

ACHIEVER





DEAR FRIEND:

As this issue of *Achiever* goes to press, the eyes of the world are focused on Beijing, China, host of the 2008 Olympic games. As the competition continues, we are inundated with stories of courage, of victory, of single-minded perseverance.

Here at UMUC, we have our own stories of courage and perseverance, and I am particularly pleased and proud to introduce this issue of *Achiever*, which focuses on women and men who have challenged the odds and changed the world—for themselves and for others.

You'll meet Marc Kohn, who came to a crossroad in his career and looked to his own creativity and ingenuity for new opportunities for himself and his family.

You'll read about a remarkable journey undertaken by Paola Canales, who spoke no English when she came to the United States from Honduras in 1990, but went on to earn her communication studies degree from UMUC. Now she works as a program assistant with The Riecken Foundation, helping to establish community libraries in Honduras and Guatemala—and helping other young people, like herself, who dare to dream.

Finally, you'll meet Janet Zimmer, assistant dean of UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies and program director for information systems management and information assurance. She traveled to Costa Rica in 2004 looking for a break from the fast-paced world of information technology, only to return nine more times to introduce others to what she now calls her "favorite non-U.S. country" and do her part to help preserve its fragile ecosystem.

That's in addition to our usual slate of news updates, faculty kudos, and notes about alumni. I hope you take a few moments to learn more about how UMUC—and UMUC's students, graduates, faculty, and staff—are working to make the world different and better place.

Sincerely,

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH AND CENTER, THIS PAGE, MARK FINKENSTAEDET; TOP RIGHT: PATTI WOLF; BOTTOM RIGHT: KATHERINE LAMBERT

UMUC READY TO SERVE TROOPS ON THE GROUND IN IRAQ

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC was awarded a contract May 5, 2008, by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to deliver undergraduate liberal arts coursework and several graduate-level programs face-to-face to U.S. troops stationed in countries in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). The contract positions UMUC to be among the first American universities on the ground serving troops in Iraq.

"The opportunity to serve American troops stationed in CENTCOM countries is a great honor for University of Maryland University College," said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. "UMUC has a 60-year history of responding to the education needs of our men

and women in uniform no matter where they serve, and our graduates have risen to the highest ranks of leadership in the military, as well as in the public and private sectors. We are pleased and proud to be able to continue our tradition of delivering a quality education to servicemembers stationed in this critical portion of the world stage."

CENTCOM covers the "central" area of the globe located between the European and Pacific Commands. It includes those countries commonly referred to as the Middle East, but stretches from Kenya and the horn of Africa to Kazakhstan.

"We are ready to move at a moment's notice," said Allan J. Berg, director of UMUC Europe, when the contract was announced. "We have a history of success in delivering education programs to our troops, even in the most challenging environments, and we are eager to prove once again that UMUC is the right choice

when it comes to delivering a quality education wherever and whenever our students demand it."

UMUC has a large contingent of faculty and staff with downrange experience who are prepared for assignments in Iraq. These assignments come with additional security restrictions, but have a reputation for being among the most professionally rewarding.

Under an amendment to an earlier contract, UMUC is already teaching military students on the ground in several other CENTCOM countries, including Afghanistan and Qatar. The new contract potentially extends for 60 months.

UMUC HOSTS U.S.–CHINA DISTANCE EDUCATION FORUM, WELCOMES CHINESE AMBASSADOR

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC hosted the fourth annual U.S.–China Forum on Distance Education June 29–July 1, 2008, entitled "Mega Trends and Innovation in Distance Education for Sustainable Growth: Pedagogy, Technology, Services, and Partnerships." UMUC was chosen to host the fourth annual forum due to its status as a leader in distance education and long history of serving students overseas. The conference was co-hosted by the China Youth Center for International Exchange and the China University Distance Education Committee of the China Educational Technology Association.

"I am pleased and proud that UMUC was chosen to host this important forum,"



said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge, who has participated in each of the previous three forums. "This is an exciting time in education, with technology and the global economy combining to change the demand for and expectations of education worldwide. It's vital that the U.S. and China establish and advance a dialogue on the potential and promise that education holds for both of our countries, and this forum offers a wonderful opportunity to do just that."

The forum coincided with the opening of a special art exhibit in UMUC's Lower Level Gallery, entitled "Art and Dreams: Contemporary Chinese Art Around the Capital," featuring the work of 11 Chinese artists from the Washington, D.C., area.

On July 1, the forum concluded with a special presentation by Zhou Wenzhong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the United States, the latest in the university's popular "Meet the Ambassador" series. The ambassador addressed a capacity crowd in the university's Inn and Conference Center auditorium, discussing U.S.–Chinese relations and the benefit, to both countries, of maintaining cordial financial and business relations. After the event, he fielded questions from the audience and expanded on his presentation, touching on challenges posed

UMUC CONGRATULATES STAFF SGT. JAMES GARLITZ: U.S. Army Central Noncommissioned Officer of the Year



Staff Sgt. James Michael Garlitz, a business student in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, won the U.S. Army Central Command's 2008 Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year competition. Garlitz, currently serving in Kuwait, won this year's competition by besting other soldiers in tests measuring physical fitness, marksmanship, general military knowledge, and other skills.

"We extend our sincerest congratulations to one of our students, Staff Sgt. James Michael Garlitz, for receiving such a prestigious award from U.S. Army Central Command," said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. "As an institution with a long history of making quality higher education accessible to our men and women in uniform, we're proud that Sgt. Garlitz has so distinguished himself while remaining in good academic standing."



position as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the U.S. in 2005.

For more about the U.S.–China Forum on Distance Education, visit www.umuc.edu/uschina. Follow the link to view a video of Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong's presentation.



Top: Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong greets Dr. Donald Orkand, chair of UMUC's Board of Visitors, and UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. Above: Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong.

by the current economic environment, the Beijing Olympics, and more.

