Indiana University Northwest conferred 797 degrees to graduates in its undergraduate and master's programs on May 8 during the university’s 42nd Annual Commencement at the Gary Genesis Center.

The afternoon program unfolded in efficient fashion, as degree candidates from the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Health and Human Services, the Schools of Education, Nursing, Business and Economics, and Public and Environmental Affairs (SPEA), and the Divisions of Social Work and Continuing Studies, all formalized the completion of their college education.

“Community and education are especially vital here at Indiana University,” said IU President Michael McRobbie during his address. “Education is the reason we are all here this afternoon. Your hard-won accomplishments in the classroom after years of diligent work have led to this moment of celebration.

“Equally important, however, are the many and varied communities that have given you support over the years leading to this day,” he continued. “Your family and friends have offered their love and guidance. Your professors and classmates have provided weighty intellectual challenges that have pushed you to ascend to the heights of academic achievement.

“Today, we honor these achievements, just as you gratefully recognize the many people who have helped you reach your dreams. These dreams have grown ever more ambitious as you have learned to be citizens of the world over your years here at Indiana University.”

Both McRobbie and IU Northwest Chancellor Bruce Bergland recounted several stories of 2008 graduates who had achieved great academic success. Some overcame personal challenges to do so. Others continued a tradition established by family.

McRobbie mentioned Gary Police Cmdr. Bruce Outlaw, who earned his Master's of Public Administration from SPEA. Outlaw joined two sisters and a stepdaughter who had already earned IU degrees. The president also spoke of Gary resident and Social Work graduate Twan Stokes, whose tireless efforts on behalf of the IU Northwest chapter of the Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society led the organization’s myriad community-service projects.

Finally, McRobbie noted the accomplishments of Joshua and Kathryn Eyermann, of Valparaiso, both of whom followed in mother Linda’s footsteps by earning bachelor’s degrees.

Many IU Northwest grads, Bergland said, remained motivated in their pursuit of education even when faced with significant obstacles. He cited the example of Lori Mendoza, of Portage, who began her studies in 1992 at IU Bloomington but paused for nearly a decade while she raised five children. Lori later came to IU Northwest to complete her bachelor’s degree in general studies, with a concentration in fine arts.

“Oftentimes, our non-traditional students at IU Northwest have the greatest motivation of all, because, in many cases, they have waited years to achieve their dreams of a college diploma,” the Chancellor said.

Bergland also noted the accomplishments of Hobart resident Gjon Nikollaj and his wife, Allison Trusty-Nikollaj, who graduated together this year, he with a bachelor's degree in computer information systems and she with a bachelor's in health services management. The couple made the decision to return to school several years ago, after Gjon lost his steel-mill job. With three children and one car, and with the support and assistance of family and friends, the Nikollajs persevered in pursuit of a new direction in their lives.

This kind of commitment typifies the approach of IU Northwest graduates to their education, Bergland explained.

“The reward for accepting the challenge of higher education is much more than a diploma, a mortarboard or a handshake from the university president or chancellor,” he said. “It is the foundation of self-confidence that comes from academic success, the power of self-determination that arises from increased knowledge, and the great personal satisfaction that has always been the hallmark of a job well done.”

The Class of 2008 was an academically successful group in which 21 percent of graduates finished with grade-point averages of 3.6 or higher. Nineteen percent of graduates earned master’s degrees, while 52 percent earned bachelor’s degrees and 29 percent earned associate’s degrees. Seventy percent of this year’s graduates were women.
AQIP gives university nod of approval
Quality review team declares campus is ‘on the right track’

After months of intense preparation, Indiana University Northwest welcomed reviewers from the Higher Learning Commission’s Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) to campus during the last week of March, and the results of this quality checkup were literally right on the button.

“Everyone had a button and it was cool!” reported AQIP reviewers Chris Crawford and Linda Stacy in their official report. They were talking about the “AQIP is Coming!” buttons sported by campus faculty, staff and students before and during the site visit.

While IU Northwest’s great strides toward achieving continuous quality improvement earned strong commendations from the AQIP team, it was the buttons, provided by the Office of University Relations, that put the exclamation point on their campus review.

“It was obvious that IU Northwest approached their Quality Checkup Visit with great seriousness and a desire to improve,” Stacy and Crawford wrote. “The obvious goal of the button was not to put the campus on edge, (but) rather … to signify a pride in being prepared for a quality improvement and assessment conversation.

“In the reviewers’ opinion, their approach was a model, and the campus should be proud of the way they prepared for the visit. By all observations, all relevant details were handled in advance, making the conversation richer. The reviewers thank IU Northwest for their commitment to making our visit (happen) without incident or problem. The reviewers felt that IU Northwest was glad we visited them.”

While the buttons implied a significant degree of seriousness about the AQIP process, the preparedness of IU Northwest’s AQIP team and the documentation of its progress toward specific quality benchmarks verified the institution’s commitment to achieving the level of improvement demanded by the Higher Learning Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation.

Chief among these requirements were the need for an updated General Education program that is tied to measurable student-learning outcomes, and the need for more permanent personnel in key administrative positions in order to give the university greater strategic balance and continuity of leadership. In these and other areas of focus, Crawford and Stacy concluded, IU Northwest has made ample headway and has therefore met the requirements for renewed accreditation in 2009.

