

Spring 2013

Academic Affairs Report, Spring 2013

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Academic Affairs

Report

SPRING 2013

A LETTER FROM PROVOST GLORIA GIBSON

Excellence abounds

Academic excellence is a crucial component of UNI's strategic plan and an integral element of the university fabric. This year our faculty, staff and students continued the trajectory of excellence as evidenced by their numerous awards and accolades. First, congratulations to our six faculty members receiving the Regents Awards for Faculty Excellence (after BOR approval). They are: **Dr. Helen Harton**, Psychology; **Dr. Paul Siddens**, Communication Studies; **Dr. Grant Tracey**, Languages & Literatures; **Dr. Carl Thurman**, Biology; **Dr. Jennifer Waldron** and **Dr. Catherine Zeman**, Health, Physical Education & Leisure Services. Congratulations are also extended to the Diversity Award recipients: **Darin Adams**, for his work in enhancing

veterans' experience at UNI and his work with LGBTQ issues on campus; **Celeste Bembry**, Student Recruitment and Retention Coordinator in CHAS; **Xavier Escandell**, Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology; **Darvel Givens**, President, Black Student Union; **Cindi Mason**, Director, Community Music School; **Melissa Payne**, Student Assistance and Outreach Coordinator, Dean of Students Office; **Jim Schuerman**, Owner of Scheurman Auto Repair for his ongoing assistance in helping international students acclimate to UNI; and **Robert Smith**, Executive Director of UNI's Center for Urban Education. Kudos are extended to **Dr. Lindsay Cohn** in the Department of Political Science, who was awarded one of ten highly competitive fellowships with the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR).

In addition, UNI has distinguished itself in the following ways this year:

- UNI is now one of a small number of leading institutions invited to apply for the Beckman Scholars Program. This past year over 100 institutions were invited and only 10 were selected. Awardees are carefully chosen in recognition for outstanding research programs in chemistry, biochemistry and biology.
- Received gold ranking by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) for our environmental focus through the use of the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS).
- Earned recognition as a finalist for the Presidential Award in the 2013 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll (one of 14 colleges and universities, and the top college in Iowa).
- Received the Iowa Distance Learning Association's 2013 Innovators Award (Team members include: Belle Cowden, Frank Kashef, Jonathan Last, Michael Savage and Joanna Thompson-Yezek).

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Our students also continue to excel. The 2013 Student Leadership Awards were recently announced. Karl Baresel, Darvel Givens and Theresa Luensmann won the Lux Award and Jordan Bancroft-Smithe, Emily Hanson, Ramya Varadaraju, and KaLeigh White were awarded the Outstanding Student Leader Award. The Lux Service Award is the most prestigious award given to undergraduate students each year to acknowledge their exemplary service through their involvement in the campus community. The Outstanding Student Leader Award recognizes students for outstanding service and leadership in student organizations. Congratulations to all our student awardees and to our 2013 graduating class!

I want to thank all faculty who submitted proposals for the funding offered by the Provost's Office through the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs and through EPSCoR. Pre-tenure faculty were awarded summer fellowships for this summer. This funding was made possible by the Provost and President's Offices. I must also acknowledge the faculty who spent countless hours evaluating their colleagues for various awards!

This year also represents the first year of the two year curriculum cycle. I would like to acknowledge the work of faculty, staff and department heads who have submitted proposals for new courses, new programs and restructuring of existing programs. I am confident these curricular offerings will strengthen our goal to be a "leading undergraduate public university that provides a strong liberal arts foundation."

One of my goals this year was to improve communication with Faculty Senate and United Faculty. I met on a regular basis with Chair Scott Peters and Vice Chair/Chair-Elect Jerry Smith. Representatives from the Faculty Senate and the Chair of the Faculty also served on key committees and I greatly appreciate their contributions. Among their tasks, they assisted in re-writing the job description for the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and participating on the search committee. Dr. Susan Hill was recently named to this leadership role.

In addition, contract negotiations between UNI-United Faculty and the BOR/UNI bargaining teams reached an agreement without arbitration. And recently, both groups completed discussions that resulted in a mutual settlement of three grievances and a Prohibited Practice Complaint. Under the terms of the settlement six faculty members who opted to participate in the Board's Phased Retirement program are granted the opportunity to either rescind their participation or continue in the program without any change. These successes signal a more productive working relationship between Faculty Senate, UNI-United Faculty, UNI and the Board.

Before closing, I want to formally welcome incoming President Bill Ruud and his wife Judy. All of us in Academic Affairs look forward to his arrival on campus. I would also like once again to thank Richard O. Jacobson for his \$15 million gift to UNI. Finally, I wish President Ben Allen the best as he enters retirement. Something tells me he won't be "retired" for long.

Everyone have a wonderful, restful and productive summer!



