

today

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Spring 2016

 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO



Taking on the World

The growing international population at Minnesota State Mankato has a huge impact here and abroad.

FEATURES



12 A LIFE OF ADVOCACY

Wilbur Neushwander-Frink '00 has an internal compass that points her toward helping others.

BY SARAH ASP OLSON



14 THE TIE THAT BINDS

Interdisciplinary Studies allows students to tie distinct programs into unique degree opportunities.

BY JOE TOUGAS '86



18 THE FULBRIGHT EFFECT

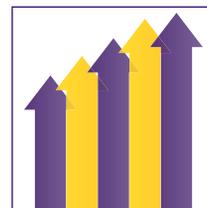
A cohort of Fulbright scholars will take what they learn in the Teaching English as a Second Language program back to their home countries.

BY LISA THIEGS

20 INTERNATIONAL INSIGHT

The growth of international students adds up to a tremendous impact on Minnesota State Mankato.

BY SARA GILBERT FREDERICK



22 TEAM PLAYER

Even after retiring, longtime educator Dale Wolpers '75, '83, '84, continues to find new ways to engage students of all ages.

BY CHRIS MIKKO



DEPARTMENTS

- 3 FROM PRESIDENT DAVENPORT
- 4 FOUNTAIN FODDER
- 5 SOCIAL MEDIA
- 6 CAMPUS Q&A: HENRY MORRIS
- 7 PARTNER PROFILE: NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
- 8 MAVERICK SCENE
- 10 OUR SPACES
- 24 CLASS NOTES/IN MEMORIAM
- 30 FLASHBACK
- 31 ALUMNI UPDATE

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ON THE COVER

International students make up more than 8% of the total enrollment at Minnesota State Mankato. Photo by Jonathan Chapman.

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today

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



WHO IS MINNESOTA STATE MANKATO?

In 1868 when this university was founded as Mankato Normal School, 27 students enrolled. They were all from Mankato or the surrounding area, and they were all pursuing the same goal—to be teachers. It's incredible how much has changed in the almost 150 years since then.

Today, we have almost 16,000 students who come from around the state, around the country and around the world. This year, approximately 8 percent of our students come from countries other than the United States. In fact, the number of international students has been growing exponentially over the past several years: In 2011, we had 719 international students enrolled; during the 2015-16 academic year, there were 1,281—an increase of more than 40 percent! We are expecting one of our largest classes of international students ever to join us next fall, so that number will continue to go up.

We've also seen a notable increase in the percentage of diverse students on campus. Last fall, students of color made up 17 percent of our total enrollment, compared to 5 percent 25 years ago. That's a good start, but we still have work to do, both in recruiting more students of color and in making them feel welcome and safe here. I appreciate the work Henry Morris, the dean of Institutional Diversity, has been doing to that end and look forward to continuing that work with him in the months and years to come. All of us at Minnesota State Mankato are committed to ensuring that people of all races and from all walks of life feel safe, welcome and appreciated on campus and in the community.

We are also committed to providing all of our students the highest quality education possible. One of the ways we do that is by maintaining our accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission. We've been working through the regular re-accreditation process over the past year, and I'm pleased to tell you that the recent HLC visit went extremely well. We look forward to receiving the commission's final report soon and beginning our next century of accreditation.

Even as we look toward the future, we are excited to start celebrating our past as well. On October 7, 2018, we will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first day of classes at the State Normal School in Mankato. The celebration of the sesquicentennial, however, will begin in earnest next year, as campus and the community honor the many important milestones that happened in advance of that first day of classes.

Please join us as we prepare to honor this University's heritage and celebrate its history. Share your memories of campus, contribute mementos and memorabilia representing specific times, and participate in any of the events related to the sesquicentennial. I hope this becomes an opportunity for alumni and friends to engage both with the University and with each other. 🍷

President Richard Davenport
president@mnsu.edu

*Today, we have almost
16,000 students who
come from around
the state, around the
country and around
the world.*

fountainfodder

- Minnesota State Mankato has been designated as a **NON-LAND GRANT COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE** by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The designation emphasizes the University's role in developing a skilled workforce for the agricultural, food and natural resources industries through hands-on experiences, undergraduate research, independent study and internships.
- The **AVIATION PROFESSIONAL FLIGHT PROGRAM** recently received **ACCREDITATION** from the Aviation Accreditation Board International.
- ETAP, a California-based leader in power systems technology and engineering, **DONATED SOFTWARE** valued at more than \$865,000 to the College of Science, Engineering and Technology. Minnesota State Mankato is the **FIRST UNIVERSITY IN MINNESOTA TO HAVE THE ETAP POWER LABS SYSTEMS ENGINEERING SOFTWARE**.
- Minnesota State Mankato was selected to participate in a **THREE-YEAR "RE-IMAGINING THE FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE" PROJECT**, which is being launched by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.
- Minnesota State Mankato's **INTERNATIONAL ENROLLMENT HAS JUMPED FROM 31ST TO 29TH** among master's institutions in the United States, as ranked by the annual Open Doors Report from the Institute of International Education.
- **"THE NEW YORKER"** published "Who Will Greet You at Home," **A SHORT STORY BY LESLEY ARIMAH MFA '10**, in October.
- Minnesota State Mankato was named a **2016 MILITARY FRIENDLY® SCHOOL** by Victory Media.
- The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system announced that it **RAISED MORE THAN \$39.5 MILLION DURING ITS ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE SCHOLARSHIP CAMPAIGN**, which funded more than 28,000 scholarships.
- English professor **GWEN WESTERMAN** received a two-year, \$194,774 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to **TRANSLATE AND CREATE A CRITICAL EDITION OF LETTERS WRITTEN BY DAKOTA PEOPLE** living in Minnesota in the mid-19th century.
- The **HONORS PROGRAM RECEIVED AN EXCELLENCE IN CURRICULUM PROGRAMMING AWARD** from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system in November. **DAVID JONES**, the vice president of student affairs and enrollment management, also received an **OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATOR AWARD** from the system.
- The **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM**, which accepted its first students in 2008, recently **RECEIVED FULL ACCREDITATION** by the National Association of School Psychologists.
- The American College Personnel Association awarded Minnesota State Mankato one of two **2016 ACPA COLLABORATIVE EXCELLENCE AWARDS** for the 2014 mock house party.
- Professor **PAUL FORCE-EMERY MACKIE PARTICIPATED IN THE WHITE HOUSE RURAL COUNCIL DISCUSSION ABOUT RURAL MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES** and challenges in February. Mackie was invited to attend as part of his role as the president of the National Association for Rural Mental Health.
- **S-T INDUSTRIES**, a St. James, Minn., based company that manufactures precision measuring tools, **DONATED A VIDEO INSPECTION SYSTEM** to the Department of Automotive and Manufacturing Engineering Technology.
- Minnesota State Mankato was ranked the **SECOND-BEST VALUE AMONG FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN MINNESOTA** and the **THIRD-BEST VALUE AMONG ALL FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS IN THE STATE** by the website BestValueSchools.com.



INSTAGRAM

Nar_gyz

Purple fountain on homecoming week
#homecoming #maverick #MNSU



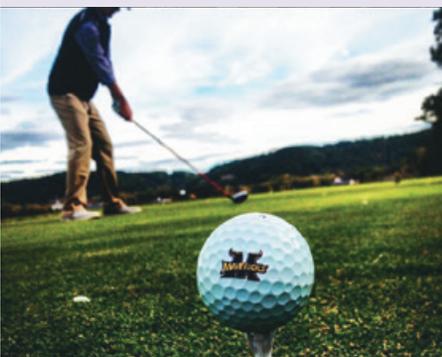
Apodorov

What a beautiful day for December



kschmitz7

#theJewel #mavfam #conference



nick_bryant19

It's not every day you get to have a candid conversation with a country music star who just wants to use your weight room!!! So honored to have met @cswinde2 this morning, look for the women's hockey jersey he'll be wearing at the concert tonight!!!
#MavFam #ChillinIt



msutheatreanddance

The sets of MSU Theatre come together and go away with lots of sweat equity. Here's a look at Antigone's demise.



TWITTER

@amyklobuchar

Congrats to @MNSUMankato on being designated Non-Land Grant College of Agriculture by @USDA_NIFA.

@KendraHuston

Confirmed my enrollment for fall 2016 at Mankato. Relief.

@JeepPiche30

Just toured @MavHockey updated digs at VWC... WOW!!! Just WOW!!!
#FirstClass #ProudAlum #MavFam

@ChristensenMnSt

Congrats to @MinnStSoftball on claiming the @NorthernSunConf regular season title!
#MavFam

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MINNESOTA STATE MANKATO HASHTAGS

#mnsu #mavfam #mavnation #msumavericks



In 1990, Minnesota State Mankato hired a human resources specialist to help develop a more diverse pool of candidates for faculty and staff searches. That year, more than a dozen diverse hires were made—one of the largest classes ever at the University. One of those was a young man from New York City who was hired to be the director of Student Activities: Henry Morris.

Morris, who became the dean for Institutional Diversity in 2013, is the only one of those hires still at the University. “Twenty-five and a half years later and I’m still here,” he laughs. “I thought I’d be here for three years, but every time I started to think about leaving, they would make it more interesting for me.”

His decision to stay has given Morris a unique perspective on how diversity at Minnesota State Mankato has changed in the past quarter century—and on the important work that still needs to be done.

Dean of Diversity

Henry Morris has seen many things change during his 25 years at Minnesota State Mankato.

Q: What are the most significant ways the University has changed since you started in 1990?

A: We are more intentional about what we do. We’re talking more often about the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students. I meet regularly with the director of Human Resources and the director of Equal Opportunity and Title IX, I speak with the cabinet and the Council of Deans.

