A new dean
A new building
A reunion for alumni
North Quad Becomes a Reality

In July, the School of Information began its move to the new North Quad Residential and Academic Complex on the Central Campus. SI is housed in the wing visible through the courtyard, just behind the trees, as viewed here from the State and Huron intersection.

The move won’t be complete until October, and other academic units are also moving into the academic side of the complex. Everyone should be in place when alumni come back to campus in September.

Among the interesting architectural features of North Quad are various remnants of the Frezer Building, which occupied the North Quad site, such as the capital from a support column (in foreground of the photo), the complete facade of the original Carnegie Library along Huron Street, and architectural relief panels inserted into exterior walls.

Three Professors Take on Key Roles as Associate Deans at SI

Jeff MacKie-Mason, associate dean for academic affairs, was appointed dean of the School of Information, effective July 1, by the U-M Board of Regents.

“I care deeply about this institution, and especially its people. It may sound corny, but this opportunity to serve is personally moving,” MacKie-Mason says. “At SI, we have an innovative, daring faculty, and bold students. I look forward to the challenges of enabling them to exceed their already high ambitions.”

MacKie-Mason has been a U-M faculty member since 1986 and a member of the School of Information faculty since 1996. He is the Arthur W. Burks Collegiate Professor of Information and Computer Science and a faculty member in the Department of Economics and the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. In 2008, he was appointed associate dean for academic affairs at SI. This year, he received a University of Michigan Rackham Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award.

Highly regarded for his pioneering research on the economics of the Internet, MacKie-Mason’s recent work includes projects on spam reduction, peer-to-peer resource sharing, and incentives to increase information security. He teaches courses on incentive-centered design for information systems, the economics of information, information policy, human choice and learning, and antitrust.

MacKie-Mason’s appointment follows an internal process that was guided largely by input from SI faculty who overwhelmingly supported him as the next dean, says Provost Phil Hanlon.

“Dr. MacKie-Mason is a respected scholar, educator, and administrator and has the qualities needed to be a successful dean. I look forward to working with him in the years ahead,” Hanlon said.

MacKie-Mason replaces Martha E. Pollack, a professor at SI as well as in computer science and engineering, who served as dean since 2007. Pollack became vice provost for academic and budgetary affairs on July 1, but will remain an SI faculty member.

MacKie-Mason earned his bachelor’s degree magna cum laude in environmental policy from Dartmouth College in 1980, his Master of Science and a faculty member in the Art, Architecture & Engineering Library, and a public services and outreach technician at the Ann Arbor District Library.

Margaret Hedstrom, associate dean for academic programs, has been a leader in curriculum development for both the master’s and doctoral programs, and most recently was coordinator of the Archives and Records Management specialization within the master’s program. In her new role, she takes lead responsibility for the student experience and the content and management of SI academic programs. In addition, as of Sept. 1, Hedstrom will be a full professor.

Douglas Van Houweling, associate dean for research and innovation. He will oversee all research and grant activities at the School. The professor has a long history at the University of Michigan in research administration. In addition to his SI faculty position, Van Houweling has been president and CEO of Internet2, a consortium of universities, government, and industry developing ultra-high-speed computer networking.
Time to Say Goodbye

So much can change so quickly. Just a few months ago, I was happily engaged as the dean of SI, fully expecting that I’d continue on that role for years to come. Then, to my total surprise, I was asked to become the university’s vice provost for academic and budgetary affairs. The decision of whether to accept this new position was one that I struggled with. I had only been the dean of SI since the summer of 2007, and it is a job — and a school — that I have come to love. But in the end, the opportunity to serve the broader university that I also love was one that I could not turn down, and so, on July 1 I stepped down as dean to take on my new responsibilities.

The past three years have been a period of growth and change at the school, and I want to thank the faculty and staff for working so hard to help us achieve our goals. Together, we have:

• Increased the size of our MSI program by about 34 percent, while continuing to ensure that our students receive a first-rate education, and that they find good jobs in the information field; we continue to have extremely high placement rates, even in this challenging economy. Similarly, our doctoral program grew by 8 percent, and despite the worst job market for new Ph.D.s in decades, we’ve placed nearly all of our graduates over the past three years!
• Launched the new undergraduate concentration in Informatics, jointly with LSECA and the College of Engineering. Today, the program has approximately 70 declared majors, and the first cohort of students celebrated their graduation this May.

Finally, I want to say that one of the most enjoyable parts of my time as dean has been meeting so many SI alumni and friends: you’ve been unfailingly engaging and supportive, and have provided me with enormously useful perspectives on our work at the school. A number of you have stepped up and made new gifts to the school, enabling more students to receive SI education, and enabling us to carry out our mission of providing first-rate education and doing top-notch research. I am deeply grateful for your support, and I know that you will continue to support the school in the coming year. I trust that we will stay in touch as well; as I’ve been telling the folks here at SI, I’m just going “down the road.” In a very deep way, I will always be part of SI, and SI will always be part of me.

With warm wishes,

Wamsley Leads SI Development Effort

Tom Wamsley joined the School of Information as director of development and alumni relations in January. An experienced development professional with six years in higher education fundraising, Wamsley most recently was director of development for the Ray and Scott College of Business at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio.

Prior to joining Wright State, Wamsley had been vice president of institutional advancement at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio and director of development, East Coast Region, for the University of Dayton. He has also worked in development for the AIDS Resource Center and as a political fundraiser in Dayton.

In 2008 he was named one of Dayton’s “Forty-Under-Forty” by the Dayton Business Journal. He holds a B.A. in political science from Ohio University and an MBA from Wright State University.

