



Spring 2016

The Voice, Spring/Summer 2016: Volume 61, Issue 3

Dordt College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/dordt_voice

Recommended Citation

Dordt College, "The Voice, Spring/Summer 2016: Volume 61, Issue 3" (2016). *The Voice Archive*. 278.
https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/dordt_voice/278

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the University Publications at Dordt Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Voice Archive by an authorized administrator of Dordt Digital Collections. For more information, please contact ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu.

Voice

THE OF DORDT COLLEGE

SPRING/SUMMER 2016
VOLUME 61 | ISSUE 3 OF 3

virtual dordt

Leading Off

WITH THE PRESIDENT

ARE WE LIBERAL ARTS?

“Liberal Arts” is a term many of us use almost instinctively. We’ve grown up with it, and we sometimes assume that everyone uses it the way we do.

In the work I have the privilege to do at Dordt College, I probably hear “liberal arts” seven or eight times a week from prospective students, current parents, or alumni—often in reference to Dordt College.

I don’t always interrupt the usage—but you might be interested in knowing why “liberal arts” gives me pause.



While Dordt College has many attributes similar to most liberal arts colleges—a residential character, small class sizes, high student graduation and retention rates, personable and relational faculty and staff, teaching excellence, and a strong commitment to curricular breadth—Dordt College is not really a liberal arts college.

We never have been.

A liberal arts college might teach many of the courses we consider vital to a holistic education, but the aim of the classic liberal arts education is to make citizens “worthy of living freely” (from the Latin *liberalis*). We see ourselves as citizens of Christ’s “already and not yet” kingdom, living *Pro Rege*, or “for the King.” So “liberal arts” doesn’t fit us very well.

This certainly does not mean we are anti-humanities, anti-arts, or anti-sciences. Our commitment is to a truly holistic and biblical education that takes every thought captive to Christ. The term “liberal arts” is too narrow to reflect the

interwoven, integral character of God’s creational structure and our call to live fully and broadly as his servants.

Dordt College started as a junior college, and we’re one of the few that have retained two-year associate degrees as a vital part of our mission. In fact, we recently announced an exciting expansion of such programs to help close a gap in Christian higher education.

Dordt was founded to prepare teachers and pastors from a Reformed, Christian world-and-life view. Today, our largest majors are education, business/accounting, engineering, agriculture, and nursing—majors that serve professional and technological fields.

But we aren’t a professional, vocational, or technical school either. Every one of our majors is rooted in our robust and interconnected Core Program, designed to help Dordt graduates grow into effective kingdom citizens—whatever their occupational area of service. In addition to the Core Program, we believe our calling as a college requires the breadth of diverse, yet integrally related, programs we offer.

Perhaps I’m a bit of a stickler about the term “liberal arts,” but I think we have something distinctive here—something more comprehensive and transformational than “liberal arts.”

Soli Deo Gloria!



DR. ERIK HOEKSTRA, PRESIDENT

Voice
THE OF DORDT COLLEGE

SPRING/SUMMER 2016

VOLUME 61 | ISSUE 3

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.

www.dordt.edu
(712) 722-6000

Send address corrections and correspondence to voice@dordt.edu or VOICE, Dordt College, 498 Fourth Ave. NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250-1606

Contributors

Sonya Jongsma Knauss ('97), editor
Sonya.Knauss@dordt.edu

Michael Byker ('92), sports writer

Aleisa Dornbierer-Schat, contributing editor

Sarah Vander Plaats ('05), copy editor

Sally Jongsma, contributing editor

Julia Jansen ('16), student writer

Lydia Marcus ('18), student writer

Vaughn Donahue, graphic designer

Jamin Ver Velde ('99), creative director

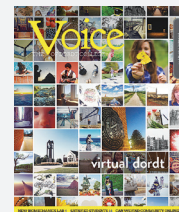
John Baas, vice president for college advancement John.Baas@dordt.edu

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

Each Instagram image on our cover represents a member of the Dordt community, viewing the world from behind a camera (often in the form of a phone). These images depict city scenes and rural landscapes, loved ones and shared meals. See if you can spot scenes from campus—maybe it’s a skylight in the classroom building, or an artfully captured brick wall.





JORDAN EDENS (13)

HIP, HIP, HOORAY

For the graduates who received diplomas at commencement, the day was a mixture of relief, excitement, and sober leave-taking of friends and a campus that was home away from home for the past four years.

Of the 356 graduates, 304 earned baccalaureate degrees, 18 earned Associate of Arts degrees, and 34 earned Master of Education degrees.

NEWS

5 Computer Science receives grant to introduce and promote careers in computing to young women.

7 Senior Carolyne Muthoni Njeri reports for work as a nurse right after graduation.

8 Artists and engineers create electronic sculptures together.

FEATURES

13 Two student films, "Defector" and "8,000 Miles with Dad," earn multiple awards.

15 Kyle Fosse earns national accolades for his sound design.

20 Pam De Jong and the ASK Center transistion: De Jong retires and the ASK Center becomes the Academic Enrichment Center.

ALUMNI

29 Dordt College students and alumni find their place in a digital world.

34 Jonathan Posthuma ('12) wins the Karel Szymanowski International Composition Competition.

38 Alumni Association offers scholarships to seven junior students.

PURPOSEFUL LIVING

I know purposeful living is a bit of a buzz phrase right now, but I like it. In one of the last chapel gatherings this year, Dean of Chapel Aaron Baart spoke about what it means to be purposeful.



He defined purposefulness as "creating habits and practices that reflect the things we love." With references to Psalm 119, and the way it speaks to the psalmist's desire for where he wants his heart to go (an "obedience trajectory"), and to Jamie Smith's "I am what I love," Baart's message was a good reminder to the students and employees filling the B.J. Haan Auditorium.

How can discipline, habit, and practice move us along to where we want to be? Healthy Christian discipleship, said Baart, is about practicing who you want to be and reflecting on where you want to go. It's about being on an obedience trajectory, not inspired by fear of the law, but by love of the law-giver.

I appreciate that way of thinking through what it means to be purposeful in the patterns, habits, and practices of my own life. What do I get excited about? What do I make time for, and what does that say about me? I think those are great questions for our recent graduates to continue asking themselves as they go out to serve and put their wisdom and knowledge to work in the world.

Sonya Jongma Knauss

SONYA JONGSMA KNAUSS ('97), EDITOR

BODIES IN MOTION: GRANT FUNDS BIOMECHANICS LAB

Dordt College has been awarded a \$130,800 grant from the Roy Carver Charitable Trust that will help fund a state-of-the-art Motion Biomechanics Laboratory in which students can record and analyze the forces and motions associated with human movements.

The laboratory facility will consist of an array of cameras and markers that allow students to track the three-dimensional spatial position of a person or object over time. "Think recording Andy Serkis' movement to animate Gollum in the *Lord of the Rings* movies," says Dr. Kayt Frisch, the engineering faculty member who will be most involved with the laboratory.

The laboratory will also include a force plate. "Think of a highly sensitive bathroom scale that records forces and movements in three directions—front to back, left to right, up and down," says Frisch. (A bathroom scale measures only the up-and-down direction.)

"Combine these two pieces of equipment and you have the ability to infer a lot about the forces acting on body joints, like your ankle or knee," she says.

The lab will be used extensively in two of Frisch's courses and in her research.

Engineering students in her biomechanics course will use the lab to learn how

a person's movements create forces on the body. They will also investigate how changing the conditions of movement—for example, wearing a backpack, running barefoot, or walking in high-heeled shoes—affect the forces on knees.

The physics course taken by pre-health and construction management students will also use the lab for observing, measuring, and predicting forces and motion. Last year's class tackled questions such as "How does running on different surfaces affect the force on the leg at landing?" and "How does foot placement affect the initial velocity of a kicked soccer ball?"

"This is a very accessible topic for students because they have lots of experience with movement," Frisch says. "Previous projects have been hampered by an inability to collect meaningful data. This lab will provide resources for answering those real-world questions students are curious about."

The lab will expand the collaborative research Frisch is doing with Volleyball Coach Chad Hanson, Strength and Conditioning Coach Adam Conway, and Athletic Trainer Chris Fagerness, studying the forces and motion involved in hitting a volleyball

and how they affect shoulder injuries in volleyball players. It will also open up opportunities to mentor students doing undergraduate research in biomechanics.

Students from a variety of majors will benefit from the lab.

"Systems like these are typically found in research labs, gait analysis clinics, and animation studios."

— Engineering Professor Kayt Frisch

"This opens up a new and exciting world of possibilities in animated computer graphics," says Digital Media Professor Mark Volkers. "This massive tool will let us create things we couldn't before. Most large schools don't even have such capabilities."

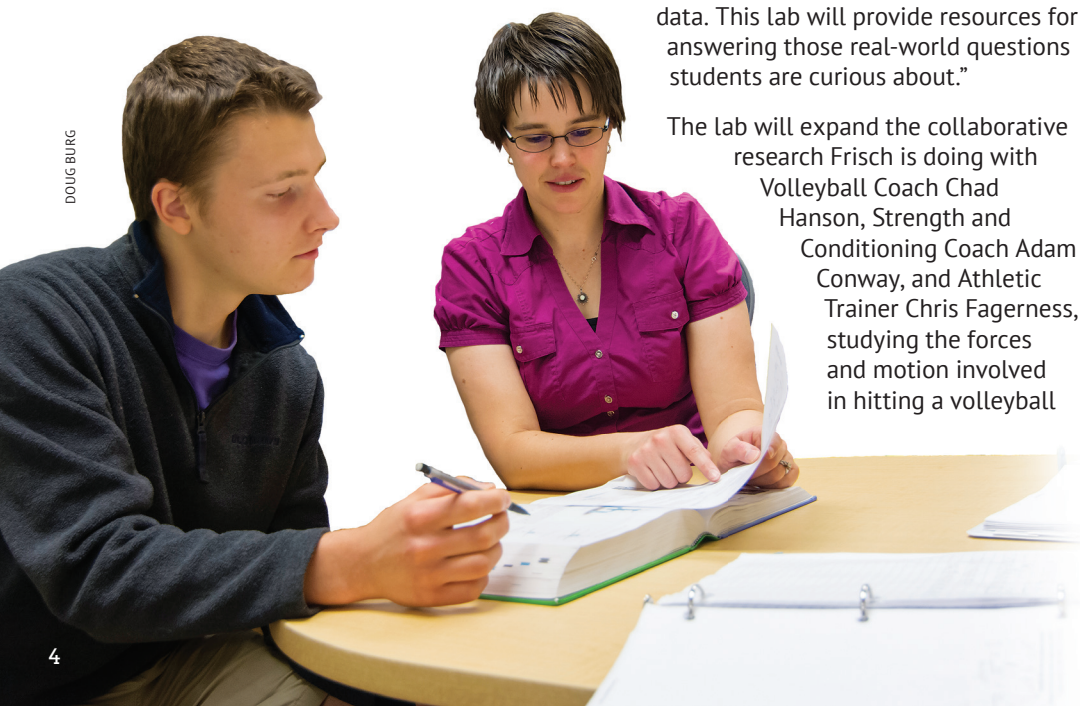
Engineering, exercise science, biology, physiology, statistics, art, and digital media students will all benefit, says Frisch.

"Systems like these are typically found in research labs, gait analysis clinics, and animation studios, so having a motion biomechanics lab on campus will create unique opportunities for Dordt students to learn to use technology they wouldn't otherwise see until they enter the professional world," says Frisch.

The Motion Biomechanics Laboratory will be ready for use this fall.

SALLY JONGSMA

The Motion Biomechanics Lab will help Dr. Kayt Frisch's students move from textbook to more hands-on learning.



DOUG BURG

BREAKING THE STIGMA OF WOMEN IN COMPUTING

Dordt College is one of four institutions awarded the 2016 NCWIT Academic Alliance Seed Fund. Sponsored by the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT), with support from Microsoft Research, the fund supports academic programs focused on recruiting and retaining women in computing.

NCWIT research has shown that although 57 percent of professional occupations in the 2015 U.S. workforce were held by women, they held only 25 percent of professional computing occupations.

"There appears to be a cultural stigma surrounding the computing profession that it's a man's world," says Computer Science Professor Kari Sandouka.

Dordt College will receive up to \$10,000 to help encourage female students to pursue computing. This summer, Dordt will offer tuition assistance for middle and high school girls who sign up for computer-related offerings at the summer academic camps, Dordt Discovery Days and IDEAS (Investigating, Discovering, and Excelling in Academics and Service).

Sandouka believes offering tuition assistance could significantly increase the exposure of female participants to computer science-related careers and skills while in middle and high school.

"Waiting until a high school senior visits campus as a prospective student is too late, as they almost always have made another choice for their major," says Sandouka. "These conversations need to start earlier." At present, few schools offer courses in computer programming or related fields, let alone require them for graduation.

Sandouka hopes to teach more women in her computer science classes in the future.

"Ultimately, increasing women's participation will lead to a more innovative and competitive technology workforce."

Dordt also plans to begin a "Girls Who Code" club, offering opportunities for young women and girls to be exposed to computer science related professions. The club will put them in contact with women in industry.

"Ultimately, increasing women's participation will lead to a more innovative and competitive technology workforce," said NCWIT CEO and co-founder Lucy Sanders.

"As people within God's kingdom, we are all given different talents," says Sandouka. "Those talents grow to strengths in a fostering environment that allows us to act on those talents and develop them. We each bring different things to the table—whether it's a different perspective that aids in the problem-solving process or a view of life that contributes to the overall function of the software. Companies and the computing industry as a whole lose out when they exclude individuals based on gender, race, or other attributes."

In the U.S. in 2013, women earned 57 percent of undergraduate degrees. Yet women earned less than one-fifth of undergraduate computer and information sciences and engineering degrees. NCWIT hopes that providing engaging tech-related opportunities can help change this trend.

"My path to computing professions started by way of an internship," says Sandouka. "I liked seeing how people were more efficient in their jobs once they were aided by technology."

She also enjoys the fact that "there's always something new to learn," she says.

Careers in computing vary greatly and require a broad range of talents.

"Problems can be solved in multiple ways, but that is the beauty and creativity of it," says Sandouka.

"There's a scientific process behind writing software and working with technology, and there is a creative aspect that makes you feel like the world is at your fingertips."

SALLY JONGSMA

JORDAN EDENS (13)

Campus Kudos

American College Theater Festival (ACTF) **Certificate of Merit awards** were awarded to two productions put on at Dordt College last year. *Ash Girl* awards went to Jerusha Pimentel for makeup/hair design, Sue Blom for costume design, and Jeremy Vreeken for scenic design. *Godspell* awards went to Peter Rexford for sound design, Professor Josiah Wallace for scenic design, and the cast for ensemble acting.

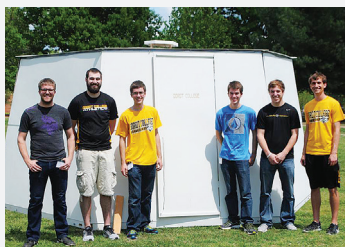


Twenty-five students from the Dordt College **Agriculture Club earned awards** in a variety of categories at the National Post-Secondary Agriculture Students (PAS) Conference and Convention in March. Dalton Webster, Rachel Limmex, Wendi Jo Vande Voort, Kyle Fischer, Mitchell Palmer, Rachel Hatfield, Alayna Gerhardt, Ellie Rethmeier, Ellen Westover, and Bethany Borup won four first-place awards, four second-place awards, and three third-place individual and team awards.

The Dordt **Forensics team finished on a high note** at the 19th Annual National Christian College Forensics Invitational in March, taking third place in the small entry division for debate. First-year students Matthew Ojo and Michel Gomes made it to the quarterfinals in the novice division of the National Parliamentary Debate Association. Gomes came in seventh as individual speaker in the novice division. Sophomore Ben Kuiper and junior Josh Bootsma were sixth overall and second as novices in individual events. First-year student Bethany Van Eps took fifth overall and second as a novice in After Dinner Speaking.

A team of Dordt College **engineering students earned second place** for their bridge display and fifth place overall at the regional American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Student Steel Bridge Competition in March. The team included Juan Pablo Benitez Gonzalez, Benjamin Kielstra, and Vanoy Harris.

