NEW DIRECTIONS

Quality Improvement in Financial Management at the University of Washington
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Letter from the Editor, Summer 2005

by Sarah Moore

Yea! It's July and there is weather for everyone—something for the sun people and something for the rain people too! (We, the rain people, are out there.) Read on and you will find that there is something for everyone in this quarter's issue of New Directions. There's a brand new RQT, and Treasury is undergoing some restructuring to reflect the growing number of endowments and investment diversification. Also, Traveling Treats was a rousing success, with its fun FM Music theme.

This issue features the following articles:

Challenges and Opportunities as FM Evolves
The Controller's Perspective

by Ann Anderson

It's been almost six months since Financial Management reorganized. With the retirement of Frank Montgomery, the Controller's Office was restructured to increase the visibility of the two major customer service areas, Research Accounting and Analysis (RAA) and Student Financial Services (SFS), by elevating them organizationally to report directly to V'Ella Warren. In addition, the Decision Support Center was established to work on behalf of leaders in schools, colleges and administrative units (including Financial Management) to provide analytical support. This work is proceeding quite nicely, and Decision Support has organized with other central decision support units to provide more cohesiveness in their efforts to work with the new and developing data warehouses.

So, what has this change meant for Payroll, Financial Services and Financial Accounting, the units remaining in the Controller's area? The primary focus is to benefit *all* customers including research faculty, students and all other customer groups. Coordination between SFS, RAA and Decision Support will reach across functional areas and focus on shared responsibilities, such as cash management, system integrity, compliance and risk. In that vein, I am leading a team composed of **Cindy Gregovich** in Payroll, **Tami Sadusky** in GCA, **Jeff Follman** in Financial Accounting, **Karen Long** in Financial Services and **Nate Findley** from Decision Support, to identify opportunities across the different functional areas where we can create and share knowledge. Not only is this consistent with the FM Knowledge Worker initiative, but we're also developing outcomes that will have a positive impact on our customers.

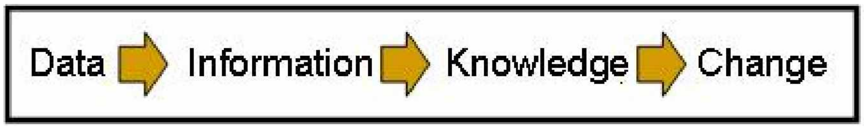
This team is working on two separate yet related projects. First of all, we are working to develop a cash management metric to evaluate the overall effectiveness of all our cash-related activities. While many of us are familiar and/or involved with individual measures for various cash activities, we don't have a composite measure which brings together all our activities. We believe this is critical to achieving our strategic goal of growing funds for the University. This means we need to determine, in a comprehensive way, whether we are investing effectively, bringing cash in fast enough and holding onto cash long enough before disbursing it.

The goal for our second project is to provide better, more coordinated information to assist those on campus involved in international or global activities. For example, the UW has many research projects where much of the work is focused and/or conducted in foreign locations, primarily for infectious disease training, prevention and treatment. In addition, international instructional activities take place all over the world. The University also brings international scholars, students and employees here to work and study. All of these foreign activities have fiscal components with varying levels of complexity. Through our work we've learned there is no single place where information about these activities can be found. Thus, one of our primary objectives is to change all that by developing a single webpage where all the fiscal information related to foreign work can be accessed.

As these efforts wind down, we'll be looking for additional areas where we can expand our collective knowledge as well as develop useful solutions for our customers.

The Decision Support Center
A Catalyst for Change

by Dinah Walters



Early this winter, a new group in Financial Management, the Decision Support Center (DSC), was created to enable the university community to better manage their business through the effective use of financial and administrative information. Currently, the Decision Support team consists of three members: Charles **Bennett, Nate Findley, and me, Dinah Walters**.

The vision of the DSC is campus-wide access to data and resources for analysis in support of decisions. The mission of our team is to be a financial information and analysis resource for the leaders of UW schools, colleges and administrative units. We are committed to cooperation and knowledge-sharing across the university data management community.

The DSC will to become a valuable tool in your quality improvement toolbox by assisting you in gathering the information you need to make informed decisions.

How will we get there?

The core focus of the DSC at this time is to partner in development with the Computing and Communications Data Warehousing Program (DWP) and be the voice of both the data and the customer.

The DWP is currently constructing an Exploration Data Warehouse of administrative information. Most of the data populating this data warehouse comes from our heritage financial systems such as FAS, HEPPS, and SDB. By the end of this summer, the Exploration Data Warehouse will be available for Central Institutional Analysts (CIAs) to access and explore. CIA's are people in central campus departments who require cross departmental data to do their daily work. For example, the Data Analyst positions in GCA are considered CIA's.

Initially, the DSC and the CIAs will create a number of ad-hoc reports that include information never before available from our heritage systems. Any of these that are determined to be useful to many users will be turned into "canned" reports available online to anyone who needs them.

The DSC will be an educational and communication resource and information portal – learning from, sharing with, informing, and teaching the University community. From there we will move to a financial consulting / analysis advisory role.

Charles, Nate and I look forward to assisting you with your data and analysis needs in the near future. We are located in the basement of Gerberding Hall, room B40 next to the vending machines. The door is always open, and your visit is most certainly welcome.

