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Diversity Dinners a Major Success

Some 540 people recently attended the Diversity Dinners held in more than 50 homes in Crete, Flossmoor, Glenwood, Hazel Crest, Homewood, Matteson, Park Forest, Olympia Fields, Richton Park and University Park to discuss racial and cultural issues.

At one home in Park Forest the attendants were black, white, married, single, widowed, divorced, and ranged in age from early 30’s to mid-60’s. Yet for all the diversity, there was within the group a universal goal — to maintain a quality community with quality services and education for themselves and their children, no matter what the racial make-up of the area.

The guests comfortably talked about their perceptions regarding the issue of race, the portrayal of issues in the media and how they are perceived. The feeling was expressed that while “white flight” and other negative news gets media coverage that very little positive news is given the same time, space or exploration.

For instance, how often are whites who are happy in their mixed community interviewed? Where are the stories about students in the south suburban schools who are becoming doctors, lawyers and educators? Our schools are producing students who are not only accepted at quality universities, but who excel at them. These are the stories the public needs to hear. Neighbors do get along in mixed neighborhoods.

Are people moving out? Yes, but they move out to retire, because of career changes, to buy bigger, more expensive homes — not necessarily because of a changing neighborhood.

Of course, those attending the Diversity Dinners are in the “choir,” but as it was stated, “You don’t go to church just once and figure you are saved.” Hearing other voices on a regular basis, especially when there are many positive things to say, is a good thing.

Out of the evening came a desire not just to hold another similar meeting, but for every one of the 540 attendants to hold a similar evening themselves, bringing 5,400 people together, maybe some who are not already singing in the “choir.”

The South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center at Governors State University, one of the sponsors for the event, will be compiling a summary report based on input from the 56 hosts and make recommendations for a next step in dealing with diversity in the southern suburbs.
The GSU Commencement Exercises of the Twenty-Seventh Academic Year are scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, June 6 and 7 at 2 p.m. each day.

The College of Education and the College of Business and Public Administration students will be conferred their degrees on Saturday, while the Board of Governors, College of Health Professions and College of Arts and Sciences students will receive theirs on Sunday.

Scheduled to receive an honorary degree on Saturday is the Hon. Jesse L. Jackson Jr., U.S. congressman from the 2nd Congressional District of Illinois. Monsignor Ignatius D. McDermott, known for four decades as "The Apostle of the Alcoholics," and well-known television journalist Bill Kurtis will be presented honorary degrees on Sunday.

Look for a special four-page pull-out section on Commencement 1998 in the June edition of "govst.edu." It will feature a pictorial review and corresponding stories.

PEP Workshop Spurs Creativity

As part of the Professional Enrichment Program (PEP), Michele McMaster, professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, presented a workshop recently entitled "Breaking Out of the Box." The workshop focused on creativity and addressed issues on how we inhibit ourselves from being creative and steps to overcome this.

McMaster said there are several tools available for increasing one's creativity. Some of her suggestions were taking time to doodle, allowing yourself to daydream, repeating affirmations to yourself, such as, "I am an amazingly wonderful human being," finding more than one option in addressing a situation, determining what makes you laugh, and recognizing everything that happens in your day is an opportunity. She also suggested when someone has a new idea, help that person figure out 15 ways it will work, not why it won't.

McMaster is a professor of Communications and a consultant in effective interpersonal communication. She has presented numerous lectures and communication workshops on various topics, including male/female communication, conflict management, diversity, stress management, building self-esteem, assertiveness, listening, making presentations with confidence, customer service and handling difficult people.

Hon. Jesse Jackson Jr.
Msgr. Ignatius D. McDermott
Women's Health Conference

More than 120 south suburban community leaders attended the Illinois Women’s Health Summit at Governors State University on Saturday, April 25.

