

ALPUMNER

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Volume 12, Number 3, January 2009

Hocus Focus

*Visual effects wizard
creates on-screen magic*

DANE HAWLEY ▼ WRITER/EDITOR

Celebrities ranging from Will Smith, Nicolas Cage, and Julia Roberts owe alumnus Ryan Heniser a debt of gratitude.

Heniser isn't an accountant, business manager, press agent, or talent scout for Tinseltown royalty. He's been more of a 21st century make-up artist, perfecting their larger-than-life appearances through visual artistry. He helps them look their best.



Ryan Heniser, B.S. '01, has enjoyed an up-and-coming career at visual effects and animation studios, having completed work on the movies *I Am Legend*, *Surf's Up*, and *The Ant Bully*. He recently accepted a research and development software engineer position at Industrial Light & Magic. ILM is one of seven divisions at Lucasfilm Ltd., named for founder and film pioneer George Lucas. At ILM, he is working on the proprietary application, *Zeno*, the organization's animation pipeline.

Heniser's "make-up case" is actually a software toolbox where—in conjunction with a variety of programming and scripting languages—the contents closely resemble an eye chart to the layperson: C/C++, TCL, SQL, RSL, OTL, PyQt, MEL, and MTOR, to name a few.

Together, these essentials form the foundation for his visual effects work, which creates or amplifies a sense of realism.

Heniser, B.S. '01, says he recognized his career destiny at a young age. "I've dreamed of working on films like *Star Wars*," he shares. "When I saw *Toy Story* for the first time, I knew I wanted to work in that industry."

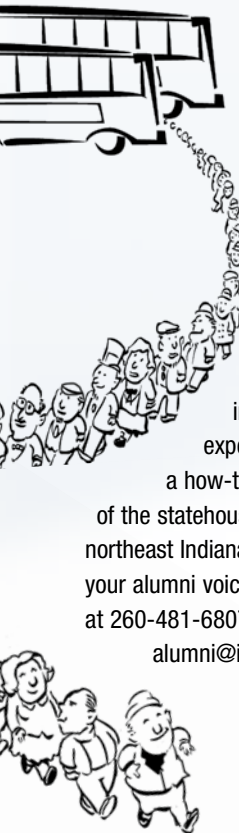
And work he has, collaborating on big-budget films such as 2007's *I Am Legend* and the animated antics in 2007's *Surf's Up* and 2006's *The Ant Bully*.

Despite the big screen focus of

Upcoming Alumni Events

Calling All Florida Alumni February 1, 2-4 p.m., Palm Island Resort, Cape Haze, Fla.

Join us at the Palm Island Resort for a special luncheon and IPFW reunion. Your parking on the mainland, water taxi transportation, and lunch is free for you and your family. For food count purposes, please contact Alumni Relations with the number of people in your party who are planning to attend by sending an e-mail to alumni@ipfw.edu or calling 260-481-6807 by January 21.



13th Annual Statehouse Bus Trip Tuesday, February 17, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Indianapolis

Join students, faculty, staff, and fellow alumni traveling to Indianapolis to lobby our state legislature for increased funding for IPFW. The experience includes transportation, a how-to-lobby lesson, self-guided tour of the statehouse, lunch with legislators from northeast Indiana, and much more. We need your alumni voice! Contact Alumni Relations at 260-481-6807 or by e-mail at alumni@ipfw.edu to reserve your seat.

Alumni Day with the Mastodons Saturday, February 28, Women's game at 1:30 p.m., Men's game at 4 p.m., Memorial Coliseum

IPFW alumni are encouraged to cheer on the men's and women's basketball teams at Alumni Day with the Mastodons. The men and women will take on Summit League rivals, the Southern Utah Thunderbirds. Tickets are being discounted for all alumni and their guests, and one ticket gets you admitted to both games. You will also have the opportunity to shoot a free throw at halftime, with the chance to win an autographed T-shirt from Men's Basketball Coach Dane Fife. For ticket information, contact IPFW Athletics Ticket Manager Zach Sweers at 260-481-6372 or by e-mail at sweersz@ipfw.edu. For event information, contact Alumni Relations at 260-481-6807.