Professor Addresses Climate Change

As director of development for the Raj and SI Development Effort

Associate Professor Paul Edwards has published A Vast Machine: Computer Models, Climate Data and the Politics of Global Warming. While some may dis- miss claims of global warming as simply model predictions, Edwards shows that no data exists without models, and that modeling is essential in the collection and analysis of the huge amounts of data now being generated around the globe—information so vast in quantity and diverse in quality that it can only be understood by computer analysis. (MIT Press, 2010). In American Scientist, reviewer Noel Castree wrote: “I can think of no other book that relates in such detail how meteorological and climatological science came into existence, sometimes acting as separate bodies of knowledge but increasingly interlocking in recent years. Over the past decade, Edwards has spent huge amounts of time exploring diverse archives and conversing with numerous practicing scientists.”

As of Sept. 1, Edwards will be a full professor at U-M.

Book by SI Staff Offers Career Guidance

SI students and alumni are fortunate to have the support of an excellent in-house career development department. Now, thanks to a new book, others considering careers in the information field will benefit from the team’s knowledge and guidance as well.

The New Information Professional: Your Guide to Careers in the Digital Age, written by Judy Lawson, director of admissions and student affairs; Joanna Kroll, senior associate director of career development; and Kelly Kovatch, assistant director of career development, has just been published by Neal-Schuman.

The handbook offers valuable guidance in identifying and preparing for a successful and rewarding career in the rapidly expanding information field. (Neal-Schuman, 2010).

Driving Home a Winner

SI master’s student Sangmi Park was a member of the winning team in a contest sponsored by Ford Research and Advanced Engineering to design a cloud-based application that combines social networks, GPS location awareness, and real-time vehicle data to help drivers get where they want to go safely and efficiently — and have some fun in the process.

The students developed their apps using a Ford Fiesta with built-in touch screen, on Microsoft Windows and Windows Azure platforms.

Six teams competed before judges from Ford, U-M, Intel, and Microsoft. The winning application, Caravan Track, allows groups travelling together in separate vehicles to track each other along the journey, map routes, share information on fuel levels and speed, and send messages about road conditions and hazards without needing to type.

The contest was part of a course offered by SI and the College of Engineering and taught by U-M professors and Ford engineers.

Park designed the Caravan Track user interface. Said Park, “It was a great opportunity for me to see how both designer and programmer work together and learn their roles in creating such an application. From this project, I’ve learned how to design user interfaces to meet real-world needs using current technology.”

ALA re-accredits SI

SI passed its American Library Association master’s degree program re-accreditation in June. This intensive, voluntary evaluation process is conducted at least every seven years and consists of both self-evaluation and peer review. The program, now accredited to 2017, includes one of the longest continuously accredited library science programs in the country.

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Welcome Back!

The 2010 SI Alumni Awards reception, lectures by distinguished faculty, and a chance to talk with fellow SI alumni are highlights of an activity-packed Reunion Weekend, Oct. 16-18. We hope you can join us for this special three-day event, concurrent with the U-M Homecoming Weekend.

While many reunion weekend activities are open to all returning alumni, we have planned several school-specific events especially for our SI graduates. These include the SI Class of 1960 luncheon, student-conducted tours of our new home in North Quad, and the SI Alumni Awards and Reunion Reception.

A complete schedule of all University and SI reunion events is available on our website at a.umich.edu/alumni/reunion.htm. For more information, contact Kelly Roan, assistant director of development and alumni relations, at (734) 763-2281 or kkrzyzan@umich.edu.

Thursday, Oct. 14

• Noon — Class of 1960 luncheon, Dean's Conference Room, North Quad.
• 2 p.m. — Museum of Art tour.
• 6:30 p.m. — Gala Cocktail Reception and Dinner (Class of 1960 only), Michigan League Ballroom.

Friday, Oct. 15

• 10 a.m. — SI Alumni Society Board meeting, North Quad.
• North Quad Tours — Hourly, at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, and 1 p.m.
• 2:30 p.m. — Libraries in the Age of Google,” a lecture by Paul Courant, U-M dean of libraries, Michigan Union.
• 6 p.m. — Meet new SI Dean Jeff Mack-Kr-Mason, congratulate the 2010 SI Alumni Award winners, and mingle with classmates and friends, Michigan Union.

Saturday, Oct. 16

Tickets for the following events must be purchased in advance.
E-mail sr.reunion@umich.edu or call (734) 647-8031.

• 12:30 p.m. — Go Blue SI Tailgate. Tickets are $30 for adults, $15 for children ages 5-12, and free for children under age 5. Oosterbaan Field House. Look for the SI table when you arrive.
• 3:30 p.m. — Michigan vs. Iowa football. Tickets (limit of four per alumni/us) are $65 each. First-come, first-served through SI by Friday, Sept. 1. Michigan Stadium.

State Street (Nickels Arcade is in the center of the buildings) in 1965

Always Lending a Hand

Today's LIS students may envy the reason William Wilson (AML '60) decided to pursue a graduate degree in library science in the late 1950s. At the time, he recalls, there was a librarian shortage, and it seemed like the route to a secure future. Fortunately in his case, that was exactly what happened... despite the ebb and flow of jobs in the profession through the decades.

In the years following his master's at Michigan, he worked for several years as head reference librarian at Beloit College in Wisconsin and at the Enos Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. He earned a second master's degree in higher education at Claremont University in 1971, "because in those days, you needed two master's degrees to enter a doctoral program."

But his plans to pursue a Ph.D. were tabled when he was hired as the librarian for the University of Maryland's College of Library and Information Services library in 1972, a library that eventually reached 60,000 volumes. In addition to managing the library, he taught every semester — a class in beginning reference and a field study course that gave students practical work experience in Baltimore area libraries.

“I never expected to stay there for 35 years,” he says of his position at Maryland, but once there he apparently had a hard time leaving. In fact he’s “retired” three times since 1995, most recently in 2006. He has been drawn back to help with numerous projects including the university's 150th anniversary and fundraising for minority scholarships.

