Scientists seek to solve hydrogen storage problems

By DOUG MAIT

A WUSTL chemist hopes to find a solution to this storage problem, a process called "gas physical adsorption." "The idea here is to create materials composed of molecules of hydrogen like sticks to it," Gelb said. "If hydrogen stuck to these particles, you could carry around much hydrogen as possible. Then we can use brain activity to predict the correct area."

After the hint and prior to the appearance of the moving dots, scientists scanned the volunteers with functional brain imaging, which reveals increases in blood flow to different brain areas indicative of increased activity in those regions. Based on brain activity patterns that reflected whether the subjects used the hint or not, scientists found they could frequently predict whether a volunteer's response would be right or wrong before the volunteers even had a chance to try to see the dots. The study's results are available at the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Web site (pnas.org) and will be published in the journal's print edition.

Sapir and her colleagues concluded that they don't use the hint the same way every trial. See Brain, Page 6

Welcome aboard (From left) Richard A. Roloff, vice chancellor, and Ralph H. Themen, associate vice chancellor for facilities, planning & management, great Campus Collections. Recently renamed the first dean of the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts, at a Nov. 18 reception in Holmes Lounge. Colangelo's appointment, effective July 1, comes amidst a nearly $60 million campaign to improve campus facilities. Plans include extensive renovations to Bixby, Steinberg and Gravina halls, as well as two new buildings — the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum and Earl E. and Myrtle E. Walker Hall — designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Fumihiko Maki.

By MICHAEL C. PURDY

But peering into the minds of volunteers preparing to play a brief visual game, School of Medicine neuroscientists have found they can predict whether the volunteers will succeed or fail at the game. "Before we present the task, we can use brain activity to predict with about 70 percent accuracy whether the subject will give a correct or an incorrect response," said lead author Ayelet Sapir, Ph.D., a postdoctoral research associate in neurology.

Eleven seconds before volunteers played the game — discriminating the direction of a field of moving dots — scientists showed them a hint: an arrow pointing to where the moving dots were likely to appear. The dots were visible for only one-fifth of a second and therefore were easy to miss if a subject was not paying attention.

Scientists use brain scans to predict behavior

Building acquisition to greatly enhance music, performing arts space

BY LIAM OTTEN

Washington University has reached an agreement with Webster University to purchase the Community Music School building at 560 Trinity Ave. in University City. The purchase will provide Washington University with additional — and much-needed — performance, rehearsal and teaching facilities.

The building includes the 1,115-seat E. Desmond Lee Concert Hall, a 300-seat theater, a small recital hall, dozens of classrooms and practice spaces, a recording studio and administrative offices.

The concert hall will become the largest performance space at Washington University. Built in 1929, the two-story, 45,000-square-foot former synagogue is located less than a mile from the Hilltop Campus at the intersection of Trinity and Delmar Boulevard, near the western end of the Delmar Loop shopping and entertainment district. It has been home to the Community Music School since 1974.

Webster will use proceeds from the sale to fund construction of Community Music School headquarters on its main campus in Webster Groves.

"This is a wonderful addition to Washington University's music and performing arts spaces," said Edward S. Macias, Ph.D., executive vice chancellor, dean of Arts & Sciences and the Barbara and David Thomas Distinguished Professor in Arts & Sciences. "It will ease pressure on existing facilities and be of great benefit to our students and faculty, many of whom live in the neighborhood." The deal includes a purchase price of $4,935,000. Webster will continue to occupy the property for one year. At the end of that term, Webster will have use of the E. Desmond Lee Concert Hall for two Sundays per month for an additional eight months. Macias noted that Washington University's current performance facilities — principally the 650-seat Edison Auditorium, the 100-seat A.E. Hitchc}

see Hydrogen, Page 6

See Colloquium, "Celebrating Our Books, Recognizing Our Authors" is Dec. 7

Washington People: Kim Donica leads Project ARK with compassion

A WUSTL chemist hopes to find a solution to this storage problem, a process called "gas physical adsorption." "The idea here is to create materials composed of molecules of hydrogen like sticks to it," Gelb said. "If hydrogen stuck to these particles, you could carry around much hydrogen as possible. Then..." See Hydrogen, Page 6

Scientists seek to solve hydrogen storage problems
Compton's X-ray research lands WUSTL on register of historic physics sites

By Susan Killenberg-McGinn

Physical Arthur Holly Compton, the University's first faculty member to receive a Nobel Prize (1927), is still getting recognition for his groundbreaking work more than 40 years after his death.

