

Compass

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development



Note from the Director

May 12, 2010 Vol. 3 Issue 2

In the following pages you will read about personal loss, growth, and success. We lost one of our best when Dale Gredler, an alum of Stevenson Center programs, passed away unexpectedly—leaving a young family. I personally remember Dale and his outstanding work with the Kentucky Highlands Empowerment Zone. He was a friend to all—indeed adored.

Best wishes to three friends who are retiring or changing position. Lon Carlson, Professor of Economics, taught the Seminar in Local Economic Development for four years. His dedication to quality instruction and learning, as well as his outstandingly rye humor, will be missed by all. You will likely find him on Lake Superior with a fishing rod in his hand. After many years as Graduate Coordinator in Economics, Professor Hassan Mohammadi is stepping down from that post and will continue to teach in the department. We thoroughly enjoyed working with him, and the Economics students have benefitted from the personal care he provided to each of them. Dr. Neil Skaggs is also retiring after 31 years at Illinois State, including service as Chair of Economics. The Center staff thank him for the support he provided us and our students.

This is also a time of growth for the Center. A generous endowment from Dr. Vernon and Elsie Pohlmann has created a multi-purpose space within the Center. It is part student computer lab, part resource room, and part conference room. The Presidential dedication is on May 24 (see page 3) and we hope to see you there. Many students are graduating; others are about to begin their professional practice. In short, we continue to thrive. Thank you for taking the time to read *Compass*, sharing in our sadness, and celebrating our accomplishments. —Frank

In Memory of Dale J. Gredler

Dale J. Gredler, 42, passed away suddenly in London on January 27, 2010. Dale is survived by his wife, Caroline; daughters, Alyson and Sarah; father, John; mother, Alice; stepfather, Jerry; brother, Terry; and sister, Debi. Dale leaves behind a tremendous legacy of dedication and service. Dale joined the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) on May 20, 2001. At the time of his death, Dale was stationed in Almaty, Kazakhstan. He had previously served in Indonesia. His service to his country improved the lives of thousands in impoverished countries.



Dale (M.A. 1999, Political Science) was a Peace Corps Fellow. He served in the Republic of the Philippines from 1994 to 1996: he met Caroline there. After his Peace Corps service and study on campus, Dale brought his community development expertise to rural Kentucky. For his internship, Dale worked for Somerset Community College and the University of Kentucky as part of a U.S. Department of Agriculture program in Lexington. In this capacity Dale promoted rural community empowerment before joining USAID.

Dale received his B.A. in Urban and Regional Planning from Eastern Washington University in 1990, and he worked as a city planner.

A colleague at USAID noted, “Dale was a dedicated professional and father whose presence will be sorely missed....Most noteworthy among his many contributions was his outstanding work on the Aceh Tsunami Relief and Recovery efforts which proved critical to the effective success of restoring infrastructure, governance, and livelihoods to a massively devastated population. “

“Dale will be most remembered not only for these efforts but moreso for the sincere interest he carried in each individual he met, the strength of his beliefs, and the warmth of his heart.”

Current Internships

Case Bell,
CASA of Sedgwick County, Wichita, KS

Amy Deal,
Greater Livingston County Economic
Development Council, Pontiac, IL

Cassandra Fritzsche,
West Bloomington Revitalization
Partnership, IL

Christine Holmes,
University of IL Extension, Bloomington

Viktor Schrader,
Quality Quest for Health of Illinois, Peoria

Phil Steffes,
NeighborWorks America, Washington, DC

Students and Alumni Serving with Peace Corps

Jessica (Murphy) Aleksy, South Africa

Ted Fischer, St. Vincent

Kara Harvey, Togo

Brian Hillery, Cameroon

Rebecca Hodel, China

Michael Hotard, Kazakhstan

Janelle Jones, Peru

Joe Lauchlan, Costa Rica

Andrew Maxwell, Ukraine

Eric Porter, Micronesia

Brad Pribe, Kyrgyz Republic

Kevin Souza, Togo



Nadia and Jermain in the Netherlands

Alumni Spotlight

Jermain Griffin (M.S. 2006, Political Science, Peace Corps Master's International Alum) is the Associate Director of International Studies at Fairfield University in Fairfield, CT. Prior to attending Illinois State University, Jermain received his bachelor's degree in Economics from Western Connecticut State University and a master's degree in Public Affairs Reporting from the University of Illinois at Springfield. He worked as a reporter in Connecticut, New York, and Illinois. Jermain decided while covering state politics that he wanted to serve in the Peace Corps, and he discovered that Illinois State had an excellent program. While attending ISU, Jermain's graduate assistantship was with the McLean County Urban League.

Nadia [Negrustueva] Griffin (M.S. 2006, Political Science, Applied Community and Economic Development Fellows Program Alum), a native of Moscow, Russia, came to ISU with a legal background and several years of nonprofit experience with organizations like the International Rescue Committee.

