

USI Magazine

Spring 2015



知识
 $E=mc^2$

KNOWLEDGE



But the phrase also can be understood as knowledge for life. This is embedded in USI's new Core Curriculum, "Core39." What it takes to be an educated citizen and successful professional is more than what is contained in a single degree field, or even accompanying major or minor fields.

Core39 focuses on "ways of knowing" or how knowledge is acquired in different ways across time and substantive fields. A scientist understands a phenomenon from a different perspective than an artist. Even within closely related fields there can be significant differences in how knowledge is acquired. As an example, for many years I taught courses on Congress and the presidency. It's all political science, right? But, congressional literature tends to be highly quantitative, with mathematical models to predict legislative voting behavior, while presidency literature remains focused on specific cases and is largely biographic. These ways of knowing may be different but, taken together, they help us to develop a richer understanding of our world.

Also contained in the interpretation of knowledge for life is that a graduate develops habits of the mind that lead to an ongoing quest to understand various phenomena, past, present and future. If that quest ends with the last final exam, then the graduate, their family, their community and our nation are the poorer for it.

Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett
President

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Vice President for Government and University Relations
Cynthia Brinker

Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Communications
Kindra Strupp

Director of University Communications
John Farless '98

Director of Alumni and Volunteer Services
Janet Johnson M'05

Editor
C. L. Stambush

Contributing Writers
Wendy Knipe Bredhold '98
John Farless '98
Angie O'Nan '12
C. L. Stambush

Art Direction and Design
Amy Ubelhor

Photography
David Arthur
Elizabeth Courtney Randolph
LaVerne Jones '05

Send editorial information to University Communications. Send alumni information to Alumni and Volunteer Services. Send donor information and address changes to USI Foundation.

Address
University of Southern Indiana
8600 University Boulevard
Evansville, IN 47712

Telephone
USI Magazine 812-465-7005

Email
magazine@usi.edu

Other University phone numbers
Alumni and Volunteer Services 812-464-1924
USI Foundation 812-464-1918
Admission 812-464-1765
Athletics 812-464-1846

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50th Anniversary Celebration



Performance Center

On the Cover
Roots of Knowledge is a digital painting depicting the diverse seeds of learning flourishing into knowledge through the embodiment of USI's Torch of Knowledge.
Artist: Heather (Dodd) Landry '03, Fine Arts major and Art History minor.

We know our alumni are doing great things, and we want to hear about it. We're eager to share your stories in upcoming issues of *USI Magazine*. The next issue of the magazine celebrates USI's 50th anniversary. The issue will include a timeline of significant moments in the University's history, as well as features looking at both our history and future. If you have a story to share or a topic to suggest, we're all ears. Contact us at magazine@usi.edu.

Thanks,
C. L. Stambush
Editor



NEW STATE OF

EDUCATION

Preparing teachers for an education system in crisis

By John Farless '98

It's no secret that new teachers in Indiana will begin their careers under a cloud of turmoil and debate that stretches from the classroom to the Department of Education (DOE) to the Indiana General Assembly. Buzzwords like core curriculum standards, standardized testing, performance metrics and school funding formulas overshadow education news. Battles rage from gridlock between DOE Superintendent Glenda Ritz and Indiana Governor Mike Pence, to local battles for a piece of the funding pie.

Teachers are being asked to do more with less while facing performance expectations based on data-driven education and standardized test results—metrics that garner criticism and are challenged at local, state and national levels. Meanwhile, the dropout rate for teachers in Indiana as well as across the country continues to climb. A new report from the Alliance for Excellent Education shows that roughly half a million U.S. teachers move from high-poverty schools or leave the profession annually—that equates to 20 percent compared to 9 percent in 2009.

Despite this grim atmosphere, the outlook of administrators, professors and students in USI's Teacher Education Program is one of optimism and forward thinking. Initiatives such as early and fully-immersed classroom placement, enhanced data and classroom management skills, and co-teaching experiences prepare would-be teachers for a variety of challenges, and gives them resources and skills necessary to adapt to the constantly changing education landscape.

Unlike a few years ago, education students in USI's Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education now take courses on classroom management and instructional data analysis. The changes were designed to meet the rigorous demands placed on today's teachers with regard to standardized testing and performance metrics. "We've had to make sure that we're teaching the content they will need in the classroom," says Dr. Gina Berridge, associate professor of education at USI. "That's what we're all really concerned about. We're looking at the standards too, and saying, 'If this is what we're driven by, this is what my students need to know.' It doesn't matter what they are, the standards are what drive instruction—not a textbook, not anything else... and they may change. They changed again this year."

Berridge is quick to point out, however, that changes are not driven by state standards only. "We're also listening to the community and to our students," she says. Both current students and recent graduates are the ones who voiced a need for more direction when it comes to managing the classroom—from the basics of setting up a classroom to navigating behavioral issues and the special needs of students. The Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation (EVSC) is working directly with USI professors and students to provide real-time data on student achievement, and to teach students how to read and use that data to garner desired results in the classroom.



Joyce Rietman, director of advanced clinical experiences and co-teaching at USI, has a hunch that new standards, evaluations, testing and other changes in education have taken a toll on the teaching ranks. “Locally, we’ve seen more retirements in the last year or two,” she says. “We’ve had schools contact us mid-year looking to replace teachers who have resigned or retired.”

Whether teachers are taking early retirements, don’t want to adapt to the changing landscape or don’t feel they can live up to the expectations, the end result is more teachers being hired in their first year out of college. “In the past, those same students may have taken sub positions, or had to wait for openings,” Rietman says.

Jaclyn Ennis, a senior from Bloomington, Indiana, who is student teaching at Tekoppel School in Evansville, felt the pressure of ISTEP testing this spring. “It’s the teachers who take the blow for that,” she says. She sees both good and bad in standardized testing, but is frustrated by the current model. “There are so many factors when it comes to testing. There are students who are bad testers. A student could have a bad morning. Even food and environment can affect how they test that day. It’s too much pressure to put on one test.” She also sees teachers today teaching for the test, rather than curriculum they’d like to be using. “For me, this is just how it’s going to be from here on out. But, I can see how the veterans are feeling more stress.”

“I think to a certain extent you need to test, but we’re taking it too far,” says Jennifer Jones, a senior from Richland, Indiana. “There are so many tests you have to take that it’s hard to get through all the material. They tell us not to teach to the test, but there are some days you’re just going to have to, to get through the material.”



Olivia Fritch, a senior student teaching this fall, is not a proponent of standardized testing, but neither is she daunted by the prospect of test-related evaluations. “If you’re doing your job, and you’re doing your best, then you don’t have to worry about it,” she says. With regard to the curriculum, she adds, a lot comes down to imagination and how much time you put in. “If you want to teach outside the box, you just have to be creative.”

Learning by Doing

USI has consistently done well at placing its students in the classroom early. Teresa Branson ’73, instructor in teaching, says USI has been ahead of the curve since she was a student at then-ISUE. She recalls receiving classroom experience as early as her sophomore year. When she transferred to another university to meet the needs of her special education emphasis, she learned that some of her peers hadn’t experienced classroom instruction, and most wouldn’t until their junior or senior year. That’s not ideal, she says. “The more you can get students in the classroom, the more comfortable they’ll be.”

“In Teacher Education, our clinically-based approach gives teacher candidates the opportunity to integrate theory into practice, to develop and test classroom management and pedagogical skills, to hone the use of evidence-based decision making, and to understand and integrate the standards of the professional community,” says Bonnie Beach, interim chair and professor of Teacher Education. “We practice ‘learning by doing.’”

Once students pass the Core Academic Skills Assessment (CASA) exam their freshman year they can begin class assignments in local

schools and, if following a four-year plan, spend at least some time in a classroom each semester. “We have a standardized and intentional field experience that mimics what student teaching will be like,” says Rietman. The program is progressive, beginning with one-on-one tutoring in after school programs, and leading up to longer practicums and opportunities tied to students’ areas of specialization. Placement culminates with a semester-long student teaching experience the semester before graduation.

Over the last several years, relationships with partner schools have been strengthened through a formal memorandum of understanding that lays out expectations for both sides. These arrangements are a departure from years past when Rietman and others worked directly with individual teachers and had no school-level coordination.

Jones won’t student teach until fall 2016; however, she’s already in the classroom part of her day and learning how to give ISTEP tests. “USI is giving us materials to learn how to give those tests now, so that we’re able to do it successfully in the classroom,” she says.

This spring, Fritch is completing a third-grade practicum at Joshua Academy in Evansville, as well as having had classroom experience at three other schools with socio-economic profiles ranging from inner city to upper middle class. “You see the difference in how the kids behave, and that helps to prepare you,” she says. The diversity helped her realize the type of teaching she wants to do, but also prepared her for any opportunity that presents itself.

Partnering with Mentors

Student teaching at USI employs the co-teaching model, where students are placed with local teachers and work alongside them in the classroom. The teacher serves as a guide and mentor throughout the experience. They plan together, instruct together, do assessments together; they work as a team.