The latest acknowledgment comes from the American Physical Society (APS), which has designated Washington University — where Compton did his Nobel Prize-winning research on X-rays — as a site of historical significance to physics.

The APS Historic Sites Committee selected Washington University along with four other U.S. sites to be the first listed on the APS Register of Historic Sites, John L. Hopfield, Ph.D., president-elect of the APS and the Department of Physics at Princeton University, will present a commemorative plaque to Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton during an 11 a.m. ceremony Dec. 12 in the Women's Building Lounge.

The plaque will hang alongside a University plaque just inside the room entrance that marks the building in which Compton conducted the X-ray scattering effect.

There talks about Compton, including a biography by Neal F. Lane, Ph.D., former director of the National Science Foundation and chief science adviser to former President Bill Clinton, will begin at 2 p.m.

See Compton, Page 6

Charity Navigator gives WUSTL 4 stars for 5th straight year

A four-star rating from Charity Navigator — the largest independent charity evaluator in America — is the highest score possible.

For the fifth consecutive year, Washington University has received a four-star rating, based on an evaluation of two broad areas of its operations: efficiency and transparency.

The first, organizational efficiency, measures a charity's fund-raising results against fund-raising expenses and administrative expenses. The second, organizational capacity, demonstrates how well a charity has sustained its program and administrative expenses. The final, organizational sustainability, looks at a charity's fund-raising results against its fund-raising expenses and administrative expenses. The final, organizational sustainability, looks at a charity's ability to remain stable over time.

The four-star rating indicates that the University is committed to fiscal responsibility and sound management practices.

"Less than 12 percent of the (more than $4,000) charities we’ve rated have received at least two consecutive four-star evaluations, indicating that Washington University in St. Louis outperforms most charities in America in its efforts to operate in the most financially responsible way possible," said Trent Stamp, executive director of Charity Navigator.

"This exceptional rating gives Washington University a significant advantage over other organizations and another indication of its commitment to meeting the needs of its constituents."

Free vehicle inspection Dec. 10

By Neil Schorsch

On Dec. 10, Washington University Police Department Det. Paul King, Parking and Transportation, in partnership with Hartman’s Towing, will once again sponsor a free vehicle inspection service to students, faculty and staff.

People traveling by car for the holidays may want to check their vehicles on the west side of University Plaza near the Fourth Street Entrance.

The inspection will cover the following items:

- Headlights
- Taillights
- Fluid levels, wipers, headlights and taillights
- Local businesses have donated oil and windshield washer fluid to allow fluids to be topped off.
- The WUPD Bear Patrol will assist the police and parking staff.

The Police Department is reminding those traveling during the holiday season to get plenty of rest, pay close attention to weather and road conditions, and make sure your vehicle is in good working condition and always wear a seatbelt.

For more information, call the WUPD Crime Prevention Office at 935-5084.

Happy Thanksgiving!

For University community members who couldn’t head home, or for those just looking for a good meal, several traditional Thanksgiving dinners were held on campus to celebrate the holiday.

ABOVE: Mahendra R. Gupta, Ph.D., dean of the Olin School of Business and the Geraldine J. and Robert L. Virgil Professor in Accounting and Management (middle), and his wife, Suzanne, chat with Olin School students Tracy Yoo from China and Shashvat Desai from India during the school’s annual Thanksgiving dinner at the WUSTL professor of physics, will discuss the scientific and historical significance of Compton's experiment.

Compton's association with the University began when he was appointed the Wayman Crow Professor of Physics in Arts & Sciences and chair of the physics department in 1920 — when he was just 28 years old. During his three years as a faculty member, Compton did the experimental work that resulted in the Nobel Prize in physics.

In 1935, he left the University for the University of Chicago, where he made important contributions to cosmic rays physics and later played a major role in World War II’s atomic bomb project.

He returned to Washington University in 1945 to become its ninth chancellor and served for eight years. Compton brought many outstanding faculty to the University, particularly in the sciences, and in so doing began the University’s rise to prominence Dec. 12 in the Women’s Building Lounge.

By Tony Fitzpatrick

President E. Avishai, Ph.D., the James M. McDonnell Distinguished University Professor and chair of earth and planetary sciences in Arts & Sciences, is the chair of the Mars Exploration Program Analysis Group (MEPAG). His duties began July 1, and he will serve for three years.

