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Myriad

INSIDE:
Retaining & graduating our students
UWM student award winners at the 2002 American Multicultural Student Leadership Conference, held at UW–Eau Claire, were (left to right): Maria Kasonda (2nd place in creative writing category), Kendra al-Kaleem Evans (honorable mention in research category), Jeanette Kowalik (2nd place in research category and 1st place in poster presentation category), and Leah Adeniji (1st place and honorable mention in research category).
A recent report released by the American Council on Education (ACE) concluded that while African Americans and Hispanics trail whites in post-secondary enrollment nationwide, minority enrollment and graduation rates continue to rise. “We’re making slow and steady progress,” says William B. Harvey, vice president and director of the ACE Office of Minorities in Higher Education. While the above is noteworthy, Harvey continues, “We’d like to make rapid and more significant progress.”

More students leave UWM prior to degree completion than stay through to graduation. After six years, the average graduation rate for students of color is 15-18 percent. For other students, the graduation rate is 34-40 percent. Student retention (students who return after successfully completing their first year as new freshmen) is much more encouraging. On an average, 60 percent of students of color and 72 percent of other students return to UWM for the second year. If, as Vincent Tinto (distinguished professor of education at Syracuse University) states, student persistence beyond the first year of college is the best indicator of eventual graduation, then it is clear that there is work to be done if we are to aggressively and effectively address the fact that more than half of UWM students are not graduating after six years. With this knowledge, the Milwaukee Commitment was launched and the Black and Gold Commission was fueled.

One or more of the following characteristics fit the profile of a majority of UWM students: married, children, first-generation college, low income, over 21, employed part-time, etc. If we agree with Tinto that “student departure is more a function of what goes on within the institution following entry than of what may have occurred beforehand,” then we must assess and improve, where necessary, academic and other support programs and activities to address what must be done to enhance student retention and graduation at UWM.

Some of the initiatives/factors that have been identified in the UWM Retention Task Force report as contributors to the retention of UWM students include:

- Positive interactions with faculty;
- Student learning groups;
- Participation in campus activities;
- Student employment;
- Freshman seminars; and
- On-campus living.

Minorities who participate in tutoring programs, study skills courses, and have individual contact with instructors experience much higher retention rates. Additionally, UWM’s Spring 1999 Senior Survey reported that 85 percent of UWM seniors who participated in extracurricular activities felt it contributed positively to their educational experience. And, based on a survey of non-returning UWM students (April 1997):

- Of those interviewed, 43 percent said UWM met their needs “very well” and 51 percent said that UWM met their needs “somewhat.” Only 6 percent believed that UWM did not meet their needs. This seems to indicate that most UWM students leave the University due to factors extraneous to the campus, not because of problems within the institution, which seems to disagree with Tinto’s findings.

- The three aspects of UWM that were least satisfying to non-returning students were: interest of faculty in students, academic advising, and transportation to/parking on campus. Though UWM has a chronic and somewhat unavoidable parking problem, the lack of faculty involvement and satisfying advising are exactly the type of student/campus disassociation that Tinto and other researchers cite as a primary cause of attrition. We can, therefore, conclude that though these non-returning UWM students cite reasons external to the institution, there remains a great deal that the University can and must do in the area of advising for direction/goal setting, more effectively

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networking students with existing programs to help them with life management, and personally engaging students on an academic level. The report of the Black and Gold Commission recommends, among other things, similar action for student success.

Nationally, programs that have been shown to contribute to student success include:

- **Pre-College Programs** – effective at preparing students for the college environment before they arrive.
- **Orientation Programs** that include many components beyond simply showing students around the university.
- **Academic Advising** as a method of helping students make connections on campus.
- **Peer Mentoring Programs**, which serve the dual purpose of fortifying students’ academic experiences and integrating them into the university environment.
- **Early Warning System**, which should include, as suggested by the UWM Retention Task Force report: 1) exit counseling for students intending to withdraw; 2) intrusive counseling for students in academic trouble; and 3) decision-making courses for undecided majors.
- **On-Campus Living**, which has documented improvement in retention.
- **Interlocking Coursework**, which has been shown to retain students, since the lack of continuity between general education classes from different schools can be alienating, especially for those most likely to drop out because of other factors.
- **Freshman Seminars**, which have been successful when they are optional for all students and required for at-risk students.

A comprehensive approach to attracting, retaining, and graduating students; attracting faculty of color; and changing the complexion of an institution one department at a time was successfully developed and implemented by the American Sociological Association (ASA) as the Minority Opportunity Through School Transformation (MOST) program. MOST is “focused on the academic department as the instrument of systemic institutional change,” says Felice Levine, former executive officer of ASA and the key architect of the MOST program. The sociology departments of 11 institutions participated in the program, and addressed five key elements of the education process: curriculum, research, mentoring, climate, and pipeline.

The results of the MOST program were dramatic. At the outset of MOST (1994), only one-quarter of the courses dealt with diversity compared with more than 50 percent by 2000-01. The percentage of graduating minority majors nearly doubled over the course of the program, from 18 percent in 1993-94 to 33 percent in 2000-01. Departments reported similar results with respect to minorities on the faculty. In 1993-94, departments reported 22 percent of their faculties to be minority, but by 2000-01, the proportion increased to almost 30 percent.

“MOST emerged at a time prior to the debate over affirmative action in higher education reaching a fever pitch, and in many respects it offers approaches that transcend the rhetoric,” says Levine. “Its success demonstrates that deliberate change, aimed at the department level in institutions of higher learning, enhances the education of students of color and of all students.”

The broad range of participating schools illustrates the effectiveness of the MOST approach. The program succeeded at all 11 institutions — large and small, public and private, with or without Ph.D.-confering programs, majority minority or majority white. The leaders of the program pointed out that, although MOST was designed for and implemented in sociology departments, the program’s lessons for those engaged in promoting diversity in higher education are relevant to all departments, to faculties in other fields and disciplines, to college and university administrators, and to the public and private foundation community.

Additionally, whether UWM employs the MOST approach or fully implements the recommendations in the Black and Gold Commission Report, it is obvious that changes should be made in a comprehensive and holistic fashion.

This special edition of Myriad highlights successful students, the challenges they faced, and the overwhelming support received from the UWM community. You will read about persistence and triumph in the face of adversity, and programs designed to retain and graduate students, especially those students for whom the postsecondary experience is the first of its kind for anyone in their immediate family.
ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITY CENTER
34 years of growth and staying power

by Sana Montgomery and Ruth Russell

The efforts of former Assistant Chancellor Ernest Spaights are still producing fruit in the lives of students after 34 years of student growth and retention at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.

In 1968, Spaights created the Experimental Program in Higher Education in the Division of Student Affairs that was designed to attract, admit, and retain minority and disadvantaged students. After several name changes, the former Department of Educational Opportunity (DEO) and Department of Learning Skills (DLS) were merged and administratively moved to the Division of Academic Affairs in 1985 to become the Department of Learning Skills and Educational Opportunity (DLSEO). The program was administratively moved again in 2000 to the new Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs.

The year 1996 marked the beginning of the current program known as the Academic Opportunity Center (AOC), with Ruth B. Russell at its helm since 1997. “Approximately 1,500 students are currently enrolled in the program. They represent freshmen, reentering, continuing, and transfer undergraduate students,” says Russell.

In the past five years, AOC has experienced steady growth in applications and admissions. According to Assistant Director John Dorosz, “Total enrollment since 1998 has increased nearly 25 percent, from approximately 1,200 to 1,500 students. During that time, the number of new freshmen admitted to AOC increased nearly 50 percent. As word spreads about the success students achieve through our program, interest and inquiries increase among prospective students, parents, and high school counselors alike.”

