

Oct. 2010

## HUSKIE CONNECTION

OFF-CAMPUS & NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES



### Welcome from the Director

Welcome Back, Huskies! I am excited to start the fall semester and happy you're back on campus!

For any new readers, Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services provides numerous resources to NIU students. Our programs vary throughout the year, but we offer something for everyone. While we will help anyone who contacts our office, our main focus is on students who live off-campus (not in the residence halls) and non-traditional students (military students and students who are 24 years old or older, have a dependent(s), or are married, divorced, or widowed). We understand that the life of an off-campus or non-traditional student can be very different from that of the typical college student. Many of you work, have families, and have other obligations you have to juggle. You certainly have unique challenges, and we are here to help.

Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services provides programs, services, referrals, and a home away from home during your time at NIU. Located in the lower level of the Holmes Student Center (room 023J, next to a large computer lab), we offer comfortable sofas, study tables, and other great resources. If you need a place to take a break or eat between classes, use our lounge. You can even store your food in the full-sized refrigerator and use the microwave to reheat food. If you need a place to store your books throughout the day, sign up for a locker in the basement of the Holmes Student Center.

In addition to programs and newsletters designed just for you, we also have a weekly listserv to provide you with campus updates and remind you about great events at NIU. We can also help you find a roommate or locate housing options during your time here.

Please stop in and visit our office and lounge space at 023J Holmes Student Center, call us at 815-753-9999, e-mail us at [commontrad@niu.edu](mailto:commontrad@niu.edu), or better yet, join our Facebook group (NIU Off-Campus & Non-Trad). Any way you choose to contact us, we are happy to hear from you and assist you.

Have a great semester, and let us know how we can support you!

Jill Zambito  
Director, Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services

## Meet Our Staff!

Our office welcomes back three returning staff members this fall. To learn more about our new staff members, check out our next newsletter!



### **Kelli Bradley, Graduate Assistant**

Kelli is originally from Freeport, Illinois, and is a Graduate Assistant for our office. She graduated from Freeport High School in 2004, from Highland Community College, (Freeport, IL,) with an Associate of Arts in 2006, and from Loras College, (Dubuque, IA,) with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in May 2008. She is currently

completing her degree in the School Counseling program. Before entering her graduate program, Kelli worked as a substitute teacher in the Freeport School District and was a waitress at Cannova's Italian Restaurant in Freeport.



### **Audrey Barsanti Gonzalez, Student Coordinator**

Audrey, a junior, is currently pursuing a Bachelor of General Studies, mainly because her interests are so diverse she can't concentrate on just one area of study. She is an active member in various political organizations on campus and is a Peer Instructor for a UNIV 101 course. She

also served on the planning committee for last April's NIU Cares Day. She currently commutes from Sycamore, where she lives with her family and three dogs. Because Audrey understands the experience of commuter students, she hopes her role as a Student Coordinator will continue to allow her to reach out to and assist this particular student population.



### **Antoinette Williams, Student Coordinator**

Antoinette is a senior at NIU majoring in Family Social Services. This is her second year as a Student Coordinator for Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services. This year, she is looking forward to her October wedding, graduation, and her son's 3rd birthday! Her future career

goals include obtaining a Masters in Counseling and working in an educational setting. Her greatest achievements include joining an honor society in 2009 and managing to successfully balance her family, school, and work life.

## Get Involved!



NIU DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS  
& ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Welcome to the start of the 2010–2011 academic year. We look forward to another exciting year filled with student activities and leadership development. Our office is a great resource, and we encourage you to take advantage of the many areas for growth and involvement we offer. Getting involved is a great way to make friends, develop leadership skills, and have fun. It's even good for your grades: research suggests that students who get involved manage their time better and have higher graduation rates.

We are pleased to offer more than 300 student organizations ranging from academic and professional interest to recreation and sports. With so many options, we are sure you will find something that fits your interests. In addition to the multitude of student organizations on NIU's campus, Student Involvement & Leadership Development (SILD) also partners with and advises the Student Association, Campus Activities Board, Greek Affairs, Volunteerism, and the Leadership Academy.

