



SPRING 2012

Northwestern College Magazine

the Classic

Following Jesus

Christians debate the best way to be the church and reach our world

Also

Republican Power Broker Bob Vander Plaats
The Wedding Gift
Three-peat

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Mel Babcock, Val Kleinjan and Jessica Wedel (from left) celebrate the Raiders' third consecutive national title—and fifth overall.



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Classic People

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The *Classic* is published three times a year—in April, July and November—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:

Followers of Jesus don't always see eye-to-eye on how best to live out their faith.



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Zwemer View

Above All

Five years ago, as a candidate for Northwestern's presidency, one of the first documents I became familiar with was the *Vision for Learning*, which articulates the four goals we have for graduates of NWC. We want them to:

1. Trust, love and worship God
2. Engage ideas
3. Connect knowledge and experience
4. Respond to God's call

I still remember being struck by the fact that the first goal listed was for our graduates to trust, love and worship God. That spoke volumes to me about Northwestern's values. Few institutions of higher education share this value, much less articulate it so prominently.

It is one thing to make this claim, but another to deliver on such a promise. Yet the fulfillment of this goal is something I witness consistently in the lives of our students and alumni. Each time I return to Orange City from visiting alumni around the U.S., I am reminded again that our graduates trust, love and worship God.

The culture that has been created over many decades at Northwestern nurtures this value. We are blessed to have dedicated faculty and staff who share this commitment. They take very seriously their responsibility to teach our students about its importance, but they also model it in the classroom, across campus, and in their churches and communities.

There are many things that make Northwestern graduates stand out from the crowd, but perhaps none is as distinctive as their understanding of all of life as worship. This worldview is what compels them to be lifelong learners and Christ followers. It spurs them to pursue excellence in their professional and personal lives—because excellence offered out of faith and love for God is worshipful.

We want our graduates prepared to contribute to society through meaningful work, but above all, we want them to know that abundant life flows out of a love relationship with Jesus. As the Gospel of Mark says, "What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?"

May the Lord's amazing grace continue to be with our community as together we seek to grow deeper in our trust, love and worship of God.



Greg Christy
President

around the Green

Passing Grade

With the national pass rate for actuarial exams at below 50 percent, what's the probability that the four Northwestern students who took exams last year would pass every one?

Seniors Kristen Humphrey, Abby Korthals and Jacob Vander Ploeg and junior Nathan Nieuwendorp undoubtedly could come up with the answer. They each have passed two of the exams—probability and financial mathematics—that are required before they can begin practicing as actuaries. The 2011 national pass rates were 42 percent on the probability exam and 49 percent on financial mathematics.

Northwestern is one of just 84 colleges or universities nationwide with an "advanced undergraduate" actuarial science classification from the Society of Actuaries.

The career placement rate of Northwestern's actuarial science graduates is consistently near 100 percent. Actuarial alumni are working in firms across the U.S., including at Modern Woodmen of America in Omaha, Principal Financial Services in Des Moines and The Segal Company in Chicago.



Fifteen Japanese high school seniors developed relationships with Northwestern students while studying English and American culture in January.

Warm Winter Welcome

Fifteen seniors from Meiji Gakuin Higashimurayama High School in Tokyo spent two weeks on campus in January, enhancing their English skills and learning about life in the U.S. Accompanied by their English instructor, Norimichi Odate '80, the students took classes in oral English and American culture four hours a day, with an additional three hours of tutoring by Northwestern students.

"The students are still talking about their experience and would love to come back," says Odate. "The staff and students at Northwestern welcomed us so warmly. The tutors were patient and a great help, not just in studying but also in adjusting to and understanding American life."

The boys stayed with area families while the girls roomed with NWC students in Hoppers Hall. Assignments to interview Northwestern students during mealtimes helped the visitors hone their English skills

and develop relationships. Exposure to life in the Midwest included a weekend trip to Minneapolis.

Among the English Training Camp's staff were Kathy Gabel '89 and Kristyn Howe '90, daughters of the late Dr. Lyle VanderWerff '54, longtime religion professor and director of international programs who established many sister-school relationships with Asian colleges and coordinated Northwestern's Summer Institute for International Students.

Odate credits VanderWerff for encouraging him to go on to seminary and helping to instill within him a passion for reaching others for Christ. "It is so amazing to see how things work in God's plan," says Odate, about returning to campus with Japanese high school students decades after his own NWC experience.

Officials hope to continue the English training camp in the future.

in Box

Impressed

Twice this year, I have been impressed with the *Classic*. Feature articles on "The Crescent and the Cross" (Summer 2011) helped me with a 9/11 sermon on reaching out to Muslim people around us. We have a large mosque a block away in Union City, N.J. The photography in that issue was so helpful, I shared it with the whole congregation at Grove Reformed.

[The article on] DNA and genetic research (Spring 2011) was informative and courageous—and helpful for my tech people and young adults.

Enclosed is a donation to say keep up your commitment to build a spiritual dimension in your student education and action projects—and in what you continue offering in the *Classic*.

Rev. Mel Van Hattem
Wanaque, N.J.

WE LOVE GETTING MAIL

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Hearts of Service

Northwestern has sent a Spring Service Project team to Bluefields, Nicaragua, since 2003. This year students also traveled to the Netherlands, Haiti and 10 U.S. sites, where they loved others by serving them in Jesus' name.

More than 200 Northwestern students, faculty and staff spent their spring break putting love into action.

This year's Spring Service Projects March 3–12 included three international sites—in Nicaragua, the Netherlands and Haiti—and 10 U.S. destinations. Of those, two were new to the SSP program. Northwestern partnered with one of its alumni, Kristie (De Boer '95) Mompremier, who with her Haitian husband, JeanJean, established United Christians International in Haiti's central plateau. Also for the first time, a team traveled to Jacksonville, Fla., to work with 2nd Mile Ministries, a Christian community development organization.

Other states that were SSP destinations included Texas, Minnesota, South Carolina, Louisiana, Mississippi and Arkansas. There teams helped

with construction projects, led vacation Bible school, interacted with ex-prisoners, taught English to refugees, partnered with a Native American church, served at a homeless shelter, learned about racial reconciliation, worked in a health clinic, and tutored inner-city youth.

Advisers for this year's Spring Service Projects included six Northwestern alumni: Rebecca (James '07) Alsum, Karla Arevalo '10, Lanet Hane '10, Carrie (Carlson '95) Krohn and Janelle (de Waard '11) Silva, all of whom work at NWC; and Crystal Clark '02, who volunteered to advise the nursing students who worked at the health clinic.

Summer School in Cyberspace

This summer, while Northwestern students bag groceries, deliver pizzas and teach swimming lessons, a quarter of them may also be taking one or more of 24 online classes offered by NWC.

Rebecca Hoey, director of online learning, has been encouraging and enabling Northwestern professors to offer courses online in order to give students who value NWC's relational and faith-based education an alternative to the online courses they're taking through other institutions.

During the past five summers, Northwestern students have taken

more than 1,400 courses at other institutions, the majority of them online.

"It's understandable that our students take advantage of the flexibility of online courses," says Hoey, who adds that in this economy, some students are eager to graduate early and begin their careers.

By offering online classes, Northwestern can ensure they meet the college's rigorous standards and contribute to—rather than detract from—the community built among its students.

"Northwestern is committed

to offering courses and eventually whole programs online because the college's mission and high-quality education is not only for students who live on campus," Hoey says. "It can also be for alumni who want to further their education and students for whom a residential experience is not feasible."

The summer 2012 courses, listed at www.nwciowa.edu/online-learning, include those that lead to teaching and coaching endorsements for working teachers, as well as classes that meet general education requirements—including introductory literature, psychology,

theology and science courses.

Registration for summer courses is open to anyone, including alumni, high school students, or others seeking professional or personal development classes. More information is available on Northwestern's website or by contacting Hoey, 712-707-7388 or online@nwciowa.edu.



DAN ROSS

Travel Notes

Northwestern's A cappella Choir performed throughout the Midwest during a spring break tour March 2–12. The 43-member ensemble presented a dozen concerts in churches, high schools and a care center in Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Among the sites the choir visited were churches pastored by alumni, including Clint Hogrefe '97, Meriden, Iowa; Jason Blaha '09, McBain, Mich.; Todd Schmidt '95, Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Gerry Norman '87, Morrison, Ill. They also performed at Sheboygan Falls High School in Wisconsin, where Derek Beekhuizen '02 is a music teacher.

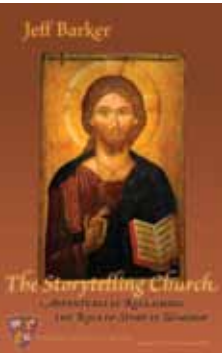
March 30 through April 1, the Symphonic Band performed an abbreviated tour in Sioux Falls and Mitchell, S.D.

The A cappella Choir presented a wide variety of music on their spring tour, including spirituals, settings of two children's poems written in a World War II prison camp, animal songs and pieces from Eastern Europe.

Book Ends

Biblical Storytelling

Theatre professor Jeff Barker is the author of *The Storytelling Church: Adventures in Reclaiming the Role of Story in Worship*, which is the inaugural publication of Webber Institute Books, in association with Parson’s Porch Books.



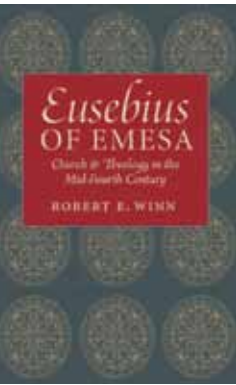
An experienced worship leader, Barker says among the challenges the church faces are these three: first, effective telling of God’s story, revealed in the Bible; second, reclaiming the story of Christianity today, manifest through God’s work in our lives and communities; and third, giving a story structure to worship services.

“In worship, we mostly just read Scripture,” says Barker, who believes the story of salvation is enriched through biblical storytelling as well as embodying the music and movement often referred to in Scripture.

In addition, Barker believes worship should include the stories of congregants. “How can we really know each other—grieve together and rejoice together—if we don’t know each other’s stories?”

Bishop’s Voice

The concerns of a fourth-century bishop are brought to light in a new book written by Dr. Robert Winn, history. *Eusebius of Emesa: Church and Theology in the Mid-Fourth Century* has been published by The Catholic University of America Press.



“The Roman Empire was becoming more Christian, but Christianity wasn’t yet the official state religion,” says Winn. “Eusebius was staking out a religious identity for Christians, addressing issues of what they should believe and how they should live at a time in which they were wondering how much of the existing culture they should participate in.”

In Winn’s analysis of Eusebius’ sermons, which survive in Latin and Armenian, he discovered four prominent theological concerns: the natural world and human nature, the nature of God, the divinity and humanity of

Christ, and asceticism and the church.

Winn will focus on translating some of Eusebius’ sermons from Latin into English while on sabbatical next year.

Higher Math

Mathematics professor Dr. Kim Jongerius is among 10 members of the Association of Christians in the Mathematical Sciences (ACMS) who contributed to a new book, *Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith*.



Published by HarperOne and co-sponsored by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, the book invites readers to consider the rich intersection of mathematics and Christian belief. The authors examine both secular scholarship and theology as they explore issues such as the relationship between chance and divine providence and whether or not mathematical concepts point to a higher reality.

Jongerius, who is currently serving as president of ACMS, co-authored three of the chapters: “Infinity,”

“Dimension,” and “Proof and Truth.” The volume was edited by Calvin College’s Dr. James Bradley and Westmont College’s Dr. Russell Howell.

Was it inevitable?

Known you’d be a Raider since your mom warmed your bald little head with red?

Everyone’s road to NWC is different. Tell us how you wound up at Northwestern for a future story in the *Classic*.

classic@nwciowa.edu • 712-707-7116



Best in the Class

What colleges have the best professors? According to a story on cbsnews.com, Northwestern College is among them.

In a ranking of “25 Colleges With the Best Professors,” CBS listed NWC 11th—ahead of every Ivy League school and all state universities. The ranking was based on data compiled by *Forbes* magazine using the website RateMyProfessors.com.