He was named the university's first Honorary Alumnus for his work with College alumni. The university also created the Bill Wilson Spirit Award in his honor to recognize a staff member “committed to the College, its people and its mission; helpful, able, warm, generous; and willing to help with any situation, often before any problem might be apparent.”

Through the years he has taught and advised students, and naturally has observed some differences between today's students and those back when he was in library school.

“Obviously, the technology has changed,” he says. But he also notes that when he was in school, the courses were much more “collection-oriented, with more emphasis on the curation of books, whereas now they are more focused on the users.” The other major change he sees in learning styles. “When I was a student, I didn’t interact much with other students. Collaboration is much more common now. I encourage students today to take every opportunity they have to engage with other students. A lot of success in life depends on good networking.”

Early in his career, Wilson developed outside interests that utilized his information skills. He became an “information activist” for various causes including environmentalism and historic preservation. He has held every office, including president of the Maryland Conservation Council, which he first joined in 1971.

He’s also been heavily involved in the Maryland Library Association, and served as its President from 1995-96. At its annual conference, the MLA grants a “Bill’s Book Club Award” to a Maryland author from a fund Wilson helped to establish. He believes that libraries have a responsibility to encourage books and writing, “even though the trend is somewhat otherwise these days,” he says. “I’m proudly old-fashioned in that respect.”

His experience working on Maryland’s sesquicentennial celebration is being put to use now as a member of the University of Michigan’s Class of 1960 50th Reunion Advisory Committee. Wilson will be back on Michigan's campus this fall for the first time in several years. He’s looking forward to revisiting some favorite spots. “I worked 16 hours a week in what was then the new undergrad- uate library while I was a student in Ann Arbor. But I loved to spend my free time in the Arboretum.”

As generations of Michigan students and alumni will attest, some things never change.
On the steps of the Michigan Union in 1960, Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. Here’s one alumna who heeded the call.

Sometimes a small piece of paper can have a life-changing outcome. It wasn’t a lottery ticket that sent Sarah Naasko (MSI ’00) off on a journey of discovery to a distant land. It was the phone number she tore off a Peace Corps flyer on a kiosk near campus in the summer of 1993. She had just graduated from the University of Michigan into a tough job market with a BA in music and English education. Although both her parents were music teachers with connections all over the state, Naasko wasn’t having much luck finding a job. So that, combined with a yearning to see the world beyond her native southeast Michigan, drove her to pick up the phone and make the call that changed her life. She joined the Peace Corps.

In those days, she says, any volunteer with even a little French ended up in Africa, and she had taken four years of French in high school. Within months, she was in a special training program in Niger, learning how to work with rural women. The World Bank had just released a study advocating dispersing development funds to women instead of men. This same philosophy guides the micro-lending practices of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh: namely, that women in developing countries are more likely to invest money in their families and communities than men are. Naasko’s group was the first—and last—class receiving special training in working with women, because it turned out to be such a good idea that “in a few months, everyone was getting the same training.”

She worked in health, education, environment, and agriculture during the four years she spent in Niger. What she enjoyed most, she says, was learning something different every day, whether it was a new word, a new plant, a new song, or a new insight into a very different culture. What was hardest was not being able to communicate or share the intensity of her experiences in what she describes as “the vocabulary of a two-year-old.” On the other hand, her frustration was a great incentive to improve her French and to learn Hausa and Zarma, the local languages of the region.

While she was in Africa, “50 kilometers from the nearest phone,” she decided to apply to library school. She picked U-M out of the U.S. News & World Report’s annual issue on top schools — not because it was her alma mater, but because it was in the top five and she wanted to attend one of the best.

“I’ve never regretted it,” she says. “It was an incredibly exciting time to be at SI, when it was reinventing itself as a School of Information.” Because she was curious about everything, she chose a tailored program so that she could take classes in all four specializations offered at the time.

While pursuing her master’s degree, it was natural for Naasko to share her enthusiasm for her experiences by serving as the university’s Peace Corps Campus Coordinator in 1998-99, recruiting other volunteers. She attended career fairs, visited departments on campus, staged events to draw attention to the program, and screened applicants. (Coincidentally, Alex Pompe, the current U-M Peace Corps Campus Coordinator, is also an MSI student. He taught math in Namibia from 2006-08.)

Naasko’s post-Peace Corps career trajectory is exactly what one might hope for a committed and talented SI graduate: seven years as director of information architecture at Enlighten; three years as director in usability practice at Market Strategies in Livonia; and a new position she’s just started as user experience group manager at Fry Multimedia in Ann Arbor.

Will she be involved in any of the activities surrounding the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps in October? “I certainly hope so,” she says. “I’m looking forward to spending time together with other Peace Corps alums—to one else can fully understand the experience.”

The University is seeking to identify U-M alumni who served in the Peace Corps. Read their stories or share your own at peacecorps.umich.edu.
Bridging Generations with Stories for Hope

StoryCorps, the Library of Congress’s oral history project, records Americans from all walks of life sharing personal stories with family and friends. Often, the storyteller is a parent recalling a piece of family history for an adult child. But for millions of Rwandan youth, the voices of their parents were silenced in 1994, their family histories and stories effectively erased. One effort to reclaim and preserve endangered family cultural history in Rwanda is getting some assistance from the School of Information’s David A. Wallace.

The Rwandan genocide killed over 800,000 people during the course of 100 days and decimated a generation. Not only lives were lost — so were the positive stories and family histories that naturally pass from one generation to the next.

Stories for Hope is an intergenerational story-telling project founded by Patricia Pasick, a Michigan psychologist and U-M graduate. Jane Hassinger, a member of the U-M Women’s Studies, Institute for Research on Women and Gender faculty, also collaborates on the project. Pasick’s interest is narrative therapy, an approach which gives voice not just to difficulties, but to the many ways people resist the effects of those difficulties on their lives. Storytelling between generations provides cultural continuity, the possibility of passing a positive legacy to coming-of-age adults.

