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Say "Hola" to Daniela Vidal

Daniela Vidal joined USI in January in the new position of coordinator in advanced manufacturing, but she is no stranger to the University. Vidal has a Master of Business Administration degree from USI and has worked closely with the University as a representative of Hospitality & Outreach for Latin Americans (HOLA) and the Southwest Indiana Latino Coalition.

Vidal holds a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Universidad Metropolitana in Caracas, Venezuela. After graduation, she was employed by Proctor & Gamble in Caracas as a project engineer. When she moved to Evansville, she joined Mead Johnson Nutritionals as a product research scientist. She worked in a variety of positions at GE Plastics and was a corporate training and development manager at Berry Plastics before coming to USI.

In her new position, Vidal coordinates the Pott College of Science and Engineering degree programs in advanced manufacturing and industrial supervision. The bachelor's program in advanced manufacturing was instituted in fall 2008. "The programs have similar curriculums, but industrial supervision has a greater number of businesses classes, while advanced manufacturing has more technology classes," Vidal said.

The position includes administrative and teaching responsibilities, as well as collaboration and engagement with regional employers and the University's Center for Applied Research.

Dr. Eric Sprouts, chair of the Department of Engineering, said, "Because of expected growth in advanced manufacturing, we needed someone who could take over the administrative duties for the program. Daniela has experience and is active in the area."

Vidal said, "I've done a lot with the community and been a part of several initiatives, and this position is a great opportunity to continue to develop the workforce, which I am passionate about."

She anticipates construction of a production facility for advanced manufacturing, including high-tech equipment and a business incubator. She said, "I see this project playing an important role in our economic initiatives in the area, along with Innovation Pointe, the STEM initiative, and Project Lead the Way. We're continuing to foster that innovation, and students can use this technology to develop things that are going to continue stimulating our economy."

Vidal also hopes to increase diversity in the program. She is one of the founders of Hospitality & Outreach for Latin Americans (HOLA), a non-profit organization that connects Hispanics to area resources. Her husband Alfonso is president of the organization. He holds a master's degree in industrial management from USI.

On behalf of HOLA, USI undergraduate and graduate students conducted a focus group needs assessment on Evansville's Hispanic and Latino community in spring 2008. **Dr. Anne Statham**, director of Service Learning, and **Dr. David Hitchcock**, assistant professor of Spanish, coordinated the study.

"One of the needs that came out of that study was the need for a Spanish-language newspaper," Vidal said. With the help of the Evansville Courier & Press, she was able to bring that to fruition. She is now editor of La Nueva Voz, a quarterly Spanish-language newspaper published by the Evansville Courier Company.

Vidal also serves on the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) implementation team, the EVSC Superintendent Business Advisory Board, and the Legal Aid Society. She is a member of A Network of Women (ANEW) and serves as president of the USI MBA Association.

Although the Vidal's have settled well in Evansville, inarguably improving the community with their good work, they came here under trying circumstances. Twelve years ago, while fishing with friends, Alfonso was kidnapped from Venezuela to Colombia by FARC guerillas.

Though he was eventually released, he and his family didn't feel safe, so they moved to Evansville, where a cousin was music director at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Alfonso, a college student at the time, transferred his credits to University of Evansville. Daniela worked in Caracas for another year before joining him in Evansville.

"We've loved it ever since," she said. "We think it's a great community. We have three kids that were born here and we feel that we can contribute so much in Evansville."

Faculty Senate makes a difference

UBlog written by Lesa Cagle

As chair of the Faculty Senate, I want to invite all faculty to the next two Faculty Senate meetings.

A regular meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held at 3 p.m. Friday, April 17, in Room 2027 of the Health Professions Center. The Faculty Senate Spring All-Faculty meeting will be held at 3 p.m. Monday, April 20, in Mitchell Auditorium in the Health Professions Center.

The Faculty Senate wants to share with you! I have been involved in much discussion regarding shared governance at this University and I have realized that many faculty do not realize that what we say and do makes a difference.

