Millington Scholarship Challenge

The OM&IS Department received a very generous scholarship contribution from Chris and Lorraine Millington. Chris and Lorraine feel so strongly about expanding scholarships that they created the Millington Scholarship Challenge. They will match, dollar for dollar, any new scholarship established in the Department of OM&IS. The match will create a $3,000 scholarship which can be named in honor of your family or in memory of a loved one. You may also estabish the award criteria for a specific recipient, such as a female student, transfer student, minority student, among others. With your support, the OM&IS Department could significantly increase the number of new scholarships for our students.

Contact the OM&IS Chair Chang Liu at 815-753-3021 or cliu@niu.edu if you are interested in establishing a new scholarship.

Deutsch named outstanding alumnus

The OM&IS Department presented the 2013 Outstanding Alumni Award to Jim Deutsch for his professional and outstanding service to the department. Deutsch graduated from NIU in 1996 with a B.S. in OM&IS. Through the NIU placement office, he was recruited out of college by a small consulting company, Browning & Clements. After about two years of working there Deutsch left and started his own consulting company based in Chicago around business intelligence (BI) and data warehousing services. He had that company for about 6 years before he sold it to the Hackett Group (publicly traded service firm HCKT) in 2004. Deutsch stayed with the Hackett Group as Global Vice President of BI and EPM practice until 2010, when he joined Ernst & Young as a Partner to develop their business intelligence practice.

Jim married Melissa in 2004 and they have three daughters, Anna, Elizabeth, and Emily. His family has a number of ties to NIU as both his older brother Rich and younger sister Laura are also NIU College of Business graduates. Deutsch has served the department in many different ways, including as a member of the OM&IS Executive Advisory Council, guest speaker, and as scholarship sponsor for the Deutsch Family Scholarship in the OM&IS.
Student & Alumni Spotlight

Senior Carlos Aguilar shares his thoughts on the OM&IS program

Q: What do you like about the OM&IS program at NIU?

The OM&IS program is very easy to follow when taking the right classes in the correct order. The classes complement each other and you find yourself remembering material from previous OM&IS classes. The program starts you off with the basic fundamentals and adds in more complex concepts gradually, which helps you understand how everything coincides.

Q: What prompted you to major in OM&IS?

Coming to NIU, I wanted to earn a bachelor’s degree in business. I knew that the degree had to relate to my father’s pallet recycling business, so I when I found out that NIU had a department specifically for logistics and database processing, I decided I wanted to major in OM&IS.

Q: Do you have an internship?

I currently have an internship in Allsteel, which is located in Muscatine, IA. It is a manufacturer of office furniture. I will be taking on the role of production supervisor.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your internship?

I really enjoy the fact that I will get to supervise the work of 20+ employees towards the end of my internship. It will give me a good perspective on the real world.

Q: What are some things you enjoy doing in your free time?

I’m a real competitive person, so anything that has to do with going head to head with a couple friends is game. I also like hanging out at my father’s business because I’ve seen it grow into a successful business since it opened in 2000.

Graduate Student Manju Nair on the MIS Program at NIU

Q: What was your undergraduate major, and where did you receive your undergraduate degree?

I received my Bachelor of Engineering from University of Mumbai in 2007. My area of specialization was Information Technology.

Q: Did you have any professional experience before joining the MIS graduate program?

After obtaining my undergraduate degree in IT, I moved on to work for several companies like Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services. I had about 4 years of work experience before deciding to pursue the MIS program at NIU.

Q: What prompted you to choose the MIS graduate program at NIU?

Apart from being involved in applications development, I also had the opportunity to have frequent interactions with clients, understand their business needs and come up with solutions that are technologically feasible. This area where technology meets business has always fascinated me and the anxiety to know more has accelerated my decision to join the MIS program at NIU. NIU had always been the first choice for its well-designed course structure, best in class faculty and strong ties with business communities. The inclusion in the course structure of the latest IT tools -- such as SAP and business intelligence practices -- is highly beneficial and prepares us to face the challenges in the business world.

Q: Do you have an internship?

