

11-2014

## The Update, October [November] 2014

University of Northern Iowa. College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences.

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2014  
2015

# THE UPDATE

College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences  
**UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

## NATURE'S TOOLBOX Exhibition at the UNI Gallery of Art

This fall, the UNI Gallery of Art presented *Nature's Toolbox: Biodiversity, Art and Invention*, which opened at the start of classes and ran through October 18. The exhibition was organized by Art Works For Change, Inc., with generous support from The Nathan Cummings Foundation; the National Endowment for the Arts; The Adobe Foundation; and the Sprint

Foundation. At UNI this presentation was made possible by the UNI College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences, where we are commemorating five years of combined colleges. Dean Joel Haack lent great enthusiasm and leadership for this project from the very beginning.

*Nature's Toolbox* is a traveling contemporary art exhibition curated by Randy Jayne Rosenberg, Executive Director of Art Works For Change and contains an international cast of artists such as Isabella Rossellini (Italy), Katja Loher (Switzerland),

Antonio Briceño (Venezuela), Xu Zhen (China), and Miriam Wosk (U.S.). The purpose of the exhibition is to show that by harnessing nature's most brilliant ideas, we can improve the quality of human life. Curator Rosenberg says, "Science provides facts while art tells stories," adding, "The need for environmental stories has never been greater — people are hungry for positive images of the future. The stories at the heart of *Nature's Toolbox* offer fresh solutions, making it clear that humanity is itself an essential piece of this system.

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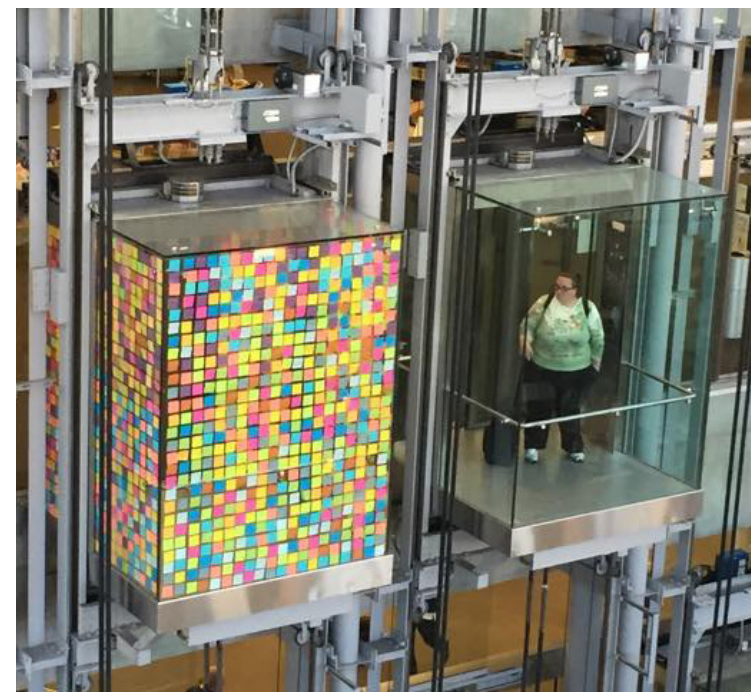
### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The previous issue of *The Update* included a misspelling of Dr. Catherine MacGillivray's name. We apologize for the error. The spelling has been corrected in the electronic version at [www.uni.edu/chas/news-events/chas-update/past-issues](http://www.uni.edu/chas/news-events/chas-update/past-issues).

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## MUSIC

- Bill Shepherd, instructor of music, will release the second Christmas CD by his Bill Shepherd Big Band. The album will be available for purchase in time for the holidays and features performances by many School of Music faculty artists. Contact [william.shepherd@uni.edu](mailto:william.shepherd@uni.edu) for more information.

- Robert Washut, Professor of Music, was jazz composer-in-residence at the University of Montana from Oct. 22-24 and the University of New Mexico from Oct. 27-29. Part of the University of New Mexico residency included two newly commissioned original jazz compositions from the University of New Mexico Jazz Band I and the Eldorado (Albuquerque, NM) High School Jazz Band I. These pieces were premiered on Oct. 29.

