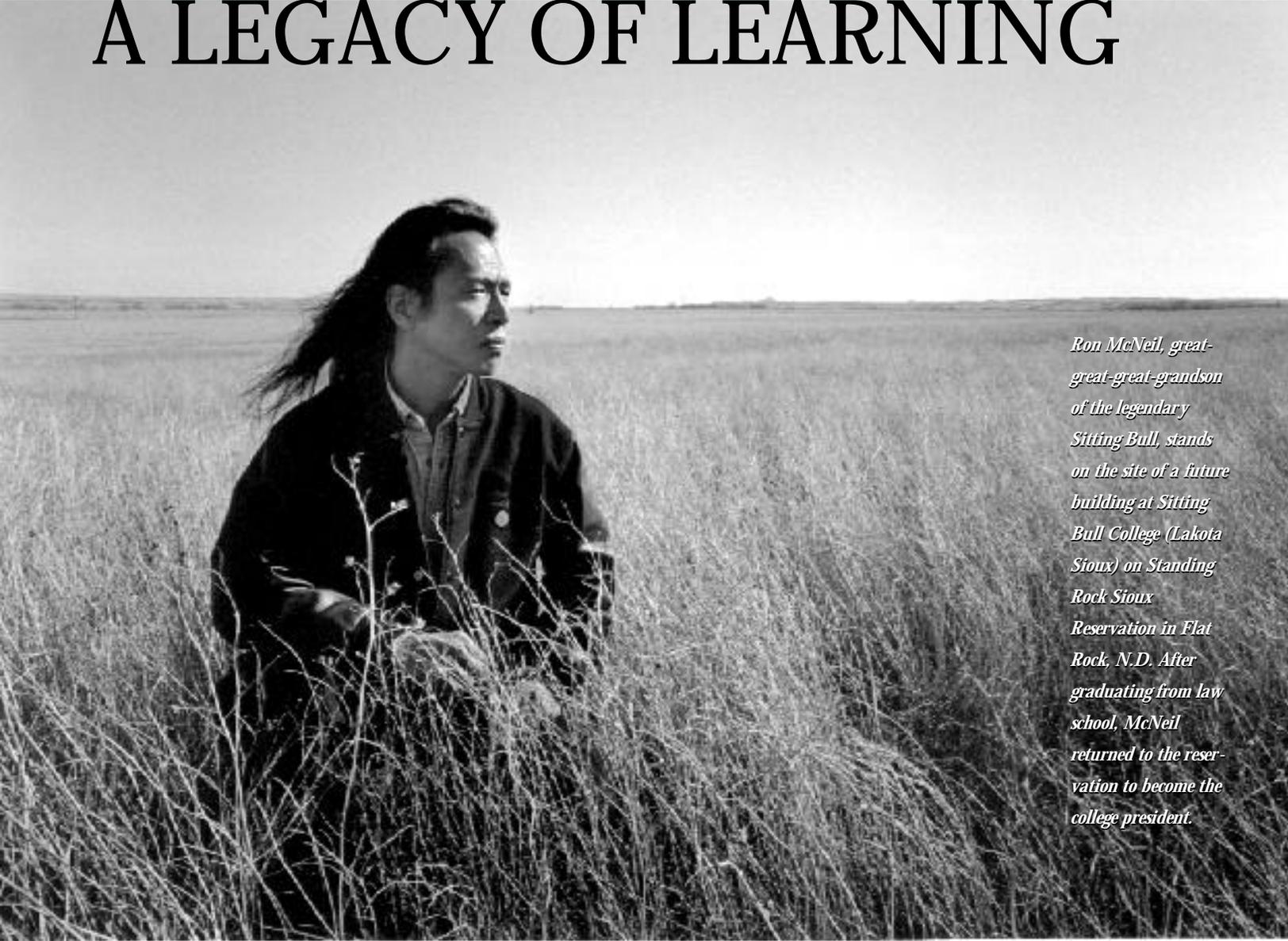


*Janine Pease-Pretty OnTop, president of Little Big Horn College in Montana, points with pride at the plaques displayed on campus to honor those persons responsible for the school's physical growth. The benefactors are not wealthy alumni showing their gratitude, but building-trades class members exhibiting their skills.*

Since the college's founding in 1980 on the Crow Reservation, its students have helped transform an abandoned gymnasium, a sewer treatment center, an old irrigation house and a collection of trailers into useable classrooms, labs, faculty offices, tribal archives and a library with 18,000 volumes.

"Visitors who come here today see homemade tables and benches that are our classroom furniture," she says. "The students did all this, and they feel a tremendous amount of ownership and pride. The problem is that the lifetime of our additions and improvements is only 10 years because we've had to use the lowest-cost materials. Progress has come at a snail's pace."

## HELPING TRIBAL COLLEGES BUILD A LEGACY OF LEARNING



*Ron McNeil, great-great-great-grandson of the legendary Sitting Bull, stands on the site of a future building at Sitting Bull College (Lakota Sioux) on Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in Flat Rock, N.D. After graduating from law school, McNeil returned to the reservation to become the college president.*



their physical properties. The Endowment's grant – and support from many other funders – will change those conditions. The grant was yet another example of the Endowment's longstanding belief that education is crucial as a means to include all Americans in the quest for prosperity and full participation in society.

