

Summer 2015

InCommon- Summer 2015

Alumni Association Staff

Follow this and additional works at: <https://neiudc.neiu.edu/incommon>

Recommended Citation

Staff, Alumni Association, "InCommon- Summer 2015" (2015). *InCommon*. 6.
<https://neiudc.neiu.edu/incommon/6>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Publications at NEIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in InCommon by an authorized administrator of NEIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact neiudc@neiu.edu.

GREEN PARTY!
Northeastern puts Earth first

On to the **IVY LEAGUE**

EXTRA CREDIT
Success in the Science Center



NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY | magazine

the common

SUMMER 2015



Olé!

Celebrating 40 years of

Ensemble Español

A message from the **PRESIDENT**



Greetings Northeastern alumni and friends,

Since our University was founded, it has been known as a place where learning, living and urban leadership converge. The stories in this edition of In Common magazine testify to many of the ways this convergence is rooted deeply into our heritage and vision.

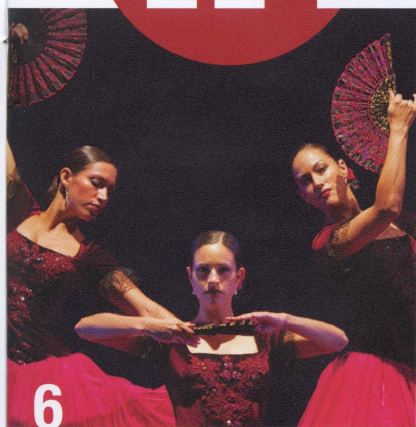
It is evident in our upcoming yearlong celebration of Ensemble Español's four decades of bringing Spanish music and dance to our University and beyond. It is evident in our new dean of the College of Business and Management, Michael Bedell, who is poised to take the college to new heights. And it is evident in the progress we make toward reducing our ecological footprint at all of our locations.

Through our academic, civic and cultural resources, Northeastern has always served as an anchor institution to the entire state of Illinois and beyond. I hope you enjoy reading more about the dynamic connection between Northeastern and our cultures in the following pages.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharon K. Hahs".

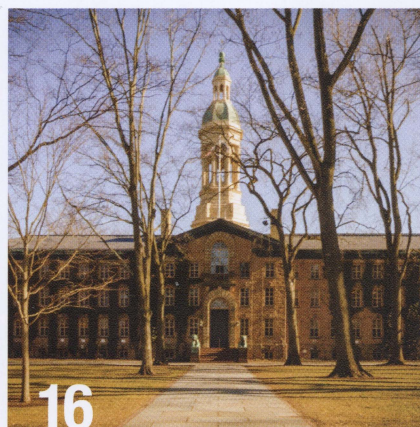
Sharon K. Hahs, President
Northeastern Illinois University



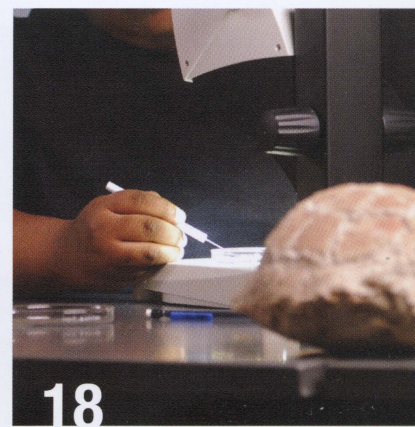
6



12



16



18

FEATURES

6 SPANISH PASSION

Forty years of dance, forty years of drama—Ensemble Español celebrates the milestone at Northeastern in style.

12 GREEN PARTY

Look! From the roofs to the classrooms, Northeastern is making eco-friendly choices.

16 IVY LEAGUERS

Princeton University has recently added not one but two Northeastern graduates to its faculty.

18 THE ENGAGEMENT THEORY

Northeastern's Student Center for Science Engagement prepares students for life after graduation.

DEPARTMENTS

2 A LETTER TO OUR ALUMNI

3 AROUND THE COMMONS

21 LEGACY FAMILY

ON THE COVER



That striking cover photo, which features company dancer and Northeastern alumnus Juan Castellon, was taken by former Ensemble Español dancer Joel Maisonet, who now runs his own photography business. It was taken to promote the June 2014 production of "Mil Clavos." The show was choreographed by former Ensemble dancer Ron De Jesús, who went on to perform on Broadway. Maisonet also took the photo of principal dancer Claudia Pizarro on Pages 6-7.

NEIU MAGAZINE STAFF

Editorial Board: **Melba Rodriguez, Liesl Downey,
Mike Hines, Damaris Tapia**

Art Director/Designer: **J. Matt Byerly
and Lauren Jordan**

Photographer: **Joe L. Davis**

Contributors: **Anna Cannova, Sylvia Daniels,
Mike Dizon, Mike Hines, Tasha Neumeister,
Damaris Tapia, Travis Truitt, Toula Wellbrook**

*In Common is published by the University for graduates, donors,
and friends. Please send your comments, suggestions, and
news items by email to alumni@neiu.edu or to the NEIU Alumni
Association, Northeastern Illinois University, 5500 North St. Louis
Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 60625-4699.*

HOW TO CONTACT US

alumni@neiu.edu

Northeastern Illinois University: (773) 583-4050

Alumni Relations: (773) 442-4205

Development: (773) 442-4210

Public Relations: (773) 442-4240

Transcripts: (773) 442-4032

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

Sharon K. Hahs
President

Richard J. Helldobler
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Michael Pierick
Vice President for Finance and Administration

Melissa Reardon Henry
Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel

Frank E. Ross
Vice President for Student Affairs

Melba Rodriguez
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Carlos Azcoitia, Chair of the Board

Jin Lee, Vice Chair

Omar Duque, Secretary

Amanda Slefo, Student Trustee

Robert Biggins

Marvin Garcia

Barbara Fumo

Darlene Ruscitti

Jonathan J. Stein

UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

Thomas R. Gramins, CPA, President

Lawrence P. Frank, Vice President

Neal Fenwick, Treasurer

Janice Howse, Corporate Secretary

Kenn Ashley

Cathy Krawitz

Jacqueline Krump

Marcellus H. Moore Jr.

Juan G. Moreno

J. Todd Phillips

Thomas F. Power Jr.

John F. Roskopf

Salme Harju Steinberg

Mark Van Ausdal

Melba Rodriguez, Executive Director

A message from the **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Greetings fellow alumni,

Northeastern Illinois University is quickly approaching the 80,000 alumni member mark. This is an exciting moment in our history! Our alumni reach all corners of the world, and most noteworthy, more than 50,000 of us live and work in the Chicago area.