Easter Basket Collection March 9-April 3

For the ninth year, the Northeast Indiana Alumni Directors Consortium is seeking wrapped Easter baskets to be given to the children of SCAN clients (Stop Child Abuse and Neglect). This is a great activity for families, church groups, your office, scout troops, and more. Ten Fort Wayne-area colleges and universities join forces each Easter and set a goal to collect more than 800 baskets for these children. Items must be commercially packaged (nothing homemade), and your entire basket should be wrapped

so that nothing falls out. Drop off the baskets at any area college or university until April 3. At IPFW, you can drop off your baskets at the Kettler Hall or Walb Student Union information desks or call us at 260-481-6807, and a representative from Alumni Relations will pick up your basket(s) from your car as you drive up to the Walb Student Union semi-circle driveway.

Alumni Math Dinner Saturday, March 21, 6 p.m., Walb Student Union Ballroom

It's time for the seventh annual gathering of math alumni and the Department of Mathematical Sciences faculty. Call Alumni Relations at 260-481-6807 to reserve your seat today.



Tapestry
A day for women

Tapestry: A Day for Women Friday, April 24, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Memorial Coliseum

Fashion expert Clinton Kelly, from TLC's *What Not to Wear*, will be the keynote speaker for 2009's Tapestry: A Day for Women. This annual program provides a day



Fashion expert Clinton Kelly, from TLC's *What Not to Wear*, will be the featured guest speaker for 2009's Tapestry: A Day for Women.

of renewal and self-growth for women of all ages, through educational, motivational, and inspirational activities in an atmosphere of camaraderie. Proceeds raised from the event support the Tapestry Parkview Endowment Fund, which provides scholarships to select IPFW female students majoring in the health or science fields. For more information regarding the event, contact the Tapestry Information Line at 260-481-6854 or tapestry@ipfw.edu. Registration begins February 27.

IPFW ALUMNI NEWSLETTER UNIVERSITY RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

IPFW Alumni Newsletter is published six times per year by University Relations and Communications.
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne ▼ 2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499 ▼ 260-481-6807 ▼ www.ipfw.edu/alumni

Irene Walters, Executive Director
University Relations and Communications
Kimberly Wagner, Interim Director
Alumni Relations
Dane Hawley, Writing and Editing
Ruth Petitti, Design
Elmer Denman and Jim Whitcraft, Photography

ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
Extending the Personal Touch

The Holiday Inn at IPFW

Where tradition meets innovation

Fort Wayne welcomes first full-service hotel in 25 years

November marked the grand opening of the Holiday Inn at IPFW where, in the words of General Manager Rob Evans, “the level of comfort is greater than what you have at home.”



Swimmer Don resides in the pool area.

The draw is in the details. Not only does the step-above concept begin with a fine dining restaurant and a full-service bar—the Mastodon Grill and the Faculty Club, respectively—it continues with fine amenities, such as a 32-inch flat screen TV and thick, pillow-top mattresses in each of the facility’s 151 rooms. Even the hotel’s branding reflects a bold, new direction for the international hospitality chain.

“This is the first Holiday Inn in Indiana to be the new hallmark Holiday Inn,” Evans shares. “The chain recently re-launched its brand with a fresher, newer look that includes a new logo, new lighting, and focuses on the first impression that guests have.”

John Merkin, senior vice president for Holiday Inn brand management in North America, complements Evans sentiments: “With this hotel design, Holiday Inn has arrived at the perfect convergence of tradition and innovation—one that will define the Holiday Inn of the future, offering the value and authenticity business travelers and families expect from this beloved brand.”



Full-service bar (Faculty Club)

This new gem on the IPFW campus, across from Memorial Coliseum, is a \$20 million investment by Focus Hospitality Services and represents a first-of-its-kind partnership. For the first time, the Holiday Inn brand will also serve as a classroom—in this instance, through a close relationship with IPFW.

