Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques Center at The University of Arizona

Maximizing Success for Students with Learning and Attention Challenges
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From the Director

EMBARKING ON THE NEXT CHAPTER: STUDENT SUCCESS REMAINS THE GOAL

by Jeff M. Orgera, M.A.
Director

Change is something that we all experience in different ways but most would agree that change is the only constant. The SALT Center has undergone a significant amount of change in a very short period of time and as a department we continue to reach our goals and outcomes in many areas. In the coming year, my goal as the SALT Center’s Director is to focus all my energies on supporting the entire staff as we provide the highest quality and most relevant services to students with learning and attention challenges. Our program has built its reputation on quality services and in the years to come we will continue to stretch ourselves as a professional staff to refine our existing services and develop new ones.

The SALT Center recently completed one of its most exciting years with so many events, activities, and changes that the staff are still catching their breath! We celebrated our 25th Anniversary as one of the premier programs providing services to students with learning and attention challenges. In conjunction with that event, the department hosted a Speaker’s Series which brought several professionals to our campus to share their expertise. Lastly, the department’s leadership underwent significant change when the Director of the last thirteen years, Dr. Diane Quinn, decided to assume a new role for the department. It has been a year filled with transition in many respects but the entire staff remains committed to our values of quality service provision and as a group we are energized to continue creating new learning opportunities for our students.

Vision

For those of you who are new to the SALT family of students, alumni, parents, and friends of the program, I would like to tell you a little about myself. I have been with the SALT Center for the past seven years and most recently served in the role of Associate Director. Throughout my tenure with the department I continue to be inspired by the hard work and commitment of the students who share their lives with us as they transition into and out of the university environment.

Each individual student has a unique story and our role as educators is to listen to that story and get to know our students. Once we have that foundation, we can then design learning opportunities individualized so that the student can develop as a person. I have worked with hundreds of students and parents over my seven year affiliation with the SALT Center and each of them has
taught me something valuable. What is clear to me from my experiences is that this program is more than just a department providing services to students with learning and attention challenges. We are a community of students, professional staff, and tutors that all value educational pursuits. As a department, we share the common goal of creating opportunities that foster the success, growth, and achievement of individual students.

My vision for this program is to remain a leader in the field of service provision to students with learning and attention challenges. Beyond that function, I want students to use the opportunities that exist within the SALT Center to change how they think about themselves, their skills and challenges, and their education. Ultimately, I want our students to experience academic achievement, begin living their dreams and crafting the story that will become their adult life.

Students who affiliate with the SALT Center have a range of skills, interests, and motivations that merge within the University environment to create the framework for their experiences. As a department, we seek to build productive relationships with our students in order to build bridges which span uncertainty and doubt so our students can reach new horizons filled with promise and possibility.

Internal Goals

The SALT Center's philosophy about working with students is about building productive relationships so that engagement with our comprehensive services becomes seamless. Additionally, the programs we develop are designed by keeping the unique needs of our students at the forefront. We strive to present opportunities to our students in many different formats and modalities so that their individual learning styles and preferences for information can be satisfied.

Our department will continue to explore the use and application of advancements in software, hardware, and web based technologies so that students can benefit from utilizing the flexibility of those media in their academic and co-curricular pursuits. For example, the SALT Center is actively exploring how we might use technology to improve learning outcomes by using instructional roadmaps which can structure learning at the college level. The roadmaps are envisioned to be interactive, resource laden study guides that are punctuated with learning strategies, comprehension checks, and organizational tools that are specified for general education courses.

External Collaborations

Several hard decisions will confront the SALT Center as a result of our success with program students and also because of our reputation within the local, national, and international community. When you are a premier program doing work that makes a difference in peoples' lives, word of mouth spreads the story of your successes to audiences all over the world.

In the past year, the SALT Center has been approached by educators as far as Malaysia looking for guidance on how to help Universities in that country implement supportive models for students diagnosed with dyslexia. In addition,

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colleges and universities across the country continue to seek out recommendations on how to deliver the best programs and services to students with learning and attention challenges. Professional associations within the field want the SALT Center to be part of their national conferences which highlight innovative services at the postsecondary level. Within the state of Arizona, the Rodel Institute is striving to utilize its foundation’s funds in order to improve K-12 education. One of the recommendations targets struggling students by providing one-on-one tutoring, and the SALT Center has been identified as a possible resource in helping launch this initiative. Within our own campus environment, the SALT Center has been approached by three distinct units to serve as a collaborator on projects attempting to reach and make stronger educational impacts on students within special populations.

Clearly the work of the SALT Center has been recognized by many as being the most innovative and cutting edge model of service for individuals with unique learning preferences. Why are these opportunities referred to as challenges? Well, ideally I would like us involved in all these projects because of the wide ranging impact they could have on individuals, organizations, and institutions. Unfortunately, we will be forced to make some tough decisions as to what we can realistically achieve without ever losing sight of our priority: our current students and constituents.

**New Campus Leadership**

After nine years as UA President, Dr. Peter Likins has retired and has been succeeded by Dr. Robert Shelton. The SALT Center enjoyed tremendous support from the former President, and it will be critical to cultivate a new relationship with Dr. Shelton so that our department can continue to prosper. In addition, the UA has a new Vice Provost of Student Affairs in Melissa Vito who assumed the role for the retiring Senior Vice President of Campus, Dr. Saundra Taylor. Once again it will be critical for the SALT Center to continue providing outreach and education to the campus community about our department’s role in student success. Building these relationships with our new campus administration will ensure that the SALT Center continues to maintain its status and reputation on campus and nationally.

**The Future Looks Bright**

The SALT Center is positioned for a prosperous and thriving future as our students continue to be the recipients of the highest quality learning opportunities. Our staff of professionals is poised to continue identifying and developing the most innovative resources which support student success at the University level. I am honored and privileged to lead a program of the SALT Center’s caliber and will continually strive to keep it as the premier program of its type for many years to come. The entire staff and I look forward with enthusiasm to being part of the journey where our current and future students develop and script the next chapter in their life story. The future is ripe with possibilities and the SALT Center will continue to cultivate the very best opportunities for the benefit of our students. From this pursuit we will never waver!
Student Programs & Services

SALT CENTER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
ENCOURAGE STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

By Rhonda Ormsby, Assistant Director of Student Programs & Services

The history of the SALT Center stands as an example of student academic success. An important part of our support to students extends from the philosophy that all areas of a students’ life contribute to their overall wellbeing and academic accomplishments.

Just as students participated in activities outside the classroom before they came to the university, the SALT Center also works to provide innovative, interesting, and useful programs and services.

This past year is an excellent example of this in that we incorporated “SALT Outdoors”, which is a hiking group, led by qualified SALT staff to expose students to the beautiful nature in the Tucson area. In addition, we had students go to see the Dali Lama at the convention center, an event sponsored by our Mentor Group.

SALT Students continued to support the efforts of the Tucson community by participating in the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life, which is an event coordinated by our VAULT program (Volunteer Activities Utilizing Learners’ Talents). Through helping others, students gain confidence and pride.

Because the transition to the SALT Center and the University can be difficult at times, SALT provides additional support in a group setting for incoming freshmen with our Freshmen Retention Group. If students can succeed in their freshmen year and return their sophomore year, research shows that their chances for graduating from college increase significantly.

Our Learning Specialists enjoy working with students and build academic as well as personal relationships with their students. They encourage students to get involved academically and socially, as well as to engage them in all SALT programs and services.

