Welcome to UWomen!

As the University of Minnesota’s vice president and provost for equity and diversity, I’m pleased to present the second annual issue of UWomen in the Minnesota Women’s Press. As you’ll see in these pages, or on a visit to any of the University’s campuses, the University of Minnesota is changing. You see it in who’s teaching, and what and how they’re teaching. You see it in the rich partnerships with diverse communities. You see it in facilities and technologies designed to make the University experience accessible to people with disabilities. You see it in childcare and parental leave policies, sexual harassment policies, and health coverage for domestic partners.

Indeed, you feel it, as a campus climate that is both more and more welcoming and affirming to the multitudes of voices and identities that make up this University.

This transformation is happening because dedicated and courageous people have come in from the margins to take their place at the table—women, people of color, members of the GLBT community, people with disabilities, and their allies.

But the benefits aren’t only theirs.

When we put historical wrongs to right, when we create an environment that embraces people of multiple identities and affirms all that they have to offer, when different perspectives and knowledge systems come together to yield innovative solutions, we all share the benefits—white women and women of color, as well as women, members of the GLBT community and straight people, people with and without disabilities.

I’ve heard it said that University women “have it all.” After all, don’t women outnumber men in the student body and occupy leadership positions at every organizational level? To be sure, we have come far—but we’re not yet there.

The University women you see featured on these pages are beneficiaries of the work already done, but they are also leaders and partners in the work that lies ahead as we continue the struggle to advance equity for women at the University, across Minnesota, and around the world.

The Ian Gertie Amacher said, “I am the daughter between my Self and the spirit of the land. I change myself, I change the world.” I see her words as guiding the work we do at the University of Minnesota as we continue our transformation. I hope the stories of women featured here will inspire you to join in the journey.

Best,
Nancy Rudy Barcelos
Vice President and Provost for Equity and Diversity University of Minnesota

Sina Yi: Finding community at the U

By Krista Anderson

Like many high school seniors, Sina Yi struggled with her decision about where to attend college. As a transgender student, however, Yi had questions and concerns that were markedly different than most. “Being transgender, I was always so afraid about college,” says Yi, who will be a sophomore in the College of Design at the University of Minnesota in the fall. “I thought I would ask myself, will they put me in a men’s dorm or a women’s dorm? And what about the men’s room vs. women’s room bathroom stuff, how am I going to deal with that? Is there any college where I can really feel safe?”

Feeling safe is no small matter for Yi. Born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, she was separated from her immediate family at a very young age and spent several years in the rice fields of the Cambodian countryside. She attended school in the city, living with her grandmother; little money and little support from her parents made life difficult.

Things changed in 2002, when she was given the opportunity to immigrate to the United States. “My life in America was much better,” Yi says. “I was no longer afraid to go to school; I no longer had to worry about money or finding a job.” Yi did well at Washington High School in Minneapolis, becoming involved in Washburn’s Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) group and District 202, a Minneapolis organization for queer youth.

It was through District 202 that Yi first learned about Lavender House, the University’s LGBTQ center. “A friend of mine told me about it,” she says. “I was highly intrigued. I heard good things about it.”

So Yi enrolled at the University of Minnesota and moved into the Lavender House dorm.

“I was nervous at first to be in a house full of guys,” Yi says. “I thought it was a man’s world and that I would be the only girl. But my roommate was really welcoming and supportive. I felt like I belonged.”

Over the past two years, Yi has found a strong sense of community and support at Lavender House. “I have learned so much about myself and about other people,” she says. “I have been able to accept who I am and love who I am.”

It’s a feeling that Yi hopes to bring to the rest of her college career. “I want to be a role model for other transgender students and show them that they can do anything they want,” Yi says. “I want to show other university students that they can also feel safe.”

Continued on page 2

Robert Juarez: Building an accessible stadium from the ground up

By Ani Berger

Even as the girders and bricks of the new TCF Stadium rise above the University’s Twin Cities campus, there’s plenty of work taking place that doesn’t involve steel or concrete. Just one of these behind-the-scenes efforts is ensuring that the state-of-the-art facility is accessible to the entire University community, including individuals with disabilities.

