

Victory for Rocky launches him into national competition

By Samantha Watson

With the help of his loyal fans and the power of social media, Rocky Rocket won first place in a write-in vote that landed him a spot in the 2013 Capital One Mascot Challenge.

“When I found out I won, I was so excited to tell everyone,” Rocky said. “I can’t wait to compete against other great mascots, and I hope to make my Rocket fans proud.”

During the 2013 football season, Rocky will compete each week against 15 other NCAA school mascots. At the end of the season, the mascot with the most weekly wins becomes the Capital One National Mascot of the Year.

The winner will receive \$20,000 toward the school’s mascot program, not to mention bragging rights. Of the 10 previous winners, two of them also call Ohio home: the

University of Cincinnati’s Bearcat and the University of Akron’s Zippy.

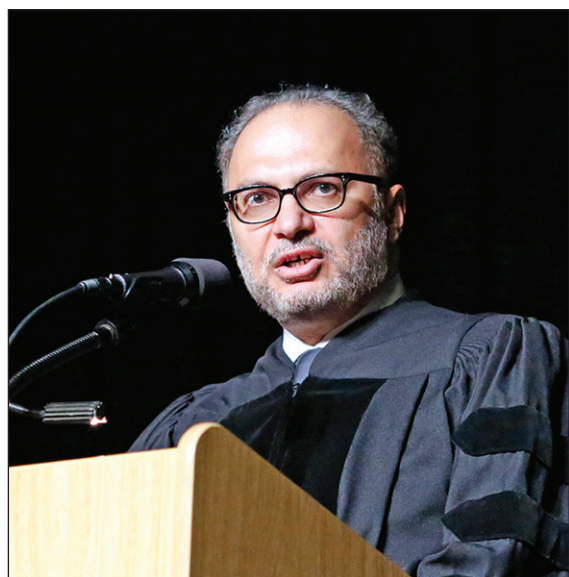
For the past 15 weeks, Rocky has been in the Capital One Mascot Challenge’s write-in vote, where fans could vote to put their school mascot in this year’s competition. Rocky received enough votes to put him at the top of a list that included mascots such as Brutus from Ohio State University.

To keep up to date on the competition, visit capitalonebowl.com.

ROCKY’S IN! Thanks to Toledo fans, Rocky Rocket won first place in a write-in vote and will compete in the 2013 Capital One Mascot Challenge.



Fall commencement



Photos by Haraz N. Ghanbari

His Excellency Dr. Anwar Gargash of the United Arab Emirates was the keynote speaker for fall commencement last month in Savage Arena. Gargash, who holds two cabinet positions in the United Arab Emirates, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for the Federal National Council, was awarded the honorary degree of doctor of public service for his work in public affairs, economics, renewable energy, culture and international leadership.



There were lots of smiling graduates in Savage Arena — and a lot of happy and proud family members and friends.



Photo by Daniel Miller

OPENING SOON: UT Medical Center's new Family Physicians Primary Care Clinic at The Shops at Fallen Timbers will open Monday, Jan. 14.

UTMC Family Physician Clinic to open at Fallen Timbers Jan. 14

The UT Medical Center continues to broaden the reach of its university-quality health care throughout the northwest Ohio region.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place Monday, Jan. 14, at 10 a.m. to celebrate UTMC's new Family Physicians Primary Care Clinic located at The Shops at Fallen Timbers that will offer families in the Maumee area access to university-quality health care closer to home.

Visitors can take a tour of the office, learn about the practice, and have some refreshments at the event in the new Fallen Timbers location near the Dillard's store in Zone C.

The new UTMC Family Physicians Clinic will see patients of all ages, from newborns to geriatrics, and appointments can be made early mornings, evenings and weekends to accommodate busy individuals and families.

Dr. Chayanika Pal, who completed her family medicine residency at UT Medical Center, is the attending physician. She has more than six years experience in medical practice and was recognized for her great patient relationships and excellent professionalism while at UTMC.

To schedule an appointment at the clinic, call 419.383.5000.



