

# CCE CURRENT

Winter 2012

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

## ONE of a KIND

While dropping her daughter off at the U, **Amy Donlin** was inspired to return to school herself. At the College of Continuing Education, she found a welcoming atmosphere and the chance to follow her dual passions for education and the environment. Donlin is just one of many students taking an interdisciplinary approach, and often with the assistance of scholarships, to create a one-of-a-kind degree.

*Meet more inside.*

COLLEGE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

1913-2013

CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF EXCELLENCE

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# From the Dean



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

Greetings,

Life is changing at an amazing pace. Medical breakthroughs, product innovations, new ways to interact with our community – change arrives on the scene almost daily. It is, indeed, an interesting time to be alive. Our inquisitive minds want to keep up on the latest changes, to be a better citizen, a better employee, ultimately to lead a richer life.

For nearly 100 years, the U's College of Continuing Education has empowered Minnesotans looking for the credentials they needed to take them where they dream of going, the professional development that will keep them fresh once they are in their career, and the personal enrichment programs that will help them see their world from new perspectives.

We were excited to showcase the College's programs serving our large numbers of learners for new University of Minnesota President Dr. Eric Kaler and his wife, Karen, during his celebratory Inauguration Week (see [www.cce.umn.edu/CCCEurrentvideos](http://www.cce.umn.edu/CCCEurrentvideos) for a video of just a few of our students welcoming the president).

The president has set excellence and access among his goals, themes you'll see repeatedly in the work of the College. In these pages alone we learn how program directors partner with industry and faculty advisory experts to create curriculum in convenient formats. This ranges from:

- our cover story on interdisciplinary scholars (pages 2-5), to...
- our new professional master's degrees, represented here by the Master of

Biological Science (pages 6-7), designed to ready mid-career professionals for leadership positions their Baby Boomer predecessors will pass to good hands, to...

- the work of dedicated leaders, such as Gene Soderbeck of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, who work with the College to bring to life a conference for their peers (pages 8-9), to...
- the new "Entry Point" College in the Schools offerings (pages 10-11) made possible when U faculty and high school teachers partner to bring actual U courses onto high school campuses for not only top students but now those in the "academic middle" who gain the confidence to see themselves in college, to...
- the 318 citizens who joined us one evening early this fall to "sample" the season's intriguing array of short courses offered by faculty and community experts; and the 221 Headliners season subscribers who make an annual commitment to refresh their worldview, among them Ted and Judy Nagel, whom we meet on page 12.

Our students never fail to impress me. I look forward during our Centennial year to looking back at their amazing achievements during the last 100 years (watch for more in future issues of *CCE Current* or, starting in January, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/centennial](http://www.cce.umn.edu/centennial)) and looking ahead to building another vibrant century filled with interesting times to be alive and to continue learning.

Sincerely,

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

# Winter 2012 CCE CURRENT

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Cover photo of Amy Donlin by Tim Rummelhoff.

Volume 8, Number 1

*CCE Current*, a publication for alumni, donors, and friends of the College of Continuing Education at the University of Minnesota, is published twice a year from offices at Coffey Hall, 1420 Eckles Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108-6000. Readers are encouraged to submit comments and story ideas to the editor at this address or via e-mail to [turch001@umn.edu](mailto:turch001@umn.edu).

The information in this publication is available in alternative formats. Disability accommodations for programs in this publication are available upon request. Call 612-625-1711.

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DO-0396-01/10.11

1913-2013

## Celebrating a Century of Excellence



### Opening Doors for 100 Years

With our centennial year approaching, we'll spend 2012 celebrating the thousands of lives enriched by continuing education and the dedicated faculty and staff who, constantly adjusting to a changing landscape, made these encounters possible.

And, much has changed since the College was founded. Course topics have come and gone, but the amount of knowledge needed to thrive in today's information-saturated society exploded; methods of connecting instructors and students multiplied with each technological advance; and education, ever more expensive, became increasingly the path to a successful life.

Here, staff look back at the most recent decades and remember what has changed and what has stayed the same.

The Department of Independent Study [now Online and Distance Learning] provided flexibility – offering the learner the opportunity to enroll throughout the year, study at a distance, and work at the learner's own pace with faculty guidance. Unique innovations over the years allowed learners to access independent material via video and audio tape, television and radio, and newspaper.

- **Anne Daly, Director, Information Center**

When I started in 1980, we did not have computers. Everything was done by hand. All the registrations were filled out by students and then alphabetized and filed by registration staff into metal bins. Grade reports were typed. When we first used fax machines, our phones started ringing off the hook because when someone faxed a registration they would call a minute later to see if we got it. I remember digging through piles of faxes looking for names. The biggest change has been technology. Web registration was unthinkable in 1980.

- **Rick Benson, Registration Coordinator**

The first CCE scholarships were established in the mid-70s to provide funding for adult students who fell through the cracks for other scholarships on campus, which targeted traditional-aged students and required full-time enrollment.

Although many things have changed over the decades, students have changed very little. They continue to persevere under increasing financial pressure; juggle multiple roles; and overcome serious obstacles. They are motivated and determined to succeed.

CCE scholarships have enriched the lives of hundreds of students over the past 38 years, and those students are immensely grateful to the donors who have eased the way financially.

- **Fran Van Slyke-Zaslofsky, Financial Aid Coordinator**



Nolte Center, East Bank campus, the original home of the College of Continuing Education.

In 1974, we hired one of the first campus veterans' advisers to help respond to the over 1,000 returning Viet Nam veterans in that first year alone. At the same time, advisers were meeting with Viet Nam refugees – judges, teachers, businessmen – who were struggling to start a new life in Minnesota.

Today's CCE Information Center grew out of this one-stop outreach concept where skilled, welcoming staff members rapidly responded to the evolving needs of new populations of non-traditional students, helping thousands of individuals find their way into the University of Minnesota.

- **Jackie Henning, Former Assistant Director of Student Services**

Did continuing your education open doors for you?

