



Photos by Sue Birrfield



World Links semester aims to develop global perspectives

Beth Pankonen ran across the Alverno gym to East Africa, waving a handful of currency and shouting: "I got the money! I got the money!" People jumped up and hugged her excitedly.

What's going on here? Is this some kind of game?

It is a game — The World Game. But far from being child's play or a simple pastime, this game involves adults in world issues of hunger, energy, health, economics and every other human pursuit. Played out on a large (35-by-70-feet) map of the world taped to the floor, the game assigns 100 people places on the map, where they each represent one percent of the human family. Candles, plastic food and various other items are passed out

in a rough representation of the resources each region possesses. Participants must then obtain the resources they need by negotiating with other regions and with groups such as multi-national corporations, financial institutions, the media and global problem-solving teams.

Pankonen, a sophomore in social science at Alverno, represented East Africa. East Africa needed \$1 billion dollars to build a hydroelectric plant, which would support agricultural and industrial development in the area. But commercial banks would not touch such a large, risky venture. Other countries had their own problems. Just as time was running out, Pankonen was able to negotiate a loan through the World Bank.

The World Game was played twice at Alverno on March 25, directly involving over 500 students, faculty and staff members. It represented a high point in the college's "World Links - Global Action," a semester-long effort to help the Alverno community understand the differences between people and appreciate the interrelatedness of all countries and people in our world.

Other activities have included an international film festival, a World Lunch, talks and demonstrations by students who have lived and studied in other countries, lectures and discussions, various interactions with the 18 international students at Alverno this semester, and artistic, musical and other cultural exchanges.