“It appears that you are on the right track.” Crawford said during a March 28 wrap-up meeting with faculty and staff. He and Stacy noted that, although their conversations with faculty and staff revealed some concerns and critiques, the overall message delivered to the reviewers was that IU Northwest is a viable institution that is engaged with its students and with the Northwest Indiana community.

“Overall, people like working here. They like the institution,” Stacy said.

Their final report noted that IU Northwest is, in philosophy and practice, a student-centered campus where students’ needs in all things considered was evident in most cases,” the report stated. Stacy and Crawford also reported positive feedback from their conversations with students.

“(IU) Northwest is an unsung hero, according to students, because of the small class size and personal attention from advisors,” the report stated. “Students loved their professors and the outstanding job they did.”

The AQIP team also praised IU Northwest’s creation in 2006 of an Office of Institutional Research, headed by Director Kathryn Lantz. Crawford and Stacy emphasized the importance of data-driven decision-making and said the IR office demonstrates the university’s commitment to that process.

In a message to the campus shortly after the AQIP review, IU Northwest Chancellor Bruce Bergland thanked the university community for its exemplary hospitality and warm cooperation during the site visit. He also thanked Faculty Assistant to the Chancellor and Associate Professor of Nursing Linda Delunas, Ph.D., and Intern Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of English Robin Hass Birky, Ph.D., for their extensive efforts as the campus’s AQIP liaisons to prepare for the recent review.

“I cannot say enough about how impressed I have been by the work of these two outstanding individuals,” Bergland said. “The reviewers also were effusive in their praise of Robin and Linda.

“The next major step, the reaffirmation of accreditation, will not take place until 2009, but, given the positive nature of the site visit, the reaffirmation is assured,” he said. “Please remember that, since we are committed to continuous improvement, we shall now just continue the good work we have begun, while using the results we gather to improve more processes.”

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Before a capacity crowd at the Indiana University Northwest Savannah Center on April 4, government officials and social-service advocates from across Northwest Indiana outlined recent successes and ongoing challenges in the effort to protect the state’s children from abuse and neglect.

The day’s presentations, breakout sessions and networking opportunities were all part of the 18th Annual Forum on Child Abuse and Neglect, sponsored by the IU Northwest School of Public and Environmental Affairs in conjunction with the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS), Prevent Child Abuse Lake County (PCALC), Dunebrook: Prevent Child Abuse LaPorte County, Mental Health America, The Villages, Parents as Teachers of Lake County, Community Partners for Child Safety, and Lake Area United Way.

“We strive to set a standard of quality service and, frankly, a sense of urgency,” said Jane Bisbee, director of Lake County DCS, during her opening remarks. “One of the things that I push every day ... is ‘Where is the sense of urgency? Where is the sense of urgency in doing whatever is right for the child?’ The sense of urgency is a priority for me and, hopefully, a priority for those who protect children.”

The morning program featured a series of speakers, including Judge Mary Beth Bonaventura of the Lake Superior Court – Juvenile Division, who delivered brief remarks to an audience of 300 social-service professionals, foster parents and others. Bonaventura said that she has seen a positive effect arising from the combined efforts of government and social-service agencies, foster parents, and volunteer organizations that work on behalf of children in Lake County.

“We have our work cut out for us. We always have,” the judge said. “But every day it seems like we do a little bit better. I think that, with all of the people in this community, in this audience, and at this front table right here, we’re all going to get it right.”

Despite the upbeat mood at the forum, the disturbing reality of child abuse and neglect was unavoidable in the various workshops.

In the session “What in the World Happened to this Child?: Foster Parent Disbelief,” IU Northwest Assistant Professor of Social Work Denise Travis, Ph.D., talked to foster parents about the tragic, even inconceivable home situations experienced by many foster children.

“What’s the worst thing that could happen to a child?” Travis asked the group. She suggested that each person imagine a worst-case scenario. “If you remain foster parents, you are going to have to redefine that vignette in your mind time and time again.

“You and me, we can’t even imagine ... my brain can’t even go there,” she continued. “My mind can’t even take me there. I have no idea what the next horrible situation is going to look like. Some of the things I’ve seen are worse than your worst right now.”

Yet Travis, who counsels foster children, explained that removing a child from the home creates additional confusion and trauma.

“I submit to you that the mere removal of a child from the home is a traumatic experience,” she said. “We don’t give enough credit to the fact that taking somebody out of their home, even when it’s a bad home ... it’s still home. Over the last 25 years, I’ve probably dealt with a thousand kids. There have been only two occasions when the child did not want to go home. No matter what has occurred to that child, they always want to go home.”

In “It’s My Body,” a session about promoting children’s awareness of sexual abuse, Indiana State Police sex-crimes investigator Jennifer McDonald conducted an educational exercise with students from the West Gary Lighthouse charter school during the 18th Annual Forum on Child Abuse and Neglect at IU Northwest on April 4. McDonald, who was demonstrating the “It’s My Body” program that is widely used in LaPorte County schools, told students that they should always tell an adult if someone touches them in a bad way.

Jennifer McDonald, sex-crimes investigator for the Indiana State Police, uses an anatomically correct doll to demonstrate the concept of good and bad touching to students from the West Gary Lighthouse charter school during the 18th Annual Forum on Child Abuse and Neglect at IU Northwest on April 4. McDonald, who was demonstrating the “It’s My Body” program that is widely used in LaPorte County schools, told students that they should always tell an adult if someone touches them in a bad way.

