Vision
The Division of Student Affairs inspires students to engage and succeed in their individual pursuit of learning as they transform into dynamic leaders.

Mission
In alliance with the educational mission of Northern Illinois University, the Division of Student Affairs creates student learning opportunities beyond the classroom that inspire intellectual, personal, and civic growth for leadership in a diverse and complex world.

Core Values
Student-centered service
Partnerships focused on student learning
Establishing an inclusive community
Actively building collaborative relationships
On behalf of my colleagues in the Division of Student Affairs, I am pleased and honored to share the 2007-2008 Annual Report. This report contains summaries of the major accomplishments and highlights from each of our eighteen departments. Once again, it was easy to see our core values at work as we served the NIU community during the past academic year.

The year began inauspiciously. Move-in day brought over 3,000 students, accompanied by storms and floods. During finals week we experienced a threat of violence in the form of graffiti in a residence hall. Yet these incidents served as preparation for the most unimaginable experience of our careers on February 14, 2008. On that fateful day during the spring semester, our entire campus community became victim to a campus shooter who ultimately took the lives of five of our students and injured many more, both physically and psychologically. It was our darkest hour.

Despite the challenges, we were witness to, and part of, some amazing successes. A pinnacle of the year was the opening of Northern View community. Additionally, Unity in Diversity, an initiative launched in 1987 to heighten awareness and sensitivity to diversity on campus, celebrated its 20th anniversary. Our campus community has greatly benefitted from the contributions of this group and the principles that they continue to promote. We noted increased attendance in numerous campus activities and programs sponsored by our departments. The continued engagement of students is critical to the fulfillment of our mission and vision statements.

As a result of the campus shooting on 2/14, we also opened our eighteenth department under the Division of Student Affairs umbrella. The Office of Support & Advocacy was developed to provide central resources and one referral point for those students, families, faculty, and staff most directly impacted by the 2/14 tragedy.

This year, especially, my colleagues in Student Affairs amazed me with their commitment, perseverance, expertise, and unrelenting spirit to overcome. After all that we experienced, I am able to reflect on this year with great pride in the work we accomplished beyond the crisis response. Please take the time to review the great successes this document captures and highlights. In doing so, I believe you will understand the pride I possess as I am honored to be a part of such an amazing circle of professionals.

Forward, Together Forward,

Brian O. Hemphill
Vice President for Student Affairs
The Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) provides accommodations and services to students with disabilities, allowing them to access the academic and extracurricular activities that NIU offers.

Equipment and software purchased for e-text conversion replaced antiquated equipment with current, state-of-the-art equipment to improve the accuracy and efficiency of converting print materials to e-text. The improved process allows for accurate conversion of more difficult text than had previously been possible, and students with disabilities receive their materials more quickly than in the past.

New and ongoing collaborations occurred this year with the intent to create increased awareness of people with disabilities. Many of the programs were aimed at previously unreached students on campus, not only to improve the sensitivity of people towards students with disabilities on campus, but also to improve their sensitivity to situations they may encounter after they leave NIU and enter the workforce. Two multi-cultural activities took place: the first between DeafPride, CAAR, and the Latino Resource Center, and the second with DeafPride, CAAR, and the Center for Black Studies.

Feedback, discussions, and comments after each event showed that participants were very positive about them and had learned information that helped bridge the gap between two different cultures. Deaf Awareness Week was once again well attended, providing the NIU community with the opportunity to learn about the deaf culture.

The new CAAR Web site, based on the NIU template, went live in May. Student suggestions were incorporated into the changes, and the Student Advisory Group has approved the new Web site. Beginning in the fall, newsletters and important dates will be posted on a regular basis.

Lastly, the CAAR staff was busy in the spring, providing additional support to students who were affected by the event on 2/14. CAAR students, especially students who already had psychiatric disabilities, needed additional support during the semester. A handful of students who did not have documented disabilities sought out CAAR assistance because of the psychological effects of the trauma. For the most part, those students received exam accommodations for the rest of the semester, as they could not take exams in a classroom.
The Asian American Center (AAC) provides student-centered services and inclusive community through its close working/advising relationships with seventeen Asian American student-run organizations, including four Greek-letter organizations. The Center continues to attract high utilization and significant participation from the Asian American student population. The Center staff documented outreach to 118 student organizational meetings, planning meetings, and/or campus events in FY08.