Coming this January, share your own memories at [www.cce.umn.edu/centennial](http://www.cce.umn.edu/centennial).

# ONE of a KIND

Interdisciplinary students make degrees their own

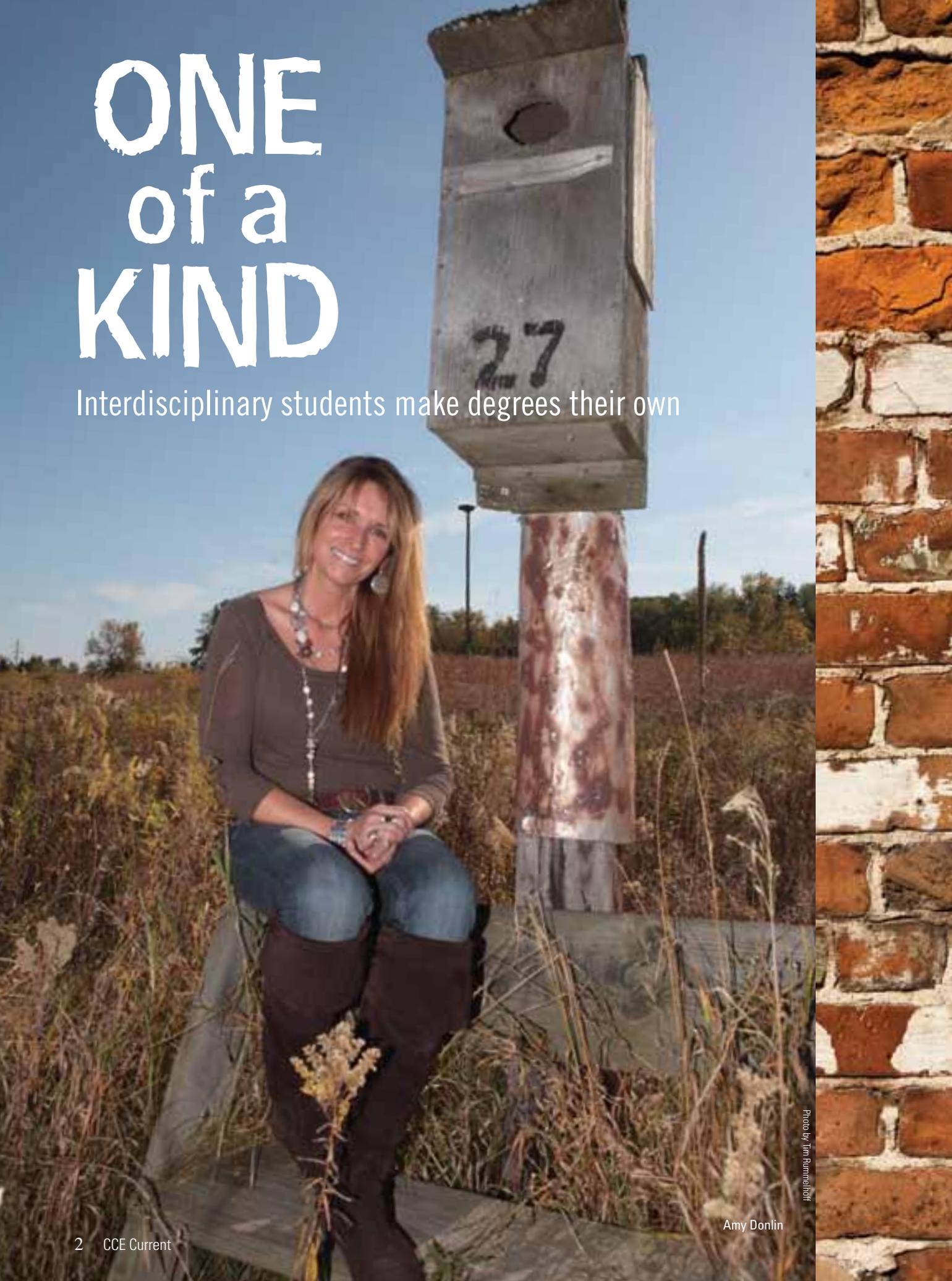


Photo by Jim Runnelhoff

Amy Donlin



## Wesley Brunson

**Interdisciplinary Degree Emphasis:** Science and Technology, Culture, and Sustainability

**CCE Scholarship:** The Fibiger Award

For Inter-College Program (ICP) student and Fibiger Award scholarship recipient Wesley Brunson, spending 8-10 hours a day on a bicycle may not be the best way to “boot camp” back into shape, but it was definitely the perfect hands-on experience to add to his degree plan.

Brunson, who is studying the relationship and interplay between science and technology, culture, and sustainability through the ICP, spent the fall semester cycling 6,500 kilometers from Buenos Aires, Argentina, to Lima, Peru, via EatBikeGrow as part of a directed study program. Many of his supplies and equipment needs were covered through his Fibiger Award.

Led by U professor Paul Porter (College of Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition Sciences), Brunson and two other undergraduate students travelled across the diverse South American agroecosystems in order to look at how humans are using the landscape to produce food, fiber, and fuel.

“I bought my bike—and clipless pedals—not long before we left (about two months), so I got some training rides in, but... Well, after a couple weeks of riding all day, you get in shape pretty quickly. Adventure is always good,” Brunson says with a laugh about his trip.

A few days (or weeks) of “adjusting” to a bike was a small sacrifice in exchange for the experience, Brunson believes, and it fits perfectly with his academic interests. “Sustainability isn’t a topic you can view from one angle. It’s an interdisciplinary problem, which is why I wanted an interdisciplinary degree.

“Sustainability isn’t a topic you can view from one angle. It’s an interdisciplinary problem, which is why I wanted an interdisciplinary degree.”

– Wesley Brunson,  
Fibiger Award-winner

“My main area of interest is in understanding the role science and technology have played in human sociocultural development, and how best to use these technologies in a more sustainable way in the future,” he says.