Although by standardized measures students’ prior education may not have adequately prepared them for college, those admitted to UWM through AOC have demonstrated academic potential. The Center provides support services to help students develop their academic skills and adjust to university life. These services include intrusive academic advising and introductory course offerings in English, mathematics, study skills, and college reading.

“For many years, I’ve listened to our students’ testimonials on overcoming obstacles and challenges, and the impact our program had with their success. I’ve also listened to students comment with gratitude because our staff set high expectations and challenged them to maintain and accomplish academic goals,” says Assistant Director Barbara Wheatfall.

AOC marked another historic chapter in its existence when it became the first program in the UW System to be honored with a Charter membership in the Chi Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society on October 12, 2002. The purpose of Chi Alpha Epsilon (XAE) is to promote high academic standards, foster communication among its members, and honor the academic excellence of those students admitted to college through nontraditional criteria. Students eligible for induction must hold a 3.0 cum GPA for two consecutive full-time semesters and be admitted through a program similar to AOC. Four students — Dominica Carson, Shaun Drefahl, Maria McKinney and Ifeoma Obi — were inducted, while Vice Chancellor for Student and Multicultural Affairs Stanley Battle, AOC Senior Advisor Jimmy Johnstone, and AOC Director Ruth Russell received honorary memberships. Each year there will be opportunities for additional students, staff, and community leaders to become members of XAE.

AOC staff continues to exhibit the highest professional standards through creativity, dedication, and commitment to students. This was most apparent when Kathleen Dale, senior lecturer, received the Academic Staff Outstanding Teaching Award at UWM’s 2002 Fall Awards Ceremony. “Two years ago, I received two grants from the Institute for Service Learning and the Learning Technology Center to develop service-learning sections of English 102, for which students would get four credits instead of three,” says Dale. For the fourth credit, students serve a minimum of 13 hours at a community site researching the causes of, and solutions for, homelessness, hunger, and/or illiteracy.

Dale was extremely pleased that one of her students, Andrew Broderick, won third place last fall in the Virginia Burke Writing contest in the 102 level for his essay comparing social activists Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. Another AOC English instructor, Christine Klingbiel, was ecstatic to learn that her student, Nicole Simonson, won first place in the contest.

AOC looks forward to continuing its tradition of serving students well, generating new ideas, and proactively launching programs to move into the future.

For more information about AOC, check out its Web site at http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/AOC
“I’m the testimony of the grace of a lot of people,” says former graduate of UW–Milwaukee, Justine Smith. Recently enrolled at Harvard University to obtain a Ph.D. in religion, Smith has needed much grace to make it through the trials life seems to have thrown in her path.

Born to a Cherokee mother and Ojibwe father in California, Smith eventually made her way to Chicago, where she became active in American Indian and other social issues. She also began her undergraduate study in philosophy. However, because of lack of support services for American Indian students, she “fell through the cracks.”

But Smith found that she couldn’t completely forget about returning to school. “I kept running into a brick wall. There’s only so far you can go without an education,” she explains. When she came to Milwaukee for a job, she found UWM was her new home. Of American Indian Student Services, she says: “They go above and beyond what you’d expect. But that’s what makes them so effective. It’s like family.”

Smith needed help to face the difficulties she encountered. After her marriage ended, she was a single mom with a young child and a baby on the way. Not able to afford child care, she brought her newborn son to all her classes. Though her professors allowed her in class, “they didn’t let me out of the work,” she adds with a grin. “And I credit that for preparing me for the future.”

The student lounge of American Indian Student Services (AISS) became her second home. She describes the couch as the only place she could sleep, and recalls how other students or AISST staff would give her a hand when needed. “They were just always there in the most fundamental way,” she says. “Sometimes it’s not just big miracles that get you through. Just being where someone recognizes you and says hello—that’s a blessing.”

Smith credits the UWM McNair Program as another office that not only supported her but also prepared her for graduate school. It gave her the opportunity to complete a research project and meet a number of people whose assistance opened future doors in her pursuit of a master’s degree and eventually her Ph.D. In an e-mail message Smith sent to Doug Harder, director of the McNair program, in March 2002, she wrote: “Had I not had the opportunity to articulate and develop my doctoral project through the McNair program, I can honestly say I would not have been admitted to those schools. I can’t sing your and the McNair program’s praises enough.”

Amazingly, she never missed a day of school, maintained straight A’s, and graduated from UWM with honors. When she finally reached graduate school at Northwestern University, Smith thought her trials had ended. But through graduate school one hardship arose after another, including the paralysis of her older son and the struggle to remain financially sound while taking care of her children.

“When I think about the different things I’ve experienced, that really isn’t humanly possible for anyone to go through.” But Smith doesn’t take the credit. “My faith is my grounding, what centers and orders everything else. If God wasn’t there, I couldn’t be here now.”

As she studies at Harvard this fall, she leaves a few words of wisdom for current students. “When I look at the end goal, it’s too overwhelming. So, I ask myself what I can do now, and make it simpler by doing that task for one hour. You need to break it down into something that you can do. There’s no magic pill, but you plug away at it. It really isn’t about being naturally gifted; it’s about being willing to try on a daily basis. Things you do now will affect things later. If you study now, you’ve kept an option open later.”

Of the people and faith that have supported her, Smith says, “It’s something bigger than ourselves, and that’s what gets us through to accomplish mighty things far beyond our capabilities.” And Justine Smith is a shining example.
Passionate about history

by Mack Bates

Marc Simon Rodriguez was born across the street from UWM at Columbia Hospital in 1968. Years later, he worked there to pay his way through UWM.

In fact, the Rodriguez family has had an extensive relationship with UWM and its neighborhood since father, son, and a daughter all graduated from the University.

Rodriguez attributes his success to the Academic Opportunity Center (formerly the Department of Learning Skills and Educational Opportunity, or DLSEO) and the Department of History when he was pursuing an undergraduate degree at UWM. He was awarded the McGovern Prize by the UWM History Department.

After graduating from UWM in May 1993 in U.S. social history, Rodriguez went on to graduate studies at the Northwestern University Department of History, earning a Ph.D. in December 2000. Fueled by an interest in law, he received a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Law in August 2001. Rodriguez is currently an assistant professor of history at Princeton University.

For an insight into his academic and professional success, Myriad writer Mack Bates recently interviewed Rodriguez.

Bates: Having already earned degrees from two UW System schools and Northwestern University, have you covered all of your academic pursuits or do you have plans to pursue another degree?

Rodriguez: I assume that I am done. I joked to Ventura Castaneda (formerly of UWM and DLSEO) about getting a law degree and a history Ph.D. way back in 1992, and actually went and completed both simultaneously. Now the real work of producing scholarly work begins. In some sense, my education continues at Princeton.

Bates: As an AOC scholar, what values and/or pearls of wisdom has the program provided you?

Rodriguez: AOC, then known as DLSEO, really gave me the chance to succeed at UWM. I entered college with limited skills across the board, and a need to work most nights, so there were not a lot of options for me. Thanks to AOC’s dedicated staff and programs, I was able to improve my skills and really learn how to “do college” in the AOC classes so that by my third year, I was ready to outperform some of my more prepared classmates. I don’t think any of the things that followed would have been possible without the help of AOC services, and the dedication of Jimmy Johnstone and Ventura Castaneda in particular.

Bates: Last spring, you were given an award of special recognition from AOC. What did that particular honor mean to you and your family?

Rodriguez: In many ways, this was the most important prize I have ever won. I was so happy to be there, and to see old friends like Jimmy, and meet a new group of AOC graduates. I could relate to each and every one of them, and I cried tears of pride when I heard many of their stories. For my family, who were with me at the table, and for my younger sister Jessica, who is an AOC scholar herself, it was a way for us to come full circle and see that others were able to make the most of the AOC and UWM experience as I had.

