

Rockefeller University

Digital Commons @ RU

BenchMarks 2008

BenchMarks

12-2008

BenchMarks 2008, December 12

The Rockefeller University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.rockefeller.edu/benchmarks_2008



SCIENCE FOR THE BENEFIT OF HUMANITY

BENCHMARKS

THE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flu shots are available. Occupational Health Services is administering flu shots free of charge to all interested members of campus, including employees of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center, Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the Population Council who work on the Rockefeller campus. Shots are available in room 118 of The Rockefeller University Hospital, daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call x8414.

Sustainability Web site launches. Communications and Public Affairs, in conjunction with the Green Task Force, has launched Sustainability at The Rockefeller University, a Web site created to communicate information about green initiatives set in place across campus. For more information, visit www.rockefeller.edu/sustainability.

Holiday Lectures are December 29. Professor Sanford M. Simon will give this year's Rockefeller University Holiday Lectures on Science for High School Students. The topic will be "Life, through a Lens: What You Can Learn about Biology Simply by Looking." Over 400 students from more than 30 area high schools have signed up to attend.

Secure wireless network launches. The campus wireless network has been upgraded to make it possible to access restricted university resources without using the virtual private network (VPN). The new network, RUWirelessSecure, allows laptop users to establish a secure, encrypted connection to the network and the internet. To connect, use the username and password you use to log in to e-mail, central file store (CFS) and other electronic services on the campus network.

New fax number for The Principal. Claims for flexible spending accounts and The Rockefeller University Group Health Care Expense Plan may be faxed to a new toll-free number: 1-888-308-5270. This number replaces the current number, 719-548-4003, which will be disconnected on December 31.

Announcements for this page may be submitted to thenning@rockefeller.edu.

BENCHMARKS

Paul Nurse, President
Jane Rendall, Corporate Secretary
Joe Bonner, Director of Communications
Zach Veilleux, Executive Editor
Talley Henning Brown, Associate Editor

BenchMarks is published monthly and is distributed on the campus of The Rockefeller University. It is produced by the Office of Communications and Public Affairs. The Rockefeller University is an affirmative action/equal employment opportunity employer. © 2008 The Rockefeller University.

Printed with vegetable-based inks on recycled paper made from 100 percent postconsumer waste.

FINANCE

World financial crisis impacts university budget

Turmoil in the world's financial markets and a contraction of the national and local economies have begun to affect the university's finances. In response, Rockefeller University's administrators and trustees have initiated a review of the economic assumptions and models that drive the budget-planning process.

"In the past few months, there has been extraordinary volatility in the world's financial markets and the broader economy," says Jim Lapple, the university's treasurer and vice president for finance. "The downturn is seen as likely the most serious in decades. Rockefeller is not invulnerable to these disruptions."

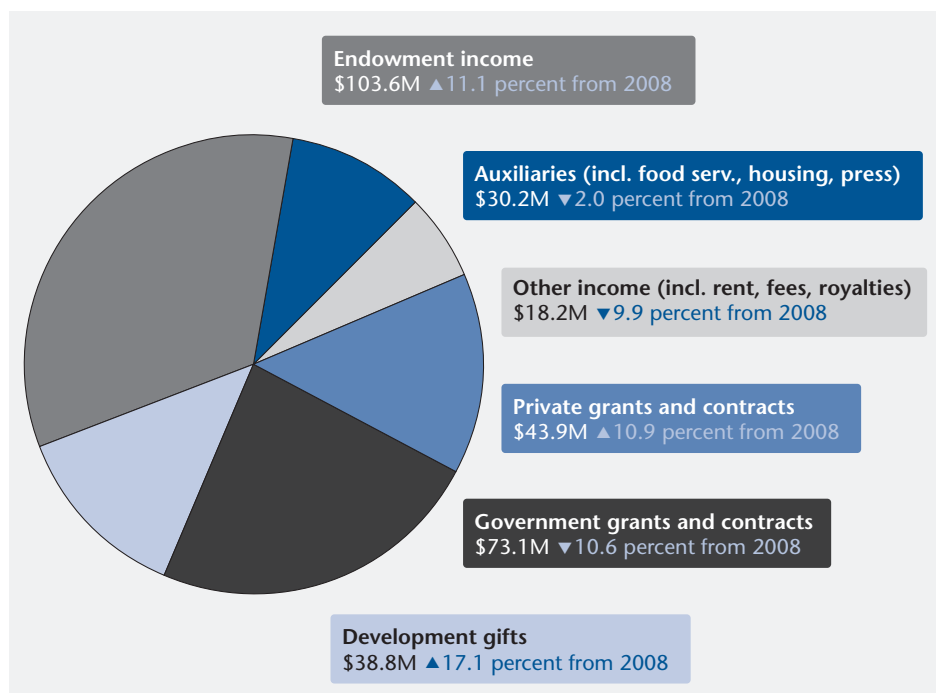
The short-term cash flow problems that developed earlier this fall have been resolved (see "University funds temporarily frozen during banking crisis," below), but longer-term budget issues will remain as proceeds from the endowment fall along with the decline of the stock market and revenue from federal grants and private donations becomes less predictable. "How the economy fares over the next several months will determine how we will have to adjust our expenditures," says Paul Nurse, the university's president. "Once there is some stabilization in the wider economy, we will be better able to assess what action is required to protect the university's operations over the longer term."

