outstanding and innovative undergraduate (BA ’67) and his wife, Tina, to recognize Arts and Sciences alumnus David Bellet. The Bellet Awards were established in 1998 in the ballroom of the William Pitt Union. Recipients were honored at a dinner on April 9 in the Department of Theatre Arts, and full-time faculty members who have taught in the School of Arts and Sciences during the previous three years are eligible. Each award recipient receives a cash prize of $5,000.

For more information about the Bellet Awards, go to www.as.pitt.edu/teaching/awards.html#bellet.
On a clear September morning, Delanie Jenkins was working in her Pitt campus studio a few hours before teaching a class. A colleague knocked on her door to see if she’d heard the news. She hadn’t—until then.

The day was September 11, 2001. Jenkins immediately felt a sense of responsibility to her students, some of whom might first hear this earth-shattering news from her. The class was working on wire sculptures, and she couldn’t help but think that here they were, working on these simple wire things, when it seemed the world was turning inside out.

Now, with the clarity of hindsight, Jenkins, the chair of Pitt’s Department of Studio Arts, realizes that she and her students were doing one of the best things they could do on the morning of 9/11. “Creative acts counter those that are destructive,” Jenkins observes. “This is something that humans have been doing for more than 10,000 years—making their marks. Art is about our collective life and the things that affect it.”

The School of Arts and Sciences studio arts program helps students to develop technical expertise as well as critical thinking and evaluation skills, and, perhaps most importantly, it probes the significance of making art in today’s world. Majors work toward a Bachelor of Arts in studio arts, immersing themselves in art courses ranging from drawing and sculpting to painting, printmaking, and digital media. At the same time, they are experiencing the benefits of a liberal arts education, which requires students to complete credits in varied fields of study for a well-rounded educational experience.

Pitt’s BA in studio arts requires a total of 120 credits to graduate, which includes 36 credits in studio arts; 13 credits in the history of art and architecture; and the remaining 71 credits in general education requirements, including those that may be used toward another major, a minor, or a certificate.

“IT’s the liberal arts concept of all other classes informing your art. You have the resources from other fields of study. You have the ability to explore anything,” says Jenkins. “I’m the product of a BA program. I have a wellspring of resources. A liberal arts education helps to generate ideas and creates more complex thinkers.”

Studio Arts graduates pursue diverse career paths, and the department plays host to many double majors. Right now, there’s a student majoring in studio arts and political science who plans to draw political cartoons. Another is majoring in biology and studio arts and already has been accepted into a graduate program in medical illustration. Studio arts alumni also pursue certification to teach K–12 art; go on to work at design firms; or work as art critics, curators, or museum educators.

In addition to the benefits of Pitt’s liberal arts approach to studio arts, several other trends illustrate the department’s strength: a devoted group of talented professors; steadily rising enrollments (the number of studio arts majors has doubled since 1996); and a continued commitment to keep the program fresh and relevant with new courses, increased collaboration, and the integration of new technologies and techniques.

And, of course, there’s the value that comes from pursuing art itself. “Art is being able to think outside a structure or boundary,” says Jenkins. “It’s about wonder and invention.”

For more information on the Department of Studio Arts, visit www.studioarts.pitt.edu.

DID YOU KNOW:

• Every spring, Pitt’s studio arts department showcases the work of its graduating seniors. In April, the annual Studio Arts Student Exhibition was held in the University Art Gallery in the Frick Fine Arts Building. It featured 99 works by 24 graduating seniors and 19 additional students taking studio arts classes.

• The Department of Studio Arts is home to two Guggenheim fellows: faculty members Paul Glabicki, who was awarded the fellowship in 1986, and Barbara Weissberger, a 2007 Guggenheim fellow. These prestigious fellowships are awarded to those who have demonstrated “exceptional creative ability in the arts,” according to the Guggenheim Foundation Web site.

• Each faculty member in the Department of Studio Arts is a practicing professional artist. Visit the upcoming faculty exhibition, October 1–November 21, 2008, in the Frick Fine Arts Building to see the work of these outstanding artists.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

A Liberal Arts Palette

As Pitt’s urban landscape begins to change from the lush greens of summer to the vibrant hues of fall, the campus pulsates with an energy that radiates from the diverse group of undergraduate students eager to achieve outstanding academic success.

With its world-class faculty and nationally ranked programs, the School of Arts and Sciences is the cornerstone of the University’s research and scholarly excellence. I encourage your son or daughter, whether a freshman or returning student, to build a solid foundation throughout his or her academic journey by following a path of knowledge and exploration that goes far beyond the formal walls of the classroom.

With more than 60 majors in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, students can shape their own degree paths and develop into creative, expressive, critical thinkers. Cross-disciplinary study enables students to broaden their horizons and open their eyes to endless possibilities and career choices.

Students can further shape their educational experience by participating in undergraduate research opportunities, special programs for freshmen, study abroad options, internships, community service, and teaching experiences.