Here are some examples of what has occurred in previous academic years when a faculty member or faculty organization initiated changes to the way things are done at USI

- The fee waiver increased from 50 percent to 75 percent for spouses and dependents of eligible employees. This originated from the Faculty Senate Economic Benefits Committee.

- The Faculty Senate recommended the need for equity increases for associate professors. Also, the Faculty Senate developed a consistent set of peer institutions to which USI can compare itself. These peer institutions are public institutions with similar Carnegie classification.

- There has been increased support for scholarship across all levels of faculty. This occurred through faculty discussions with the provost identifying resources. Examples are the Center for Academic Excellence, an increased number of sabbaticals, and additional funding.

- The tenure and promotion process has been aligned and the effective date of tenure has been moved up.

- The student evaluation of teaching forms changed from Purdue to current form. Via ad-hoc committee and faculty surveys, faculty gave input on what students are capable of evaluating.

These are just a few of the examples of shared governance that

I have compiled. I hope to see you on Monday so that we can discuss more of our accomplishments.

Language Bowl feeds enthusiasm for language

The Department of Modern and Classical Languages at the University of Southern Indiana will be hosting the annual Academic Foreign Language Bowl for high school students beginning at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 22, 2009.

The Academic Foreign Language Bowl is a tradition at USI and last year's participants came from 18 area high schools representing students with knowledge in French, German, Latin, and Spanish.

Dr. Silvia Anna Rode, associate professor of German and chair of the department, said, "Students have great fun participating in the language bowl. It gives them an opportunity to use the language and gain confidence while interacting with students from other high schools. The event also gives the department faculty an opportunity to connect with local foreign language teachers to better understand and support their professional needs."

High schools may bring a team of five students to compete. Question and answer rounds consist of 20 questions plus five tie-breakers. Questions may be based on cultural or language-specific knowledge. Students who learn a language also are introduced to the culture, so a song competition is part of the activities. Student groups of no more than eight and no less than four sing in the language they are studying. A brief awards ceremony begins at 10:45 a.m. in Mitchell Auditorium.

In addition to French, German, Latin, and Spanish, the Department of Modern and Classical Languages at USI also offers Japanese courses and beginning in fall 2009 will offer introductory courses in Arabic and Chinese.

The registration fee for the competition is \$20 per team. Rode is coordinating the event.

The *Shield* takes awards at Indiana Collegiate Press Association ceremony

The *Shield* received four awards at the Indiana Collegiate Press Association ceremony on Saturday, March 28. Jon Webb, editor and an English major/journalism minor, won first place for best news feature with "You gotta get a grip," the story of a nontraditional student who immersed himself in art after a debilitating automobile accident. The judge wrote, "What an unusual lede and approach to a memory of a traffic crash. The word choices in this piece were right on, and I especially liked the use of 'crumpled, aluminum corpse' to describe the man's mangled truck."

Travis Snyder, assistant news editor and journalism major, won second place for best non-deadline news reporting for "3.986 GPA = Magna Cum Not Enougha," a story about situations that might prevent a student from graduating with honors. "Well researched. Esoteric topic, but important for your readers. In-depth look at an issue," the judge wrote.

The *Shield* staff won third place for best staff editorial with its endorsement of candidates for president, governor, and 8th district representative. The judge wrote, "Cleanly presented endorsements that got right to the point. You took a stand on each candidate, and succinctly backed up your position."

Erin Gibson, instructor in journalism and advisor to *The Shield*, said, "This is further evidence that *The Shield* is growing and improving, and it shows that these students have been able to practice what they've been learning in the classroom and apply it to hard hitting news and feature writing as well."

"The submissions were across the board from our staff, and in the end four individuals received awards. That shows the depth of the talent. It isn't just with a couple of students; we have many students who contributed to make the paper great this year."

The staff also won third place for best special issue with its 40th anniversary *The Roach* special edition. Gibson said, "That was a challenge for the students because it was a 16-page publication and they are used to

doing eight pages. Not only did a lot of people on the campus learn about the history of *The Shield*, but it also was acknowledged with this award."