“This is a new breed of hotel,” says Jerald Good, president and CEO of Focus Hospitality Services. “We’ve turned the hotel into a giant classroom, with actual classroom space, where we can showcase and teach the Focus Services and IPFW traditions of

hospitality excellence to students wishing to enter the hospitality industry.”

IPFW Chancellor Michael Wartell is pleased with the partnership for a number of reasons. “This benefits our students, our alumni, our community partners, and the IPFW neighborhood,” he says.

“Our students gain a competitive advantage, having access to training in both the theory and practice of hospitality; our alumni have a wonderful place to expand their campus connections by staying at the hotel or dining at the Mastodon Grill or Faculty Club; our business and community leaders have a fantastic venue for continued partnerships with IPFW and the Coliseum; and the hotel is a great amenity for the surrounding neighborhoods.”



The first-floor lounge area



A family suite room with bunk beds

Hotel Highlights

- ◆ 151 rooms
- ◆ Fine dining restaurant (Mastodon Grill)
- ◆ Full-service bar (Faculty Club)
- ◆ City’s largest indoor hotel pool
- ◆ Conference boardroom
- ◆ Spacious ballroom
- ◆ Fitness center
- ◆ Classroom space for IPFW’s hospitality majors
- ◆ Thick, pillow-top mattresses
- ◆ 32-inch flat screen TVs
- ◆ Complementary wireless Internet
- ◆ Free parking

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Applied Mathematics



I Am Legend, Will Smith
© 2007 Warner Bros.
Entertainment Inc.

▼ EFFECTS/Page 1

Heniser's work, visual effects are no longer exclusive to the landscape of Hollywood blockbusters.

Today, this specialization is frequently packaged for the small screen through an increasing number of television programs, commercials, music videos, and video games, where the desired images are either impossible or impractical to shoot in the real world. Consider the E*TRADE talking baby.

There is an important distinction to be made in the vocabulary of effects. Special effects and visual effects differ. Special effects refer to on-set mechanical effects and in-camera optical effects, while visual effects refer to digital post-production work—Heniser's specialty.

With a double major in math and computer science, Heniser is poised

for these technology challenges that require a high degree of skill.

He has since heightened his credentials by earning an M.F.A. in Computer Art with a focus on visual effects from the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD).

"The craft of the visual effects artist has always been a combination of technology and art," he shares. "It was IPFW that gave me a firm background in the technology and the mathematics that makes the technology even possible.

"SCAD helped me develop a set of fundamental artistic skills that I use everyday. Plus, they taught me how to harness my strong technical background to create aesthetically pleasing imagery."

Heniser's first professional job was at Dallas-based DNA Productions, an animation studio whose projects

include *The Ant Bully*—a film about a boy who continually torments an anthill, until one day when a magic potion shrinks him to the size of the ants, and he develops the compassion to help them save their colony from extinction.

The movie features the voice talents of Nicolas Cage, Julia Roberts, Meryl Streep, Lily Tomlin, and Paul Giamatti, among others. For *The Ant Bully*, Heniser developed software plug-ins to mathematically define the visual appearance of objects.

In 2005, Heniser moved to Los Angeles to work for Sony Pictures Imageworks, a state-of-the-art digital production studio dedicated to visual effects production and character animation.

There, he was a shader writer on *Surf's Up*, coding a set of software instructions using applications in

calculus and linear algebra, for example, to develop the appearance of texture and color with each object. His contributions on the movie—a pilgrimage about a teenage penguin seeking champion surfer acclaim—led to his development of a hair shader, which was used on each character who had hair, whether it appeared wet or dry, and a separate eye shader.

He considers these accomplishments to be among his proudest, he says.

Doug Townsend, IPFW professor of mathematical sciences and one of Heniser's mentors, is not surprised by his former student's competence.