- Angeleita Floyd, Professor of Flute, hosted the "UNI Flute Day with Greg Pattillo," on Saturday, Oct. 11. The day of fluting featured a beat boxing workshop with Greg Pattillo, and sessions directed by Dr. Floyd including a Flute Choir Reading Session, "Toys for Tooters, Tips for Fluters" workshop, and a Flute Choir Lobby Concert performed before the wcfssymphony concert in the evening. Dr. Floyd also recently enjoyed a one-day residency at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill, where she gave private lessons, a PowerPoint presentation on "Geoffrey Gilbert's Transformational Teaching," and a Flute Master Class for Professor John Thorne's flute studio.

## PHYSICS

- The University of Northern Iowa has been recognized as a top producer of graduates with a bachelor's degree in physics by the American Physical Society.

UNI ranks No. 13 on the list of undergraduate physics degrees given at masters-level universities nationally for the years 2010 to 2012. There are currently 62 undergraduate physics majors in UNI's program.

## ART

- Department Head Jeffery Byrd recently presented *Symphony #4 (Beautiful Notes for SLC)* at the Salt Lake City Library's Performance Art Festival. For two days, Byrd wrote beautiful words in many languages on Post-It notes while riding in the library's glass elevator. Library patrons were asked to share their beautiful words as well.

## COMMUNICATION STUDIES

- *Sons of Jacob Synagogue*, a documentary directed by Francesca Soans, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, and Bob Neymeyer, was competitively selected to screen at the Wild Rose Independent Film Festival in November 2014. The film features original music composed by Rebecca Burkhardt, professor of music, sound mix by Tom Barry, audio engineer, and motion graphics by Electronic Media students Brandon Poll and Grant Atherton. Electronic Media students also assisted with videography and editing.

## LANGUAGES & LITERATURE

- Siegrun Wildner, Professor in the Department of Languages and Literatures, presented "The Final Days of the Nazi Concentration Camp Mauthausen: Eyewitness Testimony as Documentary Theater" on Oct. 3 at the Annual European Studies Conference hosted by the University of Nebraska at Omaha.



**Guest Artist Recital: New Third Stream Quartet**  
**Thursday, November 6, 2014, 6 p.m.**  
**Davis Hall, GBPAC**

Visiting ensemble New Third Stream Quartet will present a saxophone recital. The ensemble features world-renowned musicians and educators Rick VanMatre, James Bunte, Peter Sommer and James Romain. For more information, visit [www.newthirdstream.weebly.com](http://www.newthirdstream.weebly.com). *This event is free and open to the public.*

**UNI Children's Choir Concert**  
**Thursday, November 6, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Bengtson Auditorium, Russell Hall**

The UNI Children's Choir will offer their fall/winter concert under the direction of Michelle Swanson. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**UNI Horn Choir**  
**Thursday, November 6, 2014, 8 p.m.**  
**Davis Hall, GBPAC**

Under the direction of faculty artist and professor Yu-Ting Su, the UNI Horn Choir will offer a fall recital. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**National Association of Teachers of Singing Regional Auditions**  
**Friday-Saturday, November 7-8, 2014**  
**Various times and locations**

The UNI School of Music will host these annual auditions for exceptional vocalists. *For more information, please contact [Korey.Barrett@uni.edu](mailto:Korey.Barrett@uni.edu).*

**Guest Artist Recital: Deanna Hahn-Little, flute**  
**Monday, November 10, 2014, 6 p.m.**  
**Davis Hall, GBPAC**

Visiting artist Deanna Hahn-Little will present a flute recital. Deanna, professor of flute at Middle Tennessee State University, holds a Bachelor of Music degree in education from the University of Northern Iowa, a Master of Music degree in flute performance and the Doctor of Music degree from Indiana University. As an active performer, Little is a member of the Stones River Chamber Players, the MTSU Faculty Wind Quartet and the F4 Winds Flute Quartet. She has performed with the Nashville Symphony, the Nashville Opera, the Nashville Ballet, the Nashville Chamber Orchestra, Huntsville Symphony (AL), Sewanee Symphony Orchestra (TN), and Evansville Philharmonic (IN). *This event is free and open to the public.*

**UNI Symphonic Band**  
**Tuesday, November 11, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Great Hall, GBPAC**

Under the direction of UNI School of Music professor and conductor S. Daniel Galyen, the Symphonic Band will offer its fall concert. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**UNI Student Chamber Music Concert**  
**Wednesday, November 12, 2014, 6 p.m.**  
**Davis Hall, GBPAC**

