Top Story
How Green is Your College?

According to several rating systems, Green wonks are making American University one of the greenest colleges in the country. AU is currently among the top five Gold-rated schools ranked by STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System), the single most comprehensive assessment to date. “Hundreds of students shower with solar-heated water in the university’s residence halls, and professors can gaze through their office windows at rooftop gardens, which were planted all over campus to help absorb rainwater that would otherwise flow into the fragile Anacostia River,” cited Accuweather.com and ClimateWire. (8/7)

Op-Eds/AU Authors
The End of ASEAN Centrality?

In an op-ed for Asia Times online, Amitav Acharya, chair of AU’s ASEAN Studies Center, discussed how Cambodia, as the ASEAN chair, failed to issue a joint communique incorporating the positions of the Philippines and Vietnam and their dispute with China over the South China Sea. “Many hope that Cambodia will put its ASEAN interests first. If Cambodia does pander to China this way, it would incur serious costs. Such an action would severely isolate it from its neighbors,” wrote Acharya. (8/8)

Expertise
Avoiding Estate-Tax Traps

The Wall Street Journal talked to Kogod Tax Center’s Tom Ochsenschlager about issues associated with a 2010 estate-tax law Congress passed. In order to receive the benefits of this new law, an estate-tax return must be filed within nine months of the first partner’s death or unnecessary taxes will be paid by the estate. “This could easily happen to the owners of a farm or small business whose advisers aren’t estate-tax specialists,” said Ochsenschlager. (8/7)

In Pursuit of Nissan, a Jobs Lesson for the Tech Industry?

The New York Times traced the history of moving automobile manufacturing to the United States and the possibility of moving high-tech manufacturing to the United States. “The pressure put on the Japanese was absolutely critical for them to agree to export restraints,” said Stephen Cohen, professor emeritus of international studies, about United States’ auto trade with Japan in the 1980s. (8/4)

Political Firestorm Flares as Looming Budget Cuts Include Defense Reductions

Gordon Adams, professor of U.S. foreign policy, appeared on PBS NewsHour to discuss potential budget cuts and how cuts may impact the defense industry. “The reality is, I don’t expect it [budget cuts] to happen, but, even if it did, it’s a slow-roll process when it does. But it’s a great thing to fight about in an election year,” said Adams. (8/3)
Increased Security Needed After Mosque Burning

In the wake of another mosque burning, this time in Joplin, MO, Yahoo! News Online talked to Akbar Ahmed, chair of Islamic studies, about why attacks on mosques and prejudice against Muslims in America still continues. “The temperature must be brought down, it must be brought down by the leaders of America. They [politicians and the media] cannot allow this almost wildfire of prejudice and ignorance to just rage as it’s raging now,” said Ahmed. (8/7)

Diets High in Sugar and Fat Prime the Brain to Overeat

Business Insider quoted Terry Davidson, director of the Center for Behavioral Neuroscience, about how obesity may cause changes in the brain that cause people to overeat. “We’ve identified a potential area of the brain that should be a target for either psychological or pharmacological therapies. It should make it easier for people to control their [food] intake,” Davidson said. (8/7)

The History of Dieting

BackStory, a nationally broadcasted public radio program, interviewed history professor Katherina Vester about the history of dieting in the United States, beginning with William Banting’s 1863 pamphlet ‘A Letter on Corpulence,’ which was popular with American men. “Dieting is one way in which they can demonstrate that they can control their urges and that they are ready to rule,” Vester explained about the link between dieting and the political ambitions of the male members of the then-rising American middle class. (8/3)

Bonus Coverage

Vacation Apart and Stay Together

Have you planned your next vacation? If not, before you do, consider journalism professor Iris Krasnow’s latest research, which suggests that couples take occasional separate vacations. “Couples who allow each other to grow separately are the ones with the best chances of growing together and staying together. You get this girls night out and you come back invigorated, recharged, hopeful. If you get that after one night, can you imagine how recharged you feel after a week away?” said Krasnow to WTOP Radio. (8/5)