*Instructor Wilbur Flying By teaches Lakota/Dakota languages at Sitting Bull College, where proficiency in a native language is required.*

The grant enabled Little Big Horn College to move up the groundbreaking for a new

**R**on McNeil, president of Sitting Bull College in North Dakota and the great-great-great-grandson of Chief Sitting Bull, understands well his colleague's dilemma. In 1997 a water main broke in the interior wall of his school's library and caused so much damage that he was forced to cancel classes. Students, faculty and staff hauled the books out of the building and managed to save them from the damaging cascade of water.

learning center by seven months. It also helped persuade the board at Sitting Bull College to construct a new building to replace the one gradually sinking into the sandy soil of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation.

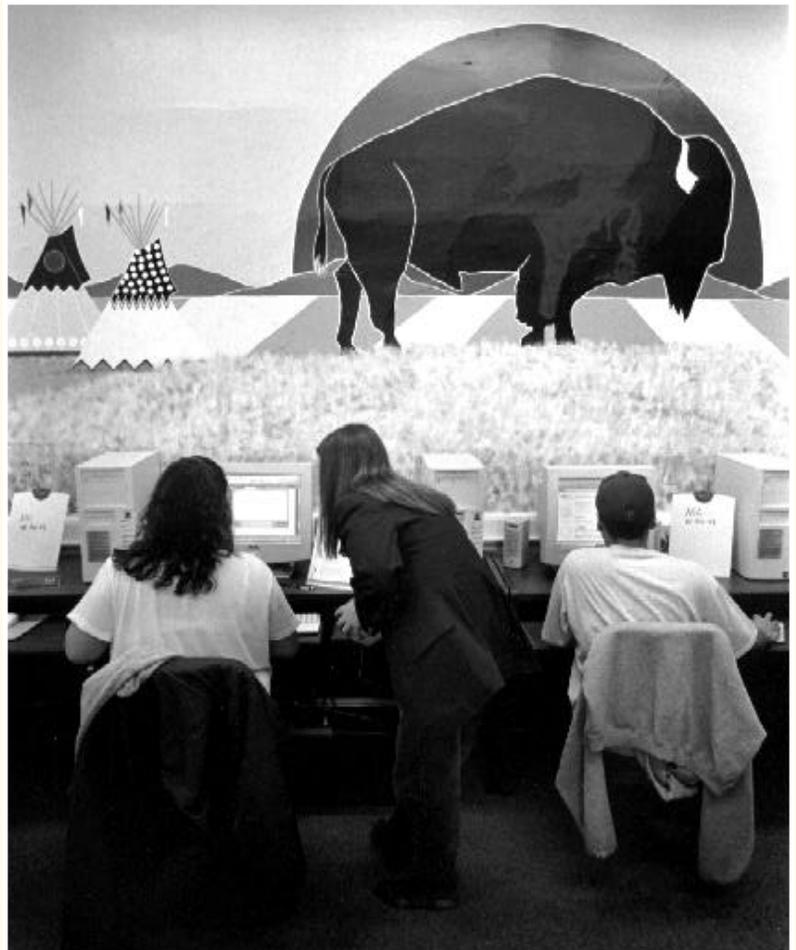
*The computer room at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck, N.D., provides students a place to complete assignments and to send and receive e-mail.*

Other schools, located primarily on rural reservations in 12 states from Michigan to California, are creating priority lists and drawing up master plans to guide them as they take steps toward upgrading their buildings.

"We also had an electrical fire last year after someone plugged in a computer," recalls McNeil. "The wiring was never intended for the amount of usage that it gets now. We're trying to upgrade the system, but it costs money and we simply can't afford it."

### Educating the mind and spirit

A "Campaign of Hope," launched by the American Indian College Fund (AICF), promises to improve the facilities at the 30 tribal colleges and universities that serve 26,000 Native American students in the United States. The five-year effort to raise \$120 million received a jump-start in June when Lilly Endowment awarded a \$30 million grant to support the construction of safe, up-to-date classrooms, laboratories and libraries. Tribal colleges face challenges enough, but surely one of the most apparent is the crying need for change in





*Richard Williams heads AICF, which includes 30 tribal colleges over 12 states with 26,000 students from 250 different tribes.*

“Our students are excited about education, even though their academic experiences take place in facilities that are totally inadequate,” says Richard B. Williams, executive director of AICF, based in Denver. “These schools started in trailers, storefront properties and abandoned buildings. Many are still there. We know that an ideal campus for an average-size tribal college costs between \$12 million and

\$15 million. We won’t have those kinds of resources for many years, but we will have the funds to develop plans, build the first building or construct a wing of the first building. Every facility will be designed so that it can accommodate additions and the sweeping changes taking place in American society.”

Although the tribal colleges are comparatively young institutions – the first was founded by the Navajo nation in 1968 – they have earned a reputation for success. In keeping with AICF’s credo of “educating the mind and spirit,” the schools offer Indian students a dual academic and cultural form of higher education that blends liberal arts requirements with classes in Native American language and culture.

