As we approach the second half of the semester, I hope everyone has had a chance to get into their academic routines. While attending class, working on assignments, writing your thesis or dissertation, or even a long paper may all be a part of this routine, I wanted to talk about something you should consider along with your academic lives. Think about volunteering. I know many of you might have just thought you don’t have enough time in the day as it is, but consider the benefits of volunteering and hopefully you’ll think about it even if it is just for an hour or two per week. It is very much related to your future career plans.

More and more employers are looking for “volunteer experience” on résumés. Many consider it just as important as paid experience. Why? Several reasons: one is simply for a candidate to “stand out” from other applicants in the crowd. A second reason is that with volunteer experiences it is a great way to build a skill set apart from your professional content skills. Skills that could be highlighted include leadership, planning/coordinating projects, and self-motivation. It can be used to help gain real-world experience that can inform your academic work. It is a way to show your ability to take initiative and that you are willing to be collaborative and have a sense of community. Additionally, it is a great way to build your network if you volunteer in organizations related to your future profession.

However, aside from the many professional development benefits, volunteering can also provide immense personal satisfaction. Achieving tangible results from work that can impact an entire community, organization, or even specific individuals can provide the peace and joy that we all strive for. One final note, many of us have many passions and even though one of those is the profession we may be pursuing, there are many others. Volunteering is a way to explore and pursue those passions that are outside of your current academic road.

Our students, faculty, and staff are involved as volunteers both on campus and in the community. In this issue, UNI Refugee and Immigrant Support and Empowerment (UNI RISE) is featured. Additional opportunities include the Student Leadership Council’s Stop & Serve, an on-campus program, and Volunteer Tuesdays, co-sponsored by the Student Leadership Council and the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley (VCCV). Review www.uni.edu/involvement/slc to learn about these programs plus additional opportunities. VCCV, found online at http://www.vccv.org/, offers year round volunteer opportunities with their 150 member agencies.

Sincerely,

Kavita Dhanwada
Blair Remmers is a first-year graduate student from Sioux Center. He received his Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance degree in December 2014 from Morningside College in Sioux City. Blair is currently pursuing his Master of Arts degree in Voice Performance. He became interested in the field of performance through the guidance of his undergraduate voice teacher, Kate Saulsbury. Blair said, “She opened my eyes to the joy of singing and the intense, emotional spectacle that opera can be.”

Blair’s decision to study at UNI was also influenced by his voice teacher who had studied at UNI. Her experience and testimonial to the virtue of the program in addition to positive accounts from other acquaintances who had been involved in the School of Music and UNI Opera convinced him that UNI was the right fit. As a first-year graduate student and a member of the UNI Opera ensemble, Blair’s experience has been both rewarding and challenging. Regarding his experience at UNI, Blair said, “The most rewarding one-time experience so far was our incredibly successful performance of Susannah. However, I’m rewarded every day with motivated, kind, and talented classmates. It’s been challenging but necessary to begin looking at myself as a business: how do I market myself? What sort of tools do I need to have ready at a moment’s notice? The instructors have been incredibly diligent in helping us prepare for the future.”

Blair plans to apply to Young Artists programs to enhance his résumé and provide the experience and connections necessary to eventually work with larger opera companies after completing his program in May 2017. Further into the future, he also intends to eventually pursue his D.M.A. In his free time, Blair enjoys playing video games and watching shows on Netflix.

Jennifer Bellingtier received her Master of Arts in Psychology with an emphasis in Social Psychology from UNI in December 2006. Prior to receiving her master’s, Jennifer completed her B.A. in Art History from the University of Southern California in 2003. She chose UNI’s MA program in Social Psychology because there were not many terminal master’s programs in social psychology and UNI’s stood out to her as a good choice. Originally from Valencia, CA, Jennifer had only visited Iowa before moving to Cedar Falls. Jennifer said, “To be honest, I thought I would be here for two years and then leave, but Cedar Falls really grew on me. It’s a lovely town, but I never quite adjusted to cold and snow.”

