

4-24-1992

NEWS AND NOTES 1992, VOL.2, NO.30

The Rockefeller University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.rockefeller.edu/news_and_notes_1992

Recommended Citation

The Rockefeller University, "NEWS AND NOTES 1992, VOL.2, NO.30" (1992). *News and Notes 1992*. Book 13.
http://digitalcommons.rockefeller.edu/news_and_notes_1992/13

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the The Rockefeller University News and Notes at Digital Commons @ RU. It has been accepted for inclusion in News and Notes 1992 by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ RU. For more information, please contact mcsweej@mail.rockefeller.edu.



Despite the chilly weather, over 70 children participated in the annual Easter egg hunt Sunday.

Carnegie Commission releases reports on science, government

By Doron Weber

The federal government's diminishing capacity to recruit highly qualified individuals for the top 78 science and technology positions in the executive branch was the subject of a widely disseminated report issued last month.

The report, "Science and Technology Leadership in American Government," was the result of a study by a panel of scientists and executives supported by the Carnegie Commission on Science, Technology and Government—based in part at The Rockefeller University—and the National Academy of Sciences. It found that top science and engineering jobs in the government go unfilled for months or years—some jobs had to be offered to 30 candidates before one agreed to take the offer—and, when they are filled, the turnover rate is extremely high.

The panel blamed the difficulty in recruiting on federal employment laws that are confusing and restrictive, noting that government service does not usually further the careers of practicing scientists and engineers or help the prospects of corporate executives. It recommended that salaries be indexed to inflation and hurdles to the appointment process be lowered. If the present situation continues, the report warned, "the government's ability to make key decisions in the face of rapid scientific and technological changes will be very seriously affected."

Finding ways in which all levels of government can make the best use of scientific knowledge is the ambitious mandate of the Carnegie Commission on Science, Technol-

ogy and Government. The independent bipartisan body was established by the Carnegie Commission of New York and its president, David Hamburg, in 1988 with a five year charter.

"We live in a world being transformed by science and technology," wrote Hamburg, a member of The Rockefeller University Board of Trustees. "Science and technology bear upon war and peace, health and disease, the economy and society, resources and the environment—indeed the entire human future.... The main purpose of the commission is to seek ways in which the branches of government can encourage and use the contributions of the national scientific community."

The commission, which includes scientists, leaders of the private sector, and former government officials—including Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald R. Ford—is co-chaired by Joshua Lederberg, university professor and former president of Rockefeller, and William Golden, of the American Museum of Natural History and The RU Council. Rodney W. Nichols, head of the New York Academy of Sciences and former executive vice president of Rockefeller, is a member of the commission's executive committee. Jesse Ausubel, Rockefeller fellow, is the group's director of studies.

The commission's first report, "Science and Technology and the President," issued in 1988, was adopted by both Democratic and Republican candidates for the presidency. The report recommended that the president upgrade the position of science adviser to an assistant to the president for science and technology, placing him or her on par with the heads of the National Security Council and the Office of Management and Budget.

Honoring his pledge a year after the election, President George Bush appointed Yale physicist Allan Bromley as the nation's first full-fledged assistant to the president for science and technology and gave him an office in the White House. According to Lederberg, the position ensures that the president receives informed scientific advice—which had been sporadic since 1972 when President Richard Nixon dissolved the President's Science Advisory Committee.

See *Commission*, page 2

Egg hunt unearths Easter fun

By Olivia Gushin

Julie Crown and other parents from The Rockefeller University's Scholars Residence and Faculty House recently spent an afternoon stuffing 450 plastic eggs with chocolate bunnies. They were preparing for the annual Easter egg hunt, one of the year's main events for the Parents' Committee which Crown chairs.

In spite of the damp and chilly weather Easter Sunday, over 70 children ages one through nine took part in the egg hunt. Older children helped hide eggs for the toddlers, zealously burying them around the borders of the lawn in front of Founder's Hall. According to Crown, older children have a better mind for hiding eggs than grown ups. Later, children tested their athletic ability in egg-on-spoon and rolling-egg races.