SALT upper-division students have the opportunity to learn about the graduate school application process, as well as how to write a resume and prepare their career search and interview skills. In addition, guidance in handling finances, credit cards, and preparing for financial independence is discussed.

Our programs are developed through student input and feedback and based on student needs. We feel it’s important to recognize the whole student and also incorporate social activities that are educational.

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SUCCESS STRATEGIES FOR SALT STUDENTS

By Lupe Thompson, Learning Specialist

There are strategies to guide us through virtually every aspect of our lives. Strategies or tips are available for managing money, buying a house, improving our relationships, and for learning. Some of us use strategies deliberately and some of us use them seemingly unaware of their usefulness. But in order for strategies to be effective we must put them to use in an intentional manner.

Situations such as the transition from high school to college, learning about the hidden curriculum (all of the things students are expected to know about but are not informed of explicitly), and disclosing a learning challenge are all emotionally charged topics. My goal is that I want to find a way to use strategies to help students remember the material they are learning in their classes so that they do not “blank out” during exams.

The first step toward learning and remembering is for students to know their preferred learning modality. Students who know their learning style can discuss appropriate strategies with their Learning Specialists, Tutors and Instructors.

Development of a skill involves using strategies. Being prepared for class by reviewing the syllabus, reading the assigned readings prior to class, attending class, taking notes and then manipulating those notes and classroom experiences are the next steps toward learning. These “classroom strategies” involve using a lot of individual strategies that can be modified and expanded to incorporate more complex material. So, once a simple reading strategy such as SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review) is learned, it can be adapted to help master more increasingly difficult college reading material.

Also, using tutors on a regular basis can help make learning more meaningful and can include emotional strategies such as role playing, debates and simulating testing conditions. Perhaps the most emotional of these strategies is “Teach the Tutor”. This strategy engages the student socially and asks that the student
Targeting Unique Student Needs

FRESHMAN RETENTION GROUP

By Lupe Thompson, Learning Specialist

The Freshman Retention Group (FRoG) continues to be an opportunity for our incoming freshmen to transition to SALT/UA through sharing their personal experiences and participating in group meetings structured around a specific topic. Topics are grouped into three parts. The first part focuses on Expectations and Balance and the topics covered are Expectations, Success, Balance, Time, Organization, Purpose and Goals. The second part focuses on Learning, and the topics are Reading, Writing, Memory, Exam Preparation, and Test Taking. The last part focuses on Connections.

These individual sessions are not as structured as other SALT programs, and oftentimes students themselves lead the discussions, offering their perspectives and possible solutions to any obstacles.

We were curious to see if there was a need for a year long transition program and if students would attend. We quickly found out there was a genuine interest in FRoG and students were willing to spend their lunchtime with us. We had regular attendance all year long and participants stated they found value in the structure, the time of day, and the opportunity to discuss, learn, reflect and connect with each other.

NEXT STEPS - JUNIOR/SENIOR WORKSHOPS

By Rose Wilhite, Learning Specialist

SALT expanded the Next Steps Workshops this year to include juniors as well as seniors by targeting all SALT students with 75 college units or more. The goal of this workshop is to provide useful information to our students about life after college. The presenters provide information on these topics: employment application process, graduate school options and disclosure of one’s disability in the work place. In the fall, SALT invited two alumni to speak at the workshop. One was a recently employed graduate, and the other was a current SALT graduate student. The SALT students enjoyed hearing these personal first hand experiences, they learned useful insights and were given a verbal list of things to consider when graduating and/or looking into graduate school.

In the spring 2006, we invited a SALT graduate who not only is employed but is an entrepreneur here in Tucson. The students were given an opportunity to hear about his academic struggles, his jobs after college and his goal to start his own business. The students responded well to the openness of being able to ask questions of someone who faced similar challenges as a student and future graduate.

SALT will continue to offer these workshops and focus on preparing students for the workforce and graduate school. It is important to prepare students for their future careers, job searches and how and when to apply to graduate school as well as introduce them to former SALT students as they come back and share their stories on how they took the “next steps” in their lives.
NAU COUNSELING & SALT STUDENTS - FIVE YEARS OF COLLABORATION

By Rose Wilhite, Learning Specialist

The fall 2006 semester marks the fifth year of a successful partnership that began in the fall of 2002. In collaboration with second-year master's level counselors from Northern Arizona University in Tucson we offer free, confidential counseling to SALT students each fall semester in the SALT building. Counseling sessions are offered on Wednesday evenings for students seeking assistance with short-term issues such as homesickness, adjustment to college, academic performance, anxiety, substance abuse etc.

SALT hosts an orientation/training meeting for the NAU & SALT staffs to share information with each other, before the counseling begins. The counseling sessions are offered for ten weeks and students are referred by their learning specialists. In the Fall 2005 semester, the NAU counselors provided thirty-one sessions to our students with the average number of sessions per student being four.

SALT also hosts a wrap-up session for both NAU and SALT staffs when the counseling sessions have ended. NAU provides SALT with a report indicating the main reasons for students seeking counseling services, and a counseling client satisfaction survey. In turn, SALT staff provides feedback to the NAU counselors and their supervisor.

It is hard to believe the NAU/SALT partnership has been in existence for five years. Many SALT students have been helped by the counseling provided and many NAU counselors have learned a lot by working with our population. It has truly been a collaboration where everyone has benefited.

-experience required-

When applying for jobs, applied experiences are valuable assets. Then there is a big question: how does one acquire necessary skills if one does not have that initial opportunity to gain them? One way to eliminate this potentially negative cycle from your job hunting is to be proactive and seek out job skills as an intern. The SALT Center has a wonderful resource where valuable internship opportunities are made available to students. We have individual contacts for various internship locations to assist with the application process. Information is gathered before you even begin you exploration such as whether or not they are accommodating of learning differences, whether there is any financial compensation etc. We have had many students placed with this internship program. So when you are ready, look up the ever growing list of opportunities available at http://www.salt.arizona.edu/progserv/specs5.shtml then speak to your learning specialist or Caroline Ragano for more details and gain that first experience through a meaningful internship.

GRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES: OVERVIEW & INNOVATION

By Rudy M. Molina, Jr., Learning Specialist

This past year has been exciting on many fronts at the SALT Center, especially for those who are working on graduate student services. Over the past year, more students have inquired about SALT graduate services. As more students with learning and attention challenges graduate from undergraduate programs, students are more confident about enrolling in graduate and professional programs. Since SALT has opened its doors to serve this population, they have had the opportunity to work with students representing a variety of disciplines. These include, but are not limited to, education, law, and pharmacy.

Although students are benefiting from the core services provided by SALT, the department is also learning a great deal about how graduate students’ needs are unique.
The needs of graduate students begin with their schedule. In addition to meeting with the Strategic Learning Specialist, Writing Skills Coordinator, and other key members of the SALT staff, they may also need to touch base with their faculty advisor regarding their research project(s) and hold office hours as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), not to mention all the other roles they might engage in during a given week. Because a graduate student’s schedule may be considered to be more limited, it has been important for the SALT Center to develop new ways to support and deliver information both efficiently and deliberately.

SALT is excited for many reasons, particularly in the development of what they refer to as the Graduate Series Topics. Topics such as authorship, research, funding, and family demands are components of the new curriculum SALT has prepared to discuss with their students. SALT will continue to develop this curriculum, as well as find innovative ways to deliver the content, complimenting the rigorous schedule graduate students encounter. This enthusiasm, coupled with student feedback, will allow SALT to become a valued network hub and resource for graduate students and professionals across the University campus.

