

# Concordian

THE MAGAZINE OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY WISCONSIN



**GAME DAY  
DESIGNERS**  
CONCORDIANS GO PRO  
WITH THE BIGGEST NAMES  
IN SPORTS

# Concordian contents

SPRING/SUMMER 2020



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**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](mailto:Concordian@cuw.edu).

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**Go green!** If you would like to subscribe to our email edition instead of receiving a copy in the mail, please email [Concordian@cuw.edu](mailto:Concordian@cuw.edu).

This was not my original introductory letter. We were all set to take this edition to print when my previous message, while still relevant, became slightly less pressing. My intention was to discuss the challenges that colleges and universities like Concordia are facing in light of the announced closure of our sister school in Portland, Oregon. Of course, I wanted to ease the concerns of readers who care so deeply about Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor. Recently our Board of Regents joined members of our senior leadership team to look forward together at the future for Lutheran higher education and the leading role that Concordia is well-positioned to assume. All of that remains true, of course, but the whole world has changed in ways that none of us imagined a few months ago.

This revised letter is being written during the first week following spring vacation. Normally, this is a wonderfully busy week on campus. Classes resume, choirs are back from tours, athletics teams return from trips, and everyone is refreshed and ready for the homestretch of the academic year. These are not normal days. As I walked on to campus today, I saw only a few people, and we were careful to keep a safe distance from one another. I met with our same Board of Regents via interactive video utilizing Zoom technology. By this same method our leadership team has been meeting twice each day for a couple of weeks. Faculty and students have also been convening their regular classes through distance learning—a plan that no one expected to occur when everybody scattered for the break.

To say the global pandemic, Covid-19, has been disruptive would be a huge understatement. Obviously, you do not need me to tell you that because your own lives have certainly been disrupted in no small way. At Concordia all of the things we look forward to in the spring semester—including Commencement—have been cancelled. We are doing our best to make sure students are able to complete their courses and to care for them as best we can from a distance, but the rest has been laid to the side out of an abundance of caution and an abundance of care.

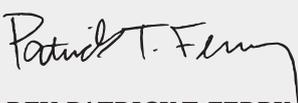
Since we are still in the midst of this situation, it is not easy to see how everything will eventually turn out. It would be disingenuous for me to suggest that I have no concerns for Concordia, or for the future.

**Nevertheless, our faith is in the One who did not distance Himself from our perilous predicament. Christ came to bear our sins and carry our sorrows. Concordia belongs to Jesus—as it always has, and as it always will.**

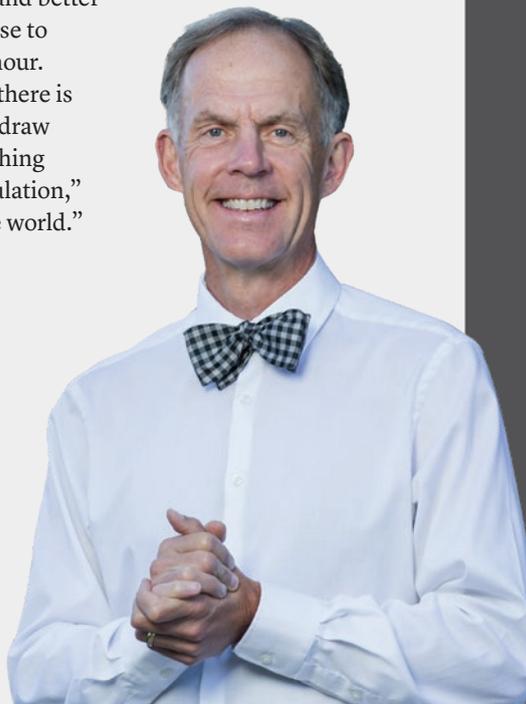
We commend ourselves and our future to the Lord.

We also remain committed to the fulfillment of our extraordinary mission, and we look forward to the prospect of brighter and better days ahead. My hope is that upon reflection of our response to this extraordinary crisis we will see that it was our finest hour. As I have watched my colleagues in action in recent days there is already evidence for that. I also hope that these days will draw us nearer to Jesus who draws near to us even when everything else around us crumbles. “In the world you will have tribulation,” Jesus warned, “but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

God bless and keep you.



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



#### ON THE COVER:

**Taylor Oestreich ('20)** and **Jonathan Michel ('18)** are behind the social media graphics for some of the biggest names in sports.  
*Illustration by Taylor Oestreich*

# social scene

## CONNECT WITH US

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-  /ConcordiaWisconsin1
-  cuw.edu/news



### SHARING MOMENTS OF LIGHT

Photographer Sean D. Hansen (@seandhansen) often uses CUW's beautiful landscape as his canvas, and posts his work on Instagram. Have you taken some impressive campus snaps? Share them on Instagram using #CUW!

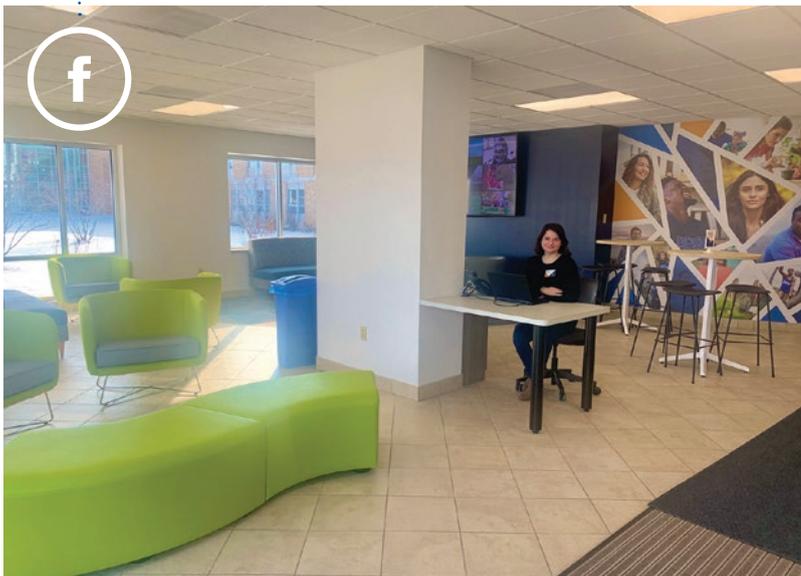
### TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

Our Sonography seniors entered a Facebook contest to win a new ultrasound machine. With the help of the CUW community, their submission got the most "likes" out of all the other schools who participated. See the full story at [blog.cuw.edu/sonography-contest](http://blog.cuw.edu/sonography-contest).



### A fresh look

In case you haven't seen it yet, CUW's front entrance renovation is complete! Check it out next time you visit!



**GET SMART** Innovation is everywhere at Concordia! Our new SMART lab doesn't replace Concordia's mental health services, but it does help more students manage everyday stress. TMJ4 took notice, and featured CUW in a segment.

• **#CIT2020**  
We got spirit, yes we do!



**Here's to those who champion Concordia through social media.**

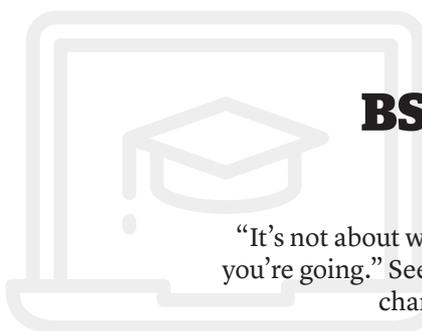
Every tweet, every post, every “like,” every comment, and every share—we notice you, and we appreciate you!



**ALL-PLATFORM ALL-STAR**

**ZACH OTTO ('18)**

Zach may have recently graduated, but he still is very active with his alma mater on Facebook and Twitter. He says, “I’m so involved because I love to stay up to date with what’s going on at CUW, as I graduated in May ’18. I love to support the campus in any way I can.”



**BSN completion program**

“It’s not about where you’re at; it’s about where you’re going.” See the full video on our YouTube channel, /ConcordiaWisconsin1.



**THE MORE THE MERRIER**

All our platforms’ audiences have grown between 2019 and 2020. We give our biggest thanks to everyone who has chosen to keep us in their social loop!

FOLLOWER GROWTH 2019–2020

FACEBOOK **1,694**

TWITTER **468**

INSTAGRAM **1,384**



Above and right: Students in Concordia's BSN completion program participated in a Dec. 6 poverty simulation. Photography by Ashley Kilgas



## Nursing students take a walk in patients' shoes

The words were quick off Brooke Hartnell's lips when Concordia's nursing faculty launched into a debrief session that followed a December 2019 poverty simulation involving Hartnell and her peers.

"Constant stress," Hartnell said succinctly. Nods from her classmates.

The stress came in a variety of forms that day. Some students found themselves evicted from their homes, some were the victims of theft, and some couldn't overcome the surge of bill collectors at their doorsteps. All of them were living at or below the poverty level.

Even though the CUW students weren't actually afflicted with their prescribed circumstances on simulation day, students agreed that the emotional effect was, nevertheless, palpable.

That's precisely the goal says Nursing Sim Lab Coordinator Kathi Lengyel, RN,C.

"It gives students that hands-on experience," she said. "Before they have to do it with a real patient, they can begin to build a dialogue in

their head about how they could handle some of these situations."

This is the first academic year Concordia has undertaken the poverty simulation in order to help students experience the challenges lower income families can face. The December poverty simulation exercise involved students in CUW's accelerated nursing and social work programs. Lengyel says there are plans to extend the exercise to undergraduate nursing students as well.

It's one of several additions made in recent years to Concordia's nursing simulation repertoire. Accelerated students newly participated in community disaster, immunization clinic, and health-teaching simulations this academic year.

