Opening doors, changing lives

Adults turn to the University and find inspiration – for life and work.

Reader Survey Enclosed
Hello,

This year, over 5,500 students will graduate from the University. Each will be armed with knowledge and insight gleaned through years of contact with faculty who, through research discoveries, push the boundaries of their field; with fellow students possessing diverse worldviews; and with one of the most expansive data goldmines – the U’s library system – imaginable. What some of them may not realize: when it comes to learning, they’ve only just begun.

A life imaginatively lived is a life filled with learning.

For many adults, spring’s sense of excitement comes not from wondering about life after school, but from a return to learning. It’s the perfect time to indulge in a little introspection and to wonder “what if…”

What if I used some of my vacation days for a fun learning adventure and in the process “recharged” my sense of curiosity? What if I paved the way for professionals at my organization to get the education they need to be even more proficient at, invested in, and excited about their jobs? What if I tapped into the University’s leading minds and its network of resources to help change the paradigm of aging in America?

Through the College of Continuing Education, the University of Minnesota makes all these things possible. This spring, CCE Current illustrates the power of lifelong learning, not only on the individual, but also on his or her community. In this issue, you’ll learn of...

- College in the Schools (pages 4-5), the University’s “concurrent enrollment” program teaming U faculty with high school teachers to allow high-achieving juniors and seniors to test the rigors of college work right in their own schools. These strengthened teachers serve as a resource not only for their students, but also for their colleagues, leading to a positive “ripple effect” for the high school and beyond.

- Great Conversations (pages 2-3) and Vital Aging Network (page 11) programs geared toward helping individuals, employers, and communities thrive as America ages.

- Split Rock Arts Program (page 8) weeklong retreats that allow novice writers and artists to step away from the frenetic speed of daily life and celebrate a sense of place through art; and Curiosity Camp (page 9), a program of 21 one-day getaways for those of us who just love insider knowledge from the experts – on everything from wine to art to archaeology and Sherlock Holmes. Elementary, it is not.

- Teams from the University and local organizations that create professional development programs for specialized groups within the organization, which leads to a “multiplier” effect. Individuals bring their newfound knowledge to bear on complex project management projects or empower their employees with heightened management skills (pages 6-7).

The University is going through tremendous change as it charts a path toward becoming one of the world’s top three public research universities. Through the College of Continuing Education, local adults can access the U’s vast resources to enrich their lives. Through these interactions they can bring the excitement and knowledge gained from lifelong learning to their organizations and their community.

Please join me in the journey of learning for a lifetime.

Sincerely,

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

College receives prestigious awards for online programs

The Split Rock Arts Program’s Online Mentoring for Writers was one of two College of Continuing Education programs to receive a prestigious award from the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA). This was the 2006 Program of Excellence award, UCEA’s highest award in distance learning. It honors new and innovative programs that utilize one or more forms of instruction at a distance and are exemplary in meeting the needs of students.

Online Mentoring for Writers offers creative writers opportunities to work with mentors who are published writers and seasoned teachers. The program’s easy-to-use Web technology has connected over 200 clients to mentors at great distances. The program’s newest mentor, renowned poet and fiction writer Pablo Medina, will help clients who are working in Spanish, further enhancing the program’s reach and relevance.

German 1001: Beginning German I has been selected as the winner of UCEA’s Meritorious Course Award. This distance learning course, taught on an “extended term” (students have nine months to complete the course) by the U’s Virginia Steinhagen, was designed, developed, and produced by the College’s Learning Technologies staff.
2 Boom(ber)ing Success
Great Conversations explores the changing face of retirement.

4 Rigors and Rewards
High school teachers take specialized training from University faculty and transform their classrooms into U outposts.

6 Productive Partnerships
Continuing education consultants partner with local organizations to tailor specialized University education for their workforce.

8 Going Home Again Through Art
Novice artists and writers will examine a sense of place through three of the 47 Split Rock Arts Program workshops this summer.

9 One-day Wonders
This summer, Curiosity Camp expands its season to 21 fun “camps” for adults to take a vacation day and enjoy a field trip to the U.

10 Business Activist
Alum puts degree skills to work by finding ways to help his organizations help the community.

11 Thriving as America Ages
Vital Aging Network strengthens outreach activities.

13 From the Development Director
There are many causes to support. Only one is your alma mater.

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ince we first began living in human communities, conversation has been at the root of how we share knowledge, discover what we value, and make sense of the world. It is through conversation that mindsets are reshaped and life is made more interesting, friendly, and passionate. Such is the premise of the College of Continuing Education’s Great Conversations series. Since 2002, Great Conversations has connected more than 15,000 intellectually curious Minnesotans with University faculty and guest experts who pair up to discuss some of the most significant topics of the day. “The dialogue is never scripted,” explains Margy Ligon, Great Conversations’ producer and director of Personal Enrichment Programs for the College of Continuing Education. “It is a true conversation between peers in a comfortable environment that gives people the chance to be a ‘fly on the wall.’”

