

Raising Our Sights

NIU College of Education's Visual Disabilities Program



Perhaps what is most striking about Dr. Gaylen Kapperman, professor and coordinator of the Visual Disabilities Program, is not that he is blind, but that he approaches his loss of sight with no sense of regret. "Here's the deal," Kapperman says. "I'm blind. I don't like being blind, but I made my mind up that I would turn a bad situation into something good." And that he has – by devoting his career to improving the lives of children and adults who are visually impaired.

A nationally recognized leader in the field of mathematics and visual impairment, Kapperman has been a professor in the College of Education for 32 years. For 28 of those years, he has led the college's visual disabilities program, turning it into one of the most rigorous and comprehensive programs of its kind in the nation. Distinctive in its use of technology for those who are blind, this program is consistently cited as one of the top three, if not THE BEST, such programs in the nation.

A Premier Program

Kapperman and his colleagues have developed the visual disabilities program to the point where it now garners national attention as an exceptional program.

"Our graduates routinely have jobs waiting for them at graduation," Kapperman notes. "We have graduates in every state in the union – they are working at Hines Veterans Administration Hospital (Chicago), for The Seeing Eye (the nation's oldest companion dog training program), for the Chicago Lighthouse for People Who are Blind or Visually Impaired, and at all major rehabilitation centers, not to mention those who teach at schools and universities for the blind. Some of our graduates are executives in non-profit organizations, and others have started their own businesses."

Technology is a key component of NIU's program, providing rigorous experience in its use to support learning, communication and mobility for those who are visually impaired. "We spend an enormous amount of time staying on top of new developments and new technology in this dynamic field so that our students are exposed to the latest advances," says Jodi Sticken, Director of the Orientation and Mobility Program. "We offer no shortcut programs of study; we have very high standards for our students, and feedback from the field tells us that they don't let us down after leaving NIU."

An assistive technology lab provides access to specialized equipment and programs and allows students to hone their skills on the latest technology. Combined with coursework, the lab provides a better understanding of how technology can enhance learning and independent living for persons with visual impairments.

A Three-Pronged Approach

NIU's program has three distinct components:

1. **Training for students to become certified teachers of blind and visually impaired students in the schools.** With undergraduate and graduate options, this component prepares students to provide instruction and support services that enable children with visual impairments to participate in the least restrictive learning environment – often times a traditional classroom with sighted peers. Teachers will work not only with children, but also with their families, caregivers, and school personnel.

2. **Training orientation and mobility specialists.** This master's level program prepares individuals to work in careers that ensure safe, independent travel for those with visual impairments. Orientation and mobility specialists help children and adults achieve the greatest level of independence in daily living (such as moving around one's home, retrieving mail, navigating through shopping centers, etc.), as well as in fulfilling career aspirations and achieving financial independence.

3. **Training for rehabilitation teachers of blind and visually impaired adults.** Graduates of this master's degree program work with blind and visually impaired adults, teaching techniques for safe, independent self-care and home management, as well as communication skills, such as using Braille. These teachers tailor techniques for specific needs, teaching life skills in home settings or rehabilitation centers.

Enrollment in the program is typically between 50 and 60 students, with about 10 to 15 graduating annually. Many students are sighted individuals who have chosen to work with people who are blind or visually impaired. All program components are approved by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Assistant Professor Dr. Kim Zebehazy, who just joined the program this year, says she was impressed with the energy level of the program. "The faculty...strive to make sure that course materials reflect the changing times and promote best practices," she says. "They seek out grants for student support and research projects, and they engage in projects that make an impact on the field as a whole."

Over the years, the program has received millions of dollars in grant funding, which allow faculty to stay on top of new technologies and explore their additional – and sometimes unintended – applications. Kapperman and Sticken just completed the Math Access project, developing specialized tutorials and techniques for teaching mathematics to students who are blind. Current research by Kapperman, Sticken and Zebehazy includes an interdisciplinary project with NIU's geography department to map the campus, thereby enabling people who are visually impaired and using global positioning system devices to navigate it more easily.

