Human Ecology dean attributes success to staff commitment

BY LUCY POLA

On October 28, approximately 75 faculty and staff of the College of Human Ecology gathered to celebrate staff service and recognize individuals who made extraordinary contributions to the college during the past year. Thirty-seven employees, representing the College of Human Ecology, Cornell Cooperative Extension-New York City, the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs (CIPA) and the joint CALS-CHE Business Service Center, celebrated milestone anniversaries this year. Cheryl Howe of the Business Service Center was the longest serving employee recognized, with 35 years of service.

At this event, the College of Human Ecology also recognizes an individual or individuals who go “above and beyond” to support the missions of the college in academics, research and outreach. This year, 12 staff members were nominated for the award: Marianne Arcangeli, Human Development; Ted Boscia, Communications; Michele Draiss, Fiber Science and Apparel Design; Beverly Geddillas, Nutritional Sciences; Angelica Hammer, Policy Analysis and Management; Debbie Mojica, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research; Trudy Radcliffe, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research; Holly Smith, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research; Tom Rushmer, Policy Analysis and Management; Lance Streeter, Facilities; Patty Thayer, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research; and Francoise Vermeylen, Nutritional Sciences.

Of these 12, two nominees were selected to receive the Human Ecology Staff Recognition Award – Ted Boscia and Angelica Hammer. According to Dean Alan Mathios, “Ted has shown great leadership on the communications team, particularly this last year when he stepped up to the plate for several months during the search for a new assistant dean of communications.” Boscia was recognized for his thoughtful and constructive guidance as well as his persistence and success in communicating news and developments in CHE.

Angelica Hammer, an administrative assistant in the Department of Policy Analysis and Management, was honored for her extraordinary effort in “rescuing a book manuscript when disaster struck.” Because typesetters missed edits that had been made, the 47-chapter book, with 87 contributors, was wrought with errors when it was very close to the deadline. Angelica worked tirelessly with the publisher to correct all the errors and to get the book to production.

“In the past year, our college has reached major milestones in nearly every area of our work,” Mathios said. “Dedicated staff in each case have risen to the challenge without missing a beat – whether asked to open a new building, start a new center or hire and orient new faculty members. Our success this year is a tribute to their commitment.”

Lucy Pola is assistant director of human resources in CHE.
Tech Talk
Shaley DeGiorgio

If you haven’t already checked out Cornell’s Blog Service, some recently added features might entice you. Hundreds of blogs hosted on the CU Blog Service, by Edublog, are already being used for communication and collaboration in teaching and research. Any faculty or staff member can request and administer a blog hosted at blogs.cornell.edu. Students must have an academic sponsor, such as a faculty member, to request a blog.

This week, new features were released, including:

Easy Blogging - A new, much simpler Easy Blogging interface helps to de-mystify the dashboard. To activate Easy Blogging, click the “Activate easy mode” button in the top right corner.

Admin Bar - Across the top of your blog you will find a new Admin Bar, which will help you navigate around your blog. Click “My Blogs:” within the Admin Bar, to easily move from the dashboard of one blog to the dashboard of another blog. See the Edublog web site for information: http://help.edublogs.org/2009/08/31/navigating-to-different-blog-dashboards-inside-your-account/

Wiki functionality - Add wiki pages to your blog. Then, give users permission to edit everything on a wiki page without ever visiting the dashboard. See the Edublog web site for information: http://help.edublogs.org/2011/06/22/working-with-wikis-on-your-blog/

Custom navigation menus - Create custom menus at the top of your blog or sidebar. Add custom links, link to category pages, create nested pages, re-arrange, add and remove pages. See the Edublog web site for information: http://help.edublogs.org/2011/07/26/how-to-customize-your-blogs-main-menu/

Google maps - Embed, customize, and use Google Maps on your blog. Display local images or give directions for events and locations. See the Edublog web site for information: http://help.edublogs.org/2011/06/22/working-with-the-maps-plugin/

Wibiya Toolbar - Add a Wibiya toolbar to the bottom of your blog to display social networking stats and links for your blog. Learn more about Wibiya at: http://www.wibiya.com/

For more information about the CU Blog Service, see http://www.cit.cornell.edu/services/blogs, or email cublogs@cornell.edu.

