Every Thursday night at around 8 p.m., several students trek to Becker House and the Robert Purcell Marketplace Eatery to take small amounts of food from the kitchen warming ovens, cool them rapidly and load them up for the Friendship Donations Network to distribute to food pantries across the county.

“The food amounts are small and vary week-to-week,” said Tony Kveragas, chef manager of Carl Becker House. “But, in the interests of sustainability and community service, these students formed the Food Recovery Network (FRN) to complete the connection between these leftovers and a community agency, the Friendship Donations Network.” The agency has been a recipient of United Way of Tompkins County funding to help combat hunger and food insecurity.

“The Food Recovery Program is a simple program that could grow and make a significant difference,” said John Lowry ’16, who spearheaded formation of the FRN and co-directs it with eight other student volunteers. He was motivated to do something to address food security issues when he took a Cornell course, Sustainable Lifestyles, while also working in dining services.

“That class helped me appreciate the value of our leftover meals,” Lowry said. “Through middle school I had volunteered at my hometown food pantry and so the topic of hunger was not foreign to me. But the hunger in my hometown pales in comparison to Tompkins County where around 13,000 people go hungry on a regular basis. I learned we had the power to change that.” One of his friends, Erica Rausch ’15, suggested that Cornell form a chapter of the FRN.

But a simple idea can have a complex implementation. Public health laws prohibit food offered buffet-style to be reused or donated once it has been put out. They also dictate how food must be handled, the training that handlers must receive, and the temperatures that must be maintained during food transport. Cornell’s risk management office also had concerns.

And, Lowry learned, Cornell Dining closely estimates the amount of food it prepares for each meal, using much of the food it has not served for entrées the next day. The amount that legally can be given away is minimal. Cornell Dining also already has a formal partnership with the Food Bank of the Southern Tier to donate perishable items such as lettuce and milk that cannot be held over breaks or the summer.

But Lowry had the support of Kveragas, who was impressed by his earnestness and determination. FRN volunteers also worked with Therese O’Connor, Cornell Dining’s assistant director for staff development and training and assistant director for sustainable initiatives oversight, to learn necessary protocols and acquire the needed training and equipment. Professors Jane Mt. Pleasant, who served on the Friendship Donations Network board of directors, and Robert Gravani, who helped submit a detailed proposal to the Tompkins County Health Department, also championed the group, and a pilot program in Becker House began in fall 2013.

“The Becker pilot program ran 10 perfect recoveries and has now expanded to the Robert Purcell Marketplace Eatery, thanks to FRN volunteer Courtney Dennee ’15, student manager at the eatery,” Lowry said. To ensure that the program continues to grow, the FRN board also includes younger classmates such as Celina Scott-Buechler ’18, serving as secretary, and Lucy Dean Stockton ’17, public relations. FRN volunteer coordinator Rausch recently recruited and helped train eight new volunteers. “We now have all the volunteers we need for the two locations, but we are always looking for more who would like to join us,” she said.

The original leaders will step into an advisory capacity next year, Lowry said. “We know that if we have dedicated, driven volunteers, the FRN can expand to more dining locations and continue long after we have graduated,” he said.

Support the United Way’s Hunger and Food Security Fund

Cornell has embarked on a fundraising campaign for the Hunger and Food Security Fund through March 31 as part of its United Way campaign to address the growing hunger crisis in Tompkins County and the surrounding area. As of Feb. 27, $8,435 has been raised by 89 donors from Cornell. Your contribution — no matter how small — will make a difference. See http://unitedway.cornell.edu.
**Tech Talk**

**Matt Klein**

**Take your desktop everywhere**

Campus has a new cost-effective Windows environment with software and storage that make working on-the-go possible for anyone. It also provides an alternative to buying and maintaining a traditional computer.

Desktop Everywhere enables full “desktop” access from any device and location with Internet access. The fast and cost-effective Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI) technology behind Desktop Everywhere keeps applications and data on Cornell servers and provides a fresh, secure desktop to users every time they log in.