Looking to the Future

According to the American Foundation for the Blind, there are about 10 million blind and visually impaired individuals in the U.S.; half of those are over age 65. Every seven minutes, someone in the U.S. loses his sight as part of the aging process and, as the baby boomer generation ages, the frequency will only increase.

"Vision is such an important sense," Kapperman says. "People are scared stiff of blindness; no one is really prepared to deal with it. Parents don't naturally know how to raise a blind child; their first instinct is to protect him or her. Young adults who lose their sight through sudden injury need considerable training to learn to live without it. Older folks who lose their sight due to injury, stroke, or other health problems face huge challenges. And, of course, returning war veterans with loss of vision and other disabilities will need tremendous help. In each case, well-prepared teachers can make an unbelievable impact, helping blind persons live, learn, and work independently."

"Everyone can point to a teacher who had a tremendous impact on their life," he continues. "There is a desperate need for teachers for blind people of all ages, and I can say confidently that it is one of the most rewarding careers imaginable. There are so few teachers for the blind and such a desperate need. Make your life count for something."

For more information about the visual disabilities program and/or admission requirements, please contact Dr. Kapperman at (815) 753-8453 or via e-mail at gkapperman@niu.edu.



Profile: Dr. Gaylen Kapperman

At age six, Kapperman was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa, which causes a slow deterioration of the retina. Doctors said he would be blind by fourteen and urged his parents to rush him through school because, "Once he is blind, his education is OVER." Kapperman chuckles, noting the irony of his lifelong career in education.

With an assertive mother and low vision devices, Kapperman's life was like that of most boys in farming communities – he drove a tractor, rode a horse, played football. "Coaches didn't know how much I couldn't see," he says. "I was very fast off the line in football, which gave me an advantage over the better-sighted kids." However, it didn't take him long to realize that this self-described "blind kid" had no future in rural Nebraska. He took the large-print SAT, found scholarships, and enrolled in Doane College, a small liberal arts college. Majoring in mathematics and German, he joined a fraternity, met his future wife, Sue, and graduated in five years. His frat brothers provided a network of friends and scholars, many of whom he keeps in touch with yet today.

While pursuing a master's degree at University of Northern Colorado, Kapperman applied for a Fulbright Grant, even though the committee had never awarded this prestigious fellowship to a person with visual impairment. As a result, Kapperman became the first person with a visual disability to receive a Fulbright, which he used to study the European approach to special education for students with visual disabilities in Heidelberg. Upon returning to the U.S., he taught math and German at the Kansas School for the Blind, then pursued his doctorate in special education research and administration. In 1974, he began teaching in the College of Education's visual disabilities program and, as he says, "Thirty-two years later, I'm still at it!"

Alumna Lands United Nations Internship

Imagine **Nalika Diyadawagamage's** panic when she learned of "her dream job" - an internship opening at the United Nations just two hours before the application deadline! Scanning the guidelines, Nalika felt that it fit well with her background as an international student and a doctoral student in the Department of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education (CAHE). She submitted the online application and hoped for the best.



This hope of working at the U.N. was Nalika's "lifelong dream." She had seen firsthand the impact of U.N. and World Bank projects while growing up in Sri Lanka and had a deep interest in the U.N.'s mission. That interest paid off when she was selected for the nine-week internship, from May 14 - July 13, 2007. Though torn at the prospect of leaving behind her husband Asanka (M.S./B.S. candidate in NIU's Mechanical Engineering program) and their two young children, she accepted the position with her family's support.

Nalika would work on three assignments in the unit with primary responsibility for the staff selection system: 1. Processing and analyzing survey data about the selection process, 2. Developing a pilot training project to be run in Geneva and Vienna, and 3. Updating job profile templates for hiring and promotion. She loved the U.N.'s international atmosphere, teeming with people in the traditional garb of its 192 member nations, and punctuated with the aroma of international cuisine from the cafeteria and the hum of diverse languages. Her work and cultural experiences affirmed her career choice of international development and human resources.

As a young girl, Nalika was a top student. When political problems in Sri Lanka resulted in school closures, she received a scholarship to study in India. She earned her undergraduate and MBA degrees in India. After six years of executive-level experience, Nalika came to NIU for her M.S. Ed. degree in Adult and Higher Education and also received the Wesley I. Schmidt Scholarship for Excellence in Human Resource Development.

