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Omicron Delta Kappa to induct 12th class

The Mu Alpha Omega circle of Omicron Delta Kappa, a national leadership honor society, will induct its 12th class Dec. 3. Omicron Delta Kappa was founded in 1914 to acknowledge leadership of exceptional quality in all phases of college life. It recognizes students, faculty, administrative staff and alumni who represent a diversity of interests, have achieved an excellent academic record, and have excelled in their commitment to university life and society.

The following members of the University of Dayton community will be inducted: Ashley Anderson, Melissa Apmann, Kaitlyn Burgei, Daniel DeBrosse, Marissa Dolle, Anthony Fantone, Elizabeth Hark, Emily Haas, Angela Holmen, Bethany Huelskamp, Tracie Johnson, Joseph Untener and Thomas Wenning.

Academic senate considers background check proposal

The academic senate meets today from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Kennedy Union west ballroom. The main agenda item is to consult on a policy and procedure for faculty background checks. You can read the proposal, submitted by the provost’s office and human resources department, at http://academic.udayton.edu/senate/documents/senate%20documents/06-12%20Faculty%20Background%20Checks.htm.

Grant funds development of new science course

A new science course for teacher education students, tentatively titled “Watersheds and Community,” will be developed for launch by fall 2007, thanks to an award from the National Science Foundation, to implement projects to improve science and math education.

An interdisciplinary team led by Don Pair (geology), Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., (Fitz Center), Dan Fouke (philosophy), Kelly Williams (biology), and Paul Benson (College of Arts and Sciences) planned the project during the Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities (SENCER) Summer Institute at Santa Clara University in August. The team will work through the Rivers Institute, housed in the Fitz Center, to develop the course.

PAC begins transformation

Beginning practice at 6 a.m. or ending it at midnight — this is a custom of Flyer athletics that may be passing. And as the Flyers pursue academic and athletic excellence, it may not be greatly missed.

With the opening of RecPlex, the vacated 60,000-square-foot Physical Activities Center is being renovated to provide indoor practice space for basketball, football, track and field, tennis, soccer, baseball and softball.

The old swimming pool will be filled in and the area made into a practice basketball gym. When the UD Arena receives a new court in 2007-08, the current one will be moved to the renovated practice facility. Collins Gym in January 2007 will receive a new multipurpose surface suitable for practices of a number of sports as well as for conditioning sessions for all sports. The facility will have a 150-meter track as well as pole vault and triple, long and high jump stations.

In addition to the PAC renovation, the Frericks Center will receive a new hardwood floor, designed for better volleyball training and injury reduction.

Overall, the facility will benefit more than 350 Flyer student-athletes. Since UD joined the Atlantic 10 Conference in 1995-96,
UD’s student-athletes have won 27 conference championships. During seven years of previous conference membership (five in the Midwestern Collegiate Conference and two in the Great Midwest Conference), UD won only two conference titles. UD is one of only 10 Division I schools who since 1999 have maintained a graduation rate of at least 85 percent. During the 2005-06 academic year, Flyer student-athletes earned a cumulative GPA of more than 3.0.

VP for student development candidates visit campus
Four finalists are interviewing for the position of vice president for student development. Each candidate’s application letter and vita are posted at http://quickplace.udayton.edu/Quickplace/vpsdcandidates/Main.nsf.

An open forum for faculty, staff and students will be held with Sally Walker, vice president for student affairs and dean of students at Albion College, from 4 to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 5, in Boll Theatre.

An open forum for faculty, staff and students will be held with Terrence Hogan, senior associate vice president and dean of students at Ohio University, from 4 to 5 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7, in the Kennedy Union west ballroom.

Open forums with Annette Schmeling, associate vice president for student learning at Creighton University, and Mark McCarthy, assistant vice president for student affairs and dean of student development at Marquette University, were held earlier this week.

Feedback sought on NCA self-study draft
UD will be evaluated in fall 2007 for continued institutional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. A draft of UD’s self-study document, which conveys what it is like to work, study and live in the UD community, can be accessed at http://nca2007.udayton.edu/SelfStudy/Chapters/Self-StudyMAIN.htm.

The campus community is invited to provide feedback through Jan. 31, 2007. Comments may be sent electronically via the Web site. Additionally, people may contact any representative of the assessment and accreditation committee. Members of the committee will also visit designated units on campus to directly solicit input.

