

California University JOURNAL

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 33 ■ DEC. 7, 2009



The beauty of nature depicted by the artwork of Robert Creamer will be on display in Cal U's Manderino Gallery beginning Dec. 18 as the University's relationship with the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service continues.

Smithsonian Exhibit Explores 'Transitions'

Digital technology reveals the beauty of nature in *Transitions: Photographs by Robert Creamer*, an exhibition created by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) in collaboration with the National Museum of Natural History.

Transitions will open Dec. 18 in Manderino Gallery, on the third floor of Cal U's Manderino Library. The images will remain on view through April 27.

In creating the works for this stunning exhibition, Creamer traded his usual camera for a flatbed scanner. His compositions use flora and fauna that are placed directly on the scanner in aesthetic arrangements or suspended over it. The resulting detail is eerily lifelike and yet incredibly expressive.

"I'm challenging the traditional notion of beauty as something perfect and flawless," said Creamer.

Many of his photographs show flowers in various stages of decay. Creamer's subjects were drawn from the research collections at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Florida, and the Echo Hill Outdoor School in Maryland.

Transitions features 39 of Creamer's high-resolution images created exclusively for the exhibition. Many are paired to show a subject in transition. This exhibition also features a video by videographer Jeannie Yoon about Creamer's scanning and printing.

"I enjoy exploring the transitory nature of beauty and am constantly enthused by the serendipitous understandings and new relationships that this technique reveals to me," Creamer said.

SITES has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 50 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science and history, which are shown wherever people live, work and play.

All SITES exhibitions at Cal U are open to the public. Gallery hours and other information is available online at www.calu.edu/sites. To discuss group tours or field trips, call exhibitions coordinator Walter Czekaj at 724-938-5244 or e-mail czekaj@calu.edu.

Activist: 'Change Will Happen'

Environmental activist and author Diane Wilson told an audience of more than 500 that commitment and acting spontaneously on her intuition have been paramount in winning battles against corporate polluters.

Wilson, author of *An Unreasonable Woman: A True Story of Shrimpers, Politicos, Polluters and the Fight for Seadrift, Texas*, headlined the American Democracy Project's Nov. 20 exploration of environmentalism and issues advocacy.

Her lecture in Steele Hall Mainstage Theatre followed two daytime panels that drew nearly 200 students and faculty members to the Natali Student Center.

Wilson said she began her career as an environmentalist simply by asking for a meeting in City Hall. She had read a newspaper article that listed her Texas hometown as the most polluted area in the world, and she wanted an explanation from local officials.

As captain of a shrimp boat — her family's business for four generations — Wilson had noticed the waters of the Gulf of Mexico growing progressively more polluted. Her persistent inquiries eventually revealed that chemical plants were discharging millions of gallons of toxic waste into the Gulf.

"Turns out it was all about money," she said. "Money and politics."

Wilson described her four-year battle to end the pollution, culminating with her decision to make a statement by sinking her own boat at the discharge site.

When the Coast Guard apprehended her, local shrimpers spontaneously joined the protest and the chemical plant's owners finally conceded.

"I believe that was my most life-affirming moment," she said. "I lost my marriage, my job, my business, my boat, and mostly everybody thought I was crazy. The only thing I had was my integrity, but when you get other people to believe, change will happen."

Wilson has continued her activism. Since Nov. 2, she has been participating in a hunger strike organized in advance of the United Nations conference on climate change in Copenhagen, Denmark.

"When you make a commitment, you are putting yourself out there on the edge, risking everything," she said. "That's where it changes. You put yourself out there. I move on instinct and intuition ... and things fall in place."



With seemingly endless enthusiasm, environmental activist and author Diane Wilson intrigued a near-capacity Steele Hall Main Stage Theatre with stories of her battles against corporate polluters.

Essay Winners Listed

Essay contests held in conjunction with Diane Wilson's appearance drew 122 entries from Cal U students.