Student Fiscal Services Implements New Ebilling Process

by Paige Hamlin

During Autumn Quarter 2004, Student Fiscal Services (SFS) started Ebilling as a means of delivering tuition account information to students electronically. As many other processes such as registration are already handled electronically, this was a natural progression for the UW. This process reduces costs, while providing a quick and convenient service for students.

Email messages reminding students to check their tuition statement on MyUW are sent periodically throughout the quarter to their UW email account if they have an outstanding or credit balance. Students may then access their tuition statement on MyUW. This is now the official billing format. Beginning Autumn quarter, paper bills will no longer be sent. Students can print the tuition statement from their home computers or on campus.

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.

A new payment option, "web check payment" is also available now. Tuition and related charges may be paid online by web check from a checking or savings account. This type of payment results in an electronic debit to the bank account, but cannot be set up in advance for future tuition dates. A bank routing number, account number and UW student ID number are required to complete a web check payment. The payment happens as soon as the transaction information is submitted. This service is accessible to students from the Tuition Charge Statement on MyUW.

Dedication and Enthusiasm Usher in a New RQT

by Donna Andreason

This past May saw another RQT take the reigns! The 2005-2006 team members are **Farida Ablang** (Payroll), **Jaeson Albritton** (SFS), **Jesus Francisco** (Payables), **Joanne Matson** (Treasury), **Kelley Smith** (Financial Accounting), **My-Hanh Tong** (Financial Services), **Shannon Kruger** (MAA) and **Tamra Clark** (GCA). **Elise Hebb** (Treasury) will continue on from last year's RQT to help with the new team's transitions for the first few meetings and **Ginny Montgomery** (Payroll) will continue as team facilitator. This team will meet for a 12 month term, at which time new members will be selected. The 2005-2006 team members are very excited about their roles in RQT and bring a wealth of enthusiasm and new ideas to the process. Special thanks to the outgoing team of Amy Liu, Elise Hebb, Donna Andreason, Katrina Day, Ginny Montgomery, Suzann Wright, and Steven Wang. It was a great year!

So far, the new RQT has planned their first quarterly Person to Person Gathering and is brainstorming ideas for the upcoming Financial Management Summer Event. The team has also successfully completed their first LINQ Award Presentation for Jeff Follman in Financial Accounting and has awarded a handful of BRAVO, EXPRESS, and Coffee Cards. Keep up the good work recognizing others in Financial Management!

Do you want to know more about what the RQT is up to? The RQT website offers a recap of meeting minutes for those who like to keep informed and an improved system for viewing award photos. The site is updated after every meeting and award event, so there's always something new to see. Visit it online at: http://www.washington.edu/admin/finmgmt/qi/rqt/ .

Your departmental RQT representative is always willing to talk to you about the program, and answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to stop by in person or drop an email at any time.

The First Annual SFS Outreach Fair

by Kyra Worrell

The Student Fiscal Services (SFS) Outreach Fair was held in the University of Washington Club (formerly the Faculty Club) on May 4th, 2005. There were six tables, each representing a unique aspect of SFS Outreach or SFS at large: Information Packets, Tax workshops and Student Database training; SFS Receivables, Tuition Forfeiture and E-billing; “Managing the Maze” workshop; and the ever popular Money 101 & 102 workshops. People from campus departments, Financial Management and even students came to browse the booths. SFS staff and leaders from all units were at the fair to answer questions and give a general overview of SFS services. Visitors were encouraged to make appointments to meet with Outreach staff to learn more about SFS services and to sign up for workshops.

Reaching out to departments, students and the community at large has always been the goal of the SFS Outreach unit. This goal is in line with FM’s strategic mapping initiative, by providing tools and information for customers to manage their own departments and by developing relationships with strategic partners (i.e. the departments on campus). SFS Outreach works closely with UW departments in order to get accurate information about SFS out to the students in these departments.

SFS now reaches most UW students (including all incoming freshmen) with presentations and/or written material about SFS services. However, the SFS Outreach unit will not rest until they are able to reach all departments on campus, as well. To achieve that end, Outreach has hosted an open house every year for the past three years (including this one) to advertise the services they offer. The Outreach Fair is yet another method to reach out to the UW departments with whom Outreach does not currently have a working relationship. The idea behind the fair was to make Outreach more accessible to departments that chose not to make the trek all the way to Schmitz Hall for the Outreach Open House. Departments from all over campus were invited to visit.

The response from people who attended was overwhelmingly positive. It looks like Outreach will be making this another annual event!

SFS Changes and Remodels – the Continuing Journey

by Ruth Johnston

You may have noticed that 129 Schmitz has added some new offices – six of them. We've built these offices for several reasons, but primarily because we want to enhance our service delivery.

Over the last several years, the volume of in-person transactions has dropped from 64% to 26%. This means that the counter staff spends less time accepting payments or issuing checks, and more time working on processes and helping students and parents with more complex problems.

How are we changing to accommodate different customer needs? First, we've created adviser positions. Two advisers, **Heidi Anderson** and **Andrew Monusko**, work with collection activity and those students who owe the university money; **Frannie Gladney** works with students who have received financial aid and then become ineligible for it, which means now having to pay it back. **Lisa Whitehead** works with scholarships and academic student employees and their often complicated financial accounts. **Kyra Worrell** helps with personal money management and navigating the complex UW bureaucracy. And we are currently recruiting for a loans specialist to help students understand the complexity of the various loans they may take and have to manage. In addition, all advisers help each other and the front counter in times of need.