I obtained my internship in a reputed consulting firm in the summer of 2012. I was involved in application development and enhancements for most of the summer and business analysis and quality assurance activities during the following Fall and Spring semesters.

Q: What are some things you enjoy doing in your free time?

During my free time, I enjoy reading books, both fiction and non-fiction, with the latest one being Lean In by Sheryl Sandberg. With summer setting in, I also like to run and explore different trails in the neighborhood.

Q: Is there anything else you want us to highlight about you?

The course structure at NIU has helped me convert my part time job to full time position. The company was impressed with some of the latest IT practices being taught at NIU. Exposure to agile practices and latest business practices in OMIS 640 and OMIS 651, background knowledge in SAP ERP, tools like SSAS in OMIS 661 proved beneficial for my job search.

Alumnus John Gianatasio (BS—May 2011) on his current job and the OM&IS program

Q: What company do you currently work for?

Currently I work for the Kraft Foods Group, Inc. In June of 2013 I’ll be celebrating two years with the company.

Q: How did you find the job opportunity?

I found this job opportunity through my internship with Kraft Foods in the summer of 2010. However, I was able to get my internship through the 2010 Spring Internship
Fair at NIU during the second semester of my Junior Year. After finishing my internship that summer, I was offered a full-time position in the Fall of 2010 during my senior year.

Q: Briefly describe your job duties and responsibilities?

As an Analyst, I work as a liaison between the business and the more technical folks. My job is to ensure that I understand what the business needs delivered from a systems perspective and ensure that it is properly communicated and then delivered by our technical resources. The current applications in the scope of my responsibility are SAP, Trade Promotion Management and Customer Relationship Management. What comes with that is managing off-shore resources to ensure that deadlines and SLAs are met according to plan along with ensuring system enhancements are well tested and then deployed with the proper functionality.

Q: What do you enjoy most about your position?

The thing that I love most about my job is that I’m able to not only work with systems and technology but I also have the opportunity to learn and understand the business. Having a clear understanding of the business process you are supporting allows you to add more value in the way of systematic design and implementation.

Q: How did your education in NIU’s OM&IS program prepare you for your position?

The OM&IS program greatly prepared me to enter into the world of Information Systems. Within my first couple months on the job, I was not only supporting and enhancing technologies, but also reviewing processes to determine how we can make them more efficient. And that’s the base of your OM&IS degree! The real world examples and opportunities that are presented in the OM&IS curriculum prepared me to well execute against my day to day responsibilities. Whether it’s pulling data from the backend of SAP and throwing together a quick query in Access to tie it all out or reviewing a current state process flow and determining how we can eliminate waste.

Q: What advice can you give to current OM&IS students?

My biggest piece of advice to OM&IS students would be to stay confident. Be confident in yourself and your degree. You are at a great school and on top of that in a great program. There is no doubt you will be able to compete with those who come from other top business schools. Just believe in yourself, be confident in what you say and what you do. OM&IS gives you a base to be very successful but it truly comes down to how bad you want it. Don’t be afraid to fail because those are the times you will learn the most.

Scholarships awarded

The OM&IS Department awarded a total of $62,000 scholarships at the Department Award Banquet on April 26, 2013. The generous scholarship sponsors and the recipients are:

