The time I have spent in the Student Leader Fellowship Program has been one of the greatest experiences of my life. The program has provided me with a new perspective on life and on my role in the community. I have never felt so empowered before in my life to bring about change in the world around me.

~Keith Voorheis
Cerulean Block
I would first like to apologize for how long it has taken to complete this newsletter. As an SLFP alum, I know how much we look forward to reading about our SLFP friends, getting updated about the program, and learning what other program graduates are up to. I can empathize with those of you who have been missing it.

Let me share some quick program updates. On Friday, April 25, 2008, we graduated 40 Student Fellows from the “Mint Blocks” of the Student Leader Fellowship Program. On April 24, 2009, we graduated another 36 Student Fellows from the “Cerulean Blocks.” Currently our 18-year program totals include 689 graduates of the program who have provided over 77,000 hours of community service in leadership positions at 324 different Community Service Internship sites. We have had 562 different community members serve as Mentors, many more than once. In fact, at this year’s graduation reception, we recognized Tami Seavoy for serving as an SLFP mentor 15 times!

As you know, the NMU Student Leader Fellowship Program’s partnership with the greater Marquette community is truly phenomenal. In recognition of this relationship, the SLFP was selected as a finalist for the 2008 Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Partnership Award for Campus-Community Collaboration. The SLFP was also nominated for the 2009 outstanding volunteer program of the year award through the Michigan Governor’s Service Awards program. Similarly, SLFP accomplishments have played a key role in NMU’s achievement of becoming 1 of 119 higher education institutions in the nation to earn the Community Engagement Classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and in NMU’s recent recognition on the US President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

It has been another busy and extremely successful year for the SLFP. Our very popular Leader in Residence, Dr. Will Keim made his ninth visit to NMU to perform his usual grand slam of events. Performing one of the many outstanding internships this year is a team of Student Fellows, Danielle Brandreth and Becky Paris who helped secure a grant in partnership with “Yellow Block” Kristina Balzarini of Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan to organize a mentoring program pairing NMU students with troubled children. The program was a huge success, the grant was renewed, and a new team of “Kiwi Block” Student Fellows will coordinate the program next year.

We had our best fundraising year ever as we continue to build the SLFP endowment. Among the many gifts we received was a recurring gift commitment from Bill & Wilma Verrette of Iron Mountain, which includes $500 for programming, $500 for student expenditures related to their Community Service Internships, and $500 to be competitively awarded annually to the year’s most outstanding Community Service Internship. This final $500 goes directly to the internship site where it will be put toward achieving internship goals. Stay on the lookout for our next fund-raising campaign which will begin January 2010. We have decided to couple this campaign with the first-ever SLFP golf outing which is tentatively scheduled for July of 2010. The SLFP’s new promotional video has been tremendously successful in grabbing the attention of new recruits. If interested, you can check it out at our new and regularly updated SLFP web site www.nmu.edu/slfp.

I feel extremely confident that the SLFP is accomplishing its mission to “develop NMU students into competent, ethical, and community centered leaders.” As usual, program graduates continue to validate this sentiment in their final reflection papers with quotes like these:

“My high school drama teacher, Richard Trice (Purple Block 1994-96), graduated from NMU and when I told him I was Northern bound, he advised that if I’m going to do anything at NMU it should be the SLFP. He was right! The SLFP has taught me more than most of my other classes and instilled in me the desire and ability to be a community leader.”

“Through the SLFP I have learned that I can do it! I have what it takes to succeed. This program has allowed me to re-evaluate my values. I have discovered that self-sacrifice (leadership) is very important to me. My desire to volunteer and to give back to my community has been rekindled. I want to be a positive role model in the lives of others. The SLFP has made me a better leader, but more importantly, it has made me a better person.”

Thank you all very much for your continued interest in this great program and for being part of the community of social change artists that it generates.

~John Barch
**RED BLOCKS**

“Oh, Snap, The 90’s are Back!” was last year’s Homecoming theme at NMU. The SLFP had somewhat of a “homecoming” of its own last fall when we had the privilege of welcoming **Eric Bolduc** back to Marquette for an “Alumni in Residence” week which included a Special Occasion luncheon, a *Skill Builder!* workshop, and presentations to Greek organizations, among other activities. It was a great opportunity to catch up with Eric and to have him share some of his experiences and passion about the SLFP with the current Student Fellows. Eric is currently living in Scottsdale, Arizona where he is the field manager for the Association Risk Management Services Department for Federated Insurance.

**Alicia Chenhalls** is currently living in Rochester Hills, Michigan. She bought a small house on half an acre of land two years ago and has been renovating the house's interior as well as working in her yard. She says, “Can you picture me on a riding mower or out in my yard trying to chop down a tree with an axe?? Seriously, it’s pretty funny!” After having been with a small engineering company for over nine years, Alicia recently accepted a position as a human resources generalist at the North American Headquarters for Grupo Antolin. Grupo Antolin is a Spanish, privately-owned, tier-one automotive supplier of headliners and door systems. She is responsible for all recruitment activities, employee relations, immigration-related matters, etc. She uses her Spanish extensively. Although it has been a challenge for Alicia changing jobs, it has also been an intense period of growth, and she is very happy she made the change. When reflecting on the SLFP, Alicia remembers many wonderful experiences, but most recently, her trip back to the U.P. for the 15-year reunion two years ago. She writes, “I was quite overwhelmed by our brief time spent with the children at Bay Cliff Camp. It wasn’t until that trip that I truly realized what wonderful things they do for the kids at the camp! Meeting many of them and hearing their stories completely changed the way I think and feel about Bay Cliff. It was already a very special place to me with all of the great memories from our annual SLFP Fall Retreats, but realizing the wonderful things they do for the children has had so much more of an impact on me. What an AMAZING place Bay Cliff is!” Lastly, Alicia would like to thank all the SLFP staff, past, present, and future for continuing to bring “us” together!

