

COMMITMENT

The Alumni Newsletter of the Meinig Family Cornell National Scholars, The Cornell Tradition and the Hunter R. Rawlings III Cornell Presidential Research Scholars

Spring 2011

INSIDE THE
ALUMNI NEWS...

Alumni Updates

Meinig News

Tradition News

RCPRS News

Mission
Statement

The Cornell Commitment recognizes, rewards and encourages further development of a select group of students who exemplify Cornell's commitment to academic excellence, work and service; research and discovery; and leadership and learning and in so doing enrich their experience at Cornell and beyond.

The Cornell Commitment
103 Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Athletes and The Cornell Tradition

Serving Our Community On and Off the Field

It is not surprising that a majority of Tradition fellows are involved in multiple campus clubs or organizations, as fellows typically pick-up where they left off during their high school days. This doesn't just apply to those fellows involved in the social, political, or service clubs but also to those who are talented athletes.

NCAA athletics are highly competitive and require a great deal of sacrifice and discipline, especially when attending an Ivy League university. Cornell student-athletes spend hundreds of hours each semester training, practicing, and competing while balancing a rigorous academic workload. In addition to hours spent volunteering in their local communities, as well as across the globe, they are also required as part of their Tradition Fellowship, to work at least 100 hours during the academic year. One may think that this is just too much; but not for our Tradition Fellows, year in and year out they continue to fulfill the requirements while representing Cornell and gaining national honors.

Over the course of the last three years, Tradition fellows have won individual national championships (Troy Nickerson '10 and Jordan Leen '09 for wrestling), as well as participated on teams in the national spotlight: wrestling - national runners up 2010


and 2011, women's ice hockey - national runners up 2010 and appeared in the 2011 Frozen Four, and men's basketball - Sweet Sixteen appearance in 2010, to name a few. Currently, 33 Tradition Fellows participate in 18 different men's and women's varsity sports. While they may strive to make national headlines, they continue to excel academically and provide meaningful service to our community.

Two great examples of Fellows' commitment to service are Amundam Mancho and Ali Barger. These two Tradition Fellows, and members of the women's varsity soccer team, organized

Currently, 33 Tradition Fellows participate in 18 different men's and women's varsity sports.

and participated in a three week service trip to Cameroon this past winter break. They helped deliver school supplies to hundreds of children attending an elementary school in a poor, rural area. In addition, they volunteered at a severely under-funded hospital. Amundam and Ali are excellent examples of how Tradition Fellows represent Cornell, both on and off the field, and exemplify what it means to be a Cornell Tradition Fellow.

News from Alumni



Kene Erike '08 Tradition works at Nassau County Government, Property Assessment and has nearly completed an E-book on applied psychology in business and social interaction.

Katherine Crocker '09 MFCNS is in the Peace Corps and recently wrote, "It's really rewarding, but not in the ways I expected; I'm learning a lot more about myself than I thought I would, and doing less "save the world" and finding that the little things I do are more likely to help in the long run than the big projects."

Elan Greenburg '09 MFCNS is stationed in Honolulu, Hawaii after a year in Afghanistan.

Samantha Stout '10 MFCNS is working as a graduate student researcher in the Almutairi Lab at University of California San Diego, where she is also enrolled in the PhD program in the department of Materials Science and Engineering.

Stephanie Leonard '10 RCPRS is currently working for Direct Relief International in California. She recently published an article based on her research at Cornell in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

Alyson Intihar '10 MFCNS works in Boston at an IT security company.

Sarah Kennedy '10 MFCNS is at SUNY Albany in the Library and Information Science master's program.

Morgan Miller '10 Tradition is a weekend Meteorologist at WJTV News Channel 12 in

Jackson, Mississippi.

Alma Aldrich '10 Tradition is serving in the Peace Corps in Rwanda. She works as a Community Health Agent. Read more about her experience here:
<http://almaaldrich.blogspot.com/>

Ed Tori '95 Tradition is a practicing physician but he also keeps busy by running several side businesses, serving as the "Director of Presence" for a health innovation institute, and home schooling his 6 children.

Meredith Odató '09 RCPRS is a Juris Doctor Candidate, 2011 at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

Alan Benson '07 RCPRS is a PhD candidate at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

Christen Kisch '08 RCPRS has been teaching English and French as foreign languages for a language school in Italy, to both children and adults, and for the past year has also been the didactic coordinator for the school.

