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**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 classrooms 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
The past year has been one filled with many opportunities within Student Affairs at Northern Illinois University. As we embarked upon our first full school year after our February 14, 2008, campus tragedy, we came with renewed vision and purpose. We came with renewed dedication to fostering NIU as a community of people who care about our students and colleagues. In the pages that follow, we highlight the major accomplishments from each of our twenty departments, as well as our work in strengthening our NIU community.

This report reflects the work of Student Affairs during fiscal year 2009. Consequently, it does not reflect the most notable recent change in the division, the addition of our enrollment management colleagues at the start of fiscal year 2010. Future reports will reflect the change from Student Affairs to the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management and will additionally highlight the work of our colleagues in Admissions, Student Financial Aid, and the Scholarship Office.

One highlight of the past year included the implementation of the Northern Pact, initiated to help us reshape our community after the campus tragedy on February 14, 2008. This initiative focused on five principals—just, open, caring, disciplined, and celebrative. During FY09, over 5,000 students pledged to build a stronger student culture at NIU by signing the Pact Pledge.

A second highlight was the Dialogue on Diversity, Race, and Conflict program. During FY09, over 450 students participated in this program that provides opportunities for student organizations to share their experiences related to race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and class. In addition, students were able to cultivate their leadership abilities on behalf of their constituency groups, their organizations, or themselves.

Two other highlights of the past year were the inaugural Career Advancement Institute and the creation of the 2011-2015 Student Affairs Strategic Plan. The Career Advancement Institute offered a unique career development opportunity for 25 staff members interested in furthering their career aspirations. Further, the development of the next 5-year strategic plan for the division represents a collaboration of over 200 individuals in the Northern Illinois University community and members of the surrounding community.

As I reflect on our activities and accomplishments over the past year, it is evident that we continue to be guided by our Core Values of student-centered service, partnerships focused on student learning, establishing an inclusive community, and actively building collaborative relationships. You will find highlights of this throughout the pages that follow; our division’s staff members intentionally integrate our values resulting in important work with students.

I am pleased by and proud of the work we have accomplished as we aspire to serve NIU students, partnering with them to facilitate their learning. Please take some time to review this document as evidence of what our community has achieved by working together.

Forward, together forward,

Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
One significant element in restructuring the NIU community is to define students’ expectations during their time as Huskies. The Northern Pact was created during the summer of 2008 to help students understand and embrace these expectations. Five principles—just, open, caring, disciplined, and celebrative—were intentionally integrated into the campus culture through a variety of marketing and programming efforts. Students embraced this renewed sense of Huskie Pride by signing the Northern Pact Pledge. Students who signed the pledge formed an agreement between NIU and themselves, making the commitment to build an enhanced campus community and instill these five principles into their daily lives. During FY09, over 5,000 students pledged to build a stronger student culture at NIU. As we continue to move forward, our goal is to reach every student and to persist in our progress toward building an improved campus community.

In assessing the scope of the initiative, 780 students in Psychology 102 classes were surveyed in January 2009. Participants in the survey were primarily first-year students (70%) living in the residence halls (75%) with slightly more men (59%) taking the survey than women. Of the students surveyed, 28% had signed a Pact Pledge and received a t-shirt. Seventy-three percent of those who had not signed a pledge had seen Pact publicity and were aware of the concept. The data reflect a higher level of awareness among first-year students, with 78% of those students having seen Northern Pact materials and 70% of students living in the halls being aware of the concept. These survey results reflect an intentional effort to target first-year students entering the university and the efforts of the residence hall staff to incorporate these principles into community-building initiatives. Further, students suggested a number of alternative means of getting the message out to students, with many of their suggestions helping frame the marketing strategies for next year.
While working with student organizations and student leaders, the Dialogue on Diversity, Race, and Conflict program aims to create a space for conversations about race and diversity, to deepen the level of authentic dialogue about difference, to continue doing self-work for effective student leadership, and to work toward building an inclusive campus community. The Dialogue focuses on a broad definition of diversity, encompassing issues of difference arising from race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and class.

The Dialogue on Diversity, Race, and Conflict sessions were first offered to student organizations on campus during fall semester 2008 and continued through March 2009. During this time, 370 students representing 55 student organizations attended 18 separate sessions. In 5 additional sessions, 82 Community Advisors and 23 professional residential staff members also participated in the program.

Among the lessons that students expressed as valuable for them were: “People experience things the same as I do, even when I don’t necessarily think they do,” “We need to keep an open mind,” and, “The word ‘diversity’ means more than we think it means.”
This was the inaugural year of the Career Advancement Institute hosted by the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management. Twenty-five staff members from across campus participated in this unique career development experience. The Executive Committee of the division served as faculty for the Institute, which consisted of a day-long program, with follow-up meetings scheduled with mentors selected by participants. In addition, Institute members are also eligible to participate in Brown Bag seminars addressing current issues in higher education.