Wenzhong began his career as a staff member of the Beijing Service Bureau for Diplomatic Missions and as a staff member of the Departments of Translation and Interpretation in 1970. In 1987, he achieved ambassadorial rank as consul general of the People's Republic of China in Los Angeles. By 1998, he progressed to ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of China to the Commonwealth of Australia, and briefly served as assistant minister of foreign affairs in 2001. Wenzhong acted as the vice minister of foreign affairs before taking his current

UMUC PRESIDENT SUSAN ALDRIDGE APPOINTED TO AASCU COMMISSION

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge was appointed to a national commission established by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) to address the role of public universities in a global economy. The commission, which comprises 12 AASCU presidents, was formed in an effort to respond to the challenges of shifting economic realities and an ever-changing global atmosphere.

Recurrent data suggests that at most educational levels, the performance of American students no longer

matches or exceeds other advanced nations. The commission, chaired by Bruce Shepard, former University of Wisconsin–Green Bay chancellor and president-designate of Western Washington University, will recommend strategies and initiatives to strengthen institutions by insuring that their graduates are globally competitive.

"I am honored to join so many esteemed colleagues on this important commission," said Aldridge. "The world is changing every day and it's essential that we explore how best to equip our students—tomorrow's leaders—with the right tools and education to thrive in our global, competitive economy."

The commission convened its first meeting July 19, 2008.

DR. BETTY JO MAYESKE RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR DEVELOPING FIRE SERVICE CURRICULUM

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

Dr. Betty Jo Mayeske, a UMUC collegiate professor, received the 2008 Lasting Achievement Award from the National Fire Academy's Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) Program for her academic contributions to the development of the Open Learning Fire Service Program (OPLFSP). At the same event, UMUC received an institutional 2008 Lasting Achievement Award for delivering OPLFSP to thousands of fire service personnel for almost 30 years. UMUC was one of seven



Dr. Betty Jo Mayeske.

institutions to receive the award.

The OPLFSP—now known as the Degrees at a Distance Program, and sponsored by the International Association of Fire Fighters—was established to enable thousands of fire fighters and officers to earn degrees through independent study, in conjunction with seven regional institutions. Mayeske, who has taught at UMUC for more than 35 years, helped with the development of an upper-level set of courses in fire administration and prevention that led to the foundation of the FESHE bachelor's curriculum. FESHE is a national program created to establish an organization of post-secondary institutions that would expand recognition of the fire and emergency services to reduce loss of life and property.

"Betty Jo Mayeske has made significant contributions to UMUC and the Fire Science Program for more than 35 years," said Dr. Susan C. Aldridge, president of UMUC. "This award is truly deserved and a testament to Dr. Mayeske's commitment and dedication to expanding the accessibil-

ity of higher education for students in the fire science field.”

Mayeske currently teaches in the humanities program at UMUC. She was previously awarded an honorary degree from the British Open University for establishing the instructional set of courses for students in the field of fire science. She has also chaired the humanities program for seven years and currently serves on the Board of Governors for the Washington Society of the American Institute of Archaeology and the Board of the Santa Fe Institute of Native Hispanic Cultures.

UMUC OPENS ENTREPRENEUR DEVELOPMENT CENTER

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC opened a new Entrepreneur Development Center (EDC) this fall at its Dorsey Station location in Elkridge, Maryland. The new center will offer a special nine-month program, composed of six three-hour seminars and three networking events. The seminar program is designed to help entrepreneurs and small-business owners continue their career growth and enhance their existing business management capabilities. Sessions will focus on planning and growth strategies, leadership development, creation and protection of value, and exit planning.

“UMUC is thrilled to provide a program that will enhance the existing business skills of entrepreneurs



Richard W. Story, CEO of the Howard County Economic Development Authority, speaks at the kickoff meeting of the Entrepreneur Development Center.

who are actively involved in the ownership and operation of established businesses,” said Dr. Susan C. Aldridge, president of UMUC. “We are dedicated to providing programs for members of the community to continue their career growth, in the interest of supporting economic development in the Baltimore–Washington corridor.”

The university kicked off the program with a special breakfast on May 16, where attendees heard from Richard W. Story, CEO of the Howard County Economic Development Authority. Story is a leading figure in economic development throughout the Greater Baltimore–Washington area. In 29 years in business leadership, he has served as executive director of the economic development programs in Carroll and Baltimore counties and chaired the BWI Airport Development Council. He holds the Certified Economic Developer designation from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) and has been named a Fellow Member by the IEDC for his long-term service to the profession.

For more about the new Entrepreneur Development Center, visit www.umuc.edu/edc.

UMUC PARTNERS WITH YABT TO MENTOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS ONLINE

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

University of Maryland University College (UMUC) partnered with the Young Americas Business Trust—a nonprofit corporation working in cooperation with the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, host of the second annual Talent and Innovation Competition of the Americas (TIC Americas)—to match TIC Americas contestants with online faculty mentors from the university.

TIC Americas offers young people worldwide an opportunity to develop business ideas and present them to a diverse international audience. More than 30 UMUC faculty members from a wide variety of disciplines volunteered to serve as online mentors to TIC Americas contestants, answering questions, providing industry and technical know-how, helping with organizational strategies, editing business plans, evaluating team presentations, and helping contestants establish

the networks necessary for their projects to succeed in the long term.

One contestant—Rodrigo Rojas, of Bogota, Colombia—was mentored by Dr. Monica Gambrell, a member of the UMUC faculty, and went on to win the “Tradition and Culture” category for his new business, Alimentos Artesano. The company responds to customer needs with innovative organic food products from the Andean, Amazonian, and Caribbean regions.

“At UMUC, we couldn’t be more pleased or proud to be able to offer support and guidance to the fine young men and women whose talent and creativity are showcased in TIC Americas and whose ideas promise a brighter future for all of us,” said UMUC



President Susan C. Aldridge. “UMUC’s reputation as an international leader in online education made this a perfect fit for the university.”

