Thomas Kuhn (SNL ’07) parlayed his work experience and his SNL degree into a successful career at Google. Read more on page 3.
FIVE MINUTES WITH DEAN ALICEA

A report from the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study shows that nontraditional students are the new majority on American college campuses, but these students face many challenges that can affect their ability to complete their degrees. Often, adult students are misunderstood. This is especially true because most institutions of higher education are not designed with the adult nontraditional student in mind. Until recently, nontraditional students have not been considered in post-policy-making decisions. Federal financial aid policies, for example, are not designed with this population of students in mind, rendering them vulnerable to the loss of or decrease in funding for their education. Founded in 1972, the School for New Learning was launched with the idea of providing access to nontraditional adult students by designing a curriculum that would meet their needs. Today’s competence-based program is an updated, improved version of SNL’s first competence-based program, but it has always had one constant: our commitment to adult learners. Our competence-based program is designed in such a way that it acknowledges that learning doesn’t just occur in the college classroom but also in the context of students’ lives at work, in family and in community.

THE REALITY OF WORKING AT GOOGLE

At Google, the nap pods beckon employees to take a break from their work. “Free food is never more than 150 feet away and glikies facilitate faster travel between point A and point B. And while it’s true that the occasional NERF fight breaks out, Thomas Kuhn (SNL ‘07), customer success manager at Google, says it’s not all fun and games in Silicon Valley. “You have to work hard here to be relevant and to stand out,” he explains. “The perks are there when you need to step away and re-energize.” Kuhn is part of Google Apps for Work, where he and his team work with large companies (more than 1,000 employees) to determine how best to integrate Google Apps—Gmail, Drive, Docs, Sheets and Slides—into day-to-day processes. “When people buy Google Apps, some think it automatically transforms their business,” he says. “They think, ‘We give it to our employees, and they are going to be magically more collaborative and highly productive.’ Many come to the realization that it doesn’t happen without some effort behind it.” To help with this, his team has come up with transformation labs in which they meet with a sample of 30-50 employees at a particular company to envision how to leverage Google Apps to simplify operations.

“Dream big,” Kuhn tells participants. “Think 10x, and then we’ll see what we can use from Google’s tool belt to help you get there. Forget about how you’re doing it today.” Because Kuhn and his team are unable to field all workshop requests, they recently launched the Google Apps Transformation Gallery (g.co/transformationgallery) of best practices on how to integrate Google Apps into a company. “It has over 100 ideas of how you can improve your job based on what industry you’re in and what role you have with Google Apps,” he says. “We’re trying to solve problems and inspire people.” That’s what Kuhn enjoys most about his work. “When I take a job, I want to work in an area that I feel is making the world a better place,” he says. “We’re finding that we’re helping so many small businesses to compete and be relevant in today’s technological world. It’s really meaningful to hear those success stories.”

Kuhn first developed a passion for service during his time at SNL, where he taught computer literacy to unemployed adults during his externship. “I did something that was so simple to me, but it made their lives dramatically better,” he enthuses. “It was rewarding to watch, and DePaul ingrained that in me.” Initially, Kuhn enrolled in what is now the College of Computing and Digital Media, but he put his studies on hold to focus on his career. When he returned years later to DePaul, he was drawn to SNL by its flexibility and community of working students and customizable focus areas, which allowed him to integrate his professional experience into his education.

Now at Google, Kuhn unites his passion for teaching, service and technology. “I have never worked at a company where people are so smart, passionate and generous with their talents,” he says. “No one is hoarding knowledge or secrets. Collaboration is a key component to our success. Google really tries to hire people who are different from what they have, and it pays off by bringing different perspectives to a team. All of the perks just keep us happy, making it feel like it truly is the best place to work!”

FAST FACTS WITH THOMAS KUHN

Kuhn developed the first customer intelligence system at Google for Work. “I created a new team to focus on engaging with customers on a regular schedule, collecting data on usage and critical success factors. We inputted these items into our customer relationship management system [an approach to managing interaction with current and future customers], which provided us with a health score. From there, we knew how likely customers were to renew and how to identify at-risk customers and upgrade opportunities.”

