

Getting them here: Betty Dyer and the entire admissions staff know the value of campus tours

By Jennifer Whitham Johnson

Even in today's whirlwind world where AOL rules, most people agree nothing beats face-to-face interaction.

The importance of "being there" holds true for all categories of individuals, including those either embarking on or fully immersed in the college search. The value of providing campus tours to those considering Simpson cannot be disputed. What better way to introduce them to what the Simpson Experience may hold in store than to acquaint them with the campus and those who dwell upon it?

Cole Zimmerman, director of recruitment, agrees. "We never stray from the basic premise that if we can get a prospective student to visit our campus we stand an excellent chance of getting him/her to enroll. All of our recruitment strategies encourage and direct prospective students to schedule a campus visit."

Enter Betty Dyer, campus visit coordinator. Arranging visits for prospective students and their families/friends is what she does and judging by the number of tours seen trekking across campus on any given weekday, she does it well.

Although Dyer says there is no typical day in her job, she generally starts the morning out by checking e-mail and voice mail from either prospective students, their parents or guidance counselors requesting a campus tour. Scheduling these tours takes up a significant portion of her day as she must be sure each one of the callers receives a return call from her and that every prospective student requesting a tour gets one. This applies even to those rare times when someone just walks into the admissions office, wanting a tour.

"There is always at least one admissions counselor in the office, available to give tours in case anyone drops in," says Dyer.

Beyond setting up times for people to peruse the campus, Dyer is also responsible for helping select and train the 25 to 30 student ambassadors employed in the admissions office each semester. These individuals, who are the only work study students on campus required to apply and interview for a position, conduct tours and answer any questions from a student perspective.

Dyer deems the experiences each ambassador goes through as valuable beyond just receiving a work study check each month.

"We like to say in the admissions office that we teach life skills," says Dyer. "These are things they will take with them when they leave here."

Aimee McCabe, a senior from Olathe, Kansas can attest to that. She says her time as an ambassador has been well spent. "Giving tours of campus is always exciting. No two tours are alike and I enjoy sharing my love of Simpson College with prospective students and their families," says McCabe.

When Dyer is not busy working with students such as McCabe, she spends her time arranging faculty, coach and admissions counselor appointments, as well as coordinating overnight visits.

Furthermore, Dyer has made it a point to keep an eye on the competition. While helping her three children during their college search, Dyer went along on several campus visits that included tours.

"During the tour I would not say where I worked, just so I could watch and see what they did," says Dyer.

One difference she discovered between Simpson tours and those of other schools, is the fact that Simpson's admissions staff stresses strongly the importance of personal-

izing each visit and conducting individual tours rather than group tours. This is not a common practice on all college campuses.

"Lots of people when they call in are surprised to hear that they will be given individual attention."

Deb Tierney, vice president for enrollment, shares her view on the importance of this individual attention. "The campus visit

"...if we can get a prospective student to visit our campus we stand an excellent chance of getting him/her to enroll."

remains one of the most important factors in the college selection process. We take great pride in the fact that the entire Simpson community plays a part in creating a welcoming atmosphere."

Once the tour appointment and arrangements with faculty, coaches and admissions counselors are confirmed, the remaining admissions staff oversees the actual campus visit. Which means Dyer doesn't always see the prospective students and their families when they arrive on campus for their visit. Although, she admits that she enjoys it when she does meet the individuals she has conversed with over the phone.

"It's fun to put a face with a voice. Sometimes I have long phone conversations with parents. Sometimes it's their first child to leave home. They want to make sure everything goes right during the visit."

Dyer adds that the entire admissions staff works to let the prospective student's parents know that their child will be given the personal attention that is so much a part of Simpson.



Beaman



Allbee

Enterprising elves

by Becky Beaman (co-chair with Sheila Allbee of the Elves Auction)

On Saturday, Nov. 9, I had the pleasure of witnessing the generosity and kindness of Indianola merchants, community members and Simpson College employees who, in combination, made for a successful Simpson Guild Elves Auction charity fundraiser.

People may not realize all the different aspects that go into this annual event: A big thank you goes out to all the Indianola merchants who made this not just a college affair, but a community action through their generously donated items and gift certificates, and who allowed the Guild to post the auction information on their windows and doors.

An equally big thank you goes to all the generous individuals who, by either sharing their talents at crafting

or by purchasing items to contribute, were able to donate a wonderful assortment of gifts.

