Student art desecrated in violent act

Jessica Braunschweig
Co-Editor

When kids' indoor play is getting rowdy, parents are often quick to say, "take it outside." But while the outdoors may provide an "unbreakable" setting for children, it failed to provide a safe haven for the setting of Dordt's first-ever outdoor gallery. The controversial sculpture garden display was vandalized early Sunday morning between 12:00 a.m. and 3:20 a.m., after which campus security filed a report with the Sioux Center police. Though rain covered all footprints of the perpetrators, evidence of the destruction couldn't be washed away. And the mixture of the artists' hurt, disappointment and anger quickly rose to the surface in a controversy that had already been brewing on Dordt's campus.

The complex meaning and understanding of art constantly confronts people, but when art involves nudity, a Christian's perspective gets complicated, perhaps even violated. For where does such art fit in with Dordt's vision? Is the presence of nudity a form of temptation? What is the place of this art amidst a campus that already seeks to combat the scathing effects of pornography? Such questions had been raised already in the first week of school. Students and staff members have commented, "Maybe they could have put some clothes on them..." and, "How can this be called art?"

Yet art's ambiguity is perhaps its greatest fertility. "Most great art has always been such that makes us think—even as student works, these people did that in legitimate ways," Professor Jacob Van Wyk said.

"Van Wyk, leader of the project resulting from the spring semester 2006 sculpture class, realizes that "art calls us to be truthful which includes going against the facade that everything's all right." But some people outside of the "art circle" cannot get past the idea that nakedness, however portrayed, is all wrong.

One art student expressed her frustration at the mixture of the artists' hurt, disappointment and anger quickly rose to the surface in a controversy that had already been brewing on Dordt's campus. "As people wanting to reform this world for Christ, we have to be able to get in it," Van Wyk added. Clearly, the art community witnessed the cost of such a vulnerable, public display and the violent reaction to it. But no matter where students and staff stand on the matter, the majority agree with Van Wyk that "destroying the works exposed, vulnerable and naked."

Van Wyk's years of art experiences provides some feedback for such questions as he's realized the risk of "foisting [art] into someone's space. You can't make everyone happy... [yet] if you want to show the symbols and exasperate the issues, it's often best with nakedness." Such words bring a stark reminder to the Dordt community—"we stand before God without all the trappings—exposed, vulnerable and naked."

"As people wanting to reform this world for Christ, we have to be able to get in it," Van Wyk added. Clearly, the art community witnessed the cost of such a vulnerable, public display and the violent reaction to it. But no matter where students and staff stand on the matter, the majority agree with Van Wyk that "destroying the works is crossing the line for your response." Additionally, a large part of the frustration of the situation lies in the fact that people cannot target their anger or specify their representative. Instead, the Administrative Cabinet of Dordt College agreed to display the sculptures for a period of time as long as "an explanation of and context for the sculpture" was included in the display.

Thus, an explanation statement was included in the sculpture garden, but more students may want an explanation of why the sculptures were approved in the first place. And, if a vote had been taken, would the student's voices have been heard? One student forum member noticed that "[Professor Van Wyk] seemed ready to set up the display no matter what... The proposal he gave to the art committee was written in a 'no would not be taken as an answer' kind-of-way." Van Wyk's proposal ended by saying, "We will install the works but would appreciate input from members of the committee as to grouping and or placement."

Would the input then have prevented the desecration now? Was the means of the project worth the destruction ends?

Fiscal cuts eliminate library's laptop service

Sara Burgin
Staff Writer

Last year, students took full advantage of the laptops available in the library for checkout, but the heavily used service has been eliminated in the midst of financial constraints.

Laptop computer checkout was a service that the library offered gladly. However with a 50 percent budget cut, computer services made the decision to distribute the library's eight laptops to new and rotating faculty. The decision to take away this service prompted criticism from students who use the laptops regularly. However, computer services said that 85 percent of residential students brought their own computers to campus—75 percent of which are laptops. Considering these figures, computer services felt that their tightened budget should be used to further develop the wireless capabilities around campus because most students are bringing their own computers.

The library still has a few laptop computers that students may check out for class presentations only for one-hour time slots. The money saved because computer services did not purchase new laptops will be used to help develop wireless capabilities in the classroom and science buildings—a project that will continue throughout the year.

