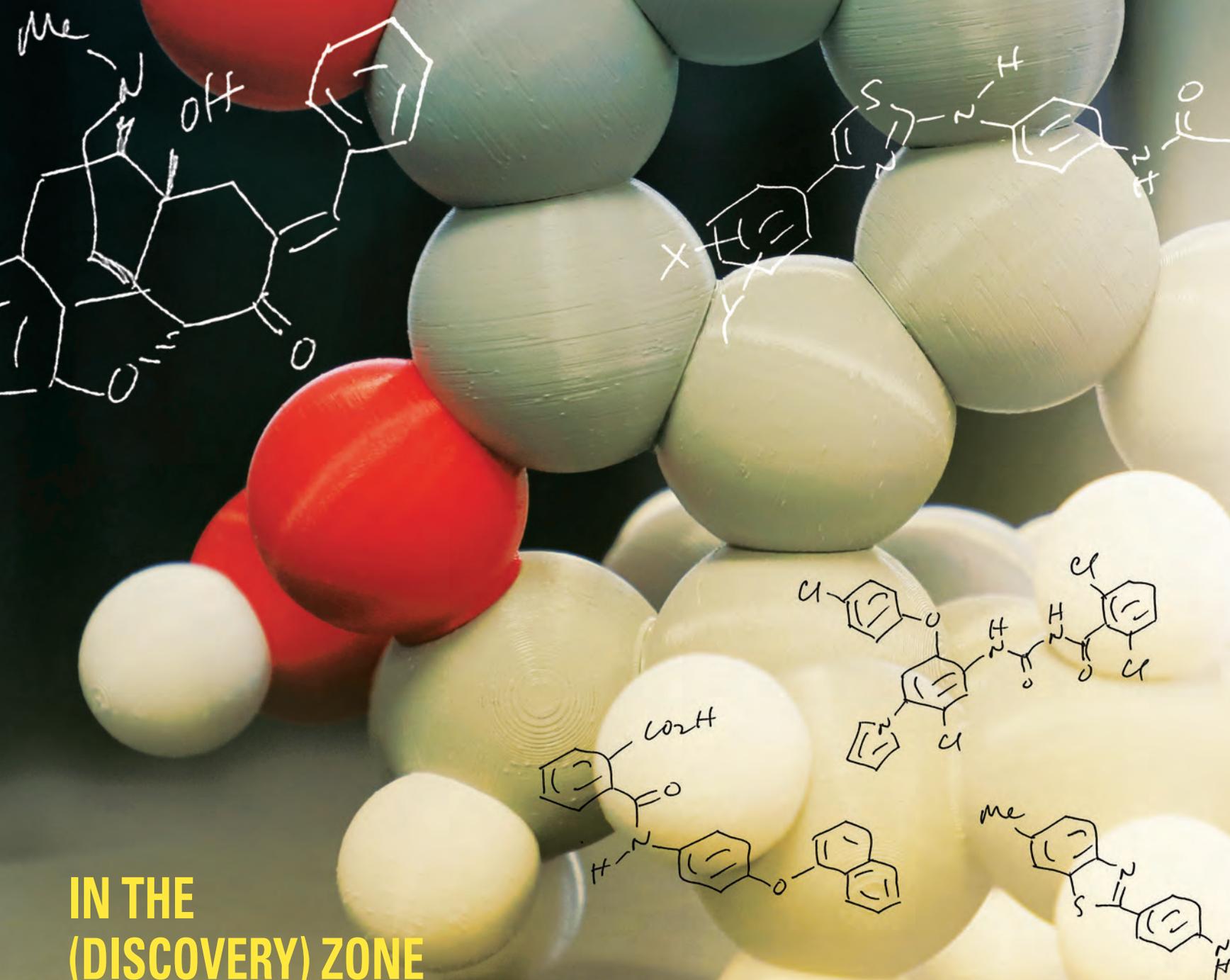


Concordian

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WISCONSIN



IN THE (DISCOVERY) ZONE

Faculty experts are building a strong research foundation at Concordia

Concordian contents

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More students than ever learned overseas this year thanks to a surge of faculty-led Global Education courses.

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“In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Romans 8:37

Each year the students who serve in our Campus Ministry programs select a theme verse to give some direction for our collective reflection throughout the academic year. Each campus, Mequon and Ann Arbor, follows a similar practice, but the choice of verse and accompanying theme is selected independently based on what fits best for Wisconsin or Michigan. The decision is made without reference to the other campus. A quick online search reveals there are 31,102 verses in the Bible. Even omitting the ones that are more obscure, the odds of both campuses selecting the same verse for the same year seem remote. Nevertheless, it happened (remarkably the second time since our merger in 2013)! This year across Concordia University we agree: We are more than conquerors through Jesus who loves us! Romans 8:37 will be our shared point of reference through all that awaits us at Concordia in 2018–19.

In the pages of this issue of the *Concordian*, you will glimpse women and men living uncommon lives of service to Christ in the Church and world.

A faculty member from the School of Pharmacy engaged in research to develop safer painkillers and help beat our country’s opioid crisis. Professor Chris Cunningham is a “rock star” but in a way much different from what he once imagined.

A group of baseball players that reached out and befriended a Bethesda College student on campus to make him part of the team. Matty Van Eerden’s uncommon Concordia experience was made possible by Falcon athletes who are winners on and off the field.

A young woman whose creativity and common sense is making a difference in the lives of thousands and thousands of people who read her lifestyle blog. Sophie Zang is a *Concordian* who has worked through personal hardships and now imparts winning advice to an eager audience.

And, young alums living out our mission—in the Church—the brothers Kegley, Casey and Noah, recently ordained following their graduation from the seminary; and living out our mission—in the world—Trey Mitchell who was elected Alderman in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, at age 22 just months after his commencement ceremony at CUW. The gifts and experiences that were cultivated at Concordia are now being put to use in service to others.

It is my great privilege to work each day alongside winsome people like these—folks who champion the needs and concerns of others. The fortuitous choice of the same theme verse for both campuses may be a coincidence. The assurance of the eternal and overwhelming victory that is ours in Christ, however, motivates our shared mission. In gratitude, *Concordians* are freed to pursue the uncommon path of dedicating their lives to make someone else’s better.


REV. PATRICK T. FERRY, PHD
President



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

The Office of Strategy and University Affairs is responsible for production of the *Concordian*. The magazine’s editorial team welcomes your feedback. Please send comments or queries to Concordian@cuw.edu.

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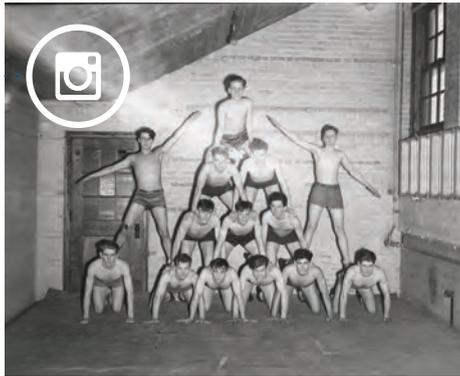
ON THE COVER:

Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences **Christopher Cunningham, PhD**, uses molecular models like the one pictured as visual aids during his ongoing talks about his opioid research efforts.

social scene

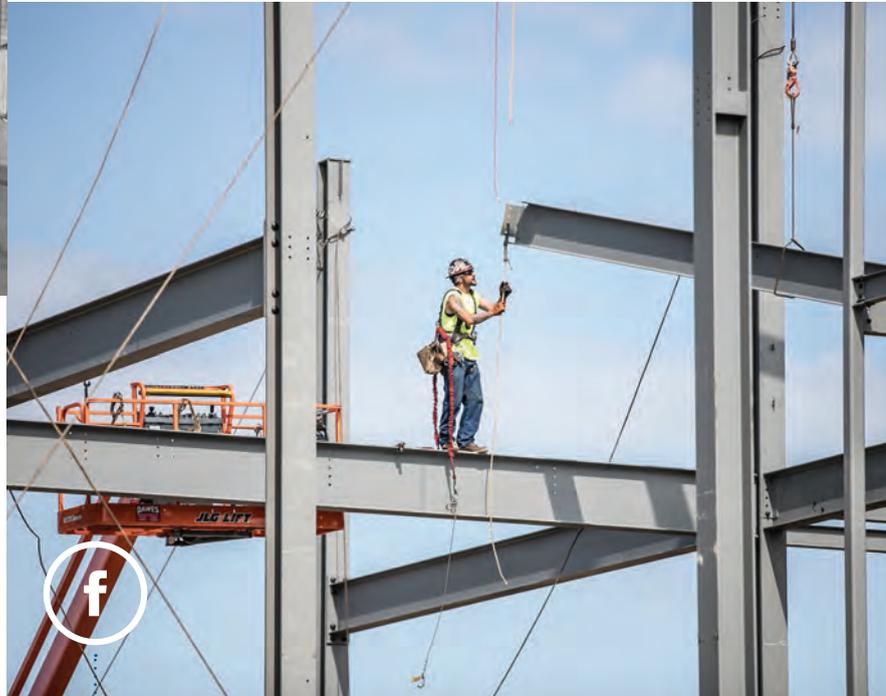
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PULL A STUNT

The 1914 men's gymnastics team is in perfect formation. Not bad for their inaugural year. Check out more on Instagram with #FalconFlashback.



DIG IN Concordia broke ground in April on The Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center, and the construction scene is unmissable if you enter the main campus entrance. In case you haven't paid us a visit lately, catch up on the building progress online. Time lapse available at cuw.edu/robertwplaster.



