NEW DIRECTIONS

Quality Improvement in Financial Management at the University of Washington
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In this edition:

Letter from the Editor

by Zach Luther

Welcome to another issue of Directions! Now that the days are short and dark, you'll have no better opportunity for sitting at your computer with a mug of hot chocolate to read all of this quarter's articles!

We have a recap of the Combined Fund Drive event, as well as an article from Financial Management's new Quality Improvement Manager.

While we hope you had a safe holiday season, you might want to check out our article on the Worker's Compensation program just in case. We'll also continue our FM 101 series with an article on Financial Accounting. Continuing with that office, we have an article on the UW's Annual Report, from one of the people who makes it happen! And if you need a laugh, check out RQ Teasdale's latest- a satirical look at meetings.

There's plenty more to be found in this issue, so dig right in! I guarantee that it's better than last year's fruitcake.

The following articles are contained in this issue:
[List]

Student Fiscal Services Implements New E-billing Process

by Peggy Fitzwater and Paige Hamlin

During Autumn Quarter 2004, Student Fiscal Services (SFS) started e-billing as a means of delivering tuition account information to students electronically. As many other UW student related processes such as registration, grades, and financial aid are already handled electronically, this was a natural progression for SFS.

Prior to autumn 2004, SFS mailed over 50,000 tuition statements to students each quarter. Now with e-billing, students with either debit or credit balances receive emails at their UW email addresses throughout the quarter. The messages direct the students to go online to MyUW to view their tuition statements. The MyUW tuition statements have replaced the former printed bills as the official tuition statements.

Students are also able to authorize online access to their statement for two additional people (for example, parents) by logging on to the MyUW Tuition Statement and using the online Information Release Authorization link. During autumn quarter, over 5,600 students signed up at least one person for either online, email, or phone access to their tuition account information.

A new payment option, "web check payment" is also available from the tuition statement on MyUW. Using this feature, students or parents can pay tuition charges directly from their checking or savings account. During autumn quarter, over 9,000 students and parents used webcheck to pay almost $12.9 million in tuition costs.

E-billing saves both time and money for students as well as SFS. Students now have access to online real-time charges rather than having to wait for their statements to arrive in the mail. The earlier receipt of tuition statement information has resulted in SFS receiving tuition payments earlier in the quarter which has a positive impact on the UW’s cash flow. Less postage and mailing costs, faster delivery of information, and quicker receipt of funds – it all adds up to success.

Giving is Great!

by Katrina Day and Anita Bingaman

The Combined Fund Drive emphasized the “Fun” in Fundraiser when the all-volunteer committee hosted a Halloween Carnival on October 29th at the Ethnic Cultural Center. The music, food, speakers, and other activities generated enthusiasm and added $480.00 to the CFD funds.

The dedicated organizers used their various talents to organize the spirited events. **Erick Winger** created an inspired monster mash using a mix of music. **Alicia Allen and Katherine Wu** painted ghosts and other scary scenes on people’s faces. **Young Kim** created a spider tossing game. **Shara Hayden** made pinning the nose on the pumpkin more challenging by spinning each player around several times. **Mickey Galbreth** made bean bags to toss into pumpkins. **Ann Sarna and John Boet** arranged for the guest speakers.

Lots of good food also added to the success of this year’s CFD Carnival. Eight pies were donated by Marie Callender’s, Alicia Allen made a special flan, and **Martin Crabb’s** cinnamon rolls brought smiles of pleasure and dollars in contributions. Dr. Jim and Joni Koch donated cakes as prizes for the cake walk.

The hit of the carnival was the costume contest and the silent auction. **JR Sloan** (sumo wrestler) had the funniest costume, **Vincent Lau** (cop from Terminator II) had the scariest, and Erick Winger (lobster) had the most original and the best overall! **Ping Tan** had the highest bid for the digital camera with $210 and **Suzette Ashby-Larrabee** took home the keyfinder for $25!

Kara Heikkila, a volunteer with Northwest Harvest and Adam Nance, with People for Puget Sound fostered the spirit of giving through their informal presentations, explaining how our donations help their organizations. Each received half of the proceeds from our event.

So far, the Combined Fund Drive in Financial Management has generated $29,750.00 with 79% of FM forms turned in. The final numbers should be available by the end of January. A big thank you to all who contributed. Every little bit helps, and together we are making a difference.

The outcome was wonderful and everyone had a good time thanks to the great job of the CFD Volunteer Committee. The members of the committee are: Alicia Allen (Financial Services), John Boet (MAA), Martin Crabb (EIO), Katrina Day (Risk Management), Mickey Galbreth (GCA), Shara Hayden (Risk Management), Michael Keller (UCIRO), Young Kim (Payroll), Jenny Krumbholz (SFS), Arlene Lalas (SFS), Ann Sarna (Treasury), Erick Winger (Financial Accounting), and Katherine Wu (Payables Administration).