As part of the Asian American Peer Mentor Program (a signature program of AAC), the Center collaborated with the Center for Black Studies, CHANCE Program, and Latino Resource Center to coordinate a Training Retreat Day for peer mentor participants in each of the respective programs. In FY08, the Asian American Peer Mentor program recruited 38 mentors and 65 protégés, developed assessment tools to measure student learning outcomes and satisfaction levels for program participants, implemented training sessions for mentors, and provided a Peer Mentor Award Ceremony to recognize participants engaged in the program.

The Asian American Center enhanced student learning by providing leadership opportunities, student partner/employee positions, and internships. The Center developed fifteen internship opportunities focusing on areas for alumni connections, event planning, marketing, media development, peer mentoring, professional development, and Web page design.

The Asian American Center developed collaborative relationships with numerous departments on campus to provide programs, services, outreach, leadership development, and/or resource acquisition.
Campus Child Care (CCC) continued to provide high-quality care and education to children of NIU students (60%), faculty and staff (30%), and the surrounding community (10%). A total of 167 children were served during the year. Demographics served included 40% minority populations, 27% single parents, 28% commuters, and 65% low-income students.

In collaboration with several departments and organizations, the Center provided experiential training and education for two Kishwaukee College students and sixty-four NIU students, most of whom are preparing to work in education-related fields. Students were provided with a wide variety of experience and training opportunities to expand their knowledge and develop skills in the areas of working with children, parents, families, and staff. The students provided learning activities for the children and participated in volunteer work, research projects, and observations.

Campus Child Care provided additional educational opportunities to student parents enrolled in the program. A year-long initiative, “Super Start to Health and Wellness,” was launched in the fall. Through collaborative efforts with various agencies and NIU departments, parents were provided with resources, services, and programs throughout the year to increase their knowledge in topic areas related to children’s health and wellness.

Campus Child Care also provided educational opportunities to professional and student staff. Four on-site workshops were offered throughout the year to increase the number of training hours obtained by staff and to provide knowledge to enhance curriculum and teaching practices.

The Center successfully completed the re-accreditation process, which included a self-assessment and a site visit from NAEYC’s Academy for Early Childhood Programs.
Career Services

Career Services devoted a significant amount of time to healing efforts after the campus tragedy on 2/14. Four members of the team were appointed as university liaisons to victims and their families. Their counseling competencies were instrumental in helping these individuals.

Job and internship fairs in FY08 attracted over 800 employers from the Chicagoland area, and the combined student attendance for all fairs, was over 4,600.

Winners of the scholarships for the Internship Student of the Month and Student of the Year program interned at the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services in Washington, D.C., and Chicago; Rawlings Sporting Goods in St. Louis; and the United States Geological Survey Department in Denver.

An online tutorial for e-Recruiting has been made available to students participating in Campus Recruiting, resulting in a 50% increase in the applicant pool. The initial phase of electronic file conversion was implemented successfully. Credential files of new graduates are automatically scanned and uploaded to e-Recruiting. Existing files are converted on an as-needed basis.

Collaborations with academic departments, coupled with increased marketing of programming and services, resulted in increased requests for workshops. The counseling unit co-presented 85 UNIV101/201 sessions with members of the Academic Advising department.
Commuter and non-traditional students are two unique and, often, overlapping student populations. Commuters include students who live at home with their families and/or spouses, or who live off-campus in local apartments. Non-traditional students are those who are 24 years old or older, have dependents, are married or partnered, and/or are military veterans. Frequently, this demographic is employed and has to balance many responsibilities throughout their college career. These students face unique challenges, and Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services (CNTSS) strives to connect them to the resources they need in order to succeed at NIU.

In order to better accommodate this student group, CNTSS provides access to resources during hours that are more convenient for them. The office’s lounge areas are available for extended hours, allowing students the freedom to connect to campus as their less traditional schedules allow.

In an effort to better assist commuter and non-traditional students, new leadership positions (called Student Coordinators) were created. The coordinators serve as a link between the students and the office. The student coordinators also contribute to the programming and marketing of department events and provide peer-to-peer resources for all who utilize the office.