The service reduces costs for departments (it’s a small monthly fee). Plus, technical support staff no longer need to worry about maintenance, since OS and application upgrades are part of the VDI service. Even equipment costs can be reduced when thin clients replace PCs on the desktop.

Two tiers are available:

- The Standard tier of service meets the needs of most users. It’s a secure, stable environment in which you can do your day-to-day work.
- The Security Enhanced tier has all the same software, but it’s appropriate for users who need to work with confidential data such as Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, driver’s license numbers and bank account numbers. The Enhanced Security tier uses Two-Step Login to provide an additional layer of security each time you connect.

Desktop Everywhere is available for faculty and staff now. The service will be released to students in the spring 2015 semester, providing them with a stable environment in which they can do their day-to-day work.

Find out more at the Desktop Everywhere service site:
http://it.cornell.edu/services/desktop-everywhere/

Find out more about Two-Step Login:
http://it.cornell.edu/services/two-step/

**Go Go Go 150**

This year’s Wellness Contest for staff, faculty, retirees, spouses and partners is all about physical activity.

Participation is simple: Form a team of four or more people and register your team by March 11. The contest kick-off event will be held March 13, 11-11:45 a.m., in 305 Ives Hall. Attendees will receive a Go Go Go 150 wristband.

The contest will run for six weeks, beginning March 16. Teams will be challenged to engage in 150 minutes of physical activity per person per week, and will have the opportunity to take part in team challenges and win prizes. Grand prizes are valued at $100-$150. For more information and to register, visit wellness.cornell.edu.

**Celebrate 150 great years at Charter Day Weekend, April 24-27**

Registration for Charter Day Weekend in Ithaca opened Feb. 24. Celebrations, commemorations and a festival of ideas and imagination will be held for four days, April 24-27. Events will be open to the public and require advance registration at http://150.cornell.edu/events/charterday/registration/. Live streaming will be available for certain events.

“With the possible exception of Ezra Cornell and Andrew Dickson White, no one knew what to expect when New York Gov. Reuben F. Fenton signed into law the enabling legislation that became the Cornell Charter on April 27, 1865,” said Glenn C. Altschuler, Ph.D. ’76, American studies professor, dean of the School of Continuing Education, university historian and chair of the Sesquicentennial Steering Committee that planned the celebratory weekend. “A century and a half later we fully appreciate what Ezra and Andy hath wrought – and it’s taking a sesquicentennial year to observe.”

“A high point of the Cornell sesquicentennial in Ithaca will be Charter Day Weekend,” said Mary George Opperman, vice president for human resources and safety services and chair of the Charter Day Operations Committee. “The faculty have planned plenty of events for the intellectually curious. Our students will show off their talents and achievements. Our staff are working hard to support these efforts.

“But there will be opportunities to have some fun, too,” Opperman said, pointing to events like the Big Red Birthday Bash in Barton Hall, April 24.

The four-day celebration aims to engage the entire local community: “We will showcase the best of what Cornell has become,” said Nancy Meing ’62, honorary co-chair with her husband, Peter Meing ’61, of the Sesquicentennial Steering Committee. “Celebrations are scheduled throughout the U.S. and around the world,” noted Peter Meing, chairman emeritus of the Cornell Board of Trustees. “Ithaca, where it all started, will be the epicenter of the sesquicentennial universe, and Charter Day Weekend is the chance for the community to see what all the excitement is about.”

Scores of events – expositions of student innovation, dances and performances, panel discussions and lectures, literary readings by notable alumni, artistic exhibitions from the atomic scale to the astronomical – are listed at the Charter Day Weekend site, http://150.cornell.edu/events/charterday/.

The gala weekend wraps up Monday, April 27, with the Charter Day ceremony in Barton Hall. 🐾

*This article by H. Roger Segelken has been abbreviated from the original appearing in the Cornell Chronicle at http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2015/02/celebrate-150-great-years-charter-day-weekend-april-24-27.*
By analyzing expenses, standardizing supplies, consolidating vendors and negotiating discounts, Cornell Procurement Services is saving Cornell more than $30 million annually.