While here, Nalika struggled to understand the field's theoretical concepts. She cites an adult education class that she took with Dr. Lemuel Watson (now Dean Watson) as the point at which she began to understand how education can transform people. She saw how her business background linked with her CAHE coursework. Later, that theoretical connection translated into "real world" experience through her U.N. internship and her subsequent work at NIU, assisting with women's empowerment in Sri Lanka and international training projects in the Philippines, Korea, Cyprus, and Sri Lanka.

Her advisor, Dr. Laurel Jeris, notes how important international students are to education: "International students...add so much to the learning environment for all of us, and Nalika is no exception. Her work in general management and human resource development, along with having earned an MBA in India...bring the benefit of those rich experiences to her coursework and scholarship. Nalika is a very generous 'cultural interpreter' who helps us reflect on theory and practice from a South Asian perspective."

Of her U.N. experience, Nalika says, "In life you have to make certain decisions without knowing the impact or usefulness of them. Sometimes these experiences take you to certain heights which you have never been before. My U.N. experience was like that...I am glad that I got the opportunity and that I made use of the opportunity."

Note: Excerpts from the Graduate Student Newsletter, Fall 2007.

College Celebrates \$15 Million in Grant Awards

Great research informs great teaching, and the College's faculty members contribute significantly to NIU's reputation as a teaching and research university. Following are some of the larger grant awards that were recently announced.

Maylan Dunn-Kenney and **Nina Dorsch** (TLRN) are principal investigators for EC2, a partnership to provide early childhood teaching certification in the Rockford area (\$261,585 over 2 years).

Toni Van Laarhoven, **Sarah Johnston-Rodriguez**, and **Traci Van Laarhoven-Myers** (TLRN) are project directors for MY VOICE (Multimedia for Youth to Voice Outcomes Individually Created for Empowerment), which will train Indian Prairie School District staff, pre-service educators, and parents/guardians to promote and support self-determination and self-advocacy among youth with developmental disabilities (\$337,590 over 3 years).

Gaylen Kapperman (TLRN) is the principal investigator for three awards: 1. A U.S. Dept. of Education grant for the training of four cohorts of on-campus students, one cohort of distance learning students, and one cohort of practicing teachers to become orientation and mobility instructors for those who are visually impaired (\$800,000 over 4 years),

2. A U.S. Dept. of Education grant for the training of five graduate student cohorts to become rehabilitation teachers or orientation and mobility specialists (\$500,000 over 5 years), and 3. An Illinois Board of Higher Education grant that developed a distance learning course focusing on issues for persons who are visually impaired (\$90,575 over 3 years).

David Shernoff (LEPF) is co-principal investigator on a project funded by the National Science Foundation, to assess the impact of a video game for teaching engineering concepts (\$150,000 over 3 years).

Lisa Yamagata-Lynch (ETRA), **Francine Falk-Ross** (LTCY), and **M Cecil Smith** (LEPF) are involved in the multidisciplinary project, Enhancing Diversity Track 2: Intensive Field Experience in Northern Illinois and Central Mexico, a National Science Foundation-funded experience for middle and high school teachers serving large Hispanic populations (\$540,000)

Richard Orem (CAHE) is the principal investigator for Project Success, a five-year project to increase the number of educators teaching ESL and/or bilingual students (\$1,500,000 over 5 years).

Brent Wholeben and his colleagues in the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Policy Studies are serving as evaluators for grant projects in the West Chicago, Rockford, Aurora, and Escanaba (Mich.) school districts, with a combined value of more than \$10,000,000.

CoE faculty members **Carla Shaw**, **Sharon Smaldino**, and **M Cecil Smith** are involved in an interdisciplinary project funded by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to help teachers in the Harlem and West Aurora school districts earn endorsements in interdisciplinary engineering and industrial technology (\$1 million).

CoE faculty members **Carla Shaw** and **M Cecil Smith** are part of an interdisciplinary, multi-year teacher professional development project to develop "highly qualified" middle school math teachers, which is funded by the ISBE (\$1 million).

