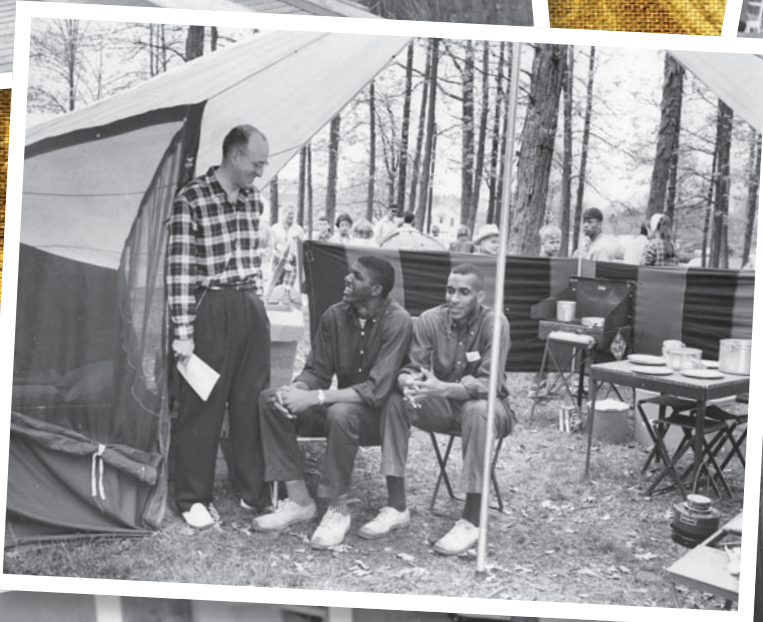
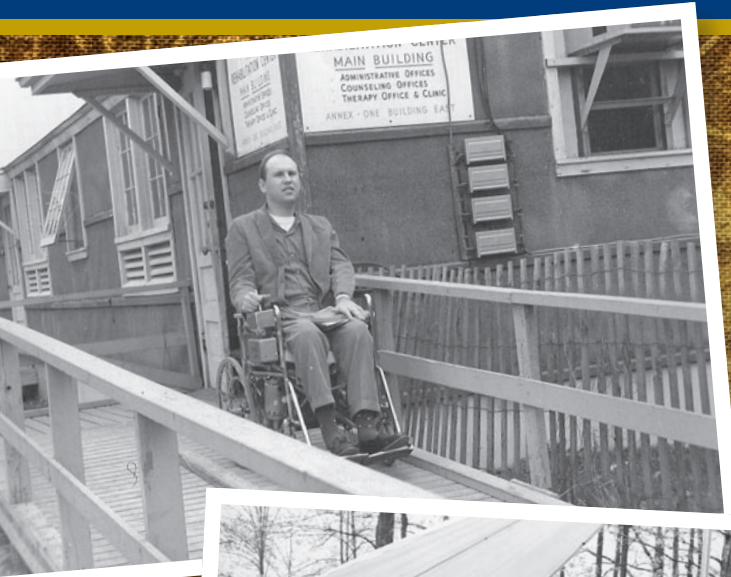


COLLEGE OF
AHS NEWS

The newsletter of the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Looking Forward Through Our Past:
The 50th Anniversary of the College of
Applied Health Sciences



This year marks the 50th anniversary of the College of Applied Health Sciences. Although we can trace our roots back to the late 1800s, it wasn't until 1957 that the programs were incorporated into a college, at that time known as the College of Physical Education. In this edition of *AHS News* we take a look back at some of the outstanding faculty from our past, while looking ahead to a very bright future that builds upon and expands their pioneering work. I'm sure many of you will remember a few of the legendary figures pictured in this issue, such as Dr. T.K. Cureton, a professor of physical education, who is widely regarded as the "father of physical fitness." You may also recognize Dr. Charles Brightbill and Dr. Al Sapora, professors of recreation, who were pioneers in the community park district movement. Landmark work on the anatomy of human speech, language, and hearing was performed by Dr. Willard Zemlin, a professor of speech and hearing science. And of course, Dr. Tim Nugent, who founded the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) in 1948 as the first program of its kind in the country, began a record of achievement that continues today. Our campus was not only the first program but it continues to be recognized as the undisputed national leader in disability services.



Tanya M. Gallagher

The College of Applied Health Sciences is building upon the strong foundation this distinguished past represents. Today, the number of older people, persons living with disabilities and children facing potentially life-constraining conditions is growing exponentially as the population undergoes historically unprecedented demographic shifts that are not only projected to continue but to increase in the next 50 years.

The "baby boom" generation, as an example, has in greater numbers than ever before experienced independence, autonomy, and freedom to make decisions about their own lives. As they grow older they want to continue to live as they have been accustomed to living, with fully enriched lives, with control over their own lives and control over the choices they make regarding where and how they live, with whom they associate, and what their schedules will be.