Photo by Daniel Miller

COURTYARD CONSTRUCTION: Louie Flores shoveled dirt and stones as he and co-workers from Blanchard Tree and Lawn in Toledo began work on reconstructing University Hall's east courtyard before the holidays. The crew was finishing work last Friday.



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Main Campus strategic plan released

"Imagine 2017" is UT's Main Campus strategic plan, which was announced Dec. 17 by Dr. Scott Scarborough, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs.

Watch a video about the plan and see a presentation about it at utoledo.edu/strategicplan/2017.

Longtime law professor to be remembered

The UT community is invited to remember Beth A. Eisler Saturday, Jan. 12, at 10 a.m. in the Law Center McQuade Auditorium.

Eisler, professor of law and resident of Ann Arbor, Mich., died Dec. 31 at age 66.



Eisler

For 26 years, she taught in the UT College of Law, mostly in the fields of contracts and evidence. Eisler also served as associate dean for academic affairs in the college from 1993 to 1995 and from 1999 to 2005, and as interim dean from 2005 to 2006.

“This would be a very different — and not nearly as good — law school had Beth Eisler not been a part of it,” said Daniel J. Steinbock, dean of the College of Law. “As an administrator and faculty member, she was instrumental in shaping our program and the composition of our faculty.

“Beth Eisler was an outstanding and caring teacher, and thousands of students had a better education and experience for having known her. She was a role model for female students hoping to balance a professional career and family life.”

Devoted to and greatly admired by her students, Eisler received the Outstanding Professor Award from the College of Law graduating class three times. In addition, she received The University of Toledo’s Student Impact Award in 2011 and 2012.

“Professor Eisler was an extraordinary teacher and a great person,” 1992 law alumnus David Fine wrote in an email. “She not only taught us the law, she explained to us how it worked and why, and she did so with good humor and wonderful accessibility.

“Professor Eisler never demanded respect — she earned it — and so many of us will remember her with gratitude and appreciation.”

Before joining the UT College of Law in 1987, Eisler taught at Wayne State University Law School and was an attorney in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, where she was involved in drafting and commenting on the Federal Rules of Evidence.

Born in New York City in 1946, Eisler received a bachelor’s degree from George Washington University and a law degree, with honors, from the George Washington University Law School.

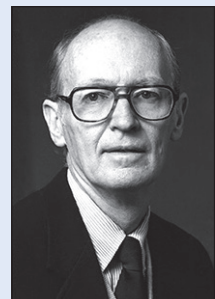
She was active in a number of professional and civic organizations, including the Michigan Supreme Court State Board of Law Examiners.

Eisler is survived by her husband, Ira Fisher; her children, Maia Fisher (Gene Keselman) and Alex Fisher (Tiffany); her grandchildren, Mirabelle and Neve Keselman, and Xavier and Oliver Fisher; her mother, Naomi Sokol; her brother, Arlan Eisler; her sister-in-law, Jane Eisler; and her sister, Andrea Eisler.

The family suggests memorials to the UT College of Law Beth Eisler Student Assistance Fund at the UT Foundation; the goal of the fund is to provide students with grants during emergencies. Donations in her honor also may go to Arbor Hospice in Ann Arbor.

In memoriam

Dr. Perry B. Johnson, Sylvania, a UT faculty member for nearly 40 years, died Dec. 11 at age 81. He joined the University in



Johnson

1960 as an assistant professor of exercise science and physical education and was promoted to associate professor in 1963 and to professor in 1966. At various times during his tenure, Johnson served as coordinator of research and graduate studies in physical education, health and recreation; director of the Division of Physical

Education, Health and Recreation; chair of the Department of Health Promotion and Human Performance; and assistant dean of the College of Education. He wrote nine books, including *Conditioning, So You Really Want to Lose Weight?* and *Fitness and You*. Johnson was honored as a professor emeritus when he retired in 1987. He continued to teach part time until 1998. Johnson was an emeritus fellow of the American Academy of Sports Medicine and the American Academy of Kinesiology.

