

THE GENERAL COLLEGE MAGAZINE

Access

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Volume 4, Number 1

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CULTURAL INSIDER *ACADEMIC EXPERT*

Zha Blong Xiong



Access

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FOCUS ON | Hmong resettlement

When it was announced that St. Paul was a designated site for the resettlement of 5,000 Hmong from a refugee camp in Thailand, the news was received with great interest in the General College. In the past, resettlement efforts usually meant that within two to five years students from those populations would be seeking access to the University of Minnesota. This was certainly true of the Twin Cities' most recent immigrants, the Somali people.

Fortunately, the University of Minnesota has among its faculty Dr. Zha Blong Xiong, an assistant professor in the General College who specializes in parent/adolescent relationships in Hmong families. In 1982, his family fled Laos for Thailand. In 2000 Dr. Xiong completed his doctorate in family social science at the University. In joining the faculty ranks of the General College, he has become the first Hmong tenure-track faculty member at the University of Minnesota, perhaps the first in the United States. Dr. Xiong's research and that of his colleague, GC Associate Dean and Professor Daniel Detzner, has been important to understanding the stresses related to the acculturation process in the Hmong community.

Dr. Xiong was not the first Hmong Ph.D. hired at the University. That distinction goes to Dr. Dao Yang, also hired by the General College, in the Student Services Office in the mid-1980s. Among his outstanding achievements, Dr. Yang received the first Ph.D. awarded to a Hmong in the country.

In addition to an article on Dr. Xiong, we have provided information in this issue on the General College Commanding English program. Many of the new Hmong residents will require assistance with language acquisition. This program, which has been in existence for 25 years, has been an important resource for immigrants for whom English is a second, third, or fourth language skill.

The information provided in this issue of *Access* demonstrates how this "urban college" continues to adapt to the needs of Minnesota in the 21st century.



Access begins its fourth year of publication with this fall 2004 issue. Longtime readers will notice that we have a new format—a little smaller, different paper. Making the page size smaller allows us to upgrade our paper and still pay the same for each issue. The matte paper you hold in your hands allows for better photo reproduction and an overall enhancement of *Access's* appearance. Graphic designer Sysouk Khambounmy of University Printing Services, is the creative force behind both the original *Access* design and this lively, updated version. Thank you, Sysouk!



Laura Weber, editor

I'd like to welcome our newest readers, parents of the University of Minnesota class of 2008. Along with parents of our continuing students, you make up the second largest audience (1,500) among our readership of approximately 13,000. We also send *Access* to some 10,000 General College alumni and donors; 500 campus deans, department heads, directors, and other "U" staff members; 200-plus elected officials; and various representatives of the media and community organizations.

The mission of *Access* is to tell the General College story, whether through the teaching, research, and advising of our talented and committed faculty and staff or via the accomplishments of our students and alumni. In this issue, we introduce a new feature, "From the Archives." As GC approaches its 75th anniversary in 2007, we will look at a noteworthy item from the General College Archives that, we hope, illuminates an important, but forgotten aspect of our legacy.

Remember, back issues of *Access* are available online at <http://www.gen.umn.edu/programs/communications/access>. We welcome your feedback on any aspect of *Access*. Please send comments, story ideas, or alumni notes to me at gcomm@umn.edu or write to 109 Appleby Hall, 128 Pleasant Street S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455-0434.

On the cover

In less than 20 years, Zha Blong Xiong has gone from being a refugee who spoke no English to becoming the first Hmong tenure-track professor at the University of Minnesota. The General College assistant professor's research focuses on parent/adolescent relationships in immigrant families. A recent project, a study of why some siblings in a Hmong family become juvenile delinquents and others don't, was aided by undergraduate research assistants (l to r) Tou Y. Xiong, Molly Yang, Dao Lor, LecLue Vang, and Pao Xiong. (Not pictured, Ser Xiong.)

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The mission of General College is to provide access to the University of Minnesota for highly motivated students from a broad range of backgrounds who demonstrate potential to succeed at a major research university and to advance research in fields affecting those students' success, including developmental and multicultural education.

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Making AN IMPACT

By Suzy Frisch

Zha Blong Xiong is a force within academia—and his Hmong community

Zha Blong Xiong knows what it's like to be new to the country and not know enough English to ask the location of a bathroom, let alone how to use the facilities when he got there. He's familiar with the experience of feeling lost in school, unable to understand what the teacher is lecturing about and just trying to make it through the day.

When thousands of Hmong refugees immigrate to Minnesota this year, Xiong will be there to help several family members and the refugee group at large make the adjustment from refugee camp to the Western world. He'll show them by example what they can achieve with hard work and perseverance. After all, in less than 20 years Xiong has gone from being a refugee who spoke no English to becoming the first Hmong tenure-track professor at the University of Minnesota, and the first at a major research university in the United States.

An assistant professor in General College since 2002, Xiong specializes in parent/adolescent relationships in immigrant families, adolescent adjustment, and parent education. He earned his master's degree and Ph.D. in family social science from the University of Minnesota in 2000, just 18 years after his family fled Laos for the safety of Thailand.

Since joining General College, Xiong has undertaken several new research projects, including a study of why some siblings in a Hmong family become juvenile delinquents and others don't. He also plans to track and compare the experiences of first-generation immigrant General College students with those of nonimmigrant students.

