

THE EVELYN T. STONE COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES NEWSLETTER

BE A STUDENT SUCCESS: ROY GIUNTOLI SHARES HOW

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While Roy Giuntoli may not be a typical traditional-age college student, he certainly exemplifies a successful returning adult student.

As an architectural ironworker, Giuntoli was called to Midway Airport in 2000 for a job that only a certified welder could do. However, after a 1200-1800 lb piece of equipment landed on his foot in an unfortunate industrial accident, Giuntoli had to re-think his career and life. After noticing Giuntoli watch television day after day after day, Concetta Giuntoli handed her husband a science fiction thriller, which he quickly devoured, giving him a taste for reading and thinking. He was hooked—and so he decided to enroll in a few adult night classes at the local high school to further his interests. Luckily his wife liked the idea since as Giuntoli remarked, “She was my right foot!” driving him back and forth to school due to his injury and continued recuperation.

After succeeding in numerous courses from English Composition 101 to Management, Giuntoli graduated with an Associate’s Degree from the College of DuPage and wondered what his next step should be. Knowing he would not be able to return to his previous occupation due to the injury, Giuntoli embraced his pursuit of education and sought a completion program for a Bachelor’s degree.

Roosevelt University’s Organizational Leadership program caught his eye immedi-



Concetta and Roy Giuntoli, with ETSCPS Dean John Cicero (right) at the ETSCPS Student Award Ceremony in April 2009, where Roy was honored as the Outstanding Student in Organizational Leadership.

ately. The time-shortened format, the flexibility of the online delivery system, plus the class titles appealed to him—and when he was offered a chance to speak with currently enrolled students or those who had already graduated from the program, Giuntoli took it, interviewing them to learn more from the student perspective. After hearing their responses, he quickly signed up.

Giuntoli believes the most important skills he’s learned within the Organizational Leadership program are how to improve communication and utilize others’ expertise. Giuntoli remarks on the importance of “making sure everyone’s on the same page” within the business world and learning how to be flexible, while delegating responsibility. Additionally, Giuntoli says “you can’t be an island of one . . . it’s so critical today to work together.” The group

projects within the Organizational Leadership program ensure students have lots of experience working within a team and while Giuntoli admits some students didn’t care for group work, he always “took on the challenge as if [he] loved it,” knowing that sometimes you have to embrace leadership even in challenging circumstances.

He also cites the online “Discussion Boards,” an area where online students discuss and debate classroom topics, as being one of the more enjoyable parts of the classes. “Basically, I never shut up,” Giuntoli shares candidly. “In [an on-campus] classroom, a student has only a few hours of seat time per week . . . rarely do students get the better part of a week to listen to and respond to any or all of the other students’ responses to that week’s topics . . . I liked how I was able to engage with just about everyone in class and at a time that was convenient for me and my family.”

Giuntoli was recently honored as the Outstanding Student in Organizational Leadership, was inducted into the Franklin Honor Society, and graduated this past May with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. He has these suggestions for students entering the program: “Time management is one of the best friends you can make during your life, but it is especially critical to succeed in

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: DEBRA ORR

Assistant Professor Debra Orr is the Program Director of the Organizational Leadership curriculum. Here she shares her insights about the field.

As a definition, leadership is an influence process. So, organizational leadership is a process of persuasion toward organizational goals and objectives. The term “organizations,” of course, does not mean strictly business organizations – many of our students work in government, education, not for profits, and associations.

With your background in Fine Arts, how did your movement into a professional field come about? How do these disparate fields complement each other?