Second, we created space – private space. To provide students with the best service, we want them to be able to hold conversations with the advisers at a leisurely pace with no distractions. The advisers now have time to assist students in fully understanding their accounts and answering the questions they might not even know they have. Students can set up appointments or drop in for help. By meeting in private offices we can focus on their particular needs and build supportive relationships.

It's a beginning and we have a lot to learn. Heidi had her first experience recently and told me that "I just had my first walk-in student! I know it's corny but it was really fun to sit and help her...nothing urgent-not even past due, but she was able to ask questions and felt comfortable! It was fun!"

Traveling Treats 2005 Features Music, Laughter and Camaraderie

by Anita Bingaman and Kyra Worrell

"Traveling Treats" is an event jointly sponsored by the RQT and the individual departments within Financial Management. It's a chance for everyone in Financial Management to learn about work processes across FM, meet people in other departments, eat food and generally have fun! Fun at work can improve work quality and mental health. It increases creativity and willingness to help which is important in a QI environment.

This year's theme was FM radio. The RQT provided glossy paper FM radio jukebox/maps listing all of the departments and their musical themes. Participants went around to departments completing various tasks in order to get hole punches that would show they had actually visited that department and maybe even learned something about it. People who were able to visit all the departments and get all their holes punched turned their sheets into their RQT Rep and were entered into a gift certificate drawing.

Each department took this as an opportunity to showcase their creativity by tying their chosen musical theme with information about their work processes and great food, fun and games! The FM "jukebox" ran the gamut of musical tastes, from Disco to TV Tunes to straight up Rock and Roll! Everybody seemed to have a great time and a few brave souls hula hooped or sang karaoke – all while learning about process improvement, recognition and their FM colleagues' daily work!

Hula hoops, black leather jackets, pony tails, and poodle skirts showed that while GCA's theme was "GCA, Work Around the Clock", they know how to play as well. Time travelers to GCA were met by staff members offering them the opportunity to work the hula hoop and answer questions about the GCA process. Since fun breaks up tension this was a good way to be prepared to learn about such things as FSRs, NEAs, and the name of GCA's new Accounts Receivable system.

Two payroll staff members, decked out in their '70s shoes, were ready to travel in this year's Traveling Treats. Their shoes, Hot Wheels, a macramé hanging, a disco ball, 70's music, and other 1970s artifacts gave visitors a feeling of having stepped back in time. While munching on Fritos and cheese fondue, visitors had a chance to view Payroll's Dashboard and try to recall songs, movies and celebrities of the '70s.

At Risk Management, visitors answered questions about the office and what it does, and then followed "hang ten" footprints to reach their beach music spread. And what a spread it was! There were all kinds of food and drink and great beach music, just right for an indoor beach picnic. The beach theme was completed by the handy dandy pint sized beach umbrellas and novelties, perfect as a garnish for your soda on ice.

The Treasury Office highlighted beloved TV tunes as their traveling treats theme. Walking into the Treasury Office, the first thing you saw was a huge time line of events, comparing historical and "TV" events. After inviting visitors to grab a refreshing ice cream bar, the Treasury office employees **Chris Malins, Elvin Smith and Judy Peterson** led hapless traveling treaters on several rounds of "Name that TV Tune". Winners received a TV tunes CD compiled by one of the game show mc's, Chris Malins.

Following Payables Administration's "Happy Invoice Trails" led FM travelers to better knowledge of the payable process. Staff members in cowboy hats with guns at the ready quizzed visitors about Fiscal cutoff dates for payable invoices, the sales tax rate used by the University, what is a Non-RIP invoice, and the number of days to reply to a RIP notice.

Just to prove that accounting type folk can have fun, let their hair down, and not only sing songs, but write them, Financial Accounting and Equipment Inventory joined together for a Karaoke sing along to "The Accountants' Lullaby" written by **Bill Christensen**. Another name for this song might be "Ode to the Common Accountant." It sets to music the sorrows, hopes and dreams of those of us who find ourselves working with numbers.

Financial Services used their focus on Jazz and jazz instruments to walk visitors through their processes for issuing checks. Participants in the game followed one process thread from beginning to end, following clues and hints from one end of the office to the other.

Student Fiscal Services (SFS) sang the Blues with a blue light room, (mainly) blue food and blues music. Visitors here were asked a variety of trivia questions about both SFS services and Blues music and musicians before receiving the coveted hole punch.

The AVP/Controller's Office/ QI/MAA focused on the King's – Elvis' – music and questions about each area's processes. Participants read information from a chart and then were quizzed. One of the foods they featured was one of Elvis' reported favorites: Peanut butter and banana sandwiches (apparently the King liked them fried!).

One of the benefits of the Traveling Treats event is the chance to get to know workers in others offices in an informal setting. The Travel Office Hawaiian setting was a perfect place for travelers to relax, take a Hula lesson, or step into a Tiki Tiki bar to sip fruit drinks and either ask questions about the travel process or get reacquainted with one of the travel staff.

All in all, we traveled, we treated, and on the way we learned a lot about other offices in Financial Management. A great time was had by all twisting and turning the dials of the FM radio!

Treasury Changes - Hiring and Restructuring

by Chris Malins

Over the last ten years, the value of the University's endowment and the diversification in the types of investments in the portfolio have increased dramatically. In just the last three years, the University has added real estate and hedge funds to the mix. The value of the endowment has increased through a combination of generous donations and market return from $750 million in 1999 to over $1.2 billion today. With a larger pool of assets to manage, the UW has had to reinvent itself to operate more like a larger endowment, with more focused governance and more specialized staff.

