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Message from the Vice President

Along with my colleagues in the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, I am privileged to present the 2011 Annual Report, which highlights the major programs and services provided by each of the departments in the Division, as well as a number of major activities across the Division.

One key initiative this year was the launching of the Enrollment Management Strategic Plan. This University-wide plan, which sets specific enrollment targets and measurable outcomes to achieve annually through 2013, focuses on student recruitment and retention, institutional facilities and capacities management, and marketing and branding.

Other significant projects undertaken by the Division during FY11 included 1) The New Northern LifeStyle initiative, a multi-year renovation and construction plan aimed at improving living and learning environments across campus to benefit our students; 2) A major gifts initiative, focused on developing five areas: The Huskie Camp, The Leadership Academy, The Emergency Student Aid Fund, The Northern Pact Scholarship, and The Discovery Fund; and 3) The Military Student Services department, created with the mission of centralizing University and Community resources, facilitating the transition of veteran and military students, and directly supporting their persistence to graduate from Northern Illinois University.

The accomplishments noted in this report provide evidence of an ongoing commitment to focus on the Division’s Core Values of student-centered service, partnerships focused on student learning, establishing an inclusive community, and actively building collaborative relationships.

Forward, Together Forward,

Brian O. Hemphill, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
Enrollment Management Strategic Plan

The summer of 2011 brought a comprehensive and intentional planning process to a close and the 2012-2016 Enrollment Management Strategic Plan to life. This pivotal document will shape our institution for years to come and will guide the work of the Division and the broader University Community as we attract, recruit, and engage a diverse and talented student body. The Enrollment Management Strategic Plan also reinforces the Vision 2020 imperative set forth by President Peters.

The Plan embodies the cross-campus collaboration of numerous faculty members, staff, and other key stakeholders who dedicated many hours to the process and provided invaluable perspective. Specifically, the Plan was brought to life through the time and commitment of five planning groups here listed with their goals:

Recruitment: To identify, recruit, and enroll a student body that meets the enrollment target of 25,400 for Northern Illinois University.

Retention: To enhance student learning and success in an effort to improve undergraduate persistence, retention, and graduation rates, further contributing to the enrollment target.

Institutional Facilities & Capacities Management: To develop a facility and capacity management model to support the enrollment target of 25,400 students and credit-hour production of 625,000.

Marketing & Branding: To achieve branding prominence and to position Northern Illinois University as a premier regional institution.

Strategic Enrollment Target & Budget Forecasting: To develop five-year enrollment targets that include student profile, recruitment, retention, credit-hour production, and graduation rates in an effort to position Northern Illinois University as the premier public research university in the Midwest.

Based on a foundation of current challenges and influences, highlights of the Plan include new and revitalized recruitment and retention initiatives; commitment to enhancing our academic infrastructure; and the alignment of University marketing efforts with outreach to prospective students. Most daunting was identifying specific enrollment targets; these targets are aggressive, yet doable, and will help NIU as a whole sustain its educational and workforce obligations to the region.
New Northern LifeStyle

Begun in 2009, the New Northern LifeStyle initiative is aimed at improving living and learning environments across campus to benefit our students. New Northern LifeStyle (NNL) is a multi-year renovation and construction plan that will upgrade many of NIU’s existing residence halls, include the construction of a new residential complex, create a new outdoor recreation complex, and renovate and upgrade the Holmes Student Center. The new facilities and renovations will be student-centered and will prepare students to engage in dynamic communities focused on ongoing learning and community development.

The renovation of current residence halls and the construction of the new residential complex include the creation of technologically sophisticated living environments with modern amenities and comfortable, functional public spaces. Construction on these projects is well under way with the newly remodeled Grant C Tower, which reopened in fall 2011. The Grant C Tower renovation includes bigger rooms, new interior finishes, upgraded safety and security features, new furniture, wireless Internet in all areas, and a proximity card access system. In April 2011, ground was broken on a new, 1,000-bed residential complex north of Lincoln Hall that is scheduled to open for fall 2012. The residential units in the new complex will feature a community space that includes a shared living space, study areas, kitchenette, washer and dryer, and twelve private bedrooms with six shared bathrooms.

The timeline for the completion of other projects in the NNL includes the reopening of a renovated Cole Hall in fall 2011, the opening of the outdoor recreation complex in fall 2012, and the completion of several parking projects in fall 2012.

For more information about these and other upcoming projects included in the New Northern LifeStyle, please visit http://newnorthern.niu.edu
Major Gifts Initiative

Achieving fiscal sustainability is an increasingly important objective, and the Division is committed to ensuring that the student experience is not compromised during continuing state-funding challenges. Therefore, it set a Divisional priority for FY10 to develop and implement the inaugural Student Affairs & Enrollment Management development initiative, which focuses efforts in five areas:

The Huskie Camp is an overnight Orientation experience designed to assist new Huskies in transitioning smoothly, both academically and socially, to NIU. At camp, students participate in team-building activities, go on outdoor adventures, learn about diversity, and discover NIU traditions.

The Leadership Academy already provides outstanding opportunities to student leaders through a unique blend of curricular and co-curricular experiences. With donor support, this will become one of the premier programs in the country.

At any time, students might be faced with personal or family emergencies that could put their degree progress in jeopardy because they lack the funds to meet the emergency and to continue attending class. The Emergency Student Aid Fund allows us to support students in their time of need by providing a small, immediate scholarship to cover such unplanned expenses.

The Northern PACT Scholarship will make the NIU experience possible for select students who would not otherwise have the means to attend NIU. By providing additional support, NIU can recruit and retain students by assisting with financial needs, recognizing merit or talent, or acknowledging service to the community.

The final focus area for development efforts is the Discovery Fund, a discretionary fund that allows the Division to appropriate resources where they are most needed.

Marketing this development initiative has been a key component in ensuring its success. A new website was launched in summer 2011 that outlines these five funding priorities and related fundraising goals. Included on the website are videos of students who describe the importance of each scholarship area in supporting their success at NIU. Print materials also have been created to share information with potential donors about these programs and scholarships.
Military Student Services

In 2008, passage of the new Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act (post-9/11 GI Bill) created a firestorm of anticipation and activity in higher education to prepare for the possible surge of two million veterans returning from the Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom conflicts. With nearly $4 billion in funding to provide tuition, book, and housing allowances to veteran students, this new GI Bill boasted the potential to produce enormous changes to the landscape of higher education as did the GI Bill of 1944 (Vance, Miller, and Grossman, 2010).

Northern Illinois University took immediate action by creating a Veteran’s Think Tank (fall 2009), which consisted of staff and faculty from across the campus, to identify, centralize, and create services and resources that would aid in the transition of veterans to civilian life and the NIU community. A culminating goal from this campus-wide task group was to establish a comprehensive, single point of contact office that could serve as a one-stop shop for veteran and military students.

NIU quickly became recognized for its achievements in supporting the unique needs of military veteran students. Military Times EDGE magazine ranked NIU in the top 50 of military-friendly institutions across the country. Additionally, on October 22, 2010, NIU received the Illinois Governor’s Award for Excellence in Veteran’s Education. In accepting the award, NIU President John G. Peters shared, “I believe this award recognizes two very important dimensions of our University Community. First, it is an acknowledgment to NIU’s commitment to the success of its veteran students as well as a reflection on the outstanding students who have joined our institution after having served our country.”

