A Day in the Life of... Jo Ann O’Connor-Chie

After 44 years with the University of Michigan, Jo Ann O’Connor-Chie is retiring at the end of June 2008. Jo Ann began her career at the University in July of 1963, where she worked in the Accounting Annex of the old Main Hospital. Her first job at the Annex was filing accounting records. She was then trained to do counts and balance numbers for entries in the ledger books that were used at that time. She has also worked in the purchasing department, and neuropsychiatric department before moving to her current position as a Financial Specialist Associate in Microbiology and Immunology in January of 1973.

Jo Ann currently supports several faculty members in balancing the statement of accounts for their grant funding. She makes sure the money is going “where it’s supposed to go.” Early on, at a time when there were no computers, and all entries had to be made by hand. Jo Ann states that the old department ledger books were about “three feet long”, so when computers came along it made everything much easier and less time consuming. One of the biggest challenges that Jo Ann faces in her job is when the spreadsheets do not balance. This can be frustrating, but after some searching she usually can find the discrepancy.

Jo Ann enjoys her current position because of the variety of people she gets to work with. Everyone in the office is like family, and all are supportive of each other. Jo Ann’s co-workers will be having a retirement reception for her, and they let her know that she will be missed.

When not at work, Jo Ann likes to travel. She has gone on cruises with her mother, which they both thoroughly enjoyed. She also likes bowling, but had to give it up due to foot surgery. Jo Ann remarried in May of 2005, and she and her husband will travel to North Carolina in July for two weeks, and in the fall they will travel up the East Coast for six weeks in September, just in time to see the fall colors, in their fifth-wheel.

The Messenger
Medical School Staff Newsletter
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CONTENTS
Challenge Your Healthy Eating Knowledge..........2
Look Who Retired.........2
Heather Offhaus Receives Distinguished Service Award from NCURA..........2
Questions From Our Readers.........................2
Weight Watchers Program At Kellogg Eye Center......2
2008 Research Administration Award Winners........2
Diversity.........................3
UM Association Of Administrative Professionals Award .......................3
Business Intelligence Award.........................3
Managing Smart..............4
Medical School Paper Of the Year Award...........5
SPG Updates.........................5
Stay Hydrated this Summer.........................5
Web Corner.........................6

A Day in the Life of. . . .
Jo Ann O’Connor-Chie

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Questions From Our Readers

I am a staff person transferring to a position at the Medical School from a position at the Hospital. I still have several hours left in my paid time off (PTO) bank. What happens to those hours once I start my new job in the School?

A. Under the Hospital’s Paid Time Off plan, employees accrue a bank of personal time. The UM School’s and College’s all recognize a separate vacation, season day and short-term sick time policy for all non-bargained for staff members. The PTO hours that you have accrued will be rolled over into your vacation bank once you have transferred into the Medical School (or any other School or College) by the Payroll Department. You will not lose any of the hours you have earned.

Who’s Retired

JoAnn O’Connor Chie
Financial Specialist Associate
Microbiology and Immunology
Retiring June 30, 2008
After 44 years of service

Marjorie “Peggy” Clough
Physical Therapy Supervisor
UMH PM&R Physical Therapy
Retiring July 11, 2008
After 33 years of service

Bertha Douglas
Senior Billing Clerk
Department of Dermatology
Retired 5/23/2008
After 38 years of service

John Ford
Research Lab Specialist Intermediate
Department of Surgery
Vascular Surgery
Retired 5/1/2008
After 34 years of service

Dennis Martin
Administrative Director Healthcare
Biomedical Research Core Facility
Retiring July 31, 2008
After 31 years of service

Heather Offhaus Receives Distinguished Service Award from NCURA

Heather Offhaus, Director, Medical School Operations Grant Review & Analysis, and an active member of the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) for the past 11 years, received the Region IV Distinguished Service Award from the for her numerous contributions at the regional and national levels. NCURA advances the filed of research administration through education and professional development. Congratulations Heather, on your award.

WEIGHT WATCHERS PROGRAM AT UM KELLOGG EYE CENTER

Many thanks to Shannan Saltz (Facilities Assistant), Pat Tongusi (Facilities Director) and Weight Watchers’ Susan Hawley for getting the Weight Watchers program up and running at the U-M Kellogg Eye Center. The first session ran 12 weeks (Jan. 9 through April 2) and 20 Kellogg staffers enrolled. The group – which included administrative staff as well as clerks, OR staff and secretaries – lost a total of 252 pounds! With those amazing results, Kellogg enrolled in another 12-week session that started April 9. This time around, 25 employees are enrolled and hoping for even better results!

