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### Carleton prepares in case of H1N1 outbreak

Shreya Singh

*Carleton College. Carletonian*

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# The Carletonian

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Living long and prospering since 1877 May 8, 2009

## Two students launch real estate company in Iraq

By BECCA WANG  
STAFF WRITER

After securing a contract with the United States Department of Defense in March of this year, Carleton students and self-taught entrepreneurs, Derrick Turner '09 and Ishraf Ahmad '09, have seen their real estate company, Foreign Real Estate Consultants (FRC), grow into a profitable and expanding enterprise.

A jointly owned American and Iraqi company, FRC offers clients real estate and related brokerage services in Iraq. In short, they identify the properties that match a buyer’s needs. To do so, FRC takes the nation-wide real estate market and centralizes everything to provide clients with a list of available properties. This is a service that was previously unavailable, the pair said in an interview with The Carletonian.

Turner and Ahmad had been in talks about starting a company together ever since they collaborated on a small web start-up several years ago. In 2007, they came across a New York Times article describing the growing real estate market in Iraq. “This got us thinking,” said Turner. “There must be some money to be made in this market.”

The project really took off after they found an Iraqi partner to serve as their eyes and ears in Iraq while Turner and Ahmad manage things stateside. Though both are political science majors and have taken courses on Iraq, they have yet to travel there. “Having an Iraqi partner help us understand Iraqi culture and business practices has been really beneficial,” Ahmad said.

REAL ESTATE ♦ A3

## HELLO, POSTSEASON

### Knights baseball clinches first-ever berth in MIAC Playoffs



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CONCORDIA COLLEGE

By SAM BENSHOOF  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Top photo: Russ Fujisawa is congratulated after a two-run triple. Below: Alex Wirta connects on a solo home run.

To a 2008-2009 sports season that has already seen Carleton football snapping its losing streak to St. Olaf, men’s and women’s soccer reaching the NCAA tournament, Zach Johnson breaking basketball’s all-time scoring record, women’s swimming winning the MIAC by over 100 points, Carleton can add another distinction: the Knights baseball team reaching the MIAC playoffs for the first time ever. The accomplishment, though, was far from easy.

On Tuesday, the Knights needed to rally from behind twice to sweep Concordia College- Moorhead, 5-4 and 7-6, to ensure their berth in the MIAC postseason tournament. Carleton will play regular-season champion St. Thomas on Friday at 3:30 in Dundas, Minnesota. For more information, see Sports ♦ A7.



## Carleton prepares in case of H1N1 outbreak

By SHREYA SINGH  
STAFF WRITER

The Swine Flu outbreak has been the cause of concern for many in the recent days. Swine Flu, or the H1N1 Influenza A, as it is being called to avoid the misunderstanding among the public that it spreads from pork meat, has confirmedly spread to 24 countries and is suspected to be present in another 20 countries. In the United States, it has been laboratory-confirmed in roughly 830 people and has caused two deaths to date.

The virus is thought to have emerged in Mexico and the evidence increasingly points the origin of the virus to a US-owned industrial pig farm in the Mexican state of Veracruz. The novel virus is thought to be an assortment of four strains of the H1N1 Influenza A virus subtype with one strain derived partly from a North American flu virus. An analysis done by the Center of Disease Control and Prevention shows that the four component strains are a combination of one endemic in humans, one endemic in birds, and two endemics in pigs (swine) but this is still being debated among scientists.

The outbreak has reached Phase 5 which is one below the official Pandemic level. Newspapers and other media are full from reports and updates about the virus and most are coupled with photos of people wearing masks. Five cases of the Swine Flu have been detected in Minnesota. Governor Tim Pawlenty stated, “State and local public health offices will do everything possible to contain the illness, but realistically, we have to acknowledge that we should expect more cases.” Such news

H1N1 ♦ A3

## Bon Appetit reaches out to help South Florida tomato growers

By HANA MARUYAMA  
STAFF WRITER

On April 29 2009, Bon Appetit Management Company announced that it has drafted an agreement that demands that South Florida tomato growers improve worker conditions and wages.