As part of the Easter festivities, a quilt made by Scholars Residence and Faculty House children was presented to Scott Herness,

president of the Tenants' Association, who accepted it on behalf of all the residents at 500 and 504 E. 64th St. The quilt was made under the direction of Nicola Bolton, last year's Parents' Committee chair. Children painted one square each and recorded their country of origin on it to underscore the tenants' multi-national makeup. The quilt will hang in the building's lobby for tenants and visitors to admire.

According to Crown, the Easter egg hunt has been held annually since the oldest tenant can remember. Being made chair of the Parents' Committee was an honor, she says. Her reward is seeing the kids with their bounty.

In addition to organizing the annual egg hunt, the Parents' Committee sponsors a rummage sale and runs a thrift shop in the building that sells used clothes. Most thrift shop items sell for \$1.00; proceeds benefit the residence playrooms.

Stein Lecture features virus researcher

This year's William H. Stein Memorial Lecture will feature Stephen C. Harrison, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology at Harvard University. He will speak on "SV40 and Polyomavirus in Molecular Detail" today (April 24) at 3:45 P.M.

Harrison developed the use of X-ray crystallography to yield images of virus particles in atomic detail. The first structures of small RNA viruses determined by Harrison revealed a basic design that has turned out to be a common feature of all positive-strand RNA viruses

examined so far. Recently, he has turned his attention to double-stranded DNA and RNA viruses. The structures of SV40 and polyoma viruses appear to show some significant differences from positive-strand RNA viruses.

The lecture series was established in memory of Rockefeller researcher William H. Stein, Nobel laureate, after his death in 1980. Stein pioneered research that elucidated the complex relationship between the chemical structure of proteins and their biological activities.

2 Scholarship funds
Hospital faculty

3 Russian science:
freedom, frustration

4 RU participates in
AIDS walkathon



Participants in The Rockefeller University Hospital's nutrition workshops prepare a delicious—and nutritionally sound—meal on the last day of class.

Nutrition workshops end with feast

The university's first series of nutrition workshops concluded last week with a sumptuous—but healthy—feast prepared in the Hospital's metabolic diet kitchen.

"Throughout the six workshops we've stressed how to adopt a low-fat diet and make other positive lifestyle changes," said Cindy Seidman, director of Dietary Service who led the workshops with Jolanta Diakun, research nutritionist. "The meal the class prepared is proof that good food can be healthy."

The dinner included scallop kebobs, tossed salad with raspberry balsamic vinegar or creamy herb dressing, Belgian beef filet mignon, turkey meatballs in Dijon sauce, stir-steamed vegetables, pasta, and

chocolate angel food cake, among other low-fat, low-calorie delicacies.

While the series stressed a long-term approach to nutrition, some participants were already reaping the benefits of workshops by the last session. Maria Popov, administrative assistant in the Roeder lab said that her cholesterol levels had dropped from 247 in January to 213 this month.

"After my doctor got the cholesterol results he asked me what medicine he had put me on," Popov said. "I told him that he hadn't put me on anything. The change was due to diet and exercise. Before I took the nutrition workshops, I just assumed I ate right. Now I know what foods are really good for me."

New memorial scholarship funds junior faculty at RU Hospital

A new scholarship, the Daniel Fraad Scholar in Medicine, has been established to help support junior faculty performing clinical research at The Rockefeller University Hospital, the Development Office announced this week. Alice Gottlieb, associate professor and physician in the D. Martin Carter lab, which pursues research on dermatology, was designated its first recipient.

The scholarship was established in memory of Daniel Fraad, a friend of The Rockefeller University who was chairman and chief executive officer of Allied Maintenance Corporation before its merger with the Ogden Corporation. An alumnus of Brown University who also attended the graduate schools of Yale and Columbia Universities, Fraad held many honors and positions of stature in the airline industry. He was an avid sportsman, inveterate traveler, and, with his wife Rita, a noted collector of American art.

At a luncheon held recently to honor those who contributed to the

\$376,000 fund which endows the scholarship, Trustee Emeritus Ralph Ablon said: "I would like to thank all the donors and friends who made this scholarship in memory of Daniel Fraad possible. Dan would be pleased his memory is being honored at The Rockefeller University in this way."

Ablon went on to introduce Professor Attallah Kappas to the gathering. Kappas spoke on clinical research at The Rockefeller University Hospital. Gottlieb then presented a brief overview of her work.