It is for those reasons that the College has extended its research efforts and has recently established a Center on Health, Aging and Disability, which you can read about on page 5. The mission of the Center is to provide leadership in interdisciplinary research, education, and outreach efforts that promote health and wellness, healthy aging across the lifespan, healthy communities and optimal participation of individuals with disabilities. This is an ambitious mission and will require the combined efforts of disciplines across the campus but it is our goal that the Center will provide a focal point, support structure, and catalyst for those interdisciplinary efforts—thereby intensifying their impact.

This is an important time for us to contribute our expertise to addressing some of the nation's most pressing societal needs, and we are fully engaged in doing so. As we reflect on our past and look forward to the challenges of the future, I'd also like to take this opportunity to invite you back to campus during this anniversary year of our College. We look forward to welcoming you!



AHS News is produced semi-annually by the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, College of Applied Health Sciences.

Editor: Kent Reel

Designer: Gretchen Wieshuber, Studio 2D

Contributors: Melissa Mitchell, UI News Bureau; Kara Stachowiak

For more information about *AHS News*, or to submit information for publication, please contact the editor at (217) 244-6600 or alumni@ahs.uiuc.edu

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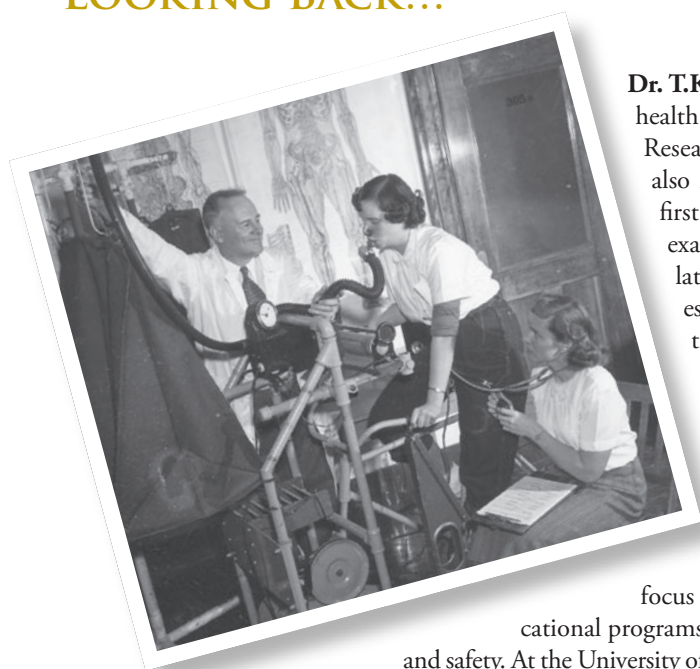
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COLLEGE MARKS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the College of Applied Health Sciences. Although the College can trace its roots back to 1895, when the Department of Physical Training for Men and the Department of Physical Training for Women were established, the College of Physical Education was not established until 1957. This name was changed to the College of Applied Life Studies in 1975, and last year it was modified to the College of Applied Health Sciences to better reflect the evolution and mission of the College.

LOOKING BACK...



Dr. T.K. Cureton was among the first researchers to document the health benefits of exercise when he established the Physical Fitness Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois. Dr. Cureton also initiated the Adult Fitness Program, which was one of the first university-based physical fitness programs that focused on examining the benefits of physical activity in the general population. Upon graduation, Cureton's numerous Ph.D. students established similar programs at academic institutions around the country, leading many people to refer to Cureton as the "Father of physical fitness."

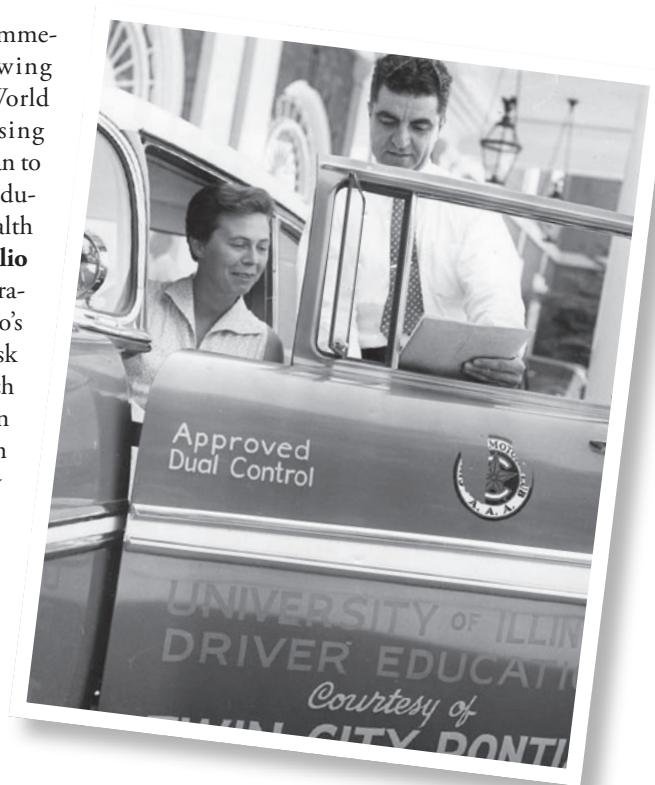
In the period immediately following the Second World War, increasing attention began to

focus on research and educational programs in the area of health and safety. At the University of Illinois, **Dr. Aurelio**

