

U.S. News & World Report ranks Ball State as one of the top innovators in nation

Commitment to immersive learning and leadership in emerging media have earned Ball State University a top spot in U.S. News & World Report.

In the publication's 2008 rankings issue, Ball State is cited as the nation's 14th best "Schools to Watch." The newly launched list of up-and-comers honored colleges and universities that are making the most promising and innovative changes in academics, faculty, students, campus or facilities.

"The ranking recognizes the strides we've made in redefining education in the 21st century. And it comes on the heels of Campus Technology magazine honoring two of our immersive learning initiatives dealing with emerging media," said Ball State President Jo Ann M. Gora. "We are receiving more and more recognition for the way we are preparing students for a world that is changing at a breathtaking pace."

In the current issue of Campus Technology, Ball State earned honors for a film course being pioneered in the virtual Internet environs of Second Life by John Fillwalk, director of Ball State's Institute for Digital Intermedia Arts and Animation, and the Digital Corps, a program that trains student apprentices for industry-standard software certifications.

Ball State's first-year programs also received recognition as one of the nation's top programs. This ranking stretches their streak of U.S. News & World Report rankings to five consecutive years. Ball State has a number of innovative and award-winning programs that help first-year students succeed at the college level.

The programs have helped Ball State achieve a 78 percent retention rate, rivaling select public universities and private colleges.

Highlights of the college rankings will be available in U.S. News & World Report Aug. 25, and the 2009 America's Best Colleges guidebook will be available Aug. 26.

Second Life installation newest creation from Ball State digital artists

Imagine flying over a pyramid-shaped boat as a variety of tones from the engine combine to create a melody. That is just what visitors will get when they interact with the new virtual art collection created by Ball State University faculty in Second Life.

John Fillwalk, director of the Institute for Digital Intermedia Arts and Animation (IDIAA) and associate professor of art, will participate in an Aug. 24 live reception in Second Life to unveil the new virtual art exhibits.

The New Media Consortium (NMC), an international not-for-profit consortium of more than 260 learning-focused organizations, asked Fillwalk and the IDIAA to transform an entire Second Life island with interactive virtual art. The collection, which will be up for a month, is part of a series of installations hosted by NMC throughout the year.

Fillwalk and Jesse Allison, Ball State faculty fellow and research specialist, worked for three months to create several interactive and user friendly exhibits that will be featured on the Second Life island of Ars Simulacra.

"The experience is compelling. And while the background technology is complex, visitors to the exhibit can easily engage with the art," Fillwalk said.

Visitors to the island can interact with exhibits, which incorporate video, sound and still photos via their avatars. One exhibit features a live connection to Flickr, a photo sharing Web site, that allows visitors to choose the subject matter and customize their viewing experience.

Fillwalk says this collection of interactive artworks showcases and expands upon IDIAA's expertise in building virtual reality projects for simulation and visualization environments.

"We are positioning the business profile of IDIAA to work with external clients to build significant research, as well as showcase Ball State's emerging media prowess," he said.

Ball State has received national recognition for its work developing hands-on, experiential, project-based learning environments. Its virtualized film studio won the first Greenhouse Grant for Virtual Worlds and an award in the 2008 Campus Technology magazine Innovator competition.

President Gora's 2008 fall faculty convocation speech

Good morning to all of you. Welcome to our annual fall faculty convocation.

One year ago, I discussed the challenge of distinctiveness. I talked about how Ball State must respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world if we were to remain a vibrant, relevant institution; how external stakeholders expected a more focused description of our value and purpose; how students and faculty had more choices and higher expectations about learning and teaching. I said that the implementation of our Education Redefined strategic plan would clearly show Ball State's unique attributes and vividly demonstrate our vital role to the future of Indiana's citizens.

In my travels around the state, country, and world, I can assure you that we are succeeding in meeting that challenge of distinctiveness. Over and over again, alumni, students, parents, legislators, and reporters tell me that they understand that Education Redefined is not just the name of our strategic plan but rather an accurate summation of all that we are doing to educate young people for the 21st century, a time of global competition and breathtaking technological advances. They recognize Ball State as a university on the move and the events of the last year as evidence of that. And we received further confirmation of it only an hour or so ago, when the annual America's Best Colleges edition of U.S. News & World Report honored Ball State as one of its "tops for innovation" selections in its list of 70 up-and-coming schools. So I begin today by congratulating you on your hard work, creativity, and collaboration, all of which have been keys to the success of this past year.

Our bold strategic plan has four key strategies. The first is to offer relevant immersive learning opportunities to each undergraduate student. I reiterate that this is the cornerstone of what we do. Our students are graduating into a truly interdisciplinary and interconnected world-and this is the best preparation we can give them for it. Immersive learning takes a long, proud tradition of experiential, collaborative learning created by so many of you and intensifies it, creating a significant intellectual challenge embraced by bright, talented students, creative in approach and entrepreneurial in outlook.

Our many constituencies praise immersive learning. It is widely seen as something that separates us from other colleges and universities and brings tangible benefits to the people of Indiana. In the past two years, private donors have pledged more than \$17.5 million to Ball State in support of immersive learning. The Office of the Provost distributed more than \$600,000 to immersive learning projects in the last year, confirming how crucial this initiative is to our future.

One of those projects is the Digital Studio Consortium, where more than 300 students from the College of Fine Arts, the College of Sciences and Humanities, and the College of Communication, Information, and Media are collaborating on more than 20 projects. Here are just two examples. An interactive television design course allowed students to create an interface for live broadcasts combining NewsLink Indiana briefs with customized, interactive content, including sports scores, stocks, and calendar listings that constantly update. A second course in interactive advertising focused on developing an interface for consumer-driven advertising, not only for your television, but also for small-screen devices like the iPhone and iTouch.

Much of my time in the last year has been spent traveling to support our immersive learning opportunities around the state. We connect student-driven projects with needs in local communities and businesses throughout Indiana, and in so doing, we find new and exciting ways to build strong partnerships with the larger community. Let me give you one example.

