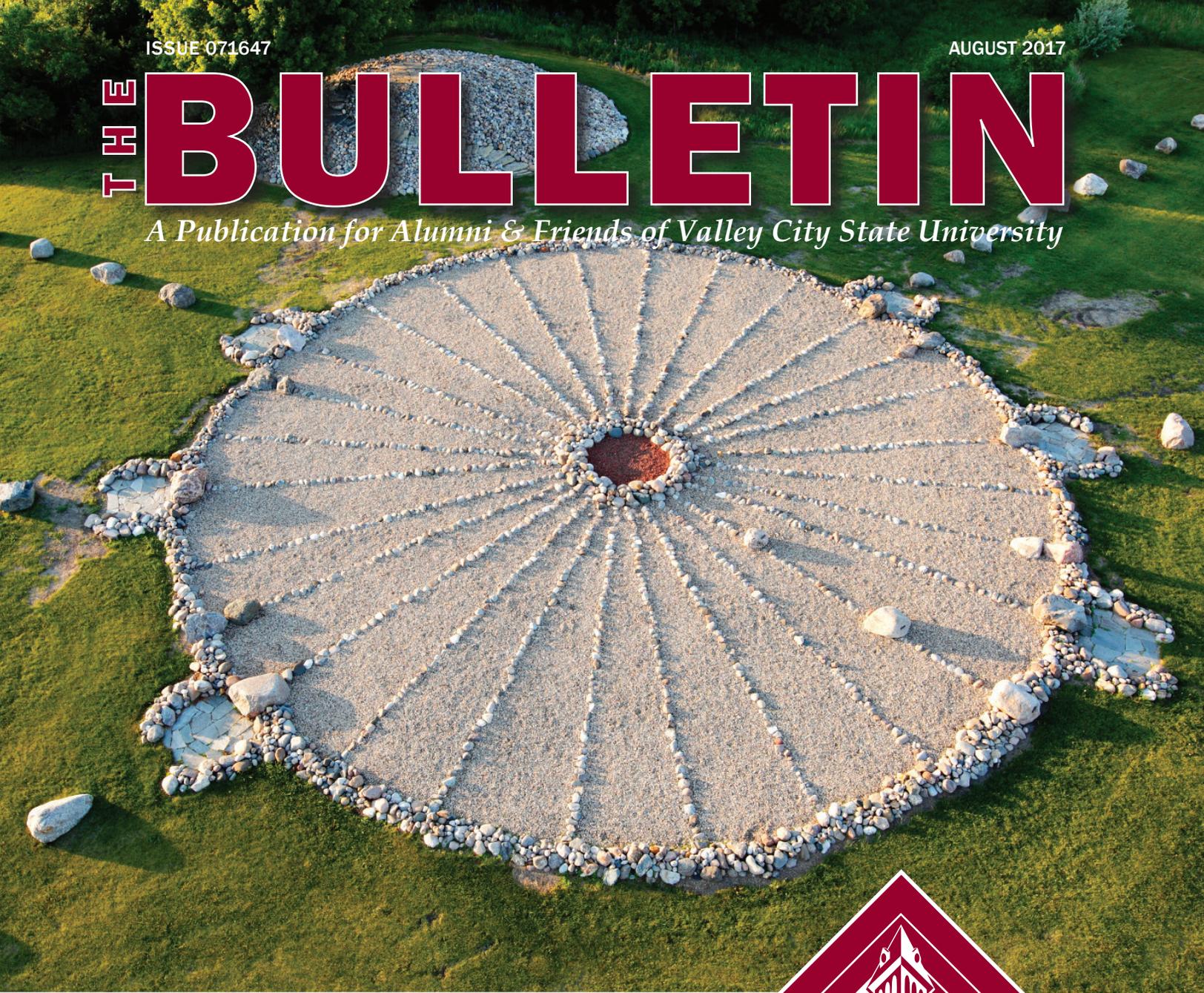


# THE BULLETIN

*A Publication for Alumni & Friends of Valley City State University*



**VALLEY CITY**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

## Medicine Wheel Park Strengthening connections to the universe for 25 years

Nathan receives DSA ♦ Commencement 2017 ♦ Heckaman serves in N.D. Senate



DEPARTMENTS

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**Welcome to the *Bulletin!***

*The Bulletin* is published in spring, summer and fall by the Valley City State University Alumni Association.

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**Cover Story**



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**4 Medicine Wheel Park: Strengthening connections to the universe for 25 years**

*Joe Stickler and his astronomy students started something special in the fall of 1992, and 25 years later Medicine Wheel Park is now a premier Valley City attraction with the wheel solar calendar, a meridian calendar, a solar system model, and a perennial garden. Did you know the 30-acre park also includes the wooded hillside that slopes down to campus?*



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**10 2017 Graduate Profiles**

*Four of our recent graduates—Jordan Bushaw, Logan Olesen, Mychael Bruce and Amelia “Mimi” (Brown) Udem—are profiled. Learn what these outstanding representatives of VCSU did during their undergraduate careers, what they considered most important in their time here, and where they’re headed.*

**13 Heckaman serves in North Dakota Senate**

*Joan (Leichtman) Heckaman '67 of New Rockford, N.D., has represented District 23 in the North Dakota Senate since 2007. Heckaman, who serves as the Senate Minority Leader, thought that her VCSU education prepared her well for both her long-term teaching career and her career in politics.*



19

**19 Nathan receives VCSU Distinguished Service Award**

*Jeff Nathan of Valley City received the university’s highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, in recognition to his longstanding commitment to VCSU at the Foundation Board meeting June 12.*

**25 Track recap: Geisler does it again**

*Viking track and field athlete Seri Geisler won her second consecutive national championship in the javelin at the NAIA Outdoor Track and Field National Championships in Gulf Shores, Ala., on May 25.*

*Photo credits: Cover—Durand Johnson '91  
p. 11—George Dutton*



## A challenging and very successful year

President Tisa Mason, Ed.D., CAE

If there is one thing I have learned during the past two-and-a-half years it is this: VCSU can count on you, our alumni! As we traversed this challenging and very successful year, it was each of you who made our success possible through your positive messages about your alma mater, through your philanthropic contributions, and by the way you live your lives every day as engaged citizen leaders.

Your steadfast faith in this university guarantees that we will stay strong, viable, and vital to North Dakota. Over and over again, your support has enabled us to break records, innovate, and deliver an excellent education. Here are just a few of the highlights from the past year:

- ◆ 19 consecutive years as a *U.S. News and World Report* "Best College" and named No. 1 Public Regional College in the Midwest for 2017 by *U.S. News*
- ◆ Record fall enrollment: 1,452 students
- ◆ Record spring enrollment: 1,407 students
- ◆ Record summer enrollment: 633 students
- ◆ Record fall-to-spring retention: 91 percent
- ◆ More than 20 students enrolled in VCSU's second master's program, the Master of Arts in Teaching
- ◆ 13 students graduated from our three-year degree programs
- ◆ Opening of Gaukler Family Wellness, Health and Physical Education Center with Charles and Janice Stowman Family Education Center as new home for Kinesiology and Human Performance Department
- ◆ New state-of-the art heat plant
- ◆ All-time record scholarship allocation of \$1.425 million for 2017-18
- ◆ Exceeded the North Dakota Higher Education Challenge Fund grant, earning \$3,115,794 for student scholarships
- ◆ V-500 Scholarship program exceeded its annual goal by more than \$58,000
- ◆ Annual Scholarship Auction raised more than \$80,000
- ◆ Nearly \$300,000 in savings for students through our OER (open educational resources) initiative
- ◆ Valley City named most beautiful town in North Dakota
- ◆ VCSU named most beautiful campus in North Dakota
- ◆ Online History Education program ranked third in nation by Top Online Bachelor's Degrees
- ◆ 2017 College Choice ranked our online Elementary Education master's degree eighth in nation
- ◆ Strength and conditioning program received NSCA recognition
- ◆ VCAB recognized as Outstanding Delegation by the National Association for Campus Activities
- ◆ Recognized as NAIA Five-Star Bronze Champions of Character institution for 14th consecutive year
- ◆ Seri Geisler won her second national title in javelin
- ◆ Women's basketball earned a berth to the NAIA National Tournament

Your faith in this institution is unstoppable! Thank you, from the bottom of my heart and soul, for your trust; your time, talent, and treasure; your words of encouragement; and for being cherished friends who can always be counted on.