Some of the new programming initiatives include specific events tailored to the interests of commuter and non-traditional students. These events include Good Morning Huskies (a free continental breakfast provided at specific commuter parking lots), Study Break (a free lunch and optional ten-minute massage for students the week before finals each semester), Off-Campus Housing Fairs (an opportunity to meet with local landlords and view apartment layouts and contracts), and Comrade Week (a week of appreciation for commuter and non-traditional students featuring kid-friendly events). Many of these events are collaborative efforts, introducing the students to multiple departments at NIU.
The Counseling and Student Development Center (CSDC) managed university-wide crises, the formation of a new administrative team, and unprecedented utilization during FY08. During FY08, clinical services were provided to 1,188 students (a 32% increase over FY07) across 5,625 appointments. Outreach presentations provided or arranged by CSDC were attended by 101,827 individuals (a 1,006% increase).

The Center was involved in multiple crises that impacted the entire campus community during the year. These included a flood in August, a posted threat in December, and the campus shooting tragedy on 2/14. The crisis and aftermath of 2/14 resulted in CSDC’s offering extended hours, remaining open on the weekends, and working with an unprecedented number of students, faculty, and staff through counseling, outreach, and consultation. CSDC provided leadership for NIU in meeting the mental health needs of the community. Specific highlights included: utilizing 509 volunteer clinicians on the main and satellite campuses for the first two days of resumed classes (a clinician was placed in each class and in several departments and offices); providing outreach services to student groups most directly impacted by the shooting; providing orientation sessions for all faculty, teaching assistants, and front-line staff on handling students’ return to campus; organizing and orienting the Animal Assisted Therapy teams; and handling a significant surge in walk-in sessions. In the first week that classes resumed, CSDC had 180 walk-in sessions. This number is significantly higher than previous peak utilization periods when the number of walk-in sessions ranged between 35-40 per week.

New initiatives this past year included an expansion of the group-counseling program. This included a new group for women students, an Emotional Health Series, and specific groups for students impacted by 2/14.

Finally, CSDC maintained strong collaborative relationships across campus, highlighted by providing training for residence hall staff. Positive collaborative efforts also occurred with Health Enhancement; Women’s Resource Center; Health Services; Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences; and Athletics.
Health Enhancement continued to develop, implement, and evaluate health education programming for the NIU student body during FY08. The department focused on prevention, risk reduction, and health promotion, and served as a campus resource for health information by providing students with materials, facilitating presentations to diverse audiences, and staffing outreach events.

Health Enhancement focused on capacity-building initiatives regarding interpersonal violence prevention education. Partnerships with many Student Affairs departments, student organizations, Intercollegiate Athletics, and the Greek community resulted in: Take Back the Night; the White Ribbon Campaign; the return of Project Link as part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month activities; the development of new educational initiatives for minority students; and an increase in the number of men attempting to put an end to sexual assault and dating violence.

For the second consecutive year, health educators joined forces with Allied Health Professions graduate students to conduct needs assessments on projects such as media preferences for obtaining health information, condom availability, and men’s nutrition and fitness knowledge and behaviors. Faculty and students from Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences expanded the dietetic internship experience with Health Enhancement by incorporating body image and eating disorders projects in a senior-level class.

Developing new program content, providing individual consultations to students, and preparing or reviewing educational materials designed to empower students to make healthier choices rounded out Health Enhancement’s evidence-based initiatives. FY08 achievements included: grant funding for incorporating Illinois’ “Live Free Tobacco Free” initiative at NIU; and partnering with San Diego State University to evaluate E-Chug, an online alcohol prevention education program.
Health Services provides ambulatory medical and psychiatric care, as well as sports medicine services, for NIU students. Health Services completed 36,369 patient visits for 11,831 students during this school year.

New student services for FY08 included a program on smoking cessation and the implementation of a credit card payment option for Health Services. Hiring a full-time staff psychiatrist enhanced mental health services. In addition, the use of Health Services space was revised to improve access to clinical services and to reduce waiting times.

Preventive Medicine staff continued to serve as liaisons between Health Services and the DeKalb County Health Department and/or the Illinois Department of Public Health. Health Services also continued to collaborate with local community agencies to strengthen disaster-response plans and procedures, including participating in drills for distributing Strategic National Stockpile drugs.