To learn more about SALT graduate services, please visit us online at www.salt.arizona.edu or contact Rudy M. Molina, Jr., MA at rudym@u.arizona.edu.

Emphasis on Involvement

SALT INTRAMURAL SPORTS

By Michael Penn, Learning Specialist

SALT Intramural athletics provide individuals the opportunity to participate in a variety of competitive and recreational sports for students, staff and faculty who wish to participate. Here, at the UofA, this philosophy is no different. During the 2005-06 year, the SALT Center participated in campus intramurals by organizing teams in four different sports, coed volleyball, men’s 3-on-3 basketball, men’s 5-on-5 basketball and men’s slow pitch softball. The seasons for both men’s 3-on-3 basketball and coed volleyball occurred in fall, while men’s 5-on-5 basketball and men’s slow-pitch softball took place in spring. In all, we attracted a total of 45 participants between students and staff members. Out of all these sports, the men’s 5-on-5 basketball and Men’s slow-pitch softball had the most successful seasons in terms of wins and losses. Our basketball team finished with a record of 4-1 and advanced into (continued on page 12)
the second-round of the playoffs. Meanwhile, the softball team completed the season with a record of 2-2. Although our coed volleyball and 3-on-3 men's basketball teams were not as successful, we were competitive and had a lot of fun.

As interest in SALT intramural sports grows, we want to find new ways to keep individuals involved in these activities. We plan to continue organizing competitive teams in some sports but also want to add new ones to the mix as well. These might include coed soccer and coed basketball. I’m looking forward to the opportunity of branching out and participating in new sports activities and watching interest grow.

Through participation in intramural programs, all participants receive different benefits. Some relish the fierce competition, while others want to relax and enjoy times with friends. Whatever reasons people give, I see them as a great way for individuals to get involved and to connect socially through sharing common interests.

SALT STUDENTS GET IN TOUCH WITH NATURE

By Laurel Grigg, Learning Specialist

The SALT Outdoors program was piloted during the 2005-2006 academic year to provide SALT students with the opportunity to engage in outdoor activities with a group of peers and experienced outdoor leaders. We wanted to remove the barriers that prevent students from enjoying this type of recreation, whether it is a lack of knowledge or a lack of transportation, and to teach new skills and responsible stewardship of our environment. In addition, this type of physical exercise has been shown to relieve stress, restore focus, and build self-confidence.

Tucson is a destination for outdoor enthusiasts because of its bountiful sunshine, extensive network of hiking and mountain biking trails, rock climbing, and birding. Several mountain ranges, also known as the Sky Islands, surrounding the city rise dramatically out of the desert floor to elevations just over 9,000 feet, allowing trekkers to experience 5 different biozones (sandy desert to pine forest). SALT Outdoors is now sponsored by a division of the Sierra Club called Inner City Outings (ICO). This provides us with a wealth of resources and knowledgeable trip leaders, which enables us take full advantage of all Southern Arizona has to offer.

Last year, SALT Outdoors successfully completed 6 outings:

1. **Mt. Lemmon**: We hiked a 4 mile loop in the Santa Catalina Mountains via the Aspen and Marshall Gulch trails. Students and staff found relief from the Tucson heat in the shade of the pine forest at about 8,700 feet of elevation. A catastrophic fire badly burned this area in 2003, and we were able to observe the re-growth process.

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2. **Pontatoc Ridge:** We hiked for 4 miles along the Pontatoc Ridge Trail in the Santa Catalina Mountains. This is a classic desert hike with lots of cactus and spectacular views of the mountains and the city below.

3. **Wasson Peak:** We hiked for 7.8 miles on the Sendero Esperanza and Hugh Norris trails climbing to the highest point in the Tucson Mountain range, just over 4,000 feet. We were treated to a spectacular 360 degree view.

4. **Sabino Canyon Recreation Area:** We explored different parts of the canyon and picnicked at a scenic spot overlooking the dam.

5. **Building the Arizona Trail:** This was a joint project of VAULT (Volunteer Activities Utilizing Learners’ Talents) and SALT Outdoors. Students and staff spent the morning clearing brush and cutting trail southeast of Tucson in the Cienega Corridor. The Arizona Trail will eventually be an 800 mile non-motorized trail running continuously from the Mexico border to Utah. It is about 90% complete, and the remaining sections are being built by volunteers. With only hand tools to minimize habitat destruction, SALT students thought it was great to be a part of this community event, and to know that future generations will be able to walk the section of trail that we built.

6. **Seven Falls:** We hiked 7 miles up Bear Canyon to the beautiful and refreshing Seven Falls. It’s always exciting to see a riparian area in the middle of the desert, and we enjoyed the multiple stream crossings and the lush vegetation. Seven Falls did not disappoint! Seven beautiful waterfalls greeted us, heavy with snowmelt. Everyone had fun playing in the cool water.

Students have really enjoyed SALT Outdoors, and we have two new hikes and one trail building event scheduled for the fall 2006 semester. We are looking forward to another exciting year of outdoor adventures! For more information about SALT Outdoors, please contact Ashley Klein at aeklein@email.arizona.edu or Laurel Grigg at lgrigg@email.arizona.edu.

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**Tutoring**

**PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS REALIZED**

By Norma Carrillo, Tutor Coordinator

I have had many individual opportunities to ask the tutors at SALT why they are interested in helping students learn. They consistently share their zeal for the overall experience. Not only do they enjoy their role in discussing academic content with students but they value and experience personal growth with their students’ success. The reward of that light-bulb feeling when students learn, the reinforcement of their expertise and knowledge base, working and meeting with other peer professionals, and the opportunity to be part of a community within the university are things that inspire SALT tutors.

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When students are asked what they most appreciate about tutoring, they respond eagerly that they value and respect their tutors. When they first arrive as freshman they do not know what to expect. As they build a good rapport and develop relationships that foster learning, students begin feeling confident and independent.

Every year in the fall and spring, SALT recognizes its tutoring staff with a tutor appreciation celebration. It is one of the many ways that allows us to recognize and value the excellent work tutors continue to provide our students. All of the staff and many students participate in this event. Certificates of recognition with words of praise solidify the achievements accomplished in the last year.

There are many opportunities for tutors to excel in providing the range of services in tutoring. The most popular is the one-on-one individual tutoring session. Tutors take more time to get to know the student. They also provide personal feedback for each student’s goals and growth. The more experienced tutors provide group reviews for the heavily enrolled classes that our students are taking. These reviews occur a week before each exam throughout the semester. They are a challenge even for the most experienced tutors because students have a variety of learning styles (visual, kinesthetic or auditory) and a variety of preferences for how they process material. Participation from the groups of students attending will also vary. Some students are shy and never ask questions, whereas other students may take over the time asking lots of questions. Students can talk with the learning specialist about ways to get the most out of group reviews based on their individual needs.

The Math and Science Lab is designed as an accessible resource for questions students may have in between the tutoring sessions and as they work on their homework at the center. It is extremely beneficial to receive help without an appointment and to know that there are several persons in the lab with the expertise and experience to provide support to students.