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Marc Rodriguez
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Bates: It’s safe to say that you are well on your way to becoming one of America’s leading historians. With that in mind, do you have any role models in the field or peers you admire?
Rodriguez: I really have to thank history teachers such as Ann Healy and George Stagakis, and especially Joseph Rodriguez and Michael Gordon, for helping me at UWM and throughout my career. In many ways, these UWM teachers were my first role models in the field.

Bates: What advice do you have for students who are interested in pursuing degrees in history and those who are just starting their history studies?
Rodriguez: When you read history, always focus on the argument. I used to love the “story” and still do, but as a historian, the “argument” is the key starting point, even if the narrative is what interests you. Students often miss this. I know I did.

Bates: Besides history, what other fields of interest do you indulge when you have the time?
Rodriguez: Since I am a lawyer, I often get calls from Wisconsin-based relatives who want me to help them with legal issues. Eventually, I would like to have some kind of part-time legal practice, but this will have to wait for a few years.

Bates: And finally, what’s next on your agenda as a scholar and a teacher?
Rodriguez: I am presently writing a few articles on Mexican-American history, putting together a conference on North American Continental Migration, and trying to transform my dissertation into a book in the next few years. Since I presently teach a course on the history of the American Southwest, I also am doing a lot of reading in Native American and environmental history.

What are some of our alumni doing now?

UWM employs many of our graduates, but where are some of our other alumni? Here is a sampling of what they are doing now…

Jose Miguel Acevedo, PhD 1995, Urban Education, assistant principal at South Division High School
Maria J. Avila, BBA 1979, Business Administration – Management, director of Information Systems Support at Northwestern Mutual
Tony Baez, PhD 1995, Urban Education, vice president of academic affairs at Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC)
Jeff Bowman, BA 1987, Business Administration – Finance, vice president of Layton State Bank
Samuel D. Cargile, PhD 1979, Education – Geography, senior program director of Lumina Foundation
Sandra Chavez, MSW 1991, Social Work, guidance counselor at United Community Center
Julie Ann Chicks, BA 1990, Anthropology and Biological Sciences, physician – internal medicine
Susan Chicks, MSW 1978, Social Work, director of student development at MATC
Souphala Chomsiengphet, PhD 2001, Economics, economist at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Ivy Covert, MS 1981, Curriculum & Instruction, director of Division of Bilingual/Multicultural Education at Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS)
Ricardo Diaz, MA 1977, Rehabilitation Counseling, consultant at United Community Center
Joyce Feaster, MS 1990, Business Administration – Management, assistant vice president of human resources at WE Energies
Emily Roos Fernandez, MS 1989, Speech Pathology & Audiology, speech/language pathologist in Wauwatosa School District
Carrol Franklin, BS 1993, Elementary Education 1-6, teacher at Alcott Elementary School, MPS
Gerardo H. Gonzalez, BBA 1985, Business Administration – Finance, managing partner at Gonzalez, Saggio, Birdsall & Harlan, LLP
Fred R. Gutierrez, BS 2000, Urban Studies, program officer at Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Inc.
Janie Hatton, MS 1974, Education, principal at North Division High School, MPS
George Hinton, BBA 1988, Business Administration – Finance, vice president of academic medicine at Aurora Sinai Medical Center
Karen Jackson, PhD 1988, Urban Education, director of human resources at MPS
Amy Kerr-Tromp, BS 1993, Elementary Education, teacher at Indian Community School
Gilbert Llanas, MS 1992, Administrative Leadership, corporate community affairs manager at Miller Brewing Company
Fungchatou Lo, PhD 2000, Urban Studies, assistant professor at St. John’s University
John E. Montgomery, MS 2000, Business Administration – Management, developer of information technology at Rockwell Automation
Wanda J. Montgomery, BS 1988, Community Education, executive director of Gray’s Child Development Center
Fred Muscavitch, PhD 1999, Urban Education, area manager of Oneida Nation Social Services
Jacqueline Schellinger, BA 1978, Community Education, Wisconsin Circuit Court judge
James Schlenker, BA 1973, General, executive administrator of Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission
Alton (Sonny) Smart, BS 1979, Social Work, associate professor at UW-Stevens Point
Maureen Smith, PhD 1994, Urban Education, director of Native American Studies at University of Maine
Sharon Sorrentino, MBA 1999, Business Administration, senior tax accountant at Deloitte and Touche
Samantha Yang, MS 2001, Curriculum & Instruction, teacher at Grant Elementary School, Sheboygan School District
William A. Wong, MS 1993, Business Administration – Management, tax manager at Price Waterhouse
Daniel Neng Xiong, MS 2001, Administrative Leadership, teacher at Morse Middle School, MPS
Lojeng Xiong, BBA 2000, Management Information Systems, programmer at Milwaukee YMCA
Khoua Yang, BS 2000, Computer Science, senior programmer at Catalyst International
Nada Yang, BS 2001, Education, teacher at Humboldt Park School, MPS
Diversity is everyone’s issue

by Brian Williamson

For Elizabeth Sengkhammee, former vice president and current multicultural issues director for the Student Association, multiculturalism is more than a set of programs and statistics.

Since coming to UWM as a freshman, she has been an active supporter of diversity — first through her involvement with the Hmong Student Association and later through her work in the Student Association, where she was a major proponent of the Milwaukee Commitment.

She was not always so outspoken about multiculturalism, though. Sengkhammee’s parents immigrated as refugees, along with many other Hmong people, after the Vietnam War. When she began the 6th grade, her family settled in Pulaski, Wisconsin.

Though Pulaski was a fine place to live, “The population of 2,200 in the village was not the most open minded,” says Sengkhammee.

“Growing up I heard that all Hmong people are on welfare. Asian Americans are the model minority. Asians eat dogs. I also heard that all Asians are good at math,” she says. Unfortunately, there were no resources to help her deal with racism in such a small town, and it was difficult to communicate the problem to her family.

“I didn’t respond,” she says, “I was very passive and not vocal. In the Hmong culture, we don’t have a term for racism, so even in the instances when I would try to talk to my parents about it, they would say, ‘Well, you don’t want to affect your school work and your education, so just forget about it and concentrate on school.’”

While studying at UWM, she began to understand the problem and learn how to advocate for its solution, partly through several classes on Asian literature, the Interracial Communications Project I & II, and her involvement with the Hmong Student Association. All of these led her to a leadership role in the Student Association last year, where she advocated for policies such as the Milwaukee Commitment that would make the University more accessible for multicultural and disadvantaged students. Further, it pulled her into national leadership groups like the United Council and United States Student Association.

In furthering her education about diversity issues, she spent this past summer working with her mentor, Shilpa Reddy, at the National Education Association. The internship was part of the Civil Rights Summer in collaboration with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Leadership Conference Education Fund, Harvard Civil Rights Project, and Citizen’s Commission on Civil Rights. Sengkhammee is using the skills she learned as Student Association Multicultural Issues Director and United States Student Association Affirmative Action Trainer at UWM. As a senior majoring in community education, Sengkhammee wants to attend law school after graduation to continue her interest in civil rights, immigration, and criminal justice.

Her goals this year are to increase accountability for the Milwaukee Commitment and to broaden the dialogue about multicultural issues beyond minority student leaders. As she puts it: “We don’t live in a world made of one kind of person. We live in a world where there are different kinds of people, and there are always going to be different people. It should not just be people of color’s issue. It should be everyone’s issue.”
Limitless goals

by Linda Phanhmahavong and Terry Higgins

Langston Verdin-Williams is known in the community as a graphic artist, educator, and entrepreneur. At UWM, he’s likely to be remembered as part of the trio that helped create the LINKS Peer Outreach and Mentoring Center.

The August graduate has always dreamed big and found a way to make his dreams come true. After graduating from Riverside University High School, he enrolled in UWM’s School of Education with an eye on both the future and the past.