The School of Nursing has made moves to add more simulations at the traditional undergraduate level also. Senior nursing students in the program participated in a simulation this year that involved "Ertha Williams," an elderly woman who suffered a

traumatic brain injury after a fall at home, and students enrolled in the gerontological nursing course had opportunity to experience what it's like to live with dementia through a simulation presented by the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Ozaukee County.

In the latter, students were asked to follow confusing tasks under the constraints of modified headphones, sunglasses, and gloves. The students became frustrated as they struggled to hear the instructions, forgot a few of the tasks on the list, and couldn't properly navigate their surroundings.

The dementia experience gave students the chance to truly feel what their patients might experience, said Associate Professor Mary Lou Kopp, PhD, who oversaw the exercise.

"When a patient starts to have difficulty with cognition, there are a lot of feelings of loss and fear," Kopp said. "Empathy is a huge teacher."

Learn more about Concordia's nursing programs at [cuw.edu/nursing](http://cuw.edu/nursing).

## On the ground floor

There are only about 20 competitive floorball teams in America, and Concordia University Wisconsin can claim one of its competitors.

Annalina Van Hercke, a freshman marketing major, represents the U.S. in international floorball tournaments, serving as the U-19 (under 19 years of age) and Women's Team USA goalie. The Colorado native has been at it for the past five years and has competed four times in the world championships, traveling to Switzerland, Canada, and Slovakia for the honor.

In her spare time (there's very little of it), Van Hercke also competes on the CUW women's hockey team. The well-rounded scholar-athlete maintains an incredibly disciplined schedule in order to accommodate the two sports.

Floorball is an indoor sport similar to ice hockey, but without the skates or ice rink. It originated in Sweden in the late 1960s and continues to be popular in Europe, but has only more recently made its way to the U.S., with its first known introduction in America in the early 1990s. The United States Floorball Association, which was officially established in 1994, gave U.S. competitors the chance to compete internationally.

While ice hockey remains Van Hercke's first love, she's thrilled to have the opportunity to stick with floorball. Concordia was attractive for that very reason.

"The size of Concordia's classes was a big draw," Van Hercke said. "I've had to miss class time for floorball, and my professors have honored my initiative and planning; they've been incredibly flexible. I feel so thankful for the strong friendships I have at Concordia, and I'm thankful I get to continue to form relationships with women on the international level."



CUW student Annalina Van Hercke is the Women's Team USA floorball goalie. Photo courtesy of Annalina Van Hercke



### 190+

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE ESPORTS (NACE) PARTNER SCHOOLS

### 35

VARSITY-LEVEL ATHLETICS AT CUW

### 13

SPORTS ADDED AT CUW SINCE 2007

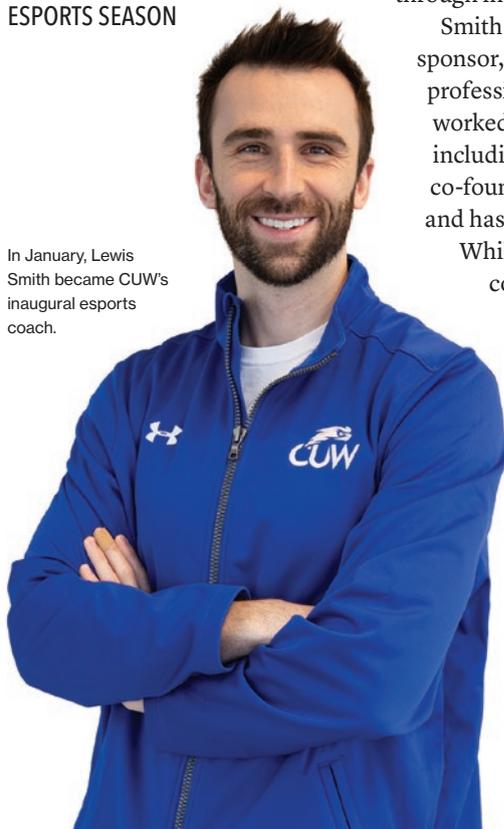
### 19%

OF TRADITIONAL UNDERGRADS ARE FALCON ATHLETES

### 80+

ROSTERED CUW COMPETITORS FOR THE INAUGURAL ESPORTS SEASON

In January, Lewis Smith became CUW's inaugural esports coach.



Emma Safley tests out the new esports arena in the computer science wing on campus.

## E-game on

If you're wondering what esports is and how this emerging sport redefines what it means to be an athlete, you're not alone. Thankfully, Concordia named Lewis Smith, a veteran in the esports world, as head coach of the university's inaugural team. Since January 2020, Smith has been busy building the roster, preparing the arena, and schooling the entire Concordia community on the ins and outs of the sport. Already in February, CUW's inaugural esports team began its competitive season and continued at-home competitions through the COVID-19 stay-at-home period—the only Falcons team that was able to do so.

Esports is organized competitive video gaming. CUW is affiliated with the National Association of Collegiate Esports (NACE), an association of college- and university-sponsored esports programs that promotes the education and development of students through intercollegiate esports.

Smith has been on all sides of esports—player, sponsor, promoter, and innovator. He started his professional career as a sports statistics analyst and worked for major professional sports organizations, including NFL, MLB, and NCAA teams. In 2014, he co-founded RankR eSports in New Berlin, Wisconsin, and has worked to grow the sport ever since.

While he is a fan of the sport and relishes competition, Smith is most excited to offer students a new avenue to hone key soft skills for life.

"To this day, I would say the bulk of my work ethic and morals were established through my participation in youth sports, and the esports team at CUW can help encourage those very same traits in others," Smith said. "With students nationwide putting more time into video games than ever before, esports is an opportunity to take a hobby and turn it into an outlet for students to be a part of a team and to grow as an individual."

## Raising pastors for the Church



Rev. Dr. Ron Mudge avidly recruits and works to support pre-seminary students at CUW.

If you care at all about Lutheran pastoral education, you've probably already met Rev. Dr. Ron Mudge. If not, he definitely wants to meet you.

Since his arrival at CUW in 2007, Concordia's pre-seminary director has determinedly invested himself in any and all of the university's efforts to bolster pre-seminary enrollment for the sake of the Church. To that end, Mudge has successfully launched multiple new initiatives over the past few years, all in support of nurturing future LCMS leaders.

The fruits of these efforts are apparent. CUW celebrates the largest pre-seminary program in the Concordia University System. With 59 students, its enrollment is nearly double that of any other Concordia, but it's still not enough to make a dent in the demand.

That's why Mudge and a team of Concordians have taken up their latest endeavor to raise funds for The Concordia Bible Institute Saleska Scholarship Endowment, established in 2017 in honor of the late Rev. Dr. John Saleska.

The endowment supports students who are entering the pre-seminary program at CUW. In 2000, Saleska founded the Concordia Bible Institute—a servant institute of CUW—after he retired from his 23-year faculty position at Concordia Theological Seminary. Up until the day he was called to his heavenly home, Saleska, too, sought earnestly to teach “Christ in Every Word” to church workers and laity alike. He especially had a heart for seminarians.

The goal is to add at least \$1 million to the endowment by mid-2022.

Visit [concordiabible.org/Saleska](https://concordiabible.org/Saleska) to learn more. If you know someone who is considering the pastoral office, please contact Dr. Mudge at [Ronald.Mudge@cuw.edu](mailto:Ronald.Mudge@cuw.edu).



“I’m so thankful for donors who have given me the opportunity to learn from exceptional professors and grow in a faith-filled environment.”

—Joe Bender ('22)  
PRE-SEMINARY

### Vocation Exploration

CONCORDIA HOSTS TWO ANNUAL EVENTS THAT INVITE YOUTH TO EXPLORE VOCATIONS, INCLUDING CHURCH WORK CAREERS.

- **SERVANTS OF CHRIST CONFERENCE**  
(FOR 9-12 GRADERS) | JUNE 23-24, 2020
- **SERVANTS OF CHRIST SEMINAR**  
(FOR 6-8 GRADERS) | FALL 2020

VISIT [CUW.EDU/SERVANTSOFCRISTCONFERENCE](https://CUW.EDU/SERVANTSOFCRISTCONFERENCE) FOR DETAILS.

## Singular support for the visually impaired



Concordia began the state's only Teacher of the Visually Impaired program in January.

Concordia has launched the sole visually impaired teaching licensure program in the state of Wisconsin. The Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) program officially began in January 2020.

The TVI program consists of graduate-level coursework, a face-to-face summer residency to apply skills, and a graduate student teaching practicum. The online accelerated program's courses run every 12 weeks. It certifies educators to teach students age birth through 21 who are visually impaired.

The Wisconsin State Superintendent's Advisory Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment Education approached Concordia with the request to start the program and identified the university as an ideal higher education partner for the need.

“We have seen incredible shortages throughout the state for teachers of the visually impaired,” said Nissan Bar-Lev, chair of the advisory council. “The council members and I felt that Concordia would be a perfect fit to pick up the program given the fact that it's in a metropolitan area and that it has an excellent reputation around the state. Concordia has generated a number of excellent teacher candidates not only in the special education fields, but through its physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology programs. These health profession disciplines make perfect complements for a visually impaired program.”

Learn more: [blog.cuw.edu/TVI-program](https://blog.cuw.edu/TVI-program).



# Bright Ideators

Concordia nurtures leaders who can collaborate, innovate, and problem solve

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

Whether they're in pursuit of enrichment, advancement, or self-improvement, these bright CUW students have an even brighter future ahead of them thanks to Concordia's newest doctorate program. They're among the first students to enroll in Concordia's Doctorate of Education in Leadership in Innovation and Continuous Improvement (EdD LICI), which launched in fall 2018.