"This is a case of the student surpassing the teacher!" Townsend says. "I taught him linear algebra and calculus, and I may still be able to prove a few theorems better than Ryan, but when it comes to applications, he's way ahead of me."

And make no mistake. Heniser is quite the expert when it comes to getting under just about anyone's skin. After all, his master's thesis is titled "Rendering Human Skin for Feature Films: Achieving a Heightened Sense of Realism by Approximating Skin Layer Dynamics."

Heniser says IPFW Associate Professor of Visual Communication Robert Murray was instrumental toward helping his thesis come to fruition by recommending SCAD for advanced study.

"Many of us say you can't teach talent to people who don't have it inherently," Murray says. "You can expose them to the arts, and they will get it or they won't. They shy away from what you share or they embrace

it. Ryan embraced it."

I Am Legend, an epic where Will Smith stars as the apparent sole survivor of a bacterial pandemic apocalypse, may qualify as Heniser's most lucrative embrace of the arts to date.

With a team of collaborators at Sony Imageworks, Heniser designed shaders that gave New York City an earthquake zone appearance—void of life for years. The buildings, bridges, streets, and sidewalks were given a dilapidated look with image processing algorithms and 2-D live action plates.

"The craft of the visual effects artist has always been a combination of technology and art. It was IPFW that gave me a firm background in the technology and the mathematics that makes the technology even possible."

—Ryan Heniser, B.S. '01

To Beomjin Kim, IPFW associate professor of computer science, it's Heniser's determination that has positioned him for this degree of career greatness. Heniser worked with Kim on an IPFW Undergraduate Research Grant to explore the interactive control of motion paths in vector fields.

"Instead of asking for solutions, he'd ask for resources to find the answers on his own," Kim recalls. "He didn't stop with just using the WYSIWYG

(What You See Is What You Get) tools. He wanted the actual foundation in computer science."

As of last year, Heniser's career greatness has found new challenges through Lucasfilm Ltd.'s Industrial Light & Magic, where he accepted a research and development software engineer position.

Industrial Light & Magic is one of seven divisions at Lucasfilm Ltd., named for founder and film pioneer George Lucas.

"I took the position because I want to know more about cutting-edge research project tools for movie productions instead of simply applying the tools to create images used in movies," he says. "If you read up on the history of this industry, you will quickly realize that this has been and continues to be groundbreaking and innovative."

In its 34-year history, the multiple Academy-Award winning ILM—which was first organized to create the visual effects for *Star Wars*—has never stopped breaking ground in digital imagery, delivering memorable movie creations throughout the company's body of work, which includes the *Indiana Jones*, *Jurassic Park*, *Star Trek*, and *Harry Potter* series.

At ILM, Heniser says he is working on the proprietary application, Zeno, the organization's animation pipeline. His stake in additional projects, which he says he cannot discuss due to intellectual property laws, will begin reaching theatres in 2010 and beyond.

As a growing fan base awaits his future contributions, may the Force be with him.

Class Notes

1970

Alan Weimer, A.S., radiography, was promoted to vice president of business banking at Grabill Bank.

1976

Joseph Hoffman, A.A.S., civil technology/B.S., building construction technology (1977), was promoted to senior vice president and project manager at Construction Control Inc.

1982

Adrienne Maurer, A.S., computer science/B.S., computer science (1987)/MBA (2000), was elected vice president of the 2008–09 Fort Wayne History Center board of directors.

Recent promotion? Job change?
Share your news with us.
www.ipfw.edu/alumni

1986

Jeffrey A. Markley, B.S., public affairs/M.P.A. (1993), is the manager of Neuhouser Garden and Gifts and was certified as a proven winner specialist by the Proven Winners Horticultural Organization.

Lisa L. Waterman, B.S., business, was elected the 2008–09 president of the Rotary Club of Fort Wayne–Downtown.



1988

Rose Costello, A.S., organizational leadership and supervision/B.S., psychology (1988), has been promoted to director of human resources at IPFW.



