Your Turn @ Tech – Preview Day 2005

On Saturday, March 19th, the Michigan Tech campus welcomed one hundred and fifty-seven accepted students and two hundred and sixty-five guests from eight states to our first Preview Day. Preview Day provided accepted students and families with additional information to help students make their final college decision. Seventy-five percent of those attending were first-time visitors to campus.

The Huskies Pep Band kicked off the morning welcome session featuring Vice-President Les Cook and President Glenn Mroz in the Rozsa Center. Currently enrolled students Kaitlin Baumgardner, Phil Ribeiro, and Kari Jordan then shared stories of their experiences at Tech with potential future students and parents.

Throughout the day, guests had the option of attending any of eighteen information sessions on topics ranging from how to pay for college to living on campus -- from getting involved in student activities to hearing the real story about life at Tech from a student panel. In addition, several academic departments hosted tours of labs and classrooms to give students a firsthand look at the outstanding facilities available on campus.

The annual Tech Showcase featured departmental representatives from across campus, running concurrently with Preview Day. Currently enrolled Tech students and Preview Day attendees were invited to learn about majors, minors, enterprise programs, study abroad options and other student services. Additional activities included a student organizations showcase, complimentary lunch in the residence halls, campus tours and residence hall tours.

Preview Day students were also invited to attend the NITE Beach Bash BBQ Friday evening at the SDC.

More than 120 MTU student, staff, and faculty volunteers participated in Preview Day 2005. Thank you to everyone who was involved in the planning and production of this inaugural event. Several students who had not submitted their enrollment deposit prior to the event committed after attending the program.

Survey results from students and parents who attended the event will be used to assist in planning the second annual Preview Day program scheduled for mid-March 2006.

Student Audits Evolve with DARwin

by Shirley Gagnon, Registrar’s Office

The Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) was first developed by Miami University and licensed to others in the early 80s. Since then, both the program and the client base have grown. It is currently being used in 267 institutions throughout the United States and serves 2,849,786 students! Michigan Tech jumped on board in June 2004 with DARwin, the client/server version of DARS where information is maintained and accessed using a Windows-based application.

DARwin tracks a student’s academic progress from point of entry to degree completion. Students, faculty advisors, and authorized staff members will be able to check on a student’s academic progress at any time on the web and/or run comprehensive reports (degree audits) showing courses taken, registered in, and those remaining in the student’s program of study. This will greatly benefit advisors, degree services staff, and students by reducing the manual processing currently required for degree audits at advising appointments and for graduation clearance. It will allow advisors to spend more time helping our students plan for their future.

Team members responsible for implementation of DARwin at Tech are Jean Burich, Shirley Gagnon, Karen Giddings, and Emmett Golde.

Web Development Takes Show on the Road

by Dennis Wallkainen, Web Development

Director Dennis Wallkainen and Electronic Marketing Associate Gail Sweeting are visiting departments across campus, reviewing the history of the MTU web presence and showing faculty and staff what’s new on the MTU website. In addition to departmental visits, Dennis and Gail are continuing to convene the Web Oversight Committee, made up of staffers from across campus who do web work; and they are gathering student focus groups to look at and improve the website.
Staff Focus—Kim Klender

Well, I’m back, only this time I have no worries of class schedules, exams, lab reports, or even a decent GPA. I’ve finally found what I was meant to do—represent Michigan Tech! My name is Kim Klender, and I’m the new Alumni Outreach Coordinator.

You may know my story. I started at Michigan Tech 22 years ago as a freshman, a politically correct term for that time. In my five years as an undergraduate in civil engineering, I developed an attachment to the Keweenaw, the city of Houghton, and campus.

I graduated with a BSCE from Michigan Tech in 1988, at which time, I served in many capacities in the civil engineering field—first as a staff engineer designing septic systems in Vermont (talk about starting from the ground up), then as a 40-hour hazardous waste responder, moving up quickly to the position of project engineer in the field of environmental construction and waste management, and finally as a project manager in construction and design.

In August 2002, I left my civil environmental profession to pursue a career in secondary education. My search for an excellent curriculum and the desire to return to and reside in Houghton led me back to Michigan Tech, where I completed my certification requirements.