The group demonstrates the broad appeal and usefulness of the program. Built for growth-minded individuals and inspired by a Christian worldview, the EdD LICI is providing a deep dive into leadership, research, continuous improvement, and innovation for a total of four cohorts of learners from across the nation.

## THE EDD IN LEADERSHIP IN INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT COURSES ARE:

- EIGHT WEEKS
- ONLINE
- IN A COHORT MODEL

TWO, FOUR-DAY RESIDENCIES ARE REQUIRED. COHORTS LAUNCH IN FALL AND SPRING.

LEARN MORE: [CUW.EDU/EDD-LICI](http://CUW.EDU/EDD-LICI).

CUW has accepted more than 100 EdD transfer students from Portland, some of whom have already begun classes.

## ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A DOCTORATE ...

### Vanessa Vande Hei

Environmental Public Health, Sanitarian, Oneida Nation

In my indigenous language, we have a saying: Yukwatsistay<sup>^</sup>, which means, "Our fire, our spirit, within each one of us." Throughout my life, I've been surrounded by incredible indigenous scholars, community advocates, program administrators, and family members who have truly championed, modeled, and instilled this core value in me. I strongly believe I have a responsibility to use this fire so that I may apply the knowledge and experiences I gain to the programs within my community.

## ON THE MOST IMPORTANT THING GAINED SO FAR ...

### Shaun Luehring

President & CEO, LUMIN Schools

I've learned a lot going for my doctorate at CUW, most importantly that the professors want you to be successful. In every class they have been easy to turn to for advice and support, much more than I expected on an online course. In fact, it is the most connected I've ever felt to professors in an online course. They take your success very seriously.

## ON THE CONCORDIA DIFFERENCE ...

### Courtney Washington

Community Engagement Specialist, Selma City Schools

Concordia's mission of helping students develop in mind, body, and spirit for service to Christ in the Church and world is not just words on paper. Professors challenge us on a regular basis to consider how our lessons lend themselves to bettering ourselves and others on all fronts—professionally, personally, and spiritually. My faith is paramount for me and it's a great feeling to be part of an institution for which the same is true.

## ON TRANSFERRING FROM CONCORDIA, PORTLAND ...

### Nicolas Kale Los Baños

Director of Compliance & Quality, Hawai'i Care Choices

I was nearing the end of my EdD at Concordia, Portland when they made their announcement. Then COVID-19 hit the U.S. and my responsibilities with the Incident Command Team were enacted at the hospice where I work. Between the two, it was a hectic period to say the least! However, Concordia Wisconsin has been incredibly responsive and accommodating. I look forward to finishing strong at CUW.



## ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A DOCTORATE ...

**Matthew Thiel**  
Music Director, Sheboygan Area Lutheran High School

I simply love learning and enjoy being in an academic setting. If getting a doctorate opens new career opportunities for me, great! If not, that's fine too. I'm just excited to put to use what I learn in this program—in my current vocation or wherever the Lord may lead. That's the great thing about the LICI program, I'm learning practical, widely applicable content that has already benefited me in my job and I'm only 20 percent done.



## ON THE MOST IMPORTANT THING GAINED SO FAR ...

**Nina Stewart**  
Lean Customer Value Consultant, American Family Insurance

It's been 20 years since I obtained my master's in computer information systems. I had always thought of going back to school, but nothing seemed to grab my interest until I found the LICI program, which feeds my passion for process improvement and becoming a better leader. It's encouraged me to reflect upon my values, strengths, and limitations. It's been a joy to learn in this program.



## ON THE CONCORDIA DIFFERENCE ...

**Rev. Brian Downs**  
Senior Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church in Belleville, Illinois

This program has inspired me as a leader in both practical and bigger, philosophical ways. The faith component was certainly a draw, but my decision to enroll was also based on the qualifications of the staff leading this program. I appreciate the creativity in online conferencing and variation in learning modalities. The professors are exceptional. Their personal investment in me was immediately apparent and has made all the difference.