**VCSU @ the  
FM Redhawks**  
August 9, 2017

# leave a Legacy for V-500 at VCSU



The VCSU Foundation Leave a Legacy program is designed to encourage alumni and friends who have supported the university while they were living to continue to have an impact on VCSU after the time of their death. They can do so with a charitable bequest, which can be in the form of cash, stocks, bonds, life insurance, or a percentage of their estate. More often than not, attractive tax benefits are associated with such a bequest.

**For further information on the Leave a Legacy program, contact the VCSU Foundation Office at 701-845-7217 or email Larry Robinson, executive director for university advancement, at [larry.robinson@vcsu.edu](mailto:larry.robinson@vcsu.edu).**



## Stay involved and give back

**Kim Svenningsen-Hesch '91, Assistant Director for University Advancement and Alumni Relations**

Greetings fellow alumni and friends:

As an alumna of Valley City State University, I could not be prouder of the university's accomplishments. Each year as we welcome new students to Valley City State University and attend Commencement we are reminded of the legacy left behind by alumni.

The Office of Advancement serves as a liaison between alumni and the university, providing opportunities for alumni to stay connected to their alma mater. We work with our campus departments to communicate messages to alumni that support **recruitment and retention** of students, as well as **fundraising** goals. We encourage alumni to keep their **contact information** up-to-date so we can share news, events and networking opportunities. We look forward to helping to facilitate class reunions and homecoming activities.

The students who attend Valley City State University depend on the support of alumni. Without the participation of alumni assisting with fundraising and scholarship initiatives, the students and university cannot succeed. I encourage you to reestablish your commitment to our students and to Valley City State University through your continued involvement. As alumni, it is not only our responsibility but also our duty to give back.

We have several ways you can support your alma mater financially. Here are a few examples:

**Annual Fund/Phone-A-Thon:** Your gifts help to support academic needs at the university, such as scholarships and other Alumni Association initiatives, including *The Bulletin*, reunion events and alumni

awards programs. By supporting the annual Phone-A-Thon, you can help VCSU achieve our strategic initiatives to move VCSU forward. Your generosity impacts the opportunities for current VCSU students and helps strengthen the value of your degree.

**Century Club Scholarship Program:** The VCSU Booster Board is committed to raising scholarship funds for the VCSU athletic department and strengthening the Viking athletic programs.

**V-500 Scholarship Program:** The V-500 scholarship program was founded in 1972 by a small group of visionary university and community leaders. Their intention was to develop a program that would provide

*I encourage you to reestablish your commitment to our students and to Valley City State University through your continued involvement. As alumni, it is not only our responsibility but also our duty to give back.*

financial assistance to students to attend Valley City State University. V-500 has

grown to become a tremendous asset to Valley City State University. Today's V-500 scholarships range from \$1,000–\$5,000. About 200 students benefit from the program annually.

To find out more about any of these programs or others please contact our office at 701-845-7203 or check out our website at [alumni.vcsu.edu](http://alumni.vcsu.edu) and click on **Giving Opportunities**. We are in the middle of redoing our website to make it more user-friendly and to provide more information for our alumni. Please check back often for updates.

Alumni and friends—I look forward to your continued support of Valley City State University. It is an honor and privilege to serve you and my alma mater. It's a great day to be a Viking!

### 2016–17 VCSU Alumni Board of Directors

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**Larry Robinson '71,**

**ex officio**

**Wesley Wintch, ex officio**



## Thank you, alumni and friends

Larry Robinson '71, Executive Director for University Advancement

By the time you read this edition of *The Bulletin*, we will have wrapped up another fiscal year at VCSU and the school year is just around the corner!

Although the years pass quickly, each year is special here at Valley City State University. The 2016–17 academic year was another great year at your university. We experienced an all-time record enrollment of 1,452 students for the 2016 fall semester. Better yet, records were set with the 2017 spring semester and summer session! We are also pleased to

report that VCSU was once again recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* in its college rankings as the **No. 1 Public Regional College in the Midwest** and also, for the **19th consecutive year, a U.S. News “Best College!”**

In addition, VCSU's graduate programs, the Master of Education (M.Ed.) and Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.), have received national recognition. The M.Ed. program in elementary education was recently ranked 8th in College Choice's 25 best online programs, and in the 2017 *U.S. News Best Online Graduate Education Program* rankings, VCSU ranked 47th of 275 schools evaluated.

Yes, this is an exciting, yet challenging time, for the university. Due to historic revenue shortfalls, the legislature approved a budget for the North Dakota University System that resulted in a 20 percent reduction

from the 2015–17 budget cycle. At Valley City State University, that reduction amounted to a whopping \$5 million!

Although the budget reduction created new challenges for the university, VCSU maintains a very strong position in the North Dakota University System. We are fortunate to have strong, dynamic leadership in President Tisa Mason, and a very dedicated and committed faculty and staff. The

*Although the budget reduction created new challenges for the university, VCSU maintains a very strong position in the North Dakota University System. We are fortunate to have strong, dynamic leadership in President Tisa Mason, and a very dedicated and committed faculty and staff. The university enjoys a very positive image within the North Dakota University System.*

university enjoys a very positive image within the North Dakota University System. We are fortunate, too, for continued strong support from you, **our alumni and friends**. Because of that support, the VCSU Foundation will be offering an all-time record of \$1.425 million in scholarship support for our students!

We look forward to another exciting year at Valley City State University. The success we have enjoyed is no accident; your

continued support is clearly **“Making a Difference”** in the lives of our students faculty and staff. We thank you for that support. Together, we will continue to set records at our university!

And don't forget, should your travels bring you this way, stop by for a visit. The coffee is always on!

# THE IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER IS PERMANENT!



IRA Rollover

## ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AN EASY WAY TO HELP THE CAUSES YOU CARE THE MOST ABOUT?

Congress has extended the IRA charitable rollover and made it permanent. With the IRA charitable rollover, you can make a gift from your IRA account to help support the work of our organization and benefit. Gifts made from your IRA (up to \$100,000 per year) are not reportable as taxable income. They also qualify for your required minimum distribution (RMD) which can lower your income and taxes.

To learn more about the benefits of making an IRA charitable rollover gift, please contact us at:  
**(701) 845-7203 or [alumni@vcsu.edu](mailto:alumni@vcsu.edu)**



# MEDICINE WHEEL PARK

*Strengthening connections to the universe for 25 years*

The brainchild of Joe Stickler, VCSU professor emeritus, Medicine Wheel Park has enjoyed its lofty perch on the hilltop above the central campus for 25 years.

## *Celebrating 25 years*

The park traces its beginnings to the efforts of a fall 1992 VCSU astronomy class taught by Stickler, but the formal celebration came a bit early—it was held during Rally in the Valley Weekend on June 17, 2017, to ensure that Stickler was part of the party.

(Those who know Stickler and his partner, Diana Skroch, professor emerita of music, understand that the retired pair typically travels and camps throughout the western U.S. and Canada from roughly the 4th of July through Halloween annually.)



The 25th anniversary celebration brought together a group of people who had helped and supported Stickler in executing an ever-expanding vision that has resulted in the multi-faceted park we enjoy today.

Organized by Mary Lee (Peterson) Nielson '79, the gathering was “typical Medicine Wheel”—Stickler explaining the various elements of the park to visitors, leading them in some tai chi exercises and chanting to help further their connection to the universe, and smiling families and individuals (along with a few dogs) enjoying the presentation, the wheel, the calendars, the planets, and the walking paths.

## *Beginnings*

The park has humble beginnings, starting with no funding and relying on donated labor, materials and equipment. At its founding, it was just an idea in Stickler’s mind that has blossomed full-blown into a unique place, one which has garnered regional, national and international publicity and recognition for Valley City.