Prior to working at Google, Kuhn had never traveled outside of North America. Now, he’s traveled all over the world. “I’ve been to the United Kingdom, Spain, Switzerland, Singapore, Ireland and Brazil. We’re a global company, and while we have great technology to keep us all connected, Google values person-to-person relationships.”

Kuhn is an idea person, making Google the perfect place for him. “Google is a fast-moving company, and they want you to act fast and fail fast if that’s what it takes. If you have an idea, people are like, ‘Great, let’s do it!’ There’s no waiting for approvals.”
This work is being facilitated by Public Agenda, a nonprofit dedicated to helping institutions and individuals navigate complex issues. Navarre Cleary presented at CBExchange, an interactive workshop about competence-based education sponsored by Public Agenda in September, while Catherine Marienau, professor, coordinator of the Master of Arts in Educating Adults and member of the C-BEN team, spoke at an invitational convening on competence-based education focused on linking learning and the workplace organized by the Council on Adult and Experiential Learning. Dean Marisa Alieca has been invited by various universities to present on competence-based education, including Indiana’s Valparaiso University and California’s University of La Verne, and SNL faculty will be presenting on the topic in Dublin, Ireland, in the winter.

“There’s a belief that competence is a bridge between the academy and the workplace because the competences, if they are stated appropriately, can communicate to the workplace what the student really knows and can do with that knowledge,” Marienau says. She was on a panel about competence-based education in graduate programs. In addition, Marienau, Cleary and various members of the SNL community are collaborating on two chapters in the forthcoming “Handbook of Research on Competency-Based Education in University Settings.”

With the flurry of outside activity, Navarre Cleary is excited to take stock of what she’s learned and start applying best practices closer to home. “We want to think about how we can bring back what we’re learning from all these programs,” Cleary says. “Other universities are doing some exciting, innovative things that would benefit not just SNL students, but students across the university.”

Some students enjoy their experience so much that they participate in ArtShare more than once, which was the case for Brandon Trumfio. “I was really happy with the piece that I ended up with, and participating in the presentation. McGury and LoSardo counsel those wary of presenting, like Theresa Tomczak (SNL ‘14).”

A former dancer, Tomczak had been out of practice for years. Yet, with a little encouragement from LoSardo, she decided to participate in ArtShare with a choreographed dance. “The actual experience was wonderful,” she says. “I was really happy with the piece that I ended up with, and participating in the program was much less daunting than I thought it would be. I was so inspired by the positive experience that I actually returned to teaching dance.”

Some students enjoy their experience so much that they participate in ArtShare more than once, which was the case for Brandon Trumfio and Ryan Glover. “I had been a professional makeup artist for 12 years, and even through there aren’t classes for me to test out of, ArtShare was a way for me to apply and show my skills as something marketable, as something that was worth credit,” Trumfio says. He created two opposite looks—special effects and bridal beauty—to demonstrate the range of his skills as an artist.

Glover chose to translate his love of dogs through photography and is currently working on his second ArtShare presentation revolving around Sydney, his 11-year-old Shiba Inu. “People think you need to be able to draw or paint to be an artist, but each person’s view of art is different,” he says. “Don’t think you can’t create something that could inspire someone else.”

For more information on ArtShare, visit bit.ly/snlartshare.
The beauty of SNL is the breadth of faculty expertise that allows students to customize their learning experience in innovative and unexpected ways. From developing creative business practices to integrating horses into therapy to inspiring a new generation of science and gender scholars to investigating ethical concerns of new practices, SNL faculty are making significant contributions in the field.

**CREATIVITY FOR ENTREPRENEURS**

For the first time since it opened in 2009, the Coleman Entrepreneurship Center at the Driehaus College of Business welcomed a faculty fellow from SNL. During her 2015-16 fellowship, part-time faculty member Patricia Acerra will draw upon more than 35 years of experience to develop a new course concerning creative practices for entrepreneurs. “As a society, we tend to make a clear distinction between creatives and entrepreneurs,” says Acerra. “What I’m noting in my research is that many practicing creative professionals and many successful entrepreneurs say much the same thing—they just use two different kinds of languages. I’m trying to imagine a language in between, a place where both creatives and entrepreneurs would be comfortable.”

