Chronicle rates NU a great college to work for

Niagara University ranks prominently among the Great Colleges to Work For in a survey released by The Chronicle of Higher Education. Niagara was ranked among the top five institutions in 20 of 27 categories examined in the nationwide survey, which recognizes institutions that have created exceptional work environments.

“"We are all very pleased and encouraged by the recognition Niagara University received in The Chronicle," said the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., president of NU. “"It is only with the work of all our employees that an award like this is possible. We are blessed to have our faculty, staff and administration so dedicated to our students and to our university’s Catholic and Vincentian mission," he said.

Eighty-nine institutions, 39 public and 50 private colleges and universities, participated in the survey, which was administered online in March and April. NU was ranked among the small institutions, based on the size of its workforce.

The results were determined by responses from more than 15,000 administrators, faculty and staff members who responded to 70 statements using a five-point scale.

This assessment process was the first of its kind conducted by The Chronicle.

Niagara was also recognized in 2007 as one of the best places to work in Western New York in a workplace survey conducted by Buffalo Business First.

Look what’s new at NU

You may have noticed that things have changed a bit at NU. Since the 2007-2008 academic year ended, the campus has been buzzing with construction crews working on renovating and adding to Monteagle Ridge. In March, ground was broken for the new Vincentian Residence (pictured top right), adjacent to Meade Hall. The building is expected to be completed by December and will be home to the Vincentian fathers and brothers.

For most of the summer, the lower level of the Gallagher Center underwent a massive renovation. The old “Gally” snack bar/food service area has been transformed into a modern-day food court that will offer, among other things, Western New York classics like beef on weck and Buffalo wings.

In May, trucks and diggers began pulling earth out from behind the Kiernan Center to make way for the new Niagara Field (pictured bottom right). The synthetic turf facility will provide a state-of-the-art home for Purple Eagle’s men’s and women’s soccer.

On Aug. 25, the field’s inaugural game brought 583 fans to watch the Purple Eagles’ women’s soccer team take on the University at Buffalo, setting an attendance record for both the men’s and women’s programs. Unfortunately, the team dropped a 1-0 decision to their local rival.
invited talk on the role of analogy, metaphor and typification in hypothetico-deductive inquiry, given as part of the state of the rhetoric of science special panel led by Dr. Jeanne Fahnestock. This fall, Dr. Little will spend four days in Washington, D.C., examining the private correspondence of George Gamow archived at the Library of Congress and the Center for History of Physics at the American Institute of Physics.

Dr. William Cliff, associate professor of biology, was invited by the Biology Scholars Program to serve as a facilitator and presenter at the program’s Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Institute held in Washington, D.C., from July 16-19. He made presentations on his research as a Carnegie scholar.

Ronny Priefer, assistant professor of chemistry, had two papers published in peer-reviewed chemistry journals this summer. The first, titled “Praseodymium induced pinacol formation,” was published in Synthetic Communication and was co-authored by Jeanette Drapo, ’08. The paper focused on a novel method of forming the organic pinacol group which is found in many pharmaceutical drugs.

The second paper, “Multilayer Film Preparation of Poly (4-vinylphenol) from Aqueous Media,” was published in Surface and Coating Technology. This was co-authored with six students: Jeanette Drapo, Michelle Ingalsbe, Mallory van Dongen, John Cadwalader, Megan Baumler, and Matthew Pinto. This is the first report of using this type of polymer as a coating agent and is ultimately aimed toward making antimicrobial surface coatings.

David Schoen, director of libraries, is participating in the implementation and editing of the Journal of Library Innovation, a peer-reviewed electronic journal whose first issue will be published in January 2010. JOLI is being published by the Western New York Library Resources Council and will be the first journal devoted explicitly to innovation and creativity in libraries.

On Campus

Leibowitz named to Business First’s “40 Under Forty”

Adrienne Leibowitz, director of sponsored programs and research at Niagara University, has been named to Business First of Buffalo’s 17th annual “40 Under Forty” class. She will be honored at a luncheon Nov. 13 at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

Honoorees are recognized for their records of professional success and community involvement. A panel of six members made the selections.

At Niagara, Leibowitz is responsible for the university’s public-funded grant projects from research and writing to compliance with federal auditing agencies and setting long-range operational goals.

Active in the community, she is a sustaining member of the Junior League of Buffalo and serves on the board of trustees for several organizations, including Cradle Beach Camp in Angola, Family and Children’s Services in Niagara Falls, and Lifecycle Farming, a sustainable aquaculture organization in Amherst.

In 2007, she traveled to Malawi, Africa, to assist the Malawi Children’s Village, a community-based organization that serves AIDS orphans and other vulnerable children in the Mangochi District of Malawi. The trip was made possible by a $4,180 poverty research and project grant through Niagara University. She has subsequently been named to the Malawi Children’s Village board of directors and serves as secretary of the executive committee.

