Hi Everyone -

I am writing this letter in the passenger seat of our vehicle as my husband, Jake (’10) drives us to Moorhead to visit some fellow Cobbs. Technology has changed so rapidly the thought of writing a research paper in a vehicle with hot spot and a plug in seems unimaginable ten years ago.

As I write this, I’m thinking back to what life looked like ten years ago, as we drove away from Concordia as a college graduates. Doing our best to navigate “adulthood”, some of us got married, enrolled in more school, traveled the world, and many of us, me included, were determined to find a job in what seemed to be the worst job market in decades. I remember being fortunate enough to receive a job offer at UnitedHealthcare in an entry level sales role, cold calling prospects. I knew I should be so excited to have been offered a job, but couldn’t help but feel like accepting anything less than my dream job after receiving an education at Concordia would be settling. Luckily for me, my parents knocked some sense into me, and I accepted the position. My Concordia education didn’t land me a CEO position after graduation, but it gave me the tools and the work ethic I needed to be a successful “cold caller”. I am celebrating my 10 year anniversary at UnitedHealthcare in July, and I am happy to report, I have graduated from cold calling.

As 2009 Concordia graduates we are invited back to campus to celebrate our 10 year reunion in October. Our class reunion committee has planned an epic weekend of activities and we hope you can join in the fun! The Full Homecoming Schedule can be found at: http://tinyurl.com/y3wvbyha. Homecoming invites and registration will be sent out this summer, and we’ve also created a facebook event “Class of 2009 - 10 Year Reunion” where we will post updates as well. Reunion Committee: Angie Perreault Elton, Brandon Eittreim, Chris Babich, Dexter Albrecht, Erin Hagen, Kaley Krause, Kayla Axtman, Kierstin Hurtt, Kristin Herrmann, Megan Myrdal, Melissa Shugarman, Michelle Sagedahl, Mollie Knowles, Nick Alton & Scott Gullickson.

2009 Class Reunion Activities:

- **Bloody Mary Reunion Breakfast**
  - Date: Saturday, October 12th (9am - 10:30am)
  - Location: Proof Artisan Distillers (Downtown Fargo)
  - Menu: Brunch Buffet (Eggbake, Quiche, Biscuits, Bacon, Assorted Donuts/Pastries/Muffins, Fresh Fruit & Yogurt, Coffee/Juice Bar). Bloody Mary Bar + Full Bar menu is available for purchase. Optional distillery tour included in price of ticket.
  - Tickets: $18 Adults/$8 Kids

- **Brewery + Pizza Patrol Social**
  - Date: Saturday, October 12th (4:30pm -7pm)
  - Location: Drekker Brewing Company (Barrel Room)
  - Menu: The biggest and best assortment of all 241-9000 (Pizza Patrol) has to offer! Ticket price includes space & food. A wide assortment of craft beer is available for purchase.
  - Tickets: $15 Adults

I am looking forward to seeing you all in October!

Kaley (Hanson) Krause, 2009 Concordia Class Agent
Concordia Language Villages

-Summer 2018 was a busy one for Concordia Language Villages. We had over 4700 villagers and families from all over the world attend immersion programs at our Turtle River Lake sites just north of Bemidji and at other leased camps in northern Minnesota. This strong enrollment demonstrates the value families are placing on world language and culture education.

-Thanks to a generous gift of $5 million from the Simone Corporation and its CEO Kenny Park, we will soon begin the first phase of construction of Sup sogŭi Hosu, the Korean Language Village, on Turtle River Lake. The first Village to be built was Skogfjorden, the Norwegian Language Village, and that happened 50 years ago this summer. A special event to commemorate this milestone will be held on July 13. Sjölunden the Swedish Language Village, celebrates its 45th summer with a midsommar event on August 3. International Days are July 5 and August 9 where we will also celebrate 50 years of offering four-week high school credit sessions.

