

Arbor Light

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY ANN ARBOR



ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Campus deans' dynamic perspectives contribute to a vibrant learning environment

Arbor Light *contents*

FALL/WINTER 2019



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Arbor Light

ARBOR LIGHT is the official magazine of Concordia University Ann Arbor. It shares the stories of exciting advancements on campus; notable accomplishments of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni; and the life-changing service Concordians undertake for Christ in the Church and world. The biannual publication is sent to tens of thousands of alumni, parents, and stakeholders each fall and spring.

The Office of Strategy and University Affairs is responsible for the production of *Arbor Light*. The magazine's editorial team welcomes your feedback. Please send comments or queries to Arborlight@cuaa.edu.

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ON THE COVER:

CUAA's campus deans include, from left: Erin Laverick, PhD (School of Arts and Sciences), Cindy Fenske, DNP (School of Nursing), Suzy Siegle, EdD, JD, (Haab School of Business), and Sandra Harris, EdD (School of Education).



CUAA students **Elizabeth Trent ('22)**, **Courtney Evans ('20)**, and **Mandi Ressler ('19)** greet incoming Cardinals at Admitted Student Day.

Concordia recently celebrated an anniversary. On July 1, 2013, Concordia University Ann Arbor and Concordia University Wisconsin officially joined to become one university with two residential campuses sharing a wide array of post-traditional academic programs. These days we do not talk so much about our merger. The day-to-day reality of what it means for us to be Concordia University is our focus.


One measure of that reality was the recent comprehensive accreditation visit of the Higher Learning Commission. A particular aim of the visiting team was to assess and report on how well our new university model is working. The result of the visit, I am delighted to report, could not have been more positive. Our peers in higher education have endorsed our "one-university-two campuses" Concordia with high praise.

Obviously, we are quite pleased to have such positive affirmation, and we will always strive to offer a first-rate life and learning experience for all Concordians. In the pages that follow, you will see several sterling examples of Concordia in action.

Of course, there are many colleges and universities that do all kinds of commendable things. The Concordia distinction, I believe, is something that I draw from our two campus themes for this academic year. In Ann Arbor, based on the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, the theme is "Embrace(d)." In Mequon, based on 2 Corinthians 12:9, the theme is "Sufficient Grace in God's Perfect Plan." In honor of our sixth anniversary, I marry these themes to underscore the foundation and frame for what we desire for every Concordian—the "Grace Embrace!" God's "Grace Embrace" in Christ Jesus defines who we are. Ultimately, what sets Concordia apart is the prevalence of the promise of God's grace given to us as a gift in the saving work of Jesus Christ.

As another academic year launches, and new and returning students arrive on campus, or meet us online, "the Grace Embrace" of Jesus reminds them that Concordia is a very special place to be. Indeed, God's "Grace Embrace" is the day-to-day reality of what it means for us to be Concordia.






To God be the Glory,


REV. PATRICK T. FERRY, PHD
President



social scene

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-  cuaa.edu/news

THE SNOWBALL EFFECT

These snowmen were built 42 years apart in the exact same spot. Winter fun in Ann Arbor—some things never change!

1977: Joyce Cummings

2019: Micah Biermann ('22),

Sean Sheppard ('22), and Jonah Grimm ('20)



CAMPUS VIEWS

Concordians all over the world post about CUAA. Check out this snap of our beautiful chapel by [@slmac20](#)! Do you have a photo of your campus experiences? Post it using [#CUAA](#)!



RIGHT ON TRACK

The Thunder Sports Complex is ready for you, Cardinals! Read more about this project at [blog.cuaa.edu/thunder-sports-complex](#).

Small but mighty

With its 1,280-student enrollment count, CUAA admittedly comes nowhere close to the size of its neighboring state schools—but CUAA student Allie Miot ('21) shares why you can be completely okay with that. Read her thoughts here: [blog.cuaa.edu/small-school](#).



EMBRACE(D) A sweet moment posted by Calvin Brown as he helped his sons move into their residence halls: “Continue to be Humble, continue to Learn and grow in every area of your lives. Daddy loves You!”



“Known. Personally, individually, by name.”

At CUAA, we take the time to not only provide a great education, but also to really get to know each and every one of our students.



This is to those who champion Concordia through social media.

Every tweet, every post, every “like,” every comment, and every share—we notice you, and we appreciate you!



**TOP FAN
JOY MCLAUGHLIN**

Joy has taken a very active part in the life of our page. Because of her continual engagement, Facebook has named her our current Top Fan! Thanks for the support, Joy!

SOCIAL HOUR

Are you a morning person or a night owl? We took a moment to see what time our Instagram followers are active online. (We see you, 2 AM-ers!)

AVERAGE NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS ONLINE

- 2 AM **75**
- 6 AM **340**
- 10 AM **546**
- 2 PM **580**
- 6 PM **616**
- 10 PM **528**

THE LATEST IN NEW PROGRAMS

Since its merge with Concordia University Wisconsin in 2013, enrollment on the Ann Arbor campus has seen unprecedented growth. The university continues to grow and respond to the needs of learners in the 21st century. Within the past academic year, Concordia has taken steps to launch several academic offerings for all levels of learners.

- **Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies** Offered at Concordia University Ann Arbor and Wisconsin
- **Bachelor of Arts in Healthcare Management** Offered at Concordia University Ann Arbor and Wisconsin
- **Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration** Offered at Concordia University Ann Arbor and Wisconsin
- **Certificate in Interprofessional Informatics** Offered online
- **Doctorate of Education in Leadership in Innovation and Continuous Improvement** Offered online with two residency requirements in Wisconsin
- **Master of Arts in Child Life** Offered at Concordia University Ann Arbor
- **Professional Master's in Business Administration** Offered online or at Concordia University Ann Arbor
- **Master of Product Development—Food and Beverage** Offered online or at Concordia University Wisconsin

Classes for the programs listed above are already underway. Learn more about these programs, including how to enroll, at blog.cuaa.edu/fall-2019-programs.



Eric Shanburn stepped into his new role as Bachelor of Social Work program coordinator this year.

NEW SOCIAL WORK LEAD FINDS MISSION FIT AT CUA

Take one look at Eric Shanburn's professional resume, and it's immediately clear that his passion is to serve others.

Within the past decade alone, the Michigan native has founded nonprofits in two different cities, both dedicated to connecting those living in poverty with food and some of the other most basic necessities of life.

It's no exaggeration, then, to say that he has a wealth of insight to share with would-be social workers. Now, at Concordia University Ann Arbor, he gets to do just that.

As the new program coordinator of Concordia's Bachelor of Social Work program, Shanburn is charged with nurturing one of CUA's newer undergraduate offerings. In 2017, Concordia launched its bachelor's in social work to meet the growing need for more skilled workers throughout the nation. The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the profession is expected to grow by 12 percent between 2014 and 2024, which equates to approximately 74,800 new positions.

Concordia is doing its part to meet the need by offering a truncated timeline to a master's degree. With its master's in social work program offered through the university's Wisconsin campus, students who complete the CUA bachelor's program are eligible for

advanced standing for the MSW degree at CUW. In other words, candidates could gain their bachelor's and master's in the field in just five years.

While helping to address a dire market need is certainly rewarding, Shanburn says what excites him the most is the chance to teach at a Christian university and to be a part of the

stories of those who will go on to make a difference in the lives of others.

"I love supporting young people and those who are on a journey," Shanburn says. "I'm especially pleased to be able to do that at a Christian university that values the faith

DID YOU KNOW?
YOU COULD EARN A BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S IN SOCIAL WORK IN JUST FIVE YEARS THROUGH CONCORDIA.

formation of its students and places a priority on the integration of Christian thought into academics."

Shanburn says he's also excited that Concordia's small class sizes afford him the opportunity to work closely with students.