Leading that effort is Roberta Juarez, a University staff member in Disabilities Services for the past 15 years. Currently, Juarez has two roles in Disabilities Services: as a disability specialist, she meets with students with disabilities to learn about their needs and recommends reasonable accommodations; as the manger of the physical access coordinator, she provides consultation and expertise on a wide range of projects to ensure their accessibility, such as new or remodeled classroom buildings.

It’s this latter role that originally brought Juarez into the stadium project. “I was thrilled to learn that Roberta was asked to provide input in the very early stages of the stadium’s design,” says Eric Schnell, interim director of Disabilities Services, who is also a board member on which Juarez was involved in the planning. “I’ve frequently seen her helped architects examine blueprints,” he says.

Juarez, who monitors the University’s accessibility, noted that some aspects of the stadium were not designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. For example, the main entrance was not accessible to wheelchair users because it was too low. The main concourse was not designed for people who use wheelchairs, Juarez noted, and the press box was not accessible to people with disabilities.

Like Juarez, many people on campus continue to work to make the University more accessible. “We are constantly pushing the envelope,” Juarez says. “We want to make sure that all people have equal access to the University.”

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Rose Brewer: Putting knowledge into action against poverty

By Kelly O’Brien

Nothing gets Professor Rose Brewer fired up like the issue of poverty. “It’s the same problem we’re in right now,” she says. Brewer, a professor in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota, “is incredible to see so many people in a position of need and want. It’s unacceptable.”

Poverty and wealth, and the ways government policies influence where one sits on that spectrum, have fueled much of Brewer’s recent work. The Color of Wealth, co-written with a team of women experts and published in 2006, shone a light on the reasons whites have more people than color, and how immigration policies, the G.I. Bill, 19th-century emancipation, and many other government actions have played a role. These days, poverty is a central part of the “policy issues” she’s investigating.

Brewer has spent more than 20 years in the Departments of African American and African Studies as a sociologist working at the intersections of inequality, race, economics, gender, and class. As a scholar and advocate, she encourages people to question the way they view the issues of our time.

Brewer points to the current Presidential race as an example. Americans seem to “redefine” its issues during national calamities, such as Hurricane Katrina and the current sub-prime mortgage debacle. For Brewer, however, it’s a topic that is always rich with meaning. “What is it about this political moment that is different?” she asks. “What is the meaning of poverty today?”

Brewer contends that globalization plays a huge role in the poverty discussion today, with global corporations moving to where labor is cheap and workers can’t organize. And United States trade policies and the World Bank play as much a role as the systematic dismantling of government safety nets and the downsizing of social welfare programs.

Although such issues get Brewer excited, she feels it’s even more critical to motivate and mobilize students to take action. It’s a tradition embedded in the “DNA” of her department, born of the protest and struggle by a group of students who, in January 1969, occupied University President Malcolm Moos’ office until he agreed to establish a department of African American studies. As the Department of African American Studies and African Studies began a yeartime celebration of its 40th anniversary in the fall of 2008, Brewer will facilitate a daylong, intergenerational workshop that will train today’s students to be effective activists.

“Important to understand the causes of poverty and other issues that affect our community,” she says. “You need both theory and practice, knowledge and action. It’s not an either/or.”

Kelly O’Brien is a communications manager in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota.

Continued on page 2
The Women’s Center: A new name reflects a rich history

At the University of Minnesota, office name changes aren’t generally considered big news. When the Office for Equity and Diversity Women, a unit of the Office for Equity and Diversity, was renamed on August 1, 2008, it was more than a name change; it was a reflection of the rich history that had been unfolding for nearly half a century.

Our constituents had been asking for a name that seemed more inviting, more inclusive, and more reflective of the current and current students, faculty and staff, and women in the community to more easily find and utilize our programs and services,” says Peg Lorentz, interim director of the Women’s Center.