Coordinated by UNI School of Music professor of horn Tina Su and professor of cello Jonathan Chenoweth, students will offer a chamber music concert. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**Spotlight Series Concert: Instrumental Concerto Competition**  
**Wednesday, November 12, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Great Hall, GBPAC**

This showcase features talented student finalists competing for the title of Instrumental Concerto Competition winner, and the opportunity to perform as soloist with a premiere School of Music large ensemble in the spring. *This event is ticketed. For tickets, call (319) 273-4TIX.*

**UNI Jazz Panthers & Jazz Band III**  
**Thursday, November 13, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Bengtson Auditorium, Russell Hall**

The UNI Jazz Panthers, under the direction of Robert Washut, will offer a fall concert with UNI Jazz Band III. Repertoire and soloists to be announced. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**Faculty & Guest Artist Recital: Trio 826**  
**Friday, November 14, 2014, 6 p.m.**  
**Davis Hall, GBPAC**

Featuring UNI School of Music faculty artist Julia Bullard and guest artists violinist Susanna Klein, and cellist Hannah Holman, Trio 826 will present a recital. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**UNI Choral Enrichment Celebration**  
**Friday, November 14, 2014, 6:15 p.m.**  
**Great Reading Room, Seerley Hall**

Conductor and faculty artist John Len Wiles will coordinate this new event celebrating the choral music program at UNI. *For more details, contact [john.wiles@uni.edu](mailto:john.wiles@uni.edu).*

**Panther Marching Band Concert**  
**Monday, November 17, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Great Hall, GBPAC**

Join us for a historic event as the largest Panther Marching Band in UNI's history appears on the Great Hall stage in the Gallagher-Bluedorn! This concert will serve as a fundraiser for the band's upcoming tour to London, England, to perform in the famous London New Year's Day Parade. *For more information, contact conductor Danny Galyen ([danny.galyen@uni.edu](mailto:danny.galyen@uni.edu)). This event is ticketed. For tickets, call 319-273-4TIX.*

**UNITUBA Concert**  
**Wednesday, November 19, 2014, 8 p.m.**  
**Davis Hall, GBPAC**

Under the direction of UNI School of Music professor of tuba Jeffrey Funderburk, the UNITUBA Ensembles will offer a fall recital. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**Northern Iowa Wind Symphony**  
**Thursday, November 20, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Great Hall, GBPAC**

Under the direction of UNI School of Music professor and conductor Ronald Johnson, the Wind Symphony will offer its fall concert. *This event is free and open to the public.*

**UNI Opera Scenes Performance**  
**Friday, November 21, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Bengtson Auditorium, Russell Hall**

UNI Opera students, under the direction of Mitra Sadeghpour and vocal coach Korey Barrett, will present an opera scenes performance. *This event is free and open to the public.*

# SEE THIS SPACE?

## IT'S UP TO YOU TO FILL IT!

We, the creative wizards at CHAS Promotions, want to showcase all of the big things happening in your department. Are you, a fellow faculty member, or a student doing something noteworthy? Send it our way! Show off your own writing talents or leave it to us.

Here's how you can contribute:

### Option 1: Department News

Send us a brief description of an event (lectures, awards, publications, and other accomplishments) to be included in the Department News section of *The Update*.

### Option 2: Write an Article

Send us an article (around 300 words) describing the event and participants.

### Option 3: Suggest an Article

Send us a brief description of the event and let us know who to contact for more information.

[CHASUPDATE@UNI.EDU](mailto:CHASUPDATE@UNI.EDU)



# NATURE'S TOOLBOX

## Exhibition at the UNI Gallery of Art

continued from cover

By understanding the relationships, not only can we save nature, we can save ourselves, too.”

Several smaller exhibitions were offered in conjunction with *Nature's Toolbox*, most notably *String Theory and the Superconducting Super Collider Series*, which featured large-scale, abstract paintings by Vermont-based artist and writer Lucinda Mason. The exhibition was dedicated to the late C. Clifton Chancey, head of the UNI Department of Physics. In addition, the Gallery presented a Showcase exhibition titled *Scientists Collect*, which included artwork made by, or collected by, scientists and mathematicians at UNI. Dr. Laura Jackson and Art Gallery Director Darrell Taylor curated the exhibition.

