

Grandparents get support in raising grandchildren

By Jo Futrell

"Grandparents have always served as a safety net for families, stepping in to help in a crisis," says Mary Brinthal-Peterson, University of Wisconsin-Extension Family Living program specialist in aging. "More and more grandparents are being called on to parent their grandchildren, often due to troubles in the parent's lives."

Extension partnerships provide help

The 2000 census shows that 89,208 Wisconsin children are living in households headed by a grandparent, other relative or nonrelative. In Wisconsin, 23,687 grandparents are caring for their grandchildren. To meet their needs, UW Cooperative Extension Family Living Programs cooperated with Grandparents United for Children's Rights, Inc., and the Wisconsin Bureau of Aging and Long Term Care Resources to form the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) Partnership of Wisconsin.

Online resource guide available

The partnership developed the GRAND (Grandparents/Relatives Raising and Nurturing Dependent Children) online resource guide in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services. GRAND lists state and local resources and is designed to be adapted for each county. It is located at www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent/grand.html.

Conferences bring together grandparents and professionals

National satellite conferences were held in 1999 and 2001 to explore kinship care issues. Each videoconference attracted more

than 3,000 participants and evaluations were positive. Increased awareness among professionals, a recognized need for support groups, and more grandparents seeking legal relationships with their grandchildren were all attributed as results of the conferences. One participant was prompted to get a second legal opinion about adopting her granddaughter. The adoption was final last year, and she wants others to know, "There is someone, somewhere to turn to and vent your many frustrations."

Support groups build understanding

The conference sparked positive action in counties throughout the state. Vilas County organized a GRG gathering to gain input on resources and programs. A Grandparent Support Network in Winnebago County has 14 member agencies and support groups steadily growing in attendance. A Waukesha County group developed a directory of opportunities for seniors and youth. The support group in Menomonie County includes extended family members and works with Head Start on "culture nights," where grandparents share aspects of Native American culture as a way of building relationships with their grandchildren.

In a partnership with UW-Green Bay, a community needs assessment was developed as a School of Social Work project. It was implemented in Brown County, giving students practical involvement in preparing for a potential statewide survey. It will be piloted again in Winnebago County this year.



More grandparents raising grandchildren

Grandparents raising their grandchildren can find resources and support through UW-Extension partnership programs.

Grandparents enjoy their role

A research partnership with UW-Milwaukee focused on grandparents raising grandchildren in Milwaukee County. In addition to three surveys, focus groups were conducted with Hispanic and African American grandparents. The research shows that grandparents enjoy the role of grandparenting regardless of their situation and

benefit from relationships with their grandchildren. Grandparents need information to help them succeed. Their spiritual relationships and a network of family and friends are important sources of support.

For more information: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Partnership of Wisconsin www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grgp Grandparenting Today www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/grandparent/

National WPT project fosters innovative political news coverage

By Michael Bridgeman

Back in 1932 Madison's WHA radio (now part of the Wisconsin Public Radio Ideas Network) provided free airtime to all qualified political candidates. Seventy years later, Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) continues the tradition of leadership in finding new ways to connect candidates and voters.

WPT project supports national political reporting

Today's embodiment is Best Practices in Journalism (BPJ), a national project of WPT funded by a grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts with additional support

from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

"The goal of Best Practices in Journalism is to help local television stations develop innovative political coverage," says project director Dave Iverson. Toward that end, Iverson and his team have presented training workshops around the country, managed a Web site (www.bpjtv.org) that includes streaming video of examples for reporters to view, and distributed grants to 40 stations for innovative election coverage.

Informative coverage requires innovation

Innovation is especially important in what Iverson calls "a very odd campaign year."

"Never has government been more at the center of people's lives than in the aftermath of Sept. 11," he says. The issues raised by 9/11 including terrorism, homeland defense, and the role of the military lend themselves more to national debate than to local.

"In such a time, covering local politics takes innovation" Iverson says.