McDonald, who conducts these educational exercises in schools regularly in throughout LaPorte County, had a frank, easy-to-understand discussion with the kids about what constitutes bad touching and what they should do if it happens to them.

“The biggest problem we have ... is that kids your age, if they’ve been touched on their private parts for no good reason or just to play a game, they just don’t like to tell,” said McDonald, who noted that embarrassment is the biggest reason children won’t talk about molestation. She then gave a kid-friendly rundown on what areas of the body are considered private, using two anatomically correct dolls for illustration. She referred to the dolls as her “tools,” saying that she uses them to educate students and also to help children who have been molested demonstrate what happened to them.

“Private parts are just another part of our body, and they are nothing at all to be ashamed of,” McDonald told the students.

Afterward, she explained to adults in the audience that education programs like “It’s My Body” are a crucial tool in dissuading child molesters from moving to a particular community.

Other sessions addressed issues like domestic violence, child fatalities, and how to create a safe environment for children. In the afternoon plenary session, James Hmurovich, president and CEO of Prevent Child Abuse America, encouraged participants to take what they had learned at the forum and use it to make a difference.

IU Northwest Chancellor Bruce Bergland thanked the audience for turning out in such force on behalf of children.

“This forum is an event that, as I understand it, has been going on for some time. However, I am quite sure that the attendance today may be setting some form of record,” Bergland said. “It’s absolutely wonderful to see all of you here, and, of course, that’s an expression of your commitment to building better futures for our children.”
Schools honor grads, achievers

It is a spring ritual as traditional as the season itself. Each April, as classes enter their final weeks and all eyes turn toward commencement and the summer break beyond, the departments, divisions, schools, and colleges that comprise Indiana University Northwest take time to honor their graduates and those students whose academic performance has set them apart from their peers.

These events are exciting not just for the honored students and their proud families, but also for the faculty and administrators who have watched their pupils mature intellectually, accept new challenges, and gain knowledge and confidence with each passing semester.

In 2008, the IU Northwest awards season began on April 3 with the School of Business and Economics honors event, where business faculty recognized this year’s assorted scholarship recipients, award winners and Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society invitees. Those inductees were also honored at a separate ceremony on May 7.

The Division of Social Work held its annual hooding ceremony on April 18. Families of graduates packed the Library Conference Center to show support for students who had completed the grueling three-year program. As many grads attested, family support was critical to their success.

“It’s been an exciting time for everyone, so I just want to congratulate my fellow graduates tonight, and also thank my parents for essentially letting me be a squatter at their home for three years, for free,” said graduate Gina Budzevski.

“The folks here who are graduating are only graduating because their family members have supported them,” said David Westhuis, Ph.D., executive director of the IU Division of Social Work. “If it were not for the support of your family members, you would not be graduating from this program. This is a way for the students to thank the families as much as it is a congratulations for the students.”

On April 22, the College of Arts and Sciences (COAS) congratulated its exemplary students with its annual Honors Tea. More than a few departments announced multiple winners for awards that technically only called for one. Such was the wealth of academic talent to be found in COAS disciplines this year.

Many COAS honorees received books or bookstore certificates along with their awards. Professor of Sociology Charles Gallmeier, Ph.D., explained that strategy.

“They will be receiving certificates, but each one will also receive a book, which I especially picked out for them,” Gallmeier said as he presented students Monica Hunter and Jacquelyn Cherry with their Outstanding Students in Sociology awards. “The object is to keep them reading.”

At the first-ever College of Health and Human Services honors reception on April 24, which recognized the academic success of nursing, dental, social work, and allied health students, Chancellor Bruce Bergland expressed his fondness for the plethora of awards events on campus each spring.

“I just love this time of year, and part of the reason is because of events like this, where we have the opportunity to recognize all of you who have worked so hard,” he said. “Not only have you worked hard, but you have performed excellently. We value academic excellence at the highest level here at this institution. Our faculty and administration are committed to that goal, and they meet that goal individually and as groups.

“They hold all of you to the highest standard, and those of you being honored here tonight have met or surpassed those standards.”

Awards events continued right up until the evening of May 7, the day prior to IU Northwest’s 42nd Annual Commencement, when the School of Nursing held its pin-
ning ceremony for new graduates in Tamarack Hall.

As she does every year, School of Nursing Dean Linda Rooda made a point to mention that she did not graduate alongside legendary nursing icon Florence Nightingale. Rooda did, however, recall her own history with the IU Northwest nursing program.

“I know what it means, and I know what it feels like, to walk across this very stage,” Rooda, herself an alumna of the program, told the grads. “And I am hoping for you, that after you walk across this stage, you, too, will have a very fulfilling nursing career.”

Not all student-recognition events were academic. The Office of Student Life and Athletics sponsored an April 24 event to recognize players from the university’s various National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics-affiliated sports programs, including the baseball, volleyball, and men’s and women’s basketball teams.

Also honored were contributors to campus clubs and others whose volunteerism and service had enriched all aspects of university life.

In that evening’s most emotional moment, Black Student Union President and 2008 graduate Vanessa Hardy received the Outstanding Student Service Award for her contributions to her organization and to the campus. Hardy, who was instrumental in organizing such events as the African-American Festival of the Arts, was overcome with emotion as she accepted the unexpected honor.

