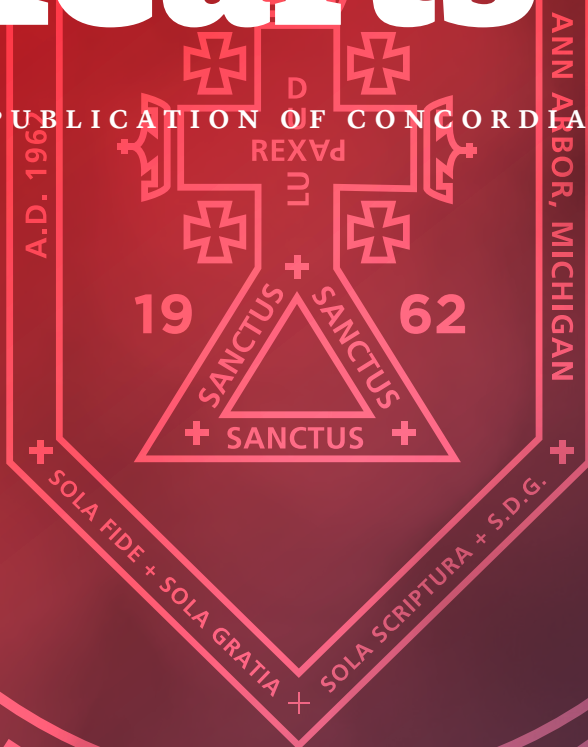


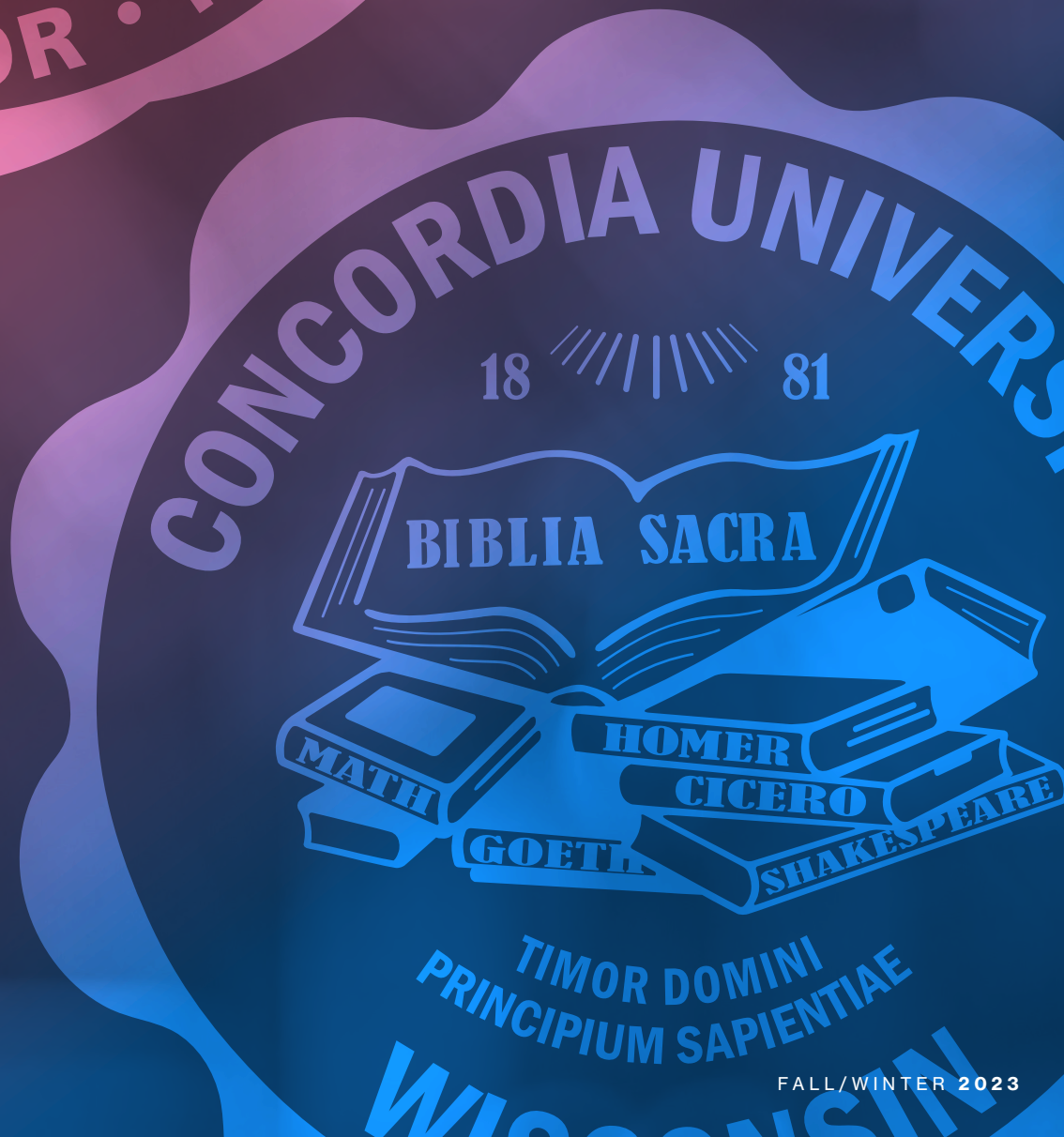
Hearts Together

A PUBLICATION OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WISCONSIN & ANN ARBOR



SEALED WITH THE SPIRIT

What holds our campuses together is the knowledge of that which sets us apart.



FALL/WINTER 2023

Hearts Together contents

FALL/WINTER 2023



ON THE COVER

The campuses' seals bear Latin phrases that represent key values of the university. The CUAA seal displays four solas of the Reformation: faith alone, grace alone, Scripture alone, and to God alone be glory. Meanwhile, the CUW seal presents the phrase "*Timor domini principium sapientiae*," which means "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Together, these markers serve as important reminders as the university looks to the future under President Erik Ankerberg's new leadership.

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HEARTS TOGETHER is a joint publication of the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses of Concordia University. In 2013, the two formerly independent universities merged into one institution, overseen by one president and one governing board. This publication shares the stories of the exciting advancements on each campus; the notable accomplishments of faculty, staff, students, and alumni; and the life-changing service Concordians—*hearts together*—undertake for Christ in the Church and the world.

The Strategic Communications department is responsible for the production of *Hearts Together*. The magazine's editorial team welcomes your feedback. Please send comments or queries to Kali.Thiel@cuw.edu.

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Go green! If you would like to subscribe to our email edition instead of receiving a copy in the mail, please email news@cuw.edu or news@cuaa.edu.

Make it new.

These three simple words encapsulate the professional and almost sacred obligation of the poet Ezra Pound and his fellow proponents of modernism. They held a goal to reinvent the literature, the art, the very life of the 20th century. The novelty of Pound's revolutionary assertion certainly stems from its expression of an optimism for the transformation of a culture and its society.

In a way, the beginning of each new academic year offers a similar kind of opportunity, in the spirit of Pound, to make all things new again. I cannot deny that I have begun my first full academic year as president of Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor with high hopes. Many of you may hold similar optimism for me.

Such optimism resonates with Emily Dickinson's poetic definition of hope, where she writes, "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all." We want so earnestly to define our life in terms of hope, but often we fail to understand exactly why we so desperately need hope.

As you might imagine, my best intentions as a president will not always come to fruition—sometimes it will be my fault, and sometimes it will be because of circumstances beyond my control. Thankfully, the same does not have to be said when it comes to our eternal futures.

The challenges we face, as individuals and as a university community, remind us that sin is the only thing we contribute to our salvation. This awareness and emptiness and longingness for something more defines the cry of the psalmist in Psalm 42. He writes, "As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God."

The psalmist's images of longing and thirst capture the bareness of our lives. When left to ourselves and our own imagination and effort, we know we are broken and dead and unable to manufacture anything that is true or beautiful or good or satisfying or enduring or even living in our lives. Instead, we are left to echo the writer's later question in this psalm: "When shall I come and behold the face of God?"