John “Jack” Shire, Osseo, Mich., who taught business classes at the University, died Dec. 11 at age 81.

Women & Philanthropy offering \$25,000 in grants; applications due Feb. 15

Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to apply for the 2013 Women & Philanthropy at The University of Toledo grant.

“We are pleased to announce that Women & Philanthropy at The University of Toledo has allocated an unprecedented \$25,000 to award in grants for UT projects and programs in 2013,” said Nancy Lapp, chair of the Women & Philanthropy Grants Committee.

The grant guidelines, application form, and information on previous grants can be found on the Women & Philanthropy website: utoledo.edu/offices/women_philanthropy/index.html.

The deadline to submit grant applications is Friday, Feb. 15.

Members of Women & Philanthropy will review the grant applications, and the recipient or recipients will be announced in May.

Women & Philanthropy was chartered in 2006 and made its first award to the University in 2008. Through this giving circle, members of diverse backgrounds and interests work collaboratively and pool their charitable gift dollars to make positive, meaningful and immediate impacts at the University.

In just five years, the group has gifted \$176,931 in eight grants to the University, according to Chris Spengler, director of advancement relations in Institutional Advancement, who is a member of and administrative contact for Women & Philanthropy.

Through their generous support, members of Women & Philanthropy have created a permanent legacy at the University, according to Spengler.

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For breaking news, go to
utnews.utoledo.edu

Experimental compound developed at UT may help Alzheimer's patients

By Samantha Watson

More than 5 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease at a cost of nearly \$200 billion a year, but a researcher at The University of Toledo may have created a drug to help.



Hensley

For the past eight years, Dr. Kenneth Hensley, associate professor in the UT Department of Pathology, has been working with a drug called LKE. The experimental

therapeutic drug mimics a natural chemical found in the body that he believes protects the brain and its neurons.

"We hope that by understanding how the natural and synthetic molecule works, we can gain insight into the biological base for Alzheimer's disease, and also develop improved drugs that can safely and cost-effectively slow this disease," Hensley said.

After patenting the drug in 2010, Hensley began working with Dr. Marni Harris-White, a researcher at the Veteran's Administration of Greater Los Angeles Healthcare Center and the University of California at Los Angeles. Harris-White began testing LKE on genetically altered mice to determine its effects on Alzheimer's disease, and the results have been astonishing.

The mice were altered to show the same pathological signs as humans with Alzheimer's disease — two types of toxic clumps called amyloid and tau. The drug seemed to improve

all of the pathology associated with the disease, and slow the loss of memory.

"Usually you'll see changes in one of the pathological features," Harris-White said. "These mice had amyloid deposition and tau pathology in addition to the memory impairments. We were able to assess changes in all of those parameters — that's pretty unusual for a single drug to be able to do that."

Even more stunning to researchers is that not only did this drug seem to reduce the pathological indicators of the disease, but it seemed to have no adverse side effects in the mice. In fact, mice on the drug displayed better weight retention and improved motor function compared to the control group of mice that were not administered the drug.

"It's very unusual for an experimental therapeutic drug not only to be well-tolerated, but also for the animals to appear to be in generally better health on that drug," Hensley said. "Usually you expect a trade-off."

Because LKE is still in pre-clinical trials, it will be some time before there will be the possibility of testing on humans. The results researchers have seen so far must be replicated, and the drug must be optimized to be sure that it is cost-effective, able to be taken in pill form, and safe.

"Some people think it's not possible to treat this disease at a price that would be feasible to society, but I disagree," Hensley said. "My colleagues and I have been working specifically to develop small molecules that are safe and can be manufactured at a low cost."

Hensley and Harris-White presented their findings recently at a meeting for the Society for Neuroscience in New Orleans. They will continue their work in the coming years and hope to get other researchers involved in the testing process.

Psychology professor to present on placebo effect at conference in Germany

By Samantha Watson

When it comes to the medical treatment of patients, individual psychology and personality can have a huge effect on the response to a drug or therapy.