After her graduation from UNI, Jennifer stayed in Cedar Falls and taught classes at UNI, Hawkeye Community College, and Wartburg College. Her adviser, Dr. Carolyn Hildebrandt, recommended that Jennifer teach developmental psychology classes. Through teaching these courses, Jennifer encountered the research that led to her interest in development during adult years. For her doctoral program, she looked for a psychology department that offered a focus on lifespan development.

She chose North Carolina State University (NCSU) because their program examined growth across the lifespan from babies to adults. She found her adviser and all of the graduate faculty to be excellent, and having the opportunity to return to a warmer climate was a welcome change. Of the transition from master’s work to doctoral work, Jennifer said, “My master’s program prepared me well for doctoral work. It was much easier to transition to doctoral work after completing my master’s. I feel like I was able to hit the ground running, and accomplish more than I would have been able to without my experience at UNI.”

While attending NCSU, Jennifer teaches undergraduate psychology courses and works in her adviser’s, Associate Professor of Psychology Shevaun Neupert, Daily Well-Being in Adulthood Lab. Jennifer’s current research examines the impact of an individual’s beliefs about aging on their health and well-being. Jennifer is also working on a project looking into how aging attitudes impact acceptance of new technology.

Jennifer’s work on stressful events and effects on older adults was recently featured in TIME magazine, and can be found at http://time.com/4117072/major-stress-helps-you-weather-smaller-stress/. To learn more about Jennifer’s current research and publications, visit https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jennifer_Bellingtier.
Dr. C. Kyle Rudick is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Studies. He received his B.A. Ed. in Communication Education from Northeastern State University (NSU) in Tahlequah, Oklahoma in 2009. Dr. Rudick initially wanted to pursue a career as a high school speech and debate coach because his influential high school debate coach. However, upon attending NSU, he was encouraged to go on to graduate school by Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford, Associate Professor of Communication and Chair of the Communication and Media Department. He attended West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia for his Master of Arts degree, which he received in 2010, and Southern Illinois University (SIU) in Carbondale, Illinois for his PhD. Dr. Rudick completed his dissertation and graduated from SIU in 2015.

Dr. Rudick was drawn to the UNI Department of Communication Studies after encountering multiple UNI graduate students and professors through conferences. Dr. Rudick had heard positive things about the department as a place with dedicated instructors and strong researchers. Additionally, Dr. Rudick wanted a chance to be involved with the Communication-Theatre Education program for students that want to teach speech, debate, and drama courses for grades 5-12 in Iowa.

Dr. Rudick's research interests concern how power, privilege, and oppression of marginalized groups can happen through communicative practices in everyday life. He intends to use this research to help influence change in the current cultural and political landscape that affects K-12 educators. Dr. Rudick said, “My research is heavily influenced by social justice frameworks, including post-Marxism, feminism, and Critical Race Theory. I am interested in how communication—the manipulation of symbols to make meaning—both reflects and produces systemic inequality. I am currently working on a project with Drs. Greg Bourassa and Scott Ellison, also faculty at UNI, to interrogate the ways that talk about Millennials is symptomatic of a late-capitalist imperative to secure market branding, exclude racial minorities, and undermine worker solidarity.”

Dr. Rudick feels fortunate to have the opportunity to begin his career at UNI. Of the experience so far, Dr. Rudick said, “I am extremely lucky to have met such great colleagues within and beyond my department. UNI has been a great place to start my career and I look forward to many years here!”

---

**UNI Professor’s Research on Stress and Cholesterol Published in Wall Street Journal**

Dr. Christopher Edginton, Professor of Youth Leadership Studies, was featured in *The Wall Street Journal* on February 8, 2016 for his article, “Stress Raises Cholesterol More Than You Think.” In the article, Dr. Edginton's cardiologist, Dr. Stephen Kopecky of the Mayo Clinic, addressed Dr. Edginton's stress as a key factor in his heart health. After scaling back on his teaching schedule and duties to professional organizations, Dr. Edginton reduced his low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or bad cholesterol, to a manageable and healthier level. Dr. Edginton served as secretary-general of the World Leisure Organization and has also held titles such as Executive Secretary of the American Leisure Academy, Professor and Director in the School of Health, Physical Education & Leisure Services along with being the founder of Camper Adventure Youth Services.

