

# today

alumnimagazine  
Spring 2014

 MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MANKATO

## HAVING AN IMPACT

How Kady Johnson '13 is making a difference  
for current Minnesota State Mankato students

## FEATURES



### 8 THE BIG IMPACT

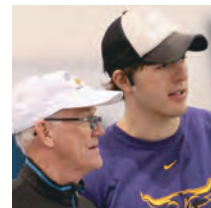
Scholarships from the Big Ideas Campaign are making a real-world difference for students at Minnesota State Mankato.

BY CAROL JONES '86 '04

### 16 TWO FOR ONE

Jim Dilling and Loren Ahonen are working together to replace one legendary coach.

BY WAYNE CARLSON '03



### 12 SUITED FOR SALES

Fulfilling a graduation requirement changed Rod Schmidt's major—and his career.

BY CHRIS MIKKO

### 18 NURSING IN A NEW LIGHT

Peter Buerhaus explains how the Affordable Care Act affects nurses—and universities like Minnesota State Mankato as well.

BY SARA GILBERT FREDERICK



### 14 STAGE PRESENCE

Award-winning director Lou Bellamy's return to the stage where he got his start.

BY JOE TOUGAS '86

## DEPARTMENTS

3 FROM PRESIDENT DAVENPORT

4 FOUNTAIN FODDER

5 OUR SPACES

6 MAVERICK SCENE

19 CLASS NOTES/IN MEMORIAM

## ON THE COVER

Kady Johnson '13 uses the master's degree she earned here to distribute scholarships for the Annexstad Family Foundation. Photo by Tim Glover.

## READ MORE ONLINE

- > Read about Austin Lee, whose academic and athletic experiences here are helping him at Stanford law school.
- > Catch up with classmates through our online Class Notes.
- > Find more pictures from alumni events and University activities.
- > Read up-to-date news from the University.

Visit [today.mnsu.edu](http://today.mnsu.edu)  
regularly to find all of this and more.



**Richard Davenport**, President

**Marilyn Wells**, Provost and Senior Vice President,  
Academic Affairs

**David Jones**, Vice President for Student Affairs and  
Enrollment Management

**Robert H. Hoffman**, Vice President for Strategic  
Business, Education and Regional Partnerships

**Ed Clark**, Vice President for Technology and CIO

**R. Kent Clark**, Vice President for University  
Advancement

**Richard J. Straka**, Vice President for Finance and  
Administration

## today

SPRING 2014 ..... VOLUME 15 ISSUE 2

EDITOR ..... Sara Gilbert Frederick

EDITORIAL INTERN ..... Katie Brunner

DESIGNER ..... Wendy Johnston

PHOTOGRAPHERS ..... Gregg Andersen, Kenn Busch,  
Jonathan Chapman, Linda Clavel, Edge-E Photography,  
Tim Glover, Chelsea Kocina, SPX Sports

PRINTER ..... Corporate Graphics Commercial

WRITERS ..... Wayne Carlson, Helen Healy,  
Carol Jones, Chris Mikko, Joe Tougas

PRINT COORDINATOR ..... Doug Fenske

CONTRIBUTING STAFF ..... Paul Allan, Karen Burger,  
Jen Myers, Kim Rademaker,  
Connie Wodtke

*today* is published two times per year by the Division of  
University Advancement. *today* is distributed to more than  
100,000 alumni and friends.

The mission of *today* is to entertain, to inform and to connect  
the reader to the campus. *today* welcomes story ideas  
supporting this mission. Full manuscripts are not accepted.  
*today* is not responsible for unsolicited material.

*today* is copyrighted in its entirety. This volume and all articles,  
images and photographs within may not be reproduced in any  
form without written permission of the editor.

**ADDRESS CHANGES & CLASS NOTES:** Send to *today*, Class  
Notes & Address Changes, Minnesota State University,  
Mankato, 232 Alumni Foundation Center, Mankato, MN  
56001, e-mail to [today@mnsu.edu](mailto:today@mnsu.edu), by fax to 507-389-2069  
or call 507-389-2523. Death announcements must be  
accompanied by a memorial service program or published  
newspaper obituary.

**LETTERS:** Send letters intended for publication to *today*,  
Minnesota State University, Mankato, 232 Alumni Foundation  
Center, Mankato, MN 56001, e-mail to [today@mnsu.edu](mailto:today@mnsu.edu) or  
fax to 507-389-2069. *today* reserves the right to edit letters  
for space and clarity. Include name, address, graduation  
year and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters are  
not considered for publication. All letters become property of  
*today*. Submission of your letter constitutes your permission to  
publish it.



Member of the Minnesota State  
Colleges & Universities System  
and an Affirmative Action/Equal  
Opportunity University.

This document is available in alternative format to individuals  
with disabilities by contacting the magazine staff at the  
address, e-mail, and/or fax number listed above or at  
800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY).

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS!

One of the proudest moments in my tenure as president of this great University came last fall, when the Big Ideas Campaign closed with a record-setting total of \$77.8 million in gifts. It was the largest campaign in our history, and the largest in the history of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System as well. And it happened thanks to you.

Almost 36,000 alumni and friends contributed to the campaign. They made more than 105,000 gifts—some quite large, but most considerably smaller. We are grateful for each and every one of them, no matter what size. All of those gifts support our students and this University in ways we never could have imagined. They help our students shape the future and become the leaders of tomorrow. They help prepare our graduates to tackle the complexities and challenges of our global environment for decades to come. Much of that, again, is thanks to you.

The dollars raised during the Big Ideas Campaign are having an impact throughout the University. They are helping us create new and high-market demand programs, improve our facilities and provide opportunities for our students to study abroad, engage in research and learn from leaders in their fields.

One of the biggest impacts those gifts have is on the students who receive scholarships. For some, scholarships make attending college possible; for others, a scholarship allows them to do more than they thought possible. In this issue of *today*, you'll read about three scholarship recipients who are grateful for the opportunities they've been given. You'll also read about one of our graduates who is now helping to distribute scholarships to students at Minnesota State Mankato on behalf of the Al and Cathy Annexstad Foundation. The recipient was able to achieve her dreams thanks to the scholarship that she received, and now she has the opportunity to help others do the same. That's a great story to tell!

You may have already noticed that there's something different about the way we are telling stories in this magazine. This issue of *today* marks the launch of a new look that is designed to make the magazine both more interesting and more meaningful for you, the readers. Some of the changes will be obvious as you page through the magazine; others may be more discreet. We welcome your feedback on any of it. Send your thoughts to: [today@mnsu.edu](mailto:today@mnsu.edu).

On behalf of all the students at Minnesota State Mankato who are feeling the impact of the Big Ideas Campaign, I'd like to thank you for your support of this University. Our faculty and staff also know that we couldn't be the great Minnesota university without your support.

I hope to see you soon. Enjoy your *today*! ☺

President Richard Davenport  
[president@mnsu.edu](mailto:president@mnsu.edu)

*The dollars  
raised during  
the Big Ideas  
Campaign are  
having an impact  
throughout the  
University.*

- Minnesota Park and Sports Managers Turf Association named **Blakeslee Stadium the 2013 Minnesota Field of the Year**—an honor that Minnesota State Mankato Director of Athletics Kevin Buisman calls “a well-deserved pat on the back” for head groundskeeper Bruce Leivermann and his staff.
- **Sodexo, Inc.**, the official foodservice provider for Minnesota State Mankato, received the **2014 Business Pathfinder Award** from the Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Board in Mankato. Pathfinder awards honor businesses that strive for equal treatment, human rights and non-violence in the workplace.
- **Lauren Bach**, a junior honors student and psychology major, is the first representative from Minnesota State Mankato to be **elected to the Board of Directors for the National Collegiate Honors Council**. She will provide a valuable student voice to issues that will affect Honors programs across the nation.
- The College of Allied Health and Nursing is collaborating with the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board to provide an opportunity for nursing students in northern Minnesota to complete their bachelor’s degrees or pursue a graduate degree online through the **Iron Range Nursing Program**.
- The College of Education and its flight-training partner, North Star Aviation, installed an **Aerosim CRJ700 Flight Training Device** in Wiecking Center in February. The simulator will help position Minnesota State Mankato, currently the only four-year institution in the state with an aviation program, as a national leader in pilot training.
- Minnesota State Mankato has advanced to **34th place nationally among master’s institutions in international student population**. This illustrates a successful move toward the University’s increased enrollment goals, specifically highlighting diversity by increasing international student populations.
- Senior theatre student **Callie Syverson** topped 400 other nominees to win the **Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship** and Minnesota State Mankato advanced more students to semifinals and finals in the Region V Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival than any other school in the region. The University also received many behind-the-scene awards for technical design, directing, choreography and costuming.
- The University successfully completed its conversion to **StarID** as its method for accessing campus-supported network systems in December. This was the biggest conversion in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System history, with more than 49,500 accounts successfully activated.
- The Office of Alumni Relations received the **Pride of CASE V Gold Award** for its event titled **“Gage Goes Boom: Planning for an Explosive Experience.”** This prestigious award recognized the work and planning that made the Gage Towers implosion event the best in the region, drawing more than 6,000 alumni, students and community members to campus.
- In November 2013, the MnSCU Board of Trustees voted to adopt the recommendations included in **“Charting the Future,”** which calls for the 31 colleges and universities in the system to significantly increase collaboration to improve access, increase affordability and better serve students.



