



# CCE CURRENT

*A publication for alumni and friends of the College of Continuing Education*

Fall 2005



## **A BREATH OF FRESH AIR**

**Bachelor of Applied Science respiratory care students get advanced clinical experience at the Mayo Clinic**

**Online course work makes a quantum leap in the use of technology to enhance learning**

**Two high-profile Twin Cities writers offer an insider's perspective on world travel and Minnesota politics**

**College alumnus and author uncovers the truth about Betty Crocker**

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

# From the Dean



Dear alumni and friends:

One of this issue's articles profiles two of the College's instructors. It describes them as having "a whole lot of moxie." What a great word. It conjures up an old-fashioned sense of purpose and confidence – Mr. Smith takes on Washington; Eleanor Roosevelt crusades for human rights; Jackie Robinson breaks baseball's color barrier.

It strikes me that moxie is often the kind of quality that draws us in and is the foundation of relationships that energize and inspire us. And it is through these connections that we are able to shape a brighter future for ourselves and our communities.

This issue of *CCE Current* is devoted to bringing you stories about some of the energizing relationships in which we as a College are engaged. The College, and its students, thrive on these partnerships.

Valuable faculty and instructors from the University or the professional community help us develop and deliver courses. The University's other colleges and departments work with us to make the U's knowledge

resources accessible for the public and professional groups. Individual organizations as well as whole industries partner with us to develop degrees, certificates, and professional development programs that fulfill workforce needs or address skilled labor shortages in critical areas. We could not do all we do to meet lifelong learning needs without them.

Through our work, we have reaffirmed what most of us learned previously in life. Enduring partnerships are reciprocal ones. They are mutually rewarding, though some of the goals of the partners may be different. They are transparent, so there can be trust. And they work best when each partner offers strength, devotes attention, and brings *moxie* to the relationship. No problem there. In this issue alone, you'll find examples of Webster's very definition of the word:

- **Energy:** The College, and its partners, offer the latest knowledge to industries and individuals through an applied degree program – meaning Minnesotans can rest easy with their businesses, or their lives, in graduates' hands (pages 2-3).
- **Determination:** Master of Liberal Studies alum Susan Marks finds the recipe to success with her book about Betty Crocker (pages 8-9).
- **Courage:** Inter-College Program graduate Michele French creates a unique educational path, immerses herself in a new culture, and lives to tell – a sea of new alumni at Northrop Auditorium – about it (page 10).

- **Expertise:** Former *Star Tribune* editor Catherine Watson acts as a guide for aspiring travel writers while the paper's opinion writer, Lori Sturdevant, fields citizens' questions on Minnesota politics during College enrichment programs (pages 4-5). And, during the Great Conversations series, U faculty pair with world-renowned experts to take on tough issues – from averting urban disasters, to preserving our natural resources, transforming what it means to be retired. Packed houses of citizens take part in these dialogues, which promise to be catalysts for shaping society's future directions (page 11).

- **Know-How:** Technology, design, and curriculum delivery experts push the boundaries to bring University expertise to students around the world (pages 6-7).

Like the stories of purpose and confidence from an earlier era, these stories of today's change-makers – University faculty and staff, local experts, and students – energize and inspire me. I hope you too are proud to be a part of a community taking charge of its future, a community with a "whole lot of moxie."

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary L. Nichols  
Dean, College of Continuing Education  
University of Minnesota

# CCE CURRENT

Fall 2005

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Sam Marks, Tim Rummelhoff

**Cover:** Public art at the U of M. *The Scholars Walk* is the brainchild of Clinton Hewitt, associate professor of landscape architecture at the U of M, who was inspired by the University's sesquicentennial celebration. The walk is designed to honor the U of M's best and brightest.

Cover photo by Tim Rummelhoff

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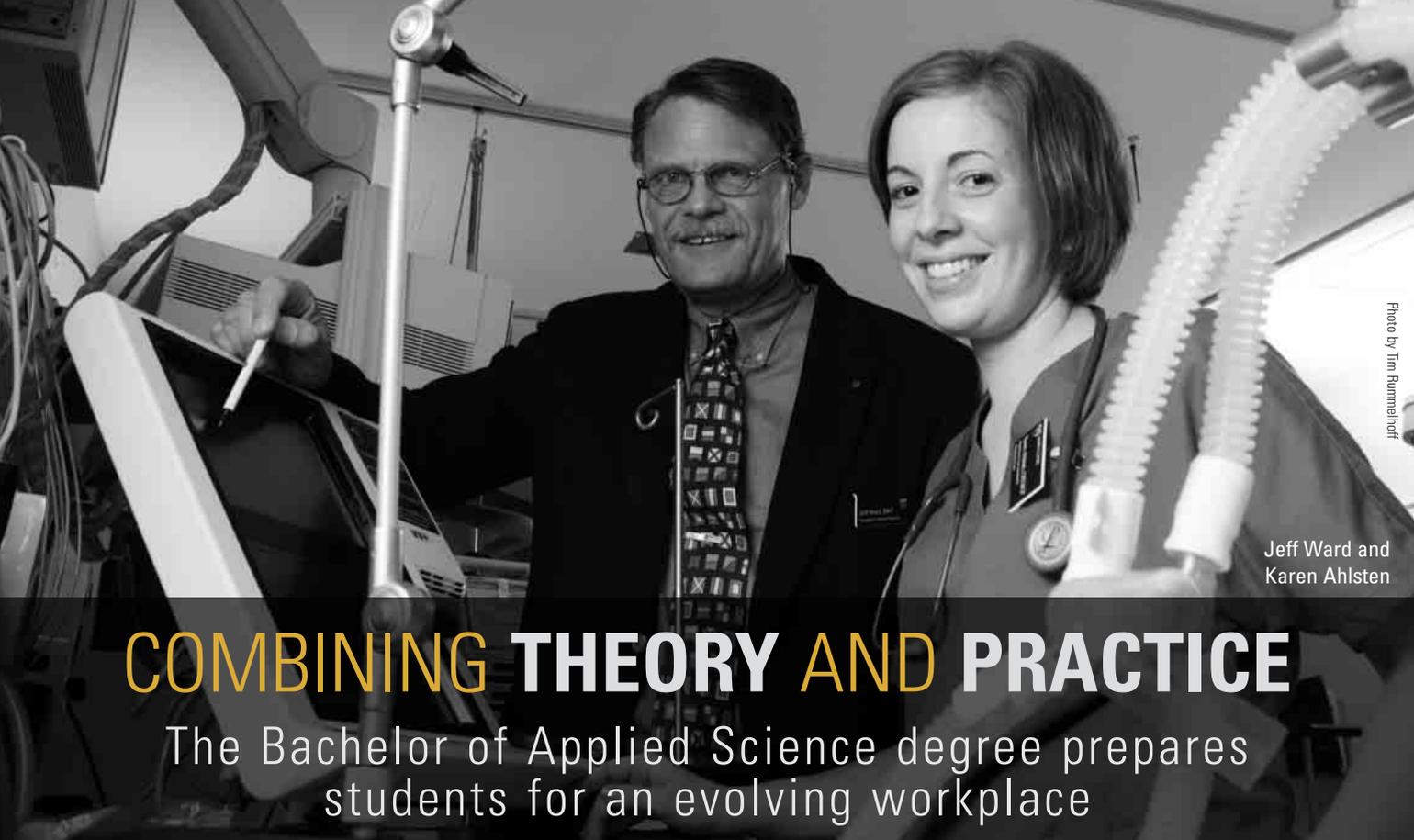