Tech Training Spotlight:
Calling all desktop technicians! This five-day instructor-led course provides students with the knowledge and skills needed to isolate, document and resolve problems on a Windows desktop or laptop computer. Register now for the Windows 7 Enterprise Desktop Technician class scheduled for January 9-13, 2012. For a complete listing of technical training resources, see http://www.cit.cornell.edu/training. Email questions to workshop-info@cornell.edu.

Women’s ice hockey game benefits United Way

BY NANCY DOOLITTLE
More than 1,400 fans attended the women’s hockey ECAC game against Harvard Nov. 12 at Lynah Rink, cheering the Big Red to a 5-3 victory and raising $1,630 for the Cornell United Way Campaign.

An anonymous donor pledged $1 for each of the first 1,000 people to attend the game. The Cornell Student United Way Campaign raised $107 through a sports memorabilia raffle, and the winner of a 50/50 raffle donated her winnings to the United Way.

“It was an exciting game, and the United Way benefit was a great success,” said Paul Streeter, Cornell United Way Campaign co-chair. “We’d like to encourage Cornell community members to donate online or return their pledge cards before Thanksgiv- ing and before the semester comes to an end, so that we are close to our goal of $805,000 before the new year.”

Streeter said that because partners such as Cornell support the administrative expenses of the United Way of Tompkins County, 100 percent of individual gifts to the organization go directly to support services and programs meeting critical community needs.

See <http://unitedway.cornell.edu/> to donate online, download a pledge card and view a message from President David Skorton.

Share the Warmth 19th annual drive

Until Saturday, December 10, donations of new and gently used winterwear and blankets can be dropped at any of the following campus locations to be distributed to Ithaca-area community members in need: all undergraduate residence halls and community centers, all graduate housing service centers, Mann Library, Anabel Taylor Hall, East Hill Plaza, Vet School Medical Center, Humphreys Service Building, Day Hall, Sibley Hall, Baker Lab, Statler Hall and Willard Straight Hall. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Karen Brown, director of marketing and communications for Campus Life and chair of Cornell’s Share the Warmth Campaign Committee, at (607) 255-1202 or ked13@cornell.edu.
Cathy Carlson, a maintenance electrician in Facilities Services, works part time so that she can give her two sons, ages 5 and 7, the attention that young children need. Robert Talda, programmer/analyst in CIT, varies his workday hours and works evenings and weekends so that he can be involved in his daughter’s school activities. The arrangements that Carlson and Talda – and many other staff members at Cornell – have worked out with their supervisors help explain why Cornell recently became a recipient of the 2011 Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility.

Depending on the needs of the organization and the individual, flexibility in the workplace can be implemented on an occasional or ongoing basis, case-by-case or throughout an entire unit.

Carlson began thinking about having a flexible schedule about a year and a half ago, when her supervisor asked what would make her job perfect. “The first thing I thought of was to work part time,” Carlson said.

Carlson works 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Thursdays. The schedule allows her to pick up her children from school or take them to doctors’ appointments and to complete household chores on Fridays. Carlson’s elderly parents are moving to town after Thanksgiving; her schedule will allow her to attend to their needs as well.

Carlson’s department has been supportive of her reduction in work hours, though they have said that they would be glad to see her return to full-time status. “There is no perfect balance,” she said. “I feel pulled in needing to be at home with my family, and I feel pulled in wanting to stay at work to get more done.”

But, she admits, with this schedule she avoids feeling like she is sacrificing one set of responsibilities to the other. “If you need the flexibility, try to make it happen,” she said. “Don’t be afraid to ask. Every workplace is different.”

