



## For People With Pre-Existing Liver Disease, Toxic Algae May Be More Dangerous

By Tyrel Linkhorn

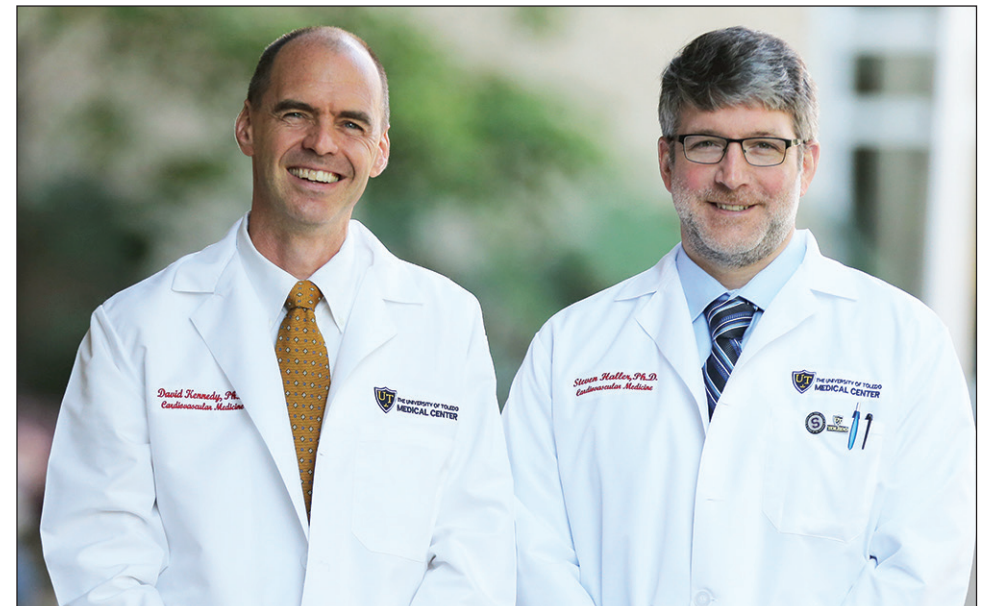
Toxins produced during harmful algal blooms may be more harmful to people than previously known.

Researchers at The University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences sought to examine how microcystin might affect individuals with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, a widespread condition that is frequently asymptomatic. They found the toxin can significantly amplify the disease at levels below what would harm a healthy liver.

The study, published last month in the journal *Toxins*, follows earlier research from UToledo that found clear evidence that microcystin exposure worsens the

severity of pre-existing colitis. Microcystin is a byproduct of the cyanobacteria found in what is commonly known as blue-green algae.

“The take-home message from our research is there are certain groups of people who need to pay extra attention and may be more susceptible to microcystin toxins. We may need to explore special preventative guidelines for those people in terms of how much microcystin they are exposed to through drinking water or other means,” said Dr. David Kennedy, UToledo assistant professor of medicine and one of the study’s lead authors.



continued on p. 7

Kennedy, left, and Haller

Photo by Daniel Miller

## UToledo Engineering Career Fair Drives Job Placements at Major Companies

By Christine Billau

Maggie Buchele doesn’t graduate from The University of Toledo College of Engineering for three more months, but she already secured a full-time job as a project engineer with Marathon Petroleum Corp.

The fourth-year mechanical engineering major traces her success back to the college’s career expo two years ago when she first met representatives from the company, which is ranked No. 31 on the Fortune 500 list.

“I chose UToledo because of the College of Engineering’s mandatory co-op program, which gives you amazing work experience as a student,” said Buchele, who completed two co-ops working at Marathon in Findlay, Ohio. “Companies are getting more specific on who they will hire, and UToledo’s co-op



**ON THE JOB:** Maggie Buchele, left, fourth-year mechanical engineering student, posed for a photo with Brian Knipper, operations technician at Marathon Petroleum Corp. in Findlay, Ohio. After two co-ops at Marathon, Buchele was offered a full-time job, which she will start after she graduates.

continued on p. 3

## Enroll for Benefits by Oct. 31

By Christine Wasserman

Open enrollment for all benefits-eligible employees will be held Tuesday, Oct. 1, through Thursday, Oct. 31. Because the University continually strives to offer a variety of benefits to meet the needs of a widely diverse workforce, several plan changes are being made for 2020.