Avishai’s experience with NASA’s Mars exploration program has been acquired over the past two decades and will guide the program in its future endeavors.

Avishai’s responsibilities include reviewing data collected by the Mars Exploration Rovers Spirit and Opportunity, which has been detected on Mars.

Measuring the temperature, pressure and other conditions on Mars will help guide the program in its future endeavors.

At a Nov. 2-3 committee meeting, Avishai oversaw 275 attendees, including scientists and representatives from seven of NASA’s 10 field centers, NASA headquarters, delegations from 25 universities, aerospace industry, nonprofit research institutes, other government agencies and private research organizations.

There was also substantial participation from international organizations.

According to Avishai, the Mars Exploration Program Plan, outlining Mars exploration over the next decade and beyond, will be discussed at length. The plan’s overall focus is to understand Mars as a global system and how the planet’s climatic and tectonic processes have evolved with time.

There is an emphasis on whether the planet was or is habitable and if life developed and if current and past habitable zones on the planet.

Sessing around the clock

Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton enjoys a toot-tooter ride with senior Mallords Hula Nov. 9 in front of the Campus Y. Students, staff and faculty members sawed for 48 straight hours and raised $1,100 for the Campus Y Partner Campaign.
The design of the eye and the muscles that surround its base is such that the eye needs to rotate continuously to keep the visual world stable on the retina," Angelaki said. "This is a well-studied reflex called the vestibulo-ocular reflex, or VOR, and it's what lets us see clearly whether we move the head or turn around to see a friend."

Adding to the complexity, naturally a round-world visional object such as the eye has a way to take over non-commuting eye movements. This means that the result of a series of numbers — a movement in one-ter-half and a half-turn, for example — is dependent on the order in which those movements are performed. Reverse the order of two steps in the series of motions, and the end result is different.

Scientists began to debate in the late 1960s whether inconsistencies in the complexities of these problems were handled by signals from the brain or accomplished via contributions both from the brain and from the eye itself.

The latter group theorized that the "motor plant" of the eye — which includes the eye, the orb of the eye socket and the muscles that pull it in — could handle some aspects of eye movements without input from the brain. The different models suggested very different things about how the way the brain controls eye movements.

Angelaki and first author Fatema F. Ghasia, a WUSTL postdoctoral fellow, conducted two sets of tests in primates. In the first test, the primates tracked a moving target by moving only their eyes. In the second, the body or heads of the primates were rotated while their eyes remained on the target, invoking VOR. In both tests, scientists electrically measured the activity of oculomotor neurons, the nerves that control eye muscles. They also measured the vertical, horizontal and torsional (toward the nostrils, shoulders) movement of the eyes. The oculomotor neurons handled the firing activity in the test that included head and body movement, demonstrating the brain's intrinsic control of VOR. But in the first test, oculomotor nerves did not significantly change firing patterns as the primates tracked the target by moving their eyes, suggesting some of the guidance for the eye's movements was coming from the eye itself and its surrounding tissues.

"It appears that the motor plant of the eye is optimized to handle the problem on its own, and then whenever you need to stop and override the brain, the eye has a way to do that," Angelaki said. "Better understanding of how this ability is naturally engineered into the motor plant of the eye is going to be very important for clinical applications, because every time you have a surgeon manipulate the musculature of the eye it might interfere with these abilities."

The brain changes that cause Alzheimer's disease begin many years before they culminate in dementia, the symptom that person may someday develop before clinical onset and put them on treatments that can stop or to apply, contact Fraser at 454-8272 or vfraser@wustl.edu. A $2.8 million grant will fund 24 training slots per year — 12 two-month summer research experiences and 12 12-month immersion programs. Students will take pre-existing and new courses focused on clinical research design, biostatistics, the ethical and legal aspects of clinical research and scientific writing.

To emphasize interdisciplinary team-building, clinical research trainees will pair with another, as well as one mentor, for their practicum research project. Medical students who opt for the 12-month immersion program can earn a master's degree through the M.A./M.P.S. program at the School of Medicine.

Bradley Evanoff, M.D., M.P.H., chief of the Division of General Medical Sciences and the Richard and Elizabeth Henley Butler Professor of Occupa-

tional, International and Environmental Medicine, has received a five-year, $30 Clinical Research Curriculum Award to develop course work and multidisciplinary training in clinical research.