Northeastern graduates provide expertise and leadership in all aspects of society. The success of our alumni is a reflection of the dedication of our University's leaders, faculty and staff.

In the spirit of that commitment to education, I write you to ask for your support.

As state appropriations shrink, it is more important than ever that Northeastern's alumni give back to the University that set them on their career paths—and by extension, to the next generation of students.

Here's how you can help.

Take action: Contact your state legislators and tell them that you support the value of a public higher education in Illinois.

Get involved: Connect with the NEIU Alumni Association by volunteering your time as a mentor to students and fellow graduates. Participate in University programs and events such as the Alumni Reunion in October.

Give back: Donate to the NEIU Foundation to support University programs and student scholarships. You might even be able to double your gift if your employer offers corporate matching funds!

Update your record: Sign up or update your contact information online at your.neiu.edu. Make sure we have your email address so you can receive up-to-date information.

Be an ambassador: Promote Northeastern to your friends and neighbors. Encourage prospective students to attend an open house event or visit campus.

Each of us has benefited from our education at Northeastern Illinois University. Now is your chance to take action in support of your University and the generations of great alumni to come.

Sincerely,



Chuck Good
Alumni Association Advisory Board President



In the PEOPLE BUSINESS

Meet Michael Bedell, new dean of the College of Business and Management

By Mike Hines

When you ask Michael Bedell what he loves most about Northeastern Illinois University, his answer is simple.

“It’s the people,” he said. “When you walk down the halls, the students, the staff, the faculty members you pass are all so diverse. This university is remarkable. There is a learning opportunity every day due to its diversity.”

That interest in the people around him is a recurring theme for the man who was appointed dean of the College of Business and Management in December 2014.

When Bedell earned his bachelor’s degree with a double major in business and psychology from the University of Kansas, he knew he would pursue a doctorate. He just didn’t know which path to take.

“Ultimately, I chose to pursue business over psychology because I thought it would make me more valuable,” said Bedell, who grew up in Belleville, Ill., outside of St. Louis.

Still, Bedell never let go of the human interest that drew him to psychology. After earning his Master of Business Administration from Kansas, Bedell obtained his Ph.D. in Human Resource Management/Organizational Behavior with a minor in Production/Operations Management from Indiana University. Bedell went on to work for Payless

ShoeSource, where his responsibilities included human resources information systems, developing selection methods and training merchandising teams.

“There’s a people component to business that’s absolutely vital,” Bedell said of his interest in human resources. “You can’t improve processes if you don’t have a handle on the people.”

After several years, Bedell chose to move back into academics, spending 15 years as a professor of Management and M.B.A. program director at California State University, Bakersfield.

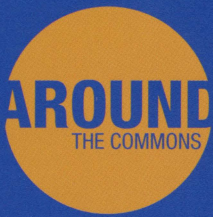
In 2012, Northeastern hired Bedell as associate dean of the College of Business and Management. Bedell was promoted to acting dean the next year, then appointed to dean in 2014.

Now settled back into his home state, Bedell is excited about the future of his college.

“This is a college with a fantastic faculty and many opportunities to grow our relevance for our students and the organizations that hire our students,” Bedell said.

“This is a college with a fantastic faculty and many opportunities to grow our relevance for our students and the organizations that hire our students.”

MICHAEL BEDELL
Dean of the College of Business and Management



Emphasis on 'ABILITY'

By Tasha Neumeister

Biology is not René Talbot's best subject. But one day her biology professor gave a lecture on amino acids and then displayed a bright, big children's toy. At that moment, Talbot said, the light bulb went off.

"He brought the entire class along with him," she said, when her professor engaged the class in a discussion by using what is known as universal design. The approach refers to designing products and spaces so they can be used by the widest range of people possible.

Talbot said her professor may not have known it, but he was recognizing that there is a broad spectrum of human ability and a variety of ways to learn. This is the approach she hopes all faculty and staff will adopt after participating in Northeastern's (Dis)ability Project.

(Dis)ability

\ə-bi-lə-tē\

Led by Northeastern's Student Disability Services office, the (Dis)ability Project is a comprehensive training and resource program that launched in April to better equip faculty and staff who interact with students with all kinds of disabilities. The project includes training workshops, a resource guide and a webpage (neiu.edu/disabilityproject).

Talbot, an Interdisciplinary Studies major, works in the Student Disability Services office. From helping students fill out documents to working on the (Dis)ability Project's resource guide, she is passionate about supporting her fellow students.

Student Disability Services Director Douglas Lawson said Talbot's contributions are vital to cross-university engagement in the project. "People are generally nervous about serving students with disabilities," Lawson said. "This project develops resources so they can support students. It's about putting more tools in people's toolboxes."

Both Lawson and Talbot echo that the project goal is to take the "dis" out of "disability," and educate all Northeastern staff and faculty, which could position Northeastern to be an institution of choice for individuals with disabilities.

That likelihood is one Talbot is banking on. "We could make ourselves more accessible," she said. "We're a state institution in the third-largest city in the country. Think of all the potential."



"We're a state institution in the third-largest city in the country. Think of all the potential."

RENÉ TALBOT
Interdisciplinary Studies major

CHUCK KANE
SCHOLARSHIP
Golf Event Since 1973

AUGUST 17, 2015

Chevy Chase Country Club
1000 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Wheeling, IL

Register Today!
neiu.edu/kane • (773) 442-4236

Meet THE Writers

By Anna Cannova



From left: Alicia Erian with graphic novelists A.K. Summers, Nicole Georges and Phoebe Gloeckner

Alicia Erian is passionate about Northeastern Illinois University's Visiting Writers Series. A published author, Erian loves giving students the opportunity to hear established writers speak.

"We have amazing authors participate in this series," the assistant professor of English said. "We want anyone who loves great literature, anyone who wants to write, to come to the series."

As curator of the series, Erian has brought such writers as Kwame Dawes, Roxanne Gay and Mary Gaitskill to the University to speak about their work and to connect with aspiring student writers. The series, which is free and open to the public, was dreamed up in the summer of 2012 by Julie Iromuanya and Erian, both of whom had recently joined English department faculty. The idea became reality with funding from the Office of Cultural Events and Division of Academic Affairs, and continues with additional help from the University community, alumni and donors.

The Visiting Writers Series collaborates with other departments to increase awareness about the event, Cultural Events Director Christie Miller said.

Faculty members and students donate their time to provide transportation for the writers and take them to dinner after their day at Northeastern.

"Success is the students' interaction with the authors," Erian said. "When we have an author who has a nice conversation with students or has helped them with their careers, then the visit was a success."