"The budget for the current year was prepared utilizing conservative assumptions, and we are confident that it remains stable," says Mr. Lapple (see charts, right). "What we need to be prepared for is a further deterioration of the economy that may impact our ability to maintain our programs in future years."

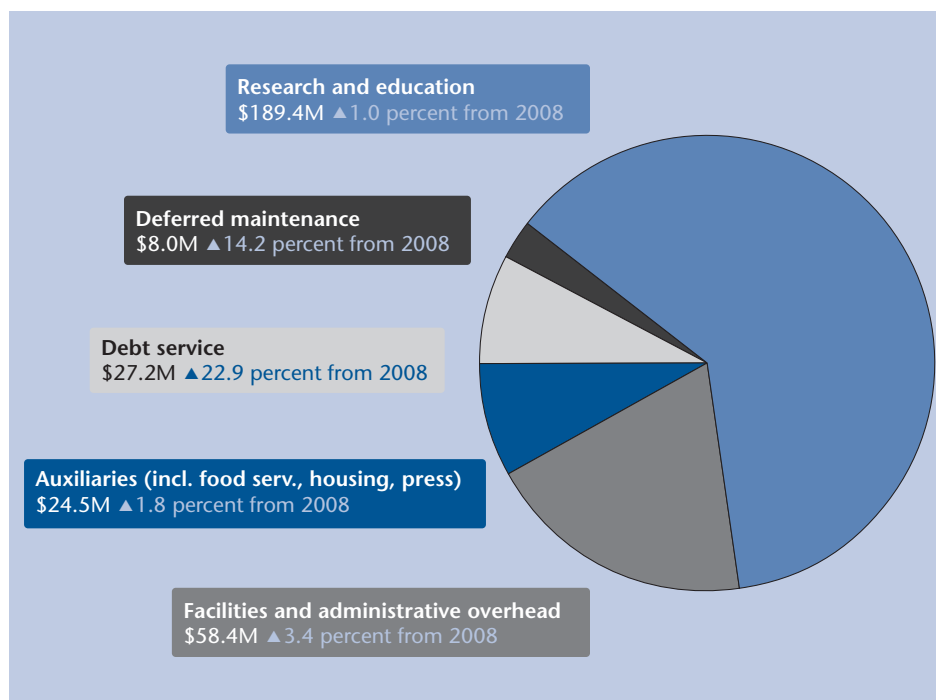
The administration is focused on both the university's short-term needs and its long-term health. "We need to keep calm during this crisis," Dr. Nurse says, "so that we can make considered and careful assessments of the plans we already have in place for 2009 and beyond in the light of the changed circumstances. We have the strong

[continued on page 2](#)

FY2009 budgeted revenues: \$307.8M ▲3.0 percent from fiscal year 2008



FY2009 budgeted expenditures: \$307.5M ▲3.0 percent from fiscal year 2008



University funds temporarily frozen during banking crisis

As distress in the markets that buy and sell credit reached its crescendo in late September, the university's finance office received some sudden news: On September 26, a short-term investment fund in which the university held some \$45 million in operating capital would be frozen.

The affected account, which paid a modest interest rate and was used to hold university money for short-term needs like paying vendors and employees, was virtually inaccessible for several weeks. During this time, the university relied on funds in its checking account and accessed an emergency line of credit, set up several years ago, to meet its immediate obligations.

The problems began when a string of

bank failures and forced sales, spurred by widespread instability in the credit markets, led to fears that some banks might be unable to meet their obligations to depositors. In late September, these fears extended to Wachovia Bank, which was then considering being acquired by either Wells Fargo or Citigroup (it reached a deal on October 9 to merge with Wells Fargo).

Like many other institutions, Rockefeller University had funds invested with a nonprofit investment management firm catering specifically to colleges, universities and private secondary schools, Commonfund. One of the firm's products was a fund, known as the Short Term Fund, designed specifically to provide return on working capital. As of mid-September,

the Short Term Fund managed approximately \$9.3 billion on behalf of over 1,000 clients, and it had provided yields surpassing the average three-month Treasury Bill continuously since its inception in 1974. "It is a well-managed, conservative fund run by a very highly regarded firm," says Jim Lapple, the university's treasurer and vice president for finance.

The Short Term Fund, however, used Wachovia Bank as its trustee, allowing the bank to run the day-to-day operations of the fund including buying and processing deposits and withdrawals. On September 26, fearing significant withdrawals from the fund as a result of

[continued on page 2](#)

World financial crisis impacts university budget (continued from page 1)

support of our trustees and we will not be making any hasty decisions which might impact negatively in a significant way on Rockefeller research in the long term.”

About one-third of the university’s revenue comes from proceeds of the endowment, valued at its peak at the end of 2007 at \$2.19 billion. The university’s investments office, led by Chief Investment Officer Lisa Danzig, follows a strategy designed to protect the endowment in lean times. Still, with some financial markets down by 50 percent or more over the past several months, losses in the endowment have been felt. The endowment’s market value has fallen 17.4 percent between June 30 and October 31 (see chart, top right). The endowment spending rate, which dictates how much of the endowment’s funds are made available for operating expenses each year, has been increased over the past few years, and in fiscal year 2010 it will be six percent of the average market value of the endowment over the previous 12 quarters. “This system, which takes into account fluctuations going back three years, is designed to help smooth out short-term gains and losses in the endowment and provide a more stable source of revenue,” says Mr. Lapple. “The effect in this climate is that the impact of a declining endowment will be felt less intensely, but over a longer period.”

