

PREPARE *The Way*

Concordia University Wisconsin & Ann Arbor

***Ankerberg accepts call to serve
as CUWAA president***

Page 2

Giving Day

Page 3

Capital Projects at CUWAA

Page 5

Donors Impact Future Generations

Page 7

FEBRUARY 2023



From provost to president Ankerberg accepts call to serve at CUWAA

In January, Erik P. Ankerberg, Ph.D., returned to his hometown of Milwaukee to take on the role of president for Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor. The former provost of Concordia University Chicago began his tenure at CUWAA on January 9, replacing the Rev. Patrick Ferry, Ph.D., who led Concordia from 1997 through his retirement in June 2021.

Most recently, William R. Cario, Ph.D., served the university as interim president.

“I am looking forward to seeing what happens in the new year with Dr. Ankerberg,” Cario recently said. “I’ve learned that he’s a good listener and very thoughtful. He is planning to spend a lot of time in the first few months listening to people on campus.”

After a global call for candidates in the summer of 2021, an LCMS Prior Approval Panel named Ankerberg to its list of 11 finalists for the position. Ultimately, on Oct. 25, 2022, Concordia’s Board of Regents unanimously voted to extend Ankerberg a Divine Call.

“CUWAA is blessed to welcome Dr. Erik Ankerberg as her president-elect,” said Concordia University System President Rev. Dr. Dean Wenthe. “He brings extensive experience in higher education governance, administration, and teaching. These abilities are anchored and enhanced by a robust, confessionally Lutheran faith and life. As a 1965 graduate of CUW, I rejoice and give thanks with my alma mater.”

In a webinar address he delivered to the Concordia community in October, Ankerberg laid out his strategic priorities for Concordia:

- Implement a university-wide framework for Christian formation for mission.
- Relentlessly focus on student success by developing a Concordia Promise that promotes specific success initiatives and outcomes.
- Maximize post-traditional student enrollment.
- Identify, prioritize, and live out a portfolio of distinctive, innovative, high-quality academic programs.
- Promote teaching, learning, and research that stretches faculty and students and provides clear value to the Church and the wider world.

“I am humbled and honored to accept the Call to serve as President of Concordia University Wisconsin and Ann Arbor,” said Ankerberg. “This university has a long and rich history of serving Christ, the Church, and the wider world by providing a rigorous, Christ-centered education that forms each student’s mind, body, and spirit as preparation to find ‘uncommon’ ways to meet the needs of others. I am eager to begin this work in such a faithful university community, whose members are deeply committed to student success.”

Ankerberg, 52, and his wife, Jennifer, have been married for 27 years. Jennifer is a literacy educator, most recently in the River Forest public schools. They have two sons: Peter, who is completing graduate work in architecture at the University of Michigan, and David, who is studying Psychology at Valparaiso University.

Watch for opportunities to meet our new president in the coming months.

March MATCHness 2023 – our day of giving

Everyone can make a difference

Every little bit helps.

You've probably heard that phrase before. But it's not just a cliché when it comes to supporting Concordia University. It's a fact.

With its hundreds of givers, our annual day of giving, historically held in March, exemplifies this concept well. Last year the university raised \$79,000 in a concerted effort from students, faculty, staff, alumni, community friends and partners.



"I gave on giving day because it was a great way to help the school in a small way," said Payton Woodruff, a senior studying elementary education on our Ann Arbor campus. "I chose to support athletics because, as an athlete, that is something that is really important to me.

"Giving to my university made me feel really good," she added. "It was wonderful knowing that the money I was donating was being used for a good cause."

Our giving day is called March MATCHness because it includes a matching gift from donors and is a play on the words "March Madness" (a college basketball tournament). "It's a university-wide day of support," said Samuel Gade, director of the Concordia Fund and lead planner of the event.

"It helps the university body, as a whole, come together to give back. Not only that, but it encourages people who may never have given a gift to become first-time donors."

Such is the case for CUW sophomore Nathaniel Laesch, an applied theology major. "I gave during March MATCHness to help support the Music Department," he said. "Giving to my university felt like I was making a difference in contributing to the wonderful community we have here at CUW."

Senior Joshua Line, who is majoring in sports and hospitality, agreed. He gave to Campus Ministry last year. "Giving to the university was something I was happy to do because I have been blessed at CUA and wanted to give back, especially to ministry," he said, adding that supporting such a cause could help people learn about Jesus.

This year, March MATCHness, which will be held on March 1, will support several areas including campus ministry, fine arts, athletics and our greatest needs.

"Our goal for this year is \$80,000," Gade said. "We want to encourage people to give back to Concordia and continue to make it great for the next generation. Every little bit helps."



Top to bottom: Payton, Nathaniel, Joshua

Learn more • Make a gift

Visit MarchMATCHness.cuw.edu or MarchMATCHness.cuaa.edu



Faithful donors made this possible

CUAA Kreft Endowed Chair in Music

The Department of Music at Concordia University Ann Arbor is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. John Boonenberg as the university's new Kreft Endowed Chair in Music. The endowment is made possible by significant support of longtime CUAA supporters Karl and Shirley Kreft. (We honor Shirley Kreft posthumously as she passed to be with the Lord in December 2022.)

