What’s New on the Avenue? Submitted by Allison Carter, Admissions

Since February 2003, the MTU Avenue has been part of the virtual recruiting efforts of the admissions staff, and is an important method of keeping students connected to Tech from the time they are accepted to the time they enroll. However, offering the Avenue isn’t enough. Keeping the content fresh, creating a sense of community, and offering “sticky” applications to keep students coming back is the key.

In November, the Rendezvous social networking system was launched on the Avenue. Designed and written by Administrative Computing Student Programmer, Jason Andorfer, a fourth-year CS student, Rendezvous functions very much like other public social networking systems like FaceBook. With the exception that Rendezvous is only available to incoming freshman and transfer students who have been accepted to Michigan Tech. By creating and maintaining a personal profile, students can start meeting other classmates by searching on profile items, or creating and joining groups based on interests. To further help students transition to Tech, class schedules and housing assignments will be used to place students into Rendezvous groups based on their courses and/or residence hall house.

The discussion forums and chat application launched in the spring of 2005 continue to grow in popularity. The forums allow students to post, read, and respond to questions. Current students and admissions staff members monitor the forums on a daily basis. The chat function utilizes instant messaging (IM) technology and allows students to IM in a public chat room in “real time”. Students may also chat live with an admissions staff member via a private IM connection. Blogs, or web journals, are another feature on the Avenue designed to provide accepted students a current student perspective on life at Tech.

The new features and electronic community seem to be working. Compared to the same date last year, over 850 students accepted for Spring or Fall 2006 have logged in to the Avenue, an increase of 33% over Fall 2005 users. These students have accessed their Avenue an average of 9.6 times compared to 5.5 times by last year’s users. Virtual recruiting is here to stay and the Avenue will continue to be one route to success for students accepted to Michigan Tech.

Interdisciplinary Learning Encourages Student Success
Submitted by Heather Simpson, Educational Opportunity

Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies (Ford PAS) provides high school students with high-quality interdisciplinary learning experiences that challenge them academically and develop their problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills. By building strong local partnerships with business and higher education, Ford PAS encourages and prepares students for success in college and professional careers in fields such as engineering, business and technology.

Developed in collaboration with Education Development Center, Ford PAS is an academically rigorous, standards-based program that introduces students to the concepts and skills necessary for future success. The program links classroom learning with the challenges students will face in post-secondary education and with the expectations of the workplace they will face as adults. These links are forged through community-wide, cooperative efforts and innovative partnerships that join local high schools, colleges and universities, and businesses. Through these coordinated learning opportunities, Ford PAS equips students with information and provides experiences to help them make decisions about their future education and careers.

This experience-based academic and personal development curriculum is comprised of a sequence of five semester-long courses with each course consisting of three six-week modules. Courses are led by Ford PAS trained and certified high school instructors, with course credits established by individual school districts.

However, with the flexible design of the curriculum, Ford PAS is not just for classroom use but also for use in summer learning, after-school and community based programs. Its hands on approach makes it an ideal complement for on the job or in the lab experiences, including internships, job rotations and job shadowing, as well as university-based technology and pre-engineering explorations.
Message from the Vice President
Greetings & Salutations!

Each year during the holiday season I tend to lose myself in thought with memories of yesteryear. For instance, it seems like just last night that I sat on my father’s lap while at my grandmother’s house singing Christmas carols and jolly old St. Nick would knock on the window outside in an attempt to scare me off to bed. Or the year we spent in the hospital with my father as he had suffered injuries from a run-in with a horse, this was the same year I received my GI Joe. Or the many years of Christmas dinner at my grandmother’s house with 30-40 relatives, bachelors, widows and friends from the valley gathered around what seemed to be a mile long dinner table piled high with turkey and all the trimmings. Thinking about all of these many things brings a big smile to my face and a sense of contentment in my heart, all of which I realize contribute to my sense of “joy”. It is this joy that I wish for everyone in the New Year.

It’s interesting, but if you are at all like me you probably don’t think much about the word joy except during the holidays. Most likely the only time many people ever hear or speak the word joy are between Thanksgiving and New Years. As I was thinking about writing this greeting and discussing the concept of joy I began to wonder, what is joy? Does joy just happen or must we create it? Do all people have joy in their lives? And what does joy have to do with higher education anyway?

Joy in my mind is something we experience when we are content, happy and energized by the happenings of our life. Joy doesn’t just happen. We have to be involved with creating this joy through our interactions with others, by feeling compassion and happiness for and with others and celebrating both our successes as well as those of others. Fortunately, through our work in Student Affairs, I think we are more prone to have joy in our lives on a regular basis than are many others.

I have seen many folks that seem to have it all, the great job, the big cars, the boat, etc. and you’d think they would be full of joy. In reality, their continued want for more seems to dampen the desire for joy and their sense of contentment. Their search for joy is seldom reached.

So where does joy come from? For me, joy is created by the work we do with others, the relationships we build, the energy we create, the roads traveled and the adventures we embark upon.