Tutors like tutoring because of the satisfaction or end result from what a student learns from their relationship. A student makes a tutor request, gets a tutor assignment, and then proceeds to establish a regular, recurring appointment. The SALT Center’s goal for students related to tutoring is when they have a good rapport with their tutor, are learning at their own pace, mastering skills, achieving goals, and addressing gaps in comprehension. In addition, students attending group reviews for exams, participating in small groups to learn from their peers, and using the labs as needed will reap benefits from those activities.

The SALT staff collaborates through a team approach to work together and provide the most relevant services to students. We won’t feel successful unless students utilize our services and reach their intended outcomes. We strive to make the connections that are necessary to promote learning by teaching students how to effectively use SALT services. A true partnership between the student and SALT Tutoring is required to enable successful outcomes to become reality. For me professionally, being the Tutor Coordinator and witnessing student growth is one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my career.

HOW CAN WRITING TUTORS HELP YOU?

By Melissa Koosmann, Writing Skills Coordinator

On the first visit to the SALT Writers Lab, many new students expect tutors simply to tell them what to do and how to fix their mistakes. In fact, university-level ethical guidelines prevent tutors from taking so much control over your work. You have to come up with your ideas yourself. You also need to learn and choose how to implement editing rules. How, then, can our tutors help you?

When you first walk into the Writers Lab, tutors will typically ask what you want to work on. At this point, you might say, “I can’t figure out what to write about” or “My professor says I need to improve my word choice.” If you’re unsure, tutors usually suggest working on the most important issues, such as clarifying overall ideas, improving
I chose to shine the SALT spotlight on Eric Werner because he is a very impressive young man whose name will be known far and wide.

Eric is a gifted student who is a double major in Political Science and Near Eastern Studies. He approaches each of his classes with enthusiasm and makes learning appear effortless. However, he does work hard and strives to learn not because he wants to earn a good grade but because his work ethic compels him. His efforts have paid off—as he has made the Honorable Mention Dean's List six times and has earned a 4.000 grade point average for 5 out of the 8 semesters he has been enrolled at the University of Arizona. He has also been motivated enough to learn Spanish, Hebrew and Arabic. Because of all his hard work Eric was also invited to join Phi Beta Kappa in Spring 2006.

He is currently completing an Internship for Congressman Jim Kolbe in Washington DC this summer where he says, “I have met some of the most powerful people in Congress, (both Republican and Democrat). I have met a lot of people from all over the US.”

He also completed a Public Policy and Administration Independent Study in Spring 2006 where he analyzed police, military and intelligence organizations’ involvement in terrorism. Additionally, he was an Intern at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and a Political Coordinator for Arizona Israel Alliance.

He is a member of the Hebrew Speaking Club and of the Arabic Speaking Club. He is also the current Campus Campaign Coordinator and former Campus Political Coordinator for CATPAC, Cats for Israel. He is a member of several organizations on campus such as Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society, Phi Alpha Delta Pre Law Fraternity and Sigma Alpha Lambda National Leadership and Honors Organization.

He was named the 2006 Murray DeArmond Mind, Body, Spirit Award winner. The recipient of this award is given to one male and one female University of Arizona student who have demonstrated a sustained and continuous effort to improve the campus community.

Eric takes ownership of his education and of his life. And he seems to manage all of his responsibilities with ease. He participates in campus wide activities, SALT activities and personal activities while keeping his academics at the forefront. He uses all SALT services consistently and appropriately. He has clearly defined goals and strategies for meeting those goals, and his hard work is definitely paying off. On a personal note, Eric is a compassionate person and I feel lucky to have worked with him and to call him a friend. He is truly a success story!!
SALT STUDENT’S DEDICATION AND HARD WORK IS RECIPE FOR SUCCESS IN THE ELLER COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT

By Rhonda Ormsby, Assistant Director of Student Programs & Services

Doug Constantiner’s dedication to his education is remarkable. From the time Doug entered the University of Arizona and the SALT Center as a freshman in the fall of 2003, he knew exactly where he wanted to be by his junior year – admitted to the Eller College of Management.

Time management is a skill that some students need to learn, however Doug had this mastered from the beginning of his UA career. As a freshman, in addition to being a SALT student, Doug also pledged a fraternity; however he still was able to achieve a 3.2 GPA during his first semester.

Doug has had 7 semesters, including summer school, over a 3.2 GPA and has been on the Dean’s List of Distinction twice. He was also on the Honorable Mention List and for the academic year of 2004 – 2005, he received Academic Distinction for his 4.0 GPA that year.

At the beginning of Doug’s junior year, he accomplished his intended goal – he was admitted to the Eller College of Management, majoring in Business Administration. Although the first semester as a new business student is known as “boot camp” and Doug stated, “I’ve never spent so much time at the library…,” Doug still has maintained an overall GPA of 3.48.

In addition to these great accomplishments, Doug also applied and was admitted to the prestigious Eller College Entrepreneurship program. This was important to Doug because he’d like to be an entrepreneur in the future. He now has a double major in Finance and Entrepreneurship.

Doug Constantiner is a wonderful example of hard work and dedication. He continues to be an active member of his fraternity having been the past social chair and treasurer. Doug is now focused on his graduation date of May 2007.

Doug is not only a role model for SALT students, but for all students at the University of Arizona. It’s a pleasure to work with Doug, and I know he’ll continue to accomplish great things in his life.

ZAC’S MT. WHITNEY QUEST

By Rose Wilhite, Learning Specialist

Zac York is a new SALT freshman who started at the University of Arizona this fall 2006 semester. Zac is a very charismatic and engaging student and many of us felt we already knew him well during his short visit with us in June. However, what touched us most about Zac were his amazing plans to climb Mt. Whitney in California at an elevation of 14,497 feet. Why is this amazing? Because Zac would be climbing the mountain on crutches to realize a dream he had five years ago before he was diagnosed with a brain tumor. The tumor initially left Zac in a wheelchair, but after 17 surgeries and hundreds of hours of physical therapy, Zac is able to walk with crutches. Zac had a goal of climbing Mt. Whitney to raise money and awareness for Pediatric Brain Tumor Research. So, this became Zac’s quest.

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Zac's Mt. Whitney Quest started out with 12 team members but 3 dropped out and 9 team members made the climb. Zac received gear from various sponsors (climbing equipment, tents etc.) for himself and his team members. A cabin at Lone Pine was also donated to them for use which is where the climb originated.

Zac left on July 9th, 2006 with his climbing team from Base Camp (8,600 feet) and they climbed 1,500 feet to the first camp Outpost (10,100 feet). On Day 2, they made it to Trail Camp and Zac honed some of his mountaineering skills. On Day 3, it was determined that it would be too difficult to make it to the summit due to weather conditions (snow fields, electrical storms etc.) but they had made it to 12,600 feet and rested. The team started their descent down on Day 4 from Trail Camp to Outpost. It was a very long day. On Day 5, they went from Outpost to Base camp. Zac is very proud of the team’s accomplishment even though they were not able to summit.

Zac's Whitney Quest raised $13,000 for Pediatric Brain Tumor Research. Donations were made to the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health. The Foundation supports the ongoing research led by Zac’s neurosurgeon, Dr. Michael Edwards, who heads The Center for Children's Brain Tumors. This is what Zac said before the climb: “By climbing Mt. Whitney using my crutches, I hope that I can show young people facing challenges similar to mine that there is always hope during the fight. Research is ongoing for treatments, and recovery is possible.” Zac hopes to climb Mt. Whitney again, possibly next summer, for the same cause.

