Preserving Paradise

Ten Rockhurst students spent their winter break in paradise — spent it working, that is. The trip, coordinated with Bahamian government entities, provided a service opportunity for the students to help preserve the beauty and accessibility of historical and tourism sites in Nassau and Andros, both popular travel destinations in the Bahamas.

Many Bahamian tourist sites are plagued with invasive species of plants, which if left unchecked, have the potential to choke out other vegetation and overrun the sites. The Rockhurst students spent their time weeding out the destructive plants, clearing paths with machetes and clearing trash from beaches. This trip was one of seven service trips that Rockhurst students have completed this academic year.

(From left) Freshmen Kim Becvar and Breanna Werkmeister remove scaevola, an intrusive plant that chokes out other species, from around the base of a historic lighthouse. See more photos at rockhurst.phanfare.com.
INSIDE

STRENGTHENING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE  6
Students are at the center of everything we do. At the halfway point of the University’s 2007-12 strategic plan, we’ll take a look at how this mission-driven document is guiding everyone at Rockhurst toward providing an enhanced experience for our students.

DEPARTMENTS
ROCK REPORT  2
HAWK TALK  12
GIVING BACK  14
FOR ALUMNI  16
CLASS NOTES  18

ON THE COVER: Students are at the center of everything we do. (From left) Sandy Waddell, assistant dean of students and director of new students, retention and access services; the Rev. Kevin Cullen, S.J., vice president of mission and ministry; Dan Shaver, junior; Valarie Cholico, sophomore; Carolyn Hobbs, food service team member; Brendan Sweetman, Ph.D., professor of philosophy
Grad Ladd Rocks Art World

St. Louis-born brothers Steven (’98) and William Ladd combine their talents in textile and beadwork design to produce meticulously handcrafted jewelry, handbags, and decorative objects. Their work defies classification in just one category; more aptly, it’s an amalgamation of craft, fashion, and art. Luckily for the Ladds, tastemakers in all three fields have noticed.

In 2004, one of their pieces was selected for an exhibit at the Palais Louvre, and designer Christian Lacroix tapped them for a haute couture collaboration. Toward the end of 2008, the Ladds, who have lived in New York for 10 years, made a sale that “changed [their] lives considerably,” according to Steven. They launched their new Web site, stevenandwilliam.com, in March 2009, and are finishing work on a collection of 12 hand-cut paper grenades called “2009 Grenade Calendar,” to be included in a show this fall at the Museum of Art and Design. They’ve even recently moved operations to a large new studio in Brooklyn, with an office, a lounge, and an extra room to rent to fellow artists—up just a few stairs but a world away from their previous basement space in the building.

“That was like the dungeon—and now there’s an Angora rug!” says Steven. “It’s a joy to come to work in the morning.”

Biology Earns Environmental Honors

At Rockhurst, biology goes beyond books and microscopes. Through a special partnership with Kansas City Wildlands, Rockhurst biology students study the importance of preserving local native wildlands by rolling up their sleeves and cutting back invasive species by hand.

This hands-on dedication to the environment is why Kansas City Wildlands honored Rockhurst University’s biology department with an Environmental Excellence Award on Nov. 19. The award recognizes efforts toward sustainability and environmental responsibility by individuals and organizations.

Chad Scholes, Ph.D., associate professor of biology, and Mindy Walker, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology, not only teach these ideas in their classrooms, but they also integrate the fieldwork into their curriculum.

“It is a tremendous honor for our faculty to be recognized for their efforts toward environmental stewardship,” said Bill Haefele, Ph.D., vice president for academic affairs and student development. “They serve as outstanding role models for our students.”
Student, Daughter Share Rockhurst Stage

When casting calls went out for Rockhurst University’s theater production of *The Wiz*, the producers got a double dose of talent from one family. In the roles of Glenda the Good Witch, Aunt Em and Evillenn, senior Tiffany Sipple shared the stage with friends, classmates and her 16-year-old daughter, Alayna Sipple.

The pair has appeared in small, church productions, but it was the first time they have performed together in a production the size of *The Wiz*. “It is exciting,” said Tiffany. “It was our first time performing on a stage like this.” Tiffany returned to college in 2006 to complete her communication degree and decided to earn a minor in theater while she’s at it.

“Alayna is excited about us graduating within a year of each other,” says Tiffany. “She is proud but she is more excited about learning first hand about the college experience. She is captivated by the experience.”

Since performing with her daughter, Tiffany has continued to pursue her passion for theater. In February she performed in *Africa’s Daughters* where she portrayed historical women, including the Queen of Sheba and Sojourner Truth.

*Tiffany Sipple, ’09, (right) and her daughter Alayna shared the stage for Rockhurst’s production of The Wiz. Tiffany is a communication major and theater minor who has appeared in a number of student and professional theater productions.*

Mentors Inspire, Teach MBA Students

At least seven people approached the table to say hello to John Quigley’s lunch companion as they dined recently at Grand Street Café, says Quigley, EMBA ’09. It wasn’t Paris Hilton or Brad Pitt turning heads. It was local attorney Jim Wirken, ’67.