Their friendship began during the first week of classes at Illinois State. After finishing her coursework, Nadia began her professional practice as an admin/finance officer with War Child, a Netherlands-based international non-governmental organization (INGO) in the West African nation of Sierra Leone. Shortly thereafter, Jermain embarked on his journey to serve with the Peace Corps in El Salvador, assisting communities as a youth development worker for over two years. "My graduate work on social capital was most helpful during my first year in helping me to understand the raw and complex process of developing relationships that were critical to engaging community in local endeavors aimed at making an impact," says Jermain.

The two enamored Redbirds maintained their very close relationship despite the long distance and logistical challenges. "There were weeks when I did not get to hear her voice, but the ties that bound us were stronger than borders or distances," remembers Jermain. In January 2006, the couple took a break from their international experiences to have a small wedding ceremony in Kew Gardens, New York: "We wanted to keep it simple and spend as much time together as possible." In the summer of 2007, the couple was finally reunited in Sudan. Nadia had been promoted to War Child senior management for the organization's program operations throughout Sudan, and Jermain took a job with the INGO Mercy Corps as manager of an economic recovery program aimed at assisting Sudanese who were returning to their communities after enduring over two decades of conflict. "Sudan was a life-changing experience for us," Jermain reports.

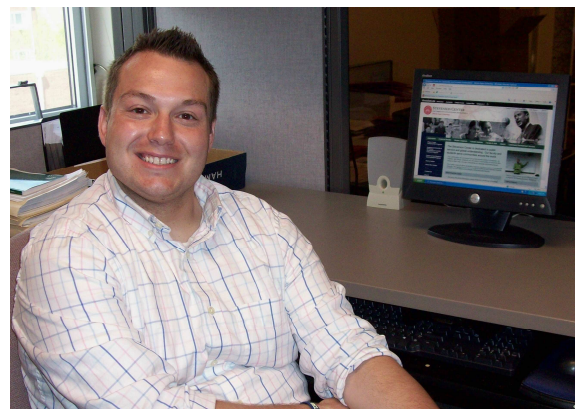
In the summer of 2008, the couple decided it was time to return to the United States. Today Jermain shares his international experiences with his students at Fairfield as they engage in their intellectual pursuits while serving their community. Nadia continues to work in the international aid and development field with Action Against Hunger out of their New York office as a logistics advisor.

On October 15, 2009, Nadia and Jermain became the proud (and very busy) parents of Sophia Elizabeth Griffin. "She is our little global citizen," laughs Jermain.

Student Spotlight

Mat Willey is completing a Master's Degree in Sociology as an Applied Community and Economic Development Fellow at Illinois State University. Mat completed his professional practice with the State Public Policy Group, an Iowa-focused consulting firm. The firm seeks social responsibility by providing services such as evaluation and training on health care, development, and child welfare issues. Mat received his B.A. in Sociology from Central College in Pella, Iowa. He recently presented his thesis research at ISU's Graduate Research Symposia on March 26, 2010, and defended his thesis on April 23, 2010. His thesis is entitled *Come All Ye Faithful? The Dynamics of Young Adult Recruitment by Churches of Different Political Orientations*.

Most recently, Mat worked for the Illinois State Career Center as the Diversity Initiatives Graduate Assistant. He was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Cultural Career Network Program (CCNP). CCNP prepared students for the workplace through networking and career awareness. Mat also is a Disaster Services volunteer with the American Red Cross and an avid crossfitter. After graduation, Mat would love to continue working with college students in some capacity. He finds the work rewarding, challenging, and fun.



Mat at the Stevenson Center office

Generous Gifts from the Pohlmann Family

The Pohlmann Resource & Conference room, located within the Stevenson Center, 435C Stevenson Hall, was remodeled this April. The conference room offers a variety of opportunities to current Stevenson Center graduate students. Vernon C. Pohlmann along with his late wife, Elsie D. Pohlmann, made a significant gift to the University in order to refurbish the room. The donation furthers the Center's commitment to involving students and faculty in and out of the classroom. Current students come and go as they please, using the conference room as a place to work and meet.

"Pohlmann Family Development Grants and the Pohlmann Resource and Conference Room offer an opportunity for the family's legacy to impact graduate students and faculty in the social sciences while also contributing to the welfare of local organizations," said Frank Beck, Director.

The remodeled space features two new work stations for students as well as new furniture. Some cabinets were removed and walls re-painted. There are also funds set aside for books, journals and software.



Stevenson Hall, Pohlmann Resource and Conference Room, 435C

The dedication of the Pohlmann Resource & Conference Room is set for May 24, 2010, 1:30 pm at Stevenson Hall, Office Suite 435.

All are invited to this Presidential Ceremony.

The event will honor Vernon Pohlmann and his family for all of their kindness and generosity. There will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony, formal remarks, refreshments, and a chance to tour the new room.

Contact Lynne Morrison at (309) 438-4781 or lemorr2@ilstu.edu by May 20th to RSVP.



