Facilities Staff Top in Customer Service

Housing Facilities is responsible for cleaning, maintaining, and safety of the halls and apartments that our student custumers reside in.

Our energetic team is comprised of sixteen full-time custodians, one hundred student custodians, 6 building mechanics, two trades helpers, 6 student MA’s, (management assistants), 5 full-time managers, 9 student custodial supervisors, 2 full-time office professionals, 3 student office workers, 1 part-time delivery person and 1 director. Full-time staff personnel start as early as 5:00 am and some work until 3:30 pm. Evening work is performed by student custodians, such as cleaning dining service areas and stairwells. All weekend cleaning is performed by student custodians.

After hour emergency maintenance needs are serviced by student MA’s in each hall, and CA’s (community assistants) in the apartments. The housing facilities offices are located in G-44 Douglas Houghton Hall, and 2001 Daniell Heights Apartments. Both offices are responsible for registering and assigning the vehicles and motorcycles of the housing residents. The DHH office also sells the THWC (tri hall weight club) memberships and provides refrigerator rental units to the residents.

In our most recent EBI survey our staff ranked “at the top” for customer service in comparison with other bench marked colleges. The friendly attitude and helpfulness of the staff has created life-long friendships with many of our student residents, and over the years the returning alumni always seek out or inquire about the happy custodians, the helpful building maintenance staff person, or the smiling office staff person with the candy dish.

All employees receive the necessary training to perform their work, as well as the required OSHA and MIOSHA safety training. Please check out our website for more information at: www.housing.mtu.edu/facilities.html.

New Staff/Staff Moves in Student Affairs

Rick Ahola joined the staff at Michigan Tech Apartments as a Trades Helper. He moved from Dining Services.

Ed Corrigan joins Facilities as a Maintenance Manager for McNair Hall. He moved from Dining Services.

Laura Givens joined the Career Center staff as an Office Assistant. She moved from the Tech Express office.

Greta Gustafson joined International Programs as the Study Abroad Coordinator. She moved to Houghton from Seattle, WA.

Chris Nightingale joined the staff of Student Activities.

Steve Patchin joined the staff of Educational Opportunity as the Director of K-12 Outreach. He was formerly a teacher in the Dollar Bay-Tamarack City school system.

Heather Simpson moved from Educational Opportunity to Housing & Residence Life as an Assistant Director.

Karen Wade joined the staff of Educational Opportunity as a Secretary. She came to Michigan Tech from Citizens Bank.

Note: We do our very best to include all of the new staff and moves within Student Affairs. If we miss someone in your area, please let us know so we can make an attempt to recognize them in an upcoming issue.
Greetings,

This fall I had the opportunity to visit with our institutional diversity board. In preparation for the meeting I requested assistance from everyone in Student Affairs so that I would be able to provide an accurate picture of the many things we are doing to infuse diversity programming into the work we do with our students. What follows is a partial list of some of the most recent new initiatives and activities we have embraced:

**DiversiTEAS**
A group was formed on campus that began discussing the idea of reincarnating the Tech Teas but focusing on the broad topic of diversity (thus Diversi-TEAS) at monthly presentations. The main goal is to offer the opportunity for people to interact with local and national experts to learn, discuss, and broaden their perspectives on many aspects of diversity.

**Diversity training for Student Affairs student staff**
A Student Affairs Team developed a comprehensive training plan that all students working within Student Affairs attend. Several components of the training include diversity based discussion and activities. Over 300 students have participated.

**Nationally known speaker Paul Wesselmann**
Student Life engaged speaker Paul Wesselmann for fall student training where he spoke to over 200 student staff on diversity issues that relate to their jobs. While on campus, Paul also spoke with the Student Affairs professional staff encouraging self renewal.

**Revised diversity programs in Orientation**
COMPASS reviewed the diversity components of Orientation to make sure it included representation of non-majority students, thoughtful reflections on the campus culture, and students' experiences related to diversity and multiculturalism. One of the larger revisions included a new skit to better introduce diverse student issues to first-year students.

**Reading as Inquiry book selection** In order to ensure commitment to diversity in the Reading as Inquiry program, it was decided that a minimum of one book choice would be focused on themes of diversity, multiculturalism and/or global awareness. There were a number of book choices that easily lent themselves to promote diversity and discussions on diversity. The book chosen was *Three Cups of Tea*. This book focused on one man’s journey to build schools for girls in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

**Student Activities Comedy Series (SACS)**
SACS had a successful year last year bringing in six comedians that performed throughout the year to an audience ranging between 250-500 students. The diversity of comedians selected to perform was a specific goal for SACS. Again this year, the comedian line up is a diverse and exciting group of performers.