BACKSTAGE BUSTLE

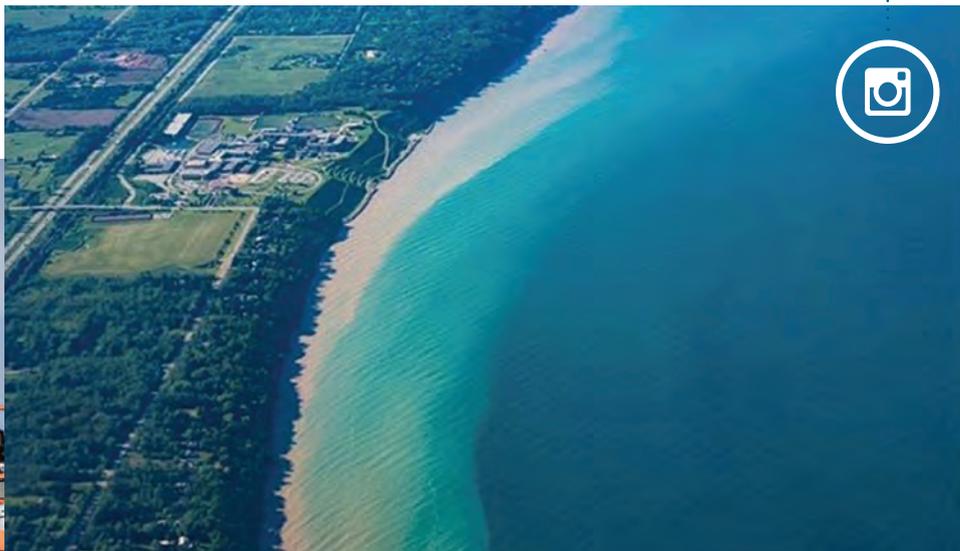
Director Lori Woodall transforms student Ethan Karschnik into James Tyrone, a lead character in CUW's summer play "A Long Day's Journey into Night."

FUNDING FUTURE LUTHERAN EDUCATORS Lindsey Fuchsberger, Katherine Scheuer, and Ku Mo are the first to receive Concordia's new full-ride scholarship given to students who want to teach in urban Lutheran schools. Read the full story at blog.cuw.edu/full-ride-lutheran-ed and view more news stories at cuw.edu/news.



Photo courtesy of Courtney Richards ('18)

TALK ABOUT A VIEW! Thank you to [@ndrcinefo](#) for this beautiful shot. It earned the most “likes” out of all our Facebook posts of the summer.



“It’s a little bit bigger than just a baseball game.”

Concordia’s baseball team made headlines for its unique and special bond with recent Bethesda College graduate Matty Van Eerden. Watch the new coverage at blog.cuw.edu/media-coverage.



This is to those who champion Concordia through social media.

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



**FAVORITE REVIEW:
BILL GROSS**

“Two of our children have attended CUW. They graduate extremely well prepared to be among the best in their fields. Throughout their college careers, Concordia actively nurtures and strengthens their faith in God. We’re so thankful for CUW!!”

FOLLOWERS FAR AND WIDE

Social media keeps us connected even when we’re oceans apart. Thanks to our loyal followers abroad. Here’s just a taste of who “likes” us (we see you, too, Myanmar!).

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 396 INDIA | 70 TAIWAN |
| 122 BRAZIL | 49 AUSTRALIA |
| 110 PAKISTAN | 26 GERMANY |
| 90 NIGERIA | 6 MYANMAR |

INNOVATIVE DOCTORATE PROGRAM PILOTED

Concordia's School of Education has launched a new doctorate degree designed for leaders, innovators, and "doers" in an array of professional vocations.

The Doctorate of Education of Leadership in Innovation and Continuous Improvement (EdD LICI) program began this fall with 16 students enrolled.

The 60-credit three-year program is an online degree, with two residency requirements. It comprises three core areas: leadership, research, and improvement science and innovation. Students are also afforded the opportunity to customize their learning experience with a fourth mandatory elective area.

Concordia will welcome a second spring cohort starting with a four-day residency Jan. 3-6, 2019.

To apply, contact Amber Schiessl, director of graduate enrollment, at amber.schiessl@cuw.edu or 262-243-4551. Learn more at cuw.edu/EdD-LICI.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION GETS A NEW DEAN

On July 1, Dr. James Pingel II stepped into his new role of dean of Concordia's School of Education. Pingel ('92, '01) previously served as director of graduate education and associate professor of secondary education.

"I believe wholeheartedly in the mission of Concordia, and I try to align everything I do to that mission," Pingel says. "We have a unique opportunity at Concordia to expose students to the Gospel message. Our goal is to educate students and to do that exceptionally well, but while they're here expose them to the lifesaving message of Jesus Christ."

Read more about Pingel's vision for the School of Education at blog.cuw.edu/new-education-dean.



The realm of opportunity extended

Concordia now offers scholarships for post-traditional learners

By **Kali Thiel**, *University Affairs*

Photography by *Jeffrey Phelps*



CUW alumni, including Mark Scholz ('15), are eligible for Concordia's new Alumni Scholarship, one of four scholarship programs CUW announced this fall.

This fall Concordia University Wisconsin announced an unprecedented level of financial support for adult and post-traditional learners who wish to further their education at a high-value Lutheran university.

Four new scholarship programs have been made available for the 2018-19 academic year, including a first-ever scholarship for all Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor alumni. In addition to alumni, scholarships are open to employees or members of any Christian organization, church, or school, as well as Concordia's official business and academic partners.

To be eligible, applicants must enroll in any of the approved academic programs offered through Concordia's School of Arts and Sciences, Batterman School of Business, or School of Education. The university's Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) program is also among the eligible programs.

The new scholarship programs include:

- **Business Community Scholarship**—Employees of any business that has a signed partnership with Concordia are able to receive \$150 per three-credit undergraduate course or \$200 per three-credit course in eligible graduate programs, including the university's MBA program, which offers more than 15 concentrations and is annually ranked the largest in the state of Wisconsin.
- **Academic Community Scholarship**—Concordia currently has Preferred Educational Partnership (PEP) agreements with 98 public, private, charter, and voucher schools in Wisconsin. All PEP district employees are eligible to receive \$150 per three-credit undergraduate course or \$450 per three-credit graduate course program, including the new Doctorate of Education of Leadership in Innovation and Continuous Improvement (EdD LICI).
- **Christian Community Scholarship**—Throughout the nation and world, employees of any qualifying Christian organization, church, or school are eligible to receive \$200 per three-credit course in adult accelerated undergraduate programs or \$500 per participating graduate programs, including the new EdD LICI.
- **Alumni Scholarship**—Concordia is proud of its more than 42,000 alumni from both the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses, all of whom are eligible to receive \$200 per three-credit course in adult accelerated undergraduate programs or \$500 per participating graduate programs, including the new EdD LICI.

Visit cuw.edu/uncommon-scholarships to see a full listing of eligible programs and to learn more about how to apply for these unique scholarship opportunities.

Double the love

Concordia's Comfort Dog Ministry adds Health Professions-focused pup

By **Kali Thiel**, *University Affairs*

Concordia University has expanded its Comfort Dog Ministry by four more furry paws.

This past August a 2-year-old purebred Golden Retriever named Sage joined Concordia's inaugural comfort dog Zoey. Together, the two serve as an emotional support on campus and beyond through their ever-patient demeanors and calming presence.

Like Zoey, Sage is a Lutheran Church Charities (LCC) K-9 Comfort Dog. He's owned by the university—thanks to the support of generous donors—and works full time, logging between 35 to 40 hours in an average week. He even has office hours, a uniform, business cards, and a Falcon 1 card.

While Zoey's primary role is to assist in Concordia's Counseling Center, Sage focuses his efforts on the School of Health Professions, working with students in the animal assisted therapy certificate program, which launched this fall.

Three physical therapy and seven occupational therapy students are among the university's inaugural cohort for the program, which requires the completion of seven courses and 225 hours working closely with certified comfort dogs.

Most of those hours will be spent serving in Concordia's three new Health Professions clinics: the Speech, Language and Hearing Clinic, which will be located in CUW's new academic building; a community-based clinic located in Granville Lutheran, a LUMIN school in Milwaukee; and a second community-based clinic located in Portal, Inc., a nonprofit organization in Grafton, Wisconsin, that serves adults and youth with developmental disabilities.

Partnerships with the two community clinic sites were finalized in time for the start of the fall 2018 semester. CUW students studying physical therapy and occupational therapy now offer free services at the sites about once a week, and Sage frequently accompanies the students on their visits.

"We see Sage as a reinforcer," says Dean of Health Professions Linda Samuel, PhD, MS, OTR. "Dogs accept everyone. With people, we try to, but we still have our biases. We've seen dogs be a really great motivator for someone who is on the road to rehabilitation."

Other schools throughout the nation offer animal assisted therapy certificate programs



Sage (right) now joins Zoey in providing comfort to the Concordia University community.

similar to the one that Concordia has piloted, but Sage sets CUW apart from the rest.

Sage and Zoey also devote their working hours to serving in the community and educational settings; deploying to national tragedies; and being at large in the university to serve as a calming presence to students, faculty, and staff in passing.

Dave Enters, director of counseling and head of the Counseling Comfort Dog program, says it's impossible to miss the impact that comfort dogs have on Concordia.

"These dogs are gentle, calm, approachable, non-judgmental, caring, and compassionate," says Enters. "And we, as human beings, are drawn to that. Concordia's comfort dogs break down walls and provide opportunity for conversation, so that those individuals who work alongside them can begin to better serve others with a Christ-like love that's so desperately needed in our world today. What a beautiful and effective way to fulfill Concordia's mission."

Follow Sage and Zoey on Facebook at /SageComfortDog and /ZoeyComfortDog. Learn more about Concordia's Health Professions offerings at cuw.edu/health-professions. Offer your financial support for the animal assisted therapy certificate program at cuw.edu/give.

NATIONAL NODS

"University Business" magazine and Higher Education Today named CUW's Counseling Comfort Dog program among the recipients of its nationwide Models of Excellence program.

.....

Zoey is featured in the 2017 National Geographic gift book "Loyal: 38 Inspiring Tales of Bravery, Heroism, and the Devotion of Dogs."