In the Issues Advocacy contest, prizes were awarded to Jesse Wiser, first place; Renee Jardine, second; and Sarah E. Smith, third.

Winners in the Environmental Responsibility contest were William Moore, first; Steven Zidek, second; and Valerie Herrero, third.

The first-place essays have been posted online in the "current students" section of the Cal U website. Look for them at www.calu.edu/current.

Wilson said she has no regrets about the tremendous personal sacrifices she has made in fighting against corporate pollution.

"I lost a lot, but have never felt better about myself," she said.

'Million Dollar Achievers' Honored Cal U Grant Writers Praised at Ceremony

A ceremony last month honored faculty and staff who have written grant proposals, including 11 individuals who have been awarded \$1 million or more during their careers.

The 2008-2009 Grant Writers Recognition Ceremony recognized "Cal U Million Dollar Achievers" Michael Amrhein, Michael Brna, Debbie Grubb, Stanley Komacek, Kevin Koury, Ellie Nesser, Anthony Rodi, Jo Ann Rodriguez-Naeser, Gary Seelye, Nancy Skobel and Deborah Wojcik.

The event honored everyone who prepared and submitted at least one grant proposal, administered at least one internally funded project and/or completed the requirements for the 2009 Grant Writers Fellowship. Each received a flash drive as a token of the University's appreciation.

"Each of you has gone beyond the scope (of your everyday work) in coming up with an idea, developing the idea and presenting a grant proposal."

— Provost Geraldine Jones

Cheryl Vogrig, director of the Office of Grants and Contracts, emphasized the impact of grant activity at Cal U. During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, 109 proposals were submitted, totaling \$11.7 million, she said. Of those, 67 new awards were received, totaling \$4.5 million. The office is currently administering 100 active projects totaling \$5.6 million.

"This celebration is to recognize you and commend you for your efforts," Vogrig said.

Speaking on behalf of President Armenti, Provost Geraldine Jones praised the grant writers.

"Each of you has gone beyond the scope (of your everyday work) in coming up with an idea, developing the idea and presenting a grant proposal," she said. "Whether you were successful or not, it takes a lot of work, time and effort to put that grant work together."

Grant writing plays an important role in helping the University move forward, especially in these uncertain economic times, she added.

"I would ask that you continue exploring ways of seeking external funding for our many worthwhile projects at California," Jones said.

— Continued on page 3

Future Teachers Practice Philanthropy

Aspiring teachers at Cal U have embraced the culture of philanthropy through the student chapter of PSEA, the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

These students — future teachers in elementary, early childhood, secondary and technology education — recently capped off a series of service projects by collecting nonperishable food items for local shelters, soup kitchens and churches.

Earlier this year, the chapter held a Reading Night at Uniontown's Ben Franklin Elementary School. They also conducted a book fair and a clothing drive, collected items for military members and gathered school supplies for local students.

The chapter participates in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Lunch Buddy Program and distributes fleece blankets that members make by hand.

"PSEA is an amazing organization that gives future teachers the ability to help the community while also learning," said Jordan Galiffa, president of the student chapter. "Not only do members donate their time and services to many worthy causes, but they also have the opportunity to work firsthand with children. PSEA offers its members the chance to gain experience before even entering the classroom."

Faculty advisers for the student chapter are Drs. Holly Diehl and Diane Nettles of the Department of Elementary/Early Childhood Education.

"At Mission Day, when we listened to Dr. Armenti talk about helping the students understand the importance of giving of their time, it immediately

reminded me of PSEA," Diehl said. "For a long time, the PSEA group has been a model to follow."

She and Nettles both credited Dr. John Vargo for initiating the student chapter many years ago, and they thanked past club adviser Charlotte Orient.

The students' projects have been quite successful, Nettles said. For example, a book fair conducted through Scholastic, the global children's publishing, education and media company, brought in more than \$1,000 in free books to be distributed to needy children in districts where Cal U students have taught or participated in field experiences.

The food drive began in the middle of the semester and concluded at the final group meeting shortly before Thanksgiving.