Joanne DeStefano, vice president for finance and chief financial officer, recently announced that the Procurement Initiative has saved the university $30.1 million in annual non-salary budget dollars. These savings exceed the goal established during the Reimaging Cornell strategic planning initiative that began in 2009.

Surpassing the goal can be attributed to the sustained efforts of procurement staff and all those across campus who purchase goods and services for Cornell, DeStefano said. “This is a huge accomplishment. The procurement team brought creativity, dedication and hard work to this initiative and steadily built partnerships across Cornell and between the university and outside vendors to identify savings opportunities and streamline operations,” she said.

DeStefano is one of three project sponsors who helped the procurement team gain the support of campus stakeholders. Joseph Thomas, the Anne and Elmer Lindseth Dean Emeritus of the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management, and Jan Nyrop, senior associate dean in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, also sponsored the initiative.

Tom Romantic, senior director of procurement services, explained that the team began its work by “tackling those areas that would be easiest to standardize without inconveniencing Cornell’s faculty and staff.” In the first phase, the procurement staff analyzed Cornell’s purchasing habits using the software SpendViz and visiting offices and labs across campus.

“We looked at the items that offices and laboratories frequently ordered, such as toners, lighting, janitorial supplies and glassware, and through e-SHOP and our preferred suppliers found ways to realize savings and quantity discounts, saving approximately $8.4 million annually,” Romantic said. Further cost savings came through reverse auctions, in which suppliers competed online to win Cornell’s business, he said.

Phase 2 involved changes in university purchasing on a complex multiyear scale. For instance, the university chose two “strategic preferred suppliers.” The first was VWR International, a distributor of scientific equipment and laboratory supplies, including chemicals, gloves, surgical masks and glassware.

A broad distributor for smaller suppliers, VWR provided deep discounts on more than 5,400 products, said Cindy Jefferson, director of strategic sourcing in Procurement Services. The arrangement allows campus community members to “access the products and manufacturers they prefer, while funneling orders through one e-SHOP supplier,” she said.

Other benefits include improved customer service, fewer delivery trucks on campus, and reduced freight and delivery expenses, she added.

Further savings came from standardizing computer-related purchasing. Working with offices across campus, procurement and CIT staff determined that four configurations for Windows computers meet the needs of approximately 95 percent of Windows users, and chose Dell, the university’s preferred supplier, to offer them at a discount. When Dell was designated Cornell’s second strategic preferred supplier, the company established a parts locker on the Ithaca campus, brought two technicians on-site and provided consulting services for desktop support.

Through these efforts, the university has saved in computer equipment, maintenance, upgrades and support costs, while streamlining ordering and delivery, Jefferson said.

Procurement Services also worked with many colleagues across campus to identify opportunities for savings. These cross-functional teams facilitated savings by awarding Vasco Brands with a contract for all janitorial products and tissue paper; Maguire Automotive, for new vehicle purchases, repairs and service; Maines Paper and Food Service for supplying Cornell dining and hotel facilities; W.B. Mason for office supplies and copy paper; and Eastern Managed Print Networks and Ricoh USA for multi-function devices to replace printers and copy machines.

At the same time, Procurement streamlined processes to make purchasing easier through the Procurement Gateway and enhancements to e-SHOP, and simplified contracting for catering and event space rental.

“As we look forward, we still see opportunities for process improvement and savings, although not on the magnitude we have just experienced,” said Romantic. “We are committed to continuing to work with our partners across campus and our vendors off campus to streamline processes, improve the procurement experience for campus customers and pursue leading-edge procurement strategies,” he said.

 PROCUREMENT INITIATIVE
Cumulative Savings to Date

Began tracking savings by unrestricted and restricted fund types in February 2012, prior periods are estimated.

