President’s Corner

Greetings, Operating Staff!

I am Holly Nicholson from NIU’s Creative Services department. As of July 2, 2015, I have the honor of serving you as the president of the Operating Staff Council. I am a 2005 alumna of NIU’s Visual Communication program and have worked for the Division of Marketing and Communications since 2007 as a graphic designer, social media manager, and currently as a web content manager. NIU is an important part of my life, and as you are the heart and soul of the university I will do what I can to represent you fairly and make sure your voices are heard.

The amazing culture at NIU and the excitement of an academic environment are what drew me to work here eight years ago. Those years have been challenging for the university community, to say the least. However, the impressive thing about the Huskie family is how we come together as a team and persevere. As we face new challenges in the coming months/years, my hope is that we can continue that tradition and work together not only to uphold the university’s mission and goals, but also to build each other up and stay focused on what matters the most – helping students.

To celebrate your hard work over the past year, we invite you to join us at this year’s StaffFest on August 6th in the Duke Ellington Ballroom. Though we are all busy preparing for the students to come back in the fall, let’s take a break and have some fun!

I hope you are having an enjoyable summer.

Holly Nicholson, President
Operating Staff Council 2015–2016

NIU Smoke Free July 1

In compliance with the Illinois Smoke-Free Campus Act, Northern Illinois University became smoke-free Wednesday, July 1, joining more than 700 colleges and universities nationwide with smoke- and/or tobacco-free policies.

With the enactment of the new law, smoking is prohibited on all campus property, defined as property that is owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by NIU, both indoors and outdoors and in university-owned vehicles. In accordance with the law, smoking is allowed in privately owned vehicles when traveling through campus. Smoking is allowed in privately owned vehicles parked in unenclosed lots on campus.

Signs have been posted, and each building is being marked with appropriate messaging. Cement ash urns have already been removed from less-traveled parts of campus. On July 1, the process of removing all black ash urns from campus began.

Additional information on NIU’s smoke-free policy, as well as cessation resources and frequently asked questions, are available on the Smoke-Free NIU website, niu.edu/smokefree.
Walk This Way: New Building Signage Earns High Marks

All signs indicate that things are looking up at NIU. During the month of June, several departments collaborated to vastly improve signage on campus buildings so that students and visitors know where to go and how to get there efficiently.

“Not only do the exterior building signs provide a fresh, contemporary look to our grounds, they also provide navigational guides to those finding their way across campus,” said Kelly Wesener Michael, associate vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students.

“These efforts are also enhanced by the launch of a virtual 3D campus map which is mobile-friendly for those traveling to or across the campus.” NIU senior Nathan Lupstein shared the sentiment.

“It’s exciting to see the dynamic change on campus,” said Lupstein, president of NIU’s Student Association. “Throughout the past year, I think NIU has done an exceptional job enhancing the aesthetic environment of our campus. Along with recently added signage around the commons and on the library, the new exterior building signs are successfully contributing to a more welcoming and sharp-looking campus.”

The university assembled a Signs, Identification Guidance and Navigation Standards (SIGNS) committee, consisting of staff members from a variety of departments, about a year ago. The initial goal was to create a positive change in the “visual impact” of campus as students returned to campus in the fall.

Mission accomplished.

“This group worked quickly to design and install the large banners placed on Founders Memorial Library and Graham Hall, as well as the ‘Ask Me’ campaign and light pole banners which provide building identification and the way-finding system on campus,” Wesener Michael said.

In addition, the team recommended the installation of interior way-finding signage in several buildings, including Swen Parson Hall, to assist students and visitors with navigation to key campus offices.

Wesener Michael said fiscal responsibility is a hallmark for members of the SIGNS team, and with each project, they have utilized the university’s talented staff in planning and design phases.

“We also used existing sign stands as a cost-cutting measure,” Wesener Michael said. “For all the SIGNS projects, when the job scope ventures beyond what our internal staff can reasonably take on, we search diligently for vendors that can provide the best product and services at the most competitive price.”

Signage is one of many campus improvements staff members work on during the summer – and it’s earning high marks.

“I think it is great to have our school colors on the new signs,” said Matt Holmes, vice president of finance for the Campus Activities Board. “It gives a much better sense of school spirit all across campus. The red and black is reflective of the university and the athletic programs, so I feel that it is a definitely a great change when I see all of the new signs on campus.”