Dr. Andrew Geers, professor of psychology at The University of Toledo, has been invited to a conference in Tübingen, Germany, to talk about this phenomenon, called the placebo effect, in the treatment of patients.

The placebo effect is the psychological effect that patients



Geers

themselves have on their treatment. Many studies have been performed where patients were given a drug that was actually a sugar pill, or placebo, and they reported feeling better because of the effect their psyche had on the treatment.

Geers said that placebo effects not only alter psychological experience, but also influence physiological and biological pathways in immune, endocrine and gastrointestinal systems.

He has studied this for 10 years and lately has focused his research on the effects a patient's personality has on the placebo effect, and has found that

nearly everyone experiences the placebo effect. However, each person is affected differently; for example, optimists tend to respond to improvements while pessimists focus more on the negative side effects a drug can have.

"A lot of the researchers at this conference are very interested in how their patients respond to different treatments and the placebo component of a treatment, so I think that's something that they would like to hear more about," Geers said.

He has attended general psychology conferences in the United States on multiple occasions. He first attended a conference aimed toward the placebo effect last summer in Switzerland, and this will be his first time visiting Germany.

"I know there are people coming from Australia for this conference, people from Canada, the U.S., all over Europe, people from China," Geers said. "I'm very interested to see the perspectives and the data coming from all these different labs."

The conference will be held from Wednesday, Jan. 23 to Friday, Jan. 25, and is titled "Progress in Our Understanding of the Psychobiological and Neurobiological Mechanisms of the Placebo and Nocebo Responses."

Along with Geers, UT doctoral students Stephanie Fowler and Jill Brown will present research at the conference. Fowler will discuss "Placebo Effects in Pain Relief Treatments," and Brown will present a poster on "Placebo Effects in Sleep Treatments."

UT alumnus contributes to discovery of planet outside solar system

By Samantha Watson

An international team of astronomers recently discovered a planet about 13 times the mass of Jupiter, one of only several outside our solar system to be digitally imaged.

One of the members of the team, Dr. John Wisniewski, received both his master's and doctoral degrees at The University of Toledo. He is an assistant professor of

astronomy at the University of Oklahoma College of Arts and Sciences.

He is part of the Strategic Explorations of Exoplanets and Disks with Subaru, or SEEDS Project, headed by Motohide Tamura, National Astronomical Observatory of Japan. The discovery paper was written by Dr. Joseph Carson of the College of

Charleston and the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy in Heidelberg, Germany.

Wisniewski will analyze follow-up observations of the planetary system, which is located around the massive star Kappa Andromedae. Wisniewski said his training at UT will help him as he searches for more on this exoplanet — a planet outside the solar system.

"Some of the follow-up work I'm doing was predicated on training I received using the Ritter telescope," Wisniewski said. "The Ritter Observatory is excellent training ground for undergraduates and graduates at UT."

Super-size them: The costumed heroes who patrol our interior borders

By Cynthia Nowak

Superheroes: powerful, fearless — and permanently marginalized?

According to Dr. Matt Yockey, assistant professor of film, superheroes live so vividly in our imaginations at least partly because Batman, the Flash, Wonder Woman *et al* are outliers, existing on the margins of the society that bred them.

“Superheroes fulfill everything in our culture, in a way,” said Yockey, who studies superheroes as part of his specialty in Hollywood film genres.

It took time, though, for the costumed crusaders to grow into their roles.

The superhero, he said, was born in June 1938 with the first appearance of Superman in *Action Comics*.

“It’s rare that you can so pinpoint the birth of a genre,” Yockey noted of the famed comic book; in 2010, an original was auctioned for \$1 million.

From the first, he added, Superman’s power reflected a superior morality: “In his earliest incarnation he was very much a social crusader. In that first appearance, he saves a wrongfully convicted man from the electric chair, he stops a man from beating his wife, and confronts a crooked senator making money off illegal arms sales.”