Published Professors

When Northeastern's English department is not hosting authors, it's making them—two in the past year, to be exact. Published in June of 2014, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed" is Professor Bradley Greenburg's first book, a historical novel set in the years following the Civil War. "Mr. and Mrs. Doctor," released in May 2015, is Assistant Professor Julie Iromuanya's first full-length novel. The tale follows the struggles of a Nigerian immigrant couple as they establish a new life in Nebraska.



Continue your education

Just because you're finished with school doesn't mean you have to be done learning. Northeastern Illinois University has established the Office of Continuing and Professional Education (CAPE), bringing together members of the community with talented professionals.

With programming that launched in March 2015, CAPE offers non-credit seminars and workshops taught by qualified professionals in subjects such as sign language, computer software training and small business marketing. Discounts are available to alumni and friends of Northeastern.

Visit neiu.edu/cape for details now!

A New Way to Give

Professor Emeritus Bernard J. Brommel has become the first donor to establish a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT) within the NEIU Foundation. This new planned giving option offered by the NEIU Foundation is possible with as little as \$25,000. It enables donors to make gifts today that can provide tax benefits as well as lifetime income streams for themselves and/or their beneficiaries.

"Giving back is so important to me, and it is very meaningful to be able to make this gift while I'm still here to enjoy it," said Brommel, whose CRT assets are valued at \$500,000. "I hope my gift will inspire others to do the same, and to provide support for Northeastern long into the future."

Read about CRTs and other planned giving options at neiu.edu/plannedgiving.

Two new programs

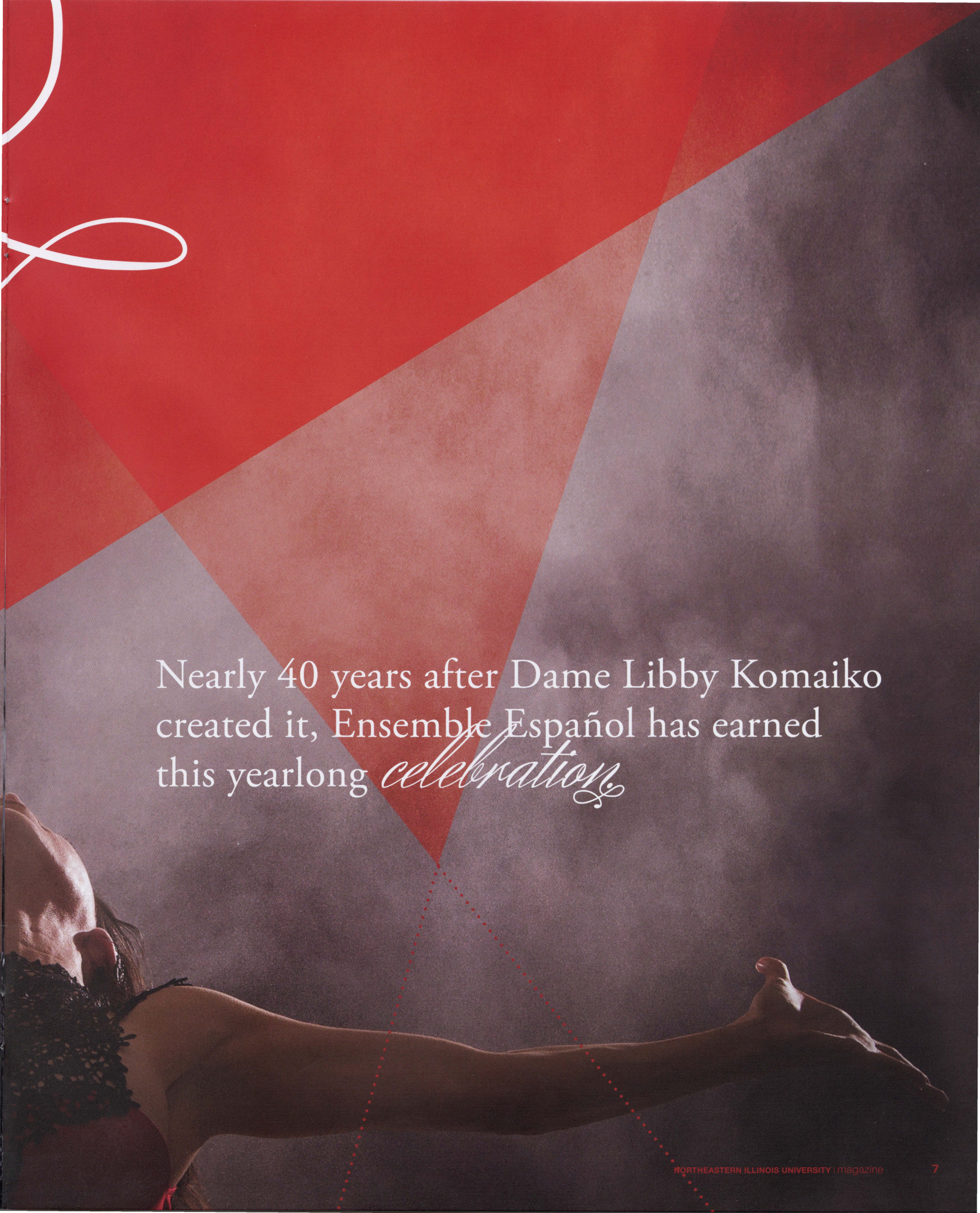
In the past year, the Illinois Board of Higher Education has approved two new Northeastern Illinois University programs: a graduate degree in Social Work and an undergraduate degree in Environmental Science.

The 60-credit-hour Master of Social Work program begins in fall 2016, and can be completed in two full-time or four part-time years. An advanced one-year program will be offered beginning in fall 2017. The Environmental Science program will launch in fall 2015.

Spanish *Passions*

By Mike Hines





Nearly 40 years after Dame Libby Komaiko
created it, Ensemble Español has earned
this yearlong *celebration*.

“When I saw the Ensemble for the first time on the stage, I was blown away.”

JORGE PEREZ, Executive director of Ensemble Español

In the spring of 1984, a young Speech and Performing Arts major anxiously walked into the cramped and cluttered Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theater office to apply for a student aide position. “Hi, my name is George,” he said, introducing himself to Dame Libby Komaiko, the company’s founder and artistic director.

Komaiko, who only one year earlier had become the first American honored with Spain’s Ribbon of the Dame by King Juan Carlos I for the dissemination of the music and dances of Spain throughout the United States, looked down at George’s résumé and then back up at the job applicant. “No it’s not,” she said. “Your name is Jorge.” After a brief interview, she hired the nervous sophomore as her administrative assistant.

