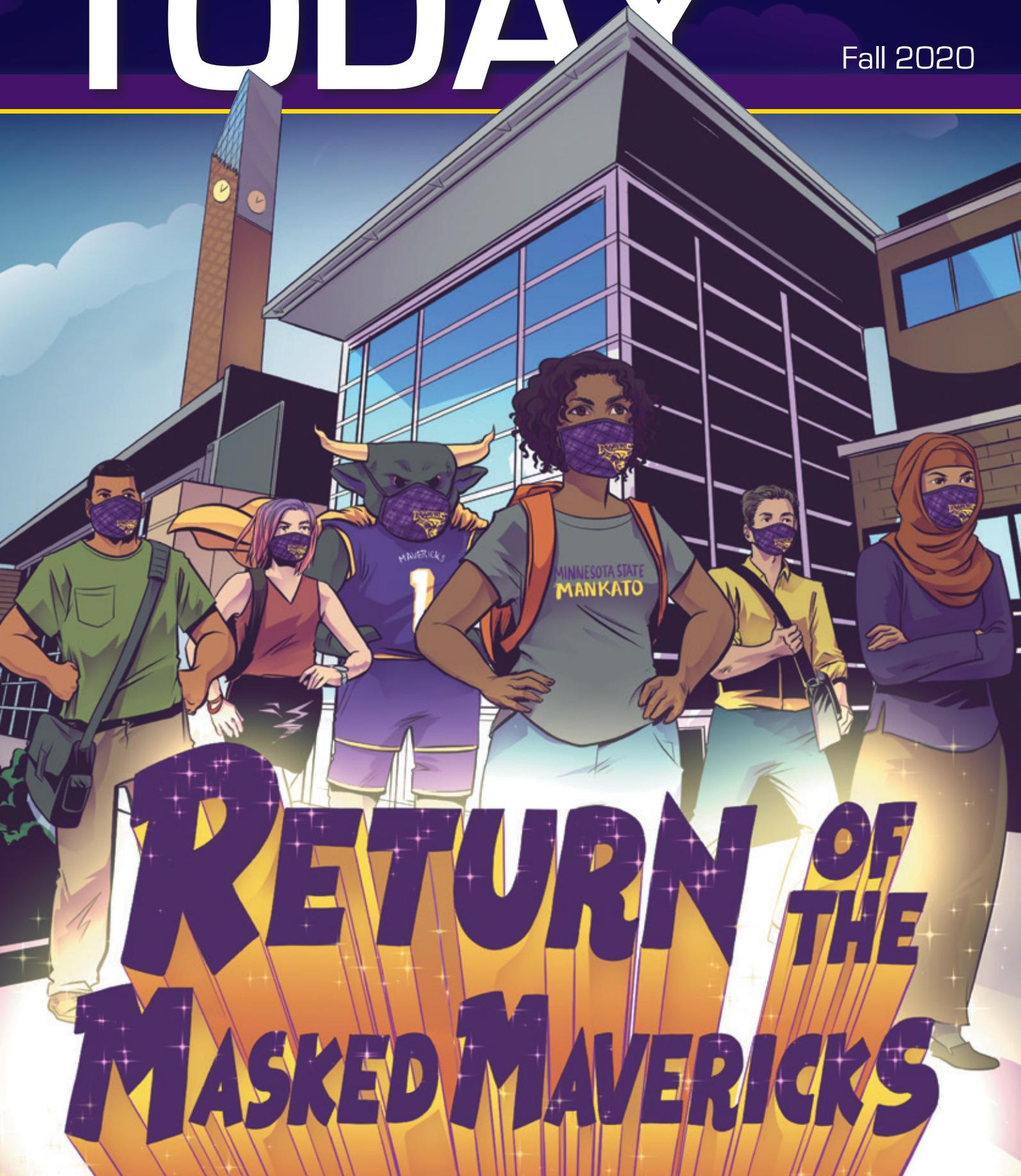


TODAY

Fall 2020



RETURN OF THE MASKED MAVERICKS

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Cover illustration by
Kaitlin Baumann Hohenstein.

"We've focused on making these the best possible experiences and not just getting by."
— Interim Provost Matt Cecil



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MINNESOTA STATE

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

EXCITING NEW CHAPTERS

With modified classrooms, ongoing health and safety protocols and a heightened determination to care for one another in a pandemic, this fall opens a new, historic chapter for the University. It also marks the end of a long chapter for me.

This will be my 19th and final year as President of Minnesota State University, Mankato. I will retire from the office effective June 30, 2021.

The past six months have brought more change than any of us could have possibly imagined. I will never forget how effectively we took care of each other while transforming the way we serve students. What we accomplished was nothing less than an on-the-spot overhaul of the entire University, a challenge affecting thousands that could not have worked without everyone on board. And we did it.

Summer saw us exhaustively preparing for what are now our first steps into the fall semester. We have implemented new measures, screenings and requirements to reduce the risk of transmission for our students, faculty, staff and everyone else on campus.

We have equipped classrooms with technology solutions for alternative learning models, working with faculty and staff on their needs for an effective and safe return to work and talking to students about what worked—and what didn't work—during the transition to remote learning last spring.

As you'll see in this issue of TODAY, the results include the introduction of FlexSync, a flexible but synchronous learning model that allows students to engage face-to-face either in the classroom or remotely via Zoom. This approach, designed by Vice President and Chief Information Officer Mark Johnson and the IT Solutions team, allows for flexibility in our learning environments so that we will be prepared to nimbly adapt to circumstances and help our students stay on track.

Students, alumni, faculty and staff continue to exhibit the spirit of this University and apply it to staying safe, adapting to change and moving forward in a way that would be the envy of any institution.

It has all been an inspiration to me as I take on my final year with fresh determination to see the Maverick family confront and resolve real-world challenges.

I am proud of the past 18 years and I look forward to my final year as president of a University that has, in the most uncertain of times, shown itself to be a source of strength, leadership and pride. As the University opens a new chapter, so will I.

FOUNTAIN FODDER

- **Robert “Bobby” Fleischman**, vice president for strategic partnerships and the University’s former associate provost was named provost and vice president for academic affairs at Ferris State University, located in Big Rapids, Mich., effective July 19. Fleischman began his appointment at Minnesota State Mankato as associate provost on July 13, 2015.
- **Marilyn J. Wells**, who had been provost and senior vice president of academic affairs at Minnesota State University, Mankato since 2013, was appointed chancellor at Penn State Brandywine, located in Media, Pennsylvania, effective Jan. 13. **Matt Cecil**, who served four years as the dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, was named interim provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.
- Six faculty members were recognized as “outstanding educators” by the Minnesota State system Board of Trustees. The six are **Rajeev Bukralia** (Computer Information science); **Kyena Cornelius** (Special Education); **Melissa Krull** (Educational Leadership); **Megan Mahowald** (Speech, Hearing & Rehabilitation Services); **Robert Sleezer** (Integrated Engineering); and **Christophe Veltsos** (Computer Information Science). **Jodi Egeland**, medical director in Student Health Services was one of four in the state designated as an “outstanding service faculty member.”
- The community was invited to participate in four online town halls this summer as the University reviewed its criminal justice programs, including the educational programs for peace officers and correction officers. Panelists included **Henry Morris**, vice president for the University’s Division of Diversity and Inclusion; **Matt Loayza**, dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences; **Pat Nelson**, faculty chair of the Department of Government; and **Sherrise Truesdale-Moore**, associate professor of corrections.
- **Anne Dahlman**, interim dean of Global Education, was one of two recipients of the Harold B. Allen Award. The award from MinneTESOL, the premier professional association for English as a Second Language (ESL) professionals in Minnesota, is given to members who have demonstrated particular dedication.
- Initiatives to help regional businesses recover from effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were launched in July by the University’s **Division of Strategic Partnerships** and the **South Central Small Business Development Center**. Among the programs is a COVID-19 Regional Business Recovery Initiative that gives participants access to small business consulting services and more.
- The **Small Business Development Center** received a two-year, \$274,000 grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to provide assistance and facilitation in the growth and success of entrepreneurs and small businesses in the Mankato area.
- **University Archives** is working on a COVID-19 community history project, seeking stories from campus and the greater community members on their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Contributions can be made at archives@mnsu.edu.

ALUMNI FOR TODAY

An ongoing spotlight on some of the alumni contributors who help bring you Today magazine.

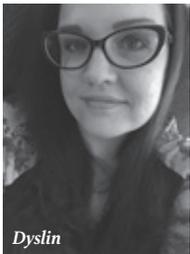
Drew Lyon ’06, has called Mankato home since arriving on campus in August 2001. He’s worked as a freelance writer, record store clerk and home health care manager. He is now managing editor of Soybean Business Magazine and curates a Little Free Library from the front lawn of his home in Mankato’s Tourtellotte Park neighborhood.

Amanda Dyslin ’04 worked as a journalist and editor at The Free Press and Mankato Magazine for 12 years. A 2003 Mass Communications graduate, she earned her MA in Communication Studies at the University in 2015 and has since worked as a public relations and communications specialist in Mankato and Minneapolis. She enjoys running, frequent travel and Minnesota Twins baseball.