Four scholars whose interests straddle both art and science

were chosen to speak through the run of the show: Ned Dodington, Founder and Director of *The Expanded Environment* ([www.animalarchitecture.org](http://www.animalarchitecture.org)); Plant Ecologist and Director of the UNI Tallgrass Prairie Center Dr. Laura Jackson; UNI Art Educator Dr. Wendy Miller; UNI Graphic Design Professor Philip Fass; and Molecular Cellular Physiologist Carl Thurman, Ph.D. Each speaker brought unique perspectives to bear, everything from lily hybridization to architectural design to finding creative inspiration in your native ecosystem.

These events represent the efforts of the UNI Department of Art and the Gallery in their ongoing commitment to provide quality art exhibitions that bolster aesthetic and academic inquiry.

Submitted by Darrell Taylor



# ARTWORKS FOR CHANGE



Photos by Bryan Van Donslear

# UNI GALLERY OF ART AWARDED \$32,500 GRANT

## by Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has awarded a \$32,500 grant to the UNI Gallery of Art. The gallery will use the grant funds to support an object-by-object survey of the works on paper in the holdings of the UNI Permanent Art Collection.

This survey fulfills the next highest priority goal in the Collection's Long-Range Conservation Plan. The product achieved at the conclusion of the survey will be more than 2,200 prioritized, item-specific reports and 30 in-depth treatment proposals for significant art objects. Two highly qualified paper conservators from the Midwest Art Conservation Center (MACC) will work on-site at the UNI Art Collection storage

facility providing hands-on service learning for art history students and the gallery's student staff who will assist them as they evaluate cherished works of art. At the end of their stay, the MACC conservators will offer a hinging and handling workshop for interested faculty and students.

“Our grants are highly competitive. The Institute of Museum and Library Services enlists hundreds of library and museum professionals throughout the United States to review grant applications and make recommendations on projects most worthy of funding,” said IMLS director Susan H. Hildreth. “Receiving a grant from IMLS is a significant achievement, and we congratulate the UNI Gallery

of Art for being among the 2014 IMLS museum grantees.”

IMLS museum grants support a wide variety of projects that create learning experiences, strengthen communities, care for collections and provide broad public access.

According to Darrell Taylor, overseer of the UNI Permanent Art Collection, “We are the proud stewards of an amazing collection of art objects, and it is our duty to preserve them for the educational and cultural objectives of this institution. This project will benefit not only UNI, but also the wider northeast Iowa-area population and university alumni who buttress our efforts through scholarship, donation and guidance.”

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. A complete list of museum recipients is available on the IMLS website at [www.imls.gov/2014MuseumList](http://www.imls.gov/2014MuseumList). For information about IMLS museum grant programs, visit [www.imls.gov/applicants/available\\_grants.aspx](http://www.imls.gov/applicants/available_grants.aspx).

For additional information, contact Taylor at 319-273-6134 or [darrell.taylor@uni.edu](mailto:darrell.taylor@uni.edu).

## Dean's Awards

### Teaching Excellence in Departmental Programs

Mary H. McDade  
Department of Biology

### Teaching Excellence in Departmental Programs

Angela N. Burda  
Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

### Excellence in Service

Jeffrey L. Funderburk  
School of Music

### Excellence in Teaching in the Liberal Arts Core

James W. Demastes  
Department of Biology

### Excellence in Research, Scholarship, or Creative Activity

Syed Kirmani  
Department of Mathematics

### Excellence in Research, Scholarship, or Creative Activity

Robert. P. Washut, Jr.  
School of Music

## FACULTY AWARDS

### University Awards

#### James Lubker Faculty Research Award

Carl Thurman  
Professor of Biology

#### Regents Awards for Faculty Excellence

Angeleita Floyd  
School of Music

#### Excellence in Liberal Arts Core Teaching Award

John D. Walton Burnight  
Department of Philosophy and World Religions

#### MidWestOne UNIque Academic Advising Award

Jennifer Cooley  
Department of Languages and Literatures





## DR. WENDY MILLER SELECTED AS Iowa's Outstanding Higher Education Art Educator

Andrew McCormick, a colleague of Miller's, said, "Wendy is a tireless advocate for her students and for the broader field of art education across the state. She is a constant source for new innovation and energy in the field of art education from her vantage point in higher education and does a fantastic job of sharing that energy and research with her public school

colleagues. Wendy has presented at the state and national levels for NAEA (National Art Education Association) and is up to date on all the current developments in art education. She embeds best practices in her classroom while collaborating with local schools to give her pre-service teachers ample amounts of 'real world' experiences."

