Mastering the graduate student experience

IRC maintains and expands reputation as international center of HRIR excellence

Whether you are a recent MA-HRIR graduate or you attended classes long before the current Carlson School building even existed, you know that the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Minnesota has a reputation as one of the leading programs granting master's degrees in human resources and industrial relations. Over its 62 years of existence, the IRC has consistently produced well-educated and highly-skilled graduates who have gone on to impressive careers in the HRIR fields.

As was true in the past, today’s program continues to be widely regarded as one of the top three in the country, and is currently experiencing some of the largest enrollments in recent years. Why are students being drawn to our program? What contributes to our excellence? And how have we changed in recent years to stay on the cutting edge? We believe our curriculum, faculty, students, alumni, career resources and location all share in the credit of our success.

Our Curriculum
First, we have kept our curriculum current. In consultation with students, alumni and the corporate and labor communities, the HRIR faculty revised the degree requirements for the MA-HRIR degree in 2005 to build upon our years of success while also keeping pace with changes in the contemporary world of work. Faculty members are encouraged to keep assigned readings and cases up to date, and often incorporate current events into their courses.

Our new curriculum’s foundation remains focused on the core areas of HRIR: staffing, training, and development; compensation and benefits; and labor relations and collective bargaining. Surrounding our curriculum is an increased emphasis on business expertise, strategy, and leadership and influence.

One new class being taught is “Business Principles for the HRIR Professional.” Because HRIR professionals cannot be successful without thoroughly understanding their business and its competitive environment, this course was added to ensure that students have a basic understanding of vital business principles. Important subjects include the nature and functions of business corporations, the role of HRIR in business,
Greetings from the Industrial Relations Center!

It's hard to believe that the school year is already winding down. It's been an incredibly busy year, but one I'm very proud of.

I'm especially proud of the world-class reputation of our MA-HRIR program. We continue to be considered among the top three programs in the nation, if not the world, and this strong reputation along with generous student fellowship donations on the part of companies and alumni, help us to attract top-notch students, faculty, and prime recruiters.

I wanted to tell you, as our alumni and friends of the center, more about the current MA-HRIR student experience. As such, this issue of the IRC News contains a special feature story with this focus. Our program especially excels at putting theory into practice through our newly-revised cutting-edge curriculum, following our Minnesota Model of HRIR Success. The Minnesota Model has at its core Human Resources expertise, with complimentary foci on business expertise and leadership and influence.

We also had an excellent recruiting year on the faculty side. I am pleased to announce that we have hired two new faculty members, Colleen Flaherty and Lisa Leslie. These two new faculty will be joining us next fall. They are two of the very top candidates in their respective fields, and we are thrilled to be bringing them into our department. See the back page of this newsletter for more information on these outstanding new faculty.

I hope to see many of you at our annual HR Tomorrow Conference, held this year on Friday, April 20. This year's theme is one I'm excited about: “Win Your Talent War: Attract, Develop, Motivate and Retain.” Hiring, motivating and retaining top performers is of utmost importance to the health and growth of organizations, and we have an incredibly strong program this year. This conference also provides excellent networking opportunities. Please visit http://hrtomorrow.csom.umn.edu for more information.

One of our greatest strengths is our alumni, and we are fortunate to have a very active and involved Alumni Association. In addition to planning HR Tomorrow this spring, the Alumni Board has coordinated the HRIR Alumni Mentorship program and two outstanding Professional Development Events, one focusing on International Assignments and the other on Building Financial Acumen.

I had the opportunity to visit with some of our HRIR alums during the Regional Carlson School Alumni event in San Francisco in January. It's always great to touch base with our alumni to see how they're doing. More regional events will be planned in the next year.

I hope you'll feel free to contact me at any time with questions or suggestions about the HRIR program in the Industrial Relations Center. And, please stop by the next time you're on campus! We'd love to see you.

Connie Wanberg, PhD
Professor and Director
Industrial Relations Center
Forbes to Speak at Commencement

The Carlson School of Management’s Commencement Ceremony for graduate students will be held on Monday, May 14, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. in Northrop Memorial Auditorium. This year’s commencement speaker will be Steve Forbes, President and CEO of Forbes, Inc. as well as Editor-in-Chief of the business magazine, *Forbes*. Graduating students received an invitation in late March. There will be approximately 75 MA-HRIR students graduating this spring, and an additional 6 PhD students as well.