Adrienne Leibowitz

Michael Beam, curator of exhibitions and collections at the Castellani Art Museum, presented, “Niagara Falls: Past and Present” at the RiverBrink Art Museum in Queenston, Ontario. The more than 600-piece collection was donated to the Castellani by Dr. Charles Rand Penney. Part of that collection is on loan to RiverBrink. Beam explained that the first topographical view of Niagara Falls was drawn from the records of Father Louis Hennepin, who visited the area in 1678. Beam also described the challenge of artists to capture the power and magnificence of what would become a symbol of the vast and awesome nature of the New World.

Dr. Joseph Little, assistant professor of English, presented two papers at the 13th Biennial Conference of the Rhetoric Society of America held in Seattle in May. The first paper contrasted the constitutive role of analogy and metaphor in the work of two physicists, the Japanese theorist Hantaro Nagaoka and the Ukrainian-born American theorist George Gamow. The second was an invited talk on the role of analogy, metaphor and typification in hypothetico-deductive inquiry, given as part of the state of the rhetoric of science special panel led by Dr. Jeanne Fahnestock. This fall, Dr. Little will spend four days in Washington, D.C., examining the private correspondence of George Gamow archived at the Library of Congress and the Center for History of Physics at the American Institute of Physics.

Dr. Zdenka Gredel-Manuele, professor of history, spent two weeks in May conducting research in Bamberg, Germany, dealing with the local Jewish community and its early history until the Nazi period. She conducted several interviews with local Jewish leaders and with the chairman of the Israeli Cultural Community, Heinrich Olmer. She also visited the Jewish cemetery and took part in a private tour of the grounds. Her research project also includes digital photographs of the medieval Jewish settlements and the newly built synagogue.

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Gust promoted, Langridge added at NU’s library

Samantha Gust, reference/interlibrary loan librarian and webmaster, has been promoted from assistant librarian to senior assistant librarian, while Melissa Langridge has been hired as the new information literacy and reference librarian.

Aside from her duties at the library, Gust currently serves on the Niagara Employee of the Month and Niagara Reads committees. She is also the incoming vice chair of the Western New York Reference Services Forum and is on the executive board of the Western New York/Ontario chapter of the Association of College and Research Libraries. Gust also serves on the Western New York Library Resources Council’s Awards and Leadership Institute task forces.

She is currently working toward a Master of Arts in interdisciplinary studies at NU.

Langridge received her master’s degree in library science in May 2008 from the University at Buffalo; she began working at Niagara last spring as a library instruction assistant. In addition to her new position at the library, Langridge is also an adjunct professor of art history at Niagara County Community College.

Carver named director of athletic communications

Kevin Carver has been elevated to the position of director of athletic communications at Niagara University. Since 2006, he held the title of athletic communications assistant at the university.

“Kevin did an excellent job for us during a time of transition,” said Ed McLaughlin, NU’s director of athletics. “He brings a high level of energy to our external area and has learned very quickly to tell the story of Niagara University.

A native of Sayre, Pa., Carver will oversee all aspects of the athletic department’s outreach to the local and national media while maintaining the PurpleEagles.com Web site.

Carver received his Bachelor of Arts in journalism and mass communication from Lock Haven University in 2005.

MOVING DAY — Biology/premed sophomores

Hannah Marchesese (left) from Batavia, and Danielle Bednarz from Allegheny, get ready to move into their dorm rooms on Aug. 22.

NU mourns

Raymond J. “Ray” Cusick, UNICCO maintenance staff member — July 29.

Vincent “Jimmy” Zagarrigo, husband of Phyllis Zagarrigo, catering manager in hospitality services — July 2.


Stanley Koshinski, father of Mary Kinney, data assessment secretary in the College of Education — June 22.


Kathy Shields, assistant to the dean for administrative services in the College of Arts and Sciences — May 19.


Leona Bielecki, mother of Don Bielecki, vice president for institutional advancement — June 9.

On Campus

Niagara University to honor six at Vincentian Heritage Convocation

Four alumni of Niagara University will be inducted into the second class of “Niagara Legacy — Alumni of Distinction” on Sept. 22 at 4 p.m. in Alumni Chapel as part of a convocation celebrating Vincentian Heritage Week.

Two other persons will be honored at the convocation. John Kinner will receive the Caritas Medal and deliver the commencement address. Kinner is being honored for his work as executive director of the Health Association of Niagara County Inc. The Caritas Medal is awarded to honor contemporary leaders who exemplify the charity of St. Vincent in an extraordinary way.

Diane Stoelting, coordinator of specialized supports services at NU, will receive the Vincentian Mission Award, which is given to members of the university community who seek to emulate the altruistic spirit of St. Vincent, the universal patron of charity. Recipients are chosen from candidates nominated by the university community.

