

Northwestern College Magazine

WINTER 2020-21

# *the* Classic



## Physician Assistants

Northwestern graduate students prepare to meet health care need

*Also*

50 Years of Women's Athletics  
At Home on the Red Carpet  
A Chapel Icon Slips Through



# 18

Now a regular fashion accessory for students, faculty and staff, masks portray personalities, highlight interests and convey one's loyalty to Northwestern.



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## Classic People

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

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### On the Cover:

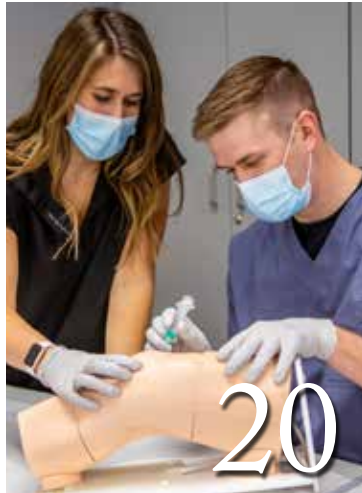
Ashley Hazeman is one of 24 Northwestern students in a new graduate program preparing them for careers as physician assistants.

PHOTO BY LEM MAURER

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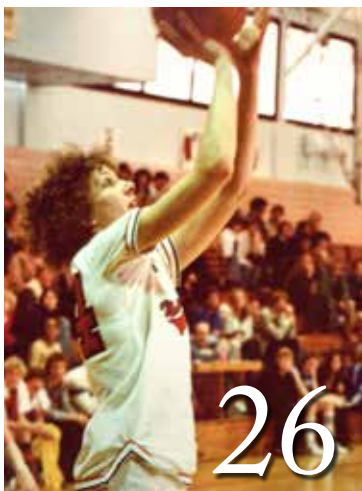
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# Zwemer View



LEMM MAURER

## Responsible Raiders

On Feb. 6, 2020, I sent my first email to the campus informing them of a coronavirus global health emergency and assuring them the college's pandemic planning had begun. What an uncharted time it has been since, affecting nearly every facet of our lives!

I encouraged all faculty and staff who could to work remotely during the months of April and May. In June, we gradually returned to campus offices. Thanks to our academic affairs, campus ministry, registrar's and AV offices, we hosted our first-ever outdoor combined commencement, baccalaureate and academic honors ceremony in July. It was worth the wait to celebrate with graduates and their loved ones in person.

Throughout the summer, we made plans for opening the fall semester with in-person undergraduate classes and full co-curricular activities. It would be impossible to name everyone who played a part in this achievement. Our faculty prepared every class for both in-person and online instruction, knowing we would have positive cases disrupting life daily. Our maintenance team worked to ensure that every classroom would have desks six feet apart, converted three larger "all-purpose" spaces into classrooms, and added extra hand-sanitizer stations all over campus.

Campus ministry was innovative and our athletic department flexible as we converted the four-court area of the Rowenhorst Student Center into chapel space for the first half of the fall semester. Student life staff put together excellent plans for how to care for students in isolation and quarantine, even delivering meals to students. And our computing services team developed a Raider Check app that helps us manage students with symptoms or positive COVID tests.

At least monthly during the summer, members of my cabinet and I held livestreams for students, families and employees, sharing information as our plan for 2020–21 developed. In addition to the cabinet, our Pandemic Response Team and medical responders have worked tirelessly all year.

I am so grateful for our faculty, staff and administrators and the sacrificial service they've displayed. Our people are our greatest strength, and that has never been more evident than during the pandemic.

From the beginning, we asked students to be Responsible Raiders—completing the Raider Check daily, maintaining physical distance whenever possible, and wearing masks in the caf, chapel, class and common spaces. It has been an inconvenience to be sure, but our students so value Northwestern's community that they have done everything and more we have asked of them.

At NWC we believe excellence honors God and serves others. I've been encouraged to see members of our community demonstrate that excellence in the love and care they've shown for one another this year. It's another example of how Raiders stand out.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Greg Christy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" being more prominent than the last name "Christy".

Greg Christy  
*President*

 @NWC\_PGC

# *around the* Green

## Perfect Pass Rate

Northwestern's 2020 nursing graduates recorded a 100% first-time pass rate on the NCLEX-RN exam last summer. All 12 of the nursing alumni who took the exam passed it on their first attempt.

"For this class of students to record a 100% first-time pass rate speaks to the high quality of Northwestern's BSN program," says Dr. Julie Dragstra, nursing department chair. "It shows that we prepare them well for practice,

and it also demonstrates the commitment of students and faculty to achieve at this high level."

Dragstra emphasizes that the pass rate on the NCLEX-RN exam is a benchmark for analyzing a nursing program's quality.

Northwestern's 2020 nursing graduates are working in medical, emergency room, cardiology, oncology, neurology, and burn and wound units. They are employed

across the U.S., having been hired by the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota; Sanford USD Medical Center and Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls; UNC REX Healthcare in Raleigh, North Carolina; and CHI Health St. Elizabeth in Lincoln, Nebraska, among others.

Northwestern offers a traditional undergraduate BSN degree in addition to an RN-to-BSN online option.

**Raiders  
Stand Out**



Northwestern's 2020 nursing graduates recorded a 100% first-time board pass rate.

# High Rankings

Northwestern's excellence continues to be recognized by the experts. This past fall brought four notable rankings:

## U.S. News & World Report

Northwestern is ranked sixth among 76 Midwestern regional colleges in the 2021 Best Colleges guidebook. In addition, Northwestern is one of 33 Best Value Schools and one of 14 cited for Best Undergraduate Teaching. NWC is also in the top 10 in several individual categories, including peer assessment, retention, graduation rate and alumni giving.

## CollegeFactual.com

Northwestern is recognized in the 2021 Best Colleges for the Money ranking as being among the nation's top 5% of schools for overall value—finishing as the 48th overall best value in the nation out of 1,472 colleges analyzed.

## BestValueSchools.org

Northwestern's accounting program is ranked 27th in the nation and first in Iowa by this



The latest rankings by *U.S. News*, *College Factual* and *BestValueSchools* affirm the excellence of a Northwestern College education.

website. Northwestern was also ranked as the second best accounting program among members of the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities, behind only Lipscomb University in Nashville, which was ranked 16th. In 2017, NWC students had an 89.3% CPA exam pass rate—the best in Iowa and second in the nation among all institutions with more than 10 candidates.

## Adoption-Friendly Workplaces

Northwestern made its eighth appearance on a list maintained by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. The college was ranked fifth in the education industry for 2020, behind Yale, New York University, Baylor University and

## Test-optional

Recognizing that some high school seniors have not had the opportunity to take the ACT or SAT due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Northwestern has waived the standardized test score requirement for acceptance to the college for the 2021–22 academic year.

High school seniors can apply to Northwestern without an ACT or SAT test score, and their acceptance is based on their high school GPA. Academic scholarship models have also been revised to accommodate a GPA-only calculation.

# Enrollment Sets Record ... Again

For the second consecutive year, Northwestern has set enrollment records. The fall enrollment of 1,546 students—the highest in school history—was an increase of more than 9% from last year's record of 1,412.

"To achieve record-breaking enrollment during a pandemic is immensely gratifying," says Tamara Fynaardt, vice president for enrollment and marketing. "We found that due to their COVID-impacted education experiences last year, undergraduates are eager for the highly personal, exceptional classroom and campus life experience Northwestern offers."

The record number of students includes the largest-ever number of graduate students, at 461—up from 351 last year. "Our graduate school continues to exceed enrollment goals and add highly sought-after programs," says Fynaardt.

Twenty-four of students are enrolled in the college's new on-site master's program in physician assistant studies. The college's Master of Education program, which started in 2015, also experienced enrollment records this year.



Northwestern's fall enrollment of 1,546 students is the highest in school history.






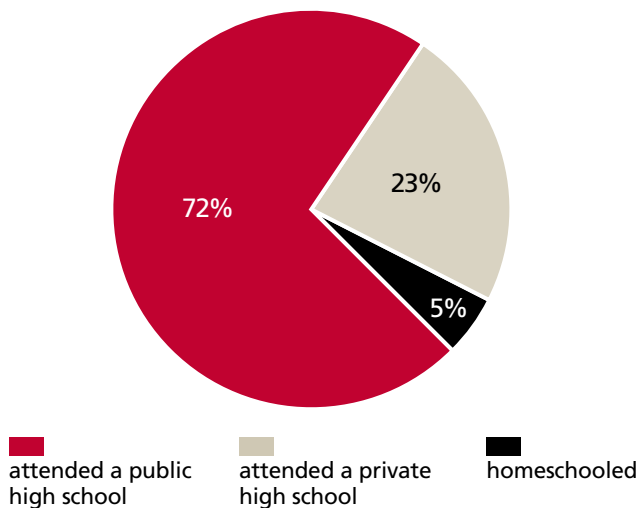
# The Newest Raiders


*Northwestern's Class of 2024*


**23%** have siblings who are attending NWC or are alumni | **13%** are first-generation college students

 **15%**  
are children of  
NWC alumni

 **23%**  
attended a Raider  
athletic camp



 **47%**  
entered with  
college credit

 **27%**  
attend a  
Reformed church

## Top five home states:



**273** first-time freshmen  
**3.57** average high school GPA  
**23.6** average combined ACT  
**13%** multicultural students

**Top five majors:** elementary education, exercise science, biology-health professions, nursing, business administration-management

# Campus Life



In a two-story home between Stegenga Hall and North Suites, the Koinonia House provides a place for six women to grow in community and enhance their leadership skills.

## Building Women Leaders

The Koinonia House, a new living opportunity for women on campus, is designed to help its residents develop their leadership skills. The brainchild of Lindsay Hubbell, resident director of the campus apartments, the house is designed to be a place that encourages women to grow in their Christian identity and as leaders before graduating.

Named after the Greek word for Christian fellowship, the Koinonia House is home to six students. In addition to providing the normal perks of apartment living, it's also a place for Christian women to improve their communication skills and gain hands-on experience with leading.

As adviser of the house, Hubbell uses her own experiences to mentor the young women.

"The living-learning community provides a space for a small cohort of women to be intentionally mentored so they will leave Northwestern as confident women, prepared for their workplaces, relationships and the Kingdom of God," Hubbell says.

Throughout the year, the women read books about community, being unified in Christ, and expressing honesty and vulnerability. They focused on building their identity in Christ during the fall semester so they can practice leadership on campus in the spring.

"I feel a lot more confident in my strengths as a leader as these women have spoken out against my insecurities and reassured me of my unique abilities, while still challenging me to take risks," says resident Jessica Rogers.

In addition to bonding with each other through deep conversations and times of laughter, the women have each had an opportunity to mentor a first-year student, passing down the lessons they've learned through the Koinonia House.

With hospitality as one of their core values, they hope to host more events that focus on education, socialization and spirituality in order to become more confident in their leadership skills.

"The women came together as strangers," says Hubbell, "but ended up having the best time of their college experience because they've never felt more known."

## Servicing Campus

Northwestern's new director of facilities management, Ryan McEwen, brings more than 20 years of experience in leadership and construction management to the job. He began the position in November after serving as vice president of sales for Voss Lighting, a national construction supply company with headquarters in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Now he's tasked with overseeing Northwestern's grounds, facilitating maintenance, and managing custodial and housekeeping duties, as well as overseeing new facilities and building projects.

"My most important goal is to glorify the Lord in my work ethic and in my business relationships," says McEwen. "From there, I plan to help the facilities team provide the best possible environment for our college students and faculty to thrive."

His future goals include implementing eco-friendly initiatives campuswide and helping build a strategic plan for controllability of the facilities.

Ryan and his wife, Amy (Van Engen '98), have four children, including Josh, a Northwestern junior.



Ryan McEwen



# A Warm Welcome

Northwestern broke ground on its newest building—the Frank and Lois Vogel Welcome Center—in October. The \$3.1 million facility is located just north of Christ Chapel and will house the admissions, financial aid, and marketing and communications offices.

