Genetic interactions are the key to understanding complex traits

By Caroline Arbanas

In recent years, genetic studies have uncovered hundreds of DNA variations linked to common diseases such as cancer or diabetes, raising the prospect that scientists can gauge disease risk based on information in an individual’s genome. But the variations identified to date only account for a small percentage — typically 1 percent — of the overall genetic risk of any common disease. This disappointment has led researchers to suggest that scientists need to get a better handle on the ways genes interact to influence disease risk.

"For diseases that are major health problems, many different genetic variants combine to affect an individual's risk," Cohen said. "The problem is that we as scientists are really lousy at predicting how these variations interact to determine whether an individual is likely to develop a common disease or respond to a particular drug."

This reality begs the question: Is it possible to tease apart a complex genetic trait to reveal the precise genetic variations that have combined to produce it? Yes, Cohen and his group reported in the Jan. 23 issue of Science. If the researchers can replicate, it suggests that scientists need better statistical models and other tools to understand genetic interactions.

The researchers turned to a simple organism, the yeast Saccharomyces cerevisiae, cultured from North American oak trees and vineyards, where it grows naturally, to find their answer. The researchers probed the genome of yeast to find the DNA variations that determine the efficiency with which the yeast undergoes sexual reproduction, a process called sporulation. Cohen acknowledges it's not a particularly fascinating trait, but it is one that can be measured easily and precisely.

see Traits, Page 2

University installs closed-circuit television system on Greenway Walk

By Jessica Daues

The installation of a closed-circuit television system on the Greenway Walk began Feb. 2, announced Don Strom, chief of Washington University Police.

"We’ve been conducting an ongoing review of safety and security issues in off-campus neighborhoods, and we identified the Greenway as a key pedestrian area for students, faculty and staff," Strom said. "We have previously increased security in the area during evening hours. Installing a closed-circuit television system is the logical next step to enhancing safety and security in the Loop area."

WUSTL police’s Neighborhood SecurityPatrol monitors the Greenway Walk area every night from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. The University also has invested in improved lighting and emergency telephones along the Greenway.

The Greenway Walk pedestrian walkway is located in University City between Melville and Westgate avenues, north of the Forest Park Parkway overpass connecting the Danforth Campus to University City. Cameras also are being installed on Melville Avenue from Kingsbury Boulevard to Washington Avenue. With an estimated 1,400 students living off campus in University City, security along the Greenway Walk — which many students use to travel to and from the Danforth Campus every day — is an important issue.

"Keeping students safe — and feeling safe — is among the University’s highest priorities," said Justin Carroll, associate vice chancellor for student and dean of students. "We hope that the installation of this security system will discourage crime along the Greenway Walk and lead to a safer environment for all in the campus community living in and visiting University City."

The installation is part of a long-term, cooperative effort between WUSTL and University City to address safety concerns, especially in the Loop.

"Washington University continues to be a critical partner in maintaining the Loop as the premier entertainment district for the region, but equally important, Washington University is ensuring the surrounding residential areas continue to be safe, inviting neighborhoods where our residents feel
Entertainer Lee gets even by getting angry

By Barbara Rea

M odified entertainer Lela Lee will be the featured speaker for the Assembly Series at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, in Graham Chapel.

Lela Lee, journalist, artist, and actress, said growing up in Afton as a female and a member of a minority made her feel very validated by racism and sexism.

In the early 1960s, while a student at the University of California, Berkeley, Lee created the character and alter ego, Kim, the Angry Little Asian Girl. The character became the star in five animated cartoons Lee developed as the "Angry Little Asian Girl" series.

Since then, Lee's creation has had successful spin-offs, including a self-published comic strip featuring girls with various identies and a Web site that offers a large selection of "Angry Little Asian Girl" merchandise. She has just published her fifth book, "Angry Little Girls in Love," debuting in time for Valentine's Day.

Lee also is an actress with film and television credits to her name, including recurring characters in "Scrubs" and "Tremors." She appeared in the 1998 film "Yellow" and the 2002 movie "Better Luck Tomorrow."

The event, sponsored by the Asian American Association, is free and open to the public. For more information, call 935-3285 or visit assemblyseries.wustl.edu.

