Super Alumna
Lyna Nyamwaya

Read her story and that of other Super Alumni on page 4.
Since my arrival in 2008, I have had a real sense of connection with the students I see every day at Metropolitan State University. I come from very different roots, but our stories are more similar than you might think.

I grew up on a farm in southern Indiana. It was a poor area and very few people went to college. I was fortunate though. Mother Nature had blessed me with intellectual curiosity, energy and good health. I also enjoyed a lot of encouragement, support and stimulation from my family. I felt blessed by both Nature and Nurture, but a third component was also necessary to enable me to really develop and contribute. That was Opportunity, and for me it came in the form of quality public higher education.

Nature. Nurture. Opportunity. Success requires all three. And that’s what I see in our students here at Metropolitan State University. They have a lot of natural ability, intelligence and spunk. They also enjoy a lot of support from their families, employers, and communities. Metropolitan State offers opportunities:

- The opportunity to pursue a quality higher education even while juggling work, studies, family and other responsibilities.
- The opportunity to study part time or full time, day or night, online or face-to-face, or in any combination thereof.
- The opportunity to be recognized as responsible adults with unique and valuable life experiences.
- The opportunity to design their own program of study if they wish.
- The opportunity to study with both professional practitioners and resident faculty.

When I came into Metropolitan State in 2008, it was with high expectations of quality. What I have found in the past year has been beyond expectation.

For example:

- The percentage of Metropolitan State graduates passing their professional certification exams (for example, nursing boards, law enforcement certification exam, CPA exam) is higher than any other university in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.
- All of the graduating seniors in our College of Management take the Educational Testing Services’ national business competency exam. Of the 83,000 students who took this exam last year, Metropolitan State students scored, on average, in the top 15 percent in accounting and economics, the top 20 percent in finance, and the top 25 percent in management information systems.
- Metropolitan State enjoys rates of student retention and graduation that are among the highest in the MnSCU system.

Today, our future is full of changes and challenges. The governor has challenged us to offer 25 percent of our enrollments online. The MnSCU Board of Trustees has challenged all the MnSCU institutions to lessen the “achievement gap” between their traditional students and their disadvantaged and minority students. And the chancellor has challenged us to grow to 20,000 students by 2020.

Metropolitan State is well on its way to achieving those goals. Over 20 percent of our enrollments are online. The graduation rate of our students of color is on par with that of our majority students. And our enrollments have grown 20 percent in the last three years. The demographic groups that we serve particularly well—working adults, transfer students, students of color and new immigrants, and adult learners seeking continuing education—all these are expected to continue growing in the coming years.

Who do you know who deserves the same opportunity that you had as a Metropolitan State student? You can help us meet our challenges by encouraging friends, family and co-workers to finish what they started and earn their degrees. The same quality, affordable education is waiting at Metropolitan State for them. Help other inspired students reach the goal of a higher education that you have achieved.

Sincerely,

Sue K. Hammersmith, president
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## A Trip Down Memory Lane

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Editor
Vicki Lofquist, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving Director

Associate Editors
Maureen Acosta
Darlene Esko

Managing Editor
Susan Amos Palmer, Publications/News Services Director

Contributing Writers
Paola Brigneti ('08)
Stephen Burgdorf
Harvey Meyer
Julia Nekessa Opoti
Ann Richards ('02)
James L. Stroud, Jr. ('01)

Design and Layout
Diane DeRosier Douglass ('05, '09)

Photographers
Anne Hodson ('07)
Jim Mims
Tom Roster
James L. Stroud, Jr. ('01)

Assistant
Noriko Ramberg

Advisory Committee
Kathleen Burnham ('92), senior vice president, Padilla Speer Beardsley
James Byrne, associate professor, College of Arts and Sciences
Robert Heuermann, vice president, University Advancement
Vicki Lofquist, director, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving
Susan Amos Palmer, director, Publications/News Services

Correspondence should be sent to Vicki Lofquist, alumni relations and annual giving director, Metropolitan State University, 700 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul, MN 55106-5000.
Phone: 651-793-1810, TTY 651-772-7687, fax 651-793-1825 or e-mail vicki.lofquist@metrostate.edu.

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In support of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, Buzz magazine is printed on a 30 percent recycled paper by Bolger, Minneapolis, which is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
Something for Everyone

Happy spring! On behalf of the alumni board, I’d like to welcome the 920 new Metropolitan State University graduates honored at last December’s commencement. You join the ranks of more than 28,000 graduates since the institution’s original class of 1973—a sampling of whom are featured in this issue’s article about alumni families.

And where are these graduates now? Although 79 percent of all Metropolitan State graduates live in Minnesota—with 71 percent residing in the metropolitan area—clusters of alumni span coast to coast. We’ll bring together those on the East Coast at an alumni reception with President Sue K. Hammersmith on May 15, and hope to hold similar alumni events in other states in the future as well.

For our Twin Cities alumni, many have asked for library use privileges at our Saint Paul Campus. Granted! As an alumnus, you may check out books, CDs and DVDs, as well as take advantage of all Metropolitan State online databases while visiting the library. Research assistance is available by professional librarians in person or via e-mail (library.services@metrostate.edu) or by phone (651-793-1614).

Other valuable resources for alumni are career services—job listings and networking contacts, job fairs, job search workshops, mock interview practice, occupational exploration, resume writing assistance and more. These valuable services can be found at www.metrostate.edu/career.

Finally, have you been buzz-y lately, referring someone to Metropolitan State? If so, you’re a BuzzAlum—our word-of-mouth campaign that rewards you with the satisfaction of helping friends or colleagues with their educational journey, and rewards us with students who are a great fit. Sign up to become a BuzzAlum and receive a gift for recruiting new students! Go to www.metrostate/alumni to get Buzz-ing.

Respectfully,

Kathy Burnham ('92)

Alumni Association Board Members
Front Row (L-R) Kathy Burnham ('92), Dr. G. George Wallin ('82), Earlsworth Letang ('05), Caroline Lowe ('02); Back Row (L-R) Robert J. Herz ('93), David Therkelsen ('74), Virginie Sanchez ('05), Alpha Mshihiri ('02), Timothy Doherty ('94), Basha Shaik ('07). Not pictured are Ruby Lee ('93), James Lukaszewski ('74), Nancy Wolf ('07), and Lynda Zimmerman ('02).
Margaret Andre

“Mary Tyler Moore was a heroine,” says Margaret Andre who successfully juggled work, family and classes for 11 years and wound up being chosen the College of Management’s outstanding undergraduate student. “That may sound a little unusual, but during my formative years, her TV show made me realize I could do anything as a woman.”

Andre completed her first class at Metropolitan State in 1998 while pregnant with the younger of her two sons. She later took a break from college while caring for her husband, who successfully battled a life-threatening illness. Continuing her studies, the knowledge she gleaned from her classes helped in financially stabilizing her family farm.

She has worked in accounting and finance for 25 years. For the past 15 years she’s been with Minnesota Wire, a Saint Paul manufacturer that also performs research and development. As Andre completed her course work at Metropolitan State, she was promoted to finance/resource manager. She now supervises several employees and serves on the company’s strategic planning, capital expansion and financial planning committees.

Long active in community affairs, she cofounded the Greater Cornelia Neighborhood Association, an Edina neighborhood improvement organization. She has also served as block captain for a number of charities, including the American Heart Association, March of Dimes and the American Cancer Society.

Now that her 11-year quest to obtain a college degree has ended, Andre plans to take a year off from school. Then she will consider attending graduate school, perhaps pursuing an M.B.A. at Metropolitan State.

Ahmed Dagane

Ahmed Dagane, a native of Kenya, was chosen the fall semester outstanding student in the university’s First College. His hero? Another man who traces some of his ancestry to Kenya: President Barack Obama.

“Obama is a source of inspiration for me and my children,” says Dagane. “He’s a role model in that if you work hard toward your goal—whether it be education or anything you want to do in life—it’s achievable if you believe it, and Obama is an example of that.”

“Dagane is a true example of what it means to be an educated person,” wrote his advisor, Professor John Burton, in the nomination for Dagane’s Outstanding Student Award. “Working, raising family and completing two degrees at the same time,

Dagane was resourceful in his approach to his education and took a sincere interest in trying to develop the best education possible for his future.”

Dagane’s path is marked by many significant, earlier accomplishments. As a young adult in his homeland of Kenya, he worked as a health care assistant in a hospital that served Somali refugees.

“I enjoyed working with the refugees and read a lot of medical journals and books,” says Dagane. “That’s how I got interested in the health care field.” The prospects of higher education in that region, however, were grim; so, in search of that goal, he came to the United States.

“I originally went to San Diego, but it was difficult for me and I had so many Kenyan friends who lived in the Twin Cities who asked me to come here that I came to Minnesota, despite the cold,” says Dagane.

For seven years, he worked as a patient services coordinator at Hennepin County Medical Center, serving as a liaison, cultural broker and interpreter, to both medical personnel and their patients. While there, he was selected as one of 30 scholarship recipients to pursue a nursing degree at
Dagane now works as a registered nurse in inpatient psychiatry at Hennepin County Medical Center and a year from now will also earn his bachelor of science degree in nursing.

Dagane credits his success to the support of his wife, three children and his extended family. He is the first of five siblings and 10 half-siblings to earn a college degree. Dagane’s ultimate goal is to earn a doctoral degree in nursing.

Yia Lor

“I want to help revolutionize nonprofit organizations in our community,” says Yia Lor, a Hmong community activist.

“I want to help provide new energy and ideas and encourage a mentality of marketing, creativity and being strategic in financing so the organizations can sustain themselves.”

Lor was chosen as fall semester outstanding graduate student in the College of Management. For the past six years Lor has been an academic advisor for the TRiO Educational Talent Search, a national nonprofit that promotes higher education to middle- and high school students. Lor assists more than 200 students.

Lor’s long history of helping the Hmong community is inspired by the eight years he and his Laotian family spent in a Thailand refugee camp.

“I witnessed a lot of discrimination and oppression of Hmong at the camp, and that really influenced who I am today,” said Lor.

“It made me think about what I could do to change these perceptions and help my community.”

Lor graduated with top academic honors from Lindhurst High School, Olivehurst, Calif., in 1994. He was active in the multicultural and student science clubs and served as a peer counselor.

Lor graduated from California State University at Chico in 2001 with a double major in Asian studies and mathematics. Lor also co-launched the college’s Hmong Student Association, serving as its president. Additionally, Lor was active with the Upward Bound Alumni Association, primarily mentoring younger students.

While still attending college, Lor served as cofounder of the Hmong Cultural Center of Butte County. At age 24, he was also elected vice president of the Chico Hmong Advisory Council, becoming the youngest Hmong leader in the Chico area. As part of his council work, Lor spearheaded a conference attended by more than 500 that brought varied community leaders together to discuss Hmong social and racial justice issues. He also led council efforts to help ensure Hmong elders working for the United States during the Vietnam War received Social Security benefits and U.S. citizenship.

In the Twin Cities, Lor volunteered for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, a nonprofit that assists low-income folks with tax preparation. He is volunteering with Take Action Minnesota, assisting the nonprofit on police reform issues and promoting the teaching of a Hmong history curriculum in Saint Paul Public Schools.

He earned a Master of Public and Nonprofit Administration. Ultimately he plans to obtain a doctorate degree and to serve as an administrator for an international nonprofit.

Catherine Marin

With a dedication to serving her community, a 4.0 grade point average and a membership in the Psi Chi national honor society, Catherine Marin was chosen fall semester outstanding undergraduate student in the university’s College of Professional Studies. She earned a B.A. in psychology.

Her parents and her grandmother founded the Pacem in Terris Christian Retreat Center in Isanti, which provides a secluded haven for people looking for quiet reflection. Marin has worked at the retreat center in several capacities for many years and attributes much of her dedication to the time spent in service there.