E. "Joe" Florio established one of the first teacher preparation programs in the area of traffic and driver safety education. Florio's groundbreaking program led to an increased emphasis on health education, risk reduction, and public safety in high schools. In conjunction with this outreach program, a new research laboratory called the Safety and Driver Education Laboratory was established to examine the impact of health and safety education programs on the students. Both the school program and the research laboratory led to innovative and nationally recognized advances in the field.



The Department of Community Health was integrally involved in the development of the U.S. Surgeon General's strategy in the area of smoking and health. **Dr. William Creswell** played a major role in developing the Surgeon General's recommendations with respect to adult education and the role of educators in the prevention of smoking in children and adolescents. The Department became nationally recognized for its work in identifying youth smoking behavior characteristics and their educational implications.





The Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism's service unit (originally the "Field Service" now the Office of Recreation and Park Resources), made substantial contributions to the "Park District Movement" and established Illinois as a national leader in the provision of local park and recreation services. These services directly contribute to the quality of life in communities. **Charles K. Brightbill** and **Allen V. Sapora**, two pioneering faculty, were leaders in the nationwide recreation movement and were directly involved in establishing the field. Their leadership was critical to the development of countless park and recreation programs, as well as providing a greater understanding of the importance of leisure and the development of a philosophy related to the recreation and park profession.

Landmark work on the anatomy, physiology, and rehabilitation of human speech, language, and hearing was performed at the University of Illinois by professors in the Department of Speech and Hearing Science. **Dr. Willard**

Zemlin devoted himself to systematically researching the anatomy and physiology of the speech, language and hearing systems. An avid photographer, Dr. Zemlin brought his camera into the laboratory to take photos at key points to show exactly how the structures look and how they interacted. He would take the resulting slides to the classroom where they gradually supplemented his lectures. This made the subject matter more clear, more interesting, and easier to understand rather than describing structures in words. In 1968, he authored *Speech and Hearing Science Anatomy and Physiology*. This book not only illustrated his photographs, but also displayed Dr. Zemlin's skill in drawing diagrams. This classic was perhaps the most widely known, as well as the longest used, textbook in the entire field.



Founded in 1948 by

Dr. Tim Nugent, the Division of Disability Resources

and Educational Services (DRES) was the first postsecondary disability support service program in the world, and today, our campus continues to be recognized as the undisputed national leader in disability. DRES began as a result of Dr. Nugent's belief that veterans who had been injured in WWII should be able to take advantage of the GI bill and go to college. That sounds like a simple idea but at that time they literally could not "get in" due to a host of physical barriers. Dr. Nugent made ramps in his garage and proved that these students if given an opportunity to have access to classrooms could be successful at a world-class university. Just a few of the many firsts this program is credited with include the first post-secondary institution to introduce curb cuts, the first fixed-route buses designed with wheelchair lifts, the founding of wheelchair sports, and the development of architectural accessibility standards that were later adopted nationally.



AND LOOKING AHEAD...

AHS ESTABLISHES CENTER ON HEALTH, AGING, AND DISABILITY

For 50 years the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has provided groundbreaking leadership in research, education, and public outreach programs related to health, wellness, and enhancing the quality of life. Building upon its leadership in these areas, the College has established a center dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of health, aging, and disability. "As our society continues to face unprecedented demographic shifts, the Center on Health, Aging, and Disability will create a future that supports the highest quality of life across the lifespan," says Dean Tanya Gallagher.

A key focus of the Center will be to identify interdisciplinary themes that bring together teams of researchers from across the University and peer institutions that address critical societal needs. Early themes will include healthy aging, individual empowerment across the lifespan, and independent living and full participation of older adults and persons with disabilities. Ultimately the Center will provide a focal point, support structure, and catalyst for those interdisciplinary efforts, thereby intensifying their impact.

The vision for the Center was developed as part of the College's ongoing strategic planning activities and will be a focal point of the College's upcoming fundraising campaign. For more information on the Center and how you might get involved, go to www.ahs.uiuc.edu/research/center/

(right) Architectural rendering of a proposed north-wing addition to Huff Hall, which will house the new Center on Health, Aging, and Disability.

"The expertise and leadership of the College of Applied Health Sciences will serve as a catalyst for bringing together intellectual talent throughout the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, enabling us to continue to lead the nation in addressing critical issues related to health, aging and disability."

RICHARD H. HERMAN, CHANCELLOR
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



JOIN US FOR OUR ANNIVERSARY!

