

From the Hill

Public Policy School to Be Established

Following a lengthy review process that began in 2016, the University has decided to launch a new School of Public Policy. The school—which will have its own dean, reporting to the provost—will begin with faculty from the departments of policy analysis and management (now housed in Human Ecology) and government (in Arts & Sciences), who will remain affiliated with their current colleges. Eventually, other faculty will be added from such fields as global development and labor policy; the school will also house the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs’ master of public administration program and is expected to start a new master’s degree program in public policy.

The new school—which could open as soon as spring or fall 2021—is one of two ways in which Cornell is addressing the long-time concern that social sciences on the Hill are hampered by

the fact that faculty in its core disciplines are based in disparate academic units throughout the University. The other will be the creation of “superdepartments,” uniting faculty from multiple colleges or schools, in economics, psychology, and sociology.

The plan, which trustees approved in late February, preserves the College of Human Ecology as an independent entity in its current form; an earlier proposal called for it to be refocused as a public policy college, prompting criticism from some students and faculty concerned for the future of HumEc departments—fiber science and apparel design, for example—that don’t fit under that umbrella. “After many, many years of analysis and discussion,” says Provost Michael Kotlikoff, “we are taking bold, transformational steps and making significant investments that will build the future for the social sciences at Cornell.”



SMALL WONDER: Using Lego blocks borrowed from his son, library staffer Craig Mains has built a tiny replica of Olin. The model, which is just three inches tall and uses about 460 bricks, garnered more than 6,400 likes on Cornell’s Instagram.

Congrats to Alumni-Elected Trustees



Beth Anderson '80 and Doug Mitarotonda '02, MEng '03, PhD '09, have been elected by their fellow alumni to the Board of Trustees. Anderson (left) is the daughter of alumni—Arlie Williamson Anderson '47 and Doug Anderson '50—and is a veteran of the book publishing industry who recently retired as executive vice

president and publisher of Audible. Mitarotonda (below), who served a two-year term as a student-elected trustee as a grad student, is an economist who is currently vice president of analytics at the business analysis firm Outlier AI. Each year, two alumni trustees—who have full voting privileges—are elected to four-year terms on the sixty-four-member board.



‘It changes how we see the world by showing the fascination and beauty of science.’

– Astronomy professor Lisa Kaltenegger on the new ‘Cosmos’ TV series (to which she is an adviser), airing four decades after Carl Sagan’s famed original

R + D

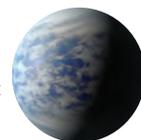
A scientist at Weill Cornell’s branch in Qatar has created the world’s smallest drill—two nanometers long, 50,000 times smaller than the breadth of a human hair. Engineered from a section of protein, it has potential applications in targeted drug delivery.



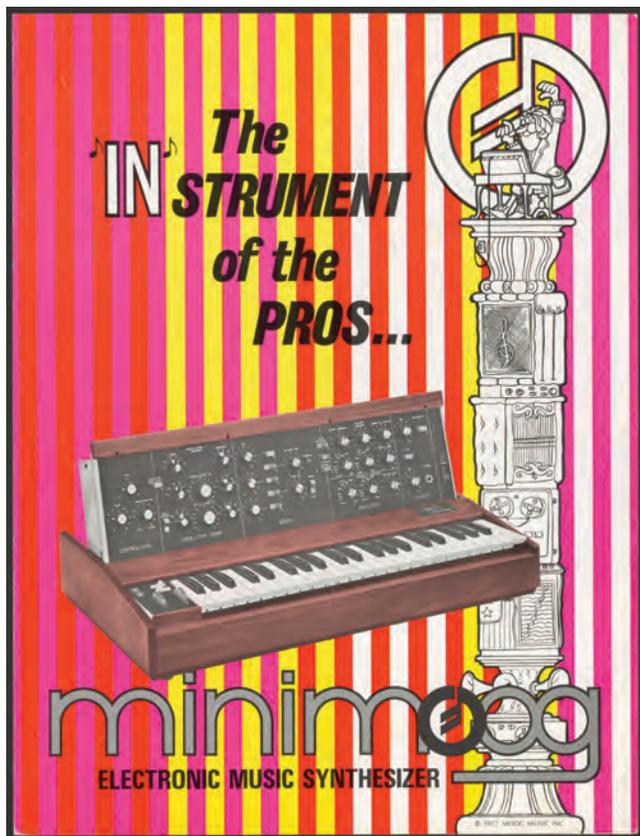
In February, CU vets operated on a very big kitty: they successfully removed a life-threatening intestinal mass from a white African lioness named Ntsumi, who normally resides at an Upstate New York adventure park.