“When I was growing up, community service was a big part of my life,” she said.

“It’s helped make me who I am today.”

She works for Catholic Charities in St. Cloud as a mental health worker in a group home for people with severe mental illnesses. For a service assignment in her community psychology class, she volunteered at Family Pathways food pantry in Cambridge and has continued to volunteer there for nearly the past two years.

She plans to begin graduate training in marriage and family counseling and is looking forward to a career of helping to strengthen marital and family bonds.
Louise Murray

Beneath a calm demeanor and unpretentious nature lies the busy and accomplished person that is Louise Murray, the fall 2009 outstanding graduate student for the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Murray is a South Central College faculty member where she teaches six nursing classes on the college’s Faribault campus. She is one of two faculty members recently appointed to lead South Central College’s nursing program changes, and is also leading the college’s National League of Nursing accreditation preparation process.

As a teacher, she pays particular attention to helping immigrant students. “It’s much harder for students who are learning English,” said Murray, who wrote a scholarly paper for her degree addressing factors affecting the academic success of nursing students who have English as a second language. “Academically, they are often as strong as anyone, but learning the language takes time.”

Murray’s strong commitment to helping others extends beyond campus. As a member of Saint Dominic’s Catholic Church, Northfield, she and her husband Bob founded the Thanksgiving Basket project in conjunction with the Northfield Community Action Center. The decade-old project has served more than 1,800 meals to families of four.

In another church project, she and Bob also team with Indian Ministries in Minneapolis to offer an annual baby shower in which formula, diapers, new-baby clothing and cash are collected and donated. Murray also participates in an Adopt-A-Highway program through South Central College.

Murray and her husband have three sons, all of whom will be graduating from their respective schools this May: Jeff will be receiving a law degree from Emory University, John will receive a bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and plans to go to medical school, and Tom is graduating from Northfield High School and is applying to colleges. “I think the fact that I was studying all the time has had an influence on my kids,” says the proud mother and Outstanding Student Award recipient.

Monica Naughton

“I have an innate ability to investigate: I’m really nosy and like to find things out.” That’s the reason Monica Naughton gives for pursuing a degree in criminal justice. It seemed an iffy proposition that Naughton would enroll in college, let alone be able to use her investigative talent to obtain a degree. Yet Naughton surmounted the odds: She graduated from Metropolitan State fall semester. Moreover, she was selected outstanding student in the university’s School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice.

These days Naughton is a picture of stability. For the past 10 years, she has served as a home health nurse at an Eagan assisted living facility for seniors. She is a jack of all trades, performing nursing, administrative and training duties.

The picture for Naughton wasn’t so rosy in 1994, when she dropped out of Burnsville High School at age 16. A single mother two years later, Naughton awoke at 4 a.m. every morning to catch a bus—she didn’t have a driver’s license—for her full-time job 25 miles away. Gang activity was omnipresent in her neighborhood; the house where she was living was once sprayed with gunshots.

Yet Naughton was determined to pursue a higher education to improve her prospects while providing a good example for her kids. She received her GED. Even though she worked full time while tending to her two children, she enrolled at Metropolitan State. That usually meant studying between midnight and 3 a.m.

Despite these challenges, Naughton still carved out time for community service. For more than two years, she served as an English as a second language tutor for a number of elderly immigrants pursuing their GEDs. She has also volunteered for the Dakota, Scott and Carver Counties Community Action Program, serving as a food support worker. Naughton also interned at a day-treatment program for troubled youth in Burnsville. She currently volunteers as a victim advocate statewide for the Council on Crime and Justice.

“Going to school full time and working full time while raising my kids was definitely my biggest challenge,” said Naughton. Her daughters are mirroring their mother and performing well in school. Just as importantly, she said, they are well behaved. “They are really cool; they are ‘please’ and ‘thank-you’ daughters.”

Chuckling, she added, “If I could copy them and sell them on e-Bay, I think people would definitely buy them.”

Naughton, who intends to pursue a graduate degree in criminal justice leadership,
sometimes pinches herself now that she has completed her far-off goal—a college degree.

“I didn’t think I’d be able to do it at times,” she said. “But I also thought at some point the madness will end, and I will have something to show for all the hard work. And now for me to receive this (outstanding student award), I was really surprised and excited about it. My kids were there when I was on the phone and I learned I had won. They were like, ‘Yeah, mom!’ That was so cool to share that with them.”

Lyna Nyamwaya

Lyna Nyamwaya takes pride in working hard taking 16 to 18 credits per semester while she studied at Metropolitan State. Others have noticed her hard work and honored her for it. Nyamwaya was chosen fall semester outstanding undergraduate in the university’s College of Nursing and Health Sciences, with faculty members complimenting her enthusiasm for life and learning. She earned a B.S. in nursing. Previously, she had won academic honors when she received her associate of science in nursing from North Hennepin Community College, after which she obtained her registered nursing license.

Nyamwaya is a charge nurse in a cardiac unit at North Memorial Medical Center, Robbinsdale. “I love to meet people and take care of them,” she says.

Nyamwaya was born and reared in Kenya and is now a U.S. citizen. Her Kenyan roots led Nyamwaya to participate in the Minnesota-Africa 10-mile AIDS Walk this past summer. She also has plans to go on a public health teaching trip to Kenya to educate Kenyans about health concerns such as First Aid skills and malaria.

Nyamwaya says her biggest challenge in life has been the death of her grandmother in the Twin Cities last spring. Her grandmother had moved to the United States in 2005, and became ill in December 2008. “She was very dear to my heart, my mom, my dad, my everything,” she said. Nyamwaya and her husband Jerry Ong’era led efforts to raise $25,000 from family, friends and church members so her grandmother’s body could be transported back to Kenya and buried there. “I used up my savings, and we had a lot of community support,” said Nyamwaya. “The Kenyan community in America helped out; I learned it’s always great to have a network of friends. It was just beautiful how they contributed.”

In the future, Nyamwaya—who speaks four languages fluently—plans to pursue a graduate degree in nursing.

Kowouvi Togni

Kowouvi Togni arrived here from the West African country of Togo with a strong background in science and math. At his high school, he graduated as the top student in physics. Togni had attended the Université de Lomé in Togo and worked as a network administrator. Ready to grow his computer science skills and knowledge, he came to the United States and to Metropolitan State University. Overcoming the challenges of moving to a new country, he was chosen the fall semester outstanding undergraduate student in the university’s College of Arts and Sciences. He earned a B.S. in computer science.

A native speaker of Ewe who also speaks French, Togni at first found that course work in English was difficult.

“When I first came here, it was pretty scary and at times I wanted to give up,” he said. “But I learned the language and became immersed in the culture.”

He was helped by attending English as a second language classes. He also credits the Metropolitan State faculty for using simple methods to teach complex ideas. “The instructors really enjoy teaching and it shows,” said Togni.

His experience prompted him to help other new immigrants—he learned enough words in Karen, the language spoken in Myanmar, to help immigrants from that country find jobs and become settled in their lives here.

“I feel I’m accomplishing something,” he said. “I’m helping the community and giving back for what I’ve received.”

Kowouvi’s dream is to earn a Ph.D. and teach statistics. “I think teaching is one of the best things you can do to contribute to the community,” he said. “You’re helping the next generation.”
The annual weigh-in of a Como Zoo python was designed as a cutesy photo-op for Vic Tedesco (’78), but the muscular 18-foot python, draped around Tedesco as TV cameras rolled and newspaper photographers snapped away, had other plans. The python quickly put the squeeze on the Saint Paul city councilman—and not because she liked him. Tedesco screamed for help. It required eight people to pry the several-hundred-pound snake off of him. The incident generated national and even international news.

“It started out as a fun event, but it got out of control,” said Tedesco, musing about the encounter 43 years later. “If those eight hadn’t been there then, I wouldn’t be here today.”

For Tedesco, the incident marked an auspicious launch to a storied 21-year career as councilman, including six years as president. By the time he retired in 1987, Tedesco would go down as one of the city’s most colorful—and popular—politicians. His fame transcended city hall. A talented musician and humorist, Tedesco later gained renown as one of the Twin Cities-area’s most popular entertainers.

As a testament to his appeal, a street bordering Swede Hollow on the East Side, where he was born and reared, was renamed in his honor. Just last fall, Saint Paul Johnson High School, from which he graduated in 1941, inducted Tedesco into the school’s hall of fame.

For all his notoriety, Tedesco beams about achieving a lesser-known milestone—graduating from Metropolitan State. “Getting a college degree ranks right up there” among his top accomplishments, he said. “Nobody in my family had ever graduated from college. I felt great when I was able to do that.”
It is a bitter-cold December afternoon and Tedesco, sans his signature charcoal-gray toupee, greets a visitor to his roomy Saint Paul home. That he is in pajamas is the privilege of retirement, but it also befits his casual manner. Boxes and memorabilia are scattered about, because he’s soon moving to a Woodbury senior residence.

A short, stocky man, Tedesco ambles to the living room and promptly plops down on the carpet. A nimble maneuver for a middle-aged person, let alone someone approaching 88. He often eschews chairs while relaxing at home. Asked why, he smiles. “I guess I’m a little eccentric.”

Tedesco has never been shy about expressing himself, whether as a city councilman, entertainer, radio station owner or cable TV host. On the council, for example, he often lightened the mood by singing and telling jokes. Such unconventional actions endeared him to many and help explain why Tedesco never lost an election. Starting in 1966, he was elected 11 straight times to the two-year council terms, making him the longest consecutive-term serving councilperson in Saint Paul’s history. In the days when council candidates ran at-large, he frequently led a pack of 30 or 40 in corralling votes.

Proud of his Italian heritage—his mother and father both were born in Italy and spoke Italian at home—Tedesco garnered 95 percent of the vote in what was then known as Saint Paul’s Little Italy. (Tedesco even attracted a national Italian following; UNICO National, the largest Italian American service organization, once selected him as its citizen of the year.)

“He really likes people and has a strong sense of public service,” said Anthony Tedesco, his son and an attorney for the city of Saint Paul. As for his father’s colorful personality, “I think my dad is secure enough that he doesn’t take himself too seriously.”

Not bad for a guy who had to be coaxed into running, initially treating the venture as a lark. Two men plied Tedesco with martinis one evening, persuading him that his outgoing nature and Italian heritage would prove an unbeatable combination.

They were right; Tedesco handily won a council seat and it wasn’t long before he burnished a populist image. He once protested a council pay raise by refusing to leave the council chambers and conducting a one-man sleep-in. For years, he spent one week of his allotted vacation performing city employees’ jobs, including hauling garbage, firefighting and helping out in the city morgue.

Once, a group of about 50 Japanese toured the council chambers. Tedesco took the opportunity to inform them he was part Japanese. The visitors smirked. “My mother and father were from Italy,” he continued, “but my toupee is from Japan,” as he doffed his hair piece. The delighted Japanese and others roared with laughter.

“Victor had an unerring sense of what people expected and wanted,” said Mike Sirian, Tedesco’s lifelong friend. “He’s gregarious and never tires of people. His idea of a perfect lunch hour—and I should know, since I was his legislative aide for a while—was to walk the streets of Saint Paul and shake hands and talk to people.”

It wasn’t just that Tedesco was colorful; he also got things done. Thirty-some years ago councilpersons headed city departments and Tedesco oversaw the 300-person parks staff during his first six years. He led initiatives to reopen several city parks, improve all recreational spaces and boost attendance at the Saint Paul Winter Carnival.

Perhaps his more enduring accomplishment was spearheading efforts to salvage historic buildings, especially the Landmark Center, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

“I had been to Italy and over there it seemed like they were saving every building,” he said. “Over here, it seemed like cities were tearing everything down.”