Nuntica (Rose) Tanasugarn '90 MFCNS and Cornell Tradition is the language Training Manager for the Kobe Portopia Hotel in Kobe, Japan.

Mike O'Hara '88 Tradition is the Director of Philanthropy at The Foundation for Ellis Medicine in Schenectady, NY.

Diane Horey Leonard '02 Tradition of DH Leonard Consulting works with non-profits around the country.

Jama Toung '88 MFCNS serves as the Chief Development Officer at The After-School Corporation. Jama writes, "All of my free time is now spent as a mother of two little ones – Sienna and Collin."

Santhi Gollapalli '06 RCPRS is still actively involved in research at Procter & Gamble.

Lisa Kubicki '96 Tradition has worked in higher education for a number of years and recently started her own business, Lisa K Leadership Solutions

Matthew Moore '10 RCPRS is a graduate student at North Carolina State University in Food Science with minors in Biotechnology and Food Safety. He is working in the lab of Dr. Lee-Ann Jaykus on noroviruses, which are the largest known cause of foodborne illness in the United States.

Cliff Dawkins '10 Tradition is a Graduate Assistant at the Rutgers University Paul Robeson Cultural Center. He works as the Director of Youth Programs and Leadership Development at the Urban League of Morris County (NJ). He was awarded the Paul Robeson Young Scholar's Award for the 2010-2011 academic year, was offered the Harold & Reba Martin Fellowship Award through the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and received an award from the Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy, where he is getting his Masters degree in Public Policy.

Emma Osore '09 MFCNS is a program assistant for the Principal Human Capital team for the District of Columbia Public Schools. In her spare time she is involved in

local town development initiatives and has been re-discovering the D.C. area.

Tunisia Bristol '10 Tradition is in the teaching residents program at Teachers College of Columbia University where she majors in intellectual disabilities/autism.

A message from the Public Service Center



The Cornell Public Service Center is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year. In honor of this, the Public Service Center will host a day-of-service reunion in four different cities in the fall, including Ithaca, New York City, Boston, and Washington D.C.

We hope that these events will bring together past PSC alums to celebrate and serve local communities through direct, hands-on service projects.

To find out more about these events in the future visit psc.cornell.edu.

Meinig Family Cornell National Scholars

Alumni Profile: Alexander Cain '10



Right now, I'm in scenic Houston working for General Electric Energy as a Financial Management Program Participant. It's one of GE's many leadership programs focused on providing four six-month job rotations in different cities/sites to help prepare the new wave of GE finance leadership. It's broken into two parts: the actual job and then classroom learning. As part of the FMP curriculum, we are expected to successfully pass courses based on accounting/finance principles key to any career in finance. I actually ended up in this role by talking to a Cornell graduate and he said it was a great opportunity to explore the US and try different avenues of finance. The cities I've gotten to experience so far are Houston, Atlanta, Schenectady, and Crotonville, NY. Coming from AEM and originally from Los Angeles, I thought this was a great opportunity to apply my major in the world while still being able to explore new cities on GE's wallet!

How did MFCNS impact your undergraduate experience? The MFCNS impacted my undergraduate experience, because it really helped me evaluate my leadership skills and impact on campus. At the end of each semester we were required to write reflective essays about our student leadership experiences. That was great for me because I was able to really assess my leadership strengths and opportunities as well as evaluate what I liked and disliked about different organization structures. A lot of times I would use these essays as an action plan for the following semester to help instill the leadership qualities I wanted to have and the organization structure I thought were great for organizations I was involved in.

What impact did your experience in MFCNS have on your life path? The biggest impact of MFCNS was that the program instilled in me a level of comfort in the role of leader. Before I was selected into MFCNS, I would have been very averse to taking on a leadership role. MFCNS allowed me to see how empowering and rewarding taking an active role was. That's a skill that isn't taught in the classroom, and yet I was able to develop it through MFCNS.