In April, I had the pleasure of attending an event in the Statehouse Rotunda, at which Bob Pritchard, associate professor of journalism, and a team of students from Cardinal

Communications presented a crisis communication protocol to officials at the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. Our students took this responsibility so seriously that they voluntarily-and successfully-completed the Federal Emergency Management Agency certification course on public information systems before working on the protocol itself. They then prepared a substantial report that forms the basis for how IDHS informs the citizens of our state during future emergencies.

The event also illustrated the strong, lasting partnerships that Building Better Communities projects build. The genesis for the project we celebrated in April was actually the production of eight public service announcements for the state Department of Homeland Security a year ago. Our telecommunications and journalism students wrote, filmed, and produced the "Take Responsibility" series, which continues to air, informing Hoosiers about disaster preparedness. IDHS leadership was so pleased with the result of that project that those officials approached Ball State to research and prepare the crisis communications protocol. And when we finished the April event, those officials began discussions about partnering with Ball State to develop a disaster preparedness curriculum appropriate for high school students, a proposal that we are finishing and will present to the state director of homeland security for that project in the next few days. Repeat customers like this high-profile Indiana department firmly establish the value of immersive learning for the citizens of our state.

In fact, many of the immersive learning projects led by Fred Kitchens, associate professor of information systems and operations management, propose solutions to similar security problems. Three years ago, his students developed a cluster computing solution for the Indianapolis International Airport and won the International Business Informatics Challenge. Two years ago, his Business Fellows team worked for the Delaware County Emergency Management Agency to develop contingencies for earthquake, flood, and tornado. His Systems Analysis and Design class that year developed a business continuity and network security plan for the City of Muncie and Delaware County; their efforts recently earned the Laureate Award from Computerworld magazine. Last year, his Business Fellows team assessed the feasibility and sustainability of a disaster-proof, vandal-proof data center planned for a Midwest location. Two more projects developed technology plans driving the services provided by two start-up companies for a local entrepreneur-one in digital signage and one in unique online video services. Both projects are under review for potential patents and venture capital.

These projects again show the potential that immersive learning holds-Ball State solves problems, attracts jobs, provides technological infrastructure, and demonstrates value to the people of Indiana. Our students and faculty have completed more than 600 projects in 68 Indiana counties in the last two years. In fact, we soon will have an international immersive learning opportunity, thanks to a Six Sigma minor in process improvement, developed by faculty in the College of Applied Sciences and Technology, which partners us with a company in China.

The strategic plan's second objective is the recruitment and retention of high-ability students. Immersive learning poses a significant intellectual challenge, and we need

students who can meet that challenge. As we attract and graduate outstanding students, those students, as alumni, become our greatest ambassadors for the distinctive value of a Ball State education.

Last year, I reported that retention of first-year students who were returning as sophomores stood at 76.7 percent, an impressive increase of more than 2 percent from the same figure in 2006. The figure for this fall is more than 78 percent, another impressive increase as we continue to provide many programs to enable freshmen to succeed academically and to build the relationships that make campus life meaningful. In fact, I am delighted to report that just this morning, Ball State's freshman-year experience is cited for the fifth year in a row in the America's Best Colleges edition of U.S. News & World Report.

We have again concluded a successful recruitment effort. Freshman applications were up nearly 600 over last year's record, totaling more than 13,750. Over the past three years, we have seen a remarkable 38.5 percent increase in applications. This has produced a freshman class of 3,806, more than 260 students larger than just last year and 450 members more than the class that entered in fall 2005. Coupled with improved retention, this has contributed to our first increase in overall on-campus enrollment in four years. This enrollment increase is critical to our budget.

At the same time, we are delighted by the size of the entering class as we continue to emphasize quality. The average SAT score for this year's freshman class is 1,566, up five points from last year and 28 points from 2006. Among this year's freshman class, 56.5 percent completed the Indiana Academic Honors Diploma or its equivalent for out-of-state students. This is up from 50.9 percent last year and 46.8 percent just two years ago. The accomplishment is even more impressive since only 30.7 percent of Indiana's high school graduates complete the Academic Honors Diploma.

Attracting-and enrolling-the best and the brightest students will be increasingly challenging; we face stiff competition from both in-state and out-of-state competitors. Last fall, the Honors College enrolled more than 300 freshmen, up 21 percent over the previous year. This year, we implemented a separate Honors College application for selective admissions. We've seen a slight decline in the number of students enrolled in the Honors College this fall but are confident we can increase that number next year. The students we are attracting to Ball State and to the Honors College have many options and receive attractive scholarship offers from many institutions. This is why raising funds for freshman scholarships is one of my main priorities.

Third, the strategic plan focuses on increasing the number of nationally recognized faculty and academic programs. We do not pursue recognition for its own sake but to reinforce to external audiences the excellence of a Ball State education. Several university departments and programs are making their mark and advancing Ball State's reputation.

Ball State's undergraduate entrepreneurship program has been in the top 10 in the country every year since 1999, according to U.S. News & World Report, which described it as the "ultimate entrepreneurial experience." Our landscape architecture department was ranked as the nation's fourth best undergraduate program and the fifth best graduate program by the respected professional journal, Design Intelligence, in its annual edition. For the third consecutive year, the educational leadership department rates among the best in the eyes of the editors of Leadership Excellence magazine, a publication cofounded by business and administrative effectiveness guru Stephen Covey. It ranks the department 11th nationally, where it keeps company with Harvard, MIT, and the University of Pennsylvania. Teachers College attained two important rankings from U.S. News & World Report in 2008, as its graduate education programs were ranked 90th nationally, placing them in the top third of those offered by all universities, and Burriss Laboratory School was listed among the top 3 percent of America's high schools, as well as earning a Blue Ribbon award from the U.S. Department of Education.

