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The Voice, Winter/Spring 2016: Volume 61, Issue 2

Dordt College

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Voice

THE OF DORDT COLLEGE

WINTER/SPRING 2016
VOLUME 61 | ISSUE 2 OF 3

OUT AND ABOUT

Cross-cultural experiences, both at Dordt and abroad, are often a highlight of students' education here.

Leading Off

WITH THE PRESIDENT

STANDING ON THE ROCK

Last summer, I had the opportunity to visit recent Dordt College graduate Chris Bylsma, an agricultural educator at Ebenezer College in Mozambique. Ebenezer is the educational arm of Communities of Fusion Mozambique—a unique group of companies, schools, and churches seeking to drive vibrant, Christ-centered community development in that part of Africa.



As we stood together on a rock overlooking the valley and the small student farming plots below, Chris was a bit apologetic about the conditions for education as compared to those at Dordt College. Ebenezer has only been in existence a few years, and the buildings, irrigation, and farm plots are modest.

I stopped his apology. Because we are celebrating Dordt College's 60th anniversary this year, I'd spent time in our archives looking at pictures from the early start-up days. I reminded us both that Dordt didn't look like much either during its first few years of existence. I also told Chris how much I stand indebted and in awe of those founders who saw a vision of something different—grander, if you will—than the single building on the edge of a gritty and somewhat dusty small town in rural Iowa.

I urged Chris to close his eyes and imagine standing on the same rock in 60 years, envisioning what God will do with the faithful beginnings he and his team are digging out of that valley—for God's glory and for his servants' thriving as his image bearers.

The Dordt College campus today has blossomed since then and has an "our cup runneth over" feel. It has become a place where, by God's providential hand, we aim to thrive and move forward, to ever more faithfully and abundantly serve the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

As the members of Dordt's Defender Nation, in Sioux Center or Mozambique or wherever God has called us to serve, may we be humbly mindful that the success of our work does not depend on our efforts alone. May we take from our work a deep joy that God has chosen us to serve his kingdom purposes in the communities to which we are called. May we hand off to those who succeed us, a commitment to Christ-centered renewal and an ever-expanding vision of what will be in the future. And may we continue to stand on the Rock, marveling at what God will do through us and to us and with us, for his kingdom purposes and his glory.

DR. ERIK HOEKSTRA

Voice

THE OF DORDT COLLEGE

WINTER/SPRING 2016

VOLUME 61 | ISSUE 2

The *Voice*, an outreach of Dordt College, is sent to you as alumni and friends of Christian higher education. The *Voice* is published three times each year to share information about the programs, activities, and people at Dordt College.

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Our Mission

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

On the Cover

Photo by Dordt junior Luke Venhuizen, who risked his safety to snap this photo while riding a bicycle in the Netherlands. He is currently studying abroad as part of the Studies Program in Contemporary Europe (SPICE).





JORDAN EDENS (13)

THE DORDT LIFE

It's been a snowier-than-usual winter in Northwest Iowa, and students have taken advantage of that fact, building igloos, creating tunnels through massive snow piles, and of course engaging in all sorts of snow play. Pictured are this year's six student bloggers at www.thedordtlife.com.

NEWS

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A GLOBAL ORIENTATION

This issue of the *Voice* has a lot to say about the value of cross-cultural experiences. Encountering cultures outside of our own can broaden our understanding and lead to a greater appreciation of diversity.

In the pages ahead, students and alumni share their reflections on travel abroad through Dordt and Dordt-sponsored programs, and we spotlight the campus employees who work most closely with international students and those who study abroad.



This year, guest speakers visiting Dordt have challenged our students and constituency to think about immigration and indigenous peoples—timely discussions in the current political climate. In this issue, you can read about the conversations these speakers prompted across campus.

But are multicultural experiences really so important that Dordt should have a cross-cultural learning requirement?

I say yes. I believe every student should spend at least one semester studying off campus if possible. It's hard to maintain a narrow perspective when you encounter people, languages, architecture, and traditions that reveal the beautiful—and sometimes disorienting—differences between cultures. This can deepen our understanding of others and help us find our place in God's world.

Sonya Jongma Knauss

SONYA JONGSMA KNAUSS ('97)

DORDT HOSTS GLOBAL AGRICULTURE SUMMIT

GROWING CONNECTIONS FOR FLOURISHING COMMUNITIES

On March 3 and 4, 2016, Dordt College and Partners Worldwide are gathering an international group of agriculturists, community developers, business people, college faculty and students, and NGOs for an intensive Global Agriculture Summit on the Dordt College campus.

The summit will help Christians in agriculture celebrate successes, address challenges, and work to alleviate hunger and poverty in the world. Through keynote speakers, workshops, exhibits, and shared meals, attendees will create connections and discuss strategies to alleviate hunger and poverty.

An agriculture summit has been in the works since the Biblical Holism and Agriculture Conference that Dordt hosted in 2012. That conference was considered immensely successful, and attendants have been eager for Dordt to host another, similar event.

In the spring of 2014, Dordt College President Erik Hoekstra, Partners Worldwide representatives Doug Seebeck and Kim and Bruce Dooyema, Provost Eric Forseth, and Agriculture Area Leader Gary De Vries met to discuss co-hosting a conference. Dordt and Partners Worldwide had co-sponsored a conference in 2000 for business leaders and were interested in partnering again.

Kim Dooyema ('76) serves on the Dordt College Board of Trustees and works with the Partners Worldwide network in Mozambique. He and his brother share a vision of a world without poverty where "all have life and have it abundantly"

SPEAKERS

David Beckmann, president, Bread for the World; World Food Prize Laureate

Fred Kirschenmann, fellow, Leopold Center at Iowa State University; farmer and philosopher

Debi Durham, director, Iowa Department of Economic Development

Mary Andringa, chair of the board, Vermeer Corporation

Kevin Murphy, owner, Food-Chain Communications

Haron Wachira, owner, Akili Holdings Ltd., Kenya; Ashoka Fellow and social entrepreneur

Cheryl Broetje, owner, Broetje Orchards and founder of the Center for Sharing

through agriculture. They imagined combining Partners' strategy with Dordt's agricultural resources and commitment to renewal in all areas of life. The Dooyemas' ideas sparked the 2014 conversation between Dordt College and Partners' leaders about how to combine resources in a global conference that

could develop that vision of a "renewed, flourishing world" through agriculture.

Dr. Ron Vos, emeritus professor of agriculture and coordinator of the 2012 conference, is looking forward to the Global Agriculture Summit 2016.

"This conference is exactly something that Dordt can and should do. It is a natural product of our mission," he says.

Dordt and Partners hope the summit will become a tradition, drawing more people each time it convenes. This year, the summit hopes to welcome hundreds of attendees from outside of Dordt College and Partners Worldwide. Organizers hope to draw hundreds of farmers from states across the United States, including Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Indiana, Idaho, Montana, Texas, California, Wisconsin, and Michigan, as well as from countries around the world, including Kenya, Zambia, Swaziland, South Africa, Mozambique, Nigeria, Honduras, Canada, Germany, China, Uganda, and Thailand.

Learn more about the Global Agriculture Summit 2016 at www.agrisummit.org.

LYDIA MARCUS ('18)





Since the Apollo missions of the late '60s and early '70s, scientists have puzzled over the differences between rocks found on Earth and rocks found on the Moon.

NATURE GEOSCIENCE FEATURES RESEARCH BY DORDT'S VISSCHER

How did the Moon become the Moon? That's the subject of an article published in the prestigious scientific journal *Nature Geoscience*, co-authored by Dordt College Professor of Chemistry and Planetary Sciences Dr. Channon Visscher. Visscher took part in the research while serving as a visiting scientist last summer at Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) in Boulder, Colorado, working with a team led by Dr. Robin Canup.



Visscher

The article, "Lunar volatile depletion due to incomplete accretion within an impact generated disk," immediately made waves in both scientific and mainstream media, including the BBC, which described it as a "twice baked model" of the Moon's formation. The two-stage model helps account for potential composition differences between the Moon's inner and outer layers, and it helps to explain why Moon rocks show

several key differences from Earth rocks.

"No other model of the Moon's formation is as comprehensive, or is as capable of making such detailed predictions about the Moon's composition," wrote Arizona State Professor Steve Desch in a commentary for *Nature Geoscience*.

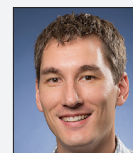
"It was really a lot of fun working with some of the leading experts in the field, piecing together an explanation for the Moon's observed properties," said Visscher. The research has generated new research opportunities for Dordt students, and some have applied the new model to make specific predictions about elements on the Moon.

Visscher was part of the SwRI team working on this project prior to coming to Dordt College, and he continued his research on the project after coming to Dordt to teach chemistry and astronomy in 2013. He hopes that the new model provides a useful framework for future studies exploring the relationship between theories of lunar formation and measurements of chemical abundances in lunar samples.

Faculty Bits

Business Professor **Art Attema** and Dr. **Ed Starkenburg** presented "Unique Affiliate Partnerships: College Departments, Schools, Communities, and Regional Connections" at the 2015 Financial Literacy and Economic Education Conference in St. Petersburg, Fla. Joining their presentation were **Vicki Vermeer**, director of the Dordt College Center for Economic Education, and Dordt elementary education major **Fayth Ponsen** ('17).

Two Dordt math professors presented at the Joint Mathematics Meetings in Seattle in Jan. 2016: Dr. **Tom Clark** presented "Specifications Grading in Calculus I: Implementation and Student Responses" and Dr. **Mike Janssen** presented "Implementing Specifications Grading in a Linear Algebra course."



Philosophy Professor Dr. **Neal De Roo** published an article titled "Facticity and Transcendence Across the Disciplines: Phenomenology and the Promise" in *Schutzian Research*. De Roo presented "Meaning, Being and Expression: A Phenomenological Justification for Interdisciplinary Scholarship" at the Society of Phenomenology and the Human Sciences annual meeting in Oct. 2015. He also recently presented a paper titled "Getting Spiritual" at the third Subverting the Norm conference held at Drury University in Springfield, Mo.

Physics Professor Dr. **John Zwart** presented "Systematic Errors in Intro Lab Video Analysis" at the Nov. 2015 meeting of the Iowa Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers and at the winter meeting of the American Association of Physics Teachers in New Orleans in Jan. 2016. Zwart completed this research with Engineering Professor Dr. **Kayt Frisch** and recent Dordt graduate Tim Martin ('15).

More information about the article can be found at bit.ly/dordt_moon.

SONYA JONGSMA KNAUSS ('97)

DORDT EXPLORES OFFERING TWO-YEAR PROFESSIONAL-TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

In late fall 2015, the Dordt College Board of Trustees approved the general concept of moving ahead with adding two new programs at Dordt College in the professional-technical field. The initial two programs would be Manufacturing Engineering Technology and Farm Operations and Management, two areas in which Dordt is well positioned to provide a good education because of its proximity to partnership opportunities, local resources, and already existing complementary majors.



Joel Sikkema

“We are called to work for Christ’s kingdom in all areas of life,” says Joel Sikkema, interim project director. “Skilled fields are an area that few, if any, Christian colleges serve, and these fields are becoming increasingly complex.”

Sikkema believes that there is a need to help equip people to serve in skilled fields with wisdom and understanding that is undergirded by a Reformed biblical perspective.

From August 2014 to August 2015, a task force met weekly to discuss the feasibility of offering professional/technical education programs at Dordt College. The task force, made up of three Dordt professors and two administrative

officers, met with leaders from local businesses and schools, as well as representatives from area church groups to discuss the feasibility of adopting a pro-tech program.

Based on what they learned, the task force concluded that a vocational education program would help Dordt and its supporting churches’ come alongside young men and women and equip them to obediently understand and respond to the Lord’s call to work for his kingdom in all areas of life. For generations, youth who pursue baccalaureate degrees have had access to post-secondary Christian education, but those interested in technical/professional-focused associate degree programs have not.

As a college with its programs rooted in a Reformed worldview, Dordt believes that technical work is an important calling where Christian insight is increasingly needed. The feasibility study demonstrated that there is a demand for a program that provides students with a Christian perspective in vocational training.

The task force recommended that

Dordt adopt a 20- to 22-month pro-tech program that would provide students with three to five internship experiences during their enrollment.

“We want to shape a quality pro-tech program for the group of students we would serve,” says Associate Provost Leah Zuidema. “We want to make sure that we’re preserving and even enhancing

“Skilled fields are an area that few, if any, Christian colleges serve, and these fields are becoming increasingly complex.”

— Joel Sikkema, interim director of the project

our program for existing students.”

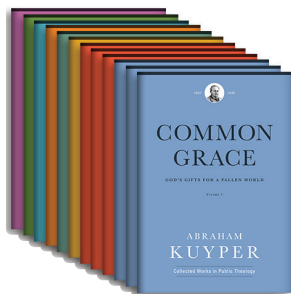
In the upcoming months, Dordt faculty and committees will discuss the logistics of implementing a pro-tech program that enables students with different schedules and program durations to be an integral part of the Dordt community. Adding new dorms is also being considered as the college looks at a new campus master plan, which is in the beginning stages of the planning process.

LYDIA MARCUS (18)



KUYPER FOR NON-SCHOLARS: NEWLY TRANSLATED WORKS ARE PUBLISHED

The Kuyper Translation Society and the Acton Institute have partnered to publish the *Abraham Kuyper Collected Works in Public Theology*, a 12-volume collection of newly translated speeches and essays written by Abraham Kuyper. The series will be made available both digitally and in print by Lexham Press and will address topics such as church, education, the lordship of Christ, and Islam. The first volume, *Common Grace, Vol. 1*, was published in late 2015, and the final volume, *On Charity and Justice*, is scheduled for publication in early 2018.



“In times of great upheaval and uncertainty, it is necessary to look to the past for resources to help us recognize and address our own contemporary challenges,” explains Dr. Richard Mouw in his introduction to the series. “While Scripture is foremost among these foundations, the thoughts and reflections of Christians throughout history also provide us with important guidance. Because of his unique gifts, experiences, and writings, Abraham Kuyper is an exemplary guide in these endeavors.”



Neal De Roo

The insights Kuyper provides in this collection of his work are “more accessible than some of his more scholarly theology” and “help us see the practical implications of the Kuyperian worldview,” says Dr. Neal De Roo, Director of the Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service, which is a sponsor of the translation project.

“For the person trying to apply Kuyper’s work in our contemporary world, the works in this series will be invaluable,” De Roo says. “These books are not meant for scholars or experts. They reflect Kuyper’s interest in the lives of everyday common folk and are meant to be read by those people.”

Kuyper was “not only a great theologian, but he was also a great organizer and political thinker,” says Mel Flikkema, co-editor of the series and advisor of the Acton Institute. “My colleagues at Acton feel that the Christian world cannot afford to be without having his writings widely available, not only in the Western world, but in the majority of the world.”

LYDIA MARCUS (18)

VISSER RECEIVES CAREER HONOR

Dordt College Business Professor Dr. John Visser has been named this year’s recipient of the Chewning Award.

