

College life

# Be a fan, not a partier

By Michael Belding @iowastatedaily.com

Last Thursday, one of my roommates traipsed into my apartment with a giant grin on her face. The other came home wearing an outrageous pair of cardinal-and-gold-striped coveralls. Why? Because football season had finally begun again, and their excitement for the games and our 27-10 win against Northern Illinois knew no bounds.

Such fans, annoying as I have found them and their exuberance to be, and even though I've been harassed for not showing support for what will someday be my alma mater, are one of Iowa State's greatest assets and most valuable gems. They feature in every athletic event. They're in line with their tickets before the sun rises. When the gates open and they can flood the ticket-takers, they stand in the front row of the student section, painted in our colors and with a supportive slogan, waving their posters and cheering wildly. They are the students whose school pride is endless.

When I was younger, I used to find such fans endlessly annoying. And while they may still be annoying and sometimes outrageously obnoxious, I think I enjoy the idea of their ardent support much more now than I have previously. Why? Because around the lethargy of going to class, reading for class and doing homework for class, these student fans get you fired up and ready to go. They cheer you on and give you energy, even if you too are a spectator in the stands. Superfans make it clear that there is something out there bigger than all of us — something we can share and something we can be proud of. That institution is Iowa State University of Science and Technology,

and we are its students, alumni, staff and faculty. Our presence here and participation in such ritualized collegiate events such as football games, Veishea parades and, when we're freshmen, Destination Iowa State creates a tie that binds.

And it is this kind of tie — one of pride — that I would rather have than the connection to people that drunken parties create. Compared to such destructive activity, I would rather hang out with the superfans at athletic events any day. Partying is fun, I'll grant you, and there are all kinds of people to meet. But far too often they end in damage to yourself — to your mind, psyche and body — and to the people with whom you interact.

Would you rather wake up in the morning struggling to sit up, contending with a hangover and trying desperately to figure out, between the keg stand and one-night stand, what the hell happened last night?

Or would you rather wake up in the morning and remember celebrating the previous night after feeling an overwhelming surge of connectedness with your fellow students and supporters at your university?

Football and other athletic games shouldn't be seen as an excuse to throw a party and get smashed over margaritas, cheap beer and mixed drinks fashioned from whatever lies in your fridge. They are, quite simply, a way to become involved with your community. And even if you're just one face in a crowd, your contribution — your own unique way of cheering your team to an exciting, captivating win — adds to the din of noise the players hear and draw inspiration from on the field.

ClubFest

# Join a club outside your comfort zone



By Rick Hanton @iowastatedaily.com

As a computer engineering student at Iowa State who has supported many organizations and has also worked in the "real world," I realize what engineers are good at and what they're bad at.

And let me tell you that while engineers would have you believe that they can do anything, they're usually not as great at writing a sentence in proper English with correct spelling as they are at doing advanced calculus and writing computer software. That is why we need more participation from non-engineering majors in our engineering clubs and groups.

Standing at the Iowa State's ClubFest the other day and talking about the group that I help run, I would often be asked the question, "Is this group just for engineers?" My answer — and the answer I heard from other groups next to us — was always "No!" because while engineers are thrilled to build fighting robots, environmentally friendly houses and super-powered rockets, we usually have issues when it comes to promoting our clubs, balancing the budget or finding funding for competitive teams.

The problem is that when we run into these issues that we would rather not handle, there is never a business student, art major or advertising guru to be found.

That's why I encourage you not just to be involved with groups in your area of study. Those groups are great, don't get me wrong, and they can give you outstanding industry connections, but you can learn much more when you also reach outside your major to a group on the other side of campus.

One of the easiest ways to find a job today is to find a niche at a company that needs people

with your skill set but isn't a traditional place for graduates of your major to go.

Now, I'm not just saying that non-engineers should find an engineering group to be a part of, but that engineers should also reach out and join other non-engineering organizations. Trust me, it will look good on your resume and will help make your job application stand out.

Though my editor Edward Leonard and I are odd aberrations from the normal engineering mold, most engineers are not amazing writers or speakers because they don't realize that those traits are not just needed, but necessary in life after college.

One of the most difficult issues for engineering companies is poor communication, especially between the businesspeople, engineers and the company's customers. The only way for engineers to understand the language of business is to work more with non-engineers and the only way for non-engineers to gain better insight into how engineering works is by working together with engineers.

But don't take my word for it, go to [www.stuorg.iastate.edu](http://www.stuorg.iastate.edu) to find an interesting organization you wouldn't normally join, and join it today. It won't hurt and if you really don't like it, you can stop at any time, but it just might get you that job or internship you have been after.

In the end, my hope is that each person reading this article is able to get deeply involved in an organization at Iowa State this year or at some point during their time at college.

Participating in organizations and particularly running student organizations helps you improve some of the skills that you won't ever learn in class, but that are invaluable in the business world.

Letter

# We should re-examine the current definition of wealth

"I think the Earth itself is going to tell us we have to live simple lives, we have to live reverent lives and we have to live together." - Richard Rohr

"When I fled Guazapa Mountain in 1981 I was a poor man. I literally had only shoes and clothes on my back. Now look at me. I have a roof over my head, a bed to sleep in and food to eat for my family. I am indeed a rich man. What more could a man want?" - Ephraim Rivas, Salvadoran farmer talking about receiving assistance from the Mennonite Central Committee during El Salvador's 12-year civil war.

**Gary T. Guthrie** is a Community Supported Agriculture farmer in Nevada.

I believe we need to re-examine what our definition of wealth is. What would it mean for our world if we looked at our needs through the eyes of a Salvadoran farmer? What does it mean to live with enough?

I have seen protein malnutrition in Bolivia and caloric malnutrition in El Salvador. In Bolivia, it was a case of abject poverty where the family could not afford to purchase a cow to milk. In El Salvador the woman was so

poor she barely had resources to put enough corn and beans on the table for her and her child. I believe there is no real peace where there is hunger.

So how will we live together? Who will be feeding us in the year 2050 when it is estimated that the world population will be 9.9 billion? Will it be the industrial food chain or the peasant food web? A recent study put out by the Canadian-based Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration (ETC) claims that 70 percent of the world's population is fed by the peasant food web.

If we are to live together in peace,

then we need to focus on developing more resilient local food webs that give life to all, honor farmers with just wages and protect the most important natural resource: the Earth's soil. Without healthy sustainable soil there is no food. The 1.6 acres I cultivated for vegetables produced more than 21,000 pounds of produce in 2009. Imagine a world populated by a web of millions of small farms producing enough food for everyone.

This web of farms would stabilize democracies because many people would not have to leave their land to look for work in the cities or cross

borders to look for work. The food system would be more resilient because small farms grow more diversified crops. We, as a world, are entering the age of limited resources, limited fresh water, limited phosphorus, limited oil, etc. How we approach and respond to those limits will determine if there will be peace. That is why I believe Rohr's statement. The Earth is teaching us now that we do have limits. How will we respond?

Let's protect our precious resources. Let's live reverent, simple lives so that, like Ephraim, we might experience the joy of being rich.



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