Wirken and Quigley meet monthly as part of the mentorship program that was launched last year in the Helzberg Executive Fellows MBA program. And Quigley, director of NTAC wireless operations at Sprint Nextel, says he has learned as much from observing Wirken as from talking about career matters.

“Jim has so much respect for everyone and really brings the best out of every personal contact you have with him,” says Quigley. “I have often told him I feel better after spending the lunch hour with him.”

Likewise, David Mauer, ’96, EMBA ’09, assistant vice president, technology, at New Directions Behavioral Health, says that many of the lessons he learned from his mentor, the late Kansas City real estate executive Alan Block, came from watching his interactions with others.

“My mentor was a true legend and showed me leadership skills and life lessons in action,” Mauer says. “He believed that good in life must start somewhere and it might as well be with him.”

The Helzberg School plans to offer the mentorship program to students in the evening MBA program and wants to expand the pool of executive MBA mentors. To find out more about how you can assist in this effort and become a mentor, contact Beth Hazels, director of mentorship programs, at tabetha.hazels@rockhurst.edu or (816) 501-4399.
Imagine learning to practice occupational therapy in Kansas City. Then, imagine practicing and teaching occupational therapy on the tiny island nation of St. Lucia.

That’s the type of international fieldwork experience that is quickly becoming the hallmark of the Rockhurst occupational therapy program, according to Liz Zayat, clinical instructor and academic fieldwork coordinator.

In January, five students in the OT graduate program and Zayat traveled to the east Caribbean to assist the St. Lucia national health ministry with training mental health staff in occupational therapy methods. The Rockhurst group conducted patient assessments, provided staff training sessions and helped launch a mental health day program.

While this was the OT program’s first trip to St. Lucia, it has visited Damien House in Ecuador to work with patients who have Hansen’s disease for the past two years. In addition, the program has added a domestic summer trip to Winter Park, Colo., to work at a camp that provides sports activities such as horseback riding and white water rafting for adults with developmental disabilities.

International fieldwork experiences allow students to learn about other cultures, practice their skills and serve others all at the same time, according to Zayat.

“Several of our students picked this program because of the international service component,” Zayat said. “We’ve taken the Rockhurst mission to heart by incorporating service into our program.”

Mathematics Inspires Intricate Art

It was, as Zdenka Guadarrama, Ph.D., laughingly puts it, a “life crisis” – her mathematician’s mind versus her artist’s spirit struggling for expression. When the two sides inevitably collided, the result was Arthematics – a magical display of math and art woven together in paintings, photographs and other media. Exhibited at the University of Arkansas, where Guadarrama received her doctorate, Arthematics featured the work of mathematicians and artists and showed how closely their worlds are linked.

Now Guadarrama, assistant professor of math and physics, has brought the magic to Rockhurst, initiating several projects with students to demonstrate the intertwining of art and math.

“Looking In and In and In: The Art of Fractals,” a summer 2008 exhibit and research project, featured pieces by Guadarrama and seniors Jeanette Powers and Chris Shaver. Works from the exhibit were displayed at a local bookstore and a national mathematics conference, and can now been seen in the Rockhurst Science Center.

“The project challenged the students to explore the relationships between art and mathematics through the lens of fractal geometry,” explains Guadarrama. Fractals are geometric figures that can be broken into parts that individually appear to be smaller versions of the whole.

Guadarrama is working with other students to bring additional creative works – using media such as sculpture and origami – to exhibit later this year.
When senior Jarrett Leiker graduates in May, his résumé will probably look a little different from those of his classmates. That is, unless someone else also holds seven professional world titles in Karate.

Since the age of three, Leiker’s dedication and passion for Karate have carried him as a novice and now as a lead instructor and world competitor. He won his most recent world title last November as a member of the United States Karate Team at the World Karate & Kickboxing Association’s World Finals in Orlando, Fla.

After undergoing major spinal surgery in 2005, Leiker considered this competition the ultimate test of his recovery.

“It was my motivation to get back to where I was before the surgery,” Leiker said. “It was really emotional for me because so many doctors said I would never be able to do it.”

And while focused on this next world title, Leiker made no mistake of missing out on what college life had to offer. While pursuing a double major in history and political science, he has filled his four years at Rockhurst with leadership positions in a variety of organizations. This year he is the president of the Interfraternity Council.

“We have a closeness of faith and a bond we share. I don’t think you can find anything better.”

Staying true to the Jesuit tradition, each CLC serves the community around it. Individual CLC projects range from serving meals at the Ronald McDonald House to working for various nonprofit organizations to painting the rec room in a local women’s prison and more.

“I like to have my hands in a lot of things,” he said. “It’s how I survive.”

Leiker plans on entering law school in the fall of 2009, and has every intention of maintaining his present dedication to Karate. Currently, he works around 35 hours a week at his family’s Karate studio teaching classes for students whose ages range from three to 59.

“Several hundred students in the past few years found in CLC’s small groups the place to mature their relationship with Christ, to make new and supportive friends and to take seriously the call to serve,” says Robert T. Costello, S.J., ecclesial assistant to CLCUSA.