Established in 1998 by the Christian Business Faculty Association (CBFA), the award honors individuals who “manifest Christ-likeness in their scholarship” and are committed to “the integration of Christian faith and learning” in teaching, scholarship, and/or service in the business field.

The award is named for its first recipient, the late Dr. Richard C. Chewning, a business professor and scholar who published widely on the intersection of business and biblical principles.

“I am humbled, and thankful to God, that my Business Department colleagues—unbeknownst to me—felt my work was worthy of a Chewning Award nomination, and that the selection committee agreed that these pursuits are worthy of its recognition,” Visser said. “I am also grateful to Dordt College, its students and alumni, and especially my wife, Linda, for their encouragement, inspiration, and support over all these years.”

Visser was presented with the award on October 31 in a ceremony concluding a weekend CBFA conference at Regent University in Virginia.

Several past and present Dordt colleagues took part in the ceremony. Dr. Brian Hoekstra spoke of Visser’s commitment to a Christ-centered approach to business and of the model of faith-integration he has provided for his students and colleagues. Dr. Dale Zevenbergen said, “John has had an impact on thousands of students over his three-plus decades of service at Dordt. This recognition is simply a celebration of God’s work in and through him at Dordt College.”

Along with the public tribute, honorees receive a plaque and a monetary award. Past recipients of the award have taught at institutions like Baylor, John Brown, Seattle Pacific, and Grace College.

To learn more about CBFA, visit www.cbfa.org.

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT

DOUG BURG



John Visser

A COLLEGE DEMOCRATS CLUB JOINS THE REPUBLICANS CLUB

When it comes to politics, Sioux County is an outlier.

It's one of the country's most Republican strongholds, and that demographic trait has an influence on the way Dordt College students experience the presidential election season.

At the start of the campaign season this fall, Dordt student clubs and the Political Science Department extended invitations to all 22 candidates. Nine visited, two of them during the Iowa Conference on Presidential Politics in late October.

While eight Republican candidates came to campus this year, only one Democrat did, though students could've seen Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, or Martin O'Malley by traveling less than an hour. Educational opportunities for students in Iowa during election season are plentiful.

"Every time a candidate comes to campus, I have a certain sense of 'cringe' for what it says to our students—political speeches are always full of broad-brush promises about what the candidate will do," said Dordt College President Dr. Erik Hoekstra in an open letter to the



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Dordt recently gained a Republicans club, featured in the Fall 2015 *Voice*, and a Democrats club. Club president Aaron Ladzinski is campaigning for candidate Hillary Clinton.

campus and broader community about campaign visits to the college. "There isn't a candidate or party that can be 100 percent biblical or reformational—at least it seems that way to me."

For years, the college has invited both Republicans and Democrats to campus. In recent responses on social media

to campaign event announcements, students from the 1980s reminisced about seeing George Bush Sr., Jesse Jackson, Jack Kemp, and Michael Dukakis.

Republican candidates are well aware that Sioux County is a good bet for them, and Dordt College has some of the largest facilities in the county. That's why the top Republican candidates all rented space on Dordt's campus within a three-week period: Ted Cruz on January 5, Marco Rubio on January 16, and Donald Trump on January 23.

But as polarization has increased on the national political scene, Dordt College hasn't been as attractive to Democrats. According to a December 17 New York Times article about Northwest Iowa, "It is here where the Iowa caucuses earn their reputation for backing the most conservative and religious candidates. Despite representing less than 2 percent of the state's population, the region so overwhelmingly favors conservative candidates that it punches far above





PHOTO SUBMITTED

Democratic candidate Lawrence Lessig was on campus for the Iowa Conference on Presidential Politics last fall. He dropped out of the race after his visit to Sioux Center.

its weight. The area can deliver such lopsided margins to conservative candidates that it can cancel out the tallies of far more moderate and populous areas.”

The 20 percent or so of Sioux County residents who vote Democrat are accustomed to being a small minority and to having their candidates overlook the Northwest corner of the state.

The brand new Dordt College Democrats Club, with a handful of members, is trying to change that, at least a little. After the defunct Dordt Political Action Committee, a bipartisan group, was succeeded by a new club, the Dordt College Republicans, hockey player and junior from Illinois Aaron Ladzinski decided he wanted to do something.

“When it comes to acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, I see and hear more of that in the Democratic party,” he said.

But it’s been an uphill climb for Ladzinski, a political science major. He did get a boost after a visit to Dordt by Donald Trump, the seventh of nine presidential candidates to visit campus.

“We got a lot more likes on Facebook, some emails from people, interest in being part of the club,” he said.

Being a Democrat in a heavily Republican city and county—as well as college campus—isn’t easy. “I’m learning to keep my words wise,” he says. Ladzinski was a precinct captain for Hillary Clinton

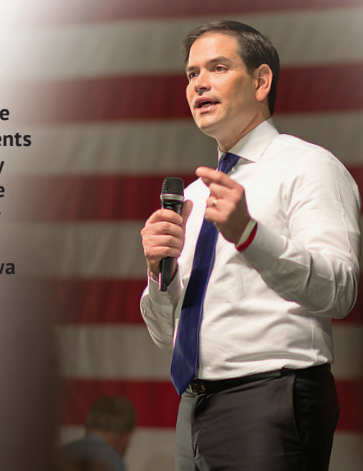
and attended the Democratic caucus in Sioux Center, where the caucus chair estimated there were about four times as many people as usual. Dozens of Dordt students helped swing the total for the four precincts to 11 delegates for Bernie Sanders and six for Hillary Clinton.

Whatever their party—if they claim one—Dordt students have a front-row seat to the drama of the election season. They can hear stump speeches first-hand, pose questions to presidential candidates, even picket when they feel their conscience and commitments require it.

“We’ve never had as much candidate contact in a national election as we have had the 2016 election cycle. We’ve also never had our students as close to the action,” wrote Hoekstra in his open letter. “Our goal is to have Dordt students graduate with a commitment to be politically active and biblically obedient, which I believe can only be helped by having first-hand access to candidates.”

SONYA JONGSMA KNAUSS (97)

Rubio spoke to a crowd of more than 600 students and community members in the Campus Center three weeks prior to the Iowa caucuses.



Faculty Bits

Theology Professor Dr. **Benjamin Lappenga** published a book (see page 12), and he published an article titled “Speak, Hannah, and Do Not be Silent’: Pseudo-Philo’s Deconstruction of Violence in *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* 50–51” in *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* in Dec. 2015. Lappenga presented a paper titled “Sanctified by God’s Word’: Towards a Websterian Ontology of Scripture and Church” at the Los Angeles Theology Conference in Jan. 2016.

Theology Professor Dr. **Jason Lief** presented “A Technology of Faith Formation” at the Association of Youth Minister Educators Conference in San Diego in Oct. 2015.

Music Professor Dr. **Bradley Miedema** worked with the Rock Valley Community High School Band in preparation for its fall concert in Nov. 2015.

Education Professor **David Mulder** presented “Social Media: Digital Footprints and Digital Wisdom” at Sioux Center Christian School in Oct. 2015.

Social Work Professor **Erin Olson** presented “Finding Meaning in Work: Calling and Life Satisfaction Among BSW Students” at the North American Association of Christians in Social Work in Grand Rapids, Mich., in Nov. 2015.



Theology Professor Dr. **Jay Shim** presented “Practical meaning of Christian education in the mission fields: from ‘mission through education’ to ‘education that generates mission’” at PAUA Forum in Seoul, Korea, in Jan. 2016.

Associate Provost Dr. **Leah Zuidema** presented about teacher-writers at the National Council of Teachers of English in Minneapolis in Nov. 2015. She also completed her term as an elected member of the Conference on English Education’s executive committee.

VANTOL HELPS MAKE A PLACE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN IN NICARAGUA

What began in 2010 as a trip to observe Dordt College student teachers in Nicaragua has turned into an opportunity to help change that country's educational system.

Last spring, at the invitation of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education, Dr. Kathleen VanTol led training sessions to help teachers across the country begin to include children with special needs in their classrooms—students who had previously been unable to attend school.

The story is a bit more complex than that, of course. In 2010, VanTol not only observed Dordt students teaching at Nicaragua Christian Academy (NCA), but she also spent time at Tesoros de Dios, one of the few schools in that country for children with special needs. VanTol offered a day-long workshop, consulted

with teachers, and did some testing of students.

“Christian schools were the only ones working with special needs children,” says VanTol. In Nicaragua, many schools do not have enough resources for regular classrooms, much less for special programs. (see www.inallthings.org/education-for-all) Tesoros was founded in

Managua, Nicaragua, by Dordt alumna Michelle Adams ('03), who saw the urgent need for such programs while she was a teacher at NCA. It is supported primarily by donors, many North American. For

“In the North American professional special education community, Christian perspective is a liability. In Nicaragua it is welcomed.”

— Dr. Kathleen VanTol, Dordt education professor



PHOTOSUBMITTED

many parents of special-needs children, Tesoros was the only place their child could get an education.

VanTol has been back to Nicaragua every year since that first visit. She returned to offer a week-long workshop the next year, which was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Education. She returned again the following year to train facilitators who could help classroom teachers accommodate the growing number of children they were required to serve after the government began to mandate such services.

Nicaragua is an avowedly Christian country, so VanTol could begin where she begins in her classes at Dordt. Workshop participants eagerly brought their Bibles and started by focusing on the biblical notion that all children are valuable in God's eyes. It soon became clear to the teachers that not only should they educate all children, but that teachers needed help in knowing how to do so.

"The universities in Nicaragua had no special education programs," says VanTol. Building on the work she had already done, she and Dordt student Wendy Gomez ('12), from Nicaragua, compiled a manual for teachers that offered a rationale for such programs, shared testing resources, and gave practical help for teachers—"a range of nuts-and-bolts information."

Fast forward to the spring of 2015. Taking a partial leave from her teaching in the Education Department at Dordt, and at the invitation of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Education, VanTol spent the whole semester in Nicaragua. In addition to teaching some of her special education courses for Dordt students online, she worked closely with the NCA school in Nejapa to develop a model for Nicaraguan schools to use in educating children with special needs. Observing in classrooms, training teachers, and evaluating progress was part of each week's work. But she did more. On Saturdays, VanTol led an eight-hour for-credit graduate course for teachers, administrators, psychologists, and facilitators from the Ministry of Education. For that, she put together a second book in Spanish, providing



Special needs are the result of many factors, but in countries like Nicaragua, lack of health care is a contributing cause. For example, more children become deaf due to meningitis.

further practical resources for teachers.

"This has been a real opportunity to influence educational policy and programs," says VanTol. It's been a wonderful opportunity for her to teach from her Christian worldview. "In the North American professional special education community, Christian perspective is a liability. There it is welcomed," she says.

VanTol believes that as a Dordt College education professor, she can make a difference in a way that other professionals might not be able to because she can connect with teachers on a foundational level—beginning with the belief that, as God's children, these students are valuable. As she does so, she is helping change attitudes as well as practices. Gradually children with special needs are seen not as something to be hidden or ashamed of, but as students worthy of society's best efforts.

Another reason Ministry of Education officials are eager to work with VanTol is her commitment to what she's started.

"I asked a ministry official, 'Why me?' They said, 'You keep coming back.'"

SALLY JONGSMA

Faculty Bits

Engineering Professor Dr. **Joel Sikkema** published an article he co-wrote titled "Photocatalytic concrete pavements: Laboratory investigation of NO oxidation rate under varied environmental conditions" in *Construction and Building Materials* in Oct. 2015.

Art Professor **David Versluis** participated in the Dordt College Art Faculty Exhibition at Northwestern College's Thea G. Korver Visual Arts Center. Versluis was also invited to participate in the University of South Dakota's New Union/ReUnion Exhibition with a photo montage titled *About to Break Apart*.

English professors Dr. **Bill Elgersma** and **Luke Hawley** presented "An At-risk Writer Program that Benefits Both the Students and the Educators" at the National Council of Teachers of English conference in Minneapolis in Nov. 2015.



Chemistry Professor Dr. **Channon Visscher** presented "Chemistry of the Protolunar Disk and Volatile Depletion in the Moon" at the 2015 Goldschmidt Conference in Prague, Czech Republic and had research published in *Nature* (page 5).

Business Professor Dr. **John Visser** was the recipient of the prestigious Chewing Award, presented each year at the Christian Business Faculty Association Annual Meeting (see page 7). At the conference, he presented "Holistic Business as the Key to Global Human Flourishing: a Visual Model"; his paper on the topic was also published online as part of conference proceedings.

Mathematics Professor Dr. **Valorie Zonnefeld** and Education Professor Dr. **Ryan Zonnefeld** presented "Critical Thinking and High-Level Discourse: Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development in a 1:1 Environment" at the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Regional Conference in Nov. 2015.

LAPPENGA'S NEW BOOK LOOKS AT PAUL'S "LANGUAGE OF ZEAL"

Dr. Benjamin Lappenga has always been drawn to the story of Paul. He describes the first-century apostle and prolific letter-writer as “a fiery character.”

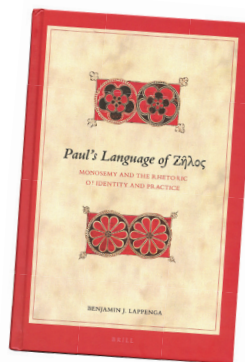
“Paul was a zealot before he met Christ on the road to Damascus,” Lappenga says. “He was a radical, holding the cloaks of those stoning Stephen.”

Lappenga wondered if Paul had left his zealotry behind him after he encountered Christ. In his recently published book, *Paul's Language of Ζῆλος: Monosemy and the Rhetoric of Identity and Practice* (Brill, 2015), Lappenga turns a scholar's eye toward this question, returning to the text's original language in order to re-examine Paul's rhetoric in the light of contemporary theories about how language works.

In approaching Paul's letters in this way, Lappenga discovered something unexpected. Paul didn't “throw out his Jewish zeal,” as most Christians have come to understand his story; he radically redefined it. In fact, Paul continues to use that same Greek word, ζῆλος, throughout the New Testament, carefully working out its implications for his readers in letters to the early Church.

According to Lappenga, ζῆλος—often translated as “zeal,” “jealousy,” or “emulation”—is used strategically by Paul. However, its nuances are often obscured in modern translations of the Bible, which interpret ζῆλος, or *zēlos*, differently according to the context of the passage in which it appears.

“There's a reason that Paul is using the same Greek word in these instances;



to native readers of that language, that word triggers something for them—they would have noticed the repetition,” Lappenga says. He believes that Paul is trying to make an argument that would have been obvious to a first-century Greek reader but that we might miss.

Among Jewish zealots of the first century, “zeal” had a military connotation and suggested taking up arms, Lappenga explains. In the Greco-Roman world, the term was often used to encourage the emulation of people with power, money, and influence. The new understanding put forward by Paul, however, emphasized power in weakness and encouraged the “eager pursuit of community-building gifts.”

Lappenga describes Paul's subversive reworking of the familiar—if fluid—first-century concept as “rightly directed zeal.” Harnessing insights from rhetorical theory and employing a linguistic methodology, Lappenga explores how Paul advances this redefinition of “zeal” in ways that form his readers, moving them toward a new, corporate identity in Christ.