With Komaiko’s fateful decision, George, the friendly theater student who just wanted to be like his Chicago buddies, evolved into Jorge, the charming and proud Puerto Rico-born man who would fall in love with Spanish dance, rise to become the company’s top male dancer and eventually take the reins as executive director of Ensemble Español. “This company opened up this whole world of dance and the arts and this cultural richness,” said Jorge Perez, who at 50 years old still dusts off his dance shoes for an occasional appearance with Associate Artistic Director Irma Suárez Ruíz. “When I saw the Ensemble for the first time on the stage, I was blown away. The drama, the music, the theatrics—I realized that yes, this is part of who I am.”

Now more than three decades after he first walked through Ensemble Español’s doors, Perez has plotted an epic year of performances, classes and residencies to celebrate the company’s 40th year in residence at Northeastern Illinois University. The yearlong party will include the company’s first performances in Spain, a trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico, and a show in a 4,000-person amphitheater in the historic city of St. Augustine, Fla., which also invited dignitaries such as the pope and the king of Spain to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the city’s founding. Closer to home, the city of Chicago will give a stretch of Bryn Mawr Avenue adjacent to Northeastern’s main campus an honorary name designation in recognition of Dame Libby Komaiko on June 30, 2015.

Komaiko, a professor emerita of Northeastern who remains the company’s artistic director, was too busy in the early years after the company’s 1976 launch to think about what she was building. “When the Ensemble started with seven Northeastern students, we had just returned from a monthlong study at the Boston Conservatory of Music with legendary Spanish artists Nana Lorca and Jose Greco that was funded by Northeastern and the Union of Puerto Rican Students. I just thought, ‘Well, let’s see what happens.’ I didn’t even think about its future,” said Komaiko, who made her first appearance at Northeastern in a sold-out 1974 performance that also featured her mother, concert pianist Dorothy Komaiko. “We just kept going. It’s pretty amazing that 40 years are here already.”

Dedicated to the presentation, preservation and promotion of the classical, folkloric, flamenco and contemporary dance and music traditions of Spain, Ensemble Español has established itself as an international player in the dance community as well as a valuable asset to the University through its Department of Music and Dance classes, community outreach efforts, social activism and promotion of academic achievement at all ages. The Ensemble now boasts 17 professional dancers (four full-time, two part-time on salary), an 18-member youth company,

“Boda de Luis Alonso, Boleras,” 2012
Photo by Dean Paul



three NEIU Foundation scholarships endowed by Professor Emeritus Bernard Brommel and a program endowment, also through the Foundation.

Other universities have bigger endowments and grander facilities, but none has replicated what the Ensemble has done at Northeastern. “We are all grateful for the support of Northeastern’s Board of Trustees, presidents, Foundation, administrative and educational leaders, faculty, staff, students and stakeholders these past 40 years,” Komaiko said. “The future is bright thanks to the ongoing passionate leadership of Northeastern and our staff, dancers, teachers, guest artists, executive and advisory boards, committees, donors, partners and sponsors and of course the families, students and friends in our communities whom we look forward to serving for the next 40 years and beyond.”

While Perez’s personal and professional transformation was extraordinary, it was not unusual, the company’s members and fans say. Once you see Ensemble Español, once you witness the drama, beauty and precision of its performances, you are hooked. That’s what happened to Chicago Sun-Times theater and dance critic Hedy Weiss, who first saw Ensemble Español about 10 years ago and frequently praises the company in the newspaper. “The productions were so incredibly professional. From the dancing to the costumes, they were spectacular,” she said of her initial impressions of the company. “People who see them become instant fans.”

Here is how Weiss began a review of Ensemble Español’s June 2010 performance at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in the Chicago suburb of Skokie: “The truth is, even if you were a dance aficionado living in Spain today, you would be hard-pressed to find the breadth and range and sheer brilliance of dance—from folkloric to flamenco to balletic riffs on both those forms—that was on



Dame
Libby Komaiko
through the years



“Once dancers enter the family of Ensemble Español, they don’t ever leave, even if they’re not dancing anymore.”

DAME LIBBY KOMAIKO
Founder and artistic director of Ensemble Español

“As a Spaniard, I am proud of knowing that in Chicago there is an accomplished Spanish dance and culture center that is underwritten by a university.”

JUAN MATA, Founding member of the National Ballet of Spain

display. ... This world-class company and its roster of guest artists never ceases to bedazzle its audiences with the variety, precision, beauty and heat of its performances.”

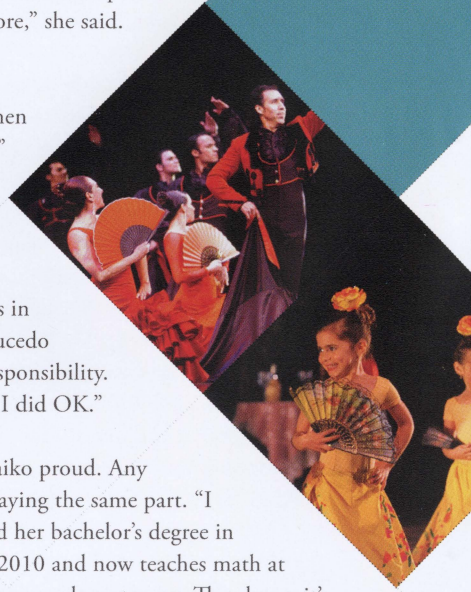
Komaiko attributes the company’s success to the unique qualities of Spanish dance that transcend country and culture—“The character and the passion is so great; there are stories there,” she said—but also to the dedication of the Ensemble’s dancers and the family atmosphere that has sustained through four decades of rehearsals, injuries, setbacks and successes. Her greatest hope for the Ensemble is that it continues to build that family with more full-time professional

dancers, giving the company a greater capacity to teach and tour in the United States and abroad. “Once dancers enter the family of Ensemble Español, they don’t ever leave, even if they’re not dancing anymore,” she said. “I’m very proud of everyone.”

One of Komaiko’s prouder moments came in 2004, when one of her featured dancers had to back out of “Bolero” just a couple of weeks before the performances. Komaiko turned to the understudy, Monica Saucedo, who had just been promoted from the youth company. “This is a big deal,” Komaiko told Saucedo, who at 16 was one of the youngest professional dancers in the company’s history. “I’m trusting you with this.” Saucedo didn’t panic. “I felt like, ‘Oh my gosh, this is a huge responsibility. I’m not going to let her down,’” she said. “And I think I did OK.”

