Destler uses global-warming forum to make ‘green’ RIT a campus priority

Taking a formal stance on increasing the quality and volume of sustainable programs and projects at RIT, President Bill Destler will sign the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment. Destler made the announcement Feb. 5 during an address to the campus community, which concluded a surprising absence of the National Teach-In on Global Warming.

The Presidents Climate Commitment, which has been signed by hundreds of college and university presidents nationwide, provides support and a framework for Americana colleges and universities to go climate neutral. Particular emphasis is placed on neutralizing greenhouse gas emissions while accelerating research and educational programs.

“As part of this commitment, we will need to come up with an institutional strategic plan for reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas production, and provide institutional structures and support that can move the campus toward the goals set in the plan,” explains Destler. “This plan will include a green building policy, an energy-star procurement policy, encouragement of public transportation, green power production and purchasing, climate-friendly investing and waste minimization.”

In addition, he pledged to make RIT a national center of excellence in the areas of environmental science and sustainability. Destler also used his address to Global Teach-In, page 4

Public service award winners announced

M. Ann Howard, professor in the science, technology & society/ public policy department in the College of Liberal Arts, is this year’s recipient of the RIT Four Presidents Distinguished Public Service Award. Howard joined RIT 16 years ago and according to her nomination form, has a long record of community service. She has served in an official capacity on no less than six community organizations, including NeighborhoodWorks Rochester (board chairperson and current chair of the governance committee), Greater Rochester Urban Renewal, Downtown Community Forum, Center for Dispute Settlement, Cornell Cooperative Extension’s environmental advisory committee and the Kodak Park Citizens Advisory Council.

“When it comes to community service, Ann exhibits a no-nonsense, grassroots, service-leadership philosophy,” says James Winstead, chair of the science, technology & society/public policy department. “She is not the type of leader who just ‘talks the talk, she ‘walks the walk.’ What is really spectacular is how Ann has brought her commitment to community service into the classroom. Through her efforts, projects like the Greater Rochester Urban Renewal and the Northeast Neighborhood Alliance have positively affected hundreds of RIT faculty, staff and students. Ann teaches by example, and she is the epitome of what grassroots community service is all about.”

RIT vice president emeritus Alfred Davis started a $50,000 endowment to fund the award. Each recipient will have the privilege of designating the endowment income to a beneficiary of their choice, such as a not-for-profit organization. Four Presidents, page 4

RIT animators help bring ‘Coraline’ to life

The adventures of a little girl come to life on the big screen as the stop-motion animated feature film, Coraline, is now playing nationwide in theaters. Viewers will witness the work of RIT professor and character animator Tom Gasek, ‘79 (design), stop-motion animator Teresa Drilling, ‘83 (art and design) and master of fine arts student Adam Fisher.

Gasek, an assistant professor in RIT’s School of Film and Animation, spent six weeks last summer working on the film. Directed by Henry Selick, the director of Nightmare Before Christmas, Coraline is the story of a little girl who stumble upon a passageway in her home where she discovers an eerie fantasy world, known as the “Other World.” The Other World is where you’ll see Gasek’s creative talents. Called upon as an additional animator for the film, he worked on some of the quicker action shots like animating the snail-painters that attack Coraline’s feet or animating Coraline as she jumps out of the way, in horror, from the claw of a preying mantis.

“Requirements and expectations are now different than when I started the program two-and-a-half years ago, and this is for the better since the program is moving towards a culture of research instead of coursework,” says Golen. “It’s rewarding to have the opportunity to give advice to the other Ph.D. computing candidates. I also think I’ve made things a bit easier for them in terms of setting a precedent for the dissertation proposal defense process since I was the first one to go through it.”

His thesis research is in underwater sensor networks and their deployment for military surveillance. RIT research he began while working as an engineer at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport. Golen took part in a sea trial aboard the U.S.S. Cashing to examine different systems to detect submarines, a test he says he knew would fail.

“The sensors we were testing were meant to operate in hundreds of feet of water, not thousands, so there was no way they could have worked,” he says. Adds Norma Shemey, RIT professor of networking, security and systems administration and Golen’s adviser, “Trick’s research covers a very strategic study of the deployment of underwater sensors and networking such sensors to collect target data. His research takes into account all details that are significant for such deployment, which is very unique and would be an asset to military underwater operations.”