Gottlieb, whom Kappas describes as a "consummate clinician" with "a very fine record in science," is a graduate of The Rockefeller University-Cornell Medical College joint M.D.-Ph.D. program. In addition to her position at Rockefeller, she is a member of the adjunct faculty at Cornell. Her research focuses on the role of the immune system in various dermatological conditions, including psoriasis, wound healing, skin cancer, and epidermolysis bullosa.

Letter to the editor:

After the April 10 article concerning the work of Professor Goulianos, I thought it might not be inappropriate to share with the readers of *News&Notes* a short poem I obtained from Mrs. Ellen Cool Kwiat, daughter of the late Professor Rodney Cool who started the laboratory which Professor Goulianos now heads. The poem was written by Mr. Bunny Elliott on the occasion of a lecture Professor Cool gave on "Quark-Quark Scattering" in 1979. It reads:

*Hark, hark!
Little Quark.
Do not fear—
Not always in the dark;
Bounce and spin,
Sing and sing,
To emulate the famous lark.
We shall hear you,
Bless your heart!*

Sincerely yours,
E.G.D. Cohen
Professor

Carnegie Commission issues reports on science, government

(continued from page 1)

Even with the new post, there has been less scientific involvement in government decision-making than many believe wise. In January, the commission issued the report "Science and Technology in International Affairs." It warned that the State Department, in particular, was on "technological crutches." The commission found few career foreign service officers with science and technology experience and few science officers abroad. While France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have a total of 34 experts staffing their diplomatic missions in Washington, the State Department has 4 Foreign Service science and technology

positions in those 3 countries.

Ausubel says that the recommendations cut both ways. "We need not only to bring science to diplomacy, but diplomacy to science." He points out that scientific projects like the Supercollider and NASA's space station might have benefitted from greater consultation and participation with other nations.

While the final verdict is still out on the Carnegie Commission—a concluding report will be prepared by Lederberg and Ausubel in 1993—the commission is having an impact. Its much-publicized study on kindergarten to 12th grade science and mathematics education has led to a memo of understanding between the Department of

Education and the National Science Foundation. As a result of another report, "New Thinking and American Defense Technology," the Senate has introduced legislation to broaden the definition of research supported for national security.

But perhaps the commission's greatest impact has been less quantifiable—changing the way many people think about the role of science and technology, and about the modern world. "At its best, science has an interest in acquiring new knowledge that transcends narrow interests and boundaries. If we can impart even some of that spirit into government, we will have accomplished something important," Lederberg says.

News&Notes is published each Friday throughout the academic year by The Rockefeller University, 1230 York Avenue, New York, NY 10021. Phone: 212-570-8967.

Torsten Wiesel, President
Alfred G. Kildow,
Assistant to the President
for University Communications
Doron Weber, Manager of Public Affairs

Mika Ono, Editor
Corrine O'Neill, Design
Robert Reichert, Photography

Ideas and submissions can be sent interoffice (Box 68), by electronic mail (*newsno*), or by fax (212-570-7876).

The Rockefeller University is an equal opportunity employer and has an affirmative action program to increase the employment of women and members of protected groups at all job levels.



Freedom and frustration: a researcher's view of Russian science

by Susan Blum

The countries of the former Soviet Union are still undergoing the aftershocks of last August's political earthquake. Almost every day come reports of new tremors in the realm of economics, politics, or social life. Less fully reported, but no less significant, are the changes in the landscape affecting scientific research.

Alexander Boronin has first-hand knowledge about those changes. Boronin, who recently visited The Rockefeller University, is director of the Institute of Biochemistry and Physiology of Microorganisms in Pushchino, about 60 miles south of Moscow. While visiting Rockefeller, Boronin discussed his institute's research endeavors at a Friday afternoon lecture; strengthened old ties, such as those he shares with Rockefeller investigator Alexander Tomasz; and forged new ones by meeting with others on campus, including President Torsten Wiesel.

