



# THE CONNECTION

The Ohio Union at  
The Ohio State University

SPRING  
2010

Where memories are made and leaders emerge

## The Moment You Have Been Waiting For: Welcome Home

The Ohio Union Opens Its Door with Ceremonial Ribbon Cutting



On March 29 at noon, the new Ohio Union opened its doors to the public with a ceremonial ribbon cutting. Students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members gathered to watch as President E. Gordon Gee, Tracy Stuck, student groups, and members of the planning and design team participated in the ceremonial ribbon cutting. The Ohio State cheerleaders, band, and Brutus Buckeye helped raise the excitement outside the Ohio Union as the crowd eagerly awaited the ribbon cutting. Once the doors flew open, prizes, games, and commemorative items were awaiting guests as they explored the meeting rooms and event spaces.

On the first floor, Ohio Union memory boxes were provided for guests to collect memories of their first day in the new building. Students enjoyed

taking their photo with Brutus (the bronze version, that is). Live music played in Woody's Tavern while movies played in the U.S. Bank Conference Theater throughout the day. Undergraduate Student Government passed out beach balls and sunglasses in the Center for Student Leadership and Service while University Residences and Dining Services provided reusable totes in the second floor lounge. A cash machine was sponsored by U.S. Bank in the Archie M. Griffin Grand Ballroom along with a "Pop Noggin" video making opportunity. In the lower level, guests enjoyed making crafts and tasting Nestle's drumsticks. Block O ice cube trays were a huge hit in the Stanley D. Gottsegen Lounge. A caricature artist was even featured in the Cartoon Room.

The first day at the new Ohio Union was filled with excitement, but even if you missed the first day, many more memories will be made for years to come.



## Flash Mob at the Ohio Union

You Better Believe It!

Leave it to the Buckeyes to pull off one of the most impressive flash mobs ever seen. A flash mob is a large group of people who assemble suddenly to perform. Shortly after 12:30 p.m. on May 3, in order to promote and celebrate the new Ohio Union, Ohio State students and staff broke out in dance to the tune of *Don't Stop Believin'*, the hit television show *Glee's* remake of the Journey classic. One student jumped over another's head, and the show began. More dancers poured in from the Great Hall staircase, and even President E. Gordon Gee and Brutus Buckeye made guest appearances.

The Ohio Union video team used seven video cameras to capture the flash mob, then posted the clip on YouTube. The video quickly went viral and landed on YouTube's front page as one of the most popular entertainment videos. By the morning of May 7, it was viewed more than 750,000 times by viewers around the world – even as far away as Iran and India. The video has reached more than 1.3 million hits.

Putting the dance routine together was quite a process. With 70 dancers split into four groups, the first group of dancers began rehearsals in February, and more groups were added over the weeks leading up to the May performance. At

a school as large as Ohio State, it is pretty tough to keep anything a secret. Taylor Candella, a fifth-year student in construction management and one of the dance organizers, said the group practiced in secret around campus at least once a week. "It was weird. I live with ten other guys, and every Thursday and Sunday they'd be like, 'Where are you going?' I've had to make up excuses for the last two and a half months," Candella said. "It was definitely hard. We wanted to tell people to show up. I was getting antsy. But it was worth it, just seeing their reactions."

Jordan Davis, a fourth-year student in political science and leadership studies, choreographed the routine and pitched the idea to Tracy Stuck, Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Director of the Ohio Union. She said she picked the *Glee* track for a few obvious reasons. "The cast is supposed to be from Lima, Ohio [where Ohio State has a regional campus]. There is no better school to represent Ohio pride than Ohio State. *Don't Stop Believin'* is something that could encompass what the new Union is about. There are a lot of traditions here, but also a lot of change."

To view the Ohio Union Flash Mob video, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HDNOB6TnHSl>

## Ohio Union Fundraising Tops \$7 Million

Since opening on March 29, the Ohio Union has become a favorite of students. But what many may not know is that the Ohio Union project has been a favorite among University donors for the past few years.

