

Arbor Light

A Publication of Concordia University

SPRING/SUMMER
2016



FOR HIM

A continuum of Jesus' resurrection

OUR LUTHERAN IDENTITY

In mind, body, and spirit for Christ

NEW POSSIBILITIES

Exciting ways to support projects

Arbor Light

A Publication of Concordia University

Spring/Summer
2016

FEATURES

STANDING TALL

Tree symbolizes sacred life and sacrifice.



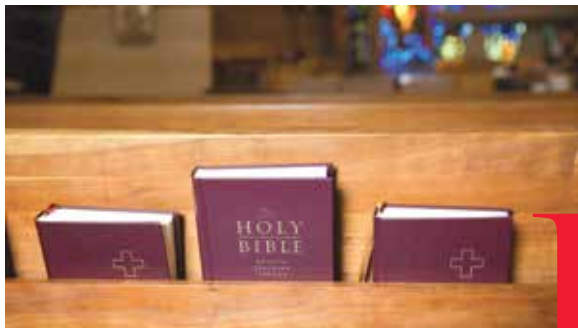
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Our Christ-centered, Gospel-oriented Lutheran University.



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TRANSFORMING GRACE

THE CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS AND THE observances of Holy Week are at the very heart of the Christian message, and integral to every Christian's understanding of God's saving work in the world. Our lives are transformed because God sent His only-begotten Son on a mission to be born in Bethlehem, and to die and rise again in Jerusalem. In between, Jesus Christ lived a life of obedience, taught us the truth, and fulfilled the prophetic promises of God to His people, changing the world and forever changing us.

On our campus each year, we have a splendid tradition that binds the message of our Lord's miraculous birth and His redeeming death in a meaningful, visual way. The Christmas tree that adorns the Chapel of the Holy Trinity during Advent is transformed on Ash Wednesday into the cross that stands before the Chapel's entrance during Lent. Our celebration of Christ's birth is always framed by the reminder that He was born to die for our sins and to bring us new, everlasting life.

The transforming impact of our Lord's saving mission is reflected in His call to discipleship. Our baptism is a prelude to the lifelong summons to take up our own cross and follow Jesus. Rather than being conformed to this world and its ways, Saint Paul urges us to be "transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2).

The aim of the Concordia University Ann Arbor experience is to have an impact on lives. First, this occurs in the lives of our students. They come to campus—to the classroom, to the residence hall, to the athletic field, to the drama stage, to the Chapel of the Holy Trinity—and like the Christmas tree that morphs almost before their eyes, they also change. The cross of Christ, and the crosses that He bids disciples to take up and follow, bring growth and maturation in faith, and students learn more about the path upon which the Lord is leading them. Invariably, it's a path to other people.

In the pages that follow, you will get a glimpse of the CUAA mission in action—shaping, molding, and "developing students in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world." It's a mission that's fulfilled only when Concordians take what they have learned and experienced and apply it to make a difference in the lives of others. Serving others is a way for us to serve Christ.

REV. PATRICK T. FERRY, PH.D.
President

The Next Chapter

AFTER A DISTINGUISHED, 38-YEAR CAREER at Concordia University Ann Arbor, professor Michael Kalmes has announced that he will retire at the conclusion of this academic year.

Kalmes, who earned a bachelor's degree in education from Concordia Teachers College degree in Seward, Neb. and a Master of Education from the University of Missouri, joined CUAA's faculty in 1978. Since then, he has taught a variety of subjects, including: political science courses in social studies methods, political theory, urban and comparative politics, American government, and world and U.S. history.

He also taught introductory education courses, and, with former colleague, professor Neil Skov, he introduced the first of the University's computer courses, providing instruction in early programs for word processors, spreadsheets, and databases. With professor of English Mark Looker, Kalmes introduced an interdisciplinary course called urban society, which has been taught as part of an annual student trip to London since 2003.



In addition to his service in the classroom, Kalmes contributed significantly over the years to the life of the University. He recalled, "I was a design team member for the first teacher education program and helped to develop the Institutional Review Board for the graduate program in education. I also served as chair of the former Division of Social Sciences, and advised a student newspaper and a black student union." For the past 20 years, he has been involved in University-wide faculty assessment of student performance.

Upon retirement, Kalmes plans to continue teaching the urban society course in London. He and his wife, Pat, plan to use his newly gained free time for travel and for various cycling events. And, he noted, he will finally have time "to actually read the books I have piled in various rooms but haven't yet picked up." He said he also looks forward to having "chances to try things I can't yet imagine."

– Georgia Krieger, Contributing Writer

A VOICE LIKE GOD'S

AS ONE OF THE FOUNDING FACULTY MEMBERS OF the Concordia University Ann Arbor theology department, Rev. Dr. Paul G. Meyer had a profound and lasting impact on the school, say those who knew him.

Meyer served as dean of the chapel from 1965-1975 and professor of theology from 1965 until the early 1980s.

Those who had him as a professor say he was respected on campus. Students joked that his middle initial stood for "God," partially because of his deep, mellifluous voice and his authoritative presence in chapel.

He was married in 1947 to Phyllis May Sanderson, who was called to her eternal home in 1971. In 1975, he married Lois Severson.

Even though Meyer has passed away, his impact on CUAA continues. The Rev. Dr. Paul and Lois Meyer Scholarship Endowment was recently established in his and his wife's name. The endowment will provide financial assistance to pre-seminary students at CUAA.