A team of **construction management majors took fourth place** overall at the John Brown University Disaster Shelter Competition. The shelter was designed and constructed by Jason Goslinga, Aaron Hooyer, Jesse Hooyer, Alec Jensen, Ross Rozeboom, and Cody Zimmerman. The team took first in the heat retention test, second in timed set up, second in ease of assembly, and second in wind loading.



Dordt College won **\$500 in wellness dollars** and achieved gold status for the large number of employees who participated in and completed a state of Iowa Financial Fitness Challenge. More than 7,500 employees in the state participated in the challenge.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Biology students have been surprised at the range of careers available to professionals in their major.

BIOLOGY CLUB CAREER PANEL

On April 2, more than 20 Dordt science students spent the evening talking with six professionals in the field of biology. Students and professionals enjoyed a meal together while the guests talked about their career paths and current jobs. Guests included Kara DeGroot, a nurse practitioner in Orange City, Iowa; Kristen (Rietsema, '05) De Berg, a genetic counselor in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Tyler Brock, a deputy director of Siouxland District Health Department in Sioux City, Iowa; Dawn Clemens, a pharmacist in Sioux Center; Brad Kamstra, a physician in Rock Valley, Iowa; and Brittany Richardson, a professional services embryologist at Trans Ova in Sioux Center.

"It was a great opportunity to understand what my options are," said first-year student Hakyung Kim. "There were so many professions I didn't know existed or that I didn't think of as biology related."

"One of our goals is to expose students to the wide variety of career opportunities available to them with a biology degree," said Biology Club officer and junior Shannon Vander Berg. "It also connects Dordt's academic community with the professional community."

The event didn't alter Kim's goal of attending medical school after graduation. She says, "It was refreshing to see so many professions in the scientific fields working together."

"As a student interested in medical school, these career-oriented events also helped me make connections with area physicians," said Vander Berg. "Even for those of us who feel committed to a particular career path, it's helpful to see what's going on in other biology-related fields."

LYDIA MARCUS ('18)

CAROLYNE MUTHONI NJERI: READY FOR NURSING

As a student in Kenya, Carolyn Muthoni Njeri had known for years that she wanted to study abroad after high school—but it seemed like an impossible dream. This spring, Njeri graduated from the Dordt College nursing program.

Her journey toward medicine began in Kenya. Like all Kenyan students graduating from public high schools, Njeri was required to work for two years before attending university. Njeri chose an organization that cares for people with heart disease.

At her job, Njeri met an intern from Zawadi Africa, an organization that enables academically gifted girls with financial difficulties to study abroad. The organization requires women involved in their program to have a B+ GPA and demonstrate excellent leadership skills.

During the yearlong application process,

Dordt was one of the seven colleges Njeri was connected to through Zawadi Africa. Although she seriously considered attending Augustana, Njeri chose Dordt College after Dr. Curtis Taylor, the former dean for global education at Dordt, paid Njeri a personal visit.

“He gave me the inside story about Dordt and promised to help me find funds, and that convinced me,” Njeri said. “I trusted God to provide me with an opportunity to study abroad, and he provided.”

Understandably, moving to Iowa from Kenya was an adjustment. “I really didn’t know what to expect,” Njeri said. “When I first came here, I wondered if this was really the U.S. There were a lot of things that were hard to adjust to, but I came here to study, and I love the education system here.”

CHANGE OF PLANS

“I had planned to study in the U.K. because I had sponsors from there who had supported me during high school. But one of the interns I worked with was from Massachusetts and convinced me to study in the United States. She connected me with Zawadi Africa, and everything since then has been a blur and a blessing,” Njeri said.



Even more of an adjustment than the education system was the worldview Njeri encountered at Dordt. “I had never heard of the Reformed perspective before,” Njeri said. “It’s the perspective I now choose to view the world through—I’m honored to be living out my cultural mandate as a response to grace.”

Njeri is living out her cultural mandate through her involvement in Dordt’s nursing program.

“Before coming here, I didn’t know much about nursing,” she said. “I had no idea what I was getting into, but I appreciate that the nurses in America are highly respected and can do a lot in their communities.” After graduating in May, Njeri began working as an R.N. in the cardiac arrest unit at Sanford Health in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Following a year there, she hopes to attend graduate school.

“I think I am prepared for the real world,” Njeri said. “For me, having seen the real world—a world where there are not many Christians—seeing a world like Dordt has really strengthened me. I can tell that God is preparing me to go into both kinds of worlds. The Reformed perspective has molded me to think in certain ways, and I know I’ll be able to reflect Christ’s love anywhere I am.”

JULIA JANSEN ('16)

JORDAN EDENS ('13)



ENGINEERING AND ART

Engineering and art students create moving sculptures together.

At Dordt College, it's not unusual for departments to collaborate on cross-disciplinary projects. Few have been as original as the partnership between the engineering and art departments, who recently teamed up to engineer art. This spring semester, an electrical engineering class joined a sculpture class to create interactive kinetic sculptures.

"This was a new venture in collaboration between two unlikely yet very compatible groups," said Art Professor Sara Alsum-Wassenaar, who taught the sculpture class.

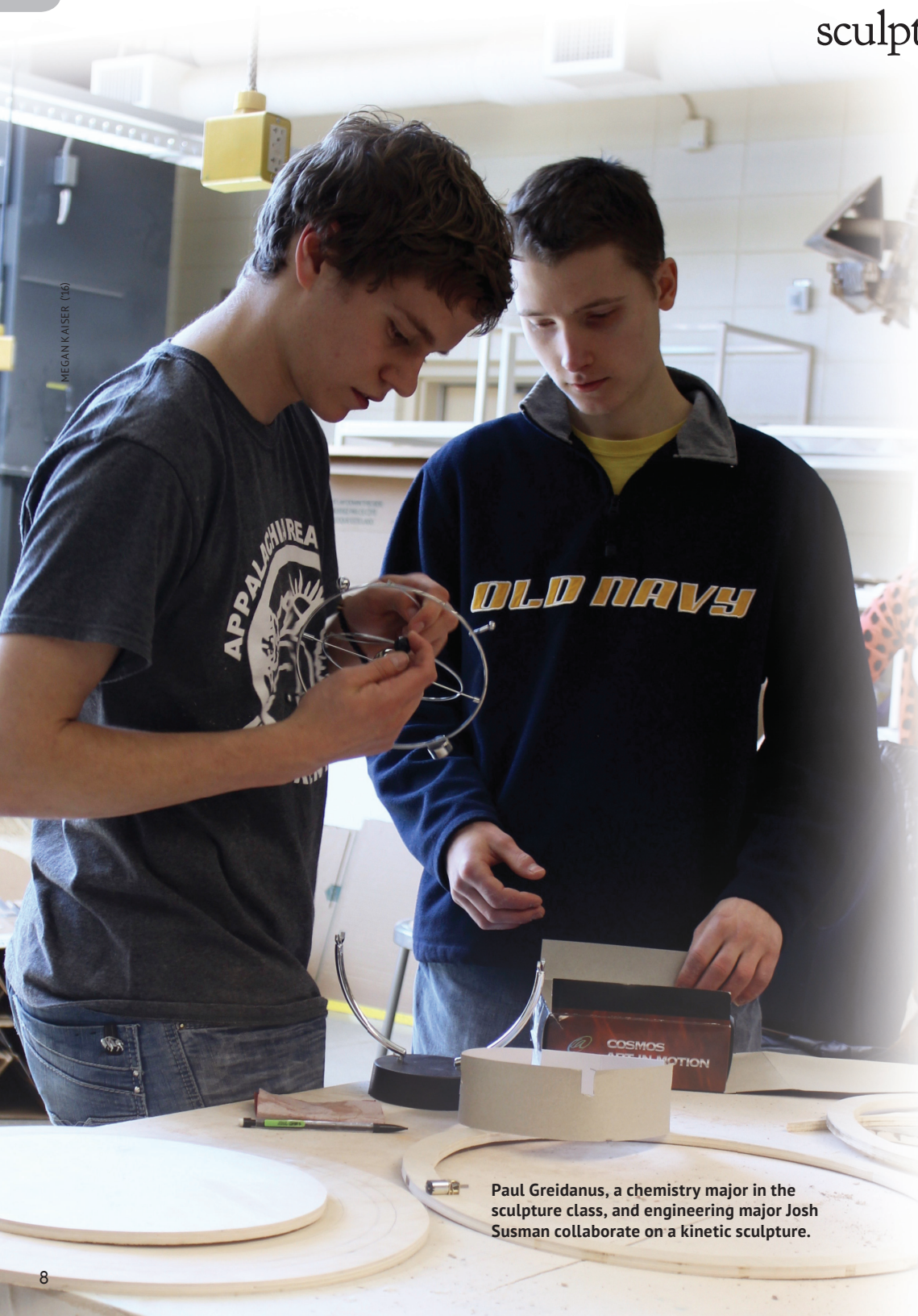
Last summer, Alsum-Wassenaar became interested in using Arduino software, an open-source electronic prototyping program used to create an interactive sculpture. Alsum-Wassenaar spoke about her idea with Engineering Professor Doug De Boer, who uses Arduino in his electrical engineering class. De Boer was enthusiastic about the partnership, and the project "took off from there."


"We wanted to create collaborative sculptures that drew on the strengths of the students involved," says Alsum-Wassenaar. "The art students brought creativity and building skills, and the engineers brought practical questions and an understanding of the electrical components."

"Our classes even meet at the same time so it was just meant to be," she adds.

"In the middle of February, we began learning how the Arduino software worked to help us envision what sort of sculptures were possible with this technology," said junior art student

Paul Greidanus, a chemistry major in the sculpture class, and engineering major Josh Susman collaborate on a kinetic sculpture.





When plugged in, this sculpture's eyes glow green. It even makes scary noises.

“This was a new venture in collaboration between two unlikely yet very compatible groups.”

— Art Professor Sara Alsum-Wassenaar

Hope Kramer. “Then we met with engineers and explained our ideas, and they broke into teams and joined our groups based on what they were interested in programming.”

The engineering and art students met every few weeks to discuss their plans and the progress they had made on their respective tasks.

“We talked through and drew out lots of ideas and modified them based on what else came to mind,” said Kramer. Students from both majors then worked together to assemble their sculptures.

“One thing I’ve learned in this project is how important communication is,” said senior engineering student Joshua Susman. “I’ve enjoyed problem-solving

with my group. Coordinating with others takes work, but it is so very worth it.”

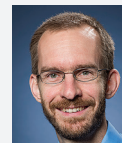
“I’ve enjoyed the blend of technology and art in this project,” said Kramer. “I majored in engineering my freshman year and have switched over to being an art major, so it’s really fun for me to see how these two very different areas of study can be brought together in a really cool way.”

“I hope more cross-department collaborations continue here at Dordt College, particularly between mathematically based departments and the humanities,” said Alsum-Wassenaar. “I think we have a lot to teach each other about value in God’s creation.”

LYDIA MARCUS ('18)

Faculty Bits

Agriculture Professor Dr. **Jeremy Hummel** co-facilitated a workshop called “Early Season IPM,” which addressed spring pesticide management issues, at CanoLab 2016 in Lethbridge, Alb., on February 17 and 18.



Agriculture Professor Dr. **Duane Bajema** received a grant from the Sioux County Pork Producers to investigate how often and to what extent manure haulers were exposed to hazardous gases.



History Professor Dr. **Scott Culpepper** gave a presentation titled “Evolution or Devolution: The Kansas State Board of Education Evolution Controversy” at the Mid-American Studies Conference at the University of Kansas in March.



Mathematics Professor Dr. **Valorie Zonnefeld** and current student **Kate Van Weelden** ('17) presented a poster titled “Mindset Training for Undergraduates in Developmental Mathematics” at the Learning and the Brain Conference: Shaping Student Mindsets on February 12 in San Francisco.



Chemistry Professor Dr. **Channon Visscher** co-authored an article titled “The LEECH Exoplanet Imaging Survey: Characterization of the Coldest Directly Imaged Exoplanet, GJ 504 b, and Evidence for Super-Stellar Metallicity,” published by Skemer et al. in *Astrophysical Journal*.

Political Science Professor Dr. **Jeff Taylor** presented a paper titled “The Political World of Bob Dylan” at the Midwest Political Science Association annual conference in Chicago in April.

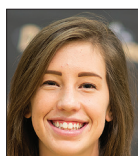


SPORTS UPDATES: THE SEMESTER IN REVIEW

Early in the semester, **men's basketball** ended their season by earning a place in the post-season playoffs for the 11th season in a row. Four Defenders—Dalton Franken, Alec Henrickson, Nathan Rindels, and Leighton Sampson—received All-GPAC honors at the conclusion of the season, and Rindels also claimed CoSIDA Academic All-District honors. Rindels, along with J.D. Boer, Bryan Sumner, and Danny Vos, was named Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes as well.

The **women's basketball** team, coached by first-year Head Coach Katie DeWitt-Severson, earned a first-time-in-program-history sweep of Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. Mycah Hulst and Cassidy Vredevoogd claimed All-GPAC honors at the end of the season, and Abby Chapman, Shae De Jager, Paige Engbers, Kim Kroeze, and Jora Vander Hart were all named Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes.

The **Blades hockey team** finished the season with a 10-15-1 record and had a pair of players selected as ACHA Division



Mycah Hulst



Vredevoogd

ON THE REBOUND



One off-the-court highlight of the men's basketball team was the very successful Tip Night the team organized at the Sioux Center Pizza Ranch in support of teammate Jacob Lewis, who was injured in a car accident on March 24. Lewis spent time at the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln, Nebraska, and returned home in May to continue his recovery.

III Regional honorees. Kevin Grootenboer and Lucas Koomans were also picked to compete in an all-star event in early April, representing the conference.

The **men's volleyball** team competed as a varsity team for the first time and had nine players claim post-season notice. Mark Tiemersma earned second-team All-Conference honors while Marcus DeWeerd, Eric Geels, Andrew Koetsier, Davis Konynenbelt, Lucas Koomans, Austin Lindemulder, Mark Schussler, and Kyle Vander Zee were all named as academic All-Conference honorees.



Tiemersma

The **indoor track and field** season came to an end in early March at the NAIA National Championship meet in Johnson City, Tennessee. Mycah Hulst (high jump), Kelsey Lewis (800 meters), Jacob Moats (high jump), Justine Van Zee (1,000 meters), Sam Wensink (1,000 meters), and the women's 4x800 and women's 4x400 all earned NAIA All-American status with top-eight finishes.

The **outdoor track and field** season will come to a conclusion in late May at Gulf Shores, Alabama, after the *Voice* goes to print. Several athletes have qualified to compete at the event.

Baseball won 19 games this season and was in the hunt for a GPAC post-season tournament berth on the final day of the

season. Cam Gingerich and Jake Thayer both surpassed the previous single season hit record of 56 with 64 and 61 respectively. Both joined the 100-career hit club along with Bryan Wallman this season, and Connor Hopkins tied the single-season strikeout record by a pitcher with 70, tying a record set in 1979. The 19 games won tied the top total in program history.



Gingerich



Thayer

The **softball** team posted a record of 24-22 and saw its season end in the GPAC post-season tournament. The win total was the highest since the 2002 season. Kassidy Van Voorst completed her softball career with a record 144 stolen bases (the previous mark was 80) and 140 hits, which ranks 11th all-time. Samantha Johnson also worked her way into the top-20 in career hits with 121, which ranks 16th all-time, and Andrea Pierce went over the 100-hit plateau this season.

The **golf** season was highlighted by senior Micah Roos earning Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete honors, while Tony Kallevig posted a team-best 76.6 average. The women's team was paced by Kristin Stoffels and a scoring average of 91.8.

MIKE BYKER ('93)



Jacob Moats

PHOTO SUBMITTED

HONORING RETIRING FACULTY

Dr. John Visser

"Dr. John Visser has been known for his gift of hospitality," said President Erik Hoekstra at the annual retirement tribute dinner this spring. "I think he's been a professor to the world throughout his long career." Visser, who has taught a range of business, finance, and international business courses on campus, has also taught, mentored, and disciplined students in places such as Russia, China, and Africa.



DOUG BURG

In high school, the only thing Visser was sure he didn't want to

do was teach. "But I've loved every minute of it," he says today. Visser is known by his business students as being one of their more difficult professors. "Dedicated," "servant leader," "pours his heart and soul into what he does," "masterful at bringing students along," "challenging," "rigorous," and "trusted mentor" are just some of the words former students and colleagues use to describe Visser and his teaching.