Premiums will not increase for most employees. There will be a nominal increase for AFSCME bargaining unit employees to more closely align their rates with those of other employees. Additionally, there will be a small increase (3.4%) in premiums for employees choosing vision coverage.

Among other changes for 2020: Preventive services will now be covered at 100%, such as screening mammograms and certain vaccinations; the Gold plan will no longer be available; and the Blue consumer-

continued on p. 2

## Governor Appoints Two Trustees

By Meghan Cunningham

A local attorney and dentist have been appointed to The University of Toledo Board of Trustees.



Walinski replaces Sharon Speyer, who concluded her term in June.

Richard S. Walinski, a lawyer who practices in the areas of contract, corporate and commercial litigation, was named by Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine to a full nine-year term ending July 1, 2028. He

Dr. Eleanore Awadalla, who leads Awadalla Dental, has been appointed to a term ending July 1, 2022. She will complete the remaining years of the term of Steve Cavanaugh, who resigned in June upon beginning his new role as ProMedica's chief financial officer.

"We look forward to welcoming Mr. Walinski and Dr. Awadalla to the Board of Trustees," UToledo President Sharon L. Gaber said. "As well-respected professionals in our community, they know firsthand the value The University of Toledo brings to our city and our region. We

look forward to working with them as we continue our positive momentum."

Walinski's family has practiced continuously in the Toledo area for more than a century. He served as chief counsel to two of Ohio's attorneys general, as chairman of the Ohio Supreme Court's Rules Advisory Committee, and as a member of the Ohio Constitution Modernization Commission.

Walinski received a law degree from UToledo, and he was the founding editor-in-chief of The University of Toledo Law Review. He also holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from UToledo.



Awadalla

Awadalla has 40 years of experience providing general, restorative and cosmetic dental services.

A graduate of Ohio State University's College of Dentistry, Awadalla is a member of the American Dental Association, the Ohio Dental Association, the Toledo Dental Society, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Association of Dental Examiners.

## Enroll

continued from p. 1

driven health plan is moving to Paramount.

If you are a current Gold plan participant, you must select a new plan during open enrollment so there is no disruption in your coverage if you want to continue receiving coverage through the University in 2020.

Additionally, members of the Blue plan, which is moving from Medical Mutual of Ohio to Paramount, should check whether their current physician or healthcare provider is a member of Paramount's network; visit [paramounthealthcare.com](http://paramounthealthcare.com) or call Paramount at 1.800.462.3589.

Further, employees who currently participate in the Flexible Spending Account or the Health Savings Account must enroll to continue taking advantage of those benefits in 2020.

"To help employees understand their options, Human Resources is offering even more opportunities this year to learn about the various healthcare plans," said Wendy Davis, associate vice president and chief human resources officer.

In addition to the annual Benefits Fairs, UToledo benefits specialists will be hosting new walk-in sessions and holding open office hours during which employees can get all of their questions answered, she stated.

To compare all plan details and rates before open enrollment begins, visit

[utoledo.edu/open-enrollment](http://utoledo.edu/open-enrollment), where you also will find frequently asked questions, definitions of healthcare plan terms, and other useful information.

Open benefits sessions to speak one to one with a benefits specialist include:

- Main Campus – Monday, Sept. 23, 9 to 11:30 a.m., and Thursday, Sept. 26, 2 to 4:30 p.m. in Carlson Library Room 1009.
- Health Science Campus – Monday, Sept. 23, 2 to 4:30 p.m., and Thursday, Sept. 26, 9 to 11:30 a.m. in Mulford Library Room 420.

The Open Enrollment Benefits Fairs will feature representatives of various healthcare plans, UToledo fitness centers' and Rocket Wellness staff, UToledo outpatient pharmacists, and other benefits-related professionals.

As an added benefit, free health screenings will be provided at the Benefits Fairs:

- Health Science Campus – Wednesday, Oct. 2, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Morse Center; and
- Main Campus – Thursday, Oct. 3, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Student Recreation Center.

As a reminder, you can significantly reduce your medical expenses throughout the year by choosing UTMC, UT Physicians and UToledo Outpatient Pharmacies for your household's primary and specialty

## OPEN ENROLLMENT: OCT. 1 – 31

Several changes are being made to the University's 2020 benefits. To make selections that best meet your specific needs, learn about your options before you enroll:

- Visit [utoledo.edu/open-enrollment](http://utoledo.edu/open-enrollment) today to compare plan details and rates.
- Attend a Benefits Fair:
  - Health Science Campus – Morse Center, Wednesday, Oct. 2, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
  - Main Campus – Student Rec Center, Thursday, Oct. 3, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
  - Note: Free health screenings available at both fairs!
- Contact HR with any questions or for help to enroll – [benefits@utoledo.edu](mailto:benefits@utoledo.edu) or 419.530.4747.

