

# Arbor Light

The Magazine of Concordia University Ann Arbor

## THE UNCOMMON THREAD

Gifted by grace, Concordians are transforming  
the ordinary into the extraordinary

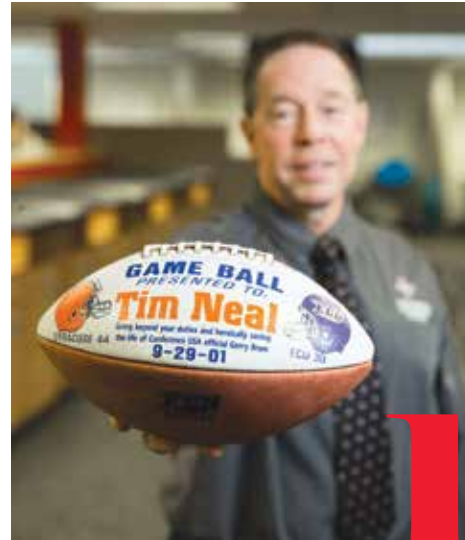
SPRING/SUMMER 2018

# Arbor Light

The Magazine of Concordia University Ann Arbor

Spring/Summer  
2018

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## TRANSCENDING THE ORDINARY

There is something quite different about Concordia University. Of course, we are proud of our academic excellence, outstanding faculty, impressive array of co-curricular experiences, and our accomplished alumni who make meaningful contributions to the world. But other institutions do those things similarly well. In fact, to the casual observer, what we do seems fairly common in the field of higher education. What sets us apart, what makes us uncommon, is that our ordinary university is attached to the Word of God and connected to His promises.

Common that is uncommon. This is a theme the Church well understands.

While everyday onlookers may observe the gifts of Word and Sacrament and be very little impressed, to those who by faith believe, these means of grace convey something remarkable. For it is "by grace you have been saved through faith," and the gift of God has been given to us in Christ Jesus. When the Promise, the Incarnate Word of God is attached, the common becomes uncommon. So, too, our good Father gives to us His grace through ordinary, down-to-earth means with transcendent and divine effect. Regular tap water splashed atop a forehead, a taste of common bread and a sip of common wine consumed in the usual way; there is nothing uncommon about those things. Yet when the Word is attached to these ordinary elements, the gift of grace given becomes, in a word, uncommon.

It is the promise of God in Jesus Christ, Himself the Word made flesh, that transforms each day into something special. What is true for us collectively at CUAA is true for each student who walks through our doors. We are "gifted by grace and prepared for a purpose." The promise of God's grace in our lives brings hope for the ever after and meaning to the everyday. It is what makes Concordia University uncommon.

Concordia University. Live Uncommon.

**REV. PATRICK T. FERRY, PhD**  
*President*

## NATIONAL PLAYOFFS

Cardinals team celebrates record-breaking season in 2017

By Rachel Ferry, University Affairs  
Photography by Kelly Cieslak

**“Fight, fight, fight with all your might, and bring home a Cardinal win!”**

The ending phrase of the Concordia University Ann Arbor school fight song rang true many times last fall as the Cardinals football program made school history, earning the most wins in a season (9-2) and securing a bid to the 2017 NAIA Football Championship Series First Round.

The young program has experienced incredible growth and a rapid succession of “firsts” since its inaugural season in 2011, including the first program win (2013), first season on a new home pro turf field (2014), first victory over a nationally ranked team (2015), first national ranking and winning season (2016), and, last season, the first trip to the national playoffs.

“Concordia is a special place because we have special people who believe in each other,” says Head Football Coach Joshua Schumacher.



“This accomplishment is an example of the progress and growth that can take place when people believe in something bigger than themselves.”

During the playoff first round last November, the 14th-ranked Concordia Cardinals fell to

the 2nd-ranked Reinhardt University Eagles in Waleska, Georgia, who went on to compete in the national championship. CUAA was the only team of the 16 competing to make its first appearance at the national playoffs.

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

CUAA’s budding ESL endorsement program is meeting a need in Detroit-area schools

By Kali Thiel, University Affairs

Concordia University Ann Arbor is taking a personal approach to teacher education in order to better serve Michigan’s rapidly growing multicultural population.

This year, Concordia will see its second English as a Second Language (ESL) cohort complete the Graduate Education Endorsement program. The educators, all of whom are full-time teachers in Detroit-area schools, will receive an endorsement that certifies them to provide specialized language instruction to the booming number of multicultural students who are entering their schools.

While other universities in the state are striving to address the need in various ways, what sets Concordia’s School of Education apart is its flexibility and willingness to meet the teachers where they are at, says Dr. Marilyn Meell, CUAA’s graduate education director.

Case in point: All of the graduates in CUAA’s inaugural cohort earned their ESL certificates last school year thanks to a unique agreement Concordia extended to The Dearborn Academy, a charter school that serves a predominantly diverse community. Instead of holding classes on the CUAA campus,

Concordia’s instructors traveled to the metro Detroit school for the convenience of the staff.

“Our size has been a motivating factor for a number of our students so far because they know they will receive individualized attention from their instructors and because we’re able to be flexible where many other schools can’t be,” Meell says. “There are already a number of obstacles standing in the way of getting more ESL teachers in the classroom, and so we want to do what we can to eliminate barriers.”

## A JOYFUL SOUND

CUAA’s music department commissions new piece for notable performance

By Kali Thiel, University Affairs  
Photography by Kelly Cieslak

No Easter service is complete without a rousing rendition of “Jesus Christ is Risen Today,” or so says Concordia University Ann Arbor Music Department Chair Dr. William Perrine, who counts the tune among his favorite hymns.

Not surprisingly, the melody can be heard within the latest CUAA-commissioned band composition, “Green Blade Rising,” which the CUAA Wind Ensemble premiered on Easter Sunday.

The band received a prestigious invite to be the showcase performance group of the 2018 Chicago International Music Festival, claiming the opportunity to perform at the Symphony Center in Chicago, one of the nation’s most renowned music venues.

The performance date afforded a not-to-be-missed chance to bear Christian witness to all those who attended the concert, says Perrine. However, as he prepared for the event he was reminded of just how few Easter band compositions there are in existence.

“There’s a tremendous amount of literature that exists to celebrate Christmas but very little

band music written for Easter,” says Perrine. “Add to that the fact that bands—in their contemporary form—have only been around for about 100 years. Because of that, band directors tend to be very engaged in the process of getting new music.”

Perrine, likewise, was interested in creating a piece to highlight the significant achievement of CUAA’s music department and to celebrate for years to come the gift of Christ’s defeat over death.

Last fall, Perrine commissioned Dr. Geoffrey Stanton, who serves as an adjunct instructor for Concordia, to compose the piece. Stanton has received numerous composition awards, fellowships, and commissions throughout his career, including from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The result of Stanton’s effort on Concordia’s behalf is a moving repertoire of melodic lines, beautiful harmonic implications, and rhythmic appeal. Stanton utilized Easter hymns and carols, including “Lyra Davidica” (“Jesus Christ is Risen Today”), “Victory” (“The Strife is O’er”), and “Noël Nouvelet”/“French Carol”

(“Now the Green Blade Riseth”).

