CHANCELLOR’S UPDATE

Across the University System, late June is our time of reflection and opportunity to look back on the just completed year. Commencement ceremonies have been held, the Legislature has adjourned, and the USNH Board of Trustees met on June 24th -- completing work on our 2010-11 budget, setting tuition and total attendance costs for the coming year, and formally bidding farewell to Granite State College President Karol Lacroix, who is retiring.

It goes without saying that this current year has had its moments -- from working with the Legislature and Governor during difficult budget times to assist in addressing the ongoing challenges they face, to doing our part internally to reduce our costs and increase operational efficiencies, and to helping the four USNH institutions better serve the more than 30,000 students that attend classes each year. All of you have played a role in these ongoing efforts, and I greatly appreciate your continued support and hard work.

We asked you through a survey earlier this year on how we could internally communicate more effectively. Your responses were very useful and we acted on them in two significant ways. First, we added quick links off the USNH home page to specific pages you often visit so you were able to quickly and easily find information online. And second, we instituted a series of brown bag lunches at which members of my senior staff have met with you to discuss issues they face on a daily basis and answer any questions you may have. I want to thank the individuals that have led sessions to date (Ron, Mary Ellen, Joan, and Kathy) for their thoughtful and engaging presentations -- the reviews were super! Next up will be Ken Cody, and we'll be sending out specific information well before his September dates.

And finally, thank you to Amanda Riecks-Kurshinsky and the rest of On Tap for rocking the house during our picnic last Friday, and to those employees who we honored for their many years of service. Diane Cotter topped the list at 40 years (she started at a very early age)! You can read more about Amanda in her profile in this newsletter to find out how she launched her second career.

I wish you all an enjoyable and healthy summer – please find some well deserved time to relax! Ed

CATCHING UP WITH COLLEAGUES

Matt Cookson interviews Amanda Riecks-Kurshinsky

Amanda Riecks-Kurshinsky is a star in more ways than one.

She is a member of the USNH system technology in human resources group, fondly called STHR’s and pronounced as “stars.” And she is a rock star as well. Really.

Amanda is a 21-year veteran of USNH who moved over from UNH to the System Office in 2004. She has stayed close to home since graduating from UNH, working at the university in administration, and in information technology for the past 14 years.

She took to the stage last year as the lead singer for the band On Tap. Joining the band was initially a challenge she made to her son, Jared. She told him one day that “if you want to conquer your fears, you need to just do it.”

She followed up by example, logged on to the Craig’s List website, and found herself auditioning in a garage in Maine to be the band’s lead singer. Her rendition of Bonnie Raitt’s “something to talk about” was good enough to land her the job. Amanda admits to never doing anything like this before. While she’s always been a singer, until recently her performances were limited to the shower and around the house. She is a self-described introvert and had limited her public singing to her high school choir and an occasional wedding. Not performing, she said, “was more of a fear thing…of not being good enough.”

She began to feel a tug a few years ago when one of Jared’s friends heard her singing in the house and commented that

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University System of NH Sets Cost of Attendance for 2010-11 at Institutions and Approves FY11 Budget

$75M in institutional financial aid will result in little or no increase in costs for NH's neediest students

The University System of New Hampshire (USNH) Board of Trustees approved the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, including modest increases for the cost of attendance at the four USNH institutions: Plymouth State University, Keene State College, Granite State College, and the University of New Hampshire. The total direct cost of attendance for full-time undergraduate students will increase between 3 and 5.8 percent across the USNH institutions for the 2010-11 academic year. The direct cost of attendance includes tuition, room, board, and mandatory fees. Read more

Catching Up With Colleagues, continued from page 1...

she sounded like someone on the radio. This led to her drive to try something new in life. Her husband was encouraging, so being an IT professional, she jumped online to see what opportunities might exist.

That was back in July 2009. The band, five members in all today, includes others who have played for most of their lives and a lead guitarist who had previously played professionally. A cover band, they run the gamut of old and new rock n' roll, country, and the blues, playing cover songs such as Back in the USSR, Taking Care of Business, and Mustang Sally. "They all can play like nobody's business," Amanda said.

The first gig together was a retirement party for a relative of one of the band members, all of which reside in Maine except Amanda, who lives in Dover with her family. They began to play in other venues along the coast of Maine and have gathered a following; including some USNH and UNH friends who come out from time to time to see them perform. This summer, On Tap is booked every weekend, playing at venues in Ogunquit and Wells every Saturday night...as paid performers no less. Her son sometimes goes to the performances, but at age 14, does not want to give up a lot of Saturday night's hanging out with mom. However, she does think that her example has rubbed off a bit, as Jared has also taken an interest in trying new things, such as lacrosse.

Now over her fears and enjoying herself, she plans to continue to take center stage, "as long as it remains fun." To see when Amanda and On Tap are scheduled to perform, check out their web site at www.ontap-Maine.com

Beautiful weather, lots of raffle prizes, great food and live entertainment were all on the menu during the USNH staff picnic on June 25th.

2010 Employee Years of Service Milestones

Attainment of Five Years
Scott Barton, Financial Affairs
Ondine Gosselin, USNH/UNH Purchasing & Contract Services
Karen Sayers, USNH/UNH Purchasing & Contract Services
Carolyn Spooner, USNH Financial & Administrative Systems Team

Attainment of Ten Years
Karen Brown, USNH/UNH Disbursement Services
Eric Hobbs, USNH Financial & Administrative Systems Team
Nancy Legere, Financial Affairs
Carol Morgan, USNH/UNH Disbursement Services
Jacqueline Nyberg, USNH/UNH Purchasing & Contract Services
Lisa Pollard, USNH/UNH Purchasing & Contract Services
Janet Rene, Human Resources
Matthew Scruton, Academic and Student Affairs

Attainment of Twenty Years
Susan Poole, Human Resources
Lorna Jacobsen, Financial Affairs

Attainment of Thirty Five Years
Gaynelle Pratt, Human Resources

Attainment of Forty Years
Diane Cotter, Financial Affairs

We recently said goodbye to Wayne Gehman after 23 years of dedicated service. Wayne is retired and plans to spend time rowing on the river, biking, acting, and visiting friends and family with his wife Louise. We’ll miss him!!

Editor’s Note – I have enjoyed putting together these newsletters and providing overall communications services to USNH for more than five years. I am now stepping out of the associate vice chancellor for external relations role as I move on to serve as president of CC Stephens & Co, a marketing and public relations firm. Through this firm, I will continue to handle certain communications needs across USNH and look forward to continuing to work with many of you, albeit a bit more virtually. Thank you – Matt Cookson

For questions, comments or to submit ideas for content, please contact Matt Cookson at matt.cookson@usnh.edu