Save the Date
It is almost hard to believe that nearly 20 years have passed since Lilyan Affinito and Pat Stewart met with President Frank Rhodes to discuss ways to advance the involvement of women students, faculty, staff and alumnae in the Cornell community. Help us celebrate PCCW’s 20\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary at the Annual Meeting, April 29 – May 1 in Ithaca. The Annual Meeting Committee hard at work pulling together is an event worthy of celebrating the achievements of the last twenty years and preparing for exciting times to come.

PCCW Chair’s Message to Members October 2009

Dear PCCW Members;
Many exciting projects are underway for PCCW including a variety of regional events. Watch for e-mail invitations. Please also note two important dates: December 1 – the due-date for nomination of new members to be admitted 2010; and April 29 - May 1 – PCCW Annual Meeting and 20\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary Celebration in Ithaca.
Representing PCCW, I was honored to speak October 23 in Mountain View, CA at the beautiful memorial service for our friend and colleague, Rosemary Stasek ‘85. Rosemary died September 24 of heart failure linked to recently diagnosed MS in Kabul, Afghanistan: see www.stasektribute.com. Many members have asked how PCCW might best honor Rosemary’s memory. After thorough discussion of several alternatives, the Steering Committee suggests that individual donations be made in memory of Rosemary to the new PCCW Leadership Scholarship Fund (#0006042) at https://www.giving.cornell.edu/give/. When contributions designated in her memory reach the required level, a specific scholarship within the fund can be named for Rosemary.

Continuing to focus on our mission to advise the President on improving the status of women at Cornell, I am delighted to highlight this month the Cornell ADVANCE Center. Dr. Yael Levitte, Executive Director of the Cornell ADVANCE Center, serves as the University Representative to our PCCW Diversity-ADVANCE Center Task Force. In the October 7 conference call meeting of this task force, Dr. Levitte described some of the wonderful accomplishments of the center to date. In addition, the ADVANCE Center has obtained (from the Office of Institutional Research) and analyzed data on the climate for women in science and engineering at Cornell. Results are encouraging. There is a wealth of additional information on the website of the Cornell ADVANCE Center: http://advance.cornell.edu/NSF_PAGE/CU_ADVANCE_Summary_final.pdf. We can be very proud of the Cornell ADVANCE Center.

I look forward to seeing many of you at regional events, and I am always available through e-mail.

Carolyn
cplandis@gmail.com
First Year for ALUM Members

At the 2010 Annual Meeting, PCCW will, for the first time, celebrate Alumna Members who make the transition to Alumna status as of July 1, 2010.

New approach:
In the past, women who became members-at-large of PCCW continued as members of the organization as long as they wished to participate and remained active. Effective July 1, 2008, PCCW Bylaws relating to membership provided that all PCCW terms are four years in length and non-renewable, with a few exceptions. Exceptions include active members in the founding class of 1990 who are now Emerita members, meaning that their terms have no expiration date. Each of the current PCCW classes now has a date on which their members will become Alumna Members of PCCW. The first class to become Alumna Members are those whose current term expires in 2010. There are 62 members in that initial group.

Why:
It was a difficult decision. But as our organization evolved over the years, we realized we had to make this change to keep PCCW vibrant and vital and to make room for fresh approaches and energy. Without making room for the new, we were at risk of the organization’s effectiveness fading as the early, long-term members eventually moved on. After building a strong foundation, we had to create a way to make room for new leadership to keep the organization relevant and productive in the long run.

What it means to you:
We realize that this will be a significant change for many of our members. We are aiming to create a smooth transition, maintain contact and provide access to the PCCW community that many of our members have been such an integral part of. Alumna Members can still take an active role in PCCW. They may attend the PCCW Annual Meeting and will receive e-mail notification about it. They will be included in all PCCW regional events, will receive the PCCW newsletter and will remain on the PCCW online directory with their alumni status noted. In that way, Alumna Members can stay connected to PCCW, and PCCW can continue to benefit from their experience and wisdom. The main difference is that Alumna Members will not be able to actively participate in committee activities. We think of it as keeping the best benefits of being a member of PCCW, without the work. Members who are in a leadership role, such as serving on the Steering Committee as a chair or vice chair of a committee when their term is scheduled to end, will remain full members until they rotate off of the Steering Committee.