In praise
A 30-person choir, dancers clad in African robes, a congregation that clapped along to the music — it was the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, but it was no ordinary Mass for Immaculate Conception Chapel.

“…There’s definitely a different feeling in here tonight,” Father Paul Marshall, S.M., told the congregation gathered in a celebration to honor Black Catholic History month at the 6 p.m. Mass Nov. 19.

Joining Marshall at the altar were Deacon Paul Richardson of St. Paul Church in Yellow Springs, Father Francis Tandoh and Father Joshua Otusaro of Dayton’s St. Benedict the Moor Church, and the choir of St. Joseph Catholic Church, located in Cincinnati.

The Mass began with praise of God through a liturgical dance led by UD graduate Kuukua Yomekpe, now a rector at the University of Notre Dame. She and six dancers were accompanied by “O Sifuni Mungu,” a Swahili song of praise Yomekpe first heard at Holy Child, her high school in her native Ghana.

“In a lot of parts of the world, a ritual expression of culture is dance,” said Emily Strand, campus minister for liturgy. “It’s a huge part of the way black Africans express themselves, and we were hoping to make that connection here.”

—Matthew Dewald

In unity
The Circle of Light diversity club’s mural-painting project was part of the weeklong, student-initiated Native American Awareness Week during November. Grade-school students from Dayton’s East End Community School also shared their artistic talents to create the mural, a sign of unity in tribal life. Splotches of red and brown, dabbled drips, and handprints adorned a large stretch of canvas to be taken during a spring breakout trip to the Lakota tribe of Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota.

Circle of Light, established at UD in 2000, focuses on bridging cultures and the inclusion of underrepresented communities. Communication lecturer and group founder Mary Anne Angel used the Lakota word for extended family, “tiospaye,” to describe the ties between the reservation and Circle of Light, which supports a community and cultural center there. “There is no difference in adoptive and blood relatives in Native American culture,” she said. “It’s really about creating extended family, recognizing gifts and resources that we all have.”

—Johnnie Kling
The political landscape may change, but Bucaro’s job remains the same

The morning after the midterm elections, Ted Bucaro knew he’d be making new friends and adding names to his Rolodex.

For Bucaro, the University’s director of government and regional relations, some players may have changed, but his job remains the same: to make sure political leaders — at the local, state and federal levels — know about the University of Dayton and its initiatives and capabilities.

“So much of what we do is face time,” he said. “We work very hard to maintain communication.” University leaders regularly invite all federal and state elected officials to visit campus, one by one, to talk over its initiatives.

Bucaro, who spends roughly 60 percent of his time focused on federal issues, typically travels to Washington, D.C., 10 to 15 times a year, working to enhance the University’s national reputation.

While UD has enjoyed better name recognition in Washington in recent years (owing, in part, to U.S. Reps. Mike Turner, a UD alumnus, and John Boehner, a graduate of Xavier University and Cincinnati’s Marianist-run Moeller High School), “we’re just one of thousands of universities and organizations involved in the legislative process,” Bucaro said.

“There’s no direct cause-and-effect relationship” between elected officials and benefit to the University, he said. Still, having Boehner in the minority leader’s position is “certainly more helpful than if it were a representative from Wyoming. You want to be the first phone call,” he said, explaining that UD officials want to be a sounding board on policy and legislation affecting higher education. “At the federal level, one of the policy initiatives we’re always watching is the Higher Education Act and issues of cost and reporting requirements.”

The University also has a longstanding federal relationship with the U.S. Air Force, and Bucaro has worked with UD Research Institute leaders to win appropriations initiatives for projects that meet a federal requirement and community priority. “We use a two-pronged approach,” with UDRI director John Leland focusing on appropriations for defense research, and Bucaro working on the non-defense components.

As control of Congress shifts, “the new chairs of congressional committees will have different ideas and philosophies,” Bucaro said. One change of note is that outgoing Sen. Mike DeWine held a seat on the Senate Appropriations Committee, which oversees all federal spending. While Sen.-elect Sherrod Brown will not take DeWine’s former seat on Appropriations, Brown has been assigned to the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee that has responsibility for the Higher Education Act Reauthorization.

U.S. Rep. Dave Hobson of Ohio’s 8th district chaired the Energy and Water Appropriations subcommittee, which oversaw the provision of infrastructure development funds, an issue important to UD as it deals with the development of the former NCR property. While no longer chair, Hobson maintains the benefit of his seniority on the committee. Hobson has also been a senior member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee.