While in South America, Brunson researched the different types of agriculture the group came across, and worked on building a vocabulary of terms and expressions that the native Spanish speakers there used to describe sustainability issues.

“Sustainable agriculture is a way of feeding the world’s population without exhausting the earth’s natural resources in the process. This issue is both a global and local concern. I think sustainable agriculture can be achieved only when there is a balance between a large-scale, global agricultural approach and bottom-up grassroots effort. This trip was a great way to experience that.”

Continues Brunson, “I was basically on the bike for about 8-10 hours every day. Along the way, I did my best to speak with any people I encountered. At first, my Spanish was limited, but I tried to engage them in a conversation about whatever it is they were doing, especially if it was agriculturally related, and especially if it was sustainable. It was a unique opportunity to get out into the field, really talk with people.

“Sustainable agriculture is a hot topic these days, and this trip has given me an opportunity to experience it firsthand. I don’t think I would have been able to make this study abroad experience work for me academically without the help of the Fibiger Award and the flexibility of the ICP program.”

## Amy Donlin

**Multidisciplinary Degree Concentrations:** Arts and Humanities; Applied, Technical, and Professional Studies; History and Social Sciences

Sometimes, fate sneaks up and surprises you when you are looking the other way... or at least it did for Multidisciplinary Studies (MdS) student Amy Donlin.

While dropping off her daughter Piper at Bailey Hall for her freshman year in 2009, an advertisement for the College of Continuing Education’s interdisciplinary degree programs caught Donlin’s eye.

“I was at the point where I realized I had to finish my degree to get the kind of job I wanted in my field. I was a single mom, caregiver to my own mother, with a daughter just starting college...I needed a good job, with benefits, and for that I needed a degree. But I hadn’t found one that really allowed me to combine my interests into something that would work for me,” she says.



Photo by Tim Runnelhoff

Multidisciplinary Studies student Amy (left) and her daughter Piper Donlin, who is also working toward a degree at the University.

management through the College of Food, Agriculture, and Natural Science. “It’s in my blood,” she says. “I just love this job—being able to mentor kids, help get them into nature. It’s great to be able to expose youth to something that they might not have at home or in school. We roll up our sleeves and pant legs and go looking for tadpoles in the puddles. We find pictures in the clouds, learn how to use scientific methods to understand the world.

“I was at the point where I realized I had to finish my degree to get the kind of job I wanted in my field... [my degree] says ‘This person has a fire in her belly. She is ready to do incredible work.’”

— Amy Donlin, environmental educator on the rise

“Whether you’re an adult or a kid, Tamarack is such a happy, spirited place. It’s a place where people can come and hear the crickets and the birds and the frogs; hike or ski or snowshoe the trails; get lost in the prairie grasses. No one has to be rushed or hurried. For many people, it’s a deeply spiritual place—it’s their church, their place to commune with bigger things.”

Donlin concludes, “My degree has been a beautiful pairing of my interests with courses and fieldwork. I think it says to employers ‘This person has a fire in her belly. She’s ready to do incredible work for us, and isn’t afraid to face challenges.’ I hope, one day, it will bring me to a place just like this one.”

“But then, dropping Piper off, there was that sign. I attended the info session, met a whole tableful of great people, and knew instantly I had found my home.”

Through the multidisciplinary studies program, Donlin was able to craft a degree plan that encompassed her interests in art, natural history, ecology, and sustainability, with the end goal of working full-time as a naturalist and environmental educator. It’s a career that up until now, she has only been able to do on a part-time basis.

“I work as a summer naturalist at Tamarack Nature Center in White Bear Lake, and have been working at nature centers for most of the last decade,” she

says. “But to get a full-time job in this field is exceptionally difficult. Jobs are few and far between, with most opportunities being seasonal, or part-time, like I’ve been working. And without a degree...I’ve not been in any position to compete.

As the daughter of conservationist and waterfowl management pioneer Art Hawkins, Donlin grew up in a family with strong ties to the outdoors, a passion that shaped all of their lives—as well as the lives of their children. Donlin’s two siblings went on to become a waterfowl biologist and a U.S. Forest Service wilderness ranger. Daughter Piper is studying environmental science policy

## Keith Pederson

**Multidisciplinary Degree Concentrations:** History and Social Sciences; Communication; Applied, Technical, and Professional Studies; minor in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) Studies

“Just an old lady trying to make a change,” is the mantra of a one Mrs. Margie Pederson—a.k.a. Mama P, Mrs. Pederson, and Margie.

The blonde afro bedecked, '70s-era schoolmarmish be-togged alter ego of MdS student Keith Pederson, Mrs. Pederson is one of the driving forces behind Keith's degree plan, which focuses on new media and GLBT history and studies.

“I work in the field of public health education, specifically on HIV education. Mrs. Pederson came about back when I was working with the Minnesota AIDS Project doing outreach for younger men. It was volunteer night, and all of these guys were over to make safer sex kits, and we fed them this horrible frozen pizza.

“I realized that we really should be valuing these volunteers more, so the next time, I took the afternoon to make up a huge pile of tater-tot hot dish, and served it up...and lo and behold, Margie was born.”

Since then, Pederson has used Margie to serve as a mouthpiece for public health and mental health topics, largely through new media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube, along with public events and appearances such as Pride Fest and “Mrs. Pederson's Twin Cities Got Talent.”

“Margie's messaging is a bit irreverent, fun, smart, and sassy,” Pederson says. “She's a good public outreach tool, and just by being ‘herself’ in the public eye—at events or through her media channels—she allows us to reach a much wider audience.

“Mrs. Pederson is like that hip grandma giving advice. People open up to her, laugh with her, they ask her questions. When she's out in public, she's able to start up a dialogue with younger gay men who otherwise wouldn't have a conversation with me or another educator.”

That connection to the community and openness to dialogue is crucial for public health education, specifically for HIV awareness among younger audiences— young gay men in particular, says Pederson. “If we can't message kids ‘where they live’—get onto the phones in their pockets, then we won't be able to communicate good sexual health and public health practices.