In 1992, Stickler and students in his VCSU astronomy class staked out some lines and laid down a few rocks. The execution and the vision were limited—a circle of rocks with six spokes, and as Stickler readily admits, really no expertise—but the wheel was there, and his vision, like the universe, kept expanding.

## *The Park Now*

In the 25 years since, that original solar calendar—now 213 feet around with 28 spokes—has been augmented incrementally with a meridian calendar, a solar system model along a paved trail (the Path of the Planets, part of the North Country National Scenic trail), and a perennial garden (the Garden of the Sun), all highlighted with the help of five interpretive panels.

Part of the VCSU campus, the park is more than just the 11 or so acres on top of the hill. Now totaling about 30 acres—a 2003 designation by then President Ellen Chaffee made the park official—it also includes the woods below it, where trails meander through the north-facing riparian hillside to make a connection with the main campus.

## *Where It All Began*

Stickler’s mother had planted the seed for the wheel during his childhood by recognizing solstices and equinoxes when they came around, and later, without formal training in the cosmos, Stickler, a chemist, went on to stargaze and teach astronomy at the College of Ganado in the Navajo Nation in Arizona before coming to Valley City.

Stickler had heard and seen photos of the Bighorn Medicine Wheel in Wyoming, but his vision began to coalesce upon his arrival at Valley City State in 1981.

He toured the future park site with science professor Stephen Greenwald, who told him of the American Indian burial mounds there.

*Joe Stickler and Diana Skroch relax on a bench at the park.*



Matt Barba '12 did some heavy lifting at the wheel in October 2010. (Strong muscles sometimes come in handy when volunteering at the park, but they are not required.)

Vestiges of the mounds—hidden within a general area that had served many functions over time, including a golf course, fairgrounds, playing fields, track, and asphalt plant—captured a place in Stickler's heart and mind.

Conversations with Valley City friends Gail and Dennis Pederson '81, who thought they had remnants of a medicine wheel on the Pederson family farm along the Sheyenne River, reinforced Stickler's idea to build the wheel.

The prime site for the wheel was threatened when it was discovered that the City of Valley City owned an acre in the middle of the university property—it had been the site of a water tower at one time—but a perpetual lease signed Aug. 30, 1993, eliminated that awkward hurdle a year after work had commenced.

### *Rocks and Physical Labor*

If you have been to the park or seen photos of it, you know that much of the work in its creation and evolution involved rocks—finding them, hauling them, placing them. Student and community labor made that happen. Volunteers would bring rocks when they came to work at the wheel, and Stickler organized “rock expeditions.”

A 2003 memo from him categorized the student volunteers under two lists labeled “students with trucks” and “students who know where rocks are,” and they were given the following instructions:

“Find rocks for Medicine Wheel Park. This year we are collecting rocks from the size of a large softball down to baseball size. Some head-sized rocks can be used, also. Please deliver them to the rock pile at the west end of the parking lot at the Park. Please focus on gathering round-shaped rocks, not flat ones. When driving around the area looking for rocks, you can always stop and ask if you can take some rocks.”

Blumer Construction Co., located across Winter Show Road from the park, contributed boulders. National Guard payloaders and operators also played a role, as did VCSU facilities staff Willis Wagar, Don Schaack, and Ron Pommerer, among many others. Anyone with a skidsteer was more than welcome to join in!

Apart from the machinery-aided work, the physical part of developing the park fell mostly on the arms and shoulders of Stickler and student volunteers. There have been hundreds of volunteers over the years, including Nick Faure '12 (now a dentist in Minot, he put in more than 300 hours as a student), Matthew Nielson '06 (now a science teacher at Valley City High School, he brings his students to the wheel for stargazing and other astronomical field trips), and Garth Weber '12 (among the most active volunteers in recent years), to name just a few.

### *Grants and Support*

Park development has been spurred by more than just manual labor. Grant proposals were written and submitted; funding requests were made to municipal organizations; local officials were engaged to support the park. Valley City community stalwarts such as Jan Stowman, Bobby Koeplin, the late Roy Sheppard, and Mary Lee Nielson were among the leaders who pitched in and made things happen.

More than \$100,000 in funding came to the park from 1991 to 2001, including multiple grants from National Recreational Trails (through the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department) and grants from the Valley City Food and Beverage Tax Fund and the Valley City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Funding from these sources helped shape the park as we know it today, providing for the creation of the paved trail and interpretive signs.

Significant ongoing support has also come from the Friends of the Medicine Wheel, a group of supporters who contribute to funds administered by VCSU. Stickler cultivates the group and keeps them apprised of park progress and plans with annual letters.



Alice (Janisch) Beauchman '73 has provided much support for Stickler and Medicine Wheel Park.

Through the years, Stickler has also relied heavily on Alice (Janisch) Beauchman '73, administrative assistant in the Science Department. “She has been invaluable,” says Stickler.



## MEDICINE WHEEL PARK

**1992**

YEAR WORK  
BEGAN

**213**

WHEEL  
CIRCUMFERENCE  
(IN FEET)

**28**

WHEEL  
SPOKES

**30**

ACRES

**\$100,000+**

FUNDING  
FROM  
1991–2001

**2017**

TWENTY-FIFTH  
ANNIVERSARY

## Recent Changes

A gift of about an acre of land—the sloping hillside on the south of the park—from AgCountry Farm Credit Services in 2011 enhanced the garden area of the park. The Garden of the Sun, which draws help from the Sheyenne Valley Garden Club, includes lilies, sedum, dame's rocket, and more, including milkweed patches for the butterflies.

Recent park additions include the Rings of Saturn, created by Stickler's former student Charles Bowen. A Valley City welder and artist, Bowen fabricated the metal sculpture addition to the boulder marking that planet along the Path of the Planets.



The Rings of Saturn, created by Stickler's former student Charles Bowen.

## Events and Gatherings

Over time, Medicine Wheel Park has served as a site for family gatherings, weddings, memorial services, solstice and equinox celebrations, Earth Day events, stargazing, research, and school field trips, along with American Indian drumming, singing, dancing, and more.

Ice luminaries have been used to decorate the wheel during the winter solstice celebrations, and a blessing ceremony was part of former president Steve Shirley's inauguration festivities in September 2009.

Along with the important volunteer work they do (Stickler is quick to point out the added value of community service on a résumé or graduate school application), students use the park for research and course work.

It's also a popular site for K-12 field trips, often combined with a visit to the VCSU planetarium in Rhoades Science Center, frequently hosted by Wes Anderson, planetarium director and avid wheel enthusiast and supporter.

Participation in group presentations and attendance at wheel gatherings number in the hundreds annually; sometimes there have been more than 1,650 attending in a year, and those figures don't include the countless individual visits to the park.

The park pulls people off the interstate to see the unique attraction, and it provides an interesting, dog-friendly picnic site for visitors and locals alike.

## Sacred Ground

Although the park is quite utilitarian in nature, Stickler urges us to not forget the sacred nature of the park grounds. The park brochure describes its spiritual purpose this way: "The Medicine Wheel is a multicultural symbol celebrating the calendar discovery process by our intelligent human ancestors around the globe and honoring the presence of the Native American burial mounds immediately to the east."

The Indian mounds there were first surveyed by T.H. Lewis on Oct. 29, 1883, as part of the Northwest Archaeological Survey, funded privately by Alfred J. Hill of St. Paul, Minn. Human remains have been repatriated in the park in accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

In respect to the native traditions, many American Indian individuals and groups have performed at the park, including Mandan-Hidatsa storyteller and musician Keith Bear, the Mandaree Singers, Lakota Thunder, and the Buffalo River Dancers and Singers.

Speculation has even linked the park site to a definitive battle between Ojibwe and Cheyenne in 1740 that drove the Cheyenne out of the area.

