DU Employees Recognized with Staff Awards

By Rose Ravasio

Nearly 800 Duquesne employees packed the Union Ballroom on Dec. 23 for the annual Staff Awards Holiday Luncheon. Among those honored for going above and beyond Duquesne’s mission were members of the Office of Stewardship, composed of staff from the financial aid office and the Division of University Advancement. Carrie Matevec Collins, Cecilia Hughes, Joy Hopkins, Jody Rieg, Alison Wojcik, Carolyn Grimes and Bob Woodside received the Team Award for their collaboration to better coordinate and expand efforts to protect its philanthropic support by building donor confidence.

Dr. Jack Nelson, director of the University Counseling Center, received the President’s Distinguished Service Award, which is the highest honor bestowed by Duquesne.

Nelson, who was recognized for his 45 years of serving University students, first came to Duquesne in 1964 as director of testing. After serving as assistant director of admissions for 10 years, Nelson founded the counseling center in 1973 in direct response to student needs.

Through the counseling center, he has led his staff in having a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Duquesne students.

John Sucha, manager of student accounts, received the Innovation Award for creating a convenient online system enabling Duquesne students and employees to register and pay to attend University events. He personally trains any department requesting the system, which saves countless hours of recordkeeping.

Lisa Newell, procurement card program administrator in the support services office, received the Consumer Service Award. Newell personally conducted training sessions for nearly 250 employees during the University’s transition to CentreSuite procurement card transaction management software.

The Staff Awards also included recognition of Duquesne employees who have provided 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years of service to the University. In addition, employees enjoyed a viewing of The 2009 Duquesne Overture, the year’s Christmas video.

Duquesne’s Health Literacy Efforts Continue at Carnegie Science Center

By Rose Ravasio

Dr. Emily Allevable, an animated character created by Duquesne University’s Partnership in Education team, is back in a new adventure at the Carnegie Science Center’s new exhibit, If a Starfish Can Grow a New Arm, Why Can’t I?

Led by Dr. John Pollock, associate professor of biology in Duquesne’s Bayer School of Natural and Environmental Sciences, the Partnership in Education team created Allevable, a biomedical research scientist on the cutting edge of regenerative medicine, to help guide children through scientific information in an encouraging manner.

The If a Starfish Can Grow a New Arm exhibit is designed to familiarize visitors with the fields of tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. Allevable stars with her robot sidekick, Regenerobot, in three interactive video games as part Dr. Allevable’s Unbelievable Kiosk, which the Partnership in Education team developed and created with the Entertainment Technology Center at Carnegie Mellon University.

In video games, Stem Cell Wrangler, SOS Heart and Grow with the Flow, children are invited to collect stem cells from bone marrow, guide them to tissue where they are needed to make repairs and provide blood supply to the stem cells in growing bones.

“We’re using these animated characters in our kiosk because they are already familiar characters that are featured in the Science Center’s Planetarium,” explained Pollock. “The games feature a tutorial in which the characters explain the goals of the game as well as explain the biology and science behind the game. It’s interesting to watch the kids play the games as teams working together, getting very high scores and having a lot of fun with the games.”

In addition, Dr. Allevable’s Unbelievable Kiosk is available for distribution to teachers in DVD and print formats for use in the classroom.

“That gives an important second life to the whole display—we created it so that not only could it be featured at the Carnegie Science Center, it can be used by children in the classroom as part of a standard curriculum,” added Pollock.

The Partnership in Education team first introduced Allevable in Dr. Allevable’s Unbelievable Laboratory, a planetarium show and DVD addressing bone and heart tissue engineering. Visit www.carnegiesciencecenter.org for more information on If a Starfish Can Grow a New Arm, Why Can’t I?