Photo by Tim Hummelhoff

Jeff Ward and Karen Ahlsten

# COMBINING THEORY AND PRACTICE

The Bachelor of Applied Science degree prepares students for an evolving workplace

**R**espiratory care is one of the fastest growing allied health fields. Physicians rely on respiratory care practitioners to assist with the diagnosis and treatment of patients who have asthma, emphysema, spinal cord injuries, heart-lung transplants, major trauma, and other serious conditions.

“Our work has become increasingly sophisticated. We used to evaluate lung function by having patients blow into a bag or a can submerged in water. Mechanical ventilators were either iron lungs or used washing machine technology. Today we perform very complex procedures, and most of the diagnostic testing and life support devices we use are supported by computer technology,” says Jeff Ward, director of the respiratory care program at Mayo School of Health Sciences in Rochester, one of five schools in the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine.

## Needed: higher-level skills

As respiratory care expanded in scope, so did the demands on practitioners, who traditionally entered the workforce with a two-year associate degree. Six years ago, Ward and his colleagues at Mayo asked respiratory care managers in the five-state region what the practitioners of the future would need to know.

Managers said they were looking for professionals with strong clinical skills and higher-level skills in communications, management, and research. “Students needed core courses in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences,” Ward says. “The associate degree was no longer enough.”

Students in Mayo’s radiation therapy program had similar needs. “Therapists should be well-rounded individuals who not only have excellent clinical skills, but also can move into educational, management, and research roles,” says program director Leila Bussman-Yeakel. She notes that the American Society of Radiologic Technologists has recommended baccalaureate-level preparation for therapists since 1996.

“These programs needed to address the evolution of the work environment. Graduates needed more education so they could think critically, write well, take leadership roles, and educate and communicate with patients and other staff members,” says Arnie Bigbee, assistant dean for administration at the Mayo School of Health Sciences. “But it wasn’t feasible for us to offer a four-year baccalaureate degree. So we decided to partner with the College of Continuing Education.”

## An applied degree

In the early 1990s, the College created the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) for working adults who wanted a degree that was directly applicable to careers in high-demand industries. Typical BAS students have already completed some college course work or even a two-year technical degree in their field. But they need higher-level skills to move into leadership positions.

BAS majors, such as information technology infrastructure and construction management, combine advanced courses in the field with education in management, business, and communication. And because BAS instructors have industry experience as well as strong academic backgrounds, they know how to combine hands-on instruction with theory, in a way that students can use on the job.

“The BAS aligns with the mission of a land-grant university to be responsive to the needs of the community,” says Bill VanEssendelft, director of the College’s degree and credit programs. “The program contributes to Minnesota’s economic growth because it meets industry’s need for a well-educated, professional workforce.”

## Knowledgeable workers

In addition to IT infrastructure and construction management, BAS majors

include clinical laboratory science and manufacturing technology. The College also partners with the University of Minnesota Medical Center, Fairview, to offer a major in radiation therapy.

According to Evon Haarklau, director of the BAS program, a high percentage of students who begin the program complete their degree. "These are career-minded, working adults," she says. "And when they finish the program, they are well prepared for good jobs that pay a high wage."

She notes that many students are combining their majors with course work in another area. A major in IT infrastructure, for example, may be complemented by courses in health care or construction management. A major in manufacturing technology may be enhanced by course work in food quality and safety.

"This mirrors the direction of the workplace," Haarklau says. "People don't live in silos with one narrow focus. Flexible, knowledgeable workers who have a multidisciplinary education are much more valuable to employers, clients, and themselves."

### The power of synergy

In fall 2004, the College of Continuing Education began offering BAS majors in respiratory care and radiation therapy in partnership with the Mayo School of Health Sciences. The programs combine upper-division University academic courses with professional classes and clinical experiences at Mayo Clinic. "These programs reflect the increasing professionalism of the allied health fields," Haarklau says.

The College created a core of 25 semester credits for both majors. Included are courses in clinical pharmacotherapy, research design, and writing, as well as "big picture" subjects like health care finance, delivery, management, and administration. Also required is a course on teaching in the health care setting. Some classes are taken online, so students can schedule them around their clinical work.

"Each institution is doing what it does best," says Faith Zimmerman, health sciences program director for the University of Minnesota Rochester. "Mayo is renowned for its clinical faculty and training. The U is well known for the quality of its undergraduate education. The resulting synergy means that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

### Learning in different ways

Karen Ahlsten had experience as a nursing assistant and an emergency medical technician. At Fergus Falls Community College, she took the science courses required for nursing school. But during a visit to the U of M in Rochester, she learned about the BAS in respiratory care, a field she hadn't considered.

After finishing the first year of the program, she is convinced she made the right choice. "Respiratory care allows you to become involved with patients. When you suction them or assist with a tracheotomy, you know you've really helped," she says.

She's equally enthusiastic about the BAS program: "It allows you to learn in different ways. The online courses work well for my learning style. And the U of M professors are very available to us."

**"It's a marriage of two great brands – the U and Mayo. Students who graduate from these programs will have gold-plated credentials." – Arnie Bigbee, assistant dean for administration at the Mayo School of Health Sciences**

In one course, Ahlsten and her fellow respiratory care students designed and carried out a research project. They have submitted the abstract for publication. She looks forward to taking courses in management and health care finance during her second year. "This is the kind of knowledge that will enable us to move into supervisory positions," she says.

Ahlsten also praises the hands-on clinical training. "It's amazing how much you learn in the first year," she says. "You go from knowing very little to putting tubes down someone's throat or setting them up on a ventilator."

### Learning from the best people

Emily Nelson discovered radiation therapy while completing a two-year degree in radiography at the Mayo School of Health Sciences. "I love radiation therapy because you really get to know patients. You work

with them over a long period. They're not just in and out," she says.



Emily Nelson

Like Ahlsten, Nelson enjoys the combination of academic courses and clinical training. "The BAS degree will help us be more well-rounded," she says. "Employers will look at it and say, 'This person went the extra mile.' They'll know that we've learned from the best people."