What an essential question for us! The manner in which we answer the question defines how we understand our present and our future. If we believe that our good intentions, our pious works, our carefully curated network of right, connected people will somehow bring us face-to-face with God, we're sorely mistaken. In reality, we're only constructing a hell of our own making.

If we wish to experience hope rather than hell, like the psalmist, we are invited to remember our experiences in the house of God. Our Lord mercifully reciprocates this act of remembering with one of his own. When we are despondent like the psalmist, when our souls are cast down within us, when we are disquieted or in turmoil about the state of our lives, we come to the house of God. In His holy temple, we remember how our Lord remembers us.

This new academic year certainly provides us with many opportunities to make our lives new, and, yes, a lot of good can come from those efforts. But let us remember that our Lord has created a new for us that will not disappoint. He has created a new home for us to occupy—a home of hope that He has built with water and His Word and His body and His blood. Because of His enduring love, we will live with Him and praise Him, not only today but for all eternity.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Erik P. Ankerberg".

ERIK P. ANKERBERG, PHD
President

social scene








INFLATED SENSE OF FUN

Falcons pulled out all the stops for this year's Stomp the Courtyard. There's no better way to kick off a new school year than with fun and games!

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Pray, praise, and give thanks

Our Lord promises that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. Faculty and staff started the semester by lifting up in prayer all of our students and the university as a whole.



CLASSY

CUAA's Krieger lecture hall received a facelift over the summer. A fresh space for fresh minds.



GAME TIME

CUAA students started the semester off strong with a good balance of work and play!



BLESSED AND COATED

Congrats to CUAAs Doctor of Physical Therapy alpha class on receiving their white coats. It's the start of something new and great at Concordia's North Building.

Home sweet Homecoming

There's no place like home ... especially when your home lights up the sky as part of an unforgettable Homecoming celebration!



DODGE, DUCK, DIP, DIVE, DODGE

Normally we wouldn't be too pleased about a student being dodgy, but we're happy to make an exception here. Concordia's competitive dodgeball club is in its second season and looking to make it to the national tournament this year.



It's a good day to be a Cardinal

Every new student experience needs a photo op! Welcome to all of our freshmen and new students. It's good to call you Cardinals!

fresh faces from afar

In August, on perhaps the hottest day of the year, some 400 students arrived on campus from around the world for orientation. Excitement mixed with sweat and trepidation as they learned the ropes, found their way around campus, caught glimpses of Concordia life, and posed with President Ankerberg in the auditorium. More than 900 will be enrolled this fall, representing the largest group of international students, by far, CUW has ever hosted. God's blessings to them all as they embark on this exciting new challenge! Learn more about the Concordia International Center at cuw.edu/international.



take five

Get to know one of our *uncommon* Concordians, **Angi Steffen ('07)**, Director of Sports Medicine.

By **Mike Zimmerman**, *Strategic Communications*



Angi Steffen is the best friend a Falcons student-athlete can have—especially when aches, pains, and injuries inevitably become a part of the athletic life. An athlete herself from a young age (Angi played for the Falcons Softball team), she thought a career in athletic training, that let her “get paid to watch sports,” seemed almost too good to be true. She’s a Concordia lifer, a 2007 graduate of the athletic training (AT) program, and one of the most popular and valued members of the athletics staff. In other words, *she’s* the one who has turned out almost too good to be true!

1 **Who has been a big influence or mentor for you at CUW?**

From an athletic training/sports medicine standpoint, Russ DeLap and Katherine Liesener, previous and current AT academic program directors. Both are still at CUW, and I continue to learn from them in different capacities. From an athletics administration standpoint, Rob Barnhill and Stacey Brunner-Jones. I’ve known both since I was an undergraduate student here, and both have been critical to my growth in a professional role and increased responsibilities over the years.

2 **What has been the biggest or most exciting sports moment here for you?**

Without spending too much time racking through the years, I would have to say Softball’s 2023 post-season run. They were the first *team* to win a regional tournament and advance to the Sweet 16 in CUW’s NCAA era, something that only 16 teams in the nation accomplish. **AND** the team that ended their run went on to win the national championship!

3 **As a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?**

A veterinarian. So I guess I stayed in health care but tossed in my passion for athletics. I’ve always loved dogs. I currently have Ali, a sweet 14-year-old beagle mix living her best life.

4 **What do you love about your job now?**

The lack of monotony. Some days are more mundane, sitting behind a desk, doing admin stuff. But others are out on the sidelines in all the elements—that’s where you’ll catch the biggest smile. I’ve gotten to visit states and see things I wouldn’t otherwise have. And, of course, watching student-athletes return to competition following long-term injuries can’t be topped!

5 **What’s the weirdest thing that has ever happened at a game?**

Coach Etter loves this story: I once took out a sideline official during a football game! We were sprinting in opposite directions and collided. I wasn’t fazed, but he went down, laid there, looked up at me, and tossed the flag! I don’t think I took a breath for the next two drives until I knew the penalty wasn’t going to hurt us or change the outcome of the game. Now we laugh about it often!

FIRST ON THE SCENE ATHLETIC TRAINERS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE ATHLETIC PROGRAM, ON AND OFF THE FIELD, TYPICALLY PROVIDING THE FIRST CARE AN ATHLETE RECEIVES FOLLOWING INJURY. THEY COLLABORATE WITH OTHER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS TO ENSURE ATHLETES RECEIVE HIGH-LEVEL CARE FOR THE RETURN TO THE FIELD AND OTHER PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES. LEARN MORE AT [CUW.EDU/ATHLETICTRAINING](https://www.cuw.edu/athletictraining).



OT student Savannah Mireles serves up care with a smile to client Jesse Green.

Affordable community care

CUW extends quality health and social care services to the community through its Interprofessional (IP) Clinic. A special focus is placed on serving the underserved. School of Health Professions students work under the supervision of licensed professionals to apply learning and provide free or reduced-price services to patients within the community. The result is a mutually beneficial experience for students and clients.

Services offered:

- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Speech, language, and hearing
- Wellness screenings
- Connections to community resources

Learn more about CUW's IP Clinic at cuw.edu/SHP.

WORKING HIS WAY BACK TO EASY

It's somewhat ironic that Jesse Green named his food trailer Big Easy'z, because owning a mobile restaurant is anything but. Preparations for the weekend's run-outs begin each week on Monday with grocery shopping. Then comes the food prep, cooking, and cleaning throughout the rest of the week.

Despite the grind, the New Orleans native loves serving up his signature chicken and fish to the people of Milwaukee, his current home. Before he made good on his goal to operate his own food trailer in 2019, he had long harbored a dream to do it.

Then in November 2020 Jesse had a stroke. The stroke caused weakness on his right side, which continues to severely limit his mobility and fine motor skills. Once he tapped out his occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) services at Froedtert, he was tipped off to Concordia's OT/PT community clinics, which now operate in the university's recently unveiled Interprofessional Clinic. The clinics give students in CUW's graduate-level OT and PT programs the opportunity for valuable hands-on training under the guidance of licensed professionals, while community patients, like Jesse, gain access to needed services at no cost or a significantly reduced price.

For Colleen Green, Jesse's wife, Concordia's clinics are about so much more than just rehabilitative services, though.

"Ultimately, it's emotional goals as well as the physical goals," said Colleen. "It's getting him to want to do more. Sometimes he might feel he's maxed out, but I feel there's always hope, and you have to keep working toward it. That's what we're doing here is keeping hope alive."

During an OT session at Concordia earlier this semester, CUW students worked to keep hope alive by having Jesse practice a familiar skill in the Interprofessional Clinic's mock apartment—frying up chicken.

Only the recipe wasn't right, and the Concordia air fryer couldn't keep up with Jesse's professional-grade equipment. Jesse broke into his first smile of the session when asked if the student-assisted chicken was as good as his Big Easy'z fare: not even close he indicated.

All the more motivation to work his way back to doing it the right way.