2008 RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION AWARD WINNERS

Four University of Michigan staff members have been honored for their outstanding research service. Kate Blakeman and Denise DuPrie will receive the Distinguished Research Administrator Award, and Eve Gochis and Patricia Smith will receive the OVPR Exceptional Service Award.

The Distinguished Research Administrator Award pays tribute to individuals from any unit at the University who have demonstrated exemplary service and who have made outstanding contributions that go beyond the ordinary fulfillment of the position’s duties.

Congratulations Kate, Denise, Eve and Patricia!

Challenge Your Healthy Eating Knowledge and Win Cool Prizes

This is the final month of the GOOD CHOICE online “Healthy Eating Challenge”! Complete this month’s Healthy Eating Challenge and a brief survey to be entered into monthly drawings for great prizes, including free cooking classes, kitchen gadgets and gift certificates! The topic for June is fruits and vegetables. To take the Healthy Eating Challenge for June and enter the drawing, visit: www.MHealthy.umich.edu.

MFit's Fall Exercise and Relaxation Classes are Still Open

There is still some room in some of the classes! Go to www.med.umich.edu/mfit/employee/classes.htm or call 975-3024 for more information or to register. If you want a class in your work area, go to http://www.med.umich.edu/mfit/employee/classes.htm and fill out a Request for Exercise and Relaxation Classes form at the bottom of the web page.

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Fostering teamwork with a diverse workforce is a top priority for many leaders. To effectively implement teams, leaders need a clear picture of the seven elements high-performance teams have in common.

1. **COMMITMENT.** Commitment to the purpose and values of an organization provides a clear sense of direction. Commitment is the foundation for synergy in groups. Team ground rules are set with consideration for both company and individual values. When conflict arises, the team uses alignment with purpose, values, and goals as important criteria for acceptable solutions.

2. **CONTRIBUTION.** The power of an effective team is in direct proportion to the skills members possess and the initiative members expend. To enhance balanced participation on a work team, leaders should consider three factors that affect the level of individual contribution: inclusion, confidence, and empowerment.

3. **COMMUNICATION.** Members of a team must be able to say what they think, ask for help, share new or unpopular ideas, and risk making mistakes. This can only happen where team members show concern, trust one another, and focus on solutions, not problems. Open communication is important to a team’s success.

4. **COOPERATION.** The F.A.C.T.S. model of effective team member behaviors serve as a guide for helping teams identify behaviors that support synergy within the team. Follow through Accuracy Creativity Timeliness Spirit

5. **CONFLICT MANAGEMENT.** It is inevitable that teams of bright, diverse thinkers will experience conflict from time to time. The problem is not that differences exist, but in how they are managed. If team members can learn to shift any negative mental tapes to more positive ones, they will be able to shift obstructing paradigms and manage conflict more effectively.

6. **CHANGE MANAGEMENT.** Successful teams must not only respond to change, but actually initiate it. To assist teams in the management of change, leaders should acknowledge any perceived danger in the change and then help teams to see any inherent opportunities. Leaders provide the security necessary for teams to take risks and the tools for them to innovate.

7. **CONNECTIONS.** A cohesive work team can only add value if it pays attention to the ongoing development of three important connections: the larger work organization, team members, and other work teams. To be effective, leaders must fashion a network of skilled employees who support each other in the achievement of corporate goals and the delivery of seamless service.


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**UM ASSOCIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE PROFESSIONALS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE**

Susan Miller received the UM Association of Administrative Office Professionals (UM-AAOP) Award for Excellence for 2008.

Susan is an Administrative Assistant in the Anxiety Disorders Treatment Clinic in the Depression Center and Ambulatory Psychiatry at the Rachel Upjohn Building.

The UM-AAOP Award of Excellence winner is chosen based upon demonstrated excellence in any or all of the following categories:

- Leadership
- Exemplary Performance
- Commitment to Continuing Professional Development
- Meaningful Contribution to Our Organization

Congratulations Susan, on your award.

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**MEDICAL SCHOOL OFFICE OF SPACE MANAGEMENT WINS**

The Medical School Office of Space Management received a Business Intelligence Award for leveraging GIS technology (Global Information Systems) to create a visual tool for managing space. University floor plans are merged with data from the M-Pathways space database, resulting in floor plans with data labels such as room number, square footage, and names of occupants. Virtually any type of data set can be merged with the floor plans. We focused on elements of space productivity such as investigator funding per square foot, and the headcount density in research laboratories and offices. Text labels and color themes are used to show a lot of complex data in one "snapshot". This tool is intended to help planners, department chairs, and administrators manage their space more efficiently.