In recent years, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) has asked fast food restaurants such as Burger King, McDonalds, Subway and Yum Brands to increase worker wages by one penny per pound. Although such an increase may appear slim, this would have led to a 74% wage increase in the South Florida tomato industry. While each company agreed to the increases, it has become apparent that many workers have not received the money they earned. In 2007, the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange, a trade association that claims to represent more than 90 percent of the state’s tomato industry, forbade its members from passing the increase onto workers. The CIW estimates that about \$1.5 million has been withheld from the laborers.

This is not the only problem in the industry. Over the past twelve years, over 1000 cases of slavery have been reported, culminating in the most recent conviction of six growers for “enslaving and brutaliz-

ing migrant workers.” In what Chief Assistant US Attorney Doug Malloy referred to as “slavery, plain and simple,” the growers forced more than a dozen migrant workers to work by chaining, beating and imprisoning them. One of these men, Mariano Lucas, was, according to the Bon Appetit website, “forced to work without pay and was regularly beaten and chained inside a box truck at night by a family of farm bosses who held him and a dozen other workers captive.”

In a recent e-mail to Bon Appetit employees, Vice President of Bon Appetit Maisie Greenawalt described the conditions under which many farm laborers are forced to work. She wrote, “We saw trailers that are home to upwards of 10 people that are charged with astronomical rents (up to \$2000 per month), we heard stories of workers being hit and threatened in the fields, and we saw how hard the work of picking tomatoes truly is.”

Until the CIW wrote a letter to Bon Appetit, the company was unaware that many of the tomatoes it serves in more than 400 university and corporate cafes across the country came from Florida. Bon Appetit was willing to agree to pay workers the extra penny. However, it was not satisfied with just paying the extra money: it wanted to ensure that this money reached the workers for whom it was meant.

Consequently, Bon Appetit has decided to boycott tomatoes grown in South Florida until growers agree to higher wages and better working conditions for the laborers.

Fedele Bauccio, CEO of Bon Appetit, explained his decision, saying, “When I met with workers in the fields and saw first-hand how difficult their lives are, I know that I could not, in good conscience, contribute to such a system.”

According to Bon Appetit’s new code, growers must pay the money they owe to farm laborers immediately, suppliers must negotiate and pay a fair minimum wage, and growers must use a time clock system in order to prevent the growers from altering time cards. The wage negotiated by the suppliers would have to take into account the harsh working conditions of farm labor.

One member of the Bon Appetit staff, Peggy Austin, feels particularly compelled by the stories of the migrant workers. She grew up in Florida and saw the migrant workers everyday on her way to work. “I would get behind the same bus every morning at five in the morning. And it’s packed full of immigrants...When I got off work, come home eight o’clock at night, I’d get behind the same bus, the same people,” she said in an interview. “They need to pay the people more...I know the huts, I’ve seen them. I would pass by the fields



Bon Appetit has been working to help improve conditions for South Florida tomato growers.

everyday. And there’s fifteen to twenty people living in them. Half of them don’t have running water. It’s sad for people to have to live in these conditions. They need to have better conditions for the immigrants.”

When in season, Bon Appetit tries to buy at least 20% of its produce from local farmers. However, during the winter, this is not always a feasible option. If Florida tomato growers do not agree to the terms set forth by Bon Appetit, the company is prepared to stop serving tomatoes in its cafeterias.

In a recent press release, Bauccio stated, “If no [grower] steps up, then I have to respond to my customers and not serve tomatoes. We’ll tell them, ‘The reason you’re not getting tomatoes is because of the situation in South Florida.’”

While Bon Appetit purchases almost five million pounds of tomatoes from South Florida per year, this number is dwarfed in compari-

son to other companies. It is estimated that McDonalds buys about 20 million pounds a year, and Subway buys even more. The CIW worries that these new terms could end up just hurting farm laborers in a time when jobs are scarce. This could cause farmers to lay off workers instead of agreeing to the terms of the agreement.