Mike Lagerquist ’84, is a Mankato native with degrees in Communications and English. Mike worked for 13 years at newspapers in Mankato and Owatonna, before enjoying nearly 16 years as Director of Public Relations for the University’s Department of Theatre & Dance. He has freelanced for Connect Business Magazine, River Valley Woman and MankatoLIFE.com and volunteers with KMSU radio producing the MavKato podcast.



Lyon



Dyslin



Lagerquist

MINDFUL MAVERICKS

#MaskUpMavs



Moving forward as one #MavFam.



STUDENT PROFILE

Empower to the People

Student Bla Yang is among a group of 32 diverse Minnesota women whose mission is improving gender equity.



As a first-generation college student, Bla Yang found it especially difficult to face those first challenges of adulthood on her own.

The Minnesota State University, Mankato senior said her parents, originally from Laos, didn't know how to support her with choosing a career, meeting academic challenges, or having confidence as a woman of color in rural Minnesota. Without the support she needed, Yang considered leaving school.

"What made me stay instead of just dropping out was the experience I had with other students here because the diversity was very inviting," Yang said. "It wasn't just tokenized; students of color were important, too. Being a student of color at a diverse school, it helped me fit in and feel supported and that I mattered."

This experience is what led Yang to pursue a career in social work, with special interests in the foster care system and child protection.

"Maybe their parents aren't really involved in their lives either, and I feel like, from experience, I can help them," she said.

It's this passion for inclusion and community service that led to Yang's recent appointment to the Young Women's Cabinet, a state task force dealing with young women's issues.

"I was so excited to be accepted," she said. "With a career in social work, it's so important to understand policies and politics and to learn to be a good advocate."

As part of the Young Women's Initiative of Minnesota, the Young Women's Cabinet was started in 2016 by the governor's office and the Women's Foundation of Minnesota. Yang is among a group of 32 diverse women from across Minnesota who will focus on improving gender equity, including greater representation of women leaders in government, education and business. The group's ideas and recommendations will be considered by the Minnesota Legislature to influence change.

"It's very empowering," Yang said. "We don't all come from the same background. I see a lot of other women who are so different from me, and we, as a whole, reflect the larger community."

Yang can take part in the task force for up to three years, and she's eager to dig into the big issues and start being part of the solutions.

"It's so exciting that we can pitch in our ideas and opinions," Yang said. "It's also exciting to take what we learn and bring it back to our own communities."

Research for the Real World

Kuldeep Agarwal's work bolsters student opportunities

For the past several years, the University's Undergraduate Research Center has been ranked in the top 20 such programs in the country by the National Council of Undergraduate Research.

One of the driving forces behind the Center is Dr. Kuldeep Agarwal, who acted as its director for the past three years.

Every year, hundreds of Minnesota State University, Mankato students participate in undergraduate research. Aided by professors, students have the unique chance to present their findings at the University's annual Undergraduate Research Symposium.

The URC helps students with everything from finding a faculty mentor to securing necessary funding.

"We've been fortunate to have great students who are passionate about their research," Agarwal said. "It was really fulfilling to see them reach their goals."

Agarwal's own story started in India, where he developed an interest in manufacturing during his time working at his father's manufacturing company. He earned a degree in manufacturing science and engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur in 2001 and then continued his studies at The Ohio State University, where he earned both master's degrees and a Ph.D.

While Agarwal returned to India between studies to start and run his own manufacturing company, he realized that his true passion was education. He decided to come to the University in 2012, drawn by its emphasis on teaching, and became a faculty member in the College of Science, Engineering and Technology. He was selected as director of the URC in 2017, starting a three-year term that ended this June.

During his time as director, Agarwal worked to expand the resources available to faculty

and students, including travel grants and external funding opportunities. Last year, undergraduate students participated in conferences from Los Angeles to Chicago, and several went to Germany to present at an international research conference.

Agarwal's own research centers on 3D printing, especially in the creation of new biological materials to be used for knee, hip and spinal implants. Working with other University faculty members across departments, the hope is to offer custom-made implants to patients.

Agarwal also helped found the University's 3D printing research lab in 2013. Located in the Department of Automotive and Manufacturing Engineering Technology, the lab includes seven 3D printers and is available for all students. Agarwal's hope is to eventually offer more 3D printing classes to students across disciplines, as well as purchase a more advanced 3D printer when funds are available.

No matter what the future holds, Agarwal is committed to helping University students learn the value of research, both in their undergraduate years and beyond.

"Undergraduate research isn't just done from a research point of view," he said. "It helps you grow as a student and as a person."

By Grace Brandt '13



OUR SPACES



Indoor/Outdoor

Much like its look from outside, the interior of the new Maverick All-Sports Dome is stunning, its surface about the same as one and a half soccer fields. And in warmer months, the interior becomes exterior.

Constructed and opened during the 2019-2020 school year, the facility was officially closed March 14 as a result of the pandemic. Athletics Director Kevin Buisman said the facility will re-open for classes, recreation and University Athletics usage this fall, although final decisions on that date and any public access to the facility are still pending.

Photo by Vanessa Knewtson



Giving Grief a Purpose

Carrying a loved one's inspiration to a new generation.

By Robb Murray '96

In the days after Kathryn Cullen's death, her five adult children spent hours going through their mother's photos and other collections, which included a trove of writings they'd never seen.

They knew Cullen was a poet, but they were unaware of the amount of written material she'd produced that never saw the light of day.

"We were absolutely floored," said Jennifer Hildebrandt, one of Cullen's children who received her BA from Minnesota State Mankato in 1991. "We knew that she wrote, and had published a few pieces over the years, but she was very private about it."

Cullen, a single parent from Mountain Lake, worked several odd jobs at a time and relied on student loans and grants as she quietly pur-

sued both a bachelors degree in English and a creative writing master's degree at Minnesota State Mankato beginning at age 35. She received her BA in 1987 and her MA in 1990. Before her death in late 2018, Cullen, retired, lived in St. Peter, volunteering at the Arts Center of St. Peter and a neighborhood thrift shop, all the while writing poems and essays.

Upon the discovery of her work, Cullen's children decided to commemorate their mother's legacy with a scholarship for other single parents in the creative writing program at Minnesota State Mankato.

With help from University Advancement, they created the \$1,500 Kathy Cullen Gas and Groceries Scholarship, designed



Kathy Cullen, above, lived quietly and wrote poetry. Her family's scholarship provided help for creative writing student Holly Dodge, left.

to help students of humble means worry a bit less about money.

Holly Dodge is the scholarship's first recipient. Her life and situation parallels Cullen's: Divorced, single parent, even living in Mountain Lake. She also empathized with what Cullen's children were

going through.

"I lost my mom in 2007 so I connected with the Hildebrandt children; they were dealing with the loss of their mother and wanted to honor her time at MSU, where her writing life was sparked." Dodge said. "This really means a lot to me. More than the gift of the scholarship and the relief that it provides





*Above: Suzanne Berg.
Left: Kylee Johnson*



*Above: Mona Askalani
and her father,
Mohammed. Left:
Zoya Pesnani*



financially is the emotional encouragement and having them cheering me on.”

Close to Home

From 1969 to 2001, economics professor Mohamed Askalani had a reputation for kindness, shrewd and innovative acumen for his profession and an unending tolerance for students coming to his office for extra help.

“Minnesota State Mankato was not only his workplace, it was where his daughters were educated—there was no concept of campus visits or college tours in our family,” his daughter Mona Askalani said. “If Minnesota State Mankato was good enough to put food on our table, then there simply was no other choice for our college education.”

After his death in 2002, Askalani’s family established the Dr. Mohamed Askalani Memorial Economics Scholarship, which goes to a senior majoring in economics. So far, 15 of the \$1,500 scholarships have been awarded.

Setting up the scholarship, Mona said, helped with grieving.

“Grief is a really tricky thing,” she said. “Being able to make a donation gives us a way to remember him. One of the things I personally enjoy is the opportunity to come back for [scholarship] dinners and be with people who actually knew my dad. I’ll cherish those forever.”

As a guest speaker at one such dinner, Mona made note of the other donor families in the room.

“Giving gives grief a purpose,” she said. “Each of the families are unified in creating a legacy to our loved ones, honoring their passion for education and their connection to Minnesota State Mankato to keep their memory alive.”

Zoya Pesnani recently received the Askalani scholarship. “As a senior, this scholarship went a long way in helping me worry less about the cost of school and let me focus more on my coursework,” she said.

Friends Forever

Heather Kaiser and Suzanne Berg were close friends at Minnesota State Mankato in the early 2000s. They competed on the University’s speech team and lived together for three years.

When Berg died suddenly in 2018 at age 35, Kaiser was among a group of 11 former speech teammates who gathered at the funeral and decided to pursue the idea of collecting funds for a scholarship or endowment. Today they’ve established the Dr. Suzanne V. Loen-Berg Scholarship, with the intention of creating an endowment in honor of a friend who immersed herself in current events and social justice for the underserved in school and society.

The scholarship provides \$1,500 a year for a returning student majoring or minoring in speech communication who has a demonstrated interest in social protest and rhetorical criticism; experience in social activism is a preference, as is being a member of the forensics team.