CoE faculty members **Francine Falk-Ross** and **M Cecil Smith** are part of an interdisciplinary project funded by the ISBE to expand biology and science teaching at the middle school level (\$1 million).

Making the Grade: Scholarship Awards

This year, over 80 students are pursuing education degrees with the support of over \$113,000 in scholarships and awards made possible by the charitable gifts of alumni and friends. Highlighted below are a few of the funds supporting students this year. For more information about establishing a scholarship, contact Deborah Fransen at (815) 753-1137 or via e-mail at dfransen@niu.edu.

Mary F. English Technology Award

"Thank you for donating such a wonderful gift to so many students...The Mary F. English Award has made it possible for me to learn new things about technology that I will one day teach my students....I never would have been able to afford a laptop....This award is something I will always remember..." These are just a few comments from the 2007 English Scholars, supported by a fund that Dr. Robert J. English (Ed.D. '74) established in 1999 as a birthday present for his wife, Mary. They wanted the award to have a "WOW" factor, and, after years of technology consulting, understood the tremendous potential and challenges that computers hold for teachers. From their experiences came the idea of providing a computer system and training to undergraduate students who have physical or financial challenges. There are now 33 students in the program, with an additional 15 to 20 students selected each year.

Penelope (Penny) Fike Cameron Scholarship

Penelope (Penny) Fike Cameron (B.A. '59) says that the education she received at NIU gave her the background and knowledge to meet many challenges in her life. She taught third grade, then served as an elected official on the Kane County Board for many years before retiring to continue her leadership roles with a variety of organizations in her home community of Aurora, Ill. She established this fund in 1998, to support upper-level undergraduate students majoring in elementary education.

Jerry Johns Literacy Presentation Award

A Distinguished Teacher Professor Emeritus and influential writer, Dr. Johns taught in the College for over 30 years. During that time, he received numerous accolades, including induction into the Illinois Reading Council's Reading Hall of Fame. In establishing this fund, Dr. Johns hopes to encourage graduate students' research in literacy by supporting research presentations at conferences. Since 2003, twenty recipients have benefited from this award.

The James and Moke Chee Wolter Endowments

Dr. James (B.S. '60, CAS '76, Ed.D. '80) and Mrs. Moke Chee Wolter's gifts reflect their love of children and their deep commitment to education. They established their first endowment in 2004 - a scholarship for elementary education majors, stipulating that the recipients must "demonstrate a special ability to reach out to children." In 2006, Dr. and Mrs. Wolter reaffirmed their commitment to children and to the College by setting up a second endowment, which will help low-income children access services at the Reading Clinic.

NIU College of Education: Producing Influential Leaders

The College has a long tradition of producing exceptional leaders in education. Here we feature a few of our graduates who have excelled as community college administrators. Dr. Ted Raspiiler, CoE alumnus and Director of the Community College Leadership Program at Old Dominion University, says that community colleges are facing “a shortage of faculty and administrators like never before. Graduates with a strong grasp of adult and higher education theory and practice are a highly sought commodity for key positions.” Check out what our alums have to say about this career track.



DR. RONALD ALLY

PROFESSION:

Vice President of Administrative Services/Treasurer, McHenry County College, Crystal Lake, IL

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREES:

M.S.Ed., School Business Management, 1994
Ed.S., Educational Administration, 1999
Ed.D., Educational Administration, 2005

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER PATH:

“Become well-rounded in your education and experiences, and realize that you can’t be an expert in everything. Working as part of an administrative team to fulfill an institution’s mission can be much more rewarding than you might imagine.”



DR. PATRICIA GRANADOS

PROFESSION:

President, Triton Community College, River Grove, IL

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREES:

M.S. Ed., Educational Administration, 1994
Ed.D., Adult Education, 2004

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER PATH:

“Broaden your experience. Volunteer to serve on committees that help you to understand all parts of the educational institution. When an opportunity comes up...do not pass it up. Be passionate and committed to servicing students. You will reap the rewards.”



