



The Obamas with the President and First Lady of France at the Phipps opening event, near campus.

G-20 Good Word

The summit's opening reception was hosted by President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama at Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Oakland, not far from campus. After the G-20, Pitt students could visit the conservatory to view the locally crafted tables built especially for the event. The wooden tables were hewn from oak and London Plane trees salvaged from Pittsburgh's Riverview Park.

committed to improving education she is, but seeing it up close and personal is another experience entirely," she says.

Pearlman always wanted to be a teacher: "For as long as I can remember. And I always thought there would come a time when I'd want to help kids more, and differently, than just in a classroom." On G-20 day at CAPA, she was doing just that—and this time the world was watching.

—Mackenzie Carpenter

Russian Roomful

In the Russian Room of the Cathedral of Learning, nine students in an advanced Russian literature class discussed the merits of a story on a Thursday afternoon. While waiting for a guest speaker to arrive, they

debated in Russian about the sociological underpinnings of a tale about children who were zealous about nationalism during the era of the Soviet Union.

Then, suddenly, security agents entered the classroom and closed the stained-glass windows. Moments later, the president of Russia, Dmitry Medvedev, strode in. He was in town for the G-20 Summit and had requested to meet with university students.

He shook hands with the instructor, Irina Anisimova, a Russian native who teaches in Pitt's Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. She introduced her awestruck class and explained what they were reading throughout the semester. The Russian president, a former law instructor, was impressed that the students were tackling modern literature and were majoring in fields as diverse as anthropology, economics, and computer science.

After the intimate classroom meeting, the president addressed a crowd of several hundred in the Cathedral's Commons Room (see page 52 in this issue). For nearly an hour, students raised their hands and inquired about Medvedev's thoughts on Russia's relations with Georgia, on U.S. plans to close missile bases in Poland and the Czech Republic, and whether he could send artists to Pittsburgh to showcase Russian culture. Medvedev amply responded to each question and even offered some wisdom on college: "It is an important foundation for your future lives and should motivate you to seek learning every single day," he said.

All in the Family

First comes the trio dressed as indigenous healers, faces painted, hair wrapped in ribbons. Then come the Buddhist monks in their cinnamon-colored robes. All around there are young adults in flip-flops carrying antiwar banners. There are horns, and tambourines, and drums—a banging, tooting family of protesters desiring to be heard.

Among them is Celeste Taylor. She, too, has gathered for the People's March, a peaceful rally held the closing day of the G-20 Summit. After march-



Taylor (left) at the People's March

ing about two miles from Oakland to downtown, she stands near the shadows of Pittsburgh's City-County Building to listen to the rally's speakers.

Taylor, a Pitt alumnus, wears her forest-green T-shirt, with the community activism slogan, "Build the Hill." A button, "War is NOT the Answer," is pinned to her left shoulder. On a wooden stick she holds a poster that calls for jobs for all. The cardboard sign has the face of Martin Luther King Jr.

An honored community activist, Taylor (CGS '82) is known for her grassroots work on education, justice, and equity causes. The range of summit protesters reminds her of a reunion across the generations and of King's 1968 Poor People's Campaign, another event that drew a mosaic of articulate, passionate people united to push for positive change.

Surrounded by friends, Taylor takes in all the excitement of people speaking to the world. She has just discovered that her eldest son is marching, too. She smiles knowing he has joined the global family of those concerned about economics, the environment, and justice around the world. "It does not get any better than this," she says, hoisting her sign high into the air.

—Ervin Dyer