“We knew that we needed an identity that would reflect our continuing ability to adapt to the dynamic needs of our diverse constituencies.”

The office has been adapting to University women’s new roles and challenges for almost fifty years. The Counseling Center for Women, as it was then called, was founded in 1960—the first women’s center on a university campus. Focused in those early days on increasing educational opportunities for women, the center’s reach has broadened over the years to embrace diverse groups of staff and faculty as well as students—including women of color, members of the GLBTQ community, and women with disabilities—and to work more strategically toward system-wide change.

“Today, the Women’s Center is nationally recognized for its innovative services and programs. In 2000, the office hosted the first National Action Conference for Women in Higher Education, a transconference focused on shaping a national agenda for women in higher education. Planning is now underway for the second National Action Conference to be held in 2010, hosted by the Women’s Center and the Office for Equity and Diversity.”

Closer to home, this fall the Women’s Center will host “Discover Exceptional Women,” a series of lectures, performances, and workshops focused on women in STEM2 at the University (see story and calendar, page 6). Lorentz is particularly eager to see community women participate in the series. “Reaching women in the community is an important part of the University mission,” Lorentz says, “and we hope that the community will continue to partner with us on multiple initiatives for women, both on and off campus.”

According to Dr. Nancy “Rusty” Barcelo, the University’s Vice President and Vice Provost for Equity and Diversity, the Women’s Center has always been at the forefront of both campus and national efforts to address challenges faced by women in higher education. “As we go forward, the Women’s Center will continue its role as a catalyst for women’s equity,” Barcelo says. “The Women’s Center is a vital part of the University’s effort to support women’s achievement and success through collaboration, leadership development, educational programs, and policy change.”

Women’s Center staff contributed to this report.

Jacquie Johnson: Going “green” at the University of Minnesota, Morris

By Ani Berger

“The concept of ‘sustainability’ is not one I would have been familiar with five years ago,” admits Jacqueline R. Johnson, Chancellor of the University of Minnesota, Morris. “But I have been so fortunate to have arrived at Morris in 2006, she has become a driving force in the movement towards creating sustainable campuses that can generate their own energy within their own limits.”

UWM’s commitment to sustainability has led to greenhouse gases and other pollutants. UMM’s most visible accomplishment is the recycling program on the University of Minnesota system when it comes to energy self-sufficiency, and its effort to become carbon neutral by 2010.

This is not in its cost-saving efforts but by reaching that goal. Currently, a wind turbine powers 50 percent of campus buildings at the University of Minnesota, Morris. Johnson has been on campus for the past 13 years; all of the wind power that would otherwise require a natural gas supply. The plant, which was just completed, is powered by locally procured feed stocks—some from corn, wheat, rice, and other local crops. And in all fall 2010, Morris hopes to open its first “green dorm,” the Green Prairie Living and Learning Community, which will provide residence and summer visitors with a true model of green living.

Such initiatives are only fitting, green Morris’ location, history, and mission, says Johnson. Born as an American Indian boarding school in the late 19th century, control of the campus was transferred to the state of Minnesota in 1959 with the stipulation that American Indian students “shall at all times be admitted to such school free of charge for tuition,” a policy the campus honors to this day.

The campus operated as an agricultural boarding school until the late 1950s, when the state legislature approved a plan to create a liberal arts college within the University of Minnesota system, and in 1960 the University of Minnesota, Morris opened its doors as a small, residential, undergraduate public liberal arts college.

“The story of Morris is much like that of Minnesota—it’s the story of the land,” Johnson says. “The school’s beginning as a boarding school for American Indian students [who were forcibly taken from their families] is a shameful but historical reality,” she says. “But I feel that our movement towards conservation is closely tied to Native American traditions and beliefs of honoring the land, preserving the land, living with the land and of the land, and not just on it.”

These values are resonant with Johnson’s thoughts and views of social justice. “For me, the concept of sustainability is closely tied to my own ideas about equity, access, and justice.”