But rankings are not the only important recognition of faculty and programs at Ball State. When professors Harold Mortimer and Greg Witkowski earned Fulbright Scholarships last year, those brought recognition to Ball State. When our students were nominated for nine regional Emmys, bringing the total to 70 nominations this decade, it continued to raise our university's profile. When Fulbright officials brought Omer Salih Mahdi, the former Iraqi physician and maker of an award-winning documentary, to our campus as a graduate student, they provided a ringing endorsement of our journalism and telecommunications programs. When the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation selected us in December as one of its initial partners in encouraging high-ability teacher candidates to seek long-term careers in high-need classrooms, it increased public awareness of Ball State.

Similarly, many of our students have earned top national scholarships and awards recently, reflecting the guidance and caring of our excellent faculty. These include winners of a Margolis Scholarship, a Morris K. Udall Scholarship, a Goldwater Scholarship, a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship, a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship, and a U.S. Navy Health Professions Scholarship. Thanks go to Barb Stedman and her colleagues for this dramatic upswing in the number of our students winning national scholarships. And national recognition came to several Ball State student groups that embrace an interdisciplinary, cocurricular approach and serve as symbols of Ball State's academic quality. The debate team won the championship at the National Education Debate Association tournament, led by Alexander Newman, one of five students named debate All-American. And the staff of The Ball State Daily News earned top honors from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association for the ninth straight year, winning 64 Gold Circles, the most received by any college in the country.

Finally, the strategic plan seeks to create a university community nationally recognized for its vibrant, diverse, and supportive atmosphere. High-ability students demand a campus that fuels their curiosity and creativity-both inside and outside the classroom. This was most visibly represented by the whirlwind four weeks we experienced at this time a year ago. The opening of four new or completely renovated buildings-Woodworth

Commons, Park Hall, Scheumann Stadium, and the David Letterman Communication and Media Building-changed the face of our campus, and the return of our most famous alumnus attracted a crowd of thousands of students and national, even international, media attention for Ball State.

Looking forward, renovations to Pittenger Student Center are well under way. Those renovations, as well as those to Ball Honors House and DeHority Hall, should be completed by next summer. Construction has begun for both the 200,000-square-foot student recreation and wellness facility and another residence hall similar to Park Hall and located on the north end of campus. Both of these projects should be finished by fall 2010. Work soon will begin on the central campus academic project, and the renovations of the North Quad and Teachers College buildings are scheduled for completion in the 2011-2012 time frame. And we will continue to work on the replacement of our aging boiler plant and update the chilled water plant to bring increased efficiencies to our energy consumption.

I hear frequently from visitors how beautiful and modern our campus is compared to when they were last in Muncie. Imagine what their reactions will be in 2012, when we can show off a campus featuring \$320 million in newly constructed or remodeled facilities in just eight years!

But there is more to a vibrant and energetic campus than newly constructed or renovated buildings. I was so pleased with the large number of successful programs planned and carried out by our students last year. Many of them, from the events of Unity Week to the Focus the Nation teach-in about global warming, raised the level of awareness and discussion not just on campus but throughout our community. Also contributing to that discussion was a long list of distinguished campus speakers in the last year-Arthur Levine, Jonathan Kozol, Mikel Harry, Chelsea Clinton, Terrence Roberts, and Barack Obama, just to name a few.

There is one other aspect to our objective to provide a vibrant, diverse, supportive campus that I want to mention, and that is our dedication to advancing international education. Two of the goals in our strategic plan are to increase the number of students participating in our study-abroad programs to 1,000 and to similarly increase the number of international students here on our campus to 5 percent of the total population. We are making tremendous progress in the number of those studying abroad, as 790 students did so last year, a nearly 60 percent increase over the 2004-05 total.

Our international student numbers have grown over the same period, but less dramatically. This is why I traveled in June to meet with nine university presidents in mainland China and South Korea, at the invitation of those academic leaders. These countries provide Ball State with almost one-third of the international students on our campus. It was important to enhance our existing relationships with Korean and Chinese universities, some of which stretch back decades, and equally important to establish new partnerships with other institutions. Ties between this university and institutions of

higher education in East Asia are vital as we progress toward providing our students with a campus that resembles the global village into which they will graduate.

In sum, the past year was a successful and memorable one for Ball State University, something in which we should all take pride. But as Soren Kierkegaard once wrote, "Philosophers are perfectly right in saying that life must be understood backward. But then they forget the other clause-that it must be lived forward." How do we continue-even increase-the momentum of our success in coming months? We do so through bold initiatives that continue to redefine education!

So we will continue to expand our immersive learning opportunities. Joe Trimmer, our immersive learning consultant, will be working hard with his faculty committee this year to provide expertise to academic departments and faculty who either have challenges in identifying immersive learning opportunities or are struggling to find funding to support those opportunities. In talking with deans and faculty last year, Joe learned much about the benefits faculty see in immersive learning and the challenges in providing those opportunities in every Ball State department. As Virginia B. Ball Center director, he knows how to maximize the benefits and deal with the challenges; we look forward to him using that experience to assist faculty colleagues.

As the provost has mentioned, another important focus this year is increasing our recognition for the use of emerging media. Ball State has a long and proud tradition of innovative and entrepreneurial faculty coming together to develop centers of true excellence. As you know, the purpose of our Education Redefined strategic plan is to focus our resources on activities that make Ball State distinctive and distinguish us as an institution. It guides us toward interdisciplinary endeavors, ones that facilitate immersive learning and support our commercialization goals. Emerging media can be a center of excellence at this university that addresses all of these goals.

Approximately 65 of you attended a retreat in April organized by Dave Ferguson, associate vice president for emerging media and director of the Center for Media Design. Most impressive at that retreat was the wide range of emerging media projects across campus. Those examples included a variety of fields: digital fabrication, emerging media research, interactive and visual learning products, virtual worlds, visualization and modeling, emerging media policy, the science of multimedia learning.

The past few months have brought several digital media honors to Ball State. At May's annual Mira Awards, presented by TechPoint in Indianapolis, more Ball State faculty members earned nominations and awards than those of any other Indiana university. The Center for Media Design received a \$3.5 million contract from television ratings giant Nielsen to study how viewers are using traditional and emerging media. The project will show the best ways to measure media consumption as it moves from the TV to the computer and mobile devices.