At the conclusion of the School of Public and Environmental Affairs honor reception on May 2, SPEA Interim Dean George O. Assibey-Mensah encouraged his school’s honorees with a quote from famed orator and presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan.

“Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice,” Assibey-Mensah quoted. “It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved.

“You achieve because you made those choices in your lives,” he said.
Profs, staff earn honors, too
CETL, Neal-Marshall among groups to recognize faculty, staff

If springtime is the season for honoring graduates and accomplished undergrads, it is also the time for honoring the professors who teach them, the staff members who serve them, and the all-around indispensable personnel who make Indiana University Northwest such an excellent place to learn.

A Great Year
In April, amidst the many celebratory events for students and graduates, IU Northwest made time to honor those who have served the campus and its students with distinction, dedication and, in many cases, considerable duration. And, based on the fact that he was honored at practically every event held this year, 2008’s biggest award-winner had to be Assistant Professor of Modern Languages E. Scooter Pégram, Ph.D.

It was Pégram’s fifth year at IU Northwest, which qualified him for a certificate at the Years of Service and Outstanding Employee Awards Luncheon on April 23. In March, he was named a member of the IU Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching (FACET), along with IU Professor of Business Subir Bandyopadhyay, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Philosophy Gianluca Di Muzio, Ph.D., and Assistant Professor of Geosciences Zoran Kilibarda, Ph.D.

On April 10, Pégram received the Outstanding Faculty Award from the Northwest Indiana Chapter of the Neal-Marshall Alumni Club. There, he was joined by Associate Professor Garrett Cope, who received the club’s Legacy of Leadership Award.

At the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning’s (CETL) Teacher Appreciation Luncheon on April 28, Pégram was recognized as this year’s co-winner, with Assistant Professor of Geosciences Erin Argyilan, Ph.D., of the 2008 IU Northwest Founders’ Day Outstanding Teaching Award. And, on May 7, Pégram was one of several faculty members to receive an IU Northwest Diversity Advocate Award, joining Associate Professor of Minority Studies Earl Jones, Ph.D., Student Support Services Director Patricia Hicks-Hosch, Ph.D., and SPEA Lecturer Jacqueline Gipson, J.D.

Pégram, who holds a dual appointment in Modern Languages and Minority Studies, is known for organizing the university’s annual Hip-Hop Summit and other outreach efforts aimed at urban youth. During his brief remarks at the Neal-Marshall reception, the Canadian-born educator noted that fellow honoree Cope had been helpful to him during his first months at IU Northwest.

“I am really honored to be sitting next to Mr. Cope,” he said.

“But I saw this position and got the job, and I felt very lucky to get it.”

For his part, Cope told the audience that he is often reminded of the lives he has touched by former students he meets unexpectedly. That, he said, is the greatest reward for a lifetime of service in the classroom.

“I was in Chicago one day, looking in the window at what was then Marshall Field’s, which is now Macy’s … and then suddenly someone was hitting me on the back,” recalled Cope, who taught elementary in the Gary schools before coming to IU Northwest. “I turned around, and it was a former student of mine. She told me that I’d taught her in the sixth grade … and, thank the Lord, I remembered her name!”

A Diversity of Winners
Mariette Williams, who introduced the Diversity Award honorees on May 7, praised Pégram’s novel methods of interacting with his students.

“One thing that is interesting to me is the way that Dr. Pégram uses pop culture and other topics of interest to engage his students,” Williams said. “I have students constantly coming in and talking to me about him and the things that they’re learning. He recognizes that students learn differently and employs a variety of teaching techniques.

“And I see so much of that here at IU Northwest,” she added. “I am constantly, constantly impressed with the range of individuals that we have here and the kinds of things that they do to stay involved and keep their students involved.”

Other Diversity Awards honorees included: the Asian-American Student Association and its advisor, Associate Professor of Economics Surekha Rao, Ph.D.; Associate Professor of Minority Studies Raoul Contreras, Ph.D.; and Assistant Professor of Education Taylor Lake, Ph.D., all of whom received IU Northwest Diversity Friend awards. Two local organizations, Gary Neighborhood Watch and
the Salvation Army of Gary, also were named as Diversity Friends.

Adjunct English faculty member Mary Pfloghauph received the 2008 IU Northwest Diversity Champion Award. She was joined by Assistant Superintendent Mark Sperling, Ph.D., of the Merrillville School Corp., Danny Lackey, who is the diversity coordinator for the Merrillville schools, and IU Northwest student Stephen Scott.

**Teaching Excellence**

At the CETL luncheon, IU Northwest Chancellor Bruce Bergland commented on the university’s growing recognition and appreciation of its talented array of caring, capable educators.

“It really has felt, over the last three or four years, as though the excitement about our excellence in teaching has grown. It just feels as though the culture of the institution is wrapping its arms even more around how wonderfully well you all carry out that function and facilitate learning.”

CETL recognized the 2008 recipients of the IU Northwest Trustee Teaching Award, which included: Di Muzio and Lake; Professor of Sociology Stephanie Shanks-Meile, Ph.D.; Associate Professor of Psychology Cynthia O’Dell, Ph.D.; Senior Math Lecturer Jon Becker; Associate Professor of Sociology Tanice Foltz, Ph.D.; Associate Professor of Anthropology Robert Mucci, Ph.D.; Clinical Radiography Coordinator Robin Jones; Assistant Professor of Philosophy Anja Matvijikwi, Ph.D.; and Associate Professor of Communication Lori Montalbano-Phelps, Ph.D.

