

First graduates earn MPA degree

by Wendy Knipe Bredhold, USI News and Information Services

The first three graduates of the Master of Public Administration (MPA) graduate program were eligible to participate in Commencement in May. Susie Carney, office manager for the Evansville Coalition for the Homeless (ECHO); Janet Johnson, career coordinator for USI Career Services; and Pamela Van Vorst, administrative assistant for USI Human Resources, will each complete their course work at the end of Summer Session II.

The MPA is a graduate degree aimed at current and future administrators in governmental agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and heavily regulated private corporations. The majority of MPA students are working professionals attending school part time, so most courses meet one evening each week during fall and spring semesters. About 15 students were enrolled in the program in spring 2005.

Indiana State University faculty, who had for years offered MPA courses in an off-campus program at USI, asked USI political science faculty to consider assuming responsibility for the MPA program in Evansville. Surveys of area corporations and organizations confirmed a demand, and the program was approved by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education in August 2002 and implemented in spring 2003.

While working at a shelter for homeless families, Carney, 54, decided to complete a bachelor's degree she had begun years before. After she completed a degree in general studies with a concentration in management at USI, she decided she wanted to go into the administrative field. "I absolutely fell in love with the homeless population and realized that with the MPA I could work to better their lives," she said.

All of the courses have been applicable to her current job at ECHO. "I can equate each one of my classes, such as budgeting, strategic planning, and fund raising, to my work at ECHO," she said. "I would have really done myself an injustice if I'd taken any other master's program. It's been a very good program and it's definitely been worth my time, effort, and money. I'm anxious to get out there and put it to work."

Johnson, 47, holds a bachelor's degree in liberal studies from the University of Evansville and has been employed by USI for five years, starting as an administrative assistant in Human Resources.

"I really like my job," she said. "Career Services is a great department and the work is fulfilling because you can see how it helps the students advance their career goals. Having the MPA will help me in my career advancement, but my



Susie Carney, office manager for the Evansville Coalition for the Homeless, wants to use the knowledge and skills she gained in the MPA program to better the lives of others.

plans are to remain at the University. It's an exciting place to be."

Students can complete the MPA program in two years at graduate tuition rates that are among the lowest in the country. The program offers a component for students who already are employed and a component for students without professional careers. The latter are assigned to a semester-long internship program.

For more information, call Dr. Paul Raymond, director of the MPA program, at 812/465-7142, or go to www.usi.edu/libarts/philpolsci/MPAV online.

Sneak a peek at The New Harmony Theatre season including world premiere

Scott LaFeber, artistic director for The New Harmony Theatre, provided insights into the coming summer season.

Thom Thomas' *A Moon to Dance By* is NHT's first world premiere. A Los Angeles screenwriter with *Hotel* and *Hill Street Blues* among his credits, Thomas also has had two plays produced off-Broadway. *Moon* was developed at the famous Actors Studio in Los Angeles and received a backers' audition/staged reading directed by LaFeber at Circle in the Square theatre on Broadway in April 2004. The premiere has national interest with producers and potential investors from New York and Washington, D.C., planning to attend.

Evansville native Paula Leggett Chase is slated to appear in a featured role in *As Thousands Cheer*, the Irving Berlin/Moss Hart musical revue. A graduate of Harrison High School, she went on to appear on Broadway in *Kiss Me Kate*, *Crazy for You*, and *A Chorus Line*.

In *The Odd Couple*, Matt Landers is slated to play the role of Oscar. He was in the original company of *Grease* on Broadway as well as in the original company (and cast album) of *Working*, for which he received a Drama Desk Award nomination for best actor in a musical.

For additional information: 877/NHT-SHOW or www.usi.edu/nht