More than 10 years later, Saucedo still is making Komaiko proud. Any time the Ensemble performs “Bolero,” she insists on playing the same part. “I was kind of thrown in there,” said Saucedo, who earned her bachelor’s degree in Secondary Education and Math from Northeastern in 2010 and now teaches math at the Chicago High School for the Performing Arts. “Everyone does step up. They know it’s a big deal, they know it’s serious. A lot of us have been in that position. Have you done your homework? Have you paid attention? Are you really ready to do this?”

Like Komaiko, Suárez Ruíz and Perez before her, Saucedo wants to remain a part of the Ensemble for years to come, perhaps helping to coach the youth company, which she joined at age 11. “That set the tone for my whole life,” Suarez said, choking up with emotion. “Every day I’m really grateful and feel really lucky to even be a part of Ensemble Español.”



First Company Dancers, 1979; Photo by Don Bulucos

El año grande

Ensemble Español will launch the celebrations for its 40th year with its American Spanish Music & Dance Festival from June 10-28.

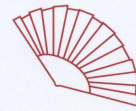
The company will dance through Illinois, New York, D.C., Florida and of course Spain—among many other locations—before the party is over. Here is a sampling of the year’s mainland highlights.

The schedule is subject to change. Visit ensemblespanol.org for the most up-to-date performance schedule.



Los números

If you think 40 years is an impressive number for Ensemble Español, you're right—and that's only the beginning! Here are more impressive numbers from four decades of Northeastern Illinois University's favorite Spanish dance company.



2,000 Spanish costumes, props and accessories.

20,000

Students reached nationwide annually through Ensemble Español's arts education programming.



95 Professional dancers trained by Ensemble Español.

7,800

Academic Spanish dance class students taught at Northeastern.



1 Letter received from the White House.

135

Original full-length choreographies performed.



4,000 Performances locally, nationally and internationally.



Ron de Jesus (right) and dancer Julia Hinojosa, 2014; Photo by Dean Paul

Even some of the best dancers and choreographers in Spain are enamored with the company and its relationship with Northeastern. Juan Mata, a founding member of the National Ballet of Spain, equates the Ensemble's success with the University's success. "As a Spaniard, I am proud of knowing that in Chicago there is an accomplished Spanish dance and culture center that is underwritten by a university," he said. "That is an educational and cultural achievement that we have yet to achieve in Spain."

Paloma Gómez, a former member of the National Ballet of Spain who has collaborated with the company on several productions since 2007, said the Ensemble is viewed with "respect and admiration, like an unusual phenomenon for the strictness, intensity and quality of their work." Gómez has choreographed five Ensemble works—spanning the flamenco, folkloric, classical and contemporary dance styles—during the past eight years. "The Ensemble has an amazing future as one of the best Spanish dance companies in the world," she said.

With an ambitious schedule of high-profile performances and youth outreach planned for its 40th year, the Ensemble is poised to make that leap. "Critics call Ensemble Español a hidden treasure," Perez said. "It is our mission to ring the bells and tell people we are here. We don't want to be hidden. We are a world-class company and center for Spanish dance, music and education."

Northeastern Illinois University
Every day, we achieve

October 21-23, 2015

Chicago
Youth Dance Festival
at Northeastern

February 5-March 5, 2016

Chicago
Flamenco Festival

April 15-16, 2016

St. Louis, Missouri
Dance St. Louis Series

June 8-26, 2016

Chicago
40th Annual American Spanish
Dance & Music Festival

October 2-3, 2015

Chicago
Northeastern Alumni Reunion

November 26, 2015

Chicago
Thanksgiving Parade
on State Street

April 8-9, 2016

River Forest, Illinois
Dominican University Residency

April 29-30, 2016

Chicago
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Family Concert Series



Green party

By Mike Dizon



Northeastern is turning
every day into Earth Day



Being green, a famous frog tells us, is not easy. Eight years ago, Northeastern Illinois University students lobbied to get funding for sustainability efforts.

More recently, the faculty worked hard to win support for a new Environmental Sciences degree that will start this fall. And the Facilities Management staff has been tireless in its endeavor to retrofit buildings for energy efficiency. Whether it's in small or large ways, elevating the green consciousness at Northeastern can be a challenge but continues to be a priority.

Northeastern deepened its commitment to environmental stewardship when it launched the Green Fee Committee in the fall of 2007 to protect the natural environment in and around all University locations through conservation and sustainable practices. In fact, a year later, sustainability was established as a key element of the University's identity in Northeastern's Strategic Plan; it was again formalized this year when the University refreshed its Strategic Plan.

"All of these efforts to promote a green University have shown us that this is both an individual and community activity," Vice President for Finance and Administration Michael Pierick said. "Improving energy efficiency, conserving resources and enhancing environmental quality are just some of the ways we promote healthy living and learning environments at Northeastern."

The University's Green Fee is a student-driven project that is funded by the \$3 fee assessed to students each semester. A committee of students, faculty and staff manage a budget of approximately \$60,000 each year that is to be used toward green projects that promote renewable energy, pollution-free transportation, green buildings, recycling and other sustainability efforts.

The fee is a prime example of the power students can have in the University community. In 2007, the student environmental club Green Cycle Group first proposed this student fee, which the Student Government Association quickly endorsed and put to a referendum for the entire student body. After the referendum passed and the Board of Trustees approved the plan, the University began collecting the \$3 per semester fee starting that fall.

During its monthly meeting last April, the committee—in close collaboration with Facilities Management staff—discussed new initiatives such as the installation of wind turbines on the top level of the main campus parking facility that would power a good portion of the structure with renewable energy.

"Everyone, no matter in what major they have or field they work in can bring about policy change or habitual environmentally friendly practices into their workplace by just speaking up about them and being a good role model," said Anett Zlotorzycycki, who is the chair of the Green Fee Committee as well as a member of the Green Conservation Group, a Northeastern student organization. "Attending Northeastern becomes a better experience when I know and see the environmental initiatives put into place."

Evidence of the Green Fee Committee's work is all over Northeastern, showing a heightened green sensibility in the University community. Recycling bins serve as the most visible example, diverting solid waste from landfills. New bike racks offer commuters a reason to keep their cars at home. Solar panels harness energy from the sun to help power buildings.

Northeastern's new El Centro building opened in the fall of 2014 to a city that was in awe of its beauty, architecture and design. Its guts, unbeknownst to some, show it to have strong green credentials, and the building is in the process of receiving Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

Buildings have a major effect on the environment; the resources required to create and maintain them are significant and scarce. But because of strategic choices in the design, construction and operation of the building, El Centro is fast becoming known as one of the University's most environmentally sound buildings.

"The idea of a green campus is not foreign at Northeastern, but it's not ubiquitous either," said Melinda Storie, assistant professor of Geography and Environmental Studies and faculty adviser to the Green Fee Committee. "We can always do more to promote a more just and sustainable society, and we must continue to explore new ways to manage the University's environmental footprint."

