



# CCE CURRENT

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

Spring 2004

University, government, and industry partner to create a program for engineers

John Fibiger insures a bright future for students

**SUMMER PROGRAMS MAKE  
CAMPUS A HOT PLACE FOR ADULTS**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# From the Dean



Dear alumni and friends,

When *The Rise of the Creative Class* author Richard Florida wrote his book in 2002, he put to the test what those of us living in the Twin Cities have long felt – that this is a great place to live.

And, it turns out, it's getting better.

At our January Great Conversations event, Florida, guest of the U of M's President Bruininks, announced that when he first conducted the study for his book, the Twin Cities ranked 10th in a list of American cities with an economy fueled by creative thinkers. We've since hop scotched ahead three spaces to number seven.

"If [cities] want to grow, [they] need human capital. And for that, you need research

universities," proclaimed the Carnegie Mellon University professor who likened universities to meritocracies where his triumvirate of T's is achieved – tolerance, technology, and talent. "Talented people have a multiplier effect [on the economy]," explained Florida. And the College is devoted to that kind of higher math.

This May 8, the College will put talented people center stage – literally. Historic Northrop Auditorium will be the backdrop for a commencement ceremony to recognize students – many of whom are working adults – who identified a goal and moved toward it by completing one of the College's interdisciplinary or applied bachelor's degrees.

But commencement is just a stop along the way in each graduate's lifetime of learning. Talented individuals who pass through our doors use continuing education to have a "multiplier effect" on those around them and the state's economic vibrancy. Examples abound throughout this publication.

For example, a university-government-industry partnership has led to new systems engineering education to enable engineers to help their company improve productivity

and quality. And, you'll hear from a scholarship recipient who will feel forever rejuvenated by her experience in a week-long Split Rock Arts Program retreat.

Since it is the College's goal to connect the state's diverse community of adult learners and organizations with the University, these kinds of inspiring stories make my job a pleasure every day. I hope that you will enjoy them too and in turn share with us your thoughts on how we can foster learning in Minnesota's talented people and organizations.

It is with the help of the College's friends, donors, and alumni that we intend to heed Florida's parting warning: Even the strongest university will fail if it is not seamlessly connected to the community it serves.

With best regards,

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

## Vibrant minds, vibrant communities capture hearts of speakers, audience



January event kicked off 2004 Great Conversations season

It all comes down to surrounding yourself with creative people. They drive your business's strategy. They oversee your innovative medical procedures. They play the music,

create the art, and design the environments that lift your spirits.

And, they rub off on you – a spark of inspiration here, the adrenaline rush of competitive pressure there.

On January 20, an audience of over 600 people sat down with University of Minnesota President Robert Bruininks (pictured, left) and guest Richard Florida

(pictured, right), author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, for this season's first Great Conversations event to talk about nurturing creative communities.

According to Florida, first, people are drawn to a vibrant community, with orchestras and museums to be sure, but also with "street level" energy – "bands in cafes, art galleries, street musicians, and outdoor recreation." In other words, a sense of "place."

Jobs then follow. Florida illustrated with a story about a Hewlett-Packard executive who said that communities could offer them lots of monetary incentives to relocate, but they would only put a facility in a location with a pool of talented people. Since people are staying in a job, on average, three years, they aren't building their living choices on their work location

anymore, he argued. Instead, they want to move to a place that boasts numerous entertainment, social, and future work options.

"Places with excitement are winning the economic race," explained Florida. "If you want to grow, you need human capital. And for that you need universities, arts and cultural entities." Florida described universities as places that draw bright thinkers from all parts of society. This creates a community where members learn to respect and draw inspiration from the ideas of others and leaves us all surrounded by creative people.

For more information on future Great Conversations events, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/conversations](http://www.cce.umn.edu/conversations) or call 612-625-5760.

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Name change is the final step in a year-long process that signifies the U's renewed emphasis on the needs of the adult learner.