Traits Could lead to an era of personalized medicine

From Page 1

"We don't have any particular family history for sporulation," he said. "We are simply using it as a model system to understand how multiple genes interact to influence variation in a binary character.""We hope that a complex trait is put together in yeast in a similar way as it is in "human" cells," Cohen said. When it comes to sporulation, the yeast from the oak tree samples produce spores with 99 percent efficiency; the vineyard strains are more efficient far more than would be expected based on the individual contributions of each SNP.

"The variations interacted like crazy," Cohen said. "The combined effects of variant were always larger than the sum of their individual effects." Understanding these interactions is critical for the scientists to accurately predict how a strain would behave based on the variations it carries in its genome.

"Only by accounting for the interactions between variants could they predict how particular variant combinations would increase or decrease sporulation," Cohen said. The researchers also were surprised to discover that the four variants carried in genes known as transcription factors may be more likely to harbor significant variations than other classes of SNPs.

Cohen acknowledged that dissecting a complex genetic trait in humans is far more difficult due to the sheer number of SNPs in the human genome.

But his research suggests that scientists need a better understanding of genetic interactions so that information in the human genome can one day accurately predict the diseases an individual is susceptible to and a list of drugs that are most effective for that individual.

In other words, a new era of personalized medicine.

"It's a big genome with many different types of genes," Cohen said. "The probability that all four SNPs would be in transcription factor genes is very, very low. This suggests transcription factors may be more likely to harbor significant variations than other classes of SNPs.

"We submitted Larry Haskin's name because of his lifelong dedication to the scientific investigation of the moon and service to NASA in promoting lunar exploration."

Bradley Jolliff

Then, when there is a scientific need to refer to a specific crater for research or charting purposes, a name is drawn from the list of approved names and given to the crater.

"We submitted Larry Haskin's name because of his lifelong dedication to the scientific investigation of the moon and service to NASA in promoting lunar exploration," Jolliff said. "One of its objectives is to map in great detail the poles of the moon because of the potential for deposits of water-ice on the surface.

"Many of the moon's polar craters were still unknown, so we — the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) Camera Team, of which I am a member — requested several of the key unknown craters be given names. And so one of the new named Haskin Crater" Jolliff said.

Jolliff said that naming a prominent feature on the moon is fitting because, during Haskin's career, he studied and wrote about the potential for resources on the moon.

Haskin's paper, "Toward the end of his career, he became very interested in the process of impact cratering, especially the factors that led to large impact craters," Jolliff said. "We will of course continue to target this crater for high-resolution imaging during the next few years."

In addition to Jolliff, other WUSTL collaborators of Haskin's on moon or moon-related research include Robert J. Dynek, Ph.D., professor of earth and planetary sciences; Randy Korotev, Ph.D., research associate professor; and Allan Wang, Ph.D., tenor research scientist.
Neurology that magnetic resonance-imaging scans can predict effects of optic nerve inflammation from MS.

By Michael C. Purdy

One of the most pernicious aspects of multiple sclerosis (MS) — unpredictability — may finally be starting to yield to advanced medical imaging techniques. School of Medicine researchers report online in the journal Neurology that magnetic resonance-imaging scans (DTI) allowed them to estimate three months in advance the chronic effects of inflammation of the optic nerve. The condition occurs most often as a result of MS, a neurodegenerative disorder that affects an estimated 100,000 patients in the United States. Symptoms of optic neuritis may finally be predictable — may finally be assuaged — for a patient's vision.

"We see this as part of a battery of tests we hope to give patients within the next decade to help our clinical assessment and tailor it to an optimal treatment," said lead author Robert T. Naismith, M.D., assistant professor of neurology. "It may also help us further refine our basic understanding of the disease and how to target our insights into where and how chronic effects of inflammation in the optic nerve affect patients differently." Naismith believes MS results from misdirected immune system attacks against the nervous system, Symptoms of optic neuritis, known as optic neuropathy, include loss of vision, blurring or fogging and pain in the affected eye. MRI scans can detect optic neuropathy but offer little guidance about its severity or potential lasting consequences for a patient's vision.

Used clinically to detect and follow up on strokes, DTI uses a rapid series of MRI scans to follow up on strokes, DTI uses a rapid series of MRI scans to track water diffusion in tissue. Naismith and his colleagues hypothesized that this information might allow them to assess the severity and potential for lasting damage of MS eye-ups. Over the past three years, the paper's senior authors, Theng Koey Song, Ph.D., associate professor of radiology, and Anne Cross, M.D., professor of radiology, did much of the quantitative work in animal models of MS. The new data, based upon this successful collaborative effort, are that DTI can produce potentially useful predictive information in humans.