You can find out your status by going on the PCCW Web site where each PCCW member is listed with the date she is scheduled to become an Alumna Member: http://pccw.alumni.cornell.edu/

Resources to help members pursue next steps:
One of PCCW’s original purposes was to re-engage accomplished women with Cornell. To further that objective, PCCW has created a Transitions Committee to assist Alumna Members and women becoming Alumna Members in finding other volunteer opportunities for Cornell. The Transitions Committee will work with the women who are interested in other opportunities to ascertain their interests, skills and experience and will work through the Cornell Office of the Councils to determine what volunteer opportunities exist and, where appropriate, nominate, recommend or advocate for the
appointment of specific Alumna Members. Andrea Williams is the chair of the Transitions Committee.

Recognition:
We appreciate everyone’s service on PCCW and look forward to staying connected with our alums. Many of the members rotating into Alumni Membership status this year and in years to come have been extremely active and made valued contributions to the organization. We will honor some of those members with short articles about them in our quarterly newsletter, on our Web site and during our 20th Anniversary meeting in the spring. If you would like to help write some of the tribute articles, please contact Alison Weir at weir_alison@yahoo.com.

If you have questions, please contact: Andrea Williams, chair of the Transitions Committee, at anwillia@msn.com or 303-778-0404; Gloria Lang, Steering Committee Member-at-Large, at glang8647@optonline.net or 631-324-9722; or Julie Crotty, Vice Chair of PCCW, at julie.crotty@finra.org or 212-858-4341.

Nominations for New Members

Have you met some fabulous Cornell women who are a cross-section of Cornell and would be a great addition to PCCW?

Please help us identify Cornell alumnae leaders for nomination to membership on PCCW for the term beginning July 1, 2010. One of PCCW’s goals is to increase the involvement of accomplished alumnae who have not been active with Cornell. All nominations are due by Dec. 1 so that new members can be invited to the 20th Anniversary Annual Meeting in April.

PCCW needs each of you to help identify and nominate new members. Please keep this in mind as you attend Cornell events and meet Cornell women.

A nomination form can be found on the PCCW Web site: http://pccw.alumni.cornell.edu/

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Development Committee reports that your gifts to PCCW in the fiscal year 2008-2009 surpassed the $1 million goal for the Affinito/Stewart Endowment Fund! Tenure-tracked women faculty will benefit from these seed grants each year.

Development efforts for 2009-10 will honor PCCW’s 20th Anniversary Celebration by establishing the PCCW Leadership Scholarship Fund (fund #0006042). Lead donors have enthusiastically supported the PCCW Leadership Scholarship Fund during its silent phase, enabling the fund to be officially launched. We have established a $1 million goal for this fund.

The new endowment fund focuses on the Far Above...the Cornell Campaign #1 Priority...STUDENTS. PCCW’s fund will award scholarship(s) annually to Cornell undergraduate women who have exhibited leadership during their time at Cornell.
Donor details will be provided to PCCW members this fall. But here are some ways you can support the new fund today:

- If this is your reunion year, please remember that gifts to PCCW count toward your class giving level.
- Many gifts are sent to Cornell in December – please consider including PCCW in your 2009 giving.
- Named scholarships can be established designating the donor and school.
- Multi-year gift pledges are welcomed

For details, please contact Wendy Richman at wmr4@cornell.edu.

Thank you so much for your past and continuing support of PCCW development funds—we are truly making a difference!

Wendy Richman, Chair, Alison Levasseur, Vice Chair

The Grants Committee reports that Prof. Rachel Bean, assistant professor of astronomy and Affinito Stewart Grant Recipient 2006, recently received an NSF award of $627,814 over five years to support her work understanding what astrophysical observations can tell us about dark energy, the mysterious substance that is causing the universe to expand at an accelerated rate.

A Conversation with Rachel Bean, NSF Grant Winner

By Micki Kuhs

PCCW is lucky to have chosen Rachel as an Affinito/Stewart award recipient in 2006. She is clearly quite brilliant in her field, a delight to talk with, and is able to translate complex concepts into understandable language. I’m absolutely sure that if she had been my professor freshman year, I would not have dropped out of physics!

As a faculty member, Rachel encourages students to come in person to her office, as well as to e-mail her with questions. They do so frequently. She recalls struggling with creative writing and French, so she knows how important ongoing help and encouragement can be for students. After even my brief phone conversation, I can’t wait to meet Rachel, and would suggest PCCW immediately add a letter to her tenure review file, coming up for consideration in January 2010. A short letter will do: “Keep this person at Cornell, no matter what.”