"Many of our students work and commute, and all carry full class loads," Nettles said. "But this does not deter them at all. They are constantly organizing and thinking of new service projects. They are really nonstop, and it's exciting to watch."

In addition to their service projects, PSEA students have taken part in the American Heart Association's Homecoming Parade Walk organized by the Cal U Peer Mentors. And they keep the circle of philanthropy growing by recruiting freshman education students at the start of each semester and inviting student-teachers to talk with chapter members about what to expect when they first venture into the classroom.

"The PSEA students are out there and making a difference," said Diehl. "We tell them all the time how proud of them we are."



Jordan Galiffa, a junior majoring in elementary education and president of Cal U's PSEA student chapter, organizes donations for one of the group's many service projects to benefit those in need.



Dr. Rebecca Hess and two students spoke on 'Investigating the Reasons Why Japanese Students Study Abroad to Become Athletic Trainers.'

Professor, Athletic Training Students Speak in D.C.

Dr. Rebecca Hess, associate professor in the Department of Health Science, joined senior Athletic Training Education majors and honors program students Elizabeth Fegely and Dierdre McFate to deliver a presentation Oct. 31 at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference in Washington, D.C. The panel addressed "The Role of Health Science in Honors."

Previously, Hess and Dr. Ronald Wagner, associate professor in Exercise Science and Sport Studies, and former Cal U student Rumi Bumbera gave a presentation at the 2009 National Association of Athletic Trainers' Ethnic Diversity Advisory Committee Town Hall Meeting in Indianapolis.

Bumbera, who graduated in 2006, now works for UPMC.

The presentation was titled "Investigating the Reasons Why Japanese Students Study Abroad to Become Athletic Trainers."

Social Work Professor Looks at Online Learning

Dr. Peg Christopher, associate professor in the Department of Social Work, gave a presentation about online learning this fall at the ninth annual Lilly Conference on Evidence-Based Teaching and Learning in Traverse City, Mich.

Christopher's presentation focused on "Creating an Online Learning Environment for At-Risk College Students." Her trip was supported by the Faculty Professional Development Committee and the Department of Social Work.

Christopher called it the best conference she has ever attended. She was so moved by the experience, she said, that she penned an article in the hope of inspiring faculty to attend next year.

"At this conference the emphasis was on measuring the effect, or result, of teaching and learning in terms of what it does for the student and for society," Christopher said. "This is



Dr. Peg Christopher

very different from the contemporary U.S. overemphasis on measuring the affect, or feelings and emotions, of the college student with regard to his or her subjective experience in the classroom.

"Effective teaching was not defined on the basis of good student evaluations, but rather on the basis of objective evidence that

demonstrates what a student knows, understands, applies, analyzes, synthesizes and critiques."

Lilly conferences have been held for more than 25 years, providing opportunities for the presentation of scholarly work in teaching and learning. Participants come from a multitude of disciplines and from throughout the United States and abroad.

Faculty interested in learning more about the teaching strategies and evidence-based measures presented at the Lilly Conference are urged to call Christopher at 724-938-5358.

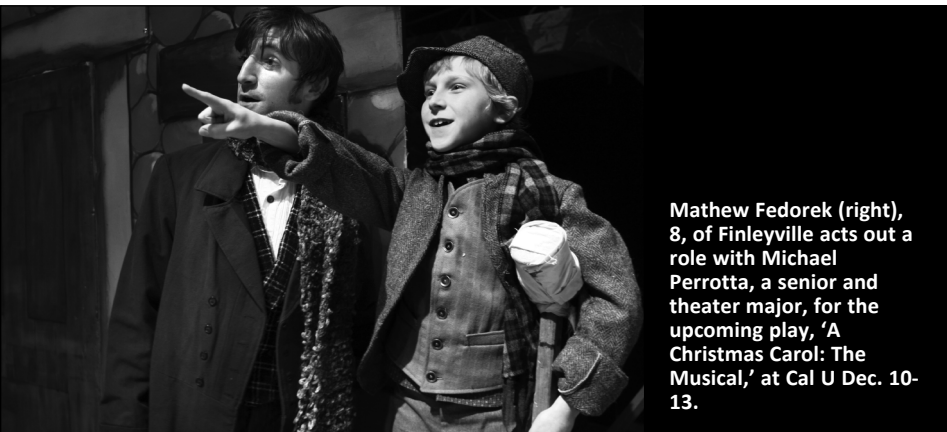
Holiday Favorite 'Christmas Carol' Opening Thursday

