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Distinguished Alumni to Address Graduates

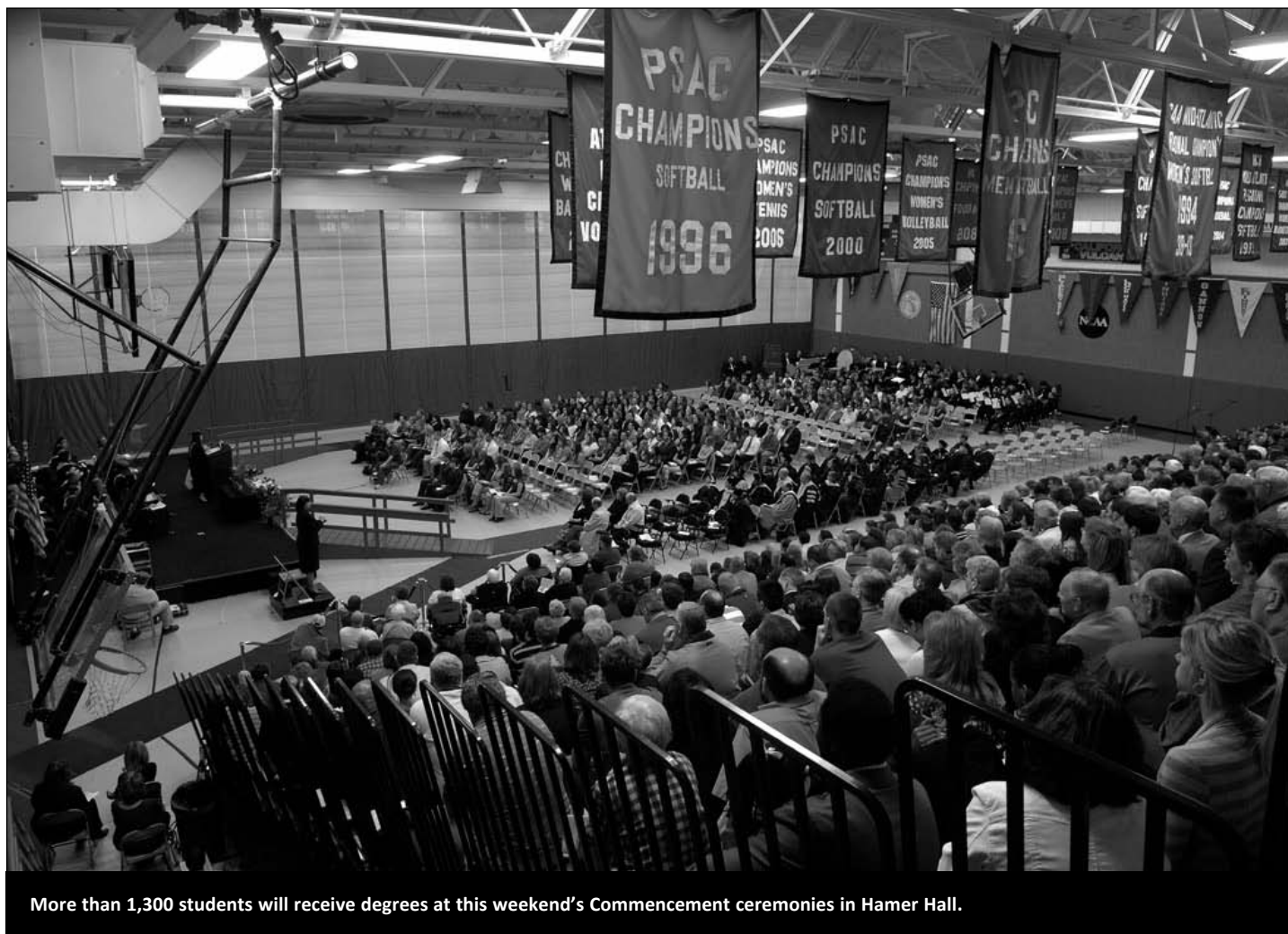
Two distinguished alumni — one an expert in education, the other in health care finances — will address graduating students and their guests during Cal U's winter Commencement ceremonies.

Dr. Sandra Kiski Stout '72, '74 will deliver the Commencement address to master's degree candidates at 7 p.m. Friday in Hamer Hall auditorium.

Armand Balsano '74 will speak to undergraduates at 10 a.m. Saturday, also in Hamer Hall.

