

CORD

News from Union College

azine

winter 2006/2007

Steady Impact

UNION STUDENTS AND ALUMNI ARE FINDING AND MEETING NEEDS

Also ...

- *Union rated 'top school' by U.S. News*
- *Cooper Place apartments open*
- *President Smith studies at Harvard*

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About the cover:

Union College students Heather Dickman
and Kristina Camacho weed flowerbeds
during Project Impact 25.

Photographer: Emily Yancer '09

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We encourage readers to submit letters
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UNION
COLLEGE
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CORDmagazine

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photo: Steve Nazario



photo: Steve Nazario

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Introduction by Jacque L. Smith, Editor

In recent years it has become easy to consider ourselves expert searchers. From seemingly endless online information to television shows offering insider views of “reality” scenarios, we are bombarded with the idea of finding.

Flip through television channels and within minutes you’ll find panels of self-proclaimed experts describing a search for America’s latest legend. From pop singer to dancer or fashion designer to chef, the viewing audience is encouraged to help in this talent quest by participating via phone, e-mail or text message (standard rates may or may not apply). I’ve noticed that while these searches usually end with swirling confetti and marathon hugging, only a few talk show appearances later, the top contender is lost in the sea of hopeful entertainers and a new search begins.

On a college campus, we’re not above engaging in our own searches. Our quest for greatness is often in the context of finding students: enrollment advisors seek prospective students who will flourish in the Union College experience; service departments look for student employees who will add their creativity and diligence to campus projects, and teachers search for students who will expand classroom discussion. In all this searching—and among all the excellent discoveries, I’m glad our search goes deeper than the next model student.

In seven years on campus, I have found Union College students, employees and alumni are seeking more than a series of winners. For many, the most prominent search is finding ways to make a difference in the lives of those around them through the example of Jesus. During a meeting early in the semester, President David Smith referred to this intangible quality that defines Union College while commenting on the highest

enrollment in 23 years: “God has blessed, not because we have a larger group of students on campus, but because we have so many opportunities to see Him lead in all of our lives.”

A campus can be known for a lot of good things. At Union, we can mention our peppy school song, friendly campus, overfed squirrels in a lighthearted list. I am grateful that in the local community and beyond, Union is becoming known for a more eternal attribute—being leaders in service for Christ. On Aug. 24, Union celebrated the 25th anniversary of Project Impact. From our research, Union’s event is the longest-running collegiate community service day in the country. (Read more about this year’s celebration and the history of the event on p. 18).

Thankfully, the search for service reaches beyond the first week of classes for current students and beyond graduation for many Union alumni. In this issue you will read how from the public school system in Omaha system (p. 14) to a television production set in Hollywood (p. 12). With God’s leading, Union alumni and students are finding ways to meet needs and make a difference.

Before you begin your search through this issue, learn about service from a special guest who joined Union’s volunteers for Project Impact this year. Jose Rojas spoke about his experience with Project Impact and Union’s attitude of service with Justin Okimi ’06, one of the most influential Project Impact leaders as a student for four years and then as a full-time employee for a year. In this guest editorial interview, Elder Rojas points to the ultimate motivation for seeking service—following our Leader.

*Interview by **Justin Okimi**—assistant chaplain,
Union College Campus Ministries*

Jose Rojas—director, Office of Volunteer Ministries,
Seventh-day Adventist Church North American Division

Justin: What was your first impression of Project Impact 25?

Jose: I understood the importance and the priority that Union College has placed on its students serving so that Christ is glorified. This was emphasized when I came to your campus and was greeted by a U.S. senator’s representative and the governor of the state.

I direct the office of Volunteer Ministries, which coordinates long-term and short-term volunteer opportunities across our continent and around the world. Our church was started by young adults—no older than college students—who volunteered as missionaries to make a difference in their communities. Mission work—making a difference in our communities so that Christ is glorified—is still a priority of our denomination.

At Union I saw hundreds and hundreds of missionaries. Many people can really say, “Now I know who Jesus is,” because of how they saw Him in us. That is what Union College took to the streets that day.



photo: Steve Nazario

Justin: During the evening program you mentioned that you've never been so proud of a group of young people. What made you so proud?

Jose: The students really wanted to be out there. When I grabbed a weed eater and helped out it was fun because nobody was complaining. People were devoted to what they were doing. I saw it in their faces, they were intently serving someone. They weren't just raking leaves. They were helping the women's shelter provide support to women in need.

Justin: What impressed you most about Project Impact 25?

Jose: Two things. Pretty much *everyone* was there, even though it was a voluntary project. And number two, that Union College is so enthusiastic about this ministry that not only was everyone from campus there, the community was there too: civic leaders, state leaders, the governor, the Mid-America Union leadership and their staff—plus the 50 organizations who couldn't wait for the volunteers to arrive.

Justin: Overall, what would you say are the memories of Project Impact that you've held onto the most?

Jose: When I went to the youth center and the kids were doing thankless work in the sun, cleaning up, cutting weeds, and having the dust mingle with their sweat. That is so un-cool and uncomfortable. And yet, they were happy to be there, because they know that kids are being served.

Another one that stuck with me was the service center where the students provided foot care for children. To see the students being like Jesus, washing the feet of his disciples, was overwhelming to me. I fought back a tear to see Union students loving people that much.

Justin: You've known Pastor Rich for quite some time. What effect do you think his leadership has had over the years on the development of Project Impact and service at Union?

Jose: Pastor Rich is a degreed and experienced professional whose absolute compassion is deeply consecrated to the Lord.

Pastor Rich has another edge that many can learn from. He believes in training and mentoring leaders and then he trains them on how to train and mentor their peers. This intentionality was evident when I walked into his office and met the Project Impact leader as well as the person who is being trained to lead next year. That's the kind of intentionality that young adult ministry needs on our campuses. Not just giving people the opportunity to lead but teaching them how to lead.

Justin: Why is an attitude of service important to everyone in our world community—youth and adults alike?

Jose: Remember that Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We live in such a selfish society. People expect from the government. People expect from their school. People expect from their church. The model of Christ, though, is that we have the privilege of giving.

It's not just handing out a sandwich, though. It's the reason why we do it. To find the lost. Many people will never know who Jesus is until they are touched by our hands. And Jesus described how to take Himself to somebody. "I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was naked and you clothed me. I was in prison and you visited me. I was sick and you came to see me."

These are the measurables of serving God. It's not just sitting at home reading your Bible. It's making the Bible come to life through your hands, feet, eyes and mouth.

Justin: We both are blessed to be able to work in these fields of service. What can people who are in our local churches do to get involved right now with service if they're not on a college campus?

Jose: People can go online to HESaidGO.net. They can also call the office of Volunteer Ministries at

800-331-2767. They can connect to the movement.

They can serve for a year as a missionary or volunteer for short-term projects either across North America or around the world. They can build churches and orphanages, hold evangelistic meetings or a variety of other opportunities.

Remember that Jesus said everything you've seen me do, you shall be able to do. Let's go and do it.



Mustache to mustache—Jose Rojas adds his artistic touch to an ongoing mural project at Lincoln's Capital Humane Society.