Recipient Kylee Johnson, a member of Minnesota State Mankato’s speech team applied for the scholarship because it resonated with her life and how she wants to live it.

“I’d never met Suzanne,” Johnson said, “but hearing her story and seeing all the people she touched together speaking about her life and personal contributions to the speech community I’ve loved for so many years really illustrated to me how close this activity makes us.”

Hildebrandt said it’s heartening to know her mother’s work and name is carried on through the scholarship.

“The scholarship is as close as we can come to being immortal,” she said. “We can keep sharing, keep discovering more parts of who she was and sharing them with the world.” ✍️

DIRECTOR EXITS STAGE RIGHT

Under Paul Hustoles' 35-year direction, the theater department didn't just blossom – it exploded.

By Amanda Dyslin '03

In mid-March, Dr. Paul J. Hustoles and his wife, Mary Jo, were walking along Broadway in New York when he received a text from a student.

"Broadway is closed," the text read.

Looking up at the theater marquees showcasing musicals such as "Dear Evan Hansen" and "Come From Away," it wasn't clear yet that COVID-19 had extended its menacing reach to one of Hustoles' favorite places – a place he had taken groups of students and community members every spring break for decades.

On this, his 30th Spring Break trip to New York, it was becoming clear that the virus would require some abrupt changes, and not just with Broadway ticket refunds and early flights home. Hustoles, who has led the Department of Theatre & Dance over the course of 35 years and 600 productions, was set to retire at the end of July. And all who know him wouldn't be surprised that his choreographed exit was to include directing 75 percent of the now-canceled Highland Summer Theatre 2020 season, as well as a great big party.

"My final show was going to be 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.' It was going to be so much fun," Hustoles said.

But – in true "the show must go on" fashion – Hustoles has a new retirement send-off plan coinciding with the theatre's spring musical in April 2021.

Ushering in Changes

"Workaholic" and "overachiever" are words often used to describe Hustoles, who pre-pandemic could be found in the Earley Center for Performing Arts at all hours of the day and night. Outside rehearsals, he had assignments to grade and notes to prep for a full course load. He had the endless checklist that accompanies chairing the department (which he did for 32 years). He had patron emails to return, advisees to guide, ticket orders to fill, donor letters to write, playbills to proof, and university committee meetings to attend.

"I think of myself as a manic depressive," the 68-year-old said, "but I'm never depressed."

Hustoles arrived at the University in 1985 to teach, direct and produce, as well as chair the department. Thanks to the late professor Ted Paul, productions at the University had a solid audience from 1950 to 1980. Hustoles loved that the program staged musicals, which are difficult to produce and often avoided by college theater programs.

"I loved Ted, and one of the things I loved about Mankato was it had the most eclectic list of plays I'd ever seen in my life," Hustoles said.

Some of his initial changes included adding a production during the academic year; making the children's touring theater production annual; and adding a consistent fourth production to the Highland Summer Theatre season.

Hustoles also put a stop to the hundreds of comp tickets going out and raised prices to match the quality of the productions, he said, which increased revenue ten-fold. And student recruitment efforts led to an increase from a few dozen majors to more than 200 majors and minors today.

"Those things are really the feathers in my cap," Hustoles said.

Hustoles vastly expanded the scholarship program, upped fundraising efforts and headed up specific campaigns that included building the Andreas Theatre and the recent renovation of the Ted Paul Theatre. He also led the efforts to develop the program's academics, including the addition of several degree program options.

The department today typically produces 17 shows annually: six mainstage productions, four studio shows, four Highland Summer Theatre productions, two dance



'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' in February. Hustoles returns in spring for 'Mama Mia.'

concerts and a touring children's production. That's more than any other college program in the United States.

"That's why we're so good," Hustoles said. "When our students go out into the real world, they've had all that experience."

Students come first

Students often said that Hustoles' passion for theater and his vision were most evident when he directed them in shows, especially a major musical with a large cast.

During an early rehearsal for the musical "Titanic," for example, more than 40 actors stood across the Ted Paul Theatre stage. With just three weeks to mold the troupe, Hustoles was focused and feverish as he maneuvered around.

He painted in broad strokes when warranted and then focused in to fine-tune details. Joshua Ryder Brooks, for example, an 8-year-old about to break audiences' hearts as the character of Jack Thayer, needed some coaching on projecting his voice. "Louder, Joshua!" Hustoles said, touching the boy's head before moving toward a group of three actors off their marks.

Mikhayla Clausen, who graduated in spring 2018 with a bachelor of fine arts in Musical Theatre, was one of those actors on the stage that night, taking in every note delivered to her and those around her. A sophomore at the time, she now tours in professional children's theater companies as far away as New Orleans.

"One of the things I learned from Paul that I apply in my career is how to work with kids," Clausen said. "He always set an example of how to behave and how to help them succeed in their role."

Hustoles often said, "We're here because of the students." They're at the root of every decision, and not being near them as he prepares to retire is one of the hardest parts of enduring the pandemic.

"My favorite thing about what I do is watching the students go from freshman to senior year," Hustoles said. "I'll watch and say, 'Oh my God, they're hopeless,' and two or three years later, they're my leading ladies and leading men. That, to me, has been very exciting."

Plans for the future

In preparation for Hustoles' retirement, Matthew Caron, an alum, was hired last year to take over as managing director. He teaches, directs, handles theater business and collaborates on public relations, among other things.

Having both studied under Hustoles and worked beside him as a colleague, Caron takes seriously the task of build-

ing upon Hustoles' legacy, including maintaining a diverse slate of theater experiences.

"We all recognize how he built on Ted Paul's legacy when he came here, and how under [Hustoles'] leadership the program has not just blossomed, but exploded," Caron said. "We have become not only of regional significance, but one of the strongest programs in the upper Midwest."

Hustoles might mourn the productions he hasn't had a chance to do. But there are plenty of career highlights to look back on, including directing "The Odyssey," which was honored as one of four productions throughout the nation chosen for performance at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

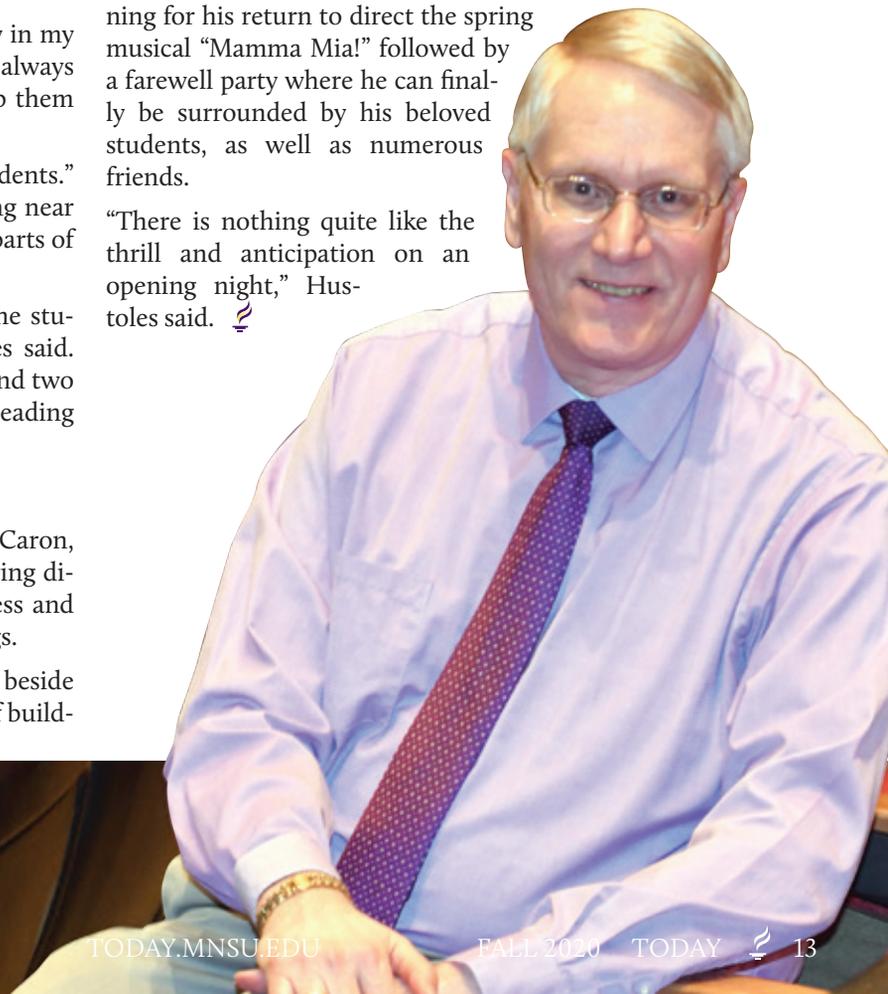
However, he's not thinking about the legacy he's leaving behind. As always, he's looking forward.

All classes moved online after Spring Break. The department canceled an unprecedented 10 shows. So work is being done in earnest to safely plan for a 2020-21 season that will mean 25 percent audience capacity, as well as contingency plans if a cast member gets the virus.