Scholars have noted that Paul talks about emulating Christ, but they haven't connected the concepts of “emulation” and “zeal,” despite their common linguistic root, and they haven't explored how that connection might deepen our

“God didn’t give us a list of propositions about the faith, he gave us something much richer and more complex—he gave us a story.”

– Dordt College Theology Professor Dr. Benjamin Lappenga

understanding of what it means to follow Christ, according to the author.

Lappenga doesn’t use the Greek word in the title to signal scholarly seriousness, nor to alienate an audience of non-specialists. It’s part of the book’s argument. “The book asks us to consider all the instances of this word’s usage together,” he says. “When you don’t translate them consistently, you miss the rhetorical strategy that I’m seeing.”

Read in this way, “Paul is asking his readers to consider this question: ‘What do you have zeal for?’” Lappenga says. “That’s another way of asking, ‘What is good?’ According to Paul, the ways the culture defines ‘good’ is not in fact good.”

“Paul doesn’t throw out zeal altogether,” Lappenga says. “He actually retains that claim for himself. He’s still a zealot, and just like he was zealous for the law as a Jewish person, he wants Christians to be zealots, too. But he wants to severely upend, or turn on its head, what that word means.” That upending amounts to a “reversal of cultural expectations about the people and qualities that are worthy of emulation,” Lappenga says, and Paul uses the idea of zealotry to exhort Christians to a radical form of Christ-likeness.

An early reviewer of Lappenga’s book praised it as a “balanced and fair critique of previous work on zeal-language in Paul” and put it in the “top quarter of books in the field.” Not simply a “word study,” Lappenga moves beyond linguistics to consider broader questions of Christian identity and practice.

Despite these implications for Christian living, Lappenga acknowledges the insights in his book won’t likely crop up in any three-point sermons. However, biblical scholarship has the power, over time, to refine and enrich our understanding of God’s Word. That’s why



Lappenga joined Dordt’s Theology Department in 2014. He holds a B.A. in classical languages and earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in Biblical Studies and Theology and New Testament Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary.

he became a biblical scholar in the first place.

Working out what the Bible demands of us today, as 21st century Christ-followers, is often as complex a task as it is challenging, according to Lappenga.

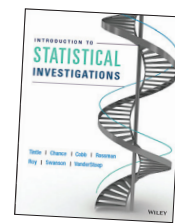
“God didn’t give us a list of propositions about the faith, he gave us something much richer and more complex—he gave us a story,” Lappenga says. In this, he sees evidence of God’s sovereignty. “A story does things that a list wouldn’t do,” Lappenga says. “Because of the Bible’s complexities, we are constantly called back to the text, being shaped and formed by it. It continually challenges us to reconsider what we thought we knew. The work will never be done.”

ALEISA DORNBIERER SCHAT

NEW STATS TEXTBOOK PUBLISHED

The collaborative work funded by the National Science Foundation and led by Dordt College Statistics Professor Dr. Nathan Tintle has resulted in a new college-level textbook called *Introduction to Statistical Investigations*.

Tintle spent years working with statisticians from Hope College, California Polytechnic State University, and Mount Holyoke College, creating the textbook that could change the way statistics is taught across the country. It’s been tested at more than 20 institutions with more than 3,000 students, including at Dordt.



The text helps students learn to conduct statistical investigations, collecting and exploring data, making statistical inferences, and drawing appropriate conclusions. Tintle says traditional introductory statistics courses do not have students evaluate and develop statistical arguments.

“Traditional courses can be so technical that students miss the big picture,” Tintle says. “Understanding the logic involved in drawing conclusions from data, and the limitations of those conclusions, is a critically relevant skill in an increasingly data-driven society.”

The authors use an active learning approach and incorporate experiences such as shuffling cards, flipping coins, collecting data, running experiments, and using simulations.

“Because introductory statistics is one of the most widely taken college courses, we feel it is critical to dramatically change the way the course is taught in order to significantly impact the critical thinking abilities of college graduates,” Tintle said.

Campus Kudos

In December, Dordt College students raised \$16,040 with the Dressemer Foundation to help fight human trafficking and restore dignity to its victims. Globally, 35.9 million people are held in slavery and 26 percent of them are children—one in every 195 persons is a victim of slavery.

“Students dressed up to fight for human dignity, first by raising awareness of the global sex trade and then by raising funds to make a small dent in the growing problem of human trafficking,” said Dordt College Junior **Annie Sears**, one of the event organizers.

The money raised will fund the work of the International Justice Mission (IJM), helping IJM conduct three rescue missions to free trafficked women and children from abuse and exploitation.

Dordt College Senior Social Work Major **Katie Nucaro** has received the prestigious \$5,000 Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, awarded by the United States Department of State. The Gilman Scholarship program offers grants to undergraduates to pursue academic studies or career-oriented internships abroad. Nucaro’s internship is in Uganda, where she hopes to gain a broader perspective on mental health and social work as she works and learns in a different cultural setting.



Engineering and Physics Students **Kolter Bradshaw** and **Zach Van Engen** were invited to present their summer research on “Viscous Fluid Motion in a Horizontally Rotating Cylinder” at the Iowa Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers (IAAPT) in Des Moines, Iowa, in November.



Over semester break, a group of Dordt engineering students, with the aid of Harbel, Liberia, residents and several Sioux County businesses, completed work on a 53-foot-long bridge across a creek in Grand Bassa County, Liberia. Designed by **Austin Lindemulder**, **Peter Hoelsema**, **Eric Fedders**, and **Kyle Vander Zee** for their senior design project, this bridge is now being used to more easily transport supplies and produce from the local 18-acre farm that Dordt student volunteers built two years ago.

Dordt College Seniors **Abbie Beahm** and **Anna Den Herder** earned the FFA’s American Degree. Recipients were honored at a reception in October at the 88th National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. The American Degree is the highest honor granted to a FFA member, requiring at least six years of dedication, volunteering, and projects. Fewer than half of one percent of FFA’s members earn this award.



JAMES C. SCHAAP/PTM

Last year, high school students from around the United States and Canada participated in Prairie Serve and took part in a Pow Wow.

SUMMER PRAIRIE SERVE PROJECT BEING PLANNED

Dordt College professors and students are taking a leading role again in this summer’s Prairie Serve Project, a weeklong event where young people from throughout the United States and Canada come together to work, worship, and encounter God through their neighbors.

The Dordt College Theology Department and the Minn-I-Kota Youth organization, in partnership with Youth Unlimited, is organizing a SERVE project held at Friendship Community Church in Sergeant Bluff, Iowa. Participants will lead Bible School at Siouxland Unity Church in Sioux City, complete work projects on the Winnebago Reservation in partnership with Winnebago Reformed Church, and paint houses in communities around Sioux City.



Jason Lief

This year’s participants will also have an opportunity to travel to the Rosebud Reservation, as well as tour the Badlands and go to Wounded Knee, with Dordt College English Professor Emeritus James C. Schaap leading the tour.

Dordt College Dean of Chapel Aaron Baart will be the speaker, and Theology Professor Jason Lief is leading the project. The Dordt College praise band will lead the SERVE participants in worship.

Youth groups can sign up by March 31 to save \$50 on the registration fee; about half of the 60 available slots are already taken.

For more information, contact Dr. Jason Lief at Jason.Lief@dordt.edu or go to bit.ly/1Q3Vkj1.

FALL ATHLETICS WRAP-UP AND A PREVIEW OF WHAT'S NEW

DORDT COLLEGE ATHLETICS

NEWS

WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL

The Defender women's volleyball team advanced to the NAIA National Championship Finals in Sioux City, Iowa, in early December and finished the season with a 25-7 record. They were ranked no. 15 in the Tachikara-NAIA Postseason Volleyball Coaches' Poll.

"I am amazed that we entered the year at no. 25 and earned our way as high as no. 6 in the country. We have tasted excellence on the volleyball court and accomplished new things this season. What a special season this has been as we reflect back on all that God allowed us to experience," said 2015 Great Plains Athletic Conference Coach of the Year Chad Hanson.

Brooke Granstra claimed First-Team All-American honors and Jamie Gesink was an honorable mention selection at the NAIA All-American level at the conclusion of the season.



B. Granstra

WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

The Defender women's cross country team claimed its fourth straight GPAC

title with a 44-point performance at the GPAC Championship in November. Kayla Byl, Justine Van Zee, Erika Douma, and Kaylie Ogle all claimed All-GPAC honors—Byl for the fourth time and Van Zee and Douma for the second time.

The Defenders followed their GPAC Championship with a 9th-place finish at the NAIA National Championship in Charlotte, North Carolina.

"We raced well on a tough course," said GPAC Coach of the Year Nate Wolf. "We went into the meet rated 11th nationally and finishing 9th was a good result for us. Byl and Ogle finished their Dordt cross country careers with solid days and fantastic seasons. Their leadership throughout the year both on and off the course was invaluable for getting this team to finish in the top-10 nationally."

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Dordt College featured a new intercollegiate varsity sport in 2015-16 in men's volleyball.

"Adding men's volleyball to our intercollegiate offerings was an ongoing discussion for the past several years," said Dordt College Athletic Director Glenn

Bouma. "Our club team was very active and there is growing interest in men's volleyball by incoming students."

Chad Hanson, who has been the women's volleyball coach at Dordt since 2011, coached the team.

Thirty NAIA schools are fielding men's volleyball teams this season and the year will culminate with an Invitational National Tournament in April. The team is scheduled to play 21 matches this season.

FOOTBALL

Joel Penner has been named the third head coach in the history of the Dordt College football program.



Joel Penner

"We were impressed by Joel's football knowledge and his ability to build up the programs he has led," said Bouma. "He has exhibited fine character and is committed to continuing to build a Christ-centered program at Dordt."

— MIKE BYKER (92)

JAMIN VER VELDE (99)



PUTTING A NUMBER ON STUDENT GROWTH

By the time students graduate from Dordt, they are at the top of the top tier of college students across the nation.

Each year in August, before a single class has been held or a single syllabus distributed, the new crop of first-year Dordt students spends two hours taking a test. Anyone passing the classroom would see students in costume—cartoon characters and superheroes—gripping their number two pencils and filling in bubbles, trying to keep their minds on the test (next in their tightly scheduled Week of Welcome agenda: the Freshman Olympics).

The test, taken by some incoming students since 2006 and all students since 2010, measures students' aptitude for college work by assessing their skills in four "core" areas: critical thinking, reading, writing, and math. Once the two hours are up and they've laid their pencils down, students resume more active WOW activities and, for all intents

and purposes, forget about the test.

In April of their junior years, these same students take the test again—this time in plainclothes and with most of the core curriculum under their belts. Here is where it gets interesting: on the whole, Dordt students—who already outrank most first-year students across the country when they start college—perform much better the second time around.

The ETS Proficiency Profile doesn't have the name recognition of the SAT or GRE, but it's an important tool for measuring learning outcomes at the college level. Developed by the same nonprofit that developed the GRE, the freshman-to-

junior-year skills-based assessment is being used by colleges and universities across the country to gauge how well they're equipping students for life beyond school. Dordt's results indicate that the college has been remarkably successful in fulfilling this purpose.

"That growth that we see between the freshman and junior years at Dordt is off-the-charts bigger than what other institutions are showing."

— Jim Bos, registrar

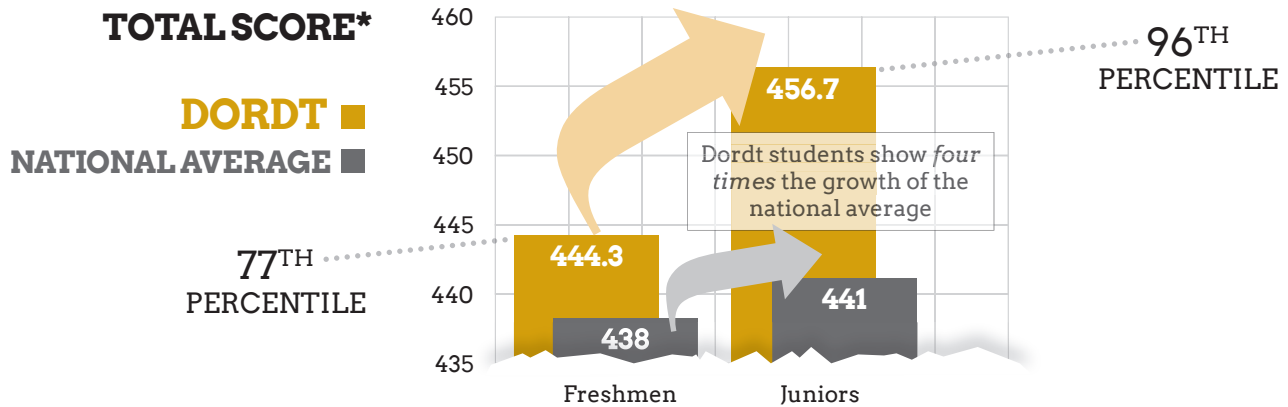
Already testing in the 82nd percentile at the outset of their college careers, by the time students leave Dordt, they outperform 98 percent of students at comparable institutions nationwide. That number drops only slightly, to 96 percent, when all schools using the test—from state schools to the Ivy League—are



GRAPH 17

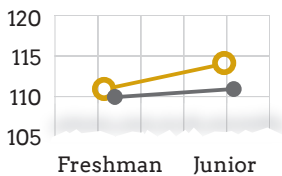
ETS PROFICIENCY AVERAGE SCORE

DORDT SCORES BASED ON THREE-YEAR AVERAGE FROM 2012—2014

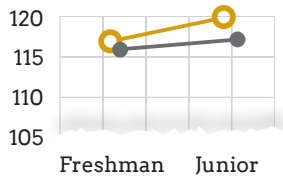


*Total score is the sum of the four components found below

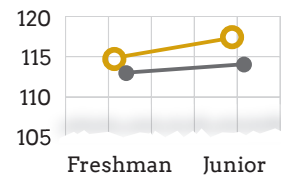
GRAPH 17.1
CRITICAL THINKING



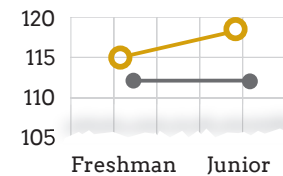
GRAPH 17.2
READING



GRAPH 17.3
WRITING



GRAPH 17.4
MATH



lumped into the pool (see graph 17). The percentiles reflect five years' worth of nationally normed data from 77,500 students, and crunching the numbers in this way helps illuminate the significance of Dordt's results each year by pitting them against the results of students nationwide.

"That growth that we see between the freshman and junior years at Dordt is off-the-charts bigger than what other institutions are showing," says Dordt Registrar Jim Bos. He identifies this as "Aha' moment number one" as he interprets the test's results. "We are moving our students up the scale," says Bos.