In fall 2010, Military Student Services was established, and by January 2011 the VA educational benefits processing (formerly in Financial Aid) had been shifted to this one-stop shop. Today, Military Student Services (MSS) is prominently located on the 4th floor of Adams Hall across from the Holmes Student Center. Veteran and military students are encouraged to use the MSS lounge (featuring computers, refrigerator, microwave, television, and sofa), to apply for VA educational benefits, to access a licensed clinician, and to connect with other veteran and military students through numerous programmatic activities and events.

MSS diligently takes to heart its mission by aiming to centralize University and Community resources, to facilitate the transition of veteran and military students, and to support directly their perseverance until graduation from Northern Illinois University.

Access-Ability Resources

The mission of the Center for Access-Ability Resources is to create an accessible, inclusive, sustainable learning environment where disability is recognized as an aspect of diversity that is integral to the campus community and to society.

The Center created a new mission focused on creating an accessible, inclusive, sustainable learning environment where disability is recognized as an aspect of diversity that is integral to the campus community and to society. Goals and objectives identified to assist the Center in reaching its mission include promoting and facilitating access; creating inclusive environments; increasing the recruitment, transition, retention, and graduation of students with disabilities; reducing barriers; and ensuring effective delivery of accommodations.

There was a significant increase in the number of students with disabilities seeking resources. The number of students disclosing disabilities to CAAR increased 32% from the previous fiscal year (n = 569) to the current year (n = 752). The increase was evidenced in myriad ways, including 2,682 tests with accommodations completed in the Center, an increase of 33% from FY10 (n = 2,010); 409 e-text books requested and provided, up 19% from FY10, (n = 344); and 3,076 hours of interpreting provided, up 37% from FY10 (n = 2,238).

Initiatives undertaken encompassed the following: Establishing a University-wide accessibility statement for syllabi, creating an accessibility statement for the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, and increasing access to resources by providing materials electronically. Targeted outreach efforts included sponsoring a disability-themed art show, hosting a national disability display, co-sponsoring a wheelchair basketball event, and co-sponsoring a lecture by Dr. Torres-Gill, and a program on “Disability and Sexuality” with the Women’s Resource Center. In April, the Center celebrated the transition of the Friends of CAAR recognition program to the celebration of Disability Friends and Allies, recognizing 12 individuals and entities that made a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. The CAAR staff participated in seven transition fairs for high school students with disabilities, made presentations to five high school groups of students with disabilities who visited NIU, spoke to multiple undergraduate and graduate courses regarding disability as a tenet of diversity, and served as panelists for two groups of secondary special education teachers and school counselors within the NIU geographical service region. Additionally, a new retention-based initiative was established in collaboration with the Counseling & Student Development Center and the graduate-level Rehabilitation Counseling program. This program, designed to provide mentoring for students on the Autism Spectrum, was anticipated to be piloted during summer 2011 and implemented in fall 2011. Finally, CAAR created four Master’s-level internships, three for Adult and Higher Education students and one for a Rehabilitation Counseling student.
Admissions

The mission of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions is to market the University and meet NIU’s enrollment objectives. The staff recruits new students and provides student-centered educational outreach. Staff members guide students through the entire admission process; provide information about NIU to prospective students and families, and to high school and college transfer counselors; and create connections for new students with current students, faculty, and staff.

The Office of Admissions works to recruit and enroll new undergraduates—both freshmen and transfer students. To do this, the office collaborates with campus partners, including departments within the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management and throughout the community. Outreach efforts to prospective students and families include direct mail, Internet, telephone, face-to-face, and campus visits.

On-campus visitation programs underwent considerable review during FY11. As a result, several new programs were implemented that included On-the-Spot Decision Days (124 attended), Admitted Student Days (770 attended), Junior Preview Day (898 attended), and Transfers Get Information Fridays, “TGIF” (356 attended/208 enrolled). These new programs provided the opportunity to send direct messages to students at various points during the college search process. As always, academic departments, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management partners, currently enrolled students, and additional staff across campus provided tremendous support to Admissions.

Regional recruiters were hired in FY11. A Chicago-based and a Springfield-based recruiter provide a sustained and visible presence in their assigned recruitment territory. The Chicago-based recruiter is bilingual and a significant asset when working with the growing Latino population in Chicago and in the surrounding communities.

Several pages of the NIU website have been translated into Spanish, thus providing additional support for recruitment efforts with Latino students and their families. Admissions, Student Financial Aid, and the Scholarship Office participate in this website enhancement effort.

In FY11, Admissions staff members were much more intentional in their efforts to convert admitted students to enrolled students. In addition to Admitted Student Days, a yield plan was created that targeted appropriate students for telephone outreach by staff and currently enrolled students.

The Call Center focused on relationship development, and student callers engaged in an entirely new approach in their outreach efforts—moving away from providing process-only information to sharing experiences and insights and calling prospective students to action throughout the college search process. The Hobsons Telecenter module was purchased to support these enhanced efforts to strategize outreach efforts and track calling campaigns.

The Transfer Center staff implemented the TGIF programs, which allowed transfer students to apply, receive an admission decision, and visit with University staff from those areas most impactful in their decision to attend NIU, including the Academic Colleges. Admissions’ staff members continued their ongoing efforts to provide personal, one-to-one opportunities to meet and counsel prospective transfer students.
Asian American Center

In support of the academic mission of Northern Illinois University and the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, the Asian American Center creates an inclusive environment where Asian American students cultivate a strong sense of community at NIU, and where campus and community partners collaborate to raise awareness about the rich cultural heritage of Asian Americans. By providing student-centered services, student learning opportunities, leadership development, student organizational advisement, and educational/cultural programs, the Asian American Center strives to enhance the quality of college life for Asian American students as they reach their academic goals. In short, the Asian American Center provides a welcoming environment and a home away from home atmosphere for the Asian American student population.

This year, the Asian American Center focused on establishing a new initiative for recruiting Asian American high school students to NIU. The Center conducted Web research on 1,405 high schools in the Northern Illinois Region to determine the percentage of Asian American students enrolled at each high school. The Center developed a strategy for inviting these high schools to NIU’s campus beginning with the high schools with the highest percentage of enrolled Asian American students. The Asian American Center developed online information, materials, and an invitation process for high school counselors to schedule a high school visit. The Asian American Center conducted three site visits and hosted three high schools’ visits to NIU. The Asian American Center, in collaboration with Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, is also developing a long-term proposal for recruiting Asian American high school students by using non-traditional outreach sources beyond high schools, such as identifying Asian American communities, Asian American church-based groups, and Asian American not-for-profit groups in the Chicago area.

The Asian American Center collaborated with the Center for Black Studies, CHANCE Program, Latino Resource Center, LGBT Resource Center, and Access-Ability Resource Center to coordinate a Peer Mentor Training Retreat Day sponsored by a Target Campus Grant in the amount of $2,000. Together with Asian American student organizations, the Center co-sponsored 49 programs and events during FY11. The Asian American Center enhanced student learning by providing leadership opportunities, student partner/employee positions, and internships focusing on event planning, photography/marketing, peer mentoring, and webpage design.

The Asian American Center established an inclusive environment by serving students of various Asian ethnicities including, but not limited to Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Hong Kong, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Taiwanese, Thai, and Vietnamese. Engaging student employees as student organizational liaisons, the Center’s staff documented outreach to 100 student organizational meetings and events. Finally, the Center collaborated with the Diversity & Equity Community of Practice on the following initiatives intended to help raise awareness of the diverse populations at NIU: “Rock tha’ Mic: Huskie Talent Jam!”, Paraprofessional Training Program, and the 6th Annual Diversity Awards Gala.
Campus Child Care Center

NIU Campus Child Care is an early childhood program that strives for excellence in providing care and education to children within the NIU community. We focus on the unique learning needs of each child in a safe, nurturing, and diverse learning environment. We succeed by partnering with families, collaborating with community partners, and drawing from the best research and practices available within the early childhood profession.

