Younger Generation Steps Up — New Deans Appointed

Administrative changes at MUM continue, with the recent appointment of new deans including younger generation leaders.

Amellia (Schuldt) Hesse, who graduated from MUM in 2008, was named dean of Student Life earlier this year, and Manyu Hesse was recently named associate dean of students in the Department of Student Life.

Ms. Hesse replaced Rod Eason, who was named vice president of enrollment management and marketing. She had worked for one and a half years as associate dean of students.

“As Amellia has taken on more responsibility, she’s demonstrated her competency at every level,” said Dr. Eason, who oversees the Department of Student Life. “She’s highly capable, and it’s a pleasure to see one of our young graduates assume a leadership role that will guide the University into the future.”

Manyu Hesse, also an MUM alum, was director of visitors weekends for two years before eventually becoming director of international admissions.

In other administrative changes, Steve Langerud was named dean of admissions, alumna Aster Hesse was named associate dean of admissions, and Gwen Stowe associate director of marketing.

Also, recent MUM grad Leslie Doyle was hired to fill the newly created position of student retention specialist.

Nearly 80 Trees Recently Planted, Totaling 200 in Past Year

Over 40 volunteers showed up late last month for a day of planting trees west of the Women's Dome, with 79 additional trees being planted thanks to a $5,000 grant from Alliant Energy; guidance by representatives from Trees Forever; and organizing by the Green Iowa AmeriCorps volunteers being hosted on campus.

“It was absolutely successful,” said Lacie Teal, an AmeriCorps volunteer. “We had an amazing turnout. A lot of MUM students showed up, including students in the Computer Professionals program.”

The varieties of trees planted included oak, linden, locust, catalpa, birch, lilacs, tulip trees, and redbud. Previously 40 fruit trees and 90 other trees had been planted, bringing the total to over 200 in the last year. Ms. Teal said that a number of the trees last month were planted near trees that were already there because the latter are ash trees expected to succumb to the rampant emerald ash borer.

Nearly 80 trees were planted west of the Women’s Dome.

Photo by Tom Brooks

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The tree planting is just one facet of a major focus on upgrading campus grounds. A landscaping committee has been formed to identify needs, set priorities, raise funds, and help organize improvements.

This fall MUM trustee Toby Lieb has spearheaded a major initiative to improve the arched bridge area as well as the immediate environment surrounding the walkway that crosses Crow Creek.

Extensive brush was removed, the creek was cleared of wood debris, trees were planted, and landscaping was done alongside the arched bridge, including perennials and bushes.

Similarly, landscaping was also done around the bridge east of the Argiro Student Center.

The dilapidated Japanese footbridge in the low-lying area near Crow Creek is also being restored. It originally spanned one of the three ponds that covered that area of campus in the past.

The weathered posts and railings have been replaced with new ones, and the cast bronze globes that had decorated the bridge will be returned. In addition, solar lighting is being added.

Other campus improvements for pedestrians include the closing of Raines Road, which connects the Highrise residence halls with the Argiro Student Center, and closing Swan Road, a gravel road that runs parallel to Crow Creek.

“So many students use Raines Road as a sidewalk that there were legitimate concerns for their safety,” said Tom Brooks, vice president of operations.

Swan was closed because it intersects with Raines Road and because of dust issues. “Also, the closing of Swan Road created a nice safe walking space in the middle of campus,” Mr. Brooks said.

Many more improvements are being planned, and another grant is being prepared for planting trees in the spring of 2017.

FROM THE FOUNDER

“Prevention from facing the problems is wisdom. It is the supreme wisdom of politics when you create an integrated national consciousness in your own country. Then there will be no enemy born to your nation, ever. So creating coherence is the clue to having world harmony.”

— Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Feb. 1, 2006 press conference

Extensive Renovation Includes Highrise Residence Halls

On the heels of major renovation in Hildenbrand Hall, the main residence hall for women, and Verrill Hall, which houses classrooms and offices, a new initiative to renovate the five Highrise dormitories that accommodate men students is now under way, thanks to nearly $100,000 from donors.

The renovation of Hildenbrand and Verrill was funded by almost $1 million in donations. For Hildenbrand that included a new kitchen and dining room, study rooms, a TV room, a lounge, and a fitness room, as well as a refurbished entryway with a new canopy.

In Verrill Hall, four classrooms were renovated for use by students in the Computer Professionals program, and 30 offices were renovated for use by the computer science department and other administrative personnel.

The focus has now shifted to the Highrise residence halls, with renovations including painting the exterior trim, repairing entryways to three of the buildings, and sandblast cleaning of the brick exterior on all five buildings.

Renovation of the lobbies includes painting, new carpet, and remodeling. The heating and air conditioning systems are also being upgraded.

“These renovations not only transform the appearance and feeling of these major residence halls, but improve their energy efficiency and overall utility,” said MUM President John Hagelin in a letter to donors.

The next phase will involve renovation of student rooms.

Other areas receiving attention include the recently completed refurbishing of the ground floor parlors in Henn Mansion where donors are hosted, as well as work on the two science labs used by the health and physiology department and on the two existing video studios.