Do you have any interesting stories you can share about your time at Cornell? Growing up in California, my first time seeing snow freshman year was

when there was a 3 foot snow storm in Ithaca where they canceled classes after 12pm, but still being an eager freshman I walked through a snow storm to get to an 8am calculus class. I also wrote for Life on the Hill Blog for Cornell which was an experience. Storming the court when Cornell basketball clinched the Ivy League title in 2009 was very exciting since we didn't win the Ivy League in basketball since before I was born.

Describe a few of the major career and/or life events that have taken place since you left Ithaca. What is the most rewarding aspect of your job/life at present? A major career event since leaving Cornell was receiving Business Honors for successfully completing the GE Foundations course over the span of six months. I worked on a 2-person team overseeing the financials for a 1 billion dollar-a-year business, which is in stark comparison to overseeing my \$200 bank account during college.

I'm also a part-time business writer, writing for sites such as BET.com and the Atlanta Post. I co-host a bi-weekly show in Chicago focused on business headlines and improving financial literacy.

What advice do you have for new professionals as they enter the work force? The biggest advice: use these beginning opportunities to find a career you are truly passionate about while you have the mobility. The average career span for first jobs for those who entered the workforce post-2000's is a little over a year and it's usually said that people explore nine jobs before they really find a career niche. That means you don't have to be in the same job for the rest of your life, but use each opportunity as a learning experience. Write the stuff you like.

How do you balance work and life? The biggest thing is being honest and upfront. Schedule out time for yourself and plan vacations when the time is available. When you go on vacation, go on vacation (i.e. no work phone, email). People, myself included, often don't take full advantage of time off. Be sure to enjoy that. Schedule time out to de-stress for the day. I typically play a pick-up game of basketball just to get my mind away from work.

If you could choose another profession to be in, what would it be? This is really specific, but this has been my goal since college. continued on page 9

Meinig Family Cornell National Scholars

Student Profile: Erin Keene '12



I am a junior Communication major with a minor in Business. I am an infielder on the varsity Softball team. We have had two championship seasons the last two years and are on pace to have another great spring. I am the Co-President of the Student Athlete Advisory Council, and I contribute

movie reviews to the Cornell Daily Sun. My favorite place to eat on campus is Synapsis, and I'll never turn down a burger from the Ale House.

Where are you from? I am from New Milford, Pennsylvania, a small town near Scranton. I went to a small school in a town where everyone knows everyone.

Why did you decide to come to Cornell? Besides the obvious prestigious reputation, beautiful campus, and dominating softball program, I wanted to go to a huge school where I would be surrounded by people who couldn't possibly know everything about everyone. The food was also a major factor in my decision.

How did you decide on your major/career path? I would not typically label myself as a decisive person, but one thing I have always known is that I want to be a journalist. As I spend more time at Cornell, and expand my coursework, that dream has extended. There are so many opportunities out there in journalism, food writing and in the magazine world in general. I am also taking a series of business courses that have sparked an interest in marketing and advertising fields.

What are some of the things you hope to accomplish while you are at Cornell? Ultimately, I would like to build the foundation of skills and knowledge necessary to create the future of my dreams, but on a smaller scale, I would like to learn how to overcome failure and accept it as a catalyst to future success. Things certainly do not always come easy, but I never realized how much sweeter victory feels when you have to fight for it. Two more Ivy titles are obviously topping that list as well.

How has Meinig impacted your undergraduate experience so far? It is not only beneficial to be in contact with other leaders around campus, but it is enjoyable to hear such different perspectives and updates about all of the diverse and truly awesome things that take place

here at Cornell. I have joined the mentoring program under Mary Opperman which I am very much looking forward to continuing in semesters to come, and I even had the opportunity to meet Peter and Nancy Meinig at the Trustee-Council Scholarship Reception in October.

What on-campus groups or organizations are you currently involved with? I am the Co-President of the Student Athlete Advisory Council, an organization that acts as a liaison between athletes and administrators, and seeks to create unity among varsity teams as well as promote Cornell Athletics on campus and in the Ithaca community. I am in charge of planning and running our monthly meetings as well as organizing events and fundraisers over the course of the year. Our two biggest events include "Win a Date with the Big Red," an athlete date auction where we raise money to Adopt a Family at Christmas and donate the remainder of the proceeds to the Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard, and "Bench Press for a Cure," an inter-team bench press competition where athletes collect pledges in support of their team's top weight lifters and the proceeds go to a local affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Foundation for breast cancer research.

