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SUMMER 2021

Northwestern College Magazine *the* **Classic**



Lab Work

Northwestern is chosen to participate in the SEA-GENES research program

Also

**Compass Center for Career & Calling
Trick-shot Artist Goes Viral
National Runners-up**

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Michael Storey's catch with 16 seconds left in the Raiders' semifinal-round game at Morningside gave NWC the victory and sent them to the national championship game in Louisiana.



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Classic People

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The *Classic* is published twice a year for alumni and friends of Northwestern College. So named because it served what was then known as the Northwestern Classical Academy, the *Classic* was the school's first student newspaper, begun in 1891. It has been an alumni publication since 1930.

Send correspondence or address changes to the *Classic*, Northwestern College, 101 7th Street SW, Orange City, IA 51041-1996 or classic@nwciowa.edu.

Opinions expressed in the *Classic* do not necessarily reflect the official position of Northwestern College.

On the Cover:

After taking Northwestern's inaugural SEA-GENES research lab last fall, Lauren Pavich will serve as a teaching assistant for her professor, Dr. Sara Sybesma Tolsma '84, during the 2021-22 academic year.

PHOTO BY LEM MAURER

Online-Only Option

To opt out of the printed magazine and be notified by email when each issue is online, please contact the editor at classic@nwciowa.edu.



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By integrating a Christian understanding of vocation into its academic and co-curricular programming, Northwestern is preparing students for success and meaningful work for the common good.

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- EXPLORE
- EXPERIENCE
- EQUIP
- EMBARK

20

Zwemer View



LEM MAURER

Raiders Stand Out

Our promise to prospective students is this: You will stand out here—and be empowered to lead a life of significance. We are called to stand out, not for ourselves, but because excellence honors God and serves others.

There are countless examples of recent graduates I encounter in my travels across the U.S. who stand out by living faithful lives and making a difference. Chris '17 and Allison (Te Slaa '17) Sietstra grew up in northwest Iowa. They were both highly involved in campus ministry and SSPs, served as tutors, and participated in athletics. Chris is a senior tax accountant with EY (Ernst & Young) in Minneapolis, and Allison is a medical/surgical nurse at North Memorial Hospital. Together they lead a small group at their church in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. They are an example of alumni who stand out in their community, workplace and church.

Another example is Stephan Sanford '18. Stephan came to Northwestern from Southern California. He majored in elementary education, participated in football, and traveled on SSPs to New Orleans and Jacksonville, Florida. Those experiences prepared him to teach and coach youth.

Stefan says his faith grew during his time at NWC. A verse he lives by is Exodus 14:14: "The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still." Stefan had to be independent growing up, but Northwestern helped him take a leap of faith and trust God to fight for him instead of doing everything himself. Now he serves as a role model for students at Storm Lake Elementary in one of the most diverse school districts in Iowa.

Raiders lead and serve, are smart and strong, courageous and faithful, and perform and win—not for ourselves, but because excellence honors God and serves others. Raiders stand out!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Christy".

Greg Christy
President

 @NWC_PGC



around the Green

Celebrated in Chicago

Northwestern's theatre department received the Chicago Semester's Excellence in Collaboration Award, cited for being an advocate for the program, during an April virtual ceremony.

In a video, Northwestern theatre professor Drew Schmidt '05 expressed his department's appreciation for the Chicago Semester. "What we love is [students] get to build their confidence and believe that they are as good as they actually are, they get to navigate a city on their own, and they get to join another group of people who are speaking the same things their professors and peers did and affirming the things they learned.

"Sending students to the Chicago Semester is always a loss for us," continued Schmidt. "We send our brightest. It hurts every time, because it means we have one less semester with them, but we do it again and again because we firmly believe these formative moments are the best things for their lives."

Matthew Hulstein '08, a theatre and writing/rhetoric major, was recognized during the ceremony as one of the Chicago Semester's three distinguished alumni for 2021. He interned at Chicago Volunteer Legal Services through the program as a college senior and now supervises interns and speaks in Chicago Semester classes in his role as a supervising attorney for the agency.

Raiders
Stand Out



MICHAEL HUDSON

With a long history of sending students to the Chicago Semester, Northwestern's theatre department received the program's Excellence in Collaboration Award in April. Shown here is Susan (Schoenrock '10) Shawger, who interned at the Chicago Dramatists Workshop.

in Box

Chapel Partners

"Survival of the Chapel Slip" [Winter 2020-21 *Classic*] reminded me of a long-standing relationship with a fellow Northwestern alum that began due to assigned seating in chapel. For three years, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, John Ter Beest '79 and I sat together during chapel. We shared a hymnbook, whispered carefully during the message, napped, read our textbook assignments, daydreamed, silently pointed at

the seniors in the balcony who hung their feet over the ledge, read the newspaper over the shoulder of a nearby student, and just generally were comfortable being "chapel partners."

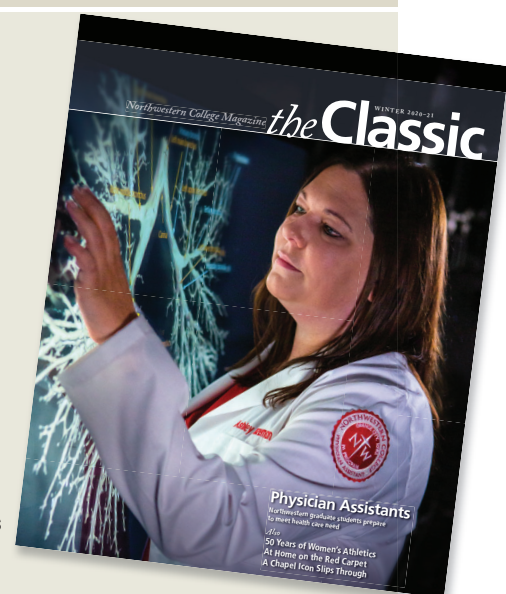
Today, more than 40 years later, we still have a bond with one another. John lives in Rapid City, South Dakota; I live in Orange City. We have never done anything social together—during college or since—but the connection we forged during

those years is still strong today and in some odd way has made us lifelong friends.

Char Ten Clay '79
Orange City

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Yawsome



Chris Yaw has stepped down after leading Northwestern's women's basketball program for 10 years.

Following 10 years as Northwestern's head women's basketball coach, Chris Yaw '92 is trading the sidelines for the classroom. He announced his resignation in March and was hired to be a full-time faculty member in the educational administration track of Northwestern's Master of Education program.

Taking the Helm

Kristin Rotert, Northwestern's new head women's basketball coach, is a winner.

As director of operations for the South Dakota State University women's basketball program, she was part of a coaching staff that led the team to the Sweet 16 in 2019. As a player for the Jackrabbits from 2007 to 2011, she helped lead her squad to four Summit League titles and three March Madness appearances while earning academic all-conference honors.

Rotert says she is honored to be the next NWC head coach.

"This is a tremendous program with a strong foundation and a

long tradition of excellence. What attracted me the most to this opportunity was the ability to combine two of the most important aspects in my life: my devotion to my faith and my passion for the game of basketball. I believe in coaching with a purpose and will use basketball as a tool to help develop our student-athletes in all areas of life."

Rotert says her first steps will involve building relationships with players, recruits and colleagues. "I want all of Red Raider Nation to know this: We're going to love what we do, love who we get to do it with, but most importantly, love

Yaw ranks second on the program's all-time list for both wins (224) and win percentage (70%), finishing his tenure with a 224-94 record. Raider teams qualified for the national tournament seven seasons under his leadership, winning the national championship in 2012 and reaching the semifinals three times. Before being named head coach, Yaw served as the lead assistant for seven years under Earl Woudstra, helping guide the Raiders to three national titles.

"My time in the women's basketball program at Northwestern has been nothing short of a remarkable experience," says Yaw, the 2012 NAIA Phyllis Holmes Coach of the Year. "I have been able to witness God's providence in bringing some extremely special and talented players and coaches together to share their gifts with one another. My family and I have been richly blessed by all those who have been part of the women's basketball program."

"Coach Yaw has been a blessing to Red Raider athletics," says Dr. Micah Parker, vice president for athletics. "He is a winner who accomplished a lot on the court and has had a positive impact on hundreds of student-athletes."

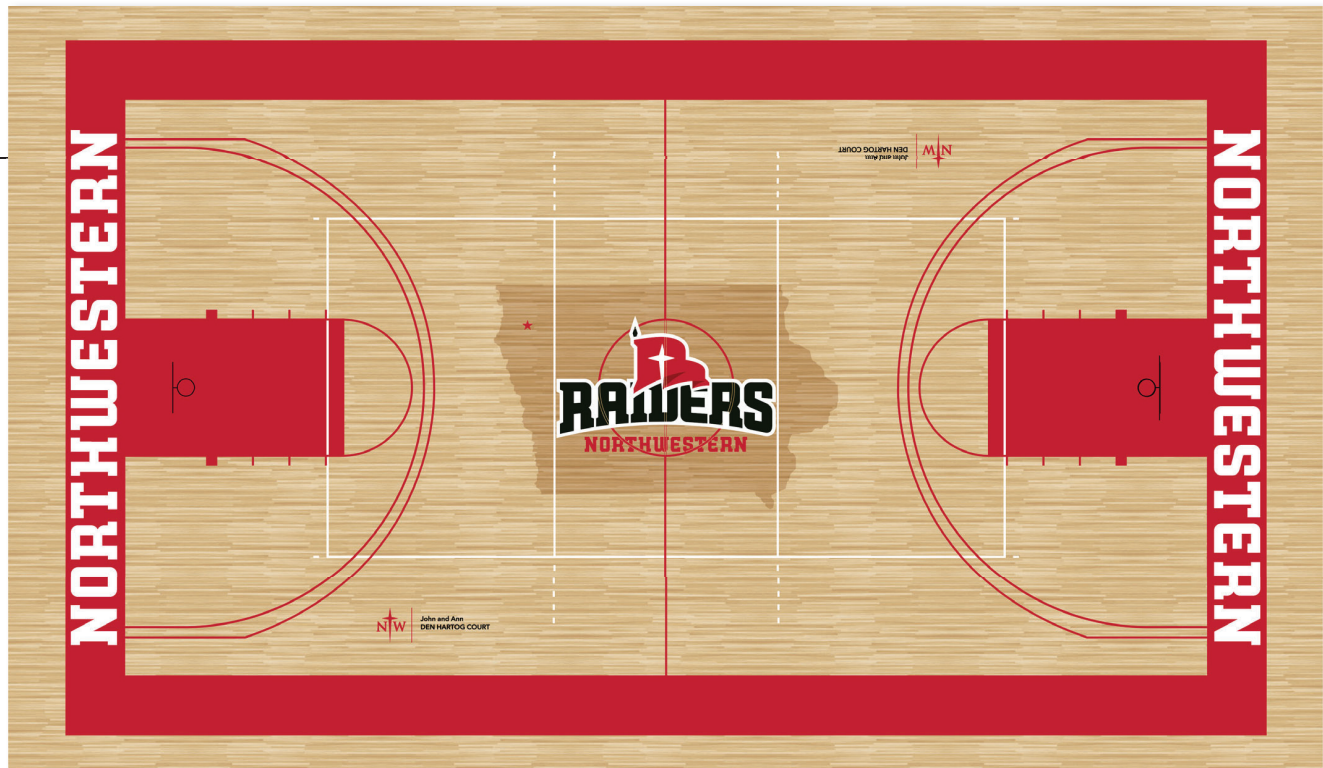
Yaw, who has taught part time in Northwestern's education department, has 17 years of experience as a teacher and school administrator, including serving as both a middle school math instructor and principal.

who we get to do it for."

"Kristin is a great fit for our athletic program," says Dr. Micah Parker, vice president for athletics. "She loves the Lord, is a winner, and cares deeply about the overall growth of student-athletes. Kristin will help the Red Raiders honor Christ through excellence in athletics and will build on the tremendous legacy of women's basketball at Northwestern."

Kristin Rotert joins Northwestern's women's basketball program after three years as an assistant at South Dakota State University.





Bultman Center Boost

The Bultman Center, built in 1995 and home to four of Northwestern's athletic programs, is undergoing a series of renovations.

During the first phase, scheduled for completion in August, the gymnasium floor and bleachers are being replaced. Both are original to the facility. Cosmetic changes utilizing the athletic department's new branding are being implemented throughout the facility, including the main entrance.

Additionally, the roof is being repaired and the lighting replaced. Air conditioning is also being added in the gymnasium.

The second phase will include the addition and renovations of locker rooms and the transformation of coaches' office spaces.

The new Bultman Center court has been named after John and Ann Den Hartog for their longtime support.



Glad Grads

Rain couldn't dampen the spirits of Northwestern's class of 2021 and their families at commencement on May 8.

Degrees were awarded to 377 students, including 129 who received Master of Education degrees. An additional three students earned certificates of completion from the Northwestern NEXT program.

Glenn Van Ekeren '74, a motivational speaker, prolific author and president of Vetter Health Services, gave the address.

To enable physical distancing, graduates were limited to four guests and masks were required.

Degrees were awarded to 377 students during commencement exercises on May 8.