The stories, unstructured and minimally moderated, aim to fill the information gap created when almost an entire generation was destroyed in the 1990s. The listeners are ages 18–30, youth in danger of losing their cultural identity due to the disappearance of their parents’ generation and the decreasing elderly population. (The average life expectancy in Rwanda is just 50 years.) Those telling the stories are guardians, sponsors, aunts and uncles, elder siblings, pastors, teachers, and grandparents. Over 60 stories have been recorded so far, on a variety of topics, from courtship and marriage and pre-colonial folk tales, to histories of survivorship and loss in the genocides.

Wallace and his team are helping to build a digital archive of these oral histories. As an archivist, Wallace is interested in looking at the best ways to preserve and disseminate this information through the creation and development of an archive.

Beyond that, he wants to know how people are using the stories. Each participant receives a CD-ROM of their story and a photograph of themselves. “What are people doing with the CDs?” he wonders. “Did this story-sharing stimulate more discussion on the past? What difference did this story sharing experience make in their lives?” Other areas he is studying include the incentives and disincentives to participate in the story-telling and the sharing of stories publicly and whether these processes are in fact helping to sustain family histories. He will have a chance to find out first-hand when he travels to Rwanda for a visit in June to interview past storytellers and story listeners.

Last fall, students in SI’s Content Management Systems class created a website for the project where the stories could be housed. To read or hear some of the Stories for Hope, visit storiesforhope.org.

Michael Shallcross (MSI ’10), one of the SI master’s students to contribute to the Stories for Hope project, is the first student to be hired with a grant from the Frost Open Access Fund. Shallcross populated the website with audio files, transcriptions, and photographs that document the stories collected.

The Frost Open Access Fund was created by SI Associate Professors Robert L. Frost and Margaret Hedstrom to encourage innovative projects using open source software or designed to allow open access and to study the open access movement. The funding comes from royalties he receives from the works of his great-grandfather, the American poet Robert Frost. Although the Frosts are not related, the fund’s name also honors C. Olivia Frost, SI’s former interim dean and now professor emerita.

A U-M African Studies Center seed grant funded MSI student Jennifer Henderson, whose time was spent developing bibliographies on the Rwandan archival landscape and archival theory and practice associated with community archiving. She was also instrumental in managing and curating the digital audio and text files connected to the Stories for Hope.

“A child who does not talk with the father can never know what was said by the grandfather.” — Rwandan proverb
Sharing the Vision of the New North Quad
Donor Lee Hess Sees Funding New Technology Essential to Success of SI

Lee Hess doesn’t hesitate when explaining the reason he has contributed a lead gift for educational technology in North Quad, the new home of the School of Information. “I get tremendous satisfaction from donating to projects that will be important to technological progress and can offer significant returns, now and in the future,” he says. As a result, North Quad has become something of a passion with him.

A charter member of the School of Information’s External Advisory Board, Hess is chairman of INSTALLS Inc., LLC, and Spectrum Capital Enterprises. He describes his business as “figuring out how to parse information that contributes to the creation and management of national companies.” For more than 20 years, the Michigan alumnus has served on a variety of advisory boards at the University. “The more I got involved, the more intrigued I became with what SI does. The school interests me because it is at the intersection of organizing knowledge and applying knowledge.”

Hess was also drawn to SI because he believes his intellectual and financial contributions can be more impactful at a highly focused school such as SI. His early gifts to SI include support of Alternative Spring Break, a week during which MSI students volunteer at non-profit and cultural organizations in New York, Chicago, or Washington, D.C. “I thought that was a remarkable opportunity for students to simultaneously acquire experience and have an immediate impact on the organizations that they were supporting.”

He also provided seed money for a project training incoming students on how to use search engines. It grew into the Bibliobouts project—an online information literacy game that won Professor Karen Markey a three-year grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in 2008 and a Provost’s Teaching Innovation Prize this year. Hess loves hearing success stories like this. “Investments such as this can pay material dividends, especially when their potential for future rewards is considered,” he says.

He’s especially excited about the potential he sees in North Quad. “First, there’s the obvious benefit of allowing the school to reunite faculty, students and staff under one roof. Supporting ‘bricks and mortar’ projects is supporting students, and I believe that it will benefit all U-M students, not just those involved with SI.”

He predicts that North Quad will become “a second Union,” given its prominent location at the corner of State and Huron, in addition to the pervasive, cutting-edge technology that is sure to prove a student magnet. From smart boards in classrooms to plasma displays of student work to high-definition tele-presence systems, “this is going to be a major living laboratory for the Information Age. We can make life more intellectually interesting for our students and push technology in new ways.”

“I consider North Quad a once-in-a-generation event, and I am pleased to be able to contribute,” he concludes.

For information on giving opportunities to the School of Information’s new North Quad home, contact Tom Wamsley, director of development and alumni relations, at twamsley@umich.edu or (734) 647-7311.

“We can make life more intellectually interesting for our students and push technology in new ways.” — Lee Hess
A Trail-blazer in Community Information

After more than 30 years, Joan C. Durrance is retiring and leaving an extraordinary legacy of accomplishment.

Her professional life has been focused on three things: “real people, real information, and real organizations.” She began her career as a librarian but found her true calling in the field of community information research while living in Los Angeles in the early 1970s. She had joined the League of Women Voters there, which at that time was studying the causes of air pollution in LA County.

“I thought, I’m a librarian — I should be able to help with this,” Durrance recalls. “Instead I found to my shock that this was relevant community information I wasn’t able to get.” With other League members she visited the air pollution control district office, where “they patted us on the head and gave us a brochure.” So the women launched their own study and discovered that sampling anomalies had led refiners to be underrepresented and automobile exhaust over-represented as causes of pollution.