“UMUC’s collaboration with YABT in TIC Americas 2008 was one of the most significant contributions we have received,” said Mr. Roy Thomasson, CEO of YABT. “It enormously benefited the finalists and participants as well as introducing them to excellent educational resources and people. I hope this will be the first of many more opportunities to collaborate with the OAS.”

TIC Americas contestants were able to meet and consult with faculty mentors in a dedicated online “classroom” in WebTycho, UMUC’s proprietary, Web-based course-delivery platform.

The 2008 TIC Americas finals were held in Medellín, Colombia, in May as an official activity of the XXXVIII OAS General Assembly.

For more about the Young Americas Business Trust and the Talent and Innovation Competition of the Americas, visit www.myybiz.net.

2008 STANLEY J. DRAZEK TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

Each year, UMUC faculty are nominated for the Stanley J. Drazek Teaching Excellence Award by students and selected by peers based on their ability to help students meet and exceed course objectives, encourage students to see new professional possibilities for themselves, and inspire them to apply course skills, concepts, or models to their work or community.

The awards are named for Chancellor Emeritus Stanley J. Drazek (1918–96), who joined UMUC in 1948, one year after its founding. During more than 30 years at UMUC, Drazek served successively as faculty member, director of the Baltimore division, dean, and chancellor.

Mona Engvig joined the graduate faculty in 2003, after receiving a Fulbright scholarship and serving for nine years as the principal of

a music school in Norway. She has extensive experience teaching both online and on-site, and has lectured and published on e-learning. She holds graduate degrees in arts administration, sociology and education administration, and policy analysis. She earned her PhD in education administration and policy



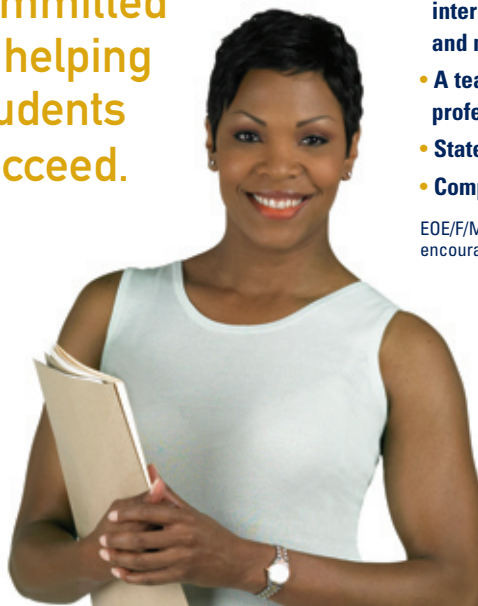
analysis from Stanford University. When teaching, Engvig is guided by one simple principle—treat all students with deep respect—and those who nominated her

noted that her kindness and dedication reach beyond the class and subject matter. She is sensitive to the needs of students who may be returning to school after years away from the classroom, makes her expectations clear, offers timely feedback, and is always available to answer

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To learn more and apply, visit umuc.edu/facultyrecruit



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PAOLA'S JOURNEY

Paola Canales spoke no English when she left Honduras for the United States in 1990. Now, with a communication studies degree from UMUC, she's reaching out to help create opportunities for other young people who dare to dream.

BY CHIP CASSANO

Paola Canales was only nine years old in 1990, but it had been eight long years since she had last seen her parents. They had left Honduras in 1982, determined to escape poverty and build a brighter future in America for themselves and their children. Canales and her three siblings stayed behind with their grandmother, waiting patiently until word finally came from the United States. At long last they were able to pack their belongings and head north to Silver Spring, Maryland, and a new country, a new culture, and a new life.



Paola spoke no English, and she experienced firsthand the challenges posed by limited communication skills. But she learned her new language quickly and discovered that she enjoyed writing. At the same time, while she worked to master English, she vowed to find a way to help others and give back to her community.

Her brother, Omar, served as an example and an inspiration. He was 18 when the Canales children came to America, and he immediately enrolled in school. He was confident in the power of education and the benefits it could provide, and he shared that confidence with Paola. When she graduated from high school—with her brother proudly looking on—Paola knew that she wanted to continue her education. She enrolled in a nearby community college, where she studied communication.

As she neared graduation, though, she found herself at a crossroad. She needed to work and help out her family, but she knew that she needed stronger educational credentials if she hoped to make the sort of long-term impact that she dreamed about. Again, Omar served as an example. Several years earlier, he had discovered UMUC, and he had been able to work full-time while earning his bachelor's degree.

Paola thought to herself, "If he can do it, so can I." So she enrolled at UMUC, too, again studying communications. And that was when her journey began taking her places even she had not imagined.

"After the first semester, I knew UMUC was the perfect fit for me," Paola said. "I needed to attend a school that would fit my full-time work schedule and, at the same time, would prepare me for the career I wanted to pursue."

And prepare her it did. Through the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and UMUC's Cooperative Education program (which allows students to earn college credit by applying classroom theory to real-world professional projects), Paola landed an internship at the U.S. Department of Education, working as assistant to the director of Hispanic communication and outreach, Elizabeth Casas Ray.

"[Casas Ray] was appointed by President George Bush, and she was one of the few Latinas in high-ranking positions in the government, so I was very flattered that she brought me on board," said Paola. "She would take me with her to conferences, or I would go to the Rayburn House Office Building or the Longworth House Office Building to cover events related to No Child Left Behind that would effect Hispanic youth, and then I would come back and draft press releases."

That was just the beginning. When her internship with the Department of Education ended, Paola accepted another position, again through the Cooperative Education program, this time as a media relations executive for a communications company specializing in educational programming.

I've found my home with The Riecken Foundation because, just like me, they have a strong passion to aid

developing countries by providing information access and igniting that spark that many children never knew they had."



Paula Canales (above) in Guatemala and (left) in Haifa, Israel. (Opposite) Riecken Foundation libraries serve as community centers in Central American countries.