USI provides training in the co-teaching model free-of-charge and encourages all teachers who will host a student teacher to go through the training. To date, the University has trained more than 320 area teachers. Likewise, students are trained in the model. As part of that training, Rietman says students are seeing more emphasis on data, testing and using data to drive instruction. “We have to lead students through a process we call ‘unpacking the standards.’”

In order to place as many as 75 students per semester in student teaching experiences, Rietman coordinates with a network of partner schools, most within the EVSC but also extending into surrounding counties.

The co-teaching model was piloted, and then fully implemented, at USI between 2005 and 2009 as a direct response to a changing climate in schools. Teachers face new expectations and state-mandated evaluations that make turning a classroom over to a student teacher a risk and liability. “When I student taught, we gave a test, we recorded scores and we went on to our next lesson,” Rietman says. “Now it’s become critical that teachers remain connected to their classrooms because the state has mandated teacher evaluations, and part of that

is how their students perform on standardized testing.”

The long-term outcome has been positive for both students and the schools. It allows the classroom teacher to feel more secure and increases the teacher-to-student ratio. Students, in turn, gain confidence and have a less stressful experience. “We believe our students are making a difference in achievement,” Rietman says. “We’ve had school administrators say they see overall scores improving in classrooms where USI students have worked with them.”



Elevating Education

In summer 2014, Dr. Scott Gordon, dean of USI’s Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education, invited to campus a cohort of educators, including academics, area teachers, principals, superintendents and

others, for what was dubbed the “Dream Session.” It was an opportunity for players across the educational spectrum to identify challenges and brainstorm creative responses.

During the “Dream Session,” one of the things Dr. David Smith, superintendent of the EVSC, talked about was getting university students and instructors into transition schools to see if the added energy and manpower—that schools can’t afford to hire—might make a difference in performance. Another idea that surfaced was implementing full-year student teaching. The two ideas meshed, and what has emerged is a pilot program, beginning fall 2015, that will put USI students in full-year student teaching positions in EVSC transition schools.


Fifteen USI students will begin the program at two EVSC schools



performance metrics they have to adhere to, but they're optimistic about the future and happy to be teaching. They all say USI prepared them well, but also admit there were unknowns, like understanding what goes into setting up a classroom for the first time, or how to manage unruly students. They're happy to hear that many of those unknowns are being addressed at USI, in programs such as the full-year student teaching pilot.

Their advice to others: Pay attention in class; seek out diverse experiences; read—a lot—and outside of required reading; hang onto textbooks, they'll come in handy later; and, network—don't underestimate the importance of building relationships and sharing knowledge while still in school.

Nationally and statewide, the number of students entering the teaching profession is down. That's the case at USI as well, where program enrollment peaked a few years ago. But Rietman says she's seen numbers remain fairly steady over the last several semesters. She and others at USI are hopeful that the changes they're putting in place now, and the readily-available jobs in the field, will provide a boost for the program going forward.

Challenges facing education in Indiana, and around the country, aren't going away soon. The question is how to respond. USI has chosen to adapt—to meet problems with solutions that elevate education for all, and to encourage more young women and men to think about becoming teachers. 

in August. "These students will essentially become part of the faculty," says Branson, who was one of two faculty instrumental in creating and implementing the new program. "They'll be fully immersed in the school culture."

Branson is aware of other programs that have explored year-long student teaching, but not at the level USI is proposing. "This is new and innovative," she says. Students enter the schools as a cohort and work together to support each other through the experience. She's eager to see the results of the two-year pilot. "If this looks like we think it's going to, and becomes what we think it will, we are looking at the possibility of implementing full-year student teaching for all students."

However, putting 75 students in full-year teaching doesn't come without challenges, including finding placements and working around student schedules, especially those who work to put themselves through college. "We may hit some stumbling blocks along the way, but I see this as a win-win for everyone," Branson says. "It's such a unique opportunity for our students." She foresees opportunity for many students to transition from student teaching into full-time teaching roles after graduation.

The Final Grade

Sitting around a small table, in chairs two sizes too small, three 2014 USI alums at Tekoppel Elementary School in Evansville talk about their first year. Taylor Espenlaub, Wesley Scherzinger and Kacie Spaetti teach students ranging from kindergarten to fourth grade. They're frustrated and encumbered by some of the standardized testing and



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Pimp My Pedagogy

By Angie O’Nan ’12

There’s a creative movement taking shape among USI’s faculty; they’re finding imaginative means through which to deepen student knowledge. From purifying water to swimming with sharks, USI’s professors are applying the University’s vision and “*shaping the future through learning and innovation.*”



1.



2.



3.



4.

Art: Heather Landry



5.

Photo: Jenna Citrus



6.



7.



8.

1. Living Literature

Dr. Amy Montz, assistant professor of English, wants to make literature come alive for her students, so in her multi-media project for her Jane Austen class, that’s exactly what happens. Rather than merely reading *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility*, Montz transports students back in time to the era of Austen’s novels by having them needlepoint, prepare 200-year-old recipes and build model ships. “This interdisciplinary approach teaches students that literature is a living, breathing object, written by living, breathing people,” Montz said.

2. Assessing the Undead

In a world overrun by zombies, it’s up to Dr. Richard Bennett’s biology students to save humanity. At least that’s the story-world the assistant professor of biology has designed for his basic biology course. Students follow the efforts of two characters working for the International Network to Eliminate Zombies. At the beginning of each semester, Bennett provides a brief prologue providing students with the zombie backstory. As the course progresses, students gain new elements of the story. “Some of the concepts we teach in biology can be a little daunting,” Bennett said. “Instead of simply answering questions about what a Biuret assay is used for, students are given assay results performed on fluids collected from zombies, and asked to answer questions about the results.”

3. The Power of Physics

How often do students get to bust a cinder block on their professor’s head? Every semester, if you’re in Dr. Kent Scheller’s physics class. Demonstrating the concept of mass, Scheller, associate professor of physics, places a 30-pound cinder block on his head and asks a student to break the block by driving a nail through it. The demonstration allows students to see and feel the concept, rather than simply read about it. As for Scheller, he gets a sense of relief when students don’t miss the block.

4. Shark Week

The classroom goes under the sea when Dr. Brent Summers, associate professor of biology, ships his marine biology class to Belize and the Caribbean, where they spend a week snorkeling among nurse sharks, moray eels and sea turtles. Summers believes that his students’ ecological immersion not only provides a lifelong memory, but deepens their knowledge more than text books, lectures or films. “I can describe in detail how a green sea turtle feeds in the wild, but until the students actually swim with and directly observe the feeding behavior, they really cannot know the full extent of the behavior,” he said. The experience builds students’ knowledge and confidence. After all, it takes courage to snorkel at night alongside sharks and eels with only an underwater flashlight. A bonus is that students leave with a deeper understanding of the cultures of Belize and the Caribbean.

5. Housing Art

Rarely has a house served as an art installation for a professional artist — let alone students — but Dr. Hilary Braysmith, associate professor of art history, wanted students to have that opportunity. They transformed a structurally sound, but soon to-be-demolished house into an “art house” infused with bold geometric illusions, live models that “vanished” into striped walls and repurposed wooden pallets that emulated Vincent van Gogh’s “The Starry Night.” The project served to bring a “living work of art” into the community, Braysmith said. “The fun part for me and the students was imagining the possibilities.”

6. Engaging Avatars

Using a program called GoAnimate, Heather Schmuck, clinical assistant professor of radiologic and imaging sciences, teaches her students the art of patient care by having them design avatars. Partnering entry-level students with upper-level students, the duos create short videos featuring avatars to increase confidence when communicating with patients. “The seasoned students challenge new students by creating a dynamic character and clinical history that prods the new students to ask questions, helping them practice their communication skills,” Schmuck said.

7. Engineering Clean Water

Dr. Jason Hill, assistant professor of engineering, noticed his environmental engineering students were more excited in lectures than labs, so he upended things by tossing out the traditional lab experiments and replacing them with real-life, problem-based issues. “I challenged students to design a system that made Ohio River water drinkable,” he said. Teams collected river water and created competing treatment systems to produce the purest water. The approach reinforces lecture material while increasing students’ enthusiasm in the labs.

8. Budgeting Battles

Balancing the national budget isn’t fun unless you’re a student in Dr. Nicholas LaRowe’s political science class, where the assistant professor has found a way to make the task entertaining. “Budgeting doesn’t draw the immediate interest or attention as, say, gun policy or same-sex marriage, yet it’s a quintessential example of what politics is,” he said. Role-playing Congress, students barter, haggle and cajole to find a way to fit their programs into the national budget. “This gives them an appreciation that limited resources means tough choices and tradeoffs, and an understanding for the messy, give-and-take nature of legislating.”



AN AMERICAN STORY

By C. L. Stambush

>Last summer and continuing this spring, a rash of questionable killings involving police and African-American males has swept across the country, starting with the high-profile deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York, and Walter Scott in North Charleston, South Carolina, culminating with riots and sit-ins. People were angry and frustrated. They still are.

Watching these events unfold in the media delivered a grim message and has heightened awareness to the plight of this particular race and gender. While it's impossible to know what life is like for every black male, there is a particular group of young African-American males at USI who can help shed light on the subject. These students are part of a group called Priority 1, which was created to equip USI's African-American male population with the skills and knowledge necessary to empower them to reach their goals.

