Thestrals Take Their First Cup . . .

POWER OF POTTER: Members of the Rochester quidditch team—Tim Kwan ’17, ’18 (TS), Dane Johnson ’21, Lucy Franzen ’19, Morris Shayo ’18, Alex McKinley ’19, David Rowcroft ’21—rush the pitch after the team won the national championship in the sport of the wizarding world described in the Harry Potter books of J.K. Rowling. Named for the books’ magical flying beasts, the Rochester Thestrals defeated the University of Texas at Austin to win the national Quidditch Cup, a competition that featured 87 teams from across the country.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIGUEL ESPARZA/THE EIGHTH MAN PHOTO
SHE IS THE CHAMPION: Kylee Bartlett ’19 added a new entry in her chapter of the Rochester record books when she won her third national title this spring. The rising senior from Williamstown, New York, won her second straight heptathlon championship at the NCAA Division III national meet, adding to the national indoor pentathlon title she won in 2017. She’s the fifth woman to win more than one title in the heptathlon, and only the second Yellowjacket to capture three national titles. Josefa Benzoni ’89 won three indoor track and field titles—two in the 1,500 meters and one in the 3,000 meters.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CALEB WILLIAMS
ART OF TECHNOLOGY

Look of Laptops

STUCK ON YOU: Bringing a personal flair to a ubiquitous piece of technology, students have long decorated their laptops and other pieces of personal technology as a way to convey their personalities and perspectives. In addition to livening up sometimes nondescript surfaces, the popular stickers also make particular machines—and people—easier to identify in a crowded library. We asked one of our student employees, Nick Foti ’19, an economics major from West Seneca, New York, to spend some time in River Campus Libraries this spring to document a few examples of the latest in computer graphics.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NICK FOTI ’19

Deiji Emiabata ’20
A mechanical engineering major from Lagos, Nigeria

Maria Majid ’19
A biology major from Rochester

Kristen Lodato ’21
An environmental sciences major from Greenwich, Connecticut

Anna Shors ’20
A mathematics and data science double major from Baltimore

Lydia Currie ’20
A neuroscience and dance double major from Stamford, Connecticut
Madison Saliba ’18
A chemical engineering major from Smithfield, Rhode Island

Lillian Henderson ’19
An environmental sciences major from Rockledge, Florida

Owen Goettler ’21
A computer science major from Pittsford, New York

Emma Briggs ’18
An international relations major from West Hartford, Connecticut

Erin Sumfleth ’20
An optical engineering major from Callicoon, New York

Samantha Mauser ’21
A computational biology major from Ithaca, New York
Connect . . . with People

While today’s college students are connected in ways earlier generations could only imagine, Ancestry CEO Margaret (Margo) Georgiadis says they risk losing touch with what matters most—their close connections with individual people.

“Technological advancements are enabling us to reimagine everything in our lives—how we communicate, commute, shop, learn, entertain ourselves, and more,” Georgiadis told the graduating Class of 2018 during the Arts, Sciences & Engineering ceremony on the Eastman Quad-rangle. “And we are only getting started. I’ve spent 30 years helping companies prepare for and reimagine the future. So my message today may surprise you. While we are more connected and have more opportunity than ever before, our biggest risk is that we forget about people. . .

It is these human connections that are essential to enabling the change we all need to see in the world.”

Georgiadis, who received the University’s Eastman Medal, was one of several honorees and guests who were recognized as part of Rochester’s 168th commencement season. Altogether, during this spring’s ceremonies, the University bestowed more than 2,500 undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degrees.

Among this year’s honorees was Frederick Douglass, who was awarded a posthumous honorary degree in recognition of his historic role as an abolitionist, human rights leader, orator, and author. (See page 15.)

This spring also marked the first time Richard Feldman
presided over the ceremonies as president.

“You have learned the value of the most important gifts we can provide: critical thinking, perseverance, the value of working with others, the value of serving the community, a personal commitment to Meliora,” he said in his address to the College Class of 2018.

“You will succeed because of your talents, your education, and your work ethic.”

For more about commencement, visit Rochester.edu/commencement/2018.

Honorees

Among the recipients of University honors during this spring’s commencement ceremonies were:

Margaret Georgiadis, the CEO of Ancestry, who gave the commencement address and received the Eastman Medal

Kenneth Morris Jr., who accepted an honorary degree on behalf of his great-great-great-grandfather, Frederick Douglass

David Primo, the Ani and Mark Gabrellian Professor and associate professor of political science and business administration, who received the Edward Peck Curtis Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

Chigusa Kurumada, assistant professor of brain and cognitive sciences and Wyatt Tenhaeff, assistant professor of chemical engineering, who each received the G. Graydon Curtis ’58 and Jane W. Curtis Award for Nontenured Faculty Teaching

Jane Chu, chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, who received the Luminary Award

Joanne Larson, the Michael W. Scandling Professor of Education at the Warner School of Education, who received the William H. Riker University Award for Excellence in Graduate Teaching

Deborah Cory-Slechta, professor of environmental medicine, pediatrics, and public health sciences, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award in Graduate Education

Seymour Schwartz ’57M (Res), Distinguished Alumni Professor of Surgery, who received the Eastman Medal

Mary Ellen Burris ’68W (Mas), senior vice president of consumer affairs for Wegmans Food Markets, who received the Charles Force Hutchison and Marjorie Smith Hutchison Medal

Ronald Fielding ’73, ’76S (MBA), retired chief strategist and senior vice president of Oppenheimer Funds Inc., who received an honorary degree.
**A HISTORIC HONOR**

**A Degree for Frederick Douglass**

Frederick Douglass, widely considered the most important abolitionist leader in American history, was honored by the University during this spring’s commencement ceremonies.

Douglass, who made his home in Rochester from 1847 to 1872, was recognized with an honorary degree, the first time the honor has been presented posthumously. The degree was accepted by his great-great-grandson, Kenneth Morris Jr.