Drive to learn and succeed

It was not an easy journey from Asia to America for Xiong's family. For two years his parents, five brothers, and three sisters lived in the jungle because his father had been a captain in the Laotian military and was wanted for reeducation by the new Communist regime. After a major battle in the jungle, Xiong's oldest brother was killed at the age of 14. Eventually the family made it back to Luang Prabang, the city where Xiong grew up, and an uncle helped them escape across the Mekong River to Thailand. The family spent a year and a half in the refugee camp before an aunt and uncle in Rosemount, Minnesota, sponsored their immigration to the United States in 1982.

Xiong entered school in the ninth grade and went through the struggles common to most immigrant children. "It was very, very difficult adjusting to the environment. It seemed at the time impossible to manage," he says. "We had to go through learning the basics, using the rest room, the shower, the stove, learning how to get out of school and memorize the bus number because you don't know the language. When I was faced with the situation, my mind was trying to concentrate on getting through each day rather than learning the subject."

Zha Blong really means it when he says his door is always open. I sometimes show up unexpectedly and he always graciously makes time for me. There were times when he was clearly very busy and had papers strewn all over, but he always stopped to make time for my questions. He's really sincere when he says that students are one of his top priorities.

Participating in his research has taught me so much about the research. I'm glad he offered this opportunity for us to gain new experiences.

Molly Yang, bioscience major, CBS



But Xiong had a drive to learn and succeed, powered by the dreams of his parents that he and his siblings obtain a higher education. His father always said he wanted his kids to achieve something better than being a schoolteacher or a nurse, and Xiong shared that goal.

He and his family went to great lengths to make sure they adjusted to their new culture. For one year when Xiong was in tenth grade, he and a younger brother lived with an American couple on their farm so they would be immersed in the English language and American culture.

Then the family moved from Rosemount to Hastings so that the Xiong siblings could repeat two grades. Xiong felt he had learned enough English by then to really master the subject matter of ninth grade, so he started over where he had begun when he moved to the United States.

Community work began early

Xiong graduated from Hastings High School and went on to college at Winona State University, where he majored in psychology. It was there that he got involved with the community and his fellow students, serving as president of the Hmong Student Club. He volunteered his time to teach the Winona community at large about Hmong people by offering adult education courses about his cultural traditions, while at the same time helping members of the Hmong community settle in Winona.

After graduating with honors, Xiong continued to work with the community, starting as an extension agent for the University of Minnesota Extension Service in Dakota County. He worked primarily with immigrants—especially those from Asia—on the issues they faced as parents in America. But he couldn't find a curriculum that was devoted to Asian Americans, rather than just being a class adapted from a mainstream American course.

Xiong approached Dan Detzner, then a professor in the University's College of Human Ecology who focused on family social science, to see if he knew of any curricula that Xiong could use or adapt. Detzner, who is now associate dean of General College,

told Xiong that he would have to create a curriculum himself and encouraged him to enroll in the family social science master's program at the University to do just that.

Xiong took his advice. While earning his master's, Xiong teamed up with Detzner to develop the curriculum "Helping Youth Succeed: Bicultural Parenting in Southeast

ZHA BLONG XIONG, to next page

■ *I worked with Dr. Xiong this past year dealing with Hmong youths who are involved with gangs. Dr. Xiong was a very great professor, a person who has infinite ideas about how to do research about the immigrants. If you ask him about how to prepare for research, how to deal with different ages, anything about social [interactions] with people, he can get on it and show you step by step. [Once we] got started, it was like a cobweb where it's just connected to more and more ideas. Before we undergrad students did the research, he took time to teach all of us carefully until we were well trained.*

Pao Xiong, CLA, third-year political science major

Xiong brings this *padao* (embroidered tapestry) to workshops. The artist portrays the immigrant journey of the Hmong: farmers whose land was invaded by the North Vietnamese, followed by escape to Thailand. Elders use the *padao*, rather than written language, to express their sorrow, Xiong said.



Commanding English lays groundwork for newest Hmong immigrants

General College may have a fresh crop of candidates for its Commanding English program from the pool of 5,000 Hmong refugees who are expected to move to Minnesota from the Wat Tham Krabok refugee camp in Thailand. But program director Robin Murie predicts that those students probably won't be ready for Commanding English for a number of years, especially if they haven't had much formal education previously.

In the meantime, Murie is laying the groundwork for General College and Commanding English to reach out to the new immigrants by developing a service-learning writing course for the spring semester of 2006, where General College would train its own students to tutor Hmong newcomers of junior high school age. The students would gain valuable tutoring skills and write papers about their experience, while at the same time providing academic outreach to an age group that is often vulnerable to peer pressure.

"We would get some bilingual tutors to the site where the junior high kids are. It would be helpful for these young teenagers to see older role models who are in college," explains Murie. "I think we're five to six years out before we're looking at some of the students in the college program. But until then, we can use the students we have to set up some bridges."

Commanding English offers a two-semester program for 45 to 60 students whose home language is not English but who could benefit from academic and English language support in their freshman year. The students work in learning communities with special advising, tutors in every writing class, and reading classes that supplement their main coursework.

Many of the Hmong newcomers will face the same struggles as their predecessors who immigrated starting 25 years ago—having to learn English and navigate the foreign cultural and academic life of the United States. But in some ways, things will be easier for them.

"The refugees coming now are coming into a well-established network with bilingual social workers, bilingual teachers, family members who are settled," said Murie. "The early wave of Hmong refugees came with very little. It was a long haul for them, but we're better set up now than we were then."