"The access that students have to their professors and the CUA staff is unprecedented," Shanburn says. "The community and atmosphere here are special. Students won't get lost like they might in a large social work program, and they'll get the individual attention they deserve in order to be empowered to do great things for others."

Read Shanburn's full story at blog.cuaa.edu/Shanburn. Learn more about CUA's social work program by visiting cuaa.edu/socialwork.



5 academic schools

CONCORDIA HAS ADDED A SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS, BRINGING ITS TOTAL NUMBER OF ACADEMIC SCHOOLS TO FIVE. IT'S THE SECOND SCHOOL (INCLUDING SCHOOL OF NURSING) TO BE ADDED SINCE THE MERGE WITH CUW.

DUNCAN'S DAILY

Campus Pastor Rev. Randy Duncan ('88) provides uncommon encouragement to the Concordia University Ann Arbor community, and he does so on a daily basis.

In addition to teaching theology classes, providing pastoral counsel, facilitating Daily Chapel, and nurturing student development, Duncan assumed responsibility for CUAA's all-campus prayer email when he transitioned from director of campus ministry to campus pastor in January 2019. Duncan's personable approach to the morning communication has resonated with the campus, especially Concordia students.

"I saw the email as a way to reach an audience in more than just an informational way but also a transformational way," said Duncan. "Part of what I've tried to do with the email is not just go for the head but also for the heart."

Duncan begins his message with a vulnerable, humorous, or friendly introduction. It may be a challenge he's been going through, a lesson he's learned, or reflection from his own morning devotion.

Ever wake up with nothing really wrong but nothing feeling right? That was me this morning, and my prayers were basically just being quiet before God. You know what? That time helped tremendously and helped center me. It reminded me that my emotions are not the voice of God. He is going to see us through, friends. Oh, and in case you were wondering, I just checked and the tomb is still empty. :) That's good news!

Duncan says that whether it's in print or in the pulpit, he wants to be himself and use the experiences, talents, and personality God has given him to connect with the people around him.

After his introduction, campus ministry announcements, and campus-wide prayer requests, Duncan ends the message with a final thought,

WHEN PEOPLE PRAISE YOU, DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD. WHEN THEY CRITICIZE YOU, DON'T LET IT GET TO YOUR HEART.



Rev. Randy Duncan became CUAA's campus pastor in January 2019 after serving as director of campus ministry since 2015.

adoringly nicknamed by students as "Duncan's Daily."

The succinct salutation is a one-sentence encouragement or reminder (as shown below) that Duncan stores in a notebook with his wallet from things he hears, thinks about, or reads. The students will often share Duncan's Daily to their own social media platforms or write it down in their planners for the day.

"People won't always remember what exactly you said, but they do remember how you made them feel," said Duncan. "I want our students to feel loved: loved by God, loved by me, and loved by our campus. I want them to know they can come to me with anything."

“

God gave us mouths that close and ears that don't. That must tell us something.

”

TRY PRAYING BEFORE YOU OVERTHINK.

”

The Enemy wants to define you by your scars. Jesus wants to define you by His.

“

GREAT THINGS RARELY COME FROM OUR COMFORT ZONES.

”

Don't let who you were keep you from who you are becoming.

“

GOD'S "NO" IS SIMPLY REDIRECTION, NOT REJECTION.

Between the big days

I recently mentioned to some parents of new students that a few of my favorite days of the year are fall Move-In Day and Commencement. The mix of emotions on fall Move-In Day is palpable. Incoming Cardinals are excited but anxious; they're ready but nervous. The emotions of parents and guardians often parallel those of new students. Energy is in the air as the campus comes alive. Everyone (well, mostly everyone) is ready to step back into the routine of the academic year.

Commencement—whether in December or May—marks a transition. We celebrate God's work. We honor our graduates. We pray for what is ahead. Yet there's still a real plethora of emotions. Everyone (well, mostly everyone) is ready for the joy that Commencement brings to students and families, and the pivotal moment it marks in the lives of graduates.

Those are my favorite days. But it's what happens *between those days* that sets Concordia University Ann Arbor apart from other excellent colleges and universities. As you read this edition of *Arbor Light*, we're between the big days. Be assured that your Concordia is living her mission of developing "students in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world." These are the days where formative conversations happen and where students take steps of faith. Some days are a struggle and others seem simple. Trusted professors are challenging students with high academic rigor. Coaches are doing more than coaching; they're guiding, leading, and shaping men and women for life.

Between the big days, students are learning what it means to Live Uncommon.

As you finish this article, would you pause and join with me in prayer for the days between the big days? Please pray for students who are struggling, that they seek strength in Christ. Pray for students who are celebrating, that they remember their identity in Christ. Pray that all Concordians would fix their eyes on Jesus, who is "the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent" (Colossians 1:18).

At Concordia, we're grateful for every day, because every day is an opportunity to love students and serve them well.

REV. DR. RYAN PETERSON

Vice President of Administration

Chief Liaison to the Office of the President



BANNER YEAR FOR CARDINAL ATHLETICS

Cardinal fans had a lot to celebrate throughout the 2018–19 academic year. The hard work and dedication of over 500 student-athletes and coaches led to all-time-high achievements in athletic department history.

The pinnacle performance occurred when Concordia University Ann Arbor's competitive cheer team took first place at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) national championships on March 9, 2019. This victory is the first national championship title earned by a team in Concordia's 56-year history, with the first individual title earned in 2018 when Stephanie Johnston ('18) won the women's marathon at the NAIA outdoor track and field



national championships.

"When it dawned on me that we won I thought, 'Oh my goodness. It happened. This is happening,'" said Head Cheer Coach Kate Edge, who also oversees CUA's competitive dance and stunt teams, and was

later named the NAIA coach of the year. "When they announced the third place team, then I knew we would either be second or first. I walked over to our team and reminded them, 'Remember what we said, we are proud of our performance no matter what.'"

The cheer squad's 2018–19 season motto "One Step Closer" drove them to focus on the task at hand each day of the season, taking it one step, one stunt, and one routine at a time until they reached their ultimate goal of performing a zero deduction routine at nationals.

And they achieved it.

While Concordia Cardinals athletic programs accomplished many accolades within the athletic arena, there were also big wins off the field throughout the year. Champions of Character awards, academic honors, and active Athletes in Action community groups continue to support the fulfillment of Concordia's mission of developing "students in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world."

Learn more about Cardinal athletics at concordiacardinals.com.



STATS

1STNAIA COMPETITIVE
CHEER NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIP1STNCCAA BASEBALL
WORLD SERIES1STINAUGURAL SEASONS
COMPLETED BY
MEN'S AND WOMEN'S
HOCKEY2NDNAIA NATIONAL
MEN'S BOWLING
INVITATIONAL

#6

HIGHEST NATIONAL
RANKING IN
FOOTBALL PROGRAM
HISTORY

101

STUDENT-ATHLETES
ON ALL-CONFERENCE
ACADEMIC TEAMS

2000+

CUMULATIVE HOURS
OF COMMUNITY
SERVICE BY STUDENT
ATHLETES

Outdoor symphony concert brings 1,200 to campus



Concordia University Ann Arbor welcomed 1,200 people from the Ann Arbor community for a free outdoor performance by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra (A²SO).

Conducted by Steven Jarvi, the performance was titled "River Sounds in the Key of A²." The collaborative event between CUAA and the A²SO had been a year in the making, featuring a mix of classical and pops music for an 80-minute performance.

Concordia leadership and A²SO Executive Director Mary Steffek Blaske both had a dream to provide the community with an outdoor performance in a beautiful Ann Arbor location on the Huron River.

On Saturday, June 8, the mutual vision came true.

