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2010 TUFTS DISTINCTION AWARDS

They make us proud to work here



Tufts University President Lawrence S. Bacow (far right), senior administrators, Selection Committee members and Distinction Awards recipients, at the third annual ceremony, June 9, 2010.

ON A COOL MORNING IN JUNE, HUNDREDS of staff and faculty gathered in the Cohen auditorium on the Medford/Somerville campus to celebrate the recipients of the coveted Tufts Distinction Awards. President **Lawrence S. Bacow** hosted the event and presented the Awards to 14 individuals and two teams.

Now in their third year, the awards recognize the accomplishments of individuals and teams among staff and faculty whose work represents the very best of Tufts. They are given in the following categories: **Extra Mile**, for exceptional customer service; **Bridge Builder**, for bringing out the best in others; **Change Agent**, for creating new opportunities for innovation; **Unsung Hero**, for accomplishing the extraordinary every day.

President Bacow said, “While it is wonderful to see celebrations of students and faculty at the end of the school year, nothing would happen at Tufts but for the good work of so many people who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Their work makes the university run. So it is appropriate at this time of year, to pause and recognize the best among us for

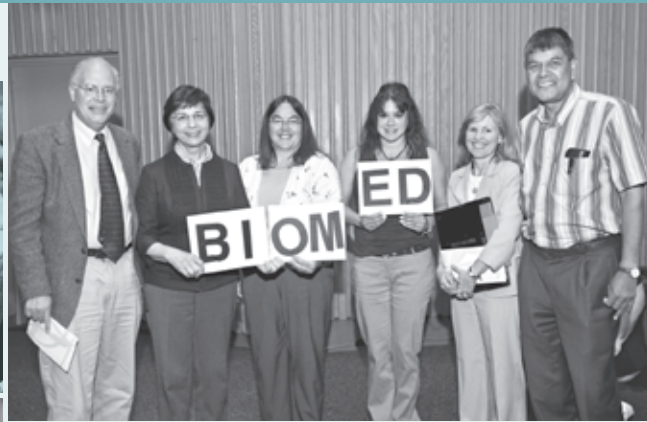
their amazing work that helps Tufts be the kind of place that makes us so proud to work here.”

Two members of the 14-member Selection Committee offered their reflections before the awards presentations. **Lois Colburn**, director of administrative services, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, and herself one of the first recipients of a Distinction Award, said the committee read over 400 pages of notes on the nominations, “and it was very difficult for us to narrow the list down to select the few who will be awarded today. Just to have been nominated should give the rest of the nominees a tremendous sense of pride.” **Christine Robertson**, administrative assistant to **Joseph Castellana**, executive associate dean, School of Dental Medicine, said, “I am impressed with each of you—both nominees and the nominators who took the time to recognize those who love what they do and do it so very well. Congratulations to this year’s winners: enjoy the recognition of a job exceptionally done.”

Continued on next page

Distinction Awards 2010

Continued from page 1



Tufts
Distinction
AWARDS

Members of the Tufts senior leadership team aided President Bacow in presenting the awards. Emcees were Chief of Staff **Michael Baenen** and Human Resources Vice President **Kathe Cronin**, who served as non-voting co-convenors of the Selection Committee.

Vice President Cronin pointed out that over 175 faculty members, staff and students had nominated some 110 individuals and teams. “Winners were chosen by a wonderful group of faculty and staff from across the university who comprised the Selection Committee,” she said. “They had a very hard time because we received so many nominees deserving recognition. We were happily overwhelmed by the number and the quality of the nominations received.”

The 14 individuals and two teams who received this year’s Tufts Distinction Awards are:

THE BRIDGE BUILDER AWARD, for bringing out the best in others

Vicky Cirrone, staff, Arts and Sciences
David F. Coleman, faculty, Arts and Sciences
Cora C. Ho, staff, School of Medicine

THE EXTRA MILE AWARD, for exceptional customer service

Lauren M. Budd, staff, School of Medicine
Debra Kendrick Knox, staff, Arts and Sciences
Divya Narayanan Mathieu, staff, Arts and Sciences
Alonso Nichols, staff, University Relations

THE CHANGE AGENT AWARD, for creating new opportunities for innovation

David Brittan, staff, University Relations
Eliot Wilczek, staff, Central Administration