“I enjoy history,” Verdin-Williams says. “I want to teach students what’s left out of the books.”

While studying at UWM, he found a path to accomplish that. He met the LINKS Director Sharon Stricklin and fellow student Mary Edwards two years ago. The three saw the opportunity to help UWM students with what’s inside and outside of the books. Through determination and hard work, they helped the Center grow into what it is today.

As a mentor, Verdin-Williams helped by offering study tips, advice on using the University’s e-mail system, and support when students were experiencing school or home problems.

He also put his graphic and computer skills to use in creating LINKS program flyers, pamphlets and newsletters, designing web pages, and providing all-around tech support.

As if that wasn’t enough, Verdin-Williams deejays and is part of the “Taste Emcees” rap group, which has just finished its third CD.

He offers these same skills to the community in the form of his graphic design company, “Gorilla Promotions.” The company designs promotional flyers for local events, is working on a 2003 hip-hop calendar, and is looking to attract the investment of one or two large firms in the area.

How does he find the time and energy to do all this? It starts with a solid foundation, he says.

“Think about where you want to be in five years,” he advises students. “Not many jobs are available without a college degree. It’s very important to go to classes and take college seriously.

“Why spend time and money here if you are not serious about your education?”

Langston Verdin-Williams
No self-imposed boundaries

by John Gardener

Few things affect a person’s outlook as negatively as seeing their dreams appear to be just that—dreams. Fortunately, UWM student Brian Rodefer does not accept the so-called inevitability of defeat, nor does he crumble in the absence of instant gratification.

Rodefer is confined to a wheelchair, the result of a car accident when he was 16. He does not pretend his life is without complications. At UWM, he experienced financial and personal difficulties as he struggled to balance study and work. When expected financial assistance did not materialize, Rodefer had to pay for his schooling himself. With typical understatement, Rodefer says he’s “overcome a few problems. I have most of them straightened out, and I think I’m back on track.”

In his spare time, Rodefer helps his father manage a family construction business, and participates in national rugby and softball competitions. He also drives himself to campus.

Rodefer has nothing but praise for his advisor and mentor, Jimmy Johnstone. “In the Academic Opportunity Center, they do a lot. Jimmy is just a wonderful man, assisting with my class schedule so I don’t have to worry about that. The man cares about what he is doing,” Rodefer says.

Rodefer emphasizes that, “In the face of adversity, you don’t just lie down and die. You do what you have to do to get by, make things happen, and make of your life what needs to be so you are satisfied with who you are.”

Rodefer wants to teach college classes. He is an English major with Ph.D. aspirations, concentrating on writing fiction and non-fiction stories. When asked whether his stories are autobiographical, he says, “Not yet. I keep lots of notes and files. One day I would like to do my own Brian’s Song.”

“You do what you have to to get by, make things happen, and make of your life what needs to be so you are satisfied with who you are.”
Majoring in success
by Sana Montgomery

When her English teacher, Mrs. Hall, gave her a sealed card in her senior year at Bay View High School, Leah Adeniji didn’t realize how it would inspire her — forever.

Asked not to open the card until graduation, Adeniji hesitantly complied. “I opened the card, and it said, ‘You were the first student to receive an A in my class with that many absences. The quality of your work was just too good.’ Mrs. Hall knew about my home situation,” Adeniji says. “She gave me $50, and told me to ‘keep up the good work.’ I will never forget that card. It meant so much to me that I kept it to this day.”

Adeniji is the eldest of three children. She was born to an American mother and a Nigerian-born father, and moved with her family to Milwaukee from Chicago when she was 12. She is now a 23-year-old senior at UWM, majoring in communication with a minor in business administration, who expects to graduate next May.

In April 2001, Adeniji submitted a research paper for an American Multicultural Student Leadership Conference (AMSLC) competition and won the first place prize of $3,500. She entered three research papers in the AMSLC 2002 competition and won first place again, plus an honorable mention, and a cash award of $3,750. Majoring in success has proven profitable for Adeniji, but that was not always the case.

“During high school my grades weren’t optimal due to my home situation,” Adeniji says. “I had a lot of responsibilities; most challenging was caring for my little brother, Rickey.” Adeniji missed a lot of classes, and struggled with her grades. Her freshman year at UWM was the turning point in her life.

“When I was in my first semester and had to start all over again, I decided that I had to go to school and make up those lost hours.”

In her junior year, Adeniji participated in the Ronald E. McNair Program, which gave her the foundation to conduct research. “The McNair program really gave me insight into scholarly work at the graduate level. I would advise anyone who desires to obtain a graduate degree to look into the program.”

Adeniji also expressed her fondness for literature and music. “I love music and poetry. I have written a couple of songs, and I’ve been writing poetry since middle school.” She would like to get her Ph.D. in education, and own her own business in the music industry.

Adeniji stresses the importance of education for today’s youth, and of rising above one’s circumstances. “I would tell them not to focus on their troubles, but to use that energy to strive for excellence. Always remember that no one has the ability to stop you other than yourself,” she says. “The decisions you make today will frame your tomorrow — hence, make wise choices.”

Adeniji thanks “God for always being my rock, and my grandmother, who died when I was six. My grandmother left an indelible impression on my life, and loved people unconditionally — she was always willing to lend a helping hand. When I think of her, it makes me smile, and I know everything will be all right in time.”

She also praises Leonard White, Tamara Hines, and Douglas Harder, who all had a serious impact on her college experience.
The sign on Maria Dixon’s former office door in Enderis Hall, Find Them – Bring Them In – Grow Them Up – Send Them Out, summarizes what she does as the youth development secretary at Mt. Hermon Church on Milwaukee’s north side. Dixon, who works with youth in preventing teen pregnancy, believes that morals and ethics play a major role in the choices one makes.

Dixon’s career choice is to become an attorney one day. She would like to become a public defender or a civil rights advocate, realizing that neither position is necessarily financially rewarding. She recently graduated from UWM with a master’s degree in criminal justice. Her undergraduate degrees (also from UWM) are in political science and criminal justice.

Dixon’s learning took place both inside and outside the classroom at UWM.

“Working in the Financial Aid office as an undergraduate student helped me academically and professionally,” she says. “It put me in a position to become more vocal, and I learned about the different financial situations students face.

“Knowing key people at UWM also helped. I had a chance to present myself to them on a professional level,” she adds. These experiences gave her a different perspective, taught her conflict resolution skills, and increased her confidence.

Dixon and her husband, Brian, who works in UWM’s Financial Aid office, have three children, ages seven, six, and 16 months. She says that the kids make what she does “all the more interesting,” and credits the UWM Children’s Center for its help while she was in school.