The event was made possible through the generous donation of Karl Kreft, a long-time supporter of Concordia's fine arts. Kreft's financial contribution allowed Concordia to offer free admission to the performance on the university's riverside grounds.

The Concordia community was extremely pleased to extend an opportunity for so many people to see and enjoy the campus and facilities, and hopes that this is one of many events like this to come.

Learn more about CUAA's Kreft Arts Program performances at cuaa.edu/kreftarts.

Concordia receives positive reaffirmation of accreditation



The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has reaffirmed Concordia University's accreditation. This is the first accreditation approval received since CUAA's 2013 merge with CUW. A major aspect of the evaluation was a comprehensive report in which Concordia demonstrated, using evidence, that it meets the standards of high quality set forth by the HLC. After reading the report, review teams from the HLC visited both campuses in spring 2019. Reviewers commented specifically on the evidence of strong growth of the two universities into one institution. Concordia received the maximum number of years for this cycle of accreditation and will next seek reaffirmation in the 2028-29 school year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more events and full information, visit cuaa.edu/events.

October

- 04-05—Homecoming Weekend
- 10-13—Fall Play
- 11—All Concordia Alumni & Friends Reception at LEA St. Louis
- 15—Concordia Wind and String Ensemble
- 17—Choir Concert
- 18—Admissions Visit Day
- 24-25—Fall Break

November

- 01-03—Senior High School Tool Time Retreat
- 06—Books and Coffee Discussion: "Bunk"
- 11—CUAA Veterans Day Celebration
- 15-December 15—Kreft Center Gallery Art Exhibit: Darren Haper's "We're Here for You"
- 16—Admissions Visit Day
- 17—Bach Vespers (Arborsong and the Boychoir of Ann Arbor)
- 21—Concordia University Marching Band Year in Review Concert
- 26—Concordia Wind and String Ensemble
- 28-December 1—Thanksgiving Break

December

- 6-8—42nd Annual Boar's Head Festival
- 14—Nursing Pinning Ceremony
- 15—Commencement

January

- 18—Musical Theatre Day
- 24-25—Concordia Invitational Tournament at Chicago

February

- 07—Worship Arts Weekend
- 17—Admissions Visit Day
- 28—Honor Band Weekend

March

- 10—Lutheran Music Festival
- 12—Concordia Wind and String Ensemble

ON THE FAST (AND FLEXIBLE) TRACK

By **Kali Thiel**, *Strategic Communications*

While there are plenty of reasons to not rush through one's collegiate experience, the benefits of an early walk across the commencement stage also cannot be denied.

As a Lutheran higher education community, Concordia's commitment to developing "students in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world" also extends to helping students be good stewards of their time and financial resources. Even before questions began to swirl within the national discourse about the cost and value of higher education, Concordia was working to thoughtfully respond to the needs and desires of its learners.

Within the past few decades, Concordia has piloted multiple programs that remain today. These programs have been strategically designed to allow more flexibility or greater cost savings, and, in some cases, early graduation—without sacrificing the educational caliber the job market demands.

For those motivated students who know early on what they're called to do, and are ambitious enough to make it happen in as few years as possible, Concordia offers a few attractive options.

MASON TROWBRIDGE IS the envy of his friend group when it comes to his higher education timeline.

While some of his peers thought they were doing well to get their bachelor's and master's degrees in five years, the Buffalo, New York, native will graduate with both degrees in just four years—and he'll get to do it for the price of just one degree.

High-achieving incoming freshmen have the opportunity to apply for Concordia University Ann Arbor's Justice and Public Policy Scholars or Business Scholars programs to take advantage of the deal.

Through JPP Scholars, students can acquire their JPP undergraduate degree, as well as a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership and Administration, in just four years. The Business Scholars program, meanwhile, allows students to gain their MBA and a bachelor's degree in one of a variety of areas within the same timeframe.

While the reward is sweet, the path to get there is rigorous. These student scholars are required to maintain a 3.5 GPA, and complete internships related to both their undergraduate and graduate degrees (for Business Scholars) or a Graduate Thesis and Research Defense (for JPP Scholars). This is only possible by maintaining a year-round course schedule of full academic loads averaging at least 18 credits per semester.

Trowbridge, who will graduate in 2022 from the JPP Scholars program, learned about the opportunity when CUAA's hockey coach recruited him.

Following his graduation from the elite New York college preparatory high school that he attended, Trowbridge opted to postpone his education to pursue his hockey passion. He played two years in the Junior Leagues in Canada and Minnesota, putting him slightly behind schedule compared to his high school friends.

A two-for-one degree was just what he needed.

"The JPP Scholars program was a huge incentive for me because of those two years I took off for hockey," Trowbridge said. "I'll be able to graduate at the same time, if not sooner, than some of my classmates from high school. Who'd want to pass that up?"

Trowbridge has aspirations to join the FBI or Secret Service (incidentally, he'd be the second alumnus from CUAA's JPP program to work for the Secret Service). After Concordia, he plans to pursue law school in order to help his chances at rising in the U.S. criminal justice system ranks.



THE PERKS

- Graduates achieve a bachelor's and master's in just four years
- Tuition costs are the same as the regular four-year undergraduate fees

WHAT IT TAKES

- ≥3.5 high school GPA
- 25 minimum ACT score
- ≥1200 combined SAT score
- 18 credits per semester + Winterim, summer, or online courses
- Completion of internship or research project

LEARN MORE:

CUAA.EDU/BUSINESS-SCHOLARS

CUAA.EDU/PRE-COLLEGE

CUAA.EDU/ROUTE-38

CUAA.EDU/JPP-SCHOLARS

ROUTE 38

PRE-COLLEGE PROGRAMS



THE PERKS

- Students can eliminate extra cost of summer courses
- Aids in early or on-time graduation
- Offers flexibility in scheduling

WHAT IT TAKES

- Enrollment in education or nursing undergrad program (or other approved undergrad major)
- Completion of one full academic year at Concordia
- Good academic and financial standing

SOME MAY SEE it as a parent's obligation to support their child's dreams, but Jonathan Chin recognizes the sacrifices his father made financially for him, and he's thankful for it. Thousands of dollars went into nurturing Chin's hockey passion from first grade on, and now Chin feels it's time that he demonstrated his appreciation by footing his college tuition.

A new program launched last fall, a year into Chin's time at CUAA, is now helping to ease Chin's load in turn.

The program, called Route 38, allows students at the traditional

undergraduate level to customize their academic schedule and maximize their budget by paying the regular, full-time tuition rate for up to 38 academic credits across fall, spring, and summer semesters.

Students can leverage the opportunity, for example, by shifting some of their courses from the fall or spring semesters to the summer. Before, students had to pay an additional fee for summer courses.

For Chin, a biology major who plays on CUAA's hockey team, Route 38 means he'll be able to pick up some summer courses, and have a more relaxed schedule during the fall and spring semesters (roughly 12 credits instead of the full 18-credit load)—and he won't have to add to his tuition bill to do it.

"It's definitely a big help. The hockey season is pretty long, and we practice early in the mornings, so spreading out my classes means I can have more flexibility with my schedule," Chin said.

While the program is open to all undergraduates, it's especially conducive for education and nursing majors because of the formats of each program. In order to complete an education or nursing degree within four years at any university is challenging, said Robert Nowak, assistant vice president of enrollment. Students are required to take some summer courses, and the programs are also heavy on internship/clinical experiences, which can be harder to complete during the fall or spring semesters.

"At CUAA, we value providing a high-quality educational experience that doesn't place an undue financial burden on students," Nowak said. "Route 38 has allowed students to stay on track or even ahead without getting overwhelmed or feeling like they had to give up certain activities that added to their Concordia experience."