On May 16, Twin Cities’ audiences once again have the opportunity to participate with two innovative thinkers as they look through new lenses at the social forces reshaping retirement. This season finale features the U’s Phyllis Moen, Professor and McKnight Presidential Chair in the University’s sociology department, and Marc Freedman, founder and president of Civic Ventures, a national nonprofit organization that works to expand the contributions of older Americans to society. The Not So ‘Golden Years’

In the boom years following the end of World War II, increasing numbers of Americans began retiring. Cut off from work and much of society, these retirees assumed “roleless roles” with nothing really expected of them. People passed into retirement around age 65, with death often occurring soon after. In the 1950s, a transformation began, shifting the ideal of retirement into that of an “endless vacation.” “Retirement became part of the lock-step career mystique,” Moen explains. “People went from preparation (education) to continuous full-time employment throughout adulthood, to the ‘golden years’ of continuous leisure.”

This lock-step ideal, Moen reminds us, was possible only for white-collar and unionized blue-collar men; it was never a reality for women, minorities, immigrants, those with little education, or those with disabilities—people who moved in and out of the workforce often in jobs without retirement benefits. Nonetheless, the golden years idea became part of the culture, taken for granted. Yet, these years were often isolating and empty as no one really knew how to best occupy that time.

Since then, medical advances and lifestyle changes continue to increase longevity, and retirees now can expect another 10, 20, 30, or more years of good health after they retire from their career jobs. “Older workers confronting retirement are better educated, healthier, and more energetic than ever in history,” Moen says. “What has not changed is the fact that retirement largely remains a passage to the sidelines of society. Americans still view older people as dependent and requiring care. However, most older people are, and want to be, independent, but find it hard to fit in to our youth-oriented society.”

Now emerging is what Moen calls “converging divergences” as men and women of all ages and stages are experiencing lives that are definitely not lock-step. Moreover, Moen says, couples now have to coordinate two retirements and must customize their plans on a
moving platform of technological, economic, and organizational changes. “People know they will not experience their father’s retirement, but life after the career job, or the patchwork of jobs throughout adulthood, is fraught with ambiguity. Many people today feel ambivalent about when to retire and what to do with the second half of their lives.” Although many retirees want both leisure and the opportunity to make a contribution, they find they have no roadmap. “There’s a lot of financial planning and less of the kinds of creative lifestyle and life planning I’d like to see,” Moen explains. “It shouldn’t be age-graded. Life planning should go on at all ages and stages. It could be something offered by employers, libraries, universities. Institutions of higher education could make a real contribution by facilitating these ‘second acts’ of life.”

True, there is increasing recognition that retirement is not the final stage of life, but rather, an interlude between stages and a time for people to take a breath before moving on to the next chapter of their lives. However, there is still much question around what, exactly, the purpose should be during this time, Freedman says. What is becoming apparent, he adds, is that a large majority of older adults will continue to work in some fashion during their retirement years.

“There’s a lot of financial planning and less of the kinds of creative lifestyle and life planning I’d like to see.”

— Phyllis Moen, Professor and McKnight Presidential Chair in the University’s sociology department

arrangements that foster second acts or take advantage of this experienced, energetic, and growing segment of the population. Baby boomers are more technologically advanced than current retirees. The challenge is getting companies to see that they should invest in and hire older workers.”

“We must create an aging America that swaps the old leisure ideal for one that balances the joys and responsibilities of engagement across the life span.”

— Marc Freedman, founder and president of Civic Ventures

Institutions of higher education could make a real contribution by facilitating these ‘second acts’ of life.”

The philosophy behind Freedman’s Civic Ventures is that society truly cannot afford to overlook, or worse, write off an older population that should be an enormous resource. Thus, Civic Ventures works diligently to tap the talents and skills of older Americans by developing avenues for meaningful service to communities. One of the many Civic Ventures initiatives, The Next Chapter, provides resources for local organizations across the country, including the U’s own Vital Aging Network, that promote civic engagement of older adults and help people over 50 pursue new life options (for more information, see the Vital Aging Network article on page 11).

While organizations like Civic Ventures and the Vital Aging Network are steadily furthering a paradigm shift of what it means to age and thrive in our society, Moen says there is much work yet to do. “It’s great that all these ‘boomers’ are going to reinvent their second half of life, but it’s problematic given the fundamental mismatch between all these capable, experienced, energetic people and no place to go. America is better at technological inventions than social inventions. We need to invent new alternatives for second—even third and fourth—acts and new institutional arrangements that make it easy to learn about and choose alternatives. Our lock-step life course is a myth, and we need to recognize that fact and create new scenarios as citizens, as organizations.”

It is through public discussions such as Great Conversations, that individuals can take part in reshaping societal views of retirement. “Reinventing retirement will require a new generation of policies, pathways, and priorities,” Freedman says. “We must create an aging America that swaps the old leisure ideal for one that balances the joys and responsibilities of engagement across the life span.” In the end, he concludes, this might just create a society that works better for all generations.

Social Forces
Reshaping Retirement with Phyllis Moen and Marc Freedman

Tuesday, May 16, 7:30 p.m.
Ted Mann Concert Hall

Event tickets are $28.50 ($23.50 for U of M faculty, staff, students, and alumni association members). Tickets can be ordered from the U of M Ticket Office at 612-624-2345. For more information, visit www.cce.umn.edu/conversations.

