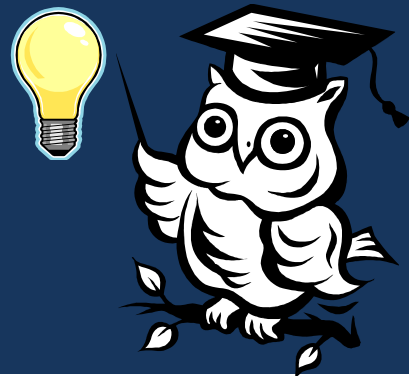


Light of Knowledge Scholarship 2009



Meet the scholarship recipients...



Meaghan Figg

Recipient of the Project Control Light of Knowledge Scholarship for Business

Meaghan Figg is a senior at Elmhurst College. Her major is accounting and she will be graduating this coming May 2010. Meaghan is planning on starting her career and becoming a CPA as soon as she can. She is a very driven person and while attending school, she also has maintained a job and participated in extracurricular activities, as well as stay involved with her family and friends. Recently, Meaghan has started working as an intern at a firm that does auditing and taxes for condominiums. This is such a wonderful experience to gain knowledge about her chosen career path. She could not be more excited about graduating and becoming a businesswoman. Meaghan's long term goal is to become a partner at a firm and eventually become a sole-proprietor of her own business. Though she is excited for her future, she is very grateful for her past. Her family has been her driving force to become who she is today, and she couldn't be more gracious. Also, Elmhurst College has been an amazing institution to attend for the past three years, and she has learned so much from the curriculum and professors. Meaghan's past has gotten her here today, and now she looks to the future.

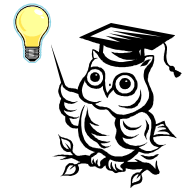


Christine Mullen

Recipient of the Larry Braskamp Light of Knowledge Scholarship

Christine Mullen just completed her sophomore year at Elmhurst College. She is majoring in Marketing and Supply Chain Management and was recently inducted into the Delta Mu Delta honors society. Along with keeping a high GPA, Christine works as an administrative assistant at Maddock Douglas, a local marketing and innovation agency. Last J-Term, Christine fed her love of traveling by studying abroad in England and plans to go to Italy for J-Term 2010.

Christine also has an interest in green initiatives for the college, including speaking of the importance of sending positive environmental messages as the student representative at the Dedication of West Hall. She is also involved in some marketing initiatives by the Office of Residence Life such as designing posters about topics such as room selection processes, relationships, the importance of sleep, and alcohol abuse.



When a Minority become a Majority: The Changing Demographics of Elmhurst College Students

By Meaghan Figg

Last year, I was presented with a wonderful opportunity to do a research project on anything that interested me. I immediately knew that my research topic would be women in business. I am fascinated with how the business world has and should change for the crowds of women graduating from colleges around the country, which has never before been seen in large quantities.

I researched the topic, and found out a few useful facts. Currently women outnumber men 2:1 in undergraduate colleges. If this increase in women continues, then by the year 2068 theoretically the entire graduation line at college should be female. Females are no longer pursuing their “M.R.S.” degrees, or in other words, get married straight out of high school. It is said that women tend to study more, score better, and participate more in extracurricular activities. Males are tempted to start making money immediately following high school and usually go to trade schools.

Since not much research has been done on this topic extensively, I decided to do some research of my own to find out answers that I wanted. I had an approach that involved three main ways to gather information. I made a company survey to send to various companies as well as interviewed three companies. These two ways helped me gain a better knowledge of what companies are doing to change and what they are offering to new employees. Finally, I created a survey to show what students were expecting from companies once they graduate.

For the company survey, I sent it to over 100 managers in a variety of industries. In this not-random sample, I received about 25 responses in a period of two months. The first finding was despite the fact that more women are graduating than men, it seemed to be easier for the companies to find and recruit men. There was no special recruiting program for women. Many of the companies stated that there were salary levels and pay grades to protect against unfair pay, however, about 10% of respondents said that there was nothing in place to prevent unequal pay. This is a big problem that needs to be looked into, considering all of the laws that are in place to prevent unfair and unequal pay.