Campus Child Care offers quality care to children ages 2 months–5 years (along with a summer school-age program for children ages 6–8 years). During FY11, Campus Child Care (CCC) provided quality care and education to the children of NIU students (65%), faculty and staff (26%), and the surrounding community (9%). A total of 147 children were served during the year. Demographic groups served included 38% minority populations, 38% single parents, 25% commuters, and 45% low-income families.

The Center provided on-campus job opportunities and experiential learning for 62 NIU students. Learning opportunities were also provided to students in Counseling, Adult, and Higher Education; Psychology, Music, Nursing, Dietetics, and Child Development. Some students provided direct learning activities for children and parents, while others participated in volunteer work, research projects, and observations.

A new and significant collaboration was established with the nursing program. Nursing students conducted health-related activities with preschool children. This experience, which will assist them in their future career, provided the students with the opportunity to learn more about the overall growth and development of young children.

During FY11, CCC received $14,200 in grant funds to help pay for classroom materials and replacement equipment. Most of these funds were used to make program enhancements to assist with the Quality Counts–Quality Rating System assessment process.

CCC staff conducted a comprehensive self-assessment of the program utilizing the Quality Rating System (QRS). Staff members worked to identify and make program improvements related to best practices, as defined by the QRS. An on-site visit was conducted in early April. As a result of these efforts, the Center moved from a 3- to a 4-star rating. With over 400 programs having achieved a star rating, NIU CCC is one of just three programs in the state of Illinois to achieve the highest quality rating.

As part of a five-year initiative, CCC conducted benchmarking to determine if other campus-based programs or community educational systems had a mentoring program specifically for college students, to further enhance their knowledge related to teaching practices. Information was gathered from six programs. Although no program was found to have this type of mentoring program, those surveyed offered a variety of resources and materials to help develop this new initiative at CCC.

CCC staff members worked to educate themselves on issues related to LGBT families. Efforts were made to enhance program materials and educate staff regarding ways to welcome and embrace all families. Efforts will continue into next year as CCC broadens its approach to implement an anti-bias curriculum.
Career Services is a centralized department for Northern Illinois University within the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management. Its mission is to foster career development by providing comprehensive services to educate and empower students through career exploration and job search skills training to make lifelong diverse career choices. The department provides experiential education and job opportunities that incorporate critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. Career Services (CS) provides a bridge for a successful transition between academia and the global community through leadership, through multifaceted partnerships, and by supporting the institution's objectives.

During FY11, through a centralized department serving all the colleges, departments, and majors, Career Services continued to help undergraduate students secure internships and full-time employment. In particular, CS provided help with career decision making; online postings for internships and full-time positions through Victor eRecruiting; walk-in and online résumé and cover letter reviews in the Career Resource Center; University-wide Job Fairs, Internship Fairs, and the Educator Job Fair; and assistance in the application process for graduate/professional school.

After developing a three-year strategic plan in 2009 that provided the roadmap for delivering outstanding service to students, during FY11, Career Services focused on assessment through feedback, data collection, and resource acquisition. A student advisory board was created to ensure that the voices of our most important constituents are included in our decision making. A departmental advisory board was revived with members from faculty, administration, and employers. The collection of employment-related data is essential for attracting college students to the University, for motivating students to complete the degree requirements, and for partnering with more and new employers. The initial data gathered during FY11 will be used as a recruitment tool beginning in fall 2011. Obtaining employment data from NIU graduates is an ongoing initiative that will build a statistical record of the success of our graduates that reinforces the tradition, pride, and culture of our University community.

Career Services has been active during the current national economic downturn. The department acquired five new or upgraded sponsorships resulting in revenue of $6,325. Employer attendance at the five annual career events increased by an average of 15% over the previous year. Approximately 1,500 students registered for or reported experiential learning through an internship. Career Services’ newest venue with employers focused on the retail arena. Employers from national companies such as Kohl’s, Sears, Target, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and Sherwin-Williams highlighted careers that included distribution, accounting, marketing, buying, and public relations. The Counseling and Internship unit presented 261 workshops to prepare students for their job search, an increase of 19% over the previous academic year. These various collaborations between Career Services, faculty, and employers resulted in a supportive environment for students.
Community Standards & Student Conduct

By promoting student engagement through learning, responsible behavior, healthy, critical decision making, and upholding our community standards, the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct assists students, staff, and faculty to maintain an environment conducive to learning.

During FY11, the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct successfully implemented the changes and recommendations from the nearly two-year-long internal and external review process, after using the spring 2010 semester to review the recommendations and determine the best methods to implement these recommendations. Then, at the start of FY11, the department prepared for the changes identified through the reviews.

This year, the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct instituted a paradigm shift of new initiatives including the formal name change of the department from Judicial Affairs to the Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct, the complete rewrite of the Student Code of Conduct, the adoption of new community standards, and, finally, the purchase and implementation of new commercial student conduct software, Maxient’s Conduct Administrator, for case management. A stronger focus on educational sanctions will be used whenever possible.

The total number of cases referred to the department during FY11 was 1,185. Non-referral contacts totaled 1,050 during the fiscal year. Also, as of May 2011, all conduct cases in the system had an average adjudication time of 22.41 days from incident date to adjudication, and all conduct cases in the system had an average adjudication time of 15.17 days from case creation to adjudication.

The Office of Community Standards & Student Conduct implemented new initiatives in fall 2011, which assist the office with improving and creating new opportunities for collaboration with departments across the institution. The new changes demonstrate the Office’s support of Divisional core values of student-centered service and partnerships focused on student learning in particular. The Office anticipates continuing on this new journey with community standards as they relate to handling student conduct issues. The Office strives to be increasingly proactive in reducing the number of incidents that occur on campus, and seeks to employ more educational sanctions in the process.
The mission of the Counseling & Student Development Center is to support the academic, emotional, social, and cultural development of students. Its student-centered programs include counseling, assessment, psychiatric treatment, crisis response, outreach, consultation, training, and educational services. The Center helps students address personal challenges and develop the skills, abilities, and knowledge to empower them to take full advantage of their college experience.

The Center values an atmosphere that is welcoming for all individuals. It embraces all diversity, including age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, citizenship, and ability, and it strives to foster and promote awareness, empathy, and cultural competence within a multicultural environment.

The Counseling & Student Development Center (CSDC) provides mental health support to NIU students and overall support to the NIU community. This is achieved by providing counseling, crisis intervention, assessment, psychiatric services, and academic coaching to students. The Center also provides consultation and outreach to the NIU community. CSDC maintains solid relationships with other mental health treatment centers on NIU’s campus and in the surrounding community. These relationships assist CSDC in best meeting students’ mental health needs.

Personnel transitions during the year resulted in strengthening the services provided by CSDC. The ongoing collaboration with the Center for Black Studies was enhanced by the addition of a new psychologist with significant experience in working with African American students. The Center also completed a successful search that resulted in the hiring of a licensed clinical professional counselor who joined the department in August 2011. Finally, a licensed clinical social worker who had prior experience working in the Center began working part-time in June 2011 in the role of case manager.