“When not writing his thesis or spending time with his wife and 21-month-old son, Golen is among those trying to create a greater sense of community among the graduate students, now 16 percent of the RIT student body. He is a member of the Graduate Student Advisory Committee, with eight members, one representing each college. They plan social events for graduate students and hope to host a research symposium this summer. As of this academic year, there is a Student Government senate seat held by a graduate student.

“My advice to other graduate students is not to think that only their research or area of interest is important,” adds Golen. “By doing this, they’ll miss out on many opportunities for collaboration that exist. Interdisciplinary and collaborative research are what I believe will ultimately lead to the greatest discoveries in the years to come.”

A San Weinert | photographer

On track to earning RIT’s first computing Ph.D.

Erik Golen is looking at the needs of his fellow graduate students from a different perspective than he did while attending RIT as an undergraduate. Golen ‘03 (computer engineering) is nearly finished with his doctorate in computing and information sciences. He will be the first student to complete the doctoral program offered through the B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences.

Golen has found it both rewarding and challenging to be among the first to go through the program. “Requirements and expectations are now different than when I started the program two-and-a-half years ago, and this is for the better since the program is moving towards a culture of research instead of coursework,” says Golen. “It’s rewarding to have the opportunity to give advice to the other Ph.D. computing candidates. I also think I’ve made things a bit easier for them in terms of setting a precedent for the dissertation proposal defense process since I was the first one to go through it.”

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A San Weinert | photographer

Student Spotlight

Erik Golen happily encourages those computing Ph.D. candidates coming after him. He also suggests they pursue opportunities for collaborative research.

Erik Golen | photographer

New award will aid female filmmakers

The Student Success Fund has awarded an Innovation Grant to Kaitlyn Werner, a graduate student in the B. Thomas Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences.

Werner has been selected to receive $5,000 to produce a documentary to be called “Last Dance,” which will document the personal stories of women who have been sexually assaulted.

Kaitlyn Werner | photographer

In the community

Partnership creates thirst for knowledge among youth

A new partnership between the RIT Corporate Research Web site and the At the Table forum will help others engage in business alliances.

RIT Corporate Research Web site helps others engage in business alliances, page 3

Grants, awards

Research and Scholarship

Corporate Research Web site helps others engage in business alliances, page 3

Viewpoints

Looking ahead to this year’s Imagine RIT Festival, page 3
NTID grad to appear on ‘Amazing Race’

A million bucks would be nice, but RIT/NTID graduate Luke Adams wanted other rewards when he applied to be on The Amazing Race. “Money was a nice perk if it happened, but I really wanted to experience it. I just love the games,” he says.

Adams, 23, of Monument, Colo., is the first deaf contestant on the popular CBS reality show. He and his mother, Margie, are one of 11 teams to race on the show’s next season, starting Feb. 15.

Born deaf, Adams received a cochlear implant but doesn’t use it. He communicates using American Sign Language.

Adams graduated from the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind in Colorado Springs. He says the decision to attend RIT/NTID was easy after he visited several colleges.

“As soon as I saw RIT/NTID, it was hands down where I wanted to go,” he says. “I love that school. I wanted to go to a mainstreamed school, get a good education and I wanted to be exposed to both deaf and hearing people. RIT was perfect.”

Adams, who received a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice in 2008, learned he was selected to be a contestant last summer. He and his mother have already gotten many e-mails from friends, strangers and former The Amazing Race cast members who told them to enjoy their 15 minutes of fame.

“We’re both really looking forward to seeing the shows” Margie Adams says. “When you’re doing it, you only know you’re doing it. It will be fun to see what the other teams were doing. We’re really excited and looking forward to it.”

Adams says held the show again, perhaps if they had another season with other deaf contestants competing.

“Regardless of his finish, he says, he accomplished what he wanted: “I’m very proud to be the first deaf contestant on The Amazing Race. It was a very, very cool experience. I just hope I make the deaf community proud.”

According to CBS, Luke Adams, an NTID graduate, and his mom, Margie, appear on CBS’ The Amazing Race.

Study examines impact of media consolidation on radio

Along with many forms of traditional media, radio has suffered a loss in listenership and relevance, according to some experts, over the last two decades—a scenario which has often been attributed to the rise in new forms of media and technology, including the Internet and the iPod.

