Dr. John Visser featured professor at Dordt Writes

**Amber Vis Staff Writer**

As Dordt students approach graduation in May, students are giving mixed reviews on whether they feel the college thoroughly prepares them with the skills needed for the real world after graduation.

Dordt senior Kristin Janssen said she doesn’t feel thoroughly prepared.

“I don’t think that Dordt prepared me thoroughly for student-teaching. I do think the Dordt Education professors thoroughly equipped me with the pedagogical knowledge and skills to lead a class and also with the knowledge of student developmental levels, but I don’t think I was thoroughly prepared in the content areas,” said Janssen, who is majoring in Secondary Education/Language Arts.

Janssen previously student-taught 9th and 11th grade English at West Lyon, and she is currently student teaching 5th and 6th grade English at Sibley-Ocheyedan middle school. She was recently accepted to teach 8th grade English at Westminster Christian Academy in Town and Country in St. Louis, Mo.

However, other students think that Dordt is successful in equipping students with needed skills.

“Since I’m a foreign language speaker, I was very nervous my first year away from graduating, but already believes that Dordt is equipping her with needed skills, while also encouraging her to explore ideas and find who she is as a person.”

Jongema Knauss, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, said that core classes do prepare students for a broad variety of skills, if students take them seriously.

“The range of opinions in the Dordt community falls on the backdrop of national unemployment statistics. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate edged up to 7.7 percent in February 2013 but has shown little movement since September 2012. The number of unemployed persons in the United States is at 11.7 million.

With the unemployment problem, students and faculty alike agree that it has become even more crucial for students to be equipped with the necessary skills required in the workforce.

According to Chris DeLong, Director of Career Services and Calling, Dordt’s overall post-graduate placement is higher than the national average. Dordt’s lowest graduate placement in the last ten years was 94 percent. This graduate percentage includes entering grad school, along with finding a job within six months of graduation. According to DeLong, 95 percent of Dordt’s 2012 graduates were placed in grad school or found a job within six months.

With graduation quickly approaching, Fox Business in Business News Daily recently released 10 skills that employers seek in potential employees. “With competition for new jobs at an all-time high, employees must have the skills employers are targeting,” said Chad Brooks of Fox Business.

According to Brooks, with the workforce becoming more fast-paced and advancing in technology, employers are seeking 10 specific skills. Brooks said that these skills include commitment, going the extra mile, wearing multiple hats, being a decision maker, having a positive attitude, good communication, and passion, plus being organized, dependable, and conscientious.

Jongema Knauss agreed that employers are looking for a variety of skills. She pointed out that Dordt offers a well-rounded core program to equip students for the real world.

Jongema Knauss said that big universities and technical schools can specialize students so quickly, but a place like Dordt offers students the chance to develop skills outside of one narrow path.

Jongema Knauss pointed to a recent Marketplace article called “What do employers really want?” This article cited a Chronicle of Higher Education employer survey which showed that employers want more well-rounded students—in other words, graduates of liberal-arts colleges.

However, she offered this criticism: “Dordt will not prepare students unless they want to be prepared,” Jongema Knauss said. She said students need to take responsibility for their education by taking challenging courses, participating in a wide variety of activities and internships, and making the most of their time at Dordt.

Because Janssen is already student-teaching, she has a strong opinion on whether or not Dordt College thoroughly equipped her with the skills needed for her future job. She explained that she was “completely clueless as to teaching spelling, research techniques, and Roman and Juliet”—all of which she has had to student teach.

It is on this model that the book is based.

Visser has already presented this model around the globe with warm and eager reception.

“For the book, Visser said, ‘I tried to avoid jargon so that it’s readable for people who have no economic background.’”

“There probably needs to be a shorter version that an easy read for people around the world,” Visser added. “But I’m a dreamer; I hope one day it gets translated into Russian and Chinese and they see that religion is nothing to fear.”
News

Get to know the NCDC winners - The Jerries

While Dordt’s most popular band The Jerries got together last year specifically to try out for NC/DC, they say they were surprised to win this year and don’t know yet what they’ll do with their prize money.

“We (The Jerries) started to play together just over a year ago in order to try out for NC/DC, and last year we didn’t even make the first cut,” said Ben Sytsma, one of The Jerries.

Along with Sytsma, a senior History and Secondary Education major from Jenison, Michigan, The Jerries also consists of Chris Postma, a junior HHF major from Orange City, Iowa, Landon Tillema, a junior HHF major from Ripon, California, Nathan Friend, a senior Computer Science major from Sioux Center, Iowa, and Daryl Bruinsma, a sophomore Digital Media major from Norco, California.