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High school teachers are always looking for ways to help their students reach their full potential. For some Minnesota schools, participation in a special program provides select teachers with not only unique educational opportunities for their students, but also for themselves.

For 20 years, the University of Minnesota’s College of Continuing Education has offered College in the Schools (CIS), a “concurrent enrollment” program that enables high school teachers to teach regular U of M credit courses to students right in their own schools. Through CIS, students gain direct experience with the pace, academic standards, and individual responsibility inherent in college education and earn college credits transferable to many colleges and universities. Equally as important, though, is the connection CIS teachers have to the University of Minnesota and each other through ongoing, discipline-specific professional development.

Each year, CIS teacher cohorts gather on campus for a series of professional development workshops. Each discipline generally meets for a full-day workshop in the fall and spring and for a multi-day workshop in the summer. Through these U of M faculty-led sessions, provided at no charge to teachers or schools, CIS instructors develop professional relationships and share ideas and techniques with other CIS instructors and U faculty. In addition to these on-campus workshops, a CIS listserv enables instructors to connect at any time throughout the year. Teachers are also credited with professional development hours that can be applied to license recertification, and first-year CIS instructors are eligible for up to four tuition-free graduate credits. The ongoing relationships with the University faculty also provide CIS teachers with access to the latest research in their particular field.

“As high school teachers, we can’t always keep up with the research,” explains Mary Lenhardt, who has taught at Burnsville High School for 33 years and has taught CIS political science courses since 1997. “The resources we receive through CIS provide relevant, current material we can use the next week, or even the next day, in class.”

Mike Novak, veteran CIS American history instructor at Eden Valley-Watkins High School, credits CIS with rejuvenating his 35-year teaching career. Prior to his appointment with CIS, Novak says that he often left work completely drained and unsure how to motivate some of his students. CIS has changed his outlook. “I could retire any time now, but I’m not even close to being burned out, and don’t feel like I’m at the end of my career by any stretch.” Since partnering with CIS, Novak feels that he has become a better historian and a better teacher and says that from this, there’s a ripple effect that positively influences other teachers in his school.

The teacher-faculty benefit is a two-way street, adds Nate Sawyer, CIS communications
director. "Our faculty members value the exposure to secondary educators. They gain a real understanding of the high school culture and see firsthand what high school teachers deal with every day. Our faculty and CIS instructors become friends, colleagues, and partners, and there is tremendous professional growth on both sides that comes from these connections."

There are other opportunities outside of CIS for high-achieving high school students to earn college credits, some of which take student-leaders out of the high school and put them into college classrooms. These programs are typically referred to as Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), although both PSEO programs and CIS fall under Minnesota’s PSEO law. In most other states, high school students can be charged for participating in college credit programs, whether they are delivered on the high school or college campus. Minnesota is unusual in that its PSEO law prohibits public school students and their families from sharing the cost for such courses. "I'm sympathetic to the view that 'a free public education is a free public education,'" Sawyer explains. "Unfortunately, the law prevents some schools from getting involved in CIS because the district has no choice but to pay for each participating student."

"It baffles me why more schools don’t offer CIS courses," Novak says. "They look at the program and think it will cost them $131 per student to offer a CIS class without fully understanding that they are saving the per-pupil allotment they would lose if the student left the high school campus to take college courses. The dollars our school spends for our CIS courses are easily offset by the State dollars we keep."

Although concurrent enrollment and PSEO programs both expose high school seniors to the rigors of college course work, many people—including high school administrators, teachers, and parents—feel it is better for high school seniors to spend their last year among their peers. "CIS students can develop the skills necessary for the challenges and responsibilities of college courses without leaving our school," Lenhardt argues. "In turn, our high school benefit from the physical presence of these motivated young people and from the many ways they contribute to our school."

Of the other college-credit programs available to Minnesota high schools, both Novak and Lenhardt agree that CIS best meets the academic and fiscal needs of their schools. Burnsville High School shifted many of their Advanced Placement (AP) courses to CIS and now offers more CIS courses than any other school in Minnesota. One reason for this change, Lenhardt says, is that the AP program does not offer "real" college courses, but rather, teachers design the syllabus around a set of questions that may appear on the high-stakes test students take at the end of the course. Depending on the student's scores, colleges may or may not grant them college credit. CIS courses are actual University courses at the end of which students receive a grade on a permanent transcript. CIS also exposes students to college-type assessment, which is multiple, varied, and goes on throughout the semester. "Rather than having to 'teach to the test,' CIS facilitates creativity in the classroom and allows teachers to interject relevant, current topics," Lenhardt adds.

Unlike CIS, the AP program does not require its teachers to participate in ongoing professional development. "Through CIS, says Lenhardt, "teachers better themselves, the quality of teaching improves, and as a result, the students benefit in many ways. Although the classes can be challenging to teach, CIS has made these last years the most interesting of my career."

For more information on College in the Schools, visit www.cce.umn.edu/cis or call 612-625-1855.

