

RuhrFAN

ConRuhr's Newsletter for Ruhr Friends and Alumni

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Director's Corner

Dear Friends and Alumni of the Ruhr Area,

I hope that your new year has started well, with an exciting slide into 2007. This was also an exciting time for ConRuhr - the first Annual ConRuhr Friends & Alumni Gala Dinner took place on December 15th in New York. It was a wonderful chance to meet some of our most active alumni and a great premiere: the Rector of the University of Dortmund, the Director of the *Initiativkreis Ruhrgebiet*, the General Motors Director for Globalization and 90 guests representing academia and business were there to share their experiences. This represented a fine climax to a year in which both ConRuhr and the Ruhr Area have continuously advanced. As you will notice in this newsletter, research institutions and enterprises are cooperating in all corners; together they are developing innovative ideas for trend-setting research and academic training. The result: excellence – no matter where you look.

ConRuhr has also profited from an unprecedented cooperative spirit, both in New York and at the three Universities of Dortmund, Bochum and Duisburg-Essen. We are very grateful for this development, and this team spirit motivates us to carry on. We will invest even more energy in promoting the relationship between the Ruhr Area and the USA, which is based upon mutual respect and understanding.



In order to accomplish this task we need you, dear audience, and we ask for your support. Together we can achieve great progress. If you have not done so already, please feel free to contact us. Would you like to invite a guest scholar? Host a student from Germany or the USA, or become a mentor? Or are you looking for a business partner in Germany? Contact us – we are here for you in New York!

In the hopes of getting to know you better in the future,
mit einem herzlichen Glückauf,

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Rolf Kinne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Rolf Kinne
Director ConRuhr
Academic Exchange Office for the Universities of the Ruhr Area
Bochum, Dortmund and Duisburg-Essen

The Ruhr Area: International!

Premiere: ConRuhr Gala for Ruhr Area Friends and Alumni

The First Annual ConRuhr Friends & Alumni Gala Dinner took place on December 15, 2006, at the German Consulate Building in New York City. Ninety members of the Ruhr Friends and Alumni Network gathered together to share their experiences living in Germany and the USA/ Canada.

Prof. Dr. Rolf Kinne, Director of ConRuhr, greeted guests with an English-version homage to Herbert Grönemeyer's *Currywurst*. This set the tone for the evening: "ConRuhr has set a goal to build a bridge between the Ruhr Area and the USA. We would like to bring together partners from academia, industry and culture, as well as Ruhr Area alumni and friends," Kinne explained. The ConRuhr network is growing steadily; 600 US-based students and professors have already registered as friends and ambassadors of the Ruhr Area.

With a view of the New York skyline as the backdrop, the keynote speakers of the Gala Dinner were Prof. Dr. Eberhard Becker, Rector of the University of Dortmund, and Martin Apfel, Executive Director Global Manufacturing, Strategy & Planning, General Motors Corporation, Detroit. Rektor Becker emphasized the innovative power of the Ruhr Area. Martin Apfel, former director of the Opel plant, mirrored that message. A Ruhr Area Alumni, he spoke fondly about his time in Bochum and talked about the demands of the German, American, and global automobile market.



Ruhr Area Friends and alumni had the opportunity to spend the evening speaking with one another and representatives from the Ruhr universities; old memories were exchanged and new friendships were made. The Gala Dinner was sponsored by the *Initiativkreis Ruhrgebiet*, which represents 61 business enterprises in the region and promotes projects in the fields of business, research, medicine and culture. "Our goal is to support the structural changes in the Ruhr Area and at the same time boost this region's national and international prestige."

Rolf Kinne, Director of ConRuhr, greeted the guests of the first ConRuhr Gala Dinner in the German Consulate, New York
Photo: Dino Trescher, Constart [▶ www.conruhr.org](http://www.conruhr.org)

International Students Attend DAAD Winter Course Duisburg-Essen

47 students from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile and South Africa have been invited to the University of Duisburg-Essen. They are getting to know the German language and German culture in the "Deutschlandkundlicher Winterkurs".

Through February 20th the syllabus for the students will consist of 90 hours of language instruction and 50 hours of classes about intercultural communication, Germany's political and social system and contemporary literature and culture. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) has been offering the course since 1998; since 2001 the University of Duisburg-Essen's campus in Essen has provided the venue. Accordingly, the international students don't just familiarize themselves with Germany's culture, but also with the Ruhr Area. Among other activities, visits to the Folkwang Museum and the Ruhrland Museum in Essen are planned.