"We're not done," said Colleen. "He can still make progress. He's lost so much. It's good for him to aim toward getting back into the trailer. It's a goal for him to focus on."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Find more ways to get involved at CUW or learn more about the events listed below by visiting cuw.edu/events.



VISIT DAYS

Feb. 19; March 15, 22;
April 12, 2024



CHRISTMAS AT CONCORDIA

Dec. 1-2

Civic Chorale & Handbells
Nov. 11; *Christ the King Celebration* Nov. 19



DECEMBER COMMENCEMENT

Dec. 16



SPRING MUSICAL

Feb. 22-25, 2024
Singin' in the Rain



MARCH MATCHNESS

March 20, 2024
CUWAA's Day of Giving



FULL RELIANCE, STRAIGHT PATHS

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

—Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV

CUW’s Campus Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) selected “In Every Way, God’s Path” as the theme for the 2023–24 academic year. The phrase is inspired by Proverbs 3:5–6.

“Though the ways in which we study, serve, and come to know God in our time here at CUW may be numerous, we can find comfort in our common confession and journey along His path for our lives together in Him,” said CMLT President Harrison Hulse.

Campus Pastor Rev. Steve Smith expanded upon this idea by breaking down the verses into four parts:

- *Trust in the LORD with all your heart.* “The word ‘all’ is important,” said Smith. “Many of us are able to say, ‘I’ll trust God with the big things,’ but the little, day-to-day things are sometimes harder to give to God.”
- *Do not lean on your own understanding.* Smith continued, “There are plenty of times when we think we are wise enough to understand something, but our own understanding will ultimately break down at some point. We need to turn to God.”
- *In all your ways acknowledge him.* “Again, we see the word ‘all,’ this time paired with ‘ways.’ ‘Ways’ can mean different things. It can be a physical road or path, or it can indicate the manner in which you act or think about things.”
- *And he will make straight your paths.* “A straight path may seem like a direct line from point A to point B, but here ‘straight’ is more about being ‘right with God.’ The path God puts us on isn’t always the easy one, but we can trust it is the path that keeps us closest to Him,” concluded Smith.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Access to mental and behavioral health services is a growing concern within the U.S. due to a shortage of skilled professionals combined with a rise in need. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, health care providers nationwide have reported an influx in the number of patients seeking treatment. Nationwide, average wait times for initial behavioral health care are up to six months, according to U.S. Health and Human Services data.

This comes as no surprise to CUW double alumnus Nathan Wallenfang, a behavioral/mental health nurse practitioner who is currently the only prescriber for his region of upper Michigan and northeast Wisconsin. Following national trends, the wait list for his home clinic in Marinette far exceeds national averages.

Inspired by Wallenfang’s career trajectory and other alumni’s desire to help, Concordia has launched a certificate psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner program. Current nurse practitioners are eligible to enroll. At the end of the program, which involves 18 credits of online courses and 500 practicum hours, graduates will be able to prescribe medications and more fully care for patients in need of mental and behavioral services.

“Is there a need? Absolutely,” said Wallenfang. “And I think Concordia is the perfect place to start this certificate program. There’s a reason I’m a two-time alumnus of Concordia.”

Learn more about the PMHNP program or apply at blog.cuw.edu/PMHNP.



Engineered for success

CONCORDIA WELCOMES SUBHA KUMPATY, PHD, DMIN, AS ITS NEW CHAIR OF ENGINEERING. Kumpaty’s impressive resume includes more than 25 years as an engineering professor, multiple awards, and terminal degrees in engineering science (mechanical) from the University of Mississippi, and in biblical exegesis and counseling from Tyndale Theological Seminary in Texas.



CUW now offers Bachelor of Science degrees in chemical engineering and industrial engineering. Programs are slated to launch in fall 2024. Apply at cuw.edu/apply.



'14 Adam VanderVeen

Master of Business Administration ('14)

ON HIS OWN TRACK

Adam VanderVeen has one rule when evaluating career opportunities: say yes. His bold and trusting acceptances led him on a remarkable career path, culminating in the position of marketing director at Triumph Motorcycles America Ltd. in Atlanta, Georgia.

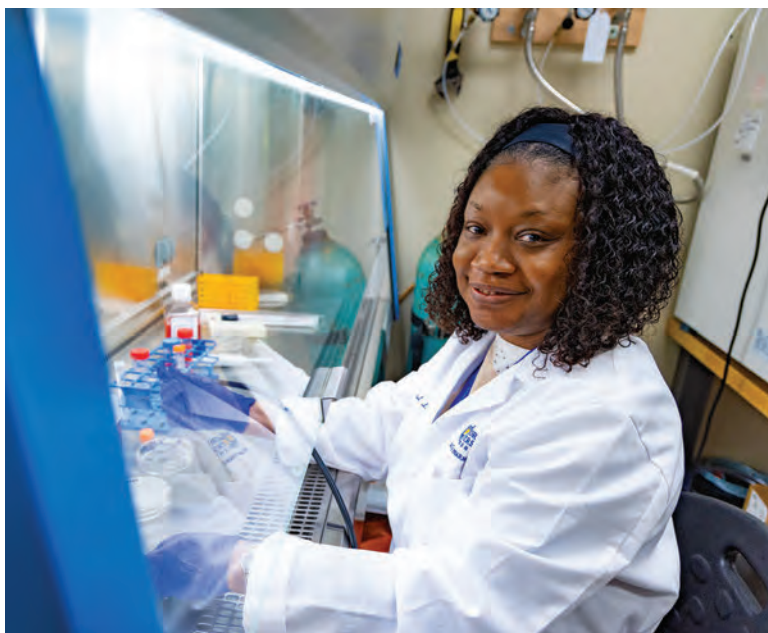
VanderVeen's unconventional journey started in Iraq, where he served as a Marine. After deployment, he accepted a promotions role at Harley-Davidson, became a professional MMA fighter, ran a video company, started a lifestyle magazine, and completed his MBA at Concordia University.

He credits Concordia's supportive culture and independent spirit for helping him ignite his entrepreneurial interests and harness his diverse experiences.

"My many interests didn't seem that unusual at Concordia," said VanderVeen. "Concordia is a culture of many paths. There are tons of exceptional people doing really different things, and they will go out of their way to help you use all you were given to succeed."

VanderVeen eventually replaced MMA fighting with motor sport racing when he accepted a marketing role at Evinrude Outboard Motors. Several promotions later, the marketer with many interests made his triumphant move to Atlanta.

For more information about Concordia's entrepreneurial initiatives, visit www.cuw.edu/culaunch.



FULBRIGHT ON SITE

Concordia has welcomed Nickania Pryce, a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence from Jamaica, to campus this year. This is the third time in the past decade that Concordia has been selected as a host institution for the prestigious Fulbright Program.

Founded in 1946, Fulbright is the U.S. government’s flagship international academic exchange program that operates in over 160 countries worldwide. Each year the Fulbright Board awards approximately 8,000 grants split roughly among 2,000 U.S. students, 4,000 foreign students, 800 U.S. university professors, and 1,000 visiting professors. On average, one out of every five applicants is awarded a scholarship annually.

Altogether, Pryce will spend 10 months in the U.S. teaching within Concordia’s School of Pharmacy and assisting with research efforts alongside Terry-Elinor Reid, PhD, assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences at CUW. Reid is an accomplished researcher who’s also a native Jamaican. She’s currently focused on finding a cure for HIV with the aid of computer-aided drug discovery technologies. The pair plan to explore latency reverse agents that can activate HIV latent reservoirs, with the hope of one day completely eradicating the virus through antiretroviral therapy.

Pryce says Reid’s research is new territory for her despite her decades of experience in pharmaceutical practice and a love of laboratory research.

“I’m learning a lot; it’s very exciting,” said Pryce. “I am really anticipating some great things coming out of this research.”

Concordia faculty and students are learning a great deal from Pryce too. She brings a different perspective and new insights to lectures based on her experiences with the health care system in Jamaica. These ideas spur conversations and help build cultural awareness among students and faculty alike.