Funding from federal and private grants makes up another third of the university’s income, and it is dependent on both the budgets of the organizations that fund the university — particularly the National Institutes of Health — and on the success individual faculty members have in their efforts to secure grants. Though the university’s scientists have competed well in an increasingly tight climate, government grants have fallen slightly over the past three years (see chart, bottom right), largely due to the departure of several senior faculty members. “Grants from private foundations have picked up some of the slack, but private grants do not include nearly as much funding for administrative costs and overhead, which help pay for essential services like electricity and shared resource centers,” says Dr. Nurse. “So even if individual labs maintain their funding, the university as a whole remains under pressure.”

The final third of the university’s operating revenue is derived from fundraising, auxiliaries and other sources, such as rent, royalties and income related to food service, housing and subscriptions to Rockefeller University Press journals. Gifts in support of university operations remain robust and are on track for the current fiscal year. To date, the Development Office has raised one-half of the \$26 million goal for this year’s operating budget. “The Development Office has been formulating a plan for fundraising during the recession, and one of our objectives is to raise additional unrestricted and flexible current-use gifts. While fundraising during today’s economic climate is daunting, Rockefeller remains a philanthropic priority for our trustees and for our many other generous benefactors,” says Marnie Imhoff, vice president for

development. “The university has a much broader base of support than we did five years ago, and individuals and foundations tend to invest in excellence, innovation and the best people during times of more limited resources. These are the characteristics that define The Rockefeller University,” says Dr. Nurse. In an initial response to the financial downturn, there has been preliminary discussion among the trustees and the administration about operating with a budget deficit for a limited period of time. No firm decisions have yet been made, but the university’s policies on the endowment do allow some flexibility in times of financial difficulty.

The concern, however, is that this plan alone will not be a sufficient response. When income falls, reductions in expenses also become necessary. To help address this issue, the university’s administration has already begun implementing a series of cost-containment measures designed to help position the university to better withstand lean economic times. These measures include:

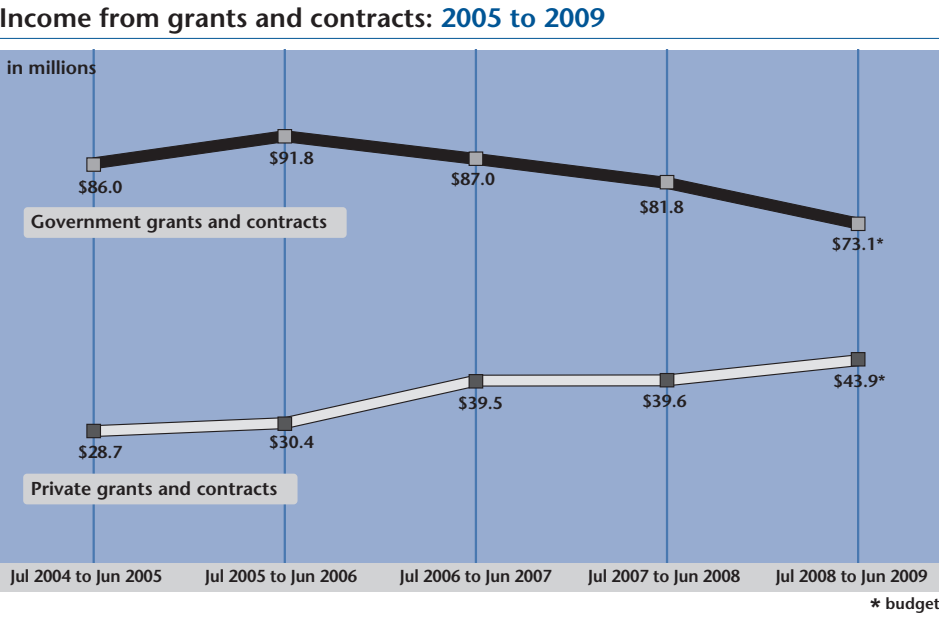
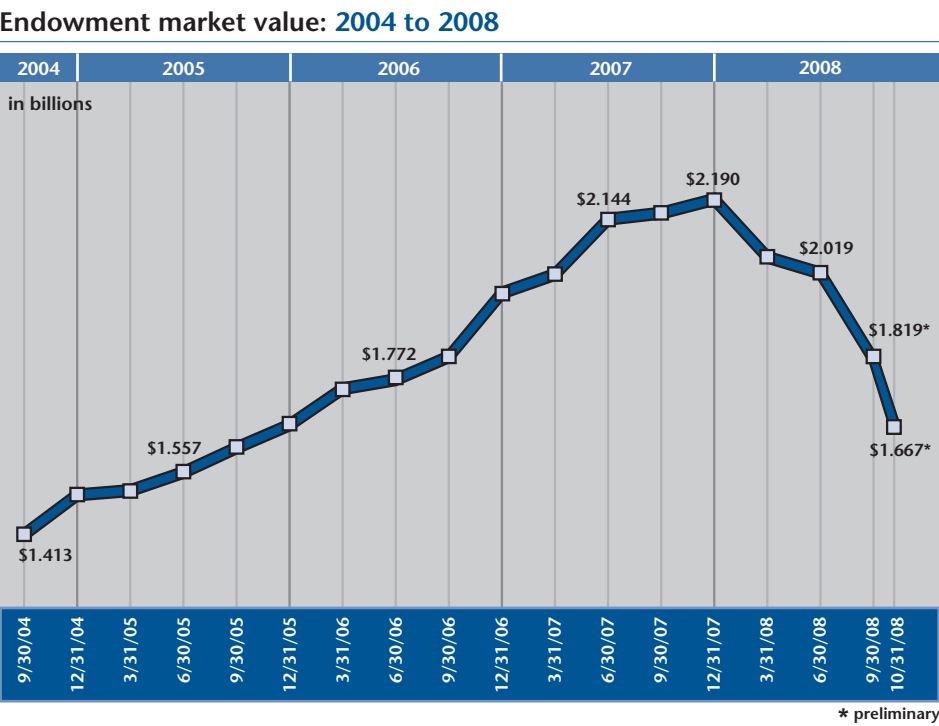
Reviewing vacant administrative positions. Beginning October 30, all vacant non-laboratory staff positions are being referred to a special staffing review committee consisting of the vice president for facility and scientific operations, the vice president for finance and the vice president for human resources. The committee reviews the justifications for recruiting new personnel and holds vacant any positions that are not essential to the university’s operations until the financial situation improves. To date, 16 vacant positions have not been filled.