Campus Life

Just an Illusion

Before performing his large-scale illusion “Metamorphosis,” junior Jett Skrien brings two audience members onstage to chain his hands together and inspect a trunk that he will soon be trapped inside.

Skrien steps into a velvet bag, which his assistant draws up over his body and ties above his neck with a rope. With a graceful flourish, she locks him in the trunk before climbing to stand on top, where she wields a red curtain that briefly obscures her from sight. Immediately, the curtain freefalls to the ground, revealing not the assistant but the magician standing there—with a smile that says he’s just as pleased as the audience that is screaming for more.

“This cool thing called magic can bring genuine joy and happiness to people,” Skrien says. “You can be fully present in the moment, look out and see everyone smiling. It’s the best feeling.”

Inspired at an early age by a magician who brought him onstage, Skrien has been performing since the age of 10. The theatre major takes his card tricks and grand escapes across the country and internationally, finding that language barriers disappear at the sight of a signed dollar bill that leaves its owner’s hands and shows up inside a piece of fruit.

Now 21, the Marshall, Minnesota, native estimates he’s presented nearly 1,000 shows. He plans to move to a bigger entertainment scene after graduation. During the pandemic, Skrien searched out venues close to Northwestern, including a performance for an Orange City Bible study that revealed the secrets to his faith.

“I can get you to believe many things, but they’re just clever illusions,” Skrien says. “Truth is true whether you believe in it or not.”

Northwestern encouraged Skrien’s passion from the start, providing space for his trailer and rehearsals. He looks forward to performing on campus once pandemic restrictions vanish into virus-free air.



Junior Jett Skrien has performed his illusion shows across the country and internationally.

A Story Completed

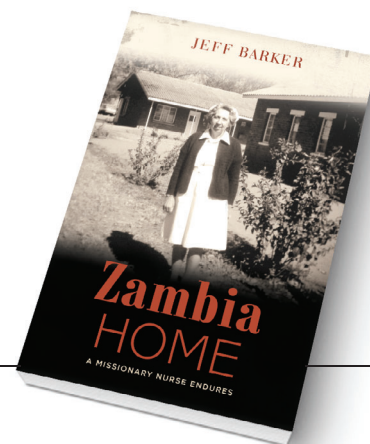
Jeff Barker has completed his trilogy of books telling the life story of missionary nurse Arlene Schuiteman, who spent 33 years in Africa.

Zambia Home was published in March. It covers Schuiteman’s final decade of service in Zambia, then follows her as she returns home to Iowa, faces a major health crisis, and experiences the death of a dear friend and colleague.

Barker, a professor emeritus of theatre at Northwestern, began a relationship with Schuiteman 16 years ago when he wrote a play about her first assignment in Africa, titled *Sioux Center Sudan*. Two more plays, *Iowa Ethiopia* and *Zambia Home*, followed.

The plays were based on Schuiteman’s journals, in which she recorded—nearly daily—the events, relationships, and spiritual questions and insights she had experienced. When Schuiteman turned 90 years old in 2014, she entrusted Barker with complete access to her journals. He began work on her biography in 2016, publishing the first book of the trilogy in 2018 and the second in 2019.

All three volumes are available on bookseller websites such as Amazon.com and Christianbook.com, as well the publisher’s website, Henrickson.com.



Enthusiastic Leader

Amber Leusink, the new director of the Northwestern Network, isn't a Northwestern College alumna, but she thinks that's an advantage for her role.

"I have another perspective from having gone to a different school," Leusink says. "I realize this place is so different—Northwestern is special. I was just a number at my college. That experience gave me eyes to see what's different, and that's why I can be so enthusiastic about loving Northwestern."

Leusink will share her passion for Northwestern as she works with alumni and current students

to enhance enrollment and provide internship and mentoring opportunities. She also will provide leadership for alumni and parent activities.

"I'm excited to connect alumni and other constituents with student stories and help them see how they can impact current and future students," she says. "There are so many great opportunities to give to the college in addition to donating money."

Leusink says she also seeks to engage Northwestern's diverse alumni—sharing their success stories and offering them as mentors

to multicultural students.

Previously the administrative coordinator for Northwestern's Compass Center for Career & Calling, Leusink has extensive experience in marketing, communications and business development in the agribusiness industry. She replaces Kristin (Breems '03) Rucks, who is now a development officer for the Carris Health Foundation in Willmar, Minnesota.

Amber Leusink brings her experience of working in the Compass Center for Career & Calling to her new role as director of the Northwestern Network.



LENI MAURER



GEORGE JOHNSON

College Consensus ranks Northwestern as the nation's top online Christian college and second-best Christian college.

Top Rankings

High rankings continue to roll in for Northwestern and its academic programs. Here are four of the latest:

- Northwestern is ranked as the nation's best online Christian college and second-best Christian college by College Consensus, a website that combines the latest results from the most trustworthy college rankings with thousands of student reviews.
- Northwestern's Master of Education program is ranked 91st out of more than 300 schools in the 2021 *U.S. News* Best Online Programs listing. Only two Iowa schools have higher rankings than Northwestern, and only one Council for Christian Colleges & Universities program is ranked higher.
- Intelligent.com gives Northwestern's programs in early childhood education top national rankings. The degree-completion undergraduate program is rated second, while the master's degree program is sixth.
- Nursing Schools Almanac ranks Northwestern's nursing program among the nation's top 20%.

NEXT Advances

Northwestern NEXT, a two-year program for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities, has been approved as a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program (CTP) by the U.S. Department of Education. The designation enables students to be eligible for federal financial aid.

The Department of Education recognizes 136 CTP programs. Only one other Iowa college or university has a CTP, and only five other CTP programs are part of the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities.

"This distinction means we have established certain standards that are acceptable to the U.S. Department of Education," says John Menning, Northwestern NEXT coordinator. "Having this stamp of approval lets parents know Northwestern is a great option for their son or daughter with a disability."

CTP programs are designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who want to continue academic, career and independent living instruction to prepare for



Relationships with peer mentors are an important part of Northwestern NEXT.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

gainful employment. They include academic advising, a structured curriculum, and internships or work-based training.

Northwestern's CTP approval enables NEXT students to complete the FAFSA and qualify for a Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant and/or federally funded work-study position.

Northwestern NEXT started in 2016 and had 10 students enrolled in 2020–21.

God in Another Dimension

Dr. Kim Jongerius, professor of mathematics, is one of six presenters featured as part of a national speaker series exploring the connections between religion and mathematics. Her address, "Does God Live in Another Dimension? How What We Assume Shapes What We Conclude," is available at tinyurl.com/jongerius-presentation through the Scientists in Synagogues program funded by the John Templeton Foundation.

Jongerius' presentation explores the idea of a God who operates outside of three dimensions. Just as different assumptions produce different mathematics that are equally valid, she says, so different assumptions about God can lead to a different perspective.

"I started thinking about the ways my understanding of geometric dimensions could help my understanding of God and

what is possible for God. In our three-dimensional world, for example, I think of my skin as an impassable boundary. If I have knee surgery, there will be a hole in my skin. But maybe what I think of as a boundary is really not a boundary at all to our—in my mind—infinite-dimensional God."



Dr. Kim Jongerius

Outstanding Engineering Student

Raiders Stand Out

Samantha (Vander Velde) Olson, who is part of Northwestern's dual-degree engineering program with Washington University in St. Louis, received the Outstanding Junior Award for Academic Excellence from WashU's biomedical engineering department. She attended NWC for three years and will graduate with bachelor's degrees from both institutions in 2022.

Growing Enrollment

Northwestern set a spring enrollment record with 1,482 students, up from 1,406 in 2020.

The 2021 enrollment figures include an all-time high for online and graduate students. This spring, 498 students were enrolled in Northwestern's online Master of Education and degree-completion programs in early childhood and nursing, up from 461 last fall.

A 90.5% retention rate for freshmen also contributed to this spring's record.

Face Value

All in for NWC

Northwestern's fourth Day of Giving was its most successful yet, raising nearly \$230,000 for the Northwestern Fund.

Held on Feb. 18, AllNDay secured gifts from approximately 460 donors—10% of whom were first-time givers to the college.

"Our goal was participation," says Ross Fernstrum '12, director of annual giving. "The fact that we broke our fundraising goal of \$175,000 was an added bonus."

This year's AllNDay featured an Eras of Excellence challenge, through which donors could designate their gift to a specific decade—with those who gave to the winning era (2000s) receiving a Northwestern Bookstore gift certificate as a prize. Throughout the day, Facebook Live videos provided alumni and friends opportunities to see how things have changed on campus.



2.18.21

Derek Brower

Educating Educators

Prior to joining Northwestern's faculty, you spent time teaching in Southeast Asia at missionary schools, on military bases, and with the Peace Corps. What was that experience like?

Living overseas changed me. It opened my eyes to a world of people trying to raise families and live out their faith regardless of political borders. I gained a deeper understanding of my life and my faith. I realized being born in America gave me privileges I hadn't earned.

Teaching overseas is similar everywhere—a classroom is a classroom. In Botswana, sometimes a cow or a goat or a snake was outside my classroom. An island in the Pacific had snorkeling and palm trees outside. Thailand had cement walls and a guarded gate. Inside my classroom, I wrote on a chalkboard or whiteboard and shared my curiosity and love of science with my students.

What makes a good high school science teacher?

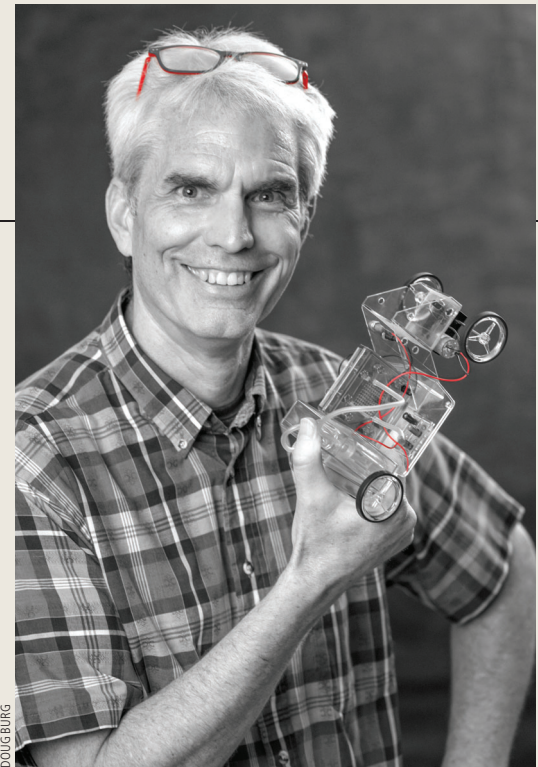
Someone who invites students to be curious, to share a sense of wonder, to explore. Science teachers need to be less concerned with their performance and more concerned with student learning. We need to determine where our students struggle and find ways to help them understand, all the while celebrating our fascination with this wonderfully complex world.

What do you love most about science?

I really just love to learn. That's why I enjoy teaching—it forces me to keep learning. Science seems limitless, both in understanding the world and in finding effective ways to share it with others.

You coordinate international student teaching experiences. What would you say is the biggest advantage students receive from teaching in cross-cultural environments?

There's value in seeing and experiencing a bigger world. It makes students realize that



DOUG BURG

A member of Northwestern's education faculty since 2006 and current department co-chair, Dr. Derek Brower '89 has a passion for education. He graduated from NWC with a degree in philosophy, then went on to earn a second bachelor's degree, a master's degree and a doctorate in science education, technology and curriculum. He says that's because he's a lifelong learner—but also because he thought science teachers had the best collection of toys.

people in other countries are just as worthy of God's favor as we are. And it's good to experience being a minority. My hope is that teaching overseas takes away some fears and opens the door to what God may be calling them to be and do. It's hard to depend on a loving and faithful God if we only stay in familiar and safe places. It's also reassuring to know there are brothers and sisters who will step up and care for our students across the globe because of our unity in Christ.

What are some of your hobbies?

My constant hobby has always been running. Most days I run 3 to 5 miles. I try to run a race about once a year. I also always have a house project underway—either fixing or renovating something.

High Placement

Despite a worldwide pandemic, last year's class of 2020 graduates found remarkable success entering the workforce or continuing their education.

A survey of the class revealed that 99.5% found employment or entered graduate school within six months of graduation. That figure is based on a 99% response rate by those graduating seniors.

"When the pandemic hit, some of our graduates had job offers rescinded, but they didn't give up," says Dr. Elizabeth Pitts, Northwestern's director of career and calling. "We worked hard to help them find opportunities, we were encouraged by alumni who let us know of their interest in hiring Northwestern grads, and we marveled at grads who adapted to virtual work environments. A placement rate of nearly 100% is something to be celebrated any year—but it's especially noteworthy given the impact of the coronavirus on our economy."

The Mayo Clinic, EY (formerly Ernst & Young), Sanford Health, Omaha Public Schools and Trans Ova Genetics are just a few of more than 125 companies and organizations that hired Northwestern's 2020 graduates.

Among the roles those grads now hold are those of a senior accountant, marketing manager, ER nurse, special education teacher, software developer and director of Christian education.