It’s the second piece that Perrine has had commissioned this academic year. Last fall, in honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the CUAA band premiered “Luther: In Canon,” which features the tune “A Mighty Fortress is our God” interwoven with other Reformation-era classics. Perrine secured world-renowned composer James Stephenson for that piece.

The two original scores mark a new direction for Concordia. This is the first time in recent history that the CUAA music department has led the commissioning of music, and Perrine says he plans to continue the practice in the future.

“I think it’s really vital for Christians to be involved in the arts and to create things that are of high quality,” says Perrine. “To create something that is profoundly excellent is a witness in and of itself.”

Learn more about CUAA’s music offerings at [cuaa.edu/music](http://cuaa.edu/music).



## NOTCHING A NICHE

A CUAA student cultivates a talent for turning reclaimed wood into art

By Rachel Ferry, *University Affairs*

Photography by Kelly Cieslak



Professor Chris Niemiec shares artistic direction with Nate Harris ('19) as they work together in Concordia's 3D art studio.

It was summer of 2016, and Nate Harris was on the lookout for a creative project, so he decided to enter a community art show. The only problem was he wasn't sure what to sell.

It's not that the junior in the Haab School of Business Administration didn't have any ideas. It was quite the opposite. He had to narrow them down to the one area of art that he enjoyed most: woodworking.

Now Harris has made a business out of his beloved hobby, restoring old wooden slabs into beautiful pieces of art. His process, guided by a Concordia University Ann Arbor professor, is the beginning of the lifelong restorative work he hopes to do.

"The earliest memory I have with this stuff is building a wooden boat with my grandpa with just a hammer and nails in the driveway," said Harris. "I was probably only 4 years old, but I vividly remember just how much I enjoyed that."

Harris, who has always enjoyed working with his hands, put together a few items for the show, including photo frames and a storage cabinet for drills. Then he came across a photo of wooden patterns and geometric shapes all pieced together, and he was immediately inspired.

"I made that first piece of wooden wall art and thought to myself, 'Wow. That was fun. This could be my thing!'" said Harris.

He enjoyed it so much that he made another and another, and ended up having more than a dozen pieces ready in time for the art show.

With the success of the first show, Harris decided to make it official, and his business, Harris Design, was born.

It was in a ceramics class that fall that Assistant Professor of Art Chris Niemiec overheard Harris talking with a classmate about his most recent projects with his business.

Harris showed him some photos of his work, and Niemiec realized that he was serious about his craft. Niemiec took him under his wing and has been a mentor since.

Niemiec's critical eye helps guide Harris when making design decisions. Harris also talks to Niemiec about his business plans, and Niemiec meets him with high support and high expectations, pushing him to be better.

Niemiec's mentorship has been especially crucial when projects don't turn out as planned, which Harris admits can happen often since he's



constantly pushing himself to try new techniques and take on new projects.

With the wall art as a launching pad, Harris Design has evolved into a handmade carpentry business. In recent months, he has found himself taking on various home renovation and restoration projects, as well as building furniture, his favorite of which is designing and building tables.

"I'm pretty much open to work on any project if people are willing to take a chance on me," said Harris. "If there are problems along the way, I'll be up front, keep the clients informed, and come up with solutions, but I believe at the end of the day I'll be able to give them what they're looking for."

Harris recently received a request for a square eight-person table with a steel base. He was excited about the project but had never welded before. After attempting to sand and stain the steel-based table three times and feeling unsatisfied with each attempt, an idea popped into his head to try soaking the wood before applying the stain.

"Everything I've ever read about wood is that you don't put water on it; you just don't do that, but it ended up turning out perfect, and it was exactly what I was going for. I felt like God was super in my process creatively in the studio that day."

In his remaining semesters at Concordia, Harris hopes to learn everything about owning a business and growing as an artist. While he loves the satisfaction of seeing clients' faces when he delivers the final project, Harris hopes to eventually use his God-given talents in the context of home restoration and disaster relief, making old broken pieces of wood beautiful again.

# THUNDEROUS SUPPORT

Upgrades to athletic facilities designed to better support student-athletes

By Lisa Liljegren, University Affairs  
Photography by Kelly Cieslak



A new competition-grade track and turf field project, called the Thunder Sports Complex, is coming to the Concordia University Ann Arbor campus. Aptly named for Keturah (Kay) Thunder-Haab, a treasured friend and supporter of CUAA, the Thunder Sports Complex will be a significant upgrade for the many student-athletes who compete in collegiate-level track and field athletics and for the greater Ann Arbor community.

“The improved track and field will enhance our recruiting efforts,” says Lonnie Pries, athletic director. “Increased enrollment is a significant goal; developing and growing our student-athletes as ethical servant leaders is our ultimate goal.”

For Thunder-Haab, a track is a natural project to get behind; and not just because of her perfectly apt name. As a longtime

Lutheran educator at St. Paul Lutheran School, located just north of campus, she has been a champion of the sport of track and field for over two decades. Among her many roles with the nearby PK-8 school, Thunder-Haab was the official record keeper for the school’s track and field events, which were hosted at the old CUAA facilities.

“Students who compete in track are always working to improve on their own time and distance,” says Thunder-Haab. “They’re part of a team, but really representing and competing against themselves.”

Thunder-Haab is a familiar name and face at Concordia. The Haab School of Business bears the name of her late husband, Oscar W. Haab, in recognition of his generous support of Lutheran education and the Concordia campus. While neither attended CUAA (Thunder-Haab

is a 1959 graduate of Concordia, River Forest), both actively and faithfully served the Lord as members of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor and volunteered throughout the community. They believed strongly in Lutheran education and were committed to increasing access for more students.

“Smaller colleges, like Concordia, help students gain the confidence to speak up in class and try new things,” says Thunder-Haab. “Students at Concordia get to grow and learn in a place filled with God-fearing people who want to love and serve the Lord.”

The new track and field facility will also include a pro turf field. It’s just one of the priorities identified in *A Heart for Concordia*, the most significant comprehensive campaign in the history of Concordia University Ann Arbor. Announced in 2017, a cornerstone of the campaign is The Maier Center for Evangelism and Apologetics. The Maier Center is envisioned to help fill a critical need within the greater Church: the need for men and women who have a passion for sharing the Gospel and are seeking the tools to defend the faith in our modern culture. Serving more than just the CUAA campus, The Maier Center will provide programming and resources that will have an impact far beyond the campus proper.

Other campaign priorities include a student scholarship fund and an endowment fund that will support students, faculty, and innovative programs.

For more information about *A Heart for Concordia*, contact Rev. Dr. Roy Peterson, vice president of advancement, at [roy.peterson@cuw.edu](mailto:roy.peterson@cuw.edu).

# CAMPUS EVENTS

For more events and full information, visit [cuaa.edu/events](http://cuaa.edu/events).