The Second Annual Elect Her-Panther Women Win Conference at the University of Northern Iowa was held on January 23. It was a successful conference with approximately thirty participants in attendance. U.S. Senator Joni Ernst and Iowa State Representatives Timi Brown-Powers and Abby Finkenauer spoke to students about the importance of women running for public office. Claire Celsi, founder of The Public Relations Project and current candidate for the Iowa House of Representatives, discussed messaging in campaigns. The facilitator for the event was political and advocacy consultant Chonya Johnson. Workshop presenters Hillery Oberle of the Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission, Professor Angela Widner, Dr. Harry Brod and Colice Sanders from UNI’s National Coalition Building Institute and Northern Iowa Student Government President Katie Evans led sessions to encourage participation in campus leadership, local governments and governmental advocacy for nonprofits. The program was sponsored by the University of Northern Iowa Department of Political Science, AAUW-Cedar Falls and Northern Iowa Student Government via the Diversity Matters Fund.

If you’re interested in being on the planning committee for Elect Her 2017, email Rachel Gregory at gregoryr@uni.edu.

The Upsilon Nu Iota (UNI) chapter of Chi Sigma Iota will sponsor the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) Out of the Darkness Campus Walk at UNI on April 16. The Out of the Darkness Campus Walk raises awareness and funds that help the AFSP invest in new research, create educational programs, advocate for public policy, and support survivors of suicide loss. Sign-in at the Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center will start at 1:00 P.M., with speakers and a memorial at 2:00 P.M. and the 3-mile walk beginning at 3:00 P.M. The event will conclude around 4:00 P.M. If you have any questions, email Aubrey Davis at davisaax@uni.edu.

Registration for the walk can be found at
afsp.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=3758
UNI OPERA: SUSANNAH

UNI Opera, a School of Music ensemble composed of graduate and undergraduate students, presented the opera, Susannah, on January 22 and 23 in the Great Hall of the Gallagher-Bluedorn. Susannah tells the story of a young woman scorned by the Elders of her village after being accused of engaging in indecent behavior. Directed by Dr. Mitra Sadeghpour and conducted by Dr. Rebecca Burkhardt, Susannah’s cast featured multiple graduate students in both chorus and leading roles, including Kayla Kjeldseth in the challenging and dynamic role of Susannah. To learn more about UNI Opera, check out their next show on April 22 and 23 and visit their website at http://uni.edu/opera/.

SCHOLARSPACE AND MAKERSPACE OPEN AT ROD LIBRARY

Rod Library is proud to provide two new spaces for student and faculty use. Rod Library’s ScholarSpace is a venue where research and scholarship at UNI can be shared and celebrated. Programs hosted can include research presentations, lectures by visiting scholars, and art and cultural programming. Located on the third floor, the space has seating for up to 96 people and comes equipped with a large projection screen and two 90-inch TVs. The room will include a bookshelf highlighting books published by UNI faculty, awards related to faculty and student scholarship, and display space highlighting campus scholarship. The ScholarSpace was funded through a generous donation from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust.

Events held in the ScholarSpace will be added to the library’s events calendar on library’s homepage. Groups of 50 or more are encouraged to reserve the space in advance of their event. Reservation forms are available at www.library.uni.edu/services/scholarspace. Questions should be directed to the Library Dean’s Office by calling 273-2737.

Rod Library’s Makerspace is a workspace where creativity takes center stage. It is equipped with supplies and technology to allow students to prototype ideas and provides a nexus for like-minded entrepreneurs to engage in self-directed learning and hands-on experimentation. The room includes a 3D printer and scanner, sewing machine and serger, table loom, Raspberry Pis, and raw materials from playdough to construction paper to Legos. The Makerspace is part of the library’s Digital Media Hub, connecting the creation of digital media with the creation of physical material. Located on the second floor, the room is open whenever the library is open. The Makerspace is funded by a generous donation from the R.J. McElroy Trust.