According to Dixon, “moving from Texas to Sheboygan, then to Milwaukee” was a culture shock. Now, she says, she feels she can take on anything.
Multicultural Retention

Academic Opportunity Center (AOC)
Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs
Mitchell Hall, Room 177
Phone: (414) 229-5135
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/AOC

Adult and Returning Student Services
Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs
Bolton Hall, Room 183
Phone: (414) 229-6732
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/DES/OMRSS

African American Student Academic Services (AASAS)
College of Letters and Science
Holton Hall, Room G28
Phone: (414) 229-6657
Web: www.uwm.edu/letsci/services/african.html

American Indian Student Services (AISS)
College of Letters and Science
Holton Hall, Room G48
Phone: (414) 229-5880
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/AISS

Building Blocks to the Future Mentoring Program
School of Business Administration
Business Administration Building, Room N251
Phone: (414) 229-6482

School of Information Studies
Bolton Hall, Room 590
Phone: (414) 229-2902

Career Development Center
Mellencamp Hall, Room 128
Phone: (414) 229-4486

Center for Cultural Diversity and Health
School of Nursing
Cunningham Hall, Room G75
Phone: (414) 229-5995

Center for Volunteerism and Student Leadership
Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs
Union, Room WG28
Phone: (414) 229-3161
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/CVSL

Committee on Institutional Cooperation Summer Research Program
Graduate School
Mitchell Hall, Room 239
Phone: (414) 229-6538

Cooperative Urban Teacher Education Program (CUTEP)
School of Education
Enderis Hall, Room 209
Phone: (414) 229-2472

Culturally Appropriate Teacher Education: Deaf/Hard of Hearing (CATE-D/HH)
School of Education
Enderis Hall, Room 673
Phone: (414) 229-4322
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/CTE

Department of Multicultural Affairs
Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs
Mitchell Hall, Room 225
Phone: (414) 229-5566
Web: www.ma.uwm.edu

Guarantee 4.0
School of Information Studies
Bolton Hall, Room 590
Phone: (414) 229-2902

Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP)
College of Health Sciences
Enderis Hall, Room 810
Phone: (414) 229-5761
Web: www.uwm.edu/CHS/minority/minority.html

Hmong American Studies Initiative
Cultures and Communities Program
Curtin Hall, Room 492
Phone: (414) 229-4511

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center
Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs
Union, Room WG89
Phone: (414) 229-4116
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/LGBT

LINKS: Peer Outreach & Mentoring Center
Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs
Union, Room WG10
Phone: (414) 229-6338
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/POMC

McNair Achievement Program
Graduate School
Mitchell Hall, Room 239
Phone: (414) 229-6538
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/McNair

MED-PREP
College of Letters and Science
Holton Hall, Room 145
Phone: (414) 229-5387
Web: www.uwm.edu/letsci/services/medprep.html
Programs...

**Metropolitan Multicultural Teacher Education Program (MMTEP)**
School of Education
Enderis Hall, Room 309
Phone: (414) 229-4884
Web: www.soe.uwm.edu/pages/welcome/Departments/Curriculum_Instruction/Degrees_Programs_of_Study/Post_Baccalaureate_Certification/MMTEP

**Multicultural Career Day**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Mellencamp Hall, Room 128
Phone: (414) 229-4486
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/CDC/multi_careerday.html

**Multicultural Career Programs and Activities**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Mellencamp Hall, Room 128
Phone: (414) 229-4486

**Multicultural Programs**
*School of Business Administration*
Business Administration Building, Room N251
Phone: (414) 229-6482

**Multicultural Recruitment and Retention Committee**
*Helen Bader School of Social Welfare*
Enderis Hall, Room 1057
Phone: (414) 229-4735

**Multicultural Resource Center**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Union, Room W198
Phone: (414) 229-3731

**Multicultural Studies Librarian**
*Division of Academic Affairs*
Golda Meir Library, Room W120
Phone: (414) 229-6613

**Office of Diversity**
*College of Engineering and Applied Science*
Engineering & Mathematical Sciences, Room E175
Phone: (414) 229-3882

**Office of Diversity**
*College of Health Sciences*
Enderis Hall, Room 810
Phone: (414) 229-5761
Web: www.uwm.edu/CHS/minority/minority.html

**Office of Equity/Diversity Services**
*Division of Academic Affairs*
Mitchell Hall, Room 359
Phone: (414) 229-5923
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/OD_C

**Milwaukee Pathways to Teaching Careers Program**
*School of Education*
Enderis Hall, Room 355
Phone: (414) 229-3795
Web: www.soe.uwm.edu/pages/welcome/Departments/Curriculum_Instruction/Degrees_Programs_of_Study/Milwaukee_Pathways_to_Teaching_Careers_Program

**Roberto Hernandez Center (RHC)**
*Division of Academic Affairs*
Bolton Hall, Room 272
Phone: (414) 229-6156
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/RHC

**Southeast Asian Student Academic Services (SASAS)**
*College of Letters and Science*
Holton Hall, Room 179
Phone: (414) 229-5282
Web: www.uwm.edu/letsci/services/seasia.html

**Student Accessibility Center (SAC)**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Mitchell Hall, Room 112
Phone: (414) 229-6287 v/t
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC

**Student Organization Advising and Resources (SOAR)**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Union, Room E310
Phone: (414) 229-5780
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/SOAR

**Student Support Services (SSS) Program**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Mitchell Hall, Room 135
Phone: (414) 229-5598
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/trio/sss

**Tutoring and Academic Resource Center (TARC)**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Mitchell Hall, Room 215
Phone: (414) 229-3726
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/TARC

**Women’s Resource Center**
*Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs*
Union, Room WG93
Phone: (414) 229-2852
Web: www.uwm.edu/Dept/WRC

...at a glance
Stanley Battle, vice chancellor for student and multicultural affairs at UWM, is the founder and stabilizing force behind the Sullivan Spaights Scholarship Program. The program awards full scholarships each year to outstanding students from Milwaukee to attend UWM. Scholarship programs are an essential component that contributes to the retention, and ultimately the graduation, of many students.

Currently there are five scholarship recipients in the program. “Competition is fierce. This is no popularity contest, although a candidate’s personality is not likely to be discounted,” explains Battle.

“The students here now are outstanding students from Milwaukee. They are ranked one, two, three, or four in their class, which means they can go anywhere in the country because they also have excellent ACT scores. Each one has multiple acceptances around the country. All are members of the National Honor Society,” he adds.

“Certainly, the scholarships encourage them to come here. With additional resources, we could recruit many more students,” Battle emphasizes. He also recalls that when setting up this scholarship program, “There was a perception on the part of some people that there are no outstanding students in Milwaukee. It’s just not true.”

The assistant director of recruitment and outreach, Leonard White, helps find students for the program. Battle follows up by visiting the families to encourage attendance at UWM and provide a personal touch.

Battle meets with the scholarship recipients biweekly to monitor their academic progress and offer tutorial support, and remains in close contact with their parents. “We keep them in that loop of support. Academically, the students are in a position where they should achieve and do well. I just try to make sure I complete the scenario with them. So far, they have all maintained excellent GPA’s, and are on course to graduate from UWM.”

The scholarship award, which includes room, board, tuition, and books, is renewable for four years. “There is a donor who, each year, gives me another scholarship. This donor is very gracious and generous,” says Battle.

### Sullivan Spaights Scholarship Recipients 2002-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zachary Correa</td>
<td>Computer Science/Spanish</td>
<td>Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana Maria De La Cruz</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas J. Foster</td>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>Sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mario Nimock</td>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tawanna D. Watson</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Junior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multicultural Scholarship/Grant Programs...

For more information or eligibility criteria, please check out the following Web sites:

Scholarship:  www.uwm.edu/Dept/FINAID/Finaid_Avail.html#Scholarship
            www.uwm.edu/Dept/Development/scholarship.html

Grant:  www.uwm.edu/Dept/FINAID/Finaid_Avail.html#Grants

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**Minority Academic Achievement Scholarships/UWM Foundation**
- Harley-Davidson Minority Scholarship
- Hazel Erickson Scholarship
- Helen & Bruce Ambuel Scholarships
- Indian Community School Scholarships
- Jack & Corinne Reichert Minority Scholarships
- Latino Student Union Scholarships
- Manpower Foundation Minority Scholarships
- Maria & Luis Cerillo Scholarship
- Minority Academic Achievement General Scholarships
- Northwestern Mutual Life Foundation Minority Scholarships
- Physical and Biological Studies Scholarships
- Royal & Myra Taxman Scholarship
- Stuart & Ann Tisdale Scholarships
- Sullivan-Spajtich Scholarships
- Victor Vega Scholarships
- WEPCO Minority Scholarship

**School of Architecture and Urban Planning**
- Eppstein Uhen Scholarship/Internship
- Findorff Construction Company Minority Scholarships
- C.G. Schmidt Scholarships
- Urban Planning Minority Scholarships