Coordinators from the Ruhr Area Take Part in ConRuhr's Alumni Workshop

During an informative trip, alumni coordinators from the Universities of Bochum, Dortmund and Duisburg-Essen gained insight into professional alumni relations and fundraising in the USA.



The universities in the Ruhr Area are striving to extend their alumni relationships, fundraising efforts and career services for students. In cooperation with ConRuhr, representatives from each university took part in a visit to partner universities in New York and a workshop both served as a forum to debate challenges in developing relationships with alumni, students and donors, and to receive suggestions from the American colleagues for this type of work in the Ruhr Area. The keynote speaker at the workshop was John Feudo, Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations at Boston College, and editor of several books about alumni work. He motivated the alumni representatives from the Ruhr universities with the following words: "It is important to establish a lifelong relationship with the graduates.

University marketing means that you start taking care of the alumni before they even begin studying on campus." Feudo offered further support in building professional alumni relationships in the Ruhr Area. Afterwards, the representatives from the Ruhr Area had the opportunity to discuss the current challenges and goals in the areas of alumni work, fundraising and career service with delegates from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Boston College, Brown University, the Humboldt Foundation and the University of Pennsylvania. The workshop was sponsored by the *Initiativkreis Ruhrgebiet*.



Exchanging information about alumni work: Martin Fischer, University of Dortmund and Tammy Ruda, Brown University (top), and Dr. Britta Freis, Ruhr University Bochum, Ruth Girmes, University of Duisburg-Essen, and Rolf Kinne, ConRuhr (right, 1 to r).

Photos: Dino Trescher, Constart and Martin Fischer

News from Teaching and Research

Ruhr University Bochum Distinguished as "Weltoffene Universität"

International researchers feel welcome in the Ruhr Area. This is proven by the distinction "Weltoffene Universität", which the Ruhr University Bochum has just received.

Along with the Universities of Bonn and Marburg, Bochum prevailed in the competition *Welcome Centres für Weltoffene Universitäten in Deutschland*. Their complete care concept for international students is being sponsored with 125,000 euros by the Deutsche Telekom Foundation and the *Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft*. The Bochum Welcome Centre, for example, provides international guest researchers with an information pack as well as language and intercultural preparation for their stay. The arrival of the international guests is organized in a friendly way with a pick-up service and a schedule of activities for the first few days. Bachelor students assist in this service and can, consequently, earn a *Global Competence Certificate*. ConRuhr will also help establish the Welcome Centre. The awards ceremony, as well as the unveiling of a publication with the awarded ideas, will take place on January 25, 2007, in Berlin.

New Institute for Material Innovation

The *Interdisciplinary Centre for Advanced Materials Simulation (ICAMS)* brings the Ruhr University Bochum a new institute for researching and developing materials.

The project has brought together the Ministry of Innovation, Science, Research and Technology, the Ruhr University Bochum, ThyssenKrupp AG and other partners from trade and industry. In addition, the *Max-Planck-Institut für Eisenforschung* (Düsseldorf), the Jülich Research Center and the RWTH Aachen. Over the next five years, the ICAMS will be financed with 24 million euros, half of which will be provided by the state of NRW and half from industry and trade. In addition, a total of 50 million euros in additional project funding will also be provided over the next ten years. The ICAMS will begin its work in 2008. The Ruhr Area is regarded as Germany's center for material production. One-third of all nationwide employees in this branch work in the Ruhr Area – a total of 13,500 people. Approximately ten percent of industrial sales in North Rhine-Westphalia come from this branch.

Excellence Initiative: Bochum and Dortmund Reach the Final Round

The application for a protein network research association in the category “Clusters of Excellence” was chosen by the German Research Society and the *Wissenschaftsrat* to be accepted into the final round.

With the Cluster of Excellence *PROTEINinteractions: From molecular Mechanism to cellular NETWORKS*, the University of Dortmund and the Ruhr-University Bochum remain in the race for subsidies from the federal and state “Excellence Initiative”. In cooperation with the University of Bielefeld and the Dortmund Max-Planck-Institute for Molecular Physiology, they may now apply for the final round, the prize for which is a grant of 6.5 million euros per year. The Cluster of Excellence investigates living cells: how do proteins in networks become interdependent? How can we reach certain cellular answers? The aim is to break down the dynamic of the cellular occurrences in real time and, when possible, with atomic precision. Mistakes in this interaction could cause illnesses such as cancer. Thus, a cooperation with doctors and pharmaceutical companies is planned so that the findings can be applied directly to medicine.