Mark your calendars for Homecoming Weekend, October 26–27, 2007, when the College will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. The weekend will include departmental open houses, a pre-game tailgate, and recognition of the College's first Distinguished Alumni Award recipients. Don't miss the opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni and your alma mater. More details on the anniversary weekend and how you can participate will be mailed later this spring. Information is also available at www.ahs.uiuc.edu.

50 years

PROJECT AIMS TO SERVE RETURNING GIS SUFFERING FROM TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

UI News Bureau

Few situations place people at greater risk for the debilitating after-effects of traumatic brain injury than combat.

While many returning Vietnam veterans suffered from the toxic, long-lasting effects of Agent Orange, the signature wound for soldiers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq is TBI.

Compounding the problems for today's veterans—and for the wider population who have experienced head traumas—is the lack of professionals trained to recognize, assess and treat pediatric TBI, says Adele Proctor, a speech-language pathologist and researcher in the department of speech and hearing science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Thanks to a \$1 million, five-year training grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Proctor and colleagues at the U of I, working with staff at area and regional hospitals, are hopeful that the situation will improve soon for those suffering from pediatric TBI—traumatic brain injury in people 21 or younger.

“The problem with blast injuries and the returning soldier is ... those people did not survive in past wars,” Proctor said. “Now they're surviving, but they have very different kinds of problems that we were—and are—not prepared to deal with.”

Body armor may prevent fatal injuries when troops are exposed to an improvised explosive device, but more than 20 percent of those who survive incur head, face or neck injuries, Proctor said. Clinicians specializing in care for pediatric TBI survivors are particularly interested in helping these victims because many of them are younger than 25, the age at which the human brain finally is considered to be fully developed.

“The issue with brain injury is you can't see it,” Proctor said. But when people are affected by TBI, “their behavior is different than before.”

“And there are all kinds of interpretations about the fact that a loved one has come back from war and doesn't really communicate effectively. He or she didn't behave like this before.” Proctor said family members often speculate about physical or emotional causes, or even suspect substance abuse.

“TBI is a neurological condition that may result in a constellation of cognitive communication impairments, physical, emotional and neurological deficits that require lifelong adjustments,” said Proctor, who suffered a head injury several years ago in a car accident. At least 1.6 million people in the United States sustain a traumatic

brain injury each year—the result of falls, sports injuries, gunshot wounds and other accidents—and that number is on the rise, she said.

Common complaints from people with TBI include memory loss and difficulties paying attention or communicating complex thoughts. They also may have learning and social interaction problems.

“One of the crucial things is that our training provides the kind of knowledge needed to go out and work with returning soldiers,” Proctor said. “So they will understand what a blast injury is, and understand there are no established protocols for treating it, as there are very few for children. But they'll have that specialization and training you need to reason through a new type of problem ... to look up information, know who to call and access information from, how to make appropriate referrals.”

Until recently, Proctor said, “there were only about three places the returning vets were being sent (nationwide),”



L. Brian Stauffer

Adele Proctor, professor of speech and hearing science, center, with graduate students Mary Ratliff, left, and Mary Newman with some of the testing equipment used to evaluate cognitive abilities of those who have suffered from brain injuries.

making it extremely difficult for patients and family members who have to travel long distances to available treatment facilities.

Now in the fourth year of its funding cycle, the training program awards fellowships to first-year graduate students in speech-language pathology who are interested in providing TBI-related services in a variety of settings, from schools and social service agencies to clinics and hospitals.

“The specific focus is on specialty training in pediatric traumatic brain injury for speech-language pathologists,” Proctor said.

“As best as I’m able to determine, we may be the only (place) in the country that has this specialty training,” she said. “Other people may have a course or part of a course on TBI (the U of I offers two courses that focus specifically on TBI). But I haven’t been able to identify anyone with the funding and the training that’s combined with the practical experience.”

During the first semester of the program, students spend eight weeks in lecture, followed by eight weeks observing in a hospital-medical facility.

“We only introduce the students, in the first semester, to what goes on,” Proctor said. “They sit back and watch the different types of patients and learn basic information. We don’t ask them to participate in any way. Then they write summaries and we continuously review that information.”

During the second semester, students come to understand the issues involved—from legislative matters to those involving special education systems in public schools, Proctor said.

In the second year of the program, students continue with speech-language pathology training, but ultimately are placed in a hospital setting.

Mary Ratliff, a second-year graduate student from Sea Girt, N.J., said the grant has provided her with “an exceptional opportunity to specialize in TBI, an area of speech pathology that is growing and gaining increased interest.” In particular, she said, “The clinical and administrative observations gave us the chance to see a more holistic picture of our clients and what we can do for them.”

That experience, often in highly select settings, such as the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago—which Proctor said is regarded as one of the nation’s top facilities for TBI treatment—can be the advantage that lends the program’s graduates an upper hand when they enter the job market.