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CENTER MACHINE SHOP TEAM, ARTS AND SCIENCES

Denis R. Dupuis, staff
Scott J. MacCorkle, staff

Laurence P. McMaster, staff

THE UNSUNG HERO AWARD, for accomplishing the extraordinary every day

Shelley M. Adams, staff, Fletcher
Annette Lazzara, staff, Arts and Sciences
Jean McShea, staff, HNRCA

Celeste M. Mahoney, staff, University Advancement
Florence Niklewski, staff, Cummings

CUMMINGS SCHOOL FARM TEAM

Scott Brundage, staff
James Phillips, staff

Garth Miller, staff
George Saperstein, faculty

Career paths brought them back

IN MAY, THE CLASS OF 2010 CELEBRATED its graduation. At that time, most seniors said farewell to the university—most but not all. If our graduating seniors are like their Tufts forebears, some will come back not just for alumni events or to study for graduate or professional degrees. Some will return as Tufts employees.

In fact, about 200 staff and 100 faculty call Tufts their alma mater. Working in various capacities on all campuses, they carry a Tufts undergraduate degree or a degree from one of the graduate or professional schools.

Periscope talked with alumni on our three campuses to learn what brought them back to Tufts. They may have returned for practical reasons more than sentimental ones, but that's not to say alumni employees don't have special feelings about working for their alma mater. And after all, they agree that Tufts is a good employer and a good place to build a career.

Returning to Tufts

Minhthe Nguyen (Tufts '05) is a budget and operations administrator in the Office of Information Technology at the School of Medicine, Boston. She grew up in Medford and worked all four undergraduate years in the Office of the Vice Provost in Medford. "My sister graduated from Tufts, and I had always wanted to go here," she said. "I enjoyed my undergraduate years, and after graduation I wanted to stay, in part because it was easier to find a job in an environment that I knew. I knew I also wanted to go to graduate school but wanted a year off." Minhthe has since earned an MBA from Suffolk University.

While an undergraduate, **Lois Colburn** (Tufts '66), director, Administration Services, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, led the cheerleading squad. After graduation she taught physical education for eight years and then left the workforce to raise her family. "I had a great four undergraduate years, both educationally and socially. Because of that I've always had strong attachment to Tufts. But I came back not because it was Tufts but because I was asked to assist with the

gymnastics officials' program in the Conference Bureau." That led to coordinating other programs as a conference coordinator. Eventually, her administrative skills led her to the veterinary school.

Following his graduation from Tufts in 2004, **David Frew**, Assistant Director, Tufts Fund, served as a fundraiser for his prep school alma mater. After a conversation with a member of the Tufts University Advancement team, David considered returning to his "other alma mater" in a similar role. In 2007, he applied for a position as a fundraiser in Advancement and was hired. He says having roots here has given him a boost with alumni. "The great advantage is that there is an instant connection with alumni. Regardless of their background, we both spent four years at Tufts. We're probably the only people who like brown and blue and get a smile on our face by saying 'Go Jumbos.'"

Ties that bind

All the alums said that they stay at Tufts for a variety of reasons: they like their job and the people they work with, Tufts treats them well, and the benefits are good. But for alums there can be something more. Lois enjoys the close-knit community and the sense of camaraderie. "I still see people I knew as an undergraduate, and those connections are special," she said. David explained, "I have a greater appreciation for the work that goes on at the school. I enjoyed it as a student and was proud then. But now I appreciate it so much more. I'm surrounded by incredibly intelligent people who are taking the university places it has never been before, and I'm proud to be a part of it."

"The great advantage is that there is an instant connection with alumni."

—DAVID FREW '04



Minhthe Nguyen



Lois Colburn



David Frew

JULY IS PERFORMANCE PLANNING TIME

Performance Planning is a time for employees and managers to get together to draft individual performance goals that are aligned with department goals, as well as the mission of the school or division and the university. *Periscope* recently talked with **Kate Messier**, HR/ODT senior learning and development specialist in Human Resources, about Performance Planning.

What is a Performance Plan and why would you want one?

The Performance Plan is the blueprint for a productive year and a tool to foster productivity and clear communication. Mutually agreed upon goals using the **SMART** criteria (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-based) ensure that both employee and manager are clear about the expectations and priorities to support the department.

What kinds of goals should be in the Performance Plan?