Following an ongoing trend, the number of clinical services increased since the prior year. Walk-in appointments increased by 10% and the total number of individual and group appointments increased by 5%. Crisis appointments increased 4%. CSDC continues to track its impact on student retention via questionnaires completed by students, and 69% of those surveyed reported that counseling helped them remain as an enrolled student.

The Center was also significantly involved in large-scale crisis response and outreach. During and after a critical incident resulting in a student death in October, CSDC provided extended hours, outreach to impacted students, and increased consultative services. The Center provided similar crisis response services after other critical incidents during the year. The general outreach presentations and programs provided by CSDC increased 5% this year.

The Center completed the first year of its five-year strategic priority, which focuses on promoting the mental health of NIU students. Plan year one focused on the financial domain of students’ lives, so that staff focused on learning more about the overall impact of the financial domain on student wellness and gained valuable information about available resources both on and off campus.

CSDC also completed an annual priority that intended to expand the mental health services provided to military veteran students. During the year, the Center established a solid relationship with the new Military Student Services. Center staff members also furthered the connection with the NIU Veterans Club. Through collaboration and purposeful programming, CSDC staff members connected with more military students throughout the year. Additionally, CSDC was a key component of the collaboration with Roosevelt University that brought Dr. Ted Bonar, of the Center for Deployment Psychology, to NIU to present on issues related to military students.
Health Enhancement continues to provide student-centered, relevant health promotion information, materials, and interventions to assist students as they pursue their academic goals. FY11 brought new and ongoing partnerships focused on creating a campus culture that supports health and wellness expectations and risk reduction initiatives for lasting positive behavior change.

One such new partnership was formed between Health Enhancement and NIU’s Undergraduate Admissions office. Health Enhancement offered a workshop and informational handouts to increase Admissions staff’s knowledge of NIU student health status and behaviors. With the knowledge gained, website content was created to prepare future students attending NIU; thus, the “Future Huskies” webpage was born.

Through a variety of activities, interpersonal violence prevention education continued to reach many students. Requests for Pause Off! peer theater troupe increased for the second consecutive year; staff members continue to partner with Enrollment Services to e-mail all first-time students regarding prevention- and service-related resources. NIU remains compliant under the state mandate regarding sexual assault awareness education.

Health Enhancement’s FY10 internal/external review process resulted in the re-visioning of departmental operations: A five-year strategic plan was designed incorporating the socio-ecological model into health promotion, primary prevention initiatives; benchmarking health promotion best practices yielded the value to implement, analyze, and distribute results from the National College Health Assessment among other assessment strategies intended to identify unmet needs, evaluate program effectiveness, and track trends in student health status; and recognizing the necessity for external funding to expand services. As a result of these converging recommendations, new mission and vision statements were also identified during the FY11 strategic planning process.

Throughout FY11, Health Enhancement provided health promotion information, materials, and interventions, staffed outreach events, enhanced web-based resources, provided print material as requested, and assisted with resource provision on health topics related to student learning and academic success.
Health Services

Northern Illinois University Health Services provides high-quality health care and preventive services to eligible individuals, a comprehensive student health insurance program, and advocacy for optimal health within the University population. In alliance with the core values, vision, and mission of the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, Health Services strives to meet the demonstrated needs of a diverse student population.

Health Services (HS) is an accredited, ambulatory clinic supporting NIU students in their pursuit of academic achievement. In FY11, Health Services provided medical care in 31,036 visits for 10,733 students. Health Services continues to serve as the compliance office for the State of Illinois pre-enrollment immunization requirements, fulfills a public health role on campus in conjunction with DeKalb County Health Department, maintains administration of the Student Health Insurance program, and provides sports medicine services for the Intercollegiate Athletics program at NIU.

As part of the Countywide Emergency Preparedness Committee, Health Services collaborates with NIU departments and local community agencies in emergency management planning and training. Health Services continues to act as the liaison between NIU and the DeKalb County Health Department.

Health Services is a member of the Illinois Consortium for Student Health Programs (ICSHP). The ICSHP is committed to the provision of student health programs at public and private four-year Illinois colleges and universities. Through primary care, health education, and prevention, student health insurance at low costs, public health services within the institutions, and linkage to the broader medical community, the consortium aims to assist students to achieve their education and career goals. The Student Health Advisory Council (SHAC) presents students’ ideas and concerns regarding health care to the Health Services administration. SHAC participates with Health Services on programs, services, budgeting, patient satisfaction, the student health insurance plan, and selection of physicians and other key personnel.

In July 2010, Open Communicator, the secure web portal for students, was fully implemented. This allows students to make and cancel certain categories of appointments at HS, view their immunization records, retrieve private messages from physicians, and access and print their account summary and visit verifications. Approximately 1,800 appointments were made through Open Communicator from July 2010 through June 2011.

The installation of digital radiography in September 2010 brought state-of-the-art health care to the campus. Health Services provided over 2,300 x-rays to the NIU student population during FY11. Digital radiography, which captures x-ray images and views them on high definition monitor screens, reduces radiation, decreases retakes of images, enhances overall display of images with greater detail, and allows application of special image processing techniques. This system interfaces with the HS electronic medical records, ends storage of film x-rays, and allows students to obtain copies of their x-rays on a CD.

Health Services’ digital radiography has also been an improvement for the NIU Intercollegiate Athletics program: Now athletes can have x-rays taken at HS and within minutes these high quality images can be viewed on a high definition monitor in the Athletics Department by sports doctors and coaches.
Housing & Dining

Housing & Dining is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and educationally empowering community where students can learn, grow, and be successful within a complex and diverse world. Through its facilities, programs, and the collaborative efforts of staff, student leaders, and campus partners, the department promotes respect, individuality, and personal responsibility.

In FY11, a renewed focus on student learning led to several new initiatives and collaborations. Housing & Dining (H&D) participated in a campus-wide implementation of MAP-Works, a comprehensive student retention and success program. H&D also introduced a residential curriculum that focuses programming efforts on specific learning outcomes such as managing personal relationships, implementing healthy lifestyle choices, and demonstrating habits that contribute to academic success. Intentional interactions with students encompassed programs, floor meetings, one-on-one conversations, roommate agreements, community standards, and other tools to heighten student awareness of and experience with these outcomes.

H&D is collaborating with units across the University to introduce New Northern LifeStyle to campus stakeholders (newnorthern.niu.edu/Housing/NNL/index.html). Renovations continued on Grant C Tower, which re-opened in August 2011. A groundbreaking ceremony was also held for the New Residence Hall complex, which will be finished and open in August 2012.

H&D also collaborated with Community Standards & Student Conduct on a new judicial tracking database. Maxient Student Conduct Administrator software allows staff members to follow a case more comprehensively than in previous years and to share information among campus departments to aid students in understanding the expectations associated with being a community member. Residential Student Conduct Boards were also implemented to allow students another leadership opportunity and to involve them in holding peers accountable for their conduct within the community. These Boards heard over 90 cases in FY11.

In an effort to provide student-centered service, for the first time at NIU residents were offered the opportunity to select a room assignment for the following year during the fall semester. This successful new initiative was chosen by nearly 1,000 residents during fall 2010. NIU’s Residential Dining program was also nominated by students and recognized as one of the most vegan-friendly college dining programs in the U.S.

