

Campuswide cost-saving innovations are rewarded

By Jonathan Laurence '98

Some textbooks are being phased out at the Campus Store, but not by students conspiring to decrease their workloads. Instead, this revolution is being led by the bookstore's Custom Publishing Department, whose goal is to cut down on the amount of underutilized texts students are required to purchase for courses.

Custom coursepacks—inexpensive packets of current articles and targeted book chapters, digitally printed by Custom Publishing—are replacing stacks of textbooks as the norm for many courses across academic disciplines.

This cost-saving idea, implemented over the past few years at the bookstore, is one of Cornell's four official entries to the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)/Barnes & Noble 1996 Higher Education Awards Program. The program encourages the pursuit of and recognizes quality achievements by colleges and universities in their efforts to strengthen and improve total quality management programs as well as improve resource utilization by reducing costs, increasing non-traditional revenues or improving productivity.

The competition is structured in two categories: the Management Achievement Award, for improvement in the quality of programs and services on campus, and the Resource Enhancement Award, for initiatives to reduce costs and increase non-traditional revenues or improve productivity within university departments.

Personnel from Cornell departments submitted 15 cost-saving programs and ideas this year—a record number of participants—in a preliminary competition organized by the Office of the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Nine of the 15 innovative entries were awarded with cash prizes of \$100 to \$350 by the university; and four of them were forwarded to the national NACUBO/Barnes & Noble contest. The four Cornell submissions will be vying for prize money ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000, and the national winners will be announced in July.

NACUBO, founded in 1962, is a non-profit professional organization representing chief administrative and financial officers at more than 2,100 colleges and universities across the country. Its mission is to promote sound management and financial practices at colleges and universities. More than two-thirds of all institutions of higher learning in the United States are members.

Robin Yager, a management services representative in the Office of the Senior Vice President, is enthusiastic about the unprecedented volume of entries to the NACUBO/Barnes & Noble contest this year.

"This is the highest number of applicants that I can remember," she said. Yager pointed out that these types of administration-encouraged, cost-saving innovations help keep the university productive and financially trim. "This sort of thing is going to take the university into the 21st century," she added.

All of the NACUBO/Barnes & Noble entries reflect successful cost-saving programs designed and applied by Cornell employees. The Custom Publishing program at the campus bookstore, for example,



Adriana Rovers/University Photography
Jim Lawrence, manager of the Custom Publishing Department at the Campus Store, stands in front of an array of coursepacks developed by his department to save money on underutilized textbooks.

was initiated in the fall of 1990 in response to a trend that found many Cornell professors supplementing textbooks with more current, outside sources. Students were being assigned a lower percentage of reading in their required textbooks, making the often burdensome, full investment in textbooks (some going for as much as \$90) somewhat excessive. Custom coursepacks, whose costs average about \$32, became an economical alternative in courses where the curriculum relied on more current reading. Also, the technology developed with Xerox Inc. has enabled the bookstore to print a coursepack upon demand, thus reducing the waste due to previous overproduction, and saving approximately \$28,000 per year.

Since the development of the coursepacks in 1990, Jim Lawrence, Custom Publishing manager for the Campus Store, and his department have been systematically overcoming the legal and electronic obstacles to implementing the plan. On the technology side, the Custom Publishing Department has developed software and machinery with Xerox Inc. to manage bibliographic citations and digitally store images of the various articles included in the custom coursepacks. Xerox and Cornell also established a computerized system for tracking down ownership and securing reproduction rights to the copyrighted texts given to them by Cornell professors.

"Now we can call ourselves the leading edge in custom publishing and reap the benefits of all the data we've collected," Lawrence said of his department's initiative. After years of hard work, he feels the program is ready to be showcased to the

American university community, so this year, the coursepack program was submitted as an entry in the NACUBO contest.

"It is time that what we've developed can really start to benefit other universities," Lawrence said.

The other three Cornell finalists forwarded to the NACUBO are:

Resource Enhancement category

- **Mobile Sales Floor**, submitted by Roger Reynolds, deputy director of the Campus Store. This idea maximizes the amount of space that can be allocated to textbooks and supplies during the relatively brief periods at the beginning of each term when demand is greatest. Awarded \$350.