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**At a Glance: College in the Schools**

College in the Schools (CIS) is a “concurrent enrollment” program of the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. It helps high-potential high school juniors and seniors take actual University courses in their high schools, taught by their own specially trained teachers. The program is a “win” for all involved.

Students take challenging courses. Their credits appear on an official University transcript. Families pay nothing for the credits. Teachers pair with U faculty for energizing professional development and in turn inspire their colleagues. The University helps students make a successful transition to postsecondary study and can offer the program “at cost” to school districts, which pay the teachers but keep their best pupils at their sites.
It is often said that the only constant in business is change. In an environment marked by explosive technology growth and increasing complexity, success these days requires organizations to engage the creativity, energy, and intelligence of its entire workforce. More than ever, businesses recognize the importance of arming their employees with the skills needed to meet changing workplace realities. Companies also recognize that not just any training will do. What’s needed are high-quality, outcome-driven programs that deliver practical information employees can apply immediately back in their workplace.

For more than 95 years, the College of Continuing Education has provided expertise in developing a wide range of professional education opportunities for working adults. With its connection to the wider university, the College has the unique ability of linking the University’s rich set of resources and industry experts to create and deliver educational programs tailored to meet unique company and industry needs. Because there’s more to employee training than the courses themselves, the College provides its business partners comprehensive client relationship management services that integrate program development, internal marketing, financial management, registration, evaluation, and progress tracking capabilities.

The combination of flexible, innovative services and depth of expertise attracted the attention of three particular organizations, each with a distinct set of professional development needs.

Marathon Petroleum: Improving productivity and morale through better management
As part of a company that prides itself on promoting from within, Marathon Petroleum Company’s St. Paul Park refinery found itself in a precarious situation. Many of Marathon’s employees, who excel at the technical side of their jobs, are promoted as supervisors and managers. This seems like good business practice, except that for many years, most of those promoted never had any formal supervisory or management training.

“We knew some of our supervisors just weren’t doing well with that part of their job,” explains Sarah Clark, human resources representative with Marathon. “Because we also understand that ineffective supervision is the primary reason people leave their jobs, we wanted to provide our supervisors with the tools and support they need to succeed.”

About a year ago, one newly-promoted supervisor was rather persistent in seeking management training, so Marathon sent her to the College of Continuing Education’s Principles of Supervision course. “She came back raving about the experience,” Clark explains. “So we sent a couple more employees to the course and soon realized that the College’s Supervision Certificate program provided a great way to
offer formal training to our supervisors and help us develop consistency across the entire team."

Using the existing supervision certificate program as a base, the College and Marathon worked together to create a unique curriculum that combines on-site courses offered at the refinery with open enrollment courses offered on the University’s St. Paul campus. The team identified three key areas in need of improvement—communication, interpersonal, and business skills—and built the training around those core elements. The program, which is fairly flexible to better accommodate employee work schedules, consists of 13 days of classroom instruction, including eight days of required courses and five days of electives.

It was the combination of on-site and open enrollment options that was most attractive to Marathon. "Holding courses at the refinery allows us to get a lot of employees through a course at one time, and that is very cost-effective for us," Clark says. "We also like the off-site component because it enables our employees to intermingle with peers from other companies and industries. This interaction is as valuable as the course itself."

Other benefits, she adds, include the high quality of faculty and course content and ease of administration. Employees receive a quarterly course catalog and select the courses they want that semester. Clark turns in a list of who wants what, and the College handles the formal registration and billing. In addition, Clark can monitor the progress of participants through reports provided by the University. "This makes administering the program really easy and seamless for me. Plus, our employees don’t have to worry about billing, registering, or keeping track of what classes they’ve taken."

Marathon plans to send about 40 of its supervisors through the program; each is expected to complete the program in approximately three years. After each course, participants meet with their manager to discuss what they learned and how they will apply this knowledge to their job. Upon completing the program, employees receive a certificate from the University of Minnesota. "The fact that our supervisors get something tangible from this program is a big selling point to them. And we know they come back to their jobs more competent and confident, which leads to better employee morale and increased productivity. Our management is pleased with the program, employees are excited about it, and I’m getting more positive feedback about a training program than I’ve ever received."

The US Postal Service: Transforming to meet changing business forces
The United States Postal Service (USPS) has a different set of challenges. Delivering hundreds of millions of pieces of mail a day to hundreds of millions of delivery points six days a week is an enormous undertaking. Couple this with the fact that the business environment in which the Postal Service operates changes almost daily and competition from e-mail and private operations has forced the organization to adjust its business strategy and modernize its products and services. Such big changes have required a newly energized, customer-focused workforce.

To meet these changing business demands, the USPS Northland district, which provides postal services for most of Minnesota and part of Wisconsin, partnered with the University of Minnesota’s College of Continuing Education to create a training program geared to empower managers and supervisors and provide the skills necessary for them to lead with confidence in times of change and uncertainty.

Working together, the College and USPS designed a specialized leadership program called Shared Values—Creating Accountability for Success. This course ties together many needs into a succinct, one-day program that last year was presented 26 times to nearly 800 supervisory employees at various locations in the Northland district. After program review with senior management, USPS and College team members revised and continually improved each subsequent course.