Approximately 16% of the class are in graduate programs ranging from medicine to ministry and at schools that include Baylor University, Iowa State, Northwestern University, the University of Nebraska Omaha and Western Theological Seminary.

The average reported salary for class of 2020 graduates employed full time is \$41,960; the maximum salary reported was \$90,000.

A survey of Northwestern's 2020 graduates reveals that 99.5% found employment or entered graduate school within six months of graduation.

New Interpreting Certificate

Beginning in August, Northwestern will offer a legal interpreting certificate. The program, available fully online, is designed for students who are completely bilingual in English and Spanish, enabling them to attain the skills needed to pass the legal interpreting certification exam after only two semesters.

Northwestern's legal interpreting certificate and medical interpreting certificate programs will be offered in alternate years. Both programs are open to traditional undergraduate students and adult learners.

Perfect Score

During the spring semester, four Northwestern seniors recorded a top score in the international Business Strategy Game, a dynamic online simulation in which participants are assigned the task of running an athletic footwear company.

Northwestern students competing in the Business Strategy Game consistently record high scores, often in the top 5% of all teams. One Northwestern team, named "Apollo Footwear Company," recorded a perfect score of 110 points and tied for the best overall score during the week of April 12–18. During that week, there were thousands of teams competing worldwide.

Apollo Footwear Company team members included Nick Bomgaars, Bradley Bourland, Makenzie Fink and Peyton Scott.

The students competed in the simulation as part of their business capstone course, Strategic and Ethical Management, taught by Douglas Anderson, professor of practice

in business and economics. "The Business Strategy Game gives our students the opportunity to take what they've learned and put it into practice," Anderson says.

Each week, teams are evaluated on a balanced scorecard that includes a variety of categories.

"Teams make decisions about marketing, sales, production, supply chain, operations, human resources and more," says Anderson. "They need to keep their customers, employees and communities happy. It's a tough—but important—balancing act. Nick, Bradley, Makenzie and Peyton were successful because they challenged each other in their decision-making, recognized each other's strengths and worked together as a team."

Raiders
Stand Out

By the Numbers: Northwestern Faculty

180
TOTAL



FULL-TIME: 77
PART-TIME: 103

Longest current career at NWC: 32 years

Faculty have lived, studied or served in 30+ countries

22
are Raider
alumni

943
cumulative years of
experience at NWC

87%
hold the highest
degree in their field

Stats are based on full-time faculty

Training Regional Leaders

A new endeavor designed to train regional leaders is underway at Northwestern. Accelerate Siouxland is a program launching through the college's Center for Innovation and Leadership.

"Accelerate Siouxland seeks to familiarize program participants with Siouxland's vast resources to spark new connections and ideas that enhance the well-being of area residents and

their communities," says Josh Van Es '09, assistant director of the Center for Innovation and Leadership, who will lead the program.

Accelerate Siouxland will meet monthly from September through April. Participants will gather at various Siouxland locations, focusing on real-world applications through a regional lens. They will engage with award-winning

training materials and hear from area leaders about what makes Siouxland special and how to lead change in their communities.

"Participants will become informed citizens of Siouxland and take on a practical project designed to benefit the region," says Van Es.

Accelerate Siouxland topics will include government, community devel-

opment, business and industry, health care, education, agriculture, nonprofits, and faith and values.

Registration is open until July 17 at nwciowa.edu/accelerate.

Diversity Leaders

Northwestern College is strengthening its commitment to diversity with the creation of new roles for two employees.

Dr. Rahn Franklin, director of multicultural student development, will become director of strategic diversity initiatives, while Dr. Valerie Stokes, associate professor of social work, will also serve as the college's director of academic diversity initiatives.

Franklin is assuming more responsibilities across the institution in offering guidance and training for curricular and co-curricular areas. Stokes will champion and support diversity initiatives related to faculty, curriculum, scholarship and other academic operations. The two will also co-lead a reconstituted Diversity Resource Committee that will offer trainings and sponsor diversity programming on campus.

Franklin and Stokes led the process of developing Northwestern's Vision for Diversity six years ago—a vision that grew out of the college's mission to "pursue God's redeeming work in the world." In addition, one of Northwestern's strategic goals is to "embrace and celebrate cultural and ethnic diversity." They will have the authority and resources to help Northwestern live out that vision through tangible and sustainable action.

"Val and Rahn have invested deeply in research and scholarship related to diversity and have a wealth of knowledge to offer our community," says President Greg Christy. "Just as importantly, they have a



LENA MAURER

Dr. Valerie Stokes and Dr. Rahn Franklin will lead Northwestern's efforts to live out its Vision for Diversity through tangible and sustainable action.

proven track record of working together to promote diversity, equity and inclusion on campus. Becoming the 'beloved community' is not merely a social goal, but a biblical mandate. We're fortunate to have two leaders on our campus whose passion for diversity is rooted in their scholarship and linked to their love of Christ and his kingdom."



MICHAEL HUDSON

Kennedy Center Honors

Northwestern captured multiple awards during the 2021 Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) season.

Maren Taylor, a senior theatre major from Spencer, Iowa, received the KCACTF Region Five top lighting design award for her work on Northwestern's production

of the musical *Bright Star*. She represented Region Five at the KCACTF National Festival in April, where her lighting work competed with that of seven other regional winners.

Taylor was also awarded a scholarship for a one-week summer intensive offered by the Stagecraft Institute of Las Vegas, which was established to train practitioners in all areas of live entertainment.

In addition, Northwestern's production of *Jabberwocky*, a children's play based on a well-known "nonsense" poem by author Lewis Carroll, won four national KCACTF awards.

Ethan Koerner, instructor in theatre, framed *Jabberwocky* as the telling of a bedtime story and used a child's imagination as the launching point for the action, portrayed through different styles of puppetry.

The Northwestern production was recognized for special achievement in the innovative use of technology and in virtual community engagement and audience development. Koerner's work was also one of four productions recognized for special achievement in puppet design. Rachel Smart, a junior English teaching major from Brookings, South Dakota, was one of six students recognized for special achievement in dramaturgy.

KCACTF is a national program involving students from more than 600 colleges and universities across the country.

Theatre major Maren Taylor, shown at her Chicago internship with the Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, was a national winner for lighting design in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival competition.

Summer Study

Grants ranging from \$1,150 to \$5,000 are funding summer research and scholarship by Northwestern faculty.

Four science faculty are collaborating with students on research projects.

Chemistry professor Dr. Dave Arnett is a double award winner. One of his grants is funding efforts to design and make a biosensor for use in class. The other grant is supporting continued research into fluorescent correlation spectroscopy. Assisting him are students Will Bauer and Aimee Hulstein.

Drs. Laurie Furlong and Todd Tracy, biology, are continuing their research into the impact of the invasive European buckthorn and eastern red cedar on local forests and grassland ecosystems. They are working with students Gideon Fynaardt, Anneka Sterk, Alaena Trevino and April Van Tol.

Another six professors round out the list of Northwestern Scholarship Grant recipients.

Dr. Laird Edman, psychology, is continuing his study of current research and theory related to the cognitive science of religion. Drs. Thomas Holm and Juyeon Kang are creating music with funding from their grants. Holm is traveling to Taiwan to prepare Taiwanese choral works for American choral directors, while Kang is recording a solo piano album.

Dr. Cambria Kaltwasser, biblical and theological studies, is continuing her work on a book about the theology of Karl Barth.

Dr. Lila Sybesma '81, education, is studying—particularly from a Christian perspective—the contributing factors to what has been called “the psychology of optimal experience.”

And Dr. Sara Sybesma Tolsma '84 is sequencing the genomes of 24 novel bacteriophages discovered by Northwestern students.

Among the faculty awarded Northwestern Scholarship Grants for 2021 is Dr. Thomas Holm, music, who will prepare Taiwanese choral works for American choral directors.



Short-term Missions

Ten Northwestern students are spending a portion of their summers as short-term missionaries through the college's Summer of Service (SOS) program. They are volunteering with mission agencies in Alaska, Colorado, Illinois and Haiti.

Focused on the theme of “Unswerving Hope,” Raiders are working with inner-city youth, leading Bible studies, teaching English,

providing manual labor, assisting in a health clinic, evangelizing, and organizing camps. They're assisting organizations including Echo Ranch Bible Camp, Many Hands for Haiti, Pioneers and the Salvation Army.

Since 1981, Northwestern's SOS program has encouraged and prepared students to be effective Christian servants around the world.

Standout Raiders

Faculty and staff recognized for work and service



Dr. Derek Brower, associate professor of education, was honored with Northwestern's 2021 Faculty Inspirational Service Award.

Honored Educator

Derek Brower's college classroom in Van Peurse Hall might not look the same as his high school classroom in Thailand, but his passion for education remains steadfast—no matter the location.

Brower, a 1989 Northwestern alumnus, joined the education faculty in 2006 after teaching secondary science for 12 years at schools in Iowa, Botswana, the Marshall Islands and Thailand.

His extensive experience and commitment to teaching the next generation of educators led him to receive Northwestern's 2021 Faculty Inspirational Service Award.

"Derek is outstanding at engaging and equipping students in the classroom," wrote Dr. Jeff VanDerWerff '83, dean of social sciences, in a letter of nomination.

Whitney Erickson, an elementary education major, echoes VanDerWerff's

comments: "Dr. Brower is the epitome of the 'teacher as servant' educator Northwestern strives to create. He's intentional with each student, and his passion shows in how he teaches and interacts with his students and colleagues."

In addition to teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses, Brower serves as co-chair of the education department and advises a large group of students.

"As department chair, Derek serves very effectively," says VanDerWerff. "He contributes in important ways to making sure that Northwestern's undergraduate and graduate programs in education work together in a collaborative fashion."

A promotor of education and Northwestern, Brower also represents the education department and the college to a broad network of educational leaders across the state of Iowa.



The 2021 Staff Inspirational Service Award capped off Sandy Van Kley's 20 years as a Northwestern employee. After a decade as the college's registrar, she retired in May.

Retiring Registrar

When Sandy (Ruter '80) Van Kley was preparing to retire after 20 years in the registrar's office, a colleague suggested that would be her opportunity to publicly name the faculty who always were late turning in their grades.

"That would be fun," she said, "but it wouldn't be ethical." Her response would surprise no one who knows her and has witnessed the integrity with which she performed her job.

That integrity—and her servant heart—will be missed by faculty and staff, and are the reasons she was chosen as the 2021 recipient of Northwestern's Staff Inspirational Service Award.

"Sandy's style was firm and gracious," says Dr. Nathan Phinney, vice president for academic affairs. "She was committed to safeguarding Northwestern's policies, but at the same time, she recognized that the policies exist to ensure our students receive a

great education. Achieving that outcome was her primary goal."

During Van Kley's time at NWC—first as assistant registrar and then as registrar—much has changed. Years ago, there were printed grade reports, long registration lines, and the laborious process of manually inputting registration worksheets. Now everything from registering for classes to requesting a transcript is done online.

While Van Kley took satisfaction in the part she played in going digital, she most enjoyed conducting degree audits—reviews of students' courses to ensure they were on track to graduate.

"I loved having everything fall into its proper place and making it understandable for the students and advisers," she says. "Being able to help a student catch something so that there's no problem when they graduate—that was very rewarding."



LEW MAURER



GEOFF JOHNSON

A biology professor at Northwestern since 1995, Dr. Sara Sybesma Tolsma is the recipient of the 2021 Faculty Excellence in Faith and Learning Award.

Vonda Post, professor of accounting, received the 2021 Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award.

Acclaimed Scientist

With more than 60 publications and presentations, Dr. Sara Sybesma Tolsma '84, professor of biology, has a proven track record of excellence in her discipline among her international science peers. She has also earned the respect of her colleagues, both for her scholarship and the ways she integrates faith with learning.

That respect is one of the reasons Tolsma received Northwestern's 2021 Faculty Excellence in Faith and Learning Award at commencement on May 8. Tolsma was nominated for the honor by her faculty colleagues.

"The combination of her technical, disciplinary work with her commitment to thinking Christianly about that work makes her an excellent candidate for this award," wrote one nominator.

Another colleague wrote, "Sara has done extensive research in the lab, helping students explore creation from

a scientific perspective, but also helping them see it through the lens of faith."

Tolsma's research efforts in cancer genetics and cell biology have been widely published in scientific journals and have received numerous awards. She's also been instrumental in Northwestern becoming part of the SEA-PHAGES and SEA-GENES research programs for students.

Tolsma says the privilege of studying what God created motivates her to do good science and is also a way she experiences intimacy with God. "When I make a discovery, I'm going to share it, but for a moment, I share it with God alone," she says. "That's an act of worship. I experience awe and wonder."

Tolsma was the recipient of the Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award in 2015 and was appointed to the Northwestern College Endowed Professorship in 2016.

Admired Accountant

Vonda (Elgersma '88) Post only had three weeks to prepare for teaching her first accounting course at Northwestern in 1988. Since then—and with more time to prepare—she's taught hundreds of classes and seen Northwestern's accounting program become one of the most successful in the country.

Post's experience in the classroom and commitment to helping students succeed as accountants and individuals led her to receive the Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award for 2021.

The honor, administered by a selection committee consisting of Student Government Association (SGA) members and Honors Program students, was given at commencement in May.