Limiting future salary increases. Annual salary increases in past years have averaged three to four percent. The administration will be considering a range of options for fiscal year 2010 in the coming months, including providing a smaller than usual increase.

Assessing supplemental lab funding. Every effort will be made to preserve the lab-funding formula that has been put in place over the last several years. However, the administration will look very carefully at the costs of bridging laboratories when grants don’t come through, and at special projects and start-up costs. Fees and charge backs for resource centers will also be assessed.

Minimizing future maintenance projects. With the construction on the Collaborative Research Center well under way, modern new lab space will be coming on line in approximately 18 months. There may, therefore, be some maintenance projects that can be deferred without causing significant inconvenience. A planned renovation of Welch Hall and the Markus Library will be deferred unless there is a new gift made specifically for it. One gift already made will be used to repair the façade, which will reduce maintenance costs.

Both the major construction projects under way on campus — the Collaborative Research Center and the Comparative Bioscience Center — will continue as planned



because the majority of funds needed for those projects has been secured already and if either project were halted now, restarting would be very expensive. “Through a combination of fundraising and borrowing, we’ve already acquired the majority of the resources necessary to finish these projects,” says Dr. Nurse. “In addition, we have until 2012 to raise the remaining funds needed.”

The faculty recruitment process, which has had several successes in the past few months resulting in a series of new appointments, will also continue. “We do not want to turn off recruitment, because it’s essential to maintaining the university’s scientific portfolio as we lose faculty members through retirement and relocation,” says Dr. Nurse. “It’s also an opportunity. If other scientific research institutions freeze new hires in order to make ends meet, this may give us the edge in attracting the very best scientists.” The emphasis will continue to be on recruitment of junior faculty.

This month, the university’s executive officer’s group will meet for a day-long discussion on the financial challenges with particular emphasis on planning for the 2010 budget. A second day-long meeting will take place in February, when the focus will be on longer-term planning.

The administration hopes that by this time some stability will have entered the financial markets and the group will know whether they need to plan for additional cost reductions to ensure the university’s future prosperity.

In addition to future updates in *Benchmarks*, Dr. Nurse plans a series of “town hall” meetings — the first of which will take place on February 4 — to keep the community informed. “I’m hopeful that the markets may stabilize and that president-elect Barack Obama’s administration will be more committed to science than the current one,” says Dr. Nurse. “But it’s important to be prepared for whatever economic conditions develop over the next months and years. It is important to be open about the university’s finances and to discuss these issues not only with the Board, the faculty and the administration, but with the entire community at Rockefeller so that we are all engaged in looking for solutions to the present problems. By continuing to aggressively pursue grants and other funding opportunities, by supporting the efforts of our Development Office to attract donations and by making sensible decisions about spending, we can all help the university weather these difficult times.”

Funds temporarily frozen during banking crisis (continued from page 1)

rumors swirling about the bank’s future, Wachovia made the decision to freeze the fund’s assets and begin an “orderly liquidation.” “This decision, which Wachovia is legally allowed to make under the terms of its agreement with Commonfund, had the effect of preserving the value of the fund’s securities that it might otherwise have been forced to sell at a loss,” says Mr. Lapple. “Unfortunately, it also meant that the assets

held in the fund would be temporarily unavailable.” Because the fund held mostly short-term debt — primarily loans made to the government or to companies with excellent credit — many of the securities have already reached their maturity dates. As of November 24, 65 percent of the fund’s assets have become liquid and have been made available for withdrawal. Most of the remaining balance will become avail-

able in 2009. The university has since transferred the withdrawn money to a new account at JPMorgan Chase & Co., has begun repaying the line of credit it recently accessed, and is working with members of the Board of Trustees to identify other ways to invest its working capital in the short term. The cost, several hundred thousand dollars in unexpected interest payments, will need to be absorbed in

this fiscal year. “The situation appears to be resolved,” says Mr. Lapple. “We have sufficient working capital liquidity to meet our ongoing obligations and we are able to respond to various challenges ahead. We are continuing to monitor cash flow on a daily basis and are looking at all our options about how best to manage our operating cash in this difficult environment.”