In May 2007, Paola's hard work and determination paid another dividend, and she graduated from UMUC with her bachelor's degree in communications. Soon thereafter, she accepted a full-time position as a program assistant with The Riecken Foundation, a nonprofit organization that builds and supports rural community libraries—complete with Internet access—in Honduras and Guatemala. More than 60 libraries now serve as community centers while providing space for social and educational programs, including youth development programs aimed at cultivating practical leadership skills and values.

It was a perfect opportunity for Paola to make the kind of impact she dreamed of, but before she had a chance to settle into her new position, she had to take a leave of absence. Dr. Robert Bromber, one of her UMUC professors, joined with Dr. Mary Alice McCarthy, executive director of The Riecken Foundation, to nominate Paola for a prestigious scholarship from the Young Americas Business Trust, part of the Organization of American States. In December 2007, Paola got word that she would have just one month to get ready for a month-long trip to Israel, where she would be the only U.S. citizen invited to participate in an international workshop, entitled "Entrepreneurship for Youth: A Tool for Poverty Alleviation," at the Golda Meir Center in Haifa.

Paola was more than ready for the challenge.

"UMUC is a very globally focused school, so I felt very comfortable working with students from different countries on various projects," said Paola. "My experiences at UMUC really prepared me to engage with my classmates, share my previous experiences, and learn from theirs."

Paola returned to the the United States more determined than ever to help others, and her position with The Riecken Foundation has given her ample opportunity.

"I am so happy to be part of a foundation that believes in providing technology and help to those in need," said Canales. "I've found my home with The Riecken Foundation because, just like me, they have a strong passion to aid developing countries by providing information access and igniting that spark that many children never knew they had."

Early in 2008, the foundation sent Paola to Guatemala with that in mind. There, she worked to lay the groundwork for a new youth program that will teach debating and, in the process, help young people learn to conduct research, defend their viewpoints, and lead others. A few weeks later, Paola was again on a plane, this time bound for Honduras for a month where she would visit Riecken Foundation libraries, dividing her time between program development—evaluating and reporting on ongoing projects—and communication, writing a couple of articles for the foundation.

"It's a pretty full agenda that I have," Paola said as she was preparing to leave, "and I feel like the month is going to fly by because I'm going to be so busy. At UMUC, though, we were expected to produce quality work, and I gained that real-life practice, so even though I'm going to be challenged, and I'm a little anxious about everything, I'm more than positive that I'll do just fine."

For more about The Riecken Foundation, visit www.riecken.org. ♦



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THE NOISE MAKER

UMUC GRADUATE MARC KOHN IS READY TO MAKE SOME NOISE—LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY—AT SPORTING EVENTS WORLDWIDE. THIS IS HIS STORY.

BY KATE McLOUGHLIN

In sports, there's at least one loser for every winner—and at least one explanation for every loss, from coaching mistakes and defensive lapses to misguided game plans and impaired officials.

Marc Kohn, a 1989 graduate of University of Maryland University College (UMUC), has a simpler explanation: The fans didn't make enough noise. And thanks to hard work, patience, and a healthy dose of creativity,

Kohn is ready with a solution.



Noisemakers of all kinds have

been part of sporting events for decades, and currently, inflatable plastic tubes—sold as ThunderStix® and CheerStix®—hold the heavyweight title. Fans of Korean baseball started banging them together at games in the 1990s, and red, white, and blue ones showed up at the Republican National Convention in 2000. When athletic directors in the NCAA Pac-10 Conference voted to ban them at basketball games—right around the time that Anaheim Angels fans were using them to cheer their team to victory in the 2002 World Series—a furor erupted, and suddenly noisemakers were in headlines nationwide.

Marc Kohn was paying attention, and as time went by, something told him that sports fans might be ready for an alternative to ThunderStix® and CheerStix®, which aren't very durable and can obstruct other spectators' view of the field or floor. Kohn's son-in-law, James Paloucha, agreed, and the two men began to discuss developing a pair of noisemaking gloves.

"I knew there wasn't a noisemaking glove on the market, so I felt this had huge potential," said Kohn, who worked for Discovery Communications before he took on the venture. "They make logo wear socks, shirts, caps, visors, jackets, sunglasses . . . Why not put a team's logo on a pair of gloves that make noise? Covering the hands is the last frontier."

Paloucha picked up some materials at a hardware store, and before either man knew it, Kohn's basement had been turned into a makeshift factory. The first crude prototype of Home Team Handz had a piece of sheet metal on each palm. Kohn liked the concept but knew he needed a high-quality working model before the idea could gain



real footing and appeal to teams and sports marketers.

Kohn had come to a turning point in his career, and he decided to focus full-time on this entrepreneurial venture—crediting UMUC with giving him the courage to take the risk.

"One thing I learned in college was to commit to a goal and keep persevering until you reach it," said Kohn. "That always stuck with me, and it probably gave me the foundation to begin something completely different from what I'd done in my previous 18 years in television—to jump into creating a commercially viable and tangible product."

He spent considerable time and money seeking out materials that could be made into gloves—or banged together to make noise—trying out rubber, nylon, Lycra, and moldable plastic, and matching it up with marbles, magnets, wood, ceramics, metal, and even hockey stick blades.

He settled on fabric gloves with a bubble of hard, high-impact ABS plastic glued to each palm. Clap the gloves together and they produce a sound that's surprisingly loud, reminiscent of a well-hit baseball or a slap shot in hockey.

With a working prototype finally in hand, Kohn knew it was time to get some professional feedback. He took his invention to a sports marketing representative, who took one look and said the idea "had legs," scoring it 9.5 out of 10 for originality and uniqueness of product.

"I knew it was going to be a hit," Kohn said. "At that point, I knew I had to set up a company and apply for a patent."

Kohn sought financial backing from friends, family, and colleagues. When he needed additional funds, he contacted Craig Maniglia, a close friend who runs MVI Post,

a high-end, high-definition production facility. Maniglia proved to be a huge asset, and Kohn established FANtrepreneur! LLC, HomeTeamHandz, and submitted his patent application for a "noisemaking device that is attached to the hands so that when the hands are clapped together, a distinct and loud sound is produced."