Hustoles is determined to do what he can to make sure a solid plan is in place that will limit lost revenue as much as possible, allow students to have plenty of performance experiences for their resumes and ensure the safety of students and patrons remains paramount.

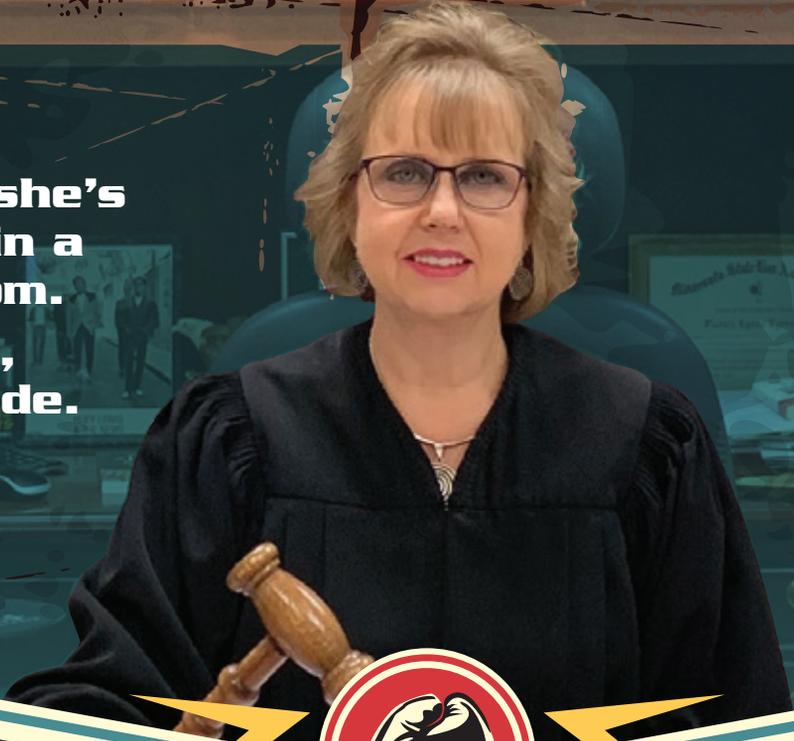
And, of course, with a passion for the stage that has spanned six decades, Hustoles is also planning for his return to direct the spring musical "Mamma Mia!" followed by a farewell party where he can finally be surrounded by his beloved students, as well as numerous friends.

"There is nothing quite like the thrill and anticipation on an opening night," Hustoles said. 



**By day, she's
a judge in a
courtroom.**

**By night,
at ringside.**



GAVELS & GLOVES

and

Natalie Tyrrell breaks judicial barriers in Nevada

By Drew Lyon '06

Among boxing judges licensed to grade pro bouts in the pugilistic capital of Nevada, Natalie Tyrrell is a rarity in her field. Just ask a boxing legend.

"I wish there were more people like Natalie in boxing—she's honest," said Joe Cortez, a Boxing Hall of Fame referee on Tyrrell's bona fides as a boxing judge. "I like to see her recognized for her skills."

And when she's not sitting ringside, the Honorable Natalie Tyrrell is also a court judge, elected four times to the North Las Vegas Justice Court. She's the only one in Nevada to tend both ring and courtroom and likely one of very few in the country to hold both titles.

Standing out in a crowd is nothing new to Tyrrell. During her four years at Minnesota State Mankato in the early-mid 1980s, she made a lasting impact.

"Natalie was a student who stood out because she knew college was a stepping stone to something bigger," said Joe Kunkel, professor emeritus of political science at Minnesota State Mankato. "I taught 6,000 students and frankly don't remember many, but I certainly remember Natalie."

A native of Wells, Minn., Tyrrell as a student commuted the 35-mile trek up Highway 22 to the University, where she majored in political science. She successfully ran for student government as an off-campus senator, then as student body president. All while remaining a stellar student.

"Natalie approached her classes in a serious manner," Kunkel said. "She tried to do the work and be interested. As a result, she was a very good student."

During her term as president, Tyrrell was a leading student voice on the construction of the Ostrander-Student Memorial Bell Tower. Directing budgets and overseeing contentious meetings helped lay the foundation for Tyrrell's future career in law.

"Running for student body president also taught me how organized you have to be to run a campaign."

Viva Las Vegas

Tyrrell attended law school at the University of Minnesota, after which she interviewed with the Clark County District Attorney's office in Las Vegas.

Throughout the 1990s, Tyrrell climbed the ranks of the Nevada court system and in 2000 launched a campaign for the North Las Vegas Justice Court. That November, 10 years after arriving in Vegas, Tyrrell became the first female elected to preside over the state's second busiest justice court. In January 2009, the Court named Tyrrell its first chief judge. Las Vegas voters re-elected Tyrrell three more times, most recently in 2018.

"I love my job, it's always interesting," she says. "It's never easy, and I take it very seriously because I do make decisions that affect people's lives. But it has to be done and I'm very thoughtful about that."

In 2002, she founded Kids in the Court, a program encouraging students to stay in school. The mission of Kids in the Court, she said, is to educate children about the inner workings of the judicial process and the array of available careers in the court system.

Kids in the Court helps Nevada students, many of whom are the only English speakers in their households, to begin thinking about their career goals.

"A lot of these kids don't see themselves doing something professional and that's sad to think about," Tyrrell said. "Kids in the Court has a real emphasis on staying in school because you need a high school degree to work in the court."

In September 2019, Tyrrell's outreach efforts with Kids in the Court earned her the American Judges Association's prestigious Judicial Education Award.

After more than 20 years on the bench, Tyrrell plans to put down her gavel and hang up her robe after her term ends in January 2025.

It will allow her to devote more time to her second love—boxing.

The Sweet Science

Around 2007, Tyrrell was attending an event in Las Vegas—its famous strip is home to many of boxing's most celebrated matches—when she struck up a conversation with Joe Cortez. Tyrrell, an ardent boxing fan, began peppering Cortez for his insights on historic matches he refereed.

"I think he was impressed with my boxing knowledge and that I love it so much," she said.

Cortez vividly remembers his first conversation with Tyrrell. A court judge who's also a boxing historian? This is fascinating, Cortez thought.

"I remember meeting Natalie like it was yesterday," Cortez said. "I thought it was perfect, because we need more women in boxing. I thought she was the right person

who brings credibility as far as having integrity and a background in law enforcement.

Cortez believed she was uniquely suited for the position.

"She's very passionate and devoted," he said. "As a judge, her mind is trained to be neutral."

Behind Cortez's encouragement, Tyrrell spent a decade sharpening her skills as a volunteer amateur judge.

"Any time you can get kids involved in activities that keep them positive, it's a good thing, and that's what I saw in amateur boxing," Tyrrell said. "Boxing helps kids redirect their energy in a positive manner."

In 2015, the Nevada State Athletic Commission announced a recruitment period for professional judges. Tyrrell was one of four judges who passed the application process. Then she shadowed a professional judge—a 'mentor'—at matches.

After two years of shadowing, Tyrrell earned the sport's most coveted boxing license when the commission appointed her a professional judge.

"It's a part-time gig but I really enjoy it," she says.

The man she credits as her catalyst to becoming a boxing judge says the sky is the limit for his protégé.

"I think she's going to be one of the top judges in Nevada," Cortez said. "Natalie has what it takes to become a household name in boxing." 

Read an extended version of this story at today.mnsu.edu



A longtime fan of the sport, Tyrrell has been a pro boxing judge since 2017.



Tyrrell's Kids in the Court program earned her Nevada's Judicial Education Award.

RETURN OF THE MASKED MAVERICKS

Fall brings a new approach to education

By Amanda Dyslin '04



When it came to academics, feedback from faculty and students at the end of spring semester indicated a return to in-person instruction in some form was desired.

“We were hearing from students that it was a tough semester,” said Interim Provost Matt Cecil. “We heard, overall, nationally from students that most of them don’t want a repeat of online semesters. They value the experience of working with faculty and other students.”

Mark Johnson, vice president and CIO of IT Solutions at the University, worked with his team to develop a hybrid instruction model called FlexSync, a variation of similar hybrid, flexible models at other campuses. The in-person/online course-delivery model allows some students to be physically present in the classroom, while others interact remotely via Zoom.

Some classes are solely in-person, such as some Theatre and Dance classes and science labs. Others are completely online.

For the FlexSync courses, staff worked over the summer to install all the necessary equipment and technology into 120 classrooms; classrooms have also been reset with fewer desks and chairs to ensure appropriate social distancing. Academic Affairs also completely rebuilt the fall course schedule, which includes about 3,700 classes.

“The main thing is we wanted to emphasize student choice—to give students a choice of how they want to attend a synchronous class,” Cecil said. “We’ve focused on making these the best possible experiences and not just getting by.”

Guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota State system informed the University’s plan for reacting to possible outbreaks once students returned. If transmission of the virus escalates to dangerous levels in

the fall and winter months, course delivery could move back online.

“Everything in this pandemic is evolving,” Cecil said.

Kristi Treinen, Communications Studies professor, said she was stressed but excited to implement FlexSync this fall.

“For me, what it’s going to do is allow me to still have a face-to-face option with students,” she said.