One of those ways is to encourage behaviors that mitigate the contributors to global

warming. Through another student fee, students receive a U-Pass, which encourages public transit and allows unlimited bus and subway rides on the CTA. Plans for a Divvy bike-sharing station on the main campus would help solidify Northeastern as a cycle-friendly university. Retrofitting existing buildings

"There is a lively movement right now because many students today see this as the call of their generation."

ERICK HOWENSTINE, *Chair of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies*


to be more energy efficient—by installing tools such as low-flow water faucets and motion sensors that control lighting—is another green move that will save the University greenbacks in the long run.

The faculty, as well, have been involved. Those who study the environment feel a responsibility to apply what they know and influence the way the University teaches and manages sustainability.

Erick Howenstine is the chair of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, which is focused on producing the next generation of professionals who have the knowledge, skills and values to lead sustainability efforts. "Northeastern is a microcosm of the larger community, and

the way in which it conducts itself can have a positive impact in advancing sustainable communities and policies beyond campus," he said.

Northeastern has a strong track record in research and teaching about how to care for the planet and its resources. The Environmental Studies major is one of the longest-running programs in the country, producing most



"Everyone, no matter in what major they have or field they work in can bring about policy change or habitual environmentally friendly practices into their workplace by just speaking up about them and being a good role model."

ANETT ZLOTORZYCKI, *Chair of the Green Fee Committee and member of the Green Conservation Group*

of the area's top leaders in the field. And this fall, the University will introduce an Environmental Science undergraduate degree program, which is designed to help students understand the complex relationship between the environment and its components.

The program will provide students with an interdisciplinary scientific framework—drawing on courses in the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science and Physics—for understanding the environment and making rational and informed decisions through hands-on lab, field and analytical work.

“There is a lively movement right now because many students today see this as the call of their generation,” Howenstine said. “We have a great student body that comes highly motivated to protect the environment.”

Eco checklist



It's easy to take for granted all of the things Northeastern Illinois University does to promote a green community.

The student-driven Green Fee Committee has played a vital role in shaping how the University community can take part in sustainability. Here are just some of the projects that have been funded and completed by the committee.

Solar water heating system

Solar panels were installed in 2013 atop the Physical Education Building to heat its swimming pool, allowing Northeastern to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels and reduce its natural gas bills.

Electric vehicle charging stations

Helping EI Centro in its bid to obtain LEED certification, three electric vehicle charging stations at that location promote the adoption of pollution-free electric cars.

Water bottle filling stations

New water fountains with bottle filling stations that dispense filtered water have been installed around the University since 2013 to reduce plastic bottle waste as well as energy and resource consumption.

Solar PV panels

Introduced by President Sharon Hahs on Earth Day 2012, these photovoltaic panels on Building B convert the sun's energy into electricity and reduce Northeastern's reliance on polluting energy sources. A TV monitor shows visitors its power savings.

Bike racks

By adding more bike racks on the main campus, the University increases the potential for bicycle commuting to ease driving and traffic congestion.

Planting of trees and greenery

Native trees and plants benefit local wildlife as well as cut down on air pollution, recharge ground water and reduce runoff that contributes to water pollution and flooding. These aesthetic improvements also contribute to biodiversity.

Energy-saving LED lights and motion sensors

Efficient bulbs and sensors that switch off lighting when not in use save electricity and the need for maintenance with longer-lasting bulbs.

Electric maintenance vehicle

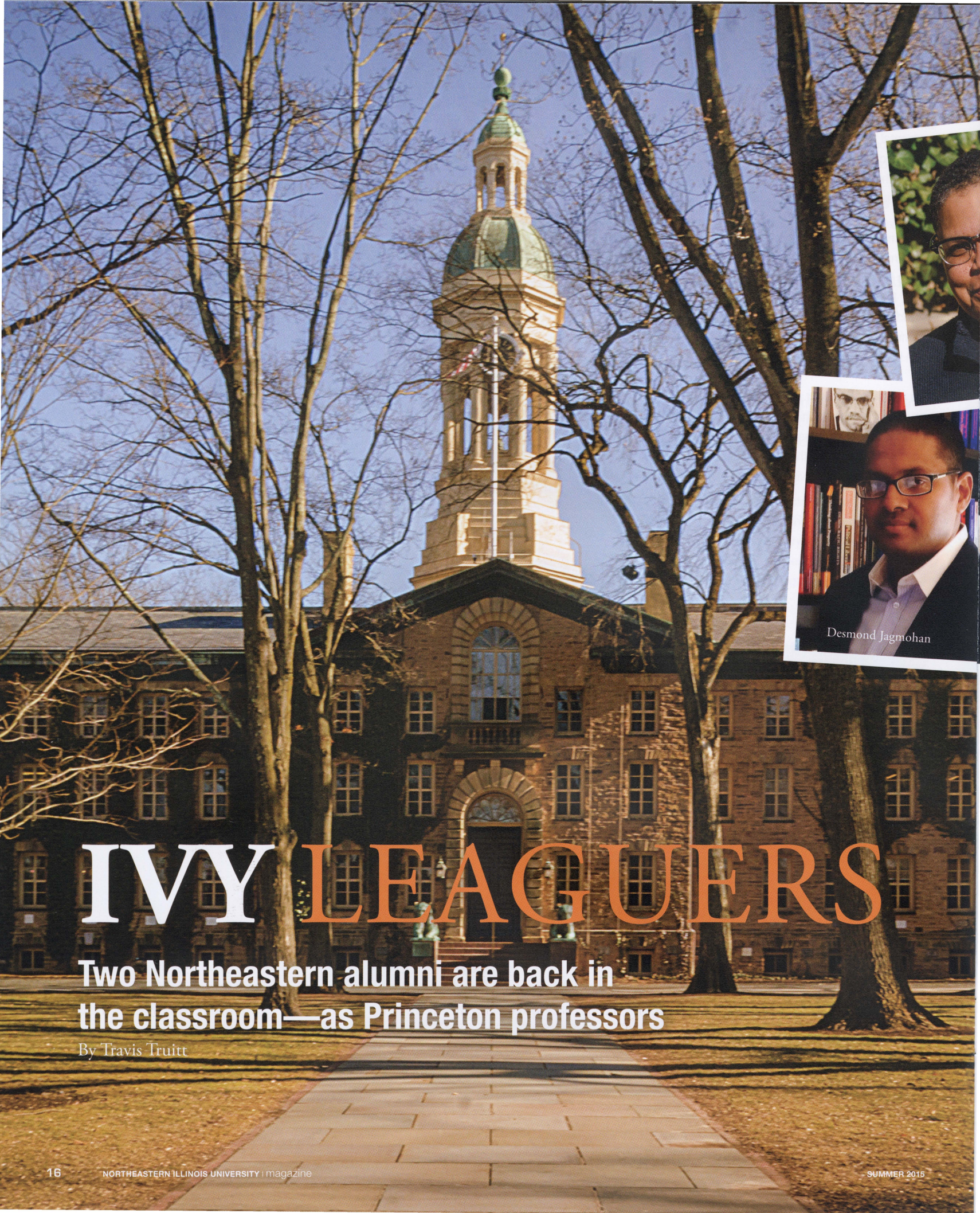
Replacing a pickup truck, this battery-powered vehicle, which is primarily used by Facilities Management, cuts down on greenhouse emissions and noise pollution.