– Kali Thiel, Contributing Writer

**CAMPUS
EVENTS**

For a full list of campus events,
please visit: cuaa.edu/events

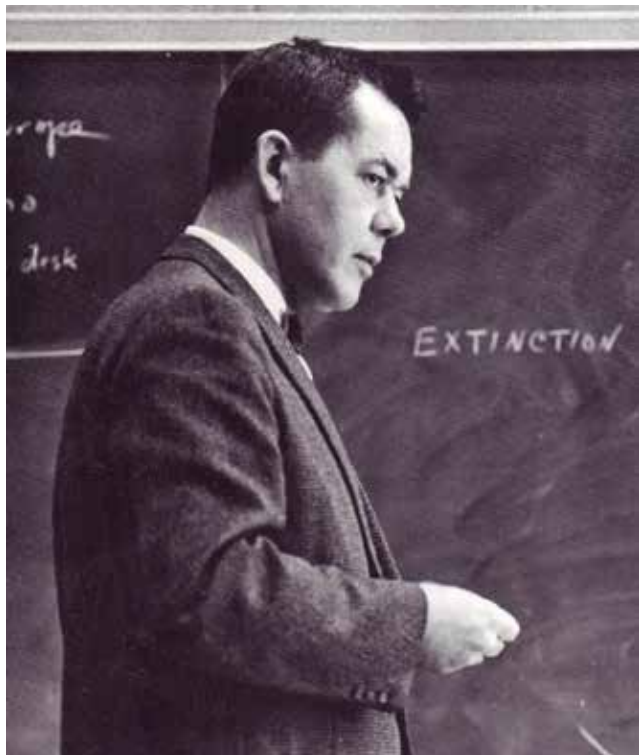
MAR.

Mar. 22– Apr. 24 **STH ANNUAL KREFT JURIED EXHIBITION**
Kreft Center Gallery

APR.

03 **THE CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHOIR CONCERT, 4p.m.**
Chapel of the Holy Trinity

A Concordia Pioneer



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY ANN ARBOR'S FIRST ACADEMIC dean, Erich von Fange, Ph.D., was witness to the school's start even before the campus was built. In his essay, "Building on the Vision," von Fange recounted the nearly insurmountable preparation needed to create a school, and the whirlwind timeframe in which he had to work.

"How can you build and equip a campus, set up a library, recruit a faculty, establish a curriculum, create a policy handbook, and recruit a class of trusting students, all in a little more than a year?" von Fange posed.

Through God's grace, and the hard work and determination of many throughout the Michigan District, the task was achieved. CUAA, then Concordia Lutheran Junior College, welcomed its first class on Sept. 15, 1963. With his gentle, soft-spoken nature and scholarly assuredness, von Fange was there to guide.

Von Fange led academics for more than 20 years before retiring in 1987. As professor emeritus, he frequently wrote and lectured on Genesis, early earth, and baseball. In 1994, CUAA honored him with the Christus Primus Award in recognition for his distinguished service to the Church and community.

Von Fange was called to rest on Sept. 15, 2015 at the age of 93. He and his wife, Esther, were blessed with five children, nine grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Members of that first class (1963–1965) shared the following memories:

"The picture that I remember of Dr. von Fange is that he was always dressed in a suit, smoking a pipe, and reading a book."—Rev. George Schaezle ('65)

"I remember Dean von Fange as an imposing, gracious man of God, full of faith and strength of the Lord."—Paulette (Rehfuss) Waech ('65)

"Dean von Fange was a man who walked with God. He always had a smile for you, and an ear and heart that listened to a student."—Eileen A. (Machtemes) Maleske ('65)

The von Fange family has designated CUAA for memorials. Please contact Laura Thomas for additional information at: laura.thomas@cuaa.edu.

— Lisa Liljegen, University Affairs



07 8TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON SPIRITUALITY AND THE ARTS AND SCIENCES
CUAA Main Campus

08 DRAMATIC PRESENTATION OF THE GOSPEL OF MARK, 7 p.m.
Chapel of the Holy Trinity

08 UNDERGRAD VISIT DAY



**CAMPUS
EVENTS**

APR.

**22 SEAN DOBBINS AND THE MODERN
JAZZ MESSENGERS CONCERT, 8 p.m.
*Kreft Center Recital Hall***





KELLY BIESIAK

MAN WITH A MISSION

HIS ROLE AS DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS MINISTRY MAY ONLY HAVE started this school year, but Pastor Randy Duncan has long been a part of the Concordia University Ann Arbor community.

Duncan, who began as director of campus ministry in August, said he was a new Christian when he first came to CUAA to start his undergraduate studies in 1983. Just before Duncan’s senior year of high school, a close friend was murdered. The incident spurred Duncan to turn to Jesus Christ.

“I still had the stench of hell in my nostrils,” said Duncan. “All I knew was I wanted to know more about Jesus. Concordia seemed like a great place to do that, and it was.”

Three decades later, Duncan is now in the role of counseling students. As director of campus ministry, Duncan has daily opportunities to develop and mentor students in leadership and mission, preparing them for service to Christ in the Church and the world, just as his student experience at CUAA prepared him for ministry.

“I had been an adjunct professor in the theology department for the past few years, so some students already knew me. Now I get to be around more often. I’m not only a professor, I’m also a part of campus ministry, a fan at their games, and a friend in the café, and I’m that guy that blasts Beatles and David Bowie music from his office,” said Duncan.

It was Duncan’s musical talent that helped him win over his wife, Jennifer, whom he met when he was a student at CUAA.

“I was sitting on the floor in Titus Residence Hall, laying down some bass. She couldn’t resist me ever since,” said Duncan, laughing at the memory.

Students are not only drawn to his musical inclination, Duncan also has a calm and relational demeanor that helps him relate to students of many different faith and family backgrounds.

“CUAA is not just a mission-sending agency, but also its own mission field,” said Duncan.