The event, sponsored by Sen. Debbie Halvorson (D-40th), the South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center at GSU, the Illinois Office of Women’s Health, the Department of Public Health and St. James Hospital in Chicago Heights, explored solutions and strategies for women’s health care.

The program began with remarks by Sen. Halvorson, Sharon Green, the deputy director for the Illinois Office of Women’s Health, who discussed the economic issues impacting health care delivery; Dr. Bambade Shakoor-Abdullah of the Leadership Development Institute, who tackled the cultural societal barriers to optimal health and Delilah Flaum of Mayer, Brown and Platt, who addressed legislating health care.

Participants then broke into three working groups, facilitated by GSU’s College of Health Professions faculty members. Each group explored the issues set forth by the panelists. Some of the questions to be addressed regarding health care delivery included: How do you pay for your health care? If you do not have insurance, why not? What choices do you have for insurance, and do you have to depend on a spouse for coverage? How much would you be willing to pay out-of-pocket if it gave you more choices?

Questions addressed as cultural societal barriers to optimal health included: Are there sufficient health providers within the community, and are they sensitive to the needs of women? What are the impediments to having routine check-ups and preventive screenings?

Questions regarding legislating health care included: Should we be legislating how doctors practice medicine? Should government set standards for insurance companies? Do we need a “Bill of Rights”? If so, what should it do?

After a working lunch, facilitators presented summaries for final comment. Exhibits were on display throughout the conference.

The Summit proposals will be compiled in a report, assembled by Sen. Halvorson’s office. It will go to the Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women and state legislators, according to Sharon Green. The forum could serve as a prototype for other gatherings around the state, said Green.

"Chicago Matters" Calls GSU a Key Resource

Governors State University and the south suburbs are significant components of the 1998 “Chicago Matters” series called “Our Region, Our Community,” said Dr. Larry McClellan, executive director of the South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center (SMRLC) at GSU.

“Chicago Matters” is an annual series initiated and funded by The Chicago Community Trust, in collaboration with WTTW Channel 11, Chicago’s Public Radio Station WBEZ 91.5 FM, the Chicago Public Library and “The Chicago Reporter.” The series is in its ninth year.

One program in the series, “Crossroads,” which will air again on Sunday, May 17 at 1 p.m., includes a segment on the recently held Diversity Dinner that were co-sponsored by the SMRLC.

A 30-minute documentary produced by Susan Davis, called “Living Together; Black and White in Chicago’s South Suburbs,” was aired on WBEZ on Wednesday, May 13, at 6 p.m. and again Tuesday, May 19 at 10:30 a.m. This documentary visits neighbors, friends and activists in Homewood and Flossmoor, who talk about leaving, staying and creating community in the South Suburbs, as well as talking about conditions under which people might leave the community.

McClellan said, “Regionalism has become a significant topic for public discussion in the last few years, and the work of many of us at GSU has contributed to this.”

He noted that in “Chicago Matters” print materials, GSU and the SMRLC are listed as key resources for further information on regionalism.
Beverly Bank Sponsors Scholarships/CPA

Charles Ofenloch, executive vice president, announced that Beverly Bancorporation’s board approved the establishment of a program that will provide scholarship funds for low to moderate income students, primarily enrolled in Governors State University’s College of Business and Public Administration.

Ofenloch said that Beverly Bancorporation of Tinley Park will invest $10,000 in 1998 and will consider similar levels of funding for the next four years, "based on the successful implementation of the program in meeting its measurable goals and objectives and subject to Beverly Bancorporation’s annual budgeting process.

GSU President Paula Wolff said, "We are very grateful to Beverly Bank and to Charles Ofenloch. Beverly Bank and Governors State University share a commitment to improve the lives of people who live and work in the Chicago south metropolitan region. This philanthropic support from Beverly Bank will greatly benefit the students and academic programs of GSU, and will also serve as an investment in the ongoing growth of the local business community as these scholarship recipients graduate and assume prominence as business leaders."