“CLC-Rockhurst is among the best programs in Jesuit higher education in the country.”
Strengthening the Student Experience

Strategic Plan 2007-12: A Mid-point Review

As Rockhurst approaches the mid-point of our five-year plan, it’s time to step back and assess our progress. While there’s much still to accomplish, the plan is clearly driving positive change, improving the student experience in everything from classrooms to service trips.

The reason why it’s working is also clear: This plan directly supports the University’s vision, mission and core values.

“When we live the values of the institution, we are finding God in all things,” says the Rev. Kevin Cullen, S.J., vice president of mission and ministry. “The question becomes, ‘How can we contribute to make the good world we’re living in even better?’”

Fr. Cullen says the University’s strategic plan helps answer that question and guide positive progress.

“To use modern technology as an example, the strategic plan is like GPS,” he says. “When you’re trying to go somewhere, a map is really helpful. The GPS – the plan – places out in front of us, very intentionally, the direction we’re trying to go. It gives direction and depth to the particulars of what’s happening. It’s a great way to help us stay on track, even when unexpected things in the economy come up.”

This may surprise you: the responses cover everything from curriculum changes to lunch lines. Fr. Cullen and Burnett have enjoyed Ignatian Conversations with the University’s food service provider, the bookstore operators and other campus contractors.

“We want to hear the reflections of people who spend many hours focusing on Curæ Personalis, care of the whole person, for the students, faculty and staff of Rockhurst,” says Fr. Cullen. “For example, many cafeteria employees know the students by name, and can tell when they’re coming from a tough test or having a bad day. They don’t just serve lunch. They are caring for the whole person.”

Mary Burnett, director of human resources, and the Rev. Kevin Cullen, S.J., conduct “Ignatian Conversations” with faculty and staff to focus on Rockhurst’s Jesuit heritage.
The Search for Magis

On the academic front, the conversations – and the actions they spark – promote Magis, excellence in all endeavors. Dan Shaver, a senior majoring in math and secondary education, says that’s evident in his courses.

“I do feel the Jesuit values of the University integrated into lessons and courses,” Shaver says. “This is present in professors attempting to not only teach students what to learn but also how to learn. I had a math professor encourage me to consider a challenging proof outside the scope of the class simply because she thought it would be a nice way to help enhance my knowledge and understanding of mathematics.

“It is this attitude of continually pushing toward the ‘more’ that brings out the Jesuit ideal of the Magis.”

Moving Forward With Intention

The spiritual heritage of Rockhurst University goes back to the 1500s, and a Basque knight, struck by a cannonball during a battle. While recovering from his wounds, Ignatius of Loyola used his time as a student, not a soldier. He read about the life of Christ and the lives of saints. He talked with others, those who believed and those who didn’t. And, with study, he realized God’s spirit is everywhere, God’s goodness part of every human being.

This spiritual awakening was just the beginning. St. Ignatius used his personal transformation as a template for helping others reach their full potential, later founding the Society of Jesus.

At Rockhurst University, the teachings of St. Ignatius still guide our steps and shape our future. They are central to the 2007-2012 Strategic Plan, created to support the University’s vision, mission and core values.

Rockhurst University Vision

Rockhurst University will be nationally recognized for transforming lives and forming leaders in the Jesuit tradition. Inspired by the example of St. Ignatius of Loyola, this Catholic university community seeks to make God’s good world better through learning, leadership, service and the pursuit of justice.

Mission

Rockhurst University exists to transform lives by creating a learning community centered on excellence in undergraduate liberal education and graduate education. Rockhurst is Catholic and Jesuit, involved in the life and growth of the city and the region, and committed to the service of the contemporary world.

Core Values

- Finding God in All Things
- Magis (i.e., Excellence in All Endeavors)
- Reflection and Discernment
- Cura Personalis (i.e., Care for the Whole Person)
- Contemplation in Action
- Wisdom (as the product of the search for God in all things, the striving for more, and the care of the whole person)

To best address these foundational beliefs and improve the student experience, the strategic plan focuses on 18 strategic directions, targeting four critical areas:

- Transforming lives consistent with core Jesuit values
- Enriching and building community
- Ensuring financial and infrastructure strength
- Establishing Rockhurst’s identity and increasing public awareness

Assessing what’s been done, and what can be done, is central to each area. For example, how do service trips transform lives? How does a student-retention plan build community? And why does recognition as a learning-centered institution matter?
Following the Plan Into the Future

Fr. Cullen expects to complete initial meetings with all University departments by the end of the year. As part of future implementation of the strategic plan, he will invite people from across schools, disciplines and job categories together for Ignatian Conversations. And he encourages alumni, students and their families to engage in their own conversations.

“You’ve had this intentional experience at Rockhurst. How are you still embracing these lifelong values? Have you noticed values resurfacing? Have we offered you the skills you need to address the things that happen in life?

“Tell us your story – where have you lived and how have you lived the values of Rockhurst? Tell us how you are finding grace and good in all things.”

What’s Your “Aha!” Today?

As part of the strategic plan and the University’s core values of “Wisdom” and “Magis,” Rockhurst is striving to achieve national recognition as a learning-centered institution, known for excellence and for challenging all students to realize their full potential.