Keith Pederson

“The best way to deal with HIV is to prevent it. There is ‘treatment optimism’ out there, and people who don't see STIs [sexually transmitted infections] and HIV as a big deal anymore because they think it's treatable. But the reality is, even for those who ARE able to treat

“The MdS degree says ‘this is where I have been and what I value; this is where I plan to go; and this is how I'll get there.’”

— Keith Pederson,  
HIV education advocate

it long term, that's still basically lifelong chemotherapy. It's toxic. If you don't have to subject your body to that, why would you? Don't contract it to begin with.”

For Pederson, designing a degree that focuses on electronic journalism through new media technology,

combined with GLBT studies is a way to build on his current career path and credentials. “The MdS degree says ‘this is where I have been and what I value; this is where I plan to go; and this is how I will get there.’ It's an opportunity to strengthen what I am already doing.”

He continues, “It's perhaps an unusual combination on the surface, but the fit is perfect for my work. For me working in HIV prevention, one of the hardest hit communities is men who have sex with men. And, being a gay man myself, I think it's important to understand and



Margie Pederson

value our history—the triumphs and the struggles. And the use of electronic media as a communication tool is only going to increase, so it's an ideal vehicle to use to reach out for education and community building.

“What we don't do in the U.S., we don't message our youth about prevention. They get a lot of sex messages—that's everywhere, from ABC to YouTube to the cable channels, but the whole safer sex message has gone by the wayside. If through Mrs. Pederson, we can get that education out to a broader audience, or if we can get one soccer mom who may be uncomfortable bringing the topic up with her kids to say ‘well, if she can do it, so can I,... well, that's my goal. My degree is giving me that opportunity, that chance to pursue the many different paths that health education can take, and to reach those audiences.”

To hear Brunson, Donlin, and Pederson discuss their degree experiences, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/cccurrentvideos](http://www.cce.umn.edu/cccurrentvideos).



# *Professionally* **POWERED**

*Interdisciplinary classroom  
work is career relevant for  
Master of Biological Science  
graduate Stephanie Fettig-Scholl.*

“Science intrigues me; it keeps me interested. There’s always something different to explore every day. It’s never the same,” says Stephanie Fettig-Scholl, a 2010 graduate of the Master of Biological Science (MBS) degree program.

The MBS degree is one of several new professional master’s degrees offered through the College. Says Sherry Wagner-Henry, the College’s director of graduate studies, “The market is changing. The workforce is becoming more competitive, and for many people, a bachelor’s degree is no longer enough. These are very much advanced degrees for people looking to get ahead in their careers.”

Janet Schottel, faculty director for the MBS program concurs. “The MBS program can be used to support many different career goals. In some cases, promotions require an advanced degree. Or, students who are interested in science instruction may decide to pursue a teaching position at a community college, which requires an MS degree.



Stephanie Fettig-Scholl

Students may want to pursue a different career direction such as beginning their own biotech company, move to a different division within their current company, prepare for a different job, enhance their credentials for professional schools (medical, dental, pharmacy, etc.), or prepare for doctoral programs. The MBS can be tailored to the individual student’s interests.”

Which is exactly the type of program Fettig-Scholl was looking for. As a research and design scientist at Synovis, a Twin-Cities-based company specializing in tissue technology and innovative surgical tools, she plays a key role in the development of the company’s line of biological repair patches. “My work focuses on treating bovine pericardium [a particular type of heart tissue] to make implantable biomaterial devices—surgeons then use the patches in a variety of situations including hernia and vascular repair.”

Fettig-Scholl’s degree focused on bioethics and pharmacy—both key pieces of her work at Synovis. “Working in a research field, on products that will be used in humans, and, of course, using animal tissue for our devices...ethics is a big concern.”

Her pharmacy studies “directly apply to my work here. Our products are prescribed by doctors, and we have to work with insurance regulations, prescription regulations, etc. Understanding where doctors, pharmacists, and other companies we work with are coming from is key.”

In addition to the ability to tailor her course of study to match her career path and interests, Fettig-Scholl was intrigued by the program’s flexibility. “I was working full-time. I’m married, and we’re starting a family. I needed something where I could go part-time, have evening and weekend course options, and to be able to take some of my classes online, as well.”

That flexibility is a hallmark of the College’s professional master’s degrees. “CCE is uniquely situated in the University to handle the specific demands of this type of degree program,” says Wagner-Henry. “We are a home to inter-college, interdisciplinary education. We already have extensive faculty contacts throughout the University, and experience working with interdisciplinary degrees, such as our particular professional master’s degrees.

“Our niche is in working with adults; we are able to offer a wide variety of courses online, on the weekends, and in the evenings so that they can complete

their degree while balancing work, their families, and other commitments.”

Says Schottel, “The MBS program’s flexibility, both in terms of curricula and in schedule, is an important advantage. So much of the work in science today

“The workforce is becoming more competitive. These are very much advanced degrees for people working to get ahead in their careers.”

– Sherry Wagner-Henry, the College’s director of graduate studies, on new interdisciplinary professional master’s degrees designed for working adults.

is interdisciplinary. Projects require foundational knowledge in several fields and ways to access and utilize diverse types of information. In addition, project teams are typically composed of individuals from a variety of disciplines, and being able to communicate across discipline boundaries is essential.”

For Fettig-Scholl, the impact was immediate: “Graduate school opened up my thought process so much. I learned to think outside of the box, to bring new and creative perspectives to my work. I learned an immense amount about the biopharm industry...[and] made some great professional contacts. I’ve met several people in the medical device and research industries I can keep in touch with, network with. The degree was hard work, but very inspiring. And definitely worth it; I’m so excited to see where it leads.”

# Making the Connection



## CCE advisory boards bridging the gap between industry and academics

In his inaugural address, new University President Eric Kaler reiterated his commitment to strengthening the U's community partnerships; and in doing so, helping students meet the global needs of the 21st century.