LEAVE A LEGACY

What will your legacy be? Have you considered what you will leave behind that represents your values and priorities? The College of Applied Health Sciences often hears from alumni, friends, and even family members of alumni, regarding the important role Illinois has played in their lives. It is a testament to this College’s mission of providing a world-class public education that so many friends and alumni choose to give something back in the form of a legacy gift. These gifts are very important to the College’s future. Won’t you please join us in this important endeavor? It’s as simple as using the following language on IRA, insurance policy, or other beneficiary designation forms; or providing it to your attorney for inclusion in your Will or living trust:

“I leave (e.g., % of your estate, \$ amount, residue) to the University of Illinois Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation located in Urbana, Illinois, to support the College of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.”

If you would like to further designate your estate gift for a particular purpose and/or program, please contact Sara Kelley, Assistant Dean for Development and Alumni Relations, at 217-244-6600 for further information to ensure your wishes are carried out. All communications are without obligation and held strictly confidential. Finally, we invite you to contact us and learn more about the benefits you may be entitled to as an estate gift donor through organizations like Presidents Council.

“In the past, students who earn master’s degrees in speech-language pathology typically wouldn’t automatically get a job in their first year in a medical environment. Those are considered unique positions. They want people with experience. So what we do is provide a level of experience that students are sufficiently knowledgeable to go immediately into a medical setting. The medical settings will look at our students because they have the unique training.”

SECOND ANNUAL ULTIMATE BASKETBALL CHALLENGE SCHEDULED FOR APRIL



Last spring members of the men's and women's varsity and wheelchair basketball teams collaborated for the first Ultimate Basketball Challenge. Proceeds from the event benefited Coaches vs. Cancer and the University of Illinois adaptive sports program. Athletes from all four teams had a fantastic time entertaining the crowd for some great causes.

"All of the teams were totally into it. We all loved it and had a great time," men's wheelchair team member Steve Serio, a kinesiology major, said after the event last spring.

The success of the inaugural event has allowed it to become an annual affair. The Second Annual Ultimate Basketball Challenge is scheduled to take place at Huff Hall on Wednesday, April 11, 2007 at 7 p.m.

Join the excitement of all our stellar basketball teams as they play for the benefit of great causes. For more information visit <http://www.disability.uiuc.edu>.

DR. WILLIAM STEWART RECEIVES AWARDS

Dr. William Stewart, Professor in the Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism received the 2006 King James McCristal Distinguished Scholar Award. Established in 1988 in honor of a former AHS Dean, the King James McCristal Distinguished



Scholar Award recognizes faculty excellence. Dean Tanya Gallagher presented Dr. Stewart a plaque and monetary award on August 22, 2006. Dr. Stewart followed with a lecture entitled "Community Well-Being Through Park Development," reflecting on the role heritage plays in park development.

Additionally, for his outstanding contributions to knowledge about leisure and recreation, Professor Stewart was inducted into The Academy of Leisure Sciences in 2005. He conducts research associated with park and natural resources development and teaches courses in the university-wide environment program. He has been involved with research projects that assess information from park users, community residents, and various other stakeholders.



DONOR REPORT

GIFTS

Private gifts play a critical role in our ability to enhance teaching, research, and outreach programs within the College that impact not only our students but the health and wellness of our society. We are pleased to recognize those who have contributed to our progress during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006.

This report recognizes all contributions to the College of Applied Health Sciences for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006. Although every effort is made to ensure accuracy, errors may occur. If we have omitted your name or listed your name incorrectly, please contact the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, College of Applied Health Sciences, 1206 South Fourth Street, Champaign, IL 61820; telephone (217) 244-6600.

PRESIDENTS COUNCIL MEMBERS

The College of Applied Health Sciences recognizes members of the University of Illinois Foundation Presidents Council for their commitment to strengthening the University's excellence. We are truly grateful to the following Presidents Council members who have provided significant lifetime contributions to the University and the College of Applied Health Sciences and to those who supported the College July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006, with an annual fund gift of \$100 or more.