THE PERKS

- Students can earn college credit while still in high school
- Courses are offered at a reduced rate—\$0 out of pocket for Michigan Christian/public school students through PSEOA state funding; \$50 per credit for homeschool
- For students who go on to enroll at CUAA or CUW, their dual credits are free
- Among the most competitive prices for homeschools or parochial schools in Michigan

WHAT IT TAKES

- Must be enrolled in a Michigan or participating Christian high school
- ≥ 3.0 GPA in high school classes
- A qualifying ACT or SAT test score

BEFORE SHE STEPPED foot on Concordia's campus as a college freshman this past August, Katie Long was already ahead of schedule.

The Howell, Michigan, native, who was homeschooled from first through 12th grade, earned 33 college credits through Concordia's pre-college programs. Not only will the frontloading allow her to graduate early from CUAA, Concordia granted back 100 percent of the dual credit tuition she paid. Essentially, she earned 33 credits for free.

Thanks to Concordia's pre-college programs, more than 1,000 students have been able to jump-start their college career at a reduced price. The pre-college programs include the Concordia Promise Dual Credit Program—for Christian high schools or homeschools—and Michigan's Post-Secondary Education Option

(PSEO)—for public or private high schools in Michigan. For students in the Concordia Promise Program who go on to enroll at CUAA (like Long) or CUW, Concordia also offers the Concordia Promise PLUS Program, which grants back the cost of dual credit tuition paid.

Even though Concordia has been offering dual credit options since 2012, the university has ramped up its programs in recent years. In fact, the Concordia Promise Dual Credit Program and the Concordia Promise PLUS Program are among the most competitive pricing options in the nation for homeschooled or Christian high school students (\$50 per credit or free for students who matriculate to CUAA/CUW).

Over the past seven years, Concordia has helped more than 1,100 students earn over 7,000 pre-college credits. Of the 106 homes or high schools reached throughout the world, 83 percent of the students were from Christian schools or were homeschooled.

"I would definitely encourage dual enrollment for anyone who might be considering," Long said. "I completed so many credits because of it, and it helped me to become comfortable on campus before I even started as a full-time freshman here."

A New Day

CONCORDIA'S ACADEMIC LEADERS SHINE BRIGHTLY

By **Lisa Liljegen**,
Strategic Communications

Photography by **Andrea Michel**,
Strategic Communications





AN INTIMATE DISCUSSION ABOUT OVERCOMING DOUBT, SHOULDER TAPS, AND THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The world of higher education is ever changing. No one understands this high-stakes fluctuation better than the leaders who are entrusted to prepare students for the present world and future-proof their academic programs for generations to come. Meet the accomplished and scholarly women who are leading the academic schools at Concordia University Ann Arbor. While their roles and titles may be traditional, these leaders each break the academic archetype in their own way. Together, they ensure a dynamic learning experience that will uniquely prepare students for uncommon lives of leadership and service.

The Philosopher



Erin Laverick

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

EDUCATION

- PhD—English, Bowling Green State University
- MA—English, Illinois State University
- BA—English, University Wisconsin—Green Bay

RESEARCH/PUBLICATIONS

Project-Based Learning
Multimodal Compositions in First-Year Writing

LEARN MORE: CUAA.EDU/SAS

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be a teacher like my parents and grandpa. One of my earliest memories is of my dad bringing home a beautiful old chalkboard that I could play school with in our basement. I also had old-fashioned sleigh desks and a bulletin board that I liked to rearrange. When my younger brothers lost interest in playing with me I always had my dolls to teach.

Did you receive any recognizable shoulder taps on your journey?

I had a lot of shoulder taps along the way. One of my undergraduate professors recognized something in me and encouraged me to apply to graduate school. She was already a well-published scholar, but she would still bring her own work into the class and ask us to review it. That was powerful to me because even she needed other people to review her work and provide feedback. I also thought she was brave to show her vulnerability to her students.

How have you dealt with doubt?

There's always doubt. Growing up I was always the kid who worked hard, but wasn't the smartest or most likely to succeed. I think that empowered me to keep going because I have a competitive spirit. Even after all this time and all my degrees I still feel like a fake sometimes.

This was especially the case in graduate school when I asked myself questions about being enough: Am I really smart enough? Am I really talented enough?

My husband is an excellent sounding board because he is also a professor. I also have a strong network of colleagues and friends who push and encourage me, and model how to be successful as an educator and as a scholar. While it's certainly a struggle to do both well, I feel like I'm a better, more empathetic leader. There's strength in the struggle.

The 2019–20 academic theme is “Embrace(d).” How do you incorporate that into your work?

I love that theme. Especially as we're looking to increase different populations, like international students, who might not have been exposed to a Concordia before. I've worked extensively with international students in a previous position so I understand how difficult it can be for them to step foot on campus and feel like they're all alone. This theme reminds all of us that it is our calling to fully embrace the uniqueness of each student, and to help them navigate campus life in and out of the classroom so that they can be successful adults.

What does higher education look like in 2030?

As technology continues to grow, the need to have quality conversations is dire. The most important conversation is around the topic of ethics in the world, in technology, in the media. The humanities help people discern the content they're receiving and what they're creating. I teach first-year writing and, regardless of the modality, the basics for good communication still apply: 1) Define a solid purpose; 2) Determine a proper context; 3) Identify the target audience; 4) Deliver the clearest, most-concise message.

What book is on your nightstand?

A stack of books and a Nook. My favorite genres are memoir and historical fiction. I just finished reading “Born a Crime” by Trevor Noah. It is an amazing read. Noah's writing is compelling and would speak to many of my students. I especially enjoy books that I can share in the classroom.

The Entrepreneur



Suzy Siegle

HAAB SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

EDUCATION

- EdD—Higher Education Leadership and Management, Regent University
- JD—Law—small business formation, business consulting/startup, real estate, estate planning, first amendment, Ave Maria School of Law
- MBA—Master of Business Administration, Western Governors University
- BGS—Middle East History, Political Science, Psychology (designed major), University of Michigan

RESEARCH/PUBLICATIONS

Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Higher Education
Success and the Subconscious Mind
Neuroscience and Business
Locus of Control Psychology for Business and Leadership

LEARN MORE: CUAA.EDU/BUSINESS

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

An innovator. No matter what I focused on as a kid, my through line always had elements of innovation, creativity, and value creation. I went through a period of time when I wanted to explore space and literally break the bounds of what we know to be possible. I also saw business opportunities in absolutely everything—especially adversity. I didn't know it at the time, but I was building the very framework for my research in the entrepreneurial mindset. I have a passion for helping leaders at every level unlock their potential through intensive personal growth and development practices, identify the behaviors and triggers that might be holding them back. Our professional growth will never outpace our personal growth!

Did you have any recognizable shoulder taps on your journey?

Everything in life has come from a shoulder tap. God has worked through other people to help me grow in different areas, and let me know when I need to work on my own personal development and growth. It might not have always felt great, but I am who I am because of them. I show up differently. Through all the people God put in my path, I've had to work

on myself to overcome self-doubt, work through conflicts, and meet challenges.

How have you dealt with doubt?

First and foremost, as Christians, we pray for strength and clarity from God. He knows us and what we are capable of. We have to ask ourselves if we are doing what He intended for us to do, what did he put us on this earth to do, and who are we here to serve.

Doubt is directly correlated with a lack of confidence. It is a great indicator that we are moving ahead to the next big stretch in our lives. I remind myself that I will never be confident doing something I have never done or moving beyond my comfort zone until I actually do it. Confidence comes with commitment to do what you say you will do and then the energy that comes with doing it (completion energy). I tell my students all the time that when they feel doubt or a lack of confidence they are moving beyond their comfort zones and can say, "Well, here we go, let's grow!"

What are the largest challenges our students face?

I would say mindset. Students are facing a changing world with changing expectations. They need to try new things here so that they develop the confidence and connections to enter the job market, and always embrace change and challenge. Of course, this is true for all of us, not just students.