Amid calls for increased accountability in higher education, more than 400 institutions in the past five years have adopted the ETS Proficiency Profile to help them assess educational quality. Over that time, nearly 450,000 students across the country have taken the test. To generate comparable results, schools are grouped according to size and

existing degree programs. More than 80 institutions in Dordt's cohort use the survey, including Taylor University, Concordia University, Union University, and Covenant College.

Leah Zuidema, Dordt College associate provost and dean for curriculum and instruction, sees the test as a helpful way to assess how Dordt students stack up against students at similar institutions.

"Using a nationally normed instrument allows us to have a more objective picture of our results," Zuidema says. "We tend to have a bias to think we're doing a good job, but we want to be able to compare that to other schools. This test helps us do that."

The test was conceived as a way to measure the effectiveness of an institution's general education curriculum. In Dordt's case, that program, known as the Core Program, is one of the things that makes a Dordt education distinctive. The core is the curricular expression of Dordt's commitment to

Christ-centered learning in all areas of life and reflects a cross-disciplinary consensus about what a broad foundation of study should look like for each student at Dordt.

Using the tool to ask "Is the core doing what it's supposed to be doing?" led to what Bos calls "Aha' moment number two." The test results reveal that students who come to Dordt with strong math skills stay strong in math, but they also boost their reading and writing skills by a significant margin. The reverse is also true: students arriving at Dordt with strong reading and writing skills continue to test well in those areas, but show remarkable gains in the area of quantitative reasoning by the time they graduate. This achievement is striking when compared to the dismal picture of math education at institutions across the country: test results indicate that students, on average nationally, leave college with the same level of math aptitude they came in with (see graph 17.4).

Dordt's results paint a much brighter picture—not just in math, but in all four “competencies” measured by the test. Bos says that speaks to the strength of the Core Program. “We are already taking good students and pushing them farther. But just as importantly, we’re doing that by rounding out the places where they have room to grow,” Bos says.

Junior Public Relations major Luke Venhuizen recalls taking the ETS test shortly after he arrived on campus his freshman year. In preparation for Freshman Olympics, his face was painted yellow and he was dressed as Spongebob Squarepants. While he doesn't remember much about the content of the test, he says Dordt's results reflect his experience of academic growth as a student.

“Taking classes in a lot of different disciplines has definitely made me a more well-rounded student,” Venhuizen says. While he came to Dordt with AP credits in English, he soon realized public relations required more than just good communication skills. “PR uses a lot of statistics, so strong skills in math are really important,” Venhuizen says. “Statistics can help you figure out who your audience is, and that's the most important part of building relationships

Evaluations give administrators a “pulse” on how well the core is serving students, and it helps professors adapt their courses and teaching methods to better meet student needs.

with different publics.”

The ETS Proficiency Profile is designed to assess the growth of individual students in order to discern patterns of growth across the student body. That's made possible by the way the test is scored. Analysis proceeds from a data set that correlates an individual student's performance on both the freshman and junior year tests. Those linked scores are used to draw conclusions about how students grow in particular skill areas during their time at Dordt, and to determine how that growth is tied to other factors, such as declared major or



First-year olympics take place during the Dordt College “Week of Welcome” for new students. The ETS proficiency test happens just before students head out for some fun competition.

certain demographic categories.

This kind of targeted assessment not only helps isolate specific areas of weakness and strength in the core, but can drive curricular change, says Bos. In fact, core requirements at Dordt have already been revised in light of students' performance on the ETS assessment. In 2011, to further boost students' growth in math, the core was redesigned to include two courses in mathematics and quantitative reasoning rather than one. That change has improved results, with last year's juniors showing the most dramatic gains in math skills since Dordt started using the test. This kind of test-directed fine-tuning is becoming increasingly

important as the student body grows in diversity—whether geographic, denominational, or otherwise, Zuidema says. Tools like the ETS assessment can help Dordt better meet the needs of a changing student body.

As useful as the tool is, Zuidema acknowledges that standardized tests have their limits. At Dordt, the test is meant to complement other, qualitative measures used to assess learning outcomes at Dordt. For example, at the end of each semester, students have a chance to fill out surveys in courses across campus. This gives administrators

a “pulse” on how well the core is serving students, and it helps professors adapt their courses and teaching methods to better meet student needs.

Ultimately, Zuidema locates the test's value in how it fits into a bigger picture of Dordt's educational mission. “While Dordt's results speak to the rigor of our academic program, ultimately, this test can't measure intangible things, like the way a biblical perspective is woven through our curriculum or the extent to which the core is shaped by a commitment to Christ-centered learning,” says Zuidema. “This test is one important measure of how students grow during their time at Dordt, but it isn't the only measure.”

Senior Renee Mahaffy, who took the junior portion of the assessment last April, agrees. While she says she's “definitely grown academically while at Dordt,” she has also been challenged to grow in ways that can't be reduced to numbers or plotted on a colorful graph. “Academic knowledge is important, but I will be taking so much more away with me when I graduate,” Mahaffy says.

One thing she'll leave here with are lifelong friendships. Mahaffy recalls taking the test during her first week on campus, but what she remembers most clearly about that day three years ago is meeting her roommate for the first time that afternoon. “I was dressed as Super Grover. I was covered in water, wearing a cape. Our other roommate, Corrina, was next to me, dressed as a nerd,” Mahaffy says. “I was like, ‘I promise, we're not actually this weird!’”

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT

ANATOMY

The Dordt Organ by the numbers

The 2,865 pipes are made of various metals, including lead and tin.

Pipes range in “speaking” length from 1 inch to 16 feet.

The organ has 57 ranks and 37 stops, three manuals (keyboards), and 32 pedals.

The keys’ color scheme is inverted, with ebony naturals and ivory sharps and flats.

The organ case and wind chests are made of solid oak, which focuses and enhances the sound of the pipes.

The organist directly controls the organ’s sound through mechanical levers and pulleys (trackers) between the keyboard and valves beneath the pipes.

Psalm 150 is inscribed directly below the Spaanse Trompets.

Stops are designated in Dutch, reflecting Dordt’s heritage and the instrument’s historical ties to northern Europe.

Unlike a piano, whose sound decays after the key is struck, an organ can sustain a note indefinitely, or increase its volume well after the key is struck.

The organ was the generous gift of Minnie J. Dahm, who loved organ music.

PRAISE HIM WITH ORGANS

RINGERWOLE WRITES HISTORY OF THE DORDT CASAVANT ORGAN

In her written history of the Casavant organ at Dordt College, Dr. Joan Ringerwole depicts the instrument as having voice and breath. Fittingly, Ringerwole refers to her work of organ history, “Praise Him with Organs,” as a “biography,” and in it the organ takes on the quality of a living being—complex and responsive, with all of the parts working together in harmony.

Ringerwole, who taught in the Dordt music department for 38 years, says this emphasis on breath is intentional, and she points to the organ’s flexible winding system, which “allows

a more vocal onset of the speech in the attack of the pipe.” According to Ringerwole, the flexible winding “allows the instrument to ‘breathe,’” and much like wind moving over the vocal chords of a singer, this “can have a momentary effect on the pitch of the instrument.”

The choice to install a flexibly wound instrument was just one among a series of decisions made collaboratively, over the course of several years, as the interior architecture of Dordt’s organ took shape. Under discussion were drawknobs and

stoplists, ranks and manuals—a host of technical terms nearly meaningless to the layperson, but which together determine the quality of an organ’s “speech”—its pitch and timbre, and the range of sounds it can produce.

Bringing the organ to Dordt was a feat of mathematical modeling and musical expertise. The group tasked with seeing the project through included an architect, an acoustician, a musician (Ringerwole), and an expert in organ tonal registration. The process picked up steam in 1976, when Casavant Frères, organ builders based in St. Hyacinthe, Quebec, were selected for their modern design, which fit the spare lines of the new auditorium.

The collaboration continued across state lines and international borders, in an era without the convenience of cell phones or the Internet. Instead, the organ’s design evolved through a network of handwritten letters and telephone conversations, arranged visits and dinners.

“The process took about two years,” recalls Ringerwole, who spent many hours on the phone talking with experts. All decisions were guided by the demands Dordt’s organ would need to fulfill: lead congregational singing in worship, be suited for teaching and performance, accompany choral and instrumental ensembles, and perform a wide range of musical literature.

Under the guidance of Ringerwole, it was decided early on that the organ would be mechanical rather than electronic. Her experience as a doctoral student at the University of Iowa convinced Ringerwole of the superiority of mechanical action, or tracker, organs. According to Ringerwole, tracker organs give the organist a greater



Dr. Joan Ringerwole performed a recital at the Casavant organ’s 1979 dedication. From left: Ringerwole, Henry De Vries (representing the faculty), and President B.J. Haan.

sense of control over the instrument through a direct, physical connection between the organ’s keys and the valves that let air into the pipes.

It is this quality of responsiveness that organ student Rianne Van Wingerden (’16) appreciates most about the instrument.

“I love the power that it feels like I have. I love the range of sounds I can make; I love the combination of sounds I can produce,” she says. An elementary education major with a background in piano, Van Wingerden applied for and was granted an Organ-from-Scratch Scholarship in her sophomore year.

Making the adjustment from piano technique to organ technique was difficult, but her biggest challenge was learning to accompany congregational singing, one of the organ’s most important roles, according to Van Wingerden. Unlike the piano, an organ can sustain a note indefinitely, helping to keep the congregation on pitch.

Another Dordt organ student, Joni Van Den Top, agrees. When compared to many other instruments, the organ “is better suited to be a leader,” she says.

“I love that whenever I play the organ at Dordt, I feel like I’m on top of the world. I feel like I could blow the town of Sioux Center away, especially with big, loud pieces,” she says. She also appreciates the versatility of the instrument, in both worship and performance. “What I love about the organ is that you can play one instrument and make so many different sounds. Two people can play the same song, and it can sound completely different because of the different stops

and the registration used.”

This uniqueness and versatility will secure the organ’s role in the future of corporate worship, the two students say, although with the rise of praise bands and contemporary styles of worship, neither will be surprised if the organ’s role is smaller than in the past.

“I come from a traditional background,” says Van Wingerden, “so the organ is used frequently in my church. However, in more contemporary churches that have organs, I think creatively incorporating the organ will continue to happen. It’s such a unique instrument.”

Ringerwole, too, stresses the organ’s enduring importance, remarking that every Sunday morning across the country, large urban churches continue to employ their organs to lead congregational singing.

Ringerwole’s history of the organ is stored in Dordt’s Digital Collections, accessible through the Dordt libraries webpage (digitalcollections.dordt.edu). In it, Ringerwole tells the full story of the organ being brought to campus. The document also includes a detailed, and highly technical, explanation of all of the organ’s various stops and divisions, as well as extensive appendices containing historical documents related to the instrument.



THIS HISTORICAL FEATURE IS HIGHLIGHTED AS PART OF DORDT COLLEGE’S 60TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR. TO SEE AN INTERACTIVE TIMELINE, GO TO WWW.DORDT.EDU/TIMELINE.

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT



Ringerwole began teaching at Dordt at age 23, after graduating from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, N.Y.

IS THERE A PLACE FOR THE ORGAN IN WORSHIP TODAY?

A conversation with Carroll Hanson, organ curator at the University of Iowa

Carroll Hanson, organ curator at the University of Iowa, has been working as a representative of the Quebec-based Casavant Organ Company for 51 years. During that time, he has overseen the production of nearly 80 organs, facilitating a binational process of design, construction, and installation in churches and performance halls across the United States.

Recently, on a trip to Dordt College to tune the school's practice organs and attend an organ recital, Hanson sat down to discuss his work, the organ's unique qualities, and its changing place in contemporary worship.

Hanson speaks haltingly but gracefully, carefully revising as he goes. He is mathematical in his precision. Like Ringerwole, he speaks of the instrument in metaphor—as something with breath and life, capable of speech.

Voice: How does the flexible winding system affect the way the organ at Dordt sounds?

Hanson: It allows the organ to have a more vocal character—to have characteristics of speech. It doesn't mimic speech, or song, exactly, but it simulates human breathing.

V: Would you say that Dordt's organ has a more human sound than some other organs?

H: Well, yes. It isn't so rigid. It doesn't sound electronic.

V: I've heard some describe the organ as capable of simulating the sound of an entire orchestra with a single instrument. Is that how you'd describe it?

H: It's not an orchestral instrument in the sense that it emulates particular instruments. It's a very vocal kind of sound, but it's not necessarily imitative. That riveting ensemble that you hear—that's an indigenous sound to the instrument.



DORDT COLLEGE ARCHIVES

Our discussion of the organ's unique sound leads us to consider its evolving role in corporate worship. Critics of contemporary worship styles often point to lyrical shortcomings in some of today's worship songs, but Hanson objects primarily on acoustical grounds, emphasizing the importance of the embodied experience of corporate singing and worship.

An organ, Hanson also explains, is an architectural feature as much as an instrument. Knit into the space it inhabits, the organ's piping and casework articulate the spatial dimensions of a room while its sounds articulate its acoustic dimensions, reverberating off walls and surfaces according to the arrangement of the pipes and the movements of the organists' hands and feet.

V: Is there something about the organ that makes it uniquely suited for corporate worship?

H: Yes. It can articulate a large space. Praise bands can't unless they're hugely amplified. Guitars work in a more intimate setting, but in a big space, they turn into a rock concert.

V: So you're saying it's just as important to consider the acoustics of worship as it is to consider particular song lyrics?

H: The musical idiom has its own content. That's important. I've used a Carl Shalk article, "A Lament for Resounding Praise," throughout my years of doing organ work to convince people to tear out absorptive surfaces, to make the room work. In many churches, bands and instrumentalists

are playing in rooms that are absolutely dead acoustically. Anyone who cares about music in the church should read it. In those three pages, he says as much as anyone can say about the nature of corporate worship.

V: Do you think the organ will continue to have an important role in worship?

H: It is the one thing that can unite a large group of people in singing. That sounds completely prejudicial, which it probably is, but it's a matter of scale. You want an instrument in a room that itself has breath—in other words, a room that is not dead acoustically, a room that has life. Otherwise people are self-conscious; they're fearful about singing; they worry about other people hearing them.

When you get them in a room with real life, people start to feel part of the communion of people gathered together in worship.

After the interview, we made our way to the B.J. Haan Auditorium, to hear organist Pamela Decker perform a guest recital. My son Jack, age four, accompanied us, carrying his green alligator back-pack and chattering excitedly. On the way, Jack asked me, "Will we be able to dance at this concert, Mama?" "Probably not," I said.

When the concert began, the audience sat still and upright. Only Jack moved in his seat with the swelling music, hands moving with the organ's reedy choruses and racing arpeggios, eyes opening then closing.

After the first song, Jack leaned forward in his seat, increasingly squirmy but awed by the momentary hush. As the first, booming chord was struck, wind animated the pipes. The room filled with the organ's "riveting chorus," as Hanson called it, vibrating the pews and giving form to the chapel's invisible geometries. Eventually, almost imperceptibly, the heads around me began to bob.

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT

GLOBAL EDUCATION

Off-campus and study abroad programs can be transformational experiences. Students live among people they come to know and respect who live differently than they do, think about issues differently, hold different things important, and believe differently.