The SALT Center is proud to have such an altruistic and philanthropic student in our fall 2006 freshmen class.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: MAGGIE STEARNS

By Mary Beth Foster, Learning Specialist

Maggie Stearns takes new risks every day. At first glance, that may sound a bit alarming, but I am not referring to risks of life and limb; rather I am speaking of the most challenging types of risks — those that involve self-growth.

Maggie first came to me as a freshman who liked to grumble a little about some of the tedium of required courses. Underneath her cynical exterior, however, resided a strong work ethic and a hidden love for learning. Her journey towards self growth accelerated with two of her first courses: Sex, Health, and AIDS and English Composition. Both courses opened doors of knowledge to a world unfamiliar to her: Africa. Naturally, the Sex, Health, and AIDS course dwelled upon the epidemic's effects on the African continent. Less predictable, her English class also frequently referred to Africa’s troubles since the instructor had recently returned from there as part of a Peace Corps project. This teacher’s inspiration stirred Maggie to strongly consider traveling to Africa as part of a relief effort. While Maggie ultimately opted not to go, I believe she will return to that idea, but after she’s finished her degree and after she’s acquired some experience that will allow her to play a more instrumental role in assisting Africa’s people in some capacity. This idea, regardless of being unfulfilled, served as a first step in Maggie’s commission to explore the world from many perspectives.

(continued on page 18)
Armando Membrila is a current SALT student who is majoring in Aerospace Engineering. He is a wonderful student and even a better human being. Armando demonstrates the right balance between professionalism and young energy. His excitement for his field of study matched with his personal interests makes him a well-rounded individual who will go far in life.

Just recently, Armando was accepted into the Summer Research Institute (SRI) and had the opportunity to collaborate with his faculty advisor on a small scale research project. In SRI he worked on a project design created by NASA. It was a design of a Personal Aviation Vehicle. The University of Arizona’s task was to create a 1/3 scaled unmanned version of this vehicle. Armando’s specific role in the project was to design and build the propulsion setup for the 1/3 scale Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV).

This type of pre-professional collaboration has proven to be an excellent step in the direction Armando would like to take his career. Research skills are best learned in hands-on, apprentice-type interactions. Fortunately, SRI and his faculty advisor believed in his potential, thus granting him the opportunity to complete his project. It is my pleasure to recognize Armando for his most recent accomplishments and I am sure he will have many more opportunities in the near future. Please join me congratulating Armando for his hard work and dedication to his future and his professional career.

Maggie has a passion for many subjects and initially found narrowing her choices to one major difficult. She thought she had found an answer in Media Arts, but when she was not accepted she realized that sometimes one has to try other possibilities before attaining the best match. She found that match in Journalism where her beginning reporting class required her to do several interviews. Timid at first, Maggie faced the challenge with some preliminary hesitancy, but with each new interview, her confidence grew until she discovered that she absolutely loves talking to a diverse assortment of people, which has included students and UA officials. In particular, she enjoyed interviewing Former Director Diane Quinn and Director Jeff Orgera when developing an article on SALT’s 25th anniversary celebration.

Maggie has also enjoyed the opportunity to be a speaker at SALT events. She’s participated in New Student Experience, freshmen orientations, and the SALT High School Connection. As a result of her newly developed confidence in the art of public speaking, she took an even bigger risk. She auditioned for a role as a reporter with UATV, and she landed the job. Next year, she might even try out for an anchor spot.

Maggie’s next leap in her education entailed taking an outdoor wilderness adventure class to fulfill a science requirement. Spending an entire summer month, sometimes in tents and sometimes in cabins in the forests of Northern Arizona, she submerged herself in an invigorating experience that involved observing science in action, taking samples from water and fauna, and articulating her analysis to other students. I am proud of Maggie for trying this class, and even more importantly, I am thrilled to share in her excitement for learning.

STUDENT’S RESEARCH INTERESTS PROPEL HIM TO NEW HEIGHTS

By Rudy Molina, Learning Specialist

Armando Membrila is a current SALT student who is majoring in Aerospace Engineering. He is a wonderful student and even a better human being. Armando demonstrates the right balance between professionalism and young energy. His excitement for his field of study matched with his personal interests makes him a well-rounded individual who will go far in life.

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SALT Technology

STUDENT USES TECHNOLOGY FOR MAXIMUM SUCCESS

by Laurel Grigg, Learning Specialist

Mimi Shocksnider exemplifies tenacity and perseverance. She excelled during her first year at UA because of her dedication, ample use of SALT tutoring, assistive technology, and her strong advocacy and time management skills. Mimi earned a 3.33 grade point average each semester while logging over 100 hours of tutoring.

Mimi’s command of the Dragon Naturally Speaking software is amazing. She uses this software for a majority of her reading and writing assignments. She also uses it to take tests. It will read test questions to her, and she can dictate short responses or essays. This means that Mimi must work closely with professors to ensure that she obtains copies of course documents in electronic format and that she has adequate time at the testing center to complete tests.

Although academics take an extraordinary amount of time for Mimi, she is also involved in campus life. Mimi participated in many SALT Mentor events and Project DELTA. In addition, she was her “wing rep” in the residence hall and the decorations chairperson for the end of year dance. To keep all this balanced, she worked with her Learning Specialist weekly to set up a detailed schedule. This allowed her to maintain some balance in her life between academics and social activities. Mimi is a terrific example of how students can use assistive technology to produce academic success.

COMING SOON: THE NEW WEB BASED SYSTEM, SALTLINK!

by Kring Fernando, Support Systems Analyst

The SALT Center is preparing to implement a new and improved Student Information System in the coming academic year. There will be a vast array of improved functionalities for both current and prospective students. Among the improvements are:

Online Application and Information Request: Interested students, parents, high school counselors, and other educators will be able to get information about our program and apply to be a part of the SALT program through the SALT website.

Online Application for Tutors: Prospective tutors will be able to apply to be part of the SALT program and list their areas of academic expertise all from the SALT website.

(continued on page 20)
Streamlined Tutoring Services: In our new system, the SALT Tutoring department will match tutors with students based on their requested courses and the tutors’ areas of expertise. Tutors will submit reports about students’ performance and these reports will be available to be viewed by their learning specialist and other departmental staff.

New Services for our Students: Students will be able to automatically view their class schedule online via SALTLink and make a tutor request for each class. They will also be able to join Math lab and Writer’s lab sessions, sign up for events and workshops, submit their choice form, and update their personal information. In addition, students will be able to view their tutoring session history, see who their assigned tutors are, and access their contact information. When a student is activated by the Admissions department, they will be able to use the computer resource lab and login to their SALTLink with no wait time.

Formulated Learning Plan: The SALT Learning Specialists will also have the ability to create a learning plan for each individual student based on their unique strengths and weaknesses in order to help them succeed in their academic career. The learning specialists will also have access to students’ class schedules, academic information, tutoring usage, and events their students have signed up for.

The SALT Center is thrilled to be able to provide our students with an additional level of service through the SALTLink system. Students will see this service when it is launched in the current academic year.
SALT Admissions

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR STUDENTS

by Autumn Palmer, Coordinator of Admissions & Outreach

Q: How many students apply to SALT and how many actually attend?

A: The SALT Center Admissions Office receives between 400-500 applications every academic year. This past year has been no different. We had approximately 170 new students join our program for fall 2006. This year 96% of the incoming class is new incoming freshmen and 4% are transfer students. Like the university, we are excited to have a growing pool of transfer students. Transfer students are coming from a wide variety of states. In the past 5 years we have had over 70 transfer students apply, and more than half of those students have enrolled in UA and SALT.