In awarding funding for the scholarship program, Ofenloch said, "Governors State University is a jewel in the Southland area and provides a stimulus to its economic growth and viability. Beverly Bancorporation is proud to be associated with the university.”

Application information for the scholarship awards will be published in the next several weeks.

Beverly Bancorporation also recently confirmed a $5,000 operating grant for the Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University.

Ofenloch stated, “Beverly Bancorporation is proud to have taken the leadership on several occasions by underwriting the operations of The Center, and continues to wish you every success in its operation.”

Similar levels of funding will be considered for the next four years, based on the successful operation of The Center in meeting its goals and objectives and subject to Beverly Bancorporation’s annual budgeting process, Ofenloch said.

Burton Dikelsky, executive director of The Center for Performing Arts, said, “Because of this five-year commitment of support from Beverly Bank, The Center for Performing Arts will be able to continue providing world class entertainment to all the Chicago Southland area.”

Artists to Tour Sculpture Park

More than 500 renowned artists and sculptors are expected to tour the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park at Governors State University the morning of May 24, as part of the International Sculpture Center (ISC) Conference being held in Chicago.

Lewis Manilow, the primary benefactor of the park, said that restoration work and excitement generated by the visit are reminiscent of the late ’70s, when semi trucks were pulling into the park daily to erect monumental pieces for a major exhibit called “The Sculpture, the Prairie and the Campus.”

Because so many of the conference attendees registered to tour the park, visitors will arrive by bus from Chicago in two segments, half arriving at approximately 9 a.m., the remainder at about 10:30 a.m., for the hour-and-a-half walk. “This is very exciting for us to have artists from all over the world coming to GSU to view the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park. It’s a testimony to the esteem this park enjoys both nationally and internationally,” said Beverly Goldberg, director of the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park.

In preparation for this momentous event, nearly a third of the 21 pieces in the park have recently been restored to their original grandeur, Goldberg said.

In addition to the ongoing restoration project, identification and directional signage is being prepared for this group and to assist in self-guided tours. A completely revised, accurate and user-friendly brochure also will be available, thanks to a grant from the Chicago Southland Convention and Visitors Bureau, Goldberg said.

Happenings

Research Grants Awarded

The University Research Grants Committee recently awarded grants for the 1998-99 academic year. The committee awarded a total of $20,000 to the following applicants:

College of Business & Public Administration: Don Fricker and David Parmenter, Mary Howes, Akkanad Isaac.


Foundation Office: Beverly Goldberg, Zafar Malik and Richard Vorwerk, both of the College of Business and Public Administration, were selected as alternates.

Internet Workshop Scheduled

The final workshop of the academic year in the Professional Enrichment Program (PEP) series is scheduled for May 27 from 1 - 4 p.m. Adalma Stevens of ITS will present “Information Sources for Fun on the Internet” in room 2435 in the Academic Computer Service (ACS) lab. Please contact Jennifer Blaeser in Human Resources at extension 5306 to RSVP.

Muchnik on Steering Committee for International Conference

Media Communications professor Mel Muchnik is currently serving as a member of the steering committee for an invited international conference on distance education titled Technical Standards for Global Learning. The conference is scheduled for later this month in Salt Lake City and is sponsored by the Western Governors University and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. Reports of the outcomes of the seven working groups at the conference will be made available in June and further discussed in a PBS and National University Telecommunications Network (NUTN) sponsored videoconference scheduled for fall.

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After Graduation, This Couple Is Ready to "Save the World"

David and Cricia Jennings of Matteson are typical Governors State University students, if GSU can be said to have typical students. After all, just like the Jennings’, the majority of GSU’s students are adults with many responsibilities besides their school work.

But the Jennings’ are not typical graduates. While GSU has some husbands and wives attending school at the same time, few are able to march down the aisle to the melody of “Pomp and Circumstance” at the same time. That’s something that requires focus and commitment.