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Cover photo by Tim Rummelhoff

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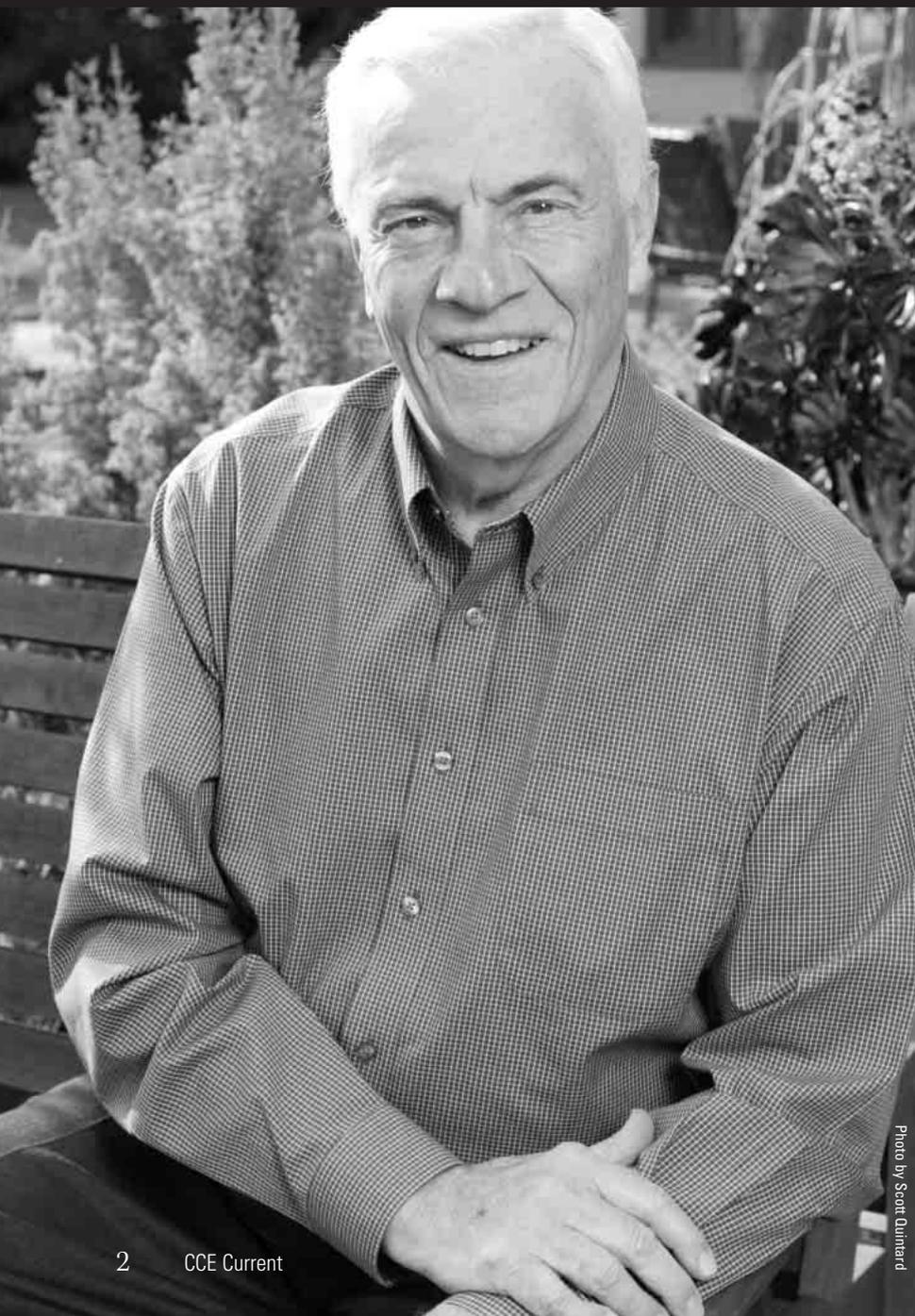
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# Insuring a bright future for students

Alumnus and insurance executive John Fibiger gives back to the U



*The University of Minnesota holds a very special place in the heart of John Fibiger.*

First, he spent his high school years on campus at University High. Then, with the assistance of a scholarship, he enrolled at the University. And lest we forget, he also met his wife, Barbara, at Northrop Auditorium during intermission at the opening concert of the Minneapolis Symphony's 1953 season.