Ellen Spake, Ph.D., director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, says it’s important to understand the basics of a “learning-centered” institution.

“Creating a learning-centered environment means we are actively engaging students,” Spake says.

“To do that, we are trying to create opportunities to learn more about how students learn, to understand what barriers are present for student learning, and to facilitate the use of a variety of effective classroom instructional techniques to promote learning.”

Spake says the value of this approach is visible.

“Classes like this are exciting, vibrant, very authentic learning environments,” Spake says. “There are substantive discussions going on and critical thinking.”

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning also offers assessment workshops and strategies to give instructors tools for determining how students are doing.

“For example, at the end of class, I ask students to write down the muddiest point – what they didn’t understand,” Spake says. “If I see several students with the same muddiest point, I know I need to find another way to explain that. It’s much better than waiting three weeks for the exam.”

Spake also has the students write down a memorable learning. “I ask, ‘What was your big Aha! today? They should always have at least one big Aha!’”
Helping Students Succeed

That Aha! feeling came through when Alan Douglas, Ph.D., a visiting instructor in the Department of Education, recently invited a local high school teacher to talk about his personal struggles with dyslexia. The teacher’s moving speech was only part of the lesson; he periodically stopped the lecture and treated students in the class as though they had a learning problem.

As an instructional technique, the personalization of the lesson was clearly effective. Students later remarked that this humbling and memorable experience provided a new perspective on teaching special education children.

In addition to one-on-one tutoring, the Gervais Learning Center offers group tutoring through Supplemental Instruction (SI) in targeted courses, such as organic chemistry.

Volin says the coordinated efforts between the learning center, faculty and students are paying off: Tutoring sessions increased almost three-fold from last spring to this fall, and the number of SI sessions doubled.

“Student learning takes place inside and outside the classroom,” Volin says. “We can be the bridge between what goes on in the classroom and student learning.”

Students have access to a variety of supplemental academic resources, including one-on-one or group tutoring.

Rockhurst faculty, such as Brendan Sweetman, Ph.D., professor of philosophy, are leading the effort to promote a learning-centered environment through effective instructional techniques.

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As an instructional technique, the personalization of the lesson was clearly effective. Students later remarked that this humbling and memorable experience provided a new perspective on teaching special education children.
Transforming Lives Through Service

“I want to stay – I want to come back. I now have faces, names, people. I know what to pray for now ... I have yet again a new understanding of the world. I will travel, I will advocate, I will pray.”

This heartfelt outpouring from a Rockhurst student following an overseas service trip speaks to the transformative power of Contemplation in Action.

Service trips have long been part of the University fabric. However, before implementation of the strategic plan, funding for those trips was provided through year-to-year support from the Regents and the Alumni Association. The establishment of the Office of Mission and Ministry changed that. Service trips are now a line item in the division’s budget, providing a stable opportunity for students to realize an unforgettable experience. The plan also calls for expanding the number of trips offered, so more students can go.

Bill Kriege, assistant director of campus ministry, says an essential part of each trip is providing students with the reflection, discernment and prayer tools needed to “lift the experience up to God.” Kriege has led previous trips, and says student reactions to the third-world challenges they face are “gut-wrenching.”

“I’m touched every time by the authenticity, the sincerity with which our students approach the week,” he says. “These transformational experiences create contemplatives in action.”

Service trips are an important part of the Rockhurst experience, encouraging students to become “men and women for others.” In 2003, Emily Bussen, ’04 (left), traveled to Belize; Beth Long, ’07 (below), traveled to Honduras in 2006.

The 20-Year Master Plan: In the City for Good

As an integrated part of the planning process, the University and community have worked together to create a 20-year master plan outlining future campus development.

The “In the City for Good” plan has taken more than eight months to create, and has been a comprehensive effort. University leaders, students, faculty, staff, neighbors, community leaders and representatives of the City Planning Department and UMKC all provided input and feedback.

The Washington, D.C.-based Einhorn Yaffee Prescott architecture and engineering firm is leading the master plan process, working with two Kansas City area firms: BNIM architects and Taliaferro & Browne consulting engineers. The plan should be finalized this spring.

The first phase of the plan includes projects addressing the University’s two largest development needs: academic and residential space. This summer, the Corcoran residence hall will receive a long-awaited renovation, similar to the work done at McGee this past summer. The residential hall updates play an important role in student recruitment.
In economic times like these, it’s always good to hear positive news. Thanks to strategic planning and campus-wide belt tightening, Rockhurst remains financially solid.

“Over the past 2½ years, the entire University community has worked hard and made great strides in achieving solid financial footing,” says the Rev. Thomas Curran, O.S.F.S., president of Rockhurst. “For the most recent fiscal year, which ended on June 30, 2008, we produced an operational surplus of $782,000.”

Fr. Curran credits the positive bottom line to “living within our means,” and remaining financially vigilant. A hiring freeze has been implemented, salaries have been frozen and expenses ranging from maintenance to travel are being assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Fr. Curran says the strategic plan also contributes to Rockhurst’s financial stability through its focus on student enrollment and retention: Tuition remains the University’s primary source of revenue.