On June 6, their focus and commitment will pay off when both David and Cricia receive a degree from GSU’s College of Education, David a bachelor’s degree and Cricia a master’s.

For years, David had taken classes part time at Chicago State University while working at Mercy Hospital in Chicago, where he’d been employed for 17 years as an obstetrical technician and doctors’ assistant in labor and delivery. Cricia has been teaching for the Chicago Board of Education since 1985 and has been a seventh grade math teacher at James McCo h Elementary School since 1989.

One day, David said, “This wonderful person, my wife, said ‘Why don’t you quit your job and go to school full time?’ It blew my mind — but I did it.” At that point he had been attending GSU for three years part time.

David said that the timing of quitting his job and going to school was perfect. The Jennings’ had just become foster parents, and the 13-month-old boy needed someone with him all the time. Placed with them by Family Care of Illinois, the child was critically undernourished. He couldn’t even sit up by himself at that time, David said, and had to be taken to physical therapy regularly.

The Jennings said when they saw Izell, they immediately said “Yes.” Within a month, they knew they wanted to adopt him and a year later started adoption proceedings. The adoption became final December 21, 1997. “He came with my middle name, too,” proud father David ‘Lee’ Jennings said. “He was meant for us.”

The Jennings also have two daughters, 11-year-old Lucretia, and eight-year-old Darcia who attend Woodgate School in Matteson. Since getting Izell, the Jennings have had several other foster children, but have recently put that on hold for awhile to focus on their three children and completing their educations.

Cricea said she started back to school because of her pastor at New Faith Church in Matteson. “I was sitting in church and my pastor said, ‘If you are in the same positions as you have been for the last five years, it’s because you want to be,’” Cricia said.

That struck a chord with her. While she enjoyed teaching the junior high students, she had come to the decision that she wanted to specialize in teaching children with special needs.

So she also enrolled at GSU. With both parents attending school, scheduling was critical. Cricia said, “If David had a class on one day, I’d schedule one on another day.” They provided strong support for each other. David said that Cricia was his inspiration. “She’s a strong mother, and a hard worker.” Turning to her he remarked, “You’re shorter than I am, but I look up to you.” Cricia smiled and said, “We’ve encouraged each other.”

David has just been hired to teach at Jefferson School in Chicago Heights, where he completed his student teaching and worked on the “Team Success Project.” Team Success is a program similar to summer school, but operates during the school year. David said, under the auspices of Family Care of Illinois, from whom they had received Izell. His specialty is language arts.

This portion of his education is nearly complete, but David said he eventually will go on for a master’s degree. With her new degree in teaching special education, Cricia will try to get a new position within James McCosh, where she currently teaches.

Right now, though, David said ecstatically, “We’re going to go out and save the world.”

Expect this family to do just that.

Happenings
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Welcome to New Employees

The GSU community would like to welcome its newest members:
Fern Katz - South Metropolitan Regional Leadership Center
Gladys Rothman - CELCS
Barbara Ronspies - CELCS
Connie Schrage - ACESSS/Learning Assistance Center
Sheila Nicholes - Center for Performing Arts
Mona Davenport - Student Development
Audrey McIntyre - College of Education
Bishop Cheers - Center for Addictions Technology Education & Evaluation
Patricia Griffin - Library
Regina Reeves - Development
Robbye Peppers - Student Development
Michael Collins - Registrar
Daniel L.Lubovich - College of Business and Public Administration
Alice Ann Parker - Student Development

GSU Gets 911 Service

Department of Public Safety Chief Phil Orawiec said GSU has just installed “the single biggest safety enhancement of the last ten years.” It’s a campus-wide 911 system. Chief Orawiec said that 911 is nationally recognized as the number to call in case of emergency, but until recently the campus number was 111. “People that have been here for five or six years didn’t know to dial 111,” Orawiec said. “If they dialed 911 they would get an outside line, then they’d dial “O” for operator and get a recording.