Topics addressed at the Institute included career paths to success, business etiquette and professional protocols, fiscal management, trends and legal issues in Student Affairs, and supervisory challenges for Directors, and Assistant and Associate Directors. Through workshops, small group programs, and one-on-one mentoring opportunities, participants gained valuable experience in discussing career aspirations and plans.
During the fall semester, preparations began for the 2011-2015 Student Affairs Strategic Plan. After contributions from more than 200 individuals from Northern Illinois University and its surrounding community, the resultant plan reflects a collaborative effort aimed at creating common vision and purpose for the division. Through the work of five committees, the division identified a refreshed set of divisional goals, along with strategic priorities and corresponding assessment targets, submitted by departments and Communities of Practice. The identified priorities will be those core efforts that the division will pursue during the next five years.

With the Student Affairs Strategic Plan setting the tone, our division can more effectively work toward our mission and vision while contributing to the intellectual, personal, and civic growth of our students. The plan will help shape our annual planning process beginning next year.
The Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) provides accommodations and services to students with disabilities at Northern Illinois University. These accommodations permit students with disabilities to access the academic and extracurricular activities that NIU offers. In FY08, 537 students were registered with CAAR. Of the 477 students registered with CAAR in the fall, 89% ended the semester in good academic standing. In the spring, 90% of the 452 students ended in good academic standing. Direct services that were provided included 1,947 accommodated exams, and 398 e-text books that were requested and provided by publishers or through CAAR conversion.

Several additional rooms were allotted to CAAR, helping to ease some ongoing space problems. An “Exam Accommodation Suite” was created, providing students better and quieter space for taking exams at CAAR. The creation of a waiting room provides a more welcoming environment than previous areas and allows for improved privacy at the front desk.

ACCESS-ABILITY RESOURCES

An internal review and an external review of CAAR were completed in FY09. The Internal Review Committee submitted a report delineating strengths and weaknesses of CAAR, and provided many suggestions for future change and growth.

CAAR continued to more fully enter the Technology Age as current information was added to the Web site throughout the year, and mass mailings of information and deadlines to CAAR students were eliminated. In addition, new pages and information pertaining to transition issues were created for the Web site. CAAR received positive feedback regarding the continued Web site improvements. Suggestions for additional changes will be considered in FY10.

CAAR had a successful year of programming, especially for programs that crossed cultural lines. Collaborations with all of the units within the Diversity & Equity Community of Practice resulted in many programs that were about disability and one or more other cultural identity or underrepresented group(s). Evaluations and feedback that were received after the programs indicated that the programs achieved intended outcomes and were well received. Participants often felt that they might have understood one of the “cultures” being represented, but learned about an additional group from attending the presentation.
The Asian American Center provides outreach and advisement to a diverse Asian American student population, working closely with 17 student-run organizations, including 4 Greek-letter organizations.

The Asian American Center collaborated with Center for Black Studies, CHANCE Program, Latino Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, and Center for Access-Ability Resources to coordinate a Training Retreat Day (funded by TARGET Campus Grants) for peer mentor participants engaged in each of the respective programs. In FY09, the Asian American Peer Mentor Program recruited 37 mentors and 63 protégés, implemented assessment tools to measure student learning outcomes and satisfaction levels for program participants, and conducted training sessions for mentors. Student mentors planned and hosted the 2nd Annual Peer Mentor Award Ceremony to recognize participants engaged in the program. This year the “OHANA!” Peer Mentor Program was recognized, along with 9 other NIU programs, for its Outstanding Assessment Practices in “Completing the Loop.”

The Asian American Center enhanced student learning by providing leadership opportunities, student partner/employee positions, and internships. The center engaged student interns whose focus areas included event planning, photography/marketing, peer mentoring, and Web page design.

Also, within the Diversity & Equity Community of Practice, the center collaborated with the Latino Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, Center for Access-Ability Resources, Center for Black Studies, and Women’s Resource Center on the following initiatives intended to help raise awareness of the diverse populations at NIU: “Rock tha’ Mic: Huskie Talent Jam!,” Paraprofessional Training Program, the 3rd Annual Diversity Awards Gala, and Summer Orientation’s Caring Reception.

The Asian American Center developed collaborative relationships with numerous departments on campus, including Foreign Language Programs, Career Services, Center for Burma Studies, Communication Department, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Counseling & Student Development Center, Holmes Student Center, Housing & Dining, International Programs, Latino Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, Music Department, Student Involvement & Leadership Development, and Unity in Diversity. These departments collaborated with the Asian American Center to assist with providing programs, services, outreach, leadership development, and/or resource acquisition.

This year, the Asian American Center completed its Internal and External Review to help launch the next 3- to 5-year plan for the department. Students, faculty, staff, colleagues, and community partners provided feedback to the Internal Review Committee and External Reviewer throughout this year-long process.
In addition, two separate class projects were specifically focused on supporting student learning. Assessment & Training provided consultation with students in a Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences dietetics course, providing them with consultation about assessing student nutritional needs and practices. Assessment & Training also collaborated with the Counseling, Adult and Higher Education department on an Assessment in Higher Education course. Students in the course conducted an assessment project to elicit specific information on students’ technology use. This information augmented other data collection projects conducted by the Student Cultures/Technology Committee. This cross-university committee was charged with identifying how students were currently using technology, and with offering recommendations for how Student Affairs could fulfill our mission through enhanced technological innovations. A benchmarking project, focus groups, and an online survey of students all provided data which are being analyzed to identify specific recommendations for the division.