Over the years, Dordt College students have studied around the world in countries such as Spain, Egypt, Nicaragua, China, England, the Netherlands, Uganda, Zambia, New Zealand, Australia, and more. They've also studied around the country: film in Los Angeles, politics in Washington, D.C., business in Chicago, music in New England.

The experience can be challenging—

academically, personally, and spiritually. Students come back changed and often strengthened in their understanding and faith.

Dordt encourages its students to spend a semester in an off-campus learning program. Unlike many institutions, the college does not put a cap on how many students may participate. Dordt also allows students to study abroad without decreasing their financial aid. Allowing

students to apply their financial aid package to their tuition whether they study on campus or off means that any student can benefit from thinking more deeply about immigration issues after spending time in Latin America, about refugee issues after studying in the Middle East, about security issues after studying in Europe.

As the world becomes more interconnected, Dordt's global education

Dancers perform a traditional Rwandan dance at the Cultural Fair, an annual event hosted by Dordt's cross-cultural club, Students Without Borders.



staff is committed to giving students the tools to engage important global issues in a wise and thoughtful way while keeping them safe. Students do not travel to high-risk areas. Staff members keep tabs on the Department of State's travel advisory list and only offer programs that are located in secure areas. Traveling always holds a certain amount of risk—whether you travel to South Dakota or South Africa, but students are given the information they need to be safe and smart travelers, and the college provides resources to respond to emergencies that may occur while students are abroad.

Dordt students can choose from more than two dozen off-campus study options. Three of these semester-long programs are Dordt-run: SPICE (Study Program in Contemporary Europe—based in the Netherlands), SPIN (Study Program in Nicaragua), and the Study Program in Zambia. Dordt also offers three-week summer programs. Other semester options, some more cultural immersion, some more professionally based, include programs run by partner institutions and by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities.

God loves people “from every tribe and nation,” and we are called to “love our neighbors as ourselves,” says Dordt's global education staff. Helping students grow in their cross-cultural understanding helps them be better neighbors and citizens and has become increasingly important professionally as more workplaces look for applicants with intercultural experience and skills. People who are sensitive to and understand other cultural perspectives than their own are more discerning voters, wiser donors, better co-workers, and more effective witnesses to Christ's love.

“It's hard to love your neighbor if you don't know them,” says Adam Adams, Dordt's new director for global education.

Adams' commitment to cross-cultural understanding and global education grows out of his own experience. He grew up in a family that frequently hosted missionaries, and he had an aunt and uncle who served in the Philippines.

DOUG BURKE



Dordt's Director for Global Education Adam Adams draws from a wide variety of personal experiences. He has been to 42 countries, taught in a Muslim country for three years, and worked with Afghan refugees.

These experiences prompted him to want to learn more about other cultures. In high school and college he traveled, spending Christmas in China one year, sleeping on a rice mat and seeing hundreds of Chinese Christians wait in line for four hours to get a seat so they could worship together. He learned firsthand that devout brothers and sisters live and worship in countries around the world.

Adams has been to 42 countries and one year spent six months backpacking across Asia.

there worked with the largest group of Afghan refugees in the United States, learning more about the gifts of others as he worked across cultures. From the Bay Area he moved to St. Louis and continued working with refugees. At the same time he augmented his ESL training, learned about visa and immigration issues, and international education. He used these skills at a sister CCCU school, then the position came open at Dordt.

“I love Dordt's educational philosophy,” he says. “To be involved in education for kingdom expansion in majors such as engineering, nursing, and business

“It's hard to love your neighbor if you don't know them.”

— Adam Adams, director for global education

“I wanted to see what community development looked like and learn more about the persecuted church,” he says. He did, and he learned much.

Adams taught English in a Muslim country for three years and as he came to know and interact with his Muslim neighbors realized there was much he didn't know about his own faith. He returned to the United States to attend seminary in San Francisco, and while

programs is exciting—and something international students are also looking for.”

Adams divides his time between administering programs where Dordt students can study in other settings and recruiting international students to study here. These students bring their perspectives and experiences to the campus community and offer opportunities for cross-cultural interaction not only for themselves, but

for students who do not themselves choose to study off campus.

Whether or not students leave campus, their education is global in scope. Adams was thrilled to find an international buddy system on campus, which pairs international and North American students if they wish to take advantage of the opportunity. He appreciates the Facebook page that highlights international students, holidays, and experiences. It is frequented by international student parents as well as North American parents of students studying off campus. And he lauds the annual Cultural Fair that showcases the cultures of Dordt students from countries outside of North America.

Adams hopes to facilitate even more ways for people in the Dordt community to get to know their neighbors, both far and near, to help them develop a curiosity and understanding that extends beyond what they hear in the news or think they know.

“Jesus said ‘love your neighbor’ without qualifying how they became your neighbor,” Adams says.

Even in rural areas today, people live in more diverse communities than they once did. Walking through Walmart in Sioux City or even Sioux Center, Dordt students see and interact with people from a greater variety of traditions and backgrounds. Getting to know each other has the potential to help communities find good ways to live together—to treat each other justly and learn from one another.

“Your perspective almost always changes when you get to know people personally, even if you disagree with them on important issues,” says Adams. He believes that cross-cultural competency is a skill that can be encouraged and learned, and he hopes to continue to develop ways for Dordt students to do so. And he hopes their lives will be as enriched by the experiences as his has been.

SALLY JONGSMA

ALUMNI RESPOND TO OFF-CAMPUS STUDY PROGRAMS



People always told me to take advantage of my college years. I took this seriously and enrolled in Chicago Semester. I spent three months in the energizing and culturally rich city of Chicago while interning in the thrilling field of photography. Having real career-world experience is unbeatable. As a result of my Chicago Semester, I fell in love with this city, accepted a full-time position offered to me through my internship, and have now lived here for three years.

Aanna (Stadem, '13) Chase is a photographer at John Reilly Photography—a studio in the West Loop



Studying in Zambia opened my eyes to a world that didn't revolve around me, to a continent filled with complex peoples, histories, economies, and governments. God put his love in my heart for the people of this land, especially the poor, the downtrodden, the hard working, the “foolish.” When I got back to Dordt, my worldview was centered around a huge God who is in control of an amazing and amazingly complex world. I began to see different sides to everything I learned. I thought about how my friends and colleagues

in Zambia, who grew up in poverty, would respond to some of the things we discussed and learned. I thought about how God would respond. I thought about how I could use my education to serve his people in southern Africa. Now that I have been living in Mozambique for over a year, I often think of the great times I had in Zambia (and the incredibly difficult times) and how they helped prepare me for what I am doing now. I will always be amazed at how God worked in my life through those four months in Ndola, Zambia.

Chris Bylsma ('14) works with Communities of Fusion in Mozambique



PHOTO SUBMITTED



Studies Program in Nicaragua (SPIN) offered a real glimpse of life in a culture that contrasts greatly with my own. Many of the things I saw, did, and experienced in Nicaragua I had learned about before the trip but had never truly understood. This program provided a powerful and living insight into worldviews different from my own. Besides exploring a new culture,

HOST'S VIEW

It took quite some time to think over hosting a student, and we finally concluded that it is an adventure. We couldn't oversee the consequences. So we took the risk, and we expected it to be a great experience for all of us. We hoped it would be an enrichment for us and for our four kids to live with someone from another country with other habits and perspectives—and, of course, to practice our English and to get over language barriers. It turned out to be far more than that. Josh became part of our family, and he still is!

Esther de Boer, a host parent for Josh Van Groningen, who spent a semester in the Netherlands on SPICE



When I got to Oxford, I was in the midst of fourteen years of Christian education, and I'd had very little experience with the diversity that exists within Christianity—racially, ethnically, denominationally. I certainly value having been educated in Reformed schools, and those experiences shaped and continue to influence who I am and the kind of integration of faith and learning/scholarship that I practice. But I've found that the most valuable thing about my off-campus experience was that it forced me to live, converse, and build community with a diverse group of Christians who loved and challenged me in my faith and in my scholarship. Study abroad also introduced me to the idea of graduate school and prepared me for the grad school environment (at Baylor University with another diversely Christian group of colleagues).



Dordt was where I began to learn how to communicate between different worldviews. There I first learned the importance of graciously engaging with different perspectives. My semester in the Middle East in 2006 was particularly important in this respect. On a regular basis I had to interact with a wide variety of people including Orthodox Christians, Messianic Jews, and a diverse assortment of Muslims. I had to navigate that sea of differing worldviews, rooted firmly in my own while simultaneously being open to learning from others.

These skills serve me today in my current work as a missionary in Costa Rica. I interact daily with liberation theologians, nominal Catholics, drug dealers, prosperity gospel preachers, and so many more. Like Paul when he spoke to the people of Athens, I need to communicate the eternal truths of the Gospel using words and images that make sense to the people I'm addressing. Talking about God's plan to reconcile all things to himself through Christ Jesus looks different depending on the person with whom I am talking. It's not that the Gospel changes. But it can look different depending on the context.

I learned many things studying abroad. But communicating truthfully and graciously between different worldviews is something I doubt I would be doing today if it had not been for my Reformed education at Dordt, supplemented by my semester abroad.

Micah Schuurman ('08) serves as a missionary in Costa Rica

I grew in confidence from travel, gained a considerable handle on Spanish, and practiced a good deal of written analysis, especially in the area of advanced Reformed thought. The time there was simultaneously challenging and rewarding, greatly expanding my perspective.

Nathan Ryder is a junior mathematics major



It may sound cliché, but participating in the Uganda Studies Program affected almost everything I've done since. Barely a day goes by that I don't think about what we studied and learned there and about how I should live as a result. The Uganda Studies Program changed how I (and how I try to) interact with others—it fostered a more deliberate and gentle approach with people I meet. We experienced and talked about being “present” with those around us. That challenge has been before me every day since Uganda and is incredibly difficult to live. It has affected how I think about the things I buy, which organizations I support, and how best intentions for helping can actually negatively affect those we intend to help. In many ways the semester made my life far more complicated, but in important ways it forced me to think and grow.

Justin Struik ('10) is an IT client services supervisor at Nalco, an Ecolab Company in Naperville, Illinois



Now, I teach at a sort-of-Baptist school in Missouri, where I'm also working in a diversely Christian community. Being able to dwell with those differences and delight in them has helped me in my work and in my own faith, too.

Julie Ooms ('08) is an assistant professor of English at Missouri Baptist University



Middle East Studies Program (MESP) was a fantastic counterpart to my education at Dordt. While Dordt equipped me with passion and knowledge to shape culture, MESP helped me grasp more deeply how my culture had already shaped me. As I learned about the people and cultures of the Middle East, I found a lens for examining my own life, and I was forced to consider if I and my theology were Christian or merely American. MESP was also an incredibly humbling experience. Anyone who claims to have cultural humility figured out certainly doesn't, but my experience did help open me up to my own cultural biases. As I work in leadership development in Cambodia today, lessons I learned in Cairo about dialogue, empathy, humility, and delayed judgment continue to inform my practice.

Justin Van Zee ('07) works as a partner missionary with Christian Reformed World Missions in Phnom Penh, Cambodia



In my senior year I became frustrated with everything I thought I knew. I dropped my education major and signed up for SPICE (Studies Program in Contemporary Europe) the day before the deadline. It was one of the best decisions

DOUGBURG



Dordt College's Global Education Office is represented by Corinne Hentes, who works closely with international students to ensure that their admission documents and status in the United States are up to date; Alexis Kreun, who coordinates off-campus and multicultural student programs; and Adam Adams, who oversees global education and off-campus programs.

of my life!

The people I interacted with in Zwolle helped challenge my thinking. God had a purpose in this adventure. The first day at Schiphol, I met my professor, friend, and mentor, Kees. I also met my future husband, Gerald, one of the "buddies" who helped us adapt culturally to the Netherlands. We were paired with teachers, and when they invited us to their classrooms, I quickly remembered why I had chosen education.

My host mom, a mentor and teacher, helped me work through why I dropped my major, and I discovered so much about the world that I had studied throughout my life. More important, I discovered I needed to teach—even though it added an extra semester to my college experience. Expensive, but it was worth it!

Having gone on SPICE, I bring a different and fresh point of view to the classroom. My goal is to have students hear about and experience things that I could only dream about in high school. When I teach my students about world geography and history, I tell them about how beautiful it is to walk the streets of Rome, the somewhat disappointing size of the Mona Lisa, and the heart wrenching experience of walking through Auschwitz.

Lexi (Elgersma, '11) **Oudman** teaches history at Sioux Falls Christian High School



Going to Puerto Rico has impacted me in a way that I won't forget. From experiencing the many diverse eco systems within a small island, to seeing the drastic differences between tourism communities and the poor communities three blocks down the road, what I learned from traveling abroad is something that I will take with me for the rest of my life. It has been almost two years since I have been in Puerto Rico, but I still tell friends and family stories and random facts that we learned there.

Professor Rikki Heldt played a large role in making it such a great experience. Her laid back, fun-loving, and carefree spirit made the trip an adventure, while her passion for learning and sharing what she knows made the trip educational. The combination of adventure and education made the trip to Puerto Rico the best class I have taken at Dordt, and one that I will never forget.

INTERVIEW WITH ALEXIS KREUN

What stimulated your interest in international studies and cultures?

I lived for four years in Tucson, a diverse city about 40 minutes from the Mexican border. Being surrounded by a variety of cultural influences definitely stimulated my interest, but I think I first became curious about other cultures as a child, when I participated in Compassion International's Operation Christmas Child. When I was seven or eight, I sent a box to a girl in the Philippines, and she sent a letter back! Jemimah and I became penpals and wrote to each other for 10 years—until we both moved to college. Today we are Facebook friends and although we don't talk as often now, I still consider her one of my closest friends. I have friends from a variety of countries, and these relationships have enriched my life in countless ways.

What have you learned from people from other cultures?

My perspectives and assumptions are constantly challenged and transformed through cross-cultural interactions. My views on human rights, politics, development, poverty alleviation, globalization, and so much more have been radically impacted through my experiences abroad. More importantly, my character has been molded—living life with people different from myself has given me patience, empathy, humility,



DOUG BURKE

Alexis Kreun works with students like sophomore Sora Block, who studied in Nicaragua on SPIN last fall.

and the ability to laugh at myself. Spiritually, living abroad taught me to depend on God and not on myself—being outside of my cultural comfort zone forces me to realize that I don't always have everything under control and that's okay. Worshipping God in a different language and culture has given me a new appreciation for how big and how great our God truly is—he is not confined to the cultural rules of the American church or to my own cultural biases.

Describe an international experience.

When I was living in China, I was doing great. I loved everything about China—the food, the language, the people, even the crazy traffic and the smog! But then came the day I needed to do laundry, and

I could not figure out how to start the washer because all the buttons were in Chinese characters. Seems like a small, insignificant problem, but after about 30 minutes of pushing buttons and yelling at the machine, I sat down on the ground and started to cry. At that moment, I hated everything about China—things that were supposed to be so easy were suddenly so hard!