## Making the Connection

Don’t call the new underground link between the Centennial Student Union and Memorial Library a tunnel. “Tunnels don’t have windows,” President Richard Davenport said in his remarks at its grand opening in October.





## This “Pedestrian Link” has windows—and more.

- 1** It leads directly to the Bullpen, where students can shoot pool, challenge themselves with the giant chess game, enjoy a hot pretzel with cheese or bowl a few frames.
- 2** The white corrugated wall emphasizes a metal/industrial theme that ties in with the steel sculpture in the fountain just above the link. It also reflects the LED lighting and brightens the space.
- 3** The floor is made of colored and polished concrete, which aligns with the industrial theme and helped cut down on construction costs. The high gloss polish also makes for easy maintenance.
- 4** The purple bench in front of the window is made of IceStone, a product manufactured from recycled glass and concrete. The windows are electrochromatic glass from Minnesota-based Sage Glass; they automatically tint based on the intensity of the sun.
- 5** The link provides an ADA-compliant path to Accessibility Resources, which is located at the library end of the link.
- 6** The design came out of a collaboration between Minneapolis architect and design firm Leo A. Daly, Brennan Companies of Mankato and the campus design committee and construction team. —Katie Brunner



## HOMECOMING 2013



Current students, alumni and friends enjoyed a weekend full of activities during Homecoming, which was held September 27-28. The weekend includes the annual parade, featuring Homecoming King Martin Ly and Queen Angel Gelhar **(1)**; students and alumni participating in the 5K run on campus **(2)**; and several reunions, including the Golden Mavericks reunion **(3)** that was attended by (from left to right) Jim '59 and Susan '59 Sneer, Al Zaske '61, Brian Boettcher '62, Joleen Durken '63, Lowell Borgas '61, JoAnn Chiappetti and Bob Sherwin '58.



## TARGET FIELD OPEN HOUSE & TOUR

The Target Field event for alumni and admitted students included a presentation by Vice President for University Advancement Kent Clark **(1)**, a tour of the facilities with dinner **(2)** and a chance for Director of Admissions Brian Jones '01, '04 (left) and alum Dale Wolpers '75, '83 **(3)** to catch up.





## GALA



The 2013 Purple and Gold Gala celebrated the successful closure of the Big Ideas Campaign. One of the highlights of the evening was the performance of two songs from the musical “Les Miserables” **(1)** by the cast of the production. Among the attendees at the event were Sandra and Randy Zellmer ’77 **(2)**, who was honored as the Volunteer of the Year, and Debbie and Curt Fisher ’72 **(3)**.



## CLIMBING WALL



Alumni and their families were invited to enjoy the University’s climbing wall in March. Among the families who participated were Travis Paulsen ’01, ’11 with his son Caleb and daughter Amber **(1)** and Misty Koch Thompson ’02 (right) and daughter Lauren **(2)**. Amber Paulsen **(3)** poses for a picture with Stomper after finishing her climb.



# DREAMS COMING TRUE

Perhaps the biggest impact of the Big Ideas Campaign is all of the scholarships it made possible—and all of the dreams that it will make real for Minnesota State Mankato students.

*By Carol Jones '86, '04*

**K**ady Johnson '13 MA remembers crying the day she was accepted to college. She cried because she hadn't expected it to be an option for her—and because she didn't think that she would be able to pay for it.

Johnson grew up in a home with limited financial resources. She had no expectation of being able to go to college, but she applied anyway. So when an acceptance letter arrived, she wept. "That was a defining moment in my life," she says.

A scholarship from the Annexstad Family Foundation made it possible for Johnson to attend college—and now, as a program administrator for that same foundation, Johnson helps other students in similar situations realize their dreams. She sees first-hand the impact scholarships have on students.

Like Sierra Fedder, who received one of the two Leaders of Tomorrow scholarships given by the Annexstad Family Foundation to Minnesota State Mankato students this year. For Fedder, receiving the scholarship meant that she didn't



have to rely on loans and work multiple jobs. “It’s super helpful,” she says.

The funding for two annual Leaders of Tomorrow scholarships, as well as an annual Big Brother Big Sister scholarship, came from alumnus Al Annexstad ’67 and his wife Cathy as part of the recently completed Big Ideas Campaign. Almost one-third of the \$77.8 million raised during that campaign—\$22,936,752.56—went to scholarships. And those scholarships are having an immediate impact on students at Minnesota State Mankato.

“Seeing the cost of college for the first time can be a real shock to a student and can be overwhelming to a family; it was to mine. Like me, many could not attend without scholarships,” says Johnson.

As she sees scholarships being awarded, Johnson watches the transformative effect they have on students. “It is amazing. Students make an emotional connection to what the scholarship means,” she says. “We hear repeatedly how scholarships help them fulfill their dreams.”

## Raising the Bar

The nation-wide funding shift in higher education continues to increase the financial burden on students and creates barriers to post-secondary education. “The high cost of college education can lead to access problems—kids either can’t afford college or students take on all sorts of debt,” says Kent Clark, vice president for university advancement at Minnesota State Mankato.

The average loan debt of Minnesota State Mankato graduates is nearly \$30,000.

In addition to providing greater access to higher education, Clark says that privately funded scholarships impact the University in another way. “As we continue to be the excellent university that we are and really offer the very best education possible, we find ourselves in a competitive marketplace for students. Nothing enhances our ability to compete for great students like scholarship dollars,” he says.

“You can almost go department to department—the more scholarships they have, the higher level of performance you will see from students both while on campus and after graduation,” says Walter Zakahi, dean of the

College of Arts and Humanities. For example, the Department of Theatre and Dance gives 45 scholarships per year; several are first-year talent grants. The impact of that is pretty direct.

“We have a talent depth that wouldn’t be there without the scholarships,” Zakahi says. “Our program is recognized nationally for its excellence and locally, audience members enjoy a level of theatre and dance that is really unprecedented in a university setting.”

A strong scholarship program attracts talented students; those students elevate the performance of other students, push faculty and contribute to the community as actors, singers, dancers, writers and artists. After graduation, they go on to perform on Broadway, pen national bestsellers and serve as leaders of businesses and organizations.

“I cannot tell you whether or not these students would have gotten a college education without the scholarships or whether they would have come to Minnesota State Mankato,” says Zakahi. “However, I can tell you that we compete on a much higher level when we have the scholarships than when we don’t.”

## Making an Impact

Providing a scholarship is often very personal to the donors as well. Al and Cathy Annexstad, for example, launched the Annexstad Family Foundation in 2000 to help students who, like Al, faced financial hardships or who were involved in Big Brothers Big Sisters, an organization that they support. Although they are particularly proud to fund scholarships at Minnesota State Mankato because of their personal ties to the University, they provide others at institutions around the country as well.

“Donors have the desire and the means to make a big impact,” says Johnson. “And they recognize that, for some students, a college education can be a ticket out of a difficult situation, whether it is poverty, social oppression or being first in your family to attend.”

Like most donors, the Annexstad Family Foundation has a vision for how its scholarship dollars will be distributed. “The majority of Mankato’s scholarship dollars are donor directed. They reflect the experiences and values of donors,” says Jeff Halbur, senior director of development and planned giving. “Donors

may have an emotional connection to and/or an appreciation for the profession, academic program, the University or the financial need of the student. Many employ a ‘pay it forward’ approach.”

“Some of the most passionate donors are people who speak or think often about the direction of the country,” adds Clark.

Johnson agrees. She sees donors who are uniquely aware of the global impact scholarships can make locally. “They understand the special needs of students. They recognize the potential of students and the need for support,” she says. “Scholarships help secure the next generation and the next great minds.”

“Few things give people the opportunity to have a direct impact on what is going to happen in their community for generations to come,” adds Clark. “You make an endowed scholarship gift and you are going to have a direct, tangible effect in perpetuity—that is quite powerful.”



*“Scholarships help secure the next generation and the next great minds.”*

—Kady Johnson

---

*“I hope to make an impact on my students that is just as profound as the impact left on me.”*

—Philip Munkvold

## Philip Munkvold

*College of Education Dean's Scholarship*

Philip Munkvold doesn't remember a time when he didn't want to be an educator. The dedication and commitment of his second grade teacher, Mrs. B., made a profound impression on him, especially because she went out of her way to help him as he underwent chemotherapy to fight leukemia.

“I chose to enter the field of education because I have had some really remarkable teachers growing up, and they became a catalyst for many of the decisions I have made throughout my life,” he says. “I owe a special thanks to my second grade teacher, who proved to me that teaching does not belong just in a classroom.”

Even as a student, Munkvold's focus extends beyond the classroom and his course requirements. He sings in three choirs, volunteers with Colleges Against Cancer and the Children's Miracle Network, and has held leadership positions in Mankato's Elementary Education Club.

That community work, combined with Munkvold's leadership skills, helped him earn the 2013-2014 College of Education Dean's Scholarship, which has reduced his financial stress and allowed him to focus on his education.

Rather than heading off to another job after a day of student teaching in the St. Peter Public School District, Munkvold is able to take the time he needs to reflect, research and plan effective lessons for the next day. “I have time to think about what went well and what I could do better,” he says. “As a result, I think my students get better lessons and when I graduate, I will have more to contribute as a licensed teacher.”