The University of Pittsburgh is the heart of one of the most thriving research, medical, and cultural communities in the United States. I hope that you will have the opportunity to enjoy the distinct textures and colors of the University and surrounding communities when you visit for homcoming/family weekend, October 24–26, and throughout the academic year.

With best wishes for a vibrant fall,

Juan J. Manfredi
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies

FACULTY PROFILE

Sharing an Artistic Vision

If you were to browse through some recent pieces of Lenore Thomas’ art, you’d probably be struck by the quirky titles, such as “Satan Is Like Wheat Glucose,” “Who Hit the Chicken Switch?”, “I’m Slapping You with My Mitten from Afar,” and “Let’s Start at Ridiculous and Move Backwards.” No doubt, you’d also be intrigued by her eclectic mixed-media approach to art, using screen printing, acrylic, laser transparencies, graphite, smoke, wax, and more to form complex, mulilayered creations.

Thomas, like her colleagues in the Department of Studio Arts at the University of Pittsburgh, maintains a lively career as a professional artist as well as a college professor. “Creating and making art is incredibly important to me, it’s who I am every minute of the day,” says Thomas.

The supportive atmosphere of the department impressed Georgiades back when he took his first class and still amazes him today. “The studio arts faculty genuinely care,” he says, mentioning faculty members Delanie Jenkins and Lenore Thomas, both of whom “helped me see art as a viable career option.”

In the short year that Thomas has been at Pitt, she’s made the most of her time. She redesigned the department’s etching lab to create a nontoxic environment; submitted her students’ etching prints to a show in Denmark; and escorted four students to the 2008 Southern Graphics Council Conference in Richmond, Va., the largest such conference in the United States. And, of course, that was all in addition to keeping up with her regular course load teaching drawing, etching, lithography, and printmaking classes and creating art in her own studio.

The University of Pittsburgh is the heart of one of the most thriving research, medical, and cultural communities in the United States. And, of course, that was all in addition to keeping up with her regular course load teaching drawing, etching, lithography, and printmaking classes and creating art in her own studio.

FUTURE LEADERS

Learn Today

ART, FILM, AND ... PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL?

A slim young man in a pair of khakis, a white polo shirt, and a baseball cap holds a black briefcase with what appears to be the number seven with a dot under it—a kind of combination exclamation point/number seven. He’s striking purposefully toward Heinz Field. His name is Jason Georgiades, aka “Coach Jason.” His mission is to get the Pittsburgh Steelers to implement his original offensive play.

Two years, $4,000, and thousands of travel miles later, Georgiades and his cameraman/ trend Tevar Cushing (BA ’05) have not accomplished their original mission. But they have created a 65-minute comedic documentary, The Steal Phantom, about their attempts to get the Steelers to incorporate their gadget play into the official playbook. And they’ve done it on a shoestring budget—Georgiades’ personal savings—in between his activities and course load as a full-time college student and studio arts major at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ironically enough, Georgiades might never have followed his artistic calling to make films had it not been for a few fateul studio arts classes he took his sophomore year, after transferring from the University of Massachusetts Amherst to Pitt. He was pursuing a biology major and needed to take some creative courses to fulfill a few requirements.

“I was a little stressed out with what I was doing,” Georgiades says of his attempt to pursue a career path that wasn’t in his heart. “I took some foundation courses in art, met some faculty, and it all took off from there.” By the beginning of his junior year, he’d declared a studio arts major and couldn’t have been happier with his decision.

The department promoted and screened The Steal Phantom last December and awarded Georgiades one of its three Arts and Sciences Dean’s Awards this past spring at the Studio Arts Student Exhibition. Georgiades also recently was selected to participate in a project called Pittsburgh Neighborhood Narratives, a cinematic salute to Pittsburgh, currently in production, that will consist of original short films representing the city’s different neighborhoods.

Georgiades will graduate in December and plans to pursue filmmaking as a career, building up his body of work in Pittsburgh and then moving into a larger market like New York. He has a few words of wisdom to share with fellow students who may be on the fence about their career choice: “Anybody who’s thinking about an artistic career should do it. You won’t know until you try it.”

Visit www.stealphantom.com for more about Georgiades’ documentary, which received the student award for best documentary feature at the 2008 Indie Gathering Film Festival in Westlake, Ohio. For more information on the film festival, visit www.theindiegathering.com/2008.htm. More information on the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Narratives project can be found at www.pghneighborhoodnarratives.com.
Pitt Student Research Featured at National Conference

Question: What event featured 2,800 student scholars representing 350 colleges and universities in one place for a three-day bonanza of presentations in more than 50 separate scholarly disciplines?

Answer: What some consider to be the nation’s foremost undergraduate academic mecca: the 22nd National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)

Held at Salisbury University in Salisbury, Md., April 10–12, the 2008 conference showcased the talents of many promising young researchers, including nearly a dozen University of Pittsburgh undergraduates. These students were chosen because of their outstanding work in fields ranging from art history to mathematics to psychology. All 11 Pitt students who submitted abstracts were accepted; eight were able to attend the conference and present their work.