For more information on 3D printing, visit https://www.library.uni.edu/about-us/policies/3d-printer-terms-use. Additional suggestions of items can be forwarded to Learning Commons Coordinator Gail Bunz (gail.bunz@uni.edu).
Dr. Tim Gilson, Department of Educational Leadership & Postsecondary Education, and Dr. Leigh Martin, Department of Teaching, have collaborated over the past several years to create an MAE program for teacher leaders in American international schools.

Gilson and Martin began their efforts with a focus on Teacher Leadership. Gilson said, “The concept of teacher leadership has flourished in both the U.S., and overseas. Graduate programs for international teachers had existed, but overseas administrators kept telling us they wanted one modeled after educational leadership for teachers.”

“Recruitment began with phone calls and emails to schools I already partnered with for student teaching placements” said Martin. One phone call to the American School of Bombay (ASB) in Mumbai, India, resulted in a visit to the school and an agreement to host UNI’s first site-based cohort of 18 teachers from ASB in the spring semester of 2013. Word of this new UNI program spread quickly to other international schools and now in its third year, the program has worked with over 75 students representing over ten different countries in locations such as: South Korea, Germany, the Philippines, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Nepal, Singapore and India. Three cohorts have since graduated and at any given time, two cohorts are proceeding through their coursework. Most recently another site-based cohort has begun at Singapore American School where Martin lives and fulfills her UNI responsibilities.

Students in the program must be current teachers in international schools where English is the taught and spoken language. Many of these teachers are U.S. trained and often have received their “ticket” to overseas teaching through the long-standing and popular UNI Overseas Recruiting Fair. The program has also served a number of UNI teacher graduates over the years. While many teachers are U.S. trained, a large number also come from places such as New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the UK. This is an added plus as the program has the ability to greatly impact the diversity of international students enrolled at UNI, as well as undergraduate student enrollment.

Gilson and Martin initially mirrored the sequence of classes for aspiring principals here at UNI, but replaced some of the courses with more relevant learning opportunities that expanded on the cultural differences found in international schools. Based on interest from the participants, they have now developed avenues for these students to take additional UNI courses beyond the MAE, qualifying them for principal certification in Iowa. Martin added, “We are excited about the opportunity to add to the diversity and expand the perspectives in our UNI classes, while providing what we know to be excellent leadership training to international schools!”

The program has also just completed the curriculum review process and a new MA for Teacher Leaders in International Schools degree awaits final Board of Regents approval yet this spring. Gilson stated, “It is a wonderful opportunity for our university and the College of Education to work collaboratively with such strong teachers in some of the top international school in the world. Adding to the diversity of graduate student enrollment on this campus has truly been a win-win for everyone involved.”

Gilson and Martin are striving to bring teacher leadership programs to overseas schools. “We face a lot of unique challenges, many that we could never have imagined, but we keep finding ways to adapt and meet the needs of various cultural norms,” said Martin. Gilson added, “These teachers and their administrators want advanced degrees in teacher leadership and respect the work UNI has done with international schools. This is just another way we are trying to meet their needs and broaden UNI’s overseas reputation.”
UNI RISE: UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

UNI RISE (Refugee and Immigrant Support and Empowerment) is dedicated to serving and advocating for newcomers in the Cedar Valley, namely refugees and immigrants. UNI RISE strives to empower the Cedar Valley refugee and immigrant communities through service and advocacy. In order to engage the UNI community, UNI RISE’s goal is to promote awareness and understanding of the experiences of refugees and immigrants. UNI RISE aims to build and strengthen connections between UNI students and the Cedar Valley to serve and support those in need.

