In-house employee education program to launch in August

By Gail Hinchion Mancini

The University will launch a new era in employee development in August as it premieres the Learning at Work Academy. The program will provide free, on-site education for employees for whom high school or college degrees and language competency could prove crucial in advancing their careers.

“The employee survey, ND Voice, provided clear indication that many dedicated staff want to continue to serve Notre Dame, and would welcome the opportunity to do so in more challenging positions,” says John Affleck-Graves, executive vice president. “The enthusiasm and commitment of these employees are tremendous assets for the University. Their positive attitudes and work efforts benefit everyone who lives, works and studies at Notre Dame. I am delighted that the Learning at Work Academy will create new opportunities and open doors for these individuals, who are our most loyal and dedicated employees.”

Learning at Work Academy will launch with courses in English as a Second Language, and GED-preparation classes provided by the South Bend School Corp. In partnership with Ivy Tech, the University will offer a two-year associate degree program in business. An information session at 10:30 a.m. Monday, July 14 in Room 203, Main Building will introduce potential students to the details of the program and the community providers of the programming. The Office of Human Resources will manage the academy and asks that those who want to attend the session register by calling askHR at 631-5900 by July 9. Supervisors are invited to a meeting at 9 a.m. Monday, July 14, also in DeBartolo Hall Room 126, to see a preview of the program.

Up to 20 students can be accommodated in the Ivy Tech program, but no limits have been set for GED and ESL students, says Tamara Freeman, associate director of talent management who is coordinating the academy.

Before classes begin, those interested in the Ivy Tech program will take a personal assessment of their skills and interests. Ivy Tech is prepared to offer degree-preparation programs for those who wish to enroll but need to brush up on fundamental skills, she says.

The GED and ESL classes are expected to meet one day a week, a day Ivy Tech is prescribing a specific curriculum that will move students toward a certificate degree after the first year and an associate degree after the second. Students will take two classes a week, each lasting three hours an evening, probably from 4 to 7 p.m., Freeman says. Students of the IVy Tech program should expect an additional six hours of work each week to complete program assignments.

Learning at Work Academy responds to dual calls. At the officer level, administrators expressed a determination to develop programming that would help prepare staff for promotions. In addition to the call for professional development that was identified in the ND Voice survey, employee length-of-service and average-age statistics suggest that a substantial number of staff will retire in the coming years and could use an in-house program for skill development.

Continued on page 3

Learning at Work Academy… Quick View

• All courses to be offered on campus
• ESL and GED courses will meet once a week
• Ivy Tech certificate and associate degree courses will meet twice a week
• On-campus internships will provide associate degree students with real-world experience
• The University is underwriting all tuition costs, books and fees.
• Further details will be provided Monday, July 14 in DeBartolo Hall Room 126.
• Supervisors meet at 9 a.m., employees at 10:30 a.m.
• Would-be students are asked to register for the 10:30 session by calling askHR at 631-5900.

Grad’s fortunes bode well for new program

By Gail Hinchion Mancini

James Hussar had the best possible final semester a doctoral candidate can have. By January, he had accepted a tenure-track teaching position at his Number One choice: California State University, Fullerton, in the modern languages and literatures department.

That allowed him to cancel interviews at more than a dozen other campuses, visits that would have taken eight weeks out of his final semester and home life with his wife and two small children. Instead, he stayed in South Bend, taught undergraduates a final time the considers teaching at Notre Dame a “surprise” (experience) and finished a dissertation that would win him one of the most prestigious awards bestowed on a graduate student—the Shuhem Graduate School Award.

Anybody aware of the challenges of finding a tenure-track teaching job recognizes Hussar’s story as a happy ending. His strikes a particularly celebrated chord, because he is the first graduate of the six-year, Ph.D. in Literature Program. A unique doctoral program that endows literary studies defined by language or national borders. Its students experience a wide-open opportunity to follow multiple languages and literatures across native tongues and national boundaries.

The program was birthed by such distinguished faculty as Margaret Dooly, Galian Faculty Professor of Literature and its first director, and Vittorio Hölle, Knauss Chair in Arts and Letters. Supporters “intimated,” says today’s director, Joseph Buttigieg, that language and literature studies would have to head in new directions in a shifting, multilingual, global society.

The proposal won adoption and has been enrolling students since 2002. Hussar was in the inaugural class. During that period, Buttigieg has seen validation that a new concept of “world literature” is developing. For example, Princeton University Press launched a book series “Translation/Transmission,” including a volume called “What is World Literature?”

As students progressed, the program developed many invaluable supporters including, Buttigieg says, the Nanovic Institute, the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, and Films, Television, and Theatre. (Countless faculty mentor these students, but as staff go, there’s only Buttigieg and administrative assistant Jessica Monokrousos, with support from professional specialist Oliver More.) Most faculty members Hussar approached welcomed his questions and lent support, he says. “I have been blessed by the number of faculty who have been willing to help me with letters of recommendations, directed reading, advice on courses. This is a very gracious faculty.”