Cal U's Department of Theatre and Dance is beginning the holiday season with its production of "A Christmas Carol" — a musical that even the grouchiest of Scrooges won't be able to resist.

Performances of the classic tale by Charles Dickens are set for 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, with 2 p.m. matinees on Saturday and Sunday. All performances are in the Steele Hall Mainstage Theatre on the Cal U campus and are open to the public. With music by Alan Mencken and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, this musical version of "A Christmas Carol" promises to delight audience members of all ages.

Michael Slavin directs the play, with musical direction by Ted Kovall and choreography by Donna Anthony.

Cost is \$12.50 for adults, \$10 for seniors and children. Cal U students with valid CalCards are admitted free. For ticket information, or to order tickets (with a credit card) by phone, call the Steele Box Office at 724-938-5943.



Mathew Fedorek (right), 8, of Finleyville acts out a role with Michael Perrotta, a senior and theater major, for the upcoming play, 'A Christmas Carol: The Musical,' at Cal U Dec. 10-13.



Robotics Competition

Tom Dusenberry, president of Robonica, shows the Roboni-i, an interactive robotic toy that users can play alone or with an online community. Robonica demonstrated the toy during the Western Pennsylvania VEX Robotics Clean Sweep Competition, held Nov. 20 at Cal U.

Grounds Win Green Star Award

Cal U's well-manicured landscape is among this year's winners in the Green Star Award competition sponsored by the Professional Grounds Management Society.

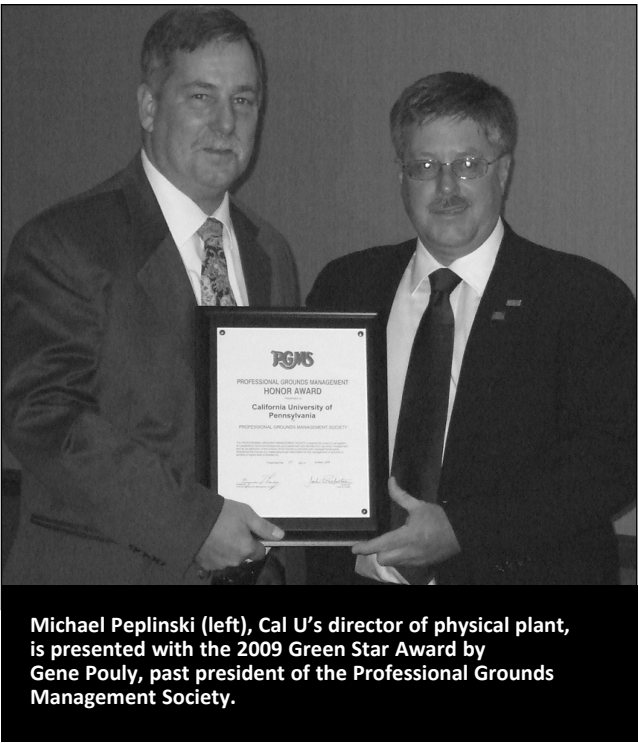
The Honor Award in the Urban University Grounds category recognizes exceptional grounds maintenance. The award was presented in conjunction with the society's annual conference and expo, in Louisville, Ky.

The Green Star Awards program brings national recognition to grounds maintained with a high degree of excellence year-round.

"Under the Landscape Master Plan that was started in 2000, the Cal U campus has been transformed from essentially a turf-and-tree campus to a diverse and vibrantly landscaped campus," said Gary Lenkey, the University's assistant director of building trades.