I have mentored and led organizations at Tech, such as First-Year Programs. I have also been involved in the LeaderShape program as a cluster facilitator. Both experiences broadened my abilities to relate and respond to the current and future student at Michigan Tech.

So, back to current day Alumni Relations—different hat, same university. I connect alumni and prospective students. Inviting alumni to support Michigan Tech as volunteers and allowing alums to proudly show off their knowledge and passion for the university is my main focus. On a daily basis, I interact with alumni around the country in the promotion of Tech and take from them observations, commentary, and suggestions.

My commitment to Michigan Tech is strong. To be able to brag about this campus as a national university of choice is an ideal experience for me.

Study Abroad “Rocks”
by Beth Taylor, International Programs

Michigan Tech students are getting excited about Study Abroad. This summer alone, 71 students will travel to 12 countries.

This fall will be the first semester any Michigan Tech has studied in Hong Kong. All students come back changed for the positive.

Two students are doing well in the Semester-at-Sea program, after getting off to a rocky start with a massive wave hitting their cruise ship and stranding them in Hawaii for a week or so. They then flew to China to begin their program and were able to board the ship on February 25 in Chennai, India.

Next year, there will be 8 students spending the spring semester in Turin, Italy, the site of the Winter 2006 Olympics. This program has limited space but there are still openings in case you know of anyone who wants to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

These are just a few of the many exciting adventures that Michigan Tech students embark on during their study abroad adventures.

Study Abroad student Danielle Miller’s photograph of the Montmartre area in Paris.

Thoughts from Fall 2004 Study Abroad Students

“Study Abroad is one of the most fun and affordable parts of being a college student.”
~ Kyle Ollanketo
Curtin University of Technology, Australia

“It rocked my socks off!”
~ Jess Barden
Copenhagen Business School Denmark

“Michigan Tech students are getting excited about Study Abroad. This summer alone, 71 students will travel to 12 countries.”
~ Beth Taylor
International Programs

Thanks to all of our contributors. Your efforts made this newsletter possible.
Greetings, and welcome to the inaugural edition of Instant Messages: Notes & News from Student Affairs. The underlying goal of this newsletter is to provide insight into happenings within Student Affairs, discussion on issues that involve our students, and recognition of those who contribute to the success of our students and the University.

The last month of the academic year is always an invigorating time of year for me. I see hope for the future as I watch our students walk across the stage at commencement; I hear excitement in students’ voices as they describe their upcoming summer adventures; I sense curiosity as students embark on summer co-ops, internships, and new jobs. Finally, there’s a mixture of sadness and pride as I watch students who are leaving campus for the last time. As I reflect over this past year, and especially these past few weeks, I am reminded of all that is good at Michigan Tech.

Here are some examples of our students who go above and beyond their academic requirements and participate as active, positive community members.

This first story opens with an end-of-hockey-season celebration for our local youth. Like many Copper Country children, my son Cole, 11, loves his hockey. He’s played for two years, and his team winds up each season with a kids-vs-parents hockey game. This year, I accepted the challenge of donning my skates, pads, and taking my stick to the ice for the very first time. It wasn’t pretty—an emotional bloodbath, you might say.

If it weren’t for two of Tech’s best—Brandon Schwartz and BJ Radovich—the kids might have stood a chance. As it happened, our two ringers proved the parents meant business.

Brandon and BJ are both Michigan Tech juniors and are the types of students we can all be proud of. In the hour and a half of ice time and pizza that followed, I can tell you we would all be hard pressed to find students who could better represent our university than Brandon and BJ.

They handled the group of somewhat obnoxious 10-11 year olds with skill and grace. We are fortunate that these students realize the importance of service and are anxious to give back to the community.

Later the same evening as the parents-vs-kids hockey game, student Jason Marcotte wowed his audience with the play, Just Being Me. I was intrigued by the title and decided not to miss this event, as it was to be a student’s view of what college life is really like.

Jason, who was our star point guard on the men’s basketball team, wrote, directed, and starred in the production. The play covers Jason’s four years at Tech and is a very realistic depiction of the trials and tribulations of the typical college student. This young man is nothing short of remarkable and someone we can all be impressed with.

A few days later, I joined a packed house of students, MTU faculty/staff, and community members for the Praise in Effect Gospel Choir year-end finale. Senior Kari Jordan directs Praise in Effect and has been involved in nearly every walk of MTU life, serving as president of the National Society of Black Engineers and volunteering for Michigan Tech’s Summer Youth program, all in addition to her gospel work and academics—she is the quintessential student.