The Health Services and Student Health Insurance (SHI) Web sites were converted to the new NIU template, with a focus on student-friendly access to healthcare services, student insurance information, educational resources, and promotion of online prescription renewals.

Health Services collaborated with multiple Student Affairs and other NIU departments during the 2/14 tragedy. Health Services was one of many first responders working with the Department of Public Safety, Psychology Department, Counseling and Student Development Center, and with community mental health professionals.
Housing & Dining created and implemented a retention plan featuring numerous initiatives such as the integration of first-year and returning students in Grant C and Stevenson D Towers; priority room selection for students who wanted to return to their community; and an extensive publicity campaign, which included “NIU tube” videos on the Web to publicize room sign-up.

In addition to the department-wide initiatives, each functional area of the department provided services and programs that enhanced the lives of students living in the residence halls.

Residential Life offered outstanding programs and initiatives throughout the year. The Exploring Majors House (a community for students who have yet to declare a major) was launched in partnership with the Academic Advising Center. Residential Life also initiated a new organizational structure designed to provide exceptional student service and community building in the residence halls and to give graduate students an optimal work experience and professional preparation.

The Facilities Team completed a number of projects that significantly enhanced the residence halls, including the installation of Huskie Tracker and renovations to many study areas and classrooms. Enhancements completed to meet ADA requirements included upgrades to the Lincoln and Douglas public bathrooms and new doors in the Neptune Central breezeway. Additionally, a master plan for sprinkler installation was finalized.

The ResTech Team provided students with education on illegal downloading. The education campaign included publications distributed at Orientation, Northern Star ads, and a program with an expert panel that included staff from University Legal Services, Students’ Legal Assistance, and ITS. Additionally, ResTech moved its office to Neptune North, not only centralizing the operation, but also giving students a location in the middle of campus where they can receive assistance with their computers and software.

The Administrative Team successfully implemented the Student Web Self Assignment. This program allows incoming students to choose their room and roommate online. These upgrades allowed students to pay their housing deposit with a credit card for the first time.
In FY08, 1,942 cases were referred to Judicial Affairs, and there were 1,086 contacts with students regarding miscellaneous judicial issues. Many times these issues manifest themselves in the form of alleged university policy violations. While Judicial Affairs adjudicates and deals with all policy violations, the office collaborates with a variety of departments across campus. These include Student Involvement & Leadership Development (including Greek Affairs), Housing & Dining, Public Safety, Counseling and Student Development Center, Health Enhancement, Students’ Legal Assistance, and Women’s Resource Center, as well as NIU faculty. Judicial Affairs also collaborates with the NIU College of Law, employing two law students to conduct mediation and adjudication.

In FY08, the Office of Judicial Affairs started a new initiative with the Greek community. The Assistant Director for Judicial Affairs, who oversees the Greek Judicial Boards, is taking a proactive approach to dealing with incidents. The Assistant Director has spoken with many organizations on the issues of risk management, alcohol, fire safety, and a variety of other topics. The Assistant Director provides programming, not only for members of the Greek community, but also for the wider NIU community. Many of these informal programs have occurred at the chapter house or some other formal meeting of the organization.

Continuing programs included Student Mediation Services, which trained over 200 students on how to successfully mediate incidents one-on-one with fellow students. This training received excellent reviews from the participants. The Civility Class is also going exceptionally well, as indicated in the evaluation sheets; the learning outcomes are very impressive. In addition, the Judicial Advisory Board, Hearing Boards, and training programs for residential hall staff and faculty received very strong evaluations.

Judicial Affairs’ program goals included expanding Student Mediation Services, and promoting an increased awareness of the student judicial process. Staff members presented informative sessions to UNIV 101/102 classes to help students understand the mediation concept and to encourage them to utilize this resource before conflicts escalate.
The Latino Resource Center (LRC) serves as a central resource for Latinos on campus and in the community to assist and encourage them to persist at NIU. The LRC offers students opportunities to participate in cultural, social, and academic programs that enhance their classroom experiences.