CAMPUS NEWS

Dr. Smith goes to Boston

The back-to-school season this year was even more eventful than usual for Union's president, Dr. David Smith. In addition to gearing up for another academic year at Union, Smith sampled Ivy League living in Boston while participating in Harvard University's Institute for Educational Management. The two-week institute for college and university administrators from around the world focused on the qualities necessary for effective leadership during times of significant institutional change. Smith's participation was funded by a leadership studies scholarship from the Milton Murray Foundation.

"I was most impressed with how current and relevant the topics were," Smith said. Much of the class sessions were devoted to case studies. After analyzing

the situation, the group would often discover that the key administrator who handled the issue was in the room. "The first-hand interaction with someone involved with the case allowed for more thoughtful reflection and analysis and taught the group not to jump to conclusions."

In addition to case studies and leadership topics, the 100 participating administrators looked at an in-progress draft of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings' report from the Commission on the Future of Higher Education that was officially released the following month. The group also had the opportunity to ask questions of one of the leading officials involved with drafting the commission's report.

"I returned to Union with a much clearer understanding of issues facing

higher education on a national level and how those factors impact our campus," Smith said. "These challenges are significant, but with what I learned, I am better prepared to help navigate through the challenges and find resolution."

Smith said he is grateful he was selected for the exceptional learning experience and the perspective it added to his leadership role. "My time spent with college and university administrators from around the world further convinced me that, while Union College may not enjoy the economic prosperity of the more elite institutions, our college is privileged to be so blessed by God. I am honored to work among faculty, staff and students who see God's will, who serve others and who are guided by the Holy Spirit in their everyday activities." ~JS

Union celebrates completion of new student housing

Union College's newest addition, Cooper Place, celebrated its grand opening on Aug. 16. The \$1.85 million student apartment complex on the corner of Cooper Avenue and South 52nd Street was the center of attention after the traditional back-to-school Student Alumni Association pizza feed.

President David Smith greeted the attendees and gave special recognition to the leaders responsible for the project's completion: namely Lincoln developers Kent Thompson and Rick Krueger ('74). President Smith praised Thompson's "absolute passion for this school" as well as declaring that Krueger "was invaluable during the design and construction phases of the project."

The president also recognized the apartment design committee (Todd Mekelburg, Wilma Darcy, Gary Bollinger, Linda Becker, Don Murray, and Union College board members Derald Goetz and Jerome Lang) and construction manager Troy Karsting. Smith commended Karsting, who "always maintained his sense of humor" through the sometimes challenging building process.

Krueger and Thompson responded



Union introduces a new student housing option – Cooper Place.

to Smith's remarks, reiterating their desire to provide Union students with comfortable and modern housing. "Better housing makes for a better learning environment," Thompson said. "These apartments remind students they are worthy of the investment."

Union's Associated Student Body president David Carlson, a resident of Cooper Place, said the complex is amazing. "I feel very blessed to be living here." Carlson presented Thompson, Krueger and Karsting (in absentia) with certificates of appreciation from the students.



ASB President David Carlson thanks Cooper Place developers Rick Krueger and Kent Thompson

(Cooper Place continued)

Two apartments were open for tours after Charles Drake of the Mid-America Union offered the dedicatory prayer. Students, faculty and staff admired the workmanship and various amenities, which include fully equipped kitchens, off-street parking and central air. "I was really surprised at the quality of everything," said sophomore theology major Mitchell Graham.

The spaciousness of Cooper Place is what grabbed several students' attention. Single bedroom units in Cooper Place are more than 200 square feet bigger than the single bedroom units in Union's Kern and Bancroft Courts. Emily Eskildsen, senior communication major, said of the apartments, "They're huge—I felt like I could live in the bathroom!"

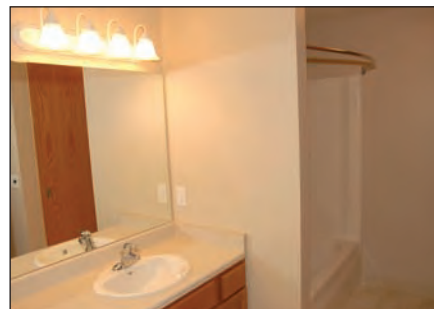
Residents appreciate that the social benefits of college are still accessible. "It's apartment life, but walking down the stairs you see people you know; it's still the friendly Union atmosphere," said resident Rachel Turner, senior communication and graphic design major.

Thompson introduced the concept of new student housing for married and

older students in early 2005. The ground was blessed in a ceremony in November of that year, and the building was completed 8 months later on July 31, 2006. "It's unusual for a project of this size to be completed so quickly," said Todd Mekelburg, director of leadership giving and project coordinator. "But thanks to the developers' experience and to the construction manager's persistence, it all came together on time and under budget." The building was opened just in time for the new school year, with nearly half of the 24 apartments already rented.

"We need to continue moving Union College into the future," Thompson said. "Cooper Place will provide an attractive, modern and safe living environment for our students."

President Smith emphasized the progress represented by the apartment complex. "I am grateful for visionary leadership from the Kruegers and Thompsons that made the Cooper Place project possible," President Smith said. "For years to come, students will benefit from this example of a creative partnership with Union College." ~NS



Spacious bathrooms are a favorite of the new apartments.



The contemporary apartments include all kitchen appliances and a washer and dryer.



*"At Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska,
We slinga da ink and pusha da pen along..."*

Seek and Find "Slinga da Ink"

Kids of all ages, can you find the words from the chorus of "Slinga da Ink," Union College's pep song? All the words to the right are hidden in the puzzle (forward, backward or diagonal).

Do you know how to sing "Slinga da Ink?" Do you know someone who does? To learn more about the catchy tune or listen online, visit www.ucollege.edu/slingadaink.

Count the Clock Towers

Last issue's winners
Brennan—Thayne, Wyo.
Kimber—Lincoln, Neb.

G	O	W	Q	D	Q	N	E	K	R
N	M	G	O	A	J	E	G	X	W
O	I	N	A	R	U	E	A	I	S
L	E	Y	K	Z	W	G	G	Y	K
A	K	S	A	R	B	E	N	N	M
N	L	O	C	N	I	L	I	P	W
I	O	P	Q	O	D	L	L	C	Z
C	C	X	E	I	C	O	S	Z	R
D	A	J	R	N	M	C	B	T	B
B	L	O	P	U	S	H	A	A	Z

CAMPUS NEWS

Union PA students participate in first Master's Commitment and White Coat ceremony

The night of Nov. 10 was special for Union College physician assistant students. The '07, '08 and '09 classes were honored in Woods Auditorium with the first master's commitment and white coat ceremony. Altogether, 70 students were honored in the ceremony.

Keynote speakers were Todd Grove, pastor of the Worship Arts Capitol City Christian Church and Karen Grove, a clinical psychologist. The husband and wife team presented from a patient's perspective.

The purpose of a white coat ceremony is to represent the professional environment that PA students are preparing to enter while still being educated, said PA program director Mike Huckabee. "The ceremony helps to symbolize the professionalism that cannot be captured in books and lectures."

But there's also a very human element to the ceremony. "We also hope to include the essence of compassion," Huckabee said. "We honor the students individually and their families can appreciate all the students have gone through."

The white coat itself represents something almost sacred to PAs. "No white coat

is worth wearing until it has some tears on it—either your tears or your patients'," said Earl Pate, associate director of the PA program, in his introduction of the class of '07.