The master plan also calls for revitalizing Troost Avenue, in keeping with the strategic plan’s call to “enrich and build community.” Future phases of the plan project moving the University’s commercial properties – such as Planet Sub and the bookstore – out to Troost. For a look at these proposals and more, visit www.rockhurst.edu/masterplan.

Restoring Sedgwick Hall to its original U-shape, complete with a winter garden, is another integral part of the master plan. The timeline for implementation of the Master Plan will be influenced by fundraising efforts.

Going Forward

Planning success comes down to people – energized, enthusiastic people – willing to work hard to bring our plan to life.

No one knows that better than Bill Bassett, director of the Office of University Planning and Assessment, and William Haefele, Ph.D., vice president for academic affairs and student development. As leaders in the inclusive planning process, they helped reach out to hundreds of faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members.

At the midway point, it’s clear that our community’s time and effort are paying off. The student experience at Rockhurst is better today, and further improvements are in the works.

Going forward, we encourage you to play an active role in Rockhurst’s success. Take the next step: Look at the strategic plan in its entirety at www.rockhurst.edu/strategicplanning.

The new facilities master plan, “In the City for Good,” outlines a vision for the future of the campus, including restoration of historic Sedgwick Hall.
Defensive Stopper Wins Honors

After starting half of the games in his freshman year, Chad Becker became the No. 1 goalkeeper at Rockhurst in his sophomore year. He went on to play every minute of every game over the last three seasons.

Becker, of St. Charles, Mo., culminated his college career by becoming one of the best goalkeepers in the country in the fall of 2008. He allowed only 10 goals in 21 games while finishing second in NCAA Division II in goals against average (0.45) and save percentage (0.875).

The National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA) selected Becker as the first team Division II All-American goalkeeper. He also received Daktronics first team All-America honors and was named the Defensive Player of the Year in the Great Lakes Valley Conference.

Becker posted 15 shutouts while helping to lead 15th-ranked Rockhurst to a 16-1-4 record and the 2008 Great Lakes Valley Conference Championship. He allowed only one goal in four postseason games.

“Chad is one of the most athletic goalies that I’ve ever coached,” said Rockhurst coach Tony Tocco, whose 566 career victories ranks first among active intercollegiate coaches and third on the all-time coaching list. “He has made himself into one of the top goalkeepers in the country.”

Becker hopes to play professionally.

“I’ve always loved playing soccer, and once I realized I could be a good goalie, I was determined to try and make something come out of it,” said Becker, who will graduate in May with a degree in marketing.

Chang Plays for Chinese Team in WBC

Former Rockhurst University baseball standout Ray Chang, ’05, played on the international baseball stage in early March as a member of the Chinese team in the World Baseball Classic. Chang, who grew up in the Kansas City area and attended Rockhurst High School, started at shortstop and batted third for the Chinese team. China, managed by former Angels skipper Terry Collins, opened against defending WBC champion Japan in the Tokyo Dome. The game was televised live by ESPN2.

“Baseball is all about opportunity and this was a great opportunity for Ray to showcase his talent,” said Rockhurst baseball coach Gary Burns. “He is one of the best players I’ve ever had at Rockhurst. Ray is dedicated to baseball and he definitely has big-league talent.”

Chang is currently playing in the Pittsburgh Pirates organization. The Pirates signed Chang last summer after he was released by the San Diego Padres. A four-year starter at Rockhurst University from 2002-05, Chang was named the Heartland Conference’s Co-Player of the Year in 2005, and Hitter of the Week four times in his senior year.

Hill, O’Connor Receive GLVC’s Top Awards

The Rockhurst Hawks received two of the top individual awards in men’s basketball from the Great Lakes Valley Conference. Junior guard Aaron Hill has been named the GLVC Player of the Year and head coach Bill O’Connor was voted GLVC Coach of the Year by his peers.

Hill is one of four guards named to the All-GLVC First Team. He was named the GLVC Player of the week twice this season. In addition, ESPN The Magazine named him to its Academic All-America men’s basketball team as a third-team selection in the college division.

O’Connor led the Hawks to an 18-9 overall record and to a second-place finish in the GLVC West Division with a 13-4 league record. O’Connor, who has a 221-206 record in 15 years at Rockhurst, also received Coach of the Year honors in the Heartland Conference in 2001-02 and 2002-03.
A Leader on Campus

When it comes to taking on a student leadership role in athletics, no one has been more active over the past four years at Rockhurst than Julie Cook.

A starting forward on the women’s basketball team, Cook has also been serving for the past year as president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). Part of her responsibilities is being a student representative for Rockhurst at NCAA and Great Lakes Valley Conference (GLVC) meetings.

Cook also has spent countless hours doing community service projects for the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Rose Brooks Center. “Rockhurst has been a perfect fit for me athletically and academically,” said Cook, who is majoring in communications and psychology. “We have great class sizes. Teachers get to know you on a personal level. The professors are very understanding when we are on the road.”