Until Hussar graduated, no one, including Hussar, knew if students from a freshly minted program would be accepted by the academy. “We were very aware there was no precedent. There were no other students to meet,” says Hussar. “In the first few years, we sweated the nerves.”

Hussar had been a middle school and high school Spanish teacher who entered the program with an interest in not just Spanish, but Portuguese and Luso-Brazilian literature. Not many doctoral programs met his requirements, he says.

One of the characteristics of a Ph.D. in Literature candidate is that one often can ask: Where can you study for that? Consider the interest the Ph.D. candidate will expect to graduate next May. Her language studies focus on English, Irish and French; her literary interest is women writers from Ireland, the Caribbean and Africa. Gender Studies has selected her as their pedagogical teacher fellow for the coming year.

Another characteristic, says Buttigieg, is that students tend to approach their subjects through the lenses of multiple languages and cultural traditions. Hussar’s dissertation was about Latin American Jewish literature. But the interest in Jewish literature—encouraged by theology professor Michael Signer—followed the love of Spanish and Portuguese.

The program, Hussar says, was “an ideal fit for me,” because its students had such influence in the direction their research took. Ultimately, he hoped to be a good candidate for a Romance Languages teaching position. But in his doctoral program, he wanted “to be able to work outside that narrow space.”

“I’m not sure I sacrificed anything,” by choosing the Ph.D. in Literature over a traditional Spanish Ph.D. program. “But I’m sure I gained,” he concludes.
Sustainability chief starts shaping program

By Gail Hinchion Mancini

“I won’t bore you with the details.” It’s a line Jim Mazurek, MD’s sustainability director, uses during many campus presentations he’s made since arriving in early May.

As it happens, Mazurek seems in no danger of boring people. But he could bryn them, for all he’s said, is absorbing his audience. That’s because the University’s annual environmental impact is as much as 30,000 tons of coal, the 275 tons of copy paper, the 8,900 printer cartridges, the 12,000 tons of garbage.

It’s really possible we consume 900 million gallons of water a year? Some numbers are smaller, yet worrisome: We consume enough electricity a year to power more than 15,000 residential homes. Although our “carbon footprint” has not been precisely defined, Mazurek expects it to range between 50,000 and 200,000 metric tons.

By the end of his first 100 days, Mazurek has a good handle on a household name and a familiar face. Showing up at 7:45 a.m., he’s ready for another 30 minutes of conversation. You can almost hear the rustle of sustainability activities that lean heavily on measurements and accountability.

Those early steps will be necessary before Mazurek can propose the method and methodology for attracting property owners who might consider a bike path. Mazurek has begun to form the above details into a strategy for sustainability programs that lean heavily on measurements and accountability.

He is expected to form some sort of strategy for sustainability initiatives. The strategy may be the answer to one of the most pressing questions: Will Old 2 Gold be a national model for other universities?

Senior job searches were successful

By Gail Hinchion Mancini

Fewer recent Notre Dame graduates still were looking for work at Commencement than any class in recent history, according to the preliminary results of a survey on graduates’ post-Commencement plans.

“Year’s graduating class seemed to have dodged any fallout from a poor economy,” according to Lee Svete, director of the Career Center.

Only 13 percent of graduating seniors listed themselves as still looking for work during the survey, which is annually conducted by Office of Institutional Research during graduation week. In 2006, 14 percent of undergraduates still were looking for work.

Survey results indicate that while 10 percent of undergraduates are doing part-time work and many are continuing their education—law or medical school or other graduate or business school—there’s no indication that students fled to post-graduate work to avoid a poor economy, Svete says.

The survey results surprised and delighted the Career Center staff, says Rose Kopec, Career Center associate director, who handles early career outreach. Increasingly, sophomores and some first-year students make their way to her door. Last year, the Career Center staff conducted close to 200 workshops and presentations, organized career fairs, and held some 3,500 individual advising sessions.

Kopec and Svete identified one trend, affecting around 30 students, that reflects the economy: Particularly the troubles experienced by the financial industry. Students who had been hired by major corporations were asked to defer their first day of work through the summer. For example, a July 1 starting date has been shifted to the fall.

“We have had contacts with these employers, and they say the jobs will be there in fall,” says Kopec.

Some business are hiring graduates but assigning them to a different industry within their corporation and a different job. For example, students who planned to work in the financial industry are being shifted within the same firm to the financial arm of the health care division.

Median starting salaries continued to climb, Svete adds. $59,300 for engineers, $55,300 for computer science graduates, $48,000 for graduates of arts and letters. Increasingly, he says, Arts and Letters graduates are taking internships that prepare them for jobs in industry.

From Old 2 Gold raises record $70,355

Thirty-eight participating local charities will share a record $70,355 raised at the fourth annual From Old 2 Gold sale May 24 in Notre Dame Stadium.