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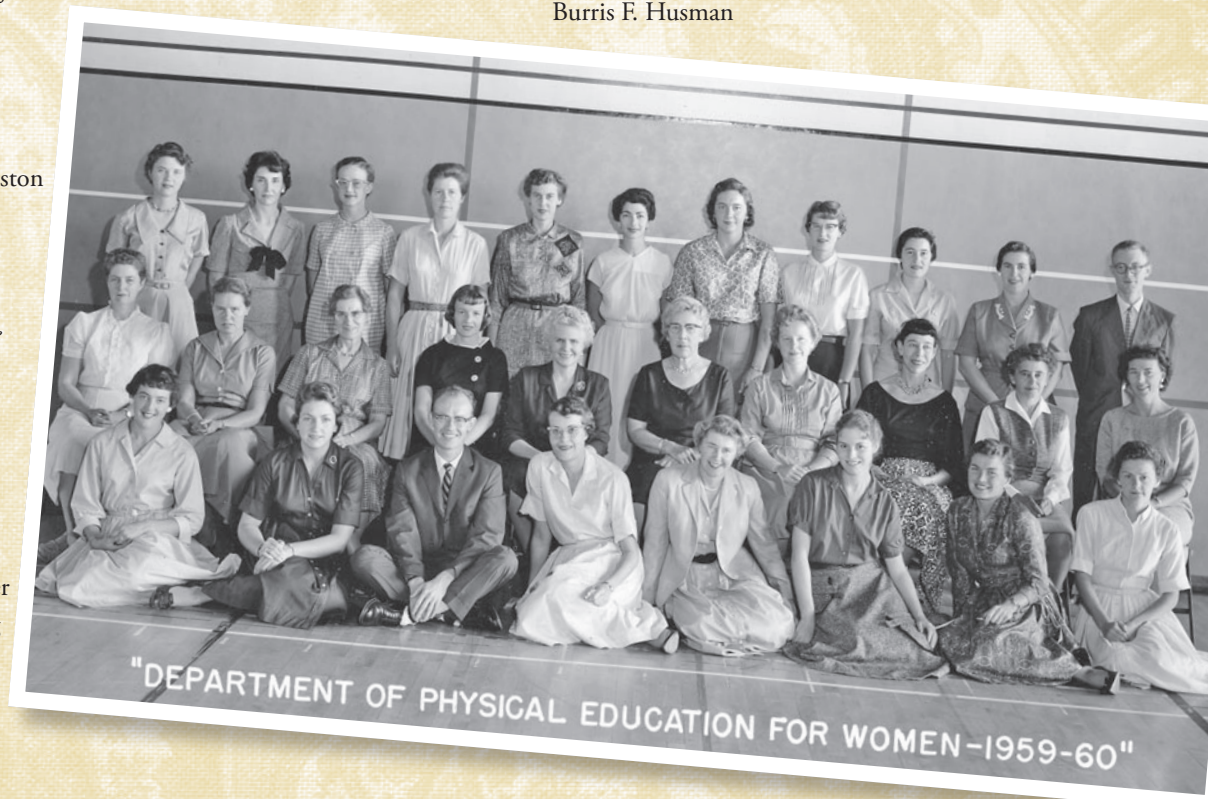
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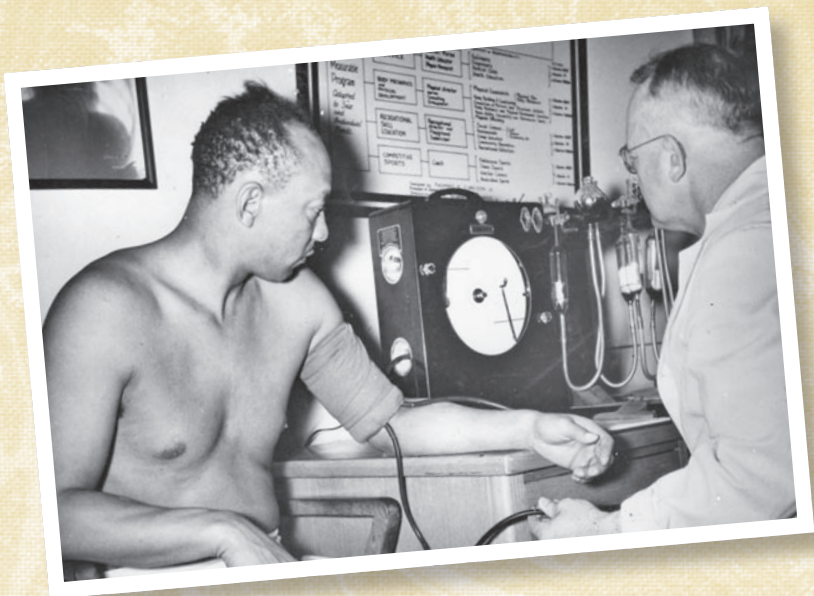
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Is your name missing from this list? Make a gift by June 30, 2007, to see your name in our next annual report. Our goals are met one dollar and one donor at a time, and every single gift—especially when combined with those of others—is immediate and dramatic, providing a tremendous boost to our students. To make a gift, say “yes” when one of our students call or go to www.ahs.uiuc.edu/giving. Thank you!

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“This scholarship will allow me to pursue my academic goals at the University of Illinois, knowing that my hard work is really paying off. It means so much to me, helping me fulfill my dreams and succeed in school.”

—TINA MATTILA, 2006 BEULAH DROM SCHOLARSHIP



COVER: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

The Rehabilitation Center was originally housed in parade ground unit (PGU) barracks. The World War II-era tar paper barracks were a temporary measure to meet the tremendous demand for student housing for returning GIs. Several of the barracks were ramped, a concession to Dr. Tim Nugent's idea (radical at the time) of sending people in wheelchairs to college.



Dr. T.K. Cureton and the staff of his Physical Fitness Research Laboratory perform a fitness test, measuring oxygen intake of a runner on a treadmill.



An early exercise cycle is demonstrated in the lab of Coleman Griffith, a pioneering researcher in the field of sport psychology.