GRIP Launched!

by Denise Lim, Grant and Contract Accounting

After much anticipation, the new J.D. Edwards (JDE) receivable system in Grant and Contract Accounting (GCA) was rolled out on November 15, 2004.

This is the sixth in a series of articles documenting the team's progress. They first started in fall 2002 to replace the current accounts receivable system with a more streamlined, integrated one that will reduce manual data entry and increase cash flow through GCA.

Throughout the project, significant obstacles greatly impacted the timeline but the implementation, when it finally came, was relatively smooth and successful. Aside from minor snags commonly encountered in a systems implementation, GCA staff actively uses the new system to generate invoices and apply cash receipts on sponsored projects. In the first two weeks of implementation, GCA invoiced for over $8 million and applied $50 million in cash receipts.

Along with the implementation, GCA is currently working on two short-term but highly important goals. The first goal is to invoice for all billable expenditures by setting up and generating as many automated invoices as possible from JDE. Prior to JDE, there were over $7 million of expenditures unbilled in a given month due to inefficiencies and manual processes inherent in the legacy system. The second goal is to prepare for the GCA reorganization. During this transition phase, the users who just learned to use the new system will need to train those who are new to the receivable process. Also, GCA dedicated a fair amount of time and resources to setting up all existing grants and contracts in JDE prior to reorganization which took place on January 1, 2005.

Learning a new system is never easy and is especially challenging when coupled with a major reorganization. However, GCA staff's ability to focus on priorities, along with their hard work and dedication, continues to keep the department moving towards the objectives set by the implementation and reorganization efforts.

“Seattle Live”

by Diane Cooley

Stand around and wait seems to be what live TV is all about. At least that’s what the Outreach Unit of Student Fiscal Services discovered on the morning of October 7, 2004. “Seattle Live”, the morning news show on KONG - TV, was on campus to do a segment about students and credit card debt. The SFS Outreach Unit had been contacted several weeks prior regarding our “Money 101” sessions and we were excited about sharing what we offer to students to help them better understand personal finances.

“Money 101” sessions are customized to the audience and may include any or all of these topics: credit cards, earnings and savings, investments, loans, credit reports, fraud, budgets. We offered “Money 101” to incoming students during Dawg Daze and “Seattle Live” sent a cameraman to record our session on Monday, September 27. Students were interviewed just prior to the session and part of the training was filmed. Excerpts from that tape plus live interviews aired October 7 on “Seattle Live”.

So what about the waiting? I arrived on campus at 7:00 a.m. and met the “Seattle Live” TV crew by the statue of George Washington. The crew consisted of the cameraman and the interviewer, Mirtha Vaca. When By George opened, we went for coffee and a discussion. The TV folk were in constant contact with KONG and after our coffee we stood around their van with the extended antennae and waited for our chance to be on TV. We had invited the students who attended “Money 101” to show up to be interviewed and Aspasia Bartell and Nathan Broome took us up on the invitation. Mirtha did a quick teaser on the show about our upcoming segment. We watched the action on their monitor and talked about student debt. Mirtha got some background information and did a couple more teasers. She showed some statistics and the excerpts from the “Money 101” sessions. Finally around 8:40 we were interviewed. It was all over in less than five minutes.

It was a glorious autumn day and the campus was beautiful in the sun. We felt that we presented a favorable image of the University of Washington. We showed that Financial Management thru Student Fiscal Services has acknowledged the student debt issue and is taking proactive action to provide students with information they need to manage their personal finances. The SFS Outreach Unit is always looking for ways to connect with students and share our “Money 101” information. A stint on TV, no matter how brief, is one way to reach a broad audience. We enjoyed our time in the limelight.

Cheers to Toastmasters

By Mai Lin C. Chua

We are proud to recognize the FM Toastmasters Club for achieving the award of "President's Distinguished Club" for its first year of existence. This is the highest recognition a club can earn under the annual Distinguished Club Program of Toastmasters International. The program runs from July 1 through June 30 and consists of ten goals a club should strive to achieve. World Headquarters tracks the progress of the club and at year-end recognizes the club based on the number of goals achieved. Our Club met nine out of the ten goals. To view more information on the Distinguished Club Program go to:

http://www.toastmasters.org/fupload/media/2004-DCP-1111.pdf

A congratulatory letter and an attractive ribbon for display were sent by World Headquarters to our previous President, Noel Bain. The ribbon is displayed in Schmitz Rm. 170.