Dr. Charles Veenstra

Dr. Charles Veenstra has a reputation for being a calm and encouraging mentor to both students and colleagues. He helped students think about how to further God's kingdom through what they say and write and how they listen. "He's the best listener I've ever met" is a frequent comment from students. Veenstra is also known for genuinely caring about his students and telling them "God will surprise you." He has been committed to training his students not just for careers, but for communicating with family, friends, and community members.



DOUG BURG

"He challenged me to find who I am," said one student in tribute. "He pushed us to think, to have opinions," said another, who describes Veenstra as opinionated—in a way that pushes students to live what they think and believe. It's difficult to overstate Veenstra's impact on the students who have gone through his courses during his 40 years at Dordt College.



Christian Community Development Iowa

Join more than 200 local and regional service providers, students, faculty, and pastors serving in community development.

October 27-29, 2016, at Dordt College



Featuring speakers John Perkins, Kurt Rietema, Mark Prosser, and Joel Van Dyke

Find out more at dordt.edu/events/ccdiowa



Faculty Bits

Education Professor Dr. **Timothy Van Soelen**

was the keynote speaker at the National Christian School Association

Conference in Richmond, Va., in March.



Art Professor **David Versluis** participated

in a collaborative fine arts event and exhibition of visual work and poetry that

responded to the theme of the biblical character Leah. The work was exhibited in the Te Paske Gallery at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, in February. In April, he participated in the Orange City Arts Council's *Regional Juried Art Exhibition* in Northwestern's DeWitt Theatre Arts Center.

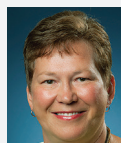


Also in April, Versluis gave a presentation titled "David Versluis: Graphic Design—Life and Work" to art department faculty and students at South Suburban College, South Holland, Ill. He displayed a collaborative work with University of Northern Iowa Art Professor Roy R. Behrens titled *Iowa Insect Series* in the exhibit *Graphic Designers Collaborate: Attention to Detail* at South Suburban College in South Holland, Ill.

Social Work Professor **Abby Foreman**

gave a presentation titled "Perceptions of the contract-for-services relationship: the impact of trust" at Midwest Political Science Conference this April in Chicago.

Communication Professor **Kae Van Engen** received the Outstanding Educator 2016 award at the International Listening Association Convention in Tucson, Ariz., on March 12. At the conference, Van Engen also gave a presentation with International Listening Association executive board members about developing curricular activities and units to teach listening in grades pre-K through 12.



ANNUAL FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS ARE ANNOUNCED

Business Professor **Art Attema** received this year's John Calvin Award at the annual board and staff dinner in March. The award is presented each year to a faculty member who demonstrates a commitment to teaching from a Calvinistic perspective and for developing and transmitting reformational insight in a discipline.



"This professor has inspired and instructed me in living a Reformed world and life view by living authentically both inside and outside the classroom," said one student. Other nominators were equally complimentary:

- "One of the things I appreciate most about this professor is his ability to gently give feedback, always doing it in such a way that it makes you think—and desire to change your behavior versus getting defensive and defiant."
- "Joy and laughter follow him wherever he goes—he always has a smile to brighten someone's day and offers an encouraging word to those he meets."
- "This professor has high standards for his students in his classroom and pushed us to do our best."
- "He offered practical tips and suggestions for how to get a job and become invaluable as a team member."

Dr. Channon Visscher received this year's Award for Noteworthy Scholarship or Service. Dordt faculty members are serious about their role as teachers, about serving the nonacademic community, and about scholarship that reflects an integrated understanding of the disciplines and how they connect to each other, said Dr. Nathan Tintle in his congratulatory remarks.



Visscher reflects all of these roles, he noted. He has taken a leadership role in faculty discussions about best practices in the classroom. He is dedicated to having an impact on the broader world through demonstrations at local schools, leading Bible studies in his areas of expertise at his church, and challenging the Dordt community to stand in awe of creation as citizen scientists. He takes an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to his scholarship, wrestling through issues of faith and science with faculty and students. His work has been funded by numerous grants, and he has actively involved undergraduate students in summer research projects that have led to publications in high-impact journals—one of which was recently picked up for a news piece by the BBC.

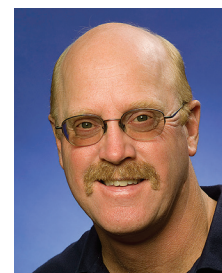
Most recently, Visscher was honored by a joint appointment at the prestigious Space Science Institute.

Dr. Walker Cosgrove received this year's Excellence in Teaching Award. In his congratulatory comments, Provost Eric Forseth praised Cosgrove's ability to challenge students in core classes, noting that he is a master teacher and his classroom is a place of enthusiasm and extraordinary wit. "Cosgrove is known for his interdisciplinary interests and his drive to grow professionally and to continually improve his teaching," said one colleague. Others noted, "He relates well to both students and colleagues" and "He is more interested in shaping a whole person than just shaping a student academically." "Even though I received a lower-than-normal grade for me, I learned an extraordinary amount in this course," said one student. Another student shared, "I never liked history, until I took a history course from Dr. Cosgrove."



Staff Excellence Awards were given to two employees this year.

Coworkers describe **Vern Eekhoff**, custodian of the Science and Technology Center, as "a hard worker who is always willing to pitch in and help whenever someone needs an extra hand, always going the extra mile to make sure that things get done whether it is convenient for him or not," "so happy and helpful all the time," "seen on the snowplow, mower, sprayer, and tree trimmer," "participating in the Prairie Grass Film Challenge," "fun to have around," and "a servant heart and a great example for others."



Academic Support Specialist **Corrine Hentjes**, who has served for nearly 40 years in part- and full-time faculty and staff roles, was described as "genuinely devoted to serving the students and promoting Dordt's mission," "always has time to stop and talk with students, and she never gets impatient with them," "a supportive colleague always willing to help think through a problem," and "a great encourager." Hentjes provides guidance to international students and serves the broader community through personal volunteer experiences, using her Spanish fluency for the good of her immigrant neighbors.



SALLY JONGSMA

TWO STUDENT FILMS ARE MAKING THEIR MARK

Defector

Most people don't think of Northwest Iowa when they think of World War II. But, for five film students at Dordt College, the two will always be linked.

Defector is the story of one American and one German defector—soldiers who leave the army—during World War II. It was the semester-long project of the five film students in Professor Mark Volkers' Short Film Production class last fall.

The film tells the story of an American soldier—John Thomas, played by first-year student Tebi Njilefack from Cypress, Texas—who cannot face the pressures of war and eventually befriends his Nazi prisoner of war.

Each student in the five-person class had a specific role in producing the film. The film's director, Kyle Fossé, a junior from Mozambique, wrote the script last summer in anticipation of using it for the class. Volkers, who teaches Dordt's digital media production courses, loved the script but let students decide whether to use it.

"The team has to pick a script," he said. "If they're not passionate about it, they won't do well."

The purpose of Short Film Production is to introduce students to the details and demands of producing a film. After settling on a script, the five filmmakers—Fossé, Jessica Lillo (Omaha, Nebraska), Jason Miller (Hudsonville, Michigan), Andrew Cameron (Greenwood, Nebraska), and Sam Malan (Lincoln, Nebraska)—held auditions for actors. Three of the film's four main actors were Dordt students: Njilefack played the young John Thomas, Josh Bootsma played the German defector



The *Defector* production team

Ernst, and Bailey McKee played Amelia Forster, the reporter who got the story from Thomas. The film's other main actor was Gideon Wamala (who plays an older John Thomas), a pastor at Calvin Christian Reformed Church in Rock Valley, Iowa, and a friend of Volkers.

Most of the film's scenes were shot at Oak Grove State Park and on nearby farmland about 20 minutes from Dordt College.

"It was really fun to get action onto camera when we were finally on set," said Fossé. At 22 minutes, *Defector* is the longest film Fossé has directed. "We were always in a time crunch because we only had a semester to film everything, but we had a really good team. Everyone gave 110 percent and was always willing to help."

Lillo, the film's producer, said that although some films can go through many major changes before they're finished, the crew only made small changes to *Defector* throughout the filming process.

"The biggest change we made was the name of the film," Lillo said. The film was originally titled *Straggler*, but another film with a similar title was growing in popularity. The setting also switched from Russia to Germany. "It was great to make decisions about the film as a team," Lillo said.

Defector is also a step forward for Njilefack. The actor, who studies engineering and plays football at Dordt,

"Classroom learning is really important, but it's when you get out and are judged by your peers that you find out where you stand."

— Digital Media Production Professor Mark Volkers

has been in a few commercials and web series, but this is his first film.

"It was really fun," Njilefack said. "The cast and crew were great and always came up with new, creative ideas. I never thought that when I came to Dordt, I would be able to put such a great opportunity on my resume."



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Dordt graduating senior Nathan Walter discussed his documentary film at its campus premiere.

After a successful premiere on campus, which brought more viewers than they were expecting, the class began what Volkers refers to as "the unknown final stage of production": marketing. The film has been accepted into three film festivals so far: Los Angeles CineFest, the High Country Film Festival in North Carolina, and the Wild Rose Independent Film Festival in Des Moines, Iowa. They are still waiting to hear back from other film festivals.

In addition to their success in film festivals, the creators of *Defector* are

doing well in film competitions. The film received a Crystal Pillar Award, also known as a "Student Emmy" because it is given by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the same group that awards Emmys. The film was nominated in the "College Fiction" category, and the class traveled to Minneapolis in April when the award was

announced. *Defector* also received an achievement award at the Iowa Motion Picture Association Awards presented in Pella on April 16.

"Classroom learning is really important, but it's when you get out and are judged by your peers that you find out where you stand," said Volkers. "That's why it's so important to let experts in your fields examine your work. Even if you don't win, the process of entering and competing is so healthy. It can inspire you to do better."

"This entire process has really taught me to consider whether or not the content I'm creating and consuming is worth being created or consumed," said Lillo. "It's made all of us more deliberate in deciding what to watch and create."

Volkers loved working with this group of students and is already looking forward to next year's crew.

"I really do think that Dordt attracts some of the best students in the world, and it's a joy to work with students like these because they're motivated, they want to learn, and you can see their potential," Volkers said. "It's exciting to see them grow in their craft."

8,000 Miles with Dad

What do motorcycles, digital media, and Brazil have in common? They were all key to making *8,000 Miles with Dad*, a film created by Nathan Walter for his senior digital media production project.

Last year, Walter received a call from his former pastor, Dale Taylor, asking whether he could edit several hours of footage into a movie. Walter turned the request for a favor into an opportunity for his senior project. After the trailer was approved by Dale and his son Jay, Walter set to work creating the 46-minute film.

8,000 Miles with Dad is the story of Dale and Jay Taylor's journey by motorcycle from North to South America. Dale's parents, Royal and Joan, had been missionaries in Brazil for 45 years, and after they died, father and son decided to trek to Brazil on motorcycles and spread Royal and Joan's ashes in the Amazon River. The film's format was inspired by the *Motorcycle Diaries* of Che Guevara and was based on nightly videos the Taylors took during their trip. The videos became even more exciting than the Taylors expected as they documented technical breakdowns and run-ins with cartels.

The film was originally intended to give a recap of their trip to those who contributed to the Kickstarter campaign they had set up to fund their trip to Brazil.

"The film turned into an exciting recap about man versus road. It was fascinating to watch unfold," said Walter.

After a semester of editing, the film was finally ready to premiere. It premiered in Norfolk, Nebraska, Walter's hometown, to a sold-out crowd. An impromptu second showing again drew a large audience. The film also had a successful premiere in Lincoln, Nebraska, and received the Award of Excellence at the Iowa Motion Picture Association awards on April 16.

8,000 Miles with Dad has currently been accepted into two film festivals: it is an official selection for the Hollywood International Independent Documentary Awards and was accepted into the Midwest Independent Film Festival. Walter hopes to hear back from other film festivals as well.

"This is the biggest film project I've worked on, and it's really inspired me," Walter said. "Being able to use Dordt's resources and expertise was instrumental in making this a quality, successful film."

JULIA JANSEN ('16)

Fossé wins national award for sound design

Kyle Fossé's film awards aren't the only ones he's been awarded this year. Fossé is the latest of a handful of Dordt College theatre students to earn the opportunity to represent the department and college at the annual Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (ACTF) held in Washington, D.C., each spring.

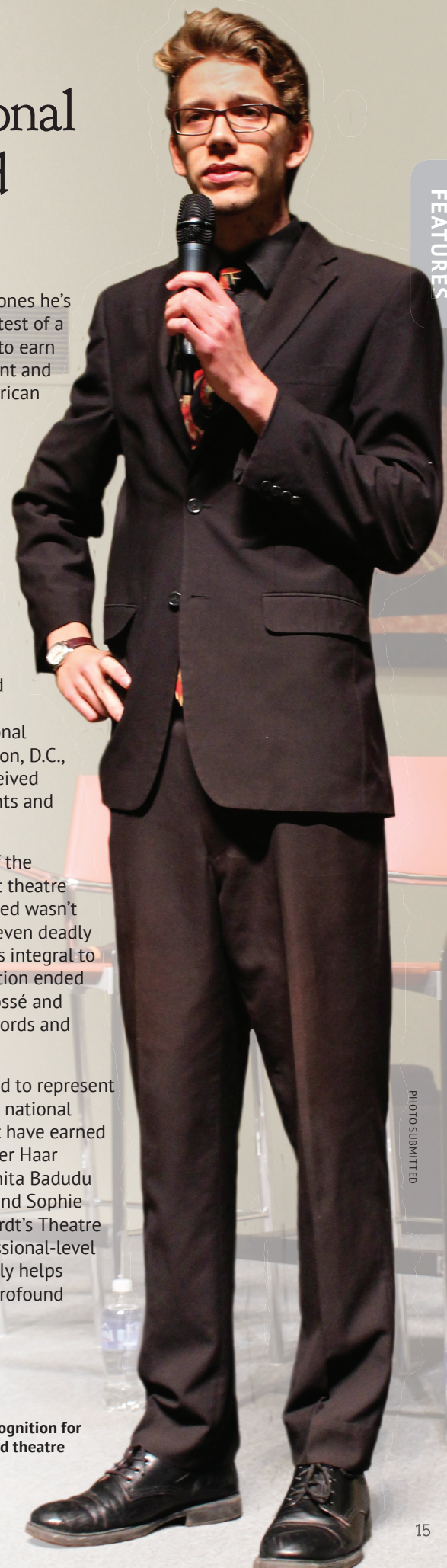
Fossé, a junior theatre arts and digital media production major, earned the national award for sound design at the ACTF regional festival in Minneapolis in January for his design work on last spring's production of *Ash Girl*. The award is given to one designer from each of eight ACTF regions in the country. Dordt's program, part of ACTF Region Five, includes 82 public and private colleges and universities in five states. Fossé had all of his expenses paid to attend the ACTF national festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in late April. There he shared his work, received feedback, and interacted with other students and theatre professionals.

"Fossé's sound was such an integral part of the production," says Dr. Teresa Ter Haar, Dordt theatre arts professor. The soundscape Fossé created wasn't simply a backdrop—it helped portray the seven deadly sins, important themes in the play, and was integral to the play's action and dialogue. The production ended with an original composition, written by Fossé and sung by two students, which captured in words and music the production's themes.

"I was very honored, and I'm beyond excited to represent Dordt College and ACTF Region Five at the national level," says Fossé, adding that he could not have earned the award without the help of professors Ter Haar and Drew Schmidt and fellow students Ranita Badudu (Indonesia), Sam De Groot (Sioux Center), and Sophie Schmidt (Vadnais Heights, Minnesota). "Dordt's Theatre Department continues to encourage professional-level engagement from its students and definitely helps make the theatre a fun, invigorating, and profound environment."

SALLY JONGSMA

Dordt junior Kyle Fossé has earned recognition for both his collaborative digital media and theatre projects this year.



PUTTING A NUMBER ON STUDENT SATISFACTION

Say it's January, and the snow is knee-high and still falling. Dordt students are trudging across campus, weighted down by books, snowflakes collecting in their eyelashes. Many will reach their destinations in the space of 10 or 20 freezing breaths.