This $1.3 million grant will fund the development of a core curriculum in clinical research, providing the basic foundation of knowledge required for clinical research including courses in research design, statistics, epidemiology, scientific writing and ethical issues.

In addition, the program will offer a Mentored Training Program in Clinical Investigation, which will offer course work and mentorship to fellows, as well as one mentor faculty committed to careers in clinical research. 

"The core curriculum is meant to provide instruction in a broad range of training that is interested in clinical research, while the mentored program goes beyond that and involves fellows who have support from their department to pursue research training for at least two years," Evanoff said. "Beginning January 2006, we plan to offer a mas-
ter's degree into a mentored training program in this program."

Both M.D.s and Ph.D.s with a strong interest in clinical research are being encouraged to apply to the mentored training program. For more information on the Piccirillo or Evanoff grants, contact program administrator Julie Follman at 454-8560 or follman@wustl.edu, or go online to k30.im.wustl.edu.
**Kwaidan: What Heated the Asteroids? • Lopata Classic**

**On stage**

**Friday, December 2**

**Wednesday, December 7**

**Saturday, December 10**

**Sunday, December 11**

**Sunday, December 18**

**Sports**

**Friday, December 2**
- 8 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. U. of Dallas. Location: Soldiers Memorial Gym. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Friday, December 9**
- 8 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. Westminster College. Location: Soldiers Memorial Gym. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Saturday, December 10**
- 8 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. St. Charles College. Location: Soldiers Memorial Gym. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Wednesday, December 7**
- 8 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. Westminster College. Location: Soldiers Memorial Gym. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Wednesday, December 14**
- 8 p.m. Men's Basketball vs. University of St. Francis. Location: Soldiers Memorial Gym. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Tuesday, December 6**
- 8 p.m. Carson Biology and Physiology Seminar. Location: Margaret Rusher Lecture Hall. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Wednesday, December 7**
- 8 p.m. Carson Biology and Physiology Seminar. Location: Margaret Rusher Lecture Hall. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Wednesday, December 14**
- 8 p.m. Carson Biology and Physiology Seminar. Location: Margaret Rusher Lecture Hall. For more information, call 362-1000.

**Worship**

**Thursday, December 8**
- 12:00 p.m. Catholic Mass. Location: Saint Louis University. For more information, call 362-1000.

**5:30 p.m. Catholic Mass. Location: Saint Louis University. For more information, call 362-1000.

**How to submit ‘University Events’**

**Submit “University Events” items to Sensative Pyle of the**

| (1) e-mail — recordcalendar@wustl.edu |
| (2) campus mail — envelope to Pyle |
| (3) fax — 935-4705 |

Deadline for submissions is noon on the Thursday eight days prior to the publication date.
Women's cross country finishes third nationally

The Bears' cross-country team took third place at the NCAA Championship for the second straight year. The Bears were well ahead of second-place Linfield College (107 points) and SUNY-Geneseo (103 points), all of which will be available for purchase. Authors will be available to sign their works.

Signs of the Times

The Institute of The Moralities of Group (1987), Sharing Responsibility (1992), The Socially Responsible Self (1996), Morality and Mortality (1998) and Crimes Against Peace and Morality (1998). The latter volume is the first in a proposed trilogy on the moral foundations of international criminal law. The second and third volumes will address crimes against humanity and war crimes, respectively.

Celebrating Our Books, sponsored by The Center for the Humanities in Arts & Sciences, is free and open to the public, although seating is extremely limited. For more information or to RSVP, call 935-5576.

Politics

Larry May, Ph.D., J.D., professor of philosophy in Arts & Sciences, will deliver a keynote address on "The Moral Writer" as part of "Celebrating Our Books, Recognizing Our Authors." The University's fourth annual faculty book colloquium, at 4 p.m. Dec. 2, in the University's Building Formal Lounge.

Going public: Junior Magdalena Osbourn puts the finishing touches on her project, "The Isolation and Characterization of a Novel Hyperthermophilic Archaean From Yellowstone National Park," during the Undergraduate Research Symposium Nov. 14 in the Women's Building Formal Lounge. The symposium showcased undergraduate research performed by more than 30 students, who described their research through posters and visual presentations, across several academic disciplines.