In November, our Club sent a panel of four debaters to participate in District 2 Toastmasters Fall Conference Education Session. The debate topic was "Resolve that the National Security Strategy of the United States of America Should Change." Our Club took the affirmative stand on the issue and our debaters were able to present strong points to refute and rebut. It was a challenging but rewarding experience for our debaters and all four of them were presented Certificates of Appreciation for the participation. Please give a big round of applause to our debaters: **Diane Cooley, Teresa Crisostomo, Tess Domingo-Herrera, and Mai Lin Chua**.

Our Club would also like to express its heartfelt gratitude to the EIT for its generous financial support. Our Club was considering hosting its first auction within Financial Management to raise funds for purchasing additional educational materials for our library and sending our members to training and educational sessions outside of our Club. With the generosity of the EIT, our Club will be provided with all the resources we need at this time – and so the auction will no longer be necessary. Our Club's library resources will become a part of the QI library. The FM Toastmasters Club is fully committed to the Financial Management wide goal of all FM employees becoming knowledge workers. Toastmasters is one way to help staff acquire needed skills.

With the continuous support from the EIT and active participation from our members, FM Toastmasters Club is working to be recognized under the Distinguished Club Program for the second year in a row. We hope to be eligible again for recognition by June 30, 2005.

Financial Accounting- More than Just Numbers

by Sarah Moore

Financial Accounting website is at: http://www.washington.edu/admin/finacct/office/

The University receives nearly three billion dollars of revenue each year, and manages and accounts for over five billion dollars of assets. Needless to say, it requires a lot of effort and coordination among many departments for all that managing and accounting to be effective, accurate and useful. Much of that information ends up in Financial Accounting (FA), and then we have to do something with it!

The activity we are primarily responsible for is the financial information in the University's Annual Report. This represents four to five months of concentrated activity for most of our group. It requires gathering and organizing all the information from the Financial Accounting System, along with other adjustments, data from Capital Projects, Treasury, the Budget Office, Grant and Contract Accounting and others, in order to complete it. It includes financial statements and other financial reporting that reflect what assets and liabilities we have, how successfully we have used these assets to operate efficiently, what activities generated cash for the University, and how that cash was used.

Users of the Annual Report such as donors, bondholders, the state, bond rating agencies and other interested parties rely on our Annual Report to tell them how we use the money we receive from tuition and from the state and federal governments to fulfill our teaching and research missions. Bondholders and bond rating agencies want to know what debt we have and how we are investing it in assets to further the University's goals. These users and others want to know how efficiently we manage our assets and if we receive enough revenue to safely cover our costs.

We know for sure we can celebrate a job well done when the University's Board of Regents formally accepts the Annual Report, usually in mid-January. The June 30, 2004, Annual Report will be available on the Web soon after that. The Annual Reports are archived at http://www.washington.edu/admin/finacct/annual.report.archive.html.

In addition to the millions of transactions that go into our accounting system from departments all over the University, there are several activities that require additional monitoring, accounting and adjusting. That's where FA comes in. Some of the ongoing activities are:

- accounting for capital leases of equipment and buildings;
- billing and accounting for reimbursement from several hundred agencies that use University resources and reimburse us;
- accounting for the many bonds and other debt issued by the University;
- the final accounting for acquisition and disposal of assets for the year;
- helping departments across the University with questions about such things as coding and recording transactions, and how to understand their budget reports;
- detecting, resolving questions and problems with the Financial Accounting System, as well as identifying needed improvements, and helping to implement them;
- accounting for equipment inventory, which recently became part of FA;

- developing the financial desktop – see the article in the Spring, 2004 issue of Directions for more information.

All of these activities are a collaboration of FA with many departments, among them Purchasing, Capital Projects, Treasury, Grant and Contract Accounting and Information Systems.

Then there are several functions of FA that are concentrated more on daily, monthly, quarterly, or annual deadlines:

A quarterly project for us is recording Institutional Overhead. With the help of the Budget Office, FA gathers information to record charges to cover University overhead costs to over 300 budgets. You can learn more about this at:
http://www.washington.edu/research/maa/recharge/externalrates.html#inst,

Another big project for FA has to do with employee benefit expenses. During the year, FA gathers information about actual payments for such costs as health care premiums and the University's contributions to pension plans, and actual expenses for benefits that are charged to budgets. This requires much information and help from the Benefits Office and Payroll, among others. Our challenge is to estimate the various percentages (depending on the type of salary and benefit) that can be multiplied by salary expense in each budget to arrive at an appropriate benefit cost. Before the end of very fiscal year, these rates and their supporting documentation must be submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services for approval. After that, we enter the rates into the Financial Accounting System for the new year so they can be applied to the budgets. Payroll Load rates are available at:
http://www.washington.edu/admin/finacct/loadrate.html.