Others are headed to the distant reaches of campus—past buildings and prairie, beyond the East Campus Apartments, beyond even Covenant, to the paved expanse north of Seventh Street. “Siberia” is Dordt’s northern- and eastern-most parking lot, and students, on the whole, are not happy about it.

According to recent survey results, their dissatisfaction by and large ends there.

The results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) are in, and aside from “adequate parking space,” Dordt’s satisfaction scores are higher than comparable institutions nationwide in each of the survey’s 98 categories.

Jim Bos, Dordt’s registrar and director of institutional research, points out that surveyed students didn’t rank parking high on their list of priorities, but it’s still something the administration revisits occasionally. “If we were a commuter campus, this would

be a more pressing concern,” he says, recalling with a laugh the much bleaker parking situations he faced as a graduate student.

The satisfaction categories in which Dordt College ranks higher—sometimes much higher—than other four-year private colleges and universities include:


- students’ experience of intellectual and spiritual growth
- faculty expertise
- quality of academic advising
- campus safety
- reputation of the institution within the community


The survey, developed by Ruffalo Noel Levitz and widely used among institutions of higher education, is designed to measure student satisfaction holistically. Survey questions touch upon

SURVEY IN SUMMARY

Last fall, the SSI was administered to 256,000 individual participants from four-year private colleges across the country; 15,000 of those students were from CCCU institutions.

Student Satisfaction in Summary (end-of-survey summary question percentages)

 Dordt College

 Other four-year private institutions



Dordt students are remarkably well-satisfied in almost every area the survey measures. Only one thing got low marks: parking. The parking lot dubbed “Siberia” requires a long (sort of) walk to the edge of campus.



KARLLANINGA (19)

Every Thursday night, students gather in the Campus Center for Praise and Worship, a service that is coordinated and led by students.

every dimension of a student's college experience: academics, co-curricular offerings, student services, and campus life. The survey also gets down to the brass tacks: food, lodging, and—let's not forget—parking. As a member of the CCCU (Council of Christian Colleges and Universities), Dordt's version of the SSI also includes questions related to spiritual formation and growth.

The SSI was used at Dordt last fall as part of an assessment project developed by the CCCU. Participation was voluntary, but 481 students—36 percent of the student body—participated. That's a high response rate, according to Bos, and it gives him confidence that Dordt's results are representative and meaningful.

"We're always looking for ways to assess how well we're doing," he says. "Tools like this can be a helpful way to see what Dordt students care about and how well we're delivering on those things." Dordt's results also give all of us a sense of how Dordt stacks up against similar institutions across the country.

The survey asked students to rank each item on a scale of importance and then according to their satisfaction level. Many of the items designated "important" or "very important" by Dordt students were also areas of high satisfaction, says Bos. He's identified these items as Dordt's "strategic strengths." They included the following:

- My understanding of God is being strengthened by classroom and/or campus experiences
- Students are made to feel welcome on this campus

- There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus
- It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus

Bos has grouped items students ranked lower in importance but high in satisfaction as "performance bonuses"—things like helpful employees in the bookstore, excellent library resources, and student access to tutoring services. While not students' top priorities, they help create an atmosphere that is welcoming, supportive, and student-centered.

"When we look at this list of strengths, we see just about every group on campus that interacts with our students," says Bos. "That shows that the people who work here care—they care about students, and they care about doing their jobs well."

Dean of Students Robert Taylor says Dordt's survey results couldn't have been achieved by just one department. They reflect a lot of dedicated people, doing a lot of hard work.

"It's a well-coordinated, campuswide effort," says Taylor, "and it's held together by excellent communication and a shared commitment to creating an environment where students feel safe and cared for as well as challenged to ask questions and grow."

Closing the Gap

In its breadth, the SSI is a well-suited measure of Dordt's commitment to educating students as whole people, whose entire lives belong to God. Dordt's

success in fulfilling that mission doesn't fit neatly into a bar graph or pie chart, but Bos says the SSI is a useful tool, not least because student satisfaction and retention are closely linked.

"Dordt's results are overwhelmingly positive, but we aren't treating them as simply a pat on the back," Bos says. He has spent a lot of time putting the data into spreadsheets, crunching the numbers, determining what the college is doing well, and what it could do better.

Knowing what students care about can help the college prioritize what changes and improvements it makes in the future. Areas students rank higher in importance but lower in satisfaction have been identified by Bos as "satisfaction gaps." He sees these as strategic opportunities for growth, and he's been busy communicating his findings to the right people, in the right departments.

"The temptation, when things are going well, is to begin to take hard-won

COMMENTS

After completing the survey, students had a chance to respond in writing. Those comments reveal a diverse group of students who deeply value their experiences at Dordt.

- Coming to college, I was very apprehensive and not sure what to expect. Dordt has fulfilled and surpassed all my expectations, right from WOW week on.
- I can definitely tell this is a Christian campus just by how the students and faculty interact. My teachers truly care about my success and want to help me learn and understand what they are teaching. I don't feel like I am just another student because everyone here really cares and goes above and beyond to make sure that I am succeeding.
- There is something different about Dordt than other college campuses I visited. It will be a bittersweet moment to leave such a community-centered campus!
- I would definitely say that Dordt helped shape my understanding of my faith and worldview.
- I feel my faith has been challenged and strengthened already in my two short years here at Dordt.
- Dordt rocks.

successes for granted,” Taylor says. He sees value in re-telling the story of who we are—rehearsing it—as a way to remember.

Surveys play a role in that process, he says, by recalling Dordt’s mission, and by pointing toward ways to embody that mission more fully.

Spotlighting Seniors

In the hands of a wise interpreter, Dordt’s survey data takes something complex—student satisfaction—and simplifies it, assigning categories and number values to experiences to help Dordt’s administration form conclusions and, when necessary, take action.

Survey data can never tell the whole story, and Dordt’s results hint at a richer, more-nuanced picture of student satisfaction that emerges in the stories of students themselves.

Even the word “satisfaction” doesn’t quite cut it for senior Jeremy Vreeken—or, at least, it misses the point. Vreeken doesn’t value his four years at Dordt because they’ve been comfortable or convenient or safe. They’ve been precisely the opposite.

“I started college with the idea that I had to be certain about things,” he says. “My whole education has been a process of reframing what I thought I knew from the ground up.”

More than finding simple answers, his time at Dordt has been about learning to ask the right questions.

Vreeken, an English major, spent many semesters at Dordt involved in theatre as a lead actor and as a scenic designer. Over his four years, he served as editor of the *Diamond*, sat on Student Symposium, and was a co-editor and designer for Dordt’s literary magazine, the *Canon*.

Vreeken admits he came to Dordt somewhat reluctantly. “At that point, I was pretty dissatisfied with the church, and by what I thought Christianity was at the time,” he says. Vreeken grew up “in nondenominational circles” in Saskatchewan, Canada, and both of his older sisters attended Dordt.

His dad convinced him to try Dordt, thinking it might be helpful for him to encounter a Christian perspective that was different from the one he grew up with.

For his first two years, he considered leaving at the end of each semester. But slowly, he started to soften. His views became less firmly entrenched. He realized things were complicated, and he let go of the search for easy certainties.

MEASURING SUCCESS



The SSI is one of several assessment tools Dordt uses to help gauge how well the college serves students and fulfills its mission. See our last issue for more about Dordt’s impressive results on the ETS Proficiency Profile, which measures students’ academic growth during their time at Dordt, at www.dordt.edu/voice.



JORDAN EDENS (13)

Jeremy Vreeken graduated in May. Whatever the future holds—maybe graduate school—he's grateful for the way he was shaped by the Dordt community.

That happened in his courses, but also in the push-and-pull of conversations with professors outside of class. In an April editorial in the *Diamond*, Vreeken wrote, "In my first year or two I was fortunate enough to find faculty who were willing to mentor an angry and confused freshman, affirm my questions, and direct my interests." Back home, many of his peers had embraced a militant form of atheism, abandoning faith as something foolish and intellectually untenable.

After four years at Dordt, he sees that learning and faith aren't fundamentally incompatible. It wasn't always clear as it was happening, but in looking back on his experience—the course readings, the hours spent talking with faculty mentors, the late nights surrounded by sawdust in the scene shop—he can see how deeply he has been formed by this place.

"Some of the things I'm most passionate about, I learned to care about through conversations and classes at Dordt," he says. He began to think about the environment in terms of stewardship, food systems in terms of sustainability, and poverty in terms of justice. He sees the value of an education in the person it has formed you to be. After four years as part of the community at Dordt, Vreeken is more thoughtful, and less sure. He's more willing to re-think his assumptions, and to engage with others who disagree.

Seniors Abigael Olson and Lauren Eekhoff say being part of the Dordt community for four years led them to encounter a variety of perspectives and challenged them to reconsider their own.

"I didn't come to Dordt expecting to be challenged so much!" Eekhoff says. "Everyone I talk to has a new perspective on faith, or a new way of thinking about something that I'd never considered before. It forces me to question what I think and form my own beliefs."

Olson, too, has felt at once supported and challenged by the Dordt community. She's from Atkinson, Nebraska, and she didn't grow up in a Reformed tradition. "When I came to Dordt, it was a huge shock. I didn't realize how Reformed Dordt was, or really even what it meant to be Reformed," she says.

"I started college with the idea that I had to be certain about things. My whole education has been a process of reframing what I thought I knew from the ground up."

— Jeremy Vreeken

Over time, she says, she's seen that reformational learning isn't stifling or narrow. "After four years, I think everyone opens up to a little more variety in their understandings," she says. "There's room here for people with different backgrounds and beliefs."

Both say Dordt's close-knit community, along with the Core Program, helped broaden their social circles to include students from different backgrounds and majors. "Conversations with friends—after chapel, after church, after class—those have probably been most integral to my faith formation," Eekhoff says.

Olson and Eekhoff, who is from Hull, Iowa, were roommates for three of their four years at Dordt, and both undertook rigorous programs of study. Olson was pre-med and graduated with majors in chemistry and Spanish; Eekhoff was pre-genetic counseling with a biology major.

The two have excelled academically, and they've found time to get involved with other activities. Olson sat on Student Symposium, served as a Learning

Community Assistant, and was involved in Dordt's sustainability committee, which has been working to make the campus more energy efficient. Eekhoff ran cross country for three years, served as a tutor and teaching assistant in the biology lab, and helped coordinate Week of Welcome activities. The two were teammates on a championship-winning co-ed intramural volleyball team.

They say graduating from Dordt is bittersweet, but they're excited for what's next. This summer, Olson will travel to southern Africa, where she'll spend two years serving in conservation agriculture with the Mennonite Central Committee. After that, she plans to return to the states to attend medical school at Boston University. Eekhoff will begin a master's program in genetic counseling at the

University of South Carolina this fall.

"It's so strange to think about leaving," Eekhoff says. "After four years here, this place has started to feel like home."

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Recent graduates Abigael Olson and Lauren Eekhoff became close friends while at Dordt. They say they grew spiritually as much as academically during their four years here.



Pam De Jong spent 29 years as director of the ASK (Academic Skills) Center. She retired this year, leaving behind a legacy of collaboration and responsive change.

STUDENTS AT THE CENTER

A look back on the Academic Skills Center as Director Pam De Jong retires

From its humble beginnings in a small classroom in 1987, the ASK (Academic Skills) Center has come a long way. As Pam De Jong retires, it's fitting to look back on how much has changed over her 29 years as its director.

"When we started, we had about 400 visits that fall for tutoring help in grammar, math, writing, and economics," said De Jong. In the fall of 2015, the ASK Center served students who made 5,258 visits.

In a retirement tribute to De Jong, Dean of Students Robert Taylor estimated that over 25,000 students were served through more than 175,000 appointments under her direction.

"This represents a massive kingdom impact," Taylor said. "When you think of the legacy Pam has left, not only is the Academic Skills Center flourishing, but students she has helped over 29 years of service are scattered all over the world."

A predecessor of the ASK Center, the ASC (also standing for

Academic Skills Center) started offering reading and writing assistance to students in fall 1979. Its name was changed to avoid confusion with the Agriculture Stewardship Center.

The ASK Center, renamed the Academic Enrichment Center this summer to more accurately reflect its mission, has grown in scope, mission, and ability to serve students under De Jong's leadership. Now, the center does more than just teach skills—it's more about life coaching, with skills as an important piece. Tutors and staff help with time management and responsible choices, as well as copyediting, statistics, chemistry, and other skill areas. Students can get help in many areas, including core courses.

De Jong sifted through old *Voice* clippings and yellowing photos as she described the center's journey over three decades.

"When you walked into that little classroom," De Jong said, reflecting on the center's early years, "there was a table with two Apple 2Es to your left, and on that students would take grammar tests. I had a desk with a typewriter, and there were stand-alone dividers sectioning off six small tables with orange and brown plastic chairs."

De Jong later added posters to the walls and tried to improve the décor, but it wasn't until the center moved to the basement of the John and Louise Hulst Library in 1996 that staff had the room to serve the number of students they do currently. They continue to use many areas of campus, including classrooms and residence halls, as well.

The key to the ASK Center's success, De Jong believes, is that staff have had faculty status since the mid-1990s and work closely with faculty members in supporting the educational mission of the college.

Together, in 2000, staff and faculty set up several new initiatives: the ASPIRE program for conditionally admitted students, a Core 100 restructuring (replacing Gen 10), the addition of English 100 and Math 100 to serve students who otherwise would have needed extensive tutoring, a retention council that became a student-success team, and an academic alert system.

"I read every alert that comes in from faculty and decide who should handle each one," De Jong says. About 500 to 600 academic alerts come into her inbox each year.

ASK Center staff also help serve international students, students with disabilities, and students admitted provisionally. The number of students involved in providing assistance has increased as well. Today, as many as 75 tutors, learning

COMMUNITY

"Of particular prominence in the pursuit of academic excellence in the Dordt community is the support from residence life for the classroom. The term 'Learning Communities' refers to student residences, emphasizing the importance of residence environment functioning as an integral facet of the learning process. The designation of 'Learning Communities' is not an illusionary term that masks the true nature of the residence, but identifies the actual scholarly nature of the residential environment."

—from the auditor's report

“I learned not to take it personally if a student was not at the point where they could respond to our work. I try to encourage our learning community assistants in this, too: we don’t always see the end of the story.”

— Pam De Jong, ASK Center director emeritus

assistants, teaching assistants, and others assist with academic support.

De Jong is looking forward to retirement but will miss her work. Most meaningful to her: “Helping students grow into the people God made them to be.” But also: “Doing all you can doesn’t mean babysitting or hand-holding.”

She didn’t always get to see that growth firsthand. Students who struggle, she says, don’t always take advantage of opportunities to be successful—at least not right away.

“I learned not to take it personally if a student was not at the point where they could respond to our work,” she said. “God calls us to do this faithfully with our whole heart, and to do what we can to help students be successful. I try to encourage our learning community assistants in this, too: we don’t always see the end of the story.”