Gloria J. Gibson
Executive Vice President and Provost

IN THIS ISSUE, we have asked incoming UNI President Bill Ruud and President Ben Allen to reflect on where UNI has been and where we're going. Interview questions were developed by members of the faculty senate, Vice Chair Jerry Smith and Senator Chris Edginton, with assistance from Faculty Senate Chair Scott Peters.

Interview with incoming UNI President Bill Ruud

The following is an excerpt from a longer interview with incoming President Bill Ruud. Visit the Provost's website (www.uni.edu/provost) for the complete interview.



Projecting forward, what do you see as the future of UNI to the state, region, nation and internationally?

UNI is **the** comprehensive university in Iowa. We have a special niche, and a special role to play. We can offer students all the amenities and regional, national and international experiences of a large university, but in a smaller more personalized setting; with appropriate class sizes, and with a majority of our classes taught by regular faculty members. The key is we need to differentiate what is unique about UNI and communicate this to students, parents, the state, Midwest and beyond. Our academic excellence is robust. Our graduates are successful (and I understand they often times begin their promising careers in Iowa), and we need to make sure students and alumni share these views and attitudes. We need to continue our outstanding programs – and brag about them – change programs for future successes, and add appropriate programs that are good for UNI, the state, the region and the world. We need to make sure that we not only brag about our outstanding programs, but also the core programs in the arts and humanities that make those programs outstanding.

What strategies will you use to build your relationship with the faculty and staff of the university?

I will listen! I plan to meet with many faculty, staff and students in the summer of 2013, throughout the rest of 2013 and into 2014, and on a continuous basis; to listen, learn, motivate, lead and move the university forward. I want to get to know individuals and hear from them. I'm planning for some robust meetings with each of the colleges, each division on-campus, student leaders and organizations, and various councils, senates, committees etc.; along with members of the Cedar Falls/Waterloo community as well as Iowa in general. I want to hear their input and begin to build relationships with everyone. I want to enjoy their company, hear suggestions for continuation of success and thoughts for improvement, and hear about their passion for UNI.

What are the greatest challenges facing UNI and higher education in general as we move into the 21st Century?

We are a student-centered, learning organization, and we need to be an organization continually evaluating and strategically looking at where we can expand our capacity to grow for our future. To do this, we must be more nimble at times, embrace opportunities, build relationships, partner

Interview with incoming UNI President Bill Ruud – *Continued from p.3*

with others and focus our efforts with our available resources. Programs in all of our colleges are doing well and we need to showcase them.

Some of the greatest challenges we face include the increasing competitive environment for top students and faculty. We also face a competitive environment for state appropriations, a stagnant tuition revenue stream, increased federal and state regulations, and increasing labor and operational costs. I will meet with several individuals on-campus first, but as with many institutions, I believe we will need to continue to work on enrollment management (Registrar, Admissions, Financial Aid, Recruitment, and Retention) efforts which include the recruitment and retention of students (especially minority and underrepresented students). We need to continue to build on offering an inclusive learning environment where all feel welcome and part of the UNI family. I think the learning communities planned for fall 2013 in the residence halls will be a great start to offering this type of inclusive learning environment option for students.

We need to continue to leverage our financial aid offers to attract top students. We may need to look at our recruitment cycle, timing of scholarship offers in relation to other universities, weekend recruitment efforts, etc. to work on expanding our pool of qualified student applications. This will take the support of everyone and I'm excited to help in these efforts. Also, the students at UNI I've met are so impressive and I think they play a vital role in helping our student (and parent) recruitment efforts. Also key is the support and engagement of our alumni, guidance counselors and teachers throughout high schools.

We need to continue to invest in our academic and co-curricular programs. We need to build upon our successes, recognize our leadership role in education throughout the state and nation, and build upon those strengths. Status quo is not acceptable. We need to be more nimble, innovative and seek to embrace future opportunities.

As with other universities, I hope we can also work on increasing the affinity our students and alumni have for UNI. Hopefully, we can build upon our efforts to strengthen our connections with alumni, which will also help with our recruitment efforts. We need to work with our current students, faculty, staff and alumni to embrace UNI and share that common view – of how dynamic and distinctive UNI is – and that our programs and learning environment provide students with the tools to succeed.

With UNI's excellent faculty and staff, the university provides transformative learning experiences. We need everyone to understand how this translates into successful, innovative graduates who become a strong core of UNI alumni we can count on for continued and long-lasting support after graduation.

What role do you envision UNI's faculty will play in setting the direction for this university and moving it forward?

I am pleased to join the UNI family and work with the faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends to move the university forward. Faculty members will be key partners in the UNI shared governance

Interview with incoming UNI President Bill Ruud – Continued from p.4

model. They will be leaders in curriculum excellence and change, as well as strong contributors to our community as well. I will generally err on the side of providing as much information as I am able to help the decision making process go smoothly. That does not mean there will not be healthy discussion... to the contrary, in order to have excellence and move from good to great, we will discuss issues, agree, disagree and ultimately come to solutions that will benefit the students and the institution known as UNI. The faculty have excellent scholarly achievements, excel in teaching and learning, and perform valuable service. We need to build on their achievements, on their scholarly excellence and provide faculty with the resources needed to continue pursuing their academic research, scholarly work, instructional development and service to the university and community.