“This system allows us to immediately know where the call is coming from. We can track it right to the desk,” Orawiec said. “Frequently, when people are excited, they tell us what the problem is, but not where it is. Now we’ll know.”

Stickers with the “911” number on them have been placed on every phone on campus. Someone will always be there to respond, Orawiec said, but asked that 911 be called only for emergencies. Anyone calling that number for a non-emergency will swiftly be referred to the non-emergency number to keep the line free, Orawiec said.
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First Annual GSU Golf Outing in the Works

Governors State University's Alumni Association is sponsoring its first Alumni Golf Outing on Saturday, June 13, at Shady Lawn Golf Course in Beecher.

The golf outing begins with a putting green contest and raffle between 9 and 10 a.m. Tee times are scheduled at seven minute intervals from 10 to 11:30 a.m. A cash bar will be open for cocktails between 4 and 5 p.m., followed by dinner and a program at 5 p.m.

Prizes will be awarded to both a man and a woman for low net, longest drive, closest-to-the-pin and high gross.

Cost for golf and dinner is $75 and includes a golf cart, lunch coupon and dinner. Dinner only is $25.

For more information or to sign up, call (708) 534-4128.

SCORE Has Longer Hours

SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives, located in the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Governors State University, is announcing extended service hours.

Effective immediately, SCORE counselors will be available for appointments on Tuesdays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Approximately 20 SCORE counselors volunteer their services at GSU. SCORE assists those interested in starting a business or business owners experiencing problems.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling Chris Barberi at (708) 534-4929.

Look Out for the GSU Bike Patrol

Last year, as part of a national trend toward an old concept of "community policing," Governors State University's Department of Public Safety (DPS) purchased two specially equipped police bicycles.

Though the bicycles were purchased last summer, by the time the officers were trained in using them for police work, the weather had begun to deteriorate. But in the few weeks they were out, Chief Phil Orawiec said they were deluged with favorable comments.

These mountain bikes facilitate getting around buildings, across the fields, grass, walking paths and in between cars — places where a squad car couldn't go, Orawiec said. Because of the bike patrol's stealthy quality, he said it's the single best anti-gang tactic DPS is using. "It's almost invisible." While a squad car doesn't easily surprise anyone, because a bicycle is very quiet, it provides excellent tactical value. "It started out as a good PR device, but it has many neat side benefits," Orawiec said.

The bikes are also excellent for handling special events. The bicycle officers will be assisting the Folks on Spokes with their annual spring ride this year. Handling commencement exercises will be a breeze with the bikes, as well, said Orawiec.

The two officers certified for bike patrol at GSU are Officer Jason Miotke, who is in charge of the unit, and Officer Larry Walters. The officers received specialized training in using the bike for crowd control, for medical emergencies and even throwing the bike, if necessary, at a perpetrator. The officers received their initial training at the Joliet Police Department and must be recertified annually. Orawiec said Joliet PD is the premier training facility for bicycle patrol in the area.

In addition to the bike patrol, the department also has two community service officers that contribute to the "heat officer" concept: CSO Dominick Kuczwalka, also a student at GSU who is well-known on campus because of his participation in the Student Senate and other campus activities, and CSO Al Berry, a security professional who worked for Amoco and Hyatt.

The bike patrol will be out and about — weather permitting.

Mary Brown
April Employee of the Month

Mary Brown said she is just doing what needs to be done and treating students the way she would want to be treated. Through others' eyes, though, she is "going the extra mile," and that's why she was nominated to be the April Employee of the Month.

Brown of Park Forest is a data entry clerk in the Registrar's Office, where she has worked for three years, one year full time. She and husband Leonard have three children and four grandchildren.

Brown was nominated by two GSU students when she went the extra mile on their behalf. One student said, "She made it her business to learn the particulars of my situation, continued to pursue my case until I was correctly registered in the two courses I had taken this summer ('97) and in making sure my grades for the class were entered."