The University will also have the continued representation of Turner, who will stay on as a member of the House Armed Services Committee. This committee is critical to the long-term positioning of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and, in turn, the University and region, Bucaro said.

On the state level, Bucaro and colleagues at UDRI will be closely watching the Third Frontier program to collaborate on projects that are important to revitalizing the Dayton region’s economy, he said.

Raising UD’s profile is part of Bucaro’s effort about the state level. “We spend a lot of time talking about what UD and UDRI do, as well as raising awareness of UD as a private institution and its Catholic, Marianist tradition.” Many state legislators, he said, didn’t know that UD ranks with Ohio State, Case Western and the University of Cincinnati in research capabilities. “UD is No. 2 nationally in materials research, and other than OSU, no one in Ohio does more nonmedical research than us. A big part of the job is getting folks to understand and build our credibility as a research institution.”

That job may get easier as UD enjoys what Bucaro characterizes as “a golden age” of UD alumni serving in state government. Alumni in the Ohio House of Representatives include Speaker Jon Husted (who visited campus Nov. 17 and toured DECA), Speaker pro tem Kevin DeWine, education chair Arlene Setzer and Bill Coley. Alumni in the Senate include senators Jeff Jacobson, Tom Roberts and Gary Cates. Sen. Steve Austria counts as “half an alum,” because he has been very helpful in areas of interest to the University and although he did not attend UD, his wife, Eileen, did, and she works for Dave Hobson,” Bucaro said. “It’s helpful to have colleagues in state and federal government who have an appreciation for the University and the expertise we can bring.”

That helpfulness extends to the local level, where Rashad Young, a two-time UD graduate, was recently named Dayton’s city manager. UD also has alumni serving as city managers of Kettering, Huber Heights, Vandalia and Tipp City.

Locally, much of Bucaro’s work focuses on reaching out to community groups to make sure they are informed and involved in UD’s planning processes, particularly in the development of Campus West.

Whether it’s at the local, regional or federal level, Bucaro said, “to the extent that folks feel they have a partner in UD, that’s a good measure of success.”

—Deborah McCarty Smith
Marci Hamilton knew the crowd might bristle at her message that religious protections need to be curtailed in the name of the common good. So she began her Distinguished Speakers Series lecture Nov. 16 with a request: Set aside your initial feelings of resistance and listen to the facts.

They were facts that the scholar, lawyer and advocate has amassed in the nearly 10 years since she argued Boerne v. Flores before the U.S. Supreme Court, a successful challenge to the 1993 federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act that prohibited government from substantially burdening religion’s free exercise.

“Religious entities often are in the position to do harm and, unfortunately, they often do harm,” said Hamilton, the Paul R. Verkuil Chair in Public Law at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University. She is the author of God vs. the Gavel: Religion and the Rule of Law.

In the United States, she said, our definition of religion is so expansive that it is possible to make any belief into a religion. RFRA and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 entitled religious entities to freedoms that trump the rule of law, said Hamilton, who identified herself as a Presbyterian.

The laws have been selectively enforced in sensible ways, she said. For example, she believes it is proper to allow Native Americans to use peyote in religious ceremonies while denying a request by Our Church to use marijuana for spiritual insight.

But other rulings deny logic, she said. A New Hampshire man refused to pay child support because he belonged to a commune that did not allow it. An Amish community refused to send its children to school past the eighth grade, despite a state law than made education through grade 12 compulsory. In 2002, when the Catholic Church priest abuse scandal broke, religious protections led many to believe a suit would never be brought against the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

The rights and protection of children should be foremost, she said. Religious liberty at any cost should be replaced with, “Even though you are a believer, you still have to obey the law.”

As the First Amendment strategist for hundreds of alleged priest abuse victims, Hamilton realized that the Catholic Church was “just the tip of the iceberg.”

“Adults in positions of trust have opportunities to abuse,” she said, “and it’s very dangerous to forget that everyone in every religious institution is human.”

From the priest abuse scandals we’ve learned that state statutes of limitations — in some cases as little as two years from the date of the child’s abuse — are insufficient to protect children, she said. Victims need time to come forward, which is the only way to truly identify abusers and protect other children. She added that the top groups lobbying against extending the statutes are each state’s Catholic Conference.