Cook made the Dean’s List last year and posted the second highest cumulative grade point average on the team. She averaged 10.2 points, 5.8 rebounds and 3.5 assists in her first three years at Rockhurst. She surpassed 1,000 career points in her senior year, while being ranked among the conference leaders in rebounding and assists the past three seasons.

Cook will graduate in May 2009 and hopes to pursue a master’s degree in school psychology.

Rock U Harvesters Classic Wins Again

The 2008 Rock U Harvesters Classic enjoyed another banner year at Rockhurst. More than 1,000 basketball fans donated eight barrels of nonperishable food items for Harvesters, a Kansas City-based food bank.

Rockhurst, Park University, Southwest Baptist University and Missouri Western State University participated in the 2008 men’s basketball tournament at RU’s Mason-Halpin Field House Nov. 28-29.

The event started at Rockhurst in 2000. “We are very pleased with the support we receive each year with this event,” said Rockhurst men’s basketball coach Bill O’Connor. “It’s nice to know that we can make a contribution to the Kansas City community.”

Harvesters is a centralized food collection and distribution facility that provides food and household products to agencies serving people in need.

In November, the Hawks men’s basketball team helped to collect more than eight barrels of nonperishable food items for Harvesters, a local food bank.
The State Farm Youth Advisory Board has awarded Rockhurst University a service-learning grant to fund the University’s partnership with nearby high school Hogan Preparatory Academy. The grant will enable a group of Hogan Prep students to spend a week during summer 2009 with Rockhurst faculty studying math, chemistry, philosophy and biology.

Don Gibbs, Ph.D., professor of chemistry, was a man of passion and dedication. His love for chemistry, and his understanding of the importance of research, was no secret to the Rockhurst community. According to Dale Harak, Ph.D., associate professor and department chair of chemistry, Gibbs’ interest and research in organic chemistry resulted in four U.S. patents, numerous articles and a book on the history of science that was in progress when he died Feb. 28, 2008.

Continually excited about learning, Gibbs immersed himself in a variety of interests and encouraged students, faculty and staff in their own pursuit of knowledge.

“He had a love of many disciplines outside of chemistry, including history, art, literature, music and astronomy, just to name but a few,” said Harak. “The depth of his knowledge in all of these areas astounded me.”

As a tribute to his life and work, Gibbs’ wife, Linda Gibbs, has established the Dr. Don E. Gibbs Memorial Research Scholarship Fund, which will assist students who have declared a major in the division of natural, applied and quantitative sciences.

“I felt that the scholarship was a good way to honor Don, and his involvement in the college,” said Linda. “He valued research and loved turning students on to the joy of research.”

“It was always a dream of mine to have an endowed scholarship. I hope it will encourage students to go into basic research and science.”

To contribute to the Dr. Don E. Gibbs Memorial Research Scholarship Fund, or to talk with someone about establishing your own endowed scholarship, contact the Office of Advancement at (816) 501-4300.
Scholarship Bridges Two Worlds

When Tamara Bogomilova Dancheva and her family accompanied scholarship benefactor James Owens to a celebratory dinner at the American Restaurant, something unexpected was on the menu — “Congratulations on your Rockhurst Graduation” appeared on the front cover.

A native of Bulgaria, Dancheva, ’08, came to the United States in 2005 to pursue educational opportunities unavailable in her home country. She joined the Rockhurst community on partial scholarship, and completed a semester of studies before learning of an additional scholarship for which she might be qualified — the James R. Owens Jr. International Scholarship.

Although originally intended for a student from the Ukraine, Dancheva’s Slavic descent made her eligible. And as the first recipient of this scholarship, she brought into fruition a plan that had its origins in the early 1970s when Owens was a student at Rockhurst. While living in Corcoran Hall, he befriended a number of international students whose viewpoints greatly enhanced his educational experience.

“Prior to coming to Rockhurst, I read extensively in history and was open to a lot of different viewpoints,” said Owens. “But it was in Corcoran Hall where the intellectual interest was reinforced by meeting people in person and hearing their stories.”

After graduating in 1972 with a degree in history, he nurtured his interest in different cultures and varying perspectives with travels to more than 60 countries. Then, in 1999, after having spent two years working in the Ukraine, he returned to the United States and began collaborating with Rockhurst to establish a scholarship for international students.

Dancheva now embarks on a five-month internship with the European Union in Brussels, Belgium, before entering a master’s program at the London School of Economics in October.

Rockhurst Fund Unites University Supporters

What better way to say you believe in your organization’s cause than to support it with a financial gift? That’s what nearly 60 percent of Rockhurst faculty and staff did this year when they gave to the annual Faculty and Staff Campaign.

Most campaign participants designated their gifts to the Rockhurst Fund, which applies the money toward the University’s most pressing financial needs.

As the Faculty and Staff Campaign is testament to the internal commitment and support at Rockhurst, the Rockhurst Fund gives alumni and friends of the university the opportunity to show their commitment to the mission. If 60 percent of alumni each gave just $50, the Rockhurst Fund would increase by $500,000. Last year, the alumni giving rate was slightly more than 10 percent.

“This is a way in which we as a community can come together to show our commitment to the University and the students of Rockhurst,” said Jennifer McKnight, director of annual giving.