“I love being able to connect with students no matter what their interests or majors are because I know that they’re here on purpose,” Duncan said. “Some students may be like me when I was a student at CUAA, not knowing what to study or what career to pursue, but God has them here, and there’s a Kingdom purpose as to why they’re at CUAA.”

– Rachel Ferry, University Affairs

- | | | |
|------------|--|---|
| MAY | 05 THE CONCORDIA WIND ENSEMBLE CONCERT, 8 p.m.
<i>Kreft Center Black Box Theater</i> | 15 COMMENCEMENT
Baccalaureate Ceremony,
<i>11 a.m. Chapel of the Holy Trinity</i> |
| | 10 “BEING LUTHERAN” BOOK LAUNCH by A. Trevor Sutton
<i>Earhart Manor</i> | Undergraduate and Graduate Ceremony,
<i>2 p.m. Field House</i> |



IMPACT POSSIBLE

HAVE YOU NOTICED IN THE Hollywood movie series titled “Mission Impossible” that the mission always seems to be possible and turns out to be achieved? That’s our mission impact here on the Concordia University Ann Arbor campus. It’s not impossible; it’s possible.

The Lord has blessed the collective work of many hands on our campus as we continue to grow. A recent acquisition in Ann Arbor is now known as the CUA North Building and is becoming the home of Michigan’s newest nursing school. The new CUA School of Nursing will open in late August 2016. In addition, the North Building will house the new facilities for the athletic training program, as well as a treatment center for current CUA student athletes who may become injured.

Findings of two recent studies of CUA students reveal that mission impact is evident. The Student Satisfaction Survey of undergraduates covers items from academics to campus atmosphere and services. The results, again, show gains across the board, with increases on 10 of 12 scales; the other two are holding steady. Our students’ satisfaction is at an all-time high and now exceeds the national average for undergraduate universities. In the Spiritual Life Survey, the key findings validate our daily experience that CUA is growing not only in numbers, but also as a cohesive and engaging faith community. Our students see CUA as providing a spiritually vibrant environment, meaningful mission opportunities, chapel services, and spiritual support. In addition, valued faculty, campus ministry, and athletic leadership and coaches are highly regarded by students.

CURT GIELOW
Campus Chief Executive

**CAMPUS
EVENTS**

JUN.

**03 CARDINAL
GOLF OUTING**



Concordia North: Welcoming New Nursing Program

By Curt Gielow, *Campus Chief Executive*

FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS, OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM at Concordia University has wondered how and where we could start a nursing program on the Ann Arbor campus that would complement the program that has existed for many years at Concordia Wisconsin. In the fall of 2015, this exploration became front and center in our strategic thinking.

We knew there was student demand and so, we initiated the process to gain approval for a program from Michigan's State Board of Nursing. What we needed next was space for our program to flourish.

We looked at all options, starting with those on our home base. Could we house the new program in the already existing spaces on campus? The answer was that there simply is not enough classroom space to accommodate the specific needs of the program.

The question then turned to: Could we take on a building project? While we're blessed with plenty of campus land, it was quickly determined that construction of a new building wouldn't be the most cost-effective option, and it would be a time-consuming one, as well.

In our quest of options, we even reached out to the LCMS Michigan District asking if there was an opportunity to use their office spaces. In the end, despite district leadership's graciousness and willingness to help us in our pursuit of expanding our Christ-centered academic programming, the space turned out to be too small.

Our efforts finally led us to consider off-campus options. Like some, I do a lot of thinking when driving. So, I got in the car to clear my head about where and how. Several evenings of driving around town finally uncovered a vacant school building on Plymouth Road in the heart of a busy, commercial area of Ann Arbor, and the property had been put on the market for sale.

The building met nearly all of our desires. Just two miles from the main campus, the 86,000-square-foot building not only delivers space for a new nursing program to blossom, it provides room for CUAA's future growth and expansion.

With guidance I now believe to have been Divine, the CU Board of Regents allowed the purchase of this building as our new CUAA North Building, where Michigan's newest School of Nursing will take residence in the west wing this summer. To God be the glory.



RENDERINGS COURTESY OF MAYER HELMINIAK ARCHITECTS, LLC

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Visit: concordiacardinals.com/sport_camps



*Baseball, boys basketball,
girls basketball, football,
coed soccer, softball, volleyball*

AUG.

**29 OPENING SERVICE AND
FIRST DAY OF ACADEMIC
YEAR**



LIFE OF THE TREE

CAMPUS TRADITION ILLUMINATES
JESUS' JOURNEY

“WHEN JESUS SPOKE AGAIN
TO THE PEOPLE, HE SAID,
“I AM THE LIGHT OF THE
WORLD. WHOEVER FOLLOWS
ME WILL NEVER WALK IN
DARKNESS, BUT WILL HAVE
THE LIGHT OF LIFE.”

—JOHN 8:12



By Rachel Ferry, University Affairs
Photography by Kelly Cieslak



WHAT STARTED AS AN ON-THE-FLY SOLUTION five years ago has turned into a meaningful Concordia University Ann Arbor tradition. The CUAA Christmas tree, standing tall at the center of campus, reveals the story of Jesus' life and Jesus' mission to anyone who steps onto campus from Advent to Easter.

In October 2010, the city of Ann Arbor decided to replace an existing traffic light in front of campus with a single-lane roundabout, meaning a flourishing 20-foot evergreen would need to be chopped down.

"I said to my staff, 'That's a beautiful tree, we should do something with that!'" said Jerry Novak, director of buildings and grounds. The staff decided to transplant the tree in front of the Chapel of the Holy Trinity, lighting the tree the first week of Advent.

"We purposefully light the tree during daily chapel the first week of Advent in reference to John 1:9," said Ryan Peterson, campus pastor. "Students walk passed the Christmas tree throughout Advent, reminded each day and each night that Jesus is the light of the world."

