



A woman with glasses and a floral scarf is looking down at a small object she is holding in her hands. She is in a museum or gallery, with various artifacts and display cases visible in the background. The lighting is dim, creating a focused and contemplative atmosphere.

Hidden *in* Plain Sight

Anthropologist
Robert Foster ‘rediscovers’
cultural treasures
of the Pacific Islands.

By Susan Hagen

Photographs by Adam Fenster

PIECE WORK: Kathryn Leacock, curator of collections at the Buffalo Museum of Science, examines a carved frigatebird from the P. G. T. Black Collection, a 6,200-piece trove purchased by the museum in 1938.

'Social Lives' of Objects

The oldest collection of Pacific Islands artifacts in North America assembled by one person, the P. G. T. Black Collection had gone largely undocumented among anthropologists until Rochester professor Robert Foster undertook a project to share the objects with a wider audience. Foster is studying the more than 6,000 objects at the Buffalo Museum of Science to learn what they reveal about early encounters between Pacific Islanders and European traders, missionaries, officials, and tourists. "They're not inert," Foster says of the objects. "They have what I call 'social lives'—and new meanings continually get attached to them." (Numbers in parentheses represent the museum's catalog IDs.)



Man's Head MILNE BAY PROVINCE, MUTUAGA

A carving by Mutuaga, the only late 19th-century carver well known to collectors today (C11025).



Lime Spatulas MILNE BAY PROVINCE, MUTUAGA

Also by Mutuaga, the carved spatulas—for spooning a mix of crushed betel nuts and lime powder, a stimulant—are rubbed with lime powder for white pigment (C8335, 8337, 8339).



Mask NEW IRELAND, CREATOR UNKNOWN

A *tatanua* mask—named for the dance in which it’s used—has hair made of plant fiber and eyes from snail shell (C8068).

Pacific Ocean



Frigatebird SOLOMON ISLANDS, CREATOR UNKNOWN

Made from painted wood, the ornamental carving depicts the famous tropical ocean bird in flight (C11813).

Bougainville Island

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Solomon Sea

Santa Cruz Islands



Widow’s Cap MT. VICTORY AREA, CREATOR UNKNOWN

The hat, made from seeds of the plant Job’s tears, would be worn with a bodice from which a widow would remove a seed each day for a year as a symbol of mourning (C11139).



Fishing Net SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS, CREATOR UNKNOWN

Complete with Black’s original identification tag, the implement is lined with thorns to ensnare fish (C8133).



ROBERT FOSTER TRAVELS ACROSS THE GLOBE TO DO FIELD research in Papua New Guinea. But one day a few years ago, following up on a footnote in a book, the professor of anthropology and of visual and cultural studies drove less than an hour west of Rochester to Buffalo—and found there one of the largest and oldest collections of Pacific Islands artifacts anywhere in the world. That 2006 discovery took place in the halls of the Buffalo Museum of Science. Although the museum had a couple dozen objects on display, when staff took Foster to the museum’s storeroom, he discovered thousands of pieces.

“I was stunned,” Foster says. “It was off the map. Buffalo’s not a place you’d expect Pacific Islands objects to be.”

The P. G. T. Black Collection—safely preserved at the museum for the last seven decades—contains some 6,200 objects from remote villages and colonial outposts across Melanesia, everything from stone axes and toys to fishing tools and spears. Although individual items had been displayed, a catalog of the collection had never been published—and the trove of cultural treasures had remained virtually unknown among scholars.

“The collection provides a window into the early encounters between Pacific Islanders and traders, missionaries, and collectors,” says Foster, an expert on the effects of globalization. “These objects reveal islanders’ innovative response to the influx of Europeans and (Continued on page 41)

PROFESSORS & COLLECTORS: Robert Foster (above) visits the Memorial Art Gallery, where items are on loan from the Black collection, named for the Australian inspector for a shipping firm (right) who collected the items between 1886 and 1916.



(Continued from page 32) new technologies around the turn of the 20th century.”

