

'99 Class Letter for 2021

Hello my fellow classmates,

OMG! (G for Goodness) as the kids say these days. What a world/time we are living in.

So... What is new? How are you? What are you up to these days? What has been happening with you this year? Since there were only a few of you who sent "updates", I had to guess at some of the answers that I would have heard.

Possible Answers: We're fine. We're home. I'm trying to work from home. Spouse is working from home. Just started going back in to work. Kids are at home. Kids are e-learning. I'm teaching online. I was furloughed. I lost my job. I started my own business. I started a new job. I lost my business. We adopted a pet. We adopted another pet. We lost a pet. I'm so glad we don't have pets. Kids are bored. The kids are keeping me busy. Kids are driving me crazy. I'm driving the kids crazy. We've had the best time with everyone at home. We've struggled with everyone at home. Zooming is great. I never want to Zoom again. I've lost someone I loved due to COVID. I've lost someone due to another illness, sickness, or unexpected loss. I have a new baby, nephew, or niece. I married, remarried, separated, divorced, or celebrated an anniversary.

Here are a few highlights from our class:

Jenny (Dragseth) Odden- "Working as a mental health therapist in Shoreview, MN"

Riley Bourdon- "Started with FirstLink as the Community Outreach Coordinator. FirstLink is a free, confidential service available to anyone 24/7/365 for listening and support, referrals to resources/help, and crisis intervention"

Becky (Stavenger) Tollefson- "My husband Jesse and I were able to finalize the adoption of our son, Theodore, in March 2020"

Heidi (Farner) and Nate Christen- "We welcomed to the world our son, Harold Arthur, on March 24th, 2020"

Congratulations on your new adventures with jobs and babies! Thank you for sending these updates!

I hope that wherever you are and whatever you are doing, that you are surviving and coping. I hope you have loved ones around you that are helping you through, holding you up, and keeping you going. The year 2020 reminded us to slow down, take it all in, count your blessings, have patience, live every day to the fullest, have compassion, be kind, cover your mouth when you cough/sneeze, wash your hands, and that we need each other, no matter the distance we are physically apart. (Just to name a few.)

Though the hardest thing, through this year and pandemic, may have been to ask for help, when we do, we realize that we are not alone. Whether it be financial or emotional, we know there are resources and people out there to help, guide, and support us.

When we donate our time, our stuff, our money, our energy, ourselves, and volunteer in any way, shape, or form we are fulfilling our “influence the affairs of the world” part of Concordia’s Mission Statement, no matter how big or small it may seem. When we are mindful and purposeful in trying to understand others’ point of view or reading/researching to help us know better to do better, we are reminded to be “thoughtful and informed”. In order to be “dedicated to the Christian life”, we will love our neighbors as ourselves and treat others the way we want to be treated.

Speaking of helping others....Here is our GIVING UPDATE:

In a year like none other, the generosity of alumni like us has helped propel the college forward while supporting the students it serves. A few of the highlights from this year include:

- More than \$2.1 million was raised for The Cobber Fund for scholarships and support to help make sure a Concordia education is possible for every one of our students.*
- During the start of the pandemic, \$59,000 was raised for emergency funding for food, transportation, and other critical needs.*
- This fall, 841 Cobber fans gave \$87,890 to make sure our athletes have the resources they need to compete despite COVID-19.*
- This holiday season, 1,809 virtual Christmas Concert attendees donated \$68,552 in honor of this Concordia tradition and our student musicians.*
- In just ONE day, donors fully funded the Cobber Food Pantry.*

**One other note in this section: The “One aCCord: Concordia Women in Philanthropy” event on 11/19/20 raised almost \$10,000 for the college’s COVID emergency fund. (The goal was to have 100 women give \$100! Wow! They hit this out of the park! Thanks to those women in our class that gave!)*

Thank you to all those who have already given this year! Be on the lookout for the “CobbersGive” Fund-the-Need campaign in March - you are sure to find an area of campus that aligns with your passions. Our class can truly make a difference in the lives of current Cobbers!

Thinking back to our college days, I remember the freedom that came with being away from home as much as the freedom to be with friends, no matter the time of day, or day of the week. How I miss the gatherings, whether big or small, and chatting with everyone, living with roommates, going to games, and having dining service, or the Korn Krib, prepare my meals.

And now, my roommates are a husband, 2 teenagers, an 11-year-old, and 2 dogs. We have schedules to follow, appointments to keep, and meals to plan. Our time with friends and gatherings with family may have been put on hold, but there is light up ahead! We see a future with many more gatherings, small or large, reunions, and celebrations where we are free to hug and spend more than 15 minutes together face-to-face. (I'll still be okay with the elbow bump versus a hand shake.) 😊 We are so close, my friends!

I look forward to our next Homecoming and Class Reunion! Any planners out there? (We know how to make a great float for the parade!!) Reach out to me and let me know!

Soli Deo Gloria,

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