Departmental leadership development efforts resulted in recognition of student representatives from NIU’s Residence Hall Association for the best roll call at the Illinois Residence Hall Association (IRHA) conference and a first-year student’s recognition for presenting a Top 10 IRHA Program. In addition, another NIU student was elected to serve as the Illinois Regional Communications Coordinator for the Great Lakes region.
Latino Resource Center

Through campus and community partnerships, the mission of the Latino Resource Center is to recruit Latina/o students to NIU, to increase the retention rate of Latina/o students, and to provide cultural, social, and academic programs that enhance the quality of Latina/o student life. The Center accomplishes this mission by offering workshops as well as an extensive programming calendar. Latino Resource Center’s (LRC) efforts promote cultural affirmation, social justice values, and community service. Students attending its activities gain insight into cultural dynamics, social processes, and the historical significance of the contributions that Latinas/os have made to the U.S. and to the broader world community.

During FY11, one notable initiative in the Latino Resource Center was to acknowledge the achievement of Latino students being admitted to NIU. In collaboration with the Deacon Davis CHANCE Program, the LRC held a Latino Leadership & Academic Achievement Reception to honor and to instill pride in incoming Latino students who have been admitted through the CHANCE program. The purpose of the reception was to expose the students to NIU’s support systems.

Additionally, with the intention of expanding the Graduate Training Institute that the LRC has been administering since 2007, the department collaborated with the following units to create the Graduate School Prep Seminar: Division of Research & Graduate Studies, Office of the Vice Provost, Office of Engagement and Experiential Learning, Department of Psychology, Center for Black Studies, Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education, University Honors Program, Intercollegiate Athletics, College of Business, and College of Law.

In an effort to continue ongoing collaborations with DeKalb School District 428, the LRC partnered with the NIU Center for the Interdisciplinary Study on Language and Literacy to develop an outreach project designed to provide support for teachers as the district equalized demographics across schools. The goal of the outreach project was to help teachers feel more prepared to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students and families by offering Teaching Culturally Diverse Students (TCDS) Teacher Book Groups.

Another initiative during FY11 was LRC’s hosting the 43rd Treasurer of the United States, Rosie Rios. Ms. Rios spoke to approximately 450 students on how she became involved in public leadership and gave advice on how to become involved. Her life story and accomplishments undoubtedly impacted students. The Center staff believes it is vitally important to expose the NIU Community to such positive Latina role models.

Finally, to address the needs of undocumented students who attend the NIU campus, the LRC held an Undocumented Students Webinar on April 28th; there, approximately 20 faculty and staff members attended to learn about the best practices to work with undocumented students. Bringing faculty and staff together was an important first step in beginning to educate the community on how to effectively work with a population that, for the most part, is silenced, and to ensure that they have the opportunity to achieve academic success.
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center serves as a vital link where LGBTQ individuals can find a sense of community and everyone can learn about LGBTQ identity and culture. The department strives to create an inclusive campus community by providing support services, educational programs, advocacy, and opportunities for leadership development.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center continued to be busy during FY11. Completing the transition from the previous Director and two Acting Co-Directors, the Center welcomed a new Director on July 1, 2010.

During the year, significant efforts to provide excellence in student service and campus community education were made in several ways. Visits to the Center averaged 143 per month, a 25% increase over FY10. In alignment with the Center’s mission, student visits accounted for 92% of visitors. The Center experienced 13,395 unique visitors to the website, averaging 1,030 per month. On facebook.com, the Center transitioned from individual and group pages to a fan page and gained 476 “Likes.” Further, on Facebook news and event posts, there were over 26,000 views. A focus on student-led programming initiatives, the incorporation of current events and pop culture, outreach to multiple populations, and educational information on current local and national events likely contributed to these figures.

Beyond visits to the Center, programming events outside of the Center covered multiple topic areas and garnered diverse audiences. The Center collaborated with 33 campus and DeKalb area community co-sponsors, presenting 27 programs and bringing in over 1,700 attendees. Each Center within the Diversity & Equity Community of Practice was a programming partner at least once, and the Center established new connections with offices such as Military Student Services. Some of the Center’s most successful program titles were, “You Are Loved” chalk campaign, “Queer People of Color: Past, Present, and Future,” “Lesbian? Beiber? Lesbieber?!,” “Religion and the LGBT Community,” and “Lt. Dan Choi.” The latter brought together 12 campus and community co-sponsors and drew over 150 attendees.

The Straight Talk Speaker’s Bureau continued its service to campus, completing seven engagements including classes and residence hall groups and reaching a total audience of 155. The Bureau had two coordinators, one each in fall and spring. The spring coordinator expanded on the foundation that was built by the fall coordinator, incorporating technology into volunteer communication and contributing ideas to a video plan for FY12.

One of the longest-running LGBT Resource Center programs, the NIU Ally Program, continued to be successful in FY11. A new group of Allies was trained, totaling 82 new faculty, staff, student, and community member Allies. There are now 330 active Allies across NIU. While much of the Ally Program remained in line with its original format, current event topics were incorporated in FY11 as well as discussion topics expanding on gender identity and resources.

Proudly, the Center continued its newest tradition, Lavender Graduation. The 2nd annual event honored 17 LGBTQ self-identified graduates from both undergraduate and graduate levels, an increase from 9 graduates last year. Further, the event drew over 70 attendees, also an increase from about 40. As on last year’s program, alumni and student speakers were featured, and the graduates had the opportunity to recognize an honored guest.
Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services

Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services aims to foster a sense of community for NIU students by providing a supportive and inclusive environment for off-campus and non-traditional students. The office assesses students’ needs in order to provide the best services which benefit them. By collaborating with key University and external partners, the department provides resources that address the diverse needs of these specific student populations. The department promotes social, intellectual, and academic growth and development through programs and services that facilitate lifelong learning.

During FY11, Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services (OCNTSS) staff members engaged over 1,800 students through programmatic efforts and served numerous additional students through Facebook updates, a weekly listserv, daily departmental e-mails, instant messages, a monthly newsletter, daily walk-ins, phone calls, and one-on-one meetings with students.

Collaborating with others is an essential function of OCNTSS. The staff initiated opportunities to partner with campus and community agencies, successfully generating over $1,900 in sponsorship through donations and collaborative programming efforts. In addition, the department collaborated with approximately 12 Divisional partners, 5 campus offices outside of the Division, 12 off-campus community partners and property owners, 3 student organizations, and 1 national corporation. Through these collaborations and co-sponsorships, the staff illustrates to NIU students the large number of allies and advocates for them in the campus community.

The staff created new and successful programs that involved student learning and inclusivity. One program was a workshop for residential students about the pros and cons of living off and on campus. Staff members from OCNTSS and Housing & Dining partnered to present in each of the residence halls. Additionally, OCNTSS provided this workshop to a number of UNIV 101 classes. Another new educational program involved a critical partnership with Financial Aid staff members. Financial Aid representatives provided workshops and one-on-one meetings with students—who frequent the Lounge in the Holmes Student Center—regarding student financial aid, finances, and FAFSA. Staff members also created a Brown Bag Lunch Series for Non-Traditional Students regarding navigating NIU, financial management, and community resources.

OCNTSS staff members aim to support student retention efforts by participating in open houses and campus visit days, by making phone calls to prospective students, and by focusing attention on the growing transfer student population. These efforts were intended to help transfer students feel welcome, to assist them in their transition to the University, and to solicit information from them through focus groups about what services would best aid them in their future at NIU.