"The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." —John 1:9

Upon the new year in 2011, Novak approached Bob McKinney, director of campus ministry (at the time), with an idea to shave the branches of the Christmas tree on Ash Wednesday, forming the trunk into a cross to mark the beginning of Lent. CUAA has upheld the tradition of the evanescent evergreen ever since. >

“Jesus’ journey ultimately takes him to the cross, so we shave the branches upon the commencement of Lent,” said Peterson. “Now, students are reminded that Jesus bore their sins on the cross, so that by His wounds we are healed.”

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” —1 Peter 2:24

On Easter, the cross is brought inside to the front of the Chapel. The cross is surrounded by Easter lilies, celebrating Jesus Christ’s defeat of death through his resurrection.

“The life of the tree is not only a cool continuum, it’s a clear illustration reminding us that Jesus was born to conquer death through His own death and resurrection,” said Peterson. ✚

Watch a time-lapse of the Christmas tree’s transition to a cross on the CUAU YouTube channel by searching “CUAA: Life of the Tree” in the YouTube search bar.





Truth & Love:

Living Life Together, the Concordia Way

By Rev. Patrick T. Ferry, Ph.D.
Photography by Jeffrey Phelps

ONE OF THE THINGS I LOVE most about Concordia University Ann Arbor is the opportunity to work alongside wonderful members of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (faculty, staff, and students) who are dedicated to helping fulfill the Church’s mission through Lutheran higher education.

CUAA is unambiguously the Church’s school. We wouldn’t have it any other way.

Another thing I love most about CUAA is the chance to work together with terrific people (faculty, staff, and students) who aren’t members of the LCMS, but who embrace this University and the blessing that it is in their lives and in the lives of others. CUAA is most certainly their school too. Together, we wear our colors, and together, we proudly proclaim, unabashedly, to the broader community around us, “We are Concordia!”

Our mission statement makes clear what CUAA exists to do. We prepare students “for service to Christ in the Church and the world.” Regrettably, there are too few places where the Church and the world connect or converse well.

By nature of the composition of our community, with Concordians from across the country and around the world learning and often even living together, the chance for such dialogue and discourse is readily presented. Of course, there are moments on our campuses when cultures collide. Upon occasion, there are situations where lifelong Lutherans and folks who were previously unacquainted with Lutheran, or even Christian, perspectives aren’t exactly on the same page. Some might perceive such situations as a threat to Lutheran identity.

At CUAA, however, this surely represents an opportunity to communicate winsomely what it means to be a Christ-centered, Gospel-oriented, Lutheran university. Dialogue and discussion are integral to the learning process. Communication within a community where all members have a sense of belonging fosters the sort of environment that deepens the discourse and enriches the interaction. As the Apostle Paul admonishes, we seek “to speak the truth in love.”

Given the great divide that we observe all around us—a setting where inclusion is framed by truth, spoken in love offers a refreshing change—it’s no secret that 2016 is a political year. Our election cycle will bring Americans to the polls this fall to elect a new president. The campaign has already dragged on for months, and the often unsavory political process will only intensify over the final stretch leading to the first Tuesday in November. We may be left wondering if “United States” is remotely descriptive of our national reality or merely an aspirational name.

Neither does “Concordia” summarize the political or social points of view of every Concordian. It’s safe to say that not everyone at our University fully agrees on the answer to every controverted question before us. However, if our University is successful in helping our students to be thoughtful and engaged citizens, attention to civility in the community discourse will behoove us all as we learn from one another.

It happens that this year will also mark a national convention of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Fortunately, most of the excesses of the national political process are generally avoided.

Nevertheless, there are inevitably differences of opinion, even within a Confessional Church such as ours. Varying positions are even more pronounced between Christians of assorted denominational affiliations. This only means that there is no shortage of opportunity within Christ’s Church to speak the truth in love, without compromise either to the truth or to love. If our University is successful in helping our students to be faithful and endearing witnesses, modeling how we handle our disagreements among ourselves and with others is also essential to the Concordia experience.

Yes, something that I truly love about CUAA is that this Lutheran higher education community is a laboratory for life. The variables of all that we observe in the Church and the world are brought together for inquiry and investigation. We “help students develop in mind, body, and spirit” as they wrestle with differences of perspective. Quoting John Milton, I often say, “Let truth and falsehood grapple.” Truth, of course, really has nothing to fear, and truth, spoken in love, will have great effect.

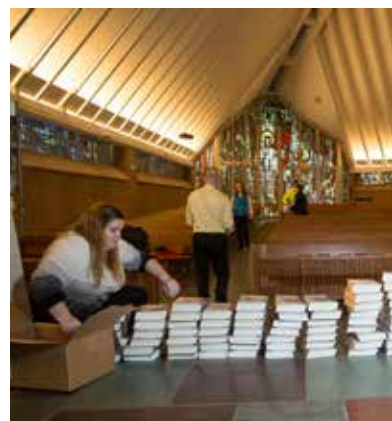
At CUAA, the love of God in Christ Jesus—who is the Way, the Truth, and Life and the Savior of the world—is the reason we exist. The mission to “serve Christ in the Church and the world” places us in the middle of the conversation about all of the big debates of our place and time. How we approach the issues, and each other, matters. Ours is the privilege of sharing the truth and reflecting the love of Christ with people at CUAA—and beyond—each day. What’s not to love about that? †



A New Way to Give

Passion projects and philanthropy

By **Kali Thiel**, University Affairs; *Photography by Kelly Cieslak*





CAMPUS PASTOR RYAN PETERSON NEVER ANTICIPATED the swift and eager response he'd receive for a request to help Concordia University Ann Arbor place new Bibles in its Chapel of the Holy Trinity pews.