Fellow council members thought enough of his contributions over the years that they named a street after him—Tedesco Street, which runs by his old boyhood homestead. He still regularly drives that street en route to attending Saint Ambrose Catholic Church, his church of 69 years. Then-mayor George Latimer also celebrated him with a “Vic Tedesco Day.”

A major reason Tedesco retired from the council in 1987 is so he could retain pension benefits. Many encouraged him to run for mayor and even Congress, but he politely declined.

“I’m positive I could have been elected to Congress,” said Tedesco, “but my wife didn’t want to go to Washington, D.C., and my children weren’t too happy with it either, so the heck with it.” Still, he has no regrets; his council experience exceeded expectations. “It was the biggest and happiest part of my life,” Tedesco wrote in his 2006 book, *I Always Sang For My Father.*

While he was 67 when he left the council, Tedesco was hardly ready to retire. He soon transitioned from one public stage—politics—to another—entertainment. Music was a lifelong interest and it soon filled a vacuum. Though he never worked full time in music, at his peak he performed at more than 100 venues annually.

All told, Tedesco says he and his bands, including the four-person Vic Tedesco and his Jazzy Crew and the 17-piece Vic Tedesco and his Orchestra, probably played more than 5,000 gigs. Among them: the Minnesota State Fair, the Taste of Minnesota and the grand opening of the Metropolitan State University library. He and his bands produced 32 albums, and he’s enshrined in the Minnesota Rock Country Hall of Fame.
Life as an entertainer started when he was a youngster performing table-top dancing, especially the tarantella, an Italian folk dance, at community and senior citizen centers. By age 10, he sang solo at contests in which amateurs entertained between films showing at Saint Paul and Minneapolis movie theaters. Recalling memorable lyrics from that period, Tedesco, sitting cross-legged on the floor at his Saint Paul home, is stirred to sing.

“I’m sitting high on a hilltop,” he croons in a soft, melodic voice, “tossing all my troubles to the moon.”

A paper and shoeshine boy whose street-side jobs offered casual acquaintance with prostitutes and gangsters, Tedesco started playing saxophone when he was 12. By the time he was in high school, the man once dubbed “Saxy Vic” was playing night clubs. He describes himself as a “passable” musician, but that didn’t matter to his growing legion of fans.

So when Tedesco and his two brothers Albert and Nick discussed entering the radio station business, he quickly warmed to the idea. The first station they built from scratch was in 1949 in Stillwater.

His duties varied but included serving as station manager, music librarian, sales manager and programmer. He played a character called “Uncle Vic,” who read children’s stories, once attracting 700 kids to a Stillwater park. By writing down 100 songs daily for the station play list, he developed a keen sense of audience desires, an invaluable asset for his later career as an entertainer.

In all, the Tedesco brothers owned and operated 13 stations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Florida and Wyoming. The stations played everything from country music to big band. Their WCOW station in South Saint Paul was the first to offer the Twin Cities rock’n’roll and rhythm and blues. The Tedesco brothers are now enshrined in the Museum of Broadcasting Hall of Fame in Saint Louis Park.

“My dad and his brothers were children of immigrants who grew up during the Depression,” said his son, Anthony. “The fact that they didn’t just buy the radio stations but built them from scratch is really impressive. They had a lot of ingenuity and tenacity.”

“I loved the radio station business,” said Tedesco, who often hobnobbed during this period with national celebrities, including Mary Tyler Moore and Rosemary Clooney. In the end, the vagaries of the radio industry were such that Tedesco was ready for a new chapter in his life.

No bookworm, Tedesco initially had a tenuous relationship with education. While attending Johnson High School on the East Side, he was a serial prankster and occasionally skipped school to attend burlesque shows in downtown Minneapolis. Still, the high school recently honored Tedesco by inducting him into its Hall of Fame.

“That meant a lot to me,” he said, “because it was the school where I grew up and enjoyed myself so much.”

When Tedesco heard about Metropolitan State in the 1970s, while serving as Saint Paul councilman, he was intrigued. He had long desired a college degree, in part because various occupations that interested him required one. Plus, it was appealing that the fledgling university offered credit for life experiences.

“I got credit for my music, radio station, newspaper publishing and council experiences,” said Tedesco. “I even got some credit for taking up downhill skiing when I was in my 50s.”

He also valued the practical nature of his Metropolitan State education. Moreover, he enjoyed taking courses with many nontraditional students like himself. Tedesco believes his university experience produced a better councilman, because he carried over his classroom study habits to the council chambers. Tedesco graduated in 1978 at age 55.

“I can’t say enough good things about Metropolitan State,” he said. “It’s a treasure for the East Side specifically and for the Twin Cities generally.”

Many who know or are acquainted with Tedesco would say the same thing about him.
Maggie Lorenz is the definition of an all-around busy Metropolitan State University student. Lorenz maintains a high grade point average while participating in multiple student organizations, working and still squeezing in her own life—including mom duties!

“I have absolutely loved exploring the discipline of psychology,” Lorenz, a senior, says of her major at Metropolitan State. She grew up in Mounds View and is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa located in Belcourt, N.D.

What are your career goals?
In the next 10 years my goal is to work in higher education with students—specifically student affairs and counseling services. My undergraduate degree is in psychology, and I’d like to get my master’s in counseling and higher education student affairs.

Can you describe your extracurricular activities?
I’m the president of the American Indian student organization, VOICES—Voices of Indian Council for Educational Success. I’m really happy to be working with that organization. Also, I’m in the GEMS program, which stands for “Guiding, Empowering and Mentoring Students.” I mentor a junior who’s majoring in biology with a psychology minor.

Do you have any mentors who have been inspirations in reaching your goals?
I’ve had a number of mentors: professor and tribal judge, Carey Vicenti, who inspired me with his stories on his life and of American Indian life, present and past; and R.J. Martinez, who was my resident director at Fort Lewis College; he led by example—teaching me about compassion and being accountable for my actions.

How do you balance all the responsibilities in your busy life?
Honestly—I don’t know. One thing that I know is that many people who are really busy let things slip their minds. After talking to them, I realize that they don’t get much sleep. I think that’s one thing that is really important—getting eight hours of sleep a night. I go to bed early. I put my daughter to bed at 8:30 p.m. and I’m in bed by 10 p.m. So, I have a little time after she goes to bed to unwind, relax, have some time for myself and then hit the sack for my full eight hours before I have to get up and get to it again.
We Are Family

How did it happen you and your family studied here?

From father to son, sister to brother, aunt to niece; many family members over the years have shared their Metropolitan State experience with each other. As a result of these conversations, there are many family scrapbooks with pictures of Metropolitan State commencements that show more than one generation in cap and gown. Some of those family members recounted to Vicki Lofquist, alumni relations director, how it happened that they and their relatives share Metropolitan State as an alma mater.
Irene Gomez-Bethke  It took me about eight years to finish my degree, but I just kept going. I was working, and when I got enough money to go to a class, I would take a class. You could go on the weekends; you could have an internship; you could do independent study. I told my daughter how great it was that Metro State works with your schedule. My daughter became very interested and decided to enroll.

Jesse Bethke Gomez  This is how it happened for me. I was accepted to an M.B.A. program at another leading institution, but I was disappointed that I couldn’t focus in the area that I wanted to research which was strategic leadership and strategic planning. I was having a conversation with my mother about how frustrated I was with that master’s program, and she told me she knew about a meeting for a new master’s program at Metropolitan State. I went to the meeting and spoke to the head of the program, Anton Jachim, and I couldn’t believe how customized the master’s program was. Eventually I was able to have a mentor, Dr. Allen Yelsey, who was director of strategic planning worldwide for Honeywell Avionics. So I was able to continue advanced education in the area of strategic leadership. Metropolitan State University—by allowing me to design a master’s program within the context and framework of what I wanted to do—made all the difference. I really thank my mom for saying, “Jesse, I just received a notice about a master’s program!”

Mary Rosas Undis  My mother encouraged me to continue with college. I had gone to North Hennepin Community College, and I had completed two years and was ready to transfer. I was actually in the process of transferring to the University of Minnesota. I’d received some financial aid, but it wasn’t enough. I had two part-time jobs, and it wasn’t enough to cover my studies.

My mother always encouraged me saying, “Think about going back to college! Metropolitan State is perfect for you.” She was my big inspiration, and I thought, Yes, I am going to do it!

It was very difficult. I had very small children, toddlers. I took classes on the weekends. Sometimes on Friday night I’d write up my paper for my Saturday morning class. Metro State was wonderful—there were a lot of young adults who were in the same boat as I was who were very committed to learning.
We are Family

Mike Fitzgerald ('98) Father
Emily Fitzgerald ('08) Daughter

Mike Fitzgerald I graduated from Metro State and I talked to Emily about my experience. She had credits from several colleges, and I suggested she check to see if there were any programs that would work for her. I think Metro State helps people realize how their college experiences can create something that is good for the individual person. It almost seems that at Metro State the person’s education is emphasized rather than the student being channeled only into degree requirements. You end up with a degree of course, which is great. Emily checked it out and said, “Yes, this is going to work out for me.”

Emily Fitzgerald I’d gotten stuck where I wasn’t finding my place at a college. Metro State allowed me to explore and incorporate everything that I had learned on my college journey to fit me!

Jeremy Hawthorne I selected Metro State because I am a CPA, and there is an M.B.A. for CPAs program. It just worked. There was a defined program and it was easy to register for it and it was accessible.

Jack Hawthorne I had a lot of college credits. I had been back to school several times, but the last time—when I actually graduated—I was pressured into it by my wife. I had a good time and continued studying, and two years later I got an M.B.A.

Terri Hawthorne When he finally finished, it wasn’t his wife so much as that there was an economic downturn, and he didn’t travel as often for work. He worked in computers and had been traveling a huge amount for his job. He probably would have finished many years earlier if some of the online courses had been available in those days.

My case was a little more complicated. I graduated in 1977, so I’m an earlier graduate. I had inquired into Metro State when it first opened. I was a homemaker and a community activist. In the early days, Metro State was designed more for adults who had verified, paid employment, and they didn’t quite know what to do with me. So, I let it go and didn’t pursue it. My sister Edie brought it up to me again. I said that I had looked into it, and it didn’t work. But then, I talked to former Advising Dean Elizabeth Shippee, and she said, “Oh, that’s terrible, just terrible. We want women like you here too. We have to figure out a way to make this work.”

Edie was working in housing and redevelopment, and her career path, I think, is a common early Metro State experience where she had a little bit of job experience in that field, and through Metro State did a huge number of internships. Her education was mostly internships. She went on to become a very successful housing and redevelopment specialist in the private sector and in the state. Her first four big jobs were contacts she had made as an intern here at Metro State.

Mine was, again, not the usual one. You needed to be a junior to enroll here. My mentors helped me get my community experiences to the junior level, and I did some other nontraditional things for my upper division work, too.

My sister Edie called me in the early winter of 1977 and said, “I’m graduating in June. You are going to keep doing what you are doing for a lifetime. Mom and Dad and grandma would have such a thrill if we would graduate together, so why don’t you get busy and complete your competencies and graduate with me?” So we did.

Two of my other kids took classes here. My daughter-in-law Sheila took some finance and statistics, and then ended up transferring to the University of Minnesota to study for a landscape design master’s degree. And my son Jeffrey eventually plans to come back here for an M.B.A.

I think a reason we’ve studied here is that Metro State is accessible. I think the small classes are appealing, and I think people are genuinely happy about their experiences, so it spreads through the family.
Jim Sable I was among the first 12 students to graduate from this school in the very first class. I applied to become a student here after an article ran in the Minneapolis Star Tribune. The school wasn’t a sure thing at that point, but I sent a letter of application, and I sent a check along with it that said, “I just want to prove that I’m sincere.” The check came back—not from the bank but from the school—with a note that said, “This isn’t the way it works. But if we get the accreditation that we are looking for, we’ll contact you.” As it turned out, they did contact me again, and I was one of the first students accepted and one of the first students to graduate. So that’s how I got here.