“People need to find out who they are,” says Barbara Bratone, director of resource development for AICF. “Once they know who they are, they can go on to become who they want to be. A very important part of these colleges is introducing and reinforcing the cultural aspect.”

Jay Old Horn, a graduate of Little Big Horn College and now a psychology student at the University of Montana, agrees. He chose to begin his college career on the reservation to reacquaint himself with the activities of the Crow culture. “The last time I was there was as an ado-

lescent, and the memories had become vague,” he says. “It was great to learn the characteristics of the people who share cultural qualities with me. Little Big Horn College helped me discover who I am as a person and taught me what I can do to contribute to my people.”

### Appeal to cultural heritage

Statistics indicate that before tribal colleges were established, 90 percent of Native Americans who pursued higher education did not graduate. The reasons varied and included homesickness, culture shock, financial woes and inadequate academic preparation. The tribal colleges addressed these obstacles and introduced responsible change by providing personal attention, cultural support, remedial classes, scholarship opportunities, tuition breaks and – on some campuses – child care and transportation to and from school.

“We’re a small institution and we know everyone by name,” says McNeil, a graduate of Sitting Bull, the Lakota Sioux college he now leads. “Close to 50 percent of our faculty members and almost all our staff are Native American, so students have strong role models. We also require that all our instructors include Native American culture in their curriculum.”

These efforts have been successful. More than 40 percent of tribal college graduates pursue further education; another 53 percent find employment. The schools stress the importance of graduates’ using their training on their home reservations and helping improve the lives of their people.

*David Gipp (left), president of United Tribes Technical College, and Bud Anderson, maintenance director, oversee work on the transformation of the old Army fort’s swimming-pool area into a student center.*



*Janine Pease-Pretty On Top, president of Little Big Horn College in Montana, greets visitors to a groundbreaking ceremony for a learning center.*

*Teacher Wayne Fox (right) explores the wonders of crayfish with fifth graders at Standing Rock Elementary School. Nearby Sitting Bull College is one of several tribal schools to receive a National Science Foundation grant to improve local K-12 education. Fox is one of five teachers at the school who have graduated from tribal colleges and returned to the reservation.*

“There used to be an incredible brain drain,” says Williams. “We lost the best and the brightest young people, who left the reservation and never came back. Now we tell them that we want them to be part of the renewal of the reservation system. Today the expectation is that, if they do leave to complete a degree or go to graduate school, they will someday return. We encourage them to choose academic areas that will be useful to their reservations.”

Beau Mitchell, a graduate of Stone Child College and now a student at Montana State University, is responding to the encouragement. He hopes to return to Rocky Boy’s Indian Reservation in Montana after earning his bachelor’s degree in soil and water science. Improving the reservation’s water quality and protecting its wetlands are his primary interests, and the Chippewa-Cree student plans to attend law school eventually and specialize in environmental and tribal law.

He credits his academic success to the exemplary teachers at Stone Child. “The classes were small,” says Mitchell. “At the state university, with maybe 300 students in a class, a professor can’t put his lecture on hold to answer one student’s questions. In a smaller setting we could discuss the material until we all fully understood it.”



## Building on success

Enrollment at the tribal colleges is surging; a new school is preparing to open its doors soon, and several institutions are expanding their offerings beyond associate programs to include four-year and master’s degrees.

Still, the needs are overwhelming. The schools are short on facilities, funds and faculty members. Some face loss of accreditation because of inadequate and unsafe equipment; some operate in crisis situations without enough income to meet the payroll; many of the college presidents pitch in and assume classroom duties in addition to overseeing the administration of their institutions.

“I’ve taught public speaking, sociology, composition, math, psychology and Indian education,” says Pease-Pretty On Top. “Such an arrangement is not unusual.”

If successful, the AICF campaign not only will raise funds for physical improvements to the campuses, but also will raise public awareness of the tribal colleges and their impressive record of success. For all the challenges they face, the schools manage to blend accredited education and culture in such a way that students once considered “at risk” emerge motivated and prepared for the future.

“The tribal college helped me get in touch with who I am and who I’m representing,” says Mitchell. “I’m reminded every day of my purpose, which is to help my people now and several generations from now.”





# HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND MAKING A DOWN PAYMENT ON THE FUTURE

**When the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF)** announced its bold intention to double the number of Latino students earning bachelor's degrees by the year 2006, president and chief executive officer Sara Martinez Tucker knew the size of the job before her. She also knew its importance. Too few Hispanic teens go to college, and of those who do, too few graduate. Of the 2 million Latinos who complete high school each year, only 728,000 continue their education; of those, only 68,000 leave with four-year degrees in hand.

*Janice Rodriguez, senior at Indiana University, anticipates using her marketing skills after spring graduation. HSF officials hope to help spur a dramatic increase in the number of Latino college graduates.*

**T**hese numbers simply are not good enough for the fastest growing segment of the American population. Hispanics now make up about 11 percent of the United States population, and that number is projected to grow to more than 24 percent by 2050 – or nearly 100 million people.

