

September 2006

University News

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Photo by Joe Angeles  
Ziyan Zhang and Yanjiao Xie, both of Peking University, visit outside the two furnished apartment buildings at Pershing Avenue and Skinker Boulevard where most of the McDonnell Academy scholars reside.

**MCDONNELL ACADEMY WELCOMES**

**17 SCHOLARS:** The McDonnell International Scholars Academy is welcoming 17 students as its first cohort of highly select graduate and professional students from 12 of Asia's leading universities. The academy partners with universities and corporations around the world to provide scholars with an extraordinary educational experience.

**CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY INSTITUTE TO GRANT \$5.3**

**MILLION PER YEAR:** The Children's Discovery Institute has been given the go-ahead to begin research within its four centers after its board approved an ambitious \$5.3 million annual funding proposal. The institute, launched in January, is a novel collaboration between the School of Medicine and St. Louis Children's Hospital to fund research in four specific areas of childhood disease and accelerate cures. To facilitate research and funding distribution, the board appointed Alan L. Schwartz, Ph.D., M.D., as its executive director, and Jonathan D. Gitlin, M.D., as its

scientific director. In addition, it appointed a scientific advisory board made up of six distinguished scientists from the University and other nationally renowned institutions.

**AMERICA'S BEST COLLEGES:** Washington University in St. Louis — consistently ranked among America's 20 best national universities — is tied for 12th place for undergraduate programs among the nation's 248 national universities by *U.S. News & World Report*.

**THE CLASS OF 2010:** The numbers just keep growing. The incoming freshman class features some very impressive numbers indeed. The approximately 1,450 first-year students hail from all over the world and represent 19 countries, 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Students in the Class of 2010, newly arrived on campus, will be rolling up their sleeves and getting to work right away — not only in the classroom, but in the community as well. More than 1,000 freshmen will volunteer their time on

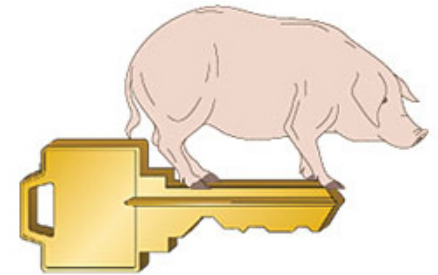
September 2 to paint, landscape, and clean 12 area public schools during the eighth annual Service First event.

[Read more about the Class of 2010](#)

[Read more about Service First](#)

## Research

**THE GAME OF MEMORY:** Exploring exactly why some individuals' memory skills are better than others has led researchers in Arts & Sciences to study the brain basis of learning strategies that healthy young adults select to help them memorize a series of objects. Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), the researchers uncovered brain regions specifically correlated with the diverse strategies that subjects adopt.



How would you remember this strange image? If you came up with the saying, the pig is key to this image, you would be using a verbal strategy, one of four that Brenda Kirchoff, PhD, research associate in psychology in Arts and Sciences found that subjects used to remember a series of odd images. Her findings could have implications for aiding people with memory impairments and early onset Alzheimer's disease.

### **MRI SCAN PREDICTORS IN INFANTS:**

Terrie E. Inder, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics, of radiology, and of neurology at the School of Medicine has found that performing MRI scans on pre-term infants' brains assists dramatically in predicting the babies' future developmental outcomes. Inder and pediatric researchers in New Zealand and Australia found that the MRI scans were able to determine abnormalities in the brains of very pre-term infants. Following the infants from birth to age 2, the researchers were able to grade those abnormalities to predict the risk of severe cognitive delays, psychomotor delays, cerebral palsy, or hearing or visual impairments that may be visible by age 2.

### **EVEN WHEN THEY WIN, STOCKHOLDERS LOSE IN CLASS-ACTION SUITS:**

Since 1995, there have been 755 separate cases of class action securities litigation on allegations of companies inflating their stock prices due to fraud or untimely disclosure. Settlements from these cases totaled about \$25.4 billion. On the surface, it appears that wronged shareholders have received just retribution for the losses incurred from purchasing stocks at inflated prices. But research by a professor at the John M. Olin School of Business shows that individual shareholders aren't receiving much benefit at all - in fact, if anything they're losing out.

## Features



### **SLUGGER TEST, NO BLUE BOOK**

**NECESSARY:** Baseball purists, especially those of Yankee allegiance, might argue that St. Louis Cardinals homerun-hitting superstar Albert Pujols is simply not in the same league as legendary New York Yankees slugger Babe Ruth. It's an argument that science may never fully resolve, but researchers at Washington University in St. Louis can now offer at least some hard numbers on how Pujols compares to the Babe in terms of the perceptual and motor skills necessary to consistently hit balls out of the park.

### **REVERSING MALNUTRITION ONE**

**SPOONFUL AT A TIME:** Swollen bellies,



Daniel Stier / GQ, September 2008

**El Hombre vs. The Babe: Pujols swings a bat in the bab of Catherine Lang, Ph.D., assistant professor of physical therapy, neurology and occupational therapy**

pediatrics at Washington University School of Medicine, founded Meds & Food for Kids in 2004, after she saw that medications and small amounts of the local staples rice, beans and corn weren't enough to nourish children back to health.

### PHYSICIAN SOLVES BAFFLING SET OF SYMPTOMS AND HELPS 16-YEAR-OLD WALK AGAIN:

This spring, Adam Tinnin, a healthy, active 16-year-old, experienced a viral infection that caused mouth sores, hives, then tingling and numbness in his feet. In a matter of days, he couldn't walk. He spent three weeks at St. Louis Children's Hospital and went through dozens of tests, which all showed normal results. Susan Mackinnon, M.D., the Sydney M. Jr. and Robert H. Shoenberg Professor of Surgery and chief of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, happened to hear about his case and her interest was piqued. Mackinnon was confident she knew what Adam's trouble was.

## Heard on Campus

"I believe that great universities are to the modern world what gothic cathedrals were to the late Middle Ages, symbols of our ideals and of our deepest aspirations. I like to think that all of us, like the mostly anonymous stone masons and architects of those days, add our bit to an enduring structure, a structure that will keep alive for generations after we are gone our hopes and our sense of what is right and beautiful."

— Dr. William H. Danforth, Chancellor Emeritus of Washington University

In recognition of the role that William H. (Bill) Danforth, his family, and the Danforth Foundation have played in the evolution of the University, the Hilltop Campus will be renamed the Danforth Campus.

The dedication of the Danforth Campus will take place September 17. The ceremony begins in Graham Chapel at 3:30 with Dr. Harold T. Shapiro, President Emeritus of Princeton University, giving the keynote address, titled *A Higher Sense of Purpose: Research Universities and Society*. For more information, [click here](#)

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This newsletter is prepared by Special Development Communications Projects staff in Alumni and Development Programs. It is intended to provide a brief summary of what is happening at the University. Alumni, parents, and friends of the University for whom we have valid e-mail addresses automatically receive @ Washington University in St. Louis.

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MRI scans at term-equivalent age from 3 VPT cohorts (n = 325) were reviewed. The severity of brain injury, including periventricular leukomalacia and intraventricular and cerebellar hemorrhage, was graded. Brain growth was assessed by using measures of biparietal width (BPW) and interhemispheric distance. Severe brain injury was more common in infants with lower Apgar scores, necrotizing enterocolitis, inotropic support, and patent ductus arteriosus. Severe brain injury was associated with delayed cognitive and motor development and cerebral palsy.