Finally, along with a small committee of Divisional staff members, the department helped develop the Transformations program to better serve the needs of this unique and growing student population. This initiative includes new programmatic efforts to help transfer students feel comfortable and informed at NIU, with the intent that students’ participation in the program will help them feel more connected to other students and more aware of campus resources. Ultimately, this program will support recruitment and retention efforts. The department hopes that this initiative will illustrate that NIU is a leader in transfer student support services.
Orientation & First-Year Experience

Orientation & First-Year Experience serves new students and families in their transition to Northern Illinois University. We value each student, and are committed to promoting their academic, social, and personal development by connecting and engaging them with the NIU community.

During FY11, Orientation & First-Year Experience (O&FYE) continued to refine and expand many of its programs and services. With the completion of the Foundations of Excellence® self-study and improvement process, conducted under the auspices of the John N. Gardner Institute for Undergraduate Excellence, attention has turned to implementing the recommendations developed during this two-year-long process. A first-year philosophy statement has been developed to guide Northern’s efforts to support student success. Other steps taken so far include a set of “common messages” relayed to entering students at orientation sessions and on posters, and the implementation of MAP-Works, an early warning indicator to support first-year student success (This program is administered by the Office for Student Academic Success and involved 52% of the freshman class in fall 2010).

Having completed a successful three-year pilot, the First-Year Common Reading Experience expanded beyond UNIV 101/201 sections for fall 2011 to include freshman English courses, Communication 100 classes, and campus and community partners such as Northern Public Radio, Housing & Dining, the DeKalb Public Library, and on- and off-campus bookstores. A campus-wide committee has selected This I Believe II, a collection of 75 500-word essays based on the revived 1950s concept of acclaimed journalist Edward R. Murrow.

O&FYE continues to be integrally involved in the Midwest First-Year Conference (Strengthening the Student Experience) and holds a resource-sharing agreement with the National Resource Center on the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition (NRC for FYE-SIT). The 2010 event was held at Elgin Community College, drew more than 250 participants, and offered 20 educational sessions.

Orientation & FYE is the home of The Journal of College Orientation and Transition, a scholarly journal of the National Orientation Directors Association (NODA), under the leadership of the O&FYE Director as editor and another staff member as managing editor. The Director of the department was named one of ten 2011 Outstanding First-Year Advocates by the National Resource Center on the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition and Cengage Learning. The Associate Director completed a three-year term as NODA’s Region V coordinator and received the Outstanding Regional Coordinator award from the association.

In FY11, approximately 60% of the entering freshman class enrolled in a UNIV 101 (University Experience) section; some sections of the course were part of Themed Learning Communities and others were designated for student athletes, marching band members, undecided majors, business majors, Health & Human Sciences majors, African American females, and Latino students. The first group of Graduate Student Leaders assisted in eight sections. This successful program was expanded in fall 2011.
Planning & Assessment provides leadership to the Division by managing Division-wide planning and assessment initiatives, through consulting and collaborating with Student Affairs & Enrollment Management areas and other University departments, and by collecting, managing, and providing applicable campus-wide data about students.

For the second year in a row, Planning & Assessment, which includes one full-time Director and two full-time Graduate Assistants, managed the development, implementation, and analysis of a student satisfaction assessment project. Results will be released during spring 2012. Results of the FY10 study were released during FY11 and are online at the following link: http://www.stuaff.niu.edu/stuaff/PlanningAssessment/pdfs/State_of_NIU_Students_Report_FY10_Final.pdf Results of both reports will be used by all departments in the Division to assist with program and service improvements.

In response to the Northern PACT initiative to focus on the word “just” for this year, Planning & Assessment initiated ongoing discussions about what it would mean for this department to demonstrate the principle that NIU is a just community “where all people are valued and diversity is pursued and celebrated.” These discussions included meetings with the Center for Access-Ability Resources, the Diversity & Equity Community of Practice, and contact with other pertinent on-campus stakeholders. The outcome of this project was the development of a document that was focused on what it means to be inclusive in a survey. This document was sent to the Division as a resource to assist staff members in their assessment activities.

Planning & Assessment continued to provide support to departments conducting a variety of Division-initiated assessment projects including internal and external reviews, benchmarking projects, University Assessment Panel Assessment Summary Reports and/or Assessment Plans, Divisional Cabinet presentations (related to an assessment project), and needs and/or satisfaction assessment projects. In addition, the department continued to offer consultation to departments on a variety of projects including student surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

The department provided two assessment-related trainings this year, including a fall workshop on identifying and developing direct measures of student learning and a spring workshop on the fundamentals of assessment.
Recreation Services

In alliance with the educational mission of Northern Illinois University and the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, Recreation Services engages students in achieving lifelong appreciation for pursuing healthy lifestyles by providing comprehensive programs, employment, and leadership development opportunities.

To support the pursuit of healthy lifestyles in the areas of fitness, nutrition, personal training, wellness, outdoor adventure, and sports, Recreation Services (RS) continues to provide recreation programs for the NIU community. The Open Recreation program hosted at the Student Recreation Center (SRC), Chick Evans Field House (FH), and aquatic centers offered 5,929 hours of recreation time resulting in 429,775 individual uses this fiscal year. Open Recreation had a 9% increase in participation when compared to FY10 resulting in an increase of 36,000 users. Through Intramural Sports, Group Fitness Classes, Nutrition Counseling, Personal Training, Outdoor Adventure trips, and Sport Clubs, RS offered 3,422 (6% increase from FY10) diverse recreational opportunities resulting in 41,697 student participations (5,896 fewer participants—12% decrease from FY10). This decrease reflects a reduction in Sport Club participation in FY11. With a reduction in Student Association funding to clubs, there may be less participation by students due to financial constraints. Nevertheless, Outdoor Adventure Trip Leaders have spent over 4,323 hours (21% increase from FY10) teaching students Outdoor Adventure and Leave No Trace skills.

To meet students’ diverse interests, new activities (such as downhill ski/boarding; whitewater rafting; horseback riding; Rock, Paper, Scissors; Texas Hold’em Poker; the March Madness Challenge; and belly dancing) were offered this year. Collaboration with the Student Involvement & Leadership Development department included a Homecoming 5K/1-mile walk, Family Day Frisbee Golf Tournament, and three service-related outdoor adventure trips. Intramural Sports made a concerted effort to increase the number of games offered in the various sports, which resulted in an increase of 212 more contests this year when compared to FY10. The IMLeague web-based software, which improved program management and increased participant communication, was launched. Implementation of the Event Business Management System (EBMS) improved the efficiency of the Open Recreation equipment checkout system. Also, concerted efforts to retire worn and broken equipment improved the quality of equipment given to patrons.

Two facility improvements included installation of energy-efficient light fixtures in the main gymnasium and weight selector area, which increased lighting while conserving energy in these areas; and painting of the SRC north multi-purpose gymnasium. Equipment replacement and maintenance initiatives included 1) purchase of new exercise equipment for the SRC and FH, which included six elliptical machines, six treadmills, one Stepmill, five Arch Trainers, a multi-function cable cross-over station, and a multi-function full cage power rack; 2) re-upholstering of 35 pieces of strength training stations; 3) purchase of a better stock of equipment parts to assist in quicker repairs; and 4) improved scheduling of staff to repair equipment. New aquatic checkout equipment included new kickboards, pull buoys, water foam dumbbells, and water fitness belts.

Learning from participation in recreation and through student employment endeavors continues to be a focal point of the department. Three Sport Club sessions were developed to help officers learn how to be better student leaders for their clubs. Outdoor Adventure trip leaders provide instruction for activities such as rock climbing, backpacking, and environmental ethics. Student staff learned how to set and attain goals within the work setting.
Scholarship Office

The Scholarship Office collaborates with the entire NIU community to connect prospective and continuing students to financial resources. The objectives and goals are designed to assist in recruiting talented and deserving students as well as retaining students who require financial advocacy.