General College started Commanding English 25 years ago to help the first wave of immigrants who fled Southeast Asia for Minnesota. Administrators were concerned that many of these young people were graduating from high school but not making their way to the University. These days, the program helps a wide variety of students, including those from Somalia and other East African countries, Eastern Europeans, and Latinos. Commanding English also reaches out to high school students through postsecondary options programs at Roosevelt and Edison High Schools in Minneapolis, offering college courses to qualified juniors and seniors.

The ultimate goal is to acclimate students to the University and build their academic confidence and fluency so that they can transfer from General College into another program and succeed. And Commanding English has a track record of doing just that. Retention rates for students in the program are high, at more than 90 percent through the first year and 66 to 76 percent three years later, according to Murie.

"We've helped a lot of students over those 25 years gain an open door at the University and go on to complete degrees. That's our mission," notes Murie. "I think we would have seen a much larger failure rate of freshmen without Commanding English. We help freshmen succeed and become sophomores." —*Suzy Frisch*



Robin Murie

Asian Families." The coursework involves 24 family stories that prompt discussions among parents about issues facing their families, especially their relationship with their teenagers. It took the pair about five years to create the program while they held extensive focus groups with the Vietnamese, Hmong, Lao, and Cambodian populations and did research of their own on the communities. Commanding English (CE) instructor Pat Eliason wrote the scenarios based on information from the focus groups. (See sidebar.)

Detzner and Xiong had the curriculum translated into all four languages and produced a video to accompany the course. The goal of "Helping Youth Succeed" is to provide a way for Southeast Asian-American parents to blend what's working from their own cultural traditions with new American techniques.

Making an academic contribution

On a two-year leave from the Extension Service, Xiong had every intention of returning to work after receiving his master's degree. But he realized there was little social science research and academic literature about Asian Americans, and Hmong people in particular, so he altered his plans and decided to earn a Ph.D. from a major research university—the University of Minnesota. That way, he could make major contributions to the body of academic work about Asians in America.

After receiving his Ph.D., Xiong spent two years as an assistant professor at Iowa State University. But he wanted to return to Minnesota to be close to his large family and to be among the extensive Hmong community in the Twin Cities. He also wanted to live and work in an area where there was a vibrant immigrant community to research—something Ames, Iowa, couldn't offer.

Detzner is grateful Xiong decided to continue on the family social science career path, for himself, the University, and the Southeast Asian community at large. "Blong is able to do research that no one else can because he's a cultural insider, and he knows people who will open doors for him that they wouldn't for anyone else," he said. "He brings the insider information as well as the aca-

ademic expertise, and that combination is rare and highly valuable.”

Xiong also serves as a role model for General College students, among whom are significant numbers of first-generation immigrant students. “He shows these kids, who have a lot of difficulty overcoming their lack of cultural knowledge of the United States and of the University, that hard work and persistence pays off,” noted Detzner. “You can make it all the way through the system and be successful.”

Smoothing the way for others

Later this year, Xiong and his family will greet about a dozen family members who are leaving the Wat Tham Krabok refugee camp in Thailand for Minnesota. He, his siblings, and parents will use their experience in adjusting to a new land to help these fresh arrivals get settled in America. With his experience as a new immigrant still sharp in his mind, and armed with the knowledge and expertise he has gleaned in family dynamics and the immigrant experience, Xiong should be able to make his family members’ transition a smoother one.

“When you are refugees, your life just becomes chaos. You want to make sure these families never go through the same thing you went through,” Xiong says. “Their children will have an opportunity to play with our children, so they will adjust much quicker. We can take these parents to parent-teacher conferences and model the process. My family never had that opportunity. Those are things that are more personal for us and will make an immediate impact for these families.”

Xiong seems to make an immediate impact wherever he goes, whether it’s in the world of academia or in his own community. This time—both with his family and in blazing a trail for other Hmong academics in the United States—should be no different. ■

■ *I could not have understood the significance of protecting human subjects, designing culturally relevant research, and collecting data via face-to-face interviews if not for this sponsor-faculty.*

Tou Ying Xiong, CLA

Zha Blong Xiong (left) was assisted in his study of Hmong siblings by undergraduate research assistants (sitting, l to r) Tou Y. Xiong, Molly Yang, Dao Lor, Leclue Vang, and (standing l to r) Ser Xiong and Pao Xiong.



BILL AL KOEER

BROADENING *horizons*

through learning abroad

By Judith A. Fox



LAKEESHA RANSOM

Darrell Tate got an eye-opening lesson in democracy while studying abroad in South Africa this summer.

"In this country, we don't take ownership in our democratic process beyond voting," says Tate, a former General College student now studying sociology in CLA. "One of the really positive things about South Africa is the concept of a civil society, meaning the regular citizen has a calling more than just a vote. So you have ordinary people just doing what they can at the community, regional, and provincial levels."

Tate's life-changing experience is just what Cheryl Johnson hopes for other students since spearheading the GC Learning Abroad Committee last spring. Johnson, an executive administrative assistant in the GC Dean's Office, missed out on learning-abroad oppor-

tunities in her own education and feels passionately that GC students should see learning abroad as a possibility in their lives. "We are a global society now," said Johnson, "and here in the United States we tend to be stuck in our own back yards."