"I went to the University basically because I won a \$300 scholarship," said Fibiger. "I started in the fall of 1949. The scholarship lasted seven quarters, and after it ended, I went into University College." University College later became the College of Continuing Education's Inter-College Program and Program for Individualized Learning.

As a student at University College, he was able to create a tailor-made program in business and mathematics that prepared him for his actuarial exams and a successful career as an insurance executive. He graduated summa cum laude in 1953, and received a master's degree in statistics from the U of M in 1954.

Fibiger was particularly grateful for the guidance he received from the Dean of University College, Dr. J.W. Buchta, who helped him map out his education and his future. Fibiger recalled, "I would meet regularly with Dean Buchta while I was in the program and defend what I was doing."

After graduating from the University, he entered a Ph. D. program at the University of Wisconsin, planning at the time to become a college professor. Instead, he married Barbara and, after army service, entered the world of insurance. John turned out to be a top-notch actuary with a head for probability and moved into management in 1970 with Bankers Life Insurance Co. of Nebraska. He later rose to the rank of President at New England Mutual in Boston from 1981 to 1989 and finished his career in 1997 as Chairman of the Transamerica Life Companies in Los Angeles.

In the mid-1990s, Fibiger and his wife attended an event at the Bel-Air Hotel,

Photo by Scott Quinard

where U of M President Mark Yudof and other University officials were in attendance. This meeting gave the Fibigers a notion. Fibiger explained, "My wife and I had been giving nominal gifts to the University for a number of years. We realized that we had benefited immensely from the support and generosity of the people of Minnesota, and we wanted to give something back. My education opened the door to everything. It made so much possible for us. Our decision to get involved and give at the Presidents Club level was based on our wanting to give back to others what the University gave to us."

Then in 1998, to enhance the undergraduate experience for students in the College of Continuing Education and the College of Human Ecology, of which Barbara is an alumna, John and Barbara established the John A. & Barbara M. Fibiger Endowment Fund and the Fibiger Award. This award allows students to participate in internships or research projects for which no other funds are available.

The Fibigers also support the Goldstein Gallery on the St. Paul campus and continue to make unrestricted gifts to the University of Minnesota Foundation. Their generosity has placed the couple in the University's Presidents Club at the Trustees Society level, an honor for donors whose gifts to the University of Minnesota total \$100,000 or more.

Talking with Fibiger about the couple's experiences at the U and their endowment, you can sense the pride in his voice. "I probably feel better about our contribution to the University than anything I've done. I'm very pleased that we've been able to do this, to know that these funds are being put to good use, and to meet the people who are the recipients of these awards. This is a better measure of success than titles or anything else. It makes you feel very blessed."

With their trademark modesty, the Fibigers trace their philanthropic efforts back to the assistance they received as students decades ago. "We were the beneficiaries in the past," said John, "and we feel very fortunate to be able to pass that on to another generation."

*Thank you to the Fibigers and other generous donors whose gifts help students achieve their goals.*

## Cross-disciplinary degree-seeker accepts the 2003-2004 Fibiger Award

From the moment Andy Haus stepped onto the U of M campus, he cared deeply about environmental issues. "I was aiming to be a 'green' architect," said Haus, "designing buildings with low environmental impact."

As his studies progressed, he shifted his attention away from architecture. Then he read about a cooperative approach in which businesses reduce waste and emissions and save money at the same time. Haus aspired to a career helping businesses adopt more earth-friendly practices.

To build a solid educational background in this endeavor required a cross-disciplinary degree program. He needed the flexibility to take classes in a wide array of subject matter, including business, environmental studies, and politics. The College of Continuing Education's Inter-College Program (ICP) satisfied his needs, and he's now one semester away from earning a B.S. in Sustainable Business Practices.

According to Haus, "There was no pre-planned major that would provide me with all the classes that I would need to truly understand the field. ICP was the only program that allowed me to pull all these courses together into one coherent package."

He drew on his studies last summer as he completed an internship with Minnesota Waste Wise, assisting businesses with waste-reduction. The real-world experiences in an internship can be extremely valuable to students – a fact recognized by John and Barbara Fibiger.