HRIR Student News

MA-HRIR second-year students Rui (Susie) Cui and Kelly Kawczynski have had papers published in the fourth quarter 2006 edition of the *WorldatWork Journal*. Susie wrote a paper on international compensation and Kelly wrote a piece on obesity and health care costs as part of an assignment in their HRIR 8051 Compensation and Benefits course taught by Adjunct Professor Mike Davis.

Three current MA-HRIR students have advanced to the semi-finals of the L’Oréal e-Strat Challenge, one of the world’s largest online business simulations. The international competition is open to both undergraduate and graduate students, and 15,000 teams from over 2,000 schools representing 125 countries have registered. The 3-person team of Yongmao “Henry” Feng, Nicholas Kilduff and Jia Liu has advanced to the semi-finals to be held in mid-March. The L’Oréal e-Strat Challenge provides students with the opportunity to put themselves in the virtual driver’s seat by managing a portfolio of beauty brands and competing for worldwide leadership against 4 other virtual companies.

A chance conversation with her grandfather more than two years ago led 2nd-year MA-HRIR student Katie Oberg to a South Carolina television studio earlier this year where she participated as a contestant on the long-running game show *Wheel of Fortune*. Katie and her grandparents watched the show frequently, solving puzzles together, and her grandfather challenged her by saying that if she ever made it on the show, he would pay for her airfare to get there. Through a series of online and in-person auditions and eliminations over several months, Katie finally found herself playing for real in January as part of Country Music Week, with country music singer Eddie Montgomery as her partner. “It was pretty exciting,” Katie said of the experience of playing in front of a live studio audience of 4,000 people, “but also frustrating, as Eddie and I never had the chance to spin the wheel.” Even though luck was against Katie and Eddie, they still managed to solve a puzzle in a speed round, earning Katie $1,000, and Eddie’s charity $10,000. The most surprising thing for Katie? “The wheel weighs 4,000 pounds and is really hard to spin!” Another result of Katie’s participation is that she now has a great “little known fact” about herself to share during those “getting-to-know-you” activities everyone participates in from time to time. Katie will graduate this spring and has accepted a position at General Mills.

Carlson School News

First Tuesday Luncheon Series

The Carlson School of Management’s First Tuesday Luncheon Series began in August 1992 to provide an opportunity for alumni and friends of the Carlson School to continue their management education. The First Tuesday Luncheon Series features top-notch executives as keynote speakers addressing hot topics in business and leadership. Mark your calendars for these upcoming dates and speakers. For more information, or to register, visit the Carlson School website at www.csom.umn.edu. Luncheons are held at the McNamara Alumni Center on the East Bank of campus.

May 1, 2007 – Michael Hoffman, Chairman, President and CEO, The Toro Company

June 5, 2007 – Lynn Casey, Chair and CEO, Padilla Speer Beardsley

July 10, 2007 – Arne Carlson, Chairman, RiverSource Funds

First Friday Networking Series

Meet with fellow alumni and current students on the first Friday of each month for these popular networking events. Watch for reminder postcards in the mail, or visit carlsonschool.umn.edu/firstfriday for more information or to register.

May 4, 2007 – Crown Plaza Northstar Hotel Skygarden, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

August 3, 2007 – Enjoy a leisurely cruise on Lake Minnetonka aboard the Queen of Excelsior yacht, 6:15 - 9:30 p.m.
Mastering the graduate student experience  continued from page 1

how to use economics and other analytical tools to understand the business environment, and an introduction to finance, accounting, marketing, operations and strategy.

The HRIR program prepares students to develop into HR professionals committed to moving human resources beyond an administrative function to becoming an important strategic business partner. Allison Thomas Cohn, ’06 MA-HRIR, knew of the strengths of the program before enrolling. “I chose the Carlson School’s HRIR program before deciding to attend. “I came to the Carlson School’s HRIR program because of its ranking, recruiting opportunities, program size, and access to MBA courses,” Thomas Cohn said. She found that the core curriculum strongly prepared her for the HR field, and was hired as an assistant HR manager with General Mills upon graduation.

Students interested in earning their MA-HRIR have two alternatives: a full-time day program comprised of four semesters plus a full-time summer internship between the first and second years; or a part-time evening option designed to be completed in 3-4 years, allowing busy working professionals to choose their own pace.

