

Defenders Forever

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Recommended Citation

Van Schouwen, Karen (2020) "Defenders Forever," *The Voice*: Vol. 65 : Iss. 2 , Article 16.
Available at: <https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/voice/vol65/iss2/16>

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ALUMNI NOTES

In May 2019, **Zach Van Engen** ('16) graduated from Illinois Institute of Technology's Kent College of Law *magna cum laude* with a juris doctor. He now works as a patent attorney with Fitch, Even, Tabin, and Flannery, LLP, an intellectual property law firm in Chicago.

Cora Okkema ('16) won the top spot at Michigan Farm Bureau's 2019 Young Farmer Discussion Meet in Grand Rapids. The contest tests young farmers ages 18 to 35 in a unique public speaking challenge. Participants are rewarded for their knowledge of agricultural issues, their cooperative demeanor, and the tact and civility of their delivery.



While in college, **Paul Hoogendoorn** ('06), **Jeff Zomer** ('06), **Chris Van Huis** ('06), and **Ross Van Der Bill** ('08) roomed together in East Campus F8—they sometimes referred to themselves as the F8 Heartbreakers. Years after graduating from Dordt, they, their wives, and their children try to get together every other year to catch up. This past summer, some of them went on a guys' fishing trip.

"These men and their families are like family to one another, and we have Dordt to thank for that," says Van Der Bill.

Sarah Wolthuizen ('05) was honored as Village Northwest Unlimited's Outstanding Staff of the Year. This award is considered the highest honor awarded to a staff member of Village Northwest Unlimited, as the recipients are nominated by their peers.

Mike ('94) and **Kim** (Vander Weide, '94) **Adams** were nominated for the Angels in Adoption Award by South Dakota senator John Thune as part of National Adoption Month in November. The Adams formed the Adams Thermal Foundation, which supports more than 1,000 students in two schools in Ethiopia. In addition to having five biological children, the Adams have adopted three children from Ethiopia and one child from Uganda.

Paul Dalen ('92) was named the Senior Modeling Analyst for USAA's chief financial office. "I manage a portfolio of statistical and actuarial models used to determine the bank's risk profile," explains Dalen.

In May 2019, Dr. **Laura Apol** ('85) was named poet-laureate for the Lansing, Michigan, area. Apol is an associate professor of literacy and curriculum at Michigan State University and is the author of several prize-winning collections of poetry, including *Falling from Grace* and *Requiem, Rwanda*. To read some of her poetry, visit laura-apol.com.

DEFENDERS FOREVER

In 1955, shortly after Dordt was founded, an idea was born—to create an organization of individuals interested in giving special financial support to the general operation of the college.

At the time, many colleges were supported by large industrialists. Dordt neither had nor expected to have support from such sources. What Dordt did have, however, were hundreds of supporters who had a vital interest in the college—men and women dedicated to its success and the promotion of reformed, Christ-centered education.

Thus began the Special Subscribers fund. To qualify for membership, Special Subscribers committed to making an annual contribution of \$25 or more; they also were dedicated to seeking new members. Over the years, the program expanded. At its height, Special Subscribers boasted 760 members—Dordt alumni, faculty, friends, and fans, committed to making gifts year after year.



To date, the program has raised over \$7 million through gifts and investment growth, helping fulfill its goal of giving "greater financial stability to the college and its operational and developmental programs with a view to securing the academic quality and prestige of the institution."

The need for financial stability is just as important in 2020 as it was in 1955. Today, a new generation of supporters are contributing as Defenders Forever.

Defenders Forever is a community of young alumni, parents, friends, and fans of Dordt University who have chosen to make a recurring gift of \$100 a year, or \$10 a month. Defenders Forever are Defenders from every generation and corner of the globe, united by their ongoing commitment to helping future Defenders develop their talents to glorify God and serve others.

As we begin this new decade, we are reminded of the faithfulness of those who have gone before us and of how grateful we are for their small, faithful acts of generosity. By God's grace and through his provision, may we humbly follow their lead.

Defenders Forever: a lasting promise with a lasting impact. For more information on how you can become a Defender Forever, visit dordt.edu/forever.

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DIRECTOR OF ANNUAL GIVING