The mentoring program, initiated last fall by USI's Multicultural Center (MCC), challenges students to discover their personal goals by engaging them in discussions concerning current events, peer literacy and strategies that enable them to increase their odds of success.

The group's members – representing various socio-economic spectrums in American culture – are dedicated to investing in the work required to reach their goals by defining their personal brand. Attaining those goals is realized through personal and academic development, social skills, presentation skills, community service, attending events, peer mentoring, resume building and strengthening, and holding each other accountable to the goals they set.

Dressed in crisp suits, pastel dress shirts and ties – because “when you take yourself seriously, so will others” – five of the six Priority 1 members gathered in USI's MCC one Friday afternoon for a conversation on race in America, and spoke candidly about their experiences as well as perceptions, the police, education and the future.

What is it like to be an African-American male in America today?

Carlos Clay: That's a good question. It can be challenging sometimes because of our history and what we've been through. I don't feel we are always looked upon in the best manner. The negativity against African-Americans as a whole is something we are continuing to push through, to overcome. That starts right here with us students. I'm hoping my USI education is preparing me for what's coming in the future.

Brandon Barton: There are everyday challenges for everyone, but being an African-American it can feel as if people are judging you to see what you'll do next. Constantly thinking you are going to do

something wrong, but we are in college to defeat those stereotypes and get an education. To grow and become successful men—making and taking care of business, negating those stereotypes from society.

Churon Covington: I don't feel strangers should look at me and see me as intimidating and scary. When I'm looking out, I feel strong and confident. It's a strong thing to be.

Delvin Pennington: Being African-American in America, the word 'overcome' comes to mind, but also 'barrier.' On a micro-scale, in the Midwest, it's kind of rough because of Indiana's KKK roots.

Zachary Ferguson: I definitely love the skin I'm in, but being black is a challenge at times. It's tiring at times. I'm a criminal justice major and I'm scared of the police. You never know what's going to happen. They can shoot you and the law is on their side. Not all cops are bad; I know that.

What have been your experiences with the police?

Covington: I feel it's the same everywhere. I get harassed plenty. I get pulled over. I just don't choose to dwell on those things as much as other people. I feel if that's all I looked for, then that's what I would bring toward myself. Other than that, I just try to stay out of the way and do what I'm supposed to do.

Clay: Once, I got pulled over for going 15 in a 10-mile-per-hour zone. We'd just left a party and the car smelled like cologne. [The police] called the canine unit and we had to stand outside in the cold for 30 minutes with no coats. He had the dog sniff the car a couple of times, then released us.

Ferguson: That's normal. [My brother, cousin and I] got pulled over three times in an hour one night by three different cops. That kind of stuff, you don't even tell people about because that's normal to everybody, I feel. Each time I get pulled over I'm thinking 'This could be the one. This guy could be having a bad day...oh man.

Barton: One night I left Walmart with a cop following me home. At my house, he wanted to know where I was going. I said, 'Here. My house.' He said, 'Okay. You looked suspicious.' As African-Americans we have to abide by a different set of rules when dealing with the police. I try to make sure my interior light is on so they can see my hands. If they don't see your hands, it could be your life.

Pennington: I try not to give them a reason to mess with me. I got pulled over once and kept my hands in my lap. I ran a stop sign; I admit that. The police told me 'If I was a rookie, I might have killed you.' He was letting me know, keep your hands in plain sight.

Ferguson: Everybody gets nervous but it shouldn't feel like that

when the police get behind you, if you aren't doing anything wrong. I saw this video once. A white dude was pulled over and he jumped out furious, yelling at the cop. I thought, 'If he'd been black he'd have been shot.'

What challenges do African-American's face, and what solutions do you offer?

Clay: At Priority 1 we talk about specific challenges. ...black folks being stuck in a matrix. Everyone else out there working and we're stuck at home. Everybody is faced with challenges every single day, so I don't want to single out African-Americans in general because we all face different types of challenges every day, but we are stereotyped a lot. But, these stereotypes don't fit us all. That's what we [in Priority 1] are working on to stand against. One of the challenges is seeing us in business attire. You think of African-American men you think of their pants sagging or some say ghetto, but the men at this table don't want that. We don't want to be characterized as that. We want to be seen as fully, potential, grown men who can handle business. That's why we are here.

Covington: I try to be genuine in my moves and make sure I don't send the wrong impressions. I just mind my own business and go about my day doing what I've got to do.

Ferguson: When I'm in the neighborhood I grew up in – Lincoln/Bosse area – if I see trash on the ground I pick it up. Some might say, 'He's not from around here, but he cares about our community more than we do, so maybe I should care.' You never know who's going to pick up on your actions.

Barton: I'd like to see the media stop portraying the majority of blacks as dangerous. We need more positive role models—people uplifting black youth. That would make a positive impact on our youth because now, they're going crazy for no reason. It makes no sense. Just killing for no reason. Just to get a name. Just to become famous. We need people telling them education is the right way to go, not selling drugs. Work hard and get an education. You'll get more money and you'll keep your freedom.



Carlos Clay
21 years old
Kinesiology major
Anderson, Indiana

- Full-time student
- Studied abroad in Ghana
- Green Bay Packers' fan



Brandon Barton
21 years old
Sports Management major
Evansville, Indiana

- Full-time student
- Coaches his little sister's basketball team



Churon Covington
21 years old
Biology major
Evansville, Indiana

- Full-time student
- Full-time third-shift factory worker
- Speaks Japanese
- Likes to travel and fish



Delvin Pennington
23 years old
Radio/TV major
Hammond, Indiana

- Full-time student
- Plans to enter the entertainment industry



Zachary Ferguson
23 years old
Criminal Justice major
Evansville, Indiana

- Full-time student
- Full-time third-shift factory worker, plus a part-time job
- Founded a motivational t-shirt company and Kutz 4 the Kids



(Left to right) Priority 1 members Zachary Ferguson, Churon Covington, James Coleman (not present for the roundtable conversation), Delvin Pennington, Carlos Clay and Brandon Barton.

I can see things from a grown man's perspective instead of a young man's perspective. Priority 1 has helped me prepare me as an African-American male in society...dressing the part, wearing business attire and acting professional.

Pennington: I'm big on not letting people down. I don't want to ever let anybody down.

Ferguson: These guys truly want to see each other succeed. It's a brotherhood. Priority 1 has changed the way I behave when I'm out and about. We are representing something much more than ourselves. I have friends at Western Kentucky University who, because of what we are doing, such as Kutz 4 the Kids, are creating Black Men of Western [group]. It's a stepping-stone, but I feel Priority 1 is definitely setting the tone.

Clay: Growing up in predominately white schools, we weren't taught about African-American history beyond the baseline of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcom X. We didn't hear about Marcus Garvey or W.E.B. Dubois. At Priority 1, we get in-depth in African-American history and culture, and the problems that pertain to us. It makes me think about what my race is and the potential we have.


Final thoughts?

Clay: I feel if we come together as one, we can overcome as one. [Changing attitudes] starts at a young age, at home. If we can take care of that early on we will see progress. We'll see people coming together. It may be hard for some African-Americans to show some respect, but respect goes a long way. In any race. I feel that if you can show respect to your elders and peers, it can take you a long way. We are the future. It starts with students getting together, networking and shaking hands with each other.

Pennington: It probably won't be for the next 50 years, but it will get better.

Covington: Racism will end when everybody feels it is time for a change. When blacks stop being stereotypes and other people stop expecting that all blacks are stereotypes. When everybody feels they can accept other people, that's when it will change. Until then, there will always be people who don't like you because you are not them.

Barton: We are getting there, but we are not there yet. We still have a lot of work to do, but I feel we can do it. Failure is not an option.

Racism is not an African-American problem; it's an American problem. The turmoil currently roiling across the United States is alarming, but the future is hopeful as long as USI continues to provide students support and education in a manner that delivers thoughtful individuals into the world. The above discussion was not intended to bring a conclusion to the subject, but rather start a conversation—one that hopefully will arrive at enlightenment and greater understanding. 

What does earning a college education mean to you?

Clay: It means a lot and is a very humble experience. Being here, I get to establish new relationships by talking to new people. It's helped me develop as a person, through the people I've met and mentors I've had at USI. I've had the chance to shake hands with a lot of administrators and build a network, making me more comfortable [with doing that]. But it's an ongoing process, and we are still developing ourselves. We are not perfect, but I feel as if we are disciplined enough, and have the skills to present ourselves in a good way.

Pennington: We are in a time when not going to college – especially on Instagram – is glorified. There's a false portrayal that you can make it without college. I wish [African-Americans] would see college as something to take advantage of. I've got an 11-year-old nephew. I'm the only positive role model in his life. In talking to him I saw I needed to do better, because he was acting the way I did at his age. I feel if I can change him then I'm somewhat successful.