The Scholarship Office awards scholarships to new freshmen and transfer students in recognition of merit and talent. For the majority of these scholarship programs, students are automatically identified shortly after their admission to NIU. For fall 2011, over 1,900 incoming students will be recipients of an NIU academic merit scholarship.

During FY11, in preparation for those students entering NIU in fall 2011, a comprehensive scholarship packet was designed to further encourage scholarship recipients to choose NIU. Based on criteria defined for new scholarship initiatives such as the DeKalb County Scholarship, Northern PACT Award for Community Service, NIU Transfer Scholarship, Out-of-State Huskie Scholarship, and expanded Centennial and VIP scholarships, this packet included notification of a scholarship award, certificate, fact sheet, and confirmation form. It also contained fliers with information on the University Honors Program, research opportunities, Themed Learning Communities, Living Learning Communities, and/or First Year Connections.

In collaboration with Student Financial Aid, the Scholarship Office distributed over $5,666,842 in institutional, federal, state, and private scholarships to new and continuing NIU students during FY11. This was a 6.5% increase from FY10. In addition, the Scholarship Office awarded more than $1,396,000 in academic and need-based institutional tuition waivers.

During summer 2010, the Scholarship Office staff worked diligently to prepare past and current scholarship records to be scanned into the OnBase Document Imaging system. The department now has comprehensive electronic scholarship records available at the click of a button. In addition, three electronic scholarship applications were developed that included the following: The Lincoln Laureate nomination form, a comprehensive application for incoming students, and a comprehensive scholarship application for current students. These changes have revolutionized the application and scholarship review processes, allowing ease of document submission, retrieval, and workflow.

This year, the Scholarship Office developed an Assessment Plan that was submitted to the University Assessment Panel. This process helped the department analyze the goals and needs of the office, along with specific methods the department will use to identify whether they are achieving their goals. As a result, the department program goals were modified to holistically meet the needs of staff and students.

The Scholarship Office strives to embody the Division’s core values. Committed to establishing an inclusive community, staff members completed LGBT Ally Training, and the website published important information in Spanish. Student-centered service and actively building collaborative relationships are essential as we work with the University Community to attract and retain talented and diverse students. New programs this year included participation in two On-the-Spot Admission Days, and two Admitted Student Days. A reception for scholarship recipients on the Admitted Student Days included presentations from Honors, Office of Engaged Learning, Orientation & First-Year Experience, and Residential Educational Programs.
The Student Financial Aid Office supports the overall mission of the University. Our team of staff members strives to provide comprehensive financial aid support services for all prospective and current students, parents, and families who seek and desire such assistance, and to provide general information to high schools and the general public.

We continue to offer financial aid while focusing on removing financial barriers to assure an educational opportunity for all and ensuring and maintaining compliance with federal, state, and institutional guidelines, policies, and procedures. Our staff aspires to see that applicants make the best use of available resources and receive the appropriate funds necessary to complete their educational journey at Northern Illinois University.

The Student Financial Aid Office helps students pursue their college education by assisting them and their families in managing educational expenses that they are not able to meet through their own resources. The office continues to balance the significant processing and regulatory responsibilities associated with the delivery of financial aid while providing counseling and general information on financing higher education to students, families, the NIU community, high schools, and the general public. Recognizing that navigating through the financial aid process is not intuitive, the Student Financial Aid Office assists students and parents through the process of applying for and receiving aid and repaying student loans. The Student Financial Aid Office plays a critical role in providing students financial help to pay for educational expenses. There was a 4.5% increase in the number of NIU students who received financial aid in FY11 from FY10. During FY11, 21,182 students received a total of $210,945,144 in financial aid and 7,642 NIU undergraduates received the Federal Pell Grant totaling $30,352,023, a 21% increase over the prior year. The office engaged over 65,000 students and family members through walk-in visits and phone contact. It is estimated that 20,000 e-mail responses were sent in response to student and parent financial aid inquiries.

Financial aid plays a critical role in recruitment and retention. Department staff and resources provide financial aid support services to prospective and current students. To support the University’s recruitment efforts, the Student Financial Aid Office offers the Huskie Advantage and the NIU Success Grant, both institutional grant programs aimed at providing grant assistance to lower-middle-income students. Incoming freshmen and continuing sophomores who qualify for the Federal Pell and State of Illinois MAP grants, receive funds from Huskie Advantage if their tuition cost is not met through a combination of Pell, MAP, and other tuition-only awards. Over 68% of freshmen awarded funds through the Huskie Advantage program chose to attend NIU in fall 2010. The Huskie Advantage program provided 442 freshmen and sophomores a total of $325,580 in tuition assistance.

The NIU Success Grant was awarded to incoming freshman and transfer students who had a financial need of at least $11,000 and who did not qualify for the Federal Pell Grant. Of these, 353 new students received a total of $746,608 in tuition assistance for the 2010-2011 academic year.

The Student Financial Aid Office has continued to grow FAFSA Fridays as a way to encourage students to file the FAFSA early. The office also collaborated with Intercollegiate Athletics and local high schools to provide FAFSA completion workshops. The efforts resulted in a 30% increase of continuing NIU students and an 11% increase of incoming freshmen who filed 2011-2012 FAFSA applications prior to the end of April 2011.
Student Involvement & Leadership Development

The Department of Student Involvement & Leadership Development (SILD), in alignment with the academic mission of Northern Illinois University, recognizes the value and need for programs and services that facilitate the total development of all students. Our staff is dedicated to helping students become actively engaged in campus and community life by providing opportunities for students to pursue their interests while developing and enhancing skills for effective leadership, engaging in a multicultural society, and exercising active citizenship.

During FY11, assessment projects became a major focus as the department underwent an internal and external review. In addition, significant benchmarking and assessment projects were completed as part of the NIU Vision 2020 process. Also, a committee was formed to benchmark and to make recommendations about communication with parents and family members. The Campus Activities Board, Event Production Services, Volunteerism, and Huskie Family Connections stayed very busy with their signature events and services. Highlighted below are additional new or significant accomplishments in some of the department’s functional areas. Greek Affairs drew many Greek alumni back to participate in a variety of homecoming activities. Highlighted was the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new National Pan-Hellenic Council Yard. Two new chapters joined the Multicultural Greek Council in spring 2011. FY11 saw the implementation of a new database system utilizing MyNIU.

Leadership had a very successful year which was anchored by one of the department’s best programs in its history, the Lead NIU Summit, a two-day leadership conference that attracted 62 student leaders. During the program, they engaged in team-building exercises and roundtable discussions, and listened to local and national speakers including Dr. Martha Singleton, Dr. Scott Allen, and Hill Harper. Participants described this experience as life-changing, and many said that this program should happen every year. Additionally, the department cultivated new partnerships and provided team-building exercises for approximately 500 incoming CHANCE students, visited different classrooms, and provided programs to specific populations such as the Women’s Track Team, Men’s Golf Team, Women’s Soccer Team, and Delta Alpha Pi Honor Society for Students with Disabilities. Student Organizational Services approved 75 social events and 14 special events during FY11. Communication between the Department of Police & Public Safety, the Holmes Student Center, and SILD has improved due to the addition of weekly meetings and event forms. During Welcome Days, Friday Fest hosted 139 student organizations. A benchmarking project compared the different policies for student organizations at 14 public higher education institutions. The Student Organization Services website was updated to include policies and forms that pertain to student organizations. In addition, the site added a resource section for advisers.