NANCY DOOLITTLE
Revised flexibility in the workplace policy released

Flexibility in the Workplace Policy, 6.6.13 has been revised to better describe flexible work practices, including working remotely or adjusting the times for arriving and leaving Cornell. A number of new resources to guide supervisors and employees in using the flexibility policy are available on the Web. The policy (http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/treasurer/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/flexibility.cfm) provides information on:

- various forms of flexibility, including occasional-use flexibility;
- roles and responsibilities of employees, supervisors and HR representatives;
- documentation that is required or recommended (depending on type of flexibility) and necessary steps for implementation; and
- resources and tools.

More information is available at https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/flexible_arrangements.html.

New flexible work tool

A new tool has been developed to support the university’s commitment to workplace flexibility and to provide support to employees in requesting and supervisors in managing flexible work. This online tool (http://blogs.cornell.edu/flexibility/) assists staff members in drafting a flexible work proposal for their supervisor’s consideration by asking them to describe, for example, the workplace benefits of the arrangement, its challenges and proposed solutions, and needed resources.

Streamlined approval process

Once a staff member submits information via this online tool, it is sent via email to the staff person’s supervisor and local human resource representative. It gives the supervisor the pertinent information to evaluate the proposal and use it as the basis of further dialogue with the employee. While an employee is not required to complete this proposal according to the policy, colleges and units may opt to make submission of the written proposal standard practice.

Supervisors who plan to deny a request for workplace flexibility must consult with their local human resource representative for guidance. While the supervisor has the ultimate authority in approving or denying an arrangement (unless college or unit policies require otherwise), the human resource representative can help supervisors consider a variety of options as well as address performance issues that can prevent flexibility.

More information

Trainings on flexible work (https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/flex_training.html) and workgroup or individual consultations are available to supervisors and employees through Career/Life Services in Human Resources. Contact Michelle Artibee, program manager, at 255-5298 with questions regarding the policy or online tool.

New HR Service Center opens in East Hill

To provide a “one-stop shop” of services for Cornell faculty, staff and retirees to ease into various life transitions – starting a new job, welcoming a new baby, changing benefit status or caring for an elderly relative, for instance – the Division of Human Resources and Safety Services opened a new HR Service Center in the East Hill Office Building. Below are some frequently asked questions

Q: What is the new HR Service Center? What are its hours?
A: The new HR Service Center is a place where staff and faculty will find resources to help address questions regarding benefits and career/life services, and where new faculty and staff will complete actions required for employment and receive valuable resources during onboarding appointments. The center, located in Suite 130, East Hill Office Building, 395 Pine Tree Road is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m, and easily accessible via bus Route #82.

Q: What services does it offer to staff and faculty? What concerns does it address?
A: The HR Service Center brings together Benefit Services, the Onboarding Center and Career/Life Services, housing resources within one suite, with one central number to contact. HR Service Center members provide information on topics such as coverage in Cornell’s health and disability insurances, retirement plans and other benefits; access to dependent care and elder care consultations and resources; and processes and tools necessary for those newly hired at Cornell.

Q: What do employees do if they have a question about any of these services or concerns?
A: Employees can call the main number of the HR Service Center at 255-0056 and questions will be directed appropriately.

Q: If employees are accustomed to dealing with specific people, can they still contact them directly?
A: Absolutely. Faculty and staff will always have direct access to their preferred specialists in the new HR Service Center.
Lessons learned

At the Feb. 26 Soup and Hope in Sage Chapel, Ella Diaz, assistant professor of English and Latino Studies at Cornell, spoke of the lessons her struggles have taught her: 1) Live on life’s terms. “I am not the ruler of the universe and learning to breathe and accept life on life’s terms actually can be a relief … I am not in charge, it’s not all about me.” 2) Thine will, not mine. “I don’t think one has to be a religious person to trust in the idea of a power greater than one’s self … More than humility, this is about feeling connected to the world and its people.” 3) Be of service. “Selfless giving or altruism is really mysterious to me … while my intentions may not always be as virtuous as they seem, the actions are still good.” 4) “Whether you believe in God or not, you can believe in the Rolling Stones, because they are … While my intentions may not always be less giving or altruism is really mysterious to me … while my intentions may not always be as virtuous as they seem, the actions are still good.”