The event, which featured student-donated items such as electronics, clothing, computers, carpeting, furniture, appliances and sports equipment, exceeded the sales goal by $20,000 and raised 53 percent more than last year. It attracted a record 5,703 shoppers (47 percent more than last year); some 3,970 pounds of food were donated to the Food Bank of Northern Indiana, and an estimated 8.3 tons of items were diverted from landfills.

“The huge success of this year’s program was due to a wonderful volunteer base, a générous student body and a caring community,” said project organizer Daniel Skurnitzel, director of administrative services for the Office of Business Operations. “Project organizer Frank Parker did a fantastic job of bringing these three elements together to make From Old 2 Gold a smashing success.”

The event, which included student donations and some $40,000 in departmental labor, was not donated from the total revenue. In four years, the sale has raised more than $184,000 for local charities and diverted some 300 tons of items from landfills.
Employee gives thanks for Compassion Fund

By Carol C. Bradley

The part in her hair has shifted a little, and she sometimes has trouble finding words, but Kathy Joindrow, administrative assistant in the Department of Political Science, is back in the office after undergoing brain surgery March 6.

She’s back two weeks earlier than anticipated—her rapid recovery, she says, aided by the financial support she received from the University’s Employee Compassion Fund. The fund covered her mortgage payments for the three months she was off work.

The fund was established two years ago as part of the campus United Way drive. Employees can choose to designate 5 percent of their total United Way pledge to the fund, which is open to employees in all departments. The same financial assistance due to catastrophic events. The fund, which has raised more than $7,000, is administered by the Family and Children’s Center in Main Cemetery. While donations to United Way and the fund are fully tax-deductible, disbursed funds are not taxable as income for the recipient.

In a letter to thanks of the Office of Human Resources just before her surgery, Joindrow described her mother of two teenagers—wrote that her biggest fear was that she would lose her home. “I can’t tell you how wonderful it was to get home and find my kids (ages 13 and 18) that the mortgage on the house would be taken care of. They are old enough to understand what having a paycheck for two-and-a-half months will do to our budget and the relief they felt made my heart sing.”

Joindrow’s family has a hereditary predisposition to brain aneurysms—her father died of an aneurysm at age 38, had a predisposition to brain aneurysms—her mother died of an aneurysm at age 46, Joindrow is the youngest of six sisters, and all undergo screening tests every four to five years. “When they are hereditary, aneurysms tend to be thin-walled and burst at small sizes,” she says.

Another older sister was diagnosed with an aneurysm in December 2002, had surgery, and then had to have a second operation in January when three more were found. After her sister’s diagnosis, Joindrow’s doctor recommended that she be screened earlier than usual, and an arteriogram revealed a large—and very dangerous—aneurysm.

Joindrow has worked at Notre Dame since 2002, but being a single mother of six sisters, and all undergo screening tests every four to five years. “When they are hereditary, aneurysms tend to be thin-walled and burst at small sizes,” she says.

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Joindrow has worked at Notre Dame Nurse’s Station since 2002, but having a single parent, she hasn’t been able to accumulate much sick or vacation time. As for savings, she says, “I have to look it up in the dictionary to see what it is. But I said, ‘God’s going to help me.' And he did. You cannot believe the outpouring of help I got.”

Department chair Michael Zuckert was alerted to the existence of the Employee Compassion Fund by staffer Cher Gody, “and he put it in the works,” Joindrow says. “The fund was a lifesaver. Everyone should know about it. Other faculty and staff pitched in to help pay her bills.”

“Thank God I have a wonderful department and a wonderful chair. I’m doing really well.”

About the Employee Compassion Fund, she says, “Words can’t be enough to tell you how very grateful I am.”

For more information on the fund, including policies and procedures on an application form, visit the Employee Compassion Fund link on the United Way section or contact the admin@hr help line at 313-5900.

In brief...

As part of the ND Healthy Initiative, free one-hour early-bud fitness classes will be offered for employees. The sessions will meet at 6 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Rockne Memorial Gym. Diane Scherer and Denise Goralski of the Department of Physical Education and Wellness Instruction will lead discussions about fitness and nutrition and lead participants through circuit and interval training and camp. The discussion and exercises are designed for46-54 years of age.

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Wayne Bishop, standing, enjoys an ice cream bar with fellow firefighters Gordon Martinezk, at left, and Marty Drehovak. Photo by Carol C. Bradley.

Elizabeth Tucker of political science does needlepoint in the shade of a tree. ND Works staff photo.

At right, food service staffer Jessaa Staub hands a platter of lettuce to Jewel Lathion. Photo by Carol C. Bradley.

Starting summer with samba

Staff and student workers celebrated the end of the academic year at the annual Staff Summer Picnic June 6 at Stepan Center. This year’s picnic had a festive carnival theme, and featured masks, beads and samba lessons.

OIT’s Clay Berkley teaches samba line-dancing. Photo by Carol C. Bradley.