Acerra envisioned the course following the annual meeting welcoming new fellows to the Coleman Foundation in August. “I thought, ‘Wouldn’t it be interesting to develop a creative practice for entrepreneurs?’” she recalls. “I would help them establish their own creative toolkit with tools they don’t normally pull from but that creatives use all the time.” Acerra thinks skills like improvisation and generative thinking (looking outside the organization’s typical framework) could enhance the traditional business mindset. “We use these tools naturally in our creative practices, but we don’t necessarily use them naturally in an entrepreneurial setting,” she adds. This course will build upon the work Acerra started in her Creativity and Entrepreneurship class, where she examines two business and two creative authors to see where their ideas overlap, and will be offered in spring 2016.

**INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO THERAPY**

In addition to traditional treatment options, Aniah Matamonasa (SNL ’98), assistant professor and licensed psychologist, offers an experiential type of therapy: equine-assisted psychotherapy. Matamonasa can work with clients in an office; however, she can see firsthand how her clients react when she brings them to interact with horses. “In the arena with a 1,000-pound live animal, I get to see in real time how my clients cope with having to communicate with a very sensitive prey animal, how they problem-solve and whether or not they’re able to have appropriate boundaries,” she explains.

Over the course of her career, Matamonasa has found this treatment to work on clients who haven’t responded to more traditional therapy. “It’s a very new area, and we don’t have a lot of good data on what’s happening. Anecdotally, I can say for a lot of my clients, it made a huge difference in their success,” she asserts. She thinks the approach is effective because of how sensitive horses are to human emotions. “They are really all about congruence—acting, behaving and being what you really are,” she explains. “So when we’re trying to pretend to be one way when we’re really something else, they are very reactive.” Matamonasa serves as a scientific reviewer and advisory board member for the American Psychological Association’s journal Human-Animal Interaction Bulletin. She is also working on a book about indigenous perspectives on animal-human relationships. “We can learn things about ourselves and how to overcome challenges through our work with horses—and it’s really fun!” she enthuses.

**FUNDING INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL**

Donald Opitz (CSH ’91), associate professor, associate dean, and senior director for mentoring and student services, was the principal investigator on a National Science Foundation grant that funded six scholars from across the United States to attend “Gendering Science: Women and Men Producing Knowledge,” an international conference held June 4-6 at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. “There is a lot of energy in looking at issues concerning women and science,” says Opitz. “A lot has been done with the European and North American traditions, but not a lot has been done outside. This conference underlined how there’s still work to be done in the field.”

More than 70 scholars from around the world convened in Prague to examine the historic marginalization of women in science and to celebrate the collaboration between men and women in the sciences over the years. “The conference was meant to really engage women and men in dialogue about the more systemic issues and policy questions that need to be addressed,” says Opitz, who served on the organizing and program committees, as well as chaired two sessions. “It seems like we’re moving into a new phase of work toward raising awareness about issues of women and gender in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, more commonly referred to as STEM.” The conference was organized by the Commission on Women and Gender Studies in the History of Science, Technology and Medicine, for which Opitz serves as secretary, in collaboration with the National Contact Centre for Gender & Science, the Czech Academy of Sciences and Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic.

**ETHICAL CONCERNS OF TRANSLATIONAL MEDICINE**

Translational medicine, which is the use of basic research advances to develop new therapies and medicines, has been on the bioscience scene for a decade, but the implications of this practice are only now starting to be explored. Assistant Professor Mark Robinson was recently awarded the Wicklander Fellowship at the Institute for Business and Professional Ethics at the Driehaus College of Business to examine the effects of translational medicine in his research project “The University of Pfizer: Science, Medicine and the Ethics of Translation.” “The idea is that translational medicine will really transform health by accelerating the process through which science and scientific discoveries are turned into technologies that can be used for medical purposes,” explains Robinson. “For-profit companies are now working with universities in order to execute these kinds of projects, and the ethical issue concerns the possibility that public-private partnerships may affect the research that’s being done in unpredictable ways.”