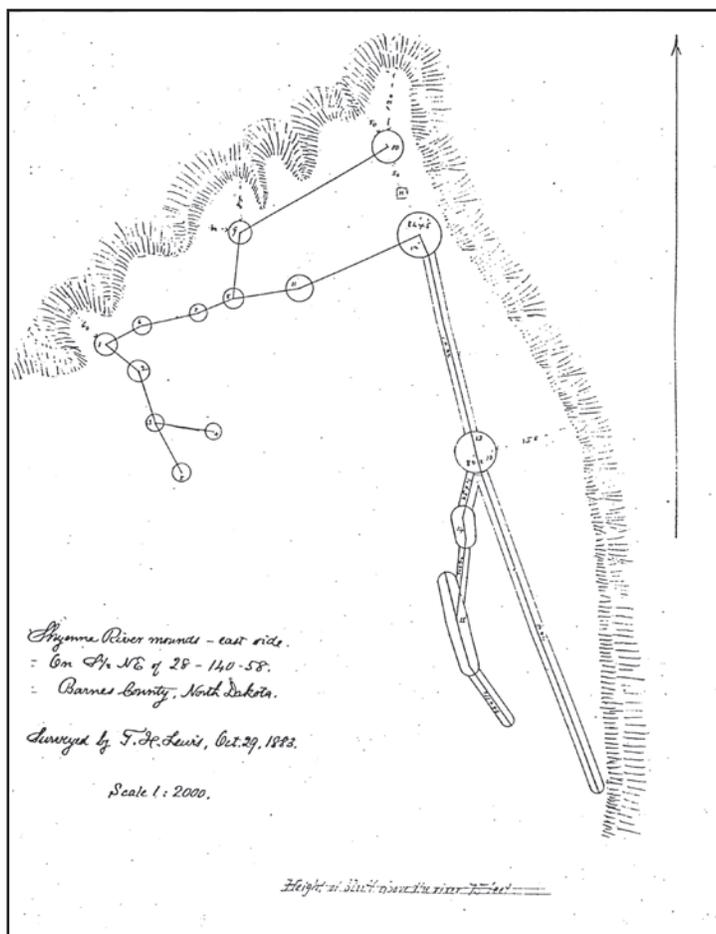
## Stickler and Community

An engaging and intellectually demanding instructor over his 30-plus-year VCSU career, Stickler received the Teacher of the Year award four times—in 1991, 2004, 2008 and 2013. But it is Medicine Wheel Park that well may be his legacy in Valley City.

Contrary to what his appearances in the wizard costume might suggest, Stickler is a humble man who recognizes that he didn't create the park alone—countless hours of volunteer effort by VCSU students and community members alike, along with financial and grant support from a host of entities, public and private, have gone into the park—and it stands today as proud testimony to what a collective effort can accomplish.

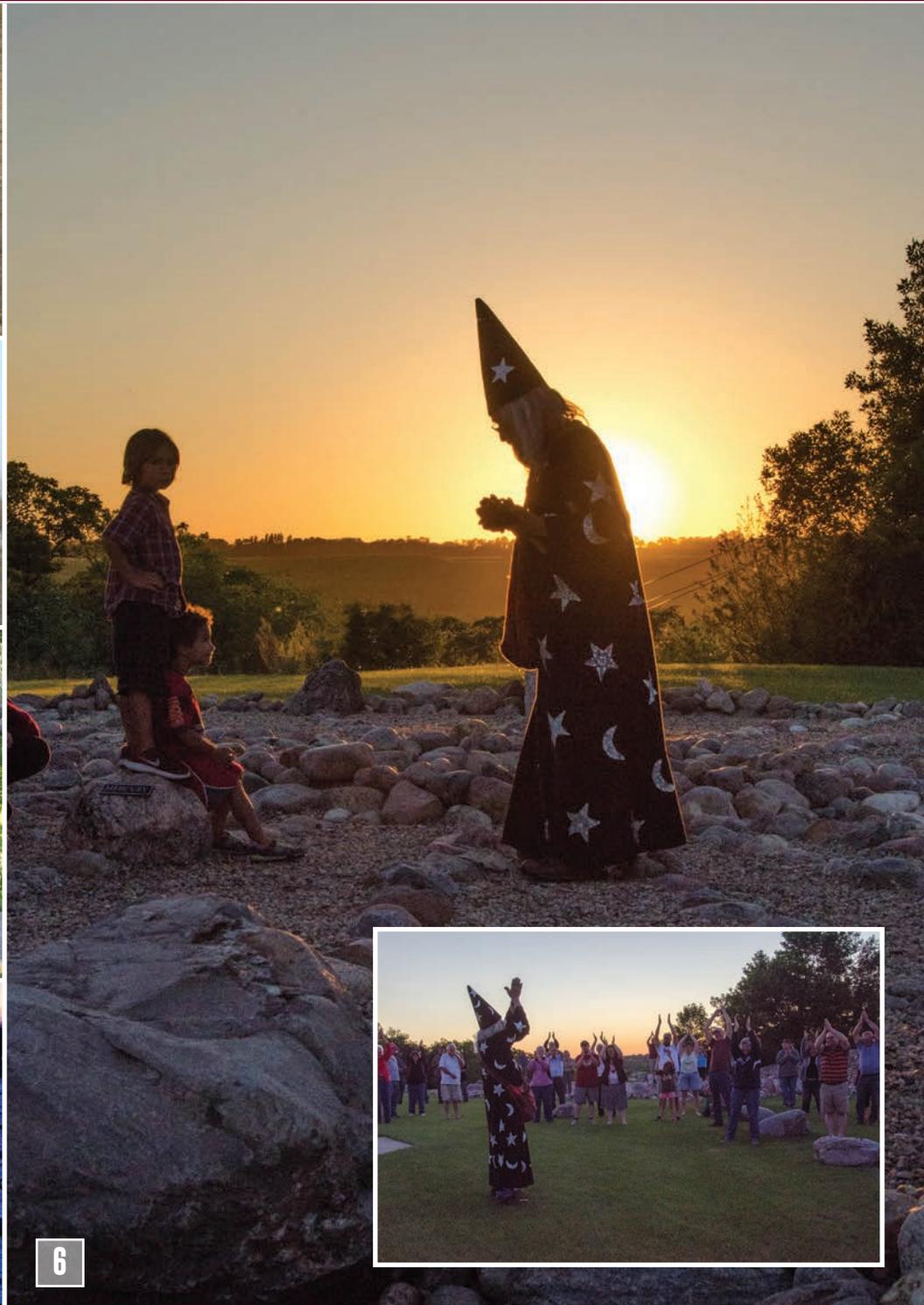
He's been quoted as saying "The Medicine Wheel is a community effort, many have contributed. No other community has something quite like this. Its existence creates community." And that's what makes Medicine Wheel Park a very special place in Valley City.

For more information, visit [medicinewheel.vcsu.edu](http://medicinewheel.vcsu.edu), or better yet, visit Medicine Wheel Park itself. (You'll feel connected to the universe!)



T.H. Lewis's original 1883 drawing of the Native American Burial Mounds located east of the medicine wheel.

- 1) A group of student volunteers unload rocks collected for the wheel.
- 2) The Buffalo River Singers and Dancers from the Fargo-Moorhead area have performed several times at Medicine Wheel Park
- 3) Perennials are featured in the Garden of the Sun.
- 4) Ice luminaries graced the wheel at a winter solstice celebration.
- 5) Steve Olson, Don Schaack and Kevin Klein, then members of the VCSU facilities staff, pose with the sign they created for the park.
- 6) Stickler in his wizard costume presides over the June 20, 2016, summer solstice celebration.
- 7) Some of the first student volunteers in 1992 included Karla (Lura) Richards '97, Jefri Jones '96 and Wayne Triebold '95, among others.





# Commencement — 2017 —

The sun shone brightly and a crowd filled W.E. Osmon Fieldhouse for VCSU's 125th spring commencement exercises on Saturday, May 13.

A total of 254 students—221 undergraduates and 33 graduate students—were eligible to participate in the commencement exercises.