Mayo's Bigbee agrees. "It's a marriage of two great brands — the U and Mayo," he says. "Students who graduate from these programs will have gold-plated credentials."

## Thank you for your support

Thanks to the support of individual contributors, the College offers scholarships that allow Bachelor of Applied Science students to realize their educational dreams. Please contact Kathleen Davoli at 612-625-1253 or kdavoli@cce.umn.edu to learn more about how you can help students prepare for fulfilling careers in fields essential to society.

# Insight, experience, and a whole lot of **moxie**

High-profile Twin Cities experts spread wealth of knowledge as College of Continuing Education instructors

College of Continuing Education instructors come from varied backgrounds. While many are U of M professors, they are also business and community leaders, as well as highly successful innovators in creative and technological fields. What the best instructors have in common is a one-two punch of far-reaching knowledge and a passion for teaching.

To get a sense of what inspires high-profile experts to connect with adult learners, we profiled two *Star Tribune* writers who share decades of insight in the realms of travel writing and Minnesota politics.

## Catherine Watson World Traveler

Add up her frequent flyer miles and she's probably eligible for a free trip to the moon.

As a travel writer for the *Star Tribune* for nearly 30 years (she originated the Travel section in 1978), Catherine Watson has



Catherine Watson

been there, done that. And while she may not have been a born travel writer, she was certainly born to travel.

"My father was stationed in Europe during World War II when I was born," explained

Watson. "He came home and told me stories about Paris and London, and all these other places. He used to split a Coca-Cola with me, from one of those old green glass bottles, and clink glasses and tell me the French called it a *tête-à-tête*."

"My family believed in travel. We had this thirty-foot silver trailer, and my parents – along with five kids and my grandmother – would pack up every summer and be gone for five to six weeks. We went to every state, every Canadian province, all the way north to the Arctic Circle and south to the Guatemalan border."

Her experiences as an exchange student in high school (Germany) and college (Lebanon) instilled the belief that when you connect with other cultures, you can't hate them and they can't hate you. This belief became a motivating factor – and an underlying theme – in her writing career.

Watson revealed, "I wanted to give people a mini exchange student experience, so I wrote first-person and tried to write about

things that wouldn't be in guide books, things that were more emotional, more personal. I wanted to encourage readers to take more risks and go to places that stretch them. I wanted them to go farther and look more deeply into the culture. I wanted to encourage cross-cultural bonds."

She's certainly achieved these objectives, as her work for the *Star Tribune* has inspired many a reader to step beyond their comfort zone. She semi-retired last summer, but still freelances and still loves to travel. She has a new book out, *Roads Less Traveled – Dispatches from the Ends of the Earth* (Syren Book Co.), a collection of forty travel stories spanning thirty years and seven continents.

Her stories (and itineraries) typically veered far from the beaten path. "I always had the most success following whims. Before I left on a trip, my bosses would ask what I planned to write about. I would tell them something and then write something totally different when I got back, because you can't factor in serendipity till it happens. You never know when you're going to run into somebody and realize this is the story."

For the last 10 years, she has taught travel writing for the College's Split Rock Arts Program. "I never dreamed I'd teach for Split Rock," said Watson. "My friend Patricia Hampl had taught at Split Rock, and I spoke to her class and thought, 'Wow, wouldn't it be great to do that.'" The following year, she was invited to teach.

"I want students to come away with a sense that they can write, that they have many more ideas than they dream. I want them to look at a culture and write about it in a way that makes it alive for the audience. The trick to successful travel writing is to write in a personal way without writing about yourself. You're in there as a sort of personal guide, not the hero."

The results are impressive. A number of students have gone on to write book-length memoirs and get them published. But Watson feels the benefits are mutual. "Teaching each year at Split Rock makes me more revved up about what I do. My craft gets sharper. It's always hard work, but it's really refreshing for me. It's a huge difference from teaching undergraduates

because they want to be there. They're in that class because they have something to say and they want help saying it."

## Lori Sturdevant Political Guru

In February, the College's Compleat Scholar program offered a unique evening of political debate and enlightenment, "The Great Politics of the Great State of Minnesota," featuring guest speakers Arne Carlson, Tim Penny, Don Fraser, and other political heavyweights.



Lori Sturdevant

The program was organized and led in part by Lori Sturdevant, a reporter and opinion journalist who has covered state government and politics for more than twenty years at the *Star Tribune*.

"It was fun!" said Sturdevant. "We had a wide range of ages, good well-informed questions, and great conversation."

And what is the state of Minnesota politics?

"The Republican Party has moved to a much more conservative posture than it held 25 or 30 years ago," replied Sturdevant, "making the political environment more polarized. It's harder on that basis alone for the two parties to come to agreement."

With over a quarter century of experience covering some of Minnesota's most important political fracas, she's seen her share of memorable moments. "The first issue I covered in any serious way in 1979 was the fight to create the Metrodome,

and we're now involved in coverage to build its replacement. The 1990 gubernatorial election will always stand out as a particularly odd one given the fact that the Republican candidate had to withdraw in the last 10 days of the campaign, and then the candidate who replaced him, Arne Carlson, won. And then the career and sad loss of Paul Wellstone. I think he would have been a very important national voice right now."

"Covering Governor Rudy Perpich was always a wild ride because he was so energetic and so full of ideas. Going with him up to the West Edmonton Mall to meet the Ghermezian brothers, and to hear this crazy idea that we would build something bigger here in Bloomington, and then to watch that come to fruition and become sort of a Minnesota landmark; that was amazing!"

While Sturdevant is willing to take sides on an issue, she does not favor either political party. "I am not partisan by any means," she said. "I am an opinion journalist and my role, as I see it, is to sift through competing policies and argue for those that will produce the best outcome for Minnesota in the long run."

She believes in lifelong learning, in part as a means of maintaining economic viability. "For us to continue to have a growing, well-trained workforce, that's going to mean that some of the people currently in the workforce are going to have to be retrained, and this effort has to become a much higher priority issue for Minnesotans. The College of Continuing Education is part and parcel of that.

"We have done well in Minnesota to create a culture that prizes learning, that sees education of higher value than entertainment. The College of Continuing Education helps give people who have those values a chance to exercise them in their own lives."

*To learn more about the Split Rock Arts Program or Compleat Scholar, call 612-624-4000 or visit [www.cce.umn.edu/enrichment](http://www.cce.umn.edu/enrichment).*

# ROLL CALL WILL NEVER BE THE SAME

ONLINE LEARNING MAKES GIANT ADVANCES  
IN TECHNOLOGY, DESIGN, AND DELIVERY

An instructor living in Ireland begins his philosophy class by logging in to the discussion group. At the same time, a stay-at-home mom checks in to take an accounting quiz while her child naps. And an army reservist stationed in Bosnia completes his physics homework on his laptop to meet his goal of graduating next June.