Classroom Excellence

The IRC faculty includes 18 tenured and tenure-track faculty members who are actively engaged in cutting-edge research, presenting conference papers, publishing articles and books, serving on local, national and international committees and editorial boards, and sharing their expertise within the University and beyond. Going forward, as is the case with other universities, the future faculty will be smaller in size after some professors move into retirement. The program also employs experienced HR professionals as adjunct professors to complement the curriculum for a very good balance of theory and practice.

Many of you may recall a professor who made a strong impact on your education and career development. One such professor, who’s been the recipient of seven teaching awards, is Professor John Budd, Industrial Relations Land Grant Professor and Director of Graduate Studies. “John is an outstanding, all-star teacher,” says Professor and IRC Director Connie Wanberg. “He was truly born to do this work. His success is a mixture of artful, creative, and powerful classroom exercises that are not just fun, but are intimately linked to learning and retention objectives and a strong drive to understand, apply, and stay current with teaching theory and best practice.”

Exceptional Students

Our program continues to work hard at attracting excellent students. Over the past several years, the trends we’ve seen with our applicant pool include declining domestic applications and increased numbers of female and international applications.

Students in the MA-HRIR program at the University of Minnesota are highly sought by leading companies following graduation. Each year, more than 30 organizations visit the Carlson School specifically looking to recruit our students for both internships and full-time employment. Shanna Koenig, a second-year MA-HRIR student who will graduate this spring, not only had 13 interviews for a summer internship between her first and second years of study, but was also able to interview with several different companies before deciding to accept a full-time position with Frito-Lay, where she’ll begin as an HR assistant manager this June.

Involved Alumni

Another important asset of the program is the wealth of knowledge and skills that our alumni share with students, each other, and the community. An active, engaged group of 40 HRIR alumni and local HR professionals are serving as mentors to 40 of our current students (see story on next page). The 13-member IRC Alumni Association Board of Directors is responsible for planning professional development workshops and the annual HR Tomorrow conference.

Outstanding Career Resources

The Carlson School of Management has an outstanding Graduate Business Career Center (GBCC) that provides services to our MA-HRIR students. Some of the services provided include résumé development, interviewing strategies and techniques, small group interview practice sessions, career

A snapshot of our students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MA-HRIR Class of 2007</th>
<th>MA-HRIR Class of 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entering students</td>
<td>Entering students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average undergrad GPA</td>
<td>Average undergrad GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>Average age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female students</td>
<td>Female students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority students as a fraction of domestic enrollment</td>
<td>Minority students as a fraction of domestic enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minnesota’s HRIR students are highly sought by leading corporations, who visit campus regularly to meet and recruit them. Chuck Edward, ’93 MA-IR, an HR Director at Microsoft, speaks with current HRIR students during a visit to campus in March. Edward and his co-workers Priya Priyardarshini, ’06 MA-HRIR, and Alexandria Crump, ’05 MA-HRIR, shared information and answered questions about Microsoft’s human resources structure and culture.
What mentoring means to her

Suzanne Luke, ’86 MA-IR, an HR and compensation consultant with University of Minnesota Physicians, is participating in the IRC Alumni Mentoring Program, coordinated by the IRC Alumni Association. She has been matched with Mingming Yang, a first-year MA-HRIR student from China. Suzanne shares her thoughts on what it means to her to be a mentor:

“I’ve always liked to work with young people and those interested in learning more about HR. My own children are grown and off on their own, so that gives me more time to share opportunities and experience. Mingming Yang, my current mentee in the IRC’s Mentorship Program, makes it fun and easy to meet. He has a great attitude toward learning and trying new things. We meet biweekly or more if possible. He’s helped me on a work project, doing some of the analysis. Doing the hands-on project highlighted the reality of interpreting regulations, intentions, presentation and using actual rough data. We did a lot of data clean-up before things worked like in the textbooks. And he showed me some new analysis tools. He’s getting to know everyone in the office.

I occasionally take him to meetings and professional presentations. After we attended a Mentorship Program Morning Coffee meeting, where he talked about his market pricing project, we went to the IRC’s Herman Reference Room and introduced ourselves to the helpful staff and resources there. As always they were very helpful, and I was so impressed that after all these years, librarian Mariann Nelson still remembered past students like me.