The GC Learning Abroad Committee, chaired by retired staff member Bev Stewart, works to raise awareness of learning abroad opportunities for current GC students as well as those who began in GC and have now transferred to other colleges, raises funds for scholarships, and encourages faculty to develop courses they can teach abroad.

Tate was joined in South Africa by fellow current and former GC students Anthony Galloway and Mandla Xaba. The trip was part of a special learning-abroad opportunity organized and sponsored by the Office for Multicultural

and Academic Affairs (OMAA), with some financial assistance from General College. Last spring, the three took a course entitled "Emerging Democracies: Lessons from South Africa," taught by Professor Harry Boyte of the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. All students in the course were eligible to participate in the summer learning abroad experience; five actually made the trip.

The students spent seven weeks in South Africa and divided their time between coursework at the University of Witwatersand in Johannesburg, community service, and travel. They worked with other students to move a

kindergarten, or "creche," and planted a vegetable garden in a rural village. But their most powerful lessons came from interacting with a wide variety of South African people.

"You can learn lessons in democracy from each person," Tate said. "It was very, very powerful to get opinions on people's ownership of that new democracy and their place in their society."

Galloway, a former GC student now studying anthropology in CLA, says the experience challenged his expectations and gave him a

LEARNING ABROAD, to p. 11

At a radio station in Johannesburg's Alexandria township, University of Minnesota students learned about neighborhood development issues. L to r (sitting) Anthony Dew, Mandla Xaba, Anthony Galloway, Jeremy Jones, (standing) Darrell Tate and unidentified South African staff member. Above: Dew in Johannesburg.



Dennis Malmberg

GOES OUT ON A HIGH NOTE



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By Tom Loneragan

When Dennis Malmberg retired this spring after 31 years as music teacher and band/orchestra director at Minneapolis South High, the occasion was noted in a prominent feature story in the *Star Tribune*, where he was described as “legendary.”

Malmberg obviously found his niche in life, but it wasn't always so. “I was in way over my head,” said the lifelong musician, recalling his two quarters at General College in 1965.

“At that particular time in my life, it was going to take a whole lot more than I was willing to do to succeed at the ‘U.’ My teachers knew I was a miserable student, but they were very nice.”

In 1964, college was in 18-year-old Denny Malmberg's future whether he liked it or not. His parents—Larry and Louise—insisted. Lawrence Malmberg, an internationally known accordionist, was a faculty member in the School of Music.

“My [high school] grades were really bad, but I was a good musician,” Malmberg said. “The only college I could get into was GC. I had a really excellent anthropology teacher, but I barely survived the first quarter. The second quarter was worse.”

“It was becoming very clear that academia was not for me,” Malmberg said. “I didn't apply myself. Most of the time I was at Coffman playing ‘Hearts.’”

Despite the Vietnam War approaching its peak of U.S. troop involvement, Malmberg and a couple of card-playing buddies decided to forgo their student deferments and join the Air Force. He ended up in Alaska, including a year stationed on one of the Aleutian Islands.

“I did a lot of soul searching out there,” Malmberg said. The winner of the Alaskan Air Command talent contest (he had played accordion since age 9), Malmberg achieved staff sergeant rank, but withstood pressure from his upper-rank officers to re-enlist.

It was time to give college another try.

Malmberg used the G.I. bill to enroll at Normandale Community College in Bloomington. It was there that the once cocky high school kid blossomed as a student musician, mastering the piano and the string bass, while earning a 3.4 grade point average.

That was Malmberg's ticket back to the “U,” where he majored in music, played in the University orchestra and wind and jazz ensembles, and landed a teaching job with Minneapolis Public Schools before graduating. He earned his master's degree in 1977.

Under Malmberg's baton, South High School grew in stature to become one of the top secondary schools for music in the Twin Cities area. One of his proudest accomplishments was to revive the string orchestra from fewer than a dozen players to more than 50 a decade later. Since 1996, South music students have participated in annual national festival competitions.

Although his initial college experience at GC was perhaps more fun than fundamental, Malmberg can look back 40 years and see an important beginning. “Maybe those years weren't wasted,” he said. “It's all part of my background. By the time the '70s came around, I was grown up. I was so much more mature and ready to go to work.”

At South High, Malmberg saw scores of students who were not deemed academically or emotionally ready for college.

That's why he believes access programs like General College are vital options for students to consider.

“There's definitely a need for GC,” he said. “There's a growing complaint that kids out of high school are ill-prepared, and many are. But the opportunity to succeed should not be taken away. At that stage, many students have not grasped it. Often, there's a special teacher out there to steer kids in the right direction.

“I believe if you're really good at what you do, no matter what it is, there's a place for you.” ■

NEWS NOTES & Kudos



Celi Dean, a General College sophomore, was named 2004 Miss Teen Minnesota International in March. Dean competed at the national Miss Teen International pageant in Chicago in July. The title included an \$18,000 scholarship and a chance to advance her pageant platform: the importance of getting a college education. Dean used the famous quote from Frederick Douglass to introduce her platform, "The way for Blacks to rise socially and economically is through education."

Her platform is heartfelt; she is the seventh of 11 children in her family and the first to attend college. She has been involved extensively at the YMCA, currently volunteers with teen girls, and is on the General College scholars list. Dean was also recently appointed by Miss Black USA to represent Minneapolis and St. Paul in the 2005 Miss Black USA Pageant in Atlanta next February.

UNIVERSITY RECOGNITION

Irene Duranczyk received a service learning faculty fellowship of \$2,500 for curriculum development during the 2004-05 academic year.