Shared governance will be a priority as I meet with faculty throughout campus. I want to get to know faculty and their strengths, and I'll work with Faculty Senate and the United Faculty as we move forward with common core goals.

We need to build on a shared vision with common goals, values and missions that become deeply shared and entrenched within the university. Soon, we will look at the 2010-15 strategic plan and work on a plan that extensively includes faculty input, involvement and leadership to develop our strategic plan for 2020 and beyond.

The University of Northern Iowa – Where great futures start!



Presidential Scholars' ThinkTank Project resulted in an on-campus garden. Students and Provost Gibson at the Panther Plot Groundbreaking Ceremony.

L to R: *Angela Wrage, Peter Ickes, Luke Peterson, Sarah Eikenberry, Rachel Carmen, Ariana Aquilani, Gloria Gibson, Kara Poppe, Britney Bockstahlere.*

Interview with UNI President Ben Allen

The following is an excerpt from a longer interview with President Ben Allen. Visit the Provost's website (www.uni.edu/provost) for the complete interview.



The university recently received a major gift from Dick Jacobson to support teacher education at UNI. What do you think will be the impact of this gift on the teacher education program at UNI and on the university more generally?

First of all, the \$15 million gift will add additional resources to the program. The scholarships are designed to attract high quality students and the faculty endowments are designed to attract and retain top quality, nationally recognized faculty. There is also a component to expand the literacy program, funded several years ago also by Dick Jacobson. In short, these funds will enhance the academic programs now being offered in teacher education. I have always said that private fundraising is important to maintain or achieve the margin of excellence, not to operate the programs. In addition, the visibility of the program is enhanced by having a non-alum make such a large investment in a teacher education program, one of the largest investments ever in the country to teacher education.

Because teacher education involves all colleges, the impact is university wide. In addition, the visibility of the announcement itself has substantial value to the entire university, not just the teacher education program. The announcement reaffirms that UNI is the place to attend for teacher education and elevates the quality of the entire institution.

At the start of your presidency, you challenged UNI's faculty and administration to go "from good to great." Have we succeeded in meeting this challenge? If not, why not? What do we have to do to meet it as we move forward in time?

One has to define what is meant by the word "great," but I believe the university is better now than it was in 2006. What we did not know at the time (2006) was that we would have arguably the most damaging recession (almost a depression) in the history of the United States with the resulting reduction of a quarter of our state funding. Unlike the 2001 and 2002 time periods when our state funding was reduced (but not as much in terms of percentage), the political environment and the competitive environment and the economic environment did not allow large increases in tuition to make up the difference.

I still believe that the basic message of the book "Good to Great" provides a good guideline on how to continue that journey from good to great. One is that we have to have a discussion of the "brutal facts" of where we are strong and where we need to improve. We need to focus on the areas in which we are the very best, where we are passionate about and where the economic engine indicates we should be. We need to better support the faculty that we have and that will require

Interview with UNI President Ben Allen – Continued from p.6

more resources or a more focused set of academic programs. Distinguishing ourselves from Iowa State University and the University of Iowa is also critically important.

Looking back over your tenure as president of UNI, what do you believe were the most significant gains for the university?

First, I wanted the university to become more visible in the State of Iowa. I believe it has, although some of that has been accomplished as the result of the changes we made last year and the reaction on campus to these changes. The very visible events, such as the visit by the Dalai Lama, the First Lady and the defeat of Kansas by our men’s basketball team, were just a sample of the events that helped make this happen. The importance of providing leadership in selected areas, like STEM education, also increased the visibility of the university.

Second, we established state-wide leadership in selected areas. For example, we did that in STEM education. First, UNI became the leader of the Iowa Mathematics and Science Education



Academic Affairs Employee Recognition Awards – Celebrating 10 years of service.

L to R: Provost Gloria Gibson; Richard Featherstone, Sociology, Criminology, & Anthropology; Masatomo Noborikawa, Senior Programmer Analyst, Information Systems; Tyler O'Brien, Sociology, Criminology, & Anthropology; President Ben Allen.

Interview with UNI President Ben Allen – *Continued from p.7*

Partnership (IMSEP) where we were the lead institution working with our much larger sister institutions, Iowa State University and the University of Iowa. Second, we maintained our leadership role when IMSEP became the foundation of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council with UNI Professor Jeff Weld maintaining his leadership role as Executive Director and my becoming Co-Chair of the Council working with fellow Co-Chair Lt. Governor Reynolds.