Lauren Green '21, outgoing SGA president, says Post embodies the definition of an excellent educator: "Professor Post cares for her students, her co-workers and the community. She treats all her

students as individuals and does her best to meet each one where they are. She goes above and beyond for her students but allows them to become independent in their learning."

As a professor and CPA herself, Post says her goal isn't just that students learn the rules of accounting so they can pass a CPA exam, but rather, that they understand the "why" and learn to think like an accountant.

One student nominator wrote, "I've been so blessed to be a student of Professor Post for four years." Another applauded her character, writing, "She is genuine, intentional and illuminates God's work in the world with all she does and who she is."

This year's award was the second teaching accolade for Post, as she also received Northwestern's 2019 Faculty Inspirational Service Award.

Faculty Sabbaticals

Northwestern awarded sabbaticals for the 2021–22 academic year to two longtime professors.

Dr. Robert Hubbard, professor of theatre, was granted a sabbatical for the fall semester. He will co-teach a theatre course and develop a proposal for a sustainable theatre program at the University of the Bahamas in Nassau. Assuming COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, he will also direct a play for the Shakespeare in Paradise Festival, held in Nassau in October. And finally, he will conduct ethnographic research into an indigenous Bahamian theatrical form called Junkanoo.

Hubbard joined Northwestern's faculty in 2001 after working in both academic and professional theatre as a director, actor, teaching artist and playwright/adaptor. He has a doctoral degree in theatre from Bowling Green State University.

Dr. Laird Edman, professor of psychology, will spend his spring semester sabbatical collaborating with Dr. Joseph Bulbulia, professor of psychology at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand. The two are exploring current research and theory in the cognitive science of religion in order to provide useful information to people of faith. Specifically, they plan to identify communal religious rituals that are most common to religious groups that thrive across at least three generations.

Edman has been teaching at Northwestern since 2003 after leading honors programs at Iowa State University and Luther and Waldorf colleges. He has a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Minnesota.



Dr. Robert Hubbard



Dr. Laird Edman

Translating Parables

Dr. John Vonder Bruegge, biblical and theological studies, has received a \$12,000 Vital Worship Grant for 2021–22 from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.

Vonder Bruegge is using the grant to continue work on a book of original translations of Jesus' parables that will serve as a resource for storytellers in worship settings.

"We should not merely read Jesus' stories; we should also tell them," he says.

Collaborating with Vonder Bruegge are Jeff Barker, professor emeritus of theatre, and Ben De Boer '21.

"These are not paraphrases or retellings," Vonder Bruegge says of the parables included in the book.

"What makes our translations unique is that they strive for a listenability rooted in their oral presentation, while at the same time remaining true to the Greek text."

Dr. John Vonder Bruegge received a grant to support his work on a book of translations of Jesus' parables.



GEORF JOHNSON

Learning to Lead

Northwestern will add a minor in leadership studies to its academic programs beginning this fall.

The interdisciplinary program is closely aligned with the college's Center for Innovation and Leadership. It's flexible to fit most majors, including those leading to careers in business, ministry, health care, and sports and entertainment.

"Students will learn leadership theories and practices through a Christian perspective," says Dr. Jiying Song, assistant professor of business. "We want to give them an understanding of current social and cultural issues. It's not only about skills and behavior, but more about systemic leadership thinking."

Song, who has a doctorate in leadership studies from Gonzaga University, is co-directing the minor with Dr. Jason Lief '96, biblical studies, who teaches Christian education and youth ministry.

A course offered by both departments that was focused on principles of leadership has been revised and retitled "Servant Leadership." Other required classes include transformational cross-cultural leadership, organizational leadership and a leadership practicum.



Red Zone

Little Big League

BY JULIANA (PENNING'S '12) BLOEMENDAAL

Chad Rutledge takes batting practice with Northwestern's baseball team every Monday. Sporting his Raider gear, he swings for the fences as his teammates cheer him on. The catch? Chad is only 8 years old.

Chad officially became a Red Raider in January 2020. The team held a signing day celebration, complete with media coverage, a letter of intent and a locker full of team apparel for Chad.

Connected through Team IMPACT, an organization that matches children facing serious and chronic illnesses with collegiate athletic teams for two years, Chad and the Raiders have learned much from each other.

At age 2, Chad had a portion of his right foot amputated following a lawn mower accident. He also has asthma. "Chad fights through adversity with a positive attitude," says Brian Wede, head baseball coach.

Chad's mom, Kari (Henryson '09) Rutledge, says the Raiders have become his "baseball brothers," adding that Chad is much more confident and outgoing since joining the team.

"Through Northwestern athletics, we're empowering our athletes to live faithfully and courageously, and that means not being afraid of someone who's different or younger," says Wede. "We have the opportunity as a team to have a positive impact on Chad's life, but the impact he's having on our guys is just as significant."

For more on Raider sports, visit nwcraiders.com



Chad Rutledge fist bumps with Shane Geurink after taking batting practice with the Red Raider baseball team.



More than a paycheck



For hundreds of Northwestern students, working on campus is part of their college experience. But for most of these students, the work is more than a paycheck—it's an opportunity to learn new skills and pursue their passions. Raiders fill a variety of roles on campus, ranging from resident assistant to admissions ambassador to peer tutor. They work with the audiovisual and maintenance departments, call donors, edit the school newspaper, and prepare caffeinated beverages for their peers.

Photos by Lem Maurer





NOW ON DUTY
Zoe Heemstra

MPASS CENTER CAREER & CALLING



Hired as Northwestern's director of career and calling in 2019, Dr. Elizabeth Pitts is guiding Northwestern's efforts to become the leading Christian college focused on student success and meaningful work.

LEMI MAURER



Career & Calling

Northwestern makes preparing students for success and meaningful work central to its mission

BY ANITA CIRULIS

Major changes to Northwestern's career services are having a significant impact on students' preparedness for life after college.

"The expectations of students and their parents are high for a four-year degree," says Julie Vermeer Elliott '97, vice president for student life. "We really have to make it clear there's a return on investment—that we can deliver on the outcomes we are promising."

In response to that challenge, the Strategic Planning Committee adopted a new vision statement for Northwestern to be "the leading Christian college focused on student success and meaningful work for the common good."

Guided by that vision, a committee of staff and faculty spent a year re-envisioning a new center focused on careers and calling. Their goals were to ground the center in a Christian understanding of the significance of work in the life of faith, to better integrate the concept of vocation into academics and co-curricular programming, and to more effectively connect students with hands-on experiences that improve their work-readiness and leadership abilities.

Collaboration and networking with faculty, academic advisers, alumni, employers and student life staff were paramount, as was the development of student and faculty leaders trained to help students find their calling from God.



Micah Rens (right) was one of six students hired as Franken Fellows and trained to help other students prepare their professional portfolios.

The philosophical change also came with a physical change. The center's offices were moved to the south side of the Ramaker Center, directly across from the campus ministry offices.

"I wanted higher visibility for the center itself," Elliott says. "The location of career services next to campus ministry communicates that faith and work belong together. It says that helping students discern their calling is central to what we're about in student development."

Moving the center also allowed it to include an office for the director of the Northwestern Network, who will increasingly focus on connecting students with alumni for internships, mentoring and job openings.

While the center was getting a new home, Dr. Elizabeth Pitts was hired as Northwestern's director of career and calling in the fall of 2019.

"I could not have asked for a better leader," Elliott says of Pitts. "She's just outstanding in every way: her vision, her leadership, how good she is with students, the respect she commands from faculty. She has an ideal background."

A Wheaton College graduate with a doctorate from George Mason University, Pitts has worked in Christian higher education for 20 years. Her first job after graduating was in career services, and she spent 10 years with the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities—first promoting CCCU off-campus study programs and then serving as a faculty member and internship director for the council's American Studies Program.

"When I started interviewing for the role and realized what a huge

vision they had—how integral they wanted to make it, the support they were willing to offer, and the resources to make this a really standout program—that's when I became even more excited about the possibilities of this job," she says.

Pitts and Elliott settled on *Compass Center for Career & Calling* as the new name for the center—a moniker that ties in with the directional nature of Northwestern's name. Pitts quickly got to work on a framework that guides the center's efforts and makes sense to students, faculty, staff and parents. The Compass Center's "navigation plan"—with its four components of *explore*, *experience*, *equip* and *embark*—was the result.

Pitts and her staff created 12 how-to guides for everything from creating a LinkedIn profile to conducting a job search. They launched a new

Adulting 101

Preparation for life after college involves more than just choosing a career and finding a job.

During the 2020–21 school year, the Compass Center's six peer career mentors, known as Franken Fellows, were charged with planning and presenting personal development events for their fellow students.

"Adulting 101" grew out of conversations that Dr. Elizabeth Pitts, director of career and calling, had with several Northwestern faculty members who recognized the need to teach students life basics not covered in the classroom.

Pitts made meeting that need an

assignment for the Franken Fellows. "We had a brainstorming session about what they thought their peers wanted to know and what these faculty members were saying about those topics," she says.

Each Franken Fellow student was assigned one session of the series, depending on his or her interests and abilities, and then paired with a content expert—for example, an accounting professor for the budgeting session.

The first Adulting 101 class, "Meal Planning on a Dime," taught students how to prepare three budget-conscious meals from one rotisserie chicken. Participants left with one prepped meal for the weekend, recipe cards and some

handy meal-prep containers.

The session on finances covered budgeting essentials, tithing and paying off student loans, while an interactive session on health and fitness explored the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and a daily exercise routine.

Franken Fellow Emily Bosch, an accounting major, partnered with accounting professor Ray Gibler on the budgeting session.

"I actually spoke for part of my event, which was definitely a growing experience," Bosch says. "We tried to create a cool incentive for students to come. We gave out cash to students, and Professor Gibler and I encouraged

them to go out and be stewards of that money."

The "Home Sweet Home" session provided an alumni panel discussing whether to rent or buy and how to find a church, make new friends and build community. The fifth Adulting 101 session focused on job benefits, covering things like co-pays, deductibles and premiums, and deciphering the meanings of HMO, PPO, FSA, HSA and 401(k).

Adulting 101 ended with "Dining Etiquette," during which students enjoyed a catered, three-course meal while learning proper manners in a formal dining setting.

website (nwciowa.edu/compass-center), created in collaboration with Northwestern's marketing and communications office. And they're building partnerships with faculty to get career preparation embedded into the curriculum from students' initial First-Year Seminar course to their capstone Senior Seminar.

As of last fall, Northwestern students can also connect with one of six Franken Fellows—students hired by the Compass Center to serve as career mentors for their peers. Pitts and her staff, she says, “hired for heart and trained for technique.” The Franken Fellows participated in a three-day orientation in August that included hands-on learning and observation of Compass Center staff doing career counseling. They prepared their own resumes, cover letters and online profiles and learned how to help others do the same.

“I love getting to know other students better and learning about them,” says Franken Fellow Emily Bosch. “Dr. Pitts talked about how we should be gold diggers for the students here at Northwestern. We should be able to draw out the gold inside of them for a resume or job interview—to help them see the good in themselves so they can serve God’s kingdom.”


The Franken Fellows are the Compass Center’s ambassadors, giving the center more visibility through events, programming and their presence at a “drop-in center.”

“There’s a lot of talk about it on campus,” Bosch says of the Compass Center. “Our services are becoming more known thanks to our marketing efforts and word of mouth.”

Chris Jelken, who graduated in May with a major in business administration—international business, was among the students who have taken advantage of the Compass Center’s services. Following weekly meetings with Pitts, he connected with a Franken Fellow to get help with his professional documents. He also worked with Compass Center staff and the director of the Northwestern Network to line up informational interviews with alumni.

“A lot of the people I interviewed just blew me out of the water with what their jobs meant to them, how God called them to where they are, and the path they followed to get there,” he says.

Now in the middle of a job search for which he feels well prepared, Jelken appreciates the support he gets from the Compass Center.

“It’s like I’m stepping into the boxing ring, and I have a team in my corner that is looking for opportunities and helping me win the fight and come out on top,” he says. “They’re just great encouragers.” 

Karl Ford earned his Compass Center padfolio by taking the CareerExplorer inventory, lining up references, and preparing his resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn and Handshake profiles. This fall he’ll help other students do the same as one of the center’s Franken Fellows peer career mentors.

Job Search Incentive

A resume, cover letter and references are essential for any job search. And in today’s digital world, profiles on LinkedIn and Handshake are increasingly as important.

Northwestern’s Compass Center staff want every student to graduate prepared for his or her job search, so they’re offering an incentive: Everyone

who prepares those five items and takes the CareerExplorer inventory is presented with a padfolio bearing the Compass Center logo.

In a final end-of-semester push, Compass Center staff and the Franken Fellow peer career mentors hosted two evening help sessions featuring free pizza. “They brought in students I’ve never laid eyes on. They have access,” says Dr. Elizabeth Pitts, director of career and calling, of her student assistants.

By graduation, 75 students earned their padfolio and had what they needed to connect with potential employers.

**COMPASS
CENTER**
FOR CAREER & CALLING



LEM MAURER

LAB WORK

Only a select few colleges and universities have been accepted into the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's SEA-GENES research program. Northwestern is one of them.

