Recent Donation to HWI Reflects A Family’s Generosity and Sage Approach to Giving

Catt Family Gift an Example of the Mutual Benefits of Planned Giving

Born in New Rochelle, New York in 1913, W. Jackson Catt was destined to become a highly successful businessman, a loving family man and a generous philanthropist. He was the owner of W. Jackson Catt Sales, where he began working during his senior year of high school after his father’s death.

A Success in Both Business and Life
The heir to the family food business, Catt possessed the rare and enviable entrepreneurial spirit which made him a leader in the business world. Catt discovered that fast food giant McDonald’s could both prevent excessive waste and increase profit margins by using what was then a groundbreaking technique — the quick freeze process. He, along with his business partners, convinced McDonald’s executives of the benefits of this new way of doing business and his rocket to success was launched.

Catt succeeded in his personal life as well. He was married in 1935 to Anne (Gehm) Catt. In the late 1940s, the Catts moved to East Aurora and had four daughters. Catt was an avid golfer. Along the way, he also became an active and generous philanthropist.

Catt Gives Gift of Time, Talent and Financial Resources
Catt was an HWI board member from 1978 until the time of his death in 1982. During his board tenure, Catt made a generous gift which allowed HWI to establish a development office.

Now many years later, Hauptman-Woodward is very fortunate to again be a recipient of Catt’s generosity. In fact, HWI received a donation via planned giving.

HWI Endowment Enriched with Catt’s Planned Gift
Catt set up a trust — a Charitable Giving Trust — and among the provisions of that trust was the directive that upon Mrs. Anne Catt’s death, the funds remaining in that particular trust were to be gifted to Hauptman-Woodward.

The gift of nearly $400,000 will be added to HWI’s endowment. The Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute’s endowment is crucial to the continued success of the Institute. The endowment earnings provide seed funding for research, start-up funds for new faculty members, and interim funding to support established faculty and their labs. The HWI Board of Directors, Scientists and Staff are grateful to the Catt Family for this generous gift.

Planned Gifts Protect Heirs and Support Favorite Cause
Planned giving is an option to consider for individuals who want to support a charity of their choice, but first want to ensure that their heirs’ needs are fully met. It is flexible and designed to accommodate the donor. To begin the process of giving, individuals find an organization that is of particular interest to them and make provisions through their will to provide a gift as part of their estate.

Why is Hauptman-Woodward a Worthwhile Institute for Individuals to Contribute to?
HWI scientists are committed to pursuing basic biomedical research in the area of structural biology to understand the causes and seek cures for a variety of diseases. The Institute is a 51 year old, independent, not-for-profit biomedical research facility that relies on public and private sources for funding.

The Steps to a Cure Begin with Basic Research
You can help pave the road to a cure with your donation. Your support at any level helps Hauptman-Woodward in this journey.

If you are interested in learning more about planned giving or other ways to support HWI, please contact Laurie Elliott Krajna via phone at 716-898-8597 or via email at lkrajna@hwi.buffalo.edu. Krajna will be happy to help you customize the best giving plan for you and your family.
Peter J. Horn, Ph.D., has joined HWI as a research scientist. Horn, who previously worked at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, will conduct research on how cancer cells function, how damaged DNA is repaired, and how DNA replication occurs.

Shaun M. Bowman, Ph.D., joined HWI in February as a post-doctoral research fellow. The Buffalo Rotary Foundation donated $10,000 to Hauptman-Woodward for a Pellicon Tangential Flow Filtration (TFF) system that will aid in the protein expression and purification process.

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David Lotterer and Rebecca Robilotto are assisting in Dr. Barnard Chaudhuri’s lab. Lotterer, a student at Cornell studying biomedical sciences, is working on clamping experiments dealing with RNA modification enzymes. Robilotto, a recent Canisius College graduate, is entering Yale University’s computational biology and bioinformatics Ph.D. program. She is working on a computational project dealing with protein assembly design.