Third, we raised the bar substantially in the area of fundraising and we focused the fundraising on faculty and students, not buildings. Almost all of the funds raised (more than \$150 million) in the Imagine the Impact Campaign went toward academic programs and academic scholarships. We were able to focus many of those funds on a key priority area for the university – teacher education because of the interest in that area and the generosity of Dick Jacobson. He invested almost \$30 million in the general area of teacher education.

Fourth, although much work remains, I believe through strategic hires and new programming by a number of people, the importance of increased diversity for a high quality educational experience has been more clearly demonstrated. The absolute growth of diversity in our student body is not large, but a foundation for future growth is being built.

Finally, the financial health of the university was not in good shape in 2006 with underinvestment in some key areas including learning technologies and an information system for student services, among other areas, and a weak balance sheet. The financial situation for the university remains challenged for a number of reasons but there is more awareness of the relationship between financial issues and sustainability of academic programs and other programs. In addition, we helped make the case that we needed additional special funding over a three year period because of our unique financial challenges resulting from having such a high percentage of resident students.

In your mind, what plans did you have that you were not able to accomplish?

I will comment on only one area. Our outstanding faculty and staff serve the students exceptionally well. Students have a very good educational experience at UNI. The students are overwhelmingly very satisfied with the education they receive here as are their parents. My plans to make the larger region (Midwest) and the nation more aware of how special this university is from an academic and learning perspective were not realized.

UNI I am...

Academic Staff Profiles:

Every day at UNI, students go to stimulating classes with first-rate professors; this is the heart of the academic enterprise. But hundreds of enthusiastic employees – from custodians to secretaries to dining center staff, to name just a few – make UNI a great place to be. In addition, academic support staff work directly with students and faculty to enrich students’ classroom experiences, plan for the future, and have access to important resources. Here are profiles of some of the dedicated academic support staff who work diligently to enhance students’ experience at UNI.

UNI I am... managing library collections.



In addition to numerous other tasks, **JEANNE LITTLE** has been acquiring viewing and streaming rights for videos and electronic resources, compiling usage statistics, replacing lost materials, receiving gifts for the library, and working with online systems and databases for over 30 years. In addition to all of this work, Jeanne also hires, trains and evaluates all of the student assistants in the Collection Management and Special Services Department.

Jeanne’s favorite part of her job is “always being engaged in the learning process” and working with faculty, staff and students across campus. Jeanne says that “seeing positive end results for something I am working on keeps me striving to always do my best.” Jeanne is also committed to helping students assistants “be the best employees they can be, which in turn helps them when they graduate and begin their chosen careers.”

UNI I am... advising students.



LINDA CORBIN, Director of Undergraduate Programs in UNI's College of Business Administration, has been advising students, implementing policies, scheduling activities, working with community colleges and fulfilling numerous other duties in the CBA for 31 years. Linda is dedicated to helping students be successful in their chosen majors. She tries hard to be a strong advocate for students and says that "developing a caring

advising relationship with students lets students know there is someone at the university on their side." She especially enjoys working with the international students who transfer from 2+2 programs. She says, "explaining our programs, helping them develop their individual plans of study and watching them mature and develop into successful UNIBusiness students is very rewarding."

UNI I am... preparing chemicals.



LINDA WILSON has been a laboratory specialist in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry for the past five years. She is responsible for preparing chemicals, solutions and supplies for the general chemistry teaching labs, ordering chemicals and equipment for the department and supervising student assistants

during stockroom and laboratory assignments. Under Linda's supervision, students gain valuable work experience and skills that give them an advantage after they graduate. In addition, Linda tries to cultivate in students a good work ethic and give them relevant advice from her years in industry that isn't necessarily taught in the classroom.

UNI I am... helping grow new teachers.



CHAD CHRISTOPHER, is a man with many different hats. For the past 12 years, he has worked in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences as an advisor for Social Science and History Education majors, as the Level 3 field experience coordinator, and as the instructor for the Level 3 professional field experience seminar and the methods course. In all of these roles, Chad works to create a support system for

students to succeed in their academic and career goals. He says, "I thoroughly enjoy the educational conversations I get to have with our students. The conversations include their philosophy on a teaching issue, a lesson plan they designed, or their teaching and how they have grown." His favorite part of the job? Helping students formulate a plan for their time at UNI.

UNI I am... managing educational resources.



MAXINE DAVIS has worked at UNI for 24 years, and is the director of Instructional Resources and Technology Services in the College of Education. She helps to make the COE's extensive library of education-specific resources, including textbooks, activities, and curricula, available to students, faculty and in-service teachers and administrators. She also lends out computers, digital cameras and projectors to students and staff, as well as

managing the COE's computer labs and multimedia classrooms. Maxine enjoys working with students "who have entered into the teaching profession with a desire to make an impact on student learning." Giving students opportunities to examine and evaluate curricula and educational tools "contributes to students' success by preparing them with a broad knowledge of current trends in their field."

UNI I am... helping students learn online.