Be part of the plan!

care, diagnostic and imaging services, prescriptions, and many other healthcare services.

If you need help enrolling online or have questions about your benefits, stop by Human Resources on Main Campus at the Center for Administrative Support (near the Dorr Street entrance) any Tuesday or Thursday during October from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., or contact [benefits@utoledo.edu](mailto:benefits@utoledo.edu) or 419.530.4747. Appointments also can be made outside of these hours; for instance, by third-shift employees.

"Along with knowing your options and selecting a plan that best fits your needs, we want employees to 'Be part of the plan,'" Davis said. "Partner with your primary care provider and participate in the many free Rocket Wellness initiatives we provide throughout the year."

The University has worked hard to ensure most employees will not have any increases in their 2020 premiums, as well to offer additional resources this year for employees who need assistance during open enrollment, she said.

## 'Ferguson Five Years Later' Topic of Cannon Lecture Sept. 26

By Lauren Smieszek

Kimberly Norwood, Henry H. Oberschelp Professor of Law at Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, will present the annual Cannon Lecture titled "Ferguson Five Years Later: A Look at the Legal and Social Reverberations in Ferguson and Around the Nation."



Norwood

She will speak Thursday, Sept. 26, at noon in the Law Center McQuade Auditorium.

In August 2014, events in small-town Ferguson, Mo., sparked international debate on the struggle for equal

justice and equal treatment.

In 2016, Norwood published "Ferguson's Fault Lines: The Race Quake That Rocked a Nation." In the book, she used Ferguson as the foundation for a study on how various laws, social conditions, and economic and political policies may negatively impact the lives of black and brown people in America – contributing to racial and socioeconomic conflict.

Now five years later, Norwood will examine the institutional, systemic and cultural structures that resulted in racially disparate treatment in Ferguson.

Norwood's research focuses on colorism, implicit bias, and the intersection of race, class and public education in America. She is a commissioner on the American Bar Association's Commission on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Profession, a commissioner on the Missouri Supreme Court Commission on Racial and Ethnic Fairness, and a member of the Monitoring Team for the U.S. v. Ferguson Consent Decree.

She is the first black woman in Washington University's history to receive tenure and was named the 2019 Woman of the Year by the Missouri Lawyers Media.

This free, public event is part of the Cannon Lecture Series that was established in 1980 to honor former Toledo attorney Joseph A. Cannon. Food and beverages will be provided. Livestream will be available through the UToledo Alumni Association.

For more information, visit [utoledo.edu/law/events/cannon-lecture](http://utoledo.edu/law/events/cannon-lecture).

## Dedicated to Science



Photo by Daniel Miller

Dr. Nina McClelland, left, and President Sharon L. Gaber smiled after cutting the ribbon at a dedication ceremony Sept. 19 for a new laboratory named in honor of the UToledo alumna. The Dr. Nina McClelland Laboratory for Water Chemistry and Environmental Analysis is located in Bowman-Oddy Laboratories. McClelland, UToledo dean emerita, retired from the University in 2011 after serving as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, as well as working in the Provost's Office. She began at UToledo in 2003 as an adjunct professor in the Department of Chemistry. McClelland served as chair of the Board of Directors for the American Chemical Society, the world's largest scientific organization. She also served as chair, president and chief executive officer for more than 30 years with NSF International, an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to certifying products and writing standards for food, water and consumer goods. McClelland earned bachelor and master of science degrees from the University in 1951 and 1963, respectively.

## Hitting It Out of the Park



Photo by Daniel Miller

The UToledo Board of Trustees presented a proclamation to celebrate the softball program's first Mid-American Conference Tournament title. Posing for a photo at the Sept. 16 meeting were, from left, Softball Coach Joe Abraham, senior Samantha Golden, Trustee Daniel J. Guttman, senior Morgan Paaverud, senior Leah Allison and President Sharon L. Gaber. The team made program history in May when the No. 7 seed Rockets went on a five-game tear, taking down No. 4 Northern Illinois, No. 2 Kent State, No. 1 Miami and No. 3 Ohio. The victory qualified Toledo to play in first-round regional action of the 2019 NCAA Women's College World Series for the first time since 1992. UToledo also scored big in the classroom spring semester with a 3.53 GPA; 10 players were named to the Academic All-MAC team.