Trustee awards are granted to faculty members who exhibit exemplary command of their subjects, instill enthusiasm for the material in their students, and have a demonstrable effect on student learning.

Later, before announcing Pégram and Argyilan as this year’s IU Northwest Founders’ Day Outstanding Teaching Award winners, Becker recounted the challenge his committee faced in selecting only two winners from four deserving finalists. Assistant Professor of Psychology Karl Nelson, Ph.D., and Assistant Professor of History Jerry Pierce, Ph.D. were the other two.

“I want to recognize both Jerry Pierce and Karl Nelson. They were excellent,” Becker said. “The entire committee agreed that picking this year was probably among the hardest years we’ve ever had. I actually got emails from past committee members with just the line, ‘Good luck with that,’ when they saw who the finalists were. We narrowed it to these two, and we literally could not break the tie.”

CETL also recognized faculty members who have regularly participated in and contributed to the Center’s events throughout the year. Those receiving CETL Loyalty Reward certificates included: (Silver Certificate) Assistant Professor of Education Judy Donovan, Ph.D.; Assistant Professor of Education Dana Dodson, Ed.D.; Business Lecturer Jim Thomas; HIM Clinical Coordinator Linda Galoccy; Assistant Professor of Social Work Denise Travis, Ph.D.; and (Bronze Certificate) Assistant Professor of Psychology Karl Nelson, Ph.D.; and Assistant Professor of Education Sheila Trezinka, Ph.D.

Finally, CETL Director Charlotte Reed, Ed.D., acknowledged the members of CETL’s board whose terms ended with the academic year. They included: Nelson, Foltz, and Bandyopadhyay; Professor of Sociology Charles Gallmeier, Ph.D.; Associate Professor of Nursing Linda Delunas, Ph.D.; and Professor of Psychology Mark Hoyert, Ph.D.

“We do honor those of you who have served,” Reed said. “CETL wouldn’t be here without people like you.”

**Years of Service**

During the annual Years of Service and Outstanding Employees luncheon on April 23, IU Northwest honored 70 faculty and staff members for their longtime service. Professor of English Alan Barr, Ph.D., was the senior member of the group, having joined the campus in 1968. Bergland noted that Barr had also served as English department chair from 1987 until 2001.

“I’m not sure if this is a celebration of service or a celebration of endurance,” Barr said. “Anyway, the teaching and the research really do keep one going if you just don’t interrupt them. Thank you.”

Other Years of Service honorees included: (30 years) Patrick Bankston, Mary Bertoluzzi, Alan Lindmark, Terry Lukas, Peggy Ruckman, Margaret Skurka, and Stephanie Smith; (25 years) Gary Beauchamp, Richard Hug, Nikki Lott, and Attila Tuncay; (20 years) Clara Augustine, Jacqueline Cheairs, Wanda Clark, Birdine Gilliam, Mark Hoyert, Anne Koehler, Julie Peller, and Stephanie Shanks-Meile; (15 years) Jackie Coven, Fritzer Emile, Darlene Green, Helen Harmon, Mary Lee, Chrystal Lewis, Eva Mendieta, Barbara Molnar, David Stupek, Tome Trajkovski, and Denise Travis. (10 years) Vidya Arshanapalli, Candy Bushnell, Felecia Edwards, Karen Evans, Karen Grabiske, Adrienne Kochman, George Kontos, Gary Lonak, Marcia Mulcahey, Linda Szalmasagi, Corona Wiley, and Susan Zinner; and (Five years) Lawrence Adair, William Allegrezza, Barbara Bennett, Carol Castaneda, Kenneth Coopwood, Hollis Donald, Steven Dunphy, Marie Eisenstein, Sharon Gardener, Teddy Hall, Kevin Kennedy, Zoran Kilibarda, Kelly Knaga, Stanley Lawrence, Carrolyn Lewsi, Mary Maljy, Dorothy Mokry, Kevin Napier, Karl Nelson, Scooter Pégram, Cynthia Posley, Loretta Pugh, Surekha Rao, Michelle Stokely, Olaf Foltz, Lynne Wiley, and Cynthia Zak.

Outstanding employees recognized during the luncheon included Pégram and Argyilan for their Founders’ Day awards, as well as Assistant Professor of Geosciences Zoran Kilibarda, Ph.D., who received the Outstanding Faculty Scholarship/Creativity Award, and Associate Dean of Education Ken Schoon, Ph.D., who received the Outstanding Service Activity Award.

Staff members honored included: Outstanding Clerical Staff winner Cynthia Kurpis, who works in Purchasing Services; Outstanding Professional Staff winner Tome Trajkovski, media production specialist; and Outstanding Service/Maintenance Staff winner Hollis Donald, who works in Physical Plant.
Telling the children

She was the keynote speaker for IU Northwest’s two-day African-American Festival of the Arts, but artist, educator and humanitarian Margaret Burroughs, co-founder of the DuSable Museum of African-American History in Chicago, didn’t talk about art.

“I wasn’t going to give any long lecture about African-American art,” Burroughs told the audience. “I would suggest that you go to the library and get some books and read about it for yourself.”

After listening to a gracious and detailed introduction about her accomplishments, Burroughs, a teacher, poet and children’s author who once served as art director of the Negro Hall of Fame, and who received a Presidential Humanitarian Award in 1975, offered a witty response.

