From the Director’s Chair

Dear Alumni and Friends of Plan II,

Things have quieted down at the Plan II office since graduation but there is no tomb-like silence. As ever, we are running orientation sessions for the incoming Class of 2016. Beginning in June, we began welcoming more than 180 rising first-year students into our program and are helping them to navigate the rapids of enrollment in Plan II. This class was especially competitive with a near-record number of applicants totaling over 1300. Thanks to Mary Dillman and Melissa Ossian, our Plan II advisors, and Jennifer Scalora for making the students' transition from high school to college particularly smooth during summer orientation.

The Class of 2012 has left our building but not without leaving a record of sparkling accomplishments. Here are but a few highlights. Two of our seniors, George Miller and Jillian Owens, were honored with George H. Mitchell Student Awards for Academic Excellence. George Miller’s thesis, *Two Planets Orbiting the Eclipsing System NN Serpentis*, won the $20,000 grand prize. George will be studying in the doctoral program in Astronomy at Harvard University in the fall. Jillian received a $2,000 prize for her senior thesis, *A Wide Net of Hope: Understanding the Success of Joel Osteen and Lakewood Church*. She plans on applying to doctoral programs in Religious Studies. Five Plan II students were designated as Dean’s Distinguished Graduates in the College of Liberal Arts: Viviana Aldous, Natalie Butler, Jillian Owens, Naveen Pattisapu, and Kelli Schultz. Anjali Datta, a Plan II and Electrical Engineering major, received the prestigious Hertz Foundation Fellowship of $250,000 for advanced graduate study.

Good news abounds for current Plan II students with the announcement in April of a generous gift of some $2.5 million to the College of Liberal Arts and Plan II from the Lowell Lebermann, Jr., Foundation. Of that sum, $2 million will help support the construction of a Plan II suite in the new Liberal Arts building. The remaining $500,000 will be reserved for the Lowell Lebermann, Jr., Scholarship, bound to be one of the most prestigious scholarships at the University and the rival of the most prestigious awards in the country. For more information, see the story in this issue of our Newsletter and on the Plan II website. I’m also happy to report that you have helped us to more than triple Austin Ligon’s challenge gift of $50,000 for Plan II study-abroad programs and students for the academic year of 2012-2013. Thank you and thanks to Austin, who has promised us an additional $50,000 in a challenge gift for each of the next three years. Let’s see if we again can triple his gift.

I’m very pleased to announce that Dr. Paul Sullivan will be joining us as Assistant Director of Plan II. Paul comes to us with a long history of connections to Plan II and the College of Liberal Arts. He is an alumnus of our program and a former advisor in it. After earning a doctorate in English, he has taught in both Liberal Arts Honors and the Department of English. We are thrilled to have him on staff and grateful for the aid he will provide Associate Director Alex Wettlaufer in guiding our seniors through the process of writing their theses.
Paul’s arrival is tinged with some sadness at the departure of Dr. Wendy Domjan. Wendy launched the position of Assistant Director four years ago and has been an invaluable member of the Plan II team, advising countless students, helping to guide the program to new heights and, as an award-winning teacher, offering several courses in Plan II. We will miss her presence and her vision and hope that she will continue to advise our students and teach in our program.

New evidence of the high regard in which the Plan II Honors Program is held nationwide has recently come to our attention. The Public University Press has just released its latest rankings of the 50 top-flight honors programs and colleges at public universities across the country. Plan II ranked third overall and second among smaller programs with enrollments under 1800. We are, of course, pleased with the results but won’t be satisfied until we achieve the number one ranking in both categories. You can read more about the report in this issue of our Newsletter and on our website.

I’m happy to say that at the request of Dean Diehl I have agreed to continue as Director of the Plan II Honors Program until the fall of 2015. I will, however, be on leave in 2012-2013. Professor Alex Wettlaufer will serve as Acting Director in my absence. An awarding-winning teacher, renowned scholar, and for several years Associate Director of Plan, Professor Wettlaufer is an excellent choice to run the program. We are fortunate to have her.

Warm regards,

Michael Stoff

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**Plan II News**

**Lebermann Foundation Gift**

The Lebermann Foundation, established by former University of Texas System Regent and Plan II student Lowell H. Lebermann Jr., is donating $2.5 million to The University of Texas at Austin to help recruit top students for the Plan II Honors Program.

A $2 million portion of the gift will support the construction of the home of Plan II in the new Liberal Arts building, to be named the Lowell H. Lebermann Jr. Plan II Honors Suite.

The remaining $500,000 will be dedicated to the launch of the Lowell H. Lebermann Jr. Scholarship Program, a full four-year scholarship program for Plan II students. These scholarships will enhance the statewide, national and global visibility, accessibility and prestige of Plan II and The University of Texas at Austin.

More about the Lebermann Foundation Gift

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**Dean Woodruff Stepping Down**

Paul Woodruff, inaugural dean of the University of Texas School of Undergraduate Studies since 2006, announced that he plans to step down from his post, effective Aug. 31.

An interim dean will be named in the coming weeks, and a national search will be held for a new dean, according to UT officials.