Thus began a lifelong career as an educator and researcher and led to her pioneering role in the study of community information systems and information-seeking behavior.

A CAREER IN COMMUNITY INFORMATICS: In the 1970s, Durrance became “obsessed with public policy issues.” She decided that a Ph.D. was required to continue her work and enrolled at the University of Michigan. Her dissertation research was conducted in Toledo, Ohio, however, because she needed to study how citizen groups seek information in a typical community, and “Ann Arbor isn’t typical of anything,” she notes with a smile.

Her dissertation formed the basis for Armed for Action, the first of her five books. While still working on her Ph.D., she was hired by the U-M School of Library Science as a lecturer and coordinator of continuing education. In 1981, after completing her Ph.D., she joined the faculty as an assistant professor. She served as associate dean from 1987–89 and in 1996 was promoted to full professor. In 2004, she was named the Margaret Mann Collegiate Professor of Library Science, in recognition of her exceptional accomplishments in research, teaching, and service.

In 2007 she was instrumental in founding the Community Information specialization at SI. “Joan’s research included exploring ways to empower public libraries to provide targeted services to patrons, for example, to those seeking enhanced job skills and employment opportunities,” remembers Daniel E. Atkins, founding dean of the School of Information.

With the emergence of the Internet, Joan realized that libraries could become a platform for greatly expanding their reach and impact together with other public institutions, not only as a source of digital content, but as the nexus of what became known as community networks.

Long before the Web, much less Web 2.0, Joan helped to build the field of community networking and to create an identity for the field of community informatics.”

IN THE INTERNET VANGUARD: Though she has received glowing accolades as an educator from both students and colleagues, winning the Faculty Excellence Award in 1995, Durrance always considered her educational mission extended well beyond the classroom. In the 1990s, she began a pilot project with the Flint Public Library system to train librarians in the use of computers. The Flint librarians not only learned to understand the Web but to create content for it and to teach children to create content as well.

“We did some wonderful projects with the Flint Public Library,” Durrance remembers. She was able to persuade a group of funders, including Kellogg, Apple, and the state of Michigan, to purchase a computer lab for Flint which became the training model for other libraries throughout the state.

FINDING RESEARCH FUNDS: Indeed, in a field where funding for research is notoriously difficult to obtain, Durrance has had impressive success. One of her many accomplishments was obtaining funding for and shaping KALIPER, the Kellogg-ALISE Information Professions and Education Reform Project — the most extensive study of the field of library science education undertaken since the Williamson Report in 1923.

“A great legacy of Joan’s research career is her commitment to conducting work that both addresses societal issues and contributes to our store of basic knowledge,” says Thomas Finholt, senior associate dean for faculty. “A hallmark of her approach has been support from federal agencies and private foundations. This level of external sponsorship is exceptional and speaks to Joan’s sustained excellence and leadership.”

NATIONAL RECOGNITION: Durrance’s vision for the future of libraries as community information and education centers influenced her decision to pursue her interests on a national level. Her research on the professional practice of librarians earned her the American Library Association’s Isadore Gilbert Mudge-R.R. Bowker Award in 1997 for distinguished contribution to reference librarianship. In January 2005, she received the Award for Professional Contribution to the Field of Library and Information Science from the Association for Library and Information Science Education, an organization of which she was president from 1996–97.

SHARED PASSIONS: When sharing their memories, Durrance’s students mention her encouragement, inspiration, mentoring, passion and professionalism. When asked what advice she gives to students, her response is swift and sure: “I tell them to find the kind of job where you can be passionate about your work. There’s an incredible range of opportunity for people who have a passionate interest. That’s what I want my students to do, whether they’re MLS or Ph.D. students — find something they’re really interested in. Be prepared to go out and work, but also learn something about that special population you want to serve.”

She’s pleased that her own work will be carried on by doctoral students she’s advised, including Maria Souden, who will be continuing research in information behaviors of chronically ill patients as a post-doctoral fellow at University College Dublin, and Kate Williams (Ph.D. ’05), now teaching community informatics at the University of Illinois.

THE NEXT CHAPTER: What does the future hold? Next year will be spent on retirement leave, working on a project developing a model for community engagement. But for the first time in many years, she’s looking forward to being in control of her time and able to travel on her own schedule. She plans to do some hiking, a favorite activity. She will have more time to spend with Ray, her husband of nearly 30 years, and her three grandchildren.

But mainly, she will be preparing for the next phase of her life. “I love what I’m doing, but I have another long chapter ahead,” she says. “And I want to learn the new skills I’ll need to live it.”

In other words, a new journey begins, with new trails to blaze.
A Mom’s Reinvention

“Plan? No, there was never any plan. It just happened,” says Beth Myerowitz, a 59-year-old student who happened to graduate alongside her 24-year-old son Joshua Sánchez this spring. The two donned cap and gown to hear President Obama’s commencement speech at Michigan Stadium.

While shutting back and forth to hear her son perform, she discovered Ann Arbor. Its cultural life was rich and accessible; plus, she could walk everywhere. One day, after passing the School of Information in West Hall, she turned around and, on impulse, made an appointment to see an admissions officer.

The rest is what’s come to be known as reinvention. Myerowitz became one more aging baby boomer pushed by a sour economy to pursue a new career. Reinvented boomers seem to be everywhere in the media, enjoying easy transitions to enticing new careers.

Myerowitz sees it differently. “There is nothing simple about starting again,” she says. “Getting ready for the Graduate Record Examination was hard.” She bought a test guide and spent months working her way through the exercises. The personal essay required for admission to the School of Information was even tougher. And, once admitted, she found the classes interesting but the work load heavy.

Now, Myerowitz is in search of a job. Was her two-year work load heavy.