Now, an RIT study is shedding new light on listener perceptions of radio programming and the impact that ownership consolidation might have on the medium.

“The findings could assist the industry in addressing audience erosion and help policymakers arrive at more informed decisions related to serving the public interest in local communities,” says study author Michael Saffran, adjunct professor of communication and associate director for new media at RIT’s University News Services.

“The banking and financial sectors aren’t the only areas in American society witnessing adverse effects from more than two decades of deregulation,” argues study author Michael Saffran, adjunct professor of communication and associate director for new media at RIT’s University News Services. “As the nation grapples with the mortgage crisis, U.S. citizens also face a growing ‘media crisis’ brought on by excessive ownership deregulation and consolidation.

The study found that less than 15 percent of respondents described their satisfaction with local radio programming as “To a Great Extent.” Instead, more than twice the number—nearly four out of every 10 listeners—expressed “Very Little” or zero satisfaction with local radio programming.

In addition, young people (those under the age of 25) were the least likely to listen to the radio among all age groups.

Findings will be presented at the 100th annual convention of the Eastern Communication Association, April 30-May 2, in Anchorage, Alaska.

New award will aid female filmmakers

At this year’s High Falls Interna- tional Film Festival in Rochester, one young female director hopes to draw attention to not just her films, but to the future of women in filmmaking.

Lauren Tracey, a fourth-year student in RIT’s School of Film and Animation, whose work has been shown three times at the interna- tional film venue, has created a na- tional filmmakers award for female students called “The X-Factor Filmmakers Fund.”

There are not enough financial resources available for film students, says Tracey, who has struggled with the demands of making high-quality films on top of tuition costs.

“My creative goal is to make great films, but my professional goal is to help young women who have enor- mous talent, but not the financial resources to make headway in the film industry,” says Tracey.

X-Factor Filmmakers will fund an award for a female student attending RIT. It will be handed out at a recep- tion to be held during the annual Rochester High Falls International Film Festival, May 13-18.

Tracey started the X-Fund with her friends Rock Tracy, a Boston-area graphic designer. They’ve launched the X-Factor Filmmakers Web site, web-X-factorfilm.com, which is selling a poster created by Tracey’s dad especially for the X-Factor Fund. Twenty-five percent of the sale of each shirt goes to the award fund. The goal for sales is $5,000.

Rosie Taravella, executive director of the Rochester High Falls International Film Festival says: “While showcasing talented independent female filmmakers, we have discovered that women are still less likely than men to land lucrative studio contracts. We believe that if more women enroll in film school, this gender gap will end one day. The X-Factor Filmmakers Fund is one more step toward making this goal a reality, and we are proud to support it.”

“The X-Factor Fund is putting the spotlight in a very worthwhile cause: how can we encourage more women to enter the world of film?” says Jeffrey Blitz, film and television director. “We never know where the next unique voice in American film will come from, and if this fund helps even in a modest way then it’s much deserved of our support. And the shirts are pretty nifty too.”

Despite notable talents like Kasi Lemmons, Julie Taymor and Sarah Polley, only 7 percent of directors in the Directors Guild of America are female. No woman has ever won an Academy Award for Best Direc- tor and only three have ever been nominated. There is also a dearth of women working in many areas of filmmaking, most notably cinema- tography and directing.

Kelly O’Connor, lacak@rit.edu

Nominations now underway for Isaac Jordan diversity honors

Nominations are now being accepted through Feb. 16 for the 2009 Isaac L. Jordan Faculty/Staff Diversity Award.

The annual award recognizes individuals who are strong advocates for, and contributors to, campus diversity efforts.

The award was established for the late Isaac L. Jordan, the first president of the President’s Commission on Pluralism and Inclusion. He was known among campus peers as a leader in addressing inclusion of under-represented populations and working with all constituencies to remove barriers to intolerance.

Eligible faculty and staff are full-time employees, serving at RIT for more than three years. The nominee for the award may be an individual whose position responsibili- ties are not focused on diversity, but who routinely and voluntarily works to ensure that those responsibilities are implementing diversity initiatives, but who also consistently explores unique ways to go above and beyond the expecta- tions. Complete requirements can be found at www.diversity.rit.edu.

“In the years since this award was first presented, RIT has made great strides in its diversity efforts,” says Peggy Tierrel, chairperson of the awards committee and member of the President’s Commission on Pluralism and Inclusion. “The award is a way to recognize the people that have worked to ensure that those diversity efforts continue. Each of the past finalists has made their mark on campus. They honor diversity and show great respect for what we do here at RIT.”