Those chosen as Alumni of Distinction have met the three criteria established by the selection committee: demonstrated outstanding accomplishments and excellence in their fields of endeavor, lived lives that mirror the Vincentian ideals of the university, and have had a positive and lasting impact on society.

Those to be inducted include:

Hubie Brown of the Class of 1955, a member of the National Basketball Association’s Hall of Fame and former coach of the New York Knicks and Memphis Grizzlies.

Richard Chapdelaine of the Class of 1949, chairman of the board of Chapdelaine Companies and a trustee emeritus of NU.

Francis (Tim) Dunleavy of the Class of 1941 (posthumously), former president and chief executive officer of ITT. He and his wife, Albina, are the major benefactors of Dunleavy Hall.

The Rev. Michael McGivney (posthumously), founder of the Knights of Columbus and candidate for sainthood. He studied at Our Lady of Angels at Seminary at Niagara in 1871.

Walk for your heart

By the time you finish reading this article, two Americans will have died from heart disease. As the No. 1 killer of men and women and the No. 2 killer of children, it’s a sad fact that no one can escape being touched by heart disease and stroke in some way.

On Saturday, Oct. 4, the American Heart Association will hold the 14th annual Start! Buffalo Niagara Heart Walk. This 5K walk that starts and ends at HSBC Arena stresses the importance of routine physical activity as part of a heart-healthy lifestyle. Charitable contributions generated through this event fund critical cardiovascular research and community education programs. In fact, $1.6 million dollars have been awarded to research scientists at the University at Buffalo and even here at Niagara University.

That is why we are very proud to announce that Niagara University will be participating as a Heart Walk team at this year’s event. Thanks to the diligent efforts of Mike Skowronsksi, we have been able to recruit six team captains, which include Skowronsksi, Katie Finamore, Dr. David Keilly, Bill Newton, Stephanie Newman and Stephanie Russell. Now we are looking to you — staff and students — to show your support by participating as a walker on one of these teams or making a donation to their efforts.

To join a team: Go to www.BuffaloNiagaraHeartWalk.org, click on “Register Here” and then “agree” to the waiver; select “Join Team”; “Locate” Niagara University and click select, then select the team you want to join.

To make a donation: Go to www.BuffaloNiagaraHeartWalk.org, click on “Donate Here” and type in the name of the person you want to donate to.

For more information about the Heart Walk, please contact Skowronsksi at 286-8535 or e-mail him at mjs@niagara.edu.
Jamie Pimlott lives and breathes politics. It should not be any surprise, then, that she is so passionate about her job as assistant professor in the department of political science. Pimlott arrived on Monteagle Ridge in 2007 and immediately made an impact in the classroom and the community.

OC: Why did you ultimately choose teaching political science as your profession?

JP: I actually started my undergraduate degree in American history with a minor in Latin American history; I went directly to graduate school after that for history, specifically political history. I was in the Ph.D. program and I got to the point where I was about to take my exams and stopped. I wanted a Ph.D., but not in this type of history. I knew that I loved academia and realized that I would rather get my Ph.D. in politics.

OC: You grew up in a home where politics was either discussed freely or watched on television, correct?

JP: My father watches CNN all the time. He would talk about the world of politics all the time and was helpful when it came to making a decision on switching my course of study. Now that I am teaching, I have my students write a paper about what their experiences were growing up when it came to politics.

OC: What are some of the things that you teach NU students that come from your experiences?

JP: I had an English professor who would rip my papers apart. She had no qualms about telling you that you would have to rewrite the entire paper. I realized, however, that she was right; my writing wasn’t very good at the time because I wasn’t prepared. By the end of the class, I loved her because she pushed me to get better. I try to do the same things for my students at NU.

OC: You are actively involved in Niagara’s Susan B. Anthony Day. What piqued your interested in women in politics, aside from the fact that you are a woman?

JP: I was always interested in the underdog. As I studied more academic readings, I became intrigued by women who had been under-appreciated. When I was studying for my Ph.D., I had an adviser who always encouraged me to study something that I was passionate about. Having a daughter has also helped to make me an avid proponent of women in politics.

OC: How do you see the Susan B. Anthony Day evolving at NU?

JP: I am banking on this year’s event to be bigger and better. I would like to have a movie viewing and a panel that discusses today’s landscape and women’s issues. Dr. (Nancy) McGlen, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, is really supportive of what we are doing.

For more information on Susan B. Anthony Day, contact Pimlott at jpimlott@niagara.edu. You can also listen to the latest edition of the Purple Podcast, where she discusses the 2008 campaign for president of the United States. Log on to www.niagara.edu/pr/media/audio/Pimlott08Podcast.mp3.

NU receives $300,000 grant for new science building

Niagara University has received a $300,000 grant from the Margaret L. Wendt Foundation to assist in funding a new science building planned for the campus.