Although no one keeps official count, the number of parents and children receiving U-M degrees in the same year is tiny, according to the Registrar’s Office. So is the number of people in their 50s earning Michigan degrees: there are just 75 among the 11,387 students who could have walked in this spring’s ceremony.

By contrast, the economic and social drivers that propelled Myerowitz back to school are enormous, touching families all across the country. “I taught in an inner city primary school, designed embedded systems for a defense contractor, and spent 20 years as a systems engineer at AT&T until it was ‘reorganized.’”

And then she discovered a new lifestyle, one in which she could use her free time to walk to concerts, lectures and exhibits. “The process was just as important as the product. I wouldn’t trade these years for anything.”

— BY JANE WILSON

The first graduating class of Informatics majors: Lisa Ferre, Tim White, Kyle Hopper, Laurel Kline, Greg Baker, Eugene Malin, Cindy Chau, Mandy Krug and Yuning Zhang. Chau and Krug will enter the MSI program this fall.

First Informatics Class Graduates

Last year, the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, together with the School of Information and the College of Engineering, introduced an interdisciplinary undergraduate major in Informatics.

In its first two years, this new program has already attracted 75 declared majors. Lauren Flint was the first Informatics major to graduate last December. She recently accepted a position with Microsoft, according to Informatics Program Manager Meghan Genovese. The first class of nine graduated from LSA in May. Of the 10 graduates, eight completed the social computing track. SI’s major contribution to the program. Two graduates will begin the Master of Science in Information program this fall. One is attending Michigan State University’s College of Law; others have taken positions at Cais, Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company, AAA Life Insurance, and Hagerty Insurance.

Informatics encompasses aspects of the processing, analysis, and communication of information and development and use of information technologies. Some students pair Informatics with concentrations or minors in subjects such as business, economics, foreign languages, and life sciences.

“Our students are very excited to have found a program that allows them to weave computational, quantitative, and social science disciplines together into one major,” says Genovese. “Having grown up in a technology- and data-centric world, they really seem to understand the relevance of the study of informatics and they love being a part of something new.”

More information on the program is available at informatics.umich.edu.

ASB Breaks Records for Participation

In March, the School of Information’s Alternative Spring Break program placed 112 students in one-week professional volunteer activities with 57 organizations in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Detroit. The number of SI students spending spring break working in the public sector has increased 100 percent over the past four years, according to Kelly Kowatch, assistant director of career development.

Projects ranged from creating a Wikipedia page for the National Transportation Library to user testing of the Columbus University Library website to helping the Huntington Post refine its social media strategy. One student’s work even captured national media attention. Jamie Nistel’s blog about her week distributing books to inmates at the Rikers Island correctional facility was picked up by the New Yorker, the Village Voice, and the New York Times, and earned her an interview on National Public Radio.

While the students gain professional, real-world experience, the organizations themselves benefit from the volunteers’ energy, enthusiasm and creativity. “We were very pleased with what our three students were able to accomplish, and delighted with their helpful insights,” said Louise Gruenberg, senior usability officer of the American Library Association. “They exceeded my expectations, and that is rare and wonderful! We hope the ASB program continues indefinitely, and that we can continue to be a host site for interested students.”

Beth Myerowitz returned to school at SI as she searched for a new career. She happened to graduate at the same time as her son, Joshua Sánchez, this spring. (Family photo courtesy of Beth Myerowitz)
Innovators Win Recognition

Two SI professors received the provost’s 2010 Teaching Innovation Prize. Professor Karen Markey led the team that developed Bibliobots, an online game designed to help students acquire some of the skills they need to perform library research at a major university. According to Markey, Bibliobots “gives teachers and students a concrete tool to model and assess the often ephemeral research process.” Students testing the game shared comments like “It solidified my methods of doing research and gave me a platform tailored to those methods” and “It made me feel more confident in the research I’ll do in the future.”

Associate Professor Barry Fishman received the award for his project “Using Collaboration and Communication Technologies to Transform Large Lectures into Small Seminars.” Using a variety of portable technologies such as laptops and cell phones, he creates the feel of a small learning community in a large classroom.

This was the second year the prize has been awarded. It recognizes faculty who have developed innovative approaches to teaching that incorporate creative pedagogies. A faculty committee selected Professor Markey’s and Fishman’s projects from among 58 submitted by students, staff, and faculty peers.

Research Awards Fund Projects

Lecturer David A. Wallace and Associate Professor Elizabeth Yakel have received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a Preservation and Access Virtual Laboratory (PV-AL) to support the educational goals of archives. The PV-AL project is being supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The NEH grant will be used to develop a virtual lab to support educational goals of archives. The virtual lab is designed to provide students and educators with a virtual lab to support educational goals of archives.

The change gives SI the same status as most of the other large, professional degrees at the University, such as the law School JD and the Ross School of Business MBA. The PhD degree was by far the largest professional program still administered by Rackham. In presenting the recommendation on behalf of the deans of SI and Rackham, Provost Teresa Sullivan noted the move was consistent with administrative practices in other professional schools, such as Law, Engineering, and Business.

Current students have been assured there will be no change in the levels of service they receive. Financial aid support previously provided by Rackham will be maintained or increased by SI. “We are committed to making this a win for everyone involved,” Dean Jeff Mackie-Mason said. The change effective July 1, Rackham will continue to administer the School of Information’s Ph.D. program.

Raskin to Speak at JSB Symposium

Azza Raskin, former head of user experience at Mozilla Labs and currently creative lead for Firefox, will be the guest speaker at the next John Seely Brown Symposium on Technology and Society on Sept. 30. The annual SI-sponsored event features thought leaders from the front lines of the digital world during their presentations on the societal implications of new technology.

In addition to his Firefox position, the multi-faceted Raskin is co-founder of Songza, a music search engine and jukebox, and Blouze, which makes furniture from cardboard. He is the son of Jeff Raskin, who started the Macintosh project for Apple Computer in the late 1970s.