## MAY

- 04 — Junior Visit Day
- 10 — Instrumental Concert
- 11 — Randy Napoleon and Friends Jazz Guitar Virtuoso
- 17 — The Concordia Honors Recital
- 19-20 — Class of 1968 50th Reunion
- 20 — Baccalaureate and Commencement
- 31 — Cardinal Hall of Fame Gala

## JUNE

- 01 — Cardinal Golf Classic
- 19-21 — English District Convention
- 24-26 — Michigan District Convention
- 28-29 — Ohio District Convention

## JULY

- 9-20 — Cardinal Sports Camps
- 29-30 — Trinity Time Retreat
- 30-August 10 — Summer Institute Workshops

## AUGUST

- 01 — Application opens for fall 2020
- 09 — Marzano Research Workshop on The New Art and Science of Teaching
- 23-26 — New Student Orientation
- 28 — Concordia Fest
- 30 — Alumni Night at the Fort Wayne TinCaps

## OCTOBER

- 13 — Homecoming

# THE HUDDLE



Leaders from the CUAA campus gather each week to connect and update one another on important campus happenings. Photography by Kelly Cieslak

A successful organizational culture is dependent upon good communication. We have many passionate leaders on the CUAA campus who are accomplishing great things, but if each of those leaders acted outside of the knowledge and cooperation of others on campus we would not be seeing the incredible growth that we’ve been seeing at Concordia over the past few years. Communication has been a key part of our campus’ success, and we work hard to engage in ongoing, effective communication with each other.

One of the ways we work to foster this type of communication at CUAA is through a weekly stand-up meeting I call The Huddle. Much like a quarterback on a football team gathers his teammates into a huddle prior to communicating the next play, I have found a similar strategy works well for the leadership team at CUAA.

Each Wednesday during the school year, a team of leaders gathers in my office to briefly discuss what is happening on campus. The team consists of people you might expect to see in a leadership meeting: myself plus the heads of enrollment, advancement, campus ministry, and our four academic schools—but it also includes some unexpected but intentional faces: the head of our maintenance and grounds, our director of institutional research, and a student representative from the Student Government Association, for example.

The Huddle is done in a stand-up format (i.e., sharing is limited to one to two minutes each) to encourage conciseness, energy, and to-the-point sharing. During our time together, each member of the team takes a moment to tell others in the group what they are doing in their particular area of campus responsibility, focusing on information that might be relevant or of particular interest to the others in the group. Oftentimes, the most important sharing happens when the meeting is over, during the candid conversations that take place as team members head back to their respective corners of campus.

In a world of advancing technology that offers new and varied ways to stay in touch, one could argue that the goal of communication could be accomplished by other means. However, at the end of the day, these meetings are not about citing what is on the docket for the remainder of the week or rattling off a list of to-dos. They are about setting aside time to be relational—in a manner that respects everyone’s valuable time—and they are about applauding the good work that is being done. In this way, we are advancing the mission of Concordia University.

**CURT GIELOW**  
Campus Chief Executive

# FUTURE alumposts

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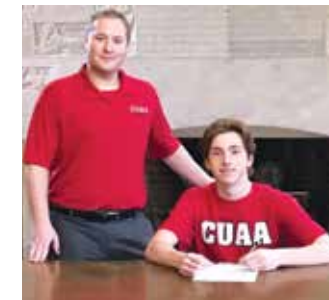
@hannahrayburn3  
So happy to be done with my first semester of Nursing School.



@emmijudithphoto  
My friends are super talented & I loved getting to take some pictures during our last Tuesday Night Worship of the year!



@cuaaxctf  
Thank you Pastor Ryan for praying with us before we take off for the WHAC XC Conference Championships!



@CK\_Hockey  
Congratulations to senior @Evan\_Daldin10 on signing for @cuaa in the NAIA hockey league today.



@randyscottduncan  
Had a little foretaste of Heaven at our International Fusion at Concordia University Ann Arbor! Amazing food and amazing people.

# THE HEAD AND HEART OF ATHLETIC TRAINING

An expert in the field combines faith and excellence in the CUAA classroom

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



Tim Neal holds the game ball from the September 2001 game where he helped save Gerry Bram's life.

**T**im Neal made national headlines in 2001 when a referee suffered a major heart attack and collapsed in front of tens of thousands of spectators during the fourth quarter of an East Carolina University versus Syracuse University football game.

Neal, who served as head athletic trainer for Syracuse at the time, was among a team of medical professionals who rushed to Gerry Bram's side to use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to jump-start his heart. Bram was immediately transported to a nearby hospital, and after receiving emergency heart catheterization he survived. He and Neal remain friends today.

Once considered a luxury for college athletic trainers, the AED is now a staple on sports sidelines. It was Neal who advocated that the

university purchase one. In fact, the first AED in Syracuse (and national collegiate-level) history arrived just six weeks before Bram's near-fatal incident, and with one life-saving jolt Neal helped build the case for AEDs to be added to the toolkit of sports medicine teams nationwide.

The miraculous story is one of many anecdotes Neal, who now serves as director of Concordia University Ann Arbor's athletic training program, likes to tell his students. Stories of his in-the-field experiences bring the class content to life, he says.

And Neal has plenty of stories to tell. Over the course of his renowned career, he's saved dozens of lives, mended too many broken bones to count, and helped shape the athletic training field in extraordinary ways. Neal,

along with others he has collaborated with, has mentored dozens of young athletic trainers who have gone onto athletic training careers in the NFL, NBA, NHL, WNBA, universities and high schools, both in clinical and academic roles.

Now, in the latter part of his career, Neal has moved from the big stage of Division I athletics to the intimacy of the close-knit Concordia community, so that he can help train the next generation of compassionate caretakers.

"I could have remained at the Division I level, but I lived that life for 36 years," Neal said. "I wanted to spend the last quarter of my career instructing and mentoring young athletic trainers as students. I wanted to move back to the Midwest and teach at a small college. Concordia was a good mission fit for me. The rest is history."

## WHERE FAITH AND EXCELLENCE MEET

Neal, a strong Christian, says Concordia's mission of preparing students in "mind, body, and spirit for service in the Church and world" aligns with his Christian values and life's work. At Concordia, he eagerly shares his faith in the classroom while pushing students to excellence in their future vocations.

Feedback from CUAA students pays tribute to his teaching approach. Responses from students surveyed in 2016-17 placed Neal among the top 10 full-time professors on the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses—both for his overall teaching and his ability to incorporate faith in the classroom. Rigorous attention to detail, commitment to continuous improvement, and bringing one's "A game" each day are hallmarks of his approach.

Neal is also nationally recognized for his expertise, which focuses on athlete mental health considerations, emergency preparedness, and concussion assessment. As the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) liaison to the NCAA Football Rules Committee in 2008, Neal wrote language for the NCAA targeting rule—the one that more than a decade after it was penned into existence is still a regular topic of discussion among sports fans and commentators.

His faith underpins his professional accomplishments and serves as the motivation for his unique approach to the athletic training field.

"Compassionate care is really critical," Neal says. "I talk about it routinely with students. That compassion comes from our faith."

## BEYOND THE PHYSICAL

From torn ligaments to psychological trauma, compassionate care is necessary for the array of situations in which athletic trainers might find themselves.

"The athletic trainer has a very unique place in sports because he is with and attempting to help athletes during their worst moments," says Neal. "Sometimes their worst moments aren't physical."

Tim Neal (right) teaches about knee injuries to two students, Timothy Koehler (left) and Jacob Bailey, in the master's-level athletic training program at CUAA.



With an estimated one in four people nationally who meet the criteria for a mental health disorder, athletes certainly aren't immune to the concern either.