For the study, researchers used DTI to image the optic nerves of 12 healthy volunteers, 12 who had begun to suffer from optic neuritis within the past month and 28 with a history of earlier onset of MS. Using this method for healthy subjects, DTI scans showed that the water diffusion along the length of the subject's optic nerve was characteristic known as axial diffusivity, DTI averaged about 1.16 micrometers per second in healthy, unaffected eyes. In three patients with acute optic neuritis, those levels went down as much as 20 percent, to 0.97 micrometers per second. "As the inflammation breaks down the structure of the optic axons or branches of the optic nerve, the normal water diffusion in this direction is impeded," said Naismith. "After several months, though, the debris cleared away, and this value and another characteristic known as radial diffusivity then start to increase."

In acute patients, the initial decrease in axial diffusivity brought on by optic neuritis correlated with decreased sensitivity to visual contrast one month after the episode. In patients with a history of optic neuritis, however, the decreases in axial diffusivity was a good predictor of lower scores on several tests of visual health.

The primary cause of VAP is the aspiration or inhalation of bacteria-contaminated saliva and mucus into the lungs. Previous studies found that using an antimicrobial mouthwash or heart patients could reduce the incidence of VAP. By reducing bacteria-contaminated saliva and mucus into the lungs. Previous studies found that using an antimicrobial mouthwash or heart patients could reduce the incidence of VAP. By brushing the patients' teeth for one minute every 12 hours followed by a mouthwash, we did both oral brushing and mouthwash to make the biggest impact.

To further reduce the costs of the study, Sona and Schallm used regular hospital toothbrushes, which cost about 7 cents each. The total cost of the toothbrush regimen through the study was $2,187.49.

In 2004, beginning in February, a patient in the unit was placed on a ventilator and the nurses made a brief presentation to the congregation about the disease and the benefits of blood donation. The study clearly demonstrated the importance of intestinal hygiene in reducing the incidence of VAP,” said Timothy Buchman, M.D., Ph.D., the Harry E. Tyson Professor of Surgery and chief of the Section of Acute Care Surgery at the Washington University School of Medicine and co-author of the study. “It also underscores how critical every aspect of the bedside care is that nurses bring to patients every day.”

The year-long study, led by nurse specialists in the intensive care unit in conjunction with School of Medicine physicians, was published online in the Journal of Intensive Care Medicine. Buchman said. "When a patient is on a ventilator, the more potential there is for other complications to occur,” said Lynn Schallm, a nurse specialist and co-author of the study. “If we can prevent VAP, we can get the patient off of the ventilator and out of the intensive care unit faster.”

The program is a joint project of St. Louis Children's Hospital, the Division of Pediatric Cancer and Related Disorders and the Division of Pediatric and Adolescent Internal Medicine. It is observed on Sundays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Sickle Cell Medical Treatment and Education Center at St. Louis Children's Hospital and from the Sickle Cell Sabbat program, a representative of the American Red Cross or a parent of a child with sickle cell disease made a brief presentation to the congregation about the disease and the benefits of blood donation.

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The A critical regimen of brushing the patients' teeth for one minute every 12 hours followed by a mouthwash, we did both oral brushing and mouthwash to make the biggest impact.
Hamlet as a teenager? PAD production to explore adolescent mind

By LIAM OTTEN

For many actors, Hamlet is the Mount Everest of roles. A four-hour, 3,000-line trek to approach only at the height of one's professional powers. As a result, many productions feature a half-dozen panelists representing a variety of disciplines. In the case of Hamlet, it is at university when he is suddenly called back to attend his father’s funeral, and there are numerous textual references to his youth. Indeed, many of the characters — Horatio, Laertes, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern — are university students, and Ophelia is younger still," Schvey said. "It's a leap that may seem extreme for an adult but is entirely plausible for the mind of the adolescent." The cast of 27 led by senior Sathyia Sritharan as Hamlet, junior Joseph as Claudius and junior Virginia Page as Gertrude. Also starring is sophomore Julia Mellon as Ophelia, junior Halli Ferguson as Polonius, sophomore Dan Tobin as Laertes and David Weiss as Horatio. Sophomores Jonathan Levinson and Ed Keen play Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. The sleek, contemporary setting, which safely anchors the look and feel of an onstage "first performance" — is by Angela Bengford, lecturer in the PAD.

