

DEPARTMENT OF

RECREATION & PARKS

MANAGEMENT ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



Students learn about the urban-park interface through the alternative spring break service learning course

Looking Back On A Very Productive Year

Best wishes to all of our alumni and friends who helped make 2008–2009 a very productive year for our faculty and students. The Department of Recreation and Parks Management had the largest group of entering first-year students in recent history. Twenty-eight came to Chico State specifically for the programs that are offered by our department. Some of these students are second- and third-generation family members of Recreation Administration majors. We sincerely appreciate the trust you place in our faculty by recommending your friends and relatives to our program.

By the end of the 2008–2009 academic year, 447 students at Chico State were Recreation Administration majors. In addition, 16 graduate students had completed their first or second year of study for their master’s degrees in the program. Despite the economy, career placements for both graduate and undergraduate students remain high. Much of that placement success is owed to you—our alumni and friends. We look forward to continuing our work with you in student recruitment, internship placements, and curriculum development for our department.

The faculty, students and staff greatly appreciate the financial support that you have provided with your donations.

Recreation Students Learn Through Service

Though the Department of Recreation and Parks Management sits at the far end of campus, it takes center stage when it comes to service learning. Service learning engages students in the community through participation with organizations and programs that help them grow. It recognizes that learning goes well beyond the classroom, involves community partners as co-educators, and encourages civic engagement.

Last academic year, over 35 programs and events in the Chico area, from festivals and fundraisers to youth and senior programs, were planned and implemented with the assistance of recreation students involved in service learning initiatives. Several classes use service learning as their cornerstone activity. One of these, Dr. Emilyn Sheffield’s “alterna-

tive spring break” class, brings students to the Bay Area for a week of immersion in National Park Service projects. “I grew up in the Bay Area but did not realize what an important and complex role the National Park Service plays in natural, cultural, and recreational resources. It was an amazing learning experience,” reported Daniel Johnson, a student in the class, about his spring break experience.

Along with important “learning by doing” that occurs within these classes, many students develop connections with organizations that extend well beyond the semester. Julie Ellen, who was introduced to Do It Leisure, an organization serving disabled adults, through a service learning project now works for them full time.

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DEPARTMENT UPDATES, AWARDS, AND ACCOLADES



Gitelson Glides Into Chico

Dr. Richard Gitelson's first major purchase when he arrived in Chico last summer was a bicycle. He was thrilled to have discovered that besides having a great university, Chico is one of America's most bicycle friendly communities. Rich is the newest member of our faculty team. He moved from Arizona State University West to join us. His work in the field has spanned several decades, and Rich is widely regarded by his colleagues around the nation as a top professor. We are thrilled he has decided to call Chico home, and to see him peddling his spiffy new bike around town is to know he's thrilled too.

Service (continued from pg. 1)



Diane Santiago, a student in the spring break service learning class, works on a habitat enhancement project at the Presidio of San Francisco.

Dr. Laura McLachlin, who has served as a service learning specialist on campus, is widely known as a champion of this approach. "Students learn class material along with important life lessons about civic engagement, community partners benefit from an infusion of energy and ideas, and our academic program stays relevant and cutting edge," says Laura. Service learning, a noted strength of the Recreation and Parks Management Department, is clearly a win-win for all.



Guthrie Earns Top Award

Dr. Roger Guthrie received the Outstanding Advisor Award at Chico State, a recognition that is no surprise to his former students. Roger was recognized as the top academic advisor on campus because of his commitment to advising students, devotion to student success, and development of a department-wide advising system. This award acknowledged what students, alumni, and faculty have known for years—Roger really cares about students! His concern for others makes a difference in our students' lives. Congratulations, Roger!



RLM Cruises with Geddie

Dr. Morgan Geddie is a lead professor in the Resort and Lodging Management Option. A specialist in many aspects of the hospitality industry, Morgan has a special interest in cruise line management. He recently organized a "cruise practicum" that took 16 students on a 7-day cruise to Alaska that allowed them to go behind the scenes to experience cruise line operations. Students learned a great deal about the industry and developed strong bonds on the trip. Morgan hopes to offer this floating class again and hopes that alumni can join the group!

A+ on Accreditation!

Did you know that the recreation program at Chico State is one of only a few in the nation that is nationally accredited by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in all its option areas? The association's national accreditation team recently visited and gave the department exemplary ratings. Faculty,

staff, and administrators are dedicated to keeping the recreation and parks program on the cutting edge of knowledge and professional preparation in all option areas—Resort and Lodging Management, Special Events and Tourism, Community and Commercial Recreation, Parks and Natural Resources, and Therapeutic Recreation.