Sure, Peterson has witnessed on numerous occasions how daily chapel is an integral part of the CUAAs experience for the approximately 200 students, staff, and faculty who attend on average.

It's also indisputable that the Word is a foundational part of worship. Peterson thought that making current ESV Bible translations readily available so those attending could delve into Scripture in tandem with preachers was certainly a worthwhile goal.

Peterson approached the Advancement Department, and it was decided that the CUAAs Bibles for the Chapel cause would be the perfect opportunity to test the waters on a new method of raising unbudgeted funds.

Using a crowdsource fundraising site called CrowdRise, the \$3,500 request was posed to students, staff, and CUAAs community of supporters.

The way CrowdRise works is a request is posted on the website, along with photos or video and an explanation of the need. Donors can track the history and progress of the effort, giving as little or as much as they feel moved to. Supporters can also spread the word about the effort by linking to Facebook, Twitter, and other social media avenues.

Within a half hour of posting, donors fulfilled the request.

"I was shocked. I did not anticipate that," Peterson exclaimed. "I think it shows us the passion that some people have to see our students engaged in God's Word every day."

Since then, CrowdRise has continued to be a tool used by the CUAAs Advancement Department.

"It was very cool that people stepped up right away," Peterson said. "They saw the need, and they met the need. We saw in it the hearts of people."

Check out some of the current CUAAs CrowdRise fundraising efforts at: www.crowdrise.com/concordiauniversityw1. ✦



THE ROAD TO CARNEGIE HALL

The Concordia University Ann Arbor Wind Ensemble is among other CUAAs groups that have used the CrowdRise platform.

The group was honored with an invitation to perform March 8 at Carnegie Hall in New York City. CUAAs ensemble was one of two collegiate groups invited to perform as Showcase Ensembles at this year's New York City Invitational Wind Band Festival.

The event is sponsored annually by World Projects, one of the most recognized sponsors of international festivals for educational music ensembles at world-class venues around the world.

"It's a huge deal," said William Perrine, Wind Ensemble director. "It's a sort of life-changing thing to perform on this stage. It's one of the best concert stages in the world."

The trip would cost \$18,600.

Thanks largely to a generous, anonymous donor who contributed \$10,000 just before Christmas, along with funds raised through the CrowdRise site, the Wind Ensemble was able to take part in the prestigious opportunity.



DOERS WELCOME

Campaign highlights students' stories

By **Lisa Liljegren**, University Affairs
Photography by Josh Kufahl

NINE HUNDRED STUDENTS. NINE HUNDRED STORIES. WHEREVER they came from and whatever their plans are, they are here—together—learning, sharing, and growing in mind, body, and spirit to do immeasurably more for the world.

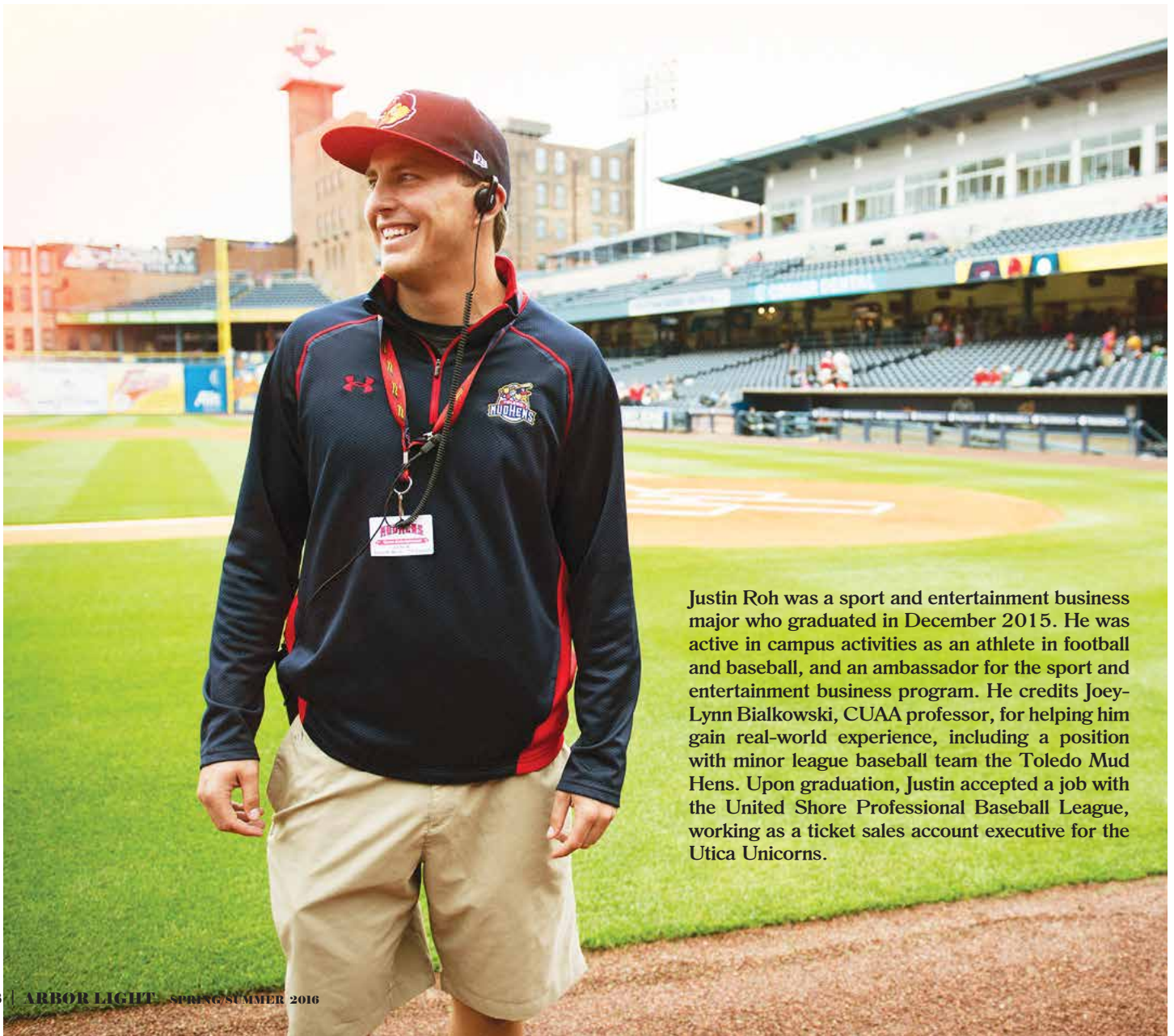
Concordia University Ann Arbor recently launched a campaign, “Doers Welcome,” to capture a few real stories of students who value opportunities to put both their education and their faith into meaningful action. Their inspiring stories of self-discovery are shining examples of the University’s mission to prepare students for meaningful lives of purpose.