Q: What has Minnesota State Mankato done right?

A: We were one of the first in the state, and in the nation, to have a chief diversity office, with Dr. Mike Fagin becoming an associate vice president in 1990. He served on the President’s Cabinet—and we were ahead of the curve on that. That’s one of the good things here, that we have a structure set up for this. And we have for a long time. We were one of the first to have a cabinet level position. We were one of the first to have a LGBT Center, a Women’s Center and a Multi-Cultural Center, all staffed by full-time people. A lot of my colleagues here in Minnesota see us as a model for what diversity should look like, in terms of staff and resources. Right now we have 17 full-time staff working in

diversity; you won’t find that anywhere else in the MnSCU system, or even at the University of Minnesota. Those are all things we can hold our heads high about.

Q: What kind of results are we seeing from the investment in resources and staff, especially in terms of recruitment?

A: We are doing a much better job with recruiting. When I first came, 5 percent of the student body was students of color. Now we’re at 17 percent. So we’ve definitely grown.

Q: Issues of race and equality have been discussed at many college campuses this year—including Minnesota State Mankato. What has been going on here?

A: Conversations have been happening here. Students have been sharing concerns with me and with senior leaders. They raise concerns about increasing the number of diverse students, increasing the number of diverse faculty and staff. They share stories with me. The issues are not new, but sometimes you need a critical mass to start a movement. They need to know it isn’t just them, that it’s bigger than that.

Q: Has the University responded appropriately to the students’ questions and concerns?

A: One of the biggest issues is that students need to believe that their voices are being heard by school leaders. There’s no need to do a sit-in if they know that they have access to those leaders. It’s important to the students that we hear what they are saying and acknowledge it as true. And I think right now they do feel that way. We’ve had open forums with the President. The President had dinner with student leaders. As we move forward, I think it’s clear that the President and other administrators are trying to hear what they have to say. ☞

—Sara Gilbert Frederick

“A lot of my colleagues here in Minnesota see us as a model for what diversity should look like, in terms of staff and resources.”



A Powerful Partnership

Visiting Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University gives Minnesota State Mankato exercise science students a broader view of their field—and the world.

For Cherie Pettitt, a trip to South Africa as a doctoral student sparked a love affair with the country. It also made her determined to help future students have the same life-changing experience.

For the past three years, Pettitt and other Minnesota State Mankato faculty have led groups of undergraduate and graduate students on two-week trips to Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, for intensive research, service learning and study programs.

“I had an opportunity to go on a study-abroad trip there, and it was really the quintessential experience of falling in love with a place,” she says. “I knew at that moment that I wanted to do study abroad programs there.”

When Pettitt joined the Minnesota State Mankato Exercise Science/Exercise Physiology faculty in 2012, she was quick to put that resolve into action.

With the help of colleagues at St. Cloud State University, where she earned her doctoral degree, and the support of her Department Chair and the Dean of the College of Allied Health and Nursing, Pettitt created a framework for an ongoing partnership with the Human

Movement Sciences Department at NMMU. In 2013, Minnesota State Mankato sent a dozen students to Port Elizabeth, where they conducted research on Critical Power and Speed in Rugby Players. A group has gone every year since.

While NMMU is academically advanced, it lies in the middle of an impoverished area of a largely poor country. Visiting that area is a new experience for the students from Minnesota State Mankato as well as for many NMMU students. Pettitt says it’s a powerful experience for all of them.

“Port Elizabeth has one of the poorest townships in the world; there’s no running water and the residents all live in shanties or shacks. There are very few services there and they all have to bus into the city to work, which is often a two-hour trip,” Pettitt says. “The days in the township are really emotional. Most students cry.”

Students from both regions actively learn from each other, both academically and culturally. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, for example, has equipment for studying exercise that Minnesota State Mankato students don’t have access to.

“They’re really advanced in exercise and sport,” Pettitt says. “That’s one of the reasons this partnership is so great, because it’s mutually beneficial.”

Mark Kramer, lecturer of Biomechanics and Exercise Physiology at NMMU, is Pettitt’s counterpoint in South Africa. “Every year we do something different and the students gain immensely from the interaction,” he says. “[Students can] see how things are done on opposite ends of the globe. And the thing that surprises our students every time is to see how similar they all are in their passions and interests.”

The Port Elizabeth community also benefits from the partnership, Kramer says. “They are exposed and educated around their current health status and [empowered] with knowledge on what they can do about it.”

Next year, a student from NMMU will be attending Minnesota State Mankato to see how exercise education here is different. Pettitt hopes that exchange will be the beginning of an even more beneficial relationship for both parties in the future.

“This experience is so much more than just something students can put on a resume,” Pettitt says. “It changes you both as a person and as a professional. Mostly my course focuses on health disparities in the U.S. compared to the world, which of course makes sense in post-apartheid South Africa. It’s the complete experiential education package that greatly impacts a student’s development, and they’re being challenged in all of these unique ways.”

—Kelly O’Hara Dyer



HOMECOMING 2016



For some, the day started with a 5K race (1); for others, it was the President's Pancake Breakfast, where Stomper helped entertain the youngsters (2). By the time the parade (3 & 4) began, almost everyone was enjoying the festivities—including the 2016 Homecoming Royalty, Na Chum and Desiree Frederick (5).



FROM STUDENTS TO ALUMNI

Congratulations to each of the 1,740 students who earned their degrees during fall commencement ceremonies on December 12, 2015, including this group of proud #MavGrads (1) who posed for a photo before crossing the stage in Bresnan Arena. The excitement of becoming alumni is also apparent among the senior nursing students in Dr. Julie Frederick's Nursing Leadership and Management class (2), who celebrated with Frederick (second row, fourth from left) before commencement.



MAKE THE MAVERICK SCENE. Learn about events for alumni and friends at mnsu.edu/alumni.
Submit photos of your own alumni gatherings to today@mnsu.edu.
See more photos at today.mnsu.edu!

BREWING UP A GOOD TIME

The Mankato Brewery hosted an alumni event in March **(1)**. Among the more than 60 alumni and friends in attendance were Arlin '07 and Gary Penner **(2)** and Jennifer '93 and Jeffrey Domas '89 **(3)**.



ALUMNI IN ARIZONA

Foundation board president Ellen Steck and her husband Glenn hosted a late winter gathering for alumni in Arizona this year and were thrilled to have more than 20 people attend the event **(1)**. Patti Kramlinger, director of development for the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, enjoyed the opportunity to leave the Minnesota winter behind and chat with Steven Zachary '81 **(2)**, a criminal justice attorney in Phoenix.



Room to Grow

Minnesota State Mankato has had a greenhouse since 1972, although the current space off of the Trafton Science Center was finished in 2010. Tony Kopari, who manages the greenhouse for the Biology Department, explains that faculty use the plants to teach plant anatomy and taxonomy; both undergraduate and graduate students also use the space for research and experiments—and sometimes, to grow plants for fundraisers as well.

- 
- The greenhouse comprises five distinct houses—A, B, C, D and E—that are each used for different purposes. The largest is C, which houses the general collection; undergraduates use A and B for research and experimentation, and D and E are used for faculty and graduate research.
 - There are approximately 200 total plants, representing 35 plant families and more than 100 plant species.
 - In 2016, 20 people helped maintain the greenhouse and care for the plants: 9 undergraduate students, 5 graduate students, 5 faculty and 1 staff.
 - Student workers are responsible for watering, fertilizing, removing dead leaves and stems as needed, and keeping the greenhouse clean.
 - Student groups have used space in houses A and B to grow plants to sell for their organizations. 🌱

A LIFE OF ADVOCACY

Wilbur Neushwander-Frink '00 has allowed her internal compass to keep her focused on helping others.

By Sarah Asp Olson

In October 2015, the Arc of Minnesota honored Wilbur Neushwander-Frink '00 with a Professional of the Year award. Her bio, in part, read: “Wherever self-advocacy is happening, Wilbur is near.”

It's true. When laid out together, the list of activities and organizations Neushwander-Frink is involved in is remarkable. The 56-year-old is a community organizer at the Arc of Minnesota Southwest, works as a volunteer coordinator at Pathstone Living, and leads two theater groups for people with disabilities—The United We Stand Players in New Ulm and Aktion Club in Mankato. She's involved in the Miracle League, Feeding Our Communities Partners' BackPack Food Program and the Good Thunder Reading Series, to name just a few.

Boil it down, though, and Neushwander-Frink's real strength, regardless of the activity, organization or platform, is giving a voice and a place at the table to a group of people who have often been overlooked.

“That is just the essential element of Wilbur,” says Melinda Wedzina, former executive director of Feeding Our Communities Partners and a friend and colleague of Neushwander-Frink's. “It's what drives her every day, to be able to help people have a voice and be heard in whatever form that takes. Whether it's theater or speaking out at a community-organized event, she's very much about the power of story and the power of the voice behind the story.”

And that is why Wedzina nominated her for the prestigious Virginia McKnight Binger Unsung Hero award, which Neushwander-Frink won last fall.



PHOTO BY STEVE WOIT

Following Her Compass

Neushwander-Frink's story begins in Plainfield, Ill., a small town about 50 miles southwest of Chicago. Both her parents were orphans and children of the depression. They were practical people. They didn't volunteer or get too involved in the community. It just wasn't their way. From the time she was a little girl, however, Neushwander-Frink felt a strong desire to get involved and to help. The way she describes it, the needle of her compass—her true north—always pointed toward serving the underserved and making a difference in the world around her.

By the time she entered high school, she was beginning to flex her volunteer muscles at church and in the community. It was about this time that an incident at school ignited her passion for advocacy in the disability community.