BY ANITA CIRULIS

Earn a biology degree from Northwestern, and you're virtually guaranteed to graduate with research experience. Five years ago, Northwestern was one of 20 colleges and universities accepted into the 2016–17 cohort of SEA-PHAGES, a national program designed to interest undergraduates in scientific research. Now nearly 150 institutions are part of a global effort to discover phages, or viruses that infect bacteria.

SEA-GENES is the next step in that research. Five colleges and universities in the U.S. were part of the first cohort selected for SEA-GENES. Eight—including Northwestern—were selected for the second cohort in 2020.

"There are so many more opportunities for research," says Dr. Sara Sybesma Tolsma '84, professor of biology, of the impact of the program. "You don't have to be the top of the class with all this extra time. You just take a couple of courses, and you're doing it."

Those courses are SEA-PHAGES: Discovery, a two-credit lab in which students discover and isolate phages; Genetics and Genomics, a four-credit course in which they annotate phage genomes; and SEA-GENES, a two-credit lab in which they identify the functions of phage genes.

SEA-PHAGES comes with financial support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Science Education Alliance. "It's not a grant, but we get thousands of dollars' worth of supplies—such as enzymes and primers—from them," Tolsma says.

Each school in the SEA-GENES program is assigned a phage to research. Northwestern's is named Island3.

"We're cloning all 76 genes and then asking if any of those genes cause the host bacterial cell to die or grow more slowly—and if any prevent another virus from infecting the host cell," Tolsma says.

Three students were enrolled in the inaugural SEA-GENES lab last fall: seniors Ali Almail and Sammy Blum and junior Lauren Pavich.

Blum, who graduated in May and is now enrolled in Northwestern's physician assistant graduate program, gained an appreciation for what research involves. "I didn't realize how much critical thinking and team collaboration goes into research," she says.

Pavich—who will serve as Tolsma's teaching assistant this fall—also enjoyed the collaborative nature of the class, citing times she, her classmates and Dr. Tolsma would have discussions about how to move forward when something wasn't working.

"I enjoy research a lot," she says. "I wasn't very good at critical thinking before coming to Northwestern, but these programs have definitely made it easier to learn how to work through problems."

Almail was grateful for the opportunity to search for answers to questions raised when he took Genetics and Genomics. He applied and was accepted into Northwestern's Junior Scholars program, which allowed him to continue his search for a sequence of DNA, referred to as a "promoter," that turns a gene on or off.

"He's gotten some amazing data," Tolsma says of Almail. "We think





Sammy Blum (left) and Ali Almail were two of the first students to take the research-focused SEA-GENES lab from Dr. Sara Tolsma, professor of biology.

LEM MAURER



LEM MAURER

In SEA-GENES, students clone the genes of a bacteriophage as a step to determining their function.

we've characterized a promoter that's never been characterized before."

For this year's national SEA Symposium, the conveners considered more than 80 abstracts for talks. Almail was one of five students chosen to discuss their research results. He isn't, however, the only Northwestern student with results to share from their research. Since Northwestern was accepted into the SEA-PHAGES program, more than 50 of the col-

lege's students have produced peer-reviewed publications to add to their resumes.

Almail will begin studying at the University of Toronto's medical school this fall and someday hopes to be a pediatric doctor and researcher. The majority of Northwestern's biology department majors are interested in just practicing medicine, but Tolsma says research experience is invaluable for them as well.

"This helps them in their role as clinicians," she says. "They'll be better able to interpret scientific evidence and to more critically evaluate research that might impact their patients."

Ultimately, the research conducted through the SEA-PHAGES and SEA-GENES programs aligns with Northwestern's goals to be a place where people use their minds to better understand, serve and love God's world.

That's what faculty and students do in the SEA-PHAGES and SEA-GENES courses. Instead of canned labs and an emphasis on memorization, students experience real science that involves solving problems, interpreting data and thinking critically.

"I'm excited. I'm interested. I'm curious," says Tolsma of the phage research taking place at Northwestern. "And when I look at the students, they're excited, they're interested and they're curious. Both of those things give me life." 🏠



National runner-up season seems taken from the big screen

BY DUANE BEESON

A movie scriptwriter couldn't come up with a better plot line than the Northwestern football team's 2020–21 season.

Start with a group of seniors who were recruited when the Raiders were 3-7 under their first-year head coach. Over four years, their teams qualify for the national playoffs each season and lose only eight games.

Throw in a global pandemic that alters protocols for games and

practices and upends the schedule. For the first time ever, the season is extended into the spring semester after the Raiders finish 8-1 in the fall.

Focus on head coach Matt McCarty '03, who emphasizes building a culture of pursuing excellence every day and overcoming adversity.

Show amazing footage of the NAIAs national-player-of-the-year quarterback Tyson Kooima and his receiving corps, including

three-time All-American Shane Solberg.

Use music to create tension as the Raiders travel to Des Moines to play second-ranked Grand View in a quarterfinal-round playoff game April 24. Northwestern is down 14-0 early in the second quarter. A quarterback sack for a safety by Trevor Rozeboom at the start of the third period makes the score 14-9 and provides NWC momentum. With 1:03 left in the game, Eli Stader converts on a 21-

yard field goal to give the Raiders a 27-24 victory.

Coach McCarty talks at practice the following week about the opportunity to face perennial nemesis Morningside in the semifinal-round game in Sioux City. News stories highlight the top-ranked Mustangs' dominance. They are the two-time defending national champions, boasting a 39-game winning streak, 10 straight GPAC titles, and seven consecutive wins over the Raiders.



scrambles and heaves the ball into the end zone. A receiver, well defended, snags it for the go-ahead touchdown. The Raider receiver is Michael Storey, and it doesn't take long for people to post on social media about Northwestern's "Storey-book ending."

But wait. As Raider fans go crazy, Kooima is in pain on the field for several minutes. He has suffered a debilitating Achilles heel injury and needs help getting to the sideline after setting a single-game school record of 490 yards passing. The backup quarterback, who has attempted only 14 passes this season, comes in. Blake Fryar keeps the ball and runs for the two-point conversion, giving the Raiders a 44-41 lead.

Morningside moves into Northwestern territory, but Solberg—who hasn't made a reception all game and is playing with a torn ACL and two broken ribs—breaks up the Mustangs' Hail Mary pass with 2 seconds left. Northwestern is going to the national championship game for the sixth time in school history and the first time since 1984.

In a press conference preceding the title contest versus Lindsey Wilson, reporters hurl question after question about how the Raiders can fare with Kooima on the sidelines.

"Tyson really transformed our program," McCarty responds. "He is such a playmaker. [But] when we were recruiting Blake, we felt he could help us win a championship. We have a ton of confidence in him."

ABOVE: Leading the Raiders to a national runner-up finish, Tyson Kooima was named the NAIA player of the year. He led the nation in passing, completing 65% of his attempts for 3,882 yards and 31 TDs, breaking numerous school records in the process.

RIGHT: More than 500 Red Raider fans cheered on the team at the national championship game in Grambling, Louisiana.

"This is the perfect group for such a unique year," he continues. "They really embraced all the adversity that came their way."

Hundreds of cheering NWC fans line the road to the locker room as the Northwestern buses arrive at Grambling State University's Eddie G. Robinson Stadium for the title game on May 10. "I got chills," Coach McCarty later says. "That was pretty awesome."

Early in the Red Raiders' first defensive stand, All-American safety Noah Van't Hof suffers a high-ankle sprain that renders him unable to compete. Quarterback Fryar throws for 157 yards and two touchdowns. But two Lindsey Wilson TDs in the third quarter give the Blue Raiders a 31-7 lead, and Northwestern falls, 45-13.


The next day, parents and fans greet the team in the Rowenhorst Student Center. "Red Raider fans are awesome," McCarty tells the crowd. "It felt like home games

in Des Moines, Sioux City and Louisiana. It's a great feeling to be welcomed back."

The team's 10 graduating seniors—who were in Louisiana on the day of commencement—wear flip-flops or gym shoes and short pants under their gowns as they receive their diploma covers from President Greg Christy.

Later that week, Kooima undergoes surgery. Coach McCarty tells a reporter the quarterback is considering coming back next season since eligibility has been extended due to the pandemic. The doctor says an early fall return to action could be possible.

Fade to black.

Perhaps there will be a sequel? 

On the Web *exclusive*

Visit nwcraiders.com/football for more on the Raiders' amazing run.



MATTHEW HICKS

Drone footage shows a crowded Olsen Stadium on May 1 as close-ups of sweat-drenched players reveal the 90-degree temperatures. Potent offenses trade blows as the scoreboard advances. Visitors 9, Home 14 ... 16-27 ... 29-34 ... 36-41.

With 1:49 remaining, the Raiders get the ball on their own 9-yard line. Kooima leads the team to the Morningside 23. The scoreboard shows 16 seconds left and third down as Kooima takes the snap,

GOING



Michael Shields uses everyday household items and simple sporting equipment in his trick-shot videos.



VIRAL

Trick-shot artist garners millions of followers on TikTok

BY JULIANA (PENNING'S '12) BLOEMENDAAL

Michael Shields '11 is hesitant to answer when asked to choose his favorite trick shot. "That's like asking me to pick a favorite kid," the father of four says with a laugh.

A financial adviser with Edward Jones by day and a trick-shot artist by night, Shields has a niche on social media, garnering more than two million followers in the last 15 months.

His tricks range from tossing a marker into a glass bottle to throwing discs into a Wii console to chipping a table tennis ball into a water canister.

"Trick shots were always something I loved, but I never had time to create a presence online with them," says Shields. Extra time at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, gave Shields the opportunity he'd been looking for.

Seeking a way to share his hobby, Shields turned to TikTok. "It was the easiest place to grow a following," he says, noting that the social media platform was seeing an increase in popularity at the time.

He chose the name "That'll Work" for his new brand. "I wanted the name to be fun and memorable, and also an antithesis to the idea that trick shots have to be perfect. Hence, 'That'll Work.'"

Shields posted his first trick-shot video in April 2020, featuring him chipping a roll of toilet paper—which was sparse at the time—onto a paper tower holder.

"That trick should have been impossible," he says. "But completing it inspired me to keep going."

The satisfaction of routinely mastering next-to-impossible trick shots keeps Shields motivated, as does the feedback he receives. "The TikTok community is overwhelmingly positive," says Shields, who receives thousands of comments per video, often such as "That was insane!" and "You just made my kid's day!"

Shields recalls one follower's heartwarming comment: The individual noted an ongoing illness, saying, "You motivate me to keep going because you never give up in your videos."

As for the tricks themselves, Shields finds inspiration from various sources. "Half the inspiration

is from other trick shots I see, but I add my own twist," he says. "The others are random thoughts that pop in my head at 2 a.m."

The majority of Shields' videos are filmed at his Urbandale, Iowa, home—some in the living room, several in the backyard, and many in the basement. His wife, Brittany (Corlew '12), occasionally assists. He records all of the videos on his cellphone, and he averages three new videos each week.

While some tricks only take a few hours to complete, Shields has spent days recording his most challenging shots. His longest to date—both in distance and time—was the feat of hitting a kickball off a baseball tee and into a basketball hoop that was 150 feet away. After nearly 12 hours at a local park,


Shields made the shot.

What started as a hobby quickly developed into something much more than that, as Shields' videos continually go viral. He's been featured on ESPN's SportsCenter seven times. "My initial goal was to build a new trick-shot brand and potentially do this as a career," says Shields, adding that a career in trick-shot artistry is still his dream.

Shields doesn't have any full sponsorships, but he does have occasional endorsements through which he will include a company's product or apparel in his videos. (A former first baseman and golfer for the Raiders, he has also worn his Northwestern gear while conquering a number of tricks.) Shields is selective when choosing his sponsorships, noting that they have to fit his brand, the sports arena and his values.

With millions of social media followers, Shields doesn't take his new and thriving following lightly. "There are a lot of young kids who follow me on social media. I don't want to present something to them that I wouldn't want my kids seeing," he says. "The music and words I choose leave an impact."

Shields' TikTok profile also draws attention, as it includes the text "Jesus saves."

"I've had a number of kids reach out asking about that, and I get to share the gospel with them," says Shields. "I'm trying to figure out how to do that more." 



Like Daughters, Like Mother

Family celebrates two graduates during Northwestern commencement

BY DUANE BEESON

Kelli Bosch remembers the feeling she had while sitting in Christ Chapel during her oldest daughter Katie's RED101 visit.

"It just felt like home—a place where she would grow so much in her walk with the Lord, study in a great nursing program, and have the opportunity to run cross country and track," she says. "And Katie did have a wonderful experience at Northwestern."

Little did Kelli know the impact Katie's decision to attend NWC would make on their family.

Two years later, younger daughter Emily chose to follow in Katie's footsteps. "I got to visit her a lot, and I fell in love with Northwestern," Emily says, echoing her mother's sentiment. "I really felt like this was where I was meant to be."

When Emily was a sophomore, Kelli decided to go back to school to earn a master's degree. A fourth grade teacher in Des Moines, she wanted to prepare herself to move into an administrative position.

Because of her daughters' experiences, she says, "There was no other place I wanted to go."