WPT project continues on page 4

INSIDE

2 FOR THE RECORD

From the Chancellor • Web site stats • Leave policy revision • Kudos

3 INDEPENDENT LEARNING

110 years of Independent Learning

4 AWARDS

SBA winner Mary Jurmain • Regents Award winner Robert Korth



MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR KEVIN P. REILLY

Happy 110th birthday to Independent Learning!

Established in 1892, the University of Wisconsin correspondence study program (as it was called at that time) is another example of Wisconsin's longstanding commitment to outreach and public service. Its continued vitality illustrates the university's ability to focus on the unique needs of distant learners.

Through Independent Learning (IL), our faculty and staff have broken barriers for all kinds of nontraditional students, including immigrants who needed civic education, suffragettes, and members of the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression of the 1930s. Independent Learning also served members of the armed forces during World War II, as well as veterans returning to civilian life after the war.

Today, we continue to extend and improve the reach of distance learning programs, enhancing the

nation's oldest state-supported program to extend university-level instruction to students who cannot attend classes on campus. Along with our UW-Madison colleagues, we have worked to make the program even better and more accessible, recently adding e-mail options and the capacity to deliver Independent Learning programs online.

Our long history and proven record of success in distance education will be great assets for UW-Extension as we embrace new high-technology educational tools. It is apparent in the evolution of Independent Learning, and it is at the center of our outreach and e-learning initiatives within the entire division of Continuing Education Extension. UW Learning Innovations, for example, not only supports the IL program but also works with the UW campuses to create online courses — more than 120 during the past five years, with more than 3,500 students enrolled

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in Web-based college courses last year alone. We forecast continued growth in this market, and expect to help develop as many as three new online collaborative degree programs in the near future.

While the delivery methods have changed since 1892, our commitment to high-quality education and responsive learner services remains constant. In the increasingly competitive arena of distance education we must continue to focus on making distance learners feel connected, cared for and valued.

Through new and old methods alike, distance learning helps bring the Wisconsin Idea to life for people across the state and around the world.

Doug Gjerde has been named director of the Small Business Development Center, UW-Green Bay, effective July 1. Gjerde has worked at the SBDC since 1996, and was instrumental in its 2001 move off campus to a new full-service Green Bay Business Assistance Center.

The Outreach Scholarship 2001: Learning, Discovery, and Engagement conference, a partnership by **UW-Extension**, Pennsylvania State University and Ohio State University, has received the University Continuing Education Association Exemplary Program Award from the Conferences and Professional Programs Community of Practice.

Rosemary Lehman, senior outreach/distance education specialist, Instructional Communications Systems, has been honored by the Madison Civics Club for her outstanding work in the community. She helps faculty and staff use audio, video and Web conferencing effectively. She has also been an active member of the Governor's Wisconsin Education Technology Conference (GWETC) steering committee, serving as chair for two years.

Mordecai Lee, director of the UWM Outreach Certificate Program in Public Administration, has been awarded the 33rd annual Fromkin Fellowship. The award includes a \$10,000 grant enabling Lee to conduct archival research this summer in Hyde Park, N.Y., and Washington, D.C., on "FDR's Forgotten Experiment: The Importance of Communicating with the Public About the New Deal's Social Justice Programs."

UW-Extension **Community Resources, Education and Development basin educators** have received the Gold Award for Promotional Materials, Silver Award for Promotional Materials, and Bronze Award for Mixed Materials from the Association of Natural Resource Professionals.

Wisconsin Public Television videographers **Frank Boll** and **Mike Eicher** recently won an Award of Distinction from the Videographers Awards. The pair was honored for their work on "A Century of Quilts: America in Cloth," a program produced for PBS that aired nationally.

Ellen Taylor-Powell, UW-Extension evaluation specialist, has been named chair of the Extension Education Evaluator Topical Interest Group of the American Evaluation Association.

What our Web site statistics really mean

By Dana Bur master, Webmaster, UW-Extension

Click, click. Who's there? People from throughout the world accessing the University of Wisconsin-Extension Web site, www1.uwex.edu.