The building is named in honor of Frank and the late Lois Vogel, who gave the lead gift of \$1 million for the center. Frank is a 1947 Northwestern alumnus who served as president of Diamond Vogel and was a 28-year member of the college's Board of Trustees.

"It's so fitting that the Vogel Welcome Center will be the space where guests are welcomed to campus," says President Greg Christy. "This building will sit at the intersection of downtown Orange City and the 'front door' to Northwestern's campus, two of Frank and Lois' great loves."

The welcome center has been part of Northwestern's campus master plan since 2012. Upon entering the building, visitors will be greeted in an inviting reception lounge that will include a fireplace and red glass wall displaying the college logo and Raiders Stand Out promise.

"In enrollment, one of our primary goals is to attract students to visit campus because once they experience Raider Nation, they want to be part of this close-knit, Christ-centered academic community," says Tamara Fynaardt, vice president for enrollment and marketing. "This new welcome center will make the strong first impression we're aiming for when they arrive."

The 8,800-square-foot facility is scheduled for completion in August.



# Lives of Service

Three staff members contribute 74 years to NWC

Hired to clean Christ Chapel and DeWitt Music Hall when they were built in 1987, Monte Golden kept those facilities shining until he retired in August.



LEW MAURER

## *A Ray of Sunshine*

Monte Golden will always be grateful for a suggestion given him more than 33 years ago by a friend, Jim Burmakow, a longtime employee in Northwestern's maintenance department. Golden was working on an ambulance crew at a hospital in Cherokee, Iowa, when Burmakow recommended that he consider applying for a job at NWC.

Golden was hired in 1987 as DeWitt Music Hall and Christ Chapel were being completed, and he served as the buildings' main custodian until he retired in August.

With a big smile and a quick wit, Golden was known for calming the nerves of many brides who got married in the chapel—and for teasing students, staff and faculty he encountered throughout his job.

"I think teasing and jokes were Monte's love language," says Dr. Thomas

Holm, music. "He brought regular sunshine—and a lot of it—to our halls."

"We had a lot of fun," says Golden. "We got to be like a family; everyone was so supportive." In addition to bringing merriment to campus, Golden aimed to impress visitors with neat and clean facilities.

Holm says he succeeded. "Keeping up the 'shine' at the water fountain, bathroom sinks and hall carpets were high priorities for Monte, and he did it with good cheer."

Golden says he would have liked to stay at Northwestern, but he needed to be home to help with his wife's health conditions. His focus now is to take care of her—and keep her smiling.



LEW MAURER

After three decades of cleaning Van Peurse Hall, Diane Westenberg retired in August.

## *Cheerful Custodian*

After 30 years of service, Diane Westenberg retired from Northwestern's maintenance department in August. She not only had cared for and maintained Van Peurse Hall, but she was also known for her work ethic, cheerful attitude and servant's heart.

"Diane's job involved cleaning the messes others made," says Dr. Scott Monsma, sociology. "Even on days where the weather contributed to large quantities of mud getting tracked throughout the building, Diane didn't get upset; she just smiled and cleaned it up."

In 2005, Westenberg received Northwestern's Staff Recognition for Inspirational Service Award for her above-and-beyond contributions and commitment to the college.

A former colleague of hers wrote, "Diane is an inspiration to our community because of her loving spirit and attitude. She believes in others and

always sees the good in them."

Monsma recognized the lessons Westenberg passed on to students who worked with her in cleaning VPH.

"In many ways, Diane was as much a mentor and instructor of students as were members of the faculty," he says. "The lessons she imparted to students will have an impact that is felt long after they graduate."

Westenberg was also known for the relationships she had with faculty members. During their time of need, she would always be there for them, even if it meant unlocking their office door for the second time in 20 minutes.

"I've really appreciated the relationships I've built over the years with students, faculty and other staff members," says Westenberg. "I still have relationships with retired co-workers, some of whom have become dear friends."



## Standout Scores

Northwestern seniors taking the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) this year recorded impressive results: Their median scores ranked in the top 10% worldwide. One student scored in the 99th percentile and another in the 98th.

The Raiders' success continues a tradition of strong MCAT scores, with Northwestern student averages frequently ranking in the 75th percentile or higher.

"We think our students' success is attributable to several factors, including our previous students' track record," says Dr. Elizabeth Heeg '01, biology. "It's very helpful for students to talk with others who have succeeded on the exam, hearing what the experience was like and knowing how to create a study plan accordingly."

Heeg also cites the high quality of the education Northwestern students receive in the sciences as well as in the liberal arts. "A quarter of the test covers psychology and sociology concepts, and another 25% is critical reading. Our students shine in those areas because they have built those skills, not only in their science courses, but other courses as well."

Senior Noah Gritters agrees with Heeg. "Northwestern's faculty did an impeccable job in preparing me to take the MCAT," he says. "They always emphasized the most important information in ways that really helped me remember the material. Furthermore, my critical thinking skills developed immensely through my classes."

An additional factor in students' high scores is a voluntary, non-credit pre-MCAT course Heeg offers using the AptarePrep software she developed with Dr. Tim Huffman, Northwestern professor of mathematics, and others. Meeting every other week, science students learn about the exam and then do practice questions with the AptarePrep MCAT software, to which they receive free access.

"It's exciting to see our students get into medical school," says Heeg, "because they are individuals with a strong moral and ethical compass who want to do good for other people in part because of their Christian faith."

Northwestern seniors taking the MCAT recorded median scores in the top 10% worldwide.



FIGATLOR



Lila Simmelink greeted students with a smile in the Wellness Center for 11 years before retiring last summer.

LEM MAURER

## Welcoming Smile

Walking through the door of the Wellness Center, students were greeted by Lila Simmelink's bright smile and cheerful voice. After working for 11 years as an administrative assistant in the office, Simmelink retired from Northwestern last summer.

"Lila provided skilled, dependable and friendly service for the Wellness Center staff, but she also offered a loving, listening ear to countless students who came through her door," says Julie Vermeer Elliott '97, vice president for student life.

Simmelink was known for her assistance in scheduling, handling paperwork, and arranging materials, as well as her interactions with students. She says she enjoyed getting to know every student who came to the Wellness Center and, no matter what students were going through, she sought to consistently meet them with kindness and care.

"Lila was reliably warm and inviting to students," says Director of Counseling Services Dr. Sally Oakes Edman. "Whether they came in with a headache or a panic attack, she greeted them with empathy and a smile."

Students praised her welcoming presence in the Wellness Center, but Simmelink was also recognized for her Christian commitment.

"Lila has a solid faith which she practices and shares with others consistently," says Edman. Simmelink loved Northwestern's Christian environment and the ability to freely encourage students in their faith walk.

"It was a blessing and a privilege to serve in a Christian workplace, using my gifts to support our amazing students with health and counseling needs," she says.

## Innovative Leadership

In November, Northwestern launched a collaborative opportunity to connect students' ingenuity with organizational leaders' insight in ways that will benefit both.

The Center for Innovation and Leadership is designed to invest in communities, organizations and initiatives through five specific programs:

- **Accelerate Siouxland** is a regional leadership development program focused on linking community members, college students and resources for the common good.

- **Learner to Leader** covers curriculum and mentoring programs that connect visionary students and organizational employers with innovative role models.

- **Research & Consultancy** provides access to the opinions, ideas and imaginations of college students for research, assessment, and product or service development.

- **Entrepreneur/Business Leader in Residence** brings experienced and emerging leaders together in the classroom and in the community.

- **Innovation Sandbox** is an inspiring space for collaboration, creative thinking, and problem solving by students, alumni and regional organizations.

"We seek to create experiences that are win-wins for both the Northwestern community and our regional organizations and communities," says Erica Vonk '00, the new center's director. "I'm looking forward to creating a shared space to enable students, staff, faculty, alumni and area organizations to come together and start dreaming."

Vonk, a Northwestern business professor since 2015, played a role in developing the college's interdisciplinary entrepreneurship minor and has connected students with Siouxland organizations through her courses in leadership, organizational behavior and entrepreneurship. She also has experience in agricultural finance and



In her role as director of the new Center for Innovation and Leadership, Erica Vonk will help area businesses and organizations tap into the potential of Northwestern's students.

management, as well as economic and community development. She holds an MBA from the University of South Dakota and is pursuing a doctorate in organizational leadership from Concordia University Chicago.

Northwestern also hired Josh Van Es '09 as the center's assistant director and program coordinator for Accelerate Siouxland. The owner of Orange City's Ben Franklin-Crafts Central, he has 11 years of management experience with Walmart.

Several area leaders played important advisory roles for the center, including Steve Roesner '83, president of Vogel Traffic Services and EZ-Liner, and Mark Gaul, Orange City's community development director. See [nwciowa.edu/innovation](http://nwciowa.edu/innovation) for more.

## Published Professor

A new book focused on servant leadership and forgiveness was edited by Dr. Jiyong (Jenny) Song, assistant professor of business and economics at Northwestern.

*Servant Leadership and Forgiveness: How Leaders Help Heal the Heart of the World* includes chapters written by 21 authors from around the world. Song served as first editor of the anthology and wrote the opening chapter.

The book draws upon contexts from personal, organizational and global levels to engage a deeper conversation about the role of leadership and forgiveness in the midst of political and social upheaval.

Many of the authors, like Song,

are alumni of Gonzaga University's School of Leadership Studies or serve on its advisory board. Song worked alongside three additional editors, all from Gonzaga. She says discussions about developing the book began in 2018.

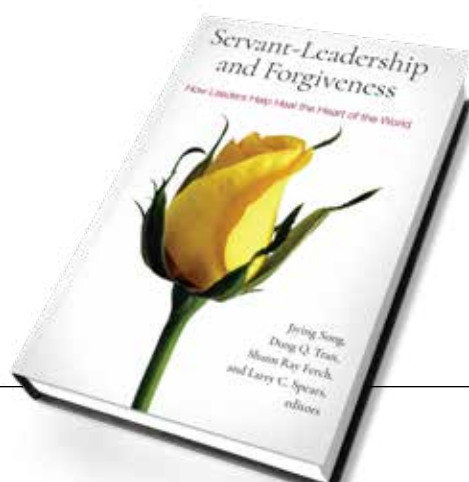
"It feels like it was meant for the book to be published now," says Song. "We need forgiveness at the individual, organizational, national and global levels now more than ever."

The book chapters cover the

theories of servant leadership and apply them to life. Authors included a number of personal forgiveness stories.

"Working on the book was a really enriching journey," says Song. "So many times when I read and edited the stories, I was moved to tears. I hope this book will bring peace and hope to many people."

The anthology is available for purchase on Amazon and the publisher's website, SUNYpress.edu.







Athletic training program director Dr. Rick Loutsch talks with guests attending the Van Peursem Hall renovation dedication.

## Extreme Makeover: VPH Edition

It's not the VPH you may remember. A number of renovations have been made to Van Peursem Hall over the last 18 months. Most noticeable are facilities for the physician assistant and athletic training graduate programs on portions of the second and third floors.

A mock clinic area provides five exam rooms, which help to simulate the clinical environment

physician assistants will experience after they graduate from Northwestern's program. A large skills lab with nine beds facilitates the development of skills for undertaking physical examinations and specific medical procedures.

The physician assistant and athletic training programs are also using several new group study rooms, classrooms and faculty

offices, as well as a locker room and an expanded cadaver room, all of which were dedicated Oct. 1.

"The renovated facilities provide physician assistant and athletic training students an amazing space to collaborate and develop essential skills," says Dr. Christy Hanson, director of the PA program.

## Investing in Students

For the past two years, Northwestern students have received hands-on wealth management opportunities through the Investment Club. The club offers financial experiences through managing a small portion of Northwestern's endowment, researching and creating investment strategies, and learning in a collaborative environment.