This May, the Bosches' Northwestern experiences came full

circle. Emily walked across the commencement stage having earned a bachelor's degree in accounting, business education and secondary education. Several moments later, Kelli received the hood recognizing her completion of an online master's degree in educational administration.

Emily says she is proud of her mother. "Not many people can stay home for 15 years, have five kids, then do schoolwork while doing a full-time job," she told the *Des Moines Register*.


The two found ways to assist each other on their college journeys. Emily helped her mother

with the technological challenges of putting together an education portfolio, and Kelli provided advice as Emily worked on lesson plans and reviewed her experiences in the classroom.

"The graduate program energized me," says Kelli. "I was reminded of the reason I'm here. And the professors are wonderful—very accommodating and encouraging. At just the right time, I'd get an email from a professor saying, 'You can do this.'"

Emily was an all-conference and NAIA Scholar-Athlete softball player who served as a peer mentor in the Compass Center for Career & Calling, an admissions student ambassador, and a member of the Campus Ministry Team. She is already thinking about earning an MBA and possibly becoming a professor.

Her mom's advice? "Don't wait as long as I did to go back to school!"

May 8 didn't mark the end of the Bosch family's experience at Northwestern. Youngest daughter Megan will enroll in the fall. 



First Katie (Bosch '18) Hollinger, right, had a great experience at Northwestern. That led her sister Emily to enroll, and two years later mom Kelli began work on her online master's degree. Emily and Kelli both graduated in May.

A Little Grit, A Little Glamour

May Day celebration was annual highlight

BY DUANE BEESON

As the spring semester wound down and the temperatures warmed up, Northwestern students in the 1960s and '70s looked forward to May Day festivities.

The event featured themes like “Roman Holiday,” “A Time for Us,” “Medieval Magic,” “Laughter in the Rain” and “Country Sunshine.” The weekend began with the crowning of the queen at a ceremony complete with escorts, a crown bearer and flower girl, and a song serenading the royalty.

The mood shifted for the rope pull pitting the freshmen men against their sophomore counterparts. Teams of 15—aided by “morale girls” offering nourishment from oranges, lemons and ice cubes—competed to see which one would be pulled into the Floyd River.

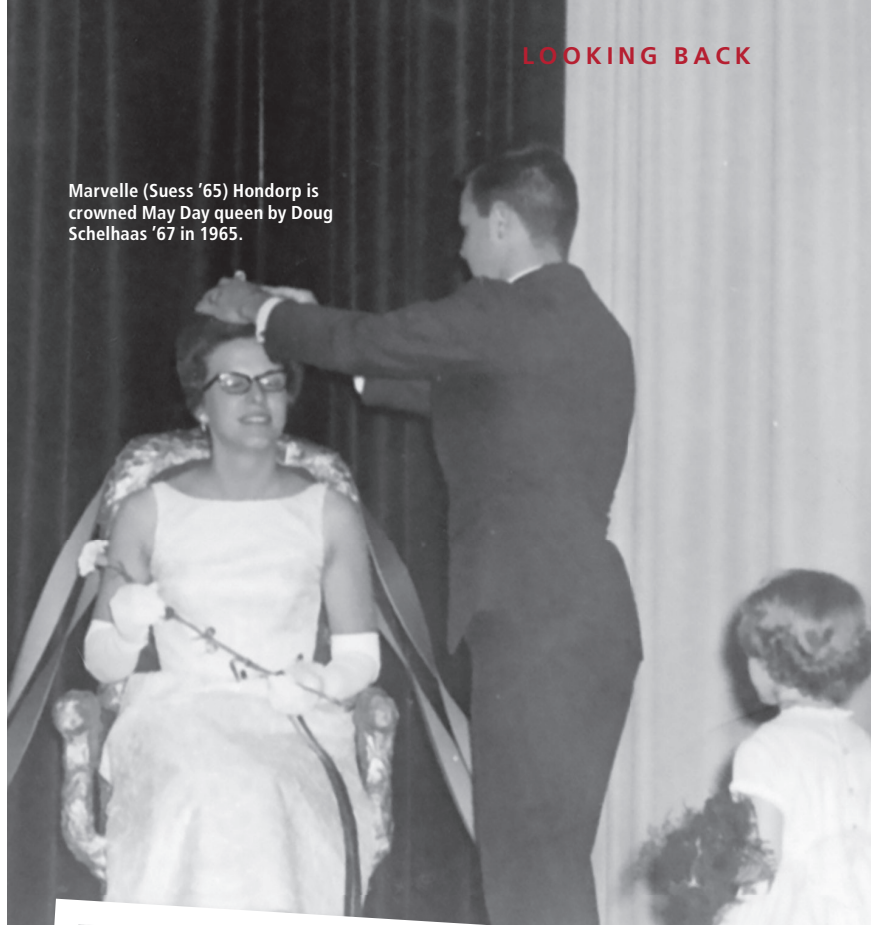
The 1963 *Beacon* offered this description: “After a grueling, 28-minute struggle—followed by a satisfying, resounding splash—the sophomore pull team rose victorious from their foxholes to watch their less fortunate freshman opponents flounder in the Floyd.”

Another popular activity at the Floyd River was the Granberg Regatta, a race of homemade rafts. The faculty often fielded a team, albeit without much success. The 1968 *Beacon* commented on “the annual failure of faculty engineering attempts.” And while the newspaper reported that the 1969 faculty team had their best time ever, they still finished seventh out of eight boats.

Students cleaned up and put on formals and dinner jackets for the banquet Saturday evening. In 1966, a *Beacon* letter to the editor scolded faculty for not dressing up for the event. “The banquet is the biggest social event of the year. It is the time when the girls don their loveliest formals and the guys all dress their sharpest. While everyone else is dressed in formal attire, our faculty comes dressed at best in ‘good’ clothes and at worst in ‘street’ clothes. The attire worn by the faculty destroyed the effect [that] could have been created by a completely formal affair.”

The previous year, the banquet’s musical entertainment was provided by a relatively unknown duo, Simon and Garfunkel. Dan Smith '67 remembers being impressed by their musicianship but also sensing that their performance was not well received. “Their lyrics contained a social message, and I’m not sure that was what we wanted in our entertainment.” Just months later the group released its now-famous *Sounds of Silence*.

Marvelle (Suess '65) Hondorp is crowned May Day queen by Doug Schelhaas '67 in 1965.



The 1970 rope pull is about to end as the freshman team heads into the Floyd River.

NORTHWESTERN ARCHIVES

Other May Day activities over the years included the Stegenga Festival competition in music, oratory and drama between the freshmen and sophomore women, a talent show, style show, tennis tournament, movie, and theatre production.

In 1968, May Day broke new ground with the first college-sanctioned dance. A band played in the Auditorium, which was decorated like an oriental garden. The peaceful scene belied the controversy that preceded it, as some Northwestern constituents felt dancing wasn't appropriate for a Christian college.

RAIDERS

Called to lead.
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Called to stand out.

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class Notes

'74 **Glenn Van Ekeren** has published volume two of *Little Leadership Lessons ... From an Old Guy*. He is the president of Vetter Health Services in Omaha, Nebraska.

'77 **Randy Oostra** of Holland, Ohio, president and CEO of ProMedica, has been recognized by *Modern Healthcare* magazine as one of 2020's 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare. This award honors individuals deemed by their peers and senior editors to be the most influential in the industry in terms of leadership and impact. This is the fourth consecutive year he has been named to the list. He also serves on Northwestern's Board of Trustees and is a member of the Ohio and Michigan hospital associations and the American College of Healthcare Executives.

'79 **Mark Voss** retired from the Iowa Department of Transportation after 37 years of supervising the Ames and Marshalltown Driver and Identification Service Centers. He continues to live in Ames.

'87 **Julie Powell** is a CPR instructor at West Des Moines (Iowa) EMS. Her primary role is to supervise more than 60 basic life support instructors, in addition to leading continuing education classes, overseeing the city's first-aid program, and visiting local elementary schools to provide ambulance tours and discuss safety and first aid.

'88 **Steven Bruder**, Cherokee, Iowa, retired after eight years as principal of South O'Brien Junior High and High School. He previously served as principal at Sibley-Ocheyedan High School in addition to teaching at four other school districts in northwest Iowa.

'90 **Barb (Ehlers) Austin** of Luverne, Minnesota, completed a master's degree in human services

and is now program manager/program assistant for the Southwest Minnesota Opportunity Council-Head Start.

'92 **Dr. Robin Pals-Rylaarsdam** is the new provost at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota. She brings more than 20 years of experience serving in higher education, including her tenure as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Saint Xavier University, professor and administrator at Benedictine University, and a professor at Trinity Christian College and Azusa Pacific University.

'93 **Michelle TeGrootenhuys**, K-8 literacy instructional coach for the MOC-Floyd Valley School District, was named the 2021 Iowa Reading Teacher of the Year by the Iowa Reading Association. She also teaches in Northwestern's online Master of Education program.

'99 **Andrew Manz**, Bennington, Nebraska, is the SAFe release train engineer for production operations and support application teams at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics.

'01 **Kara (Christoffer) DeGroot**, a certified nurse practitioner, has joined CCM Health as an outreach service provider with the ENT department. She serves patients at the Montevideo, Minnesota, clinic location. She and her husband, Jon, reside in Prinsburg with their two sons.

Dr. Matt Foss was awarded the 2021 Mid-American Conference Outstanding Faculty Award for Student Success by the University of Toledo for his work in supporting and developing students both inside and outside of the classroom. An associate professor of theatre and film, he has fostered student participation and performances with the National Tennessee Williams Festival and the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival;

Red Ties

CORKY KOERSELMAN '82
Associate Director of the Alumni Network

We made it through an unusual but very successful year of on-campus living and learning. Now summer is upon us. The Bultman Center is undergoing a major renovation, and the Frank and Lois Vogel Welcome Center is nearing completion. What an exciting time!

We would love to see you on campus again—and for you to see Northwestern again! Mark your calendars now for Raider Nation Celebration, Sept. 17–18. I hope you can return to campus and celebrate God's goodness with us as we dedicate the Vogel Welcome Center, host events, play games, induct Hall of Fame athletes, recognize our new distinguished alumni, and hold reunions and banquets.

This year we are doubling up on our banquets and recognizing a two-year span of classes: the 40-year anniversaries of the classes of '80 and '81 and the 50-year anniversaries of the classes of '70 and '71. This should be a great time to meet again at Northwestern, renew friendships, reminisce and give thanks to God for his faithfulness through the years.

The Vogel Welcome Center includes office space for alumni. When you come this fall—or anytime during the year—stop in and let us know you're here. Someone from the alumni team will be happy to give you a tour of campus and a small "welcome-back" gift. You will be astonished by all that has changed.

It is always encouraging to visit with returning alumni and hear your stories. Since I have the privilege of visiting with alumni from all over our country, I have noticed one thing that always stands out: You, quite simply, stand out!

I am continually amazed by the many ways God has blessed our graduates and how you have been "salt" in your spheres of influence. By his grace, you are pursuing God's redeeming work in the world.



organized a study abroad experience with the Moscow Art Theatre; assisted in arranging internships with regional theatre companies; and featured students in his own local projects with the Toledo Museum of Art, the Arts Commission and WGTE.

'02 Steve Hydeen is program director for the Acting Academy at the 402 Arts Collective in Omaha. He develops classes, workshops, personal training, corporate training, presentations and performances based on human development and life skills achieved through acting technique. He previously worked as director of human resources and concierge management for Counterparts LLC.

'04 Jeannine (Lovas) Bryant wrote a book, *Keep the Memories, Not the Stuff*, which is aimed at helping those who have lost a loved one and are tasked with clearing out a house full of belongings. A senior move manager and CEO/owner of Changing Spaces SRS in Lincoln, Nebraska, she has helped hundreds of families as they make difficult decisions about what to keep.

'07 Dr. Amanda (Brown) Browner, associate professor of psychology at Winona State University,

was voted by students as the institution's Professor of the Year for 2020–21.

Robbie Cundy, a mathematics teacher at Sioux Center High School, has been named a recipient of the 2021 Iowa STEM Teacher Award. The award is presented annually to six teachers who demonstrate their commitment to inspiring student interest in and awareness of the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. He will receive \$1,500 to use for his classroom, in addition to \$1,500 for personal use.

Tracy (Brown) Lumley plays cornerback with the Sioux Falls Snow Leopards, a women's tackle football team and member of the Women's Football Alliance. The professional football organization is the largest, longest-running women's tackle football league in the world. She and her husband, Ryan, reside in Sioux Falls with their three daughters.

Scott Stahl is president of the South Dakota Corn Growers Association. He is a fourth-generation family farmer in western McCook County.

'09 Justin Boersma, Hospers, Iowa, is the district conservationist for the Sioux County Soil and Water District. He previously worked in a

CARES Act Tax Incentives

As you think about filing taxes for 2021, keep these things in mind:

Universal Charitable Deduction

If you make a cash gift to charitable organizations such as Northwestern and take the standard deduction, you can deduct up to \$300 as a single filer or \$600 as a married couple filing jointly.