These personal stories are available online at www.cuaadoers.com, and are also shared through CUAAs Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages using the hashtag #CUAADoer. ✝

2015–2016 Academic Year
Theme:

Now to Him who is able to do
immeasurably more than all
we ask or imagine, according
to His power that is at work
within us, to Him be glory
in the church and in Christ
Jesus through all generations,
forever and ever! Amen.

– Ephesians 3:20-21



Justin Roh was a sport and entertainment business major who graduated in December 2015. He was active in campus activities as an athlete in football and baseball, and an ambassador for the sport and entertainment business program. He credits Joey-Lynn Bialkowski, CUAAs professor, for helping him gain real-world experience, including a position with minor league baseball team the Toledo Mud Hens. Upon graduation, Justin accepted a job with the United Shore Professional Baseball League, working as a ticket sales account executive for the Utica Unicorns.

Emily Stewart, a senior in family life education, is another student featured. Prior to arriving at CUAU, Emily had spent time abroad working as a missionary with LightBridge International in Cambodia and Thailand, serving orphans, families, and impoverished children. She knew she wanted to continue to help underserved people, but she wanted more practical guidance. Emily shares that CUAU has helped her develop a greater sense of fellowship and Bible-based knowledge to prepare her for more missionary work overseas.



Emily Collins is a freshman who was unsure about college life. Having attended Lutheran schools her entire life, Emily grew up in a small, tight-knit community and is close with her family. When she visited CUAU for the first time, she was struck by the beauty and size of the campus, and then she realized it would be the place for her. Within weeks, Emily joined worship arts and led her first Tuesday night worship soon after. Emily says she feels most connected to God when she is singing. She doesn't know what He has in store for her yet, but she trusts His guidance and the support of her family and CUAU advisors to help her find her purpose.



Knocking on Doors

Going active for Jesus Christ

By Lisa Liljegren, *University Affairs*



AFTER MORE THAN 16 YEARS serving as a reserve chaplain in the U.S. Air Force, Rev. Mark Bowditch was called to active duty.

Last year, Bowditch ('85) was selected for the position of a staff chaplain at the U.S. Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC). He and his fellow staff members are responsible for administrating the mission of the entire U.S. Air Force Reserve Chaplain Corps, which includes 475 chaplains and assistants located throughout the world.

This promotion would have required Bowditch (a Lieutenant Colonel) and his wife, Barb, to leave behind their home and the family of Christ Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., where Bowditch served as church planter for 10 years, and relocate to Warner Robins, Ga., where Robins Air Force Base (AFB) is located.

"I never expected to go to active duty," says Bowditch. "When the opportunity opened up, I prayed a lot, spoke to at least 10 brothers for counsel, then submitted an application package. I believe in Jesus' promise in Matthew 7:7, and as with all opportunities, I knocked on the door to see if God wanted to open it."

God has opened many doors for Bowditch.

Bowditch came to Concordia University Ann Arbor in 1982, intent on studying youth ministry. He was immediately struck by the active spiritual life that existed on campus and quickly built solid relationships with other students who put Christ first in their lives. One of those relationships was with Barbi Katt, who chose CUAA to further her spiritual growth as she pursued a degree in education.

Both student athletes—Mark in basketball, Barb in volleyball, and both involved in track and field—the two started dating their second year and became engaged over spring break of their final year. While at CUAA, they combined their passions for Christ and athletics and created Cardinals for Christ, a ministry group for student athletes and fans that hosted regular speaking events in the Manor and "frequently packed the place," according to Mark.

The couple was also active in mission work, rarely missed daily chapel, and enjoyed a nightly ritual with mates from the residence halls.

"DE-VOS," declares Mark with jubilation. "De-vos," short for devotions.

"Every night, at a few minutes before 10 p.m., people would press the buzzers in the dorms and yell, 'de-vos,' and then everyone would leave their rooms and meet in the common area for nightly devotions," explains Mark.

"Everyone heard the buzzers and would come to bond with Christ and each other," adds Barb. That exuberance for Jesus Christ has stuck with them all these years.

After graduating from CUAA, Mark and Barb were married while Mark attended seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. ('90). Over the next seven years, they grew their family, adding four children (Troy, Timothy, Joanna, and Gabriele), and served, first in Thailand for seven years and then in Hawaii for eight years.

While in Hawaii, Mark was introduced to the U.S. Air Force Reserve chaplain program through a fellow pastor and was intrigued enough to "knock on the door."

—Rev. Mark Bowditch

God answered.

