has become one of the nation’s leading experts on Eulerian mathematical principles, sharing his research on the 18th century master’s life and works through his monthly column “How Euler Did It” on the Web site of the Mathematical Association of America. He is a co-founder of The Euler Project, a group dedicated to promoting the teaching and translation of Euler’s works, and served as co-organizer of a short course on Euler presented at the national Joint Mathematics Meetings held this January in New Orleans. Stealing a page from the late-night talk shows, Sandifer polled participants in the course to find “Euler’s Chain of Theorems.” Topping the list was Euler’s elegant solution to “The Basel Problem,” the sum of the squares of the reciprocals of the square numbers, taken to infinity.

“Calculus had solved all of the problems of the previous century except for The Basel Problem, and you knew that if you solved this last problem, it would be like capturing the king in a game of chess,” he said. “And that is just what happened. It opened new doors to some of the problems that continue to be the subject of our research today.”

In addition to being “by far the most important scientist of the 1700s,” Euler also provided crucial scientific foundations for contemporaries such as Benjamin Franklin to build revolutionary political theories of modern democracy. Sandifer noted: “The leaders of democratic movements in America and Europe wanted to base their theories on science, and in part our democratic social system today is based on the concepts developed by Euler.”

And an experiment he designed was in the form of an educational assignment that participants this April in his 35th consecutive Boston Marathon, Sandifer is committed to getting distance runners farther. As well as the publication of “The Early Mathematics of Leonhard Euler” marked the start of a bicentennial year that will also bring the release of three other Euler books to which Sandifer has contributed articles. He has turned his research attention now to the later years of Euler’s life, including his 25 years’ service at the Prussian scientific academy sponsored by Frederick the Great and his subsequent return to the St. Petersburg academy. Though blind in his final years in Russia, he noted: “Euler could still do magnificent calculations in his head, and he relied on his assistants to help him complete 40 to 50 papers in those years. Now that I have an understanding of his early period, I am beginning to look at his late mathematics — look for that book in several years!”

To read Sandifer’s monthly column, “How Euler Did It,” go to www.maa.org/leoma/howeulerdidit.html.

Under the plan, a performance center to house the new School of Visual and Performing Arts would be built on the Westside campus. The plan also calls for construction of a new Performing Arts Center, both to provide performance space for student groups and community members, and to house the arts center. A pedestrian quadrangle would be designed in place of the new Performing Arts Center and Visual and Performing Arts would be replaced with another quadrangle (see the artist’s drawing on page 1). A new Convocation Center.

Plans OK’d (cont’d.)
**May 1 Honors Convocation:** The Acelon School of Business will host an Honors Convocation at 7:30 p.m. in Room 218 of the Classroom Building on the WestConn campus. The public is invited to this annual event at which scholarship and award recipients are honored. For more information, call (203) 837-4845.

**May 2 Poetry Reading:** The Department of World Languages and Literature will host “Worlds of Poetry” from 4:30 to 7 p.m. in Alumni Hall on the Midtown campus. The reading will feature poets who will present poems in original non-English languages on the topic of “The City.” The event will be free and the public is invited. For more information, call (203) 837-8672.

**May 2 – 10 Art Exhibits:** The Sessa Arts Exhibition, featuring the work of graduating students in graphic design, illustration, photography and studio art, will be on display in the Frank and Anne Castagna Gallery from May 2 to 10. Weekdays in Higgins Hall on the Midtown campus. There will be an artist reception at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, May 2. The exhibition will be free and open to the public. For more information, call (203) 837-8470.

**May 3 Holistic Health Fair:** The Institute for Holistic Health Studies at WestConn and the Connecticut Holistic Health Association will present a health fair from 4 to 7 p.m. in the Ballroom of the Westside Campus Center on the WestConn campus. The event will be free and the public is invited. For more information, call (203) 837-8244.

**May 3 Honors Convocation:** The School of Professional Studies will host an Honors Convocation at 7:30 p.m. in Ives Concert Hall in White Hall on the Midtown campus. The public is invited to this annual event at which scholarship and award recipients are honored. For more information, call (203) 837-8672.

**May 3 Telescope Viewing:** WestConn will host a star party, featuring telescope viewing of the night sky from 8 to 10 p.m. at the Science Building Observatory on the Midtown campus. The event will be free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.wcsu.edu/col/obs/ or call the Office of Institutional Advancement at (203) 837-8279.

**May 5 Planetarium Show/Telescope Viewing:** WestConn will host a show at 7 p.m. “Romans of the Gallinaeum” planetarium show, followed by telescope viewing of Venus, Saturn and the spring sky from 9 to 11 p.m., at the Westside Observatory and Planetarium on the Westside campus. The event will be free and open to the public. For more information, call (203) 837-4988.

**May 7 Honors Convocation:** The School of Visual and Performing Arts will host an Honors Convocation at 7:30 p.m. in Ives Concert Hall in White Hall on the Midtown campus. The public is invited to this annual event at which scholarship and award recipients are honored. For more information, call (203) 837-4988.