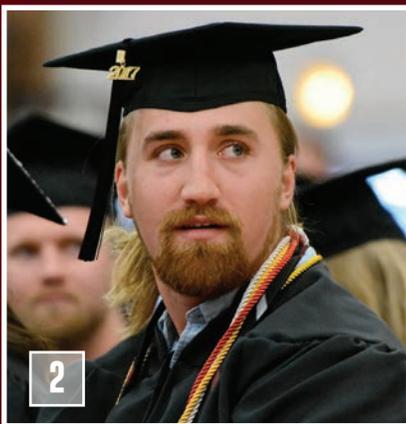
VCSU President Tisa Mason led a group of speakers which included Mark Hagerott, chancellor of the North Dakota University System; Morgan Nalley, a graduating senior from Pocatello, Idaho; and Jodi Shorma, assistant professor of language and literature.

President Mason spoke about the one constant in our lives—change. She encouraged the graduates to adapt and transform themselves in the face of change, and she reminded them that “your education is a privilege, and a VCSU education is special privilege. Cherish it.”

Chancellor Hagerott touched on change as well: “That rapid change is driven by technology, by heightened productivity, by the interconnectedness of nearly everything. As it moves quickly forward it is demanding that each of us—as citizens, employees, and lifelong learners—be as versatile as possible.”

A student leader and softball standout for the Vikings, Nalley noted, “Today is a day filled with pride” and considered herself and fellow graduates blessed to attend VCSU and be a part of its family. “Here at VCSU we are encouraged to be individuals and take advantage of opportunities, and as we move into the future I think that is an important lesson to carry with us.”

Shorma, named Student Senate's 2017 Teacher of the Year, brought lessons from “a double-reverse activity” from her work in the Learning Center, encouraging graduates to attend and participate at work, to stay engaged, and to seek moderation and balance in their lives in the working world. She also emphasized that “learning in higher education is so much more than knowledge transfer,” citing the personal connections she had made with members of the Class of 2017 in her role as teacher and mentor.





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1. Mark Hagerott, chancellor of the North Dakota University System, shared remarks at VCSU's 125th spring commencement on Saturday, May 13.

2. Logan Olesen of Brooklyn Center, Minn., graduated summa cum laude with a degree in biology education. (Read a profile of Logan on p. 11.)

3. An education graduate sported a mortarboard with the message "Now it's my turn to teach."

4. Dakota College at Bottineau nursing students, whose program is hosted on the VCSU campus, participated in the commencement ceremony.

5. Morgan Nalley of Pocatello, Idaho, gave the student reflection at the VCSU commencement ceremony.

6. Nisja Bass of Lakewood, Calif., a member of the women's basketball team, decorated her mortarboard with flowers.

7. Jodi Shorma, Student Senate's 2017 Teacher of the Year, gave the Faculty Reflection at commencement.

8. President Mason congratulates graduate Steven Velarde of San Jacinto, Calif.

9. Many of the 2017 Master of Education graduates gathered for a reception at Epworth United Methodist Church prior to the commencement ceremony. Those attending the reception included (front, l to r) Emily Nelson, Danielle Foss, Heather Dahlsad, AmyJo Murphy, Amy Havelka, Stacy Owens, Susan Milender, (back) Sarah Williams, Emily Schneider, Wiley Wisnewski, Robert Sandness, Devin Hodgins, Kathleen Jepson, and Alyssa Schauer.

10. Pictured with May 2017 graduate Jacob Schlecht (center) are family members (l to r) paternal grandfather Will Schecht '67, maternal grandfather George Bunn '64, mother Barb (Bunn) Schlecht '92, and uncle Brad Bunn '90. Jacob, Barb and Will represent the 125th, 100th and 75th VCSU graduating classes respectively.

11. Among the 2017 graduates were sisters Emerald and Olivia Damge of Fort Collins, Colo.



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## 2017 Graduate Profiles

### Jordan Bushaw



One could say it was destiny that brought Jordan Bushaw to Valley City State University. Growing up in Bismarck, VCSU wasn't too far away geographically. But it's the personal connections she had to the college

that led her here. Jordan has many relatives who call VCSU their alma mater: her mother, father, four uncles, two aunts, a brother and six cousins, to be exact. Plus her grandfather, Dick Bushaw, taught science and technology here from 1971–78.

Before arriving at VCSU, Jordan intended to major in history education. However, after some online searching and a gentle reminder from her mother that she is “the tech support of the family,” she switched to software engineering instead.

That proved to be a wise decision for Jordan. She finished college in just three years and accomplished many things during her time at VCSU. In regard to graduating early, she says, “It wasn't the original plan, but it worked to finish in three years.”

Even with a heavy course load, Jordan still managed to be very involved

on campus. She helped recruit for the Computer Systems and Software Engineering (CSSE) Department, tutored other students, mentored a Learning to Live section for freshmen CSSE majors, worked as a teacher's assistant in Computer Information Systems courses, and participated in student government.

During her third and final year at VCSU, Jordan served as president of Student Senate. She represented the student body well and was a voice for them during a trying time of legislative challenges regarding the state's economy. Writing Student Senate columns for President Mason's monthly reports to the State Board of Higher Education, presenting to legislators and relaying information from shared governance meetings were just part of her standard routine this past year.

Jordan also used her summers to gain experience in her field. The summer after her freshman year, she worked at Medora as an information technology intern. The next year, Jordan attended the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing in Houston, Texas, where she interviewed with more than 40 companies and was offered 7 internships. She eventually accepted an internship with NBC Universal Studios in New York City. She worked in media technology, where she must have truly impressed—she was offered a position with NBC in the fall with a whole school year ahead of her.

She has since moved to Engelwood Cliffs, N.J., to start her career with NBC as a media tech associate currently working in data security. Every eight months for the next few years, she will rotate to another location within NBC. She could be in Seattle, Denver, Los Angeles, Orlando or New York City next!

While Jordan and her dog are enjoying New Jersey now and the prospect of further moves excites her, VCSU will always be home. As Jordan said in her final column for the State Board of Higher Education, “Once a Viking, always a Viking.”

### Logan Olesen



At 6-foot-2 and 250 pounds, with a mane of long hair and facial hair to boot, Logan Olesen bears more than a passing resemblance to the Viking mascot of VCSU. Fitting perhaps, in that an offer to play football for the Vikings is what brought Logan from his home in Brooklyn Center, Minn., to campus.

Logan's VCSU football career did come to fruition: he took a redshirt year and played three years for the Vikings, starting on the offensive line his senior year and earning NAIA-Daktronics Scholar-Athlete honors after both his junior and senior seasons.

That scholar-athlete term fits Logan very well. He graduated summa cum laude this spring and was named the Science Department's Outstanding Graduate in Biology Education. Along the way, he did research on a project titled “The Use of Sand Fraction Lithology Analysis to Differentiate Sediment Layers at an Archaeological Site in Grand Portage, Minnesota,” investigating whether two visually distinct sediment layers shared a similar depositional history.

Logan also presented that research—conducted through VCSU's SOAR (Student Opportunities for Academic Research) program—in a poster session at the April 2016 annual meeting of the North Dakota Academy of Science at North Dakota State University in Fargo.

His research, done with faculty mentor Susan Kilgore, Ph.D., of the Science Department, contributed to the sense of “family” Logan found at VCSU. “The small community within VCSU allowed me to build personal relationships with professors and other staff members,” he said. “This gave me a sense of family within the community, helping me stay accountable and unafraid to ask questions.”

This summer Logan has been teaching summer school math and biology in School District 281 in Robbinsdale, Minn. In the fall he'll be teaching chemistry at St. Michael-Albertville High School in Albertville, Minn. Says Logan, “Even though I am not teaching biology full-time yet, the education I received at VCSU prepared me to teach whatever subject is necessary. The science program really helps you prepare to do whatever you want in the future.”

The future will evolve for Logan, but he's not beyond being a little nostalgic about Viking football. One of his favorite VCSU memories is the Vikings' thrilling 17-13 comeback win against Southeastern University in Lakeland, Fla., in the final game of his career. But Logan also remembers the cultural diversity practicum in the Minnewaukan (N.D.) Public Schools; that “really opened my eyes as to why I wanted to become an educator,” he says.

Bet on Logan becoming another fine VCSU-educated teacher—“once a Viking, always a Viking.”