Additional collaborative efforts involved participation in the Student Affairs strategic planning process, two Foundations of Excellence dimensions groups, and the Campus Assessment Network. In addition, the Student Affairs Awards and Professional Development Committee, facilitated by Assessment & Training, hosted an All-Staff Professional development program, “Permission to Laugh: Humor in the Workplace.” The Spring Awards and Recognition Program was another major event that was supported through the collaborative efforts of many individuals in Student Affairs and co-led by Assessment & Training, and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Ongoing programs managed by Assessment & Training involved the administration of divisional assessment strategies, including benchmarking projects, assistance with Assessment Summary Reports, and support of departmental Internal and External Review processes.
Campus Child Care (CCC) continued to provide high-quality care and education to children of NIU students (62%), faculty and staff (33%), and the surrounding community (5%). A total of 164 children were served during the year. Demographics served included 40% minority populations, 26% single parents, 28% commuters, and 45% low-income families.

The center provided on-campus job opportunities and experiential training for one intern from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and 69 NIU students. In collaboration with several departments and organizations, the center provided opportunities for experiential learning to students in Psychology, School of Music, Sociology, Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences, and DeafPride. Some students provided learning activities for children and parents while others participated in volunteer work, research projects, and observations. Collaborations that provided services to student families included: Community Coordinated Child Care (4-C); DeKalb County Health Department; Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services; Athletics; and Recreation Services.

The center received $12,000 in grant funds to help pay for technology enhancements and replacement equipment. The CCAMPIS Grant continued to provide scholarships to assist 43 low-income student parents in paying for child care.

The center successfully achieved a three-star rating (out of four) through the Illinois Quality Counts: Quality Rating System, which is administered through the Illinois Department of Human Services. In addition to the center’s accreditation, the rating system assures a specific standard of quality for child care centers. As part of the star rating, the center received funds equivalent to a 15% add-on to the current state subsidy reimbursement rate.

The center developed a variety of resource materials for CCC parents in an effort to increase their knowledge of children’s development and support services for families. Thirty-three university and community resources were compiled in the form of a booklet and shared with parents during conferences. The resource directory was also added to the CCC Web site for easy access. In addition, 13 articles related to children’s development were added to the CCC Web site. A total of 672 hits were made to the Web site articles. A resource notebook for each age group was completed and added to each classroom’s observation booth for parents to use. Twenty-five percent of parents indicated that they had accessed the resource information. Of those who accessed information, 84% provided at least one example of how the information enhanced their knowledge of child development or a specific parenting skill.
Opportunities were abundant during the past year for Career Services to assist students with their job search, despite the instability of the national economic environment. Student attendance at job and internship fairs reached its highest levels since 1999. The slight decline in attendance by new employers was overshadowed by the consistency of employers, especially from the Chicagoland area, who are still able to continue their recruiting and hiring of NIU students. Enterprise Rent-A-Car hired 14 graduates, largely with majors in Liberal Arts and Sciences, in full-time Management Trainee positions, and 7 additional students as interns. Further, 40 employers conducted over 800 Accountancy Internship interviews.

Internal and external stakeholders were major partners in our collaboration efforts. Undergraduate students benefitted from a Target Corporation grant to Career Services aimed at assisting in outreach and leadership initiatives for students with diverse backgrounds. The grant supported two leadership seminars with approximately 200 student athletes, and African American and Latino/Latina students. In addition, the office was awarded an $86,000 grant by the Illinois Board of Higher Education for student internships in nursing, journalism, and education.

Collaborations with academic departments, coupled with increased marketing of our programming and services, resulted in increased requests for workshops. Career Services staff presented 200 workshops during the 2008-2009 school year. Topics included etiquette dinners, résumé reviews, interviewing skills, networking, and preparing for the job/ internship fairs. Additionally, the counseling unit co-presented 72 UNIV 101/201 sessions with the members of the Academic Advising department.

Three academic advisors were recognized as Target Faculty/ Advisor award recipients. Selection was based on how their partnerships with Career Services have impacted curriculum and programming to further the opportunities for experiential learning and work experiences for students in their academic colleges. The $500 grant that Advisors received will be used to expand or enhance internship and experiential learning opportunities. The monies were allocated from the $15,000 grant awarded to Career Services by Target Corporation and serve to enhance the linkages between faculty, employers, and Career Services.
In the 2008-2009 academic year, Commuter & Non-Traditional Student Services (CNTSS) engaged over 1,980 students through programmatic efforts. The department collaborated several times with 13 divisional partners, 3 offices outside of the division, and 2 off-campus partners.

New initiatives included a collaborative effort with Campus Child Care (CCC) to increase CCC students’ knowledge and awareness of the programs and services offered by CNTSS. The partnership included newsletter articles, Web site presence, personal e-mails to CCC students with children, Good Morning Huskies, Good Evening Huskies, and a new program called Winterfest. Participation of CCC students with the office of CNTSS increased by 49% from early fall to the end of spring semester.

Other new initiatives include several co-sponsorships with Recreation Services, for Fitness on the Go, Microwave Luncheon, Family Fitness and Study Breaks; the Committee for the Preservation of Wildlife for the Planet Earth Series; the Holmes Student Center for Soup Du’jou’r; and several campus partners for Good Evening Huskies to reach out to students taking evening courses.

As it relates to retention, the department partnered with the Transfer Center from Academic Affairs on the Transfer Welcome Lunch to welcome new transfer students at the beginning of the spring semester and introduce them to pertinent campus resources.