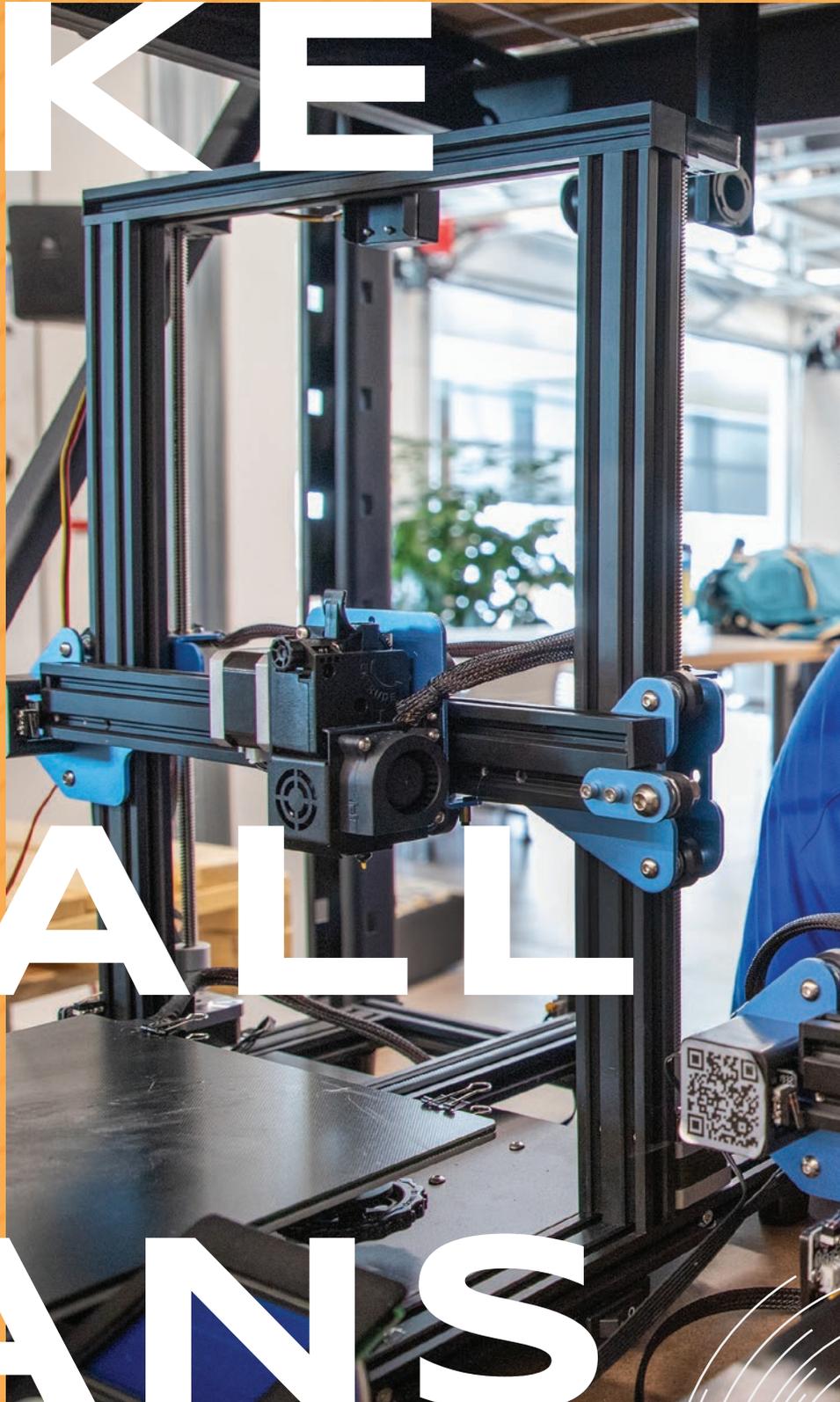


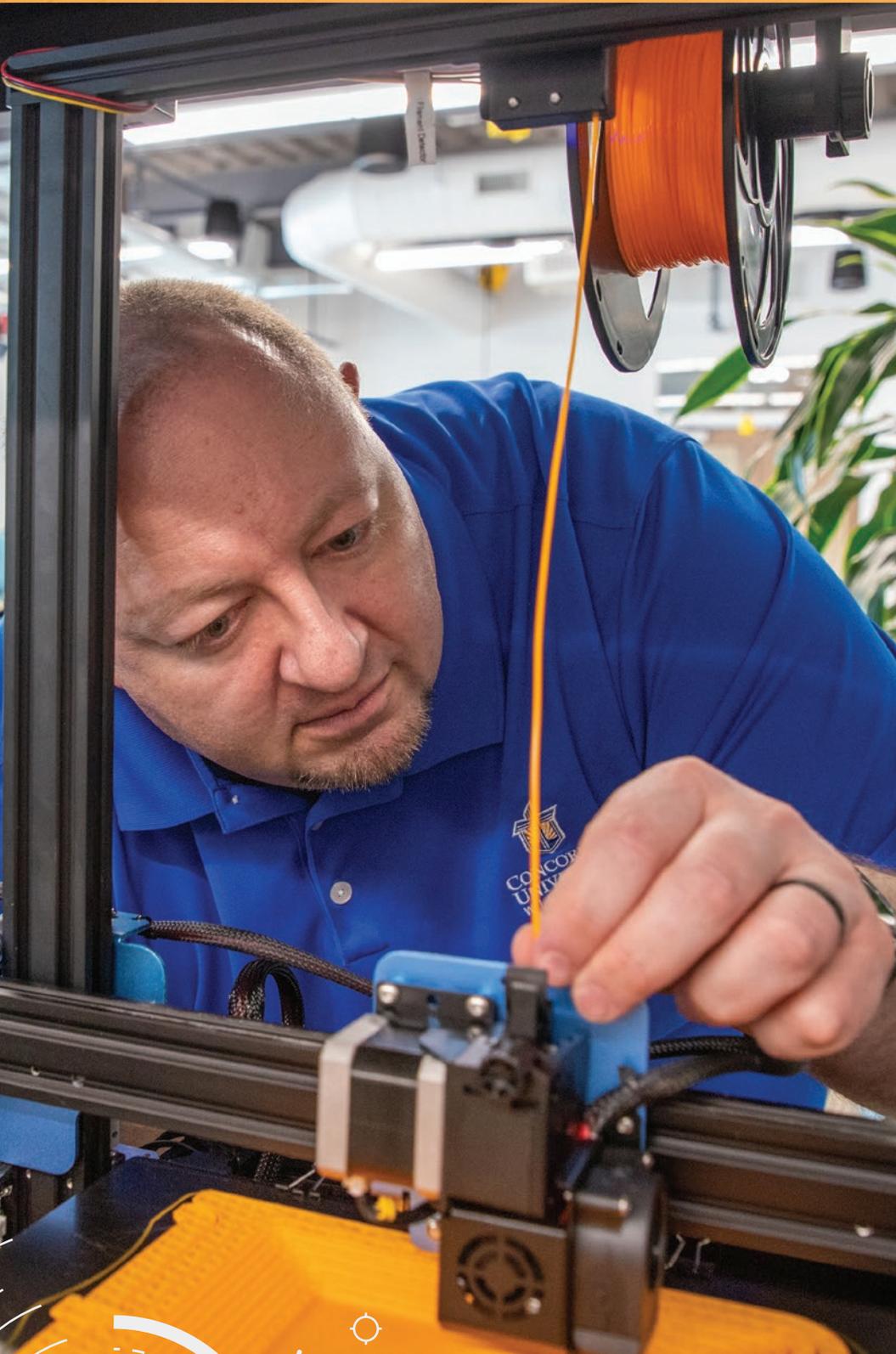
## ON BECOMING A STUDENT AGAIN ...

**Jenna Roeske**  
Principal, Trinity Lutheran School in Sheboygan, Wisconsin

My amazing husband has picked up extra duties along the way. ... It helps to have your whole family and support system on board when you decide to pursue a degree, and, after that, you just simply have to resolve to make it a part of your daily routine. Altogether, I've been pleasantly surprised to find that my husband and I can juggle it all—my coursework along with full-time jobs and raising our 3-year-old son. It is a great testament to the structure and delivery of this program.

MAKE  
NO  
SMALL  
PLANS





Dr. Mike Litman loads filament into the extruder on one of the direct drive 3-D printers in the new makerspace at Concordia University Wisconsin.

By **Lisa Liljegen**,  
*Strategic Communications*

**T**hough open less than a year, Concordia University Wisconsin's makerspace is poised for students and the broader community to create big things that could change the world, which is fitting because the professor leading this endeavor makes no small plans.

The term "makerspace" is broadly defined as a dedicated space equipped with tools where people can come together to create a product. Within the past couple of years, makerspace, sometimes referred to as "hackerspace," has evolved to become synonymous with 3-D printers. While many public libraries, universities, schools, and collaborative workspaces provide access to 3-D printers, CUW's makerspace offers the most 3-D printers and the largest additive manufacturing capacity in the state.

"I'm a big guy with a big personality, who comes up with big ideas and is willing to take big risks," explains Mike Litman, PhD, chair of computer science. "God made me to do big things."

Litman stepped into the role of chair of computer science in July 2019 and has been working on making big improvements to the department, the program, and the overall university culture ever since.

On the academic side, Litman led significant efforts to revise the computer science curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Starting in fall 2020 undergraduates will have the opportunity to select a concentration from the following five options: software engineering, AI and robotics, cyber security, computer animation, and information systems. In addition, the

# COMPUTER SCIENCE FALL 2020

## UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

All concentrations within the undergraduate program share a revised technology core and include ample room for free electives.

### Software Engineering

- Programming 3—data structures
- Systems programming
- Programming language theory
- Theoretical computer science

### AI and Robotics

- Coding 3—data structures
- Artificial intelligence
- Advanced artificial intelligence
- Machine learning & robotics

### Cybersecurity

- Systems integration
- Cybersecurity
- Networks & security
- Penetration testing

### Information Systems

- Systems integration
- Cybersecurity 1
- Networks & security
- Systems programming

### Computer Animation

- Systems integration
- Animation 1
- Animation 2
- Animation 3

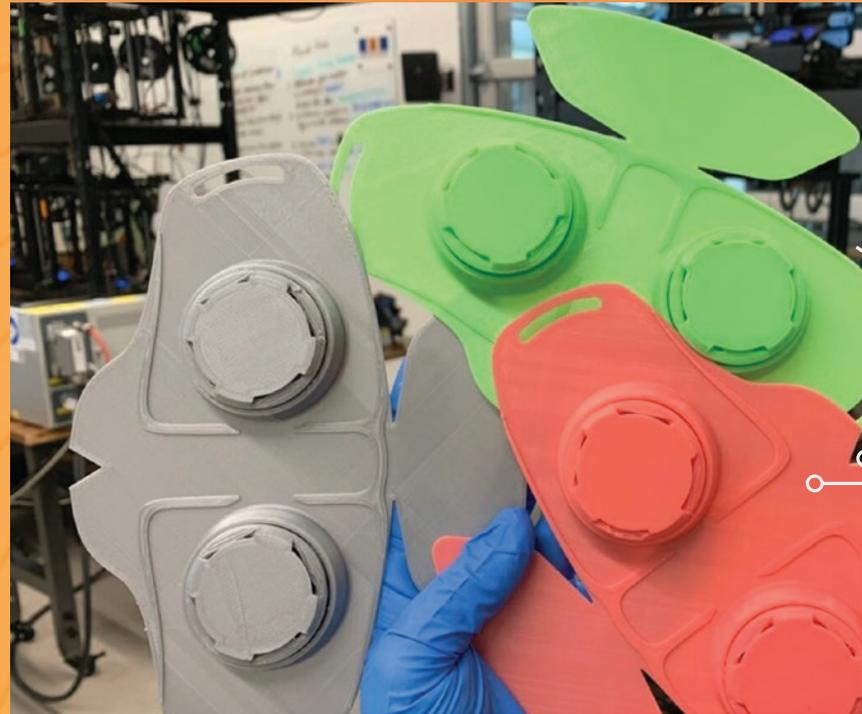
## GRADUATE PROGRAM

### Software Engineering

- Advanced algorithms
- Compilers
- Language theory

### Information Systems

- Advanced networking
- System design
- System admin



An early prototype of N95-modeled respirator masks is shown here. Heat was later applied to form the masks into a face-fitting shape.

## 3D PROTECTION FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

The COVID-19 outbreak caused a global shortage of the heavy-duty N95 respirator masks utilized by health care workers to avoid contamination. As manufacturers scrambled to find innovative ways to maximize production, Concordia, along with regional partners, sprang into action to fill the gap.

Leaning on direct input from area medical professionals, including from the nationally renowned Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, Concordia teamed up with UWM's Prototyping Center to identify an ideal prototype of an N95-modeled mask to be 3D-printed.

It was a role Concordia was perfectly positioned to assume. While the typical university owns at most a handful of 3D printers, CUW's makerspace boasts 30 machines. Each was enacted to print masks all day long in order to provide workers on the front lines with the vital medical supply.

Concordia gained widespread media attention for the effort. Learn more about the project and view media coverage at [blog.cuw.edu/COVIDmasks](http://blog.cuw.edu/COVIDmasks).



Yiming Liao, a graduate assistant for the computer science program, often works in the makerspace.

For more information, visit [cuw.edu/computerscience](http://cuw.edu/computerscience).

revised program has greater flexibility for more free electives. Graduate students will select from two concentrations: software engineering or information systems. Additionally, a computer science scholars program has been created for qualifying students to earn both a bachelor's and a master's degree in computer science in four years.

The computer science program is also partnering with and providing temporary space for the newly announced varsity esports team. Faculty and students are helping the athletic department be ready and equipped for the team's inaugural year.

Perhaps most visible is the new makerspace located in the heart of the Robert W. Plaster Free Enterprise Center.

CUW's makerspace includes several standard, industrial, high-end direct drive, enclosed, multi-material, and large-format 3-D printers, and all of the software and support to learn how to use them.

"Human beings solve problems with the tools that are available to us," says Litman. "Our vision is to bring together people, whom God created to be great problem-solvers, and give them the tools and the space to get their creative juices flowing."

The process of creating something is relatively simple. Once one has an idea, the first step is to create a 3-D model using computer-aided design (CAD) software. The model is then formatted for printing using additional software that's readily available in the space. Depending on the size and material, the printing (or "building") could take minutes or days to complete. The space is staffed by computer science students and faculty to assist creators at every step.

Important products and solutions will derive from this space, but first users need to know how to use the tools. According to Litman, "Creativity is flowing in the lab. The more comfortable we become, the more useful our creations will be."



Several 3D-printed figurines of varying sizes adorn the makerspace, showing off the personality and interests of those who utilize the machines.

The growing comfort level can be easily tracked through the large display windows that encase the space. Lined up along the shelves is a visual history of the collective learning curve. Creations have evolved from standard tchotchkes, like a replica of the Eiffel Tower, to custom dinosaur skulls and action figures. The most popular creation at the moment is a detailed Baby Yoda.