And what do we know about our visitors? Statistics tell us that most of them like to visit on Wednesday and that April is their favorite month for visiting. The Web site has the fewest visitors on Saturday, but we don't know why....

While statistics can be helpful in tracking Web site users, they don't tell the whole story. Hits and pageviews cannot measure user satisfaction. Ideally Web statistics should be used in conjunction with user testing, Web site feedback and user surveys to determine the usefulness of the site.

That said, here are some of Extension's Web site statistics and some definitions to help you understand them.

Note that UW-Extension Information Systems does not track statistics for all UW-Extension Web sites. Some sites are tracked by individual units/divisions.

May 2002 Web statistics

Hits for UW-Extension Web site: 3,705,186
 Home page hits: 342,088
 Pageviews: 941,300
 Unique visitors: 94,000
 Average length of visit: 30 minutes

Most common search queries

Search phrases that led the most visitors to our site, regardless of the search engine they used.

Distance education and learning: 3,957
 Water, climate or environment: 1,034
 Insects (weevils, yellow jackets, lady beetles): 1,080
 Education: 400
 Agriculture: 900
 Gardening: 888
 UW-Extension: 202

Understanding the numbers

Keep in mind the following definitions when analyzing Web statistics.

Hits are generated when a user requests a file from a server. A typical Web page is composed of several files (HTML, GIF, JPG, etc.) and each of these files generates a hit. For example, one visit to the Extension home page generates 41 hits.

Pageviews are individual Web pages requested from the server. While a little more concrete than hits, pageviews do not give specific information about visitors.

Unique visitors are tracked not according to the files they have requested, but by their unique IP (or "Internet Protocol") addresses. A user session is a session of activity (all hits) for a single visitor of a Web site within a timeframe.

Unclassified catastrophic leave program expands

By Marilyn Leffler, Pay and Benefits Supervisor

An important revision has been made to the unclassified catastrophic leave policy, addressed in Unclassified Personnel Guideline (UPG) 9.06.

The catastrophic leave program allows unclassified employees to donate leave to another unclassified employee who has suffered a catastrophic illness. Donations had been limited to the employing institution, but now employees can donate leave to their colleagues in another institution. This is a great benefit for UW-Extension employees because of the unique partnership we have with other UW System institutions. The complete policy may be viewed online at www.uwsa.edu/hr/upgs/upg09.pdf.

The outpouring of support since the unclassified catastrophic leave program began Oct. 5, 2000, has been remarkable. To date, UW-Extension employees have donated 2,512 hours (314 days) to three colleagues in need.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Celebrating 110 years of Independent Learning

By Doug Bradley

Learning at your pace and your place

Correspondence study is the oldest and most accessible form of distance education, and the University of Wisconsin laid much of its foundation. This year marks the 110th anniversary of correspondence study, now called Independent Learning, at the University of Wisconsin.

Independent Learning is a collaboration of the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Division of Continuing Education Extension (via UW Learning Innovations) and UW-Madison. In fiscal year 2002, IL and its collaborators enrolled more than 4,500 students from all 72 Wisconsin counties, 48 states and 50 countries."

IL historical highlights:

1892

University of Wisconsin gives permission to faculty to "arrange correspondence courses."

1896-97

The University Extension catalog lists 20 university departments offering 63 correspondence study courses. Fees range from \$2.00 for an eight-lesson course to \$10.00 for a 40-lesson course.

1906

The Extension Division is founded at UW-Madison. It includes oversight for correspondence study.

1907-08

Excerpts from Dean Louis Reber's *Report of the University Extension Division to the Board of Regents* regarding correspondence enrollments:

1,200 registrations

35 UW-Madison departments developed over 200 courses.

Five course classifications:

- Regular University work
- Special advanced work
- High school and preparatory work
- Elementary school branches
- Special vocational branches

1910

The Army and the Navy YMCA enter into an agreement with UW Extension to permit Armed Forces members stationed abroad to enroll in correspondence courses.

1920

As women receive the right to vote, a correspondence study curriculum is developed to "assist women in their training for full citizenship."

1929

Special correspondence courses are offered to those unemployed as a result of the Great Depression.