John Fillwalk, director of our Institute for Digital Intermedia Art and Animation, earned Blackboard Inc.'s special Greenhouse Grant for Virtual Worlds for his team's work

combining the interactive technology of Second Life and Blackboard. This allowed Ball State to extend virtualized studio and laboratory experiences to an online distance education audience. And Phil Repp, interim vice president for information technology, and two of his colleagues earned an Innovators Award from Campus Technology magazine for creating the Digital Corps, which groups faculty and students into interdisciplinary teams to develop media software expertise that can be used across campus. Professor Fillwalk also earned an Innovators Award for his Second Life project, meaning two of the magazine's 14 national awards went to our university-the only one to receive multiple honors.

Taken individually, these projects-and many others-are compelling and important on their own merits. But when you put all of them together, a new and more vivid picture forms. Emerging media has permeated every college and each of our three mission areas: teaching, research, and service. All this is even more striking when we examine a new report from Michael Hicks, director of our very own Bureau of Business Research, which demonstrates why emerging media is the most dynamic sector of Indiana's economy.

In short, we have an important opportunity, and we must seize it. Plans are under way to provide new resources to you as faculty that will encourage the increased use of emerging media in the classroom and will more fully integrate emerging media in our immersive learning experiences. A new faculty council will be formed to help set an interdisciplinary research agenda around emerging media. We are expanding our support for commercialization with a particular emphasis on this sector, and we intend to expand the opportunities for students and faculty to work on emerging media projects on behalf of external clients.

All of this will provide another focused avenue to develop interdisciplinary immersive learning projects and a critical path to help us reach our commercialization goals, both of which are important objectives in our strategic plan. And it enables us to distinguish ourselves in an area where we already excel. We will announce more later this fall and detail our plans to further Ball State's growing reputation in this field.

Several other exciting developments are unfolding this fall. This year marks the 90th anniversary of Ball State's founding in 1918. To commemorate this historic occasion, we will be hosting a series of events, one of which the provost described earlier. I would note that in addition to this speaker series, we plan to celebrate our Ball family roots with an event on October 25th. I hope all of you will join me at these noteworthy events.

Last year was another successful one in securing new resources in support of strategic plan implementation. We have spent much time and energy in the last few months carefully preparing our legislative requests, which were approved by the Board of Trustees last month and heard by the Commission on Higher Education a few days ago. These requests soon will be submitted to the state budget committee in preparation for next spring's biennial session of the Indiana General Assembly.

We must continue the hard work we demonstrated in the 2007 session to secure appropriate support. These are difficult economic times for our state, and the challenges facing Indiana's colleges and universities are particularly daunting. Only through clearly demonstrating the crucial difference that Ball State makes in Indiana will we be able to receive adequate public funding. The strategic plan calls for us to use our resources to attract and retain highly productive faculty of national prominence. Our commitment to provide competitive salary increases and benefits for our faculty members is absolutely critical to our long-term success. Providing competitive salary increases remains my top priority as I make our case to the legislature in every budget year.

Meanwhile, we are about to take a bold step in seeking expanded philanthropic support. Our private donors provided more support than ever last year; their gifts totaled \$22 million, an increase of \$4 million over 2006-07. On September 5th, we will unveil a comprehensive capital campaign that will support the objectives of the Education Redefined strategic plan.

We should all take a moment to savor the excitement and importance of this announcement. All of you know that our capital campaign planning has been under way for some time, and many of you have played integral roles in that process. This will be our opportunity to recognize your efforts and spread the word about how this campaign will have a lasting impact, especially on our students and faculty. Our public announcement in two weeks promises to again raise Ball State's reputation and distinction, as we announce our financial goal, our progress thus far in reaching that goal, and the various initiatives that campaign funds will support.

I also want to emphasize the strategy behind the date of this announcement. The events on September 5th constitute a public celebration of Ball State University, its history, its mission, and its vision for the future. Many of you will be involved in the noon ceremony in Sursa Hall announcing the campaign and the immersive learning showcase that follows it in the Fine Arts Building. Our football Cardinals, fresh off last season's International Bowl appearance, host the Naval Academy that evening in a game that will be nationally televised on ESPN. Thus, our capital campaign, our strategic plan, our 90th anniversary, and all the bold initiatives being undertaken here at Ball State will have an audience of millions of people nationwide. It will be a historic day in the life of this university, nearly a year to the day after we garnered national coverage of the events surrounding the opening of the David Letterman Communication and Media Building. I encourage all of you to be a part of the activities of this special day!

Another objective of the strategic plan is that each of us would take stock of our health and improve it, resulting in an increase in the number of faculty and staff, and their families, participating in a coordinated wellness program. Last year saw tremendous strides in this area, through the leadership of Patty Hollingsworth, director of the employee health enhancement program, and her outstanding committee. The Start Where You Are initiative gave us great strides in employee wellness last year that were much, much greater than simply becoming a smoke-free campus, as notable as that was.

Patty and her committee have many new programs planned for this fall. One is the Life Health Assessment, an online tool that compiles information about your health and well-being. It also offers aggregate data to help the university plan programs that meet your needs and measures our institutional progress. The Life Health Assessment is a contracted service, and no individual information is shared with any Ball State officials. You received a brochure this morning with information about the Life Health Assessment, a schedule of clinical screenings, and support services for those choosing to improve their nutrition and physical fitness. We believe clinical screening and the Life Health Assessment are so important that benefit-eligible employees will receive a gift card worth \$50 just for completing the assessment.

I also want to mention one other strategic plan objective, our service initiative titled "Roll Out the Red." Under the leadership of Judy Burke in University Human Resources, a task force has been working for a year, conducting surveys and focus groups to determine how to provide better service to our many constituencies. What that task force found, in a nutshell, is that the overwhelming majority of our faculty and staff are talented, helpful, caring people, but that our systems are often cumbersome and do not lend themselves to providing prompt service easily. Marilyn Buck is leading the "Roll Out the Red" faculty committee, and the two groups will coordinate service training for all departments over the next two years, even as we look at methods for streamlining and improving our systems to better serve our constituents.