He was, in fact, standing up for the little guy — a fact not lost on Superman’s teenage creators, writer Jerry Siegel and artist Joe Shuster, both the children of working-class Jewish immigrants who came to North America.

“Most comic book writers, artists and editors were Jewish, well aware of what was happening in Europe in the late 1930s,” Yockey said. “They were agitating through the superheroes about what America should do.”

Thus Captain America delivering a swift right cut to Adolph Hitler on a comic book cover. And when an Amazonian princess decides to join America’s fight against the Axis powers, Wonder Woman is born.

“Once America entered [World War II], the superhero was brought directly into the patriotic fold,” Yockey said. “It was very clear-cut who the good guys and bad guys were, because Captain Marvel and Superman and a whole army of these heroes were on our side. They defined the American character.”

It was potent stuff, irresistible. By 1945, half the country — some 70 million people — were reading comic books.

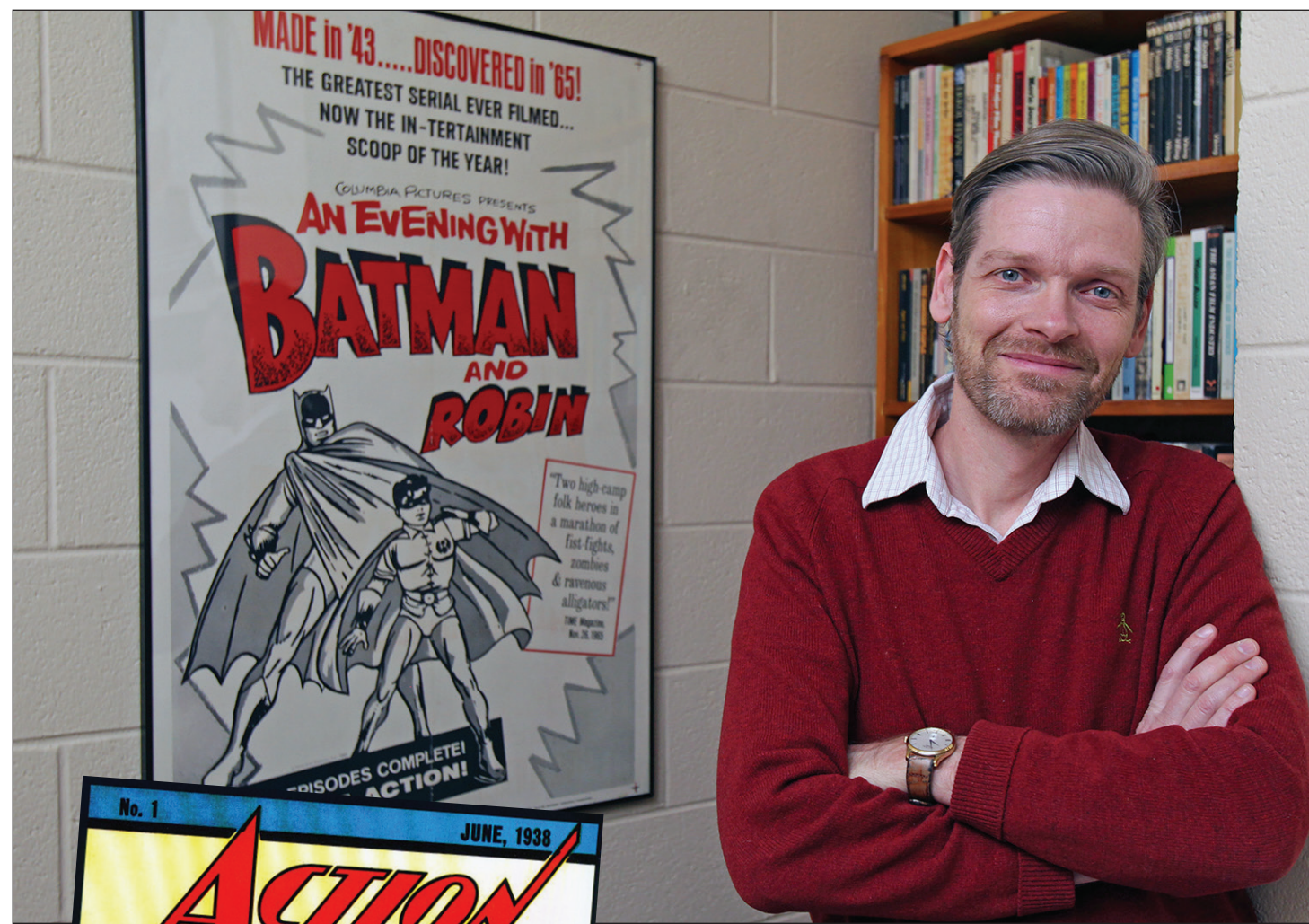
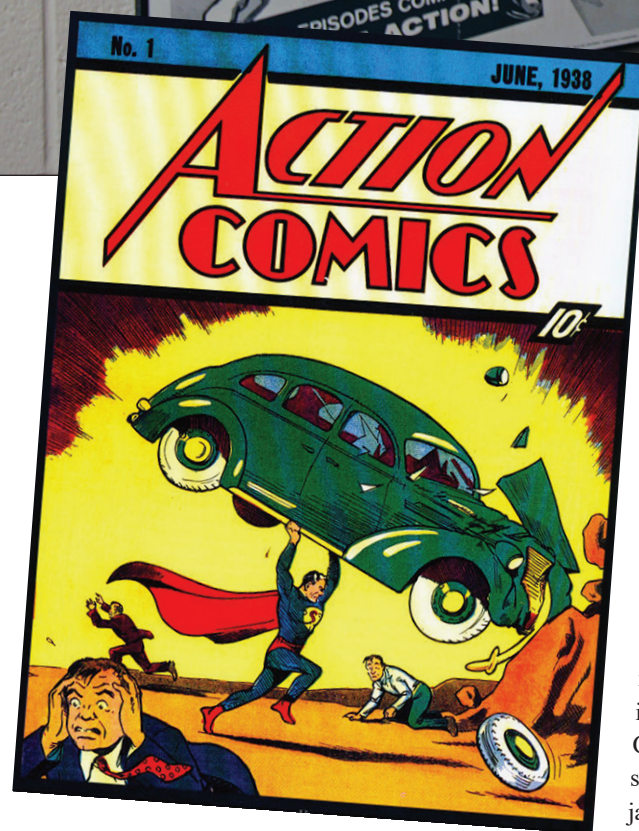