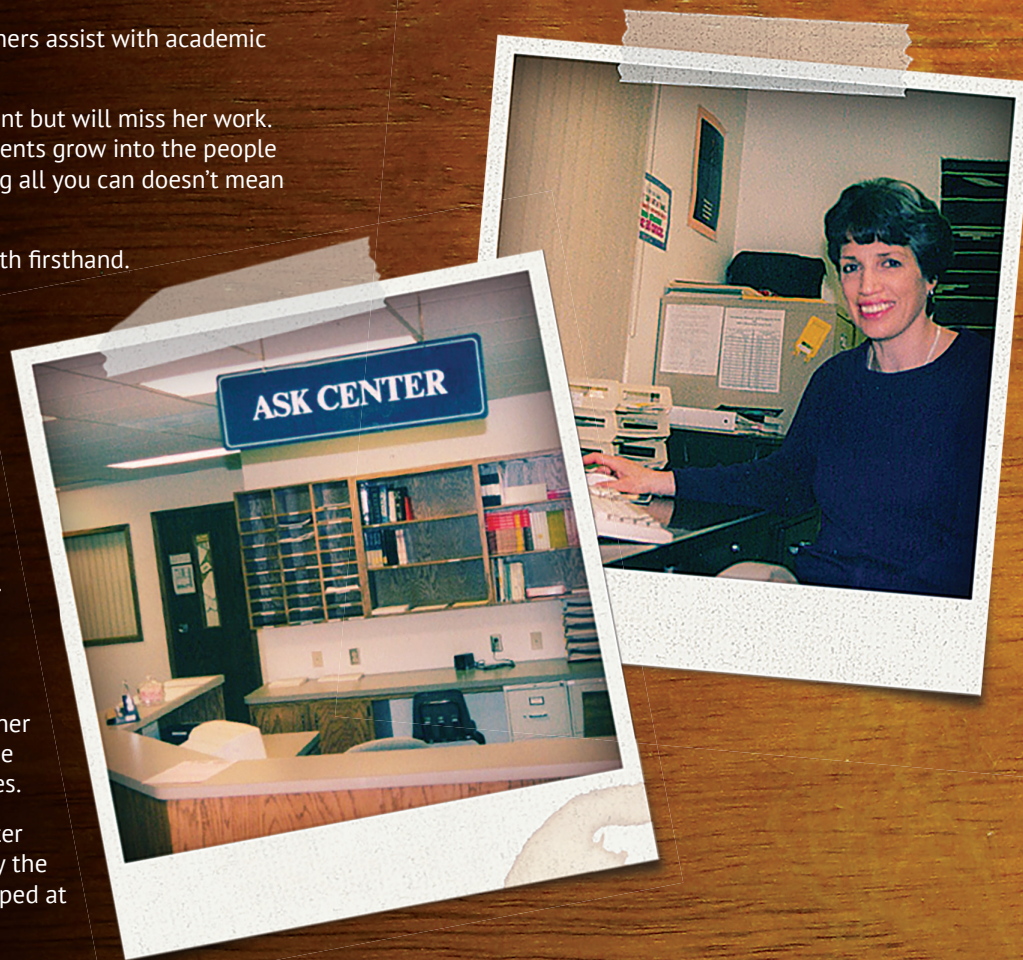
De Jong has had students come up to her years after graduating to share how the ASK Center had an impact on their lives.

A recent outside audit of the ASK Center gave a wealth of accolades for the way the academic support program has developed at Dordt over the years.

The 50-page report mentions the “exemplary collegial atmosphere between the academic sector and student services sector.” It also notes there isn’t a stigma attached to using the center’s services. It is “viewed as a means to achieve academic excellence for all students, and not just academic success for struggling students.” The report continues: “The staff members of ASK are committed, passionate, hard-working, and collaborative.... They have a vested interest in seeing their students succeed.”

Perhaps De Jong’s work and that of her colleagues can best be summed up by this statement from the report: “Faculty and staff have exhibited commitment to students and model care, Christ’s love, and concern for both the students who are in need of intervention and the students who are excelling. The mission is not a lofty ideal relegated solely to a catalog or on a website, but it is a living part of the daily lives of the campus community.”

SONYA JONGSMA KNAUSS ('97)



ALSO IN THE LIBRARY

Elaine Wassink began working in Dordt’s library as a student, the “start of a career that I had not thought about” before. She worked there for four years in the early 70s and then returned as technical services coordinator in 1989. Since then, Wassink has had responsibility for acquiring, processing, and cataloging books and media materials for the library’s collection.



Wassink, who is retiring this year, is known as a dedicated worker who has a wealth of knowledge, is attentive to detail, and can be counted on to get the job done, said Associate Provost Leah Zuidema. “She cheerfully helps with any projects and always strives to do what is best for the students, faculty, and staff,” Zuidema says.

VIRTUAL DORDT

The pitfalls—and promise—of the new togetherness



From paintbrush to pixel

In grade school, Crissy Chahyadinata had excellent handwriting. She remembers forming letters on wide-ruled paper, moving carefully from left to right. Chahyadinata, now heading into her second year at Dordt, grew up in Indonesia, and one of her early teachers recognized her gift for penmanship. That teacher pushed her to perfect her handwriting.

"If I made one mistake, she made me start the whole sheet over," she says, laughing. "Handwriting has always been sort of a love-hate thing for me."

In fifth grade, she moved on to cursive. "It was just my thing," she says. "I was writing everything in cursive." Doodling words and letters in notebooks was an early step toward artistry.

Chahyadinata started in pencil and moved on to the brush pen, then watercolor. As an artist, she's known for her flourishes—the intricate curving lines that extend from her letters, enveloping them in fine, looping patterns. Her preferred tool is the zero brush, one of the tiniest. It allows for the detail work that has become her artistic trademark. In their gracefulness, her designs call to mind written Arabic, or Elvish (for Tolkien fans). Each piece takes her hours, though the time passes quickly. It's a form of contemplation, she says.

"This work that I'm doing—it's a kind of worship. I take such pleasure in looking down at those curves, those flourishes," she says. "But then I look up at the sky and think, 'God is the true artist.' My life as an artist always reflects who he is."

At age 16, Chahyadinata started her own business in Jakarta and soon gained renown as a skilled calligrapher. She was in demand for birthday cards and wedding invitations, hand-lettered signs and customized fonts. Her celebrity, while profitable, was limited by geography—but it was about to grow.

What catapulted Chahyadinata to the world stage was the internet. Specifically

Facing page: Chahyadinata posted this image—featuring lyrics from a Coldplay song—on her Instagram page. She captioned the image with a verse from Psalm 8.

Instagram, a platform for sharing images, often filtered to mimic vintage photographs, and stamped out in perfect squares.

Her business gave her a clientele; the internet gave her followers. Sixty-five thousand of them—up from 6,000 within a matter of weeks. And she didn't amass them by posting artful selfies, or documenting trips to exotic locales. In a world of QWERTY keyboards, she did it by employing her hands in the service of a calligrapher's paintbrush.

Chahyadinata's new celebrity was one part artistic skill and vision, one part internet luck. In 2015, she was chosen to be a featured artist on Instagram's homepage. Someone at Instagram—or some algorithm—had identified her as a potential star. Virtually overnight,

Today, "crissyvr" snaps pictures of her hand-lettered designs and posts them alongside hashtags like #goodtype and #kaligrafina. Her Instagram page is an unlikely convergence of technologies—old and new, paint brush and pixels.

Chahyadinata found herself and her watercolors before millions of half-bored eyes trained upon millions of glowing screens. From there, her work and words were carried to the world by the momentum of consensus, signaled by an accumulation of "likes" and "follows" and "shares."

"My phone was hung up for a while after that!" she says. "It couldn't display all the new followers—my notifications list basically dropped off the edge of the

With nearly 60,000 followers, Chahyadinata is a rising star on Instagram. More than just pretty pictures, the messages she paints and posts are typically inspired by her morning devotions, a quiet time she spends in contemplation and prayer.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

screen. It was crazy.”

What’s unusual about Chahyadinata’s story is that her rise to Instagram fame came through an ancient art form, produced by an ancient technology. The art of calligraphy had largely given way to moveable type by the end of the sixteenth century. Monks laboring over illuminated manuscripts were replaced by elaborate machines, churning out pages of text at unimaginable speed.

Fast-forward to the 21st century. Today, “crissyvr” snaps pictures of her hand-lettered designs and posts them alongside hashtags like #goodtype and #kaligrafina. Her Instagram page is an unlikely convergence of technologies—old and new, paint brush and pixels.

That paradox might help explain her vast virtual audience. Her followers are from all over the world. And they’re young, mostly in their teens and 20s. They’re spending more and more time behind screens, “hyperconnected” but increasingly disconnected from the

physical world—and the physical work of even ordinary handwriting. Amid tweets and pop-up ads and memes, something about her intricate, hand-painted letters resonates.

What is the internet doing to our brains?

Maybe each “like” or “follow” on crissyvr’s page represents a re-embrace of slower, more tangible mediums—a tiny rebellion against the monopoly of the screen. This monopoly has consequences, according to Dordt College Computer Science Professor Dr. Derek Schuurman. And not all of them are good.

Though he’s a computer scientist, Schuurman hasn’t embraced digital technologies uncritically. For example, Schuurman doesn’t normally carry a smartphone. “I prefer not to live my life in a continuous state of partial attention,” he explains. This tendency to encourage “partial attention” is a bias,

or direction, built into the technologies themselves. “It shouldn’t be surprising to us that these technologies have predispositions built into them,” he says. “From a reformational perspective, everything has a structure; everything has a direction.”

The web brings worlds to our fingertips—

“I prefer not to live my life in a continuous state of partial attention.”

— Dr. Derek Schuurman

vast landscapes of information, covering every possible subject. It’s a medium that thrives on distraction. Online, multiple apps and links and tabs compete for our attention. We are subject to a chorus of notifications and blinking banner ads, hyperlinks to anywhere and nowhere. Newsfeeds blur by in endless vertical ascent.

“These tools aren’t neutral—they shape us,” Schuurman says. “And we’ve been created to be shaped. But the question is: What sort of direction do these tools have? What sort of people do we become when we use them?”

Shallow people, is one answer, offered most famously by Nicolas Carr, author of *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. When our attention is pulled in too many directions, “we tend to engage in a more shallow way,” Schuurman explains. In the words of Carr, “We become like pancake people—spread wide but too thin.”

Like all our habits, the way we use digital technologies is rewiring our brains. “The medium is literally sculpting our neural pathways, shaping who we are,” Schuurman says. We shape our tools, and then our tools shape us.

Our shrinking attention spans have been well documented by researchers. But it’s not just “content” we’re engaging in a shallow way; it’s also people. With the rise of social networks like Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, and Twitter, we are conducting more and more of our social lives online (the third of us globally who



Dordt College junior Luke Venhuizen and fellow SPICE student Kaylie Ogle pose for a selfie in front of the John Lennon Wall in Prague, Czech Republic.



CHELSEY NUGTEREN (11)

mrsnugteren ♡ #AnnikaRenae (Nugteren's daughter is a frequent subject on her Instagram page.)

have access to the internet, anyway). While this enlarges our social networks considerably—and can broaden our perspectives—it comes at the cost of depth, Schuurman says.

Humans are wired for connection. For

Like all our habits,
the way we use
digital technologies is
rewiring our brains.

many of us, the pull of connecting with others online, often with minimal effort, is nearly irresistible. But what happens when we live our lives through our phones and computer screens? Is something lost when we trade three dimensions for two?

The product is YOU

Chelsey (Munneke, '11) Nugteren lives in the middle of rural Iowa with her husband, Steve ('11), and 11-month-

old daughter, Annika. When she posts images on Instagram, she uses hashtags like #ourlittliefontheprairie and #AnnikaRenae, and her photos depict her home life and travels. In spite of their rural location, Nugteren works as a marketing consultant for clients several states away, primarily in Colorado Springs, where she and her husband moved after college so she could work for Focus on the Family.

Digital technologies enable Nugteren to do her job, and she's grateful for the flexibility. "I'm not stuck to a desk. I can be monitoring Facebook and Twitter for my clients, posting things on the go, checking email throughout the day," she says. If need be, she can work from behind her shopping cart at the grocery store. Still, early this year, she started to ask herself questions about the place social media was occupying in her life. Her small group at church was studying Romans 12:2. "I started considering where, if someone were to look at my life, would they say, 'You are being conformed to the patterns of this world,'" she says.

Through reflection, she arrived at an uncomfortable answer. "The Lord put it on my heart that something needed to change when it came to my social media habits," she says. She had a moment of clarity while feeding her daughter, a time she often found herself "scrolling and scrolling, mindlessly" through other peoples' photos and status updates. "I thought, wait—I could be singing to her! Or praying for her!" She decided to begin a fast. She would cut out all forms of social media, with the exception of monitoring notifications on behalf of her clients, with an end date of April 1.

The lure of social networks is no accident, Schuurman says. "Designers of social networking platforms are building those tools so we'll keep our eyeballs glued. They're trying to constantly entice us, grab our eyeballs, pull us in different directions."

"It's set up so that you can just barely move your finger, and invite yourself into so many peoples' lives," Nugteren says. "It's like reading a gossip magazine. Except people in the magazine are people you actually know."

Why are sites like Instagram or Facebook designed this way? "Because," Schuurman says, "the product on a social network is you." Users locked into a mindless scroll are all the better to advertise to. "That's their revenue model," he says. "Social networks are created to keep you coming back, to draw you back in."

We can't afford to ignore how these technologies affect us, Schuurman says. Unlike computers, humans aren't simply information processors. It's not just our minds that these tools direct; it's our hearts. "We're not just brains on a stick. We're not just people who think—we're people who love," he says. "As Christians, we need to ask ourselves, 'How are our loves shaped? How are our loves directed?'"

Just days into her fast, Nugteren had

It's not just
our minds
that these
tools direct;
it's our
hearts.

new clarity about what her social media habits were “shaping her heart to love.” The first thing she noticed was a growing feeling of contentment—with her own life, her own marriage, her own house and job.

“I found myself desiring less stuff. Scrolling through pictures and ads in my newsfeed, I’d feel like, ‘Ooooh! I need that paint color for my walls!’ Or, ‘My daughter needs this dress!’ Or, ‘Oh, this Etsy Shop is adorable—I should buy something!’” That sense of needing more to feel fulfilled evaporated quickly once

she unplugged from her virtual social life. “Because I haven’t been in that space, seeing all those pictures, I’ve realized I don’t really need all the things I thought I did.”

Without her phone propped up between her and her everyday life, in all its tedium and beauty, she also felt a new sense of connection with her husband and daughter. “Social media had become such a time-waster in my life,” she says. She isn’t ready to give social media up for good yet, but she missed it less than she thought she would. Once April 1 rolled around, she instituted a “no-scrolling rule,” and she plans to stick to it.

The portals in our palms

Dordt junior Luke Venhuizen, too, has seen first-hand the way our phones and devices can pull us out of our lives and disconnect us from the living, breathing people in front of us. He spent the spring semester studying in Europe through the Studies Program in Contemporary Europe (SPICE). It was the longest stretch he’s ever spent away from home, and digital technologies allowed him to stay in touch with family and friends back home.

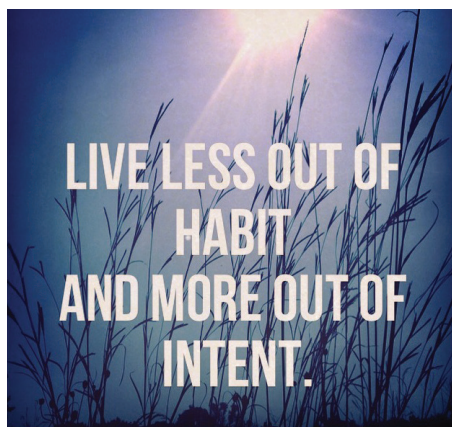
The demands of documentation and sharing can be grueling, he says.

He’s seen a lot of Europe through the small rectangle of his phone’s screen. Cathedrals in Italy, canals in Amsterdam, sweeping mountain vistas in Romania—all of them have been reduced to a 3-by-6-inch pixelated image, ready to be captured, cropped, filtered, and posted.

“At one point, looking back on some photos, I asked myself, ‘Do I actually remember this place because I saw it, or because I saw pictures of it on my phone?’” he says. He started giving himself rules. No more than one post a day, and only one quick picture at each new site or landmark. “Then I’d put my camera or phone away,” he says. “I don’t want to miss the real life right in front of me.”

That’s easier said than done, he says, recalling a trip he took with fellow business students to Berlin. They traveled to the city’s funky Neukölln neighborhood, where an old factory had been converted into an indoor campground. There were cabins and retro campers set up in a cathedral-size space, along with picnic tables and strings of glowing lanterns. Tall windows overlooked the darkening city.

“We were all like, ‘This is so cool! It’s going to be like a big sleepover!’” They set up camp. “We all put our stuff away, and we’re sitting in a circle, and literally everyone pulls out their phones. No one talks. Like, at all.” He caught the eye of a friend, and they both burst out laughing.



mrsnugteren: “It’s too easy to get caught in a routine—robotically moving through life. Live with passion and purpose.
#littliefontheprairie #bigbluestem”



Dordt College junior Luke Venhuizen explored Manarola, Cinque Terre, Italy, as part of his adventures on SPICE, documenting his travels on a blog and on social media.



mrsnugteren: "Watching the Rockies fade in the rear view through blurry eyes. #Colorado, you were an adventure we will never forget."

