



The Latest in Pawprint: May 20, 2016

Also available online at www.pawprint.cornell.edu

Recognition dinner marks milestone years of staff service



Cornell's annual Service Recognition Dinner, honoring the dedicated work of Cornell staff who are celebrating 25, 30, 35, 40 or more years of service, was held May 17 in the Ramin Room of Bartels Hall.

This year, [the event](#) honored 346 staff members with 25 or more years of service (representing a cumulative total of more than 10,000 years of work for Cornell); 213 of those awardees attended the event and dinner, in addition to their guests, deans, supervisors and others.

"Your efforts and dedication have contributed to Cornell's many successes," said Mary Opperman, vice president and chief human resources officer. "You are part of Cornell's legacy."

Interim President Hunter Rawlings congratulated the staff celebrating service anniversary milestones, in addition to those who have worked for Cornell more than 40 years but who were not marking a fifth-year anniversary this year.

"It is a great pleasure and it is an honor for us to join those of you who have served Cornell for so long," Rawlings said. "You are the backbone of the place; we understand that. What you have provided here is that best of all words, service."

Rawlings gave special recognition to the evening's longest-serving awardee, Martha Lyon '71, marking 45 years working at Cornell as the laboratory coordinator for the university's introductory biology course.

Quoting Lyon's supervisor, senior lecturer Mark Sarvary, Rawlings noted that as an undergraduate, Lyon was among the first students to take introductory biology from Professor William Keeton. The current Investigative Biology laboratory course for

which Lyon has worked for so long is a direct successor to the Keeton course, Rawlings said, and between 800 and 1,000 students take the class every year.

“There is no issue that Martha has not seen yet, and there is no problem that she has not solved already,” Rawlings said, quoting Sarvary. “Her 45 years of dedication to this course have been appreciated by thousands and thousands of Cornell students. ... She is truly the strong beating heart of introductory biology at Cornell.’ And that is the right metaphor for biology, the strong beating heart,” Rawlings noted.

“Cornell is known as one of the great, great research universities, not just in this country but in the world,” Rawlings said, after leading a round of applause for Lyon and the other long-serving staff members. “And we could not be one of the great research universities in the world without what you do.”

During the cocktail hour before the dinner, Lyon, who described herself as a “behind-the-scenes person,” noted she never expected to work at Cornell for four and a half decades.

“People think I’m absolutely crazy for having the same job all these years,” she said. “But we have a new group of graduate students every year as the teaching assistants, and the course has changed tremendously over the years – so it’s as if I have had many different jobs without having to go to the trouble of reapplying for a new one. ... It has all changed around me. I have been incredibly fortunate.”

Andrea Dutcher, athletics and physical education icon, retires

At the end of June, one of Cornell’s strongest advocates for women’s sports and physical education will retire from the university after 42 years of service.

Andrea Dutcher, senior associate director of athletics for physical education, came to Cornell in 1974 to teach physical education after graduating from Penn State, where she had been a member of Penn’s 1970 and 1971 Eastern champion golf teams and earned individual golf honors in 1971. Dutcher had played against Cornell many times, so when she was offered the Cornell job, she accepted without even visiting campus.

“Everything happened very quickly, and I just happened to be in the right place at the right time,” Dutcher said. Shortly after Dutcher arrived on campus, the women’s volleyball team formed. “I was asked to be the assistant women’s volleyball coach, and then head women’s volleyball coach – and then the coach of the women’s ski team – all in a matter of months,” she said. Dutcher coached the ski team until 1984 and the volleyball team until 1988.

“Women’s athletics programs were still in the fledgling stage,” Dutcher said. “Without the resources that are available today, women coaches did everything: taped the students’ ankles, swept the floors and set up the volleyball nets before practice. We sold food to raise funds for travel, and for 14 years I drove a van for the team on road trips in all sorts of weather.”

The experience created strong bonds between team members and coach, Dutcher said. “The students were bright, energetic and coachable. I still stay in touch with dozens of them, and I can remember a story about every one.”

Andy Noel, director of athletics and her supervisor, said Dutcher’s volleyball teams won four New York state tournaments and two district crowns, tallying at least 20 wins nine times. A trophy named for Dutcher is presented annually to the Ivy League women’s volleyball champion, he said.

Also during the ’80s, Dutcher completed her master’s degree in education from SUNY Cortland and her MILR in human resource management from the ILR School in 1987. She transitioned from coaching to recreational sports, serving as director of Helen Newman Hall and Intramural Sports, 1988-97, and became the first Helen A. Newman Director of Recreational Services, 1997-2009. She led intramural sports, bowling, open recreation, the fitness centers and wellness program, and Noyes Center. While Dutcher counts herself “blessed” to have been in “every single area of athletics,” Noel credited her for helping Cornell renovate Helen Newman Hall and build the Noyes Community Recreation Center “while establishing Cornell intramurals as one of the premier programs in the nation.”

Richie Moran, former Cornell head lacrosse coach, said, “Andrea was a huge spokesperson for women’s sports and physical education throughout campus,” and had “tremendous impact” in those areas.