Mark received his first chaplain assignment at Hickam AFB in Honolulu, Hawaii. His other stations have included Scott AFB near St. Louis, Mo.; Ellsworth AFB in Piedmont, S.D.; Vance AFB in Enid, Okla., and the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Behind the scenes, it has always been Team Bowditch.

"The faith and strength of the amazing wife God gave me has seen me through every step of the way," says Mark.

"I've always been eager for whatever God wanted us to do," adds Barb.

The Bowditch family eventually relocated to Grand Rapids, Mich., where Mark accepted a call to plant a Lutheran Church. Barb and their children were active in music and youth ministry. They might have stayed there forever, but God opened another door.

"I believe in Jesus' promise in Matthew 7:7, and as with all opportunities, I knocked on the door to see if God wanted to open it."

An Unanticipated Calling



**Fulfilling vocation
through filmmaking**



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CUBECITY ENTERTAINMENT

By Georgia Krieger, Contributing Writer

THE REV. ROBERTO MUÑOZ NEVER SET OUT TO BE a film producer, but years after graduating from Concordia University Ann Arbor he found himself doing exactly that.

And, he's confident it's what the Lord has equipped him to do. "Theater and film have never been a big dream of mine," Muñoz said. "This is specifically God putting me into a situation where, 'This is what you've got to do.'"

With no formal film training, the 1971 CUAA graduate has founded two successful filmmaking companies, the New York-based CubeCity Entertainment and the Canadian-based Curium Films.

Through his companies, Muñoz aims to create films that are entertaining and educational, while furthering the Gospel.

"Essentially, I see my work as an outgrowth of my pastoral ministry," Muñoz said.

A 1980 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind., Muñoz started his career as a pastor in Ontario and New York before becoming a concert promoter for Christian musical artists. He spent two years producing musical theater in Toronto and for Off-Broadway productions before deciding to pursue filmmaking.

Muñoz's companies are behind original films including: "Dear J," a story about Christian apologetics; "Under Jakob's Ladder," the story of a Lutheran pastor imprisoned in Soviet Russia for his faith; and, most recently, "The Lost Penny," a film that explores ways of protecting children from the world's evils. Muñoz and his wife, Jill, whom he met at CUAA, visited Ann Arbor last fall to treat students to a preview of his latest work.

Muñoz says filmmaking is a powerful witnessing tool because it allows him to share the Gospel in creative ways that sometimes reach unlikely audiences.

"Our mandate is to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves so that he who has ears to hear will hear," Muñoz said. In other words, "Sometimes the straight-ahead message isn't the best way to get things done," he said.

Even though he never set out to be a filmmaker, Muñoz says he's found great fulfillment in his work.

"It's just out of the ordinary what I do," Muñoz said. "It's just very fun, and all of it is within the parameters of Matthew 8, the Great Commission."

Learn more about Muñoz's films at www.cubecity.org or www.curiumfilms.com.

alumprofile

*“We can see
God at work;
He is the
reason for
our hope.”*

Ruth Koch,
Michigan Committee of
Overseers chair,
Mental Health Educator

'65

A CARDINAL FOR LIFE

A conversation with an alumna deeply committed to the University

By Kali Thiel, *University Affairs*

SHE WAS THERE AT THE SCHOOL'S START, AND SHE continues to be a part of its future. As a member of Concordia University Ann Arbor's first graduating class, Ruth Koch ('65) says she holds a special place in her heart for her alma mater. It's partially why she's committed herself to regular campus visits—despite the fact she lives more than 1,200 miles away in Colorado—to serve on the Michigan Committee of Overseers for CUAA, giving thoughtful consideration to some of the University's weightiest issues, as well as its most exciting opportunities.

Q: What is one of your fondest memories of CUAA as a student?

A: Probably one of the things that comes to mind most readily is the dedication of the faculty. I had a wonderful Old Testament professor named William Hoerger, and I met Christ in the Old Testament through him. I had classes with that faith focus, and that was a wonderful, wonderful part of being at CUAA.

Q: You've worked as a mental health educator most of your life. What does that work look like?

A: Over 45 years of teaching, training, and consulting, I developed a number of topics in the area of mental health and how sound mental health principles cross with our Christian faith. I also specialized in conflict management and healthy boundaries. One of the joys of my working career was when I could help church workers find some healthy balance to their work and their family life, and really enjoy living and serving.


Q: Why is it important to you to serve on the Michigan Committee of Overseers?

A: I'm so excited about CUAA, and how they serve and truly prepare students with a foundation—a faith-based education, a Christian education.

My husband was senior pastor at St. Luke in Ann Arbor from 1994 until he retired in 2001, so it was kind of interesting, after having been a student there and then coming back 30 years later, to see the changes. Now, skip forward to the time since the merger and what's happening now, it's exciting to see the changes once again. I feel like I've been a part of the CUAA story for decades. It's a place where Christ is really at the center.

Q: What do you anticipate for CUAA's future?

A: I think students, faculty, everyone involved with CUAA, they're all excited and anticipating the future in a way that's very hopeful. We can see God at work; He is the reason for our hope.

 Want to be the next featured alum? Let us know on Twitter: @CUAA

FUTURE alumni

Petty Boop (@Jrszuba143)

Happy to give back and help the kids at St. Paul #CUAAdoers



Kaitlyn Meister (@Kmeister5)

So incredibly thankful for the past 3.5 years at Concordia...Offerings on Tuesday nights will always be special to me #CUAA #Thankful



CUAA (@cuannarbor)

Today is visit day at #CUAA! Meet Janese, future Nursing student from right here in #AnnArbor. Thanks to all prospective students and their families for joining our campus community today. We hope to see you in the fall!