Gerardo Reyes, a member of the CIW, said of the agreement, “It’s not a final product, and it’s not meant to be. But it is a great first cut at building a relationship between farmworkers and their employers based on a genuine appreciation for the value of farmworkers’ labor.”

One of Bon Appetit’s main goals is sustainability. Bon Appetit believes that the boycott of tomatoes is the next step in that direction. Greenawalt said, “We cannot have a sustainable future without considering the humans in our supply chain.”



# Week-long series addresses prevention of sexual violence

By ANUSHKA PATEL  
STAFF WRITER

This week, the Gender and Sexuality Center is organizing a series of events with the help of its student employees to prevent sexual violence and foster a supportive environment for sexual abuse survivors. These events are held in the convention of a Carleton tradition called ‘Take Back the Night,’ when supporters and survivors would host similar events that symbolically promoted reclaiming physical spaces to feel safe on campus again.

This series of week-long events began with a community forum held last Tuesday, where around fifty students attended to show support and voice their views on various issues. The open and honest discussion broke the silence around sexual violence, which can be very shameful for its victims. This touched Elizabeth Nguyen, an employee of the GSC for three years now, who said, “It was beautiful and very meaningful.” Nguyen also helps to broaden the definition of sexual misconduct; she said that each person at Carleton, whether they recognize it or not, has been affected by sexual violence, even if it is in the form of inappropriate use of sexual language. This is why supporters of victims sign a pledge to speak up against all forms of harassment, appropriately called, “Not on our campus.”

Events this week included “Speak Up” on Thursday on the Bald Spot, where students read their stories of how they have been affected by sexual violence; this was followed by a tying of ribbons in solidarity and some informal conversation in the Chapel. Next will be a discussion titled “How it can hurt and how it can

## H1N1 FROM A1

has already frightened several Carleton students; many Carls could be heard in the past few days talking about cases of the flu in America or Mexico, where the H1N1 flu has proved fatal for 42 Mexicans already.

Carleton’s administration responded very quickly to the H1N1 outbreak. By April 28—a day prior to a Cold Spring, Minnesota resident testing positive for H1N1—Dean of Students Hudlin Wagner sent out a mail to Students, Faculty and Staff explaining that the Acting Health and Human Services Secretary had declared a Public Health Emergency nationwide. She also stressed an action plan for people falling ill and relayed that there was a normal flu doing rounds on the campus which should not become the cause of much anxiety. She also described the emergency signals to look out for if a person with the flu becomes seriously ill.

This was followed by President Rob Oden’s mail on the May 1 about the update on Carleton’s Pandemic Preparedness. Carleton has also set up a update plan on their webpage on the flu at <http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/flu/>. Additionally, no off-campus studies programs have been changed as of now because of the flu.

Natalee Johnson, Advanced Certified Practice Nurse at the Wellness Center, stressed the fact that students becoming

empower: a common time discussion about language and sexual violence” on Tuesday in Sayles during Common Time. Lastly, there will be a policy workshop in the Alumni Guest House at 5 p.m. on Thursday where people from around the Carleton community can formulate ideas about how to change specific aspects of Carleton’s policies and processes surrounding sexual misconduct.

Regarding students’ limited jurisdiction, when asked about changing misconduct policy on an institution level, Dominik Vendell, also with the GSC for three years now, is optimistic: “The SHARE committee, particularly Karen Williamsen and Hudlin Wagner, are responsive to student appeals and opinions. It takes time to effect changes on an institutional level but that is to be expected and so far, they are concerned with student opinion and these forums generate lively debate.” Currently, there is considerable dissatisfaction over these policies precisely because of the pluralism of opinion they engender; for instance, victim visibility and punishment of assaultive students are hotly contested as the school’s necessarily confidential policy on sexual harassment varies along a spectrum based on individual situations. The aim of such events is to help parse out differences in the community.