It was the 1970s, and students with disabilities were being mainstreamed into Neushwander-Frink's high school.

"The kids [with disabilities] weren't able to go about in the hallway like all the other kids, they had to be in a line," she says. "I remember these kids walking in this line and I remember standing at my locker. My fellow classmates in the hallway were making fun of and pushing some of the kids and I just couldn't take it."

Neushwander-Frink called the bullies out—and she took some heat for it. "Kids started making fun of me too, but it didn't hinder me from being the person I was. That day my eyes were open and I was like, 'What is going on here?'"

After high school, Neushwander-Frink felt a pull towards ministry but opted instead to follow her parents' advice. She became a nurse and, over the next 30 years, practiced in a variety of settings and locations—including a stint in New York where she lived the artist's loft life with her painter husband, Brian.

In 1990, she moved to Mankato, where Brian had joined Minnesota State Mankato's Art Department in 1989 (he now serves as chair). Neushwander-Frink worked briefly for Abbot Northwestern, then took what would become her last job in nursing with a New Ulm residential provider, MBW Company.

MBW has a long history of serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and supporting Minnesota's self-advocacy movement. For Neushwander-Frink, it was where her true north began to intersect with her vocation.

"Though my parents chose what I was going to do, I think there was some wisdom there," she says. "In the long arc of my career it really led me to the discovery of how I can best use my own personal gifts in the world."

In 1995, Neushwander-Frink decided to enter Minnesota State Mankato's Educational Leadership master's program, from which she graduated in 2000. "I cannot say enough for my master's education at Minnesota State Mankato," she says. "It was fabulous and it really helped transform the way I practice as an ally in the self-advocacy movement."

The Next Big Idea

Neushwander-Frink's work in self-advocacy has led her down paths she couldn't have imagined when she began 22 years ago. For one, while she always enjoyed theater and writing, she couldn't have pictured herself as a director and playwright.

"When I started working with People First of New Ulm, they seemed to see something in me that I didn't see in myself," she says.

The group asked her to help them put together a presentation to share with legislators, and she was game. "I wrote a little performance, the history of people with disabilities. Then the group said, 'We'd really like to do a play.'"

Neushwander-Frink is now finishing her 11th full-length play. Her work in social justice theater is among her most profound contributions to the self-advocacy movement, and what she considers her biggest legacy as an ally.

"It's been so rewarding," she says. "When [people] first join the theater group their heads are down and they don't feel confident about themselves, but as we begin what we call nurturing and watering the seeds of their soul, that's when you see people begin to blossom and to really discover who they are beyond any label society puts upon them. It's just been really incredible to stand back and see that happen."

Of course, it's had its challenges, but just as teenager Wilbur didn't back down in the face of bullying, Neushwander-Frink is determined to keep moving forward. She's decided to embark on her next big idea this year: a non-profit centered on inclusive arts. The way she sees it, it will be a place where artists of all backgrounds and abilities are supported and safe to explore everything from theater to dance to creative writing.

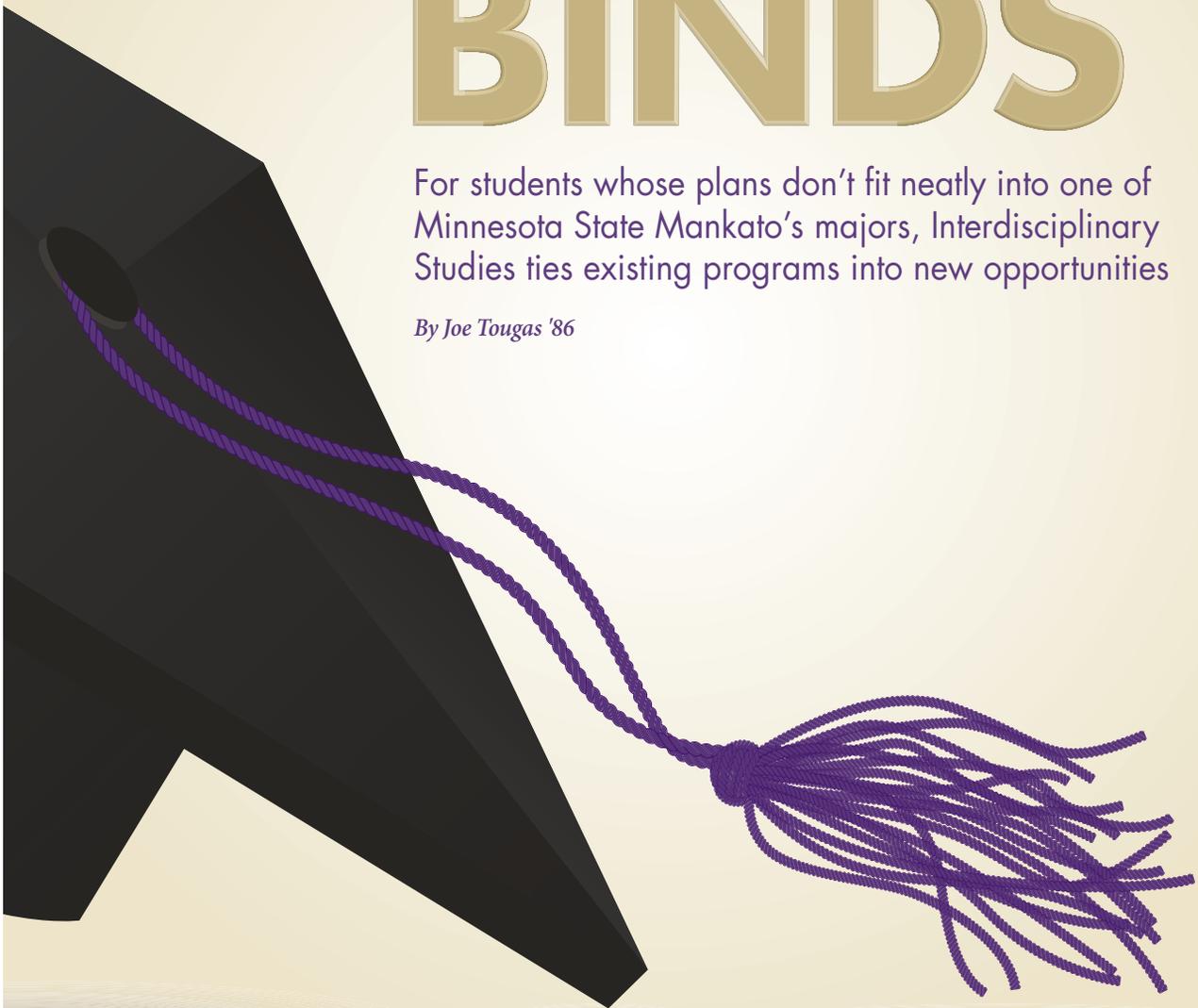
It's a big venture, to be sure, but you'd be hard pressed to find someone more qualified, passionate or experienced than Neushwander-Frink. And the well-loved and respected ally, volunteer and community leader is sure to have an abundance of support along the way.

"Wilbur is very futuristic and visionary; she can see the bigger picture before any of us even have an idea we need to look in that direction," says Wedzina. "She has built such an army of admirers and followers that she will have no trouble finding any help or resources she needs as she gets this set up. The stars are aligned and her track record is impeccable. It just feels like it's the right next move." 🌟

The TIE that BINDS

For students whose plans don't fit neatly into one of Minnesota State Mankato's majors, Interdisciplinary Studies ties existing programs into new opportunities

By Joe Tougas '86





Making His Own Music

Shortly after enrolling at Minnesota State Mankato as a music major in 2013, Andrew Grabowska discovered something potentially disastrous about his piano playing.

“I have terrible performance anxiety,” he recalls. In junior and senior high music events, the St. Clair, Minn., student always seemed to get hit with the nerves. While fine in rehearsal, playing at competitions brought on trembling hands, missed notes and memory lapses.

When he enrolled at Minnesota State Mankato intending to pursue a bachelor’s degree in music, he hoped to have those days behind him. Grabowska’s one-on-one piano courses went well—until it was do-or-die time to perform for grades.

“All of a sudden the music I knew so well in my lessons just went out the window,” Grabowska says. “I couldn’t do it at all. I’d forget sections. I’d play poorly. ... I realized that I can’t do this as a living if this is such a hindrance for me.”

With performance out of the picture, Grabowska did some soul-searching and realized his true passion in music was on the composing side. More specifically, composing for specific events, such as film, video games or marching bands and drum corps. In an ideal world, the University would offer a degree in writing and composing for film and video games. It would be a degree that offered courses in sound engineering, licensing and recording.

But the University has no such degree. So Grabowska created one.

The young composer graduated this year with a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. It may sound like nine syllables of vagueness, but for a growing number of students, the degree program provides specific and specialized experiences toward jobs and careers that aren’t represented by one of the traditional majors offered by the University.

Previously known as Open Studies, Interdisciplinary Studies allows students to take classes from three distinct areas of study and combine them into a customized degree.

For transfer students, student athletes and students, like Grabowska, who discover a snag in their pursuit of a more traditional degree, the Interdisciplinary Studies major provides an opportunity to customize a program when the perfect program doesn’t technically exist.

In Grabowska’s case, he took select courses in music, music industry and film—three distinct majors—that together propelled him toward his goal of composing for special events and projects. He graduated this year among a handful of other students majoring in Interdisciplinary Studies.

That number is going to grow, says Kristen Treinen, who’s been director of Interdisciplinary Studies since 2013. “It’s growing and people are finding out more about it,” Treinen says. Also an

associate professor in Communication Studies, Treinen is currently helping 10 students work on the program’s required capstone experience. In 2013, she helped one.