Johnson says, “I never would have cast those ideas in the terms of sustainable development before coming to Morris, but when I think about what we’re trying to do here—educating ourselves and our students about preserving our many resources for the benefit of all—it’s clear to me that we’re in on the ground floor of these fights for social change and social justice really are.”

Ani Berger is editor of UWM and director of communications in the Office for Equity and Diversity at the University of Minnesota.

For more information about UWM and resources for the transgender community, visit www.ghta.umn.edu.

The classroom stereotype that “only boys like math” is getting a run for its money at the University of Minnesota, Institute of Technology, which houses the University’s engineering, physical sciences and mathematics disciplines, the Civil Engineering and Mathematics (GEM) program is teaching female students how to—and enjoy—math and science with the same enthusiasm and success as their male peers. Now in its third year, GEM is one of several programs offered through the Institute of Technology and the Center for Educational Programs (ITCEP) helping to reverse the steady decline in the use of girls’ interest in math and science and engineering.

According to Sarah Gregg, GEM program coordinator, many factors contribute to girls losing interest in math and science around age 15. “There’s an expectation culturally that girls are not supposed to excel in science, and as a result, many girls lose the same encouragement as boys to succeed in these areas in school,” Gregg says. “Our program works to close that gap by encouraging girls’ enthusiasm for math and science in the early years.”

The GEM program, designed for girls in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, offers participants the chance to experience hands-on, real-world math and science experiments, applications, and activities. The program runs over the entire year: the girls attend four weekend events during the school year and a week-long GEM summer camp, all held on the University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities campus. Some of this year’s GEM activities included examining tessellating patterns and how these patterns are linked to nature; using images of the cosmos to visualize geometric concepts; and understanding the best way to pack round objects together based on spatial relationships.

Erin Backus, who will attend Dakota Hills Middle School in Eagan, Minn., this fall, thoroughly enjoyed the 2008 GEM summer program, held June 29-July 2. “The rebounding balloon demonstration was the coolest!” she says, referring to an experiment designed to simulate fireworks by heating a helium balloon filled with various salts. “I had a lot of fun, and I wish it could have been a week longer!”

Thanks to financial support from the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE), GEM’s core sponsors, hundreds of girls from 20 Minnesota schools have the opportunity to explore, learn, and enjoy mathematics in GEM’s supportive environment. The program’s learning experiences alone have the potential for lifelong positive impact on its students, but it goes even further and offers them something just as powerful: a community of motivated girls.

“Like minded young ladies like to spend time together working on challenging math activities—it reinforces and raises their enthusiasm for the subject,” says Monica Fon, teacher at Cedar Park Elementary School in Apple Valley, Minn., who has been involved with the program since its inception. “Inspiring enthusiasm for science is critical. By introducing the girls to math and science curricula that is relevant to their current and future lives, and in thinking about future goals—college and science-related careers.”

“GEM brings together students of diverse backgrounds with an interest in math and science,” says Gregg. “Students grow through the program, year after year, together. They look around at other girls getting chapped about math and science, and realize that they aren’t alone—and that math and science can be both fun and useful.”

GEM is a jewel for sparking girls’ math interests

By Silvia Yeung

Sina Yi: Continued from page 1

of Minnesota’s Living & Learning Community for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allied (GLBTA) students. Located in Coonmeadow Hall, Lavender House is both a residential and community space with programming on topics that address the history and culture of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities and to connect with the larger Twin Cities GLBTA community through social events, service opportunities, and guest speakers. Lavender House opened in the fall of 2007, the same time that Yi arrived on campus. The first year, Yi, a senior living in Lavender House, chose to attend the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Twin clear. “The Was the place that seemed the most open to queer folks,” says Yi, “I admit that my first year was also the beginning of my year and I’ll be in Community Advisor (CA) during the 2008-09 school year.”

“There is a history here of teaching awareness and openness,” says Yi, who reports that she feels “safe and welcome” at the U.