Some ongoing programs include the off-campus housing fair held in the fall with many campus partners including Greek-letter organizations, Health Enhancement, and Students’ Legal Assistance. Good Morning Huskies, a free continental breakfast at rotating commuter high-traffic areas and parking lots, occurred on six occasions during the fall semester.

The office provided several programs on student learning. The Sunday Series is a stellar example. The staff worked with the Child Development Lab, Campus Child Care, and Counseling & Student Development Center to provide five life skills workshops for non-traditional students with children.
The Counseling & Student Development Center (CSDC) managed the first year after the 2-14 tragedy, and saw significant increases in clinical crises and hospitalizations. During FY09, services were provided to 1,036 students across 5,820 appointments. Outreach presentations provided by CSDC were attended by 14,240 individuals. Two clinical staff positions were also added after the tragedy, enhancing the center’s knowledge base regarding working with issues related to trauma, grief, and loss.

The center played a pivotal role in the planning and preparation for the one-year marker of the tragedy on 2-14-09. The center led an initiative to have approximately 60 clinicians on campus during the day. They included NIU faculty, staff, and students, as well as community providers. The center also was primarily responsible for the return of eleven Animal Assisted Therapy teams from Animal Assisted Crisis Response. These teams were at NIU for 10 days surrounding 2-14-09 and had 18,650 interactions while on campus.

CSDC managed a significant surge in clinical crises resulting in transport to the hospital for an evaluation for inpatient admission. During FY09, 29 such transports occurred, which was more than triple the number in FY08. The center also handled a surge in after-hours crisis calls, as the number of contacts more than doubled from the previous year.

The relationship with Housing & Dining was strengthened this year. The satellite counseling office located in Grant Hall experienced an exponential increase in utilization. The number of students served, total number of sessions provided, and consultations provided to Housing staff all significantly increased, with a more than 500% increase in the total number of students treated. Additionally, CSDC added a parents counseling group for students with dependents. This group was held at the Northern View Community Center to make it more accessible to the priority population.

Finally, the center’s annual priorities benefited staff and highlighted collaboration with multiple departments. Two priorities focused on professional development, with work in the area of post traumatic stress disorder and enhancing multicultural competence. Another priority focused on providing education and awareness about sexually transmitted infections. These priorities involved collaboration with multiple departments including Health Enhancement, Health Services, Center for Black Studies, Center for Access-Ability Resources, International Student Faculty Office, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center.
Health Enhancement continues to expand its health promotion and educational initiatives for the NIU student body. FY09 brought new alcohol programming and educational initiatives with the addition of an alcohol education coordinator and the inauguration of BASICS (Basic Alcohol Screening and Intervention for College Students). This individually-focused alcohol intervention is designed to reduce drinking and alcohol-related harm. Students were referred to the alcohol education coordinator for a one-on-one motivational interviewing session wherein their alcohol-related behaviors were assessed, and strategies to change their behavior were addressed. Those who followed through 30 days later for their second session had significantly reduced their alcohol consumption as well as risky behaviors.

A new population-based alcohol education endeavor was also launched during the fall semester. The two winners of the FY08 alcohol education competition unveiled their posters depicting safety messages. After months of evaluation for believability and message content, both posters were deemed worthy of serving as the backdrop for an enhanced educational initiative with Housing for FY10.

Health Enhancement assumed leadership, partnering with Admissions and Information Technology staff, in assisting with NIU’s compliance under a new state mandate regarding sexual assault awareness education. Every student entering NIU for the first time received a message in their e-mail inbox referring them to on- and off-campus Web sites for information on prevention and service-related resources, should the need arise.

For the fourth consecutive year, Health Enhancement partnered with Recreation Services to serve as a rotation site for dietetic interns from Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences. Eleven graduate-level interns developed a comprehensive social marketing campaign designed to inform students about the importance of breakfast and ultimately decrease the number of students who forgo this important meal.

Of equal importance is informing students about sleep hygiene. Data from the 2007 and 2009 National College Health Assessment indicates that NIU students often do not get adequate sleep. Collaborating with Housing staff and personnel from Assessment Services, Health Enhancement attempted to promote sleep hygiene in one of the residence hall towers. Pre- and post- intervention revealed some evidence of a successful intervention, but further assessment is warranted.
Health Services (HS) provides ambulatory medical and psychiatric care for NIU students and provides sports medicine services for the Intercollegiate Athletics program at NIU. Health Services completed 34,876 patient visits for 11,265 students, faculty, and staff during FY09.

The department served as the compliance officer for the State of Illinois pre-enrollment immunization requirement, fulfilled a public health role on campus in conjunction with DeKalb County Health Department, and maintained on-campus administration of the student health insurance plan.

In February 2009, HS was surveyed by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc., and received re-accreditation for the maximum three-year period.

In April 2009, the HS laboratory was surveyed by the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation (COLA). The lab was re-accredited for the maximum two-year period and, for the second time, received the Certification of Excellence under COLA. The laboratory is certified under the Clinical Laboratory Improvements Amendment (CLIA) as a high-complexity operation.