Recycling bins

These receptacles, located throughout the University, are some of the most visible displays of sustainability. They encourage the community to think about waste disposal and how it contributes to growing landfills.

Bird-safe windows

Bird-shaped stickers adorn select windows to prevent bird mortality.



Desmond Jagmohan

IVY LEAGUERS

Two Northeastern alumni are back in the classroom—as Princeton professors

By Travis Truitt



Some may view Princeton University as out of reach for all but the elite academics. If that's the case, then you can count two Northeastern Illinois University graduates among them.

Keeanga-Yamahatta Taylor and Desmond Jagmohan are recent additions to the faculty at Princeton, the top university in U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges rankings.

Neither Taylor nor Jagmohan envisioned an Ivy League future before they attended Northeastern, but looking back, their journeys make perfect sense.

"You get the education out of Northeastern that you put into it," said Jagmohan (B.A. '05 History and Philosophy), a political theorist at Princeton, essentially a post-doctoral fellow who will become an assistant professor of Politics in 2016. "If you're the sort of

reputation for asking and engaging with serious intellectual questions, while seeking ideas that are "quite critical in really organizing, building and fighting for the kind of world we want to live in."

Jagmohan also took a non-traditional path to Northeastern. Born in Guyana, he moved to Chicago with his family at the age of 16. Jagmohan became captain of his high school football team and later joined the U.S. Army Reserves, where he saw multiple stints of active duty, before entering Northeastern.

Northeastern "provided an environment that was actually welcoming and conducive to non-traditional students," he said, and the University was where he "fell in love" with political philosophy.

After graduating summa cum laude in 2005, Jagmohan earned his Master of Arts at Cornell University in 2011 and his Ph.D. from Cornell earlier this year.

"If you're the sort of person that's going to open the library and close it, there are professors on campus that are hungry for you."

DESMOND JAGMOHAN, B.A. '05 History and Philosophy

person that's going to open the library and close it, there are professors on campus that are hungry for you. They'll seek you out, and you should seek them out."

Taylor (B.A. '07 Board of Governors) is an assistant professor in Princeton's Center for African American Studies. Born in Texas, she moved to Chicago from New York City in 1998. She was working as a tenant advocate just a few blocks away from Northeastern's main campus when she chose to return to school at the age of 32.

"I had a fantastic experience at Northeastern. I'd been out of school for a really long time ... almost 10 years," Taylor said. "My experience at Northeastern in the classroom and with the faculty really reinvigorated my excitement about academia. I just remember walking across the campus and feeling very happy that I was there and that I was back in school again."

Taylor, president of the Socialist Club during her time at Northeastern, believes she was offered a job at Princeton partially because of her

Jagmohan, who studies African American political thought and the politics of the disenfranchised, has two primary goals at Princeton: Be a productive researcher and a good teacher.

Meanwhile, Taylor, who earned a Master of Arts and a Ph.D. at Northwestern in African American Studies and spent a year in a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has been busy writing.

She has one book set for publication later this year, and she is working on another manuscript. This fall she'll begin teaching a class on race and poverty, and use a book first introduced to her by one of her favorite Northeastern professors.

"I'm very proud to have been at Northeastern," Taylor said. "It's a great school."

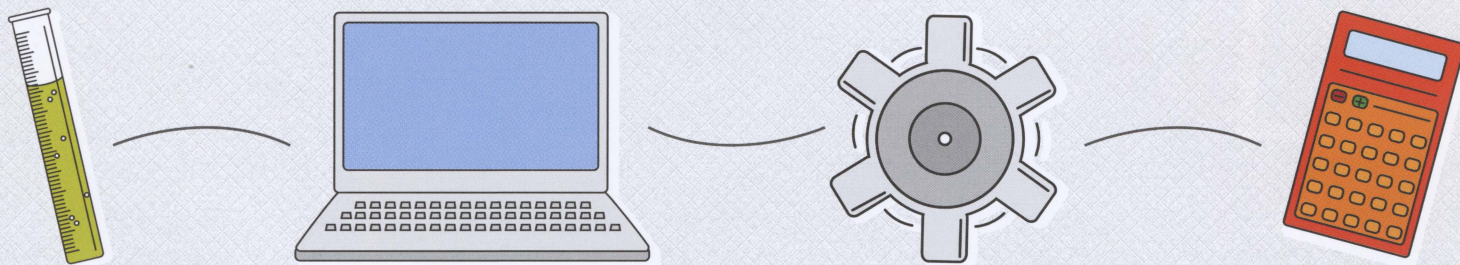
Photos of Princeton and Taylor by Yicheng Sun;

Photo of Jagmohan by Amy Rowland

The engagement theory

By Mike Hines

Center for science, math students focuses on life and careers after graduation



2011 A.D.: Northeastern Illinois University freshman subject Mariah Green discovers the Student Center for Science Engagement (SCSE). Months later, subject joins her new SCSE friends and mentors in San Jose, Calif., for the national conference of the Society for Advancement of Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS). "I was overwhelmed," subject later notes, "but in a good way."

2012 A.D.: Green attends the SACNAS conference in Seattle to deliver her first poster presentation. Judges express their support. Subject gains confidence.

2014 A.D.: Green serves an internship with the National Soil Erosion Research Lab in West Lafayette, Ind., then travels to Los Angeles and tours the La Brea Tar Pits. Subject sets her sights on a career in paleontology.

2015 A.D.: Green accepts a spot in the Summer Undergraduate Research in Geoscience and Engineering Program at Stanford University, where she will study micropaleontology. SCSE staff members are observed celebrating subject's successes and potential.