It is a goal that resonates with the College of Continuing Education, where flexible degrees that fit students' academic, personal, and professional goals, and immediately applicable theory have long been the benchmark.

"We owe it to students to offer relevant, timely curricula and courses that are aligned with the needs of the industries they will be working for," says Mary Nichols, dean of the College of Continuing Education. "By partnering with advisory experts, our students benefit, and the community—and future employers benefit as well."

Says Larry Kuusisto, a member of the Manufacturing Technology Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S.) advisory board, "I have a strong interest in the transition from academia to industry. If not done well, graduates end up knowledgeable but unable to fit in immediately and effectively. That right fit is the primary goal."

Vice president of education for LifeScience Alley and executive director of its research affiliate, Alley Institute, Kuusisto works alongside other community professionals, faculty, program staff, students, and alumni on the board, to ensure the program prepares students to meet the needs of employers.

“The advisory boards are critical to our success,” says Nate Sawyer, the College’s director of undergraduate programs. “Their goal is to provide advice and support on industry trends, issues, and needs; integrate and align our programming with what the business community is looking for; consult on policy, program, and curricular matters; and provide professional feedback to students.”

According to chair of the Construction Management B.A.S. board, Alana Sunness Griffith (vice president of marketing for Empirehouse, Inc., and president-elect for the Minnesota Construction Association), her role on the board is a mutually beneficial one. “I enjoy working with students to ensure their education not only meets academic requirements, but also prepares them for the real work world.

“We want to prepare our students for what’s coming, not just what’s been done in the past.

By bringing this type of education to the classroom while still new and trend-driven, we can produce students who are not only prepared for traditional construction roles, but are also ready to address how projects may be managed and constructed in the future. The students benefit from classes influenced by professionals who have been in the trenches. The industry benefits because the [College] produces plug-and-play graduates who will build quality buildings. And the U and the College benefit because of the high reputation their graduates have earned.”

Josh Dyba is one of those graduates. Impressed with the flexibility of the Information Technology Infrastructure B.A.S. program and the value of the degree to both students and to prospective employers, Dyba agreed to serve as a member of the degree’s advisory board in 2007. He started as a student member of the board, and was invited to remain on it following his graduation in 2008. He now works alongside the faculty, other industry consultants, academic advisers, and other program staff to make sure the degree continues to prepare students for the workforce.

“The instructors, advisory board members, and program staff are keyed into the industry and the business

needs. [All of us] are really driven to keep the degree pertinent. We don’t want it to be an ‘okay, you’ve shown you can earn some college credits, here you go,’ sort of experience. We want students to come out of this program and be able to hit the ground running—to exceed the expectations of employers. We want to graduate folks who are the stars of the workplace...people who can come in and know not just the hardware and tech systems and talk to the IT folks on their level, but who can also look at a flowchart and point out gaps in process or procedures or write effective business proposals or other communications.”

“The students benefit from classes influenced by professionals who have been in the trenches. The industry benefits because the [College] produces plug-and-play graduates.”

– Alana Sunness Griffith,  
industry expert and College  
advisory board member on the  
results of industry-University  
collaboration.

By learning from working professionals, as well as being in classes with other individuals from a variety of backgrounds, Dyba built a rich portfolio of hands-on, real-world experiences, along with his textbook examples. “It’s that sort of immediately relevant skill set the College strives to ensure for all of its applied and professional degree students. Partnering with members of the community and business and industry to make it happen is a win-win for everyone,” says Dean Nichols.

## “A Two-Way Street”

### Conference Services Helps Put U Research in a Public Forum

The College’s degree programs are not the only connection between academics and industry. Conference Services and Program Planning facilitates a wide variety of short courses, conferences, workshops, and events that provide professional development opportunities or link University research with the public sector.

Professional Engineer Gene Soderbeck (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency) is a long-time member of the Minnesota Water Resources Conference planning committee. Working with the College, the committee is able to put on “a conference that highlights new and emerging issues happening in Minnesota water resources and addresses the educational/informational needs identified by [professionals attending the conference].”

“University academic members have a handle on the research [angle],” Soderbeck says. “Whereas the public members can identify what’s happening ‘on the ground.’ Collectively, the different perspectives provide a better understanding of the water resource issues. Pair that with the College’s proven administrative ability...and it results in a positive experience for committee members, attendees, and presenters.”

As a U faculty member, Ted Galambos has a view from the other side. He has been on the planning committee for and a speaker in the Structural Engineering Series for many years. Producing an event that combines what is happening both in the academic world and the practicing world of structural engineering “is extremely important, for all parties,” he says.

“The community is taking our graduates, and they deserve to know what they’re getting, so to speak. And the U needs to know what the engineers on the outside are working on, what the current issues, concerns, and projects are.

“It’s a two-way street. The U needs the public; the public needs the U. It really is a common community, and we need that connection. [That’s why] regardless of how busy I am, I serve on this committee. It’s very gratifying on a personal and professional level.”

