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## Bloom Where You are Planted

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# BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED

Every vocation and activity is of importance to the building of God's kingdom.

On October 19, my father, Dennis Hoekstra, celebrated his 90th birthday by visiting us here at Dordt University. Over the weekend, we played nine holes of golf, hunted pheasants near his boyhood home in South Dakota, and cheered the Defender football team to a win.



My father held many leadership roles in Christian non-profit organizations, including serving as Trinity Christian College president from 1972–1978. He's been a mentor to me throughout my life, and I'm grateful for his wise counsel, especially today as I serve as president of Dordt.

When I was younger, my father would often provide pulpit supply to local churches, and I'd tag along. My favorite sermon of his was called "Bloom Where You Are Planted," taken from Colossians 3:23-24: "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ." In that sermon, he encouraged the listeners to never say, "I'm just a janitor," or "I'm just a homemaker." Every vocation and activity is urgently needed and of equal importance to the building of God's kingdom. Therefore, we should all give our utmost in all our endeavors, as an offering of thankful service to Christ.

The weekend my father was here, Dordt had the privilege of hosting U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos on campus. While visiting Dordt, she spoke to current students. During one conversation about a summer internship, a Pro-Tech student mentioned he'd begun the summer doing "menial" work and finished the summer leading a crew. While Secretary DeVos congratulated this student on developing leadership capabilities during

the internship, she also reminded him that there really aren't "menial" jobs of any kind. Given what I know of Secretary DeVos's background as a Reformed Christian, I wasn't surprised to hear her rejoinder to this student echoing a bit of my father's sermon from many years ago.

These stories are consistent with Dordt's *Educational Task*, in which we read:

"In principle, no legitimate profession, occupation, vocation, or station in life can be precluded from Dordt's educational concern. One goal of the college is to identify those occupational areas where serviceable insight is increasingly needed. Dordt must therefore continually examine the nature and scope of its curriculum and other activities in order to provide high quality learning experiences that are central to its mission and that address crucial needs in society. In this way Dordt, by remaining aware of the demands of the times, can carry out its educational task of providing leadership that is not only uniquely Christian, but also dynamic and relevant."

As you read about the activities of Dordt in these pages, I hope you're again heartened and inspired in the ways we're equipping students for service in God's kingdom—in every area of life. I hope that no matter what your calling is, you'll "bloom where you are planted" as well. To be clear, our salvation does not hinge upon the quality or quantity of our earthly work; it rests only upon *Christ's* atoning work. Yet, we can also find joy and meaning by serving Christ with excellence in everything we do here and now, until he comes again.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

DR. ERIK HOEKSTRA, PRESIDENT

# Voice

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## Our Mission

As an institution of higher education committed to a Reformed Christian perspective, Dordt University equips students, alumni, and the broader community to work effectively toward Christ-centered renewal in all aspects of contemporary life.

## On the Cover

This year's Week of Welcome (WOW) festivities looked a bit different than usual. Instead of holding the Welcoming Celebration in the B.J. Haan Auditorium, WOW staff set up a stage on the Campus Green and invited incoming students, their parents, and Dordt employees to participate in a time of worship together. Photo by Jordan Harmelink.