What does higher education look like in 2030?

I don't even know if we will call it higher education. It will be more like a highly connected community of entrepreneurs, leaders, and students who coach and learn from each other. The future is not fixed; we have an incredible opportunity to help shape the world we want and decide what it will look like in 2020 and 2030!

What book is on your nightstand?

Right now I'm listening to "The Obstacle Is the Way: The Timeless Art of Turning Trials into Triumph" by Ryan Holiday. I mostly do audible books because I can listen every morning when I run, get ready, drive to and from work, etc. I listen to one audible a week (usually on 1.5 or 1.75x speed!)

The Teacher



Sandra Harris

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

EDUCATION

- EdD—Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University
- Education Specialist, Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University
- MA—Guidance and Counseling, Eastern Michigan University
- BBE—Bachelor of Business Education, Eastern Michigan University

RESEARCH

Developing ways to keep students interested in the teaching profession

LEARN MORE: CUAA.EDU/EDUCATION

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I always knew I wanted to be a teacher.

Did you receive any recognizable shoulder taps on your journey?

I am a first-generation college student. I knew that the teaching profession would require a college education. The encouragement from my fifth grade teacher was a pivotal point in my life. His early “tap” impacted my entire career path.

I always remind my students that they have the power to impact peoples’ lives in that same way. Teachers make all professions possible.

How have you dealt with doubt?

That is where my faith came in. I look to Matthew 6:33 and am reminded that when I put God first everything else falls into place.

I help students who might be experiencing doubt by sharing my story of hard work and breaking perceived barriers. Like the teacher who saw it in me, I let them know that I believe

in them, and remind them that they, too, can be successful and excel in life. I tell them, “I did it; you can do it, too.”

The 2019–20 academic theme is “Embrace(d).” How do you incorporate that into your work?

From the first time I walked on this campus I felt embraced. To be in an atmosphere where we can pray together with our students is refreshing and empowering. We are a family here. Not just this year but every year I embrace students, and say and do things that make them feel wanted, loved, and cared for so they can be the best teachers they can be.

What are the largest challenges our students face?

It’s a real challenge for students to finance their education. Some of our students are nontraditional and come back to school after being out in the workforce for a while. They can’t just quit their jobs and other responsibilities to earn a degree. We’re looking at programs that can meet their needs—like offering more courses online and during the evening—so they can do what they were called to do. The good news is that if they can make it through the program they will find jobs. Both in Michigan and nationally there’s a teacher shortage that we’re striving to help fill.

The teaching criteria are also becoming a challenge. We need to equip and acclimate our students to all different school settings—urban, rural, and international—so they feel prepared to be effective and make an impact on students with backgrounds that are different from theirs.

What book is on your nightstand?

My favorite reads are mystery novels. Currently, I’m reading “The Poet” by Michael Connelly. I also read a chapter or two from the Bible before going to sleep every night.

What are you still curious about?

Travel feeds my curiosity. I’m looking forward to a trip to the Holy Land with a church group next summer. Also on my travel bucket list are trips to South Africa and Australia.

The Mentor



Cindy Fenske

SCHOOL OF NURSING

EDUCATION

- DNP—Nursing, Oakland University
- MS—Medical-Surgical Nursing, University of Michigan
- BSN—Nursing, Valparaiso University

RESEARCH/PUBLICATIONS

Fenske, C., Watkins, K. & Saunders, T., (2019).
Health and Physical Assessment in Nursing
The impact of simulation on clinical judgment development in pre-licensure nursing students
Student nurses' perception of performance compared to actual performance

LEARN MORE: CUAA.EDU/NURSING

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I was always going to be a nurse. I had an aunt who was a nurse, and was intrigued with what she did and how she helped people. Because of her I knew what I wanted to do at an early age.

Did you receive any recognizable shoulder taps on your journey?

I had a professor during my undergraduate studies who demonstrated such competence in the field of nursing and such compassion for her students that I wanted to be just like her. While I always knew that I wanted to become a nurse, she introduced me to the idea that I could teach nursing and, therefore, help even more people through my work.

She was approachable, highly motivated, well educated, kind, and caring, yet she also had high expectations for each one of us. She made me want to do my best. Because of her mentorship, I switched from a nursing focus to teaching.

How have you dealt with doubt?

When I had to pursue a doctorate degree or risk losing the job I loved as a university professor, I experienced significant doubt. While there had always been pressure to further my education, a change in leadership made a terminal degree mandatory.

My doctoral colleagues at the time were almost entirely consumed with research, and I knew that wasn't my path. I didn't think I could complete the program and that I was cut out for research. I prayed for guidance. I asked the Lord to help me find my path, to literally drop the answer into my lap. He did. No sooner had I finished praying when the right program for me appeared with open slots and on the right start date. He opened up that door for me, and I walked through. If I hadn't walked through the door, I wouldn't be here today.

What are the largest challenges our students face?

Because this is a licensure program, our students really have to learn the material. Everything builds. If a student doesn't understand something fully it becomes detrimental down the road. Most of our students work, and many of them have families and other responsibilities, so a sustained focus can be difficult. We spend extra time with them and provide additional simulation opportunities when needed to help them stay on track. Sometimes the answer is that they take a semester off. The nice thing about our program is that every class is offered every semester so they can jump right back in when they're ready.

What does higher education look like in 2030?

In nursing it means more and more simulated practice with higher fidelity to make experiences as realistic as possible. Not only does this emphasis provide them with applicable experience, but it also allows us to create authentic settings, like a hospital room, an apartment, the emergency department, and a clinic, in which our students have to practice communicating with patients, staff, family, and other practitioners confidently and correctly.

What are you still curious about?

I am curious about how we can help students develop clinical judgment skills at a more rapid rate. The research into clinical judgment development shows that there are many factors that foster it, one of which is experience and practice. I'm interested to study if the additional practice our students receive in simulation has an effect on accelerating its development.

Faithful

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH



VISIT CUAAs SCHOOL OF EDUCATION PAGE AT CUAA.EDU/EDUCATION. LEARN MORE ABOUT LUTHERAN INDIAN MINISTRIES AT LUTHERANINDIANMINISTRIES.ORG. OR LISTEN TO TIM YOUNG EAGLE SHARE ON CONCORDIA'S "LIVING UNCOMMON" PODCAST: LIVINGUNCOMMONPODCAST.COM



By **Rachel Thoms**, *Strategic Communications*

Fairbanks, Alaska, is known as one of the coldest cities in the United States, with average temperatures well below 0 degrees Fahrenheit. In fact, the coldest recorded temperature is -66 degrees, which happened on Jan. 14, 1934. Nevertheless, around 100,000 people aren't afraid to call frigid Fairbanks their home year-round, including Sarah (Collins) Milan ('07) and her family.

Sarah and her husband, Nathan—both central Michigan natives—recently packed up their lives at the Air Force base in Louisiana and made a five-thousand mile trek north to serve as missionaries with Lutheran Indian Ministries (LIM), an organization that proclaims the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Native American peoples.

Sarah, a CUAAs elementary education alumna, first learned about LIM in 2018 and was impressed with their hands-on, walk-alongside approach to sharing the Gospel and raising up Native leaders to share the love of Jesus Christ with their own people.

What she didn't know, until the Lord stirred in her heart, was that their openness to be a part of Native ministry would lead them to Alaska.

"LIM releases a devotional for Advent and for Lent that includes updates about the work they are doing. There was an update in the Lenten devotional for 2018 that basically said, 'Alaska is really big, so we could use more people,'" said Sarah. "We talked about it for so long but didn't know if it was a possibility for us."