Photo by Daniel Miller

CAPED CHIMERAS: Dr. Matt Yockey posed for a photo with fantastical friends.



The genre, however, declined in popularity after the war, Yockey said: “Our enemy during the Cold War is an ideological one, not one we fight with a standing army. And the decline takes place during one of America’s biggest economic booms, when we’re more interested in finding our American identity through our habits of consumption.”

So by the time of the U.S. Senate hearings on the comics’ dangerous allure,

men in tights socking villains already were becoming passé.

Taking their place was the satiric perspective of Lenny Bruce, Mort Sahl — and *MAD* magazine.

“*MAD* magazine brought a more subversive tone to the industry, which infiltrated the superhero genre in the 1960s with *Marvel Comics*, reinventing the superhero not as a square-jawed paragon of American values but as the neurotic boy next door who’s as worried about getting a date as he is about fighting a criminal,” Yockey said.

“They may stand for accepted values, but they always stand at the margins of the society that breeds those values. They are excessive, extraordinary, not the norm — yet they defend the norm.”

The 1960s saw a new generation of writers and artists in the comics industry. They’d grown up as comics readers, and

they had the freedom to develop the rich narrative universes that today define the superhero.

“Thanks to blockbuster movies, that kind of superhero has become mainstream,” Yockey observed. “With the success of last summer’s ‘*The Avengers*,’ we can see that the genre is not going away.”

Socially marginalized or not, superheroes continue to help define us, Yockey said: “Their best attribute is that we can relate to them. They’re a blank canvas on what we aspire to be.