As Lavender House’s CA, Yi will extend that welcome to new Lavender House residents. It’s a job she’s uniquely qualified for, says Siew-Thwee Koh, director of the University’s Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Programs Office. “Having lived in Lavender House last year, when it was just getting off the ground, Sina knows how important it is to create community on campus, especially for first year students.”

Kris Anderson is communications intern at the Women’s Center at the University of Minnesota and a student in the College of Liberal Arts. Ani Berger also contributed to this report.

"I WOMEN" IS A SPECIAL SECTION IN THE MINNESOTA WOMEN'S PRESS PUBLISHED BY THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT AND VICE PROVOST FOR EQUITY AND DIVERSITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
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So, What Are U Working On?
A Snapshot of UWomen Reading, Writing, and Working

CAROL BERKENKOTTER, professor of writing studies, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s working on: In 2006, I published a book called Same-Sex Marriage: The Cultural Politics of Love and Family. I am currently working on a book discussing how legal, biologic, and transgender people think about family today. With the rise of gay and lesbian parenting and the intense focus on the marriage issue, it’s interesting to consider whether LGBT people are starting to think about family in more ‘conventional’ ways.

What she’s reading: I just finished Susan Jacoby’s book The Age of American Unreason, which examines anti-intellectualism and anti-rationality in contemporary American culture. Jacoby uses compelling examples to illustrate the peril of a culture that increasingly values visual media over reading and disdains well-educated “elites.” I’m looking forward to assigning some chapters to my students and getting their reactions.

KATHY HULL, associate professor of sociology, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s working on: My research explores issues of culture and inequality in the education of immigrant students. One of my recent projects, Six Lessons for Anti-discriminatory Education, examines multiple ways to challenge racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression in the classroom. It depicts the hurdles we often confront when teaching, learning, and learning to teach towards social justice.

What she’s reading: The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Folk Memoir by Kao Kalia Yang, a memoir of her family’s refugee experience in Thailand and the United States. Yang beautifully weaves Hmong folklore into a story that honors her grandmother’s and parents’ courage and grace in the struggle to find a better life. The deep love and respect that she has for her culture gave me pause to think more about my family’s refugee experience and those of other refugee groups in our Twin Cities.

OPFELIA FERRAN, associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s working on: I just published Working through Memory: Writing and Remembrance in Contemporary Spanish Narrative, which analyzes a series of texts written by Spanish authors. I explore how these texts, ranging from novels to autobiographies, present memory production and transmission across generations as a way of dealing with the legacies of war and political repression in Spain throughout the twentieth century.

What she’s reading: One of my favorite novels is Spanish author Carmen Martín Gaite. I have enjoyed re-reading her 1992 novel Nebosberberis (Scented Clouds). It explores the therapeutic nature of writing for women, understood as a process of self-exploration and interpersonal communication. The novel is the story of two middle-class women who decide to exchange letters and share diary entries at a time when they are each going through major life crises. Through that written exchange, they work to confront and deal with their lives without blinding of various kinds, break away from the social constraints that were stifling them, and imagine themselves anew.

BETH BROWN, Dakota language program associate, department of American Indian studies, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s working on: Over the past year, I have been dedicated to coordinating the development of Dakota Ipiwewciyapi, our brand new certificate program in Dakota language teaching. With fewer than 10 native First-language speakers left in the state of Minnesota, there is a crucial moment in the effort to revitalize Dakota; it is imperative that we act to ensure that the language is passed on.

What she’s reading: The Milk Kings: An Indian Baseball Story by LeAnne Howe. Howe presents a version of reality that is, like its characters, both familiar and mystical at once. Limitations of time and space are dissolved, and the reader’s mind becomes the center of the four directions. Peeling back its layers of meaning, the story Howe tells re-identifies “America’s” favorite pastime, tracing it down to its indigenous roots.

Catherine S. O’Doherty, director, American Indian Studies program, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s writing: My most recent research has focused on the role of alcohol in explaining racial and gender disparities in homicide rates in inner cities. My colleagues and I specifically looked at the role alcohol and male liquor availability and promotion in explaining high homicide rates in African American inner cities.