- Allstate Scholarship—Kaylee Heller, Ryan Gunn, Kyle Grant, Anthony Ristich, & Jason McCune
- Cassandra & Randy Young Scholarship—Marissa Meiter & Jacqueline Rodriguez
- Caterpillar Scholarship—Melissa Welsh & Carol Marr
- Deutsch Family Scholarship—Taylor Ancelet & Christain Pitts
- Godambe Family Scholarship—Alifya Dhokawala & Laura Greybill
- i-Test Scholarship—Yunhua Sun
- Information Integrity Coalition Scholarship—Sonal Jain
- Jeffrey Burton Lollar Memorial Scholarship—Thaddeus Hupp
- Marian E. Millington Scholarship for the Advancement of Women in Information Technology—Kathleen Abell, Carly Steffen, & Taylor Ancelet
- Marchewka Family Scholarship—Nathaniel Kessel
- Matthew L. Johnson Scholarship—Collan Davidson & Luis Sandoval
- McKesson Scholarship—Kristina Cox
- Microsoft Scholarship—Aikaterini Makridakis
- Nathan Griffin Memorial Scholarship—Charles Besenhoffer, Jason Lindstrand, & Elizabeth Peters
- OM&IS Faculty Scholarship—Travis Chapman & Khurram Shahzad
- OM&IS Excellence Student Scholarship—Matthew Carlson, Weston Love, & Manju Nair
- OM&IS Executive Advisory Council Scholarship—Anusha Kandi & Sheng Xia
- OM&IS Programming Scholarship—Kurt Lesko
- OM&IS Project Management Scholarship—Geoffrey Alberti, Leo Berrun, Shannon Duppler, Weston Love, & Carlos Salgado
- Rich Born OM&IS Electives Scholarship—Zhe Li
- Target SAP Scholarship—Carlos Aguilar, Enrique Martinez, Oscar Morales, Ziyi Niu, Ujwal Pandya, & Carlos Salgado
- True Value Scholarship—Thomas Kingsley, Derek Snow, & Mike Verhulst
- William and Eileen Breitkzke Endowed Scholarship—Matthew Hoffer, Nina Spillone, & Michael Verwijst
OM&IS Open House and MIS Informational Session

The fall 2013 OM&IS Open House is scheduled on Wednesday, October 23 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in Barsema Hall 344.

The Master of Science in Management Information Systems (MIS) will have two informational sessions on Monday, November 4 and Tuesday, November 5 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Barsema Hall 315 to give prospective candidates an opportunity to hear from OM&IS faculty, program advisor, and students.

Contact Mr. Steven Kispert, Academic Advisor and Internship Coordinator, at 815-753-6372 or skispert@niu.edu if you are interested in being an OM&IS or MIS major.

SAP Student Recognition Award

The OM&IS Department held an awards ceremony on December 6, 2012 for its first recipients of SAP’s Student Recognition Certificate since the College of Business joined the SAP University Alliance Program in fall 2011.

Thirteen students—twelve from the MIS graduate program and one from the OM&IS undergraduate program—received the SAP recognition awards during the ceremony.

An additional twenty students—fifteen OM&IS undergraduates and five MIS graduates—received SAP recognition awards during the department spring award banquet on April 26, 2013.

Award recipients successfully completed three required courses, which included significant relevant content recognized by SAP.

Honorees include Tope Adesida, Udit Agarwal, John Bruce, Luke Bujarski, Scott Burke, Dan Van Devoorde, Tariq Esmail, Olugbenga Fadiya, Benjamin Farraher, Shyam Kona, Daniel Krouse, David Garcia, Suhas Gariapati, Ryan Hedba, David Jacobs, Steven Jans, Mitchel Johnson, Austin Jones, Mark Leahy, Guang Cheng Liu, Jose Lopez, Austin Mealer, Megan Middleton, Varsha Mittal, Oscar Morales, Duraid Muhsin, Saima Newaz, Jason Phan, Falgun Patel, Laxman Rapolu, Robert Skowrons, Sadia Syed, and Jerry Tokars.

Congratulations to all!

Faculty global reach

Faculty Exchange with Bordeaux University, France
Assistant Professor Jung Young Lee taught at the Bordeaux University School of Management in February 2013 as part of an exchange program between NIU’s MBA program and Bordeaux University’s Master of International Business (MIB).

This is the fourth time that the OM&IS Department sent faculty to Bordeaux University.

Drs. Kathy McFadden, Jack Marchewka, and Charles Petersen went there to teach in 2010, 2011, and 2012, respectively.

Assistant Professor Jung Young Lee with students

Faculty recognized for excellence at the OM&IS Award Banquet

Graduate Faculty Teaching Award
Dr. Brian Mackie

Undergraduate Faculty Teaching Award
Dr. Chuck Downing

Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award
Dr. Nancy Russo

Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction Award
Dr. Shail Godambe

Outstanding Faculty Service Award
Dr. Jack Marchewka