Kari will graduate next December after spending the summer in Michigan Tech’s Study Abroad program in Denmark followed by a fall program in Spain.

The annual Student Awards banquet, the School of Business & Economics student recognition lunch, Blue Key Banquet, athletics banquet are just a few groups celebrating the accomplish-

ments of our students, staff and faculty. I think all of us would agree that we are truly lucky to work in the environment that we do.

Each of these stories could be told virtually any day at Tech. What makes them so special? It doesn’t take long to realize that it is not the university that makes the people but the people who make the university. We are fortunate to attract the types of students we do to Michigan Tech, and much of their success relies on what we all do to make students and their successes a priority.

The ethics of care, compassion, and supportive guidance demonstrated by our Student Affairs team and the faculty and staff at Michigan Tech is extremely important as we prepare students to create the future and is something that clearly defines the MTU experience.

Student Affairs has spent a fair amount of time defining our mission, refining our vision, and establishing guiding principles and goals this past year. Moving forward, it is important that we remind ourselves on a regular and frequent basis that our role as educators is to prepare students to create the future and that their success is paramount to the university’s being successful.

Our guiding principles will impact our direction as we strive to provide a diverse and inclusive community, one in which intellectual creativity, leadership, and excellence are valued and integrity, trust, and personal responsibility promoted. We must keep students at the center of all we do and work to ensure they have a voice in our decisions. Our success depends on student success, and their success depends on us. Thanks for making this a reality.

In closing, I welcome you to our first edition, congratulate each of you on your successes and those of your students, and remind you all that the people are what make Michigan Tech the place that it is today. It’s about students, staff, faculty, advisors and others coming together in a collaborative and congenial manner. I’m glad to be a part of this great institution and I hope you are too.

With all good wishes,

Les
Why do we have a summer reading?
To connect first-year students to our campus during the summer
To plant the seeds of inquiry and discussion
To create a common University experience
To build a strong sense of community among faculty, staff and students

What is this year’s book?
*Feed* by author M.T. Anderson
A fabulous book about our “possible” future
Chosen by a committee of students, faculty, and staff

What is the plan?
All incoming first-year students read this common book over the summer
Groups discuss the book by Orientation team
Discussions will be lead by faculty and staff
A Resident Assistant (RA) and Orientation Team Leader (OTL) will be in each group to assist with the discussion. A campus address will be presented during Orientation

What is my role?
Discuss and encourage faculty and staff participation as group discussion leaders
Discussion leaders would:

Contact Beth Wagner at blwagner@mtu.edu to volunteer
Attend an informational meeting the week of August 15
Lead a discussion group with about 25 students during Orientation week

Thank you!
Your support is key to the success of this program.
“Tough Work for Tough Times” Offers Important Insight

by Don Williams, Counseling Center

To be honest, the fact the Northeast Counseling Center Director’s Conference, “Tough Work for Tough Times,” was held at an 18th Century Castle, nestled in the Catskill Mountains of New York (Mohonk Mountain House), with beautiful views, over 250 fireplaces, 2,500 acres and award winning food didn’t exactly make me not want to go, but I really did go for the conference (all right, I also went for the conference).

The keynote address was given by Dr. Richard Kadison, M.D., Chief of Mental Health Services at Harvard and author of the new book College of the Overwhelmed (highly recommended, reading, by the way). Dr. Kadison described some of the research data about college students as FRIGHTENING. In the past 13 years, sexual assaults have quadrupled, suicidal ideation has tripled, and depression has doubled. Nearly half of our college students (45 percent) self report feeling depressed and 44 percent report binge drinking. Prozac is the number-one prescribed medication for this age group (more so than birth control, antibiotics, allergy medication, etc.). Yet we often tell them “these are the best years of your life.” Dr. Kadison’s presentation wasn’t all depressing statistics and doom and gloom reports (Thank goodness!). Kadison suggests universities need to:

- Provide rapid access to mental health care
- Educate faculty, staff, and students to recognize and destigmatize problems
- Coordinate care between the Counseling Center, Residence Life and Community Resources
- Provide policies and guidelines for students to leave and return because of mental health problems

Kadison also urges universities to be more proactive in promoting wellness activities, such as sleep, hygiene, relaxation, exercise, healthy eating, and balanced living. He also promotes the use of “wellness and caring events” such as yoga classes, wellness fairs, etc.