Every day, Munkvold aspires to be like Mrs. B. “I hope to make an impact on my students that is just as profound as the impact left on me,” he says.



---

*“One day my goal is to help international science communities grow through collaborative, applied research.”*

—Tatiana Soboleva





## Tatiana Soboleva

Winston Grundmeier Chemistry Scholarship

Gladys Olson/Bill Olszewski Scholarship

Tatiana Soboleva grew up in the Eastern European country of Moldova. Extremely bright, hardworking and passionate about science, Soboleva yearned for a challenge but found limited educational opportunities at home. As she explored various options, a family friend told her about the quality of education in Minnesota.

She immediately applied to Minnesota State Mankato. When she received her acceptance letter, Soboleva also received an international student scholarship that helped affirm her decision to come to Mankato.

Although she misses her family and friends back home, her introductory science courses made the decision worthwhile. “I had the most amazing biology and chemistry courses,” Soboleva says. “I switched my major to biochemistry. I want to understand biology—the study of the human body and cells—for chemical applications.”

Now, as a senior, Soboleva’s hard work and dedication have earned her a pair of scholarships: the Gladys Olson/Bill Olszewski Scholarship from the International Student Endowment Fund and the Winston Grundmeier Chemistry Scholarship.

Those scholarships make it possible for Soboleva to devote her time to what she is most passionate about: research. She is currently involved in four research projects: a study of the genetic mutations of fruit flies; an egg white purification project; an analysis of archival French paternity suit documents that allows her to put her nine years of studying French to use; and using electro-paramagnetic resonance to study the oxidative effects on muscle protein function, under the direction of a new faculty member, Rebecca Moen. “I was so interested in this kind of biophysics research, I begged to join Dr. Moen’s research before she came to Mankato,” Soboleva says.

Her experience on different research teams helps Soboleva develop ideas for her future. “At a recent conference, collaboration among groups was a big topic. Collaboration allows growth. One day my goal is to help international science communities grow through collaborative, applied research,” she says. “We can unite resources and show real results.”

*“I know that I want to help people. I don’t know exactly how yet, but I know that’s what I want to do.”*

—Sierra Fedder



## Sierra Fedder

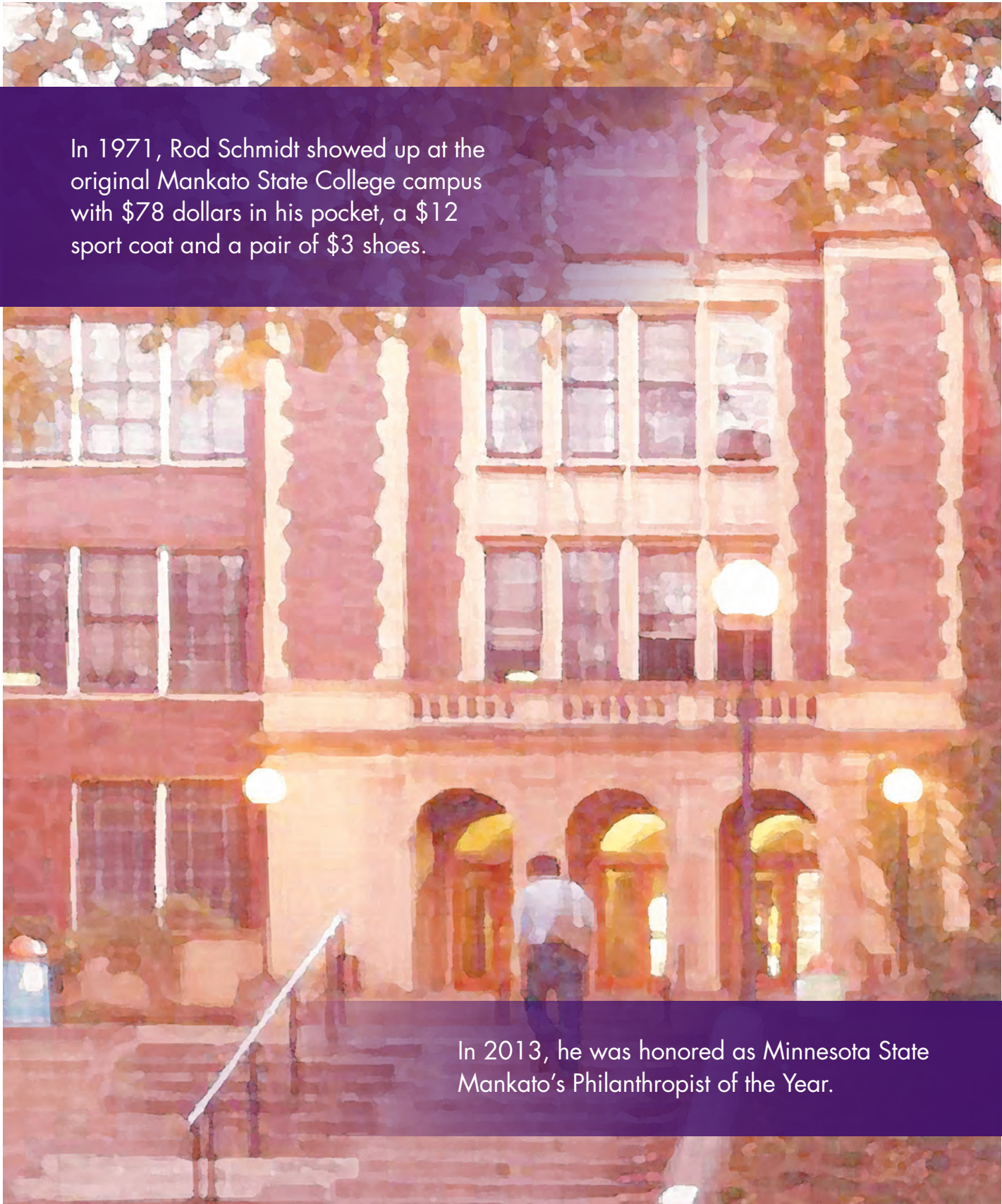
Leaders for Tomorrow Scholarship

Not long after graduating from Mankato West High School, Sierra Fedder got a call from the Upward Bound counselor she had worked with for several years. “He asked if it was okay for him to recommend me for a scholarship,” Fedder says.

The scholarship that counselor recommended was the Leaders for Tomorrow scholarship from the Annexstad Family Foundation, which is awarded to two students with both financial need and demonstrated potential for leadership at several select universities around the country—including Minnesota State Mankato.

Receiving the scholarship allowed Fedder to start planning for her future. Now she knows that she’ll be financially able to finish her degree at Minnesota State Mankato, and even though she hasn’t officially declared a major yet, she knows what her ultimate goal is.

“I know that I want to help people,” she says. “I don’t know exactly how yet, but I know that’s what I want to do.” ✍️



In 1971, Rod Schmidt showed up at the original Mankato State College campus with \$78 dollars in his pocket, a \$12 sport coat and a pair of \$3 shoes.

In 2013, he was honored as Minnesota State Mankato's Philanthropist of the Year.





# Suited for Sales

How fulfilling a graduation requirement changed the course of Rod Schmidt's career, and his life.

By Chris Mikko

It was the fall of 1972, and Rod Schmidt '73 wasn't sure what he wanted to do. He knew what he didn't want to do: move back to his hometown of Larchwood, Iowa, or end up working in a Sioux Falls, S.Dak., packing plant with many of his high school friends. Beyond that, however, he was a "walking generality," as he terms it, casting about for a path to lead him out into the world.

Within a year, Schmidt had been hired as a sales rep for Mobil Oil (now ExxonMobil). Within 10 years, he was working in Manhattan, managing oil sales for all five of New York City's boroughs. Today he owns and operates Vintage Apartment Rentals, a thriving Sioux Falls property management company.

## Dressed for Success

Schmidt enrolled in a salesmanship course to fulfill a graduation requirement. At the time, he "had no idea what business was all about." A classroom exercise changed that. "I had to 'sell' something," he says. "I'd been an 800-meter runner in high school, so I decided to sell track shoes. My goal was to move 20 pairs. I ended up selling 200 pairs."

The professor of that class—Richard Lebsack—had a keen eye for talent. "He came up to me afterward and told me it was the best sales presentation he'd ever heard," Schmidt recalls. "He actually said, 'What's your major? You should study business. You could make a good living.'"

The message resonated with Schmidt, who had grown up poor. "I showed up in Mankato with \$78 in my pocket, a \$12 sport coat, a \$3 pair of shoes and a 1953 Desoto that I bought for \$35 and painted camouflage to hide the

rust," he says. "I was also working 40 hours a week to pay for school. I scrubbed pots and pans in the college cafeteria, did construction, and worked as a tour guide at the Blue Earth County Historical Society."

Schmidt switched his major to business and applied that drive to his courses. "I enjoyed every minute of it," he says. "The professors were knowledgeable, and they gave me great advice. In fact, I can't think of a better school to go to than Mankato State. It offered me the vision that the whole world was open to me."

It also offered the support he needed to get there. Schmidt is especially grateful for his Phi Delta Theta fraternity brothers. "They were my support system, they helped me carry the load," he says. "Joining Phi Delta Theta was probably the second best thing that happened to me, after coming to Mankato."