So what does all of this have to do with higher education? Personally, I think each of us has the opportunity to create joy each and every day from the work we do with students and the interactions we have with each other as colleagues and friends. To fully participate and share, both in the challenges and triumphs of those we are involved with creates satisfaction and a sense of exuberance.

It doesn’t matter if you attended K-Day at McClain State Park on the banks of beautiful Lake Superior; took part in the Homecoming Parade; sat in awe at the magnificent costumes and performances at Diwali Night; felt the beat of the Cass Tech Band; had great conversation about “The Feed”; or watched the women’s basketball team score yet another victory at the Wood Gym. The energy created by all of these Michigan Tech events is satisfying and exciting. It is this energy, created together that brings us joy and makes working in higher education both meaningful and real. Our work should be filled with joy and we should all strive to be the type of person that others look forward to working with each day.

As we begin a new calendar year, reflect on our past journeys and look forward to new adventures it is important that we remember the joy we help to create. A month or so ago Phil Ribeiro, current Undergraduate Student Government President came bounding into my office to share his excitement about receiving a flight slot in the United States Army. The sparkle in his eyes and excitement on his face were astounding. It is the Phil’s of the world, the students in our offices, classrooms and homes and those that walk across the commencement stage that remind me almost daily about the importance of our work. Every individual student that we interact with is on their own journey, some know the end destination while many are not sure, but through their experiences both on and off campus, in Houghton and abroad, we are helping them to accumulate learning and understanding that will shape them and our world forever.

Tocqueville stated, “The world belongs to those with the most energy.” Joy contributes to this energy. My wish for all is to find your own joy, help others to find theirs and continue to make your imprint on those who will create the future for all of us.

Peace and best wishes,

Les

“...power as the hands; not really to grasp the world, but to change it.”

Colin Wilson, Author
Staff Focus:  
Saleha Suleman
Submitted by  
Karla Korpela, Educational Opportunity

Saleha at the 2005  
Parade of Nation’s  
Multicultural Festival

Walk over to the Administration  
Building to see  
Saleha Suleman,  
our new Director  
of International  
Programs, and  
you will be  
greeted with a  
warm smile and  
a genuine wel-  
come. Arriving  
early for my inter-
view with Saleha, I observed her multi-
tasking. She was talking with a col-
league, then providing direction to a  
student, and finally meeting the daugh-
ter of one of her staff members. In a  
flash, Saleha and this young woman  
were talking about nose rings, with  
Saleha explaining why she was wear-
ing one. It was wonderful to see them  
habitually engaged in conversation.

Saleha Suleman is a leader, a great  
conversationalist, and an accom-
plished woman who speaks matter-of-
factly about her accomplishments and  
states her opinions and beliefs firmly.  
She creates an eager want in others to  
work to accomplish her goals. Before  
the interview was over, I had been  
recruited to help with two tasks in pre-
paring for the arrival of almost 100 in-
ternational students.

What is TECH?  
Submitted by Rob Bishop, Student Life

The Michigan Technological University  
Team Effectiveness Challenge  
(TECH) Course was built with the goal  
of providing a unique teamwork and  
leadership program for groups of  
widely varying ages and ability levels.  
The TECH Course is an outdoor com-
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Born in Pakistan, the sixth of seven  
children, Saleha was raised in a family  
that highly valued education, espe-
cially for females. Saleha earned her  
Masters degree in Pakistan, and  
worked as the first female reporter in  
the national daily of Pakistan covering  
women’s issues and higher education.  
Then she moved on to Germany to  
become a broadcaster in the Voice of  
Germany Radio station. While there,  
the Pakistan government awarded her  
the Quaid-e-Azam Gold Medal and full  
scholarship to earn her Ph.D in Amer-
ica. Saleha is a pioneer - the only per-
son in the history of Pakistan to re-
ceive this high honor!

While discussing the environment at  
MTU, Saleha has a dream. “I want to  
transform the cultural environment at  
MTU to be a global university, where  
all kinds of people can develop, suc-
cceed, and create the future.” To this,  
she solemnly and emphatically adds,  
“The MTU community must seriously  
start thinking about making the univer-
sity internationally competitive, and  
must recognize that the value of inter-
national universities rise only when  
you offer the best education and the  
best services.”

“This is the time,” Saleha says pas-
ionately. “This is the time for both  
domestic students and the interna-
tional population. I dream of US stu-
dents getting enough quality education  
to study and research abroad. They  
are to be the change agents in the  
global economy. This is the time.

Take action now to shape the future.”

Saleha believes that those of us in  
Student Affairs and all of us at MTU  
must offer a wealth of mentorship and  
support to our students. We must cre-
ate more inclusive holidays, and very  
importantly, increase the number of  
US students going abroad for study.  
To be more supportive of this, we must  
include a pre-departure orientation and  
a re-entry debriefing.

Saleha is opening her arms to the  
community. She is a member of se-
veral service organizations including  
Rotary International, Dial Help and the  
Keweenaw Family Foundation. She  
also works with international students  
so they can learn how to function in  
the community. One recent fun activity  
was a cooking class so international  
spouses could learn how to cook  
Thanksgiving dinner.

