Baker Named One of Top 50 Schools in Game Design by Princeton Review...

Baker University is one of the 50 best undergraduate institutions in the United States and Canada to study game design, according to The Princeton Review, one of America’s most widely known education services and test preparation companies. The Princeton Review developed its “Top 50 Undergraduate Game Design Programs” list – the first project of its kind – in partnership with GamePro, one of the most respected brands in the video game industry, reaching more than 3 million gamers a month. The list is reported in GamePro's April 2010 issue and on the Web sites of The Princeton Review (www.princetonreview.com) and GamePro (www.gamepro.com). It names eight programs for top honors as the best of the best. The top eight are listed in rank order. The remaining 42 programs are listed in alphabetical order and are not further ranked.

Of the roughly 500 programs at which students can study game design in the U.S. and Canada, The Princeton Review selected these 50 programs based on a survey it conducted in 2009-10 of administrators at institutions offering game design coursework and/or degrees. The comprehensive survey numbered more than 50 questions and covered areas from academics and faculty credentials to graduates' employment and career achievements. Criteria included the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities and infrastructure. The Princeton Review also looked at data on scholarships, financial aid and career opportunities.

“It is a great honor,” said Val Kolesnikov, assistant professor of computer science at Baker University. “It is no small thing to rank among the 50 best programs nationally. I consider it to be a great impetus for laying down the foundation for a great computer science program with several concentrations here at Baker. I also expect to have outstanding applicants and grow in the number of computer science students in general as a result.” Congratulations Professor Kolesnikov!!!
BU Delta Tau Delta Chapter Wins National Awards…

This past month several undergraduates from Gamma Theta attended the Western Plains Division Conference in Houston, TX where their chapter heard its name called several times to receive various awards. The largest of the awards was recognition as one of only 10 chapters in the nation to receive the Hugh Shields Award. This is the most prestigious award that can be bestowed upon a chapter of the Delta Tau Delta Fraternity. The award came in recognition of the chapter’s hard work over the previous year!

Additionally, Gamma Theta was awarded these additional honors at the same conference:

* Most Improved Chapter in the Western Plains Conference (for the second year in a row)
* Court of Honor Award (presented to only the top 20% of all DTD chapters)
* Excellence in Adopt-a-School Award
* Excellence in Recruitment Award
* Recognition of 25% Growth in Recruitment Award
* Recognition of Meeting or Exceeding Recruitment Goals

Congratulations to all actives, pledges and alumni members of Baker's Delta Tau Delta Chapter!!!

Wandering Wildcats Update…

Here’s your chance to vote for the final destination of your choice for the upcoming Wandering Wildcats trip in the summer of 2011. Since I wrote and asked for suggestions in December I received numerous responses with 15 different locations. The top three vote getters are listed immediately below.

If you might be interested in one of them, I would appreciate you sending me a reply with your choice to jerry.weakley@bakeru.edu.

Wandering Wildcat Trips are not only sponsored by Baker but feature President Long and husband Dennis accompanying the group along with other members of the administrative team.

Wandering Wildcat trips are open to alumni, former students, faculty, parents of students, donors, friends and neighbors/relatives of all of the above...essentially EVERY-ONE! Having gone on 12 of these trips in the past, I can assure you that you will have fun and make lots of new friends!!!

Here’s your choices:
- A Cruise to Alaska with train through Denali Park
- A Greek Island Cruise to include stops in Turkey
- A Caribbean Cruise 7-10 days
Men’s Basketball Coach Search Continues...

As Rick Weaver completed his 25th year on the court as the head coach of the University’s men’s basketball program, the University was continuing its search for his ultimate replacement. No fewer than 140 applications were received by Theresa Yetmar, Associate Director of Athletics, who headed the search committee. Applicants ranged from current head coaches of high school and NAIA schools to individuals who are currently assistant coaches all the way up to Division I NCAA programs.

Both the numbers of interested individuals and the quality of this applicant pool speaks volumes about the attractiveness of the Baker program and facilities.

On-campus interviews began the second week of March with the committee’s intent to have a new coach named by the end of the month. An update on this important position will be featured in the April issue of the Arbor.

Student Balances Studies with Boxing...

Mioshia Wagoner is pursuing a degree in Conflict Management and Dispute Resolution while at the same time remaining a world-class female boxer. Wagoner, proud of her Navajo and Chickasaw heritage, has claimed several boxing titles. Among her accomplishments are the Native American championship in 2007; the National Championship in 2008; and the silver medal in the Women's World Championship, held in China in 2008; and most recently state and regional championships in 2009.

“Boxing challenges you mentally and physically — basically all aspects in your life,” said Wagoner, who became interested in boxing after attending Amateur Fight Night at Haskell Indian Nations University. “You have to keep that passion to get better; you have to train; and you have to watch what you eat.”

Wagoner believes there are certain parallels between boxing and working on a degree in conflict management. “You have to go in there and be prepared for any situation,” Wagoner said.

After graduating from Baker, Wagoner plans to return to use her degree in her home state of Arizona and hopefully in ways that will help her tribe.

Baker Football Memory...

As we continue to march toward the huge football celebration that will be held at Homecoming next fall, the Arbor is featuring a “Football Memory” in each issue until October. In case you haven’t heard...If you played even a single year in the pads and helmet of a Wildcat football team member you are invited to join your teammates in a commemoration of the 120 Years since Baker played in the first college football game in the State of Kansas. As you may know, our opponent in that first game was the University of Kansas...a game which the Wildcats won by a score of 21-9!