As I work with international students and off-campus programs here at Dordt, this memory motivates me to be the best advisor and counselor I can be. I understand that culture shock is not always about the big changes—sometimes homesickness and despair can hit because the washing machine doesn't work or because you just can't handle the smell of cows anymore, and you wonder, why did I ever decide to come to this country? It was so much easier at home! Everyone who has lived abroad has asked that question at some point, but in the end, it is always worth it. I have never talked with a student who says he regrets studying abroad; students are always happy that they took on the challenge, and usually they can't wait to go back for more.

Alexis Kreun spends half of her time as support staff for international students at Dordt, and half managing and advising students on off-campus programs.

DORDT DISCOVERY DAYS

DISCOVERY OLYMPICS

JUNE 20-24, 2016

Details and registration can be found online
www.dordt.edu/events/ddd
 Registration opens online April 1, 6 a.m. CST

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Starting difficult conversations about race and immigration

On the first Monday morning in November, Mark Charles stood before a crowd of hundreds in the B.J. Haan Auditorium. When he opened his mouth to speak, no one in the room understood. The unfamiliar words were Navajo, and comprised a traditional Navajo introduction that placed Charles in a genealogy connecting him to four distinct clans. In rehearsing his heritage, Charles began with “the wooden shoe people,” the clan of his mother’s mother, a woman of Dutch descent; he ended with the clan of his father’s father, Tódich’ii’ni, “the bitter water people,” one of the original clans of the Navajo nation.

That moment of disorientation set the tone for the rest of his presentation, titled, “The Trauma of the Doctrine of Discovery.” “I’m going to tell you something that’s going to make you very uncomfortable,” he acknowledged up front. “I want to present a story that most of you have never heard.” The story would be difficult to listen to, Charles said, but there would be hope at the end of it. “You’re going to be tempted to walk out. Don’t. Stay in the conversation,” Charles said.

Mark Charles is the director of Five Small Loaves, an organization that seeks to “forge a path of healing and reconciliation” in our nation by engaging issues of race, faith, and history from a biblical perspective. He blogs at the Wireless Hogan and travels throughout the country, speaking with urgency about issues facing native people today.



Mark Charles

Charles opened his talk that cold November morning by telling a story—a history—that often goes untold. The story begins in 1452, with an edict from the Pope that justified European conquest of “undiscovered” lands and sanctified the enslavement of those who lived there. This and other “Papal Bulls” of the period led to a “doctrine of discovery,” Charles says,

SPEAKER SERIES

The First Mondays Speaker

FIRST | MONDAYS

Series brings thinkers, writers, and cultural leaders to Dordt College to start conversations about ideas that stretch our imaginations, grow our understanding, and help us re-form our world in God-honoring ways. Sometimes the ideas speakers share are inspiring, and the conversations are energizing. Sometimes those conversations are difficult, and the path forward isn’t clear.

fueling a period of European exploration and imperial expansion that many considered to be divinely ordained.

The doctrine’s consequences have reverberated through the history of the Western world, Charles says, surfacing in clauses in our founding documents that dehumanize indigenous people and African Americans, and setting in motion a chain of events that included, among

other tragedies, forced marches of native tribes from their ancestral lands. Many generations of Native Americans have made their homes on the reservations of their displaced ancestors, unfamiliar landscapes on society’s margins, where—despite vibrant cultural traditions that endure—poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence, and teen suicides are symptoms of a traumatic past.

STARTING A CONVERSATION ABOUT RACE

Charles’ presentation at Dordt represents a continuation of challenging conversations about race that began, formally at least, last April, when another First Mondays speaker, Dr. Christena Cleveland, was invited to speak about racial reconciliation within the church and share insights from her book, *Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces that Keep Us Apart*. The conversations speakers like Cleveland and Charles begin in an auditorium full of people continue on the miniature stages of classrooms and dormitories, in guided group discussions or informally over coffee.

“We hope that each First Mondays speaker will challenge students to fully and thoughtfully engage



important cultural conversations,” says Aaron Baart, Dordt’s dean of chapel and an organizer of the series. “We want to provide students with an opportunity to hear firsthand the most important and most articulate voices that are leading this cultural dialogue. Speakers are helping us understand what it

means to do all of these things as knowledgeable and unafraid followers of Christ,” Baart says.

Dordt College junior Heather Kaemingk has attended many First Mondays talks during her three years at Dordt.

She found Charles’ talk to be eye-opening but difficult. A social work major, she remembers learning about the “Trail of Tears” in school, but most of the history Charles related was new to her.

“My memory of how we were taught history is basically: ‘Conquest, victory, freedom,’” says Kaemingk. “But that’s not the whole story.” Aside from learning an incomplete history, she says the geographic isolation of most reservations means that the problems many Native American families face are tucked away from view.

“It’s easier for us to

just forget, to move on,” says Kaemingk.

This moving on interferes with our ability to heal the racial divisions that run deep in our nation, Charles says. According to him, these divisions run along fault lines created by two competing stories about our national past:

“We have a dominant culture that remembers a history of discovery, expansion, opportunity, and growth. And we have minority communities who have the lived experience of stolen lands, broken treaties, cultural genocide, slavery, internment camps, mass incarceration, segregation, Jim Crow laws. We have no common memory,” he says.

“My memory of how we were taught history is basically: ‘Conquest, victory, freedom,’ but that’s not the whole story.”

— Heather Kaemingk, junior social work major

That history still shapes some peoples’ experience of America today, Charles says. It is reflected in our laws and institutions, in the ways we organize our neighborhoods, and in the economic and educational opportunities open—or not—to members of minority groups. “Until we can acknowledge that, we’re never going to have justice here,” he says. In order to move toward healing, he believes we need to begin the process of building a common memory.

Without “a shared past,” we will never achieve true community, Charles says.

And while that’s true in our national life, he says, it’s perhaps especially true in our churches, where we have a biblical imperative to overcome division and seek unity in Christ.

Dr. Jeff Taylor, Dordt College professor of political science, says acknowledging the hard truths of our nation’s history doesn’t mean we can’t also be patriotic.



Jeff Taylor

“If you love your country, that doesn’t mean you need to be blind to its weaknesses, its faults,” Taylor says. “You might think we’re exceptional, but it’s

important to realize: the United States is not God's chosen people; our country is not the Church. And when it comes down to it, even the Church has lots of flaws."

Taylor says we don't need to agree with everything Charles has to say, but it's important to listen to people like him, who challenge us to reconsider what we thought we knew about our nation's history.

"When it comes to perceptions of the United States, our history and culture, we're seeing two largely different narratives," says Taylor. "When one of those narratives is your narrative, it can be very hard to make sense of the other one."

Making sense of the other narrative is precisely what we, as Christians, are called to do, says Dr. Neal De Roo, Dordt philosophy professor and fellow of the Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service, which co-sponsors the First Mondays series. The stories we tell about our past matter, De Roo says. They have the power to shape our sense of who we are as a people, and to enlarge—or limit—our understanding of the body of Christ, which transcends borders of race, culture, and nationhood.

"First, we need to be open to hearing that other people have different experiences of America than we have," he says. "Some peoples' experiences of America are not positive, or they're not uniformly positive." Second, and more difficult, "We need to talk about the ways in which our different experiences of America might be at least partially attributable to racial differences," he says.

There isn't just one American story; there are many, says De Roo. Until we're willing to listen to all of them, "we can't really have reconciliation."

"To truly represent the nature of the body of Christ, we have to be able to have

these hard conversations, and we need to have them in a spirit of reconciliation," he says. Otherwise, we risk drifting apart, merely tolerating one another when we are called to something more radical than that: love.

Dordt sophomore Adam Ter Haar agrees. "The most important part of having these kinds of conversations is being willing to listen, even if someone has things to say that we don't want to hear," he says. A criminal justice and social work major, he has learned in social work courses that "there's always more to the story than we can see."

"There's a reason people feel the way they do, and in order to move forward, we can't just dismiss them," he says. "We need to honestly consider, 'Is there a problem? And am I the one who can't see it?'"

A PATH TOWARD HEALING

"Our people are literally crying out in pain," says Charles. "Our history is dark and the path forward is difficult." Yet his message is ultimately a hopeful one. He believes the Church, in particular, can play a special role in forging a path toward healing and reconciliation, and he sees the Old Testament tradition of lament as a hopeful way forward.

"Lament is a powerful tool, given by God to his followers, through which we can address these deep sins and omissions of our history," Charles says. By creating a platform where native voices can be heard, where their stories can be shared, we can open ourselves to the

pain that lies buried—and to the hope that lies buried there, too.

This kind of listening can be a "de-centering" experience that challenges our own worldview and ultimately enriches it, says Dr. Jason Lief, Dordt theology professor. For the past several years,

"Lament is a powerful tool, given by God to his followers, through which we can address these deep sins and omissions of our history."

— Mark Charles, director of Five Small Loaves

Lief has helped organize Prairie Serve, a service opportunity for area high school students (see page 14). The project brings students and youth leaders to the Winnebago Reservation in Nebraska and provides students an opportunity to listen to—and learn from—native voices.

"We go to the reservation to see how God is present and at work there and, in working alongside the native people, to have our own worldviews challenged," Lief says. After hearing Charles speak on campus, Lief was inspired to create more intentional spaces for listening and learning through Prairie Serve in the future. He hopes it will be one way to, in the words of Charles, "allow God to deepen our understanding of our history, and help us see a way forward."

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

Like Charles, Matthew Soerens prompted hard and thoughtful reflection on another issue with racial dimensions: immigration. In doing so, he wrestled with what the Bible might tell us about our obligations toward our immigrant neighbors.

Soerens visited Dordt as September's First Mondays speaker, and his presentation was prescient. At the time of his visit, the terrorist attacks in Paris and Beirut were still more than a month off, and our national conversation about immigration had yet to be reignited by a refugee crisis—five years in the making—



M. Soerens



During his morning talk, Matthew Soerens challenged Dordt students to respond to immigrants with hospitality, not fear.

that acquired sudden urgency among media outlets and on Twitter feeds. State governors had yet to announce their borders were closed to those fleeing the violence of their home country, and Americans had yet to grapple anew with how to balance the demands of safety and compassion.

Especially in a polarized political climate, immigration can become a shorthand for speaking about racial and religious differences, registering some of our deepest prejudices and fears. According to Soerens, 69 percent of surveyed white evangelicals perceive immigrants as a drain on economic resources and a threat to law and order. That's not surprising, he says: "We're taught to think of strangers as people who are a potential threat to us. The Bible doesn't promise that immigrants aren't a threat to you. But it does command us to love them. And to welcome them. And it does so repeatedly." He points to passages in First Timothy and Titus, where hospitality is held up as a requirement for leadership in the church, and to Hebrews 13, which says in welcoming the stranger, we may welcome "angels without knowing it."

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY ABOUT IMMIGRATION?

Soerens himself grew up in a "wonderful Christian home, in a Bible-believing church," and yet for most of his life, he had never stopped to consider what the Bible had to say about immigration. He's not alone. A mere 12 percent of surveyed Christians said the Bible was their primary influence in how they thought about immigrants.

"For most Americans, I think it's fair to say that immigration is a political issue, it's an economic issue, it's a cultural and social issue. And it is all those things—but it is also a biblical issue," says Soerens.

The word for immigrant appears 92 times in the Old Testament, says Soerens. Many heroes of faith were immigrants: Abraham, Joseph, even Jesus himself, who with his parents fled persecution under a tyrannical government as a boy. Throughout the Old Testament, the immigrant, or foreigner, is mentioned alongside widows, orphans, and the poor—society's most vulnerable groups. This theme is picked up in the New Testament. Christians are called to practice hospitality, or *philosenia*—literally, "to practice loving strangers," a command embodied powerfully by Jesus.

"This isn't just one or two verses we maybe missed somewhere in the Minor Prophets," says Soerens. "This is actually a pretty consistent theme as you go through the Bible." As an immigration counsellor with World Relief, Soerens assists churches in understanding the complexities of immigration from a biblical perspective; he is also the co-author of *Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion & Truth in the Immigration Debate*.

Until he heard Soerens speak on campus, Dordt sophomore Adam Ter Haar had never stopped to consider immigration from a biblical perspective. "I think we sometimes try and put our Christian perspective on a shelf," he says, "and instead of asking what the Bible has to say on an issue, we try to think from the perspective of whatever political party we identify with." As a criminal justice and social work double major, Ter Haar takes seriously his future obligation to protect American citizens from potential

threats. He thinks we can find a way to balance caution and compassion, and he appreciates Soerens' call to wrestle through this complicated issue while rooted firmly in the Word of God.

God's command to us in his Word is unequivocal, says Soerens: we must love and seek justice for the immigrants living among us. He acknowledges that moving from biblical principles to policy is difficult, and the issues raised in the process are complex. There are no easy answers. But the immigration system is broken, Soerens says. It is slow moving and burdensome, and many immigrants must wait years—sometimes decades—to

AU CONTRAIRE

Most objections to immigration reform don't hold up under scrutiny, Soerens says. Rather than an economic burden, 96 percent of economists agree that immigration has a net positive impact on the U.S. economy. Even unauthorized immigrants pay taxes, though they don't qualify for most benefits, and as workers and consumers, they are an engine of job creation and economic growth. Also, despite popular perceptions to the contrary, immigration doesn't increase crime rates: in fact, FBI data has shown for many years that immigrants are less likely than American citizens to commit violent crimes.

On the other hand, Dordt Political Science Professor Dr. Jeff Taylor points out that unauthorized immigrants are vulnerable to exploitation by employers, who may withhold wages or subject workers to unsafe working conditions, knowing their employees have limited recourse to legal action. And, given that unauthorized immigrants are often willing to work for less pay than most American citizens, immigration can put downward pressure on wages in the "lesser-skilled" sectors of the American job market.

Policy questions aside, when it comes to your immigrant neighbor down the street, God's command is clear, says Soerens: we are called to love them—whether or not they're documented, and whether or not they're going to make us more affluent.

Alumni Bits

'60s

Cynthia Nibbelink Worley's ('66) poem "These Photos Now" is the basis of a University of South Dakota art exhibit of local artists and art students. Dordt Art Department Chair David Versluis was invited to participate in the exhibition with a photo montage titled *About to Break Apart*.

Frank Pott ('69) retired from active ministry in 2008 and has since served as vice president for the Parkersburg Economic Development Board. He's served four area churches as an interim pastor and just began his fifth interim pastorate, now in Kanawha, Iowa. He and his wife, Betty, have four children and six grandchildren, and recently celebrated their 53rd wedding anniversary.

'70s

Fred Heerema ('77) retired from his work as a mediator with the Ontario Labour Relations Board in May 2015.

'80s

Roger Wallenburg ('83) was selected to officiate the NCAA DII regional volleyball championships in Saint Paul, Minn., this fall. He officiates in seven NCAA DI conferences and several NCAA DII and NAIA conferences as well. He retired from the army in 2005 and began pursuing an officiating career and teaching part time at Missouri State University. He lives in Springfield, Mo., with his wife, Julie.

▣ **Alan Bandstra** ('89) published *Beyond Control: Heart-Centered Classroom Climate and Discipline* in 2014.