Murray Jensen was chosen as a consortium scholar by the University's Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment, and the Life Sciences. He will use the \$10,000 grant to develop a new freshman seminar, "The Science and Politics of Genetics and Reproduction."

Na'im Madyun was selected as a multicultural teaching and learning fellow for 2004-05. He will be working on "Strengthening Students' Comprehension and Application of Psychological Concepts and Theories."

Susan Staats received \$500 from the Office for University Women to support her work on "The Somali Mathematics Lexicon."

COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

Maureen Aitken was one of eight Minnesota writers to receive a \$3,000 grant from SASE: The Write Place and The Jerome Foundation. Aitken used the grant to work on her novel during the spring term of 2004.

PUBLICATIONS

Jeffrey Di Leo and **Walter Jacobs** (eds.), *If Classrooms Matter: Progressive Visions of Educational Environments* (Routledge, 2004).

Pat James, "Beyond Her Own Boundaries: A Portrait of Creative Work," *Studies in Art Education*, Summer 2004.

Don Opitz, "Connecting with the Curriculum: The General College Math Center at the University of Minnesota," *NCLCA [National College Learning Center Association] Newsletter*, Summer (2004): 2

—. "Behind Folding Shutters in Whittingehame House": Alice Blanche Balfour (1850-

1936) and Amateur Natural History," *Archives of Natural History* 31 (2) (2004).

Mark Pedelty, *Musical Ritual in Mexico City: From the Aztec to NAFTA* (University of Texas Press, 2004).

Laura Weber, "The House that Bullard Built," *Minnesota History: The Quarterly of the Minnesota Historical Society*, 59/2, Summer 2004. *The following GC personnel have chapters in the 2004 monograph Access and Retention in Higher Education, published by the Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy (CRDEUL):*

David R. Arendale, "Pathways of Persistence: A Review of Postsecondary Peer Cooperative Learning Programs"

Thomas Brothen and **Cathrine Wambach**, "Historic Note on Retention: The Founding of General College"

Irene M. Duranczyk, **Susan Staats**, **Randy Moore**, **Jay Hatch**, **Murray Jensen**, and **Chas Somdahl**, "Introductory Level College Mathematics Explored Through a Sociocultural Lens"

Jeanne L. Higbee, **Carl J. Chung**, and **Leon Hsu**, "Enhancing the Inclusiveness of First-Year Courses Through Universal Instructional Design"

Randy Moore, "The Importance of a Good Start"

GRANTS

Leon Hsu has received a grant of \$28,709 from the National Science Foundation for support of a "Collaborative Project: Implementing Physics by Inquiry Using Undergraduate Peer Instructors and Cooperative Group Learning."

The **Student Parent Help Center** has been granted \$75,000 from the Virginia McKnight Binger Fund for scholarships to be used toward child care expenses. The HELP Center has also received \$5,500 from the Hunter's Chosen Child Fund to provide child care scholarships to low-income student parents.

Getting to know...

Annia Fayon, new assistant professor

Education: Ph.D., geology, Arizona State University; M.S., geoscience, University of Texas–Dallas; B.A. geology, Boston University.

Academic and professional positions: Research associate, lecturer, and post-doctoral research associate, Department of Geology and Geophysics, University of Minnesota; adjunct faculty, geology, University of St. Thomas; visiting assistant professor, geology, Carleton College.

Course teaching this year: Historical geology.

Research areas: Evaluation of temperature-time history of rocks to determine how deep rocks are exhumed to the earth's surface; development of new low-temperature thermochronometers (tools used to evaluate the time-temperature history of a rock); development of an undergraduate research curriculum.

What most excites her about coming to GC: Being part of a faculty committed to teaching and to the success of its students.

Plans or goals for first semester: Settling in.

Anything else? My hobby is riding horses.

WELCOME TO NEW STAFF

Miriam Chiza, student personnel worker

Steven Cisneros, assistant counselor advocate

Robert Copeland, program associate

Daniel Detzner, associate dean of academic affairs and professor

Annia Fayon, assistant professor

Susan Goette, teaching specialist

Shani Greene, student personnel worker

Patricia Hoag, principal accounts specialist

Katie Hutton, student personnel worker

Amy Kampsen, assistant counselor advocate

Ann Rieke, assistant counselor advocate

Anthony Ritz, principal student personnel worker

Greg Sawyer, principal student personnel worker

Jeannie Stumne, assistant counselor advocate

Nicole Scales Lindberg, community program specialist

Arien Telles, office specialist

Loren Utter, community program specialist

PROMOTIONS

Rashne Jehangir, teaching specialist

Kitty Jones, assistant department director, Student Services

Ellen Mauro, accountant

BEST WISHES TO—

— RETIRING FACULTY

Thomas Buckley, associate professor, Social Sciences

— DEPARTING FACULTY AND STAFF

Lisa Albrecht, associate professor, Writing (transferred to Department of Family Social Science)

Tabitha Grier, TRIO/Student Services

Jennifer Peterson, Financial Services Office

Andy Reickert, Upward Bound

Anthony Scott, Upward Bound

ALUMNI NEWS

Clark C. Peterson (A.A. '67) writes from Hinckley that he received a Ph.D. in biblical studies last April from Grace Bible College, Morrisville, NC. He received his B.A. degree in 1970 from UMD. Peterson is the author of *The Great Hinckley Fire* (Exposition Press) and noted that his biography is included in the current edition of *Marquis's Who's Who in the World*.