That was just the first hurdle. Next, Kohn had to find a way to mass produce the gloves for less than \$2 a pair,

Marc Kohn and his son introduced Home Team Handz to baseball stadiums nationwide on a 3,000 mile "trip of a lifetime" in 2007.

cheap enough to be given away at sports games.

"There are a lot of wacky things you have to do



when you want to be involved in the sports giveaway world instead of the retail world,” said Kohn.

One company agreed to produce the gloves, but couldn't do it for less than \$4 a pair. Another claimed to be able to produce the gloves for less than \$2, but after wasting valuable time, didn't deliver.

Dismayed but not discouraged, Kohn started to research other manufacturers.

“I got lucky when I hit it off with the owner of Gloves Online,” Kohn said. “Gloves Online helped us fine-tune the glove—all machine-made, no hand-sewing—and also had their factory make several different molds to produce the plastic palm sound piece.”

Now, almost three years into his venture, Kohn is beginning to see the fruits of his labor. He took the product with him on a “trip of a lifetime” with his son in the summer of 2007. They decided to focus on baseball, traveling more than 3,000 miles in less than three weeks and visiting stadiums nationwide.

“My test marketing application was very simple,” Kohn said. “After we found our seats, I put on the Home Team Handz and started clapping as appropriate. Invariably, fans sitting next to us would notice and start asking questions. Some asked to try them on. People were very intrigued.”

Fans asked when the product would be available and wanted to know how to get their hands on them—and in them.

I can't remember a single person saying anything negative,” said Kohn. “It's just kind of snow-balled—not that it's been easy.”

In December 2007, Kohn headed to the Major League Baseball Trade Show in Nashville, Tennessee, and handed out hundreds of samples.

“We had tremendous booth traffic with most teams expressing interest. One vendor who has been attending the trade show for the past 15 years said he'd never seen as much interest in a product,” Kohn said.

It probably didn't hurt that Kohn hired three local models—dubbed Home Team Handz Girlz—who clapped nonstop outside the booth. A representative of Major League Baseball even came by to interview Kohn and Maniglia after Home Team Handz were named one of the show's top new items.

“We have genuine interest from more than 150 minor league



baseball teams in the United States and Mexico, and two Major League baseball teams have the product and are extremely interested,” said Kohn. And the interest isn't limited to baseball. Kohn said the senior vice president of DC United—the District of Columbia's professional soccer team—has a sample of Home Team Handz, and a company from Norway contacted him to discuss using Home Team Handz at beach volleyball games.

Home Team Handz generate interest—and smiles—wherever they appear.

“The product virtually sells itself. We are in discussions with the Collegiate Licensing Corporation to get our product into the top 200 colleges and universities,” said Kohn.

Even outside of the trade show, Home Team Handz attracted attention. Kohn was sitting at a bar after the show one day when the bartender took interest in the product. As he tried them out, another person across the bar noticed. As it turned out, that man was a representative from the San Diego Padres who had been sent to the show to find the next noisemaker.

“He said, ‘This is it, guys,’” Kohn said.

Representatives from two sports premium companies approached Kohn, expressing interest in offering a line of Home Team Handz. The companies would have the items produced in China, marketed to teams worldwide, and Kohn and company would receive a cut of the profit from each sale.

“In a very short time, we could be licensing our product to companies that have a long history of selling premiums to sports teams. It could jumpstart sales rather quickly,” said Kohn.

If that happens, Kohn will be pleased; if it doesn't, he'll be patient.

“The average ‘overnight success’ is 10 years in the making,” said Kohn. “We have seven more to go, so we have a lot of patience. Most people with an idea give up just before the big payoff. If you really believe in what you're doing, it will succeed, but it takes a lot of faith. My favorite quote is from Winston Churchill: ‘Never give in, never give in, never, never, never, never. . . .’”

For more information about Home Team Handz, visit the product Web site at www.hometeamhandz.com. ♦





When Janet Zimmer is playing tour-guide, no trip to Costa Rica is complete unless everyone pitches in to help plant trees.

Photographs: Background, planting trees, flower (inset) and hotel sign by Patti Wolf; Janet Zimmer (inset) by Donna McKalip; Arenal (inset) by Janet Zimmer

NO



Four years ago, Janet Zimmer traveled to Costa Rica and fell under its spell. Now she's doing her part to preserve its fragile ecosystem for future generations—and introducing others to her "favorite non-U.S. country."

ORDINARY



TOURIST



BY KATE McLAUGHLIN

W

When Janet Zimmer signed up for a trip to Costa Rica in 2004, she wasn't expecting much more than a short break from the fast-paced world of information technology. But Zimmer—who serves as program director of information systems management and information assurance, and assistant dean of UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies—got much more than she anticipated.

"It was, in several ways, a life-changing journey," said Zimmer, who was particularly inspired by her tour guide, Edwin Ramirez, who amazed the group by locating and identifying 124 species of birds in the course of the 10-day trip, and whom Zimmer characterizes as a "Costa Rican national treasure."

"He displayed such a passion for his country, his people, his birds, forests, mountains, and volcanoes," said Zimmer, that many in the group felt a genuine sense of grief when it came time to leave. "His connection to his environment, his love of the land, and his concern for preservation of its fragile beauty calls him to action, and I found myself responding to [that]."

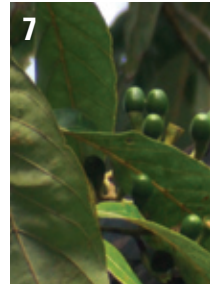
So Zimmer decided to return, and did—time and time again. In May 2008, just four years after she first visited Costa Rica, she made her 10th trip to what she now calls her "favorite non-U.S. country." Sometimes she has brought family and friends with her, but she has been no mere tourist.