Haus first heard about the Fibiger Award – given for internships and research projects – from his adviser, Karolyn Redoutey. The application process involved writing an essay and getting a faculty recommendation. "When I received the award, I felt honored and grateful. I'm sure there were a number of good applications, and I was honored to be chosen as the recipient. I also felt very grateful to the Fibigers. I can't thank them enough for their generosity."

"After I graduate, I'm planning to work for a year or so and then go back to grad school to get an MBA, so I'll be able to work with more businesses and help them adopt pro-active environmental policies that are mutually beneficial to them and the environment."

## Commencement 2004 – May 8

They've worked hard – many of them having to balance the priorities of work, family, and their education. Now it's time to help them celebrate! Graduates of the Inter-College Program, the Program for Individualized Learning, and the Bachelor of Applied Science will be recognized for their determination and creativity upon completing their degree programs. The open ceremony, which begins at 10 a.m. on May 8, will be held at the historic Northrop Memorial Auditorium. The commencement speaker will be Dr. Reatha Clark King, former President and Board Chair of the General Mills Foundation.

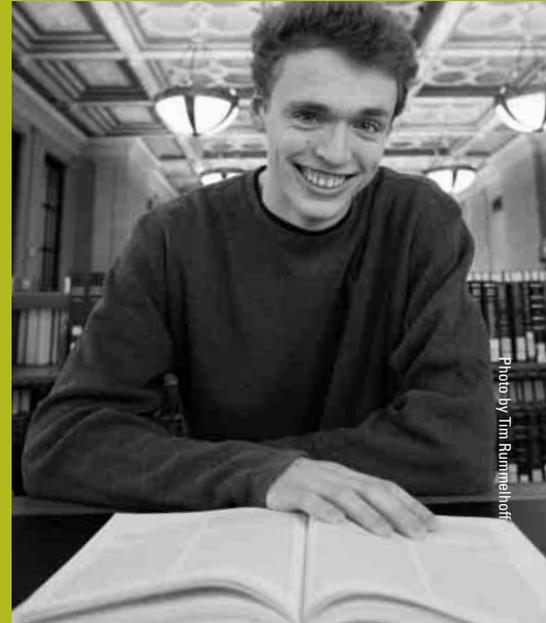


Photo by Tim Runnelhoff

# Summer programs make campus

## Week of inspiration resounds through a lifetime

### Split Rock Arts Program workshops offer adults a chance to recharge creativity

This summer, hundreds of artists, writers, and creativity-seekers from around the country will converge on the Twin Cities campus to spend a week immersed in a topic they love. This will be the Split Rock Arts Program's first year in the Twin Cities, but its 21st year offering adults the opportunity to learn under the instruction of world-class mentors and in the midst of others who share their passion.

Sherri Warner represents part of that history. Last year, she had the opportunity to study "The Sumptuous Book" with master artist Shereen LaPlantz. "Unless you've experienced it, it's hard to describe the effect of the uninterrupted art time. Everything you do feeds into something else. Ideas sprang forth so fast that I began to keep a small notebook with me at all times to write them down," explains Warner, who attended the program on the Mucke-Roff and Gilford & Esther Remington scholarships.

"For the first time, I realized what producing art as a life style could be. The experience left me more determined than ever to always make time to produce art. It showed me how creatively freeing it can be to participate in a community of artists. About a dozen of us still keep in touch through a book circle, where each month we exchange a limited edition handmade book."

This year, those art book aficionados can sign up for "Artists' Books: Ideas, Actions, and Transformations" and mingle with students from 46 other classes, such as "Drawing for the Truly Terrified," "Creating Fictional Worlds," "Navajo Weaving," "Speaking with Beads," and "Color: Working From Nature and Culture." A full range of topics – some geared toward the novice, while others are designed for those with more experience at their craft – will be offered the weeks of July 4 through August 8.

While most classes will be held for the first time on the Twin Cities campus, where participants can commute or stay in a new residence hall that overlooks the Mississippi and is within minutes of the Cities' eclectic mix of arts and cultural venues, some courses still will be held in Minnesota's beautiful North Woods at the University's Cloquet Forestry Center.