Congratulations to **Kristine Day** and her husband! They welcomed their second child on June 11, 2008. “Carter Gene was born healthy and is one happy baby.” Kris is also excited because her campus (The University of Michigan-Dearborn) hosted, along with United Way of America, the first Alternative Spring Break Detroit last spring. UM-Dearborn welcomed over 60 college students from across the country to their campus and the Metro Detroit community for a week of service. “It was an amazing experience and really got a lot of our students even more excited about being servant leaders and creating positive change in Detroit,” Kris reflects. Kris was also elected vice president of NMU’s Alumni Association Board of Directors last summer. Starting this year, she will assume the role of president for two years. She contributes her new role to her experiences in SLFP which helped prepare her to serve her alma mater in this way, “I am happy to announce that this year marks the 15th anniversary of my remission! To celebrate I hope to paraglide off a local mountain this summer. It has been something I wanted to do for many years.”

**Becky (DeGrand) Dufek** is obviously loving life! And even though she has overcome her battle with cancer, she is still fighting against Neurofibromatosis Type 2, which she was diagnosed with in 1997. Since her diagnoses, Becky’s hearing quickly digressed, but she still remained very active downhill skiing, scuba diving, roller blading, and motorcycle riding. However, in the fall of 2007, they found that the tumor attached to her brainstem (which was causing her hearing loss) grew much larger than expected, and even at one point caused permanent vision loss, and also loss of balance, which had to put a halt to her active lifestyle. Deciding to operate that fall, Becky faced one of the hardest decisions of her life (obviously not an easy choice). Becky was fortunate that the surgery went well, and over those first four months, many of the functions she lost because of the tumor/surgery been returned. This past fall, Becky returned to have surgery in order to remove the tumor on the other side of her brainstem. She was not as stressed for this surgery because she had the surgeon selected and she knew the risks involved. That is why Becky took last summer to enjoy life, which included paragliding off a mountain! From now on Becky’s mission in life is to raise awareness of Neurofibromatosis (NF) and acquire funding to find a way to prevent the tumors from growing in others, or at least lessen the devastating side effects they cause. Becky says, “Although difficult and challenging at times, the obstacles I have faced have heightened my awareness and motivated me to become a better person.” One of Becky’s goals is to submit letters to the Oprah Winfrey show in order to raise awareness for her cause. Becky would greatly appreciate anyone with connections to Oprah or her show! Becky is
not alone in this battle, however. She is greatly supported by her husband. He left his job as a water treatment operator to go into business for himself as a real estate agent. He felt his potential was limited and missed working in a motivational team setting. Now he works with other like-minded individuals on problem solving and setting goals. Because of this change, she and her husband are able to bounce ideas off each other about leadership and her experiences in SLFP.

Becky's blog is: http://diverbeck.blogspot.com/
Her fundraising page is: http://www.firstgiving.com/myquest4nf
Becky's e-mail address is bluediverbeck@yahoo.com
Please contact her for opportunities to raise money/awareness for NF. A final quote Becky would like to share: “Make no small plans for they have no power to stir your soul.”

Shannon (Killinger) Schuster is currently living in Green Bay, Wisconsin. She is working for United Health Group as a director of audit management for omissions. She is married and enjoys traveling with her husband and spending time with her nieces and nephews. In May of 2007 Shannon and her husband traveled to Australia.

Wendy (Kreig) Schweigart is working for AGA Medical in Plymouth, Minnesota (a Minneapolis suburb) as a quality assurance manager. AGA designs and manufactures catheter-deployed medical devices for correcting heart and other cardiovascular defects. AGA has virtually eliminated the need for open-heart surgery to correct very common heart defects in infants, children, and adults. Wendy feels very fortunate to work for a company dedicated to saving and improving lives and also one that donates generously (and quietly) by providing hundreds of devices and specially trained physicians for children in third world countries. In their spare time, Wendy and her husband volunteer as much as they can. She states, “I want to remind those SLFP’ers who are busy balancing family and demanding careers (like me) that it doesn’t take a huge commitment of our limited personal time to continue contributing to our communities. For example, my husband and I have donated our computer skills for small one-time projects; he created a database for a local women’s shelter and I developed a web site to help our volunteer fire department recruit new members. Our wonderful dogs are from animal shelters — neither would have been adopted otherwise due to their medical and behavioral challenges. We always donate used clothing and household items instead of throwing useful things away. While time is valuable to non-profits, money is often desperately needed — so we donate a portion of our income to organizations in the Twin Cities and back in Michigan. Every little bit counts, so don’t feel bad when all you have to spare is — to you — a little bit.”

DeAnna (Doyle) Strand is currently living in Tecumseh, Michigan with her husband Fred, and children Kennedy (12), Nikole (9), and Trey (6). They also have a dog named Lani and a cat named Rascal. For almost five years now DeAnna has worked for Venchurs in Adrian, Michigan. Having done human resource work for the past three years, last spring she accepted the position of training and development manager; she loves it! DeAnna has also started a community counseling MA program this past year and has been looking at a PhD program in leadership. In their spare time, the Strand family is very active in Girl Scouts and will start with Boy Scouts this year as well. DeAnna and her daughters put in over 100 hours of community service each year. The family also does a lot of work with and for their church. DeAnna is also a Red Cross blood drive coordinator for two different drives which she really enjoys!

BLUE BLOCKS

Damien Barrett, his wife Katie, and son Casey are happily living in Montclair, New Jersey, only an hour outside New York City, but far enough away to enjoy clean air, sunshine, and quiet. They had another child this past November. Congratulations! Damien was the director of technology at the country’s largest public access cable TV station. However, the lure of teaching and schools has brought him back into the classroom as a system technician and teacher at a private school in his town.

Kelly (Kaikkonen), Green Block, and I will be married 12 years in June, writes David Basten. We’ve got 3 wonderful kids—Ben (9, third grade), Adam (nearly 8, second grade), and Julia (6, kindergarten). “We still get up to Marquette several times a year—Kelly’s family lives in Negaunee so we’re up to visit often. We are fortunate that Kelly is able to stay home with the kids.” David has been working as a senior software developer with Quest Software for over eight years.

