President’s Corner

Amid economic down turn, political turmoil and NIU’s own tragedy being revisited by recent gunfire, is there good news anywhere at NIU? Yes there is! There are a number of good things happening here at our university:

• Governor Quinn recently released initial funding for the Cole-Stevens Complex. This new construction will repurpose Cole Hall and renovate the Stevens Building.

• We also can be thankful that thus far we have not had to enact furlough days or layoffs, avoiding the drastic measures to which other institutions have resorted.

• The Forward, Together Forward Scholarships were awarded to five of our outstanding students who represent the new hope for our world arising from the tragedy on 2/14.

• Operating Staff Council will soon be announcing this year’s recipients of the Outstanding Service Award. This award celebrates the achievements and contributions of some of our most outstanding Operating Staff members.

• We also will be announcing the Staff Dependent Scholarship awards; recognizing the accomplishments of our Operating Staff family members.

Now is the time for you to get involved. Help us with the important issues! You should have received a letter via campus mail from the Operating Staff Council which was a call for candidates. There are five vacancies to be filled this year. Each vacancy is for a three year term. The Operating Staff Council’s by-laws state that the Council’s role is to promote the general welfare of Operating Staff employees through action in a communicative and advisory capacity to the NIU administration as well as any other applicable group, agency, or individual. We function as a source of direction, information, and two-way communication for the Operating Staff at NIU.

To be eligible to run for a position on the Council, you must be a Civil Service employee in a status position. You must have your supervisor’s approval. The time commitment is approximately five hours per month, which includes the monthly meeting and sub-committee participation. The Council meets the first Thursday of every month in the Holmes Student Center Clara Sperling Sky Room from 9:00 until approximately noon.

Please fill out the Candidate Data Sheet you received via campus mail. You may also obtain the form from our website at http://www.niu.edu/osc/election.htm. Please send your form, with supervisor approval to: Sara Clayton, International Programs, Williston Hall 406, by 4:30 p.m. on or before Tuesday, March 31, 2009.

Please remember that Operating Staff Council is here for you. Bring your concerns to me, another member of the Council, or attend our monthly meetings.

Think Spring!

Jay Monteiro, President
Operating Staff Council 2009-2010
Benefits Survey

For the past several months, the University Benefits Committee, and the Insurance and Benefits Office have received a growing stream of reports from current employees and annuitants about the personal impact of the State's delays in payment of insurance claims, particularly through CIGNA, and sometimes through HMOs. We know that medical providers are also experiencing complications because of the delayed payments.

The mission of the University Benefits Committee is to advise the President on the needs and interests of employees and annuitants on benefits. In order to effectively fulfill this mission, in March, the University Benefits Committee will be conducting an electronic survey of employees and annuitants to identify patterns of the difficulties they have experienced in the provision and reimbursement of health care by medical providers. We have been authorized by President Peters to conduct this survey, and plan to use the results in our report to him, and in efforts to work with our health care providers as partners in dealing with this statewide crisis.

When you receive this survey via e-mail, please respond about your experiences with insurance reimbursement, and let us know if you have had to make difficult decisions on your medical care as a result of the insurance crisis. Results will be kept confidential and reports will not identify individual responders. If you work in a department that does not offer email access to you, departments can print off a paper copy of the survey, or you may visit Human Resources, 1515 W. Lincoln Highway, or the HR Service Center in Swen Parson to respond to the survey.

Your University Benefits Committee Representatives: Ray Foster and Pam Rosenberg

Wellness Fair Scheduled

NIU’s annual Campus Wellness Fair, co-hosted by Employee Assistance and Recreation Services, will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, March 31, in the Duke Ellington Ballroom of the Holmes Student Center.

Providers from the campus and community will be in attendance to provide free information, screenings and activities for fair attendees. All are invited. Admission is free.

Benefit Choice Fair Scheduled

The annual Benefits Choice Fair will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday, May 6, in the Regency Room of the Holmes Student Center. This event is sponsored by Human Resource Services. Employees will have the opportunity to talk with representatives from Human Resource Services and from the various benefits vendors in preparation for making benefit choices and changes during the annual Benefits Choice period in May. Representatives of SURS, Social Security, Deferred Compensation (403b), Health Plans and various campus resources will be present with current information to answer questions about health coverage, sick leave bank, insurance and other benefits.