Tim Young Eagle, a 1975 alumnus of Concordia University's Mequon

campus and the executive director of LIM since 2016, connected with the Milans and talked through the potential of having them join the LIM team. With shared vision for the needs of Alaskan Native ministry, combined with the Milans' God-given gifts and talents, they knew this adventure in ministry was where God was calling them.

Just a few months into settling into their new Alaskan home, the Milans are focusing on transitioning Fairbanks from what was primarily a ministry of sending out VBS teams and working with a teen camp to now offering programming year-round. The Milans work together to plan and coordinate programs, while Nathan carries out much of the implementation of the programs. This will be their approach for a while, as Sarah homeschools their five young children.

Each LIM ministry is unique to the geographical location, but what is the same is the intent to stick with the people, befriend them, and be present through their peaks and valleys. Milan shares that a lot of the pain that they are encountering in the Native villages doesn't have a quick fix. The spiritual healing begins to take place after building relationships and trust over time.



Sarah and Nathan Milan enjoy exploring the beauty that Alaska has to offer. Here, they are visiting Denali National Park, located about 120 miles from their home in Fairbanks, Alaska. *Photo courtesy of Sarah and Nathan Milan*

As the only LIM missionaries living in Alaska year-round, the Milans knew that they would have to be intentional about making contacts and building relationships as they launch the new ministry.

“God has opened so many doors, and that was one of the things that we prayed for,” said Milan. “We have prayed constantly that God would send those in the Native community that would be willing to partner with us, and He has certainly provided those opportunities.”

Milan chose to attend CUAA because of the sense of community, Biblical context in her courses, and for the School of Education to prepare her to be an elementary education teacher. Milan’s Concordia education also equipped her for her current vocation as a missionary, though she may not have realized it at the time.

“Concordia has a holistic approach to working with students: they address every aspect of the person rather than just academics,” said Sarah. “That was a great foundation for me to build on, not only generally speaking, but especially in this work we are doing today as we help our Native friends understand the forgiveness and salvation they have through Jesus Christ.”

Top right: This salmon was caught with nets and then set out to dry to eat during Bible camp. When dried, salmon is a great food supply in winter.
Bottom right: Natives join the Milans for a Bible camp outside of Kotzebue, Alaska.
Photos courtesy of Sarah and Nathan Milan



take five

Get to know one of our *uncommon* Concordians on campus,
Director of Buildings and Grounds Jerry Novak

By **Rachel Thoms**, *Strategic Communications*



Everyone on Concordia University Ann Arbor’s 197-acre campus knows Jerry Novak. In fact, most people even have his cell phone number. From weather concerns and office moves to building projects and large-scale mechanical decisions, Novak is on call just about 24/7.

A carpenter by trade, Novak takes seriously his vocation as CUAA’s director of buildings and grounds, a role he’s been in since 2005 after joining the staff in 1997. Not too serious, though, is his demeanor—those who know Novak would agree that his friendly, outgoing, and truly caring approach make each phone call or on-campus run-in a positive one.

Get to know the guy who has every campus nook and cranny memorized, and learn how Concordia’s mission is exuded even from within the mechanical closets, from up in the ceiling rafters, and from the seats of lawn mowers and snow plows.

1 As director of buildings and grounds, what are your general responsibilities on campus?

I oversee operation and maintenance of the buildings’ mechanical needs and the grounds’ physical needs. So a typical day means arriving early in the morning, getting acquainted with the days’ events, and then we start attacking the projects we have laid out. Some of that is responding to immediate issues or problems, too.

I’m open to input and ideas of my staff and student workers. I like to get everybody involved in decisions, but

then I also like to anchor it home and make sure we get the job done.

2 What led you to Concordia University Ann Arbor?

Our Lord and Savior led us here. I guess the bottom line is, my wife, Julie, received a call to teach kindergarten at St. Paul Lutheran School in 1997, and we’ve been here ever since. We drove down the road and saw what was then named Concordia College. I didn’t even realize there was a Concordia here, but I heard they needed a carpenter. So I called the boss at the time, and he said, “Come on down!” So I went down, met him, and left with a job.

3 What is your favorite project or part of your work?

My favorite part is interacting with all of you; interacting with the faculty, staff, and especially the students. Just like the students learn a lot from us, in regard to our maintenance student workers we learn a lot from them if we’re willing to step back, take a minute, and just listen to them. A lot of times we tend to forget to do that.

4 What’s something most people don’t know about campus?

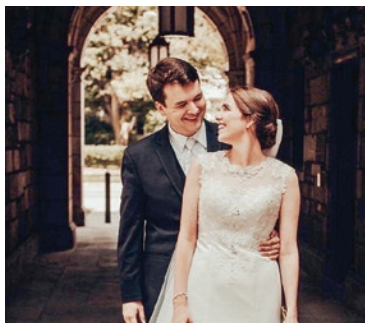
There isn’t a tunnel that goes to the river. Although some people will tell you, “I’ve seen it, I’ve been there, I know it,” it’s not true!

5 How does the work you do align with Concordia’s mission?

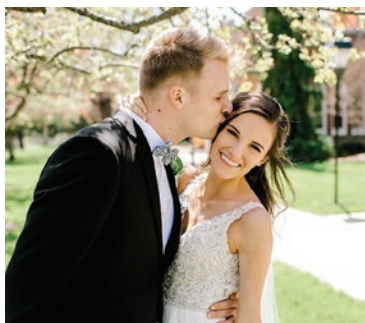
Seek and serve God first, and seek and serve those around me here. That’s part of what buildings and grounds is about—we serve you. We come in each day, and attack our day as work orders and phone calls, but that’s what we’re here to do: We’re here to serve our Lord through serving our constituents on campus. That’s what we do.

alumni notes

10s Joel Werner ('19) married Adele on Aug. 8, 2019. The two recently moved to Missouri, as Joel studies to become a pastor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. ▼



Courtney (Dykema) Werner ('18) and Zack Werner ('15) celebrated their wedding on May 4, 2019. Zack is on staff at University Lutheran Chapel in Ann Arbor and Courtney is a kindergarten teacher at St. John's Waltz Lutheran School. ▼



Grace (Stadler) Lampkowski ('18) and her husband, Cody, recently celebrated their marriage on Aug. 17, 2019. They currently reside in Temperance, Michigan, as Grace pursues her Doctor in Physical Therapy from the University of Toledo. ▼



MacKenzie Drinan ('17) recently received her master's degree. She teaches at Our Savior Lutheran School in Lansing, Michigan.

Alison (Schmidt) Jakubs ('15) married Ben Jakubs on July 27, 2019, at Trinity Lutheran in St. Joseph, Michigan. ▼



Brad Lyons ('13), Dan Ramthun ('83), and Kay Thunder-Haab were inducted into the Cardinals' Hall of Fame on June 1, 2019. Read more about the 2019 inductees at blog.cuaa.edu/2019-hall-of-fame.

Rev. James ('12) and Deaconess Christel Neuendorf ('07) continue their missionary work in Puerto Rico. Last summer they moved toward determining a location for a church plant and mercy center. They ask for prayers during this hurricane season. Learn more at lcms.org/Neuendorf. ▼



Alexander Reuter ('12) was recently hired as an attorney for Dalton & Tomich, PLC. He will specialize in support for churches and other religious organizations nationwide in the highly specialized area of religious land use and zoning law, particularly cases under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA). ▼


cuaa.edu/kreftarts' is written in white."/>

Get creative

EXPLORE CONCORDIA'S KREFT ARTS PROGRAM

Award-winning authors
Topical discussions
Inspiring performances

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS SEASON'S LINEUP: cuaa.edu/kreftarts

Announcements

MILITARY VETERANS, LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH!