First the "governance" part. Prior to 2002, all UW investment decisions were made directly by the Board of Regents, based on recommendations from the Investments Office. In 2002, UWINCO was formed as a voluntary advisory committee to the Board. UWINCO stands for University of Washington Investment Committee and comprises seven investment professionals, with each one bringing a special expertise to the committee. For instance, there is one person who is in charge of a large buyout firm, and he brings UW expertise in that area. Another person runs a local investment house that specializes in bonds and she is available to offer her expertise to UW in fixed income. This committee brings a wealth of real world knowledge and an unbiased perspective to UW asset allocations. UW Treasury staff meet with this committee quarterly to share ideas and seek input on future opportunities.

As most of FM is already aware, on January 1st, UW hired its very first Chief Investments Officer to oversee the endowment. **Keith Ferguson** has hit the ground running and is currently moving the investments office to its next level of development, a more specialized staff. Prior to Keith's arrival, due both to the smaller size of the endowment and the shortage of staff, the Investments Office was staffed by "generalists." A generalist is someone who has a broad knowledge of the entire portfolio, but doesn't have the time to develop an expertise in a particular area. With a staff of generalists, Treasury Office has relied heavily on the work of consultants when reviewing investment opportunities or when performing due diligence on existing money managers. The new model is one tending towards more specialization, with a staff of Portfolio Managers and Financial Analysts, with each person or team being responsible for a specific strategy in the portfolio. UW will also begin initiating its own investment research, work that has until now been the almost exclusive domain of outside consultants. This movement towards more specialized expertise is a "best practice" of large ($1B and above) endowments and one that UW is seeking to emulate.

To further the goals described above, the investments area has begun to hire financial analysts and structure the staff around investment strategies. One new junior analyst has been hired and two more senior analysts are currently being recruited. These new staff members will work with current Portfolio Managers to be better stewards of the ever growing endowment at the UW.

Dashboard Drill Down – Payables Administration

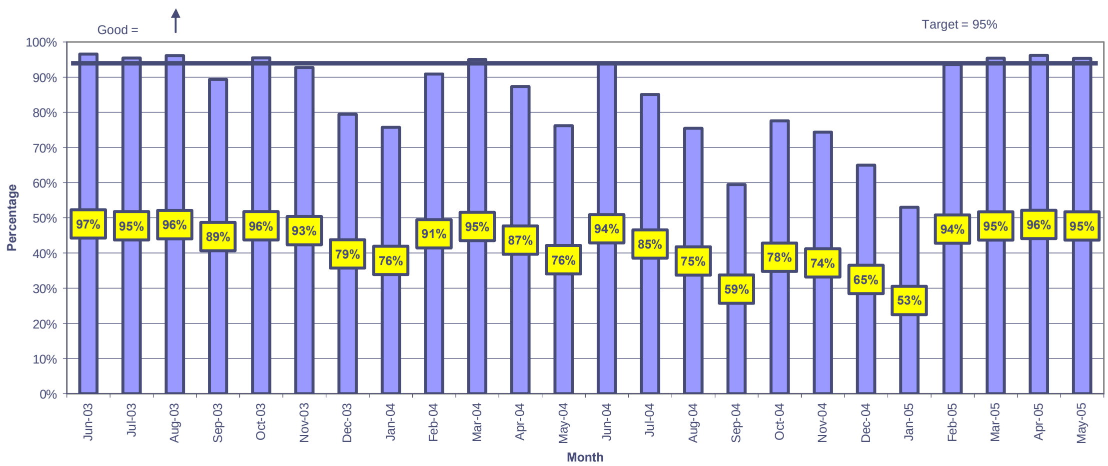
By Karl Kraber and Keli Johnson

The heartbeat of process improvement is best understood by the term "Kaizen." Originally a Japanese management concept for incremental (gradual, continuous) change (improvement), Kaizen is actually a *way of life philosophy*, assuming that every aspect of our life deserves to be constantly improved. In business, it means that a process or system is never fixed "once and for all," but needs to be constantly and incrementally improved. This is also the idea behind Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA). Once a major improvement activity has implemented, the wheel of PDCA is constantly turned.

Today's article focuses on a group that represents the Kaizen and PDCA philosophy and how their continuous improvement is evident on the departmental dashboard. The purpose of this "drilldown" is to examine a part of Financial Management through a departmental dashboard to focus on an ongoing improvement that takes us behind the numbers and tells the story. The group is Payables Administration. The process is invoice processing. This is their story.

As the chart below shows, during 2004 the Payables Administration group had been struggling to process invoices within 30 days of the invoice receipt date. Based on measurements used for their dashboard, it was obvious that Payables Administration Processing was behind. They realized that the processes they were using were not working. They received a number of customer complaints and employee morale deteriorated. Definitely, it was time to consider a serious rapid problem solving technique. Consequently, Financial Services brought a Payables work group together to address the problems. The work group established common goals and expectations. They decided that they would do what they called "process concentration" twice every week. Process concentration is four hours dedicated solely to processing invoices. During these "concentration times" employees have no outside distractions. That is, they are required to ignore the phone and cannot set up other meetings.