The grant from the Buffalo-based foundation will be applied to the university’s ongoing capital campaign, “The Promise of Niagara.” Partial funding for a new $25 million science center is included in the campaign’s $80 million goal. Half of the campaign’s goal has already been raised, according to the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., president of the university.

Among the major projects the university expects to complete before 2012 are a renovation and expansion of its theater, a new dining commons and the science building.

The proposed 44,000-square-foot science center will replace DePaul Hall, a facility that has housed the university’s science programs since 1961. The new structure will provide more space and flexibility for today’s integrated learning environment and interdisciplinary approach to the sciences. Biology, chemistry, physics, bioinformatics and computational chemistry students and faculty will all have access to advanced instrumentation either as individuals or as members of a study team, according to Dr. Nancy McGlen, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“We are very thankful to the Wendt Foundation for their generous grant. It is an important step in Niagara’s goal of building our new interdisciplinary science building,” McGlen said. “It is also recognition of the impressive work our science faculty members are doing in interdisciplinary teaching and research with students,” she added.

The Margaret L. Wendt Foundation is a private, philanthropic organization that focuses on education, the arts and social services in Buffalo and Western New York.
It only takes a moment

By Father John T. Maher, C.M.’76, University Chaplain

A warm welcome to our new and returning members of the NU community. It’s great to have you here on Monteagle Ridge.

As some of you know, I’m a bit of a movie fanatic. Film reviews often pop up in my conversations, class and even (gasp) homilies. This summer, I was goaded into seeing a “kid’s film” I thought would be (literally) a waste of time, but lo and behold, it turned out to be a moving and thought-provoking experience.

“WALL-E” is an animated film about a robot on abandoned earth doing nothing but “waste management.” (His name means “Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth-Class.”) His life is empty and sterile, save an occasional distraction from a cricket or an item he ferrets from the garbage. He repeatedly watches an old movie video of the musical “Hello Dolly,” and is fascinated by the characters dancing, holding hands, and singing “It Only Takes a Moment.” Their tenderness and touch give WALL-E a desire for similar contact.

Enter EVE (Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator) who crashes to earth from another planet to sample any plant life left on the toxic planet (abandoned for 700 years!). WALL-E instantly falls for her and follows her from earth onto her spaceship to prove his love. The film has little dialogue, few “humans,” strange twists and turns, but it is a wonderful parable of life as it should be lived today.

Its message and symbolism are simple, yet profound. We all need to be connected to one another, to our environment, and to something greater than ourselves. In the film, the “humans” on the spaceship (exiles of planet earth) live blithely and blindly in self-centered comfort, ignorant of anything other than their next meal or activity. But WALL-E and EVE take the risk and learn what it means to be in a relationship. Once “connected,” there is no going back to their mundane and meaningless existence of the past.

Our God is a God who seeks connection with us fearlessly and faithfully. Whether in Sacred Scripture, the stories of God’s mighty deeds; or the Word Made Flesh, God’s Son, Jesus, we have a God who sifts through the wants of our hearts and the waste of our lives and tells us because we are his beloved sons and daughters, we are good. And he gives us His Son as our guide and model of how to live.

A new academic year brings challenges and exciting possibilities. “It only takes a moment” to pause, reflect on God’s goodness to us, and to give thanks. Let this year be one in which we connect more deeply with our God, with one another, and the beauty of the world around us. Once that happens, there is no going back to that humdrum past life.
NU ranked among the best; exceeds national norms

Niagara University is again listed among the best colleges and universities in the North, according to annual rankings released recently by U.S. News and World Report.

NU is listed 58 among 86 colleges and universities in the northeastern United States that provide a full range of undergraduate and master’s degree programs. The rankings will appear in the Sept. 25 edition of the magazine and in the 2009 edition of America’s Best Colleges, which will be out Sept. 26.

The rankings are based on such factors as peer assessment; retention, graduation and acceptance rates; class sizes; and the giving rate of alumni. Compared to last year, NU’s scores went up in retention, graduation rates, class sizes; SAT/ACT scores of incoming students, and peer assessment.

“Niagara is very pleased that our scores have gone up in the areas that are the truest indicators of educational excellence,” said Dr. Bonnie Rose, NU’s executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs.

Noting the increase in the peer assessment score, she added, “Students, colleagues and the public clearly are getting the message that NU is an institution on the move.”

Meanwhile, a nationwide survey of effective educational practices has found that Niagara University students rank their institution higher than the national average in all five benchmark areas.

The 2008 report from the National Survey of Student Engagement, which involved 774 four-year colleges and universities, found that both freshman and senior students ranked NU above the national averages in level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences and supportive campus environment.