Ferguson: I'm happy to be back in college. I came to USI in 2010-11, but I didn't really see the importance of an education then. I was being a knucklehead, and now that I'm paying my way through school I'm big on networking. I've met great friends. The way I grew up, you had to look out for yourself. I used to go to sleep starving. You only know

what you are exposed to. If you know better you do better. Growing up, nobody [in my family] knew better. I want more from life. I've been at Berry [Plastics] almost three years, and I don't want to work in the factory all my life. It's allowing me to pay for school, so I do appreciate that. And, I don't mind paying to go to school. It's worth every penny. I went from sleeping in my car to having my picture taken with the mayor. So I've grown into this character of being genuine. I've learned to respect others and look out for others. Now, I'm starting to see it come back to me.

Barton: Opportunities in the future...by receiving an education. It gives you options for different professions and ways to make money in the future. Being African-American and American, you already have one strike against you, so you have to find ways to further yourself and elevate your persona.

Covington: Most in my family are not people who would go to college. Had I not come, most likely I would have been exposed to a darker path. I feel like I'm making the best of a bad situation. So, college to me is a valued experience; being able to talk to people on both sides of the fence, those who have and haven't graduated. Listening to the person who has just graduated explain ways to expand your horizon and opportunities as to what you can do. All my professors tell me life is a competitive environment, so put yourself forward.

What has being a part of Priority 1 done for you?

Clay: It's gotten me into gear as far as presenting myself to the public. I love the idea of being a business professional on Fridays, when we meet. I don't like people perceiving me in any bad or negative way because that's not my character. Doing the right thing. Being a leader. In college, I feel I've developed my communication skills and leadership skills. These are necessities in this world. Being presentable. Being gentlemanly. People pick up on that. People talk. After a while, hopefully, they'll say, 'He's doing the right thing. He's a good man.' I hope people pick up on this and start following some of the rules we are setting. A little here, a little there, it eventually adds up. If you apply yourself day in and day out, people are going to see what you are truly about.

Ferguson: I try to dress up more because of the stereotypes of black men. People say, 'They sag; they thugs; they this; they that.' Three of us were at the mall in our dress clothes and people were shocked. Somebody asked if we were coming from church. Because we're black and wearing suits we have to be coming from church? Why couldn't we have come from a meeting?

Barton: Treat people with respect. Be honest. Some things I'm doing...college is definitely number one...I'm also involved with the Black Student Union. I feel it's all helped me mature in a way that

Knowledge gained in the classroom *and* on the field

By Wendy Bredhold '98



USI softball star Sara Loete '11 had great role models in the classroom at USI, but her experience on the playing field was equally influential in shaping the future high school teacher.

Loete started playing the game competitively when she was 6 years old in her hometown of Pekin, Illinois, and played until 2014. While a USI sophomore, she was twice named an All-American, and coaches nationwide chose her as the best designated hitter in the country.

Five days after graduating from USI with dual bachelor's degrees in history and social science teaching with a minor in sociology, she was offered a job at Harrison High School in Evansville. While teaching, she played for an amateur women's softball team out of Peoria called The Rage and earned a master's degree in gifted and talented education from Arkansas State University.

Now, in addition to teaching World History, Psychology and Freshman English at Harrison High School, she coaches the school's softball and volleyball teams (as well as the speech team). "I tell the girls I coach that I've been playing longer than they've been alive," she said.

Loete often laughs and has a lot of energy. That positive spirit is surely native, but it was nurtured by lessons she learned as a USI student athlete, student worker and intern in the University's Athletic Communications Office—lessons that have carried over into her own teaching and coaching.

In USI's Athletic Department, Loete learned that the student comes first. "As a Division II school, it is stressed upon you at USI that you are a student first, and you have to have that balance between sports and study," she said. "I learned to take academics seriously, and I teach the same thing to my students."

She asks students to apply the same discipline to academics that they do to their athletic training. "You can't be successful as an athlete unless you are striving to be what you want to be every day. You have to practice. You have to work out," she said. "As a student, you also have to be an advocate for yourself. You have to do your work and speak to your teachers."

By Loete's definition, being an advocate for yourself means treating yourself and others with respect. That's something she learned from her coaches and teachers, and stresses to her own student athletes. "That respect factor is very important to leadership skills. If you develop a relationship with your teachers, they will want to work with you and you will be more successful."

Developing those relationships means taking advantage of opportunities offered while in school. "You only have four years. I am no longer a softball player, but I took advantage of the opportunities I had, and because of that, I don't have any regrets."

Loete's strong belief in developing leadership skills is the reason she mentors a student leadership group called Link Leaders. Most, but not all, of the Link Leaders are student athletes. "You don't become a


good player without being able to lead your team. I played with some great leaders, and I am able to take that into class and use that to lead 35 teenagers. I am able to use techniques I learned from coaches and teammates to teach my athletes how to lead a classroom, a team and a school."

At the same time, Loete said, there is knowledge to be gained – and applied – from playing as part of a team. "On the softball field, no one person can win a game for you. It truly is a team effort. Everybody has to work together. Similarly, if one person is being disruptive in class, it throws off the whole classroom."

When Loete was a student at USI, she often heard the mantra: *You play for the name on the front, not the number on the back.* "That



means you play for your school and represent your school," she said. "Today, as a coach, I am not just representing myself, my family and my team, but also my school and my community."

Though she graduated four years ago, Loete has stayed involved with Athletics and Athletic Communications, serving on the statistics crews for the University's volleyball, basketball and softball teams. "Even though I graduated, I still go back and work for USI and try to help out as much as possible. I think it's important for alumni to give back to their school." 



"There's so much I learned on the softball field that helps me in the classroom."

Sara Loete

USI's distinction recognized by Carnegie Foundation

USI has once again been selected by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as one of 240 U.S. colleges and universities to receive its 2015 Community Engagement Classification. USI first received this classification in 2008 and has now been successfully re-classified in 2015. Additionally, 121 institutions earned the classification during the 2010 selection process, bringing the total to 361 campuses nationwide.

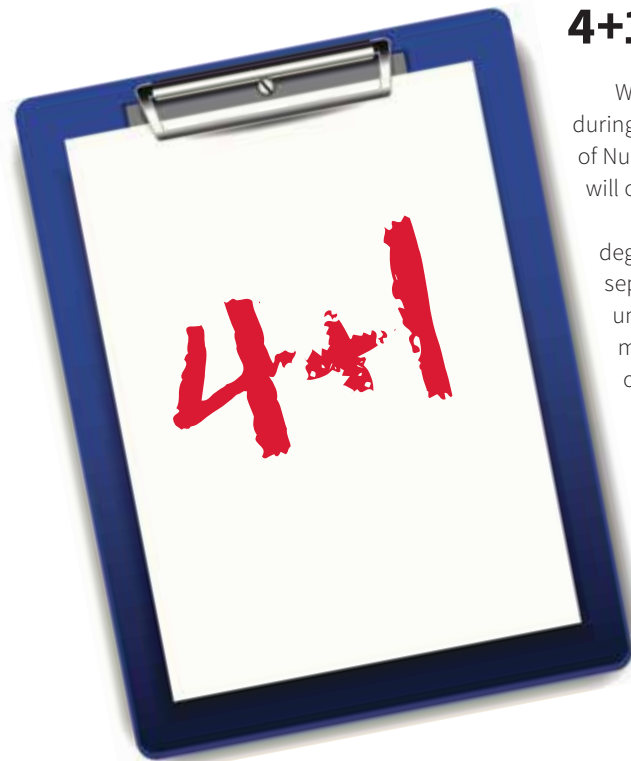
Colleges and universities with an institutional focus on community engagement were invited to apply for the classification as part of an extensive restructuring of The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Unlike the Foundation's other classifications that rely on national data, this is an "elective" classification—institutions participated voluntarily by submitting required materials describing the nature and extent of their engagement with the community, local or beyond. This approach enabled the Carnegie Foundation to address elements of institutional mission and distinctiveness that are not represented in the national data on colleges and universities.

In its notice to the University of re-classification, the Carnegie Foundation said USI "documented excellent alignment

among campus mission, culture, leadership, resources and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement, and responded to the classification framework with both descriptions and examples of exemplary institutionalized practices of community engagement."

"This is the first time that there has been a re-classification process," said Amy Driscoll, consulting scholar for the Community Engagement Classification, "and we are seeing renewed institutional commitment, advanced curricular and assessment practices and deeper community partnerships, all sustained through changes in campus leadership, and within the context of a devastating economic recession."

The Foundation, through the work of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, developed the first typology of American colleges and universities in 1970 as a research tool to describe and represent the diversity of U.S. higher education. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (now housed at Indiana University Bloomington's Center for Postsecondary Research) continues to be used for a wide range of purposes by academic researchers, institutional personnel, policymakers and others.



4+1=CAREER GROWTH

With demand for health service managers projected to grow 23 percent during the next decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the College of Nursing and Health Professions' Master of Health Administration (MHA) program will offer an accelerated degree option called MHA 4 + 1.

The option allows students to earn a graduate degree alongside a bachelor's degree in a shorter period of time than it would require to pursue each degree separately. It's less costly for students while maintaining continuity within the same university. For example, an undergraduate pre-med student could delay entry into medical school for a year and earn an MHA degree during the interim to further his or her knowledge of the healthcare system.

