News and Events

Oh Provost, Where Art Thou

Thanks to all members of the GSU community who attended Friday’s presentation by Provost candidate Dr. Terry Allison. Candidate evaluation forms should be turned in to Pulchritadia Kinney-Smith in Human Resources as soon as possible.

On Tuesday, December 8, Provost Candidate Dr. Carmen Coballes-Vega, Dean of the College of Professional Studies, Metropolitan State University (St. Paul, Minnesota), will visit the university. The GSU community is asked to welcome her and to attend the community-wide public forum, which takes place from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m., in Sherman Hall. Dr. Coballes-Vega will give a brief PowerPoint presentation on Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, followed by a Q&A session with the audience. Dr. Coballes-Vega’s resume and letter of interest are also online for review.

Candidate evaluation forms will be available after the presentation.

Snow Closure Procedures

With the season’s first measurable snow on the ground, the GSU community is reminded that emergency campus closures due to inclement weather will be communicated via:

1. GSU website homepage
2. GSU website emergency info page (/emergency)
3. Campus wide e-mail sent to faculty/staff e-mail and student iMail addresses
4. School Messenger alert system – per your personal contact preferences
5. WGN Emergency Closing Center website (www.emergencyclosingcenter.com), WGN TV news, WGN 720 AM radio

Students, faculty, and staff are asked to check these sources to determine if there is a campus closure and should NOT contact the Department of Public Safety with basic closure inquiries.

Free Holiday Concert - Tonight

The Chicago Conservatory for the Performing Arts Chorus and Wind Ensemble are joining forces to perform an array of classical Christmas selections. They will present a free holiday concert tonight, at 7:30 p.m., at the Center for Performing Arts.

The concert will explore Christmas music over the course of several eras. Brass, winds, and voices combine to put everyone in the holiday spirit. Claudio Monteverdi’s Vesperes of the Blessed Virgin and Franz Bielbel’s Ave Maria are among many great holiday selections.
**Invest in Your Future**

John Olson, the VALIC Representative under the university’s 403(b) plan, will be on campus on Wednesday, December 9, in the room G269, from 2 to 4 p.m. Appointments are not needed to see John regarding your account or starting a new one.

GSU also has three other authorized vendors able to accept new contributions. They are TIAA-CREF, Fidelity, and the Legend Group.

**Taking Skills to Namibia and Tanzania**

HIV and alcohol abuse are always a toxic combination. In Namibia, a southwestern African nation, 40 percent of the population is HIV positive and 30 to 40 percent suffers from alcohol addiction. It is a combination that can shake the foundations of society.

Assistant Professor Jacqueline Elder, Psy.D, CADC, has traveled to Namibia to help fight this twin scourge. Elder, who teaches in the Master of Addictions Studies program, volunteered her services in combating alcohol abuse, which completely negates any benefit HIV victims get from their medications.

Elder, a GSU graduate, is trained in a technique known as Motivational Interviewing (MI). Her husband, Ken Schmidt—a fellow GSU graduate—joined Elder and other MI trainers on their first visit to Namibia in September 2008. The couple also volunteered in Tanzania, in eastern Africa, during the summer of 2009. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention solicited help from the trainers.

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a form of psychotherapeutic intervention designed to help people change their addictive behavior. Developed approximately 20 years ago, MI was considered somewhat controversial at the time because it involved a more empathic, rather than confrontational, style of therapy.

In Namibia, the goal for Elder and the other trainers was to help the HIV workers (social workers, nurses, and therapists) engage in a non-adversarial and non-judgmental conversation with their patients about their alcohol use and adherence to HIV medication use. Sometimes just one session, done well, yields a positive outcome for patients, according to Elder.

The whole idea is to talk about quitting drinking so the HIV meds can work,” Elder said. “Even though the HIV workers know their clients are drinking, they find it too uncomfortable to bring up the issue of alcohol abuse.”

**Help Soldiers Phone Home**

Student Life is collecting cell phones to help soldiers serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Donations will be used to finance the purchase of calling cards for members of the Armed Services.

All cell phone makes and models, chargers, and accessories are accepted until December 18. Donations may be made to the Welcome Center (Room D1429), Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**Governors State CSI**

The students taking their final exam in Criminal Forensics last week did not sit behind a desk or in front of a computer. Instead, they searched the brush behind the GSU Conference Center, measured blood splatter on a window, took foot casts, and identified fingerprints. They also discovered the most gruesome evidence of a crime…a decomposing body.

The final exam requires students to apply all they had learned to help them solve a crime scenario created by adjunct professor and GSU
alumni, Colin Reid. Reid, who is also a forensics investigator for the West Suburban major Crime Task Force and a sergeant on the River Grove Police Department, kept the evidence as real as possible. The “dead body” the students discovered was actually the carcass of a dead pig he had buried in the ground two weeks earlier.

As the students did their work, the evidence, including a remarkable sketch of the suspect seen fleeing the scene of the crime, pointed to one possible culprit. In a surprise ending to the final and a joke on all the students, the mock evidence pointed to Criminal Justice Program coordinator Dr. Chip Coldren. No arrests have been made.

A story about the forensics final with pictures appeared in the SouthtownStar on December 4.

**Habla Espanol**

The Spanish Reading Club strives to bring together students and community members with different levels of Spanish. The main goal of the group is to improve the members' Spanish level through social events, networking, and language exposure. The club is dedicated to exposing its members to the Latino culture through various events throughout the semester.

Meetings are held weekly to discuss group plans and to practice Spanish. Membership is open to all students, faculty, and staff regardless of Spanish language proficiency. The most important qualification is the desire to make new friends and learn more Spanish.

For more information contact the Spanish Reading Club or Carlos Cantu.

**Ooouuummm**

Rid yourself of holiday stress by starting the year out right. The Library Intellectual Life Committee presents *An Introduction to Meditation* on Wednesday, January 27, from 5 to 7, in Engbreton Hall. Dr. Maristela Zell, Associate Professor of Social Work, will discuss meditation practices and lead participants in several meditation exercises. Light refreshments will be served.