"We were like, 'What are we doing!?'"

It can be difficult to resist the pull of our phones in our pockets. Often, we reach for them out of force of habit—we've grown so accustomed to seeking entertainment there, or solace, or a sense of belonging. They can also give us a way to opt out of face-to-face conversation with others in real time. "I've definitely grabbed my phone in an elevator, or walking next to someone, if I didn't feel like talking," Venhuizen confesses.

"Interacting with others in person comes with messiness," Schuurman says. Our bodies don't always cooperate. We endure awkward silences, or say the wrong thing. We may blush, or cry. In many ways, interacting with others online demands less of us. It's easier and more convenient than loving the people right in front of us, with all



Schuurman

For another faculty reflection, read Dr. Kevin Timmer's piece at inallthings.org/my-iphone-made-me-do-it/.

their idiosyncrasies or irritating habits. "When we're in the same room, we can't simply turn others off or tune them out," Schuurman says.

Social networks allow for connection in small doses—short bursts of interaction, mediated entirely by a screen. But Schuurman likens that form of nourishment to a candy bar, a quick fix for hunger that isn't ultimately sustaining. Social scientists call this "social snacking," and it's not a replacement for face-to-face interactions in real time, Schuurman says.

"Only physical community gives you the full spectrum of interactions, on all the different levels of what it means to be human." As a community of faith with resurrection at its center, we can't afford to deny the importance of our bodies, he

says. "When you push social networking to an extreme, you actually lose physical community altogether—it's just you and a glowing rectangle."

Facebook blues: Comparison is the thief of joy

When that glowing rectangle is a highlight reel of others' milestones and photo-worthy moments, some internet users begin to experience envy or dissatisfaction with their own lives. Some even sink into depression.

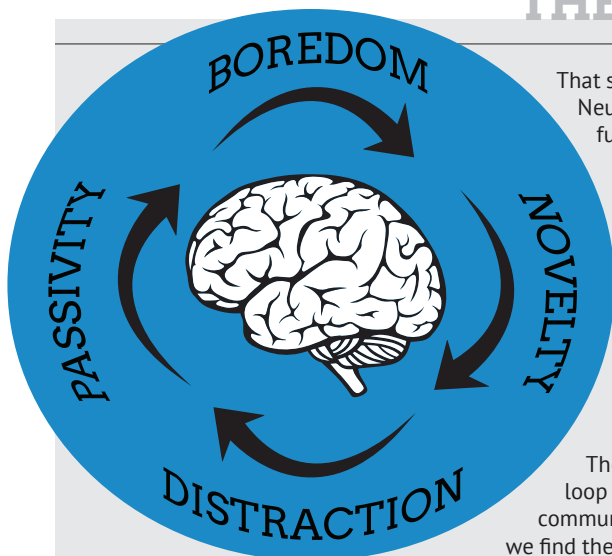
Rebekah Dykhuizen is a recent Dordt graduate living in Colorado Springs, and she's active on a variety of social networks. While she's grateful for the way they connect her to friends and family far away, she's not immune to the pitfalls.

"When I'm having a hard day or week, and I'm online seeing the idealized lives of my friends, it's a lot harder to resist going into that pit of despair," she says, laughing. "It's funny—when I see images from celebrities' lives on Pinterest or Twitter, that doesn't make me feel as dissatisfied with my own life." With celebrities, she says, there's a distance that doesn't invite comparison. Not so with the photos her friends post online. "I have to remind myself: I'm comparing my life right now to three good things that happened in three other peoples' lives this week. I can't live the happiness of all my friends simultaneously."

The public nature of social networks can tempt us to carefully select the words and images we share to present an idealized version of our lives and selves online. When everyone is putting their best foot forward online, though, it can set up unrealistic expectations. "You can't measure your life against the most perfect picture, on the most perfect day," says Nugteren.

When it comes to creating the illusion of perfection, Nugteren says Instagram is the worst offender. The site favors quality over quantity—most users post one image at a time, and the app's editing tools make it easy to produce beautiful images from even hastily snapped photos. Scrolling through Instagram yields an abundance of beach vacations and laughing babies, yoga poses and ice cream cones.

THE BOREDOM LOOP



That social networks are habit forming isn't news to many of the people who use them. Neuroscientists are beginning to understand the way this sort of addiction works, using functional MRIs to map the topography of habit onto our brains.

Researchers have shown that when our attention is divided among too many things, we become passive. And when we're engaging in a shallow, passive way, we become bored. A quick fix for boredom? More new things, selected from the variety of things competing for our attention at any given moment online. That state of distraction breeds more passivity, bringing us right back to where we started: boredom.

It's a vicious loop, fueled largely by dopamine, which researchers increasingly recognize as the chemical in our brains that causes us to seek out rewards (functional MRIs show that even this anticipation of a reward—in the form of new information or social connection—lights up the "pleasure centers" of our brains).

The rise of the smart phone and other hand-held devices has accelerated the addictive loop of boredom, reward, and more boredom that keeps us plugged into virtual forms of community. With phones in our pockets, we need never be bored (and yet the entertainment we find there often leaves us ... bored).

#realtalk

Though she admits she doesn't always succeed, Nugteren tries to resist the pressure to appear perfect online. Rather than choose from among the visual "filters" offered on Instagram—"Inkwell," "Lo-Fi," "Willow"—she applies a different sort of filter to her posts. "Before I post, I ask myself: 'Is it true?' 'Is it necessary?' And 'Is it uplifting?' If it's not, I don't post it."

On Instagram, "mrsnugteren" shares her parenting struggles alongside words of encouragement; her posts feature small joys and ordinary disappointments. Not every picture of her daughter is smiling, and sometimes she admits to feeling guilty as a parent. Ultimately, she aims to post from a place of gratitude, even if not every day is sunlit and joy-filled and momentous. "I try to share the raw and real moments, and not just the good things," she says.

As a young adult leader in her church, she encourages college students to make deliberate choices about how they live their lives online. "People often feel like they don't have a choice," she says. "I tell my students, 'No, you have a choice. You can choose to use these technologies in a way that's honoring to God—in a way that's transformative, and not conforming to the patterns of this world.'"

Venhuizen agrees that we aren't simply at the mercy of our digital tools. "The

internet is a beautiful place, but like everything else, it's been corrupted," he says. "It comes down to how you use it."

How then shall we compute?

A computer scientist, Schuurman recognizes the biases and limitations of our current technologies. Rather than simply work around them, he has turned his energy toward creating new digital tools—better ones that move us closer to being the sort of people God calls us to be. He's spending the year at Dordt as a visiting professor from Redeemer University in Ancaster, Ontario, and he hopes to convince students in his computer science classes that they, too, can re-think our current technologies—how they work and who they form us to be.

At the same time, Dordt Education Professor David Mulder is busy trying to figure out how we can make the best of the tools we've got. As an educator, he's equipping the next generation of teachers for tech integration. That requires wisdom and discernment, he says, not to mention a great deal of trial and error. But he's optimistic about the possibilities.

Mulder points out that the rise of new technologies is always accompanied by hand-wringing. "The classic yellow pencil was a disruptive technology," he says. Putting the power to erase in the hands of students meant "the end of education as we know it." Same goes for the

typewriter, then the personal computer, then tablets and smart phones. When we fear new technologies, it's partly due to a failure to place them into the story of technological change over time. "When it comes to perceptions, technology isn't technology if it happened before you were born," Mulder says, quoting Sir Kenneth Robinson.

Not all technologies are created equally, he acknowledges, and we need to think critically about how they shape us. But we shouldn't simply romanticize the past: every new technology comes with trade-offs. What we lose in concentration, or "deep attention" (as required by a novel, for instance), we may gain in speed of information processing, selective attention, and deliberate analysis (benefits of gaming and web surfing, according to some studies).

Mulder joins a growing online community of Dordt students and alumni who are finding ways to explore the possibilities latent in our digital tools, while creatively resisting their limitations.

"Every technology opens up new possibilities," Schuurman says. "But if you simply allow it to have its way with you, it's going to send you in a certain direction." Using our digital tools well requires discipline, he says; we need to recognize their limitations as well as our own. "It comes down to realizing how we're made, then trying to become the people God wants us to be," he says.



DIGITAL, THE DORDT WAY

When snow sculptures go viral

Dordt sophomore Trevor Bartz never meant to become an internet sensation. He and his two brothers were simply looking for something to do on a snow day at home in Minnesota. They ventured out into the cold and started sculpting a giant pufferfish from the wet, late-March snow.

He posted a picture to his Facebook page, and from there it went viral. "It was weird—people we didn't even know were liking and sharing our photo," he says. "We were the top news story on Yahoo for a day, then we were trending on Facebook."

They've made the news every year since. They've been featured on Good Morning America, Fox International News, and NBC News, among others. Bartz is now



facebook.com/BartzSnowSculptures

an engineering major at Dordt, and in the years since that first pufferfish, he and his brothers have sculpted a walrus, shark, sea turtle, and octopus, using sleds to haul snow onto their New Brighton front lawn. This year they transported over

300,000 pounds.

Last year, they created a Facebook page, Bartz Snow Sculptures, featuring their work. They now have 20,000 followers on Facebook, and this year, they leveraged their visibility to raise over \$17,000 to help provide clean water to Haiti through the organization One Day's Wages.

While many donated online, others drove from five or more hours away. "Over half of the money we got was in one dollar bills," he says. Beyond raising money for a worthy cause, he says "it brings people a little bit of joy. That's why we do it."

Tweeting in the service of learning

Dordt Professor of Education David Mulder says it took him three years

to figure out what Twitter was for. Eventually, he discovered that Twitter can be more than a platform for self-promotion. It can be a way for educators to connect and share resources, 140 characters at a time.

Mulder often convenes with educators from around the world for Twitter chats. Meetings are published ahead of time, and anyone can join by following hashtags like #iaedchat or #weirded. Moderators keep the conversation on track by posing questions, which spark dozens of side conversations.

"You have to choose your words very thoughtfully," Mulder says. "The 140-character limit breeds economy—you have to be as clear as possible in as few words as possible."

One of Mulder's former students, Brian Verwolf ('12), has also discovered Twitter as a tool for professional development. He agrees the character limit has benefits. "It's a great practice to summarize thoughts and eliminate jargon," he says. "Plus, I think it keeps people more intentional about the words they type."

Verwolf, who completed his bachelor's and master's degrees at Dordt, took to Twitter early in his teaching career, when he was "looking for a way to grab students' attention at the start of math class each day." He connected with a teacher in Texas, who turned him on to a math teaching website, estimation180.com.



twitter.com/d_mulder

Verwolf is now the head of school of Deer Creek Christian School, which is relocating to Chicago Heights, Illinois, in the fall, but he continues to teach a daily math class. Ever since that first Twitter connection, he has started each math class with an "estimation challenge."

David Mulder doesn't agree with those who say we can't build real, meaningful relationships through digital technologies. "I think that's bogus—we can, and we do."

"It's a fun way to start each class," he says. "Students experience math in a real-world context and then explain why they chose their responses." Verwolf connects the discussion to concepts they're covering in the course.

Mulder has also used Twitter connections as a catalyst for better teaching. He's even found a way to replicate Twitter's benefits for students sitting in his classroom. He uses a website called todaysmeet.com to create a private chatroom, where students can join in a virtual discussion during class time.

"Students are already having whispered conversations in back of class," he says. "This is a way to capture those whispers in public. It's a deliberate back-channel for your classroom." So far, it's been successful. "In a technology-mediated environment, I've found some of my quietest students suddenly have a lot to say," he says.

Mulder has found Twitter such a useful tool that he developed a four-week online course for practicing teachers and administrators, using funds from an innovation and teaching grant. Twenty-three teachers from across North America, including several Dordt alumni, signed up for the course to "explore how educators can use tools like Twitter and YouTube for professional development."

Mulder acknowledges that connecting online has a different character than face-to-face interactions, but he doesn't agree with those who say we can't build real, meaningful relationships through technology-mediated connections. "I think that's bogus—we can, and we do.

However distant, it's always another human being on the other side of the interaction," he says. He's even found Twitter to be "a great leveling tool," allowing him to connect with well-known figures in his field.

Verwolf is cautiously optimistic. "Twitter

should never be a sole substitute for any face-to-face professional development," he says. "But it definitely increases opportunities to connect with people serving all over the world, in different educational contexts."



[instagram.com/mymorningmane](https://www.instagram.com/mymorningmane)
"My bangs are always an adventure."
#mymorningmane #bedhead

Turning the "selfie" on its (bed) head

For six months, Rebekah Dykhuizen ('15) rolled out of bed, grabbed her phone, and stared, squinting and half-asleep, into the dark eye of her camera's lens. Her hair was tousled, or stringy, or comically matted. Her expression in each photo is unmistakably grumpy.

"Everyone is always posting these really nice pictures online, and I thought, 'That's not how I look.'"

Dykhuizen's Instagram page, [mymorningmane](https://www.instagram.com/mymorningmane), is a self-conscious

upending of the “selfie,” photos taken at arm’s length that rose to prominence alongside the smart phone.

“I tried to achieve as natural a state as possible,” she says. “I always took it before I touched my hair, or wiped the sleep out of my eyes.” She had rules: one take, no filter. Just her and her iPhone and the World Wide Web.

Dykhuizen’s selfie project was her good-humored but subversive response to the mounting pressure to appear perfect online. With everyone carefully selecting and editing their best photos, she decided to do the opposite.

She stuck with it from July through December of last year. “Friends started sending me their own bed-head pics, in texts or Facebook messages. Even my mom would do it,” she says. At one point, she tagged another Instagrammer known for bed-head selfies, and they struck up an online friendship.

She posted her last selfie on the last day of the year. “I didn’t want my first instinct in the morning to be to grab my phone and take a picture,” she says.

Authentic intimacy online

While the internet anonymity doesn’t always lead in fruitful directions, Chelsey (Munneke, ’11) Nugteren has experienced something surprising. She



[instagram.com/mrsnugteren](https://www.instagram.com/mrsnugteren)

develops and leads online Bible studies for women through Authentic Intimacy, a nonprofit organization that ministers to women on topics related to intimacy in marriage and intimacy with God. The first study Nugteren led, *Passion Pursuit*, was intended for married women, and the study she’s developing now, *Sex and the Single Girl*, is for women who are between 18 and 30 and either divorced or single.

“Since we’re covering topics related to sexuality, the women often appreciate communicating online. I think the distance is helpful in this context,” Nugteren says. The Bible studies are conducted using a free conference calling website, and later, participants process the material together on a private

Facebook page.

“Many women end up sharing things they’ve never told close friends,” she says. “I think many of them feel more comfortable being behind a screen. In this setting, it proves to be something really powerful.”

Virtual collaboration

Crissy Chahyadinata (’19) works in watercolors, but her calligraphic designs have a life beyond the hot press paper she favors as a canvas. Once Instagram launched her into the public eye, she gained a global audience. Using the same platform, she began to form relationships with other artists, sowing the seeds for digital collaboration with other artists—some of whom she’s never met in person.

Last year, Chahyadinata undertook a collaborative project with fellow Dordt student Brett Randolph, a junior who enjoys photography. She did the lettering with her paintbrush, then transformed the artwork into a series of digital images to be overlaid on Randolph’s photographs of tree branches and sky. This past Christmas, she collaborated with another Dordt student, senior digital media major Nathan Walter, to create a Christmas card. In the past, she has sent out 100 Christmas cards to friends and followers at random; this year, she sent them to 100 Dordt faculty, staff, and students.

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT

MORE RESOURCES

Shaping a Digital World: Faith, Culture and Computer Technology by Derek C. Schuurman

iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind by Gary Small and Gigi Vorgan

Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other by Sherry Turkle

It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens by danah boyd (danah.org)

Online reading

A six-part “Technology Today” series from inallthings.org: inallthings.org/is-technology-bringing-us-together-or-pushing-us-farther-apart/

www.thedordtlife.com, which features blog posts by Dordt students.