White coat ceremonies are not unique to Union, said Huckabee. In fact, most PA schools hold them. So when the Nebraska Academy of Physician Assistants approached Union with the idea, the students were eager to institute it.

According to Huckabee, the master's commitment and white coat ceremony will become a tradition at Union, but this first ceremony was considered extra special. "This will be Union College's first graduating master's class," Huckabee smiled proudly. "They're a unique breed." ~NS



The PA class of 2008 take pride in their new coats.

Library receives new signage

The Ella Johnson Crandall Memorial Library at Union College will soon be getting something it has lacked for the last 20 years—professional signs. Thanks to many charitable contributions, library rooms will have professionally made signs denoting each room's name and purpose.

"When the library moved into its current location approximately 22 years ago, professional signage was never installed," said library director Sabrina Riley. "For the past 20 years, library staff have made paper signs and taped them up where needed."

Now, Riley says, the goal is to purchase a permanent, professionally made signage system. The first installment is already in place, which has provided signs for staff offices, study rooms and the smaller seminar rooms. This first step was made possible by contributions from library staff members, both current and

former, as well as alumni who were student employees in the library during their time at Union. In fact, 41 former library employees have given almost \$2,000 since July.

The previous library director, Chloe Foutz, who worked at Union almost 40 years, gave in a creative way. When current librarian DeForest Nesmith had to take an extended leave of absence in early 2006 due to a family illness, Foutz shared her time and contributed her earnings to the project.

To date, Riley says, approximately \$4,500 worth of signs have been purchased. The entire project requires \$16,000. Bookshelves, the larger study rooms, the library classroom and smaller spaces such as closets still need signs. The library also hopes to install a free-standing library directory. This directory and the larger study rooms are available for commemorative naming opportunities.

For information about the library signage project, please contact Sabrina Riley at 402.486.2154. ~JS

New writing studio empowers students

The 2006 school year has ushered in a rebirth of Union College's writing center. Tanya Cochran, assistant professor of English, has taken over the former Hagen Writing Center and renamed it the Studio for Writing and Speaking.

"We strive to offer an extra-classroom space designed to empower students' writing, speaking and thinking abilities," Cochran said. The seven tutors assist other students with anything from the initial brainstorming stage to the final draft. One of the studio's new goals is to go beyond the simple mechanics of English and encompass the thought process behind writing and speaking. "The driving force behind the studio is free inquiry," she said.

Before its renovation, Union's writing center was primarily an editing service with little interaction between tutors and writers. Cochran hopes the studio will now be more conducive to fostering relationships through tutoring sessions that help students "take ownership" of their words.

The tutors agree that the studio provides opportunities for relationships to grow through a shared purpose. "Our team works very well together," said Jeana Styron, sophomore international studies major. "We all have the same goal—to help the students learn more and develop as individuals."

The studio has seen several improvements so far, including its relocation from the Everett Dick Administration Building to the lower level of the Ella Johnson Crandall Memorial Library. This change is advantageous, said Cochran, because "our relationship with the library gives students immediate access to library books, journals and electronic resources." There is still room to grow, however. At this point, growth includes more technical resources such as dictionaries and handbooks, as well as aesthetic resources such as carpet, color and improved lighting.

As Cochran and her tutors work toward these and other improvements, the original goal of the studio will stay the same. "In the studio, we aim to work in ways that are personal, reciprocal, communal and transformational," Cochran said. "Simply, we want Jesus to be our Logos, our Reason for being."

To learn more about the studio, please contact Tanya Cochran at 402.486-2325 or tacochra@ucolleg.edu. ~NS

Union College gains students and recognition

August brought good news for Union College. Enrollment for the 2006-2007 school year reached the highest level in 23 years and *U.S. News and World Report America's Best Colleges 2007* gave Union College its highest ranking yet, placing Union at number 46 in its category (Midwestern comprehensive colleges-bachelor's) and designating the college a "top school."

"I'm not sure what accounts for our rise in the rankings this year," said Osa Berg, director of Records, Research and Assessment, who submits information to *U.S. News* each year. Berg noted that many of the areas Union ranks highly in, such as alumni giving and graduation and student retention rates, have not changed significantly in recent years. "A large part of the score is based on reputation and if I'd have to guess, I'd say increased visibility of President Smith and the faculty among their peers at other colleges played a role."

The annual *U.S. News* rankings are a tool to help parents and potential students plan

for college. Comprehensive colleges like Union grant more than half of all degrees in professional fields such as business, health care and education. They are ranked in six areas: peer assessment (25 percent), selectivity of incoming freshman (15 percent), faculty resources (20 percent), graduation and retention rate (25 percent), expenditure per student (10 percent) and alumni giving (five percent).

"Being ranked in the top 50 in our category is an amazing achievement for a small college like Union," said Malcolm Russell, vice president for Academic Administration. "Unfortunately, the *U.S. News* criteria don't measure the bonds formed between students and professors, the vibrant spirituality on our campus or the degree of personal and academic growth students experience in their years at Union. It's unquantifiable qualities that make Union a top school in my book."

Even more exciting to college administrators has been the increase in enrollment as the total student body grew to 982 with

a full-time equivalence of 927.8, up from 930 students and 863.3 FTE last fall. The number of first-time freshmen this year is 194 compared to 177 in fall 2005.

The increased enrollment coincides with the implementation of more stringent admissions standards. All regularly admitted students must now have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 and an ACT score of 18. While these are not as high as elite universities, they are higher than most of the schools pulling from the same demographic of high school graduates as Union College. "Attracting 352 new students to our campus and raising our admissions standards in the same year is really exciting," said Rob Weaver, vice president for Enrollment and Student Financial Services.

"Union's climb in enrollment is one of many indicators that the campus is blessed with the momentum of progress," said David Smith, Union College president. "Enrollment growth is energizing all areas of campus, and I am grateful for the efforts of the many people who made this possible." ~SC

In memory of Mozart

Musicians around the world have been excited about the year 2006, marking the 250th anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's birth and have celebrated in a variety of ways. At Union College, musicians gave tribute to Mozart through a concert of their own.

Presented in October at the College View church, the "Majesty of Mozart" concert included performances by Union students and faculty, and guests from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the community. The concert was attended by approximately 700 people.

"Participating in the concert was a fantastic experience, and it was well support-



Unionaires and the String Ensemble performed significant pieces from Mozart's repertoire. "Lacrimosa" from Mozart's "Requiem," K. 626 was Mozart's last and unfinished work. According to Lynn, "Lacrimosa" showed Mozart at his most mature and dramatic." They also performed "Ave Verum," K. 618—one of the most elegant yet simple choral works in the international repertoire. Written for a friend and composed just six months before his own death, Mozart wrote "Ave Verum" as a simple prayer for forgiveness and redemption at the foot the cross.



Clark Potter and Marina Fabrikant from the School of Music at University of Nebraska-Lincoln join Rudyard Dennis, Union College professor of music, in a performance of "Kegelstatt" K. 498.

ed by the community and administration," said Ken Hoppmann, Union College associate professor of music who performed "Sonata for Two Pianos in D Major," K. 448 with Ryan Wells, Union professor of music. "I think Mozart would have appreciated the jovial atmosphere and beauty of the concert."