Washington University in St. Louis
Innovative, internationally acclaimed artists open Jazz at Holmes spring series

BY CYNTHIA GEORGES

Washington University's Jazz at Holmes series will feature internationally acclaimed, Grammy-winning alto saxophonist, composer and educator Wayne Shorter. "Jazz is a force for life," said Shorter in an interview with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. "It has a way of making people feel alive, happy and free."

On Stage

Friday, Feb. 13
8:30 p.m. OVATIONS! Series. "King Henry's Coronation." Cost: $32, $28 for seniors, faculty and staff, $20 for the public.

Saturday, Feb. 14

Monday, Feb. 16
6p.m. Immunology Research Seminar Series. "Dendritic Cells and Allergy." Cost: $5 for students and faculty, $10 for staff, $20 for the public.

Friday, Feb. 13
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Sports

The No. 2 ranked men's basketball team remained unbeaten in the University Athletic Association (UAA) with a pair of road victories.

Senior Sean Wallis had 12 points and a game-high 11 assists as the Bears posted an 80-75 victory at Brandeis University Jan. 30. Junior Aaron Thompson assisted all scorers with 18 points, while junior Cameron Smith had his career-high with 15 points on 6-of-6 shooting from the field. Senior Nick Nelson shot 5-of-12 (42 percent) and freshman Alex Toeb (11) also scored in double figures for WUSTL, which shot 53.7 percent from the field in the victory.

WUSTL had 24 assists and just eight turnovers in the victory, its seventh straight of the season. The eight turnovers were the second lowest total this season.

Thompson scored a game-high 29 points with five three-pointers to lead the Bears in a 76-54 victory at New York University Feb. 1. Thompson was 9-of-19 from the field, including 5-of-9 from three point range, as he notched his sixth game of 20 points or more this season.

Thompson drained a three-pointer from the corner and one from the top of the key to ignite a 27-2 run by the Bears to gain a 28-12 lead with 4:48 remaining.

The Bears have won 76 consecutive games when holding their opponents under 60 points. WUSTL also is seeking a point total of 700, or higher, for the 299th consecutive game.

The Bears (17-1, 7-0 UAA) play their next home game in three weeks Feb. 6, host New York University, and then play Brandeis at noon Sunday, Feb. 8, at the WU Field House. With seven games to play in the regular season, the Bears hold a two-game conference lead over Brandeis.

Women's basketball tied for first in UAA

The No. 20 women's basketball team kept pace with the University of Rochester for first place in the University Athletic Association (UAA) standings with a pair of road wins over ranked conference opponents last weekend.

The Bears defeated No. 19 Brandeis University, 81-55, on Jan. 30 and topped No. 8 New York University, 63-55, on Feb. 1. Senior Kiemie McFlinn scored 11 points and pulled down a game-high 18 rebounds as the team earned back-to-back wins to keep the UAA lead without any bumps.

The Bears defeated No. 19 Brandeis University, 81-55, on Jan. 30 and topped No. 8 New York University, 63-55, on Feb. 1. Senior Kiemie McFlinn scored 11 points and pulled down a game-high 18 rebounds as the team earned back-to-back wins to keep the UAA lead without any bumps.

Junior Kathryn Berger led the team in scoring, netting 18 points, while junior Cameron Smith added 11 points on 6-of-6 shooting from the three-point line.

The Bears will face New York at home in a rematch at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 8.

Safety

Cameras already on residence halls

The WUSTL police department offers the following safety tips:

• Avoid walking or jogging alone, and never walk or jog alone after dark.

• Do not wear music head phones while walking or jogging. Stick with a familiar area.

• Always walk with a well-lighted path and avoid dark or vacant areas when you are not sure of your surroundings.

• Carry a whistle or other device for personal safety that you can use if a thief approaches you.

• Inspect your campus and report any suspicious activity or behaviors to the police immediately.

For more information on safety tips or the television system, call the University Police at 913-5084.
Of note

Deanna M. Barch, Ph.D., professor of psychology in Arts & Sciences, has received a three-year, $790,000 grant from the National Institute of Mental Health for research titled "Cognitive Neuroscience Task Rich Clinical Applications Consortium."...

Peter M. Burgers, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, has received a four-year, $1 million grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences for research titled "Kinase Activation in the DNA Damage Checkpoints."

