Distinguished Service Alumni
2012 • Kari Jagodzinski

Kari received National American University’s 12th Distinguished Service-Alumni Award at the NAU-Rapid City’s 70th commencement event on May 19, 2012.

Mrs. Kari Jagodzinski graduated Magna Cum Laude from the Rapid City campus of National College in 1986. Following graduation, and as part of the National College extension program, she continued her studies in international marketing at Schiller International University in Strasbourg France. Jobs which followed included regional sales & marketing positions in the tourism and transport industries, including Vice President and Sales Director for Black Hills Badlands and Lakes Association. Having the opportunity to travel the United States over the course of these years confirmed her opinion that Rapid City was where she wanted to establish her home. In 1996, she married husband Joe. They have two children - Joey and JuliAnna.

In 1997, Jagodzinski founded Seize the Day Marketing Group, Inc. The marketing firm focused on assisting small businesses in the Black Hills region, along with larger clients such as Black Hills Power, Rapid City Regional Hospital and The Macerich Group. In 2001, she developed a second corporation, Account Executives, Inc. This company was conceived through work with clients, who in addition to marketing help, needed high caliber business-to-business sales people. With a business partner and utilizing a franchise model, this corporation quickly expanded into Mankato and Minneapolis, MN.

RIO RANCHO RELOCATES AS ALBUQUERQUE WEST | 10131 Coors Blvd NW, Ste. 1-01 in the Alameda West Shopping Center

April 27th, 2012 was a historic day for National American University – Rio Rancho. The students, staff and faculty made the move into their new building down the hill and on the west side of Albuquerque and thus, the Albuquerque West campus was born!

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ALBUQUERQUE WEST CONT...

National American University prides itself on creating student friendly learning environments. Over the last several years, NAU has been updating its floor plans in order to provide updated, efficient, and effective student-friendly campus environments. With the growing number of students residing on the west side of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho, service to these students is a priority. The new location will allow for additional staff to serve the growing online, as well as on-ground, student population. Updated classrooms, learning resource center and improved technology throughout the campus will enhance the NAU experience for students, staff, and faculty. This new location is not only convenient in the regard to location, but also has an abundance of parking and easy access to bus routes.

RAPID CITY
NATIONAL SCHOOL OF BUSINESS – 1951

The alumni office received a personal letter from Ralph Scissions, who graduated in 1951 from the Rapid City campus (at this time, the only campus) with a degree in Senior Business Administration. A native of Dallas, South Dakota, he is also a member of the Rosebud tribe. He believes he was the first Native American student to complete his educational program. The 1951 graduation event was held in the Alex Johnson Hotel ballroom and at this event, he was awarded a trophy for being the top student in accounting. The graduation event and his award were featured in the Rapid City newspaper and the article prompted a job offer to work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which led to a position in Owyhee, Nevada. He retired from that position in the 1990’s. Mr. Scissions indicated that he planned to attend the commencement event at Rapid City in May and hoped to meet with some graduates and members of the current staff. With the letter, he included a generous contribution to the university’s Alumni Scholarship program, which was much appreciated.

WELDON SPRING

The Weldon Spring “wonder women” (and some men) walked in St. Peters, Missouri, to raise funds for Multiple Sclerosis, a debilitating disease that strikes people in the prime of their lives. They raised $378.

TULSA CAMPUS

Dr. Ron Shape, CEO, recently visited the Tulsa campus and gave a presentation on the state of the university. He, Michaele Holland, President of Campus Operations, and Joan Meyer, Southeast Regional Vice President, joined the Tulsa staff for lunch. • The campus held Spirit Week in late April for faculty, students, and employees and celebrated with an 80’s day, crazy hair day, and NAU day.

WICHITA

The campus is hosting a “Dinner with the Dean” at the close of the quarter. Students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher for two consecutive quarters are invited to participate.

BELLEVUE

The Bellevue culture club recently took part in fundraising for the March of Dimes and they contributed $100 to the cause. • Asante’ Moody has joined the staff as academic dean and Rana Forrest has taken a position as financial services representative.
AUSTIN

At a recent regional leadership conference, the Austin campus was presented an award for helping the most students get their education started during the winter quarter.