Capstone projects can involve internships, teaching or immersion in a specified group of classes. Treinen also requires a three-pronged communications project: Write a paper defining how the three areas of study work together; create a website that explains their expertise; and apply for an actual job, including creating a LinkedIn profile and rehearsing the application and interview process.

These three requirements get at the core of one of Treinen’s concerns about the program. It’s critical that graduates be able to describe a degree titled Interdisciplinary Studies to an employer who might not understand that it is actually a customized, specialized degree and not a generalized or open area. “What I have them do is articulate how their three areas actually intersect,” Treinen says.

As director of the Interdisciplinary Studies major, her work with the students is in an individual study format. “They come in, they ask questions, I get them enrolled, I figure out what their plan of study is going to look like, how many credits they have,” she says. “It has to be very much hands-on. There’s some freedom to it but we have to make sure it makes sense for what they’re doing.”



Returning with a Plan

Tammy Bohlke, 37, recently returned to school more than a decade after leaving without completing a degree.

After graduating from high school in Pine City, Bohlke entered community college to study accounting. Although she had enjoyed accounting in high school, her interest faded the more she got into it. As she was re-evaluating her career options, most of her friends were moving on to four-year colleges to complete their degrees.

“I don’t know if it was just me not being fully invested in college at the time, my friends moving away or all of the above. It just wasn’t my time,” Bohlke says.

Thirteen years ago, she took a job as an administrative assistant at Minnesota State Mankato; since then she has worked in several different offices that serve students and alumni. Her current position in University Extended Education allows her to serve students who are often like her—older and eager to finish a degree.

Her job at the University gave her a unique vantage point to learn about career paths that might appeal to her, from nonprofit leadership

and event planning to advising students. As her vision for her future evolved, so did the classes for which she registered. Between her community college credits and the credits she was accumulating at Minnesota State Mankato, the interdisciplinary approach looked like it might be the best way to finish her bachelor’s degree—and so she contacted Treinen.

“She said I was the perfect candidate for why this degree was formed,” Bohlke says.

Bohlke was able to pair the credits she had earned in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services with credits in Health and Nonprofit Leadership.

“It worked perfectly for me,” she says. “Those were three fields I enjoyed and was invested in. It was the right time for me to go to college. They also had a lot of nighttime and online classes, so that was perfect for a non-traditional student.”

Her capstone project was co-teaching a course that prepares students for careers in business. She enjoyed the class so much she’s teaching it again.

“I’m so glad I had this degree that let me kind of just create that [capstone project]. I wasn’t told, ‘Go do an accounting internship.’ I was able to put everything I like into this.”

After graduation this May, Bohlke began pursuing a master’s degree in Educational Leadership at Minnesota State Mankato. Her goal is to eventually work as an advisor to college students. She thinks she’ll be able to relate well to students who are uncertain about navigating college.

“I was that student who stopped going to school because I didn’t have a mentor or advisor,” she says. “I think I have the right story to help some of those students.” Last summer, she volunteered to help undecided students during new-student orientation. That experience affirmed her belief that Interdisciplinary Studies would work just as well for incoming first-year students as it does for non-traditional students.

“Some people come here and don’t know what to do,” she says. “Sometimes it’s just like ‘Hey, your common theme here was health. Let’s look at what health majors we actually have...’ Sometimes it’s that one-on-one personal connection.

“It’s so fun to hear the students say, ‘Have you ever been undecided?’” she adds with a laugh. “I’m a 37-year-old undergrad student. You have no idea.”



Finding a Focus

Maverick heavyweight wrestler Malcolm Allen grew up in New Rochelle, N.Y., where he attended youth camps every summer. He credits those sports camps with guiding him away from bad influences and toward goals such as college.

He attended Nassau Community College for a year in Long Island, N.Y., then spent two years at Iowa Central Community College. That's where he decided to pursue a goal of being a college wrestling coach as well as a camp director. He assumed he'd need a degree in physical education, so he turned to Minnesota State Mankato.

Allen was drawn to Mankato after talking with wrestling coach Jim Makovsky about being a student athlete. "His energy and his goals that he set for me were everything I wanted for myself as well," Allen says. "The thing he was most concerned about was the schooling—he wanted me to graduate and graduate on time. No other coach really spoke about that, about schooling and graduating. Everybody else was just worried about me wrestling for them."

But Allen found that it was all going to be more time consuming than he expected.

He was stressing and his classes were getting ahead of him. It was Makovsky who suggested Interdisciplinary Studies.

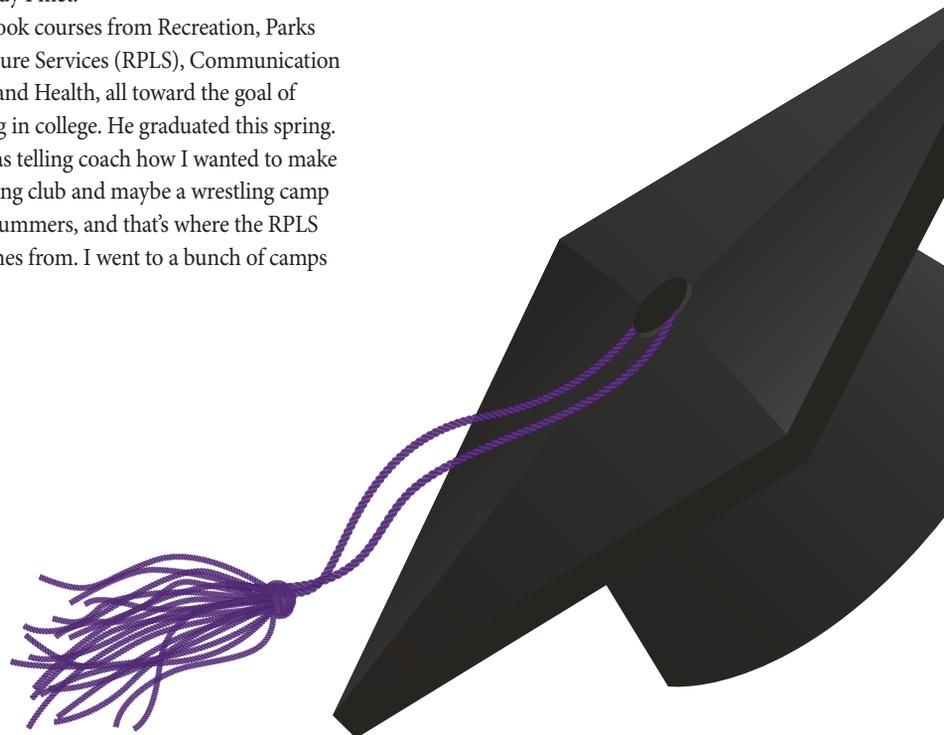
"I sat down with Coach Makovsky and we had a three-hour talk about how I should switch to Interdisciplinary Studies and I did," Allen says. "I don't regret it at all. I love my class, I love everybody I met."

He took courses from Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services (RPLS), Communication Studies and Health, all toward the goal of coaching in college. He graduated this spring.

"I was telling coach how I wanted to make a wrestling club and maybe a wrestling camp for the summers, and that's where the RPLS side comes from. I went to a bunch of camps

as a kid— every summer I was in a camp— and I think that helped me a lot in becoming who I am.

"I could have fallen into the wrong hands of society," Allen adds. "I just want to create the opportunity for other kids to do the same thing, to go down the right path in life." ✨



Shining Bright

Fulbright scholars in the TESL program leave lasting impressions.

By Lisa Thiels

Mafina Sanou, an international student from the West African country of Burkina Faso, was a bit surprised to discover that her classmates in the Teaching English as a Second Language program hadn't heard of her home country. But then again, when she first learned of her acceptance as a Fulbright scholar at Minnesota State Mankato, she had to research the location of Minnesota, which wasn't familiar to her and her family.

Sanou has been on campus since August. Since then, she has had to adjust to the dramatic changes in the weather—in Burkina Faso, daily temperatures year round can be in the 90s. She has had her share of cultural and language barriers to overcome as well. Upon her arrival, for example, the native French speaker missed a domestic flight because of a miscommunication. But Sanou couldn't be happier with the education and connections she has made at Minnesota State Mankato.

"The education system here is totally different. In my country, we have at least a

thousand students in the same class, and teachers don't have time for us," Sanou explains. "Here, everybody has attention from the teacher. I'm very thankful, and I know I'm learning a lot."

Sanou, who had worked as a translator previously, intends to return home and become a TESL teacher; at some point, she'd also like to start her own fashion-design business. Her classmate Stefan Prima, another Fulbright scholar in the TESL program, was already teaching English in Indonesia. His master's degree will help him elevate his teaching curriculum.

"I taught nurses at a school of health science," Prima says. "We made our own curriculum with special English terms for nurses. But we only had one standardized test, and it wasn't appropriate enough to measure English for the nursing field. By coming here, I hope I get more skills, so when I return later I can apply what I have learned to create a valid assessment."

The Fulbright Program, which is managed by the Institute of International Education,

aims to create cultural understanding between Americans and people around the world through scholarship. Originally crafted by Senator J. William Fulbright after World War II and signed into law by President Truman, it now works with 160 countries around the globe and provides 8,000 grants a year to graduates and young professionals through a highly competitive application process. The program funds scholars in a variety of disciplines and also supports teacher exchanges.

Sanou and Prima are two of six Fulbright scholars who were in the TESL program, which is part of the English Department, last fall. It's unusual to have more than two or three Fulbright scholars on the same college campus, and even more rare to have six all in one program.