## Engineering Career Fair

continued from p. 1

program gives them a perfect opportunity to see if you will be a good fit as a permanent employee."

In 2018, the College of Engineering placed 1,745 students into co-ops with companies that paid students an average wage of \$17.54 an hour.

More than 700 UToledo engineering students and alumni are once again connecting with employers from more than 170 companies across the U.S. at the Fall 2019 Engineering Career Expo Tuesday, Sept. 24, from noon to 4 p.m. in Savage Arena.

The networking event is part of a yearlong celebration of a milestone for the UToledo Shah Center for Engineering Career Development: 20 years of placing more than 20,000 engineering co-ops.

In addition to Marathon Petroleum Corp., participating companies include

Cooper Tire & Rubber Co., Dana Inc., GEM Inc., Johnson & Johnson - DePuy Synthes, GE Appliances, Honda, Owens Corning, Owens-Illinois Inc., PCC Airfoils, SSOE Group and North Star Bluescope Steel.

Employers are seeking undergraduate students to participate in engineering co-op assignments, as well as their leadership development programs, along with seniors and graduates for full-time employment.

Buchele completed co-ops at two other companies in addition to Marathon.

"After my co-ops, I knew Marathon was the right fit for me. After my second co-op with them, they offered me a permanent position starting February 2020," said Buchele, who accepted the position. "I would never have received a job offer from Marathon at another university."

# UToledo Hypertension Expert Receives Prestigious American Heart Association Award

By Tyrel Linkhorn

The American Heart Association has recognized University of Toledo hypertension researcher Dr. Bina Joe for her innovative work focusing on the links between high blood pressure, genetics and gut bacteria.

Joe, Distinguished University Professor and chair of the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology in the College of Medicine and Life Sciences, has spent nearly two decades studying and isolating the role genetics play in individuals with high blood pressure.

Her research has helped begin to unravel some of the potential causes of hypertension that go beyond one's diet and exercise routine.

Most recently, Joe's lab has been investigating how the colonies of tiny microorganisms that call our bodies home may help regulate our blood pressure. In 2018, Joe received a \$2.64 million grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to advance her groundbreaking research.

In recognition of her impactful work, the American Heart Association recently presented Joe with the Harriet Dustan Award, which recognizes female

investigators who have made outstanding contributions in the field of hypertension.

"This is a really prestigious award, chosen from many of the top hypertension researchers in the world," said Joe, who is also founding director of the UToledo Center for Hypertension and Precision Medicine, which is recognized by the University as a research area of unique distinction. "I feel very passionate about our research, and I'm honored to have been recognized by this award from the American Heart Association."

The award is named in honor of Dr. Harriet Dustan, a trailblazer as both a female physician-scientist and as a hypertension researcher. Dustan was the first woman to sit on the Board of Governors of the American Board of Internal Medicine, and she was among the first researchers who linked hypertension to excess sodium consumption.

Dustan, who started her career at the Cleveland Clinic and later went on to the University of Alabama School of Medicine, died in 1999.

"Dr. Dustan was born and lived her life in the previous century when they did not have a genomic avenue to look at microbial



@2019 AHA/Matthew Herp

**HONORED:** Dr. Bina Joe spoke at the American Heart Association's Hypertension 2019 Scientific Sessions in New Orleans. More than 600 people from 22 countries attended the event.

genomes and their contributions to hypertension," Joe said. "She was asking the same questions we are now. She once wrote in one of her papers that not everything is known. I hope to fill that knowledge gap with the new idea we have that salt regulates blood pressure via microbiota and liver metabolites. I'm proud to bring the award bearing her name back to Ohio, where she started her research career."

The award was presented in New

Orleans Sept. 7 during the American Heart Association's Hypertension 2019 Scientific Sessions.

Joe also was the recipient of the association's 2014 Lewis Dahl Memorial Lectureship. That award honors the groundbreaking work of Dahl, who developed a genetically based experimental model of hypertension. The lecture is given each year by a prominent hypertension researcher.