Saleha’s husband Qaisar Abbas, is  
currently the Director of Multi-Cultural  
Support Services at Florida Atlantic  
University in Boca Raton. Saleha and  
her twin sons, Shari Rizvi and Shazoo  
Rizvi live in Houghton while Qaisar  
Abbas lives in Florida, so she is man-
aging a new job, a big move, and a  
long-distance marriage - which she  
says at times is difficult. Her sons are  
both sophomores at MTU; Shari Rizvi  
is studying communications and  
Shazoo Rizvi is studying pre-law.

Welcome, Saleha!

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The TECH Course, located along the  
University’s Recreational Trails, is  
currently coordinated by the Office of  
Student Life.

Groups participating on the TECH  
Course have made the choice to par-
ticipate together. While on the TECH  
Course, groups can begin to identify  
strengths and weaknesses in individu-
als and in their group, as well as issue  
trust, leadership, diversity, cooperation,  
and communication.

The TECH Course currently serves  
academic courses, student organiza-
tions, athletic teams, campus depart-
ments, community groups, and corpo-
rate teams. A basic program incorpo-
rates four hours of activities, however  
shorter programs can be tailored to  
meet specific needs of the group/
organization. Participants are chal-
enged outside of their comfort zones,  
but never forced to do activities.  
They are given the chance to try  
potentially difficult tasks in a caring  
and supportive environment, recogniz-
ing that the attempt is more significant  
that the performance results.

For more information on the TECH  
Course please contact Rob Bishop,  
Assistant Director of Student Life -  
Student Organizations & Leadership.
Residence Life Conduct Board – A Successful Experiment
Submitted by Pat Gotschalk, Judicial Affairs

Beth Smock, Assistant Director of Student Life-Residence Life presides over more than 235 student conduct cases annually as a result of rules violations in the residence halls. During Spring semester 2005, she and Pat Gotschalk, Director of Judicial Affairs, began working on an idea to create a student board that would hear some of these cases. The principal idea was to create a mechanism for students to provide peer-to-peer feedback about student behavior, developing community standards and educating students about their responsibilities as members of the University community.

The experiment has turned out to be a success. After a selection process, including applications and references, thirteen students were selected as members of the first Residence Life Conduct Board (RLCB). Prior to beginning to hear cases, board members received training on hearing procedures, listening skills, and sanctioning. Three members sit on each hearing board, with one member chosen to serve as the chair. As a rule, one or two cases are heard during each session. Board members are rotated so the same students do not always hear cases together.

For the Fall 2005 semester the RLCB heard cases involving issues that included vandalism, noise, removing property from common areas, smoking in unauthorized areas and alcohol violations. A staff person (Beth or Pat) sits with each Board as the procedural officer, but the questioning is performed by the RLCB students and all decisions regarding responsibility for violations and sanctions are made by them. Good informal feedback has been received from students who appeared before the RLCB. Beth and Pat will also include some questions in the semi-annual Judicial Satisfaction Survey to gain additional information. The RLCB members also provided feedback at the end of the first semester, which will be incorporated into the policies and procedures. They all said that the RLCB provided a great leadership opportunity for them and they enjoyed serving the University community in this role.

Next semester new RLCB members will be recruited although many of the current members intend to stay on. If you know of a student living in one of the residence halls who would be a good candidate, please forward their name to Beth Smock at easmock@mtu.edu.

FOCUS Matches Personality & Skills to Career
by Jim Turnquist, Career Center

Guidance at the Career Center

Think about a job you may have had where you hated every moment you worked. When you got up in the morning and resented each and every moment of that day. When the magical 5:00 pm came along, you felt liberated. Now, think about doing this for 35 years, yes 35 years! Talk about developing stress related illnesses.

Imagine getting up to go to work and enjoying what you do each and every day! The anticipation of the challenges you’ll face brings about a feeling of excitement. What a great feeling. The day seems to fly by. You want to talk to people about what you have done; you are excited about the day’s accomplishments. This is a career not a job. A career is where you take the time to inventory your skills, especially your people skills. You incorporate those skills into your daily work. Now, you are doing something that reflects you, the real you.

Students come to Michigan Tech for a variety of reasons but expect to leave with a good paying job that will buy them the things they want. When they interview for a job, they do not see what this job will bring them in 5, 10, or 15 years. As they mature, their people skills surface and they start changing careers to match their inner most feelings. How can we help our students to focus on a career instead of a job?

The Career Center makes available to the students a program called F.A.S.T (Future Advancement for Students Today). Each step in this program gets a student to prepare for the career search process. “FOCUS”, an education and career planning system, assists students in finding a career that matches their personality as well as their skills. Upon completion of FOCUS, the student may sit down with someone from the Career Center to review the results and receive some guidance.

FOCUS is also available to staff, faculty and prospective students free of charge. Wouldn’t it be great if we all could have a career not a job? Do you have a job or a career? There is a saying “if you love what you do and do what you love, you will never work another day in your life” (author unknown). For any advisement with career assessment, please feel free to contact the Career Center at 487-2313.

The Student Affairs Newsletter Committee welcomes your thoughts. Please forward comments and suggestions to Lynda Heinonen at lheinone@mtu.edu.