DR. JAMES C. GRAY

PROFESSION:

Vice President for Learning and Student Support Services, McHenry County College, Crystal Lake, IL

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREE:

Ed.D., Adult and Continuing Education, 1993

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

PATH: “Develop a base of understanding in both credit and continuing education areas, and it will serve you well.”



DR. PATRICIA KEIR

PROFESSION:

Chancellor, Eastern Iowa Community College District

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREE:

Ed.D, Adult and Continuing Education, 1993

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

PATH: “Be prepared to work hard, respond creatively to the pressures of change, and step up to the plate when opportunities arise. Seek out mentors who can give you honest feedback and open interesting opportunities – at all stages of your career.”



DR. IRENE KOVALA

PROFESSION:

Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Minneapolis

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREE:

Ed.D., Adult and Continuing Education, 1999

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER PATH:

“Seek and actively involve yourself with a mentor. If you find that your values and the values of your organization do not align, leave. Give your employees trust. Be a delegator. Communicate in every method you can and often! And, remember – the best dissertation is one that is on the shelf!”



DR. CHRISTINE SOBEK

PROFESSION:

President, Waubensee Community College, Sugar Grove, IL

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREE:

Ed. D., Adult and Continuing Education, 1996

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

PATH: “Be open to change and growth. Follow what you are passionate about. Strive for balance in your life and learn to be resilient.”



DR. JOHN J. SYGIELSKI

PROFESSION:

President, Lord Fairfax Community College, Middletown, VA

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREE:

Ed.D., Adult and Continuing Education, 1998

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER

PATH: “Build your reputation as the positive, high performing professional willing to execute a variety of goal-driven tasks. Continually refine your interpersonal, management, and leadership skills. Conduct research in a variety of areas in higher education, and present your findings to a juried publication. Network with your peers, especially those in positions you desire.”



DR. WILLARD WRIGHT

PROFESSION:

Vice Chancellor Administrative Services, Yuba Community College District, Marysville, CA

NIU COLLEGE OF EDUCATION DEGREE:

Ed.D., Adult and Continuing Education, 1997

ADVICE FOR ALUMNI WHO WISH TO FOLLOW YOUR CAREER PATH: “In my opinion, a career path in college administration requires not only a formal education, but also hands-on instructional experience in the classroom and as an administrator. I have over 28 years’ teaching experience as a part-time (adjunct) instructor. I truly believe this has given me an advantage over other applicants when I applied for higher-level administrative positions.”

Kudos

Paul Carpenter, chair, Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education, won the 2007 Tejas 500 bike race in 30 hours, 57 minutes and is now training for the 2009 Race Across America event.

Wilma Miranda, former chair and professor emerita, Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations, was honored with the 2007 James and Helen Merritt Award for Outstanding Contributions to Philosophy of Education.

Crossover Dribble, a middle-grade-level novel by **Pamela Farris**, professor emerita, Department of Literacy Education, will be out in mid-November (www.pjfarris.com).

Artwork by **Meryl Domina**, assistant professor, Department of Teaching and Learning, and her mother was featured in a mother/daughter show this fall at the DeKalb Area Women’s Center.

College of Education students **Jenna Arceneaux**, **Lihn-Han Nguyen**, **Melissa Reece**, and **Rey Ty** are featured on the “NIYou” website (www.niu.edu/NIYou/).

Mary Gardner, instructor in the Department of Literacy Education, has been elected president of the Northern Illinois Reading Council.

Norman Stahl, professor and chair, Department of Literacy Education, is president-elect of the National Reading Conference.

Counseling, Adult and Higher Education associate professor **Lisa Baumgartner**, along with coauthors Sharan Merriam and Rosemary Caffarella, won the Cyril O. Houle award for their book *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*.

Northern Illinois University College of Education was honored as a nationally recognized program in elementary education by the Association for Childhood Education International.

TRUE NORTH

Campaign Update

The public phase of “True North,” NIU’s first-ever comprehensive capital campaign, kicked off in May. It is a celebration of NIU’s core values of initiation, hard work, and access. It’s also about an abiding belief that generosity, drive, and dedication DO make the world a better place.