Financial Accounting also prepares the University's Federal Tax Return (yes, we pay taxes each year!) We advise clients about whether their business activities could generate taxable income. We also played a large role in some recent tax incentives that have become available to us. For instance, the High Technology tax deferral on construction projects and the Machinery and Equipment Exemption on research-related equipment has the potential for saving a good deal of money for the University!

One of the more interesting balancing acts that Financial Accounting's Cash Management group does is to forecast our daily cash balances. Each banking day, (with a 10 o'clock deadline, mind you!) we estimate how much money will be available in our main account after 1) checks clear for the day, and 2) money is received. Then each day's estimated excess cash can be invested. That way, the University receives the maximum interest on the money that we are responsible for. This requires close communication from other departments that might be making large deposits or wiring out large amounts of money. Our Financial Accounting Dashboard measures the effectiveness of this activity.

The University must also report our financial activity and asset and debt balances to the State of Washington, using the state's accounting system. This uses a separate, state system of accounting to which we enter our revenues and expenses monthly, and requires that we continually reconcile what our system reports with what the state system reports.

Managing and accounting for equipment inventory is also an important part of our activities. The Equipment Inventory group has just been moved (organizationally, that is) to Financial Accounting, so we want to welcome the folks in Equipment Inventory to our group. This organizational change was effective in December of 2004. Financial Accounting works very closely with Equipment Inventory to bring together information about the University's assets for our annual reporting. Equipment Inventory also provides data that we need for the application for the Machinery and Equipment tax exemption – which results in an important tax savings for the University. So it will be a big advantage to have them as part of our group. Welcome to **Mark Centuori, Martin Crabb, Heidi Gustsafson** and **Christine Wall**!

The GCA Reorganization Is Upon Us!

by Lily Gebrenegus

You've heard about it. People have talked about it. The suspense has risen to its peak. Now the time is here to actually see it happen. The GCA reorganization took place on January 3, 2005. Our office has worked for the last year to change the way we serve customers to give the best service possible.

In the spirit of the knowledge-driven worker, GCA is moving toward employees understanding all three of GCA's major processes:

- Setting up new accounts
- Invoicing
- Reporting

Prior to the reorganization, employees were familiar with only one process. Now, there are six teams that can answer questions about any of those topics. Each team has three or four people that act as one point of contact for a set of schools and colleges. Our goal is to facilitate relationships with our process partners and customers and also create consistency for people who get confused about where to go when they have questions about their grants.

For more information about the way things used to be at GCA, take a stroll through the FIN Man 101: GCA article. *(link to spring 2004 issue)* or the first article about our reorganization article (*link to summer 2004 issue*).

Our entire office has had a hand in aligning ourselves with this QI concept. Teams were established earlier this year to address issues that were important to accomplishing our goals.

I know, I know. You're thinking: "How could all these people go from knowing one process to knowing three in just one year?" That's a good question! Fortunately, all the people involved in the reorg have undergone intensive cross-training during the last several months. A training team was assembled to address the issues related to such an extensive effort. All three processes have been introduced and presented to the staff by those who currently know them best.

I know what you're going to say: "I hope each process was sufficiently documented to ease the transition for everyone at GCA." Thanks to documentation software named Procarta, we are working on documenting all the major processes in which GCA participates. Not only does it serve as a way of creating consistency among the six teams but is also a reference tool for newcomers and veterans alike.

Let me guess what your next thought might be. "You've covered the technical side but what about the human perspective?" Am I right? Not only is the new year upon us but this reorganization changed who works with whom within our office. We've had team building workshops hosted by some of FM's best facilitators, **Ruth Johnston** and **Karl Kraber**, to help establish good working relationships with our new teams.

For further information about the reorg or to contact GCA, please visit the website below. There you can answer all your questions about who works with which schools and colleges:
http://www.washington.edu/research/gca/office/gcacontacts.html

Stop by and visit us at GCA to see how the new reorg works!

Payroll Year End Processes Last All Year!

by Anita Bingaman and Heather Nordberg -Stewart

Year end for Payroll begins each March with a review of the previous year. At that time the Payroll Tax Services team looks at what went well, what could have gone better, and what fires were narrowly averted. Plans are laid for the next year and requests are made to Computing & Communications for system enhancements for the coming year.

What is Payroll year end and why does planning and implementing it take so long? Everyone is familiar with the semi-monthly check run, but have you ever stopped to think about what cumulative effect it has on Payroll's big picture? The 34,000 paychecks processed twice a month translate into about 52,000 W-2 forms, 1,500 (from the Payroll side) 1042-S forms, 200 1099-R forms and 750 stipend letters. All of these forms need to be reconciled for annual IRS reporting, various state tax agencies, and the Social Security Administration. In addition to all of this reporting, any taxable fringe benefits, such as payment of employee moving expenses, have to be added to gross earnings and applicable taxes withheld. Now you can see why coordination with various offices is required and begins early in the year.