"This generous gift in support of the CUAA Kreft Endowed Chair in Music is a game-changer for the music ministry program on our Ann Arbor campus," said Dr. Leah Dvorak, interim provost at Concordia University Wisconsin & Ann Arbor. "Dr. Boonenberg is an outstanding musician and educator. Under his leadership, we are confident that the CUAA music programs will soar even higher."

"I'm honored and humbled to serve in this new capacity, and to be a part of this exciting inflection point for the Music Department at CUAA," Boonenberg said. "We have so many wonderful things happening in our ensembles and academic programs, and I'm thrilled to be able to elevate the public's awareness of the quality of music-making and training happening at CUAA."

In addition to teaching music courses and leading choral music programs as Director of Choral Activities and Church Music, Boonenberg focuses his energies on promoting all CUAA music programs regionally, nationally, and within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He will actively recruit students with exceptional gifts in music who will elevate the quality, visibility, and reputation of these programs, while also developing new ensembles to serve both the CUAA campus community and the LCMS.

"The Krefts' vision for this endowed chair is one we enthusiastically endorse," Dvorak said. "We expect it to drive enrollment in CUAA music programs, to substantially increase the number of new, dynamic music ensembles, and to foster increased recognition of the quality of our music offerings and performances."

Boonenberg, who holds degrees from The University of Michigan (B.M., D.M.A.) and The Juilliard School (M.M.), has used his musical gifts to serve God and the Church in a wide variety of ways throughout his career. He plays organ, piano, guitar, and other instruments for worship services; conducts award-winning choirs and instrumental ensembles; and has taught general music and drama in Lutheran schools.

New *fitness center* to meet growing needs at CUA

Since Concordia University Ann Arbor has grown significantly in student population, academic programs, and co-curriculars, our current fitness center space for the campus community has become inadequate and unable to meet our increasing needs. Therefore, we are excited to share the plans for a new Concordia fitness center, as well as a new health and wellness center.

The three-phase project, with a cost of about \$4 million, will include the construction of a new fitness center as phase one. To date, we have raised or received



commitments for \$2.5 million. The appropriate planning documents have been submitted to the City of Ann Arbor and we are awaiting approval as we continue to invite interested friends of Concordia to consider involvement in this important project. It is a needed space for our students and will certainly enhance their uncommon Concordia experience as they fulfill our mission of helping students to grow in mind, body, and spirit.



GIVE ONLINE AT CUW.EDU/GIVE or CUAA.EDU/GIVE



2022
at a glance

Making an *impact* on future generations



Leaving a legacy means giving something that will be valued and treasured by those who survive after your death. Scholarships, as well as a Concordia education, are indeed something to be treasured.

Nancy Klein and her husband, Harry Lefferts, agree. After Nancy's parents, Gordon and Dorothy Klein, left a gift in their estate for Concordia University Ann Arbor, she decided to designate the funds for the veteran's program in honor of her father's military career.

Although none of the Kleins graduated from Concordia, they soon became part of the university's family. Nancy and Harry have continued to make significant gifts toward the Gordon and Dorothy Klein endowment, thus increasing its impact.

"My parents valued education and wanted to invest in Christian youth who are the future generation," Nancy said. "My parents believed in the greatness of America and lived their lives loving the flag and what it represents. They would swell with pride and be overjoyed knowing that their support to Concordia would make a difference in the educational program of veteran students."

Staff Sgt. Gordon Klein was a member of the US Army

Air Forces and served in action during World War II. He was a sharpshooter and top turret armorer-gunner on B-24, 15th squadron, 456th Bomb Group for 29 missions. His plane was shot down, and the Tuskegee Airman escorted them out of danger. Staff Sgt. Klein was honorably discharged in 1945.

Gordon married his childhood sweetheart, Dorothy, right after his honorable discharge from the war. They were married for 70 years. Their only child, Nancy, taught school for 31 years and now volunteers at a senior living facility.

Knowing that the legacy of the Gordon and Dorothy

"Contributing to Concordia is a truly rewarding experience..."

Klein endowment fund will benefit veterans at Concordia for future generations gives Nancy and Harry a deep sense of pride and fulfillment.

"Contributing to Concordia is a truly rewarding experience that makes a profound difference and impact on future students," Nancy said. "My parents' legacy lives on, and they will be remembered for years to come."

Leaving a legacy to Concordia

An estate gift of any size can be made to an existing endowment that aligns with your area of interest.

An estate gift of \$25,000 or more can be used to establish a new, named endowment.

Contact 877-CUWAAGO (877-289-2246) to help advise you about how to achieve your stewardship goals.

Refer a Student Please mail completed form to CUW or CUA, Attn: Office of Advancement

Student Name

Student Address

City State Zip

Email

Name of High School

Student is currently a Sophomore Junior Senior



PREPARE *The Way*