"The fact that we've got six at a time is an extraordinary statement about the relationship we've built with Fulbright and the respect Fulbright has for students' experiences here," says Stephen Stoyhoff, dean of Global Education at Minnesota State Mankato. "Fulbright has to have



Fulbright scholars, back row from left: Hong Vo (Vietnam), Mamadou Belem (Burkina Faso), Stefan Prima (Indonesia); front row, from left: Firdaus Navruzov (Uzbekistan), Mafina Sanou (Burkina Faso) and Hamed El Haj (Mauritania).

a high degree of confidence in our University in order to make us one of its elite partners. We have been able to demonstrate that we offer high-quality academic programs, and therefore they place students here in large numbers.”

TESL Program Director Karen Lybeck was a Fulbright scholar herself and knows firsthand the value of broadening cultural horizons. “The international students gain more than an American education; they also have a chance to be friends for a lifetime with other students who are here,” Lybeck says. She uses the classroom to teach life skills as well as academics and helps students navigate through language confusion and day-to-day interactions as they go through the program.

Although he had a good grasp of the English language when he came, Prima had not been exposed to different American accents in his home country. So being in the classroom setting helps him learn various pronunciations and nuances. “In the classroom, I like that I can interact with a lot of people and compare our

ways of speaking,” Prima says. “It’s also a great opportunity to share our point of view.”

These rich exchanges among students and faculty are really the essential piece in creating a truly global university. In addition to this cohort of Fulbright scholars, there are more than a thousand international students on campus—a number that has almost doubled in the last five years. These students are sharing their cultures in classrooms, through student organizations and at campus-wide events. Furthermore, they are taking their experiences home and sharing them, which helps to widen the reach of Minnesota State Mankato overseas.

The Fulbright scholars are a small but prestigious subset of the international community on campus and represent the best and brightest in their countries. “They come to us for the kind of education that will prepare them to make important contributions to the national development plans for their respective country,” Stoyhoff says. “We believe that we have a very important responsibility for their

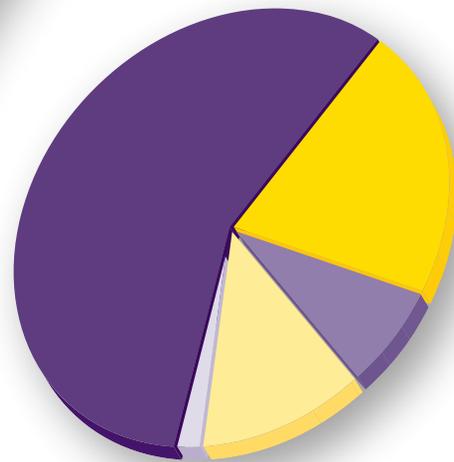
educational experience, and we want to impact their ability to contribute to their country’s national development.”

Both Stoyhoff and Lybeck revel in the success stories they hear about students who were once Fulbright scholars in the TESL program. One student returned to Mali and is now empowering other teachers to help thousands of children. A South African’s capstone project was discovered by a UCLA professor in the Cornerstone Repository and requested for reprint and inclusion in his course materials. These are the experiences that create lasting impressions.

Prima knows about lasting impressions. He chuckles when he tells about how he shared the Christmas holiday with a Minnesota family and tried his very first casserole—which he liked. But it’s more than the taste of hotdish that he will take with him when he leaves. He also knows that the taste of culture and education he experienced as a Fulbright scholar will be what he carries home and pays forward to others. ☞

INTERNATIONAL INTRIGUE

Six Fulbright scholars in one cohort is an impressive number. But it's not the only one. Almost all of the numbers related to international students at Minnesota State Mankato are fairly jaw-dropping.



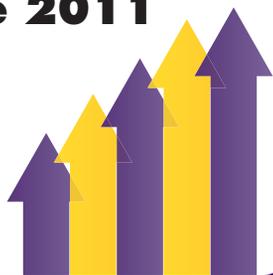
1,281

International Students in 2015-16

| | |
|--|-----|
| Undergraduate | 741 |
| Graduate | 270 |
| Non-Degree (Exchange and Sponsored Students) | 95 |
| Optional Practical Training | 151 |
| International English Language Institute | 24 |

44%
**Increase in
 international
 students
 since 2011**

2011: **719**
 2012: **894**
 2013: **1,053**
 2014: **1,228**
 2015: **1,281**



88
Countries represented on campus

TOP 10 COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST POPULATIONS

- Saudi Arabia: **151**
- India: **108**
- Republic of Korea: **106**
- Bangladesh: **82**
- Nepal: **82**
- Brazil: **53**
- Nigeria: **52**
- Ivory Coast: **36**
- Sri Lanka: **28**
- Germany: **27**



2015-16 International population by region

- Africa: **215**
- Asia: **534**
- Europe: **87**
- Middle East: **170**
- Americas: **119**
- Australia & Oceania: **5**

33,000

The approximate number of volunteer hours contributed to campus and the community by international students each year.

12

The total number of full-time staff in the Elizabeth and Wynn Kearney International Center

- Global Education: **4**
- International Student & Scholar Services: **6**
- International Programs Office: **1**
- Intensive English Language Institute: **1**





Team Player

A visit to a Mankato elementary school started Dale Wolpers on a long and fulfilling career. It also led him to a new role on an entirely different playing field.

By Chris Mikko

Editor's Note: Dale Wolpers is the current chair of the Minnesota State Mankato Alumni Association Board.

All it took was one visit, and Dale Wolpers was hooked. In the early 1970s, Wolpers was a student at Minnesota State Mankato. Like many people his age, he was mulling over potential majors and careers. The idea of teaching and coaching had some appeal for him, so he interned at an elementary school in Mankato. As he recalls, the goal was simply to help out in the classroom and observe teachers in action. But it quickly turned into much more than that.

"I realized probably from the first day that teaching was what I wanted to do," he says. "I found that I really enjoyed working with the kids. But I also saw how much teamwork was involved in the profession, how all of the teachers worked together to ensure that their students would be successful. That sense of cooperation appealed to me.

"After I was done with the internship, I got a letter from the school principal thanking me for my work and telling me I'd done a good job," he adds. "But my fate was pretty much already sealed by then."

Wolpers isn't exaggerating. That experience shaped what was to become a 35-year career in education and has continued to shape Wolpers's post-retirement projects, including a role he now plays with the Minnesota Twins baseball team.

First Steps

Wolpers graduated from Minnesota State Mankato in 1975 with a major in Speech Communications, minors in Theatre and Social Studies and an emphasis in education and coaching. After graduation, he immediately went to work at Hastings Middle School and stayed there for 20 years. He taught communications, speech, radio, TV and theatre and coached the football and baseball teams; he also coached the speech team and directed three theatrical productions each year. He returned to Minnesota State Mankato and earned a master's degree in curriculum and instruction in 1983.

Those efforts helped Wolpers earn the respect of his peers. He was named the Hastings Teacher of the Year in 1991. They also earned him a promotion and a move 10 miles north in 1995, when he was named an assistant principal at Cottage Grove Junior High School.

Wolpers credits his education for providing him with a rock-solid foundation for his career. "Minnesota State Mankato prepared me very well for the rigors of teaching and all aspects of the education world," he notes. "My professors taught me that to be an educator, you needed to be a dreamer *and* a doer. You needed to be organized, well prepared, creative, flexible and professional."

Wolpers brought those qualities to Cottage Grove, launching the school's in-house television station and developing its Cougar Pride program, which recognizes students for academic achievements and community service work. In 2008, the Cottage Grove Area Chamber of Commerce named him the South Washington County School District Secondary Educator of the Year.

Second Act

A year after receiving that award, Wolpers retired. But he soon discovered that his teaching days weren't over. During his time at Cottage Grove, he'd established a relationship with the Minnesota Twins: Cougar Pride winners were rewarded in part with game tickets and tours of the team's facility. Shortly after retiring, he joined the Twins organization as a tour guide for the newly opened Target Field. And that led to a new opportunity.

"I learned that the Twins were looking for someone to help develop an education program," he says. "My experience in all areas of education and my speech background provided a natural fit. Soon after, our Minnesota Twins Learning Through Baseball program was born."

The program combines a tour of Target Field with educational instruction. The education component uses baseball and the ballpark as a launching point to explore such topics as architecture, art, environmental sustainability, history, science and sports marketing. The program can be tailored to all ages, from preschool and elementary through college students and even adults.

Wolpers, who has played a key role in the initiative's development, is thrilled with the results. "The neatest thing about the job is seeing the faces of the kids as they come to learn about baseball and also learn about math, science and more," he says. "We are not only teaching, we are creating memories. It's tremendous to see a kid hold a bat for the first time ever, sit in Joe Mauer's spot in the dugout, or even to have preschoolers come up and give you a hug because you made them laugh. I also like the fact that I get to meet people from all over the world and use my Minnesota State Mankato speech education skills to entertain and inform them on the tours."

Rick Olson, the Twins' coordinator of Target Field Tours, says that Wolpers is the ideal person for the role. "I've worked with Dale for six years now. On one hand, he understands what teachers and principals are looking for in a productive field trip," he notes. "He knows how to schedule classes and coordinate educational events. But he's also been instrumental in teaching our other tour guides and teachers how to handle kids."

In a sense, his work with the Twins has taken Wolpers full circle. That observation of teamwork in a Mankato elementary school 40 years ago still resonates today. "The Twins have a great team on the field. But the organization also has a wonderful education department that does a great job of working together," Wolpers says.

"My biggest passion has always been to serve as part of a team. That and seeing children find success. It's tremendously gratifying for me to be able to combine the two with this program." ✍

"The neatest thing about the job is seeing the faces of the kids as they come to learn about baseball and also learn about math, science and more."

classnotes

► 1950s

TWILA (NORTHNESS) JOHNSON '52, Sacramento, CA, is a retired teacher.