Cap on Deductions

The CARES Act lifted the cap on annual contributions for those who itemize, increasing it from 60% to 100% of a taxpayer's adjusted gross income in 2021. Excess contributions can be carried over to the next five years. Be sure to discuss all strategies with your tax and financial advisers before acting.

similar position for Cherokee and O'Brien counties.

Lindsay Squires won the 2020 *Green Profit* RBI Young Retailer Award. She is the community development manager and events coordinator for Tagawa Gardens in Centennial, Colorado.

'11 Austin McCombs is a detective with the Sedro-

Wooley Police Department in Washington state. He also serves on the Skagit County Crisis Negotiations Team, which is comprised of area officers and deputies trained to defuse potentially dangerous situations through communication techniques in order to gain cooperation and peaceful conclusions.

Jacqueline (Clark) Roff, Minneapolis, earned a master's degree in physician



Raiders
Stand Out

CAROLYN DUKE

Physical education teacher, athletic director and coach Daniel Solis was honored by his peers with a teaching award at Williams High School in Plano, Texas.

A Different Direction

Daniel Solis '11 knew he was called to make a difference in the lives of young people. After earning his degree in sociology and criminal justice, it seemed obvious that it would be through the criminal justice system. The Texas native started his career as a juvenile corrections officer in Waco, Texas, providing guidance and resources to steer troubled kids in a better direction.

When his wife, Sara, got a job offer they couldn't refuse in Plano, Texas, a couple years later, it was Solis who went a different direction. He earned his teaching license and began to work with kids in a whole new way. But he says it's not so different.

"The biggest thing that draws me to being both a probation officer and a teacher is just trying to see who the kid is, listen to them talk, not judge them for their background, and just try to guide them where they need to go," Solis says.

Serving as athletic director, football coach and physical education teacher, Solis now influences nearly 1,200 freshmen and sophomores at Williams High School in Plano. His standout work doesn't go unnoticed: His fellow teachers voted him the school's 2021 Experienced Teacher of the Year.

"I'm still shocked," says Solis, who also serves as vice president of the National Hispanic Coaches Association. "I get up every day and feel blessed to do something I love."

BY BETH (NIKKEL '02) GAULKE

assistant studies from Bethel University in December.

Josefrayn Sánchez-Perry is a new assistant professor of theology at Loyola University Chicago, where he will focus on early modern theologies and Indigenous Christianities. He is scheduled to defend his doctoral dissertation at the University of Texas this summer.

'13 **Ethan Lensch**, Guthrie Center, Iowa, is the principal at Adair-Casey/Guthrie Center High School.

JD Pluim is a physical therapist with the Orange City Area Health System. He previously worked for Therapeutic Health Services in Le Mars. He earned a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Iowa in 2016.

'14 **Ryan Brasser** was named the *Northwest Iowa Review* 2021 Girls Basketball Coach of the Year after leading West Lyon High School to second place at the state tournament in Class 3A. The Wildcats won the Siouxland Conference with a 17-1 record and finished 24-2 overall.

Jesse McCann of Greenfield, Iowa, is a high school special education teacher. He earned a master's degree in sports administration with an emphasis on education leadership through Upper Iowa University and hopes to get an athletic director or collegiate coaching position.

Evan Stoesz, St. Peter, Minnesota, earned a master's degree in school counseling from Minnesota State University in 2020.

Dr. Zachary Wittenberg graduated from the Creighton University School of Medicine's internal medicine residency in May and received the Outstanding Resident award. He has begun a three-year pulmonary critical care fellowship at Creighton.

'16 **Courtney (Pattison) Venegas** won the 2021 Medical Student Prize of Excellence in Neurology Award. She earned an M.D. degree at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and is a neurology resident with UNMC in Omaha.

'18 **Nick deVries**, Spirit Lake, Iowa, recently finished taking the CPA exams and began working at Halse Company in Rock Rapids.

Josh Hornstra has a new job as membership services executive for the Denver Nuggets. He previously worked as a service and retention consultant in the University of Denver athletic department.

'19 **Kendra Burmester**, Washington, D.C., is pursuing a master's degree in early childhood and special education at Johns Hopkins University. She is a resident student teacher in a kindergarten Title 1 classroom.

'20 **Emily Wikner** is the director of Christian education at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

New Arrivals

Michael and **Jamie (Zeutenhorst '04)**

Kammerman, son, Max Robert, joins Jaylee (16), Tessa (10) and Jenna (8)

Levi and **Megan (Van Peursesem '07) Bruins**, son, Liam Levi, joins Maci (6) and Easton (2)

Mitchell and **Kristen (Moss '08)**

Andringa, daughter, Lucy Jane, joins Malachi (5), John (3) and Isaac (1)

Andrew and **Heather (Anderson '08) Stout**, daughter, Cora Louise, joins Ella (5)

Zack and **Stephanie (Grieme '08)**

Valentine, son, Theodore

Jeff and **Amanda (Wright '09) DeWit**, daughter, June Marion, joins Arley (2)

Micah and **Julia (Glendenning '09)**



GREG LATZA

While COVID-19 was making the environment more stressful for health care workers, Alex Overweg received a nursing award from Sanford Health in Sioux Falls.

Nurturing Nurse

Nurse Alex (Brower '14) Overweg says she wants to be known for loving people well and being an encourager.

She's meeting that goal, according to Abby Brock, who works with her at Sanford Health in Sioux Falls. "Alex's positive and uplifting attitude is contagious," says Brock.

For her impact on those around her, Overweg received Sanford's 2020 Patricia Van Wyhe Nurse of the Year Award.

Overweg is the manager of Sanford's Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) and Patient Center, where she and her team help patients coming out of surgery move on to their next phase of recovery.

"I work with a great team and great leaders," she says. "I like the huge variety we see in patient acuity and concerns, because it keeps me learning. It's fulfilling to be able to recognize needs, find solutions and serve people at critical times in their lives."

Overweg, who began working for Sanford while still in college, says she felt very prepared for her nursing career. "I got great clinical experience that prepared me for my first job. Northwestern did an excellent job!"

As she seeks to positively influence those around her, Overweg draws inspiration from her experience at NWC. "Coaches, professors, staff and friends all invested time and energy into me and helped me grow into the person I am today. I'm very grateful."

BY DUANE BEESON

Redfield, son, Josiah Gary, joins Luke (5) and Isaiah (3)
Travis and **Laura (Denekas '11) Blacett**, son, Landen Carter
Adam and **Beth (Hunter '11) Fennema**, son, Enzo Edward, joins Constance (6) and Devorah (3)
Cody and **Emily (Muilenburg '11) Rasmussen**, son, Drew Henry, joins Caleb (2)
Kyle and **Jacqueline (Clark '11) Roff**, daughter, Elliana Grace
Rylee (Hulstein '12) and Taylor Morris '13, adopted daughter, Huxley Jean, joins Braxton (3)
Brittany (Corlew '12) and Michael Shields '11, twins, Jackson Tyler and Barrett Roman, join Gaby (4) and Emelyn (2)
Jaclyn (Moret '13) and Taylor Hoekstra '13, son, Ranger Jay, joins Hanson (3) and Palmer (1)
Heidi and **Ethan Lensch '13**, daughter, Elliot Lynn, joins Quinn (5) and Lennox (3)
Alli (Dunkelberger '14) and Cody Engebretson '13, daughter, Raelyn Mae, joins Madelyn (3)
Amber and **Jesse McCann '14**, daughter, Neely Casey, joins Kaden (8) and Jovie (2)
Rachel (Muilenburg '14) and Graham Kinsinger '13, daughter, Maisie Ellen
Samantha (Kleinsasser '14) and Nathan Van Gorp '14, son, Kyler John Evan, joins Tyus (4) and Mya (2)
Hannah and **Joey Hendershott '15**, daughter, Linley Grace
Britta (Wilson '16) and Collin Ten Haken '17, son, Merrick Jay
Connor and **Suzanna (Nachbar '16) True**, daughter, Vivian Marie
Carolyn (Hopkins '17) and Josh Kester '16, son, Simon Paul

Pennings '12, Sioux Falls
Yukiko Higashino '13 and Kai Pope, Fullerton, California
Jodi Stahl '13 and **Mitchell Janssen '14**, Sioux Falls
Jenna Beeson '16 and Peder Brevig, St. Paul, Minnesota
Koriene Schulte '17 and Johnathan Gallagher, Sioux Center
Lauren Stanton '17 and Ethan Van Briesen, Rock Rapids, Iowa
Brenna Ellington '19 and **Micah Rens '22**, Orange City

The couples reside in the city listed.

In Memoriam

Dr. John Rider of Enid, Oklahoma, a member of Northwestern's business faculty in the early 1960s, died Aug. 17 at the age of 92. During his 42-year career as an educator, he taught in high schools in Kansas and in several colleges. He received teaching awards at West Texas State College and East Tennessee State University, and he was honored in 1995 as an outstanding education alum by Northwestern State College in Oklahoma. His survivors include two children.

Steve '43 and **Gerry (De Cook '43) Ekdorn** of Orange City died Jan. 21 and Feb. 28 at the ages of 96 and 98, respectively. Steve served in the Coast Guard, completed his bachelor's degree at Buena Vista University, and served as high school principal in Ireton for nine years. He became principal at Northwestern Classical Academy in 1959 and taught at NWC until 1982. He earned a master's degree and education specialist degree at the University of South Dakota and later worked as a real estate agent. Steve served as a deacon, elder and Sunday school teacher at First Reformed Church, where Gerry was active in the women's ministries, and they participated in several mission trips. Among their survivors are three children, including **Barbara**

Marriages

Dave Dunkelberger '85 and Julie Nelson, Ames, Iowa
Andrew Bloemendaal '09 and **Juliana**

Raiders
Stand Out

Reece '74 and **Brenda Hartig '77**, and a brother, **Don Ekdom '50**.

Lois (Muilenburg '47) De Jong, 92, died Dec. 26 in Orange City. She spent many years working as a bookkeeper. Among her survivors are five children, including **Gerald '81** and **Harlan '84**, and three sisters, **Joyce Booher '42**, **Ladene Altena '47** and **Harriet Harmelink '56**.

Trudy (Bosman '49) Blankers of Sheldon, Iowa, died April 16 at the age of 91. She taught in country schools in the Matlock area and later was a cook at Boyden-Hull Elementary School. She taught Sunday school, vacation Bible school and catechism, and was involved in women's ministries at First Reformed Church in Boyden. She was also a Girl Scout and 4-H leader and singer with the Senior Saints. She is survived by four children, including **Gaylene '78**, **Gary '81** and **Gloria Bartelt '89**.

Martha (VanEs '51) Pennings of Blomkest, Minnesota, died Dec. 12 at the age of 88. She taught Sunday school, wrote several children's Christmas programs and wrote a play script for Roseland Reformed Church's centennial celebration. She is survived by her husband, Lawrence; six children, including **Teresa Enriquez '77** and **Joslyn Kleinjan '78**; and two siblings.

Ruth (Bogaard '51) Van Voorhis, 88, died Jan. 30 in Iowa City, Iowa. She graduated from Hope College and taught in Ames and Iowa City. When she and her husband, Lee, settled in Sioux City, she became active in First Presbyterian Church, the Sioux City Symphony, the Boys and Girls Club, and the Ronald McDonald House, and they opened their home to exchange students. Among her survivors are four children.

Jack Mouw '53 died Feb. 8 at the age of 87. He farmed north of Orange City and worked at the Flower Cart, Sioux County

Bank, the Sioux County Courthouse and Silent Sioux. He is survived by three daughters, including **Nora Mulder '83**.

The Rev. Harlan Nyhof '53 died in Warwick, New York, on Jan. 11 at the age of 87. He graduated from Central College and Western Theological Seminary and served churches in Monroe, South Dakota; Willmar, Minnesota; Waterloo, Iowa; and Grahamsville, Woodbourne and Claryville, New York. His survivors include his wife, Diane; three sons; and four siblings, **Verla Joesse '61**, **Calvin '63**, **Gordon '65** and **Rosie Wurpts '69**.

The Rev. John Helmus '55, age 89, died Dec. 6 in Jefferson, Iowa. He emigrated from the Netherlands to Grand Rapids, Michigan, at the age of 19. After graduating from Northwestern, he continued his education at Hope College and Western Theological Seminary. He served churches in Canada, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska and New York. Among his survivors are his wife, **Elaine (Hesselink '54)**; eight children, including **Bryan '79**, **Calvin '81** and **Ivan '86**; and a sister.

Marlene (Van Der Sloot '57) Gloss, 84, died Dec. 26 in Tempe, Arizona. She graduated from Morningside College and taught in Cherokee, Iowa. She later worked for 23 years as a service representative for the USDA Farm Service Agency in Lyons, Kansas. Survivors include her husband, Jim; three children; and a brother.

Marjorie (Tenpas '61) Symens, Blaine, Minnesota, died Feb. 25 at the age of 82. She and her husband, **David '57**, farmed near Amherst, South Dakota, and later lived in other South Dakota and Minnesota towns. She was an active volunteer and choir member at the churches they attended, and she edited the newsletter for the Parkinson's support group in Northfield, Minnesota. Among her survivors are her husband and two children, including **Lauri Hanson '84**.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Vito Maffei (left) and Ben Loftis are putting their kinesiology majors to work as members of the Giants and Padres minor league baseball staffs.