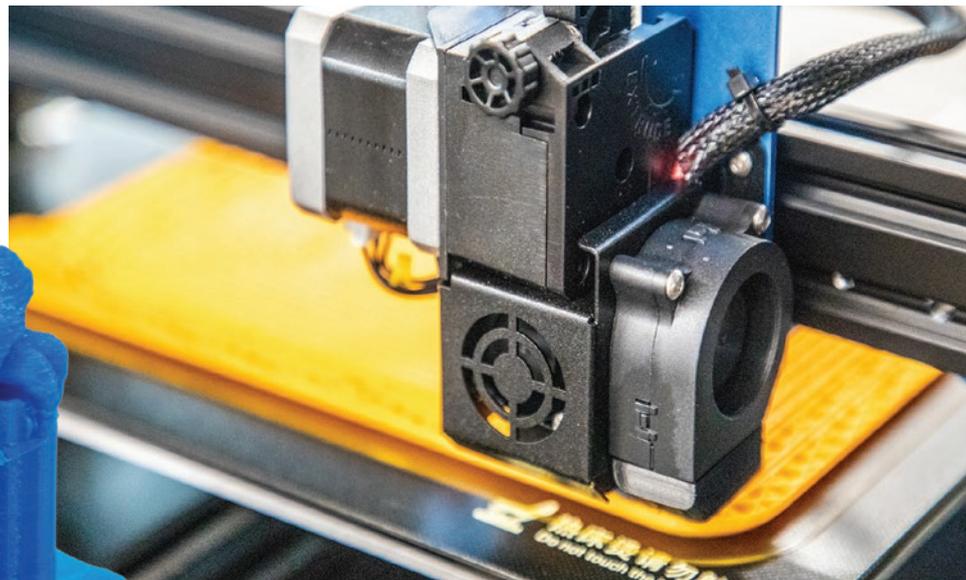
While Litman enjoys displaying the evolutionary masterpieces, he's quick to point out that real-life solutions are more important and have also originated from the space. The lab started with small but practical items such as cell phone cases, antique sewing machine replacement bobbins, and coat hangers. Then, with the COVID-19 outbreak, it quickly rose to life-saving applications (see sidebar on page 14). Small everyday solutions now that will pave the way to bigger creations.

For a leader like Litman, bigger is always better. As he reflects on how he's fulfilling his purpose at Concordia, he stops for a moment before surmising, "I would say that I'm not big enough, yet. Hopefully one day I will fill that shoe."



One of the makerspace staff's most popular giveaway items is a baby Yoda like the one shown here.

CUW's makerspace offers the most 3-D printers and the largest additive manufacturing capabilities in the state.



# BIG *Leagues*

**Concordians play a  
major role in elite  
game-day experiences**

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



The Concordians on the Fox Hammer Media team include, from left, Taylor Oestreich ('20), Thomas Paschke ('18), Jonathan Michel ('18), and Taylor Rystrom ('20).

**T**aylor Oestreich ('20) was more than 900 miles away from Yankee Stadium on April 30, 2019, when CC Sabathia made history and became the 17th MLB pitcher ever to earn 3,000 career strikeouts. Nevertheless, Oestreich's remote contribution put her right in the midst of the monumental celebration.

Moments after Sabathia struck out Diamondbacks catcher John Ryan Murphy in the second inning, the Yankees official Instagram account posted a celebratory gif for which Oestreich, still a student at Concordia, served as illustrator. The post received a whopping 160,377 likes—an arresting accolade for a budding professional.

The opportunity came thanks to an internship with up-and-coming sports design agency Fox Hammer Media, located in Port Washington, Wisconsin, right in Concordia's backyard. The internship will turn into a full-time position once Oestreich graduates this May with her bachelor's in illustration and minor in animation.

## *Dynamic content,* captivating coverage

Despite its unassuming home base, Fox Hammer serves team titans the likes of the Toronto Raptors, Chicago Bears, New England Patriots, and New York Yankees. Started by Aaron Cummings, the company bills itself as an agency that helps teams, leagues, and athletes captivate fans like never before through dynamic live-event content. It has contracts with teams within nearly every professional athletic association that exists—from mainstream darlings, including the NFL, NBA, NHL, and MLB, to more niche competitive organizations such as the Overwatch League's Boston Uprising. By consistently delivering dynamic graphics and content, Fox Hammer has increased its client base year after year, and has become the go-to agency for more than 30 pro teams and leagues around the world.

"I'm a huge sports fan," said Oestreich. "Being in the art field, there's not a ton of job opportunities like this, but here I am getting to combine two of my favorite worlds in one of the best ways possible."

An enterprising agency needs equally promising

talent to succeed, and Cummings has found the skills and drive needed for the job within Concordia students. Two recent graduates, Jonathan Michel ('18) and Thomas Paschke ('18) and two soon-to-be-graduates, Oestreich and Taylor Rystrom ('20), have quickly become valuable members of the Fox Hammer team. Both Oestreich and Rystrom have secured full-time positions at the organization once they graduate.

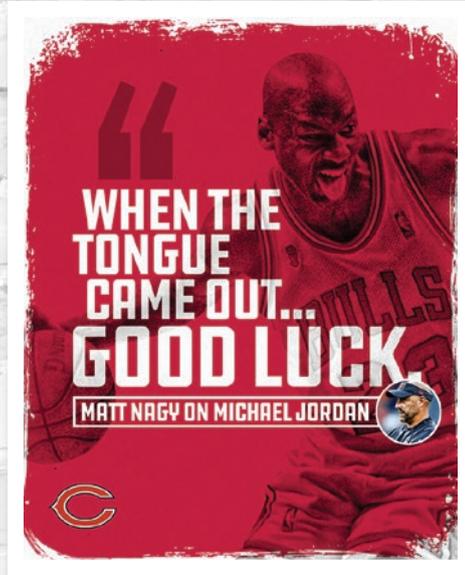
"Concordia is equipping its students with the tools needed to succeed," said Cummings. "I'm impressed by the level of skills, creative thinking, and deep understanding of the industry that each Concordian on my team has shown. On a personal level, I'm also impressed by the school's mission and believe it only strengthens graduates' ability to succeed. Concordia students have proven to be hard-working employees who put team before themselves—a combination that is critical for success in our industry."



This is one of four illustrations Taylor Oestreich made to celebrate CC Sabathia's 3,000th strikeout.



Taylor Oestreich's Walter Payton illustration was one of eight that made the Chicago Bears' All-Time Team Centennial Scrapbook in honor of the franchise's 100th season.



Jonathan Michel was behind this Instagram compilation of Chicago Bears Coach Matt Nagy's thoughts on some of the NBA's greatest players. View the full collection at [blog.cuw.edu/big-leagues](http://blog.cuw.edu/big-leagues).



Thomas Paschke ('18) helped Boston Uprising mark the start of its 2020 season with this graphic, posted to the team's Instagram the morning before its first match on Feb. 9.



In the midst of finals last year, Taylor Oestreich pumped out 10 illustrations of Bengals players for the team's 2019 season tickets.



The 2019 Toronto Football Club won the Eastern Conference, Jonathan Michel turned out an impressive Instagram graphic.

## Game day routine

Michel joined the Fox Hammer team shortly after his May 2018 graduation from Concordia and set the tone for future CUW hires.

As a young professional, it would have been easy to get swept up in the magnitude of it all, but Michel managed to keep a level head. The only team that gave him pause was his very first assign, the New York Yankees.

"The Yankees were pretty intimidating to me at first," Michel said. "The people on staff are so nice, but there's an intense reputation that comes with the team just because there's so much history there."

Now, well over a year in, the nerves have settled and, time and again, he's risen to the challenge of game day.

The key to game-day success is preparation. Fox Hammer employees work months in advance to be able to quickly provide graphics and animations with real-time scores, quotes, or images received from the franchise's on-site media crews.

"It takes a lot of planning and effort to help teams capitalize on major moments as they happen," Cummings said. "Fox Hammer is a demanding environment for any designer. We work with the biggest brands in sports, and they expect nothing but the best. Our clients rely on us to deliver dynamic graphics in pressure-packed situations, and so far every Concordian has been able to meet the challenge."

While it might seem counterintuitive to outsource design, Fox Hammer brings a wow-factor that's hard to pass up. Teams tap Fox Hammer to visually tell their story and engage fans at a deeper level.

"Social media is about what is happening now. Posting something tomorrow or the next day is already too late," Cummings said. "Because of our diverse team, Fox Hammer can provide anything from amazing illustrations to dynamic motion graphics in near-real time."

## A bearable bragging point

A sense of professionalism is paramount when fan loyalties are at play. Slinger-born Oestreich, who grew up a die-hard Packers

fan, received plenty of good-natured razzing from her family when Cummings called upon her to illustrate a commemorative scrapbook for the Chicago Bears' centennial celebration. Ultimately, the magnitude of the offer beat out her homegrown allegiance, though. It helped that her fiancé, a native of Joliet, Illinois, and lifelong Bears fan, was thrilled for her opportunity.

Oestreich illustrated eight of the Bears' greats from the past 10 decades: Walter Payton, Mike Ditka, Dick Butkus, Gayle Sayers, Charles Tillman, Devin Hester, Richard Dent, and Sid Luckman. Michel played a role in the layout of the book.

"That was one of those projects that I knew would be super meaningful to the fans, so it was a real honor to be a part of it," Oestreich said. "I think that is a project that I will definitely talk about for a while."

## The Concordia difference

Oestreich, Michel, Paschke, and Rystrom are quick to laud their Concordia experience.