Submit alumni news to www.gen.umn.edu/alumni/form.htm

LEARNING ABROAD, from p. 8

much broader view of the world. He was surprised to get off the airplane in Johannesburg and find a bustling metropolitan city with both skyscrapers and extreme poverty.

Galloway had the opportunity to attend a Baptist church service and was particularly moved by the music. "There was choral music," he explains, "but with different scales and harmonies. It reminded me of a church service from down south."

Mandla Xaba was also surprised by the extreme disparities of wealth, but he was impressed with the country's level of industrialization. Xaba, a GC student who plans to study political science, emigrated from South Africa to the United States as a young child. His reunion with his father, whom he hadn't seen for several years, made the trip especially meaningful.

Xaba encourages all Americans to study in South Africa. "It's easy to get used to," he says. "There are lots of familiar things, like Internet cafes. And most people speak English, especially in the urban areas."

Now back at school, the students are active in Students for African Learning and Leadership Exchange, which aims to break down stereotypes of Africa, get youth engaged in political action, and increase exchange between Africans and African-Americans.

The "U" offers a range of learning-abroad opportunities. GC students can get further information at GC's Transfer and Career Center. GC Learning Abroad scholarships are open to GC students, as well as other students who began their studies in General College. OMAA, the primary sponsor of the South Africa trip, hopes to provide students with similar learning abroad opportunities in the future, given sufficient resources, says Karen Anderson, OMAA's director for civic engagement, global initiatives, and service learning. ■

Contact the GC Office of Development and Alumni Relations at 612-625-8398 or darg@umn.edu for more information on contributing toward learning abroad scholarships.

Dana Britt Lundell, director
Jeanne Higbee, senior faculty adviser for research
David Arendale, faculty adviser for outreach
Robert Copeland, program associate

News from CRDEUL / Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy

www.gen.umn.edu/research/crdeul/

CRDEUL's summer office move

CRDEUL staff members were very busy this summer moving to a new location. We are now down the hall from our previous location. Our new space in 340 Appleby Hall allows for an expanded library and resource board and provides more storage and staff office space. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We welcome visitors!

Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium conference

Planning is under way for a one-day regional conference on Saturday, January 15, 2005. "Building Bridges for Access and Success from High School to College: Meeting the Needs of Twin Cities' Under-served Students" will be the culminating event for the Metropolitan Higher Education Consortium initiative on developmental education. A final summary and conference proceedings will be published and made available in fall 2005. Summary reports of the first two intentional meetings held in January and May 2004 are now available on the CRDEUL Web site.

New staff member

The center is pleased to welcome Robert (Bob) Copeland. He joined our staff this summer in the position of program associate. Bob assists visitors to the center and works on CRDEUL projects and initiatives.

CRDEUL eNewsletter

We are looking forward to publishing the second edition of the *CRDEUL eNewsletter*, edited by Robert Copeland, in November. It will contain the latest news from the center, including research highlights, community connections, and outreach activities. A link to the newsletter is available on our Web site.

Publications

CRDEUL's fifth monograph, *Best Practices for Access and Retention in Higher Education*, was published in October. We are also hard at work on a book featuring General College faculty and staff authors, titled *Integrating Intellectual Growth and Student Development: The General College Model*. It will be available in May 2005. All CRDEUL publications are downloadable, free of charge, from the CRDEUL Web site, www.gen.umn.edu/research/crdeul/, along with previous reports, monographs, books, and calls for submissions for future publications.



GEOFFREY KROLL



Assistant professor Carl Chung (top) checks out CRDEUL's expanded library while teaching specialist Ezra Hyland browses the online resource library in CRDEUL's new offices. CRDEUL's bookcases are a gift from Richard O'Neill in memory of his wife, Barbara Lynn Corwine.



Scott Davis creates opportunities for American Indian students

To honor a brief but important friendship from over a decade ago, Scott Davis of Alexandria, Minnesota, is helping make it possible for American Indian students to attend General College.

The honored individual is Richard Lussier, whom Davis, a retired instructor in chemical dependency at Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), met at a difficult time in Davis's life. Davis has made a gift of \$100,000 to General College for scholarships, particularly for students from the Red Lake Band of Ojibwe.

"In 1993, I had a brain aneurysm, very serious," Davis said. "I needed quite a bit of neurosurgery. Coming out of it I felt really lost, that part of my self was gone."

Davis's then-wife was coordinator for Hennepin County's Senior Companion Program, which gave older Americans the opportunity to apply their life experiences to meeting community needs. "Richard was one of her Companions," Davis said. "He was very well known in the Indian community, a recovered alcoholic and an alumnus of both our state penitentiaries. Richard worked a lot with chronic recidivism and alcoholics. My ex-wife thought that since we had that similarity, I'd like to talk with him."

Indeed, the two men developed an important relationship over the next two or three years, before Lussier's death, in his 70s. "We did talk about chemical dependency issues, but that wasn't all we talked about," said Davis quietly. "Richard showed me a way, he talked about the Indian way."

Davis continued, "This was a guy who migrated to Minneapolis early from Red Lake and became a drunk and a street person, but I thought, 'Geez, if he'd ever had the chance, if he had been able to realize his potential, he'd really have been something.' The things we talked about really got me back on track again."