Even though the lack of laptops may inconvenience some, the prospect of expanded wireless capabilities should help pacify even the staunchest critic.
Iran's deadly game
Joel Veldkamp
Staff Writer

The international community gave Iran a choice last June: stop its nuclear program in exchange for various benefits, or face potential consequences. The G8 nations gave Iran until July 5 to respond to the offer and Iran replied that it would need until August 22 to give an answer.

What happened in between July 5 and August 22? A war between Israel and Lebanon.

Coincidence? Almost certainly not.

The war in Lebanon broke out after Hezbollah, a terrorist group operating in southern Lebanon, killed three Israeli soldiers and kidnapped two others. Hezbollah was founded by Iran and still receives massive amounts of aid from Iran, including hundreds of millions of dollars a year and long-range rockets.

There is little doubt that Iran was the driving force behind the recent war in the Middle East. Israeli intelligence officials believe that Iran gave the order for the kidnapping attack that ignited the war. Iranian soldiers were found among dead Hezbollah fighters. Iranian-made rockets were fired at Israeli ships and cities during the war. Most convincing, Iran's top nuclear negotiator made a sudden flight from Israel to Moscow the night before the kidnapping.

What were Iran's motives? Maybe they wanted to show off their influence in the region as a warning to the United States and its allies. Whatever the reason, Iran clearly showed how much they are willing to sacrifice to protect their quest for nuclear weapons; the war killed 157 Israelis and 1,300 Lebanese.

When the August deadline finally rolled around, Iran's president gave a speech declaring that "the Iranian nation will not accept for one moment any bullying, invasion and violation of its rights." This past week, the United States said it would draft a resolution for economic sanctions against Iran at the UN while the European nations reported "progress" in further talks with the Iranians, but there's little hope that the talks will result in anything meaningful. If Iran was planning to respond to any incentives, it would have accepted the offer the world gave it three months ago. And there's little chance that the United Nations will impose sanctions on Iran since Iran's major trading partners, China and Russia, sit on the UN Security Council.

But one thing is certain: the United States is unlikely to accept a nuclear-armed Iran, and Israel is even less likely to accept it - particularly after Iran's president explicitly threatened to "wipe Israel off the map." Another war in the Middle East may be looming.

Dordt through the eyes of the world
Josh Dykstra
Staff Writer

Kevin Kim is a freshman here at Dordt College. Back home in Pusan, South Korea, his friends call him by his birth name, Ji Wan. Kevin first heard of Dordt when he was an international student in Lynden, Wash. His search for a college began a few years ago. After seeing a picture of Dordt over the internet, Kevin immediately knew that he wanted to come to Dordt. He remembers that when he first saw the picture, he thought to himself, "So this is what an American college looks like. It is very beautiful." Kevin chose Dordt because he wanted to go to a Christian college and loved the look of the campus.

When Kevin came to the United States from his home in Pusan, he had to overcome many hindrances. He says that the hardest of such was learning English. "The [English] language was very hard. I didn't understand much of what was said. I often had to look up a word. I remember one time I was asked to bring a bowl to the table and I brought a plate instead, all because I did not know English."

Kevin is still trying to adjust while he is here at Dordt. "Living here is very different because I don't have any of the easy things from back home. I have to walk to the edge of town to find a McDonalds. We had one within two blocks of our house," says Kevin.

Of the differences, Kevin says adjusting to the culture is the most difficult. "Words and colors mean totally different things here. Like the color pink; back home a guy could wear the color and no one would care because it is common. Here, only girls can wear pink or people look at you weird." Kevin likes being here at Dordt College but still misses his home, his family and his friends.
A call to conversation

Justin Van Zee
Staff Writer

Controversy abounded in the last issue of Diamond this spring. For those who were not with us then, several now-graduated students wrote jarring editorials calling into question several aspects of our college and its mission. One editorial warned that "all is not well at Dordt." I ended wondering aloud if Dordt had lost its vision and would be better off closing its doors (see page 4 of the April 28th Diamond available at http://diamond.dordt.edu/diamond/2006-04-28/).