According to Tillema, the group picked their name when someone told them they should call themselves Ben and the Jerries, but they short-ended it to The Jerries. “We actually prefer to be called Ben Sytsma and the Ben Sytsma Experience featuring Ben Sytsma,” said Bruinsma.

“Daryl lived down the hall from me in East last year; (I) found out he played guitar and we kinda became friends after that. I met Ben freshman year and then last year he had the idea to play some cover songs and he asked me to play with him. I just recently met Nathan this year before NC/DC. I’ve known Chris since last year when me and him played in praise in worship together,” said Tillema.

Though they won NC/DC, some of The Jerries have not always been involved in music. “I have never been in choir and haven’t played a musical instrument until two years ago. I just always liked singing. No offense to choir, but I don’t think I would enjoy it,” said Sytsma.

Postma commented that the his band playing the drums for 12 years, and Tillema has been involved in a variety of campus activities, including playing tuba in a campus community band since his freshman year, praise and worship his sophomore year, and GIFT this year.

The Jerries pick songs based on what they like and think sounds cool. Sytsma said that the some of the people that listen to them may not know the songs that they pick, but they pick ones that they find creative and good.

“I wasn’t expecting to win NC/DC; it was more of a last minute, kinda thing after getting knocked out before we even played in front of people last year. But it was crazy that we won! Very exciting,” commented Sytsma.

“I think I gave a fist bump,” said Postma.

Each member of the group walked away with $100 in prize money. “This sounds lame and nerdy, but I have to take the GRE in about a month, so if I’m honest, I will probably use the money to pay for that,” said Postma.

“I owe Daryl 100 bucks so I’m giving it to him,” said Tillema.

“I’m not really sure there is a share. In theory we all have 100 dollars but I haven’t actually received anything yet. Pretty sure it’s a conspiracy, or Ben pocketed the $500,” said Bruinsma.

Digital Media and Engineering Senior Projects

Lauren Bird
Staff Writer

As the year comes to an end, seniors in various majors at Dordt are working to complete projects that will be their final work for college. The majors that have been assigned senior projects are digital media and engineering.

Jeremy Kasik is a senior digital media major from Columbus, Nebraska who, since Christmas break, has been working on his senior project.

“I’ve been working on a documentary about dreams and what they are in American society. I want to focus on making people ask questions about their dreams and what they believe,” said Kasik.

Kasik has been working on this documentary as part of an independent study. Since he is a transfer student, he didn’t have an opportunity to take the documentary film making course that Dordt offers. The project hasn’t been easy.

“I’ve spent so much time on this project,” said Kasik. “I’ve probably spent 50-60 hours filming and another 40-50 hours on editing alone. And it’s all for a half an hour documentary.”

Since Christmas, Kasik has interviewed and filmed many people for his documentary.

“I’ve interviewed Ryan Brunner, a professor here at Dordt, as well as the pastor from my home church, a dream interpreter, and a professor from the University of Minnesota.”

While Kasik admits that this experience has been a good one, he has learned that documentary making is probably not for him.

“It was a good process,” said Kasik, “but it’s harder because you can’t write and plan what people are going to say. It takes a lot of time and dedication for even a few seconds of film. It’s so important to have the time and money and also to know that you won’t get much sleep.”

Digital media seniors are not the only ones working hard, however. Engineering major Jon Bierma has also been developing a final project, a combined effort with fellow seniors Jared Goedhart and Daniel Gondere.

The group has been working on developing a battery monitor, or fuel gauge, for the electric car belonging to Dr. De Boer, a professor of engineering at Dordt.

“We started working on this last semester,” said Bierma. “At that point, we were just trying to understand the concept, figuring out how to meet Dr. De Boer’s needs, and planning ahead.”

This semester, the group has been working on putting their plans into action and making the real product. According to Bierma, it has been a gratifying experience.

“We thought this would be a cool project to do because it looks at many different aspects of engineering. It’s a hands-on project instead of book problems, and we get to take ownership in the whole thing. I’ve learned a lot about working hard and scheduling since we’ve put a lot of time into it,” said Bierma.

Both Kasik and Bierma feel as though their projects have been a good end to their time at Dordt. However, senior projects take a lot of planning and hard work.

“Make sure you know what you’re getting into,” said Kasik. “It takes a lot more work than you think.”
**PDS Inquiry Project**

**Rachel Mulder**  
Staff Writer

Student teachers participating in the Professional Development School (PDS) completed senior inquiry projects, along with lesson plans and grading papers, during their student teaching experience.