Talda’s work involves maintaining the E-Z Backup system for all university data. His department had implemented flexibility on a broad scale because its staff members often need to work evenings and weekends, troubleshooting hardware problems or upgrading software. The department identified core office hours, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., but gives staff members the flexibility to come in earlier or stay later, work during the weekend or work remotely, depending on the work they need to complete.

Talda’s daughter has just started kindergarten. He appreciates having the flexibility to attend some of his daughter’s school-time events or to take her to the doctor’s office. Having flexibility also helps him with child-care concerns. “If our daughter has a day off from school, my wife – who also works – and I often split the day, with one of us taking care of her in the morning and the other in the afternoon,” Talda said.

“Because of the kind of work my department does, we are evaluated based on the quality of our work rather than on the hours we are in the office,” Talda said. “We also have a marvelous supervisor who trusts his employees to use that flexibility responsibly.”

See Flexibility in the Workplace, <http://www.dfa.cornell.edu/dfa/treasury/policyoffice/policies/volumes/humanresources/flexibility.cfm> for more information.

The Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility are given by a research-based initiative, When Work Works, to organizations that successfully use flexibility to achieve business goals and help employees meet their responsibilities on and off the job. Based on the results of questionnaires, the top 20 percent of applying organizations were asked to provide a random sample of 250 employees for Sloan to survey about their use of and experiences with flexibility and other aspects of an effective workplace, the supportiveness of their workplace culture and whether they perceive any negative consequences for using flexibility at their workplace.

“The awards that Cornell has received this fall from the AARP, Working Mother and the Dave Thompson Foundation for Adoption all indicate that by objective standards Cornell is on the right track in being a best place to work,” said Lynette Chappell-Williams, associate vice president for inclusion and workforce diversity. “The Sloan recognition is particularly meaningful because it also is based on the assessments of our own faculty and staff members.”

In addition to case-by-case and ongoing flex agreements, many Cornell units have occasional-flex agreements in place. In a separate employee survey of more than 700 staff and faculty conducted in May 2011, 82 percent of nonexempt staff, 94 percent of exempt staff and 95 percent of faculty said that their work schedule is somewhat or very flexible. Among staff, 78 percent of nonexempt and 74 percent of exempt staff reported using occasional flexible work hours.
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences faculty and staff honored for outstanding achievements in their fields

SHERI HALL

A pioneer in grape disease resistance breeding; two of the nation’s top authorities in microbiology; a leading entomologist who has shaped the way fruit growers ward off pests; and a respected world leader in food aid economics were honored Nov. 7 for outstanding achievements in their fields.

Kathryn Boor, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, presented awards to five faculty members at a ceremony at the Biotechnology Building as part of the college’s eighth annual Research and Extension Awards.

The recipients of the awards were:

• Bruce Reisch, professor of horticulture, for Outstanding Accomplishments in Applied Research. Since joining the CALS faculty in 1980, Reisch has garnered widespread recognition for his pioneering work in grape development, including developing biolistic transformation technology, a novel technique that injects plants with new genetic information.

• Arthur Agnello, professor of entomology, for Outstanding Accomplishments in Extension/Outreach. Agnello’s work over the past 26 years has impacted how tree fruit growers control insect and mite pests. He is the editor of an essential reference manual for tree fruit growers throughout the Northeast and founder of Scaffolds, a weekly newsletter that provides timely information on pest management and fruit production.

• Chris Barrett, the Stephen B. and Janice G. Ashley Professor of Agriculture in the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, for Outstanding Accomplishments in Science and Public Policy. Barrett is a respected world leader in the economics of food aid programs, helping governments better understand how markets actually function in low-income countries. He also generated policy contributions to the U.S. Farm Bill and agriculture in Africa.

• Steve Zinder, professor of microbiology, for Outstanding Accomplishments in Basic Research. Zinder, considered a top authority in microbiology, is best known for his work identifying a microbial respiratory process that removes chlorine atoms from industrial solvents and groundwater pollutants. This discovery has helped advance pollution-control technologies and, ultimately, helped clean up contaminated environments.