Jennifer (Shirkey) Palzter moved to Manitowoc, Wisconsin with her family. She and her husband Jaret have two boys, Michael (5) and Connor (2). Jaret stays home with their sons and is planning a major renovation on the “fixer-upper” house they bought on the lake. Jennifer separated from the Air Force (8 years active duty) and moved to work at Holy Family Memorial Hospital, where she is an OB/GYN. Last July Jennifer and her family attended the Bay Cliff Health Camp Alumni Program — they were celebrating 75 years! Jennifer was a counselor in 1995. Working with kids with special needs was the most rewarding experience, the best summer of her life! When reflecting on the SLFP, Jennifer remembers the mentor program the most. She thought it was phenomenal.

“I think I have commented on everything at least once over the years. I am just extremely thankful for the opportunity,” comments Sherry (Szczepanski) Rosenkranz in regards to the SLFP. Sherry
is enjoying being a soccer mom and coaching t-ball for her daughter Jill, who is 6, and will finish first grade this spring. Working at Campbell-Ewald as a digital strategist/account supervisor, things are going well, especially since Sherry gets to ride her Harley (60 mpg) to work.

GREEN BLOCKS
When asked about the SLFP, Sarah (Booth) Borlace writes, “It was always so nice to be around a group of like-minded individuals, sharing a common goal and contributing, making a difference with energy and enthusiasm.” Sarah currently lives with her son Aaron (4) in Midland, Michigan. She is a massage therapist, supervising three locations affiliated with the regional hospital there. However, she is hoping to make a drastic change in the next few years, moving more towards business consulting/teaching/training. When Sarah is not working, she is involved with United Way and is president of the Bay City area club for Zonta International. Sarah also loves to spend time with her son, usually outdoors, watching and playing baseball, riding their bikes together, or going to the beach. A quote that Sarah would like to share, “Life is what happens when you are busy planning it.” (Betty Talmadge)

Charlotte (Petersen) Kindler currently lives in Kimberly, Wisconsin with her husband and three kids. When her niece was diagnosed with leukemia almost three years ago, Charlotte decided to get involved with a local Team in Training Organization. The organization offers coaching for long distance events in exchange for funds raised for the leukemia and lymphoma society. In the fall of 2007 she completed her first marathon, the Chicago (despite the heat), and is now a mentor for the new marathon teams and will complete another marathon in the future. Charlotte still uses her SLFP binder and the many skills that the program offered her.

“I am just so thankful to be ‘still connected’ to so many of my fellow Green Blocks after so many years!” says Sharon (Togstad Berry) Minton, “It’s been wonderful to continue to be a part of each of your life stories!” Sharon is currently living on Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota with her husband, Scott, and kids, Emma (6) and Luke (4). Her husband is an evaluator pilot in the KC-135, while she stays at home with her kids. Sharon is also active in spouse’s groups, her kids’ parent organization, as well as volunteering her time for the local thrift store.

Working as a physician’s assistant at Orthopedic Associates of Michigan, Brent VanDyke has been living in Grand Rapids, Michigan for the past eight years. Brent’s practice primarily specializes in sports medicine. They take care of the Grand Rapids Griffins Hockey Team and the Grand Rapids Rampage Arena Football team. He and his wife, Kalen celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary last spring by taking a trip around Lake Michigan. While on their trip, Brent and Kalen stopped by Marquette to look at campus (a lot of new changes since their last visit), went to Vango’s (unfortunately Jim and Ray weren’t there that night), and hiked up Sugarloaf (where Brent proposed to Kalen in the fall of 1996). After Marquette they stopped in Menominee to see family, Green Bay for Brent’s first trip to Lambeau Field, Madison to visit friends, and Chicago to shop. Brent and Kalen have three daughters, Lucy (8), Kate (6), and Megan (4). “They are very busy and can be quite a handful at times, but we couldn’t imagine life without them,” says Brent. Brent’s family also attends Mars Hill Bible Church and are involved in a small study group. Brent and his wife also do premarital mentoring for engaged couples. Brent will never forget his Community Service Internship at Neguane High School with Debbie Gilin and Eric Page. They mentored students involved in a leadership class. He recalls being nervous before he started his internship, but it truly shaped him, and the SLFP as a whole added to his college years. According to Brent: Tuition…thousands of dollars, Books…but hundreds of dollars, Mac and cheese…79 cents, SLFP…PRICELESS.

PURPLE BLOCKS
Currently living just north of Grand Rapids in Sparta, Michigan, Courtney (DeBoer) Hazzard and her husband Doug celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary last year. Doug and Courtney have three children, Lara Elisabeth (8), Ethan Chase (6), and Kaitlyn Rose (2). Lara is finishing second grade, and Ethan just finished kindergarten. Having three kids keeps Courtney very busy during the week. They run to the library, zoo, museums, and parks. When the kids are sleeping, she reads and cooks to calm herself down. Courtney remembers her experiences in college and being painfully shy which made it hard to meet people and make friends. She initially joined SLFP to force herself to speak in public and have an opportunity to meet new people. She also remembers that the people in her block were very supportive and really helped her grow into a person that speaks her mind without fear of judgment. She is a different person, which she thankfully attributes to her time in the SLFP.

Erin (Alaga) Hesterman is currently living in Uniontown, Washington with her husband Scott and their three kids, Andrew (19),
Erin Neumeyer and Dylan Neumeyer. Erin is currently a data specialist working at Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc., and her husband works there as a machinist. In their spare time, Erin's family enjoys company picnics, motorcycle group rides/BBQs, and church functions, which include baptisms, first communications, confirmations, and fundraisers.

Congratulations to Erin (Haughey) Neumeyer and her husband Keith! Last summer they were expecting a child on July 8! Erin and Keith already have one son, Dylan (4). Erin’s photography business, www.eaphotola.com, is doing great! She has been getting a lot of work, but enjoys every minute of it. Erin is also studying improv at west improv.com and was planning to perform at the local theater after their child was born. Hopefully a talent scout will discover her, which happens quite often to performers there. The Neumeyer family also enjoys volunteering with an animal rescue group called Voices for the Animals. Because there is no physical shelter, the group relies on volunteers to house the animals while they wait to be adopted. Currently Erin and her family have two little dogs and a cat from the shelter, as well as a Siberian husky.