In early 1973, the third best thing happened: Schmidt learned that Mobil Oil would be on campus conducting interviews. "I had long hair and looked like one of the Rolling Stones," he says. "The guys at the placement office told me to buy a blue suit and get a haircut. They also lined up an interview for me."

The makeover worked. A week after the interview, Mobil hired Schmidt for the then-hefty salary of \$10,000 per year. After he graduated, the firm sent him to Grand Rapids, Mich., for its training program. Big salary aside, Schmidt wisely decided to stock away cash—a move that would eventually pay big dividends. He bought an old Volkswagen Beetle that he had to push to start and initially slept on the floor of his apartment in a sleeping bag.

He also validated Professor Lebsack's prediction. Over the next 13 years, Mobil

consistently promoted Schmidt and moved him to such cities as Columbus, Ohio; Chicago; Los Angeles; Minneapolis; and finally New York City.

While the last stop placed Schmidt squarely in the big time, he realized it wasn't for him. "I was living in Stamford, Conn., and commuting to Manhattan," he says. "I got tired of it. My commute was long, and there were just too many people in too small of an area."

## Back to His Roots

Like many expatriated Midwesterners, Schmidt felt a tug back to his roots. In 1986 he moved to Sioux Falls and tapped into his savings to buy and sell homes. The venture eventually turned into Vintage Apartment Rentals, which specializes in classic apartments. "Our buildings are preserved exactly the way they were when they were built, but with electric heat and modern appliances," he says. "We now have four large apartment buildings on the Historical Registry."

Schmidt hasn't forgotten where he got his start. Over the past several years, he has been a generous supporter of Minnesota State Mankato and was named the University's Philanthropist of the Year in 2013. For all of his success, however, he remains humble. "I'm no big deal—there are millions of people like me out there," he says. "I just believe strongly in giving."

"I was always met with open arms at Mankato," he adds. "It offered me the vision and tools to move to a bigger stage. It feels tremendous to be able give something back." ✍

# Stage Presence



Lou Bellamy's award-winning career in theatre started on a stage at Minnesota State Mankato. Last fall, he returned to his alma mater to direct "Crumbs from the Table of Joy."

*By Joe Tougas '86*

It sounds like folklore, but Lou Bellamy '67 says it's all true. It goes like this: Theatre director Ted Paul needed black actors for a production of "Finian's Rainbow." Meanwhile, the overall student body at Mankato State College in 1964 was as white as typing paper. Faced with few suitable solutions, Paul walked into the McElroy Residence Hall, where Bellamy and a few other black students were living. He introduced himself, proclaimed them all actors and recruited them for the show.

"That's exactly what happened," laughs Bellamy today. "I think when I was there, there might have been five or six black students on campus, and that constituted the black population of the city."

In 2013, the chair of Minnesota State Mankato's theatre department knocked on Bellamy's door again. This time, Paul J. Hustoles was inviting him to direct a main

stage production at the Ted Paul Theatre. Bellamy and Minnesota State Mankato now had 50 years of theatre behind them, and the reunion allowed for a reflection not only on the University's artistic growth, but its influence on one of its most successful graduates.

Bellamy graduated in 1967 with degrees in psychology and sociology. He moved to St. Paul, where he found ongoing work as an actor. Eager to promote the otherwise absent voice of African Americans in theatre, in 1976 he formed Penumbra Theatre Company, which has since been staging works devoted to black perspectives and experiences, from the annual upbeat musical "Black Nativity" to the recent drama "The Ballad of Emmitt Till," a story of the Chicago youth whose murder ignited the civil rights movement.

As a director, Bellamy has received several national accolades, including an OBIE

Award for the Off-Broadway production of "Two Trains Running" by playwright August Wilson—whose Pulitzer Prize-winning career was launched at the Penumbra Theatre.

"We have been wanting to get Bellamy back for years," Hustoles says.

Bellamy's return was in part thanks to the Andreas Endowment, bestowed by the family of Lowell and Nadine Andreas to the College of Arts and Humanities in honor of Nadine and her longtime support of the arts at Minnesota State Mankato.

When Bellamy accepted the offer to direct a show in late 2013, he visited with Hustoles and student actors. They agreed on Bellamy's suggestion to stage the drama "Crumbs from the Table of Joy." The play, first staged Off-Broadway in 1995, revolves around a black family in Brooklyn.

This time, nobody had to go marching over to McElroy.





Lou Bellamy (left) with actress Gabrielle Chavers during a “Crumbs” rehearsal.

“We finally had the right cohort to mount our first-ever African-American play on our main stage,” Hustoles says. “This year we knew we had two third-year [master’s of fine art] students of color, both of whom were cast, ... and a whole bunch of undergrads. So the casting pool was solid.”

What Bellamy remembers learning from mentors such as Ted Paul and Fred Bock was to shed the pretense of theatre and aim for the soul.

“People make a mistake thinking theater is about the craft, and it isn’t,” Bellamy says. “It’s about people. They made that very clear to me, and it’s served me well through the rest of my career.”

That’s how Reginald “Reggie” Haney recalls Bellamy’s touch as a director. Haney had acted professionally for 10 years before enrolling as an MFA student in theatre.

“Sometimes it felt like we were just talking instead of acting,” says Haney, who played the lead role in “Crumbs.” “Basically he wanted us to get rid of the acting and really have us focus on those moment-to-moment scenes and focus on the intimate details of those scenes, which is really, really great.”

Bellamy’s visit offered students an experience to find their own way into their characters, versus a strict reading of the work.

“He wants you to get out there and try your ideas first, and if your ideas aren’t strong or readable on stage, he’ll come back and try to sort of adjust your choices to make them more readable, or more playable,” Haney says. “He let you make choices and he helped you make your choices definite as an actor.”

One similarity to his days as a student, Bellamy says, is how the University remains the center for regional theatre.

“Paul Hustoles is still successful in being *the* theatrical experience for the town, not only the University,” Bellamy says. “And I think that’s an accomplishment that many colleges would look at with a degree of envy.”

Ted Paul’s direction beyond the stage gave Bellamy a sense of what theatre can be, he added.

“Lawyers, accountants, carpenters, all that sort of stuff. Theater sort of throws them in together and says ‘Here’s the project, you guys work together on this,’” Bellamy says.

“It’s still a way of providing a focus where a community can engage complex issues in a civil manner.” ♪



# Two for One

It isn't easy to replace a legendary coach. But both Jim Dilling '06 and Loren Ahonen are finding Mark Schuck's shadow a great place to start.

*By Wayne Carlson '03*

**L**egends cast long shadows. Just ask Jim Dilling and Loren Ahonen, who were hired last summer as head coaches of the Minnesota State Mankato men's track and field and cross country teams, respectively. A conversation about legendary Maverick coaches will always include mention of their predecessor: 34-year Maverick head coach Mark Schuck.

Schuck took the helm of the men's cross country team in 1979, won nine North Central Conference cross country titles and was a nine-time league Cross Country Coach of the Year. He also led the Mavericks to their first-ever NCAA Division II cross country title in 1988.

Schuck coached four national individual champions during his 15 years as head coach of the men's track and field team (including a four-time high jump champion and NCAA indoor record holder by the name of Jim Dilling). Schuck was named league Outdoor Coach of the Year four times and Regional Indoor Coach of the Year three times. His 1989 Maverick indoor track and field team finished second in the nation.

So legendary was Schuck that it took two men to replace him.

**One is Ahonen.** The Michigan-native was hired to serve as the men's cross country coach and assistant track and field coach after working with the distance runners as an assistant coach at Western State in Colorado.

As a student-athlete at Western State, Ahonen amassed seven All-American honors, including two in cross country and five in track and field. Ahonen also takes academics seriously: He graduated Summa Cum Laude

in 2011 and was the first student-athlete in Western State history to earn a pair of Capital One Academic All-American honors. He was also a seven-time NCAA Division II Academic All-American. His commitment to academic responsibility extends into coaching as well, which impacts his recruiting strategy.

"I'm looking for guys who see the balance in their lives," Ahonen says. "They're passionate about track and field and cross country. They want to improve their running, but they know that for them this is the means to a greater end. They're here to do great in school and use their experience in athletics to help them be more successful in whatever career they will be moving into."

**The other is Dilling,** a Wisconsin native hired to serve as the head coach of the men's track and field team. As a Maverick student-athlete, Dilling racked up four national championships in the high jump and was a six-time All-American in the event (including both indoor and outdoor). At the 2006 NCAA Division II Indoor Championships, he set the NCAA Division II high jump meet record at 7 feet, 6.5 inches.

After graduating, Dilling was the 2007 USA Track & Field High Jump Champion and represented Team USA at the IAAF World Track & Field Championships in Osaka, Japan, where he finished 16th in qualifying. He finished 2007 ranked fourth in the United States and 19th in the world.

Dilling also spent two years as an assistant on Schuck's staff before taking the helm last summer. He is eager to extend the tradition he learned by being so close to the program.

"Coach Schuck had a 35-plus year presence within the program and will always be someone who I look up to as well as look for as a resource moving forward," Dilling says. "The biggest challenge, not seen by those outside of the program, is being able to give current and future student-athletes of the track and field team the same amazing experiences that have been given to each and every one of us who are alumni of the program. Not a day goes by that I am not thankful for the educational and athletic experiences provided to me by this great institution, and being able to deliver that to my athletes is the true challenge that I face in my new position."