Friday night the 22nd of October will feature the Annual Athletic Banquet and Hall of Fame Induction. A special video honoring Baker’s football past will be featured throughout the dinner and program. (Our newest inductees will be announced in the April issue of the Arbor.) The next day on campus will once again bring together all former players for a huge tailgate cook-out, introduction of all team members by decade at the game and a post-game victory BBQ along with Coach Mike Grossner’s 2010 edition of the Wildcats. I hope you will plan to attend! We will also be looking for former players/volunteers to help us communicate with and recruit their teammates to attend and assist in other meaningful ways. If you would like to help, please contact Alumni Director, Doug Barth ’91 at doug.barth@bakeru.edu.

And now, here’s a football memory from the fall of 1970 from then senior linebacker and running back, Tim Burkindine, Baker Athletic Hall of Fame class of 1992:

“In the fall of 1970 after graduating one of the best lines Baker had seen in a while the year before, we were projected to be in what is referred to as a “rebuilding year”. Apparently most of the coaches in the KCAC believed that too as we had been scheduled to be the Homecoming opponent for four different teams! Since it was my last year at Baker, I was hoping for a year that would be one to remember...and it really turned out that way. We played FIVE homecoming games that year – winning four of them- including our own. I also had thought that since I had only played one game previously in the rain that I was hoping to get a chance to do that again. Little did I know that we would end up playing four or five games in the rain (and mud) that year- including our Homecoming game. Because we were so wet and muddy, the Homecoming Queen Candidates we were supposed to “escort” at half-time wouldn’t let us within a foot of them. We did finish that season with a 6-3 record and only a season ending 35–7 loss to Ottawa kept us from going to an NAIA bowl game that year.” Thanks, Tim!!!
Arizona Alumni/Former Students Gather to Reminisce and Form Friendships...

President Pat Long along with members of the University’s Advancement team attended three gatherings with Arizona alumni, former students, donors and friends the beginning of March. All three events had great turnouts with lots of food and fun! Green Valley was the site of the first dinner on Wednesday, March 3rd. This was followed the next day with a luncheon hosted by Lois Levering ’36 in Sun City and then a “Baker After Hours” gathering in Phoenix. Thanks to everyone who attended one of the events. A special thanks to Tom Van Sickel ’59 who attended two of the events and who surprised me with a beautiful new Orange tie that I will be wearing proudly this coming Alumni Weekend! :)  

Alumni Weekend Not Far Off…

Lots of great new and improved activities lie ahead in May during Baker’s annual Alumni Weekend Celebration. Included in the activities this year is the return after several years of absence of a golf tournament on Friday, May 19th that will be open to everyone. Also a new place to meet and greet fellow classmates and friends from 3:00-11:00 p.m. on Saturday the 20th will be announced in the upcoming Baker Pride magazine. Watch your mail for the Pride which will be sent out on March 19th! Remember, Alumni Weekend is NOT just for members of the reunion classes...but is open to every former student and alumnus...so make plans to be there!!!

Another Great Way to Check up on Campus Activities…

You can stay abreast of the most current activities on campus by checking out this YouTube site from time to time: http://www.youtube.com/knbu. Also there is a growing list of “official Baker sites on Facebook...why not join us???
Endowment

As I travel often and visit with alumni and donors from one end of the nation to the other, the most common question that I am asked in regard to the University's fiscal well-being is “How is the Endowment?”

Recently, I had the opportunity to address the assembled members of the University’s Board of Trustees and Administrative Council on this same topic and found in doing my research for those remarks a few interesting notes that I thought I would share with a wider public.

First, and so that we are all on the same page in regard to how the endowment at Baker works, the endowment is essentially and in a personal way of speaking, the savings and pensions that you have accrued through life. The University uses a certain percentage of the annual earnings on its endowment to fund scholarships, programs, salaries and various other programs. And, just as you may have set up specific accounts to fund such things as college for your children, for a renovation of your home, for a new car or for a vacation fund, some of the University’s endowment funds are similarly “restricted” in their purpose and scope. Named and restricted endowments for scholarships can only be used for this purpose as directed by the original donor. An endowed Chair in a specific course of study is restricted to the support of a professor in that field or for that specific program and so on. Many of the University's endowments and other temporarily restricted funds (known as quasi-endowment) are not restricted and may be applied where the University's Board and officers think most prudent for the overall operation of the University.

After taking some significant hits due to the downturn in the nation’s economy, I can report that the University’s endowment is back on the road to recovery. In addition, over the course of the previous five years, we have receipted gifts to the endowment of nearly $5,000,000! These gifts have come through the charitable remainders of Life-income gifts, through wills and trusts, through current gifts to establish immediate endowment supporting activities, and even through the donation of the “cash value” of life insurance policies.

My records show that I have been informed in one manner or other of the existence of some 150 additional estate gifts that will one day be coming to the University...many of these in support of endowment. As the University continues to grow and serve increasing numbers of students in all of our current and future programs we will need to greatly increase our endowment holdings and the number of estate expectancies in our records.

If you have considered establishing an endowment either during your lifetime, or are planning to include Baker in your estate plan, I would encourage you to think in terms of benefitting the endowment. Also I would encourage you to add language that would provide a percentage as opposed to a fixed dollar amount. I have seen estates come to the University where the donor felt that a fixed dollar would suffice, when with the effect of inflation, the estate grew extremely large but, the impact of their gift to the University fell well short of what they were originally envisioned. Call me at 785-594-8332 if you would like more information.

Jerry L. Weakley

* The Above information is provided only for your consideration and should not be construed as “Legal or Tax Advice”. You should always consult your own professional advisor before acting upon this or similar information.

As Dr. James Chubb ‘22 used to say when he visited classmates and alumni while on the road for Baker...

“Please remember to leave something for Baker in your will!”