Woodruff will return to his faculty position in the Department of Philosophy. He is working on a
concept for a new center for research and teaching in practical ethics.

More about Dean Woodruff

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Plan II Highly Ranked

A new site on the web, Public University Honors, is devoted entirely to the evaluation and discussion of public university honors programs and public honors colleges. Plan II Honors ranks among the top honors experiences in the country.

Plan II Honors is ranked third in overall excellence and honors factors, and second of smaller programs in overall excellence.

From the website: "Overall Excellence is based on honors curriculum; prestigious scholarships (Rhodes, Truman, Goldwater); honors graduation rates; honors housing; study-abroad programs; and priority registration for honors students. Honors Factors excludes prestigious scholarships from the scoring in order to place greater emphasis on honors-specific features of each program. UT Austin's Plan II Honors Program is Number 3 in both Overall Excellence and Honors Factors."

More about Public University Honors Rankings

Plan II Alumni & Friends

The Cookie Jar Project was created in 2011 to bring Plan II alumni together in small groups in various cities around the US. The idea comes to us from Lalana Pundisto ('04), who was kind enough not only to provide us with the idea, but also with the cookie jar itself, a vintage ceramic owl.

The Cookie Jar is symbolic, both of what the Program has done for its alumni, as well as how alumni can support current Plan II students. Here's how it works.

Plan II alumni in major cities around the country begin the process by volunteering to be 'chapter leaders'. The chapter leaders' job will be to organize a reunion/party in their city. The gathering will be centered around the idea of alumni coming together to sample, literally from the Cookie Jar, but metaphorically from their shared experiences in Plan II.

Houston: May 5

Lalana held the first event, in Houston, in coordination with the Texas Exes Lone Star Stampede.

Lalana writes, "...the Plan II Pre-Race Coffee went smoothly. We had a 50% turnout, which is impressive given the early start time. I had coffee, cookies, and embossed wristbands waiting for our alums. Everyone expressed interest in future events."

"The recently graduated alums wanted me to urge you to ask students to immediately register on Linkedin and join the Plan II alumni group. The older alums indicated that they preferred quarterly book discussions to the young alums' monthly happy hours as possible alumni events. If you can get a Plan II professor to share his or her notes on a book assigned for a class he or she teaches, it would make for a very interesting Voltaire's Coffee."
Chicago: August 7

After the success of the first event, Lalana has passed the jar off to three alumni now living in Chicago: Kimberly Mickelson ('81), Brooke Vuckovic ('92) and Daniel Hartman ('98). They are planning an event in Chicago on August 7th, 2012.

The details are still being worked out, but the idea is to meet after a planned Texas Exes event in the Windy City on the evening of the 7th. U.T.’s Athletic Director DeLoss Dodds and the Executive Director of the Texas Exes, Leslie Cedar will be in town to kick off the UT football season, so the Plan II Alumni & Friends will meet somewhere for some food and drinks afterward.

Contact Kimberly, Brooke and/or Daniel for more details.

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Want to host a Cookie Jar event? Write to Phillip at planialumni@austin.utexas.edu

Alumni News

**Michael Lind ('82)** has a new book, *Land of Promise*, an ambitious economic history of the United States. The book is rich with details, more than a few of them surprising, and its subject is central to what is arguably the single most important question facing the country today: How can our economy grow more quickly, more sustainably and more equitably than it has been growing, both to maintain the United States’ position as the world’s pre-eminent power and to improve the lives of its citizens?

Lind, a founder of the New America Foundation in Washington and the author of several political histories, acknowledges from the beginning that his thesis will make some readers uncomfortable.

More about Lind’s Book

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**Nathan Moore ('07) and Elisabeth Askin ('06)** are both medical students at Washington University in St Louis and have recently written a book about the American health care system, *The Health Care Handbook: A Clear and Concise Guide to the United States Health Care System*.

This 175-page guide is written for health professions students, practicing health professionals and anyone else who has to navigate the vast and complex U.S. health-care system. The book explains topics including inpatient and outpatient care delivery systems, health insurance and economics and healthy policy and reform. The guide also explores some of the major issues facing the health care system today, including medical errors, malpractice, conflict of interest and residency work hours.

More about The Health Care Handbook

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**Jenny Millsap Crutchlow ('95)** and Ross Crutchlow are a professional operatic soprano/tenor husband and wife team living in New York City with two small boys. They are raising funds for an audition tour of opera houses in Germany.
Jenny specializes in German coloratura and Ross specializes in Wagner. They write that they, "want to go to the birthplace of the music we sing, to immerse ourselves in the language and style, to collaborate with and learn from colleagues for whom this repertoire is second nature, to become more than just great – to become masters of this music."

More about the Crutchlow Project

Paul Navrátil ('99) was interviewed by PBS News Hour for an eight minute piece on (Austin) Pecan Street's smart energy work. The interview will air on Friday July 13. Check your local PBS station for times. In Austin, it comes on KLRU at 6pm CT.