The list is heavily represented by liberal arts colleges, with Oklahoma Wesleyan University ranked No. 1, followed by the Air Force Academy and the Military Academy.

Northwestern ranked 11th on a list of colleges with the best professors as reported by CBS News.

Iowa to Ethiopia

The first time it happened, the actors were a little startled: Before the end of the play, a standing ovation.

Again and again during their 13 performances in Addis Ababa, students and alumni in Northwestern’s Drama Ministries Ensemble (DME) paused their performance as Ethiopian audience members leapt to their feet to clap and cheer when the character Arlene proclaimed, “... the Lion of Judah ... the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords ... His name is Jesus.”

The actors, along with DME director Jeff Barker and Arlene Schuiteman, former missionary to Africa, toured in Ethiopia Dec. 26 through Jan. 6, performing *Iowa Ethiopia*, a play Barker wrote about Schuiteman, a nurse missionary to Ethiopia in the 1970s.

In the play, Schuiteman—who celebrated her 88th birthday during the tour—reflects on the spiritual revival that swept through Ethiopia

during her years there—a revival that touched her personally and resulted in some surprising gifts of the Holy Spirit in her life.

In addition to sharing Schuiteman’s story, the drama also tells the story of Judaism and Christianity in Ethiopia, from the Queen of Sheba—who visited Solomon and is rumored to have borne his son—to the Ark of the Covenant, which many, including Schuiteman, believe rests in Ethiopia today.

“It was so different to perform the play there,” says sophomore Jackson Nickolay. “In the U.S., it’s a story of a missionary who dedicated her life to God. But in Ethiopia, it became a retelling of the history of the country and its evangelical movement. You could feel the difference in the audience as we talked about events—like the Red Terror genocide—they actually lived through.”



Of Course

Beautiful Minds

Class

Topics in the History of Mathematics

Instructor

Dr. Kim Jongerius
Professor of Mathematics

The Pythagorean theorem is taught in countless classrooms around the globe, but rarely do classes take time to learn about the man behind the math.

“Generally, mathematics is presented like, ‘Here’s the rule, learn it,’ and you never really realize there are people who worked a long time and struggled to come up with these things,” says Dr. Kim Jongerius.

Students enrolled in Topics in the History of Mathematics get much more than just a brief biography of the great mathematical minds from centuries past. Jongerius delves into the historical context of their surroundings and the factors that may have influenced their work. More often than not, mathematicians were influenced by theology.

“Prof. Jongerius taught us that many mathematicians throughout history were doing math to try to learn more about the world and the Bible. They wanted to further God’s kingdom,” explains senior Mark Haselhoff.

Students also experience firsthand the difficulties of communicating complex mathematical discoveries in an age of painstaking communication. Jongerius assigns collaborative projects in which two students must work together to solve a problem, but can only communicate through handwritten letters and documents. “The really bright mathematical minds didn’t tend to congregate in the same place,” Jongerius explains. Letters were written back and forth, and the few published books were often circulated very slowly.

But when it comes to the purpose of this course, Jongerius wants it to resonate as more than just a history lesson. “I hope students learn that math isn’t a set of rules that someone came up with once ... that it developed and it continues to develop.”

Texts and Assignments

- *Journey Through Genius: The Great Theorems of Mathematics* by William Dunham
- *Mathematics Through the Eyes of Faith* by James Bradley and Russell Howell
- *e: The Story of a Number* by Eli Maor
- *Zero: The Biography of a Dangerous Idea* by Charles Seife

In addition to reading assignments, students must also keep a journal of reflections on their reading. The first entry is written prior to class and serves as a springboard for class discussions; a second entry is written after class and takes into account differing perspectives raised by peers.

Bravo!

A Northwestern student and alumnus received Certificates of Merit for technical design and theatre management at the Region V Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, held at Iowa State University Jan. 16–20.

Kory Jensen ’11 received a certificate for his lighting design for *Baghdad Tales*, adapted from *Arabian Nights* and performed last spring. Jensen, an education major, is a teacher in Aurora, Colo.

Sophomore Laura Jonker, Brandon, Wis., led the front-of-house team for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* that also received recognition. The front-of-house team included the box office staff, house manager, ushers and dramaturgy students who created educational displays about the historical context of the play, which was presented to audiences of schoolchildren throughout October.

Watt Success

Since Northwestern and Dordt have a heated rivalry, it was probably appropriate that their December basketball game on campus was the site of a presentation related to heating and cooling efficiency. During halftime, Orange City Municipal Utilities representatives presented a \$32,618 rebate check to Northwestern in recognition of the college’s installation of the latest energy-efficient equipment in North Suites Hall last summer.

Through the energy-conservation efforts in the new men’s dorm and upgraded lighting in other campus buildings, NWC saved almost 457,000 kilowatt-hours of energy last year—enough energy to power approximately 42 homes for one year.

Learning’s a Trip

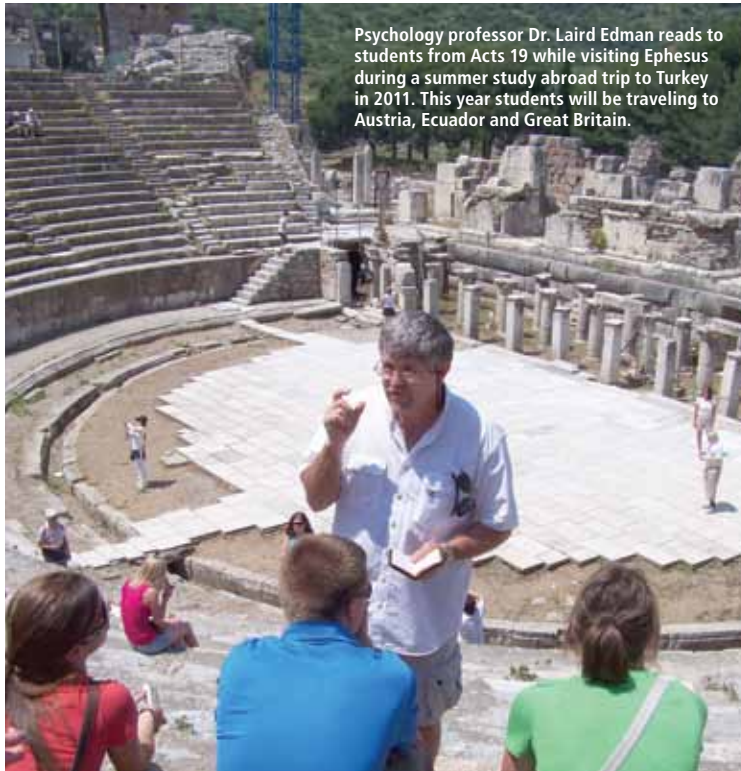
One new program is among the three summer study abroad opportunities available to Northwestern students in 2012.

After a sabbatical in Vienna, music professor Dr. Juyeon Kang will be joined by fellow music professor Dr. Luke Dahn in leading a trip to Austria that focuses on that country’s musical history and culture. Students will stay with host families and attend concerts and visit museums in Vienna, Salzburg and Prague.

Spanish professor Rick Clark is once again taking students to Ecuador, the country he grew up in as the son of missionaries. Students will learn about Ecuadorian

society and culture, study Spanish, live with host families for three weeks in Quito, and worship with Christian members of the Huarani tribe in the Amazon jungle.

Finally, a summer study abroad program in Great Britain will examine British culture through art and theatre. Led by theatre professors Bob Hubbard and Jeff Taylor, students will attend theatre productions, visit museums, and explore England’s many cathedrals, markets, parks and squares.



Psychology professor Dr. Laird Edman reads to students from Acts 19 while visiting Ephesus during a summer study abroad trip to Turkey in 2011. This year students will be traveling to Austria, Ecuador and Great Britain.

Sold!

Northwestern’s 29th annual Gala Auction, which was held both on campus and online, raised \$33,000 in February. Around 600 college supporters attended the campus event and submitted bids on more than 400 items.

Items that secured generous bids included an NWC T-shirt quilt, Bultman Center reserved parking spot, and “Tremendous Tailgate Party,” offered by Sodexo, the college’s food service provider. A Kindle Fire was among the items sold online via charity auction website eBid.

Auction proceeds are added to the endowed Alumni Scholarship, which will fund \$1,000 scholarships for more than 50 students next year.



John Vander Stelt ’83 drives the bidding up at the Gala Auction.

ANITA CIRIUS

Learning by Story

In a classroom filled with NWC peers and professors, Ignacio Reatiga-Higuera, Storm Lake, Iowa, shared how, as an eight-year-old, he hid in a field with his mother, brother and sister. When it got dark, his mother told them to run, so they did—across the border from Mexico into the U.S., where Ignacio's farm-worker father was waiting, having received amnesty during the Reagan administration.

The sophomore, now a citizen, was one of many who shared his story during Northwestern's fifth annual Day of Learning in Community (DLC) Feb. 15. Themed "Different Together," the event featured more than 40 presentations offered by students, faculty, staff and alumni, aimed to enable members of the campus community to teach each other through stories of ignoring and exploring difference.

Among the more than 70 students who became DLC teachers was Shweta Baniya, a freshman. She can't stop turning off lights, she told a Christ Chapel audience as she explained ways in which she sometimes feels out of place. Baniya is from Nepal,

where she and her family can expect electricity about eight hours a day, so she feels odd living in a place where dorm hallways and campus side-walks remain lit around the clock.

Across campus, senior athletes Chris Butler and Matt Negaard led a packed classroom of sports fans in a discussion of race and religion in professional athletics. "Would Tim Tebow be as popular if he were black or a devout Muslim?" they asked, prompting conversations about stereotypes and prejudice that spilled into the hallway.

Taking a break from regular classes and activities, members of the Northwestern community met disability advocate Heather (Harrison '88) Northrop and her assistance dog, Zephyr. They heard stories about adoption, bullying and interracial dating. They discussed affirmative action and politics, Ebonics (African American Vernacular English) and why students are told to "write white" on college essays and term papers.

They sought to educate each other about avoiding what Nigerian author Chimamanda Adichie, speaking in the day's opening film, calls "the danger of a single story."



Among the more than 40 sessions at Northwestern's Day of Learning in Community was a "This I Believe" writing workshop, modeled after the popular NPR feature and led by Kim Van Es' writing students.



In the Event of an Emergency

Northwestern's campus-wide security notification system, NWC Alert, now can reach students, faculty and staff by text, email and voice-mail in just minutes during an urgent situation. The college has installed the Blackboard Connect multi-modal platform, which replaces a desktop notification system that had been installed on campus computers over the last few years.

"Blackboard Connect is a great addition to our emergency preparedness and communications plan," says Blake Wieking, director of safety and security. "It enables us to keep students and employees informed and connected should an emergency arise, whether they are on campus, at home or en route. It's a powerful tool to communicate quickly and efficiently."

Developed for academic and government institutions, Blackboard Connect currently sends 40 million time-sensitive calls per month for clients across the country.

Face Value

Karen Vander Pol

Raider Rooter

You are originally from a small town in Illinois. What brought you to Iowa?

Northwestern College. At the time, several people from my home church had attended Northwestern and told me good things about the college. I really didn't look into other colleges, and I believe God was directing me to be a student in the secretarial program.

What three words would you use to describe Northwestern?

Christ-centered, friendly and challenging.

What do you appreciate about the campus community?

The opportunities that are available for students to participate in service projects and study abroad, and the friendships I have made with co-workers and students.

What was your dream job growing up?

My mom started her career as a secretary. I enjoyed going to her office from time to time, which made me want to be a secretary. I might have thought about being a nurse at one time, but not for long.

What do you admire most about NWC athletes?

They are very respectful. It's not just on Northwestern's campus. From comments we receive, we know they also represent Northwestern very well when they travel.

What about the coaches?

They genuinely care and invest a lot of time into their athletes. Our coaches are not just concerned with how students do athletically, but how they mature into men and women and grow in their faith.