Next Soup and Hope: March 12

Kelechi Umoga will present the next Soup and Hope talk, March 12, noon-1 p.m., in Sage Chapel. Umoga is a graduating senior at Cornell University, from Abuja, Nigeria, majoring in Human Biology Health and Society, with a minor in Global Health. An aspiring physician, Kelechi is passionate about addressing issues surrounding health inequity. Bring your soup bowl or a mug; free soup and bread provided.

Preparing for Baby Series

The Preparing for Baby workshop series will help you sort through all of the information available for new parents and guide you in making the best decisions for your family. Register for one or more of the programs at https://cornell.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3UHv8yUzqhf1XeJ. All classes are held 4-5:30 p.m., at 140 East Hill Office Building, unless otherwise indicated.

March 6: What to Expect When You’re Expecting in Ithaca – This class is designed to help you understand the different care models available during pregnancy. Explore your beliefs about birth and find the right provider, classes and support to meet your needs.

March 13: Beyond the Birth Day: What to Expect in the Immediate Postpartum

This workshop, 4-5:50 p.m., outlines what to expect during the first few weeks after your baby’s birth and includes evidence-based information on infant sleep, healthy diet and maternal recovery from birth.

March 20: Postpartum Relationship Changes

This workshop examines the postpartum relationship between the mother and her partner, undoubtedly the biggest postpartum change that is overlooked, underestimated and under-addressed. The workshop will outline the distinct needs of each parent and discuss how to strengthen partner and parental bonds and keep positive communication flowing.

March 24: Social Gatherings for New Cornell Parents

Both gatherings below will be held on March 24, at 163 Day Hall. Refreshments will be served.

New Parent Meet ’n Greet – Noon-12:45 p.m.

Attend this gathering to connect with other new and soon-to-be parents at Cornell. Children are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be provided.

Meet the Doulas – 12:45-1:30 p.m.

Area doulas will join participants after the Meet ’n Greet to share information about care services doulas provide and how to decide whether these services might be a good fit for you.

April 10: Breastfeeding Basics: Participants will learn the fundamentals of successful breastfeeding, including holding techniques, latching on, maximizing comfort, and the basics of pumping.

April 17: Pumping with Success and Returning to Work as a Breastfeeding Mother

Participants will learn about the various pumps available, how to select a pump, when to begin pumping, and the fundamentals of pumping techniques. Participants will learn about building up a freezer supply for the return to work, when to introduce the bottle, and tools for juggling breastfeeding and work. Participants will also learn about the Cornell policy on lactation accommodations and resources available.

English for International Students and Scholars (EISS) offered

The Summer Session EISS program (http://www.sce.cornell.edu/eiss), which will run from June 22–July 31, provides full-time intensive English instruction and cultural orientation for those interested in working and studying in an academic environment in the U.S. or in using English professionally. It may be taken for credit or not, and offers instruction at all levels.

The program features small class sizes to enhance students’ ability to learn English and to enable instructors to provide personal attention and encouragement. Core classes are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. weekdays, with additional afternoon electives, evening events and field trips.

Summer EISS participants are eligible to receive a Form I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant [F-1] Student Status). Interested students should apply before April 28 to allow time for visa processing.

For more information and to register, please visit the program website at http://www.sce.cornell.edu/eiss, or contact the Professional Studies Office at cusp@cornell.edu or 607-255-7259.
Spring 2015 Financial Education Seminars

FOR ALL AGES

Equally prepared: Financial planning for the LGBT community – Live webinar, Mar. 11, noon-1 p.m. You have a responsibility to yourself – and those you love – to prepare for the future and protect what you’ve set aside. TIAA-CREF’s workshop leaders will share essential saving and investing strategies, and ways to help safeguard your assets with an estate plan:

- Learn how to determine your retirement readiness, and ways to help ensure your retirement planning and saving are on track
- Discover the importance of wills, trusts and living wills, and how state and federal laws – including changes resulting from the DOMA decision - may affect you.