Throughout the year, the Center offers academic-related training opportunities, including the Latino Graduate/Professional Training Institute, speed reading workshops, and study skills workshops. The LRC collaborates with on-campus units and community resources to provide services and programs. New initiatives and ongoing programs and workshops include career development, Latino culture awareness, leadership enhancement, successful academic and social transition to the university, academic guidance, psychosocial support, student forums, and Latino student art exhibits. The LRC continues to serve as a meeting place for numerous student groups and community organizations.

Another critical component of the LRC’s mission is to provide social capital and mentoring to Latinos in 7-12th grades. The mentoring programs aim toward establishing positive social networks among young Latinos, which lead to the development of skills needed in areas that will assist them in acquiring their desired educational objectives.

Additionally, the LRC sponsors an average of 27 school visits from predominantly Latino high schools and middle schools. The purpose behind the school site visits is to expose Latino students to the options and opportunities of accessing higher levels of education.

The LRC also works to bring nationally recognized speakers to campus. In fall 2007, the LRC hosted award-winning author Luis J. Rodriguez, one of the leading Chicano writers in the country. In spring 2008, the LRC collaborated with the Women’s Resource Center to bring to campus one of the century’s most powerful and respected labor movement leaders, Dolores Huerta. Huerta co-founded the United Farm Workers Union with César Chávez in 1962.
The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center began the year with a new emphasis on Web-based outreach designed to more effectively reach its target population, known to be higher-than-average users of the Internet. This effort launched with a completely redesigned and enhanced Web site, integrating the use of online forms throughout the site and introducing “NIQ Profiles” featuring student and alumni perspectives on the Resource Center and the NIU campus.

The new emphasis on Web-based outreach was accompanied by a notable jump in walk-in services of the Resource Center. Visitors to the Resource Center increased to an average of 78 per month, up from 55 last year, with students continuing to account for 80% of all visitors. First-time visitors accounted for 26% of all visits.

The Resource Center continued its efforts to create an inclusive community through the Ally Program, a voluntary avenue for students, faculty, staff, and community partners to learn about and support NIU’s LGBT students. A total of 114 individuals completed the redesigned two-part training process, and the program ended the spring semester with a total of 252 volunteers in the program. A new addition to the Ally Program was the opportunity for volunteers to receive advanced training on specific topics through a new series called “Ally Practice: Rehearsals for Real Life.” Two workshops were offered in the fall: “Supporting Someone in the Coming Out Process” and “Strategies for Discussing Religion and LGBT Identity.”

The Resource Center added to its educational efforts with a revitalized Straight Talk Speakers Bureau program. An intensive assessment effort of the program focused on supporting speaker development through observation, feedback, and speaker reflection.

Resource Center activities were rounded out with educational, cultural, and social events that attracted several thousand participants. Highlights included the commencement of the Quest Leadership Project, hosting the inaugural LGBT Alumni Lecture as part of LGBT Awareness Month, and the presentation of the second annual Joseph Harry Endowed Scholarships.
The Office of Support & Advocacy (OSA) was newly created in April 2008 as a response to the tragic shootings in Cole Hall on 2/14. The purpose of the OSA is to centralize resources and provide assistance to the families of the deceased and to students, their families, and faculty/staff who were most directly impacted by the tragedy.

The OSA has established an Advisory Board, with representation from all primary functional areas of campus operations, to provide guidance and support. Additionally, the OSA established two distinct campus partnerships with the Academic Advising Center and the Department of Public Safety to centralize campus resources to assist this population. The Academic Advising Center provides an academic advisor who serves in an academic counseling role for OSA students, and the Department of Public Safety provides an officer who has extensive training and knowledge to help victims and their families file for reimbursement from the Illinois Crime Victim's Compensation fund.

Primary goals accomplished for FY08 were to transition injured students who were being served by university liaisons to the OSA, to represent this population on 2/14-related campus committees, and to conduct outreach efforts to inform students, families, and faculty/staff of the services and resources available through the OSA.

Key successes of the OSA were an open house for its population, which brought Cole Hall students together with counselors, the OSA staff, and President Peters. The OSA also offered family support group meetings on the main campus, the NIU Rockford campus, NIU Naperville campus, and NIU Hoffman Estates campus.
In a variety of ways, FY08 was a significant year for the Office of Orientation & First-Year Experience. The defining event of the year for this office was responding to the aftermath of the 2/14 shootings at NIU. Staff members at all levels were involved in various ways with our campus’s recovery, and two professional staff members served as university liaisons to victims of the tragedy.