Rachel came to Cornell via Cambridge (undergraduate), the University of London (graduate degrees) and Princeton. She also taught at the high school level and continues to be very active in outreach and mentoring activities in the community and at Cornell. I did not want to impose on her time too much, but there were so many things I think we’d find interesting to talk to her about. (And her wonderful
British accent makes for easy listening.) Rachel has a good webpage, with cross-references to her work, and an awesome CV.

If I understood her correctly, Rachel’s research areas include looking into what happened in the first billionth of a second, 400,000 years after the Big Bang, as well as investigating what is happening now and might develop in the future. For instance, Einstein’s predictions of a slowing universe seem in conflict with current insights that the universe is expanding at an accelerated pace. For those of you who, like me, don’t quite know what that means, Rachel suggests that it is like the surface of a balloon: as it expands, every object on the surface gets farther away from all other objects. One possibility, according to Rachel, is that general relativity (Einstein’s theory) just doesn’t apply on cosmic scales. Again using the balloon analogy, if we are ants on the surface of the balloon, we can see each other and measure the expansion, but cannot see what we are expanding into. Light that existed way back then is still traveling, and, in an effort to learn what happened then, is being studied by Rachel in collaboration with the physics department, much as a fossil is studied.

As is evident in her own research, in her teaching and mentoring Rachel is committed to the concept of critical thinking. She feels it is essential for students and researchers to contemplate, to question, and to not just accept the theories of others.

Rachel applied for the Affinito/Stewart grant one year after she arrived at Cornell. Her department chair had forwarded her the PCCW e-mail announcement, another faculty colleague also told her about the grants, and she looked it up on the PCCW Web site. She very much believes the process itself was helpful to her: getting grants requires honing skills needed to write grant proposals, and subsequent efforts were easier once she had gotten her packet together for the Affinito/Stewart application. Rachel definitely thinks the Affinito/Stewart experience led to her ultimate success in obtaining the NSF grant that she was recently awarded.

Rachel notes that the Affinito/Stewart grant proposal is often written early in an academic career, and therefore feedback is most welcome, whether or not a grant is offered. She believes it is helpful for questions and suggestions on an individual’s application to be conveyed privately to the applicant, with specific guidelines directed to the general applicant pool available online. Depending on various factors, such as the nature of the ‘lacks’ in the proposal, and timing on the tenure track, the individual applicant could be encouraged to improve the current year’s grant proposal, or to try again the next year.

Rachel now sits on the panel awarding NSF grants, so is familiar with the process from that perspective as well as that of an applicant. She feels that applicants find it helpful to get feedback on how to better convey their grant proposals (not necessarily on the substantive subject) at the time they receive or are denied the grant.

As PCCW well knows, grants are highly competitive and can determine a career path. PCCW made an excellent decision in awarding a grant to Rachel Bean, for both PCCW and for this talented person.

The Mentoring Committee is encouraging members to take part in the many mentoring programs Cornell offers.

PCCW member Meredith Oppenheim, Cornell Arts & Sciences `95, wrote about the experience she had mentoring Jane Peng, Hotel `09, last January. Jane, in turn, wrote about her experience shadowing Meredith, who is head of senior housing and senior vice president at Savills.
EXTERNSHIPS: A WIN-WIN SITUATION FOR STUDENTS AND PCCW MEMBERS

By Meredith Oppenheim
As a Cornell undergraduate, I participated in the Winter Externship program and vividly remember these rich and valuable experiences to shadow alumni in their places of work. Participating in theExtern program as a sponsor provides me the opportunity to make these incredible learning opportunities possible for current students. Jane Peng (Hotel ’09) shadowed me during her winter break this year, and I was quite impressed with her level of preparation prior to our day together, as well as her enthusiasm for getting to speak with many colleagues at my firm. My goal was to design a day for her that included listening to a conference call with a client, sharing senior housing industry information, speaking with my associate about his role in executing all our deal activity and learning from my colleagues who are focused on other forms of real estate, including the hotel sector which is Jane’s sweet spot. I was thrilled to facilitate Jane using the Externship opportunity to network within my organization and get the names of other Savills executives based outside the US with whom she could follow up for more career information. Jane and I have stayed in touch. She has since assisted me with a project and I continue to advise her on her career planning and decision-making. It is truly an honor and pleasure to mentor such a motivated and talented recent female alum.