Those who cannot spare a week for themselves this summer can get a taste of the Split Rock experience at five inspiring "Soirées" featuring the program's renowned faculty. Visiting writers will give readings while master artists will discuss their work. The events will take place at 7 p.m. on Tuesdays July 13 through August 10 at the Coffman Union theater.

For more information, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/splitrockarts](http://www.cce.umn.edu/splitrockarts) or call 612-625-8100.



Sherri Warner's handmade book commemorating her time at the Split Rock Arts Program

# a hot place for adults

## A day's respite from routine re-energizes work, life

*Curiosity Camp introduces participants to new topics in a fun, hands-on way*

Your day-to-day work may have nothing to do with unraveling the makings of a who-done-it novel, getting your hands dirty in a gardening experiment, or mapping the life of a city. But, taking a day to nurture new interests may be the best thing you can do for your career and your life.

Curiosity Camp offers that opportunity.

Whether you choose to indulge in just one, or sign up for the whole four-part series, these interdisciplinary adventures may just leave you inspired to apply your re-emerging creativity in other aspects of your life.

"Why should kids have all the fun at summer camp? We created these day-long experiences to give adults an excuse to take a vacation day and explore an interesting topic," says Margy Ligon, Director of Personal Enrichment Programs at the U's College of Continuing Education. "They'll get a chance to hear from U experts, meet people with similar interests, and tour the quiet campus to discover beautiful gardens, fascinating laboratories, and 150 years of inspirational architecture and sculpture."

Workforce trends are showing that as a society we are taking fewer vacations while

the College's lifelong learners are citing a "lack of time" as their biggest barrier to education, according to Ligon. "We're hoping Curiosity Camp will encourage adults to take time for themselves and remember how incredibly stimulating and fun learning can be."

Topics Include: **Mapping the Life of A City** (June 30); **The Mysterious Agatha Christie** (July 13); **Gardening with a Guru** (July 28); and **Consuming Passions: Food and Culture** (August 11).

For complete information, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/curiosity](http://www.cce.umn.edu/curiosity) or call 612-624-4000.

## Left-brain thinking sparks award-winning teaching program

In days gone by, they said science was for nerds, geeks, and squares. Teachers have long been challenged with the task of making science fun and interesting. The U developed an unusual professional development workshop – Brain U – that succeeds in getting teachers and their students intrigued by teaching them about the human mind and what makes it tick.

Designed by the U's Department of Neuroscience and administered by the College of Continuing Education Summer Session program, Brain U is designed to provide fifth- through eighth-grade teachers with the knowledge and resources to guide an inquiry-based neuroscience curriculum for their students.

Teachers take an intensive, all-day, two-week summer course and then, during the school year, apply what they have learned with the aid of a follow-up consultation and visits to their schools by program staff who also conduct an "Explain Your Brain" school assembly and hands-on exhibit stations that students can visit.

Brain U was recognized by the North American Association of Summer Sessions (NAASS), taking first place in the category of credit programming – the College received the Creative and Innovative Award for 2003.

In addition to learning basic content, teacher participants modeled neuroscience class activities and experiments, visited working cellular neuroscience and developmental cognition laboratories, performed sheep brain dissections, learned to use hands-on teaching aids, and toured an MRI facility.

During the past four summers, more than 80 teacher participants have benefited from Brain U, and approximately 17,100 of their students. It's truly a collaborative effort, linking University faculty and research scientists in the neuroscience department, staff from the Science Museum of Minnesota, state- and district-level schools, and teachers throughout Minnesota (inner city, suburban, and rural). Brain U is grant-funded,

eliminating the need for U support. The National Institutes of Health's Science Education Partnership has committed to funding the program through 2007.

One participant, seventh-grade science teacher Caroline Waskow, said, "I thought it was a very valuable experience because I made connections with other teachers and the staff of the neuroscience department. It certainly improved and added to my science curriculum."

And what did her students learn? "They learned a lot about the brain and the scientific process," Waskow responded. And fun stuff such as experiments that determine whether a person balances better on their dominant or non-dominant foot, and "Who has better taste buds – old people or young people?"

Now that's cool.