Dr. Hagelin is eager to see the renovation continue, and intends to upgrade “the physical campus to a whole new level of excellence and beauty.”

In a letter to donors, Dr. Hagelin thanked them for making these renovations possible. “All this has been possible through the great generosity and selfless support of our precious donors.”
**Alum Garners Wide Recognition for Solar Company’s Success**

A solar energy installation done by a company founded by alumnus Troy Van Beek was recently recognized as “solar project of the year” by Solar Builder magazine as a result of reader voting and was featured on the cover of the November/December 2016 issue.

In addition, Mr. Van Beek, founder and CEO of Ideal Energy, is one of 40 leaders in Iowa selected to participate in the 2016-2017 Leadership Iowa program.

The project earning recognition by Solar Builder magazine involved repurposing a former school building into a 39-unit apartment complex, powered by a 300-kW solar array. The array included a 100-kW carport and a 200-kW installation on the roof.

Mr. Van Beek was selected for Leadership Iowa because of his demonstrated leadership, his contribution to the community and the profession, and his potential for future leadership in Iowa.

He founded Ideal Energy in 2009, and it has grown into one of the leading solar companies in the Midwest, installing solar energy systems for residents, businesses, farms, communities, and utilities. The company engineers, designs, installs, and maintains high-quality solar installations.

Sponsored by the Iowa Association of Business and Industry Foundation, Leadership Iowa seeks to instill passion in current and emerging leaders while fostering a high level of civic engagement.

At the opening retreat for new participants held in Red Oak, Iowa, Steve Langerud, MUM dean of admissions, served as the facilitator.

**Students Second at Mediation Tourney**

Competing against students from seven other colleges and universities, MUM students earned second place in the recent Ninth Annual Peacemakers Invitational Mock Mediation Tournament hosted on campus late last month.

The team of Tal Ron, Mirah Dumasia, Almar Meijles, and Daniel Bekete came in second in the advocate client category and Mirah Dumasia won second place in the individual mediator category.

A record 45 students came to MUM from the University of Dubuque (Iowa), Drake Law School (Iowa), Lewis University (Illinois), Principia College (Missouri), Culver Stockton (Missouri), Grace College (Indiana), and Bowling Green State University (Ohio).

The two-day tournament included an all-day training workshop conducted by Dick Calkins, former dean of the Drake Law School. He is the author of Mediation Practice Guide and Chronicles of an American Mediator, and has conducted over 2,000 mediations and hundreds of mediation training sessions.

“We couldn’t provide this opportunity to train young mediators without the support of the dedicated individuals who volunteer to judge the competition,” said MUM’s coach Vicki Alexander Herriott, who organized the tournament.

Community members who served as judges included Kara Anastasio, Ripunjay Bhargava, Mark Deutch, Leslee Goldstein, Bill Goldstein, Anil Madeshwari, Tholooma Mband, Tom Palladino, Patrick Pomfrey, Cliff Rose, Sheila Swanson, Rouzanna Vardanyan, and Nancy Watkins.

Twelve students from professor Herriott’s mediation and negotiation course participated in the tournament as the capstone experience of their course.

**Computer Student Intern Wins Amazon Award**

MUM intern student Amarbayar (Amar) Amarsanaa, who works for Amazon as part of his curricular practical training in the Computer Professionals program, was recently named “Associate of the Month” in recognition of his contribution to, and impact on, one of the software development engineer teams he was supporting.

He works on an Amazon Fulfillment Technologies DevOps (development operations) team and also earned a significant promotion.

The recognition comes as a result of his reducing his team’s operating issues by 86%. Mr. Amarsanaa worked with another engineer on his team to automate the process of data consolidation, which had been done manually by engineers. Their automation saves 2–3 hours per engineer, per week, and is now used by over 12 teams of Amazon software engineers.

In addition, Mr. Amarsanaa and his colleague were honored during Amazon’s October 2016 meeting, which included teams from the US, Canada, and India. Amazon’s corporate leadership recognized their effort and presented them with the “Operational Excellence” award.

“Operational excellence is something my employer takes seriously, as we continue to strive to be the earth’s most customer-centric company,” Mr. Amarsanaa said. “My experience with my employer so far has been that we don’t stop at just innovating, building, and launching — but we also make sure our services are optimized, efficient, reliable, available, and accurate. In executing these plans, we identify manual, repetitive work and take the initiative to automate it to save our and others’ time.”

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Darla Murphy at Unity Gallery

“Ripple Delete,” a video and installation exhibit by alumna Darla Murphy, is showing at Unity Gallery through December 9.

The show is a three-dimensional exploration of how humans fabricate their relationship to the natural landscape, referencing the history of painting, documentary film, and even outdoor leisure activities.

Ms. Murphy earned her master’s in fine art at the Institut supérieur des arts de Toulouse in France in 2015.

Vedic Cultural Show

Come enjoy traditional dance, music, and fashion, as well as traditional desserts. Free!
Saturday, Nov. 19, 7:45–9:15 pm, Dalby Hall, Argiro Student Center
Sponsored by the MUM Vedic Fine Arts Club and the South Asian Heritage Club.

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