There are usually three to six goals, and they may be any of the following:

- **Expectations and/or standards** relating to important ongoing responsibilities, projects and activities.
- **New assignments** related to unit goals for the year.
- **Tasks** related to responsibilities that focus on one or more of the Tufts Organizational Competencies (or Tufts Leadership Competencies for managers).
- **Improvement of a skill or behavior** identified in the Job Description or the previous Performance Review.
- **Development of a new skill** related to new or changing assignments.

Actually, those last two (bullets) are important. We strongly encourage employees to identify a skill to

improve or develop. Be sure to refer back to your Performance Review to consider areas of improvement and development.

Any advice on how to develop skills or competencies?

Check out the Leadership/Organizational Development Guides to help identify ways to develop Organizational and Leadership competencies as well as ways to utilize the competencies (skills) to achieve individual goals. [See box for more information].

How do employees benefit from participating in the Performance Planning process?

- First, through the process, employees gain insight into how their work and contributions fit into department goals, and in turn the school/division goals and university mission.
- Second, employees can identify specific ways to improve/develop skills that relate to the job, support the work of the department—and incidentally may align with their career aspirations.
- The collaborative process ensures that employees talk with their manager about their goals and discuss the support they'll need to accomplish them.
- Performance Plan goals provide clear expectations and concrete measures of performance.

How do managers benefit from Performance Planning?

- It is important to set and communicate priorities for the year. Annual Performance Planning encourages managers to develop department goals and discuss how staff members can support them.
- Second, Performance Plans are important tools to help managers develop staff members. Via their planning discussions, managers can consider the career aspirations of staff and look for opportunities and goals to develop the individual while supporting the department.
- Measurable goals provide concrete measures of performance. A clear Performance Plan is the first step toward a successful year a positive Performance Review.

Any final thoughts?

Remember, the Performance Plan is just that—a plan that may be revised to reflect changes in priorities. Be sure to review the Performance Plan during the year and update it to reflect changes in goals. The mid-year Checkpoint Review is a formal meeting to discuss progress toward achieving goals and receive feedback on performance.

Performance Plan forms and instructions can be found in the @Work Guidebook and on the HR website <http://www.tufts.edu/hr/pdp.html>

COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

Do you need specific ideas on how to develop a Tufts Organizational or Leadership Competency? Human Resources/ODT has two resource guides available to assist your development efforts. Both guides are available on the HR/ODT website and may be accessed by the following links:

> **DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR TUFTS LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES**
http://www.tufts.edu/hr/webcm/docs/odt/Leadership_Guide.pdf

> **DEVELOPMENT GUIDE FOR TUFTS ORGANIZATIONAL COMPETENCIES**
http://www.tufts.edu/hr/webcm/docs/odt/OD_DevGuide.pdf



They help make college dreams real

IN 2007, A FAMILY WITH SIX CHILDREN arrived in Springfield, MA, from Burundi, after spending years in refugee camps in the Congo and Tanzania. They spoke no English, and none had even a high school education. Yet, less than three years later, one of the children, now 19 years old, has been accepted by six colleges and, with financial help, will attend one in the fall.

This remarkable student, who graduated from Springfield High School of Science and Technology in June, was aided in the college search and application process by **Matt Thomas**, a 2009 Tufts graduate and a member of the College Advising Corps (CAC). “I worked very hard with him,” Matt said of how he helped find appropriate colleges, seek financial aid, and work through the application process.

CAC is a nationwide initiative with a mission to increase college enrollment and graduation rates among low-income high school students. The CAC has operated in the Commonwealth for three years under the auspices of Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University and Massachusetts Campus Compact (MACC), which Tufts has hosted on the Medford/Somerville campus for 15 years. MACC is a statewide consortium of 73 colleges and universities that seeks to leverage higher education’s resources to address community problems, especially those faced by low-income residents.

The CAC advisors assist seniors at 10 different Massachusetts high schools, which also partner with local colleges that provide additional support. Seven of the CAC advisors are recent Tufts graduates and all are full-time Tufts employees. CAC operates under grants from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation and the Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation, whose funds flow through the Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service and MACC.

Role of the advisor

“The advisors work as coaches and mentors to help the students navigate the application process, help them find the best fit and explore their post-secondary options,” said CAC Program Coordinator **Andrew Cahill**. He says that since the program began in Massachusetts three years ago, CAC advisors have worked one-on-one with over 6,000 students, serving over 36,000 hours.