After the ceremony, Morris said the family appreciated the recognition, particularly as a way to mark the 200th anniversary of Douglass’s birth into slavery.

“Frederick Douglass said it’s easier to build strong children than to repair broken men,” Morris said. “We’re living in a time right now where we need the glorious light of truth and people who will speak when others say be quiet, and stand when others say sit down. To hear that all these years later, he’s inspiring the next generation of leaders is very humbling. He still has that impact, all these years later.”

Born into slavery on a Maryland plantation in 1818, Douglass escaped to the North at age 20 with the help of Anna Murray, a free black woman in Baltimore. The two eventually married and settled together in Rochester, where Douglass founded the abolitionist newspaper the *North Star*. From 1847 until 1863, he published the paper—renamed *Frederick Douglass’ Paper* in 1851—from a second story office in the Talman Building at 25 East Main Street.

An accomplished writer and speaker, Douglass taught himself to read and write. Before settling in Rochester, he traveled to Great Britain and Ireland—in large part to avoid recapture—and spoke widely, to growing crowds. In Rochester, Douglass became friends with Susan B. Anthony and took up the cause of women’s rights, attending the 1848 Women’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York. Douglass and Anthony were at the center of a prominent group of western New York activists who agitated for abolition and women’s suffrage under the common umbrella of human rights.

Douglass delivered many of his most famous speeches while in Rochester, including his 1852 Independence Day address, “What to the Slave is the 4th of July?” He published three memoirs: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845), *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881).

After moving to Washington, D.C., in 1872, he would eventually serve in several roles under five presidents.

Douglass died at his home in Washington in 1895. He is buried in Rochester’s Mount Hope Cemetery.

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**TOP TEACHERS**

**Singer Awards Honor High School Teachers**

High school teachers who made a difference in the education of four graduating seniors were recognized for their dedication as mentors during commencement this spring. Supported by Paul Singer ’66 through the Paul Singer Family Foundation, the annual Singer Family Prizes for Excellence in Secondary School Teaching are drawn from nominations submitted by members of the graduating class in the College.

This year’s recipients and their nominating students were (seated) Cristina Duarte, an English teacher at Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School in New York City, who was nominated by Joseph Gray (standing); Teresa Haskiell, a mathematics teacher at James Wood High School in Winchester, Virginia, who was nominated by Brian Baker, who was also commissioned as a lieutenant in the Army through the Army ROTC program offered by the University in partnership with the Rochester Institute of Technology; Allison Cain, a French teacher at Kent Denver School in Englewood, Colorado, who was nominated by Perry DeMarche; and Michael Zitolo, a physics teacher at the School of the Future in New York City, who was nominated by Hannah Parker. The students and teachers were joined by Jeffrey Runner, dean of the College (standing, center).

—Joe Hagen ’19E
Board Elects Two New Members

By Sara Miller

Two alumni were elected to the University’s Board of Trustees this spring while two long-time members were also recognized.

New Trustees

Joseph Abrams ’74S (MBA) is an entrepreneur, investor, and advisor. An expert in emerging growth companies, he is an early stage investor and advisor with Recruiter.com, an online global recruiting service.

Abrams has advised or acted as principal in dozens of mergers and acquisitions and has been involved with several eco-friendly and socially responsible businesses. A co-founder of the Software Toolworks, he also cofounded eUniverse. Later renamed Intermix Media, the company became the parent of the social network site MySpace. NewsCorp bought Intermix in 2005.

Abrams and his wife, Patricia, are lead supporters of the Simon Venture Capital Fund, a seed fund run by MBA and master’s students at the Simon Business School. He is also a member of Simon’s National Council and Advisory Council, and the University’s San Francisco Network Leadership Cabinet. In 2017, he received Simon’s Distinguished Alumnus Award.

The Abramses also established, with their son, Matthew ’02, and his wife, Lindsay, the Abrams Family Fund for Myotonic Dystrophy Research.

Elizabeth Pungello Bruno ’89 is president of the Brady Education Foundation, an organization focused on closing the achievement and opportunity gap for children at risk for poor school outcomes due to environmental factors associated with living in poverty. She is also a research associate professor in the developmental psychology program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where her research has focused on early care and education environments and school readiness skills.

She serves on the board of Brady Corporation, a public company that manufactures and markets high-performance labels, signs, safety devices, printing systems, and software. She also serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Marriage and Family and Early Childhood Research Quarterly, and other nonprofit boards.

In 2011, she established the Brady Scholars Program at the University to support first-generation minority students. In 2016, she renewed her support of the program, which now focuses solely on undergraduates. She is a member of the Arts, Sciences & Engineering National Council and the Parents Council.

Her daughter, Hope, graduated this spring as a member of the Class of 2018.

Life Trustees

Also at the May meeting, the board recognized Alan Hilfiker ’60 and Richard Sands as they moved to life trustee status.

A trustee since 1988, Hilfiker has served on several board committees. His support established both the Alan F. Hilfiker Endowed Graduate Scholarship Fund and the Alan F. Hilfiker Distinguished Professorship in English, and helps support the Hyam Plutzik Memorial Poetry Series.

Elected to the board in 2008, Sands has served on Simon’s Executive Advisory Committee and been active with the University at many levels. His support includes the annual Sands Leadership Lecture Series, the establishment of the Dr. Laurie Sands Distinguished Professorship in Family and Health, and support for other programs at Simon, the Medical Center, and the Memorial Art Gallery.

Committee Leads Search for Next President

The Board of Trustees has established a committee to select the University’s next president.

Cochaired by University Trustee Cathy Minehan ’68 and Board Chair Danny Wegman, the Presidential Search Committee is working with three campus advisory committees—a University Advisory Committee, consisting largely of faculty; a Staff Advisory Committee; and a Student Advisory Committee—with the goal of selecting a president by 2019. The new president would then begin in July 2019 at the start of the 2019–20 academic year.