"The club helps students try out ideas they learn in the classroom, without having their jobs on the line or intense pressure to get high returns," says Devin Vander Werff '20, one of the club's founders, who is now a financial adviser in West Des Moines.

In addition to partnering with the Business Club in hosting events that promote financial literacy and personal finance education, the Investment Club allows student to learn more about investing through its hands-on experience.

"It's important for students to get as close to real-world experience as possible," says Vander Werff. "Through the club, I became much better at presenting ideas, planning meetings and being a team leader."



**A Northwestern  
connection in the palm  
of your hand.**

**#RaidersStandOut**  
[nwciowa.edu/social-media](http://nwciowa.edu/social-media)

# New Programs

Northwestern is beginning four new academic programs: an undergraduate major in software engineering, a 3+2 option for the master's degree in athletic training program, and two new graduate education programs in teaching history.

## Software Engineering

The computer science department will add a major in software engineering this fall, designed to prepare students for careers in software engineering and development, database administration, and web and mobile app development. The program will focus on how software is developed in industry.

"We're excited to provide students with a program that addresses modern, cutting-edge technology and gives them experience working on projects in a real-life setting," says Dr. Mike Wallinga '01, computer science.

"We've had a number of graduates work in software engineering, including for Google and Microsoft, but this program will offer better preparation, bridging the skills gap between what academics is producing and what industry wants: the ability to design, test, validate, calibrate and work with teams."

## Athletic Training 3+2

The master's degree program in athletic training now has an option that enables students to earn both a bachelor's degree and the master's degree in five years.

"This provides students with an accelerated route into the master's program, saves them a year of undergraduate costs, and gets them into the athletic training workforce a year earlier," says Dr. Rick Loutsch, Northwestern's program director.

To be eligible to complete the 3+2 option, students must be enrolled in Northwestern's exercise science major or an approved

program at an institution that has an articulation agreement in place, like Wayne State College.

Northwestern's on-site athletic training program, accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, begins in June.

## Teaching History

Northwestern began offering two new graduate education

programs in teaching history in January.

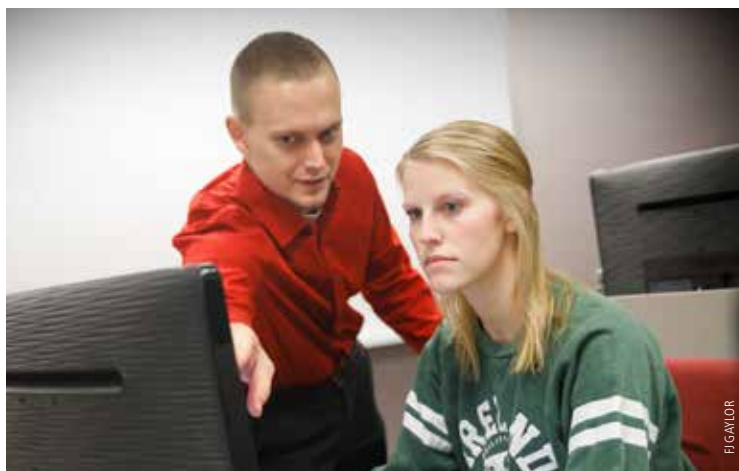
The online Master of Education (M.Ed.) in teaching history features 18 graduate credits in history and is specifically designed for current K–12 social studies and history teachers. Completion of the program will qualify educators to teach college-credit history courses in high school or history in a community college setting. Educators will take 33 total credits for the M.Ed. degree, which can be completed in two years or less.

Teachers interested in completing the 18 graduate credits in history without earning a master's degree can pursue the option of a graduate certificate in teaching history.

"There are very few programs that offer graduate history classes, all online, that are designed with current social studies teachers in mind," says Dr. Rebecca (Vander Molen '03) Koerselman, director of Northwestern's graduate programs in teaching history. "The classes include insightful topics that history teachers will enjoy taking, with content and strategies that can be applied immediately to the classes they are teaching."



LEW MAURER



FIGAYLOR

**LEFT:** Northwestern's computer science department will begin offering a major in software engineering this fall. **ABOVE:** Two new graduate programs in teaching history are being directed by Dr. Rebecca Koerselman, history education.



# Giving to Northwestern College in 2019–20

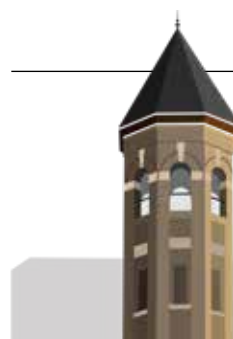


**60** donors gave **\$1,000** or more for the first time

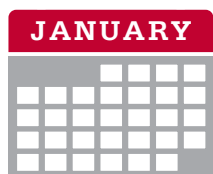
**548** donors gave \$1,000 or more in any giving category



**\$1,300**  
per student underwritten  
by unrestricted gifts



**397** donors gave \$1,000 or more to the Northwestern Fund as members of the college's Tower Society



**590 donors**  
have given 20+ consecutive years



**\$56.3 million**  
value of Northwestern's endowment as of June 30, 2020

**15** new scholarships established (12 endowed and 3 annually funded)



**1,066 volunteers**  
who advocate for Northwestern



# Award Winners

Northwestern recognizes outstanding work and service by faculty and staff



Dr. Rebecca Hoey, dean of the Graduate School and Adult Learning, received Northwestern's 2020 Faculty Inspirational Service Award.



Dan Lassen's customer service and skill in computer programming won him Northwestern's Staff Inspirational Service Award for 2020.

## Critical Contributor

The spring of 2020 presented one of the greatest challenges to instructional continuity Northwestern has ever experienced. The ways of teaching and learning as faculty and students knew them were gone in what seemed like an instant—but Dr. Rebecca Hoey, dean of the Graduate School and Adult Learning, was up for the challenge.

Hired in 2011 as the director of online learning, Hoey was no stranger to developing course material for online instruction. Self-described as a “teacher at heart,” Hoey saw an opportunity. “There was so much I couldn’t change about the pandemic,” she says. “But I could step in where the college needed help and faculty needed support.”

Hoey led the faculty transition to online teaching. “We had to give them a crash course,” she says.

“The expertise, calm and grace Dr. Hoey expressed during that stressful time,

along with her servant-hearted help and encouraging competence, were a boon,” says Dr. Laird Edman, psychology. “That our transition worked as well as it did is surely in great part due to Dr. Hoey and her tireless work.”

Edman was one of many faculty who commended Hoey’s leadership during the pandemic, leading her to receive Northwestern’s 2020 Faculty Inspirational Service Award.

Dr. Nathan Phinney, vice president for academic affairs, echoes the praise for Hoey: “Her work was a critical contribution at a critical time.”

Hoey oversees Northwestern’s online Master of Education program and on-site master’s degree programs in physician assistant studies and athletic training, along with graduate certificates, degree-completion programs in nursing and early childhood education, and continuing education opportunities.

## Problem Solver

Northwestern’s computing services department wanted Dan Lassen ’01 to join their staff so badly they hired him at the beginning of his senior year of college. Those he worked with over the last 20 years in his role as associate director of administrative systems understood why.

“He was key to troubleshooting software problems, developing programming for new processes, and writing new reports,” says Janette Reuter, comptroller. “Dan listened to everyone’s concerns and identified opportunities for improved customer service and efficiencies. He thought outside the box and found solutions we could not come up with on our own. His faithful efforts kept our administrative offices functioning at our best.”

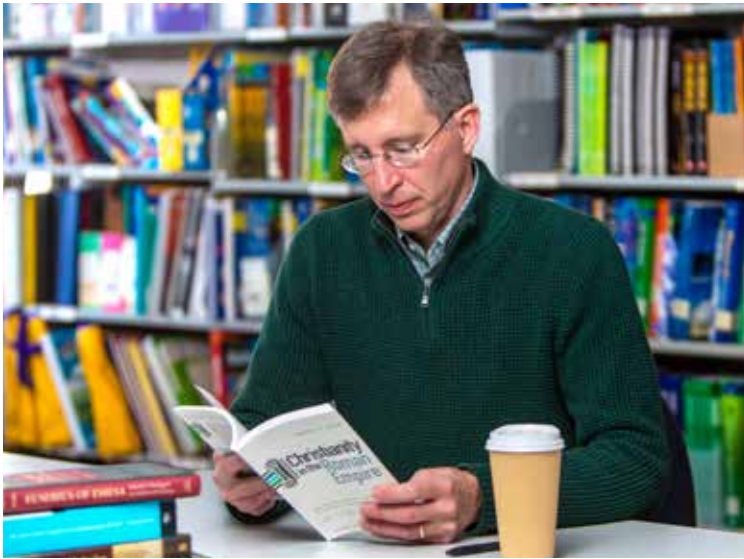
Bev VanDe Griend, advancement financial services coordinator, joined Reuter in nominating Lassen for North-

western’s 2020 Staff Inspirational Service Award. “He was always patient and willing to help us run detailed reports and mailing lists,” she says. “There were times last spring when we were all working from home, and he was answering my emails late into the evening. After a helpdesk request, he always followed up to make sure we had the information needed to get the job done correctly.”

Lassen made a big transition at the end of December: He left Northwestern to focus on farming and to work with Pat Jones ’01 in construction.

“It just felt like the time was right for a change,” he says, adding that he will miss being on campus. “I owe pretty much everything to Northwestern. That’s where I got my education and met my spouse and lifelong friends.”





LEW MAURER

Dr. Robert Winn, the recipient of Northwestern's 2020 Faculty Excellence in Faith and Learning Award, does much of his research in Greek, Latin and other ancient languages.

## Christian Scholar

Research and writing is part of Dr. Robert Winn's calling as a historian.

"I like the idea that I can write something that will help people understand the past better—in particular, the history of Christianity and the history of the church," he says. "There are 2,000 years of people who may have asked the same kind of questions and faced the same kind of difficulties, and we can actually learn from their experiences."

Winn's love of learning was recognized when he was named the 2020 recipient of Northwestern's Faculty Excellence in Faith and Learning Award. The award honors and encourages the calling and responsibility of Christian faculty to devote time and energy to scholarship that faithfully expresses God's revelation in Scripture and creation.

A member of Northwestern's history department since 2004, Winn is a scholar of religious and intellectual history in

the pre- and early Middle Ages. He is the author of a book about a fourth-century bishop and another about key figures and practices of the early church, and he is currently completing a follow-up volume on Christianity in A.D. 300 to 500.

Karen Bohm Barker, Northwestern's recently retired dean of arts and humanities, says she appreciates the depth of Winn's scholarship that joins his specialization in history with his faith.

"Bob creates significant peer-reviewed scholarship that is a testimony to his strong and deep faith," she says. "He works at that scholarship slowly, carefully and consistently."

Winn earned doctoral and master's degrees in early Christian studies at The Catholic University of America.



LEW MAURER

Education professor Tonya Moore-Huss was selected to receive the 2020 Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award after being nominated by students who praised her caring spirit.

## Honored Teacher

Tonya Moore-Huss, known for caring for students' lives both inside and out of the classroom, was the recipient of the Northwestern Teaching Excellence Award for 2020. She was honored during the college's commencement ceremony in July.

After the selection committee reviewed more than 110 student nominations, Moore-Huss was selected as the award winner based upon evidence of strong teaching ability. With more than 20 years of experience in elementary and middle school education, she contributed greatly to Northwestern's education department and NEXT program for the past five years.

Northwestern students said she loved them as if they were her own children. One wrote, "She cares for all her students and wants to help each one succeed, both in the classroom and in life. She demonstrates her faith in a sincere and

welcoming way and always provides encouragement through her words."

Others explained how she surpassed the expectations of her job description to prove she cared about them through occasionally checking up, lending a listening ear and giving advice.

"She is one of the people who has really made Northwestern feel like home," said another student. "She helped make my transition to NWC very smooth."

Students noted her compassionate heart, her encouragement in making real-life connections in class, and her ability to challenge and inspire them to grow.