“Being here helps me realize that we are doing some great things in Jamaica despite being a developing country,” said Pryce. “At the same time, the practices of Concordia’s pharmacy and the advancements that exist in the U.S., I can carry some of that back home. There’s a lot that we can learn from each other.”

Read more at blog.cuw.edu/pharmacy-fulbright.

TRAVELING EDUCATORS

In the midst of their own back-to-school bustle this year, School of Education faculty pressed pause on their pre-term preparations to provide professional development training to well over 1,000 Lutheran preschool through high school educators. Within the span of one month, CUWAA faculty traveled out of state twice to contribute exemplary content, training, best practices, and insights from a distinctly Lutheran worldview. Here’s a snapshot of their impact:

1,357

PREK-12 LUTHERAN EDUCATORS SERVED

6

STATES REACHED (MINNESOTA, IOWA, SOUTH DAKOTA, WISCONSIN, ILLINOIS, MISSOURI)

23

CUWAA FACULTY WHO LED SESSIONS

58

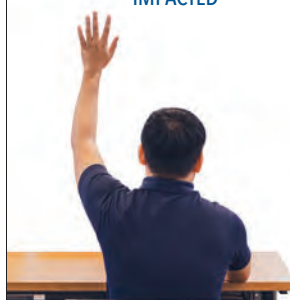
UNIQUE SECTIONALS OFFERED

93

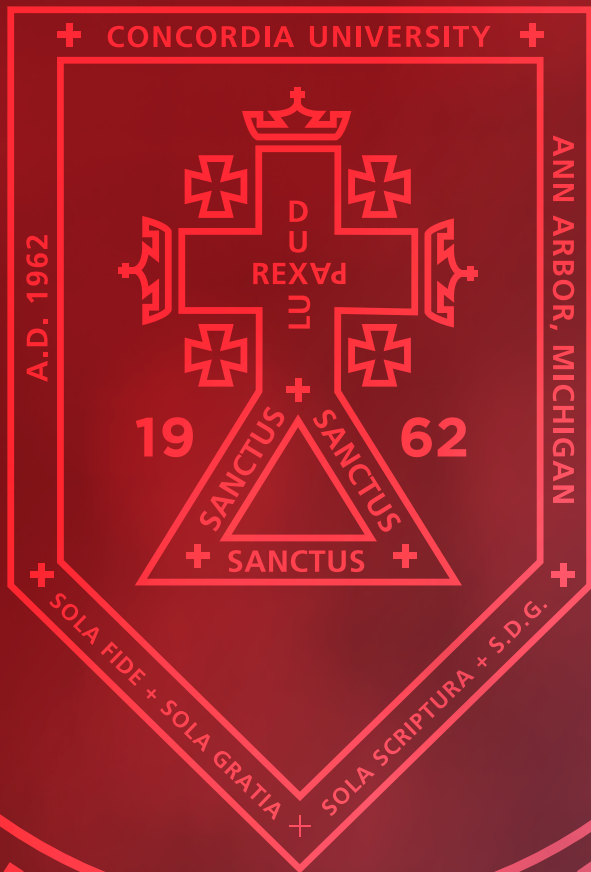
LUTHERAN SCHOOLS IMPACTED

UP TO CODE

CUW’s computer science department is busy this year. Enrollment across the undergraduate and graduate programs nearly doubled from last year, earning computer science students a spot among Concordia’s largest learner populations. The computer science wing and Acuity Esports Arena also received a spruce thanks to significant donations from Acuity and Program Chair Mike Litman, PhD.



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY



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CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

18 81



TIMOR DOMINI
PRINCIPIUM SAPIENTIAE

WISCONSIN

Looking back, looking forward, *hearts together*

A new president marks a pivotal point in a university's history. It is an opportunity to look back at the accomplishments accumulated since the institution's inception, as well as forward toward future goals. For generations, thousands upon thousands of learners have chosen Concordia's Mequon or Ann Arbor campus to grow in God's love and become better equipped in mind, body, and spirit to serve Christ in the Church and the world. As President Erik Ankerberg, PhD, begins his first full academic year as head of our university, we pray that the work our Lord has begun at CUWAA will, by His grace, continue for generations to come.



At the end of September, Concordia University and its community of supporters marked the inauguration of Erik Ankerberg, PhD, with eight days of celebrations on the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses. Students, employees, alumni, donors, and friends ushered in their new president with a speaker series, special guest preachers, a student poetry contest, a gala, and lots of light hearted fun and games. For his inauguration ceremony on Friday, Sept. 29, Ankerberg addressed the audience and shared his vision for the future of the university. Here is his address.

“I wasted time, and now doth time waste me.”

By **Erik P. Ankerberg, PhD**, *University President*

This is the lament of William Shakespeare’s King Richard II, as the failed leader reflects on losing his crown and his kingdom. For me, as a recovering English professor, this confession is one of the saddest moments in Shakespeare’s plays. How does a leader come to the end of his play, and his life, and make peace with his own shortcomings—not to mention the prospect that others will remember him as an abject failure?

On a day when we are celebrating our university and our work together, I believe it is healthy and honest to face facts. We know we live in a world in which higher education is a challenged enterprise, and many are ambivalent about our efforts. When we consider the factors that impact our commitment to mission, our enrollment, our financial position, and the public perception of our work, we would do well to consider the ways we can ensure, as a university community, that we are not, in Richard’s words, wasting time.

Today I would gently suggest we can understand our work in relation to three pillars that demonstrate that we, as a university community, are making the most of the time we have:

- 1) Authentically living out our university values;
- 2) Pursuing the status of rising regional university;
- 3) And making our students—and the world—whole.

University values

First, we should remember that our university’s values, in a tangible way, provide the framework of our life together in this community. That is precisely why we are focusing on them so intently this week, and I am so grateful for the thoughtful presentations that we are enjoying throughout this Inauguration Week. When we consider the benefits of being a university that is *Christ-centered*, a place focused on *truth and integrity, excellence, and service*, we begin to understand the gravity of the promises we are making to one another. I just want to take a moment and provide a brief summary of my initial understanding of each value:



CHRIST-CENTERED

Because we are *Christ-centered*, the person, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ intersects with every aspect of our work as a university. From that perspective, everything revolves around Him. As a result, we continually look to strengthen our ability to love and care for each other because each person is precious—each one made in the image of God. Consequently, we welcome *all* to our university community and surround them with the love, joy, mercy, and peace that our Savior brings to us.



TRUTH AND INTEGRITY

Likewise, we pursue *truth and integrity* because when we pursue and encounter truth we discover He is a person—Jesus Christ. From that perspective, we realize that He is our terminus. He provides the integrity—the bond—that holds creation and all of our relationships together; consequently, we care about each individual as a complete human person. In that context, we learn from Him to listen to others, to care *about* their hurts, and care *for* their needs. He nurtures empathy within us; He encourages us to be concerned about justice and dignity; and He does this because He gives us hope as He reminds us that He makes all things new.



EXCELLENCE

We promote *excellence* because we want each member of our university community to grow—not just in knowledge and skill—but virtue, as well. We privilege the liberal arts—the studies that free us from the control of others, and simultaneously we invest intentionally in those disciplines that lead more directly to professional careers. We believe that excellence is distinct from elitism, and we prepare our students well to lead lives that are extraordinary—not because of wealth or social status or achievement—but because of faithfulness that manifests itself in an authentic concern for others.



SERVICE

We prioritize *service* because we want our students to live out an understanding of vocation that transcends the whims or limits of mere careerism and explores widely their roles in families and the church and the state. We strive to orient everyone in this community to turn outward, to look beyond the horizon of their aspirations, and to seek the flourishing of all they meet in their daily lives.

A rising university

The second pillar that allows us to make the most of our time is aligning ourselves with traditional university success markers. In a highly competitive world—with wavering public confidence in higher education—we recognize the value of using data to demonstrate our university’s contributions to the region. We certainly hope those in our communities will recognize Concordia as a rising regional university—one with a reputation for curating a portfolio of academically rigorous programs and delivering outcomes that prove our commitment to student success.