The month of December is a time for parties and days off, but not in Payroll. Phone calls are made to New York to clarify any new income tax filing rules, fingers fly entering data into FAS, and midnight oil is burnt poring over Excel spreadsheets. Thanks to excellent organization and system enhancements, the year end process is nowhere near as difficult as it was in the past, but it still requires hours of intensive work by the accountants in the Payroll Office throughout the year.

When you receive your W-2 in January or you pass out the 1042-S forms in March, take a moment to remember that the Payroll Office is just getting started for next year.

Dear QI Guy

by Karl G. Kraber

I have started this column so you can ask questions and bring to light issues about quality improvement, process improvement, and change management. This includes requesting advice on which process and quality improvement (QI) tools and methods to use, options on how to use the tools you have, and resolving issues when the methods aren't working as planned.

I will also provide guidance about typical "people" issues you face when you are trying to create change. This includes ways to approach team-building, overcoming resistance to change, and getting buy-in from others; who are commonly referred to as "stakeholders." Stakeholders are those who have some vested interest in what you are doing: suppliers, workmates, teammates, customers, process partners.

However, if you need a sounding board on more personal or interpersonal issues, I will be happy to discuss these with you in person, but not in this forum. My best advice on these types of issues is to face them head on with the people with whom you have concerns.

You may contact me by my UW e-mail address: karlgk@u.washington.edu or by clicking on the "Dear QI Guy" button **[*at the top right*]** of each edition of Directions. **All notes to me are confidential** and I will not use your real name in the column so you don't have to worry about whether you are asking a "stupid question." (There aren't any, but sometimes it feels that way when we're asking.) I look forward to your use of this column as a way to further your understanding of process and quality improvement, and change management.

Sincerely,

QI Guy

Not Ready? Not to Worry!

How to be successful at a meeting when you haven't adequately prepared for it.

By Dr. RQ Teasdale

The other day, as I was barreling through a four-way stop at 4:00 AM in my solar powered RV, I started to think about the number of meetings I've been to over my long and eventful life. From my first job in 1924 as a Control Supervisor for a WI-FI company to my current position as the Wandering Troubadour of Quality™, I figure I've been to well over 20,000 meetings. That isn't much by UW standards, but it nets out to over three years of non-stop agendas, meeting minutes, and action items. Also, while I don't freely admit this to many people, I was entirely or somewhat unprepared for at least 95% of these meetings. Yet at each one I was lauded for my contributions and thanked profusely for my efforts. How do I do it? How does a 95 year old man with a degree in TV Viewing from a mail order college seem so on top of it at meetings? That is the secret that I will reveal in this trailblazing article.

There are two steps in the process. **The first step is to shorten the time during the meeting where informed discourse could potentially occur**. This can be accomplished in a couple of ways.

First, suggest an icebreaker and drag it on as long as possible. This will shorten the actual length of the meeting and reduce the chances that you'll have to say something intelligent.

Second, never discount the time absorbing value of questions about the weather and the temperature. Virtually everyone can relate to the changes in temperature both inside and outside. If you feel that you may be soon expected to constructively contribute to a meeting, you can either wipe your brow and say "Is it hot in here or is it just me?" or fold your arms across your chest and say "Brrr!".

Of course there will come a time when talking about the weather and finding about everyone's summer will no longer be sufficient. **This is where the second step comes in: limiting your own exposure to well-prepared participation in the meeting.** There are many strategies for dealing with this circumstance; the most popular are outlined below.

Volunteer to be the scribe. This can be beneficial in two ways. First, you do all the writing and don't have to do much talking, and second, it allows you to look at other people's thoughts and potentially piggy-back on them.

At any time during a meeting and for as many times as you feel appropriate, say, **"We need to be more proactive."** Most of the time, people will look at you and nod approvingly. In the off chance that this doesn't happen and someone casts a questioning glance towards you, just add "…rather than reactive."

Every five minutes (bring a watch, this has to be pretty exact), listen really closely to what someone is saying and interject the following: **"What I think I hear you saying is….." and paraphrase what they just said.** This will often get approving nods from others and get you off the hook for saying anything for the next five minutes. Continue to repeat the process.

Other useful phrases are:

"We need to take a macro look at this process"

Who-really- are our customers?

"Has anyone tried flowcharting?"

"This may require a more **robust** solution."

Special note about the word "robust". This word is very currently very popular in organizations and makes the person using it sound thoughtful and intelligent. **It is virtually impossible to overuse this word in a meeting.**

It is always better to ask questions, since you don't know enough to give any answers. If you're in a pinch and it seems as if you absolutely have to answer a question, don't be afraid to answer it with another question.