What she’s reading: I enjoy reading inspirational books such as The Zev & My Shephard: Healing Wisdom of the Twenty-third Psalm by Harold S. Kushner. The book is beautifully written and a very thoughtful piece of literature.

DIYaH LARASATI, associate professor of theatre arts and dance, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s writing: I am currently working on a book called Dancing on the Map: Grage Cultural Reconstructions in Indonesia Following the 1965–68 Massacres. In collaboration with an Indonesian choreographer, Seryanti, I am also working on a performance aimed at creating a new discourse in historiography, based on the oral history of Indonesian female dancers who are former political prisoners.

What she’s reading: During the past few months, I’ve re-read Amistad Gough’s wonderful essay entitled “Dancing in Cambodia,” an ethnography which presents a detailed account of the differentiation and romanticism of alliances within the politics of border, and questions of nationalism arising through relationships between female dancing bodies and violence.

MICHELE WRIGHT, associate professor of English, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s writing: I’m working on a book called Crossing Cultures: Reimagining the African Diaspora in the Western World. This book will extend my research on black identity through a specific historical narrative, beginning with the African Diaspora and continuing with the Civil War, the Jim Crow era, and the Civil Rights movement. I am particularly interested in the extent to which the black community has participated in Western culture to the development of the US, meaning you see how our blindnesses, prejudices, religious beliefs, jealousy, greed, and arrogance can both inspire and destroy inventions and discoveries.

What she’s reading: From the archive of interviews with David Boskin and The Elusive Universe, both by David Boskin. I had very little interest in science as a student—I saw it as this dull narrative of great white men saving the world. Boskin connects the discovery of the scientific cosmos with white Western culture to the development of physics in the West, meaning you see how our blindnesses, prejudices, religious beliefs, jealousy, greed, and arrogance can both inspire and destroy inventions and discoveries.

PAULA OLOUGHLIN, associate professor of sociology, UM–Moorhead

What she’s writing: A collaborative project with colleagues across the Twin Cities titled Conscience: Courageous Resistance. I address the question of why and how so many ordinary people on their own, in groups, and through institutions, can and do resist grave injustices such as war and theft, despite tremendous pressure to participate in evil.

What she’s reading: Hannah Arendt’s Eichmann in Jerusalem is a book that I often reread. It serves always as a reminder to me that the real danger in the world is not the profoundly evil, but rather the ordinary people who join in their actions or sit by silently and by saying nothing.

LOUISE CANCEL RODRIGUEZ, academic progress associate, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s writing: I’m working on the plan for next year’s CASA SOL (Community Activism, Student Organizing, Leader Opportunities for Leadership) program. CASA SOL is the University of Minnesota’s Ethnic Community for incoming freshmen who are interested in the Chicana/ Latina experience. I’ve been working with the CASA SOL newsletter, maintain the CASA SOL blog, and provide academic and personal support to students.

What she’s reading: The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom by Don Miguel Ruiz is a transformational book—a new way of looking at the world around you and living your life. Ruiz empowers individuals to look within themselves and make changes in their belief system so they find personal freedom by being aware of how their actions affect their lives.

MARThA THErlow, senior research associate, Institute on Community Integration, College of Education and Human Development, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s writing: For more than a decade, my work has focused on the inclusion of students with disabilities in all the opportunities that younger students have, including participation in assessments that determine future opportunities. Universal design of assessment is an approach that attempts to make the tests for assessments with students with disabilities accessible to all students who need them addressed in the design of the assessment, without changing what the assessment intends to measure.

What she’s reading: After the death of my husband this year, I read Jean Doidge’s The Year of Magical Thinking. It is a good read for anyone because the forward and backward paths that the grieving take are so eloquently and authentically described by the author. For those grieving, this book is an understanding friend who reflects the ups and downs of losing someone close.