To an audience member who worked, as Hamilton did, to pass Ohio’s Senate Bill 17 that would have extended the statute of limitations on cases of minor abuse, Hamilton suggested future attempts to tie child protection laws to financial incentives. She also hopes a sea change among states will propel change.

When asked about rights for same-sex couples and embryonic stem cell research, she said, “Our elected officials have fallen down on the job, as they have in almost every discussion of religious issues. They say that this religious group says it is bad, so it must be bad.”

On these and other public policy questions that involve religious views, there should be vigorous hearings, open debate and sensible resolutions that protect vulnerable populations and uphold the rule of law, she said.

—Michelle Telford

In thanksgiving

Through the generosity of the University of Dayton community, the annual food drive coordinated by Campus Ministry’s Center for Social Concern provided more than 400 families with complete Thanksgiving meals, including gift cards for turkeys. Baskets were delivered to the Wesley Community Center, Building Bridges, Dayton Urban Ministry Center, Holt St. Miracle House and the Good Neighbor House for distribution to families.

Students also had the opportunity to deliver food to some families’ homes. Right: UD senior Karen Sarmir and Marilyn Knisley of the School of Engineering sort food donations contributed by people throughout campus.
Six months before he’s set to graduate from the University of Dayton, Adam Buckman has already received one job offer and four other interviews at corporations such as General Electric and Fifth Third Bank.

Buckman, a 22-year-old operations management major from Louisville, Ky., started out two years ago making cappuccino at the Blend coffee shop on campus. He’s now the chief executive officer of Flyer Enterprises, a student-run enterprise with seven companies, approximately 170 employees and revenues topping $1.3 million annually.

“I feel well prepared to handle whatever career challenge is next for me. Flyer Enterprises has given me the confidence to handle anything. When I talk about managing a $1.3 million business, it catches the attention of company recruiters,” said Buckman, who’s received interest in second interviews from all the firms.

The Flyer Enterprises’ companies range from coffee shops to the ArtStreet Café to convenience stores. Nationally, Flyer Enterprises has been compared to similar business programs at Harvard, Georgetown and Stanford, but this one takes a bigger risk because faculty don’t get involved in day-to-day operations. UD students manage every detail — from creating a leadership development program to launching new product lines. Leadership training is critical because half of the management team turns over at graduation every year.

The venture’s success helped UD this fall gain national recognition for its undergraduate entrepreneurship program, named fifth best by Entrepreneur magazine and The Princeton Review. UD’s entrepreneurship program, the business school’s fastest-growing major, started in 1999 with 10 students and enrolled a record 140 undergraduate majors this fall.

All sophomores are given $3,000 loans from the Crotty Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership to start their own businesses, with any profits going to charity. Businesses in the Dayton region receive free consulting from teams of senior entrepreneurship students. Students compete in a business plan competition, and a number get involved in Flyer Enterprises.

“These are not college students. They are business executives who happen to go to school at the same time,” said Dick Flaute, executive-in-residence and entrepreneur, about the 25 students in management positions at Flyer Enterprises. “They receive a level of experience head and shoulders above other college students. If I saw a résumé from a college student who had fiscal responsibility for 170 other employees … I’d immediately invite that person in for an interview.”

When Buckman is not interviewing for his first post-college job or taking such classes as management economics and quality control, he’s busy bringing fresh ideas to some of the divisions, such as Rudy’s Fly-Buy, where the management team has redesigned the convenience store’s layout, reduced prices, added hot food and is considering installing a DVD vending machine. He has led the development of a “scorecard” to measure strategic decisions against performance measures for all seven divisions. His team is shifting its marketing away from fliers to online promotions on the popular Facebook.com. They’re also evaluating the marketability of launching a spirit wear shop, in collaboration with the bookstore.

All new ventures must be approved by a 15-member board of administrators, faculty, alumni and Fifth Third Bank.

Adam Buckman will graduate with experience managing a $1.3 million business.

Survey shows many employers check Facebook

University of Dayton career services staff members surveyed college students throughout the region and 5,000 employers nationwide about Facebook.com, the social networking Web site, and found a surprising trend:

- 40 percent of employers say they would consider the Facebook profile of a potential employee as part of their hiring decision, and several reported rescinding offers after checking out Facebook.
- 32 percent of students think it’s unethical for employers to use Facebook posts as part of an evaluation of candidates.
- 42 percent of students said it was a violation of privacy.