Within the new curriculum, students will begin the MHA 4 + 1 option in the fall semester of their senior years, along with their undergraduate studies. "They will immediately be immersed into a health practice environment, in concert with their MHA courses," said Dr. Kevin Valadares, chair of the MHA program.

"While the MHA program fully intends to continue to grow its current online model which focuses on a non-traditional working student cohort, we also see great benefit in expanding in a new direction," Valadares said. "The benefits of the MHA 4 + 1 option are numerous and will allow bright, driven USI undergraduate students from any discipline the opportunity to earn both a bachelor's degree and the MHA degree in five years."

New VP focuses on recruitment and retention



Responding to recent trends in higher education, increased regional competition and a need for a more focused approach to recruitment and retention strategies, USI has created a new vice president position within the University's administration.

As vice president for enrollment management, Andrew Wright provides strategic leadership and professional development for Admission, Student Financial Assistance, the Registrar and

University Division, and oversees departmental budgets and resource allocation for programs and services. He also leads an Enrollment Management Council, which includes representatives of units from across campus.

"Enrollment management is an integrated approach to the recruitment and retention of students," said President Linda L. M. Bennett. "Integration of functions requires experience across a range of fields as well as skillful leadership. We've found those traits in Andrew Wright."

Prior to joining USI, Wright served as assistant vice president of Enrollment Services and director of Admissions at Missouri State University (MSU). Before MSU, he worked in the Eastern Michigan University (EMU) Office of Admissions, as an admissions officer/recruiter, and later became assistant director of Admissions and associate director of Admissions. He also spent time working in EMU's Residence Life as an area complex director and at the University of Akron as a hall director.

Wright received a bachelor's degree in business administration from Central Michigan University in 1992, with a major in general business and a concentration in international business. He also earned an MBA in international business from the University of Akron in 1995.

USI is going all out to celebrate its 50 years of success as an institution of educational excellence. The main event will be our signature Party of the Decades, held September 19. Basketball courts in the Physical Activities Center (PAC) will be transformed into a dining and dancing extravaganza, in which you will find yourself enveloped in moving memories of USI's history. It's an event to come together and share memories and life achievements. It's more than a trip down memory lane, however. This formal event (cocktail attire) will offer plenty of high-spirited dancing as the Atlanta Allstars rock the PAC with lively beats from classic rock bands such as The Eagles and the Rolling Stones to the hip Motown sounds of Stevie Wonder and Aretha Franklin.

While the Party of the Decades is USI's signature event, festivities run year-long, including a first-ever party on the quad in June. Come back to USI's beautiful campus for this alumni event and enjoy music by the Duke Boys, a pig roast and a cash bar with selections from the local Carson's Brewery and Tin Man.

Other happenings during 50th Anniversary Celebration week (September 14-20) are the Varsity Club Steak Fry 'n Auction, alumni reunions, golf outings, art exhibits, special lectures and, of course, the Founders Day ceremony on September 15. We can't wait to see you there!

For more information and to reserve your seat at the table of all these events, visit USI.edu/50 or call 812-465-7050.

New networking opportunity for business owners

USI's Alumni Association has created an online directory to help alumni market their businesses. The new USI Alumni Business Directory promotes alumni products and services, providing space for alumni to network and do business

with over 36,000 USI alumni worldwide. Take pride in patronizing businesses owned and operated by fellow alumni by including your business information in the directory. To participate, visit USI.edu/alumni-directory.

Theatre lands center stage with opening of Performance Center

From acting, costume and makeup to set design, lighting and sound, the University of Southern Indiana offers an experience in the theatre arts that few undergraduate programs can match. Students and graduates have gone on to train at some of the most prestigious graduate and internship theatre programs in the country. Now, USI's program has literally and physically taken center stage with this spring's long-awaited opening of a 300-seat state-of-the-art Performance Center located adjacent to the University Center at the heart of campus.

At USI, foundational courses in theatre performance establish practical skills based on acting techniques, and supported by specialty courses such as stage combat, musical theatre performance and playwriting. From the moment students enter the classroom, they have the opportunity to apply what they've learned, on stage in one of many full-scale productions. The Performance Center – an intimate venue with outstanding views from every seat – demands that theatre majors “scale up” their performances as it challenges them to stretch their talents, allows them to work at a higher artistic level and prepares them for the professional realities they'll confront after graduation.

“As a training ground, the Performance Center is a much more realistic test,” said Elliot Wasserman, chair of USI's Performing Arts Program. “It replicates the kind of demands students face going forward. It demands amplification of gesture and vocal projection on the part of the actor – a space where students objectify the action, to make it observable – a facility that allows them to do their best work.”

For the last several years, theatre productions were staged in the 100-seat Mallette Studio Theatre, a black box theatre in the lower level of the Liberal Arts Center—a small area where students often vied for space. “People would be getting dressed and putting on makeup in shifts,” Wasserman said. “This new space lends itself to the concentration a good actor likes to practice before going onstage.”

Spacious dressing and green rooms are only the beginning of behind-the-scenes advances. In design and technology, students are exposed to new and innovative techniques, supported by a state-of-the-art design studio and all new production shops. “A few years ago, we updated our design lab with sophisticated computer equipment and software,” Wasserman said. “Now we really get a chance to put the theory to practice, taking those designs from the lab and using the Performance Center as our canvas. It's a much bigger canvas, and much bigger color palette.”

In addition to productions in the Performance Center, students still have access to the Mallette, as well as a new 30-seat performance space in the Technology Center. “There's no question, we have more educational range as a result of this Performance Center, and that's why the department will grow. It will be obvious to prospective students that we are a top choice in the state,” Wasserman said.



The new space was designed by Holzman Moss Bottino Architecture of New York, designer of USI's campus landmark, The Cone.

Ben Bernanke encourages education; contributes \$40,000

Dr. Ben Bernanke, former chairman of the Federal Reserve System, spoke at USI this March as the second guest in the Romain College of Business Innovative Speaker Series. The inaugural speaker was T. Boone Pickens, legendary entrepreneur and philanthropist, who spoke in spring 2013.

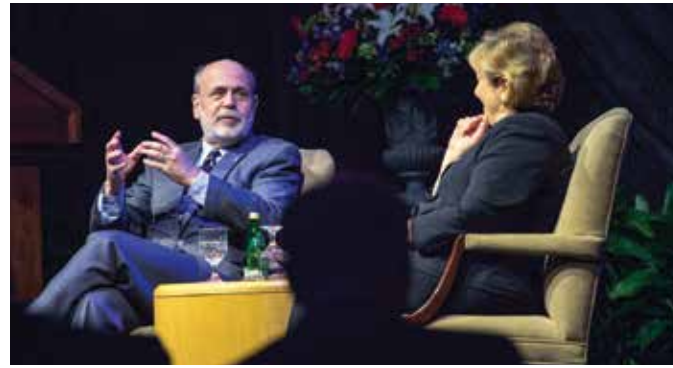
An estimated 2,500 people filled the Physical Activities Center (PAC) for "A Conversation with Ben S. Bernanke," part of a year of events planned for USI's 50th anniversary in 2015. USI President Linda L. M. Bennett introduced the speaker and announced a \$40,000 gift from Bernanke to be used for scholarships at USI.

Bernanke gave a brief talk before moving into a Q&A session moderated by Dr. Karen Bonnell, USI professor of communications. He talked about his early years with the Federal Reserve and the crisis the nation faced in 2008-2009. He said he was responsible for

explaining the imminent crisis to Congress, including the financial meltdowns of Lehman Brothers – global financial services firm – and AIG Insurance. Fighting the crisis was a team effort, he said, and credited much of his success leading the country out of the recession to the creative

processes, innovative approaches and direct involvement of his staff. Today, his overall outlook is that the economy is moving in the right direction, but said the challenge now is to maintain that growth and economic progress.

In the Q&A session, questions ranged from the effects of technology on the economy and a potential student loan



Dr. Ben Bernanke and Dr. Karen Bonnell, professor of communications

bubble, to whether federal regulations put in place following the recession will help prevent future crises. On income and equality, Bernanke said, "What's most important is what's happening to those in the middle." He said success often comes down to education level and skills. "If you're in college, you need to finish and get those skills."

MPA student beefs up USI's community engagement



Meschac Gervais (far left) and USI students landscape at Habitat for Humanity home.

The heart of the University's mission is to prepare individuals to live wisely in a diverse and global community; it's a mission Meschac Gervais carries in his heart as well. A Master of Public Administration student – set to graduate this spring – he first came to USI as an undergraduate exchange student from Haiti in 2012. Most exchange programs require that students perform community service, and he was committed to 20 hours, but volunteered 300 hours.

Gervais grew up involved in community service and understands the purpose of it. When he came to USI, he fell in love with the community and received the Global Ambassador Scholarship to return and attend

graduate school. Back on campus, he took a job in USI's Center for International Programs (CIP), coordinating student volunteer opportunities. He knew, from his days as an exchange student, that foreign students need help adjusting to and connecting with their new environment. One of the best ways for that to happen is volunteering for some of the community's neediest groups. But, he didn't want volunteers to simply put in time. "I wanted students to be able to learn from the community while serving the community. If an organization needed help painting a house, I wanted students to know how painting the house served the organization's mission," he said. "I saw this as a win-win situation."