The committee has established a website, Rochester.edu/presidential-search, where information is posted about the position, the search process, names of committee members, timelines, and other activities. The site will be updated regularly over the course of the search.

Members of the University community can submit suggestions, questions, and nominations in confidence at the site.

The committee has engaged Spencer Stuart, an international executive search and leadership consulting firm with significant successful experience in conducting senior searches in higher education.

A former president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and former dean of the Simmons College School of Management, Minehan has served on the board since 1995. Wegman, the chairman of Wegmans Food Markets Inc., has chaired the board since 2016.
Culture of Respect

EVER BETTER

Meliora Guides New Vision and Values Statement

The principles of Meliora are expected to be even more prominent in the life and culture of the University, serving as the grounding idea for a new University statement of Vision and Values.

Approved by the University’s Board of Trustees in May, the new statement is designed to better clarify and communicate the University community’s shared goals and principles.

Building from the letters of the motto, the statement articulates and defines core principles that are important to the institution and its community.

They include equity, leadership, integrity, openness, respect, and accountability.

The statement will become part of a set of defining ideas, including the mission statement, that represent how the University envisions itself and its aspirations.

Drafted by a committee of faculty, students, and staff this spring, the new statement is modeled on similar efforts undertaken by the Medical Center and the College to better articulate the values of those units.

The Medical Center has established “ICARE” as its guiding statement. The word is an acronym for the core principles of integrity, compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence. The College has adopted a program based on six key principles. Called the Communal Principles, they include fairness, freedom, honesty, inclusion, respect, and responsibility. Each year, the College highlights one of the six principles, focusing activities and other programming around the ideas embodied in that principle.

The University’s new statement will be used to guide ongoing work to review and revise University policies and procedures.

The statements will also anchor education and training around diversity, equity, and inclusion by tying them to commonly held values, with a goal of helping strengthen a culture of respect.

Mission

Learn, Discover, Heal, Create— and Make the World Ever Better

Vision

The University of Rochester will continue to frame and solve the greatest challenges of the future.

We are a community in which all who work, teach, create, and provide care are welcome and respected, and where all can pursue and achieve their highest objectives for themselves, their communities, and the world.

Steeped in Rochester’s rich history of social justice and entrepreneurial spirit, we will always be an inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and responsive organization at every level.

Values

Meliora: We strive to be ever better, for everyone.

Equity: We commit to diversity, inclusion, and access.

Leadership: We take initiative and share responsibility for exemplifying excellence.

Integrity: We conduct ourselves with honesty, dedication, and fairness.

Openness: We embrace freedom of ideas, inquiry, and expression.

Respect: We value our differences, our environment, and our individual and collective contributions.

Accountability: We are each responsible for making our community ever better, through our actions, our words, and our dealings with others.

We will hold ourselves accountable to these values in the design of our programs, the development and delivery of our services, the evaluation of performance, and in the ways in which we interact as a community.

Find More Online

Rochester’s Culture of Respect
Rochester.edu/respect

Vision and Values Statement
Rochester.edu/president/vision-and-values/

Commission on Women and Gender Equity in Academia
Rochester.edu/commission-women-gender-academia/
Set Your Calendar for Meliora Weekend

Award-winning journalists, authors, analysts, and musicians headline the lineup for Meliora Weekend 2018.

By Kristine Thompson

Soledad O’Brien, award-winning journalist, speaker, and author, will be the keynote speaker for Meliora Weekend, one of several acclaimed guests scheduled for the 18th edition of the four-day celebration in October.

O’Brien headlines a lineup that includes Pulitzer Prize–winning author Ron Chernow, former Republican National Committee Chair Michael Steele, comedian Nasim Pedrad, and the genre-hopping musical ensemble Pink Martini.

The weekend kicks off Thursday, October 4, and continues through Sunday, October 7.

“Soledad O’Brien is known for telling stories about pressing social and global issues. She also anchors and produces the Hearst Television political magazine program Matter of Fact with Soledad O’Brien and reports regularly for HBO’s Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel and PBS NewsHour.”

In addition to appearing as an anchor or contributor on major networks, she is philanthropy editor of Worth magazine, and is a frequent author of op-eds for the New York Daily News and the Huffington Post. She is also the author of two books: her memoir, The Next Big Story, and Latino in America. In 2011, O’Brien and her husband, Brad Raymond, created the PowHERful Foundation, an organization to help young women get to and through college.

Conversations

Michael Steele
Saturday, October 6

When he was elected lieutenant governor of Maryland in 2003, Steele made history as the first African American elected to statewide office. He made history again in 2009 with his chairmanship of the Republican National Committee. Currently, Steele is president and CEO of The Steele Group, cohost of the Steele & Ungar radio show, and a political commentator for MSNBC. He has been a frequent contributor on the Fox News Channel and a guest on Meet the Press and Face the Nation, among other news programs. His writing on law, business, and politics has appeared in such major media outlets as The Wall Street Journal, Politico.com, and BET.com.

Comedy

Nasim Pedrad
Saturday, October 6

Nasim Pedrad, best known for her work on Saturday Night Live, will provide the laughs during an interactive comedy show. Joining SNL in 2009, Pedrad was a cast member for five years. Her recent television credits include appearances on the FOX series New Girl, TBS’s People of Earth, and the 2017 return of HBO’s comedy Curb Your Enthusiasm. She is now filming Disney’s live action remake of Aladdin, set to hit theaters in 2019.

Get Ready to Register

Registration will begin at noon on Wednesday, July 25. For more, visit Rochester.edu/melioraweekend. Email alumni@rochester.edu or call 877.MELIORA (877.635.4672). The website will be updated as more information about guests and other programming becomes available.
HISTORIC FIGURES: Author Ron Chernow, whose work has included biographies of Ulysses S. Grant, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and other pivotal American figures and families, will be the guest for this fall’s University Symposium.