What she’s writing: I’m working on a book called Scrutinizing the African Diaspora in the Western World. Western scholars and politicians tend to define black identity through a specific historical narrative, beginning with the African Diaspora and continuing with the Civil War, the Jim Crow era, and the Civil Rights movement. I argue that this definition is incomplete, because African immigration to the West means black identities with different relationships to the Middle Passage are ignored or marginalized.

What she’s writing: E-MZC and The Electric Universe, both by David Boskin. I had very little interest in science as a student—I saw it as this dull narrative of great white men saving the world. Boskin connects the discovery of the scientific cosmos with white Western culture to the development of physics in the West, meaning you see how our blindnesses, prejudices, religious beliefs, jealousy, greed, and arrogance can both inspire and destroy inventions and discoveries.

PAMELA M. LYLE, assistant professor of education, College of Liberal Arts, UM–Twin Cities

What she’s working on: At the end of this semester, I finish teaching my class on special education. My students bring me a wealth of knowledge and wisdom, and I am always impressed with their ability to think critically about the special education system and the community we are responsible for. I have learned much from them, and I am grateful for their passion and commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of children and youth with disabilities.

What she’s reading: I am currently reading The Interpretation of Murder by Jed Rubenfeld. It’s a really a retelling of Freud’s most famous case history of his patient “Dora,” but the story is told by Rubenfeld in an entirely different way.

JOY DORSCHER, assistant professor of family medicine, Medical School, UM–Duluth

What she’s working on: My most recent project was dedicated to coordinating the development of Dakota Ipiwewciyapi, our brand new certificate program in Dakota language teaching. With fewer than 10 native First-language speakers left in the state of Minnesota, there is a crucial moment in the effort to revitalize Dakota; it is imperative that we act to ensure that the language is passed on.

What she’s reading: The King on a Bus: Cycling in the Spirit of Revolution by John M. Barry. It’s a study of a life in the U.S. during the influenza epidemic: what we as a nation did that allowed it to continue to spread, and the level of fear that permeated the everyday life of the entire population.

What she’s reading: The Power in the Blood: A Play for Black Youth by John M. Barry. It’s a study of a life in the U.S. during the influenza epidemic: what we as a nation did that allowed it to continue to spread, and the level of fear that permeated the everyday life of the entire population.
**Resources for Women at the U**

Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education
aurora.umn.edu/aurora

Center on Women and Public Policy
www.umn.edu/content/wpp

CSOM Graduate Women's Initiatives
www.umn.edu/gwipage400.aspx

Derek F. Pond, Center for Women's Health
www.umn.edu/wh

Department of Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies
gwss.umn.edu

Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
eoa.umn.edu

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Ally Programs Office
www.glbta.umn.edu

**UWomen**

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**Editor**

Ami Berger

**Designers**

Norma Olson, Amy Kiellor

**Contributing Writers**

Krista Anderson, Ami Berger, Andrea Coffield, Peg Lonquist, Kelly O'Brien, E agendas, Sila Young

**Contributing Photographers**

Richard G. Anderson, Ami Berger, Tom Fasly, Brett Grosklein, Greg Helgerson, Kelly MacWilliams, Patrick O'Leary, Brad Shuffler, Diane Walters

**“DISCOVER EXCEPTIONAL WOMEN” AT THE U**

This fall, the University of Minnesota’s Women’s Center (see story, page 2) will host a two-week series of events entitled “Discover Exceptional Women.” The series is designed to engage women faculty, staff, students, and community members in the wide range of resources, programming, and services available to women at the U.

“Discover Exceptional Women” will run from September 22 through October 3, 2008, and will feature lectures, films, performances, and workshops on topics including women’s leadership, work/life balance, body image, women’s health, and strategies for student success.

Author and journalist Courtney E. Martin will kick off the two week series on Monday, September 22 at 7 p.m., with a lecture entitled “Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters,” about her book of the same name. Martin’s work addresses the ways in which a culture of perfection is manifested in girls’ and women’s attitudes about their bodies.