**Peck School of the Arts**
- Visual Art Department Minority Scholarships

**School of Business Administration**
- Alois Bulawa Memorial Scholarship
- Firstar Milwaukee Foundation Scholarship
- Herbert H. Kohl Charities, Inc. Scholarship
- Sheldon and Marianne Lubar Scholarship Program
- Wilbur and Ardie A. Halyard Scholarship

**College of Health Sciences**
- Academic Achievement Book Scholarship
- Curative Care Network Resident Tuition Scholarship
- Quest Diagnostic Resident Tuition Scholarship

**College of Letters and Science**
- Educational Opportunity Scholarship for Low-Income Students (Center for Women’s Studies)
- Florence L. Healy Women’s Studies Scholarship for Low-Income Students (Center for Women’s Studies)
- Journal Sentinel Minority Scholarship

**School of Nursing**
- Charlotte Gellerman Scholarship

**Helen Bader School of Social Welfare**
- NOBLE (National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives) Scholarship

**School of Education**
- Reuben Harpole Education Scholarship
- Second Century Fund Minority Scholarship
- Thomas Cheeks Scholarship Fund

**College of Engineering and Applied Science**
- Industrial Scholars Program
- Hearst Foundation Scholarship

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Division of Student and Multicultural Affairs/Financial Aid Office
- Bureau of Indian Affairs Grant
- Handicapped Student Grant
- Lawton Undergraduate Minority Retention Grant
- Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC) Scholarships
- Wisconsin Indian Grant

Graduate School
- Advanced Opportunity Program

Thanks to the UWM Foundation for verifying the scholarship information.

...at a glance
A group of six staff members, six faculty, and 12 students met every week from January to June, 2002, facilitating a dialogue between students and the University. Called the Black and Gold Commission, they issued a report this summer that envisions a metamorphosis of the way UWM provides services to students.

The Commission was created by Chancellor Nancy Zimpher last year with a broad goal to improve the University's ability to promote student success. The Commission attempted to narrow this goal by taking the first few months of its existence — from October to December — to digest a huge amount of data. The Commissioners looked at resources ranging from student surveys to specialized local studies by UWM faculty in an effort to get a holistic picture of the student experience at UWM.

After this data review, the Commission met to discuss the most vital issues affecting students, and generate strategies to improve their success and well-being. The final report recommendations are less an outline of specific programs than a framework for building a more vital campus culture.

Take, for example, the Commission’s handling of two key issues: student satisfaction and retention. Surveys of exiting seniors suggest that overall satisfaction dropped slightly between 1999 and 2001. Though retention rates have increased in the last few years, UWM has room for improvement, especially among students from racially diverse backgrounds. One of the changes the Commission recommends is a change in the way students are introduced to UWM.

“I think one [issue] that rose to the forefront was the first-year experience,” says Isaac Monteagudo, student co-chair of the Commission. "But the Commission didn’t stop with simply developing ideas for incoming 18-year-olds from the suburbs.

“When we thought of the first year, we always tried to broaden beyond the idea of the traditional freshman,” says Carol Haertlein, faculty co-chair for the group, adding that the Commission always tried to build recommendations that would benefit the uniquely diverse student body that UWM enjoys. “We wanted to expand the idea of diversity,” she adds.

Following that philosophy, the report recommends that diversity has a wider meaning, to encompass “race/ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, political views, religious perspectives, income level, nationality, and stage of life.”

That’s the language of the report throughout. It is not only suggesting a change in policy, it’s suggesting “that a cultural shift within the UWM community is necessary for the student experience we envision to become a reality.”

These ideas are not only those of the Commissioners, but were gained from feedback from all quarters, including a series of open forums with the student body that were held last spring.

To read the report, go to http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/blackandgold/.

What would the Commissioners like to see as a result of this report?

“I’d certainly like to see a little more cooperative effort between departments to create a stellar first-year experience,” says Monteagudo. “I want the Columbia Hospital property to be purchased and developed,” says Haertlein, adding that she’d like to see “a centralized physical space that is more student centered, and to see the faculty embrace these recommendations.”

Recommendations
(http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/blackandgold/recommend.html):

I. Adopt an “Investing in UWM’s Students” culture throughout UWM
II. Organize for student success
III. Maximize student learning
IV. Increase connections and interest in diversity
Champion of Indian education

by Kathy Quirk

David Beaulieu, Electa Quinney professor of American Indian education, remembers the day when he discovered what his career goal would be.

In 1969, when he was a college student working at the Minnesota Historical Society, Beaulieu was asked to retrieve a box from a storage vault and bring it to a photographer. The box contained remains of Little Crow, Minnesota’s foremost Indian leader of the 19th century. Little Crow, the leader in an 1862 Indian uprising fueled by broken treaty promises and hunger, was murdered by farmers while gathering berries a year after the uprising. He was scalped and his body mutilated. His skull, scalp, and arm bones were eventually donated to the historical society, where they were displayed until 1915. As Beaulieu, an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, White Earth Reservation, held Little Crow’s remains in his arms, he began to reflect on his own family’s history and that of his tribe. The research and action inspired by that incident propelled him into a career focused on researching and writing about American Indian history and culture, and actively working to improve American Indian education.

Beaulieu, professor in the School of Education’s Department of Educational Policy and Community Studies, came to UWM a year ago after serving as the director of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Indian Education for four years. The Electa Quinney professorship, the School of Education’s first endowed professorship, honors the pioneering American Indian educator recognized as Wisconsin’s first public school teacher.

Before becoming director of the Office of Indian Education, Beaulieu served as commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, and was the first American Indian to be appointed as a commissioner in state government. Beaulieu, who earned his doctorate in education administration from the University of Minnesota, served on the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force, and has written extensively about Indian education. He also has taught at a number of universities and is a former chairman of the board of trustees of NAES (Native American Education Services, Inc.) College in Chicago.

The U.S. Secretary of the Interior recently appointed Beaulieu as a founding member of the Board of Directors of the American Indian Education Foundation (AIEF). The Foundation, created by Congress in 2000, is authorized to encourage and accept private gifts to benefit the education of American Indian children in schools on or near reservations.

In his first year at UWM, Beaulieu has focused on developing courses to educate teachers about teaching American Indian students, and how to incorporate information about American Indian culture into schools. He also is working on projects to encourage more American Indians to become teachers, and developing mentoring programs and student teaching opportunities in collaboration with the Indian Community School, Spotted Eagle High School, and MPS. “Teachers are constantly challenged to respond to children who are culturally and linguistically different. Teaching strategies that work for American Indian children can work for other children as well,” says Beaulieu.

American Indian children have faced unique education challenges as a result of misguided education policies imposed by the federal and state government. At one point, children were taken from their homes and culture and sent to boarding schools, sometimes thousands of miles away. “Then the government wondered why so many individuals had limited parenting skills,” says Beaulieu. By the 1960s and 70s, “American Indian education was labeled a national tragedy and a national challenge.”

The work and research Beaulieu is doing in American Indian education can have an impact not just for American Indian children. For example, the sense of community, respect for elders and accountability to others that many American Indian schools have developed can benefit many other school systems. “Teachers need to ultimately know all their students within the context of their individual family and community. How the teacher responds to that is important for all children.”

Thanks in part to David Beaulieu’s efforts, Little Crow’s remains were eventually properly buried. For more interesting facts about the story, including Beaulieu’s encounters with Little Crow’s grandson and the great-granddaughter of the pioneer doctor who preserved Little Crow’s skull, see the full article online at http://www.uwm.edu/News/profile/beaulieu.html.
Cultivating student growth

by Angela Fernandez

She laughs as she tells of how she would hang out in her brother’s car between classes. But as fate would have it, an American Indian friend of her brother’s invited her to pick up author Vine Deloria from the airport. She describes this event as the beginning of her involvement in NASM, a tight-knit group of six to seven regular members. One of their main goals was to find any and all American Indians and bring them to the group. At the time, the student group (now called American Indian Student Association, or AISA) was more politically focused, given its birth amidst the Civil Rights Era and other events. “It was an exciting time,” Amour reminisces.