Before moving to the Taft House, the Speech Clinic was housed in Gregory Hall. Here Severina Nelson and a student work with a patient.



Dr. Charles K. Brightbill, standing, is shown with two students during an outing sponsored by the Recreation Field Service, a component of the Department of Recreation. Today the Field Service is known as the Office of Recreation and Park Resources.

PAGES 3 AND 4



Dr. Cureton and Annelis Jensen (seated) perform a fitness testing on a graduate student.



Dr. Aurelio E. "Joe" Florio reviews a driving test with a student in 1957. Dr. Florio established one of the first driver education safety programs in the nation.



Dr. Charles Brightbill, Dr. Ted Storey, and Dr. Allen Sapora share a document related to their study of a municipal park and recreation program.



Dr. Willard Zemlin was one of the first researchers to photograph the anatomical structures related to speech. Here is shown examining an obliging patient.



In 1949 the University of Illinois authorized ramps to make six classroom buildings accessible for students who used wheelchairs. In this photo, student Lee Wise navigates the ramp at Lincoln Hall in 1952.

PAGE 9



Until 1972 the College of Physical Education maintained two separate Departments of Physical Education—one for men and one for women. Here the PEW faculty and staff assemble for a group photo.

PAGE 11



The Physical Fitness Research Laboratory was recognized throughout the nation. In this photo, Jesse Owens is tested by Dr. Cureton.

PAGE 14



In this photo from 1927, students in the department of Physical Education for Men receive formal instruction in the fundamentals of baseball from coach Carl Lundgren. George Huff established the School of Athletic Coaches, the first of its kind in the world, at the University of Illinois in 1919.

PAGE 15



Students at the Speech Clinic perform group therapy for children with articulatory difficulties in this photo from 1950.

PAGE 18



The first National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament (NWBT) was held in April of 1949, which led to the founding of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA), with Tim Nugent named commissioner. Here the Gizz Kid teams from 1955 and 1960 pose for team portraits.



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UD03

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BECKWITH RESIDENCE HALL TO CELEBRATE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Beckwith Residence Hall, the nation's first transitional living facility for students with severe disabilities, is celebrating its anniversary with a series of events in April 2007. For 25 years, Beckwith Hall has provided residential accommodations and assistance with daily living activities for students with disabilities, taught them the skills needed to live more independently, and eased their transition into community living.

The celebration kicks off on Friday, April 20, 2007, with the annual Ellis Lecture at 3 p.m. A reception at the Alice Campbell Alumni Center will be followed by a celebratory banquet. Beckwith Hall will host a brunch and open house on Saturday, April 21.

These events not only serve as a venue to rekindle past friendships, but also allow current students and staff to connect with Beckwith alumni. It's also an opportunity to educate the University community about the issues surrounding accessible housing and accessibility issues in general.

Please join us in supporting Beckwith Hall and celebrating a milestone in service and innovation at the University of Illinois. For more information on the anniversary celebration, go to <http://www.disability.uiuc.edu/>



UPCOMING EVENTS

Speech and Hearing Science Student Awards Program 7 p.m.
Friday, April 13, 2007 Levis Faculty Center

Kinesiology and Community Health Awards Program 7 p.m.
Wednesday, April 18, 2007 Levis Faculty Center

Beckwith Hall 25th Anniversary Celebration

April 19 & 20, Thursday and Friday, Interactive Display
April 20, Friday, Michael J. Ellis Distinguished Lecture on Disability Science and Practice
April 20, Friday, Anniversary/DSO/Adapted Sports Banquet
April 21, Saturday, Beckwith Residence Hall Brunch and Open House
April 21, Saturday, Informal Alumni Gathering at White Horse Inn

Recreation, Sport and Tourism Student Awards Program 7 p.m.
Friday, April 27, 2007 110 Huff Hall

AHS Convocation 9:30 a.m.
Saturday, May 12, 2007 Assembly Hall

* For more information, contact the AHS College Office, 217-333-2131

THREE AHS FRESHMEN HONORED AS MATTHEWS SCHOLARS



For the 2006-07 academic year, we are proud to share that three new AHS students have earned the honor of being named Matthews Scholars. Matthews Scholars are incoming freshmen who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their high school academic careers. Students do not apply for this recognition, but instead are selected for consideration from the entire incoming first-year class based upon their academics, leadership, community service and extracurricular activities.

Community Health major Sarah Haberkorn is a native of Palos Heights, Illinois, and a graduate of Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School. She earned the Musical Director's Award as a flute player and played on the Mighty Mac's basketball team. In high school she also was involved with National Honor Society, a cappella choir, theater performances and school musicals. Here on the U of I campus she is a member of the Alpha Chi Omega soror-

ity and the No Comment co-ed a cappella singing group. Her interests include singing, theater, and volunteer work through church and Christian Outreach.