Alumni Profile

Julius Glickman ('62)

The Ex-Students’ Association at the University of Texas has named six recipients of the Distinguished Alumnus Award, including Plan II alumnus and benefactor, Julius Glickman. The association, also known as the Texas Exes, honored this year’s recipients at a presentation in Austin in October 2011. This is Texas Exes’ highest honor, reserved for an elite group of alumni whose professional successes and service to the University go far beyond expectations.

During his time at UT, Glickman served as student body president, was named outstanding student, and was selected for membership in several of the most prestigious campus organizations: the Spurs, the Friars and the Tejas Club.

More about the Distinguished Alumnus Award

More about Julius Glickman

Alumni Updates

Connie Duckworth ('76)

In 2003, Connie was a retired partner of Goldman Sachs. She had four school age children and a calendar full of board and speaking responsibilities. She wasn’t looking for anything in particular, but she was looking. This interview is the story of her journey from Wall Street partner to social entrepreneur, from working in a world of privilege to one in which the need is overwhelming. Arzu Studio Hope commissions women in Afghanistan to weave top quality rugs for sale in the United States and Europe. ARZU addresses three interdependent needs: consistent and improved employment, access to education, and access to basic healthcare, with a particular focus on maternal and infant care.

More about Connie

Bruce McCandless III ('83)
Bruce was named a partner at the law firm Mitchell, Williams, Selig, Gates & Woodyard, P.L.L.C. in January.

He writes that his novel *Sour Lake*, which was "written against the strenuous opposition of fellow Plan II alum Roger G. Worthington ('83), debuted in December 2011 and is now available at Amazon.com and in bookstores in Austin and San Antonio. Kirkus Reviews called *Sour Lake* a "well-executed journey into the macabre," and reader discretion is advised. Greetings to all disciples of Wayne A. Rebhorn, Pat Kruppa, and the late Irwin Spear!"

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Kayne Burk ('03)

Kayne has moved from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

He writes, "I'm still settling in and getting to know the city, but I'm already enjoying warm weather and sunshine. If you pass through, I'd love to hear from you. My move to Los Angeles, was not driven by an offer. Four months ago, in the midst of interviewing, I began discussing a new web based concept in the reality television space with a partner in Los Angeles. At first I was skeptical of the business prospects, but after vetting the concept, digging into the numbers, and conducting real world tests with reality stars, it made sense to relocate to pursue the opportunity. We are only a few weeks along, but we're excited by the progress we've made so far. If you are a reality television fan, please let me know; I'd love to include you in our beta and get your feedback."

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Jonathan Hunt ('06)

Jonathan is currently a Research Fellow at U.S. Department of Education in Paris, conducting historical research into France's role in the making of the global nonproliferation regime, 1945-1970.

He writes, "I've just sent in the final paperwork to accept a MacArthur Predoctoral Fellowship at the Center for International Security and Law at Stanford University beginning next fall. Thank you Iran for making my nascent history of the global nonproliferation regime suddenly seem urgently needed. And thank you all those who have helped me keep my sanity this year. Needless to say, if you're in or planning to be in the Bay Area next year, I can't spend EVERY minute writing my dissertation! There are real mountains to climb!"

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Sarah Weiner ('08)

Sarah has been admitted to several top law schools in the country and has decided to go to the Harvard Law School. She is interested in gender politics and her honor thesis compared laws on veiling.

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Owen O'Brien ('10)

Owen has just finished his first semester at Tulane University's Graduate School of Social Work.

He writes, "The socially conscious, relationship-centered curriculum has broadened my perspective on how to best help society's disadvantaged. Although I still have an interest in one-on-one therapy, I am becoming increasingly fascinated with the macro approach embodied by
community organizations and policy practice. I am currently working with Youth Run NOLA, an after-school running program for underprivileged middle school and high school students, and next semester, I will also work for University of New Orleans Counseling Center as a counselor and workshop creator. I serve as a member on the TSSW Diversity Coalition and a Wellness Senator on the TSSW student government and founded the TSSW Running, Walking, and Wellness Club."

"I cannot tell you how useful my Plan II degree has been thus far. My courses taught me to write well, think critically, solve problems creatively, communicate clearly, and above all, seek opportunities proactively. Thanks to all Plan II faculty, staff, and students for this!"

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Leah Holder ('11)

Leah has completed her first semester of teaching as a member of the Teach For America Corps.

She writes, "It is a phenomenal program, and it enables me to work directly toward closing our nation’s achievement gap. I teach a beautiful class of 2nd graders at Whidby Elementary School. Most of my students come from low-income homes in Houston’s Third Ward area. Because I am the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, my class contains students from a range of ethnic backgrounds, including African-American, Hispanic, and Middle Eastern. I love having such diversity in my class!"

"At times, I have felt overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of my responsibilities; but every time I see my children’s beautiful faces, I am reminded that they’re worth it."

Have an update? Send it to Phillip at planialumni@austin.utexas.edu

In Memoriam

George William Lederer Jr., '69

George was born on September 13, 1947 in Houston, the second of five children of George and Margie Lederer. He attended Alamo Heights High School in San Antonio before enrolling in the Plan II Honors Program at the University of Texas at Austin. He graduated from the the University of Texas School of Law in 1972.

More about George Lederer Jr.