MUSIC & LAUGHTER: The genre-hopping musical ensemble Pink Martini (above), whose repertoire crosses jazz, classical, and pop music, will headline the annual Eastman Presents concert, and Saturday Night Live alumna Nasim Pedrad (below) will present an interactive comedy show during the weekend.

MEDIA MOVERS: Michael Steele, the first African American to chair the Republican National Committee and now a nationally syndicated political commentator, will be a featured speaker as part of the weekend’s events.
Who’s Telling the Truth?

Can a data-informed system help identify those with something to hide?

By Bob Marcotte

Imagine someone is fidgeting in a long line at an airport security gate. Is that person simply nervous about the wait? Or does the passenger have something to hide? Even highly trained TSA (Transportation Security Administration) airport security officers have a difficult time telling whether someone is lying or telling the truth—despite the billions of dollars and years of study that have been devoted to the subject.

In a project led by Tay Sen and Kamrul Hasam, PhD students in the lab of Ehsan Hoque, the Asaro-Biggar ’92 Family Fellow in Data Science and an assistant professor of computer science, researchers are exploring a screening system that they say may be able to more accurately detect deception based on facial and verbal cues.

In a report this spring, the team used data science and an online crowdsourcing game to put together a database of more than 1.3 million frames of facial expressions. Further crunching the data, they identified five smile-related faces. The one most frequently associated with lying was a high-intensity version of the so-called Duchenne smile, a facial expression that involves involuntary movement of muscles along the cheekbone.

The team plans to further refine the system, but they think they’ve only scratched the surface of potential findings from the data they’ve collected, work that could have implications for how TSA officers are trained.

“In the end, we still want humans to make the final decision,” Hoque says. “But as they are interrogating, it is important to provide them with some objective metrics that they could use to further inform their decisions.”
Ask the Archivist:
Was the University a Player in the Invention of Baseball?
A question for Melissa Mead, the John M. and Barbara Keil University Archivist and Rochester Collections Librarian.

For a number of years I have been interested in the history of baseball, culminating with the recent commemoration of Cartwright Field in Honolulu—named for the true “Father of Modern Baseball,” Alexander J. Cartwright Jr. Can you shed any light on when baseball started at the University, and whether Cartwright played any role?—Capt. Brian Bennett ’79 (U.S. Navy, Retired), Honolulu

A comprehensive study of baseball and Rochester by Priscilla Astifan appeared in Rochester History (published by the Rochester Public Library) between 1990 and 2002. Rochester—either as city or university—played no special role in the early development of the game. Possibly the first team in Rochester was the Flour City Club, formed on April 28, 1858, and the University was on deck in fielding a team, despite President Anderson’s notable discouragement of athletics. According to a box score in the Union & Advertiser, Flour City beat “University Club” on June 19, 1858, 25–8. The Interpres yearbook issued that same month confirms a University Base-Ball Club with 29 members: a comparison of the rosters shows that these two University teams were one and the same.

The Civil War caused a hiatus in club baseball on campus and in the United States: no club is listed in the Interpres for 1864 and 1865, but soldiers did play the game in camp. Samuel Porter, Class of 1864, describes a match in a January 1863 letter to his brother Farley, Class of 1866: “I played 2nd base and think if you had been here you would have been proud of your brother. Although our adversaries were from New York City they admitted that our 2nd base was played up to the handle.”

Sadly, there are apparently no letters from Cartwright in our collections. Astifan credits Rochester astronomer Lewis Swift with determining in 1877 that the curve ball was not an optical illusion; the University granted Swift an honorary degree in 1879, although probably not for his contribution to the American pastime.

I am a massive fan of Frank Zappa—borderline obsessed. One time I saw a list of student activities at the U of R from the ’70s, and I thought I saw a Frank Zappa or Mothers of Invention concert. I know that he toured through Rochester a few times, but did he ever play a show on the River Campus or the Eastman school?—Steven Torrisi ’16, Cambridge, Massachusetts

A 1970 article in the Campus Times bemoans the high cost of bringing in outside speakers and performers: “...Walter Cronkite demands $5,500 for an appearance, Senator Muskie and Mike Wallace each ask $2,000, and even Frank Zappa wants $1,000.”

Although the Palestra has seen its share of music legends, Zappa was not among them. He and various configurations of his band did perform in Rochester, first appearing at the War Memorial on October 28, 1967, then alternating between the War Memorial and the Dome Arena on May 5, 1973, November 17, 1973, November 14, 1974, November 5, 1975, and March 11, 1988.

There are a number of online sources which list dates, venues, and even setlists for performers, but the Campus Times concert reviewers provide a richer picture of the experience of being there. G. Joshua Matusewitch had this to say in the May 9, 1973, issue: “The new Mothers seem to be a return to the Motherness of about three years ago, while retaining some of the jazz of the Hot Rats and Grand Wazoo. The important thing here is the music, with little silliness... That's not to say that Zappa has lost his weirdness. Untrue, it will be said.”

The November 7, 1975, post-concert review by “K.C.” concludes with an affirmation. “If you miss this concert, you will forever be an incomplete person.”

To quote Frank Zappa, “Information is not knowledge.” It would be untrue if I were to say that I am well acquainted with the man or his music: my thanks to music historian Ron Fritts for his assistance in verifying the performance dates.

For extra innings on baseball at the University, and reviews of Frank Zappa in the Campus-Times, visit https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/blog/ATA-May2018.

Need History?
Do you have a question about University history? Email it to rochrev@rochester.edu. Please put “Ask the Archivist” in the subject line.
NEW KNOWLEDGE, NEW FORMS

Beyond Medieval
Early Worlds Initiative highlights interdisciplinary scholarship.

By Jordan Mangefrida ’20

A new interdisciplinary research project is taking a deep dive into a complex era that stretches from before traditional conceptions of the medieval period up to early modern times.