DEVON WAYNE LINN '52, Ashland, OR, has published “Letters from the Winds of Lilogwe.”

ELIZABETH (BAKKEN) TROLDHAHL '54, Okemos, MI, retired from the Okemos Public Schools. She has published four beginning reading books: “Look with Me,” “Play with Me,” “Come with Me” and “See with Me.”

MARGARET (HANSON) KING '57, '64, Silver Bay, MN, is a retired teacher/substitute teacher with the Lake Superior School District. She has two adult sons with her recently deceased husband, Dick.

MARY LEE ACKERMAN-AMBERG '58, Albert Lea, MN, is a retired educator.

► 1960s

MARK DAVIS '63, St. Peter, MN, received the 2016 Horatio Alger Award, which recognizes exceptional leaders—all with a commitment to philanthropy and higher education—who have overcome significant personal challenges to achieve success. Davis is chairman for Davis Family Holdings and a board member of the Minnesota State Mankato Foundation.

BARBARA WINTER '63, Santa Clarita, CA, has been “joyfully jobless” for the past 40 years. She is the author of “Making a Living Without a Job” and conducts seminars on self-employment throughout the U.S., Canada and Great Britain.

DENNIS THISIUS '66, Marysville, CA, is a retired Lt. Colonel, United States Air Force, who flew top secret missions in the U-2 aircraft world wide for 11 years.

PATRICIA (HANSON) KORBA '68, Lakeville, MN, retired after teaching for 30 years in the Lakeville Schools. Her husband, **EDWARD KORBA '71**, is president and owner of Korba Insurance Agency, Inc. The couple has two adult children, both of whom graduated from Minnesota State Mankato, and two grandsons currently enrolled there.

► 1970s

GEOFFREY WASCHER '70, Plymouth, MI, is a consultant with Vision IT in Detroit who is preparing to retire this year. Throughout his time in the business, he has seen many changes in the healthcare data business.

KIM KERRIGAN '70, Malden, MA, is president of Corporate Classrooms. He continues to conduct training workshops for corporations and nonprofit organizations, and has co-authored and published his 11th book, which pertains to communication skills. He also volunteers his time presenting workshops for community organizations.

JERYLD CARSTENSEN '70, '79, Champlin, MN, retired after teaching in St. James, MN, for 36 years. He is enjoying traveling and helping family with childcare.

PAUL COLLING '71, Forest Lake, MN, retired from Intricon Corp. in Arden Hills, MN, in May; he had been the director of supply chain management.

CRAIG WALDRON '73, Roseville, MN, was named the director of public administration programs and co-director of the Center for Public Administration and Leadership at Hamline University.

DALE BREKKE '73, Denton, TX, has become an accounting consultant after retiring from the corporate world.

LINDA MADAY '73, Fairmont, MN, is retired.

BILL MURRAY '75, Chaska, MN, is self-employed.

BRIAN STEELE '78, Shoreview, MN, recently was named to the Kansas City Regional Internal Audit team of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. The team reviews work product for compliance with rules and regulations.

► 1980s

BRYAN SWEET '80, Fairmont, MN, is a wealth advisor with Sweet Financial Services, which was recently named to Inc. Magazine's Top 5000 list of fastest-growing private

companies in America for the second year in a row. Sweet Financial Services offers comprehensive retirement planning.

SUSAN JANICKE '81, '85, Kenyon, MN, is a doctor of nursing practice with the Minneapolis Veterans Association. Her interest lies in pain management, and she provides private pain consulting.

JAMIESON RODBERG '81 and **BARBARA RODBERG '80**, Raleigh, NC, have retired.

JOHN CLADWELL '84, Peachtree City, GA, is president of Delta/MLT Vacations in Atlanta. Prior to this position, he worked in various positions for Northwest Airlines and then Delta when the companies merged.

RONALD JACOBSMA '84, Brentwood, CA, is an assistant general manager-administration with the Contra Costa Water District.

JEFF SCHETZ '84, '92, Eagan, MN, is the vice president of payments with HIWAY Federal Credit Union in St. Paul.

CYNTHIA (BEMIS) ABRAMS '86, Bloomington, MN, is producing the podcast “Advanced TV Herstory,” which looks at aspects of women and the television industry from a historical, cultural, feminist and leadership perspective. Last fall she taught Growing the Leader in You to Honors students at Minnesota State Mankato.

JAMES MEIER '87, Rochester, MN, is the chief financial officer of Nevada Gold & Casinos in Las Vegas.

► 1990s

SHANON “MOOSE” KNUDTSON '90, Dallas, TX, recently became an underwriting consultant within the Southwest Region of Business Insurance for Liberty Mutual. He was appointed a training coordinator for the area and subject matter expert for trucking, schools and autos. He just finished his 25th season as a volleyball official for several conferences.

DANIEL LUNA '91, Orange Walk Town, Belize, is a teacher for the Catholic Public Schools. He and his wife have three children.

We love to hear about baby Mavericks! Tell us about any new additions to your family with an email to alumni@mnsu.edu—the Alumni Association would like to send a gift to you!

KRISTI (ZITZMANN) RIGDON '92, North Mankato, MN, is a self-employed consulting geriatric dietitian.

ADAM JOHNSTON '93, Eagan, MN, is self-employed with Balius Marketing & Web Design in Bloomington, MN.

NICOLE (SMITH) THOMPSON '94, Wilmington, NC, was nominated by Wilma Magazine as one of the “Women 2 Watch” in the arts category. She was featured in the October edition.

MELANIE (SIZER) MORIARTY '95, North Oaks, MN, is a human resources director at Best Buy. She recently won second place among women in the Mankato Marathon.

JENNIFER HUBBARD '96, PH.D., Veazie, ME, is the director of primary care with Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth, ME.

BRYAN KARRICK '97, Ocoee, FL, recently accepted the position of chief meteorologist for News 13 in Orlando. Prior to that he was a broadcast meteorologist for WeatherNation/Media Logic Group in Excelsior, MN.

KAY (FOIGHT) BIERMA '98, Mankato, MN, was a foster care provider with the State of Minnesota until she had some medical issues in early 2015. She has had to make many changes in her life since, and is hoping that small jobs helping others will help her financially.

► 2000s

JASON CARLSON '01, Davenport, IA, is a database analyst with Lee Enterprises.

DAWN (BUTTERFIELD) ROBERTS '04, Chaska, MN, is the director of marketing for The Lutheran Home Association in Belle Plaine, MN.

BRADY DAHL '04, Montevideo, MN, recently published “Momo Traders.” Prior to that he was a writer for the FX show “Sons of Anarchy.” His wife, **CHARLYNN (AMBORN) DAHL '05**, is a school social worker and co-founder of EmpowHer, an organization designed to empower girls. They have three children.

DR. MISTY (GOFFENA) SPITLER '04, Greenwood, IN, is a psychologist with the Department of Defense and the subject matter expert in psychology for the U.S. Army Medical Evaluation Board. She was the president of the Board of Directors of the Indiana Psychological Association for three years. She and her husband, Jeremy, have two sons.

MICHELLE FITCH '05, Superior, WI, is the director of residential life at The College of St. Scholastica in Duluth. She is pursuing her Ph.D. in education/leadership in higher education at Northcentral University.

JESSICA BROWN '05, Minneapolis, MN, is a program coordinator with pharmaceuticalconferences.com.

DAVID STORDALEN '06, St. James, MN, is a band director at New Ulm Public High School.

SHELBY THORNE '07, Eagle Lake, MN, recently was promoted to a manager position with Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP.

ERIC HOFFHEISER '07, Spring, TX, is the subsea technical writer/document controller for Rowan Companies, a major offshore drilling company.

RICHARD QUICKLE '08, Urbana, OH, is pursuing his master's degree in social work at The Ohio State University.

DANIELLE (IMLAY) DUFFEY '08, Lake Crystal, MN, is the convention sales director with Visit Mankato. She is looking forward to promoting the Mankato area.

JOSH SOUTH '09, New Ulm, MN, is a financial planning and cost accounting manager with Farmers Union; he earned his MBA from Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall in 2015. His wife, **SAMANTHA (WALDRON) SOUTH '08**, is a stay-at-home mom with three sons.

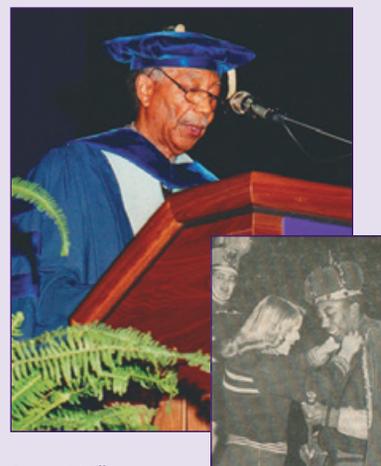
HEIDI (BJERKETVEDT) SOLBERG '09, '12, St. Paul, MN, is a human resources specialist with DC Group, Inc. She married her partner, Melissa, on July 18.

Dr. Bruce Williams, 1931-2015

In 1956, Bruce Williams became the first African-American graduate from Minnesota State Mankato when he earned a bachelor's degree in social science. He then returned to earn a master's degree in educational administration in 1970, and went on to complete his Ph.D. at Union Graduate School in Antioch. Williams died August 16, 2015, after a long battle with Alzheimer's Disease.

Williams's long and distinguished career included serving as a teacher, principal and assistant superintendent in the Minneapolis Public Schools, working for the Rockefeller Foundation in New York City, serving as deputy chancellor of the New York City Department of Education and teaching at Hunter College.

Minnesota State Mankato extends its sympathies to the family and friends of Dr. Williams.