The survey results were released Nov. 17 at the Southwestern Ohio Community College. The researchers also will present the findings nationally at the National Association of Colleges and Employers conference May 31 in New York City.

“We did this survey to help employers know what Facebook is,” said Megan Lemming, one of the researchers. “Also, we wanted to explore the generational differences between employers and employee candidates.”

Megan Lemming, a UD assistant director in career services, explained the data:

“Facebook was originally created by college students for college students, they view it as their place and strictly a social network,” said Chris Wiley, UD associate director in career services and one of the researchers. “The thought that what they put on Facebook would ever be seen by a potential employer is unreal to them. It’s like an employer showing up at one of their parties on a Saturday night.”

Not surprisingly, 64 percent of students said employers should not consider Facebook profiles during the hiring process. Daniel Luckett, a UD senior, said his profile is getting less detailed as he heads into the job search.

“Facebook profiles are just as valid as résumés, but can be just as misleading,” Luckett said. “The only way to know anything about anyone is to get them into an interview and then hire them. I know plenty of people whose Facebook profile doesn’t fit their personality, or speaks too highly of them, just like résumés.”

On Facebook.com, students can join any number of online interest groups, which range from groups they become aligned with or who they want to be. “I understand that misrepresenting themselves isn’t the way to go,” said Luckett.

“Next year, I’ll inactive some of my pages to let employers know what they’re looking at,” said Megan Lemming, one of the researchers. “Also, we wanted to explore the generational differences between employers and employee candidates.”

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From coffee maker to CEO, senior builds attention-grabbing résumé

Survey shows many employers check Facebook before hiring

The experience Buckman has gained as CEO of Luminous has taught him more than to oversee a business. It has taught him what it’s like to work with great team members, develop new talent and have the opportunity to try new things. For example, you learn something new from each team member, developing your skills and your ability to lead. The experience has also taught him to be a leader, to think strategically and to be open to new ideas.

I’m going into education, and I do think teachers should be held to a higher standard. They have to be able to adapt to the needs of their students, to think creatively and to develop new ideas. The experience has also taught me that faith can be fun. Faith can be discussed anywhere, and faith can be shared with others. Thank you to Joe’s amazing faith and for sharing it with the rest of us, just as Jesus taught us to do.

“I have a responsibility to share this,” said Melendrez, who will hold one burrito party for homeless in the area. “You live the Marianist mission by focusing your efforts on the well-being of others and working to fix problems in the community.”

Danielle Desmond met with Melendrez, co-director of Marianist involvement for UD’s student government association, because she “wanted a free burrito and to meet someone new.”

“More importantly, I learned about the reasons he wanted to win (the contest), which I think are beautiful. He is very devoted. He is going beyond what most people would do with the burritos. He is sharing it with the rest of us, just as Jesus taught us to do.”

Desmond said it was a much different trip to Chipotle than when she gossips with her girlfriends about the social scene or what’s on TV.

“I learned, no matter how different people are, you can always find a common bond with someone,” Desmond said. “Joe is helping the UD community by bringing different students together that would have probably never met and taken the time to know.”

“I have always considered myself a religious person. But, I never considered sitting down at Chipotle, praying before I ate my burrito and talking about faith in a restaurant. Thanks to Joe’s amazing faith and love for others, he has taught me that faith can be fun. Faith can be discussed anywhere. And, faith goes great with burritos.”

Melendrez has shared a meal with 80 people already and was booked through late November.

“I’ve met with people from all faiths — Christian, Jewish, agnostic,” Melendrez said. “This has been rewarding, as I’m able to learn and better understand their personal stories and beliefs.”

Melendrez makes announcements in classes, church and at speaking engagements at local high schools. Some people are acquaintances he doesn’t know very well. Some reach him through Facebook.com or e-mail. He’s even met with faculty members.

“His generosity and enthusiasm for sharing his faith are great,” said Father Chris Wittmann, S.M., director of campus ministry, who can’t recall anything like this. “His initiative and creativity are very commendable.”

When the year of the burrito ends, Melendrez will continue working on his music. He said he’s looking forward to traveling to Catholic high schools nationwide after graduating in two years.

—Shawn Robinson
Professors Joseph Castellano and John Ruggiero are recipients of the School of Business Administration’s inaugural J. Robert Berry Endowed Fellowship awards. The awards were established to recognize faculty who have exemplified excellence in teaching and research performance and also contributed to the University’s and school’s missions. The awards aim to encourage continued efforts in teaching and research and shared learning with colleagues.