Mike Sable And I followed. I had gone to the University of Minnesota and earned an associate degree. Then I got a job working in the advertising field for my dad and mom who had an advertising agency at that time, and I started working days. I wanted to keep up with my schooling and my dad suggested I check into Metropolitan State. That’s how I followed in his footsteps, and it worked out great.

Jenny Foss I could simply say, “Ditto!” I, too, was a student at the University of Minnesota and had a daytime job. So, I ended up going to Metropolitan State because my family had such good personal experiences going here. I decided to transfer my credits from the University of Minnesota over to Metropolitan State, and a year later I graduated. I loved my experience—I had wonderful instructors, I just raved about all of them. The class sizes were nice and small, and I had a really good experience here.

Jim Sable I should add one thing. I have one rogue daughter who graduated from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Ali K. Siddiqui It all started with my wife. She had a long-term goal to come to Metropolitan State. She went to Anoka-Ramsey for a couple of years, and found out there that Metro State had a good program. It all started with her, and I came later to do my M.B.A.

Seema Siddiqui People from Metro State were at the Anoka-Ramsey orientation. I was interested in the two-year accounting degree at Anoka-Ramsey, but I wasn’t sure whether I was going to go back for my four-year degree. So I kept my Metro catalog, thinking that some day I would go back to school. I took a break right after graduation from Anoka-Ramsey when I had kids. I was a stay-at-home mom at that time, and the evening program for the accounting degree at Metro was great.

Ali Siddiqui I came because it seemed like a nice campus, nice school, nice program. So, I decided that it would be best for me.

Murtuza Siddiqui If I can add to Ali’s decision to come here—the biggest draw for him was the First College. Ever since he was young, he was into sports, playing as well as watching. We had to make a decision about what he would do in terms of schooling. We checked into a couple of degree programs in sports marketing or sports management. That’s when we decided that if he came to the First College, he would be able to create his own program. He started working with Dean Daniel Abebe, and he was able to design a degree program in sports marketing. I think we have a wonderful First College, and it gives a lot of people an opportunity to go into the area where they have a strong passion. Metro State also gave him an opportunity for a couple of internships. He had an internship last summer with the Saint Paul Saints. Then last fall, he interned at KFAN, the sports radio station.
We are Family

John Sipe (’91) Father
Jeremy Sipe (’09) Son

John Sipe  For me, Metro State filled a need and classes met at convenient times. Back when I was going to school, I had to travel all over the Twin Cities to take my classes, but it worked out. Since Jeremy was working full time, and there was a central campus that would work well for him, I suggested Metro State and he came here, too.

Lydwine Sisson (’95) Daughter, Sister
Bernice Sisson (’86) Mother
Joseph Sisson (’03) Son, Brother

Bernice Sisson  Before World War II, I’d attended the College of St. Catherine for two years, and then I went into nurse’s training. Then I learned about a woman’s organization in Ohio I really loved, so I went there and I didn’t finish nurse’s training. After the war, I met my husband and came back here. Later I started to volunteer with a group called Women’s Advocates with Sharon Rice Vaughan and I was involved in that group quite a bit. That was when I thought I’d like to finish my degree. I took some classes at Minneapolis Community College, and I also took some classes at the University of Minnesota in women’s studies, and then I came here. I was in First College and

I earned all my credits together and graduated. I remember Miriam Meyers who was one of my faculty mentors. It was great to have that connection, and a connection with Chet Meyers, too. That’s how it all came together.

After I earned my degree, my daughter Lydwine was a single mother who wanted to get a college education, so she came here. And then Joe moved back from California and was living with us—he first went to Saint Paul College and then he transferred to Metro State. He graduated in information technology. That’s how it happened that we all came here.

Merrilee Spaeth (’05) Mother-in-law
Tony Schramel (’99, ’03) Son-in-law

Merrilee Spaeth  We came separately to study here and became family just a couple of years ago. My daughter married Tony. He had graduated before me.

Tony Schramel  I got my B.A. in 1999 and a master’s degree in information systems in 2003.

Merrilee Spaeth  And I graduated in 2005 in the technical communication program. So, we didn’t even know we were family graduating from Metro State until a couple of years ago!
I still cry when I read the poem.

they had a variety of locations, and you could go to school at night and take a variety of classes. And it was affordable, too.

Irene Theis Here’s a poem that I wrote about my graduation from Metro State which shows how passionate I was about the graduation. I still cry when I read the poem.

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A Tale of She and He

SHE and HE went to the same schools
SHE got As and HE got As.
SHE took academic courses and dreamed of college.
HE took academic courses and went to college.

SHE settled for a business course and a bookkeeping job.
HE went on for a master’s and a Ph.D.
HE became the youngest full professor at the university
And SHE was very proud of her brother.

SHE worked and educated her children.
One son, microbiologist and chemist, then dentist.
One daughter, pharmacist, then programmer-analyst.
Optician, teacher, banker—SHE was proud of her children.

Sixty six years it has been, and now
SHE graduates from college.
Wearing robe, cap and tassel, SHE joins the procession,
Fighting back tears of pride, yet sadness too.

~Invoking the Muse, page 1

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Lynda Zimmerman I was a full-time academic advisor at Metropolitan State when I decided to pursue a master’s degree. It was ideal timing for me in that the degree I wanted—an M.S. in technical communication—was just beginning to take applications. While in the program, I applied for and was selected to be a community faculty member in the writing department, and now I teach one course per year in addition to continuing my academic advisor job. I find the teaching aspect very rewarding and an unexpected product of my master’s degree.

Lisa and Sean both began their college degrees at local community colleges and transferred to Metro State to complete their bachelor’s degrees. The psychology major matched Lisa’s goals, and she was selected Psi Chi president and Outstanding Student for the College of Professional Studies. After graduation, she worked for Tubman Family Alliance, advocating for women who were victims of domestic violence, and later as a counselor in a restorative justice pilot program. She has since completed her master’s degree in counseling and now works for PB&J Family Services, a nonprofit organization in Albuquerque, N.M., which helps at-risk children to grow and develop to their full potential. Her main focus is working at the Metropolitan Detention Center, teaching parenting classes and facilitating therapeutic contact visits between children and their incarcerated parents.

Metro State suited my son Sean as he was able to fit his studies around two Air Force National Guard enlistments. He took a break from classes to reenlist for pararescue training, then came back two years later to finish his degree. Shortly after graduation, he accepted a full-time position in the guard and is now a technical sergeant in the Air Force Pararescue, based near San Jose. His unit is one of the special forces that assists with civilian and military rescue and emergency medical situations at sea, in the mountains, stateside and overseas, such as assisting with hurricane relief efforts in Houston and pirate patrol off the African coast. He will be going to Afghanistan for the second time this spring, is married to Katie, and they have a brand new baby boy, Logan.

The Individualized Studies degree appealed to Sean because it allowed him to build upon the extensive medical education earned through the Air Force and transfer in locally-earned credits as well as those earned in California. First College facilitated his degree completion by offering maximum transferability and a unique focus to his bachelor’s degree.

It certainly benefited all three of us that I worked at Metropolitan State because I was familiar with many processes, details and people at Metro State. But it’s likely we would have all landed here anyway due to the suitability of degrees offered, programs that fit our career goals and life situations. We all worked more than full time while going to school, and we studied hard. In return, Metropolitan State has been good to us and opened new doors, some which were anticipated and others which were unexpected!
Seventy-six-year-old George Wolf ('79) sits in his senior apartment in Saint Paul reminiscing about the past. It is a few weeks after Christmas, but what he remembers most as we talk is not this past Christmas, but holidays spent with his now-deceased parents.

“It was 1939 and my uncle and I used to sit by the radio and we heard Adolf Hitler. Of course my uncle would understand everything that Adolf said. “Was für ein Verrückter (he is nuts),” Wolf remembers his uncle saying. These family gatherings around the radio allowed Wolf to develop an entertaining personality as a child. He would take on accents and characters from radio programs. He would watch his grandparents, uncles and aunts, always fascinated by their facial expressions.

An illustrator, Wolf has been drawing for most of his life. Like the 19th century French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec who he considers a mentor, Wolf draws from characters that he observes in their daily lives doing the most mundane things.

He would draw, and then write. He has written stories about his childhood, of Christmas with his parents, of growing up on a Prescott, Wis. farm as the only child of Irish and German immigrants. “And if you listen quietly you can hear the sound of an old blind man crying,” reads a profound passage from one of his unpublished works. This man was his uncle.

Later, he would dabble in theater, a career that did not catch on. Instead, he worked in human services in schools, all the while continuing to develop his skills as an illustrator.

At first Wolf was hesitant to work with children, because as an only child, he believed he would not know how to interact with them. However, he says he started to work in an after-school program for children whose parents left them alone for long stretches of time because they both had to earn a living—latchkey kids. He began to sympathize with the children. “Sometimes we were the only people who cared about these children.”

As head of a speech and grammar after-school program, he began to teach the kids how to develop speech patterns in their own voices. It was then that he began to use not just speech, but art to show children how to express themselves.
“It shows the kids the meaning of lines and zaps the creativity of children,” he says, explaining a program that he has used in schools and also with sick and disabled children at Mount Sinai and Gillette Children’s hospitals. He continued to teach for decades until at 62, congestive heart failure, diabetes and debilitating arthritis forced him to retire.

Wolf says his passion has always been observing people and illustrating their moods. Some of these characters stay with him. For example, there was a six-year-old girl sitting outside a window for hours as she waited for her dad who never came, and would never come, because he was ashamed that his daughter was mentally challenged. For years, he says he could not bring himself to draw the little girl, her sadness always with him. He eventually did. Having won several awards, Wolf was disappointed that this particular drawing that took so much from him has not been recognized for anything. Instead, he laughs at a recent award he received for drawing barns.

Drawing portraits imprints other people’s happiness in his mind. But, like the little girl’s painting, not all his illustrations are happy. One in particular stands out—it’s a self-portrait, the contours of his face folded in anguish as he feels a heart attack coming on or the excruciating pain of joints when arthritis strikes every so often. At the same time, he says, his art allows him a release, and it’s a release that not even medication can match.

Even after seven heart attacks, open heart surgery and being wheelchair-bound from diabetes complications, Wolf still delights in his daily activities. Once a week, with other residents from the senior home, he goes to a casino, which is the highlight of his week. On other days, a volunteer picks him up to take him grocery shopping. When the weather is pleasant, he will ride the bus and take walks in the park. He likes to visit the Minneapolis Institute of Arts’ 19th century gallery with his girlfriend who is also an artist.

“I am like Brett Favre, who loves his football, I love my art. When you love what you do, it is difficult to think of failing health and age. If people loved art, we wouldn’t have wars,” are his parting words to me.

Wolf has shown his work in the annual Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute International Art Show by Artists with Disabilities. His work has also been included in an exhibit at the Outsiders and Others Gallery, at the Minneapolis Foundation as part of its Mosaic: Many Worlds—One City exhibit and in area public libraries. In 1999 he was selected as a workshop presenter at the Art and Soul Festival—An International Celebration of Arts, Disability & Culture in Los Angeles. For many years the Wilder Foundation has provided support for his art work.

Julia Nekessa Opoti is a Twin Cities-based freelance reporter who writes primarily on immigration and gender issues. Opoti studied international business, business administration and economics at Metropolitan State. She won several awards for her student activism and worked on issues such as lowering textbook prices, tuition affordability, and diversity on university faculty and curriculum. She served with distinction as the Student Senate president in her senior year.
Historically in the United States of America, from an economic standpoint, there are three types of families: old money, new money and no money. Regardless of which one you come from, no family was exempt from the negative impact of both the mortgage and real estate industry meltdowns in the last few years which led us into a recession. We are still feeling the impact and are in need of answers as to what we should do next.

