On Campus

In Brief: Winter 2012

Winter 2012-13

Big screen coming

Katharina Otto-Bernstein ’86CC, ’92SOA, a filmmaker best known for her award-winning documentaries *Beautopia* and *Absolute Wilson*, has committed $5 million to create a film screening room in the Lenfest Center for the Arts, the new arts building scheduled to open on the Manhattanville campus in 2016.

The 150-seat Katharina Otto-Bernstein Screening Room will host screenings by prominent and emerging filmmakers, lectures and panel discussions, and artist talks — in addition to providing a place for students to view one another’s work.

“It is with great joy that I find myself in the position to give back to the institution that has played an immeasurable role in my development as a filmmaker and as a person,” says Otto-Bernstein.

New computations

Dylan Liu ’13SEAS recently became the first Columbia Engineering student ever to win a prestigious Marshall Scholarship for graduate study in the UK.

Liu, a native of New Jersey who left high school after the eleventh grade to attend Columbia, plans to pursue a DPhil in theoretical physics at the University of Oxford. He hopes to contribute to the emerging field of quantum computing, which borrows ideas from quantum mechanics in an attempt to design extremely powerful computers.

Pursuing graduate work at Oxford “will quench my thirst for elegant physics,” Liu says, “while also fulfilling my commitment to improving our world via applications to biology, neuroscience, economics, chemistry, climate science, and more.”

Giving with flair

New Delhi–based entrepreneur Sharik Currimbhoy ’02CC has made a donation to Columbia as notable for its dramatic timing as for its generosity: he announced his gift of $12.12 million at 12:12 p.m. on December 12, 2012.

Currimbhoy, who studied economics at the College from 1998 to 2002 and is the founder of the real-estate and private-equity investment firm Element Capital, says the gift is intended to honor his great-great-grandfather, Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim. It is the largest gift ever to Columbia from an alumnus in India.

According to a University statement, Currimbhoy’s gift will “support research and fellowships with a focus on India and emerging markets” at several schools across Columbia.



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