Born in Salzburg, Austria in 1756, Mozart is considered one the greatest composers of Western civilization. Composing his first work at age five, Mozart wrote over 600 works, many of which are in the standard repertoire for orchestras, opera houses, chamber ensem-

bles and professional soloists. He became ill and died in Vienna at the age of 35.

Dan Lynn, Union professor of music, conducted the choral and string ensemble. "The choir and strings performed beautiful legato melodic lines with a deceptively difficult harmonic progression," Lynn said. "It created a moment of sublime beauty and reflection on how we are loved by God. It was breathtaking to be so blessed by such music from the mind of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart."

A complete description of the concert written by Lynn is available online. www.ucollege.edu/fineart/mozart. ~BD

CAMPUS NEWS

Campus improvements flower from seeds of generosity

The generosity of Union College's many supporters has taken physical shapes throughout the Union College campus.

On the third floor of the Everett Dick Building, a vision for the future of the Division of Business and Computer Science has become fresh paint, new carpet and improved technological tools throughout the division's offices and classrooms. "We needed to do this, but we couldn't have without a gift," says Marsha Bartulec, office manager for the Division of Business and Computer Science. The faculty and staff of the division spent much of the summer giving their own time to the renovation project. This summer was the first stage of a three-part project funded by a \$50,000 donation. "We focus on building leaders and professionals here" Bartulec says. "We need an environment of professionalism, including professional-looking carpet."

Union's two 50-year-old boilers are being replaced by two state-of-the-art boilers that were delivered this summer, both physical manifestations of the leadership of the Mid-America Union. This is one component of a \$5.8 million initiative spearheaded by the Mid-America Union that has also resulted in a renovation of Larson Lifestyle Center's roof and heating, cooling and ventilation systems, the campus air-conditioning system, campus electrical system and Prescott Hall's plumbing. "We are grateful to the Mid-America Union leadership," says Don Murray, director of Plant

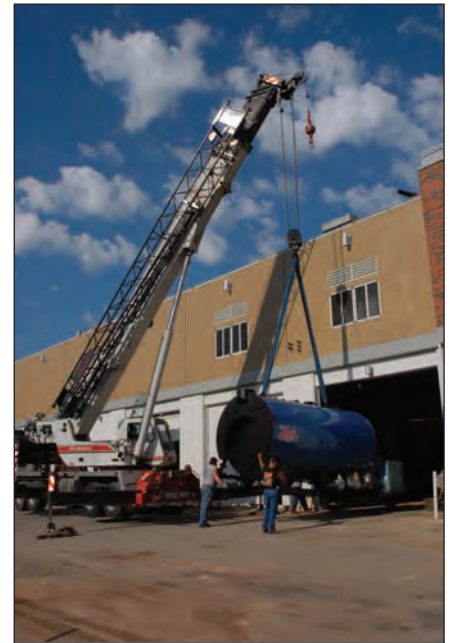
Services. "It's only with their involvement that this is happening."

Working alongside Plant Services this summer were volunteers from across the country sponsored by Maranatha Volunteers International. They replaced and widened campus walkways, making Union College better equipped to meet the needs of disabled students, employees and visitors, and they began work on new offices for the International Rescue and Relief program. The IRR program is now housed in the space previously occupied by Kiddie Kollege in Rees Hall (**see story p. 11**).

Workers in information systems worked around the clock throughout the summer and the beginning of the fall semester to keep up with the pace of change—installing servers, software and more. "We've made more changes this year than any previous year," says Tom Becker, director of Information Systems. "Fortunately, most of the changes came about through donations and without a lot of cost to the college."

With so many departments and divisions engaged in the work of keeping Union's facilities and infrastructure up-to-date, a comprehensive listing is nearly impossible to compile. The following lists outline of some additional major projects.

- The graphics lab in Engel Hall has been expanded and renovated, allowing for more students to take graphic



The smaller of the two new boilers arrives, allowing for the campus to add new buildings and services.

design courses and for more classes to be offered.

- The machine shop in Jorgensen Hall has been transformed into a math classroom.
- Larson Lifestyle Center pool ceiling was replaced, parking lot lights added, and the heating, cooling and ventilation system was updated.

Updates to the computer network and systems at Union include:

- A Microsoft Exchange server for employees that allows calendar sharing and better off-campus access to e-mail.
- A dedicated server for student e-mail and Moodle—an online learning tool and course management system.
- A laser connection allows Cooper Place, the new apartment complex, high-speed Internet access to Union's network.
- Thirty-five new computers were added or replaced older machines in labs and offices.
- A Web-based late leave system was set up for resident students.
- A point-of-sale system in the Campus Store allows all products to be barcode scanned. ~SC



Plant Services workers remove one of Union's aging boilers after 50 years of service.

IRR expands in space and enrollment

Emergency care, EMT basic, seminar in international service, CPR and ground school. These are a few of the classes currently being taught in the ground level of Rees Hall in the space formally occupied by Kiddie Kollege. When the childcare facility closed in 2005 because of financial shortcomings, there were questions about how to best use the space. The questions were answered by Union College's newest and fastest growing area of study—international rescue and relief.

Since the program began in 2004, IRR had been housed in the health sciences building, which is also home to the physician assistant and nursing programs. Space was a precious commodity. Doug Tallman, associate director of IRR, said that the program was crowded into one office which was also being used for storage space. The 3,800 square feet IRR now has is being used to help educate 110 majors, 52 of which are freshmen. The new location provides the roominess the popular new program needs to flourish. "The relocation allows the IRR program to nurture its own academic identity," said Jeff Joiner, chair of Division of Health Sciences.

The improvements of the classroom and office space are numerous and collaborative. Office desks and tables were donated by Advancement, while the business division donated storage cabinets, office chairs and lobby furniture.

Improved lighting and Internet connectivity have also been added. Renovations began during the summer of 2006, and the department was officially opened the week before school started. "It's taken lots of hard work and elbow grease," Tallman said.

The effort put into relocating IRR has been greatly appreciated by the students, who now have their own academic home. "The staff has made the new office very warm and welcoming for us students," said sophomore Kristen Price. "We can study, practice our skills or just hang out."

The facility now houses four private offices, a multi-purpose room used for class work as well as relaxation and a worship room that the staff refers to as "God's office." "We meet in God's office as a staff each morning for worship and prayer. We pray for our students and ask God to set the priorities for our day," said Tallman. "In EMS operations, there is a chain of command. The work flows downward, from the incident commander to all the other entities. In our department, God is our incident commander."

A goal for IRR's new space is the installation of a rock climbing/bouldering wall in the multi-purpose room. This addition would give students a place to practice their skills in the winter months as well as a chance to relax. According to Tallman, IRR is hoping to see the wall in place by the beginning of spring semester.

"We're grateful not only to the college," Tallman said, "but to God for giving us a place to grow." ~NS

Have you visited the Rock Pile?

Union's online community officially launched on June 19, 2006. In the first five months nearly 900 alumni have registered on the community. Many have created photo albums and reconnected with classmates from their Union College days. Here is what a few of them are saying.

- "Going to UC was the best part of my life. I am often lonely for it and miss the campus and time I spent there. This site will help so much. Thanks to its creators!"
- "I am having fun with this site. I hope others from my classes join in too. I started at Union in 1948 and graduated in 1971. Want to find out what took so long?"