Certainly, leading a collegiate athletic team is never easy work. But for now, Dilling and Ahonen are finding that in a legend's shadow isn't a bad place to start a young career. Not for these guys. And not for these programs, built by Schuck to be handed over seamlessly to young coaches just like them—two young men equipped to breathe youthful energy into tradition.

"I give credit to Minnesota State Mankato and the hiring committee for being able to conduct two completely separate searches and realize the potential for compatibility amongst future staff members," Dilling says. "We are in this together and not only utilize each other as a resource, but others within the sport who we know and trust. What makes our chemistry meld together is that we both believe that we provide one main thing to all student-athletes: opportunity." 🍀

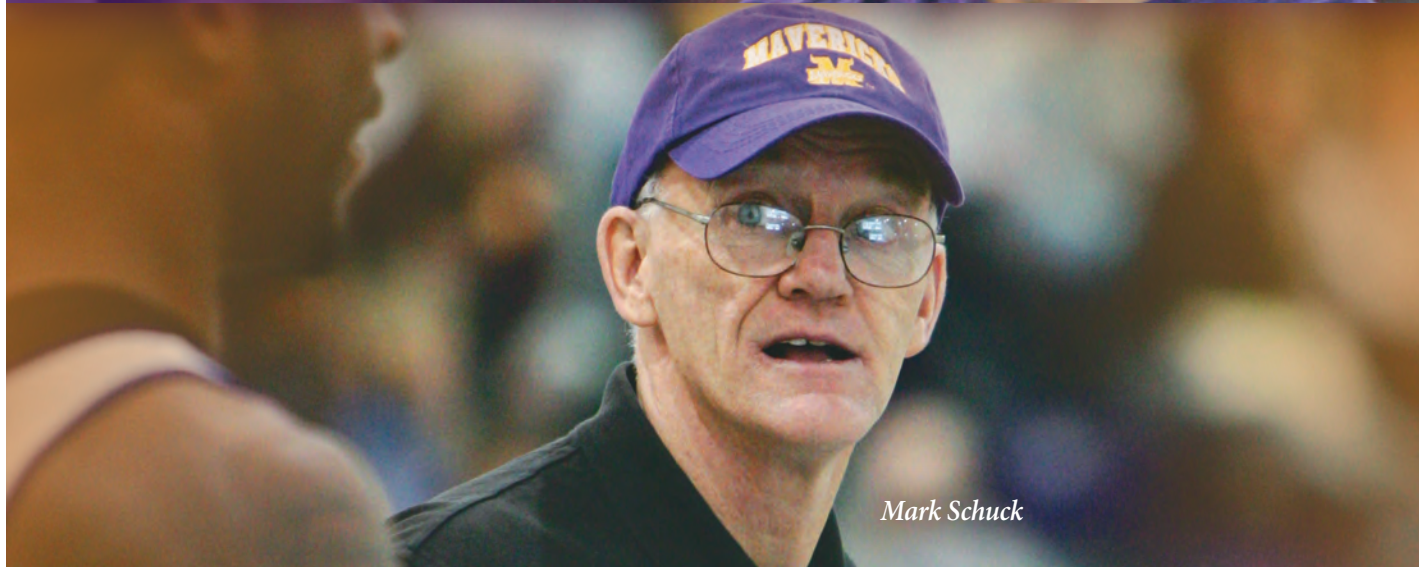




*Loren Ahonen*



*Jim Dilling*



*Mark Schuck*

# NURSING IN A NEW LIGHT

The Affordable Care Act could change the way Minnesota State Mankato nursing students do their jobs in the near future.

By Sara Gilbert Frederick

When Peter Buerhaus graduated from Minnesota State Mankato in 1976, his plan was to use nursing as his ticket to travel the world. He figured he'd work long enough to fund his first flight, then go abroad, working as a nurse wherever he was able. "See the world," he says. "That was my plan."

He only made it as far as Ohio.

That's where he fell in love, got married and started graduate school. That's where he was introduced to the connection between economics and nursing, where he saw the value of results culled from a well-planned research study, where he realized the influence those results could have on policy makers. And that's where his career path veered away from clinical practice and into a more academic vein. "I never saw it coming," he admits.

Now, Buerhaus is the Valere Potter Professor of Nursing and the director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Workforce Studies at the Institute for Medicine and Public Health at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. He's a recognized expert on issues relating to the nursing workforce, which is why *today* called him to discuss what the Affordable Care Act means to nurses.



**TODAY:** How do you think the Affordable Care Act impact the nursing workforce?

**Peter Buerhaus:** I should start with the big picture. We have had decades with big developments that, in my view, were mostly directed at hospitals, physicians, managed care, Medicare and Medicaid. Now, reform is about the whole system: improving the delivery of care, embracing prevention, expanding health insurance coverage, and finally, reforming the way we pay for health care. The nursing profession stands to gain in each of those four areas.

**TODAY:** How so?

**PB:** What nurses need to do is ask, "How do I add value to all of these elements of reform?" ... Nurses need to step up and look at their ability to provide value. That means taking a self-examination of the things they do every day and deciding which add value, and which do not. This system is going to be rewarding the things that add value.

**TODAY:** Why should nurses be part of the conversation about health care reform?

**PB:** The answer is twofold. First, they are the most trusted, most admired and most respected profession in the country, bar none. The people who are interested in moving forward with healthcare reform should recognize that it makes sense to work with them as they move forward. And second, nurses already provide a lot of value to the system. If we can tweak nursing in ways that are helpful to supporting the changes, then you are using an existing resource to make things better, rather than creating something new.

**TODAY:** How can universities like Minnesota State Mankato prepare nurses who are ready for what may be a very different health-care system?

**PB:** Right now, we focus on a clinical model of patient care, with our clinicals in the hospital. But the care delivery system is saying "see you later" to hospitals. Curriculum has to get in line with where the health care system is going. And

then the state licensing exams have got to get in line, too; if the state licensing exam isn't asking questions about prevention, delivery reform, access and value, then the faculty won't be teaching it.

**TODAY:** How did Minnesota State Mankato have an impact on your career?

**PB:** I had great clinical and classroom instructors; I was challenged and I was inspired to learn. I also had exceptional classmates who helped me grow a lot as a human being. Another thing that was very important: We had a curriculum that emphasized theory, in terms of why you do what you do, and how it has an impact on the health of the patient, the family and the community. But it was backed up by experiential learning, particularly in terms of communication and working well in groups. It was visionary. I had a tremendously positive experience in Mankato. ☞



## ► 1950s

**Ken Bom, '50**, Minnetonka, MN, is a retired teacher.

**Donald Steward, '57**, South Plainfield, NJ, is a retired research chemist who worked for Union Carbide-Dow. He married his wife, Sally, in August 2005.

**Dorothy Gascoigne, '58, '62**, Stillwater, MN, retired after 52 years in education. She had the first state-funded, adapted P.E. program in the Wayzata School District in 1964 and worked with special education teachers and charter schools.

**Gary Pyles, '59**, La Jolla, CA, is enjoying retirement with his wife Gwen.

## ► 1960s

**David Bruels, '60**, Seattle, WA, is selling his business of conducting tours in China.

**Thomas Hansen, '61**, The Villages, FL, was a teacher and coach before joining UNIVAC in 1965. He retired in 2001. He and his wife, Mari, have been married for 48 years.

**Patrick Ellis, '62, '71**, Eagle Lake, MN, received a certificate of clinical competence—speech pathology, was initiated into Phi Delta Kappa and selected into Colorado Association of School Executives, and served as the president of the council of administrators of special education in Colorado.

**Carol Ann Lowinske, '63, '86, '94**, Mankato, MN, is a self-employed licensed psychologist-director with Mind Body Spirit Center.

**James Matteson, '63, '67**, Sun City, AZ, is a retired dentist.

**D.E. Brobst, '65**, St. Cloud, MN, published *Knock Until the Dog Barks* and is working on a collection of short stories and poems. He is also the director of K-12/secondary teacher interns for the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University.

**Elaine (Cluever) Johnson, '65**, Pelican Rapids, MN, taught English as a Second Language before retiring.

**William Murray, '65**, Chaska, MN, is retired and spending his winters in Florida. He and his wife, Vickie, have two children and four grandchildren.

**Ken Lade, '66**, Powder Springs, GA, and **Sherry (Sennert) Lade, '64**, are retired and living near their two children and four grandchildren.

**Larry Schluter, '66**, Lakeville, MN, is retired from the insurance business and serving on the board and executive committee of the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

**Bruce Frederickson, '68**, Blaine, MN, is

the Interim Pastor for the Family of Christ Lutheran Church in Ham Lake, MN. He and his wife, Ann, winter in Surprise, AZ.

**Rod Grove, '68, '74**, San Diego, CA, taught at Minnesota State Mankato for 10 years. He is a pilot/instructor and has taken up dancing.

**Don Niemi, '68**, Aitkin, MN, is an Aitkin County Commissioner.

**James Torgerson, '68**, Bartlett, IL, is a tax accountant/investment specialist with CTS Tax Services.

**Michael Felix, '69, '80**, Grand Rapids, MN, is a self-employed land broker and author with five books out.

## ► 1970s

**Robert Buchanan, '70, '76**, Sioux Falls, SD, retired after 36 years with Sammons Financial, where he was a senior vice president.