The results were particularly significant for seniors in the areas of community service, student-faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences, and a supportive campus environment. For example:

- Seventy-one percent of seniors reported having completed a practicum, internships, field experience, co-op experience or clinical placement, compared to 53 percent nationally. Twice as many NU freshmen than the national average reported the same experience, 19 percent vs. 8 percent.
- Thirty-one percent said they had worked on a research project with a faculty member outside of class, compared to 20 percent nationally.
- Forty percent said that they had completed an independent study or self-designed major, compared to 18 percent nationally.
- Eighty-three percent of NU seniors reported having done community service or volunteer work, compared to 60 percent nationally.
- Fifty-eight percent of the NU seniors surveyed said they had talked with a faculty member or adviser about career plans “often or very often,” compared to 42 percent nationally.

“The results confirm that our students are engaged in a variety of learning experiences, including service opportunities, real-work settings, research and independent study,” Rose said. “Our reputation as a leader in active, integrated learning is clearly justified.”

NU, Fredonia ink MBA agreement

Niagara University and the State University of New York at Fredonia have signed an agreement granting Fredonia graduates admission into Niagara’s one-year Master of Business Administration program.

SUNY Fredonia graduates who have completed the foundation courses and meet the prescribed admission standards will be considered for admission to the Niagara program. The plan offers graduates an opportunity to plan their academic program carefully and take advantage of the experience afforded by full-time study for the MBA degree.

After five years of college study, the graduate will have obtained both an undergraduate degree from SUNY Fredonia and an MBA from Niagara University.

Clet Dining Commons update

The academic year is underway and that means Clet Dining Commons is cooking up some great food and fun events for students. This year, the Commons have new hours as follows:

Monday through Thursday: 7:30 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.
Friday: 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Saturdays and holidays: 10:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Through the month of September there will be featured weekly events with special highlights on:

Wednesday, Sept. 10: Rochester Garbage Plate
Thursday, Sept. 11: Late Nite Breakfast
Monday, Sept. 15: Outdoor BBQ
Monday, Sept. 22: Meet the Mascot
Wednesday, Sept. 24: Sushi
Friday, Sept. 26: featuring Native American foods
Smoking on campus

By R.E. Pfeil, HR director

The issue of smoking on campus has often evolved into an emotional rather than an objective discussion. Smokers and non-smokers alike complain that they have “rights” that should be protected. The university has come to a crossroads with regard to the smoking on campus debate. The medical evidence is very clear that smoking can cause cancer as well as adversely impact other diseases and illnesses. In addition, there are serious issues regarding the effects of secondhand smoke. As an institute of higher learning, with its foundation based on caring and concern for individuals, the university must be a leader in addressing this societal issue. Additionally, New York state has passed increasingly stringent restrictions on smoking in public areas.

The university has a well-established wellness initiative that has included Weight Watchers, Pilate’s programs, “brown bag” luncheon presentations, the “Bra Guru,” cholesterol and blood pressure testing, and influenza vaccinations. Additionally, the university has moved to an experience-rated medical plan to capitalize on these efforts and control costs and employee contributions.

Aside from the obvious health issue, there is a serious problem with the ever-increasing number of cigarette butts discarded without regard to the campus environment. Cigarette butts are one of the most commonly littered items. It is an environmental concern and one that dramatically increases when indoor smoking bans are implemented. We do not wish to see our beautiful campus architecture and well-maintained grounds littered with cigarette butts.

Consistent with its philosophy of concern, the university has elected to establish a new smoking policy. Effective Aug. 18, 2008, smoking is not allowed within any building or other enclosed facility on campus and not within 25 feet of any building or additional designated outdoor areas indicated by maps and signage. Smoking will be allowed in other areas of the campus. However, all smoking material must be properly extinguished and placed in designated receptacles.

The university will foster educational programs and encourage participation in smoking cessation programs. It is the university’s intention to demonstrate leadership in this area and attain an objective to become a smoke and tobacco-free campus for the 2009-10 academic year.

Weight Watchers at Work

Since October 2006, a number of NU employees have gathered each week to weigh in, share diet tips and celebrate their weight losses at NU’s Weight Watchers at Work meetings. Sponsored by the HR department, the program has helped the group lose more than 1,000 pounds. From Sept. 7 - Oct. 18, a new initiative, “Lose for Good,” will enable members to help others as they become healthier themselves. For every pound a member loses, Weight Watchers will donate the equivalent of a pound of food to the organization Share our Strength, up to $1 million.

Jennifer Herman, NU’s director of instructional support (pictured center with leader Sue Case, left, and receptionist Debbie Majchrzak), lost 50 pounds over the past seven months with the Weight Watchers at Work program. She notes, “Weight Watchers is not easy. It takes a lot of work and patience to cook, measure, track, and permanently change eating habits. However, the rewards are great, and having at-work meetings gave me the support that I needed to stick with the program.”