Encompassing social and cultural developments from the 5th to the 18th centuries, the Early Worlds Initiative is designed to take an interdisciplinary look at the influence of an intriguing era. Participants hope to answer one of the biggest questions among some outside the field: why, in the 21st century, should people care about what happened so many centuries ago?

“Issues like nationalism, representative government, certainly race—all these things existed in this previous age,” says Tom Hahn, a professor of English and a key contributor to the project. “Looking at those very different models of how they existed, not just in Europe but all over the world, helps us understand our own lives a bit more clearly.”

The project originated last fall with Joan Rubin, the Ani and Mark Gabrellian Director of the Humanities Center and the Dexter Perkins Professor in History.

“Rochester’s long-standing strength in the study of medieval and early modern cultures seemed to me to be the best foundation on which to build an innovative set of scholarly projects that would enhance the University’s reputation and create new knowledge in new forms,” she says.

“It’s a really dynamic opportunity,” says Anna Siebach-Larsen, the director of the Rossell Hope Robbins Library and Koller-Collins Center. “This is both where medieval studies is tending to go, and needs to go. There’s so much going on, and one person can’t learn all of it. We really have to work together.”

She says students and the general public will find value in the project’s collaborations and resources while contributing their own perspectives and insights.

“There’s this whole world out there that we’re just starting to uncover. And there’s a place for everyone in it.”
How’s That Again?
A graduating senior offers a primer on some River Campus lingo. Have you Tapingo-ed Dfo?

By Joshua Hill ’18

Rochester students acquire a specific lingo that becomes ingrained in their everyday conversations, and, eventually, the vocabulary becomes part of their identity.

While a student here, I found it hard to escape the nicknames and abbreviations, as words and phrases were tossed around in the library or over a Facebook conversation.

The terms are in common use, regardless of students’ class year, club involvement, or major. And I think they deserve to be shared with the larger University family.

I’m not a dictionary writer, but as an English major, I offer a whimsical guide to some of the phrases I can’t seem to escape, even if I wanted to.

Hill, an English and political science double major from Penfield, New York, graduated this spring. He was a student employee in University Communications.

**The GAC** ¹: abbreviation for the Goergen Athletic Center ²: short-hand term to refer to the Goergen Athletic Center using the abbreviation

**Groundboi** ¹: a nickname given to the ground-hogs that live around campus—specifically those on the Eastman Quadrangle and near Sage Arts Center ²: a popular name given to the furry creatures that call the River Campus their home and who have inspired a Rochester-specific meme

**ITS** ¹: abbreviation for Information Technology Services ²: a colloquial term to refer to the area of Rush Rhees Library on Library Road ³: the area surrounding Connections Cafe, the Barbara J. Burger iZone, TechStore, and the Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program, below Gleason Library

**Phase** ¹: nickname for Hill Court, a suite-style housing area for juniors and seniors; named after a planned three-phase housing project that only saw the completion of Phase 1 ²: Are you living in ~ this year?

**The Pit** ¹: the à la carte dining option on the first floor of Wilson Commons; named after its appearance of an orchestra pit ²: briefly renamed “The Commons,” the Pit offers the Grill, Wok On Up (Asian-style food), Freshens Burrito Bowl & Smoothie Bar, Pizza Pi, a salad bar, macaroni and cheese bar, and fresh sushi from California Rollin’ on Tuesdays

**Tapingo** ¹: an app introduced on campus in 2015 that you can use to order food on and off campus from the convenience of your phone ²: to order food on the Tapingo app ³: a bagel and coffee before class let out.

**Wilco** ¹: nickname for Wilson Commons, one of the student life buildings in the Campus Center ²: home to the Pit, Rocky’s Sub Shop, the Commons Market, Starbucks, and many student-life spaces used for events and daily gatherings

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### What’s the Word?

Send us your favorite Rochester references. Write to us at Rochrev@rochester.edu.
The Genes of Genetic Recombination

Scientists have long recognized that the exchange of genetic material in a process known as genetic recombination is vital to natural selection. During recombination, chromosomes from each parent “cross over,” mostly lining up properly, but occasionally so-called “selfish DNA” intervenes to cause deletions or insertions of chromosomes that manifest as birth defects. Some species display far more crossover than others, leading scientists to hypothesize that crossover rates have evolved to balance the benefits of crossing over with its risks.

Dean’s Professor of Biology Daven Presgraves and PhD candidate Cara Brand have accomplished a milestone in learning about such evolutionary dynamics. By studying two species of fruit flies, they discovered a gene, MEI-218, that controls the rate of recombination. In a paper published in Current Biology, they explain how MEI-218 controls differences in the rate of crossing over between species and the evolutionary forces at play.

Selfish DNA sequences known as transposons—repetitive genetic elements that do not seem to have benefits to their hosts—are distributed throughout the genome. Transposons are akin to viruses, but instead of injecting themselves in cells, they invade genetic material. If abnormal crossovers occur between transposons in different locations on the chromosomes, the chromosomes do not line up properly and important genes may be duplicated or deleted.

Brand and Presgraves hypothesize that the change in recombination rates between two species of fruit flies may reflect an adaptation to their different amounts of transposons. One species, D. melanogaster, has more transposons in its genome than D. mauritiana, so D. melanogaster may have evolved a lower rate of crossing over in order to avoid the higher risk of harmful crossovers between transposons. If that’s the case, MEI-218 is constantly evolving to an ever-changing optimum. The evolution of MEI-218 is similar to genes involved in immunity, Presgraves says. “That should make some intuitive sense because genes involved in immunity are constantly adapting to the changing community pathogens that are challenging us all the time.”

The gene has so far only been investigated in fruit flies, but the research into recombination has applications for humans. “During meiosis at least one crossover per chromosome, in general, is required to make sure the chromosomes separate properly,” Brand says. “Either a lack of crossing over or crossing over in the wrong regions of the genome is what leads to many birth defects.”