Treinen said caps on classroom capacity mean there are about 10 students on average in her rooms at a time, which allows both students and faculty to feel much safer. Yet the teleconferencing allows her to continue teaching many more students in a more direct, face-to-face manner.

“I was just happy to have the FlexSync option because I don’t want to teach all online,” she said. “I’m really hoping this will be the way to go.”

Advising and Registration

University Advising already was in a state of transition when COVID-19 hit, having recently moved under the umbrella of the division of Student Success, Analytics and Integrated Planning. So in the midst of all the accompanying logistical change, the virus hit the reset button.

Advising students who might need extra help academically or who have questions about what courses to choose occurred mostly in person on campus, with drop-ins welcome. Some advising was done by phone, but online tools weren’t part of the regular practice, said Sara Granberg-Rademacker, interim director of University Advising. When everyone was ordered to work from home after Spring Break, everything changed.

“Thank goodness for IT. We had to get student record info, use different platforms and be able to access those from home,” Granberg-Rademacker said. “Initially, our biggest

challenge was getting people situated and communicating with students that advisors are still here, and we want to assist you.”

Advising across campus has taken place since mid-March via Zoom and by phone, and a hybrid model for fall reincorporates in-person visits, albeit with safety precautions in place.

“We have learned that advising is really conducive to online practices, and it allows us to still connect with students,” Granberg-Rademacker said. Zoom likely will continue to be used to replace some in-person appointments and also as a tool to help advisors and students social distance during in-person visits.

For the in-person advising that does occur, University Advising, and other advising offices, will follow all University guidelines, which include masking and social distancing of six feet.

“We’re trying to stay nimble and be able to respond to what the situation requires while always keeping students’ needs at the forefront, but also prioritizing student and employee health and wellness,” she said.

Residential and Campus Life

More than 2,600 students were living on campus when the virus caused the spring shutdown, although many had gone home for break, where they inevitably would stay. Dean of Students and Residential Life Director Cindy Janney said that students who did not move home were moved into Stadium Heights and Preska residence communities to ensure their safety.

“We have students here 24/7, 365; we are never empty,” Janney said. “Our biggest concern in the spring was moving students from floors where many students use the same bathroom to spaces where we could give each student a private bathroom.”

In preparation for fall, hundreds of such considerations were made to ensure that students returning to campus received a positive college experience while remaining as safe as possible.

One big change over the summer was to move new student orientations online. Another is occupancy in residence halls, such as doing away with triple rooms. Overnight guests won’t be allowed.

Extra sanitation practices are in place throughout the residence halls and dining areas. Hand sanitizer is readily available, signage is posted with safety information, and social distancing markers are affixed to the floor in areas where lines form.

University Dining Center staff planned for a cap of 400 diners in the building, removing some tables to ensure six feet of distance. Other changes include social distancing dots for diners approaching each service station, condiments in packets and menu updates, all designed to ensure quicker



service and a touchless process.

“The goal is to be supportive of students and educational for students, not to be confrontational or punitive,” Janney said. “Across the country people are talking about community transmission among young people, and that’s going to be the important thing: helping students develop a culture of care for one another and also for their families. We don’t want a student to contract the virus at school and take the virus home.”

In the Centennial Student Union, Communications Director Lenny Koupal said physical changes to the space have included rearranging furniture and putting markers on the floor to social distance, as well as building-wide signage with safety information.

The Campus Programs team worked over the summer to develop safe ways to provide students with the experiences they are eager to have on campus. A series of “socially engaged but physically distanced” events was created that includes Welcome Week activities (a movie on the football field, an online new student rally and more) as well as ongoing activities such as virtual scavenger hunts, concerts and mini golf.

All of these events adhere to Minnesota Department of Health guidelines—and in many ways, take them a step further. An 8-foot distance will be required among participants, and many events have required ticket times to avoid a rush.

“These events provide an opportunity to demonstrate to students how they can remain socially engaged while physically distant and safe,” said Bill Tourville, assistant director of Campus Programs.

“It’s made us certainly, on the positive side, think outside the box,” Koupal said. “I think now we have to figure out how we provide the same spirit and still keep people safe. We’re still dedicated to making sure students experience the excitement of student life.”



Filling the Food Gap

How the University is addressing food insecurity among its students

By Maria Ly '20

Ellen is much like every other student at Minnesota State Mankato. She's a full-time student in interdisciplinary studies, has a part-time job in retail, a scholarship and is on track to graduating in a couple of years.

But Ellen has been hiding a secret from her friends, family, classmates and professors. Her secret is that she is food insecure. And there are many others on campus like her—more than one might think.

Food insecurity, defined by the University's Department of Sociology, is a lack of reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable food. Students facing food insecurity may not have enough money, reliable transportation, access or time to get the food they need.

A study done at Minnesota State Mankato by the 2018 Sociology in Action class found that two-thirds of students face food insecurity in some way. The national average is 47 percent in a four-year university.

It's been part of Ellen's college life since its start.

"When I started college, my parents said they'd help pay for groceries and that they'd help pay for school, but I never got any help from them," she says. "I didn't have a job for a while when I first started college. Money was tight, and even when I got a job, I just couldn't make enough money to afford things, especially food."

Students such as Ellen have faced increasing tuition rates, high costs of living and struggles with balancing work and school. Something often has to give—and it's often getting enough to eat.

Now and Then

In 1980, when the minimum wage in Minnesota was \$2.90, the average annual rate for tuition and fees at Minnesota State Mankato was \$714. It would take a college student during that time 246.2 hours of working to pay for school—about a summer's worth of working a part-time job.

By contrast, the state's minimum wage in 2020 is \$10. With tuition and fees averaging \$8,521 per year, it would take a Minnesota State Mankato student half a year of working part-time to pay off their yearly cost of education. And the expenses don't end there.

Ellen has found that supporting herself financially has become increasingly difficult each year she attends college. To cut costs, Ellen had no choice but to cut back on food.

"I remember, there was one night specifically last January, I remember driving home from work and wondering if I could find enough coins in my car to go buy some ramen from the store so I could eat," she says.

Solutions on Campus

Early in the 2019-2020 school year, Ellen learned of a number of resources at the University and in the community to help meet her nutritional needs. After applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), where students can get help through monthly food benefits and by the community's food shelf, she found herself improving in her academics and health.

Ellen at first assumed she was the only one facing food insecurity. After talking with advisors and friends, however, she realized that this is an ongoing problem faced by many students.

“I guess I didn’t realize that it wasn’t just me who was having this problem. Knowing now that there are ways to get help, it makes it seem a little bit less intimidating and scary,” she says.

Cher Vang, a senior at Minnesota State Mankato can relate. She too found it difficult to balance work, life and school while also having a nutritious diet.

“Most of the time, it’s hard finding food. And a lot of my friends too, they’re also in the same boat. I actually had an upper classman reach out to me and tell me about some of the resources on campus,” says Vang. One such resource was Campus Kitchen.

From harvesting, storing, packaging and delivering food, Campus Kitchen provides meals for agencies who help people find food.

“Any day you need food you can get access to it, says Karen Anderson, the manager of the Campus Kitchen. “All you do is you come through the door. You can pick up bread at the bread cart, walk through the Campus Kitchen, open the fridge and take a baked potato or a PB and J and walk straight out. You don’t need to talk to anybody, no questions asked.”

Another important resource for food insecure students at the University is the student-run Campus Cupboard hosted by a nearby Lutheran ministry. Campus Cupboard offers a free food pantry for students every Tuesday.

“It’s nice to have that source and to know that once a week I’ll have food in my pantry and I can get those other supplemental things,” says Laura Soland, a student volunteer at Campus Cupboard. “That’s one of the things we push is supplemental, even if you are capable of getting groceries, you can still come here.”

International students are not qualified for food assistance programs such as SNAP and are limited to working 20 hours a week on campus. Having a resource like Campus Cupboard is beneficial for many international students whose families may only have enough to pay for their tuition.

“I have suffered from bouts of food insecurity during times when family couldn’t send me the money that I need to get by,” says PJ Gurung, a student from Nepal. I had \$7 that I had to stretch out for two weeks. That’s when I went to all of the free events on campus with free snacks and free food and the [Campus Cupboard].”

Minnesota State Student Association president Anisa Omar says student government has convened the stu-



The January 2020 Free Farmers Market was hosted by Campus Kitchen and Campus Cupboard. The event provides vegetables for students every semester.

dent basic needs committee – a committee dedicated to specifically helping students facing both food and housing insecurity.

“My intentions for the committee is to have them start volunteering at the Campus Cupboard and Campus Kitchen, have them work closely with Community Engagement to see how we as Student Government can assist them better, what it is that they need from us, and how we can help them get to where they need so they can help better themselves as students,” says Omar.

Contributions to Campus Cupboard during the Spring 2020 pandemic increased by thousands of pounds of food. Specifically, donations from Jan. 1 to mid-March amounted to 622 pounds of food. Since the early closing of classes to mid-July donations amounted to 5073 pounds.

Staff and faculty also contribute – mostly as advisors in the emergency grant program, where food insecure students can apply for funds to buy groceries.