What are your favorite sports teams?

I really enjoy watching the Red Raiders, Chicago Bears and Chicago Cubs.



DOUG BURR

Karen (Sikma '75) Vander Pol joined Northwestern's staff in 1988 as the secretary in the Career Development Center. She has been the athletic department assistant since 1997.

What professional athletes do you admire?

Tim Tebow is my current favorite, because he's so open about his faith. I also like to follow Michael Oher because I loved the movie *The Blind Side*, and Kyle Korver of the Chicago Bulls because he's a Reformed Church and Iowa boy and a nephew of Kris Korver '92 [Northwestern's men's basketball coach].

What is your favorite Northwestern memory?

If I had to pick just one I'd say the women's and men's basketball teams both winning their national tournaments in 2001.

What's been one of the most exciting Raider moments you've witnessed?

When Jon Kramer put up a last-second three-point shot to beat Dordt last year. That was so awesome!

Who inspires you?

I work with a lot of inspiring people, but I really love it when Coach Larry Korver stops by and shares some words of wisdom with me.



Award-Winning Marketing

Two more certificates adorn the walls in Northwestern's public relations offices after the college won awards in the 2011 Council for Advancement and Support of Education District Six competition in January.

A series of new recruiting publications won a silver award. The publications included a viewbook, search piece and college fair piece developed by NWC in partnership with Stamats Communications of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, last summer. The series also included postcards, posters, and brochures for academics, athletics, campus life, faith, financial aid, the fine arts and graduate success, produced by the public relations office with assistance from freelance designers.

Northwestern's mobile site, m.nwciowa.edu, received a bronze award. Launched last summer under the leadership of Web Development Manager Dan Robinson '01, the site enables constituents to access the latest Northwestern news and sports scores, event calendars, a campus directory, facility hours, directions to campus and much more via smartphones.

Recommended

A sort of honor roll for academic departments, the 2012 edition of *Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges* lists 18 Northwestern programs as being among the nation's best. Most schools in the guidebook have around nine departments cited.

The annual publication recommends Northwestern's actuarial science, athletic training, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, ecological science, education, English, history, music, philosophy, physics, psychology, religion, social work, Spanish and theatre programs.

Written by Frederick Rugg, a Brown University graduate who directed secondary college counseling programs for 20 years and conducted college seminars around the country for 23 years, the book includes programs at 1,125 four-year colleges he has identified as providing a high-quality education.



Chemistry is among 18 Northwestern programs listed in the latest edition of *Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges*.

STEPHEN ALLEN

Door Man

BY AMY SCHEER

Freshman Paul McCleary heads to Northwestern's cafeteria a half hour before he'd like to have a meal. He holds open the door, greets those who pass, eats and then opens the door again as diners file out.

Every day, nearly every meal, McCleary is there. And he's also often at the doors of Christ Chapel and the Rowenhorst Student Center, continuing a habit he started in his Ankeny, Iowa, high school. To him, the hundreds of hellos said daily are his doorway to authentic Christianity.

"If we want to be like Jesus, we need to be humble and not think so highly of ourselves," McCleary says. "What really shows you care is being willing to do little things."

Reactions to McCleary's quiet servanthood include surprise, appreciation and—more often than not—the question, "How long do you stand here?"

When a certain six-foot student approaches, McCleary steps aside and lets him open his own door. It's a joke between the two, who might not otherwise have shared a laugh had McCleary not taken his post.


Door opening has, quite literally, opened the door to relationships on campus for this soft-spoken student. People are more willing to talk, he finds, especially to someone who's not in any hurry. Impatience had been an early hurdle, but now he sees his time manning doors as meditative.

"It's kind of nice to not worry about anything for awhile and just talk to people as they pass," McCleary says. "I let them know I hope their day goes alright."

As McCleary pursues a sociology major with a criminal justice concentration, he believes his profession will line up with this same desire to meet people where they are.

"When I was a kid, I thought it would be cool to be a police officer and have adventures," McCleary says. "Now that I'm here at college, I've been hearing about social change, how we need to do those things as Christians. Being a police officer seems like a way to get out there and be with people and figure out ways to address these issues."

For now, opening doors is McCleary's way of working toward the public good. He's a believer in small kindnesses done regularly.

"It's good to find something you can consistently do that helps people," McCleary says. "It doesn't have to be very big—I'm just doing this—but be consistent, every day, every week. Just get it into your routine. What I do is not really a random act of kindness. It's more of a routine act of kindness." 

DOUG BURG



Three-peat!

Women's basketball team claims third straight national title

When Northwestern's women's basketball team started off this season with a 4-4 record, at least one person questioned what new head coach Chris Yaw '92 was doing. Yaw himself.

"I was wondering if the right guy was running the ship," says Yaw. "Are we guiding the ship in the right direction? Are we even in the right ocean?"

Yaw, the top assistant under Hall of Fame coach Earl Woudstra '78 for the last seven years, says he had tons of questions. After much time in prayer and visiting with

coaches and friends, he decided the team just needed to stay on course and keep trusting each other.

About a month later, after a win at perennially tough Hastings College, Yaw felt the Raiders' perseverance and hard work were paying off. "I could see in their play and how they interacted that they were gelling and growing. I thought it could be a pretty special group."

Led by All-Americans Kendra De Jong and Kami Kuhlmann, the Raiders won all but two of the rest of their regular-season games. They were ranked eighth nation-

ally as they made the familiar trek to Sioux City's Tyson Events Center—where they had won two straight national championships and three of the last four—for the NAIA Div. II national tournament in March.

"We came into the tournament wanting to play as one person," says De Jong. With every player elevating her game, the Raiders were able to do just that. Northwestern romped through their first two contests with wins of 20 or more points and edged top-ranked Indiana Wesleyan by five in the quarterfinals. The Raiders' rebounding and defensive efforts stood out, as NWC grabbed nearly 13 more rebounds per game and held their opponents to 28 percent shooting from the field.

During a team Bible study the night before their semifinal-round game, the players took time to say what they appreciated about each other. "That was one of the coolest things I've ever been part of," says Kuhlmann. "I felt like there was no pressure anymore after that. I didn't feel like we had to win; I just wanted to go out and play with my teammates.

I didn't want this to be over."

By the time Kuhlmann's college career had ended, she had earned her third consecutive national championship. And there was no question the Raider ship was sailing smoothly.



Champs!

- Kami Kuhlmann was named MVP of the national tournament. Kendra De Jong, who had a double-double in every national tournament game, also made the all-tourney team.
- De Jong, the GPAC player of the year, was named a first-team All-American for the second year in a row, and Kuhlmann earned second-team honors.
- Chris Yaw was named the national coach of the year.



Kami Kuhlmann averaged 22 points, 5 rebounds, 3 assists and 2 steals at the national tournament, earning MVP honors.

Red Zone

Men's Basketball GPAC Champs

The Raiders beat Dordt by 25 points in Sioux Center to capture the GPAC tournament championship for the first time since 2008 and give Coach Kris Korver his 300th career win. Northwestern advanced to the second round of the national tournament before ending with a 26-7 record and a ninth place national ranking. Ben Miller earned All-American third team status and Daniel Van Kalsbeek was named to the Capital One Academic All-America College Division second team.

Wrestling Three-Time All-American

Nic Leither became an All-American for the third year after placing fifth at the national meet at 197 pounds. He was among a school-record 10 national qualifiers. Josiah Simburger, at 141, received national wrestler of the week recognition in January after winning the York Open and defeating a University of Nebraska wrestler. Simburger and Zach Fishman, at 149, earned first-team all-conference honors. Leither and Matt Dowell, at 141, were named to the second team.

Indoor Track Soaring

Matt Huseman won the high jump at nationals, setting a school record with a 6-11.75 effort. He becomes only the third Raider in school history to win an individual title, joining Fernando Abugattus '68 and Jacob Koczman '01. Joining him as All-Americans were the seventh-place 4x800

relay team of Teresa Kerkvliet, Brianna Hobbs, Sara Edwardson and Dawn Gildersleeve; Krystina Bouchard, who placed eighth in the 600-meter run; Gildersleeve, who was sixth in the 1000-meter run; and Logan Hovland, seventh in the 1000. Huseman also won the high jump at the GPAC meet. The men placed sixth and the women were seventh.

Scholar-Athletes Standouts

Thirty Raiders in fall and winter sports earned NAIA Scholar-Athlete recognition, including nine in football and eight in cross country. Repeat honorees included Matt Dowell (wrestling); Teresa Kerkvliet, Kylie Underwood, Adam Verhoef and Allison Weeldreyer (cross country); Val Kleinjan, Kami Kuhlmann and Walker Seim (basketball); and Jeremy Sheppard (football).

Red Raider Club In the Hall

Austin Janssen '07 (football) and Trygve Johnson '96 (baseball) were inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame in February.

Cory Brandt '92, head football coach for Boyden-Hull/Rock Valley (Iowa), and Jay Rozeboom '84, head football coach at West Lyon (Iowa) High School, were named coaches of the year. Margie (Peters '79) Holmes received the Barnabas Award.

For more on Raider sports, visit www.nwcraiders.com



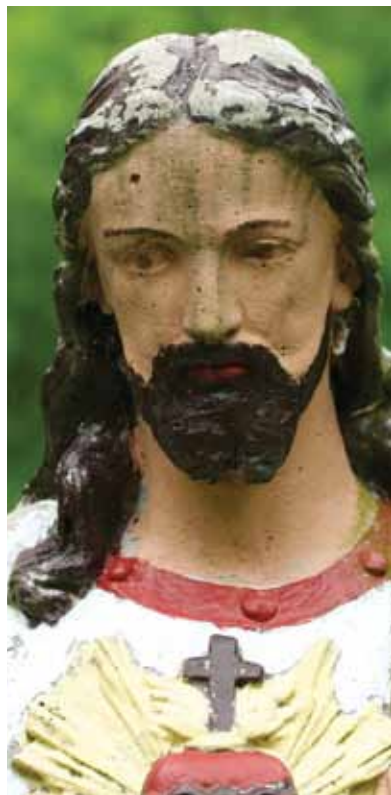
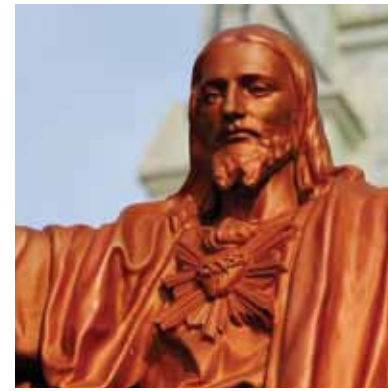
Guard Ryan Stock drives for two in Northwestern's 96-86 victory over Morningside in January.

In a Prof's Office

Behind the Bibleman action figure in the window is history professor Mike Kugler's office, where texts on the Scottish enlightenment rest next to a Bart Simpson blow-up doll. Across campus, English professor Ann Lundberg's beloved books keep company with artifacts from summers as a park ranger. What does a prof love besides learning? Step into her office. Look around.

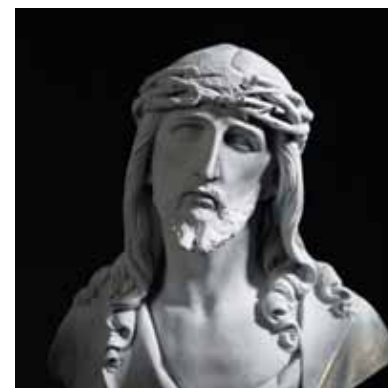
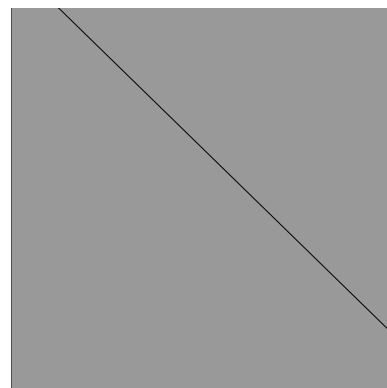
Photos by Doug Burg and Geoff Johnson





Changing Church

Today's Christians are wrestling with how to make their faith relevant *and* countercultural



When Rob Bell's book *Love Wins* created a storm of controversy following its publication last year, both *USA Today* and *Time* magazine called Dr. Richard Mouw '59 for comment. Mouw, a leading evangelical voice in the United States, serves as president of Fuller Theological Seminary. Bell, at the time the pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., is a Fuller graduate.