In an interview with *News&Notes*, Boronin explained that the institute he heads is a large one, with over 700 scientists. Like all research institutes in the former Soviet Union—most of which are located in Russia—it is dedicated to a specialized field of study; in this case, microbiology. Within the institute are over a dozen laboratories that conduct research into such topics as the molecular biology and molecular genetics of microorganisms and the use of genetically-engineered microorganisms for environmental protection. Since the events of last summer, Boronin said, "the institutes have become much more independent, and the directors have much more autonomy." He reported that one of his aims is to gradually give more independence to the institute's individual labs.

Funding prospects are grim

But with greater independence also come new responsibilities, one of which is to devise new ways of financing research. Boronin believes that much support will eventually be provided through a system of grants made to individual labs. Currently, though, most funding is still provided on an institution-wide basis by the Russian government, and the state of that funding is dismal: Boronin estimated his institute will receive only about one-third of last years' support.

Not only is there less money to go around, but less of it can be used

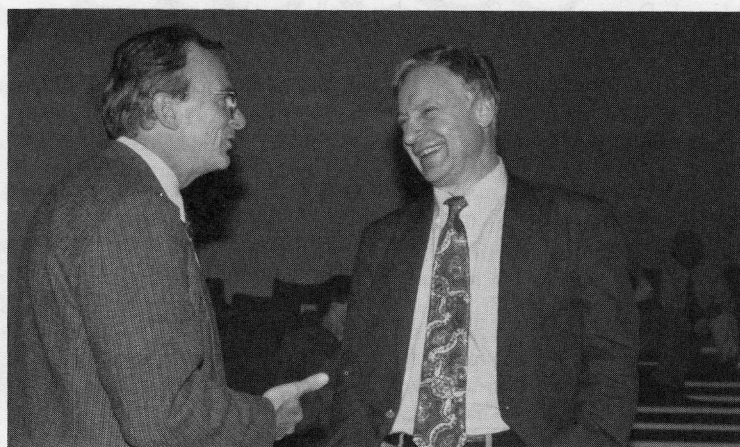
outside Russia. Funding now comes in rubles only, so researchers no longer have access to the hard currency they formerly used to purchase necessities unavailable in their own country. Thus, they must now do without some of the most basic technical and intellectual tools of scientific research, such as reagents and international journals. Participation in conferences and other scientific events outside Russia has also become virtually impossible because the national airline, Aeroflot, now requires that Russians pay at least part of their fares in hard currency.

The paradox is obvious, and succinctly summed up by Boronin: "Now we finally have democracy and intellectual freedom, but we don't have the means to use it."

There is general agreement among experts worldwide that the first steps toward resolving this paradox must include cooperative endeavors linking scientists in the former Soviet Union with individuals, organizations, and agencies in the United States and Europe.

Some of the endeavors may involve private firms, such as the well-publicized deal in which the California-based computer company, Sun Microsystems, will pay Russian computer experts to develop improved microprocessors. Others may involve governmental agencies, such as the recent agreement whereby the U.S. Department of Energy will contract services from a team of nuclear fusion scientists at the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy. Still others may involve research collaborations between labs in the former Soviet Union and in the United States, funded through grants provided by such sources as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.

Boronin himself has started to explore the options for cooperation. A number of innovative products and techniques, as well as a fund of knowledge and experience, have emerged out of his institute's research on microorganisms, and he hopes to find ways to employ them for the mutual benefit of his institute and various partners in the West. For instance, it might be possible to license for sale certain products and drugs developed in Pushchino, such as a new powerful enzymatic antibacterial agent with promise for use against antibiotic-resistant staphylococci. In addition, strategies developed at Pushchino to genetically engineer *Pseudomonas* (a type of bacteria) may prove as useful to American and European



Rockefeller University Professor Alexander Tomasz (left) chats with Alexander Boronin, director of the Institute of Biochemistry and Physiology of Microorganisms in Pushchino, Russia, before Boronin's lecture in Caspar Auditorium recently.

farmers and environmental engineers as they have in the former Soviet Union, where they are currently used for a wide range of purposes such as cleaning up toxic spills and promoting plant growth.