## Making a Difference

Dr. Celia Williamson, Distinguished University Professor and director of the UToledo Human Trafficking and Social Justice Institute, read from her new book, "A Seat at the Table: The Courage to Care About Trafficking Victims," last week at the 16th annual International Human Trafficking and Social Justice Conference. The two-day event was held in the Thompson Student Union and featured presentations from researchers, advocates and survivors. To date, the trafficking conference has welcomed presenters from 42 states and 30 countries to educate social service, healthcare and criminal justice professionals on human trafficking and the needs and risks of survivors, as well as their customers and traffickers.

Photo by Daniel Miller

## UToledo Banned Books Vigil to Take Place Sept. 26

By Chase M. Foland

Keep the light on and your mind open: Students, faculty, staff and area residents will answer riddles to win prizes, discuss ideas, and eat snacks at the UToledo Banned Books Week Vigil Thursday, Sept. 26, in Health and Human Services Building Room 1711B.

Every fall for 22 years, the University community has celebrated the right to read and think freely because “Censorship Leaves Us in the Dark.” This theme of the American Library Association’s Banned Books Week, Sept. 22-28, highlights the role reading plays in democracy.

The free, public open house champions the right to read, think, speak and create freely.

“The battle for the First Amendment is never won,” said Dr. Paulette D. Kilmer, UToledo professor of communication and coordinator of the Banned Books Vigil. “Somebody is always eager to censor books, music, TV, movies, art and other cultural forms of free expression in the name of protecting us from ourselves.”

Recently, a Catholic school in Nashville banned the “Harry Potter” series, claiming the books contain spells and curses. In 2018, censorship affected 531 resources, including books, magazines and databases, according to the American Library Association.

Many instances of banning and challenges are not reported, Kilmer said.

“All books are vital to our democracy,” she said. “The ones that lack lasting value will fall away because they will not merit literary attention or remain interesting to the next generation. All books are not equally good reading, but each person must determine for him or herself what to read without outside interference.”

The book festival calls attention to everyone’s right to read what he or she wants, Kilmer added.

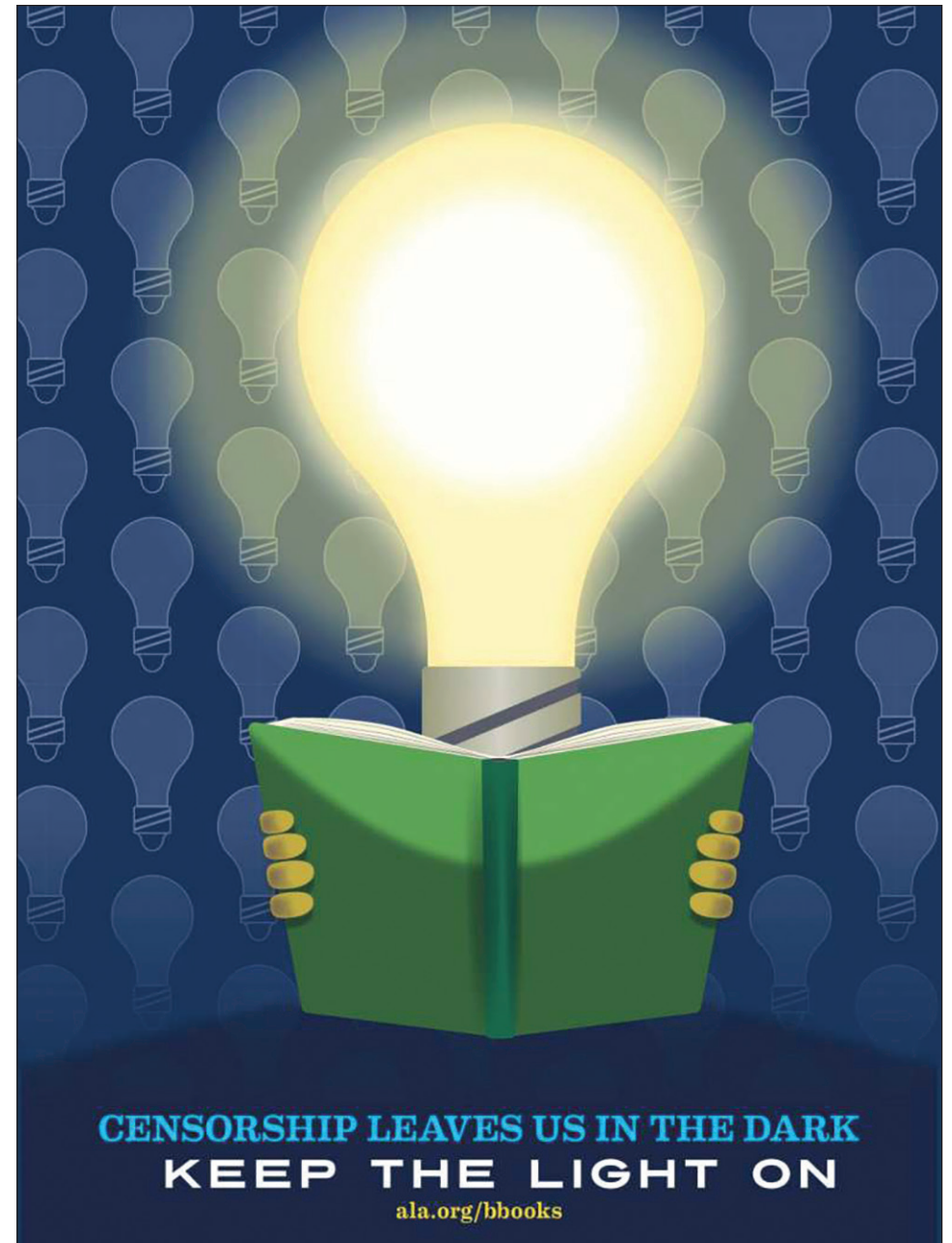
UToledo faculty and area teachers are invited to bring classes. Attendance vouchers will be provided.