# ALL SYSTEMS GO!

THE COLLEGE PARTNERS WITH BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT TO  
BOOST THE STATE'S ECONOMIC VITALITY



**W**hen defense contractor Lockheed Martin discovered a critical need for systems engineering education, they looked to the College of Continuing Education and governmental agencies to put together a

customized education solution that would be advantageous for Lockheed Martin, the College, and the state of Minnesota.

It all began with a communication problem. As technology has evolved over the last

30 years, engineers trained in different eras have come to speak different technical languages. Yet, when they're working together on a project, it's essential that they're on the same page. Systems engineering presents a common method

of communicating.

In the past, engineers worked independently of one another, building their piece of the project and handing it over to someone who would make it all fit together. They didn't have to understand others' roles, or communicate with them about how to estimate a project, for example.

Sal Lopiano, Lockheed Martin's systems engineering functional advocate, says the times are changing. "Today," he said, "you have to have a system-level perspective. You need to understand how your piece is going to be integrated."

Systems engineering helps all project participants understand their role in the big picture. Lopiano continued, "We are largely charged with making sure there's continuity across the entire life cycle of the project and across all layers of the organization. It involves developing systems architectures and organizational structures. It involves identifying what capabilities and functionality are needed and how you're going to implement it – whether or not you're going to develop components yourself or outsource them to suppliers or subcontractors."

Most importantly, systems engineering can greatly improve an organization's ability to compete in the marketplace by improving productivity and product quality. In Lockheed Martin's case, these improvements could boost revenue in the form of large government contracts.

In 2001, Lockheed Martin's facility in Eagan recognized that they would benefit greatly from a comprehensive program of systems engineering education. Initially, they talked to the agency now called the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), which oversees the state's premier job training program, the Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership (MJSP). MJSP is a partnership by which the state, through a competitive grant process, makes an investment with a company and partners with one of the state's institutions of higher education.

The Commissioner of DEED, Matt Kramer (pictured), also serves as MJSP's chairman. He explained some of the agencies' inner

workings. "Usually what happens is a local business is struggling with some sort of a training need. Instead of approaching this as one-time training, we approach it from a long-term perspective of how are you going to keep your workforce educated, how are you going to keep them motivated, how are you going to keep them employed, and thus your business competitive?"

Together, Lockheed Martin and the College of Continuing Education wrote a grant application to MJSP, and in February 2002, MJSP awarded the College \$399,000 to create an advanced, professional-level certificate by creating five courses and implementing them throughout a three-year span. Participants would acquire an understanding of advanced systems engineering theoretical concepts and go through case studies, simulations, and modeling that could be directly applied to their work.

The College developed five courses and identified a content expert for each of the topics. Next, program staff researched textbooks and materials to help develop the content. The training began in September 2002 and has served nearly 200 members of the Lockheed Martin's tactical systems, naval electronics, and surveillance systems divisions. All five courses were offered first in a classroom. These courses were captured by a video production crew, then converted to an online format.

Today, Lockheed is holding online classes in systems engineering with a mentor assigned to help the students complete their studies. This was the first opportunity for systems engineering professionals in Minnesota to enhance their skills through a comprehensive on-site academic program.

The training isn't complete, but it's already yielding positive results. Lopiano said, "People have been very pleased with what they've seen. One of the immediate benefits we've seen is that our engineers have come to appreciate how the work they do impacts others, and how the work that others do impacts their own work."

Kramer beams at the success of the program. "For a very modest investment on the part of the state, we now have a program that

can be used for companies and for students at the University of Minnesota. I look at this, and as far as I'm concerned, this is the epitome of good government investment. The University really stepped up to the plate. They understood the challenge, and they've put together an outstanding program.

"You end up with a classic triple-win for the state," Kramer continued. "The employer gets better-educated employees and thus is more competitive; the state gets an employer that is more competitive and thus is in the state for the long run providing jobs for our citizens; and the institution of higher education gets a new curriculum that they in turn can offer to other businesses."

Which, by the way, is currently in the works. Though the curriculum was designed specifically for Lockheed, it can be modified for other audiences. As the course work is developed online, the potential for other defense contractors inside and outside the U.S. becomes a viable opportunity. Plus, systems engineering is finding a place in more industries, and it's one of the fastest-growing professions in the state. As products become more sophisticated and more integrated, the greater the need for systems engineering.