For the past five years, **JEFFREY RIES** has worked as an applications administrator

for UNI's learning management system, eLearning, which includes Blackboard and its related technologies like Turnitin, Respondus and Panopto. He and the eLearning team oversee all aspects of the system, including user account creation, student enrollments, troubleshooting problems with the system, upgrades, and system backups. Jeffrey works to make sure that UNI's eLearning system "is running as efficiently and securely as possible." Jeffrey thoroughly enjoys working with the LMS

team because he gets to interact with a wide variety of people every day. He also appreciates the range of tasks he gets to perform, from working on new features and tools in the system to investigating bugs and making system improvements. Providing a stable and robust system that allows instructors flexibility in their pedagogy helps students get the most out of their education at UNI. Jeffrey says that "the best part is that students can access these eLearning class materials and activities anytime from anywhere."



Fall Faculty Workshop
August 22, 2013

See p.17 for details!

New Initiatives in Languages at UNI

By Julie Husband

The study of language at UNI is in a very dynamic phase at this time. We are actively seeking opportunities for our students to advance in the study of multiple world languages at UNI and through studying abroad. Currently, UNI offers a certificate, minor, major, teaching major and MA in Spanish, allowing students to tailor their study of language to their specific personal and professional goals. Once the teach out of German and French programs are complete, the Department of Languages and Literatures will continue to offer coursework in French and Chinese, facilitating study abroad to French-speaking and Chinese-speaking countries where students can continue their study of language in a full-immersion environment.

At the moment, our department is working with the Study Abroad Office to pilot a 2+2 program permitting students to earn a dual degree from UNI and the Université de Besançon. Beginning in 2014-15, UNI students will be able to take two years of preliminary coursework in French and in the Liberal Arts Core and then another two years of study in Besançon. Students from France will likewise pursue two years of study at the Université de Besançon and two in a major at UNI. The full-immersion experience over two years will give UNI students fluency in French language and culture while the addition of students from Besançon will enrich our programs at UNI.

To support this initiative as well as the French courses that are a part of other majors and certificates on campus, our department is proposing a new Interdisciplinary Language Studies Minor: French that combines relevant culture and social science courses with language courses. The minor also will facilitate short-term study abroad experiences, such as the Capstone in France offered

this summer by Dr. Elizabeth Zwanziger. This minor could serve as a model for future programs, supporting UNI's study abroad mission as well as majors and minors across campus.

UNI began teaching elementary Chinese in fall 2012 and enrollment in Elementary Chinese has strengthened tremendously in just one semester. In courses offered by Chang-li Huang, from the top-ranked university in Taiwan, National Taiwan University, students are introduced to traditional script and build an impressive vocabulary base.

Students in the languages at UNI are active in our community, making resources more available to recent immigrants and helping to bring bilingual education to Cedar Falls. Through practicums, we offer students important community outreach experience and we provide valuable services to the Cedar Valley. Recent graduate students and undergraduates in the languages have offered translation services for Iowa Legal Aid, the Phelps Youth Pavilion and the Cedar Falls School District. This spring, Dr. Jennifer Cooley is taking a group of students to participate in the Nuestras Voces 2013 National Bilingual Sexual Assault Conference. This conference joins language teachers and victims' advocates to seek ways to support women who, as Spanish speakers, may not have access to typical resources. Students will perform testimonials (in Spanish) from migrant women in Iowa and will create interactive forums to engage innovative techniques to work with victims of sexual abuse. Next fall, students taking Spanish in Elementary Schools will be helping classroom teachers in Cedar Falls to introduce their students to Spanish.

Responding to changing demographics in Iowa, where Latinos are the fastest growing ethnic group,

New Initiatives in Languages at UNI – Continued from p.12

the Spanish program has piloted a new course this semester, Spanish for Heritage Speakers. It serves students who have grown up speaking Spanish at home, have a large vocabulary and intuitive grasp of the linguistic structure of Spanish, but who are less familiar with the reading and writing conventions of Spanish. Walter Abrego, a freshman from Dennison, Iowa whose family came from El Salvador, comments, “[I]t is very comforting to be able to go to a place where everyone seated by me is somewhat similar to me... I am proud of my heritage and I hope to be able to share it with more people at UNI.” This semester the class, comprised of students whose families come from a variety of Spanish speaking countries, are writing and editing a Spanish/English anthology of stories drawn from their personal and community backgrounds called, “En nuestras propias palabras/ In Our Own Words.” The tentative publication of the collection will coincide with Hispanic Heritage

month. This course is an important way to engage Latino students at UNI and to offer a meaningful way to study their experiences in a broad and historical context.

Graduates from our Spanish programs are highly sought after in business, the medical field and the legal field. Wells Fargo, for example, pays an enhanced salary to new employees who can speak Spanish. The Principal Financial Group has hired graduates from our Spanish programs who have study abroad experience, including Philip Musson and Janae Holtkamp, to work in their facilities in Spanish-speaking countries.