The award is also co-sponsored by the chief diversity officer.

Letters of nomination can be sent to Michelle Cometta at macomet@rit.edu or by interoffice mail to Sandra Whitmore, the President’s Commission on Pluralism and Inclusion, 2152 Eastman Building.
A look ahead to this year’s Imagine RIT Festival

by Andrew Quagliata

Program educates high schoolers about business, accounting

RIT and the accounting firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers have formed a pilot program in order to help retention rates and offer ninth-grade Jefferson High School students a first-hand look at the college experience. The program will continue through the end of the academic year.

“If we catch them now before they get disenchanted with high school, we will have the opportunity to increase the graduation rate and help students set realistic goals,” says Loretta Holtzman, vice principal at Thomas Jefferson High School in the Rochester City School District. “For many of our students, they see only what’s in their backyards and what they see doesn’t equal success.”

A total of 35 Jefferson High School students will be offered opportunities to attend a leadership conference, tours of the campus, and meet RIT students and faculty from the E. Philip Saunders College of Business and business professionals who will lead several workshops in the fields of business and accounting.

“RIT has had a relationship with Jefferson Middle School for the past 15 years with a career counseling program for seventh and eighth graders, and when it became a high school in 2007, we began working with older students as well,” said Brown, interim chief diversity officer at RIT. “With this new program I hope that we can broaden the program. The first goal is to increase the percentage of these ninth graders who receive a college education from high school, it mirrors the goal we have for freshman students at RIT—to persist and graduate. The second is to introduce ninth graders to life on the college campus and help them make academic areas like math, science, business and leadership skills something they want to pursue. I hope it will encourage them to stay motivated. The third goal is to assess, monitor and track these students when they graduate from Jefferson High—whether they go to a job, go to a vocational school, or college. The fourth goal is that we want to know what happens to them. If they come to RIT, that’s wonderful—but it’s what we would really like to have happen.”

Jefferson partnership, page 4

Liberal Arts hosts new Mac computer lab Facility includes enhanced video editing, publishing, design capabilities

RIT has partnered with four Rochester-area advertising firms to enhance educational and research facilities for students in the fields of advertising, public relations and journalism.

Partners + Naperi, Catalog Director, Direct, and Packaging; and Mason Sellards-McDermott provided funds to RIT’s College of Liberal Arts to assist with the creation of a new Mac computer lab. The facility includes enhanced video editing, publishing and design capabilities and will be used for classes and research work in the college’s advertising and public relations programs and its newly created journalism degree.

“I’d like to thank all four firms for their assistance in the creation of this lab and in enhancing opportunities for RIT students,” notes Robert Ulman, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. “In the college we make use of both sides of the brain in that we have programs that range from the humanities to those that emphasize the research methods of the natural sciences. Therefore, we have a need for facilities that enable teaching and research in both the creative arts and science and technology.

“The fields of advertising and journalism are increasingly tied to new digital technologies, and students studying in these fields need a comprehensive understanding of how to access these technologies to succeed,” adds Rudy Pugliese, professor and graduate coordinator in the Department of Communication.

The new Mac lab is available to additional RIT students in a host of majors, including printing, photography and graphic design, and it will be utilized to design and edit professional publications for RIT-hosted conferences and symposia.

The Department of Communication and College of Liberal Arts also hope to increase cooperative education opportunities for students through the partnership as well as explore additional educational and research projects in the future.

Web site links RIT research with corporate partners

Since the introduction of the Corporate RD&D program in 2008, RIT has expanded its corporate research to encompass a broad range of research activities. Program partners have an easy connection to RIT and present the range of project approaches, a new research web site has been created.

The Corporate Research Web site, www.rit.edu/research/corporate, provides an overview of the types of research, faculty involvement, student involvement and intellectual property ownership.

“RIT offers multiple vehicles to promote research partnerships and our new web site provides information on how to best utilize these programs to enhance scholarship and technology transfer,” notes Donald Boyd, vice president of research.

Three key research programs are offered through the RD&D service: corporate research and development and sponsored research.