For more information on the Weight Watchers at Work program, contact Jenn Suitor at ext. 8691.

NU welcomes

Michael Torrie and Dana Estrada, Border Community SERVICE project coordinators; James Polito, personal trainer/desk coordinator at the Kiernan Center; Derek Puff, assistant director of recreation and intramurals at the Kiernan Center; Kaylin F. Ranagan, admissions counselor in the office of admissions; R. Mark Wilson, dean of the College of Business Administration; Carol Becker, assistant athletic trainer in the department of athletics; Christopher Barringer, residence hall director in the student affairs office; Milton Cook, chemical waste and instrumentation specialist in the Office of Business Services; Derick Thornton, sports information intern; Kathryn Finamore, director of experiential opportunities for the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management; the Rev. Bruce Krause, C.M., campus minister in the Office of Campus Ministry; Mary Telatnik, music and choir director; Julie Moses, assistant marketing and promotions director in the athletics department; and Karen Edmond, professional-in-residence, field practicum coordinator.

New faculty: Mark Buxton and Lisa Manning, assistant professors of accounting; Kristine Principe and Edward Hutton, assistant professors of commerce; William Angus and Dr. Stephen Mayer, assistant professors of management; Kalen Churcher, assistant professor of communication studies; Sheryl Garippo, CIS instructor; Diana Falco, assistant professor of criminology; Clara Kroetsch, criminal justice instructor; Carol Beebe and Christopher Palmi, education instructors; Michelle Ciminelli, visiting professor, teacher education; Carmen Montgomery, assistant professor of teacher education; Martha Krupa, English instructor; Anthony Mauro, visiting professor, hospitality and tourism; Chang Huh, assistant professor of hospitality and tourism; Michael Barg, assistant professor of mathematics; Todd Bindig, assistant professor of philosophy; Sherri Brown and Robert St. Hilaire, assistant professors of religious studies; and Troy Hourie, assistant professor – scenic design.
Niagara University awarded four deserving Niagarans the honor of employee of the month during the summer months. In May, Teresa Slipko, registration process coordinator in the records department, was handed the award. A native of Niagara Falls, Slipko has been with the university since January 2001, when she was hired as a financial aid technician. In 2004, she accepted her current position in the records department.

Slipko is responsible for registering students and for assigning appropriate classrooms to each course. A nomination applauded her handling of what can be a daunting task. “She handles all of it proficiently and responsibly,” it said. “In fact, sometimes it seems like she works magic by finding an appropriate room for every class.”

In June, Rhonda Shiah, secretary to the executive vice president/vice president for academic affairs, was awarded for her hard work. A native of Niagara Falls, she has been an employee at the university since October 2005.

A nomination by a Niagara student mentioned Shiah’s welcoming personality toward students. “She is always polite and helpful to students who come in with a million questions concerning studying abroad, and does everything with a smile,” it said. Another nomination mentioned Shiah’s dedication to the university by going the extra mile. “Without any prompting or intervention,” it said, “I can be sure Rhonda will see to the thorough completion of a project or assignment.”

In July, Dina Martin, coordinator of admissions activities, received the honor. A native of Youngstown, she has been an employee of the university since August 2005, when she was hired as the communications/applications coordinator in the Office of Admissions.

Martin is one of the first people potential students and their parents may meet. “She is always willing to go the extra mile to help a student with a problem or plan the perfect visit day for them,” a nomination said. Another nomination added that Martin works very hard to ensure that families receive the entire Niagara experience during their time on campus.

In August, Virginia Garcia, secretary in the Office of Continuing and Community Education, was feted for the second time. She also received the honor in February 1993. The Niagara Falls native has been an employee of NU since September 1976, when she was hired as the secretary in continuing studies.

In two separate nominations, Garcia was described as compassionate and paying attention to concerns of others. Her supervisor, Jay Stockslader, director of the Office of Continuing and Community Education, said sincerity and genuineness are two qualities that stand out with Garcia. “Often I have heard her speaking to someone whom she has dealt with over the years,” he said, “and she remembers all of the details about that person.”

Congratulations to all!

The employee-of-the-month award recognizes Niagara University employees who consistently exhibit superior job performance and high levels of quality service. Employees (with the exception of vice presidents, deans, directors, and faculty members) who have completed at least one year of employment are eligible to be nominated for the award.

Nominations may be made by NU employees, students, alumni, parents, or other persons who come in contact with NU employees. Visit the HR Web page under myNU and select “Bulletin Board” to access the EOM nomination form.

The employee-of-the-month committee reviews all nomination forms the week of the 15th of the month preceding the month of the award.
**Sports Section**

**From NU to Deutschland for women’s hoopster**

After a stellar four-year career as a Purple Eagle, women’s basketball standout Sarah Wilson will join the BG Donau-Ries team in the German National League, located in Nordlingen, Germany.