UNI RISE offers a variety of volunteer opportunities for students and community members. Students can volunteer or intern with the agencies through UNI RISE’s programs. These programs connect UNI students to other nonprofits to help with additional volunteer work as well. Opportunities to volunteer include mentoring with Ethnic Minorities of Burma Advocacy and Resource Center (EMBARC), English tutoring classes with First United Methodist Church and Saint Paul’s First United Church, and assisting Catholic Charities with basic intake work for immigration clinics.

Tutoring is usually 1.5 hours from 10.30 A.M. to 12.00 P.M. on Saturdays. One-on-one mentoring depends on time agreement between mentor and mentee. There is a one day orientation for all volunteers followed by one day tutoring training on a separate date for those interested in becoming English tutors with First United Methodist and Saint Paul First United Churches. Help is always available from language coordinators who will assist new tutors.

TESOL graduate student Ammellia Md. Amin has been involved with UNI RISE for two years. Of working with UNI RISE, Ammellia said, “From personal experience, a volunteer grows as a person both emotionally and intellectually. We become more empathetic and sympathetic towards [immigrant and refugee] situations while at the same time learning how to become a better event facilitator, language tutor and time/resource manager.” Ammellia has found that involvement with UNI RISE is also an excellent résumé builder for those considering joining similar organizations as a career in the future.

To volunteer and learn more about UNI RISE, visit http://www.unirise.org/.
Anxiety Screening

The UNI Counseling Center is providing a FREE anxiety screening on Wednesday, March 9. Screenings will be held at 11 A.M., 1 P.M., 2 P.M., and 3 P.M. There is no registration required. If you have any questions, contact the Counseling Center at (319) 273-2676. Visit our website at www.uni.edu/counseling.

**Where:** UNI Counseling Center  
(Located on the 2nd floor of the Student Health Center)

**When:** Wednesday, March 9th

**Time:** 11 A.M., 1 P.M., 2 P.M., 3 P.M.
Want to know more about the grant funding process?

AAUW for UNI
Presents the

Women in Research Brown Bag Series
February’s Session Features Kerri Robinson
Of UNI’s Research and Sponsored Programs
Monday, February 29th, 12:00p.m.—1:00pm
Presidential Room of Maucker Union

⇒ Learn about the external grant funding process
⇒ Make connections with other women interested in research at UNI
⇒ Get all of your grant questions answered

Bring your lunch and join us!

Students and faculty from all disciplines are welcome!

AAUW FOR UNI WOMEN IN RESEARCH BROWN BAG SERIES
AAUW for UNI will begin its Women in Research Brown Bag Series on February 29 from 12:00pm-1:00pm in the Presidential Room of Maucker Union. Bring your lunch and connect with other women interested in research at UNI. The first speaker will be Kerri Robinson, Research Development Specialist, from UNI’s Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. She will discuss the external grant funding process for research and creative projects. All students and faculty are welcome to attend. Questions can be directed to Rachel Gregory at gregoryr@uni.edu.
GRADUATE COLLEGE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES: POSTER AND ORAL PRESENTATION WORKSHOPS

The Graduate College offered two professional development opportunities in January for the Professional Development Workshop Series. On January 19, Dean Kavita Dhanwada presented “Preparing and Presenting Poster Presentations at Professional Conferences,” and on January 27, Associate Dean Barbara Cutter presented “Preparing and Presenting Papers/Oral Presentations at Professional Conferences.” Both workshops were held in the Oak Room of the Maucker Union. The workshops covered a variety of general topics relating to preparing an appropriate presentation for professional conferences, including the upcoming 9th Annual Graduate Student Symposium. Drs. Dhanwada and Cutter provided PowerPoint presentations outlining their workshops which can be found on the Graduate College’s website at http://grad.uni.edu/symposium-workshop. Upcoming Graduate College professional development opportunities include a workshop on developing a CV or résumé by Director of Graduate Student Life, Susie Schwieger, and “Information Literacy for Graduate Students: Everything a Graduate Student Should Know Before Starting a Research Project,” a workshop by Leila Rod-Welch on February 24. For more information about workshops or suggestions for future professional development opportunities, email gradlife@uni.edu.