In fact, Bell may be Fuller's most well-known alumnus. The 41-year-old was an evangelical celebrity by the age of 30, having founded Mars Hill in 1999 when he was just 28. The church grew quickly and today draws 7,000 people to its Sunday services. Bell also created the popular video series on Christianity called Nooma (a variation of the Greek word for spirit) and authored books with the unusual titles of *Velvet Elvis* and *Sex God*. In 2011 *Time* included Bell on its list of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Mouw describes Bell as a solid evangelical with a provocative style. "I've always admired the way Rob reaches out to the younger generation and people who are alienated from traditional churches," he says. "I've met many people in Grand Rapids who go to Mars Hill who either came to faith in Christ or who found a new vitality in their faith through Rob's ministry."

Some of those people, however, (Mouw says as many as 1,000) have left Mars Hill due to the theology of *Love Wins*. The book is widely criticized for Bell's suggestion that the redemptive work of Jesus may be universal—that every person who ever lived will eventually succumb to God's irresistible grace and enter heaven.

"I think the voice in the book is, again, more provocative," Mouw says. "It's speaking to a broader culture."



A Changing World

The culture Bell is addressing is the one in which today’s college students are asking questions about faith and the church. They’re reading books like Bell’s and also learning about Reformed doctrines like predestination. They’re wondering what the churches they grew up in have to offer and how to follow Jesus. They live in a world referred to as post-Christian that is shifting from modernism to postmodernism.

For centuries, the church held a central and privileged role in Western society—ever since the conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine in 313 A.D. With the rise of pluralism, however, it has lost its favored status and more and more finds itself on the margins of society.

Part of that shift was due to modernism, a worldview arising in the 17th century that argued truth could be discovered not through revelation, but through reason. Life was divided into sacred and secular, and the scientific method was viewed as the way to understand both ourselves and the world.

Dr. Mitch Kinsinger, who teaches religion at Northwestern, says postmodernism is a response to modernity, “a reaction to science and reason having the final say and being the final authority.” Instead of belief in a universal truth based on reason, truth is thought to be subjective and relative—and therefore different for each person.

While modernism is agnostic about the spiritual and supernatural, postmodernism embraces mystery, says Dr. Michael Andres, another Northwestern religion professor. “In postmodernism there’s a real questioning about how we can know anything with certainty,” he says. “There’s always been skepticism, but in postmodernism, it’s not a begrudging skepticism; it’s an embrace of it.”

Andres, who taught a senior seminar course at Northwestern that

dealt with postmodernism, says today’s students may not know what it is, but they resonate with his description of some of its characteristics: suspicion of any form of authority and power, increasing fragmentation, relativism and ambiguity, and a deep yearning for community and connection.

The Birth of the Emerging Church

At the time Bell was founding Mars Hill, other young evangelicals were beginning to wrestle with how to relate the gospel to a postmodern society. Initially focused on alternative worship services for Generation X, they were dissatisfied with the traditional church and eager to pioneer new models of ministry. Soon they were writing and speaking about what they saw as evangelicalism’s faults.

By 2001, the words *emerging* and *emergent* were being used as the name for what many saw as a protest movement. One of the earliest voices in that movement was that of Brian McLaren, a pastor who wrote about a postmodern form of Christianity in his book *A New Kind of Christian*. McLaren eventually became the leader of a network of emerging church leaders that took the name Emergent Village and communicated through a website and blog.

For many people, McLaren—who has become more and more liberal in his theology—represents the emerging church. But Jim Belcher, a Fuller grad who considers Richard Mouw a mentor and who used to meet weekly with Rob Bell and other young pastors to talk about ministry, stresses there are many different camps in the emerging movement and no single voice.

Church planter Ed Stetzer suggests three broad categories of emerging churches. What Stetzer calls “relevants” are theologically conservative



evangelicals who want to make the gospel understandable to postmodern culture by updating preaching techniques, worship styles and church leadership structures. “Reconstructionists” is his term for those who hold a more orthodox view of Scripture but want to change the church’s current form and structure. Finally, “revisionists” are those who question and revise both the gospel and the church, looking to leaders from the Emergent Village like McLaren, Tony Jones and Doug Pagitt.

Rev. Seth Sundstrom, a 42-year-old Reformed Church in America pastor in Sioux Falls, S.D., fits the definition of a relevant, although he eschews labels. A native Californian, he was doing road construction when he became a Christian in 1992.

When his denomination asked him to start an outreach church to Generation X, Sundstrom was working as a youth pastor and reading about postmodernism’s influence on the church. Data from the 2000 census had revealed there were 33,000 people in Sioux Falls between the ages of 18 and 36, but only 1,800 of them were attending a church. The Crossing held its first worship service on Pentecost Sunday in 2002.

“The original intent was to reach that age group,” Sundstrom says, “but as time went on, there were a number of us around the country who were doing church a little differently—not theologically different, but stylistically. We were attempting new things to be more relevant to the current culture. There was no plan or leader. It’s just that a number of churches started to emerge across the country that had a similar hunger for relevance and passion in the life of the church.”

Reaching Today’s Generation

The specter of young people abandoning church is a fear of many Christians. However, Dr. Scott Monsma, who teaches sociology at Northwestern, says that looking at just one slice of a person’s life provides an incomplete picture.

“If we look at youth as they’re leaving home and before they’re married and have kids, it’s very common for them to be less attached to a church,” he says. “Research shows people come back to church when they start having a family.”

Dr. Bradley Wright, a sociologist who teaches at the University of Connecticut, studies national surveys about the religious practices of Americans. He says research also shows that today’s single young people are much less likely to attend church than single people of the previous generation. “This problem is compounded by the trend that fewer people are getting married, and they are often older when they do,” he writes. “As a result, a key challenge for today’s church is reaching young single people.”

Another change in demographics is the increase in people who are religiously unaffiliated. Those who indicate no religion in national surveys has risen from 8 percent in 1990 to 15 percent in 2008. Rare before the 1970s, the unaffiliated have grown in every decade *and* in every age category. During that same time period, evangelicals reached approximately 25 percent of the population—a level they’ve maintained since the 1990s—while mainline Protestants dropped from over 30 percent to less than 15 percent.

Also notable is another characteristic of the religiously unaffiliated. “Earlier in the 20th century, it was common for people raised without a religious affiliation to convert to a religion in adulthood, typically upon

marriage,” Wright says. “In more recent decades, however, this pattern has changed. Now those raised without religion are as likely to remain unaffiliated as those raised with religion are to stay in their religion.”

Statistics like these underscore the need to reach today’s postmodern generation with the gospel and are at the core of efforts to transform the church.

“We have to remember that more and more individuals in our emerging culture have not grown up in a church,” says Dan Kimball, a pastor and author of *They Like Jesus but Not the Church*. “Most don’t see the church as a place they would naturally go to seek God and spiritual growth.”

As the title of Kimball’s book implies, people in emerging generations often respect and admire Jesus but have a negative view of the church. Could it be, he asks, that they have stereotypes because Christians are so caught up in our church subculture we’ve never engaged them in conversation or formed relationships with them?

who have extensively researched emerging churches. They say there are three core practices those churches have in common, and the first is identifying with the life of Jesus.

“Modern readings of Jesus are prone to dismiss his life and focus [only] on his death and resurrection,” they write in their book *Emerging Churches*. Identifying with Jesus means emulating the way Christ served others, cared for the poor, welcomed the outcast and created community. It’s hearing the Lord’s teaching about the Kingdom of God as a reminder that—to quote Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper—“God is in the reclamation business and is calling us to be part of it.”

This distinctive of the emerging church is particularly appealing to young people, says Kinsinger. “Students want a church that’s engaged in the world, that’s trying to make a difference,” the Northwestern professor says. “This generation is very service-oriented, so a church that only cares about individual souls going to heaven is not where this generation is at. They want a church that cares about the broad, redemptive purposes

“[Pastor] Seth and I talked about this idea of compartmentalization,” Joe explains. “For a lot of people, they have their church box and their work box and their family box. We want to mix all the boxes up and spill them out on the floor and have no separation or boundary between work, family and faith. It’s all influencing each other.”

The third core practice of emerging churches is living in community. There’s a focus on relationships instead of meetings and an understanding that the church is people rather than a building. In place of modernism’s embrace of individualism, there’s postmodernism’s hunger for connection.

“Church is a seven-day-a-week identification,” write Gibbs and Bolger, “not a once-a-week, 90-minute respite from the real world.” Measuring success by connectedness instead of growth, they say, calls into question many of the activities of the traditional church. It also means reproducing by establishing a new church when size interferes with the relational health of the congregation.

Coffee, Candles and Couches

As important as community is to the emerging church, so is the question of who may belong. Gibbs and Bolger refer to this hallmark of the emerging church as “welcoming the stranger,” something that’s in keeping with its focus on changed lives rather than changed beliefs.

This view, says Kinsinger, holds that “traditional churches want to get people to believe, and then they can belong. They would say, ‘You need to accept Jesus and then you can start coming to church,’ or ‘I’ll bring you to church so you’ll accept Jesus.’

“The emerging church would want to reverse that and include someone and have them belong so that they might believe. They would say, ‘You don’t need to have your mind made up about Jesus. Just come and hang out with us, and let’s talk.’”

One stereotype associated with emerging churches is that of a darkened sanctuary filled with candles and incense or a room with couches,



“ We use songs that are current along with songs that are ancient, and we mix them together and worship in a way that is relevant to who we are as human beings, desiring to express our love for God. ”



Hallmarks of a Protest Movement

Joe Hubers is a 2003 graduate of Northwestern who grew up in the church and wed his college sweetheart, Lacey (Heemstra ’02), when he was a sophomore. Despite his upbringing and marriage, their church attendance was sporadic and they found themselves drifting. Part of their disillusionment stemmed from the separation—Joe even refers to it as a wall—between their church and the world.

In his book *Deep Church*, Belcher calls that separation a “narrow view of salvation.” It’s why the emerging church argues traditional churches are too focused on what people believe and not enough on how they live. Or, put another way, orthodoxy (right believing) trumps orthopraxy (right living). The Christian faith is merely “fire insurance.”

Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger are two Fuller Seminary professors

of God, that wants to heal and restore the broken, fight injustice and oppression, and care for the world God has made.”

A second core practice of emerging churches—transforming secular space—is a response to modernism’s division of the sacred from the secular. Instead of that false dichotomy, there’s a recognition that all of life is sacred and due to God as worship.

Joe and Lacey Hubers found that kind of “whole life” spirituality when they began attending The Crossing, the RCA’s church plant in Sioux Falls.

“What was different about The Crossing is that their intention at all times was to take it beyond just this ‘club’ mentality,” Joe says. A focus on discipleship and relationships helped the Hubers mature in their faith. Being a Christian became more than just a cultural practice relegated to Sundays.

While The Crossing isn’t large—it has a core of just 200 people and 250 to 270 attending on any given Sunday—community is encouraged through the church’s 22 Life Groups. And within those Life Groups are Kyros Groups: people meeting one-on-one or in smaller gatherings of three or four for accountability and discipleship.

“What I think The Crossing has done very well is saying, no, this isn’t a club. This is church. This is doing life together. This is walking with Christ,” says Hubers. “The Crossing doesn’t have one front door; it has 22 front doors.”

coffee and communion. It’s true many of today’s young people are turned off by the seeker-sensitive church, with its ministry strategies modeled on the business world and emphasis on entertainment-oriented worship. Instead, there is a return to traditions and practices of the past that were abandoned by a church influenced by modernism. There’s an emphasis on art, dialogue and using one’s gifts in worship—on being a participant instead of a spectator.