**J. Roger Simonds Jr., '70**, Phillipsburg, NJ, received the Distinguished Lifetime Leadership Award from the New Jersey Subcontractors Association in November.

**Goeff Wascher, '70, '71**, Plymouth, MN, is a systems analyst with MSX International, Ford Motor Co., in Dearborn, MI.

**Albert Arndt, '71, '72**, Sioux Falls, SD, is a district sales manager with Brock Grain Systems, a division of CTB, Inc. a Berkshire Hathaway Company.

**Bruce Jarish, '71**, Howard Beach, NY, recently published *There's No Vacation from Desire*.

**Randall Munson, '71**, Rochester, MN, was inducted into the Speakers Hall of Fame in June. His professional speaking career has taken him to 40 countries on six continents.

**Donald Orescanin, '72**, Fairfield, CA, is the executive assistant/office manager with the University of California, Davis.

**Kenneth Pengelly, '72**, Maple Grove, MN, married his partner of 28 years in August.

**Dr. Jeffrey Andert, '73**, Battle Creek, MI, received the 2012 Distinguished Psychologist award at the annual convention of the Michigan Psychological Association. In 2009 he served as president of the MPA and is currently the chair of its licensure committee.

**Douglas Benson, '73**, Bloomington, MN, recently retired as the supervisor for primary care and financial assistance programs in the Offices of Rural Health & Primary Care with the Minnesota Department of Health.

**John Berg, '73**, Kindred, ND, is a pastor with Calvary/Zion UMC. He has also worked for the U.S. Postal Service.

**Pamela Blazick, '73**, Mission Viejo, CA, is a senior registered CSA with UBS Financial Services.

**Ken Lloyd, '73**, North Mankato, MN, is

retired. He volunteers for VINE Faith in Action and sings with Summit Singers.

**Lane Patterson, '73**, Tucson, AZ, is a retired artist who married his partner of 23 years in June.

**Robert Raley, '73**, Rockford, IL, owns Raley Nursery with his wife, Lanna.

**Lynette Shishido, '73, '74**, Malibu, CA, is a retired business professor who taught for 40 years.

**Thomas Surat, '73**, Watertown, CT, is a music/theatre arts teacher with the Town of Oxford. He has been teaching middle school students for 41 years.

**George Willock, '73**, Auburn, AL, is the director of planned giving at Auburn University. He is a member of the Partnership for Philanthropic Planning, the International Association of Advisors in Philanthropy and the Montgomery Estate Planning Council.

**Terry Harstad, '74**, Georgetown, TX, retired in December after working for Sirloin Stockade since 1974.

**Eric Johnson, '74**, Atlantic, IA, is a teacher's aid in instrumental music with the Atlantic Community Schools.

**Reggie McCarthy, '75**, St. Anthony, MN, retired in 2007 after teaching for more than 33 years at two-year colleges.

**Kristine Odegaard, '75**, Hobe Sound, FL, is a primary therapist with Recovery Road.

**Deborah (Haub) Vacek, '75**, San Diego, CA, retired as Captain in the Navy Reserve Nurse Corps. Her husband, **James Vacek, '74**, retired from the United States Navy Reserve as a Captain, Dental Corps.

**Peggy (Kryzer) Pasche, '77**, Altura, MN, and her husband, **Steve Pasche, '79**, are retired teachers.

**Scott Anderson, '78**, Nassau, Bahamas, is senior vice president with Family Guardian Insurance Company.

**Mark Lewis, '78**, Excelsior, MN, retired from American Family Insurance in 2012.

**Mary (Schauer) Skrove, '78**, Menomonie, WI, has owned Buttonhole for 28 years.

**Gary Hjermstad, '79**, Deadwood, SD, is retired from the U.S. Postal Service. His 19<sup>th</sup> grandchild was born in 2013.

**Stuart Moir, '79**, Crystal Lake, IL, lives in Illinois.

**Bruce Philipson, '79**, Minnetrista, MN, retired from the Internal Revenue Service after 33 years as a manager of exempt organizations, financial investigation unit.

## ► 1980s

**Paul Ament-Gjenvick, '81**, Woodstock, GA, is as a processing archivist with American Baptist Historical Society Archives in Atlanta.

# classnotes

**Linda Koerselman, '81**, Mankato, MN, is a CPA and partner with Eide Bailly who serves on the board of directors in the Mankato office.

**Gordon Wiborg Jr., '81, '83**, Yuma, AZ, is the chief of plans and operations with the U.S. Army Garrison—Yuma Proving Ground.

**Kathy Kremer, '82, '87**, West Olive, MI, is the dean of curriculum at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, MI, where she previously served as a chair and associate professor.

**Mark Wiersbeck, '82**, Maple Grove, MN, works for Cargill Inc.

**Mark Fujan, '83**, Fairmont, MN, is an agent with State Farm Insurance.

**Mary Horgan, '83**, Blaine, MN, lives in Blaine.

**Dean Raven, '83**, Sioux Falls, SD, is in sales with Safety-Kleen.

**Scott Perschbacher, '84**, Thompsons Station, TN, was promoted to director of sales and operations with Bridgestone Commercial Solutions Mining.

**Susan (Keller) St. Ores, '84, '92**, Bayport, MN, is the director at SAP Global Marketing and is the mayor of Bayport.

**Jeffrey Schuetz, '84, '92**, Eagan, MN, is the vice president and senior project manager with BMO Harris Bank in Minneapolis.

**Mary Rodenberg-Roberts, '85**, Rosemount, MN, is the vice president and assistant general counsel with MENTOR, a community-based health care company. In 2010 she received the MENTOR Ripple of Hope award.

**Krisna Suswandi, '86**, Jakarta, Indonesia, is the director and CIO for OTO Multiartha PT.

**Jon Jensen, '87**, Grand Forks, ND, was appointed to serve as a district court judge in the Northeast Central Judicial District by North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple.

**Deborah Mosby, '87**, St. Paul, MN, is a tenured associate professor at Metropolitan State University. Her son, Alexander, graduated from Minnesota State Mankato in 2011.

**Timothy Buck, '89**, St. Michael, MN, is a senior mortgage banker with BMO Harris Bank.

**Ramzi Haraty, '89**, Beirut, Lebanon, is an associate professor at Lebanese American University in Beirut. He and his wife recently welcomed their son, Ahmad.

**Gayle Johnson, '89**, Eagan, MN, is the co-owner of Children's Country Day Preschool in Mendota Heights, MN.

## ► 1990s

**Karen Jacobus, '90**, Bismarck, ND, is an audiologist with the Mid Dakota Clinic.

**Kirsten (Lee) Carson, '90**, Andover, MN, is a social worker for Presbyterian Homes and Services. She also is a realtor and owns a rental business with her husband. She has volunteered with the Salvation Army for 20 years.

**Elizabeth (Allen) Rasmussen, '90**, Blue Earth, MN, is a paraprofessional with Blue Earth Area High School. She and her husband have two adult sons.

**Shanon Knudtson, '90**, Dallas, TX, is an underwriting consultant with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

**Matt Pothast, '91**, Park Ridge, IL, is in sales for Genentech in South San Francisco. He and his wife have two sons.

**Curt Pribnow, '91, '98**, Nisswa, MN, is a criminal justice instructor with Central Lakes College.

**Tracy (Cook) Lindstrom, '91**, Esko, MN, and her husband recently bought a resort on a lake in northern Minnesota.

**Trever Christian, '91**, Woodbury, MN, is co-president and co-founder of Freedom Financial Partners, LLC.

**Laura Lee Scott, '91**, West Linn, OR, is an author and owner of WriteLifeStories and Passionflower Press. She received the 2013 Cascade Writing Award for Best Published Children's Book, *The Santa Switch*.

**Sean McGinty, '91**, Rogers, MN, was promoted to lieutenant with the Minneapolis Police Department. He has been with the MPD for 17 years.

**Brian Wilson, '91**, Hutchinson, MN, completed his doctorate of business administration from Metropolitan State University last fall.

**John Jones, '93**, Inver Grove Heights, MN, is a senior staff commodity manager with Seagate Technologies LLC.

**Lori (Ford) Ahlness, '93**, White Bear Lake, MN, is an early childhood screener with ISD 622.

**Randy Wanke, '94**, West Des Moines, IA, was promoted to senior industry relations manager for the Americas with DuPont Pioneer.

**Steve Helget, '94**, Norwood Young America, MN, is the city administrator for the City of Norwood Young America.

**Randy Vee, '94**, St. Cloud, MN, is a software engineer with CCSI in Waite Park, MN.

**John Safranek, '94**, Denton, TX, is the chief administrator Precinct 1 for Denton County.

**Lori (Wilcox) Rosenberg, '95**, Worthington, MN, is teaching kindergarten in the Worthington School District after being a stay-at-home mom for 13 years.

**Antonio Adkins, '95**, St. Paul, MN, lives in St. Paul.

**Jennifer Guyer-Wood, '95, '98**, Louisville, KY, is the director of the career development center at Bellarmine University in Louisville.

**Diane (Belden) Otterson, '95**, Killeen, TX, is the assistant principal at Killeen IDS.

**Megan (Sinkbeil) Bearce, '96**, Maple Grove, MN, is a licensed marriage and family therapist who published *Super Commuter Couples: Staying Together When a Job Keeps You Apart*.