“I should have told this young man that I don’t like these long introductions, because they sound too much like obituaries,” she said.

Eschewing a formal speech in favor of poetry readings and informal commentary, Burroughs paid tribute to her late friend and fellow DuSable Museum founder Eugene Peter Feldman, a Jewish man who answered Burroughs’ own famous poem “What Shall I Tell My Children Who Are Black?” with his own work, “What Shall I Tell My Children Who Are White?”

“A lot of people don’t know that one of the main co-founders of the DuSable Museum was a white person,” said Burroughs, who repeated Feldman’s name several times. “I repeat his name because an old African proverb says that if you repeat a departed person’s name, they come to life.

“Let me tell my white children, at long, long last, that ancient Egypt was black. Yes, great, ancient Egypt was black,” Burroughs read from Feldman’s poem. “White historians have hated to admit this. To them, Egypt was Asian, Semitic, white, but, God forbid, not black. Let us stop writing history books that say Egypt was white. Let us stop showing movies with white actors showing Egypt as white. Here is black, ancient Egypt, my white children, the donor of our writing, our calendar, the world’s mightiest buildings, mathe-
Inside Indiana’s business

Any business professional concerned about the economy in Indiana and nationally may not have been exactly reassured by Inside Indiana Business founder Gerry Dick’s April 24 keynote address at the annual IU Northwest Business Speaker Series luncheon. After all, Dick, a longtime Indiana business journalist who also happens to be a successful entrepreneur, is in the business of business news, and lately that news hasn’t been all good.

Dick is perfectly aware of how unsettling headlines may disturb the mood of a state or region’s business community. But Indiana’s overall economic mindset hasn’t yet tipped toward the negative, he explained.

“It’s more like uncertainty about what’s going on with respect to the Indiana economy,” Dick said during his address at Merrillville’s Radisson Hotel. “Certainly, there are concerns. As we continue into 2008, I think uncertainty is a key word, a buzzword. The state faces serious challenges, without question.”

Chief among them, he said, is workforce literacy.

“I think we’re going to continue to hear more and more about that,” Dick explained. “The estimate is that there are nearly one million Hoosiers who lack basic workforce literacy skills for employment in a 21st-century economy.”

Dick acknowledged both gains and losses in Indiana’s manufacturing sector, noting that job reductions in traditional industries have frequently offset the state’s job creation in more high-tech manufacturing fields. But the best indicator of Indiana’s overall economic health is that things are still happening here, he said.

“I have not seen a time when there has been more economic activity around the state than there is right now, in terms of things going on, action in different sectors and at different companies,” Dick said.

Rather than bemoaning the loss of 20th-century industrial jobs, he insisted, Indiana business and government leaders must embrace new opportunities and learn to adapt to changing business realities. As one of the state’s foremost business journalists, Dick said, he’s seeing plenty of evidence of this already.

“Globalization is here, has been here, and is not going away,” he said. “We either participate, or we don’t. I think that Indiana, slowly but surely, has come to that realization, and is putting more emphasis on the global economy.”

Best and worst of Tupac

Chicago hip-hop artist and poet Malik “The Wordsmyth” Yusef was the guest speaker at the 2008 IU Northwest Hip-Hop Summit on April 9, but the guest of honor was late rap legend Tupac Shakur.

Yusef, a Grammy- and Emmy-winning spoken-word artist who was personal friends with Shakur, paid tribute to his fallen comrade at the campus event while also cautioning young people in the audience to learn from the slain singer’s shortcomings even as they admire his talent and accomplishments.

“If we properly study Tupac, we study the best and worst parts of ourselves, the weakest parts of ourselves, the parts most prone to do something detrimental,” Yusef said during a lengthy, deeply personal talk about Shakur, who was shot in Las Vegas in 1996 and later died of his injuries. Yusef described the example set by Shakur as one of immense potential never fully realized.

“He had a power that was very compelling and very intriguing,” Yusef said. “Had he been able to squelch or sequester his demons, he could have uplifted the nation.”

Despite Shakur’s reputation as a hardened gangster, a rep that Yusef asserted was probably only 20 percent real, the truth, according to his friend, was that Tupac possessed a powerful intellect and took interest in diverse topics.

“When he read the book The Prince and understood the manipulative qualities of Prince Machiavelli, he understood himself,” Yusef said. “He understood that there were two places he could go, but he was diametrically opposed to both of those places. He was going to see the fork in the road and go straight somehow.”

Yusef headlined the most successful Hip-Hop Summit yet at IU Northwest, with the event drawing well more than 100 people. Assistant Professor Scooter Fegram, Ph.D., who holds dual appointments in the Department of Minority Studies and the Department of Modern Languages, initiated the program as a way to reach out to urban youth in Northwest Indiana.

Ultimately, Yusef’s message to his audience was simple and strong.

“That next morning, that sunrise, ain’t promised to you,” he said. “Ain’t nobody got that contract yet where you can be like, ‘OK, I’ll mess up today, and then tomorrow I’ll get it together.’”
Helping the helpless

Pre-med student Chatterjee brings compassion to Kolkata, India

Indiana University Northwest pre-med student Rohini Chatterjee has always known that she wanted to practice medicine. After participating in relief efforts on the impoverished streets of India twice last year, she now knows why.