Likewise, we, like every university, want to thrive: We seek to grow enrollments and our endowment; we should aspire to serve an equal number of traditional undergraduate and post-traditional students; we must pursue a better sense of fiscal discipline and become financially self-sustaining at each campus. We want our retention and graduation rates to demonstrate our influential status as a higher-education institution of choice across the states we serve.

That is why we are in the middle of doing what most universities do today: We are developing a university strategic plan, master plans for both of our campuses, and both strategic budget and enrollment plans. We are also in the process of initiating a comprehensive campaign. These are the necessary steps that denote our health and point us toward an encouraging future. At the same time, while pursuing these positive metrics we must be wise and self-aware enough to acknowledge that a thriving university is feckless and poverty-stricken if it is not faithfully living out its missional commitments.

Continued on page 18





WHAT IS AN INAUGURATION?

Much like the baccalaureate and commencement ceremonies during graduation time, Concordia's new president was celebrated with both a sacred (installation) and secular (inauguration) rite of passage. Dr. Ankerberg's installation service, which took place on Feb. 5, 2023, marked the Christological sanctioning and blessing of Concordia's new president as a commissioned worker of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

The inauguration refers to the full eight days of celebrations, including the formal ceremony on Friday, Sept. 29, during which Concordia's Board of Regents sanctioned Ankerberg as leader of the university. The larger-scale inauguration provided Concordia and its stakeholders with the opportunity to come together in celebration of the university's new leader and the institution's bright future.





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1 & 2 An inauguration ceremony was held in the R. John Buuck Field House on Sept. 29. Faculty Laureate Ernest Stremski, MD, led the faculty processional. **3** CUAA student McKenzie Peters makes the catch at the student vs. employee whiffle ball game amid inauguration celebrations. **4 & 5** Erik Ankerberg's family—including sons David (left) and Peter, and wife Jennifer—joined him at the Hearts Together Gala. Table decorations at the event celebrated Concordia's two campuses, hearts together. **6** Members of CUAA vocal ensembles traveled to Mequon for the inauguration ceremony. Kreft Endowed Chair in Music John Boonenberg, DMA, (pictured) directed a joint choir for the event. **7** Dr. Pano Kanelos, founding president of the University of Austin, served as the featured speaker of the Inauguration Speaker Series. **8** On "Ankerberg's Favorites" day, students got to snuggle rescue pups from President Ankerberg's favorite animal shelter. **9** Individuals beyond our campus community joined in the inauguration celebration. Church partners like Pastor Emeritus Rev. Rodney Zwonitzer (center) and English District Bishop Emeritus Rev. Dr. David Stechholz (right) were among the honored guests at the Hearts Together Dinner in Ann Arbor.

Support Concordia's commitment to whole-student development

We invite you to honor President Ankerberg's start at Concordia by supporting our students through scholarship aid or the university's greatest need, the Concordia Fund. Gifts of any size are appreciated and do make a difference. Visit cuw.edu/give or cuaa.edu/give.



Making individuals whole

The third pillar involves two interrelated steps: making students—and the world—whole. The first step is making our students whole by encouraging them to gather all that the world has to offer. The cantankerous 20th-century Welsh poet priest R. S. Thomas’ poem “Threshold” gives us a sense of the choices we face as we educate students today:

I emerge from the mind’s
cave into the worse darkness
outside, where things pass and
the Lord is in none of them.

I have heard the still, small voice
and it was that of the bacteria
demolishing my cosmos. I
have lingered too long on

this threshold, but where can I go?
To look back is to lose the soul
I was leading upwards towards
the light. To look forward? Ah,

what balance is needed at
the edges of such an abyss.
I am alone on the surface
of a turning planet. What

to do but, like Michelangelo’s
Adam, put my hand
out into unknown space,
hoping for the reciprocating touch?

Thomas’ poem reminds us that our education allows us to access the widest and deepest forms of knowledge. We can expose students to the most magnificent aspects of the physical world—from the microscopic influence of bacteria to the macrophysical movement of planets—but we come to recognize the limitation of that kind of education: It is incomplete. Thomas’ speaker would have us reach toward the transcendent with wonder, grace, imagination (and we might even say faith). From Thomas’ perspective, then, education makes a person whole when she comes to terms with all that the material world offers, but is only complete when she realizes she is a creature in a world much larger than she realizes and then turns to engage—seriously and intentionally—that which is beyond her temporal experiences with the gift of hope.

The second step is to encourage our students to pour out themselves and all they have gained in an effort to make the world whole. The 17th-century British poet George Herbert explores this possibility in his dramatic sonnet “The Holdfast,” where his speaker and the speaker’s interlocutor wrestle with essential questions about the nature and purpose of life:

I threaten'd to observe the strict decree
 Of my dear God with all my power and might;
 But I was told by one it could not be;
 Yet I might trust in God to be my light.
 "Then will I trust," said I, "in Him alone."
 "Nay, e'en to trust in Him was also His:
 We must confess that nothing is our own."
 "Then I confess that He my succour is."
 "But to have nought is ours, not to confess
 That we have nought." I stood amaz'd at this,
 Much troubled, till I heard a friend express
 That all things were more ours by being His;
 What Adam had, and forfeited for all,
 Christ keepeth now, who cannot fail or fall.

Herbert's speaker—like most of us in the contemporary world—wants to advocate for a quality of life that is determined by our own efforts and knowledge and skill—our own "power and might." The interlocutor frustrates the speaker by continually unraveling his assumption that the "good" things he has accumulated constitute a "good" life. Herbert proposes a provocative understanding of life: We are better off when we acknowledge that we have nothing, and—ironically—we actually possess "all things" only when we first admit that we do not own or control the world around us. From this perspective, we might gain the "world" of knowledge and skills and achievements, but we can only avoid "losing our souls" when

we confess that those things were never truly our possessions in the first place. Their true value and purpose only become apparent when we willingly learn how to lose things we have gained—by pouring out ourselves and all that we have into the gaping holes of our neighbors' lives.

Shakespeare's Richard does indeed find a form of redemption for his wasting the time in his life—the self-awareness he gains allows him to rise to defend himself, even as he comes to his tragic end. He thinks, and he acts nobly—not a bad model for us as a university community today. When we intentionally remember our university values and live them out in our life together as a university community; when we seriously and consistently hold ourselves accountable to the markers that we believe define the meaningful work of a rising regional university; when we make students whole by helping them gain all of the knowledge and skills available to us, and at the same time encourage them to give up those things to make others whole—only then do we see the true opportunities that lie before us. As we pursue these three pillars, we will come to remember that, through the blessed work of the Holy Trinity, we have in the past carried out—and we must continue in the future to carry out—the extraordinary work of providing our students with a transformative and uncommon education that develops students in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world. If we bring ardor and faithfulness to that work, we will come to see that we are not wasting time; we are not serving time; we are redeeming time. Thank you.



4

1 CUAU Professor Emeritus Mark Looker, PhD, was among the presenters of the Inauguration Speaker Series. 2 President Ankerberg and students bust a move on the dance floor during the Hearts Together Gala. 3 Alumni from both campuses and spanning multiple decades joined in the inauguration ceremony procession.

4 Students and employees ended their good-natured whiffle ball battle with a collective cheer. 5 CUW student Isabel McCauley sang in the joint-campus choir during the inauguration ceremony. 6 CUAU Assistant Professor of Rehab Science Reggie Kehoe knocks one out of the park during the whiffle ball game at CUAU.



6



5

take five

Get to know one of our *uncommon* Concordians, golf and hockey player **Chase Temple ('26)**.

By **Mike Zimmerman**, *Strategic Communications*



Sometimes learning how the business world works comes with some pretty cool opportunities. While helping out at a big charity celebrity golf event in Florida last spring, CUAA sophomore (then freshman) Chase Temple had a “brush with greatness” involving Baker Mayfield, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers’ new quarterback. Long story short, Chase—a sport and entertainment business major—put his golf skills to good use on Mayfield’s behalf. We’ll let him explain the rest!