At The Crossing, services are rarely the same from month to month or year to year. The congregation has used drama, art, readings, silence and foot washings as part of worship.

“When people ask us what worship style we espouse, we say, ‘It’s relevant,’” says Sundstrom. “We use songs that are current along with songs that are ancient, and we mix them together and worship in a way that is relevant to who we are as human beings, desiring to express our love for God.”



Knowing Truth

While traditional and emerging churches may not see eye to eye on matters of worship style or the best way to witness, the biggest source of conflict between the two camps stems from whether they see postmodernism in a positive or negative light.

Kinsinger says the root of the traditional church's objection to postmodernism lies in one's understanding of truth. "For a modern mindset, we know absolutes and we absolutely know them. And God is absolute and the Bible is absolute, so you can't have a Christianity that's postmodern when postmodernism doesn't believe in absolutes."

Postmodernism, on the other hand, acknowledges that beliefs and understanding are shaped by one's culture, race, gender, religion and community.

"It's not that truth is relative. It's that human understanding is always limited and relative," explains Monsma. "It's not that I give up trying to understand who God is or to read the text and get insights. It's that I must have humility as I approach the text. I think a postmodern approach gives me a greater sense of learning from others. In some ways, it's true to the Reformed notion that all truth is God's truth."

Humility is prized by those in the emerging generation wounded by church leaders wielding the Bible as a club, holding to positions with

arrogance and dogmatism. How can those preachers and teachers all be right, emergents ask, when there are differing interpretations of Scripture and 41,000 denominations in the world?

Those in the Emergent Village—the revisionists like McLaren—take such doubt even further, contending that because God is infinite and we are finite, we may know God personally but we can't confidently know things about him.

Kevin DeYoung is a Hope College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary graduate who served as associate pastor of First Reformed Church in Orange City for two years. Since 2004 he has been the senior pastor of University Reformed Church in East Lansing, Mich., just an hour away from Mars Hill, Bell's former church. He is also the author of *Why We're Not Emergent*, a book he wrote with Ted Kluck that won a *Christianity Today* book award in 2009. Belcher praises it for presenting "the most in-depth analysis of emergent theology to date."

DeYoung says there are strengths and weaknesses in both modernism and postmodernism—aspects of both that either fit or conflict with the Christian faith. "Modernism believes in truth and absolutes but has a harder time believing in miracles or the mysterious," he writes, "whereas, postmodernism accepts spirituality and the unexplainable but doesn't have a firm concept of truth."

The fact that there are different interpretations of Scripture shouldn't

“Emerging generations are looking for truth, and when we have something we know is true, we should clearly and boldly say it.”

surprise us, DeYoung says. People hold differing viewpoints in any field of human inquiry, including science. "If we can't know anything about the Bible because people disagree," he reasons, "then we can't know anything about anything, because people disagree about every single thing under the sun."

Such disagreements have admittedly contributed to the thousands of denominations in the world today, but DeYoung points out that in mainstream evangelicalism, there are more similarities than differences, "and certainly similarity and agreement on the core essentials of the faith."

Agreement on those core essentials is possible, he says, "because God has spoken to us clearly and intelligibly and has given us ears to hear his voice. Christianity is based upon, and the whole Bible assumes, a certain knowledge of and adherence to confident assertions about God and his Christ."

Belcher, too, believes the Scriptures are clear on what he calls "the first-tier doctrines of the Great Tradition" as outlined in the Apostles' Creed. It's those first-tier doctrines that can help determine if someone remains orthodox, he says, while second-tier doctrines—those that are distinctive from one denomination to another—should be held with humility rather than used to divide.

From Emerging to Missional

Emerging church author and pastor Dan Kimball maintains that those essential core doctrines can be held with "bold confidence."

"In fact, I believe emerging generations are looking for something to believe in," he says. "I believe they are looking for truth, and when we have something we know is true, we should clearly and boldly say it."

DeYoung thinks the emerging church movement lost followers when McLaren and other revisionists moved from evangelicalism and historic orthodoxy to classic liberalism, equating right living with right belief. But without faith in the person and work of Jesus as the only access to God and the only atonement for sins—without the new life that comes

won't sustain and propel a gospel-driven church, because it isn't the gospel."

Belcher tells of discussing the relationship between believing in Jesus and living for Jesus with his mentor, Richard Mouw. Mouw replied that it's not a matter of balance but more a matter of priority, that justification or penal atonement on the cross has to be held as "first among equals."


Despite the faults of some aspects of the emerging church, Andres sees positive things coming from the last decade's conversation.

"I think as a protest movement, it has influenced the church," he says. "The church still has a long way to go, but the discomfort with consumerism, the desire to talk about justice issues, looking at the life of Christ and not just the cross, discussions we're having now about race, the nature of justification and the atonement are in a different place than they were 10 years ago."

Now, even as some in the emerging church have embraced liberalism, others are adopting more of a missional stance. "Some parts of the emerging church have morphed into the missional church, which I think is very influential now," Andres says.

As with the emerging church, there are different strands of the missional church. One strand is connected with the RCA; Western Theological Seminary is the institutional host for the Gospel and Our Culture Network, for which author and theologian John Franke serves as the general coordinator. The network supports Christian leaders of churches and organizations by providing useful research regarding the encounter between the gospel and culture and encouraging transformation in the life and witness of the church.

As with the emerging church, the missional church will need to find a way to reach today's culture with the gospel without losing the gospel's counter-cultural message.

"We just need to preach Jesus," Sundstrom says. "When it comes down to it, we have the gospel, and that's what's most important. When you look at places like China or India and how the gospel is exploding there, it's not exploding because they have slick PowerPoint presentations or Rob Bell videos. It's because they have the Word." 

from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—there can be no right living.

"If orthodoxy [only] means I live the right way, the way of Jesus, I have no hope," DeYoung writes. "Just a call to live rightly and love one another

Political

Power Broker

Iowa's Bob Vander Plaats influences presidential race

BY DUANE BEESON

As national media converged upon Iowa in the months leading up to the first-in-the-nation presidential caucuses, Bob Vander Plaats '85 was called "Iowa's social conservative king" by *Time* magazine, the state's "go-to guy" by the *Wall Street Journal*, and one of the country's 10 most coveted endorsements by *The Hill*.

By the time the candidates and media had moved on to South Carolina and Florida, those labels seemed to have been accurate. Vander Plaats announced his endorsement of Rick Santorum two weeks prior to the Iowa caucuses, at a time when the former Pennsylvania senator was polling about 5 percent. Santorum was eventually declared Iowa's winner with 24.6 percent of the vote.

"There is no question Bob made a difference," says Jamie Johnson, Santorum's Iowa coalitions director. "His endorsement helped put us over the top."

In a congratulatory phone call, Donald Trump gave Vander Plaats some friendly chastising when the Iowan deflected praise for Santorum's victory. "Have you ever watched my show?" asked the star of *The Apprentice*. "You should take the credit."

Vander Plaats' rise to political power broker wasn't foreseen by those who knew the lanky Sheldon, Iowa, native decades ago. B.J. Mulder '85, one of his Red Raider basketball teammates, saw in Vander Plaats strong leadership qualities, a good dose of confidence and an unparalleled work ethic, but he didn't envision him as a politician. "He was always very passionate. You knew whatever he decided to do, he was going to give it 110 percent."

Vander Plaats embarked upon a career in education. In 1993, while he was principal of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School, the Iowa Civil Liberties Union filed suit against MMC and another school district to try to prevent student-initiated commencement prayers. Vander Plaats recalls being grilled for an hour on the stand in federal district court, with the judge focusing on his background as a graduate of Christian schools. "He thought my purpose was to proselytize," he says. The districts won on appeal two days before graduation.

That year, Vander Plaats and his wife, Darla (Granstra '85), welcomed their third of four sons. Lucas was born with a severe, rare brain disorder. Today Vander Plaats calls him a "dynamic blessing. If it hadn't been for the miracle of Lucas, we would have never looked beyond where we were."

A few years later, Vander Plaats became CEO of Opportunities Unlimited, a Sioux City agency that provides rehabilitative services for individuals with disabilities such as brain or spinal cord injuries. While in that role, Vander Plaats was appointed to the state's Advisory Council on Brain Injuries.

Vander Plaats' insight into government's role in education and human services ignited a new interest in politics. "I saw us funding bureaucracy,

not needs. Too often it didn't make sense philosophically and wasn't smart economically. I felt the state needed leadership from the outside."

He ran unsuccessfully for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in 2002. He also ran in 2006, until he withdrew to become Jim Nussle's running mate in another losing effort. In 2010, he ran again and garnered 41 percent of the vote, losing to Terry Branstad.

Normally, Vander Plaats admits, losing candidates lose influence. But he gained some clout when he chaired Mike Huckabee's surprising win in the 2008 Iowa caucuses. And he parlayed his conservative credentials into a successful 2010 campaign to ouster three members of the Iowa Supreme Court who had voted to overturn Iowa's Defense of Marriage Act, resulting in the legalization of same-sex marriages.

After the vote, Vander Plaats became president of the Family Leader, an umbrella organization that includes groups such as the Iowa Family Policy Center and a political action committee. The Family Leader organized a lecture series that brought most of the Republican presidential candidates to voters across the state and a forum in which the candidates talked about family values in front of an audience of 2,500.

Vander Plaats says the pillars of his organization's pro-family views are the sanctity of human life, God's design for one-man/one-woman marriage, preservation of the Constitution, and economic freedom.

Vander Plaats has his share of detractors, both from the left and from his own party. He's been called a bully and a bigot—even a "poodle trainer"—and he's received death threats. Some prominent Iowa Republicans claim his focus is on building his own brand.

Shortly after he endorsed Santorum, allegations surfaced that he had asked Michelle Bachmann to drop out of the race and that he sought money in exchange for his endorsement—both of which he denied.

Like a star three-point shooter who's constantly double-teamed, Vander Plaats understands that verbal barrages and accusations are part of the game for those willing to take controversial stands in the public square. He responds by taking comfort in Scripture, counseling his family not to read the blogs, and recalling a phrase he's often repeated: "You'll never be wrong when you do what's right."

And he enjoys remembering a speaking engagement he had on a college campus. A lesbian student spoke up at an open mic time, disagreeing with his viewpoint on same-sex marriage. Vander Plaats says he walked her through why everyone needs to be concerned about the dangers of judicial activism. "I talked about the process the judges used to reach their decision—that they would eventually reach conclusions through that process that she couldn't agree with. By the end of our time together, she told a reporter, 'He's way different than I thought. I could vote for him.'" 🏠

贈物

The Wedding Gift

BY AMY SCHEER

Betty Van Der Weide sat on a bed in Tennessee's Heartbreak Hotel and told her husband, Rod, "You're not going to believe this." The two were on a rare road trip away from Maurice, Iowa, when their former host student Natsuki (Isobe '99) Nagakawa called from Japan with news of her wedding. After inviting the couple to attend, she added, "All expenses are on us."

"I appreciate Rod and Betty for everything they did for me," Nagakawa wrote in an email. "To visit their home and spend time with them made me feel so safe and secure. I wanted their presence at our marriage and to give them a trip to Japan. It was my selfish wish."

The Van Der Weides debated for three weeks before accepting such a generous gift, the scope of which would unfold with the beauty of a paper fan. Nagakawa scheduled her wedding on a date that worked best for Rod and Betty. She booked their seats on the plane's right side for a view of Mount Fuji on the way there, and the left side on the way back.

Over the course of 15 years, the Van Der Weides had welcomed 55 students from Northwestern's host family program. Around a crowded table at Sunday dinner, Nagakawa had practiced English with her new

family, just as the Van Der Weides would try a few words in Japanese in Niigata.

"We managed to communicate," says Betty. "A smile goes a long way. They could see how much we cared for Natsuki."