Bruce Williams was crowned Snow King as a senior at Minnesota State Mankato in 1956. In 2006, he returned to deliver the commencement address at his alma mater.

classnotes

► 2010s

HANNAH (HUTTNER) HALLAHAN '10, '11, Glencoe, MN, is an event coordinator with the City of Glencoe. Her husband, **CODY HALLAHAN '13**, is a guest services supervisor for Canterbury Park. They welcomed their son, Blake, in August.

SETH FERKENSTAD '10, Mankato, MN, has been promoted to a manager position with Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP.

SARAH (KUCHINKA) CEKALLA '11, married Tom Cekalla.

SARAH DIRKX '12, Mankato, MN, has been promoted to senior accountant with Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP.

TYLER PETZEL '12, North Mankato, MN, recently was promoted to senior accountant at Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP.

TYLER STEPHENS '12, Farmington, MN, has been promoted to senior accountant with Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP. He specializes in preparing tax returns and compilations.

ANNALIS (PITTS) LUCK '13, North Mankato, MN, is a library technician with Minnesota State Mankato. She married her husband, Michael, on Oct. 17, 2015.

SYDNEY (EMANUELSON) RUEDY '13, Maplewood, MN, is a marketing assistant with Adler Graduate School. Her husband,

JORDAN RUEDY '13, is a software test engineer with Thomson Reuters. The couple married on March 1, 2014.

MATT NISTLER '13, Eagan, MN, has been promoted to senior accountant with Abdo, Eick & Meyers, LLP. He started at the firm as a certified public accountant earlier in the year.

EVERETT RACHKO '14, Andover, MN, is a first officer with Compass Airlines, a Delta Air Lines regional airline. Prior to that he was an instructor with North Star Aviation.

FUQUAN JACKSON '14, Newark, NJ, is a senior academic advisor/coordinator for the School of Nursing at the College of New Rochelle.

Distinguished Alumni Award Winners

Congratulations to the eight alumni who were honored in April as Distinguished Alumni. The annual event recognizes outstanding alumni for their personal and professional accomplishments.



**HAROLD J. FITTERER
SERVICE AWARD**
Ginger L. Zierdt '02, '03



**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
David L. Falk '69
Deborah A. Natvig '71, '76
Maurice L. Oehler '55, '56
Jeffrey D. Stewart '79



**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI
HUMANITARIAN AWARD**
Carol A. Martin '13



**DISTINGUISHED YOUNG
ALUMNI AWARD**
Sophia Bera '05
Michael Leech '08

Nominations for the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Awards may be submitted at any time at mnsu.edu/alumni/awards.

Honoring a Friend

Ailee Norton and Amy Holscher met as first-year students and became fast friends. They were supposed to graduate together this spring. *By Drew Lyon*



Ailee Norton hoped someone was playing a cruel prank when a text message awakened her near the midnight hour on Aug. 1, 2014.

"It was a Friday night," she says, "and I was like, 'Oh geez, who's texting me at this hour?'"

The text was from a friend of her roommate, Amy Holscher, saying how sorry she was and asking if Norton was okay.

A series of frantic messages later, Norton learned the kindred spirit she had met during her first week at Minnesota State Mankato had died earlier that evening from injuries suffered in a car accident.

It wasn't supposed to be this way.

"Amy was like a sister to me," she says. "Most days are OK now, but I still have days when I don't understand why this happened."

Norton graduated from Minnesota State Mankato on May 7 with a degree in sport management. She wasn't able to walk alongside her friend like they had imagined they would during their freshman and sophomore years, but Amy's parents were there in honor of their daughter and in support of her best friend.

Fast friends

Norton moved into Crawford Residential Community in August 2012. A native of Duluth, she arrived in Mankato without any friends from high school. At her first floor meeting, one of the students was a few minutes tardy; Norton would soon learn this wasn't unusual. Norton took a moment to meet that woman afterwards. She was

from St. Anthony, Minn., had just turned 18 and lived down the hall from Norton. Her name was Amy Holscher.

Witty and vivacious, Holscher had an infectious charm. She and Norton quickly became inseparable. When Norton wanted to stay in and watch Netflix, Holscher would convince her otherwise. Looking back, Norton thinks that she didn't want to waste any time.

"We did everything together," she says. "She helped me branch out (socially). She always wanted to be doing something; she always seemed to be in a hurry."

After their first year, Ailee and Amy, along with their Crawford roommates, moved into an apartment together. Norton learned that her new roommate liked to sing with reckless abandon in the shower. And if one of the pair was out of town, they would catch up on their days via FaceTime.

Just a few days before her death, Amy drove down to Mankato with her sister to pick up belongings from Norton's apartment. It was the last time Norton saw her friend.

"She gave me a hug and said, 'It's so good to see you,'" Norton remembers. "I remember she tweeted, 'It was great to see Ailee Norton for three seconds today!'"

Holscher was on her way to buy WE Fest tickets when a pickup truck collided with her car south of Shakopee. She was conscious and talking when she reached the hospital, but passed away later that night.

As Norton stared at the ceiling in the long hours after learning of Amy's death, she spotted

a white figure appear in the corner of her bedroom and watched it flash across the room and disappear. "It looked like an angel figure," she said. "People might not believe that, but when you deal with something that traumatic, there are things that happen that make you wonder."

Norton went with a group of about 20 Minnesota State Mankato friends to attend Holscher's funeral. Several of them made a pact to honor their friend's memory in a permanent fashion.

"The day after she passed, I went over to our friend's house and somebody brought up a tattoo, and we were all like, 'Yes!'" Norton says, pointing to the tattoo on her right ankle, an 'A' with a halo on top. "I would normally never get a tattoo, but we did that because it's a place we can look down and think of her and think about the people she was the glue for."

In the months after Holscher's death, Norton sought solace by reminiscing with Amy's friends and family. "If I didn't have her friends and family, I would still be torn up about it," she says. "We'll go into talking about fun times, and that's really nice. It's like her mom said—without each other, we'd still be lost. And I take a lot of happiness by still having a relationship with her friends and parents and sister."

After commencement, Norton planned to visit with Holscher's family and share memories. "It'll be a hard time," she said. "I always expected her to be graduating with me and moving on with me. But I know she's probably thinking, 'Ailee, go have some fun!'" 🍀

in memoriam

ALUMNI

▶ 1930s

Bernice Wilhelmina (Yost) Anderson '33, '65, '71
Evelyn Cecelia (Bergin) Feit '37
Charlotte Burnetta (Alvord) Hartley '39
Marion Alice (Swenson) Pehling '39

▶ 1940s

Lucille Virginia (Battig) Burghart '40
Georgia Blanche (Taylor) Wheeler '40
Beth E. (McNab) Nelson '41, '61
Zetta Lorraine (Nord) Pyle '41
Grace E. (Miller) Lahr '42, '66
Marie Dorothy (Bublitz) Karnik '43
Shyla Darlene (Burke) Walsh '43
Rachel Esther (Olson) Gaalswyk '44
Marcella J. (Bendzick) Koenig '45, '68
Catherine Laurentia (O'Meara) Delaney '47
Leila R. Swenberg '47, '55, '63
Corinne Helen Herron '48, '65
Marian Louise (Kluender) Pribyl '48
Philip Bertram Price '48
Shirley Irene (Starr) Sandmann '48, '64
Helen M. (Berg) Sawyer '48
Mary Lou (Martin) Sandstrom '49
Raymond David Swee '49

▶ 1950s

John Joseph Davitt '50
Robert Arthur Eigenbrodt '50
Greta Marcellyn (Bredvold) Jensen '50
Gerald Milton Quilling '50
Edward A. Wick '50
Donald Walter Kuether '51
Martin Hugh McIntyre '51
Gary Paul Ness '51, '61
Charles A. Rehwaldt '51, '56
Nicholas John Cords '52
Roxie Marie (Smith) Grandprey '52
Geraldine Rosella (Engelson) Mayhew '52
Audrey Jean (Martin) McCready '52, '56
Thomas Harold Starks '52
James Leo Templin '52
Joanne Ruth (Bellig) Kallevig '53
Marvin Howard Nelson '53
Ronald Meredith Wenberg '53, '58
James E. Bollum '54
Chester Earl Christison '54

Clinton Thomas Keene '54
Donald Carl Mittag '54
Mary Jo (Sullivan) Roberts '54, '59
Reta JoAnn (Hoover) Wood '54, '64
Donald Robert Yohe '54
Richard H. Acquard '55
Lela May (Christopher) Graupmann '55, '56
Gordon Clatus Johnson '55, '58
Dorothy Jean (Thompson) Rieke '55
Francis Joseph Stenson '55
Charles Russell Voeltz '55, '60
John Thomas Bates '56
Robert M Browne '56, '73
Ronald Dean Filloon '56
Helen J. (King) Kuehlman '56
Roberta Ann (Nelson) Naylor Schuster '56, '89
Bruce Edward Williams '56, '70
Harold Lloyd Christensen '57, '61
Louis Otto Kemp '57
Helen Mae (Allis) Smith '57
Mary Ann (Nelson) Boynton '58
William Howard Etherton '58
Ann Evelyn (Armstrong) Nichols '58
Alayne Gene Ree '58
Richard William Sandmann '58, '65
Michael Kevin Biehn '59, '62
Joan P. (Powell) Gunsolus '59
Curtis A. Haga '59
Dwayne Virgil Moon '59
Delford Perry Pope '59