Typically, when you improve the skill set of your employees, you improve their competitive position. Trained employees have better career opportunities by leveraging the training to receive better pay, and better opportunities for career advancement. Their employers become more competitive because their workers are more skilled, and they're providing jobs for the long haul.

Kramer summed it up. "That's where we're talking about long-term economic benefit for our citizens. This is, bar none, one of the best programs in the state of Minnesota."

# BUILT FROM THE GROUND UP

## CCE'S CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FORMS A SOLID FOUNDATION



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

The Twin Cities building boom is on, and the College of Continuing Education has responded to builders' needs for a better-trained workforce with degree and certificate programs in construction management.

Students can earn a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree, a four-year degree program that admits students who have completed their first two years at the U of M or a community college. Other options are the construction management minor or certificate program, which offer concentrated professional training.

These programs prepare students for a professional career by combining design and engineering concepts with management and business skills. Once students complete their studies, they find no shortage of job opportunities. Typically, they work for general contractors building industrial or commercial properties or high-end housing. Others are employed with subcontractors, developers, the highway department, school districts, and more – building everything from parking ramps to skyscrapers.

To ensure the program offers a practical, up-to-date curriculum, the College staff holds quarterly meetings with an advisory board consisting of members of the Twin Cities' largest builders, developers, and contractors. These industry leaders advise on the latest trends and discuss their expectations of new graduates in the workplace. They also serve as a networking resource for internships and scholarships.

Tom Sackett, a member of the advisory board and Vice President of Construction Management at Kraus-Anderson, describes the program's growth. "We see more students coming from diverse backgrounds. Some have experience in construction and are seeking to learn more skills and move up. Others have been out in the field and they want to move into the office and learn about bidding and contracting. Some are right out of high school."

One of the program's first graduates in the late 1990s, Bill Scherling, is now a project manager for McGough Construction. He chose the BAS program because of its convenience and flexibility. With a full-time day job, he took nearly all his classes in the evening.

Scherling said, "What was most beneficial was being in a position to work and go to school at the same time. I retained more because I could apply it in the workplace."

It also helps that many instructors are industry professionals. Kristin Kittel (pictured), a current BAS student who is also a project manager for Ryan Companies said, "In my opinion, the professors who have industry experience are more effective at offering understandable, relevant information."

And it is this practical learning that gives students a productivity edge. Advisory board member Jim Carver, Vice President of Egan Mechanical explained, "Labor productivity is one of the huge variables in our business. Your ability to improve is limited only by your imagination, energy, and desire to think outside the box. If you can improve that by 5 percent, you could double your profitability."

Applied learning. Flexible class times. Instructors who know the business. The College is breaking new ground educating Minnesota's next wave of construction managers.

# From the Director of Development

Dear Friends,

In the few years that I've been with the College, I've come to meet a group of the most amazing people. They are current and future business executives, doctors, accountants, health care managers, journalists, genealogists, and artists. The list goes on and on.

No matter how different their remarkable stories – working mothers, laid-off career-changers, multi-taskers holding down multiple jobs – they all have two things in common. They have received a scholarship and, through the College of Continuing Education, they are accessing the U's incredible wealth of resources to learn, grow, and achieve their dreams.

Many of these adult students received funding through the Nolte-Miller Scholarship. This fund, named for two prominent University deans, provides support for students who don't have access to the full array of financial aid opportunities available to full-time students because they don't meet all the traditional criteria.

Maybe they are testing the higher-education waters with a few classes, but are not yet accepted to a degree program. Or maybe the courses they need to enhance their career are offered, but not on a for-credit basis.

To all of you who contribute to scholarship funds, I want to thank you and share exciting news. Wise investing on the part of the University of Minnesota Foundation

helped the endowments achieve a strong return of 6.8 percent, within the top quartile of major nonpro t endowments.

As you read through this edition of *CCE Current*, please remember that you play an important role in these students' stories.