Dutcher became the Robert E. Browning Director of Physical Education in 2009, overseeing 75 part-time physical education instructors and 250 classes as well as continuing her previous responsibilities.

“The first two years were an absolute scramble to institute systems that would make the workload manageable,” she said. “We instituted automatic bursar billing and online course evaluations, payroll and appointment processes.” Dutcher also helped reorganize nine different fitness centers, merging them into one Cornell Fitness Center to centralize delivery of services and hiring and training of students. The Cornell Wellness Program grew from 30 members in 1988 to more than 4,000, and is one of the top wellness programs in the country, she said.

In 2012, Dutcher was promoted to senior associate director of athletics for physical education. Calling her “an icon” in the Department of Athletics and Physical Education, Noel said Dutcher “has earned a measure of respect and admiration that sets her apart, not only because of her length of distinguished service, but because of the level of leadership she applied in transforming physical education, recreation and intramurals on campus to the benefit of all Cornell students, faculty and staff.”

“Andrea puts so much effort, compassion and caring into whatever she does,” said Deborah Gatch, administrative assistant for Cornell Wellness and Recreation Services, who has worked with Dutcher for many years. “Andrea has always been there for me - as a mentor, as someone who knows and loves Cornell, as a friend.”

New members welcomed to IPP Diversity Council

People join committees for various reasons – networking, because their job requires it, because they have knowledge, experience or perspectives that the committee needs.

At the Infrastructure Properties and Planning (IPP) Diversity Council Transition Meeting, May 11, past and future council members gave much more personal reasons for serving on the IPP Diversity Council:

- “I am the father of two daughters, and I raised them to believe that they could do anything they wanted in life, so I have a responsibility to try to encourage diversity.”
- “I consider myself inclusive but I want to learn more.”
- “My interactions with people from all different backgrounds and experiences have made me a better person in my position.”
- “I am interested in the concept of diversity as it applies to higher education.”
- “I’m a recent U.S. citizen and I’ve been the recipient of both good things about the American culture as well as those that are challenging. Working at Cornell has been on the bright end of the spectrum.”
- “On the council, I learned so much that I did not expect to learn, new ways of thinking and different perspectives.”
- “I want to see what training is out there that we can use for front line staff.”
- “It is important to know what our role as staff is in promoting diversity.”

Two years ago, IPP welcomed new members to its diversity council, charged with setting diversity goals for their division in support of the university’s Toward New Destinations (TND) diversity initiative. Their term now over, the members explained what they had learned through the process of annually developing and implementing three initiatives that would further the TND principles of composition, engagement, inclusion and achievement across the division. These included a career exploration event that reached out to Cornell and local community members; a research project within the Trade Shop to figure out diversity pipeline and retention strategies; viewing and discussion of the three-part video, “Race: The Power of Illusion,” by all IPP supervisors; and a switch-over to and mapping of universal single-stall restrooms across the university.

Giving keynote remarks was Renee Alexander, associate dean and director of intercultural programs, who, after reviewing the early days of the Toward New Destinations initiative, said of the work of the IPP Diversity Council, “The work that you’re

doing is complex work. It is difficult to sustain over time; these are issues that many people find are difficult to talk about.”

But, she said, the IPP Diversity Council has created a “dynamic, safe space in which you can talk openly and honestly and forthrightly, without fear of reprisal,” and she encouraged the group to bring people in if they are needed to help facilitate some of the difficult conversations.

Vice President Kyu-Jung Whang thanked both incoming and outgoing council members for helping ensure that the IPP organizational culture is welcoming, saying he respects, values and supports the council members’ efforts to promote diversity and inclusion.

Resource fair provides needed contacts for veterans, families



Nearly 80 veterans attended a Veterans Resource Fair May 16, hosted by Cornell’s Veterans Colleague Network Group (VCNG). While many learned of resources for veterans and their families that are available at Cornell and in the upstate New York area, others used the opportunity to network with veterans and military personnel.

Keynote speaker Kevin Justian, state veteran counselor for the New York State Division of Veterans’ Affairs, encouraged veterans and allies of veterans to familiarize themselves with the abundance of benefits and resources available through the 15 organizations represented at the fair, including the Division of Veterans’ Affairs, the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Syracuse, the Southern Tier Veterans Group, Veterans of Foreign Wars in Dryden, the American Legion in Trumansburg and a number of Cornell offices.

Speaking from a personal perspective, Aubrey Lang, health, education and voluntary plans associate in Cornell’s Benefit Services, said, “This Veteran Resource Fair was a much appreciated opportunity to gather information that may be of great assistance to my family. My brother, a disabled, retired Army Captain, has spent the last couple of years healing at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and is scheduled for release this summer. To assist him with this transition, I’ve been trying to gather as much information as possible regarding local resources. I realize much is shared on websites, but it’s a daunting task at times to know where to begin and where to look; networking is key and having tables filled with information in one room was most definitely appreciated.”

Lang found speaking with representatives for Clear Path for Veterans, Soldier On, The American Legion and the Binghamton Veteran Center extremely helpful, and was especially interested in the Dogs2Vets program, Wingman and recreation programs offered by Clear Path for Veterans.