"My No. 1 goal is to do a fantastic job in the classroom," said accounting professor Joseph Castellano. "I try to bring an energetic presence because that creates a good learning environment. I want the students to come to class motivated; if they come motivated, I’ll bring the inspiration."

Castellano, who was recently appointed as a J. Robert Berry Endowed Faculty Fellow, has taught at UD since 1999. In his classroom, he acts as both teacher and student and encourages students to do the same.

“I am a professional educator, but I am also a professional student,” he said. Listening to students over the years has allowed him to make connections he might not have made. His students have taught him a great deal. “That's what makes a dynamic classroom,” he said.

Castellano has taught the MBA core course that blends managerial accounting and operations management; he has developed and regularly taught an MBA elective in advanced managerial accounting, often involving teams of students assisting local companies wanting to implement lean initiatives; he has also supervised a number of independent studies; and he has taught scholars sections of principles of accounting, as well as introductory accounting courses. He is also a respected researcher with a significant number of award-winning articles in refereed journals. His research is credited with making an impact on the practice of both accounting and management.

With his fellowship award, he hopes to continue his study of the principles and culture of the Toyota Production System and the Toyota Way. He wants to use the knowledge gained to help non-profit organizations apply the Toyota Production System to improve quality and productivity and reduce costs. He also will continue to develop the MBA elective course — Business as a Calling — that he co-created with Brother Victor Forlani, S.M.

Castellano’s colleagues praise him as an untiring and unselfish contributor who exemplifies the concept of a servant leader.

Castellano, who has worked to bring greater visibility to the University’s Catholic and Marianist heritage, believes that business, like any other profession, is a vocation with a spiritual dimension. He hopes students will recognize this calling in their professional lives and work to improve their profession.

He has found his own calling as an educator. “This is what I’m supposed to do,” he said. “I've always felt that.”

—Sarah Barnidge
Economic forecast: Hot holiday retail season followed by cooling economy

With holiday spending expected to reach $457 billion this year, University of Dayton business faculty say consumers will be spending a lot in the stores, but even more so online.

“Of this amount, U.S. online retail sales are expected to increase 23 percent over last year to reach $27 billion,” said Irene Dickey, a lecturer in the management and marketing department. “Despite continued dissatisfaction with shipping charges and concerns about returns and exchanges, the convenience, choice and control that consumers can experience online are expected to increase sales for e-tailers.”

Forecasts predict the average shopper will spend from $800 to almost $1,200 this holiday shopping season. The National Retail Federation expects a 3 to 7 percent increase in holiday spending, while other reports forecast up to a 17 percent increase.

Significantly lower gasoline prices following summertime spikes are expected to add cash to consumers’ wallets — as well as considerable optimism, which often drives spending, Dickey said.

However, UD analysts caution that the economy has slowed and will continue to slow into the first of the year, which will mean continued belt-tightening if consumers have extra debt from the holidays.

“A lot will depend upon the energy prices after the holidays and the severity of our winter in terms of the discretionary funds consumers have available,” said David Sauer, UD associate professor of finance. “We didn’t have as many hurricanes this year, so we didn’t have disruptions in the oil supply. But other factors in the economy, such as the housing market, are still shaky.”

Because the housing market has yet to rebound, “sales also will be slow in housing-related industries, such as furniture, carpets, appliances and home improvement,” Sauer said.

For many retailers, the holiday season can account for 30 to 50 percent of annual sales, Dickey said. “Consumers will see aggressive marketing promotions to attract them into their stores or onto their Web sites. Once they get there, there will be many more promotions to increase the average sale. You can count on this.”

—Linda Robertson

An interdisciplinary approach

John Ruggiero

Despite the gray November afternoon, no students dare fall asleep in John Ruggiero’s managerial economics class. The associate professor of economics, who was recently appointed as a J. Robert Berry Endowed Faculty Fellow, engages the room with an interactive chess game to accompany a lecture on inputs and outputs.

Moving around two rows of tables in a Miriam Hall classroom, Ruggiero calls the students by name, bringing out their personalities and drawing out the responses he seems to know they have in them.

“He cares about the students,” says Julie Kelling, a senior finance major.