Former NYPD officer becomes security operations manager

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

The position of security operations manager, left vacant in March by the departure of 31-year university veteran Michael John, has been filled by Michael J. Murphy, former lieutenant commander detective of the New York Police Department. Mr. Murphy, who directly oversees daily operations, personnel deployment and electronic surveillance systems on campus, began at Rockefeller University June 1.

Mr. Murphy entered the New York City Police Academy in 1987. He later studied psychology at Rockland County Community College and earlier this year received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice administration from Empire State College. From his first beat as patrol officer with the 52nd Precinct in the Bronx, Mr. Murphy was promoted to detective in 1995, sergeant in 1997, lieutenant in 2004 and lieutenant commander detective in 2008. He worked in various specialized units, including both the gang investigation unit and the internal affairs bureau, and has vast experience in managing large staff groups, conducting crime pattern analysis and acting as liaison to community groups. His final position with the NYPD was as commanding officer of the Central Park Precinct and 28th Precinct Detective Squads. He earned 32 commendations during his service, including a Commen-

datation from the New York City Mayor and Police Commissioner last year for



PHOTO: ZACH VELLEUX

his role in the record-setting 21 percent decrease in overall crime in the 28th Precinct, which covers central Harlem. "I met Mike on September 11, 2001,

when he was assigned to assist me at the George Washington Bridge Command Post," says Director of Security James Rogers. "I quickly learned that he is a conscientious and driven individual who knows how to get things done efficiently and effectively. He is a proven leader with exceptional investigative skills, but his greatest quality is his genuine concern for people. The departure of Michael John left a void that I am confident Michael 'John' Murphy can fill."

Taking advantage of the NYPD's 20-year retirement program, Mr. Murphy decided to shift his career into the private sector, where Rockefeller University is his first position. In addition to coordinating daily security operations and managing a staff of 35, Mr. Murphy is responsible for the university's closed-circuit video surveillance system and oversees maintenance of the building access system, the ID-card scanners that secure building doors across campus. He is also Security's point person for major events held on campus, including Convocation and awards ceremonies.

"After 21 years with the NYPD, I'm very happy to start the new phase of my career at Rockefeller. The people I've met here are friendly and very easy to work with; it's great to be part of such an exceptional team," says Mr. Murphy.

New campus intranet centralizes electronic resources

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

Since its introduction in 1994 the university's Web site has tried to be all things to all people. Internal users trying to access library resources, get information on benefits or download petty cash forms have been forced to wade through links designed for prospective students, journalists and collaborating scientists. This fall, however, the launch of a redesigned intranet — called Inside Rockefeller and available at inside.rockefeller.edu — has laid the groundwork for a separation of these two audiences that will, ideally, make life easier for both.

Phase one of the new site, developed by Communications and Public Affairs and Information Technology, was launched November 3, and will be followed this winter by a phase-two implementation with new features and enhancements.

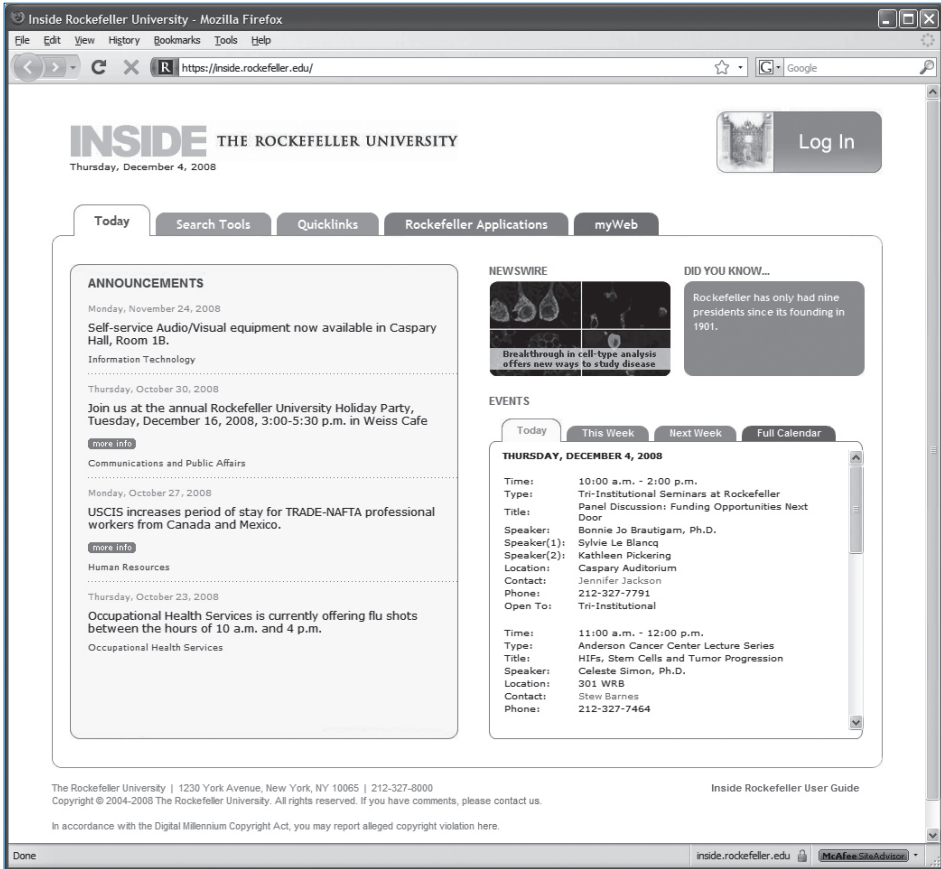
In addition to security advantages — the separation of internal and external Web sites makes it possible to better protect critical resources behind a network firewall — Inside Rockefeller also makes for easy access to key university applications, like the tools that allow users to manage e-mail settings, send large files and book meeting rooms. An Announcements and Events section can be used to transmit campus-wide and department-specific announcements and also to communicate campus or city emergencies, transportation issues and other crucial, time-sensitive information. The site also contains several new tools including an interactive campus map linked to the campus directory; package tracking; and MyBookmarks, where users can bookmark their favorite Web sites.