James “JJ” Royer and his wife Kim welcomed their first son (Ethan James) into the world on July 19, 2008. Two of JJ’s NMU classmates and friends also had a baby last summer (Michael Muligan and Jason Graunke). JJ lives in Howell, Michigan and is employed at Datapak Services, where he is the director of creative and internet services. JJ is heading up the effort to branch this group into its own interactive agency. His first duty at Datapak was to launch a minor league hockey team in Port Huron last summer.

“After the post-election turmoil of early 2008, things have calmed down considerably in Kenya and we are able to create a nice home for us here in East Africa,” writes Holger Wagner and his wife Andrea Gommans (Yellow Block). Holger and Andrea currently have three children, Zoe (5), Noah (3), and Niall (1½), and are enjoying the opportunity to grow up in Kenya where there is plenty of outdoor activity. Holger is currently the program coordinator for Horn Relief, a Kenyan NGO and has had a number of trips to his project areas in North and South Somalia. Andrea is enjoying her time at home but is slowly trying to find some consultancy work in organizational change focusing mainly on educational institutions. In their free time, the Wagner/Gommans family enjoys going to the many Kenyan national parks and swimming in the Indian Ocean. Both Andrea and Holger remember their good friends and Green Blocks Joel Yacks and Chante Lasco, who welcomed Cooper into their lives last year. Lastly, they look forward to hearing about the new block color as they seem to continue to get more and more obscure (the newest is Teal...).

AQUA BLOCKS

Father Al Mott has raised $140,000 in pledges and contributions for the Bay Cliff Capital Campaign. He continues to work hard to not only give gifts from his own income but encourages others to give as well. He states that Bay Cliff needs 2.5 million dollars to finish its campaign and they can use your help. Although fundraising might sound like a full-time job, Father Al is still the pastor for St. Ignatius in St. Ignace, Michigan and Immaculate Conception in Moran. During his morning prayers, he loves to sit in his copula and watch the sunrise over Mackinac Island and the straits area.

Congratulations to Shana Weber and her husband! They welcomed a baby girl, Mia, on February 22, 2008. Unfortunately, shortly after Mia was born, Shana was diagnosed with adrenal cancer. She and her husband are calling their diagnosis a blessing because of how early they caught it, and Shana will be in chemotherapy for the next 1.2 years. Shana states, “One thing I’ve learned from my cancer is enjoy every moment of your life.” Shana sends a big hello to Dave and Cara!

YELLOW BLOCKS

Congratulations to Jennifer Magyar and Justin Marlowe (Burgundy Block)! As of last summer, they were expecting their first child in November. Jen has worked for the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services for three years now, and Justin just finished his fourth year as a professor in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Kansas in Lawrence where they reside. Both Jen and Justin are avid Jayhawks basketball fans, having season tickets, and were able to see Kansas go all the way to win the national championship. They also traveled to Europe together in the fall of 2007 and visited England, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

Scott Zischke is currently married and lives in Peoria, Arizona. The link to his MySpace profile and more information is www.myspace.com/zztocs. It is open to the public, regardless of whether or not you have a MySpace account.
BURGUNDY BLOCKS

“Maggie and I are doing great and so are our kids, Lenora, Fiona, and James.” says Jon Barch. Time together is a priority though. They are busy with their rental properties and renovating their home, which will be featured on this year’s historic home tour. He is on the Marquette Sister City Committee and after completing the Lake Superior Leadership Academy, their planning committee as well. He remembers the 1999 Fall Retreat, being in the dining hall, eating pizza late at night, talking about future careers with other Student Fellows, Dave, and Rachel and saying something to the effect of “I wish I had Rachel’s job, then I could be doing something fun, productive, and be living in Marquette. What can I say except, did I ever get lucky in life?”

Rehema Clarken is currently getting her Ph.D. at Michigan Tech in rhetoric and technical communication. Her husband, Jeffrey Thornton, just started his own company, a high-tech venture called Evergreen Data Management. Rehema wishes she could be a mentor again but the commute between Houghton and Marquette would be too hard.

Jill (Aldrich) Dark and her husband, Dan, welcomed their third child into the world last spring, Emily. She joined her older siblings Nicholas (6) and Gabrielle (4). They are both delighted to have a baby sister. Jill is working full time as a human resources business partner for Hospira in Lake Forest, Illinois. She is an adjunct instructor for the REACH program at Trinity International University in Deerfiel, IL. She and her family live in Zion, Illinois. Jill is still very grateful for the skills she learned in the SLFP and continues to use them on a daily basis.

“Now call Schaumburg, Illinois HOME! I love living in the greater Chicagoland area. I get to enjoy the city life and have a great job!” exclaims Jodie Filpus. Jodie is the director of Residence Life and Housing at The Illinois Institute of Art-Schaumburg. “I love working with the program here. There are so many possibilities and amazing, creative students that challenge me in new ways.” Jodie served on the NMU Alumni Board of Directors. It was sad to end her time with the board, but she was proud to be able to serve the Alumni Association in such a way. She is getting settled into her new job, plans to take up a softball league, and loves to travel on the weekends.

Erik Kaeding lives in San Jose, California. Last summer he and his partner, Greg, were planning to be married in August and had gotten their marriage license from the county. Congratulations! Finishing his first year of law school, Erik was researching with two of his professors who were comparing In re Marriage Cases to Prez v. Sharp, which was a 1948 California Supreme Court decision in which the court held that the State’s anti-miscegenation statute violated the Fourteenth Amendment of the US Constitution. He traveled to India over the summer to provide pedagogical training to teachers who work for the Rural Development Foundation (www.indiavrural.org).

“This is the first summer we are not under construction!” exclaims Stacey (MacDonald) Miller. After two years of construction, the addition and garage are completed and she and daughter, Tessa (3), are enjoying the extra space. In August of 2007 she finished her MA in educational leadership/supervision. She finished her fifth year teaching in a self-contained EI classroom at Lincoln Elementary School in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan where she lives. She spends free time with Tessa and on the EUP Great Start Great Parents steering committee. The focus is early literacy and playing. It gives parents of young children an opportunity to discuss early childhood issues. She remembers playing Catch Phrase at the Fall Retreat, the bonfire, and swimming in Lake Superior.