- "Have read all the news and events! Thoroughly enjoyed it. Thanks for a great idea that became reality."

People from across the decades have signed on. Here are the logon totals by decade: 1940s – 20, 1950s – 62, 1960s – 118, 1970s – 142, 1980s – 159, 1990s – 173 and 2000s – 203.

If you haven't been to the Rock Pile yet, here's how you can join.

1. Go to www.ucollegecommunity.org
2. Click on "First Time Login"
3. Search for your name
4. Enter your constituent ID number (this can be found above your address on the back of *CORDmagazine*).

Questions about the Rock Pile? Send an e-mail to alumni@ucollege.edu.

Campus Calendar 2007

Second Semester begins	Jan. 9
Spring Vacation	March 9-18
Pre-registration for fall semester begins	March 20
Homecoming Weekend	April 5-8
Spring Preview Days	April 12-15
Home School Sneak Peek	April 26-29
Graduation Weekend	May 11-13
Summer School begins	May 14



On Oct. 2, Union dedicated a new metal sculpture located on the north wall of the Ortner Center lobby. This artwork was made possible through gifts given in memory of Jean Carlson, deceased spouse of alumnus and Board of Trustees member, Ron Carlson, from North Dakota. The artwork was designed and built by Bobl Ironworks, Jamestown, North Dakota. The owners, Brad '94 and Corey '99 Bobl are both alumni of Union.

Pictured from left...

WATCHING OVER BIG BROTHER

by Becky Dewey

Most international rescue and relief majors expect to use their training to serve in crisis situations or third world countries. When Michelle Halim joined the IRR program, she didn't expect to use her training to serve in a city of affluent rising stars.

"This summer was a huge growing up experience for me," Halim said. "I moved into the heart of Hollywood, right under the sign."

She lived near actors Jennifer Aniston, Jessica Simpson and Gary Dourdan, and rented from the same Blockbuster as musicians Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale. "When I first moved there, I was quite star struck," Halim said. "After a week, I really got over it."

After last spring break when she observed her medic cousin on the set of *The Surreal Life*, her cousin suggested Halim work in California for the summer. Through Affordable Services Agency Inc., a specialized crew agency, she accepted a job and headed to Hollywood.

Halim was the only medic on staff while working on the set of two music videos, a crew party and *Big Brother All Stars*. Most of her summer was spent on the *Big Brother* set working 50 hours per week, the night shift Monday through Thursday.

"I basically did more work than an EMT. If something went wrong I would be held liable—me and my company. We had to be very careful," said 20-year-old Halim. "I was sort of everybody's mom." Among other incidents, she treated sunburns, an ear infection, a sliced foot and a man who cut off the first knuckle of his finger.

"The highest-ranking people on the set were very respectful to me. It sounds kind of crazy, but they have a lot of respect for medical people," Halim recounted and added with a smile, "They knew if they got in trouble, they would have to come to me."

Through the summer, Halim had some trouble of her own. While she earned \$3,000–\$4,000 a month on the



Michelle Halim, junior IRR major, working as the only set medic during the filming of a Nick Lachey music video.

Big Brother set, apartments in the area cost \$5,000 a month. In addition, everything else was more expensive in Hollywood too. To conserve her resources, Halim slept on friends' couches.

"I had a lot of people helping me out, but many people go out there and lose everything," Halim said, noting that Hollywood is not for everyone. "It's all about who you know. If you know somebody, I'd say go for it. If not, you'll be scraping money together to go back home."

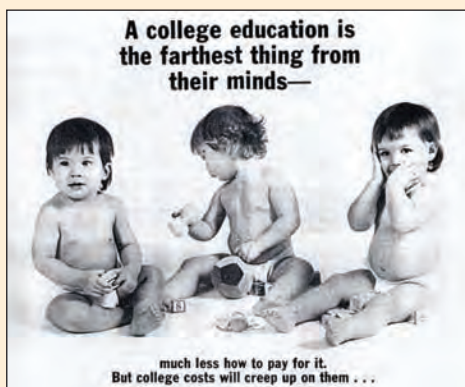
Money is not the only reason Hollywood can be difficult. "It's hard working in Hollywood as a single woman with standards and morals," Halim said. "I'm not in this career for the money; I'm in it to help people."

Nowhere is her desire to help more apparent than Halim's dream job, which is far from Hollywood. Halim and two friends—Jessica Peinado (UNL senior chemistry pre-med major) and Julia Dickman (Union junior IRR major)—want to become a core team that teaches preventive health care in South America, especially for children. According to Halim, "That's the ultimate goal."

Though she saw Christianity in Hollywood is more a name than a belief, she found subtle ways to share her faith.

"I had to take things really slow because people are wary," said Halim who decided to let her faith speak through her actions. "In the Hollywood business, meeting genuine, caring people, instead of people who cater to their every whim, was unusual. A lot of people were impressed by how real I was compared to the fakeness that pervades Hollywood."

"With the training I got at Union College—EMT training, Basic Trauma, other classes, even Dr. Duerhrssen's stories—I felt prepared," Halim said. "I've learned how to work with difficult people. It's part of being a grown up." **A**



Michelle Halim has definitely grown up as part of Union. Twenty years ago, Halim (at left) and two other toddlers appeared in a Union College ad that informed parents about Union's financial options and support.

STUDENT FINDS INTERNSHIP, SEARCHES FOR LOVE by Becky Dewey

Six singles looking for love in Lincoln plus one matchmaking newspaper equaled one unforgettable internship for Brian Weed.

While scanning the classifieds in the *Lincoln Journal Star*, one opportunity at the newspaper had jumped out at Weed—weekly writing assignments, photography, Web updates and coordinating a promotional campaign. As a Union College senior communication major, Weed was immediately interested. The ad happened to omit “matchmaker” in the job description.

The *Journal Star* was looking for someone to coordinate a summer promotion called “Six in the City.” Six singles (three men and three women) were chosen to have makeovers before going on two dates—one picked by *Journal Star* readers and another the singles could choose for themselves.

The coordinator would manage a Web page about Six in the City, write Sunday editorials about the singles’ progress and organize the participants’ complete makeovers, from hair to new clothes to life coaching.

The right match

Though he had impressive credentials, including an editorial internship at Sandhills Publishing and a promotional internship at a California radio station, Weed said he couldn’t have shown off his skills without help from his communication professors. Not only did his course work give him experience writing creative and editorial pieces, it also required making a portfolio that showcased his strengths.

“A portfolio is important because it can speak for the student after the interview is done,” said Michelle Velázquez Mesnard, associate professor of communication and Weed’s advisor.

Weed credits Mesnard with helping him create a successful portfolio. “The professors at Union College are more than teachers,” he said. “They’re mentors.”

It’s the one-on-one approachability between faculty and stu-

dents that Weed appreciates. “That’s what Union brings to the table,” he said. “You don’t get that interaction at other colleges. It’s the personal atmosphere.”

That mentorship gave Weed the edge to sell his accomplishments successfully.

“Brian brought a unique set of skills to the internship that I would consider rare to find in a college student,” said Jessica Kennedy, Weed’s supervisor and *Journal Star* Marketing Manager. “Brian was perfect in that he had both writing and promotional internships, which was the ideal combination for Six in the City.”



Brian Weed, senior Communication major, during his internship at the Lincoln Journal Star.