This fall, Moore-Huss joined the MOC-Floyd Valley Community School District as a special education teacher at Orange City Elementary. She continues to teach online courses in Northwestern's Master of Education program.

# Red Zone

## Raiders Sport a New Logo

BY JULIANA PENNINGS '12

The Raiders started the 2020–21 sports season with a new athletics logo. Revealed in August, the new graphic aims to represent the college's definition of a Raider: "one who is fearless, confident and prepared to finish the task through discipline, sacrifice and the relentless pursuit of excellence."

The primary logo combines a bold font with a new Raider flag (which is also a stylized "R") that symbolizes courage and leadership. Central to the Raider flag is the Northwestern cross, signaling Christ as the focus of everything at Northwestern, including athletics.

"The reputation of the Raiders continues to grow, and we saw a need for a visual that is complementary to the college's word mark and logo while also making an even more commanding impression in the athletic arena," says Chris Yaw '92, head women's basketball coach and member of the task force that commissioned the logo.

Variations of the logo—including a distinct Northwestern "N" with the Raider flag—are also part of the new athletics identity. Utilizing a robust visual identity guide, Northwestern coaches have flexibility in how the branding is used on team apparel and uniforms while fulfilling a strategic goal of having a consistent identity for Raider athletics.

Dr. Micah Parker, vice president for athletics, describes the new logo as a "powerful image" and says it's beneficial for expanding the Raiders'—and Northwestern's—brand. "The logo is an excellent representation of what Northwestern athletics are about: honoring Christ by developing leaders and performing with excellence."

In addition to the new logo, Northwestern announced in October a seven-year agreement with Nike and BSN Sports for team apparel and facility branding.

"This is another important step toward a unified brand and the marketing of Raider athletics," says Parker. "It will benefit all programs and have a direct impact on student-athletes."

The new athletic logo, designed by Greg Elliott of Authentige Branding, will be implemented on team uniforms and apparel and in facilities over the next few years.

For more on Raider sports, visit  
**[nwcraiders.com](http://nwcraiders.com)**







# START EARLY

"With a young family and all of the related expenses, it can be easy to put off charitable giving until the future. But because of the importance of a Christ-centered education, we've chosen to make it a priority to support Northwestern now."

*Join Nathan '13 and Jacklyn (Punt '11) Nieuwendorp in giving to the Northwestern Fund, which annually invests in scholarships, academic programs and support services that benefit the entire campus. Gifts of any size are needed and welcomed.*



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## Mask Fashion

Like people around the world, Northwestern faculty, staff and students have added an accessory to their daily wardrobes: masks. Committed to being "Responsible Raiders," the campus community is making the most of the new fashion statement. Some masks depict people's personalities and highlight their hobbies. Others represent individuals' fields of study or offer words of encouragement. And still others testify to a Raider's love for NWC.

*Photos by Lem Maurer*





Jill Van Otterloo, a professor of practice in Northwestern's new physician assistant studies program, watches as Noelle Berg prepares a sterile field on classmate Jerry John.







# Meeting a Need

*24 students enroll in Northwestern's first class of physician assistants*

STORY BY ANITA CIRULIS  
PHOTOS BY LEM MAURER

**M**egan Stahl decided she wanted to become a physician assistant—or PA—while doing medical mission work in Nepal.

“I worked with a PA there and just really loved the sense of teamwork,” she says. “You get to work with nurses and doctors and be part of an awesome medical decision-making team.”

When Stahl applied to PA master’s degree programs, she was accepted into several but chose the new program starting at Northwestern College. As a small-town girl herself, she loved Orange City and was drawn to the sense of community she felt when she arrived on campus for her interview.

“But the faith part of it was really why I came to Northwestern,” Stahl says. She earned her undergraduate degree at a church-related college, “but I never had [an education] where you can pursue your faith while you’re pursuing your degree. It’s just incredible.”

Stahl is one of 24 students who are part of the first PA cohort at Northwestern, and she’s not the only one drawn to the program’s combination of biblical teaching with a medical curriculum. Jerry John moved to Iowa from the Dallas, Texas, area. The 33-year-old has a

background in the sciences, having worked in clinical research and as a medical scribe for a nephrologist.

“I was looking for a Christian college or university,” John says. He discovered Northwestern on CASPA, the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants. “I liked the faith integration of the program’s vision statement, so I did some research.”

“There aren’t a lot of PA programs that are integrating faith with their curriculum,” says Dr. Christina Hanson, the director of Northwestern’s physician assistant program. “But for many PAs, that’s a big part of why they go into the profession. There are a lot of Christians who feel called to health care and want to learn in that model.”

Northwestern’s faith-based approach also convinced Dr. Alan Laird ’82 to join the program as its medical director. In his other role as chief medical officer for the Orange City Area Health System, Laird knows firsthand the shortage of health care workers, especially in rural areas.

“We, as every place in the nation, are struggling to recruit doctors,” he says. “The need for physicians only continues to grow as our population grows and ages.”

"PAs are trained with the expectation they will be part of a medical team but able to act independently and to treat patients in their area of expertise," he says. "They provide high-quality medical care and access for times a physician intervention isn't required."

Laird praises the dedication of students in Northwestern's first cohort. They range in age from their early 20s to 42, and for many, becoming a PA is their second or third vocation.

Ashley Hazeman of Winona, Minnesota, is among those making a career switch. She majored in psychology in college, earned a master's degree in counseling, and worked as a counselor and as a therapist for children with autism.

"I've always been interested in health care," she says, "but when I was in college, I didn't have a lot of self-confidence to think I could do the hard science classes."

A desire to do more for her community led to her return to school.

"I have patients come in all the time and tell me that they can't find a psychiatrist," Hazeman says. "Being a psych PA has a lot of aspects that I like about being a counselor, like the diagnosis and treatment plans, while also adding the medicine piece. I can use the skills I learned as a counselor in my job as a PA."

In preparation for applying to PA schools, Hazeman took college courses on the side to fulfill prerequisites. The timing of her acceptance into Northwestern's PA program, she believes, is part of God's plan. "It's within driving distance of home, and I could tell it was going to be a really supportive community for me," says the wife and mother of a 12-year-old daughter and 8-year-old son. "This is a big change for my family. My kids only see me on weekends."

Derrick Moss '12 is also making a career change. The Northwestern grad worked six years for NWC as the head athletic trainer for Raider athletic teams. For nearly that long, he also thought about becoming a physician assistant. "I have a passion for working with others," he explains. "I knew being a PA would enhance my opportunities to truly make a difference in someone's quality of life."

**"I knew being a PA would enhance my opportunities to truly make a difference in someone's quality of life."**

Derrick Moss '12

When his alma mater announced it was starting such a program, Moss—like Hazeman—saw God in the timing. Northwestern's was the only program to which he applied.

"Having done my undergraduate work here, I knew the kind of academic rigor that Northwestern strives for, and I knew that would be true of the PA program as well," he says. "I knew I wouldn't have an issue when it came time to sit for my boards."

Both Moss and Hazeman appreciate the unique health care experience each PA student brings to the cohort. One classmate was an EKG tech, so when they learned about EKGs, he was the one with expertise in that area; another worked in a cardiology unit and was the "go-to person" when their studies focused on the heart.

"Now we're transitioning to an orthopedic module," says Moss. "That's probably my strongest suit, having done athletic training, so I would expect I will be able to answer questions from my classmates."

The modular style of learning helps students integrate their understanding from course to course, explains Hanson. All of the medical courses cover the same body system at the same time—an effective learning technique for a program that essentially condenses four years of medical school into 15 months of classroom instruction followed by another 12 months of clinical rotations.

"They warned us it was going to be like drinking from a fire hose," says Moss. "We get a lot thrown at us really quickly, but I've really enjoyed it." He and the other students in his PA cohort are in class



LEFT: Megan Stahl records herself reading her lecture notes and then listens to those notes during daily runs on Orange City's Puddle Jumper Trail. ABOVE: Northwestern's first PA cohort includes students from nine states. Among them is Patience Murapa, who moved to Iowa from Seattle.



from 9 to 5 Mondays through Thursdays and typically dedicate another four hours to studying in the evening. Exams take place on Fridays.

With such a demanding schedule, the PA students spend a lot of time with their professors and the other members of their cohort. Stahl speaks glowingly of the PA faculty, whom she describes as mentors and friends. Relationships with her fellow students are equally as important.

“It is incredibly overwhelming,” she admits when describing all they have to learn, “but when you’re sitting in VPH, hanging out with people you like, it doesn’t feel like you’re studying 12 hours a day.”

Stahl remembers her professors saying on the first day, “Put your swords down. You’re all here because you deserve to be here. Now is the time to help each other.”

Training for a team-based approach to medicine makes it especially important to practice a team-based approach to learning, Moss says. “We want to get everyone through the finish line to be the best future health care providers they can be.”

After spending more than a year together in intense study, these future physician assistants will scatter across the country to complete clinical rotations in family medicine, internal medicine, general surgery, psychiatry, emergency medicine, women’s health and pediatrics. Only then will they be prepared to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam, and upon passing it, begin to serve patients.

John, a musician who serves as a drumline instructor for the Red Raider Athletic Band, enjoys working with his hands and is drawn to a surgical practice. Stahl is passionate about women’s health. Haze-



Derrick Moss works in a conference room on the third floor of Van Peurse Hall, which was remodeled to provide classrooms, offices, study spaces and a lounge for the PA program.

man is leaning toward either psych or emergency medicine. Moss is gravitating toward emergency medicine or orthopedics.

Whatever they do and wherever they practice, they and their classmates will leave Northwestern prepared—as theologian Frederick Buechner said—for God’s calling on their lives: a vocation where their greatest joy meets the world’s greatest need. 🏠



Sandra Muyskens '92 worked as a physician assistant for 25 years before returning to her alma mater to teach in Northwestern’s new PA program.

## Standout Faculty

Northwestern assembled a stellar group of faculty for its master’s degree program in physician assistant studies.

Dr. Christina Hanson, the program director, worked as a physician assistant herself, taught in the PA program of Bethel University, and has a doctorate in education with an emphasis in higher education leadership. Dr. Alan Laird '82, the program’s medical director, is also the chief medical officer for the Orange City Area Health System.

And while the rest of the faculty include physician assistants who worked in primary care—the emphasis of Northwestern’s program—they also have a wide variety of clinical experiences. In addition to Northwestern alum Sandra (Hurlburt '92) Muyskens, they include a disease management consultant, a former software development engineer, and an expert in virtual reality teaching and learning for medical school education.

# At Home on the Red Carpet

## Alumna earns Tony Award nomination for Broadway performance

BY AMY PHILLIPS

**D**ick Wheeler, the central character of Tracy Letts' play *Linda Vista*, alternately elicits boos and applause due to his lack of self-awareness and a witty, though womanizing, bent. This level of audience engagement is nothing new to Cora Vander Broek '00, who played Jules to her fellow actor's Wheeler, and who, at the age of 9, performed Chekhov in *Costa Rica* to an alert crowd.

"The cardboard set kept almost falling on us," she says, remembering her childhood performance. "The audience would scream thinking we were going to get crushed, and we'd turn around just in time."

For a child who moved frequently throughout Central

America with her missionary parents until the age of 15, feeling at home on that makeshift stage was a surprise. She followed that feeling all the way to Broadway and a Tony nomination this year for best performance by an actress in a featured role in a play.

The 74th annual Tony Awards ceremony was postponed indefinitely due to the pandemic. When it is held, Vander Broek will be recognized alongside other well-known nominees such as Jake Gyllenhaal, Blair Underwood and Laura Linney. Vander Broek's husband, actor Matthew Brumlow, screamed loud enough to scare his co-workers when he heard the news.

"Is it a fluke because it's a weird year and a pandemic?" Vander Broek asked herself at the time.