A Whole New Ballgame

Vito Maffei '14 can't watch baseball like a casual fan.

"I'm pretty nervous just watching and making sure each guy's healthy," says Maffei, an athletic trainer with the San Francisco Giants' Low-A affiliate in San Jose, California.

Then again, being a fan was never Maffei's goal. His goal was a career in professional baseball.

Ben Loftis '15 is also living his dream, though not on the athletic field he expected.

"I was always going to be a college football strength coach," says Loftis.

After college, though, he found kindred spirits and a new career path while working with the University of Arkansas baseball team. He is now a strength and conditioning coach with the San Diego Padres' High-A affiliate in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Both Maffei and Loftis say their duties are broader than their titles suggest, including injury prevention, post-injury rehabilitation, interfacing with team officials, and lately, ensuring players follow COVID-19 protocols.

"Things get thrown at us," Maffei says, "but you know, we're ready for it."

Loftis says he loves that his job allows him to encourage players through the ups and downs of sports, and of life.

"Those are the moments where I say, 'OK, God, you have me here for a reason.'"

BY JARED KALTWASSER

Lee Ver Mulm '64 of Cedar Falls, Iowa, died Jan. 15 at the age of 79. He earned a master's degree at the University of Iowa and taught writing and critical thinking skills in Alta and Cedar Falls, Iowa. He received several awards for his teaching, including the national Christa McAuliffe Award, and he was Northwestern's 1997 recipient of the Distinguished Professional Achievement Award. He was an adjunct composition instructor at the University of Northern Iowa and Wartburg College, a board member for North Star Community Services, and an elder at Cedar Heights Community Presbyterian Church. He is survived by his wife, **Hazel (Van Veldhuizen '65)**; two children, including **Laura De Boer '90**; and two brothers, including **Roger '68**.

David Raak '66 died April 13 in Cherokee, Iowa, at the age of 77. He graduated from Minnesota State University Mankato, served in the Army, and earned a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Colorado State University. He taught in Colorado and Redwood Falls, Minnesota, before joining his father

at the Hospers Telephone Company in 1974. He took over its management in the 1980s. He was an elder and deacon at First Reformed Church in Hospers, a past commander of the local American Legion post, and a board member for Inspiration Hills and the Iowa Communications Alliance. His survivors include his wife, **Arlene (Cornelius '16)**, three children and two sisters.

Marlys (Bonnema '70) Van Aartsen, Orange City, died Jan. 23 at the age of 84. A homemaker who earned her NWC degree after her children were in school, she worked in technical services at Ramaker Library from 1978 to 1995. She was an active member at Trinity Reformed Church, teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir, and serving as a youth group sponsor. She held roles as president of the auxiliaries for Northwestern and the Orange City Hospital. Survivors include her husband, **Henry '54**, and two children, **Susan Shull '79** and **Bruce '83**.

The Rev. Leon Pannkuk '72 of Manchester, Missouri, died Jan. 19 at the

age of 70. He graduated from Covenant Theological Seminary and served as chaplain at Friendship Village of South County. In 2004, he became a full-time evangelist, preaching in India, Mexico, Russia, Ukraine and several African nations. He also pastored Swiss Evangelical Reformed Church in Swiss, Missouri. Among his survivors are his wife, **Marlene (Van Aalsburg '78)**, as well as three children and a sister.

Darlene (Miller '73) Tatsumi Krier, 83, of Sheldon, Iowa, died April 4. She taught Wee Learners Preschool out of her family home for many years. In 1975, she and her husband, Harold Tatsumi, founded K-T Industries. She and her sons continued the business after he died in 1979. She is survived by her second husband, Gene, as well as four children and a sister.

Gary Meyer '73, Morrison, Illinois, died March 15 at the age of 70. After Northwestern, he attended Western Illinois University. He was a stock trader and worked for many years at Iowa Beef Processors. He was a member of Emmanuel

Reformed Church. Among his survivors are his wife, Dawn; three children; his mother; and four siblings, including **Brenda '76** and **Calvin '81**.

Roy Beukelman '75 of The Villages, Florida, died Jan. 10 at the age of 67. He taught in Onawa and Sheldon, Iowa, before working for the Production Credit Association in Storm Lake. He then was a loan officer with the Farm Credit Association of America for more than 38 years. Survivors include his wife, Bonnie; a daughter; and three siblings, including **Maryanne Ward '61** and **Fran '72**.

Lois (Litka '76) Postma Gruis, age 93, died Jan. 21 in Worthington, Minnesota. She taught music in Sioux City, Le Mars and Sibley, Iowa, and gave more than 100 private piano, organ and voice lessons a week for many years. She was organist at the United Methodist Church in Sheldon, where she also directed the handbell choir. She is survived by two children.

Lori (Goldhorn '79) Ovington, 63, died Jan. 6 in Apache Junction, Arizona. She



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taught special education in West Point, Nebraska, for many years. Among her survivors are her husband, John, and a sister, **Sheri Vander Veen '81**.

Kevin Schott '81, age 62, died March 30 in Fairbanks, Alaska. He earned a master's degree in administration from the University of Wyoming and was a teacher, coach, principal and superintendent at schools in Colorado. He served as president of the Colorado Association of Secondary Education for several years. Most recently, he was principal and athletic director at a high school in Galena, Alaska. Survivors include his wife, Teresa; two daughters; his mother; and three siblings.

Glenn Bruxvoort '84 of College Station, Texas, died of cancer April 8 at the age of 60. He earned a master's degree from the University of Texas and was a social worker. He is survived by his wife, Melanie, as well as three children, three stepchildren and his father.

Clark Voge '88 died April 29 in Cherokee, Iowa. He served in the Army for 22 years. He worked more than 30 years at the Hy-Vee Distribution Center and enjoyed umpiring Little League baseball games and coaching youth baseball and wrestling. Among his survivors are his wife, Dawn; six children; and a brother.

Dr. Brian Matheis '98, age 45, died in Lakeville, Minnesota, on Jan. 7 following a five-year battle with lung cancer. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees at Iowa State University, where he also completed a doctorate in aerospace engineering. A technical fellow at Collins Aerospace for more than 16 years, he was internationally recognized as an expert in aircraft icing. He was instrumental in the design and development of the Advanced Icing Wind Tunnel, one of three in the world. Survivors include his wife, **Jill (Miller) '98**; three children; his mother; and three siblings.

Zachary Einerwold '00, age 43, of Alta, Iowa, died Dec. 25 in Storm Lake after a long battle with Huntington's disease. He attended Des Moines Area Community College and worked as a carpenter in Ankeny and Spencer, Iowa. He is survived by his mother; stepfather; brother, **David '92**; and stepbrother.

Chuck Hackett '03 died of cancer Dec. 26 in Kingsley, Iowa, at the age of 57. He completed his teaching degree at Northwestern after earning a bachelor's in wildlife biology at Iowa State University. A taxidermist for several years, he taught science at River Valley Community School and, for the last 16 years, at Kingsley-Pierson Community School. Survivors include his wife, Kristine; two children; and five siblings.

Charity (Miles '11) DeLawyer of Valentine, Nebraska, died April 18 at the age of 32 as the result of a UTV accident. An All-American in cross country and track, she was inducted into Northwestern's Athletic Hall of Fame in 2017. She was a nurse in the oncology department at Cherry County Hospital and a member of Valentine Berean Bible Church. She is survived by her husband, Steven; two sons; her parents; and a brother.

Stephen Dykstra '16 of Des Moines died May 3 at the age of 28. Since graduating from Northwestern, he worked for nonprofit organizations benefiting Iowa children and families, including the last three years as communication associate for Common Good Iowa. Among his survivors are his parents and three siblings, including **Leah Nonnemacher '13**.

LET US KNOW: Email your news for the next *Classic* by Aug. 25 to classic@nwciova.edu.



Labor and delivery nurse Cherish Shuka served grieving parents by taking photos of still-born babies when COVID-19 restrictions resulted in the discontinuation of her hospital's photography service.

A Picture of Love

A labor and delivery nurse in Ames, Iowa, Cherish (Henry '19) Shuka bonds with her patients over the miraculous experience of childbirth.

As a professional photographer, she's bedside for their most challenging times, too.

On a night shift when Shuka had brought her camera to photograph a coworker in labor, a stillbirth occurred on her unit. COVID-19 restrictions prevented the hospital's photography service from capturing the grieving family's final moments with their child—so Shuka stepped in.

"Some families have had weeks to prepare for this; some don't get to process things until the baby has been delivered," Shuka says. "It's special that I'm also a nurse, and I understand what they're going to go through physically. I'm there to do exactly what they need."

Shuka continues to provide remembrance photography free of charge to families who have lost a child, including two of her own patients. Reflecting on the nursing program at Northwestern, she's grateful that professors emphasized the personal and emotional aspects of real-world scenarios, rather than a sole focus on physical needs.

"We were challenged to think about how to take our personal gifts into those circumstances," Shuka says. "I felt very prepared to walk through these very low moments and to be vulnerable."

BY AMY PHILLIPS

Classic Thoughts

Dream Catcher

BY VALLEN COOK '13



“Bozhoo.” Hello. I grew up on the Grand Portage Reservation in northern Minnesota. I am a member of the Grand Portage Band of Chippewa/Ojibwe. The name for *Grand Portage* in Ojibwe is *Gitchi Oningaming*, or “the great gathering place” in English. My mother’s family is from Grand Portage, and my father’s family is Sioux from South Dakota.

On the reservation, I know everyone and am most likely related to them. I had a similar feeling when I was a student at Northwestern, where if you didn’t know a person directly, you knew of them. Northwestern helped me come out of my shell and not be afraid to step out of my comfort zone. I am a quiet and introverted person by nature; Northwestern allowed me to open up and learn in a more relaxed environment.

When I moved into the dorms, I was a rez kid from way up north going through culture shock. But within the first two months, I had a group of great friends I could talk to. In my culture, we put people first and our task second. Northwestern let me foster that and in turn made me more confident when talking to people and more able to relate to them. Going to Northwestern pushed my boundaries in more ways than I could have imagined and allowed me to grow as an individual.

As part of my college education, I studied in Romania. That experience was unique and enjoyable. Culture shock didn’t last as long as I had expected due to my previous experience moving from the reservation to Northwestern’s campus. Being in Romania exposed me to a beautiful culture, language and geography. Romania’s diverse history is incredible, and I drew parallels with Native American history in the United States. The food was terrific and memorable; eastern European food is super diverse yet so good. I was with an excellent group of students, and some even became lifelong friends.

I graduated with a bachelor’s degree in youth ministry and cultural studies. Since then, I have been living in Grand Portage, serving as an associate pastor at the church I grew up in: Mt. Rose Community Church. In 2015 I graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with a master’s degree in tribal administration and governance and started my current

job as the air quality specialist for the Grand Portage Tribe. In 2020 I started a Ph.D. program focusing on leadership in intercultural and international education through the University of Minnesota’s Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development.

Since I was at Northwestern, my goal has always been to serve my community. My dream has been

“I want every Native American young person to reach their potential and flourish.”

refined a bit since graduating, but the core is still the same. I want every Native American young person to reach their potential and flourish.

This idea will be the basis of my Ph.D. research. I would like to study how Native American/First Nations students within the Great Lakes area of

the United States and Canada understand schooling.

Long term, I would like to help more Native American students get to the next stage toward their dreams after high school. I want to encourage and connect them with people already in an area they are interested in pursuing, through both formal and informal education. To see Native American students realize their dreams—as I have done with mine—is my ultimate goal.

Vallen Cook is an environmentalist and youth worker for the Grand Portage Band of Chippewa in northern Minnesota. He also volunteers at an indigenous youth center in Thunder Bay, Ontario, while pursuing a doctorate in leadership at the University of Minnesota.



Leave a Legacy

John and Jane Greller weren't major financial donors during their lifetimes. But they planned well, making provisions in their estate to support the organizations they loved, including Northwestern. Because they named the college as the beneficiary of a retirement account, they were able to give a significant gift to establish scholarships for future NWC students.

How about you? Let us know if you've remembered Northwestern in your estate plans—or would like to take that step.

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"Bear" and "Janeo" Greller were beloved members of Northwestern's community for 17 years. He served as the college's vice president for advancement, and she managed the theatre costume shop. John died in February 2019; Janeo, in October of 2020.



Perfect Genes?

Ali Almail '21 is probably not the first genetics major and Christ follower to wonder about Jesus' genetic composition. But Almail also majored in art, and he used his creative talents to explore that question.

The result—a six-panel metal installation hanging in the northeast lobby of the DeWitt Family Science Center—features a famous 16th century painting of Christ suffering as he carried the cross.

Almail produced the image using the nitrogenous bases that code for genes corresponding to cancer, diabetes and Huntington's disease, all common in the Middle East.

"Jesus had a genome, possibly 50% from Mary and 50% from God," says Almail, who will start medical school at the University of Toronto this fall. "Was his genome perfect? Did he possess genes that might have predisposed him to certain diseases, allowing him to share in human suffering at the genomic level?"