A prolific researcher, Ruggiero has published 38 articles and book chapters since 1995 and has increased his publication rate since receiving tenure. His work has been published in leading journals, including *Public Choice* and *Review of Economics and Statistics*, and he has become a recognized expert in estimating technical efficiency — all while teaching year ‘round.

From a team-taught MBA course to a new calculus-based principles course for engineers, Ruggiero has been willing to teach whatever is needed and has earned high marks for quality from peers and students, including one who offered this succinct evaluation: “Ruggiero is awesome.”

“I would like to think that I am not different,” Ruggiero said. “I recognize the importance of the interdisciplinary approach to teaching and scholarship. Many of my publications have resulted from incorporating insights from multiple disciplines. Also, I have gained knowledge from participating in the team-taught MBA course for the last 10 years.”

The Berry Fellowship, Ruggiero said, “will allow me to continue pursuing my research agenda. I am thankful that I was selected among many deserving faculty and hope my appreciation is reflected in my productivity.”

Back in the managerial economics class, which Ruggiero developed, student Andy Farrell makes his move on the interactive chessboard and awaits Ruggiero’s response. The professor easily wins the game.

The class is lighthearted and quick to joke with Ruggiero, who reminds his students with a laugh, “I am the only comedian in the room.”

He pulls the class back into focus as he moves on to explain benchmarks on a graph and determining the points of efficiency. The lecture becomes a conversation about the project at hand. Ruggiero hits on convex combinations as the class comes to a close.

—Johnnie Kling
Sister Phyllis Gronotte loves to teach just as much as she loves to learn.

She quenches her thirst for both by working as a tutor for the Alliance for Work-Based Education, a program started by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and the Marianists in 1993. Retired sisters and brothers tutor classes to help University employees obtain their General Equivalency Diploma, study English as a second language and learn computer skills.

In the past, Sister Phyllis, a Sister of St. Benedict, has taught math, science and English classes to help students receive their GED, but now teaches a basic computer class where approximately 10-15 students learn word processing, PowerPoint, Access and Excel each year. However, before teaching her students, she first had to learn those seemingly foreign skills herself.

“I didn’t know any computer (skills) when I first started — I didn’t even know any of the names of the programs,” she said. “But I was very anxious to learn — and I continue learning as I go along.”

Imbued with boundless energy and a propensity for trying new things, Sister Phyllis devotes hours to studying books so she can keep up with what she needs to know for her students, whether it is learning how to create compact discs and greeting cards or learning the latest information in the constantly evolving world of computers.

Her dedication to helping her students is evident by the 90 hours a month commitment to her work. She was recently recognized as an outstanding adult literacy tutor and was awarded a Grimmy Award, named after the popular comic strip “Mother Goose & Grimm,” from Project READ, a coalition of public and private organizations working together to build skilled workers, strong families and healthy communities.

Sister Phyllis thoroughly enjoys teaching computer skills, which she considers to be a type of literacy, and strives to teach with patience, understanding and creativity, considering she also started from scratch when first learning about computers.

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An avid traveler who worked as a missionary in Colombia for six years, Sister Phyllis devoted almost 25 years working as an elementary teacher in southern Indiana. She is in her 10th year working for the Alliance for Work-Based Education and has kept busy working in the Marian Library for the past seven summers.

“The most rewarding part of my job is just watching my students see what they can accomplish,” Sister Phyllis said. “One time one of my students said to me, ‘Now I know what my grandkids know.’ Although it may not seem like much to someone who’s been doing a lot of computer work, it means a lot to someone who hasn’t had the chance to practice or learn about computers.”

—Kathleen Miller
Constant encouragement on the job makes dreading work difficult.

“When the students come in, I don’t even remember if I’ve had a bad day or not,” Pam Peavy, chief union steward in the Virginia W. Kettering residence dining hall, said. “They put a smile on my face.”

For three weeks every fall, a group of special needs students assist the naturally gregarious Peavy and the rest of the Kettering dining hall staff. The students are participants in the Integrated Transition Option Program, a vocational program that since the mid-1990s has allowed developmentally challenged students from the Centerville school system to learn on-the-job in Kettering dining hall.

The program is designed to help students gain steady employment. Students work daily in the dining hall for three weeks, gaining experience in a variety of food service tasks.

Last year marked the first time in Peavy’s 10-year career at UD that dining hall staff and ITOP students worked side by side. In the past, students were limited to the dish room, but now they multi-task between making salads, making pizza and working in the hot food line. Increased student-worker interaction has fostered the students’ communication and people skills.