According to Peg Lonquist, interim director of the Women’s Center, the “Discover Exceptional Women” series has a dual mission:

- In addition to providing opportunities for women across campus and across the community to get involved at the U, we hope Discover Exceptional Women will help foster a culture of success for women by creating greater visibility for all the women’s events, services, and offices that are available here,” Lonquist says.

- Most “Discover Exceptional Women” events are free and open to the public. For more information about the series or any individual event, visit the “Discover Exceptional Women” web site at www.umn.edu/women/nwew or email women@umn.edu.

Below are highlights from the “Discover Exceptional Women” series. Visit www.umn.edu/women/nwew for a complete list of events and full information about location and time of each event.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22**

The 5th Annual Women’s Health Research Conference
Sponsor: Deborah E. Findell Center for Women’s Health
9 a.m.-3 p.m., McNamara Alumni Center

"Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters: a lecture by Courtney E. Martin
Sponsor: Women’s Center
7 p.m.

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23**

Positive Body Image Information Fair
Sponsor: Boeing Health Service and the Department of Recreational Sports 11 a.m.-1 p.m., University Recreation Center

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**

A Showcase of Intercultural Programs by International Women
Sponsor: International Student & Scholar Services Noon-2 p.m., 110 Hillo Hall
Front Runners: Women With Political Ambition
Sponsor: Center on Women and Public Policy 6 p.m., 255 Hapen H. Humphrey Center

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**

"Women’s Work is Never Done: How to Balance Work & Life"
Sponsor: Career/Life Alliance Services, Inc. Noon-1 p.m.

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**

Talk and Tea How to Succeed as a Woman Student On Campus
Sponsor: Women’s Center
Noon-1:30 p.m.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29**

“Developing Women’s Leadership Through Volunteerism”
Sponsor: Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education
4:30 p.m., McNamara Alumni Center

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**

Women’s O.N.E. (Organizations Networking for Equity) Fall Meeting
Sponsor: Women’s Center
6 a.m.-5 p.m., The Depot Hotel, Minneapolis

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1**

“See Ed For Everyone”
Sponsor: Women Students Athletic Collective 6 p.m., Coffman Memorial Union Theater

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2**

“The 2010 Conference for Women In Higher Education: An Overview”
Sponsor: Women’s Center 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3**

File, Screen, Discuss
University Women of Color

Above left: the site plan for the University of Minnesota’s TCF Stadium. Above: artist’s rendering of the view from the west of the TCF Stadium. The stadium will open for the first Golden Gopher football game of the 2009 season on September 12, 2009.

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**Robertas Juarez** Continued from page 1

include numerous unisex bathrooms for guests who have opposite-sex caregivers or assistants, and most multi-stall restrooms will feature double the number of accessible stalls that are required by law. Different textures will be built into floors in key areas of the stadium, to provide wayfinding cues for guests with visual impairments, and elevator access will be available for all public areas of the stadium. Juarez is currently working with University Parking and Transportation Services to determine the best locations for disability parking and drop-off areas for guests with limited mobility.

Despite the amount of effort Juarez has put into the stadium project, she’s enthusiastic about both the process and the outcome. “It’s been so much fun,” she says, “and it really is a once-in-a-lifetime project.” The stadium team has been very receptive to her suggestions, and she also gives credit to the University Services staff who are responsible for adhering to University standards and state and federal codes across campus. “The University’s facilities staff are consistently responsive, innovative, and encouraging about issues of accessibility. They frequently go beyond what is required by code to make access better for people with disabilities,” she says. “I think it demonstrates the U’s overall commitment to providing welcoming access to people with different needs.”

Schnell agrees with that assessment, and includes Juarez in it. “Robertas is a true professional who is exceptionally knowledgeable about issues pertaining to the physical accessibility of facilities,” Schnell says, “and the stadium will be one of the most accessible stadiums in the nation, thanks to Robertas’s work.”

Ami Berger is editor of UWomen and director of communications in the Office for Equity and Diversity at the University of Minnesota.