Faculty also work in other unique ways to help students. This year the Annual Giving office which provides money in scholarships, emergency aid, grants, etc. hosted two fundraising initiatives to raise money for Campus Kitchen. 🍌

Resources and Opportunities

Helping students with food insecurities has been a growing mission at the University. In addition to supporting direct access to food sources such as Campus Kitchen, the University has emergency financial help available, help that is sustained by donations, grants, the University Foundation, and University support.

The MAV Cares Emergency Grant Program has been helping students get through financial hardships since 2017. During the spring months of the coronavirus pandemic, donors contributed nearly \$90,000 to the Campus Drive, coordinated by Annual Giving, which helped domestic, graduate, and international students.

In addition, two large gifts came in totaling \$121,000 that was used to establish the University’s first emergency grant fund endowment, which will provide annual support to emergency grants. For more information, visit engage.mnsu.edu/MAVCares



MAVERICKS ON THE FRONT LINES

From working on the front lines in hospitals and clinics to figuring out ways to keep children fed without school lunches, University alumni are finding creative, resourceful and compassionate ways to care for their communities.

By Grace Brandt '06

From the beginning, healthcare workers have faced much of the danger and uncertainty of the COVID-19 situation. As they've tried to protect patients from a virus still not fully understood, they've pulled exhausting shifts and risked contamination on a daily basis.

University student Cy Schweiss is a registered nurse at a rural hospital in Minnesota. Schweiss, who is currently working toward her Doctor of Nursing Practice, has had to find new ways to protect patients while giving their families the best access for visits that quarantine can allow.



Nurse and doctoral candidate Cy Schweiss

Schweiss shared the story of one elderly patient who had been in multiple hospitals and was finally returning to his home hospital. Because of quarantine, he had not been able to see or touch most of his family for several months. When he returned home, his family wanted to visit, but they could only look at him through his window—10 feet above the ground. So, Schweiss got creative.

“I moved every piece of furniture in the room, moved his bed as close to the window as possible and raised his bed up as high it would go,” she said. “He could see his family and talk to them through the window. It was the biggest smile I had ever seen on that man’s face.”

Schweiss credits the University nursing program for her holistic perspective on nursing, saying that it teaches students to consider not only patients but also their families.

“It was really helpful to learn how important the family is,” Schweiss said. “You really don’t understand [at first] the impact it makes on patients and their healing process. Nurses have to think critically, but we also have to be creative to make sure that we’re providing families and patients as much together time as possible.”

According to Sandra Eggenberger, director of the Glen Taylor Nursing Institute for Family and Society, the program’s emphasis on family nursing is fundamentally important—especially now in a time where so many people are affected by a health crisis.

“Our whole view of nursing practice and healthcare is that for us to improve health outcomes, we need to have a focus on the individual, the family and the society,” she said. “[Students] recognize that idea of what happens with the family and what happens to the family in the community all has to do with our health outcomes.”

Eggenberger has been contacted by several students who graduated from the University’s nursing program and are now working in their chosen field, and she said they’ve shared stories of how they’re putting what they learned in the classroom to work while treating COVID-19.

“I can just hear it in the students’ voices, what kinds of challenges they’re facing—the threats, the anxieties, the stresses, the fears—but they’re also showing us their strength,” she said. “They feel very confident that in spite of all that’s going in our world, they’re prepared. I’m very proud of their resiliency in the face of all this challenge.”

On-the-job leadership

Dietitians and nutritionists play a critical role in the fight against the coronavirus, according to Dr. Joyce Bond, acting dietetics program director at the University. Examples include calculating the necessary nutrients for a patient who’s on a ventilator, along with helping patients who are recovering from COVID-19 and dealing with ongoing symptoms such as lack of their sense of taste. Dietitians also worked with schools to help students receive nutritious lunches, even when schools were closed, and have continued to educate their communities about how best take care of themselves and their families in these difficult times.

Mavericks coming out of the University’s dietetics program have been involved in all of these areas during internships that spread across the country. For the past two years, the program has had 100 percent placement for internships, which are necessary for students to eventually become accredited as registered dietitians. Mavericks who graduated in May 2020 have found internships at universities, hospitals, clinics, food service companies and other real-world locations.

As for why the Dietetics Program has had such success for the past several years—including a more-than-90-percent pass rate for the registered dietitian exam—Bond said it’s be-

cause the program is able to offer one-on-one education for students that's family-focused and holistic in its scope.

"We're really able to get to know our students really well and work with them from the very beginning," Bond said. "We spend a lot of time advising students that it's not only grades that are important in being a good dietitian; it's also about getting experience in leadership and in the community. We focus on the family, [which] gives our students a perspective that nobody exists in a vacuum. I think our students get a really good sense of how that affects people's behavior when it comes to food and eating and food preparation."

Like dietitians, community health specialists also play a vital role during these times, both in educating how to stay healthy and helping people recovering from COVID-19. Pa Houa "PH" Moua graduated from the University with a degree in community health education in 2017 and now works as a community health specialist in Olmstead County Public Health Services in Minnesota.



Moua (right) in gear as community health specialist in Olmstead County Public Health Services.

While Moua's job usually focuses on tobacco prevention and worksite wellness, everything changed when the pandemic swept through the country. She was activated as an essential worker in March, and she has done everything from educating community partners about the basics of the virus to answering phone calls from concerned residents. Now, Moua is the coordinator for the county's medical reserve corps, which is helping at Olmstead County's only testing site. While she mostly works from home, Moua also works at the testing site once a week, clad in full personal protective gear as she greets arrivals and helps them understand the process.

"It's been a crazy ride," she said. "You know that you're doing it for the greater good and the whole [health] of the public. That's what really drives me—when I think about the bigger picture. However small I'm helping, I'm helping a little bit. I take comfort in that."

Creative solutions

Many other University grads have found unique ways to help based on their abilities and resources. One pair of 2018 graduates, Bella Lam and Myles Olson, are working together to



Faculty member and business owner Chandrasekhar Valluri delivering food from his business to Gail Fox at Campus Cupboards.

fill a critical need through their business, Coconut Whisk. The St. Paul-based company, which won the Agriculture and Food/Beverage category in the 2018 Big Ideas Challenge hosted by the College of Business, makes and distributes healthy vegan baking mixes.

When Lam, who graduated with a degree in public health education, heard that schools were closing because of COVID-19, she realized the struggle that some families would face when they lost free school lunches. To help combat this, Coconut Whisk has donated boxes of its mixes to more than 60 families and also made donations to Food for Life Global, a nonprofit vegan relief organization.

"I feel like during times of crisis, you can either just stay stuck and feel helpless, or you can find a way to contribute and help your community however you can," Lam said.

Another Maverick business working for good is Infuzn, which is based in Pine Island and makes, delivers and distributes Indian-inspired dishes and products for home and com-



*Sean Beaverton '20,
and colleagues at Edina
Public School System.*

mercial use. Started by University faculty member Chandrasekhar Valluri and his two partners, Ananth Kollengode and Sudharsan Iyengar, the company committed to donating 1,000 pounds of food to area communities. By mid-July the effort had delivered more than 795 pounds of cooked meals so far, sending the food to organizations and front-line workers in the Pine Island area. In addition, Infuzn sent meals to the Campus Cupboard, which has been particularly critical in meeting the needs of international students in Mankato.

“As a community member of the University, when you see or hear of situations where people are in need and you have some capacity to be of assistance, it goes without saying,” Valluri said.

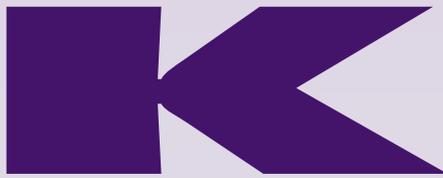
Sean Beaverson, who earned his Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from the University this May, doesn't have a company that he can use to raise

funds or supplies, but he's still working hard to help his community—through education. During spring semester, Beaverson was working in Edina Public Schools when the district needed to completely overhaul its curriculum to online courses. His team came up with a contingency plan, was in charge of helping teachers transition to distance learning and worked with the Minnesota Department of Education to gather educators for online training sessions.

Like Schweiss, Moua, Lam and Valluri, Beaverson continues to adapt and find creative solutions during an ever-changing situation with no clear ending. While COVID-19 will have lasting impact even after the pandemic ends, these Mavericks and countless others are committed to helping their communities thrive—and even come out stronger in the end.

“We want to take all we've learned,” Beaverson said, “and reap the benefits going forward.”

GENERATION



The University is cemented in the Klocke family history

By Grace Brandt '13

Among the commemorative bricks on Alumni Plaza on the Alumni Plaza—which is located just under the Alumni Arch on campus—is the Klocke brick, which lists the names of Dr. Ronald Klocke, his wife Linda, and their children Keith, Steve, Dave and Chris.

Yet this brick only scratches the surface of the Klocke family's legacy at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Throughout the past 50 years, nine members of the family have attended the University.

Ronald A. Klocke came to the University in 1966 as an assistant professor of sociology. During his tenure, he also worked as a business management professor, MBA coordinator and Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies before retiring in 2002. He helped design the cornerstone for the Wigley Administration Building, ordering the stone and picking it up in his 1976 Chevette.