Programs will start every 30 minutes during the event, which coincides with the American Library Association’s Banned Books Week. Door prizes will be given out every half hour. The first 300 guests will receive a grab bag at the door. Pizza is

scheduled to arrive around 3:45 p.m.

Topics and speakers will be:

- 9 a.m. – “How Copyright Rules Cramp Free Speech” by Lucy Duhon, collection sharing coordinator and scholarly communications librarian in University Libraries.
- 9:30 a.m. – “The Sound of Silence: What Does It Look Like?” by Dr. Monita Mungo, assistant professor of sociology.
- 10 a.m. – “Silence = Death” by Holly Hey, professor of film, with Dr. Allyson Day, assistant professor of disability studies.
- 10:30 a.m. – “Banning Pride?! Challenging ‘This Day in June’” by Dr. Sharon Barnes, associate professor and chair of women’s and gender studies.
- 11 a.m. – “Prison Resistance and the Right to Speak” by Dr. Renee Heberle, professor of political science and co-director of the Program in Law and Social Thought.
- 11:30 a.m. – “Super Hero Women Return to Save the World” by Warren Woodberry, Toledo author and playwright.
- Noon – “Banned in Boston: Lillian Hellman’s ‘The Children’s Hour’” by Holly Monsos, professor of theatre and associate dean of the College of Arts and Letters.
- 1 p.m. – “A Thousand Hands, A Million Stars: Speaking for Those Whose Voices Have Been Rendered Silent Through Human Sex Trafficking” by Jane Atwood, instructor in the Department of Music and University College.
- 1:30 p.m. – “Outrageous T-Shirts – Free Expression or Rudeness?” by Kilmer.
- 2 p.m. – “Google Docs, Social Media and Censorship: How Third-Party Corporations Are Deciding What You Can Study” by Dan McInnis, assistant lecturer in the Jesup Scott Honors College.
- 2:30 p.m. – “Banning Books in Nigeria: Findings From a Study of the Origin, Methods and Motivations” by Dr. Mojisola Tiamiyu, associate professor of psychology.
- 3 p.m. – Banned Books “Jeopardy” hosted by The Independent Collegian.
- 3:30 p.m. – “Why Democracies Need a Free Press” by Ben Morse, editor-in-chief of The Independent Collegian.



- 4 p.m. – “Don’t Look a Smith Horse in the Mouth,” an episode of “American Dad” that was fined by the Federal Communications Commission.
- 4:30 p.m. – “Woody Guthrie Songs,” a performance by Risa Cohen, local singer and storyteller.

Kilmer said the Banned Books Vigil would not be possible without the help of generous sponsors on campus and in the community. She gave a special thanks to the Office of the President; the Office of the

Provost; the Jesup Scott Honors College; the College of Arts and Letters; the School of Visual and Performing Arts; Communication Department; Athletic Department; Disability Studies Department; Law and Social Thought Program; Inside-Outside Prison Exchange Program; and Phoenicia Cuisine.