Looking Back (continued from pg. 1)

Your contributions have helped to fund student scholarships, the Recreation Administration Student Writing Lab, and Ability First Camp. These first two help to improve the academic performance of students, and Ability First provides hands-on experience for our students as well as enhances the quality of life of the disabled campers who participate each year.

Thank you for your continued support. The faculty, staff, and students are dedicated to continuing the reputation of the Department of Recreation and Parks Management as one of the best and most respected programs in the U.S.

Jim Fletcher,
Professor and Department Chair

Thank you to students in RECR 422—Leisure Services Promotions for assisting with this newsletter!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Patricia West



Patricia (Tricia) West is a student with vision, passion, and dedication. And she's a student who turned a class assignment into a real life program extraordinaire.

This past summer, Tricia implemented a pilot program of Camp LEAF (for learn, excite, advance, fulfill), a six-week program for children with learning disabilities. Tricia envisioned and developed Camp LEAF in RECR 220-Foundations of Programming. After researching needs in her hometown, Pleasanton, and creating a preliminary program design, Tricia requested a meeting with representatives of Pleasanton Unified School District. They agreed that Tricia should bring Camp LEAF to their students.

Describing her program, Tricia noted that "The idea for Camp LEAF was developed when my professor, Sarah Richardson, asked us to design a program about something we loved, something that made us tick. Her words really stuck with me, leading me to search my soul for what I am most passionate about. I designed Camp LEAF based on my own experiences as a student with learning disabilities. I felt these children would benefit from a summer camp that would help them close their educational gaps."

Tricia is a junior in the Community Recreation Option. We can't wait to see how, with Tricia's leadership, Camp LEAF will continue to grow!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Wayne Smith

Since graduating from the recreation program at Chico State in 1975, Wayne Smith has been helping communities become better places to play, learn, and grow. Thirty of his 34 years in the recreation field have been in Bend, Oregon, where Wayne launched a career and family while maintaining a strong connection to Chico.

Wayne graduated with a focus in therapeutic recreation, nurtured by "the best professors there were." Currently the director of recreation services at Bend Metro Park and Recreation District, Wayne has helped lead his agency to being a two time national award winner, receiving its last recognition in 2006 from the National Recreation and Park Association. The National Gold Medal Award recognized Bend Park and Recreation District for its long-range planning, environmental stewardship, and progressive programming. In addition, he was the recipient of the 1994 Professional Honor Award and the 1997 Outstanding TR Professional from the Oregon Recreation and Parks Association.

As noted by Wayne, "Our recreation department is a leader in innovative programming, especially therapeutic recreation. As a community-based organization, we have developed an extensive program with a comprehensive inclusion component. All therapeutic recreation staff are CTRS (certified therapeutic recreation specialist) certified, including myself."



Wayne Smith, Class of '75, is director of recreation services at Bend Metro Park and Recreation District in Oregon.

Wayne notes that a very important part of their success is the use of internships. "My education and training through Chico State was excellent," said Wayne, "so I believe strongly in supporting the education of students about to enter the fascinating, challenging, and important field of recreation. We look forward to helping Chico State students learn and grow through our commitment to internship learning."

Wayne's connections to Chico run deep. He met his wife, Val, at Chico State. Wayne recently enjoyed a reunion of a close knit group of friends from his Shasta Hall days at Chico State. A student at the time Merriam Library was being built, Wayne remarked on changes to campus: "The place has changed, but I know the strong commitment to the education that I experienced as a student remains."

Update Your Address - Stay in Touch!

Does Chico State have your current address? The recreation department uses the alumni association's database when mailing this newsletter. Please update your alumni record online at <http://www.csuchico.edu/alumni>. That way you'll be sure to receive the latest department and university news.

Chico State Campus Has a New Look!



New Student Services building, located by the BMU, adds convenience and atmosphere.



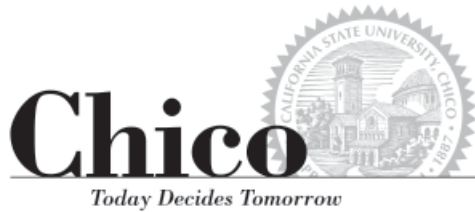
Students enjoy opportunities for sport and fitness at the Wildcat Recreation Center.



Yolo Hall is home to the Department of Recreation and Parks Management.



Tennis enthusiasts are thrilled with the new tennis courts, located next to Yolo Hall.



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