Stout earned a bachelor's degree from Cal U in 1972 and a master's degree and reading specialist certificate in 1974. After completing her doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh, she taught in Upper St. Clair, worked as a reading specialist in Central Greene School District, and served as director of elementary education and federal programs in Highlands School District, Natrona Heights, where she established the first public kindergarten for 4-year-olds in Allegheny County. After serving as acting superintendent of the Keystone Oaks School District, Stout retired from public education but continued to share her expertise as an educational consultant for the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh.

Balsano graduated from Cal U in 1974 with a bachelor's degree in social sciences, then earned a master's degree in health administration from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. A financial expert now based in Atlanta, he has worked with acute care and long-term care facilities, performing evaluations of strategic and financial feasibility and planning for specialty services such as rehabilitation, mental health, cardiology and home health. He frequently helps clients to evaluate the financial feasibility of new projects and



More than 1,300 students will receive degrees at this weekend's Commencement ceremonies in Hamer Hall.

the financial impact of strategic initiatives. In addition, Balsano is qualified in many states as an expert witness in health-care planning and financial feasibility.

At the winter Commencement ceremonies, Cal U will award degrees to more than 700 graduate students and 625 undergraduates who completed their studies in August or December 2010.

CUTV will broadcast both ceremonies live on Armstrong Cable (Channel 61 Armstrong-Connellsville) and Atlantic

Broadband Communications (Channel 21).

In case of an overflow crowd on Saturday, guests will be directed to viewing areas in the Natali Student Center's Performance Center. Visitor parking is available in the Vulcan Garage, off Third Street near the campus entrance.

For more information, visit the Commencement website at www.calu.edu/events/commencement.



Armand Balsano



Dr. Sandra Stout



Enjoying the Veterans Day festivities on the deck of the battleship USS North Carolina are Viva Kreis (left), Mary Kreis and U.S. Congressman Mike McIntyre of North Carolina.

Prof Adds Speech to Triathlon Agenda

Dr. Mary Kreis continues to use her own life's story to inspire others while also promoting Cal U.

An associate professor in the Department of Exercise Science and Sport Studies, Kreis delivered a Veterans Day speech on the deck of the battleship USS North Carolina, a World II vessel permanently docked in Wilmington, N.C.

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VIP: Your Gateway to Cal U

Soon everyone in the Cal U community will get the VIP treatment with the introduction of a new student information system.

Known as the Vulcan Information Portal, or VIP, the web portal will become a gateway to everything students and faculty need to know about living and learning at the University.

On Feb. 1, the Financial Aid module will "go live" on VIP. Students will be able to check their financial aid awards, packages and other critical information.

But that's just the beginning of many good things to come through the new portal.

VIP is part of Banner, the world's most widely used administration suite of applications for higher education. Eventually it will replace SIS Web, providing easy access to all student and faculty information, including registration, grades, schedules and more.

"The Vulcan Information Portal will be a one-stop shop," said Becky Nichols, director of applications and academic support for University Technology Services. "Instead of going to different sites to access e-mail or assignments, students and faculty can simply log in to VIP and

find everything they need."

The portal will "recognize" each user, and welcome them by name. Newly admitted students, for example, will be directed to orientation and housing information, among other things.

The University Office of Admissions was the first to use the Vulcan Information Portal. Starting in October, accepted students were able to go to the portal to see the next steps needed to complete the admissions process.

Over the next few months, the new portal will be expanded to include many other services. By early April 2011, students will be able to register for classes through VIP.

Current students and faculty members will be able to access VIP through the University's home page, and log in using their existing user name and password. But Nichols urges students to use caution — and common sense.

"It's important that you never share your user name or password with anyone," she warned. "With so much information at your fingertips on the Vulcan Information Portal, you'll want to protect your privacy at all times."

Audit Went Smoothly, Trustees Told

California University's auditors had good news for the University's Council of Trustees at their final meeting of 2010.

This year's audit went smoothly, the accounting firm ParenteBeard LLC reported. By boosting enrollment, proceeding with construction projects and controlling expenses, the University was able to end the year with an increase in net assets of \$7 million.

"It was as good an audit as we've ever had," said Elizabeth McMahon, of ParenteBeard. "We did not detect any discrepancies, and this clean audit is the highest level of approval we can give you."

The annual audit report is presented to the Trustees each December. While praising Cal U's fiscal management, McMahon urged the Trustees to plan ahead, since it is unlikely that state allocations will be available to replace the federal "economic stimulus" funding that helped to bolster the budget this year.