On one trip, she volunteered at a Costa Rican nursing home, helping care for elderly residents, some of whom had been abused, and working to get them involved in activities and outings. On another trip, she worked at a halfway house for children from troubled homes, escorting older children to and from school, organizing games and arts and crafts activities, and giving the resident housemothers a much-needed break in caring for dozens of children ranging in age from 18 months to 13 years.

But as the years went by, she never lost touch with Ramirez, her first tour guide.

"I have enjoyed the hospitality of the Ramirez family, staying in their home and becoming part of the family on almost all of my visits to Costa Rica since 2004," Zimmer said. "Sora, Edwin's wife, 13-year-old Javier, and 7-year-old Nicole practice their English with me as I struggle to respond in my very limited Spanish vocabulary."

Zimmer, in turn, has joined Ramirez's personal crusade to reforest several tracts of land in the beautiful LaPaz cloud forest



Photograph nos. 1, 5 by Janet Zimmer; 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10 by Patti Wolf; 6 and Edwin Ramirez by Donna McKalip; 3 courtesy of Hays Cummins, Miami University.



FLORA AND FAUNA

- 1. Green-crowned brilliant hummingbird
- 2. Zebra butterfly
- 3. Resplendent Quetzal
- 4. Dryas Julie butterfly
- 5. Violet saber-winged hummingbird
- 6. Freshwater crocodile
- 7. Chestnut mandible toucan
- 8. A member of the melastome family of plants
- 9. Heliconia
- 10. An unidentified local ornamental plant.



Edwin Ramirez,
Guide

“His connection to his environment, his love of the land, and his concern for preservation of its fragile beauty calls him to action, and I found myself responding to [that].”



“Each day I traveled to the cloud forest area and spent four to six hours planting seedlings.”

and, in the process, strengthen the surrounding fragile ecosystem (for more about cloud forests, see the box, below). The strategy is simple. In the 1950s, acres of land were clear-cut to allow for cattle farming. Because many wild animals won't venture into the open, the clear-cut areas act as barriers, disrupting migratory pathways and feeding patterns.

“These spaces create an artificial boundary that we are hoping to break down by rebuilding a continuous treed pathway between the two existing forests,” Zimmer explained. “These forest bridges, once re-established, will allow animals and birds to migrate over a much larger area, broadening the gene pool.”

By her own estimate, Zimmer has helped plant 2,000 trees thus far, and when she organized a trip to Costa Rica in 2007 for six of her UMUC coworkers and friends, she made sure to include a stop in San Ramon, where the group pitched in to plant another 70 trees.



CLOUD FORESTS

Cloud forests are tropical or subtropical highland forests that are often shrouded in low-level cloud cover. In Costa Rica, this phenomenon results as warm, moist ocean air moves inland, cooling as it rises into the highlands. As the air cools, the moisture condenses, forming clouds and fog.



During that trip, Zimmer was happy to help play tour guide in the country she has grown to love, and the group rose at 6 a.m. each day for bird watching, followed by a variety of tropical adventures—hiking, whitewater rafting, zip-lining, and soaking in the volcano-heated hot springs. On the southwest Pacific coast, they visited La Cusinga, an isolated area with a pristine beach with waves suitable for bodysurfing, a cave to explore, and a tiny freshwater waterfall that serves as a natural shower. To explore Gerardo de Dota, Savegre, the group literally had to drive through the clouds at 11,500 feet.

“It was sort of a terrifying experience, with no visibility at some points,” said Zimmer. “But Hotel Montaña is down in a beautiful valley at 7,500 feet, and it is home to the Resplendant Quetzal, one of the ‘must see’ birds of the tropics.”

Again, though, Zimmer wasn't content only to play tourist, and—after her colleagues were safely aboard a plane headed back to the United States—she stayed behind for an additional week, working with Ramirez to plant more trees.

“Each day I traveled to the cloud forest area and spent four to six hours planting seedlings,” she said. “It can be very demanding work, because it involves manually digging each hole, lugging the seedlings up and down some very uneven terrain, and then planting each tree.”

Top Center: Donna McKalip; All other photographs this page: Patti Wolf.



The seedlings come from a local nursery in San Ramon or from the forest floor nearby, and only native species are used. It is labor-intensive and painstaking work, but it is also gratifying, promising results whose impact reaches far into the future. Already there is evidence of progress.

“Some trees are quick-growing, used to create the shade needed to eliminate the non-native grasses that were planted for cattle,” Zimmer said. “I have seen two or three feet of growth on a few of the trees I helped plant in 2006. Some trees grow at a slower rate, but they will provide fruits and seeds that attract birds and animals. Eventually we hope to create unbroken spans of forest that will allow the birds and animals to move freely over much larger forest areas and attract more rare species back to the area, including the Resplendent Quetzal and the tapir.”

Ultimately, Zimmer and Ramirez hope to see the reforestation efforts move beyond Ramirez’s tracts of land.

“We only have access to four acreages, and there are many other open spaces that are owned by local families,” Zimmer said. “It will take some time to convince others who own land in the area to think in terms of allowing the forest to come back, either with help or on its own.”

Now that very little cattle farming is done in the region, some are concerned that the land could become a magnet for develop-

TIME OUT FOR ADVENTURES

(Clockwise from top left) Janet Zimmer braves the zip-line; Nancy Landreville and José Lopez cross a log bridge; the “First Annual UMUC Trip to Costa Rica” with (clockwise from left) Beth Hawthorne, Patti Wolf, Karl Klee, Donna Nickols, Wayne Lewis, Nancy Landreville, Donna McKalip, Janet Zimmer, and Betty Ring; whitewater rafting on the Sarapiquí River; and group members enjoying the swimming hole at La Cusinga Lodge.

ment, and Zimmer hopes the added trees can help sideline those efforts and focus attention on an alternate and growing source of revenue—ecotourism, now one of the country’s primary sources of income.

Zimmer will continue to do her part. In May 2008, she led the “Second Annual UMUC Trip to Costa Rica,” and the “Third Annual UMUC Trip to Costa Rica” is already in the planning stages for 2009.