The **Student Association** is NIU's student governing body, consisting of an executive cabinet and senators from across campus. Students wishing to have a voice in the governing process of NIU are encouraged to get involved in student government. Opportunities for elected and cabinet positions are available throughout the year. For additional information, please visit the Student Association's Website at [www.sa.niu.edu](http://www.sa.niu.edu)

**Campus Activities Board (CAB)** is the largest programming body on campus. CAB is a well-funded organization responsible for bringing mainstream and local entertainers to campus as well as organizing other large scale student activities and programs. There are opportunities in CAB to program events in a number of genres including fine arts, comedy, concerts, and cultural presentations.

**Greek Affairs** is available for any student wishing to participate in a Greek fraternity or sorority. Being a part of a sorority or fraternity is a unique experience that lasts a lifetime. Not only will you make life-long friendships, you'll have access to many leadership, scholarship, and community-service opportunities. There are four Greek Councils, and they are responsible for outlining the methods of recruitment for the organizations to form the council. The first step to becoming a member of an Interfraternity Council (IFC) or College Pan-Hellenic Council (CPC) chapter is to participate in the Recruitment—formerly known as rush—or Intake process. During this process, you will discover what IFC and CPC have to offer, make new friends, and become acquainted with the IFC and CPC chapters. The Multicultural Greek Council (MGC) and the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) have recruitment methods that vary from chapter to chapter. The first step to joining one of these two councils is to ask a current member about upcoming events.

**Volunteerism**, another component of the SILD office, consists of a series of programs throughout the year pairing NIU students with service opportunities throughout the DeKalb area. Volunteerism works tirelessly during the academic year and concludes their full year of activities with NIU Cares Day, which is a massive show of student service in the greater community.

The **Leadership Academy** offers students opportunities to fine-tune their leadership skills and meet a variety of student leaders. The Leadership Academy offers students a fast track to developing those skills needed to become leaders in an organization or future business endeavor.

Wherever your interests lie, Student Involvement & Leadership Development can assist you in determining an appropriate organization to join or help you develop skills that will be valuable throughout your time at NIU. Please stop by our office in the Campus Life Building Room 150 or visit our website at [www.niu.edu/studentinvolvement](http://www.niu.edu/studentinvolvement)

Melissa Williams  
Associate Director, Student Involvement & Leadership  
Development



## NIU Student Insurance Updates for Fall 2010

Beginning this semester, NIU is partnering with Aetna Student Health & Academic HealthPlans to offer a very good and affordable health insurance plan. Plan benefits are changing slightly. The lifetime maximum coverage for students is increasing to \$500,000, and the network is changing to Aetna's own network. Amazingly, the cost of the insurance has not changed since last year: it's still \$395 per semester. The cost of coverage for dependents is actually dropping!

Students who enroll in nine or more on-campus hours are automatically billed for insurance. The cost for the insurance is put on your Bursar's account; it is listed under "Misc Fees." If you have at least six credit hours, you can enroll in the NIU plan. An enrollment form needs to be submitted to the insurance office if you have less than nine on-campus hours. Enrollment forms for students and dependents are listed on the student insurance Website under Forms and Brochures, [www.studentinsurance.niu.edu](http://www.studentinsurance.niu.edu)

Carole Balli  
Benefits Services Supervisor, Student Insurance

## Ten Hot Spots at NIU

With the fall semester just beginning, it's important to be aware of places to visit on campus in order to study, hang out with friends, meet new people, grab lunch, or receive support. Check out ten great hot spots to visit on campus in order to make your time at NIU that much more successful.

### **The Lounge in the Lower Level of the Holmes Student Center:**

The Lounge is open to all students, specifically off-campus and non-traditional students. The Lounge provides comfortable couches, a microwave, television, full-sized refrigerator, computer access, and much more.