For the past two years, Gervais has expanded and strengthened USI's partnerships with local nonprofits by building a robust volunteer service. He set up learning goals for the students then approached organizations and discussed their needs. Based on the agreement with the partner organizations, he created ways to reach students and engage them in the activities. To make students aware of volunteer opportunities, he's used CIP's website, established a Facebook page, constructed a database containing volunteers' availability, service preference, cell phone numbers and email addresses, and spoken to students during orientation week. Once a student signs up to volunteer, Gervais then drives them to the project. The payoff: in three semesters USI students logged over 700 hours of community service.

"I want them to see how organizations address some issues so that when they go back to their countries their eyes will be open to needs and opportunities," Gervais said. "I want them to ask themselves, 'Is there something I can do?'"

Gervais said all the students who have worked with him as volunteers through the CIP program are still part of the social media networks he established. For him, this is a sign they learned to care for their communities and will carry on giving back wherever they go after leaving USI. "I can't wait to hear they are creating another Patchwork Central or Lifesong Academy in their native countries."

Extras at USI.edu/magazine

Campaign USI

Elevating Excellence

Carynn Koch '15, biology, benefitted from a gift made by a 1977 USI graduate. Be part of Campaign USI: Elevating Excellence and assist students pursuing a higher education.

Participate and Elevate Excellence today.

USI.edu/giving



Learning to write in Arabic at West Terrace's Passport Club.



USI students prepare a meal for homeless people at United Caring Services.

Fresh new look coming for *USI Magazine*

USI Magazine is being redesigned. Beginning in spring 2016, the magazine will sport a fresh new look and expanded content. Changes ranging from shape, size and content to the frequency of publication are coming. Soon it will be 48 pages and published twice a year—spring and fall. The magazine redesign is part of ongoing efforts to align the USI brand with the University's mission and vision, to put a spotlight on our tradition of excellence in education and our goal of providing Knowledge for Life. The magazine will continue to bring readers meaningful stories on alumni, faculty, students and happenings around campus that keep you informed and connected to USI, but there are two new sections that require help from readers.

Letters to the Editor

The magazine will now include your comments and thoughts on articles and other magazine content. The inclusion of feedback from readers will help to expand knowledge and understanding on subjects by bringing unique perspectives to the conversation. In addition to written or emailed letters, social media comments, such as tweets and Facebook messages, will be included.


Letters to the editors should be no more than 250 words and can be emailed to magazine@usi.edu or sent by mail to: Editor, University Communications, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, IN 47712. Letters may be published in the magazine unless the author states the letter is not for publication. Letters may be edited for length, style, clarity, grammar and relevance to issues within *USI Magazine*. Not all letters will be published.

Class Notes

The Class Notes section is expanding to include submitted photos of weddings, births, gatherings and other alumni milestones, in addition to achievements, career and life updates. Send notices and photos, along with explanation of the image content, to alumni@usi.edu. Submissions may be edited for length, style, grammar and relevance. Not all images will be published.

In addition to the new look for the magazine in 2016, USI is celebrating 50 years with a special 50th anniversary edition of *USI Magazine* in fall 2015. The issue will include a timeline of significant moments in the University's history, as well as features looking at both our history and future. Photos and memories can be submitted online at usi.edu/50. Look for the "Participate" tab.






Sgt. Brock Babb made the ultimate sacrifice while serving his country in the Iraq War.

To commemorate his dedication and honor his memory, his family established the Brock Babb Memorial Engineering Scholarship Endowment at USI. The scholarship in Brock's memory will serve many USI students and their future success. Consider creating a scholarship in memory of your loved one.

For more details, contact
David A. Bower
USI Foundation
812-464-1918
bower@usi.edu



Alumni Council 2014–2015

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*Assistant Director of Alumni
and Volunteer Services*

Deb Schmuck
*Senior Administrative Assistant
Alumni and Volunteer Services*



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All alumni are invited to attend these events.

- May 12** **USI Alumni Association Annual Meeting**
University Center West, Room 206
- June 6** **Alumni Party on the Quad** (*must be 21 to attend*)
Pig Roast, Live Music by the Duke Boys, 6 p.m.
- June 9** **Information session for "Reflections of Italy"**
Summer 2016 Alumni Trip
Traditions Lounge, 6:30 p.m.
- June 12** **Indianapolis Alumni Chapter Cookout**
Bob '71 and Mary Roeder Home, Indianapolis, 6:30 p.m.
- July 7** **Alumni Council Meeting with Orientation**
University Center East, Traditions Lounge, 5:45 p.m.
- July 16** **Eagle Hour**
Tin Man Brewing Company, 5-7 p.m.
- August 7** **Indianapolis Chapter Scholarship Golf Outing**
Coffin Golf Club, Indianapolis, noon
- September 8** **USI Volunteer Fair**
Carter Hall, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
- September 8** **Alumni Council Meeting**
University Center, Room 206, 5:45 p.m.
- September 15** **USI Founder's Day Luncheon**
Carter Hall, 11:30 a.m.
- September 18** **USI Alumni Golf Scramble**
Helfrich Hills Golf Course, Evansville, 11:30 a.m.
- September 19** **Party of the Decades!**
Physical Activities Center
- October 15** **Eagle Hour**
Carson's Brewery, 5-7 p.m.
- October 20** **Archie's Birthday Bash**
Outside the University Center, 1:30-3 p.m.
- October 24-25** **Parents and Families Weekend**
Campus, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
- November 10** **Alumni Council Meeting**
University Center, Room 206
- November 23** **Lighting A Tradition**
University Center East\Quad, 7-8 p.m.

More upcoming events in 2016 at USI.edu/alumni

1970s

Gary Long '72, biology, is senior scientist and vice president of Tetracore, Inc., in Rockville, Maryland.

David Robinson '74, political science, of Robinson's Law in Evansville, has been named 2015 Super Lawyer in the area of personal injury.

1980s

Randy Haaff '84, finance, a financial advisor with Raymond James in Evansville, has received a Certified Financial Planner designation from the College of Financial Planning.

Mike Bevers '85, communications, an account manager at Midwest Communications in Evansville, received a Silver Medal from the American Advertising Federation.

Eric Adams '86, chemistry, is the chief executive officer at Ronin8 Technologies Ltd in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Trudy Stock '86, accounting, president and chief executive officer at Harding Shymanski & Company PSC in Evansville, was awarded the Chartered Global Management Accountant designation from the American Institute of CPAs and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. The designation recognizes her as being among the most talented and committed accountants, with the discipline and skill to drive sustainable business success.

1990s

Phil Coudret '90, accounting, has been named vice president of credit administration for Phillip Coudret '90, accounting, has been named vice president of credit administration for Commerce Bank in Evansville.

Jane Lasher '90, management, has been named manager for Med-Star Billing Group in Evansville.

Tim Fulton '91, electrical engineering technology, '06, Master in Industrial Management, has been promoted to engineering electrical distribution manager at Vectren in Evansville.

Jamie Wicks '91, business administration, '96, Master of Business Administration, is a 2015 ATHENA Awards nominee. She is a vice president and senior trust officer at Fifth Third Bank in Evansville.

Rebecca Hoffman Hopf '93, elementary education, is the owner and director of Krazy About Kidz in Jasper, Indiana.

Thomas Burkhardt '96, communications, is the general manager at C.H. Robinson in Newburgh, Indiana.

Are you interested in becoming a mentor?

Contact Janet Johnson at 812-464-1924 or alumni@usi.edu.

"I believe that it is pivotal for each young professional to experience having a mentor. I wouldn't be where I am today without the influence and guidance of those who mentored me. There's no better way to pay it forward than to provide the same type of encouragement and direction to a rising star such as Shauna."

—Jared McIntosh '11,
Deposit Services Officer
First Security Bank



"Through the University of Southern Indiana's Alumni Mentoring Program, I was able to apply my degree knowledge to business that led to a career opportunity."

—Shauna Stone '14,
BS in Business Administration

Laurel Hart '96, Master of Social Work, has joined the staff of B Renewed Wellness Center in Evansville.

Caron Leader '96, Master of Social Work, is a 2015 ATHENA Awards nominee. She is a psychotherapist and partner at Within Sight in Evansville.

Michelle Schroeder '96, accounting, has been promoted to vice president and chief financial officer at Kimball International in Jasper, Indiana.

Jason Kellams '98, business administration, has taken the position of group vice president of operation at Restoration Parts Unlimited Inc. in Louisville, Kentucky.

Jake Fulcher '99, political science, has been named a Rising Star in Employment and Labor Law for the fifth time. He is a labor and employment lawyer at Kahn, Dees, Donovan & Kahn LLP in Evansville.

Rob Goodge '99, business administration, has been promoted to receivables management and customer billing manager at Vectren in Evansville.