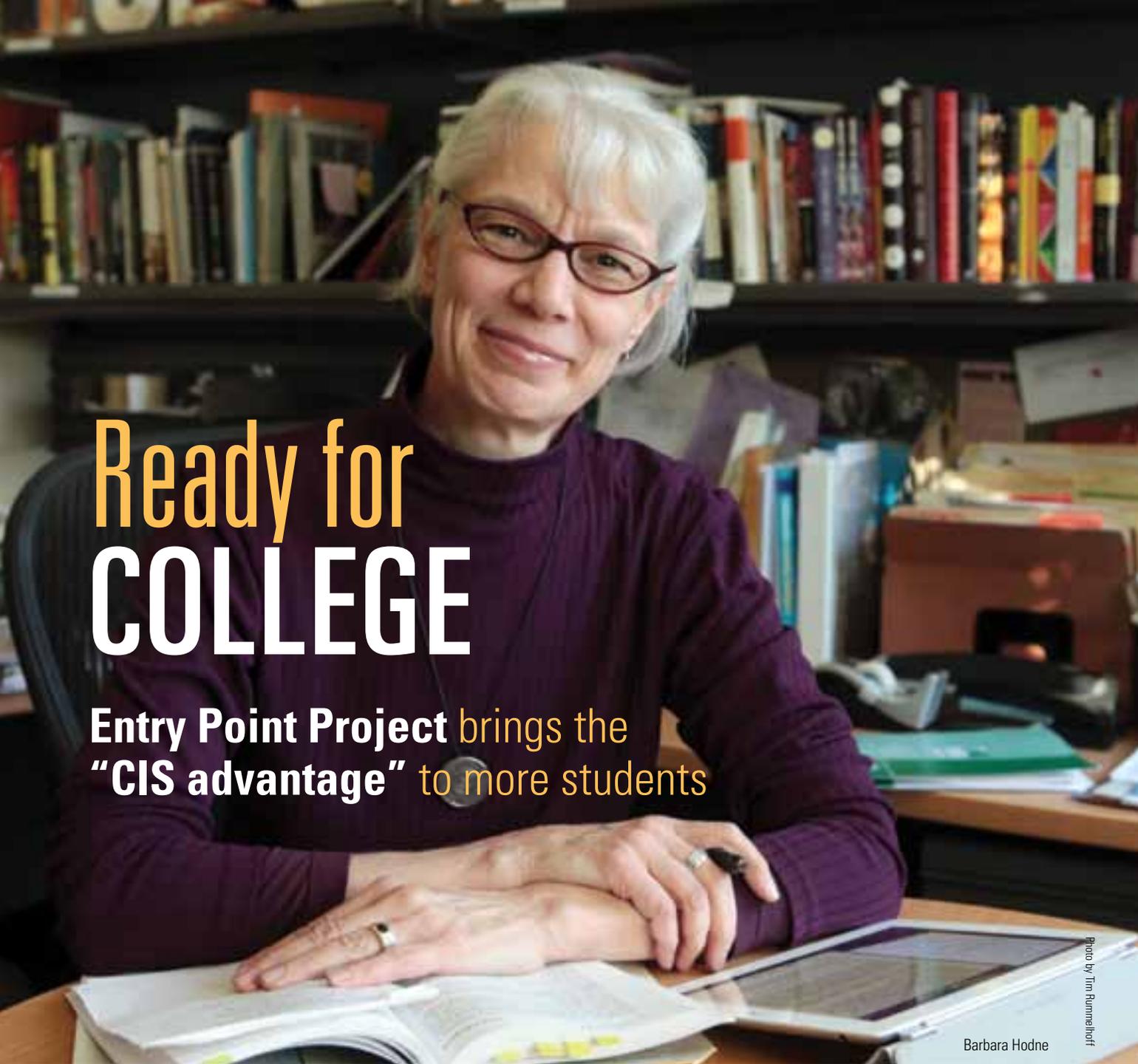


Photo by Tim Runnelhoff

Barbara Hodne

# Ready for COLLEGE

Entry Point Project brings the “CIS advantage” to more students

For a quarter of a century, College in the Schools (CIS) has given Minnesota high school students a jump-start on college by making it possible for qualified students to earn University credits without leaving their local high schools.

Through CIS, students take university courses taught by their own teachers in their own classrooms. They receive both high school and U of M credit, while getting a feel for what will be expected of them in college. At the same time their teachers work with University faculty

from sponsoring departments, learning what the U expects students to know and be able to do.

CIS has historically focused on high-achieving students, those in the top 20 percent of their class, who are the most confident and likely to have the skills and behaviors needed for college success. But in 2009, in response to a challenge from its advisory board, CIS launched the Entry Point Project to deliver the “CIS advantage” to a broader academic and demographic range of students.

Entry Point offers three credit-bearing courses: Writing Studio, Mathematical Modeling and Prediction, and Physics by Inquiry, geared to students in the “academic middle”—those between the 50th and 80th percentile of their class. All three incorporate Universal Instructional Design. This highly interactive pedagogy draws on what students already know or care about, emphasizes critical thinking and reflection on learning, and incorporates regular cycles of practice and feedback.

Barbara Hodne, senior teaching specialist in the Department of Postsecondary Teaching and Learning, is the CIS faculty coordinator for Writing Studio. She organizes professional development for CIS teachers and ensures that U classes taught in the high schools retain University rigor. In fact, her dedication to teachers and students recently was recognized when she was awarded the College of Continuing Education's Distinguished Educator of the Year award.

"It's a hands-on collaboration," she says. "Teachers are doing very creative work, and I've taken many of their ideas into my own classroom."

For example, during one classroom visit, Hodne observed a teacher demonstrating how to analyze each assignment and break it down into "jobs." "This is a very effective way to teach students how to interpret and understand what is expected in a college writing assignment," she says.

Sharon Ornelas, who teaches bilingual students at Edison High School in Minneapolis, enjoys working with Hodne and the other Writing Studio CIS teachers. "We learn from each other. It's a very rich experience for me, and it also enriches my class," she says.

In Writing Studio, her students practice the kinds of writing they'll need to do in college. One assignment, for example, requires them to read an article, understand what the author is saying, and respond from their own perspective. Another assignment requires them to do primary research, such as interviews, surveys, and data collection.

Ornelas credits Writing Studio with changing the way she teaches. "I've learned to respond to student writing based on their individual needs. And I can share my understanding of college expectations with my colleagues," she says.

Her students aspire to attend college, but need more practice using college skills. Writing Studio meets that need. In fact, Ornelas says, "The entire Entry

Point Project is cutting-edge. It's unique in the U.S. There's nothing quite like it anywhere else."



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

Sharon Ornelas

During its first year, the Entry Point Project served 262 students, most in the academic middle. Of these, 60 percent were students of color, 56 percent came from homes where English was not the primary language, 62 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch, and 48 percent came from families in which neither parent had attended college. Most importantly, Entry Point students were academically successful—91 percent earned university grades of C or better.