Choosing Six in the City

The *Journal Star* wanted singles that had the ability to grow and wanted a personal change. Advertisements in the *Journal Star* and local radio stations brought more than 80 responses, each with a profile and photo. Finally six hopeful singles were selected.

“This summer internship was perfect because I was not just sitting at a desk doing a meaningless task,” Weed said. “I took ownership of the Six in the City project and had a great impact on the success of it. That freedom gave me a sense of pride and purpose that showed in my work.”

“As an employer, I look for flexibility and energy,” Kennedy said. “Brian was able to take feedback and improve his work, as well juggle the multiple demands thrown at him every day.”

By the end of the summer, none of the singles had found “true love,” but they had formed friendships, discovered more about themselves and had a fun time. Weed’s employers were impressed by his hard work and his internship continued into the school year.

“I grew up in the neighborhood near Union College, so I was pretty familiar with the school and have always been impressed with it,” Kennedy said. “I hope for more opportunities to work with the college and its students in the future.”

Communication Program Gets Makeover

Our program is directed to help our students get great internships,” said Michelle Mesnard, associate professor of communication. In the last 10 years, communication majors at Union College have increased by 300 percent.

This year the communication program has gotten even better by leading the way in the program review process and implementing changes. According to Mesnard, “Our students will be better prepared by both the breadth and depth of their knowledge.”

Highlights of the program review changes:

- Sophomore seminar requires job shadowing two professionals, two mock interviews (one from a communication professional), a graduation plan and a portfolio.
- Required minor or second major for journalists
- Multi-cultural communication class
- Research training

Celebrating 25 impacting t

story by Scott Cushman

A silver anniversary deserves to be celebrated with forethought, a labor of love, and an extravagant dinner. Union College used a similar recipe to celebrated its love of service this year with the 25th anniversary of Project Impact, the college's annual community service day.

Student leaders and their faculty support team started planning the event immediately after the successful conclusion of Project Impact in 2005. The result of their planning and coordination was the largest Project Impact yet, with

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25 Year



25 years of the community

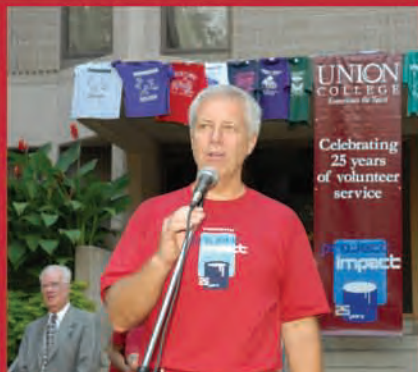
*photography by Steve Nazario, Crista Nazario,
Emily Yancer, James Goff and Bruce Forbes*

Project Impact



over 900 volunteers serving more than 50 agencies in the Lincoln community.

Project Impact primarily serves those who serve the needs of the Lincoln community by doing the odd jobs that non-profit organizations don't have the man power to keep up with. "We wouldn't have this many working on a huge project like that without Project Impact's help," said Renee Cohen, volunteer relations coordinator at Goodwill, where students sorted piles of clothing





donated to the organization.

Partner sites included caring for the feet of the homeless at the Matt Talbot Soup Kitchen, distributing fliers and posters for the Alzheimer's Association and reading to children at public libraries. Most sites have less contact with the end recipients of the services. Students and faculty cleaned, sorted, pulled weeds, mulched flower beds and did clerical work behind the scenes. These aren't the sort of activities that reward volunteers with touching stories of directly affected someone's life.

Sometimes the lack of a touching story is the greatest story of all. "I don't know what to tell you," said Tyler Henry, junior exercise science major at Union College. "I pulled weeds for a few hours, nothing too special." Yet Henry, with feet and legs caked in mud, exhausted on a 95 degree day, was ready to do more. According to Justin Okimi, assistant chaplain, that's what Project Impact is about, serving because Union College is a part of a community, serving for the sake of being servants.



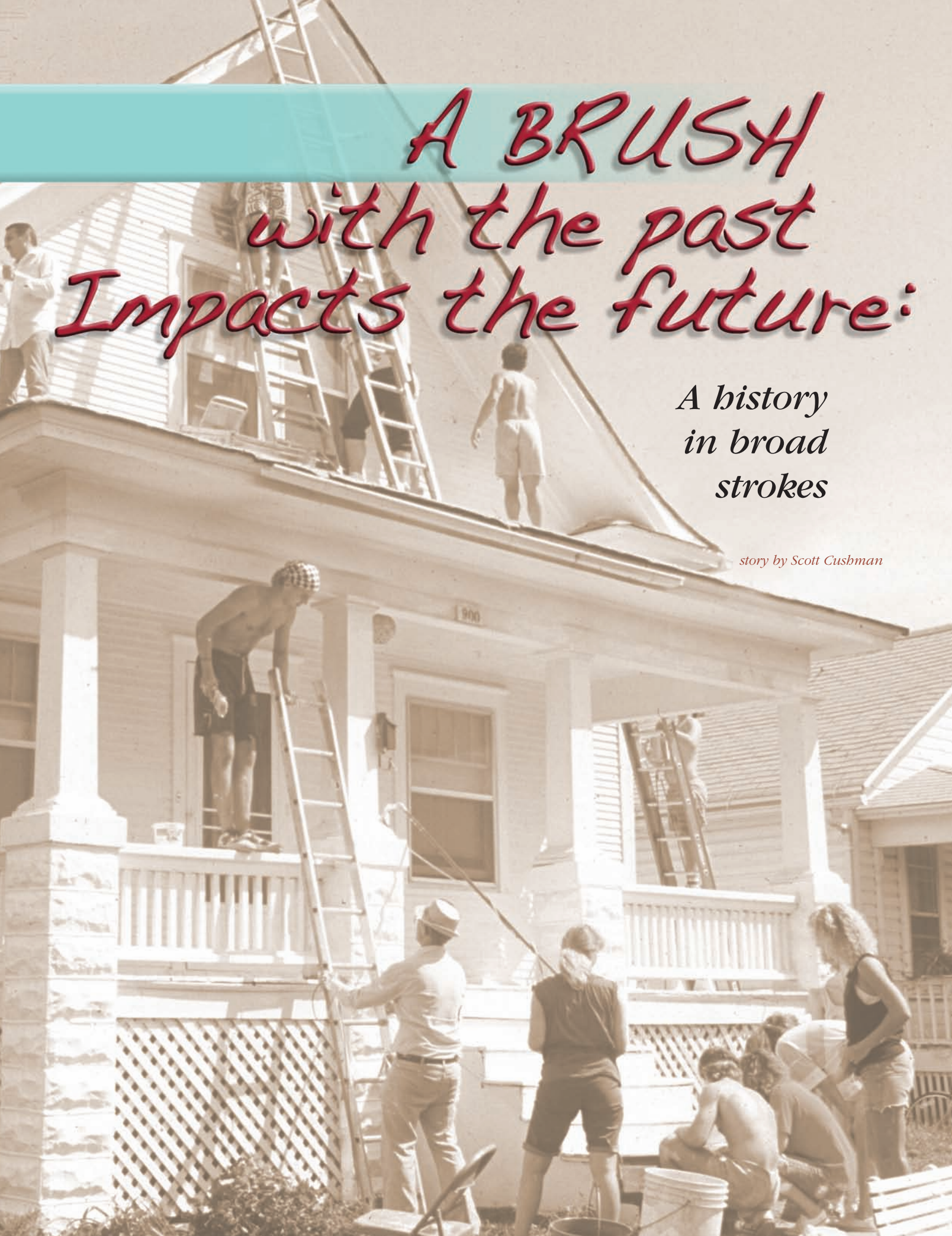
For the 25th anniversary, the day's activities expanded from a half day to a full day of work, adding a special urban renewal project in two of Lincoln's poorest neighborhoods in the afternoon. Groups from Union, joined by about 120 workers from Lincoln Action Program, painted over graffiti, picked up litter, weeded and disposed of 25 tons of debris for residents of the Clinton and Hartley neighborhoods.