What experience or person has had the greatest impact on you during your time at Cornell so far? Before I came to Cornell I heard a lot about how challenging it was to be a Division I athlete, both mentally and physically. I also heard that time management was vital in finding a balance between school, softball, and life. With these warnings, I felt like I was mentally prepared to take on whatever challenges I was about to face. As it turns out, I had absolutely no idea what I was about to endure. Not only am I bigger, faster, and stronger than I was coming in freshman year, but the discipline, focus, and inner-strength I have acquired as a varsity athlete is an experience I think you can only understand if you have lived it.

The commitment and dedication a successful program requires is immeasurable. More important than the life qualities I have acquired through difficult training and hours of practice are the lessons I have learned in teamwork. Since my arrival at Cornell I have met a lot of students, worked with a lot of individuals, and networked at a lot of events;

continued on page 9

The Cornell Tradition

Debra S. Newman '02 Cornell Tradition Community Recognition Award Recipient Named

Alexandra “Sandy” True of Ithaca is the recipient of The Cornell Tradition’s tenth annual Debra S. Newman ’02 Community Recognition Award for her tireless volunteer efforts throughout the Ithaca community. True received the award Saturday, April 9, 2011 at the National Volunteer Week Kick-Off event, a community-wide event sponsored by The Cornell Tradition. The event was held at the Women’s Community Building, and was followed by a community service project at the Ithaca Children’s Garden. Volunteers from The Cornell Tradition and the Ithaca community worked side by side to prepare the garden for programming for the upcoming year. The event is designed to be a collective celebration of volunteerism in the greater Tompkins County community.

True received the Newman award as a result of her long-time commitment to service through her work with Family & Children’s Services, Planned Parenthood of Tompkins County, Ithaca High School, St. Paul’s Nursery School, and the Drop-In Children’s Center. Her nominator wrote, “I believe she [Sandy] exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism for Ithacans. She has already touched many lives and energized and contributed to many not-for-profit agencies and endeavors.”

The Cornell Tradition Community Recognition Award was renamed in 2002 in honor of the late Debra Newman ’02, a graduate of The Cornell Tradition, who was killed in a tragic automobile accident the year she graduated.



Todd Hilgendorff '02 presenting Sandy True with this year's Newman award

Sunshine helps make Tradition’s National Volunteer Week Kick-Off event successful

Following a public presentation of the Debra S. Newman ’02 Cornell Tradition Community Recognition award at the National Volunteer Week Kick-off, Saturday, April 9, 2011, several Cornell Tradition fellows gathered at Cass Park in downtown Ithaca to help clean up the Ithaca Children’s Garden in preparation for the summer season.

The Ithaca Children’s Garden (ICG) is both a place and a program. The ICG, founded in 1997, is building a three-acre public children’s garden in Cass Park. The ICG develops, implements, and evaluates a wide range of education programs for children, teens, and the community.

For more information on the ICG, visit the website at <http://www.ithacachildrengarden.org/index>.



The Cornell Tradition

Student Profile: Ariel Robinson '12



My world is forever changed; these simple words are the best way to explain my past semester abroad. I was fortunate enough to participate in a program called Semester at Sea during which I sailed around the world while studying on a ship. During this voyage I was able to visit thirteen different countries and learn about the world and humanity in its truest form. While I could go on about each country for days, Ghana touched my heart and enabled me to find a way to give back to the world.

During our time in Ghana we visited an orphanage called the City of Refuge in which children are rescued from the slave trade in the fishing industry. Unfortunately child slavery is still a huge issue today, not only in Ghana but all across the world, including the United States. This orphanage was started by a couple named John and Stacy Omorfe who have been operating it for the past 3 years. They currently have 14 kids at their orphanage and were able to rescue 42 kids this past year alone. It is really amazing what they have been able to accomplish in such a short period of time. John and Stacy do wonders for these children including providing a safe home for them as well as an education and above all a hope for their future.