Jonathan Langer and Jennifer Makin are assisting Dr. Vivian Cody. Langer, a neuroscience and anthropology student at Indiana University, is expressing, purifying and crystallizing a family of GTP cyclohyra- lose proteins, whose effects are studied as a model for Parkinson’s. Makin, who is studying biology at Canisius College, is cloning, purifying, crystallizing and making mutants of human dihydrofolate reductase enzymes — targets for drugs and chemotherapy.

Deborah Makin and Claire Smith are working with Dr. William L. Duax. Makin, a bioinformatics and computer science student at Canisius College, is analyzing and interpreting data from thousands of crystallization experiments to quantify the impact of the methods they are helping to develop.

Elizabeth Nowak and Keri Omphroy are assisting Dr. Debashis Ghosh. Nowak is studying African studies and biology at Harvard College. Omphroy is studying nuclear medicine at UB. Nowak and Omphroy are both working to clone, express and purify the aromatase enzyme system in the lab.

Mehwish Ghauri and Matt Varacallo are working in Dr. Andrew M. Gulick’s lab studying essential proteins from a bacterial pathogen that is prevalent in hospital-acquired infections and causes chronic infections in Cystic Fibrosis patients. Ghauri is studying pharmaceutical sciences at UB. Varacallo is studying biochemistry at Washington & Jefferson College.

Martha Clark and Ria Swanekamp are developing high-throughput crystalization methods in the lab of Dr. George DeTitta and Joseph Lub. Clark is studying biochemistry at UB. Swanekamp is a student at Grove City College and is studying chemistry with a minor in business. They are preparing crystallization cocktail combinations used for high-throughput identification of protein crystallization conditions. Both students are analyzing and interpreting data from thousands of crystallization experiments to quantify the impact of the methods they are helping to develop.

Erie County Gives Summer Program $45,000

Erie County through the dedicated efforts of County Executive Joel Giambra and County Legislature Chair Lynn Marinelli, has donated a generous sum of $45,000 to the HWI Research Intern Summer Program. “Erie County is privileged to have an institution such as the Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute,” Erie County Executive Joel Giambra said. “The money that the County provides for the summer intern-ship program is money well spent, as the students selected learn the necessary experience and education to become tomorrow’s top scientists and doctors.”

First Niagara Gives $25,000 for Program

The First Niagara Foundation has donated $25,000 for the HWI Summer Program. The foundation has made a commitment to local communities and makes decisions regionally to ensure that the needs of the communities are met through charitable donations.

“First Niagara has long embraced mentoring as an important component of our corporate philosophy and mission of being a good neighbor and community member,” Western New York Regional President Dan Cantara said. “This emphasis on mentor- ing will provide our communities with the financial and manpower backing to make a real impact; it’s amazing what can happen when a young person has the positive influence of a mentor.”

Where Are They Now?

A Quick Look at Where a Small Selection of HWI’s former Summer Students are Today...

Kam Lam graduated from Washington & Jefferson College with a degree in Biochemistry and Spanish, and a minor in History. She will attend Georgetown University to obtain a master’s in Physiology and she plans to enter a Master of Public Health program next fall where she will focus on international health. “My intern experience was very positive,” Lam said. “I worked with Dr. Eddie Snell and some great lab technicians, Jen and Robin. Everyone was so friendly and helpful.”

Sheena Degnan graduated from SUNY Fredonia with a bachelor’s degree in Molecular Genetics and a minor in Chemistry. She will attend UC Berkeley to receive a Ph.D. in Genetics and Development. “It was great working in the lab. The time spent at HWI was priceless,” Degnan said. “All the hands-on time with such fabulous equipment, tools, and human resources opened up so many doors.”

Carolyn Hogan graduated from Cornell University with a bachelor’s degree in Biological and Environmental Engineering. She will enter the Medical Scientist Training program at Washington University this fall. “My internship at HWI was definitely an influence in my decision to pursue biomedical research,” Hogan said.