1993

Douglas L. Rheinheimer, A.A.S., electronic technology/B.S., electronic technology (1995), relocated to California recently to serve as director of electrical engineering for Paramount Pictures.



1994

Lara A. Gaerte, B.S., geology, is a professional pilot and just competed in the 2008 Air Race Classic. She and her husband own Century Aviation near Auburn, Ind.

1997

Mark Reynolds, A.S., architectural drafting, joined Project Design & Management Inc. as a CAD designer.

1998

Judith Nastally, A.S., architectural drafting, is the assistant manager of Neuhouser Nursery & Landscaping and was certified as proven winner specialists by Proven Winners Horticultural Organization.

1999

Sandra Hofmann, B.S., business, was promoted to federal tax executive at Crowe Chizek and Co. LLC.

2001

Lucian Krawczyk, A.S., architectural engineering technology, was promoted to executive designer/estimator of Granite Ridge Builders Inc.



Alumni fountain dedicated

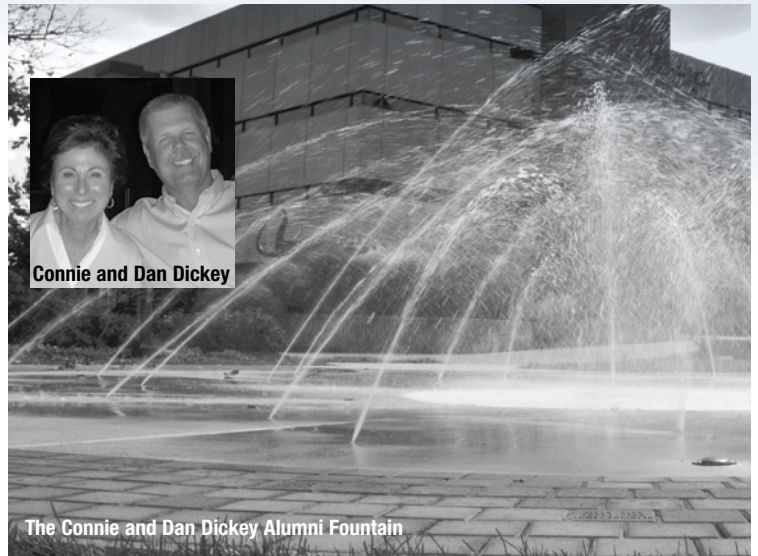
For Connie (M.S.Ed. '78) and Dan (M.S.Ed. '76) Dickey, philanthropy is not an obligation or duty; it is a joy to give back to the university of which they are both alumni. And on October 14 at the 10th annual Mastodon Roast, the Connie and Dan Dickey Alumni Fountain was officially dedicated as a part of the new Alumni Plaza at IPFW.

The “flat” fountain, featuring jumping jets of water, has joined the bronze mastodon statue outside Walb Student Union, an area that is quickly becoming the place for IPFW alumni to leave their mark.

In addition to the footprints around the mastodon statue and the Alumni

Millennium Walk bricks, alumni now have the opportunity to purchase a cobblestone to place around the fountain to leave their own lasting legacy. Some of them are simply engraved with a name, degree, and date. Others pay tribute to faculty and staff members or to student clubs, organizations, and other groups or individuals.

The cobblestones can be purchased for \$100 and include three lines of text, 17 spaces per line. For more information about the cobblestones or to obtain an order form, please contact Alumni Relations at 260-481-6807 or alumni@ipfw.edu.