“My boyfriend of three years, Steve, and I spend a lot of time with our families. We enjoy keeping up with the activities of my niece Sara (8), my nephew Patrick (4), his nephew Jeffry (6), and great-nephew, Aiden (2),” writes Jamie Rugg of Bellevue, Michigan. Jamie owns and operates Davette Designs Online, a web site development company. Last year showed a huge increase in business! When business was slower, she began substitute teaching at the Bellevue Elementary School. She really enjoyed the opportunity to work with kids in the community and especially the time she worked as the art teacher. In 2007 she taught the 4-7 year old Sunday school class at the Bellevue United Methodist Church, where she is a member. She is a member of the Young Women’s Book Club. Recently, she spent a day at the F.A.R.T.H. (Educated Animal Rescue and Teen Haven) farm volunteering at their second adopt-a-thon. They take in abused and neglected animals to help them find forever homes. She and Steve enjoy watching the Detroit Tigers and spending time with friends. Reflecting on the SLFP, she says, “There were so many great opportunities that were available to the Student Fellows. The speakers, the leadership class, the members of the community who were willing to mentor us. I will never forget my mentor and still keep in touch with her ten years later.”
**NAVY BLOCKS**

Lynda (Looker) Crawford is currently living in Gladwin, Michigan with her husband of three years, and her beautiful daughter, Madeline (almost 2 years old). Lynda is currently the coordinator of an after-school and summer-school program. She is finishing her sixth year and thoroughly enjoying it! She is very active in her church, is working on updating the family farmhouse to move into, and also spends time with her daughter, Mady. Lynda fondly remembers the retreats at Bay Cliff. “They were a wonderful time to get to know your fellow SLFP’ers.”

Penny (Gapinski) Matchinski recently bought a new house in Lonsdale, Minnesota. Congratulations, Penny!

Life is good for Alison (Johnson) Matelski. Alison is a recent cancer survivor! She now lives in Gaylord, Michigan with her husband, Gary, and two kids, Rylan (5), and Laila (1). Both Gary and Alison are teachers; he teaches high school (and coaches basketball), and she teaches second grade and loves it!

“I moved to Sheboygan last summer with my fiancée, Glenn Cathey. We are getting married July 19, 2008,” writes Jennifer Shaffer last spring. Glenn is a supply chain facilitator. Jennifer finished her sixth year of teaching last spring at Sheboygan Falls Middle School (her first year there). Jennifer hopes all is well at NMU!

Jeremy Smith just finished his second year as a principal of a K-8 school. It is a small school with just 8 teachers, 6 classrooms, and 130 kids, but he loves it! He says, “The little kids make me smile every day and the big kids are great for conversations. I’m pretty sure I’ve found my dream job and hope they never kick me out!” Jeremy still lives in Eugene, Oregon with his wife, Jeanie, and Lucas (almost 2 years old). Recently he and a group of his friends entered a 7-leg relay race in Bellingham, Washington. Jeremy’s part was the downhill ski leg, but he actually had to walk up the hill (with all his equipment) before he could go down. Their team name was based on Tom Select’s 80’s TV character Magnum P.I., so everyone on the team grew out their mustaches.

**ORANGE BLOCKS**

Becky Brockman was living in Countryside, Illinois for a little while and then moved to Urbana-Champaign in August 2008. She lives with her two cats (Casey and Zoelle) and her Brazilian Rainbow Boa (Rhea). After getting an M.S. in chemistry from UC Berkeley, she worked as a veterinary technician for two years and is now going to attend veterinary school! Becky remembers sleeping on the beach at Bay Cliff and FREEZING (in a cotton sleeping bag – she has learned much more about camping since then).

Erin Elliott is still living in the Twin Cities but moved to New Brighton (a northern suburb) in the fall of 2007 to begin living with her boyfriend, Tom Bryan. Erin is still the community news editor at the American Jewish World, the only Jewish newspaper in Minnesota. Last spring she wrote, “This is an exciting year for our paper, since the Republican National Convention will take place in St. Paul, and Al Franken and Sen. Norm Coleman (both Jews) will vie for a U.S. Senate seat.” This year, Erin is also serving as the public relations vice president and newsletter editor for the Hopkins Area Jaycees, a member chapter of the U.S. Junior Chamber. At their last state convention, she won the silver award for both PRVP and the newsletter and received a presidential medalion, which is given directly by the state president. In the Jaycees, they do a lot of icebreakers and small-group teambuilders, which reminds Erin a lot of the activities she did while in the SLFP, and of course, she smiles every time she thinks about it.

In August 2007 Amy Hovis accepted a teaching position at Charyl Stockwell Academy in Hartland, Michigan. She misses living in Grand Rapids but enjoys being close to her parents in Fenton, Michigan (her new home). Amy says that it has been an exciting, challenging, yet rewarding year.

Jenny Jo Mueller is currently a lieutenant in the US Navy, stationed at the Naval Medical Research Center in Silver Spring, Maryland, and living in Washington, DC. Jenny says, “It is great to live in a beautiful city where I can go anywhere using public transportation.” Some highlights of her time there include walking in the reflecting pool (all the way from one end to the other), training for her first triathlon (Olympic-length in Sacramento, CA), touring DC with friends and family who come to visit, learning to shoot a rifle with the US Marines and earning the top qualification possible, and making some great new friends. Jenny has also spent some time traveling (Denver, CO; Salt Lake City and Park City, Utah; Norfolk, Virginia; Ocean City and St. Michaels, Maryland; and Texas). Last September she moved to a new duty station (Naval Station Great Lakes) in North Chicago, Illinois. At Great Lakes she works at a drug screening laboratory. Jenny is looking forward to exploring Chicago.
**LIME BLOCKS**

Mary Bal-Sargent has spent the last two years in Virginia Beach with her husband Joe, but is now living in Greenville, Wisconsin, near Appleton. They are both happy to be closer to their families again. Mary is currently as speech-language pathologist in Wrightstown, Wisconsin. It is a small district located right between Green Bay and Appleton. She has been traveling to five schools throughout the district providing services to preschoolers through high school students.

