



Photo by Alexandra Ghiz '12

*You are invited to 126 West Street
on December 8, 2011 from 9-11 a.m.*

The Facilities Management and Campus Police departments are hosting an Open House on Thursday, December 8, 2011 from 9-11 a.m. Please stop by to see what really happens at Facilities Management and to see the Campus Police department's new location. Take a tour, have a snack and ask questions.

Tech Savings for Smith Employees

An important staff resource on campus is the Computer Store, where Barbara Pliska has served as manager for the past 16 years. Pliska says she has worked in retail her "entire adult life," starting out as a record store sales clerk in 1985. She earned her bachelor's degree in consumer studies at UMass Amherst, and later served as the manager of computer sales of the university store. Married with two teenagers, Pliska is a veteran at solving technical glitches, handling difficult customers, and testing new products. She says her job is "never boring and keeps her on her toes." The following are some interesting facts about the Computer Store shared by Pliska.

The Computer Store has had the same campus address for 20 years: Stoddard Hall 22. The store underwent a full renovation in 2010. It sells only Apple and Dell computer systems and offers various types of software programs and accessories at academically discounted prices.

The store's Microsoft Campus Agreement licensing program allows faculty and staff to purchase MS Office 2010 and Windows 7 (PC) or MS Office 2011 (MAC) software. The license agreement gives employees the right to install either program on one personally owned computer once a year. (Employees who leave the college are required to return the software.) PC software is \$20; Mac software is \$10.

The Computer store sells the license for Adobe Creative Suite 5.5 for \$349. (Retail price: \$1,299; academic price: \$599)

Pliska worked with the Five College Credit Union to create a faculty/staff loan program for computer purchases. There is no deposit or need to justify how the equipment will be used. Currently, the interest rate is 4.25%.

The computer store staff does not work on commission. They are happy to answer questions, give advice on products, or help solve technology challenges. For more information, become a fan on Facebook!

"Nickel and Dimed" Draws Hundreds



Photo by Jon Crispin

Paying with linguine, Campbell soup, cans of vegetables, and a \$1 admission price, hundreds of penny-pinching theater-goers flocked to the October 26 production of "Nickel and Dimed" at Theatre 14 in Mendenhall Center for the Performing Arts. A joint production between Smith College Department of Theatre and New Century Theatre, "Nickel and Dimed" told the story of working-class America through the eyes of an investigative reporter who goes undercover and relays her experiences at a number of minimum wage jobs.

The play was directed by Sam Rush, production coordinator at Smith and co-founder of New Century Theatre. Witty, dramatic and fast-paced, "Nickel and Dimed" is based on Barbara Ehrenreich's 1998 bestseller. The play gave the Smith community a chance to discuss class issues during a talkback session after the show. The audience and mostly student cast discussed the importance of a living wage, the increasing number of people who work two or three jobs to make ends meet, and how service workers are often treated as if they are "invisible."

Some Like it Hot

A little humor, resiliency and “delusional optimism” are what Trish Jackson believes have been the keys to her success in development for the past 30 years. Smith’s vice president of development since 2005, Jackson directs a staff of 67, many of whom have the challenging job of asking people for money—in some cases \$100,000 or more. It takes a special kind of person, she acknowledges, to do this kind of fundraising, development, or advancement work, much of which has historically been done by female volunteers. Often she looks for people with non-traditional skill sets, such as those who have community service experience. Many of her employees will interact a great deal with volunteers on the Board of Trustees, in alumnae organizations, and with alumnae who write donor letters or connect development officers with people to whom they should be talking. Her office attracts the experienced as well as novices, whom she is willing to train. “I’m a firm believer in professional development,” she says, offering webinars, conferences, and professional memberships. During the summer, she even offers training opportunities in cupcake decorating!