And what would an auction be without auctioneers? Putney Auctioneers Kenny, Kevin, John and Kathleen not only donated their time and talents to this event, but they worked hard to get top dollar from each donation.

But the "frosting on the cake" that lets us categorize the 2002 Elves Auction as a resounding success comes from the fact that community and college people together opened up not only their pocketbooks for this charitable event, but their hearts as well, and were able to raise over \$4,000 in under three hours.

This is money that will be used to provide scholarships for young people needing help to get a higher education, that will be used for needed equipment

updates or additions, and money that will be used for miscellaneous needs by both the college and the community.

God bless you all for contributing to this charity fundraiser!

The Guild has long been serving the college through generous contributions to scholarships and support for academic departments.

Membership is open to anyone. Annual dues of \$10 go directly into the Simpson Guild Fund to contribute to scholarships and for the support of academic departments.

For additional information on membership and/or upcoming Simpson Guild events, please contact Kim Tierney Keller, president of Simpson Guild at 515.961.7416.

Lilly Endowment Grant just under \$2 million

Simpson College is one of 39 colleges and universities in the country to receive a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. that begins or enhances programs that help prepare a new generation of leaders for church and society.

These four-year, church-related liberal arts colleges have devised programs that encourage their students to reflect on how their faith commitments are related to their career choices and what it means to be "called" to lives of service. The programs also provide opportunities for students to explore the rewards and demands of Christian ministry and consider a career as a minister.

Simpson received \$1,999,986 to support programs that encourage all students to think and reflect seriously about vocation. Goals of the programs are to affect students broadly through personal reflection; to provide varied opportunities for students to engage in direct experiences that will help them better understand vocation; and to identify and support students

who desire to explore a personal call into ministry.

The grant will support enhancements in several programs including new-student orientation and first-year Liberal Arts Seminar, May Term courses, Cornerstone Studies, the Simpson Forum, Senior Colloquium, Counseling and Career Services programs, the chaplain's office programs, volunteer service programs and the student advising program.

Jim Thorius, vice president for student development at Simpson, commented on the grant, "The theme is theological exploration of vocation, to help students understand and think about vocation in their life," said Thorius. Thorius added that the programs invite students to ask 'what am I called to do?'

Founded in 1937, the endowment is an Indianapolis-based private foundation that supports its founders' wishes by supporting the causes of religion, community development and education.

Tilka finds fundraising 'alternative' to journalism

Ashley Tilka, recently hired assistant director of annual giving, likes to tell it like it is. This is no doubt due, at least in part, to her time as a writer at *Cityview*.

Prior to joining the college advancement team, Tilka spent five months working as a reporter for the Des Moines based alternative newspaper. A graduate of Loyola University with a degree in English/communications and journalism, Tilka was prepared for and excited about life as a journalist following graduation. Relocating to Iowa from her native Indiana, led Tilka to apply for a number of various positions in the Des Moines area, one of which was with *The Business Record*.

Following the interview, at which Tilka discussed a straightforward writing position reporting on happenings in the local realm of the business and professional world, she was offered a job as a "floater" between *The Business Record* and *Cityview*, both of which Business Publications Corporation owns. Although admittedly unsure of her ability to write in a style suitable for a publication such as *Cityview*, Tilka accepted.

This decision embarked her on a

journey from which she walked away with a better understanding of the growing phenomenon of alternative newspapers and more specifically, the differences between writing for one and writing for a mainstream paper.

It only takes a perusal of any given week's *Cityview* to notice obvious contrasts in focus and content of the two genres of newspapers. However, that's not to say that they each don't have their place and purpose, as Tilka can attest.

"Alternative newspapers try to get the stories that aren't out there already," said Tilka, "Cause I can guarantee you if I flip from channel 5, to channel 8 and 13, I will see the same five stories. Alternatives try to look at different stories or at least at a different angle," she continues.

One example is Tilka's cover story titled "The Autism Question," which examined the controversy that childhood vaccines may be the culprit in some cases.

To skeptics of the true journalistic value of alternative newspapers, Tilka says,

"Alternative newspapers can be dismissed very easily but they are trying to be as open as possible and not trying to put themselves into a specific ideology."

She adds, "No, it's not *The Register* and it doesn't claim to be or want to be necessarily, it is just another source to consider."