—Lindsey Valich
Fracking Chemicals Linked to Immune Imbalance

A study led by Paige Lawrence, chair of environmental medicine, links chemicals associated with fracking to damage to the developing immune system in mice.

“This discovery opens up new avenues of research to identify, and someday prevent, possible adverse health effects in people living near fracking sites,” she says.

Fracking (shorthand for hydraulic fracturing) involves pumping millions of gallons of chemical-laden water deep underground to fracture rock and release oil and gas. About 200 chemicals have been measured in wastewater and in surface water or groundwater in fracking-dense regions. Of the chemicals found in groundwater, several have been classified as endocrine disrupters, meaning they can interfere with hormones and derail hormone-controlled systems.

For the study, published in Toxicological Sciences, Lawrence and her team tested the impact of fracking chemicals on the immune system because it’s greatly influenced by hormones.

The team added the chemicals to the drinking water of pregnant mice at levels similar to those found in groundwater near fracking sites. She and her colleagues found that mouse pups—particularly females—who were exposed to a mixture of 23 fracking chemicals in the womb had abnormal immune responses to several types of diseases later on, including an allergic disease and a type of flu.

Moreover, the mice were especially susceptible to a disease that mimics multiple sclerosis.

Lawrence and her colleagues believe the chemicals derail cellular pathways that control which immune cells are spurred to action. The group plans to continue to investigate how fracking chemicals interact with the developing immune system in ways that will inform biomedical scientists, health care professionals, policy makers, and the public.

—Susanne Pallo

Protecting Horses—and Humans—from Deadly Flu

Flu vaccines for horses haven’t been updated in more than 25 years, but Rochester researchers have developed a new live equine influenza vaccine that is safe and more protective than existing vaccines. That’s important not only to horses and their owners, but also to humans, since animals such as horses, pigs, and dogs are the most likely source of future human pandemics.

Although it hasn’t happened yet, it’s possible that animals could be infected with multiple influenza viruses and have the potential to act as “mixing vessels,” generating new flu strains that could infect people. The strains would be particularly dangerous because people wouldn’t have pre-existing immunity.

In the journal Virology, Luis Martinez-Sobrido, an associate professor of microbiology and immunology at the Medical Center, and lead author Laura Rodriguez, a research assistant professor in Martinez-Sobrido’s lab, describe a new “live-attenuated” vaccine that’s given as a spray through the nose. Created using a genetic engineering technique called reserve genetics, the new vaccine is designed to replicate and generate an immune response in the nose, where the flu first enters a horse’s body, but not in the lungs, where replication of the virus can cause disease.

The use of reverse genetic approaches to create the live-attenuated equine vaccine confers an additional major advantage not available until now: the vaccine can be updated quickly and easily to protect against newly emerging equine influenza strains.

Traditional equine vaccines, which are made in eggs, take months to produce and do not allow the flexibility to update against newly emerging viruses.

—Emily Boynton

HORSE SENSE: Rochester work to develop a new vaccine to protect horses from multiple strains of flu virus may have important implications for protecting humans from viruses as well.

Bugs in the Gut Could Make You Weak in the Knees

Bacteria in the gut, known as the gut microbiome, could be the culprit behind arthritis and joint pain that plagues people who are obese, according to a study by Rochester researchers published in JCI Insight.

Osteoarthritis is the greatest cause of disability in the United States, affecting 31 million people. Sometimes called “wear-and-tear” arthritis, osteoarthritis in people who are obese was long assumed to be a consequence of stress on joints. But a team led by Michael Zuscik, an associate professor of orthopaedics, Robert Mooney, a professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, and Steven Gill, an associate professor of microbiology and immunology, provides the first evidence that bacteria in the gut—governed by diet—could be the driving force behind the condition.

The researchers fed mice a high-fat “cheesburger and milkshake” diet. Just 12 weeks of the diet made mice obese and diabetic, nearly doubling their body-fat percentage compared to mice fed a low-fat, healthy diet. They had more harmful bacteria in their guts compared to lean mice, which caused inflammation throughout their bodies, leading to rapid joint deterioration.

Surprisingly, the harmful gut bacteria, inflammation, and osteoarthritis were completely prevented when the high-fat diet of obese mice was supplemented with a prebiotic. While their weight was unaffected, the knee cartilage of obese mice who consumed an oligofructose supplement was indistinguishable from that of the lean mice.

“Cartilage is both a cushion and lubricant, supporting friction-free joint movements,” says Zuscik. “When you lose that, you have to replace the whole joint. Preventing that from happening is what we, as osteoarthritis researchers, strive to do.”

—Susanne Pallo
In Brief

Student Leader Teams Mark Milestones

An international student will serve as president of the Students’ Association for the 2018–19 year, in what’s believed to be a first for student representation in the College.

Beatriz Gil ’19, an economics and political science double major from Barcelona, Spain, was elected this spring on a ticket with Jamal Holtz ’20, a political science major from Washington, D.C., who will serve as vice president.

Gil and Holtz campaigned on a platform that emphasized their goal of working to ensure that international and underrepresented minority students feel as engaged in campus life as domestic students of any background.

Meanwhile, at the Eastman School of Music, two trombonists will serve as president and vice president of student government.

Henry Carpender ’20, an applied music and jazz and contemporary media major from Mundelein, Illinois, and Ben Dettelbach ’19, an applied music major from Martinsville, New Jersey, were elected to lead Eastman’s Students’ Association.

In June, Gil and Holtz, who have been involved in SA government since their first years on campus, will take part in a conference with student presidents and vice presidents from universities and colleges across the country.

“We’ve already hit the ground running,” Holtz says. “Our goal is to meet with all of the (200-plus) student organizations this fall. We can’t wait.”

Library Has Vision for Augmented and Virtual Reality Lab

Students and faculty will have a space on campus to explore augmented and virtual reality, according to a proposal to transform an area in the Carlson Science and Engineering Library into a hands-on lab devoted to the new technologies.