## Mychael Bruce



In simplest terms, Mychael Bruce's motivation to make the 1,611 mile journey from San Tan Valley, Ariz., to Valley City can be summed up in one word: football.

It was the opportunity to play college football that brought Bruce to Valley City State University, but it was a culmination of factors that shaped Bruce's decision to join the Viking family. The VCSU football coaching staff was not the only program recruiting Bruce during his high school career at San Tan Foothills, but the combination of affordable tuition, engaged faculty and small class sizes all helped lure Bruce northward.

While football remained a central focus during his college career, his time at VCSU became so much more than that. Known around campus for his friendly smile, smooth baritone voice and well-spoken thoughts, Bruce graduated this spring with a psychology major, a sociology minor, and an athletic coaching certificate. And when he talks about his time at VCSU, a central theme emerges: relationships.

"The faculty and staff at VCSU promoted an environment that allowed me to grow intellectually while creating lasting relationships," he said. "Both faculty and staff want the students to succeed and look for ways to make the experience while at VCSU a memorable one."

While at VCSU, Bruce married his wife Mackenzie (also a San Tan Valley native and a current VCSU student); he made lifelong friendships with teammates such as Samuel Cooke, Jawuan Pugh and Beau Winchester; and he developed lasting relationships with his football coaches and faculty and staff such as Kari Stricklin, Kathryn Woehl and Jackie Owen.

"Each of these wonderful individuals found ways to help me grow as an adult," he said. "It really is like being part of a huge family: we laughed, spoke about life problems, and learned about one another while building

a bond I won't forget."

There were, of course, the on-field memories. Taking the field against rival University of Jamestown will always stand out in his mind, a series in which the Vikings went 6-2 during Bruce's career. In fact, one of Bruce's defining football moments came when he returned an interception 70 yards for a touchdown against Jamestown on Sept. 27, 2014, opening up the floodgates in a 48-17 Viking romp.

A two-time all-conference defensive back, Bruce had another game to remember against Mayville State on Oct. 11, 2014, filling up the stat sheet of a 62-6 victory with four tackles, two interceptions, two passes broken up and two blocked kicks. Bruce's football career was cut short when an injury forced him to miss his entire senior season. But not being able to play didn't mean Bruce was done with football. He was there on the sidelines as a senior leader—conducting the coin toss, cheering and teaching his teammates, and carrying the Paint Bucket during the Jamestown game—and with a bulky knee brace still made the daily trek from campus to the Bubble to stay involved in team activities.

It was another walk, across the stage at commencement, that he will never forget.

"That's the best memory of all," he said. "Walking across the stage and shaking President Tisa Mason's hand symbolized the culmination of my undergraduate studies."

Bruce currently works as a CNA at the North Dakota State Hospital in Jamestown, N.D., a job he says he was well-prepared for during his time at VCSU.

"My education is being put to use every day at the North Dakota State Hospital," he said. "The Social Science Department provided me with the knowledge of mental health in various ways that allow me to work effectively with the client population within the state hospital."

A year, two years, or five years from now Bruce's life will look very different though. The end goal, according to Bruce, is to become a high school counselor and coach. That will likely be preceded by a stint in graduate school and a move back to Arizona after his wife Mackenzie finishes school this coming spring.

Bruce was the first of his family to attend VCSU, but he might not be the last. His youngest sister is currently considering playing basketball for the Vikings. Whether she chooses VCSU remains to be seen, but if Mychael's experience is any indication, the campus would be lucky to add another member of the Bruce family.

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*Amelia (Brown) Udem*

Amelia (Brown) Udem, better known as “Mimi,” put her passion for music to work for her at VCSU. For her senior capstone project, she put together a CD, “Along the Way.”

Saying Mimi put the CD together doesn’t exactly do the intensive project justice. What she did was write, arrange, perform, record and produce the CD! Available online at [ameliaudem.bandcamp.com](http://ameliaudem.bandcamp.com), the CD was a labor of love for Mimi, now pursuing songwriting (and perhaps music publishing) as a career.

The VCSU Music Department first recognized her talent back in 2010 when she took first place in the high school category of the

annual Composition Competition and Concert by writing and performing a solo piano piece, “Intentional Chaos: The Lonely Note.”

That helped pave the way from Wahpeton to Valley City State for Mimi, who came away from her VCSU music scholarship audition—and the conversations with faculty members surrounding it—convinced that she wanted to pursue a music major.

She did well—graduating summa cum laude and garnering the department’s honor as the “Outstanding Music Graduate—On Campus” at the Senior Awards Luncheon. (The Music Department also gives an outstanding music graduate award to an online student.)

In addition to her capstone CD, Mimi had other unique opportunities in VCSU’s music program, including an undergraduate research project that involved incorporating a Makey Makey invention kit into music composition lessons for high school students.

Connecting the Makey Makey circuit board to a variety of media (including people) with alligator clips allowed Mimi and her research partner, Ben Clifton ’15, to produce electronic sounds and make music. The two shared their project in local schools and won grants to present their research with faculty member Sara Hagen (now professor emerita) at the January 2014 annual show of the National Association of Music Merchants. Clifton and Mimi also performed with the Makey Makey at the

VCSU Composers Competition and Concert May 1, 2014.

Three years later, in the 2017 Composers Competition and Concert, Mimi tied for first place in the pop category with her composition and performance of “Dance with Me Tenderly,” which is also the fourth track of her “Along the Way” CD.

That CD wasn’t created in a vacuum. Mentored by John LeTellier, assistant professor of music, Mimi crammed what normally would have been two or more years of study in digital audio production into one year. She credits LeTellier with helping her not only learn how a recording studio functions but also helping her further develop her composition skills. In addition, he helped out by performing on piano and organ on two tracks of the CD.

Mimi gives credit to music faculty members Geraldine Ong and Christopher Redfean for their support as well; she also says, “Every member of the music staff showed that they cared about me as a person as well as a student.”

It wasn’t all school work for Mimi at VCSU. She met her husband, Jordan Udem ’14, at VCSU and has fond memories of her freshman year time with him. “We spent countless hours with our friends from CRU—Campus Crusade for Christ—going on various adventures,” she says, including “driving to Perkins in Jamestown for all-you-can-eat pancakes” after CRU meetings that ended around 10 p.m.

Choir retreats at Wesley Acres—“singing with some of my best friends, canoeing, and smores”—and playing in the athletic band are also cherished memories.

Armed with a music major, a minor in business, and a certificate in music composition, Mimi considers herself prepared for what lies ahead. “At VCSU I gained the specific skills that I will need to succeed as a songwriter: music theory and aural skills; increased proficiency in piano, percussion, and voice; composition training; audio production knowledge; and an understanding of how to plan for, create, and sustain a business,” she says. “I also had the opportunity to create a CD of original songs that I am already using to share my music with friends, family, and potential clients. Beyond technical skills, I gained personal and social skills that will help me in all aspects of life.”

After her graduation, Jordan and Mimi moved to Fargo, and that’s where she’ll look to carve out her future in music. Mimi is already collaborating with a worship band, and she’s looking for other songwriting opportunities, primarily for churches or other Christian organizations. With one CD already under her belt, look for her to encounter more success “along the way.”

## Alumnae honored at business education conference

VCSU alumnae Amber (Ussatis) Aberle ’03 and Theresa (Foertsch) Ostgarden ’11 received awards at the Mountain-Plains Business Education Association’s regional conference held in Bismarck, N.D., from June 12–14.

Aberle, a VCSU business instructor, was named 2017 M-PBEA Collegiate Teacher of the Year, and Ostgarden, an instructor in the Grand Forks Public Schools district, was named Middle Level Teacher of the Year. The conference, themed “Inspiring Tomorrow’s Legends,” provided technology sessions, workshops, tours and keynote addresses for attendees, including middle and high school teachers, community and university professors, and administrators from North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Aberle presented on two topics: Universal Access and Design, and Open Education Resources. She also exhibited on behalf of the VCSU Business Department and provided a means for secondary educators to earn continuing education credits at the conference. Aberle served on the conference planning committee the past year.