Next, I did the company interviews. I interviewed a non-profit community organization, nonprofit hospital, and for-profit professional accounting firm. I learned that non-profit companies pay less, but offer more benefits. Also, there is a relatively low amount of work-sharing or telecommuting, which is good for employees with children. Finally, all three said that women are now taking over the roles that were traditionally held by men.

The final step in my approach was the student survey. I sent out a survey to a few students on Facebook and to Elmhurst College’s business capstone classes. I received 29 total responses. As far as benefits go, health insurance and retirement plans were important to both men and women. But after these two benefits, there was a definite line between female and male choices. Males tended to choose options that involved more money while females chose benefits that were for families (day care, parental leave, etc).

At this point I compared all the answers and data that I collected and drew a few conclusions. Some of the students’ wants matched up to what the companies were offering. Also, mentors and support groups are a great way to help female employees thrive in a company. The third, but not final conclusion, was that unfair and unequal pay should be looked into more carefully by HR of companies; women are motivated knowing that the company they work for are being fair to all employees. Now the question is: will the business world be willing to respond to the call to change.

Elmhurst College “Green”jays

By Christine Mullen



Ever since taking the First Year Seminar class, Local Choices Global Effects, my eyes have been opened to the Green movement which has seemed to push its way into the minds of many who are environmentally aware. While in that class, I learned that many of the effects of local pollution can be felt outside of our communities. For example, the electronic waste people produce in the U.S. is often dumped in places of complete poverty such as in Lagos, Nigeria. I had not known before how much my trash affected other countries, but after having learned about that in our class, I now see the importance of creating a Green environment for ourselves and others.

While in Local Choices Global Effects, my personal research was focused mostly on energy consumption and coming up with alternative solutions to avoid producing as much pollution. The ending class project was an analysis of Elmhurst College to determine where our school was excelling and lacking in sustainability efforts. After this analysis, we tried to offer some realistic and possible solutions to the problems the campus faces in terms of saving energy and producing less trash.

One alternative solution that I felt was very important as well as extremely relevant to life at Elmhurst College is drinking and using tap water instead of water bottles. In my research, I found that bottled water is not always the "clean" water that we perceive it to be. The differences between bottled water and tap water were astounding. When one thinks about the number of bottled beverages they see around campus either in offices or residence halls, they will see that the campus spends a lot of money on bottled water that is not as cheap or possibly not as safe as tap water. This past year I purchased a water filter jug for the fridge in my room on campus. I saved tons of J-pass meal points by simply walking down the hallway to fill it up from the kitchen sink. A suggestion for the cafeteria might be to invest in reusable cups in the cafeteria instead of the Styrofoam cups. Or maybe invest in biodegradable plastic cups. There are many possible solutions.

This past year, I had the opportunity to explore being Green from a business aspect as well. In Business Management, I did a project with a friend on sustainability in businesses. The focuses included an overview of sustainability, some effects of business pollution, why businesses should think sustainability and environmental awareness is important, and some tips for managers on how to make their office environment more environmentally friendly. While researching this project, I found some surprising statistics which changed the way I do my job and my behaviors as a student. For example, one statistic I came across stated that the average worker uses around 10,000 sheets of paper annually. That statistic became real to me because I experience firsthand the costs of using a lot of paper because I am in charge of supply ordering at my job. One smart, cheap way to deal with excessive paper use would be to go digital. There are an endless number of solutions.

In addition to that class project, I also represented the student body by speaking at the dedication of West Hall. I think being Green and environmentally conscious is important to teach and integrate into the Elmhurst College ethos because there is such a large opportunity to influence today's college students to live in ways which help preserve the planet and its resources for the future populations to live on. As unfortunate as the current economic times are, it would be a great opportunity to help students figure out how to make smart lifestyle changes which help them save money and the environment. It's a topic that I hope to work on in the future to make a difference on the Elmhurst College campus as well as in the lives of students and the community.