“(The inquiry project) is required of PDS interns because we are actively seeking ways that we can improve the learning needs of our students and the quality of teaching in the classroom,” said Samantha Van Zyl.

The inquiry project is required by the education department to make students dig into what it’s like to solve a problem in the classroom. This is done by doing research and implementing ideas to help remedy the situation.

“It’s great practice for what will happen each day in our own classrooms someday,” said Katie Watt.

The PDS interns began work on their inquiry projects in the fall semester by brainstorming with their Dordt advisor and mentor teacher, and observing their students to decide which topic would make the most sense for their classroom.

Once interns chose a topic, they discussed potential ways of implementing ideas and solutions. They then began implementing their ideas in the second semester, and continued collecting data until they presented their findings at IdeaFest on April 18.

“My project revolved around ‘Creating a Kindergarten.’ I wanted to really help students understand that all people are made by God, and they are valuable for that reason alone.” I wanted to help improve their relationships with people in the classroom to make the atmosphere safer for learning,” she said.

Tyler Van Schepen and Samantha Van Zyl collaborated on a project because they both teach at Rock Valley Christian.

“Our project’s topic was an anti-bullying campaign for the grades of 5-8 at Rock Valley Christian.” We chose this topic because some things we saw while at Rock Valley made us aware of bullying that happens and we thought by having the 5th-8th grade be a part of this we could make a difference,” said Van Schepen.

“This has been a great learning experience over all. Tyler and I have been able to leave the students with information to think about concerning how to present his paper.

**Frisch wins award at student history conference**

**Amber Vis**  
Staff Writer

Dordt College student Kurt Frisch won the Best in Conference award at the 48th Annual Student History Conference with his paper “The Trent Affair: A Diplomatic Success.”

Frisch graduated from Calvin College with a degree in Accounting. However, he found his major “really really boring,” so he decided to go back to school. He is attending Dordt College for prerequisites to work towards a PhD in History and is currently applying to the University of South Dakota in Vermillion to fulfill his dream of getting a PhD.

Frisch married Kate Frisch, an Engineering professor at Dordt during Christmas of 2006. He started attending Dordt in the Fall of 2011 when his wife got her job as professor.

Frisch’s paper addressed the Trent Affair during the American Civil War. He explained that the Trent Affair could have culminated in Great Britain on the side of the Confederacy which would have made a big impact on the outcome of the American Civil War.

In his paper, Frisch looked at how the war was affected by the Affair. “It was only by taking very deliberate and strategic actions while ignoring the popular tide of nationalistic sentiment within both countries that British and American diplomats were able to avert war through mutual cooperation,” Frisch wrote in his paper.

In the end, Frisch’s research showed that negotiations between diplomats of Great Britain and the Union settled the Trent Affair, and the rest is history.

While writing the paper may seem like the difficult part, Frisch expressed his apprehension of presenting his paper in front of a crowd of people. “It’s a little awkward when people don’t laugh at your jokes,” Frisch said.

Frisch made the comment that he had to present his paper right after the

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Leah Zuidema was the kind of professor who would come wearing. None of these “sensible” shoes for her; in fact, probably nothing less than two inches, and definitely nothing less than impeccable. The rest of her look was impeccable too—perfectly fitted and pressed slacks, blazers, and blouses, paired with scarves or simple jewelry—and never a blond hair out of place. Her classroom matched her look. In every 50-minute class period Zuidema spent as a new faculty, and working to enhance student understanding, she spent time volunteering for a stronger infrastructure. Two days after college serving in the slums while helping develop literacy and foreign culture. Benitez, encouraged Benitez to apply for a program. The embassy program. The one they were talking about was at the beginning of his senior students, juniors at their school in December and lives at home with his mother, who is a freelance photographer, in Asunción. Benitez found Dordt in the very first year of his college search. As senior English education major Kristin Janssen says, “Zuidema is genuinely interested in developing future teachers...who will change the English curriculum and instruction as needed.” More than that, Zuidema says that her goal is “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever,” to do her work in a way that is always Kingdom building. “We are God’s coworkers,” she said, smiling, that’s what this is all about. All that and never a hair out of place, never a student left behind. Impeccable.