"For an organization this size to receive such an audit is a remarkable achievement," said Leo Krantz, chairman of the Trustees. "This reflects plenty of hard work from many people, and all of them should be applauded."

In other business:

- Provost Geraldine Jones reported that Cal U's fall headcount of 9,400 was the highest in school history. She also announced re-accreditations for Bachelor of Science programs in athletic training, computer science and electrical engineering technology, and initial accreditation for the Computer Information Systems program.

- To date 19 of 22 (86.4%) Cal U academic programs recognized by PASSHE have attained national accreditation.

- Dr. Lenora Angelone, vice president for Student Affairs, focused on the service work done by students. The newly created Center

for Civic Engagement will help to promote and organize those volunteer efforts. Since its inception this fall, more than 300 freshmen have made a commitment to a total of 2,800 service hours.

- Craig Butzine, interim vice president for Marketing and University Relations, highlighted his office's proactive work building partnerships across campus and the reactive work done in crisis communication this semester. Among the highlights of the semester was the Nov. 11 Cal U Hockey Night at Pittsburgh's CONSOL Energy Center, which drew more than 2,500 Vulcan supporters and created positive opportunities in areas such as athletics, alumni relations, development and public relations.

- Ron Huiatt, vice president for University Development and Alumni Relations, reported that more than 3,000 friends and alumni have attended a variety of on-campus and off-campus events since Sept. 1. The Campaign to Build Character and Careers has reached \$22.4 million, on its way to the \$35 million goal.

- Dr. Charles Mance, vice president for University Technology Services, reported that the Banner project is continuing on schedule, with the admissions module "going live" in October. The financial aid and student information modules are scheduled to be activated next, in February and April, respectively. He also explained that the Help Desk has developed a tiered support model to better support the University community's use of information technology resources.

During his report, President Angelo Armenti, Jr. commented that Cal U continues to thrive.

"Despite the challenges, which are mostly financial, the brightest time ... lies ahead, and wonderful things are going to happen."

The next meeting of the Council of Trustees is scheduled for March 2.



As part of the Trustees' final quarterly meeting of 2010, Cal U's auditors delivered their annual report.

Speech on Prof's Triathlon Agenda

— Continued from page 1

Two days later she competed in the PPD Beach2Battleship Iron Distance Triathlon.

Kreis, a cancer survivor, was asked to participate in both events by sponsor Pharmaceutical Product Development Inc. PPD is a leading global contract research organization with offices in 42 countries and more than 10,500 professionals worldwide.

Kreis was diagnosed with metastatic melanoma in 2004, during her first week at Cal U. She had two surgeries to remove the cancer, both while she was pregnant with her daughter, Viva, who was born healthy in January 2005. The child's name means "live long."

Because of her connection with cancer, Kreis was one of 25 cyclists selected to ride in the 2005 Tour of Hope, a cross-country bike ride with Lance Armstrong that was designed to highlight the need for clinical trials in cancer research.

Kreis was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army's Medical Service Corps while she completed her bachelor's degree. In 2006 she accepted a medical discharge with the rank of major in the U.S. Army Reserve.

PPD "reached out to those of us who participated in Tour of Hope, and both the talk and the race tied in everything about my life," Kreis said.

"It was about motherhood, spreading the message that you can beat cancer, the military, my athletic background — and I even helped to plan the events, which allowed me to use my sport management expertise.

"I never planned on doing a triathlon at 40, though," she added.

Kreis said she is grateful to people who take part in medical research by entering clinical trials that verify the safety and efficacy of new medications and procedures.

"Because people participated in a clinical trial for me, the doctors knew they could operate on me in confidence," she said.

Competing in just her second triathlon — her first was

in 1999 — Kreis completed a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bicycle ride and 26.2-mile run in 11 hours and 31 minutes.

She finished first among all females in the Masters (over 40) and military groups, and she placed sixth overall among all female competitors.

The PPD Beach2Battleship Triathlon has been named one of the top five iron distance triathlons in the world by *Triathlete* magazine. The event began with the swim in the inner-coastal waters near Wilmington, followed by the bicycle race and the marathon run.

To prepare for the contest, Kreis said she trained in two of the three sports each day. Her workouts included a round-trip ride from near her home in North Belle Vernon to Confluence, Pa.

"You rarely go through an actual triathlon in preparing, because that is too much for your body," she said. "You have the same feeling from the triathlon as you do from military experiences — and both of them have made me mentally and physically stronger."