In the next year we hope to grow our language offerings and work closely with Study Abroad to offer UNI students, as well as international students coming to UNI for short-term study, the best possible cultural experience.

– Julie Husband is head of the Department of Languages and Literatures.



▶ *TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) students Kate Hein and Sarah Keller tutor CIEP (Culture and Intensive English Program) students Zainab Al Faraj and Zahra Alzayer.*



◀ *TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) student Molly Rome tutors CIEP (Culture and Intensive English Program) student Ali Al Nasser.*

UNI Capacity Building Grants Benefit Faculty Research

By Christy Twait

58 faculty members received more than \$150,000 in seed funding to advance their research, scholarship and creative activity in the past few months. The funding ranged from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for each award, depending upon the competition to which they applied. While the majority of support came from the Provost with one-time funds, we were able to leverage NSF, EPSCoR and Regents Innovation Fund (RIF) support as well. When the Provost expressed her desire to provide capacity-building funds for scholarly activities, we reached out to campus and inquired about funding needs. Three research capacity-building opportunities resulted, and a fourth was later added with support from RIF:

- Scholarship Grants up to \$1,000 supported a broad range of activities to further faculty research, including supplies, student assistance and travel.
- Small Seed Grants up to \$3,000 supported research and development activities that would enhance the ability of faculty and staff to apply for external funding, particularly to federal and state agencies and national foundations.
- Large Grants up to \$10,000 supported research and development activities to enhance the ability of faculty and staff to apply for external funding also, but could be used to support larger and longer-term projects which might require more than one investigator. Projects that involved multiple investigators and/or were multi-disciplinary were strongly encouraged. These funds were also available to support faculty and staff interested in developing larger, institutional level projects such as the NSF's Math and Science Partnership (MSP), which require the development of external partnerships.
- The Regents Innovation Fund supported applied research projects with commercial applications in any field with funding up to \$10,000.

Please continue to let us know how Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) can help you advance research, scholarship and creative activity.

– Christy Twait is Assistant Provost for Research and Sponsored Programs.

Next Year's Common Read

“The American Way of Eating”

For the past three years, the faculty members of UNI's First-Year Cornerstone course have collaborated with the Reaching for Higher Ground (www.uni.edu/higherground) project in selecting a common read for first-year students in the course. With common read selections such as *Zeitoun* by Dave Eggers (for the 2010-11 topic of “Community after 9/11”) and *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson (for the 2011-12 topic of “In Search of an American Dream”), the committee selecting a book for the 2013-14 Higher Ground topic of “Food Matters,” had a challenging task of choosing a common read that would engage students and work well in tying the Higher Ground topic into the Cornerstone course.

A committee made up of 20 faculty members, staff, students, alumni and community members solicited possible book nominations from the university community, and narrowed down the list created to five top nominations. After discussing each of the choices, the committee selected the New York Times bestseller, entitled *The American Way of Eating: Undercover at Walmart, Applebees, Farm Fields, and the Dinner Table* by award-winning journalist, Tracie McMillan. To write her book, McMillan did ethnographic undercover work in multiple food industries, chronicling her own experience as a produce picker in California, produce seller in Michigan and kitchen food preparer in New York City.

“Fearlessly reported and beautifully written, The American Way of Eating goes beyond statistics and culture wars to deliver a book that is fiercely honest, strikingly intelligent, and compulsively readable. In making the simple case that—city or country, rich or poor—everyone wants good food, McMillan guarantees that talking about dinner will never be the same again.” (amazon.com)

Building on the success of bringing the author of the common read to campus, Tracie McMillan has been invited to campus for October 2013, to give a public lecture, talk with Cornerstone students and help prepare for the adaptation of the common read into a UNI Main Stage production as part of the Strayer-Wood Theatre season which is set to premiere in the same month. The Reaching for Higher Ground committee is also working on lining up speakers and events to illustrate the *Food Matters* topic and to encourage dialogue between members of the university and the larger Cedar Valley community.

The Reaching for Higher Ground committee and the Cornerstone faculty look forward to continued collaboration in the coming year on this important topic, and encourage community members to get a copy of this year's common read, *The American Way of Eating*, to see how they might incorporate the book into their own professional and personal endeavors.

IINspire LSAMP Grant

By Doug Mupasiri

UNI is in its second year of participating in a multi-institutional, multi-state alliance funded by a \$1,879,523 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) under the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program. The long-term goal of this project is “to double the number of underrepresented minority students (URMs) graduating in STEM fields and have a total enrollment that will support a continued increase in future years.” The alliance, called the Iowa Illinois Nebraska STEM Partnership for Innovation in Research and Education (IINspire) LSAMP, consists of 16 higher education institutions, including Iowa’s three Regents universities, seven baccalaureate granting private colleges and six two-year colleges. To meet this long-term goal, several specific objectives have been developed among the collaborating alliance partners. These objectives include: “coordinating community based recruiting practices, identifying and recruiting the cohort of students currently in our institutions who have the aptitude and interest in STEM but do not enter college with the intent of pursuing a STEM career, initiating early and sustained initiatives for students to transition from high school into either 2-year or 4-year colleges, working to grow a faculty peer group to develop inclusive pedagogy and mentoring as well as to train alliance and external partner mentors of research interns on mentoring skills.”