The 2008 Third-Team All-MAAC selection scored 742 points in 113 games, while finishing as Niagara’s all-time block leader, with 137. “I’m excited to go overseas and play,” Wilson said. “I’d like to play as long as I can, but when I’m done I have a great education for me to put into action.”

The 6-foot-2 forward will be one of two foreign players on the BG Donau-Ries roster. With only a few foreign players in the league, Wilson will be able to pick up a different style of play rather quickly. “It’s a much faster game from what I’ve been told,” she said. “I will be used to provide a strong inside presence.”

Wilson has had a few offers to play overseas, including one to play in the country of Mozambique. While the chance to play in Africa was appealing, she wanted to play in Germany. “This is a great opportunity for Sarah to continue her career and see different parts of the world,” Niagara women’s basketball coach Kendra Faustin said. “She will thrive with her skill set overseas.”

Wilson joins the list of Niagara alumni that have played professional basketball in a foreign country, a list that includes Niagara’s all-time leading scorer Eva Cunningham, ’05, Jessica Kemp, ’04, Amy Getman, ’01, and Sheryl Klick, ’00. The BG Donau-Ries begins its 2008-09 season in late September.

Scott Langdon makes a play during the Purple Eagles’ first round NCAA tournament game against Michigan last March. He is the second member of the men’s hockey team to join the Toronto Maple Leafs’ organization this year.

**Men’s icer Langdon inks deal with Toronto Marlies**

For the fourth time in 2008, the Niagara men’s ice hockey program has placed a student-athlete into the pros, as senior defenseman Scott Langdon has signed a two-way professional contract with the Toronto Maple Leafs No. 1 affiliate, the Toronto Marlies.

“It’s a dream for me to be able to play close to home,” Langdon said. “I have an opportunity to play at the next level and I hope I can make the best of it. It’s a pretty good feeling right now for me.”

Langdon agreed to a one-year deal, which will see him start off with the Toronto Marlies, the American Hockey League affiliate of the Toronto Maple Leafs. While at Monteagle Ridge, Langdon played in 101 games, netting six goals, 13 assists and 19 points.

“I couldn’t have done this without the entire team and the effort we put out during the 2007-08 season,” Langdon said. “We had a great year and I can’t thank the team enough for helping me reach this level.”

The Ancaster, Ontario, native was one of four Niagara players who turned to the pros during 2008. Langdon could be reunited with Niagara teammate Kyle Rogers, as Rogers agreed to a two-year deal with the Toronto Maple Leafs in late March.

“I can’t wait to be Kyle’s teammate again,” Langdon said. “We used to live together when we were at Niagara and we are good friends. It helps a lot to know someone when I get there.”

Also leaving Niagara with NHL contracts this year were junior Les Reaney (Edmonton Oilers) and senior captain Matt Caruana (Anaheim Ducks).

Prior to the 2007-08 season, former Purple Eagle and current assistant coach Greg Gardner, ’00, signed with the Columbus Blue Jackets on May 16, 2000. Former Niagara forward Matt Ryan, ’03, also made it to the NHL ranks, seeing action in 11 games for the Los Angeles Kings during the 2005 season. Sean Bentivoglio, ’07, a former teammate of Langdon’s, also signed a professional contract with the New York Islanders in May of 2007, and he has played this past season with their top affiliate, the Bridgeport Sound of the AHL.

SABRES GO CAMPING AT NU

— The Buffalo Sabres held their annual development camp for the first time at Niagara University June 25 to July 1. The seven-day camp featured a roster of 30 Sabres prospects, including forward Drew Stafford (center), who played in 64 games with the NHL club in 2007-2008. To relive some of the camp, log on to Sabres.com and look for the Sabres TV link.
Niagara University has received a gift of $10,700 from Ernst & Young LLP as part of the firm’s matching-gifts program. The gift brings to $21,400 the amount contributed to NU by the worldwide public accounting firm and seven NU graduates who are employed in the Buffalo office. “We are grateful to Ernst & Young and our alumni for taking this initiative,” said Donald P. Bielecki, NU’s vice president for institutional advancement. “We hope it will be a model for our graduates in other firms that have matching-gifts programs.”

Andrew L. Neyman, senior manager in the Buffalo office of Ernst & Young, helped coordinate the fundraising effort and made the presentation to NU.

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A 36-hour program leading to a Certificate of Applied Urban Ministry will be offered free of charge at Niagara beginning Sept. 15.

Designed by representatives of faith communities in Niagara Falls and Buffalo in cooperation with the university, the inter-denominational program is intended to make pastors and lay people more effective leaders in their respective churches and work settings. The program will require completion of 11 courses that will be offered at various times over a six-month period.