For the summer/fall orientation cycles, overall freshman attendance was down 5 percent from 2007, and transfer/reenter attendance was up 5.7 percent. Total attendance by new students for all sessions (April through August) was over 4,700, down 1.3 percent.

During FY08, Orientation & First-Year Experience served on the Provost’s Strategic Planning Task Force, with specific assignment to the subgroup on Student Success. The Director crafted four proposals addressing first- and second-year-student needs linked to the Strategic Planning Imperatives established by President Peters and Provost Alden.

One initiative proposed by Orientation & First-Year Experience is already being implemented, with Northern’s participation in the well-respected “Foundations of Excellence” program sponsored by the National Policy Center on the First College Year. This campus-wide self-study will be the most significant step, to date, in developing a comprehensive first-year experience at NIU.

Another proposal undertaken this past year was the planning of a Midwest regional drive-in conference entitled “Strengthening the First Year of College: Purposeful Strategies for Pedagogy and Practice,” which took place at NIU in Fall 2008. This conference was co-sponsored by Oakton Community College, Rock Valley College, Hayden McNeil Publishers, and the National Orientation Directors Association.
Recreation Services continues to provide programs for NIU students to support their healthy lifestyle pursuits in the areas of fitness, nutrition, personal training, wellness, outdoor adventure, and sports. Recreation Services offered 2,964 diverse recreational opportunities for students and served approximately 10,758 students. The Open Recreation program offered 7,357 hours of recreation time, with 320,581 individual uses during this fiscal year.

Recreation Services developed an avenue for student employees to reflect upon their employment and to identify what they learned from those experiences. Student employees listed various skills that they developed through their respective recreation work experience as follows: program knowledge and skills to implement programs; emergency response; leadership style and skills; teamwork and collaboration; customer service; program preparation; rules and procedures; and communication.

With over 150 student employees working in Recreation Services annually, the department developed a Student Employee Annual Recognition program, spotlighting student employees who exceeded performance standards and provided excellent service to NIU recreation patrons. Twenty-nine student employees were recognized.

Professional staff, graduate, and student staff responded to the 2/14 incident with compassion and service. Two professional staff members served as university liaisons to injured students. Open Recreation student staff returned to campus prior to the university’s re-opening for classes in an effort to provide fitness and recreation opportunities to the campus community. Fifteen students were commended for their service and leadership as they assisted in recovery efforts after the 2/14 incident.

A department-wide Risk Management Committee was created in FY08. Department representatives, collaborating with members from the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Environmental Health and Safety, have begun a comprehensive review of programmatic procedures and practices.
Student Involvement & Leadership Development (SILD) had a very busy and successful year. The development and implementation of the Social Events Policy in September resulted in 162 individual meetings with student organizations in addition to the time spent in committee meetings, public forums, and meetings with the Department of Public Safety.

The tragedy on 2/14 also impacted SILD in multiple areas. Three of the full-time staff served as university liaisons. SILD was instrumental in the planning and implementation of programs and events that were directly related to the tragedy, both during the month of February and throughout the remainder of the spring semester.

The Parents’ Association (PA) launched an online ordering system for its annual events (Family Weekend, Moms’ Weekend, and Dads’ Weekend). This will allow PA members to register for events more quickly, and will help staff members spend less time managing event orders and more time coordinating quality events. The PA staff has also increased its collaboration with the City of DeKalb (especially the Convention and Visitors’ Bureau) to extend SILD annual events into the community. As a result of these initiatives, SILD saw an increase in attendance at each of its events this year.

Collaboration with the community increased even further through the actions taken in Volunteerism. This began with the development of a Volunteer Fair, where students interacted with representatives from 24 organizations. With the introduction of the Huskie Paws for a Cause monthly service project program, more organizations could be assisted, further increasing awareness of the program. April has become “NIU Cares Day” Month in DeKalb, and everyone knows it! Thanks to increased visibility on the campus, as well as an online registration system, student involvement increased 50%. Fifteen hundred students, faculty, and staff members completed significant work at 40 sites.

Several chapters from the Greek community participated in the Bridge Builder Program with Diversity & Equity. The Multicultural Greek Council expanded this year and recognized three new organizations.