"There's that part of you that starts to pick at it, but I really worked hard at not going down that road. I'm thankful to be surrounded by loved ones who give me complete freedom to celebrate."

*Linda Vista* premiered in 2017 at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre before traveling first to Los Angeles, where Vander Broek lives, and then to Broadway in the fall of 2019. After the play's first night at the Helen Hayes Theater, the cast lined up to clap for Vander Broek and a fellow performer, honoring their Broadway debuts.

Vander Broek's family had

moved to Orange City in time for her sophomore year at MOC-Floyd Valley High School, where she dove into speech and theatre. Her mother asked her friend and Northwestern theatre professor Karen Bohm Barker to offer feedback as Vander Broek prepared for a speech contest.

"I saw a young woman who was not afraid to be herself, not afraid to be vulnerable," says Barker. "From the beginning, Cora had something all the classes on technique can't teach you. She knew herself and wasn't afraid of the emotion inside of her—that alone was so impressive to me."

After a lifetime of moving, Vander Broek appreciated the

SUBMITTED PHOTO





Cora Vander Broek's theatre journey has taken her from Orange City to Chicago, Broadway and now Los Angeles.

prospect of being able to stay in Orange City and study theatre at a private college with a respected theatre program. At Northwestern, Karen and Jeff Barker created a nurturing and empowering environment, she says. Thanks to personalized attention and purposeful exposure to the larger theatre community, she felt prepared to leave Orange City for Chicago, where she would ultimately land the role that would lead her to the (virtual) red carpet.

"I was created to do what I'm doing," Vander Broek says. "It's a deep vocation for me. That's a privilege and a gift from God. The Jesus I know spent time with every type of person and loved every type

of person. It's important to find a way to love whatever character you play, even if they're not a good person. I believe deeply that every story deserves to be told."

With Broadway closed at least through May 2021, Vander Broek feels fortunate to have performed on the New York stage months before theaters shut down. Her focus now is on television and film; thanks to the Tony nomination, her audition prospects—all virtual—have picked up in number and quality.

But at some point midway through her years at Northwestern, Vander Broek worried that she didn't have a plan B. Maybe she should minor in teaching, she

thought, in case her acting career didn't pan out. She bounced the idea off of Karen Barker, who stopped and looked at her.

"Do you want to teach?" she asked.

"No, I want to act," Vander Broek replied.

"Then you're going to act. That's what you're going to do."

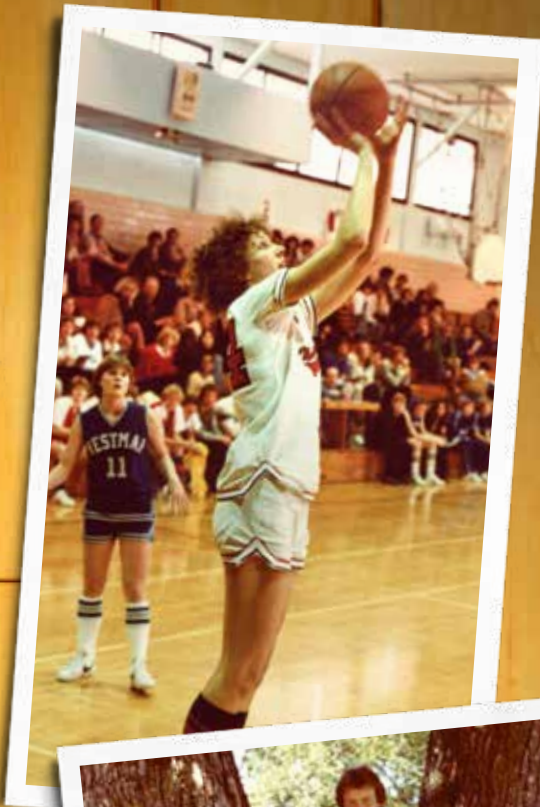
Remembering the conversation, Vander Broek says, "And that's what I did. I never looked back." 🏠

LINDA VISTA PHOTOS TAKEN BY JOAN MARCUS



Her performance in Tracy Letts' play *Linda Vista* earned Cora Vander Broek a Tony Award nomination. With the pandemic shutting theaters down, Vander Broek is now focused on TV and film roles, including appearances in *Grace and Frankie* and *Law & Order: SVU*.





PHOTOS COURTESY OF NORTHWESTERN ARCHIVES, MARY VERY STEEG '72 AND CINDY FLISS '73.



# Lessons in Teamwork

## Intercollegiate women's athletics at NWC celebrates 50th anniversary

BY DUANE BEESON

**N**orthwestern College's first women's athletes learned a lot about teamwork—with an emphasis on “work.”

First, they made a case for starting intercollegiate athletics at Northwestern in 1970–71 by lobbying Athletic Director Don Jacobsen. Several of them had played high school basketball and participated in NWC “powderpuff” intramural games, so why couldn't they compete against other colleges?

Once they got approval, they embarked upon the process of finding opponents. Using the paperwork for the men's conference, several students worked with Jacobsen to form the structure for the women's Io-Kota Conference.

Uniforms? The basketball team began by wearing their own shorts and T-shirts with numbered pin-afores over them.

Facilities? When Northwestern added field hockey and softball a couple of years later, the players prepared the fields and built the goal nets.

The fan base was mostly the athletes' parents—and the men of First East Colenbrander, the teams' unofficial cheerleaders. The basketball team practiced in the Auditorium when the men weren't using the facility, or in Orange City's Town Hall. By the end of

the decade, the men's and women's teams practiced at the same time in the Auditorium, with each squad getting a half court.

The women's teams were known first as the Raiderettes. “None of us liked that—it sounded like something you would put in your hair,” says Brenda Meyer '76. By the mid-1970s, the moniker was Lady Raiders.

Even with meager resources, the women loved the opportunity to compete. “We didn't have women's athletics in my high school, and I craved being an athlete,” says Mary Ver Steeg '72, a member of the first NWC basketball team who returned to coach from 1975 to 1982. “It was fabulous to be on a college team. I loved every minute of it, including practicing.”

“We had a band of sisters who were able to grow together not only in sports but in academics and faith,” says Meyer.

Meyer and Karen (De Boer '79) Woudstra remember team Bible studies and the Christ-centered emphasis Coach Ver Steeg instilled in her squads. “The teams had a sense of purpose and a focus on serving one another,” says Woudstra.

Northwestern's early women's teams experienced a good amount of success. In the inaugural year for intercollegiate basketball, the Raid-

ettes won their first five games and finished 8–4. Northwestern's volleyball teams went 81–40 from 1976 to 1981, and the softball teams were undefeated in the conference from 1977 to 1980.

Jean Mast was Northwestern's first women's coach, leading the volleyball, basketball, field hockey and softball teams while also teaching. When Ver Steeg returned to campus, she coached volleyball, basketball, softball and tennis.

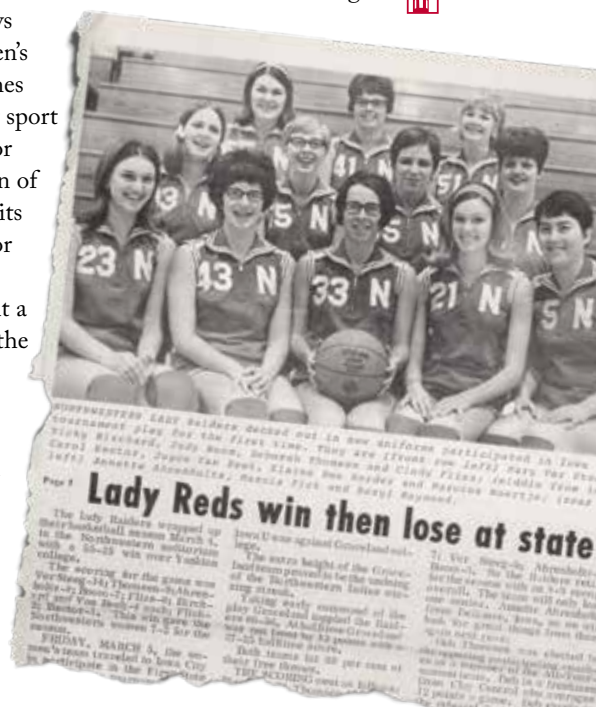
Dr. Earl Woudstra '78, Northwestern's head women's basketball coach from 1994 to 2011 and athletic director from 2014 to 2019, notes that the Raiders' efforts in the 1980s and 1990s to hire more coaches was one of the keys to the growth of the women's athletic programs, as coaches could focus on a particular sport and be a better advocate for that team. The construction of the Bultman Center, with its equality of locker rooms for men's and women's sports, also was a factor. “That sent a strong message that all of the sports are important.”

From its humble beginnings, Northwestern's women's athletics program has become a powerhouse, with five national championships in basketball to its

credit. Thousands of women have grown through the relationships they developed as Raiders and the lessons they learned about hard work, commitment, glorifying God, and what it means to be part of a team.

Ver Steeg shares one lesson from her coaching days: “I told them that if they were late for away games, we would leave. I graced one gal a couple of times. Finally one day we left without her. I drove slow because I didn't really want to leave her—she was one of my starters! We saw her running behind the van, carrying her duffel bag. I made her run a couple blocks before we stopped.”

She was never late again. 🏠





Students often use their chapel slips to summarize that day's talk through artwork or notes.

# Survival of the Chapel Slip

BY DUANE BEESON

Since Northwestern's early days, staff have been tracking chapel attendance. For many decades, students were assigned a particular seat in the Van Peursem Hall chapel, with the freshmen in front and seniors in the balcony. Student workers reviewed sections and tabulated attendance.

The system meant you might not get to sit next to your best friend, but you could make a new one. Some couples' chapel-seat introductions eventually led to marriage proposals.

In 1978 the college announced a new chapel policy. Assigned seating was out, chapel slips were in. Students submitted slips with their names and ID numbers on them, and were encouraged to write comments as well. A *Beacon* article noted that the comments included amateur poetry, wisecracks, complaints, compliments and suggestions for improvement.

Darla Hettinga, Northwestern's student life assistant from 2002 to 2018, remembers one student who wrote "Happy Birthday" on his ticket nearly every day. Another conveyed his ID number using Roman numerals, stymieing work-study students who had to decipher it before entering the number into the system.

Just as some students tried to get an unwarranted credit during the assigned-seating days by having a friend take their seat, some tried to cheat the chapel-slip system by having a friend turn in a slip for them or by saying they lost theirs.

Sometimes, though, the lost-slip pleas were legit. Last January a student found the December 7, 1992, chapel card of Jason Moser '94

jammed between the wood trim and wall in Christ Chapel's balcony. Moser doesn't recall losing it, but he says, "I probably asked for a second slip."

Chapel services are now held from 11:05 to 11:55 a.m. on Tuesdays and from 10:05 to 10:30 a.m. on Fridays. Students are expected to accumulate 28 credits per semester but are given a total of 65 credit options from the regular chapel services, as well as through other special worship and discipleship opportunities.

Dean of Christian Formation Mark DeYounge '08 talks about Northwestern's attendance expectations from the lens of accountability.

"People that love you a lot hold you accountable," he says. "For example, my mom loves me a lot, and she expects me to be present when we celebrate Christmas. Part of being a family is showing up when the family gets together. We are the Raider family—Christ has called us brothers and sisters—and accountability is part of that. Accountability isn't outside of love, but a part of it."

As the fall 2020 semester began, it appeared that chapel slips would be going the way of the freshman beanie, replaced by a mobile app. The goal was to decrease congestion caused by students stopping to turn in their chapel slips, but some technological glitches led to the return of the cards this spring semester.

For now, the days of chapel slips aren't numbered. But students' chapel attendance still is.



# class Notes

**'58 Helen (Ter Haar) Bolks,** Sioux Center, retired in May from Uribe Family Dentistry after more than 40 years of work in the dental profession.

**'65 The Rev. Dean Reeverts** reports that he's still pastoring Walnut Grove United Methodist Church in Prairie City, Illinois, and enjoying it as much as ever.

