Sociology & Anthropology Newsletter

Volume 4, Issue 1   Spring 2012

Alumnus Highlight: Jay R. Howard, Ph.D.

Jay Howard earned a B.A. in Sociology at IU South Bend (1988) and continued his studies at the University of Notre Dame where he earned an M.A. (1990) and Ph.D. (1992) in Sociology. Currently a professor of sociology and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Butler University, Dr. Howard’s research interests include the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the Sociology of Religion, the Sociology of Culture/Popular Culture, Sociological Theory, and Sociology of Work. His latest book, First Contact Teaching and Learning in Introductory Sociology, co-authored with Nancy Greenwood of IU Kokomo, includes best practice methods for sociology educators.

When asked about his success at IU South Bend, Dr. Howard responded, “I was willing to consider lots of topics fascinating rather than being too narrowly focused on subjects that I might have perceived as more directly job or career related.” Dr. Howard engaged in his studies and took the time to enjoy what he was learning.

As a non-traditional student entering college seven years after high school, Dr. Howard offers advice about the value of education:

"When presidential candidates and other commentators say “not everyone should go to college,” they are always talking about someone else’s children -- not their own! Completing your college degree doesn’t absolutely guarantee the life style and career you may want, but NOT completing a degree will guarantee that you DON’T achieve the lifestyle and career you want. A college degree gives you an opportunity to achieve at a new level. And remember to enjoy the process of getting there!"

Dean’s List Fall 2011

SOCIOLOGY
Allison Berger
Rachel Berryman
Megan Bonham
Nikkole Caudill
Nicole Dinon
Kaitlynn Dugan
Virgil Jones
Kellee Neary
Erica Overton
Rori Peterson
Michael Petty
Gary Simon Jr.
Lynlee Swartz
Stephanie Swartzendruber
Sarah Taylor
Libbyrae Troyer
Easton West
Gayle Wilson

ANTHROPOLOGY
Paul Drake
Bryan Dull
Hannah Freeman
Amber Hardcastle
Jihye Lee
Nicole Miller
Jennifer Randall
Beau Rasco
Aubrey Stevens
IU South Bend students Bridget McGann, Neisha McGhee, Megan Bonham, and Sikholisile Nyoni shared their experience of attending the Indiana Academy of Social Sciences Conference this past fall.

Nyoni, an anthropology minor, used the conference to build rapport with professionals in related fields, and increased her knowledge of the latest research.

McGann, an anthropology major, highlights both personal and professional motivations to presenting at the conference. She says it was a great time to learn the conventions of presenting research, while also socializing with fellow colleagues.

Bonham, a sociology major, was excited about her research and wanted to share it with others.

McGhee, also a sociology student, simply loves presenting, and just like Nyoni, she enjoys the networking opportunity.

Bonham advises students to start with smaller conferences, like the Undergraduate Research Conference at IU South Bend. “These generally offer very supportive environments for undergraduate presenters.” Bonham encourages students to ask faculty members about upcoming conferences and to look online for regional conferences. Most students interviewed about

Their conference experience attributed the success of their presentations to extensive preparation, practice, and the guidance of a mentor. Students are usually accompanied by faculty members and funds can be raised to help cover registration costs.

One of the greatest fears of public speaking is the mere thought of appearing dimwitted before a large group of people, but IU South Bend students should not underestimate the quality of training they receive at the University.

Nyoni expected to be challenged by presenters from other institutions, but from her conference experience she states, “IU students out-classed them.”

IU students are competitive in research presentations and often may receive standing ovations. Presenting at conferences can build confidence and become useful in interviews and graduate school. Regardless of your motivation, the love for your research, the desire to refine your public speaking, or the need to expand your professional network, all students will benefit from the conference experience.

Alumna Highlight: Jess Carlson

Jess Carlson earned a B.A. in Sociology at IU South Bend and is now enrolled in the Masters of Social Work. Carlson attributes much of her success to her mentors at the University.

In her senior year, Carlson secured an internship at Logan Center where she helped disabled adults.

Her internship experience, with the exposure to casework, social workers, and social work jargon, has proven useful in her MSW program.

Currently, Carlson is employed at Youth Services Bureau as a case manager at the Rise Up Academy in South Bend. She is also employed at Porch Light Transitional Living as a mediator for pregnant and runaway youth. She says that the youth have helped her own personal and professional growth.

When Carlson is not busy with the MSW program, she is training for marathons with Team in Training to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Carlson anticipates a coming mission trip to Honduras with River Valley Church to deliver and hand out food boxes and clothing to families in need.

Carlson is flourishing at the start of her career and enjoying every minute of it. The IU South Bend community is proud to be a part of her success and looks forward to her future accomplishments.
Faculty Highlight: Elise DeCamp

Elise DeCamp will join the IU South Bend Department of Sociology and Anthropology this coming fall as the newest Anthropology faculty member. Ms. DeCamp earned her B.A. in Anthropology at DePauw University, Greencastle, IN (2005) and her M.A. in Anthropology at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN (2009).