“It’s an unusual collection in that it emphasizes everyday objects more than exotic ritual objects,” Foster says. “I’ve speculated that in some ways it’s a ‘shadow’ collection, representing objects that were being replaced at the time by what Europeans were bringing in.”

P. G. T. Black, the collector, was a branch inspector for Burns, Philp & Co., a trading and shipping firm based in Sydney, Australia. He acquired the objects—pieces used by Pacific Islanders at the time—between 1886 and 1916, and in 1938 the Buffalo Museum of Science bought, sight unseen, the 40 crates they filled.

There are some structural reasons for the collection’s low profile, Foster says. Anthropology as a discipline was, until the 1920s or ’30s, much more institutionally associated with museums than it is today, and the ties that did remain tended to concern archaeology. The Buffalo Museum of Science is independent of all of the area’s universities.

Lacking proper documentation, the Black collection remained relatively unknown even among Pacific studies specialists. The problem, Foster explains, is that without accurate records of where and under what circumstances objects were acquired, scholars have lacked crucial context for the objects.

But a lucky break and some timely advocacy by museum staff and Foster have solved the mystery. After tracking down Black’s grandson in California during the mid-1990s, a former museum curator discovered that the family owned three trunks of papers, including material from the period when Black was collecting. In 2010, following inquiries from Foster, Black’s great-grandson donated the original diaries to the museum. From these documents—itineraries, really, says Foster—and other material in the Australian archives, Foster has been able to piece together some of the missing background on the collection.

The National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Council of Learned Societies have both awarded Foster fellowships to support his project of sharing the riches of the collection with a wider audience. His scholarly sleuthing will culminate in a book, an online catalog, and a museum exhibit, *Journeys into Papua*, that opens September 17 in celebration of the museum’s 150th anniversary. The collaboration is a “match made in heaven,” says



Kathryn Leacock, curator of collections at the museum. “He provides the research, we have the collection.”

Foster anticipates that the insights culled from the collection will eventually come full circle. He’s working with senior researchers at the Australian Museum, the National Gallery of Australia, and the Australian National University on ways to incorporate the objects from the Black collection into regional projects. Such initiatives, he says, will help make the artifacts accessible to the communities from which they originated and provide a rich set of resources for constructing local histories.

“It’s amazing when you think of these objects that were created in New Guinea in the 1890s and then went to Australia, and then to Buffalo and then—for those that were part of other exhibitions—New York or San Francisco or Washington, D.C.,” says Foster.

“They’re not inert. They have what I call ‘social lives’—and new meanings continually get attached to them.” ^R

DOCUMENTED COLLECTION: A museum drawer holds examples of earrings and other ornaments from Central Province, Papua New Guinea (above, top), part of a collection that also includes Black’s meticulously kept diaries (above and inset).

Additional reporting by Kathleen McGarvey

An undergraduate business major
—built to ‘Rochester standards’—
offers students fresh options
and broad knowledge.

A New Major in the Marketplace



By Kathleen McGarvey

MICHAEL ECHTER '13 HAS PLANS TO BECOME A MECHANICAL engineer. But the Penfield, N.Y., native says that's not all he's interested in—a lawn care business he's run in his hometown for the past five years has whetted his appetite for some business knowledge to pair with his engineering degree.

This spring, he made it official, pursuing dual degrees: a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering and a bachelor of arts in business, paired with a minor in American Sign Language.

"I believe it'll make me more marketable, but it's also something I have a strong interest in," he says. "There are natural connections between business and engineering."