» www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/exzellenzinitiative

ConRuhr Universities' Graduate School Receives Excellence Grant

The Leibniz Association is providing seven scholarships for the *Ruhr Graduate School in Economics (RGS Econ)* and has pledged to provide 400,000 euros for the expansion of the Graduate School and 16 further post-graduate positions.

The RGS Econ is a cooperative initiative from the Universities of Dortmund, Bochum and Duisburg-Essen and the *Rheinisch-Westfälischen Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung*. The third year is comprised of 8 scholarship recipients, the best of 180 applicants from all over the world. While full scholarships were provided in the two previous years through the financial support of private companies, this year seven scholarships were granted through the “Pact for Research and Innovation” at the Leibniz Association. The eighth scholarship is being provided by the National-Bank Essen, as in previous years. In all, ten post-graduates now study at the RGS Econ in the University of Dortmund's Faculty of Business Administration.

» www.rgs-econ.org

Dortmund Environmental Researchers Commissioned by the UN

Purified city sewage could be the solution for all agricultural water problems in arid regions. The Dortmund Institute of Environmental Research (INFU) is setting out to prove the advantages of re-use for the United Nations.

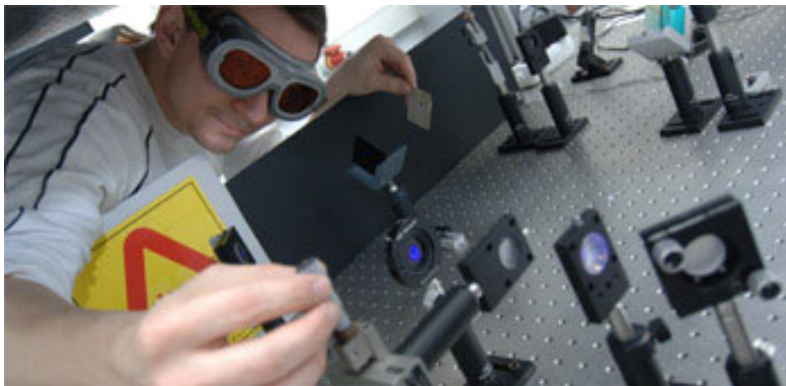
If adhering to hygienic requirements, the reuse of city sewage could help relieve the water sources and prevent the excessive extraction of ground water. The United Nations' *Food and Agricultural Organisation* has commissioned the INFU to investigate the hydrological, ecological and economic advantages of improving the use of natural water sources in arid regions. Two case studies are planned: one in the area of Barcelona, Spain, and another in the district Alfajayucan, near Mexico City.

» www.infu.uni-dortmund.de

New Graduate Research Training Group at the University of Duisburg-Essen

The new graduate research training group “Nanotronics - Photovoltaics and Optoelektronics from Nanoparticles” is the fourth research training group at the University of Duisburg-Essen and will deal with the optic and electric characteristics of nanoparticles (Nanopartikeln). The research training group was authorized by the German Research Association.

The emphasis of the research is placed on the transformation of electric energy into light and the transformation of light into electric energy. The goal is to develop electric devices out of nanoparticles – which total only approximately a billionth of a millimeter in size. The students work on interdisciplinary research and graduate school programs in groups



of no more than 25 participants. The approach being used here is innovative because it closely integrates academia and industry in research and training in one research training group. As a part of a stay of up to three months in the Degussa AG's Science-to-Business-Center, the post-graduate students can put their research results to use.

Experiments with the laser table, Photo: Frank Preuß, UDE

» www.uni-duisburg-essen.de/nanotronics

The Essen University Clinic's Tomograph Covers Entire Body

The Essen University Clinic is now equipped with world's the first magnetic resonance tomograph (MRT) which can produce an image of the patient's entire body at once.

The range of a conventional tomography is limited to no more than 50cm. That is sufficient for examining the head or knee joint, but not for angioplasty in the entire body, an examination of the entire spinal cord or a search for metastases, which could appear throughout the body. Prior to this machine, images of individual body parts had to be taken in separate steps and were later stitched together with the help of a computer program. This extends the length of the examination for the patient and allows room for error. Research in the field of radiology at the University Clinic in Essen formed the foundation for creating this new technology in a close cooperation with Siemens. With this device, the examination table continuously moves through the center of the tomography, allowing an image of the entire body from head to toes to be taken at one time.