Operating Staff Council will sell raffle tickets in support of the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship.

The Benefits Choice Fair is a university-sponsored event and supervisors are encouraged to provide employees with the opportunity to participate. For more information, contact Employee Relations at (815) 753-6039.

Direct Deposit Payroll Statements Available On-line

Direct deposit payroll statements are available on-line for employees. This on-line function represents the first phase of several Self-Service options with the Human Resource Services (HRS) PeopleSoft system. Employees will continue to receive printed payroll statements through campus mail unless they opt to suspend printed statements.

The Self-Service option for payroll statements, allows individuals to obtain their direct deposit pay information at least three days before payday and also view previous payroll statements available since the July 15, 2001 payroll. Individuals, with limited computer access, wishing to view their payroll statements on-line are welcome to utilize the computer lab in the HRS Service Center, Swen Parson, Room 110, or at the HRS Service Center on Lincoln Highway. Additional resources and tutorials on how to navigate and interpret the payroll statements are available at www.niu.edu/erptraining/hris/index.shtml.

To log into the Self-Service system, navigate to www.hr.niu.edu/self-service. Then use your personal Novell login and password to access the system and click on the Self-Service link. Employees who do not know their Novell login and/or password can obtain their login or reset their password by going to https://password.niu.edu/iuadmin or calling the ITS help desk at 753-8100. It is important to maintain your personal Novell login and password in strict confidence. The Novell login password grants access to NIU work related systems, and specifically in Self-Service, personal information such as your deductions and direct deposit information are contained on the payroll statement. It is also important, after you complete viewing your Self-Service information that you sign out of the system for security purposes by clicking the “signout” link in the upper right hand corner of the red bar.

Printed payroll statements can be suspended through Self-Service at www.hr.niu.edu/self-service or by checking this option on the Personal Data Form or Direct Deposit Form, which are available on the Human Resource Services website at www.hr.niu.edu/resources/forms.cfm.

The second phase of Self-Service will be made available toward the beginning of 2010, and will allow individuals to update and view personal information on file in the Human Resource Services database. If you have any questions, please contact Human Resource Services at 815.753.6000 or humanresources@niu.edu.
EMPLOYMENT

Changes

December 2009

Welcome New Employees
Bradley Besonen, IT Technical Associate—Information Services

Changes
Robin Anderson to Administrative Assistant I—University Council
Tammy Stevens to Business/Administrative Associate—College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Marcus Ward to IT Support Associate—Customer Support Services

Separations
Veronica Day, Child Development Supervisor—Family, Consumer and Nutrition
James Fredrickson, Electrician—Physical Plant
James McElhaney, Senior Applications Analyst—Information Services
Laurel Slack, Child Development Supervisor—Family, Consumer and Nutrition

January 2010

Welcome New Employees
Claire Entas, Office Support Associate—Teaching and Learning
Benny Garbacz, Stationary Fireman Helper—Physical Plant
Virginia Meo, Budget Analyst II—Student Affairs and Enrollment Management
Kristin Schulz, Child Development Supervisor—Campus Child Care
Kristin Simon, Admissions/Records Specialist I—Registration and Records

Changes
Brenda Hart to Office Administrator—Marketing
Theresa LaRocco to Admissions/Records Specialist I—Vice President Research and Dean of Graduate School
George Tarbay to Photographer II—Media Services
Scott Walstrom to Photographer II—Media Services

Name Change
Linda Leifheit to Linda Webb, Communications Services Specialist II—NIUTEL-Telecommunications Services

Retirements
John Davis, Carpenter—Physical Plant
Shirley DeFano, Office Support Specialist—Art
John Emberson, Building Service Worker—Building Services
Charles Gautcher, Plumber—Physical Plant
Sharon Pfleumer, Office Manager—Housing & Dining
Gary Skinner, Stationary Engineer—Physical Plant
Robert Trahan, Jr., Building Service Worker—Building Services