In my mind I kept saying, "I hope he sensed this tension which my fellow students wrote about. I have sensed the uneasiness and distrust, fear and frustration. I have read and reread the infamous "Manifesto," wishing that its claims were not true but deep inside fearfully felt that Dordt is dangerously close to losing its identity. Its vision, once a radical call for transformation in all areas of life, is in grave danger of becoming nothing more than a patry collection of phrases, useful only in legitimating already-held plans and justifying complacency.

I say this because I do not believe we are prolonging the logic of biblical community in dealing with our conflict. In Acts 15 the fledgling body of Christ faced an even greater conflict which threatened its unity. The apostles and church leaders reacted by meeting together, praying together, discussing together, submitting to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and finally ruling by consensus. This is my challenge to Dordt College. Let us do away with clandestine meetings and conspiracy theories. Let us move beyond unfounded accusations and personal attacks.

Instead, let us be a true biblical community. Let us be a community in conversation. President and VPs, board members, faculty and staff, alumni and students. May the conversation begin now, not at the end of the semester amidst final exams.

I love Dordt College, and I am thankful for how she has shaped my perspective over the past three years. At the same time, though, I feel as if I--to borrow an analogy from Andrew De Young--have been treated like a child whose parents are fighting, a child sent to bed early so his parents can yell in hushed tones from opposite ends of the house. No. No more of this. Please, seek reconciliation and shalom with me. Join in the conversation. Do not let Soli Deo Gloria simply be lip service to The Nation. Instead, embody the spirit of the Reforma- tion and bring honor to our King by dealing with our conflict.

The good ...

Grace Venhuizen
Staff Writer

Week of Welcome kicked off on Aug. 26, with the morning move-in. Later came Wiener World, Peer Counselling (PC) group meetings, open house conferences with professors, Freshman Olympics and a Freshman Talent Show.

This was a trying week for many first year students. It's hard to adjust to college life, much less college life that keeps a person constantly bouncing around from place to place. Yet within this continuous movement and adjustment, friendships were made, familiarity was gained and WOW became a success.

Freshmen point out that WOW started with a very camp-like feeling about it. Upon arrival, students were maulled at their cars by PC leaders wearing matching shirts and grins. Yet, one freshman pointed out that "seeing all the kids come to our car and take all our things...was comforting (in) that my freshman was being enfolded in the Dordt community immediately upon arrival at Dordt." The parent later commented that she felt she "could leave and know [her] child was in good hands."

The PC program at Dordt is easily criticized by new students. Many form the opinion that these groups are especially unwanted. It's a strange situation for freshmen; many complain of it being uncomfortable and unnecessary. Yet looking back, a first-year student reflects on her PC experience saying, "I really liked it. At first it was kinda awkward, but I really liked it. It gave me a chance to meet new people without being overwhelmed because it was a smaller group."

Freshmen quickly realize that the PC leaders firmly believe in the work they are doing. PC leader Anna Venhuizen says, "WOW is good for the college as a whole because freshmen are ushered in the community. It just opens up their eyes to what's available to them at college. [And] it allows them an upperclassman to go to with their problems." PC leaders agree that WOW helps freshmen become familiar with the philosophy at Dordt, along with the students and the campus itself.

In retrospect, freshmen point out that WOW had its weak spots, but most freshmen can agree that the Week of Welcome benefits students by giving them familiarity, new friendships, and a sense of community at Dordt College.
Teaching English, touching lives

Justin Van Zee
Staff Writer

Imagine the challenge and frustration of explaining words such as "spirit" and "discipline" to Chinese students who only understand simple English. Then, imagine explaining idioms such as "between a rock and a hard place" or "as tough as nails." Compared to being transplanted into a communist country and immersed in a foreign culture revolving around respect and honor, these were just minor challenges in the English camp.

As part of the English Language Institute/China (ELIC) summer program Camp China, Lindsey taught English to students ranging from age 14 to 18 years old for about four weeks at the Shashi No.3 Middle School in Jingzhou, a rustic inland city in south-central China. Lindsey was one of four Dordt students to partner with ELIC for the summer, Ginelle Bakker teaching in Vietnam and Amanda Pothoven and Jen Van Wyk teaching in Hong Kong.