Rebecca Robilotto graduated from Canisius College with a bachelor’s degree in Bioinformatics. She will attend Yale University to receive a Ph.D. in Computational Biology and Bioinformatics. “HWI has given me opportunities to work with some great people and it gave me a chance to be innovative and to learn more about a topic on which I only had basic knowledge,” Robilotto said. “My experience here helped solidify my desire to go into research as a career.”

Deborah Ghash is a student at Cornell University. He plans to receive a bachelor’s degree in Engineering in 2010. He is doing research at Cornell in their Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering department this summer. “I had a great first-time research experience at HWI,” Ghash said.

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The Verizon Foundation has donated $12,000 to the HWI Research Intern Summer Program. The Verizon Foundation funds programs that address social issues such as literacy, technology education and domestic violence.

The Verizon Foundation is very enthusiastic about the HWI summer program.

“We provided a grant for $12,000 for the HWI Summer Intern Program. Verizon has been sponsoring this internship program since 2005. This grant is in support of HWI’s efforts to provide science-based research experience for bright students so that they can stay in Buffalo to work in highly skilled professions,” Maureen Rasp-Glose, Director of Verizon Community Affairs said. “The internship program provides a wonderful opportunity for students to learn, grow and prosper in a learning environment. Verizon is very much committed to supporting programs that strengthen the communities where our employees live and work. Verizon continued its sponsor-ship in 2007 because we were confident in the leadership of Dr. Jane Griffin to make the Summer Intern Research Program a quality program once again.”
Ann Marie Wojtaszycy and Martin Glase are assisting Dr. Edward H. Snell. Wojtaszycy, a student at Canisius College studying biochemistry, is working to grow larger crystals for neutron diffraction. Glase is studying physics engineering at John Carroll University. Glase is imaging the rapid cooling of biochemical crystals – an important technique in crystallography.

Melvin Parker is studying biomedical engineering at Brown University. He is working with Dr. Edward Snell and Joseph Luft. Parker is programming an Epson robot, enabling it to perform repetitive, laborious tasks, such as picking up and sorting thousands of small vials containing crystalization cocktails. Parker also is using software to design tools that a robot can use to perform these tasks. His work is integrated with the high-throughput crystalization laboratory.

Andrew Lusty is studying information technology at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He is working with Dr. Edward Snell and Joseph Luft. Lusty is assisting in Dr. Peter J. Rosenblum’s lab developing a recombinant expression system to produce fusion yeast proteins aimed at studying their physical association with each other. Johnson is a pre-med student at D’Youville College.

Elena Sendra is assisting Dr. Timothy C. Umland. Sendra currently is attending Washington & Jefferson College, where she is studying biochemistry and Spanish. She is working to clone, express and purify the DNA binding domain from the protein prep1, to crystallize the protein-DNA complex.

Namrita Mozumdar is assisting Dr. Mary Rosenblum in her lab. Mozumdar is a graduate of Boston College with a bachelor’s degree in English and a minor in Chemistry. This fall she will be attending Roswell Parkentering the Masters in Natural and Biomedical Sciences program. She is working on the development of membrane protein crystallization screens in the lab.

Rebecca Pietrasik and Ryan Rimmer are assisting Dr. Wayne Schultz in his lab. Pietrasik, who is mapping in biology at SUNY Geneseo, is studying the SARS virus and its conducting stabilization and crystallization experiments on viral polyproteins. Rimmer, a student at Cornell University, is studying microbiology with a minor in economics and management. He is using a fluorometer to quantify the interaction of SARS virus non- structural proteins with RNA.

Loknath Bharti, a computer engineering student at UB, is writing web-based interfaces for structure determination programs developed at HWI, under the direction of Dr. Charles M. Weeks.

Andrew Lusty, who is studying information technology at the Rochester Institute of Technology, is working with Max Thayer to develop a web-based interface to integrate data generated in the laboratories with a database. This will allow scientists to more efficiently track the thousands of experiments that are set up each day, permitting them to more rapidly analyze and interpret their results.