Upcoming events

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

October

- 17—"Aggregate" Art Gallery Opening; Oct. 15—Nov. 30 exhibition run
- 26—Admissions Visit Day
- 26—Pops Concert
- 26-28—Homecoming Weekend

November

- 03—Admissions Visit Day
- 8-11—Theatre Program Presents "Guys and Dolls"
- 09—Admissions Athlete Visit Day
- 11—Selah and Civic Chorale Choir Concert
- 17—Women's Leadership Institute 15th Anniversary Celebration Dinner
- 18—Christ the King Celebration
- 30—Christmas at Concordia

December

- 01—Christmas at Concordia
- 15—Baccalaureate and December Commencement

January

- 26-27—Concordia Invitational Tournament at Ann Arbor
- 31—"Earth: A Vessel" Art Gallery Opening; Jan. 28-March 30 Exhibition Run

February

- 15-17—Theatre Program Presents "Robin Hood"
- 21—Workforce Career and Internship Fair
- 22—Admissions Athlete Visit Day

March

- 17—Alumni Milwaukee Bucks Game and Social
- 29—Junior Visit Day

April

- 06—Admitted Student Day
- 12-14—Theatre Program Presents Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap"
- 13—Junior Visit Day
- 26-28—Theatre Program Presents "Steel Magnolias"

May

- 3-5—Alumni Waterpark Weekend



From left: Elizabeth Polzin, Christopher Brandt, and Andy Miller are just a few of the people making sure students are fully supported and encouraged to do their best at Concordia.

Solid support

Concordia's award-winning academic advising team has got students' backs

By **Kali Thiel**, *University Affairs*

In fall 2017, Concordia achieved an impressive 82 percent student retention rate. It was a 10-percent jump from Concordia's 2016 retention, not to mention an all-time record for the university.

While there were a number of factors at play and multiple individuals to credit for the retention boost, Concordia's academic advising model noticeably underwent a massive overhaul within the year preceding the shift when Assistant Vice President for Student Success Elizabeth Polzin came on board.

Using analytics as their guiding force, a cross-departmental group made up of Polzin, Director of Academic Advising and Career Engagement Andy Miller, and Director of Business Intelligence Christopher Brandt reinvented or reinvigorated a significant number of the academic support services that play a key role in the retention equation. For their efforts, the trio was awarded a 2018 Blackboard Catalyst Award in the category of "optimizing the student experience," the highest honor given out by the academic technology company that serves 16,000 education-focused clients worldwide.

"It's so rewarding to have a system that's clearly working. One key aspect to our success has been staff that embraced the tools and provided the timely intervention to students," says Polzin. "More importantly, though, I think we're all excited that what we have reimagined best serves students to enhance their success."

Changes within the advising model include PROSPER, for those in need of academic coaching upon entry into the university; STAR, for students on academic probation; and FAST, an academic early alert task force that meets weekly throughout the academic year. The programs, which are led by Miller, were each started or revamped within the past two academic years and have shown impressive results ever since. In 2017-18 alone, students in PROSPER and STAR completed more classes, earned higher GPAs, and were far less likely to be on academic probation or academically dismissed than eligible students who didn't engage in the programs.

The new approach depends on analytics to identify students in need, and the group leans heavily on Brandt, with help from Registrar Carl Butz, to manage the data models that allow them to easily access the data. Prior to the shift, academic advisers relied primarily on an antiquated midterm grade reporting practice to indicate if students were struggling in class—reports that often came too late into the semester to be able to turn the tide.

But now, with the help of Brandt's analytics, advisors have the information they need at their fingertips, allowing them to intervene early—before the semester even starts—and personally for the best student outcomes. They can tell, for example, if a student has had a significant drop in GPA from the prior term or if they're registered for an overload of credits in a semester.

"We've been able to use numbers to ensure

PROSPER

Providing Resources and Opportunities for Student Performance, Engagement, and Retention



Started in 2016, Concordia's PROSPER program pairs new students with a faculty or staff member to develop an individualized plan for success. The students participate in weekly meetings and learn about helpful topics, including time management, test-taking strategies, and self-efficacy development.

STAR

Striving Towards Academic Recovery



Concordia's STAR program follows a similar structure as PROSPER but is catered toward returning students. Participation in the program may be warranted short-term to remedy a poor semester performance, or some students who are struggling academically may remain in the program for longer.

FAST

Falcon Academic Support Team



This task force, comprised of Advising, Student Life, Academics, and Athletics staff, meets weekly and uses data, faculty/staff referrals, and personal interactions to identify and connect with students who may be facing academic difficulty. The combination of resources allows the group to reach out to students oftentimes before he or she even knows there's a problem.

that students aren't treated as one," Miller says.

Dozens of students have benefited from the revamped model—students like Eric, who learned through the STAR program that he struggled with time-management skills. Eric was taught tips on how to make the most of his time, and a STAR coach held him accountable to utilizing them while he was in the program.

A year later, Eric has raised his GPA and is on track to graduate within four years. He continues to utilize lessons learned through the program. "I like the fact that the system automatically kicks in," Eric says. "I think I would have eventually asked for help, but it would have been too late."

"I'm happy I went through it," he continues. "I met once a week with Elizabeth (Polzin). She gave me confidence that I could do it."

Preferred by the Pack

Concordia partners with the Green Bay Packers to showcase its MBA program

By **Kali Thiel**, *University Affairs*

Wisconsin's largest Master of Business Administration program is now the preferred educational program of the Green Bay Packers.

In August, Wisconsin's NFL team and Concordia University Wisconsin announced the new partnership, which gives Concordia a significant marketing edge on its competitors for the next three years.

"The iconic Green Bay Packers brand represents quality, excellence, and consistent hard work—all traits that Concordia values, as well," says Dr. Brian Curry, MBA program director. "The Packers are beloved and recognized all over the world, and we are excited to have this connection to such a strong Wisconsin-based brand. With this partnership, we look forward to expanding our reach, not just in Wisconsin but around the globe, and offering the highest-value Christian education to more people than ever."



Freddy the Falcon visited Lambeau Field to help announce Concordia as the "Preferred MBA Program of the Green Bay Packers."

With 15 different concentrations and more than 850 students enrolled, Concordia's Master of Business Administration program annually tops the list of largest MBA programs in the state. The master's-level program, which is housed in the Batterman School of Business, annually reaches learners worldwide through classes online, in person—on the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses, or at any of CUW's nine center locations throughout Wisconsin—or in a blended format.

The agreement gives Concordia rights to a bevy of benefits, including access to Green Bay Packers executives, multiple club-level tickets, and branding rights on the Packers' scoreboard and other areas seen by millions upon millions of people throughout the season.

Through the agreement, Concordia is now an associate sponsor of the Packers Speaker Series, a monthly luncheon held in Milwaukee during the Packers season that gives attendees a chance to hear from and interact with Packers administrators and players. The partnership also includes the presenting sponsorship of the "Player on the Rise" digital series on Packers.com.

Learn more about Concordia's MBA program at cuw.edu/mba.

SUBSCRIBE TO CUW'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL and catch our series of videos featuring Green Bay Packers retired running back Dorsey Levens (pictured) and current running back Ty Montgomery.



THEY PRACTICE WHAT THEY TEACH

These five professionals have reached impressive heights in their personal careers. Here's why they choose to adjunct and share their expertise with Concordia students.

By **Lisa Liljegren** and **Kali Thiel**,
University Affairs



Mark Baden
Chief Meteorologist, WISN TV

Why do you teach at Concordia?

My connection to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod goes really deep, and my family background is in teaching, so there was a draw to do it. For me, it's so much different than what I do on a daily basis. What's been rewarding is there have been a handful of students I've taught who have gone after a career in meteorology. That's fun to see. Getting people to follow their passion, no matter what it is, is fun.

How did you get your career start?

I saw lightning strike a tree when I was a kid, and it ignited my passion for weather. From then on it's what I wanted to do. What's fun for me is the job's different every day. TV business can be rough, but I've been blessed to work for a very good company. It's nice to have an occupation that's really a hobby.

What has been a pinnacle moment or accomplishment of your professional life thus far?

More than anything, it's survival in a nutty business and just being able to still enjoy getting into work every day. I've had some awards and things, but I think it's being able to go to a place of work where I'm respected and where I respect my coworkers.

There's also been lots of other fun, goofy things that have happened along the way: bungee jumping, riding a mechanical bull, shooting live shots on a llama, and getting to meet all kinds of people just because of where I was at. To get an invitation to the White House ... never thought I'd have that before.



Jim Johnson
Sheriff, Ozaukee County

What do you like best about being a sheriff?

There's a line on my coffee cup that reads: We're serving the people of today for a better tomorrow. Those are words I live by. Throughout my career in the military (Marine Corps and the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 32nd Military Police Company) and in criminal justice and law enforcement, I've always been motivated to serve and protect people. The best part about being a sheriff is that I'm in a position to positively impact people's lives. Sometimes it's the little things that leave a lasting impression so I always look for big and small opportunities to impact others.

What advice do you give your students?

We spend a lot of time talking about ethics in my classroom because having strong ethics is such an important part of law enforcement, in everything, actually. I tell them to do the right thing even when God is the only one watching. I also encourage them to follow their passion and to surround themselves with colleagues who bring them joy because they are the people who are going to get them through difficult times on the job and in life.

What have you learned as an adjunct at CUW?

So many people worry about the next generation. I'm not concerned at all. The students here at Concordia care about learning. They care about the future. And, they're respectful and kind. We have to understand that the millennials and the generation after that have a different way of looking at things, but they still value the same things that we do. They will make great leaders someday.



MBA

Jill Busch ('03, '13)

*Talent Development Manager,
Human Resources, Kohl's Corporate*

Why do you adjunct at Concordia?