Item # 11: Percent of Online Invoices Paid in 30 Calendar Days or Less from Date of Receipt



At the beginning, the Payables workgroup suggested different ideas about how they wanted to improve this process. One idea was to change the filing method for batches of invoices waiting to be processed. It was changed to a method of oldest invoices first, rather than by batch number. Another process change was to put aside the “problem” invoices that needed more time, focus on the easy ones, and then, later, resolve the problems. This was an effective application of the Pareto Principle: 20% of the work caused by 80% of the problems. The team then set up a two-tier goal structure to accomplish the requirement of paying the invoices within 30 days: 1) process the “non-problem” invoices within two weeks and 2) resolve the problem invoices within the remaining two weeks. Within a month, the backlog of invoices was eliminated. This shows up on the chart at February 2005.

This team hasn’t been complacent with their newly achieved success. For example, they implemented a plan to have the leader send out emails at the end of each day to provide the workgroup with a summary of where they were and what needed to be focused on the following day. In addition, they arranged with the Customer Service group to receive help from students to log in faxes while a Customer Service person processed invoices.

During the last four months, they have continued to make improvements, especially when there are vacant positions and new employees. In the event that there is a vacant position, the team has put together back-up positions. When a person knows they are leaving, going on vacation or planning to have sick leave, they meet with their assigned “back-up” along with the supervisor to review any outstanding or pending work on their desk. In regards to a new employee, the group plans out who can help fill in for certain duties and offers suggestions on how to best utilize the student assistants while the new employees are in training.

Process improvement is never-ending. Payables Administration knows that and, while continuing to make the incremental changes, they will also be starting another focused process improvement effort soon.

FM 101 – Internal Audit
The Mysteries of IA – Revealed at Last!

By Maureen Rhea, Sharon Scully and Chris Malins

The Internal Audit (IA) department is a bit of a mystery to most of us in FM.

There are a few reasons for this. First, Internal Audit only recently joined FM and as such hasn't been as visible to most of us. Second, they are a small department with only 10 staffers working out of the Alumni Building on the NW corner of campus. Third and most importantly, the nature of IA's work requires that they demonstrate organizational independence and objectivity in their approach to their audit work. They are independent of the activity they audit, although they are still part of the University.

IA's independence is reflected by the department's dual reporting/budgeting relationship. The department functions under the authority of the Regents Finance and Audit Committee and reports to the Treasurer of the Board, V'Ella. The actual dollars to fund Internal Audit come from the office of the Executive Vice President, Weldon Ihrig. This design is intended to prevent conflicts of interest, especially were Internal Audit ever to audit a department in FM.

The mission of Internal Audit is to provide the Regents and the University community with useful information that identifies problems, makes recommendations, and helps facilitate resolutions. This translates into three primary IA activities–audits, advisory services, and training. Let's take a look at each of these activities separately to get a clearer picture of how this important university department operates.

Audits

On the audit side, IA focuses on financial and compliance audits. The financial work can range from auditing the financial statements of self-sustaining units to reconstructing a trail of fraudulent transactions. Compliance audits focus on how well we follow and abide by laws, regulations and University policies and procedures.

Everyone wants to know how IA determines which departments will be audited. There are actually three reasons that IA will work with a department on their financial and compliance internal controls. Either through the regularly scheduled audit process (yes, everyone gets their turn eventually), through special investigations, or by a special management request.

Departments visited as part of regularly scheduled audits are chosen based on an annual risk assessment and audit plan. Each year IA gathers and analyzes a wide variety of information in order to identify and qualify key business risks. Once the risks are ranked, IA determines the best way to allocate its resources.

Sometimes scheduled audits focus on a department or other type of unit; sometimes a cross-institutional issue will be examined (e.g., gift and endowment expenditures).

Although the common stereotype is dread preceding an auditor's arrival, IA isn't viewed that way. Upon occasion, management actually *invites* IA to audit departments and systems. IA thinks of itself and is viewed campus-wide as a resource that departments can tap into if they need advice or assistance on accounting or compliance issues and questions. Ten percent of IA's workload are special management requests.

Special investigations are the other primary activity that IA spends time on and represent fifteen percent of total workload. The 20-30 special investigations a year are usually related to fraud, employee or citizen complaints, State Auditor's Office whistleblowers, and conflicts of interest involving faculty and staff.

When the audit work is complete, IA communicates recommendations for corrective actions in audit reports. Six months after reports are issued IA follows up on their recommendations to determine whether they have been implemented.

Training and Consulting

Training and advisory services are a growing part of IA's activities. IA offers 30-40 training sessions each year with topics ranging from cost sharing to fraud prevention. Advisory services include: fielding a wide range of questions from academic departments and central administration, participating on teams that are discussing and addressing institutional issues or developing guidance for UW, and working with departments and units to solve problems related to internal controls, federal compliance, and ethics law.

Internal Audit is led by **Maureen Rhea**, and staffed by eight auditors and one support person. They have grown from just four employees in 1958 to the current staffing level of ten. While still a small department, IA has a very broad reach. They have been instrumental in improving controls and resolving complaints all over our campus. And there's no mystery to that.

Recognition and Toastmasters Part I

*by Mai Lin C Ch*ua

One of the most valuable leadership lessons – the importance of recognition – comes directly from participating in a typical Toastmasters meeting.