Advisor **Lillian O’Donnell** added, “We work most often with first generation college-bound kids who come from immigrant families, or are immigrants themselves. Their families have little



knowledge about college, and the kids are in urban schools where guidance counselors have so many other things to do,” Lillian began as one of the original advisors after she graduated from Tufts in 2007. She has stayed with the program since, serving in East Boston and Somerville schools.

The advisors’ assistance runs the gamut, according to **Angela Robins**, Tufts ’09, adviser at John D. O’Bryant School of Math and Science in Roxbury. “Our help can be just reading an essay, or we can take them through the whole process. We also go on field trips to universities and community colleges.” Students learn about academic and social issues they’re going to face, from dorm life to classes and homework—even how to do laundry, said Matt. “We are there to meet the students where they are at. It’s a cool opportunity to get involved in each student’s life where they need the most help.”

Success stories

A highlight for Angela this year was working with a young woman whose parents had never considered college for their daughter, although she ranked fifth in her class. With Angela’s help, she has been accepted to Boston College and has received considerable financial assistance. A memorable outcome for Lillian involved a senior who wanted to go to a particular college, but neither he nor his family understood the costs or what financial aid could do. With Lillian’s coun-

Continued on next page

THE 2009-2010 MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE ADVISING CORPS:

All the advisors are Tufts graduates except as noted. L-R: **Andy Cahill**, **Estelle Davis**, **Benji Tarshis**, **Jenna Cassoli**, **Katie Lorenz**, (Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts), **Rema Beiruti**, (UMass Dartmouth), **Matt Thomas**, **Shawna Russo**

Not Pictured: **Angela Robins**, **Ashlee White**, (Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts), **Lillian O’Donnell**, **Will Kent**

College Advising Corps Continued from page 5

selling, the family was able to call the financial aid office and successfully advocate for \$10,000 more in yearly grant aid. “Things like that make you understand the importance of just asking,” Lillian said. “There are so many students who aren’t asking and aren’t receiving the help, and my position exists because the knowledge isn’t there.”

Evolution

In its three years, the CAC has grown from four to 10 partner schools in Massachusetts and has changed in other ways as well. Lillian pointed out there’s more advisor training, and the CAC facilitates more discussion and sharing of resources among the advisors. “If someone comes up with a great workshop or learns about something that could affect our students, we pass that along.” Program Coordinator Cahill also implemented a CAC Advisory Council where advisors meet monthly to discuss ways to continuously improve the program. They’re also putting together a CAC manual for new advisors. “As returning advisors, it’s exciting to be able to share our knowledge and experience with other advisors,” said Lillian.

Benefits for the advisors

The students are not the only ones who benefit from the program. The CAC advisors say they have been changed by their experiences, and often their career ideas solidified. Angela said that she’ll return for another year: “I really love working with high school students because they

have a lot of energy about their future. I feel very lucky to work with so many people who are in that exciting transition.” Matt will also stay on as a CAC advisor next year. “My experience has affected my plans and helped me narrow them,” he said. “I want to help people, and I really believe in the power of higher education,” he said. But Matt wants to focus on helping students stay in college and get their degrees. “There’s a growing trend of students not being adequately prepared for the rigors of college and leaving early without the degree but still owing money on their loans. I want to help make sure students go to college ready to succeed.”

Lillian is headed off to graduate school for a masters degree to become a teacher—“but for the elementary age, because I see so many students who really struggle with issues that stem from the elementary level academically.”

Program at a crossroads

The Cooke and Balfour grants are set to expire in 2011, so Andy, who is also the program’s main grant writer, is in the arduous process of raising money and has been working with **Miriam McLean**, Associate Director in the Tufts Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations. “The CAC really helps students. It is a terrific program, and long-term, we want to make it sustainable,” he said. “To do that, we need to think about how we can diversify our funding sources so we can support the work.”



The Psychology softball team (and 6-year-old bench coach), pose for a photo on Cousens field before a June 8th game against Medford Division rival Student Services. Psychology won 5-0.