Envisioned as a place where advanced students and faculty could work on projects and where beginners could explore the possibilities for the technology, the new lab is a joint project of the River Campus Libraries and Arts, Sciences & Engineering.

A steering committee has conducted initial research to outline plans for the space, with the goal of developing a functional program by this fall. The group recommended a hands-on learning lab designed to support a range of research, teaching, and learning activities, including spaces where faculty and students could meet to foster discussion and collaboration, experience AR/VR projects, learn and work with new tools, and have easy access to expert help.

Identified as a research priority for the University, the new technologies are expected to have an important influence not only in entertainment, but also in health care, education, the performing arts, and other fields.

The committee plans to hold a series of design charrettes—“facilitated brainstorming sessions”—in which faculty and students will be invited to help provide ideas for what they would like to see in the space.

Partnership Aims to Advance Drug Discovery

The University is joining the University at Buffalo and Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center to form a new drug discovery partnership that aims to convert the institutions’ scientific breakthroughs into viable pharmaceuticals for commercialization and strengthen the region as a hub for life sciences research and development.

The partners are establishing the Empire Discovery Institute, an independent, nonprofit entity that will identify promising drug candidates and move them toward clinical trials. The institute will help the institutions’ researchers conduct preclinical testing of promising compounds discovered in their labs. Researchers will also receive assistance in designing new drugs for drug targets they have identified through their work.

During an announcement in May for the new initiative, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the new partnership will receive $35.4 million in funding over five years from Empire State Development, a state economic development agency, in addition to $12 million worth of in-kind support from the partner institutions.

University’s Career Links in China Recognized

The University has been recognized for work to help students find jobs with Chinese enterprises.

At the 2018 Global University Career Development Conference, Rochester was selected as the “Most Proactive University Career Services Team” from a consortium of university career centers that work with Chinese employers.

Administered by Global University China Career Union and the recruitment platform Lockin China, the award is presented to the university that actively seeks cooperation between Chinese enterprises by effectively assisting students with future employment through strong job-seeking initiatives.

While the award was presented to the University, the honor highlights collaboration between the Gwen M. Greene Center for Career Education and Connections and Simon Business School.
Simon and Eastman Deans Reappointed

The deans of the Simon Business School and the Eastman School of Music have been reappointed to new five-year terms.

Simon’s Andrew Ainslie and Jamal Rossi ’87E (DMA), who is the Joan and Martin Messinger Dean of the Eastman School of Music, have both led their schools since 2014. Provost Rob Clark made the new appointments, which were approved by the University’s Board of Trustees. The new terms are effective July 1, 2019.

Andrew Ainslie

Since being named Simon’s seventh dean, Ainslie has led strategic curriculum and recruitment changes, including reducing program offerings to sharpen the focus of the admissions, faculty, career placement, and administrative staffs.

He has also expanded the undergraduate business program and has worked with faculty to move Simon’s academic programs from quarters to semesters to better meet student needs.

In 2018 the Financial Times listed Simon as No. 44 among business schools worldwide, as well as No. 13 for “Top U.S. MBA Programs for Women”—and No. 21 worldwide.

In 2015, Ainslie cut the total tuition of the full-time, two-year MBA program by 13.6 percent. Designed to provide greater transparency to prospective applicants and realign Simon among its peers, the move resulted in an increase in global and domestic applications. This is the third year that Ainslie has frozen the MBA tuition rate.

Ainslie came to Rochester from UCLA’s Anderson School of Management, where he was senior associate dean of the full-time MBA program.

Jamal Rossi ’87E (DMA)

Rossi succeeded the late Douglas Lowry, becoming the second Messinger Dean of the Eastman School of Music. Recognized for his efforts in faculty recruitment and his commitment to innovation, Rossi has overseen the introduction of managerial, entrepreneurial, and leadership skills.

Rossi has established new partnerships with numerous organizations, including the Gateways Music Festival, to support and promote greater diversity in classical music; ArtistShare, to support and promote student and young alumni careers; the Yamaha Corporation, to create the “Yamaha Fellows Program” as part of a new Eastman Leadership Academy; and several prominent conservatories around the world.

Rossi joined Eastman in 2005 as senior associate dean and served as executive associate dean from 2007 until 2013. As executive associate dean, Rossi was responsible for

University’s First Chief Data Officer Appointed

A former assistant vice president and economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City has been named chief data officer, becoming the first person to hold the new University-wide position.

As associate vice provost for data governance and chief data officer, Sandra (San) Cannon will be responsible for the University’s data and information strategy, governance, control, and policy development, effective July 1. She will report to Rob Clark, University provost and senior vice president for research.

Cannon joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City in July 2014 after 20 years at the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C.

She is active in the international data community and has presented and published on topics such as metadata standards, copyright and licensing issues, and data management and dissemination.

Cannon holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of California, Irvine, and a master’s degree in economics from the London School of Economics.

She received a PhD in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Cannon was selected following a national search. Tom Barnett, chief information officer at the Medical Center, led the search committee.

SCHOOL LEADERS: Rossi (left), the Joan and Martin Messinger Dean of the Eastman School of Music, and Ainslie (right), dean of the Simon Business School, have been reappointed to new five-year terms.

DATA CHIEF: Cannon is Rochester’s first chief data officer.
IN REVIEW

YELLOWJACKET SPORTS

Sensational Seasons

All-American athletes and quarterfinal finishes mark strong 2017-18 campaigns for the Yellowjackets.

By Scott Sabocheck

Powered by the success of three teams that reached the NCAA quarterfinals and the All-American performance of track-and-field athletes, the Yellowjackets finished among the top 25 percent in a national measure of athletic competitiveness.

Rochester was 67th in the Learfield Director’s Cup Standings for the 2017-18 season. That’s down slightly from last year, but marks the third year in a row that the Yellowjackets have been in the top 25 percent.