Preventive Medicine staff continued to serve as liaisons between Health Services and 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, specifically collaborations regarding the H1N1 influenza campus response during Spring 2009.
Departmental staff devoted significant time and resources this year toward enhancing/developing sustainability efforts. Initiatives included the introduction of a new laundry company with energy-efficient machines; Green Scene, a weekend of sustainable programming initiatives; the use of biodegradable cups, napkins, utensils, and bags in Residential Dining; implementation of a performance contract for installing low water flow fixtures in restrooms and dining units; and the installation of energy-efficient lighting fixtures throughout the residence hall system.

The Residential Facilities Team completed a number of projects that significantly enhanced the residence halls. These projects included the creation of four new Smart Classrooms in Lincoln and Douglas in partnership with the First Year Composition program; the enhancement of the Grant Computer Lab; renovation of the Douglas lobby; refurbishing of Neptune Central; upgrades to Neptune Dining; and new paint in Lincoln and Douglas hallways.

Collaborative partnerships initiated or enhanced during the year included a partnership with Recreation Services to identify ways of increasing resident involvement in Intramural Sports, the development of a work group with staff from Health Enhancement to develop alcohol education initiatives for residents, and collaboration with Student Involvement & Leadership Development, Orientation & First-Year Experience, and others on the Winter Wonderland program in January.
In FY09, 2,010 cases were referred to Judicial Affairs, and 1,084 contacts were made with students regarding judicial issues. Judicial Affairs took a proactive approach to dealing with incidents by speaking with many Greek-letter organizations on the issues of risk management, hazing, alcohol, fire safety, and a variety of other topics. Judicial Affairs provides programming not only for members of the Greek community, but for the entire NIU community. On October 8, 2008, the interactive alcohol education program, “33 Minutes,” was put on for the NIU community. A total of 143 people attended the program.

Other presentations were made to the academic departments, Athletic department, UNIV 101 classes, NIU Department of Police and Public Safety, DeKalb Police Department, and Rock Valley College.

Judicial Affairs is expanding the training that it provides to Housing & Dining staff. This year, each level of staff – professional, graduate, and student staff – will receive individualized training by Judicial Affairs staff. The individualized training will allow each staff member to better complete their job requirements as they relate to judicial matters.

Judicial Affairs provided financial support ($7,600) toward recognized student organizations to assist in the presentation of diversity programs for the entire student body. Efforts focused on the enhancement of student learning and included counseling of student violators during and outside of preliminary meetings, and the training of community advisers and teaching assistants. Ongoing programs included Civility Class, judicial hearings, the Judicial Advisory Board, and faculty and residence hall staff training.

Students come to Judicial Affairs for a variety of issues. Many times these issues manifest themselves in the form of alleged university policy violations. While Judicial Affairs adjudicates and deals with any policy violations that occur, the office also collaborates with a variety of departments across campus in addressing student needs. Collaborative partners included Greek Affairs (Student Involvement & Leadership Development), Housing & Dining, NIU Department of Police and Public Safety, Counseling & Student Development Center, Health Enhancement, Students’ Legal Assistance, and all NIU faculty (regarding issues of academic misconduct and disruptive behavior in the classroom). Judicial Affairs also collaborates with the NIU College of Law, routinely employing two graduate students to provide mediation and adjudication services.
A new pilot program, Freshmen Receiving Experience and Study Habits (F.R.E.S.H.) was developed in spring 2009. The F.R.E.S.H. program is designed to provide one-on-one tutoring to incoming first-year students and offer educational workshops such as résumé writing, job preparation, and internship information. In addition, two signature programs, the Mentoring for Academic Success (M.A.S.) program and De Mujer a Mujer: Latina Assistance Program (L.A.P.) continued to garner positive support in assisting incoming first-year students in their transition to college life and providing a strong social support group specifically for Latina students at NIU.

Approximately 60 students volunteered for the mentoring programs offered by the LRC throughout the year. Several students served as mentors to middle school and high school students in the surrounding DeKalb community through programs such as Together Exploring Oportunidades para Sobresalir (T.E.L.O.S.), Changing How I Can Achieve Success (C.H.I.C.A.S.) and Vanguardia Afirmativa de Latinos Unidos (V.A.L.U.). For the V.A.L.U. program, more than 50% of participants agreed that the program had been helpful to them, and interaction with other Latino students had a positive impact on their experience. In general, these programs provide academic, social, and cultural assistance to Latino/a students.

The LRC hosted 19 school site visits this year. The majority of the visitors indicated that they would consider Northern Illinois University as their first college choice. The large number of interested visitors is also reflected in the increasing number of visitors to the LRC Web site. A total of 15,728 visitors accessed the Web site in 2008-2009, with visitors viewing information on programs, services, and events.
A new community art project adorning the walls of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center was a highlight of the 2008-2009 year, and serves as a visual metaphor for the center’s efforts toward creating an inclusive community. Students, faculty, and staff were invited to create postcards with messages of pride, empowerment, and community to support and inspire current and future students. The colorful and artistic cards are displayed collectively in the Resource Center, creating a wall of inspiration where all visitors can find a sense of community.

Visitors to the Resource Center averaged 78 per month for the second year in a row, with students accounting for 76% of all visitors. First-time visitors accounted for 27% of all visits. The walk-in traffic was accompanied by substantial traffic on the Resource Center Web site as well. Unique visitors to the Web site averaged 883 per month, with a total of 17,292 visits over the course of the year. All of these figures indicate active community interest in the programs, services, and activities of the Resource Center.

