Welcome To Student Life!

This summer Student Life welcomed six new members to the Student Affairs Team. These new people arrived from as far as California, New York and Florida and from our own backyard, Ohio and Wisconsin. Hopefully you have had a chance to meet each one of them over the course of the summer. If you haven’t, take a minute to introduce yourself.

Their ideas and enthusiasm have helped create energy within Student Life and added a fresh perspective. The fall is always an exciting time of the year, filled with many events. We asked our new staff what they are looking forward to about working at Michigan Tech and living in the area. Here are a few of their responses.

- Working with student staff and collaborating with colleagues
- Broomball
- Michigan Tech Traditions and seasonal activities
- Living in the middle of the best outdoor recreation area in the Midwest

Welcome to these new staff!

Patti Kirk joins Michigan Tech’s Student Life staff as the Assistant Director of Learning Communities & Mentoring. Patti comes to Tech from the Florida Institute of Technology where she served as Assistant Director for Residence Life.

Rachel Wussow joins Student Life as the Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life. Rachel was most recently the Resident Director at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

Christine Erickson comes to Michigan Tech as the Associate Vice President for Student Life. Christine joins us from California State University-San Bernardino where she was the Director of Student Leadership and Development.

Jared Johnson is the new Assistant Director of Student Activities & Adventure Programs. Jared was most recently Aquatics Director at the Eau Claire YMCA. Jared will also be getting the new Outdoor Programs area up and running.

Jason Bergeron is Michigan Tech’s Assistant Director of Student Activities, Greek Life and Leadership. Jason was most recently at Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, OH where he served as a Graduate Intern for Alcohol and Related Issues Education.

Michelle Nightingale is the Assistant Director of Orientation and comes to Michigan Tech from Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY where she was the First Year Program Area Residence Director.

MentorNet: On-Line Connections Provide Real World Advice

MentorNet is a free online mentoring network that Michigan Tech provides for its students. It is a nonprofit e-mentoring network that promotes retention and success in fields of engineering, science, and math for all students. MentorNet was created to help students excel in their chosen field of study. There are 1068 companies providing mentors and 111 participating universities. Major sponsors include IBM Corporation, Hewlett-Packard Company, 3M Company, Texas Instruments, Cisco Systems, and Schlumberger.

MentorNet is a free online mentoring network that Michigan Tech provides for its students. Benefits include:

- The option to choose from a list of potential mentors
- Help in obtaining co-ops or internships
- A mentor in their field to write letters of recommendation
- Increased desire to pursue a career in their field
- Information about work in industry or government

Many students have had great experiences with MentorNet.

“My mentoring relationship means being able to talk to a real professional and get the information I need to make me feel more comfortable about eventually obtaining a job in the professional world,” one student shared.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate as mentors and to direct students to participate.
Board’s Input Helps Career Center Better Serve Students

In June, the Career Center conducted its 2006 Corporate Advisory Board meeting. This meeting is very important because it provides the Career Center and Michigan Tech with feedback from the corporate world. Simultaneously, the Career Center provides the corporate representatives with feedback related to the world of academia, with an emphasis on MTU. Like always, this was a very productive meeting.

Dr. Gloria Melton, Dean of Students, provided the Board with an overview of Student Affairs, with an emphasis on the student body profile. According to some of the Board members, this information will assist the various companies in their recruiting process. All of the Board members anticipate that the 2006-2007 academic year will be a busy recruiting season. This of course, is great news for our students.

Stephan Olsson, Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Gail Beausoleil, Associate Director, Career Center presented the concept of a “Job Shadow” program which would be a joint effort between the Career Center and Alumni Relations. Most of the companies thought it was an excellent idea and are participating in a similar program with various high schools but not colleges. Steph and Gail will research the possible implementation of this program.

"Facebook" and MySpace were discussed. These sites are new to most of the Board members. Currently, the companies are not using them but did not disregard the possible future usage of them. There were concerns about the legalities of using these sites.

In the world of academia, portfolios are becoming more popular but the Board members stated that they are not utilizing them. If the students want companies to use portfolios, writing samples, web development and a copy of their transcripts would be valuable.

The portion of the meeting that received the most attention was when the Board had an opportunity to talk face to face with students, faculty and staff, especially students. Questions from students included, “How do non-engineering majors get the attention of the company rep at a job fair?”, “Should a student put a grade point average on their resume if it is low?”, and “Which is more valuable a co-op assignment or an Enterprise experience?”