▶ 1960s

Richard Earl Anderson '60
Lawrence Steven Breen '60, '65
Gerald Edward Eibner '60, '69
Paul Michael Flick '60, '67
Thomas A. Hahn '60
Richard Lewis Krenzke '60
J. Grafton Love '60
James M. Olson '60
Elaine D. (Pysick) Reitter '60
Donald Eugene Conrad '61
Frank R. Johnston '61
Howard W. Olson '61
Edwin Earl Schulte '61
Peter C. Sorensen '61, '79
Doris Jean (Doyscher) Bower '62, '77
Marvin T. De Young '62
Patrick W. Gulden '62

Sandra Kay (Ehlers) Hartmann '62
Dale O. Eastlee '63
Norita Jean (Seewald) Olson '63
Richard Theodore Putman '63
Norma Kathleen (McFarland) Smeby '63
Nancy Susan (Klee) Aldrich '64
George Aaby Boyum '64
Laverne Robert Busho '64
Lee Edward Tomlinson '64
Richard Lee Christensen '65
Joseph Jay Maas '65
Jean Stromberg Olson '65
Mary Lynne (McPhillips) Petersen '65
Kent Robert Baldwin '66
Charles Dewey Bianchi '66
Phyllis Jean (Swenson) Fredlund '66
Irene Sylvia (Sorensen) Larson '66, '71
Sandra F. (Pester) Lawin '66
Kenneth Allen Nielsen '66
Richard D. Petersen '66
Bryan T. Piens '66
Roger Lynn Saathoff '66, '78
David Luther Sorbel '66
Donald F. Zaun '66
John Frederick Manecke '67
Lynn Frank Sackenheim '67
Charlotte Marian Stacy Taylor '67
Kenneth S. Prestegard '68
Valine Mary Saumweber '68
Bruce John Anderson '69
Alan David Beens '69
Philip Clarence Hall '69
Robert Arnold Isdahl '69
Judith Verna (Schrader) Schroeder '69, '75, '93
Nancy Marie Shillington '69
Beverly Ann (Latzke) Voss '69
Eugene Matthew Zins '69, '72

▶ 1970s

Jay Peder Bogen '70
Bruce Wendell Johnson '70
Margie Jean (Waterman) Lauruhn '70
Pamela L. (Hanson) Ahrens '71
Kenton Lee Anderson '71
Diane L. (Fischer) Bensen '71
Steven Bert Brosnan '71
Jodie Lynn (Jensen) Hoppe '71
Neil Ray Lewis '71
Tony J. Nelson '71

Barbara Jean (Horky) Radloff '71
 Genevieve Helen (Ginger) Ziegeldorf '71
 Kim Pearson Briden '72
 James Kahl Holte '72
 John L. Koch '72
 Ronald Van Roberts '72, '78
 Mavis Vivian (Olson) Rognes '72
 Owen John Smith '72
 Lorraine Mary (Stadther) Thompson '72, '80
 Dorita Lynn (Beissler) Valley '72
 Rosanne Alice (Wadding) Baggett '73
 William John Brummond '73
 Kathryn Rae (Telford) Krogsrud '73
 Lawrence Vincent Morgan '73
 Gilman Lee Carlson '74, '78
 Margaret M. Schorer '74
 Larry Palmer Johnson '75
 Gregory Lee Miller '75
 Donna Marie (Cunningham) Shern '75
 Brian Michael Ziemer '75
 Charlotte Madeline Galbraith '76
 Mark Edward Meyer '76, '82
 Richard J. Nelson '76
 Valerie C. (Determan) Ralph '76
 Gregg Layman Strohmeier '76
 Lee Arden Williams '76
 Ralph Jon Zwaschka '76
 John Charles Charter '77
 Elaine L. (Connelly) Cuff '77
 John Adrian Nevelle '77
 Linda Lee Okrina '77
 Roselee Edna (Malone) Siegler '77, '78
 Roger Alan Venne '77
 Marlys A. Bishman '78
 Linda Sue (Fedge) Banik '79
 George Edward Smith '79
 Phillip Merrill Smith '79
 John Carl Swanson '79

► 1980s

Laurie Elaine Hoffman '80
 Janet Kay (Boeh) Dobie '81
 Randy Mike Hunefeld '81
 Ronda Lynn (Clarke) Maclean '81
 Kimberly Ann (Polzin) Melius '81
 Bernard Russell Melter '81
 Alan Wayne Wakey '81
 Jalal Afshar '82
 Stephen Paul Bloom '82, '94
 Ronald Stephen Reinhart '82

Charles Nicholas Thielman '82
 Susan Loen Troidahl '82
 Carol Joann (Teigen) Dingman '83, '85
 Arnoldus J. Gruter '83
 John K. Hamilton '83
 Paul Victor Meyer '83, '88
 Ruth S. (Sorensen) Petersen '83
 Daniel Dallas Schmiegel '83
 Winifred Marie (Barquist) Frolen '84
 Terry Jay Hinze '84
 Leone Marie (Lueck) Hunter-Gjesvold '84
 Grayce Marie (Zwaan) Kooiman '84
 Arlene Elaine (Christianson) Rudolph '84
 William Owen Kjarum '85
 Timothy Duane Rannow '85
 Kurtiss Emiel Beck '89
 Lisa Renee (Kiepert) Franck '89
 Duane Allen Groebner '89
 Teresa Joan (Rickerl) Landherr '89

► 1990s

Diane Carol (Bunday) Gadbois '90
 Amy Louise (Kluis) Olson '90
 Kim Ky (Le) Herrmann '91
 Charbel Habib Sadaka '91
 Danielle Monique (Berg) Goette '93, '96
 Xiaoyun Y. Cui '94
 Jeffrey David Ewert '96
 David Lee Sams '96
 Leslie Jo (Jenkinson) Ringen '98
 Wade Theodore Wallen '98
 Eric Francis Martinez '99

► 2000s

Eric Wade Mahlum '01, '05
 Margaret Angela Medina-Thielemann '01
 Beth Michelle Bohlsen-Skelton '02
 Jennifer Elizabeth Cobb '04
 Joshua Francis Stuhr '05
 Christopher Douglas Hennen '09

► 2010s

Nathan Heyward Williams '10
 Pershing John Cook '13
 Justin Gary DeChantal '14

FACULTY AND STAFF

Richard H. Acquard
 Mildred Lucy (Weber) Anderson
 Joe Wayne Davis
 Thomas G. Gustafson
 Robert Arnold Isdahl
 Orville H. Madsen
 Burton E. Meisel
 Robert Rene Nadeau
 Amy Louise (Kluis) Olson
 Monroe David Purrier
 Doris A. (Trent) Selover
 Michael Alan Shaw
 Paul James Thompson

FRIENDS

Don Clem Bowyer
 Velma Norine (Wood) Joneson-Sparks
 Carolyn Neta (Miller) Lammers
 Ruth E. (Otness) Lund
 Stephen Paul Palmquist
 George Willard Sugden
 Lorraine M. (Miner) Wright
 Nadine Katherine (Hallman) Zuhlsdorf





Lowell and Nadine Andreas (left) join Paul Hustoles and Richard Rush at the opening of the Andreas Theatre.

Stage Debut

In its first 15 years, the Andreas Theatre has provided new opportunities to both students and audiences.

Anyone who has been around Paul Hustoles during his nearly 31 years leading the Minnesota State Mankato Department of Theatre and Dance has heard this statement: Mankato is among the top 1 percent of theatre programs for attendance in the United States.

The 529-seat Ted Paul Theatre (named for Hustoles's predecessor, who was chair of the department from 1955 to 1985) is the primary setting for theatre audiences, but the flexible, 250-seat Andreas Theatre—known as the “black box”—has been a welcome change of scene for the past 15 years. An on-site second stage was part of departmental plans since the Performing Arts Center opened in 1967, but it wasn't realized until 2000. The addition of the Andreas Theatre as a second mainstage space allowed the department to increase the shows in the subscription series while offering students and audiences a greater variety of staging options.

Lowell and Nadine Andreas, lead donors, “both considered charitable giving as an investment in the community they regarded as home,” says Jane Earley, dean emerita of the College of Arts and Humanities who, with Hustoles and Evan Bohnen, asked the Andreas to help set the stage. Both Lowell and Nadine also understood the importance of liberal arts in life, their son David says.

Their gift has made it possible for the department to do more—and to honor Ted Paul's legacy, which Hustoles continues to do. “I think that I'm carrying on his tradition,” he says. “I've exploded it a little bit, expanded it a little bit, but that's just because we have that other gorgeous space.”

—Michael Lagerquist

Read more about the history of the Andreas Theatre at today.mnsu.edu.

Please list any career changes, awards, honors, marriages, births or memorial information you'd like to see in today in an email to today@mnsu.edu or msuupdates@mnsu.edu. Due to publication schedules, your news may not appear in the next issue. Class Notes may be edited for length and clarity.

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UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS

- **JUNE 17: MINNESOTA TWINS PREGAME SOCIAL & GAME**
Social: 5 P.M. at Huberts Sports Bar & Grill
Game: First pitch at 7:10 vs. New York Yankees
- **JUNE 24: ST. PAUL SAINTS PREGAME SOCIAL & GAME**
Social: 5:30 P.M. in the gallery at CHS Field
Game: First pitch at 7:05 P.M. vs. Winnipeg Goldeyes
- **JULY 19: SIOUX FALLS CANARIES BASEBALL GAME**
Game: 7:05 P.M. vs. Fargo-Moorhead RedHawks
On the Party Deck at The Birdcage in Sioux Falls
- **AUGUST: VIKINGS TRAINING CAMP SOCIAL & SCRIMMAGE**
Watch for details about this event at mnsu.edu/alumni

Also: Now is the time to nominate deserving alumni for the 2017 Distinguished Alumni Awards. Online nomination forms can be found at mnsu.edu/alumni/awards/nomination and can be submitted until Sept. 15, 2016.

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