Developed jointly by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics and USA Today, the Learfield Director’s Cup competition awards points based on each institution’s NCAA finishes in up to 18 sports—nine women’s and nine men’s.

Rochester finished 67th of 329 teams in the Division III standings, accumulating 292.5 points. A total of five Yellowjacket teams participated in NCAA team postseason competition.

Field hockey, men’s soccer, and women’s basketball all reached the national quarterfinals (Elite 8), scoring the most points for Rochester. The other two key teams scoring points were women’s indoor track and field and women’s outdoor track and field. In addition, Rochester sent an individual participant to the women’s cross country nationals and the Yellowjacket squash team qualified for the top division at the College Squash Association championships.

As of early June, Rochester had a total of seven All-Americans for the 2017-18 year. They are Courtney Dunham ’19 in field hockey; Geoffrey Rouin ’18 in men’s soccer; Alexandra Leslie ’18 in women’s basketball; Tomotaka Endo ’18 and Ashley Davies ’21 in squash; Kylee Bartlett ’19 in track and field; and Jason Paek ’18 in golf.

In another season highlight, men’s soccer defender Nik Angyal ’19 was named an Academic All-American by the College Sports Information Directors of America.

Overall, the Yellowjackets have finished in the top 75 of the Director’s Cup standings for three straight seasons and six of the last nine years.

Scott Sabocheck is assistant director of athletic communications.

MILESTONE MOMENTS: Claire Dickerson ’18 (right), Maya Haigis ’20, and the field hockey team marked milestones: the program’s first Liberty League title and third straight NCAA appearance.

QUARTERFINALS: Men’s soccer defender Zach Lawlor ’20 (left) and women’s basketball point guard Brynn Lauer ’18 (T5) (right) helped lead their teams to the Elite 8 round of the NCAA tournaments.

STRONG FINISHES: Multi-event athlete Eileen Bequette ’21 (left) and Michaela Burrell ’20 (right) joined All-American Kylee Bartlett ’19 for a strong showing at the NCAA national meet this spring.
HIGHLIGHTS

Baseball Claims Regular Season Title

For the first time since 2010, the Yellowjackets baseball team won the regular season title. With a 16–5 record, Rochester hosted the league tournament, where the Yellowjackets were the No. 1 seed.

The team was one win away from advancing to the NCAA tournament, falling in the championship game to Union.

Also this spring, three-time NCAA champion Kylee Bartlett ’19 was named the 2018 Liberty League Field Athlete of the Year for women’s outdoor track and field. Jason Paek ’18 was the Liberty League Golfer of the Year. And in women’s rowing, the Varsity 4 took the state title.

Here’s a look at other highlights:

**Baseball:** The team won a nail-biting 13-inning game to advance to a winner-take-all final in the Liberty League championship, only to see visiting Union College take the league title. The Yellowjackets finished at 19–17. First baseman Aiden Finch ’19 and outfielder Steve Pickering ’21 earned all-region honors. A total of 10 players were named all-league and the coaching staff was honored as well.

**Softball:** A rugged schedule at the start (11 of the first 12 came against Top 25 teams) helped Rochester post an 8–4 Liberty League record and make the conference playoffs. Eight of nine starters will return plus both pitchers.

**Golf:** Jason Paek ’18 was the Liberty League Golfer of the Year, all-UAA, all-region, and was named an All-America Scholar by the Golf Coaches Association of America. Jack Mulligan ’20 earned all-region honors as well. Rochester finished third at the Liberty League championships.

**Women’s outdoor track and field:** Three-time NCAA champion and All-American Kylee Bartlett ’19 was named Liberty League Field Athlete of the Year. She won the Division III individual national championship in the heptathlon in May, her second consecutive NCAA national title in the heptathlon and the third time she won a multi-event championship in the last 15 months. First-year teammate Eileen Bequette ’21 finished 14th overall at the national meet, while Michaela Burrell ’20 just missed the finals in the 100 meters in her first NCAA national meet appearance.

**Men’s outdoor track and field:** Hunter Phinney ’19 won a gold medal at the all-Atlantic regional championships in the 5,000 meters. The men finished fifth at the Liberty League championships.

**Rowing:** The Varsity 4 won the state title while the 8s captured a four-team meet in Worcester, Massachusetts. Elizabeth Sadrakula ’20 earned all-Liberty League honors.

**Lacrosse:** Rochester assembled a four-game winning streak in mid-season to get into the Liberty League playoff picture. A 10–5 win at Union was a milestone: it was the 200th all-time victory for women’s lacrosse over 38 years.

**Men’s tennis:** Sahaj Somani ’20 came from 4–1 down in the third set to win, 7–5, 5–7, 7–5 and give Rochester a 5–4 win in the seventh place match of the UAA championships.

**Women’s tennis:** Rochester went on a 6–2 roll after returning from the Florida part of the schedule.

—DENNIS O’DONNELL

HONORS & AWARDS

**Celebrating Success**

VARSITY TEAM: Seven Yellowjackets were honored at the 2018 Varsity Awards Banquet this spring. They are (from left) Olivia Denny ’18, a four-year letter winner as an attacker on the field hockey team (Terrence L. Gurnett ’77 Award); Brynn Lauer ’18 (T5), a point guard for the women’s basketball team (Sylvia Fabricant Award); Jacob Wittig ’19, a point guard for the men’s basketball team (John A. Vitone Award); Alexandra Leslie ’18, a four-year All-American in women’s basketball (Merle Spurrier Award); Daniel Bronson ’18, a multipurpose back for the football team (Louis Alexander Award); and Luke Meyerson ’18, a starter on the baseball team (Peter DiPasquale ’52 Award);

Not pictured: Haberly Kahn ’18, an outfielder on the softball team (Terrence L. Gurnett ’77 Award).–Dennis O’Donnell