

July 28, 2018

Dear Class of 2002,

It was so great to see those who were able to make it back for our reunion last September. We had such fun catching up and reconnecting over the weekend. Five years goes by too quickly and before we know it, we'll be planning our 20 year reunion.



Now - a few updates from Concordia:

Our class has our first Sent Forth Award winner - Arday Ardayfio! Arday received the award over this year's graduation. The **Sent Forth Award** is conferred upon young alumni who have distinguished themselves early on in their careers and service to others. **Arday** is the founder, president and CEO of Blueprint IT Solutions, which provides networking and information technology service to small to mid-sized businesses. A computer science and business major, Ardayfio came to Concordia from Ghana. He worked in college admissions, banking and other entrepreneurial enterprises before starting his Fargo-based business in 2011. He is a member of the Fargo Kiwanis Club and served as its president when the organization set a Guinness World record for the number of pancakes served in 8 hours - 35,000 pancakes. He was named to Prairie Business Magazine's "40 Under 40" list for top business professionals and has served on the board of Charism. Ardayfio and his wife, Kara, live in Fargo and have three children. **CONGRATULATIONS ARDAY!**



To nominate someone for the **Sent Forth Award**, fill out a nomination form here:

<https://www.concordiacollege.edu/alumni-donors/awards-recognition/nominate/>

Other classmates in Cobber news - our classmate **Molly Beck Dean** was featured in a News & Notes article on July 10, 2018. Check out the article here:

https://www.concordiacollege.edu/blog/post/gathered-for-grace&utm_source=feature



Music:

- This May, the Concordia Orchestra spent two weeks on a cultural immersion trip in Greece, visiting eight cities and performing several concerts.
- The 2016 Concordia Christmas Concert "Gather Us In, O Child of Peace" earned a regional Emmy award for special event coverage. This is the second time a Concordia Christmas Concert has received the Upper Midwest Regional Emmy award.
- Dr. Rene Clausen was honored with the Weston H. Noble award for Lifetime Achievement at the 2018 ACDA Central and North Central Conference this year. Clausen is in his 32nd year at Concordia College as the conductor of The Concordia Choir.

Athletics:

- Senior Bailey Hovland broke several throwing records this year, winning the MIAC Championship and breaking the conference meet record in the hammer throw. Hovland's hammer mark qualified her for the Women's Track and Field Nationals Meet this spring.
- Brandon Zylstra '15 signed a reserve/futures deal with the Minnesota Vikings for the upcoming season, after two successful seasons with the Edmonton Eskimos. Zylstra caught 100 passes for a league-best 1687 yards in 2017.
- Head tennis coach Joseph Murrey was named 2018 MIAC Coach of the Year after leading the team to the conference postseason for the first time since 2011.
- Becca O'Shurak has been hired as the first female head coach of women's soccer. O'Shurak has previously served as assistant coach at Youngstown State and Tennessee Tech University.
- Chad Johnson was named the Bobby Bell College Impact Player of the Year by the Minnesota Chapter of the National Football Foundation. He is only the second athlete from the MIAC to receive the honor. This honor is in addition to his MIAC All Conference Awards (3 years) and the 2017 MIAC MVP Award he received earlier this year.

Other Updates:

- Concordia has been awarded a \$1,000,000 grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation in honor of former Mellon Foundation president Earl Lewis '78. This grant will be used for faculty development, scholarships for diverse students, program support for the Office of Diversity and support for the National Book Awards. This grant is in addition to the \$800,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation the college received earlier this year to support PEAK and diversity initiatives across campus.
- Rachel Schaefer '18 was named a Fulbright Scholar and will be working at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia next year.
- This past fall, Concordia College launched the RISE Campaign, a comprehensive fundraising campaign with a goal of raising \$150,000,000 by December 2019. These funds will be used to support three pillars of the Concordia experience: integrative learning, inclusive learning, and innovative learning. For more information, head to www.riseforconcordia.com
- The Department of Chemistry celebrated 100 years in early March (Chemistry has been at Concordia 102 years, but the event was postponed until the completion of the new Integrated Science Center). The day-long celebration included talks from chemistry alumni from across the country, a career networking event for students and a banquet in the evening with Robert Homann, Professor Emeritus and Past Dean of the College, as the keynote speaker.
- Over spring break, 130 students served out the mission of the college all over the country, participating in 8 volunteer opportunities including: Habitat for Humanity Trips to Louisiana, Florida and the Carolinas, a hurricane relief trip to Dallas, Justice Journey Trips to New Orleans and El Paso, and High Impact Leadership Trips to Milwaukee and Pittsburgh.

Fundraising Update:

Concordia continues to have fundraising success due to generous supporters in each class. In the past few years, Concordia has continued to surpass fundraising goals and can create new opportunities for students, including the completion of the Integrated Science Center and student scholarships.

This past year, our class had 13% participation and gave \$6,800+ in honor of our 15 year reunion. Since graduation, our class has given \$72,400+ in outright gifts. THANK YOU!

Now, the fun part of the letter... thank you to the classmates who sent updates this year. **Kiaja Klabo** and her husband Tyker "Marlin" welcomed a baby boy, Marlin Herbert Klabo IV in November 2017. Big sister Lily is so excited with the newest addition to the family. **Alisha (Johnson) Whitley** is now the Branch Head at Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division in Quantico, VA.

Jason DuBord, was elected MAYOR of Kindred, ND. Congratulations Jason!

Remember, we have our class FB page where we can stay connected throughout the year. I'll be posting events monthly to this page. Please feel free to share photos and updates for our

classmate here as well: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/10350150208>. If you haven't joined the group yet, please join!!

All class letters will now be delivered electronically and can be viewed at <https://www.concordiacollege.edu/alumni-donors/stay-in-touch/class-letters/>

Til next year,

Kiaja (Morgenthaler) Klabo
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