In 2007, the Longaberger Foundation Board approved designating a previous gift to the Ohio Union to underwrite concerted development efforts for the new building. Heather McGinnis was then hired as the Union's development director and the work began, resulting in \$7.07 million in donations - \$3.6 million that will directly underwrite construction costs and another \$3.47 million for student programming.

"Donor support for the Ohio Union has been simply overwhelming, especially as our development efforts have taken place in such a challenging economic environment," says Tracy Stuck, Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Director of the Ohio Union.

In November 2004, an independent study conducted by Hodge Cramer and Associates estimated that between \$10 and \$15 million could be raised for the Ohio Union; however, the Ohio Union had no dedicated development team and a limited donor prospect database. By the time funds for development efforts were secured in 2007, the nation was on the brink of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Despite the obvious challenges, the Ohio Union team set an internal goal of raising \$6 million.

"The timing for the beginning of our efforts wasn't ideal," says Heather McGinnis. "We had to get creative and come up with programs that were accessible to donors of all ages and resource levels."

The role of a student union on any campus is to facilitate community-building, so it is fitting that 1,253 individuals came together to give to the Ohio Union. In addition to those whose donations named spaces in the building, this number also includes those who donated to the Brick Society, student organization group gifts, and the Ohio Union couples plaques.

While celebrating their success, the Ohio Union team says there is room to grow. The new building's opening has brought many visitors to the facility, creating new opportunities for support and development of new relationships. "We know there is still potential for additional fundraising out there, so we're going to keep at it," says Stuck.

### PHOTO KEY

- 1 Thousands of students and community members waited in anticipation on the West Plaza for the Ohio Union doors to open at noon on March 29.
- 2 Ohio State students, staff, administration, and leaders cut the ceremonial ribbon as the Ohio Union opened its doors.
- 3 The infamous Ohio State flash mob dancers cut loose in the Great Hall.
- 4 President Gee and Brutus Buckeye join the flash mob as hundreds look on.



OPENING CELEBRATION  
APRIL 10 2010



## The Opening Celebration: A Historic Event for the new Ohio Union

On April 10, 2010, the Ohio Union hosted its grand opening celebration, a night for students, alumni, donors, staff, faculty, administrators, and other special guests to celebrate the opening of the new Ohio Union. After eight years of planning, 38 months of construction, and countless hours of preparation, it was time to host a celebration for the special people who made the vision a reality.

More than 1,100 guests attended the event in the Archie M. Griffin Grand Ballroom on the second floor of the Ohio Union. The unique program was hosted by former Ohio State staff member and alumna Barbie Tootle as well as Ohio Union student staffer Taylor Candella. The hosts entertained the audience by using television-themed videos. *Day Break at Sporting Central* was a take on ESPN Sports News. *This Blessed Union*, an Ohio Union-themed soap opera, showed students vying for office space in a

hilarious, melodramatic story. *If These Walls Could Talk* was the documentary portion of the program. Lastly, *Extreme Makeover: Ohio Union Edition* was a spin-off of the ABC reality show, highlighting the building process. Students, staff, and building designers yelled “Bus driver, move that bus!” to unveil the new Ohio Union.

Guests were served food to match the time of day the television shows would typically be shown. Breakfast nachos and caramel corn were served as appetizers while soup, salad, and bread were served in unique brown bags and construction-type tins to reflect the design process. Guests also enjoyed chicken marsala or vegetarian ravioli as an entrée. Lastly, President E. Gordon Gee entertained the crowd with one of his infamous “Top Ten Lists” as guests ate a delicious television-inspired cake which also served as the table’s centerpiece.



## Scarlet, Gray and Pink: A Walk for Stefanie Spielman

The South Oval was a sea of pink on Saturday, April 24 as approximately 400 participants gathered for “Scarlet, Gray and Pink: A Walk for Stefanie Spielman.” In November 2009, the Ohio State community lost an extraordinary person, when Spielman passed away after her decade-long battle with breast cancer. During her battle with the disease, Stefanie was an advocate for breast cancer awareness and research. She left the community with the final thought: continue to fight.