Music

-Dr. René Clausen announced that he will retire following the 2019-20 academic year, concluding his service as professor of music and conductor of The Concordia Choir. Clausen is a leader in choral music as both a conductor and a composer. He is the artistic director of the Concordia Christmas Concerts. In addition to composing arrangements and original pieces for Concordia ensembles, he has written dozens of commissioned compositions including “MEMORIAL” and “Crying for a Dream” for the American Choral Directors Association. Clausen was also commissioned by Concordia to create a major work in observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The work is titled “The Passion of Jesus Christ” and premiered at Orchestra Hall in 2017. President William Craft noted in an announcement to the Concordia community that throughout his work at the college Clausen has lived the mission of The Concordia Choir “to uphold a sacred choral tradition through the uncompromising and unrelenting collaborative pursuit of musical integrity and spiritual expression.”

-The Concordia Choir completed a highly successful tour through the Pacific Northwest in March. The tour featured concerts in Washington, Oregon, Montana, North Dakota, and Minnesota. The Choir also had engagements with ten high school choirs, as well as The Choir of the West at Pacific Lutheran University and a collaboration concert with The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists at the Ordway in St. Paul. Work is now being done to plan the Choir’s 2020 tour to the Southeast United States. Updates and more information can be found at www.TheConcordiaChoir.org.

-The Concordia Orchestra completed a very successful fall domestic tour with performances in Appleton, Wausau and Chippewa Falls in Wisconsin and Roseville, Sartell and Brainerd in Minnesota. Repertoire included Symphony No. 3 by Florence Price, Scheherazade by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Concerto for Trombone by Jim Pugh, which featured Concordia Professor of Low Brass Dr. Nathaniel Dickey on trombone. Also joining the tour was guest conductor Christoph Rehli-Fankhauser, professor of conducting at the Lucerne University of Music in Switzerland.

-The Concordia Band was invited to perform at both the Minnesota Music Educators Association Mid-Winter Clinic in Minneapolis and the North Dakota Music Educators Association Conference in Bismarck. In addition, the band was also invited to be the featured collegiate
band at the Westman Honour Band concert at Brandon University in Brandon, Manitoba. As part of their annual domestic tour, the band performed a joint concert with the Encore Wind Ensemble in St. Paul, MN as well as concerts in St. Anthony Village, Albany and Staples-Motley, all in Minnesota. The band is in the beginning stages of planning their international tour to Spain in May of 2020.

**Cobber Athletics**

- In the spring of 2018, Concordia had only one team - women’s basketball - with a female head coach. Fast forward one year, and with the hiring of new volleyball head coach Faith Dooley, the Cobbers now have 5 additional female head coaches mentoring student/athletes. Dooley, who was an All-American at the University of North Dakota, joins women’s golf head coach Kari Weidner-Ceniceros, Maureen Greiner of women’s hockey, Rebecca O’Shurak from women’s soccer and NDSU All-American Laura Januszewski who coaches both the men’s and women’s cross country teams. The rise of female head coaches was recognized by University of Minnesota’s Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sport in their 2018-19 coaching report card that cited Concordia as the top college in the MIAC for the increase in female head coaches over the past year.

- Concordia men’s track and field junior Matt Bye, Moorhead, won the heptathlon at this winter’s MIAC Indoor Championship Meet and went on to finish 11th in the event at the NCAA National Indoor Meet held in Boston, Mass. Bye won the MIAC title with the second highest point total in school history.

- The Cobber men’s hockey team earned its seventh consecutive berth in the MIAC playoffs this season. Concordia finished conference play with nine league wins which was the most since the 2013 season. Sophomore forward Tyler Bossert, Fargo, led the MIAC in scoring and went on to earn All-American Second Team honors to become the ninth All-American in program history.

**New Hires**

- Concordia added two critical new leaders in the Career Center this year. Kris Olson joined the College as the new Director of the Career Center in October 2018. Jill Wenger, a Barnesville native, was hired in the role of Assistant Director of the Career Center in March 2019.

  Kris began her career in Higher Education spent several years in Higher Education at NDSU and Concordia before making a career switch. She began working for Cargill, Inc as a Corporate Training Consultant, Training Curriculum Specialist, a Member of a Global Realignment Team, and a Recruiting Manager. Following her time at Cargill, Kris founded her own consulting business. Kris is an experienced professional with over 30 years of progressive experience in Higher Education, Corporate Business and Consulting.