Neal demonstrates his commitment to the psychological well-being of athletes and athletic trainers alike in a number of ways. During his time at Syracuse, he developed a protocol for athletic staff and coaches that ensured that athletes would receive the mental health care they needed, and has helped numerous other colleges adopt similar policies.

He also regularly travels to state universities across the nation to train personnel on a short-term psychological helping process called Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). Through CISM, an individual learns a series of skills to help normalize the events of a traumatic incident so that victims can return to their lives or be encouraged to seek professional mental health care, and, ultimately, avoid the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder.

In 2016, spurred by Bram's heart attack and witnessing the angst that fellow athletic trainers experience after handling critical incidents like Bram's, Neal teamed up with other professionals to develop a NATA peer-to-peer support program called ATs Care, which applies CISM to help athletic trainers cope after a critical incident. Neal is an approved instructor of CISM, one of only a handful of athletic trainers nationwide certified to instruct fellow athletic trainers in this technique.

The value that Neal places on caring for individuals holistically is one that's supported by CUAA, as well. It's part of what makes him feel at home at Concordia.

"At Concordia, I'm so fortunate to collaborate with great people—people of faith," Neal says. "That's what I like to be affiliated with."

If you're interested in becoming one of Neal's students, learn more about CUAA's athletic training program at [cuaa.edu/athletictraining](http://cuaa.edu/athletictraining). †

## Highlights of Tim Neal's 40-year career

- Wrote the language for the rules that news reporters and sports commentators refer to as "targeting." Written with the intent to assist referees in preventing concussion-related injuries, the NCAA Football Defenseless Opponent and NCAA Football Helmet Contact penalties are arguably among the most significant policies in college sports history.
- Served on NCAA panels concerning concussion management, student-athlete mental health and wellness, and student-athlete sleep and wellness.
- Served as athletic trainer on the United States Olympic Committee from 1985-87.
- Authored the first Catastrophic Incident Planning in Athletics guideline for the "NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook."
- Was given the NATA Most Distinguished Athletic Trainer Award in 2010.
- Received the NATA "Tough Cases" Award for Outstanding Performance in the Athletic Training Profession in 2002 for the part he played in saving Bram's life.
- Is presently the chair of the NATA Committee on Professional Ethics, and is a member of the ATs Care and Professional Responsibility in Athletic Training committees.



Watch Tim Neal spring into action to save Gerry Bram's life! View the video at [YouTube.com/cuannarbor](http://YouTube.com/cuannarbor).

“When the ordinary is attached to the Word  
of God and connected to His promises,  
the common becomes uncommon.”

*Rev. Patrick T. Fenny, PhD* / PRESIDENT

# Live UNCOMMON

**G**IFTED BY HIS GRACE, CONCORDIANS APPROACH EACH DAY with a sense of purpose. They don't seek recognition for what they do, but, rather, are confident in who they are and who they were created to be. With hope in the ever-after, Concordians go outside of their comfort zones, and use their gifts and talents in service to others. They find meaning in the everyday and transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. It isn't the easiest or the flashiest way, but at Concordia it's the only way.

By Lisa Liljegen, *University Affairs*  
Photography by Nick Collura/BVK

**WHETHER THEY HAIL FROM URBAN DETROIT, ACROSS THE WORLD, OR ANY POINT IN BETWEEN, STUDENTS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE MAKE THEIR WAY TO CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY ANN ARBOR TO GROW IN THEIR FAITH AND PREPARE TO MAKE AN IMPACT IN THE WORLD. WITH ALL OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION CHOICES AVAILABLE TO THEM, IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT LED OUR STUDENTS TO CHOOSE CUAA, AND WHETHER OR NOT THEIR EXPECTATIONS WERE MET.**

That desire for clarity guided the university through a comprehensive 18-month brand-discovery process, led by Gretchen Jameson, senior vice president of the Office of Strategy and University Affairs. The charge was to capture and share the distinct Concordia story: who we are and why our work matters. Earlier this year, the fruits of this effort were revealed. With support from Milwaukee-area marketing firm BVK, Concordia rolled out a new website, refreshed creative, and a bevy of print, outdoor, electronic, and broadcast media.

"In its essence, a brand is the concise distillation of the promise that an organization makes to its constituents consistently, dramatically, and repeatedly," says Jameson. "When we began our process we didn't set out to create a new Concordia catch-phrase; instead, we initiated a process of discovery, a university-wide dialogue that will continue to unveil itself for years to come."

While the CUAA brand has been strong for well over 50 years, particularly within the Lutheran community, two factors propelled the university to take a thorough self-examination: the changing landscape of higher education and CUAA's merger with Concordia University Wisconsin.

"These are challenging times for higher education in general and Christian universities in particular," says Jameson. "It is imperative that we ask and answer the hard questions, to ensure clarity about our identity as a Christ-centered university, and bring that brand into the market in an authentic and accessible way."

Because Concordia now represents two universities, multiple campus extensions, and a thriving online presence, Jameson and her team selected to implement an umbrella or family brand strategy to be able to focus on the combined strengths of the enterprise without compromising the distinctiveness of any endeavor.

"Research confirmed what we knew all along," says Jameson. "Concordians share the same DNA—similar strengths, recognizable character, and shared values across our campuses. So this positioning strategy is in complete alignment with how the organization operates on a daily basis."

After hundreds of interviews involving students, alumni, faculty, and staff; dozens of focus groups; and months of action and reaction sessions; Jameson crafted the brand promise—what Concordia delivers consistently, dramatically, and repeatedly to every student—and engaged BVK to bring that promise to life.

So what did the research reveal? It led to clarity around the unique promise that CUAA extends to students; that is, our vibrant promise to uniquely develop each student for a life of uncommon, Christ-led purpose. It reinforced that Concordia views every person as created remarkably and distinctively for many roles and vocations, and cherishes our mission to develop students in mind, body, and spirit to go forth, ready to live "a you-first life in a me-first world." +



Gretchen Jameson unveils the "Live Uncommon" brand platform at a university leadership meeting. Photography by Jeffrey Phelps



## THE ROAD TO LIVE UNCOMMON

Authenticity at every point of contact is the goal of successful, comprehensive brand work. Organizations can only fully achieve their missions when they are able to say and share exactly who they are and why they exist.

The following statements have been crafted and distilled from 18 months of research, conversations, focus groups, and testing to help our entire Concordia community clearly understand and articulate the Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor story.

### Mission

Concordia University is 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.

### Brand promise

We are a learning community at the junction of knowledge and Christian faith, where students are developed to lead uncommon lives of higher professional purpose for the betterment of self and community.

### Value proposition

We provide distinctive Christian higher education that develops the whole student, intentionally nurturing alignment of mind, body, and spirit in a vibrant, caring

community. As a result our graduates are *empowered to achieve* their highest potentials: to think, communicate, lead, and serve with integrity and compassion, wherever their careers, vocations, and lives lead.

### Position statement

For values-oriented, relationally driven students, Concordia University delivers a distinctive Christian higher education, where faith and knowledge intertwine, linking disciplinary content and liberal arts learning to faith and values in a supportive, friendly community that develops students holistically *to achieve* their God-given potentials.