Another student said, "She rectified [my] problem."

Brown's supervisor, Leora Pedric, added that "Ms. Brown, although sometimes overwhelmed with responsibilities, always finishes her tasks in a timely manner. . . . She is pleasant, upbeat and a very respected member of the registrar's staff."

Brown said that when students come in to the Registrar's Office about an issue, they are usually upset. Her first task is to calm them. "So I can hear what they are saying," she said. Sometimes it takes a little while. From there, she just works on getting the problem solved, whatever that may entail.

"I enjoy it," Mary said. Apparently, so do the students.
The Center for Performing Arts Concludes Successful Season

The Center for Performing Arts at Governors State University, under the leadership of Executive Director Burton E. Dikelsky, has just completed the most successful season ever in its three year history.

The Valentine's Day show with the Coasters, Drifters and Platters and South Africa's cultural emissaries Ladysmith Black Mambazo were sell-out shows for The Center. In addition, all the shows in the children/family series were heavily attended and nearly sold out.

During the entire season the Center continued to present world class Broadway, dance and concert events, while providing a valuable artistic venue for resident and outside concert promoters. The increase in the use of The Center by local groups such as The Suburban Crisis Center, The Enhancement Organization of Olympia Fields, and local schools, GSU groups, business meetings, and churches will be busy through the month of June with various graduations. The Center staff and board are busy working on the '98-'99 season offerings. The goal and theme of The Center for Performing Art's '98-'99 season is "Putting You at The Center." Opening night will feature Ramsey Lewis and Billy Taylor in a tribute to Duke Ellington and George Gershwin on September 12. A Gala Opening party is planned for this special event. Ladysmith Black Mambazo returns next year along with an entire line up of shows, including the Broadway production of "The King and I" for next Mother's Day. Mailing of the '98-'99 season brochure is scheduled for the second week of June. Call The Center Box Office, 708-235-2222, to get on the mailing list.

Ramsey Lewis & Billy Taylor kept The Center active all year long. In total more than 30,000 patrons attended events which took place during the '97-'98 season.

While the regular season has ended at The Center, the venue will be busy through the month of June with various graduations. The Center staff and board are busy working on the '98-'99 season offerings. The goal and theme of The Center for Performing Art's '98-'99 season is "Putting You at The Center." Opening night will feature Ramsey Lewis and Billy Taylor in a tribute to Duke Ellington and George Gershwin on September 12. A Gala Opening party is planned for this special event. Ladysmith Black Mambazo returns next year along with an entire line up of shows, including the Broadway production of "The King and I" for next Mother's Day. Mailing of the '98-'99 season brochure is scheduled for the second week of June. Call The Center Box Office, 708-235-2222, to get on the mailing list.

Students Nominate Faculty for Honors

GSU's Committee for Diversity and Sense of Community held its second annual Student Faculty Choice Honors Reception on Thursday, April 23, in the lobby of The Center for Performing Arts.

Students were invited to nominate the faculty member who had the most positive influence on them personally, on their education and their future for recognition. Students filled out nomination forms and wrote a brief essay why they chose the faculty member.

This year's faculty choices are listed in alphabetical order by college.

College of Arts and Sciences: Mike Blomasz, Arthur Bourgeois, Debra Boyd, Deborah Holdstein, Jeanne Kilpatrick, Jacquelyn Klosak, Anna Kong, Pat Koutouzos, Patricia Krasnodebski, Michele McMaster, Joyce Mohberg, Rashidah Jaami' Muhammad, Pam Neubauer, Milan Panic, June Patton, Walter Perkins, Marilyn Yirku and Shensheng Zhao.


College of Health Professions: Gregory Blevins, Beth Cada, Russell Carter, Arthur Durant, Constance Edwards, Carolyn Fraser, Sandra Mayfield, George Ochsenfeld, Peter Palanca, Ann Vendrelly and Bill Yacullo.