“I just want to share my growing love of Costa Rica and my concern for preserving its environment with the folks here at home,” she said. ❖

IMPORTANT LEGAL NOTICE

KARYN S. BERGMANN, <i>et al.</i> ,	★	IN THE
Plaintiff Class Representatives,	★	CIRCUIT COURT
Plaintiff Class Members,	★	OF MARYLAND FOR
v.	★	BALTIMORE CITY
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND,	★	
<i>et al.</i>	★	
Defendants.	★	Civil Case No. 24-C-02-005740

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MARYLAND FOR BALTIMORE CITY ABOUT A CLASS ACTION INVOLVING A TUITION REFUND THAT YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE

A class action has been certified by the Circuit Court of Maryland for Baltimore City and steps have been taken by the parties to notify all class members of their rights and involvement in the case. The class action seeks partial tuition refunds for students charged out-of-state tuition after applying for in-state tuition at any one of the following University System of Maryland (“USM”) schools: (1) University of Maryland, Baltimore; (2) University of Maryland, Baltimore County; (3) University of Maryland, College Park; (4) University of Maryland, Eastern Shore; (5) University of Maryland, University College; (6) Bowie State University; (7) Coppin State University; (8) Frostburg State University; (9) Salisbury State University; (10) Towson University; and (11) University of Baltimore. Students who qualify as members of the class include those who: (1) petitioned any USM school for re-classification from out-of-state status to in-state status for **any semester from the Spring 2001 to the present**, and (2) were denied in-state tuition status based upon a failure to overcome the “financial dependence” or “residence at application” presumptions of the relevant USM policies, but otherwise met the requirements of the policy and the school’s procedures for obtaining in-state tuition status, including exhaustion of the institution’s administrative process. Class members are entitled to have the original decision to charge out-of-state tuition reconsidered by the institution, based upon revised standards for determining how these presumptions should apply (Those standards may be found at www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionVIII/VIII270). Depending upon the results of that review, you may be eligible for a refund in the amount of the difference between the out-of-state tuition that you paid and the in-state tuition rate applicable at that time.

If you believe you are a member of the class but have not received a personal notice and wish to be part of the class, you should immediately contact the class plaintiffs’ attorney Anthony M. Conti at CONTI FENN & LAWRENCE LLC, 36 South Charles Street, Suite 2501, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, to learn more about your possible rights in this matter, as you may be entitled to a tuition refund.

To learn more about your possible rights and to make a request to be considered as a member of the class, please contact Anthony M. Conti, CONTI FENN & LAWRENCE LLC, by calling (410) 837-6999 or by e-mailing info@lawcfl.com. All e-mails should include the following information: full name, day and evening telephone number(s), current mailing address, name of constituent institution attended, and the years applied for and denied in-state tuition.

_____/s/_____
 Judge M. Brooke Murdock

1990s **Jack Kushner '90**
 Annapolis, Maryland, was inducted into the IBC Hall of Fame by the International Biographical Centre of Cambridge, England, in recognition of his outstanding achievements in the field of neurosurgery and emerging medical technology. He received the award during IBC’s annual World Forum, which was held this year at St. Catherine’s College, Oxford, August 26–31. He is one of the first inductees into the IBC Hall of Fame, which was inaugurated earlier in 2008 under the tenet, “Honouring in perpetuity those individuals, citizens of the 21st century, whose contributions to the arts, athletics, business, education, government, the humanities, philanthropy, and science, have been the greatest value for the development of their society.”

Marjorie Vogeley '90
 Laurel, Maryland, an occupational therapist in the Prince George’s County Public School system, was elected president of the Maryland Occupational Therapy Association. She assumed the office as of January 1, 2008.

Sean J. Moynihan '93
 Charlottesville, Virginia, received the University of Virginia Outstanding Contribution Award for his work as director of radiology information systems in the Department of Radiology of the University of Virginia Health System. He was cited for contributing above and beyond expectations and showing committed leadership to his employees. He designed and implemented the hospital’s first successful picture archiving and communication system (PACS), an information system that distributes radiology images to radiologists, clinicians, and referring physicians. He has since expanded the service to gastroenterology and radiation oncology, with cardiology, dermatology, and pathology to follow. Dr. Karen Rheuban, director of telemedicine and professor of pediatric cardiology, wrote, “Sean’s innovative and service-oriented demeanor has helped us fulfill our missions of clinical care, research, and public service.”

Polyanna R. Amistad '94
 Hagatua, Guam, owns a home-based business as an independent distributor for Reliv Interna-

tional. She also volunteers in a family-owned business, where she serves as assistant manager.

C. Thomas Bowers '99

Cape Coral, Florida, retired in 2003 after a career with the Maryland State Police. He served as superintendent of residential programs for the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services from 2004 through 2007, and took a full retirement in the spring of 2008, when he moved to Florida.

2000s **Angela Britton '04**
Washington, D.C., a staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, recently joined the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee, which is preparing to support the 56th Presidential Inauguration on January 20, 2009. The committee includes members from all service branches of the U.S. armed forces, including the Reserves and National Guard. She will serve as IT support technician in the information technology directorate, where she will be responsible for ensuring the integrity of computers, printers, and scanners, as well as isolating and resolving all office and LAN service support requests. She said, "It is a one-chance-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I am glad I can be a part of it and represent the Air Force."

Ralph Portnoy '04

California, Maryland, made the news when the Naval Air Systems Command's Air Combat Electronics Program—for which he serves as program manager—celebrated the 1,000th product delivery of the Tactical Air Moving Map system computer. He said, "This is a great milestone for naval aviation. The Tactical Air Moving Map Capability (TAMMAC) provides cutting-edge moving map technology to give our aircrews unprecedented situational awareness. As a pilot, I can tell you that being able to see at a glance your own position overlaid on your planned flight path, the terrain, the target's position, and any threat system nearby gives our warfighters a tremendous advantage in today's complex battlefield."