Jackson is facing one of her biggest professional challenges since she’s been in the business—a \$500-million, five- to seven-year fundraising campaign to support financial aid and initiatives stemming from “The Smith Design for Learning.” Currently in Year Three, the goal is to reach at least \$200 million by October 2012 for a public kick-off—though “we’re not quite on trend line.” The development staff has identified more than 10,000 alumnae, parents, and friends believed capable of making gifts of \$50,000 or more over a five-year period.

In Jackson’s favor are a couple of factors that keep her grounded in her chosen profession. She has been “incredibly fortunate to work for good institutions” and feels personally committed to the cause she is serving. “Those that choose to be in this profession are aware of the risks and expectations,” she says with a smile.

Development, meaning “developing the resources for the institution or advancing the institution,” nurtures long-term relationships with potential donors. In 2008, during the challenge of foreboding cutbacks for the college, Jackson’s office had no shortage of prospects, though most of them were not willing to make an immediate commitment in the wake of economic changes. Women donors tend to want to be engaged in the process and “see the impact their money will have.”

While others in the field might outwardly show signs of stress, Jackson reacts differently to what she calls “creative tension.” She says she is a good manager, knows how to put together a good team to run a campaign and, she adds, as a side note, “I’m generally a happy person.” A third generation Angelino” (she’s

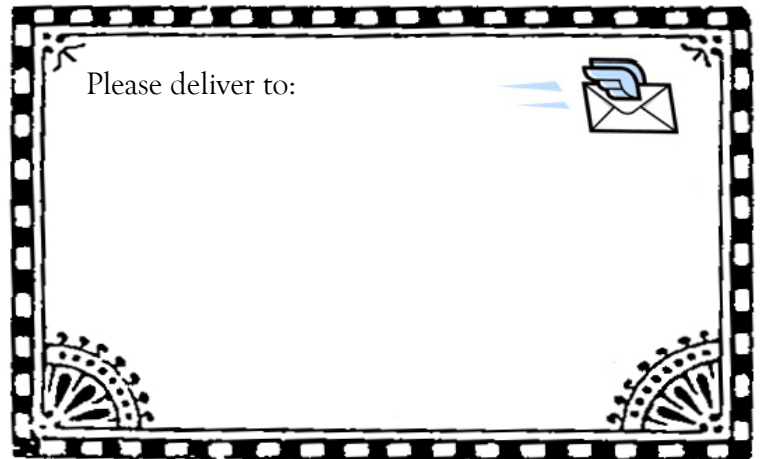


originally from Los Angeles), Jackson has been on the East Coast since 1988, where she has held development positions at Dartmouth, Wheaton, and Mount Holyoke colleges. She met her husband at Mount Holyoke and decided to make the north-east her home. Jackson loves to read, walk, and travel. One of her favorite pastimes is writing in haiku, or Japanese poetry based on rhythms of 5,7,5 syllables, with which she communicates with colleagues and friends. In haiku, she wrote:

“Staff Council news note,
Development office yours,
Come visit us soon!”

Share a Thanksgiving Meal!

In conjunction with the Office for International Students and Scholars, the Office of Student Affairs would like to invite you to participate in a student/staff match-up program for Thanksgiving Day. Many of our international students remain on campus for the holiday break. Some make plans to spend Thanksgiving Day with relatives or friends, and some are treated to a meal out with Hrayr Tamzarian, associate dean of international students. This year we have a greater number of international students on campus, and we expect there to be greater need for a place to share a meal on that day. We hope this new program will serve as a cultural and educational opportunity, as well as filling a need for students. If this is a program that you would like to know more about, or if you would like to participate, please send an email to Jan Morris (jmorris@smith.edu), with “Thanksgiving Match” in the subject line.



If you would like to join more than 230 of your co-workers who have opted out of receiving a printed version of this newsletter, and receive future issues of the *Chronicle* as a PDF file via e-mail, check the box below and return this newsletter via campus mail to “Staff Council.” An electronic version of the *Chronicle* is available at www.smith.edu/staffcouncil/chronicle.

Please send future issues to me as a PDF in e-mail.



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