To date, Robinson has found that partnerships between universities and private firms tend to benefit the private firm more, especially pharmaceutical companies. “In many ways, the goal of public-private research appears to be not necessarily about health or about improving global health, but about something altogether different,” he says. However, it’s more complicated than just increased profit. “It’s about the leveraging of risk on the part of the pharmaceutical company,” Robinson explains. “During the economic downturn, they needed a place to put a lot of the risk of developing new treatments, so they turned to universities.” In addition to the fellowship, Robinson was also invited to attend an international workshop on the ethical, social and legal implications of clinical and translational medicine held at the Brocher Foundation in Geneva, Switzerland.
Vincentian Mission Institute inspires Mission-driven Work

Corinne Benedetto, associate professor and associate dean for undergraduate programs, operations and enrollment management, recently concluded a two-year stint as part of the Vincentian Mission Institute (VMI), a cohort program that examines Vincentian and Catholic identity in conjunction with fellow Vincentian institutions Niagara University and St. John’s University, both located in New York. Benedetto was inspired to participate following a 2011 Vincentian Heritage Tour, an eight-day exploration of various St. Vincent de Paul-related sites throughout France led by the Rev. Edward R. Udovič, C.M. (LAS ‘76).

Benedetto and a team of seven senior administrators from across the university, as part of the third cohort to participate in the VMI, explored the impact of the Vincentian Heritage Tour on its participants by gathering and analyzing data from pre- and post-tests from the tour since 2007. “Is the tour working? Is it having a lasting impact? We have plans to keep going back to groups to see if the impact lasts beyond six weeks, six months or six years,” says Benedetto. Meanwhile, the group from Niagara has been exploring how to bolster student psychological services, while the participants from St. John’s examined the digital mapping of Vincentian imagery on their campus. “We started working on the links between these projects,” she explains. “We learned we have a family tradition in common in upholding and supporting the vision of St. Vincent and St. Louise de Marillac.”

Several participants in Benedetto’s cohort are working on publishing their findings, and Benedetto has brought her mission-inspired work to SNL. “I try to inject attention to Vincentian values in all kinds of decision-making contexts—academic advising, enrollment, new degrees, student services and collaboration with university offices,” she asserts. “I used to assume it was there somehow added to the mix, but now I will be the one to say, ‘Where’s the Vincentian value in this?’” To learn more about the VMI, visit bit.ly/vmivel.

New Bachelor’s Degree in Decision Analytics

In fall 2015, SNL launched a new bachelor’s degree in decision analytics. In contrast with its traditional, individualized, focus-area-based degrees, this is a course-based program in which students will take classes in collaboration with the Department of Mathematical Sciences and the School of Computing, as well as obtain credit by demonstrating competence. “Decision analytics is a much more human way of moving forward in an increasingly crowded, competitive, colorful, data-rich world,” explains Corinne Benedetto, associate professor and associate dean for undergraduate programs, operations and enrollment management. “How do we make sense of data and make it worthwhile? The new degree in decision analytics will give people the ability to be powerful, stand out and make a decision that means something for the future.” For more information, contact snlbada@depaul.edu.

Pamela Meyer’s New Book

In “The Agility Shift: Creating Agile and Effective Leaders, Teams, and Organizations,” Pamela Meyer, director of the Center to Advance Education for Adults, makes strategic recommendations and provides personal accounts, case studies and findings from neuroscience to show leaders how they can shift their mindset and business practices to be effective when the unexpected strikes. Meyer profiles four companies—Mightybytes, UPS, Ericsson and Umpqua Bank—to illustrate how each is successful in making agility a regular part of business, and provides other examples of agile best practices. Meyer explains that making and sustaining this shift requires the continuous development of individual, team and organizational agility competence, capacity and confidence.