Q: What is the gender ratio of students in the SALT Center?

A: The 2006-2007 class consists of 57% males and 43% females. The SALT Center is often asked about its gender ratio since historically it is more common for males to be diagnosed with a learning or attention challenge. It can be seen by the current numbers that this may continue to be the case but what the SALT Center typically finds is that there is a fairly common ratio of about 60% males to 40% females.

Q: What are the academic statistics for incoming students?

A: Incoming students’ academic statistics tend to look very similar to our historical incoming student. The average high school GPA was 2.9. The average SAT score was 960 and the average ACT score was 20. Even though these numbers are slightly lower than the university’s average, students who participate in SALT are retained and graduate at a higher rate than other university students.

Q: Where do our students come from?

A: This year’s group of students came from 25 different states and one foreign country, namely the United Kingdom. Our top five feeder states for this year were California, Arizona, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. In the past, Illinois and Colorado have also been part of the top five feeder states. SALT is always looking to attract more students from all states and continues to do outreach in order or support this goal.

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Q: What do SALT students major in?

A: The chart below shows the class of 2006 students and their current chosen major. Many students feel the pressure to choose a major at the beginning of their college career. As you can see, 53% of students who are starting with SALT this year are undeclared students. Many of these students will determine their major over the next few years. By the time they graduate these statistics will change. According to SALT data, the largest group of graduating students will have earned degrees from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Q: What are the most common challenges of students applying to SALT?

A: As of 2004, students who participate in SALT do not have to have a specific LD or ADHD diagnosis, although 95% of students who apply and are admitted to SALT do have some type of diagnosed disability. Students that currently are in the no diagnosis category are students who have experienced significant learning or attention challenges as indicated in their application essays. Additionally, students in this category are students who may not qualify to be in special education or who have been tested but do not meet the needed aptitude/achievement discrepancy in order to obtain a diagnosis.

In general, we see about half of our students diagnosed with an LD and the other half with some form of attention disorder, although it is common to have students diagnosed in both areas. This chart specifically shows the incoming students and their primary diagnosis.

Q: What attracts students to SALT?

A: The SALT Center has found that many students who use our services come to the UA not just because it is a great university with a wonderful reputation, but also because we are a nationally recognized program which supports students with learning and attention challenges. Many of our students want to have a large university experience but benefit from the services of a program like SALT to make the experience more manageable. Referrals are another way students learn about the SALT Center. The number of school and independent counselors familiar with our program continues to grow which is reflected in larger number of students coming from specific schools and parts of the country.

As you can clearly see, SALT students are a diverse group with varied challenges, interests, backgrounds who come from many different parts of the country. Through SALT, all of these students find a comprehensive range of programs and services to support their success in the university environment.

If you have any other questions about SALT Admissions please feel free to contact our office at saltadm@email.arizona.edu or 520-621-8493.
The SALT High School Connection program, established at the end of the 2005 fall semester, provides a transitional stepping stone between the local high school community, the university, and the SALT Center. Initially, this pilot program paired the SALT Center with Catalina High School in an effort to offer organizational strategies, academic support, assistive technology expertise, and peer tutor training.

Forming a partnership with Tucson area high schools has been a longtime dream of the SALT Center. Mary Hinson’s vision of a “mini-SALT” began for her when she received several large technology grants. She received Kurzweil stations, which read text aloud through the aid of a digital voice; Inspiration software that allows students to brainstorm through mind-mapping and visual organizers; and Dragon Naturally Speaking, which allows students to dictate and create text by using voice recognition technology.

Throughout the spring 2006 semester SALT staff and students visited Catalina High School on a weekly basis and made presentations on the following topics: reading and notetaking techniques using Kurzweil, essay writing using Inspiration (mind-mapping computer program), test preparation and test taking, decision making and goal setting, time management, procrastination, organization, math strategies, SALT and university admissions, learning styles, college transition, and stress management. Catalina students heard firsthand from SALT students about their own struggles and successes. The SALT students excelled in their role as mentors, openly sharing themselves, offering valuable tips, and modeling how students can succeed through determination, hard work, and enthusiasm.

The culminating event of the SALT High School Connection, a Shadow Day at the U of A, served to hallmark the spring semester’s efforts with a promise of a successful future for the SALT High School Connection. The Shadow Day enabled Catalina students to attend classes with SALT students at the U of A. Many Catalina students remarked afterwards that they could now see themselves attending college when they had previously thought the goal to be impossible. In turn, many SALT students made comments on the satisfaction that they received by helping students with struggles that they themselves have faced.

SALT’s last visit to Catalina High School in the spring 2006 was an Evaluation and Reflection Day on the SALT High School Connection. Four of the students agreed to be videotaped for a “live” evaluation and were asked a series of questions. The students were very honest and forthright in their answers and gave us a lot of valuable feedback. The remaining students in the class were given an evaluation template on the software program “Innovation.” These students “mapped out” their feedback regarding the different presentation topics and technology that they learned about this semester. SALT plans to share the results of these evaluations with the staff at SALT & Catalina High School to improve the “connection” for this academic year.

Currently, SALT tutors are training a few high school tutors in alternative techniques that support a variety of learning styles. The high school tutors will in turn provide assistance to students with learning challenges at their school. Other activities planned for the year include another Shadow Day as well as a continuation of SALT staff and student presentations.
SALT CENTER PARTNERS WITH GRADUATE STUDENTS IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

by Ashley Klein, Learning Specialist

Since the Fall 2005 semester, the SALT Center has collaborated with the school psychology program at the University of Arizona. Together, we have been able to provide students and others with assessments free of charge, and school psychology graduate students with the opportunity to work with young adults facing learning challenges.

The SALT Center coordinated referrals from the UA Disability Resource Center, Pima Community College Disabled Student Resources, and other community organizations. Referrals included students needing updated documentation for graduate school or entrance exams, those needing documentation to extend or expand their current services, and some requesting assessment for the first time due to challenges experienced in the college environment.

Supervised by Dr. Shitala Mishra, graduate students interviewed clients, conducted IQ, cognitive and academic achievement measures relevant to each referral, and made recommendations for services and academic strategies. Because this is an important collaboration, the SALT Center facilitated case referrals, provided space to meet with clients, and supplied information on documenting learning disabilities at the postsecondary level. End of semester evaluations from graduate students indicated that this experience was extremely valuable to both the clients and graduate student examiners. The SALT Center looks forward to continuing this collaboration in upcoming semesters.

SALT Parent Ambassador Program

The SALT Admissions team is seeking parent volunteers for the newly created SALT Parent Ambassador Program. This program, designed in response to comments and concerns expressed by parents over the years, will connect new or prospective SALT parents with current SALT parents.

Many parents, especially those from outside of Arizona, feel that SALT and UA are the best choice for their child, but still have questions about sending their child away from home. It is our hope that when we connect these parents with someone from their same region of the country, they can get a first hand perspective on the SALT parent experience and hopefully have some of their concerns alleviated.

Parent Ambassadors will be asked to share their name, phone number and email address with prospective families from their areas. If you are interested in being an Ambassador, or if you need additional information, please contact Autumn Palmer at autumn@u.arizona.edu or at 520-621-5285.