**Jennifer Glovka Highfield, '96**, Owatonna, MN, is an architectural design specialist with Viracon who assists architects with glass selection and specification.

**Adrienne (Gillespie) Andrews, '97**, Clearfield, UT, is the special assistant to the president for diversity at Weber State University. She married her husband, Chip, in October 2012.

**Dr. Surya Nauli, '97**, Toledo, OH, is a professor and vice chair of pharmacology at The University of Toledo College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences whose focus is on cilia biology, cardiovascular disease and polycystic kidney disease.

**Beverly Butler, '98**, Lakeville, MN, is the vice president marketing/strategic business alliances with True Choice Services, which works with businesses on health insurance for their employees.

**Victoria Poage, '98**, Bremerton, WA, retired from the federal government after more than 26 years of service in the U.S. Navy, National Marine Fisheries Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. She plans to volunteer with her local county extension service.

**Homero Boa Esperanca, '99**, Sao Tome, Sao Tome & Principe, is a chief engineer with EMAE in Sao Tome.

**Ahmet Hepdogan, '99**, Oak Park, IL, is the vice president of procurement for the Ferrara Candy Company.

## ► 2000s

**Becky (Evers) Gerdes, '00, '02**, Rochester, MN, and her husband Scott welcomed daughter Grace Becky Gerdes on May 2, 2013. Grace joins big brothers Nathan and Matthew.

**Christopher Shearman, '00, '06**, North Mankato, MN, is a business process consultant with AgStar and recently became PMP certified.

**Richard Robles, '00**, Wyoming, OH, is an assistant professor of experiential learning with the University of Cincinnati. He helps mechanical engineering students secure co-op jobs.

**Heidi (Grams) Raymond, '00**, Shakopee, MN, is a correctional case manager with the State of Minnesota.



**Staci (Fick) Minkler, '00**, Sioux Falls, SD, is a project manager with United Health Group/Optum.

**Elizabeth Ruhter Willett, '01**, Mankato, MN, is an herbalist with her own company. She and her husband, Bradley, welcomed their second son on Oct. 26, 2013.

**Joe Studnicka, '01**, Somerset, WI, is the founder/owner of Building Solutions Group in Bayport, MN.

**Michelle Jacobson, '01**, Mankato, MN, is a tax manager with Eide Bailly.

**Lisa Ashley, '02**, Eden Prairie, MN, is an attorney with Messerli & Kramer. She was recognized as a 2013 Super Lawyers Rising Star.

**Lori (Fick) Swart, '02**, Maple Grove, MN, is a financial advisor with Merrill Lynch.

**Angela Blount, '02**, Huntsville, AL, published *Once Upon a Road Trip*, about a teenage girl's two-month journey across the eastern United States and Canada.

**Andrew Steil, '03**, St. Cloud, MN, has been elected a shareholder of Gray Plant Mooty. His areas of concentration are commercial litigation, banking and other lending-related issues.

**Joshua Larson, '04**, Beaverton, OR, is a provider network executive with LifeWise Health Plan of Oregon/Premier Blue Cross.

**Heather (Kaiser) Diersen, '04**, Eden Prairie, MN, is an associate attorney in the human resources and employment and litigation practice groups with Fafinski Mark & Johnson.

**Robert Briggs, '04**, Vernal, UT, and his wife Holly welcomed their daughter Kathryn on Aug. 8, 2013.

**Ruth Carlson, '04, '12**, Mankato, MN, is the general manager of Culver's of Mankato.

**Donald Mitchell, '07**, Grand Rapids, MI, is an assistant professor of higher education at Grand Valley State University. He has earned several awards for writing, researching and mentoring.

**Edmund Bruyere, '07**, Minneapolis, MN, ran for mayor of Minneapolis in 2013.

**Dan Groh, '07**, Mankato, MN, is a tax manager with Eide Bailly, where he works with individuals, partnerships and corporations.

**Gayle Depuydt, '08, '12**, Mankato, MN, operates The Yellow Door Music Studio in Eagle Lake, MN.

**Tony Ochalla, '08, '10**, Salt Lake City, UT, is the president of Gambella Ethiopian Community.

**Trisha (Tuchtenhagen) Rosenfeld, '08**, Mankato, MN, is the manager of community relations and economic development for Xcel Energy in Mankato.

**Anne Elvecrog, '08**, Payson, AZ, is a case manager for Bridgeway Health Solutions in Tempe, AZ.

**Jeffrey Olerud, '08**, Rockford, IL, is in medical sales with Patients Choice Medical.

**Dashanne Stokes, '08**, Pittsburgh, PA, is a doctoral candidate at the University of Pittsburgh who published *The Unfinished Dream: A Discussion on Rights, Equality, and Inclusivity*.

**Susan (Fehrenkamm) Flores-Diaz, '09, '10**, St. Paul, MN, is a data specialist with the Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin River Valleys.

**Heidi Bjerketvedt, '09, '12**, St. Paul, MN, is a high school recruiter for the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy.

## ► 2010s

**Ashley (Hamblin) Lang, '10**, Jesup, IA, is the director of campus programming at Wartburg College. She and her husband, Anthony, welcomed their daughter, Logan Leona, on Dec. 20.

**Samantha (Huiras) Thoreson, '10**, Lakefield, MN, is a substance abuse counselor who has her ADCR-MN, which enables her to work in any state.

**Angela (Schlager) Naumann, '11**, Jackson, MN, is a public health educator with Community Health—Jackson. She married her husband, Christopher, on May 25, 2013.

**Srikar Kuppli, '11**, Eagan, MN, is a controls engineer with DRC, Inc.

**Rehab Baamer, '12**, Mankato, MN, is the founder and managing director of zawrag.com.

**Dylan Hauer, '12**, Minnetonka, MN, is a police officer with the City of Minnetonka.

**Jonathon Heide, '12**, Minneapolis, MN, is an assistant professor at North Central University.

**Kelsey Wiseman, '13**, Gilbert, AZ, is using her master's of art degree in her business, Wiseman Editing.

**Nicholas Perfetti, '13**, Minneapolis, MN, is married with two children. He is working on an MBA from Metropolitan State University.

**Peter Digiorgio, '13**, Palm Coast, FL, is an adjunct instructor of speech communication with Daytona State College.

**Tammy Gagnon, '13**, St. Peter, MN, is a mental health practitioner with Horizon Homes Inc.

**Sarah Koenen, '13**, Flower Mound, TX, is a project manager with Dynamic Innovations in Grapevine, TX.

**Heidi Lefebvre, '13**, Brainerd, MN, is the aquatics and sports coordinator with the Brainerd YMCA.

# 2014 Distinguished Alumni Awards

Friday, April 25, 6:30 P.M.  
Centennial Student Union Ballroom

## Honorees

### Achievement Award



Dirk Derksen '67, '69



Cindy Firkins Smith '81



Robert Gebhard '69



Suresh Matthews '75

### Humanitarian Award



Geraldine Colby '69, '72

### Harold J. Fitterer Service to Minnesota State University, Mankato Award



Todd Pfingsten '89, '93



Patrick Sexton '85

### Distinguished Young Alumni Award



Aaron Owens '05

For more alumni  
events visit  
today.mnsu.edu

# inmemoriam

## ALUMNI

### ► 1930s

Virginia Magdalen (Coleman) McGeary '33  
Harriet Clara Augusta (Krueger) Oftedahl '36, '67  
Agnes P. (Peloquin) Rajala '36  
Esther A. (Anderson) Gronfor '37, '64  
Rita Marion (Coggins) Marsh '38, '67  
Loreen Marie (Farwick) Gregg '39  
Lawrence Mathews Morris '39  
Arline Fae (Rendall) Perrizo '39  
Bernita (Bell) Shurr '39

### ► 1940s

Leona Esther (Sandager) Goehle '40  
Hope Evelyn (Noble) Hislop '40  
Ardis L. (Krumwiede) Mathews '40, '66  
Marie Rosine (Thelemann) Crosby '41  
Deloris P. (Pletz) Graham '42  
Mildred Amelia (Reese) Fink '43  
Betty Margaret (Grover) Park '44  
Teresa Evangeline (Ebberts) Ford '45  
Eunice Emogene (Ekstrand) Gordon '45  
Marian Elizabeth (Zoeller) Wolle '45  
Anna Elfrieda (Fast) Klassen '46  
Catherine Cecilia (Garrahy) Murphy '47  
Belva E. (Budde) Sauder '47  
Russell Fredrick Fechter '48  
Alvina Gwen (Owens) Guanella '48, '75  
Audrey Ann (Petersen) Thomas '48  
Cecelia C. (Hager) Biggins '49  
Clarice Elizabeth (Gamm) Madsen '49

### ► 1950s

Jean Ellen (Juhl) Ahrendt '50  
Ray Donald Erdal '50  
Phyllis Irene (Newman) Jenkins '50  
Jeanne Helen (Lundin) Kottke '50  
Vernon LeRoy Ludeman  
Leon Paul Schimbeno '50  
Ruth L. (Moore) Boyne '51  
Harold Albert Fenske '51  
Donald Eugene Felch '52, '64  
Robert Joseph Sandvik '52  
Jimmy L. Terhune '52  
William David Blackley '53  
Joy Margaret (Wolfram) Poate '53, '55  
David Lee Crane '55, '66  
Marilyn A. (Svee) Dahms '56  
Kenneth Raymond Gertjensan '56  
William H. Kiffe '57  
Joan R. (Wigen) Preston '57  
Victor Harold Greier '58  
Lucy Jane (Kokesh) Hennies '58, '62  
Wesley Raymond Hintz '58  
Donald Lee Larsen '58  
Robert Roy Olsen '58, '64  
Mildred F. (Helle) Wing '58  
Donald M. Aschenbrener '59, '63  
Alice Annjoline (Dahle) Dahle '59  
James P. Feely '59

