

Sunny Future for Sustainable Energy

Penn researchers are at the forefront of discovering solutions to one of society's most pressing concerns — finding renewable sources of energy. The Department of Energy recently awarded professor of chemistry **Andrew Rappe** and his team a \$710,000 grant to improve the harvesting, conversion and use of solar energy. Rappe's research focuses on designing new semi-conducting ferroelectric materials that use sunlight to convert water to hydrogen and oxygen. Rappe and his team are designing these materials to harness more of the light spectrum, thereby making energy conversion more efficient. "Our research is dedicated to making solar energy viable and more affordable," he says. Rappe is a member of the **Energy Research Group** at Penn. The group comprises Penn researchers from disciplines across the University who are working on projects designed to make energy use more sustainable and environmentally sound. "The Energy Research Group is finding multiple ways to address our nation's and world's energy needs," Rappe says. "The time is right for solar energy research at Penn."

Andrew Rappe



Chelsea Meyer



From left, Jason Han, Christine Anterasian, Pia Banerjee, Sherry Yin and Gan Hong Tan

It's a Bioscience World

Last summer, five students from the **Roy and Diana Vagelos Program in Life Sciences and Management (LSM)** traveled to the other side of the globe to receive a hands-on education about how scientific endeavors play out in the marketplace. Sophomores **Christine Anterasian, Pia Banerjee, Jason Han, Gan Hong Tan and Sherry Yin** attended month-long internships at Nicholas Piramal India Limited, one of India's largest pharmaceutical companies. From working in the company's research and development division to reviewing job appraisals, the interns gained an international outlook on how a bioscience company is managed. They also had a chance to participate in cultural activities. The group was invited to a corporate event in honor of the Hindu god Krishna at company headquarters and to celebrate the Indian holiday Rakhi at the home of **Swati Piramal**, director of strategic alliances and communications at the company. Piramal, who also serves on the LSM advisory board, initiated this internship opportunity. **Andrew Coopersmith**, director of administration and advising for the program, says the cross-cultural nature of the internship taught students to think of themselves as citizens of the world who have the potential to make a worldwide impact on health-care issues. "India is a country generating major scientific growth, and for our students to experience that firsthand is just marvelous," Coopersmith says. "It's important they see that what they're learning in the classroom has global applications."

Stats on a Healthier Nation

Irma Elo knows that numbers often speak as loudly as words on the state of the nation's health. An associate professor of sociology and associate director for training and information services at Penn's **Population Studies Center**, Elo regularly uses vital and health statistics in her research on how societal inequalities affect health. Many of these numbers are generated by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the nation's principal health statistics agency. Now, as the recently appointed chair of the Board of Scientific Counselors for NCHS, Elo can help the agency do its important work even better.

NCHS data help policy-makers and scholars as well as private and non-profit sectors of the U.S. economy to monitor the country's health, guide health policy and set policy priorities. As chair of NCHS's primary scientific advisory board, Elo will draw on her sociology and demography research experience to help advise and conduct reviews of the center's statistical and epidemiological research. Elo says, "I hope the board will be in a position to provide constructive advice to NCHS regarding how to make the most efficient use of its resources and how best to take advantage of new opportunities to monitor and evaluate key public health issues and health policy."

Rhodes Passion

When Rhodes Scholarship winner **Joyce Meng, C'08**, met some of the other award candidates for the first time, she was impressed by the clarity with which they were pursuing their passions. "To be selected from this pool of students was absolutely amazing," says Meng, who was one of only 32 students across the nation to receive the scholarship this year. Meng, a senior in the **Huntsman Program in International Studies and Business**, possesses an impressive amount of clarity and passion herself. She will use the scholarship to pursue master's degrees in economic development and financial economics at the University of Oxford. The new Rhodes Scholar hopes these studies will help parlay her dream of fostering sustainable growth in developing countries into a career in development policy. Meng has already made considerable advances toward this goal, including co-founding YouthBank, an innovative bank and business incubator for street youth in Lagos, Nigeria. She looks forward to a future that will challenge her to find new and better solutions for those in need around the world. "The Rhodes Scholarship isn't an end in itself," Meng says. "It's a means that will open up a lot more doors to something I'm so passionate about."

Joyce Meng



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Gender in Harm's Way

When **Shannon Lundeen**, associate director of Penn's **Alice Paul Center for Research on Women, Gender and Sexuality**, taught a class called **Gender and Warfare** a few semesters ago, she realized that many of her students' ideas of conflict were limited to U.S. involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. Lundeen recognized a need to bring in more scholars who could discuss not only conflicts outside of U.S. engagements but also how these conflicts relate to ideologies of gender. In response, the Alice Paul Center and the **Women's Studies Program**, along with 11 other schools and centers across the University, sponsored last fall's **Gender, War and Militarism Conference**. "The conference generated discussion on the ways in which conflicts are mobilized by cultural ideologies of gender and sexuality, and the ways in which they affect norms of gender and sexuality in particular cultures," Lundeen explains.

In accordance with the interdisciplinary nature of research on women, gender and sexuality, conference speakers and panelists included scholars from a variety of disciplines and institutions as well as activists and other professionals. Their presentations ranged in topic from military couples and domestic violence to postwar trajectories for girls associated with fighting forces in Sierra Leone. "We received feedback from presenters who were extremely happy we brought them together with people outside of their disciplines," Lundeen says. "They really came to be with one another because they don't necessarily get that opportunity in their particular disciplines or fields of work."