## THE UNCOMMON Musician

Set on Striking a Chord  
in the Classroom

By **Rachel Ferry**, *University Affairs*  
Photography by *Kelly Cieslak*

Jess Russ knew she was home the first time she stepped foot on Concordia University Ann Arbor's campus.

Never mind the fact that she was more than 600 miles away from her home state of Alabama and didn't know a single soul in Ann Arbor. Concordia immediately felt like a place where she wanted to be.

"The first time I visited Concordia, I knew I was in the right place," Jess says. "I have met so many cool people with good hearts, servant hearts. Just by knowing them my faith has been strengthened, and it has changed me as a person."

Jess is one of thousands of individuals who have been changed by Concordia—in such a way that causes them to lead a life of uncommon impact in the world today. From the seemingly mundane tasks to the extraordinary, Concordians around the world are living their lives with a higher purpose, using their gifts and talents to serve those around them.

Two years into her time at Concordia, it didn't take long for Jess to become a part of the family. Everyone on campus knows Jess Russ, and she has made an impact simply by being herself. The approachable, small-but-

mighty sophomore is known for wearing beanies, her colorful singing voice, and being involved in many areas of campus life.

Jess' jammed-packed schedule is an intentional move. She believes that diverse learning experiences and encounters with new people will help better prepare her to understand her future students who will all have unique interests, backgrounds, and experiences themselves.

A music education major, Jess is eager to apply her approachable and accepting personality to her classroom environment, creating a safe place where students can support each other as they learn more about music and about themselves.

Her inspiration to become a teacher began at a very young age as she witnessed her mother's welcoming embrace of the students that came through her pre-K classroom.

"Even at a very young age, my mom makes sure students know that they are one-of-a-kind, talented people who can change the world," says Jess. "That's the kind of teacher I want to be."

READ THE FULL STORIES ONLINE OR FIND  
MORE STORIES OF **UNCOMMON CONCORDIANS**  
AT [BLOG.CUAA.EDU/LIVE-UNCOMMON](http://BLOG.CUAA.EDU/LIVE-UNCOMMON).



## THE UNCOMMON Crusader

Building Community for Christ

By **Lisa Liljegren**, *University Affairs*  
Photography by *Kelly Cieslak*

As a triplet, Kaleb Pohlman is comfortable in crowds. When he's not attracting fans to the Cardinal Stadium as a defensive end, Kaleb is lifting up the Concordia University Ann Arbor community, one personal interaction at a time.

The campus is his mission field and Kaleb, who draws inspiration from Luke 12:8, has more impact to make before he graduates in May 2018 with his bachelor's degree in sport and entertainment business.

"I've always been the kind of guy who rallies the troops," says Kaleb. "I've been given this outgoing personality that people seem to be attracted to, and I make sure to use it; to raise my voice as an example for others to follow."

As a team member, Kaleb intentionally helps other players remain focused on the goal. Throughout campus, he enthusiastically attends as many programs and events as his schedule allows to physically show his support. In all of his interactions, Kaleb greets as many students as he can by name because "it might just make their day."

Kaleb and his triplet brothers were raised in a Christian home in Liberty Center, Ohio.



## THE UNCOMMON Advocate

Skating to Impressive New Heights

By **Rachel Ferguson**, *University Affairs*  
Photography by *Kelly Cieslak*

For Lydia Paradysz, it's a tradition to spend a quiet morning rollerblading through the neighborhood alongside her husky, Bruce. It gives her the opportunity to reflect upon the journey that has taken her to where she is today.

A standout senior in Concordia's family life program, Lydia is a whirlwind of passion, focus, and fun. As with her morning routine, Lydia's story is uncommon. She's faced unforeseen turns that even she and Bruce couldn't easily rollerblade through.

Now, as one of two students out of hundreds of applicants with a prestigious child life internship at Mayo Clinic Children's Center, Lydia has learned that, for her, true success started with real compassion.

Some may think that Lydia's excellence in such a competitive field was bound to happen. After all, she grew up on medical terminology, health diagnoses, and hospital stories. Day in and day out, she saw her mother, a pediatric intensive care nurse, impact the lives of patients. From the beginning, Lydia knew that she, too, wanted to have a significant influence on others.

Even so, Lydia's journey was never a straight one.

Now retired, his father was a health and physical education teacher who also worked with students with special needs. The family maintained a busy schedule of church, sports, music, and volunteering with Special Olympics, an organization that touched each of the siblings through their father's teaching.

His open heart and bold witness attracted the attention of Beth Welkenbach, a CUAA parent, teacher, and organizer of a mentoring program in Dearborn Heights for children who are going through life-changing events like parent death or incarceration, homelessness, and addiction in the family.

"Our mentoring program needs strong role models whom kids can look up to when they don't always find them at home, and we have found a good one with Kaleb," says Welkenbach.

Twice a month Kaleb makes the 35-minute drive to Dearborn Heights to spend time with a fourth grade student who is enduring a traumatic family event. The two of them like to talk football, play games—Battleship is a favorite—eat snacks, and joke around together.

Upon graduation, Kaleb intends to pursue a career in events and operations with a sports team, but he is open and looks forward to wherever the Holy Spirit leads him.

"Whatever God has planned for me, I know I'll be put in a position to inspire others; to build a crowd in His name."

Uncertain about what she wanted to do with her life, Lydia attended a local community college and began a long process of job shadowing in hopes of discovering her calling.

It was during that breadth of time when Lydia's friend was diagnosed with cancer and underwent treatment. Lydia's first year of college, her friend passed away.

"It has definitely been a big part of my life," Lydia says. "Seeing and hearing all the things she went through, all the treatments and procedures, and how she was still so strong through the process impacted my decision to go to CUAA."

Lydia saw her friend's strength, and, even more, she saw the hurdles her friend's family had to go through. The experience led her to pursue the child life specialist track at CUAA, for students interested in being emotional advocates for families in medical crises.

Now in her final year at Concordia, Lydia is preparing to move to Minnesota for her internship at Mayo Clinic. As she thinks back on her mornings spent rollerblading and the winding path that brought her to where she is, she notes with a smile in her voice: "In such a journey, it's hard not to have faith. In a competitive field like this, faith has grounded me. So has Concordia."



Keep up with Johnston's running career through her Instagram page @thatrunnergirl34

# Every Step of the Way

Stephanie Johnston ('18) hits her stride at Concordia

By Rachel Ferry, University Affairs

Photography by Kelly Cieslak and Nick Collura/BVK

As a seven-time NAIA All-American, Stephanie Johnston is already the most decorated athlete to ever compete for Concordia University Ann Arbor, but her collegiate running career is not yet complete.

Johnston, a senior exercise science major who has her sights set on earning the national title in the NAIA Track & Field meet for marathon distance, has not always been the first to cross the finish line. In fact, her first race ever was quite the opposite. As a junior in high school, Johnston came in dead last out of the 75 girls competing in the 1500-meter race.

"That was the moment I actually fell in love with running," says Johnston. "There was something about the idea of not having to compare myself to anyone else. I was running simply to see what I was capable of and to be the best that I can be."

Johnston's goal with the sport is the same as her outlook on life: Everything you do is an opportunity to push yourself and to help someone.

If you've seen her race, then you've seen the socks.