• Ruth Ley, assistant professor of microbiology, received the Early Achievement Award, which recognizes individuals who have shown extraordinary leadership and scholarship during their initial years at Cornell. Ley’s work has provided insights about the microorganisms that live inside mammals, including how they are passed down from a mother to her offspring and how diet, evolution and digestive physiology affect their structure.

“These awards honor a range of accomplishments that support the college’s land-grant mission of creating knowledge with a public purpose, and its vision to be the pre-eminent college for research, teaching and extension of agriculture and life sciences,” Boor said.

She also recognized Sarah Gould, administrative manager for the Department of Natural Resources, and Bruce Berggren-Thomas, a teaching support specialist in the Department of Animal Science, with the college’s Core Value Staff Awards, which honor those who show exceptional respect, honor and integrity, promote a collegial and supportive work environment, positively influence others, and show true commitment to the college and its advancement as a world-class educational institution.

“These recipients continuously surpassed expectations and have made significant and unique contributions to the college.”

—Kathryn Boor, Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Boor commended Gould for being a model leader who has helped her department recruit new talent and secure research grants.

Berggren-Thomas was praised for being an impeccable technician and dedicated team player who is continually willing to go above and beyond to help others.

Sheri Hall is a freelance writer based in Ithaca.
Rental vehicles with hand controls are available through Fleet Services

Fleet Services has purchased two vehicles that have been modified for drivers who require hand controls to lease for official university business. Sally Compton, administrative assistant, and Bob Larry, mechanic, in Fleet Services consulted with LaWanda Cook, an extension associate with the Employment and Disability Institute in ILR, to determine what modifications would best meet the needs of Cornell employees.

“I travel about 65 percent of the time for my work,” said Cook. “Having a Cornell Fleet car that is modified provides me the same privileges as other employees. The vehicle modifications available through commercial rental car companies do not meet my needs.”

Working with an area car dealer who had experience in accessibility-modification orders, Cook, Compton and Larry determined that a van with a sliding door would provide the greatest accessibility, both for the driver and for storage of a wheelchair. Prior to the purchase of the modified Toyota Sienna vans, those who relied upon a modified vehicle for their travel needs would often use their personal vehicle for university business. The modifications made to the new vans include an extended parking brake, a steering knob and a hand-operated control for gas and brake. They also include a lock to prevent those who are not appropriately trained and licensed to use those controls. The modifications are easily adapted so that when groups of co-workers travel together, employees who do not need them can share in the driving.

Cook said, “I don’t know how many people on campus have physical disabilities, but for those who are here, and for those who will be part of the Cornell community in the future, the availability of the modified vehicles may increase their interest in different employment opportunities here, including jobs that require a significant amount of driving.”

For more information on leasing a vehicle through Fleet Services, including a vehicle modified for hand-control driving, see <http://www.transportation.cornell.edu/tms/fleet/> or call 255-3247.

Sally Compton and Bob Larry in the Fleet Services yard.

Remember to complete Cornell employee survey

The deadline for completing the Cornell Employee Survey is Nov. 18.

All full-time employees of the Ithaca campus or New York State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva who began working at Cornell prior to July 1 and who are not tenured or tenure-track faculty are encouraged to complete the Cornell Employee Survey announced by President David Skorton Oct. 24. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) developed this confidential universitywide survey about various aspects of employees’ work experience at Cornell in response to a request from the Employee Assembly.

Supervisors have been encouraged to allow staff to take the survey during paid work hours. Staff members may skip any questions that they do not wish to answer and still submit their surveys. Only grouped results will be reported – individual responses will remain completely confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

The survey and more information can be found at <http://www.cornell.edu/employeesurvey>
600 attend Benefair 2011

With 540 door prize slips collected, organizers estimate some 600 staff members attended the 2011 Benefair, held Nov. 9 in the Biotechnology Building. Staff from the various Cornell benefits programs; Cornell’s retirement fund, health, dental, life and eye insurance vendors; and representatives from the United Way and local health and fitness organizations were on hand to answer questions and provide information.