While visiting their orphanage, 32 other students and I were able to spend a large amount of time interacting with the kids as well as learning all about the child slave trade in Ghana. I was also privileged enough to be able to visit one of the poorest communities in Ghana from which many of these children are sold into slavery. It was incredible to see homes that women could not afford to pay the rent on; and the rent was only equivalent to \$4 USD a month. One of the most amazing things that we were able to participate in was a “feed” in the village. We helped the orphanage; City of Refuge prepare and bring 1200 meals for the children of this village. Words cannot explain the rush of emotions we felt as hundreds of cheering children came running toward our bus, or the pain of watching the children’s joy turn to fear as they became scared we would not have enough meals for all of them.

At the beginning of November, John and Stacy moved to a new plot of land that they received as a donation and are planning to begin building a children’s village in hopes that they can accommodate more children at their home in the near future. Their dream is to get as many children out of slavery as possible and they are attacking the child slave trade in various ways. We wanted to know how to help and the answer from John and Stacy was “tell people about it.”

As a group of students we know that there is so much more that we can do to help this organization and others like it. Therefore we decided to start our own Non-governmental organization, (NGO) with our first efforts to directly benefit City of Refuge ministries. We are all very passionate about this organization and have put forth many efforts to raise money since we have been home. *continued on page 9*

The Cornell Tradition



Alumni Profile: Emily Getty '08

After a year of gaining experience in the world of private sector work, I have journeyed back to Cornell as a graduate student in

the Master's International Program in International Agriculture and Rural Development. I left my home state of New York on June 8, 2010 and joined the Peace Corps in Moldova to gain experience in the field and polish off my thesis. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication from Cornell University.

What made you choose Cornell? I chose Cornell for a number of reasons:

1. I thought I wanted to be the next Katie Curick
2. My brother was a freshman at the time of my application.
3. Where else could I find so many opportunities under one umbrella?

How did you decide on your major? In 2003 I was selected as the Washington County, New York Dairy Princess. In this role I was a volunteer liaison between dairy producers and local consumers. I communicated to young children, teenagers, adults and the elderly the health benefits of getting "3-A-Day" of dairy in their diet. Growing up on a small dairy farm, I was always intrigued by the business aspects of agriculture on a macro-level. However, the experience I acquired as the Washington County Dairy Princess - and Second Alternate New York State Dairy Princess - allowed me to experience first-hand what it would be like to work in communications and agriculture. My ability to combine these two passions in my studies at Cornell is what made me decide on a major in Communication with a concentration in Coordinated Planning and Evaluation and a minor in International Studies with several courses in Animal Science and Agriculture throughout my years at Cornell.

How did Tradition impact your undergraduate experience? Without Cornell Tradition, my undergraduate experience would not have been possible. My parents were not able to assist my brother or I financially with our education and so we both had

to have on-campus jobs; being a part of Tradition was like an added bonus. Volunteering has always been a big part of my life; I was in 4-H and Junior Holstein Club growing up and many of our activities were done to help those around us. My mom was always volunteering her time advising clubs or helping at church and so her example helped me to understand the rewards of giving back. Being a part of Tradition connected me with other undergraduates who felt the same way about hard work and volunteerism; it was a great network of which to be a part.

What impact did your experience in Tradition have on your life path? I don't think I would have even considered the Peace Corps option had it not been for Tradition. And now, I am not only directly serving the people of my community in Moldova but also indirectly I am serving my friends and family back home by opening their eyes and minds to new experiences and teaching the people of Moldova (by example) that Americans are happy, hardworking and helpful people.

Do you have any interesting stories you can share about your time at Cornell? At Cornell, I discovered the best way to learn was to take advantage of the many off-campus travel programs. I joined the Cornell University Dairy Science Club and traveled to California and Italy, learning about different aspects of agriculture along the way. I visited India, Thailand and Chiapas, Mexico with the International Agriculture and Rural Development courses. In the fall of my junior year, I studied in Monterrey, Mexico, where I had the opportunity to teach English to aspiring kindergarten teachers. And now as a graduate student I am able to live and work in Eastern Europe.

Describe a few of the major career and/or life events that have taken place since you left Ithaca. What is the most rewarding aspect of your job/life at present? I graduated in 2008 with a B.S. in Communication and for one year I worked as a project manager for General Electric energy infrastructure's Power and Water Communications team. I thoroughly enjoyed my work there and still plan to venture back to the private sector, but I signed onto the job knowing

continued on next page

Getty continued from page 8

that I desired more education. Going back to Cornell for my Master's program for me was a life-changing decision as not only was I signing up for a unique Master's program but also a two-year commitment in the Peace Corps. Now that I am here working in my small village in the Republic of Moldova, I am so glad that I took that leap of faith.