Spring 2006 Mean Cumulative GPA of Students from the Top 5 States of Origin

<table>
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<th>State</th>
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<td>NY</td>
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<td>TX</td>
<td>2.64</td>
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In celebration of its 25th anniversary of providing service to UA students, the SALT Center hosted a year-long speaker series to bring new and innovative information to students, professionals and members of the University and Tucson, Arizona communities. The speakers, all nationally known for their writing, practice or research, brought a range of perspectives to living, learning and working with both learning and attention challenges.

In September, Dr. Mark Katz presented For Whom the Bell Curve Tolls: Revealing Portraits of Children Who Fail in School But Succeed in Life. Dr. Katz’s examples of resilience in individuals who struggled in school yet persevered to create productive and self-fulfilling adult lives provided inspiration to parents who worry about the future of their children and to adults who are still seeking a sense of accomplishment. Dr. Katz’s practice in clinical psychology is located in San Diego, CA.

In November, Dr. Sandy Newmark, a physician affiliated with the Tucson-based Center for Integrative Medicine, presented An Integrative Approach to ADD: Is Medication the Only Answer? As the only pediatrician in practice in Tucson who has trained through the center founded by Dr. Andrew Weil, Dr. Newmark presented a broad spectrum of possible interventions to address the challenges of ADHD in children.

Our December speaker, Kathleen Nadeau, presented a lecture of particular significance for adolescents and those who work with them. Transition to Adulthood – Life skills, academics and work, discussed the various stages of growth and development and the strategies that should accompany them to help those with ADHD achieve adult success. Dr. Nadeau based her comments on her internationally recognized experience in clinical psychology with individuals experiencing ADHD.

Carol Gignoux, founder of ADD Insights in Massachusetts, presented our January lecture. ADD in the Workplace: What Every Executive and Manager Needs to Know, informed our audience about the employment challenges experienced by individuals with ADHD. This topic pointed out a growing area of concern not only in Tucson but throughout the country as more employees with ADHD identify themselves to employers.

Lecturing on Journeys Through ADDulthood, Sari Solden, noted author and psychotherapist, discussed the adult impact of ADHD. Much of her lecture illustrated the emotional and psychological impact of ADHD on adolescent and adult development. She presented a realistic yet optimistic view of the future.

The SALT Center was proud to welcome Dr. Ed Hallowell, author of numerous books and founder of the Hallowell Centers, as its keynote speaker during the 25th anniversary gala in April. Dr. Hallowell delivered a thought provoking and uplifting address to over 200 people assembled to celebrate SALT’s anniversary. Speaking with students and SALT alumni after the event, it was clear that Dr. Hallowell’s message of optimism and perseverance resonated with the audience. The SALT Center is proud to have shared all these experts with the Tucson community. It looks forward to continuing to heighten knowledge of the impact of learning and attention challenges as well as research and interventions that may prove valuable in promoting individual success.
Development & Fundraising

SALT CENTER SETS NEW TARGETS FOR FUNDRAISING

by Diane Quinn, Director of Development

In May of this year the SALT Center established its first official staff position responsible for the identification and development of funding to meet SALT’s many goals. Though the SALT Center will always be grateful to its many contributors who have given unrestricted gifts, the department has recently identified two areas of critical future need. To meet these needs on an ongoing basis, gifts are now being solicited for contribution to these areas specifically.

Scholarship Endowment
The SALT Center has long had a commitment to access by all who qualify for service, regardless of ability to pay. Numbers of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who experience learning and attention challenges continue to grow. The SALT Center is no longer able to fully meet the requests for financial assistance of either needy or meritorious students. Funds raised through this initiative will assure that students from all locations and backgrounds will have an opportunity to benefit from SALT services. The Center has established an endowment goal of $2,000,000.

SALT Health and Wellness Services
All students entering higher education are challenged to adapt to new learning environments, but also to new living areas, new social structures, and previously unexperienced levels of expectations. SALT students are forced to confront these challenges and the additional psychological and emotional issues that a life-long history of learning and attention challenges have created. Experience has shown that many students require, and benefit from, access to psychological services while participating in the SALT program. These services must be delivered by trained, certified professionals. Experience has also shown that SALT students more fully engage with such service when it is available as a part of SALT programming and delivered within the walls of the SALT Center. Further, the SALT Center must provide programming and activities that promote a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Funds provided through this endowment will support both the academic, psychological and emotional health of SALT participants. The Center has established an endowment goal of $1,000,000. We are pleased to announce that the endowment has been established through a generous, anonymous lead gift of $50,000.

If you would like information about how to contribute to either of these endowment funds, please contact the SALT’s Director of Development, Diane Quinn, at 520-621-1433 or dcquinn@u.arizona.edu.

In Appreciation

The SALT Center gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions of the following friends from September 2005 through August 2006. We feel fortunate to receive these expressions of respect and appreciation for our program and will use these gifts in support of both programming and scholarships.

Ms. Marsha Ahearn
Albert H. Cohn Foundation
Dr. & Ms. Kirk & Mary Lou Aleck
Mr. Eric Anixter
Mr. & Mrs. Barry M. Aniko
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Armstrong
Mr. Ian Arnof
Mr. & Mrs. David Arnold
Dr. & Mrs. Tipton Asher
Diane Atwell
Carolyn Aufhammer
Charles & Caren Aufhammer
William & JoAnn Avellone
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis & Ahuva Barlow
Bruce & Patricia Bartlett
Jean Beck
Mike & Beverly Becker
Ronald & Claudia Beideman
Bernie & Cindy Benson
Mr. & Mrs. Saul Berkowitz
Lannette & Todd Bloom
Donald & Marilyn Braun
Mr. Richard Breeden
Seth & Alyn Breger
Scott & Jean Breininger
Mr. James S. Brown
Burton, Livingstone & Kirk, Inc.
Neil & Kathe Callahan
Mr. & Mrs. John & Veta Carney
Mr & Mrs. Guy & Elodie Cassidy
Central Louisiana Anesthesia
David & Danielle Chandler
Evelyn & Herbert Chernis Fund

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(In Appreciation... continued from previous page)

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Chernis
Mr. Franklin Cohen
Ms. Beth Cohn
Coleman Foundation
David & Susan Cone
Roberto Constantiner
Dr. Thomas Cottle
Joseph & Bonnie Cunningham
D’Amico Family Trust
Janet Davis
Denver Academy
Stephanie Devonshire
Mr. Harold Dorenbecher
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Duggan
Tom & Ellen Dunnion
Elizabeth Dushabek
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Edelman
Mr. Alan English
Mr. & Mrs. Craig & Jodi Erwich
Douglas & Sally Ryan Eustice
Dr. & Mrs. Seve & Dyann Fassman
Hallie Federman
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Ivan & Julie Field
Mr. & Mrs. Steven & Marjorie Fine
Mary Finger Family Foundation
Linda & Gary Firestein
Jean Firstenberg
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Andrew (Chip) & Barbara Glassanos
Earl & Anita Burger Gohl
Michael & Marta Goldblatt
Dr. Basil Gordon
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Dr. & Mrs. Hugh & Colleen Greenway
Jennifer Grunfeld
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Dr. & Mrs. Edward & Susan Habermann
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Rodney Herson
Denise & Marshall Hertz
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Dennis & Jane Kearns
Mr. & Mrs. James Keller
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Mr. & Mrs. Cary & Marla Lefton
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TW Lewis Foundation
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Mr. & Mrs. Michael Tomasz
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin & Sharon Travis
Joy Tucker
Ernie & Lesley Ufer
Velcro USA Inc.
W.B. Leons Foundation
Mr. Stephen Wahlstrom
Martha & Walter Webber
Dr. Amber West
Douglas & Sherry Shirley
Bruce & Andrea Winkler
Bill & Dyana Woo
Bruce Woodbury
Larry & Vickie Yamaoka
Mr. & Mrs. Tom & Carol Yuki
Mr. & Mrs. Bob & Perrin Zamarripa
“I can’t believe how quickly time went by,” “I’m happy and nervous at the same time,” and “I’m really graduating from college!” are just a few of the statements our SALT seniors say as they approach their graduation date.