**'66 Ivan Mulder's** wife, Ruth, died Dec. 21, 2019. Complications from 45 years of disability contributed to her death. Ivan and Ruth were married 58 years.

**'68 Kella Klinker-Simonin** taught a Third Age College Class for Iowa Lakes Community College this fall. "Starring Ingrid Bergman" covered movies in which Bergman received an Academy Award, a Golden Globe or an Emmy.

**'70 The Rev. Daniel Ramaker** and his wife, Karen, have moved to a retirement community in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

**'71 Michal Haug,** Castlewood, South Dakota, is now retired from a career that included serving as executive director of the Wyoming State Arts Council and associate director and executive director of the South Dakota Humanities Committee. He taught English at South Dakota State University from 2001 to 2018.

**Kenneth Klay** has retired after 40 years of missionary service with SIM, a global Christian ministry. During his work with the organization, he served with an agricultural development program in Nigeria, a microfinance loan program in Ghana, and in the U.S. as a technology officer for the Transformation Education Network. He and his wife, Cora, now reside at the SIM Retirement Center in Sebring, Florida.

**'74 Leanne (Peterson) Bailey** retired in July after 42 years of service to Wycliffe Bible Translators and JAARS in Indonesia and Waxhaw, North Carolina. She served in education, library and office management roles while her husband, Ken, also served the organizations as an aircraft mechanic. They reside in Lancaster, South Carolina.

**Glenn Van Ekeren** recently published a book, *Little Leadership Lessons ... From an Old Guy*, with practical lessons and insights from his life of leadership. The paperback is available for purchase on Amazon. Glenn serves as the president of Vetter Health Services in Omaha. He has written and edited many books, including the *12 Simple Secrets of Happiness* series.

**'75 Dr. Nicholas deVries** has received the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award after being featured in multiple editions of *Marquis Who's Who* registries. He retired in 2019 after 21 years as a radiologist at Orange City Area Health System.

**'76 Barbara (Te Brink) and Marty Hodgen** met while dissecting a cat in a biology lab at NWC and celebrated their 46th wedding anniversary in August. Barbara retired from teaching high school biology and math in 2016, and Marty retired last spring after a career in agricultural business. They live in Omro, Wisconsin.

**'77 Mark Vellinga** has returned to Orange City after pastoring the Mescalero (New Mexico) Reformed Church. He is serving as community engagement coordinator for ATLAS, pairing hurting people with compassionate community members and developing people to serve as mentors.

**'78 The Rev. Dr. Rodney Veldhuizen** and his wife, **Debbie (Stratbucker '78)**, have

## Red Ties

**KRISTIN (BREEMS '03) RUCKS**  
Director of the Alumni Network

Working with the Northwestern Network, I primarily help people plug into the college in ways that are meaningful for them. That can be by speaking in a class, hiring new graduates, setting up an internship, attending a Network event, referring and encouraging prospective students, and more. There are many ways to engage with Northwestern College on a practical level, even if you are far from campus.

Last year, the alumni and parent relations office launched a prayer initiative for parents of current students. We developed a prayer card that lists 31 prompts as a way to pray for NWC every month. We have formally organized other ways for alumni, parents and friends to remain a part of campus, but had been remiss in not asking for a very important way to support Northwestern: prayer.

There have been many times in the advancement office when we have known of a colleague, alum or community member in a difficult situation, and we have been privileged to pray for that person. I know the same can be said for many other departments around campus. There is tremendous strength in a small campus community like ours that believes in the power of prayer. As we lift each other up, we humbly ask that you stay involved in the life of the college by praying for NWC. Pray for President Greg Christy; pray for our Board of Trustees; pray for our students, faculty and staff.

If you would like to join our prayer initiative, please email me at [kristin.rucks@nwciowa.edu](mailto:kristin.rucks@nwciowa.edu), and I will send you a prayer card that will guide you through 31 general requests for the Northwestern community.

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NRSV)





ABBY DISTLER

Dr. Randall Haight is vice president of medical affairs at Capital Region Medical Center in Jefferson City, Missouri. He recently earned an MBA from the Isenberg School of Management, UMass Amherst.

## Guiding Principles

Two Bible verses guide the approach Dr. Randall Haight '88 takes as vice president of medical affairs at Capital Region Medical Center in Jefferson City, Missouri.

The first is Proverbs 27:17, which proclaims that iron sharpens iron, or as Haight puts it, "one person sharpens another." The second is Philippians 2:3-4, the admonition to put others first.

As Capital Region's chief medical officer since 2010, Haight oversees quality and patient safety. He works to foster an environment of collaboration and humility, bridging the gap between the administrative and clinical departments of the hospital. He also brings those values to patient care, which comprises about 30% of his time.

When the coronavirus pandemic hit the United States last year, Haight and colleagues had to completely rethink how they provided care and then convince patients it was safe to come in. The experience reinforced his guiding principles and the goal of being transparent, even when there are no easy answers.

"It's always been true that you should be open and honest with your patients and your colleagues, but I think that's especially true when there are so many unknowns," says Haight, who was recognized last year by Becker's Healthcare as one of the "100 hospital and health system chief medical officers to know."

BY JARED KALTWASSER

retired from pastoral ministry and established New Trails, a ministry that encourages pastors, first responders and other front-line caregivers to take time for self-reflection through intentional wilderness sabbaticals. They also provide guided backpack trips through the Black Hills of South Dakota and the Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming to help individuals avoid burnout and remain strong in their professions.

**'80 Larryl Humme**, Mokena, Illinois, is the director of advancement for the Reformed Church in America. He previously served as the RCA's regional coordinator for development and associate director of development and as Trinity Christian College's vice president of development.

**'83 Ryan Achterhoff** of Orange City, chief administrative officer for Pizza Ranch, received the 2020 Industry Champion Award from the Iowa Restaurant Association in November. He was recognized for his efforts to help Pizza Ranch and other Iowa restaurants survive during the pandemic. He led a series of webinars teaching restaurant owners across the state how to access financial assistance to weather the loss of business due to the pandemic, and he lobbied state and federal legislators on behalf of the industry.

**Michelle Levigne** is co-owner of a small Christian press, Mt. Zion Ridge Press. She also operates YeOldeDragonBooks.com.

**'88 Karen (Kludas) Roghair**, Orange City, has been working for Hope Haven for six years.

**'89 Dr. Doug Hochstetler** is the associate dean for the College of Health and Behavioral Studies at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He previously served as the director of academic affairs at Penn State Lehigh Valley.

**'90 The Rev. Luke Schouten** is the pastor at Emmanuel Reformed Church in Morrison, Illinois. He served the last seven years at First Reformed Church in Sibley, Iowa.

**Dr. John Swart** and Cytotheryx, the startup biomedical research company for which he serves as CEO, have been honored with a 2020 R.A.V.E. (Recognizing Awarding Valuing Entrepreneurs) Award from Rochester (Minnesota) Area Economic Development. The company, founded in 2019, focuses on the development of a high-quality source of primary human liver cells and has a close relationship with the Mayo Clinic.

**'91 Steve Meester** was ordained as minister and installed at Bethel Reformed Church in Lester, Iowa, in August. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from Western Theological Seminary in May. Steve and his wife, **Shelly (Feekes '94)**, live south of Lester.

**'92 T-Graphics West**, co-owned by **Dan Van Beek** and **Lori (Burris) Van Beek**, celebrated its 28th anniversary last summer. The Chino, California, screen printing and embroidering firm has provided various items to Northwestern over the years.

**'93 Renia (Park) Snyder** earned a master's degree in learning and teaching with a credential in special education from the University of Redlands. She is a special education teacher at Palm Middle School in Moreno Valley, California.

**Dan Zomermaand**, Sioux Center, has been appointed Sioux County treasurer. He worked for the last six years as a marketing consultant at PMA Financial Network and represented the Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust.

**'97 Melanie Mason**, Waukegan, Iowa, completed a doctorate



in athletic training from Temple University and is now an assistant professor of health and movement science at Graceland University.

**'98 Rebecca (Schreuder) Gómez** is the K-12 director of Spanish immersion for Pella (Iowa) Christian Schools. She serves as the liaison between immersion teachers, parents, administration, media and consultants.

**'01 Koury Kramer**, head baseball coach at West Lyon High School, was selected as the *Northwest Iowa Review* 2020 Baseball Coach of the Year after guiding the Wildcats to a semifinal berth in the state tournament. The team compiled a 15-4 record.

**'02 Sara Friedrichsen**, head softball coach at Boyden-Hull/Rock Valley High School, was selected as the *Northwest Iowa Review* 2020 Softball Coach of the Year after leading the Nighthawks to their fourth state tournament appearance in six seasons. The team finished with a 14-3 record. She is stepping down as coach after 14 seasons in that position.

**'04 Josh Perkins** earned a doctorate in higher education administration and student personnel from Kent State University in May. He now serves as the university's director of student success programs.

In November, **Melissa Tagg** won a 2020 Christy Award in the contemporary romance category for *Now and Then and Always*. The Christy Awards have honored Christian novels of excellence, imagination and creativity since 1999. Melissa has written 15 novels.

**'05 Doug Van Zanten** is an assistant vice president and associate general counsel for EMC Insurance Companies. His wife, **Carrie (Stromley '05)**, is a speech-language

pathologist for the Heartland Area Education Agency. They reside in Des Moines, Iowa.

**'07 Molly (Gort) Schilling** is the superintendent at Adrian (Minnesota) Public Schools. She previously served as the 6-12 principal at Hills-Beaver Creek and PreK-8 principal at George-Little Rock, Iowa.

**'09 Emily Boettcher**, a farmer near Spirit Lake, received the 2020 Women Impacting Agriculture Award from the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. She has been involved with FFA and J-Term students at Spirit Lake High School, taking them on tours of various ag-related industries and farms in the area. She also serves as treasurer for the Dickinson County Farm Bureau.

After coaching wrestling for West Point and competing in the U.S. Olympic Trials, **Enock Francois** earned a doctorate in educational leadership and administration from the University of the Cumberlands. He now is special services coordinator and an associate head wrestling coach at The Villages Charter School in Florida.

**'10 Tyler Glanzer** is the principal and activities director for George-Little Rock (Iowa) Middle School and High School. He previously taught math at the school since 2014.

**'11 Aleah Stenberg** works for the Minneapolis Public Works Department.

**'12 Jordan Kruse** earned a master's degree in counseling and human development from South Dakota State University and serves as a school counselor at Sioux Falls Christian.

**'14 Sarah Stofer**, Austin, Texas, serves as the supply noncommissioned officer for the 36th

Infantry Division Band. She plays trombone and electric bass in the ensemble.

**Samantha (Kleinsasser) Van Gorp** has joined Orange City Area Health System as a nurse practitioner. She previously worked at Avera Medical Group in Sibley, Iowa.

**'15 Tyler Janota** is the director of basketball sport performance at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City. He previously spent three years as an assistant strength and conditioning coach at the University of Texas, working with the men's and women's basketball teams.

**'17 Danielle (Cupp) Atkinson** teaches seventh grade English in Las Vegas, Nevada. Her husband, Alex, is a construction planner for Cox Communications.

**'18 Josh Vander Zwaag** is an account executive at Deveron Corporation, an agriculture technology company. On Oct. 19, he and his colleagues assisted in virtually opening the Toronto Stock Exchange in celebration of the company's new listing on the TSX Venture Exchange. Josh resides in Blue Springs, Missouri.

**'19 Alyson Eversman** won a Faculty Selection Award for her essay *Farming the Prairie*, which was published in Central Lakes College's *Bent Pine* journal.

**Emelie (Swonger) Laackmann**, Sioux Center, is assistant office manager and a dance instructor at Robin's School of Dance. Her husband, **Bradley '20**, is a sports information graduate assistant at Dordt.