AUSTIN SOUTH

Sarah Nelson, academic coordinator, recently presented the Instructor of the Quarter award to Rodney Norman during the academic awards event. Mr. Norman has taught Strategies for Success for several terms. He is a US Army veteran and serves as a military liaison at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio.

RICHARDSON

Richardson, one of NAU’s eight locations in Texas, held a ribbon cutting ceremony in April. Richardson’s mayor, city officials and members of the Chamber of Commerce and members of NAU’s staff attended as Rodney Brown, campus director cut the ribbon. An informative power point presentation created by Raenalda Palmer featured the educational sequence from application through graduation. Guests were provided with refreshments and a campus tour.

GEORGETOWN ONLINE

NAU’s 36th location and number eight in Texas is now open. Georgetown is currently providing online programs, and is awaiting HLC approval to begin offering on-ground programs. Joel Lee is the campus director and Patricia Drake is the Director of Admissions.

NEW JERSEY

The campus has a goal of raising $1000 for the American Cancer Society. They will be walking and making an NAU presence across the George Washington Bridge from New Jersey to New York City.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Joel Strum, (pictured left with family) an NAU online student since 2009, was recently killed in Yemen. He was living in Taiz, Yemen, learning Arabic and teaching English at a language institute. Assailants dressed in military uniforms sped up next to him on a motorcycle and opened fire. A message that was circulated announced that “holy warriors” had killed a “senior missionary.” Joel’s parents said that he was there to learn Arabic and not to proselytize. He had been passionate about teaching business skills to Yemenis. He was teaching English and assisted them in learning computer skills. Hundreds of youth activists and other protestors marched and demanded justice for the American teacher.

NAU CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Dodie Serafini has been named as the dean for the school of nursing. She has her LPN, ADN, BS and MSN degrees and has previously served in progressively more important roles with the University’s school of nursing. She is also in the dissertation phase of her doctorate in educational leadership.

Kari Jagodzinski continued...

In 2008, Mrs. Jagodzinski sold this business, and then went on to work as a marketing consultant for the largest orthopedic practice in the region, as well as a manufacturing company, launching into the international market. She received the SBA’s “Small Business Advocate of the Year” award for SD in 2002, as well as for Region 8, which includes the states of CO, MT, ND, SD, UT and WY. She is a published author, and has been recognized for her service to numerous business and community organizations.

Mrs. Jagodzinski discovered over the years, what she describes as her true definition of success. “My greatest success is helping others succeed - in business, in professional endeavors or personal goals.” Currently, she is focusing on caring for her family, and helping individuals and the community through ministry work at Rimrock Church. She continues to offer corporate speaking, training, and consulting services on a limited basis, and she points out that her entrepreneurial spirit and inspiration started with her grandmother and great-grandmother. While in high school, a successful business owner hired her and served as a mentor. She credits her success to her college education, mentors, and business associates; and continued passion for commerce to the privilege she’s had working with many tenacious, innovative and industrious entrepreneurs.
The photos examine the progress of construction of the new location of the Rapid City campus. The views show the progression of the addition to the front and side of the building as well as the inside space from December 2011 through May 2012. The building currently houses NAU’s Central Administration and Distance Learning campus and is located on Highway 16 in Rapid City. Construction is scheduled for completion this summer so the Rapid City Campus can move to the new location.
Thank you to those alumni who responded to NAU’s most recent Alumni Survey conducted in March. A total of 1,657 surveys were e-mailed to those who graduated in 2010 and beyond from all NAU locations. The responses were shared with the NAU President and CEO as results influence university planning, budgeting, the hiring and training of staff, and many operational matters.

Matthew Charles, a DL graduate 2011 with Master of Business Administration, is from Waynesville, Missouri, and is employed at Ft. Leonard Wood in Missouri at the Non-Commissioned Officers Academy.

James Cross, a Rapid City campus IT grad and a member of DEK, is living in Clancy, Montana and working as a manager of Systems and Technical Infrastructure for the Student Assistance Foundation.

NAU wishes to remain in contact with graduates from all campuses and all time frames. To update your information, please go to www.national.edu/alumni-information-form. This will ensure that this newsletter continues to be delivered to you.
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