Chad Brands ('89), M.D., serves as vice president and medical director of clinical integration for Children's Health System of Texas in Dallas. Chad and his wife, Marla, have three children and live in Frisco, Texas.



secure authorization for their family members to join them in the states. The system is also outdated, he says. Largely unchanged since 1965, the laws haven't kept pace with economic and political change: "Our laws are saying, 'Stay out,' while our economy is saying, 'Welcome; we need you,'" he says.

Soerens says many immigrants to the United States are fleeing violence or persecution in their countries of origin, or they're seeking greater economic opportunity and a better life for themselves and their families. A minority of them come unlawfully, or overstay their visas—not because they're

criminals, but because the U.S. visa system is backlogged and difficult to navigate. These immigrants, documented or not, play a vital role in our national economy, he says, leading to willful ignorance on the part of employers and selective enforcement of immigration laws. Under these circumstances, the meaning of the law begins to erode. Soerens doesn't mince words: illegal immigration is wrong. But he believes we need to remove the incentives to migrate unlawfully, and to find ways to keep families together.

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT

IMMIGRATION COALITION

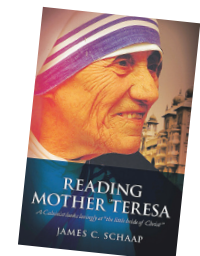
The Evangelical Immigration Table is a broad coalition of evangelical leaders and organizations, including Dordt College, calling for bipartisan solution to immigration reform that avoids the extremes of amnesty or mass deportation. For an outline of its principles guiding reform, visit www.evangelicalimmigrationtable.com.

NEW FROM DORDT COLLEGE PRESS

READING MOTHER TERESA: A CALVINIST LOOKS LOVINGLY AT THE LITTLE BRIDE OF CHRIST

James C. Schaap

This 150-page book is comprised of meditations built on the life, faith, and work of Mother Teresa after Schaap read *Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the "Saint of Calcutta"*.



dp Dordt College Press
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “WELCOME THE STRANGER”? DORDT RESPONDS

Across campus, first-year students in Dordt’s Core 100 course—Kingdom, Identity, and Calling—processed Soerens’ talk in written reflections and group discussions. Students in Dianne De Wit’s section of the course admitted that, before hearing Soerens speak, they didn’t know enough to take a firm position on U.S. immigration policy. Afterward, she says most students felt better-informed and had more nuanced positions on the issue. Though not everyone agreed on the finer points of immigration reform, she says, “They learned so much; their whole perspective broadened.”

Soerens’ talk didn’t trigger a campuswide movement toward perfect consensus, however, says Donald Roth, Dordt criminal justice and business administration professor. In fact, it prompted lively discussion about how to deal with the issue of undocumented immigrants in our churches and communities.



Tara Boer

“Students were buying the idea that it’s not our job as individual Christians to enforce governmental laws and regulations,” Roth says, “but some were still asking, ‘At what point are you being complicit, and not submitting well to the governing authorities?’” In wrestling through these questions, many students’ perspectives were further complicated by hearing the stories of their Canadian classmates, many of whom have first-hand experience navigating our country’s complex immigration system.

Roth says, on the whole, what resonated most with his students was Soerens’ call to reach out to immigrants in their communities—to get to know them through church or community activities, invite them into their homes, share meals, and listen to their stories.

Tara Boer, Dordt social work professor, has purposefully structured her courses

to facilitate this sort of engagement. Boer wants students to “learn to be comfortable being uncomfortable,” and she creates assignments “that lead students to hear stories and build relationships” with people from different cultural or religious groups.

“So often we remain comfortable in our preferred social circles and we fail to seek out relationships with people that live, work, and believe in different spaces than we do,” Boer says. “Jesus spent most of his ministry interacting with the ‘least of these.’” We, too, need to love people in the context of meaningful relationships.

Heather Kaemingk, a student in Boer’s Diversity and Inequality class last fall, grew up in Sioux Center, but didn’t have meaningful interactions with immigrants living in the community until she came to Dordt. She now meets regularly with a “reading buddy” at the local library—he’s six years old, and he often translates for his parents, who are immigrants.

“People often say, ‘This is a Dutch town,’” says Kaemingk. “But Sioux Center isn’t just a Dutch town anymore.”

“So often we remain comfortable in our preferred social circles and we fail to seek out relationships with people that live, work, and believe in different spaces than we do.”

— Tara Boer, social work professor

Over the past decade, Sioux Center’s demographics have shifted dramatically. Partly in response to changing demands within local industry and agriculture, a third of the population is now Latino/a. Like Soerens, Kaemingk sees in the global movement of people a profound opportunity—to share Christ’s love with and to enrich her own understanding of the diversity within the body of Christ.

“There’s diversity here in Sioux Center,” she says. “Just go across the street, and there are people with complex stories you’ll never hear unless you’re open to them.”

While Kaemingk believes it’s important for Christians to advocate for the immigrants in their communities, she sometimes feels overwhelmed by the complexity of policy questions and discouraged by the way the issue is politicized, even within churches. Dordt’s Dean of Chapel, Aaron Baart, has helped her think through her obligations as a Christian and a U.S. citizen, and she strives to engage controversial issues like immigration reform in a way that is “kingdom-charged, not politically-charged.” During the panel discussion following Soerens’ evening talk, Baart challenged Christians to move beyond concerns of economic self-interest and personal safety to achieve a perspective on immigration that is turned upside down by the good news of the gospel.

Thinking about Jesus’ example gives Kaemingk hope. “I can open my ears to my neighbor,” she says. “I can listen to their story and walk alongside them.”

Kaemingk recalls a recent afternoon at the public library. Sitting with her young reading buddy, head inclined toward a shared book, she looked up to see people from different cultural backgrounds

reading, talking quietly, sitting at computers. Among the stacks were recent immigrants to Sioux Center as well as longtime residents. In this everyday gathering of people, Kaemingk says she caught a glimpse of the kingdom of God: “It was beautiful too see two cultures intersecting together. It didn’t matter if someone had documentation or not—my friend and I were there to spend time together. We were there to read a book.”

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT

Alumni Bits

'90s

Stephen Stryd ('92) was promoted to senior special agent for the State of California in Dec. 2015. He leads a team that conducts criminal and administrative investigations on employees of the California Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Born to **Brian** ('95) and **Jennifer** (**Gesch**, '93) **Huselnd**, Lana Kay, Sept. 20, 2015, in Spokane, Wash.

Born to **Wayne** ('95) and Paula **Bakker**, Hannah Joy, Nov. 25, 2015, joins Jack Samuel (1) in Holland, Mich.

Born to Stephen and **Marilyda** (**Stel**, '98) **Chacon**, Cooper John, Aug. 15, 2015, in Denver

Born to **Daniel** ('98) and Dawn **Howeryl**, John Daniel, Dec. 20, 2015, in Redlands, Calif.

Born to **John** ('99) and Rachel **Ton**, Maggie Elizabeth, Feb. 8, 2014, in Hanford, Calif.

Born to **Andrew** ('99) and Holly **Stravers**, Felix Joseph, April 16, 2014, in Gallup, N.M.

Born to Dan and **Marissa** (**Deblaey**, '99) **Hocking**, Wyatt James and Tighe Lee, March 25, 2015, in Cascade, Wis.

□ Born to **Robert** ('99) and **Leah** (**De Groot**, '05) **Bruxvoort**, Eli Jerry, April 16, 2015, in New Sharon, Iowa



Born to **Eric** ('99) and Elizabeth **de Jong**, Jacey Elizabeth, Sept. 20, 2015, joins Alexa Wilhelmina (6) and Brielle Karley (3) in Hanford, Calif.

'00s

Born to James and **Robyn** (**Van Leeuwen**, '00) **Thornburg**, Alexander James, April 9, 2015, in Chicago

Born to Nathan and **Marietta** (**Westra**, '00) **Heeringa**, Hanna Marie, June 2, 2015, in Tulare, Calif.

ALUMNI OVERSEAS: RYAN AND ERIN GROEN ARE AT HOME IN JAKARTA

It all started in Dordt's bowling alley, where Erin (Attema, '98) and Ryan ('96) Groen struck up a conversation with old friends that eventually landed them in Indonesia. It was 2014, midsummer, and the two Dordt alumni were in town visiting Erin's parents. While knocking over pins and chatting with Bethany (Baker, '97) and Andy ('97) Schuttinga, the Groens learned that Bethany, a former Dordt administrator, had recently accepted a position at an international university in Jakarta. The Groens were intrigued. Shortly thereafter, they learned that a position had come open at a grade school in the same group of international Christian schools.

"We were excited about the schools, and the work Christian educators are doing in Jakarta, but we weren't sure the timing was right," Ryan says. Several months and many conversations later, they felt certain God was calling them to go. In July of 2015, they packed their lives into suitcases and moved with their two children, ages eight and 11, to the island of Java, near

the border of the Pacific and Indian oceans. Since then, Ryan has served as head of the Sekolah Pelita Harapan (SPH) school in Kemang Village, one of five SPH campuses in Jakarta committed to educating students from a Reformed, Christian perspective.

This isn't the first time the Groens have followed God's call overseas and across continents. Since leaving Dordt, the

On the face of it, Jakarta is an unlikely place for Reformed, Christian education to have taken root and blossomed.

couple has undertaken an international tour of world cities: four years in Sao Paulo, Brazil; seven in Chicago; and four more in Los Angeles. In all four places, they served in schools rich in diversity, where the Groens were in the ethnic minority. Ryan describes their neighborhood in Southern California as "like the United Nations, with people



PHOTOSUBMITTED

from all over the world.” In Chicago, they watched as their neighborhood was reshaped by what many call “white flight,” learning that, despite challenges, a school “can move forward and even thrive in the midst of demographic changes.”

The Groens have spent nearly two decades translating their lives and work into multicultural contexts. Both say their time as students at Dordt moved them toward this sort of life. The semester Ryan spent living in downtown Chicago as part of the Chicago Semester showed him “what ministry looked like in an urban context.” Meanwhile, Erin discovered a knack for learning languages through her Spanish courses at Dordt, and that skill has served her well throughout the family’s travels. Both Erin and Ryan say their experiences serving through PLIA (Putting Love Into Action) were especially formative, cultivating their commitment to service and nurturing a vocational vision that was global in scope.

These experiences set the stage for their travels around the globe and for their newest adventure in Indonesia. In Jakarta, the Groens live on the 28th floor of a condominium located in the heart of the city. It’s strange, they say, living in a home nearer the sky than street. Ryan describes the long, air-conditioned elevator commute down to smoggy streets, the tropical humidity, the long elevator ride back up to the 22nd floor of the Kemang Village school building. They’re still getting their bearings in their new city. The food is unfamiliar, and they rarely get into a car (a disorienting shift for the former California residents).

Already, though, the Groens have come to love Jakarta. The family often gathers on the balcony to watch huge tropical storms roll in from the ocean. Their neighborhood, populated largely by expats, is an exciting convergence of cultures and languages and world cuisines.

The Groens see God at work in this cosmopolitan city, which like many cities in the developing world bears contours of both poverty and extravagant wealth. The school Ryan leads is an international K–10 school near their home, and it’s



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Ryan, Elise, and Will Groen on their first day of school at the Sekolah Pelita Harapan school in Jakarta, Indonesia.

part of a multi-tiered system “reaching every part of Indonesia for Christ—from the richest families in Jakarta to some of the poorest,” Ryan says.

On the face of it, Jakarta is an unlikely place for Reformed, Christian education to have taken root and blossomed. Most of the city’s inhabitants are Muslim, though there are also many Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians, among other faith communities. The school Ryan leads serves Christian students and families, but it serves many non-Christian families, too. These families are drawn by the school’s rigorous academic program, delivered in English, Ryan says. The Groens see in this a profound opportunity.

“Sekolah Pelita Harapan” means “Light and Hope School,” explains Ryan, and the school he leads serves wealthier Indonesian and ex-pat families whose children are preparing to study at universities abroad. The tuition paid by these students in turn supports other schools in the system, which serve lower- and middle-income families in Jakarta and smaller cities and villages throughout Indonesia. As unlikely as it sounds, Ryan says, “An entire country in Southeast Asia is being impacted by Christian education, and by the transforming power of the Gospel.” As in Sao Paolo, Chicago, and L.A., the Groens are grateful to witness God at work in the diverse world he created—and to be a part of it.

ALEISA DORNBIERER SCHAT

Alumni Bits

'00s

Born to Rick and **Sara (Van Groningen, '00)** Hoffman, Elsie Grace, July 29, 2015, in Mt. Pleasant, Wis.

□ Born to David and **Heidi (Hilbelink, '00)** Greenwood, Heartley Denae, Oct. 5, 2015, in Arlington, Wash.



Born to Tim and **Rachel (Mulder, '01)** Raakman, Micah James, March 14, 2014, and Elijah Peter, Aug. 20, 2015, in Three Rivers, Mich.

Born to Kyle and **Michelle (Gruppen, '02)** Sytsma, Gideon Hanford, Oct. 26, 2014, in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Born to **Matthew ('02)** and Holly **Haan**, Andrew James, Oct. 30, 2015, Rock Valley, Iowa

Born to Adam and **Shari (Olmsted, '02)** Montague, Pax Alexander, March 26, 2016, joins Ella Marie (9), Addison James (7), and Emily Joy (5). Shari intends to graduate with a master’s degree in counseling from Covenant Seminary in Dec. 2017. Adam is studying for a master’s degree in religions and culture at Covenant Seminary in St. Louis.

Born to Tony and **Elizabeth (Graf, '03)** Larson, Anna Lorraine, May 12, 2015, joins Tim (3) in Le Mars, Iowa

Born to John and **Jessica (Geleynse, '03)** Bandstra, Benjamin Herman, May 24, 2015, in Port Perry, Ont.

Born to **Isaac ('03)** and **Leah (Fedders, '06)** Boerema, Gerrit Thomas, Oct. 6, 2015, in Pantego, N.C.

Born to **Jonathan ('03)** and Megan **Huizingh**, Clara Noel, Oct. 7, 2015. Jonathan graduated from Dallas Theological Seminary in Aug. 2015 with a Master of Theology degree.

Born to **Shannon ('04)** and **Bethany (Hoksbergen, '04)** Schuller, Connor Kendall, Dec. 24, 2013, in Orange City, Iowa

Born to **Kyle ('04)** and **Katie (Hoekstra, '04)** Van Arendonk, Harrison, Nov. 26, 2014, in Baltimore, Md.

Alumni Bits

'00s

Born to Chad and **Amanda (Branderhorst, '04)** Jasper, Tinley Ann, Jan. 28, 2015, in Aliquippa, Pa.

Born to Aaron and **Cheryl (Deelstra, '04)** Thompson, Juliet Evangeline, Feb. 3, 2015

Born to Reid and **Kristin (Sneller, '04)** Rozenboom, Collin Jay, July 21, 2015, in Oostburg, Wis.