This isn't a pipe dream. It's happening now.

The College of Continuing Education's Independent and Distance Learning program offers 60 online credit courses, ranging in duration from 14 weeks to 9 months, and covering a broad range of disciplines including foreign languages, humanities, sciences, business, health care, and music. These courses count toward a U of M degree, and participating students are eligible for financial aid.

The brains behind these 24-hour virtual classrooms are the College's Learning Technologies Unit, a gifted team of instructional designers, multimedia developers, course developers, and editors who are revolutionizing the manner in which knowledge is communicated, both online and in the classroom.

The Learning Technologies Unit's Director Eric Schnell explained, "In addition to our online courses, we can enhance traditional classroom courses by creating lessons for students to complete online. Or we can create Web-based or technology-enhanced learning tools to be used in the classroom, such as a 3-D model of a helium atom with electrons rotating around it that can be incorporated into a PowerPoint for a physics class."

During the last decade online enrollments have boomed, fueled by quantum leaps in technology, and all-encompassing convenience – students learn when they want, where they want, and at their own pace. This opens up educational opportunities for working professionals, stay-at-home parents, overseas travelers, night owls, and others whose schedules require a great degree of flexibility. They can attend class in their bunny slippers at home. For that matter, so can instructors.

While some skeptics question whether students really learn as much online as they do in a classroom, one could counter that learning is actually enhanced with the advent of online discussion groups, which foster a greater degree of student interaction and collaboration. It's as if they're in the same room, but they don't have to be there at the same time.

"Most anything you can do in a face-to-face class, you can do online," responded instructional designer Kim Ballard. "Some students find it more comfortable because they're shy, or perhaps they speak English as a second language. With online courses, they have a chance to collect their thoughts, revise them, and add to them."

Instructors can make a more accurate and comprehensive evaluation of a student's participation. If a student makes a comment in a classroom, there's no written record of it. As they participate in online discussions, the instructor can look back and see who said what.

The process for putting a course online is set in motion when a program director determines that a subject area is ripe for online delivery. An instructional designer will meet with the instructor to map out what they want students to get out of the course, and then they try to get creative with the possibilities. Sometimes, this takes the instructor by surprise.

Ballard, said, "Last week, I had a meeting with a professor, and he was asking me about the instructional strategies we would use for his online class. I told him he can divide the students into groups, each group can work on a problem, come up with a solution, and then present their answer so other students in the class can view, discuss, and critique it. He looked at me and said, 'You're talking about face to face, right?' I said, 'No, I'm talking about what you can do online,' and he was astounded."

After the course work is developed, an editor will pilot-

test it to make sure the navigation functions smoothly. Editor Rose Brandt explained, "One of the most important aspects of our work is determining whether the information is coming across, because if it doesn't make sense to us, it's probably not going to make sense to the students. So we will often find little gaps in the information, and get in touch with the instructor or our instructional designer to resolve the issue."

## Where they've been, where they're going

The University has offered distance education in the form of correspondence study since 1909, but the first Independent and Distance Learning course offered on the Internet was in 1995. Growth has been steady ever since, and in the coming year Schnell expects a 60 percent increase in work, converting 10 to 12 new courses from print (correspondence) to online due to an increase in demand, and creating an additional 10 to 13 brand-new online courses.

When online courses first got off the ground in the mid-'90s, the technology was primitive – mostly links and no discussion groups. "When I started working on online courses," said Brandt, "it was pretty much a matter of taking the printed study guide, converting it to HTML, and posting it on the Web."

It's not just that the technology today is more sophisticated, it's more interactive and instructional designers have learned to incorporate technology in ways that facilitate learning.

For example, 3-D models can be created which show a virtual hypodermic needle.

Students can drag it to the patient, and push and hold the mouse to inject. The Learning Technologies Unit can also model complex processes on video, such as a chemistry lab, and then create an

interactive test to see whether the student can replicate what was shown on the video.

Recently, Ballard and Brandt were working to convert a German course to the online environment. "We were struggling with the question of how to teach students to speak a new language in a distance learning setting," said Ballard. Drawing on our own experiences with flash cards in face-to-face language courses, we had the idea that we might be able to replicate this electronically.

We described what we wanted to Terry Schubring, one of our technical wizards, who turned vision into reality."

Now students can drill and practice vocabulary at will. Whenever the students see a

German sentence or vocabulary word in the course, they can click on a link to see how it's spelled and hear it spoken by a native German speaker.

The flash cards are examples of *learning objects* – fundamental tasks that can be applied to different processes. "Learning objects can be built in such a way that they can be used for anything," said Schnell.

"We'll use flash cards not only for the original purpose that they were developed, the German course, but for other languages, science courses, etc. The fundamental principle can be used with little modification. Likewise, the framework of a video demonstration can be easily reused."

As students' connections to the Internet get faster and faster, Schnell and his team will be able to create stronger multimedia content with video and graphics. They are constantly on the lookout for the latest technologies and trying to figure out new and better ways to assimilate them into online courses. According to Ballard, "One of the exciting new advances on the horizon is audio files that students can download to their MP3 player or iPod and listen to exercises or foreign language pronunciation, or the architectural qualities of a building on a field trip."