I spoke with two experts closely associated with Metropolitan State University about their thoughts on this matter. Tene Wells (’91) is an economic development specialist, social entrepreneur and business consultant. Walter P. Lambert teaches Principles of Finance and Personal Finance at Metropolitan State.

Under her leadership WomanVenture received national and international recognition including an Ann Bancroft Award for Organizational Support and Encouragement. Wells has been given a Use Your Life award by Oprah Winfrey and appeared on The Oprah Show. Wells has also received a Women Who Inspire Us award from Woman’s Day magazine, was named a National Women’s Business Advocate by the Urban Financial Services Coalition, and given a Women with Heart award by The Oprah Magazine.

Since leaving Woman Venture in June 2009, Wells has formed a consulting firm and hosts a weekly program on KMOJ radio called Financial Fitness.

During this period of recovery and uncertainty, what are the first three things that you recommend?
1. Know thyself.
2. Don’t be scared.
3. Know that opportunities are where you make them.

Do you think most people just wait for opportunities to show up?
Before you make opportunities happen, you must know yourself. You have to know what you want. You have to know what your strengths and skills are. You have to know how you relate to other people. You must have confidence in your abilities. You need to know those things that are not good at, too, and how and where you go to compensate for them. Most of all, you have to be honest with yourself.

Sometimes people allow fear to shut them down. Are you saying to embrace the fear and find a way to get it done?
Yes, you’ve got to embrace it. You know what? What you need comes to you. The first thing we need to do when we change jobs or go through some transition is have faith. It’s central to me, too. Leaving my job at WomanVenture in a horrible economy was a leap of faith. It’s scary. Having a regular paycheck is a good thing, but I haven’t lost any money. As a matter of fact, I make more now and I work less.

There you go.
I loved my old job, but having done it for 10 years and with all of the ups and downs and changes in government and funding, you get tired. I left my job at the worst time for the economy back in June 2009, but scary situations are great motivators.
If President Barack Obama sent you an invitation to be the Job Czar, what would be your job creation advice for him?

We are in a time when we need to create our own jobs. We need more programs out of the Small Business Administration that focus on assisting organizations like WomenVenture. We need more social investment that helps people understand how to become social entrepreneurs.

Let’s say there is a Metro State graduate who lost a job due to the recession. The person wants to reinvent himself or herself, but doesn’t know where to start. Is the key to reinventing yourself finding something that you are good at?

Finding something that you love. You can do only what you love. I would say that Metro State should teach more about entrepreneurship.

Tell me about your radio show.

The show is called Financial Fitness and it airs on KMOJ radio. The purpose is to provoke discussion, thought and actions that change people’s personal wealth creation habits; in an effort to change the communities’ habits.

**Financial Fitness** hosted by Tene Wells, Wednesdays 6 p.m., KMOJ Radio 89.9 FM

Now let me run this one by you. Let’s take someone who knows about financial literacy, but lost his or her job and regular income. What should that person do?

What someone will do depends on his or her personality. It’s going to range from, “Oh my God, I can’t maintain my six-figure lifestyle!” to “Okay, this may be tough, but let’s see how we can handle this.” I have personally seen every type in between. In personal finance the general rule should be that you plan for bad times and pray for good times. The primary goal of everyone should be the elimination of debt. Period!

It’s a benefit for an individual to learn as much about personal finance as possible. In my class, I require everyone to read the book *Rich Dad Poor Dad*, and afterwards they get angry.

**Why do they become angry after reading it?**

Because they realize that they have been lied to.

**Lied to by whom?**

The banks and everyone.

**So you recommend the book *Rich Dad Poor Dad* even if they don’t take your class?**

Yes, it’s a great starting point. There are other good authors like Suze Orman who is best practices in my book.

If someone doesn’t know about the various types of mortgages, they are very likely to be victimized by someone selling them the wrong kind. If they don’t know the boundaries of auto insurance, they are likely to be open to fairly large lawsuits if they don’t do it properly. It’s important for them to know about homeowner’s insurance because of the various lender requirements. Knowing all of this stuff is important, but it’s boring to learn. It’s just boring.

According to Lambert, his personal finance course is customized and it is equivalent to financial literacy 101. The course covers the complete financial gamut in ways that keep his students engaged. Lambert currently holds a series six and 63 securities licenses in four states. He is a certified financial planner who is licensed to offer life insurance, long-term care insurance and variable annuities in Minnesota. “It is critical for everyone to look into and get long-term care insurance for their family,” says Lambert.

After hearing that most people who take Lambert’s class have an eye-opening, going-up-to-money-mountain-to-see-the-grand-financial-wizard-experience, I’m on the lookout for the start of his next personal finance course. Look for me, I’ll be the guy who’s 10 minutes early, in the front row with a tape recorder, notepad, ink pen, calculator and wearing mountain boots.

Walter P. Lambert

Over the last 10 years, Walter P. Lambert has been teaching finance, business, project management, statistics and management courses. Lambert is committed to his goal of producing success-oriented, business-savvy, management-competent and financially literate graduates.

**How long have you been with Metropolitan State University?**

I’ve been teaching the Personal Finance course for about three years.

**I believe that there should be a mandate—at least in public schools—for our children to receive financial literacy education by the third grade. What do you think?**

The first grade.

James L. Stroud, Jr. is a freelance writer, photographer and a Metropolitan State University graduate. Stroud welcomes comments to jlswriter@aol.com.
Tough Questions—A Nurse Addresses End-of-life Planning

What would you do if the service you offer ended up in the middle of a contentious national debate? Write and call your senators. That’s what Mary Jane McConnell (’92) did when end-of-life planning became an issue in the nation’s health care debate this past year. “And when the subject comes up, I try to talk about it and help people learn about the importance of it,” says McConnell.

McConnell is the director of Life Choices, a consultation service offering end-of-life planning—she educates clients on various choices a person might need to make if terminally ill. She uses a framework asking five questions:

1. Who do you want to make health care decisions if you can’t?
2. What kinds of medical treatment do you want or do you not want?
3. How comfortable do you want to be?
4. How do you want people to treat you if you are not able to speak or communicate?
5. What would you like your loved ones to know about your funeral wishes?

It was McConnell’s decades of experience as a nurse that prompted her to start her consultation service. She graduated from nursing school in 1966, and in 1992 she graduated from Metropolitan State with a bachelor’s degree in nursing and became an oncology certified nurse. From 1977 through 2008, she worked in a hospital as a staff nurse, a nurse educator and a care coordinator. During most of these years she served adult cancer patients as well as working in intensive care, coronary care, and in neuro medical-surgical and mental health units. It was the end-of-life suffering that she saw in the intensive care unit that was a catalyst to start her consultation service.

McConnell thinks the best thing you can give your family is your end-of-life plan in writing so family members will know exactly what you want. She says that some patients don’t want to talk about it and may think that the family is going to be able to answer medical treatment questions, but she says there can be bad scenarios when patients don’t have a health care directive. “If you have more than one family member, there might be conflict. For example, there can be a conflict about the question: ‘Should we take dad off the ventilator?’ ”

“There was one fellow I’ll never forget who was on a ventilator for a week. He was brain dead and in a vegetative state. He had poor health, and he was about 85 years old. Nobody could decide what to do. It was a big family, and they were having one fight after another.”

“There is a lot of miseducation or lack of education about health care directives, end-of-life care,” says McConnell. “After I talk to people about this, they always say, ‘I’m really glad we talked about this. I didn’t know.’ ”

McConnell says relying on your doctor isn’t a good solution. “Having trust in your doctor is wonderful, but if you go to the emergency room, the doctor on call is the one who’s going to take care of you and he or she may not be your personal doctor. Your doctor could be away on a trip to Europe. You might not be physically able to speak to your doctor. Or your doctor might be woken up in the middle of the night and might not remember your medical history and your specific case.”

That’s why she thinks end-of-life planning through preparing a health directive is so important. As part of her service, McConnell notarizes the health directive, makes copies, and sends a copy to the person’s doctor’s office and a copy to the hospital. “Most people who have a health care directive keep it at home in a safe or filed away some place,” said McConnell. “That doesn’t do any good if you go to the hospital emergency room, and you don’t have it there. I also make a laminated copy for people who travel, so that if they were to go to Florida and land in an emergency room, they can have it with them.”

McConnell thought that people arguing about end-of-life planning during the nation’s health care debate didn’t understand the big picture. Her decades of work as a nurse helps her understand the issue.

“I’ve seen situations where people die alone because the family is afraid to be there at the end of life because they are just scared, and they haven’t talked about end-of-life choices and they don’t know what to do. I think a lot of it is denial of mortality. That’s sad, but that’s the way it is.”

She emphasizes it’s important to take responsibility for your own health, to know your medications and your health issues. She says it’s also important to keep in touch with your loved ones and let them know what you want. McConnell follows her own advice. “My son knows what I want. The person who has power of attorney for my health care is a nurse who I think is excellent, and she knows exactly what I want. I know I can reach her in a heartbeat.”

If end-of-life planning once again becomes controversial, expect McConnell to write and call her senators once more and to speak up to others about the value she sees in a well-prepared health directive.

“It’s for the sake of doctors, nurses, patients and families,” she says.
Equal Children, Unequal Opportunities

By Paola Brigneti (’08)

As children, many people dream about going to Africa to see wild animals while riding in a safari vehicle through the Serengeti Plain. I too dreamt about seeing lions and rhinos in the wild, but the trip my husband, Joe Hansen, and I took to Tanzania was going to be a very different one.

We left on the afternoon of Dec. 21, 2009, to volunteer at an orphanage in Arusha, a city located about an hour west of Mount Kilimanjaro, and right on the skirts of Mount Meru, Africa’s second tallest mountain. We spent two weeks volunteering at LOHADA (www.lohada.org), a small Tanzanian nongovernmental organization that houses and schools children who would otherwise be on the street. When we look back, we think of it as a learning process that had both huge challenges and successes.

LOHADA houses about 100 children in two different camps: one for kids five years old and younger and another for primary school-aged children. We had the chance to work at both camps, doing everything from structuring play activities to raising food for the organization. Interacting with the children was definitely the highlight of our time in Tanzania. These children are full of joy and happiness and, despite having so few material possessions, they have big smiles and kind hearts. Children in Tanzania are not different from children in the United States. As in the rest of the world, children in Tanzania want love and affection, and they enjoy playing. We were amazed at how small things such as bubbles, paper airplanes and balloons could really brighten up these kids’ day. Coloring pages in a coloring book had the power to take them away to a land of play where they could forget all of their strenuous daily chores. We thought about children back in the United States and about how overindulged many of them are, and we wondered if we are teaching our children to value how lucky they are, or if we are simply spoiling them.

Despite lacking toys and many of the opportunities that could help them succeed more easily in life, the children work very hard and are incredibly bright and enthusiastic. Through the school that LOHADA has created for these children, many have learned to speak English fluently, a skill that will greatly help them in their future endeavors.

Unfortunately, not everything was as positive as we would have wanted. The children have the same dreams as other children and are equally bright and hopeful, but we saw many structural impediments to their future advancement. Also, upon arriving to Tanzania, we learned a very commonly used expression, “No hurry in Africa.” This cultural belief may sound glamorous to us overworked Westerners, but in reality we found it to be a major obstacle to accomplishing tasks. We definitely struggled with drawing a line between trying to understand cultural differences and trying to make positive contributions.

Overall, this was an incredibly enriching experience. We decided to volunteer for the children because we strongly believe they are the future of our world, and we want that future to be better and brighter. If you get the time and the opportunity, volunteer with children. It does not have to be at the international level; it can be in your town or city. Regardless of where you volunteer, you can have a huge impact on the lives of children and, as a result, you will make an even bigger impact on the future of our world.