"Once you start doing it, it's something that just attracts you every single time," said Chatterjee, who gave a talk about her experiences on April 16 at the IU School of Medicine – Northwest (IUSM-NW). "It kind of defines what your life is."

Chatterjee, a graduate of Munster High School, goes to India every year to visit family. Beginning in the summer of 2007, and continuing last December, she used that opportunity to join a fledgling group of activists called the CRAWL (Children Resolution and Women Learning) Society, members of which take to the streets, alleys and train stations of Kolkata, India, to provide food, basic medical care and other assistance to people whose lives are a study in hardship.

Better known to Westerners as Calcutta (of Black Hole fame), Kolkata is a city whose denizens witness or experience unimaginable daily suffering. Poverty, homelessness, prostitution, domestic violence, rampant drug use, child abduction, starvation, and lack of medical care make the streets a desperate and scary place even for the relief workers who come there to help.

"When you're in India, you tend to look over the fact that people are sleeping on the street," said Chatterjee, who is pursuing a B.S. in chemistry and a B.A in Spanish. "You tend to look over the fact that there are people who don't have food. But when you start talking to them and living with them and listening to their stories, you realize how desperate they are."

CRAWL Society volunteers dispense food, bandage wounds, provide education, and offer solace to hundreds in Kolkata, most of them women and children.

"One of the things we got to do with these people was sit down and listen to their stories," Chatterjee recalled. "When you have 16-year-old girls coming to you and telling you that they were forced into marriage because they were raped by this person ... and they have nothing better to do than get married to that person, whether that person is 40 years old or 50 years old ... you don't know how to respond. You really don't do much in that situation. You just listen to them and try to be a friend to them."

Such stories, and worse besides, shocked Chatterjee and her fellow volunteers. Equally distressing was residents' evident acceptance of such acts as just part of daily life in Kolkata, she said.

For an aspiring physician, the experience was a blunt object lesson in what happens to people when even the most rudimentary healthcare is beyond their reach. Chatterjee saw broken arms that had healed improperly, untreated wounds festering with infection, even the unattended birth of a baby in a train station.

"(The mother) was a person who was slightly mentally challenged, and she was seven months pregnant," Chatterjee said. "I think she had just sat down to go to the bathroom, and the baby just started coming out. When I got there, the baby's head was out."

"I had never been that close to that young of a child," she continued. "I had never been close to that situation before. I was confused, to say the least, about what to do. I didn't want to touch her, because I didn't know what to do to deliver the baby completely. Fortunately, the baby just kind of slid out."

Chatterjee and another woman assisted as best they could, cutting the baby's umbilical cord and taking him and his mother to a nearby shelter that had been established by Mother Theresa. Chatterjee checked on the child during a return visit and said he was doing well.

In areas that needed the most help, safety was a concern, she said.

"This guy, Raj, was actually a very, very rich drug dealer in the (train station)," said Chatterjee. "The only reason we treated him, and the only reason we gave him food, was because he used to threaten to kill us if we didn't. There is kind of a legend, passed down from volunteer to volunteer, that he has HIV. So everybody was kind of scared about what to do with him. So we just treated him, because we were scared to do otherwise for our safety."

Chatterjee admitted that her proximity to such unremitting misery exacted an emotional toll. She took heart, however, in the uplifting spirit exhibited by many who lived there, especially the children.

"They find joy, they find excitement, and they find laughter amongst the saddest things in life," she said.

Chatterjee, who credited IUSM-NW Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Microbiology Dipika Gupta, Ph.D., with introducing her to the CRAWL Society, plans to remain involved in the effort to bring relief, education and hope to women and children in India.

"I'm just trying to expand my borders," said Chatterjee, who aims one day to work for international relief agency Doctors Without Borders. "Before I do that, I really want to experience different kinds of social work."
Spanish majors not required for Bilbao study

You don’t need to be a Spanish major to spend your summer in Spain. As part of Indiana University Northwest’s burgeoning relationship with University of the Basque Country (UPV) in Bilbao, Spain, the Department of Modern Languages has arranged for IU Northwest students to enjoy a study-abroad experience in Bilbao. And few of the 10 IU Northwest students who left for Bilbao on May 20 (along with one IU Bloomington student and one IU South Bend student) are actually Spanish majors, though most are pursuing minors in the language.

“Really, this is only my second college semester of Spanish,” said sociology major Bryan Fielder, 22, of Portage. Fielder took four years of high school Spanish but stayed away from the language in college until later in his university career. “I’m going over with other kids who’ve done 300-level and 400-level courses, and I’m in Spanish 150. I guess it’s going to be a little intimidating, but I do have that (Spanish) background.”

Fielder has traveled to Costa Rica, Venezuela and other Spanish-speaking countries but never to Europe. He and his fellow IU students are staying with host families, and Fielder said he didn’t realize until shortly before the trip began that his hosts likely would not speak English.

“We’ll see how it turns out,” he said. “I was under the impression that they would speak English, but the last thing I heard was that they don’t. (I was told) we’ll be pointing a lot and using the dictionary.”

IU Northwest Associate Professor of Spanish Eva Mendieta, Ph.D., who coordinates the study-abroad program, helped to foster the university’s relationship with UPV and Bilbao. A native of Spain’s Basque region, Mendieta first drew the attention of IU Northwest Chancellor Bruce Bergland and other campus officials to Bilbao’s unusual history as an economically depressed industrial region that managed to reverse its downward spiral and reinvent itself as a European cultural hotspot.