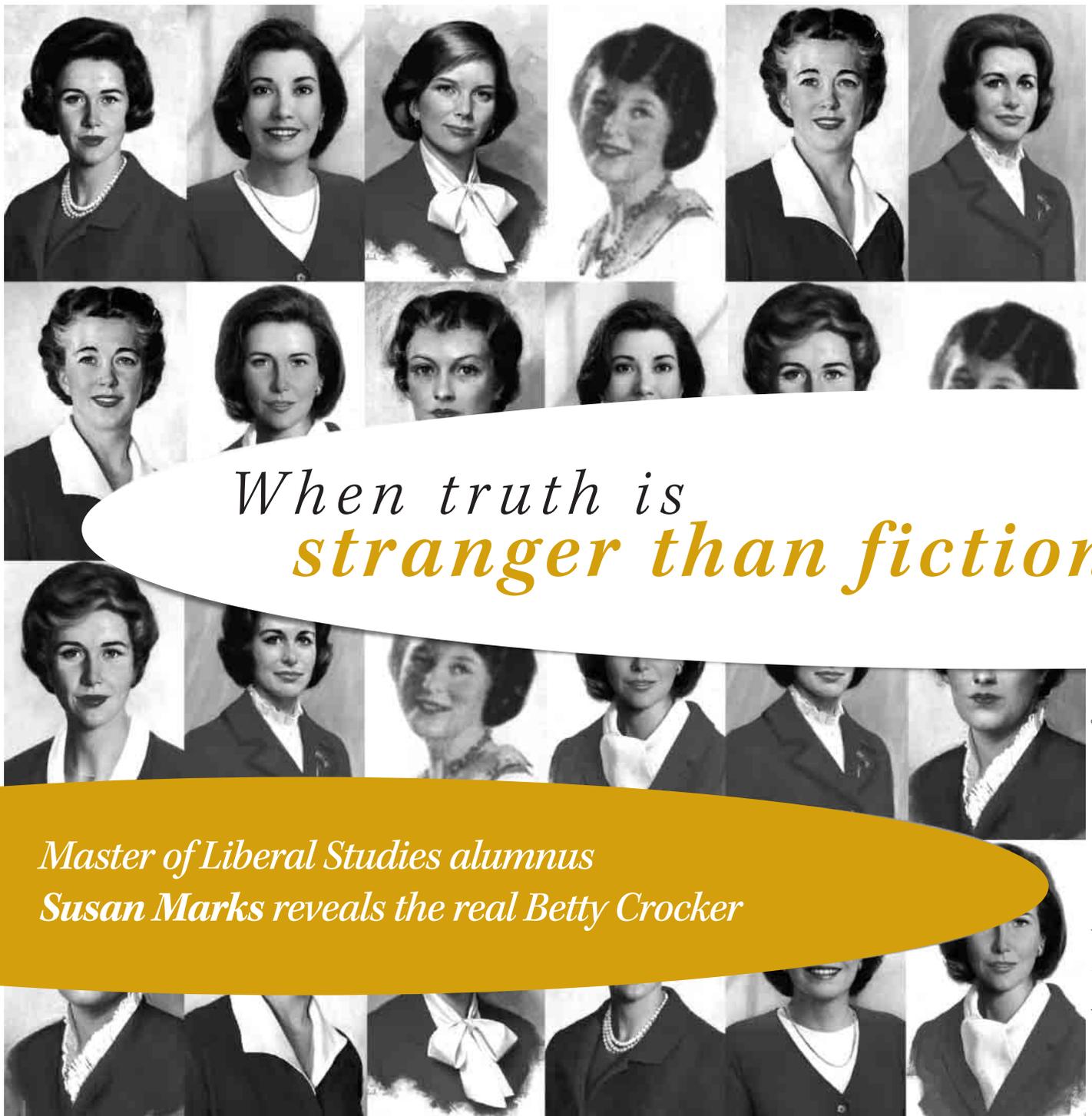
"It all boils down to educational impact," added Schnell. "Can we find a way to use media to help students learn? We're not about bells and whistles. If it's cool, that's a nice byproduct of teaching effectively, but it's not our primary concern. We want to do more courses, more effectively, with more interactivity. Students have grown up with it. They expect it."



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff



*When truth is  
stranger than fiction*

*Master of Liberal Studies alumna  
Susan Marks reveals the real Betty Crocker*

Images from *The Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food*, courtesy of Simon and Schuster

**B**orn in 1921 to a Minneapolis ad executive, Betty Crocker has lived an extraordinary life in full view of the American public. Yet some would argue her true story was kept hidden.

Her quick rise as a culinary icon crossed over into pop culture long before Martha Stewart. During the 1930s, she hung out with movie stars Clark Gable, Betty Davis, and Bing Crosby. Millions of listeners tuned into her radio show, "The Betty Crocker

Cooking School of the Air." In 1945, *Fortune* named her the second most popular woman in America, trumped only by Eleanor Roosevelt. And in 1951, her Big Red cookbook sold more copies than any other book except the *Bible*.

Today, at the age of 84, she has yet to spend one red cent of the millions she generated for General Mills. Thanks to numerous makeovers, she doesn't look a day over 35. She's still going strong, working every day,

and totally unburdened by the aging process the rest of us have to endure, because Betty Crocker is a figment of the imagination designed primarily to generate interest and sales for General Mills products.

Okay, so maybe you already knew Betty Crocker wasn't a real person. Most Minnesotans are keenly aware of this. But the ranks of true believers are substantial, and they can be rather fervent on the subject. In fact, the General Mills home

economists who gave tours of the Betty Crocker Kitchens actually kept Kleenex on hand for visitors who wept after learning their heroine was not of flesh and blood.

The story of how Betty Crocker came to be, and her impact on the way we view cooking and homemaking in America, has been revealed in a new book, *Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food*, by College of Continuing Education alumnus Susan Marks. A playful biography and fascinating cultural history, the book actually evolved from Marks' master's thesis on the same subject.

In 1998, Marks enrolled in the College of Continuing Education's Master of Liberal Studies (MLS). At the same time, she was a tour guide for the Minnesota Historical Society. "One of the sites I worked was the milling district of Minneapolis," recalled Marks. "I think I bored people to tears with my rendition of the flour milling process, but when I brought up Betty Crocker, people became much more interested and began to share their stories about her with me.

"At first, it was really lost on me. I thought, 'Don't they know this is just an advertisement.' I didn't understand why people would get so nostalgic and emotional about Betty Crocker. But then I realized that I was the one that wasn't getting it. There's this whole story behind Betty Crocker that transcends commercialism and advertising."

Since she had just enrolled in graduate school, Marks needed to pick a subject for her master's thesis that revolved around her three areas of concentration: history, American studies, and film studies. When she presented her idea for Betty Crocker, some of her advisers were enthusiastic, others were skeptical at first. Not realizing there was such a rich history with Betty Crocker, they wondered whether this was a truly academic story. In the end, Marks got the green light.

The research proved to be a massive undertaking. All in all, Marks scoured the General Mills archives for six years (three for her thesis, three more for the book), poring

through recipes, cookbooks, notes, and memos from the home economists, product images, old ads, internal General Mills memos, radio scripts, and more. She also interviewed former Betty Crocker staff and purchased old recipe booklets off eBay.

She struck gold with the letters. At the height of her popularity, Betty Crocker received 4,000-5,000 letters per day, or nearly 1.5 million per year, with a full-time staff of 10 people just to answer the letters. Unfortunately, General Mills didn't warehouse the letters, but they did save nearly 200 excerpts.



Photo by Sam Marks

Susan Marks

"People looked to her for answers to questions above and beyond cooking and baking," said Marks. "They looked to her for help with finances, depression, marriage problems, and time management. Even my grandma wrote a letter to Betty Crocker. The first time in my life I've been speechless was when my grandma presented this letter to me that she had gotten back from Betty Crocker more than 50 years ago."

Betty Crocker's "father," by the way, was Sam Gale, an advertising director for Washburn Crosby, which became General Mills in 1928. His company received many letters seeking advice on cooking and homemaking, which were answered by home economists but signed by Gale. He felt that the women who wrote to him could relate better to a woman, so he invented Betty Crocker.