Links to RU are forged

Boronin is also enthusiastic about the prospect of research collaborations between Western scientists and scientists from the former Soviet Union. One such collaboration is already taking place at Rockefeller in the lab of Alexander Tomasz. Even before the fall of the Soviet Union, Pushchino biochemist Anatoly Severin had come to the Tomasz lab, intrigued by the Rockefeller researchers' work on the development of antibiotic resistance in bacteria. Severin proved an invaluable member of the research team, and when his joint funding from the National Academies of Science of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. ran out, Tomasz arranged alternative means of support so that Severin could stay for a while longer. He has just returned to Russia, but has been replaced in the Tomasz lab by another researcher from Pushchino, George Abramochkin.

Such collaborations build on Rockefeller's historic tradition as an international university, said President Torsten Wiesel. "I would hope that more scientists from the former Soviet Union will be interested in coming to Rockefeller," he said. He stressed that these collaborations should prove fruitful to all parties involved, since "the scientists are well trained in the basic physical and life sciences. They are highly educated and sophisticated, and ready to take advantage of new concepts and techniques."

Wiesel encouraged Rockefeller investigators to consider ways to open their labs to promising researchers from the former Soviet Union and other Eastern bloc countries, or to develop relationships with them in other ways. "In our outreach, we should keep in mind that there are many ways we can assist," he said. He pointed out, for example, that arranging for free subscriptions of international science journals is one way to make an intellectual contribution. Such arrangements have already been made in the Tomasz lab, which will be sending year-long subscriptions of a number of relevant journals to Pushchino.

The benefits of research collaborations and other interactions will extend well beyond the scientists themselves. That is the message recently given to D. Allan Bromley, President Bush's assistant for science and technology. The message was part of a report prepared by a group of more than 100 leading U.S. scientists who met at the National Academy of Sciences last month. They told Bromley, "If science and technology in the former Soviet Union wither and flounder, it is difficult to see how those nations can prosper. Science and technology, together with capital and free social institutions, propel a modern economy. In our view, international disaster could ensue if the present political and economic restructuring of the former Soviet Union were to fail and new totalitarian regimes were to re-emerge. An enlightened program that would help stabilize science and technology in the former Soviet Union would make an important, perhaps decisive, contribution to the future of these burgeoning democracies."

Walk 10 km. to fight AIDS, RU committee urges

Marie LeDoux, assistant for research in the McEwen lab, wants you to walk 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) Sun., May 31—or, if you can't make it, to sponsor someone who will. A regular participant in AIDS Walk New York, this year LeDoux is actively recruiting other members of the Rockefeller community to join her cause.

"The walk raises money for the Gay Men's Health Crisis, which sponsors education, counseling, and assistance programs for people with AIDS," LeDoux said. "I would like Rockefeller University to have a strong, visible presence at the walk this year. AIDS is one of the most critical issues facing the country today."

LeDoux has organized an AIDS

Walk New York committee on campus, which is putting up posters about the event and staffing a table next week at lunchtime in Tower lobby. Committee members include Ann Ho, Dee Graefe, Scott Herness, Lenore Martin, Svetlana Mojsov, Christina McKittrick, and Amy Steingart.

This year's AIDS Walk New York is the seventh annual walk to benefit Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), the nation's oldest and largest AIDS service organization. The event begins at 9:00 A.M. on the Great Lawn in Central Park. More than 25,000 are expected to participate.

"We have seen overwhelming support for the walk from both corporate and community groups,

and expect increased team participation this year," notes Steve Damiano, team coordinator at GMHC. "As the public's understanding of AIDS and the difficulties faced by people with AIDS increases, so does people's willingness to become more involved in the fight against the epidemic."

GMHC predicts that \$4.1 million will be raised by individual walkers who in the weeks prior to the event seek sponsorship from friends, family members, and co-workers for each kilometer they will be walking. Fifteen percent of the net proceeds from the walk will be awarded to other local and national AIDS organizations.

For further information, contact LeDoux, x8625.



Marie LeDoux chairs the AIDS Walk New York committee on campus.

Calendar of events

Personnel Office sponsors workshops on benefits

Seminars for supervisors

The Personnel Office will sponsor two luncheon seminars for supervisors, designed to provide information and promote discussion. The first seminar will focus on Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and how supervisors can utilize it effectively. This program provides professional counseling to faculty and staff for a variety of problems which may affect work performance and employee relations. Counselors and staff will be on-hand to provide information on EAP procedures and services. This seminar will be held today (April 24) from noon to 2:00 P.M., in Nurses Residence 110B.