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Building

A 'lager, acoustically brilliant space' — from Page 1

The Department of Music and the School of Engineering and Applied Science are collaborating to build a new music building. The new building will include a large concert hall, a smaller recital hall, and several practice rooms.

Hydrogen
Has potential, but also many challenges — from Page 1

Theoretical chemistry work aims at calculating the properties of materials that are based on hydrogen, but there are many challenges and potential drawbacks.

Hydrogen burns in the same way as natural gas. It is a promising alternative energy source, but its chemical energy is directly and efficiently converted to electricity in a vehicle.

But the biggest problem with hydrogen is that the infrastructure is not yet in place to support hydrogen fueling stations.

Brain
Variability of internal signals is important — from Page 1

One speculation was that the brain signals might be encoded in a way that allows for more efficient communication.

The variability of internal signals is important for predicting how the brain might be able to perform complex tasks.

The variability of internal signals can help to explain how the brain is able to make decisions and control its activities.
A team of WUSTL students won first place in the national Regional Collegiate Col- lege Programming Contest, placing 11th of 12 teams from Kentucky, Tennessee, Illi- nois, and Missouri. The annual contest is run by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). The contest involves teams of college students trying to solve difficult program- ming problems, against the clock. The WUSTL students competed at Webster University Nov. 5 in St. Louis.

The students are James Aguilier and Adam Nørberg, undergradu- ates in computer science and en- gineering, and Albert Mao, a graduate student from the School of Medicine. "The problems are generally just tricky questions that one can write a computer to solve. One possible instance of a problem would be a problem that deals with a very complicated board game and asks a contestant to write a program that deter- mines who won the game after a certain number of moves," Mao said.

"Another possible problem would be to give (the contestants) a university course schedule includ- ing prerequisites and require the contestants to write a program that determine the minimal num- ber of semesters required to com- plete all of the courses," Mao said.

"One thing that we do on the surface, but Aguilier said that the hard part is that the con- testants can only talk to answer the question — the contestants cannot help to help the program answer any of the questions.

Another difficult twist to the competition is that if your pro- gram fails, you are given chances to fix it, but the judges will not tell you how your program failed — only that it failed. Contestants have to figure out the "how" on their own.

"The contest questions are extremely difficult," Aguilier said. "For example, one of the level 4 problems our team solved was unavowed by any other team in the entire region. When you consider that among those teams there are 372 of the most brilliant collegiate programmers in the Midwest, the fact that only one team answered the question cor- rectly becomes more impressive.

"Perhaps the greatest indication of the difficulty of the ques- tions is that there were only nine questions which no team solved — none didn't even try, after reading it." There's also an element of teamwork that is very important here. The three students only have a single computer to work on at a time, and they have to manage the process of solving prob- lems.

"Deciding who should actually type in the solution to a particular problem, and who should be thinking about the next problem is a surprisingly difficult thing to do. Because the problems are timed, the ability to perform this coordination is critical. It's not only the question of the time between winning and losing.

The WUSTL team did a partic- ularly good job in this aspect of the competition, and that reflected in its final score, which was considerably better than that of the second-place team.

The WUSTL students worked about 4.5 hours to complete the ques- tions they answered. There is a time limit of five hours for the entire contest, which is completed simultaneously across the entire region. "Being able to win against such a tough field is probably the best thing about winning the contest," Aguilier said. "Aguilier said that the team was all in shock, and it definitely makes me feel like there was no obstacle too large for me to con- quer in the future."

"Being a champion in the true sense of the word feels amazing."
Guiding Project ARK with compassion

Kim Donica helps children, adolescents and women with HIV

Kim Donica (left) and Stacey Slovacek, child life specialist, sort toys for Project ARK's annual toy drive, which provides toys for more than 1,000 children affected by HIV in the St. Louis area.

BY DIANE DUKE WILLIAMS

In 1989, Kim Donica took a social work position in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at St. Louis Children's Hospital. As a small part of her job, Donica was asked if she would work with families whose babies had contracted HIV from their mothers.

"When I had this opportunity, I knew working with these families was what I wanted to do," says Donica, now program director of Project ARK (AIDS/HIV Resources and Knowledge) and research administrator in pediatric infectious diseases.

Now a national policy maker and the key figure in the field of HIV services for women and children in St. Louis, colleagues say Donica brings patience and a level head to her emotionally challenging work.