Benefits starting to come from finance consolidation

SUSAN KELLEY

Despite some challenges, the benefits of a finance streamlining initiative to consolidate more than 30 Cornell business service centers are starting to come in. They include a sharing of best practices, improved compliance, seamless backup when a team member is on vacation and more consistency in how transactions are processed, said directors of Cornell’s financial transaction and business service centers on Nov. 4 at a brown-bag lunch in Weill Hall. Yet the streamlining initiative has had its share of challenges, including some related to the Kuali Financial System (KFS), they said. “Right now we feel like we’re a little stretched, but we’re going to wait for the system to stabilize. I think that’s going to have a big impact,” said Robin Yager, the initiative’s program manager.

Much of the discussion centered on backlogs at some centers caused in part by technical difficulties related to KFS. In response to an audience member who said there aren’t enough staff members to deal with the resulting workload, the directors said they are combating backlogs with various strategies. The KFS project will pay for temporary help, said Anne Shapiro, university controller. “We’re very aware of that archaeological mound of backlogged work,” she said, adding that the accounts payable department in the Division of Financial Affairs hired 18 temporary workers to process backlogged invoices. Directors will shift staffing levels to match their workloads as the centers become more efficient and KFS problems are solved, the directors said.

Another benefit of the initiative will emerge over time, Shapiro said: enhanced skills and enhanced career advancement for anyone participating in the centers.
Campus residents may find it a bit noisy one evening next week

A helicopter fitted with an infrared camera will be criss-crossing the campus looking for leaks in Cornell’s 25 miles of high-pressure steam heating pipes. Heat escaping from the system warms the ground and the camera picks up the hot spots.

“This is a check before winter to find out if there are any problems with the system,” said Frank Perry, project manager for Utilities Services in the Division of Facilities Services. “It will show you where insulation is beginning to fail or you might have a leak and helps us plan for future renewal of the system.”

“I think of this as the red light on the dashboard,” added Andy Andersen, project coordinator for Utilities Services. “You’ll always pick up something you didn’t know about.”

Flying at 500 feet, the helicopter, operated by Mid-Atlantic Infrared Services, Inc., will follow a grid that divides the campus into squares measuring 1,000 feet across. It sometimes reveals serious problems, like an expansion joint leak discovered under the Bailey Hall parking lot a few years ago.

“The whole parking lot was hot on the infrared image and there were no other signs,” said Andersen. “That line is absolutely critical to heating the campus during the winter.”

The efficiency of the campus heating system has improved greatly since infrared examinations began 35 years ago. Some pipes date back to 1914, when there were several steam services in the Division of Facilities Services. “It will show you where insulation is beginning to fail or you might have a leak and helps us plan for future renewal of the system.”

“Leaks and condensate were all over the place. If you compare that to what we see now, it is a day to think of what freedom means ... a time to realize our debt to soldiers for their bitter sacrifices to ensure our freedom.”

Shearer grew up in a small town near Charleston, W.Va., and enlisted in the U.S. Army Sept. 18, 1942. He became a gunner for the 391st Bomb Group, 573rd Bomb Squadron, and flew 46 missions before being shot down in 1944 during a mission over France.

Shearer said he parachuted, landing in a tree. Two Frenchmen gave him refuge in a farmhouse. Three houses later, he and two other soldiers in hiding were betrayed to the Gestapo. Shearer was interrogated and put in solitary confinement before being loaded in a boxcar with other people and sent to the concentration camp at Buchenwald, Germany.

At Buchenwald, Shearer and the other prisoners slept on the ground for two days in pouring rain before being moved to a building where they could sleep on wooden shelves. Meals consisted of bread made from beets and sawdust and a thin soup.
FOR RENT
2 Apartments for Rent in Freeville $750-850/month. Apt. #1: $750, 1 Bedroom, large living space; Apt. #2 $850, 2 Bedrooms, washer/dryer, dishwasher, hardwood floors. TCAT nearby, Utilities included. Rent negotiable. 330-0345 or rdt28@cornell.edu.