In Financial Management, we have several recognition tools which include QSTEP, LINQ, TOPS, Recognition Express, Bravo Awards, coffee cards, and thank you cards. In a Toastmasters Club, we also have recognition tools for our members including the following:

Awards and Certificates

If you are a long-time Toastmaster, you probably have a drawer full of ribbons. You might have ribbons for speaking, evaluating or Table Topics. In FM Toastmasters Club, we recognize our members who have completed their first ten speeches with Competent Toastmaster Certificates. Badges with the members' names also come with these certificates. All Competent Toastmasters are also given two free advanced manuals to further their Toastmasters journey depending on which areas they'd like to excel in.

Awards and certificates can be a great way to tell people we appreciate their efforts. Awards and certificates are also a great way to show recognition, but they are only one of the ways Toastmasters teaches us to recognize people.

Applause

In a typical meeting, we learn to applaud enthusiastically for our fellow members. Where else could you expect to receive applause for providing a short answer to an impromptu question? In Toastmasters we even applaud people for giving feedback.

Imagine how a little more applause *outside* of Toastmasters might change your perspective. What if your children clapped when you did their laundry and your spouse applauded you on a well-prepared meal. Wouldn't that make you feel better and wanting to work harder? In the same perspective, what if your co-workers gave you a standing ovation when you solved a difficult customer's problem? Wouldn't you find yourself trying just a little harder?

If you are like most Toastmasters, you love receiving applause. Receiving applause acknowledges your contribution. It demonstrates that you have provided something of value or achieved something significant.

Recognition and Toastmasters Part II will focus on the other recognition tools such as *Feedback* and *Opportunity*. Please stay tuned for the next article in the Autumn issue of New Directions.

FM Toastmasters Club holds its summer meetings every other Tuesday from 12 noon to 1 pm at Schmitz Rm. 170. Please come and join the fun!

RQT Round Up

by Chris Malins and the RQT

The Recognition Quality Team (RQT) has been keeping very busy recognizing the greatness that is Financial Management. In the last quarter, we have awarded two TOPS award, one Q-STEP, hosted a Person-to-Person lunch, and sponsored the ever-popular Traveling Treats celebration. Here are the details:

Q-STEP

Martin Crabb, Martin D Crabb, Program Coordinator in the Equipment Inventory Office received a Q-STEP award on May 31, 2005 for the quality of “Committed”. Martin was noted for his demonstrated commitment to quality principles, the excitement and energy that he shows on the job, the effective relationships that he has developed with customers and co-workers, and his eagerness to accept challenges. Cindy Gregovich, one of the people interviewed for this award, said that “Martin is constantly looking at process improvement, and learns as much as he can so that he can give departments correct answers”. Ann Anderson highlighted Martin’s willingness to step in and learn to help out. She also noted his great sense of humor and consistently positive attitude.

TOPS

Laurent Anstett received a TOPS award on April 4th, 2005. Laurent was awarded a TOPS for his successful modification of a new method for calculating which salary cap to apply to grants and contracts as they are used in completing the Faculty Effort Certificates. This improvement not only streamlined the process, it allowed for the creations of summary reports on an as-needed basis, so that departments could access their salary cap info when necessary. Suzette Ashby, who nominated Laurent for this award, was impressed with Laurent’s approach to the project. “He watched the process, analyzed our needs, and developed creative ways to improve it.”

On April 28th, 2005, the GRIP Team received a TOPS award for their efforts on the GCA receivables system. The goal of the project was to create a receivables system that would automatically generate invoices in the multiple sponsor formats that are currently required. This new system would significantly reduce the number of manual invoices processed. The team kicked off in April of 2002 and the new system went live in November of 2004. The GRIP Team accomplished a hugely complex task by taking an off-the-shelf receivables package (from JD Edwards) and doing the design, programming and testing required to make it communicate successfully with UW heritage systems. The success of this system is borne out in the numbers. Prior to implementation in November 2004, 80% of all invoices were inputted manually. After the conversion, just 20% are entered manually. This reduction translates into dollar savings on funds collected sooner, and people savings, in that instead of entering invoice data, research accountants can now focus on customer service. The GRIP Team is: **Denise Lim, Kris Jaeger Marisa Honig, Hoang Ong, Jan Sullivan, Michael Duong, and Rebecca Tseng**.

BRAVO

Twenty-one Bravos have been awarded since April 1st, 2005! The following people received awards:

Nate Findley, Karen Long, Anita Bingaman, Jove Lam, Venessa Posadas, Cristi Chapman, Laurent Anstett, Suzette Ashby, John Boet (twice), Brion Norton, Shannon Kruger, Ann Sarna, Cathy Billings, Chris Malins, Elise Hebb, Elvin Smith, Mary Girgis, Yee Lam, Peggy Fitzwater, Marisa Honig.

Upcoming Person-to-Person Gathering

- November 16th 2005 – Person to Person lunch. Invitations to come!

Kudos

Compiled by Kyra Worrell

To: John Cady, GCA

From: Jane Babione, Assistant to Michael Kimmey, MD, UW, Division of Gastroenterology

RE: 66-8533, Award NEA arrived. End date only updated today
Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you,
Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you,
Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you,
Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.
And
By the way: thank you.
I cannot tell you how happy you have made me

To: Elizabeth Cherry, Risk Management; **Maureen Rhea,** Internal Audit:

From: Bill Ferris, Executive Director of Administration, Office of the Executive Vice President

Referring to a positive email from President Emmert: This is a direct result of the documentation/plan you provided to us for our budget proposal. Weldon took it in to discuss with the President this morning. Your presentation made a strong impact and I wanted to thank you again for all your efforts in this area. You pulled together a lot of complex ideas and issues in a short amount of time. Great job!!