"The faith-based atmosphere was definitely a huge draw for me when I was first considering Concordia," said Michel, "but it's also been clear to me in observing just our little group at Fox Hammer how well Concordia trained us for this opportunity." At Concordia, it's not just about learning how to be excellent in a given discipline, it's about realizing a bigger picture and understanding that we all strive to do our very best because we're gifted by the Lord to do so."

"When I first got to Fox Hammer, Aaron was super impressed with how well I worked in Photoshop and Illustrator and how quickly I could pick up on things," Oestreich added. "They are not easy programs to learn so a huge shout-out to my CUW professors for teaching us to use all of those programs and to be confident enough in them to perform any given job."

Once upon a time Oestreich contemplated whether an illustration major was a wise choice. In hindsight, she needn't have worried. She's exactly where she would like to be.

"It's just super exciting to be a part of Fox Hammer, and I'm so thankful to have had the training I received at Concordia that more than prepared me for it," Oestreich said. "It's definitely been a huge blessing."

## Highlight reel: A few of Fox Hammer's 2020 clients

|          |                      |           |                     |           |                    |
|----------|----------------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| <b>1</b> | New York Yankees     | <b>6</b>  | Toronto Maple Leafs | <b>11</b> | Toronto Argonauts  |
| <b>2</b> | New England Patriots | <b>7</b>  | Chicago White Sox   | <b>12</b> | Cincinnati Bengals |
| <b>3</b> | Toronto Raptors      | <b>8</b>  | Denver Broncos      | <b>13</b> | Cleveland Browns   |
| <b>4</b> | New York Rangers     | <b>9</b>  | Toronto FC          | <b>14</b> | New York Knicks    |
| <b>5</b> | Chicago Bears        | <b>10</b> | Brooklyn Nets       | <b>15</b> | Carolina Panthers  |

## The Concordia-MIAD collaboration

Thanks to CUW's decades-running collaboration with the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, students can enroll at Concordia and receive all the benefits of a tight-knit campus community rooted in faith without sacrificing the expertise and industry connections of a MIAD education—plus, they could pay less for the arrangement.

Located just 25 minutes from Mequon, MIAD has been ranked among the top 10 art and design colleges in the country. Students enrolled in the collaborative programs will take a majority of classes right on CUW's campus and will commute to MIAD for their remaining 18+ credits, typically starting their sophomore year.

### CUW-MIAD programs:

- BA in Graphic Design
- BA in Illustration
- BA in Interior Architecture and Design

### In-house CUW programs:

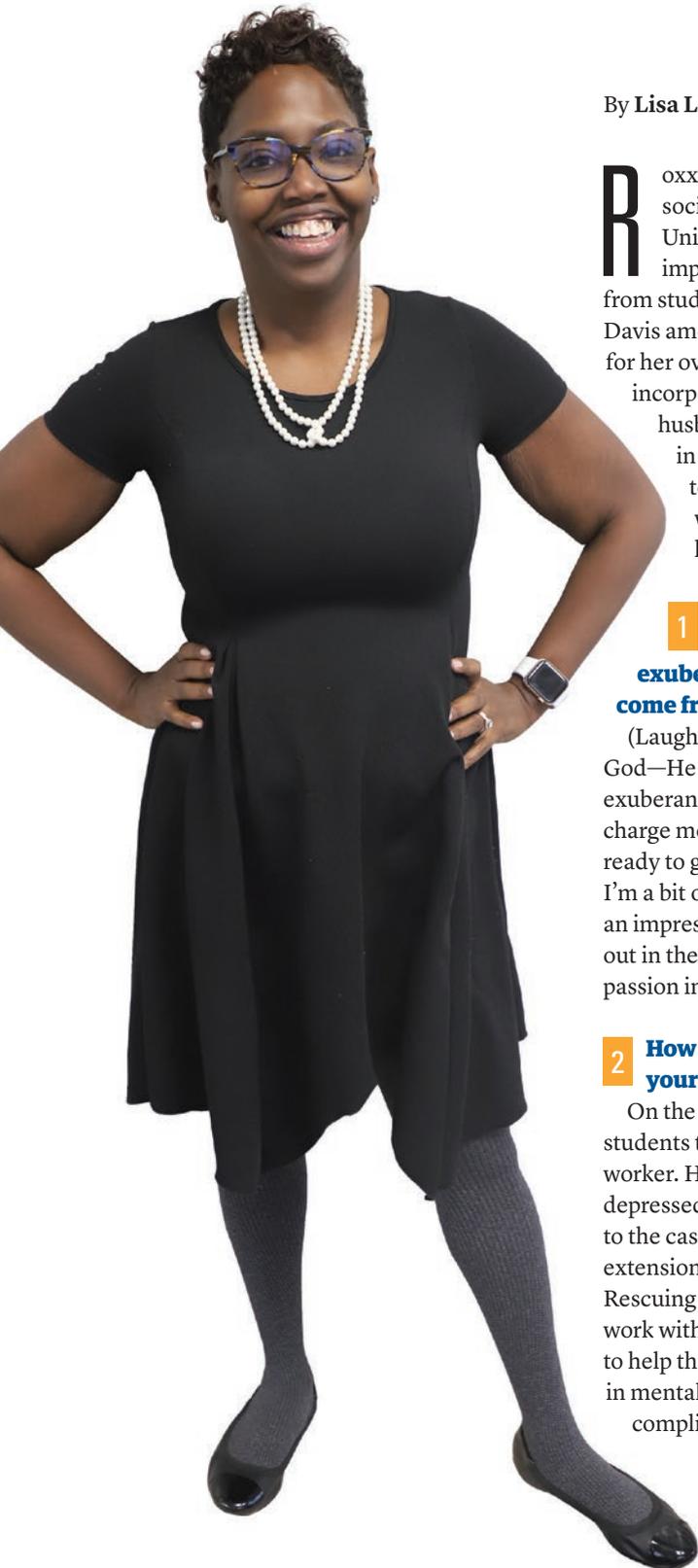
- BA in Art
- BA in Photography
- BS in Art Education
- MS in Art Education

Learn more at [cuw.edu/finearts](http://cuw.edu/finearts).



# take five

Get to know one of our *uncommon* Concordians,  
Assistant Professor of Social Work **Roxxi Davis, DSW**



By Lisa Liljegren, *Strategic Communications*

**R**oxxi Davis, DSW, assistant professor of social work, has only been at Concordia University Wisconsin a short time, yet her impact has been significant. Responses from students surveyed in 2018–19 placed Davis among the Top 10 full-time professors for her overall teaching and her ability to incorporate faith in the classroom. Davis, her husband, Terrance, and their son, T.J., live in Mequon, Wisconsin. When she isn't teaching, the licensed clinical social worker serves the community through her faith-based counseling practice.

**1 You've been described as high-energy and that you have an exuberant personality. Where does that come from?**

(Laughs) My personality comes from God—He is my strength and my source. My exuberance comes from our students. They charge me. I show up each day prepared and ready to give them my best. It turns out that I'm a bit of an activist because I want to leave an impression on them so that when they go out in the field they bring the same energy and passion into their practice.

**2 How does being a Christian inform your practice and teaching?**

On the first day of class, I remind our students that Jesus was the first social worker. He helped the sick, worked with the depressed and oppressed, and reached out to the castaways. My personal practice is an extension of my faith. I call it GROWTH—God Rescuing Others with Truth & Healing—and I work with individuals, churches, and families to help them with personal needs, particularly in mental health, and to help them navigate the complicated health care system.

**3 How do you make class engaging for students?**

I bring fun, relevant activities and material to the classroom to keep them engaged. Why not have fun learning? Not everyone learns the same, and no one wants a lecture every day. I have a learning disability—dyslexia—and, thanks to my mother, I was given tools and resources to help me succeed. I still use the tools to this day and incorporate some of them into my classroom.

**4 Why teach instead of work in the field full time?**

I want to have as big of an impact as I can in the biggest way I know. I love my practice, but it is one-on-one; on a micro level. When I teach, I can have an influence on what my students learn and how they learn it, so that when they go out into internships and into practice they are mini Roxxis helping people and bettering the world.

**5 The social work field can be heavy and draining. How do you take care of yourself so you can help others?**

Self-care is so important, especially in our field. I make sure that I have my morning devotion between me and God. I read my Bible, do some journaling, and take time for reflection. After that, I work out so that I stay physically and mentally fit. I also spend a lot of time playing with my son because that helps me be creative and imaginative. As adults we forget to play, and deprive ourselves of the joy and spontaneity that comes from making our own fun.

Learn more about Concordia's social work program at [cuw.edu/socialwork](http://cuw.edu/socialwork).

# alumni notes

**'10s** **Andrew Fratzke ('19)** and **Lauren Gieschen ('19)** were engaged on Aug. 31, 2019, to be married on June 20, 2020. ▼



**Lindsay (Depies) Johnson ('19)** married Russell Johnson in July 2019. Lindsay recently began her ninth year teaching special education. ▼



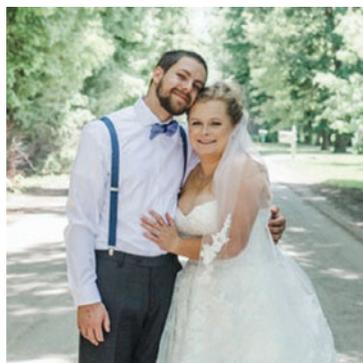
**Alannah (Bruggink) Wallsten ('19)** married **Lucas Wallsten ('19)** on Oct. 12, 2019, at First Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Cedar Grove, Wisconsin. Several of the bridesmaids were friends that Alannah met while at Concordia. ▼



**Hannah (Arrigoni) Brockman ('18)** and **Blake Brockman ('16)** were married on June 29, 2019, in Antigo, Wisconsin. Hannah recently began teaching English at D.C. Everest High School, and Blake is the director of Youth and Family Ministries at Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo. ▼



**Elizabeth (Cross) ('18)** married Samuel Wall on June 22, 2019, in Milan, Michigan. Elizabeth is in her second year of teaching middle school math and physical education at Trinity Lutheran School in Davenport, Iowa. ▼



**Annalise Jasinski ('18)** has taken the position as Special Events/Tourism Promotion Coordinator at the Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce (GACC). ▼



**Nora (Imperl) Rosenau ('17, '18)** and **Alex Rosenau ('15)** were married on July 26, 2019, in Hartford, Wisconsin. ▼



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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Have you heard the latest?