"It's a great academic environment, and a great supportive environment," he said. "With the amount of resources that Minnesota State Mankato receives, they do a good job in parceling it out, and they're successful in the product that they produce."

Meanwhile, Ronald's wife Linda earned her Masters of Science in counseling in 1976. She worked at the University's Counseling Center for 10 years.

"I really enjoyed the program," Linda Klocke said. "The faculty were so well qualified, and if you had a problem, they worked with you individually. It was very comfortable, but also very stimulating."

The Klockes made use of many of the University's resources, including the dental clinic and the Otto Recreation Center, and brought their four sons to games and theatre events.

"All four of our kids had a sense of community and connection with Mankato, but particularly with the University," Linda Klocke said.

Keith Klocke was the first to attend, earning a degree in business in 1988 and returning for an engineering degree in 1997.

"I was definitely happy with the education I received," he said. "There was a 5-to-1 student-teacher ratio [in engineering] so I could get all my questions answered right away. We could have more one-on-one discussions than some of the larger schools. The professors seemed like they were genuinely concerned about our education, to the point where they'd take extra time out of their day, even staying late to meet and help us understand a subject."

Keith's younger brother Steve followed shortly after, studying management and graduating in 1989. Steve Klocke started his own business, IT Wholesaler, which has 110 employees between two locations. About a third of his current sales team graduated from Minnesota State Mankato.

"The professors gave us insight from the market, from the real world," Steve said. "My classes really gave me a nice groundwork for success at business."

Twin brothers Dave and Chris Klocke rounded out the sibling experience, both graduating with double majors in management and marketing in 1992.

The next generation of Klockes have begun their own Minnesota State Mankato experience. Mary Klocke (Steve's daughter) attended the University for two years before transferring to pursue a degree in veterinary science, while her sister Brittany Klocke graduated in December 2019 with a degree in finance. Meanwhile, Kyle Klocke (Chris's son) plans to graduate in 2020 with a degree in mass communications.

While every member of the Klocke family has had a different experience at the University, they all share a love for Minnesota State Mankato and a pride in such an enduring family legacy.

"We might need to get another brick," Steve Klocke added, "since I don't think all the names can fit on the original one." 🍂



One of the most recent family grads, Brittany Klocke graduated in 2019. Kyle Klocke will graduate this fall.



CLASS NOTES

1940s

LOIS (PETERSON) JOHNSON '42, St. Paul, MN, taught school until her focus turned to her four daughters and a large vegetable garden. She stays active and maintains a positive outlook, which keep her going strong.

1950s

CALVERT BELDEN '51, Robbinsdale, MN, is a retired American history teacher and track coach.

WILLIS OSTREM '56, Dousman, WI, retired in 1993 from the Illinois Masonic Hospital. He and his wife have been married for 65 years.

1960s

JANET JACOBSON '61, Tucson, AZ, has embarked on a new career of making quilts and masks after working for the United States Government for 30 years. She enjoys traveling and has been to 103 countries and 47 states.

CARROLL AUSTINSON '65, Pine Island, MN, is a retired elementary school teacher.

PAUL CARLSON '67, Ransom Canyon, TX, is a professor emeritus with Texas Tech University. His 25th book, "Historic Tales of the Llano Estucado," recently was published.

STEVEN SCHLAKE '69, Pullman, WA, retired as a Captain in the U.S. Navy after 24 years of service. He also has retired after working as a computer engineer with Motorola, Inc. for 20 years. In addition to this, he has worked with youth groups.

TOM WEINZIERI '69, Waconia, MN, is a retired USAF and World Airways Pilot who is enjoying retirement with his wife in South Carolina.

1970s

GARY SCHOLLA '70, St. Francis, MN, began serving as a marine in South Vietnam shortly after he began his college career. He returned to Minnesota State Mankato and went on to graduate in 1970. He and his wife have two sons.

LARRY WOLFF '70, '71, Edina, MN, is a professor at the University of Minnesota who received the 2018-19 Distinguished Teacher Graduate and Professional Teaching Award.

GREG WAGNER '77, Longmont, CO, retired after 35 years as probation officer and then the chief probation officer with Longmont Municipal Probation Department. His wife,

WENDY (KANNE) WAGNER '76, is a parish nurse. The couple has three adult children and six grandchildren.

DALE ORTLOFF '78, Hutchinson, MN, recently retired. He plans to play golf and enjoy warmer weather.

MARK VANDERBOSCH '79, Cocoa, FL, recently had his novel, "Karmic Punch," published. Prior to his retirement he worked for several nonprofit organizations and in 2009 was awarded the Alumni Humanitarian Award.

1980s

SUSAN (WITMAN) ERICKSON '80, St. Paul, MN, is a supervisor at Bridgeman's in Woodbury, MN.

MICHAEL PILKINGTON '80, Euless, TX is a retired pilot who played hockey at Minnesota State Mankato from 1975-1979. He continues to enjoy flying, playing hockey and chasing his grandchildren.

DOUG PARROTT '85, Kansas City, MO, is the chief underwriting officer with Foresters Financial. He and his wife have adult triplets.

RAYMOND VAN BRUNT '86, Bonaire, GA, is a software engineer with ASET Partners.

DEB (SMITH) HEISE '88, Cumberland, WI, is a retired social worker who enjoys volunteering and working part-time.

BECKY (CLAIRMONT) ZIEGLER '89, Bismarck, ND, teaches at Bismarck State College and runs her own business. She continues to stay active through running, swimming, stretching and other various activities.

1990s

MARY ELLEN FILZEN GROSSMANN '91, Minneapolis, MN, retired from 3M after working in several positions.

2000s

ASHLEY (DAVIS) KERBER '07, Chaska, MN, lives with her husband Matthew in Chaska.

ANDREA (THORKELSON) MOEN '08, Otsego, MN, works at Target Corporation in Human Resources Planning and Delivery. She will be featured in the 100 Years of Volunteers book by Hands On Twin Cities for her continued volunteer work in Minneapolis.

MADELINE (BROWN) KROELLS '09, La Crosse, WI, is the vice president of clinical operations with Driftless Recovery Services.

2010s

ARCHANA HUXLEY '10, Verona, WI, is a career pathways coordinator with UW Hospital and Clinics in Madison, WI. Prior to this she taught English for four months in South Korea.

ADAM YANKOWY '16, Des Moines, IA, is an assistant professor of theatre at Drake University.

KILEY LASSAHN '17, Ellendale, MN, is a second-grade teacher at her childhood elementary school. She is working toward her master's degree at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

KATIE RUBITSCHUNG '19, Coppell, TX, is a lab technician with the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, TX.



IN MEMORIAM

1940S

Helen Lorraine (Andersen) Fohl '40
Betty Jane (Wiltse) Maday '41
Dorothy Adale Nord '41
RE Andrew Rogness Een '43
Patricia Elaine (Kelley) Howell '43
Rita Katherine (Sullivan) Hessian '46
Joyce Emily Ann (Vihlen) McNab '47
Kathleen Rose (Cummiskey) Haws '48

1950S

Carol Ann (Schulz) Mittelsteadt '50
Ann Therese (Nolan) Donahue '51
Lucille Bonevieve (Pierson) Nelson '51
Joseph James Wiegel '51
Marvis Jean (Heinemann) Canon '52
Jane Ila (Miler) Douglas '52
Gertrude Ann (Brown) Suel '52
Donna Mae (Brolsma) Welsh '52
David Dean Berger '54, '61
Carol Nadine (Miller) Harper '54
Otto Gaylord Horwath '54
Jerald R. Hinrichs '55
Verna Esther (Koster) Kuhn '55
Odean E. Berg '56, '66
Marguerite Louise (Stege) Boyne '56, '57
Carol Ellenora (Krause) Gahler '56
Carmen Ann (Staloch) LaFrance '56
John Alfred Lawrenz '56
Mary Eileen (Kortuem) Buschkowsky '57
Roger McBeth Field '57, '64
Clyde F. Kramer '57
Donald Everett Moe '57
Luella Ann (Piehl) Taylor '57, '71
Thomas Bernard Thielen '57
Verna Marie Ziegenhagen '58
Darlene Betty (Mausling) Ersland '59
Myron Leonard Jordan '59, '65

William Lyle Klitzke '59
Aldeen Burdette Underland '59
Burdette Carl Wheaton '59

1960S

Francis J. Berres '60
James Charles Rima '60
Mervin Leroy Sabolik '60
Donald C. Thiesse '60
Robert Paul Jette '61, '70
LeRoy Truman Storby '61
Claude Willard Green '62
Dennis Alfred Schmidt '62
William W. Talley '62, '67, '72
Peter Hartz Johnson '63
William Lovell Olsen '63
Thomas Richard Ranweiler '63
Harold Arnold Schuchard '63
Mylla Kay Urban '63
Duane Rudolph Zaun '63, '70
Anne Marie (Meany) Huntley '64
Jon Richard Jordahl '64
Nancy Bell (Fiksdal) Linville '64
Ada Florence (Stephenson) Lund '64
John Thomas Powers '64
Twillla Angella (Bieber) Schmidt Peterson '64
Douglas Charles Smith '64
Gerald Allen Vanek '64
Paul Joseph Baechler '65
Elaine Elise (Neske) Christopher '65
John Patrick Thamert '65
James Richard Thompson '65
Ronald Lee Vanek '65
Eric John Bartleson '66, '69, '75
John Henry Burns '66, '71, '79
Merlin Nels Carl Christensen '66
Phyllis Elaine (Olson) Koehler '66
Anne Grace (Klingenberg) Nelson '66
Fred Henry Squires '66