Paola Brigneti (’08), originally from Peru, will graduate this May with a master’s degree in public health from the University of Minnesota, with a specialization in maternal and child health. After graduation she is planning to work with at-risk minority youth in San Francisco.
Embracing “the toughest job you’ll ever love”

By Ann Richards (’02)

I am a late bloomer, always have been. It isn’t a bad thing; I just have to come to terms with it. It explains why I didn’t discover backpacking until my late 50s, graduate from Metro State until my early 60s, or join the Peace Corps until age 64. Most of my colleagues are 20-something, and much of the Peace Corps culture is geared for the younger set. There are advantages to being an older volunteer, however.

The motto for Peace Corps is, “It’s the toughest job you’ll ever love.” That didn’t scare me at all. I have been in sales in tough economic times, which is scary. I have watched investments and home values plummet; that’s scary. Daunting is the word for the medical process I went through to get accepted. How does a senior stack up in comparison to a young adult as a physical specimen? We have a few knocks and kinks that have to be evaluated and explained away. If anything is tough, it is the whole process to get ready to go. Once I was accepted, I unloaded a house, furniture, car and furnishings. I wanted a clean break of possessions.

Early in this process I did something that helped me immeasurably as I prepared myself for a 27-month commitment. I did what I frequently do when there are tough decisions to make: I fled. Yes, off to the Appalachian Trail for some serious hiking and thinking. What better setting for good-quality alone time? I spent three months in the Appalachian area. I had just learned that I was to become a grandmother for the first time. Should I proceed with my plans or not? If I proceed, how do I plan for my return? Hiking by oneself with only essentials in a pack has a way of making priorities clear and bringing everything down to simple issues. At mile 300, I knew I was going. At mile 600, I knew what I would do with everything. And now at month 24, I am thinking of my return.

I have advantages here in Romania that my younger colleagues don’t have. Raising children makes us humble; that quality again becomes familiar as we mature ones struggle with a new language. Small setbacks and disappointments tend to be easier for us. We have perspective: this is really a short period of time to us, and our experience here is just a blip on the radar that spans a long lifetime. I have experienced isolation and learned to thrive on it. Even with a busy schedule, there is down time—blocks of time to fill with positive pursuits on an allowance.

The biggest advantage I am experiencing, however, is this wonderful culture without negative age distinctions. I am respected because my hair is gray. Here children, teens and adults usually have warm relationships with their grandparents. I hike with young people; we have many opportunities to talk about age and aging in America, a subject they are very curious about. Our conversations have allowed me to shatter myths and perceptions about the elderly potential.

Ann Richards (’02) graduated from the College of Professional Studies and has been with the Peace Corps in Romania since February 2008.
Virginia Card is an associate professor in the College of Arts and Sciences and chairs the Natural Sciences Department. One of her research interests is the effects of climate change on Minnesota's aquatic resources.

Virginia Card has a bachelor's degree in physics from Reed College in Portland, Ore. and a Ph.D. in ecology from the University of Minnesota. She has been teaching at Metropolitan State since 1999.

What do you see as the link between ice fishing and global warming?

Because of warming, there’s now a shorter ice fishing season in Minnesota. It’s a very dramatic event in the spring when the ice cover leaves a lake. Often the ice cover will be destroyed by the wind and swept off the lake in just a day or so. Especially in the olden days in Minnesota, ice-out was a big event for people. People would write it down in their diaries or other calendars. In many cases it was even in the newspaper—the editor would make a note of when the ice went out. I’ve been collecting historical records of ice-out and ice-over for 10 to 15 years. I’ve been interested in using them as a climatic indicator.

If the thermometer records are correct, then spring has been getting warmer. My idea was to use the observational records I’ve collected as an independent measure of the thermometer records. The historical records of ice-out really do match the thermometer or the instrument records of temperature.

Which lakes have you studied?

I've studied about a hundred lakes across the state of Minnesota. Some of the lakes that I spent the most time working on include Detroit Lakes and Okoboji and Spirit Lake down in the northwest corner of Iowa. One of my students, Kevin Morgan, studied Lake Koronis and Rice Lake, which are just west of the Twin Cities.

How much earlier is ice-out occurring?

Over the course of the 20th century, the overall trend was about seven days earlier. Most of that change took place since the 1970s. Right now it’s changing very rapidly at a rate of something like 10 days per decade. That means that 10 to 20 years from now, 30 years from now—if things continue at the current rate—the ice might be going out a month earlier on average. That’s really significant if you’re thinking that the ice always goes out shortly before the fishing opener, and then it’s going out two months before the fishing opener. That’s a big change.

How do you respond to critics of the idea of global warming who think it might be a good idea for the Minnesota climate to be a little warmer?

Well, it’s hard to argue with that on some winter days when we’re wearing long johns. I was at a conference recently, and one of the speakers said that the subject of climate change has become so politicized that it’s almost impossible to have a rational conversation about the subject. People are so polarized that they think that either climate change is the worst thing that’s ever happened to the earth, or they believe it’s a hoax. He believed that our inability to have a rational conversation is a harmful situation and urged us to try to think of ways to improve our communication about this topic.

If you have notes, articles or a record of any kind about an ice-out event, please send the information to Dr. Virginia Card at Metropolitan State University, 700 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul, MN 55106-5000, or contact her by e-mail at virginia.card@metrostate.edu.
**Family Cookbook**

**TERRI HAWTHORNE (‘77)**

Terri Hawthorne (‘77), the eldest granddaughter in a large family, is the editor of the *Berthiaume, Hawthorne, Nelson & Green Family Cookbook*—a 760-page collection of recipes, photos, memoirs and genealogy printed by Jumbo Jack’s Cookbooks. Hawthorne also led a workshop with her sisters Diane Berthiaume Brown and Jolie Berthiaume Cummins at the 28th Women and Spirituality Conference at Minnesota State University Mankato entitled “Food: From Family Cookbook to Global Issues.” This fall Hawthorne will teach a class through First College called Food: From Family and Multicultural Cookbooks to Global Issues.

**Written in Bone**

**KATE MEYERS (‘03)**

Kate Meyers (‘03) is the art director and designer for *Written in Bone: Bone Biographer’s Casebook*, a companion book for the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History exhibit entitled *Written in Bone: Forensic Files of the 17th Century Chesapeake*. The book, edited and written by Miriam Rothstein, presents the work of Smithsonian scientists Dr. Doug Owsley and Karin Bruwelheide. The exhibit is on display at the Smithsonian through January 2013.

**Culturally Speaking**

**MARY COONS (‘93)**

Mary Coons (‘93) is the author of *Culturally Speaking: Promoting Cross-Cultural Awareness in a Post-9/11 World*. The book addresses differences in religion, culture and politics between Bahraini Arabs of the Middle East Gulf region and Americans through interviews with both groups.

**Who Made My Bed?**

**DEE HORWITZ (‘80)**

*Who Made My Bed?* is the story of a 19th century Russian immigrant who came to Saint Paul where he founded the United State Bedding Company. The book was written by Dee Horwitz (‘80) and Edward Bronstien.

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“My congratulations to ninety-four-year-old Bertha Whitman,” read Julia Gillian, “who just obtained her B.A. from Metropolitan State University.”

She had no idea what a B.A. was but she knew that it must be a good thing, because both her parents were smiling.

~From *Julia Gillian and the Art of Knowing*, page 274

**KATHARINE KRUEGER (‘75)**

who is also known as Kate Saundby is the author of 13 e-books:

- The Wages of Justice
- The Wages of Sin
- The Wages of Greed
- Golden Silence
- Dark Angel
- The Artesian Mandate
- The Orion Property
- Fortune’s Hostage
- A Circle of Arks
- The Spirit Dogs of Sirius
- Aase’s Daughter
- Wages of Deception
- A Distant Bell

She describes her books as *Star Wars* meets *As the World Turns*.

*The Wages of Justice* received the 2001 Dream Realm Science Fiction Award.

Her latest title, *A Distant Bell*, has been released by Double Dragon Publishing in electronic and paperback editions.
By Harvey Meyer

If you had met Jerry Cotton (‘02), you’d soon discover how passionate he was about higher education and serving youth. You also would quickly discover the long-time law enforcement official was zealous about golf.

Cotton died in December 2006 at age 57. But his memory lives on in the Jerry Cotton Memorial Golf Tournament, an annual charity event that funds scholarships for law enforcement and criminal justice students attending Metropolitan State, his alma mater.

“I know Jerry would be so overwhelmed,” said Jan Cotton, his wife of almost 40 years, who with family and friends established and oversee the golf tournament. “He would be so humbled and proud.”

While the 18-hole golf tournament at the Emerald Greens Golf Course in Hastings has been conducted since 2007, attracting more than 100 participants annually, this year will be the first when all proceeds will go to scholarships for Metropolitan State students. It is anticipated about $3,000 to $5,000 will be distributed annually from the Jerry Cotton Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Scholarship Fund.

Jan Cotton said it is fitting that the scholarships involve Emerald Greens and Metropolitan State students. In the several years after he retired as a 23-year Dakota County deputy sheriff in 2002, Jerry’s enthusiasm for golf approached infatuation. So much so that he was hired as a security ranger at Emerald Greens, enabling him to golf for free.

Like Jerry Cotton, many Metropolitan State students are of nontraditional age and attend school part time. Cotton was 52 when he graduated in May 2002, culminating what Jan jokingly called his “30-year plan.”

“Many of the students are adults who have jobs and have families,” said Jan. “Jerry talked admiringly about how many of the students were working so hard on their own to get their degrees.

“Jerry really enjoyed the classes at Metropolitan State. A large part of that was the teachers. He loved the teachers because they were so down-to-earth” and offered practical knowledge.

One of those instructors was John Harrington, Saint Paul’s police chief, for whom Cotton regularly guest-lectured. Harrington returned the favor by speaking at charter-school classes Cotton taught.

“I’m proud to be a friend and colleague of Jerry’s,” said Harrington. “He was so much more than a cop. Jerry was the most giving person I can think of. So I’m just delighted that Metropolitan State is where his legacy of giving to the community and education can continue.”

Cotton taught part time for 12 years at the Mall of America-based Metropolitan Learning Alliance, a charter school for many at-risk juniors and seniors. He taught law enforcement, juvenile justice and community social justice classes.

He was also active in promoting education at other youth organizations, including the Kaposia Developmental Learning Center, the Dakota Alliance for Prevention, and the youth program at Saint Joseph’s Catholic Church, West Saint Paul. Jerry regularly was a Black History Month guest speaker at suburban Saint Paul schools. Over the years, he also coached youth basketball, football and soccer.

“He was a kid at heart,” said Jan. “He loved kids and they loved him, even when he was breaking up their beer parties as deputy sheriff.”

For 10 years, up until his death, Jerry also moonlighted as a security officer for the Minnesota Vikings, initially accompanying the team on away games. At a Vikings Christmas party, Jerry surprised many when he was offered the band microphone and belted out “Mustang Sally.”

“He was a great singer,” said Jan. “He had this deep bass, Barry White-type voice. Many people said he even sang ‘Mustang Sally’...
better than the original singer, Wilson Pickett. From that Christmas party on, whenever Mike Tice (former Vikings coach) saw Jerry, he always called him ‘Mustang Sally.’

While it took Jerry about three decades to obtain his college degree, he was a tireless promoter of higher education and lifelong learning to his four children—and anyone else who would listen.

“First of all, Jerry loved to talk,” laughed Jan. He had a booming bass voice, bellowing laughter and a take-charge, charismatic personality that quickly captured everyone’s attention. “And he loved talking about education.”