The second seminar will concentrate on Job Path, an organization that provides disabled individuals with an opportunity to work. Representatives from Job Path will discuss how the university

can benefit from its services. This seminar will be held Fri., May 1, from noon to 2:00 P.M., in Nurses Residence 110B. Those interested in attending either seminar should contact Stefanie Kaleschke, x8300.

Flexible spending accounts

Flexible spending accounts—which enable employees to use pre-tax wages to pay for medical expenses or dependent care—can save some Rockefeller University employees money. The Personnel Office will conduct workshops on this new benefit on:

Monday, May 4—10:00 to 11:30 A.M., 1:30 to 3:00 P.M., 7:00 to 8:30 P.M.

Thurs., May 7—10:00 to 11:30 A.M., 1:30 to 3:00 P.M., 7:00 to 8:30 P.M.

Mon., May 11—10:00 to 11:30 A.M., 1:30 to 3:00 P.M.

Except for the session on May 7 at 10:00 A.M., which will be held in Tower 301, seminars will take place in Tower 305. For more information, contact Darryl Williams, x8297, or Ginny Hansen, x8299.

Long-term care insurance

Long-term care insurance is one option for employees concerned about paying for prolonged nursing home or home care for themselves or a relative. Seminars on long-term care insurance will be held Wed., May 20, 1:00 to 2:30 P.M. and 6:00 to 7:30 P.M. in Nurses Residence 110B. To register, call Teachers' Insurance and Annuity Association, 1-800-582-8422, by May 8. Additional copies of the invitation and educational guide are available in the Mail Room or Personnel Office.

RU research nurse named head of Employee Health

Candi Scheiner, R.N., has been named supervisor of the Employee Health Service, replacing Ted Rock, who has been promoted to assistant administrator of The Rockefeller University Hospital.

Scheiner has worked as a research nurse at the university since 1990, both in the Hospital and the metabolism-pharmacology laboratory. Previously, she was director of health services for Goldman Sachs & Company. In these positions, she acquired first-hand experience working in the laboratory and hospital, managing employee health, and developing health-promotion programs. Scheiner joins Aurea Tuason, R.N., who has been

providing high-quality personalized care for Rockefeller University employees since 1989.

Scheiner hopes to expand the health-promotion programs offered through the Employee Health Office. She and Tuason have already begun CPR training at the Hospital and plan to offer classes to the Rockefeller community in the near future. In the meantime, she will be working closely with Tuason and Rock to ensure a smooth transition of existing programs and services.

Rock will work with Medical Director Richard Galbraith in the day-to-day administration of the Hospital, which includes oversight of the Employee Health Office.



Candi Scheiner, supervisor of Employee Health Service

Potpourri

Retirement

Friends and co-workers said goodbye to Security's Sergeant Wintworth Johnson, Wed., April 13. Having kept a watchful eye on The Rockefeller University campus for 10 years, Sergeant Johnson can now hang up his blue uniform and prepare to slip into something better suited to sunny Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where he plans to make his home.

Science writing workshop

Registration for the final science writing workshop, "Translating Scientific Abstracts for the Public," has been reopened. The two-hour workshop given by Bruce McEwen, Rockefeller University professor and dean, and Joseph Carey, a science writer and public information officer for the Society for Neuroscience, will be held in Caspary Auditorium Tues., April 28, at 7:30 P.M. To register, contact Public Affairs, x8967.

Sunday film

How Tasty was my Little Frenchman (1971, Nelson Pereira dos Santos) is a documentary style, highly ironic film about a 16th century French explorer who tries to integrate himself into the Indian tribe which captures and enslaves him. An example of Brazilian *cinema nuovo* rarely seen in the United States, the film will be shown on Sun. April 20 at 7:30 P.M. in Caspary Auditorium. It is free and all are welcome.

Guitar donation

The Hospital's Recreational Therapy program seeks the donation of an acoustic guitar for a patient in isolation. Contact Elizabeth Gorman, x8474.

Lost and found

To claim a camera case found in the white Rockefeller University van, call Robin Cooper, x7579.