Over the past year, UNI’s focus has been on identifying URM students who are already on campus and enrolled in STEM disciplines to provide them with the academic, social, financial and professional development support to help them succeed. A committee made up of the CHAS associate dean, Dr. Kavita Dhanwada, the director of the Academic Learning Center (ALC), Inez Murtha, the math coordinator in the ALC, Latricia Hylton, and LSAMP campus director and head of the department of

mathematics, Dr. Douglas Mupasiri, are leading UNI’s efforts. The committee has developed an implementation plan for LSAMP on our campus, developed guidelines and requirements students must meet to qualify to receive direct LSAMP financial support, and formalized a selection process for choosing LSAMP scholars (students receiving direct financial support from LSAMP) from the pool of qualified students. This year, we have designated seven students as LSAMP fellows. Each fellow receives a \$1,000 stipend in their first year; this award is renewable and increases to \$1,500 in subsequent years if students remain in good standing. Requirements for LSAMP fellows include biweekly meetings with Latricia Hylton for updates on academics, attending STEM focused seminars/workshops on and off-campus, meeting with STEM faculty on campus to talk about research opportunities and visiting/touring local industry and small STEM focused businesses. The goal of the UNI LSAMP committee is to encourage our current and future LSAMP fellows to broaden their perspectives, think “big” and get out of their “comfort zone” to engage in the many STEM activities and careers that are available.

We are excited to be involved in a project that has the potential of having a lasting impact on the lives of the UNI students. The project aligns with the goals of the Governor’s STEM initiative, the UNI strategic plan, the Academic Affairs strategic plan and the CHAS Strategic plan, which all aim to increase student success, prepare students for an increasingly diverse and competitive global economy, and contribute to the workforce development of the state of Iowa and the nation. We are off to a good start and look forward to delivering on the promise of the LSAMP program.

– Doug Mupasiri is head of the Department of Mathematics.

Peter Seldin:

Guest Speaker for the Fall Faculty Workshop, August 22, 2013

UNI welcomes Dr. Peter Seldin, our guest speaker and facilitator for an interactive workshop on the effective evaluation of teaching at the 2013 Fall Faculty Workshop. Mark your calendar!

Dr. Seldin is Distinguished Professor of Management at Pace University, Pleasantville, New York. Formerly an academic dean, department chair and professor of management, he is a specialist in the evaluation and development of faculty and administrative performance, and has been a consultant on higher education issues to more than 350 colleges and universities throughout the United States and in 45 countries around the world. His recent well-received books include, among others: *The Teaching Portfolio (4th ed)* (2010, with J. Elizabeth Miller and Clement Seldin); *The Academic Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Documenting Teaching, Research, and Service* (2009, with J. Elizabeth Miller); *Evaluating Faculty Performance* (2006, with associates); *The Teaching Portfolio (3rd ed.)* (2004); *The Administrative Portfolio* (2002, with Mary Lou Higgerson); *Changing Practices in Evaluating Teaching* (1999). He has contributed numerous articles on faculty evaluation, the teaching profession, student ratings, teaching improvement, educational practice and academic culture to such publications as *The New York Times*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Change Magazine*.

Watch for details on the Provost's website for multiple exciting Faculty Development Opportunities:

- **Cornerstone Course Teaching**
- **Continuing Education eLearning Initiative**
- **Diversity Curriculum Infusion**
- **Pre-Tenure Fellowship**
- **Service Learning Initiative**
- **Sustainability Opportunities**
- **Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning**

www.uni.edu/provost

The screenshot shows the website for the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost at the University of Northern Iowa. The navigation menu includes: Home, About The Provost, Administrative Leadership, News and Updates, Diversity, Curriculum Review, Employment Opportunities, Resources, and Strategic Plan. The main content area has a 'Welcome to the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost!' message, followed by a paragraph about educational opportunities. Below that is a section for the 'MWOne AA Award' with a 'Read more about MWOne AA Award' link. At the bottom, there is an 'Administrative Development Vacancy Announcement' with a 'Read more' link. On the right side, there is a portrait of Provost Gibson and a 'Meet Provost Gibson' section with a 'Read more...' link.

Sustainability Dialogue & Action: *Academia & Community Looking to the Future*

By William M. Stigliani

On April 12-13, the Symposium on *Sustainability Dialogue & Action: Academia & Community Looking to the Future* attracted an audience numbering about 200, including students from the three Regents universities, Luther and Wartburg colleges. The Symposium featured three keynote speakers, panel discussions, sessions spanning numerous topics of sustainability, tours of ongoing sustainability projects on the UNI campus and poster sessions.