A new LGBT Resource Center Facebook group was added as an avenue for outreach. Group membership reached 129, attracting primarily students and alumni (72%). Analysis shows that a majority of those student and alumni members were not actively involved with the Resource Center in other ways, demonstrating the potential of the group to reach previously unknown or perhaps disconnected students and alumni.

The Resource Center maintained a full schedule of educational, cultural, and social events throughout the year, collaborating with 30 co-sponsors to implement 65 events that attracted nearly 2,000 participants. A highlight this year was a first-ever collaboration with Intercollegiate Athletics to co-sponsor a major speaker addressing homophobia in athletics; all student athletes were required to attend.

Two signature programs of the Resource Center, the Ally Program and the Straight Talk Speakers Bureau, continued to show strong assessment results in support of fostering community awareness and knowledge about sexual orientation and gender identity. The Ally Program is a voluntary avenue for students, faculty, staff, and community partners to learn about and support NIU’s LGBT students. Nearly 100% of workshop participants reported an increased understanding of LGBT identity, heterosexual privilege, and ways to be an ally.

Six students volunteered for the Straight Talk Speakers Bureau program and made eight presentations. Four events were evaluated by event sponsors, with 100% rating the speakers as “always” professional, knowledgeable, open to questions, and effective. Further, 97% of audience members rated the presentations as excellent (78%) or good (19%) at helping them understand LGBT identity, and 87% were able to list at least one thing they learned from the presentations.
Highlights for the Office of Support & Advocacy (OSA) in FY09 include, but are not limited to, the following new initiatives, collaborative efforts, ongoing programs, diversity efforts, and activities focused on student learning or retention.

The OSA outlined four primary goals (outreach, counseling services, programmatic support, and victim advocacy) for 2008-2009 to help provide support to those students and family members directly impacted by the February 14, 2008, campus tragedy.

Outreach efforts include monthly newsletters, a Facebook group, and a comprehensive calling campaign to connect with each student in the priority population throughout the academic year. Outreach calls specifically inquired about stress related to 2/14, current academic progress, and provided students with information about academic deadlines, upcoming OSA events, and available OSA resources and services.

Counseling services included implementing an integrated service model to holistically serve the priority population. Counseling services offered included individual sessions, monthly family support group meetings, and the establishment of a counseling resource library containing 55 materials on grief, trauma, and post-traumatic stress. The OSA Academic Counselor had 76 contacts in FY09 with priority population students. A variety of services were offered and utilized, including faculty consultations, monitoring student progress, one-on-one consultation, providing information regarding changing majors, and offering academic skill enhancement workshops.

Programmatic services throughout the academic year provided opportunities for the priority population to strengthen their connections and peer support networks. Programmatic initiatives included monthly dinners, NIU athletic events, therapeutic trips to Great America and a theatrical production of "Jersey Boys" in Chicago, and hosting private events and a reception for the priority population during NIU Remembers: A Day of Reflection (2/14/09).

Victim Advocacy was provided by the OSA on a number of institutional committees (e.g., Forward, Together Forward scholarship development committee; permanent Memorial planning committees; and the coordinating committees for NIU Remembers: A Day of Reflection). Additionally, the OSA provided victim assistance for the priority population by navigating and securing a variety of local and state resources, including establishing an Emergency Medical Relief Fund.

OSA formed key partnerships in FY09. Collaboration with Athletics provided opportunities for students and families to come together at sporting events. OSA partnered with Media Services and University Archives to enhance and enrich the temporary Memorial Center, which had over 590 visitors throughout the academic year. The OSA also partnered with NIU Finance and Facilities to provide a personal memorial (tree or bench) memorializing Gayle Dubowski, Catalina Garcia, Julianna Gehant, Ryanne Mace, and Daniel Parmenter.
Northern’s participation in the Foundations of Excellence® self-study and improvement initiative was the defining activity for Orientation & First-Year Experience in 2008-2009. More than 100 students, faculty, and staff members have served on the Steering Committee and on Dimension Committees to take a comprehensive look at the first-year experience for all NIU freshmen. In addition, more than 3,000 members of the NIU community participated in assessment related to Foundations of Excellence® in the First College Year, yielding rich quantitative and qualitative data to be analyzed in 2009-2010, the second year of the project. Staff members of the National Policy Center on the First Year of College in Brevard, North Carolina, are consultants for this initiative, which is funded jointly by Student Affairs & Enrollment Management and the Provost’s Office. All professional staff members of Orientation & First-Year Experience are members or co-chairs of various Foundations Committees, with the director serving as Co-Liaison for the NIU project.

The inaugural Midwest Regional Drive-In Conference on the First-Year Experience was held on the NIU DeKalb campus on October 24, 2008, with more than 160 participants in attendance. The conference, entitled Strengthening the First Year of College: Purposeful Strategies for Pedagogy and Practice, was a collaborative effort between NIU, Rock Valley College, and Oakton Community College, and was sponsored, in part, by Hayden-McNeil Publishing, Pepsi, and the National Orientation Directors Association. The highlight of the event was the keynote address by Charles C. Schroeder, veteran Student Affairs administrator, Noel-Levitz consultant, author of more than 75 books and articles on higher education, and founder and past editor of the ACPA (College Student Educators International) publication, About Campus. Dr. Schroeder met with the Steering Committee for NIU’s Foundations of Excellence® initiative while on campus. In January 2009, Orientation & First-Year Experience at NIU entered into a resource sharing agreement with the National Center of the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina in support of each other’s conferences. This agreement connects NIU with the most respected first-year experience leaders in the field.