The blue-and-white-striped knee-highs boast a bright yellow lightning bolt at the center of each side. Johnston was gifted the socks in 2014 from a little boy named Garcia, a family friend, who at the age of 3 was hospitalized for aplastic anemia, a disorder where the marrow fails to produce blood cells.

She has worn the socks for every race since, as she climbed her way up from dead last to the top of the leaderboard.

Johnston shared that Garcia's mom suggested some socks with other designs that might be more applicable for everyday use, but Garcia wanted to get her the lightning bolts, "so she can be fast."

After her races, Johnston would report back to Garcia and let him know how she did. After his bone marrow transplant, Garcia's first trip out of the hospital was to watch Johnston race.



He was certain that the socks were the reason she was becoming a faster runner.

By the time Johnston was a senior in high school, she had trimmed four minutes off of her 5k-race time and received a scholarship offer from Concordia's cross country coach.

Johnston worked extremely hard at her stamina and technique, and achieved her first All-American medal at the NAIA Indoor Track & Field National Meet her sophomore year, finishing sixth overall in the 5k.

Around the same time Johnston's running career was taking off, she was beginning to accept her roommates' invitations to join them for church on Sundays. After conversations with her friends and Campus Pastor Ryan Peterson, and catechism classes with the local church pastor, Johnston became a confirmed member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Now in her last semester at Concordia, Johnston reflects on the many experiences that have been made possible by her soon-to-be

alma mater. When she wasn't traveling the country for national cross country and track meets, Johnston spent her time playing violin in the orchestra or with the worship arts team, helping to lead a small-group Bible study with her teammates, and even creating new inventions.

Her newest hobby started to take shape when her favorite hobby, running, started taking a toll on her body. Johnston was hitting the pavement so much that she developed a stress fracture in her foot just before the start of her senior cross country season.

"I needed a project for my senior thesis, and I knew my shoes were part of the reason I had a stress fracture," said Johnston. "So I thought maybe there is a way for me to invent a shoe that is light enough for people to run properly but would also protect them from the stress of hitting the ground."

Thus emerged *JBolt*, a shoe designed to help runners avoid stress fractures. (See sidebar)

Though she's still working through the prototype phase, Johnston has the dream of dedicating a percentage of profits from *JBolt* to the Aplastic Anemia & Myelodysplasia Association of Canada (AAMAC) in honor of her friend Garcia.

Johnston knows a thing or two about how important training shoes are for running, especially as she competes for the marathon distance for the first time this spring, a new race compared to her usual 5k or 10k distances.

Just how far will Johnston go? If you ask her, the aspirational goal is to compete in the Olympic marathon, but she's just as intentional with her immediate future and running with endurance the race set before her, inspired by her favorite Bible verse Hebrews 12:1.

She'll finish her successful collegiate running career, walk across the commencement stage, and become a high school physical education teacher with a passion for encouraging students to take care of their bodies and to try new things. She'll keep working on her new invention and probably try some other new hobbies, too.

"I'm so thankful for the path that Concordia has set me on for my future because of this college experience that I had," said Johnston. Whether I'm running, developing my shoe, or growing in my faith, Concordia will always be on my mind." +



## CULaunch!—A New Shoe Solution

Stephanie Johnston wants to make stress fractures a non-factor. The 21-year-old runner was inspired to find a solution to end stress fractures for runners through an invention of her new shoe *JBolt*. She believed her own stress fracture could have been avoided with a better high-mileage training shoe.

Johnston received the push she needed to take her *JBolt* innovation to the next level by entering CUA's CULaunch! competition.

Launched in 2016, the annual entrepreneurial pitch event is put on by the Haab School of Business but is open to students of all disciplines.

Through CULaunch!, students receive business coaching and feedback from a panel of judges who are business owners themselves. The judges decide which students will receive a portion of the prize money to then launch their ideas.

Johnston's *JBolt* won first place, and she received \$1,500 to help in attaining intellectual property for her idea. Currently she's in the process of building a prototype.

Other ideas pitched by students at this year's CULaunch! competition included an expansion plan of a students' self-owned music and entertainment business and a computer programming learning module system.

"Our CULaunch! competition allows our students to turn their ideas into action and earn seed money toward launching their business," said Dr. Suzy Siegle, campus dean of the Haab School of Business. "Students learn to problem-solve, innovate, pivot, and persevere; all traits that serve them well in any business entrepreneurial endeavor."

## THE BIRTH OF A BETTER WAY

CUAA nursing students help provide prenatal health care to Detroit moms

By Rachel Ferguson, *University Affairs*  
 Photography by Kelly Cieslak



CUAA nursing student Caitlyn Freshour cares for a patient's newborn daughter in a consultation room undergoing renovations.

Detroit native Turome Chandler ('18) knew he was somewhere special as he stood in the sanctuary-turned-exam-room of the Luke Project 52 Clinic and saw a young woman with her newborn baby surrounded by a team of medical volunteers who were dotting over her and her child. The clinic's photographer was capturing the special moment, and balloons filled the space. But what really caught the Concordia University Ann Arbor nursing student's attention was the mother, who was dressed in an unbelievably warm smile.

Only a month earlier, Chandler had seen the same woman come into the clinic—afraid, untrusting, and closed off from anyone willing to help. Now she spoke to the medical volunteers with the same familiarity as her closest friends.

With plans of becoming the state's first mobile prenatal clinic, the Luke Project 52 Clinic is providing free pre- and postnatal health care to hundreds of Detroit mothers. The clinic, opened in 2016, was born from the passion of pastor and pharmacist Brad Garrison, in collaboration with The Lutheran

Church—Missouri Synod Michigan District.

It may be surprising to learn that, according to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Detroit's infant mortality rate is 2.5 times higher than the national average (i.e., the same as a Third World country). Statistics show that 61 percent of women in the state don't have prenatal care.

"The problem is not a lack of health care in Michigan," Garrison states. "It's an issue of relationship-building with women who have experienced serious issues, like domestic abuse. Our goal is to build a health care delivery



An extension of the Luke Project 52 Clinic, Benjamin's Closet provides childcare items to Detroit mothers in need. CUAA student Turome Chandler (left) helps sort items during his volunteer time.

system that is designed for the comfort and convenience of women in poverty, while building incentive for them to maintain appointments."

And that's exactly what Garrison and his wife, a nurse with more than 40 years of experience in high-risk delivery and neonatal intensive care, created. They transformed a former sanctuary to include patient consultation rooms, an ultrasound room, and a reception area. They recruited volunteer nurses, midwives, and physicians to provide expectant mothers with needed health care every other Thursday evening. They also recruited volunteer nursing students, like CUAA undergraduates Stephanie Husted ('19) and Caitlyn Freshour ('19).

The CUAA student volunteers are gaining valuable experience for their future vocations, but they'll tell you it's not just about what they gain academically.

"It's incredible to see how the patients are being impacted," Freshour says. "Even after their care, they want to keep coming back."

Beyond medical care, Luke Project 52 offers wraparound services that help meet the needs of the whole person. When women keep their medical appointments, they receive a ticket that allows them to shop at Benjamin's Closet, an in-clinic "store" that's stocked with free baby care items not provided by federal programs. Women are also encouraged to meet with social workers on site.