Roger Chambers, D.Sc., associate professor of computer science, has received a three-year, $200,000 subsidio from Oregon State University for research titled "Mycological Circuits and Architectures for Deeply Pipelined Algorithms."

Marcus Colonna, M.D., professor of pathology and immunology and of medicine, has received a three-year, $675,000 grant from the American Diabetes Research Foundation for research titled "The Immunoreceptor DNAM-1 in Type 1 Diabetes."

Livia Hinegardner, graduate student in the College of Arts & Sciences, has received a one-year, $23,000 grant from the Wenner- Gren Foundation for research titled "Grassroots Videos in Mexico: Developing Countercultures, Producing Citizen Journalists."

Young-Shin Jun, Ph.D., assistant professor of energy, environmental and chemical engineering, has received a one-year, $53,061 subclassward from Shaw Environmental Inc. through a grant funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for research titled "Ozone and Trace Organic and Emerging Contaminants and Microorganisms During Wastewater Reuse Applications."

Stephanie Kirk, Ph.D., assistant professor of Spanish in Arts & Sciences, has received a $5,000 grant from the Program for Cultural Cooperation Spain's Ministry of Culture and Communication to help fund a conference titled "Literary Transformations in the Early Modern Americas."

Robert Kebl, Ph.D., director of the Consortium: the Center for Advanced Learning, has received a one-year, $19,280 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to study student migration patterns and in out of the science, technology, engineering and math fields.

Daniel Moran, Ph.D., assistant professor of North American studies, has received a four-year, $25,000 grant from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering for research titled "Development of Thin-Film MicroECOG Electrode for Chronic Cortical Recordings. Also receiving the grant was Justin Williams, Ph.D., of the University of Wisconsin-Madison."

Dipanjana Pan, Ph.D., research instructor in medicine, has received a one-year, $300,000 grant from the American Heart Association for research titled "A Nano- medicine Approach to Controversy: Ruptured Plaque With Spectral Computed Tomography."

Marcus Raiche, M.D., professor of neurology, of neurology and of radiology and biomedical engineering, was awarded the Ralph W. Gerard Prize in Neuroscience at the Society for Neuroscience's annual meeting. He shares the $25,000 prize with Mortimer Mishkin, Ph.D., of the National Institute of Mental Health. The award recognizes Raiche for outstanding contributions to the study of human brain function through the development and use of position emission tomography and functional magnetic resonance imaging. ...-

Marco Colonna, M.D., professor of pathology and immunology and of medicine, has received a one-year, $53,061 grant from the National Institutes of Health for research titled "Specimen Preparation for Construction of Well-Annotated Progression and Prognostic Tissue Microarrays (TAMs) for Invasive Breast Carcinoma for use in Breast Cancer Research."

Court of Appeals session at law school Feb. 11

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals will hold a special session at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, in the School of Law's Bryan Catoe Moos Courtroom in An- berson Beach Hall.

The public is invited to hear three appeals cases related to death penalty staffing and protocols; an insurance company's liability in a child abuse case; and property damage to a tool shed and appellate procedure, including notification by e-mail.

The event is a continuing education program in which the Court extensively holds sessions in law schools as part of professional programs. Hearing oral arguments will be judges William Jay, assistant dean of Arts & Sciences, and received a four-year, $1,508,000 grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute for research titled "Evaluation of Endobronchial Ventilation for COPD and CHF.

Barbara Zohabzian, Ph.D., professor of pathology and immunology and of medicine, has received a one-year, $53,061 grant from the National Institutes of Health for research titled "Specimen Preparation for Construction of Well-Annotated Progression and Prognostic Tissue Microarrays (TAMs) for Invasive Breast Carcinoma for use in Breast Cancer Research."

Obituaries

Torack, retired Alzheimer's researcher, 81


Torack was a pioneering researcher on Alzheimer's dementia and his tenure on the School of Medicine faculty. After his retirement in 1992, he continued his research as a clinical professor of pathology and immunology until 2000. His work over the three decades helped lead to the creation of the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC) at the School of Medicine.

"It was always a pleasure to interact with Dr. Torack because he examined issues from a unique, challenging and sometimes unconventional perspec- tive," said John C. Morris, M.D., the Harvey A. and Dorisamie Hacker Friedman Professor of Neurology and director of the ADRC. "He was warm, gracious, supportive and had a delightful personality."

Services were held Jan. 31 at Madeline in Pine Hills Catholic Church. Memorial contributions may be made to the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, 4408 Forest Park Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63108.