We're filled to the brim with opportunities for our alumni, and we'd love to share the news with you. We just need your preferred email! A monthly e-newsletter—with information on CUW news, events, opportunities, and alumni stories—is sent out to all alumni who provide us with their preferred email. We would also love to share your news with the rest of the Concordia community—whether you published a new book; snagged a promotion; or celebrated a milestone like marriage, the birth of a baby, or an

anniversary. Send us your updates and current contact information at [cuw.edu/alumniupdates](http://cuw.edu/alumniupdates) and check out the stories at [blog.cuw.edu/alumni](http://blog.cuw.edu/alumni).

### Until next time

Out of an abundance of caution and concern for others throughout the coronavirus outbreak, Concordia University made the decision to cancel or reschedule several of its spring events. For the latest information on events, check the CUW upcoming events page at [cuw.edu/events](http://cuw.edu/events).



# mission minded

Amy Gray Bird ('12) has taken her go-getter attitude to World Vision, where she works as an account executive for its in-house marketing agency. Photo courtesy of Amy Gray Bird

By **Madelyne Arrigoni ('22)**,  
Student Contributor

Concordia students may not know her personally, but they're still feeling the impact of Amy Gray Bird.

As a student-athlete at Concordia, Bird ('12) launched the still-thriving Conditioning Our Run Eternally (CORE), a Bible study for "athletically minded" Concordians to connect their faith with their passion for sport. She also spearheaded the first ever STOMP the Courtyard, a beloved carnival-style event hosted by the Campus Ministry Leadership Team (CMLT) each fall.

Bird's tenacity is evident in every realm of her life. She transferred to Concordia University Wisconsin as a sophomore and managed to complete a double major in four years; finishing her senior year remotely from St. Louis, Missouri. The LCMS headquarters recognized her potential even before she completed her degrees in public relations and business communications, and hired her to its Youth Ministry Office. As soon as she arrived for her first "big girl job," as Bird calls it, she was off and running as the media director for the 2013 LCMS Youth Gathering. Bird was instrumental in the development and orchestration of the last three Gatherings, overseeing all communication and promotional efforts.

Bird's current calling has widened her scope to an international scale. In October 2018, she began working for World Vision, combining her strategic communication skills with her passion for holistic service.

World Vision works with local leaders from every corner of the world to identify key needs in a community and works with the "teach a man to fish" mindset to meet those needs. This past fall Bird helped launch the World Vision's Chosen® campaign in U.S. churches. Through this program, children are being empowered to choose their own sponsors instead of the other way around.

Just like Bird, World Vision cares about people holistically, a value she first learned at CUW.

"Being heavily shaped by faith and sport, I've always appreciated this focus on both the body and the soul. God the Father created both and cares about both."

Bird's vocation has allowed her to connect children to families who are committed to supporting them in mind, body, and spirit. Chosen is already celebrating the worth and dignity of the children that World Vision serves.

With a master's degree in systematic theology fresh in hand, Bird continues to realize her full potential. After graduating from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in May 2019, she has embarked on a new journey as a freelance writer for Concordia Publishing House and YouthESource.

"Certainly all of life provides a domino effect, but I see just how big and powerful the 'domino' of transferring to CUW was," said Bird. "Looking back, I can see just how much God was present and active in all of it."

Keep in touch with CMLT on Facebook at [facebook.com/cuwcmlt](https://www.facebook.com/cuwcmlt).



IN THE CHURCH

**Amber (Schmidt) Ruleford ('17)** married Patrick Ruleford in Oct. 2018. ▼



**Stephen Bernau ('16) and Paige (Miller) Bernau ('16)** were married on Aug. 4, 2019, at Rustic Manor 1848 in Hartland, Wisconsin. Paige is a public health nurse manager at the Wauwatosa Health Department, and Stephen is a teacher at Good Shepherd Lutheran School in Watertown, Wisconsin. ▼



**Allison Tresner ('16)** is one step closer to becoming a physician. She received her white coat as a D.O. candidate as part of the inaugural class at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine South Georgia. ▼



**Maggy Waech ('16) and Brad Behrend** were married on July 26, 2019. Maggy recently became the head coach of women's soccer at Wisconsin Lutheran College. ▼



**Josiah ('14) and Brooke (Vander Wegen) ('14) Frusti** welcomed their second son, Abram, in Dec. 2019. ▼



## MINISTRY IN ACTION

Annika Schumeth is a co-leader of Nursing Home Ministry this year. Here she chats with Jackie on a recent visit. *Photography by Madelyne Arrigoni ('22)*

As prospective students come to campus, we offer a session for students and parents to learn about our extracurricular campus ministry opportunities. Some are larger and well-known—Women's Ministry, Men's Ministry, and Haven. Some are more “splashy”—Homeless Ministry or mission trips. Others involve a small but faithful band of students who live out their faith in a niche related to a passion—like nursing home ministry.

When I'm describing the ministries, I often say, “If you come to college and you're far away from your family, and especially if you might miss your grandparents, think about being involved in nursing home ministry.” It's not something that attracts a lot of attention. But every Thursday a group of students travels to a nearby nursing home to offer something that is always precious: time.

When I talk with students and see how packed their days are—sometimes from 7 a.m. or earlier until 9 or 10 p.m., and then studying. Jam into that the joy of an abundant life with friends, and their lives can easily be described as beyond busy!

Compare that to the typical day of an older person—someone in a nursing home—where time can drag on. Or sometimes be a burden. Or where there may be only one “thing” or event that seems to happen in the day.

Put those two together and you have students and the elderly who each can gain a different perspective on time. For an hour or so, faith can bless this time together in being not just conversation or group singing or playing games or praying or sharing faith. It reminds students to slow down and take time for important things, and gain wisdom that can come only with age. It lets older people take joy in how these kind-hearted students bless them in the moment, and will live on and serve God into the future. Young or old, it's truly a blessing!

**REV. STEVE SMITH**  
*Campus Pastor*



In January, CUW's Symphonic Wind Ensemble travelled to Florida for their winter tour. Under the direction of Dr. Louis Menchaca (director) and Mrs. Johanna Anderson (associate director), they spent over a week playing both sacred and contemporary wind band selections at Lutheran churches in the Tampa Bay area. Pictured here, the band is getting ready for their concert at Grace Lutheran Church in Saint Petersburg, FL.



Brian Loesel has found his way to the classroom. He teaches at Concordia Lutheran High School in Fort Wayne.

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

**H**e took a roundabout way to get there, but Brian Loesel ('19, '20) is now officially carrying on the family tradition. He's the eighth out of nine Loesels in his immediate family (including his siblings-in-law) to work in a school setting.

Following his high school graduation, the youngest Loesel initially struck out in pursuit of his Doctor of Medicine, and he came close to achieving it—an impressive feat, considering most medical schools' acceptance rates hover at only 2.5 percent. Out of the estimated 1,300 individuals who applied to just one of his school selections, only 300 candidates received an interview, and Loesel was one of them. In the next round—the acceptance round—Loesel found the door closed to an MD and, after a period of wrestling with the Lord, his heart was opened to Lutheran teaching.

Concordia University Wisconsin made the remaining path to a teaching degree quickly achievable. With a bachelor's degree already under his belt, Loesel enrolled in CUW's Graduate Teacher

Certification Program, now called the Concordia Accelerated Program for Teacher Licensure (CAPTL). The program is designed to be completed in 2½ years, at the end of which students will walk away with both their teaching licensure and master's degree.

Loesel achieved his licensure at the end of his first year at CUW and accepted a position to begin to teach science in fall 2019 at Concordia Lutheran High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana, while he completed the remaining courses for his master's online.

In May, he'll make the walk across Concordia's commencement stage, finally with clarity and newfound direction for his life's work.

"The idea of being able to show the wonders of the human body, to show students more of who God is through those processes, and to help them fall in love with that design is really motivating for me."

Learn more about CUW's CAPTL program at [cuw.edu/teachlearn-secondary](http://cuw.edu/teachlearn-secondary).

**Lindsey (Farmer) Pietrowski ('12)** had a baby girl, Adley Mae, on July 29, 2019. ▼



**Reid Otto ('10)** proposed to Angie Helgeson after the BTN Big 10K in front of Buckingham Fountain in Chicago on Aug. 11, 2019. Reid is the new principal at St. Paul's Lutheran School in Bremen, Indiana. ▼



**'00s Ben Rohde ('09, '15) and Abby (Zierke) Rohde ('10, '13)** welcomed their fourth child, Éowynn Jane, on Nov. 27, just one day before their 10th wedding anniversary. ▼



**Steven ('05) and Samantha Purcell** were married on May 25, 2019, at Chapel of the Cross—Lutheran in St. Louis, Missouri. Samantha is an elementary teacher at Kirkwood School District, and Steven is an athletic trainer at Mercy Sports Performance. They reside in St. Louis, Missouri. ▼





# new heights

By **Lisa Liljegren**, *Strategic Communications*

Alumnus Sheldon Cuffie's new leadership position at American Family brings him back to Milwaukee, the city he loves.