For more information about the UToledo Banned Books Vigil, contact Kilmer at [paulette.kilmer@utoledo.edu](mailto:paulette.kilmer@utoledo.edu).

# American Dream Comes True

By Yixing Chen

In 1989, my father, Zhong Chen, who was a professor in academia, was under pressure due to political turmoil in China. With the help of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, he secured a student visa to The University of Toledo to escape the unstable fallout of his home country, where he left his wife and 4-year-old son with a hug.

My mother, Liping Gao, and I were not able to join him at the time and stayed behind in China. We did not know that it would be four years until we would see him again. That is how long it took for my mom and I to secure our visas to come to the United States.

I still remember the multiple long journeys to visit the U.S. Embassy and staying in hotels night after night to wait to be granted an interview. From 1991 to 1993, my mom and I would take the train from Xian, our hometown, to Beijing, the capital. Each trip took 12 hours one way. The trip was tough on my mom, especially with an 8-year-old in tow. Each time we went, we had to wait outside in a line most of the day just hoping to get in the

embassy; the weather was not always nice. We were denied visas three times before they were granted the fourth time.

I still remember the cold winter air when our plane finally landed in Detroit on New Year's Eve in 1993 and seeing a man that resembled the memory of my father waiting for us with a hug. I still remember the drive to Toledo that night and seeing all the New Year's fireworks as my life in America started.

My dad graduated with his Ph.D. from The University of Toledo soon after. Like most immigrants, my family had to change our visa status many times to remain in the U.S. legally. Every few years, we had to renew or reapply for different visas, hoping that it wouldn't be denied. One denial is all it takes for us to go back to a country where we have nothing. That uncertainty of your family's life is what most immigrants talk about when they describe the difficult, long journey to citizenship.

I grew up in the Toledo area most of my life and graduated from The

University of Toledo with a dual master's degree in public health in 2011. I work at UToledo's Jacobs Interprofessional Immersive Simulation Center.

During my 25-year journey to citizenship, I never lost the dream of being able to hold my hand to my heart proudly when my classmates recited the Pledge of Allegiance; or when my friends sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the Toledo football games; or when I hang the stars and stripes in front of my home in Toledo; or when I tell my beautiful daughter, Lilian, that her "baba" (Mandarin for daddy) is also an American like her.

To my fellow Americans: Don't forget the journey and sacrifice of your immigrant family to get here, and never take for granted the privilege and responsibility that so many people around the world are currently fighting to obtain. It is the duty of we the people to make this country a more perfect Union.



Photo by Daniel Miller

**FLYING COLORS:** Yixing Chen smiled during the naturalization ceremony last week in the Law Center.

*Chen is a clinical simulation and educational research associate in the Jacobs Interprofessional Immersive Simulation Center. He was among more than 70 people who became U.S. citizens during a naturalization ceremony Sept. 17 in the Law Center.*



## Welcome New Citizens

More than 70 people became U.S. citizens during a naturalization ceremony Sept. 17 in the Law Center McQuade Auditorium. Judge Mary Ann Whipple of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Ohio presided over the ceremony, which was held on campus to celebrate Constitution Day. The event was sponsored by the Office of Government Relations and the Center for International Studies and Programs.

Photo by Daniel Miller

## Toxic Algae

*continued from p. 1*

Aided by nutrient runoff and warming waters, seasonal blooms of blue-green algae are flourishing across much of the United States. Not all algal blooms produce toxins, but many do.

Potentially dangerous concentrations of microcystin have been found this year in ponds in New York City's Central Park, along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, reservoirs in California, and a portion of Lake Erie's coastline near Toledo.

While no human deaths have been linked to microcystin in the United States, deaths have been reported elsewhere – most notably among a group of kidney dialysis patients in Brazil. There also have been reports this year of pet dogs dying after exposure to blue-green algae in Texas, North Carolina and Georgia.

With annual blooms becoming more frequent and intense, researchers in the UToledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences wanted to better understand how the toxins might affect people already suffering from conditions that affect organ systems microcystin is known to attack, such as the liver.

"It's a gray area in terms of what microcystin is really doing to you if you have a pre-existing disease state. Are you more susceptible? Are we going to have to go back and re-evaluate what we consider safe in a person with a pre-existing disease state? It's important we start providing answers to these questions," said Dr. Steven Haller, UToledo assistant professor of medicine.

In the liver study, researchers examined how chronic, low-level exposure of microcystin affected mice with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease compared to mice with healthy livers.

At microcystin ingestion levels below the No Observed Adverse Effect Level for healthy mice, analysis showed significant exacerbation of liver damage in mice with fatty liver disease. Researchers observed no liver damage in mice who started the experiment with healthy livers.

"Current exposure limits from the World Health Organization and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for humans are based off studies done in healthy animals," Haller said. "The results

of this study suggest there may be a need to review those guidelines for people with pre-existing conditions."

They also noted major differences in how microcystin was processed by the kidneys in the two test groups.

In mice with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, elevated levels of microcystin were found in the blood plasma, but were not detectable in the plasma of healthy mice. Mice with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease also excreted far less microcystin in their urine.

The differences seen in how microcystin was processed between the two test groups suggest that kidney function may play an important role in the increased susceptibility of the mice with pre-existing liver disease.

"This may be highly relevant to help us understand the deaths that occurred in kidney dialysis patients and point to the need to pay particular attention to at-risk patient populations as we design preventative, diagnostic and therapeutic strategies," Kennedy said.

The results from the liver study build

on prior work from Kennedy and Haller looking at how microcystin exposure might affect individuals with inflammatory bowel disease, another common condition that impacts an estimated 1 million Americans.

In that study, published in June, the researchers demonstrated that exposure to microcystin-LR prolongs and worsens the severity of pre-existing colitis, contributing to significant weight loss, bleeding, and higher numbers of signaling molecules that cause inflammation.

"Based on this data, we're coming up with insights into how we can potentially treat exposures if they do occur," Kennedy said. "This is giving us a number of insights into how we might help patients, especially patients who are vulnerable or susceptible if there was an exposure."

The lead author of the paper published in August was doctoral student Apurva Lad. Doctoral student Robin Su was the author on the paper about inflammatory bowel disease published in June.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Denise M. (Niesy) Terry-Cook**, Toledo, an instructor at the University from 1997 to 2002, died Sept. 7 at age 46.

**Raymond J. Whelan**, Lambertville, Mich., a former karate instructor at the University, died Sept. 14 at age 76.

## UTOLEDO NEWS

UToledo News is published for faculty, staff and students by the Marketing and Communications Office weekly during the academic year and periodically during the summer. Copies are mailed to employees and placed in newsstands on the Main, Health Science, Scott Park and Toledo Museum of Art campuses. UToledo News strives to present accurate, fair and timely communication of interest to employees. Story ideas and comments from the UToledo community are welcome. Send information by campus mail to #190, Marketing and Communications Office, Vicki Kroll. Email: [vicki.kroll@utoledo.edu](mailto:vicki.kroll@utoledo.edu). Fax: 419.530.4618. Phone: 419.530.2248. Mailing address: Marketing and Communications Office, Mail Stop 190, The University of Toledo, Toledo, OH 43606-3390.

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For details and registration, visit us online at  
[utoledo.edu/parent/familyweekend](http://utoledo.edu/parent/familyweekend)

**#rocketfamiliesunite**



## University Counseling Center to Hold Open House Sept. 27

*By Bailey Sparks*

Campus community members are invited to stop by The University of Toledo Counseling Center open house Friday, Sept. 27, from 3 to 5 p.m.

The center is located in the University Health Center, which is across from the Horton International House on Main Campus.

“We invite everyone to visit us. There’ll be food, games, music and good Rocket fun,” Dr. LaTasha Sullivan, interim associate director of the Counseling Center, said. “This event is a way to highlight the fact that we are here to help students.”

The Counseling Center is a safe space for students to process their feelings and experiences; increase skills for coping and self-care; and receive mental and emotional support. Counselors aim to assist students navigate through their journeys at the University and equip them with tools for the future.

“We hope to empower students with the skills to help them attain their educational goals at The University of Toledo,” Sullivan said.

Those who attend the open house can meet Audrey, a therapy dog that belongs to Debbie Andrews, director of graduate enrollment management in the College of Graduate Studies. Audrey is certified by the Alliance of Therapy Dogs. Andrews also will bring her four-legged friend to the Counseling Center Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. starting Sept. 25.

For more information about the open house or the Counseling Center, call 419.530.2426.



Photo by Kelsi Rooks



# TOLEDO FOOTBALL

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**HAPPINESS IS A WARM PUPPY:** Audrey, a therapy dog that belongs to Debbie Andrews, director of graduate enrollment management in the College of Graduate Studies, will be at the Counseling Center’s open house.