A bare-bones intranet has been in place for several years and used by many IT employees, but development and design of Inside Rockefeller, geared toward the whole campus, began last summer. The effort was led by IT's Web design and Web

programming groups, based on graphic standards established by CPA, and done with input from administrative heads, faculty, postdocs and students. "In addition to the new design and user interface, a number of backend applications were built to support the functionality and features of Inside Rockefeller," says Anthony Popowicz, director of IT.

Phase two, due this winter, will include further refinements to the design, as well as some new features including a classified ad area that will serve as a repository of for-sale and wanted notices in any of several categories from housing to event

tickets. Users will be able to subscribe to the classifieds in order to receive e-mails when new notices are placed and, to help reduce unwanted messages, a new policy will be established regarding the use of all-campus e-mails for personal notices. "One of our biggest long-term goals with this tool is to reduce the amount of electronic clutter we're all currently dealing with," says Alyssa Gelbard, director of marketing communications and operations for CPA. "Our number one goal from the beginning has been to make Inside Rockefeller not just a useful tool, but an indispensable one."



Winners announced in walking challenge

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

There's no charity fundraising, no 26-mile course or nationally televised fanfare, but here on the Upper East Side, Rockefeller University has begun its own rendition of a New York City marathon. From October 13 to November 2, Human Resources hosted the first semiannual Rockefeller Walks competition, an initiative of HR's Wellness program designed to promote a greater consciousness of healthy physical activity through the stimulus of a little healthy competition.

In the works for the last few years, Rockefeller Walks came together this fall through the efforts of Director of Benefits Ginny Hansen and HR Assistant Courtney McBride. HR purchased 150 pedometers, measured out two campus walking courses and brought to campus life coach/health psychologist Michele Kofman to lead a walking meditation workshop.

Of 146 participants who registered, 135 joined the team competition as well, creating 27 teams of five. "There was an incredible variety of people — heads of lab, administrators, students and postdocs, support staff," says Ms. McBride. "The Finance Office fielded four teams by itself." Based on advice from health professionals, HR urged walkers to aim for at least 10,000 steps every day, a number that, depending on the length of a walker's stride, equals up to five miles. Participants recorded daily steps taken and HR posted weekly counts on the Benefits Web page. In addition to the contest for most steps taken, walkers were judged on how much they increased their steps taken from week one to week three.

"We had a playful approach to the competition, but as it turns out, we were serious competitors," says Daniver Morales, a postdoc in the Hatten Laboratory and member of the first-place team.

Ms. McBride solicited prizes from vendors including Plum Benefits, LA Sports Club, Asphalt Green, Global Fit, Sterling Optical and *The New York Times*, as well as Amy Elers, on-campus yoga instructor. Awards went to the top 12 in the individual category, the top six most-improved-steps winners and the top four teams. The next contest will be held in the spring. Until that time, HR is offering pedometer rentals with a \$15 refundable deposit to all campus members, "to keep up the good work all year," says Ms. McBride.

Most steps taken by an individual

- First:* Craig Hunter, animal technician I, Comparative Bioscience Center. **1,092,758 steps**
Second: George Smith, mail room clerk, Mail Room. **654,721 steps**
Third: Christine Lai, animal technician I, Genstat Project. **646,286 steps**

Most improved steps

- First:* Andrew Gallina, assistant director, Plant Ops. Office. **115 percent improvement**
Second: Stephen Hooper, mail room clerk, Mail Room. **83.62 percent improvement**
Third: Gladys McMilleon, administrative assistant, Chait Lab. **69.28 percent improvement**

Most steps taken by a team

- First:* Team Helen — Helen Curry, admin. assistant, Tomasz Lab; Florian Gehre, visiting student, Tomasz Lab; Choonkeun Kim, postdoctoral fellow, Tomasz Lab; Daniver Morales, postdoctoral associate, Hatten Lab; and Sandro Pereira, visiting student, Tomasz Lab. **2,080,390 steps**
Second: Team Vet Services — Amanda Blanchard, animal health technician II, CBC; Susan Hinklein, animal health technician I, CBC; Craig Hunter; Janelle Monnas, animal health technician I, CBC; and Stephanie Pistilli, animal health technician I, CBC. **2,020,381 steps**

MILESTONES

PROMOTIONS, AWARDS AND PERSONNEL NEWS

Awarded:

Jan L. Breslow, the 2008 Senior Scholar in Aging Award from The Ellison Medical Foundation, for a project to determine the link between the nuclear hormone receptor PXR and aging processes. Dr. Breslow is head of the Laboratory of Biochemical Genetics and Metabolism.