As a way to celebrate Stefanie’s life and honor her final wish, the Ohio Union sponsored a one-mile walk on campus. With Stefanie’s husband and former Ohio State football player Chris Spielman, their daughters,

and Stefanie’s mother leading the way, the walk began through a pink-and-white balloon archway on the South Oval. The walk journeyed across south campus on 12th Avenue, looped around the Thompson Library, and finished with a long walk across the Main Oval to the finish line on the South Oval. More than \$6,000 was raised during the event. Proceeds were donated to the Stefanie Spielman Fund for Breast Cancer Research at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute. To date, more than \$6.5 million has been donated to this fund to support breast cancer research and patients because of the extraordinary efforts of the Spielman family and grassroots support of community partners.



**PHOTO KEY**

1 Ohio Union donor, Arlene Roth, cuts the cake at the Ohio Union Opening Celebration as student Ashley Sinram looks on.  
2 Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Director of the Ohio Union, Tracy Stuck, takes a quick photo with Ohio Union alumna, Karen Weise Kovey.

3 Ohio Union donors, Cal and Donna Wible, enjoy cutting their cake with Ohio State Board of Trustees member Gil Cloyd and wife Susan.  
4 Participants walk through Ohio State’s campus.  
5 Shoelaces, bracelets, and T-shirts were given out at the 2010 Spielman Walk.



## The 49th Annual Leadership Awards Celebration

### OHIO UNION

by the NUMBERS

**1,345,100**

FLASH MOB  
INTERNET HITS

on YouTube as of June 14, 2010

**220,000**

FOOD TRANSACTIONS

facilitated in the Ohio Union within  
first 50 days

**110**

OFFICIAL TOURS

of the new building given  
since opening day

**70**

Student and Staff

DANCERS

in Ohio Union Flash Mob

**21**

STUDENTS

awarded the "Outstanding Senior  
Award" by the Ohio Union and  
Office of Student Life

**7**

CAMERAS

used to film Ohio Union  
Flash Mob

An Ohio State tradition for nearly half of a century, the 49th Annual Leadership Awards were held on Friday, May 14 at the Ohio Union. These annual awards pay tribute to the students, advisors, and student organizations who lead others and create memorable experiences for all Ohio State students. During every year of its existence except during building construction, the awards celebration has taken place at the Ohio Union and is now finally back where it belongs.

In true Ohio Union fashion, the awards were a themed experience, playing off of favorite board games played in a family room, just as the Ohio Union is the family

room of Ohio State's campus. With the Performance Hall decorated to match the game Twister and guests playing Bingo as the awards were presented, Ohio Union staff dressed as game pieces or game characters to present the awards.

As Kurt Foriska, the event's master of ceremonies and Associate Director of the Ohio Union, jokingly said, "It's been mostly fun and games here this afternoon with you all, but I hope you'll agree that we've got some seriously outstanding student leaders at Ohio State."

### Some of the exceptional individuals who received awards included:

#### Outstanding Senior Award

Courtney Banks, Stafford, Virginia  
Laura Bockbrader, Perrysburg, Ohio  
Robert Bonacci, Akron, Ohio  
Garren Cabral, Huber Heights, Ohio  
Allyn Checovich, Willowick, Ohio  
Ryan Conklin, Plain City, Ohio  
Andrew DeLong, Stoutsville, Ohio  
Daniel Do, North Olmsted, Ohio  
Kayln Eyer, Bowling Green, Ohio  
Erin Ferlet, Middletown, Ohio  
Meredith Gilbert, Curtice, Ohio  
Thomas Hammer, Wauconda, Illinois  
Jaimie Horning, Chillicothe, Ohio  
Julia Kennedy, Springfield, Ohio  
Peter Koltak, Upper Arlington, Ohio  
Emily Madden, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Michael Shoenfelt, Sidney, Ohio  
Stephanie Stelmaschuk, Broadview Heights, Ohio  
Zachary Usmani, Twinsburg, Ohio  
Anna Yonas, Akron, Ohio  
Anthony Zimmerman, Fremont, Ohio