University administrators made an initial visit to the city in 2005, and what they saw convinced them that the so-called “Bilbao effect” could hold promise for the city of Gary and Northwest Indiana. In November 2006, IU Northwest hosted “Drawing the Lines: International Perspectives on Urban Renewal Through the Arts,” a major international conference that considered the role of the arts and humanities in urban transformation.

The next month, the university joined with the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster to exhibit “From Rust to Restoration: Basque Art and the Bilbao Effect,” a varied and impressive collection of paintings, sculptures and other artworks created by Basque artists. Last summer, Bergland made a goodwill visit to UPV, where he assured university officials that IU Northwest’s initial interest in Bilbao and the Basque region was merely the beginning of a much deeper and longer-lasting relationship.

The study-abroad program is part of that relationship. Gary resident Lakisha Walls, 25, who is a communication major, is making her second consecutive trip to Bilbao.

“The scenery is amazing. There are a lot of mountains, and the air is so fresh,” Walls said. “There’s not a lot of industry like we have here. Everything is so natural. The people are excellent. They help you when you’re trying to speak their language. And the professors are awesome. They really take time out with their students to help them learn the information.”

Walls said she picked up her Spanish minor because she enjoys the language and finds it to be useful in the workplace, where she encounters many Spanish-speaking patrons. As a returning student, Walls is more familiar with what to expect in class and in host homes in Spain, but she admitted that her first time staying with a host family was a bit uncomfortable.

“It’s like walking on eggshells,” she said. “You don’t know if it’s all right to go to the bathroom, or if it’s all right to go into the refrigerator. Even though these people are very nice and they welcome you to everything … they tell you, ‘My house is your house, help yourself’ … you’re staying with someone who’s not your family, and you want to be very respectful and not take over their territory.”

For graphic design and East Asian cultural studies double-major Ryan Campbell, 24, of Gary, it was Bilbao’s art, and not its language, that drew him to the study-abroad excursion. Campbell is also pursuing a minor in art history, and he said the lure of Bilbao’s museums, including the world-famous Guggenheim Museum located there, was too exciting to pass up.

“I try to speak Spanish, but it’s not high up there on my list,” said Campbell, noting that he’s taken one Spanish class. “I’m trying to get hold of a video camera so I can make a video journal, and when I get home I can make a movie. I’m going more for the experience and just to see the sights, and meet the people. That’s more of what I’m interested in.”

Sociology major Morgan Jacobs, 20, of Dyer, is also interested in the people of Bilbao, from a cultural point of view.

“It’s a nice way to analyze the people of the language, instead of just the language,” Jacobs said. “I have to learn a language for my bachelor’s degree, anyway, so I decided that this would be a good way to help me learn a language better and actually apply it to my life and my cultural interests, as opposed to just learning a language in a classroom.”

Jacobs is also in her first semester of Spanish but said she expected to handle the cultural immersion with relative dexterity.

“I feel like I’m the kind of person who is pretty good with non-verbal communication and making things up as I go along, so I hope we’ll be able to communicate well,” she said. “By the end of the three weeks, I’ll probably be able to hold a conversation.”
Calendar of Upcoming Events

Monday, June 16
Kids College – 8 a.m. until 12:15 p.m.
Kids College, the popular Division of Continuing Studies program that brings students ages 7 to 16 to campus for a variety of fun, interactive learning programs, begins the first of two three-week sessions. For information about class topics and registration, contact Coordinator Joan Wolter at (219) 980 6805 or email her at jwolter@iun.edu.

Thursday, June 19
New Student Orientation – 12:30 p.m.
in Savannah Center. Incoming IU Northwest freshmen and non-traditional students may register for classes, receive academic advising, acquire information about student services and campus groups, and network with fellow students. There also will be several formal presentations. For more information, contact the IU Northwest Office of Admissions at (219) 980-6991.

Friday, June 27
Summer I classes end – Last day of regularly scheduled classes.

Monday, June 30
Summer II classes begin – The late registration and drop/add period continue through July 9.

Friday, July 4
Independence Day holiday – campus closed.

Monday, July 7
Kids College – 8 a.m. until 12:15 p.m.
Kids College, the popular Division of Continuing Studies program that brings students ages 7 to 16 to campus for a variety of fun, interactive learning programs, begins its second three-week session. For information about class topics and registration, contact Coordinator Joan Wolter at (219) 980 6805 or email her at jwolter@iun.edu.

Wednesday, July 16
Diversity Awareness Video Series –
12 p.m. in Moraine Student Center lobby.
This monthly video and discussion series, which focuses on different cultures, includes occasional guest speakers and is open to the community.

Wednesday, July 30
New Student Orientation – 12:30 p.m.
in Savannah Center. Incoming IU Northwest freshmen and non-traditional students may register for classes, receive academic advising, acquire information about student services and campus groups, and network with fellow students. There also will be several formal presentations. For more information, contact the IU Northwest Office of Admissions at (219) 980-6991.

Northwest News correction
In the April/May 2008 issue of Northwest News, the page 4 story “Iverson does ‘shadow-reporting’ for U.N.” referred to Assistant Professor of Labor Studies Thandabantu Iverson, Ph.D., as Labor Studies Lecturer and Coordinator rather than Assistant Professor. Northwest News regrets the error.