Lindsey's students were on summer break, which is a bit of a misnomer as their summer is filled with specialized academic camps. On the first day the students were divided up the rest. Since the goals of the camp were to teach English and also to expose the Chinese students to American culture, Lindsey's class spent the mornings practicing conversational English, and the American teachers often used a portion of the afternoons to re-create American culture. These activities included a pretend wedding, making Valentine's Day cards and reenacting the Christmas story—both the version with Santa Claus and the one with Jesus Christ.

Regarding conversation about religion, Lindsey and her team had to follow strict guidelines since they were visiting China as English teachers. Any discussion of religion had to come from personal interest from them. Not long after arriving in China, Lindsey and her teammates discovered that they were in a special position. The students were eager to spend time with the American teachers because they could improve their English skills, but more importantly, the personal attention the teachers showed created the opportunity for deeper friendships to develop. These conversations and friendships gave Lindsey and her team chances to show the students what true love looks like even if it was limited by the language barrier and government oversight. Lindsey said, "I saw how much love these children didn't know because they're stuck in a culture where they're one of millions."

At the end of the English camp, the finality of the goodbyes sunk in as Lindsey realized she would likely never see any of her students again, never to teach them another English word, share another ice cream cone or act out another Bible story. Her project is not fully finished though; it has only been modified. Now her mission is to tell her story and encourage others to stretch their comfort zones to see what God is doing around the world.

Dordt receives National Health Assessment results

Jacob Kroese
Staff Writer

Last year, Dordt College campus health services initiated a survey to gain information about college students' health in order to understand how Health Services, Student Services and the Safe Campus Office can better address and understand the needs of students. Linda Vogel, secretary of campus health services, arranged for the administration of the survey and gave secretarial support while Rachel Valentine, Coordinator of the Safe Campus Project, worked with questions in the survey to address issues related to sexual assault and relationship violence.

In the spring, the survey was sent via e-mail to all full-time students, and 324, about one-fourth of the student body, responded. The results showed that 65 percent of students are in "good or excellent health," but 42.5 percent have experienced back pain, 31.8 percent have suffered from allergies, and 26.5 percent indicated that they have experienced a sinus infection. Students indicated that their academic performance was most impacted by sickness, sleeping problems, and relationship difficulties.

Of the students who responded to the survey, 37.7 percent reported having to deal with extreme depression at least once a year. Student Services encourages students to utilize counseling services from Bob Wiersma, Director of Personal Counseling. Rachel Valentine also provides counseling, to those dealing with relationship violence and sexual assault. The large number of students who indicated that they have been in abusive or sexually coercive situations surprised Rachel when compared with the small number of students who reported to her personally that they have been stalked. However, only eight percent of females claim to be in an emotionally abusive relationship, and only 0.5 percent claim to be in a physically abusive relationship.

The responses also showed that there are significant differences between the percentage of students who reported alcohol use and the perception that students have of alcohol use by their peers. Of the students who responded, 37.6 percent said that they used alcohol one or more days within the past 30 days. When students were asked how often they thought the average student drank alcohol in the last 30 days, the average estimate was 79.2 percent. Student services would like students to know the social norm at the college is dry. Students who do not drink regularly are not the minority. The survey also asked students to indicate the number of times they had consumed five or more drinks within the last two weeks (the commonly used definition of binge drinking). The national average over the past ten years of students who reported binge drinking behavior was 43 percent. The survey responses at Dordt indicated that 15 percent of students reported engaging in binge drinking behavior within the last two weeks. Based on these responses, the student body reports less than half the percentage of the national average of binge drinkers, but this also means as many as 200 students often have more than five drinks in one sitting. Students services hopes to be able to use the survey to better reach students who abuse alcohol and lead students to challenge behavioral decisions. Ken Boersma, Vice President for Student Services, emphasized counseling is always available, and a support group has been available in the past.

Support groups have also been used to help young men and women struggling with eating habits. According to the survey, 4.2 percent of students were underweight, and 20.2 percent were overweight. Of those students indicating that they were dieting, 2.6 percent reported using laxatives or vomiting to lose weight. Individual counseling is also available for those struggling with eating disorders.

Summarizing the results, Ken Boersma says "When I look at the results, I see significant positives and also some concerns."
Dordt's new tradition

Kyle Van Wyk
Staff Writer

Last year, murmurings occurred on the Dordt College campus that football was going to be added to the already wide variety of athletic offerings. Announced March 21, 2006 and taking effect on June 1, John Heavner took the task of building the Defender football program.