John William Timmers '66
James Lowell Wahlstrom '66
Elizabeth Carol (Bevan) Eykyn '67
Roxanne Mae (Strukel) Kavaloski '67
Roger James Porter '67, '94
David H. Vigdal '67
Melvin Arba Waller '67
Dennis J. Zaun '67
Robert Charles Dahl '68
James Thomas Frost '68, '80
Paul Alan Gesche '68
Harrington M. Hazel '68
Curtis Alan Robinson '68
James Arthur Rode '68 '74
Daryl Dean Schlei '68
Margaret Carroll (Francis) Seifert '68
John J. Shep '68
David Clarke Swanson '68
Karen (Klingberg) Busselman '69 '89
James A. Falck '69
Diane Elizabeth Gorney '69, '79
Roger Keith Hove '69, '01
Norrine Audrey (Thompson) Jensen '69
Jeffrey A. Keating '69
Timothy Robert Kelley '69

1970S

Jill A. (Klawitter) Peterson '70, '88
Norman W. Gullickson '71
George Allen Headrick '71, '80
James W. Landkammer '71
Alan Wayne Mason '71
Robert Wayne Miller '71
Daniel Mark Newton '71
Lynn Robert Owen '71
M. Norleen Rans '71
Marlowe Frantz Christian Anderson '72
Ardys E. (Petersen) Bartel '72
Larry Dean Bicknase '72
Arlene Mary Blank '72

Mildred M. (Bittner) Deanovic '72
Judith Ann Lundell '72
Gene R. Aspengren '73
Richard Harding Jorgensen '73, '78
Barbara Jayne (Walker) McDowell '73
Berneda Etherial (Sorgatz) Smith '73
Mary Ann Bishman '74
Craig Steven Cain '74
Patricia Mary (Winkler) Chvatal '74
Loren Duane Fredin '74
Kirsten Rachel Shelstad '74
Ernest John Silbernagel '74
Patricia Leslie (Coy) Skilbred '74
Laurence LeRoy Martens '75
Daniel John Nelson '75
Trudy Ann (Westphal) Harper '76
Kenneth Kronborg Jensen '76
Edward Hans Petersen '76
Vivian M. (Macho) Borak '77
Mark John Buckentin '77
Barbara Jean (Rockne) Clark '77
Thea Mae (Holtan) Holtan '77
Christine Ann (Jelen) Rogers '77
Lorraine H. (Ziemer) Ziemer '77
James Philip Egan '78
Daniel Joel Lein '78
Dennis A. Thorsen '78 '84
Charles Roy Warning '78
Robert Dennis Burge '79
Norma Ellen (Hatanpa) Cameron '79
Richard Duane Murphy '79
Glenn Orland Peterson '79

1980s

Janet Jackline (Helm) Dempsey '80
Marjorie Lee (Kaus) Jenkins '80
Lois Jeanette (Enga) Krause '80
Paulette Loy (Myers) Traver '80
David Albert Brehm '81
Sheila Joyce (Jacobson) Herke '80, '81

Arlene B. Myllymaki '81
David Stanley Pearson '81
Lawrence Stephen Wogensen '81
John Erik Wik '82
Louis George Wittrock '84
Gail Jeannine Davison '85
Anthony Charles James '85
Jean Ann (Kenney) Sammon '85
Holly Ann (Muller) Johnson '86
Sara Vana Dunnington '87
Dottie Jo (Jack) Anderson '88
Kenneth John Chesney '88
Michael Jay Crosswell '88
Jeffery Michael Giese '88, '96
Jennifer Grace Thompson Isaac '88, '90
Barry Clyde Trump '88
Karen Ann Kemnitz '89
Thomas James Ronholm '89

1990s

Brad Leslie Haugum '90
Brian Joseph Koepnick '90
Scott Thomas Haugen '91, '98
Robin Jean Kelly '91
Timothy Joel Agrimson '92
Kent David Landor '92
Constance B. (Czeck) Sheehan '92
Mark Raymond Suel '92
Megan Elizabeth (Blonigan) Berglund '94
Jeffrey L. Hedlund '96
Helen Elaine (Wackher) Paulsen '96, '99
Patricia Gloria (Mathews) Siemens '97

2000s

Adam Richard Worrell '00
Christopher John Holm '02
Beverly Jean (Anderson) Mueller '02
Darlene Ingrid (Mattson) Anderson '03

Jennifer Mary (Pattison) Lundeen '04
Linda Rae (Dickhoff) Mellen '05
Elizabeth Ann (Sugg) Brown '07
Jenna Marie Simon '14
Cole Tyler Turrittin '14
Alex Nicholas Noben '17

FACULTY & STAFF

Eric John Bartleson
Vivian M. (Macho) Borak
Roger Kellogg Coomes
Andrew Rogness Een
Alan B. Eke
Mary Ann (Muller) Greenwald
Jeffrey L. Hedlund
Sheila Joyce (Jacobson) Herke
Iver Henry Johnson
Charles Robert Keal
Geraldine A. (Broeren) Kline
Margaret G. (Sandy) Lewellyn
Rea Ching (Justad) Mingeve
William B. Montag
Howard Lee Prouse
Robert J. Reutzell
Leo A. Ruggle
Burdette Carl Wheaton

FRIENDS

Phillip Henry Bachman
Janet Marie (Heinze) Barry
Shirley L. (Halbe) Higginbotham
Randall Lee Herzog
Bruce James Hesser
Robert Boyd Layman
Lyle Burton Olstad
Jill Ann (Randen) Palmer
Charles Edward Powers
Jesse Joseph Tougas

What's Up With That Guy?

Kris Lindahl
welcomes naysayers
with open arms

Over the past year, it was hard to miss Minnesota State Mankato alum Kris Lindahl with outstretched arms and a hard-charging grin adorned by the words "Guaranteed Offer."

Though good-natured, his Twin Cities billboards blitz indeed prompted inevitable backlash, coming in especially hard on social media. The gripes are generally about the ads' seeming omnipresence, truculence or lack of humility.

Lindahl tends to let the antipathy roll off his back. He credits being the oldest of his siblings for helping him develop a tough outer skin and to tune out the naysayers.

"I think our society has started to understand that some of these comments are not real-world," said Lindahl, who earned a bachelor's degree in education from Minnesota State Mankato in 2004. "It's almost more like entertainment where people are saying things that they would nev-

er say to someone's face."

Lindahl is a single working father. He's an older brother to siblings Jamie, Kory and Nick. He's the leader of an agency of some 140 employees that revels in its family-like approach.

He came to Mankato for college, he says, because he had friends who were also attending—namely Nick Arellano, Matthew Brooks and Tony Lindgren.

Fondest memories of his time spent at the University include taking a popular music class from Gerard Aloisio—"I still remember something he always said: 'Music is a stimulus,' says Lindahl—and playing intramural sports.

Lindahl's intramural football team topped all Minnesota State Mankato competitors. The college then stepped up, sending his team to a national invitation tournament in Lincoln, Nebraska. "We still talk about it today," he says.

Lindahl credits experiences at the University for helping him develop a style of work ethic that has made him arguably the Twin Cities' most recognizable realtor.

"The discipline aspect of showing up and making a commitment to getting a college degree," he says, "never goes away." 

by Nate LeBoutillier '04



Behind the big scenes, Lindahl oversees a firm with 140 employees.

ALUMNI UPDATE

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 MinnesotaStateUniversityupdates@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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Update your contact information online: mnsu.edu/alumni/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 _____

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THE NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN

The University is accepting nominations for Distinguished Alumni Award honorees.

The awards honor alumni who have enhanced the reputation of the University through their actions, hard work and achievements.

Categories include:

Achievement

The Achievement Award is presented to graduates who have achieved high rank or honor in their professions, have a widespread effect on their communities and have been recognized for their achievements over the course of their careers.

Humanitarian

The Humanitarian Award is presented to graduates whose lives exemplify service to humankind. They have demonstrated exceptional dedication and are recognized for their philanthropic contributions and achievements.

Young Alumni

The Young Alumni Award is presented to recent graduates, ages 35 and younger, who have reached personal and/or professional achievements early in their careers, have positively impacted their communities and show promise for continued success.

Harold J. Fitterer Service Award

The Harold J. Fitterer Service Award is presented to graduates distinguished by their record of service to Minnesota State University, Mankato and to their communities. They have engaged in continuing efforts to preserve and promote Minnesota State Mankato programs through their time, treasure and talents.

More information can be found on our Alumni Association webpage. Go to mnsu.edu/alumni/awards/ to nominate someone today.

Nomination deadline is April 30, 2021.



2020 Achievement Award recipient Jessica Davis.

From The Inside A close-up of stories inside this issue of Today



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