“But right now this country can't afford for 1.9 million young people to be ill-prepared to join the workforce and ill-prepared to be parents,” says Martinez Tucker, whose role in the aggressive campaign expanded when she left the

executive ranks of an international corporation to assume the top role at the 25-year-old HSF.

Even if the organization succeeds in increasing the graduation rate from the current 9 percent to the anticipated 18 percent, Hispanics still will lag behind other groups.

“The national average for all races is 23 percent,” points out Martinez Tucker. “Hispanics have a way to go to catch up.”

Until they do, they most likely will continue to be overrepresented in the service-jobs sector of the labor force and underrepresented in the ranks of management. “Our wages and median income



*Sara Martinez Tucker left the executive ranks of an international corporation to become president and CEO of HSF.*

have stayed relatively flat, which means that parents can't afford to send their kids to college," she explains. "Breaking that cycle is the reason the scholarship fund exists."

To support the HSF effort to bring about significant change, Lilly Endowment awarded a grant of \$50 million to the San Francisco-based fund. The award was historic in two ways: It represents the largest grant ever made by the Endowment to an organization outside Indiana, and it is the largest single gift ever received by HSF. Of the total amount, \$5 million is earmarked for the establishment of an HSF endowment and will require a dollar-for-dollar match.

### **Doubling the impact**

"In the past, we've had nothing left when we've closed our books on March 31," explains Martinez Tucker. The fund-raising cycle would begin anew each year, and by the end of January "we'd see how much we had raised." That amount – usually about \$3.5 million – would determine the

number and size of the scholarship awards.

With the help of the Endowment grant, HSF will double the amount awarded to current students enrolled in four-year degree programs and will launch new initiatives to reach other segments of the Hispanic population. These initiatives include:

- A community college program that will encourage individuals to continue their education by transferring to four-year institutions, thus strengthening the pipeline of future graduates.
- A scholarship fund for graduating high school seniors, requiring school districts to raise matching funds in their communities.
- A "community engagement" campaign to inform people about the need to support Hispanic scholarship efforts and to familiarize Hispanic families with college admission requirements and the financial-aid process.

"We surveyed our students and discovered that a lack of financial resources is the number-one reason students do not continue their education," says Martinez Tucker.

"The family also is seen as a barrier," she says. "Parents are committed to education, but for them 'education' means economic security. If their kids get jobs that pay more than the parents earn, then the parents think the kids have had enough education. We need to convince them that it's higher education that equals economic security."

When she carries the HSF story to audiences of prospective donors across the country, Martinez Tucker characterizes the Endowment grant as a "down payment" on the future and challenges her listeners to help "raise the mortgage."

She underscores the message by citing compelling statistics: Of the 30 million Hispanics living in the United States, 38 percent are under the age of 19; currently Hispanics have the highest dropout rates from high school and college; 58 percent of scholarship recipients are the first in their families to attend college, and 51 percent of the families fall into the "low income" category.

"The need is acute," she says, as she outlines strategies for the future. "We hope to open regional

*Angela Castañeda is working toward a doctoral degree in anthropology from Indiana University. She aims for a career as a professor and hopes she can be a mentor to others as her professors were for her during her undergraduate days at DePauw University.*

offices in key areas where we have high concentrations of Latinos. We want to mobilize people to get involved at the grass-roots level, serve as mentors, create local chapters and identify students for focus groups to discuss barriers – including money – that keep these students from attending college.”

### Setting a high standard

Criteria for HSF scholarships have always been demanding. Students are evaluated on their academic achievement, financial need, character and leadership. Although HSF grants have been modest in size (the average award has been about \$1,300), recipients say the funds go a long way in easing their financial burden.

“I’ve been able to keep my loans down to a minimum because of the scholarship,” says Janice Rodriguez, a marketing major at Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business in Bloomington.

She will graduate from the school’s honors program in May. With family roots in Puerto Rico, she hopes to work for a company that supports scholarships for minority students.

“Regardless of nationality, if students have the desire to go to school, money shouldn’t be the issue that prevents them,” Rodriguez says.

Angela Castañeda, a Mexican-American, was encouraged by the faculty at DePauw University to pursue a Ph.D. program in anthropology. “No one in my family had ever gone to grad school, but my profs convinced me I could do it,” she says. “The scholarship made a really big difference.” She packaged her HSF grant with other awards and now is in her second year of graduate study at I.U. Bloomington. She plans to teach eventually at a small liberal-arts college and hopes to mentor young Latino students just as she was mentored at DePauw.

“Success breeds success,” says Martinez Tucker. “We’ve shown that our graduates do well; 67 percent are in managerial jobs, and 89 percent earn more than the average national per capita income. They’re active in volunteer work and make strong role models in their communities.”

As more and more students graduate, they will validate the HSF premise that higher education equals economic security and ensures choices.

“I want all Latino children in this country to be able to create their own destiny,” she says. “I want them to have the choice, and education is the only thing that will give them that choice.”