For example, if someone looks at you and says, "In the last five years how many times have there been exceptions to the payables invoicing process?" say "Could we expand on the Payables invoicing process discussion?" Or if you get in real trouble, rely on the tried and true: "We really need to be more proactive."

Also, body language helps. **No one likes to interact with people who seem frustrated or angry.** If you really know absolutely nothing about the subject of the meeting and feel as if you're overdoing the "we just need to be more proactive" thing, just fold your arms really tight, lean back in your chair and occasionally snort disapprovingly. Other meeting attendees will avoid you like the plague.

And so, with the battery power ebbing on my sun-charged Winnebago and another birthday fast approaching (97 years young!), I'd better get moving. Besides there's probably another meeting on my calendar that I need to prepare for (or not).

Dr. Teasdale received his doctorate in Television Viewing and Cellular Biology from the College of Universal Life at P.O. Box 3763, Loma Vista, CA.

Treasury Office 4th Quarter Initiatives

By Chris W. Malins

As the year winds down, it seems as if the Treasury Office is just getting started! There are some exciting things going on in each area of the Treasury – Investments, Investment Reporting, and Debt Financing. Here's a quick update on some recent changes and improvements.

There is major news on the investment side. UW has hired its first-ever Chief Investments Officer to oversee the investment program. His name is Keith Ferguson and he starts work at the University on the third of January. Prior to moving to Seattle, Keith worked at Fidelity Investments in the Hong Kong and Boston offices. Being a native of Seattle and a UW alumnus, he is glad to be home and excited to take on the challenge of managing a large endowment.

Within the investment reporting group, the thought was that while too many cooks might spoil the soup, too many editors were delaying the process. The Treasury Office produces multiple reports for the Board of Regents and UWINCO. The reports are generated by a team effort, combining the expertise of many individuals in the office. Pressing time deadlines resulted in multiple and different copies of drafts and "final" copies being circulated. The group was wasting precious time re-reviewing work.

Beginning this quarter, a single individual is in charge of controlling the production and reviews of the reports. This change has made the reports more focused, saved paper, and freed up limited time for more important functions.

It has also been a busy quarter for the Data Warehousing team. They successfully developed and implemented a new, simplified method for transmitting data from the University's custodial bank in Chicago. This will make the process easier to maintain over time. They're also been working steadily to recreate quarterly reports using the data warehouse instead of using legacy Excel spreadsheets. An important milestone occurred in the last few weeks, as well; the Data Warehouse technology consultant delivered 150 pages of technical documentation, and the Data Warehouse team completed and tested about 50 pages of documentation that describe the process for the monthly data load.

The debt financing group kept busy as well, and has closed financing transactions in excess of $100 million over the last six months. The biggest news here has been the University's first foray into variable rate debt. Variable rate debt can reduce the cost of borrowing over time. While the variable rate debt issued this time was "hedged," meaning that the full savings potential of variable rate bonds isn't realized (but the risks are lower!), the University has plans to issue additional variable rate debt in the future.

RQT Roundup

by Donna Andreason

TOPS Awards

On November 17, 2004, RQT and members of Financial Management recognized ***Ann Anderson, Karen Long, Pramilla Chand, Katherine Wu, Alvin Chau, David Wright and Donna Andreason*** with a TOPS award to recognize their contributions in the development of a department-based, web-accessible payment process for the University's express mail shipments. Previously this process was very labor intensive with Payables receiving more than 50,000 invoices from FedEx and UPS annually. Today Payables handles no paper invoices and the department has an easier to use online system to manage their express mail shipping. This project is another great example of cross-departmental collaboration. The Payables and Procurement Card departments worked together to develop a solution to this problem which had been a challenge since 1998.

QSTEP Awards

Terry Taft Harter from Risk Management was awarded with a QSTEP award on 10/12/04 to recognize her qualities in the **Committed** area. Her co-workers note her positive "can-do" attitude as well as her excitement and dedication to her job. While working full time, Terry was able to complete her bachelor's degree and inspired others to pursue their educational goals. Her co-workers also notice her commitment to ongoing process improvements in her willingness to volunteer for new teams and projects. One of these projects involved a complete revision of Risk Management's website. Terry was able to develop the site within a week of the project being given to her which allowed Risk Management to roll out their new website much earlier than expected. Congratulations Terry!

Farida Ablang, Payroll Office, received a QSTEP award on 11/30/04 to recognize her qualities in the **Committed** area. Coworkers describe Farida as the "ultimate team player". She offers to help out whenever it is needed and has a positive "can do" attitude. She offers her time, energy and ideas in helping around the office and customers, sharing her knowledge and joining teams. Her co-workers describe her as "a spark to be around, has a friendly voice and big smiles."