Having just bought their first home last year, Carissa (Villa) and Eric Chase, and son Brodie are now living in Tucson, Arizona.

Brodie was born on February 22, 2008, and is growing up so fast – rolling over, laughing, as well as attempting to sit up for longer than five seconds. Carissa and Eric both just graduated from Wayne State University School of Medicine and began their residencies in pediatrics (Carissa) and emergency medicine (Eric) at the University of Arizona on July 1, 2008. In their spare time, Eric enjoys cycling, and Carissa enjoys spending time with Brodie and settling into their new home.

Brant Nesbitt is living in Malden, Massachusetts doing interactive and graphic design for a biotech company. Having previously worked as a print designer, he made the transition to interactive designer and is working more with multimedia and the world wide web. In his spare time Brant plays hockey, runs, and lifts weights. This past summer he took a trip to Washington, DC with his fiancé to visit her family and another to Milwaukee for Summerfest and a Brewers game while visiting his parents. They also took a trip to Los Angeles to see Brant’s brother. Other than that, he is working to obtain a certificate in web design and development from UMass Lowell. Brant remembers the retreats as always being the best part of SLFP.

Having been in Washington, DC for almost seven years, Layla Wright is a media relations manager at Reading Is Fundamental (RIF). She is really enjoying her new career path (she majored in broadcasting) and the mentorship of a fabulous boss. RIF is the nation’s oldest and largest non-profit children and families’ literacy organization. Last year RIF programs across the country distributed 16 million free books to 4.6 million children who are at risk for educational failure; for many of the children, the books received through RIF are the only ones they have. Layla is also becoming re-involved with the World Youth Media program of the Youth Leadership Support Network. She continues to be a member of the National Press Club and participates in their young member activities. Layla is also running to be on the board of the DC chapter of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

**SKY BLOCKS**

Congratulations are in order to Patty Egeler and her husband, Troy Dowd, who were married on December 13, 2008 in Muskegon, Michigan! Patty and Troy are currently living in Toledo, Ohio where they bought a house a year ago. Patty is working for a professor at the University of Michigan doing planetary science research. Last year she started in a post-baccalaureate program at the University of Toledo to get her secondary education math certificate and just finished her last class except student teaching, which she began in January 2009.

Amanda (Spenner) Kelley is currently living in North Muskegon, Michigan with her husband, Tim. They have been married for two years now. Congratulations! Amanda is the director of dietary services at DeBoer Nursing Home and the Hermitage Assisted Living in Muskegon. In their spare time, Amanda and Tim fix up their house and enjoy playing with their two dogs, Schwarz and Remy. They are also trying out organic gardening. One of Amanda’s SLFP memories included a *Skill Builder* about humor and leadership in which the participants had to wear clown noses.

Tami (Robillard) Oxley is living with her husband, Derrick and their son, Keegan (1 ½) in Litchfield, Michigan. Tami finished her early childhood endorsement at Spring Arbor University and was hired in October of 2007 full time to teach a Michigan School Readiness Program through Hillsdale Community Schools. She loves her job! Lastly, Derrick and Tami miss being in Marquette and look forward to visiting again in the future.

“I live in Kansas City, Kansas and I am entering my fourth year as a graduate student in Kansas University Medical Center’s Pharmacology, Toxicology and Therapeutics Department. I passed my comprehensive exam in January and finished the course work this May. I have approximately 1½-2 years left, and I will finish with a degree in pharmacology.” Congratulations go to Mary Shawgo on all her accomplishments! Mary also writes that she is expecting another nephew at the end of July.

Having recently graduated from Michigan State University with a Master’s in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), Monique Yoder currently calls no place home. She was living in East Lansing, Michigan but is now traveling and teaching overseas. Last July she began working with LCC International University in Klaipeda, Lithuania. Monique is currently in Al Khobar in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She will be there for two years.
teaching English at Prince Muhammad Bin Fahd University. Last June, Monique was doing some literary excursions in Ireland. She was in Dublin for the annual Bloomsday Festival (celebrated every June 16) and then traveled to Sligo to do some research and exploring of W. B. Yeats.

Tiffany Zavesky moved back to Michigan a year ago from Tennessee. Having just completed two more years of school at Columbia State College with a radiological technology degree, Tiffany now lives in Charlevoix.

JADE BLOCKS

Although Matthew Abel still considers Michigan home, he is currently living in Oklahoma with his wife, Samantha. She is attending veterinary school, and Matthew is working but hoping to take classes in education. As of last summer, Matthew and his wife were hoping to have a baby in December, he hoped for a girl, and she hoped for a boy.

Pete Pelletier is currently attending medical school in Salt Lake City, Utah. In his free time, he volunteers as a lab technician and counselor at the Utah AIDS Foundation and is also a hospice volunteer. Last summer Pete was fortunate enough to go to Ghana, Africa to serve on a medical/teaching mission. While collaborating with Ghana Health Services, he was able to help develop better laboratory diagnostics, offer malaria testing to children in remote villages, and visit attractions like the beautiful and historic Cape Coast.

Kristine (Krissy) Petersen is currently living in East Lansing, home of the Spartans! She decided to go back to school and will graduate this spring with a Master’s degree in student affairs administration from Michigan State University. She also has an assistantship with the Department of Residence Life, where she works as an assistant hall director in a hall of 420 freshman and international students. It is challenging, but she loves the work and the classes are going well. “This is one of the best decisions I have ever made,” she says. In her free time, Krissy enjoys her boyfriend and amazing friends. She writes a lot, reads a ton, and travels when she can. Last year she visited England and Scotland, where she had the time of her life. One of Krissy’s fondest memories from the SLFP was when she and Pete Pelletier put on a workshop about positivity for their fellow SLFP’ers. “It was such a great experience because we were surrounded by so much love and support – all of our friends signed up to take it! We spent two hours laughing, sharing, and bonding,” she writes.

MANGO BLOCKS

Katy Morrison is currently in Marquette and graduated with a Master’s in public administration from NMU. Although Katy and her boyfriend Chris work a lot, they try to camp and fish as much as possible. They also love to spend time with their new girl, Abbey – she’s a pretty Rottweiler.