“He would say if it takes you 30 years to get a degree, that’s okay, just go ahead and do it. But if you can get your degree sooner, you’ll get more of a head start in life.”

We Can Find a Planned Gift Opportunity That’s Right for You

There are almost as many variations on ways to make a donation as there are needs to be met. Check out the Metropolitan State University Foundation Website and discover new ways to make a gift that also takes into consideration your personal circumstances and the needs of your heirs.

You’ll find the information you need on the Metropolitan State Website: www.metrostate.edu/foundation/types_gift/planned_giving.html

Or call Development Director Rob Larson at 651-793-1813.

Explore the value of charitable gifts that require a little thought, but pay off in big benefits to you, your family and the Metropolitan State University Foundation.

Jerry Cotton Memorial Golf Tournament set for Sept.19
The fourth annual Jerry Cotton Memorial Golf Tournament is Sept. 19 at the Emerald Greens Golf Course, Hastings.
In addition to the 18-hole tournament, there are silent and live auctions.
Organizations or individuals can sponsor one or several holes. Participants receive golf-related gifts, plus attend an evening dinner banquet.

For more information on the tournament, check the Website: www.jerrycottongolf.com
or write Jan Cotton at cottonjan@hotmail.com.

Support the Annual Fund—Help Us Grow!

Metropolitan State’s enrollment is up 20 percent over the last three years. As we grow, we need your help! Please consider giving to the Annual Fund to support the programs and scholarships that assist deserving students, enhance the university’s academic effectiveness and advance the university’s mission.

Metropolitan State students—just as you did—return to college in order to improve their lives. Today’s students are tomorrow’s accountants, artists, nurses, peace officers, nonprofit managers, social workers and teachers. Metropolitan State is preparing a new workforce of leaders for many of the most critically needed areas of our society.

Please help us grow by giving a gift of support to the 2009–2010 Annual Fund:
• Give online at www.metrostate.edu/foundation.
• Mail in your gift in the donor envelope enclosed with this magazine.
• Call the Annual Fund hotline at 651-793-1810.
Robert O’Connor, assistant professor of social work, College of Professional Studies, was quoted in a July 19 ABC News online piece about Michael Jackson’s children being white and living with their black grandmother. The article, “How Will Michael Jackson’s ‘White’ Kids Get Along in a Black Family?” can be found at http://www.abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/MichaelJackson/story?id=8039127&page=1. O’Connor, who studies transracial adoptions, served as one of the expert sources for the article.

Doug Rossinow, history professor, College of Arts and Sciences, had his book, Visions of Progress: The Left-Liberal Tradition in America, reviewed in the fall 2009 edition of Dissent magazine, a University of Pennsylvania Press publication, by Harold Meyerson, editor-at-large for the American Prospect and an op-ed columnist for the Washington Post. The article is entitled “Liberalism and Its Friends.” Subscribers may read the article at http://dissentmagazine.org/ article?article=1987. Or you may contact Rossinow at doug.rossinow@metrostate.edu for the PDF of the article.

Ron Salzberger, professor, College of Arts and Sciences, retired at the end of fall semester 2009 as professor emeritus after 28 years teaching philosophy at Metropolitan State. He coordinated the university’s then-Arts and Sciences Center and launched the Philosophy Department, developing curriculum and chairing the department. A hallmark of the early days involved resident and community faculty teaching in a myriad of venues and engaging in enthusiastic, even challenging, exchanges with each other and students, often in cafes or coffee shops.

Few subjects were off-limits in Salzberger’s classes, faculty-designed independent studies, essays and speeches. Topics he addressed ranged from animal rights to war and morality to children’s and economic justice. And then there was the most basic: What constitutes philosophy? A constant in all his classes, ranging from the Ancient Greek Philosophy to Philosophy on the Front Page, was an emphasis on practicality. Theory was fine, but Salzberger preferred identifying common problems in daily life and then mobilizing philosophical tools so students could examine those problems. That practical approach distinguishes Metropolitan State’s Philosophy Department from others in Minnesota and serves as his enduring stamp.

Beyond his classes, Salzberger coauthored a book, Reparations for Slavery: A Reader. It offers a vivid portrayal of the widespread injuries slavery inflicted upon African Americans historically and continuing to this day.

Ruth Staus, assistant professor, College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and the Homestead at Maplewood received the Person-Centered Care Award, with its Culture Change in Assisted Living project at the Center for Excellence in Assisted Living’s fifth anniversary celebration in November in Washington, D.C. Only five innovative programs that demonstrated excellence in assisted living were honored.


Lorene Wedeking, professor, College of Nursing and Health Sciences, was awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to lecture at the University of Pécs, Pécs, Hungary, during the 2009–2010 academic year. Wedeking will lecture on “Strengthening Public Health Services Through the Use of Foundation Models and Principles.” She is one of approximately 1,100 U.S. faculty and professionals who will travel abroad through the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program February–June 2010.

Five Metropolitan State University instructors and advisors were honored for their exemplary instruction and advice to students. Joel Wilson, Lakeville, assistant professor of accounting, College of Management, received the 2008–2009 Outstanding Teaching Award. Last year, Wilson was presented the Excellence in Teaching Award. Receiving the 2008–2009 Excellence in Teaching Awards were Rikki Wagstrom, Saint Paul, assistant professor of mathematics, College of Arts and Sciences, and Brenden Schaaf, Brooklyn Park, community faculty member teaching accounting, College of Management. Susan Hilal, Plymouth, School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice assistant professor and academic advisor, and Siew Wong, Saint Paul, College of Management academic advisor, were selected recipients of the 2008–2009 Carol C. Ryan Excellence in Advising Awards.
IN MEMORIAM

Kathleen Chalekian, Eden Prairie, age 55, died of cancer at her home on Dec. 1, 2009. She was assistant professor of marketing in the College of Management since August 2007. Chalekian was a long-time board member of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Marketing Association. Said College of Management Dean Gary Seiler, “Kathleen helped us get the online M.B.A. off the launching pad. She loved Metropolitan State and our students. Teaching was her passion.” She and her husband Bob Lindberg, a community faculty member in Human Resource Management, set up a Metropolitan State scholarship to support the value of post-secondary education.

Charles E. “Chuck” List, Minnetonka, age 68, human services community faculty, died on Oct. 12, 2009. A graduate of Valparaiso University, St. Mary’s College and the Union Institute, he was a long-time faculty member at Metropolitan State and Cardinal Stritch University. He was teaching HSA 370 Supervision in Human Services and HSTD 390 Conflict Resolution this past fall semester. Memorials are preferred to Park Nicollet Cancer Program or the International Diabetes Center.

Students Study Internationally

Metropolitan State students traveled to Nicaragua from Dec. 28, 2009, to Jan. 11, 2010, for a service learning course in the city of Granada on Lake Nicaragua, the 20th largest lake in the world. Students spent mornings with Nicaraguan children and older students studying English, and studied Spanish in the afternoons. Several evenings were shared with guest speakers from the community. Activities included a boat ride through volcanic islands and a village visit where students were invited into homes and learned about animal care and farming, as well as crafts including casket making and other carpentry. Associate Professor Kathryn Kelley organized the trip with community faculty member Helen Korengold who lives in Nicaragua. It’s planned that the course will be an annual international service learning and study abroad course offering in communication, writing and the arts.

Criminal Justice in the Caribbean

Jamaica was the location this past January for a course taught by Susan Hilal, assistant professor, School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. The course—Criminal Justice in the Caribbean—was designed to give an overview of Jamaica’s criminal justice system. It included visits with the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the Ministry of National Security, child protective services, port security, a group called Jamaicans for Justice, and a face-to-face visit with the chief justice of Jamaica’s Supreme Court. Dr. Hilal created this study abroad opportunity by partnering with the University of Southern Mississippi.

Doctorate in Business Administration Offered Summer 2010

Metropolitan State University College of Management plans to offer an applied Doctorate in Business Administration (D.B.A.) program in summer 2010, according to Tim Delmont, assistant professor, M.B.A. program director and director, graduate programs. The program will prepare qualified individuals for faculty positions in higher education schools and departments of business, helping to meet existing and predicted shortages of business instructors in the region. It will also prepare people for management consulting positions and sharpen the advanced leadership and management skills of mid-level and senior managers. For information about admission requirements and program format, see www.metrostate.edu/dba.
By Stephen Burgdorf

Note: All towns are in Minnesota unless otherwise noted.

Nestor Amarilla (‘05), Asuncion, Paraguay, has been nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature according to the newspaper El Mirador Paraguayo. Amarilla, a native of Paraguay, studied at Fridley High School and Metropolitan State University. While in the Twin Cities, Amarilla wrote numerous plays. The Nobel Organization does not officially identify nominees but will announce the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in October.

Wade Barry (‘03), Saint Paul, is a writer for the television program Diners, Drive-ins and Dives on the Food Network.

Robert Bayer (‘05), Circle Pines, joined Coldwell Banker Commercial as a vice president. He is also a certified public accountant and a member of the Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Kathleen Bechtel (‘07), Milwaukee, Wis., was hired as Froedtert Hospital’s chief nursing officer. Bechtel holds magnet status with the American Nurses Credentialing Center, an affiliate of the American Nurses Association.

Peter Bell (‘76), Minneapolis, was elected to TCF Financial Corporation’s Board of Directors in November 2009. Bell is serving his final year as chairman of the Metropolitan Council, where he has been the longest serving chairman.

Dave Bellows (‘92), Lakeville, announced he will run for Dakota County sheriff in the 2010 election. Bellows teaches at Metropolitan State University in the master’s program in law enforcement and at the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in the police personnel management program.

Timothy C. Berens (‘90), Saint Cloud, Fla., is an independent distributor for wowgreen International, LLC, a company that provides environmentally safe cleaning products.

Jared Blankenship (‘08), Saint Paul, joined Valley Mortgage in Fargo as a loan officer. Blankenship has 10 years of experience in sales and customer service.

Joy Bodin (‘93), Delano, was appointed a member of the Delano School Board. Bodin is the director of marketing and admissions for Hennepin Technical College.

Brad Bourn (‘08), Minneapolis, was elected to the Minneapolis Park Board. For the past three years, Bourn worked as program manager with youth service agencies in the Minneapolis Public Schools on the city’s North Side.

Veronica Chatterton (‘78), Minneapolis, is editing a centennial book about the Dutch in Minnesota, which focuses on a community called Butler. She is looking for others of Dutch descent and can be reached at veronicachatterton@yahoo.com

Rebecca Collins (‘07), Minneapolis, is the marketing and communications coordinator for the Minnesota Film and TV Board.

Jean-Claude Duncan (‘00), Chatfield, is the new pastor for Chatfield United Methodist Church. The former Tri-County Parish pastor, who loves aviation and holds a private pilot’s license, is also a member of the Airplane Pilots and Owners Association.

Mary Gaasch (‘08), Lauderdale, is the program manager at Hammer Residences and was elected to the Lauderdale City Council. From 2006–2008, she served on the Lauderdale City Council’s steering committee and helped develop their 2008 comprehensive plan.

Barbara Forster (‘76), Minneapolis, was named Outstanding Volunteer Fund-raiser at the 2009 National Philanthropy Day Awards luncheon presented by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Minnesota Chapter. Forster was cited for her volunteer work with more than 30 nonprofits. In addition to chairing campaigns that have raised more than $500 million, she has served as a board member for numerous organizations including the Women’s Foundation, Women’s Caucus, Hennepin County Library, American Refugee Committee, Masonic Cancer Center, the Center for Victims of Torture and Metropolitan State University Foundation. In her remarks as she accepted the award, Forster quoted the Dalai Lama, “We are all equal, members of one and the same family, and the affairs of the entire world are our internal affairs.”