  Jill is an experienced professional with progressive experience within the City of Moorhead ranging from City Clerk, Assistant City Manager, and most recently, Human Resource Director. Jill brings great insight into public service, the local Fargo-Moorhead area, the Restorative Justice process, and recruitment best practices.

- Katie Nystuen was hired as our Health Services Coordinator this year. Part of her role is to guide students in making choices regarding their healthcare needs, and connecting them to the many quality providers in our community. Though direct care is not the focus of the Health Services Office, she is First Aid, CPR and AED certified, and can assist with triage and referral to an appropriate medical facility should an urgent situation arise, as can our Public
Safety Office. One of her goals is to be more proactive and holistic regarding health and wellness programming on campus.

-Dallas Fossum joined Concordia as the new Director for Facilities Management in March. Dallas is an experienced director of facilities management and has, with his teams, completed more than $50 million in renovations, new constructions, infrastructure, and deferred maintenance.

-Dr. Jill Abbott has been appointed Deputy to the President at Concordia College, effective June 3, 2019. Dr. Abbott holds a bachelor’s degree in literature/language arts education, a master’s in counseling and human resource development, and a doctorate in educational administration. She currently serves as the associate vice president of academics at Minnesota State Community and Technical College. Dr. Abbott will serve as a member of the college cabinet and will continue the good work of her predecessor Tracey Moorhead as liaison to our Board of Regents. As Deputy to the President, she will work with me to ensure the fulfillment of the new college plan following its affirmation by the Board of Regents, to represent the college in building strong local and regional partnerships for mutual success, and to position Concordia as mission driven institution of national significance.

Other News

- Concordia’s outstanding tradition of preparing students for medical school is now available to those who have completed an undergraduate degree. This intensive, 1 year program is designed for highly motivated individuals with excellent academic records, who have earned a bachelor’s degree from an accredited four-year institution, but lack most or all of the prerequisite science courses needed for admission to medical school. Our program is ideal for career changers, and individuals deciding later in their academic journey, to pursue a career in medicine.

- Concordia sent 12 members to the American Forensic Association National Individual Events Tournament (AFA-NIET) at the University of Alabama, where 60 colleges and universities from across the United States competed for top honors. Concordia was one of only a few smaller colleges that placed in the top 15, which is dominated by larger research institutions.

- The Center for Student Success has a new home in the Normandy. The beautifully renovated space is open and light making for an inviting space for students. The center includes academic support, Orientation and First-Year Transition Programming, the Peer Mentor program, and the Diversity Coordinator for Student Support Services.

- More than 300 students presented their posters or spoke at concurrent sessions during Concordia’s 2019 Celebration of Student Scholarship (COSS) on April 10. Some students participated in multiple presentations. New at this year’s COSS was an art display with printmaking pieces and two sessions presented in Spanish. “Our goal is to keep building on the diversity of research,” says Krys Strand, director of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity and coordinator of the Celebration of Student Scholarship.

A dinner was held April 4 to celebrate the naming of Dr. Dan Biebighauser as holder of The Sigurd and Pauline Prestegaard Mundhjeld Endowed Chair of Mathematics. Biebighauser is a 2002 graduate of Concordia and joined the faculty in 2006. The holder of the Mundhjeld chair is to be a person who has provided exemplary service in teaching and scholarship in the field of mathematics and who is known and respected in the field. All of the past holders of the Mundhjeld Endowed Chair were present. Past holders include Dr. Bill Tomhave, Dr. James L. Forde, Dr. Alexander Sze and Dr. Gerald A. Heuer ’51.
Alumni Awards:
The National Alumni Board voted on the 2019 Alumni Achievement, Sent Forth and Called to Serve Awards. To learn more about each award, visit www.concordiacollege.edu/alumni/awards-and-recognition/.

