Greetings, Class of 1997!

It’s finally feeling a bit more like summer in Fargo-Moorhead after a very long winter! I hope these months have been giving you time to relax and recharge while you spend quality time with your families and friends. As my kids get older, I spend more time driving them from place to place, but I wouldn’t give that time up for anything. Our “on the road” conversations are random, funny, and require Siri’s expertise more often than I’d like to admit. Nonetheless, I know I’m blessed to have those opportunities with my boys. I hope you feel the blessings in your lives as well, whether it be in the car, in your homes, in your work, or wherever you enjoy spending your time.

As you schedule out your time this year, keep in mind that Concordia’s Homecoming is scheduled for October 10-13, 2019. Mark your calendars and come back to connect with other Cobbers and explore the changes taking place at CC!

**CAMPUS “KERNELS” 2019**

**Concordia Language Villages**
- Summer 2018 was a busy one for Concordia Language Villages. There were over 4700 villagers and families from all over the world attending immersion programs at the Turtle River Lake sites just north of Bemidji and at other leased camps in northern Minnesota.
- Thanks to a generous gift of $5 million from the Simone Corporation and its CEO Kenny Park, Concordia will soon begin the first phase of construction of *Sup sogŭi Hosu*, the Korean Language Village, on Turtle River Lake.

**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.
- The Concordia Choir completed a tour through the Pacific Northwest in March. The tour featured concerts in Washington, Oregon, Montana, North Dakota, and Minnesota. Updates and more information can be found at www.TheConcordiaChoir.org.
- The Concordia Orchestra completed a fall domestic tour with performances in Appleton, Wausau and Chippewa Falls in Wisconsin and Roseville, Sartell and Brainerd in Minnesota.
- 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. The band is also in the beginning stages of planning their international tour to Spain in May of 2020.

Cobber Athletics
- 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.

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.
- Katie Nystuen was hired as Concordia’s 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.
- 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.

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, one-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. The 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 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. “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 which recognizes exemplary service in teaching and scholarship in math. Biebighauser is a 2002 graduate of Concordia and joined the faculty in 2006.

Alumni Awards:

2019 Alumni Achievement Award Recipients
- Dr. Paul Brandvik ‘59
- Dr. Kristi Ferguson ‘71
- Dr. Thomas Samuelson ‘81
- Rev. Ann Svennungsen ‘77

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.
- **Matthew Culloton ’98**, 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.

1997 GIVING
In the last year, our class participation went up to 14.47% and gave a total of $17,073.03. Thank you for your generosity to the college!

CLASS UPDATES
You can also keep the Class of 1997 in the loop by liking our Facebook page (Concordia College – Class of 1997) and posting your news and photos.

- Nate Prosser joined the law firm of Hellmuth & Johnson PLLC as a partner practicing in the complex litigation group.
- Sara (Fleischer) Solhjem received a PhD in Mathematics from NDSU in August 2018. The title of her dissertation was “Sign Matrix Polytopes.” She is currently a professor of mathematics at MSUM.
- Troy and Gina Stark welcomed a baby boy named Domenic into their family on September 17, 2018.
- Elysia (Frank) Larson teaches 3rd-4th Grade and music classes at Crown Christian School in St. Francis, MN. She also practices her art interests on the side and can be followed on Facebook or Instagram (elysialarsonstudio).

WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

According to the Alumni Office, there are still a few missing Cobbers out there. If you have any information about these classmates, please contact the Alumni Office at (800) 699-9020 or alumni@cord.edu.

Christopher Allen        Ryan Hess        Jennifer Mlynek        Chanda Scherer
Jayne Becker            Erik Hunziker    Lisa Newman           Angela Schultz
Melisa Castro           Eva Jenssen       Kristin Nickerson    Danielle Specht
Chelsey Erbaugh         Ryan Johnson      Kathryn Olson        Cheryl Tieskotter
Laura Ferrington        Issa Kass         Scott Olson          Corey Weber
Trisha Gorecki          Ryan Kruse        Birgit Oppelt        Michelle Wermerskirchen
Jiahe Gu                Sarah Larson       Joshua Perry         Andrew Whiteman
Kristin Halvorsen       Adam Lucas        Anne Peterson        Kirsten Winters
Bonnie Hardegree        Melissa Maristuen  Stephanie Sargent    Wendy Zeiher

Again, I hope that life is treating you kindly and that peace, health, and blessings abound for you and yours.

Soli Deo Gloria,

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