Diane Ice '99, social work, '04, Master of Social Work, has joined the Social Work Department at Deaconess VNA Plus in Evansville.

Jason Smith '99, sociology, has been promoted to manager with the Special Investigations Unit at Farmers Insurance in Evansville.

Monica Stinchfield '99, finance, has been promoted to senior vice president of retail lending at First Federal Bank in Evansville.

2000s

Matt Anderson '00, business administration/finance, has joined Heritage Federal Credit Union as vice president of residential lending in Evansville.

Matthew Kimmick '01, economics/finance, has been appointed city controller in the Office of Finance and Management for the City of Indianapolis.

Julie Hope '02, art, has taken the position of graphic designer at Tucker Publishing Group in Evansville.

Portrait of a Young Artist



Self portrait by Heather Landry

As a child, Heather (Dodd) Landry '03 learned to create art by copying Henry Fuseli's "The Nightmare," but it took having children to become the artist she is today. The freelance digital artist, whose work titled "Roots of Knowledge," is on the cover of this issue, came to USI interested in pursuing a career in science but graduated with a bachelor's degree in studio art and a minor in art history.

"While drawing and copying pictures as a kid, I was playing with a toy microscope. When I came to USI I intended to get a dual degree in biology and chemistry, and really enjoyed the program," Landry said. "But, I didn't display the intuitive level of talent in the advanced science classes that I did with art. It was a humbling experience and I had to take a step back."

Because Landry had been creating art since she was old enough to hold a crayon, transitioning into USI's Art Program was easy. And, although USI offered digital art courses, she focused on figure drawing. It wasn't until she'd graduated and started having children that Landry felt the need to discover a new form of art to pursue. "I had to have art that took up no space, so I taught myself digital art," she said. "Having children literally saved my art career. It's because of them that I reapplied myself to become what I consider to be a more skilled artist."

Teaching herself digital art required adapting to new sets of tools and years of practice. She began by manipulating photos and progressed to using a computer mouse to draw and paint. "At first I practiced vector art – which is very line heavy – making cartoonish characters based on video game characters," she said. "When I was using a mouse, it was incredibly hard. Finally, I got a tablet with a stylus and it became easier as I'd already taught myself to paint using a mouse." Embracing digital art meant applying the foundational art skills she'd learned at USI to a new form, one that required retraining her brain to "see" designs on a screen created by her out-of-sight hand.

Landry said every professor she studied with at USI was incredibly supportive and genuinely wanted her and other students to succeed. Several faculty helped her secure scholarships to study abroad in Mexico and Europe, trips that afforded her the opportunity to study ancient themes and forms not available in the United States. "It makes your mind shoot off in different directions," she said.

Opportunities to experience and explore new challenges are crucial to every artist's growth, but perspective is everything. That she got from faculty who shared real-life pragmatic advice of what it means to be an artist, instilling in her pride and satisfaction to be an artist. "From them, I got my sense of 'no matter what, I want to do this,'" she said, "and, I'm really glad."



Dive by Heather Landry

See more of Landry's work at www.sandpaperdaisy.com.

Shannon Hoehn '02, political science/psychology, '06, Master of Business Administration, has joined the Blackboard Administration Team as an application systems analyst at USI.

Andy Miles '02, business administration, has been named director of mortgage sales at Evansville Teachers Federal Credit Union.

Brandi Ponsler Schwartz '02, art/public relations and advertising, '07, Master of Public Administration, has taken the position of manager of marketing and public relations at Methodist Hospital in Henderson, Kentucky.

Derek Adams '03, accounting/Spanish studies, has been promoted to director at BKD LLP in Evansville.

Josh Gessling '03, political science, has been named a Rising Star in Employment and Labor Law for the second consecutive year. He is a labor and employment lawyer at Kahn, Dees, Donovan & Kahn LLP in Evansville.

Eric Jost '03, accounting, '04, Master of Accountancy, has been named executive director of finance at St. Mary's Health in Evansville.

John Raisor '03, interpersonal-organizational communications, has been promoted to community and economic development relationship manager at Fifth Third Bank in Evansville.

Curtis Begle '04, Master of Business Administration, is president of the Engineered Materials division at Berry Plastics in Evansville.

Chad Horrell '04, political science, is director of DCI Group in Washington, DC.

Michael Ready '04, English, is a consultant for Axia Advisory Corporation in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Allen Collins '05, electrical engineering technology, has been promoted to engineering electrical distribution manager at Vectren in Evansville.

Christopher Colvin '05, chemistry, is an analytical services analyst for Grain Processing Corporation in Washington, Indiana.

Brandon Stephens '05, accounting and professional service, has joined HealthSouth Deaconess as controller in Evansville.

Melissa Weinzapfel '05, business, has joined Shoe Carnival as a sales audit associate in Evansville.

Victoria Sutton Woodrow '05, public relations and advertising, has accepted the position of director of marketing and public relations at Hamilton Memorial Hospital in McLeansboro, Illinois.

Tiffany Johnson Saunders '06, radio and television, is a membership specialist at the YMCA in Indianapolis, Indiana. She received a Master of Business Administration from Wesleyan University in 2013.

Julia Hunter '07, journalism, has been named director of member services for the Wisconsin Newspaper Association in New Berlin, Wisconsin.

Jared Simmons '07, engineering, has been promoted to assistant manager of plastics pilot and engineering at Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Princeton, Indiana.

Michael Carter '08, finance, has been promoted to vice president of commercial loan origination at First Federal Savings Bank in Evansville. He serves on the board of the Risk Management Association.

Julie Cline '08, public relations and advertising/marketing, has been named manager of integrated operations support at WOW! Corporate office in Denver, but will be based in Evansville.

2010s

Jacob Luker '05, biology, is an analytical specialist at Air Quality Services, LLC in Evansville.

Gary Burgdorf '10, business administration, is a construction administrator at USI.

Robert Wolfley '10, public relations and advertising, is a customer experience representative at MeUndies in Culver City, California.

Joshua Pietrowski '11, English, has been selected as head brewer at Turoni's Pizzeria & Brewery in Evansville.

Andrew Crowell '12, finance, has been promoted to assistant vice president and compliance officer at First Federal Savings Bank in Evansville.

Lauren Perrey '12, nursing, will receive the 2015 Rising Star in Clinical Practice Award in March at the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses' annual meeting in Tennessee. She works in the critical care unit at Indiana University Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Andrew Shetler '12, finance, has been promoted to assistant vice president and banking center manager/North Park Branch of First Federal Savings Bank in Evansville.

Adventures in Italian Renaissance



The University of Southern Indiana prepares individuals to live wisely in a global community. There is no better way to enhance understanding and knowledge of another culture than through travel. Each year, the USI Alumni Association arranges a global experience for alumni and friends, and in the summer of 2016 a cultural enrichment program is headed to Italy. Travel with us for an adventure in Italian Renaissance.



The trip will expand your knowledge by taking you to a country rich in history. Local experts deliver talks and give insights to expand visitors' understanding of places such as the Colosseum, Siena's narrow Gothic streets, magnificent palaces and historic Piazza del Campo, or Florence—the "Cradle of the Italian Renaissance".

The alumni trips are designed to not only enhance learning and understanding, but to include an educational reception exclusively for USI alumni and family. Additionally, a portion of the proceeds support USI students by providing funds for scholarships.

To learn more about this opportunity, join us for an informational session which will be held at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 9, in Traditions Lounge, located in University Center East. For more information, contact Janet Johnson, director of USI's Alumni and Volunteer Services, at 812-464-1924 or alumni@usi.edu.

USI's vision is and will continue to be: *Shaping the future through learning and innovation.*




alumni.usi.edu



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Send us your updates so we can share your successes in *USI Magazine*.



[USI.edu/alumni/update](http://usi.edu/alumni/update)



Email: alumni@usi.edu

Claire Bosma '13, Master of Business Administration, has joined Orthopaedic Associates as a marketing director in Evansville.

Mark Furman '13, elementary education, has taken the position of fifth and sixth grade teacher at Joshua Academy in Evansville.

Carolyn Townsend '13, Doctor of Nursing Practice, has been promoted to assistant professor at Indiana Kokomo School of Nursing in Kokomo, Indiana.

Abby Allen Huff '14, nursing, has taken the position of registered nurse at St. Mary's Hospital in Evansville.

Rex Laughlin '14, history, is a history teacher at East Richland High School/Middle School in Olney, Illinois.

Carly May '14, accounting and professional services, has taken a position in the General Services Department at Harding Shymanski & Company PSC as a staff accountant in Evansville.

Brittany Brasel Skeels '14, accounting and professional services/finance, has joined the General Services Department Harding Shymanski & Company PSC as a staff accountant in Evansville.

Kari Weinzapfel '14, public relations and advertising, has been hired by Deaconess Foundation as publications and events coordinator in Evansville.

Marriages

Gregory Nixon '06, art, and Dawn McIvried, October 18, 2014.

Emily Bigham '10, accounting and professional services, and **Dale Wolcott '10**, sociology/criminal justice studies, May 3, 2014.

Kasey Spicer '12, nursing, and Adam Griffith, July 14, 2014.