#### Stanley D. Gottsegen Leadership Award

Zachary Usmani, Twinsburg, Ohio

#### Outstanding First Year Student Award

Niraj Antani, Miamisburg, Ohio  
Kaila Blanchard, Toledo, Ohio  
Zack Blaner, Moon Township, Pennsylvania  
Jake Bruner, Solon, Ohio  
Tim Collins, Avon, Ohio  
Lauren Eisemann, Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Kelly Lewis, Grandview Heights, Ohio  
Sally Patton, Hudson, Ohio  
Adam Wagner, Tiffin, Ohio  
Dasha Zhitenev, Solon, Ohio

#### Spirit of Ohio State Award

Brian Bunting, Columbus, Ohio  
Nathan McCullough, Lima, Ohio  
Zach Usmani, Twinsburg, Ohio  
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences  
Student Council

#### Outstanding Student Organization Award

Black Student Association  
College Mentors for Kids  
Sigma Phi Epsilon  
South Asian Student Association  
The Student-Alumni Council

#### Outstanding Student Organization Advisor Award

Craig Little, Ohio State Sportsmanship Council

## Sibs Weekend 2010

### Ohio State Students Show Siblings What It's Like to be a Buckeye

More than 1,700 "sibs" visited the Ohio State campus during the weekend of April 30 to experience life as a Buckeye. The weekend was full of free events for Ohio State students and their brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, cousins, children, or friends that they welcomed to campus. The weekend kicked off Friday evening at the Ohio Union. Guests were treated to snacks, movies, Ohio State trivia, and a photo flip book they created. Despite a threat of spring rain, Saturday was also packed with exciting activities. The Ohio State Sportsmanship Council hosted their annual

Spring Tailgate prior to the men's lacrosse game at Ohio Stadium. Later, guests returned to the Ohio Union for photo sessions with Brutus Buckeye and Ohio State President E. Gordon Gee. In the early evening, the Columbus Zoo's Jack Hanna brought many of his furry friends to campus for an educational and interactive presentation on wildlife.

Before the "sibs" headed home on Sunday, they enjoyed breakfast at Sloopy's Diner and had an opportunity to participate in a 5K run, Cinco de Mayo BBQ, or a flag football tournament. Throughout the weekend, cooking classes, dance classes, arts and crafts, residence hall activities, and campus tours completed the Buckeye experience. The weekend also included activities for parents who were visiting campus with their children.

#### PHOTO KEY *continued*

6 Zach Usmani stands with his family after receiving the 2010 Stanley D. Gottsegen Leadership Award.

7 Outstanding Senior Students receive their awards.

8 President Gee and Brutus Buckeye pose with an Ohio State student and her sib during Sibs Weekend.

9 Jack Hanna signs autographs for attendees of Sibs Weekend 2010.





## Ohio State Celebrates More Than 8,000 Graduates at Spring Graduation

A record 8,652 students, who are among the brightest in the university's history, earned degrees during Ohio State's spring commencement on Sunday June 13 in Ohio Stadium. Ohio State is one of the few universities where all graduates participate in a single ceremony and where each graduate gets his or her diploma at the ceremony. Honorary doctorates were presented to Francisco J. Ayala, one of the foremost evolutionary geneticists of the time, and commencement speaker David Gergen, who has served as an advisor to four U.S. presidents.

Distinguished Service Awards were presented to Jack Lucks, a founding partner in Columbus-based Continental Real Estate Companies, former Ohio State football star Chris Spielman, and posthumously to Stefanie Spielman, who both worked tirelessly to increase public awareness of cancer and to promote the critical importance of medical research.