**The Fireplace in Neptune Central:** In the winter, the Fireplace is an ideal location to study, hang out with friends, or grab a quick bite to eat. Not only does it keep your toes warm, but it provides you with a peaceful environment and a place to meet new people. You do not have to live in the residence halls in order to access this great hot spot.

**Huskies Den:** If you are looking for a place to hang out with your friends and unwind after classes, then the Huskies Den is the place for you. The Den offers bowling, billiards, Xbox 360, Wii, and PS3 for a small fee. The Den also has convenient hours and is a wonderful place to simply relax and have fun. Check out the Huskies Den in the basement of the Holmes Student Center.

**Founders Memorial Library:** As you would expect from any library, Founders truly lives up to the standard of an ideal place to study with spacious tables, comfortable chairs, and a quiet atmosphere. You can bring your computer and use NIU's WiFi, meet in one of the meeting rooms for group projects, or find numerous books on various subjects.

**The Writing Center:** If you need help with a paper, visit the Writing Center. Simply bring a few copies of the paper and receive advice on how to correctly edit or revise it in order to do your very best on any writing assignment. The Writing Center is located in Stevenson South Tower B and in 302 Founders Memorial Library.

**The Trident in Neptune Central:** Putting money toward your Huskie Bucks account on your OneCard allows you to eat at most of the dining locations on campus, one of which is the Trident in Neptune Central. This particular destination provides grab-and-go items for anyone with a busy schedule. It also offers great soups, salads, and coffee selections. Remember, you do not have to live in the residence halls in order to access this great hot spot.

### **The Computer Lab in the Lower Level of the Holmes Student Center:**

During the busiest times of the day when everyone is trying to print something or do some last minute research, it is often hard to find a place where you can access a computer quickly. The computer lab in the lower level of the Holmes Student Center rarely has a line of students. It's one of the HSC's best kept secrets.

**DuSable Dugout:** Located in the main entranceway of DuSable Hall, DuSable Dugout allows students to grab a quick snack at the concession stand, sit down at a table, or visit with friends. This is a location on campus that is regularly frequented.

**Martin Luther King (MLK) Commons:** This is a great place to hang out, especially when the weather is nice. MLK Commons has concrete steps, grassy areas, and benches where you can sit and do homework, hang out with friends, or simply enjoy the atmosphere around you. Different organizations and companies frequently set up tables or pop-up tents that promote their missions so students can find out more about the different clubs and organizations both on and off campus.

**Campus Child Care:** For those of you with children, Campus Child Care provides a safe, comfortable place to send your children while you attend class. This resource truly alleviates stress on students trying to juggle school and parenthood. Check out Campus Child Care's Website for more information on their curriculum and availability at [www.niu.edu/cc](http://www.niu.edu/cc)

Audrey Barsanti Gonzalez  
Student Coordinator



## Ten Hot Spots in the DeKalb Community

Now that you know where to go on campus, it's important to know great places to visit in the DeKalb community. Every year, the Northern Star newspaper allows students to rate "the best" of DeKalb and the surrounding area. Below is a list of ten of these hot spots, as voted on by the student body.

**Best Live Music—Starbusters**, 903 Pappas Drive: Starbusters' raised stage has been used by a variety of bands, such as '80s cover bands Sixteen Candles and Trippin' Billies.

**Best Burger—Fatty's Pub & Grill**, 1312 W. Lincoln Highway: Fatty's Pub & Grill is a great place for meeting friends, watching a game, and, of course, having a delicious burger.

**Best Mexican Cuisine — Eduardo's**, 214 E. Lincoln Highway: Eduardo's recently added a new outdoor patio with a fountain, both of which add to its unique atmosphere.

**Best Asian Cuisine—Fushi Yami**, 822 W. Lincoln Highway: Fushi Yami is famous for using the freshest ingredients and is the place to go when you are craving great sushi. They also have other items for those looking for a less adventurous meal.

**Best Pizza—Pizza Pro's**, 1205 W. Lincoln Highway: In a town full of pizza joints, Pizza Pro's lives up to its name. Be sure to try their popular cheese nuggets!