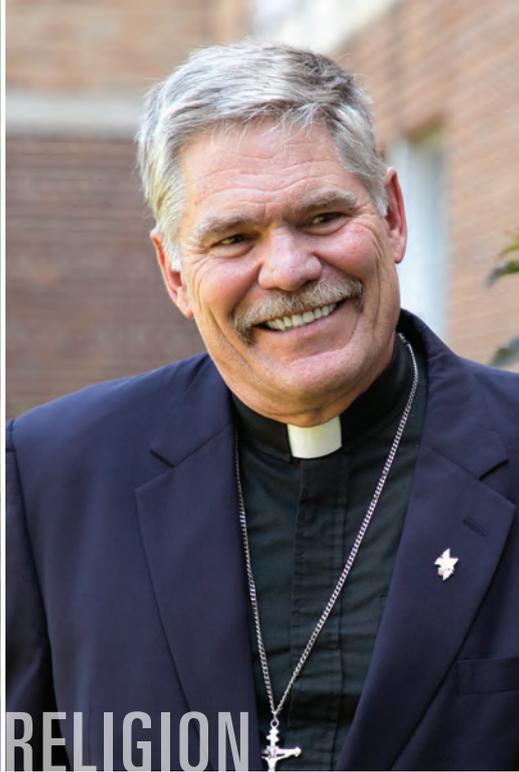
I completed my undergraduate degree as an adult learner at Concordia and had such a positive experience. The classroom discussions were rich and applicable to my professional life, and I loved the freedom to express my faith and connect it to learning. I enjoyed it so much that God planted the idea of becoming an adjunct professor in my head, and led me back to Concordia to complete my graduate degree so I could teach and give back.

How do you incorporate faith into your class?

I like to generate discussion with my students about how we, as Christians, can follow His lead in our daily lives and careers in practical ways. We also talk about leading by example as an opportunity to share our values and faith. I remind them that how we respond as leaders says a lot about what we value.

What's the best advice you've received?

Like so many young people I struggled to find my calling after high school. I started college, but it wasn't the right fit for me at the time. I left school, found a job, and was blessed to work for a manager who would see my potential as a trainer and instructional designer. He helped me see that I could build a career and help others succeed in the field of corporate learning. I tell young people that it's okay to not know their purpose yet. I encourage them to work and find their calling, and then come to Concordia and make their education really apply to what they want to do.



RELIGION

Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe

Assistant Pastor, LCMS Fourth VP and Great Lakes Regional VP, former LCMS Second and Third VP, retired U.S. Navy Chaplain

How did you get your career start?

I was in college and received a low draft number, so instead of waiting to get called up I voluntarily enlisted. I was initially placed on the USS John F. Kennedy, working in the shipyard, basically chipping paint all day. One day the chaplain saw me playing piano on a break. He asked, "Can you play church music? How'd you like to work for me?" I asked, "Would I have to chip paint? No? Then sign me up!" I ended up playing the organ for the church services and running the ship's library. That was the start of my interest in ministry work.

What has been a pinnacle moment of your professional life?

I've been so privileged and honored to serve our Lord and our Church in so many ways—whether it's serving a congregation, as a chaplain, as a vice president, or as an adjunct, it's all good work. I get up each day and say, "Lord, thank you."

What's your approach to faith instruction at CUW?

I teach classes that are requirements for all non-church workers, so I have students with all kinds of faith backgrounds. I try to approach the class objectively by presenting the faith as a reality that has been brought to us by God through Christ and then passed on by way of the apostles' teaching. We spend a good deal of time in class looking at and reading verses aloud. I take very seriously what Paul says in Romans 10, so I let them hear the Word.



BUSINESS

Celeste Cuffie ('08, '12)

Professional Skills Consultant, Life Empowered

Why did you want to teach at Concordia?

I received my undergraduate degree from Concordia through the adult education program. From that time, I've always wanted to teach at Concordia. I really enjoyed my programs and Concordia University as a whole. Teaching was a way for me to give back to the place that poured so much into me.

What do you love about your job as a consultant?

Helping people realize that what they need is inside of them. My professional career began in the medical field, however, through a series of twists and turns I ended up in IT. One thing that was consistent: People are going to be people. When you hear others complaining, they're often looking at external things instead of what's inside. I work with individuals and groups to help them realize that the greatest tool is themselves. If we can command our strength, knowledge, and competence, we can positively change the world.

What adage or advice do you have for Concordia students?

Your belief drives your behavior. I encourage Concordians to really tap into what they believe from a Christian perspective and from a holistic perspective, and allow that to drive them to be the best they can be. I remember when I started crafting my mission statement for Life Empowered. I had "God-given skills" in there, and I received feedback that I should take God out because that may turn some people off. I opted not to because that's who I am. We all have a choice, but I cannot give up who I am or my faith to appease someone externally.



THE PURSUIT OF DISCOVERY

In 2007, while studying as a graduate student at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy, Christopher Cunningham, PhD, discovered a new class of potentially non-addictive opioid analgesics that brought scientists one step closer to the “holy grail” of developing safer painkillers. Years later, in the height of the nation’s opioid crisis, Cunningham and his students are continuing the quest. He’s one of several Concordia professors whose passions and expertise are driving a culture of discovery.

By **Lisa Liljegren**, *University Affairs*
Sidebar by **Kali Thiel**, *University Affairs*



 **CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY**
WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



Chris Cunningham, PhD, recently spoke to Milwaukee-area science teachers about the devastating effects that opioids have on the brain.

Christopher Cunningham, PhD, was sick of hearing about his favorite musicians dying. As a self-described child of the '80s, Cunningham was raised in a suburb of Washington, D.C., on MTV and came of age as the Seattle music scene was exploding in his living room. A budding musician himself, Cunningham was drawn to the heavy guitar riffs with a punk flare and the raw, personal lyrics distinctive of the bands coming out of the Pacific Coast at the time. The “grunge” music style and subculture had captivated America’s youth and compelled teenagers everywhere to wear flannel shirts and army boots, grow out their hair, and take music lessons so that they could be a part of the movement.

As the grunge subculture was making its way through mainstream young America, so, too, was heroin. Heroin, also known as diamorphine, is an illegal opioid derived from the opium poppy plant that’s mainly used as a recreational drug for its known euphoric effects. It’s a Schedule 1 substance, which means that it’s highly likely to be abused.

While heroin has been in the United States since the late 19th century, three main factors contributed to its resurgence in the early 1990s: the drug had become cheaper, purer, and available in powder form (as opposed to injections), so it was more accessible and acceptable in middle-class America. Influencers in art, music, and fashion became early adopters of the re-established drug, and were so effective in their advocacy that American culture redefined beauty to replicate the look of a user—emaciated, pale, and tired—the look that became known as “heroin chic.”

This phenomenon played out in rural and urban America, in the streets of Seattle, and on the television in the Cunninghams’ living room and every other living room across the country.

One by one, Cunningham’s music heroes were struggling with and dying of heroin-related causes. First it was Andrew Wood from the band Mother Love Bone, then Kurt Cobain from Nirvana, and then Shannon Hoon from Blind Melon. And the deaths would keep coming.

Cunningham, the son of a chemist father and educator mother, gave up his instruments and channeled his fascination for grunge music and culture into a life mission to find answers and create solutions to the heroin epidemic that was taking so many artists so soon—a quest that continues today, with a promising research breakthrough under his belt.

He followed in his parents’ footsteps and enrolled at the University of Maryland in College Park to study chemistry with a desire to teach. Upon graduation, Cunningham enrolled at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Baltimore, and, fortuitously, under the tutelage of Dr. Andy Coop, professor and associate dean for academic affairs, would make a discovery as a graduate student that would be an effective first step in his quest.

“It just so happened that Dr. Coop was at that school asking the same questions that I was,” says Cunningham. Questions, like: Could we develop opioids with less-addictive qualities? Why does the effectiveness of opioids drop over time when used to treat severe pain? What can

we do to prevent more people from dying from these drugs that help people?

The student and his mentor honed in on the question of consistent effectiveness, and focused their research on the concept of tolerance. According to Cunningham, “When a patient becomes tolerant to the analgesic effects of a painkiller, the physician must increase the dose to compensate.” This increase is likely to cause the patient to experience other consequences, like severe constipation, addiction, and possibly even overdose.

Cunningham and Coop were the first to propose that this tolerance was due to a protein in the brain called P-gp (P-glycoprotein or multidrug resistance Protein 1). P-gp is an important drug flusher that significantly impacts the patient’s ability to absorb, distribute, metabolize, and excrete toxic substances. In other words, “The job of this protein is to throw drugs out of the brain like a bouncer would throw rude customers out of a nightclub,” explains Cunningham.

Hundreds of compounds, hundreds of failures, and one lab fire later, the chemists eventually developed the compound that could prove their theory correct. This compound

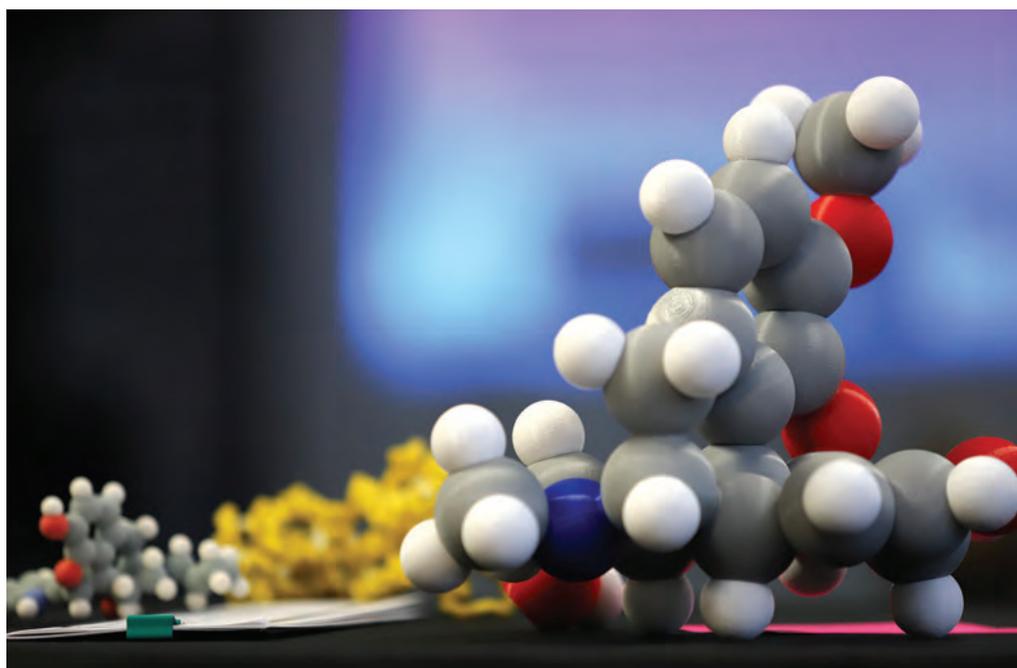
After earning his PhD, Cunningham joined the Department of Medicinal Chemistry at the University of Kansas, where he met his wife, Allison. In 2011, the couple moved to Wisconsin where Cunningham accepted the position of assistant professor of pharmaceutical sciences at Concordia University.