The Board responded to these questions with several helpful comments. They suggested to the students that at a job fair, tell the company what skills they can bring to the company and do some research of the company prior to the job fair. All of the companies stated that the students should put their GPA on their resume no matter what it is. The overwhelming majority of Board members stated that a co-op is preferred over an Enterprise experience. But, they did state that Enterprise is a major plus for the students. The Board said that they use “eRecruiting” software and highly suggest that the students use this software.

Many other issues were discussed and people left feeling more informed and desiring a stronger relationship with Michigan Tech. In the wrap up session, there were many comments such as;
- Companies want a list of recipients of their scholarships.
- The Board wants more time with the students in future meetings
- The Board would like to meet with various student groups and their advisors
- The Career Center will survey where students want to work and with what company.
- The co-op program should be promoted more. This is one of the key factors in considering a student for a job.
- The Board asked the Career Center to construct a wish list of things they need to facilitate their operation.

The Board asked for a list of Administrators which they can send their comments about the performance and value of the Career Center. Several of the members stated that Michigan Tech Career Center is one of the best career centers in the country.

The 2006 Corporate Advisory Board meeting in conjunction with Student Advisory Board meetings provides the Career Center with ideas to strategically plan their future programming. If you would like to attend future Corporate Advisory Board meetings, please contact the Career Center, 7-2313 or career@mtu.edu.

Winter Career Fair 2006

Who am I?

- I am married with two children.
- I was a high school athlete who graduated from Chassell High School.
- I still like to participate in all kinds of sports including: hunting, fishing, basketball and volleyball.
- I have degrees from Michigan Tech and Lake Superior State.

Send your guess to rheimone@mtu.edu. In the event of multiple correct answers a winner will be selected by random drawing of correct respondents.

The Career Center’s Wall of Fame
Career Center Partners are featured on this wall. If you are interested in learning more about the Career Centers Partners Program visit http://www.career.mtu.edu/employers/partnersprogram.php.
ExSEL Program Earns National Recognition

Michigan Tech’s ExSEL program received a Retention Excellence Award at the 2006 Noel-Levitz National Marketing, Recruitment & Retention Conference in Denver, Colorado July 18th-21st. ExSEL is an academic success program designed to support academically and economically disadvantaged students.

The program’s documented success was a deciding factor in achieving this honor. Since program inception the average fall GPA for ExSEL participants has increased 30% (1.99 to 2.60; there has been an 18% decrease in ExSEL students academically dismissed after their first year; and ExSEL student retention has increased 13.3%.

The program was founded six years ago as a partnership between the Department of Educational Opportunity, the College of Engineering, and the State of Michigan’s King-Chavez-Parks Initiative. This year ExSEL will expand to include all of Michigan Tech’s Schools and Colleges.

ExSEL provides support to students through education, collaboration and interaction. The “Frameworks for Success” course teaches critical skills including note taking, time management and test taking. Contact through grade monitoring provides students with attention early enough in the semester (4th and 8th weeks) to effectively change the outcome of their final grades. Collaborative efforts with a variety of resources on campus help link students with areas that can support them in being successful. Additionally, ExSEL staff and Peer Mentors provide the one-on-one contact that is so important in the success and retention of many students.

Kerri Sleeman, ExSEL Programs Director, has been the force behind the success of the ExSEL program for the past three years. As a 1995 Mechanical Engineering graduate of Michigan Tech, Ms. Sleeman has been able to provide advice and support through both her academic and professional engineering experience.

If you encounter students you believe would benefit from additional support, contact ExSEL Coordinator, Susan Liebau (sliebau@mtu.edu) or Kerri Sleeman (kasleema@mtu.edu) at 487-3539. You may also email ExSEL program staff at exsel@mtu.edu.

My Life as a Regional Admissions Manager: Melanie Davis

Many people don’t know what a regional admissions manager is, let alone what they do. My name is Melanie Davis, and I am the Chicago area regional admissions manager for Michigan Tech. My ultimate goal in this position is to attract quality students to the university. This article will give you a glimpse into my daily life in this position.

For me, no two days are alike. I manage a territory of nearly 400 high schools in Illinois, but my main focus is Chicago and the immediate suburbs. From the months of September through May, I visit 3-4 high schools per day, four days a week. This past spring, I attended nearly 100 programs. These high school visits usually come in two flavors: the individual visit or the college fair.

During the individual visit, the students are notified in advance of my arrival by the guidance office and are encouraged to sign up to come see me. This gives students the opportunity to ask me questions and gives them a contact person to follow up with throughout the admissions process. I never know what to expect during a high school visit; I have given my presentation to anywhere from one student to an entire math class.