April Beckett '05

Chapmanville, West Virginia, wrote, "Since graduating from UMUC Asia in Okinawa, Japan, I have relocated to West Virginia. Through UMUC, I took the most fascinating education courses, which motivated me to



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get my teaching license. I am currently in my second year as a fourth grade teacher. I love my job and attribute my success to the wonderful professors in Okinawa.”

Hans Meeder '05

Columbia, Maryland, is president of Meeder Consulting Group, which assists state departments of education and national advocacy organizations with policy implementations, outreach and communications, and leadership development. He began consulting in 2005 after serving as deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Education. He has more than 20 years of experience in the field of education policy. He wrote, “The MBA program at UMUC helped me immediately apply organizational development principles at the U.S. Department of Education and with my clients around the country. The UMUC experience was invaluable in helping me understand the theory and research behind good, common-sense leadership strategies.”

Peggy J. Jacobs '06

Glen Burnie, Maryland, wrote, “UMUC was a wonderful experience for me. I advise anyone looking to enhance their career to attend UMUC. I am currently preparing to begin work on my master’s degree.”

Sandra Spruill '07

Olney, Maryland, works as an administrative secretary for Montgomery County Public Schools and was recently inducted into the Tau Chapter of Alpha Sigma Lambda, the national honor society for adult, nontraditional students. ♦

continued from page 5

DRAZEK WINNERS

questions, address concerns, and provide support.

Laura Witz came to the Graduate School of Management and Technology in 2004 and has helped develop the curriculum for classes on research



FACULTY KUDOS

ROBERT BROMBER, academic director of African American studies, government, and history in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, was elected to the board of the Inter-American Institute for Diplomacy, which co-sponsors (with the Organization of American States) the Washington Model of the Organization of American States.

HELEN CAMPBELL, a collegiate professor in the business and management and social sciences departments in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, received a Fulbright grant to travel to Russia to lecture at Moscow State University on American commercial law. She earned her law degree from Temple University and joined the Pennsylvania bar, but she also completed graduate work in clinical social work at California State University, Sacramento, and holds a graduate degree in musical performance from Yale University, where she studied the viola with Raphael Hillyer, a student of Dmitri Shostakovich. She is the author of two novels, supported by grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts: *Turnip Blues* (Spinsters Ink Books, 1998) and *The Blue Yonder Inn* (Michigan State University Press, 2002).

PATRICIA RIFE, who teaches PMAN 637 Conflict Resolution and Negotiation Skills in UMUC's Graduate

School of Management and Technology, will be consulting with managers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID) on the instructional design and facilitation of "The Art of Leadership" training workshops. Her new book, *Peace Stories* (Trafford Press, 2008), is scheduled to release this fall, coinciding with her public lectures at the Naval Research Lab Research Library and International Association of Educators for Peace conference, which will focus on her first book, *Lise Meitner and the Dawn of the Nuclear Age* (Birkhauser, 1999).

BENJAMIN STEVENSON, who teaches criminal justice courses in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies and serves as a correctional specialist III at the Montgomery County Department of Correction, recently won awards for Group Outstanding Performance in the Pre-Trial Supervision Unit, and Pre-Trial Services Division Employee of the Year. In the announcement of the awards, Stevenson was cited as exemplifying "the committed, compassionate, and effective caseworker," and was praised for his "teaching abilities as a certified trainer for the department, instructing numerous training classes throughout the year." The awards were presented at the annual awards program on May 7, 2008.

methods for managers and organizational communication. Her work is based on years of teaching both graduate and undergraduate classes in research methods, intercultural and business communication, persuasion, conflict management, and interpersonal relationships. Witz holds a PhD in communication with a specialization in conflict management and intercultural communication from Michigan State University.

Students praise her positive feedback and constructive criticism on course assignments, which helps motivate them. According to one student, "She has not only provided educational guidance; she has also proved to be a mentor."

Kina Leitner joined the School of Undergraduate Studies in 2000, teaching both psychology and introductory statistics courses. She holds a PhD in psychology with a specialization in measurement and evaluation from Columbia University. Her experi-



ence as a psychotherapist helps her create learning environments in which students can recognize, acknowledge, and discuss their anxiety about taking statistics courses. She actively engages students in online discussions, where they learn from one another and strengthen their analytical and communication skills.

Students who nominated her noted her enthusiasm for psychology and statistics and her commitment to making complex subjects understandable, relevant, and interesting. She serves as course chair for both departments, and serves as a mentor to students and also to faculty who are new to teaching online, and she shares her expertise with the community through presentations and publications.

ence as a psychotherapist helps her create learning environments in which students can recognize, acknowledge, and discuss their anxiety about taking statistics courses. She

Dennis Whitford

came to the School of Undergraduate Studies in 2002 after serving as chair of the oceanography department at the U.S. Naval Academy. During his 30-year career in the Navy, he gained extensive experience in working with adult students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. He holds a PhD in oceanography from the Naval Postgraduate School.

Whitford's students note his enthusiasm for oceanography and marine biology, and say his personable style comes across in online discussions and in his thorough feedback and timely responses to questions. His devotion to learning is evident in his own life as he continues to research and develop lectures on science, which he presents to the public. ♦





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- ◆ Join the **State Employees Credit Union of Maryland, Inc. (SECU)**
- ◆ Receive discounts on rooms and meals at the **UMUC Inn and Conference Center by Marriott**

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and career goals. Using the UMUC alumni directory, I've been able to contact and interact with colleagues, classmates, and co-workers while building new professional relationships. I recently used the alumni directory to interact with a former classmate on studying and preparing for the Project Management Profession® exam. But my favorite feature is the 'Events' link, which provides a snapshot of current, future, and archived UMUC and Alumni Association events, including professional development, continuing education, volunteer, and social events.”

JOE BROUSSARD '05

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, MANTECH SYSTEMS ENGINEERING CORP.
VICE PRESIDENT, COMMUNICATIONS, UMUC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2008

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