America bought the Betty Crocker fantasy in much the same way that children buy into Santa Claus. There was always plenty of evidence to indicate Betty hailed from never-never land, but beliefs can be stubborn in the face of hard facts. For instance, different actresses portrayed her on radio and TV. And in print, her portrait has undergone several major facelifts since the 1930s.

"People seemed to believe what they wanted to believe about her," explained Marks. "General Mills was mostly open about it, but somehow it got past a lot of people. I constantly meet people who believe Betty is a real person."

Marks also examined the message that Betty Crocker sent to women. In the early years, Betty conveyed the sense that women should feel empowered as homemakers.

"Betty's staff of home economists, lovingly called Crockettes, did a lot of justice to homemaking. They believed that it resided on the edges of consciousness in American culture and that people didn't recognize it as very difficult work. And people certainly didn't give credit to women who worked both inside and outside the home, and acknowledge how difficult that was. So the Crockettes did a lot to promote women. Not that it was purely altruistic. They always had the bottom line intact, but I think they did much more good than bad."

When Marks earned her master's degree in 2001, she set out to transform her thesis into a book. "I planned on writing a book about it from the beginning," said Marks. "Betty possessed a mystique that captured the imagination of several generations. I knew the story was so deep and had so many angles that it could be a great book."

The success of the book, which has received considerable national attention since its publication in April, has inspired Marks to write another book while continuing to focus on her career as a documentary filmmaker. She writes, directs, and produces videos for the arts, nonprofit, and corporate projects. Among her credits, as you might guess, is a historical documentary film about Betty Crocker called *The Betty Mystique*.

Marks shares part of the credit for the book and her filmmaking career with the MLS program. She recalled, "I received constant encouragement and support from the staff and faculty, both when I was in school and today. They were completely devoted to the students and that was very different from every academic experience I had previously."

And what of Marks' culinary aspirations? "If I want an easy, fail-safe recipe, I bake Betty's Snickerdoodle cookie recipe. Or I whip up one of her Devils' Food SuperMoist cake mixes. Everyone asks me if it's a Betty Crocker cake and I pause and say, 'Is there any other kind?'"

To learn more about the Master of Liberal Studies program, call 612-626-8724 or visit [www.cce.umn.edu/mls](http://www.cce.umn.edu/mls).

# ALUMNI VOICES

*The College of Continuing Education serves a diverse body of highly committed students seeking uniquely individualized education. In Alumni Voices, we learn about a recent graduate's connection to the College and hear her story.*

Michele French, B.A., 2005

Inter-College Program, B.A. in Carlson School of Management and Spanish Studies

When I first began to consider going to college, the U was not my first choice. I was very nervous about a big school experience, but once I arrived on campus I found my niche. Soon, I made friends and joined a sorority. Being part of a group helped me feel more at home. My sorority house was like my home away from home.

As I look back, I think that going to school in a large city and at a Big 10 University helped me to mature. It really taught me how to survive in the real world. No one is there to hold your hand, so you have to learn how to be responsible for yourself.

I became interested in combining majors when I met a student adviser named Rick Marsden. From the get-go, he was energetic and understanding about my needs as a student. I had many interests and had a hard time narrowing them down to just *one*. That's why the Inter-College Program (ICP) was perfect for me!

I always knew I wanted to incorporate business management into my degree. I had the opportunity to do a lot of traveling

growing up, which probably sparked my interest in learning a different language. My dual majors in Carlson School of Management and Spanish Studies provided a nice balance.

In the spring of 2004, I spent a semester abroad in Toledo, Spain, which gave me a different perspective into the way people live. For instance, they go to work at 10 a.m., leave at 10:30 for coffee, go back for a couple hours, have lunch, leave at 2 p.m.,

come back at 5:00, and stay till 7:00. Also, they don't wait in line. Instead, they just gather in a cluster and

Looking back, I think going to college helped me develop my critical thinking skills and build rapport with my classmates and professors. These relationship-building skills, coupled with time-management skills, are especially important as I enter the working world.

Paying my own way through school was challenging, and any aid was helpful, especially with the costs of studying abroad. I was honored to receive a scholarship through the College and it was terrific to finally meet the woman who was responsible for my scholarship – Karin L. Larson [B.S., 1961, University College] – when we shared the stage at commencement.

The commencement ceremony and my opportunity to address the graduates was definitely the most exciting day of my U of M career. My parents were there along with relatives, friends, and others who are close to me.

Standing in front of so many people at

Northrop Auditorium was a very emotional experience. I was afraid I might get choked up, but I held it together. My family and friends were very proud. Some of my relatives couldn't believe how far the family generations have come in educational endeavors. This thought put the day in an even larger perspective. I thought the way the College handles commencement was exceptional. I was honored to have had such a special role in this event.

take turns. These cultural differences opened my eyes to a new way of life, one that has much less stress. It was powerful.

My semester abroad was a vital part of the Spanish Studies portion of my degree. It broadened my worldly knowledge and gave me a new sense of reality. I wouldn't trade this experience for any other. I would love to go again, but duty calls to work!



**"I had many interests and had a hard time narrowing them down to just *one*. That's why the Inter-College Program (ICP) was perfect for me!"**  
– Michele French

# Debate, analyze, question, counter, agree (if only “to disagree”). Repeat.

*Conversations move the community forward*

*This February, the U will launch its 2006 Great Conversations season featuring world-renowned faculty, their thought-provoking guests, and you.*

We live in an increasingly interconnected world. We can look ahead and see a populace graced with healthy, productive lives; safe, welcoming cities filled with culture and commerce; and an ecosystem teeming with diverse life. But we each need to shape how the community gets to that future.

Before there can be action, there needs to be conversation. Since 2002, nearly 15,000 Minnesotans have taken part in 21 ground-breaking discussions between the U’s faculty experts and their peers around the world – an inspiring group of visionary activists, political strategists, ground-breaking researchers, and Nobel and Pulitzer Prize-winners. These electric evening events are part of the College of Continuing Education’s Great Conversations series.

The series is gearing up for its 2006 season – a visionary look into the future. After the New Year, make a resolution to join these provocative discussions on issues affecting our lives.

## **February 28: Deborah Swackhamer,**

Director of the U’s Water Resources Research Institute, compares perspectives with award-winning Canadian ecologist **David Schindler** on how to protect water sources such as the Great Lakes for future generations.

**March 28: Ann Forsyth,** Director of the U’s Metropolitan Design Center, envisions the future of affordable housing with **Nicolas Retsinas,** current Director of Harvard’s Center for Housing Studies and former Federal Housing Commissioner for the Clinton administration.