In 2011-12, twenty-four schools are participating in Entry Point, up from 13 that participated the first year. "We believe that Entry Point will continue to grow because it meets a critical need," says Susan Henderson, CIS director.

## 25 years of CIS

In the early 1980s, CCE program director Bill VanEssendelft became intrigued by Syracuse University's Project Advance, which allowed high school students to take university courses in their own schools. When the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act was signed into law in 1985, this kind of dual enrollment program became possible in Minnesota.

The following year, English professor Charlie Sugnet taught a course with Karen West, an English teacher at Johnson High School in St. Paul. The course was successful, but sending University faculty into high schools several times a week wasn't feasible as a long-term strategy.

About the same time, another English professor, Lillian Bridwell-Bowles, recruited 10 high school teachers to offer Freshman Writing Practice Honors to their students. This pilot showed that high school teachers—with extensive preparation and regular contact with University faculty—could successfully teach college courses to high school students. This model became College in the Schools.

Today CIS offers 36 courses from 17 university academic departments. In 2010-11, over 6,100 students earned more than 38,600 U of M credits in courses offered by 296 teachers in 107 high schools across the Twin Cities and the state.



# It's a date

Minneapolis couple makes learning together a priority engagement

Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

“With all the media available to us today, it’s become so easy to talk to ourselves, to miss out on a chance for dialogue,” says Headliners discussion series regular Dr. Theodore Nagel. “The airwaves (and newspapers) are filled with people more or less shouting over each other, everything from Rush Limbaugh to the cast of ‘The View.’ It’s nice to attend an event [like Headliners] where the audience can ask questions and experts can elucidate things in a true exchange of ideas.”

In 2006, after seeing an advertisement for a new discussion series at the U of M, Nagel and his wife Judy decided to make a “date night” to go and hear stem cell expert Meri Firpo. The couple has been Headliners season ticket holders and regular attendees ever since.

“Our kids had all gone off to college by then,” says Judy, “and we thought it sounded like a nice chance to be learning again ourselves. There are people doing amazing things at the U, and having a showcase like this is good for us and for them. It’s a good way to get introduced to new and varied topics...and a way to show the public what is going on at the U.”

That accessibility to the cutting-edge research being done at the University, as well as the breadth of topics covered, says Theodore, are two of the things that keep them coming back month after month. Although he and his wife come from a medical background (Theodore is one of the top reproductive medicine specialists in the Twin Cities; Judy is a former operating room nurse), their interest has been piqued by a wide range of subjects. “Prairie grass and biofuels, the roots of the Cold War, the Hmong spiritual world...the variety is great.”

Aside from sparking good post-date-night conversation and further inquiry into discussion topics, the couple has even picked up a home repair tip or two. “We were so impressed by the Energy House/Solar Decathlon edition,” Judy says with a smile, “when we bought new windows, we bought Marvin because of the things we learned in that presentation!”

“Every time we go,” Theodore says, “we realize new things we didn’t know we didn’t know. I mean, even though I’m in the medical field, Larry Jacobs’ presentation on the history of the health care system, who is responsible for what, what the background is, that sort of context...it was quite interesting to hear.”

The lessons they learn often stay with them, the couple says, citing, for example, Mai Na Lee’s 2009 presentation on Hmong grave desecration in Thailand. “The Hmong population in the Twin Cities is the largest in the country,” says Judy, but their traditions and rituals and history remain a mystery to many. Lee’s presentation, she says, “was so eye-opening, so moving. Gaining an understanding of what the mass exhumation of graves meant to their people, learning about their spirit world, and how it all fit into their culture. I carried so much away from that night. It was very touching, very emotional for me.”

The couple also believes in exercising the body, as well as the mind. Avid bicyclists and outdoors people, they have toured

“It’s nice to attend an event [like Headliners] where the audience can ask questions and experts can elucidate things in a true exchange of ideas.”

— Dr. Theodore Nagel

Central Europe and Utah by bike, and kayak together frequently. And with interests that include travelling, photography, language-learning, music, theatre, and volunteering, the Nagels have plenty to do to keep them busy when Theodore retires from practicing medicine at the end of this year. But attending Headliners and other lifelong learning opportunities remains at the top of their “to-do” list.

Says Theodore, “You know, I feel like we have a responsibility to continue to educate ourselves throughout our lives. And there’s a danger in becoming too narrow in our focus—only learning about what we know or hearing/reading what we want to hear. This way, we get a chance to hear questions and topics from a number of viewpoints, and to ask questions ourselves. It stimulates the mind, for sure. No doubt about it.”



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

## *Easing the way* *Scholarships bridge the gap for CCE students*

In 1978, when Fran Van Slyke-Zaslofsky became financial aid coordinator for the College of Continuing Education, many students paid for their education with savings and part-time employment. During the next two decades, federal and state-funded grant programs generally kept pace with tuition and fees.

But over the last decade, University tuition and fees have doubled, while the median income for Minnesotans has dropped. Most students now use loans to bridge the gap between what they owe and what they receive in other financial aid. But they worry about taking out loans that they might not be able to repay. In 2010, the average loan debt for U of M students graduating with a bachelor's degree was over \$26,000.

Because of the recession, many students are unemployed or underemployed, companies are reducing or eliminating

employee tuition benefits, and financial aid is in flux. Fortunately, CCE students are able to turn to Van Slyke for help finding the resources they need.

"I was able to attend college when it was much more affordable, and I have always wanted to help students who lacked the resources to begin or continue their education," Van Slyke says.

She works closely with CCE staff and helps students navigate the University, understand the financial aid process, and reach their educational goals. It's a challenging job, but one that brings her great satisfaction.

Van Slyke especially enjoys awarding scholarships that provide access to the College's wide range of courses and programs. "CCE scholarship recipients are remarkably diverse. They range in age from early 20s to late 70s, and many are first generation college students," she

says. "Seeing their excitement and relief is an extraordinary experience. They are so grateful for this help."