Richard “Dick” Franson (‘76), Minneapolis, announced he will run for Minnesota Secretary of State in the 2010 election. www.dickfranson.com

Laura Goodman (‘96), Saint Paul, announced she will be running for Ramsey County sheriff in 2010. Goodman started her career as Ramsey County sheriff’s deputy in 1981 and then worked with the Minneapolis Police and Brooklyn Center Police departments. She is public safety director at St. Catherine University.

Brian Gronquist (‘09), Andover, was featured in an article in the Pioneer Press as part of the “Watchdog: Your Next Job” series. He worked with an image consultant and received a makeover for the article. The article can be seen at twincities.com/watchdog.

Mai Doua Hang (‘08), Oakdale, has accepted the position of ESL teacher and Hmong outreach specialist for the District 2 Community Council. Hang is the primary contact for their community gardens program and liaison for the youth soccer program. She’s lived in Minnesota for 15 years and has worked at Lao Family and Face to Face Health and Counseling as a health educator, specializing in family planning.

Edward Harm (‘07), San Bernardino, Calif., was named the manager of a newly-opened Forsythe Appraisals, LLC branch in San Bernardino, Calif.

Constance Hill (‘03), Saint Paul, is a senior editor at Llewellyn Worldwide, Ltd. Hill was profiled in the Aug. 10, 2009, edition of Minnesota’s Women’s Press.

Larry Hubner (‘02), Carlsbad, N.M., was promoted from advertising director to general manager at the Current-Argus, which is part of Media News, the fourth largest media corporation in the United States. Hubner began his newspaper career with the Star Tribune’s circulation department, where he served as the youngest district manager in Minnesota.

Phillip Jares (‘97), St. Louis Park, is a shipping solutions specialist at the U.S. Postal Service.

Jeanine J. Johnson (‘90), Coon Rapids, accepted a position as an early childhood special education teacher in the Cambridge-Isanti school district and will teach at the Cambridge Primary School. Johnson has been an early childhood family educator for the Anoka-Hennepin school district for the past 20 years and has her license in parent, early childhood and early childhood special education from St. Cloud State University.

Dennis D. Jones (‘01), North Oaks, is a fire captain with the Saint Paul Fire Department and graduated from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., in March.

Lina Knox, (‘09), Coon Rapids, was featured in an article in the Pioneer Press as part of the “Watchdog: Your Next Job” series. She’s lived in Minnesota for 15 years and has worked at Lao Family and Face to Face Health and Counseling as a health educator, specializing in family planning.

As she was unable to attend the Metropolitan State University graduation ceremony in Minneapolis, her mother, Joyce Knox, accepted the diploma on her behalf.
Wendy Lehner ('04), Andover, was recently promoted to detective in the Anoka County Sheriff’s Office’s Criminal Investigative Division and will help handle Anoka County’s violent crimes.

Jessica (Sandin) Loftus ('05), Saint Paul, was named Orono’s city administrator and comes to Orono from the city of Tonka Bay, where she had been their city administrator. Loftus is a member of the International City Managers Association, City Managers Association and the Metro Area Managers Association.

**Metropolitan State University** is the proud recipient of a 2009 Pride of CASE V Award. Metropolitan State’s Buzz magazine received a Silver Award for Excellence in the category of Most Improved Alumn/i/Institution Magazine (3,000 to 9,999 FTE). The Gold Award in this category went to the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul and the Bronze Award went to Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea, Ohio. CASE stands for the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and is an international association of educational institutions; CASE District V includes members from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

Dianne Miron ('05), Centerville, is director of physician services at Courage Center in Golden Valley and will be managing and maintaining the operation of Courage Center’s physician practice Rehabilitation Medicine Associates. Miron brings experience from prior managing positions at both Regions/Health Partners and Allina Hospitals and Clinics.

Mark W. Nelson ('94), Chanhassen, is the Minneapolis energy examiner for Examiner.com, a Web site that offers national and local articles about current events and also provides reader resources and insider perspectives on local news.

James A. Olson ('08), Waconia, announced he is running for Carver County sheriff in 2010. Olson has worked with the Carver County Sheriff’s Department since 1987 and is a lieutenant who oversees public safety in the city of Chanhassen.

Randy M. Olson ('04), Woodbury, received a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. Olson’s dissertation examines residents’ experience with public art and how their sense of community is shaped by it.

Anthony Price ('05), Hastings, is the general manager of Friendly Puters LLC, which provides computer networking and PC repair and specializes in the area of custom-built PCs and servers. He has written a radio play called The Memory Righter.

Elizabeth Quaido ('06), Scottsdale, Ariz., is a real estate agent with Keller Williams Realty and specializes in corporate relocation.

Victoria Reinhardt ('99), White Bear Lake, was elected chair for the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners for 2010.

Peter Riggs ('04), Minneapolis, came out of retirement to gain business skills and training at Courage Center and works with their Leadership Lab Program to improve his knowledge and awareness of development and advocacy issues. After completing the program, he plans to open a curio shop featuring artists of all abilities.

James S. Rogers ('94), Saint Paul, is the new president of the American Conference for Irish Studies (ACIS). ACIS is a multidisciplinary scholarly organization with members in the United States, Ireland, Canada and other countries. Rogers, the managing director at the University of St. Thomas Center for Irish Studies and editor of its journal, New Hibernia Review, has published articles on Irish literature and regional Irish history in many books and journals.

Simon Rutherford ('08), Cottage Grove, successfully completed basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, earning the rank of Air Force Airman 1st Class.

Charlotte Samuelson ('77), New Brighton, was elected to New Brighton’s City Council. Samuelson served two terms in the Minnesota House of Representatives from 2003 to 2006 and is in her second year of service on the New Brighton Parks and Recreation Commission.

Bryan Schafer ('05), Minneapolis, was named second precinct inspector for the Minneapolis Police Department. Schafer has been with the Minneapolis Police Department since 1991.

Geraldine A. Scott ('99), Hamburg, was selected to be the new city clerk/treasurer for the city of Plato.

Greg Sedbrook ('76), Inverness, Fla., teaches classes about European chocolates and traveled last fall to Paris where he gave a chocolate-focused tour.

Robert Sobicz ('74), Chicago, Ill., is serving as the national director of talent relations and compliance at Deloitte, LLP.

Julie Steiner ('00), Bismarck, N.D., has joined the staff at the Village Family Service Center as a mental health professional. Steiner also works as a social worker for the Adoption Option program, a collaboration between the Village and Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota.

Tony Sutton ('93), Inver Grove Heights, is the chairman of the Minnesota Republican Party. Sutton has held more than 20 party offices from precinct chairman to state executive director.

Todd VanWambeke ('06), Eagan, was promoted to assistant vice president of Maple Bank in Champlin. VanWambeke previously worked for Highland Bank and First National Bank of the Lakes.

G. George Wallin ('82), Big Lake, is the director of telecommunications consulting at Leonard, Street and Deinard. Wallin provides business consulting services to clients in the telecommunications industry and holds a Ph.D. in organization and management from Capella University. He is also a qualified civil mediator under Minnesota General Rules of Practice 114.12.

Nicholas Wasylik ('76), Hastings, is a retired Hastings police chief and teaches at Hastings Community Education. He also works for InfoPro Legal Resources in Hastings, a company that handles private investigations.

John Wenker ('79), Mendota Heights, is the co-manager of the First American Real Estate Fund. Wenker has helped manage the fund since 1999.

Cheryl Westin-Swenson ('99), Coon Rapids, joined Tri-County Health Care as their newest family nurse practitioner and will practice at both Wadena Medical Center and Bertha Medical Clinic. Westin-Swenson brings more than 20 years of experience to her position.

Agitu Wodajo ('97), Brooklyn Center, runs the International Self-reliance Agency, which was established in 1996 to provide immigrant and refugee women and girls with opportunities to access resources to become self-sufficient and improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Jason Zachariason ('08), Saint Paul Park, was sworn in as a member of the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission in August.

Lynda Zimmerman ('02), Minneapolis, completed her first Competitive Trail Ride in September 2009. The Competitive Trail Ride is similar to a marathon, but is for horseback riders.

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**IN MEMORIAM**

Randell N. Brix ('85), Saint Cloud, died Sept. 8, 2009. Brix was employed by Hennepin County as a computer programmer/project manager since 1980. He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

Mary A. Fischer ('92), Mounds View, died at the age of 58. Fischer served as librarian at St. John the Baptist School for 24 years. She is survived by her husband, a son and two daughters.

Ramon “Ray” Hain ('91), Roseville, died Nov. 22, 2009. Hain served as a Saint Paul firefighter from 1994 to 2000. His name will be inscribed at the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial in Emmitsburg, Md. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, father, two sisters and brother.

Grace Mae Mayo ('87), Saint Paul, died Jan. 17. She had worked at the Minneapolis Public Library for more than 30 years. After retiring from the library, she graduated from Metropolitan State University at the age of 64.

Norma Stephani ('77), Alexandria, died Nov. 7, 2009, at the age of 88. She is survived by her husband and two daughters.
President Sue K. Hammersmith’s inauguration as Metropolitan State University’s sixth president last fall featured a unique dancing staff that she and her husband, Allyn Uniacke, commissioned for that occasion. The dancing staff is a departure from tradition and was used instead of the mace that many universities use on ceremonial occasions.

The staff was made by Wisconsin artist Dick Mindykowski, a member of the Lac Courte Oreilles tribe. All of Mindykowski’s works represent earth’s four orders: physical, plant, animal and human. The inaugural dancing staff is made of hand-carved alder wood adorned with deer leather and antler, turkey feathers, French beads, horse hair, and beaver and muskrat fur. To the Ojibwa, these media have special meanings that fit well with Metropolitan State’s culture. According to the artist, the muskrat is industrious and a critical thinker, and the beaver is industrious, intelligent and hard-working. The dancing staff features exquisite wood carvings in groups of six; three groups of six feathers; and a delicate and original dreamcatcher.

Following the inauguration, President Hammersmith and Dr. Uniacke presented the dancing staff to Metropolitan State University, where it has become part of the school’s permanent collection and is used in university ceremonies, such as commencements.
DATES

April 1–30 Women’s Commission Art Show, Empowering Creativity, runs through April 30 in the Founder’s Hall Reception Area, Saint Paul Campus.

April 30 The College of Management Graduate Program Spring Dinner is Friday, April 30, at the Como Park Conservatory, Bullard Rainforest Auditorium, 6–9:30 p.m. For information, contact Gloria Marcus, recruiter/advisor, College of Management Graduate Programs, at gloria.marcus@metrostate.edu.

May 6 Spring 2010 Commencement Ceremony, 6–6:30 p.m. reception, 7–9 p.m. ceremony, Minneapolis Convention Center, Auditorium. Tickets required. If you wish to volunteer, contact Sue Amos Palmer, commencement coordinator, at 651-793-1823 or e-mail her at sueamos.palmer@metrostate.edu.

May 15 Metropolitan State University in New York City. Luncheon at the New York Athletic Club. The hosts are Jim Lukaszewski (’74) and Susan Rydell, founding faculty and psychology professor, with guests of honor President Sue K. Hammersmith and Metropolitan State East Coast graduates.

May 21 Grand reopening of the gallery under its new name, The Gordon Parks Gallery at Metropolitan State; Library and Learning Center, third floor. The reopening takes place on Friday, May 21, from 4–8 p.m. The gallery is featuring the exhibition Gordon Parks: Crossroads. The show runs through July 30. For information contact Erica Rasmussen, professor and gallery director, at erica.rasmussen@metrostate.edu or call 651-999-5942.

June 24 2010 Recognizing Excellence event from 4:30–6:30 p.m. in the Great Hall, New Main, Saint Paul Campus. Faculty members, students and the alumna/alumnus of the year are honored at this by invitation event.

For more information about events, sign up for the alumni e-newsletter at alumni.relations@metrostate.edu.