The Power of IP
In vivid examples of the potential value of inventions, two universities have reaped rewards from their scholarly output. Carnegie Mellon University received $750 million from Marvell Group and Marvell Semiconductor to settle a patent dispute. After the inventors’ share (distributed to a professor and former student) and payment of all legal fees and expenses, CMU banked $250 million, to be applied to financial aid and the student experience. And UCLA sold its royalty interest in a prostate-cancer medicine, developed on the basis of discoveries made by campus researchers; the cash payment of $1.14 billion, plus possible future sums tied to drug sales, yielded $520 million for the institution, which will devote the funds to research, financial aid, and graduate-student fellowships. In a smaller-scale step in this direction, Harvard announced that it had licensed a compound to Merck, for investment as a leukemia therapy, for a $20-million fee.

Stanford Stays the Course
With its president, John L. Hennessy—computer scientist, technology entrepreneur, and corporate board member—stepping down, Stanford is staying the course, and perhaps signaling its view of the Next Big Thing—in life sciences. Its new president will be neuroscientist Marc Tessier-Lavigne: former Stanford professor, former chief scientific officer at Genentech, entrepreneur, and current president of Rockefeller University. Meanwhile, the university announced it had raised more than $700 million to endow the [Philip] Knight-Hennessy Scholars Program, which will bring graduate students to Stanford for leadership training—a sort of Palo Alto Rhodes-Marshall scholarship, with the lead gift from the co-founder of Nike Inc., and Hennessy in charge. The Chronicle of Higher Education profiled Stanford’s pilot CS+X program, melding student studies in computer science with any of 14 humanities programs. And President Obama is scheduled to serve as host for the 2016 Global Entrepreneurship Summit, with Stanford as a partner and venue, in late June.

HAILING FROM HARVARD. To fill the Supreme Court vacancy created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia, LL.B. ’60, President Barack Obama, J.D. ’91, on March 16 nominated Merrick B. Garland ’74, J.D. ’77, chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit. Of parochial interest, apart from his career of public service and private legal practice, Garland’s official biography notes that the social studies concentrator graduated summa cum laude from the College, and magna cum laude from the Law School, where he has taught. A former freshman proctor and resident tutor in Quincy House, Garland in 2003 was elected to Harvard’s Board of Overseers, filling the unexpired term of future Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick ’78, J.D. ’82, LL.D. ’15, who had stepped down. The next year, Garland was elected to a full six-year term, which he concluded as president of the board. The Crimson ties extend to Garland’s wife, Lynn Rosenman Garland ’82, and sister, Heidi Garland ’81, J.D. ’84.

Campuses under Pressure
Chancellor Nicholas B. Dirks of the University of California, Berkeley, one of the nation’s preeminent public research universities, said in February that the institution faced severe “continuing financial challenges,” requiring “re-examination of all our discretionary expenditures, including athletics and capital costs.” Facing limits on state appropriations, a tuition freeze, pressure to restrain out-of-state enrollments (those students pay more), and higher costs for everything from employee benefits to seismic safety for its campus, Berkeley faces a reported $150-million deficit this year. Meanwhile, Cornell announced in February that it could no longer maintain need-blind admission for international applicants, and will have to revert to “need-aware” admissions. (Amherst, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, and Yale are thought to be the only remaining need-blind colleges for international students.)

A Void in Ithaca
Elizabeth Garrett, who became president of Cornell last July, in February announced that she would go on leave to undergo treatment for colon cancer. Her death, at age 52, came on March 6. President Drew Faust called her “an extraordinarily thoughtful and vibrant colleague,” and noted, “I am profoundly saddened by her untimely death….American higher education has lost a great leader and champion, and I send deepest condolences to our friends at Cornell.” Hunter R. Rawlings III, Cornell’s president from 1995 to 2003 and interim president in 2005–2006, will return to Ithaca as interim president again, beginning in late April.

Nota Bene
Dialing back contact. Amid concerns about concussions and brain trauma, the Ivy League has voted to eliminate full-contact football practices during the regular season. The measure, enacted by coaches in late February, complements existing limits on full-contact tackling during spring and preseason practices and scrimmages, when live tackling is permitted.
Admissions and tuition. The College admitted 2,037 of the 39,041 applicants to the class of 2020—5.2 percent, down fractionally from 5.3 percent last year. Those who matriculate will face a nominal term bill (tuition, room, board, and fees) of $63,025, up 3.9 percent from the current academic year; but for a majority of the class, of course, all or some of that expense is offset by financial aid. Complete details are available at harvardmag.com/2020-16.


Acclaimed authors. National Book Critics Circle honorands include poet and Radcliffe Institute Fellow Ross Gay (see harvardmag.com/gay-16), for Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude, and biographer Charlotte Gordon ’84, for Romantic Outlaws: The Extraordinary Lives of Mary Wollstonecraft and Her Daughter Mary Shelley. Separately, novelist C.E. Morgan, M.T.S. ’07, won a $150,000 Windham-Campbell Prize in fiction, conferred by Yale, to support her writing.

Making money from MOOCs. Coursera, the principal for-profit competitor to the Harvard-MIT edX online course venture, has moved further toward monetizing its services. In January, it ended the free option for students who wish to have their work graded and to earn a certificate of completion (they may still browse free of charge). In February, it launched project-based courses (building an app, creating a website, and so on), for free or on a certified, fee basis.

GOING HOLLYWOOD. Following the College and Law School Class Day speakers, actresses Rashida Jones ’97 (see harvardmag.com/jones-16) and Sarah Jessica Parker (see harvardmag.com/parker-16), the Commencement afternoon talk will be headlined by director Steven Spielberg—Schindler’s List, Saving Private Ryan, and Amistad—and popular entertainments including Jaws, E.T., and Jurassic Park (see harvardmag.com/spielberg-16).

GOES COMES HOME. A portrait of the late Reverend Peter J. Gomes, Plummer professor of Christian morals and Pusey minister in the Memorial Church from 1974 to 2011, was installed in the Faculty Room of University Hall following a March 31 unveiling ceremony. Gomes, who spoke often at the faculty meetings held there, would no doubt delight in joining the august portraits on display; his hangs directly over the seat he habitually occupied. The Faculty Room portraits first included a woman’s image only in 1995; with Gomes’s arrival, they are now integrated, too. Read a full account at harvardmag.com/gomes-16.