Meanwhile, an activity center provides childcare, and the church offers a hot meal at the end of the day, connecting the women with the church body. The medical staff continues to see the family until the baby reaches 12 months, which provides the clinic more time to build relationships and share Christ with the women. Since the clinic's inception, three babies have been baptized.

In its second year, the clinic has already reached its capacity. Garrison plans to expand to another static clinic site in Flint, Michigan. Plans are also in place to build a 40-foot mobile clinic that will allow them to partner with Michigan churches and provide these services throughout the state. CUAA's School of Nursing will begin sending students to the Luke Project 52 Clinic for official rotations beginning this summer.

For CUAA students, like Chandler, and mothers in Detroit, the clinic provides hope. "It's made me more of an optimist," Chandler says. "It's confirmed my love for the community and restored my hope for humanity."

*If you're a medical professional interested in volunteering your time or a church interested in supporting this ministry, please contact Rev. Brad Garrison at [bgarriso@reagan.com](mailto:bgarriso@reagan.com) or 734-646-8206.*



A lifetime train aficionado, Rev. Terry Cripe looks forward to many more rail rides in his retirement.

## A VISIT WITH A MASTER VISITOR

By **Lisa Liljegren**, *University Affairs*  
 Photography by *Kevin Wilson*

**R**ev. Terry Cripe ('68) knew he wanted to become a pastor since he was 5 years old. Inspired by his pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sturgis, Michigan, young Cripe emulated the preacher so often that his mom dressed him up in a pastor costume, complete with a hand-sewn cassock, for a photo that remains close to Cripe to this day.

As Cripe readies for his retirement as president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Ohio District later this year, he reflects on his time preparing for his long-desired calling at CUAA.

**Q:** Why did you choose CUAA?

**A:** While in junior high school, my parents and I made the drive to what was then named Concordia College, from Warsaw, Indiana, to see the campus and start preparing for my journey to become a pastor. Unfortunately, it was 1963 and all that we got to see were a bunch of signs and a pile of dirt. The campus was still being built, but I knew that was where I wanted to go. I stayed in touch with the campus throughout high school and applied as soon as I could.

**Q:** Describe a fond memory of your time on campus.

**A:** So many fond memories: The formative bond that I shared with the other pre-seminary students was something that I really appreciated about my time at CUAA. We got to know each other personally and understood what each other was going through.

I'm also envious of the theatre and black box that's now on campus. Back in my day we performed on risers in the gym. One time we were doing a play where we were interacting with the audience, and I nearly fell off the risers and could barely get through the rest of my lines because I couldn't stop imagining a fall.

**Q:** Are there any campus traditions that you remember?

**A:** A fun tradition, that they don't do anymore, was house decorating for different historical events. One year my house was assigned the Civil War, so we created a battle scene on the first floor with two canons pointing at each other and actual dirt on the floor. In the basement, we recreated a somber burial scene with candles and a coffin to the soundtrack of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." We took first place that year and spent the entire next day sweeping everything up.

**Q:** Do you think your dirt floor had anything to do with the demise of this beloved tradition?

**A:** (laughs) More likely it was because another house flooded their sunken floor to resemble an ocean battle scene!

**Q:** What does your daily life entail as a district president?

**A:** When I was in school I had to interview someone working in the field, so I interviewed a pastor and he described his job as a jack-of-all-trades, and that is a perfect description. I never get bored. I believe in doing as many visitations as I'm able and am only behind a desk when the task absolutely requires it. Since 2006, I've racked up 322,000 miles on my Honda Accord. I mostly listen, evaluate, and provide guidance to congregations in the District.

**Q:** What's next for you?

**A:** After 12 years as district president, I'll step down on August 31. I look forward to spending more time with my wife, Marlene, who recently retired; and our daughters, Leah and Sarah; and our grandchildren. My granddaughter, Kaytlynn, is a sophomore at CUAA and plays on the basketball team.

**Q:** What advice do you have for Concordia students?

**A:** Be thankful that you get to be at this wonderful place for four years; I regret that our program was only two years. Take advantage of all that Ann Arbor and the campus have to offer. The time goes by so fast! Enjoy it all while you can.

**Q:** Any last thoughts?

**A:** I am extremely grateful to God for President Ferry and his administrators for bringing this campus back to life. It is nothing short of a miracle. Marvelous!

*Join Cripe and other Class of 1968 Concordians on May 19-20, 2018 for the 50th Reunion Weekend on CUAA's campus. For more information, visit [cuaa.edu/classof68](http://cuaa.edu/classof68).*

# alumnnotes

## 2000s

RYAN BEFFREY ('08) received a call to Epiphany Lutheran Church in Dorr, Michigan, after serving for five years at Mount Olive Evangelical Lutheran Church in Cleveland Heights. Ryan and his wife, Ashley, live in Wayland, Michigan.



GRACE WU (MS '07) was named managing director of the A. Alfred Taubman Medical Research Institute at the University of Michigan. She and her husband, Ted Ressler, have two children and reside in Saline, Michigan.



REV. DAVID HERALD ('06) and his wife, Elizabeth, welcomed a daughter, Anna Margaret Herald, on Sept. 22, 2017. Anna joins big brother Benjamin.

REV. RYAN KLEIMOLA ('06) and his wife, Kati, welcomed their fifth child, Levi Ryan, on Sept. 27, 2017. Ryan is associate pastor at Trinity in Toledo.



REBECKAH (NEVINS) CARTER ('03) won the Excellence in Education Award from the Michigan Lottery. Rebeckah teaches ninth and 10th grade English at Charlotte High School in Michigan. Rebeckah's favorite part about being an educator is "working every day with kids and preparing them for a successful future."



GEOFF STRESMAN ('02) married Mary (Moore) Stresman on Dec. 30, 2017. The two live in Pearland, Texas, where Geoff serves as the middle school assistant principal at Lutheran South Academy in Houston.

## 1990s

ROB MEYER-KUKAN ('98) accepted a position of handbell director at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Ypsilanti, Michigan. In July 2017, Rob presented three classes at the Handbell Musicians of American National Seminar in Anaheim, California. Rob is currently developing a curriculum for using the Aroma Freedom Technique with performing artists.



KRISTA (STILLINGS) HARTMANN ('93) was recently selected to be one of 10 real estate experts on "The American Dream," which airs in St. Louis weekly on ABC. Krista moved to St. Louis in 2014 with her husband, ROYCE HARTMANN ('91), and is very excited about this new opportunity.

## 1980s

LISA (MATTSON) TINO ('84) and her husband, JAMES ('84), live in Santiago, Chile, where they serve as missionaries. After graduation, Jim went on to the seminary in Ft. Wayne, and they both served as missionaries in Venezuela from 1988-2001. After their service in Venezuela, Jim served as area director for Latin America with the LCMS. Lisa served as a church musician and a Lutheran schoolteacher in Indiana, Venezuela, Florida, and now Chile. They have four children and three grandchildren.

## 1960s



CAROL STEFICEK ('68) recently published her book "Desert Sojourner." The book includes information about the Sonoran Desert in Arizona. The book is available on Amazon and Kindle.