Through this program, USPS managers have gained a greater understanding of the effect their shared values have on the rest of the organization by learning methods to motivate employees and measure what matters. Their leadership skills have also been strengthened by learning how to apply delegation, coaching, and leadership principles on the job.

Word spread among managers about these positive results, and the Northland district’s achievements from this initiative led to a plan to deliver the course to 300 employees in the Mid-American district of Missouri and Kansas City.

USPS and College team members are now collaborating on a follow-up course called Leadership Principles for Individuals and Groups, which will cover situational leadership, focus group management, and time management skills. All of the courses Continued on page 12.
Remember when you didn’t have to wander far from your own backyard to discover something truly one of a kind? It’s a different story today as blank-faced “Big Box” stores cover our country from coast to coast, paving over what once made a neighborhood, a city, a region unique. We’re a nation fallen victim to ‘mall-dom’ where there are more chains than charm, and it’s virtually impossible to find the special flavor that identifies a place. Those who wax nostalgic for bygone landscapes of place and play can take comfort in knowing that through art, they may find their way home.

Throughout the summer, the College of Continuing Education’s Split Rock Arts Program offers adults 47 weeklong and three-day workshops in creative writing, visual art, and design. These workshops, which are taught by renowned artists and writers, run June 18 through August 4. Some Split Rock offerings are geared to individuals advanced in a particular artistic discipline or area of interest. However, the program also includes several workshops geared to the novice. For example, artists Kinji Akagawa and Mara Adamitz Scrutie, and writer Alison Hawthorne Deming offer interested participants three distinct opportunities to explore and rediscover a “sense of place.”

Kinji Akagawa
Site Specific: Eco/Aesthetics and Environment
July 9-14

From the time he was a small boy in 1950s Japan, Kinji Akagawa was keenly aware of his purpose in life: to be an artist. He recognized a connection that drew him into the world of senses and emotions. Today, Akagawa is an internationally known sculptor and widely regarded as one of the United States’ most prominent public artists. His work combines the elegant simplicity of traditional Japanese art with a deep concern for the impact of art on public places, and explores the contrasts between public and private, inside and outside, natural and made.

His workshop, Site Specific: Eco/Aesthetics and Environment, will focus on the creation of sculpture within the natural environment while using ecology as a foundation for participants’ thinking. Students will learn how to use this ecological journey to express themselves. “It is from self-expression that we discover our authenticity and can then fully participate in the world,” Akagawa says.

In his teaching, Akagawa aims to impart a sense that art is not just an object or a thing, but it is a relationship with the world. “Art is not a static notion of looking at something and calling it beautiful,” he explains. “Rather, it is the dynamic view of looking at the relationships. I encourage my students to become conscious of the interrelatedness in our beautiful world and then to do their work accordingly.”

Alison Hawthorne Deming
The Power of Place: A Writing Retreat at the Cloquet Forestry Center
July 16-21

“We all have experiences of loss of the places that we love. Art is one way we heal from this,” says author and creative writing professor Alison Hawthorne Deming. “It’s not just the ability to express our feelings of loss, but also to search in our writing for new things that give meaning to our lives in the face of change. When a place that you treasure is lost, you can hold it forever and honor it by writing a poem or essay.”

In The Power of Place: A Writing Retreat at the Cloquet Forestry Center, participants have the chance to step away from the velocity of their daily lives for a time of reflection and interaction with a particular place, the Cloquet Forestry Center. The week will begin with a tour led by a local naturalist, so that the group can get its bearings among the old-growth red and white pines of this spectacular preserve. Students will then combine observational abilities with imaginative abilities—memory, dreams, stories, folklore— to draft poems and essays.

“As writers, we study place through the lens of our senses, the love that people bring through place,” Deming explains. “The Continued on page 12.

Split Rock Soirées

If you are unable to attend a workshop, whet your appetite for art Tuesday evenings (7 p.m.) at a Split Rock Soirée. These intimate events feature readings and artists’ talks celebrating the artistic accomplishments, energy, and talents of the 2006 Split Rock faculty. Each lively discussion is followed by a reception. Dates are June 27 (McNeal Hall Auditorium, St. Paul campus), July 11, 18, 25 and August 1 (Coffman Union Theater, Minneapolis campus). For more information, call 612-625-8100 or e-mail srap@cce.umn.edu.
If you long to break away from the routine of work, but can’t spare much time away, the U has an intriguing opportunity. Come spend the day learning a little more about a favorite topic or exploring something completely new. This summer, the popular Curiosity Camp program will offer an expanded season of 21 daylong retreats led by University and community experts. These learning adventures combine discussion and interaction centered on a specific theme from the art of cheese making to shop talk with a Sherlock Holmes historian and everything in between. Here’s a sneak peek of just three of the offerings:

**Come One, Come All to Judyland**
**June 1, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.**
**Continuing Education and Conference Center, St. Paul campus**
Meet award-winning sculptor, Judy Onofrio, on a guided field trip to her Rochester home, studio, and the sculpture-filled garden she’s affectionately named “Judyland.” U of M Professor Rob Silberman and Emily Galusha, director of the Northern Clay Center, put Onofrio’s work in context with illustrated lectures and lively discussion. While in Rochester, you’ll also visit the retrospective exhibition of Onofrio’s magical work, “Come One, Come All,” at the Rochester Art Center.