Register online at http://bit.ly/1EinhNP.

IRAs – Learn what an IRA is and the advantages of owning one, March 19, noon-1 p.m., G10 Biotechnology Building. Discussion includes the different types of IRA’s, how to choose the IRA that is right for you, and the different IRA investment options. Presented by TIAA-CREF* RSVP: https://www.signup4.net/Public/ap.aspx?OID=130&EID=IRAW10E

FOR EARLY-CAREER EMPLOYEES (AGES 18-35)

Smart money moves in your 20s and 30s – Focus on 10 important ways to prepare for financial success, including tips on creating a budget, establishing an emergency fund and making the most of your retirement savings. Presented by MetLife, March 11, noon-1 p.m., in G10 Biotechnology Building. Lunch will be provided. RSVP: www.metlifeplansmart.com (use Cornell University as your company name) or call 1-866-801-3547.

FOR MID-CAREER EMPLOYEES (AGES 35-50)

What’s your number? – Calculate “your number” – the amount that you will need to have by the time that you retire. It’s your starting point and your destination. This workshop, March 24, noon-1 p.m., G10 Biotechnology Building, examines your individual retirement savings calculation and provides a helpful tool to identify answers to long-term planning questions: when can you anticipate retiring; do you need to consider working part time or supplementing your income in early retirement; and what other sources of income are available to you in retirement? Presented by VOYA* (formerly ING). Light lunch will be provided. RSVP: courtenay.tresco@voyafa.com or 315-682-3957.

FOR PRE-RETIREEs

Ernst & Young conducts special financial topic workshops available via webcasts and PowerPoint presentations on insurance planning, retirement and investment planning, Social Security and estate planning.

Other webcasts available through Cornell’s approved vendors include: Paying Yourself: Income Options in Retirement; Preparing Your Savings for Retirement; Shifting from Saving to Spending; Preserving Your Savings for Future Generations; When to Start Social Security Retirement Benefits; Planning for Social Security; Retirement Milestones; Life Long Term Care.

See https://www.hr.cornell.edu/benefits/retirement/preretirement_planning.html for more information and links. *TIAA-CREF is an approved provider of the Cornell University retirement plans and the SUNY Optional Retirement Plan; MetLife and VOYA are approved providers of the SUNY Optional Retirement Plan

To register for any of the following, or for more information, go to: https://www.hr.cornell.edu/life/support/wellbeing_programs.html.

Stepfamilies: The new normal - This workshop, March 13, noon-1 p.m., in 163 Day Hall, will cover the most common problems that arise in stepfamilies and what members of stepfamilies can do to succeed. The workshop is presented by Jenna Korf, RN, a certified Stepfamily Foundation coach who works with step-moms and couples to help them overcome their stepfamily challenges.

Caregiver Support and Education Network meeting - The next meeting will be held March 19, 12:15-1:15 p.m., in 221 Weill Hall. Are you providing care for an adult family member, spouse, or friend? If so, you are invited to attend meetings of the Caregiver Support and Education Network, held the third Thursday of each month. Participants are welcome to attend when their schedule allows. Caregivers come together to share the challenges, joys and resources of caregiving as well as listen to occasional speakers presenting on topics of interest specifically to caregivers. Facilitators will share strategies, tools, and resources for coping with stress, caregiver guilt and burnout as well as information on local/national resources. For more information, contact Eileen McCoy Whang, emw76@cornell.edu, 255-1917.

Wills, probate and estates - Joy Blumin of Blumin, Finlay & Bixler, LLP, will discuss the basics of wills, estates and probate, March 25, noon-1:30 p.m., 224 Weill Hall. Who really needs a will? What happens if I die without a will? What property and assets does a will control? What does it mean when someone’s will is probated? What is the process like, what does it cost and how long does it take? Does it make sense to set up my estate to avoid probate, and if so, how do I do that?

Parenting teens ‘n tweens: A strengths-based approach – Linda Croll Howell, director for inclusion and diversity metrics, in the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity, will present this workshop March 26, noon-1 p.m., 102 Mann Library.

Team RWB Ithaca announces new social director

Jessica Waldman, engagement director for Cornell Hillel, also has been named social director for Ithaca’s chapter of Team Red, White & Blue (Team RWB), a national veteran’s nonprofit organization. Waldman grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, before spending seven years in Charlotte, N.C. Most recently, she earned her master’s degree in criminal justice at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte before coming to Cornell in July 2014.

Team RWB was founded after 9/11 by Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans. By bringing other post 9/11 veterans together, they seek to amplify their voices and amplify their mission. The organization understands the challenges associated with returning home from war, including feelings of guilt, survivor’s remorse, post-traumatic stress, and anxiety.

Information on Team RWB events can be found on their Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/TeamRWBithaca/. To join Team RWB, go to www.teamrwb.org/get-involved/join-the-team.
Looking to further your education?

The following workshops can help you determine your next steps. All are held in the East Hill Office Building (EHOB), 395 Pine Tree Rd.

**Graduate Employee Degree Program** – This workshop will be held March 11, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Suppose you’ve thought about getting a graduate degree but can’t imagine how you can do that and work at the same time. How long will it take you and how long will the university allow you to be a student while working? Maureen Brull, Benefit Services, Anne Haessner, Graduate School, and Camilla Morgan, the Johnson, will facilitate. No registration required.

**Cornell Children’s Tuition Scholarship (CCTS) Program** – This workshop, March 17, 10:30 a.m.-noon, will provide you with information on how to apply for the benefit and the process for providing payment to the student’s school. This is a great workshop for those employees whose children will be first-year students in the fall, 2015. A representative from Benefit Services will facilitate. Register by contacting Aubrey Lang at aj63@cornell.edu.

**Extramural/Tuition Aid Workshop** – This workshop will be held March 24, 9-10 a.m. Did you ever just want to take a class to learn something new? Have you wondered what it would be like to take a class at Cornell? How would you pay for it? Or maybe take a class or class outside of Cornell? It is easy to pursue these classes by using the extramural or tuition aid benefit. Lisa Schutt, School of Continuing Education, and Aubrey Lang, Benefit Services, will facilitate. No registration required.

**Undergraduate Employee Degree Program Workshop** – This workshop will be held March 31, 10-11 a.m. Have you ever wondered how you might be able to complete an undergraduate degree while also working? How can you afford Cornell tuition? Do the colleges accept you just because you are employed here? Maureen Brull, Benefit Services, and Reba McCutcheon, Undergraduate Admissions, will facilitate. No registration required.

To get to EHOB:
1) TCAT Route 82 travels from north campus, to central campus, to the Veterinary College and then to East Hill Plaza/East Hill Office Building and the return trips follows the same route. At East Hill Plaza, the bus stops directly outside the Cornell Training Center door on the south side and at East Hill Office Building. 2) Parking: The following permit types are valid in the EH/ME permit areas on the eastern-end of East side and at East Hill Office Building. The return trips follows the same route. At East Hill Plaza, the bus stops directly outside the Cornell Training Center door on the south side and at East Hill Office Building. To get to EHOB:

Understanding Deeds

Bruce Brittain, a trained engineer and the historian for the hamlet of Forest Home, will cover just about everything you need to know about deeds, March 7, 2-4 p.m., at the History Center. He will discuss how to search for them, trace them both forward and backwards in time, read and understand them, map them and perform (rough) surveys. Deed abstracts, making use of tax maps, how to compute selling price, and various ways of recording distance and area will also be discussed.

Great Backyard Bird Count sets new species record

Participants from more than 100 countries submitted a record 147, 265 bird checklists for the annual Great Backyard Bird Count and broke the previous count record for the number of species identified. The 5,090 species reported represents nearly half the possible bird species in the world. The four-day count was held February 13-16, the 18th year for the event, which is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society with partner Bird Studies Canada.

The information gathered by tens of thousands of volunteers helps track the health of bird populations at a scale made possible by using the eBird online checklist program.

**GBBC Top 10 lists**

Surprisingly, a Eurasian species, the Brambling, appears on the Top 10 list of most reported species for the first time ever. Since November, some of these birds have been spotted on the West Coast and others strayed even farther by turning up in Montana, Wyoming, and Ontario, with one 2015 GBBC record in North America from Washington state. But the Brambling’s appearance among the Top 10 can be traced to one checklist from Germany reporting a flock estimated at one million birds. Up to three million Bramblings have been known to gather at that site.

In North America, California sits atop the leader board with the most checklists submitted and the greatest number of species, followed by Pennsylvania and New York. Ontario, Canada, is in the Top 10 for the second year in a row, nudging past Ohio and Georgia.

**Top 10 most numerous species**

(sum of how many individuals were observed across all checklists)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Snow Goose</td>
<td>1,494,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Goose</td>
<td>1,110,946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brambling</td>
<td>1,000,047</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Robin</td>
<td>488,063</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dark-eyed Junco</td>
<td>465,939</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red-winged Blackbird</td>
<td>432,513</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Goldfinch</td>
<td>364,963</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


See what species are being reported and how many checklists are being turned in at the county, state/province, and country levels. The GBBC is made possible in part by sponsor Wild Birds Unlimited.
Get a taste of Spring Field Ornithology

The public is invited to join the first session of the Spring Field Ornithology course free, March 25 at 6 p.m. in the Cornell Lab of Ornithology auditorium, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca.

Doors open at 6 p.m. At 6:30 p.m., ornithologist Kevin McGowan will deliver a talk on the birds of Cayuga Lake Basin. At 7:30 p.m., Spring Field Ornithology course instructor Dr. Steve Kress will talk about how to identify birds and which birds you might see in this region.

These free lectures kick off the 2015 Spring Field Ornithology season, giving audience members a taste of what’s to come during the following eight weeks of the course, March 25 through May 17. You’ll also have the opportunity to sign up for the Spring Field Ornithology class, which is designed for bird watchers of all skill levels.

Find out more about the course schedule, watch a video about the course, and sign up at http://www.birds.cornell.edu/sfo. You can also call 607-254-2165 to sign up (outside Ithaca, call 800-843-2473 toll-free).

The 2015 Spring Field Ornithology course receives support from Wild Birds Unlimited at Sapsucker Woods and The Plantmen Nursery.

Maple Weekend at the Arnot Forest

The statewide “Maple Weekend” will be celebrated at Arnot Forest, March 21-22. The modern maple-syrup making operation at Cornell University’s Arnot Forest in Van Etten, NY, will host a pancake breakfast at 8 a.m. both days ($7 per person 5 years and older, includes pancakes, eggs, sausage, and beverages. Children under 5 years, $3). Also features public tours, syrup tasting, and displays and demonstrations 9 a.m.-4 p.m. both days. The evaporator will be running at full-tilt, with sap running from thousands of sugar maple trees directly to the sugarhouse.

New this year: Portable band-saw demonstrations with rough-cut lumber available for sale and a firewood processor demonstration. The days will include mostly outdoor activities, so participants must dress accordingly. Information about other Maple Weekend events at http://www.mapleweekend.com.

Location: Cornell University’s Arnot Forest - On Jackson Hollow Road (Schuyler CR 13) 1 mile north of NY Route 224 between Cayuta and Van Etten, NY. GPS Directions: Cayuta, NY 14805.

Information: Call the Arnot Forest Sugarhouse at 607-589-6076.