"It was amazing to see so many students stay through the afternoon," said Jesse Proctor, senior business administration major and neighborhood revitalization coordinator, "They went out, finished up projects and came back looking for more ways to help. Everyone worked harder and longer than we could have hoped for."

To cap off a long and busy day, the college provided a picnic for volunteers and community members at Peter Pan Park in north central Lincoln. "It was so much work to pull everything together," said Tara Taylor, a junior communications major who helped organize the picnic. "But it was worth it to see the community out there just as hungry as we were. After all that work, the burgers tasted so good."

Union's love affair with service compliments the college's commitment to education. Jason Donovan, a physician assistant studies major, summed up the relationship, saying, "Project Impact keeps your focus on what's important. Education is important, but learning to serve our community is what our education is preparing us for." A





A BRUSH with the past Impacts the future:

*A history
in broad
strokes*

story by Scott Cushman

Brightening Residences Using Student Help, the project known as BRUSH, kicked off in 1981 after a month of festivities marking Union's 90th anniversary.

Commemorative events at Union College that September included a Renaissance fair sponsored by KUCV, Nebraska Public Radio's parent station, a reconstruction of an 1891 dorm room, an antique car rally and a faculty beard growing contest in which two women, Aleta Hubbard and Ruthita Fike, donned stage beards and won prizes.

Twenty-five years later, few faculty wear beards and the Renaissance fair and KUCV have moved off campus, but BRUSH, renamed and expanded into Project Impact, continues as a testament to Union College's commitment to its community. Ruthita Fike '71, who was then the assistant to the college president and played an instrumental role in planning the first BRUSH said, "If I'd been told we were starting something to last a quarter century, I would never have believed it."

Priming the surface

BRUSH began as an elegantly simple big idea. "I had read about a growing trend of altruism among college students," said Dean Hubbard, former president of Union College who now holds the presidency of Northwest Missouri University in Maryville, Mo. "I wanted to know what we could do to focus that trend on our campus." Hubbard met with Bruce Johnson '82, then the Associated Student Body president, to brainstorm about ways to direct the zeal of students into positive action for the local community. Together, they came up with the idea of painting houses.

"The focus was on helping elderly people right in the College View neighborhood," Hubbard said. "We didn't have to go far to find people who needed a fresh coat of paint."

"We wanted to raise awareness of Union College in the community," said Fike. "Union was always described as either the best kept secret or that weird little college. We wanted to be known as a school of service and to teach our students to give back to their communities ... we set a goal to paint 100 houses in 10 years."

BRUSH eventually surpassed both the 100-house target and the goal of creating awareness. The event has become the longest-running collegiate volunteer event with the highest percentage of campus participation in the country according to available research. The project has been featured in the local media every year and has been celebrated in proclamations by mayors and governors. In 1991, for the 10th anniversary, *Good Morning America* spotlighted BRUSH for the nation to see.

"There are people who only know of Union College through our volunteer day," said David Smith, current college president. "It's an excellent introduction to who we are."

In its earliest years, BRUSH was primarily organized by faculty sponsors with support from ASB and Campus Ministries. Project Impact now relies almost entirely on student leaders in Campus Ministries to ensure its continued success. "Pastor Rich (Carlson) deserves more credit than he's willing to take," said Gina Jacob '03. Jacob helped organize Project Impact for four years and has served as assistant chaplain. "He mentors students and encourages them to mentor other students. Helping the students grow as leaders is his ultimate goal and Project Impact provides a perfect opportunity for leadership."



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The right brush for every corner

"From its start, it's been a feel-good endeavor" said Duane Fike, Ruthita's husband and also the originator of the acronym *BRUSH*. "I remember helping an older man clean up around his place. It was simple stuff, just things that needed to be hauled away. Not a big project, but for him, too big. I remember how thankful and astounded he was at the giving spirit of the students ... our reward was his gratitude and surprise."

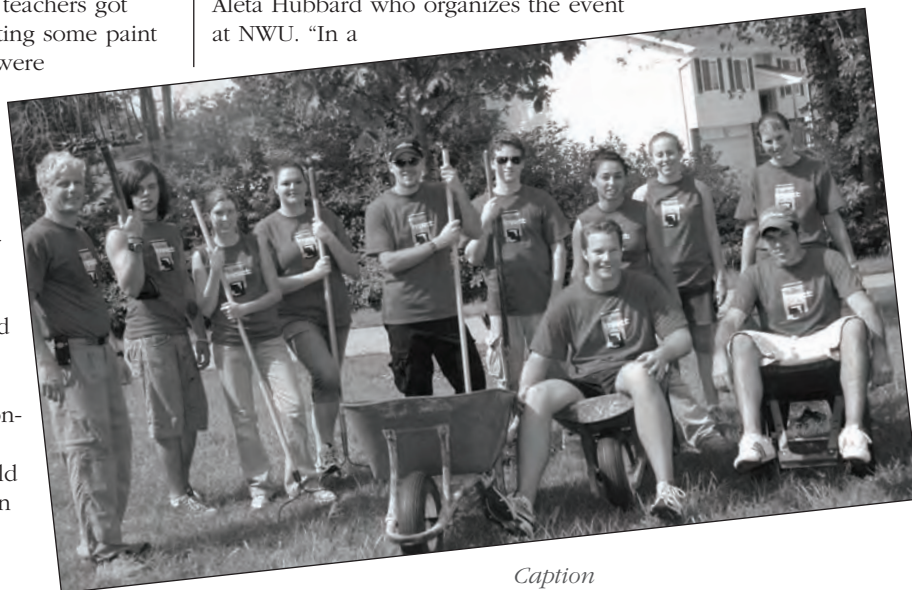
The joy of helping resonates through the stories students and alumni tell of *BRUSH* and Project Impact. Randy Cozine ('83), a freshman straight out of the Navy during the first *BRUSH*, said, "It was a big deal—students and teachers got involved. None of us were bothered about getting some paint on us. We were looking forward to it and we were looking forward to the smiles on people's faces when they saw their houses and garages brightened up ... We were able to get acquainted with the homeowners and pray with them."

The project was aided by expert craftsmanship from students like Cozine whose father was a professional painter. Another student made a big impression that day. "I wish I could remember the name of the student from North Dakota who had spent the summer painting silos," Hubbard said. "He brought his professional sprayer and could do the side of a house in just a few minutes. I don't know how we would have reached our goal that day if it hadn't been for him."