**May 1:** In the wake of the devastating hurricanes in the Gulf Coast, **Judith Martin,** Director of the U’s Urban Studies Program, welcomes visionary Congressman **Earl Blumenauer,** founder of the House Livable Communities Task Force, to assess the unprecedented opportunity to rethink our urban environments.

**May 16: Phyllis Moen,** the U’s McKnight Presidential Chair in Sociology, is joined by **Marc Freedman,** author of *Prime Time: How Baby Boomers Will Revolutionize Retirement and Transform America*, for a lively discussion of the social forces reshaping retirement.

*All conversations take place at 7:30 p.m. at the Ted Mann Concert Hall. Series tickets are \$95 (\$80 for U of M faculty, staff, students, and UMAA members). Single event tickets are \$28.50 (\$23.50). Tickets can be ordered from the U of M Ticket Office at 612-624-2345. More information is available at [www.cce.umn.edu/conversations](http://www.cce.umn.edu/conversations).*

## Great Conversations’ Philanthropic Sponsors

- **University of Minnesota Foundation**  
– In recognition of the generosity of Presidents Club members
- **TIAA-CREF**  
– Financial Services for the Greater Good

## Great Conversations event inspires scholarship fund

On April 19, 2005, Joan T. Smith, a long-time supporter of the University and a member of the University’s Presidents Club walked into the Ted Mann hall looking forward to the Great Conversations discussion between U of M Regents Professor Allen Isaacman and human rights activist Graça Machel. The topic was the *Struggle and Hope for Southern Africa*. Smith, who has traveled extensively in Africa, left the hall so engaged and inspired that she decided to create an endowed scholarship at the College of Continuing Education - The Joan T. Smith Scholarship Fund Honoring Graça Machel.

Joan T. Smith, who received her master’s degree in business from the University and established a fellowship at the Carlson School of Management, has long been a champion of equal rights. She was one of the first female executives in the Twin Cities banking industry and felt a deep respect for Machel who grew up under the oppressive racial and gender discrimination of colonial rule in Mozambique. Graça Machel defied the odds by getting a college education and later serving as the first woman in the newly independent government in the position of Minister of Education and Culture. Machel is currently the Chancellor of the University of Cape

Town and serves on the boards of several international organizations including the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

The Joan T. Smith scholarship will support undergraduate students who are recent African immigrants, refugees, asylees, or citizens, who are living in the United States, admitted to the College of Continuing Education, and who have a financial need and show academic promise.

*For more information about lasting gifts that provide inspiration and opportunity for students, contact Kathleen Davoli at 612-625-1253 or [kdavoli@cce.umn.edu](mailto:kdavoli@cce.umn.edu).*

# Professional Education at the College expands with new programs

This fall, the College of Continuing Education unveiled programs for professionals interested in project management and Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). The new programs, along with five existing certificates, are concentrated learning experiences that strengthen participants' knowledge base and better their prospects for advancement.

## Project Management Certificate

The benefits of effective project management can be measured – substantially – on an organization's bottom line. Because projects that are managed efficiently make better use of resources and are more likely to have superior cost and on-time performance, demand for excellent project management skills training is on the rise.

For many years, the College has offered popular courses in project management for supervisors, managers, and individual

contributors to sharpen their project management skills.

"People wanted more," said Anne King, program director for the College, "so we tied our existing course work with new leadership and communications components to develop this new certificate. We've been hearing for some time that project management is a huge competency that people need to have."

Participants of the new program can complete four project management courses during five daylong sessions, in as little as three months or as long as two years.

## Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) Certification

The success of an IT program developed for a major local company sparked interest in opening it up to the general public. The concept of ITIL, which is the most

recognized framework for IT service management, originated in Great Britain and is based on the idea that IT departments need a unique management system to deal with their specific challenges.

"What ITIL does is teach IT managers best practices to deal with issues from a Help Desk to programming to database management to interaction with other departments," said Lori Graven, director of continuing professional education for the College.

The three key objectives of this ITIL certification program (accredited by the Information Systems Examination Board) are to learn to align IT services with the current and future needs of a business and its customers, to improve the quality of the IT services delivered, and to reduce the long-term cost of service provision.

*To learn more about professional education, call 612-624-4000, or visit [www.cce.umn.edu/professionaleducation](http://www.cce.umn.edu/professionaleducation).*

## Join the UMAA – Benefits for You and the "U"

The University of Minnesota Alumni Association (UMAA) and the College of Continuing Education are partnering to offer UMAA members savings on the following CCE programs: Compleat Scholar; Curiosity Camp; Great Conversations; Split Rock Arts Program; Continuing Professional Education courses; and career services workshops and consultations.

Additionally, the UMAA offers an extensive collection of valuable benefits, member-exclusive activities, and access to U of M

events. Whether you are planning a night out, a visit to campus, or a career change, you'll find the benefits enticing.

Members receive a subscription to the award-winning *Minnesota* magazine, access to an online alumni directory, special offers for performances at Northrop Auditorium and the University Theatre, membership savings at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, discounts at the U of M Bookstore and Gold Country stores, competitive insurance rates, and much more! Review a detailed list,

including College of Continuing Education program discounts, at [www.alumni.umn.edu/rewards](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/rewards).

UMAA programs like the Distinguished Teaching Awards, Mentor Connection, and student scholarships allow your UMAA membership to serve as a gift to the University community. Join the UMAA today and make a difference. Call us at 612-624-9658 or 800-UM-ALUMS (800-862-5867) or visit [www.alumni.umn.edu/membership](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/membership).

# From the Director of Development

What a pleasure it was to gather this year's list of contributors which you'll find on the last pages of this issue of *CCE Current*. I am proud to report that we had a fine group of over 500 like-minded individuals and organizations who gave their financial support to our students and our College through donations this past year. Thank you one and all!

Your commitment to our College's mission, to bring the vast knowledge resources of this great University to the public and the sense of responsibility you feel toward students who have the unique vision and drive to take the road less traveled, allows and encourages us to look to the future with hope and pride. Without your support this would not be possible. You have made a difference in the lives of our students and in the future of public education.

Thankfully a stalwart group of people and their company's matching programs have been supporting the Nolte-Miller

Scholarship for many years. We also know that some of you are new donors to the College, who have given to the Vital Aging or the Split Rock Arts Programs or to a particular scholarship program for the very first time. Many of you are alumni of the University Without Walls or the University College. Others of you are graduates of the University's current non-traditional degree programs: the Program for Individualized Learning, Inter-College Program, and the Master of Liberal Studies. Also, many of you are not alumni, but friends of the College who have a sense of responsibility towards the students and a need to make a difference through the power of education. And, we applaud you.