Separations:
Irma Rains, Building Service Worker—Building Services

SERVICE AWARDS

December 2009

5 Years
Mark Austin—NIU Outreach and Regional Development
Thomas Boken—Campus Parking
Chad Glover—Student Employment
Kristen Hickey—Physical Plant

10 Years
Katharine Dempsey—Document Services
Lowell Hatfield—Materials Management
Marcy Kalvelage—Holmes Center Bookstore
Kevin Marshall—Environmental Health and Safety
Jennifer Ridge—College of Health and Human Sciences

15 Years
Michael Shered—Building Services
Evelyn Smith—Allied Health and Communicative Disorders

20 Years
Debra Benson—Presidents Office
Terrance Olin—College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

25 Years
George Morisette—Media Services

30 Years
Robert Bailey—Geology and Environmental Geoscience
Richard Klages—Physical Plant
Linda Larsen—Materials Management

35 Years
Ruby Foreman—Information Security and Operations

Endowment Campaign Making Progress

As of January 31, 2010, total donations to the endowment for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship were $15,748.50, or 63 percent of the campaign’s goal of $25,000. The goal is to complete the campaign by June of 2011. You can help make the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship, the first at the university to be endowed by an employee council, by donating as little as $1 a paycheck. Go to www.niu.osc/dependentaward/donate.shtml for information about making a donation or contact Clair Williams at 753-8382.
Northern Public Radio Seeks Volunteers

Northern Public Radio station 89.5-WNIJ (http://www.wnij.org/) soon will need phone room volunteers for its spring membership campaign from March 12 to 19.

Good communications skills and the ability to commute to the NIU Broadcast Center (801 N. First Street in DeKalb) are a must. Those with free time during the campaign week — anywhere from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. depending on the day — can contact Diane Drake at ddrake@niu.edu to inquire about available shifts.

Classical WNIJ will host a separate “One Day Wednesday: pledge drive from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 31. Volunteers are also needed for that date.

Athletics Seeks Volunteers for Two April Track Meets

Athletics is looking for volunteers to assist in working at two home track and field meets Saturday, April 17, and Thursday, April 29, at the Soccer and Track & Field Complex.

Shifts are 9 a.m. to noon, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Sue Hansfield at (815) 751-0066 or via e-mail at shansfield@niu.edu.

International Programs Hosts Series of Brown Bag Lunches

The Division of International Programs hosts its Spring 2010 Brown Bag Series from noon to 1 p.m. Thursdays in John E. La Tourette Hall (formerly Faraday West), Room 300. Attendees are invited to bring a lunch and listen to speakers covering a variety of topics such as international perspectives, cultural diversity and study abroad experiences.

March 18
Farah Tazeen Khattoo – Have you got 32 shining pearls??

March 25
Andrea Buford – Improving Access to Education for Children in Forced Labor in India

April 1
Anuradha Marwah – Healthy diet in a fast food nation

April 8
Maimouna Konate – One finger cannot lift a stone: the aspiring women of Africa with emphasis on women of Mali

April 15
Srikanth Dandotkar – How we comprehend everyday arguments

April 22
Jui-Ching Wang – Listeners without borders?

For other details, contact Heesun Majcher, Director of the International Student and Faculty Office, at (815) 753-8275 or hmajcher@niu.edu or visit www.niu.edu/ISFO/programs/brown_bag.shtml.

Ally Award Nominations Open

The Ally Awards are sponsored by the Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, the LGBT Resource Center and the LGBT Studies Program as a way to recognize individuals, departments and groups who have done something positive for or on behalf of the LGBT community.

The Ally Awards are inclusive, with the intent of recognizing as many people as possible. It is not a competition designed to select only a few winners.

Recipients of the Ally Award will be recognized at the Ally Awards Reception during LGBT Awareness Month in April. Everyone is welcome.

Details on the nomination process and to access a nomination form are online at www.niu.edu/lgbt/resourcecenter/awards/allyawards/index.shtml. Deadline for nomination submissions is 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 5.