# PREPARING TO PROSPER I.U. AND ROSE-HULMAN IN FOREFRONT OF CHANGE

At the beginning of the 21st century, Indiana must face a sobering question: Is it ready to participate – let alone prosper – in an increasingly global, technology-driven economy?

For the past several years, Lilly Endowment has been deeply concerned about the unacceptably low rankings of Indiana's residents on several measures of educational attainment: Indiana ranks 48th of the 50 states in the percentage of the adult population with a baccalaureate degree and 50th of the 50 states and the District of Columbia in the percentage of the workforce in professional positions or specialty occupations. During 1999 the bad news continued: Indiana declined from 42nd to 45th in the SAT college entrance exam scores.

From 1996 through August 1999, the Endowment had invested more than \$220 million in efforts to raise educational attainment levels by funding programs at virtually all of Indiana's four-year public and private colleges and universities. This includes the Lilly Endowment Community Scholarship Program, which is sending more than 350 students



*(right) Michael McRobbie, I.U. vice president of information technology, claims the world is just on the front edge of what's coming in the ever-more-computerized future.*

from across the state to Indiana colleges and universities on full-tuition scholarships. It also includes funding projects for public school foundations and private schools in Marion County.

Recognizing that no single approach would solve the challenges ahead, the Endowment invited Indiana University and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology to develop proposals that would position those institutions, as well as the state of Indiana, for the future. Rose-Hulman enjoys the *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking as the country's top undergraduate engineering school, and I.U. uses the latest technologies across the board to position its teaching, learning and research into the front ranks of American universities.

As a result, the Endowment in September awarded two grants totaling nearly \$60 million: \$29.9 million to the Indiana University Foundation to jump-start the Indiana Pervasive Computing Research (IPCRES) initiative and \$29.7 million to Rose-Hulman to create the Center for an Innovation Economy (CIE).

*(opposite) James Eifert works with Lisa Durcholz in a design class at Rose-Hulman. The task was to design a "halo system parametrically." Students worked out their designs on the computer, then sent instructions to the "rapid prototyping machine," which turned out "the product" to test on a mannequin. Halos are used to stabilize patients with head and neck injuries.*

### Success by innovation

Although it is still mostly empty, the Rose-Hulman CIE, located in a 35,000-square-foot building called South Hall, has the potential to change the face of Rose-Hulman, Terre Haute, and the state, according to James Eifert.

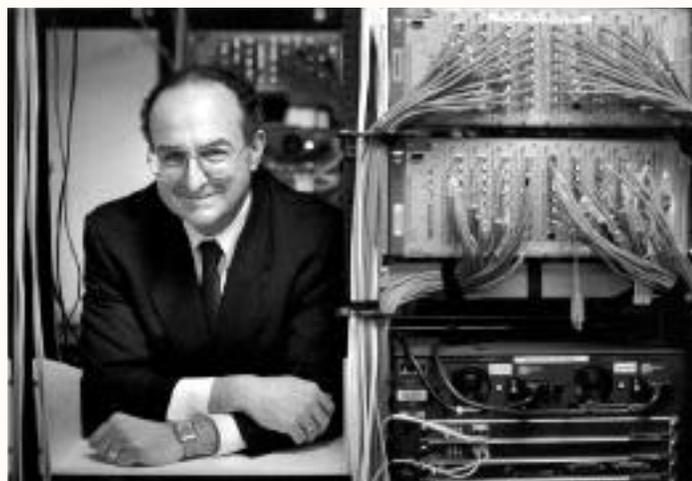
CIE president and a Rose-Hulman professor of mechanical engineering, Eifert says that by the end of the year 2000, CIE should be buzzing with activity. Within a few months of the announcement of the grant, calls were coming in from people wanting to learn more about the opportunities within the new business incubator, located in Rose-Hulman's 180-acre Aleph Park in Terre Haute.

"The ideas that have come to us range from electronic products to manufacturing technologies to theatrical products," Eifert says. "Our original goal of five tenants is not at all unrealistic, but we're not looking just to fill up the space. These small companies have to fit our goals."

The goal of the incubator – equipped with

advanced computing and communications systems – is to attract, develop and retain high-tech industries in Indiana so that students, faculty, staff and others can apply their talents to enhance Indiana's technological competitiveness. The Rose-Hulman CIE also includes a venture capital fund to provide capital for commercial development of promising ideas that will attract entrepreneurs and encourage them to stay in Indiana.

To support the overall goal of boosting Indiana's muscle in technology – including the community in and around Terre Haute – CIE initially will sponsor several programs: an Innovation Fellows Program to attract specific expertise need-



ed for CIE clients, an Entrepreneurial Internship Program to permit students actually to be a part of growing firms, and an International Internship Program to enable students to acquire the global perspective necessary for success in the future economic milieu.

CIE's goals, Eifert explains, complement Rose-Hulman's top-rated academic programs and provide its students and faculty with cutting-edge professional practice opportunities increasingly important to the needs of a 21st century engineering, mathematics and science education.

"Engineering education has been very focused on science and research during the past 40 years, and not so much with consumer products. The world has changed greatly, which requires a slightly different focus for our engineering stu-

dents. They need to understand that shift,” Eifert says. “Our economy will be successful through innovation. We have concentrated on attracting innovative companies to Indiana, but in the end that may be more difficult than growing our own pool of talent.”