In late May 2010, President E. Gordon Gee provided the graduates valuable insight from a portion of his Ohio State website called "From Where I Stand." As President Gee said:

"The graduation season has begun. During the months of May and June, tens of thousands of young people – and some not quite so young – leave colleges and universities across the country with diploma in hand. The great joy of that tassel-and-gown moment is tempered for many people, of course, who walk away from their Commencement ceremonies not only with a degree, but also with uncertain job prospects. It is no secret: These are challenging times. Having been called a serial optimist, however, I believe utterly and completely in the power of these new graduates to create their own destinies and to guide us all to a brighter future. After leading universities for a full three decades now, I say with all certainty that today's graduates are among the most entrepreneurial, compassionate, determined, and hard-working I have ever known. With great affection and admiration, I offer up a few bits of advice for them."

### President Gee's Top Ten Guidelines for 2010 Graduates

1. Update your status in person.
2. Make sure your global experience encompasses more than Shakira and sushi.
3. Put away your Guitar Hero and be a hero in someone's life.
4. Disagree without being disagreeable.
5. Take chances: The biggest failure is not to try.
6. Always be just as curious as you are at this moment.
7. Know that you are never too old to play on a swing set.
8. When opportunity knocks, knock it out of the park.
9. Start working in your field before you are hired.
10. Dance when you can, laugh every day, and say thank you.

### OUAB Opening Events

Ohio Union Activities Board (OUAB) had a successful spring quarter by programming more than 60 engaging and exciting events. The opening of the Ohio Union contributed to a record-breaking year for OUAB, as they planned and executed a total of 134 events. Some of these amazing events included Party in the U(SA), David Sedaris, James Cameron, and Andy Samberg

Party in the U(SA) was a dance party held in the Archie M. Griffin Grand Ballroom. The event was part of OUAB's late night programming effort to provide students on campus an alternative form of entertainment on Friday nights. This event featured a guest DJ, Eddie George, and a visit from university President E. Gordon Gee. The event was filled to capacity with 1,200 students in attendance.

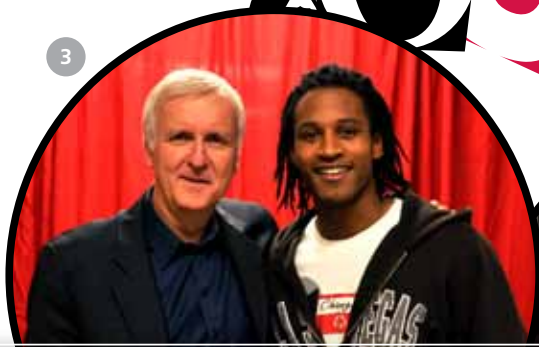
OUAB was also able to make Ohio State a stop on writer and humorist David Sedaris' book tour. Students were given an opportunity to hear a few of Sedaris' short stories from his new book, "When You Are Engulfed in Flames," and participate in a question and answer session. Sedaris also stayed late to sign books. The event sold out in the Archie M. Griffin Ballroom with 1,600 students in attendance.

Academy Award-Winning Director James Cameron made his first-ever college appearance at The Ohio State University. Cameron spoke about the life of a director and answered questions from the audience.

Saturday Night Live's Andy Samberg also made his first-ever college appearance at Ohio State. The event consisted of Samberg showing many of the hilarious clips which made him famous. Samberg talked with students about his career and how he rose to stardom on SNL. He also discussed how he comes up with ideas for his sketches and humored the audience with a question and answer session. This event reached maximum capacity with 1,700 students in the Archie M. Griffin Ballroom.

#### PHOTO KEY

- 1 Students decorate their graduation cap in preparation for commencement.
- 2 Students meet and greet with President Gee.
- 3 James Cameron poses for a photo with Ohio Union student staffer, Drew Love.
- 4 Andy Samberg stands with OUAB student, Allie Feinstein, after his comedy performance at the Ohio Union.



SAVE THE DATE:

**Ohio Staters, Inc. Alumni Society  
and Ohio Union & Student  
Activities Alumni Society  
Annual Football Tailgate**

at the Ohio Union

University of Miami vs. The Ohio State University

**Saturday, September 11, 2010**

Event begins 3 hours before kickoff