The Campus Activities Board (CAB) ratified its new Constitution and Bylaws in the spring. CAB also changed its structure with the purpose of attracting more students to be part of the organization.

The Student Association (SA) was heavily impacted by the tragedy on 2/14. SA was responsible for hosting student forums to gather information and feedback from the students about Cole Hall and memorial-related issues. President Jarvis Purnell did an outstanding job of representing the student body in a variety of high-profile venues.
Students’ Legal Assistance (SLA) continued to provide high-quality legal services to students at Northern Illinois University in FY08. The department provided assistance to 853 individual new clients and 1,209 returning clients, while hundreds of students received other services that included voter registration, notary public services, and referrals to other offices.

Students’ Legal Assistance continued its development of the Debt Counseling/Budget Planning Program by securing funding for a graduate assistant position specifically to work on debt counseling projects and research. The office actively sought new partners to enhance the program, which is intended to increase students’ understanding of the benefits of financial planning in order to avoid debt.

Given the volume of individual cases, staff members continue to develop prevention programs to increase student learning in order to avoid legal problems and to address them before they become serious. In collaboration with the Office of Public Affairs, Students’ Legal Assistance implemented the redesign of its office Web site. Web features on the new home page allow SLA to highlight topical and other newsworthy legal developments of interest to students, as well as services offered by Students’ Legal Assistance.

Staff members also presented programs to a variety of student groups concerning issues of interest to them, including landlord/tenant relations, traffic laws (particularly driving under the influence of alcohol offenses), privacy, illegal downloading of copyrighted materials, and expunging and sealing criminal records.

Students’ Legal Assistance experienced noteworthy successes in FY08 in protecting student rights. The attorneys made more than 230 court appearances on behalf of students, including numerous contested hearings and trials. In a number of cases, the office was able to secure the return of students’ security deposits, resolve disputes to avoid students being evicted, reduce or eliminate disputed bank and other financing charges, increase child support payments, and assist students to set up debt repayment plans.

Finally, the office made a successful move from the Holmes Student Center, where it had been located for 25 years, to the Campus Life Building. The move allows improved student access to legal services and facilitates interactions with other Student Affairs and Student Association offices.
The Women’s Resource Center (WRC) serves as a central resource for campus and community women to support and encourage their advancement and success on campus and to improve the campus climate for women. The WRC provides students with a variety of services, including social justice programming, leadership opportunities, and personal advocacy. Throughout FY08, the Women’s Resource Center staff reached more than 1,500 students, faculty, and staff members with programming, outreach, and advocacy services.

The WRC collaborated with more departments than ever before, including partnerships with Housing & Dining, Recreation Services, Health Enhancement, Women’s Studies, Center for Black Studies, Latino Resource Center, Division of International Programs, Center for Access-Ability Resources, LGBT Resource Center, Students’ Legal Assistance, and Commuter and Non-Traditional Student Services.

Additionally, the WRC was heavily involved in sponsoring events in partnership with a wide variety of student groups. Last year, the WRC partnered with EBONY Women, S.I.S.T.E.R.S., Hip Hop Congress, NAACP, Women’s Rights Alliance, Prism, and Deaf Pride.

Finally, the WRC connected students with the community in various ways, collaborating with several community organizations, including Safe Passage, Hope Haven, Senior Services Center, DeKalb County Youth Services Bureau, and the DeKalb Park District.

Beyond campus, the NIU Women’s Resource Center participated for the first time at the National Women’s Studies Association national conference in St. Charles, Illinois. The presence of the WRC was the first realization for many centers that NIU had a Women’s Resource Center of its own.

The WRC made several technological updates throughout the course of the year, including updating the WRC Web site using the new NIU templates. In addition, reserving rooms for campus departments and student groups was made easier with the creation of an online request form that is posted on the front page of the WRC site. This provides faster, more efficient customer service for those needing to reserve room space at the WRC. A presentation request form was also added to the Web site, to simplify the multitude of requests that come in throughout the year from UNIV instructors, CAs, and other sources.
Northern Illinois University is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, marital status, national origin, disability, or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran. The Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University afford equal treatment regardless of political views or affiliation, and sexual orientation.

Design & Photography: Yuma Nakada