The symposium will be in the Palmer Commons Forum Hall. Watch si.umich.edu/job for details.

Tips for a Tough Economy

If you are experiencing a challenging job search, it’s time to step back, reassess, re-evaluate, and make adjustments to your strategy. Here are some tips for success:

NETWORK, NETWORK, NETWORK: Research indicates that networking is the most effective job search method. Tell anyone and everyone you know that you are on the job market, and give them your “pitch” and an updated resume. It’s time to reconnect with past supervisors, colleagues, peers, alumni, etc. Set a networking goal each and every week so that you don’t feel overwhelmed by it all.

Most people are not natural networkers. It can feel fake and awkward, and it’s hard to envision the tangible outcome. It takes practice and preparation to network effectively. It’s easy once you have created your pitch — think of it as a 60-second commercial — about who you are and what you want to do. Once you have created your pitch, you are prepared to be an effective networker in any situation. To help develop your career pitch, check out our “Five-Minute, How-To Job Series” to develop your effective networking pitch.

TABBED COVER LETTERS AND RESUMES ARE A MUST: This is your big opportunity to stand out in the application process. Your resume and cover letter effectively market yourself to land an interview. It is critical to create a resume and cover letter market yourself to land an interview. It is critical to create a resume and cover letter that are tailored not only to each specific job you are applying to, but to the type of organization as well.

USE ALL JOB SEARCH RESOURCES: Most SI graduates report using anywhere from three to five resources for an effective job search. The most effective reported by 2009-10 SI grads were networking, company websites, job board websites (indeed.com, usajobs, professional organization websites), professional LITTERM, and iTRAC. Identify the resources that are most relevant for your search and use them regularly.

BE PROACTIVE AND STRATEGIC: Gone are the days of mass mailing resumes and standard cover letters and expecting a job offer. That effort is viewed as transparent, generic, and lacking thoughtfulness to the employer. A thoughtful and strategic search effort is critical in today’s market.

HIGHLIGHT TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: Figure out how your skill sets can transfer into growing industries, such as health care and government. Pursue positions in these areas and always have a plan B or C if your dream job doesn’t materialize immediately.

DON’T SPEND ALL YOUR TIME RESEARCHING JOB POSTINGS: An effective job search is 75 percent networking and 25 percent research.

CONSIDER A CONTRACTUAL POSITION: Today, companies find it economical to hire on a contractual basis. Many companies partner with reputable professional staffing firms to identify candidates. SI graduates have worked with Dana- Star, The Creative Group, Aequent, Besica, Library Associates, C. Berger Group, Advanced Information Management, TRAK Records, and Library. Do your research to identify the one that offers placements in your field of choice and never pay a fee. Reputable staffing firms are paid by the employer.

STRONG INTERVIEWING SKILLS ARE CRUCIAL: Your resume and cover letter can get you that interview, but your interview performance gets you the job. Do a mock interview with a colleague, past supervisor, friends, career services — anyone!

STAY POSITIVE: Rejection plays a big part in any job search, in any economy, for any job seeker. But not being the right fit for one organization doesn’t mean you don’t have a chance for the next. Give yourself a maximum of 24 hours to wallow in your rejection, and then pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and keep moving forward. Persistence, positivity, tenacity and confidence will pay off in the end.

What can we do for you?

The SI Career Development Office offers life-long services — anyone!

Reputation, professionalism, and confidence will pay off in the end.

SI alumni can have full-access to iTRAC and to any of our online job search resources at si.umich.edu/careers. You’ll find a wealth of information, resources, employment reports, career development presentations — along with a “Five-Minute, How-To Job Series.”

Check it out!

Jeanne Kreitl and Kelly Kowatch. Kreitl is senior associate director of career development at SI, and Kowatch is associate director.

Have a career-related question? Write to them at si.careers@umich.edu.
Deborah Dubois (AMLS ’77) is outreach librarian at Mansfield/Richland County Public Library in Mansfield, OH. After being the children’s outreach librarian for 19 years, my position has been changed to include adult outreach programming. So I am now doing programming for young children up to senior citizens. It’s a challenge, but I always love having something new to do,” she points out. ddubois@umich.edu

An illustrated book for middle-grade readers by Karen Russe (AMLS ’60) was named one of the 2010 ALA Notable Books for Children. The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of How Muslims Rescued Jews (Holiday House, 2009), during the Holocaust (with Deborah Durand DeSantis) illuminates a little-known aspect of WWII resistance: the heroic efforts of Muslims to orchestrate the escape of Jews during the Nazi four-year occupation of Paris.

Deborah Seungahl (AMLS ’83) is a librarian for Oakland County, MI. devanse@umich.edu

1990-1999

Valeda Dent Goodman (MALS ’92) is a doctoral student at Long Island University’s Palmer School of Information Science. She and her husband, clinical psychologist Geoff Goodman, are also currently working on literacy and attachment research in rural Uganda. Valeda published her first book, Keeping the User in Mind: Instructional Design and the Modern Library, in May 2009.

The fascinating and at times frustrating Web function known as search is explained and explored in the latest book by Peter Morville (MILS ’93). Released by O’Reilly Media, Inc., Search Patterns (co-authored by Jeffrey Callender) is a provocative but practical guide designed to help make search better today across multiple categories, including Web, e-commerce, enterprise, desktop, mobile, and social search and discovery.