1 What happened in Florida last spring?

I was on an ELO (Extended Learning Opportunity), and we were helping run this big charity golf tournament in Tampa with a lot of current and former Tampa Bay Buccaneers players and coaches. I was working at a par-3 hole, and when the players found out I play on the golf team, some of them asked me to hit their tee shots for them. When Baker Mayfield asked me, I hit it two feet from the hole, and he made birdie for his team!

2 What’s Baker Mayfield really like?

Before I met him, I wasn’t sure because he has a bit of a reputation that some fans don’t like him. But he was super cool! I was like, I don’t know what those guys are talking about! He was happy to take a photo, and he let me hit that shot for him.

3 Did the experience influence or reinforce any career choices?

Last year when I started I didn’t really know what I wanted to do for a major. But when I was talking to some friends who were in sport and entertainment business it sounded interesting, so I declared that as my major. Ever since then I’ve just really enjoyed what we’ve been doing. Going to Florida was a really

cool experience to be able to get my feet in the water and show me a little bit what it’s like in the industry.

4 How are golf and hockey going for you so far?

Well, hockey wasn’t all that great last year because I broke my wrist just seven games in. But golf has gone well. At a tournament in Indiana, everything was just clicking one day, and I shot a 68 to set a CUAA single-round record!

5 If you could play only one, would it be golf or hockey?

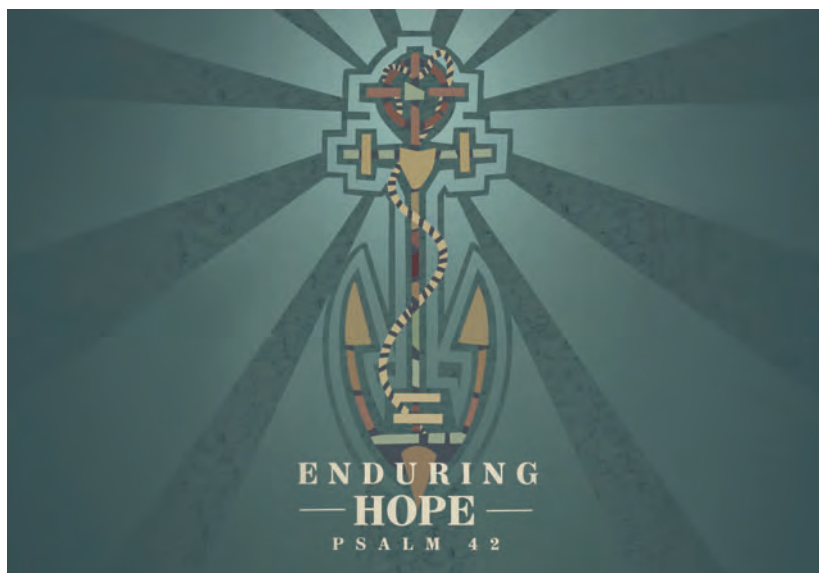
If you mean forever, it would be golf because I can play my whole life. If you mean for Concordia, it would probably be hockey. We have a great team; it’s like a family. I live in a house with a bunch of other players, which is a great way to create friendships and build connections with teammates. These are people I’m going to know for the rest of my life.

THE BUSINESS OF SPORTS IF SPORTS ARE YOUR CALLING BUT ATHLETICS ARE NOT, THERE ARE COUNTLESS FULFILLING AND DYNAMIC CAREERS YOU CAN CHOOSE THAT WILL KEEP YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ACTION. A BS IN SPORT AND ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS IS JUST ONE OF MANY EXCITING BUSINESS DEGREES AVAILABLE AT THE HAAB SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AT CUAA. LEARN MORE AT CUAA.EDU/BUSINESS.



it takes skill

To be a good nurse, one needs to possess both soft and hard skills. Clinical Assistant Professor Kathleen Sheehan, MSN, RN, ensures CUAA nursing students have the latter through her “Foundational Skills” courses. During their orientation to lab equipment earlier this semester, students—including Treneice Coleman-Kelley (left) and Kendal Sanders—practiced using the various types of oxygen delivery devices, such as this nebulizer respiratory treatment. Learn more about CUAA’s Ronald and Marvel Jones School of Nursing at cuaa.edu/SON.



NO MATTER THE HARDSHIPS ...

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.”
—*Psalms 42:11 ESV*

Concordia University Ann Arbor’s theme verse for the 2023–24 academic year is “Enduring Hope.” The CUAA Campus Ministry Leadership Team selected this year’s theme phrase based upon Psalm 42, primarily the fifth and 11th verses, which are essentially the same.

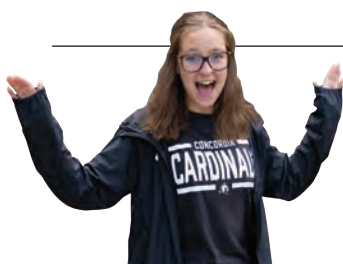
The entirety of Psalm 42 conveys the writer’s despair over his separation from God’s Holy temple and the seeming victories of his enemies, explained Campus Pastor Rev. Randy Duncan. Twice over, in verses 3 and 10, he recalls his enemies’ taunts: “Where is your God?”

There are seemingly valid reasons for his despair. Yet there is one more definite reason for hope. The psalmist twice records his response and inner urging when faced with hardships: “Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.”

The challenge is the same this year for the students, faculty, and staff of Concordia University Ann Arbor, explained Duncan.

“In the midst of earthly struggles, doubts, and uncertainty, we can be certain that God’s love never fails,” said Duncan. “We can have enduring hope, not only because of what He has done in the past when Christ died for our sins as our Savior, but because of what He is doing in our present and because of what He has promised for our future.”

This reminder bears repeating. Each weekday, during Daily Chapel, students and employees are invited to conclude worship by speaking this year’s congregational response: “No matter the hardships and struggles we endure, we have a greater enduring hope based upon the presence and promises of Jesus.”



Flying high

IT’S AN ENROLLMENT TRIFECTA! CUAA notched record-high numbers for its undergraduate, graduate, and total enrollment populations, according to fall 2023 census data. Everywhere we look we see Cardinals, and we love it! Learn more at blog.cuaa.edu/enrollment-23.



Come see what all the fuss is about.
Encourage someone you know to schedule their CUAA visit today at cuaa.edu/visit.

MOMENTS IN TIME

Many of the well-known buildings that lined Ann Arbor’s streets in the 19th century are no longer standing, or they have since taken on a new sheen. However, residents can catch a glimpse of the cityscape of the past on Concordia University Ann Arbor’s campus.

On display in the Earhart Manor is a rare collection of 33 oil paintings by American artist Daniel K. Gregory. Each piece depicts an iconic Ann Arbor home, school structure, commercial building, or city scene in the 1800s.

Dr. James “Jim” Irwin, a retired University of Michigan faculty member and Ann Arbor business owner, commissioned Gregory in the late 1990s to paint the collection. Gregory relied heavily upon meticulous research that Irwin had conducted over the span of seven years, including diving into the University of Michigan archival library to pull historic photographs of Ann Arbor.

In 2018, Irwin gifted the collection, called “Moments in Time,” to Concordia. It was the first time the paintings were made available for public viewing. This fall, to add to the experience, Irwin donated headsets with a pre-recorded audio tour. He timed the donation to coincide with the city of Ann Arbor’s bicentennial celebrations in 2024.

Irwin said he chose CUAA as a recipient—even though there was plenty of interest from other area universities—because he believes in Concordia’s mission. His hope is that the collection will further solidify the Lutheran campus as an integral part of the Ann Arbor community.

“I think the mission of Concordia is as good as it comes within higher education,” Irwin said. “If you want to get your heart warm, walk through campus and talk to a Concordian.”

Those who would like to view the exhibit may reserve a time by emailing ConcordiaGuild@cuaa.edu. A \$10 donation is requested.