"Now the campus landscape boasts large masses of mixed plants, perennials and hanging baskets that provide a beautiful, scenic backdrop for students and staff."

Founded in 1911, the Professional Grounds Management Society is an individual membership society of grounds professionals dedicated to advancing the grounds management profession through education and professional development.



Michael Peplinski (left), Cal U's director of physical plant, is presented with the 2009 Green Star Award by Gene Pouly, past president of the Professional Grounds Management Society.

Internship Project Wins Grant

Karen Primm, director of the Internship Center, has been awarded a \$30,000 grant to continue the project "Building an Internship Network at Cal U."

The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education awarded the funding through June 2012.

The project goal is to develop the institutional capacity to increase the number and percentage of undergraduates who schedule and complete a for-credit or non-credit internship or other experiential learning opportunity.

"The project aims to generate greater students interest in internships and employer outreach programs, while concentrating on various industry-specific events," Primm said.

This funding also will support and expand programs available through the Internship Center. Some of the money will be available for the Student Internship Award Fund, which helps students pay costs associated with internships.

Two key components of the project are Employer Outreach and Student and Faculty Marketing. Employer Outreach funds will be used for meetings, outreach events and travel to conduct employer visits. To further educate students and faculty about the benefits of internships, the current marketing plan for the University community will be expanded and enhanced.

For more information, contact the Internship Center at 724-938-1578.



Karen Primm

'Million Dollar Achievers' Among Grant Writers

— Continued from page 1

"These projects significantly impact the lives of our students, employees and the community at large."

Dr. John Cencich, dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research, touched on the importance of the Grant Writing Fellowship.

Through the Office of the President and the Grants and Contracts Office, fellows can participate in a comprehensive, hands-on enrichment program that covers topics from strategically selecting potential funding sources to writing the critical sections of a competitive grant application.

Cencich also lauded Vogrig and her secretary, Denise Thomas.

"I am very proud of the work undertaken by the Office of Grants and Contracts in helping our professors and staff members in their scholarly pursuits," he said. "The end products are, indeed, phenomenal."



Eleven faculty and staff members who have been awarded \$1 million or more through grants during their Cal U careers were honored at the 2008-2009 Grant Writers Recognition Ceremony. Gathered around the plaque listing these individuals were Kevin Koury, Stan Komacek, John Cencich, Jo Ann Rodriguez-Naeser, Gary Seelye and Deborah Wojcik. Absent from photo are Michael Amrhein, Michael Brna, Debbie Grubb, Ellie Nesser, Anthony Rodi and Nancy Skobel.

Hoops Star ‘Outhustled’ the Competition

Editor’s Note: Cal U held its 15th annual Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet Oct. 16 in the Performance Center. Throughout the fall, The Journal is profiling each of the 2009 Hall of Fame inductees.

Good news arrived twice this August for Vulcan basketball star Chad Scott ’93. Just three days after he and his wife, Erin, celebrated the birth of their daughter, Journee, Scott learned that he would be inducted into Cal U’s athletic Hall of Fame.

“It was kind of surreal,” said Scott during the Hall of Fame induction banquet on Oct. 16. “To experience the birth of our daughter and then to receive word about this great honor in such a short time period was something I could never forget.

“I feel very proud, and it’s quite an honor.” A dominant post-player for the men’s basketball team from 1990-1991 through 1993-1994, Scott led all NCAA players in field goal percentage in 1992-1993 by converting 178 of 245 attempts for a 72.7 shooting percentage.