Kristin Janssen Staff Writer

Moving to a foreign country is not something foreign to Juan Pablo “Jaimpy” Benitez, a freshman english major who was born in Asunción, Paraguay. He and his three siblings spent their growing-up years moving back and forth between Paraguay and Brazil. His older sister now lives in Rio, Brazil, and is a professional ballet dancer, while his older brother studies architecture at Paraguay’s national university. Benitez’s younger sister is in high school in December and lives at home with his mother, who is a freelance photographer, in Asunción. Benitez found Dordt in the very first year of his college search. As senior English education major Kristin Janssen says, “Zuidema is genuinely interested in developing future teachers...who will change the English curriculum and instruction as needed.” More than that, Zuidema says that her goal is “to glorify God and enjoy Him forever,” to do her work in a way that is always Kingdom building. “We are God’s coworkers,” she said, smiling, that’s what this is all about. All that and never a hair out of place, never a student left behind. Impeccable.

International Introduction: Juan Pablo Benitez

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Features

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Getting to know one of Dordt’s Professors

Anna Visser

Staff Writer

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hereby are: the final deep,
Jordan Harmelink
Staff Writer

If you are a student, professor or faculty member on the campus of Dordt College, chances are you know Bryce Schelhaas. But chances are he might not know you.

"Probably about the first month of school I was walking to class and everyone was saying 'Hi Bryce' and I'm always like 'I didn't even know you were here but ok,'" Schelhaas said.

The reason for this one-sidedness is due to Schelhaas's penchant for standing apart from anyone else on campus.

Schelhaas lives with achondroplasia: a form of dwarffism that causes his arms and legs to be shorter than an average person. Being a little person isn't a big deal to Schelhaas anymore. In fact he relishes it with his constant jokes and his realization that this is the way God made him.

"If some people heard some of the things that my friends say to me they probably think it was terrible, but I can handle it," he said. "I probably joke around about it more than they do."

Through his parents, an association called LPA (Little People of America) and his relationship with God, Schelhaas has learned to accept living with achondroplasia.

Between kindergarten and first grade, Schelhaas started to realize he was different. He was hanging with kids his size and before he knew it, everyone around him was getting bigger while he stayed the same height.

"That was kind of tough," Schelhaas said. "Right around junior high is when it probably hit me the most that I wouldn't be able to do what average height people do; specifically with sports. Going into high school I started to realize that it wasn't a big deal. I realized that this is the way God made me."

Every year starting when he was 10 years old, Schelhaas's parents Ivan and Sandy took their son to an organization called Little People of America.

"These conventions would be the highlight of my year. Going out and being able to hang out with people who are just like me. It's funny because I'm actually one of the tallest ones there," Schelhaas said. "But just to go out and see people who are like me, actually, there are people there that have it worse than me. They're in wheelchairs or have crutches because they can't support their own weight. I feel pretty fortunate seeing all that."

Schelhaas also had the opportunity to attend and participate in the DAAA (Dwarf Athletic Association of America) in 2000 and 2008 where he could display his love for sports.

"This is where I got to display my competitive nature. I played basketball and soccer and actually played post for basketball which is pretty funny," Schelhaas said. "My team took home the gold one year and I'll admit it, I tore it up on the court."

As a manager for the Dordt College men's basketball team, Schelhaas gets to be close to the game he loves every day and keep his competitive spirit.

"I love to golf. That's one sport where I know I could compete with average-height people at a high level. I played through high school and a year here at Dordt," Schelhaas said. "With basketball, I have a great relationship with all the guys on the team. I have their back and I know they have mine...which is good because they're all huge," Schelhaas added laughing.

"Probably about the first year I started to realize he was getting bigger while he stayed the same height," Schelhaas said with a chuckle. "Every time I see her she wants to compare to see who is taller. It’s fun for her and for me."

Physical structure might present a challenge for Schelhaas in the future, as he anticipates needing back surgery at some point to correct some nerve endings. But that won't wipe the unshakable smile on his face and uplifting attitude.

"I don't consider it to be a bad thing anymore; this is the way God made me. I've thought about what it would be like to wake up one morning and be six feet tall, but I think I would want to go back. This is all I've known and I feel blessed. Yeah, I'm a little person but I have it pretty good. I feel so blessed."

Ask an Athlete

Justin Pastoor
Sports Editor

How has your experience in Dordt athletics been different than other teams you've played on?
I pray before I play, and I think about glorifying God while I am playing; I've not thought about those things before.

What do you look forward to most in being an upperclassman next year?
I would make donations to some children's homes, and then buy myself some material things.

What is your number 1 song played in your iTunes library?
Guys Like Me by Eric Church

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? Married with a stable job and my own home.

What is the number 1 thing you would do if you had no financial restrictions?
I would make donations to some children's homes, and then buy myself some material things.

What is the first thing you would change at Dordt?
Nothing, I truly enjoy Dordt while I am playing; I've not thought about those things before.