### Ready – and able – to compete

With Grandma surfing the Web, the proliferation of personal computers at home and work, and microchips implanted in our pets, the Indiana Pervasive Computing Research initiative seems especially aptly named.

After all, isn't computing already pervasive?

Not according to Michael McRobbie, I.U. vice president for information technology, chief information officer, and primary architect of the IPCRES initiative.

“You ain't seen nothin' yet,” says McRobbie in a distinguished Australian accent. “People talk about the magnitude of information technology now, but we're just on the front edge of what is possible. We're looking forward to a time when microprocessing is so cheap that every household appliance, every device will have the technology.”

Pervasive computing is the increasingly powerful combination of high-speed computers and intelligent devices, ranging from scientific instruments to home appliances to online digital libraries, all completely interconnected by wired and wireless networks and accessible anywhere in the world.

The IPCRES initiative seeks to leverage the trend in pervasive computing by developing a topnotch research capability. By advancing research in the technologies poised to drive the 21st century information economy, McRobbie hopes that the initiative will contribute significantly to the growth of the information economy in Indiana.

To this end, the initiative should complement the efforts associated with I.U.'s new School of Informatics, its position as the Abilene Network Operations Center (Internet2), and the work of Purdue University's Center for Education and Research in Information Assurance and Secu-

rity (CERIAS). (Purdue received a \$4.9 million Endowment grant in 1998 to support CERIAS.) McRobbie sees the potential for significant synergies between the IPCRES initiative and CERIAS.

With the grant from the Endowment, I.U. will establish six IPCRES laboratories on its Bloomington campus and at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. The laboratories will focus their efforts in two main areas fundamental to building the pervasive computing environment of the future: software technologies and advanced telecommunications. The state-of-the-art labs will be headed by a cast of researchers with the highest international standing, according to McRobbie.

As part of its strategy, the IPCRES initiative also will establish an economic development office to build on the technology developments and scientific discoveries of the IPCRES laboratories to create new business, infuse new technologies into existing businesses and attract new companies to Indiana.

Another important element in the success of the IPCRES initiative as a force for economic development in Indiana will be an increase in the number of graduates trained in information technology.

“It's clear by just a cursory look that Indiana's economy is focused on industry susceptible to economic fluctuation,” McRobbie says. “We want to encourage a shift in economic development in the state of Indiana to diversify the economy through the development of information technology. The university has a duty to contribute to economic development in the state and a duty to encourage the kind of change that will be important to Indiana in the future.”



## STUDENTS HELP STUDENTS ON HOMEWORK HOTLINE

**Homework can be a lonely, frustrating experience.** *But for many Indiana students, an end to that lonely grappling is just a phone call away, toll-free at 1-877-ASK-ROSE. On any given Sunday through Thursday evening throughout the school year, up to 20 student-tutors from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology sit by the telephones in Terre Haute, Ind., ready and willing to help middle- and high-school students tackle mathematics and science.*

**S**tudents like Rose-Hulman junior Megan Switzer, a chemical engineering major from Falling Water, W.Va., are happy to help. The question could be about anything regarding math or science. The answer could be simple – solved with a little help in five minutes – or take more than an hour to figure out.

“Sometimes panicky parents call and say, ‘I can’t help my child, can you?’ The students all seem pretty motivated to understand this stuff, and when you can help, it’s nice,” Switzer says.

It is nice for everyone involved, according to Susan Smith, coordinator of Homework Hotline and director of the Learning Center at Rose-Hulman. The hotline was started in 1991 to help students in Vigo County, where Rose-Hulman is located, and was expanded to serve Clay and Blackford counties in 1995.

In 1999 Rose-Hulman received nearly \$1 million from Lilly Endowment to expand the program again, this time to serve students primarily in Indianapolis and central Indiana. Speaking to struggling students on headsets, Rose-Hulman tutors work with calculators and the same textbooks used by students in their own schools. Tutors are housed in a brand-new call center, assisting students from 15 Indiana communities. With the expanded service and new facilities, up to 80,000 students in those areas can tap into the expertise of students from one of the nation’s leading engineering schools.

Tutors benefit too, polishing their communication and problem-solving skills and applying what they know to help others, according to Smith.

*Rose-Hulman student Megan Switzer calls upon the expertise of Homework Hotline coordinator Susan Smith (right). The students’ services as math and science “advisers” to younger students now extends to central Indiana communities.*

“This is a way Rose-Hulman can give back,” Smith says. “We want our graduates not only to do well in engineering and science, but also to give back to their communities and share their skills and talent. We believe that people working together can make a difference.”

The Homework Hotline logged 680 calls during November 1999 alone. Calls came from students all over central Indiana and from counties previously served. That’s more than the 604 calls received during the 1997-98 academic year.

“Things are going well,” Smith says. “We think we’re answering a big need out there.”

### Trying to change Indiana’s math scores

“Many of the questions seem to be about algebra,” Switzer says. “I remember struggling with algebra when I first started, too.”