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Generous Gifts Fund the 34th Consecutive Research Intern Summer Program

The Western New York Foundation has donated $10,000 to the HWI Research Intern Summer Program. “A group of Western New York Foundation trustees met with Dr. Jane Griffin and Laura Krajoy, as well as an HWI board member prior to approval of the grant,” Richard E. Mao, President of the Western New York Foundation Board of Trustees, said. “We were very favorably impressed with the quality of the 2007 Research Intern Summer Program and the enthusiasm of the staff in charge. Based on the meeting the WNY Foundation concluded the program presented a critical component of the education between organizations. The Josephine Goodyear Foundation has given support to events, organizations, and educational and scholarship programs in the Greater Buffalo area."

The Josephine Goodyear Foundation has donated $10,000 to the HWI Research Intern Summer Program. The foundation, which offers grants to non-profit organizations helping low-income women and children in Western New York, encourages collaboration between organizations. The Josephine Goodyear Foundation has given support to events, organizations, and educational and scholarship programs in the Greater Buffalo area.

Citizens Bank Gives HWI Summer Program Gift of $5,000

The Citizens Bank has donated $5,000 to the HWI Research Intern Summer Program. The foundation, which is the principal charitable contributions vehicle of Citizens Financial Group, Citizens Bank and Charter One Bank, N.A., supports housing, community development and basic human needs.

Anthony J. Rizzo, senior vice president and regional manager for Citizens Bank explains the importance of science education programs. “Citizens Bank is proud to support the summer intern program at Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute.”

U.S. Senate Staff Speaks to HWI Scientists

Laura Krizak, Regional Director for U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, recently visited HWI. After a tour led by Dr. Jane F. Griffin and Tara A. Ellis, Krizak observed a new 3-D protein structure related to the study of the SARS virus. She is pictured here with Dr. Wayne Schultz (seated) and Dr. Tim Umland.

Articles are courtesy of: Amanda Allard, Contributing Writer

Marissa Faitelson, Contributing Writer

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Dr. Robert H. Blessing: Up Close and Personal

Structures: What is the best part about working at Hauptman-Woodward?
Blessing: The science - the camaraderie, spirit, and cooperation among the staff members and scientists.

Structures: What is the most interesting scientific accomplishment you have made at Hauptman-Woodward?

Structures: What was the longest workday you have ever experienced and why?
Blessing: 36 hours – Not often, but yes, it was a 36-hour day. It was for the sake of experimental measures that could not be interrupted.

Structures: What is something that no one at Hauptman-Woodward knows about you?
Blessing: I have been at HWI for almost 30 years. Rumor has it that I snore, but it is not true.

Structures: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
Blessing: Maybe dead. Hmmm. 10 years? I don’t know. My wife will not let me retire.

Structures: Who has been the biggest influence on your life and why?
Blessing: Well of course my family, parents, and teachers. I have been lucky at all the stages of my education.

Structures: What is your favorite holiday?
Blessing: Christmas!

Structures: What is your worst fear?
Blessing: Are we being psycho-analyzed here?

Structures: What is the last movie you saw?
Blessing: If it counts if you saw it at home-The Queen.

Structures: What is the most recent book you read for fun and your all-time favorite book?
Blessing: The most recent book I read is called The Princes of Ireland. I cannot possibly pick one all-time favorite book, however I like to read poetry. My favorite poets include William Butler Yeats and John Montague.

Structures: What is your favorite song or musician?
Blessing: J.S. Bach.

Structures: What advice would you give to the students, interns, or younger employees?
Blessing: “Work hard, be good, and let who will be clever.” I believe that is a quote from the Railway Children.

Structures: If you could spend a day with anyone from the past or present, who would it be?
Blessing: Socrates.

Structures: What three words best describe your personality?
Blessing: That would be better for others to decide.