L to R: *Majora Carter, Provost Gibson, Andres Edwards, and Winona LaDuke.*

Keynote speaker Andres Edwards spoke on the connections between global ecological challenges and personal well-being. Second Keynote Speaker Majora Carter shared her visionary insights for transforming poverty-stricken inner cities, where a citizen's best hope is to escape to a more promising place, into spaces where people desire to live through achievement of sustainable living goals. Third keynote speaker Winona La Duke spoke about wisdom gained from the Native American philosophy of "Seventh Generation Thinking," where elders make decisions with careful consideration of how those decisions will affect future generations.

Parallel sessions addressed areas such as sustainable citizenry, activism by faith communities, leadership, grassroots coalition building, student success stories, sustainable spaces, the economic case for sustainability, the local foods movement, K-12 curriculum and UNI professors' experiences in teaching sustainability.

The Symposium was waste-free, with composting or recycling of all foods, eating utensils, cups and plates.

Event sponsors included the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost (www.uni.edu/provost), the Recycling & Reuse Technology Transfer Center (www.rttc.com), the Office of Sustainability (www.vpaf.uni.edu/energy), the University of Iowa Sustainable Citizens Program, and the Healthy Cedar Valley Coalition (www.healthycedarvalleycoalition.org).

– *William M. Stigliani is Senior Policy Advisor at UNI's Center for Energy & Environmental Education and Professor of Chemistry.*

Department of Technology Update

By James Maxwell

The Department of Technology (formerly known as Industrial Technology) is a part of the College of Humanities, Arts & Sciences (www.uni.edu/chas) at the University of Northern Iowa. The department, with current enrollment of approximately 410 undergraduate and graduate students as of spring 2013, prepares students majoring in the following areas:

- Construction Management
- Electrical Engineering Technology
- Graphic Technologies
- Manufacturing Technology
 - Emphasis: Advanced Manufacturing
 - Emphasis: Design
 - Emphasis: Metal Casting
- Technology Education
- Technology Management
- Master of Science in Technology
- Doctor of Technology

The programs in the Department of Technology remain relevant. According to the Iowa Workforce Development report in June 2012, “fifty percent of all jobs in Iowa require mid-level specialist training. However, only 33 percent of the workforce is qualified to fill these positions.” The Department of Technology offers students an opportunity to excel in manufacturing and industrial careers.

Nearly 91% of the students enrolled in the Department of Technology programs are from Iowa. Approximately 90% of Department of Technology graduates remain in Iowa to begin their careers in the industrial and manufacturing areas. Another 5% of those graduating from these programs will continue on in their pursuit of higher education.

Over the course of the last year, the department has set forth and implemented many new initiatives. The Master of Science in Technology and the Doctor of Technology degrees were restructured and saved from cuts at the university. These programs are slated to be provided with a distance education option as well as face-to-face. An involved and concerned Executive Advisory Board has been developed and is actively involved with the department. The outdated articulation agreements with community colleges have been made current and new relationships have been established. We are currently pursuing articulation agreements with community colleges in Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Department of Technology has held open house events for community colleges as well as high school teachers, administrators and counselors. The departmental website has been updated and all the departmental collateral is synergistic, current and relevant. The Department of Technology is moving and shaking. Catch us if you can!

– James Maxwell is head of the Department of Technology.

International Meeting of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion

July 10-14, 2013



UNI will host the annual meeting of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion (COV&R). Founded in 1990, COV&R is an international organization dedicated to the exploration, criticism and development of René Girard's mimetic model of the relationship between violence and religion in the genesis and maintenance of culture. With half of the COV&R membership hailing from outside North America; virtually every country in Europe as well as Brazil, Japan, India and Australia will be represented at the conference.

The theme of this year's conference is "**A Land between Two Rivers: Space, Place, and Mimetic Theory.**" Conference participants, whose fields span the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, will reflect together on changes in our relationship to the land, of which the transformation of Iowa from prairie to a location for industrial agriculture is emblematic. Conference participants will consider how mimetic theory can illuminate ecological issues, contribute to environmental ethics and inform our reflections on interconnections among organisms and varied forms of life.

Laura Jackson (UNI), Mark Wallace (Swarthmore College) and Whitney Bauman (Florida International University) will be keynote speakers. Papers and seminars on other areas of mimetic theory will be included on the conference program. A number of UNI colleges and departments as well as the Office of the Provost are sponsors. Martha Reineke (martha.reineke@uni.edu), Department of Philosophy and World Religions, is the conference coordinator.

Daryl Smith--Tallgrass Prairie Center ▲

"Humanity is
more than ever
the author of its
own fall because it
has become able to
destroy its world."

-René Girard

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