**Inside the Raptor Center: Helping Hawks and Owls**
**July 19, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.**
**Continuing Education and Conference Center, St. Paul campus**
This is a rare opportunity to witness and understand how wildlife vets help rescue and rehab Minnesota’s birds of prey. Tour the normally off-limits clinic and get up close and personal with the Center’s renowned raptor specialists. You’ll have a chance to watch medical procedures performed and to participate in a variety of hands-on activities. Learn how humans negatively affect these wild birds and understand the role you play in positive change.

**Wines Made in Minnesota**
**August 7, 1-7 p.m.**
**Horticulture Research Center, Excelsior**
Take a trip to the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum where you’ll join experts from the U’s Horticultural Research Center who are forging a new frontier in cold-climate grape-breeding and winemaking. Campers in this class will tour the research vineyards and enology lab and then taste and compare a variety of Minnesota wines made from some of the U’s newest grape cultivars.

Tuition is $120 per session ($95 for U of M faculty, staff, students, and Alumni Association members). For registration or more information, visit www.cce.umn.edu/curiosity or call 612-624-4000.

Revive Your Sense of Curiosity with a Day of Productive Play

*Check out Curiosity Camp 2006: A Unique Summer Adventure for Inquisitive, and Busy, Adults*
Jesse Helin
2004 Inter-College Program graduate

It was my junior year and I had come as far as I possibly could without actually pursuing a degree. I had taken many social justice and public policy classes, but no specific program had caught my eye. That is when a classmate referred me to the College of Continuing Education and the Inter-College Program (ICP). The day I met Bob Danforth, and he became my adviser, the party officially ended.

Within ICP I chose a thematic format. I used the traditional concentrations of the Leadership Minor and Communication Studies and wove them together with a Social Change component. Once I chose my degree my goal became to get a job in nonprofit management. ICP enabled me to take my passions and hand tailor a truly meaningful degree. Through this process I was able to set goals and have a reasonable expectation of achieving them.

Upon graduation in the winter of 2004, I moved home to La Crosse, Wisconsin, for a summer filled with countless weddings. In March of 2005 I started working with Logistics Health (LHI), a La Crosse-based medical services company. I started in the warehouse to get my foot in the door. Once I was in, I immediately began planning community initiatives within the company. First, I organized a team from LHI to participate in a local neighborhood clean-up project entitled Neighbor’s Day. I was able to recruit a group of 12 volunteers from throughout the company. This activity allowed individuals to meet from different departments and build a new sense of community with our company, and allowed me to get a better feel of our corporate climate. Other initiatives included assistance in starting a recycling program and working on a local United Way campaign.

Although I did not start off my career in a nonprofit, I was able to address social and environmental issues within a corporate setting. This leads me to a lesson that I learned my senior year and is a focal point driving my personal life and career. This story stems from a volunteer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) during the Civil Rights Movement. As SNCC started to become more radical and transform into the Black Panthers, it became less and less a place for white people. One dedicated white woman was at a crossroads as to what she should do. She no longer belonged in the movement but was still dedicated to the cause. She received this advice: Go home and work within your own community. You do not need to work with black people and tell them that they are oppressed; they are aware of it. Take what you have learned and work with your fellow white folk. If you can show them that they are oppressive, that is where you can truly make change.

By accepting and living by this principle, I now know that I have chosen the harder path; however, it has allowed me to make change in the corporate world. I also know that this path will allow me to fully embrace the lessons I learned while earning my degree. The skills I acquired while building my degree have been monumental in starting my career.

In November I accepted a new position within my company as a project manager. I have relocated to Seattle, Washington, and am in the process of trying to find a community organization to connect with here. In the meantime, I am improving my computer and financial skills to further prepare me for a career in nonprofit management. The College of Continuing Education and ICP prepared me for success. By choosing my own classes I was able to prepare for my future in a truly meaningful way. The process and constructive criticism from Bob Danforth taught me to take pride in my work and work diligently towards achieving goals. Now, a year removed from college, I can really see how ICP prepared me for life.”

– Jesse Helin
To many people, being old and being dependent are synonymous, but that belief is not supported by facts. Today, three-fourths of older adults report they are active and feeling healthy into their 80s, according to the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging. These active, older adults are also seeking quality information and opportunities to maintain their well-being and stay connected in their communities.

The College of Continuing Education’s Vital Aging Network (VAN) has become a valuable resource for those active, older adults. VAN challenges ageism stereotypes and provides resources that promote self-reliance, community engagement, and better quality of life. However, it is not structured like a traditional program-based organization; but rather, it is a network of networks that facilitates information sharing between older adults and organizations that serve them.