Because graduating from the University of Arizona is the ultimate goal for all SALT students and the staff, the SALT Center is proud to celebrate this occasion at the end of each fall and spring semester with a SALT Graduation Luncheon.

In December 2005 and May 2006, we honored the achievements of over 40 SALT graduates. Each graduate was encouraged to invite family and friends to have lunch and enjoy a short program with the SALT staff.

The program included a wonderful buffet lunch, an introduction of each graduate and their accomplishments by their Learning Specialist, a gift from the SALT Center, and a Certificate of Congratulations signed by all SALT staff members.

As student success stories and plans for the future were shared at the luncheons, the heartfelt pride from parents, friends, and the SALT staff were truly memorable moments. To see our graduates accomplish this great milestone in their lives is an example of their academic and personal success that we are privileged to participate in.

We look forward to seeing all of our students attend the SALT Graduation Luncheon in the future and we continue to encourage them to reach for their goal of graduating from the University of Arizona. As a department, we look forward to hearing more success stories and statements of pride coming from our current and future students.

Over the past year, the department made explicit efforts to learn more about our graduating students, and this led to over thirty interviews with SALT graduates. It has been a terrific way to hear from the student’s perspective how they felt about their time with the SALT Center and the University of Arizona.

The interviews were conducted in the months leading up to December and May commencement ceremonies and took place during an informal conversation with the Associate Director. Students were asked to reflect upon their initial experiences and feelings when they arrived on campus and specifically what they perceived to be their biggest (continued on next page)
skills and challenges. Additionally, they were asked about the most valuable skills they learned from their time in the SALT Center and, lastly whether they had any words of advice for incoming students.

Here are some of the themes that came out of the responses of SALT graduates:

- Achieve balance between fun and academic work
- Take full advantage of the services and opportunities available
- Get involved in the campus community
- Strive to identify and create learning opportunities
- Look to your fellow students and learn from their experiences

What became clear during these interviews was that each student took something different from their experiences in the SALT Center. Some students found the tutoring and computer lab the most critical resource while others found their meetings with learning specialists to be the most valuable. The individualized nature of the work we do clearly results in outcomes that are equally individualized.

Overall, there were two main themes that appeared in the interviews with SALT graduates. The first was the level of comfort they experienced within the SALT community of learners. Regardless of whether they were interacting with staff, fellow students, or tutors, all students were impressed by the level of commitment and integrity that existed within the SALT Center's programs and services. The second theme was that the outcomes and results they got out of their time in the SALT Center were directly connected to how much effort they put into the process.

So the message from our recent graduates seems clear: students who take advantage of the services, become engaged in our community, and find balance between social and academic endeavors will find success and reach their personal goals. The SALT Center looks forward to continued conversations with our graduates in order to keep our program providing innovative programs and services to our students.

SALT GRADUATES LEAVE THEIR MARK THROUGH THE WALL OF SUCCESS

by Diane C. Quinn, Director of Development

Several years ago the leadership of the SALT Center created a wonderful opportunity for graduating students to celebrate their achievements at the University of Arizona while also leaving their mark on the SALT Center.

The Wall of Success is located on the second floor of our building and is intended to commemorate the accomplishments of countless University of Arizona graduates who have benefited from participation in the SALT Center. The Wall of Success serves as a great example to both current and prospective students who can see the success that results from hard work, resilience, and persistence.

At this time we have over thirty names on the Wall of Success and the wall gets bigger after each commencement ceremony in May and December. Each name symbolizes how a commitment to academics and use of SALT services can combine to make goals become a reality. For family and friends of our students, the Wall of Success offers a great way to permanently pay tribute to the success and achievement of that special person who accomplished many great achievements during their time in the SALT Center and at the University of Arizona.
be responsible for preparing for his “lesson”. It involves taking seemingly random information and establishes relevance and ensures understanding of the material. Teach the Tutor allows the student to use what he’s learned immediately, make connections with previously learned material, explain or teach it and then to receive immediate feedback if needed. It is an excellent activity that raises the student’s emotional level to aid in long term retention.

The next step involves time management. It is important that students give themselves enough time to study effectively and learn the material prior to an exam. One exam preparation strategy is the 8 Day Study Plan. It involves taking a long term project and creating immediate goals and retrieval cues to help students stay focused and motivated.

In addition, students can create a “memory game” by mixing up their concept cards and studying “out of order”. They can use visualization techniques, quiz themselves, see if their details are comprehensive and check if their retrieval cues are accessible. This “memory game” also helps to activate students’ emotional learning levels.

Using appropriate strategies involves a commitment. Knowing the strategy is not good enough. Students must first be willing to learn, use strategies, and then must be able to adapt them for different types of coursework. It is also important that students know what has worked for them in the past and what has not. The strategies I mentioned are some simple ways to incorporate appropriate levels of emotion in a learning task. They also engage the student with multiple learning modalities. Using these strategies will help reduce any anxieties that can interfere with information retrieval during an exam. Hopefully, the student will have positive emotional memories of the learning process, will have spent enough time preparing, and will be able to use retrieval cues that he was responsible for researching and creating himself. And all of this will prevent the dreaded “blank out” during an exam.

Incorporating success strategies is important for a student’s success here at the University of Arizona. At the SALT Center, we guide students in learning new skills and strategies so that they can achieve their academic goals.

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thesis statements, and organizing paragraphs, before they get to the smaller problems like grammatical errors and misspellings. When you solve these higher-order problems, you spend more time reflecting on ideas and the writing process, which helps you learn more. It also tends to have the greatest effect on your grade.

Once you’ve reached an agreement about what to work on, tutors often start asking questions. For example, if you’re trying to decide what to write about, the tutor might ask, “Can you tell me about what you’ve read?” or “What interested you most about this topic when you were discussing it in class?” In these cases, the tutors are not looking for particular right or wrong answers; they are only trying to help you come up with your own ideas.

Many students visit the Writers Lab two or three times before they arrive at the editing stage. When you do start editing, the tutors will not simply fix the errors for you. Instead, they will ask for your input on the process, perhaps reading the paper out loud and pausing whenever either of you hear errors. They will point out problems and explain how to fix them if you don’t know how to do so yourself. As you learn and master editing techniques, they will usually ask you to take more and more control over the process.

I should note that if you only want help with editing, you don’t need to sit through two or three sessions on other topics. You just need to tell your tutors that fixing your mistakes is all you want to do. Most of the time, the tutors will encourage you to dig deeper, and if you do, it should improve your overall performance. However, the final decision about what to work on always rests with you.

College-level writing tutors require you to do more thinking during sessions than some high school tutors do. This will probably seem daunting at first, but it also has many good outcomes. You learn more, and you become more independent. Most importantly, the control over your own work truly rests with you. After working with SALT’s Writing Lab on a consistent basis, you will surely begin to see improved outcomes, and you will develop more confidence in your writing skills.

![Distribution of Spring 2006 Cumulative GPA of SALT Female Students](image)