I have a copy of Dr. Kadison’s presentation so if you have more questions feel free to contact me. Perhaps “College of the Overwhelmed” would be a great second book for the Student Affairs Book Group.

In addition, I attended a session on, “Testing and Assessment Center,” by Brian Van Brunt, director of Counseling Services at the New England College. This session featured a wide variety of potential tests for use as assessment tools for issues such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, relationships, and overall quality of life and mental health.

A multi-disciplinary team from the U.S. Military Academy (West Point) gave a very interesting presentation on education and treatments of eating disorders. This included everything from the way women cadets’ clothes were tailored to changing some of the dining hall rituals/routines.

Three universities from New York City discussed how they have been dealing with a rash of suicides since 9/11. Suicides started on 9/12 and have continued to be a concern at these institutions to this day. If you have any questions about any of these sessions let me know.

All of this information in an amazing setting with interesting and friendly people and wonderful food, along with a little exercise and adventure (getting down the mountain in a blizzard) combine

Career Center Revs Resumés

“I’ve got absolutely nothing,” he began as he sat down in my office at the Career Center. “No work experience, no leadership…I don’t have anything good to put on my resume to get an internship or a co-op.”

Not exactly the most fruitful sounding start to helping a mechanical engineering sophomore with his resume, but we at the Career Center know it’s important to ask the right questions. And we do ask students a lot of questions because sometimes they don’t comprehend how incredibly valuable their experiences are and how they should view these experiences with confidence and pride.

So I began with asking the student what he did in his free time. He replied, “I didn’t have any free time. My family has a farm with 600 head of cattle and I had to work there before and after school since I was eight years old. That’s what I do on my breaks and summers from Tech too.” Aha! I suspected amazing things would follow, and they did.

I asked him if he ever worked on a farm project that used his mechanical skills. He described a project that he and his father undertook that summer. His father drew up initial plans to build an industrial crop sprayer with a 60-foot span—to be created from a mix of new materials and a lot of old farming machinery. This mechanical engineering student fine-tuned his dad’s plans with lessons he learned from courses he took here during his first year at Tech, and together they manufactured, welded, troubleshoot, and successfully reached their goal.

“Well,” I told the student, “you actually have everything an employer would want.” By the end of the week, he had created an incredible resume that highlighted his leadership, responsibility, mechanical prowess, ingenuity, and hard work on his family farm. He left the Career Center feeling that he had something valuable to offer employers… and soon had more than three co-op offers to choose from.

I love the opportunity to work with Michigan Tech students on their resumes and interviewing skills, and I am constantly amazed (and often humbled) by their achievements. I’m even more amazed that they often have no idea how great their achievements are! We’d love to see more students using the Career Center not only to help them highlight their skills and abilities, but also to gain confidence in speaking with employers and securing rewarding and challenging opportunities like we did with this student. We encourage you to send them our way.

Your input is appreciated. Please email Lynda at lheinone@mtu.edu with article ideas, questions or comments. Our next issue is slated for September.

The members of the Student Affairs Newsletter Committee is Paula McCambridge, Lynda Heinonen and Susan Liebau.
Graduate Fair in Mexico Well Worth the Trip
by Madeline Mercado Voelker, Educational Opportunity

Luis Garcielo, a master's candidate in Environmental Engineering, and I, Michigan Tech's Hispanic/Latino(a) Outreach Coordinator traveled to the Sixth Annual Graduate Fair throughout Mexico this spring.

People traveled from as far away as New Zealand to represent their colleges and universities. More than 20,000 students attended.

Michigan Tech showed its ethnic sensitivity by sending Spanish-speaking representatives. Some campuses sent only English-speaking professionals, and they were strongly criticized in the Mexican media.

Luis said, “I felt so proud to represent this institution, and I felt so good because I was able to answer all the doubts and questions that the people had in my country. It’s a lot better to receive the answers from a Mexican who is studying here than from a ‘stranger’ through email.”

Michigan Tech is considered one of the strongest educational options among Mexican people. “They simply said ‘wow’ when they saw us there,” Luis said.