She notes that demand for CCE scholarships has increased as students struggle to pay their educational costs. "The need for scholarships has never been greater. That's why I contribute to CCE scholarships. Every single gift, large or small, has a real and positive impact on students' lives," Van Slyke says. "I've seen first hand how our combined contributions can ease the way for students who need assistance at a critical time.

Many scholarship recipients tell Van Slyke that they plan to become donors one day. In fact, several have already contributed. "Seeing them 'give back' after they graduate is one of the best rewards I've ever received," she says.



Photo by Tim Rummelhoff

## From the Development Director

Our College opens the door to the University for thousands of people every year – whether folks want to study across colleges and disciplines for a bachelor’s or master’s degree, focus in on their professional skills or life enrichment, or want just a single class to start or finish their degree.

For all the students we help, many remain whom we cannot. Government aid, loans, and central administration support simply can’t meet the growing student need. Potential is lost to the individual, and society.

For example, years ago a scholarship was set up specifically for single mothers. Yet, over the last few years the bottom has almost completely dropped out for that population. Financing a college education for them, and for so many others, is unthinkable now.

As I write, Dr. Eric Kaler has been inaugurated as our University’s 16th president, giving him the opportunity to lead us to enhance the quality of operations here at the U while holding students front-of-mind. This challenging

and complex job has got to be tough, but his success will facilitate big rewards for our students, state, and world.

Your impact can be just as great. Please consider supporting a College of Continuing Education scholarship fund – help us open a door and change a life. The enclosed envelope makes your generous act easy.

Thank you so much.

Yours truly,

Kathleen Davoli, Director of Development  
College of Continuing Education

## Building Better Leaders

*Professional development instructors identify talents that will be needed tomorrow*

CCE Current talks with three of the College’s instructors who are organizational development and business analysis leaders to see what trends are rising, and find out what today’s professionals can do to equip themselves for tomorrow’s business climate.

**Current:** Looking ahead five years, what key skills and/or core competencies do you think professionals will need?

**K. David Hirschey:** As the impending labor shortage approaches, organizations will increasingly be focusing on “enterprise-wide core competencies,” in which all employees will be expected to demonstrate the ability to carry out the mission and goals of the business.

Accordingly, the human capital professionals will need tools to assist in the early identification of desired experiences and aptitudes, as well as a candidate’s willingness to learn and grow. Also becoming critical will be strong communication skills and the ability to assess and champion innovation, creativity, financial acumen, business judgment, integrity, teamwork, and customer focus.

**Stephanie McGovern:** Individuals will need to develop their skill sets in order to account for the shift from vertical, hierarchical organizational structures to more lateral, team-oriented structures.

When I started my career 25 years ago, there were jobs where you could sit in a corner and work by yourself. Today, those jobs are long gone. Today, teamwork and informal social networks are how products get produced and services get delivered. Collaboration skills, from listening well to conflict management to creativity will be crucial.

**Angela Wick:** Sharing information is the key to an organization’s agility in meeting market demands.

Business analysts are a good embodiment of this—they have the ability to share and re-purpose knowledge for others to consume. They are constantly eliciting, gathering, and analyzing information from a variety of people, systems, and documents. Their success is about sharing all of that knowledge with others, and enabling their stakeholders to perform downstream tasks such as developers designing technology, trainers developing training on new systems, testers testing new systems, and business managers changing operational processes.

**Current:** What is one asset everyone should have in their professional toolkit?

**K. David Hirschey:** Critical thinking skills. Individuals need to identify and anticipate issues. By using a ‘Systems’ perspective, they can see how a problem and its solution(s) will affect other units.

We need to be able to analyze problems skillfully, gather information before making decisions, base decisions on facts and metrics rather than emotions, and use logic to solve problems and reach ‘correct’ solutions.

**Stephanie McGovern:** If I had to pick one, it would be the ability to integrate many points of view and then make a thoughtful, but timely decision.

Too often we get caught in “either/or, right and wrong” discussions that go nowhere. I see creativity stilted and good ideas left by the way side because we like to defend our point of view instead of listen openly to someone else’s perspective. Decisions don’t get made and people end up frustrated.

**Angela Wick:** Definitely organizational change management. Recognizing our own--and others’—reactions while effectively facilitating and navigating through business change is a vital skill. Also crucial is the ability to understand and influence the motivations of others. Business analysts need the intuitive sense to identify and respond to changing business needs and be able to facilitate the actions of various stakeholders through quickly understanding impacts to business and technology initiatives.

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**Page 1: Centennial**  
[www.cce.umn.edu/centennial](http://www.cce.umn.edu/centennial)

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*We strive to accurately acknowledge all of our donors. If you find an error, please accept our apologies and contact the Development Office at 612-625-1253 so that we can make the needed corrections.*

## Congratulations

The College of Continuing Education is proud to congratulate its 203 bachelor's degree 2010-2011 candidates from interdisciplinary and applied degrees (in manufacturing technology, construction management, and information technology infrastructure) along with its 46 graduate-level interdisciplinary and professional degree program candidates. At the spring ceremony, those who chose to "walk" were treated to inspiring words from *Jon McTaggart* (shown), CEO of MPR.



Jon McTaggart

## Welcome

Welcome to *Dr. Eric Kaler*, the new University of Minnesota president, who joined College of Continuing Education staff, including College dean *Dr. Mary Nichols* (shown), during his celebratory "Inauguration Week."

At the event, via video, College students – many of whom enjoy their U education in nontraditional ways such as at conferences at the College's conference center, during the evening around campus throughout a semester, online at their own pace, or even (for College in the Schools students) in high schools around the state – greeted the new president, relayed to him their aspirations, and welcomed him back to the University where he himself studied.

To view the video, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/cccurrentvideos](http://www.cce.umn.edu/cccurrentvideos).



Dean Mary Nichols and President Eric Kaler

Photo by V. Paul Vrinenco