FOR SALE
Brand New 30” Kenmore Microwave/hood $190. White 30”, 1.6 cuft, 1000 watt microwave/hood combination with transferable warranty. Model72180032700. Still in box - never opened. kjn23@cornell.edu.

Farmstead on 78 acres $275,000. 1,800 sq ft. house, 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, new kitchen, bath, electric, plumbing, septic, windows, roof, siding. Barn, fenced pasture, pond, stream. 255-7070 or jps39@cornell.edu.

2012 Ithaca Weather Calendar $10. Calendar has weather statistics such as record high & low temps, average temps, snowfall amounts, moon phases, sunset and sunrise times. 255-3034 or pmv2@cornell.edu.

2009 Chevy Cobalt $9700. Great condition! Make an offer! 41,000 miles, power windows, CD player, air conditioned, clean interior. 255-1866 or asr243@cornell.edu.

Books $5/Box. 4 Staples boxes of books: Catherine Coulter, Sandra Brown, Danielle Steel, Nicholas Sparks. Paperback & hard cover. dld8@cornell.edu.

1998 Chevy Tahoe $4,500 or best offer. 4-door, great condition, dark blue. 280-3452 or mmv6@cornell.edu.

Blue and gold Macaw parrot $800. DNA female hatched in my aviary July 23, 2011. Still hand feeding. I will keep her until she is weaned. She’s a real sweet baby. 273-4013 or lpd4@cornell.edu.

Guidelines for Classified Ads
Free to members of the Cornell community as well Cornell retirees.

• Include name, campus phone, and category.
• Limit ad to 20 words or less.
• Ads selling goods or commercial services on an ongoing basis or promoting employment outside Cornell cannot be accepted.
• To run your ad more than once, you must re-submit it.
• Pawprint is not responsible for errors or unprinted ads, and retains the right to edit or reject any submission.

Submit classified ads via:
online: pawprint.cornell.edu
Classified deadlines:
• Oct. 12 for the Oct. 21 issue

University reminds employees of holiday guidelines
In order to celebrate the winter holiday season safely and in accordance with the university’s commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, staff and faculty members are reminded of the following guidelines:

In displaying holiday decorations, employees are expected to be sensitive to the rights and views of others and of the university’s commitment to creating an inclusive environment. The visibility of decorations to other employees and their resulting impact upon the workplace should be considered by employees who place them in the workplace.

Holiday decorations in the workplace are expected to be done in a manner which is not disruptive and does not interfere with work performance or use university resources without approval. Such displays must also conform to the fire/safety and decorative guidelines contained in the Winter Holiday Display Poster at http://www.ehs.cornell.edu/file/Fire_Safety/Winter_Holiday_Display_Poster.pdf. This poster should be displayed in a prominent place.

Consider the timing and needs of staff when scheduling events year-round by consulting the Cornell United Religious Services calendar listing of major religious holidays at: http://www.curw.cornell.edu/holidays112.html.

Throughout the year, religious restrictions such as fasting (with implications for event planning), observances (absences from work) and other practices may warrant religious workplace accommodations or event planning modifications. Guidelines for handling requests for religious accommodations may be found at: http://hr.cornell.edu/policies/all/religious_accommodation_faqs.html.

More comprehensive information on event safety, including use of decorations and candles, may be found at the Environmental Health and Safety website at http://sp.ehs.cornell.edu/event/event-management/Pages/default.aspx.

Questions or concerns about fire safety information can be directed to Christine Stallman, director of Environmental Health and Safety, at 255-8200 or by e-mail at ehsdir@cornell.edu.

For diversity issues in the workplace concerning winter holiday displays, contact Alan Mitman, director of Workforce Policy and Labor Relations, at 255-6866 or by e-mail at alm63@cornell.edu.