**Best Ice Cream—Ollie's**, 2290 Oakland Drive, Sycamore: Ollie's provides outdoor seating and stellar homemade frozen custard. Choose between malts, sundaes, shakes, and much more!

**Best Haircut—Hair Cuttery**, 2350 Sycamore Road, DeKalb: Hair Cuttery is the perfect place to go for a great haircut at the right price.

**Best Date Restaurant—Johnny's Charhouse**, 1950 DeKalb Avenue, Sycamore: Johnny's Charhouse has been hosting couples in the DeKalb and Sycamore area for more than 10 years. Choose from a variety of appetizers, seafood, and steak as you dine in a romantic atmosphere.

**Best Speedy Delivery—Jimmy Johns**, 1011 W. Hillcrest Drive: Jimmy Johns lives up to its catch line: "Subs so fast you'll freak."

**Best Grocery Store—Schnuck's**, 975 S. Annie Glidden Road: Schnuck's has a wide selection of groceries as well as a pharmacy, both of which have reasonable prices.

OFF-CAMPUS &

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STUDENT SERVICES



## The Low-Down on the Academic Advising Center

Academic advising is one of the most important resources for college students to utilize during their academic career. The Academic Advising Center at NIU can help ensure students are on the right track toward obtaining their degree. Implemented in 2005, the Academic Advising Center has helped hundreds of students select classes, find a major, and stay on track with their academics. "Our mission is to assist students in achieving their personal, academic, and professional goals," says Steve Barleen, Assistant Director of the Academic Advising Center.

The Academic Advising Center does not advise students of all majors. "We work with students who have declared their major as undecided or who are reassessing their academic plans," says Barleen. Students who are reassessing their academic plans may be thinking about changing their major or leaving NIU. The Academic Advising Center also specializes in helping students find a major that is right for them, which often can be a difficult task since NIU offers more than fifty major programs.

There are a few tips advisors would like students to know when planning their academic career:

"Students should see their academic advisor every semester. It will help them stay on track with their major."

—Jonathon Ferguson, Academic Advisor

"Your friend, mom, or brother is not your academic advisor."

—Steve Barleen, Assistant Director

"Get to know your professors, watch your GPA, and go to class. Then you can do almost anything."

—Mazen Nagi, Academic Advisor

If you think the Academic Advising Center may be of use to you, contact them at 815-753-2573 or visit the Website at [www.advisingcenter.niu.edu/advising](http://www.advisingcenter.niu.edu/advising)

## Someone You Should Know



Each month, Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services highlights a student we feel is important for you to know. This month we are featuring Kenyetta Watkins, president of College Parents Group and a non-traditional student.

### **Can you explain how you are a non-traditional student?**

I am a non-traditional student because I live off-campus and I am a mother.

### **What are some of your greatest achievements?**

My greatest achievement personally and academically is being a student at NIU while also being a mother. I have a son, two part-time jobs, and I sit on the Executive Board of Liberated Minds and College Parents Group. I'm also proud of becoming president of College Parents group.

### **Who inspires you?**

I am mostly inspired by my son. Although I always planned to finish high school and go to college, having a child at a young age really pushed me to do so. I was determined to prove the people wrong who thought having a child would stop me from getting my degree. Having a child has only made me stronger. Many of my family members didn't attend college, so I felt I had to start the right path for my younger sister and cousins.

### **What will your life look like ten years from now?**

Ten years from now I see myself living in a townhouse near my hometown of Rockford. I plan to be a registered nurse in pediatrics at Rockford Memorial Hospital. I would eventually like to get married and have a larger family. I can also see myself being a teen pregnancy activist to provide my testimony as proof that having a child is not the end of the road.

### **If you could have any superpower, what would it be?**

Flying. If I could fly, I wouldn't have to worry about gas prices or being late to class after dropping my son off at school.