At the wedding reception, Nagakawa and her husband, Dai, held a special tea ceremony in the Van Der Weides' honor, presenting them with a custom blend of tea and a cup imprinted with their names.

The bride and groom called the next day with an invitation to Sado Island. When Betty protested they should be alone on their honeymoon, Dai replied, "We have the rest of our lives together; you only have one week here."

It was the trip of a lifetime for the Van Der Weides, who traveled little yet welcomed the world into their home. For Nagakawa, the journey fulfilled a dream held since graduation: For 10 years, she'd been putting away money to fly the couple to Japan.

"My wish of seeing them once again came true," she wrote. "My guests could know me better through their presence since they were a big part of my life. I cannot give them back as much as I got from them." 🍵



The hospitality Rod and Betty Van Der Weide showed Natsuki Nagakawa as her NWC host family made such an impression on her that she paid for them to attend her wedding and set the date to best fit their schedule.

class Notes

'68 **Kella Klinker Simonin** directed and starred in a production of *Steel Magnolias* for the Spencer (Iowa) Community Theatre in December. She teaches Fundamentals of Oral Communication for Iowa Lakes Community College and also teaches a class on Western movies for ILCC's Third Age College.

in baseball playing rules, served on the World Series games committee eight times, and led efforts to recognize individual and team sportsmanship.

Elaine (Bakker) Lawrensen and her husband, Barry, recently moved to Hong Kong, where they teach at International Christian School.

'73 **Ronald Bunger** is associate director of libraries at Richmond Graduate University in Chattanooga, Tenn.

The football field in Graettinger, Iowa, was named in honor of **Rod Hough** in October. He taught and coached in Graettinger for 33 years, and he still serves as the athletic director for the Graettinger/Terril Community School District. Seven of his football teams qualified for the playoffs, and two finished as state runners-up. He was previously inducted into the Iowa Football Coaches Hall of Fame.

'77 **Wendell Kampman** is a custodial assistant at Northwestern.

'79 **Dr. Larry Duenk** is an urgent care physician at the Marsho Clinic in Sheboygan, Wis. He is also an associate professor of family medicine and anatomy at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He and his wife, Patti, have two children: Sarah (16) and Michael (14).

'81 **Arlis (Wassink) Folkerts**, Winnipeg, Manitoba, earned a master's degree in elementary education from the University of Alberta in 2010. She serves as vice principal at John de Graff Elementary School.

'82 **Jim Boeve**, baseball coach at Hastings College, received the 2012 Robert E. "Ish" Smith Achievement Award at the NAIA Baseball Coaches Association convention in January. The award recognizes unselfish promotion of NAIA baseball. A former president of the association, Boeve spearheaded a transition

Marty Guthmiller, CEO of Orange City Area Health System, has been named to the Iowa Volunteer Hall of Fame for his outstanding service to the community. Guthmiller was recognized by Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad at ceremonies in Des Moines in February. Guthmiller's volunteer work has included leadership in planning and overseeing the design and development of the Hawkeye Center and the new Prairie Winds Event Center. In addition, in his role as vice chair of the Orange City Development Corporation, Guthmiller has been instrumental in attracting new businesses to Orange City.

Roy Paul is the chief of police/provost marshal for Marine Corps forces located in Okinawa, Japan. A 30-year Marine, he has served in Africa and Europe and been deployed four times in Iraq. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy who is now pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership.

Dr. Robert Puff, San Clemente, Calif., is a clinical psychologist, author and international speaker. He blogs at www.psychologytoday.com/blog/meditation-modern-life.

'83 **Jill (Smidt) Christensen** set the South Dakota record for volleyball wins in November as she led the Parker High School team to a 33-2 mark and third place at the state Class B volleyball tournament. Her teams have compiled a 638-227-14 record in 29 years.

Jerry Heemstra, Tumwater, Wash., is the chief financial officer of McFarland Cascade, a supplier for outdoor construction projects.

Red Ties

MARK BLOEMENDAAL '81
Director of Alumni Relations

We all like to hear good things about ourselves. Recently the Northwestern College community had a chance to hear some great things about the college we love. The best part was that the overwhelmingly positive feedback came from those who know us best, including our alumni.

Northwestern has engaged Performa Higher Education to help focus the college's strategic plan and update the campus master plan. As part of their research, they surveyed employees, alumni, students and their parents.

When Joanne Soliday from Performa visited campus in January, she said Northwestern's survey response numbers were "off the charts," and, she added, "I've been working in higher education for more than 35 years, and Northwestern's percentages on some of our survey questions were as high as I've ever experienced."

Of the alumni who responded, 94 percent said Northwestern provides them opportunities to stay connected, and 75 percent said they'd visited the college within the last five years. Eight in 10 said the college had a lasting impact on their spiritual lives, and nearly half are still in contact with a faculty mentor. Most gratifying, 96 percent of alumni said they would recommend Northwestern.

Responses like these affirm administrators and our Strategic Planning Committee as they set short- and long-term priorities and plan Northwestern's future.

The strategic plan and campus master plan will be shared with you in the coming months as both are finalized. I believe we're on the verge of some exciting changes that will make Northwestern even better.

Thanks to those of you who took the time to complete the Performa survey last fall. Thanks also to those who have already supported the Imagine Campaign, which is setting the stage for new strategic goals. If you want to get involved, please contact me.



RED RAIDER
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'89 Teri Thomsen is office manager at Holy Trinity Church in Lincoln, Neb., and also serves as an accounting associate at Southeast Community College.

Paula Wanken, San Antonio, recently collaborated with 39 other poets to publish an international collection of poetry entitled *Prompted*. Profits from book sales are being donated to LitWorld, an international literacy organization.

'91 Cheri Waggoner, Des Moines, works in customer service at Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield.

'92 Lt. Col. Lisa (Burris) Ciccarelli, Torrance, Calif., has been reassigned to the Los Angeles Air Force Base as program manager for the U.S. Nuclear Detonation Detection System.

'93 Lori De Jongh-Slight was recently hired to coach volleyball at Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. She previously coached volleyball at Creston High School.

Jonathan Musselman is the senior academic librarian at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

'95 Steven Bogaard, Orange City, is the natural science lab coordinator at Dordt College.

'96 Keith Starkenburg has completed his doctorate in theology at the University of Virginia. He is an assistant professor of theology at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, Ill. His wife, **Rebekah (Dykstra)**, is director of Trinity's First Year Experience.

'97 Deb Schleusener is the associate director of graduate programs and budget manager for Seattle Pacific University's School of Business and Economics.

'98 Sara Veldhuizen Stealy is a foreign service officer serving at the U.S. Embassy in Riga, Latvia.

Michael Waugh is deployed for a year with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, serving aboard the USS Bataan.

'99 Josh Bolluyt, head football coach at Spirit Lake (Iowa) High School, was named the *Sioux City Journal's* 2011 Siouxland Football Coach of the Year after leading his team to a second-place finish in the state Class 2A playoffs.

Josh Pyle, Fort Dodge, Iowa, is a correction officer at the Webster County Jail.

Jill (Bonnama) Rector is the marketing programs manager at 3M Healthcare in St. Paul, Minn.

Tim Wood is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at Princeton Theological Seminary.

'00 Krista Meckling has moved to Columbus, Ohio, where she is an account manager for Cardinal Health.

Jamie Stubbe, Kansas City, Mo., is a news producer for KSHB-TV.

'01 Josh Russell is manager of consolidations, reporting and treasury accounting for John Deere Financial in Des Moines.

'04 Kelli (Vermeer) Cummins, Fort Collins, Colo., is a legal secretary for the 8th Judicial District Attorney's Office.

Ryan Dittman is an IT support specialist for Rosenboom Machine and Tool in Sheldon, Iowa.

Jason Holtgrewe is the associate pastor of Connection Church in Bettendorf, Iowa.

Abby (Michael) Milbrodt, Springdale, Ark., is a contract blogger for passionforsavings.com, a website dedicated to helping people save money.

'06 Andrew Gunter, Spring Park, Minn., graduated from the University of St. Thomas School of Law. He is a corporate compliance consultant for Target Canada.

Dr. Shelby (Schmidt) Tessendorf is a dentist with the Air Force in Tampa, Fla.

'07 Kaitlyn Bowie is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at Duke University in Durham, N.C.

Andrea (Collier) Helmus, Longmont, Colo., is the assistant program coordinator in Front Range Community College's Center for Adult Learning.

Kristin (Erickson) Hu has been living in Hong Kong for more than two years. She teaches high school history at the American International School.

'08 Amanda Allen, Antelope, Calif., graduated with distinction in May from the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law with a concentration in public law and policy.

Katie Hohnstein-Van Etten is pursuing a master's degree in teaching from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash.

Laura Jacobson, Houston, is the staff attorney at the St. Francis Cabrini Center for Immigrant Legal Assistance, a program of Catholic Charities of Galveston-Houston.

Ryan Jacobson is the deputy city clerk in West Des Moines, Iowa.

The Rev. Sarah Palsma, Columbus, Ohio, is the associate pastor of New Hope Church in Powell.

Meggan (De Jong) Vasileiadou and her husband, Pavlos, work at Greek Bible College in Nea Ionia, Greece. She is a librarian, chapel music leader and student

counselor, and he is the computer services administrator. They are missionaries with Commission to Every Nation.

Aubrey Weger is an intake counselor for Catholic Charities of Minneapolis.

'09 Katie Bell earned a master's degree in college counseling and student development from Azusa Pacific University in May. She is a residential community director and community engagement/leadership coordinator at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

Nakeata (Hendershott) Divis is an ESL teacher for the Sioux City Community Schools.

Danielle Gaudian, Primghar, Iowa, is an ultrasonographer at the Orange City Area Health System. She received an associate's degree in diagnostic medical sonography from Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines.

Marly Melsh is a principal office and administrative specialist at the University of Minnesota.

Trista (Knoke) Pitt teaches kindergarten at Roosevelt Elementary in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

'10 Carrie (Manifold) Blaha, McBain, Mich., is a pediatric and medical/surgery nurse at Mercy Hospital Cadillac. Her husband, **Jason '09**, is the director of youth at Rehoboth Reformed Church.

Jonathan Gesink is a fund accountant for Aviva Investors in Des Moines.

'11 Renee Ausborn is a teacher at Cono Christian School in Walker, Iowa.

Kassie (Scorza) Carpio, Orange City, is a bilingual family advocate for Mid-Sioux Opportunity's Early Headstart Program.

Jacqueline Clark is an athletic trainer at the Institute of Athletic Medicine in Minneapolis.

Morgan De Jong is pursuing a master's degree in physician assistant studies at Midwestern University in Downers Grove, Ill.

Laura Denekas is pursuing a master's degree in social work at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Courtney Drenth, Brookings, S.D., is an assistant coordinator in the commercial business unit at Daktronics.

Katie Erickson teaches K-12 art at Woodstock School in Mussoorie, India.

Kimberly Ford serves as the Christian education and youth director at Bettendorf (Iowa) Presbyterian Church.

Westley Garcia is an admissions counselor at Northwestern.

Jacob Gaster is a part-time biology lecturer at Northwestern.



David Tilstra juggles two jobs: medical geneticist and medical director of the CentraCare Clinic.

Double-Duty Doc

As the health care reform debate continues to rage, Dr. David Tilstra '83 remains focused on two things: improving care and lowering costs.

A two-job doc, three days a week he's the medical director at CentraCare Clinic in St. Cloud, Minn., responsible for the Health Care Homes program, which seeks to improve treatment for patients with chronic health conditions like diabetes.

The other two days, Tilstra is a medical geneticist, running a practice that helps the families of patients with genetic issues such as birth defects, mental retardation and autism determine the underlying causes and plan for long-term care.

Both jobs give him the satisfaction of tangible results. At CentraCare, Tilstra has overseen better management of chronic illnesses, leading to results like one patient whose hospital admissions were reduced from 29 over two years to just three admissions last year.