Team members include Julie Walsh (Director), Sucheta Kulkarni (GIS Specialist) and Bennett Stallone (Senior Applications Programmer/Analyst).
CUSTOMER SERVICE IN 10 SIMPLE STEPS

Adapted from an article by Debbie LaChusa. Debbie LaChusa created The 10stepmarketing System to help independent professionals and small business owners successfully market their business, themselves, without spending a fortune on marketing. To learn more about this simple, step-by-step program visit: www.10stepmarketing.com

If you’re like me, you’ve had plenty of experience with bad customer service. Just think about the last time you had a bad experience with a product or a service. Perhaps the product or service did not live up to the sales pitch. Maybe the company was unresponsive to your calls or emails. Maybe they did not do what they said they were going to do. Or they gave you the run-around when you called to report a problem or ask a question.

If you think about it, all of these negative experiences boil down to one thing, a lack of customer service. And a lack of customer service usually stems from a lack of customer focus. It seems many businesses have simply lost sight of who they are really in business to serve.

Instead of the old saying, "the customer is always right," many businesses seem almost bothered by customers these days. In fact, I’ll let you in on a little secret from my early ad agency days. We used to have a saying, "this business would be great, if it wasn’t for the clients."

How ridiculous is that?! We wouldn’t have had a job if it weren’t for the clients (I’m older and wiser now!). Yes, sometimes clients can be difficult, but they are the reason we are in business. Our job is to serve them. If they are upset, we should welcome the opportunity to find out why, and use that information to improve our product or service.

Yes, sometimes you’ll run into someone who is being totally unreasonable and you just have to deal with it. But very often, client complaints uncover a problem or something we can improve upon.

So make it a point to really listen to your customers. Make a commitment to treat all your customers well. After all, giving great customer services is one of the best and cheapest marketing tools available. When you treat your customers well, or even better, when you deliver beyond their expectations, you will be rewarded.

Those happy clients are the same clients who will happily refer you. The opposite is also true. If you disappoint a client, or don’t deliver what you promise, or you just plain treat them badly, they will likely tell everyone they know how horrible you are. In fact, those disgruntled clients are more likely to talk about you than your happy clients. Unfortunately, that’s just the way it usually works.

The good news is, it’s not hard to give great customer service. You simply have to be aware and make it a priority. Following are 10 tips to help you offer stellar customer service.

1. Be accessible
Your customers should be able to get a hold of you, or someone in your company, if they have a question or if they need service. Provide multiple ways for your customers to get in contact with you, such as email, phone, mail or fax.

2. Respond in a timely manner
Make it your policy to return all phone calls or emails within 24 hours. And, if you cannot commit to that, then determine what timeframe you can manage and let your customers know upfront they can expect to hear back from you within that amount of time.

3. Listen to your customers
Often when a customer calls or writes to complain, they just want to be heard. In fact, sometimes, just listening is all you need to do. Take the time to listen to what your customers have to say before you start responding or defending your product or service. They may just have a point.

4. Treat your customers with respect
Even if the customer on the other end of the phone is acting irrationally, or being rude, don’t lower yourself to their level by reciprocating. Treat everyone with respect and you will be respected in return. Plus, you never know when someone’s just having a bad day, and they happen to be taking it out on you (we’ve all done it).

5. Don’t argue with your customers
You can never win an argument with a customer. Because if you do win, you’re more than likely alienated the customer and you’ve lost their business. We all know the customer isn’t really always right, but instead of focusing on what went wrong and defending yourself, focus on how you can solve the problem or fix the situation.

6. Honor your commitments
If you say you will answer emails, then answer them. If you offer a guarantee, then honor it. Nothing spoils a customer relationship faster than being promised something and not getting it. I got a nice email last week from a client that made me realize just how important this is.

Here’s what he wrote:

"Many thanks for your prompt and comprehensive reply. Your personal interest, caring and enthusiasm is clearly apparent. Most company owners invite you to respond and promise to reply personally, they seldom do so ..."

Yes, it took me some time to respond to his email. But I promise email support to all clients who purchase my 10stepmarketing System and therefore it is important to honor that commitment. If I ever get to the point I can no longer respond due to the volume of requests or other time commitments, I will stop offering this service, not just stop responding.

7. Do what you say
If you say you’re going to call someone on Tuesday, call them on Tuesday. It’s as simple as that. If you want your customers to trust and believe you, you have to follow through and do what you say.

8. Focus on making customer relationships, not sales
The long-term success of your business rests on your ability to make
long-term customer relationships. If you sacrifice relationships to make short-term sales, your business will be short-lived.

9. Be honest
Don't exaggerate the results your product or service will provide. Don't promise things you cannot deliver just to make a sale. I see hype all over the web these days; everything is a quick fix or a silver bullet. It suckers people into buying the product, and then the product doesn't deliver. Think that customer is ever going to make another purchase from that business? Not likely. Be honest and direct about what your products and services can deliver.