2019 Alumni Achievement Award Recipients

- Dr. Paul Brandvik '59, professor emeritus of music at Bemidji State University, served as director of choral activities for 31 years. Brandvik received several awards, guest conducted more than 100 festivals and workshops in 16 states and abroad, and composed, edited or arranged more than 50 works.
- Dr. Kristi Ferguson '71, is professor emeritus of General Internal Medicine and served as director, Office of Consultation and Research in Medical Education at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine. She spent her entire career at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine where she has greatly influenced the development, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum.
- Dr. Thomas Samuelson '81, a board-certified ophthalmologist, is a founding partner and attending surgeon at Minnesota Eye Consultants, P.A., Minneapolis. He’s also an adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota and on the faculty of Hennepin County Medical Center. He has received several awards and has been named to America’s Top Doctors each year since 2002. He has written numerous articles and given more than 600 presentations around the world.
- A 1977 Concordia graduate, the Rev. Ann Svennungsen is the bishop of the ELCA Minneapolis Area Synod, the first female bishop to serve in any of the ELCA’s six Minnesota synods. She served as a parish pastor prior to serving as president and CEO of The Fund for Theological Education and then as president of Texas Lutheran University. Svennungsen, a well-respected theologian and speaker, is published in numerous journals, and is invited to lecture, preach, and provide keynote and commencement addresses.

2019 Sent Forth Recipients

- Betsy Grams '98, co-founder and executive director of Cycle Health, is a 1998 Concordia graduate. CycleHealth was founded in 2014 to equip kids to power their own wellness. CycleHealth’s programs are based on adventure and self-directed goal attainment, and are prescribed by pediatricians in more than 50 Twin Cities clinics through an innovative platform called Sweat Rx.
- Matthew Culloton '98, Matthew Culloton, founding Artistic Director of The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists, is a 1998 Concordia graduate and earned a master’s and a doctorate from the University of Minnesota. He is Choirmaster at The House of Hope Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, Minn., an adjunct faculty member at the University of Saint Thomas and composer. Culloton received the VocalEssence/ACDA of Minnesota Creative Programming Award (2003) and MN ACDA Outstanding Young Choral Conductor of the Year Award (2004).

2019 Called to Serve Recipients

- LaVern ’54 and Lois (Austin) ’56 Nornes have spent their lives dedicated to the Lutheran faith. LaVern was a high school biology teacher, a driver’s education instructor and a high school hockey coach. Lois, a retired public school music teacher, was also director of music and senior choir director at their church, Transfiguration Lutheran. In addition to their involvement with the church, LaVern and Lois have been active in Meals on Wheels and Feed My Starving Children, among others. At Concordia they’ve been members of C400, the National Alumni Board and various
committees and volunteer activities. They’ve received several awards from the college for their generous gifts and sponsor, in part, the Nornes Lectureship.

- **Gayle (Carpenter) Denny ’76** has served as the executive director of the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association since 1999. She previously worked in congregationally based early childhood center management and taught pre-K through college in a variety of public and private schools. She is a current board member of the Council for American Private Education (CAPE). She has devoted her life to being a member of the ELCA, and has served as a musician and choir member for various churches. Throughout her life, she has maintained her commitment to educating others, and serving both the church and her community.

**Class Updates:**

**Leesa Novotny:** It’s crazy to think it’s been 10 years! This past year and the year ahead have been amazing. In February 2018, the love of my life asked me to marry him which we did in February 2019! I also became a board certified family physician and will graduate from residency this June. Then it’s time for our big move from Monticello to Montevideo. Plans from there include getting a puppy. Can’t wait to see everyone this fall!

**Lisa Heffernan:** Not a whole lot that’s new to report from me here in SD. I continue to serve the people of Trinity Lutheran Church in Chamberlain, SD and will be celebrating the fifth anniversary of my ordination at the end of June. This past winter the Women of the ELCA published some of my writings in their Bold Cafe resource, and I guested on a podcast to speak about disability and worship. My work with ELCA Disability Ministries continues to go well, and it’s awesome to see the fruits of our work through several grants we funded in the last year or so. We’ll see what the rest of the year brings! I hope everyone is well and happy in whatever you are up to these days.