At Concordia, Cunningham attacks the opioid crisis from three different angles: He teaches, mentors, and advocates.

As a teacher, his primary focus is teaching medicinal chemistry to PharmD candidate students. He teaches students to understand how drug structure affects its function. In other words, individuals respond to medicines and dosages differently, so pharmacists not only need to know the medicine, but they also have to know the patient.

“Every aspect of drug action—whether it is taken by mouth or in a patch, taken once a day or twice a day, even if it cannot be taken with grapefruit juice—is tied directly to its chemical structure,” says Cunningham. “My job is to make sure students are prepared to counsel patients or consult industry on the foundations of drug action.”

Cunningham’s second focus as a teacher is in drug design for students enrolled in the master



was more potent than morphine at killing pain but was able to avoid detection by P-gp (avoid getting “bounced” out of the brain). “This is a pretty big deal, because P-gp plays such an important role in how so many drugs work. If we can avoid P-gp, we might be able to get significant pain relief without the devastating side effects,” explains Cunningham.

Their collaboration led to a significant finding that’s still being tested today.

of product development (MPD) program. In this role, he prepares students to work in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries by teaching them about the process of turning an idea into a medicine, with a goal of inspiring students to make life-changing discoveries.

As a mentor, he works in the lab alongside students at the undergraduate, Pharm.D., and MS levels on team-based projects related to drug design and discovery. One team is

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HEROIN

WHILE OPIUM HAS BEEN in the United States since the early 1800s, the heroin compound was created in the late 19th century. It was thought to be a more powerful, non-addictive pain reliever, and its usage was widely embraced by the military to manage the pain from war-related injuries. Upon discovery of the devastating effects, heroin use was banned in the United States under the Anti-Heroin Act of 1924. That set the black market in motion, and the drug has been making its way illegally into the country ever since. Between 1965 and 1970, there were an estimated 750,000 heroin addicts in the country, prompting President Nixon to create the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in 1973 to consolidate resources to fight the heroin problem.

Though initially effective in slowing heroin and opium abuse, other recreational drugs began to emerge, including powder and “crack” cocaine in the 1980s. When heroin and prescription opioid abuse roared back in the 1990s, it infiltrated all forms of culture, and its usage has been on the rise ever since.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, opioids killed a record 42,000 people in 2016. In 2017, President Donald Trump declared that our national opioid crisis is a public health emergency. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services unveiled the Five-Point Opioid Strategy that focuses on improved access to prevention, treatment, and recovery support services, as well as improving data and research.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC BY THE NUMBERS*

- **116 people a day** die from opioid-related drug overdoses
- **11.5 million people** misused prescription opioids
- **42,249 people** died from overdosing on opioids
- **17,087 deaths** attributed to overdosing on commonly prescribed opioids
- **948,000 people** used heroin
- **170,000 people** used heroin for the first time
- **15,469 deaths** attributed to overdosing on heroin
- **\$504 billion** in economic costs

*According to a 2016 national survey on drug use and health as reported by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

Like Cunningham, numerous CUW professors are furthering their fields of study through research and educational outreach efforts, some with the support of grant funding. **Here are just a few of the endeavors currently underway.**

1 A NEW DEMENTIA TREATMENT

CUW project lead: Dr. Daniel Sem, Batterman School of Business dean/professor of business and pharmaceutical sciences



Sem has been the recipient of two National Institutes of Health¹ grants and is slated to receive renewal of the third this year. His most recent one—a three-year \$340,674 grant—was awarded in fall 2015. He and his collaborators developed a stripped-down estrogen molecule that has proven effective in a model system for treating dementia in women. In July, after publishing their work and securing patent protection for their drug lead molecule, the three formed a start-up, Estrigenix, which will allow them to continue their research. Concordia plans to execute a license agreement with the company and owns the issued patent for the drug lead compound.

1. Research reported in this publication is supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under award number R15 GM118304. The content is solely the responsibility of CUW and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

2. Grant number R25OD021871 is supported by the Science Education Partnership Award program, which is sponsored by the National Institutes of Health. The content is solely the responsibility of CUW and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

3. Federal award number NNX15AP92G was granted to New Mexico State University, with Dr. Nancy Chanover serving as the principal investigator. The content is solely the responsibility of CUW and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

2 BRINGING SCIENCE (AND ZEBRAFISH) TO WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOLS

CUW project lead: Dr. Michael Pickart, associate professor of pharmaceutical science



Pickart has joined the UW–Milwaukee (UWM) WinSTEP project, which helps pre-service, middle, and high school science teachers engage more students in classroom-based STEM research with an environmental health focus. The project is made possible by a five-year \$1.25 million grant² awarded in 2016 to UWM. Since joining CUW in 2012, Pickart has engaged hundreds of students each year—through WinSTEP and beyond—via Concordia’s zebrafish lab and in his role as education RIG director for the Zebrafish Disease Models Society.

3 HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMEBOUND

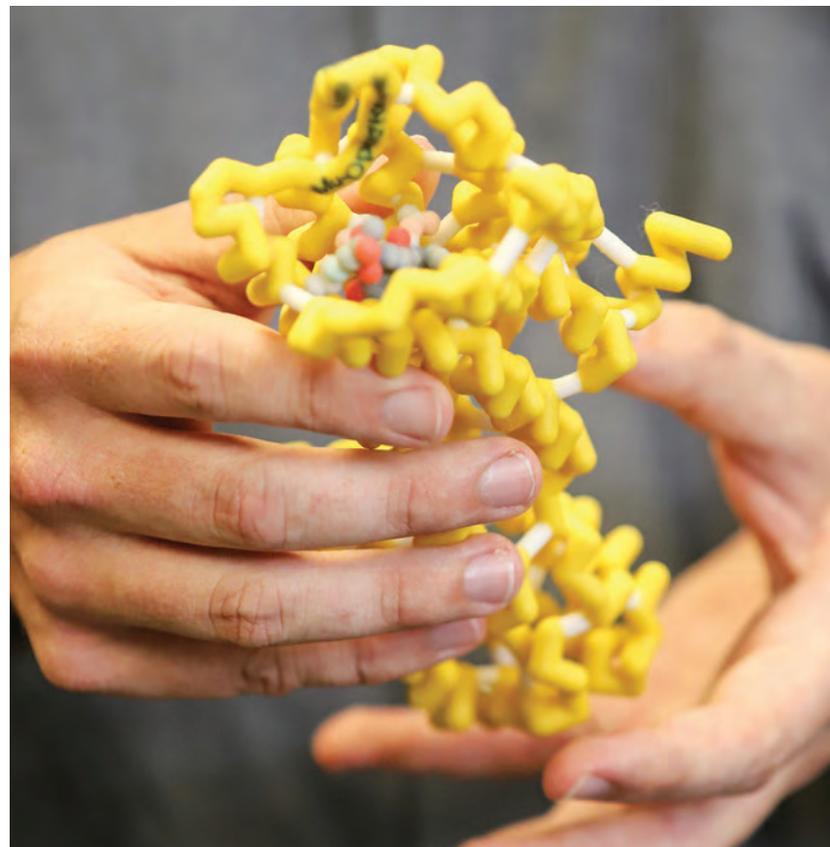
CUW project leads: Dr. Sharon Chappy, dean of nursing; Dr. Lois Harrison, associate professor of physical therapy; Dr. Stacey Kukor, clinical instructor of occupational therapy; Dr. Michael Oldani, director of interprofessional education (IPE); Dr. Travis Suss, assistant professor of pharmacy practice



In spring 2018, Concordia faculty from the Schools of Nursing, Health Professions, and Pharmacy began a partnership with Fresh Meals on Wheels of Sheboygan County to offer free in-home health assessments to homebound individuals. This semester they began to involve CUW students in the effort. The work is supported by a \$10,533 award from

working on developing non-addictive painkillers that are showing significant progress in early testing. Cunningham shares that they aim to tackle the “Holy Grail” of painkillers: developing an agent that treats pain but is non-addictive, doesn’t cause constipation, and avoids overdose.

A second team is developing treatments for amphetamine and synthetic cannabinoid abuse. While opioids are getting the headlines, synthetic man-made drugs—like methamphetamine and “bath salts”^{*}—are also being heavily abused in America, particularly in the Midwest. According to Cunningham, treatments for these drugs don’t yet exist. He and his student pharmacists are trying to be the first to treat this emerging crisis. They’re working on antidotes for these stimulants similar to how NARCAN^{®**} counteracts the effects of



opioids in the human body. Like his other discoveries, this antidote is showing early promise.

As a community advocate, Cunningham is a popular speaker who openly and candidly fields science questions about the brain’s biology, painful questions about addiction and recovery, and lighthearted questions about his taste in music. As the crisis in America grows, so, too, do the crowds at his talks.

While it was the tragic loss of famous people that lured him into pharmacy, Cunningham finds his greatest motivation in his conversations with everyday people. “It doesn’t matter who they are or where they come from,” says Cunningham. “People are struggling with very heavy things and desperately want to understand addiction. I want to learn more about the brain so that I can help more people, more families, in need.” ■

CONCORDIA SUPPORTS UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH, TOO. READ ABOUT THE CURRENTLY FUNDED PROJECTS AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM AT CUW.EDU/UNDERGRADUATE-RESEARCH-PROGRAM.



The Council of Independent Colleges' Intergenerational Connections: Students Serving Older Adults program, which is supported by the AARP Foundation.