To make your gift to the Rockhurst Fund, visit www.rockhurst.edu/giving, call (816) 591-4629 or use the envelope included in this magazine.
Rockhurst University will offer two marquee athletic fund-raising events for alumni and friends in 2009.

The seventh annual Joseph M. Freeman, S.J., Golf Classic, will be Monday, June 29, at Milburn Golf and Country Club in Overland Park, Kan. Plus, for the first time, St. Louis-area alumni will have the chance to golf and raise funds in their own “back yard” with the inaugural Robert F. Weiss, S.J., Golf Classic, Monday, Sept. 14, at the Country Club at the Legends in Eureka, Mo. The Weiss Classic will be preceded by a Rock and Roll Auction Party Saturday evening.

Funds raised from these events will go to the athletic department to enhance the overall program and upgrade facilities. Last year’s Freeman Classic raised more than $60,000. For more information or to register your spot for either tournament, visit www.rockhurst.edu/golf.

Fr. Freeman, S.J., Golf Classic
Monday, June 29, 2009
Contact: Athletic Director Richard Konzem
(816) 501-4141

Fr. Weiss, S.J., Golf Classic
Monday, Sept. 14, 2009
Country Club at the Legends, Eureka, Mo.
Contact: Tournament Director Reggie Thorpe, ’71
(314) 402-9631

Alumni and friends will have the chance to “play for Rockhurst” in two fund-raising golf tournaments this year.
Kay Saunders, Executive Fellows MBA ’04, distinctly remembers the troubled phone call she received several years ago from her five-year-old niece – it changed the entire course of her business.

“My niece was attending an urban school where her mother taught and she was really struggling with the environment,” explains the president and CEO of Bellewether Ltd., an organizational and human development company. “The kids in the school were not getting the support they needed (at home) and everything just seemed broken.”

Concerned, Saunders began researching the behavior, performance and other issues that seemed to be prevalent in the environment. It soon became apparent to her that the issues came down to one thing – character, or principled conduct. It also became apparent that issues associated with principled conduct were not just prevalent in schools, but also throughout society.

“In our own work, we often saw a gap in people’s basic understanding of things like ethics and taking accountability,” she says. “These gaps have a profoundly negative impact on the achievement of business objectives.”

From that realization, Saunders’ trademarked Human Asset Imaging — a curriculum focusing on responsibility, respect for others, self-respect, and other positive personal characteristics — was born and became foundational to her company’s training offerings. The courses are now also sold through Amazon.

Saunders launched Bellewether 15 years ago, building her clientele by offering educational programs focused on the four “Ps” for organizational success: people, practices, processes and performance. The company has grown to attract such clients as NASA, the Department of Labor, the Federal Aviation Administration and multiple corporations across the country.

Although Saunders and her company have received numerous civic and professional awards and honors, it is seeing the impact of her work that inspires her.

“When we have clients with gaps in their performance, I see ‘what could be,’ not ‘what is,’” she says simply. “And that’s what motivates me.”

During a recent trip to New York City, Helzberg School of Management students met with Joseph Flaherty, Ph.D., ’52 (at lectern), senior vice president, technology for CBS Broadcasting. Flaherty, a high-definition TV pioneer, led the students on a tour of CBS Studios.

The students then traveled to Madison Avenue for a small reception with alumni at the offices of William Kerch, ’75, a senior executive with JWE Enterprises uniform and clothing company.

“It was a wonderful trip and event for the students and alumni,” said Mary Landers, director of alumni and constituent relations. “Strong connections were made, the alumni were able to share with the students what their Rockhurst degrees meant and students got to ask questions of successful executives.”
Mark Your Calendar for Homecoming 2009

Be sure to save the dates for Homecoming 2009 events. Alumni reunions, Rockhurst Day and Parents Weekend will be Sept. 18-20.
Births

'93
Gilbert “Duke” Jones and his wife, Amy, welcomed their third child, Layla Josie, on Nov. 20, 2008. Layla joins big brother, Austin, and big sister, Maya.

'94, '96 MBA
Jeff and Kate (Hanna) Bush, ’96, welcomed their third child, Dunavan James, born Sept. 11, 2008. Dunavan joins big sisters Hanna and Ellie.

'99

'00

'02
Marybeth (Mall) Lightfoot and her husband, RJ Lightfoot, welcomed their son, Lucas Isaac, on May 28, 2008. The couple was married on Sept. 1, 2006.

Grades

Start Saving
For Your
Children’s
Tuition

If you want to send your children to college, then you need a plan. The Independent 529 Plan can help Rockhurst families save for their children’s college tuition in a way that allows you to lock in today’s lower rates — even if college is years away for your youngsters.

The plan lets you prepay college tuition at today’s tuition rates. As tuition increases, the value of your investment grows. There are no fees and the amount you use toward tuition will be free from federal income tax.

Plus, your children will have the flexibility to choose from a variety of top schools around the nation. Rockhurst is one of more than 260 private colleges and universities participating in the plan, and more are joining every year.

To learn more, visit independent529plan.org.