Marvin Eldren Jacobsen '59  
Ralph Herbert Krenz '59  
Rodney Newell Searle '59

### ► 1960s

Raymond Leonard Dahlberg '60  
Neil J. Houtcooper '60  
Floyd J. Schweer '60  
Frances Jeanette (Stiller) Anderson '61  
Raymond Henry Appel '61  
Franklin James Banwart '61  
Kay Marie (Anderson) Barthel '61  
Max E. Brown '61  
JoAnn Amelia (Larson) Hill '61  
Eunice B. (Matthes) Kazemba '61  
Janice M. (Okland) Lange '61, '65  
Anabelle Ruth (Underdahl) Lea '61  
Robert James McKeehan '61  
David Dean Price '61, '66  
Garrett D. Salmon '61  
Winnefred Ann (Zaun) Simser '61  
Carol Ann (Wolner) Wendt '61  
Donald Loren Wolter '61  
Robert Jacob Becker '62  
Linda Lee (Martine) Curtis '62  
Ronald Allan Gower '62, '63  
Betty Jean (White) Jegeris '62  
Terrance F. O'Brien '62  
Margaret A. (Korteum) Roscoe '62  
Howard Milton Erickson '63  
Michael J. Fesenmaier '63  
Virginia Carol (Sundeen) Hazelett '63  
William August Stradtman '63, '71  
Gary William Bray '64  
Don Aldrich Cain '64  
Stanley W. Corey '64, '70, '86  
Mary Ann (Johnson) Dixen '64  
Edmund Carl Hinrichs '64  
Joseph Allen Leonard '64  
John T. Metzke '64, '73  
Mary Jean A. (Dale) Kelly '65  
Joseph J. Koenig '65  
Catherine Jean (O'Meara) LaVelle '65  
Sylvan Roger Struck '65  
William F. Burns '66  
Carrol Marvin Erickson '66  
Gerald Lee Hart '66  
Beatriz R. (Riojas) Larson '66, '69  
Margaret A. (Burkholder) Mett '66  
Judith Ann (Daly) Muenchow '66  
Robert Michael Regan '66  
Lois Lee (Longbottom) Tollefson '66  
Howard William Wegner '66  
Judy Diane (Miner) Hanson '67  
Martha Leigh (Johnson) Jacobsen '67, '70  
Janice Alene (Demoney) Stevens '67  
Russell Dale Bundy '68  
Robert Peter Herz '68  
Dennis Charles Million '68, '81  
Glenn LeRoy Schelhaas '68  
Romaine Geneva (Olson) Schull '68  
James Howard Wandersee '68

Steven G. Warren '68  
Dennis Brian Barron '69  
Timothy R. Fredell '69  
Terje C. Hausken '69  
Joseph M. Lenk '69  
Gary Allen Nordlie '69  
Marcia Sharon Paulsen '69, '71  
Cheryl Joy (Hexum) Rogers '69, '81  
Stephen Irwin Ross '69  
John Robert Siple '69

### ► 1970s

Rose Alice (Dunbar) Beavers '70  
Catherine Ruth Brown '70  
Donald E. Dare '70, '84  
Thomas Alan Hagmann '70, '74, '87  
Leanora Swanee (Leske) Halstead '70  
Elaine Rene (Rupp) Harder '70  
Patricia Ann (Janssen) Mino '70  
Arlan John De Yong '71  
Neil G. Lazerine '71  
Marion A. (Evers) Nelson '71  
Kenneth Robert Peterson '71  
Mary Lee (Cords) Peterson '71  
Gerald Luther Sabin '71  
Jean F. Schwanbeck '71  
Diane Kay (Stuckenbroker) VanDeWiele '71  
Ordella Jeanette (Walker) Arneson '72  
David Maxwell Boyce '72  
Agnes Elaine (Simonson) Markham '72  
Roger Lyle Paquin '72  
Harvey R. Ratzloff '72  
Steven James Remington '72, '76, '83  
Norman Anthony Wieseler '72  
Patricia Lynn (Nelson) Beckius '73  
Virginia Kay Bigalk '73  
Mark Jennings Feroe '73  
Leonard P. Gisvold '73  
Paul Anthony Hoven '73  
Ellen Marie (Conway) Johnson '73, '77  
Michele Ann (Ranweiler) Johnson '73  
Carmen Lee (Clark) Klatt '73  
Odie Rubie (Knutson) Mielke '73  
Larry A. Spencer '73  
Ida LeRoyce (Lenz) Hagen '74  
Charles William Ries '74  
David Lee Johnson '75  
LeRoy Francis Domagala '76  
Gopal Krishan Jain '76  
Nancy Jean (Mathiason) Nelson '77  
Cynthia L. (Staples) Zillmer '77  
Larry Paul Forsythe '78, '82  
Rita Ann (Przytarski) Gerlach '78  
Gerald Louis Hagen '78  
Dennis U. Anderson '79  
Kamal Mohammad Katanani '79  
Thomas Paul Mueller '79

### ► 1980s

Roxann Kay (Pufpaff) Moeller '80  
Virginia Alice (Schmidt) Fischer '81  
Michael Lee John '81



# alumniupdate

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](mailto:today@mnsu.edu) or [msuupdates@mnsu.edu](mailto: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.

MAIL: Editor, TODAY

232 Alumni Foundation Center  
Mankato, MN 56001

FAX: 507-389-2069 E-MAIL: [today@mnsu.edu](mailto:today@mnsu.edu)

ONLINE: [today.mnsu.edu](http://today.mnsu.edu)

Update your contact information online: [mnsu.edu/update](http://mnsu.edu/update)

## ABOUT YOU

Name (including maiden) \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation year(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Major(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Degree(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred email \_\_\_\_\_

Professional title or position \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

## ABOUT YOUR SPOUSE/PARTNER

Name (including maiden) \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/partner \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation year (if Minnesota State Mankato graduate) \_\_\_\_\_

Professional title or position \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

How may we share the information you've provided to us here (contact information will never be shared)? Check all that apply:

☐ Print version of Today ☐ Online version of Today ☐ On University social media sites

Jackie Ann Malone '81  
Michael William Bohlman '82  
Thomas Lyle Cody '82  
Pamela Marie (FitzSimmons) Miller '82  
Sheila Rae (Peterson) Nichols '82  
John McGran Steele '82  
Mark Randolph Alvig '83  
Merritt John Coughlan '83  
Elizabeth Helen (Arends) Kaye '83  
Leonard Paul Kiskis '83  
Nedra Nancy (Lamb) Connelly '84  
Diane Lee (Paulson) Draper '84  
Rhonda Jeri (Villa) Sanders '85  
Joseph Philip Woog '85  
Michael Norman Bushlack '86  
John George Polyard '86  
Gloria Jeane (Major) Zachow '87  
Ricky Lee Anderson '88  
Brian Douglas Granberg '88  
Daniel Joseph Reuter '88  
Rita Ericka Werner '88  
Helen G. (Granquist) Johnson '89

### ► 1990s

Allan Frederick Wurst '90  
Karen M. (O'Brien) Keohen '91  
Cynthia Marie Perovich '91  
Brian Thomas Boelter '92

Eric Charles Webster '92  
Kevin Lyle Bosomworth '93  
Amy Sue (Mosow) Morris '93  
Ray Allan Ready '99  
Melanie Jane (Rotz) Hartman '98

### ► 2000s

Teresa Marie (Wallace) Van Iperen '00  
Scott Martin Becker '04  
Andrew Eugene Johnson '04  
Eric Michael Lindquist '04  
Corey Joseph Blaedorn '13

## FACULTY AND STAFF

Kenneth Stewart Barklind  
Henry Herman Busse  
LeeAnn Christine (Tietje) Christian  
Ronald Allan Gower  
Ellsworth "Bud" Carl Granger  
Myrna Mae (Doering) Just  
Mary V. Kahrs  
Alise N. (Smits Jegeris) Lange  
John Edward McCarty  
Norman E. Pietan  
Jane Pyle  
Cheryl Joy (Hexum) Rogers  
Carol Ann (Hahn) Stallkamp

## FRIENDS

William G. Altnow  
Frances Jeanette (Stiller) Anderson  
Douglas Earl Gerdtz, Sr.  
Alan Lyle Guyer  
Eva Marie (Senders) Hughes  
Frances S. Johnson  
Sharon Elaine (Fjerstad) Larson  
Donald Charles Meredith



# today

Minnesota State University, Mankato  
232 Alumni Foundation Center  
Mankato, MN 56001

NON-PROFIT ORGN.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 202  
MANKATO, MN 56001



## It's T-shirt season!

Shop the Minnesota State Mankato Spirit Store for summer gear made just for alumni. Find these items, and much more, at [mnsu.edu/alumni/pride](https://mnsu.edu/alumni/pride).