Concordia would like to establish special communication with all our alumni who served in the armed forces. Please email your name and branch in which you served to alumni@cuaa.edu or call Linda Sproul at 734-996-7491. It would be an honor to connect with you. Be sure to mark your calendar for CUAAs Veterans Day celebration on Nov. 11. Thank you for serving our country!

COMMITTED TO LIFELONG LEARNERS

Concordia continues to offer its Luther Promise and Uncommon Scholarships, which are specifically designed to support Lutheran learners, alumni, and more. Luther Promise guarantees up to \$20,000 for qualifying undergraduates, while the Uncommon Scholarships are geared toward learners at the graduate level. Learn more at cuaa.edu/luther-promise or cuaa.edu/uncommon-scholarships.



DID YOU KNOW?

THE 42-YEAR-OLD HMONG EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA, WHERE REV. RICHARD HER ('12) SERVES, IS THE OLDEST HMONG CHURCH TO BE CHARTERED BY THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD. ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT U.S. CENSUS, ST. PAUL HAS THE LARGEST HMONG POPULATION PER CAPITA IN THE UNITED STATES; MORE THAN 28,000 HMONG-AMERICANS LIVE WITHIN THE CITY.

mission minded

Rev. Richard Her is one of only 26 rostered Hmong-Lutheran church workers within the LCMS. Photo by Nick Schroepfer

By **Kali Thiel**,
Strategic Communications

Rev. Richard Her ('12) may live smack in the middle of a mission field that's ripe for the harvest, but it didn't stop him from traveling 8,000-plus miles from home for one of his latest ministry efforts.

Sometimes, says Her, you need to step away from the familiar in order to begin to recognize another's needs. And that's exactly what he encouraged 12 individuals from Wisconsin, Laos, and his congregation in St. Paul, Minnesota, to do last year. On Dec. 29, 2018, the group—led by Her and Vicar Yia Lor—traveled to Chiang Mai, Thailand, to help the Ban Hmong's Hope Hostel build a concrete wall around the perimeter of the property and to serve the youth who are housed there. It was the first time Hmong laity from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod embarked upon an organized mission trip to a country of their cultural origin.

The mission trip was an important step for the congregants of Hmong Evangelical Lutheran Church in St. Paul, where Her has served as a called LCMS pastor for the past 3 1/2 years.

"For me, growing up in the Hmong-Lutheran community, a lot of my experience has been that the Hmong has received a lot of support from outside groups," he said. "Now that our church is self-sustaining, the next step for growing in Christ is to encourage our people to think outside the four walls of the church and to start giving back."

Hmong Evangelical Lutheran Church is part of Hmong Mission Society, a network of Hmong-Lutheran churches or ministries worldwide. The Hmong Mission Society extends to Alaska, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. When most of the Hmong refugee population began to arrive in the U.S. in the 1980s, very few were Lutherans. Today, thanks to the Holy Spirit working through the society, there are approximately 3,000 who claim Christ as their Savior.

And Her is proud to be one of those believers. He's also one of the most recent to be ordained as an LCMS pastor and joins the 25 other rostered Hmong church-workers who oversee the 18 ministries of the Hmong Mission Society.

Her feels passionately about helping individuals from his culture embrace a Scripture-driven approach to Christianity.

"Even though we have a lot of Hmong Christians, many of them don't go too in depth with the Scriptures. That pushes me as a preacher to teach good theology and good doctrine, and to help people realize that there's more to our faith than simply 'I believe in Jesus Christ.' It's about what Scripture tells us about our lives."

Read Her's full story at blog.cuaa.edu/ **Richard-Her**. Learn more about Concordia's pre-seminary program at cuaa.edu/pre-sem.



Naomi (Fenker) Stephens ('10) recently released her debut novel, "Shadow Among Sheaves," a story of Ruth and Boaz set in the Victorian period. ▼



Jeremiah Hoehner ('02) served on an executive committee that oversaw a \$4 million building project for St. John Fraser Lutheran Church and School. A dedication was held Aug. 25 to celebrate the project's completion. He also achieved the 2018 Presidents Elite Award, the highest sales award given by AAA Michigan, where Hoehner works as an insurance agent.

'00s Ruth Meyer ('00) has published her third novel, "Hope Alone." She and her husband **Jonathan ('00)** have five children and reside in rural Texas. Ruth can be contacted at ruthmeyerbooks.com, on Facebook at Ruth E. Meyer, or on Instagram and Twitter at [@ruthmeyerauthor](https://twitter.com/ruthmeyerauthor). ▼



'90s Rev. Justin Daniel Gadbow ('98) accepted a call to serve as associate pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Crown Point, Indiana. He was installed there this past May.



MINISTRY IN ACTION

From left, **Angela Knicklebein ('20)** and **Alex Elliott ('22)** lead worship during Daily Chapel.

By **Allie Milot ('21)**, Student Contributor

The 2019–20 academic year is underway, guided by the theme "Embrace(d)."

This year's theme is based on Luke 15:20, the parable of the prodigal son, where Jesus tells of a sinful son who returns home to his father. While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, ran and embraced him.

Together with Campus Pastor Randy Duncan, seven students made up what Rev. Duncan called his "theme team." The team met throughout the spring 2019 semester to discuss various chapters, verses, or parables that could be suitable for the upcoming theme.

In between meetings, the team prayed about their choices. When they came back together, they talked about what they felt would tie their ideas together the best.

"We thought that having just the single word 'Embrace(d)' helps to create a powerful reminder that it all comes back to the fact that we are so loved by God," shared Alex Elliott ('22), a member of the theme team.

Elliott shared that after a few meetings they narrowed down their top choices to four. The group went their separate ways again and prayed about the top options.

"When we all came back together, we all had chosen the same one! Now that's God," said Elliott.

The theme team chose "Embrace(d)" not only because it's a daily reminder of how our God embraces us and loves us, but it's also a reminder to embrace one another and be a powerful witness of His love.



IN THE CHURCH

Twelve Concordia University students from both the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses spent a week in Minneapolis as stage hosts for the 2019 LCMS Youth Gathering. Pictured here is **Matthew Osborne ('20)** passing out Live Uncommon bracelets to youth participants before an evening mass event. Photo by Ashley Kilgas



Ford Motor Company was so impressed with Kate Kirchoff that a position was created for her.

By **Rachel Thoms**,
Strategic Communications

Kate Kirchoff ('19), a recent graduate of Concordia University Ann Arbor's Haab School of Business, is already paving her way through the professional world.

Upon interviewing for a job at Ford Motor Company, the hiring supervisor felt that Kirchoff was overqualified for the role. A brand-new position was created just for her to work as an internal analyst with a systems optimization and engineering team.

How could a recent graduate be overqualified for an entry-level position?

"My college education gave me many opportunities for leadership and experiential learning that I was well prepared," said Kirchoff, 22, from Canton, Michigan. "I was able to take on so many roles at Concordia that a big challenge like this wasn't frightening."

As a marketing major, Kirchoff especially enjoyed class projects for actual clients that the students would meet with. She was an ambassador for the admissions department, a student-athlete on the women's lacrosse team, and a member of multiple clubs and organizations. Kirchoff was also given the opportunity to work behind the scenes at events for the 2019 NCAA Final Four, the Los Angeles Chargers, and NBC's "The Voice."

Kirchoff continues to set goals for her immediate future with a desire to earn her MBA, and perhaps one day return to higher education to share her God-given talents and knack for marketing.

"I want to invest in students in the same way that my coaches, professors, and staff members invested in me. Concordia is a supportive community that cares about me, and that's a really special thing to be a part of."

Learn about CUAA's business programs: cuaa.edu/business.