Best Regards,



Kathleen Davoli  
Director of Development  
College of Continuing Education



Photo by Tim Hummelhoff

## Alumni Voices

### **Bernard Gulachek, MLS 2001, College of Continuing Education**

*Director of Planning, Office of Information Technology, University of Minnesota*

I began taking graduate courses in 1997, then decided that I needed my master's degree. The Master of Liberal Studies (MLS) was perfect. It didn't force me into a prede ned "slot" that I didn't quite t because my interests seemed to cross a number of programs and disciplines. The MLS program enabled an interdisciplinary approach to my studies, which I feel is essential in today's complex world. My thesis focused on knowledge workers, the eld of information technology, and higher education. I argued that nurturing human capital is key to a strong economy and a strong society.

I've been working at the University of Minnesota since 1986, and was a technology operations director when I received my degree. Shortly after that, I was offered the position of Director of Planning in the Of ce of Information Technology. I truly believe that the research I did in innovation as part of the MLS program positioned me for this role, which requires a broad perspective.

Today I help plan institution-wide technologies and services and work with University

units as they form their adoption/migration strategies. Strategic institutional alignment with the right technologies can create greater ef ciencies within colleges and departments that free-up resources that can be reallocated to new strategic initiatives.

### **Betty Runyon, B.A. 1938, University College (now a part of the College of Continuing Education)**

*Coldwell Banker/Burnet Realtor*

We were raised in the 1930s. I don't know how my mother and father came up with the money, but father was determined that all his six children, one son and five daughters, should have a college education. My father was a University of Minnesota graduate in Electrical Engineering. In 1934, when I graduated from Derham Hall at the College of St. Catherine, my brother was a junior at the "U" in Chemical Engineering, so it was logical for me to go to the "U."

It also was the only university or college in town that offered an opportunity to explore my main interests. I wanted to study journalism, public relations, advertising, and speech so I enrolled in the S.L.A. (Science Literature and Arts). But these areas were represented in four different parts of the University, so as a junior I enrolled in University College where they

allowed students to combine various fields of study into an interdisciplinary degree.

After I graduated in 1938, I worked for a few years doing advertising at the Golden Rule, which was a department store in downtown St. Paul and also did freelance publicity for the St. Paul Civic Opera. In 1940 I married my husband G. Lee Runyon, who was a 1936 graduate from the U of M School of Business Administration. Pearl Harbor was attacked the next year and as he was a Second Lieutenant in the army reserves, he was called to service in the Pentagon. We moved to Washington, D.C., and after the war we returned to Minnesota and built a home in Highland Park.

Twenty years later, we put our house up for sale and I showed it to potential buyers. Our realtor said I was a natural realtor and so I decided to give it a try. I didn't want to work every day from 9 to 5 because we had five sons. Real estate allowed great flexibility and I found my journalism and public relations background helpful. Incidentally, we never sold our home. In the last 41 years, I've seen many changes in the real estate business. Versatility has been important in my real estate career, as it was in my education.

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Photo by Nancy Johnson

# The Continuing Education and Conference Center

## A habitat for learning

**A** The newly renamed Continuing Education and Conference Center (formerly the Earle Brown Center), which became part of the College of Continuing Education two years ago, has been a landmark of the St. Paul campus since 1978.

An average of 60,000 professionals per year come through its doors to take a break from the daily routine to update their knowledge and tap into the top thinkers in their field. The Center features eleven meeting rooms that serve up to 440 people for daytime, evening, and weekend events. It provides a distraction-free learning environment for

groups from all sectors, such as engineering, business, information technology, and government.

The name change is the final step in a year-long process that signifies the U's renewed emphasis on the needs of the adult learner. These enhancements included updating the Center's interior design, technological capabilities, and ergonomics to stay current with the needs of local meeting and conference planners and their audiences.

"The demand of planners these days has been convenience over extravagance," said

Ken Gay, Director of the Continuing Education and Conference Center. "With the U's long history of educational and technical excellence, we make events run smoother for the attendee and seamlessly for the client."

In a time when planners are being asked to do more with less, an emphasis on value-added services is proving popular – from managing meeting logistics to accessing leading U faculty and community experts to present industry trends and case studies at conferences. It all comes together at the Continuing Education and Conference Center.