**Zan Thrasher:** Hello Cobbers!
There’s a lot going on in my life these days! My husband Nate and I are expecting our first child in exactly one week. We got our first puppy about a year ago as well (Copper). She is a little ball of energy. I’ve been a 6-12 choir teacher at Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted for 4 years now and I’m loving it! I cannot wait for our 10 year reunion this fall! It will be awesome!
Maren Nelson: Hey, Cobbers!
10 years on and still no husbands, babies, marathons, or houses to report, but I did graduate with my Masters in Graphic and Web Design from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) this past December! Other recent milestones include: going on some fun trips, getting more tattoos, making my apartment smarter than should be allowed (“Alexa, play Lizzo”), and learning how to curl my hair like the adult woman that I am.
I currently work as a Graphic Designer at a nonprofit and am living in Minneapolis at the sweet spot between Uptown and Downtown. My days are filled with unnecessary meeting requests, running for buses, and texts from my mom, while my nights are filled with unwanted Tinder notifications, good food, great beer, better friends, and spraying my cats with water because we can’t have nice things.
All in all, life is pretty grand and I’m thoroughly enjoying my 30s: where we finally realize we don’t have to compare ourselves and everyone was faking adulthood this whole time.

Angie Perreault Elton:
Hey, Cobbers! Not too much new in my world. I continue to live in Hutchinson, MN and teach 5th grade. I love my job and working with kids each day. My husband, Kevin ’08, and I spend most of our time chasing our three year old, Michael around. He’s a joy and I love being a mom! I cannot wait to see many of you for our 10 year reunion this October. It is going to be a great time. See you there!

Melissa Shugarman:
Greetings all! I’m still in St. Peter working at Gustavus as an Assistant Director in Residential Life. Highlights from this past year include multiple trips and vacations, being elected to the executive board of a professional association, selling baby onesies on Etsy, and, of course, spending time with loved ones.
Rebecca Bjorgaard-Olson: Hello fellow Cobbers! My husband (who continues to work as security officer at Concordia) and I will celebrate our 12th anniversary this summer and our trio of redheads will be 8, 6, and 3 this year. I have the privilege of running a licensed daycare in our home and working with some incredible children and families. This year, we also added 'chicken farmer' to our resumes as we continue to expand our garden and miniature orchard! I look forward to seeing some familiar faces this fall at the reunion!

Rachel E. Aho: Hello fellow Cobbers! Let’s see…in terms of updates I’m still in SLC working at the University of Utah. Highlights from this busy year include getting engaged, tackling another year of PhD coursework, and continuing to pack in as much travel as I can! Loving the mountains and looking forward to the BeUtahFul hikes coming up this summer…hope all is well!

Kyle Peltola: Hi everyone! How has it been 10 years already?! The big updates for me the past decade are that I received my Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from NDSU in 2013 (I know that was so long ago) and I have been working in the mental health field in St. Paul since then. This past year I became fully licensed as a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (that test was brutal) and I am working at Ramsey County in St. Paul as a Mental Health Professional. I am on the Crisis Stabilization team and provide short-term therapy and coordination to help stabilize mental health crises for people dealing with some pretty significant mental health concerns. I live in a 152-year-old stone house in St. Paul and am really enjoying my time in the Twin Cities area! Excited to see a lot of you in October!
Kelly McGannon:
Hello 09’ Cobbers! Wow! 10 years! Sadly I won’t make it to the reunion. I’m making my way to the US at the end of the month for a wedding so sadly can’t afford two trips! But at least I’m looking forward to some more time with family in Colorado and exploring the west coast too.

As for me…. not much has changed since last year. No marriage, no kids … just hundreds of fur children. Loving life at the National Zoo and Jamala Wildlife Lodge. My photography is kicking off and the Zoo is selling my work in the gift shops. (Kelly McGannon Photography check it out!) That’s really it, but photo of Tenzin after our recent paw painting session (He painted some cute canvas’s to raise money for the Bhutan Foundation. and don’t worry, the paint is non-toxic)... because… cute!

Sarah Ogroske:
I am still teaching kindergarten in Perham, MN. I just started my Masters in Differentiated instruction online at Concordia, St. Paul. I am very busy taking care of my 15 month old and this summer we are expecting our surprise blessing #2. I am thankful for teacher life and looking forward to spending the summer with my family.
Kristen (Anderson) Herrmann:
Hi Cobbers! I’m looking forward to seeing everyone for our 10 year reunion! It’s hard to believe it’s been almost exactly 10 years since we graduated and jumped into Prexy’s pond. Photo below to prove we actually did that and also to assure you I still look that young. Update on my life: I’m still living in Fargo, working in Finance for Sanford Health and spending most of my free time chasing around our 21 month old son, Jackson, with my husband Zach. I look forward to hearing your updates!