Marriages

'97
Madelyn “Maddie” (Sorensen) Dyson married Mark Dyson in June 2008.

'00
Kelly (Hillebrandt) and David Meiners, ’92, were married on Nov. 8, 2008, in Kansas City.

'01
Brie (Cable) and Matt Krentz, ’99, were married in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, on Dec. 1, 2008.

'02
Henry “Hal” and Jenny (Damico), ’00, Marsh announce the birth of their son, Adam, born on July 17, 2008.

'06
Shannon (Ady) and Jeremy Schimacher, ’05, were married on Aug. 2, 2008 in St. Louis. Fellow Rockhurst alumni and students Megan Green, ’06, Kim Stocker, ’06, Chelsey Schumacher, ’11, Brandon Ady, ’09, Zachary Kissel, ’05, Patrick Wank, ’05, Scott Kluetner, ’05, Bill Fritz, ’05, Joe Kuetkewitte, ’05, and Drew Tate, ’05, were in the wedding party. Shannon works as a speech language pathologist and Jeremy is a commercial broker with Cozad Group Commercial Real Estate in St. Louis.

'03, ‘07 MBA
Katrina (Burket) married Jeremy Huber on Jan. 20, 2009, at the Church of Santa Susanna in Rome, Italy.

'06
Ellen (Niece) and Christopher Moore, ‘03, were married on July 7, 2007, at Cure of Ars in Leawood, Kan.

'07
Jeffrey “Jeff” Thoele and Melinda “Mindy” Auer, ’06, were married on July 5, 2008, at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in St. Charles, Mo. Jeff sells homes for the Jones Company and Mindy attends medical school at Saint Louis University.
Career Services Keeps Alumni Connected

Professionals know that every advantage counts in today’s job market. And Rockhurst University offers an outstanding one with its Career Services office.

From services like career counseling and resume and interview preparation to networking opportunities, the Career Services office provides support to Rockhurst alumni for virtually every professional need. One recent initiative was a job search and networking club, which offered participants the chance to reconnect and network with other like-minded professionals.

Both formal and informal Career Services resources are available for alumni who may be looking for alternative employment, are currently between jobs or who may simply want to become involved with a group of peers. Services, which are available to Rockhurst and other Jesuit graduates throughout their lives, include:

- Individual career advising
- Resume and interview preparation
- Campus interviewing
- Mentoring opportunities
- Local and national job listings

“Given today’s economic climate and the job market, we want to ensure we are doing everything we can to support our graduates who may be in career transition,” says Mike Theobald, director of career services. “We hope Rockhurst alumni will take advantage of the resources we have available.”

For more information on Career Services, contact Theobald at (816) 501-4861 or mike.theobald@rockhurst.edu, or visit www.rockhurst.edu/careerservices.

In Memoriam

Donald V. Ritchie Sr., ’51 – Nov. 21, 2008
John Ivan Rust, ’52 – Jan. 1, 2009
Norris E. Warren, ’55 – Nov. 20, 2008
Daniel T. Tarwater Jr., ’59 – Nov. 30, 2008
Ronnae L. Coleman, ’75 – Feb. 6, 2009
Patrick E. Collins, ’78 – Nov. 21, 2008
Deborah L. Kramer, ’83 – Nov. 27, 2008
Mary Kathryn McDermott, ’06 – Dec. 21, 2008

Submit a Class Note

We’d love to hear from you. Submit a class note online at www.rockhurst.edu/classnotes.
Pay it Forward
You Can Help Rockhurst Students Every Day

"The time I spent at Rockhurst helped shape me into the person I am today, both personally and professionally. The school helped me in a number of ways and I want to contribute back, both financially and as a volunteer. Every alumnus takes away something positive from Rockhurst and we are charged with paying that forward to help future students."

— Ferd E. Niemann IV
Tax Incentive and Abatement Analyst, Jackson County, MO
Business Administration, '07
MBA 2008

Ferd has chosen to make his annual gift to Rockhurst University via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), a quick and convenient giving option, where funds are automatically transferred to Rockhurst from the banking account you specify.

EFT allows you to divide your annual gift into monthly installments – an ideal schedule, especially for recent graduates – and makes it easier than ever to financially support the University.

For more information, call Jennifer Wewers McKnight at 816-501-4574 or visit http://www.rockhurst.edu/eft to download the form and mailing instructions.
Upcoming Events

Mark your calendar for these upcoming University events.

**Sunday, June 07**  
St. Louis alumni and friends picnic

**Saturday, June 20**  
KC Royals vs. St. Louis Cardinals tailgate  
Kauffman Stadium

**Saturday, June 27**  
Omaha alumni event

**Monday, June 29**  
Fr. Freeman S.J., Golf Classic  
Overland Park, Kan.

**Friday, July 31**  
Annual St. Louis Cardinals game  
Busch Stadium

**Monday, Sept. 14**  
Fr. Weiss, S.J., Golf Classic  
Eureka, Mo.

**Friday, Sept. 18**  
Rockhurst Day

**Saturday, Sept. 19**  
Parent/Reunion Day

For more information, call the Alumni Office at (816) 501-4025 or (800) 756-2586.