## Heckaman serves in North Dakota Senate



Joan (Leichtman) Heckaman '67 of New Rockford, N.D., has served in the North Dakota Senate since 2007. A retired teacher, Heckaman holds a master's degree in special education

from Minot State University and a bachelor's degree in mathematics and health/physical education from Valley City State University.

Her legislative profile shares some of her non-legislative memberships: Central North Dakota Steam Threshers, Governor's Autism Task Force; member of Eastern Star, New Rockford Golf Club, New Rockford Book Club, Eagles Auxiliary, and First Lutheran Church.

Heckaman and her husband, Dewey—a Dickinson State alumnus and, like Joan, a retired teacher—have 4 children and 10 grandchildren. All four children graduated from North Dakota University System institutions; son Dan is a 1996 VCSU graduate, as is daughter Laura (Heckaman) Dokken, class of 2002. Son Scott is a North Dakota State College of Science graduate, and Wayne followed in his father's footsteps at Dickinson State.

"Our grandchildren range in age from 22 to 4 years old," says proud grandmother Joan. "It is so fun to watch them participate in their school and community activities. Of course, they are the most talented and beautiful/handsome kids in the world!"

A December graduate, Heckaman started her teaching career as a fill-in replacement in Edmore, N.D., weeks after leaving VCSU. After teaching in Edmore that winter and spring, she moved to California for a few years, returning in 1969 to teach full-time at her alma mater, Grace City (N.D.) High School, until 1977, when she took a break to raise a family. She returned to teaching in 1985.

"At that time, I also returned to college and earned credentials in special education in learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and intellectual disabilities, as well as completing a master's degree in special education," says Heckaman.

She unsuccessfully tried to retire from teaching twice before finding the charm the third time around. "I retired from teaching special education at New Rockford in 2004 and was then asked to work in the special education department at Four Winds Elementary until 2009," says Heckaman. "At that time, I tried to retire again, but got called back in the fall of 2009

to teach math in the Alternative High School at Four Winds High School. I did that until I finally retired again in 2013."

About the same time she returned to teaching, Heckaman became involved in politics. "After moving to New Rockford in 1984, I found that I became interested in some of the issues across the state and aligned myself with the Democratic-NPL Party," she says.

"My involvement started with helping paint road signs for candidates for the North Dakota legislative race. Then I moved into the position of district treasurer. While we have been in three different legislative districts since that move (due to redistricting), I remained active in helping candidates with their campaigns."

In 2004, after her first retirement from teaching, Heckaman ran for a seat in the North Dakota House of Representatives. "I enjoyed the campaign process, and even though I campaigned hard, I lost by a little over 100 votes. That seemed to be the end of my career in politics," says Heckaman. "However, in 2006, the Senate seat came open in District 23, and I was encouraged to run for that position. I won and have served in that position ever since."

The 65th Assembly of the North Dakota Legislature convened in December 2016 and met in regular session from January 3 to April 27, 2017. So what keeps Senator Heckaman busy when the Senate is not in session? She explains it this way:

"While we meet only 4 months (January thru April) in odd-numbered years, much of our research takes place during the other 20 months. All legislators are assigned to Interim Committees that are assigned studies based on legislation passed during the session.

"There are over 20 Interim Committees that work to find answers to study resolutions.

"This Interim I am serving as vice chair of the Agriculture Committee and also on Administrative Rules, Government Administration, and Tribal Taxation, as well as Budget Section, Legislative Procedures and Arrangements, Legislative Management, and the Legislative Revenue Advisory Committee.

"Some of these are committees I am appointed to because I serve as Senate Minority Leader. I appreciate the opportunity to serve and hope I have been helpful in resolution building."

Perhaps it's in her genes to serve, or maybe it's just that Heckaman had good role models. "My parents were both hard-working farm people who participated in leadership roles in local and county activities," she notes. "My dad was a county commissioner in Eddy County for years, and my mom was on the school board and served in leadership roles in a variety of community and church organizations."

Regardless of her motivation, Heckaman is

proud of her service, and gives Valley City State some of the credit for her success as a public servant. "I feel very blessed to be able to give back to my community and state through my involvement in the North Dakota Legislature," she says. "I believe that an atmosphere of collaboration only benefits all stakeholders involved. Thanks to VCSU for helping mold my life."

Reminiscing, Heckaman talks of her college days in Valley City:

"Valley City State gave me a solid foundation in mathematics and health and physical education. I reference Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Graichen. I also remember chemistry class with Dr. Dafoe. He tried very hard to get me to triple major in science, but I did not. And I regretted that decision many times.

"I enjoyed the fellowship with my sisters in the Atheneum Society and our production of 'Atheneum Antics' every year. I can still remember some of the songs we sang. I also still am connected to some of the classmates in my math and PE classes—either through teaching or through connections in my legislative district.

"And, of course, I have to mention athletics. While women's athletics was just gaining ground again in the late '60s and early '70s, I was a follower of the men's football and basketball teams. As a member of the pep band and marching band, I participated in many events either in the stands or on the football field.

"VCSU was the perfect fit for me. I came from 6 years in a rural 1-room school and 2 years in a 2-room schoolhouse with only 1 other student in my class. Making the move into a high school with 9 students in my class was a little scary. The small campus atmosphere with caring faculty made the move to VCSU seamless for me.

"At VCSU I was a person and not just a number. I value my degree with a great deal of pride because the focus of the university is academic excellence."

Heckaman has enjoyed two careers: teaching and politics. Regarding the first, she says, "I have had a wonderful, enriching career that has given me great satisfaction. "I still meet former students and enjoy touching base with them."

And as for the latter, Heckaman encourages others to get involved in the political process: "Getting involved is important because if you are not happy with the way things are, make your voice heard. It can be through an active campaign or helping someone else with their campaign. There is always a place for everyone to get involved whether it is at a local, county, or state level."

## VCSU connection put to work in Arizona classroom

One of the things VCSU students hear when they graduate is that they have a whole network of alumni offering support. Heading across the country? Call the Alumni Office and see what other graduates of alma mater dear are doing out there in the real world! Job hunting in a new city? Contact alumni and see if they have any ideas for you or know people in your given field. There are endless examples of how the VCSU Alumni Office has helped people in different ways.

For Melanie (Shaw) Vining '96, it's how she found a new volunteer for her elementary classroom. Melanie teaches first grade at Painted Sky Elementary in Oro Valley, Ariz. With 29 students in her classroom and no paraprofessionals available to help her work with students, she is always looking for volunteers, especially to assist with reading and helping students who benefit from one-on-one time.

Insert Marge (Nutz) Sogn '61. Marge started teaching in 1961 and spent most of her career teaching first grade. In 1975, she became her district's reading specialist and served in that role for seven elementary schools.

The two were introduced at a VCSU alumni event in Arizona on Feb. 6, 2016. Both live in Tucson, and that simple connection got the conversation started. Sharing family stories and educational backgrounds, their conversation quickly turned to teaching. After a few minutes, Melanie boldly told Marge, "You are going to volunteer in my classroom!"

After completing volunteer paperwork and gaining proper clearance with the school, Marge began her new adventure of helping Melanie in her first-grade classroom.

This past school year, Marge assessed students and established instructional reading levels. She visited the classroom once a week, on Wednesdays, to work with reading groups to raise skill levels.

"The students love her, and she is such a huge part of their success," says Melanie about Marge.

Seeing the impact a volunteer like Marge has in the classroom is clear, but don't forget the other side of the equation: "Melanie and the children have brought so much joy into my life," Marge says.

She looked forward to each Wednesday with the students and is grateful she and Melanie met and formed this bond.

Relationships like this are hard to come by, and finding volunteers isn't easy. Without their shared alumni connection, they likely wouldn't have ever met. Thanks to VCSU, both have benefited.

If you would like to connect with VCSU alumni in your area, contact the Foundation and Alumni Office at 701-845-7203.