My undergraduate degree is in Fine Arts and I still enjoy that field. However, as I worked in that environment, I ended up in a facility that was known for hosting professional and social events, so I had the chance to observe a lot of meetings. What I discovered is that many organizations didn’t clearly communicate their ideas and direction to their employees and those who were charged with executing the goals. So I started studying meetings and facilitation, eventually taking that on as a career. As I further progressed, I found that organizations often became stuck in their thinking and were unable to break out of previous limits. I found I could often help them by making a few suggestions about how to think differently. I entered into graduate work about leadership and eventually organization development. I have used my fine



Assistant Professor and Program Director Deb Orr, pictured here with a niece, Ava

arts background often though and aesthetic epistemology (i.e., how we know things through art) is a foundational way I can assist organizations.

How has being a Director of this program enhanced your experiences in teaching and research?

Well, I can’t take all the credit here. There have been a number of dedicated people who have contributed to the development of this program, including Professor Laura Evans, former Dean of our college, who had the great insight to develop this program. Being the Program Director though has brought me into contact with student opinions, challenges and problems that have helped shape how the program is evolving. Right now, our curriculum changes are focusing on the specific skill sets that students need to demonstrate in order to be perceived as competent in the field, such as writing their own strategic plan, rather than simply analyzing the work of someone else, –or helping to select the right change method for a specific organization and a specific change project, rather than relying on a single approach. These are the kinds of critical

skills that organizations value and will help our students professionally and it will assist the organizations in achieving their goals. One challenge we’ve faced as a department is that students, especially online, tend to prefer to work alone – and yet we know that organizations are increasingly focused on virtual teams – how we bridge that gap between student preferences and organizational needs is tough. I think it requires us, as faculty, to be creative in the projects we assign and how we assess that piece of participation in the class. It continues to be a challenge.

You’ve earned an upcoming research leave in fall 2009. What can you share about the project on which you’ll be working?

I’m writing about six methods to think “out of the box.” We hear phrases like that all the time – “think out of the box” or “take it to the next level” –and yet, often people don’t know what they want when they say those phrases or what it means to think in creative, scalable and strategic terms. So my book is about methods to accomplish that. It’s a how-to book on creative thought.

How does your research relate to your teaching?

Other research that I’ve done recently relates more to my teaching. A project I conducted last year was on collaborative working practices in healthcare environments. I did a national study in ten hospitals across the country about what characteristics create positive working relationships between varying

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levels in the organization. Hospitals tend to be places with a lot of hierarchy in them and it can be difficult to get people to collaborate in that kind of an environment – but there is no place on earth it’s more necessary to work together smoothly than in healthcare. I particularly enjoy doing research around employee engagement because I’ve found that the solutions to those problems are often well within reach of most managers and involve behavior, rather than money – so almost anyone can fix their system if they’re committed to doing it. Employee engagement issues are often at the heart of many other organizational problems and I think our students know exactly what I’m talking about when we talk about these kinds of problems. They’ve all been there and they can almost always contribute their own stories to the conversation.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD: WHO'S WHO

The Organizational Leadership Advisory Board features successful practitioners in the field from various industries and sectors as well as Roosevelt academics. The board discusses leadership competencies that graduates of the program should possess, given the current business climate as well as opportunities that students may have in terms of mentors and internships. Currently, the board consists of Ross Ament, President of Ament Associates Inc., which offers management and leadership services to associations, cor-



Pictured from left, Ross Ament, Gerald Bouey, Jan Moellering, Vic Settergren. Not pictured, Debra Orr and Laura Evans.

porations, and tourism organizations; Gerald Bouey, manager of the Private Client Services Center from JP Morgan Chase; Jan Moellering, Vice President of Operations for Strategic Development, with ARAMARK Healthcare Services; Vic Settergren, who is certified as a Senior Pro-

fessional in Human Resources, has a Ph.D. in Organization Development, and who recently served as Vice President of Talent and Organization Development with DMB Inc., a real estate development company headquartered in Arizona; and two faculty members, Assistant

Professor Debra Orr, a scholar-practitioner who directs the program, and Professor Laura Evans, former Dean of the College and a successful grant writer.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH AN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEGREE?