Jenna (Freudenberg) Schlafke:
A year ago I took a position as an Assistant Women’s Basketball Coach at the University of South Dakota. It has been a whirlwind of a year - I accepted the position and immediately left for a mission trip to Kenya. What an unbelievable experience that was! Then, in August, I got engaged and got married on May 25th! We celebrated with friends, family and, of course, Cobbers!

Megan Myrdal:
Greetings Cobbs! Really excited to see many of you this fall for our 10 year reunion! Life update: I live in Moorhead (blocks from Concordia, but currently selling my house, so if you’re looking...). I started a new job in January working for the Northarvest Bean Growers Association as the Director of Domestic Marketing & Communications. I basically promote all the beans (black beans, pinto beans, kidney, etc.) grown in North Dakota and Minnesota. So #EatMoreBeans! Besides that I continue to co-manage Food of the North and the Little Free Garden project, travel and get to concerts as much as I can, and enjoy time with friends and family. Cheers!
Erin Hagen:
It’s hard to believe how fast time has gone and that it has already been 10 years since we graduated from Concordia! After graduation, I lived in Jacksonville, FL for six years. While there, I took full advantage of the endless sunshine and ocean air. In 2016 I ventured north and returned to MN.
My fiancé Ken moved from Florida to Minnesota in August of 2017. With this past winter, I worried the cold temperatures and endless snow would run him off, but believe it or not, he enjoys the winter months (even more than I do).
I currently work for Hospice of the Red River Valley as a Development Officer. Ken and I are in the process of fixing up my grandparent’s old farm house - in hopes of having our wedding their next summer. We have three fur babies and dream of someday owning chickens.
I’m excited to see everyone this year at Homecoming!

Dr. Paul Sommerfeld:
In March of 2017, I defended my dissertation, "Scoring Star Trek's Utopia: Musical Iconicity in the Star Trek Franchise, 1966-2016," and will be graduating from Duke University with a Ph.D. in Musicology in May 2017. In June, I will be moving to Washington D.C. in pursuit of archival work as I finally get to live full-time with my partner, who works in the district.

Sarah Rude:
I don't think I've ever submitted a note to the class letter, so there's a lot to report. Six years ago (2011) I graduated from NDSU with a masters in English literature and married my husband Niles Haich (from Dickinson, ND) whom I met while we were both MA students there. For the past six years, we've been living in Waco, TX (yes, the Fixer Upper town) while I work on my PhD in medieval literature at Baylor University. We have an Australian cattle dog named Feste Waffles, and we have adapted reasonably well to the blazing summer heat. I just defended my dissertation, and I'll be Dr. Rude when I graduate in August!
Ashton Madsen:
I am currently enrolled through Grand Canyon University's Master of Science program in Addiction's Counseling. I am just about to begin the practicum portion of the project, and I'm looking forward to being finished! I am employed through Family Counseling Center, Inc., currently counseling adults in the outpatient program. I will begin accepting clients through the substance abuse program, and I'm looking forward to applying the skills I've learned. My fiance and I continue to live in Southern IL where we've been able to form new friendships and enjoy being closer to the Midwest.

Jake Winchester:
Hey Cobbers! Crissy and I are loving living in Denver, with our mini Schnauzer Archie. Cristina started her second year as a nurse at UC Health and I am celebrating 8 months at my new job with Colorado Coalition for the Homeless as a Behavioral Health Provider. Crissy and I are starting the process of buying a house, and although it is stressful it is also exciting. Look forward to hearing from you all, and by all means send us a message/email if you are in Denver!

Lindsey Lamb:
I’m in my 8th year of teaching string orchestra in the public schools. There are days when I think...why did I do this to myself? But, then summer happens. ;) In all honesty, it’s a challenging job and I’m obsessed with it! I play viola in the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, take viola lessons, volunteer with the ALS Assoc., and am completing my Masters degree. We used the Dave Ramsey method to pay off my crazy insane amount of debt from Concordia...and finally bought our first house in February. We love it! Hope you're well!