A mandatory orientation for all prospective students will be held Sept. 10 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 127 of Dunleavy Hall on the NU campus. The certificate program is an outgrowth of the Institute of Public Ministry, which was started by the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., president of Niagara University, and the Rev. Jimmy Rowe, director of the Church and Faith-Based Resource Center at Jericho Road Ministries, Buffalo. The goal of the interfaith institute is to support faith-based institutions in their efforts to meet the needs of their parishioners and immediate communities.

“Churches provide the most direct means of touching the residents who live in distressed communities,” Father Levesque said. “This certificate program will help develop the ministerial skills of those who are in direct contact with the people, making both pastors and lay people more effective in their work.”

Others involved in developing the certificate program were the Rev. Harvey Kelley, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Niagara Falls and chair of the Niagara Ministerial Council; the Rev. Stanley Gordon Smith, former pastor of St. John AME Church in Niagara Falls; and Jeff Paterson, director of communications and advancement for the Health Association of Niagara County Inc. Additional assistance from Niagara University was provided by JonJay Stockslader, director of the Office of Continuing and Community Education, and Dr. David Taylor, a criminal justice professor and coordinator of ReNU Niagara Community Outreach Partnership Center. Financial support for the certificate program was provided by the Congregation of the Mission and grants secured by state Sen. Antoine M. Thompson of the 60th District.

The program consists of four core courses, three courses from either a clergy or lay tract, and four elective courses. The core courses include four-hour classes on both the Old and New Testament, effective communication, ministry, and comparative theology. Other courses cover various aspects of ministry, preaching and church operations.

Courses in the certificate program will be taught by priests, ministers and credentialed lay people qualified in their respective fields. A complete list of courses and the dates on which they will be offered is available through Niagara University’s Office of Continuing and Community Education at www.niagara.edu/ccc. Online registration is also available through the Web site or by calling 716-286-8181.
Castellani Art Museum

Through Dec. 14 — “Devotional Displays: Personal and Community Traditions.” Devotional displays are created at the crossroads of folk and formal religious belief. They exist in a wide variety of forms in cultures worldwide — and in many communities in the Greater Niagara region. This exhibition draws on photographic works from the museum’s permanent collection as well as new documentation. Hindu domestic prayer altars, Asian shrines to ancestors, Polish American Easter altars and Puerto Rican altars built in connection with the annual spring celebration of the “Rosario de la Cruz” will be among the traditions represented.

Through Feb. 15, 2009 — TopSpin Exhibition: “Homage to Picasso”


To learn more about the Castellani Art Museum’s classes, exhibitions and special events, visit www.niagara.edu/cam/ or call 286-8200.

To view the calendar of events, visit www.niagara.edu/cam/calendar/calendar.html.

Niagara University Theatre

NU Theatre adopts new ticket system, cuts prices

A brand-new academic year at Niagara University also brings a new outlook at NU Theatre. Starting with the fall season, the theater is implementing a new and easy way to purchase tickets online. For a nominal fee, you can even choose your seats and print out your tickets.

The NU Theatre box office, located in Room 2113 of Clet Hall, is open for phone and in-person ticket orders. For information or to order tickets by credit card, call the Niagara University Theatre Box Office at 716-286-8685, Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tickets may also be purchased at the theater box office one hour before each show.

NU Theatre also announces new, lower-priced tickets across the board this season, plus new discounted rates for youths, alumni, seniors, faculty and staff of Niagara University. Groups with 10 or more patrons will receive a discounted rate. Tickets cannot be refunded or exchanged.

Ticket prices for all Thursday productions of plays and musicals at an earlier curtain time of 7 p.m. are $7 for all audience members. Tickets for plays performed Friday through Sunday are $10 general admission for adults, while seniors 62 and over; groups of 10 or more; Friends of NU Theatre; NU alumni, faculty, staff; and youth 22 and younger (non-NU) may purchase tickets for $7. Tickets for musicals performed Friday through Sunday are $15 general admission for adults. Seniors 62 and over; groups; Friends of NU Theatre; and NU alumni, faculty, staff may purchase tickets for $12; and tickets for for youth 22 and younger (non-NU) are $7. Readers’ theater and the 24-Hour Play Festival tickets are $7 for all audience members, and NU Players Present tickets are $5 for all audience members. There is no charge for the short play marathon and Senior Showcase, but donations are requested.

Season passes, which allow the bearer to attend five main stage and two readers’ theater productions are $70 for adults, while seniors; NU alumni, faculty and staff; groups; and Friends of NU Theatre may purchase tickets for $55. For non-NU youth 22 and under, the price is $45.

NU students with NU ID may attend any performance at no charge. In addition, any non-NU student, including high school and younger, with a current student ID card, may be admitted free of charge if there are seats available. Such tickets will be distributed 10 minutes prior to curtain. To guarantee tickets, patrons are requested to purchase a discounted youth ticket.

For more information, e-mail theatre@niagara.edu.