I've provided many examples of our accomplishments in the last year. I've outlined a number of exciting initiatives for the coming year. But I must tell you that my many discussions over the past year show that the public understands our distinct mission at Ball State, how we make a difference in the lives of our students, and how we demonstrate our value to Indiana's citizens.

I am the Indiana representative on the American Association of State Colleges and Universities board and recently received the results of an AACSCU survey of Fortune 500 chief executive officers about the public accountability of colleges and universities. The CEOs were asked which higher education measurements were most beneficial-and least beneficial-in determining whether a graduate would be a successful employee. Only 29 percent of those surveyed found a student's college transcript helpful in evaluating whether a job applicant had the potential to succeed at their company! So what did these executives find most useful? By far, the most effective assessment method for them was, and I'm quoting here, "Supervised and evaluated community-based projects or internships where students apply their college learning in a real-world setting." Sixty-nine percent of the respondents identified these projects as very effective in ensuring that graduates have the skills to succeed, the highest response to the survey question by 23 percentage points. Forty-four percent said universities should devote more resources to these projects, also the highest response to that survey question.

Through immersive learning and our other strategic plan objectives, we are preparing our students to graduate with the critical thinking, global knowledge, and self-direction they

need to compete in the marketplace. Ball State is uniquely positioned to supply this state with the leaders Indiana needs in the 21st century.

Together, all of us at the university have accomplished much over the past year. We should all be proud. That's why, even as I prepare to attend the first meeting of The New York Times-Chronicle of Higher Education cabinet next month—one of only 50 presidents in the nation to do so—I think of all that you have done to raise this university's reputation and visibility. The fact that I was invited to be a member of that esteemed cabinet is one of the many ways in which our success—individually and collectively—is reflected.

As I stand before you today, I am again reminded of your passion, your dedication, and your bold innovation. Because of your efforts and their impact, it is with great pride that I lead Ball State University as we build our already considerable momentum in the coming year. Thank you for all that you do to make this a great university. My best wishes for a successful year!

Emerging media initiatives earn multiple honors in prestigious national competition

Of the 14 honors awarded in the coveted 2008 Campus Technology magazine Innovator competition, two were won by Ball State University, furthering its reputation as a leader in emerging media.

The annual awards competition, which yielded nearly 300 entries, sought out initiatives that were true innovations, featured solid technological advances and helped the colleges or universities stand out among their peers, according to Campus Technology magazine.

Ball State won top honors in:

- **Virtual World Learning: The Aesthetic Camera** — This film course is being pioneered in the virtual Internet environs of Second Life by John Fillwalk, associate professor of electronic art and director of Ball State's Institute for Digital Intermedia Arts and Animation (IDIAA).
- **Digital Media Training and Support: Digital Corps** — This program trains student apprentices for industry-standard software certifications, and, in addition, provides the Ball State community with a cadre of digital media experts.

To launch the cinematography course and establish Ball State's presence in Second Life, IDIAA leveraged its years of innovation in 3-D animation and virtual applications. Now students — through their avatars (Second Life personas) — can check out cameras, dollies, light systems and more to create their own original movies. They can also film in a Star Trek-inspired holodeck, which allows them to select from a wide variety of virtual set locations.

The Campus Technology Innovator award is the second national recognition for the fledgling program. Earlier this year, the digital arts initiative earned Blackboard Inc.'s inaugural Greenhouse Grant for Virtual Worlds.

"These awards are quite an honor, and I'm humbled to see our work have such wide impact," Fillwalk said. "The IDIAA is committed to developing hands-on, experiential, project-based learning environments. Our students are the main beneficiaries of our efforts, and the hope is to share Ball State's achievements with the broader higher education community."

The beneficiaries of the Digital Corps initiative are the students who earned the certifications, and as a bonus, the Ball State community benefits as well. By taking advantage of well-known certification programs such as Certiport, Apple Certified Pro and Adobe Certified Expert/Adobe Certified Associate, a growing number of students are now fluent in digital media.

In just the last 10 months, Ball State has gone from zero certified experts to more than 50. And there is tremendous anecdotal evidence that the additional knowledge the corps provides is creating a trickle-down effect to the rest of the campus community, said Phil Repp, interim vice president for information technology.

"Jonathan Huer, who directs the program, has done a wonderful job," he said. "Our faculty appreciate the support for in-class assignments, and various departments and institutes appreciate the on-campus expertise."

"Digital media technology is now persistent throughout the campus, and administrators and IT leaders feel its potential is being fully realized," Repp added.

Detailed descriptions of the winning entries can be found in the August issue of Campus Technology and online at www.campustechnology.com.

Studying endangered Indiana bats may one day help save the species

A Ball State University biologist hopes that the data collected during a recent visit to a national forest in southern Illinois will eventually lead to methods to improve the recovery of a rare and endangered bat.

In a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, Tim Carter led a student team in May and June to the Shawnee National Forest in southern Illinois to monitor two colonies of Indiana bats. The team was able to collect data by studying an unusually large and healthy colony of about 280 bats.

Indiana bats are medium-sized, gray, black or chestnut mammals listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The species, named after the state where it was discovered, lives primarily in the East, Midwest and in parts of the South.

"During our visit to the forest, we looked at the characteristics of the trees that the bats roost as well as the locations of the roosts on the landscape to see what habitats are needed," he said. "We also examined the temperature of the roosts."

"In addition, we looked at the bats' activity patterns to determine how much time these animals spend feeding and resting. We are comparing the different reproductive stages, including pregnant and lactating, to see if there are differences in needs at different times."

Managing habitat

Carter, who first discovered these colonies in 1999, captured bats by setting up large nets in the forest and then gluing tiny radio transmitters on the backs of females. The captured animals then led the team to the first of two colonies. A typical colony numbers about 100 in a roost tree.