One of Dr. Miller's students, Melissa Airy, commented not only on Miller's excellent classroom instruction, but highlighted her community efforts as well. Miller has developed an after school art club to serve homeless

youth. This helps young people recognize their own abilities, builds confidence, and provides a positive experience through art endeavors. Miller has also worked with women in correctional facilities and homeschooled the gifted and talented. Her work and passion for arts education expands far beyond the traditional classroom settings.

Jeffery Byrd, head of the Department of Art at UNI credits Dr. Miller with providing strength in the art education program at the university. Her interests in social justice issues and her advocacy of arts education both within traditional classroom settings and within the broader community have contributed to the preparedness and maturity of her art education students.

Dr. Miller reflected on her work, stating, "It is wonderful to be surrounded by such creative artists, talented teachers, and researchers at the University of Northern Iowa and in the Cedar Valley. Every year,

I get more excited to collaborate with new students, teachers, and children throughout Iowa on new art projects and to continue to share my passion for teaching and art making."

Dr. Wendy Miller is helping to ensure that new art teachers are fully prepared to be highly competent, successful educators in the 21st century. Her advocacy for and practice of arts education in schools and in the broader community help keep creativity a vital part of education in Iowa.

"AEI award winners are fantastic teachers that go way beyond doing an excellent job in the classroom," said Noel. "Dr. Wendy Miller is an example of this."



Halloween House  
Photos by Roland Ferric



Halloween House  
Photos by Roland Ferric

## SPOOKY STUFF UNI Chemistry & Biochemistry Host Annual Halloween House Event

The annual UNI Chemistry and Biochemistry Halloween House was held on Friday, Oct. 24 in McCollum Science Hall. This year, the UNI Chapter of the American Chemical Society (ACS) partnered with The Delta Iota Chapter of the Beta Beta Beta Biological Honor Society, Gamma Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon Earth Science Honor Society and the UNI Physics Club. The event featured nine spooky science-themed stations, including "Creepy Crawlies," "The Devil's Den," "Frankenstein's Lab," "The Mummies' Yummies," "The Pirate's Cove," the "Pumpkin Patch," the "Skeleton Graveyard," the "Witches' Lair" and "Wizards and the Four Elements."

"My favorite part is seeing all of the kids come through McCollum and get excited about science," said Kristin Staude, Co-President

of the UNI Chapter of ACS and a third year volunteer at the Halloween House. "They ask questions and want to know what is happening during the various demonstrations."

This year, many student organizations partnered together, creating demonstrations that represented all areas of the sciences offered at UNI.

"There are so many types of sciences represented and being taught to kids. It shows kids that there are more branches to science than the obvious! It also shows kids that no matter what type of science you're in they're all related somehow!" Brita Berry, President of Sigma Gamma Epsilon, said.

Berry explained that Sigma Gamma Epsilon joined the Halloween



House event in an effort to branch out in on-campus activities. SGE planned the activity "Wizards and the Four Elements," which included a tornado demo, a stream bed table, and astronomy globes.

"Collaborating with other student organizations has really allowed this event to grow over the past few years," Staude said. "It allows us as student organizations an opportunity to work together to put on this event for our community. Partnering with the other organizations allows us to host more rooms and provide more opportunities for the kids to learn about the different branches of natural science."

In addition to providing opportunities for student involvement, the event also facilitates learning and helps to foster an interest in the sciences through engaging activities.

"The goal of Halloween House is to provide a safe, fun, and educational Halloween experience to children and families. We do this through chemistry demonstration shows. Halloween House is held in conjunction with National Chemistry Week to promote chemistry," Sarah Eikenberry, Co-President of the ACS said.

"I am most excited to share our passion and interest in science with other people and children. We are always amazed at the amount of people who come to the event! We continue to hear positive things about Halloween House and how much people enjoy it," Eikenberry said.





## VANESSA ESPINOZA

### Department of Languages and Literatures

Espinoza also works to give back to her home community and has established the Vanessa

Espinoza Scholarship, which she awards to seniors from Columbus Community High School. “The purpose of this scholarship is to recognize students who have overcome adversity,” said Espinoza. “I was a student who struggled personally and academically in high school. I don’t believe that grades define you.” Instead, she looks for other markers of quality character, such as letters of recommendation and a personal essay.