Heavner, a native of Norman, Oklahoma, grew up with football all around him. He said, "It's more that I attended my dad's practices as a little kid that I learned to love the game." If anyone is concerned that Coach Heavner doesn't have the experience to start and run a NAIA college football program, think again. This state champion has coached at the Division II and Division IAA levels, both at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma and at Missouri State in Springfield, Missouri.

Many people are very excited that Dordt is starting this program however, there are others who are unsure about the whole process. Some fear that bringing in football players will weigh down the academic success of the school. That won't happen with Heavner at the helm, as he feels "as much stress about kids to graduate as to how they do on the football field." The Athletic Director at Dordt College, Rick Vander Berg, is very high on Heavner as he knows he'll "do the right things to get the job done."

One big question is, "What will the football players use to train and lift in?" A new weight room is enough and have the needed equipment for all athletes to fine-tune their skills. Three possible locations are being considered. The addition could be tackled on to the Recreation Center, the Ali-Seasons Center, or by using the gymnastics room in the recreation center. The location is still in question but decisions will be made soon. Starting from the ground up is not an easy task and will be a real challenge to all players and coaches. The Defenders will play a junior-varsity schedule in the 2007 season and field a varsity team beginning in 2008. The way, the first varsity game will be against the Northwestern Red Raiders.

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

Dordt College's campus security has a new, proactive approach this year. Campus security is working to develop a positive, approachable image. Mason Welsh has worked for campus security in the past and is optimistic about the upcoming year. When asked about the message he would like to convey, Welsh said he wants students to realize campus security is a service that is available to them.

Ken Boersma, Vice-President of Student Services, said that foremost in his mind this year was preparing security to be trained to provide appropriate responses to various situations. This especially included equipping security staff to present a positive image for themselves. Campus security is here to protect the students. Boersma explains, "For example, if a student doesn't feel safe walking across campus late at night, campus security is available to pick the student up and give him or her a ride." Campus security has a tough balancing job. They have to learn to simultaneously enforce rules, protect the students, and present a positive, friendly face.

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A new face for Campus Security

Bridget Smith
Staff Writer

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Dordt builds new lab to serve multimedia and the arts

Cheryl Korthuis
Staff Writer

Computer Services and Maintenance crews are giving the final touches to the new computer lab in Classroom Building room 88. The lab is part of a new cross-department request to revamp Dordt's multimedia technology.

Dordt allowed funding for the project because of the oncoming demands in the fields of graphic design, web design and media production. "There will be an area of growth in the next decade in web design and animation," says Dave Versluis, professor of Art.

The new lab meets the industry standards. "We have one of the better labs in the nation for multimedia," says Mark Volkers, Electronic Media-Production Coordinator and Instructor.

Before the new lab, Dordt's needs and Computer Services and Maintenance constructed the lab this summer.

The student reaction of the new lab is positive. "I love it - it excites me very much," says Mason Welsh, graphic design major. He says the media today is more motion-oriented than ever before, and the new animation capabilities will be beneficial in finding a job after graduation.

Dordt is responding to a new wave of technological advances in society. There is growth in media, and we must have Christians involved, says Volkers. In fact, there is a study committee looking into proposing a new major for the Fall 2007 school year. The new major may be called "Digital Media Production" and would be in the communication department. It would be a blend of Business, Art, and Communications.

The interdisciplinary major would have a complementary minor as well. Volkers mentioned this minor might be helpful for pre-seminary majors because the work of a preacher is communicating, and the latest generation massively communicates through digital media. In fact, freshman Piper Kucera says she was not going to attend Dordt until she found out about the new video-editing technology and possible new major at Dordt.

The Macintosh units are mainly used by the art department for graphic design, the communication department for video editing classes and the music technology class. The Diamond will now use the complete Adobe Suite including InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator. "Similar interfaces are more compatible," says Volkers, and this streamlines production.

The lab will be equipped with both an inkjet and laser printer and scanner. Lab open hours will be whenever there are no classes, as video-editing and graphic design are quite time-intensive.

The new lab meets the present needs and Computer Service and Maintenance constructed the lab this summer.

Sculptures

Continued from pg. 1

reactions to a certain face or group of people.