Michela Di Virgilio and **Ivan Marazzi**, American-Italian Cancer Foundation Post-doctoral Research Fellowships, in the amount of \$35,000 each. Dr. Di Virgilio is postdoctoral associate in Michel C. Nussenzweig’s Laboratory of Molecular Immunology. Dr. Marazzi is a postdoctoral fellow in Alexander Tarakhovsky’s Laboratory of Lymphocyte Signaling.

Howard C. Hang, an Exploratory/Development Grant from the National Institutes of Health. The grant, in the amount of \$337,083, is for a project on chemical reporters for the analysis of lysine methylation in epigenetics. Dr. Hang is head of the Laboratory of Chemical Biology and Microbial Pathogenesis.

David D. Ho, an honorary doctor of science degree from the University of Hong Kong, for his research and advocacy in the cause of HIV/AIDS victims. The degree was awarded at the university’s 179th convocation ceremony, December 4. Dr. Ho, who is scientific director and CEO of the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center, is one of three honorees this year, with President William J. Clinton and Yao Ming of the Houston Rockets.

Barbara Juncosa, a Robert D. Watkins Graduate Research Fellowship from the American Society for Microbiology, for her work on the streptococcal adaptive response to the host cell environment. The fellowship, which comes with a \$21,000 annual stipend for three years, was established to increase the number of graduate students from underrepresented groups completing doctoral degrees in the microbiological sciences. Ms. Juncosa, a student in Vincent A. Fischetti’s Laboratory of Bacterial Pathogenesis and Immunology, is one of five winners this year.

Tom W. Muir, a 2008 Blavatnik Award for Young Scientists from the New York Academy of Sciences. The award, established last year with funds from the Blavatnik Charitable Foundation, comes with an unrestricted cash prize of \$25,000. Dr. Muir, who is head of the Selma and Lawrence Ruben Laboratory of Synthetic Protein Chemistry, was one of three faculty winners announced at the NYAS Science and the City Gala on November 17.

President **Paul Nurse**, a 2008 Global Creative Leadership Award from the Louise Blouin Foundation, presented at a gala dinner and ceremony September 21. The foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing challenges in diverse areas including international trade, foreign policy, education and the environment.

Paul Nurse, a 2008 Science and the City Award for Outstanding Accomplishments in New York City from the New York Academy of Sciences. Dr. Nurse, head of the Laboratory of Yeast Genetics and Cell Biology, was honored at the annual Science and the City Gala.

Michel C. Nussenzweig, a 2008 Lee C. Howley Sr. Prize for Arthritis Research from the Arthritis Foundation. Dr. Nussenzweig, head of the Laboratory of Molecular Immunology, is awarded for his contributions to the fields of B cell development and dendritic cell function, which have provided important insights into the etiology of autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and have paved the way for the development of novel therapies for the treatment of these diseases.

Jürg Ott, the 2008 Ming Tsuang Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Society of Psychiatric Genetics. The award was presented at the World Congress on Psychiatric Genetics in Osaka, Japan, in October. Dr. Ott is head of the Laboratory of Statistical Genetics.

Hired:

Alexandre Bolze, visiting student, Casanova Lab.

Robert Borek, animal attendant, Comparative Bioscience Center.

Fana Campbell, grants management specialist, Sponsored Research and Program Development.

Brianna Caszatt, copy editor, The Rockefeller University Press.

Emily Conrad, development assistant, Development.

Amandine Crequer, visiting student, Casanova Lab.

Shulin Deng, visiting student, Chua Lab.

Nelson Eusebio, administrative assistant, Steinman Lab.

David Frescas, postdoctoral fellow, de Lange Lab.

Dustin Gerding, administrative assistant, Development.

Lauren Glenz, laboratory manager, Breslow Lab.

Charlene Graham, office assistant, Nussenzweig Lab.

Hedy Grinspan, grants management specialist, Sponsored Research and Program Development.

Yiqi Guo, visiting student, Casanova Lab.

Amy Hansen, visiting student, Tuschl Lab.

Melina Herman, visiting student, Casanova Lab.

Allison Hornung, visiting student, Pfaff Lab.

Shalini Jaiswal, research assistant, Brivanlou Lab.

Daniel Johnson, postdoctoral associate, Simon Lab.

Anna-Carina Jungkamp, visiting student, Tuschl Lab.

Sudhir Kashyap, postdoctoral associate, Kapoor Lab.

Eleni Katifori, fellow in physics and biology, Center for Theoretical Studies.

Xiaofei Kong, visiting student, Casanova Lab.

John LaCava, postdoctoral associate, Rout Lab.

Ronald Liebman, laboratory manager, Casanova Lab.

Rivky Lindauer, clinical research nurse, Hospital Nursing Outpatient.

Steven Mielke, visiting fellow, Mauzerall Lab.

Joshua Mincer, visiting fellow, Simon Lab.

Kathy Mu, research assistant, Rice Lab.