Through its comprehensive Web site (www.van.umn.edu) and monthly electronic bulletin sent to 1,100 older adults and human service staff, VAN provides a continual stream of reliable information to vital agers across Minnesota and beyond. VAN also hosts monthly forums in the Twin Cities featuring guest speakers who talk on a variety of vital aging-related topics including housing, transportation, arts, civic engagement, spirituality, physical and mental health, and continuing education.

“VAN provides information on a wide range of topics so that older adults know they have choices and can feel empowered to take charge of their own well-being,” says Kris Orluck, VAN Leadership Group chair. “VAN’s philosophy really sets it apart from outdated service models where older adults are viewed as a drain on society. We believe they are a vital resource to their communities.”

One of the newest initiatives, VAN Venture, was launched in 2005 to strengthen VAN’s network and foster increased collaboration with like-minded groups. An organization receiving a VAN Venture designation essentially obtains a “seal of approval” acknowledging that group’s commitment to furthering VAN’s mission. It also designates a desire for more collaboration between the two organizations with VAN offering its ventures support in marketing, technology, volunteer recruitment, and mentoring.

While VAN has received University funds for basic operations since it was founded in 2005, it has not yet achieved sustainability. The organization moved a giant step closer to that end in July 2005 when it received an Atlantic Philanthropies grant for up to $650,000 over the next three years with the third year of the grant requiring a fundraising match of $200,000.

With this award, VAN will focus on building infrastructure, raising awareness of vital aging issues and encouraging civic engagement of older adults throughout the state. It also will assist communities across Minnesota in pilot-testing strategies to foster vital aging as a way to ensure community vitality. In addition, these funds will be used to expand existing programs, such as the VAN speakers bureau, and to strengthen the Advocacy Leadership for Vital Aging (ALVA) certificate program.

VAN’s next monthly forum will feature Minnesota Department of Human Rights Commissioner Velma Korbel. You can join her for “Age Discrimination” on June 13.

For the location or more information about any of the Vital Aging Network’s programs or services, or to make a contribution, visit www.van.umn.edu or call 612-626-5555.

Atlantic Philanthropies Supports Vital Aging at the University of Minnesota

Mark Skeie was drawn to ALVA shortly after he and his wife retired in 2003. “If you don’t retire with meaning and purpose, you struggle in that space,” Skeie says. “Finding opportunities to improve your community and create a benefit for society is really important to being a vital ager. There are endless opportunities, but the difficult thing is finding and getting associated with the right groups.”

As an ALVA student, Skeie began developing a workbook kit called Mapping Your Retirement. The workbooks, which were inspired by Skeie’s father who regretted not properly planning his retirement, are unlike other retirement books that generally focus on financial planning. Skeie’s workbooks take a holistic look at retirement planning encompassing how to best use one’s time and manage one’s physical and mental health. This project was the first to receive the VAN Venture designation.

Skeie and his wife Janet, who is now enrolled in ALVA and working with Mark on the workbooks, epitomize what it means to be vital agers. They are currently in negotiations with the College of Continuing Education to create classes and programs that are derivatives of their workbooks.

“When we first retired, we planned on traveling and spending time at our cabin,” Janet says. “Now we’re leading a project that has grown bigger than we ever anticipated. But, it’s become both a passion for us and a legacy.”
are delivered via instructor-led classroom lectures that incorporate a wide variety of interactive and experiential learning techniques that appeal to different learning styles. In addition, participants earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for each course completed.

“Working with the U has been a very positive experience, and what has made this such a unique and effective program for us is our direct involvement in developing the training,” explains Chrystine Faucher, EAS Coordinator. “The fact that training was designed with our team and for USPS makes it much more meaningful and effective.”

These days, USPS operates as a leaner, more efficient organization than ever before. Service performance and customer satisfaction are at record levels, thanks in part to the dedicated group of managers and supervisors in the Northland and Mid-Atlantic districts who have embraced the learning opportunities developed specifically to help them achieve the Postal Service’s new model of success.

**Datacard Group: Improving the management of complex customer projects**
Project management can be tricky enough, but when no two projects are the same, the process becomes even more intricate. For Minnetonka-based Datacard Group, this was the challenge, and it was clear that employees needed to develop in-depth skills to successfully manage complex projects. When a special project management team was created to focus on such projects, Datacard called on the University of Minnesota to help team members standardize procedures and develop project management in-depth skills.

During an initial needs assessment, consultants from the U’s College of Continuing Education first surveyed both project management and senior staff in order to fully understand the issues at hand. The assessment was followed by a two-day interactive workshop. According to Kathleen Synstegaard, Datacard’s director of global program management, the assessment and the workshop “really got to the core of our needs and gaps.”

From these beginnings, College consultants developed a series of trainings, ranging from a basic principles of project management course to an advanced, customized workshop created exclusively for the group working with complex customer projects. The overall program specifically addressed the needs identified in the assessment and workshop. “Our employees found tremendous value in the classes and the reference guides created for us,” Synstegaard says.

In total, 60 employees were trained in basic project management. The U also created customized training for 14 employees, including project managers from France and Hong Kong. In the development of these programs, a set of standardized processes and assessment tools was created, resulting in a better alignment between project managers and the sales organization and improved project management and communication.