The college fair is where I see the most students. College fairs can be hosted by an individual high school, a group of high schools, a community organization, a community college or a university. They are normally held in a gymnasium or library. During the college fair the student has the opportunity to visit with numerous college representatives from all over the country. Although I see more students at college fairs, I have less time to spend with them because they are trying to get information about as many schools as possible.

I thoroughly enjoy my position as a regional admissions manager. Almost every day in the fall and spring I am talking to students about how great Michigan Tech is, and helping to increase the ethnic and regional diversity of the institution. Did I also mention I get to work from home? Life couldn’t be any better.
Over the course of the past couple of months, I hesitate to say how many times I have reminded my twelve year old son, Cole, that life is not necessarily a “spa experience.” All of us are aware, students today are somewhat different than those of the past and one doesn’t have to look far to witness these changes. In the book, “Millenials Go to College”, Howe and Strauss indicate we can anticipate students arriving on campus this fall that see themselves as:

- Special
- Sheltered
- Team oriented
- Conventional
- Altruistic
- Pressured
- High achievers

Any of this sound familiar? My guess is that most of us know these students, as a matter of fact, those of you that are parents have probably contributed to this phenomenon. I know for a fact at our house that we are overprotective of both our kids, we check their homework on the computer almost daily, hurriedly run them from one practice to another and expect they will get all A’s on their report cards. And we wonder why students today have changed.

Today’s generation of students have grown up in a period of profound change as they have undoubtedly seen demographic, economic, social, global and technological change at a much faster pace than generations to come before them. These students have higher expectations and some might say they want everything to be “Disney friendly” and “Fed Ex Fast”, and because of their eternal optimism they are sometimes called the “sunshine generation”. Expectations of parents are also much different, they see themselves as partners with their student; they are much better informed; they expect us to keep our promises; they are less concerned with cost and more concerned with academic reputation and career placement. In order to remain competitive and attract/retain these students we have to be transformational in our actions and deeds. As we move forward and ready ourselves for the beginning of the 06-07 academic year, I would encourage all of us to consider recommendations from Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter, a recent Jossey-Bass publication. Their recommendations for creating conditions that matter for students by doing the following:

- Living the mission and educational philosophy of the University.
- Having an unshakeable focus on student learning.
- Creating environments that support student success.
- Demonstrating clear paths to success.
- Fostering an ethos oriented towards change and innovation.
- Embracing shared responsibility for educational quality and student success.

With the recent updates and refinements made to the Michigan Tech Strategic Plan, there is no better time than now to take heed to these recommendations. Preparing students to create the future is no easy task, however, it is exciting and inspiring. Individually and collectively each of us make a difference in the lives of our students each and every day. Student success is our highest priority and I encourage you to create inventive opportunities and authentic interactions daily that validate this priority. We will soon welcome over 6,500 new and returning students. The intensity level of these students is amazing, they are bright, motivated and exceedingly adventurous. These students coupled with our exceptional staff and faculty are what make Michigan Tech a world class university.

Please join me in welcoming them to our campus and I look forward to working with each of you to continually create conditions that matter and support the success of our students, as they will change the world.

Thanks and best wishes for a successful and productive year.

Les

What does Counseling Services have in their reception area that other departments do not have?

Jeanne can be found hiding in the back corner of the Student Affairs Office where she works with the judicial process and academic standings for students. OK, yeah … but what does she do? Well, Student Affairs often deals with students who are not in their office for the best of reasons and according to Gloria Melton, Jeanne has the ability to handle these students with sensitivity and care. She offers an unflappable and patient demeanor while dealing with their circumstances. Wow, unflappable and nice.

I guess you would have to be unflappable if you had four children in college. Yup, four. Two currently at Tech, one a graduate of Tech currently in graduate school downstate at some “other” college and one in Jacksonville, Florida working at the Florida Jaguars football stadium after completing his degree in turf management. How cool is that?

It is this experience as a Mom that makes her invaluable in Student Affairs since she has good common-sense advice about how to deal with some of the "noncompliant" students and it also helps that the students like her a lot according to Pat Gotschalk who is in charge of judicial affairs.

So for the past two years this is where Jeanne has been. Prior to that Jeanne worked for the University Senate for ten years but when they were going on their fourth president, Jeanne elected to move to Student Affairs.

Jeanne likes to travel (if she has any money left over after paying all those tuition bills) and one of her favorite places ogo is the hot springs in Glenwood, Colorado. She also enjoys going to Mexico and New York and with children in Florida I’m sure she’ll soon be on a plane this winter.