Erin Dunn '12, English, '14, Master of Communication, and **Eric Vogler '13**, criminal justice studies/sociology, November 8, 2014.

Kimberly Anderson '13, business administration/French studies, and **Michelle Harrell '12**, sports management, July 20, 2014.

Samantha Williams '14, radiology imaging science, and **Matthew Canfield '14**, respiratory therapy, October 18, 2014.

A Man of Vision

By C. L. Stambush

Kacheyta McClellan '10 has always been a man of vision and a believer in education. As a child, he set up an office in a closet in his bedroom – using a child's school desk and lamp with a long extension cord – intent on becoming a businessman as a result of his parents emphasizing the importance of higher education. While there was never any question that he'd be successful – and the way to do it was with a college degree – getting there wouldn't happen right away. "I learned I was going to be a father and I had to grow up rather quickly," he said. "I needed to find a way to be successful."

Despite being a young father, McClellan (now the assistant director of USI's Multicultural Center) knew the best way to provide for his son and accomplish his dreams was to get that college education; so, he applied to USI – his first and only choice – and started attending fulltime while working two part-time jobs and serving as an AMIGO (student leadership organization). During his third semester, however, parenthood took over. "Your children come first," he said. "I was at USI, but felt I needed to do more for my kid."

He took a job at Whirlpool on an assembly line. "I was working fulltime and thought life was going to be great," he said. With secure employment, McClellan felt he was once again in a position to resume his education. The plan was to work second shift and attend day classes at USI. But during the semester's second week, he was bumped from second to first shift—a rarity in factory life. He tried to switch to a different second-shift job or be put on third shift, but he was still within his 90-day probation period and nothing could be done. He had to decide between college and earning a solid salary. "I prayed on it. I didn't know what to do, so I talked to 'The Most High.'"

A couple of days later, he got his answer while talking with a coworker on the assembly line. "We were doing basically the same job and she had a degree in accounting. I asked her, 'If you have a business degree why are you here?' She said she'd gotten the degree to prove to herself she could. That blew me away," McClellan said. "I called my supervisor the next day and said, 'I'm not coming back.' I always knew I was going to finish my degree, but the timetable got moved up when I heard that."



Over the course of what McClellan calls "too long," the first generation college graduate succeeded in earning a degree in business management from USI's Romain College of Business. Today, he has that office he dreamed of as a child, and is in the business of improving the chances that USI's young black men will succeed. "When you see African-American males as an endangered species, and you feel like you can make a difference in their lives," he said, "you want to contribute to making a difference."

During his tenure at USI, he's counseled many students and ushered in a number of mentoring initiatives through the Multicultural Center that challenge and encourage students: Excel Mentoring Program, Executives vs Scholars, Power Hour and Priority 1 (see page 10). Being a young black man himself, McClellan is in a position to uniquely relate to that portion of USI's population who are striving to earn a college degree. "Being an African-American male from the Evansville community, a product of USI, I know what it took for me to graduate," he said. "I know the kinds of hurdles these students may encounter."

As a father, role model, mentor, administrator and alum, McClellan employs a strict measure of beliefs to guide not only his life and his two sons, but the students he works with at USI. From his perspective, they are future leaders and, as such, he wants them to be successful. For that to happen, he believes men must be able to define their values and set examples of what they represent in every aspect of their lives. For McClellan, that test is his sons.

"If either of my sons came to me and said, 'Dad, when I grow up I want to be just like you,' I have to be okay with myself; I must be proud of the man I've become; and I have to model the example of what I believe a great man is in order to give the response I want to give, 'Son, if you end up like me I will be proud, but I want you to be better. I'm not your measuring stick, I'm your guide. Everyone has to define what success is and they have to put in the work to achieve it.'"

Births and Adoptions

Nicholas Clark '03, political science, '04, economics, '07, Masters of Business Administration, and Callissa welcomed Gracialana Ruth, February 1, 2015.

Laura Reidford Davis '03, accounting and professional services/finance, and Ryan welcomed Griffin Miles, November 11, 2014.

LouAnn Hamm Shively '05, psychology, and Adam welcomed Clarica Joyce, September 5, 2014.

Brittany Sharpe Dodd '08, management, and **Justin Dodd '10**, elementary education, welcomed Paxton Michael, September 13, 2014.

Sarah Whitehead Wittenbraker '09, accounting and professional services, and Brent welcomed Crew Thomas, January 16, 2015.

In Memoriam

Michael Clark '72, management, of Evansville, Michael Clark '72, management, of Evansville, died December 10, 2014.

Deborah Hartz '75, elementary education, of Newburgh, Indiana, died November 20, 2014. She was a teacher for 37 years.

Carol Robb '75, sociology, of Lynnville, Indiana, died December 24, 2014. She was in Case Management and Administration at Welborn Hospital for 20 years.

Joseph Schmitt '75, social science, of Evansville, died January 22, 2015. He was a veteran of the Vietnam War, serving as a meteorologist in the U.S. Air Force for 22 years before retiring as a Major in 1973. After his service career he worked at the Evansville Urban Enterprise Association for 30 years, retiring in 2013.

David DeLong '76, management, of Evansville, died December 2, 2014. He worked as a technician at Berry Plastics.

Roy Perry '76, communications, of Evansville, died January 15, 2015. He retired from Evansville Parks and Recreation Commission after 20 years of service.

Kim Laib '78, psychology, of Evansville, died November 16, 2014.

Myrna Craney '81, accounting, of Evansville, died January 23, 2015. She was a retired partner at Brown Smith & Settle, LLC in Evansville.

Daniel Sollman '82, management, of Boonville, Indiana, died January 22, 2015. He was a claims adjuster for Farm Bureau Insurance for 27 years.

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Edward Cates '86, computer information systems, of Evansville, died February 26, 2015.

Cathy Guenther Manchette '94, nursing, of Evansville, died March 13, 2014. She was a nurse liaison at Parkview Care Center in Evansville.

Dennis Radnovich '94, business, of Fort Branch, Indiana, died January 18, 2015.

Donna Farny Williamson '95, nursing, of Evansville, died December 22, 2014. She was a registered nurse at Evansville Surgical Associates.

Ralph Plunkett '01, computer information systems, of Mount Vernon, Indiana, died December 9, 2014. He was working at Ferrell Hospital as director of information technology.

Kent Gearheart '02, industrial management, of Newburgh, Indiana, died January 16, 2015. He was a plant manager and engineer at Berry Plastics in Princeton, Indiana.

Andrea Outlaw-Sanders '04, physical education, of Evansville, died November 20, 2014. She was an advanced health and fitness specialist at Andrea Outlaw-Sanders Personal Training and Fitness.

Rebecca Curl '07, English/psychology, of Newburgh, Indiana, died November 21, 2014. She taught English at North High School and Bosse High School.

Jeremy Oliver '07, psychology, of Evansville, died January 9, 2015. He served in the United States Army Reserve for eight years. Jeremy was in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Robert Oswald '10, biology, of Indianapolis, died November 27, 2014. He was attending Indiana University School of Medicine and a member of Kappa Alpha Fraternity.

Michelle Baucom Sharp '13, nursing, of Evansville, died February 17, 2015. She was a registered nurse at Deaconess Hospital for 10 years.

Joey Morris '14, political science, of Speedway, Indiana, died February 27, 2015. He was a legislative assistant at the Indiana State House, Southwest Regional Director of IN House Republican Campaign Committee and an Intern at Indiana State House in Indianapolis, Indiana.

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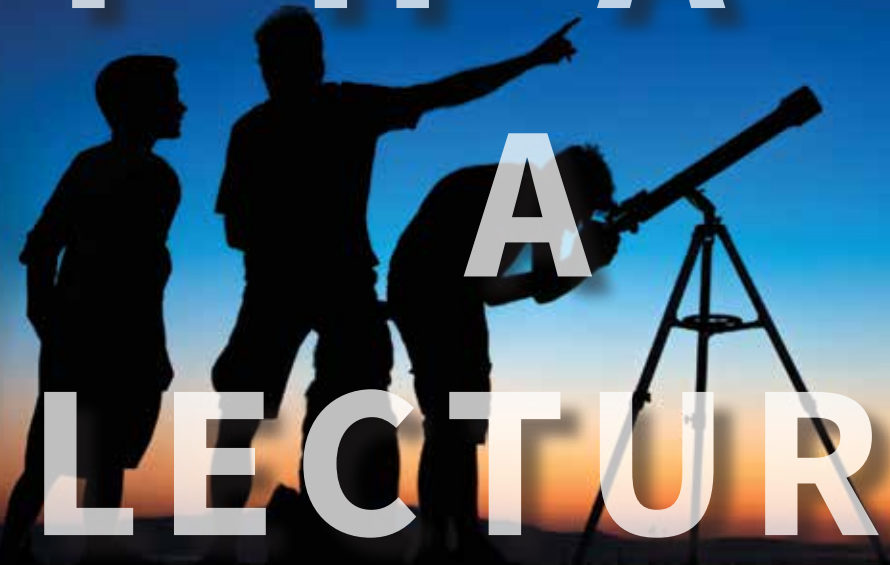
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