Sheldon Cuffie ('08) is a born tinkerer. Ever since he was a child he took things apart and put them back together. It started with toys but rapidly progressed to lamps, televisions, and, eventually, computers. To some, his penchant for parts might have seemed precocious; for Cuffie, it was very early career preparation. As the newly appointed enterprise chief information security officer at American Family, the technological prodigy is exactly where he is called to be—in a leadership position in his hometown with a company that shares his values for people and community.

In this new role, Cuffie and his team of 140 professionals are responsible for protecting the private information of millions of families who trust American Family Insurance and the companies that make up the American Family enterprise. With more than 20 years of industry experience, and leadership training and education—including a technical diploma from the U.S. Army Signal Center in Fort Gordon, Georgia, and an undergraduate degree in management and communications from Concordia University Wisconsin—Cuffie is comfortable at the helm of such a vital operation.

This new position brings Cuffie and his wife of 27 years, Celeste, and their two adult children back to Milwaukee after a year in Austin, Texas, where Cuffie served as vice president and chief information security officer at Dell Technologies.

"I'm so happy to be back in my hometown," says Cuffie. "The people are nice, traffic

is manageable, and there's a real sense of community here that you don't find in other cities. Milwaukee has been a significant part of my development as a leader, a father, and a husband."

Prior to Dell, Cuffie held the position of vice president and chief information security officer for Northwestern Mutual, where he was responsible for the company's cyber-security, risk management, and enterprise privacy programs. Before Northwestern Mutual, Cuffie served in the Wisconsin Army National Guard and worked in information systems leadership roles for Kohl's, M&I Bank, Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Company, and Abbott Laboratories Global Pharmaceuticals division.

"I've worked in almost every IT position you can think of," says Cuffie. "As an analyst, an engineer, and now cybersecurity leader, I take pride in ensuring I'm always learning and applying the latest technologies. At the same, I had to evolve to ensure I'm operating as a progressive leader that supports, empowers, and develops the people entrusted to me. That's where the CUW experience became a game-changer for me."

Cuffie enrolled at Concordia as a nontraditional student and was already working full time in his field. He credits CUW for offering flexible options to accommodate busy adult learners and is grateful for the friendships he made with other working professionals within his cohort.

"Concordia helped me to develop my corporate and leadership skills," says

Cuffie. "We covered relevant material, and were encouraged to ask questions to develop our critical-thinking and problem-solving capacities."

Sheldon's wife, Celeste ('06, '12), also attended Concordia as a nontraditional student. She is a well-known executive coach and corporate trainer, and is CEO of Life Empowered Consulting Services, a Christian-based consulting firm. The two of them are active alumni, and generously volunteer their time and treasure back to their alma mater. Celeste serves on the Foundation Board and has helped to create the inaugural alumni council. She frequently partners with the Batterman School of Business to host personal development events.

In 2019, the Cuffie family created an endowment to support students of color who pursue a degree in computer science, or construction and trade management; both programs were chosen to honor their fathers' professions and intense focus on education.

Whether volunteering in the classroom or out in the industry, Cuffie is a servant leader who is invested in the growth and development of the next generation. "If I'm not creating more leaders, then I'm not a leader," says Cuffie. "I don't want to be remembered for the things I accomplished. I want to be measured by the number of people that I've developed to lead the next generation with integrity, capability, and conviction. For me, it's about legacy."

Learn more about CUW's business offerings: [cuw.edu/business](http://cuw.edu/business).

**'90s** Nate Cox ('96) and Andrew Milam, an adjunct instructor at CUW, started a podcast called "Two Beards Please," which focuses on living in Wisconsin in homes full of women (i.e., their wives—both CUW alumni—and two daughters each). Listen to their podcast at [twobeardsplease.com](http://twobeardsplease.com). ▼



**Kaethe Grabenhofer ('93)** was recently named the new musical director of the Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble (MHE). Kaethe has more than 25 years of handbell ringing experience. Kaethe also enjoys teaching music and playing the organ at First Immanuel Lutheran School in Cedarburg, Wisconsin.

**'60s** Bruce ('68, '70) and Lois Linderman had a family reunion in 2019 with all four children, spouses, and 12 grandchildren present at Camp Okoboji, Iowa. Bruce, 44 years in the LCMS ministry, has retired; as has Lois, an RN for 46 years. ▼



**Walt Vosicka ('68)** found a passion for kayaking, and was featured in a July 25, 2019, "Guideposts" story. Walt and his wife, Christy, live in Omaha, Nebraska. ▼



Professors emeriti Rev. Dr. John Oberdeck ('72), Rev. Dr. Tom Feiertag ('72), and Rev. Dr. Tim Maschke ('66) traveled to the Holy Land last fall on a trip led by Synodical Vice President Rev. Nabil Nour. It was Oberdeck's and Feiertag's first time in Israel and Maschke's sixth.

UPDATE YOUR INFO AND SEND US YOUR ALUMNI NOTES AT [CUW.EDU/ALUMNIUPDATES](http://CUW.EDU/ALUMNIUPDATES). VIEW ALL OF THESE ALUMNI UPDATES AND MORE AT [CUW.EDU/ALUMNI](http://CUW.EDU/ALUMNI).



# Advancing the mission



None of us knows what the future holds, especially in light of this year's pandemic. Yet despite the very real concerns that this global epidemic has caused, I admit that I am optimistic about the future. There are two reasons that inform this optimism. The first is a trust in God and His care for us no matter what may be happening in the world around us. The One who gave His Son for us will certainly not abandon us. We have every reason to remain hopeful knowing that God is with us.

The second reason for this optimism about our future comes from the students, alumni, and friends of Concordia whom I know. What an amazing group. Their energy, joy, and love for our mission is indeed inspiring. While we often hear and read about young people abandoning the church, the faith that I see in so many Concordians reminds me that the Lord's Church will endure until Jesus returns. In times of crisis, the Church is often at its best.

Students come to Concordia to receive a great education and to deepen their faith. None of them though would have ever anticipated what that would look like this year. Following the Spring Break, students started attending class virtually, that is, online, because of the corona virus outbreak. While this was a significant change for students and their instructors, both rose to the occasion and the Concordia mission of developing students in mind, body, and spirit, for service to Christ in the Church and the world continued. Not even Covid-19 could stop the Lord's mission from being live out at Concordia!

But while the mission continues, the economic impact on Concordia has been significant. Because students were not able to continue living on campus, it was only right and proper that they be compensated for unused services. This has created a significant and unexpected funding gap of over \$2 million.

Even in the face of this shortfall, we remain grateful and blessed that alumni and friends who care deeply about seeing the Concordia mission continue strong, have stepped forward to help us address this financial need. If you have not already done so, we ask that you prayerfully consider standing with us during these challenging days. You can help us fill the gap with your gift at [www.cuw.edu/give](http://www.cuw.edu/give). On behalf of our students and faculty, we all thank you.

**REV. DR. ROY PETERSON**  
*President, Concordia University Foundation*

“IT’S AN INCREDIBLE FEELING TO KNOW SOMEONE SPECIFICALLY CHOSE TO INVEST IN ME. I CAN’T THANK KEN ENOUGH.”

*Victoria* ('21),

Lutheran Secondary  
Education/Biology

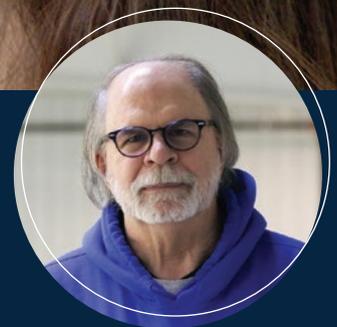
# Giving just got personal

## WHAT IS ADOPT-A-STUDENT?

You will be matched to a student who will benefit directly from your gift. The student will send you a personal letter, sharing their progress, challenges, and joys of life at CUW. This is a partnership that, by God’s grace, helps students overcome financial limitations so they can attend Concordia.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

With a gift of \$1,000 or more, you can change the life of one of our students. You will fill out a simple form that allows you to specify certain preferences such as major, grade point average, or year in college. Concordia then selects a student for you who has a demonstrated need and who matches your giving specifications.



“AFTER SIX YEARS OF SUPPORTING CUW STUDENTS THROUGH ADOPT-A-STUDENT, I REMAIN OVERWHELMED AND HUMBLED BY THE IMPACT AND RESPONSE FROM STUDENTS I’VE BEEN PAIRED WITH. IT’S BEEN AS MUCH A GIFT TO ME AS IT HAS BEEN FOR THEM.”

*Ken*

Adopt-a-Student donor

## Adopt-a-Student *Today*

Gifts may be made online, over the phone, or via mail.  
Contact the Office of Advancement to get started: [advancement@cuw.edu](mailto:advancement@cuw.edu) or 262-243-4423.



STOP BY AND SEE US  
*this Summer!*

THE BEST WAY TO DECIDE IF CONCORDIA IS RIGHT FOR YOU IS TO **SEE IT IN PERSON**

## TASTE OF CONCORDIA

July 27-31 | Mini open houses daily at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

- Tour campus
- Meet professors
- Hear from current Concordia students

Advanced registration requested:  
[cuw.edu/privatecollegeweek](http://cuw.edu/privatecollegeweek)

## PERSONALIZED VISITS

Any day Monday-Friday, all summer long

- Customize your experience
- Meet professors, tour the campus, chat with a few current students—you decide!

Schedule your visit today:  
[cuw.edu/visit](http://cuw.edu/visit)