Davis hopes his gift will provide the kind of opportunity for today's Indian youth that Richard lacked. The number of undergraduate American Indian students attending the University is small; 176 enrolled in spring semester 2004. Although only 32 of those students (19 percent) were enrolled in GC, about one-third to one-half of all undergraduate Native students at the University have come through GC and have transferred to other 'U' colleges, according to Mark Bellcourt, General College counselor advocate and director of GC's Native American Math and Science Camp.

"The combination of a scholarship and GC is great!" said Bellcourt, who is on leave this year as a McKnight Leadership Fellow. "Fewer than half of Native Americans will graduate from high school and fewer than 17 percent will go on to college. Those who do graduate from high school and decide to go on to college are not prepared. They need the developmental programs that GC offers."

Although Davis did post-doctoral work at the University in psycho- and neuropharmacology, he had no prior connection to General College. The connection was made through Davis's wife, Billie Jo Jones, a U of M graduate who has established charitable gift annuities through gifts to the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Raptor Center.

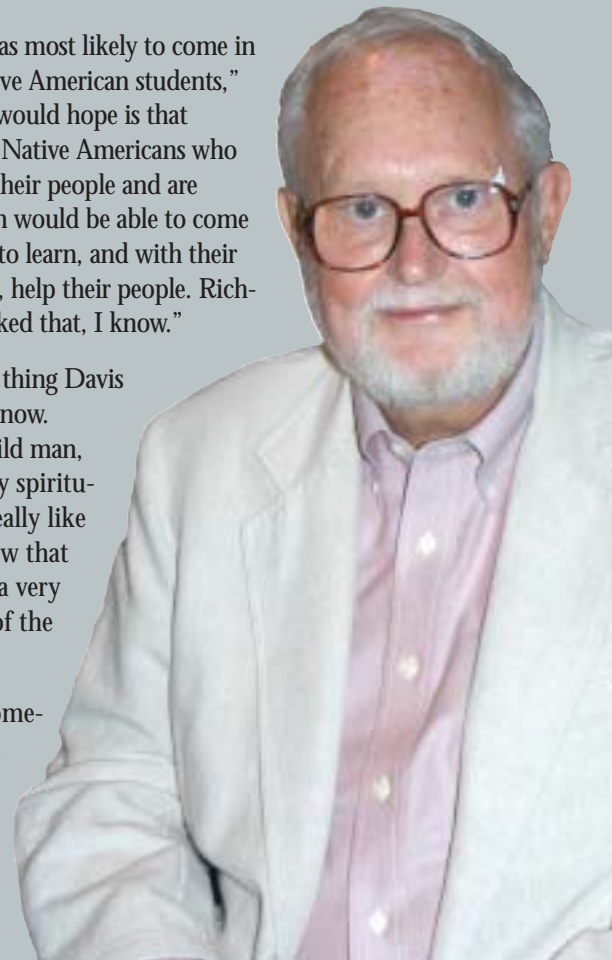
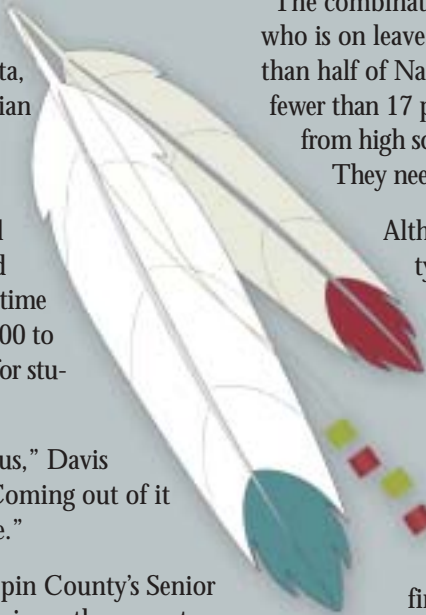
Davis was looking to invest the profits from the sale of a house in the Macalester-Groveland area of St. Paul. After talking with private investment firms, Jones suggested the gift annuity idea. Following discussions with University Foundation development staff, Davis decided to establish a scholarship fund in the General College as a way to honor his friend.

"I thought GC was most likely to come in contact with Native American students," he said. "What I would hope is that promising young Native Americans who have a vision for their people and are motivated to learn would be able to come to the University to learn, and with their skills and abilities, help their people. Richard would have liked that, I know."

There's one more thing Davis wants people to know. "Richard was a wild man, but he was deeply spiritual too. I would really like his family to know that Richard became a very valued member of the community.

"He was really something. He helped me so much."

Scott Davis



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Tomorrow*

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The Promise of Tomorrow

From the
FRONT HALL
GC DEVELOPMENT REPORT



Deb Wilkens-Costello
director of development
and alumni relations

I often think about the students at General College and the impact that professors, advisers, TAs, and others have on them. It can be life-changing. Do you ever think about the impact you are making on those around you? Do you think about the legacy you are leaving in this world?

I now ask myself the legacy question after meeting Scott Davis. You can read Scott's story on page 13, but briefly, the story is of Scott meeting someone—quite by accident—finding a connection, and making something big come from the relationship. Scott wanted to honor a friend by making a future gift to the General College.

Scott chose to leave a deferred gift annuity. To make a gift annuity, a donor transfers assets to the college in return for the University's promise to pay the donor a fixed annual income for life. The donor also receives a charitable tax deduction for the gift portion of the annuity. One important feature of charitable gift annuities is that the older a donor is at the time the annuity is established, the greater the income payments will be.