TUFTS LEAGUE SOFTBALL

It’s summer, and that means it’s time for Tufts League Softball, when faculty and staff dust off their mitts and bats, and try to wake up muscles and joints they had forgotten existed. Founded in 1985, the league has 15 Tufts employee teams plus the highly competitive “Tufts Seniors,” composed of undergraduates and recent grads. Each team has about 15 players (approx. 250 players in all). To learn more, go to <http://softball.hnrc.tufts.edu/league/>, where you can see a short video, “A League of Their Own,” check out the league schedule, team standings (updated weekly) and even the daily weather forecast. Come out and root for your favorite team!

Welcome Sabrina Williams

ON APRIL 26, SABRINA WILLIAMS JOINED Tufts as the new Human Resources Director for the Boston and Grafton campuses. An HR veteran, she has hit the ground running, as the saying goes.

“I’m getting to know Tufts, some by getting the work done and making things happen,” she says. “I’m trying to understand the culture of how the work gets done, how decisions get made, how change is received here. I’m also looking for smaller things we can do to add immediate value and have some wins to build on.”

Sabrina has worked in HR in the private sector for over a decade. A native of Jamaica, she grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y. She graduated from Brandeis University and moved back to New York City for her first job as a management trainee at Chemical Bank. Two years later, the bank merged with Manufacturers Hanover Trust, and Sabrina served on the transition team. In that role she met a consultant who was an organizational and development specialist.

The two hit it off, and a year later the consultant asked Sabrina to join her on another transition. From there, Sabrina moved into Human Resources and found her vocation. She held HR positions with a marketing firm and an insurance company, prior to becoming Director of Human Resources for Instinet, a large brokerage company. She later returned to Boston to join the advertising firm Hill Holliday in Human Resources and to earn an MBA from Simmons College in 2007.

Seamless service delivery

At Tufts, she said, a key goal will be to provide seamless delivery of HR services to the Boston and Grafton campuses. “When employees come to one of us we’ll be looking to pull all the different pieces of HR together to solve the problem. A manager or employee can come to me or any one of us in the Boston or Grafton HR offices and we will reach out collaboratively to our other HR colleagues.” The different functional areas of HR hold different pieces and have different expertise. The best route is to leverage the expertise of the different functional areas and work together to provide seamless service.

She said she will also be an advocate for the Boston and Grafton campuses, seeking to identify opportunities for cooperation and synergies across the university. For example, the Medical School might have a new policy need, she explained. “We

step back and ask the implications for the university. If this is a good, transferable practice, maybe we should try to replicate it in other areas of the university.” She added, “So we’re constantly trying to leverage best practices and positive solutions. It’s a kind of local/global approach: locally there are things that make sense for the different schools, but globally there are opportunities for leverage.”

Sabrina’s MBA and corporate experience help her understand not only the human dimensions of the university’s work. “I have a business radar as well. I can understand what the internal client is trying to get done, managing margins, resources and people. I try to take that into account, especially in these tough times.”

The role of HR

“I’ve worked in several industries where employees were successful because of their technical or creative expertise, but did not always have strong people skills, which can result in challenging situations” Sabrina explained. “My job was to try to harness the good that people brought and help them to be open to and see what other colleagues brought to the table. HR is here to support managers and employees and help them identify and remove barriers to their success at work.”

Sabrina’s approach to employee relations is to help individuals assess the situation they’re in and look at what caused them to be there. The approach works because it is non-judgmental, she said. “I like to say, ‘Meet people where they’re at and then try to get them to where we need them to be.’”

Personal life

Outside of work, Sabrina, said, “I journal, and I enjoy creative writing—working on the ‘Great American Novel’—along with thousands of other people, of course!” Married with a step-daughter, she and her family enjoy traveling. She also exercises and likes to run but declined to say whether she would join the President’s Marathon Challenge in 2011.



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WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

What do you think of
Periscope? Do you have
 ideas for future topics?
 How to make it better?
 We want to know!
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www.tufts.edu/hr/index

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Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine
 invites you to the



Save the Date!

Saturday | September 11 | 2010 | 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
200 Westboro Road | North Grafton | MA

- Student veterinary groups
- Birds of prey exhibit
- Hayrides and self-guided tours
- Vet school admission sessions
- Teddy bear clinic
- Livestock and alpacas
- Sheep shearing and police dog demonstrations
- Plastination exhibit



We look forward to seeing you! Bring the whole family!

For information call 508.839.5395, x 84899 or
 visit our Web site: www.tufts.edu/vet/openhouse

For safety reasons, pets are not allowed on campus for Open House.