As Sarah King, a student employee at the GSC for two years, puts it, “the goal of the events this week is twofold: to prevent sexual violence on campus and to foster a supportive community for survivors of sexual violence.”

sick with flu-like symptoms should rest properly and make sure they do not go to classes and infect the rest of the student body. According to Johnson, the fact that the H1N1 virus is a novel virus is very serious because we do not know if the virus will evolve into something worse. “We have to be very careful and watch it properly,” said Johnson. She also stated that the attitude of the state in regard to the flu virus had changed in that while previously the state was asking schools to close, now it is asking them to stay open and anyone with a severe flu is being asked to go into voluntary isolation.

President Oden stressed the same point when he was asked about the college’s plan for action if the H1N1 stepped up from its current Phase 5 status to Phase 6 Pandemic status. He said that while the College’s Pandemic Response Team has been meeting daily, their plan of action was changing because of the current information on the H1N1 virus which indicated that the epidemic appeared to be quite mild and not spreading rapidly. Oden also said that the team is still contemplating a wide spectrum of responses should the H1N1 flu become more serious. These measures also include longer-term planning, for instance, if the flu returned in the fall in a more virulent state.

# Annual International Festival celebrates diversity and culture

Carleton’s annual International Festival, sponsored by the Office of Intercultural Life and International Student Programs, will take place Saturday, May 9 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Sayles- Hill Great Space and Great Space Balcony. The colorful and spirited event is free and open to the public, although a three-dollar donation is suggested.

The International Festival is intended to celebrate the diversity that exists among the student body. This year’s theme—[PRO]FUSION—has a dual meaning for the organizers. The word profusion itself means abundance, but when read as pro-fusion, the word takes on a new meaning to support the fusion of cultures through performances, entertainment and food.

The event will feature international cuisine, music, performances, activities and information tables. There will be more than 50 countries represented at the festival, including cultural performances from Burma, Vietnam, Korea,

South Africa and more. There will also be cuisine from Belize, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Malaysia, among other countries.

As a fundraiser for the Carleton Microfinance Club and campus chapter of Engineers Without Borders, postcards will be sold featuring photos taken by students on off-campus studies programs or from students’ international hometowns. Seventy percent of the proceeds will go to Engineers Without Borders and the remainder will go to the Microfinance Club.

For more information or disability accommodations, please contact Kristen Askeland, Administrative Assistant to Director of Intercultural Life, at (507) 222-4495.

## IRAQ FROM A1

Initially, the group thought their clients would mostly be those interested in investing in properties in order to turn a profit. However, through further research, they have found that a large portion of their clientele is people who were displaced from their homes during the war. Ahmad said, “With refugees looking to return to Iraq, there is a huge demand for property. Obviously, the U.S. government is also a major demander.”

The big break for FRC came in March when they secured a contract with the U.S. Department of Defense. FRC was

our employees through facebook.”

To date, FRC has 6 full time employees. All are predominantly like the company’s founders, young guys who are proficient with today’s technology. “These are the guys who know how to work a GPS system or a digital camera. It also helps that they are usually comfortable with English,” said Ahmad.

However, with operations expanding, they are considering hiring more staff, most likely for translation and administrative related positions. While this does entail rising costs, with the government contract, overall profitability for FRC has

“We’re a bunch of 22-year old students. We definitely had to find cheap ways to run a business. This includes using Skype, Google-Earth, and other basic free software. We even hired several of our employees through facebook.”

-Derrick Turner

selected after a rigorous two-month application process that included interviews, a host of paperwork, and a 150-page long application. “Landing that contract was pretty surreal,” said Ahmad. “It not only secured us financially, but having the U.S. government as a major client lends great legitimacy to the company as well.”

Turner added, “This provided the financial source outside of venture capital to expand our company. Also, the government is someone all the other clients, both from inside and outside the U.S., will recognize.”