4 FOUND: MISSING PLUME ON THE MOON

CUW project lead: Dr. Paul Strycker, associate professor of science



Strycker is a co-investigator on a grant³ from NASA totaling \$270,678 since 2015. His efforts focus on uncovering the faint light from the 2009 Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite (LCROSS) mission in recordings and to determine the properties of this man-made lunar explosion. Four CUW undergraduate students have worked with Strycker on the grant since its start, traveling with him to collaborate and present results at multiple out-of-state conferences.

5 GREAT MIGRATION ART AND EDUCATION

CUW project lead: Paul Calhoun, assistant professor of art



In March 2017, Calhoun received a \$9,250 grant from Bader Philanthropies, Inc. to engage students from the Milwaukee High School of the Arts (MHSA) in learning about the historical period known as the Great Migration. The movement, which took place from 1916 to 1970, forever changed the culture of numerous northern cities, including Milwaukee, and created new forms of artistic expression. Under Calhoun's lead, 15 Concordia students partnered with about 45 MHSA students to create two 12-by-12 murals and one large painting that pay tribute.

6 ANXIETY-RELIEVING COFFEE CREAMERS AND HOT CHOCOLATE

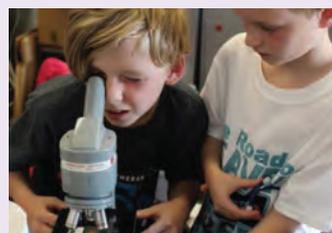
CUW project leads: Dr. Kwadwo Owusu-Ofori, pharmacy fellow; Dr. Michael Pickart, associate professor of pharmaceutical science; Dr. Christopher Cunningham, associate professor of pharmaceutical science



Owusu-Ofori started The Satori Food Project in 2012 to build medical foods that improve mental health and well-being. Instead of taking pills that can cause foginess, weight gain, and other unpleasant side effects, patients can try Satori Coffee Creamers and Satori Hot Chocolate mix to help them manage their anxiety and concentration disorders. Owusu-Ofori joined the CUW community in January 2018, where he continues his research into the relationship between proper nutrition and anxiety disorders under the mentorship of Pickart and Cunningham.

7 STEAM CAMPS AND COLLEGE READINESS

CUW project lead: Dr. Michael Uden, vice provost of student enrollment and engagement



Uden currently has two grants from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, which he secured in 2017 on behalf of CUW's School of Education. The first one—a two-year \$1,000 grant—provides scholarships for students in grades 6–8 to attend science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) camps put on annually by CUW faculty. The second grant, totaling \$34,200, supports the College FAIR program, which empowers first-generation high school seniors or students from underrepresented populations to become college-ready while living on

campus during an abridged three-week summer term.

8 TOBACCO-FREE THROUGH IPE

CUW project leads: Cathy Cero-Jaeger, assistant professor of nursing; Dr. Michael Oldani, director of interprofessional education (IPE)



In 2017, CUW received a \$15,000 grant from the American Cancer Society's Tobacco-Free Generation Campus Initiative Grant Program, supported by CVS Health Foundation, to help CUW become a campus that promotes a tobacco-free environment. Cero-Jaeger and Oldani are the faculty mentors for the student-led Tobacco-Free Through IPE Task Force, an interprofessional team of students who are leading advocacy efforts on campus. The grant also supported cessation counseling training through the American Lung Association for faculty and students.

9 ANTIBIOTICS IN THE WATERWAY

CUW project lead: Dr. Sarah Lovern, associate professor of physiology



In 2014, Lovern began to receive funding from the Mick A. Naulin Foundation to research the impact of pharmaceuticals in the waterways. Lovern has involved CUW undergraduates in the effort, and together they work with *Daphnia magna*, a tiny freshwater crustacean conducive to research because of its short lifespan. Lovern again received a renewal this year bringing the total award amount to \$36,125.

Chris Cunningham, PhD, frequently uses models in his talks to represent molecules and their processes.



**"Bath salts" is a term used to describe a number of recreational designer drugs. The name derives from instances in which the drugs were sold disguised as true bath salts.

**NARCAN HCl (naloxone) is a prescription medicine that blocks the effects of opioids and reverses an overdose. It can't be used to get a person high. If given to a person who hasn't taken opioids, it won't have any effect on them, since there's no opioid overdose to reverse.



Above and Abroad

A record number of Concordia students studied abroad in 2017–18

By **Kali Thiel**, *University Affairs*

Study abroad is booming at Concordia University.

The university saw its largest send-out during the 2017–18 academic year, with 315 students—representing online, centers, and the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses—participating in dozens of distinct global learning opportunities in more than 30 different countries.

The interest in education abroad has been consistently climbing over the past five years or so at Concordia, and the trend promises to continue this academic year. During the 2018 summer and fall terms, Concordia sent out 164 learners, a surge of approximately 40 students compared to last year's summer/fall count.

The increase is largely thanks to the growing number of global education courses being offered at Concordia. Global Ed courses are faculty-led study abroad opportunities that can be completed for course credit and typically last one to three weeks. In addition to the short-term Global Ed courses, Concordia students annually participate in a variety of other international learning opportunities, including internships, clinical rotations, mission trips, and long-term study abroad experiences.

In 2017, Concordia faculty led 12 Global Ed courses. In 2018, that number jumped to 17, and in 2019, it's expected to spike to 25. In the 2017–18 academic year, more than two-thirds of students who traveled abroad did so through Global Ed courses.

"We live in an increasingly connected world where students need to learn how to interact with people from other cultures and mindsets," says Maggie Leimkuehler, who in July replaced Chris Reeder as coordinator of study abroad programs at Concordia. "Knowing how to understand and appreciate another person's culture while gaining a deeper understanding of one's own is vital to that process. These study abroad programs help set students on a course to competently, compassionately, and enthusiastically engage in and serve the needs of the world."

In total, Concordia's study abroad reach extended to about 30 countries this year. While a few new destinations were added in 2018, the majority of educational excursions offered were long-standing traditions for the university.

One such opportunity, a Global Ed experience led by Assistant Professor of Business Erik Hollander, has been drawing

students to Austria for the past eight years. This year's trip had the most attendees in the trip's history—21—with a near-perfect split of undergraduate and graduate students represented. Also included in the mix was a student from the Ann Arbor campus and two online students who had never stepped foot on Concordia's campus.

The blend of learners enriched the experience, says Hollander.

"Not only were our students getting immersed in a ton of different perspectives from around the world, they were bonding with fellow Concordians who represented a variety of backgrounds and perspectives," Hollander says. "That mix of perspectives sparks new ways of thinking, and it's something that I can't easily recreate in a regular course format. A lot of the students who go on these trips create friendships and professional contacts that they keep well beyond the initial experience."

SEE ALL OF THE STUDY
ABROAD OPTIONS AVAILABLE
TO CUW STUDENTS AT
CUW.EDU/STUDY-ABROAD.





TANZANIA **KENYA**

Concordia's Schools of Nursing on the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses offered more Global Ed experiences in 2018 than any other academic school at the university—eight in all and four more slated for 2019. Here, Jeremiah Parve ('17) serves in Tanzania during the long-running CUW graduate nursing trip to Kenya and Tanzania this past summer. *Photo by Jon Marshall, courtesy of Hope Without Borders-USA/Intl*

Study Abroad Top 5

These five trips routinely top the list of most popular study abroad experiences offered at Concordia.

1 **Caribbean—Ecology of the Tropics**

This nine-day cruise to five different tropical ports around the Caribbean takes place during Winterim and is open to all Concordia students looking to develop an increased appreciation for God's creation through studying tropical ecosystems. Activities include kayaking in the mangroves; snorkeling to observe coral reefs, tropical fish, and sea turtles; and dolphin/whale watching. *Photo courtesy of Jake Lipski*

2 **Israel—The Holy Land**

This Winterim course has become a favorite of students from both the Mequon and Ann Arbor campuses. Students earn religion credits as they explore major Biblical sites throughout Israel and the West Bank, including Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jericho, and the Sea of Galilee. *Photo courtesy of Dan Flynn*

3 **London—20th Century Arts and Culture/Urban Society**

This three-week summer learning program takes travelers to the iconic tourist sights (and lesser-known gems) of London. Students also get to spend a day in Paris. *Photo courtesy of Kiely Page*

4 **Mexico—Global Perspectives/Global Experience**

This one-week medical mission trip for CUW nursing students takes place over spring break. Students learn about cross-cultural community nursing and also play a vital service role by providing health care services and donations to an under-resourced community. *Photo courtesy of Giannina Vernon*

5 **Austria—International Business**

This 10-day excursion exposes business students to Steyr, Austria, in May, during International Week. Concordia's partner school University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria hosts guest lectures and engaging discussions, giving students the chance to meet peers from across the world. Students also participate in a day-trip to the Austrian Alps, and travel days in Munich and Vienna. *Photo courtesy of Erik Hollander*



NEPAL

Physician assistant students participated in an inaugural educational program to Nepal this year. Beyond completing their clinical rotation requirements, the graduate students also found time for sightseeing and fun, like when they celebrated Holi (the "Festival of Colors") in the streets of Kathmandu (pictured). The international experience was one of five trips open to Health Professions students in 2018. *Photo courtesy of Shreya Vasavada*



PERU

Five pharmacy students and one undergraduate student participated in the biannual Global Ed trip to Peru this past summer, where Analeah Schwind (pictured) held a three-toed sloth at the Animal Rescue Centre of El Paraiso del Amazonas. Next year, Concordia's School of Pharmacy will give students the chance to travel to China and Japan. *Photo courtesy of Dean Arneson*

take five

Get to know one of our Uncommon Concordians, Sophie Zang, interior architecture and design major

By Kali Thiel, *University Affairs*



She works hard ... to work even harder. Don't worry, though, Concordia sophomore Sophie Zang welcomes the bustle of a busy life. It's what keeps her motivated to perform at her best while balancing her coursework with her personal life—oh, and a lifestyle blog that earns 130,000-plus views a month. She started **BySophiaLee.com** in 2015 and has since turned it into a profitable side hustle, earning between \$1,000 and \$3,000 a month as of this past summer, and the numbers keep growing.

1 You make it all look so easy, but your blog is also built on the tagline "Making Your Not So Perfect Life Look Perfect." How do you juggle it all?