The intended audience is Web practitioners, mobile and attachment researchers, and outreach librarians at the University of Michigan Library. kjordan@umich.edu

Karen Jordan (AMLS ’75) is exhibits and outreach librarian at the University of Michigan Library. kjordan@umich.edu

2000-2010

2010

Katherine Theimer (MSI ’00) is a writer at ArchivesNext. Kate is the author of Web 2.0 Tools and Strategies for Archives and Local History Collections published this winter by Neal-Schuman info@archivesnext.com

In Chicago, Karen Trimberger (MSI ’08) is a director of retail shopper insights at Information Resources. ktrimbe@hotmail.com

John Bowen (MSI ’02) is a corporate archivist at John Deere in Moline, IL. johnwillowbowen@gmail.com

At Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn, MI, John Northup (MSI ’02) is a graphic designer jn@umich.edu

Su-Yong Song (MSI ’02) is president of Network Expert Group, Inc., in Los Angeles (www.nexg.com). I founded an ISP company in the U.S. with the largest Korean VPN solution company (NEXG Co., Ltd.),” she writes. “Our proven-Internet service is to supply enterprise high-speed Internet bonding solutions using our own load balancing and VPN equipment.” Her firm’s solutions use DSL/cable lines bonded with other Internet services to multiply the speed. Since March 2005, her company has provided the new service in Los Angeles. dsong@nexg.com

Arti Acharya (MSI ’02) is a user-experience professional at DST Technologies in New York City. arti_acharya@yahoo.com

Lauren Collins (MSI ’03) is an assistant professor and Law Library director at North Carolina Central University School of Law in Durham, NC. collinst@nccu.edu

Jason Rodrigues (MSI ’04) is global lead for SYNC Software at Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn, MI. jasonrodrigues@yahoo.com

Drew Montag (MSI ’04) is a systems programmer/analyst senior at the University of Michigan. In early December 2007, he writes, “I started my new job as an HPC (high performance computing) consultant with the University of Michigan Medical School Information Services group. I’m optimistic that I’ll be using my HCI degree much more now.” drew@umich.edu

Holly South (MSI ’04) is digital collaboratives grant project coordinator at BCR in Aurora, CO. hsouth@umich.edu

Vikram Valihya (MSI ’04) is an associate at Genentsch in South San Francisco, CA. vvalihya@umich.edu
Sarah Cookingham (MSI ’06) is a library media specialist at Grand Blanc Community Schools in Grand Blanc, MI. scizet@grandblankschools.org

Richard Kong (MSI ’06), a director of the SI Alumni Society, is now information services manager at Arlington Heights Memorial Library in Illinois.

Andrea Wiggins (MSI ’07) is a Ph.D. candidate at Syracuse University. Her research focuses on public participation in scientific research. awiggins@syr.edu

Elizabeth Bartmess (MSI ’08) is a logistics management specialist (Presidential Management Fellow) at Self in San Francisco, CA. elizabeth.bartmess@gmail.com

Kumud Bhani (MSI ’09) is a co-founder of Codez in Kolkata, India. kumud@codez.in

David Zande (MSI ’08) is an information architect/user experience at Enlighting in Ann Arbor.

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Meredith Kahn (MSI ’09) is an art and architecture librarian at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

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Now in Cincinnati, OH, Gaurav Pimprikar (MSI ’09) is an Information Management Leadership Program at General Electric. gpimprikar@ge.com

Krystal Thomas (MSI ’09) is a coordinator/archivist at Dickinson State University. kthomas69@gmail.com

Hung Truong (MSI ’09) is a program manager at Microsoft.

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In Morton Grove, IL, Angelique Richardson (MSI ’09) works at the Winthrop Group, Inc. “I work as a project archivist for the Kraft Foods archives,” she notes. angelique.richardson@gmail.com

Nan Chen (MSI ’10) is a user experience designer at RWD Group in Ann Arbor, reberkanho@gmail.com

Kimberley Hoff (MSI ’10) is a library technician at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, MI. khoff@gmail.com

Rahin Khozein (MSI ’10) is an interaction designer at Cisco Systems in San Jose, CA. rahanhar@gmail.com

Debra Laueterbach (MSI ’10) is a user experience researcher at Google. dlautertach@gmail.com

Dan Bree (MSI ’99) continues to make his mark in the television industry. Most recently, he made significant contributions to a reality show presented on the Discovery Science cable channel that earned its director a “best direction” award for a reality series from the Directors Guild of America.

The show, Hong Kong Bridge, was part of the Build It Bigger series on Discovery Science. That’s Bree above on location, shooting “Build It Bigger: NASA.”

Bree served as producer and writer of Hong Kong Bridge. He describes himself as a “freelance cable nonfiction TV producer and writer,” which roughly translates to being a multi-talented figure in the entertainment industry. “I go where the jobs are,” he says. So far, he has produced and written 10 shows for the National Geographic Channel, one for PBS, two for the Discovery Channel, and one special and two series for the History Channel.

Most recently, he’s been in Boston as senior producer on a new 20-part History Channel series called Sliced.

“It’s my first big management gig, and I have a team of 12 people, working to churn out 20 shows in five months. It’s fast and furious, and seriously fun,” he says. “The show has a host who takes power tools and slices everyday objects in half to discover the secrets inside.”

At SI, Bree studied information economics and usability in what was then the Information Economics, Management and Policy specialization. And how do such IEMP skills translate to the TV industry? Quite well, in fact, as he explains with his typical humor:

“When I first began work on a show, I first consider the information I will need to research, then the Economics of my budget, the Management of the people on my team, and my attendance Policy, which is pretty lax. That covers IEMP, right?”
Graduate Rebecca McNitt (above) keeps a tradition alive in her family. Her mother Marilyn (AMLS ’76), father William (AMLS ’70), and sister Sarah (MSI ’05) all have SI degrees. With them is Marilyn’s mother, Ruth Munsell (at left in photo). Meanwhile, newly minted doctoral graduate Magia Krause (left) spends a moment with Assistant Professor Soo Young Rieh.

Enjoying moments at the reception following the spring 2010 commencement ceremony are (above) Michael Nagara, Annie Fong, and Sarah Raezler, and (left) Evan Anderson.