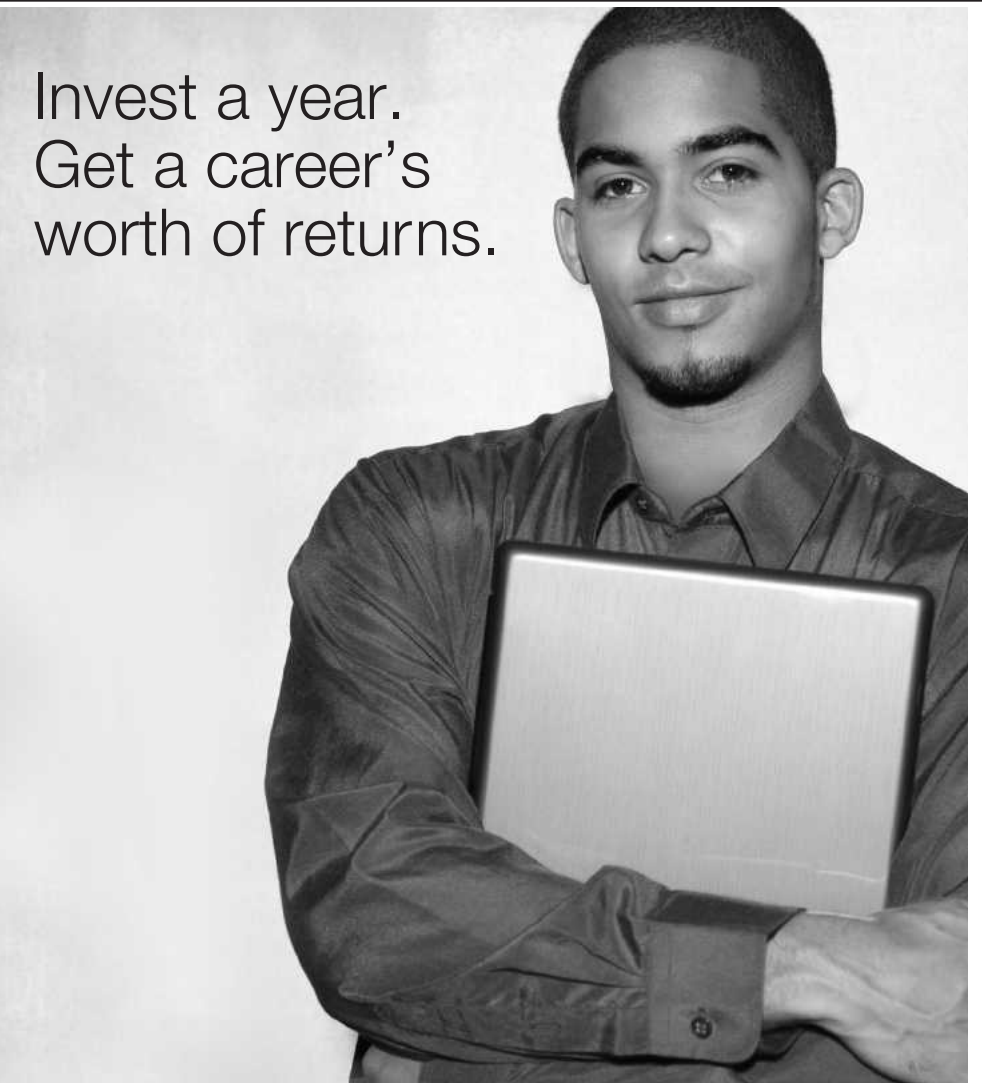
Currently, FRC also works with other private investment firms like KCP Capital and Winter and Manhattan.

In taking advantage of the free software available to the public, Ahmad and Turner were also able to keep their start-up costs to a minimum. “We’re a bunch of 22-year old students,” said Turner, “we definitely had to find cheap ways to run a business. This includes using Skype, Google-Earth, and other basic free software. We even hired several of

swung upwards. Also, thus far, it appears the global economic downturn has not adversely affected their business. “Luckily, we’ve been super insulated from the recession because Iraq is growing for reasons unrelated to the global economy,” Ahmad said. “The Iraqi real estate market is the exact opposite of what we’ve seen in the U.S.”

When asked if it was difficult to balance running a business with schoolwork, both agreed, “it is tough, but definitely manageable.”

“There really is no other way to learn how to run a business,” said Turner.



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