I'm extremely structured, and the more stuff I have going on in my life the better I do. I'll put in upwards of 25 hours a week on my blog, so that means I regularly get up at 6 a.m., and I'll keep on working easily until 5 o'clock or later in between my school load and other obligations. If I have more time in my day, I've just found that my grades start to go down, my website stats go down, and things start to slip.

2 So what brought you to Concordia?

I actually started out at UW-La Crosse, but then my world kind of blew up when my parents told me they were getting a divorce and I suddenly learned I'd have to financially support myself through college. I knew I needed to find a school that I could afford and that would still offer me everything

I wanted. I wanted to stay close to home and be near my family, but I also wanted to major in interior design and architecture. When I found out about Concordia's partnership with Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design (MIAD) and that it would cost a fraction to get a degree through Concordia as it would to enroll directly through MIAD, I was sold. Plus, I get the added bonus of sports and the full typical college experience at Concordia.

3 What's been the best part of your Concordia experience so far?

The people at Concordia are the nicest people I have ever met in my life. I don't go anywhere in the school without someone smiling at me or holding the door open for me. It was honestly a little foreign to me coming in, but I've quickly grown to love it here.

4 What led you to start blogging for a profit?

I always followed blogs, but I didn't realize how profitable it really was until the summer of 2017 when I found a woman online, "Making Sense of Cents," who makes over \$1 million a year on her website. I came to find there was this whole group of people who were making that much on their websites, and it just got me really motivated to do the same.

5 What's the best piece of advice you can give to anyone looking to start their own blog?

Be confident and don't care about what other people think about you. I know that when I talk to other people they don't want to start a blog because they're worried about what other people will think. I was so worried when I started my blog that people would make fun of me, but I honestly have had such a great response. People are really so supportive.

alumni**notes**

'10 **Marjorie Buss ('18)** recently received a BA in psychology and social work. She will be attending the University of Illinois in the fall pursuing a master's degree in social work. ▼



Elizabeth (Rindt) Ekblad ('18) married **Anders Ekblad ('17)** on June 30, 2018 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The two now reside in Grafton, Wisconsin. ▼



Emily (Hanmann) Moon ('18) and **Colin Moon ('15)** were married on July 14, 2018. ▼



Amanda (Westphal) Rohde ('17) and **Zachariah Rohde ('17)** were married on June 16, 2018. ▼



Michael Taylor ('17) currently owns GLARI, a U.S.-based company with global reach. GLARI uses cutting-edge technology and real estate marketing by creating 3-D models, floor schematics, and more for unique commercial and residential properties. ▼



Alexis Hermes ('16) was nominated Miss Madison Wisconsin, which qualified her to compete for Miss Wisconsin United States. She was elected as the "People's Choice Award" recipient for Miss Wisconsin United States 2018. ▼



Marissa (Schwede) Krogmann ('16) and **Lucas Krogmann ('16)** were married on June 16, 2017. ▼



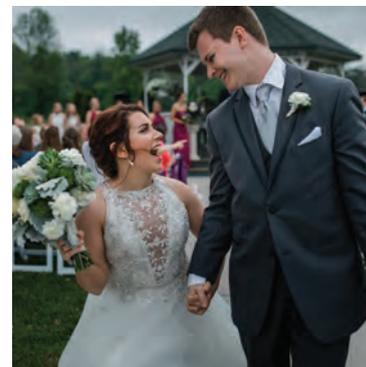
Katie (Knutson) Stiller ('16) and **Steven Stiller ('16)** were married on Aug. 18, 2018. ▼



Michelle Sinklair ('15) was selected for the Stuart A. Wesbury Jr. Postgraduate Fellowship program shortly after she graduated from CUW with her MBA, and she has been on an

upward career trajectory ever since. She recently wrapped up her first year as a practice manager with Mobile Anesthesiologists.

Rachel (Ferguson) Ziarko ('15, '17) married Ian Ziarko on June 9, 2018 in Germantown, Wisconsin. The couple now resides in Manhattan, Illinois. ▼



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stick With Us

Stay connected with Concordia, and become informed of your alumni benefits and news by taking a moment to update your preferred email address, current address, and phone number(s) at cuw.edu/alumniupdates. You can also request that your news be shared on the cuw.edu website through this form.

Another option for staying in touch is **CUWConnect.com**. This private platform was designed especially for you—our alumni—to connect with one another, your alma mater, and current CUW students. If you do not have an active profile, now is the time to create one.

By updating your contact information and creating a CUW Connect profile, you will receive our monthly alumni e-newsletter that informs you of opportunities 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.

—CUW Alumni Relations

Feedback Welcome

Concordia University Wisconsin seeks comments from the public about the university in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The university will host a visit on March 25–26, 2019 from a team of peer reviewers representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The team will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. Concordia University Wisconsin is currently accredited with the HLC.

Comments must be in writing, and must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs.

Submit comments to HLC at hlcommission.org/comment or mail them to the address below. All comments must be received by February 25, 2019.

Public Comment on Concordia University Wisconsin
Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411



Casey (left) and Noah Kegley following their joint ordination on June 10, 2018. Photography courtesy of Monica Kegley

By Rachel Thoms, *University Affairs*

Casey ('13) and Noah Kegley ('14) aren't just brothers. The siblings, a year apart in age, have also been classmates and teammates for most of their lives, attending grade school, high school, college, and seminary together.

Now the two are partners in ministry.

Ordained into The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod pastoral ministry together on June 10, 2018 at their home congregation of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Grafton, Wisconsin, the brothers are now serving at their first calls as associate pastors: Casey at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Ridgewood, New Jersey; and Noah at St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School in West Allis, Wisconsin.

"Our ordination was joyous and humbling all at once," said Rev. Noah Kegley. "It felt like a pinnacle moment in both of our lives, being ushered into ministry together with all of our family and so many of our lifelong friends in attendance."

The Kegley brothers are the first in their family to become pastors. They attribute their parents, teachers, coaches, and youth leaders as being great mentors of faith and demonstrators of God's love who encouraged them to consider their pastoral pursuits at Concordia University Wisconsin.

The greatest encouragement they found was in one another.

"Sharing so much school and life experience with Noah has been a valuable gift I've received from God," said Rev. Casey Kegley. "Noah has been an amazing encouragement, inspiration, and teacher to me through every step of this journey. I can't thank God enough for allowing us to share what we've shared."



Josiah Frusti ('14) and **Brooke Frusti ('13)**, who were married at Concordia in 2014, welcomed their first child, son Nathaniel, in November 2017. ▼



Miranda ('14) and Andrew Gazza welcomed their daughter, Audrina Sue Gazza, on Feb. 15, 2017. ▼



Sarah Kitterman ('12) and **Tony Kitterman ('12)** welcomed their first child, Colton Wyllis Kitterman, on April 18, 2018. ▼



Mike Schumm ('11) and **Kelly Krueger ('10)** were married and have two little girls, Reagan (3) and Zoe (2). Mike and Kelly teach at Pilgrim Lutheran School in Green Bay, Wisconsin. ▼



James Fischer ('10) and **Jessica (Stange) Fischer ('10)** celebrate the birth of their daughter Makenna James Fischer. Makenna was born on Nov. 17, 2017. Makenna was also named Milwaukee's Cutest Baby 2018 by KISS FM. ▼



Last spring's Stomp the Courtyard was moved inside due to inclement weather, but it didn't put a damper on the fun. Lindsey Bengsch (left) and Kat Hovland enjoy a sweet treat in the midst of the activity. Photo courtesy of Lauren Gieschen

“Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere” (Psalm 84:10a)

We have three courtyards on Concordia University Wisconsin's campus. There's the President's Courtyard, an idyllic little place enclosed by some of CUW's most trafficked hallways, and Regents' Courtyard, a somewhat amorphous and undefined space.

Then there's the Chapel Courtyard—the one you see when you come onto the main entrance of campus; the one where the statue of Martin Luther greets you as you enter; the one lined by hammocks hung from trees on nice spring days; the one where you can actually gather a large group. And that's the one we stomp!

The annual Campus Ministry-hosted Stomp the Courtyard event for Concordia's student body derives its name from a movie title, the 2007 movie “Stomp the Yard.” About the only thing the event has in common with the movie, however, is that both take place at a college. Mostly, when Stomp the Courtyard began in 2011, the movie title served as a catchy name that students quickly connected with a big event. In our case, a few hours filled with a hog roast, inflatables, music, fellowship, and fun.

Why the celebration? Largely we celebrate the opportunity to serve God. It's an entire-campus celebration of all the ministry that takes place throughout the year—all of the service in Milwaukee and on mission trips near and far; all of the events for youth and children; all of the worship and study of God's Word; the retreats and everything.

Its occurrence in the Chapel Courtyard is as if the joy of our faith just can't be contained in the chapel but spills out onto our beautiful campus. To try to condense all that we're trying to celebrate and thank God for—this place to know His saving love and forgiveness each day, and the opportunities to share it with others—makes for a great day. One day in one of Concordia's great courtyards to give just a taste of the joy of everlasting days in God's heavenly courts.

STEVE SMITH
Campus Pastor



Hundreds of lay delegates and pastors, including, from left, Rev. Thomas Wink ('69) and Northern Illinois District President Rev. Alan Buss ('86), attended the LCMS South Wisconsin District Convention on CUW's campus last summer.



Trey Mitchell ('17) works at Acuity in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The company is known for its extravagant workplace perks, including an indoor 65-foot-tall Ferris wheel.

grad on the go

By **Kali Thiel**,
University Affairs

When Trey Mitchell announced last spring his decision to run for Sheboygan's 9th district aldermanic seat, he initially received a few raised eyebrows.

Mitchell, who was 22 at the time, didn't let it slow him down. He wasn't going to let the fact that he was less than a year out of college deter his passion for public service.

In April 2018, he won the vote and became the youngest alderman in Sheboygan history—or at least he's believed to be the youngest since the mid-1800s, the earliest available records in the city's annals.