What advice do you have for new professionals as they enter the work force? Doing what you love is the most important thing. If you don't wake up in the morning excited about what the day may bring then you need to reevaluate.

What do you do to unwind in your spare time? In my free time I enjoy photography, running, sailing, traveling and chronicling my life here in Moldova. I also enjoy meeting new people and learning their life stories.

How do you balance work and life? Living here in Moldova as a Peace Corps volunteer, the lines are very blurred. Work is life and life is work. I enjoy what I am doing so much that it really doesn't seem to matter.

If you could chose another profession to be in, what would it be? I would not choose another profession currently. I am really enjoying my service in the Peace Corps and I look forward to what life brings me after this adventure.

Cain continued from page 4

I would be a TV host for the Travel Channel similar to Anthony Bourdain's No Reservations show or I would be the next host to be inline for Man V. Food. I compete in eating challenges sometimes; once I ate a 5lb burger in one sitting!

Keene continued from page 5

but the bond that I have with my teammates is unlike any other relationship I have developed here. I may not remember all of the material covered in my courses, but I will always remember the loyalty and commitment I have for the softball team.

Robinson continued from page 7

Upon returning to Cornell this semester I have been able to generate a lot of knowledge about Finding Refuge on campus and have been approached by many organizations wanting more information and finding ways to help. We have a strong community of individuals here who are all looking for ways to lend a hand. This summer I will be returning to City of Refuge and leading two group trips while I am there. One of these trips is comprised of all Cornell University students, many of which are part of Cornell Tradition. I am excited to share my experience with so many other people and look forward to continuing to build Finding Refuge on campus. To donate, participate or for more information please visit our website www.findingrefuge.com or you may reach me at ar523@cornell.edu.

Rawlings Cornell Presidential Research Scholars

Two juniors named Goldwater scholars

By Krishna Ramanujan

Randall Meyer '12 and Rachel Perlman '12, both in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, have received 2011 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships. This year's 275 Goldwater Scholars were chosen for academic merit from 1,095 mathematics, science and engineering students nominated by their institutions worldwide. The scholarships cover tuition, fees, books, and room and board up to \$7,500 per year.

Meyer, a biological engineering major from Poughkeepsie, NY, would like to pursue a Ph.D. in biological engineering. As a Hunter R. Rawlings III Cornell Presidential Research Scholar, he investigates the pathology of viral hemorrhagic septicemia virus in zebra fish. The virus has spread and caused massive fish kills throughout the Great Lakes. Meyer has served as a teaching assistant in Introduction to Computer Programming and Principles of Biological Engineering. Last fall, he was a team leader for Into the Streets, where Cornell students volunteer for a day of service in Ithaca, and he is a member of the Digital Gamer Alliance.

Perlman, a science of natural and environmental systems major with a concentration in sustainability from Arlington, Mass., plans to earn a Ph.D. in environmental science. Also a Rawlings Research Scholar, Perlman has worked in labs in three departments: earth and atmospheric sciences; biological and environmental engineering; and entomology. In spring 2010, she conducted independent research in Costa Rica, mapping sand temperatures related to sea turtle survival and nest management. A peer mentor in her major, she performs and arranges music for a campus a cappella group and enjoys salsa dancing.

In addition, Nicholas Champagne-Williamson '12, a computer science major minoring in cognitive science and information science, received an honorable mention from the Goldwater scholars program.

In its 25-year history, the Goldwater Scholarship Program has awarded 6,600 scholarships worth more than \$50 million. Since 1991, 51 Cornellians have received Goldwater scholarships.

The campus selection committee included William Crepet, plant biology; Jim Morin, ecology and evolutionary biology; Laurel Southard, director of Undergraduate Research; and Todd Walter, biological

and environmental engineering.