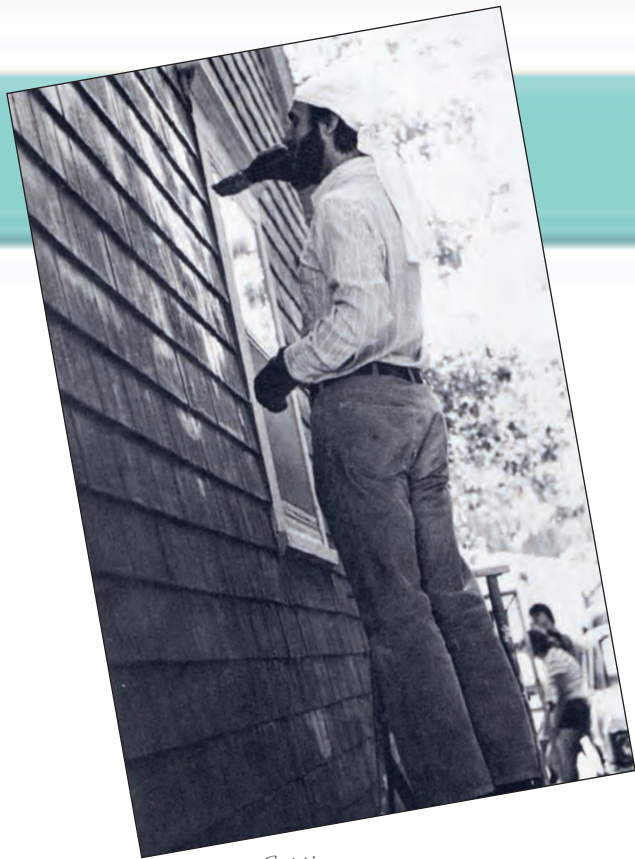
Finish one room, paint the next

In an editorial printed in the Sept. 15, 1983 *Clocktower*, Tom Seibold '85 declared "BRUSH is not enough." Over the years, the campus has agreed with him as the spirit of *BRUSH*—the same altruism that resonated with students in 1981—now provides the impetus for ever-expanding volunteer ministries.

BRUSH has grown beyond Union College as other schools have replicated the event on their campuses. Hubbard and his wife, Aleta, brought *BRUSH* with them to their new home in Missouri. "I've had many students come to me and say they enjoyed it immensely and will come back every year," said Aleta Hubbard who organizes the event at NWU. "In a



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small town like Maryville, improving one building improves the whole community."

At Union College, BRUSH concluded in 1991, Union's centennial year. The goal of 100 houses in 10 years had been over-shot. Students, faculty and staff had painted 113 homes in southwest Lincoln and were ready for more. Rather than letting willing hands go idle, Project BRUSH was expanded into Project Impact. "We celebrated achieving our goal by setting even higher goals," said Rich Carlson '73, campus chaplain for the last 24 years. "Our aim now is to help all of Lincoln as much as possible."

Project Impact has grown to serve more than 50 non-profit organiza-

tions in the Lincoln community. "During Project Impact, you can pull weeds, paint buildings, file papers, sort clothes, read to children ... there's an opportunity for every volunteer to find something they'll enjoy," said Justin Okimi '06, assistant chaplain and former Project Impact coordinator. The percentage of students, faculty and staff participating has also grown from just over 50 percent the first year to over 80 percent for the last several years. "Our challenge now is to match student volunteers with sites they'll want to return to throughout the year."

One example of continued service is the women's basketball team. They volunteered as a group this year at the Lincoln Children's Museum and have kept going back for special events. "They were so excited about our help that they asked us back," said Marsha Bartulec, office manager for the Division

of Business and Computer Science and the team's assistant coach. "We've had a lot of fun helping with special events and we're glad to be part of their volunteer database." The name, tasks, and faces may have changed, but the legacy of Union's annual volunteer day continues to grow. Following the first BRUSH, President Hubbard wrote in *The Clocktower*, "I have never been more proud to be part of Union College." Echoes of the same sentiment were heard this year when Jose Rojas, director for the Office of Volunteer Ministries at the North American Division, ended a day of serving alongside Union College students by saying, "I have never felt so proud of a group of students as I did today." **A**



Caption

CAMPUS NOTABLES

► The May 2006 graduating class from Union's nursing program achieved a **100 percent first-time pass rate** on the NCLEX (nursing licensure exam). For the last 10 years, Union's nursing graduates have maintained a pass rate in the 92-97 percent range, which is higher than the Nebraska or national averages.

► **Dr. Joe Allison**, chair of the Division of Human Development, and **Kathy Bollinger**, associate professor of education, have stories published in the book, *Avenues of the Heart*. The book is a compilation of 52 heartwarming stories about teachers who truly made a difference in a student's life through Adventist education. *Avenues of the Heart* is available through the Adventist Book Center.

► **Dr. Linda Becker**, vice president for Student Services, was chosen to serve on the 2006 Board of Examiners for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Becker also served as an examin-

er in 2004. The board is composed of approximately 500 leading experts selected from industry, professional and trade organizations, education and health care organizations.

► Union College was well represented at the annual Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC) convention in Baltimore, Md., Oct. 12-15. **Michelle Velázquez Mesnard**, associate professor of education, served as SAC president and was instrumental in organizing the event. Two of four annual SAC awards were presented to communicators connected to Union College.

● Recent communication program graduate **Kate Simmons '06**, received the Student Achievement Award. Simmons is currently the special media coordinator for the Mid-America Union.

● **Jacque Smith**, director of public relations, received the SAC Award of Merit for the 25th anniversary Project

Impact paint pail media kit. Smith also recently earned the professional designation of Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) through the International Association of Business Communicators. The yearlong process included submitting two comprehensive portfolio samples for evaluation and passing a four-hour essay exam and half-hour oral exam.

► A chapter written by **Mark Robison**, associate professor of English, was published in the volume, *History, Memory and War*, edited by Steven Trout (Volume 6 of the Cather Studies series published by the University of Nebraska Press). The title of Robison's chapter is "Recreation in World War I and the Practice of Play in One of Ours." In the introduction, Trout said, "Meticulously researched, Robison's contribution to this volume represents New Historicism at its best and breaks entirely new scholarly ground."

UNION
meet at the rock pile
april 5-8, 2007



early bird registration
ends march 30, 2007

HOMECOMING 2007
MATRP:
1907-2007

rock pile (rok pahyl) n. a heap of small boulders; a collection of minerals; a large rounded mass of stones lying on the surface of the ground or embedded in the soil; rocks quarried and worked into a specific size and shape for a particular purpose; the result of a landslide; a landmark on the union college campus in lincoln, nebraska; a hang out spot; **the place where all the cool kids will be for homecoming 2007!**

friends. memories.
laughter. be there.

honor years: 1937.1947.1952.1957
1967.1977.1982.1987.1997.



Faye Poore, Jerry Pague, Bev Hilliard
1969

SAVE 20%
when you register by march 30

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*Cheers for Volunteers
for the 25th anniversary of
Project Impact, a record-breaking
900 plus Union College students and employees
started the academic year
with a day of community service.*

Learn more about Project Impact 25 on page 18.

CORDmagazine

News from Union College
Vol. 72, No.1 Winter 2006/2007

Published by the
Union College Advancement Office
3800 South 48th Street, Lincoln, NE 68506

Address service requested

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lincoln, NE
Permit No. 62