In December, *The Shield* staff picked up two awards in the Hoosier State Press Association's Better Newspaper Contest. **Andrew Foster**, opinion editor and an English/journalism major, won second place for best feature story with "Warm welcome defies bitter cold," and **Seth Grundhoefer** managing editor and a journalism major with a radio/TV minor, won third place for "Allergen mold cleaned from O'Bannon Hall."

Aquila constellation art installation in the quad will celebrate Earth Day

The constellation *Aquila* (the eagle) will adorn the University of Southern Indiana's quad from Monday, April 27, through Thursday, April 30.

Art students and faculty will create *Aquila*, a temporary art installation inspired by the 11-star constellation and raising awareness about environmental issues, in celebration of Earth Day. An opening reception for *Aquila* will be held at 7:15 p.m. Monday, April 27, on the labyrinth in front of the Liberal Arts Center.

Dr. Hilary Braysmith, associate professor of art, said the constellation idea came from a Public Art class she taught several years ago. "I had students do site research on the USI campus - human history, natural history, aesthetic analysis - all of it. A student came to me and asked if I knew that there is a constellation named *Aquila*, which means eagle."

The eagle is the University's mascot. "From that moment, I've always wanted to do a piece based on that," Braysmith said. "That's just too fabulous to pass up." USI art students will work with Braysmith and **Rob Millard Mendez**, assistant professor of art, to create the art installation.

Each star in the constellation will consist of a steel disk surrounded by a plywood circle supported by short wooden stilts. Each plywood circle will have an environmental fact painted on it to focus attention on the importance of recycling.

The stars will be surrounded by a design created out of aluminum cans which have been collected in recycling bins around the USI Campus.

Those who participate in the piece by visiting each star will experience the impact of the environmental facts. As facts accumulate, the hemispheres or disks will turn increasingly red. Altair, the largest star in the constellation, will offer participants the opportunity to reverse the process. As they continue visiting the rest of the stars, participants can observe how increasing recycling can help change the hemispheres back to green.

Faculty and students also are working to incorporate the idea of illumination or light in the piece.

Aquila is a temporary installation, but Braysmith said, "We are not sure what the future holds for *Aquila*. If things worked out, it would be wonderful to make *Aquila* an annual fall ritual (when the constellation is visible) through which it can identify and encourage campus-wide sustainability efforts. We could set up a website where we could set environmental goals and measure them. Earth Day could be a celebration of our improvements."

Aquila is funded by a Major as Home grant. Developed by the Office of the Provost, the Major as Home initiative is intended to strengthen student connections with the academic department and faculty of their major.

For more information about *Aquila*, contact Braysmith at hbraysmith@usi.edu or 812/464 1740.

Leah McGinnis awarded Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship

A University of Southern Indiana senior with a double major in elementary education and Spanish has been awarded an English Teaching Assistantship for 2009-10 by the prestigious Fulbright Program.

Leah McGinnis will teach English in Spain from September 15, 2009, through June 30, 2010. She has been assigned to teach at the elementary-

school level in metropolitan Madrid.

The Fulbright's English Teaching Assistantship program places U.S. students in 43 countries worldwide each year. The teaching assistants help students in other countries improve their language abilities and increase their knowledge of the United States. At the same time, the U.S. students improve their language abilities and knowledge of the host country.

"Living in other countries makes me who I am," McGinnis said. Born in Kenya, she lived in Tanzania and Nigeria before moving to Costa Rica with her missionary parents when she was in fifth grade. She completed high school in Costa Rica.

McGinnis began school in Costa Rica without knowing Spanish. "I probably could have said 'hello' and that's about it," she said.

Being required to use Spanish in classroom presentations and other settings helped her learn the language.

Her experiences in international living also have helped her in interaction with people. "No matter what environment I'm put in, I've learned to adapt to that situation. I can feel comfortable being with any group of people," she said.

Students interested in an English Teaching Assistantship can apply for only one country.