Dillon, 82

Richard T. Dillon, J.D., the Lebanon Visiting Professor of Law in 1990, died Jan. 21, 2009, in Hoosier Woods in Pinckneyville, Ill., after a long illness. He was 82.
Tough but fair

King doles out discipline while ushering growth

Director of Judicial Programs Tamara King, J.D. (left), confers with undergraduate Cathlyn Clark, one of her four-year advisees, who has her sights set on law school. "Tamara King never ceases to amaze me with her ability to handle each student's case with a balance of sensitivity, fairness and professionalism," says Laura Mendell, special assistant to the chancellor for diversity initiatives and a member of the University Judicial Board. "And, even though her position constantly brings her in contact with students behaving badly, she uses her contact with our students as teachable moments."

Tamara King


Family: Lives in Fairview Heights, Ill., with her husband, Michael, and their 10-year-old son, Michael, Jr. (called KJ for "King Jr.").

When she's not working: She's a typical busy mom, taking the kids to myriad activities, including Girl Scouts, basketball, soccer, cheer, roller and ice skating, and swimming lessons.

Advice to her children: "You have to decide for yourself what you want to do, and, based on that, you need to do the right things to get there," she says.

If she didn't work at WUSTL: "I would take a nonprofit organization focusing on providing its skills for underserved populations. I think it is a perfect ability, drive and motivation that gets them to where they are," she says.

By Steve Givens

Jersey, 85 miles from New York City, a couple of miles down I-95 in Philadelphia. "We're dealing with some tough behavior all the time, so I always approach it believing there's got to be a silver lining somewhere in this dark cloud that looms over a student's head."

"But I also am a strong believer in treating the student, no matter what they've done, with the utmost respect," she says. "I need to be able to say to a student, 'You're not a bad person, you just made a bad decision, and here's what that decision is going to cost.'"

King's colleagues and supervisors echo and confirm that her decision is going to cost.

"Sometimes, young people fall short of our expectations. During the past 10 years, Tamara has helped countless students learn what it means to be a responsible citizen of our community. She is tough but very fair," Carroll says.

A life 'full of firsts'

Growing up in a small town, King always knew she wanted to go to college and do well, which was not necessarily the expectations for much of the African-American population in her community. In her high-school graduating class of 623 students, there were only two African-American women — and no African-American males — who went to college and did well, which was not necessarily the expectations for much of the African-American population in her community. She tells the story of a student who, in their eyes, succeeded, "She has a very difficult job dealing with a part ofundergraduate life that is never talked about. One of Tamara's most important responsibilities is communicating to students the principles that are important to being a part of our community."

"Sometimes, young people fall short of our expectations. During the past 10 years, Tamara has helped countless students learn what it means to be a responsible citizen of our community. She is tough but very fair," Carroll says.

Tamara King, J.D. (left), confers with undergraduate Caitlyn Clark, one of her four-year advisees, who has her sights set on law school. "Tamara King never ceases to amaze me with her ability to handle each student's case with a balance of sensitivity, fairness and professionalism," says Laura Mendell, special assistant to the chancellor for diversity initiatives and a member of the University Judicial Board. "And, even though her position constantly brings her in contact with students behaving badly, she uses her contact with our students as teachable moments."

Tough but fair

King doles out discipline while ushering growth

Director of Judicial Programs Tamara King, J.D. (left), confers with undergraduate Cathlyn Clark, one of her four-year advisees, who has her sights set on law school. "Tamara King never ceases to amaze me with her ability to handle each student's case with a balance of sensitivity, fairness and professionalism," says Laura Mendell, special assistant to the chancellor for diversity initiatives and a member of the University Judicial Board. "And, even though her position constantly brings her in contact with students behaving badly, she uses her contact with our students as teachable moments."

Tamara King


Family: Lives in Fairview Heights, Ill., with her husband, Michael, and their 10-year-old son, Michael, Jr. (called KJ for "King Jr.").

When she's not working: She's a typical busy mom, taking the kids to myriad activities, including Girl Scouts, basketball, soccer, cheer, roller and ice skating, and swimming lessons.

Advice to her children: "You have to decide for yourself what you want to do, and, based on that, you need to do the right things to get there," she says.

If she didn't work at WUSTL: "I would take a nonprofit organization focusing on providing its skills for underserved populations. I think it is a perfect ability, drive and motivation that gets them to where they are," she says.