Her co-workers also notice her commitment to ongoing process improvement and her willingness to volunteer for teams and projects. She has developed a tracking system for better communication between the Payroll and Benefits offices to obtain the accurate information for the Separation Payout Payments faster. It has increased the percentage of people receiving their payments on time. She also volunteers for the internal payroll Customer Service Team, served on DFD and other FM wide teams. Way to Shine Farida!

LINQ Awards

Elizabeth Cherry, Director of Risk Management, was presented with a LINQ award on 10/27/04 for her inspiring leadership in developing and directing the University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO).

UCIRO investigates complaints concerning the conduct of UW employees that may be discriminatory or otherwise violate UW policy. Elizabeth took initiative to create the UCIRO program in 1994 based not only on current models of other universities, but also by anticipating what would most effectively meet the challenges and needs in our University's future. October marked the tenth anniversary of UCIRO.

The UCIRO department wished to formally acknowledge Elizabeth's inspiring leadership qualities with a special emphasis on her ability to anticipate the future needs of the department, Financial Management and the broader goals of the University as a whole. They also noted her willingness to share a vision of the future with the group that energized the department to stretch and reach for new ways to realize UCIRO's capability to resolve problems and effectively. Elizabeth is committed to ongoing process improvement and takes a personal interest in ensuring that those who participate in the UCIRO process feel respected, heard and understood. Thank you Elizabeth and congratulations!

Scott Davies of the Treasury Office received a LINQ award on December 6, 2004 for the qualities of Trustworthiness and Approachability, as well as his caring personality and high standard of integrity. Scott's co-workers describe him as always being available to share knowledge or provide input on decisions and note that he demonstrates a genuine interest in others.

Scott can be trusted for his competency, reliability and understanding of Debt Management. He implemented a new borrowing platform for financing research facilities, which required getting consensus from senior managers, consultants, attorneys and credit rating agencies. He orchestrated a process leading to credit rating upgrades which keep the University's borrowing costs low.

In serving on the Lead Team and Office of the EVP Communication Team, Scott has shown communication qualities of confidence, and a real interest in the participation and contributions of others. Setting standards as a team player, he assisted the Development Office in the successful sale of the North Bainbridge Water Company. Congratulations Scott!

Express

- UCIRO celebrated their 10th anniversary with an Express on 10/27/04.
- Student Fiscal Services celebrated another successful opening on 10/29/04.
- Payroll held an Express to welcome Cindy Gregovich and Ann Anderson to the Payroll family on 11/29/04.

BRAVO

Seventy two Bravos have been awarded since October 1, 2004! The following people received awards (more than once in some instances):

Agnes Acholonu	Lynn Duong	Mark Landis
Fil Acuario	Ana Duppenthaler	Sharon Larsson
Carolyn Adams	Norm Englund	Vincent Lau
Ruchi Aggarwal	Peggy Fitzwater	Sadiq Lew
Jaeson Albritton	Peggy Fizwater	Randy Lewis
Christine Amaratunge	Mike Fleming	Mai Lin
Heidi Anderson	Lily Gebrenegus	Nancy Linde
Donna Andreason	Aris Gempesaw	Shawna Litterski
Erlinda Antonio	Mary Girgis	Amy Liu
Linda Arcand	Frannie Gladney	Kah Loh
Suzette Ashby-Larrabee	Libby Graham	Eva Lu
Marisa Baker	Brenda Grayson	Zachary Luther
Jill Beaver	Heidi Gustafson	Anna Mirza
Amelia Bermudez	Paige Hamlin	Andrew Monusko
John Boet	Diane Harker	Margarita Mortel
Lejla Boric	Lauren Harris	Joe Nguyen
Mary Brokaw	Shara Hayden	Heather Norberg Stewart
Alice Bukengolts	Misty Hayes	Adam Pierce
John Cady	Elise Hebb	Cecilia Pittman
Jim Caldwell	Nancy Hurja	Vanessa Posadas
Susan Camber	Evelyn Jagoring	Cece Redila
Diane Cooley	Paul Jeganathan	Susie Rodriguez
Teresa Crisostomo	Mary Jo	Alice Rose
Karen Crowder	Jennifer Johnston	Sandie Rosko
Gwen DarDen	Michael Keller	Amanda Rountree
Katrina Day	Jenny Krumbholz	Maurene Rutkin
Tess Domingo-Herrera	Laura Lai	Ghan Sachdeva
Marcus Dorschel	Arlene Lalas	Lisa Scheyer
Barbara Schielmann	Kim Tennessen	Lisa Whitehead
Juinette Schrijn	Johan Thirun	Todd Wilder
Sam Senturia	My-Hanh Tong	Li-Chang Wong
Dick Simmons	Beverly Trulson	Christa Woodhull
Cathy Sleipnes	Scott Ulrich	Suzann Wright
JR Sloan	Rosemarie Valencia	Shelly Yen
Vicky Spring	Kevin Wald	Sun Yoon
Kazuko Stoesz	Chris Wall	
Ping Tan	Steven Wang	

