Healthy Huskies 2007

Submitted by Jared Johnson and Jen O’Connell, Student Activities

The Division of Student Affairs has undertaken a Healthy Lifestyle Challenge and encourages you to take part in this program.

Healthy Huskies is as simple as cleaning your house, walking your dog or running on the treadmill. Just log your points (www.presidentschallenge.org) and track your success! As of 10:03 am on April 17, 44 Student Affairs staff members had taken the challenge to be a Healthy Husky!

For more information contact the Student Activities Office at 487-1963 or at activities@mtu.edu.

Go out and get active!

Staff Focus: Rita Smith

Rita Smith was born and raised in the Highland Park area of the Lower Peninsula. After high school, Rita attended Central Michigan University for a while, but was unsure of what she wanted to do. Her sister suggested Rita come stay with her in Missouri for a break from college to figure things out. She was set up on a blind date with Gary Smith, a Marine, and three months later they married.

They will celebrate 30 years of marriage next September!

Rita and Gary moved to the UP after Gary’s discharge from the Marines in 1978. Gary’s family was here, so this was a good choice for relocation. Gary immediately went to work at Michigan Tech, and Rita held positions at Pamida and JCPenney’s as a sales clerk. After their son Christopher was born in 1981, Rita stayed home with Chris and did volunteer work for the Lake Linden-Hubbell School District.

Rita joined the staff at Michigan Tech in 1989 as a centralized data entry clerk (this was pre-Banner days), and also worked in accounting, the cashier’s office, payroll, and chemistry before landing at the Career Center in 2003, where she is a staff assistant for campus recruiting. Rita says she loves her job at the Career Center, particularly seeing the students who come through to interview with the companies at the Career Center Job Fairs and then coming back as recruiters themselves!

Rita’s interests range from kayaking, gardening (flowers—not food), reading, and crafts. And how about the camping in snow shelters and climbing mountains in Alaska?? Rita explained both were part of expeditions she took as an assistant scout master with her son’s boy scout troop. The climb was up the Angel Rock Trail to the Chena Hot Springs in Alaska, approximately 2600 feet elevation. Arriving at the hot springs (which were horrible and muddy) she was then charged by a very angry moose!! Thankfully Rita sustained no injuries and is here today to tell the tale! Lucky for us and the Career Center!

Highlights: Healthy Huskies Program

- Emphasizes staying active year round, which is especially important during our long winters
- Friendly competition between departments or individuals
- Free, simple and you are more than likely earning points just being you
- Be eligible for incentives such as clothing, healthy food and workout accessories
- Feel healthier
- Interact with students on a personal level

Guess The Mystery Person!

This issue’s “mystery person” will be the featured staff focus in the fall Student Affairs newsletter. Use the clues below to identify the staff person and win a pizza.

This issue’s Mystery Person:

- was born in Macon, Georgia
- snorkeled with sting rays in the Grand Caymens and swam with barracudas in Bimini
- performed the national anthem at high school football and basketball games
- had a CB handle of Gingersnap

Send your guess to lheinone@mtu.edu. A random drawing of correct respondents will select the winner in the event of multiple correct responses.

Congratulations to last issue’s winner: Joan Pastore of First-Year Programs.

Husky Fridays

The Student Affairs Service Innovation Team will be looking out for Student Affairs colleagues who are sporting the most Michigan Tech spirit on Fridays. Rewards will be given to those who are participating in Husky Fridays! Bring out that Tech t-shirt and support your University.
Spotlight on Spring 2007 Graduates

Each semester we say goodbye to another group of graduating seniors. We’d like to spotlight just a few of those about to graduate who have been employees and/or friends of our various Student Affairs divisions.

Submitted by the Career Center:
Cindy Ruotsi is very active on campus, participating in MTSF, the Alumni Board of Directors, and the Career Center’s Student Advisory Board. Cindy will miss being a part of the MTSF organization, which she is currently president. Her unforgettable experiences include being the student representative on the Alumni Board of Directors. She was part of the search committee that brought the new Alumni Director to Michigan Tech.

Throughout her years at Michigan Tech, Cindy has made numerous friends which she will miss after graduation. According to Cindy, “when you attend classes with the same group of people, you can’t help but to develop very special friendships.”

Cindy’s career aspirations include teaching English at a local high schools and continuing her technical writing for Roadsoft, a roadway asset management system developed at Michigan Tech.