Less grueling than the race was her talk aboard the battleship, where she focused on clinical trials and the military.

Kreis said she began her speech by stating that she is a professor at Cal U.

"With a big smile on my face, I explained why we are California University of Pennsylvania," she said. "People always enjoy that story and want to understand why you are putting two states in one (university's) name."

For the past three years, Kreis has taught solely through Cal U Global Online, whose Internet-based degree programs have been ranked No. 1 in the nation.

"I think online learning is more challenging for students, because most of them are trying to balance so many things in their lives," said Kreis.

One of her online students recently arranged a phone call with her from Japan, where he serves in the military.

"Students know they can reach out to me even though they just know me through a computer," she said. "We can still build relationships that way."

Campus BRIEFS

Stuff a Stocking with SEEK

The gift of learning is an ideal stocking stuffer, so Cal U's Office of Lifelong Learning is offering gift certificates for SEEK and all of its summer programs.

The Summer Enrichment for Kids program will offer two weeklong sessions in 2011 for children entering grades 1-8. Classes will be held June 20-24 and July 18-22.

Coinciding with the first session will be a Robotics Camp and a Graphic Communication and Multimedia Camp for students entering grades 9-12. A Kindergarten Camp for children entering kindergarten will be offered during the second session.

To purchase a gift certificate, call the Office of Lifelong Learning at 724-938-5840.

Legal Seminars Slated

The Institute for Law and Public Policy, based at Cal U's Southpointe Center, offers Continuing Legal Education (CLE) seminars in a variety of locations.

Seminars this month are "Law, Justice and Lawyers in the World of St. Thomas Aquinas" Friday at Gannon University in Erie, Pa.; "Law and Ethical Aspects of Health Care Administration" Saturday at Rosemont College, Rosemont, Pa.; and "Cicero and the Nature of Law" Saturday at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa..

Information is available at www.calu.edu; look for "Information for ... Business & Community" at the top of the homepage, then click on "Institute for Law and Public Policy." Online registration is available. For details, call 724-597-7401 or e-mail Rose Mahouski at mahouski@calu.edu.

CONSOL Energy Continues Support of Cal U

CONSOL Energy Inc. continued its longstanding support of Cal U by presenting a \$15,000 check to the University on Nov. 16.

The funds will be used to purchase new equipment for use by students in the Electrical Engineering Technology (EET) and Industrial Technology programs. A portion of the gift also will support the College of Science and Technology Endowment.

Jeff Hohn, specialist for staffing and recruiting at CONSOL, and recruiter Erica Koshar presented the check to Dr. Leonard Colelli, dean of the Eberly College of Science and Technology.

Also participating in the presentation were Ron Huiatt, vice president for development and alumni relations, and Kristine Doppelheuer, career counselor and employer relations coordinator in the Career Services Office.

With the support of the University's Career Services program, Hohn conducted an information session and Koshar interviewed students for full-time jobs and internships.

CONSOL has hired many Cal U Industrial Technology and EET graduates in the past.

"Cal U's programs lend themselves specifically to what we're looking for, both in our underground operations and our gas operations," Hohn said.

"We find a lot of good students here who are technically sound and adapt well to our training programs. It's been



Taking part in the Nov. 16 check presentation are (from left) Erica Koshar, a recruiter at CONSOL Energy Inc.; Jeff Hohn, specialist for staffing and recruiting at CONSOL; Dr. Len Colelli, dean of the Eberly College of Science and Technology; Ron Huiatt, vice president for University Development and Alumni Relations; and Kristine Doppelheuer, career counselor and employer relations coordinator in the Career Services Office.

very beneficial to both parties."

Cal U students have hands-on experience that prepares them for jobs at CONSOL, Koshar said. Recently, for example, the company hired Cal U students as assistant drilling engineers and underground supervisor trainees.

"We find the Cal tech students to be gritty," she said. "They get right into the dirt and get moving. They are a good fit."

That practical preparation pays off for the company as well as the students.

"CONSOL doesn't have to do a lot of training with our graduates, because they have a theoretical background and a practical background in engineering technology, as opposed to engineering science," Colelli said. "Our students have the right knowledge and skills to hit the ground running."

Last year, CONSOL's generosity

enabled Cal U to upgrade its motor control laboratory to meet requirements for re-accreditation by the Technology Accreditation Commission of ABET, the Accreditation Board for Engineering Technology.

"Our students are playing in a highly competitive career game when they leave here," Colelli said, "and CONSOL's tremendous support helps to prepare them."