Born to Michael and **Stephanie (Grydanus, '04)** Dalrymple, Jace Michael, May 14, 2015, joins Steven

Born to Ryan and **Colleen (DeGroot, '04)** Kron, Thaddeus Harold, Sept. 2015, joins Isaiah and Abram in Minneapolis

Born to Justin and **Tami (DeJong, '04)** VanZuiden, Tyler Andrew, Nov. 6, 2015, in Phoenix

□ Born to **Philip ('04)** and **Kristin (Wyant Van De Griend,** Solomon Charles, Dec. 7, 2015, joins Landon and Nadia



Born to William and **Erika (Hydeen, '05)** Strickland, Finnley Rae, April 10, 2015, in Arvada, Colo.

Born to **Jason ('05)** and **Kallie Van Zee,** Piper Bethany, April 22, 2015, in Grinnell, Iowa

Born to Phil and **Katrina (Westra, '05)** Bartel, James Diderich, July 2, 2015, in Kingsburg, Calif.

Born to Andrew and **Kara (Bouma, '05)** Feikema, Wilhelmina (Willa) Beth, July 30, 2015, joins Matias

Born to Tim and **Dawn (Kooiman, '05)** Van Vugt, Norah Gertrude, Nov. 3, 2015, joins Ella Grace (2) in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Born to Dan and **Tricia (De Haan, '05)** Nikkel, Wyatt Daniel, Nov. 16, 2015, in Ankeny, Iowa

Born to Lydell Wiebe and **Ann Andree-Wiebe ('06),** Liska Jane, July 18, 2014, in Hamilton, Ont.

EXPANDING DEFENDER NATION

When I ask Dordt seniors what they think is most valuable about their Dordt education, one of their more common answers is that they value the sense of community they've gained here. Walk across campus and you'll see plenty of evidence of this. Students and faculty pack the B.J. Haan Auditorium every Wednesday to hear Aaron Baart preach from God's Word. Students stick around after class to chat with professors. President Hoekstra invites graduating seniors to have lunch at his house and talk about their Dordt experience. Students make lifelong friendships, grow in their faith, and develop a clearer sense of calling during their time at Dordt.



Building community doesn't just happen; it takes time and effort. Because of that effort, Dordt is a special place.

That sense of community doesn't end when students walk across the B.J. Haan Auditorium stage and receive a diploma. I've seen evidence of this at Dordt Connections Dinners, which the Career Development Center has hosted in cities including Chicago, Kansas City, and Milwaukee. When Dordt alumni get together, they enjoy hearing about what's new on Dordt's campus, but

they also want to learn more about one another. They're eager to connect with other Dordt graduates and revive the sense of community they shared in college. They want to be part of Defender Nation.

In the Career Development Center, we frequently get calls or emails from Dordt alumni who are looking to hire Dordt graduates as interns or full-time employees. Countless Dordt alumni value the education they received and the sense of community they developed while on campus, and they want to maintain those connections across the country and around the world.

This desire is part of the reason the Career Development Center created www.HireDefenders.com, Dordt's online job and internship board. We want alumni and students to connect with one another, no matter where they are. Many of our 1,399 registered employers are alumni, and we encourage any interested alumni to join the 1,953 registrants on the site to view and apply for jobs. The new daily job and internship postings show how much employers value a Dordt education and the people who share it. With HireDefenders.com, we're doing all we can to sustain and promote the sense of community that has helped define a Dordt education.

SARAH MOSS ('10)



DORDT COMMUNITY LIVES ON IN ALUMNI CHAPTERS

On a campus known for its sense of community, what happens to those connections when alumni graduate and spread out all over the world?

One of the biggest benefits of attending Dordt College is the community created on campus. “You live with your closest friends, and others are just a few footsteps down the hall,” says Dordt alumna Kristen Brands ('10).

Like many Dordt alumni, Brands appreciated the camaraderie she had with others at Dordt. “But then you graduate, and the wonderful community present on Dordt’s campus doesn’t necessarily exist in the city or town you go to live in after college.”



Hoping to help bring that camaraderie with her, Brands took on the task of becoming the Sioux Falls chapter leader, helping to organize events and facilitate communication among Dordt alumni in the area. As chapter leader, she’s worked closely with the Alumni Council to create and define the activities of Dordt’s chapters.

Across the country, chapter events have become a way for far-flung Dordt alumni to recreate some of that campus camaraderie in their home communities.

Chapters began as an intentional gathering of likeminded Dordt alumni and friends in 2014, with the first three

Alumni Bits

'00s

Born to **Tim** ('06) and **Chelsea** (**Gerdes**, '07) **Eisenga**, Caleb Fredrick, Aug. 9, 2015

Born to **Nathan** ('06) and **Lisa** (**Rouw**, '07) **Sakuma**, Sienna Hope, Aug. 13, 2015, joins Kaiya (3) in Bow, Wash.

Born to **Scott** ('06) and **Tara** (**De Boer**, '06) **Boer**, Carson Keith, Nov. 19, 2015, joins Tenley in Hull, Iowa. Tara teaches social work at Dordt.



Born to Philip and **Carolyn** (**Breukelman**, '07) **Bosma**, Aubrey Jenna, Dec. 5, 2015, joins Markus Philip (2) and Paige (4) in Edmonton, Alb.

Born to **Luke** ('07) and **Jeanetta** (**Groenendyk**, '08) **Nieuwsma**, Layton Lawrence, Dec. 15, 2015, joins Lydia (5) and Leah (2) in Pella, Iowa

Garrett ('07) and **Hollie** (**Link**, '08) **Hovland** adopted a son, Kade, Dec. 31, 2014, in Renville, Minn.

Born to **Joseph** ('08) and **Leah** (**Wolthuisen**, '09) **Van Walbeek**, Ethan, Jan. 8, 2015, in Eleva, Wis.

Born to **Ross** ('08) and **Lisa** (**Moore**, '06) **Van Der Bill**, Jacob Nathan, June 20, 2015

Born to **Cody** ('08) and **Angela** (**DeGroot**, '08) **See**, Zachary Duane, July 9, 2015, joins Mackenzie Joy (2) in Ontario, Calif.

Born to **David** ('08) and **Elaine** (**Hannink**, '09) **Vos**, Elizabeth Joelle, Aug. 26, 2015, joins Jacquelyn in Lynden, Wash. Elaine is a worship coordinator, and David manages his family’s garden center.

Born to **TJ** ('08) and **Laura** (**Dykstra**, '09) **Lagestee**, Janelle Sue, Nov. 19, 2015, in Sioux Center, Iowa

Born to **Jason** ('09) and **Amanda** (**Locke**, '09) **Hibelink**, Wesley Richard, June 22, 2015, in Cane Ridge, Tenn.

Born to **Matthew** ('09) and Ashley **Chesla**, Judah Ward and Samuel Crews, July 14, 2015, in Marietta, Ga.



DENVER CHAPTER TESTIMONIAL

Chad Nibbelink, 30, graduated from Dordt in 2007

Family: wife Christine (Soodsma) Nibbelink ('09), son Ezra (10 mos.)

I was involved with the Denver chapter picnic in August of 2015. There was a nice turnout and it felt a lot like a reunion. Even though I met many new people, we already had connections, so I put faces with names and made new friends. Many of the Dordt alumni I met are passionate about urban ministry in Denver, so it was great to learn about their work to advance the kingdom in our city. In my experience, Dordt folks have always been creative about finding fun things to do. This event was no different—we tested out new yard games, ate good food, and enjoyed the beautiful Colorado weather.

By participating in the Denver chapter, I have gotten to learn about work that Dordt alumni are doing in a variety of industries in the area. For example, I am not personally involved in oil and gas, but I find it fascinating to talk with alumni in that field and hear how much that industry directly affects our city. It’s also fun to find out about Dordt grads’ involvement in diverse faith communities in the area.

Anyone who moves to a new area realizes how important it is to find a good community. It is valuable to have an alumni community to plug into and meet quality people who have similar values. If you’re thinking about starting a chapter in your area, consider the many benefits and do it!



Alumni Bits

'00s

Born to **Matt** ('09) and **Jana** (**Krygsman**, '09) **Postma**, Johanna Edan, Sept. 6, 2015, in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Born to **Clark** ('09) and **Kaleigh De Vries**, Adelaide Joann, Oct. 17, 2015, in Sioux Center, Iowa

'10s

Born to **Justin** ('10) and **Julie** (**Van Boom**, '10) **Carruthers**, Jayna, Jan. 20, 2015, in Hanford, Calif.

Born to Steven and **Krysta** (**Boroski**, '10) **Kranenborg**, Kate Emmeline, March 27, 2015, joins Kenna Jean (2) in Villa Park, Ill.

□ Born to **Ross** ('10) and **Kyla** (**Jameson**, '09) **De Wit**, Lucy Jean, May 6, 2015, in Auburn, Wash.



Jonathan Vroom ('10) graduated from Valparaiso University Law.

Born to **Brian** ('10) and **Karina** (**Bakker**, '10) **Wierenga**, Trent Sidney, Aug. 8, 2015, joins Miya and Derek in Fenwick, Ont.

□ Born to **Nathaniel** ('10) and **Abigail** (**Dykstra**, '10) **Cordel**, Opal Mae, Jan. 4, 2016, in Great Bend, Kan.



Born to **Michaela** (**McMahon**, '11) **Joslyn, Jaida Nicole**, Jan. 22, 2015, joins Emmet (3) in Grand Island, Neb.

Michelle Kistler ('11) graduated in 2015 from the University of Denver with a master's degree in organizational communication.

Born to **Stephen** ('11) and **Emily** (**Vos**, '11) **Stiles**, Abigail Faith, June 3, 2015, in Alta Loma, Calif.

Born to **Brendan** ('11) and **Sarah** (**Seymour**, '11) **Lyle**, Aurora Belle, Sept. 7, 2015, in O'Fallon, Mo.

Born to **Justin** ('11) and **Addie** (**Dow**, '11) **Krosschell**, Melanie Grace, Nov. 7, 2015, in Sun Prairie, Wis.

chapters established in Big Sky, Montana; Lynden, Washington; and Denver, Colo. Since that time, three additional chapters have been established in Washington, D.C.; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Grand Rapids, Michigan. This summer, new chapters are planned for Chicago, Minneapolis, and Visalia, California.

In the last two years, chapters have hosted a variety of events, including a Denver service project; a corn maze in Bozeman, Montana; a wine and cheese reception during ArtPrize, an art competition in Grand Rapids; and many family friendly picnics.

"Dordt College is not just about the four years you're on campus," says Alumni Director Brandon Huisman. "Our mission statement makes clear that we want to 'equip students, alumni, and the broader community' for kingdom service—chapters are a way of living out that part of the mission."

Dordt's alumni relations team hopes to serve alumni by helping make chapter events a reality. "Alumni chapters bring people together, allow for business

"Our mission statement makes clear that we want to 'equip students, alumni, and the broader community' for kingdom service—chapters are a way of living out that part of the mission."

— Brandon Huisman ('10), director of alumni relations

or job networking, and help plug new people into the area, find churches, and identify new avenues for service," Huisman says.

The idea is not just to bring Dordt to other communities, but to bring people together where they live and allow them to drive the events. "People living in these communities have a much better handle on what is happening there than we do. We trust them, so we rely on our chapter leaders and committees to help come up with ideas for gatherings based on what those living in the area enjoy doing, whether that is service, a social hour, or a fun activity that they can bring



LYNDEN CHAPTER TESTIMONIAL

Aaron Wagenaar, 36, graduated from Dordt in 2001

Family: wife Elise, children Maraaikie (9) and Tyse (7)

What event were you involved with?

Last summer we met at a local park and about 50 people turned out. We shared a relaxed dinner of Subway sandwiches, and the kids enjoyed the playground. Several great connections were made. We met a recent Dordt graduate who was new to the area and were able to secure housing for him.

How has your involvement with your Dordt alumni chapter been meaningful to you?

We live quite far from Dordt and wish we could be closer, but it is so exciting to see how many local people have a special love for Dordt. It's great to see how many people in Lynden are passionate about the things that are going on at Dordt and are invested in its continued growth and success.

What would you say to others who are thinking about starting a chapter or hosting an event?

Go for it! It's a great way to feel connected to Dordt from afar.

Why participate in the life of the college following graduation?

Dordt graduates have a strong networking system—something like that is a gift, especially for new graduates. We would love for our kids to attend Dordt someday, and staying connected is a great way to get our kids excited about Dordt at a young age!





JORDAN EDENS '13

Chapter events bring the Dordt community to alumni where they live. Last fall, the Big Sky Chapter in Montana gathered together with their families for hayrides, a corn maze, barbeque, and a bonfire.

their children to,” Huisman says.

These events are also an investment in the future of the college. “Our alumni are Dordt College throughout the world. They help us reach and recruit new students from their area,” says Huisman. “We believe chapters are important for alumni and for the future of the college.”

Brands says chapters are working to

provide one event in their respective locations each year. “We realize that our alumni are busy and have many commitments,” she says, “but our hope is that—because the events are valuable—people will make the time to come to the chapter event in their area and reconnect with each other and to Dordt College.”

SARAH VANDER PLAATS '05

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dordt.edu/events/ideas



Alumni Bits

'10s

Born to **Roland** ('11) and **Deborah (Jude, '12) Ossae-Oppong**, Abigail Yaa, Nov. 5, 2015, in San Diego, Calif.

Born to **Andrew** ('11) and **Briana (Wubben, '13) VanderWoude**, Jael Addison, Sept. 11, 2015, in Parma, Idaho

Born to **Tyler** ('11) and **Elise (Van Essen, '11) Dooyema**, Jonathan Cole, Jan. 12, 2016, joins Raegan in Sioux Center, Iowa



Joseph Lammers ('12) and **Amber Weingartner** ('12) married Aug. 1, 2015

Kailee (Adams, '13) Wolterstorff earned a master's in public policy and public administration from Liberty University. She works as a development coordinator at Hope House in Norfolk, Va.

Born to **Alex** ('13) and **Brittany (Haan, '13) Geleyense**, Olivia Renee, March 20, 2015, in Waupun, Wis.

Born to **Kody** ('13) and **Paige (Fynaardt, '13) Roos**, Logan James, July 11, 2015, in Altoona, Iowa

Born to **Daniel** ('13) and **Leah (Hananburg, '11) Hofland**, Clara Mae, Sept. 24, 2015, in Pella, Iowa

Born to **Derek** ('13) and **Amy (Van Voorst, '14) Lourens**, Owen Wayne, Oct. 24, 2015, in Sioux Center, Iowa

Leif and **Dorinda (Krause, '13) Scott** married Dec. 22, 2015

Born to **Daniel** ('14) and **Dana (Hananburg, '11) Shuff**, Daxton Jeffrey, July 10, 2015, in Beaverton, Ore.

Born to **Trevor** ('08) and **Jordan Mouw**, Soren Andrew, June 24, 2014. Trevor is guidance counselor at Unity Christian High School in Orange City, Iowa.

Born to **Marcus** ('16) and **Nichelle (Carney) De Jager**, Emmet Joshua and Elsie Ann, Oct. 28, 2015, in Rock Valley, Iowa



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