Amour was hired as a work-study student in the American Indian Studies program when it was created. In that position she was sent to conferences and served in various community organizations. But her involvement didn’t end there. She describes how diligently NASM members worked. The group eventually grew “by leaps and bounds.” In addition, it began to hold an annual pow-wow at UWM. Says Amour, “Because I was involved, I’ve always seen the need to also reach outside the University to connect and network with the state and the city’s Indian population.” And this still holds true for Amour. She continues to serve on the Indian Community School Board, the Indian Summer Board, and the Milwaukee Indian Education Committee. She was also a board member of the Wisconsin Indian Education Association for a number of years.

Amour carries on the early traditions of AISS as she and the rest of the staff provide a wide variety of services and support to students. “The staff is what makes the program,” says Amour. “Their dedication and how much they’re willing to give can make or break a program.” She praises the different strengths of the AISS staff. Jenelle Klumb provides community connections to students, while Celeste Clark monitors their academic progress. And Debbie Porter is always in the office, providing a variety of services to staff and students.

AII S specializes in a wide range of services. Students have access to a small lounge for studying or resting, as well as several computers. Both AII S and AISA provide cultural and social opportunities for students, including potlucks, the annual Autumn Pow-Wow, and trips to the National Indian Education Association conferences.

Amour says she “would like to conduct more focus groups to find out what students need and what we can do to improve. I would also like to make AISS more visible on campus so more students can benefit from our services. And, a full-time recruiter would be beneficial for statewide visibility.”

Amour explains: “Students use our services for different things. We’re not trying to create a dependency, but we want our students to have a base where they can feel comfortable, so maybe they will try new things and take advantage of opportunities.”
The man with a plan

by Mack Bates

Born in Uvalda, Texas and relocated to Modesto, California when he was 11 years old, Enrique Figueroa’s journey to becoming the first permanent director of the Roberto Hernandez Center (RHC) is a textbook example of the rewards hard work and perseverance can offer.

Figueroa received his undergraduate degree from Fresno State in agricultural education, two master’s degrees in environmental horticulture and agricultural economics and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics, all from the University of California at Davis.

Figueroa was named director of the Roberto Hernandez Center and special assistant to the provost for Latino affairs after most recently working as a consultant to the Southern States Cooperative Foundation. Prior to consulting, he was deputy undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and was also the administrator of the agricultural marketing service. Figueroa was both an assistant and associate professor of agricultural economics at Cornell University for 11 years, and spent time as a teacher while in California.

The UWM Roberto Hernandez Center (formerly the Spanish Speaking Outreach Institute, or SSOI until 1998) was renamed to honor the memory and work of the late Latino activist Roberto Hernandez, who became a leading voice in political activism during the 1970s. Over the years, community outreach for the Hispanic community has become a focal point for RHC. Other goals include Latino student recruitment and retention, and the development of Latino studies and Latino awareness on campus.

Since arriving at UWM in January 2002, Figueroa has been committed to increasing the RHC’s profile on campus and in the community. He is “thrilled” with RHC’s new location in Bolton Hall.

Figueroa is determined to improve the Latino Studies Certificate Program. “The program has been relatively underutilized — very few students are enrolled,” he contends, pointing out that part of the reason lies in the limited number of Latino Studies courses and the inconsistency with which those courses are offered. The plan is to have courses and faculty that will be large enough to propose a department of Latino Studies at UWM. “That is the long-term goal, and I think the one that would have the greatest and longest impact,” Figueroa states.

Enrique Figueroa
Always there to help

by Linda Phanhmahavong

When it is time to schedule classes, or when schoolwork gets tough, many students turn to their advisors. Jimmy Johnstone, a senior advisor in the Academic Opportunity Center (AOC), has assisted thousands of students during the past 32 years.

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Achieving personal success
by Mariah Lewis and Umeeka Harris

As a high school senior and new mother, Marion Marie Angeloff’s accounting teacher told her, “You will be a statistic—a single mother on welfare.”

Completing that accounting class with a “B” average was her first step on a journey toward a world of choices, toward a fulfilling career and a commitment to family and church. Angeloff continues to build on her skills and a record of hard work to achieve personal success while enhancing the lives of others.

For seven years, Angeloff was employed in UWM’s School of Continuing Education and School of Education as an LTE. In 1995, she was hired as a program assistant 1 in Physical Plant Services, and was promoted to her current position as a program assistant 3/office manager in the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) in 1997.

As SAC’s office manager, Angeloff assists in providing academic services to students with disabilities to help them excel in their undergraduate and graduate studies. Angeloff takes great joy in her personal relationships with some of the students and has seen several of them return after graduating to pursue graduate degrees or work for SAC.

Angeloff shares the following story. A student stopped by her office every day and said, “I don’t want to be here, I am not happy with school, I want to quit.” Angeloff encouraged and supported the student, uplifted her spirit, and assured her that “this will all be over soon.” The student returned the following year and said, “Thank you, Marion. I am graduating next semester as a 4.0 honor student.”

Angeloff is active in the community and in her church, as well as the National Alliance of Postal Federal Employees. She is an honors high school graduate with some college credits. As she raises her children, who are now 9, 12, and 19, her biggest accomplishment, in addition to family, is the rededication of her life to God. Her greatest inspiration is the love of her husband, and her greatest aspiration is to return to college.

Angeloff recalls word for word the encouragement she once received from a colleague/mentor Barbara Faucett: “With the dedication and hard work you put into things, you could do anything and be successful at it.” Having benefited from personal drive, faith, and encouragement from those who believed in her, Angeloff now finds fulfillment in offering services and support to students headed toward their own success.
Anthony Hightower, director of the Office of Equity/Diversity Services (ED/S), likes to know his neighbors. His neighborhood. His constituency.

At the ED/S open house this fall he made a point of meeting, greeting, and welcoming all comers. During the festivities, he offered a snapshot of how he sees his role on campus.

“Understanding the future means understanding how things are now,” he says. “What we have to offer ourselves, and each other. It’s about seeing what we can do now to make UWM a great place to be, and how that can help make the world a better place to live in.”

Hightower joined UWM six months ago from a position as supervisory attorney with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. In that role, he managed a team of attorneys and investigators responsible for examining discrimination complaints.

His educational experience includes an undergraduate degree from Clark College, a master’s degree in public administration from Harvard, and a law degree from the University of Iowa.

He’s also taught at the post-secondary level and served in state and local government in Georgia.

Hightower says he’s been impressed by UWM’s commitment to diversity, and plans to continue along the same lines.

“I’m committed to reviewing our discriminatory conduct policy, and looking at how ED/S can offer more outreach activities,” he explains.

In that regard, the office’s Diversity Dividends Seminar series has already been a hit on campus. A recent session on “Breaking the Glass Ceiling,” featuring talks by UWM Professor of Management Belle Rose Ragins and Deborah Blanks, executive director of the Social Development Commission, drew a large crowd of men and women interested in making a difference.

Future seminars include looking at human rights in the university context, academic and artistic freedom, affirmative action, and more.

Hightower believes that such outreach efforts, coupled with focused and rigorous institutional self-examination, will make UWM a destination campus for students, faculty, and staff.

“There are a lot of resources out there that we can tap into,” he says. “We have to know where to go, how to position ourselves, and how to persuade people to come here and be a part of UWM.