The NCUR trip was sponsored by the School of Arts and Sciences Office of Experiential Learning, which actively encourages Arts and Sciences undergraduates to earn credits outside the classroom by engaging in internships, service projects, research, and teaching. By placing students in dynamic, hands-on activities tied to course work, the office helps to enrich and enhance the learning process.

To learn more about experiential learning at Pitt, go to www.as.pitt.edu/oel.

University of Pittsburgh Students Who Participated at NCUR:

- Timothy Adamo
- Caitlin Cater
- Rachel Denlinger
- Shanna Duffy
- Maura Koehle
- Nicholas Maradin III
- Benjamin Merichi
- Todd Moyle
- Amira Rahim
- Alison Roos
- Miriam Stoll

By Nicole O’Barto
University Counseling Center

When we discuss college drinking and the culture behind the behavior, we are prone to discussions concerning social norms, the role of the media in perpetuating the culture, and the perceived rite of passage that a college student has in relation to the decision to drink. However, it is also important to acknowledge that some drinking behaviors are directly related to an untreated mental health issue and that, in those cases, drinking is a coping mechanism.

Research shows that there is an increase in the number of students who are drinking in response to stress and anxiety and that a lack of healthy coping skills is associated with alcohol use and an increase in mental health problems. When a student drinks to cope with a negative emotional state or to mask unpleasant symptoms of anxiety or depression, the relationship with alcohol changes drastically, and the risk for developing a substance-related disorder increases.

In essence, it is crucial to be aware not only of the signs and symptoms of possible alcohol abuse but also of those signs of anxiety and depression. Warning signs of depression and anxiety include:

- Loss of confidence
- Loss of motivation or low energy
- Sleep disturbances
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in appetite
- Frequent mood swings (quick to anger)
- Persistent worry
- Persistent sadness

Possible signs of alcohol abuse include:

- Lower-than-normal grades
- Reluctance to talk with you or unavailability to talk
- Unwillingness to talk about activities with friends
- Trouble with campus authorities
- Mood swings, and
- Defensiveness

Tips for parents:

How can you help your son or daughter if you suspect that he or she may be experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety or that he or she may be abusing alcohol?

- Call and/or visit the University Counseling Center and ask to speak with a counselor.
- Plan a visit with your son or daughter and ask to meet his or her friends. Sometimes unexpected visits can be quite telling.
- Contact your son or daughter’s residence hall assistant or director and discuss your concern.
- Encourage your son or daughter to develop emotion-focused coping skills to alleviate distressing feelings.

Resources:

- University of Pittsburgh Counseling Center
- College Drinking: Changing the Culture
- Alcohol Screening
- National Institute of Mental Health

Other recent noteworthy accomplishments include Thomas’ first solo art show at New York City’s Kathryn Markel Fine Arts gallery in March 2007; another solo exhibition at Murray State University; and representation by two galleries in side exhibitions around Art Basel Miami Beach. Thomas also has received two Pitt grants since her arrival at the University: the Hewlett International Grant, which allowed her to attend an international print conference in Tallinn, Estonia; last fall and a third- term research stipend for summer 2008 to support her research work.

Far from resting on her laurels, Thomas plans to keep busy as she settles in for her second year at Pitt. Her proposal for a new course in screen printing was approved, so she’ll be working to set up shop for the new class, slated for spring term 2009.

She’s also enjoying both the University and the city. “Everyone has been very welcoming, including the students and the University as a whole. Pittsburghers are particularly friendly people, which has been a happy, unexpected bonus. And the students definitely exceeded my expectations, which is always wonderful for a teacher.”

To find links to Thomas’ art and learn more about her, go to www.studioarts.pitt.edu/faculty/thomas.php.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Dean’s Stars
  Academic achievement brings many rewards, including a $50 award. Students who complete the fall term with a minimum of 12 credits and a term grade point average of 4.0 will see a $50 award posted to their PeopleSoft accounts. If your son or daughter qualifies for this award but does not receive the $50 credit, please contact us at pittpride@as.pitt.edu.

- Homecoming/Family Weekend
  Mark your calendars for Pitt’s annual homecoming/family weekend (October 24–26). The scheduled events and activities provide you with a chance to visit with your son or daughter and enjoy the University of Pittsburgh campus community. For details, including hotel and football game ticket information, and to register, please visit www.familyweekend.pitt.edu.

- April 2009 Graduation Notice
  Students planning to graduate in April 2009 need to apply for graduation by Monday, November 10. Application forms will be available at the Student Records Office in 140 Thackeray Hall beginning Tuesday, October 21.

- December Graduation
  The School of Arts and Sciences will host a graduation reception and recognition ceremony for the Class of December 2008 on Saturday, December 13. An invitation will be mailed in mid-November to those Arts and Sciences undergraduates who have applied for December graduation. For more information, contact the Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies at 412-624-6480.