The Corporate RD&D program includes short-term research proj- ects involving evaluation or analysis, conducted by undergraduates with supervision of faculty or staff. Intel- lectual property in these projects is not anticipated. The Printing Applications Laboratory in the College of Imaging Arts and Sciences is working with substrate suppliers, under Research Services agreements, to evaluate the performance of different types of media on HP Indigo printing technology.

In the Corporate RD&D program, research projects address a specific company problem and typically involve master’s students working directly with the company with mentoring from faculty. Under these agreements the company owns the intellectual property, but RIT retains the right to publish and present the research findings. For example, Kathleen Lamkin-Kennard, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, and two mechanical engineering students are working with Johnson & Johnson Ortho Clinical Diagnostics on a Core RD&D project to develop a modular simulation platform to better simulate antibody antigen reactions.

Sponsored Research addresses long-term research goals, which ad- vance a specific field or technology and usually involve Ph.D. students working with faculty. All intellectual property developed through these re- search is owned by RIT and licensed to the sponsor. For the past five years, Karl Hirschman, Micron Professor of Microelectronic Engineering, and a team of graduate students have been conducting a sponsored research project with Corning Inc. to advance the development of silicon-on-glass technology for use in flat-panel displays.

For additional information about Corporate Research opportunities or to discuss a possible corporate partnership, contact the Office of Research Relations at 475-2898.

Leap of faith

The campus morphed into a ski and snowboard world Feb. 6 as RIT’s Alpine Ski and Snowboard Club hosted its annual Winter Games. Racer series had several different rails and a jump were set up for participants.

A Sue Webler | photographer

Carolee Fawcett, a second-year psychology major, utilizes the newly upgraded Mac lab in the College of Liberal Arts building.

A look ahead to this year’s Imagine RIT Festival

by Andrew Quagliata

Many smaller changes have also been made to ensure a positive experience for visitors and exhibitors alike. Allow me to paint a picture of what we envision the 2009 Imagine RIT Festival to look like.

It’s a sunny spring day with temperatures in the mid-60’s. Service providers have been on campus since early in the morning to prepare for at least 20,000 visitors. President Destler’s Green Vehicle Challenge kicks things off at 9 a.m., as an assortment of teams attempt to top the energy efficiency of Destler’s electric bicycle as they navigate a three-mile loop around campus. As the race begins, tow cars in turn for the festival’s 10 a.m. opening ceremony, they’ll be greeted by volunteers (wearing orange T-shirts) at one of six welcome tents that have sprung up across campus.

Like last year, the festival will stretch from the Louise M. Slaughter Building to the National Technological Institute for the Deaf—with exhibitors (wearing yellow T-shirts) showcasing their interactive presentations, hands-on demonstrations, exhibitions and research projects almost everywhere in between.

As visitors explore campus, they’ll come across four performance stages that will feature live entertainment throughout the day. They’ll also have the opportunity to purchase a wide selection of food from a number of different locations.

By the time the festival concludes, we hope visitors will feel the need to return next year to further explore all of the innovative and creative things we do at RIT.

Festival day is quickly approaching. Our exhibit deadline has already passed and another looms on the horizon. Feb. 16 marks the deadline to be included in the festival’s print program, which will be circulated to visitors on the day of the festival.

Plan to spend May 2 at RIT, and please don’t keep this event a secret; tell your colleagues at other universi- ties, your associates in professional organizations, your neighbors and your friends. Don’t forget to bring your family!

While some things have changed from last year, this remains the same: we hope visitors will feel the need to return next year to further explore all of the innovative and creative things we do at RIT.

...
Four Presidents at Rochester
Rochester or a group on campus. Howard plans to divide the $2,000 award among the following groups: NeighborWorks Rochester, Greater Rochester Urban Beauty and the Anthony L. Jordan Health Center. Kailyn Werner ’10 (business administration) who has been selected to receive the Bruce R. James ’64 Distinguished Public Service Award, since fall 2007, she has been involved with RIT’s Habitat for Humanity club, having served as secretary and club fundraiser/event coordinator. She works weekends on the local Rochester Habitat for Hu-
manity, and has organized RIT’s alternative spring break leading stu-
dents across the country to assist in the construction of Habitat for Humanity homes. She is also the student leader for a project to build a ‘green’ Habitat for Humanity house sponsored by RIT.
Werner is a member of the RIT Honors Program and serves as a learning assistant for an honors class. She grew up in stereoscopic 3-D.

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