1942

The United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI), a mammoth correspondence study college, is created with headquarters in Madison

1957

Fees for in-state residents are \$7.50 per credit. Fees for nonresidents are \$12.00 per credit. Approximately 400 courses are offered by correspondence.

Characteristics of the students: age range: 13-85 years; mode: 23 years; 67 percent male; 33 percent female.

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN



General office of the Milwaukee Center Extension Building, circa 1934

Fashions in offices and clothing may change, but adults' desire to improve their lives through education remains as strong as ever. University of Wisconsin Independent Learning offers students the opportunity to learn at their own pace through avenues including correspondence, the Internet and e-mail.

1958

The University of Wisconsin Correspondence Study unit:

- Offers nearly 450 courses in nearly 150 areas of learning.
- Teaches 12,000 active students annually.
- Gives personal instruction on more than 80,000 written assignments.
- Cooperates with the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State to teach immigration law and visa operations to foreign service officers.
- Contracts with the U.S. Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) to develop and teach 200 correspondence courses on the high school and university level and provide instruction for over 300,000 USAFI assignments.

1965

UW President Fred Harvey Harrington urges the creation of a separate institution, UW-Extension, which is given leadership for Independent Study, the new name for correspondence study.

1995-96

Independent Study changes its name to Independent Learning.

2002

Independent Learning celebrates its 110th anniversary, and adds e-mail capabilities to some courses.

The future

As Independent Learning moves into the 21st century, it will leverage technologies like the Internet and wireless telecommunications to enhance its course delivery and instructional effectiveness.

There may be more "hybrid" courses, combining elements of distance education instruction with occasional face-to-face or videoconference interaction.

Technology will enable IL to increase its global reach through enhanced communication and faster turnaround time on assignments.

New technologies will build upon the core strengths of Independent Learning: one-on-one instructional guidance, open registration, self-paced study and UW quality courses.



Supporting learners at a distance

A voice at the other end of the phone says: "Hi! Can you help me? I need to know if UW offers a course in . . ."

Thus starts a conversation that has been recurring for more than a century — a prospective student far from a UW campus needs to find a way continue his/her education. But what really goes on behind the scenes after that initial inquiry?

From the time the initial inquiry comes in to the call center to when a student completes an Independent Learning or online class, every conversation and interaction is "tracked" and in-depth records are maintained in the Learner Relationship Management System (LRMS). UW Learning Innovation's award-winning LRMS provides learners with a seamless integrated student service system spanning UW's 26 campuses. This degree of collaboration is cost-effective for the institutions, and for David Seegers, an Independent Learning student, it means "just one phone call and that's it."

At the heart of this seamless system is the call center and the people who staff it. Call center

specialists also reply to e-mails, enter inquiries into the LRMS, respond to questions ranging from registration to advising, and mail out informational packets.

Learner services specialist Cheryl Martin says, "I like advising students about distance education goals. The variety that the LRMS offers — from high-tech (online) to low tech (U.S. mail) — is appealing to me."

For more information:
1-877-UW-LEARN
(877-895-3276)
info@learn.uwsa.edu
<http://learn.wisconsin.edu>

AWARDS

SBDC client is state Small Business Person of the Year

By Joel Bradtke



Mary Jurmain

For the second year in a row, a client of the UW-Extension Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has received the U.S. Small Business

Administration's top award in Wisconsin. Mary Jurmain, president and CEO of BTIO Educational Products, Eau Claire, is the SBA's Small Business Person of the Year for 2002. She went on to compete for the National Small Business Person of the Year and finished as first runner-up.

Culver was 2001 winner

Last year's Wisconsin winner was Craig Culver, president of Culver Franchising System, Inc., Prairie du Sac, the parent company of the Culver's frozen custard restaurant chain.

Winning entrepreneurs are judged on their staying power, growth in number of employees, increase in sales volume, current and past financial reports, innovation, response to adversity, and contributions to their communities.