Ruhr Campus Life

The University of Dortmund's Jazz Festival

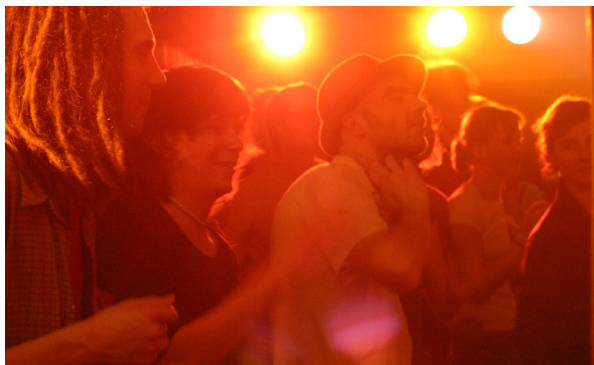
International and national jazz legends as well as musicians from the Ruhr Area will come together on January 27 for the University of Dortmund's 11th Jazz Festival.

The program is full of variety: the Markus Stockhausen Trio, internationally regarded as a top class headliner, is booked to be there.

Just Fun, an integrative Big Band from the Bochum School of Music, will also be there. This band even moved former Federal President Johannes Rau once to comment, "It was especially delightful to see young people with and without special needs playing together." On the microphone will be the internationally renowned blues and jazz singer Brenda Boykin, who has already sung at international jazz festivals such as in Montreux. Just as in the past years, the University of Dortmund is expecting many guests.

Photo: Uni Dortmund, Institut für Musik und ihre Didaktik

► www.jazzfestival.uni-dortmund.de



Business News

Ruhr Area or Ruhr Metropolis?

Initiated by the Ruhr University Bochum's Geographic Institute and the *Regionalverband Ruhr*, the booklet "Auf dem Weg zur Metropole Ruhr? Strukturwandel im Ruhrgebiet" ("Becoming a Ruhr Metropolis? Structural Changes in the Ruhr Area") has been published by the *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie* (Newspaper for Economic Geography).

From the Ruhr Area to the Ruhr Metropolis – what will this path look like? And where exactly are the opportunities, risks, obstacles and catalysts? The *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie* has dedicated a booklet to this topic. A total of 17 experts from academia and industry discuss how the Ruhr Area can position itself as the Ruhr Metropolis. The scholars have identified two speeds for the region. On the one hand are the lighthouse projects, which are increasingly determining the image of the Ruhr metropolis. On the other hand are the locations that cannot keep up with this dynamic development.

► www.wirtschaftsgeographie.com

New Railway System for the Rhine-Ruhr-Express

In the future the Ruhr Area will be even more connected to the cities of Aachen, Cologne, Düsseldorf und Münster due to a new high-speed line.

The “Rhine-Ruhr-Express” (RRX) will probably begin connecting the Ruhr Area even more closely with Düsseldorf and Cologne as soon as 2015. The federal government, the state of NRW and the Deutsche Bahn AG have agreed upon a concept. The RRX will operate every hour at speeds of 160 km/h on six lines and connect Dortmund, Cologne, Oberhausen and Düsseldorf. The final stations are Münster, Minden, Cologne-Bonn Airport, Koblenz and Aachen, which will enable a direct connection for almost all of NRW to the Rhine-Ruhr axis. In order to make the RRX possible, the railway system between Cologne and Dortmund will have to be expanded at a cost of approximately 1.3 billion euros. An expected 56 million euros will be invested in expanding the stations. The RRX is an inherent part of the new federal investment plan. According to the NRW Minister of Transportation Oliver Wittke, the RRX will mobilize more than 31,000 people per day.

Real Estate Projects and the Knowledge Metropolis Take on Topic of Water

The Ruhr Area showed its strength in a collective effort at the International Commercial Property Exposition *Expo Real* in Munich. The main topic was building on the water.

“Hier können Sie anlagen” was the motto with which the Ruhr Area introduced its new real estate projects on the water. With titles like “Urbane Wasserlagen” or “Fluss Stadt Land”, over 30 individual projects with a variety of uses for residence, service or commerce with a total investment of around 3 billion euros were presented on over 1,000 hectares. An estimated 28,000 jobs are expected to result from these water projects. Water will also be the topic of the “Expedition through the Ruhr knowledge metropolis”. In September the *Regionalverband Ruhr* (Ruhr Regional Association), in cooperation with the cities of Dortmund, Bochum, Duisburg and Essen, will present a three-week event on the topic of water. The goal is to bring science, industry and the public closer together through cultural and scholarly activities.