Reception Honors Grant Writers

Despite the downturn in the national economy, grants continue to play an important role in helping the University move forward.

A ceremony last month honored faculty and staff who have written grant proposals.

The event recognized everyone who prepared and submitted at least one external grant proposal, administered at least one internally funded project, and/or completed the requirements for the Grant Writers Fellowship.

Cheryl Vogrig, director of the Office of Grants and Contracts, emphasized the impact of grant activity at Cal U. During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, 100 proposals were submitted, totaling \$7.1 million, she said.

Of those, 71 new awards were received, totaling \$4.1 million.

Currently, the office is administering 109 active projects totaling \$5.8 million.

"You are being recognized and commended for the hard work and extra effort that you put forth to seek external grant funding for Cal U," said Vogrig. "Throughout the process, win or lose, we work together as a team toward the Cal U mission — and I feel that I know each of you in a very special way."

Speaking on behalf of the administration was Dr. John Cencich, dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

"I really believe that research solves life's problems," he said. "Whether it's studying the rates of recidivism or bio-assessments of the Youghiogheny River, or robotics, I'm aware of the amazing things you are doing to improve the quality of life in our region, in our commonwealth and beyond."

As a token of the University's appreciation, 68 grant writers, three grant writer professionals and eight grant writer fellows received insulated beverage holders with Cal U leather bands.

Through the Office of the President and the Grants and Contracts Office, grant writer fellows participate in a comprehensive, hands-on enrichment program that covers topics from strategically selecting potential funding sources to



Dr. Taunya Tinsley accepts a gift from Dr. John Cencich during the recent Grant Writers Recognition Ceremony.

writing the critical sections of a competitive grant application.

Assisting Vogrig in the Office of Grants and Contracts are post-award administrator Lewis Honaker and secretary Kim Rabbitt.

"I am very proud of the work undertaken by the Office of Grants and Contracts in helping our professors and staff members in their scholarly pursuits," he said. "This is truly a team effort."

Politics Draws Students to Conferences

A dozen students accompanied Dr. Melanie J. Blumberg, a professor of political science and campus director of the American Democracy Project, when she gave a presentation at the American Association of Political Consultants Academic Outreach Conference in Ohio.

The conference, held Nov. 18-19 in Akron, provided a forum for students, academics and consultants to discuss professional political consulting and public affairs.

They explored career trends, technical expertise and ethical issues, and a mentoring program connected students with professionals.

Blumberg was one of six panelists who discussed "Good Campaigns: Ethical Speaking and Spending."

"Some of the top campaign consultants and political scientists who study campaigns and elections discussed a variety of topics," she said. "The two-day conference provided valuable information and insight."

Blumberg studies American political parties, Congressional elections and mass belief systems. Active in Ohio politics, she has consulted on judicial races.

In addition, Blumberg and her co-authors have published numerous articles on local parties, coordinated campaigns, campaign conduct and civic engagement.

In addition to the conference attendees, seven Cal U students participated in the 12th annual American Democracy Conference, co-sponsored by the University of Virginia and Politico, on Dec. 2 in Washington, D.C.

Cal U students joined journalists, political insiders, elected officials and academics to examine the midterm elections, evaluate the current administration and look ahead to the coming election cycles.

This March, students also are planning to attend the 20th annual American Association of Political Consultants "Pollie" Awards and Conference, also in Washington, D.C. Individuals representing the full spectrum of political advertising are expected to attend.

The trips are sponsored by Cal Campaign Consultants, an interdisciplinary group that gives students the opportunity to design and manage political campaigns both on campus and in the community.

Intramural Sports Booming

Intramural sports have been popular at Cal U for decades, and interest keeps increasing.

In 2009-2010, about 1,750 participants, mostly students, competed in one of the 14 intramural sports on campus. The number of athletes is expected to exceed 2,000 this academic year.

“For a lot of students, intramurals is an extension of their high school athletic careers,” said Tom Hasbrouck '06, '09, assistant director of recreational services. “They weren’t afforded the opportunity to play collegiate varsity athletics, so this is the next best thing, and they approach it that way.”

Among the most popular sports is flag football, which this fall attracted 398 individual competitors — 29 men’s teams and five women’s teams.

Playoffs and championships were contested, and the top Cal U teams enjoyed success at the National Campus Championship Series (NCCS) Regional Flag Football Championships held last month at the University of Maryland.