The generous gift, of course, is significant to the work at GC, and I want to thank Scott again. Mostly, though, I am moved by his story. Scott was left the legacy of peace and clarity by his friend, Richard; in turn, Scott chose to honor his friend by naming his gift the Richard Lussier Scholarship Fund, a scholarship fund to assist future American Indian students.

Making a future or planned gift is one way of leaving a legacy—of saying you care about and understand the importance of education. Other options to consider could be the transfer of an insurance policy, IRA assets, real estate, or making an outright gift at death through a beneficiary designation. The possibilities are many. Scott's gift annuity gives a gift that lives far beyond his physical life and affects students he'll never meet. That's a legacy worth leaving!

I encourage you to make plans to create your own legacy. Perhaps you, like Richard Lussier, will be a mentor who will affirm another. Whether it be a gift or other method, think about what you wish to leave behind in this world. If I can help you design a future gift, please let me know. Peace.

GC ALUMNI SOCIETY TAKES FORM

In the last issue of *Access*, we detailed the key findings and suggestions gathered from focus group feedback to determine what functions alumni want the General College Alumni Society to serve.

An advisory committee was appointed, chaired by Tom Harding, class of 1982, and worked during the summer to frame the Alumni Society's administrative structure.

The committee crafted the purpose, vision, and mission of the society:

General College Alumni Society

Purpose

To support and advocate for the General College in the areas of educational advancement, funding, and community impact.

Vision

The Alumni Society will champion opportunities to create and cultivate relationships between the University community, GC alumni, students, staff, and friends of the college.

Mission

The Alumni Society priority shall be the promotion of past, present, and future General College alumni and students in a life-long bond with the college and the University. Members strive to create a leading University society in terms of involvement, enjoyment, and support for the college.

General College Alumni Society Representative

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Barbara Stephens Foster

As you have read in the adjacent article, these are exciting times for the General College alumni society. The input of alumni will be critical to the success of the society. Advisory committee members are still being sought. Contact Betsy Taplin, GC Development and Alumni Relations (tapli001@umn.edu or 612-626-3445) or me at foste080@umn.edu if you wish to be involved or with your comments and suggestions.

UMAA National Board news

Speaking of your input, my contributions to the UMAA career services effort will be improved by your insights. My board assignment

for 2004-05 is to serve on the career services review work group. Our charge is to advise the career services director in devising online and in-person services to enhance career services offerings for alumni.

I will be happy to hear from you regarding your experience with current UMAA career services. You may also have ideas about the features you would access if available.

In an effort to learn more about Alumni Association society and chapter "best practices," I also asked to serve on the volunteer awards work group this year. The recipients of the 2003-04 volunteer awards were stellar. Their programs were imaginative, creative, and fun-filled, and they generated considerable increases in society and chapter memberships. Through hard work and a commitment to get the word out about the GC Alumni Society, next year we will have enough programming under way to be nominated for one of the awards.

The close relationship between the UMAA and the University administration is somewhat unusual. Having a General College presence at events such as breakfast with the president and the regents, legislative briefings, homecoming events, and alumni association committee meetings gives us the opportunity to inform others about the work of the college and its importance to the University. I appreciate being that presence for you on the UMAA National Board. Feel free to contact me at any time at foste080@umn.edu.

"Our elevation must be the result of self-efforts and work of our own hands. No other human power can accomplish it. If we but determine it shall be so, it will be so." —Martin R. Delany, 1852



From the **ARCHIVES** general college archives

The General College Archives in Appleby Hall contains hundreds of documents chronicling the college's 70-plus years as an evolving experiment in higher education. Beginning with this issue, *Access* will share some of the stories those documents tell, as General College prepares to celebrate three-quarters of a century in 2007. Thanks to Mary K. St. John, archives director, for her assistance.

Long before the General College adopted a focus on multicultural education in 1991, a petite, gracious professor of English named Mary L. Wyvell brought her abiding interest in global education, intercultural communication, and international students into the numerous courses she taught in GC from 1944 to 1981.

Wyvell's sabbatical year of 1974-75 was extraordinary: an invitation to the Wingspread Conference on Women in the People's Republic of China, held in anticipation of International Women's Year—1975, followed by travels in the south of Mexico, a National Council of Teachers of English meeting in New Orleans, and the Conference on World Education in Ahmedabad, India, followed by travels in that country.



At the Indian conference, a workshop called “Learning in Cross-Cultural Context” attracted her. Wyvell stressed at that session the role that the arts can play in cross-cultural learning and in bringing about attitudes of respect and concern for others. At the final plenary session, she had been asked to deliver thanks to the hosts and conference organizers on behalf of the overseas visitors. She used an experience she had in Ahmedabad—“Eager, black-eyed children came up to us asking, ‘What’s your name?’—the one English phrase they knew”—as the inspiration for those thanks, a poem expressing the interdependency of the human species, called “What’s Your Name?”

Colleagues remember Wyvell as someone “with a brightness about her, a pleasant smile, and always professional” and “beautiful in spirit and in person.” Wyvell died in 1998. Her poems can be found in the GC Archives, but sadly, neither the GC Archives nor the University Archives has her photo. —*Laura Weber*

Wyvell's poems appeared in *The Broken Glass Factory: 5 Poets, An Assembly of University of Minnesota Faculty*, published in 1974 by GC professor Louis Safer. The publication is part of the GC Archives collection.