Carter and his students will continue to analyze this data and much more throughout the summer in order to discover many important aspects of the life history of these animals. The analysis will help the U.S. Forest Service to better manage public lands for this rare species.

"We've just started analyzing the data," he said. "But so far, it looks like the basic needs of these animals are similar to what others have found in other studies of this species. The new and really interesting part will be analyzing the temperature and activity data as that has not been done with this species yet."

Carter expects to have a report completed in 2009.

Environmental impact

Carter points out that like many other species of bats, the Indiana bat is declining due to various factors, including loss of habitat. In 2007 there were an estimated 450,000 animals, down from 883,000 in 1965.

Indiana bats feed entirely on night flying insects and are an integral part of the natural ecosystem, he said.

"As biologists, we have no idea what the impact would be if we were to lose the Indiana bat. It is like parts on your car," Carter said. "Some components like your radio are not essential, and your car will function without it. Other parts like a tire are essential for proper function. We do not fully understand the role that Indiana bats play in the ecosystem.

"We know that they are important insect predators and, along with other bats, help keep many insect populations in check, including many agricultural pests. We can't anticipate the ramifications to the ecosystem of losing the Indiana bat. For that reason as well as simple ethical reasons — like the fact that we caused the decline of this species — we are working hard to recover this species."

Princeton Review ranks Ball State 'Best in the Midwest' for a fourth time

For the fourth year in a row, Ball State has been named one of the best universities in the Midwest by the Princeton Review.

The New York -based education services company selected Ball State as one of 159 Midwestern colleges profiled in its "2009 Best Colleges Region by Region." Nationwide, 630 schools - about 25 percent - received the distinction.

Schools receiving the prominent national accolade were selected primarily for their excellent academic programs along with the opinions of students who report to Princeton Review about their campus experiences there, says publisher Robert Franek.

Ball State President Jo Ann M. Gora said receiving the recognition four times in as many years shows that Ball State is distinguishing itself as a university where hands-on learning is the hallmark of students' education.

"Our focus on immersive learning is the best preparation we can give our students as they prepare for a competitive job market fueled by constant change," Gora said. "It offers a significant intellectual challenge, and that is something for which we want Ball State to be known. Accolades such as this one are an affirmation of those goals."

In the past, Ball State also has been cited by Princeton Review as one of the 150 "best values" among the most academically outstanding colleges in the nation, with its programs in architecture, entrepreneurship and journalism among those recognized by the company.

For the complete list of "Best in the Midwest" schools, visit Princeton Review's "Best Regional Colleges" listing.

ON CAMPUS

Shuttle service now taking reservations for rides to and from Indianapolis airport

A new shuttle service provided by Ball State University can help students, faculty and staff who may need rides to and from the Indianapolis International Airport during upcoming breaks in the academic year.

The shuttle service will be available at Thanksgiving break (November), the semester break (December/January) and spring break (March). The service first was offered Aug. 20-24 to students who needed a ride to campus from the airport for the start of fall classes.

Reservations for the shuttle must be made 72 hours in advance of desired departure time and a \$55 nonrefundable one-way fee must be paid online in advance by credit card. A

Ball State ID will be required for boarding the shuttle. Reservations can be made at www.bsu.edu/map/airportshuttle.

University officials have said additional dates and times may be added for the shuttle based on demand. Campus pickup locations will include LaFollette Complex and Park Hall.

Estate gift to benefit Ball State students studying business, fine arts

Estate gifts valued at \$545,000 from a former local car dealer and his wife will be used to fund scholarships at Ball State University.

The William and Maudames Conner Business Scholarship will benefit students pursuing a major in the Miller College of Business, while the William and Maudames Conner Fine Arts Scholarship will assist students in the College of Fine Arts.

The couple shared a vision of allowing business students and fine arts students to take advantage of generous scholarship awards.

They met while in college and married in 1937. After living in Indianapolis, they later moved to Muncie in 1954 after purchasing a Chevrolet dealership that year. They owned the dealership for 17 years.

Mrs. Conner also was a member of Kappa Delta sorority, Delaware County Country Club, Tri Kappa sorority, and Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). She attended First Presbyterian Church.

He died in 1998, and she passed away in 2008.

Availability of the scholarships is dependent upon an award selection process established by Ball State and its academic departments. For more information about other scholarships available at Ball State, contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at 765-285-5600 or visit www.bsu.edu/finaid.

Ball State alumna leaves \$50,000 to fund scholarship for business students

Ball State alumna leaves \$50,000 to fund scholarship for business students (7/22/2008)
The late Glorian Kalil has left Ball State approximately \$50,000 for the creation of a new scholarship. The Charles Kalil and Roy M. Johnson Memorial Scholarship will benefit undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Ball State University's Miller College of Business.

The scholarship honors Kalil's father and uncle, respectively. A Muncie native and avid reader, Kalil earned her master's degree in library sciences from Ball State in 1964. She then worked as an elementary school librarian for Muncie Community Schools for 22 years.

She encouraged kids to read and belonged to the Association of Lifelong Learners. During the summers, she traveled with a group from the university throughout the U.S. and abroad. Ball State was an important part of her life, and she attended several university functions and was an early member of the Human Performance Lab.

Availability of the Charles Kalil and Roy M. Johnson Memorial Scholarship is dependent upon an award selection process established by Ball State and its academic departments. For specifics about this scholarship, contact the Miller College of Business at 765-285-8192.

For more information about other scholarships available at Ball State, contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at 765-285-5600 or visit www.bsu.edu/finaid.

IN THE NEWS

Ball State University

An Aug. 4 article published by the technology-related Web site Arts Technica featured a recently published study from Ball State University that reveals even the health status of Hollywood's finest is now a significant catalyst for health-related Internet searches. The study, "Understanding Internet Health-Related Search Patterns: How Useful is Google Trends?" was created by Ball State faculty who investigated the public's health-related search behavior using Google Trends, a service that tracks search volume by keyword and maintains data back to 2004.