The response to his victory has been well received, says Mitchell. Apart from a few good-natured jokes about him being younger than some aldermen's grandchildren, his age was hardly even addressed at his first Common Council session.

"I went into it thinking I would have to make a really strong case for why I would be qualified for this position despite my age," says Mitchell. "I was pleasantly surprised to find it wasn't necessary. I think most people really liked the idea of a newer perspective coming in."

Mitchell, who graduated from Concordia in May 2017 with a bachelor's degree in computer science

and a minor in political science, says his interest in politics began at Concordia after his freshman year roommate turned him on to former President George W. Bush's autobiography, "Decision Points."

"I initially came into Concordia feeling that politics was bigger than me," Mitchell says. "I have a pretty antithetical view from that now. I can see now how important politics is to us in our everyday lives. It's definitely not too large. If you want to get involved, you really can make a difference."

Throughout his four years at Concordia, Mitchell took on an assortment of leadership positions: he served as a resident assistant and chief student officer for Concordia's Student Government Association, and he started Concordia's first intercollegiate ultimate Frisbee team.

In addition to his city government duties, he currently works as a programmer at Acuity.

"I think if there's one piece of advice I've gathered from my experience it's this: If you're passionate about something, you should never let doubt or the obstacles in your way stop you from pursuing it," says Mitchell.

That advice has clearly worked in his favor.

Hannah Johnson ('10, '13) recently published a textbook/handbook titled, "Psychosocial Elements of Physical Therapy: The Connection of Body to Mind." In the book, Dr. Johnson provides an introduction of psychosocial concepts, general treatment approaches, and selected classes of mental illness.

'00s Cathy Vandoske-Buzaitis ('09) recently became a National Board Certified Teacher. This means that she earned the profession's highest mark of achievement through a rigorous, performance-based, peer-review process, demonstrating proven impact on student learning achievement.

Tiffany Koenitzer ('08) was named Gaston Elementary School's 2018 Teacher of the Year. She was honored at the Beloit School District's Knight of Distinction awards night on May 4. Koenitzer has served as a general music educator in Beloit since 2011.

Ben Simmerman ('08) received the Educator of the Year award for Boyceville High School in northwestern Wisconsin. He previously received the award in 2016. Simmerman, who began teaching in 2009, recently completed his sixth year at Boyceville. He is a vocal and general music teacher and drama advisor in the Boyceville Community School District.

James Saleska ('08) was selected to serve as the lead graphic designer for the LCMS National Youth Gathering, which will take place next summer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Tracy Milkowski ('05) was named vice president for advancement and external relations at Silver Lake College. She has over 20 years of experience in higher education.



Arcetta Knautz ('98, '00) watches over more than 4,300 college students in her director role at UWM.

By **Lisa Liljegen**, *University Affairs*

Arcetta S. Knautz ('98, '00) has a heart for residence life on a college campus. As the director of university housing/assistant dean of students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), Knautz and her 66 colleagues take personal responsibility for the growth and development of the 4,300 college students who reside in one of the university's eight residence halls.

She credits her time at Concordia University Wisconsin for preparing her for this role.

"Concordia was a stepping stone for me falling in love with housing and the student development profession," says Knautz. "When I was in college I was grounded by my faith, but I still needed help managing my day-to-day. Concordia invested in me and helped me figure things out."

Knautz enrolled at Concordia her freshman year and enjoyed her campus experience so much that she became a resident advisor and then a hall director. This allowed her to live there year-round while earning her undergraduate degree in education and then an MS in student personnel administration. Seven years later, Knautz finally moved out.

"I moved in as a freshman and basically never left," jokes Knautz.

Knautz worked in residence life at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh before making UWM

her home in 2005. Since then, Knautz has been promoted four times. She credits her success to being eager to learn from those around her, most notably, her boss and mentor for 13 years.

Knautz's day is filled with big foundational decisions and small meaningful interactions, but her top priority always remains the well-being of her students.

"So much of the college experience happens outside the classroom," says Knautz. "Operating in residence life means that we, of course, have to understand academics, but we also have to be helpful with personal, family, and roommate conflicts, and everything else that could affect our students 24 hours of every day."

When she feels anxious about a certain decision or direction, Knautz turns to 2 Timothy 1:7—"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Knautz learned that passage as an undergraduate student at CUW when she was confused about her own place in the world. She continues to draw comfort and clarity from it in her professional life.

"Concordia helped me find my passion for student development," says Knautz. "They were such a blessing to me that I'm inspired to be a blessing for my own students."

'90s Pamela Eckoldt Drow ('97) married David Ziebell on July 1, 2017, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. ▼



Mary Karsten Surridge ('95) was nominated on June 22 to serve as the 10th president of North Park University. She received her master's degree in student personnel administration from Concordia.

Kris Best ('93) received Concordia's Distinguished Alumna award, given each year to an alum who has consistently demonstrated faithful stewardship of his or her talents and has rendered notable service to the Church and to the university.

'80s Rev. Allan Buss ('86) received an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from CUW this past May. In March, Buss was also elected president of the LCMS Northern Illinois District.

'70s Paul Smith ('74) and Mary (Strains) Smith ('73) celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary in June of 2018.

Hall of Fame Inductees

The following individuals were inducted into Concordia's William C. Ackmann Athletic Hall of Fame this past summer.

- **Stephanie Boehm ('10)**, women's volleyball and women's hockey
- **Dr. Samantha Gries ('11)**, cross country and track and field
- **Mark Kretzmann ('64)**, men's basketball
- **Muriel McIntyre ('12)**, women's golf
- **Tom Weber**, men's tennis coach

CUW Heritage Society Members

January–June 2018

Concordia University Wisconsin would like to recognize its January through June 2018 new Krieger Society members. Members of this society are donors with a deferred gift or named endowment to the university.

- Ms. Dolores Baum Hagner
- Mr. David Bogenschild
- Mr. Richard Daehnert
- Mr. Erwin and Mrs. Jane Dohmen
- Mr. Jack and Dr. Theresa Kenney
- Dr. Kenneth and Mrs. Darlene Luedtke
- **Rev. Dr. William ('54, '56)** and Mrs. Paula Otto
- Mr. Glennon and Mrs. Patricia Phillips
- Mr. Lyle and Mrs. Valda Quant
- **Mr. Christopher ('05)** and **Mrs. Katy ('06) Root**
- Mr. Edward and Mrs. Nancy Schlifske
- Mr. Gino and Mrs. Tracy Villani
- **Mr. Joel Zink ('91)**

For more information on how to include CUW in your estate and gift planning, call Greg Fictum at 262-243-4540.

Advancing the mission



As you enter the campus of Concordia University Wisconsin, you can't help but notice the construction taking place right before you. Extending off the end of Luther Hall, steel girders are forming the skeleton of what will next year become the home for the Batterman School of Business. This state-of-the-art academic building will serve as a place of innovation, collaboration, and community outreach as Concordia extends its mission of helping our students develop in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and the world.

As exciting as the sight of a new building might be, it would not be possible without the generous support of so many of our alumni, friends, and community supporters. Attached to the fencing surrounding the construction site are several banners with the headline "Philanthropy in Action!" Those three words serve as an important reminder to all who pass by that this project, a vital project for our students, would not be possible without philanthropy.

The heart of philanthropy is love—love for others. Demonstrating philanthropy, we reflect in a small way the incredible love that God has first shown us through His Son. For many of our donors, it is this love of God that they have experienced that inspires them to love others, and to be philanthropic and generous. When completed, this building will serve many practical functions, but perhaps more importantly it will remind us of God's love and our mission to serve our students so that they may serve many more.

Our heartfelt thanks to all who have already given so generously and demonstrated philanthropy to support this project. The building is not yet done, and additional funding is still needed. If your heart is filled with love for our students and the mission that God is setting before them, please give me a call at 262-243-4533. I would love to show you how Concordia continues to build on generosity.

REV. DR. ROY PETERSON
Senior Vice President of Advancement

HAVE YOU HAD A SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENT OR EXCITING ACHIEVEMENT THAT YOU WANT US TO INCLUDE IN THE NEXT CONCORDIAN? PLEASE EMAIL YOUR NOTE TO ALUMNI@CUW.EDU. VIEW ALL OF THESE ALUMNI UPDATES AND MORE AT CUW.EDU/ALUMNI.





Building on Generosity

IN APRIL 2018, the Concordia University Wisconsin community broke ground at the site of The Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center. Slated to open in fall 2019, the academic building will provide students with unprecedented access to resources, labs, and technology to work together, across disciplines, to build and nurture ideas that have impact in the world.

Together, we've come so far, but we still need your help! Whether you wish to contribute directly to the building fund or prefer to invest in the students who will be learning inside, we want to hear from you!

Why support CUW?

- Largest MBA program in Southeastern Wisconsin
- Ranked the safest campus in Wisconsin
- 2018 Christian College of Distinction
- 72 undergraduate majors and 42 graduate programs
- Students from 34 countries

Unique Gifting Opportunities:

- Support CUW's greatest needs through the Concordia Fund
- Create an endowment that supports students for years to come
- Directly support a student through the Adopt-A-Student program
- Remember CUW in your estate plans
- Jump in on a crowdfunding project

For these and more giving opportunities at CUW, visit cuw.edu/give or call 262-243-4425.



"Concordia helped to shape the person I am today. The gifts I have been given are from Him and were further nurtured when I attended CUW. That is why I financially support The Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center and support future students as they become leaders in their chosen fields."

—Kris Best ('93), VP of Finance at BVK, 2018 CUW Distinguished Alumna of the Year



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN



Live UNCOMMON

Spend a day on our campus, and you'll quickly recognize there's something quite different about Concordia University. It's the promise of God's grace at work in our everyday lives. Trust us, it's worth experiencing in person.

Reserve your spot and stop by for one of our scheduled Visit Days to see for yourself. Or find a visit option that works best for you. Learn more at cuw.edu/visit.

26 Visit Day
OCTOBER

3 Visit Day
NOVEMBER

9 Athlete
Visit Day
NOVEMBER

22 Athlete
Visit Day
FEBRUARY

29 Junior Day
MARCH

13 Junior Day
APRIL