If you would like to join this laudable group and help our students and this College to grow in strength, we welcome you and have made it easy to do. Your gift envelope (provided with this newsletter) can be in your hands with just a flick of

your wrist. Write your check, add your stamp, and when you mail it, rest assured – in a few short days, every single dollar you have given will be put to work educating students and preparing them to make a real difference in the world. If you don't see a fund in the list that interests you, let me discuss them and other opportunities with you over coffee.

To our supporters we say again, thank you for your generosity. Your impact on the future is assured.

Warmest regards,



Kathleen Davoli  
Director of Development  
College of Continuing Education



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

## Scholarships change adults' lives You can make that possible

### New gifts from alumni to be doubled

The University is filled with visionaries, change-makers, and risk-takers. Stepping into that world for the first time – or for the first time in a long, long time – is daunting for most adults, even those with amazing, untapped potential. But, the rewards are extraordinary. Having the determination and courage to return to school as an adult can, well, breathe life into life.

But sometimes, even drive, ambition, and an iron-clad plan to juggle work, family, and school aren't enough. Financial barriers squelch dreams. But you can help.

Now, thanks to a special matching grant from the TCF Foundation, first time gifts from University alumni to the College of Continuing Education scholarship fund will be doubled.

Because of your contribution, motivated adults could find themselves with the invigorating challenges and life-changing opportunities found by all alumni during their time at the U. Sure, there will be hurried hikes across a sub-zero campus and all-night cram-a-thons. But, for these future U grads, it's the eclectic people, the lively energy, and the hope for the future that will stick with them for the rest of their lives.

If you are a U alum and want to give to the U for the first time, please consider donating to the College's scholarship funds (fund information at [www.cce.umn.edu/giving/scholarships.html](http://www.cce.umn.edu/giving/scholarships.html)). A gift of any size, be it \$25 or \$500\*, will be doubled and will make a real difference.

*\*New gifts of any size up to \$10,000 to a scholarship will be matched.*

### Gift matching program allows donors to create named funds

If you are able to make a gift of \$25,000, the President's *Matching Program for Scholarships* allows you to establish and name a scholarship fund. Then, the dollars awarded to students in scholarships will be *matched on a one-for-one basis*, doubling the impact of your gift.

*For information on these programs or other giving, call Kathleen Davoli at 612-625-1253 or e-mail [kdavoli@cce.umn.edu](mailto:kdavoli@cce.umn.edu).*

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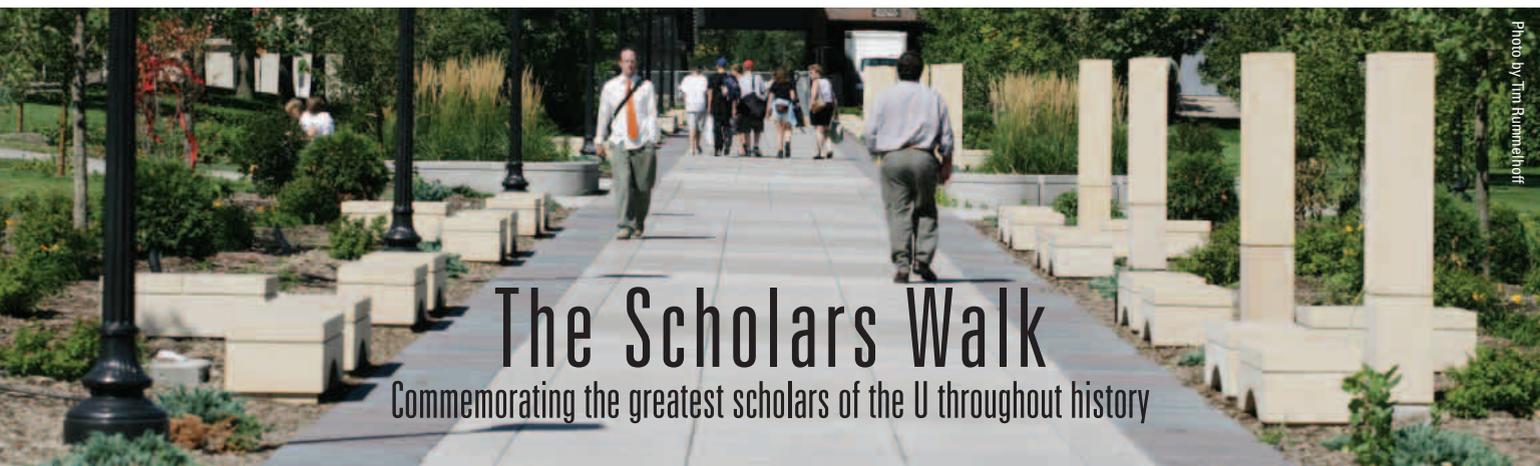


Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

# The Scholars Walk

Commemorating the greatest scholars of the U throughout history

The latest attraction to turn heads on campus isn't a new building or art installation. It's a distinctive walkway designed to celebrate the research and classroom accomplishments of the U's award-winning faculty and students by providing a prominent, permanent memorial to the honorees.

The Scholars Walk, scheduled to be completed next spring, will stretch from Walnut Street near the McNamara Alumni Center west to Appleby Hall and Pleasant Street – more than 2,200 feet long. Once completed, it will become the major east-west walkway on the East Bank campus, complementing Northrop Mall, which runs north-south.

The extra-wide walkway will be lined on either side by greenery, benches, and limestone monuments. The monuments will feature the honorees' names etched in glass along with famous quotations; and they will be lighted at night.

The final element, currently awaiting formal approval by the regents, will be the Discovery Wall – a giant blackboard 8 feet high and 265 feet long, displaying the major scholarly achievements of the U, such as the invention of the heart valve.

The project was privately funded by the Gateway Corporation, a nonprofit entity made up of the U of M Alumni Association, the University of Minnesota Foundation, and the Minnesota Medical Foundation. The Gateway Corporation also spearheaded funding of the McNamara Alumni Center and Gateway Plaza.

The Scholars Walk is the brainchild of Clinton Hewitt, associate professor of landscape architecture, who was inspired by the University's sesquicentennial celebration.

"The University hasn't had a place to commemorate some of the great scholars who have come through our institution during the last 150 years," said Larry Laukka, head of the Gateway Corporation.

"We wanted to design a space to inspire people – to let them discover the opportunities they have and the accomplishments of the University."

Among the 800-900 national and international award recipients recognized are the U's Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winners, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences winners, national academies inductees, and Rhodes, Truman, and Marshall Scholars. University award recipients recognized include the Regents Professors, McKnight Distinguished Professors, McKnight Presidential Chairs, Morse-Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Teachers, and the Outstanding Graduate and Professional Teachers. New honorees will be added each year.

One thing is for certain – the Scholars Walk will add a unique and inspirational component to the University's beautiful campus.