“I think their primary value lies in their ability to straddle the lines of social acceptability, always battling for good yet remaining outliers. We all imagine ourselves in a similar role, especially in America, with its paradoxical collection of individuals.

“So you might say that superheroes resolve the paradox — by being so very extraordinary, they’re able to defend the status quo.”

Local teacher recognized with national award for implementing climate change lessons learned at UT

By Meghan Cunningham

A teacher at Gesu Catholic Elementary School and graduate of The University of Toledo's LEADERS Program received a national education award for leading her school in projects to reduce the impact of climate change through education, action and prayer.

Peggy Riehl, who teaches fifth grade, received the 2012 St. Francis Care for Creation Award from the National Council of Catholic Women. Bishop Leonard Blair presented her the award during a ceremony at the school Nov. 30.

Riehl graduated with a master of arts and education degree in education and geography from UT last summer after completing the Leadership for Educators: Academy for Driving Economic Revitalization in Science, or LEADERS Program that aims to improve K-12 science education to better prepare students for future careers in northwest Ohio's renewable energy industry.

She was recognized with the award for taking what she learned in her UT courses in climate change and biofuels and then preparing professional development

programs with Toledo Catholic Schools to train other science teachers to share the lessons with their students.

Riehl also maintains a rain garden with her science classes, provided starters for the parish youth group vegetable garden, coordinated an energy audit of the school with maintenance staff, and helped other teachers learn about carbon footprints to develop lessons that demonstrate to students how they can make footprints for change.

"Peggy is a wonderful example of the impact our teacher LEADERS can have on their students, their schools and the community," said Dr. Kevin Czajkowski, UT professor of geography and principal investigator of the LEADERS Program that is funded by a \$5 million grant from the National Science Foundation.

"Mrs. Riehl's award recognizes the value of teaching science using a project-based approach, which makes science meaningful to students and matches the new science standards," said Dr. Charlene Czerniak, UT professor of curriculum and instruction, and a co-investigator on the grant.



Photo by Daniel Miller

HONORED: Peggy Riehl, a fifth-grade teacher at Gesu Catholic Elementary School and UT alumna, received the 2012 St. Francis Care for Creation Award from the National Council of Catholic Women from Bishop Leonard Blair during a ceremony late last year.

Holiday help



Photos by Daniel Miller



Ansley Abrams-Frederick, director of alumni programming, and Dave Nottke, senior associate athletic director, boxed up canned food as Institutional Advancement and UT Alumni Association members put together holiday gift baskets distributed by the Salvation Army to local families.

Pat Baldwin, secretary 2 in Institutional Advancement, checked on Etch A Sketches that were included in holiday gift baskets for needy families. She was one of many who helped from the division and the UT Alumni Association, which partnered with the Salvation Army to offer holiday assistance.

Employees celebrate fall graduation



Kattie Palmer, center, daughter of Marianne Palmer, left, and twin sister of Kellie Palmer, both basic outpatient preservice specialists in Registration at UT Medical Center; graduated cum laude with a bachelor of science degree. Kattie, who was a member of the Toledo softball team for four years, will continue her education and plans to study nursing at the University.

Photos by Daniel Miller and Chris Mercadante



Dr. Julie Fischer-Kinney, director of the Office of New Student Orientation Programs, received a doctor of philosophy degree in higher education. Her dissertation was titled "Biracial/Multiracial Student Perceptions of Student Academic Support Services at a Predominantly White Public Institution." She plans to continue in her current position at the University.



Megan Reinsel, daughter of Cindy Reinsel, secretary in Pediatrics, graduated cum laude with a bachelor of education degree specializing in moderate to intense intervention. Megan, who made the president's and dean's lists, plans to stay in the Toledo area and work as an intervention specialist.



Emily Schneider, daughter of Mary Schneider, accountant in the Office of Student Financial Aid, received a master of business administration degree. Emily is pursuing a career in health care.

