On Campus

In Brief: Spring 2014

Spring 2014

From books to business

For many aspiring Mark Zuckerbergs, attending Columbia is an opportunity to cultivate connections that will benefit their fledgling businesses. Helping them along is Columbia Entrepreneurship, a new initiative out of President Lee Bollinger's office dedicated to supporting ventures run by alumni, students, and faculty.

This spring, Columbia Entrepreneurship brought to campus speakers like social-media branding expert Gary Vaynerchuk and venture capitalist Ben Horowitz '88CC, a University Trustee and author of a recent book of business advice, *The Hard Thing about Hard Things*.

At the time *Columbia Magazine* went to press, the initiative was preparing to host an all-day entrepreneurship festival on April 11 that would feature the founders of major startups like Dropbox and the Harlem Children's Zone, as well as a $50,000 business-plan competition. Columbia Entrepreneurship has also announced the establishment of the Columbia Startup Lab, a coworking space that will open in SoHo this summer. The 5,100-square-foot facility will house seventy- one recent graduates.

Big year for men's hoops

The men's basketball team had one of the best seasons in its history this school year, finishing with a 21–13 record and a spot in the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament, which marked the Lions' first postseason appearance since 1968.

Led by junior forward Alex Rosenberg, who averaged 16 points per game and was named first-team All–Ivy League, and sophomore guard Maodo Lo, who averaged 14.7 points and made second-team All–Ivy League, the Lions progressed to the

quarterfinals in the CollegeInsider tournament, finally succumbing to Yale 72–69 on March 26.

“We were all excited to play in the postseason, so there was no feeling of, ‘Ah, the season’s stretching,’” Lo told the *Columbia Daily Spectator* after the Yale game. “We had an exciting win in the first round of the tournament, and then we had a solid win against Eastern Michigan, so it was a great feeling and a great atmosphere within the team.”

Ayala takes helm at Double Discovery

Joseph Ayala ’94CC has been named executive director of the Double Discovery Center, a Columbia College program that provides academic support and counseling to low-income college-bound teens and young adults in New York City.

Ayala, who grew up in the Bronx, has twenty years of experience teaching and counseling underserved youth, dating back to his time as a Columbia College student, when he coordinated childcare for the Harlem Restoration Project.

What does it mean to age?

Columbia recently established an interdisciplinary research center for studying the aging process and the implications for society of aging populations.

The Robert N. Butler Columbia Aging Center, which is based at the Mailman School of Public Health, is expected to involve faculty and students from across the University. It is named for the late founding director of the National Institute on Aging — a physician, gerontologist, psychiatrist, and Pulitzer Prize–winning author who graduated from Columbia College and the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

The center’s inaugural director is Ursula M. Staudinger, who previously served as founding dean of the Jacobs Center on Lifelong Learning and Institutional Development at Jacobs University in Bremen, Germany.

Pulitzer administrator to retire

Sig Gissler, who has administered the Pulitzer Prizes at Columbia's journalism school since 2002, has announced that he will retire from that position this summer.

Gissler, who is seventy-eight, edited the *Milwaukee Journal* before joining Columbia as a journalism professor in 1994. He is credited with moving the Pulitzers into the digital age, opening the competition to online-only news organizations and encouraging video entries.

The Pulitzer Prize Board has formed a committee to find Gissler's successor.

Ten top teachers

The University recently presented ten Arts and Sciences professors with Distinguished Columbia Faculty Awards, which honor excellence in teaching. The awards include stipends of $25,000 per year for three years; they are funded by Trustee emeritus Gerry Lenfest '58LAW, '09HON.

The recipients are historian Elizabeth Blackmar, political scientist Virginia Page Fortna, Romantic and Victorian poetry expert Erik Gray, earth scientist Peter Kelemen, archaeologist Ioannis Mylonopoulos, historian Christine Philliou, psychologist Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, French-philosophy scholar Joanna Stalnaker, biochemist Brent Stockwell, and neuroscientist Rafael Yuste.

Zuckerman Institute gets its first executive director

The Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute, the interdisciplinary neuroscience initiative to be housed in the nine-story Jerome L. Greene Science Center now being constructed in Manhattanville, has named David M. Greenberg as its first executive director.

Greenberg, formerly vice president and chief administrative officer of finance and administration at Columbia Facilities, has worked at the University since 2006.

He will now manage the Zuckerman Institute's administrative infrastructure, working closely with Richard Axel, Thomas Jessell, Eric Kandel, and Charles Zuker, the

neuroscientists who are developing the institute’s scientific mission.



Guide to school abbreviations

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