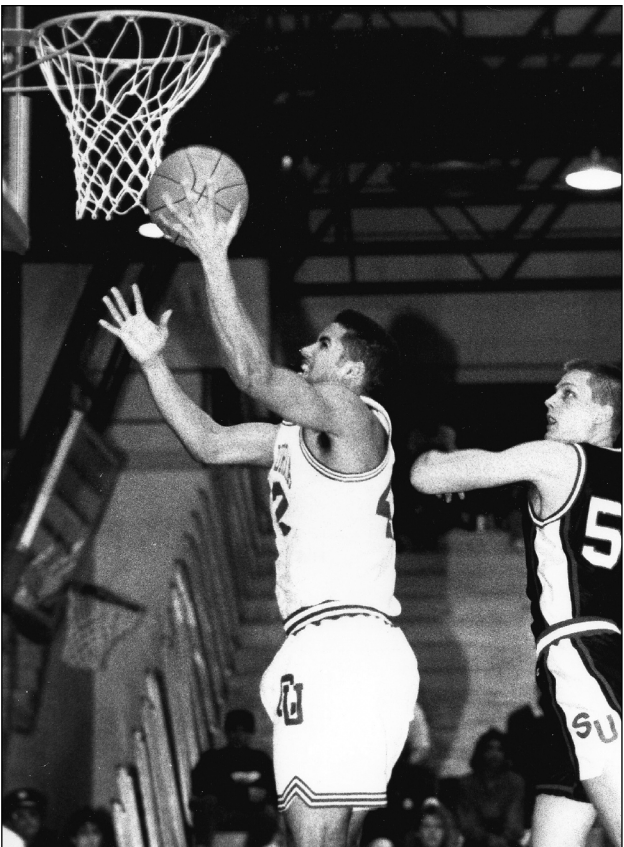
During his senior season, Scott shot 70.6 percent from the floor (173/245). These two single-season field goal percentages still rank first and third, respectively, in PSAC history.

Scott ended his career with an overall shooting percentage of 70, scoring 465 field goals in 664 attempts. Fifteen years later, this mark still ranks third among all NCAA Division II players.

Coinciding with Scott’s fine individual play was considerable team success.

Playing under 2005 Cal U Hall of Fame inductee Coach Jim Boone, the Vulcans compiled a 100-20 (.833) cumulative record from 1991-1994 and a 42-6 (.875) PSAC-West mark.

“Coach Boone did a really excellent job of bringing everyone along and understanding their roles to play together as a team,” Scott said. “I thought the majority of the teams we played had more individual talent than us, but collectively we were able to do it.”



Dominant post-player Chad Scott finished his stellar career with a 70 percent field goal percentage, which still ranks third in NCAA Division II history.

During this four-year stretch, the Vulcans won three consecutive PSAC-West titles (1991-1993), made three NCAA tourney appearances (1992-1994), three PSAC title game appearances (1992-1994), and won two PSAC championships (1992, 1994).

A two-time all-conference selection and the 1994 team captain, Scott finished with 1,141 career points — at the time, the 14th highest career point total in team history. He explained his consistently effective play with straightforward basketball terminology.

“I was always thinking what I could do next on the court and always knew where everyone was supposed to be,” he said. “One thing I would say I did more than anything was setting screens and coming back off to the ball and just beating people down court defensively. I just out-hustled people and mostly thought about rebounds because of my height.”

Understandably, Scott fondly remembers his senior year despite a tough four-point loss to Indiana in the Regional title game.

“We really matched up equally with IUP and playing them four times that season was something,” Scott said. “The games were like chess matches all the way through.”

A graduate of Monessen High School, Scott was a star on Monessen’s 19887-88 and 1988-89 boy’s basketball team that won consecutive PIAA Class A championships. He was also a football standout for the Greyhounds.

He received his bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Cal U in 1993. One faculty member Scott praised for his help was emeritus professor Larry Lancaster, whose son, Paul, was one of Scott’s collegiate teammates.

“Larry Lancaster was definitely a help, and I always remember him pushing me,” Scott said. “He inspired me to do well, but I always think I have had that drive in me. I appreciated his support.

“Cal was definitely a good fit for me,” he added. “It was a place that helped you academically, and I did better there than in high school. Also, I wanted to go and play for a winning program. That always helps your morale and how you feel. I’m just glad we were able to succeed — and that I was, too.”