Echter is among the first students to sign on for Rochester's newly minted business major—the Barry Florescue Undergraduate Business Degree Program, named in recognition of the support of Barry Florescue '66, a University trustee (see sidebar, page 47). A collaboration between the College and the Simon Graduate School of Business, the major takes an atypical approach for an undergrad-

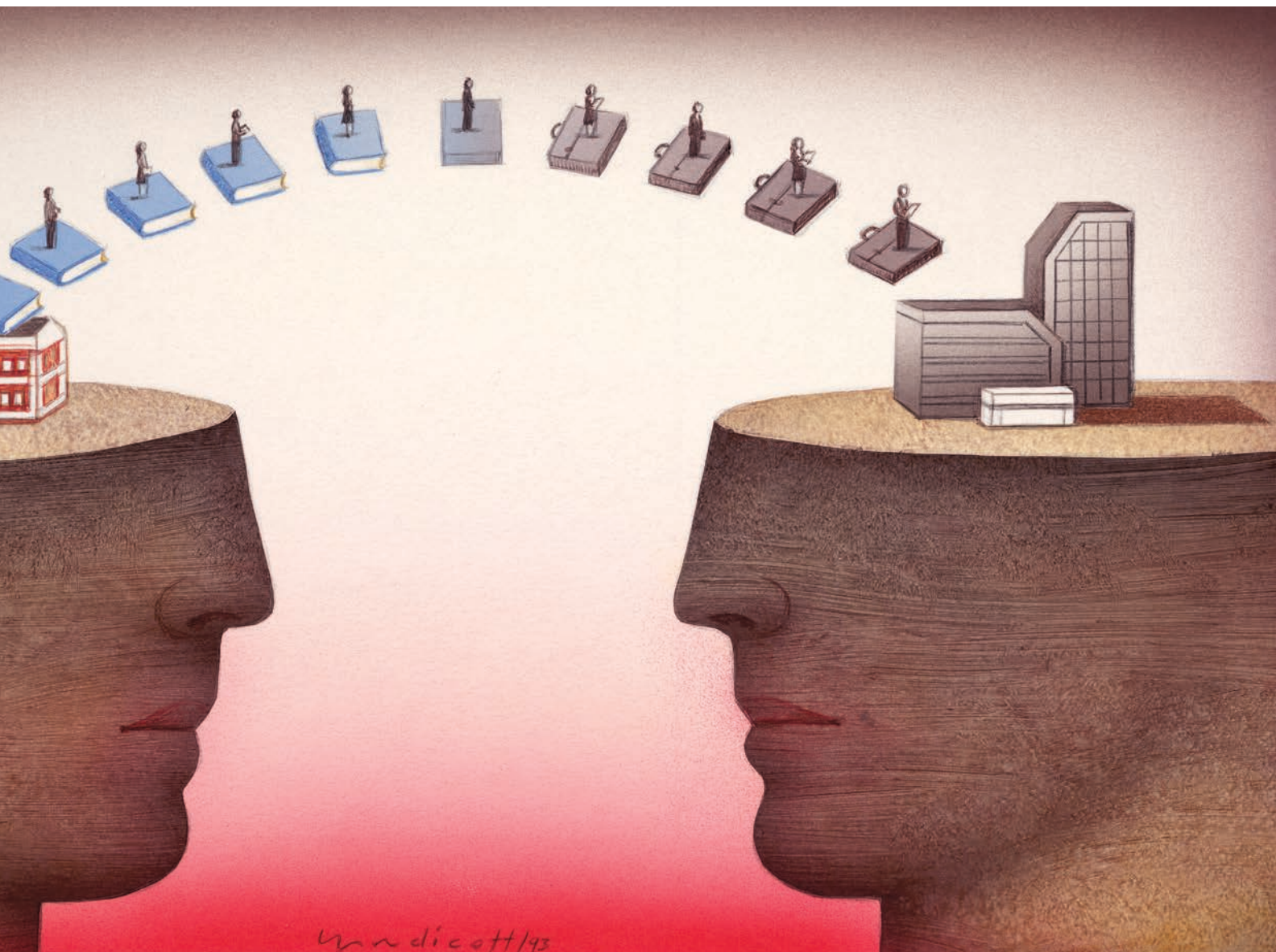
uate program: students will study business within the context of a liberal education, giving themselves a broad base of knowledge in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences rather than narrow training within fields of business.

"Some of our peers don't have an undergraduate business major at all, or have it in a different school, as a business degree," says Richard Feldman, dean of the College. "To have it in the same school, as part of a liberal arts program, is unusual. Not unique, but unusual."