**May 8 Art Slide Lecture:** Painter Robert Berlind will discuss his work at 11 a.m. at Teter Farm, 720 Rid Hill Road in Wilton. Berlind has been actively exhibiting an abstraction-based, painterly realism in shows for more than 30 years. He is the recipient of an award in painting from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. The event will be free and open to the public, and it will be presented as part of the university’s Master of Fine Arts slide lecture series. For more information, call (203) 837-4981.

**May 8 Book Signing:** Professor of History and Asian-Western Cultures Dr. Burton Peretti and Professor of English Dr. Shohoua Qi will meet from 1 to 3 p.m. in Higgins Hall on the Midtown campus. The event will be free and open to the public, and it will be presented as part of the university’s Master of Fine Arts slide lecture series. For more information, call (203) 837-8486.

**May 9 Symphony Band and Wind Ensemble Concert:** The WCSU Symphony Band and Wind Ensemble will perform at 7 p.m. in Ives Concert Hall in White Hall on the Midtown campus. The event will be free and open to the public; donations to the music department will be accepted. For more information, call (203) 837-8300.

**May 10 Research Day:** WestConn Research Day, enabling students from across the university to present their research to faculty and colleagues, will be from 2 to 5 p.m. in the Science Building Auditorium on the Midtown campus. The event will feature faculty- endorsed student research presentations in a variety of academic disciplines. The event will be free and the public is invited. For more information, call (203) 837-8471 or (203) 837-8799. See story on page 2.

**May 10 Coffee House:** WestConn will present the Midtown Coffeehouse at 8 p.m. in Alumni Hall on the Midtown campus. The Coffeehouse will include open mic performers at 8 p.m., followed by the featured act, Amy Gerhart, at 9 p.m. Admission will be free and the public is invited. Call (203) 837-8700 for more information.

**May 10 Planetarium Show/Telescope Viewing:** WestConn will host a show at 7 p.m. “Realms of Galaxies” planetarium show, followed by telescope viewing of Venus, Saturn and the spring sky from 9 to 11 p.m., at the Westside Observatory and Planetarium on the Westside campus. The event will be free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.wcsu.edu/col/obs/ or call the Office of Institutional Advancement at (203) 837-8279.

**May 10 & 12 Theatre Production:** The WCSU Play Production class will present David Mamet’s “Sexual Perversity in Chicago” at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 10, and 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 12, in the Remick Theatre in Berkshire Hall on the Midtown campus. The public is invited and the performance will be free; donations to the theatre arts department will be accepted. The play contains adult content and is not recommended for children. For more information, call (203) 842-3999.

**May 11 CCSU Psychology Day:** The 10th annual Connecticut State University (CSU) Psychology Day will be free and open to the public; general admission tickets will be $98 for platinum seats, $75 for gold seats, $52 for reserved seats and $33 for lawn admission, can be purchased at (203) 837-8499 or wcsu.edu/tickets.

**May 20 Concert:** Earth, Wind & Fire will perform at 7:30 p.m. at the Ives Concert Park on the WestConn campus. Tickets will be $98 for platinum seats, $75 for gold seats, $52 for reserved seats and $33 for lawn admission, can be purchased at (203) 837-8499 or wcsu.edu/tickets.

**May 22 Children’s Theatre Production:** WestConn will present an original play, “The Ballad of William Tell” written and directed by Dr. Michael M. Moore, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 22, in Ives Concert Hall in White Hall on the Midtown campus. The performance will be free and open to the public; donations to the music department will be accepted. For more information, call (203) 837-8300.

**May 24 Conference:** WestConn will host a day of math enrichment workshops for Connecticut’s mathematically inclined students in grades five through eight from 8 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. in White Hall on the Midtown campus. The workshops, sponsored by the WestConn Math Club, the WCSU Mathematics Department, and the WCSU Math Club, will cost $32 for students and chaperones. For registration information and a workshop schedule, visit www.wcsu.edu/math/summerworkshops/ or call (203) 837-5986.

**May 28 Conference:** D健身, Wind & Fire will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Ives Concert Park on the WestConn campus. Tickets will be $98 for platinum seats, $75 for gold seats, $52 for reserved seats and $33 for lawn admission, can be purchased at (203) 837-8499 or wcsu.edu/tickets.

**July 7 Benefit Concert:** WestConn will host an evening with the Branford Music and Arts Foundation Benefit the Ford Foundation Scholarship Fund at 8 p.m. in Ives Concert Hall in White Hall on the Midtown campus. The public is invited. Ticket prices will range from $27 to $112, and may be purchased at wcsu.edu/tickets or by calling (203) 837-8499.

**July 28 Concert:** Farmer “American Idol” finalist Paris Bennett will perform at 7:30 p.m. at the Ives Concert Park on the WestConn campus. Tickets prices have not yet been determined; when tickets are made available, they can be purchased at (203) 837-8499 or wcsu.edu/tickets.

**Twenty-First Annual Western Connecticut State University Ball**

**WestConn will host** a special evening of fun on Saturday, May 5, 2007.