There is ample evidence that many Indiana students struggle with algebra and other areas of math and science. Of high school sophomores tested in 1997, only 58 percent demonstrated a mastery of essential skills in mathematics.

The problem of low scores continues to concern the Endowment, which has funded programs aimed at the complex problem of raising educational attainment among Indiana youth. Homework Hotline is another link in a chain of initiatives with the potential to improve math and science education in the state and, as a result, increase the potential for succeeding in higher education.

The success of Homework Hotline lies in the use of peer tutoring, according to Smith. Rose-Hulman students must be recommended as tutors by Rose-Hulman faculty. They must then complete a training process to learn how to best answer questions over the phone or the Internet and how to use their expertise to help younger students. They are probably among the best qualified college-age tutors in the state: The median SAT math score for the 1998-99 freshman class was 710, making that class one of the best in the nation.

Not that Rose-Hulman tutors are giving away any answers to math quizzes. Although they

are armed with calculators and desk copies of the textbooks being used by students who call, tutors are trained to work through problems with students, coaching them on underlying mathematical concepts, such as terminology, steps in solving an algebraic formula, or geometry theorems.

The grant allowed Rose-Hulman to hire 45 tutors to work three-hour shifts a few times a week, earning \$8 an hour. “Many students want to be tutors,” Smith says. “We’re looking for a specific kind of person, someone who can communicate clearly, be empathetic toward students and be patient.”

The Endowment grant enabled Rose-Hulman not only to construct its new call center with additional phone lines, headsets and desks for tutors, but also to develop a targeted advertising campaign to market the Homework Hotline to students and teachers in the expanded service area. Rose-Hulman distributed pens, notepads, stickers, magnets and classroom posters marked with the Homework Hotline logo and toll-free number. Smith, her assistant and Rose-Hulman students sometimes visit schools and PTA meetings to promote the program.

“Previously, we had only three telephones for three tutors to work. The new call center is wonderful, with space to expand as demand grows,” Smith says. “We’re confident that with the right marketing and as the word spreads, more students will call.”

By the third year of the grant, Rose-Hulman officials expect that the Hotline will incorporate online materials and learning modules that could demonstrate the efficiency of tutoring as a distance-learning technique.

“Students really struggle with math and science,” says Smith. “We need to change with the times. By making the most of the rapidly advancing technology now available, we are adding to the ways students can receive the help they need.”

## BETTER SITTERS TODAY, BETTER PARENTS TOMORROW

*Indianapolis Safe Sitter Sam Blevins takes some all-in-fun ribbing from his siblings: Laura, Sash and Zach Blevins.*

**Sam Blevins is a 12-year-old sixth-grader** who already has some serious responsibilities. He has two younger brothers (ages 8 and 10) and a younger sister (age 4). An older brother is in high school, busy with all the extracurricular and social events of a teenager. “When my parents have to be away from home, that leaves me in charge,” Sam says.

And he is up to the task, thanks to Safe Sitter, founded 20 years ago by Patricia A. Keener, associate chairman of the department of pediatrics, clinical professor of pediatrics, division director of general and community pediatrics at the Indiana University School of Medicine, and chief of pediatrics at Wishard Health Services in Indianapolis.

Sam completed the two-day baby-sitter training course last August. When he baby-sits for his siblings, he keeps his Safe Sitter folder handy – just in case. The folder contains information on everything from how to rescue a choking child to tips on preventing problem behavior.

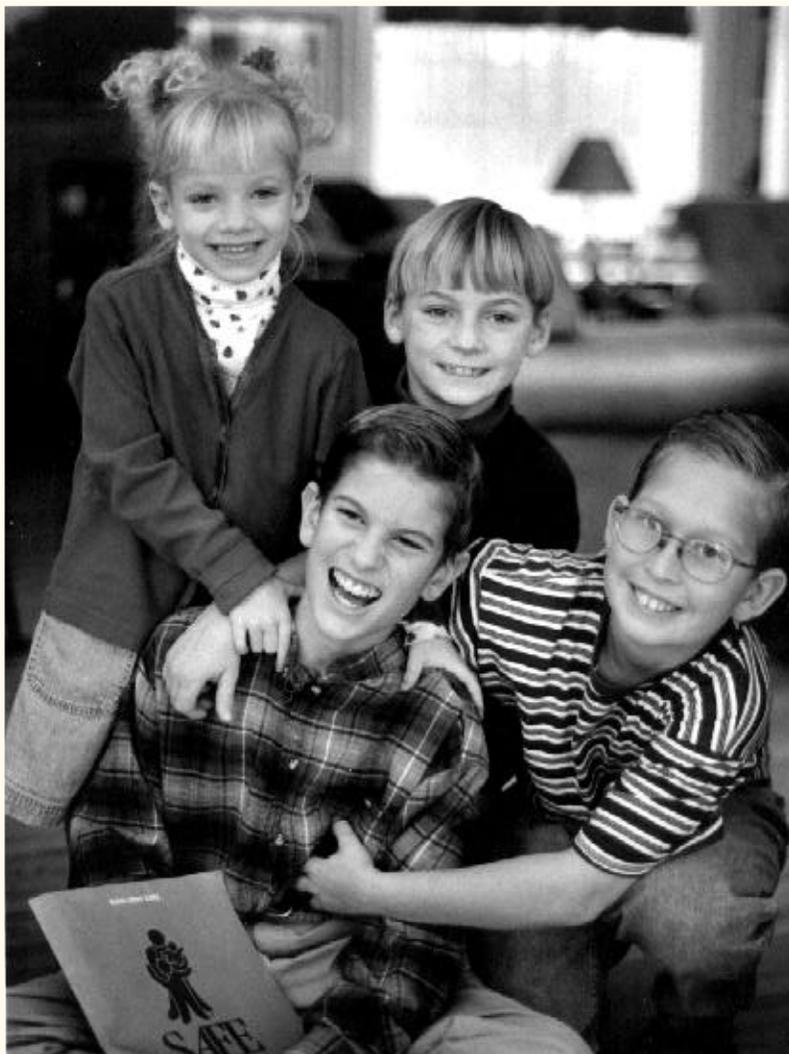
“I don’t hesitate to leave Sam in charge,” says his mother, Meg Blevins. “He now has a sense of security to match his sense of responsibility.”

### Making wise choices

The primary aim of Safe Sitter is to prepare youth to be better caregivers – and, eventually, better parents. Sam, however, pointed out another valuable lesson he learned during the training: knowing when not to accept a baby-sitting job. He recently put his judgment to the test when he was asked to baby-sit for a family with five children. He decided to wait until he had more experience under his belt.

“Safe Sitter taught me to start small with baby-sitting jobs and to think about the number of children I can safely take care of,” Sam says. “I think maybe I need to be more mature to baby-sit for five kids.”

That kind of thoughtful response is just what Keener wants to hear. “We teach our young people to ask themselves, ‘Am I able? Will I be safe? Am I available? Do I have permission?’ If the answer to all these questions is ‘yes,’ then it’s okay to take the job.”



## Local program now international

Keener taught the first Safe Sitter course to 12 students in her daughter's sixth-grade class. A colleague's 18-month-old daughter had choked to death in the care of an adult baby sitter who did not know how to save the child. Keener decided that everyone who takes care of children needs the skills to rescue a child whose airway is obstructed. "I realized that young, adolescent sitters were the least likely to have those skills, so I decided to start a training program for children 11 to 13 years old."

From its initial offerings in the early 1980s and with the help of seed money from Lilly Endowment in 1987, Safe Sitter has grown from a local program to an international endeavor with 900 sites in the 50 states, England and Israel. Safe Sitter materials are available in Spanish and Braille, and more than 200,000 teens have completed the two-day course and have since taken care of hundreds of thousands of younger children.

A 1999 Endowment grant of nearly \$987,000 further supported Safe Sitter's mission. Keener adapted and modernized the curriculum to serve today's adolescents, host sites and instructors. Now called Safe Sitter 2000, the program still covers the basics in medical emergencies and first aid, but Keener has added new information and a new format.

"Adolescents are less protected by adults than they were in previous generations and more encumbered with adult responsibilities, including after-school care for siblings and other children," Keener says. "And they seem to be less supervised, less mentored and less aware of their own limitations. Families are smaller, so children have fewer opportunities to observe their moms raising other children in the family. In many cases, the younger brothers and sisters are being raised in day-care centers. And the increase in single mothers creates all kinds of challenges.

"Kids also learn differently today. They have a shorter attention span, so they need a livelier, more interactive Safe Sitter course. They learn better when they can rely less on reading and more on playing games.

"We now include a behavior-management component and cover things like basic job skills and baby-sitting as a business," Keener says.

Good Samaritan Medical Center in Brockton, Mass., has offered Safe Sitter courses for the past 10 years, training nearly 500 young people in the process. The demand for the classes has been consistently high.

"Safe Sitter 2000 is even better than the original," according to Rita Maynard, director of volunteer services at the hospital. "It's much more interactive, and students like that," she says.

## Controlling costs

Safe Sitter's corps of 13 national trainers worked with new instructors as well as veterans of the old course at all 900 sites to introduce new materials. The Endowment grant enabled Safe Sitter 2000 to launch its training without passing on any additional costs to Safe Sitter instructors, participants or host sites.

As in the 1980s, hospitals still account for 90 percent of host sites for the courses, but other factors have changed, particularly the hospitals' costs to provide the program. Originally, the instructors were volunteers. Nurses took the course and then taught the course to kids for no fee. Now nurse-educators or health-educators teach the Safe Sitter course (and many others) through the hospital's education department.

"What used to be an inexpensive program now has a cost attached to it and must vie with other community outreach courses for its place," Keener says.

"Even so, we insist that host sites charge the kids only a modest fee (usually no more than \$25 and a maximum of \$50)," Keener says. "It is important to assure that the course remain accessible."

The Endowment grant also allowed Safe Sitter to update computer and office equipment at the national headquarters in Indianapolis, and the organization is studying ways to reach more diverse groups of adolescents with scholarships, recruiting efforts and partnerships with youth organizations.