Christopher Wedge is a Joliet, Illinois-native majoring in Kinesiology. While at Joliet Township High School West Campus he was a member of the Steelmens cross country and track and field teams. Christopher also earned All-Area Academic Awards in math, reading and science as well as being a leader in the marching and symphonic bands, and the history honors society. Here in Urbana-Champaign he is a member of the Army ROTC. Christopher would like to work as a physical therapist in the Army en route to a career in physical therapy for a professional sports team. He has a passion for motorcycles while also enjoying reading, music, and running. Christopher has dual citizenship in the United States and England.

Aurora, Illinois-native Brett Zimmerman is a newcomer to the Recreation, Sport, and Tourism program. He was the salutatorian at East Aurora High School where he was a member of the Tomcats tennis and golf teams, scholastic bowl and math club. At U of I he is involved in Orange Krush, Club Tennis, White Sox Nation, Intervarsity Christian Fellowship and Fantasy Football League. He enjoys sports, poker and board games. He would like to become a sports analyst or scout for a professional sports team.

These exceptional individuals were named AHS Scholars in addition to earning Matthews Scholar honors. Your generous donations help to support programs that benefit all of the outstanding students like Sarah, Christopher, and Brett in the College of Applied Health Sciences.

NIBLEY-LADNER WINS AGAIN AT CHICAGO MARATHON

Miriam Nibley-Ladner, a University of Illinois alumna who has trained extensively with staff at the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services, is no stranger to marathon success. As a previous Chicago Marathon champion and a top-3 finisher in both Los Angeles and Boston, her racing resume is impressive. Last fall, she appeared larger than life as she was chosen to be on the LaSalle Bank Chicago Marathon billboard along the Kennedy Expressway. Miriam lived up to the publicity, winning her second-straight title in a time of 2:04:21.

Several University of Illinois adaptive athletics participants fared well in marathons throughout the country last fall. Congratulations to all of the stellar competitors!



NEW WEB TOOL HIGHLIGHTS BENEFITS OF “USER-CENTERED” DESIGN

An analogy regarding sidewalk “curb cuts” has long been used by advocates of universal usability to explain how products designed for users with disabilities can be beneficial to all users. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1991, environmental changes such as sidewalk curb-cuts that were initially intended to accommodate wheelchair users ultimately benefited large numbers of the general public. Parents pushing baby carriages, delivery service workers, bicyclists, and travelers with roller bags give thanks everyday for the improved access that curb cuts have provided. Today, researchers at the U of I, led by Jon Gunderson, the coordinator of Assistive Communication and Information Technology at the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services, are exploring universal usability in the context of information technology. Their work is reaping benefits not only for individuals with disabilities, but for everyone who uses a web browser.

Gunderson’s team is developing the Functional Accessibility Evaluator (FAE), a software tool that analyzes web resources for markup that is consistent with the best practices for creating accessible web pages to implement Section 508 and W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The best practices give everyone more options for accessing and using web content, including people with disabilities.

The primary purpose of the Functional Accessibility Evaluator is to measure the accessibility features of a website and report the accessibility in a way that is useful to administrators, web developers and people with disabilities who may not be familiar with web accessibility. Developers can get additional information from the reports on how to improve the accessibility of their web resources.

“The typical approach to web accessibility is a ‘repair’ approach that focuses on meeting the technical requirements of either the Section 508 or W3C WCAG 1.0 accessibility standards,” says Gunderson. “This accessibility repair usually results in the resources becoming more ‘technically accessible’ but still remaining functionally unusable by many people with disabilities. The best practices, being developed here at the University of Illinois

and which FAE is designed to identify, avoid this problem by focusing on the functional requirements that improve access to all users, including people with disabilities.”

Although the guidelines are inspired by the needs of people with disabilities, they are designed to give all users more options and control when accessing web resources, hence the name “user-centered” design practices. In this user-centered approach, fewer assumptions are made about what technologies will be used to access a web resource. For instance, some web visitors may access the web site using a computer and a large monitor, while others may be using a cellphone, Palm Pilot, or a screen reader. Therefore more options are provided that allow use of a broader range of technologies and the ability to restyle information for their own needs. Since all users benefit from this design approach, developers can functionally test their web resources using common web browsers and extensions to see if their resources conform to the user-centered design approach.

The Functional Accessibility Evaluator tool will allow web developers to understand what needs to be changed within a web site and on individual pages to improve accessibility. It will also enable users to report the functional accessibility problems to webmasters. By designing web resources that adhere to best practices and accessibility guidelines, the content can be adapted easily to individual needs and preferences.

For more information about the Functional Accessibility Evaluator, visit <http://fae.cita.uiuc.edu/>

For more information about other accessibility tools being developed at the University of Illinois, please see: <http://www.cita.uiuc.edu>.



Jon Gunderson

Alumni of Applied Health Sciences from the 1950's through the present returned to campus for Homecoming this past fall where they enjoyed food and fellowship before the football game. Many thanks to the AHS Student Council for their assistance in making the event such a success. Make plans to join us this coming fall as we celebrate the College's 50th anniversary. See page 5 for details.



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