**Mason O'Donnell** is a financial analyst at Stockman Bank in Billings, Montana. His responsibilities include modeling interest rate and liquidity risk, as well

as assisting in the analysis of balance sheet strategies, funding options and firm capitalization.

**Anna Stroh** teaches first grade at Robert Frost Elementary in Sioux Falls.

**Connor Tupper** is attending medical school at Creighton University in Omaha. He has done research in New York City the last three summers.

## New Arrivals

Jen and **Phil Brinks '04**, son, Oliver Michael

Ben and **Jill (Dykstra '07) Bavier**, daughter, Lucy Charlotte, joins Eli (2) Luke and **Brooke (Sliefert '07)**

**Nielsen**, son, Kamden Luke, joins Kendall (9) and Kinley (6)

Tom and **Geri (Genant '09) Carroll**, daughter, Elouise Rachel, joins Charlie (1)

**Jenni (Sybesma '09) and Kyle Och-sner '09**, daughter, Osa Odette, joins Luna (2)

**Carrie (Manifold '10) and Jason Blaha '09**, daughter, Adelaide Quinn, joins Jesse (6) and Jamie (3)

Eric and **Sarah (Hansen '10) Vermeer**, daughter, Esther Grace, joins Josiah (7) and Vivian (4)

**Janna (Bloemendaal '11) and Kadrian Hardersen '08**, daughter, Haidyn Amelia, joins Braelynn (5), Kynleigh (4) and Adley (1)

**Alayna (Carlson '11) and Caleb Kester '11**, daughter, Aubrielle Marie, joins Caedan (7), Delaynie (4) and Emmett (2)

Brad and **Emily (Gowing '11) Lawson**, son, Elijah James

Bill and **Jasper (Shull '12) Guildner**, daughter, Evelyn Marie

Steve and **Kelli (Neevel '12) King**, son, Maxwell Kars, joins Levi (6) and Owen (3)

Michael and **Megan (Herlyn '12) McCoy**, daughter, Jada Lynn  
**Amanda (Eisenga '13) and Noah**



# Pull Together Now

## Northwestern's Annual Day of Giving Thursday, Feb. 18

Join the fun and do your part to support Northwestern during AllNDay. This year's annual giving event will feature the Eras of Excellence competition, bookstore gift certificates for members of the winning team, and \$100,000 in matching gifts.

Follow us on social media for more details.

#RaidersAllN • [allnday.nwciowa.edu](http://allnday.nwciowa.edu)



**Bohlmann '13**, twins, Blakely Fae and Zander Rey

**Rachel (Lynn '13)** and **Matt Honken '15**, son, Asa Matthew, joins Iris (2)

**Larissa (Sapp '13)** and **Ben Miller '13**, daughter, Emery Marie, joins Avery (4) and Sawyer (2)

Alex and **Anna (Cloeter '13) Ward**, son, Barrett

**Johannah (Jensen '14)** and **Davis Bloemendaal '14**, son, Kase Davis, joins Walker (4) and Briar (1)

**Dawn (Gildersleeve '14)** and **Taylor Bodin '14**, daughter, Rose James, joins Grace (3)

**Lindsey (Vander Velde '14)** and **John Hellinga '16**, son, Calvin Felix Mike and **Jennifer (Koehn '15)**

**Haugaard**, son, Levi Gary Trent and **Megan (Bruxvoort '15) Pingel**, son, Griffin William, joins Olivia (4) and Elsie (2)

Stephanie and **David Runia '15**, daughter, Mackenzie Kay

Brandon and **Joslynn (Roth '17) Clark**, daughter, Harley Mae

**Courtney (Tucker '17)** and **Taylor Johnston '16**, son, Rowan Alexander **Amanda (Vander Stelt '17)** and **Drew**

**Lemke '17**, daughter, Eloise Faith Brett and **Kaleigh (Schildhouse '17) Van Middendorp**, daughter, Cambrea Marie

## Marriages

**Karisa Fuerniss '16** and Joe Kuipers, Maple Park, Illinois

**Emily Bokowski '17** and Brandon Broschat, Omaha

**Danielle Cupp '17** and Alex Atkinson, Las Vegas, Nevada

**Emelie Swonger '19** and **Bradley Laackmann '20**, Sioux Center

**Kaylee Puttmann '20** and Caleb Netten, La Vista, Nebraska

*The couples reside in the city listed.*

## In Memoriam

**Paul** and **Lois De Jong** of Orange City died July 26 and Dec. 20, respectively, at ages 86 and 85. They were longtime Red Raider fans whose support of Northwestern athletics earned them the 1996 NAIA

Sears DieHard Fan Award. The De Jongs were well known for providing fresh produce and meat to coaches, having players over to their farm for meals, and giving cupcakes to NWC basketball teams after they scored 100 points. Paul also was a longtime member of the Raider Rooter board. They are survived by three children.

**Cal Heemstra** of Orange City, who worked as a part-time NWC maintenance assistant for several years, died Dec. 5 at the age of 85. He worked as general manager of the Farmers Cooperative Associations in Boyden and Orange City/Maurice. He served on the boards of Land O'Lakes and Iowa Institute for Cooperatives and was a consistory member and teacher at Trinity Reformed Church. Among his survivors are his wife, Bev; and five children, including **Brad '83** and **Dan '89**.

**Jane Greller**, Northwestern's theatre costume shop supervisor from 1996 to 2000 and widow of **John**, the college's vice president for advancement from 1992 to 2009, died in Newberg, Oregon, Oct. 17 at age 71. A Hope College gradu-

ate, she taught in elementary schools in Michigan, Ohio and Alaska before becoming a stay-at-home mother. She is survived by four children, including **Brian '96** and **Michael '00**.

**Pearl (Herwynen '40) Kuyper**, 98, of Lampassas, Texas, died March 14. She was a stay-at-home mother as her family lived in three northwest Iowa communities and Des Moines. In retirement, they lived in Georgetown, Texas, where she was active at First United Methodist Church. She also volunteered for 30 years at the Caring Place. Among her survivors are three children.

**Samuel De Jong '46**, Orange City, died Sept. 23 at the age of 92. He established a trucking company in Orange City; owned and operated a grocery store in Valley Springs, South Dakota; and trucked for a packing plant in Worthington, Minnesota. His survivors include seven children and three siblings.

**Elynor (Heemstra '48) Vander Wilt** died July 28 in Orange City at age 92. She worked as a secretary for the Sioux Coun-



## Raiders Stand Out

ty health nurse and at the Farm Bureau Insurance office before moving to Grand Rapids, Michigan, with her husband, Jack. After he retired, they returned to Orange City, where she was a member of First Reformed Church. Among her survivors are three children, including **Gayle Newby '73**, and two sisters, **Audrey Landegent '54** and **Carole Kempema '57**.

**Dr. Arnold Menning '50**, age 89, died Aug. 9 in Phoenix, Arizona. He served in the Army during the Korean conflict and later earned a doctorate from South Dakota State University, where he was dean of the College of General Registration. A longtime basketball coach, he retired as an assistant vice chancellor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He is survived by four children.

**Thelma (Intveld '50) Menning** of Fountain Hills, Arizona, died Nov. 29 at age 88. She taught elementary and preschool for several years and later served as a library specialist in Omaha, Nebraska. Among her survivors are four children and two siblings, including **Leroy '56**.

**Marvella (Huisman '51) Duisternars** of Orange City, 88, died Nov. 24. She worked as a secretary for Silent Sioux, K-Products and two law firms. A former 4-H leader, she was a member of the Dutch Heritage Boosters, Saber Saddle Club and Calvary Christian Reformed Church. Her survivors include three children, **Shawn Peuse '78**, **Dan '81** and **Todd '85**; and two sisters, including **Hazel Prather '50**.

**The Rev. Donald Den Hartog '53**, 87, died in Orange City Dec. 16. After attending Northwestern, he graduated from Hope College and Western Theological Seminary. He ministered at Reformed churches in Rockford and Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Chicago and Lombard, Illinois. In retirement, he served part time at Trinity Reformed Church in Orange City. He is survived by his wife, Audrey; three children; and two siblings.

**Harold Dykstra '53** died Sept. 27 at the age of 87 in Sioux Falls. He had a long career in the poultry and egg business, serving for many years as the owner and operator of Canton Produce. He retired from his position of manager of logistics and operations at Michaels Foods in 2014. Among his survivors are his wife, Beverly, and five children, including **Jonna '92**.

**Howard Schutt '54** of Brookings, South Dakota, died Oct. 17 at age 86. A military veteran, he was a stockbroker for IDS for nearly 20 years. He retired in 2010 after working nearly 30 years at the South Dakota State University Foundation Seed Stocks Division. He was also a member of the Tyndall Library Board and treasurer of the Methodist Church Board. He is survived by four children and four stepchildren.

**Norman Vander Lee '54** of Rock Rapids, Iowa, died Nov. 23 at age 86. He taught elementary school for three years before earning an accounting degree at the University of South Dakota. He began working at Kooiker Chevrolet in Rock Rapids in 1959, and the dealership became Vander Lee Motors in 1989. He was active in leadership roles at First Reformed Church. Survivors include three children, including **Rollie '82** and **Jerry '85**, and two siblings, including **Merlyn '65**.

**The Rev. Wilmer VerMeer '54** of Savage, Minnesota, died Dec. 15, 2019, at the age of 85. He earned a Master of Divinity degree from Western Theological Seminary and served churches in Davis, South Dakota; Roseland and Hollandale, Minnesota; Brandon, Wisconsin; Morrison, Illinois; and Colton, South Dakota, before retiring in 2000. Among his survivors are his wife, Joyce, and three sons, including **Barry '81**.

**Thelma (Jouwstra '56) Haverdink**, age 83, died Aug. 2 in Orange City. She taught elementary school in Rock Valley



SUBMITTED PHOTO

In his role as CEO-elect of American Family Insurance, Bill Westrate is heavily involved in the community. He is vice chair of United Way of Dane County and a board member of American Family Children's Hospital and NWC.

## Mutual Benefits

A year from now, Bill Westrate '94 will be CEO of American Family Insurance, a Fortune 300 company. But today, the CEO-elect is holed up in his home's laundry room, working remotely like so many people across the country.

He does get into American Family's headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin, once or twice a week, but when he's there, Westrate is joined by few others in the 1.5 million-square-foot facility.

While the pandemic has rocked society, Westrate says it has provided American Family an opportunity to shine.

His company was the first auto insurer to send relief checks to customers in recognition of fewer claims—and was followed by many others. That action helped earn the firm record customer satisfaction levels and a top rating for response to the pandemic by the J.D. Power market research company.

As a mutual insurance company, American Family's focus is on delivering value to policyholders—its owners—rather than to investors. That's one of the reasons Westrate has been with the corporation for 23 years—starting as an actuary and advancing into various VP roles, the chief operating officer position in 2014, and the presidency in 2017.

"I'm proud of what we do. We serve an important role in the lives of our customers," says Westrate, whose goals include continuing to increase inclusion in the workplace to attract and retain great talent.

BY DUANE BEESON



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Sarah Connolly oversees programs that serve young children with autism and their families at the May Institute near Boston.

## Enabling Communication

From an early age, Dr. Sarah Connolly '09 understood that nonverbal children have something to say.

Her mother, a special education teacher, ran a side business adapting computers for children with disabilities. Connolly and her sister tagged along.

"In the '80s and '90s, this was cutting edge; not a lot of people knew how to use technology to help a child who doesn't know how to talk," says Connolly. "I spent a lot of my childhood in the homes of children with disabilities—and we still keep in touch."

Connolly started as a special education major at Northwestern but soon sensed she wanted to serve this population outside of the classroom. She earned master's and doctoral degrees in school psychology from Ball State University and became a licensed clinical psychologist and a board-certified behavior analyst with a focus on establishing communication skills in minimally verbal children.

Now director of early intervention for the May Institute in Randolph, Massachusetts, Connolly oversees programs for children and their families. She's watched as children who previously had no way to express themselves learn to communicate with their families and friends.