By working with the University, Synstegaard says the confidence level of the entire organization is higher because everyone knows that her particular group is better able to manage large-scale projects for all Datacard customers. “We continue to use the assessment tools and to implement the consultants’ numerous other ideas,” she adds. “Senior managers have noticed the improvement in our project management and our ability to communicate it.”

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**Meeting Business Challenges Through Professional Education (continued)***

**Finding Your Sense of Place Through Art (continued)***

wonderful thing about adult learners is that they have so much life experience to tap into. They have certain concerns about the world that become obsessions that keep calling them back and are what they want to write about. The richness of experience they bring is as inspiring as the place.”

**Mara Adamitz Scrupe**

**Into the Garden: Drawing From Nature**

**July 16-21**

For sculptor and landscape artist, Mara Adamitz Scrupe, long-term experience with rural living has heightened her awareness of the relationships between people and the land they live on. “I am convinced of the dilemma of urban people who are disconnected from access to nature on a day-to-day basis,” she says. “I seem to revisit garden forms over and over in the work I do...the garden is important in our experience in nature.”

In Into the Garden: Drawing from Nature, students will work in the studio and in Twin Cities parks so they may closely and carefully observe plants, flowers, and other elements of nature and render what they see in the natural world. “It’s not just a pretty flower we’re looking at, but it’s a plant, a part of nature that interacts with other parts of nature,” Scrupe says. “As an artist and teacher I want to communicate a sense of joy when we look at nature, understanding that we live in a time that so much of our natural world is threatened. If we truly feel pleasure in the experience of nature, then we will preserve it.”
From the Director of Development

Dear Friends,

Today spring has finally arrived in the mid-west. Birds singing and trees budding confirm the season of growth and promise is finally here. Naturally this season depends on previous activity, a warm and moist summer, a hearty fall, and a quiet winter - without any one of which there would be no spring. Learning evolves in a similar fashion. We endeavor to study and think, listen and question, test and regroup, and then all at once – it arrives – we’ve learned. And, hopefully, we find we’ve changed – blossomed.

The general operating growth fund at the College is the College of Continuing Education Fund established to facilitate a unique kind of learning at the University for those pursuing interdisciplinary study and education over a lifetime. In order to support and challenge our students, we develop and provide a new access to the University through recruitment, advising, and retention that is personalized and yet uses advanced technology. The adult learner is more of the seasoned oak tree, and a process that doesn’t take this into full account will only stunt the opportunity for growth. To continue to make this important and somewhat rare learning possible, we need your support.

Every day I see our contributors’ gifts making a difference in the programs and services we offer. Their generosity not only enables minds to blossom, but also increases the quality and the promise that life holds for all citizens of our State. So as contributors to the College facilitate learning, they become the gardeners, allowing both small seeds and large sturdy oaks to grow and thrive.

It’s been over three years now since the first issue of CCE Current was launched as a vehicle for the College of Continuing Education to connect with our alumni, donors, and friends. We believe by sharing stories that impress you with the talent of our students, inspire you with the rigor and caliber of our programs, and the success of our alumni that you too will learn and help future students do the same.

Have we been successful? In this issue you’ll find a Readers Survey. I hope you will take a few minutes to give us your honest appraisal of our publication and provide some suggestions for its direction and focus in the future. Your comments and ideas are very much appreciated.

Wishing you all a lively and wonderful spring.

Kathleen Davoli
Director of Development
College of Continuing Education

P.S. Please join me in congratulating the College’s Graduating Class of 2006. May the learning continue!

There are many causes to give to. But only one is your alma mater.

What kind of role do alumni play in boosting academic quality and scholarships at the University of Minnesota? It couldn’t be more significant. Last year, a remarkable 55 percent of donors who made gifts were alumni. Every contribution furthered the quality of the University’s work and its ability to change people’s lives. If you haven’t made a contribution this year, please make your alma mater a priority.

It’s easy to give. Use the enclosed envelope or visit www.cce.umn.edu/giving, where you can designate your gift to the College of Continuing Education, or give to the general scholarship fund to help students across the University.

www.cce.umn.edu/giving
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 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 breathe life into life.

The University’s doors are open to adults. To help them get started — not an easy task when you factor in all the variables from finances and scheduling to finding the program that is the right fit — the College has an array of opportunities. These range from techno-wiz tools that match adults’ circumstances with financial aid offerings (www.cce.umn.edu/frwizard) to the age-old art of simply sitting across a table with someone and listening to their history, their hurdles, and their hopes.

These opportunities for adults to connect with the College’s knowledgeable, friendly staff and “find their place” at the University have been increasingly popular. They include campus information sessions; downtown, community college, and corporate on-site education fairs; professional development planning services; and one-on-ones with advisers and others who can offer guidance.

This “open door” message and person-to-person means of connecting with the University is so central to the College of Continuing Education that many of its communications — ads, catalogs, newsletters, Web pages — will converge around the theme of providing a doorway to the University’s rich and varied resources, and the rigors and rewards that follow.

“The desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential...these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.”

— Confucius

The doors are wide open
Helping adults step inside