We take each other out for lunch and talk about classes, projects, interests, goals, life in Minnesota and China, as well as work. I’m looking forward to sharing notes with Mingming following the HR Tomorrow Conference. I’m not a teacher, but I can offer him my perspective and actual life experiences or suggestions in implementing and designing similar programs. I try to be a good listener and I am sincerely interested in his trials, experiences and ambitions. Ming makes it all very easy by being very thoughtful, inquisitive and gracious. He sends me follow-up and confirmation emails. Most of the time he comes to my office which is very near to the campus. He even brought me a gift from China to celebrate the Chinese New Year. It gives us another dimension in his life to discuss and helps me learn more about the world and his culture.

I am so proud of all the students who come here and I want them to know that others who were in the program care and want the best for them too.”

Mingming Yang said he signed up for the mentoring program because “I am very interested in compensation and benefits, and I really needed someone who could help me learn this subject. The most satisfying part of the program,” he says, “is that I’m getting hands-on experience, which is helping me see the whole HR compensation picture.” Mingming is pleased to have found a mentor who has experience in his area of interest. “Suzanne gives me ideas from her experience and perspective. I can always learn new things, and am really benefiting from this program,” he says.
Alumni News

Regional Alumni Event Updates

The Carlson School hosted several Regional Alumni Events around the country over the past several months, and HRIR alums who attended were able to meet new Carlson School Dean Alison Davis-Blake, and reconnect with their colleagues from their HRIR days at the Carlson School.

IRC External Relations Coordinator Anne Obst met with New York-area alumni, Dan Ben-Asher, ‘70 MA-IR, Tracey Leaf, ‘03 MA-HRIR, Joanna Lisell, ‘05 BSB-HRIR, and Ronnelle Yee, ‘00 MA-HRIR during the Alumni Reception in New York in November. Joanna is currently working at Random House; Dan is working as a freelance photojournalist after having retired from the nonpartisan professional staff of the New Jersey State Legislature in 2003; and Tracey works for NBC Universal.

IRC Director and Professor Connie Wanberg met with San Francisco-area HRIR alumni Karyn Johnson, ‘06 MA-HRIR, Johnny Liang, ‘01 MA-HRIR, Vadzim Piuneu, ‘06 MA-HRIR and Mike West, ‘01 MA-HRIR during the Alumni Reception in January. Karyn works for Google; Johnny works for Sun Microsystems; Vadzim works for Chevron; and Mike also works for Google.

Alumni Updates

Kim Bristow, ‘03 MA-HRIR and President of the IRC Alumni Association Board of Directors, recently joined C.H. Robinson Worldwide as an HR Consultant.

Steven Boettcher, ‘96 MA-HRIR, is director of staffing and diversity at Health Net in Woodland Hills, California.

Aichia Chuang, ‘01 PhD-HRIR, was promoted to associate professor in the Department of Business Administration at the National Taiwan University.

Jennifer Haggerty, ‘94 MA-HRIR, is co-president of Baby Basics, a South Boston nonprofit organization that provides diapers to families in need.

John Hill, ‘98 MA-HRIR, has accepted a position with Time Warner’s Turner Broadcasting division in Atlanta.

Sandra Joppa, ‘91 MA-HRIR, joined the Donaldson Companies as its vice president of human resources and communications.

Kirsti Lehn Peterson, ‘96 MA-HRIR, is a human resources manager at Johns Manville in Denver.

Hilary Marden-Resnick, ‘94 MA-HRIR, recently accepted the position of vice president of human resources for Hennepin County Medical Center.

Adam Moffatt, ‘01 MA-HRIR, and a member of the IRCAA Board of Directors, recently accepted the position of HR Manager for Eaton in their Cleveland, Tennessee facility.

Where are you now?

Please help us keep our records updated by contacting us with any changes to your information: change of name, address, employer, email address, telephone number, etc.

We want to make sure we keep you informed about all the exciting activities going on in the HRIR program, the Industrial Relations Center, and the Carlson School.

Please forward your updates to: irc@csom.umn.edu or call 612-624-2500.
News from the IRC

Faculty and Staff News

Professor Avner Ben-Ner spoke in October at seminars at the Central European University in Budapest and Cornell University. In November he spoke to the Korea Finance Institute in Seoul, South Korea, about the effects of ESOPs and profit sharing. At the Association for Comparative Economics Studies part of the LERA conference, Ben-Ner gave a presidential address titled “Linking Comparative Economic System Studies with Comparative Organization Studies.”