While this case study is ongoing, it certainly looks promising—

and there are many more where it came from. In the six years since its launch, Northeastern's Student Center for Science Engagement is proving to be a valuable and versatile resource for hundreds of students in the science, technology, engineering and math disciplines. The goal is not only to graduate those students, but also to provide them with a holistic preparation for their post-graduation lives, whether that's in industry, government agency or academia.



Mariah Green

Like coaches who push their athletes to accomplish physical feats they never thought possible, the three full-time SCSE staff members—in collaboration with Northeastern science and math faculty members—challenge their students to be better in every aspect of their professional lives. “The SCSE sets a high standard, and we ask that the students reach it,” SCSE Coordinator Sylvia Atsalis said. “This is the high standard that graduate school or the work world is going to set, and we see Northeastern students as professionals in training for that world. We want them to succeed at the highest level.”

The SCSE was founded in 2009 with an award from the Department of Education’s College Cost Reduction and Access Act for Hispanic Serving Institutions grants. In addition to a naturally lit, inviting study lounge equipped with white boards for students who want to work in groups, the SCSE offers five key components of success to its students: one-on-one advising, career and study tip workshops, tutoring, research opportunities, and access to conferences. The services are all free and available to students on a completely voluntary basis.

“With the SCSE, it’s about taking advantage of the opportunities or resources,” said Green, a junior studying Earth Science who is the first member of her family to attend college. “You don’t have to be the smartest person in the universe. At the end of the day, it’s about how passionate you are and taking advantage of the resources, different mentors, anybody who is there to support you.”

For Green, that support started with an invitation to SACNAS in her freshman year and continued through tutoring, internships, research and hands-on help polishing her résumé from SCSE Specialist Paloma Vargas. “When I first came to the SCSE with a résumé, I wasn’t sure what I was doing,” Green said. “After Paloma looked over my resume, we got it to the point that it was well-crafted, professional. It makes me proud. It looks impressive.”

While Green has used all of SCSE’s services, other students have found success by seeking help only in specific areas. In 2012, Kevin Gallagher joined the trip to SACNAS in Seattle, where he won an Outstanding Student Poster Award for his work on bacterial structure and function.

“What gives me the passion is knowing that I can succeed.”

MARIAH GREEN
Earth Science junior



Leyva and Laura West. “We love our students,” said Atsalis, who has a Ph.D. in Biological Anthropology and studies primate ecology. “We are invested deeply in their success, and we get as excited as they do when they share their good news.”

Adjacent to the SCSE office is the spacious lounge for students to study and seek tutoring. Christopher Castro, a Math major who graduated in May, called the lounge his favorite place on campus, not just because of the space but also the community it created. “It’s comfortable,” Castro said. “I could go in there pretty much any time and expect to see someone else who was taking classes that I was interested in and we could help each other out.”

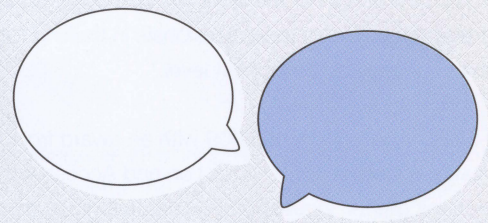
The Biology major won more awards at future conferences and even joined Biology Associate Professor Emina Stojkovic at the 2014 International Congress of Photobiology in Cordoba, Argentina, to deliver a podium presentation. Gallagher is on track to graduate in the summer of 2015 and will enter the Interdisciplinary Biological Sciences program at Northwestern University in the fall. “The way I see it, SCSE was my launching pad,” Gallagher said. “They pushed me out the door. I don’t think I would have had the motivation or even thought to apply to a conference until they encouraged me and showed me how.”

Successes such as Gallagher’s do not go unnoticed—nor uncelebrated—by the four-person SCSE staff, which also includes Marilyn Saavedra-

Castro’s career trajectory was altered in the summer of 2014, when the SCSE helped him land a summer research opportunity at the University of Colorado studying computational biology. “I went in there not really knowing what I was doing. There was a lot to learn,” he said. He quickly learned what to do—and learned to love biology. Castro will enter the Bioinformatics graduate program at the University of Michigan in the fall.

Green also plans to pursue a Ph.D., almost certainly in paleontology. “It amazes me how far I’ve come in life, especially in scientific fields,” Green said. “What gives me the passion is knowing that I can succeed. I want to show my nieces and nephews that I’m studying science. They may love it just like I do. I’m motivated by motivating other people to go into science.”

Sample the inspiration



Who says scientists don’t have a way with words?

Rather than bombard its students with pages of reading about how to prepare for their careers, the Student Center for Science Engagement often boils down its messages into catchy slogans. Here is a sampling:

- Get LinkedIn or get left out! Your résumé lists your skills and experiences, but a LinkedIn profile creates a memorable identity.
- It’s branding, not boasting! Don’t be afraid to promote your skills, experiences and dreams—employers expect it.
- You are a professional in training! You’re not just a student, but someone who is learning to go out in the world as a skilled and competent professional.
- When in school ... think internship! An internship gives you professional experience that is expected by any future employer or graduate school.



EDMUNDO PUJOL
(B.A. '91 Education)

ADRIANNA GUENDICA-PUJOL
(B.S. '91 Business and Management)

MILTON GUENDICA
(B.S. '94 Accounting)

LUIS ANTONIO PAZ
Current student studying
Physics and Math

MARTHA GUENDICA-LOPEZ
(B.S. '96 Business and Management)

MARCO TULIO PAZ
(B.S. '99 Board of Governors)

PATRICIA GUENDICA-PAZ
(B.A. '84 Psychology)

Northeastern Legacy **THE GUENDICA FAMILY**

Patricia Guendica was the first member of her family to graduate from Northeastern Illinois University, but she was far from the last. All three of her siblings also graduated from Northeastern, plus two of their spouses and two of their children. In all, eight members of the family are proud alums who have gone on to be teachers, business owners and office professionals. "We have instilled the importance of education in our children," Patricia said. "We constantly remind them, and we use our experience as a model of effort, perseverance and success." Visit neu.edu/families to read more about the Guendicas and other Northeastern legacy families.

Not Pictured: Cristina Paz
(B.S. '13 Biology)



Learn in the city. Lead in the world.

Office of the President
5500 N. St. Louis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60625

www.neiu.edu

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CHICAGO, IL
PERMIT NO. 2929

Do we have your email address?

Make sure we do!

Visit your.neiu.edu to:

- Update your profile. Manage your alumni information online.
- Learn about alumni events. Receive information about upcoming alumni and University events via email or online.
- Learn about what Northeastern graduates are accomplishing. And don't forget to send in your own class note!
- Network with other Golden Eagles. Connect through the online alumni directory.



**Give back to Northeastern.
Find out how your gift can make a difference.**