PAMELA MEYER’S NEW BOOK

SNL COMMUNITY RECEIVES SEVERAL AWARDS

Several members of the SNL community were recognized at the annual excellence awards luncheon on June 6. The recipients are as follows: Theresa Campbell (BUS ‘89, SNL MA ‘13, MBA ‘14), David O. Justice Award; Maria Capoccia (SNL ‘93) and Bridgh O’Shaughnessy (SNL MA ‘07), Lifelong Learning Award; Edita Ravauskas (CMV ‘10, LAS MMN ‘14), SNL Staff Appreciation Award; and Deborah Steele (SNL ‘14), Arthur Weinberg Memorial Prize. 2015 commencement speaker Ullises Sanchez (SNL ‘15) was also recognized at the event. Recipients are nominated by the SNL community and are selected based on their creativity, leadership, attentiveness to the SNL community and commitment to social justice, Vincentian values and lifelong learning.

In addition, instructor Stefannie Triller Fry (LAS MA ‘06) received an Excellence in Teaching Award at Academic Convocation on Sept. 3. Of her recognition, “Ibler remains modest.” “I have been doing this thing that we call ‘teaching’ in various settings over the past 12 years, and it is humbling to find my name in the same phrase as the words ‘excellence and teaching,’” she says. “If I am at all excellent, it is because of the wonderful mentors I have had during this journey. They include my colleagues, my own instructors, the writing instructors I support in SNL’s writing program and, most of all, the many students with whom I’ve shared learning environments over the years. They are the ones who are truly excellent. I’ve learned so much from them, and I still have so much left to learn!” The Excellence in Teaching Award honors faculty members for their superior teaching and includes a $2,000 stipend.

Online and Hybrid Learning: A Conversation with Darrylinn Todd

Since Darrylinn Todd, senior director of SNL Online, joined the school in June 2015, she’s been working to realize a comprehensive vision for SNL Online. Todd brings with her more than 10 years of online experience from her positions as vice president of academic and student affairs and dean of the Center for Distance Learning at the City Colleges of Chicago.

What Philosophy or Point of View Guides You in Your Work as Director of SNL Online?

SNL Online has a very strong history and foundation in competence-based curriculum with a dedicated faculty and staff who work collaboratively to create the best in online scholarship. I am looking forward to continuing this work by fostering a commitment to excellence and quality in online instruction that will keep SNL moving forward.

What are your Top Priorities?

Dean Marisa Alicia has challenged me to continue enhancing the quality of the SNL Online program and its respective courses. Based on my previous experience, I know that designing quality courses for online delivery requires careful deliberation and strategic planning, and any decisions on the quality of an online learning program must focus on whether courses are meeting the needs of the students.

In addition, it is important that I engage our faculty in conversations to gain an understanding of what is valued within the SNL academic environment. We will work together, not only in the development of online course content, but also in establishing scholarship criteria. Working collectively in interdisciplinary teams will maximize SNL resources, as well as increase faculty and staff productivity. Finally, providing faculty and staff with professional development opportunities focused on online best practices will enhance their knowledge and contribute to their support of SNL online learning initiatives.

Why is this so important?

As the SNL Online team focuses on strategic planning, we will develop tools to extract data on student behavior in our courses. Adult and nontraditional learners demonstrate motivations and priorities that are well-suited to online course design. They enroll in online courses for convenience, flexibility in program completion and other reasons. By understanding student requirements, we can refocus and improve online course design and enhance faculty professional development opportunities. This will allow SNL to remain competitive in the field.
ALUMNI SHARING KNOWLEDGE OFFERS CAREER GUIDANCE TO STUDENTS, ALUMNI

More than 20 years ago, Daniel Kesselring (MUS ’70, MM ’73), interim director of Alumni Sharing Knowledge (ASK) and advisory board member, approached the Career Center for job search advice, and he’s been perfecting the art of networking ever since. Now, he shares his years of experience as an ASK mentor. “I just want to give back as much as I can because so many people helped me along the way,” Kesselring says. ASK caters to both alumni and students, offering myriad opportunities for those seeking mentoring services or hoping to become mentors themselves. More than 1,200 alumni and friends volunteer with ASK, with mentors from a wide variety of industries and at various stages of their careers. “We tell students, ‘Don’t be afraid to contact mentors. They’ve already said they won’t hang up on you,’” jokes Kesselring. He advises those wary of approaching strangers to prepare a script. “Get started for the first 15 to 20 seconds with an introduction, and go with the conversation,” he says. “Just getting through the first few seconds is very helpful because you only have one chance to make a first impression.”