Coming to UNI was largely influenced by a specific faculty member said Espinoza. “I definitely have to thank Dr. Gabriela Olivares,” she said. “I met her during my orientation and she immediately made me feel like I belonged here.” Espinoza also contributes a portion of her success to Jennifer Cooley, professor in the Department of Languages and Literatures. “She is not only my advisor, she is my mentor and role model. She has opened doors for me. She is taking me to Arizona in November to a conference. Dr. Cooley encouraged me to become a McNair Scholar and this summer she worked with me on my research. I would have never thought I would have worked with

a professor conducting research,” Espinoza said.

After graduation, Espinoza hopes to teach in a bilingual school or a school with a large amount of diversity. “I want to make a difference in a student’s life,” she said. Further in the future, she plans to return to college and pursue her PhD and eventually become a university professor.

*By Tanner Sandrock*

“Since I was in first grade I knew I wanted to be a teacher,” said Vanessa Espinoza, senior majoring in Spanish Teaching. “In high school, I started a literacy program for Latino adults. I became very interested in Spanish after that and decided that’s what I wanted to teach.”

During her time at UNI, Espinoza has taken on many different roles. Currently, she is the vice-president of Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Hispanic Honor Society; she works as a tutor at the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI), helping Burmese refugees; and she actively contributes her time and talent to Art for El Salvador, an organization that uses art in all forms as means to support and uplift the impoverished communities in El Salvador. In the past, she has worked at the Center for Social and Behavioral Research, as well as toughing it with Camp Adventure in Germany.



## MIKAYLA LIEN

### Department of Communication Studies

the activities associated with her interest in Public Relations.

“As the Iowa Dairy Princess, it is my responsibility to promote dairy products to consumers in Iowa. I get to travel all across Iowa throughout the upcoming year to give speeches at banquets, community events, and state-wide events held by the Midwest Dairy Association. I have already worked at cow shows, and have met with students at the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo. Other fun events include throwing the first pitch at an Iowa Cubs Baseball game, presenting ‘Fuel Up to Play 60’ to students at Kinnick Stadium, and meeting the governor of Iowa.”

Through the competition, Lien was also given the opportunity to give a presentation at the Iowa State Fair.

“All of the contestants completed an application form answering questions and giving facts about the farms they live on. At the contest, the other 12 contestants and I had numerous activities to participate in, including: a ‘fishbowl’ question, a dairy presentation, a group interview session, an essay contest, and finally, an individual interview with the judges. The judges selected my dairy presentation to

Mikayla Lien is the sixth generation on her family’s dairy farm in Calmar, Iowa. She is currently a freshman in the Department of Communication Studies and plans to major in Public Relations with a minor in Interactive Digital Studies. Recently, she was named Iowa Dairy Princess.

“I decided to run for Iowa Dairy Princess because I knew it would be a very rewarding experience,” Lien said. “I take great pride in having the opportunity to represent over 1,400 dairy farmers in Iowa.”

Lien was crowned the Winneshiek County Dairy Princess in 2013, which made it possible for her to compete at the state level. She stated that her dad milks 100 cows on their farm in Calmar – primarily Holstein with a few Jerseys.

In her role as Iowa Dairy Princess, she performs many of

win, so I had the opportunity to present it at the Iowa State Fair during the coronation ceremony,” she said.

Some of her future goals include traveling through university programs like Study Abroad and Camp Adventure. She would also like to complete a Public Relations internship in the field of agriculture prior to graduation.

“After graduation with my B.A., I would like to work for Midwest Dairy Association or a similar-type organization within Iowa’s agriculture industry. Working for Midwest Dairy Association would allow me to continue making an impact on the dairy industry,” Lien said.

In her first semester, she is taking primarily liberal arts core classes. She is currently enrolled in Exploring Communication Studies with Dr. Paul Siddens, in which she is learning about the opportunities available for Communications majors.

“I am loving my first semester at UNI, and I am looking forward to the rest of my experience as a panther!” Lien said.



## ANDREW VAN FLEET

Department of Art

Andrew Van Fleet graduated from UNI in 1998 with a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art with an emphasis in Graphic Design and a General Business Minor. He is now the Managing Partner at Visual Logic, a user experience (UX) design firm in Waterloo, Iowa. The company crafts user experiences for clients in the agriculture, military and consumer product spaces.

“Essentially our job is to make technology interfaces easy for people to use,” Van Fleet explained.

He began his studies as a biology major, but did not find it to be as engaging as he had hoped. He cited two primary reasons for his decision to switch to graphic design.