“Understanding the future is now. Diversity is a necessity. The bottom line is that it’s just reality.”
As one of this year’s recipients of the UW System Women of Color Award, Gwat-Yong Lie is not only devoted to students, staff, and faculty, but also to the surrounding community.

This shows in her work with various community organizations, such as Minority Substance Abuse Prevention and HIV Prevention Services Program, the Hmong American Friendship Association, addiction treatment for low-income women, and her position as president of the Board for the Hmong American Women’s Association.

Leaving her home in Singapore in 1978, Lie came to Milwaukee to earn her master’s degree at UWM. She finished her Ph.D. in Madison in 1984, and then moved on to work at Arizona State until she returned to UWM as an associate professor of social work in 1996. But her history of community involvement started long before she came to UWM. She has worked with various organizations for domestic abuse, sexual assault and rape crisis, and vocational and academic training primarily for women with children.

When it comes to tying her community projects to the campus, and more specifically to the students, Lie has a unique approach. “The way I bring what I do in the community to the campus is to hire students to help with data collection and interviews,” says Lie. She feels involving students in research projects provides them with much needed financial support, which is important in retaining students, particularly students of color. Lie also looks at the bigger picture: “The whole idea is not just financial support, but also to help them develop good research and interviewing skills, and to develop key community contacts.”

Lie lists a few critical factors in retaining multicultural students. She believes it is important for faculty to step up and mentor students on research projects, as a means of supporting them financially and providing them with real world experiences. Says Lie, “It’s a very important relationship that the University should and must cultivate.”

Another important factor is “connecting students with faculty of color. Students need to see someone on campus who looks like them or who can relate to their backgrounds, and to get them excited and empowered to use their talents and skills. I think it is also important to recruit and retain faculty and staff of color, because the composition of faculty, staff, and students on campus should reflect the composition and diversity of the surrounding community.” In that regard, Lie is spearheading the formation of an Asian faculty and staff association on campus.

Lie relies on student feedback when it comes to improving services at UWM. “Many students of color have a different reality than the dominant reality for other students,” says Lie. “Instead of telling them ‘I know what is good for you,’ we need to ask them what they need, and what we can do to help them accomplish their goals and objectives.”

Although Lie has played an integral role on campus and in the community, she is by no means one to praise herself. Her attitude is one of silent service. Says Lie, “I feel my work in the community helps me to identify important issues which I can bring back to the students in my classes. This is also a way I can bring students to the community.”

Without a doubt, Lie’s focus on the campus as part of the larger community is an important aspect of student retention. With enthusiasm and a bright vision for the future, she says, “We’re trying to improve the diversity of students, staff, and faculty on campus. It’s been a long time coming, but we’re moving in the right direction. It will be really interesting to see what happens in the next few years.”
A search for natural light

by Samaria Morris

If you walk into the Office of Student Life, you will find Laura Murphy, Program Assistant 3, hard at work. She may be conversing with frantic students over the phone helping them to stay in school, or discussing issues with her supervisor, Dean of Students James Hill. Murphy is just one of the many committed staff in the Office of Student Life. The office is responsible for handling nonacademic issues such as disciplinary actions, safety issues, publication of rules and regulations, and tuition appeals.

By observing her at work, you would never know that Murphy has another life beyond her office. Murphy is a talented photographer who has displayed her work at each year’s “Artists Within Us” art exhibit.

Murphy is no stranger to the UWM campus and the East Side. Five generations of her family grew up in the area. She claimed that growing up in an area renowned for its diverse flavor may have promoted her creative edge. The fact that her mother is a painter and poet, combined with a brief meeting with a palm reader who warned her to embrace her creative side, could have encouraged her interest in photography as well.

Murphy chooses photography for its permanence. The beauty caught in a photo lasts forever.

Along with her interesting past, Murphy has established a unique goal for her photography. She chooses to take pictures of people in their natural state, and utilizes natural light to allow the photos to reflect the true person and catch their emotion. She is spontaneous, and snaps pictures when her subjects are unaware.

According to Murphy, being photogenic is the ability of a subject to send something of self through the photo. She understands why some cultures believe that to take a photo is to kidnap a person’s spirit, since that photo is an extension of the self.

Murphy has the insight and skill of an artist, yet she does not consider herself one. This way, she has the opportunity to strive to be better. Her mentor, a filmmaker and photographer, critiques her work and holds her to a high standard.

Despite having a passion for photography, Murphy does not expect to leave her job to become a professional photographer anytime soon. She has been working at UWM for 11 years, and enjoys interacting with her colleagues. She chooses to keep photography as a hobby, to keep the camera as an instrument which allows her to express herself.
Our **Myriad** student writers

**MACK BATES** is an award-winning journalist and a senior at UWM, majoring in film and film studies with a minor in journalism and mass communication. Currently, he is also film editor for The Leader, and a freelance film critic for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. In 2000, Mack won Honorable Mention in the Milwaukee Press Club’s College Journalistic Excellence Awards in the category of Best Single Feature Story – Print for “Simply the Best: Susan Sarandon,” an exclusive interview with the Oscar-winning actress. In 2001, Mack won the First Place award in the Club’s Best Critical Review of the Arts – Print category for his review of the film, “Pay It Forward.”

**ANGELA FERNANDEZ** is a junior majoring in social welfare, with a minor in Spanish, and is originally from the Menominee Indian Reservation. She has been involved in several student organizations and enjoys volunteering in the community. She is also thankful for the many learning opportunities that wise people have brought into her life, and hopes to give the same to future generations.

**JOHN GARDNER** is a fourth year returning student, majoring in journalism and psychology. He enjoys writing short stories, fiction, non-fiction, and poetry.

**MARIAH LEWIS** is a senior majoring in sociology. After graduating in May 2003, she plans to attend graduate school, but only after traveling and exploring a little, since she grew up in a small town in northern Wisconsin. Mariah enjoys going home to relax, visit her family, and walk around in the woods.

**MACK BATES** is an award-winning journalist and a senior at UWM, majoring in film and film studies with a minor in journalism and mass communication. Currently, he is also film editor for The Leader, and a freelance film critic for the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. In 2000, Mack won Honorable Mention in the Milwaukee Press Club’s College Journalistic Excellence Awards in the category of Best Single Feature Story – Print for “Simply the Best: Susan Sarandon,” an exclusive interview with the Oscar-winning actress. In 2001, Mack won the First Place award in the Club’s Best Critical Review of the Arts – Print category for his review of the film, “Pay It Forward.”

**SANA MONTGOMERY** is currently a graduate student in the Educational Policy and Community Studies Program. She is an experienced and published writer, poet, and researcher. She also teaches martial arts!

**SAMARIA MORRIS** is still between declaring majors. However, she says, “I know for sure that I want to help change the world for the good and help as many people as I can.” When she decides, she will choose a major that will help further her cause.

**LINDA PHANHMAHAVONG**, a junior at UWM, is determined to obtain a bachelor’s degree in public relations. Aside from school, Linda enjoys dancing, vacationing, and going out with friends. She currently works at the 440th Airlift Wing at Mitchell International Airport.

**BRIAN WILLIAMSON** is a senior in the school of Journalism and Mass Communication. In his free time, he volunteers at the 8th Note cafe, lets scruffy rock bands play in his basement, and obsessively reads the news.
AOC students (from left to right) Dominica Carson, Ifeoma Obi, Shaun Drefahl and Maria McKinney were inducted into the Chi Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society on October 12, 2002. AOC Director Ruth Russell (center), AOC Senior Advisor Jimmy Johnstone (second from right), and Vice Chancellor Stanley Battle (right) became honorary members. The Honorable Dr. Elbert M. Saddler (third from right), founder and national executive director of the honor society, was present at the charter and induction ceremony.

UWM students and staff posed in front of the Union prior to their departure to the American Multicultural Student Leadership Conference, held at UW–Eau Claire in April, 2002.