Currently a Ph.D. candidate at Indiana University, her dissertation includes research in comedy clubs across the Midwest and focuses on the role of stand-up comedians in the manifestation of racial humor. The qualitative methods used in her fieldwork include participant-observation, interviews, and focus groups.

"I am discovering how comedy clubs serve as significant sites in the consideration and contestation of prevailing racial discourses of class, physical appearance/dress, behavior, and language, through the permissive, relaxed, and live/interactive nature of the space."

When not conducting research, Ms. DeCamp enjoys reading science fiction and fantasy novels by authors like Neil Gaiman, Tad Williams, and Patrick Rothfuss. She loves to write poetry and take long walks in the park. Her former years as a novice bass player and clarinetist in high school still draw her to small venue live musical performances.

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology at IU South Bend is excited to have Ms. DeCamp join their team. She brings a lot of energy to her research and undergraduate students should look forward to her coming courses. This fall, students can enroll in ANTH A390: Arts Aesthetics and Creativity Race and Ethnic Humor in the U.S.

What Employers Look For

In a survey of employers, Hart Research Associates found that employers want new hires who have a balance of knowledge and experience. Applicants with an internship or other form of applied experience are more marketable.

Dr. Gail McGuire, Chair of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at IU South Bend states, "Going to class is simply not enough." Internships and other field related experience not only move knowledge out of the classroom and into application, they also can secure future employment opportunities.

One possible field experience to keep in mind this summer is the Archaeology Summer Field School. Make an appointment with your advisor to discuss internship possibilities in both fields for the coming year.

An understanding and ability to apply a variety of research methods is among the skills desired in the workforce.

According to Dr. Theo Randall, the required method courses in the Sociology and Anthropology programs are often the most marketable skills for graduates in both fields. Qualitative Research Methods is taught in the spring and fall semesters and quantitative is offered only in the spring. Social Statistics is taught in both semesters.

This coming fall a Laboratory Methods Course in Archaeology will be offered. Students will analyze data and materials from the Summer Field School. Students need not attend the summer.

What Employers Look For Continued...

In addition to emphasizing internships, Dr. McGuire advises job seekers to choose their language carefully when promoting the skills they acquired during their degree program.

"Students need to market themselves by paying attention to the terminology and language they use when highlighting their accomplishments and experiences."

By using the language employers are looking for, rather than simply noting an experience, job seekers will catch the eye of hiring committees.

A student might market their service learning project as having "gained civic knowledge, civic participation, and community engagement" while applying "knowledge and skills in a real-world setting."

To find the language to better market yourself, access the full report by Hart Research Associates: Raising the Bar: Employers’ Views on College Learning in the Wake of the
Get Real World Experience!

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Indiana University South Bend is dedicated to offering students opportunities to get real world experiences. We encourage students to get outside of the classroom and engage in:

- Study Abroad in Mexico or Costa Rica
- Completing an internship with local agencies
- Conducting archaeological research
- Presenting independent research at regional or national conferences
- Publishing research in undergraduate journals

Our Mission:

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Indiana University South Bend is dedicated to fostering a critical understanding of social and cultural diversity and of the social bases of the human condition. As a faculty we are committed to excellence in teaching, scholarly activity, and service. With a strong liberal arts education, our students are prepared to be active contributors to their communities and to live fruitful lives as informed citizens of a global society. Through their training in theoretical analysis and research methods, our students have a solid basis for pursuing careers in law, social work, business, public administration, public health, cultural resources, library science, and many other human services professions. They also are well equipped to pursue graduate study in sociology and anthropology in order to go on to careers in teaching, administration, and research.

Sociology and Anthropology Student Success

Meredith McCabe, an Anthropology major, was selected to participate in the OSEA SELT program this summer. Participants in the SELT Teaching English Service Learning Program teach English as a second language to children and adults in a Maya community of Yucatán and are trained to do ethnography of the educational process.

Lynlee Swartz, a Sociology alumna, was accepted into the Applied Sociology program at the University of Indianapolis.

Kristin Budd, a Sociology alumna, has accepted an Assistant Professor position in IUSB’s Criminal Justice Department.

Sikholisile Nyoni and Megan Bonham this past fall at the Indiana Academy of Social Sciences conference.

Megan Albaugh Bonham, a sociology major, has been accepted into the North Carolina State Guatemala Ethnographic Field School program this summer. Megan also received a $500 SMART Travel Grant to present her research at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Baltimore this March.

Sarah Nixon, an anthropology major, presented on “Spatial Distribution and Artifact Densities of Upper Mississippian Features at Collier Lodge” at the 127th Annual Indiana Academy of Science Meeting on March 10th at Purdue University.