Although work and family consume the majority of his time, Scott still follows the Vulcans and frequently returns for Cal U Basketball Alumni Day, a tradition initiated by current head coach Bill Brown.

“I sure do follow the program, and wish I could be more involved, but there’s just not much time these days,” said Scott. “The Alumni Game and day is a great tradition. It’s also great to see the school doing so well.”

Campus BRIEFS

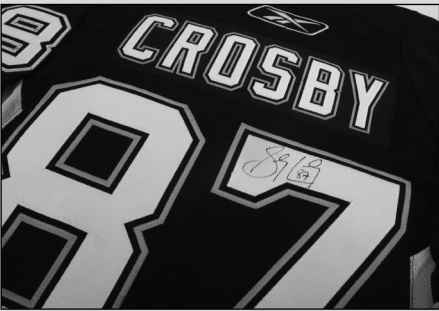
Girls Focus of ‘CSI’ Project

Middle school girls from the California Area School District can look forward to a special “night out” thanks to a team of STEM educators from Cal U and a grant from the American Association of University Women.

The funding supports “CSI: California, Pa., Engaging and Inspiring Girls to Explore Their World.” The project aims to break down the personal barriers that may prevent girls from pursuing interests in science, technology, engineering and mathematics — subject areas known collectively as STEM.

Project organizers are planning a series of Girls’ Nights Out activities involving faculty, undergraduate students and middle school girls. The aim is to provide a social support system that will encourage young girls to engage in STEM initiatives.

Project director is Katherine Weber; co-director is Dr. Laura Hummell. Team members are Dr. Kimberly Woznick, Karen Posa, Nancy Skobel and Dr. Lisa McBride.



Online Auction Ends Friday

Hockey fans have until 5 p.m. Friday to support student scholarships by entering Cal U’s online auction at www.pittsburghpenguins.com.

On the block are three jerseys, signed by Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Marc-Andre Fleury; three hockey sticks, signed by the same players; and a Game Night Experience on Dec. 27, when the Pens face off against the Toronto Maple Leafs at home.

The Game Night package includes four Igloo seats for

the game, one stick autographed by Crosby, a chance to watch warm-ups from the penalty box, and tours of the Mellon Arena press box and the Penguins radio booth during the game. One member of the group can ride the Zamboni during the first intermission.

Auction proceeds will go to a scholarship fund bearing the Penguins name and managed by the Foundation for California University of Pennsylvania. For auction details, visit www.pittsburghpenguins.com.

Event Honors Student Writing

Freshmen composition students will present their research projects in the third Celebration of Student Writing, set for 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday in the Performance Center.

“Students in the last two semesters have really created some wonderful visual presentations of their formal research papers, and I don’t expect anything less this fall,” said professor Peggy Roche, coordinator of the project.

“This is an opportunity to showcase their achievements, and our freshmen who participate often get their first understanding of academic discourse outside of their classrooms.”

All members of the campus community may circulate among the projects on display. Student authors will be on hand to talk about their projects and explain their research.

Visitors can vote for a “Best in Show” prize and for the most creative presentation.

Each winner will receive a gift certificate to the campus bookstore, courtesy of the English department.

The California Journal is published weekly by California University of Pennsylvania, a member of The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

Dr. Angelo Armenti, Jr.
University President

Geraldine M. Jones
Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Joyce Hanley
Executive Vice President

Dr. Lenora Angelone
Vice President for Student Development and Services

Angela J. Burrows
Vice President for University Relations

Dr. Charles Mance
Vice President of Information Technology

Eric Larmi
Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance

Ron Huiatt
Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations

Christine Kindl Editor
Bruce Wald Writer
Wendy Mackall Writer

Office of Communications and Public Relations • 250 University Avenue, California, PA 15419 • 724-938-4195 • wald@calu.edu
The Journal is printed on paper made from trees harvested under the principles of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (www.SFIprogram.org).

I N T E G R I T Y • C I V I L I T Y • R E S P O N S I B I L I T Y