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By Jane Peng
While browsing Cornell’s Winter Externship listing, an opening at Savills leapt out at me. As one aspiring toward a career in real estate, I was eager to learn more from an executive’s perspective. After extensive research on Savills and on my sponsor, Meredith Oppenheim, I caught the 4 a.m. bus to New York on the day of the externship. The experience far exceeded my expectations thanks to Meredith, who is a veteran and true visionary of the senior housing industry. Sitting in on Meredith’s telephone conferences, reading industry reports and speaking to her colleagues on all levels of the firm, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the real estate industry. More importantly, however, I gained a lifelong lesson on how to develop a successful career through Meredith’s invaluable insight and advice. I still keep in touch with Meredith and my “lessons” with her continue to this very day.

Regional Events

Washington, D.C.

On May 27, 2009, a group of PCCW members toured the U.S. Capitol, guided by Tom Manatos, a Cornell grad and member of Speaker Pelosi’s staff.
PCCW and Cornell Club teamed up with Washington’s Capital Hospice on Oct. 14 to share Jane Brody’s insights and wisdom, as captured in her new book, “Jane Brody’s Guide to the Great Beyond.” The event was co-hosted by Hogan & Hartson and Booz Allen Hamilton and was held at Hogan & Hartson’s office.

New York

Jane Brody was also the star at a special PCCW New York book-signing in June at new member Alison Levasseur’s apt. <Photo attachments in separate email>
PCCW and the Cornell Club hosted on Sept. 29 Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, authors of a new book, “Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide.” Kristof and WuDunn are Pulitzer Prize winners for their coverage of China for The New York Times. WuDunn is a PCCW member.

In November, the New York-area PCCW is planning a repeat of its Bottomless Closet event, which was such a hit last fall. Bottomless Closet helps disadvantaged women become self-sufficient by providing them with professional clothing, preparing them for job interviews and teaching them workplace skills.

Another activity under consideration is a walking tour of Hamilton Heights, which is located in Harlem.

**Chicago**

A service day at Bottomless Closet is planned in November, with a lunch afterward.

**Los Angeles**
Brunch is planned on Nov. 15, with Dr. Gale Greendale, who will discuss menopause and other women’s health issues. Margaret (Marge) Graf will host the event.

**San Francisco**

**On May 27, 2009** the women of the President's Council of Cornell Women (PCCW) and the Cornell Alumni Association of Northern California (CAANC) jointly hosted a special presentation by and discussion with TeeBeeDee Founder and CEO, Robin Wolaner ’75.

Pulling from some of her own rich experiences, Robin spoke about some of the following hot topics for today’s career-oriented woman, including how to make the entrepreneurial leap, achieve work/life balance, and successful negotiation. Lunch was held at the University Club in San Francisco.
An entrepreneurial event is planned in November.

**Portland, Oregon**

The PCCW book club met Sept. 20 to discuss John Steinbeck’s “Grapes of Wrath,” the Cornell freshman book selection.

**Cornell in the News**

AARP selected Cornell, for the fifth straight year, for its list of Best Employers for Workers Over 50. See the group’s Web site for details:  

Two Cornell research teams have each received National Institutes of Health grants to identify factors influencing the careers of women in biomedical and behavioral sciences and engineering

http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Oct09/NIHwomen.html

**PCCW Members in the News**

PCCW member **Nancy Mills** and her husband Barton Mills are among this year’s Frank H.T. Rhodes Exemplary Award recipients. The Cornell Alumni Federation, with the endorsement of the Board of Trustees' Subcommittee on Alumni Affairs, established the Frank H.T. Rhodes Exemplary Alumni Service Award in the spring of 1994. This prestigious award honors alumni who have demonstrated extraordinary service to Cornell through long-term volunteer activities within the broad spectrum of Cornell’s various alumni organizations. Such service may be reflected in the leadership roles that the individual has assumed, or through the unique contributions made by the person as a part of his or her service to Cornell. Consideration is given to the length and depth of the individual’s activities; however, gifts are not among the criteria used to select honorees. University trustees are not eligible for consideration until they are no longer active members of the board. A maximum of six awards may be presented annually.

Honorees are chosen from candidates proposed by fellow Cornellians. Typically, honorees have been involved with Cornell since their graduation. They have served the Board of Trustees, the Cornell University Council, the Cornell Alumni Federation, the Cornell Association of Class Officers, college advisory councils, campaign committees, class activities, or Cornell clubs and alumni associations. By no means is this a complete list of the Cornell organizations to which these enterprising alumni have provided leadership and guidance.

Nancy and Barton were featured recently in the Cornell Alumni Magazine.  