Submitted by Student Records & Registration:
Jillian Spagnotti is a senior from Calumet, Michigan. She will be graduating in May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management. After graduation Jillian plans to move to Orlando, Florida and hopefully work for Disney.

The thing Jillian will miss most about Michigan Tech is her mom, Denise Spagnotti, who works in the Office of Student Records and Registration. Jillian will also miss the “hominess” feeling that Tech has, along with her friends, Winter Carnival and Michigan Tech hockey. While at Michigan Tech, she enjoyed classes that had “hands-on” experience.

Submitted by Admissions:
Rebecca Youmans has been a very dedicated student leader in Admissions. She is a supervisor in the Call Center and described by staff as “one of the best tour guides Admissions has.”

After graduation she will be continuing her schooling for the Army by attending BOLC II and then Adjuntant General school for officer training. When that training is completed she will be moving to Clarksville, TN where she would like to find a job in Student Affairs or with the Department of Defense.

The thing she will miss the most about leaving Michigan Tech is the people she has met. “I have made some great friends and will miss not being able to see and hang out with them whenever I want.”

Submitted by Educational Opportunity:
Terri Mullen is from Merrill, MI. He will be graduating with a BS in Material Science & Engineering. After graduation he plans on moving to metro-Detroit and working for US Steel. He also has a big event on June 9th—he is marrying his girlfriend of twelve years.

Terri was an AISES member the duration of his time at Tech, including numerous positions on the e-board. He has also served as an ExSel Mentor. His best experience at Tech was working in Educational Opportunity. He describes the staff in Ed Opp as good people and a second family. He has worked in the department for four years.

He would like to be involved with Michigan Tech as an alumni and a professional. He has had very positive experiences with Educational Opportunity’s Advisory Board and would like to use his professional experience to assist students in transitioning into their careers.

Submitted by Student Activities:
Mike Fleck, a Mechanical Engineering major and a German minor will be graduating this spring and heading to GM Powertrain in Pontiac, Michigan.

Mike has been involved with Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, Order of Omega, and the LeaderShape Institute. He recently served as the Student Activities intern concentrating on the Student Awards Banquet and the Alternative Spring Break Program.

When asked what he will miss most about Tech he stated “I’m going to miss the people at Tech - my fraternity brothers, other students, staff and faculty that I’ve met, and the outdoors. There’s not many places like Houghton out there especially not in the suburbs, where I’m headed.”

Submitted by International Programs:
Tamasin Yarina has been a study abroad student in both Costa Rica and the Czech Republic; she has also been an intern and is a student worker at IPS. Her work and studies at Michigan Tech University exemplify the slogan that our students are hard working, adventurous, and motivated. Whether it is her work establishing the on-going Holidays Around the World Web Site or presenting study abroad opportunities to other students around campus, Tamas has approached her work with skill and enthusiasm. Her interest in the world around her and a sincere interest in the people with whom she works and comes into contact, have made her a valuable addition to the workforce at IPS. As Tamas completes her time at Michigan Tech University she is preparing to begin a new chapter of her life as a graduate student in Baltimore, Maryland studying virology. We wish her the best and know she will be a great success.

Submitted by Residential Life:
Kathryn (Price) Sterk (l) will receive her Masters in Environmental Engineering with a Concentration in Enterprise. The things she’ll miss most about being on campus is the Tech community; her friends, professors, and her Residence Life co-workers (who she says have been a family to her). She hopes to come back and visit often! Kathryn (Price) Sterk (l) will begin pursuing a PhD in Materials Metallurgy with an emphasis in traditional metallurgy at UW-Madison. She is receiving her BS in Materials Science Engineering with a Concentration in Enterprise. The things she’ll miss most about being on campus is the Tech community; her friends, professors, and her Residence Life co-workers (who she says have been a family to her). She hopes to come back and visit often!

Attendees at the 2007 Student Awards Banquet
Walking across campus this week I witnessed the crocus beginning to bloom, the daffodils awaiting a few more days of warm radiant sunshine and other plants just popping through the earth’s crust. Each fall we welcome a new group of bright and energetic students to campus. Much like the bulbs that were planted across campus last fall as soon as these new students step foot on campus our hope is that they will become deeply rooted to Michigan Tech and their lives will be transformed in dynamic and positive ways. Over the course of four, five, and six years our students are introduced to new thinking, innovative solutions, practical realities and extraordinary adventures. Contrasting this to April flowers, I would assert that some students, no matter if you are a first-year, third-year or fifth-year, are like the sprouts just emerging from the soil while others resemble daffodils in full bloom. The difference in each individual may be caused by any variety of factors including academic preparation, family upbringing, lifestyle/balance, motivation and attitude.

As educators our role is similar to that of the gardener taking great care to ensure the flowers blossom to their fullest potential. Staff and faculty are diligent in cultivating students to think in new and innovative ways providing nutrients and just the right amount of fertilizer to tease out pioneering and provocative results. Analogous to the gardeners (faculty/staff) and equally important is the ecology of the campus. Student experiences as part of an enterprise, working out at the Student Development Complex, studying in the library, dining in their residence hall, or analyzing data in a lab are all part of the campus ecology. Their success is largely dependent on the interrelationship between the two. Similar to the most beautiful gardens across the world, Michigan Tech has a proud history of attracting the best and brightest students and there is no doubt that this legacy will continue. The late Ernest Boyer indicated in his revolutionary book Campus Life: In Search of Community that successful campuses were those that were educationally purposeful; open; just, disciplined; caring; and celebratory. Contrasting Dr. Boyer’s work to those of today, in their book Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter, George Kuh and others open up dialogue about a recommitment to student success focused on student learning, enriching educational environments, identifying clear pathways to success and a shared responsibility for educational quality and student success. These are the ingredients that ensure the ground is fertile, nutrients abundant and absolutely the right conditions provided to foster the brightest and most robust gardens.

As we conclude yet another highly successful year and send off some 900 new alums with the Michigan Tech brand it is important we take time to recognize our accomplishments, that we celebrate our successes and those of our students/faculty and staff and that we spend some time reflecting on the value and meaning of our work. My hope is you will be able to take some time to do this in your own garden over the course of the summer and that you look forward to welcoming those whom we will nurture, challenge and cultivate as they begin or return to campus in the fall.

Wishing you a productive and restful summer,

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**Study Abroad at Michigan Tech**

As Coordinator of Study Abroad the question is often asked of me, why should students go abroad, and who goes abroad? After nearly a year of directing the program I thought it would be nice to give a few possible answers to my colleagues in Student Affairs.

The study abroad program at Michigan Tech University is still small, as of this year we have the equivalent of 9% of our students who study abroad while at Tech, up from 5% in 2005 - 2006. The goal is to increase this number to approximately 20% in 4 – 5 years. How? The answer to this question is the answer to the first general question – why go abroad? Study abroad is now a necessity for an undergrad, not a luxury. In a global society a student needs experiences with, and in, multiple cultures in order to help ensure success in future endeavors. As the study abroad program of International Programs and Services (IPS) helps to spread this fact across campus, it also works with faculty to develop new programs and enhance current programs to meet new demands. The number of students taking part in study abroad will inevitably grow. New locations are constantly being added to the options available to Michigan Tech students. Programs in Fiji, Estonia, Malaysia, and Switzerland have all been added or are in the process of being added to our stable of locations this year alone.

Who goes abroad? The profile of the Tech student abroad is changing. As our numbers increase, a wider array of Tech students are able to benefit from foreign travel and study. Several years ago (such as in 1999), when I was taking Tech students to an archaeological dig in England – the students going tended to be academically superior students whose travel goal was simply an interesting experience. An experience that really had very little to do with their majors, but a lot to do with having a fun time, with summer as the main travel time for students. Now as more students travel, more are going to work on specific aspects of their majors and minors and in the 2006–07 year a majority of students who went abroad went during the academic year. As we further build the program and we see yet a wider variety of students wanting to study abroad, it will be an exciting challenge for us all to design and facilitate programs that will meet their requirements and provide the sound academic background that they need.

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**Welcome to Student Affairs**

Beth Pollins has joined Student Affairs as Assistant to the Vice-President. She was previously in the Physics Department.

Thomas Henning joined the staff at Student Records and Registration as an Office Assistant. He was previously with Public Safety as an Operator/Dispatcher.

If you have new staff join your area’s team between now and the next newsletter, email Lynda at lheinone@mtu.edu, so we can share the news.