- **Stockless Supply**, submitted by Terri Hargett, assistant director of the Campus Store. This program takes advantage of technology to process supply orders and deliver the materials to a customer's desk within a very short time frame. Awarded \$350.

Management Achievement category

- **Leadership Development Program**, submitted by Roxy Bahar, director of administration in the Department of Facilities and Campus Services. This employee empowerment program has trained staff in the areas of leadership and supervision and has been credited with cost reduction within the department. Awarded \$350.

The other five programs awarded cash prizes by Cornell are:

- **Print Shop Consolidation**, submitted by Richard McDaniel, director of the Campus Store and Cornell Business Services.

This initiative consolidated two Cornell-operated independent offset print businesses into one efficient full-service facility, saving more than \$84,000 per year in direct expenses. Awarded \$150.

- **Cornell Travel Office/ US Air**, also submitted by McDaniel. In this program, the Cornell Travel Office negotiated a 10 percent discount for all flights made by Cornell business travelers who use Cornell's corporate card to book their air travel, resulting in \$300,000 in savings. Awarded \$150.

- **Internal Resources—1,000 horsepower chiller**, submitted by Lanny Joyce, senior mechanical engineer at the Humphreys Service Building. This team effort involved the emergency repair of the 1,000 horsepower motor on campus chillers that provide cold water to the campus chilled water system, cutting repair time to one week from a projected 20 weeks. Awarded \$100.

- **Unit Train Purchase of Coal for Campus Heating**, submitted by Jim Adams, senior utility engineer and plant manager at the Cornell central heating plant. The cost of coal and the hassle associated with unloading at the central heating plant were significantly reduced due to a procurement procedure that resulted in the delivery of larger shipments of coal instead of multiple small deliveries. Awarded \$150.

- **CHP Overhead Coal Larry Rail Systems**, submitted by Hans van Binsbergen, assistant manager in utilities at the Humphreys Service Building. This idea developed a better method of fastening the drive wheels to the coal larry that delivers coal to the boilers for campus heating. Awarded \$100.

Guest Chef Series features Waldorf-Astoria chef and presidential dinners

By Darryl Geddes

Patrons of Cornell's Guest Chef Series will be able to get a taste of history when John Doherty, executive chef of the Waldorf-Astoria who has prepared meals for state dinners hosted by Presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, recreates these historic dinners for the public March 3. Doherty's visit to campus opens the 1996 Guest Chef Series, sponsored by the School of Hotel Administration.



Doherty

The public also will have the opportunity to appreciate the talents of Roger Vergé, chef and owner of the Restaurant Du Moulin de Mugins in France, who will present dinner

March 31, and Madeleine Kamman, director of the School for American Chefs-Beringer Vineyards, who will don the chef's apron April 14.

Reservations are still available for the March 3 and April 14 sittings; the March 31 dinner is sold out. Dinner is \$60 per person (an optional wine package is available) and is served at 6:30 p.m. in Banfi's in the Statler Hotel on the Cornell campus. Individuals attending any two dinners will receive a complimentary autographed cookbook featuring the recipes presented. For reservations, call 254-2606.

The Guest Chef Series is part of a course on specialty food and beverage operations for students interested in careers in the hotel food and beverage industry.

Course instructor Barbara Lang said the series involves students in virtually every aspect of special-event planning and food preparation. "Students order all ingredients ac-

ording to the chef's instructions, as well as develop the recipes and plan a schedule for food preparation," she said.

Another challenge for students, Lang said, is the requirement that Banfi's, the Statler Hotel restaurant, be transformed to reflect the atmosphere of the chef's home restaurant. "While we can't repaint the walls and order new furnishings," Lang said, "students do an admirable job creating menus and place settings that recreate surroundings familiar to the guest chefs."

One of the most rewarding experiences for students, however, comes long after dessert is served. "That's when students have the time to sit down with the chef and talk about the industry," she said. "The Guest Chef Series provides students with a once-in-a-lifetime educational experience, while offering the public a once-in-a-lifetime dining experience," Lang noted.