We were either on the road or visiting fairs each day. We traveled within the country by bus and air. We dreaded the 12-hour bus drive from Toluca to Querétaro but enjoyed the scenery and beauty of the region. On the road, we saw shrines erected in honor of a dead family member or for the Virgin of Guadalupe and also goat farms and quarries. We watched barefoot children chasing their goats or standing in school uniform waiting for the bus.

One interesting note: Mexican Airlines didn’t serve red meat on their flights because it was Lent.

Daytime temperatures were pleasant, ranging from 50 to 70 degrees. Only in Villahermosa, which is close to the Caribbean, did the weather get a little hot and humid with temperatures in the 80s. While in Toluca, I told Luis that I thought I was getting old because I was suffering from rapid heart palpitations, but he reminded me that we were in one of the highest points in the country, and I was reacting to the high altitude.

In Villahermosa, working at the fair around 5:30 p.m., the whole building shook for three seconds—there was no sound. We all froze. We were told that a truck hit the side of the building, so we continued working. The next day, newspaper headlines said there had been an earthquake!

As a Puerto Rican and Michigan Tech’s Hispanic/Latino(a) Outreach Coordinator, this trip gave me a broader sense of the Mexican culture and its people. They are proud of their country and all that it has to offer. They are developing programs to integrate English as their second language starting at the elementary school level.

The graduate fair was sponsored by Mexico’s National Council of Science and Technology (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología—CONACYT). CONACYT provides scholarships to Mexican students enabling them to study abroad and attain a graduate degree in science and technology.

Summer Reading
by Allison Carter, Admissions

Ann Patchett is an author whose works you experience rather than read. Her characters, their interactions, and experiences are portrayed in such a realistic and humanistic manner you long for more when the last page has been read. The stories stay with you and become part of your own life experience.

Josh Picoult is similar in her writing style, though her books are more of the mystery/thriller genre. Second Chance is a page-turning story focusing on life, loss, the paranormal and the possibilities an open mind can bring.

If you have never read a novel by Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child, you owe it to yourself. They are a remarkable writing team whose thrillers are tough to put down. The books are not in a series, though some common characters exist in several of their novels. Most all focus on archaeological digs or historical sites of interest. Just when you think you’ve figured out the ending to a Preston/Child novel, the story takes another turn and keeps you guessing.

Sunday Dinner at the Cicala House
by Dorothy Peterson, Financial Aid

I grew up in a typical Italian-American family of the 50’s “Happy Days” era. My mother was a stay-at-home mom, and her main job in life was to care for her family. I was in charge of setting the table, given the artistic touch that I alone had. My specialty was napkin flowers. When the family sat down for dinner, all family members were present.

Our Sunday dinner included many aunts, uncles and cousins. We took turns saying the blessing, and then the eating and verbal jousting would commence. If you were not a non-Italian, it probably sounded more like bickering than jousting. In my house, to love, to care, was to bicker, and vice versa.

My mother never used a recipe to cook, so these recipes that I am sharing with you are measured by a handful of this or a pinch of that. Enjoy! Buon appetito!

Baked Chicken Cacciatore
Serves 4
1-3 chicken, cut into 8 pieces (salt and freshly ground pepper to taste)
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 Green & 1 Red pepper, seeded and cut into narrow strips
1 large onion, thinly sliced
8 ounces mushrooms, trimmed and quartered
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 cups canned Italian peeled tomatoes, drained and chopped
1 teaspoon dried oregano
Preheat oven to 450 degrees.

Oil roasting pan, to hold chicken pieces in a single layer. Arrange the pieces skin down, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake 20 minutes or more until lightly browned.

Heat the oil over medium heat in a heavy skillet while the chicken cooks. Add the peppers, onions and mushrooms in a shallow layer. Cook, stirring frequently, until the vegetables are tender, about 15 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, oregano and salt & pepper to taste.

Bring to a simmer and cook until the sauce is thick, about 30 minutes. Spoon off some of the fat from around the chicken. Pour the sauce and vegetables over and around the pieces. Bake 20 minutes longer. Serve hot.

Look for this and other great recipes in the upcoming Student Services Cookbook.

MTU Mexican Ambassador Luis Garcielo enjoying some free time in the national park La Venta in Villahermosa, Mexico.