Congratulations to Nicole (Abendroth) O’Brien! Her wedding was May 31, 2008. She and her husband Keith were married in Ishpeming, Michigan.

Lisa Williams has been living in Madison, Wisconsin since July 2006 where she works as a study technician at Covance Labs, a contract research organization in the pharmaceutical industry. She is currently engaged to Adam Johnsen (NMU Alum ’07). Congratulations! They are excited about making plans for their future together. Lisa still keeps in touch with her mentor Laura Katers Reilly, which is really meaningful to her. Last March, Lisa and Adam took a ten-day trip to Arizona to visit fellow Mango, Liz Kohn, one of Lisa’s best friends. They had a great time with her, as always!

Working as an admissions counselor here at Northern, Becka Zemba is still living in Marquette. She is currently busy recruiting students to NMU and working on her Master’s in public administration. Becka is also currently becoming involved with the Jaycees of Marquette but her availability with traveling for work makes it difficult to be involved in much more than that.

CRIMSON BLOCKS

Lauren and Alex Johnson-Buck have some exciting news. Last year she was accepted to medical school at Michigan State University. Lauren and Alex moved to Howell, Michigan to be between MSU and U-M, where her husband is getting his Ph.D. in chemistry.

“For about five seconds, I considered a career as a meteorologist,” says Gavin Telfer reflecting on his first Fall Retreat. “My first retreat was quite a blast. I was especially proud that I predicted that it wouldn’t rain, even when almost everyone else thought it would. A group of us spent the night out on the beach, and didn’t feel even a sprinkle.”

Gavin recently moved to Manchester, New Hampshire with his wife, Sara (Barclay) Telfer (Jade Block). He is currently the assistant director of Student Life/Student Center at Southern New Hampshire University. Sara and Gavin were married on August 24, 2008 in Marquette. They enjoyed their time back in the U.P., as well as the time spent with friends and family. Gavin’s last remark, “The
SLFP is for me!”

**FUCHSIA BLOCKS**

**Kelley Carey** is currently living in Atlanta, Georgia and teaching second grade at Chapel Hill Elementary School. She started teaching last January 2008 and will be employed next year at the same school in the second grade classroom. Kelly has been enjoying the culture of living in a big city and has been volunteering at the Decatur Domestic Violence Shelter.

“I definitely miss the kids at my CSI,” writes **Darcie Cook**. Darcie moved to Savoonga, Alaska, last year to teach first and second grade. If you don’t know where Savoonga is, look it up on a map. It is on the northern tip of St. Lawrence Island off the coast of Alaska, almost closer in distance to Russia than to North America; quite exciting!

**Manda Frederick** is currently living in Spokane, Washington where she is getting her Master’s in writing. She is also teaching creative writing for Eastern Washington University. Manda is living with her boyfriend, Mike, whom she met in the graduate program at EWU; he just graduated with his Master’s in fiction. They have a dog named Max (whom they adopted from the Spokane Humane Society), two hermit crabs, and some fish. “I’m sad to say there was very little snow this winter and, also, no bodies of water close—I’ve certainly come to appreciate the water of Michigan that is so far away now,” writes Manda. Since coming to Washington, she has had a lot of teaching experience. She’s also become the non-fiction editor for the literary magazine called *Willow Springs* and is enjoying an internship with the EWU Press. Recently Manda won the EWU Graduate Creative Works Symposium for an essay she wrote; the award prompted the EWU Foundations office to ask Manda to read her essay at their annual dinner—it was very exciting for her! She’ll graduate next spring with her MFA in non-fiction and hopes to go overseas to teach English. In their spare time, Manda and Mike recently traveled to Yellowstone National Park for the first time. They also spend three hours a day working a Blue Heeler Cattle Dog which they recently adopted. When asked if she had any SLFP memories, Manda’s reply was, “Oh, how long it’s been since I’ve seen Dave Bonsall in that blue shirt I love so much…” Manda’s last comment was, “You have no idea how much I miss Marquette and NMU. It’s a strange thing to love a place and an institution that simply can’t possibly love you back; I suspect our love of ‘place’ is one of the ore selfless loves we feel. I’m definitely a Wildcat for life.”

“I will never forget all the special people I have met through the SLFP. It’s amazing how many people I still keep in touch with and that I will never lose contact with. Every memory from the retreats in Big Bay, to the graduation in April, will always hold a very special place in my heart.” **Dayna Haddock** is living in La Crosse, Wisconsin for the time being. She participated in an internship with the La Crosse Loggers Baseball Organization until the end of August 2008. She learned all aspects of the baseball business and met so many incredible people (including Greg Vaugh – former Brewer)! Currently Dayna is applying for many different jobs and sports organizations, preferably jobs outside Wisconsin. The Loggers really believe in giving back to the community, so Dayna is constantly involved in community service with La Crosse. Dayna would also like to say, “Hello to Dave, Janet, Rachel, Jon, and Cara! Thanks for making me a better person! I miss you guys!”

**Seth Hill-Kennedy** will be married on June 13, 2009 on his grandparents’ farm just outside Ann Arbor, Michigan. Seth and his fiancé, Stephanie look forward to celebrating their day with all their family and friends. Last fall, he began a graduate assistantship in the Center for Student Enrichment and also began a Master’s in public administration. He hopes to eventually work in the student affairs field at a university, probably somewhere downtown. Seth enjoys spending time with his fiancé, biking to work (if winter will ever stop!), running, and exploring the area with Steph. Seth remembers the UN250 class, and more specifically all those in it; Manda being Magnanimous, Allie taking notes on all the text that was never covered in class, Rachel having to tell Jeremy to use his inside voice (that was meant in a loving way), and Bob Towers inviting the class to Circle K meetings every week, to name a few.

**Jessica Jannette** has moved to Appleton, Wisconsin this past year where she is working as a certified nursing assistant. She fulfilled the last of the prerequisites this past summer/fall in an attempt to be accepted to UW-Oshkosh’s accelerated BSN program for this May. Between working full time and taking fairly difficult courses, there is little time to do much but sleep. She has, however, taken up golf for fun, thanks to Bob Towers. Jessica states, “SLFP was great. I miss it all.”