10. Admit when you make a mistake
No one's perfect. We all make mistakes; it's part of learning. So when you do make a mistake, don't try to cover it up or deny it. Just admit it and if necessary, do something to make the situation right. Your customers will appreciate it and they'll be more likely to stay customers.

So how does your customer service measure up? Are you practicing these 10 steps and offering stellar customer service? If not, I challenge you to take your service up a notch. Approach it like Ken Blanchard and instead of just being satisfied with happy customers, create "Raving Fans" (a great little book if you haven't read it).

Commit to putting these 10 tips into practice. Get to know your customers. Make them the focus of your business. It's one of the keys to marketing success and best of all, it doesn't cost very much!

Medical School Personnel Receive “Paper of the Year” Award
Riley S. Rees, M.D., professor of surgery, and Noura Bashshur, M.H.S.A., research associate, received the 2008 Telemedicine and eHealth Journal Award, which was presented at the American Telemedicine Association’s annual meeting in April. Dr. Rees and Noura Bashshur received this award for a research paper they wrote about the effects of a TeleWound program on the use of service and financial outcomes among homebound patients with chronic wounds.

Congratulations!

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**STANDARD PRACTICE GUIDE UPDATES**

**NEW**

604.14 General University Policy — Social Security Number Privacy Policy.


601.25 General University Policy — Information Security Incident Reporting Policy.

**REVISIONS**

518.01 Controller’s Office — Payroll Controls.

201.68 Human Resources — Moving and Relocation Expenses.

201.85 Human Resources — Non-Appointment Related University Compensation.

201.72 Human Resources — Reduction in Force.

205.01 Grants and Awards — Authorization for Scholarships, Fellowships, and grants (deleted).

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**STAY HYDRATED THIS SUMMER**

Summer is almost here! While you enjoy your time outdoors this summer, remember to protect yourself by staying hydrated. Dehydration can occur if your body loses too much fluid. Dehydration can occur in anyone of any age, but it is most dangerous for babies, small children, and older adults. Here are some symptoms to watch out for:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Urinary problems
- Sunburn
- Muscle cramps
- If shock is present, call 911 or other emergency services immediately

Tips to prevent dehydration:

- Drink 8 to 12 glasses of fluids, such as water or rehydration drinks each day.
- Drink extra water before, during, and after exercise.
- Take a container of water or sports drink with you when you exercise, and try to drink at least every 15 to 20 minutes.
- Use a sports drink if you will be exercising for longer than 1 hour.
- Encourage your child to drink extra fluids or suck on Popsicles. Children between the ages of 4 and 10 should drink at least 6 to 10 glasses of liquids to replace lost fluids.
- Do not drink coffee, colas, or other drinks that contain caffeine. They increase urine output and make you dehydrate faster.
- Avoid high-protein diets. If you are on a high-protein diet, make sure that you drink at least 8 to 12 glasses of water each day.
- Do not drink alcohol, including beer and wine. They increase dehydration and make it difficult to make good decisions.
- Do not take salt tablets. Most people get plenty of salt in their diets. Use a sports drink if you are worried about replacing minerals lost through sweating.
- Stop working outdoors or exercising if you feel dizzy, lightheaded, or very tired.
- Wear one layer of lightweight, light-colored clothing when you are working or exercising outdoors. Change into dry clothing as soon as you can if your clothes get soaked with sweat. Never exercise in a rubber suit.

Source: Healthwise Knowledgebase ([http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/unstaff.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/1libr/unstaff.htm))

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5 University of Michigan Medical School Staff Newsletter
WEB CORNER

New Web site launched for MICHRI

The Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research has launched a new Web site that highlights major changes within MICHRI since receiving a Clinical and Translational Science Award grant in September. Among the numerous changes is the transformation of the General Clinical Research Center into the Michigan Clinical Research Unit, the creation of a new pilot grant program and the creation of special consultative programs. Visit www.michr.umich.edu for more information.

The new site is designed to make it easy for users to understand and access the services and opportunities that are available through MICHRI. “A huge benefit of our new Website is that this is the first time information about all of MICHR’s new programs and services are gathered in one place,” says Dan Clauw, M.D., director of the U-M Chronic Pain and Fatigue Research Center and associate dean for Clinical and Translational Research.

SUMMER CALENDAR

June 15  Father's Day
June 21  Summer Solstice
June 25  Summer Classes Begin
July 1    New Fiscal Year Begins
July 4    Independence Day
August 3 White Coat Ceremony
          For M-1 Students

If you would like to add a date to the calendar, please e-mail carrkm@umich.edu for future consideration.

Thank you.