First, “the ability to ‘undo’ design decisions with the stroke of a keyboard unlocked a lot of creative freedom for me,” he said. “Though I love traditional art mediums such as painting and drawing, there is more commitment to artistic decisions, which can slow down the design process.”

Additionally, “the likelihood of obtaining a career in graphic design was appealing. I didn’t want to be a starving artist.”

His current duties fall primarily under the categories of business and design, which correspond to the academic areas he concentrated in at UNI. On the business side, he oversees hiring and training, works to stimulate company culture, manages finances, develops client relationships, cultivates the internship program, and “a bunch of other boring business stuff that has to be done by someone, so it falls on my plate.”

In terms of design responsibilities, he said, “I manage UX projects, often working on the higher-level strategy aspects of the projects with the rest of the team, and occasionally I find myself immersed in Illustrator or Photoshop. Those days are like winning the lottery.”

Overall, he enjoys aspects of both varieties of work.

“I love the creative freedom I have to do the things I want to do,” he said. “Some days that’s designing and sometimes that’s thinking up creative solutions to a business challenge.”

Visual Logic works with a wide variety of clients, solving many unique problems.

“I like taking on really challenging projects,” Van Fleet said. “Recently, we worked on the User Experience for a handheld device used by the Australian Army to detect non-metallic landmines (plastic IED’s). We had to design the experience for varied conditions so the feedback to the user had to meet the requirements of;

audio, visual and tactile feedback that worked both all together and independently. The tricky part was the tactile-only feedback for ‘black-out’ usage (at night) by soldiers who needed to go undetected while using the device. The innovative outcome from Visual Logic was a huge inventory of all tasks the soldier used the device for, with clear definitions of audio tones, visual cues and tactical vibrations that taught the soldier how to use the device in all the different scenarios.”

Currently, close to ninety percent of Visual Logic’s 22-employee team graduated from UNI. They also provide internships to many UNI students. This semester’s UNI student interns include Ian Tucker, Kelly Cunningham and Mandy Walker.

Van Fleet explained that when searching for interns, “I look for the ability think two-ways at once; design-oriented thinking and strategic-thinking. Then it’s our job to help bring the two thinking styles closer together during their year with us at VLG.”

He is excited to continue building the company through creative innovation, and is looking forward to the many good things to come.

“It’s a great mix of espresso, socializing with the team, ping-pong and working on tough UX problems,” he said. “I can honestly say I absolutely love what I do at VLG.”



## CASSARA HIGGINS

Department of Physics

her professional and academic experiences. “With this club I have been able to attend the National Women in Physics Conference put on by the American Physical Society,” said Higgins.

She was also able to present her research at other conferences around the country. “Last year I attended two conferences to present my research,” she said, “the Annual Argonne Undergraduate Research Symposium in Argonne, Illinois and the Spring National ACS Meeting in Dallas, Texas. Both experiences have greatly influenced my current path. While at Argonne last November, our keynote was a nuclear chemist. After her keynote address I was interested in the field, which led to my application into the National Nuclear Chemistry Summer School.”

Being involved with ACS has also enabled Higgins to give back to her community. “With the ACS club I have participated in community demo shows at local elementary schools,” she said, “as well as our own Family Weekend Magic Show and Halloween House.”

When Higgins isn’t attending a conference or working at a local school, she enjoys getting a little ultimate Frisbee action in with the Ultimate Frisbee Club here on campus. “I never played sports in high school, never mind being able to throw a Frisbee,” she said. “Ultimate is one of my favorite weekly activities. I have made wonderful friends through the club and enjoy traveling around the Midwest a few weekends a semester to play other teams.”

Over the summer Higgins was able to attend the National Nuclear Chemistry Summer School at San Jose State University. “There I learned about different jobs in the Nuclear Sciences,” she said. “Since participating in the program, I have decided I want to attend graduate school for Nuclear Forensics. After graduate school I would be looking to work within the Department of Defense or the Department of Homeland Security.”

During the summer after her freshman year, Higgins began working with Dr. Weeks of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry to develop a technique for creating a specific metal organic framework (MOFs) purely. For her senior thesis, she will be testing the magnetic properties of the MOFs she has created.