GSU/Alumni News

Talley Wins Golden Apple Award

Lee Talley (MA-CAS 1984, MA-CE 1995) was recently awarded the 1998 Golden Apple Award for outstanding excellence in education. Talley lives and teaches in California.

GSU Alum in Hall of Fame

Thomas Haas (MA-CE 1980) was recently honored as a new inductee into the Illinois Baseball Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Haas has served as the athletic director of Chicago Vocational High School for the past 17 years.

First State Bank & Trust Promotes GSU Grad

James P. Murphy (MA-CBPS 1976) of Lockport was recently promoted from auditor to vice president and cashier with the First State Bank & Trust Co. Murphy earned his GSU degree in business administration.

GSU Prof to Write Forward to Radio Reference Book

Eli Segal, Professor of Media Communications at GSU, has been selected to write the forward to The Golden Age of Radio to be published by Yesteryear Press. The book is being promoted as "The standard reference work of radio programs and radio performers of the past." It will feature information on nearly 100,000 items of radio history. The author is J. David Goldin, founder of Radio/Video Yesteryear.
First-Time GSU Grads Get Free Alumni Membership

Governors State University students completing their first degree are eligible for a one-year free membership in the Alumni Association," said Rosemary Hulett-Porter, director of GSU's Alumni Association.

This is in keeping with the concept that Hulett-Porter has been developing since being hired one and a half years ago, she said. "We want our first contact with alumni to be something other than a request for money. That creates a negative first impression," she said.

Hulett-Porter said benefits of membership in the Alumni Association include use of the academic computing lab; use of GSU’s library; voting privileges within the association; as well as the right to hold office; more than a 50 percent reduction in the cost of membership at the Campus Community Center, free admittance to Student Life-sponsored events and 15 percent off the ticket price for events at The Center for Performing Arts.

The university has about 20,000 alumni. First-time GSU graduates are invited to join the Alumni Association free of charge. For those GSU graduates receiving a second degree and who have not already joined the Alumni Association, the cost is $25 for one year. An Internet account will be set up for any alumnus who contributes $100 or more to the Alumni Association. Those members will also receive a free three-hour training session.

For more information or to enroll, call (708) 534-4128.

Meet... Bob Solomon

"One of the things that impresses me about GSU is that the students there are at GSU for self-improvement and advancement, not because someone has told them they have to go to school," notes GSU Foundation Board member Bob Solomon. "I'm very impressed by the unique student body and the unique mission of the university which focuses on lifelong learning and continuing education."

Solomon has shown just how impressed he is through his dedicated work on behalf of the GSU foundation since 1993, raising money for several scholarships and special programs at GSU. He is particularly excited about the fundraising he does for The Center for Performing Arts at GSU, which he calls "...a jewel in the prairie," noting how important and rewarding it is to have such a regional resource for top quality performing arts.

Solomon recognizes the need for such a resource because of his long-time affiliation with Chicago's Southland region. He grew up on Chicago's south side, and currently works for Homewood-based Silliker Laboratories Group, one of the world's foremost food testing/research facilities, where he is vice president of marketing.

Although he spends a great deal of time in the southern regions of Chicagoland, Solomon currently lives in downtown Chicago. He is married with two daughters, ages three and six. He is active on several other boards and service groups, including the alumni associations of University of Chicago Lab School where he attended high school, Princeton University where he earned his bachelor's degree, and Stanford University where he earned an M.B.A.

Solomon first came to be a part of the GSU foundation board when he was approached by President Paula Wolff, who served with him on the board of directors for Ariel Capital Management. He says that he is glad that Wolff "recruited" him for the board, because he is proud of his involvement with Governors State.

"Silliker has offices in Homewood, Chicago Heights and South Holland, so we're interested in making sure that there are well trained workers in the south region. Many outstanding GSU students or alumni work at Silliker; in fact, many take advantage of our tuition reimbursement program to attend GSU."