Vernon C. Pohlmann and the late Elsie D. Pohlmann have also endowed the Pohlmann Family Development Grants. Dr. Pohlmann and his family are very dedicated to Illinois State University. Dr. Pohlmann was appointed to the College of Arts and Science Emeritus Faculty Advisory Board. In 2008, he was inducted into the College's Hall of Fame.

Dr. Pohlmann is currently in his twenty-third year as a volunteer at the Home Sweet Home Ministries homeless shelter, where he and Elsie were named Volunteers of the Year in 1995. Dr. Pohlmann is an incredibly generous and kind man who has a huge heart.

The Stevenson Center is very appreciative of his donation and support.

Dr. Muhammad Yunus Visits Central IL

Dr. Muhammad Yunus visited the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign on March 1, 2010, to speak about social entrepreneurship. The founder of Grameen Bank and an advocate of microfinance, Dr. Yunus received the Nobel Peace Prize for his research in 2006. During this visit, Dr. Yunus made himself available to students, faculty, staff, and the general public for a book signing during a poster session hosted by the College of Business in their Atrium. Sue Bandy, Community and Economic Development Educator at the University of Illinois Extension-McLean County, and Peace Corps Fellow Christine Holmes were honored to be a part of this session. They presented a poster on the new Multicultural Leadership Program in McLean County. This program enhances the opportunities of people with diverse backgrounds to serve on committees and boards through a rigorous professional development leadership program. For her professional practice, Christine has played a key role in launching this exciting program.

Student Presentations and Awards

Joint Annual Meeting of Midwest Sociological Society & North Central Sociological Association, *Communities in an Age of Social Transformation*, March 31-April 3, 2010: Amy Deal (PCF) and Sean Moore (PCMI)

Graduate Research Symposia, Illinois State University, Oral Presentation, March 26, 2010: Amy Deal (PCF) and Mat Willey (ACEDF)

Department of Sociology 2009-2010 Charter Graduate Student Excellence Award, Illinois State University: Tessa Zevallos (PCF)



Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Hassan Mohammadi is finishing his term as graduate coordinator in the Economics Department. He received his Ph.D. in economics from Washington State University in 1988 and joined Illinois State University soon after. His areas of specialty include macroeconomics, economics of financial markets and intermediaries, and applied econometrics. His earlier research appeared in *Southern Economic Journal*, *Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, and *Journal of Economic Studies*, among others. His recent research on international crude oil prices and interactions among prices for crude oil, natural gas, coal, and electricity has appeared in *Applied Economics* and *Energy Economics*. In addition to teaching, Dr. Mohammadi has done collaborative work with the United Nations and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Stevenson Center staff, faculty, and students offer heartfelt thanks to Dr. Mohammadi for his dedicated service as graduate coordinator.

Professor Mohammadi has been an advocate of the Stevenson Center's mission since its inception. He has been involved with the Center as a teacher, graduate advisor, and member of its advisory board: "I have enjoyed my involvement with the Stevenson Center. The Center has contributed to the teaching, research, and service missions of the University. As the Economics department graduate coordinator, I am

very happy with the superb quality of the students that join our program in community and economic development. Fellows bring with them a wealth of real life experience in community services, and students in Peace Corps Master's International are committed to make a difference in the life of others. Apart from its unique mission, the success of the Stevenson Center is due to the dedication and hard work of Dr. Frank Beck and its great team, particularly Beverly Beyer and Martha Boudeman." Dr. Oz Dincer will take over these duties in May 2010.



AmeriCorps News

The Stevenson Center is finishing its fifth year of providing AmeriCorps Member status and benefits to some of our students serving in Illinois. Examples of accomplishments include:

- Through her work with the Greater Livingston County Economic Development Council, Amy Deal helped the town of Cullom (population 400) in establishing a cooperative grocery store.
- Christine Holmes, with the University of Illinois Extension office in McLean County, launched the Multicultural Leadership Program, with several members of the first class beginning service on boards and committees.
- At Quality Quest for Health of Illinois, Viktor Schrader has assisted the Healthy Community Schools Team in taking concrete steps to measurably combat obesity in some of Peoria's high-risk schools.
- Serving with the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Jered Ulschmid has been promoting the 2010 Census count at every opportunity with good results.

The Stevenson Center is continuing its partnership with the Leadership and Service Unit on campus. Under the supervision of Harriett Steinbach, Shantira Norris engages undergraduates at the Student Volunteer Center, for example by arranging for student volunteers to build a wheelchair ramp for a local family. We thank our colleagues at Western Illinois University for their partnership in the endeavor.

Give a Gift to the Stevenson Center

We want to serve more communities and more students. Thus, a primary goal is reducing the cost of these services so that more underserved communities can benefit from the great work of our students. Donations reduce that cost. Thank you for your consideration.

Check one or Both:

Student Service to Communities

Endowment

\$10

\$15

\$25

\$50

\$100

Other \$ _____

Please send checks payable to the Stevenson Center or visit us online at www.stevensoncenter.org to make a donation.



STEVENSON CENTER

FOR COMMUNITY AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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