The Student Association (SA) had a record turnout of candidates for the Senate Elections. SA also worked with the Administration to rewrite sections of its constitution for funding and student recognition policies.
Students' Legal Assistance

The mission of Students' Legal Assistance is to provide the best legal assistance possible to students at Northern Illinois University. The program was born of the idea that it is vitally important to make available legal information and advice to the thousands of NIU students who, because of economic incapacity, would otherwise be unable to participate in the due process system. Assistance includes advice and consultation, legal advocacy, and, in appropriate cases, court representation.

Students’ Legal Assistance (SLA) continued to provide high quality legal services to students at Northern Illinois University in FY11. The department provided direct assistance to 1,039 individual new clients, an increase of 63 over FY10. The Department also assisted hundreds of repeat clients and other students who received services that included voter registration, notary public services, and referrals to other offices.

Of new clients seen, the following characteristics were noted: 52% male and 48% female; 9% freshmen, 14% sophomores, 30% juniors, 30% seniors, 4% masters, 3% doctoral, 1% law, and 9% at-large or post-graduate students.

Services were provided in a wide variety of new cases during FY11. These included 37% landlord/tenant issues, 34% criminal misdemeanor, traffic, or local ordinance violations, 7% consumer and employment, 5% domestic relations, 1% torts, 4% expungements, 1% insurance, 1% identity theft, and 10% miscellaneous. There were 39 expungement cases. The two office attorneys also made 262 court appearances on behalf of 642 students, with a number of cases involving more than one court appearance.

Given the volume of individual cases, staff members continue to develop prevention programs to increase student learning and to address issues before they become serious. Again this year, Students’ Legal Assistance had the opportunity to work with the CHANCE Program and the NIU Department of Police & Public Safety to speak with incoming CHANCE students about ways to avoid legal trouble. Overall, SLA staff members made presentations and conducted workshops to more than 20 UNIV 101 classes and various student organizations about specific issues such as financial literacy, expungement of criminal records, rights and responsibilities in dealing with the police, D.U.I., and alcohol laws. The programs reached more than 500 students. In addition, the department website was updated with topical legal information of interest to students, including a new comprehensive guide to buying used cars and step-by-step discussion of the legal aspects of the apartment rental process. Website and written materials featured the SLA nameplate “Savvy Huskie” to stress the value of informed decision making.

Collaborative partnerships on campus remained active with the NIU College of Law, Ombudsman, NIU Foundation, International Student & Faculty Office, the Academic Advising Center, and the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management and its constituent departments. Off-campus collaboration continued with the DeKalb County State’s Attorney, the DeKalb City Attorney, the DeKalb Police Department, and Hope Fair Housing.
Office of Support & Advocacy

The Office of Support & Advocacy empowers students, faculty, and staff who were present during the shootings in Cole Hall Auditorium on February 14, 2008, as well as the loved ones of the students who were lost, to take full advantage of the resources available to support them as they manage their present situation and create their future.

During FY11, the Office of Support & Advocacy (OSA) continued to provide support and assistance to the individuals who were directly impacted by the tragic shootings on 2/14/08. A variety of programs, counseling, and academic support initiatives were provided. The FY11 accomplishments of the OSA include, but are not limited to, the following:

To honor those students who survived the shootings, the OSA hosted a special survivor tree planting ceremony in October. More than 65 individuals attended the event with three families of the deceased present. The tree and plaque, which are located east of the Forward, Together Forward memorial, were purchased by the fund-raising efforts of student survivors.

Also in October, a special monthly dinner was held to provide support for OSA students during the tragic loss of missing student Toni Keller. This tragedy brought back vivid memories of how the campus community was compromised after the 2/14/08 tragedy. Ten students and one family member attended the dinner and offered support to each other.

The OSA planned and hosted a private event in February to complement the campus-wide Day of Remembrance weekend activities, which included a scholarship dinner and the wreath-laying ceremony. More than 60 individuals attended both the wreath-laying event and the private OSA bowling/billiards reception and remembrance walk. At this event, a representative from Alumni Services was introduced as the individual who will begin serving the 2/14/08 alumni population in FY12 through the creation of an affinity group.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) conducted a site visit at Northern Illinois University in March 2011. Office of Support & Advocacy staff prepared a comprehensive binder documenting programs and services provided through the support of the DOJ funding.

Also during FY11, a large-scale, campus-wide program was planned by the OSA. National speaker Colin Goddard (Virginia Tech shooting survivor) came to campus and shared his 40-minute, award-winning documentary titled, “Living for 32.” A crowd of approximately 125 individuals attended the viewing in the Carl Sandburg Auditorium. A private monthly dinner was provided specifically for OSA students and families, attended by more than 30 individuals (including three families of the deceased).
Women's Resource Center

The Women's Resource Center staff is dedicated to gender equity and enhancement of the campus climate for women through advocacy, personal development, and social justice programming. We provide a central space on campus where faculty, staff, students, and community can come together around issues of inclusiveness and activism.

During FY11, the Women’s Resource Center (WRC) staff reached more than 2,000 students, faculty, and staff members with programming, outreach, and advocacy services. The WRC collaborated with six Student Affairs & Enrollment Management departments, student organizations, Academic Affairs Departments, as well as community organizations and businesses to provide gender-focused programs and services. The WRC utilized individual volunteers throughout FY11, totaling an average of 40 hours per week. Throughout the year, the WRC offered 30 student-designed social justice programs and initiated student-centered programs with a focus on gender. Many grants were written and awarded to enhance the services provided by the Women’s Resource Center. With assistance from the Office of Sponsored Projects, the Center was awarded a Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women grant in the amount of $300,000 to provide programmatic support and funds for a full-time victim advocate on campus. The WRC was also awarded a grant for $1,500 from the DeKalb County Community Foundation to support its mentoring efforts with the DeKalb School District. The WRC also submitted a successful funding application in the amount of $3,771 to the Student Association and received these funds to complete the installation of the SMART Classroom in the current WRC conference room.

As a means to empower growing young girls, the Women’s Resource Center kicked off its first year in partnership with Huntley Middle School and Clinton Rosette Middle School on a one-on-one mentoring program for 7th-grade girls. The course was offered for credit for the college women mentors. In addition, the WRC was selected as a host campus for the American Association of University Women “Elect Her” campaign, a national training program to train and encourage female students to run for student government positions on their campuses. In spring 2011, the WRC was nationally selected as one of 21 schools to screen a documentary (“Telling Amy’s Story”) that addressed the issue of dating/domestic violence within the collegiate environment. This initiative led to the campus HopeLine cell phone drive that took place April 27–May 13, 2011.

The staff at the WRC was invited to attend several conferences throughout the year, including the National Women’s Studies Conference on programming for intersectional identities, best practices for student-driven programming, the utility of social media and feminist activism and working with student activists. In an effort to be nationally involved, the WRC Director applied to and was accepted as one of 40 representatives on a delegation to Cuba with the American Association of University Women. In spring 2011, the WRC staff attended the End Violence Against Women International Conference.
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 provide for equal treatment regardless of political views or affiliation, and sexual orientation. Inquiries concerning application of Title IX, Section 504, and other statutes and regulations may be referred to the Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources Center, 1515 W. Lincoln Highway, DeKalb, IL 60115, telephone 815-753-1118.