“You could see how excited they got,” Peavy said. “They were really learning how to interact with the customers and practice good customer service.”

Peavy’s kindheartedness and sincerity earn students’ trust and respect. Her down-to-earth teaching style nurtures their independence and sense of purpose.

“I always tell them when you do something, find a way that makes you feel comfortable,” she said. “It gives them freedom, and it makes the job more enjoyable for them.”

Students appreciate the freedom, as she has caught several saying, “That’s not how Ms. Peavy taught us.”

When one student forgot to wear his proper uniform to work, Peavy was asked by his teacher to reprimand him because he would take her words to heart.

“She’s really taken on the leadership role,” said Ray Jones, general manager of Kettering dining hall. “A lot of these kids are looking for direction. On most days, Pam saves certain duties for them so that they can build their confidence.”

Assignments such as slicing carrots and cucumbers for the salad bar may seem like simple tasks, but they provide the students with the chance to make valued contributions in a team environment.

“It’s such an excitement to see them put two and two together and make connections,” Peavy said.

The students may not realize it, but they remind her to stay upbeat on the job and not take the little things for granted.

“It makes coming to work worthwhile,” she said. “They appreciate the little things. They don’t have the attitude ‘just here for the job.’”

She is comforted by the notion that students have the opportunity to learn new skills in a different area of work after their three-week stay in the dining hall, but that does not make saying goodbye easier.

“They’re not here long enough,” she said. “I hate to see them go.”

—Anna Sexton


Friday, Dec. 1
“Are Hurricanes Getting Stronger?”
Seminar presented by Anthony Wimmers ’96, research scientist, Cooperative Institute for Meteorological Satellite Studies at the University of Wisconsin — Madison
2 p.m., Science Center 066
Academic senate meeting
3 p.m., Kennedy Union west ballroom

Saturday, Dec. 2
Ebony Heritage Singers
Conducted by Donna Cox
7 p.m., Kennedy Union ballroom

Sunday, Dec. 3
Dayton Jazz Ensemble and Vocal Improvisational Workshop
Conducted by Willie L. Morris III
3 p.m., Kennedy Union Boll Theatre

Tuesday, Dec. 5
Woodwind concert
7 p.m., Sears Recital Hall

Wednesday, Dec. 6
Piano ensemble recital
Conducted by Phillip Farris
7 p.m., Sears Recital Hall
Last day of classes

Friday, Dec. 8
Feast of the Immaculate Conception
Christmas on Campus
No classes

Monday, Dec. 11 – Friday, Dec. 15
Examinations
First term ends after final examinations.

Saturday, Dec. 16
Graduation ceremony
10 a.m., UD Arena

Friday, Dec. 22
Christmas Eve observed
University offices closed.

Monday, Dec. 25
Christmas Day
University offices closed.

Tuesday, Dec. 26
University offices closed.

Wednesday, Jan. 3
Classes begin at 8 a.m.

Monday, Jan. 1
New Year’s Day
University offices closed.

Friday, Jan. 5
Academic senate meeting
3 p.m., Kennedy Union 331

Local Catholic school children were asked how they would describe Jesus’ birth without talking. Their answers, in the form of pictures, are on display 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. now through Jan. 28 in the Marian Library.

Local artists and teachers picked 30 pictures from 575 submissions by children in grades three through eight for “The Nativity through Children’s Eyes” exhibit, which is free and open to the public. The Marian Library is on the seventh floor of Roesch Library.

The Marian Library is home to the world’s largest collection of crèches or nativity sets. The library has collected more than 1,000 crèches from 45 countries since 1994. The collection includes styles and settings as diverse as the heritage, vision and interpretation of the artists who created them. Some incorporate earthier elements like cork, bamboo and moss to create natural landscapes. Others use household items such as bread, wax and clothespins. Traditional mangers abound, but the Christ child also can be found in a forest, a cave and a Swiss chalet.

The collection, managed by the UD Marian Library’s Crèches International committee, is designed to promote the study and understanding of culture and religion, as well as the Christmas story itself.

Crèches will be on display 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. now through Jan. 28 in the Marian Library; noon to 4 p.m. now through Jan. 31 at Gallery St. John at the Bergamo Center; and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday through Wednesday and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday now through Jan. 1 at the Dayton Art Institute. Admission to the exhibit is free at each location.