Why we participate in ASK

More than 100 members of the SNL community volunteer their time to mentor students and alumni. Read below to learn about why these alumni think it’s important to give back as mentors.

“Everybody has a story they can tell, even if it’s just putting a blurb down about what you do for a living. It might give somebody else some insight. Everybody has some value they can offer, and in a way, it’s paying it forward. That’s the DePaul message.”

— Christine Johnson (SNL, MA ’13), territory sales manager, J.M. Smucker Co.

“We all come from different tracks of life. We may not have the same career goals. We may not be as successful as others, but there are transferable skills. I think it’s incredibly important to have guidance from people who not only went through similar schooling, but also who have already been exposed to different career successes and career failures.”

— Marek Sliwiak (SNL ’07, MBA ’12), area sales director, Midwest and East Coast, Alberdingk Boley

“It’s important to keep your options open, and networking with DePaul alumni is a good way to do that. I feel very strongly that we should be helping. We have a duty. We owe it to DePaul students to help them just like people helped us.”

— Joanna Van Rensselaer (SNL ’01, MA ’96), principal, Smart PR Communications

As Grace Kalita embarks on her final year of the SNL undergraduate program, she reflects on the impact scholarship support, including the Suzanne and Pat Ryan Endowed Scholarship, has had on her continued education.

“I work for a hospital, and it amazes me daily the amount of patients who come through these doors. Every time I turn around, the patients appear to be younger. I came to the realization that I wanted to be a part of the solution in helping people, so I decided to take a deeper look at what’s causing health issues for people. It was at that time that I decided to start up my own company, called Gracefully Aware. My mission is to be an advocate for change by bringing awareness to consumers about health, safety, sustainability, truth and transparency in their personal products and food choices. As consumers, it is important that we understand the impact that the products we eat, breathe, wear, and even touch every day have on our otherwise healthy bodies. With the help of the SNL program, I am gaining the necessary tools and skills needed to make an impact on the world for better and safer choices for our children to inherit. Safety should be a right, not a choice.

“The scholarships I received helped to lift some of the financial burden, allowing me to concentrate on my studies. Scholarships have empowered me to continue to challenge myself, as well as reinforced my self-confidence. Adult learners often struggle to finance their college expenses, having to contend with competing responsibilities involving work, family and school. Scholarships are crucial in bridging the gap between the increasing cost of tuition and what a student can afford to pay out of pocket. Scholarships are powerful motivators and help to drive students.”

“Mentoring isn’t just giving information to people. It’s also learning a lot about what’s going on and making yourself a better person,” notes Kesselring. Marek Sliwiak (SNL ’07, MBA ’12), ASK mentor and advisory board member, seconds that. “There are always two sides to the interaction,” he explains. “There’s the benefit of giving back to the community, and through interacting with young people, mentors learn as much from them as they learn from us. It’s an interesting dynamic.”

For more information or to join ASK, visit resources.depaul.edu/ask.

Want to support more outstanding students like Grace Kalita? Visit alumni.depaul.edu/newsletter to learn more.

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Fund for DePaul
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Visit alumni.depaul.edu/newsletter to make your gift now.
Calendar of Events

**FEB. 18, 2016**

**Verses & Flow III**

5:30-8:30 p.m.
DePaul Center
1 E. Jackson Blvd., Floor 11

Join SNL’s Africa Diaspora Committee for an evening of creative expression.

**MARCH 12, 2016**

**Annual Forum on Race: From Civil Rights to Black Lives Matter and Beyond**

1-3 p.m.
DePaul Center
1 E. Jackson Blvd., Room 8005

Discuss the most crucial and challenging race-related issues in America with Dorothy R. Leavell in collaboration with Chicago-based The HistoryMakers.

**JUNE 10, 2016**

**A Conversation with Lila Downs**

Time: TBD
Location: TBD

Welcome acclaimed singer-songwriter Lila Downs to campus for an evening of discussion.