The men’s team, known as Dynasty, finished second in the 38-team tourney, losing only to the defending national finalist, University of North Carolina-Charlotte, 27-14, in the title game.

Torrin Davis and Charles Baker were named to the all-tourney team, and Dynasty earned a bid to next month’s National Flag Football Championship tournament at Texas A&M, in College Station, Texas.

The women’s team, called Lady Vulcans, reached the quarterfinals before being eliminated by Division I Howard University (Washington, D.C.).

“It’s a testament to the strength and commitment these students have shown,” Hasbrouck said. “They spend many hours out in the cold and rain but have a great time.”

Other intramural sports are volleyball, dodge ball, tennis, ultimate Frisbee, racquetball, pickle ball (paddles and wiffle ball), basketball, softball, water polo, water volleyball, roller hockey, dek hockey, water volleyball and indoor soccer.

Most intramural games are played at Herron Recreation and Fitness Center. Football and softballs teams play at Roadman Park, and hockey players use the courts adjacent to Hamer Hall.

Student participation in intramurals has been spirited for years, but Hasbrouck reminds would-be athletes that faculty and staff are also welcome.

“It’s a great way for faculty and staff to meet students outside the classroom, and it’s a good way to network between departments,” said Hasbrouck. “We encourage their involvement.”

All intramural sports are geared for the moderate to advanced athlete, he added, but no experience is necessary.

A number of staff members competed



Cal U student Mallory Bieringer (above) returns a volley as teammate and fellow student Tony Spicuzza prepares to join the action during an intramural volleyball game in Herron Recreation and Fitness Center.



Tom Hasbrouck (left) has integrated social media and added more activities to significantly increase the number of students participating in intramurals at Cal U.

in flag football this fall, forming a team called Staff Infection. Members included Robert Prah, Chris Nicholls, Pete Ware, Walt Czekaj, Tom Donovan, Keith Skirpan, Jerry Kelly, Justin Harbaugh and Hasbrouck.

“We held our own, and it was all about the fun,” said Prah, who played both quarterback and wide receiver. “This is a nice diversion and builds cohesion across campus. We’re also hoping to play dodge ball and basketball in the future.”

As an undergraduate, Czekaj competed in intramural flag football and softball with his rugby teammates. Last spring the University exhibitions coordinator took part in intramural water polo and softball.

“I think it adds excitement to the work environment,” Czekaj said. “Some of the guys on my team I did not know before, and now we have a good

relationship on the field and in the office, as well. Intramurals is definitely a lot of fun.”

Chuck Bohn '78, director of recreational services, competed in intramurals during his collegiate days. He praised emeritus professor Steve Tselepis '53 and Paul Fazio for running intramurals for years before he took over.

Bohn also credited Hasbrouck, who was hired in fall 2009 when the renovated fitness center re-opened.

“Tom has put a professional stamp on the intramural programs,” Bohn said. “He’s increased the membership using social media. . . . He’s also increased some of the activities, has a nice staff and that’s why the numbers have gone up. It just keeps getting better every year, and we hope it continues.”

Intramural sports are funded by the Student Association Inc.

Crows Make Visit to Campus

The black feathers and bird droppings evident in parking lots and on the Quad were left behind by a large flock of crows that swooped in earlier this month.

Unlike birds that predictably head south for the winter each year, crows migrate “only as far as they have to,” explained Dr. Carol Bocetti, assistant professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Science.

Cold temperatures in early December probably pushed them south from northern Pennsylvania, New York and Canada, she said.

Migrating crows gather in large groups at night, roosting in tall trees or other convenient spots. The mature, widely spaced shade trees on university campuses provide perfect habitat for roosting birds, Bocetti said.

As of mid-December, large numbers of crows were still roosting on the Quad.

Spring Semester Starts Jan. 18

The University has issued a reminder of key dates in the spring semester.

All offices will be closed on Jan. 17 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. In keeping with the late Coretta Scott King’s call for “a day on, rather than a day off” to commemorate her husband, students are planning a Day of Service for that date.

The first day of classes is Jan. 18, and the Spring Faculty Convocation will be held at 11 a.m. Jan. 20 in the Learning Resource Center auditorium in Morgan Hall.

Spring break for faculty and students will be the week of March 7-11.

Honors Convocation will be held April 2 in Hamer Hall auditorium beginning at 2 p.m.

Easter Break for faculty and students will be April 22-24 and Reading Day (no classes) will be April 29.

The Spring 2011 Commencement ceremonies will be May 6-7 in Hamer Hall.

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