KENNETH HAUG ('65) recently authored Stephen Ministries' newest caring resource "Cancer - Now What? Taking Action, Finding Hope, and Navigating the Journey Ahead." This book helps people navigate the medical, emotional, relational, and spiritual challenges that cancer brings.

## Faculty Memorial Endowments

DR. JAKOB K. HECKERT was called to his heavenly home on Jan. 16, 2018. Dr. Heckert was an emeritus faculty member of Concordia and was beloved by many who had him as a professor. The Rev. Dr. Jakob K. Heckert Memorial Scholarship Endowment has been set up in Heckert's memory, benefiting pre-seminary students studying theological languages. For more information, contact Jen Hackmann at 734-995-7317 or jennifer.hackmann@cuaa.edu.

## STAY CONNECTED TO CONCORDIA

We want you—our Concordia family—to feel connected to our mission, our students, and all that is new on campus.

Please take a moment to email us at [alumni@cuaa.edu](mailto:alumni@cuaa.edu) and send your correct mailing address, phone number, and preferred email address. By doing so, you will receive our alumni e-newsletter that is brimming with opportunities for you to connect with other alumni, mentor students, network, be a classroom presenter, volunteer to help others, and live out the Concordia mission.

Many thanks, and blessings to you and your family.

—CUAA Alumni Relations



The CUAA men's basketball team took home the victory at the 67th annual Concordia Invitational Tournament, held this year in Mequon, Wisconsin. Fans rushed the court in celebration.

Share your milestones with us! To submit an AlumNote, email [alumni@cuaa.edu](mailto:alumni@cuaa.edu) with a high-resolution photo, if possible.

## ADVANCING THE MISSION



Who cares? Who cares enough about Concordia University Ann Arbor that they would be willing to support the university in living out its mission of helping students develop in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world? Who cares?

Apparently, a lot of people, and especially the more than 1,000 individuals who have demonstrated their heart for Concordia and our students by already contributing to our comprehensive campaign *A Heart for Concordia*.

In the past several years, CUAA has been blessed in countless ways. From sharply increased enrollment to expanded programs of study (including nursing and athletic training), CUAA is advancing the mission for the benefit of our students, and the Lord's Church and world.

Our thanks for all of this is always first to God, and then to those in whose hearts He works and who in turn bless CUAA through their generosity. Since the beginning of *A Heart for Concordia*, our alumni and friends have already contributed more than \$3.5 million! What else can you say but that God is clearly at work. Alumni and friends of the university recognize the vital role that a school like CUAA plays in a world that is increasingly indifferent or even hostile to the Christian message, and they are responding with prayers and financial support.

To those who have already stepped forward to help fund scholarships, endowments, the outdoor athletic complex, or The Maier Center for Evangelism and Apologetics, please accept our heartfelt thanks for your sacrifice and generosity. And if you have not yet become part of this movement please accept my invitation to join us now. Join us in what God is doing in a powerful way on the campus of CUAA. Join us in *A Heart for Concordia*.

If you would like more information about how you can help make a difference in the lives of our students and extend the mission of CUAA, please contact me anytime at 262-243-4533 or [roy.peterson@cuw.edu](mailto:roy.peterson@cuw.edu).

REV. DR. ROY PETERSON  
Vice President of Advancement

# AN UNCOMMON SENDING



Near the end of every semester, it is common for students to be thinking about what's ahead: a summer job, a move back home, family responsibilities, off-season training, or myriad other important life decisions or transitions. It is also common to be overwhelmed by the academic rigor of completing courses, final projects, and final exams. It is common for students who will complete an internship or student teaching assignment in the following semester to be consumed with the details and preparation of this exciting endeavor.

What if our students received an uncommon gift as they completed their coursework?

Rather than settling for the common feelings or actions of the end of a semester, a Concordia University Ann Arbor student's collegiate ending is characterized by a sending. Paul wrote to the Philippians that they should "shine as lights in the world" (Philippians 2:15). We pray that our students shine as lights wherever they go.

During the last week of classes each semester, students who will be completing internships, studying abroad, or involved in student teaching assignments are invited to participate in our Sending Service. The campus community gathers in a worship service that celebrates God's work in the lives of these students being sent to various places to complete their collegiate experience. In this service, students are encouraged in their vocations as they're sent in the name of Jesus and with His blessing. They hear Paul's encouragement in Colossians 3:15-17, and then they're reminded that they "have the privilege of living out and fulfilling the mission of Concordia: service to Christ in the Church and the world."

One of my favorite sights each semester is seeing our campus community pray over those students being "sent." That is uncommon. Watching students support one another in prayer is uncommon. Seeing parents arrive on campus to encourage their son or daughter in this next step is uncommon. Hearing stories of how the gifts and talents of our students are used in the service of others rather than the promotion of self is uncommon.

Of course, our students still have the same concerns that other students at similar institutions have about the future. But what makes a Concordia experience unique? The Concordia experience centers on being rooted in someone, rather than something. It centers on the action of Jesus rather than the action of self. While we celebrate commencement, championships, and completed courses, we first celebrate Christ Jesus, who is "first in everything."

That is uncommon.

**REV. DR. RYAN PETERSON**  
Campus Pastor

# CONCORDIANS IN THE CHURCH



Vicar Tyler Cronkright ('15) holds a child as Pastor Jim Hill baptizes her at Family of God Lutheran Church in Southwest Detroit.



The CUAA Worship Arts team helps Lutheran High North in Michigan kick off its 2018 National Lutheran Schools Week celebration in January.



Rev. Patrick T. Ferry, PhD, preaches during the LCMS Michigan District-sponsored Reformation 500 service, which approximately 13,000 people attended.



CUAA students Michael Hansen ('14), Thomas Winterstein ('15), and Andrew Osborne ('14) traveled to Phoenix in February to be among the thousands of pastors, church workers, and lay people who gathered at Christ Church Lutheran for the annual Best Practices for Ministry Conference.

# THEN

In the 1970s, all incoming calls to campus were received at the university switchboard and then transferred to campus departments or the one landline in each residence hall, but only between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.



# NOW

2018: CUAA students are constantly connected to friends and family near and far. Sisters Rebecca Johnstone (left) and Rachel Johnstone FaceTime in Silas Hall with a friend from home.

Arbor Light is published twice a year by the Office of University Affairs. For a free subscription, call 734-995-7317 or email [ArborLight@cuaa.edu](mailto:ArborLight@cuaa.edu). Comments: [ArborLight@cuaa.edu](mailto:ArborLight@cuaa.edu) OR via Twitter: @CUAA

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# CARDINAL

## HALL OF FAME GALA AND GOLF CLASSIC

Join fellow alumni and friends of CUA for a special two-day event to celebrate the successful history of student-athletes, while raising support for the athletic department's continued growth.

### Cardinal Hall of Fame Gala

Thursday, May 31 | Earhart Manor at CUA

- Formal Dinner
- Keynote Speaker
- 2018 Hall of Fame Induction
- Live and Silent Auction

### Cardinal Golf Classic

Friday, June 1 | Stonebridge Golf Club

- Two flights, AM and PM tee-off times
- Giveaways and Raffles

**REGISTER NOW**  
[concordiacardinals.com/alumni](http://concordiacardinals.com/alumni)



Cardinal Hall Of Fame Gala  
& GOLF CLASSIC