*For more information about the Goldwater Scholarship Program, go to:
<http://www.act.org/goldwater/>*

Annual Senior Expo a Success

Fifty talented Cornell University seniors presented and discussed their research at the annual Senior Expo on April 14th. The expo, which is free and open to the public, is the capstone experience for the Hunter R. Rawlings III Cornell Presidential Research Scholars program. The 2011 Expo included posters and multimedia presentations on topics such as emotional stimulation in older adults, the politics of popular culture, developing diagnostic tools for detecting John's Disease, and stock return predictability.

National Conference on Undergraduate Research

More than 3,000 of the brightest and most talented undergraduate college students from across the country spent three days on the Ithaca College campus presenting and discussing their original research, scholarship and creative activity. Ithaca hosted the annual National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR), March 31–April 2. More than 100 Cornell students presented their research, 20 being members of the RCPRS program. Those representing RCPRS were Swarn Vijay Arya, Lu Bai, Emily Bick, Jeremy Blum, Jacob Friedman, Lucas Fuess, Alyssa Henning, Henry Hinnefeld, Julian Homburger, Rajeshwaran Kannappan, Maya Madhavan, Randall Meyer, Mrinalini Modak, Anthony Monroe, Claire Moser, Desmond Ong, Shauna-Kay Rainford, Wangzhong Sheng, Jeongmin Shin, Alisha Vimwala, Mary Beth Wilhelm, Qi Wu, and Jiaqing Yi.

Other Commitment students presenting at NCUR include Rebecca Zuckerman (Cornell Tradition), Jason Lai (Cornell Tradition), and Angela Pring-Mill (Meinig Family Cornell National Scholars).

*For more information got to:
<http://www.ncur.org/>*

Rawlings Cornell Presidential Research Scholars

Alumni Profile: Grace Chen '10



While at Cornell, Grace was actively engaged in autism research. At right, she is working with her then faculty mentor, Professor Matthew Belmonte who is currently a consultant and head of the Laboratory of Neuroscience of Autism.

How did you decide on your major? I actually found choosing only one

major to be quite challenging because I came to Cornell with an interest in a spectrum of disciplines like German, Human Development, English and Neurobiology. I did continue to take English courses throughout my time at Cornell, but during my junior year I ultimately decided to major in Psychology and minor in Biological Sciences. The psychology major was a good fit in that the field encompassed many of my interests in both the humanities and the sciences. Through different research experiences and a course in Adult Psychopathology, I realized that I enjoyed applying psychology in practical ways and could see myself pursuing a career in that direction.

How did RCPRS impact your undergraduate experience? The RCPRS experience provided me with opportunities to develop as a researcher--thanks in part to how RCPRS encourages faculty mentors to really foster a solid mentoring foundation with students. Throughout my four years, I worked with Dr. Matthew Belmonte in his Laboratory for the Neuroscience of Autism. Dr. Belmonte was an incredible faculty mentor who really invested in my growth and potential as a student. I actually decided to work with him after he came to speak with me and a group of RCPRS freshmen in a meeting organized by Brenda Bricker. One of the key turning points in my research experience as an undergrad was also when I had the opportunity to conduct research in Germany for a summer--an opportunity that would not have been

possible without the financial and research support of RCPRS.

Describe a few of the major career and/or life events that have taken place since you left Ithaca. After graduation, I have started working at the Yale Child Study Center's Developmental Disabilities Clinic as a research assistant.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your job/life at present? Although the position can be challenging at times, it has been an incredibly rewarding experience thus far. I feel fortunate to have a job at a clinic where I have the opportunity to enjoy a good blend of clinical and research experience. Working with the families and kids who come to our clinic and being a part of a team of professionals who are passionate about helping children with developmental disabilities is definitely the most rewarding aspect of my job.

What advice do you have for new professionals as they enter the work force? Don't be afraid to be curious and ask lots of questions. Be open to pursuing new career paths as well--sometimes what you envisioned in undergrad can be so different than what you actually experience in the workforce.

What do you do to unwind in your spare time? I love being inspired by art, so you could also find me at a lot of concerts, theatre shows or writing/doodling at a café. Spending time with family and friends is also really important to me too; I like to travel or visit different eateries with them.

If you could choose another profession to be in, what would it be? I would pursue a career as a professional hairstylist. During my senior year, a lot of my friends graciously allowed me to practice cutting hair in exchange for a "free haircut."

Visit us on the web
<http://commitment.cornell.edu>