"Many local families literally ose her their trust," says Lynn Cooper, who has worked with Donica for 15 years as president of Doorways, a local shelter for HIV residence program. "She's gotten them out of bad situations and connected them with lifesaving services, case management and resource referral."

When Donica started working with families with HIV, she knew firsthand what an HIV diagnosis meant for a family and the struggles it would face. Her brother-in-law and two other family members had already been diagnosed with the disease.

"I consider her an organizational genius," says Greg Storch, her former third-grade teacher who went on to practice in a rural area after graduating. "She's very good at understanding how organizations work, fitting the right people into the organization and making sure they're successful."

"She also is a very creative problem-solver," Storch says.

Today, with a budget of $2 million and a staff of approximately 60, Project ARK helps almost 600 people and is the only local agency specifically dedicated to serve children, adolescents and women living with HIV.

"I was critical in overseeing the growth of Project ARK," says Donica. "I consider her an organizational genius," she says. "She's very good at understanding how organizations work, fitting the right people into the organization and making sure they're successful."

"I also am a very creative problem-solver," Donica says.

When Donica first began helping families with HIV, babies born to mothers with HIV had a 30% chance of being infected before, during or after birth at an alarming high school. But since 1994, when women with HIV started taking the drug AZT during pregnancy, the transmission rate has plummeted.

"Seeing fewer mother-to-child HIV transmissions and longer life expectancies in children with HIV has been very rewarding for Donica."

"When I first started working in this area, the life expectancy for children with this disease was 3- to 5-year-old," she says. "Now, many are living through adolescence and into young adulthood. Many of these kids have complicated lives, but for the most part enjoy a good quality of life. They are very brave and a true inspiration."

More children today — about 70 percent of the families that Project ARK works with — tell school administrators about their disease.

Under Donica's guidance, Project ARK developed a plan of action that families can use when they make this disclosure.

"One of the hardest parts of Donica's job," she says, "is helping chil- dren who have been unplanned by the disease."

The children and families helped by Project ARK often view the staff as an extended family. This feeling is fostered by Camp Hope, an annual camp Project ARK hosts for children with HIV and their families at Trout Lodge in Potosi, Mo.

Not only do the families connect with the staff and provide great support to each other — away from the stigma and rejection they may face at home — but they also share advice about how to get family members to take their medications on a regular basis.

"It's immeasurable what Camp Hope means to these families," Donica says.

Donica grew up the middle child in a close-knit family in Puxico, Mo., a town of fewer than 1,000 people, located between Poplar Bluff and Cape Girardeau. But people in little Puxico had big dreams, Donica says: "It seemed the entire town had a belief that you could do anything or be anything.

Some of Donica's classmates became physicians, CEOs of companies and political leaders. The late Chris Sifford became a top aide for former Missouri Gov. Mel Carnahan; and Roy Temple served as chief of staff for U.S. Sen. Jean Carnahan.

Donica's father farmed and her mother taught school. In 1987, Donica's 1-year-old daughter, Kirsten, was diagnosed as profoundly hearing impaired. Both children received cochlear implants from the Washington University Hearing Rehabilitation and Cochlear Implant Program and now attend the hearing-impaired program at Brentwood School.

"From the start, we believed we could develop a comprehensive program to help address the many needs these families have, and we did," she says proudly.

Donica majored in social work at Southeast Missouri State University. When she graduated, she received a full scholarship for a master's degree at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work. The scholarship was given to a social worker who promised to practice in a rural area after graduating.

As part of her master's degree, she completed a practicum with the Ferguson Medical Group and the Missouri Delta Community Hospital, not far from Puxico. Donica was that hospital's first social worker and provided both mental-health and medical social services. She distinctly remembers counseling young girls whom she referred to the local health-care facility and saw them the next day.

"After she earned a master's degree, Donica was hired by the Ferguson Medical Group for a short while and then joined the Booth Memorial Health Center, where she worked for five years."

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As part of her master's degree, she completed a practicum with the Ferguson Medical Group and the Missouri Delta Community Hospital, not far from Puxico. Donica was that hospital's first social worker and provided both mental-health and medical social services. She distinctly remembers counseling young girls whom she referred to the local health-care facility and saw them the next day.

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In 1997, Donica's 1-year-old daughter, Kirsten, was diagnosed as profoundly hearing impaired. Both children received cochlear implants from the Washington University Hearing Rehabilitation and Cochlear Implant Program and now attend the hearing-impaired program at Brentwood School.

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