"The earlier and more intensively we can start, the better," she says. "Our goal is not to suppress or change a child from who they are, but to help them become the most authentic versions of themselves they can be."

BY AMY PHILLIPS

and at Orange City Christian before embarking on a 22-year career teaching at Wee Dutchmen and Wee Blessings Preschool. A member of First Reformed Church, she participated in women's Bible study groups and taught Sunday school. Survivors include her husband, **Gene '56**, and four children, including **Dave '92**.

**Ruth (Jacobsma '60) De Vries**, 80, died July 23 in San Jose, California. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees from San Jose State University and taught first grade for 34 years. She earned teacher of the year honors from her district one year and retired in 2004. Ruth also served as director of music for many years at Church of the Chimes, where she taught Sunday school and vacation Bible school. She is survived by her husband, **Don '60**, and two sons.

**David Ver Steeg '66** of Katy, Texas, died July 12 at the age of 76. After two years at Northwestern, he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in geological engineering from Iowa State University. His career involved research in oil exploration and recovery technology with Marathon and Amoco. With assignments in Denver, New Orleans and Houston, he held two patents related to his research, as well as a significant oil discovery. After retirement, he spent several years volunteering at the Community Redevelopment Corporation in downtown Houston, Habitat for Humanity and Katy Christian Ministries. Among his survivors are his wife, **Joan (Muilenburg '66)**, and three daughters.

**Allan Huizenga '67**, Stoughton, Wisconsin, died Dec. 18 at the age of 76. An Army veteran, he graduated from Western Theological Seminary, was a social worker for nine years, and owned a Christian bookstore in Madison, Wisconsin, for 26 years. He competed in horseshoe pitching tournaments throughout North America. Survivors include his wife, **June (Hout-sma '67)**, and three siblings.

**David Kleis '67** died April 25 in St.

Petersburg, Florida, at the age of 75. He taught in Sioux Center and Minneapolis before working in the banking and insurance fields in Hospers, Marcus and Des Moines, Iowa. He lived in St. Petersburg since 1999. He is survived by two sons, including **Karlton '96**.

**Linda (Vanderhorst '68) Van Beek**, 74, died Sept. 23. A California native, she taught in the Chino Valley Unified School District for more than 20 years and earned a master's degree from California State University, Fullerton. After retiring in 2004, she moved to Monument, Colorado, where she was active in P.E.O. International. Among her survivors are her husband, Tony; two children, including **Dan '92**; and four siblings.

**Betty (Hembs '69) Taylor** of Hartley, Iowa, died May 10 at age 85. An elementary teacher for many years, mostly in Sutherland, Iowa, she was active in the Iowa Writing Project. She started the Hartley Writers Group, published a collection of her poems and essays, and was involved in several anthologies. She also participated in the rehabilitation of the Patch-Eeten House Historical Museum and the restoration of the Pleasant View Cemetery Chapel. Survivors include her husband, Orville, and two sons.

**Phyllis (Mehrens' 71) Vander Sluis**, 86, died Nov. 10 in Sanborn, Iowa. She earned a teaching certificate from Buena Vista University and taught fifth grade in Linn Grove. She later completed a bachelor's degree at NWC and taught at Zion Lutheran School in Paullina, Iowa. She was a member of Bethel Lutheran Church in Sutherland, Iowa, teaching confirmation classes and serving as a member of the Altar Guild. She is survived by her three children.

**Cornie Wassink '73**, Northwestern's director of planned giving, died Nov. 12 at the University of Minnesota Farview Hospital at the age of 70. A member of Northwestern's staff for 43 years, he





served as the college's first alumni director. A chartered life underwriter, he was a board member of Leave a Legacy Iowa and past president of the Planned

Giving Council of Siouxland. He had served as District 6 chair of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and received its 2004 Distinguished Service Award. A charter member of the Northwestern Athletic Hall of Fame, he officiated eight sports over the years and co-founded the Iowa Association of Track Officials. He was inducted into the Iowa High School Athletic Association Officials Hall of Fame in 2008 and the Iowa Track Officials Hall of Fame in 2009. In his 50 years of officiating, he was named state official of the year eight times between football, track and cross country. Survivors include his wife, **Deb**, who retired from Northwestern's business office in 2019; two sons; and four sisters, including **Arlis Folkerts '81**.

**Herman Vink '78** of Belmond, Iowa, died Dec. 5 at the age of 64. He worked in maintenance at Eaton Corporation for 28 years and most recently at Clarion Packaging. He was active at Holmes Baptist Church. Among his survivors are his wife, Kristine; five children; and a sister.

**Brian Cottrell '80** died Aug. 28 at age 61 in Boone, Iowa. He worked in the information technology department for the Iowa Department of Transportation for 30 years. He was also a member of Grace Church in Des Moines. He is survived by his wife, **Cathy (Cosgrove '80)**; his mother; and two siblings.

**Donna (Visser '84) Van Der Linden**, 58, died Nov. 8 in Orange City. She worked at St. Jude Medical Center in Fullerton, California, for 35 years and taught swimming lessons. She was a member of Emmanuel Reformed Church in Paramount, where she participated in

the adult choir and annual Christmas dinner theatre production and directed the children's choir. Her survivors include two daughters, her mother and four siblings.

**Rob De Jong '93** of Rock Valley, Iowa, died Sept. 22 at age 51 from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. He owned and operated a Subway for many years before selling the business recently and focusing on farming. Among his survivors are his wife, Lynette; three children; his mother; and three siblings.

**David TenClay '09** died Nov. 11 in Des Moines, Iowa, at age 34. After attending Northwestern, he graduated from Columbia College Chicago. He worked as a repair analyst/alternative disposition asset manager for Wells Fargo and was active on the worship team at Westview Church. He is survived by his parents, Roger and **Sherry (Vander Meer '77)**, and a brother, **Mike '07**.

**Sam deVries '15** died Nov. 30 at the age of 28 after struggling with an autoimmune disorder for seven years. After graduating from Northwestern, he lived in Rapid City, South Dakota, before returning to Orange City. Survivors include his parents, **Nick '75** and Cindy, and brothers **Nicholas '18** and **Jacob '18**.

**Auggie Hubbard '23** died Oct 23. He was active in Northwestern's music and theatre programs and a member of Church of the Savior in Orange City. Among his survivors are his parents, **Robert**, NWC theatre professor, and **April**, former NWC theatre professor; and two brothers, including **Charlie '20**.

**LET US KNOW:** Email your news for the next *Classic* by March 1 to [classic@nwc-iowa.edu](mailto:classic@nwc-iowa.edu).



Sarah Schweinsberg (right), of WORLD News Group, interviews one of the grandchildren of a Japanese-American family that was interned at Heart Mountain.

## Clearly Inspiring

Sometimes inspiration springs from surprising sources. As a high school freshman, Sarah (Wedel '16) Schweinsberg wore square glasses that reminded her friends of then vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin. Spurred to learn more, Schweinsberg studied Palin and discovered her education in journalism, sparking her own desire to use her love of words in that field.

Now a radio reporter for WORLD News Group, a news organization that reports current events grounded in biblical truth, Schweinsberg continues to find inspiration in often unnoticed places to share in WORLD'S daily news podcast, *The World and Everything In It*. Even without the square glasses, Schweinsberg has a sharp eye for a story that shines light on human goodness.

For example, driving through Wyoming last year for an assignment, she happened upon a sign for Heart Mountain, an unfamiliar landmark that triggered her curiosity. She had discovered Heart Mountain Relocation Center, a former Japanese internment camp. Invited back two months later, she witnessed the reunion of dozens of Japanese-American families who shared stories of both their internment and their resilience.

Schweinsberg loves meeting people wherever she is and harnessing words to tell their stories in powerful—some might even say *inspiring*—ways. But she would say it is her subjects who inspire.

"What I love about my job is that I get to find amazing people. They're not on big stages, but they're doing such incredible, Godly work."

BY BETH (NIKKEL '02) GAULKE

# Classic Thoughts

## Not Who I Used to Be

BY CHRIS GODFREDSSEN '92



Blasphemer. Persecutor. Insolent opponent of the gospel.

These are words used by the Apostle Paul to describe himself. While nobody at Northwestern called me those names during my years at NWC, they certainly could have.

One of my most vivid memories from my time at NWC was a conversation I had with one of my baseball coaches. Mark Bloemendaal '81 sat me down near the end of my college days and pointedly asked, "How do you want to be remembered around here?" He proceeded to tell me how people saw me. While he didn't use Paul's words, I knew they were true of me. While not great to hear at the time, Mark's words made a significant impact on me.

My years at NWC were spent unaware of the grace of God that was available for me to claim in the person and work of Jesus Christ. I lived out of a false version of myself that I created in order to feel safe in the world. The true version of the person who God created me to be would be discovered (and is still being discovered) later in life.

Men like Cory Brandt '92, Bob De Boer '91, Kurt Erickson '92 and Kris Korver '92—among others—were the poster boys for NWC in those years; I was anything but. I enjoyed my time at NWC but drank and played my way through school, missing out on most of what God had for me ... or so one might think.

Reflecting on those years, I am mindful of the ways coaches Korver, Brandt and Meyer impacted my life, scattering seeds that germinated years later. I am aware of how many teammates influenced me too. And though I'm not proud of the life I lived then, I am acutely aware of the impact those experiences had on the truer version of the life I now live.

I was ordained in September—28 years after graduating from Northwestern—as a minister of word and sacrament in the Reformed Church in America. It is my pleasure to serve the East and West Sioux classes as classis leader, acting as a catalyst for church health and multiplication. I minister to pastors, work with pastoral search teams, and lean into conflict within churches in healthy and redemptive ways. My life experience enables me to serve in hard places like prisons and to walk with people in

the darkest moments of the human experience. I also have the privilege of journeying with people through an ongoing process of spiritual formation known as Faithwalking.

As Paul wrote, "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor and a man of violence. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus." (I Timothy 1:12-14, NRSV)

My call includes helping people understand they have God-given gifts, skills, talents and passions and that God wants them to use those to join him in restoring all things—including individuals, families, churches, communities and social systems—to God's intended design.

This is God's work, and we get to play a part. For me, it's been a long and winding road. After graduating from NWC, I ran small-town newspapers (Marion, Pocahontas, Sibley and Rock Valley, Iowa) in pursuit of the American dream. God had other plans and called me to ministry—a call I fought for some time. Eventually giving in, I engaged a commissioned pastor process and was the pastor of a second-campus ministry in Rock Valley. I transitioned to become the classis leader in 2012 and graduated with a Master of Divinity degree from Western Theological Seminary in May.

I am grateful for the life God has given me. By the grace of God, that life is enhanced by my wife, Kathy, who still loves me 28 years later. We have four kids (three daughters and a son) who we think are pretty great, a son-in-law who is an exceptional human being, and two beautiful granddaughters whom we adore.

**Chris Godfredsen is the classis leader for the East and West Sioux classes of the Synod of the Heartland (Reformed Church in America). He is a pastor to pastors, a catalyst for church health and church multiplication, and a Faithwalking facilitator and coach.**



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# Shakespeare in the Park

William Shakespeare's romantic comedy *Love's Labour's Lost* returned to the outdoor stage in October when Northwestern's theatre department performed it in Orange City's Windmill Park.

"What audiences experienced was similar to what performances were like at the Globe Theatre in Elizabethan times," says Dr. Robert Hubbard, director.

Hubbard provided audiences with an opportunity to laugh at current circumstances by including COVID-19 references—such as elbow bumps and hand sanitizer—in the play. Taking the Act 5, Scene 2, line of the show, "We will every one be mask'd," literally, Hubbard incorporated masks into the cast's Renaissance-inspired costumes.

"The production was a testament to one of the great hallmarks of the arts," says Dr. John Vonder Bruegge, dean of arts and humanities. "Art can't be suppressed even in the most adverse circumstances."

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