Robert Morris, preventive maintenance program manager for Facilities Management and vice chair of the VCNG, said he learned about the DD214 registry, the Return the Favor ID program for veterans, and the process for getting veteran's status listed on his driver's license.

Emily Franco, director of the School of Hotel Administration/Culinary Institute of America Alliance and VCNG historian, said that while she already is engaged with veteran resources around campus, she was "amazed at the additional community resources that exist, especially through the Department of Labor."

Others appreciated the opportunity to connect with veterans, military family members and colleague veteran service providers.

"As chair of the VCNG, I thought the Veterans Resource Fair was a wonderful collaboration of resources," said Rick Roper, training program manager for Facilities Management. "I think the greatest resource is the veterans themselves. In this world of electronic communication, I firmly believe that 'word of mouth' is still a great way to spread the word about the vast number of resources available to the veteran community."

Cornell diversity recruitment consultant Edgar Johnson found the fair a good place to meet potential Cornell employees. "I met several veterans interested in pursuing a career with Cornell," he said.

The VCNG plans to hold additional veterans' information sessions on benefits and employment each year, perhaps coordinating with Justian; Johnson; the New York State Department of Labor; the regional veterans medical centers; and Tompkins Workforce New York.

Veterans' academic 'boot camp' returns to Cornell

A little more than a year ago, Piragash Swargaloganathan, U.S. Navy petty officer and cardiovascular technologist serving at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, decided to pursue a medical career when his five-year military commitment was up. Educated in Sri Lanka, Swargaloganathan had never attended a U.S. academic institution. To prepare for the transition from the military to university environment, he participated in the 2015 Warrior-Scholar Project (WSP).

Through WSP, he met Cornell graduate Craig Plunges '04, WSP director of education in Washington, D.C., who teaches study and reading skills and who, on learning of Swargaloganathan's career aspirations, suggested that Cornell could be a good fit for him. Swargaloganathan will begin his first year this fall in the College of Human Ecology's [Human Biology, Health and Society Program](#).

WSP is an intensive, one-week "boot camp" orientation to academic life. Originating at Yale University in 2012, WSP is offered at 12 universities. It debuted at Cornell last summer and will be held this summer, beginning July 23.

"We received positive feedback last summer from both the veterans who attended and the faculty who taught them," said Vice Provost Judith Appleton, who oversees the program. "We look forward again to helping the participating veterans acclimate to and prepare for college life at Cornell or elsewhere."

Each program is run by student veterans and taught by professors and graduate students. The syllabus emphasizes reading, writing and the liberal arts, and includes classic and modern scholarly works on topics of liberty, equality, citizenship, and civil rights and responsibilities. Participants learn to frame their ideas in an academic context, think critically and formulate scholarly arguments. Mornings customarily are spent in seminars based on readings, followed by reading and writing classes in the afternoon. Dinners often include discussions on applying to and succeeding at an academic institution.

"We focus heavily on governance and the rights of citizenship, and we discuss how people are able to exercise their civil liberties, because those discussions throughout history and our subsequent military engagements have framed how we have developed our incredible country," said Hill Landon Wolfe, M.P.A. '16, program director at Cornell.

Returning faculty members include Deputy Provost John Siliciano; Gretchen Ritter, the Harold Tanner Dean of the College of

Arts and Sciences; and Hunter R. Rawlings III, Cornell's interim president and a member of the WSP's board of directors.

"Through its military science courses and Reserve Officers' Training Corps, Cornell has had a long-standing history of educating young people affiliated with the military," said Rawlings. "I taught a morning session of the Warrior-Scholar Project last year; the students were very well-prepared and engaged. I greatly look forward to leading another discussion this July."

Wolfe noted that the networking that comes from the intense, small classes helps veterans know that they are not alone in their transition into academic life; they are part of the veteran community within academia, and others have succeeded before them.

Swargaloganathan agrees. "Initially I was not even dreaming about applying to an institution such as Cornell," he said. "But going to WSP gave me the courage to apply to a school of high caliber and selectivity. The Human Biology, Health and Society Program has the broadness of a liberal arts education and yet is rooted in the context of health care and wellness. I thought it would be the best fit for me considering my short- and long-term educational and career goals."

Noted Plunges: "In a single week I've seen the Warrior-Scholar Project have a transformative effect on transitioning veterans. I am confident that they can be successful in pursuing an excellent education at an outstanding university."

Volunteers for May 29 Commencement activities needed

Cornell still needs volunteers to help with the Commencement festivities next Sunday, May 29. Don't miss this chance to see the university at its finest, celebrate Cornell's new graduates, and help make this a great event for them, their parents and guests.

Volunteers (regular full-time or part-time non-exempt and exempt staff, including benefits-eligible temporary staff) will receive a paid [day off](#) to use by Dec. 31, 2016. All volunteers will receive additional perks and be entered automatically into a drawing for the chance to win:

- One free iPad
- Two free round-trip tickets on the Campus-to-Campus bus to NYC
- Five other grand prizes.

[Sign up now](#) to help on Sunday, May 29. More information is on the [Commencement volunteers](#) web page.