**Ramadan services for Muslim students**
For the month of Ramadan, we worked with the Muslim Student Association to provide accommodations for a 24 hour accessible prayer room and meeting space in Wadsworth Hall, as well as provided meal/fasting accommodations for those students on a residential meal plan.

**Gender neutral apartments**
Revised the policy for Michigan Tech apartment occupancy. Policy now no longer restricts the gender of the contract holders. We are one of the first in Michigan to drop biological gender as a requirement for leasing.

**Safeplace support**
The Safe Place Program is a campus wide program that sends a visual message of inclusion, acceptance and support to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) individuals in the University Community. Manuals, letters, buttons and stickers are currently distributed to members.

**Iris Prettypaint**
This year we were fortunate to be able to bring a highly respected Native American from the Blackfeet Tribe in Browning, Montana, Dr. Iris Heavy Runner-Prettypaint was able to join us during our Annual Spirit of the Harvest Pow Wow. Dr. Prettypaint also led professional development sessions for both faculty and staff.

**Summer Youth scholarships directed to minority students**
This fall we are mailing scholarship applications to all former youth program participants who are graduating high school this year for a chance to “compete” for fifteen three-thousand dollar a year scholarships. Winners will be chosen based on essay
regarding their SYP experience, merit and financial need.

**ESL support**

ESL orientation was established this past year to aid in the cultural transition of students whose English proficiency is sub-par. This included a whole team of cross-university representatives, from housing to academic units.

**Disability access to ski trails**

The trails now have adaptive equipment to give persons with disabilities an opportunity to use the trails in a manner similar to the way able-bodied persons do. We have three mountain hand-cycles available for use at no charge and we will have four pairs of sit-skis available this winter. In addition, two enterprise teams are working on additional adaptive equipment that we hope to have within the next year. We are also looking at similar equipment for the other venues.

**Invited a NASPA Undergraduate Fellow (NUFP) to campus this past summer**

Student Affairs hosted Nelly Moreno, a Hispanic/Latina woman from Northern Illinois University and graduate candidate at Loyola University. The goal is to expose traditionally underrepresented populations to Student Affairs work and encourage them to choose a career in higher education.

**Prayer replacement at Commencement**

In an effort to be more inclusive and welcoming to all populations, we replaced the traditional prayer at commencement with a celebratory reading encouraging students to acknowledge all those who had a part in their success and the ceremony was concluded with an inspirational greeting and challenge.

**Cass Tech poster**

In mid October, we presented Cass Tech principle and Tech Board of Control member Lenora Ashford a picture of some of Cass Tech alums who are now enrolled at Michigan Tech. We made that picture into a recruitment poster to showcase the healthy representation of Cass Tech students at Michigan Tech. More than 15 other schools are currently being considered to add to the project including schools in Kalamazoo, Lansing, Saginaw, and Milwaukee. These are just some of the many initiatives that we are either leading in Student Affairs or partnering with others to create a welcoming and inclusive campus.

It’s easy to see why we feel busy, we are. Working together to embrace all types of people, cultures and activities and encouraging their participation with us and ours with them is one of the most meaningful things we can do. Through all of this we can and will continue to make a difference in these student’s lives.

Les

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**Staff Match**

What do you know about the staff in Student Affairs? Match the staff member to their respective clue and win a large pizza. Submit your guesses by Friday, December 19th to lhenone@mtu.edu. The winner of the staff/pet match from the summer newsletter was Bev Auel.

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**Clues:**

1. Likes to give away money.
2. Works in the largest residence hall.
3. Maintains everything for our students.
4. Is an expert in helping veterans.

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**Submissions:**

A. Lisa Pignotti  
B. Marie Ryding  
C. Tom Henning  
D. Ed Corrigan
Tech Attracts Leading Scholars

It’s the one for all the marbles…a “full ride” for students from Michigan. The very competitive Leading Scholars scholarship awards 30 students with a handsome $8,000 a year scholarship and three of those 30 receive tuition, room and board, as well as some funds to cover the costs of books. Each December we invite 30 of the nearly 350 applicants to campus to interact with faculty, students, and staff. Throughout the two days, the participants are evaluated on their academic skill, leadership potential, and intellectual curiosity. With the help of Student Activities, COMPASS, Residential Life and Admissions, this Financial Aid program is geared to select the three students to receive the full scholarship, but the ultimate goal is to impress all 30 enough that they all enroll at Michigan Tech.