The Ruhr metropolis team in the exhibition hall of the Expo Real in Munich. Photo: Frank Elschner, Metropole Ruhr

» www.metropoleruhr.de and » www.rvr-online.de

Job Pool Starts in the Ruhr Area

In an attempt to secure jobs, companies in the Ruhr Area have merged and formed a job pool.

“Flexpool” is the name of North Rhine-Westphalia’s job pool project, which is starting now in the Ruhr Area. It provides a work force specifically for the regional metal industry and organizes a labor exchange. Companies come together and exchange contracted personnel with one another; the employees go to the company in which they needed at that moment. The aim is to secure jobs by forming synergies and renouncing short-term work or overtime, downsizing and temporary employment. A supplement to the collective labor agreement, which has just been signed, forms the legal basis for the organized exchange. The European Union and the NRW state government are supporting the organizational phase.

» www.flexpool.biz

Culturescape Ruhr

The Ruhr Area Deemed a “National GeoPark”

The Alfred Wegener Foundation, on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education, presented the association “GeoPark Ruhrgebiet” with the distinction “National GeoPark”.

The Ruhr Area is the only National Geopark in the world that is situated in an urban center and that has broached the issue of raw materials. The decisive factor for the jury was the enormous value placed on natural resources for the economic and cultural development of the region, which is well documented through the various witnesses of earlier and current coal mining in the Ruhr Area. Examples are the Geological Garden in Bochum, the Ice Age Exhibition in the Bottrop Museum Quadrat, the Geological Hiking Paths in Essen and Sonsbeck and the quarries in both Hagen-Vorhalle and Witten’s Muttental. The association “GeoPark Ruhrgebiet” was founded two years ago as an initiative of the NRW Geological Service and the *Regionalverbandes Ruhr* (Ruhr Regional Association).



**GeoPark
RUHRGEBIET**



» www.geopark-ruhrgebiet.de

European Capitol of Culture 2010: Essen and the Ruhr Area

It was made official on November 13, 2006: The European Council in Brussels named “Essen for the Ruhr Area”, as well as the Hungarian city Pécs and the Turkish metropolitan city Istanbul, European Capitol of Culture 2010.

This marked the final end to the application marathon for the title “European Capitol of Culture 2010”, a process which lasted over three years. An ECOC company ltd. (*Kultur 2010 GmbH*), which will prepare and carry out the Capitol of Culture year, was established in January. Company partners are the *Regionalverband Ruhr* (Ruhr Regional Association), the *Initiativkreis Ruhrgebiet*, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the city of Essen. Fritz Pleitgen, the former director of WDR, will take over as chairman of the enterprise. He is a culture manager and can bring many international contacts along with him. Just last December the University of Dortmund granted him an honorary doctorate.

The International Short Film Festival Oberhausen and a multitude of concerts have already begun to set the tone for the Capitol of Culture. The Ruhr University Bochum will accompany the planning of the *Kultur 2010 GmbH* with a forum which henceforth will take place once per semester.

» www.kulturhauptstadt-europas.de

Quadrat in Bottrop: 2006 Museum of the Year

The German section of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA) has chosen the Josef Albers Museum Quadrat in Bottrop as the “2006 Museum of the Year”.

Josef Albers was a painter, art educator and member of the Bauhaus tradition. He worked with optical illusions and was one of the founders of the so-called Op-Art style. The Museum Quadrat in Alber's hometown of Bottrop has been showing the artist's works since 1983. Second to only the Albers Foundation in Connecticut, USA, the museum houses the most comprehensive collection of his works. The Association of Art Critics honored the Josef Albers Museum exhibit and collection program, which they described as intelligent and independent of “fashionable tendencies in the art market”.

» www.quadrat-bottrop.de

Announcements

ConRuhr at the MIT European Career Fair

ConRuhr will be promoting the Ruhr Area at MIT in Cambridge, USA, at the *11th European Career Fair*, February 1-4, 2007. More than 4000 visitors are expected at the campus of the University of Cambridge to gather information about study and career opportunities in Europe. ConRuhr will be presenting the opportunities at the Universities of Dortmund, Bochum and Duisburg-Essen.

» www.euro-career.com

Invitation: Knowledge Transfer of Tomorrow Conference

ConRuhr, along with six other liaison offices in New York, is organizing a conference entitled “Knowledge Transfer of Tomorrow”. On February 15, 2007, top-level German and American experts from politics, society, academia and industry will meet in Washington D.C. to analyze the various dimensions of knowledge transfer and to develop perspectives for the future. The event is sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. All members of the Ruhr Friends and Alumni Network are cordially invited to attend.

» www.innovation-transfer.org

Imprint

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