Virtual baby teaches parenting responsibilities

An infant simulator, or virtual baby, was the genesis of BTIO Educational Products. BTIO stands for Baby Think It Over®, a program that has taught more than a million teenagers about the responsibilities of parenting in an effort to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy.

The SBA honor is significant. In May, Jurmain was among 53 business owners — one from each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam — who were honored at ceremonies in Washington, D.C. The Wisconsin SBA

celebration for Jurmain and other state winners was held in Milwaukee in June.

The right attributes and long-term commitment

According to Erica Kauten, Wisconsin SBDC director, several success factors are common to the state's winners. "They have the 'classic' attributes of entrepreneurs: capacity for hard work, a clear understanding of their business and markets, and optimism. They're surrounded by others who believe in what they are doing, and they have a good sense of timing. They also have the ability to seek good counsel and training, including the people and resources available through the SBDC.

"Another factor in the winners' profiles is the time it takes. Craig Culver first received SBDC services through the UW-Madison office 11 years ago, and Mary Jurmain began

working with the UW-Eau Claire office six years ago. They are typical examples of how long it takes to mentor successful businesses," Kauten says.

Continued from page 1 WPT project

"It takes the ability to connect the dots between what government does and how people lead their lives."

Partnerships bring people and politicians together

One way of connecting the dots for Wisconsin voters was supported by a BPJ grant. Partners in the ongoing We the People project came up with a new way to bring candidates and citizens together by taking politicians on the road with the destination a surprise. Each week a different gubernatorial candidate visited a city where reporters documented impromptu citizen interchanges in cafes, bowling alleys and barns. Partners in *We the People* include WPT, Wisconsin Public Radio, WISC-TV (the Madison CBS affiliate), the *Wisconsin State Journal* and Wood Communications Group.

WPT to target high school voters

In a further effort to expand its impact, BPJ has teamed with the National Center for Outreach, another locus for innovation hosted by WPT. The two organizations offered grants to public television stations to implement joint outreach and news projects related to this year's election. In May \$125,000 in grants were awarded to 13 stations across the country, including a WPT project, *On the Verge of Voting*, targeted at high school students.

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Robert Korth receives Academic Staff Excellence Award



Robert Korth

Robert M. Korth, a lake management specialist at UW-Stevens Point and UW-Extension, is a recipient of a 2002 University of Wisconsin Regents Academic

Staff Award for Excellence.

Regents appreciate contributions

Korth received the award April 4 during an awards ceremony following the UW System Board of Regents meeting in Madison. Each UW institution nominated an academic staff member for the award, and a committee chaired by Regent Lolita Schneiders chose the recipients.

"By presenting this award each year, we demonstrate the Board's strong appreciation of the UW System's noninstructional academic staff," Schneiders says. "The

strength of the UW System and its institutions can be attributed in part to the excellence of the academic staff. This award acknowledges the vital contributions they all make, as well as their institutional loyalty, their professionalism and their devotion to serving students and the public."

Sharing the recognition

As an Academic Staff Excellence Awards recipient Korth received \$5,000 for professional development or to enhance a university program or function. He plans to use the award to help one of the programs currently in progress, such as the Lake Leaders Institute.

"It is important to remember that even though I was recognized for this award, it came on the shoulders of many people," Korth says. "Being part of the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership has given me the privilege of working with many tireless and amazing people who should share in the recognition."

Educating and leading

Since 1990 Korth has served as a lake management specialist in the Cooperative Extension Service at UW-Stevens Point. He directs the Wisconsin Lake Partnership at UW-Stevens Point, a national model that brings together individuals from the public and private sector to protect Wisconsin's lakes.

Korth coordinates the annual Wisconsin Lakes Convention, produces a quarterly newsletter, *Lake Tides*, writes extensively, and provides educational and organizational assistance to citizens and groups interested in lake stewardship. Korth is also an accomplished photographer and author. His book, *Through the Looking Glass: A Field Guide to Aquatic Plants*, is known nationally and internationally.

Korth's bachelor's degree in anthropology is from UW-Oshkosh; his master's degree in natural resources/environmental education is from UW-Stevens Point.

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