Employment Changes

**May 2015**

**Welcome New Employees**

- Michael Ayres, Laboratory Mechanic—College of Engineering & Engineering Technology
- Jason Bolles, Housing Representative—Housing & Dining
- Jeannine East, Webmaster—Office of Creative Services
- Jennifer Ferris, Events Administrator—Convocation Center
- Joan Parrish, Office Manager—Counseling & Student Development
- Martha Ryan, Library Assistant—University Libraries
- Stephen Siebler, Arena Physical Facilities Supervisor—Convocation Center
- Jeremy Simonson, Office Support Associate—Chemistry & Biochemistry
- Sean Wolfe, Office Support Associate—College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

**Changes**

- Russell Andres to Maintenance Equipment Operator—Grounds
- Aaron Bloyd to Maintenance Equipment Operator—Grounds
- Terry Dobson to Mailing Equipment Operator/Expediter II—Materials Management
- Mark Fagerstrom to Grounds Gardener Assistant—Grounds
- Kent Flewellin to Athletic Turf Specialist—Grounds
- Melissa Folowew-Vargas to Administrative Aide—Center for Governmental Studies
- Douglas Freeman to Grounds Gardener Assistant—Grounds
- William Heal to Grounds Gardener—Grounds
- Keith Hearn to Grounds Gardener Assistant—Grounds
- Paul King to Maintenance Equipment Operator—Grounds
- Christine Monteiro to Internal Auditor Associate—Internal Audit
- Ronald Peterson to Grounds Equipment Mechanic—Grounds
- Megan Sippel to Administrative Aide—Public Safety
- Richard Twombly to Electrician Foreman—Physical Plant

**Retirements**

- Jane Boardman, Administrative Aide—Development Administration
- Debbie Groye, Maintenance Repair Worker—Lorado Taft
- Georgia Harris, Budget Analyst III—Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
- Barbara Kaufmann, Graduate Placement Officer—Career Services
- Karen Mishler, Administrative Assistant—Vice President Research and Innovation Partnerships
Curtis Moore, Brickmason—Physical Plant
Paula Ruff, Financial Aid Adviser Coordinator—Student Financial Aid
Michael Serby, Building Service Worker—Building Services

Separations
Angela Byers, Office Support Specialist—Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations
Aysha Flowers, Financial Aid Adviser Coordinator—Student Financial Aid
Jake Guetterman, Admissions/Records Representative—Graduate School
Mohammed Haque, Police Telecommunicator—Public Safety
Krystal Kennedy, Child Development Supervisor—Campus Child Care
Diane Ledbetter, Accountant I—Controller & Grants Fiscal
Nicholas Lowery, Office Support Specialist—Psychology
Brenna Merchant, Office Support Associate—Physical Plant
Sipradith Mounivong, Building Service Worker—Building Services
Cheryl Murray, Office Support Specialist—Military Student Services
Carrie Parks, Pharmacist—Health Services
Heidi Rudolph, Administrative Assistant—Materials Management
Jaquelyne Smith, Office Support Associate—Computer Science
Patricia Solomon, IT Technical Associate—College of Business
William Swineheart, Storekeeper I—Materials Management
Francesca Tines, Resident Hall Attendant—Public Safety
Elizabeth Toure, Program Adviser—International Student & Faculty Office
Kathrine Ubik, Admissions/Records Representative—Admissions

Changes
Robert Allen to Human Resource Representative—Human Resource Services
Renee Bechtel to Benefits Counselor—Human Resource Services
Janet Gianfrancesco to Purchasing Officer III—Procurement & Strategic Sourcing
Veris Hawkins-Smith to Human Resource Officer—Human Resource Services
Sherri Metsker to Human Resource Officer—Human Resource Services
Mindy Venner to Human Resource Officer—Human Resource Services
Kurt Westhoff to Admissions/Records Representative—CHANCE Program
Maria Wilk-Shiuba to Benefits Counselor—Human Resource Services
Timothy Meyers to Storekeeper I—Physical Plant

Retirements
Michael Ackerman, Steam & Power Plant III—Heating Plant
Lisa Allison, Office Support Specialist—Registration & Records
Bonnie Bamborough, Food Service Sanitation Laborer—Lorado Taft
Susan Edwards, Office Support Specialist—English
Diana Grace, Office Manager—University Libraries
Lori Hall, Office Support Specialist—English
David Protano, Building Service Foreman—Building Services
Diane Smith, Office Support Specialist—English