Word has not yet been disclosed as to whom the culprits are, but the message they sent is clear. "The biggest thing this whole incident shows is that Dordt and the surrounding community have a ways to go in educating people about art and respect," one alumnus art major said.

So, how can Dordt's campus share their response, both to the art itself and to the defacing of it? They may start with turning their face—toward seeing art in a new way. Furthermore, the artists encourage students to read the sculpture statement in the display which offers a sense of better understanding the purpose, passion and person behind each of the sculptures which is about "the beauty and complexity of the human form as the crown of God's creation." Will such art be forced inside and thus forced out of the public domain?

Jake Van Wyk realizes that "some artwork that is appropriate to do isn't appropriate for all to see," but where do those bounds take the definition of and place for art on Dordt's campus? Does every square inch exclude the human body?

Is Dordt as an institution seeking to be reforming through art? Can Dordt bring about a new sense of education and appreciation for the human body on our campus? Such questions will be addressed in an all-campus discussion to be hosted by Student Forum this Monday, Sept 18, at 7:30 p.m. in GL 160. Present will be the sculpture class, Professor Van Wyk and members of the Administrative Cabinet. Don't keep your opinion inside.

The Art and Communication department's new lab was custom designed for Dordt's specific needs and Computer Service and Maintenance constructed the lab this summer.

Toppled sculptures lie scattered in the field behind the BJ Haan.

Jessica Braunschweig

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Movie Review: Invincible

Chris O'Neill
Staff Writer

Everyone loves a "feel good" movie, especially one that leaves you feeling inspired. Disney and Buena Vista's "Invincible" is based on the true inspirational story of Vince Papale, a Philadelphia native who achieved his personal dreams of being a Philadelphia Eagles' uniform and the opportunity to play for them over and over again. Of course, my opinion of music may differ from the readers. Nonetheless I think it would sell.

Eldredge was left devastated and bewildered. After quoting sections from Psalms, Eldredge says, "After his best friend died in a climbing accident, Eldredge was left devastated and bewildered. After a long struggle with this tragedy and with God, he thought it would sell."

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The second half of the book focuses on what Christians are setting their hopes on. Each chapter of the book starts with quotes from famous philosophers and theologians as well as lyrics from popular music, all applying to the upcoming text. He cuts right to the issue and brings up some interesting questions.

After quoting sections from Psalms, Eldredge points out an interesting observation. "Ask yourself, could this person be promoted to a position of leadership in my church? Heaven's no. He is far too unstable, too passionate and too desirous. It's all about pleasure and desire and thirst. And David, who wrote most of the Psalms, was called by God 'a man after his own heart' (I Sam. 13:14 NIV)."

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The second half of the book focuses on what Christians are setting their hopes on. Each chapter of the book starts with quotes from famous philosophers and theologians as well as lyrics from popular music, all applying to the upcoming text. He cuts right to the issue and brings up some interesting questions.
head of the men's soccer coaching staff. This year six freshman have been added to the team: Travis Feekes, Jake Kloet, Tyler Turney, Darin Keizer, Will Bruinsma, and Jordan Huisken. Other new faces include sophomores Craig Humphreys, Siam Grobler, and Junior Keith Hickox.

The team's two opening wins were matches against Mount Marty of Yankton, S.D. and Northwestern of Orange City. Quentin Glashower and Mike Oppeneer both scored goals during the team's game against Mount Mary and led the team to its first victory of the season.

An even sweeter victory came next when the team pulled out a 2-1 lead over Northwestern, Dordt's biggest rival. "No one on the team had beaten Northwestern in their career, so it was a memorable win to beat them this past week" says Captain Bryan Burgers. Brett Van Andel and Will Bruinsma both scored a goal in the first half of the game against Northwestern to secure the lead.

The team also played Dana and lost 3-1 with Captain Chad Nibbelink scoring the team's only goal in the second half.

The team's goals for this season are to win the conference tournament and to qualify for the regional tournament. Hopes are high for the success of Dordt's men's soccer team this year. "My favorite aspect of the team this year is that we have a great mix of experienced leadership and fresh talent on the team. We have players all over the field who are willing to take charge and tell the team what they see to help the team and to make the team better, and this year's team has the most talent of any I have ever played. All of them are great guys, too, which makes for a fun season" says Captain Bryan Burgers.