First-Year Connections (UNIV 101/201, REACH, First-Year Success Series, Student Faculty Links) continued to move forward in 2008-2009. A pilot Common Reading Experience was launched, with approximately 200 students in UNIV 101 and 201 courses participating. The 2008 selection, The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow, will be used again in fall 2009. Collaborative campus partners include Student Involvement & Leadership Development, the University Honors program, and Housing & Dining, with additional partnerships being cultivated.

During orientation sessions for new students and their families, this department highlighted the Northern Pact both in the welcoming remarks and in a new component—a “Caring Community” reception at the close of the day. The reception featured light refreshments, opportunities for interaction with the Division’s Diversity & Equity Community of Practice, and students’ expressions of what a caring community means to them. After a decline in numbers in 2008, orientation attendance rebounded to 2007 levels during summer 2009.
Recreation Services (RS) continues to provide programs for NIU students to support their pursuit of healthy lifestyles. The Open Recreation program hosted at the Student Recreation Center, Chick Evans Field House, and aquatic centers offered 7,357 hours of recreation time and 324,320 individual uses this fiscal year. Through Intramural Sports, Group Fitness Classes, Nutrition Counseling, Personal Training, Massage Therapy, Outdoor Adventure trips, and Sport Clubs, RS offered 3,006 diverse recreational opportunities and served approximately 11,010 students. Two new dance instructional classes proved to be popular for students: Street Jam and Hip Hop.

In FY09, RS eliminated programs that were not being utilized or meeting students’ needs and increased marketing efforts for current programs. These factors contributed to a 1% increase in program offerings and a 2% increase in student participation when compared to FY08. It is important to note the significance of student leadership within the Outdoor Adventure area. Outdoor Adventure Trip Leaders spent 4,561 contact hours with other students, teaching them skills in Outdoor Adventure pursuits and environmental education.

Several enhancements occurred within the Open Recreation program this year as follows: replaced eleven cardio and strength training stations; added six new multi-function weight stations; added four flat-screen televisions to the cardio area; and redesigned the layout of the cardio/strength training rooms to improve physical access for persons with disabilities, traffic flow, and workout routes.

In response to an Open Recreation Survey conducted in the fall, RS is focusing on upgrading the quality and quantity of sport equipment check-out items in FY10. Open Recreation aquatic participation increased 27% from last year, contributing to crowded pool use. In a survey conducted in the spring, students, faculty, and staff swimmers (110) requested expanded pool hours, which are being considered for FY10.

Recreation Services staff developed and implemented an annual leadership training program for approximately 20 student employee supervisor positions. In collaboration with Kinesiology and Physical Education (KNPE) faculty and the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) staff, RS developed four fitness activities for students with disabilities. Despite enthusiastic and persistent efforts to promote them, students did not respond to the programs offered. In the spring, RS staff conducted a comprehensive student online survey to examine recreation student use and satisfaction and assess future program, service, and facility needs. Due to an insufficient number of respondents, Recreation Services plans to redistribute the survey in FY10.

As part of the Health and Wellness Community of Practice, RS surveyed fall students to examine user needs. Consequently, short- and long-term initiatives are being developed to respond to students’ needs. In concert with the division’s efforts to integrate Boyer’s Principles within the campus community, RS staff conducted an all-staff student retreat focusing on how to implement these principles into the student employee work environment. In addition, staff implemented a customer response program, which allowed patrons to provide feedback and input on programs and services.
Student Involvement & Leadership Development (SILD) experienced a successful yet challenging year. Despite the department experiencing staff vacancies in key positions, SILD was still able to complete all of the planned annual priorities. Mid-year, other staff picked up the responsibilities related to the completion of the annual priorities associated with leadership development and with marketing, and adjusted accordingly in order to maintain operations.

The following are highlights from the annual priorities:

- Event Production Services experienced an increase of 15 new customers this year, which is a 50% increase over the number of customers from FY08.
- The average score on the Leadership Practices Inventory for NIU Leadership Academy participants was 3.96/5.00. The average result for Kishwaukee College students who had not completed any part of the Leadership Academy was 2.98/5.00.
- The Graduate Assistant Program Project taught us that graduate assistants have limited committee experience and that, in this type of project, more time and effort needs to be put into training for the process. They did report an increase in knowledge in program planning and budget management.
- The Alternative Spring Break program had a very successful launch in its first year, with a group of 22 students traveling to Galveston, Texas, to help with hurricane recovery efforts. This group was remarkably large, given that the national average for these trips is 12-15 participants, and the students themselves funded the majority of trip expenses. We received positive local news coverage in the Houston/Galveston area, with two of our students being interviewed. In the future, we would like to travel in smaller groups, involve more staff, increase the fundraising and sponsorship to decrease participant cost, and spend more time in advance teaching students about the area in which the work will be done. In the summer of 2009, we sent one of the student participants and our staff coordinator to a training hosted by the national agency that assists in site coordination for these programs. The training provided information on how to set up a comprehensive, year-long educational program that is completed with the actual trip in the spring.