Upcoming Person to Person Gatherings

- January 27, 2005 – lunch at Ethnic Cultural Center. Invitations will be sent shortly.
- April 13, 2005 – Breakfast. Location TBA
- July 20, 2005 – Lunch. Location TBA

Kudos

compiled by Kyra Worrell

To: Ann Anderson, Cindy Gregovich, Pramilla Chand and Karen Long (Payables Administration)
From: Sara Gomez, Director, Administrative Information Services
Comment: Just wanted to update you all (and you may already know this) on another successful partnership between Purchasing, Payables and the ePrep team. The teams had a successful go-live on 10/4 of the M&E (Machinery and Equipment) Sales Tax Exemption Project, thanks to the hard work and considerable efforts of Ernie Jones, Arylton Costa, Janet Schwartz, and Doyle Huckabay (ePrep); Ann Anderson, Cindy Gregovich, Pramilla Chand and Karen Long (Financial Mgmt/Payables); and Ann Barry, Carla Helm (Purchasing). This project touched all of the major PAS online areas: requisition entry, buying, and accounts payable. It is anticipated that the M&E Sales Tax Exemption will bring the University considerable tax savings by allowing the University to take advantage of a recent tax exemption granted by the WA state Dept of Revenue for purchases of machinery and equipment over $1000, meeting specific criteria (directly used more than 50% of its useful life on qualifying research, with a useful life over one year). The work done by these teams automates manual procedures that have already saved the University $2 million since Feb '04! A great accomplishment and thanks to all!

To: Sue Camber (RAA), **V'Ella Warren** (Financial Management) and team
From: Bryan Sires, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Professor & Acting Chair, Boyd K. Bucey Memorial Chair of Ophthalmology, Harborview Med Ctr.
Comment: I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you for your efforts related to FEC. It was an impressive and helpful presentation and I recognize it came from an enormous amount of work that has taken place over the past year. I know many others played important roles but I write you due to your leadership roles in the University and SOM, respectively. Please feel free to share my sentiments with the group. I realize there are still some issues to be worked out but it is nice to see a PROACTIVE approach to a complex issue. It is a clear sign that we have learned from our past mistakes related to dealing with resources from the Federal Government and that is all anyone can ask. Thank you for your steadfast leadership.

To: Diane Cooley and Kyra Worrell (SFS)
From: Shautzie Shieh, Counselor Senior Student Support Services/Office of Minority Affairs
Comment: Thank you very much for leading the Money 101 workshop for the staff and students in the Student Support Services program last Thursday. It was very informative and interesting. Both Tim Mccoy and I think we will arrange another presentation for our students in the future. Thank you again for your service to the students!

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Comment: Over the past year, I have been completing RSTs for Division of Oncology budgets where the PI is one of our 4 breast cancer physicians. I have consistently found

Lynn Duong helpful over the phone, accurate with her work, and her work is done in an expeditious manner. It's a pleasure working with her.

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To: Ben Gines (RAA)
From: Terri E. Whitney, Research Coordinator, UW School of Nursing, Dept of Family & Child Nursing
Comment: I wanted to send you an email about the great service I received from Ben. I was in a tight jam earlier this week with the UWMC when they called to say that our budget was not approved for food. Somehow FIN was showing that we were not approved for food and that was one of many things that went wrong for me this week. By the time I called Ben I was not in a very good mood. Ben was able to calm me down and fix the problem. I appreciate his willingness to help me and get the situation resolved quickly and professionally. We had subjects coming in this week and it would have been embarrassing if we could not provide them food as promised in our guidelines. Thank you again Ben for helping our research!

To: Lily Gebrenegus (RAA)
From: Carole Davison, Assistant Director of Development, College of Architecture & Urban Planning
Comment: Lily! You ROCK! Thanks so much for doing this so quickly!

To: GRIP Team (On going GRIP going "live") (RAA)
From: Sara Gomez, Director, Administrative Information Services
Comment: GRIP Team - Congratulations on this huge milestone! You all should feel great about what you have accomplished as a team.

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Training Classes 2005

Process Improvement: to be scheduled*

Quality Awareness: June 23 from 12:30-4:30 &
June 24 from 8:30-12:30 ECC Black Room

Nov. 30 from 12:30-4:30 &
Dec. 1 from 8:30-12:30*

Facilitator Training: May 5-6 from 8:30-5:00*

EDP Workshop: April 4 from 9:00-11:30 a.m. ECC Black Room
April 18 from 1:00-3:30 p.m.

October 3 from 9:00-11:30 &
October 17 from 1:00-3:30 p.m.

*locations to be announced