Students in the popular course on Cornell history taught by Corey Earle '07 are being given the option to contribute to posterity: they can write about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and their memoirs will be added to the University archives.

Cornell astronomers have created five models, representing key points in Earth’s evolution, to use as templates in the hunt for similar planets in distant solar systems, once powerful telescopes currently in development go online.



Researchers at Cornell and Intel have created a computer algorithm—based on how the mammalian brain processes smell—that could offer a breakthrough in pattern recognition within the field of machine learning.



Synthesizer Pioneer Remembered

The life and work of synthesizer inventor Robert Moog, PhD '65, was the subject of a three-day event on campus in early March. "When Machines Rock" included talks, workshops, and performances. An exhibit in Kroch Library of artifacts and other items (such as the vintage advertisement above) from Moog's archive—which is housed in Cornell's Rare and Manuscript Collections and was recently opened up to scholars—is scheduled to run through mid-October. Though Kroch is currently closed, an online version of the exhibit can be found at rmc.library.cornell.edu/moog.

Did You Know . . .



That CALS has a wine library? Housed in a temperature-controlled space in the basement of Stocking Hall with a capacity of 3,400 bottles, it was launched in 2016 as an educational resource for students in viticulture and enology.

The library—which, sadly, doesn't allow its holdings to be "borrowed" on a casual basis—was a gift from Napa Valley winemaker John Wilkinson '79. It's used for tastings and other coursework.

CU Stops Publicizing Admissions Data

While a low admission rate has become something of a status symbol among elite educational institutions—proof that while many hopefuls may apply, only a relatively small percentage win a coveted spot in the freshman class—Cornell recently announced that it's opting out of that process. Jonathan Burdick, vice provost for enrollment, said in a statement in late March that the University will no longer publicize its admissions data, though it will continue to provide the relevant numbers as part of its annual reporting to the federal government. Stanford made a similar move in 2018, arguing that trumpeting admissions data can discourage some potentially qualified applicants and prompt others to fixate on getting into the most exclusive institution possible, rather than the one that's the best fit. Says Burdick: "Cornell's highest priority remains to encourage a broad and diverse pool of applicants to consider their opportunities here."

Give My Regards to . . . These Cornellians in the news

Peter Eisenman '54, BArch '55 (right), winner of a Gold Medal (for architecture) from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, its highest honor. His built work includes the Wexner Center for the Visual Arts in Columbus, Ohio.



Classics professor **Eric Rebillard** (left), named a Guggenheim fellow. He'll use the grant to write a monograph that challenges traditional accounts of the rise of Christianity.

J.C. Tretter '13 (right), starting center for the Cleveland Browns since 2017, elected president of the National Football League Players Association.



'It doesn't take much time for the positive benefits to kick in—we're talking ten minutes outside in a space with nature.'

— Vet lecturer Gen Meredith, co-author of a study on how the outdoors reduces college students' stress

One-Day Fundraiser Tops \$7 Million

Cornell's sixth annual Giving Day, held in mid-March, raised just over \$7 million from about 10,000 donors. This year, a particular focus of the twenty-four-hour fundraising effort was the Access Fund, which gives emergency grants to first-generation and low-income students. The fund, which is currently helping students with unexpected costs related to the coronavirus pandemic, garnered more than \$45,000 including a \$10,000 matching gift.

PHOTOS: MOOG, RMC; WINE, CHRISTIAN DELBERT/SHUTTERSTOCK; EISENMAN, CHRIS WILEY; REBILLARD, JASON KOSKI/UREL; TRETTER, CLEVELAND BROWNS