Robert Bell, assistant professor of physical education

Bell was quoted by The New York Times in an Aug. 1 article titled "The Secret Curse of Expert Archers." Bell told the newspaper there is an affliction that can impair the world's elite archers so much so that many in the sport refuse to even say its name. Target panic, as the condition is known, causes crack shots to suddenly lose control of their bows and their composure. Mysteriously, sufferers start releasing the bow the instant they see the target, sabotaging any chance of a gold-medal shot. Others freeze up and cannot release at all. Even those with a neurological disorder can develop anxiety that makes the problem worse, said Bell, a sports psychologist who specializes in golf. "It kind of gets into the mind that this could happen, and that's where the anxiety and the stress come in," he said.

Timothy Carter, professor of biology

The (Ala.) Birmingham News followed Carter and a team of biologists for an Aug. 15 article detailing their efforts to survey the local bat population. Carter led the group into the forest Aug. 13 on the third and final night of their expedition. Because bats are predators, they are angry rather than scared when captured, he explained. "These are the

lions of the insect world, the top predators," he said. "If you captured a lion, a lion wouldn't be very scared of you, he would be very mad at you." The story was distributed to 37 newspapers in Alabama.

Larry Cox, director of the Entrepreneurship Center

In a July 30 article titled "World of Difference," U.S. News and World Report featured comments from Cox about strategies for "green" business startups. "If you can solve a problem at the same price point and have the same features as an existing product - plus, you can help save the environment - you have a strategic advantage," he said. And since college campuses are one of the hotbeds of the environmental movement, Cox encourages entrepreneurs to explore the resources campuses can offer to help launch green business ideas. He added, "It's the best time ever to start [a green] business."

Wes Gehring, professor of telecommunications

Gehring is featured in an Associated Press article published July 23 about the comedic pairing of actors Will Farrell and John C. Reilly in the summer flick, "Step Brothers." Gehring discussed how Hollywood teams comedy duos today much differently than it did in the past. Bob Hope and Bing Crosby might be on the road to nowhere if they tried to team up today the way they did in old Hollywood. "In the old days, traditional comedy teams had a straight man and the comic," Gehring said. "Everybody now wants to be the comic. Everybody wants to be the funny one. Nobody wants to be the second banana now." The story was distributed to more than 200 media outlets.

Elaine Fisher, Center for Economic and Community Development

In an Aug. 7 online posting for Indiana Business Journal's "News Talk," Fisher comments on Nestle's plans to build a 50-foot-tall rabbit near the company's new Nesquik plant along Interstate 69 outside of Anderson. Fisher, who directs special projects at Ball State's Center for Economic and Community Development, says it's all but impossible to prove whether an unusual landmark like the rabbit would help or hinder a town's growth, adding that officials are taking a big risk if they think it will help economic development. Some people will equate the rabbit with giant billboards, in other words as visual pollution. "The image that such a thing creates could be very negative," Fisher said.

Michael Hanley, assistant professor of journalism

In an Aug. 9 article published by the Indianapolis Star, Hanley commented on Muncie Mayor Sharon McShurley's idea to begin selling ad space on the sides of municipal vehicles, including police cars and fire trucks. She promised, however, that the vehicles would not end up looking like NASCAR race cars. Hanley said he worried that allowing advertising on city vehicles could create more headaches than it is worth. "Who is going to regulate the ads?" he said. "I'd hate to see a city get in the business of defining what's acceptable and what's not. Where do you draw the line with say alcohol and tobacco ads or other ads that may be deemed controversial?"

Michael Hicks, director of the Bureau of Business Research

In a July 8 story distributed by the Associated Press, Hicks discussed how small town retailers were thriving. Hicks said, "Rural retail centers are likely to see a lot more traffic as consumers are not willing to make the long commute to the big city." He has studied the so-called pull factor - a measure of regional retail sales that takes into account local income levels as well as sales per capita - in Muncie and found it was seeing a smaller drop in sales than more urban areas such as Indianapolis. That means that consumer spending in rural retail hubs is holding up better. The story also was published by 181 media outlets, including Business Week, Boston Globe, Augusta (Ga.) Journal, Chicago Daily Herald, Winston-Salem Journal, Baltimore Sun, Chicago Tribune, Hartford Courant, Los Angeles Times, Newsday, Orlando Sentinel, Virginia Gazette, Arizona Republic, Tampa Tribune and Charlotte Observer.

Steve Jones, Center for Information and Communications Sciences

The Indianapolis Business Journal published a July 14 article exploring the fact that tech jobs are on the rise, but graduates of tech-related programs are on the decline. Jones, who is the director of the Center for Information and Communications Sciences' graduate program, concurred. His challenge is recruiting students to the 11-month graduate program while dispelling any fears about offshoring. Ball State conducted a study similar to the Computing Research Association's annual survey that reached the same conclusions. "What's frustrating is that I have had an increase in companies looking for (computer-related) skill sets," Jones said.

Ray Scheele, professor of political science

A July 28 article published by the Chicago Tribune explores the idea that unions are slow to support Indiana gubernatorial candidate Jill Long Thompson and features comments from Scheele on the issue. "Organized labor in Indiana is the strong right arm of the Democratic Party, and in that sense, they do bring a lot of contributions and a lot of people power to the table," Scheele said. He added the UAW (United Auto Workers) and AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations) have weakened since the SEIU (Service Employees International Union) split and the groups are now battling each other for membership and dues. The Associated Press distributed the story nationally, and it was published by 59 media outlets.

Rodger Smith, director of the Institute for Digital Entertainment and Education

Inside Higher Education featured comments from Smith in its Aug. 5 article "The Birth of Ball-E-Wood," which documents the university's work on the production of its film, "My Name is Jerry." Smith played an instrumental role in the project, which is providing an immersive learning opportunity to students. He sought funding to produce the indie film outside of Los Angeles and in the halls of academe instead. "I had to pitch this to the president and the provost, and for some strange reason they decided to go along with me," said Smith, who is the producer of "My Name is Jerry," which stars Ball State

alumnus Doug Jones. "This is not something a university does." As a lead producer of the film, Ball State may well be the first-ever university to put its money behind a privately developed commercial motion picture, according to those involved in the production. The story centers on Jerry Arthur, a middle-aged, Midwestern encyclopedia salesman whose life is turned on its head when he meets a group of young punk rockers.