Patricia L. Aakhus, director of USI's program in international studies, mentors students applying for the nationally competitive Fulbright awards. She said of McGinnis: "Leah's choice of Spain as a host country was appropriate, based on her education in Costa Rica, her immersion in Spanish literature, history and culture, and her fluency in the Spanish language. Her interest in linguistics and passion for literature and for teaching will dovetail in a formative experience for her, teaching English in Spain, and sharing her knowledge of American culture, as well as her multicultural world view."

English teaching assistants spend about 20 hours in the classroom each week. McGinnis is researching opportunities to volunteer at a library

Madrid during her free time. She also plans to explore the linguistic differences between Spanish in Costa Rica and Spain.

After completing the assistantship, McGinnis is considering several options. Her interests include mission work, a teaching career, and pursuing a doctorate.

McGinnis is the daughter of Jeannie and Thad McGinnis. She enrolled at USI to be near her grandparents, Susan McGinnis and Ann and Bill West, in Henderson, Kentucky, while her parents completed their work in Costa Rica. Having retired from mission work, her parents live and work now in Golden, Colorado.

McGinnis worked in Golden last summer at a children's camp that uses the Montessori approach and plans to teach there again this summer. She is completing her student teaching this semester at Cynthia Heights Elementary School in Evansville and will be awarded a bachelor's degree at USI Commencement in May. McGinnis recently was named an Outstanding Future Educator by the Indiana Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

Fulbright grants provide funds for international transportation, a living stipend, a small book/research allowance, and medical insurance.

Previous USI Fulbright recipients are **Tracy Bee '97** who completed an English Teaching Assistantship in Korea; **Kirt Page '98**, who studied at the University of Mainz in Germany; and **Walter Jermakowicz '03**, who studied at the University of Munich in Germany.

The Fulbright Program for U.S. students is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. It is the largest U.S. international exchange program offering opportunities for students, scholars, and professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools worldwide.

New employee welcome

Dana Drury has accepted a position as senior program assistant in

Extended Services. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in electronic media from Murray State University. Drury was employed as a business care representative for AT&T.

Daniela Vidal has accepted a position as instructor in engineering and program coordinator in advanced manufacturing in the Pott College of Science and Engineering. She holds a Master of Business Administration degree from USI and a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering from Universidad Metropolitana in Caracas, Venezuela. Vidal was employed as a corporate training and development manager at Berry Plastics.

Announcements

Passings

J.D. Rinks, father of **J. Wayne Rinks**, associate professor of communications, died on April 16. Services will be held at noon on Saturday, April 18 at Williams Funeral Home in Columbia, Tennessee.

College Business Reports available online

The spring issue of *College Business Reports* is online at <http://business.usi.edu/Newsletter/Reports-W09.pdf> Read about three projects funded from the Major as Home grant to establish a community of scholars in the college. Also learn how senior business executives are connecting with students and faculty through the Board of Advisors. Meet USI business graduates who work at Vectren Corporation. Read about these topics and more in the current issue.

Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference

Faculty from the Bower-Suhrheinrich College of Education and Human Services' Department of Teacher Education presented at the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference. **Dr. Jane Meyer**, associate professor of teacher education, (assisted by student **Christine Mears**) presented, "Getting to know you, getting to know all about you: Learning to work with culturally diverse families." **Dave Sandrick**, instructor in teacher education, presented, "Entering the Blogosphere." **Dr. Jennifer Mohr**, assistant professor of teacher education, presented, "What's In Your Suitcase? Discover What You Bring to Your Classroom."

Graduation Celebration

Class of 2009 graduates, their families and guests, faculty, staff, and alumni are invited to attend Graduation Celebration on Saturday, May 9. The reception begins at 6 p.m. in University Center Room 201 and dinner including the awards program follows at 6:30 p.m. in Carter Hall. The cost is \$12.50 per person; dinner is complimentary to 2009 graduates.

Receiving 2009 Alumni Association awards are **W. Kerry Jackson '84**, Distinguished Alumni Award; **Stephanie Buchanan '97**, Alumni Service Award; **H. Ray Hoops**, Special Recognition Award; and **Ann White**, Faculty Recognition Award.

Call the Alumni Services office at 812/464-1924 for reservations.