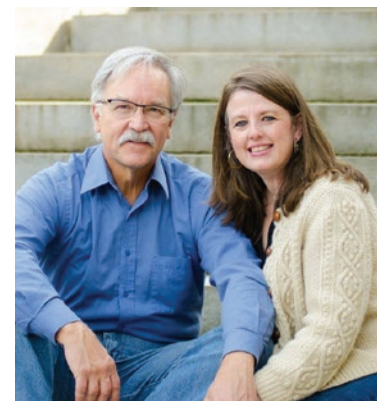
Justin Schmidt ('98) accepted a call to Peace Lutheran Church in McMurray, Pennsylvania, in July 2018.

Rev. Dr. Edward Anthony Sikora Sr. ('94) began to teach as an adjunct instructor at CUAA this fall. He continues to serve as senior pastor at Hope Lutheran Church in Dewitt, Michigan, where he has been for the past 13 years.

Daniel Coffey ('92) earned a prestigious Diplomat Credential from the International Conference of Police Chaplains (ICPC). Coffey has served as a police chaplain since 1993 when he began his service with the Fort Wayne Police Department. ▼



Heather (Lipps) Krakat ('91) and **Roy Krakat ('90)** are enjoying life in Maryland. Roy is working for the State of Maryland and Heather is working as center coordinator for an office complex just outside of Baltimore. Heather is thankful for the solid foundation she received as a business/marketing major at Concordia. ▼





new heights

By **Kali Thiel**, *Strategic Communications*

Charles Numrich ('66) has an impressive résumé of acting credits to his name. *Photo courtesy of Charles Numrich*

All the world was an audience to a young Charles Numrich's stage in 1968 when San Antonio hosted HemisFair '68, the official World's Fair that year.

At age 20, Numrich ('66) was green on the theatre vine, but full of promise and gusto. Just two years prior, the Aurora, Illinois, native had delivered his first monologue on Concordia Lutheran Junior College's stage, but his Concordia theatre director, Dr. Robert Lehmann, recognized a potential in the budding thespian that far outweighed his inexperience. Lehmann convinced The Inter-Lutheran Impact Committee that Numrich was the man to organize and direct the Lutheran Church's theatrical presence at HemisFair '68.

So from April through October of that year Numrich led a troupe of some 15 college and professional actors in several hundred performances of short sketches for the 6.3 million-person global audience that visited San Antonio.

That experience marked the start of Numrich's enduring passion for exploring how the stage influences community.

"The impact of the arts on communities is essential and eternal," said Numrich. "The essence of all art is what's the conflict and how

do we work towards resolution. Looking at that from the perspective of communities in conflict, it is an incredible, valuable tool to help people understand themselves and others."

Since graduating from Concordia, Numrich has authored multiple books, founded a nonprofit theatre company in Minneapolis that had a 27-year run, and has held down a successful career as an actor, performing lead parts in shows throughout Minnesota. He's been the recipient of two of Minneapolis' highest honors awarded to the arts community: an Ivey Award (voted on annually by theatergoers) and The Twin Cities Mayors' Public Art Award.

Concordia Ann Arbor bred in Numrich a passion for the arts that he has passed on to countless others as well, including his children. His son, Seth, who has a number of TV and film credits to his name and has also starred in multiple Broadway and off-Broadway shows, is the youngest person to ever be admitted to The Juilliard School's drama program.

Learn more about Numrich by reading his full story at blog.cuaa.edu/new-heights-numrich and learn about Concordia's vibrant Kreft Arts program at cuaa.edu/kreft.

CHARLES NUMRICH'S PLAYBILL

- At age 20, he had his directorial debut at the 1968 World's Fair, which was attended by 6.3 million people worldwide.
- His son, Seth, is the youngest person to ever be admitted to The Juilliard School's drama division.
- He's authored three series of short vignettes based on the lectionaries for the church year and Lent.
- "Living Tapestries," his fourth publication, is one of the first collections of Hmong folktales published in English in the world.
- He received an Ivey Award in 2016 for his role in "Equus."
- From 1981–2008, he ran the nonprofit Creative Theatre Unlimited.
- Creative Theatre Unlimited's first big project received The Twin Cities Mayors' Public Art Award.

PURPOSEFUL GROWTH

Commander Richard Townes ('90) retired from more than 20 years of active duty as a Navy and Marine Corps chaplain. On August 11, he was installed as pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church in Howard City, Michigan. ▼



'70s Class of 1971—Some of the members of the class of 1971 recently reunited at the Hymn Festival in Auburn, Michigan. Members of the class include Dave Winningham, Dennis Hoerauf,

Karen (Strickert) Hoerauf, Tom Schimm, Anita (Steinbach) Eichinger, and Ken Eichinger. ▼



'60s Steven Briel ('69) is currently teaching at a seminary in Kenya, Africa, and will be filling a vacancy at University Lutheran Chapel in Minneapolis when he returns to the United States. Steven and his wife, Katy, have been married for more than 40 years.

Together again—Class of 1969



The Concordia Lutheran Junior College Class of 1969 50th Reunion at CUAU this past May gave Susan (Baringer) Frincke (left) a chance to catch up with classmates Janine (Roth) Pfanstiel (center) and Jane (Bernhardt) Hoffman. Photo by Kelly Cieslak

HAVE YOU HAD A SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENT OR EXCITING ACHIEVEMENT THAT YOU WANT US TO INCLUDE IN THE NEXT *ARBOR LIGHT*? PLEASE PROVIDE INFORMATION AT CUAA.EDU/ALUMNIUPDATE. PHOTOS MAY BE SHARED, AS WELL. PLEASE SEND A HIGH-RESOLUTION IMAGE, IF POSSIBLE.



Advancing the mission



Even as some students are still learning their way around campus, prospective students and parents are visiting us and considering if Concordia is the right place for them. They might be drawn to us because of a specific program, it could be that they have heard how beautiful our campus is, or perhaps the reputation of our faculty and the Christian ethos that permeates our culture causes them to check us out. Whatever the motivation, we are glad to welcome them to campus so that they can experience Concordia firsthand.

After that initial visit, many factors will determine if they will become one of our students in the future. Even if the fit seems perfect, one factor that often plays an important role for many families is the matter of finances. While many quickly recognize the value of a high-quality, Christ-centered education, the reality of how to pay for it cannot be ignored.

Thankfully, significant financial aid is available to help make a Concordia education possible. With more than 99 percent of our traditional students receiving scholarships, grants, and other financial aid, students can focus on their education and preparation in “mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world.” In other words, living the Concordia mission.

But where does all of this financial aid come from? While the sources are many, a vitally important part of the financial aid package comes from gifts made to the Concordia Fund. The Concordia Fund receives gifts of all sizes that help offset the cost of education. Through the generosity of alumni, past and current parents, friends, businesses, and congregations, the Concordia Fund is a keystone to student support. No gift is too big or small to be appreciated, and to make a difference for our students.

If you annually support the Concordia Fund, thank you. On behalf of the thousands of students who benefit in many ways from your annual gift, thank you. You may never know the name of any specific student who was touched by your gift, but rest assured that you are having an impact on the life of another person.

And if you have never made a gift to the Concordia Fund, please accept this invitation to begin the tradition today. Doing so is easy and is explained on the next page of this issue. You can also always go to our website and select the “Donate” link at the top of the page.

Whether your support of the Concordia Fund is a first-time experience or continues decades of support, every student who comes to Concordia will be blessed. Thank you.

REV. DR. ROY PETERSON
President, Concordia University Foundation

SUPPORT THE FUTURE



What is the Concordia Fund?

Tuition only covers a portion of the actual cost to educate each student at Concordia. The Concordia Fund was established to offset the remaining expenses, allowing us to offer Concordia's students the increased quality and excellence that they deserve, without placing a greater financial burden on them.

Gifts to the Concordia Fund support scholarships and the day-to-day mission operations of the university.

This is our greatest need. Your support of the Concordia Fund is vital in sustaining our mission to help students develop in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world.

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