Favorite professor at Dordt and why? Professor Elgersma. He genuinely cares about the success of his students. He may be a little rough around the edges, but he pushes students beyond their comfort zones.

What is the first thing you would do if you had $10 million?
I would present a challenge for my students. He may be a little rough around the edges, but he pushes students beyond their comfort zones.

Where do you see yourself in 5 years? Married with a stable job and my own home.

Five things on your bucket list: Sky dive, travel out of the country, live on the coast, drive a BMW, and go to the Grand Canyon.

How did you first become involved in sports? It was for fun and my parents signed me up, but then I really enjoyed the sports and the competition.

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**CORRECTIONS**

In our previous issue, the Diamond erred in an article titled “NISO Concert,” and would like to correct the following facts:

1) NISO does **not** rehearse every Monday evening but rather on six or seven Mondays per semester.

2) NISO in many ways is **not** a Dordt-sponsored orchestra; the first credit listed on the concert programs is Dordt College with thanks “for its generous provision of rehearsal and performance space, support staff, and office accommodations.”

3) The Diamond incorrectly stated that NISO is organized by individuals who are not affiliated with Dordt; it is completely false.

**Preparing for the real world**

(continued from page 1)

“I just signed a contract for a job offering me more money in a year than I’ve accumulated throughout my entire first 22 years of life,” Janssen said.

“In addition, I have no idea what to do about insurance plans, retirement funds, credit scores, or investment options.”

Dordt Senior—Drew De Vries, who is majoring in General Agriculture and will be graduating in May, feels that Dordt does a good job at teaching students the facts, but he doesn’t feel like students are learning any common sense in the classroom. He added: “I understand that Dordt professors feel a random urge to play the devil’s advocate, but where does the line get drawn between acting stupid and actually using my tuition dollars to teach me something?”

After graduation, De Vries will be a swine specialist for the Farmer’s Coop Society in Sioux Center.

Attema explained that the business department has a required Senior Seminar for all business students, and this class includes a mock interview, plus resume and cover letter help. Students are required to write a resume and cover letter, and then conduct a mock interview with a real company or business.

“This experience helps students gain more confidence and also helps them to succeed,” Attema said.

According to Attema, the business department alsoCheckpoint on graduates, who are two years out of Dordt. They ask the alumni what we can do better,” he said.

“Dordt helps me to think more creatively about my field options, rather than forcing me in a box,” Spargo said.

She also believes that Dordt is broadening her worldview and helping her develop people skills, which will be helpful in the real world. Spargo said that she has received a lot of hands-on experience through Ag labs and real-life reporting in journalism classes.

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**Contact Diamond.dordt.edu**
Movie Review: *Wreck it Ralph*

Hannah DeVries  
Co-Editor

Rating: 8/10

Best Line: “You wouldn’t hit a guy with glasses would you?” Gets hit with the glasses. “You hit a guy, with glasses. That’s… that’s… Well played.”

Puns. Puns everywhere. And with a unique story line on top of it all, Wreck it Ralph proved to be a must-see movie for the spring.

The plot itself is actually a little like Tron, diving into the world behind the familiar arcade-screen. The main character is thrown into a world in which he doesn’t belong and is forced to use his wits and brawn to fight his way out. The evil overlord, who isn’t all that he seems, is constantly trying to ruin the game. And there’s even the spunky girl-sidekick that turns out to be the most important character of all.

The storyline follows Ralph, a “bad-guy” who wants to be accepted by the “good-guy” and other characters in his video game. To accomplish this, he goes on a quest to get a medal that will win him the favor of everyone in his game, Fix-it Felix Jr. This quest takes him into other bug-infested and sugar-coated video games and soon the plot escalates. Before long, it isn’t only Ralph’s reputation on the line – or even that of his new friend Vanellope’s – but the future of every video game plugged in at the arcade. Because small green pixel-eating bugs can do that, you know.

The graphics are well done and the creators paid special attention to minor details that added a whole new level of irony to characters. The best part about the plot was that it kept getting deeper and deeper. It was still focused on Ralph, but after a while the viewer cared about more than just him, making the movie a better overall experience. The fact that Vanellope is adorably snarky and resembles Agnes from Despicable Me definitely helps, too. It’s an original plot that deserves a strong nod for stepping away from the traditional video-game-comes-to-life movie. This movie was a great watch, especially for looking like a children’s movie. And despite its child-like appearance, the movie turned out to be complex enough to keep the eyes of pretty much anyone at any age fixed on the screen.

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