Alumni Awards



Five IPFW alumni awards were presented to very deserving alumni and friends of IPFW during halftime of the Homecoming basketball game November 22. From left to right are Michael Fritsch (B.A. '79, A.S. '80, B.S. '82), who was awarded the Bob F. Jesse Medal for his years of service to the IPFW Alumni Association, which included two years as president of the IPFWAA board of directors; M. James Johnston, who received the IPFW Honorary Lifetime Alumni

Board Member award for his years of service to the university, most notably his expertise as IPFW Athletics was making the switch to NCAA Division I athletics; Associate Professor of Interior Design Matthew Kubik, who accepted the IPFW Honorary Lifetime Alumni Board Member award for his leadership in designing a future IPFW alumni center; Michael Newell (A.S. '86, B.S. '87, MBA '91), who was awarded the Alumni Citation Award for the significant role he played in the creation of the IPFW Center for Wireless Technology, an IPFW Center of Excellence; and Daniel Churchward (A.S. '86, B.S. '88), who accepted the IPFW Distinguished Service Award for his dedication to his alma matter and for his continued support of the College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science. IPFW Alumni Association Board President Karen Clelland, who presented the awards with Chancellor Michael Wartell, appears on the right.

Pink:

IPFW Sponsors Pink Out to Promote Breast Cancer Awareness, Research

IPFW Athletics will paint Memorial Coliseum "pink" again as it sponsors the second annual Pink Out on February 7, as the women's basketball team takes on the Oral Roberts Golden Eagles at 1:30 p.m. Tickets will be \$5; breast cancer survivors will be admitted for free.

Pink Out is an NCAA nationwide initiative in women's intercollegiate athletics to support breast cancer awareness and research programs. IPFW's involvement as a member of The Summit League is meant to localize this awareness campaign.

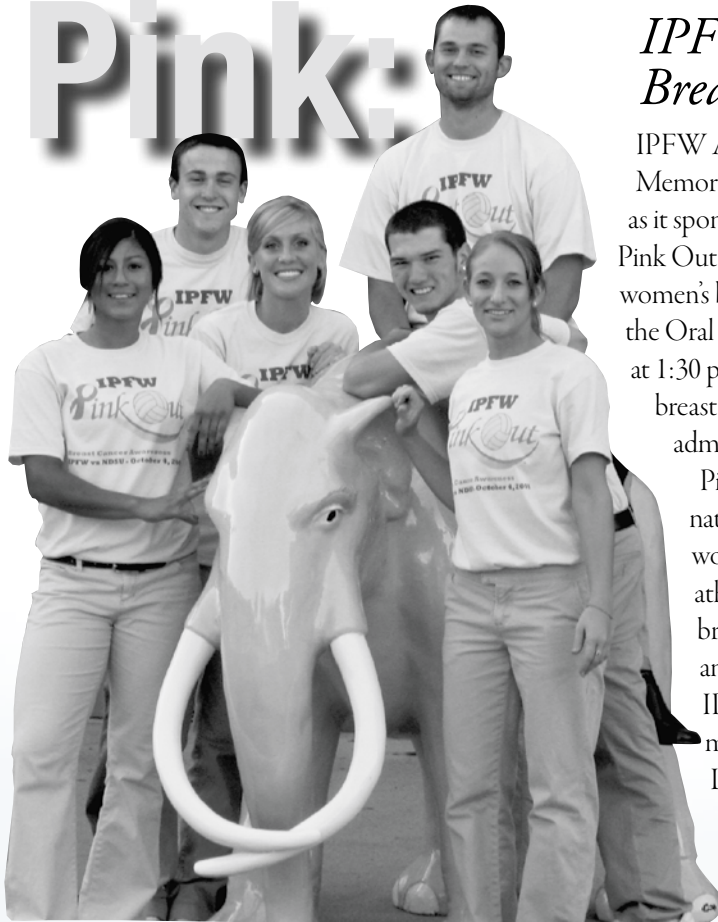
During last year's

inaugural event, the players, along with the opposing team, practiced with pink basketballs and wore long-sleeve, pink T-shirts to commemorate those who lost their battles with breast cancer and to honor breast cancer survivors as well.

Additionally, the Mastodons wore custom-dyed pink basketball shoes provided by Fred Toenges Shoes and Pedorthics. Spectators showed their support by wearing pink to the game.

A portion of the ticket sales, totaling \$5,000, was divided evenly between the American Cancer Society and Francine's Friends Mobile Mammography.