Brett Norman, science writer, Communications and Public Affairs.

Andres Ortiz, watch engineer, Plant Operations Power House.

John Pietzsch, visiting student, Nussenzweig Lab.

Anna Puszynska, foreign research intern, Nurse Lab.

Andrea Quijano, electronic resources librarian, Library.

Smriti Rao, research assistant, Program for the Human Environment.

Christine Remmers, research assistant, Greengard Lab.

Andrew Richards, electrical helper, Plant Operations Maintenance Shop.

Maria Ryder, visiting fellow, Tomasz Lab.

Thomas Stepanchak, associate director, Plant Operations Office.

Rita Sullivan, news production coordinator, The Rockefeller University Press.

Alexander Ulrich, visiting student, Tuschl Lab.

Kunihiro Uryu, senior research associate, Office of Academic Affairs, and director, Electron Microscopy Resource Center.

Amaranta Viera, science outreach coordinator, Dean’s Office.

Aryeh Warmflash, postdoctoral associate, Siggia Lab.

Albert Weixlbaumer, postdoctoral associate, Darst Lab.

Peng Yuan, postdoctoral associate, MacKinnon Lab.

Shen-Ying Zhang, instructor in clinical investigation, Casanova Lab.

Shusheng Zhang, postdoctoral associate, Steinman Lab.

This publication lists new hires, awards and promotions. Staff promotions are listed yearly; academic promotions and appointments are listed monthly.

Collaborative construction



Behind the fences, work on the Collaborative Research Center is proceeding on schedule. Over the past several months, crews in Smith Hall have poured a new slab for the sixth floor, constructed a new roof and penthouse for mechanical equipment, and have begun installing new windows and running electrical and ventilation equipment on several floors. Next door, at the site of the bridging building, excavation work is complete and the foundation has been poured; beginning in January, work will begin on the concrete “superstructure” that will form the building’s skeleton. Construction is also proceeding at the Comparative Bioscience Center, and it’s complete at the electrical vault under the 66th Street parking lot, where Con Edison is currently testing new equipment. For more photos and videos of the progress, visit crc.rockefeller.edu.

OBITUARY

Nobel laureate George E. Palade, 95

by TALLEY HENNING BROWN

At the presentation of his Nobel Prize in 1974, George Emil Palade was described as “largely responsible for the creation of modern cell biology.” The man whose research played a crucial part in bringing electron microscopy to the study of biological cells was an integral member of The Rockefeller University for nearly 30 years, and his scientific and intellectual influence is apparent in several laboratories in operation today. Professor Emeritus Palade, who resigned from the university in 1973, passed away Tuesday, October 7, at his home in Del Mar, California.

Dr. Palade was born November 19, 1912 in Iasi, Romania, to Emil Palade and Constanta Cantemir-Palade. It was during medical school, at the University of Bucharest, that Dr. Palade discovered an intense interest in basic research, and following military service during World War II, he moved to the United States to continue his studies at New York University. Later that year, 1946, he met Albert Claude, one of the first scientists to apply electron microscopy to the study of living cells, and subsequently came to work in Dr. Claude’s laboratory at Rockefeller.

Dr. Palade’s work in the Claude laboratory centered mainly on cell fractionation, the breaking apart of cells to study their individual components. In the early 1950s, Dr. Palade moved to the lab of then-president Herbert S. Gasser, where he began to focus on electron microscopy with the aim of improving live tissue preparation techniques. He and his colleagues developed methods that revealed entirely new subcellular structures, thus opening new avenues of study. In the mid-1950s, Dr. Palade combined his work with cell fractionation and electron microscopy and subsequently showed that microsomes, previously thought to be mitochondrial fragments, are actually fragments of the endoplasmic reticulum, a component discovered in 1945 by Dr. Claude, Keith Porter and Ernest Fullham and now known to be instrumental in a cell’s transport system. Dr. Palade also discovered ribosomes, responsible for genetic translation.

In 1958, Dr. Palade was appointed professor and head of laboratory, and by the early 1960s, cell biology was a recognized field of research. Dr. Palade



was active in the founding of *The Journal of Cell Biology*, published at Rockefeller, as well as the American Society for Cell Biology.

“Palade had an uncanny ability to integrate the most disparate observations into a coherent working hypothesis. He mentored not by micromanaging one’s thoughts but by guiding them into a productive trajectory,” says Günter Blobel, head of the Laboratory of Cell Biology and a former postdoc in Dr. Palade’s lab, who won his own Nobel Prize in 1999 for work based on Dr. Palade’s discoveries.

Dr. Palade moved to Yale University Medical School in 1973, following an interest in combining the new field of cell biology with pathology and clinical medicine. By the time he left Rockefeller, there were five labs studying cell biology. In 1990, he moved to the University of California, San Diego, where he was professor of cellular and molecular medicine and dean for scientific affairs. In addition to the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, which he shared with Albert Claude and Christian de Duve, Dr. Palade was the recipient of numerous awards, including the 1966 Albert Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research and the 1986 National Medal of Science.

In addition to his wife of 38 years, Marilyn Gist Farquhar, who is currently chair of cellular and molecular medicine at UCSD, Dr. Palade is survived by two children from his first marriage, Georgia Van Dusen and Philip Palade, two stepchildren, Douglas and Bruce Farquhar, and two granddaughters.