To: Bill Christensen, Financial Accounting:

From: Bruce Abe, Principal Financial Planner, Capital and Space Planning Office, UW

Bill Christensen and I have been working on several key topics for which he has been most helpful and expeditious. On the Capital Bond Task Force, Bill stepped up and distributed meeting notes to the task force members. He's volunteered to continue this task through April. With the task force meeting almost every other week, these notes will be valuable in tracking our progress. Additionally, with the legislature in session and developing the capital bill, I asked Bill to review and help me reconcile funds 064 and 378. He graciously reviewed my spreadsheets, that covered over three biennia, and made the necessary edits to confirm the numbers. He did this when his work load and schedule was quite full, however, he made the effort to get back to me in a day so I could work on the spreadsheets over the weekend. His work and efforts are much appreciated.

To: Diane Cooley, SFS; **Kyra Worrell,** SFS & SFS staff assisting the Outreach unit:

From: Meg Estep, First Year Programs, Gateway Center

I felt compelled to write this letter of support for the Outreach Staff of Student Fiscal Services as they have contributed and added value to much of the work I do on this campus. I—along with several others of the First Year Programs staff—have had the distinct pleasure of working closely with the SFS staff in their outreach capacity over the past several years. I have watched them balance their personal commitment to the *individual* student with a strong sense of duty and responsibility to educating the campus *at large*. Our programs have benefited from both efforts, and the SFS staff handles this challenge with both enthusiasm and dedication.

First Year Programs serves to assist new students' transition to the university, and strives to make the complex processes and requirements of this institution transparent, and most importantly, *manageable*. SFS are willing and eager partners in that effort. But I also see them taking their responsibility one step further: not only are students being introduced to a resource on campus, but they are learning useful life-long skills at the same time. This is important to me, as the program I coordinate—Dawg Daze, the UW's week of welcome for new students—offers a plethora of workshops for students to learn about the resources at the UW. However, SFS is one of the few offices to take on the daunting task of teaching students new skills during that time. SFS's signature session, 'Money 101' has been offered for the past two years at Dawg Daze, and has proved to be a concise, user-friendly and active session encouraging interested students to start thinking about their finances, along with practical tips in managing their financial responsibilities more broadly. It is this practical element of their work which helps me feel confident that students are in good hands whenever Student Fiscal Services appears on the agenda of any of my events.

I am constantly impressed by the dedication of the Student Fiscal Services staff as they pursue their mission to outreach through workshops and services to students at the University of Washington. I work with over 60 separate UW offices who coordinate events or workshops for new students, and I can confidently say SFS is among the most active and dedicated of those partners. SFS makes our job—to bring experts right into contact with students—easy. SFS strives to empower students with the information they need to make good decisions, and the SFS staff's friendliness goes far in countering the common perception among students that the university is an unfeeling, impersonal place.

First Year Programs works to challenge those same perceptions in the programs we provide for new students and their families, and SFS's priority on outreach helps further that mission considerably.

What I admire and appreciate about the staff of SFS has been their constant willingness to try different things—to adapt their presentations and information to changing audiences—as well as their commitment to keep abreast with changing trends, specifically to educate the campus and the students about the need to be concerned about increasing identity theft among this population, for example. The SFS staff have also been willing to accompany First Year Programs as our programs go 'on the road' and we have been able to rely on SFS to talk directly with students on their home turf during our summer Off-Site Orientation sessions. Finally, I can personally attest to the fact that the SFS outreach staff have been the most dedicated attendees at our local Parent Orientation sessions, which happen five times throughout the summer: I can depend on SFS to be present both at the early morning breakfast receptions (which start as early as 7:30am!) and at the lunch-time conversation hour with parents. I find the SFS outreach staff always eager and willing to try new ways to capture their audiences' interests, which keeps the material current, pertinent and *on the radar* for students and their families.

I wish to thank the Student Fiscal Services outreach staff for their significant contributions to Parent Orientations, Summer Advising & Registration sessions, Off-Site Orientations and Dawg Daze workshops, among others. I depend on their expertise to continually help educate our newest students in the intricacies of something as fundamental—and complicated—as managing money.

To: Diane Cooley, SFS; **Kyra Worrell,** SFS

From: Howard Gutknecht, Columbia Tower Rotary

Hey Kyra and Diane, good to meet you at the Park Hill Rotary.
It was a pleasure to hear your presentation on "Finance 101" - how credit cards are marketed to teens, the youth debt trends, etc., particularly since the recent passage of the federal bankruptcy law.
As speaker chairperson for Columbia Tower Rotary
www.columbiatowerrotary.org <http://www.columbiatowerrotary.org/
I'd like to invite you to come speak to our club.

To: Teresa Crisostomo, Travel; **Barbara Schielmann,** Travel

From: Michelle Williams, Director, MIRT (Multidisciplinary
International Research Training) Program

We sincerely appreciated you taking time out of your demanding schedule to speak to the MIRT 2005 Fellows prior to their summer research training experience. The students were quite pleased with the information that you provided them and they are looking forward to their Fellowship. Their enthusiasm at orientation will continue to grow as they continue to learn more about the culture they will be living and working in. Certainly, this summer will be a great learning opportunity for our fellows. The fellows, faculty and staff are thankful and very grateful for the knowledge, experience and perspective that you share with us. The MIRT pre-departure orientation was a great success thanks to your contribution and we hope you will be available for our May 2006 orientation!