“When I first came into this position, I was blown away by the caliber of these students,” says John Lehman, assistant vice president for Enrollment Services. With its help, Michigan Tech has recruited students who would have otherwise gone to Purdue, Notre Dame, Ann Arbor, and Harvard. The program has evolved the past few years, adding a focus on leadership skills as well as academic skills. “We used to include a one-on-one oral math exam as part of the program until one participant remarked to me afterwards, ‘I thought you were trying to recruit us.’ That gave us pause enough to say, let’s make some changes.”

Leading Scholars, when they arrive on campus as first year students, continue to interact as a group, help to organize and deliver future Leading Scholars events, getting together for social activities, and are given the opportunity to represent the student body when dignitaries visit campus.

“One of the best days I have each year is the evening I get to call the three Leading Scholars finalists to tell them they will be receiving the scholarship” remarks Lehman. “Typically I call after dinner, inviting my daughter to listen in with her head up close to the phone so she can hear the happiness, disbelief, and often times screaming which ensues after we deliver the news.”

Student Commission Helps Enrich the University Experience

The Student Commission is a broad based group of students, staff, and faculty that work together to enrich the student experience for everyone at the University. Over the course of past five years the Commission had addressed nearly 150 different issues and has completed well over 100.

Some of the projects that were introduced or completed in the 2007-08 school year are:

- Prince’s Point rehab and upgrade. Funds were provided by a variety of groups and the site was completed in September 2008.
- The idea of an online textbook exchange was developed and supported by the Student Commission. This initiative was made available for fall 2008.
- The idea for covered bike shelters was approved and shelters were designed by the Construction Management Enterprise. Shelters are planned to be built during the 2008-09 school year.
- The Experience Tech fee initiative was supported by over 80% of students participating in a survey during the spring. It was presented to the Board of Control in May and approved in June. The initiative took effect fall 2008.
- Continued discussion about email, calendaring and file storage. A new program Zimbra was introduced and took effect in September.

The Student Commission has ongoing projects/initiatives for the 2008-09 school year and a few of them are:

- Development of creed/honor code
- Construction of covered bike shelters
- Recycling and increased sustainability efforts
- Increase green space on campus
- Relocation of broomball rinks

This is just a small listing of what the Student Commission is discussing. If you are interested in joining the Student Commission, the group meets at 2:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of each month during the school year (contact Lynda Heinonen at lheinonen@mtu.edu for location). If you have questions regarding the Student Commission or have a suggestion or issue you would like addressed, please email studentcommission@mtu.edu.

The newsletter committee members are Lynda Heinonen, Mary Ann Struthers & Susan Liebau. Thanks to all of our contributors. Please forward any suggestions or comments to Lynda at lheinonen@mtu.edu.
Mary Ann Sturthers from Student Activities with Whiskers. Whiskers is 13 years old and diabetic. Whiskers needs two insulin shots a day.

Pat Gotschalk, Director of Student Judicial Affairs, with Charley the toy poodle and his big brother Sparky, who is a border collie/sheltie mix. Charley is 4 years old and is a lively but often naughty dog. He is full of energy and likes to give Sparky (who is 10) a hard time by chasing him and grabbing his tail. He is also obsessed with chasing cats.

Nancy Gagnon has been in the Office of Student Records and Registration for 23 yrs as a Sr Staff Assistant/Transfer Credit Coordinator. Nancy has also pursued a degree through Forest Resources in Wildlife Ecology and Management and has conducted field research/documentation on local cougar sightings. In her spare time she enjoys riding her 10-year old paint horse, Rhyan, in classical dressage. During the fall of 2007, Nancy attended the world premiere of Les 4 Ecoles d’Art Equestre (a performance of the four classical riding schools of equestrian art) in Paris, France. She continues her dressage studies by attending clinics, accompanied by Rhyan, learning various riding techniques as taught by well-known equestrian trainers.

Gina Goude, Coordinator of Career Services Programs, and Cooper is her three year old Shitzu. Cooper “The police dog” (from the summer newsletter) took first place in the pet Halloween costume contest during the annual Harvest Festival held at Van Riper State Park. Cooper “The Lobster Dog,” captured first place again this year! Also pictured are Gina’s boys, Austin (9) “The Ghoul” and Brayden (1) “The Monkey.”
On November 6, 2008, over 15,000 students attended the YES! Expo event at Ford Field. As we are all aware, it takes a dedicated team to coordinate this event each year. Because many of us cannot make the trip to Detroit to witness the huge undertaking that is the event, the pictures below are meant to share a little of what happens. Enjoy!