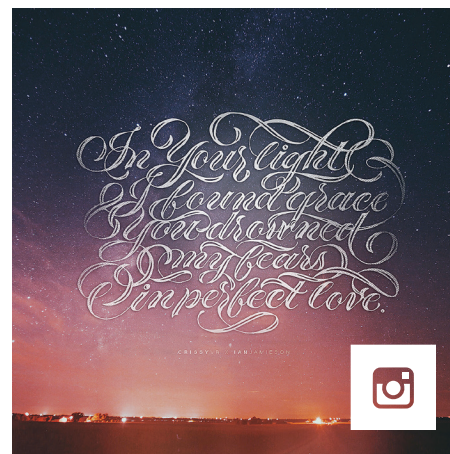
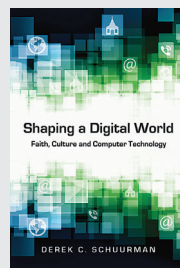
Official Dordt College social media accounts

[facebook.com/dordtcollege](https://www.facebook.com/dordtcollege)

twitter.com/dordtcollege

[instagram.com/dordtcollege](https://www.instagram.com/dordtcollege)

[linkedin.com/edu/school?id=18216](https://www.linkedin.com/edu/school?id=18216)



[instagram.com/crissyvr](https://www.instagram.com/crissyvr)

“In your light I found grace. You drowned my fears in perfect love.” Collaboration by Crissy Chahyadinata and Dordt student and photographer Brett Randolph.

SOMETIMES GRACEFULLY

Finding the story in the ordinary

The first time Grace (Schmidt) Beekman ('11) walked the streets of Paris, she was wearing a microphone and trailed by a Swedish film crew. "They filmed me buying things, exploring the city, using the little bit of language I knew," Beekman says. "It was nuts!"

The whirlwind trip came about after she tweeted a link to a post on her life and style blog, Sometimes Gracefully, about wanting to learn French. As a graduate student, Beekman hopes to someday study French literature in its original language—and teach college students to do the same. In her tweet, she tagged Rosetta Stone, a company that creates software for language learners. Three weeks later, she was sitting in a Parisian café, drinking a cappuccino, and speaking French on camera. The "video story" is aired on airplanes and internet pop-up ads.

Beekman is a popular blogger and has a wide following on Instagram. This isn't the first time her visibility online has led to an unexpected opportunity.

"I created the blog as a place to tell stories," she says. "When people read stories, they like to see pictures—to put a face to the writing. That's how the fashion element came in."

Shortly after starting the blog in 2013, she began to hear from a variety of brands, asking her to review their products. What started out as a playful distraction quickly became a small source of income. More than that, though, it's given her a way to connect with people she might not otherwise meet.

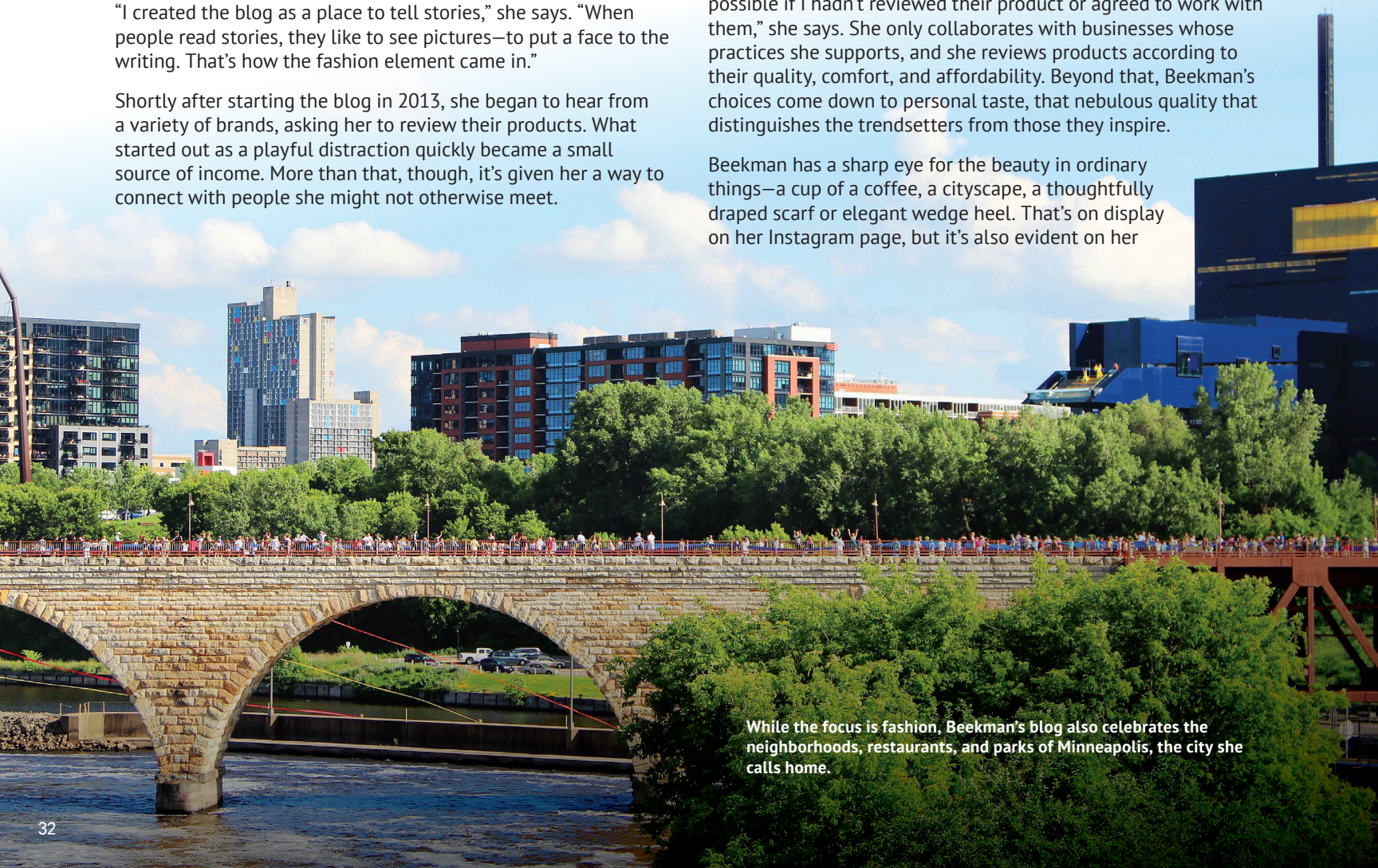


INSTAGRAM.COM/SOMETIMESGRACEFULLY

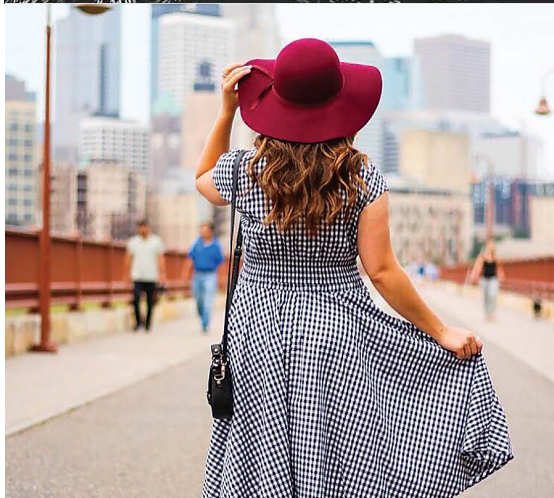
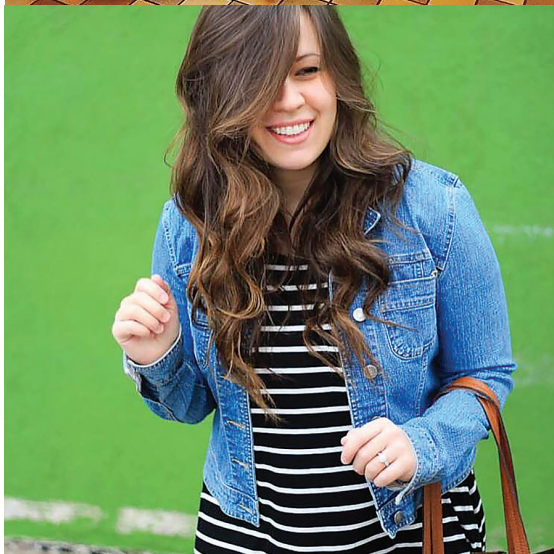
Grace Beekman recently announced on her blog and Instagram page that she and her husband, Darrin, are expecting their first baby in September.

"You form these friendships that would have never been possible if I hadn't reviewed their product or agreed to work with them," she says. She only collaborates with businesses whose practices she supports, and she reviews products according to their quality, comfort, and affordability. Beyond that, Beekman's choices come down to personal taste, that nebulous quality that distinguishes the trendsetters from those they inspire.

Beekman has a sharp eye for the beauty in ordinary things—a cup of a coffee, a cityscape, a thoughtfully draped scarf or elegant wedge heel. That's on display on her Instagram page, but it's also evident on her



While the focus is fashion, Beekman's blog also celebrates the neighborhoods, restaurants, and parks of Minneapolis, the city she calls home.



blog, where the images she posts are accompanied by anecdotes from her daily life. She posts about trips to get ice cream, or a rainy day spent wandering Minneapolis under an umbrella.

She's married to another Dordt graduate, Darrin ('11), who is pursuing his doctorate in biomedical engineering from the University of Minnesota. On her blog, she describes them as "two graduate students living on love and {most often} Hamburger Helper in the heart of Minneapolis." They are expecting their first baby in September.

In the world of fashion blogging, Beekman is somewhat unusual. As a graduate student at the University of St. Thomas, studying for her master's degree in literature, she spends most of her time buried in Victorian sensation novels and books of critical theory.

The grind of academic research and writing is what led her to blogging in the first place. "It's a creative outlet for me," she says. "Lately, my life has mostly involved staring at this big master's thesis, trying to work through it." Her blog is a welcome break from the demands of scholarship. It's meant to be a "conversation with the reader," and the writing is lively and personal.

Grace's blog following is wide enough that Darrin—tall, with striking red hair—is often recognized when the couple is out and about in Minneapolis. "Poor Darrin. He can't escape blog recognition," she laughs.

The blog's wide appeal is purposeful. "Everybody has to get out of bed and get dressed in the morning," she says. "I'm not drawn to fashion because I think, 'If you buy this new product, your life will be complete.' But when you choose what you're going to wear, you're choosing how you're going to present yourself to the world that day. I think everyone can relate to that," she says.

"I try to make sure each post is written from a humble posture, a loving posture, and one that brings hope to the reader."

— Grace Beekman, life and style blogger

Establishing this place of common ground online has enlarged her social world far beyond her grad school cohort or Minneapolis neighborhood. "You create these little virtual communities," she says. She connects with regular readers in the comments section or on Instagram, and she's become part of a community of local lifestyle bloggers, who often read and comment on each other's blogs. Sometimes, they meet up for coffee, or grab lunch.

Aside from new friendships, having a following online has given her a public platform, and she's thoughtful about what she shares, and how she shares it.

"My blog is meant to be uplifting, but it's not all happy-go-lucky. There are stories about struggles, stories about where my hope is found," she says. Rather than wear her faith on her sleeve, Beekman says, "I try to make sure each post is written from a humble posture, a loving posture, and one that brings hope to the reader."

"I want my blog to be a space people can visit that encourages love and hope. And thankfulness, I guess—for even the ordinary things of this world," she says.

ALEISA DORNBIERER-SCHAT



A DREAM COMING TRUE

Jonathan Posthuma ('12) says he's always been interested in composing music.

In high school, he played piano in his church and often wrote his own hymn arrangements for the offertory. Taking music theory courses with Dr. Karen DeMol and a composition course with Dr. Luke Dahn at Dordt piqued his interest further. He performed original works in both his junior and senior recitals. Following graduation he decided to do graduate work in composition at the University of Wisconsin-Madison rather than look for a teaching job. Today this is clear: he wants to earn his living by composing.

Posthuma's decision was affirmed this spring when he earned international recognition and reached a milestone in his career as a composer. His orchestral piece "Fili de Perle" (Strings of Pearls) received third prize in the Karel Szymanowski International Composition Competition. In March, Posthuma

attended the world premiere of his work in Katowice, Poland.

"It was very exciting to hear the piece performed by an orchestra the first time," he says. By the third time he'd heard "Fili de Perle," he was convinced it "really sounded good," and other than a few minor tweaks, he was ready to have it take on a life of its own. He also submitted the composition to several festivals and hopes "Fili de Perle" will have an American premiere in the near future.

In September of 2015, Posthuma, who moved to St. Paul for its musical opportunities and temporarily supported himself by working in a grocery store, was looking for a new composing project

when he learned about the Szymanowski Competition. He challenged himself to write a piece for large orchestra by the November 30 deadline.

"It was an ambitious project, and I figured it would be a good experience, whether I won or not."

— Jonathan Posthuma, composer

"It was an ambitious project, and I figured it would be a good experience, whether I won or not," he says. Winning competitions is one way for others to get to know, perform, and commission his music.

Next to hearing he'd won a prize, the four days in Poland were a highlight of his year.

"It was really exciting to share my work in another culture, being able to communicate beyond language barriers," he says.

Posthuma describes his musical style as one that combines lyricism, evocative imagery, and intense emotional contrasts, yet maintains clarity in form and function. "'Fili de Perle' is a coloristic dance for orchestra that is very strictly constructed and logical but feels effortless and free," Posthuma says.

"Fili de Perle" is Posthuma's second major professional work. The first, "The God of Material Things," was written for his master's program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2014. "The God of Material Things" combines vocal and instrumental music with poems from the book of that name written by Dordt College English Professor Emeritus David Schelhaas.

Posthuma says he likes to read poems as starting points for his compositions because of the emotion they evoke. A friend had given him Schelhaas' *God of Material Things* as a birthday present. As he began reading, he says, "The poems resonated on so many levels." He understood what it's like to live in a rural community, and he, too, finds God in the rich, earthy, everyday parts of life—something he learned early and began to understand more deeply at Dordt.

"The poems struck me differently in the context of a large university than they may have earlier; they gave me a way to connect to my personal voice," he says. The poems also spoke to his professors, who shared his appreciation for their remarkable breadth of human emotion.

"Who is this poet? These poems are beautiful," he was asked.

Schelhaas was honored to be asked for permission to use his poems.

Jonathan Posthuma was honored at the premiere of his award-winning composition, "Fili de Perle," in Katowice, Poland, in March.

Posthuma describes his musical style as one that combines lyricism, evocative imagery, and intense emotional contrasts, yet maintains clarity in form and function.

"I write poems. Some of my poems might be called love poems to God—though I didn't really think of them that way until I started thinking about this essay," Schelhaas wrote in a piece at inallthings.org, an online publication of Dordt's Andreas Center in which writers explore the implications of Christ's life, death, and resurrection for the world.

Many of Schelhaas' poems are responses to the natural world, using free form and an informal tone.

"I essentially write about real things I see and feel"—everyday things that reflect

life in God's world.

Captured by Schelhaas' words and images, Posthuma began as he does with most vocal compositions—allowing words, images, and moods to sink in, grow, and connect themselves to musical sounds and images. He builds on this to create melodies and rhythms that can grow into a unified composition.

"I love writing with text," he says. "It comes most naturally."

"Sometimes it's a bit of a mystery," he says about where this process takes him. Gradually, usually sitting at the piano, he organizes the poetic imagery into musical ideas. Today's MIDI technology (Musical Instrument Digital Interface, a way to record and play back music using a computer) makes obsolete the process of writing notes on a score, and it allows him to hear many layers at one time. Still, hearing the sounds in one's head on different instruments takes practice and listening.

Posthuma credits his musical education



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Alumni Bits

'70s

▣ **Duane Nieuwsma** ('71) published a book on the Old Testament titled *Longing for a Better Country: 365 Daily Readings on Life Before Jesus* in February.



'90s

Adopted by **Karmen (Bousma, '95)** and Robert Beazley, Preston Allen, born Feb. 23, 2010

Born to **Nathaniel ('98)** and **Kari (Van Meeteren, '98) Zylstra**, Molly Christine, Feb. 3, 2014, in Plymouth, Minn.

'00s



▣ **Mark ('04)** and **Paul ('00) Ten Haken**, along with two other teammates, will appear on NBC's *Spartan: Ultimate Team Challenge* in June. In training for the show, Mark discovered that running was an unlikely way to connect with his eight-year-old daughter, Ruby, who has cerebral palsy, and who joins Mark on long runs in her stroller. In May, Mark and Ruby participated in the River Bank Run in Holland, Michigan, through myTeam Triumph, a nonprofit that gives people with disabilities the chance to experience the thrill and energy of a race.