When asked the question, "what can I do with a degree in Organizational Leadership?" Program Director and Assistant Professor Deb Orr gets right to the point: "You won't find a job in the Employment section of a newspaper under 'Organizational Leadership' because this discipline doesn't specify a narrowly-defined career path." Instead Organizational Leadership gives its graduates flexibility, as it allows them to "take previously-held skill sets, prior job experience, and apply them in leadership ways," Orr continues. Using a

degree in Organizational Leadership is "dependent on who you are and where you've been," Orr says, and yet, the degree can transform students' futures as graduates transition into new fields.

Orr believes that students majoring in Organizational Leadership should think about their future plans while still in school by "starting with the end in mind and working backwards." In other words, as students progress toward their degree, they should consider what career path they want

after they achieve their goal of a diploma. By doing this, they can ensure they have access to the electives, internships, and volunteer opportunities which will be used as building blocks to determine and locate the position they ultimately want to have. Orr stresses that even if advised academically by other advisors in the college, students majoring in Organizational Leadership are encouraged to touch base with their course instructors about these issues so that the faculty can help students "get where they want to go."

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CURRICULUM CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Curriculum changes are ongoing in the dynamic Organizational Leadership program, as department faculty and the advisory team work together to improve and update courses, course titles, and content. One significant change is the creation of a curriculum-wide portfolio, in which students will contribute student work from each Or-

ganizational Leadership class they complete. The portfolio can be used as evidence of success during a later job search. Additionally, a new course entitled "Evidence-Based Decision-Making" is in development. The new course will look at organizational metrics, how to use data as a decision-making tool and how data is instrumental in the launch-

ing and sustaining of change models. Due to the course content, PLS 290 (Technical and Quantitative Literacy) will be a prerequisite. Other changes include adding a historical component to OLED 330's "Foundations in Organizational Leadership," giving an overview of the evolution of leadership theory. As well, OLED 375 will be renamed

"Conflict and Negotiation," reflecting the course's content that not all conflicts can, in fact, be resolved. Finally, OLED 380's "Vision, Strategy, and Planning" will move from solely a case analysis model toward a creation model, as students develop a strategic plan, rather than only analyzing the work of others.



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Dates to Remember:

May 26 – Aug 15: Summer sessions

Ongoing: Advising and registration for fall

Aug 28: University Convocation

Aug 29 – Sept 4: Fall classes begin

Roosevelt University is a national leader in educating socially conscious citizens for active and dedicated lives as leaders in their professions and their communities.

The University's student-centered faculty and staff inspire academically qualified students from diverse backgrounds and all ages to benefit from rigorous higher education and professional development opportunities in the dynamic Chicago metropolitan environment.

Deeply rooted in practical scholarship and principles of social justice expressed as ethical awareness, leadership development, economic progress and civic engagement, Roosevelt University encourages community partnerships and prepares its diverse graduates for responsible citizenship in a global society.

GIUNTOLI, STUDENT SUCCESS STORY, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

college and online classes. Understand that some sacrifices will have to be made; however . . . your schedule

should be both achievable and allow you to participate in both class and life."

Giuntoli's accomplishments speak for themselves.

His enthusiasm for education and life is abundant, and Giuntoli is clearly a successful representative of the Organizational Leadership program, the College of Profes-

sional Studies, and Roosevelt University itself.

OLED CLASSES, NEW SEMESTERLY SCHEDULE

In order to help their students plan their classes more easily, the Organizational Leadership faculty have created a standard schedule for all OLED courses. Please check the schedule to ensure you have access to the courses you need and want for each semester.

Fall Semesters	Spring Semesters	Summer Semesters
OLED 320	OLED 320	OLED 320
OLED 325	OLED 325	OLED 325
OLED 330	OLED 330	OLED 330 or OLED 335
OLED 335	OLED 335	OLED 365
OLED 365	OLED 365	OLED 380
OLED 380	OLED 380	
OLED 370	OLED 350	Summer 2009 OLED 370
OLED 378	OLED 375	