"This is a wonderful example of a crossdisciplinary program," says Mark Zupan, dean of the Simon School. "It's also an example of an intergenerational commitment, exemplified by Barry's counsel and support, to create an outstanding program."

The latest development in an effort to expand the College's undergraduate offerings, the business major was approved by the state this spring. As is the case for students throughout the College, business majors will take three-course clusters in two areas outside of their social sciences home.

It's an approach that reflects the signature Rochester Curriculum, which offers students the freedom to study what they love



and the guidance, through the cluster system, to explore a variety of fields.

That liberal arts perspective plays to the University's historic strengths, say Rochester's academic leaders. For example, when Howard Hanson took direction of music education at the Eastman School in the 1920s, he urged students to partake of all the University had to offer. He saw eye-to-eye with then president Rush Rhees, who had declared that "educated musicians should be much more than expert musical technicians."

"A traditional business degree would feature a much higher fraction of business courses," says Feldman. "I think a broad education is valuable. Students will have a greater understanding of a variety of disciplines."

For Timothy Kuchman '13 of Rochester—who says he was the second person to sign up for the new major—the opportunity to study business is a welcome one.

He began taking business classes as a high school student, and knew he ultimately wanted a business career. He opted to attend Rochester, in spite of the lack of a business major.

When he heard the major had been approved, "it was great news. It was exactly what I wanted."

Business is one of the most popular areas of study for undergraduate students nationwide—about 12 percent of undergraduates are business majors nationally, says Zupan, and more than 295,000 students entered undergraduate-level programs of study in business in the 2009–10 academic year at member institutions, according to data from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, an international accreditation group for business programs.

Over the past five years, the College had sought to address students' interest in business with a minor and with two majors in the economics department, economics with a concentration in financial economics and economics with a concentration in economics and business strategies.

"We'd developed the idea of a hybrid major, an economics major but you'd take a certain set of courses in economics and a number of electives that could be in the Simon School," says Mark Bills, professor and chair of the economics department, of the earlier majors.

The new major, in development for two years and ultimately ex-



ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS: One of the first students enrolled in the new major, Michael Echter '13 is studying business and engineering, which, he says, have natural connections.

developed specialty in economics and markets.”

“I’m going to bill this as the hardest business major in America” when talking with prospective students, says Jonathan Burdick, dean of admissions and financial aid. “It’s everything you’d want in a business major, plus some pretty significant pinnings around it from economics and the Simon School that aren’t always part of a business major elsewhere.” The quantitative and analytical research focus of faculty in both the economics department and the Simon School means there won’t be a “soft track” for students who aren’t interested in the challenge, he says.

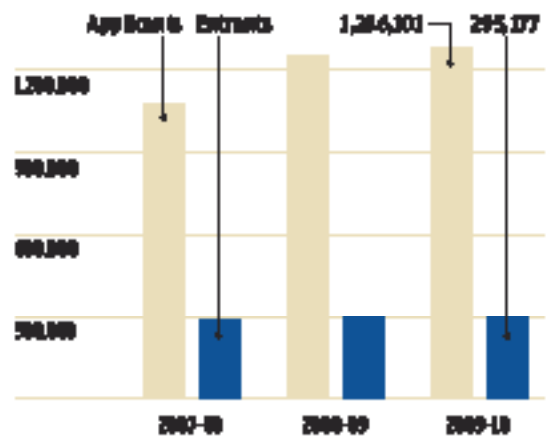
The structure of the Rochester major also stands in contrast to recent criticism of some academically anemic undergraduate business programs. In an April article produced collaboratively, the *New York Times* and the *Chronicle of*

pected to draw 50 to 60 new students a year, replaces the business strategies hybrid—but the grounding in economics is key, say those involved in creating the program.

“This major fulfills both needs” students have expressed, says Bil: “a broader background in business-related courses and a

Undergraduate Applications

The number of applications submitted to undergraduate business programs has grown in recent years.



Source: The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business

“Because Simon is very economics-oriented and has a good relationship with the economics department, working on this major together is a natural for us.”

—Ronald Hansen, senior associate dean for program development at the Simon School

Higher Education suggested that undergraduate business education is characterized by student disengagement, with students spending less time preparing for class than their peers in any other general field.

“We’ve been very conscious in designing this major to maintain what I’ll call ‘Rochester standards,’” says Ronald Hansen, senior associate dean for program development at the Simon School and the William H. Meckling Professor of Business Administration. He, along with Zupan, Feldman, and Bills, played a central role in designing the new major.

“Because Simon is very economics-oriented and has a good relationship with the economics department, working on this major together is a natural for us,” Hansen says.

A relatively small set of core courses for the major allows students ample time to explore other areas within the liberal arts; two alternative tracks for several additional courses—Organizations and Markets, and Marketing—provide a narrowed focus of concentration within the major.

Karen Forsythe, the academic advisor for students in the major and part of the Multidisciplinary Studies Center, calls the business major “a true collaboration between the two schools. But it’s an undergraduate College degree.”

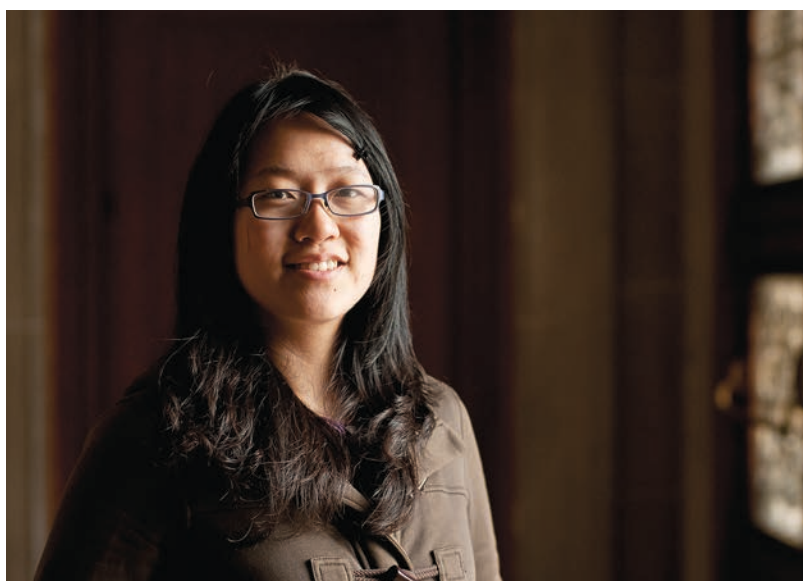
The major builds on principles of statistics and economics and other social sciences to provide students with an understanding of business-related disciplines such as finance, accounting, marketing, operations management, and organizational theory.

Its approach is analytical—a hallmark of the Simon School, Zupan says.

“We’re fairly distinguished for management as a science, not an art,” he says. While some business schools teach using case studies, “we’re more deductive. What are the underlying principles?”

The deductive framework taught at Simon is funda-

EARLY ADOPTERS: Timothy Kuchman '13 (top, right) and Yu (Bonnie) Xia '13 are among the first to enroll in the new business major, which was approved by the state this spring.





mental to the rigor of the new major, Zupan says, and a critical skill in solving the problems one meets in business. “One alum calls it ‘X-ray vision,’” he says.

From its earliest days a very academic business school, the Simon School has been rooted in the discipline of economics, Hansen says. Three prominent journals—the *Journal of Financial Economics*, the *Journal of Monetary Economics*, and the *Journal of Accounting and Economics*—are edited there, and “this school has a very economics-oriented faculty.”

“A lot of business schools that are very case-based tend not to emphasize the underlying theories—but

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS: Richard Feldman, dean of the College (above), Ronald Hansen, senior associate dean at the Simon School (far left), and Mark Zupan, dean of the Simon School, helped develop the new business major as a collaboration between their academic units that’s designed to be grounded in a liberal arts setting.

Rochester is on the analytical and quantitative side” of approaches, he says.

The fact that Simon has no internal departments fosters integrated thinking, Hansen says. “Most business problems don’t come neatly labeled, and you can’t just crank out a solution. When a product is losing money, it could be a marketing, or a design, or a cost issue, among other possibilities. The areas overlap.”

“I feel it’s a more global view than the previous economics major—more organization-wide and less theoretical,” says Yu (Bonnie) Xia ’13, from Shanghai, China. She hopes the major will enhance her employability when she returns to China—and she says it complements her interest in human behavior. She would like ultimately to work in human resources.

To all involved, the notion of increasing students’ options is compelling.

“The single most valuable thing” about the development of the major “is we’ve had students who’ve transferred out of Rochester saying the reason they’ve left is the lack of a business major,” says Burdick. Now he anticipates being able to attract transfer students into Rochester with the opportunity to major in business.

“We asked, how do we get the best of both worlds?” says Zupan. “We preserve liberal arts strength and include the Simon School approach to business.” Although “we looked at other schools’ majors closely, we wanted to break the mold, to leave the most space possible for the liberal arts.”

Their connection at the undergraduate level is crucial, Zupan says. “At too many universities, there’s a moat between business and other schools on campus.” That’s not true at Rochester, he adds, and the business major will strengthen ties, raise the Simon School’s visibility among undergraduates, and perhaps draw more of them to the school’s MBA program after graduation.


“I think the students who come out of this major and go straight to the job market will have strong economics training in solving problems, thinking analytically, and framing questions and issues that come up in terms of what they’ve learned,” says Bills. “And for those who go on for an MBA, graduate schools will be looking for a good background in math and economics.”

The question of what comes next is always on students’ minds when they choose a major, and Hansen suggests that a familiarity with the fields of business can enhance competitiveness on the job market.

“If the people hiring you expect you to have some understanding of marketing, some understanding of underlying economics, of how markets work, then you’ll have more value to companies if you have basic skills,” Hansen says.

“But this is a broad business major,” he adds. “We’re not trying to get students to specialize.”

Says Feldman: “Some majors are more aligned with career choices than others.

“I expect we’ll find business majors will go on to do many different things—just as students in every major do.” 



BUSINESS MAN: A key supporter of the new business major, Florescue himself majored in business as an undergraduate at Rochester.

Preparing Students for a ‘World of Business’

New major is named for Barry Florescue ’66, a trustee and longtime University advisor.

When Barry Florescue ’66 was an undergraduate at Rochester, he earned a business degree in a program that was retired in 1972, as the Simon School—then the School of Business Administration—turned its focus to graduate studies.

Now, as Rochester returns to undergraduate instruction in business, Florescue is lending his financial support, and his name, to the newly created major. He has contributed \$5 million to the University to support the business major. In recognition of his generosity, and other contributions he has provided for development of the major, it will be named the Barry Florescue Undergraduate Business Degree Program.

“When I learned that the University was considering reestablishing the business major that I pursued as an undergraduate, I knew this was an important area of the dynamic curriculum that was worth supporting,” Florescue says. “I am pleased to be a part of this new program, knowing that it will prepare our students to become successful players in the world of business.”

Florescue is chairman of the board of BMD Management Company Inc. A charter member of the George Eastman Circle, he is a member of both the University’s Board of Trustees and the Simon School’s Executive Advisory Committee. Through the Florescue Family Foundation Scholarship and the Florescue Fellowship Fund, he has helped both undergraduate and business school students in their quest to study at Rochester.

“Barry’s support ensured that we would be able to launch and sustain the new business major, and we’re very grateful for that,” says Peter Lennie, the Robert L. and Mary L. Sproull Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering. “Our undergraduates will greatly benefit from his generosity.”

—Melissa Greco Lopes



Tree-Lined Campus

With a horticultural history dating to the turn of the 20th century, Rochester's arboretum is earning national recognition.

By Scott Hauser



ROOTED IN ROCHESTER: “[When] you realize what we have as a palette,” says Dan Schied, manager of horticulture and grounds, of the University’s arboretum, “why not look for ways to celebrate it?”

YOU MIGHT SEE THEM IN LATE SPRING OR EARLY summer—one or two at a time, sometimes a larger group—stopping on the Wilson Quadrangle. The visitors pause to look at a leafy canopy that seems so well sculpted you might imagine it was dreamed up by a child who was told to draw a tree.

The goldenrain tree, a hardy deciduous species originally from Asia that grows near Crosby Hall on the River Campus, is a favorite of students, who like to climb its broad branches.

But horticulturists, too, have been known to stop to admire it.

“People in the know who have seen it say it’s an unusually good specimen,” says Dan Schied, the manager of horticulture and grounds at the University.

The goldenrain tree may soon have new fans as the University’s arboretum earned national attention this spring when Rochester was selected to join the Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree Campus USA program. Fewer than 100 schools nationwide have earned the designation, and Rochester became just the sixth member in New York.

“It’s really quite an honor to be recognized—and a testament to the hard work of all the individuals who maintain all the campuses,” says Schied.

His 12-person team, along with support from vendors, is responsible for maintaining the University’s arboretum and grounds, which includes the trees and shrubbery on the River Campus as well as the Eastman, Medical Center, South, and Mt. Hope campuses.

To qualify as an arboretum, a collection of trees and shrubbery

Take a Tree Tour

The University’s arboretum features several examples of unique, unusual, and prized specimens. Here are a few highlights from the regular tree tours that Dan Schied, the University’s manager of horticulture and grounds, offers River Campus visitors. For more about the arboretum, visit www.facilities.rochester.edu/arboretum.



Baldcypress

An example of one of the few species of deciduous conifer trees, the baldcypress near Fauver Stadium is part of an effort to create a pinetum near the University’s athletic facilities.

Linden

Located adjacent to Crosby Hall and the Goergen Athletic Center, the linden is possibly one of the few remaining trees from the former Oak Hill golf course.



Green Ash

University horticulturists are working to protect several ash trees from the invasive emerald ash borer, a destructive insect that has destroyed stocks of ash trees in the United States.



must have at least one person committed to its care, it must feature interpretive materials about the plants, and it must be shared at least part time with a wider community.

And sharing the history and educational information about the University's collection, especially with students, is a favorite part of Schied's job. "Students seem excited when you tell them their campus is an arboretum."


As part of his work, he looks for opportunities to create collections of particular plants and plant species as a way of introducing students and visitors to the importance of landscaping and how careful consideration of plant selection and placement helps create inviting environments.

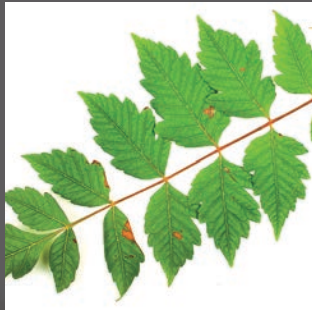
For example, he's helped establish a collection near Meliora Hall

that includes specimens of each of the Rochester-bred lilacs. Such efforts also fit into a larger horticultural legacy.

Located in a metropolitan area known as the "Flower City," the University shares a neighborhood with Highland Park, an internationally recognized botanical garden that grew out of the Ellwanger and Barry Nursery, likely the largest nursery in the country at the turn of the 20th century. Many of the buildings—and trees—on the Mt. Hope Campus were once part of the nursery.

A presenter at national conferences on the topic of sustainability and landscaping, Schied travels frequently and says such history is rare for a college campus.

"You come back and you realize what we have as a palette," he says. "Why not look for ways to celebrate it?" 



Goldenrain tree

Located between Crosby and Wilson Commons, the tree is recognized as an unusually good specimen of its kind, which has origins in Asia.



Chinese Elm

The University has introduced several elms since its American elms were devastated by Dutch elm disease, including Chinese elms along Wilson Boulevard.



Scotch Elm

Unaffected by the Dutch elm disease that wiped out the University's American elms, the Scotch elm thrives on the Wilson Quadrangle.



Amur Corktree

Known for its resistance to drought and pests, the Amur corktree is one of several species in the University's collection native to Asia.