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PARTNERS

Partners in Crime

“... he found me on the Internet,” Albert M. Greenfield Professor of Human Relations and renowned criminologist Lawrence Sherman quips of how he met Jerry Lee. Lee, a pioneering broadcaster with a lifelong concern for the problem of crime, elaborates: “I was surfing the Web when I came across a report [which Sherman co-authored] on the Department of Justice page entitled ‘Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn’t, What’s Promising.’ I downloaded it and read it almost nonstop.” Days later, Sherman and Lee were sitting face to face discussing their shared interest in crime prevention.

Today, more than eight years later, they continue to work together toward a better understanding of the causes and prevention of crime. One of the most fruitful results of their collaboration is the Jerry Lee Center of Criminology, a research institute that Lee established in 2001 with an initial $5 million gift from the Jerry Lee Foundation. The idea for the center sprang from their recognition of a need for an interdisciplinary resource devoted to the scientific study of crime that would build on Penn’s foundation of criminology scholarship. Sherman, who directs the center, points out that it has become the “world’s largest program of randomized controlled trials of crime prevention and justice.”

Lee, who funded two assistant professorships in the criminology department, says that Sherman brings to the center “a brilliant and open mind” as well as an ability to implement ideas. Sherman, meanwhile, explains that Lee is the source of many of these ideas and calls him “the force that keeps me and the enterprise going.”

—BROOKE ERIN DUFFY

Gift of Music

The new Fisher-Bennett Hall needs a few good pianos. Part of the $23 million renovation of Fisher-Bennett Hall will include extensive revamping of the fourth floor to enhance the teaching of music at Penn. The refurbishment will also make available to students round-the-clock practice facilities. The classrooms and practice spaces are in need of high-quality baby grand pianos. Please consider donating one to help complete the new music complex in Fisher-Bennett Hall or for practice rooms in the College Houses. The cost of moving and transportation would need to be included in your gift. Send a little music into the world. To donate a piano, please contact Beth Wright at 215-898-5262 or ewright@sas.upenn.edu.
Collaborating on Collaboration

Last year, David B. Weigle, W’69, wanted to put music where the students are. So he provided funding for the College House Music Program. The idea was to bring professional musicians to undergraduate residences for lessons and recitals. Now he wants to bring students to the library. The result is the David B. Weigle Information Commons, a joint undertaking by SAS and Van Pelt Library that will support undergraduates as they conduct research and experiment with technology and collaborative learning. “When Dean Bushnell called the information commons one of her top priorities but needed additional funds to make it happen, I knew I had to act,” said Weigle, who is president of Swan Engineering and a library overseer.

The Weigle information commons, slated to open this spring, will be housed in the library and incorporate the College Tech Center, the Digital Media Center and the Student Learning Laboratory. The technology-rich space will support study groups and collaborative projects, and will offer training, equipment and support for work with video, Web publishing and other digital media. There will also be programs and services to make students better learners, writers, presenters and researchers. “The information commons will provide a central location for students to enhance their skills,” Weigle notes. “As an undergraduate, I could have used these resources.”

The Business of Science

Following in the tradition of successful interschool initiatives like the Huntsman Program in International Studies & Business comes Penn’s newest interdisciplinary initiative, the Roy and Diana Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management. The new program will combine the liberal arts education offered by the School of Arts and Sciences and the business education provided by the Wharton School to give students the scientific and entrepreneurial background needed for success in the complex world of biotechnology.

The curriculum integrates science and business coursework and includes internships in both fields as well as a year-long independent research project. Students will earn either a B.A. in science with a business concentration or a B.S. in economics with a science concentration. The program, which started in the fall, will prepare undergraduates for management careers in such rapidly growing fields as pharmaceuticals, human health, agriculture, animal health, genetics and basic biological and biochemical sciences.

According to College Dean Dennis DeTurck, “the program takes advantage of Penn’s unique combination of strengths in the life sciences and its outstanding undergraduate business school.” Although the program is only a few months old, he added, student interest is already strong.

The new collaboration has been made possible through the vision and support of former Penn trustee P. Roy Vagelos, M.D., C’50, Hon’99, who, with his wife, Diana, made a generous commitment through the Marianthi Foundation. Robert L. Benz, M.D., C’74, and Marie Uberti-Benz, M.D., Res’82, David D. Elliman, C’73, WG’77, and Decision Resources Inc. have also pledged their support.
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The Society of Arts and Sciences recognizes individuals who have enhanced the excellence of the School of Arts and Sciences by giving $100,000 or more over the last five years. Its members embody the spirit of the School with their dedication to achieving and maintaining distinction in the liberal arts. They demonstrate a unique awareness of the importance of balancing tradition and innovation in higher education and champion both in equal measure. Their vision informs our pursuit of excellence, and their generous support moves us forward.

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