To her current



Tilka

LIFE AFTER FIVE



A look at life with Sandy Cerveney

Cerveney

Title: head athletic secretary/office manager

Joined Simpson staff: 1977

Family: husband, Gilbert; five sons, Jason, Tyler, Ryan, Josh and Luke; two grandsons, Alex and Braden

Likes most about job: The variety, meeting and working with the kids and the coaches

Interests: aerobics, walking, reading, watching a lot of sporting events

Future ambition: To visit Lake Tahoe (where one of her sons was married) again someday soon

Lives: Indianola



Tilka's story on autism made the cover

position, although quite different from writing for *Cityview*, Tilka brings a number of talents and years of experience. She participated in Phon-A-Thon during all four years at Loyola, where the project was entirely student-staffed. She worked as a caller her first year, a supervisor her second and a student manager during both her third and fourth years. Despite the differences between this job and her last, Tilka sees both positions as virtuous in their own right.

"This is just a different kind of creative. I'm looking at 'How can I reach all people I need to reach to convince them our college is worthy of support,' she adds. "I look at it as simply a different kind of figuring out what needs to be done."

FOOTNOTES

Ron Albrecht, professor of music, received a composition commission from the Music Teachers National Association. He will be composing a piece for saxophone and piano, which will be premiered at the Iowa Music Teachers Association State Convention next June. The works will then be submitted to the national organization for performance at the national convention held next fall.

John Benoit, associate professor of music, recently had two original jazz compositions for trombone quartet—"Elbow Grease" and "Mr. Twister" – accepted for publication by TAP Music Sales.

Tricia Calkins, assistant professor of German, gave a presentation at the annual conference of the Iowa World Language Association in Cedar Rapids on October 4. The title was: Teaching the Berlin Wall in

the "Berlin Republic." She was also the Iowa representative at a seminar "Training the Trainers" at the Goethe-Institute in Chicago September 20-22. This part of her commitment to the Midwest Network of German teachers is based at the Goethe-Institut.

Cyd Dyer, college librarian/archivist, will be receiving the Award of Achievement Certificate for Better Boardsmanship from the Iowa Association of School Boards at their annual conference this month in Des Moines. She completed 75 hours of learning experiences with IASB this past year.

Nia Kos, professor of Spanish, **Bob Gieber**, professor of French, and **Tricia Calkins**, assistant professor of German, attended the Iowa World Languages Conference in Cedar Rapids on Oct. 4. **Mark Bates**, associate professor of Spanish, attended the conference on both Oct. 4 and 5.

Marilyn Mueller, professor of management, and four students attended the 16th annual Financial Executives International lecture and dinner featuring Bruce Kelley, president and CEO of EMC Insurance Companies on Thursday, Oct. 17, 2002, at Drake University.

Steve Rose, associate professor of education, presented at the 2002 Iowa Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development held in Des Moines Oct. 13-15, 2002. His presentation was entitled "Teacher Preparation in Iowa, Something to be Proud of."

Melvin Wilk, professor of English, wrote a letter to the "London Times Literary Supplement," UK, concerning an inaccurate comment about the setting of "The Amboy Dukes," a 1940's novel about Jewish "juvenile delinquents" in Brownsville, Brooklyn. The letter will appear in the next issue of the "TLS", available in Dunn.

Tobias Winright, assistant professor of religion, was part of a panel presentation on "Catholic Perspectives on a Preemptive War Against Iraq" at the Newman Center at Iowa State University on Oct. 3. He spoke on "Moral Use of Force" at the monthly meeting on Oct. 14 of clergy of the Des Moines District of the United Methodist Church. At St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Des Moines on Oct. 23, he gave a presentation on Catholic social teaching. On Oct. 24, he lectured on "Christian Responses to Violence" at a luncheon for area clergy in Warrensburg, Missouri, and that evening he presented "Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace" at Central Missouri State University, sponsored by their campus ministries.

Also, he preached at Trinity United Methodist Church on November 17, and he gave a presentation to Sunday school classes there on "United Methodist Perspectives on War and Peace." He also did presentations for the youth group at St Catherine of Siena Catholic Church in Des Moines on Nov 10 and for the youth group at St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Indianola on Nov 13. On Nov 22-25, he attended the American Academy of Religion meeting in Toronto.

THE CORNERSTONE

Editor: Jennifer Whitham Johnson

Art Director: Carol Carder

Production Assistant: Carole Schipper

THE CORNERSTONE is published seven times during the regular academic year by the Simpson College public relations department for faculty, staff, administrators and trustees. To submit a story idea or a news item, or to share a comment or suggestion, write to 31 Hillman Hall, Simpson College, 701 North C Street, Indianola, Iowa 50125; call 515-961-1600; or e-mail whitham@simpson.edu.