As a medical geneticist, Tilstra plays detective as he searches for a diagnosis (if not already known) and formulates a treatment plan. "I tell parents what the game plan needs to be for the next few years, how to engage the school system to maximize the child's learning, what to watch for, like seizures or new conditions that might develop. To take clues and try to translate them into solutions—that's always fascinated me."

BY SHERRIE BARBER WILLSON '98



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Currently stationed at Scott Air Force Base near St. Louis, Matt Huibregtse will become an instructor at the Air Force Academy next year.

Aim High

For Matt Huibregtse '01, Sept. 11, 2001, was more than a day of shock and sadness. It was a day of decision. Biding his time in a hometown factory since his Air Force acceptance a month prior, he heard vague reports of planes and towers. It wasn't until arriving home that he got details—and a phone call.

It was his recruiter. "Training starts next month. Still want to go?"

The Air Force was Huibregtse's lifelong dream. Four years earlier he had been rejected, high school hockey injuries dashing fighter-pilot hopes. Now he knew his second chance could look very different. Still, he says, the decision wasn't difficult.

"I remember thinking, 'If the world needs Christian leaders, now is certainly the time.' It wasn't a feeling of grand patriotism. I just knew I hadn't felt drawn to the Air Force my whole life only to pull away."

Ten years and two deployments to Iraq later, that same desire to lead drives Huibregtse, now a major. He completed a master's degree in industrial/organizational psychology and will become an instructor at the U.S. Air Force Academy next spring.

Huibregtse says he looks forward to the relationships as much as the teaching. "I don't make decisions that affect national security or put people in harm's way, but as a Christian leader, I still hope to make a significant and positive impact on those around me."

BY BETH (NIKKEL '02) GAULKE



Iowa native Stephanie Hague loves life in New York City—and her position with one of the world's largest ad agencies.

Stephanie in the City

Have you seen the commercial for Macy's where the shoe salesman walks into the back room and encounters a warehouse filled with celebrities like Martha Stewart, Jessica Simpson and Sean "Diddy" Combs?

Every time Stephanie Hague '07 sees that ad—and dozens others—she feels a twinge of professional pride. Since 2008, Hague has worked as an account associate for JWT Manhattan, one of the world's largest advertising firms.

"It's surreal sometimes," says the native of West Des Moines, Iowa, who moved to The Big Apple with only a vague idea of what she'd like to do. "I always wanted to live in a bigger city. So without even having a job offer, I gathered all my stuff and headed to New York."

Hague's leap of faith paid off. Not only does the business administration/marketing graduate get to rub elbows with the occasional celebrity, she's responsible for day-to-day communication, finances and account management for clients like Macy's and Kleenex.

While she's a long way from Iowa, Hague's managed to make a life for herself that isn't all that different from what she had before.

"New York is a very weird and wonderful place," she says. "I'm fortunate I've found very loving, caring and giving friends. The more time I'm here, the more I have grown roots here."

BY SARAH ASP OLSON '03

- Jessica Glanzer** teaches high school geometry for the Perry (Iowa) Community Schools.

Ansley Griess, St. Paul, Minn., is an ETL developer in the information technology department at Prime Therapeutics in Eagan.

Anna Hanrahan, Minneapolis, is a site leader for Athletes Committed to the Education of Students.

Janna (Bloemendaal) Hardersen is a registered nurse at the Orange City Area Health System.

Greta Hays is serving in a media relations fellowship at the Arena Stage in the Mead Center for American Theater in Washington, D.C.

Phillip Hegeman is a business analyst for Wells Fargo Home Mortgage in West Des Moines, Iowa.

Heidi Hildebrandt is a teacher for Southwest Star Concept Schools in Heron Lake, Minn.

LeAnn (Johnson) Hjelmeland is a graphic designer and reporter for *The Hometown Press* in Sully, Iowa.

Jessica Huitink is a recreational advocate and certified medication aide at Village Northwest Unlimited in Sheldon, Iowa.

Beth Hunter is a registered nurse at Sanford Luverne (Minn.) Medical Center.

Kory Jensen is a teacher for the Aurora (Colo.) Public Schools.

Becca (Hurley) Kramer is an admissions counselor at Northwestern.

Grant Landon is a student at Ross University School of Medicine in the West Indies.

Andrea (Wedel) Larson is a registered nurse in the critical care unit at Trinity Regional Medical Center in Fort Dodge, Iowa.
- Amanda Leonard** is a teacher for the Mankato (Minn.) Public Schools.

Shane Lesko is pursuing a master's degree in public history and museum studies at the University of South Carolina.

Hillary (Aeikens) Madsen is a publishing specialist at Spader Business Management in Sioux Falls.

Charity Miles, Valentine, Neb., is a registered nurse at Cherry County Hospital.

Courtney Moberg is a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at Sanford Health in Sioux Falls.

Carolyn Muilenburg is a senior accountant at Cain Ellsworth & Company in Sheldon, Iowa.

Caitlyn Nerem, Sioux Falls, is a registered nurse at Avera McKennan Hospital.

Angela Ness teaches kindergarten in Rosemount, Minn.

Blake Norris is assistant manager of Noodles and Company in Coralville, Iowa.

Logan Ogden is pursuing a master's degree in exercise science: sport nutrition and human performance at South Dakota State University.

Jacob Peterson is a medical student at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha.

Jacklyn Punt teaches middle school Bible at Sioux Falls Christian School.

Cody Raak is studying in the Master of Divinity degree program at Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Mich. His wife, **Kait (Koerselman)**, is a designer at Graphix Signs and Embroidery.

Rachel Rager serves as office manager for ATLAS in Orange City.

Emily (Muilenburg) Rasmussen is marketing coordinator for Invino, a wine company in Sonoma, Calif.

Mallory Richardson teaches kindergarten at Spirit Lake (Iowa) Elementary School.

Alli (Klarenbeek) Sanchez-Perry is a youth discipleship intern at The Reformed Church in Plano, Texas. Her husband, **Jose**, is the assistant to the Center for the Study of Latino/a Christianity and Religions at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, where he is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree.

Amanda Schroder is a registered nurse at The Lutheran Home in Omaha.

Sarah Seeger, Sioux Falls, is a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at Sanford USD Medical Center.

Janelle (de Waard) Silva is an admissions counselor at Northwestern.

Trisha (Hartzler) Smit is a clinical research technician for Exemplar Genetics in Sioux Center.

Chelsea Stanton is serving with Mission Year in Atlanta.

Kasey Summerer is pursuing a master's degree in theology at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Nessa Summers teaches elementary special education in Conrad, Iowa.

Michael Ten Clay, Orange City, is an accountant at Van Bruggen & Vande Vegte.

Kristin (Neth) Tigges is a chiropractic assistant at Inspired Chiropractic in Sioux Falls.

Sarah (Bolkema) Vande Griend is a general ledger accountant at A&I Products in Rock Valley, Iowa.

Matt Vander Molen is serving with the Peace Corps in Panama for two years, doing community environmental conservation.

Bryce Vander Stelt serves as the director of youth ministries at Faith Christian Reformed Church in Elmhurst, Ill.

Delainye (Hardersen) Woudstra teaches fourth grade at El Camino Academy in Bogota, Colombia.

WORK AT NWC

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Kori Heidebrink was surprised to find \$100 in her Northwestern student mailbox near the end of last semester. She and another student were the recipients of gifts sent by an alumnus to random mailboxes.

Christmas Mail

Remember those lean college years when you searched the sofa for quarters to do laundry and lived on peanut butter and ramen noodles? How excited would you have been to receive \$100 randomly in the mail one day?

Kori Heidebrink, a Northwestern junior, was one of two students who received exactly such a gift this Christmas. She was so surprised, at first she thought the gift was a joke. But it was real money, so she spent some on her mother’s Christmas present and put the rest toward gifts for friends. And, beyond just being grateful, Heidebrink says she’s inspired to give generously when she has a steady income someday.

The donor, an alumnus who chooses to remain anonymous, has been sending \$100 to randomly selected Northwestern student mailboxes since graduating a few years ago. He remembers being financially strapped in college, selling his books to buy Christmas presents for his family. It’s a gesture to younger members of the Northwestern family intended to “take one worry off their minds,” he says.

In Heidebrink’s words, “He just wants to make a difference in a few strangers’ lives.”

BY DAVID GUTCHE ’11

Nicole (Mentink ’00) and Carl Velzke ’99, daughter, Amelia Faith, joins Grace (9) and Jamison (5)

Tony and Amber (Vande Zandschulp ’02) Altena, son, Samuel James, joins Joanna (3)

Brent and Beth (Nikkel ’02) Gaulke, son, Silas Dean, joins Mason (3)

Carmen and Lee Woudstra ’02, son, Jackson James

Lyndsay (Henderson ’03) and Scott Bahrke ’01, son, Isaac Jeffrey, joins Payge (5) and Olyvia (3)

Tiffany (Altena ’03) and Ryan Govig ’02, son, Kale Beckett, joins Kyler (3)

Jason and Angela (Schreuder ’03) Van Gorp, daughter, Hope Audrey, joins Noah (3)

Meagan (Wells ’03) and Mike Wallinga ’01, daughter, Anna Michelle, joins Abigail (4) and Allison (1)

Roscoe and Kelli (Vermeer ’04) Cummins, son, Jude Anthony

Corey and Dr. Jessica (Baade) Gumm ’04, daughter, Chelsea Kathleen

Tim and Erin (Piehl ’04) Kittila, daughter, Alice Anna

Abby (Michael ’04) and Mark Milbrodt ’04, son, Landon Michael, joins Ava (2)

Mikyla (Hardersen ’05) and Ryan Dittman ’04, daughter by adoption, Zoe (6), joins Meraya (2)

Kim (Boersma ’05) and Jamie Dykstra ’05, son, Micah Lee

Brett and Jolynne (Nilson ’05) Eilts, daughter, Haley Rose, joins Jackson (5) and Katie (2)

Eric and Nicole (Koenecke ’05) Forbes, son by adoption, Owen Dylan

Kelly and Drew Schmidt ’05, daughter, Stella Kapri, joins Nolan (2)

Cody and Teresa (Larson ’05) Templin, son, Jack Gray

Don and Kristi (Hilbrands ’05) Vanderlip, daughter, Madisyn Ann

Daren and Kara (Van De Berg ’06) Dieleman, daughter, Ava Kay

Megan (Gort ’06) and Marcus Leloux ’04, daughter, Maclaren Rae

Mitchell and Shelby (Schmidt ’06) Tsendorf, daughter, Kaylee Allison

David and Breann (Sechler ’07) Tier-schel, daughter, Morgan Maielle

Bri and Tom Eaton ’09, daughter, Emily Rose, joins Caleb (3) and Evie (2)

Marriages

Susan De Prenger ’91 and Sam David, Des Moines

Jill Bonnema ’99 and Jeff Rector, Chanhassen, Minn.

Trent Fredericksen ’04 and Kendra Kock, Omaha

Amanda DeBoer ’05 and Eric Bowman, Gig Harbor, Wash.

Rachel Starr ’05 and Mark Heath, Portland, Ore.

Katie Erickson ’07 and Zhao Hu, Hong Kong

Cassie Montgomery ’07 and Daniel Ayala, Katy, Texas

Crystal Algood ’08 and Jonathan Anzulewicz, Centennial, Colo.

Mary Holm ’09 and Josh Steinhoff, Sioux City

Trista Knoke ’09 and Nolan Pitt, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Carrie Manifold ’10 and Jason Blaha ’09, McBain, Mich.

Janna Bloemendaal ’11 and Kadrian Hardersen ’08, Sioux Center

Andrea Wedel ’11 and Bret Larson ’10, Manson, Iowa

The couples reside in the city listed.

In Memoriam

Nelly (De Vries ’36, ’38) Straks, age 92, died Nov. 21 in Creston, Iowa. After graduating from Northwestern Junior College, she continued her education at Morningside College. Her career as an English teacher included several years at Boyden-Hull (Iowa) High School and Sheldon High School. She was a member of Bethel Reformed Church in Sheldon, where she played organ, sang in the choir and taught Sunday school. She is survived by two children.