To: Lisa Edlin, Judy Peterson, Treasury Office

From: Eric Godfrey, Assistant VP, Scholarships and Student Programs, UW Office of Development and Alumni Relations

Thank you very much for your characteristically timely and complete work.

To: Keith Ferguson, Treasury Office:

From: Cyndi Asmus, Director of Development, University of Washington Libraries

Keith, Thanks so much for your thoughtful comments at this morning's Chief Development Officer meeting. Your perspective gave me excellent food for thought as I work with the East Asia Libraries librarians and potential donors.

To: Frannie Gladney, SFS

From: James McCammon, UW student

Ms. Gladney, You might not remember me, but a few Quarters ago you helped me set up a payment plan to help repay a loan to UW. Thank you for understanding my difficult financial situation and being kind and for not judging me. I recently graduated with a degree in Electrical Engineering. Without your help I would have had much more difficulty in terms of preparing my finances for graduation. Thanks again, I'm glad to know the UW has people like you.

To: Frannie Gladney, SFS

From: Summer Henderson, UW student

I just wanted to take a minute to let everyone know how grateful I am that Frannie Gladney works with the University of Washington. I recently found out that I owed the University an entire quarter's worth of tuition and financial aid – a quarter in which I became very ill and was unable to finish. I was devastated and had no idea what to do, or how to do anything about it. Frannie was the first person that I went to see after I found out, and when I came into her office I was in tears, I felt hopeless. However, by the time I left – I had a plan and support system. Frannie walked me through the entire process. She was constantly on hand to get me in touch with people, give me support, work with other agencies and departments – simply to go the extra mile. I know that she didn't have to do all that she did, and I will never be able to say how grateful I am to her. The entire process took several months and I was shocked that she was just as supportive at the end as she was in the beginning. Without her help, guidance, and support, I can honestly say that I wouldn't have been able to resolve this problem. I'm sure that you already know this, however, I would just like to reiterate that Frannie Gladney is an incredible asset to your institution.

To: Ruth Johnston, SFS; **Diane Cooley** (Cash Management class coordinator)**,** SFS; (fill in with Cash Management class instructors):

From: Ken Sinarski, Associate Comptroller, University of Virginia

Ruth, we met at a conference in Colorado last fall and I want to let you know that I think your cash management class is an excellent tool. Steve Kimata speaks highly of you and we often look to your website for information and updates on the balanced scorecard.

To: The Payroll Office

From: Payroll Customer (comment was placed in the Suggestion Box in the Payroll lobby)

Great Staff. Cooperative among themselves and proactive for the UW employees. So helpful and attentive.

To: Sandie Rosko, SFS

From: General Revenue Corporation, one of the collection agencies that contracts with SFS

University of Washington has managed to service the student population by developing their current staff and changing policies and procedures to maximize efficiency ...Sandie was a wonderful ambassador for the University and it was a pleasure to have her on the team.

To: Kiet Tran, GCA

From: Kim Hubbard, Washington National Primate Research Center

I would like to send a message to let you know how wonderful, efficient, and helpful Kiet Tran has been since the re-organization of GCA, and her assignment to the Primate Center. She has made many special accommodations to meet our requests as our department has also gone through a re-organization. With a fair amount of last minutes requests over the last couple of months, her response time is less than a day. She is doing a great job and is high commended by the staff at the Primate Center.

To: Beverly Trulson, SFS

From: UW student (from the SFS Spring Survey comments)

Beverly is especially approachable and friendly.

To: V'Ella Warren, Sue Camber, Suzette Ashby-Larrabee, Ted Mordhorst

From: Lori Oliver, Assistant Attorney General, University of Washington

Re: Salary Cap for faculty with VA appointments
Congratulations to all who worked on this issue. This is great news.

To: V'Ella Warren, Maureen Rhea, Elizabeth Cherry, UCIRO team – Kristi Johnson

From: David Thorud, Acting Provost, Office of the Provost

Many thanks to you V'Ella and all of your colleagues who so ably stepped forward on virtually no notice to help with this important task. Your collective competence and contributions are greatly appreciated.

To: Steven Wang, SFS

From: UW student (from the SFS Spring Survey comments)

Steven Wang has been the most helpful staff member during my 4 years of interactions with this office.

To: Lisa Whitehead, SFS

From: UW department (from the SFS Spring Survey comments)

I'm a first time user from an academic department and I was asking questions from the slant. The help I got from Lisa was very prompt and helped accomplish the task.

To: Erick Winger, Financial Accounting

From: Clarice Hall, Event Coordinator, Business Services

I received two great comments about you in the evaluation... "Loved the presentation on Financial Desktop. The gentleman presenting was very effective."
"I attended the Financial Desktop lecture and found that to be very helpful. The speaker was very knowledgeable, personable, and willing to answer all questions that were brought to him. Very good speaker!"
One more... "The presentation I attended on the financial desktop was very professional, informative and dare I say, inspiring."

To: Li-Chang Wong, SFS

From: Srinath Narayanan, Graduate & Professional Student Senate, GPSS Treasurer

On behalf of GPSS, I personally want to thank you for conducting the Tax Workshop. It was a great success. The workshop was attended by 67 people (Which is definitely a pretty good head count). There was a lot of positive feedback about the workshop too.
Thank you once again.