Born to **Shara (Griffin, '02)** and Mark Tetchner, John William, Sept. 7, 2015, joins Ellie Joy

Born to **Janna (Van Swol, '02)** and Kelly Herold, Matthias John, Dec. 30, 2015, in Buffalo City, Wis.

Born to **Corey ('04)** and Holly (Van Beek) **Rozenboom**, Dawson Lee, Dec. 11, 2015, in Sanborn, Iowa

and the expansive worldview he developed as a student at Dordt with giving him the tools to do what he is doing today.

"All of life is devotion and worship, from writing quality music to serving a customer in a grocery store," he says. "Music allows us to grow, praise, find shalom."

Today Posthuma also works at the ticket office of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra—getting a little closer to the work community he wants to inhabit. He tries to spend three to four hours a day composing, although he admits that sometimes he can only find three or four hours per week. He sings in Kantorei and the auditioned VocalEssence Chorus, a group of talented volunteer singers connected to the VocalEssence Ensemble, one of the Twin Cities' many exceptional choral groups.

Someday Posthuma hopes to teach composition. To get there, he'll keep entering competitions and festivals, looking for commissions, and sending his music out so that it becomes known. He had two more premieres in April in Mississippi and the Twin Cities, and has another upcoming in Italy in May.

"This is my mission field," he says. He's eager to share with the world the work he's been called to do.

Schelhaas ('63) has published two books of poems, *God of Material Things* and *Illuminated Manuscript*, both available through the Dordt College bookstore and from Amazon.

"Essentially

I write about real things I see and feel," says

Schelhaas.

When he is struck by a scene or an experience's potential, he quickly jots down some details. Then comes the fun part: playing with the words and images on his computer, allowing words and images to take him to new words and images and eventually to a unified idea.

"Sometimes it becomes a completely different poem," he says.

Last October, Posthuma visited Dordt's campus, and Schelhaas was able to hear his poems set to music. The sound filled the room. "It was powerful," he says.

SALLY JONGSMA



Visit Posthuma's website at jonathanposthuma.com. You can also listen to his music at soundcloud.com/jnthnpsthm.

Dordt College is seeking applications for the following faculty positions:

Agriculture: Farm Operations and Management

Mathematics/Statistics

Business Administration

Construction Management

Engineering

Director of the Andreas Center

Manufacturing Engineering Technology

Dordt College seeks to provide a holistic Christ-centered learning experience for our students, in which a kingdom perspective is infused throughout the curriculum—a curriculum designed to help students develop Christian insight to discern and challenge the worldviews of our age in light of God's Word and a reformational perspective.

For more information on these positions, please visit the Dordt College website at: www.dordt.edu/prospective_employees/faculty

Dr. Eric Forseth, Provost
Dordt College
498 4th Ave. NE
Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697
Email: provost@dordt.edu



DORDT COLLEGE

Dordt College does not discriminate as to age, sex, national origin, marital status or against those who are disabled.

FAITH AND WORK

Martin Luther once described a farm girl milking a cow as the fingers of God. Through her, God fed his people. Almost every day, I hear stories of Defenders that God uses to love and care for his people.

When we approach our work filled with Christ's perfect love, it becomes an offering of gratitude to God and a service to others. So many of you have been placed in leadership positions and serve from a place of humility and gratitude. Here are some of the lessons I've learned as I've observed, listened, and asked questions of those of you who lead and love in the work you have been called to.

Our actions as leaders are powerful. **C. Esther De Wolde** ('86), CEO of Phantom Screens, reminded me that people we lead have families they return to each night, and our leadership affects how they see themselves and how they see the world.



Jay Schuiteman ('96), partner at Ground Effects Landscape and Garden Center, reminded me that leadership can affect how employees interact with their children and treat their spouses. It can affect their service at church and the attitude they bring into their neighborhoods—it is not something to take lightly.

WRAPPING UP

We would like to thank our retiring Alumni Council members for their service to Dordt College. **John Brouwer, Sue Couperus, and Bonnie Jonkman** have each completed two three-year terms. They served their regions well, providing guidance to the Alumni Council and supporting the outreach efforts of Dordt College.

Tammy Walhof ('86), director at Lutheran Advocacy, showed me that the heart of leadership is honoring the image of God in another person. Shame on us if we get in the way of what God is doing or push too hard for selfish motivations that drive success for us, but not them.

Aaron Baart ('99), Dordt's dean of chapel, shared that the very best thing we can offer our spouse is this: Spend time with God and become more of who he has created you to be. The same applies for all those we lead at work. Our vision will be transformed by Christ, and our greatest

breakthroughs will happen as we are renewed and recreated by God. As Christians, we must also spend time refining our craft and developing our skills—Christians ought to be the best teachers, vintners, farmers, and designers. We should define industry standards, not settle for mediocrity.

Denny Van Zanten ('81), senior group vice president at Pella, showed me that servant leadership begins when we look to the ultimate servant, Jesus Christ. We must lean upon the transformative power of Christ, who has come to make all things new. As Christians, created in the image of God and breathed into with the power of the Holy Spirit, excellence is the truest reflection of our God, who has invited us to join him in the unfolding of his good creation.

Thanks for leading by example.

BRANDON HUISMAN ('10),
DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Alumni Bits

'00s

Born to **Frank** ('04) and **Nancy (Vander Tuig, '07) Leyendekker**, Cody Paul and Kacie Ann, Aug, 19, 2015, in Visalis, Calif.

Born to **Andy** ('05) and **Laura (Henson, '05) Deaver**, Lucille Beatrice, Jan. 13, 2016, in Omaha, Neb.

Born to **Steve** ('07) and **Jami (Smith, '07) Hoekstra**, Gwen Eowyn, July 2, 2015, in Lake George, Colo.

□ Born to **Daniel** ('07) and **Lauren Westra**, Willemmina Grace, Feb. 13, 2016



Born to **Jennifer (Alkema, '08) and Rinse de Boer**, Ellia Tina, April 29, 2016, joins Jos

Born to **Kyle** ('08) and **Abby (Ahrenholz, '09) Hoekstra**, Theodore Everett, Jan. 1, 2016, in Urbandale, Iowa

Born to **Sarah (Van Stempvoort, '08) and Samuel Lin**, Gabriel Jacob, April 8, 2016, joins Alexander in Kentwood, Mich.

Born to **Kyle** ('09) and **Andrea (Wetter, '10) Dieleman**, Emden Grace, July 19, 2015, in Iowa City, Iowa

Born to **Amanda (Vande Voort, '10) and Kyle Harwood**, Henry Lafayette, Oct. 21, 2015, in Lynnvile, Iowa

Born to **Travis** ('10) and **Valerie (Kroll, '10) Van Holland**, Lucass Wayne, Feb. 21, 2016, in Forest Park, Ill.

Born to **Neal** ('10) and **Laura (MacMillan, '09) Vellema**, Eli Reid, April 22, 2016, in Harris, Iowa

'10s

Born to **Nathan** ('10) and **Charis (Honor, '10) Gross**, Amory Lloyd, Dec. 13, 2015, in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Born to **Nathan** ('12) and **Lauren Hubers**, Lincoln, April 16, 2016, in Demotte, Ind.

ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year, the Alumni Association awards scholarships to junior students, based on an essay, a faculty recommendation, and an interview. Recipients have demonstrated how their education has and will impact their lives.

SOPHIE SCHMIDT (16)



KIM BRANDS | Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Elementary Education: teacher

One of the things that I love so much about Dordt is the community. People at Dordt are not afraid to go deep and encourage others in their faith. This

has challenged me to make my faith my own and to think about how I am going to serve God in every area of my life. Since coming to Dordt, God has been challenging me to think about how I can live differently for him.

My education professors have challenged me to live in faithful service to the Lord. In each class, we are challenged to think about how we are going to teach from a Christian perspective and show the love of Jesus to our students. I am motivated to become the best teacher I can be and to serve the Lord with all my heart. As I look to the future, I am encouraged by how much Dordt has equipped me to live a life of service through the skills I have been learning here. I do not know if I will ever get the chance to live in a community like Dordt again; however, I am motivated by Dordt to do my best to help build that community wherever I live.

MEGANKAISER (16)



PAUL GREIDANUS | Granum, Alberta
Chemistry: doctor

What God has done with me in my time at Dordt has been beautiful. In the past two years, I have scored the game-winning hockey goal in a shootout, climbed

Kilimanjaro, studied Puerto Rican culture, and dove from an airplane 8,000 feet in the air the weekend before exams. I have written powerful essays, aced tests, painted pictures, and made friendships that will last a lifetime. I met the girl of my dreams. I could go on, but the point is made. Dordt has impacted me more than I could have dreamed.

I still want to be a doctor. I want to be there in people's most exciting and desperate hours, but I get now that making money is not the point. Knowing the church order is not the point.

I want to show people the love my Savior has deposited in me. I cannot put my personal goals better than Paul does in Philippians 1:9–11. He writes, "And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."

SOPHIE SCHMIDT (16)



CAEDEN TINKLENBERG | Harrisburg, South Dakota
Biology: regenerative medicine clinical researcher

Dordt is preparing me for a life of faithful service on many fronts—not only via class material, on-campus worship, and

faculty relationships, but also activities such as intramurals, Doubt Night, and clubs. Indeed, club involvement has been an irreplaceable part of my development as a student. Generally student led, I have found that being involved in the College Republicans, Eco-Defenders, Student Symposium, and others has challenged me in ways that my school work can't. My leadership skills, patience, and creativity have all developed as a result of my club experiences.

That does not devalue the curricula and professors. The resounding message of the Gospel flowing through each classroom is central to Dordt's commitment to kingdom service. Learning from professors who aren't afraid to voice their opinions and defend what they believe is a blessing. I took it for granted my early semesters, not knowing that Dr. Dengler was challenging cultural norms every day of KSP 151 (Rhetoric & Christian Scholarship) with her stubborn rejection of certain truisms. It wasn't until I took Perspectives on Origins with Dr. Jelsma (a class investigating and comparing different theories of natural history) that I began to understand the lengths Dordt professors go to and the risks they take to guide their students not toward what to think, but how to think.

Outside-the-classroom educational events like Doubt Night and the natural sciences colloquium have also prepared me for a life of service, providing me with the chance to ask questions that I don't get to ask anywhere else and to receive answers I couldn't find anywhere else.

SOPHIE SCHMIDT (16)



MARIELLEN HOFLAND |
Dixon, California
Biology: doctor

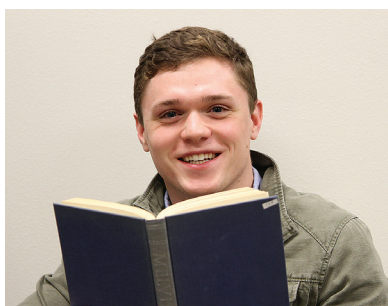
In the Fall of 2012, perhaps slightly on a whim, I boarded a plane and traveled halfway across the country to a state I had never before set foot in. I was

welcomed to my new home away from home.

Today I study biology as a pre-med student, and along with being a Kuyper Scholar, I am involved in a variety of activities. I have never felt so at home within a community before. This community has helped prepare me to faithfully serve God's kingdom both today and as I go out into the rest of his kingdom.

Faithful service means being more than just a "Sunday Christian." It means living in a way that others look at my life and long to share in the faith that I have. I have learned during my time at Dordt that all of my life should be spent in bringing glory to him. I have a special interest in medicine after spending much of my life caring for my mother who has multiple sclerosis. I also have a strong desire to work in family medicine because I have seen the impact that many local doctors have on their communities. Many rural areas of California have Hispanic immigrants who come from impoverished backgrounds. These communities are often incredibly poor and badly in need of services—not only medical services, but also in the area of community development. My time at Dordt has taught me that I am called to minister to others in every aspect of life, especially in my "everyday" work.

SOPHIE SCHMIDT (16)



JONATHAN JANSSEN |
Hospers, Iowa
English: professor, writer

Being involved in a wide range of activities outside of academics at Dordt—newspaper, choir, Student Symposium, PLIA leader, residence life—has played an integral role in

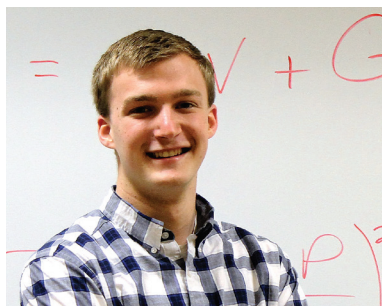
preparing me for a future life of service.

The beginning of my transformation at Dordt College was due to the high level of conversation taking place in classes and hallways. Coming from a public school, the experience of learning with God in the classroom made me initially uneasy—professors of the Core Program classes pushed my boundaries on what could be considered academic scholarship.

I plan to study English at Oxford University through Dordt's study abroad opportunity and to pursue my Ph.D. in English after graduation. Ultimately, I would like to teach English at a university like Dordt College and pass on the torch of passion for English I acquired here to the future generation of scholars. I would also like to throw my hat in the ring of authors and

continue a life of writing—all plans I credit to my time at Dordt College.

SOPHIE SCHMIDT (16)



LUCAS VANDER BERG |
Waupun, Wisconsin
Business Administration,
Actuarial Science: actuary

Dordt has been a huge blessing for me. I am thankful for the opportunities to dig into data at Dordt as I work with Jim Bos and Dr. Val

Zonnefeld as an institutional research assistant. I love asking Dr. John Visser about future opportunities with quantitative finance, discussing politics and government service with Professor Lee Pitts, and working on important statistical research with Dr. Nathan Tintle. I feel completely blessed to be part of a community where I can establish so many different relationships and be given so many opportunities as I study to be an actuary. I hope to turn my summer internship at Northwestern Mutual into a career.

I also want a huge part of my life to be using my hands and brain to work in nonprofit organizations fighting poverty, and I hope to be involved with politics for the rest of my life. As Dr. Visser says, "One bad politician can ruin the work of 1,000 good businessmen."

SOPHIE SCHMIDT (16)



JUSTINE VAN ZEE |
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Health and Human
Performance (Exercise
Science):
physical therapist

From a young age, I had a desire to live in a way that was glorifying and honoring to God. At Dordt,

I have seen these desires begin to blossom into actions and take deep root in my life. Dordt has offered me a priceless education that goes beyond the textbooks and encourages students to wrestle and make sense of various topics that prepare Christian leaders to work and live with Christ in the forefront of all they do. Dordt has immersed me in a community of brothers and sisters in Christ, where I was encouraged, challenged, and equipped to make my faith my own. Dordt has offered numerous opportunities for me to blossom in my faith through events, chapel, mission trips, and Bible studies. Faith is woven throughout the entire Dordt College experience.

Because of this incredible experience, I feel equipped to pursue my passion to become a physical therapy specialist in pediatrics because I have a treasured place in my heart for kids. I also aspire to go on a medical mission trip where I can minister to people and be a witness of Jesus' love. Being a physical therapist is so much more than just a job title to me; it is a fantastic way to use the gifts God has blessed me with so I can selflessly serve others in a compassionate way.



DORDT
COLLEGE

498 4th Avenue NE
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
OMAHA NE
PERMIT NO 776

Have you discovered the power of a gift annuity?

Discover a great win-win!

- A charitable gift annuity not only provides a gift to Dordt College but provides a source of income for your future.

Increase your income while making a lasting impact!

A charitable gift annuity will provide you with:

- Payout in a range from 4.7% to 9.0% (depending on age)
- Income payments for life
- Current charitable income tax deduction
- Significant impact to advance Dordt College



HOW DOES A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY WORK?

You make a gift of cash or other property to Dordt College. At the time of your gift, you receive a charitable deduction for a portion of the amount given. In exchange for your gift, you receive an annuity contract establishing your annual payments for life, which will never decrease in size or frequency, regardless of changes in the economy. The payout rate depends on your age, and a portion of your annual payment will be tax-free to you.

To learn more,
please contact
Dave Vander Werf
at 712-722-6023.

**PLAN NOW
TO ATTEND**



DORDT COLLEGE
DEFENDER DAYS 2016
OCTOBER 14 - 15