CUAA (@cuannarbor)

Students throughout the nation are bringing their Bibles to school today. Did you #bringyourbible in your backpack? #CUAA #CUAADoer #nationalbringyourbibletoschoolday



alumnnotes



2000s

EMILY (DE BOER) ABRAHAM ('10) and CALEB ABRAHAM ('09) announce the birth of their first child, Noah David George Abraham. Noah was born on Aug. 3, 2015. The family of three resides in Boynton Beach, Fla.

EMILY JOHNSON ('08) earned her master's degree in educational Leadership from Concordia Portland. She currently teaches first grade at Emmanuel Lutheran School in Asheville, N.C.



facultyposts

Ryan Peterson (@PrRyanPeterson)

It's early but they're ready! Our Haiti mission team, ready to serve! Join me in prayer for them. #CUAADoer #CUAA



1990s



ROBERT MEYER ('98) accepted a position as a music director for Dearborn First United Methodist Church after serving seven and one half years at Zion Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor, Mich. Rob is also currently working on rebranding and expanding his business, "The Healthy Musician Institute."

1970s

LARRY LUIKART ('73) recently published a book "Throw Sal on the Water: A Test of Friendship and Faith." Before publishing his book, Larry worked for over 25 years as a member of the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Larry lives in Colorado with his wife and their two dogs.



WANT TO SHARE YOUR NEWS?

Did you recently get married or give birth? Have you received a promotion, changed employers, or traveled the world? Email your alumni update with an accompanying photo (high-resolution if possible) to: alumni@cuaa.edu or submit online at: cuaa.edu/Alumni/whatsnewform.cfm.

YOUR OPINION DOES MATTER

By now, you should have received an email asking you to complete an Alumni Attitude Survey. If you haven't received an email with a link to the survey, please contact us at alumni@cuaa.edu and we'll send it promptly. It only takes 10 minutes, and we're asking for surveys to be completed by May 4. Your answers will help us improve alumni programs, develop new ways to serve you, and keep you connected to your alma mater. You could win prizes (including a \$300 Amazon gift card) by entering the drawing upon completion of the survey.



WORD FROM ADVANCEMENT

“... HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP IN mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world.” These are familiar words from the Concordia University Ann Arbor mission statement that many people see expressed through our dedicated and excellent faculty. These words are lived out as our current students engage in Christian service on campus. Our alumni continue to be the ongoing manifestation of the mission through their lives. The focus on service is evident in all of these groups.

But, stop for a minute to consider two key words in the mission statement, “helping students.” Certainly, our faculty and staff are on the front lines of this, but even they couldn’t do it alone. Helping students strikes at the heart of what motivates so many of our alumni and friends. Knowing the passion our students have for service inspires and causes others to ask what they can do to help our students. Perhaps, you’ve asked that question yourself.

Our first request, always, is for your ongoing prayers for our students and those who serve them directly. Pray that God’s Spirit would be active in their lives, guiding them as they prepare for their vocational calling. Pray for wisdom among our faculty, that their instruction would always be God-honoring and build His Kingdom.

In addition to prayer, be a CUAAs advocate. Share the great news about what’s happening at CUAAs. If your vocation allows you to make hiring decisions, consider interviewing CUAAs graduates. Encourage others to do the same.

Consider also helping our students with your resources that provide them with the facilities and technology they need. Your gift, combined with those of many others, makes a tangible difference in the education that our students receive.

Wondering how you can help our students? Give me a call or send me an email anytime. I would love to tell you more.

REV. DR. ROY PETERSON
Vice President of Advancement

IN THE SEAMS

A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE OFTEN TALKS about ministry that happens “in the seams.” Throughout this issue of “Arbor Light,” you’ve read and witnessed the mission impact of our students, staff, and faculty. You could spend a day on our beautiful campus and see for yourself the kind of impact these stories and pictures describe. But you might miss some of the most significant stories of mission impact—those that happen “in the seams.” This phrase describes those conversations, interactions, and experiences that probably won’t be highlighted on the front page or posted on social media. Rather, they happen between faculty and students, staff and students, students and students, and they occur on the sidewalks, in the café, in the gym, on the field, and in the car on the way to somewhere else. Oftentimes, they’re impromptu, unplanned, but Spirit-led. They’re conversations of struggle, questions, pain, and growth.

These individual moments matter and are transformative for everyone involved. After all, our mission statement reminds us that we’re a “Lutheran higher education *community* committed to helping students *develop* in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world.”

As campus pastor, I’ve had the privilege of engaging in and witnessing these “in the seams” moments. There are countless others that I’m unaware of, though. As a Christ-centered, higher education community, we can all help students develop. Peter says it well in 1 Peter 3:15: “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”



According to the results of the recent University Spiritual Life Survey, administered this past fall for the first time, the key findings validate our daily experience that Concordia University Ann Arbor is growing not only in numbers, but also as a cohesive and engaging faith *community*. While there is much to digest and consider, our students see CUAA as providing a spiritually vibrant environment that offers meaningful mission opportunities, chapel services, and spiritual support.

Ministry “in the seams” leads to mission impact. Or, maybe better said, ministry “in the seams” *is* mission impact, for the sake of our students and our entire CUAA community.

REV. RYAN PETERSON
Campus Pastor





THEN

The Concordia
Cheerleading
team performs a
halftime routine.
Circa 1978



NOW

Kim Daade, a
member of the CUAU
Cheerleading team,
soars above the "Red
C" of fans during the
Concordia Invitational
Tournament.
2016

Photo by Jeffrey Phelps

Arbor Light
Spring/Summer 2016

Assistant Vice President
Lisa Liljegen

Campus Communications Manager
Rachel Ferry

Communications Director
Kali Thiel

Art Director
Gwendolyn GaBree

ag Design and Production
Angela M. Girard

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CUAA.EDU/NURSING

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