UTNEWS

UT News is published for faculty, staff and students by the University Communications Office weekly during the academic year and periodically during the summer. Copies are mailed to employees and placed in newsstands on the Main, Health Science, Scott Park and Toledo Museum of Art campuses. UT News strives to present accurate, fair and timely communication of interest to employees. Story ideas and comments from the UT community are welcome. Send information by campus mail to #949, University Communications Office, Vicki Kroll. E-mail: vicki.kroll@utoledo.edu. Fax: 419.530.4618. Phone: 419.530.2248. Mailing address: University Communications Office, The University of Toledo, Toledo, OH 43606-3390.

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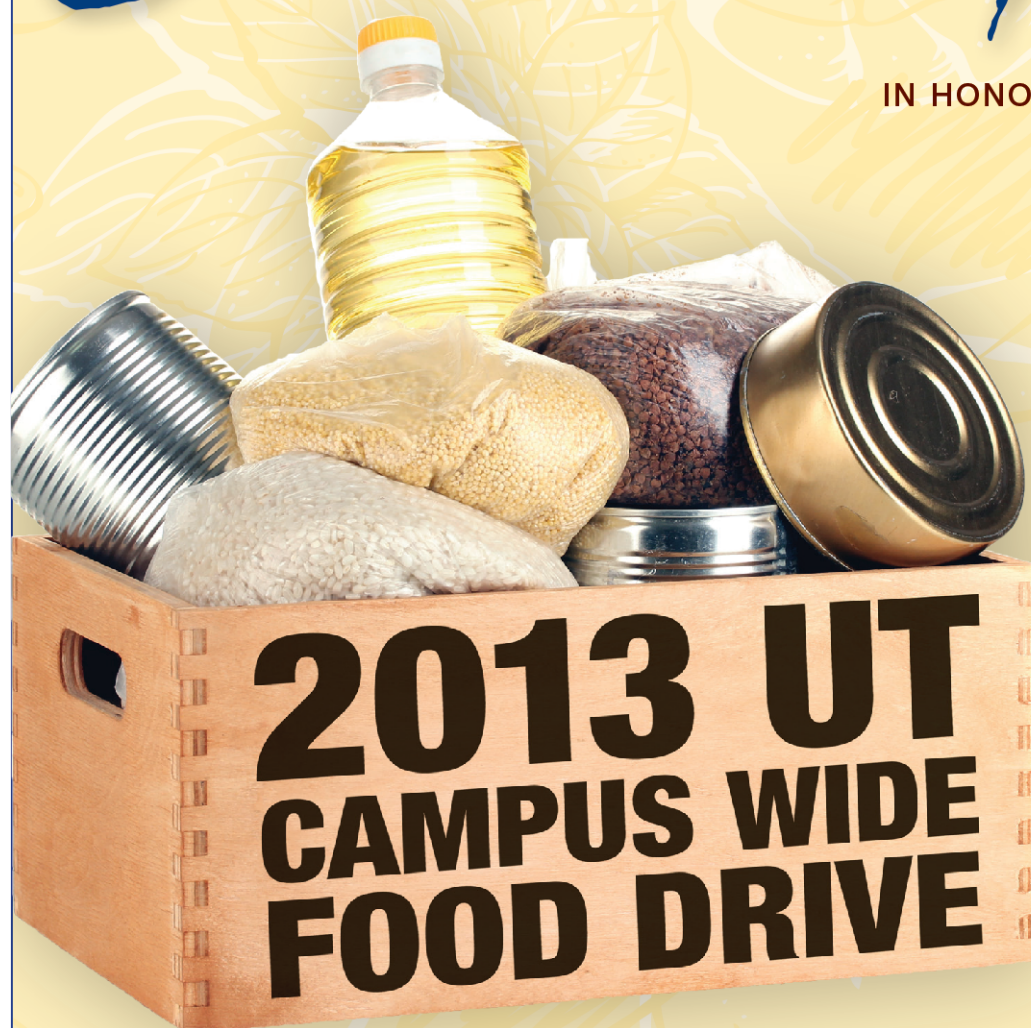
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