Matt Deneen (left) in 2013 and Chris Deneen (with Lauren Genthner, now Lauren Deneen) in 2017. Photos courtesy of the Deneen brothers

Merger milestones

Since the 2013 merger, Concordia University Ann Arbor has seen tremendous growth:

60%

GROWTH IN TOTAL ENROLLMENT

#1

FASTEST-GROWING INDEPENDENT INSTITUTION IN MICHIGAN

13

GRADUATE PROGRAMS ADDED

22

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS ADDED

11

ATHLETIC PROGRAMS ADDED

BROTHERLY MERGER MEMORIES

A lot has been written recently about the 10th anniversary of the merger between CUW and CUAA. Back in 2013 when it was all happening, two brothers in Ann Arbor had a unique perspective on what it all meant.

Matt Deneen, now a Lutheran teacher, graduated in 2013. Chris “Critter” Deneen, now a Lutheran pastor, started as a freshman that fall. Between them (they both served as student body president), they had a unique “before and after” perspective on what was happening.

Considering how CUAA is thriving now (another record enrollment was announced for the current semester), it’s easy to forget what a financial pinch the Ann Arbor school was in. By the time he was a junior, Matt said, there were fears that the school might close or at least that programs might be cut.

“We weren’t entirely sure we were going to *have* a Concordia for senior year,” he recalled, “or what programs they might be able to offer.”

Fortunately, from his vantage point as student body president, Matt was aware that talks were already taking place with Concordia University Wisconsin. Some students worried they might lose their school’s identity.

“We were afraid we were no longer going to be the Cardinals,” he said. “We thought, ‘Are we all going to be Falcons now?’”

Those fears were alleviated when it became clear that it would not be a *takeover* but rather a true *merger*. Both schools would keep their independent identities, and Matt’s diploma would still say “CUAA Cardinals.”

By the time Chris started that fall, the merger had been announced. Still, it was unclear what effects it might have.

“The academic catalog looked completely different,” he recalled. “But when the athletics programs started expanding right away, it was a strong sign that things were going to be okay.”

If anything, the merger made the rivalry with CUW even stronger, Chris said. Especially when a Concordia Invitational Tournament (CIT) victory was at stake.

“Sometimes CUW students would chant, ‘We Still Own You!’” Chris said. “So one time we got a bunch of fake money, and when they started chanting that we threw the money up in the air and chanted back, ‘Thank You, Thank You!’”

The bottom line is both Deneens are grateful the merger has worked out so well. They’ll always love the Cardinals more than the Falcons, but it’s nice they still have a campus to “come home” to. And be proud to call their own.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Find more ways to get involved at CUAA or learn more about the events listed below by visiting cuaa.edu/events.



PREVIEW/
DISCOVERY DAY

Jan. 12, Feb. 19

Admissions visit days



BOAR'S HEAD FESTIVAL

Dec. 1-3



CONCORDIA BAND
AND ORCHESTRA
CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Dec. 7



DECEMBER
COMMENCEMENT

Dec. 17



MARCH MATCHNESS

March 20, 2024



SWEET RETREAT

These days there’s no better place on campus for students to hit the books than Zimmerman Library.

Over the summer, renovations were made to the previously defunct lower level, giving students a new and fresh study space option. Thanks to the generosity of donors of the university, the lower level is now equipped with plenty of tables, chairs, and comfortable reading nooks.

On the main floor, the Academic Resource Center (ARC) has claimed the multipurpose room, a former classroom, to help accommodate CUAA’s booming student population and their needs. The converted room now includes additional testing setups and can be used for tutoring, supplemental instruction, and peer academic coaching, as well as the Writing Center and Math Drop-in programs.

This add-on complements other recent spruces made to the ARC’s overall space, including new furniture, extra whiteboards, and a fresh coat of paint. The North Building’s ARC room also received an upgrade to allow for accommodated testing.

To sweeten the deal, students who pay a visit to the ARC are now greeted with a platter-sized, never-ending candy bowl in honor of Karen Jones, professor emeritus, who passed away in May. Jones served as a math instructor from 2003 to 2019. She loved to serve students, and she especially had a heart for those who were struggling with her subject area.

She knew the power a piece of candy could hold as a “soft invite” for students. That’s why she always kept her office fully stocked with sweets. Where some people would keep a small dish on their desktop, Jones had an array of treats.

Upon Jones’ passing, her family donated all memorial gifts to Concordia’s ARC. They have also pledged to keep her candy bowl, now relocated to the entrance of the ARC, always full.

Read more and see pictures of the space at blog.cuaa.edu/ARC-upgrade.

NEW NORTH

Concordia’s North Building, a former law school located just under 3 miles north of the main campus, is fast becoming a state-of-the-art epicenter for CUAA’s blossoming health care offerings. The university purchased the building in 2015 and launched CUAA’s first-ever undergraduate nursing degree programs the following year. Since that time, the building has undergone significant changes as renovations have continued to allow for expanded programming. Here’s a glance at the North Building today.

85,000
SQUARE FEET

6
DEGREE PROGRAMS HOUSED WITHIN (NURSING, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT, EXERCISE SCIENCE, ATHLETIC TRAINING, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, PHYSICAL THERAPY)

1st
DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY COHORT (WELCOMED IN AUGUST)

306
NUMBER OF CUAA STUDENTS ENROLLED IN NORTH BUILDING-BASED PROGRAMS

22
CLASSROOMS, SKILLS LABS, AND SIMULATION ROOMS



FAITHFUL AND GROWING

Though we are more than halfway through the semester, I invite you back to August. Specifically, August 24, 2023, when CUAA kicked off the academic year with a Welcome Chapel service for incoming students and families.

On this day, the Chapel was packed with nervous enthusiasm. Mixed emotions filled that sacred space. Following the benediction, families filed out of the Chapel onto Central Campus, where ice cream awaited them. A parent, along with her son, approached me and shared that the service affirmed his decision: “I know this is the place for me.”

Concordia is the place for *that* student and so many more.

It is meaningful moments like this that remind me of the true power of our mission. As a campus geographically located in a Big Ten town, nestled on the banks of the Huron River, with three public institutions of higher education surrounding us, we have an uncommon, distinctly Lutheran Christian mission. We get to do what other schools simply won’t or can’t do. That is a gift.

In my 11th academic year serving the students of Ann Arbor, my reasons for working at Concordia remain the same. First, it is because of our distinctly Lutheran mission. The second is our incredible students. Without them, we don’t have a mission. But because of them, our mission matters for today and eternity. We are not simply developing students for great careers but for meaningful lives of service centered in Jesus. We want every student to hear the Gospel every day. We serve with an eternal perspective.

Thank you for your faithful support, encouragement, and prayers. Our mission matters, and it is a true blessing to serve each student the Lord brings to our campus.

REV. DR. RYAN PETERSON

*Vice President of Administration
Chief Liaison to the Office of the President*



'16

Sam Mullet

BA in English ('16)

CALL HER COACH

Samantha "Sam" Mullet, who graduated in December 2016 with her English degree, is the first woman in Michigan to serve as a head football coach. This past summer she began her inaugural season at the helm of her high school alma mater's program in Bear Lake. At 28 years old, Mullet is not only an anomaly because of her gender, she's also among the youngest head coaches around.

She strives to overcome any barriers, however, by commanding respect through a combination of preparedness, diligence, and humility.

"To me, servant leadership is the biggest thing," said Mullet. "If I'm not going to do it, then I'm not going to ask my players to do it."

Read more about Sam at blog.cuaa.edu/Sam-Mullet.