### **If Hollywood made a movie about your life, who would you like to see play you in the lead role?**

Taraji P. Henson

### **If you could have dinner with anyone from history, who would it be and why?**

Rosa Parks. Just like me, she wanted change for her people. My people are college students who are also parents. I want us to be looked at the same way as students without children. Like Rosa, I am a strong black woman who won't stop until I've accomplished my goals.

Antoinette Williams  
Student Coordinator

## Join our Listserv!

Interested in what Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services has to offer? Join our weekly listserv! As an off-campus and/or non-traditional student, it is important to stay connected and informed about issues that directly affect you. Joining our listserv will allow you to receive weekly updates with the programs and services we provide along with other important dates and events on and off campus. Come by our office (located in the lower level of the Holmes Student Center, room 023J) to provide us with your name and email to sign up for the program, or simply email us at [commnontrad@niu.edu](mailto:commnontrad@niu.edu) and request to be on our listserv!

## Important Dates to Remember

As the semester begins, students are expected to know many important dates pertaining to class schedules and registration deadlines. We want to make sure you stay up to date, so we compiled a list of the most important dates of the semester.

October 15:	Last day for an undergraduate to withdraw from a full-semester course
October 17:	End of the first half of the semester
October 18:	Beginning of the second half of the semester
October 24:	Last day to add or drop a second-half-semester course via self-service in MyNIU
October 25:	Last day to add or drop a second-half-semester course with approval of a major college
November 5:	Last day to change a second-half-semester course from credit to audit or from audit to credit
November 12:	Last day to withdraw from a second-half-semester course or from the University
November 19:	Last day to change or declare a major for the fall semester
November 23:	Last day for an undergraduate to make up a mark of incomplete from spring semester 2010
November 24:	Beginning of Thanksgiving Break
November 29:	Classes resume
December 1:	Last day to apply for spring 2011 graduation via self-service in MyNIU
December 4:	Classes end
December 6–11:	Final examinations
December 12:	End of fall semester Undergraduate fall commencement

For more information on these dates, please visit <http://catalog.niu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=319>

## Off-Campus & Non-Traditional Student Services Calendar of Events Fall 2010

### October 2010

**9:** Transfer Tailgate, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m., between B and C towers of Stevenson

Come relax, have fun, and meet other transfer students before the football game!

**20:** Off-Campus Housing Fair, 12:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m., Chick Evans Field House

Interested in finding off-campus housing options for next year? Take advantage of this opportunity to interact with local property owners!

**29:** Pumpkin Party, 6:00 p.m.–7:30 p.m., Northern View Community Center

Attend this kid-friendly event as we celebrate the fall!

### November 2010

**30:** Study Break, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m., Holmes Student Center, lower level

Take a break from studying for finals to enjoy a free lunch and sign up for a free ten-minute seated massage.

For the most updated event information, please check out our events page at [www.niu.edu/ComNonTrad/news/upcomingevents.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/ComNonTrad/news/upcomingevents.shtml)

## Ideas? Suggestions? Let Us Know!

If you have any program ideas, suggestions for improving our services, or anything else you wish to share, do not hesitate to contact us via email at [commnontrad@niu.edu](mailto:commnontrad@niu.edu) or call our office at 815-753-9999.

Oct. 2010

HUSKIE CONNECTION

## Contact the Staff

### Director:

Jill Zambito  
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### Graduate Assistants:

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### Student Coordinators:

Audrey Barsanti Gonzalez  
Jody Danna-Hoehne  
Arturo Jimenez  
Antoinette Williams  
815-753-9999

## Office Information

**Location:** 023J and 023K Holmes Student Center Lower Level

**E-mail:** [comnontrad@niu.edu](mailto:comnontrad@niu.edu)

**Website:** [www.niu.edu/comnontrad](http://www.niu.edu/comnontrad)

**Facebook Group:** NIU Off-Campus & Non-Trad

**AIM:** NIUCommNonTrad

**Phone:** 815-753-9999

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OFF-CAMPUS &  
NON-TRADITIONAL  
STUDENT SERVICES

**NIU** NORTHERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY  
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS  
& ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

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