To date, \$113 million has been raised toward the \$150 million fund-raising goal. The campaign focuses on endowed funds for scholarships, programs, and positions, particularly endowed fellowships, professorships and chairs – all areas in which NIU falls far short of its peer institutions. NIU students will reap the benefits of this campaign, enjoying more opportunities to study under, learn from, and work with top scholars, artists, and researchers.

The road to “True North” runs through the heart of our own lives and legacies. What will your legacy be? Perhaps putting your name on an endowed fund would be a good choice. An endowment can be established through an outright gift of cash or appreciated assets, or it can be built through regular gifts over a period of time. As the donor, you choose the fund’s name and what it supports.

For more information about making a gift to the College of Education, contact Deborah Fransen at (815) 753-1137 or via e-mail at dfransen@niu.edu.

Dean's Message

Welcome to the first edition of the College of Education's Newsletter! This new publication gives us an opportunity to share news and showcase the outstanding work being done in the College of Education. I hope you will be energized and excited after reading about the marvelous talents, exceptional programs, and invaluable financial support that enrich and extend the College's impact.



Teacher training is the purpose for which NIU was founded over 100 years ago, and the College of Education remains the heart of this great institution yet today. As one of the nation's premier colleges of education, we have a distinguished record of providing positive educational opportunities, and we are proud of the quality of our programs, our faculty and staff, and, most of all, our graduates.

The new academic year brings the opportunity to examine who we are and who we choose to be in the future. In that vein, we are beginning a strategic planning process that will help identify opportunities, define priorities and develop a "road map" for fulfilling the College's mission. We'll keep you updated during this exciting journey.

We are also pleased to announce that our newly re-designed website is "live." In planning the site, we carefully considered the information and resources that would be most useful to our alumni and friends. Please visit us at www.cedu.niu.edu and let us know what you think.

All of these efforts are only possible because of the dedication and hard work of our faculty and staff, combined with your continued financial support. If you have ever wondered what we do with the gifts you send us, I hope this newsletter will help answer those questions and confirm that your support is making a significant and positive impact.

Lemuel W. Watson, Dean

Credits: **Writer/Editor:** Deborah Fransen (dfransen@niu.edu)
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www.cedu.niu.edu

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I would like more information about alumni events.

I would like to support the College of Education at NIU.

\$50 \$100 \$250

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My gift will be matched! Many employers will match charitable contributions. Ask your HR department. If your employer does, ask for a matching gift form to enclose with your gift.

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Development Office
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115
(815) 753-1137
www.cedu.niu.edu

Please make your check payable to: NIU Foundation-CoE.

To donate by credit card, please select one:

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Signature _____

I have news to share:

Upcoming Events

Last Home Football Game — GO HUSKIES!!

Saturday, November 24
NIU vs. Ball State, 3:00 p.m.

College of Education Holiday Party

Wednesday, December 12; 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Anderson Hall 100

Fall Commencement

Sunday, December 16; Convocation Center

January All College

Wednesday, January 9; O'Connell Theatre, Stevens Building

Los Angeles, CA Alumni Event

Friday, February 15, 2008; Location: TBD

Children's Literature Conference

March 14-15, 2008; NIU DeKalb campus

CoE Retirees and Friends Meeting

Thursday, March 20, 2008; Location: TBD

Arizona Alumni and Friends Receptions

April 1-7, 2008; Phoenix and Tucson

Spring Commencement

Saturday, May 10, 2008; Convocation Center

CoE Retirees and Friends Meeting

Thursday, May 15, 2008; Location TBD

Alumni Ice Cream Social and Jazz Afternoon

June 2008; Location TBD

Alumni Fall Picnic

June 2008; Ellwood House, DeKalb

For more information about these events, please call Gail Hayenga at (815) 753-8370 or via e-mail at ghayenga@niu.edu.

Our annual **Spring Event** will be on Friday, April 25, 2008, at NIU Naperville. This invitation-only event celebrates the generosity of our friends and alumni who contribute \$500 or more to the College during the calendar year. In addition, the event's silent auction raises money for programs and scholarships in the College. For more information about this event, please contact Deborah Fransen at (815) 753-1137. We hope to see you there!