IPFW Director of Athletics Tommy Bell anticipates continued success. "We expect an even larger attendance at this year's event as we honor the survivors of this terrible disease," he says. "Let's get out to Pink Out and support this worthy cause."



Alumni Pre-Game Reception

This year, IPFW Athletics and Alumni Relations have teamed up for a special pre-game reception before each home men's basketball game at Memorial Coliseum. Join fellow alumni and Royal Dons members in the Century Club room for some refreshments and

fellowship. Each game, one of IPFW's basketball coaches will give a briefing and scouting report on the opposing team, including which players to watch for, as well as IPFW's strategy of play for that game. The doors open at 6 p.m. and a game ticket is required for entrance. Call Alumni Relations at 260-481-6807 for information.

Former Mastodons Leave Lasting Imprint

Three highly accomplished student-athletes honored with IPFW Athletics Hall of Fame inclusion in November



Left to right: Jeff Ptak, Julie Hefty-Price, and Jeff Richey

Jeff Ptak, A.G.S. '02, B.G.S. '03, continued the tradition of world-class attackers for men's volleyball. Ptak was named to the All-MIVA three times and was the conference's Player of the Year in 2003. He was part of the Mastodons' NCAA Final Four team in 1999 and was named to the All-America in 2003. Professionally, Ptak has played in Italy, Cyprus, Brazil, and Puerto Rico. He is currently a member of the Mayaguez Indios (Indians) in Puerto Rico.

Julie Hefty-Price, A.S. '88, was a four-year letterwinner in women's volleyball at IPFW. She was named to the All-Great Lakes Valley Conference in 1986 and 1987. Hefty-Price ranks highly in a number of women's volleyball statistical categories and was named to the Second-Team All-America in 1987.

Jeff Richey, B.G.S. '01, was a four-year letterwinner in men's soccer. Richey backstopped the Mastodons to their NCAA Final Four tournament appearance in 1999. He was named to the All-Midwest Region team, and more importantly, All-America. Richey is currently a goalkeeper with the Chicago Storm of the Xtreme Soccer League.

Inside Track



COVER STORY:

Math Whiz Magic

Alumnus Ryan Heniser uses math (and computer science) to apply “make-up” on Big Screen productions. ▼ COVER

Alumni Events

Explore a number of ways for IPFW alumni and friends to get involved during the next several months. ▼ 2

Teaching Hospitality

Read about IPFW’s new source of pride, which is also the latest addition to IPFW’s classroom space. Hmmm . . . it doesn’t look like an academic building. ▼ 3



Homecoming Honors

Three alumni and two friends of the university were honored at the Homecoming basketball game in November for their various contributions. ▼ 6

Splish Splash!

The newly dedicated Alumni Plaza next to Walb Student Union now features an exciting new water feature, the Connie and Dan Dickey Alumni Fountain. ▼ 6



Think Pink!

Cheer the Mastodons to victory this February during the second annual Pink Out, an event to promote breast cancer awareness and research. ▼ 7

Kimberly M. Wagner, B.A. '01, M.P.A. '05
Interim Director of Alumni Relations

As a new year begins, I take time to reflect on the previous year . . . and what a year it was for IPFW and the Alumni Association. With regard to the Alumni Association, the plaza between Helmke Library and Walb Student Union was officially named “Alumni Plaza,” and the Connie and Dan Dickey Alumni Fountain was dedicated in October during the 10th annual Mastodon Roast. On the IPFW front, construction started on The Ron Venderly Family Bridge, which spans the St. Joseph River. Completion is set for spring 2009. The Holiday Inn at IPFW and the Coliseum opened in early November. And the soon-to-open Medical Education Center will allow IU medical students to complete all four years of med school in northeast Indiana. We are looking forward to 2009 being another banner year and are planning some new and exciting events and programs, as well as sticking with some that have become alumni favorites. As always, share what ideas you have and any exciting news in your new year by sending a note to alumni@ipfw.edu.



New Year. Different Faces. Fresh Ideas.

Alumni Relations
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499