Dr. Peter Meerdink ’40 died in Austin, Texas, on Sept. 12 at the age of 91. After

graduating from Iowa State University, he practiced veterinary medicine in LeRoy and Galva, Ill. He later served for 10 years with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Puerto Rico, Florida and Georgia. He is survived by four children and four siblings, including Grace Boote ’44, ’70.

Bernard Reinders ’41, ’43 died Sept. 29 at age 87 in Orange City. He was a lifelong farmer. At the time of his death, he was the oldest lifetime member of First Christian Reformed Church in Orange City, where he sang in the choir and served on the council. He was also a member of the farmers’ cooperative and the board of directors for the Christian school. He is survived by his wife, Lorna; two children; and two siblings, including John ’33.

Dr. Robert Spaan ’50 died Oct. 3 in Le Mars at age 80. He graduated from the University of Iowa Dental College and was a dentist in San Francisco for many years. He later received a doctorate in philosophy from Stanford University. Among his survivors are six children.

Phyllis Steunenberg ’55, age 76, died Sept. 1 in Omaha. She earned a bachelor’s degree at Hope College and a master’s degree at Mankato State University. She taught for many years in Sanborn, Spencer and Sheldon, Iowa. She served as organist at Orange City’s Trinity Reformed Church.

Her survivors include siblings Ruth ’59, ’64 and John ’73.

The Rev. Robert Wallinga, director of development at NWC from 1977 to 1984, died Sept. 14 in Pella, Iowa, at age 76. He received a bachelor’s degree from Central College and also graduated from Western Theological Seminary. He served Washington Reformed Church in Ackley, Iowa, and Morningside Reformed Church in Sioux City before coming to Northwestern. He later served as the financial resource consultant for the RCA’s Heartland Synod Office in Orange City. He is survived by his wife, Darlene, and two children, including Tom ’84.

Marietta Vandersall, administrative assistant to the academic dean from 1991 to 2001, age 72, died Oct. 8 in Orange City. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Sterling College in Kansas. She and her husband, the Rev. Stan, served Reformed churches in Amsterdam, N.Y.; Cleveland; and Des Moines. She was the administrative assistant at Maurice-Orange City Elementary School for 10 years before joining the Northwestern staff. In addition to being an active local volunteer, she was a member of Trinity Reformed Church, where she served as an elder. She is survived by her husband and three children, including Scott ’90.

SPEAK UP

Tell your NWC friends and classmates about the latest news in your life.

Submit for consideration by May 10 to:

Office of Public Relations • Northwestern College
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Distinguished

Have you been impressed by a classmate’s achievements and service? Nominate him or her for the Distinguished Professional Achievement, Distinguished Service to Humankind or Distinguished Service to Northwestern College award.

Email your nominations to alumni@nwc-iowa.edu

Classic Thoughts

Investing in Moldova

BY ANONYMOUS

As a former member of Northwestern's baseball team, our son visited Moldova several summers ago and came home with a passion for the small Eastern European country that touched our hearts too. He'd learned about microfinance and was enthusiastic about its potential for empowering people who are poor to start their own small businesses. Our son and his coach at the time, Dave Nonnemacher, encouraged my husband and me to visit Moldova and consider how we might become involved.

We didn't really want to go, but the encouragement just kept coming—from our son, his coach and, I guess, the Holy Spirit. That's how, one summer, we found ourselves on a trip to Moldova, hosted by Invest-Credit, a microfinance organization.

Fifty years of communism have left their mark on Moldova. We stayed in a Soviet efficiency apartment building, where staircases are lit by one dim light bulb and children climb on rusty playground equipment in dirt courtyards littered with cigarette butts. We strolled through villages where drinking water is drawn from a community well and corn for livestock is shucked by hand.

We saw desperate young women, willing to be exploited sexually in exchange for a ticket out of Moldova. I was astounded when my husband, noticeably a foreigner, was approached by a woman who said, "You are a nice man; I would marry you."

Abandoned by their Russian rulers after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Moldovans were left with little resource wealth and barely any knowledge of self-governance. Communism had stripped Moldovans of their self-worth, self-reliance and political wherewithal, creating a profoundly dependent society. In fact, Soviet governance succeeded unusually well in Moldova because a history of subservience already haunted the country. Before communism, Moldovans had rarely experienced the societal stability many of their neighboring countries remembered and yearned for when they won their independence.

Moldova's last 20 years of post-communism have

also been years of hardship. As we met with both political leaders and international investors, it became clear this is still a society in a state of crisis. Members of the older generation long for the sustenance of the iron-fisted Soviet regime, while younger Moldovans have glimpsed the fruits of independence and economic entrepreneurship via their televisions, computers and cell phones.

My husband was intrigued with the question of where development efforts should be focused in this country. Should the first priority be a stable government, a system of transportation, cultivation of Moldova's fertile soil, or outside investment leading to increased employment? I was captivated by observing the development of a new society both through governance and societal evolution. We wondered what more can be done and how quickly? As visitors from the wealthiest nation on earth, were there roles for us in Moldova's emergence?

During the months following our trip, these questions fermented and led to others: Could we start by enabling just one Moldovan young person to be educated in ethical business and governing principles—principles he or she could take back to Moldova and put into practice? And could that education happen on a campus filled with diverse, welcoming, trustworthy individuals of high integrity? Could we establish a four-year scholarship that would enable one Moldovan student to graduate from Northwestern, a place we knew would encourage the values Moldova so desperately needs?

Our "Moldovan investment," Cristina Bodarev, started at Northwestern last fall. She's a business administration major from the capital city of Chisinau. We trust God is surrounding her with the right people and directing her steps at Northwestern. We pray regularly for Moldova, a country we've grown to love, and hope Cristina might impact her country someday in ways we can only imagine.

If you would like to contribute to the Moldovan Study Scholarship established by the writer and her husband, contact Cornie Wassink in the advancement office, 712-707-7109 or corniew@nwciowa.edu.



The first recipient of Northwestern's Moldovan Study Scholarship, Cristina Bodarev, right, met her future roommate, Tara Woodward, last summer while Tara was participating in a Summer of Service with a microfinance organization. They are shown in front of the Cathedral of Christ's Nativity in Chisinau, Moldova's capital city.

I M A G I N E

A C A M P A I G N F O R N O R T H W E S T E R N



"I have been pushed to discover what I truly believe. The importance of community and tradition, my idea of what the church should be, and what it means to be a follower of Christ have all changed for the better during my time at Northwestern."

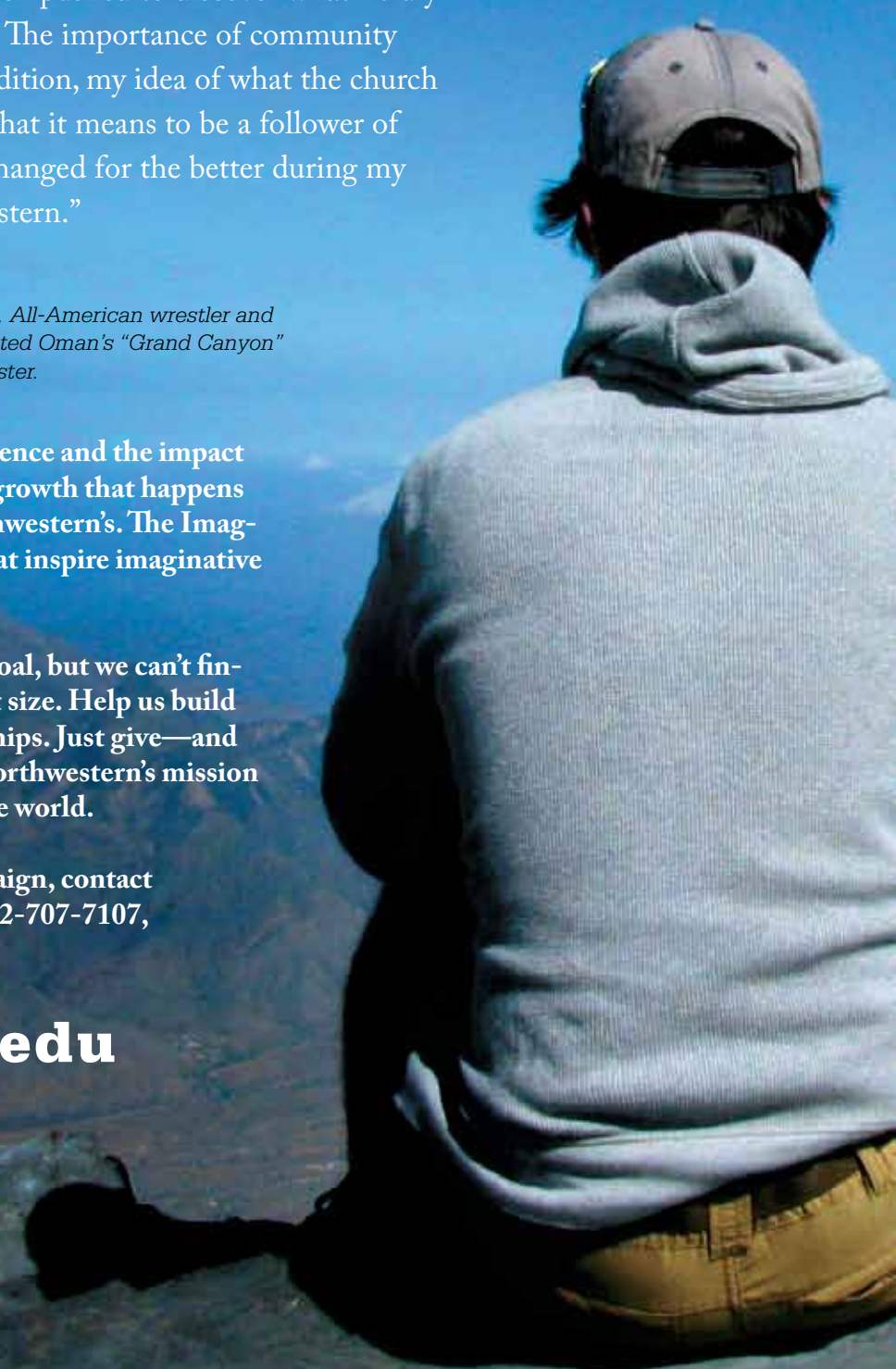
Nic Leither from Atwater, Minn., is a senior psychology major, All-American wrestler and residence life leader who's headed to graduate school. He visited Oman's "Grand Canyon" last spring while participating in Northwestern's Oman Semester.

Students like Nic value their Northwestern experience and the impact it has on their intellectual and spiritual growth—growth that happens best in a relational learning community like Northwestern's. The Imagine Campaign will fund facilities and resources that inspire imaginative thinking and service.

We've raised \$37 million toward our \$55 million goal, but we can't finish without you. Every gift counts, no matter what size. Help us build the learning commons or give to student scholarships. Just give—and imagine how your contribution will strengthen Northwestern's mission and the students and alumni who live it around the world.

If you've not yet made a gift to the Imagine Campaign, contact Vice President for Advancement Jay Wielenga, 712-707-7107, email giving@nwciowa.edu, or visit our website:

imagine.nwciowa.edu



Dance Fever



TOM BECKER

Tickets went on sale at 4 p.m., and within a few minutes, all six shows were sold out. RUSH, begun in 2003 and named for the adrenaline surge that accompanies dancing, is one of the most popular foot-stompin' events on campus.

For RUSH 2012 in February, more than 220 students performed 16 dances, including jazz, hip-hop, lyrical and steam punk.

Dancers came from all corners of campus: artists and athletes, bookworms and class clowns, students

who'd had music or dance lessons and those for whom clapping to the beat requires concentration.

The dances featured original choreography by Northwestern students who then auditioned their peers and rehearsed with them until

they were ready to take the stage as rhythmic wonders.

the Classic