ABBIE GACKE: 2015 SYMPOSIUM PARTICIPANT

1. WHAT DID IT TAKE TO PREPARE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 8TH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM?
I participated in the Poster Presentation category and my preparation process included learning about creating an appropriate poster, finishing my literature review proposal, and understanding how to present the information on my poster. My research advisor, Dr. Ken Bleile, encouraged me to format my poster in an easy-to-read format and highlight the important information that the judges will want to know about. The Graduate College Symposium website was also very helpful when I needed help printing my poster and knowing the guidelines for presenting a research poster.

2. WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE THINKING ABOUT PARTICIPATING?
The Symposium is such a student-friendly event so don’t be afraid to take a chance and participate! Graduate school is a time to take risks academically and showcase your hard work.

3. WHAT WAS MOST BENEFICIAL ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN THE SYMPOSIUM?
Presenting at the Symposium last spring was very beneficial for me because it prepared me for presenting my research at the national conference for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association which occurred in November 2015. Also, as a first year graduate student last year, I was only ready to present my literature review for my research project, so seeing other participants’ completed work was also very eye opening and motivating for me.

4. WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE ASPECT OF THE SYMPOSIUM?
I really appreciated the constructive feedback I received from faculty judges. It was such a great opportunity to discuss my research with other professionals outside my field of study and I enjoyed entertaining the discussions that were sparked from my project.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY VISIT DAY

The School Psychology program hosted their annual visit day for prospective students on Friday, February 5. Eight prospective students attended, including some from out-of-state. Dr. Kerri Clopton, Graduate Program Coordinator, started the day with a welcome message, overview of the program, and brief introductions of the current first and second year students. Following introductions, individual student presentations began, which informed the prospective students of the program requirements. Following the presentations, the prospective students toured the campus. Students were served lunch in Sabin 15 with all prospective and current graduate students. This allowed for an informal gathering in which all students could speak openly about their experiences, research topics, and additional advice.
Ranjana Joshi and Ziyuan Li, accompanied by Dr. Hong Nie, travelled to the IEEE Consumer Communications & Networking Conference held at Las Vegas, Nev. on January 9-12 to demonstrate their UNI Capacity Building Commercialization Grant sponsored research project “A Joint Power Harvesting and Communication Technology for Smartphone Centric Ubiquitous Sensing Applications.” Their research project examined joint power harvesting and communication technology that aims to harvest double or more power from both earphone channels without affecting data communication. At the conference, Ranjana and Ziyuan presented their research paper and demonstrated their prototype board. The demonstration attracted great interest from many conference attendances and the research project was awarded the only Best Demonstration Award at the international conference. Ranjana and Ziyuan are planning to contact conference attendants who were interested in their demonstration and explore opportunities for academic and industrial collaborations.
9th Annual Graduate Student Symposium

APRIL 6, 2016

Poster Presentations
Central Ballroom, Maucker Union
12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Oral Presentations
Lower Level, Maucker Union
2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Creative Performances
Davis Hall, GBPAC
6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Questions? Email gradlife@uni.edu

GRADUATE COLLEGE STAFF AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To submit articles for consideration in the UNI Grad Student News contact gradlife@uni.edu.
With any questions or concerns feel free to contact the Graduate College staff listed below.

Dr. Kavita Dhanwada
Dean of the Graduate College
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
kavita.dhanwada@uni.edu

Dr. Barbara Cutter
Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs
barbara.cutter@uni.edu

Susie Schwieger
Director of Graduate Student Life
susan.schwieger@uni.edu

Lisa Steimel
Secretary IV, Assistantships and Scholarships
lisa.steimel@uni.edu

Janet Witt
Clerk IV, Thesis and Dissertation Reviewer
janet.witt@uni.edu

Rubina Chowdhury
Secretary II
rubina.chowdhury@uni.edu

Carly Hanson
Graduate Assistant for Online Content and Electronic Media
hansocan@uni.edu

Cori Austin
Graduate Assistant for Graduate Professional and Community Development
austicab@uni.edu