“UNI is special as a state university due to its focus on undergraduate education,” said Higgins. “Because I was able to get into a lab right after my freshman year, I was accepted into a program the following summer that primarily accepted senior undergrad students. For my last summer at UNI, I am applying for a research position at a national lab. UNI’s dedication to undergraduate experiences in science research labs has opened doors for me to have several national experiences.”

Cassara Higgins is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Physics as well as a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, with an anticipated graduation of May 2016. She is the Vice President of the UNI Physics Club, Secretary for Women in Physics, Social Chair of the UNI Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society, and plays on the UNI Women’s Ultimate Frisbee team, Monium. She is also participating in research with Dr. Weeks in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, has participated in conferences in her field and attended the National Nuclear Chemistry School at San Jose State University.

As a member of the Physics Club, Higgins has helped to secure funding for community building projects. “Last fall Dr. Kidd and I applied for the Verdian Community Outreach Grant and received \$5000 to purchase hands on demos,” said Higgins. “These demos have been used at the Girl Scouts regional meeting last spring, STEM festivals, and the Halloween House here on campus,” Higgins said.

Her work with Women in Physics has helped her expand



## FUNDING RENEWED

### for UNI's Iowa Farm Bureau STEM Career Outreach Program

The University of Northern Iowa's Iowa Farm Bureau STEM Career Outreach program has been granted funding from Iowa Farm Bureau for years two and three of its operation.

"The program provides outreach conferences for teams of school counselors and teachers to expand their knowledge of STEM careers and training," said Beth Thompson, UNI's STEM outreach coordinator.

Held at community colleges throughout the state, these conferences introduce teachers and counselors to the different STEM career programs offered at two- and four-year colleges. These influential individuals can then guide their interested students onto the STEM career paths.

The conferences also host a panel of local business professionals who provide the educators with insight about the different

STEM job opportunities and what qualities they look for in future employees. The business panels include leaders who work in ag-related careers, such as engineering and renewable energy. They will hold six conferences at community colleges throughout the state.

The pilot grant was funded for 2012-13 and funding for years two and three was based on the successful completion of year one.

## AUDITIONS FOR *AVENUE Q*

December 1 in the Strayer-Wood Theatre

Auditions for *Avenue Q* will take place on Dec. 1, and callbacks will be held on Dec. 2. Both will start at 6:30 p.m. in the Strayer-Wood Theatre.

"*Avenue Q* is a really innovative and wonderful piece of theatre. It's an irreverent take on modern culture, race, and musical theatre itself," said Eric Lange, Artistic Director. "The show uses puppets which interact with human actors and the songs are quite funny and often fairly bawdy. It's a very amusing and challenging show."

"The production is set in New York and it requires a fairly diverse group of actors, and this is where we are hoping to reach out to the university community. It's very important to us that we find actors who will be able to portray some of the characters in this piece with honesty.

While we traditionally practice casting that does not take race into consideration; there are two roles in particular that are problematic for us in terms of the theatre department's student population. One, Christmas Eve, is a female character who is identified as being of Asian heritage in the script and another character, Gary Coleman, is purported to be the former child star and is usually played by an African-American woman."

Those who wish to audition may choose to follow the requirements for Theatre majors listed below OR may do a "cold" audition, in which you will be provided a part to read and asked to sing something familiar.

Theatre majors will have a TOTAL of 90 seconds. Within that time, you will present a contemporary

comedic monologue AND sing 16 bars of a musical theatre selection. An accompanist will be provided.

- You MUST bring your own sheet music
- You should be prepared to sing the whole song upon request from the Music Director.
- You may bring your own accompanist if you wish. No CD's, please.

**IMPORTANT:** the cast for the show will be asked to return to campus on Jan. 7 to participate in three days of music and puppetry workshops. Housing will be provided.

# CULTURE BUILDS COMMUNITY

## ART AFTER WORK

Look forward to your Wednesday evenings by attending the 'Art After Work' concert series: Culture Builds Community. What a great way to unwind after work and get your evening started.

## SCHEDULE

Nov 5	UNI Horn Choir Features ensemble works
Nov 12	Electronic Music FN Electro-Acoustic Ensemble
Nov 19	Young UNI composers' voice works
Dec 3	Saxophone from the streets of Paris UNI Saxophone Quartets

Join us!  
Free concert at  
220 East, 4th St.  
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Series starting Oct. 1, 2014


Doors open at 5:00pm  
Concert: 5:15pm – 6:00pm  
Admission is free!  
Donations appreciated;  
not required





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