“I will be calling home Normal, Illinois,” says **Amanda Lobsinger**. For the past year Amanda has been attending graduate school at Illinois State University. Congratulations also go to Amanda for receiving an assistantship in the leadership unit of the Dean of Students office.

**Amanda Moraska** is attending medical school at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Although this takes most of her time, she finds time to be a youth mentor, swim coach, and work in a free medical clinic. For Amanda, the SLFP was an amazing experience with long-lasting friendships.
Last year was a busy one for Kevin Wieser. He and Amanda Kaminski (Mint Block) were married in December. Kevin also had a three-month internship with Western Land Services, Inc. where he was a GIS intern in Ludington, Michigan. Kevin enjoys taking walks, and hopes everyone in the SLFP is doing great! Congratulations, Kevin and Amanda!

Having spent last year in Iraq serving our country, Jeremy Wright has returned home to Marquette. Once settled back in, he will be working with his church to start a backpacking program as part of his internship to finish up his degree from NMU. Jeremy was married a year ago and is looking forward to finally being under the same roof as his wife, Emily. Over the past year, Jeremy enjoyed his two weeks of leave he got to spend with Emily in New Zealand where they traveled the South Island hiking, sightseeing, meeting people, and playing frisbee golf. Jeremy enjoyed getting to meet the people in SLFP.

**MINT BLOCKS**

Spending last summer in Marquette in the medical/surgical clinic at MGH for the fast track nursing program, Amber Chiapuzio also worked at the front desk of NMU’s Woodland Park Apartments. Amber spent three weeks last July in Peru studying alternative medicines and teaching the local people a little bit about health maintenance. On August 22, Amanda became an aunt again! Amber graduated from the nursing program and is beginning her active duty in the Army (which she joined on February 9, 2008) to work in an Army hospital. In her spare time, she enjoys playing softball with friends, going to the lake, and visiting home. One of Amber’s favorite SLFP memories is Klamesha Richards’ speech at the SLFP Graduation Reception.

Laura Rueden is currently living in Madison, Wisconsin working as a full time kindergarten summer school teacher at a private school. She is planning on getting married in July, so a lot of her free time is spent planning the wedding.

Jeron Schmidt spent last summer interning with the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers. He graduated in December 2008. Jeron says he’ll miss the Fall Retreats and is currently working between 50 and 60 hours a week. In his free time he does laundry and sleeps.

Now calling Rochester, Minnesota her home, Dana Toenjes is working as a registered nurse at the Mayo Clinic on the Oncology/Hematology Floor.

**SLFP GET TOGETHER**

At the end of March, Dave Bonsall and I were able to get together with some Washington, DC area alumni. We were fortunate to have dinner at the National Press Club where Layla Wright is a member. Location aside, I thoroughly enjoyed the chance to re-connect with a few of our alumni. It was so exciting and rewarding to see what wonderful contributing adults everyone has grown into. It is my hope that the SLFP has played an important role in developing such strong leaders. I felt so proud of everyone’s accomplishments. It is difficult to describe, but I felt sort of like a proud parent listening and observing everyone.

It made me realize a couple of things. I am so fortunate to have a job that allows me to interact with such amazing people. I get to watch students grow and develop into responsible, caring citizens and get to witness their campus and community successes. Now as the years and relationships continue, I sincerely miss those daily/weekly connections with all of you. I wish it was easier to stay connected with our alumni. We will have a 20th reunion two years from now. I hope that everyone can do what they can to try to come back to NMU to connect with each other. These relationships are so valuable and are worth the effort. In the meantime, take a few minutes to fill out the *Still Connected* questionnaire so we can hear where and what you are up to. I look forward to hearing from each and every one of you. Thanks for your valuable time.

~Rachel Harris

DC Trip 2009 Front: Chante' Lascio, 96', Green Block; Amy Pascoe, 06'; Fabiana Perera '05; Layla Wright, '02, Lime Block; and Courtney Hyrinen, '07. Back: Joel Yacks, 96', Green Block; Rachel Harris; Ivy Lange, '99, Yellow Block; Andy Hill, '03, Lime Block; Dave Bonsall, and Seth Hill-Kennedy, '08 Fuchsia Block.
WHAT YOU HAVE LEFT BEHIND: 
THE SLFP’S LEGACY AT NMU

Northern Michigan University recently hosted two visitors representing AQIP (Academic Quality Improvement Program), as part of the accreditation process. One of their meetings was with several faculty and staff who are heavily involved with NMU’s civic engagement efforts, including Jon Barch, Rachel Harris and me. Our session highlighted the 18-year history and 700 alumni of the Student Leader Fellowship Program, the 2,200 students who have engaged with Superior Edge over the past three years, the 30 courses, 49 sections, 783 students, and 21,447 hours of community contact generated through academic service learning this semester, and the hundreds of students and thousands of hours registered annually in the NMU Volunteer Center. At the conclusion of our meeting, one of the AQIP visitors commented that many schools highlight civic engagement as one of their priorities, but upon examination there are few opportunities available to students. She then mentioned how numerous and available community involvement opportunities are for students at NMU.

One of the ultimate tributes to any program and its members is leaving behind a positive legacy. When I reflect on the many wonderful civic engagement opportunities NMU provides for its students, I always go back to the Student Leader Fellowship Program and all of you who have established and grown this incredible and unique leadership development program. Your Community Service Internships (CSI’s) first helped us to understand the incredible power of “learning through service.” James McClelland’s (Red Block) CSI in 1992-93 established the NMU Volunteer Center on campus. It continues to grow and has involved thousands of students in service to the community since its inception. Your overall experience in the SLFP made us question how we could provide leadership and civic engagement experiences to large numbers of NMU students; this was a major motivating factor leading to Superior Edge.

We have always focused on the “leadership at the community level” emphasis in the SLFP and the many contributions all of you are making in your current communities. It is fitting to remember the significant and meaningful impact you have had on Northern Michigan University. Thank you!

~Dave Bonsall

Bill and Wilma Verrette Outstanding CSI Award: Bill Verrette, Nicole Stumpf, SLFP Cerulean Block, and Jill Rady, Site Adviser for Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes