AU Newsmakers
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Top Stories
AU Education and Health Experts Analyze D.C. Healthy Schools Act

For the Washington Post, Stacey Snelling, dean of the School of Education, and Sarah Irvine Belson, executive director, AU Institute for Innovation in Education, spoke about their research on the gains and challenges of the D.C. Healthy Schools Act. They found that the amount of time that students spend doing physical activity in schools is linked to higher standardized math scores in D.C. schools. WAMU also featured the research. (2/9)

Law School Celebrates New Digs with Ruth Bader Ginsburg

The Washington College of Law was featured in the National Law Journal for the new 312,000-square-foot Tenley law campus. The official ribbon cutting featured Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg. Of the project, which started in 2008, Dean Claudio Grossman noted that having staff, faculty members and students together in one building was a crucial development. (2/11) *Link not available*

Faculty Authors

Einstein Was Right

For USA Today, Physics Professor Gregory Harry co-authored an op-ed about the discovery of gravitational waves, which are ripples in the fabric of space and time. The authors discussed the role of public funding in making such breakthroughs possible. Harry and his peers wrote, “An exciting new field of physics and astronomy has begun, one that will play a major role in our exploration of the universe during the 21st century. Federal funding agencies, with public support, can invest vigorously in basic science research that will drive both practical applications and a deeper understanding of the wonders of the universe and of the world around us.” (2/12)

Talk to Iris: The Power of Stopping

For Capital Gazette, Iris Krasnow, professor in the School of Professional and Extended Studies, wrote about the gift of stopping. Krasnow reflected on the importance of being present and deliberate in each moment, saying, “In stopping we get to be the masters of the clock and not puppets of the clock, oblivious to time and wholly ensconced in what is happening, right here and right now.” (2/7)

Election Cycle Creates Unrealistic Expectations for the Presidency

Policy, Politics and Law Scholars Program Director Chris Edelson penned an op-ed in the Baltimore Sun about the unrealistic expectations for the presidency caused by the election cycle. Edelson wrote that the nearly two-year long presidential campaign has the consequence of minimizing the contest to a horse race versus a meaningful policy debate and, worse, it gives the false impression that a president can unilaterally solve all the complex problems discussed in campaigns. (2/10)
Beyond The Army Commission: Unifying The Army’s Components

For War on the Rocks, David Barno, distinguished practitioner-in-residence, and Nora Bensahel, distinguished scholar-in-residence, both of the School of International Service, wrote an article offering analysis on a report by the National Commission on the Future of the Army. The two discussed the report’s findings and where it was lacking. It did not offer suggestions on how to integrate the active Army, the Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard into a truly unified force, Bensahel and Barno wrote. (2/9)

Expertise

How Obesity May Impair Memory

Director of the Center for Behavioral Neuroscience Terry Davidson spoke to Scientific American about how obesity impairs memory. Davidson commented on research he was not a part of, saying, “Further analysis of these results could yield a better understanding of specific correlations between Sirt1 expression and body weight as well as how time and exposure may play detrimental roles.” (2/11)

Surveillance Deal Would Allow British Spies Easier U.S. Access

Law Professor Jennifer Daskal spoke to the Washington Post about the upcoming trans-Atlantic surveillance agreement. Daskal said, “Before U.S. firms are asked to turn over data, they should be assured that the legal standard for the request is sufficiently high. It need not mimic precise U.S. standards, but should at least require that requests be targeted, subject to independent review and privacy protections that weed out irrelevant information.” (2/5)

How the Role of Women in The Military is Changing

Nora Bensahel, distinguished scholar-in-residence of the School of International Service, participated in a panel discussion on WAMU NPR’s The Diane Rehm Show about the changing role of women in the military. Bensahel discussed the recent decision to open all combat roles to female service members and talked about her experience witnessing the first female soldiers graduate from Ranger School. (2/5)

As Millennials Come of Political Age, Few Decide To Run For Office

Director of the Women and Politics Institute Jennifer Lawless spoke to New England Public Radio about a study that she co-authored on the political ambitions of millennials. Lawless said that encouragement from parents can have a big impact on whether or not children see a viable future in public service. Young people are very concerned with making the world a better place, and the key is to show that politics is one way to do so. Lawless also spoke to Al Jazeera America about the meaning of Hillary Clinton’s defeat in New Hampshire. (2/8, 2/9)

New Hampshire Primary Results

For WTTG Fox 5, history professor Allan Lichtman spoke about the New Hampshire Primary results. Lichtman called Ohio Governor John Kasich the Lazarus candidate who rose from the dead. Lichtman also saw the results as particularly problematic for the Democrats who benefit least from a protracted primary. (2/9)
Do Animals Feel Empathy? Inside The Decades-Long Quest for an Answer

Vox cited the research of Alan Silberberg, psychology professor, about whether or not animals feel empathy. Silberberg replicated an experiment where a free rat placed near a jailed rat opens the hatch to rescue the jailed rat. Silberberg’s replication included a twist that showed while it’s easy to observe animal behavior, it is nearly impossible to confirm the motivations behind that behavior. (2/8)

GIFs Are the Ultimate Weapon in This Addictive Browser Game

Mashable Center for Research, Teaching and Learning Director Naomi Baron spoke to Mashable about the human tendency to add visual symbols to communication. Baron discussed the history of GIFs, saying, “GIFs are a natural extension of how humans have communicated for years.” Baron also attributes the rise of GIFs to how acclimated humans have become to moving images. (2/10)

Bonus clip

College Basketball’s Most Unlikely Hot Streak Might Belong to American U.

The men’s basketball team was featured in the Washington Post for its recent resurgence in the Patriot League. The team had experienced a setback during the season but has recently seen significant wins. A recent game against Bucknell illustrated the team’s ability to hold opponents below a 39 percent shooting average. American won that game 69-55. (2/5)