In addition to the annual priorities noted above, SILD experienced several other successes, especially in the area of programming. NIU Cares Day continues to be a very positive high-profile program for our department. We had a record number of participants, both students and staff, totaling over 1,500 at over 40 work sites in 2009. In conjunction with Student Association and Campus Activities Board (CAB), we planned three events for NIU Remembers: A Day of Reflection. We also served as the primary host for guests from Virginia Tech during the day’s activities. CAB had an incredibly successful year, including hosting the Broken Bread Poverty Dinner intended to help students increase awareness, action, and engagement in civic responsibility.
Students’ Legal Assistance continued to provide high quality legal services to students at Northern Illinois University in FY09. Services were provided in a wide variety of cases, with the type and percent of total new cases delineated as follows: landlord/tenant issues, 34%; criminal misdemeanor, traffic, or local ordinance violations, 32%; consumer and employment, 9%; domestic relations, 7%; torts, 4%; expungements, 4%; insurance, 2%; educational, 2%; immigration, 1%; and, miscellaneous, 5%. Of the cases handled, an unprecedented number, 66 or 4%, related to Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol matters. The number of expungement cases was also unprecedented.

Given the volume of individual cases, staff members continue to develop prevention programs to increase student learning to avoid problems or to address them before they become serious. This year, Students’ Legal Assistance worked with the CHANCE Program and the NIU Police Department to speak to more than 120 incoming students about avoiding legal trouble. Staff also presented at UNIV 101 classes and student organizations about issues such as financial literacy, expungement of criminal records, rights and responsibilities in dealing with the police, and D.U.I. and alcohol laws. The office also participated in a forum concerning unlawful downloading of copyrighted materials and the Recording Industry Association of America’s policy to pursue lawsuits against copyright infringement.

Two cases were of particular significance during FY09: First, a number of students contacted Students’ Legal Assistance concerning threats made by their landlord, who accused them of causing a bed bug infestation in their apartment(s) and/or apartment building. The landlord demanded that the students pay for the costs of extermination, sign waivers of liability (for any harm caused them by the insecticides used in the extermination process), and agree to pay for any losses of rent incurred by the landlord due to the infestation. The landlord also threatened eviction.

In response to this, the Students’ Legal Assistance attorney handling the case worked with the International Student and Faculty Office about a proper response to the landlord’s threats. Consequently, beginning fall 2009, a letter from SLA will be e-mailed to all incoming international students before they come to DeKalb. The letter informs students of their rights and rental options, and offers an open-door opportunity for the students to have their leases reviewed and questions answered.

Second, SLA attorneys represented more than 25 students who expressed interest in participating in a new diversion program initiated by the DeKalb County States’ Attorney’s Office for first-time criminal offenders who were charged with relatively minor, non-violent offenses. The program allows offenders (in return for performing community service work, paying a program fee and other requirements) to accelerate the dismissal of the case and grants them eligibility to apply for an expungement of their record immediately upon dismissal of the case.

In addition to providing legal services, Student’s Legal Assistance conducted an internal/external review of operations during FY09. While the final external evaluation has not been completed, the internal review and preliminary indications regarding the external review indicate that Students’ Legal Assistance is performing at a high level, particularly in the area of providing quality legal services to students.

Collaborative partnerships remained active on campus with the NIU College of Law, Ombudsman, NIU Foundation, International Student and Faculty Office, and within the Division of Student Affairs. Off-campus collaboration occurred with the DeKalb County State’s Attorney, DeKalb City Attorney, and the DeKalb Police Department.
Between individual volunteer shifts and WRC Selfless Saturdays events, the WRC logged 274 student volunteer hours among 82 volunteers. The WRC arranged for an internship abroad for one of its students, and another student staff member received an internship with Planned Parenthood to continue her work organizing a new student group focused on reproductive rights. In partnership with Career Services, the WRC created two intern positions, and each intern worked approximately 10 hours per week during the spring semester.

Throughout FY09, the WRC offered 37 student-created social justice programs with a focus on gender. One of the more successful events of the fall semester was a self-defense workshop, co-sponsored by the Residence Hall Association, which drew more than 150 new Greek women recruits and residence hall women. Erin Weed, of “Girls Fight Back,” offered an interactive workshop for women on effective ways to defend themselves in dangerous situations. One student-developed program on women and religion was requested by a local church pastor and will be re-offered by the WRC student staff member at the congregation’s regular Sunday service.

Staff also assisted with five award programs, including the Outstanding Women Student Awards, the Martha Cooper Journalism Award, and the Diversity & Equity Awards Gala. These awards are annually co-sponsored by the NIU Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, the Office of the President, and the Division of Student Affairs.

The WRC had a successful year in many respects, with record event attendance, and record numbers of presentations and outreach to students and community groups. The WRC staff is proud of its many accomplishments and is excited about entering into its 30th anniversary year with renewed energy and purpose.
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, status based on the Victims’ Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), or status as a disabled or Vietnam-era veteran. Further, the Constitution and Bylaws of Northern Illinois University provides for equal treatment regardless of political views or affiliation, and sexual orientation.

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