SPOTLIGHT

Recognitions

Chu-yuan Chang, Department of Economics, was featured in a half-page report in the June 13th Chinese edition of the Chicago Times on his academic achievements and for having received Ball State's President's Medal of Distinction.

Elizabeth Dalton, Department of English, received a scholarship to attend and work with author Lee Martin at the RopeWalk Writers' Retreat, June 14-21, 2008, New Harmony, Ind.

Publications

Jayne Beilke, Department of Educational Studies,

- co-author, "The Constraints of Poverty on High Achievement," *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, Vol. 31: 295-321, 2008.
- co-author, "Clubcasting: Educational Uses of Podcasting in Multicultural Settings," *Multicultural and Technology Journal* 2: 107-117.

Mike Bloxham, Insight and Research, Center for Media Design, contributor, *Media* magazine's "The Future of Media" issue, September 2008.

Chu-yuan Chang, Department of Economics, "Taiwan's Economic Growth Requires Substantial Structural Changes," *The World Journal*, New York, July 1, 2008.

Elizabeth Dalton, Department of English, "Pick-Up Game," Spring/Summer 2008 issue of *Flying Island*, a literary journal published by the Writers' Center of Indianapolis.

Ryan Hourigan, College of Fine Arts, "The Use of Student-Written Cases in Music Teacher Education," *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 17 (2), 19-32.

Presentations

Robert Fritz, Department of Modern Languages and Classics, "How Whole Foods, W. L. Gore, Google and the GED Might Inform Us Regarding the Management of Our

Spanish Classes," American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Matthew Harber, Human Performance Laboratory,

- "Influence of Amino Acids on the Anabolic Response to Resistance Exercise," XIV International Symposium on Exercise and Sports Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 20, 2008.
- "Protein Metabolism in the Endurance Athlete," XIV International Symposium on Exercise and Sports Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 20, 2008.
- "Influence of Carbohydrate Availability on the Adaptation to Exercise," XIV International Symposium on Exercise and Sports Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 21, 2008."

Amanda Hurford, University Libraries,

- "Photos, Letters, Books, Now What? Digital Collections 2.0 - Oral Histories using CONTENTdm at CONTENTdm Digital Collection Showcase: Web Access Delivers Success to Libraries," American Libraries Association Annual Conference, Anaheim, Calif., June 29, 2008.
- "Yesterday's Voices, Today's Workflow: Oral Histories using CONTENTdm at CONTENTdm Users Group Meeting: CONTENTdm@work!," American Libraries Association Annual Conference, Anaheim, Calif., June 30, 2008.

Geri Strecker, Department of English, "The Great Oscar Charleston: The Chicago Defender's Celebrated Hero of the East-West Classic," 11th Annual Jerry Malloy Negro Leagues Conference, Willowbrook, Ill., July 24-27, 2008.

Scott Trappe, Human Performance Laboratory,

- "From the Global Muscle Structure to the Genes: Principles of Training Adaptation, Genetic Cell Adaptation Responses to Aerobic and Endurance Strength Training," XIV International Symposium on Exercise and Sports Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 19, 2008.
- "Athletic Performance Optimization and Recovery Processes: Muscle Adaptations During Periods of Both High Intensity Training and Tapering Off," "The 'Master' Long Distance Runner: Cardiovascular, Muscular, Physiologic-Metabolic and Orthopaedic Prevention Aspects Related to the Adult Long Distance Runner," XIV International Symposium on Exercise and Sports Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 20, 2008.
- "The Aging Process of Muscle and the Role of Exercise: Sarcopenia and the Role of Endurance Strength Training as a Therapeutic Intervention for Older Populations," XIV International Symposium on Exercise and Sports Sciences, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 21, 2008.
- "Single Muscle Fiber Adaptations to Age and Exercise," University of Liverpool, School of Medicine, Liverpool, United Kingdom, July 11, 2008.

- "Impact of Bed Rest on Muscle and Metabolic Function: From Dallas to Toulouse," Symposium: Physical Inactivity: A Biological Basis For Metabolic Disease, Physiological Society Meeting at the University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom, July 15, 2008.

Dennis Wible, Teachers College,

- "Improving Classroom Instruction," Heald College, Honolulu, Hawaii.
- Institute Graduate Reunion Idea Exchange, Career College Association, Las Vegas.

Mei Zhong, School of Music, "Traditional and Modern Art Songs/Anthology of Chinese Songs, Volume II," 50th National Convention of National Association of Teachers of Singing, Nashville, Tenn.

Service

Richard Bellaver, Center for Information and Communication Sciences, "Integrating Human Factors Research into a Communications Technology Program," Proceedings of the International Conference on Engineering Education, Pecs-Budapest, Hungary, July 27-31, 2008.

Mike Bloxham, Insight and Research, Center for Media Design, second-year judge for Mediapost's 2008 Creative Media Awards.

Chu-yuan Cheng, Department of Economics, granted two interviews to Radio Free Asia on China's economy in the post-Olympic period and on the Chinese government's policy to revive the falling stock market, July 2008.

Robert Fritz, Department of Modern Languages and Classics, session chair, "New Models for Assessment," American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Ryan Hourigan, College of Fine Arts, grant reviewer, U.S. Department of Education Professional Development for Arts Educators.

David McIntosh, Department of Special Education, elected president-elect of the American Academy of School Psychology (AASP).

Creative Endeavor

Scott Trappe, Human Performance Laboratory, committee on NASA's Research on Human Health Risks, Board on Health Sciences Policy, Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, Washington, D.C.

Mei Zhong, School of Music, performed at Taiwan Music Fest-Los Angeles 2008, Los Angeles.

Get Update Delivered to Your Home E-mail Address

If you would like to have Update delivered to your home e-mail address, visit the Update Web site at www.bsu.edu/update and click on the "Subscribe" link.