Separations
Lon Clark, Business Manager II—Office of Creative Services
Diane Drake, Administrative Assistant—Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
Adam Lewis, Program Assistant—NIU Outreach Rockford
Ivan Matosevic, IT Technical Associate—College of Law
Shevonne Shannon, Security Guard—Public Safety
Carl Simonson, IT Support Associate—Information Security & Operations
Dana Van Tholen, Child Development Supervisor—Family, Consumer & Nutrition
Anthony Vinz, Police Officer—Public Safety

Save the Dates
Fall Flu Shot Schedule
Wednesday, September 30, 2015
Tuesday, October 20, 2015
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

JUNE 2015
5 Years
April Law—Anthropology
Pamela Yockey—Campus Child Care
10 Years
David Berg—Physical Plant
Karen Larsen—English
Paula Vasko—Housing & Dining
15 Years
Arison Russell—Holmes Student Center
Michael Fleming—Document Services
James Garman—Heating Plant
Paul King—Grounds

June 2015
10 Years
Cheryl Alliston—Accounts Payable & Travel
Kathy Gibbs—Alumni Services
Diane Rich—Nursing & Health Studies

Welcome New Employees
Michael Benson, Publicity Promotion Specialist—College of Engineering & Engineering Technology
Lesli Buie, Office Support Specialist—College of Engineering & Engineering Technology
Sheree Carlson, Office Support Specialist—Student Involvement & Leadership Development
Sara Clark, Program Adviser—Student Academic Success
Christopher Derr, Motor Vehicle Operator/Mechanic—Transportation
Zachary Effler, Library Assistant—University Libraries
Rebecca Hallenbeck, Payroll Specialist I—Human Resource Services

Service Awards
MAY 2015
10 Years
Cheryl Alliston—Accounts Payable & Travel
Kathy Gibbs—Alumni Services
Diane Rich—Nursing & Health Studies

15 Years
Susan Lietz—Management
Ginger Prothero-Schwersenska—University Libraries
Bernhard Ritter—Architectural/Engineering Services
Rahul Thatte—Holmes Student Center
Carrie Williams—Controller & Grants Fiscal

20 Years
Jeryl Faire—Housing & Dining
Brian Thompson—Document Services
Vicky Yosburgh—Kinesiology & Physical Education

25 Years
Joan Pontarelli—Research Evaluation & Policy Studies
Operating Staff Employees Sought for University Committees

Have a voice. Join a committee. NIU’s Operating Staff Council (OSC) is seeking employees interested in serving on campus committees. Representatives are needed for the:

- Campus Parking Committee (two representatives for a three-year term)
- Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee (one representative for a two-year term)
- Parking Appeals Committee (one representative for a three-year term)
- Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (one representative for a two-year term)
- University Benefits Committee (one representative for a three-year term)

More information on the openings and the "interest form" is available on the OSC website http://www.niu.edu/osc/committees/committees.shtml

Detailed descriptions of University Committees can be found at http://www.niu.edu/u_council/committees/2015-16/INDEX.shtml

In addition, the Office of the President invites nominations of faculty, staff, and students for appointment to the four presidential commissions for academic year 2015-2016. Self-nominations are welcome.

- Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities
- Presidential Commission on the Status of Minorities
- Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
- Presidential Commission on the Status of Women

Forward nominations, including name, classification (Faculty, Supportive Professional Staff, Operating Staff, Student), address, email, telephone number and a brief statement summarizing your qualification and desire to serve to Pat Erickson, Office of the University Council, at pje@niu.edu

City of DeKalb Invites Input on Strategic Planning Process

The City of DeKalb has embarked on a multi-year, collaborative, grassroots strategic planning effort. The end results will be a 10-year vision for the city as well as a set of shorter-term specific actions to move toward that vision.

To accomplish this, the city is turning to city residents, students, workers and employers to share their ideas about DeKalb’s future.

The goal is to provide an understanding of the city’s assets and improvement opportunities, suggestions for change strategies and ways for the city to maintain ongoing dialogue and communication with people who live, work or attend school in DeKalb.

Seven 90-minute community conversations will be held throughout DeKalb in July. For more information visit: http://www.niutoday.info/2015/07/07/city-of-dekalb-invites-input-on-strategic-planning-process/