For more information about Frank H.T. Rhodes Exemplary Service awards, see  
http://www.alumni.cornell.edu/federation/frank.cfm

Past PCCW recipients include  
Grace Richardson 2007  
Nancy Clark 2006
Bonnie S. Weinstock was the 2009 recipient of the ILR Groat award. Judge William B. Groat (1899-1986) served as counsel to the New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Industrial and Labor Relations, where he played a pivotal role in founding the ILR School and drafting its charter. The Groat Alumni Award was established in 1971 in honor of Judge Groat's vision and in tribute to his professional accomplishments, which culminated in appointment as justice of the New York State Supreme Court, Eleventh Judicial District.

The single most important criterion for selection as the Groat recipient should be achievement in "the field" of industrial relations, as broadly interpreted to include all aspects of labor relations and human resources management in any of the major sectors labor unions, management, neutrals, government service and academe. Service to the School and participation in alumni activities are also criteria to be considered in selecting the Groat awardee.

For more information about the Groat award, see http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/alumni/awards/groat.html

Past PCCW recipients include
1996 Carolyn J. Jacobson
1991 Eileen Barkas Hoffman '69,

In Memoriam: Rosemary Stasek

By Alison Weir

Rosemary, a PCCW member since 2002, former mayor of Mountain View, Calif., and entrepreneurial independent aid worker, died in Kabul, Afghanistan as a result of complications linked to recently diagnosed MS. She was 46.

Rosemary, in her too short life, achieved more than most people who live twice as long. Even among the extraordinary women of PCCW, she was exceptional.

Rosemary was a “doer.” She became active in local politics because she wanted to make Mountain View a more inclusive place to live. As mayor, she accompanied her Afghan constituents to Afghanistan following the start of the war and “fell in love” with the mountainous country. When her term in office ended, she settled in Kabul to do what she could to improve the lives of women in Afghanistan. She was modest about the scale of her projects—establishing a beauty school so Afghan women could learn a trade and earn money on their own, buying tents for girls’ schools to have a place to conduct classes and teaching women police officers emergency obstetrics so they could aid women who could not reach a hospital or a doctor. But each one of her projects made an enormous difference in the quality of life for so many women. Rosemary demonstrated that even “a little help” can make the world a better place for others in need.
She was a fixture in the community in Kabul. She became the local restaurant critic and was a link between the community and the military base, particularly the hospital. When I asked a friend who had been stationed in Afghanistan if she knew Rosemary, she replied, “Of course, Rosemary knows everyone.” She even became a “defense contractor” as she used her Internet and credit card to procure necessary supplies for the base hospital. She was also a link between Afghans and Americans, as she traveled around the US speaking of her experiences and the tremendous need of the people of Afghanistan.

PCCW members who attended the annual meetings learned about Afghanistan from Rosemary, but also enjoyed her incredible sense of humor. Above all, Rosemary was fun. And, despite the distance, she was a very active member, coming to annual meetings, serving as Web master, and contributing to the work of the Communications Committee. She was an inspiration – a rare combination of bravery, compassion, energy, conviction, charisma and good humor. She touched the lives of so many and strived to make the world a better place. She will be missed greatly by many friends and colleagues in PCCW.

Morne du Preez, who married Rosemary in 2007, is working with the young Afghan women who assisted Rosemary in Kabul to continue her projects. Decisions have yet to be made regarding the long-term future of the nonprofit group she founded ...a little help. Morne du Preez encourages friends to contact Rosemary’s parents, Andrew and Patricia Stasek at (astasek@ptd.net or 241 W. Blaine Street, McAdoo, PA 18237) and to visit the tribute blog for Rosemary: www.stasektribute.com

To read more about Rosemary’s nonprofit “…a little help”, see http://www.stasek.com/alittlehelp/

You can also see Rosemary’s appearance on the NBC Nightly news last year at http://nightly.newsvine.com/_video/2008/06/27/1619286-lending-a-hand-in-afghanistan


Also, from the Cornell Sun: http://cornellsun.com/node/38584

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Newsletter Content
Please send your news and updates to Alison Weir at weir_alison@yahoo.com and Sally Jacobsen at sallyjacobsen@optonline.net by Jan. 3, 2010, so that we can include you in our next Newsletter.

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Office of the Councils
President's Council of Cornell Women
Cornell University
130 E. Seneca Street, Suite 400
Ithaca, New York 14850-4353
t. 607.254.7104
f. 607.254.7139
pccw@cornell.edu