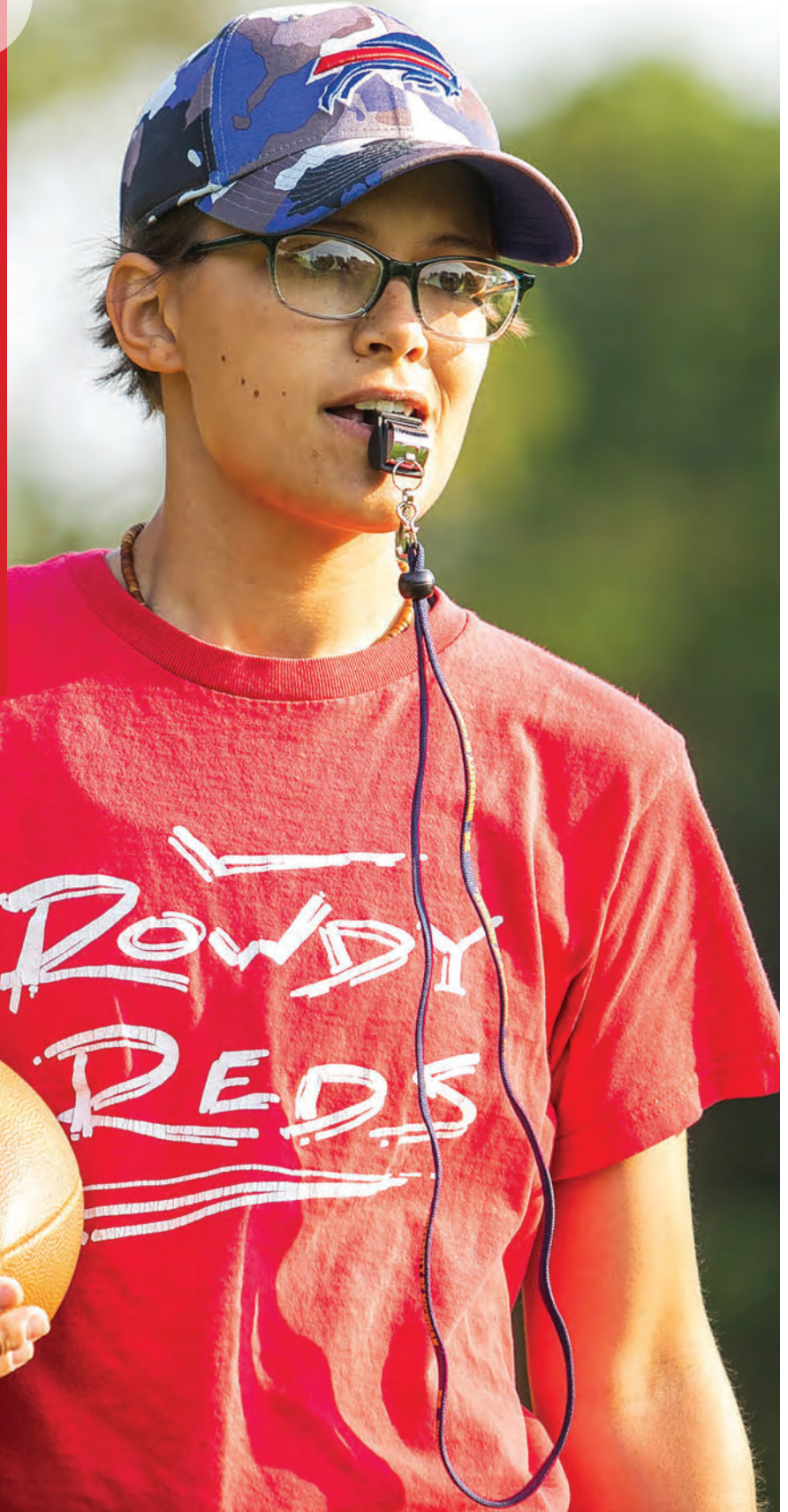
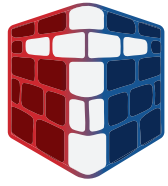


Photo courtesy of Jan-Michael Stump/
Traverse City Record-Eagle



CONCORDIA CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

SOCIETY BENEFITS

Benefits of being a Concordia Cornerstone Society member include:

- Unique gift recognition
- Membership newsletter
- Special access/seating at select Concordia events
 - Reserved seating and dinner invitation to Christmas at Concordia or the Boar's Head Festival
 - A campus tour during Homecoming festivities (on either campus)
 - Athletics pass to home games of any sport (campus specific for CUW or CUAA)
 - Premier access to complimentary pre-estate planning and education sessions
- Exclusive connection opportunities with the president

If you have questions or want to learn more about the Concordia Cornerstone Society, contact Director of the Concordia Fund Sam Gade at 262-243-4417 or Samuel.Gade@cuw.edu.

JOIN THE CONCORDIA CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

Become a member of the Concordia Cornerstone Society.

Go to cuw.edu/give or cuaa.edu/give and select "Concordia Fund" as the area you wish to support.

Become a member of the Concordia Cornerstone Society **with a cumulative annual gift of \$1,000 or more.**



The cornerstone of Concordia University Ann Arbor's campus bears the inscription "That in all things Christ might have preeminence." The Concordia Cornerstone Society seeks to support a university whose mission is firmly set in Christ.

MAKING A *DIFFERENCE*: THE CONCORDIA CORNERSTONE SOCIETY

The cornerstone in a building has great significance, much like Jesus Christ has in our Christian faith. As Paul wrote to the people of Ephesus, "... you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people, members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief *cornerstone*."

As a solid foundation plays a key role in building projects, the Concordia Fund plays a key role in fulfilling our mission as a Lutheran higher education community committed to helping students develop in mind, body, and spirit for SERVICE to Christ in the Church and the world. The Concordia Fund offers opportunities for generous people to help with the university's top priorities, which is why we are introducing the Concordia Cornerstone Society.

The Concordia Cornerstone Society is part of an effort to raise awareness of the Concordia Fund, which is supported by unrestricted gifts to help impact the immediate needs of our students. This past year the Concordia Fund helped with student scholarships, classroom and laboratory technology updates, research, facility upgrades, student/faculty retention and recruitment, and so much more.

By making a cumulative gift of \$1,000 or more on a yearly basis to the Concordia Fund, a donor will become a member of the Concordia Cornerstone Society. Members of the Concordia Cornerstone Society will receive access to events and services on campus, a quarterly newsletter, and, most importantly, will be part of a community of people who share a passion for helping students achieve their goals.

How can you help? First, pray for us. Also, recommend Concordia University to students you know. And finally, if so moved, make a financial gift to the university. Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor is making a difference in the lives of many. Please prayerfully consider becoming a part of the Concordia Cornerstone Society.

DEAN RENNICKE

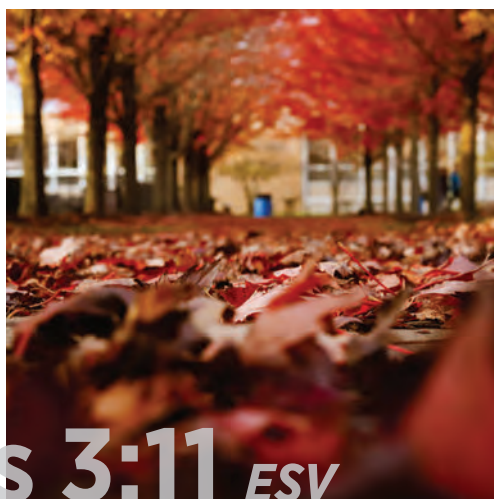
Vice President of the Concordia University Foundation





**Beautiful
in its season**

Nature, our lives, and human society each has its seasons. In his devotion, CUAA Associate Professor of Theology Rev. Charles Schulz, PhD, reminds us that the ultimate harvest comes from God's seasons as He, and we, reap the salvation Christ achieved. Read more at blog.cuaa.edu/benediction-Schulz.



Ecclesiastes 3:11 *ESV*

“He has made everything beautiful in its time.”



Mind, Heart, Soul

by Julia Schulteis

This world is hard as rock,
stubborn as unrelenting wood.

We are to be salt, light.

So in this in-between earth and heaven,
do the best with your mind
love with all your heart
believe with all that is in your soul
that Jesus is Lord.

Show this hard, stubborn world
the power of Christ
to change hearts and lives!

A WAY WITH WORDS

As an English teacher, President Ankerberg is a lover of poetry. For inauguration, Concordia students were invited to try their hand at a turn of phrase in his honor. CUW junior Julia Schulteis, a Lutheran elementary education major, penned the winning poem.