The second edition of Professor John Budd’s award-winning textbook, Labor Relations: Striking a Balance, was released in January 2007. Budd was also appointed to the editorial board of the British Journal of Industrial Relations. Budd gave presentations at the University of Toronto and York University in March on “Working Out a Balance: Public Policies for Employment with a Human Face.”

IRC Associate Director Bob Glunz completed his MA-HRIR degree in 2006 and is proud to now be an alumnus of the program.

Professor Jim Scoville has been named to the editorial board of LERA’s “Perspectives on Work.”

Associate Professor Theresa Glomb spoke in December at the University of Florida, Warrington College of Business, Darden Diversity Speaker Series, and presented “She Works Hard for the Money: The Role of Gender in Emotional Labor Jobs.” In January, she presented to The Center for the Study of the Individual and Society at the University of Minnesota with a talk titled, “Gift Exchange Between Employers and Volunteer Organizations: Utilizing Employees as Intermediaries.”


Please welcome Laura Simpson as the new HRIR admissions coordinator. Laura is a 2005 graduate of the University of Minnesota with a B.S. degree in international advertising. In her role she will help recruit prospective students to the HRIR program and work with applicants through the admissions process.


Professor Emeritus Mario Bognanno was re-elected to the board of directors of the National Academy of Arbitrators, Research and Education Foundation. Bognanno participated last fall as a panelist at a CLE conference of the Labor and Employment Section of the Minnesota Bar Association and has a $20,000 grant from the National Academy of Arbitrators to analyze the content of 2,000 plus arbitration awards, all having to do with episodes of employee discharge and discipline.

PhD student Thomas J. Norman has accepted an assistant professor position with California State University-Dominguez Hills for the upcoming academic year.

Associate Professor Michelle Duffy is currently writing a chapter examining issues surrounding workplace envy for inclusion in an edited book on the phenomenon of envy. “Envy” is due to be published in early 2008.

Associate Professor Jason Shaw had two papers accepted for presentation at the Academy of Management annual meetings: “Social network positions and social undermining roles” (co-authored with M. Duffy and R. Fang), and “Entrepreneurial orientation, competitive aggressiveness, and store performance among supermarkets.” He will also speak at the Fisher College of Business at Ohio State University in April, on “Compensation characteristics and quit patterns among good, average, and poor performers”, and has a paper forthcoming in the International Journal of Human Resources Management in 2008 tentatively titled: “Strategic HRM in North America: What is Winning?”

Effective in the fall of 2007, Professor Yijiang Wang will begin a 2-year phased retirement from the Industrial Relations Center. Over the period of his phased retirement, Wang will be teaching in the Carlson School’s China Executive MBA (CHEMBA) program. We are very appreciative of his 16 years of service to the IRC.

Labor Education Service (LES) News

LES Director of Diversity Programming Deborah Rosenstein has revived the Solidarity Kids Theater, an informal group of young people who perform skits on economic and social justice themes.

LES Director Howard Kling and staff members Randy Croce, Barb Kucera and John See won recognition for their communications and video work from the International Labor Communications Association in November. The Workday Minnesota website won two first-place awards for content and general excellence; the Minnesota at Work cable TV series won first place in its category; the documentary, “A Terrible Price for Beauty,” won a first-place award and the documentary, “From Field to Factory,” won a second-place award.
New IRC faculty members named

The Industrial Relations Center is pleased to announce Colleen Flaherty will join the IRC as an Assistant Professor in fall 2007. Colleen is completing her PhD in Economics at Stanford University. Her dissertation title is “Employee Compensation and Retention,” and her research and teaching interests are Labor Economics, Public Finance, Econometrics, Applied Microeconomics, and Public Policy. She earned her B.A. with Honors Distinction from Stanford University with Majors in Public Policy and Economics. Colleen will be teaching courses on Personnel Economics, Compensation and Benefits, and Benefits next year.

Lisa Leslie will also join the IRC as an Assistant Professor in fall 2007. Lisa is completing her PhD in Organizational Psychology from the University of Maryland. Her dissertation title is “Putting Differences in Context: The Role of Status and Cooperation in Team Ethnic Composition Research.” Lisa earned her M.A. in Organizational Psychology from the University of Maryland in 2004, and her A.B. in Psychology from Princeton University in 2001. Lisa will be teaching courses on Managing Diversity, Staffing and Selection, and International HR next year.