Melanie (Shaw) Vining '96 and Marge (Nutz) Sogn '61

## Viking Scramble golfers support athletic scholarships

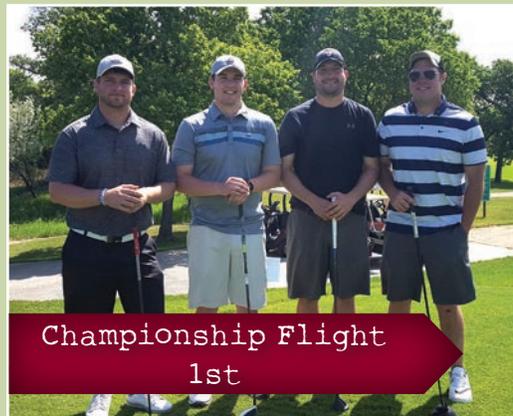
A total of 109 golfers played in the annual VCSU Viking Golf Scramble held June 10 in Valley City.

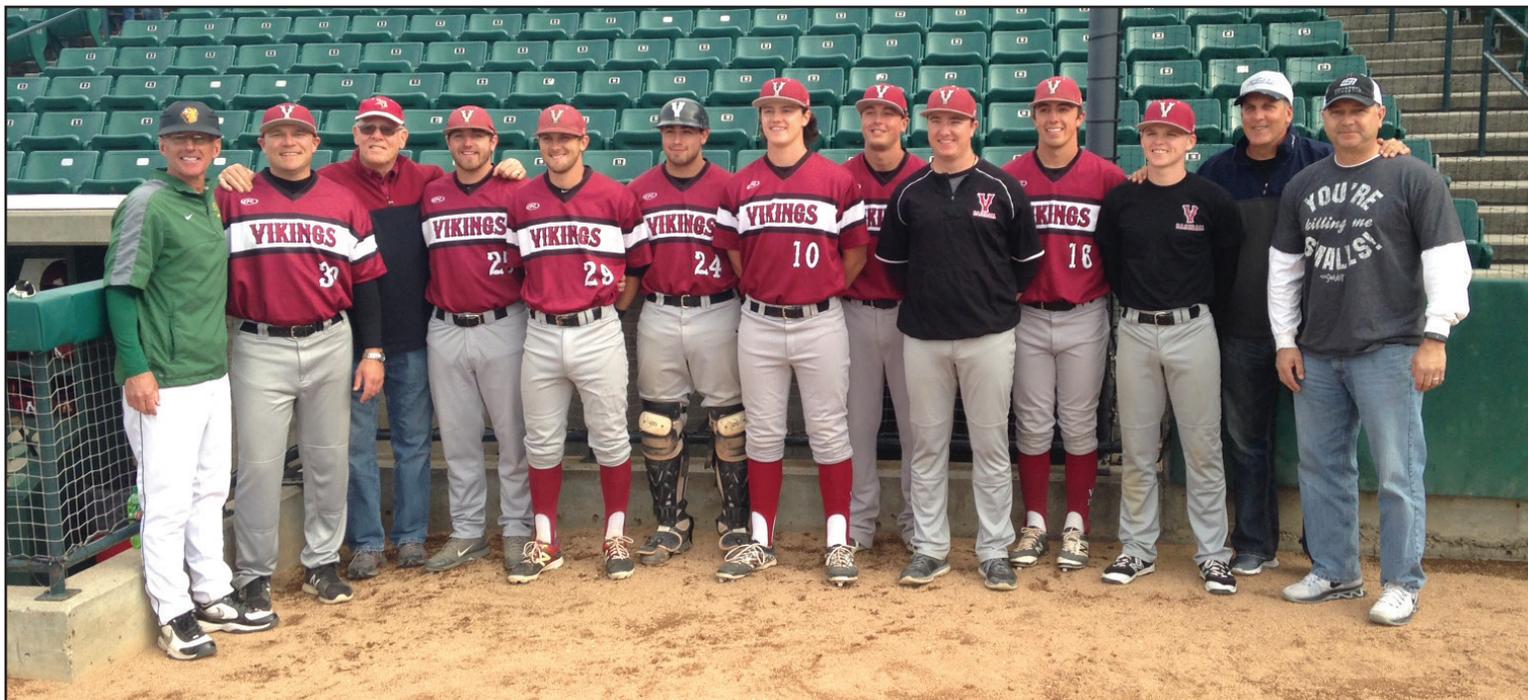
The tournament raises money for athletic scholarships at Valley City State University. Twenty-seven teams participated in the tournament held at both Bjornson Park Public Golf Course and the Valley City Town & Country Club.

The team of Shane Ost '15, Brian Zerface, Brent Geisler and Trevor Justesen '15 won the championship flight with a 14-under score of 57. Finishing runner-up was the team of Nate Zerface, Josh Brouse, Jeremy Wiebe '08 and Jamie Paurus.

The team of Todd Webster '95, Adam Longmore, Ron Wendel '67 and Justin Tabor '06 won the open flight. Second place went to Doug Beiswenger, Kevin Jacobson, Jim Ukestad '78 and Joe Ukestad.

Major sponsors for the Viking Scramble this year included Dacotah Bank, Puklich Chevrolet, MEI Technologies and Bridges Car Wash.





Scott Nustad '89, Cory Anderson '89, Jeff Ditch '89 and former coach Jim Dew pose at the May 2 Vikings vs. Bison game in Fargo.

## Viking/Bison baseball game features alumni connections

Former VCSU coach Jim Dew attended the May 2 VCSU at NDSU baseball game in Fargo. The Vikings and Bison rosters included eight players whose fathers played, coached or worked with Dew. Former Vikings at the game included Cory Anderson '89 (former Vikings coach, now commissioner of the North Star Athletic Association), Jeff Ditch '89 (Bison assistant baseball coach), and Scott Nustad '89.

Pictured above at the game are (l to r) Jeff Ditch, VCSU head coach Casey Olney, Jim Dew, Brady Smith, Brady Anderson, Ben Bruenjes, Jesse Johnson, Ryan Sand, Bradyn Sand, Tyler Ukestad, Brian Fike, Cory Anderson, and Scott Nustad.

*The "legacy" players and their parents are listed below.*

<b>VIKING PLAYER</b>	<b>PARENTS</b>
Brady Smith	Layne (Holcomb) '92 and Kyle Smith '94
Brady Anderson	Kristi (Tait) '92 and Cory Anderson '89
Ben Bruenjes	Don Bruenjes, former VCSU athletic trainer, 1989-99
Jessie Johnson	Jody (Schwab) '89 and Dan Johnson '85
Ryan Sand	Jody (Enstad) '85 and Mark Sand '86
Bradyn Sand	Traci (Kadmas) '94 and Scott Sand '95
Tyler Ukestad	Bonnie and Mark Ukestad '92
Brian Fike	Mary (Enstad) '92 and Steve '93 Fike



# ALUMNI

**VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY**

## SHOW YOUR VIKING PRIDE!

Join alumni in showing your pride as a graduate of Valley City State University. We have a limited number of alumni car decals available. These vinyl decals look great on clear or tinted windows. They adhere to the outside of your car window and are removable.

If you would like a free car decal email [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu) with your mailing address!



## Potts named North Star SID of Year

VCSU's Mark Potts was named the North Star Athletic Association Sports Information Director of the Year, the conference announced Wednesday, May 24, during the NSAA Summit meetings in Watertown, S.D.

Potts has served as sports information director (SID) since 2013. Under his guidance, Viking athletics has improved its presence online and on social media. This year he led the creation of a new VCSU athletics mobile app in conjunction with SIDhelp. The app launched in January and has been downloaded by about 650 users.

He took on a large role in the revamped Viking Awards Banquet this spring and the first North Star Baseball Honors Banquet, held in Valley City ahead of the NSAA Baseball Championships. He also served as tournament SID for the baseball championships.

On a day-to-day basis, Potts is responsible for all VCSU athletic publicity, including communication with local media, stats and record keeping, stories, photos and videos. He also oversees VCSU's live video streaming of home events and various aspects of game management.

Potts will now be nominated for the NAIA Sports Information Director of the Year Award.

## Superintendents, principals focus on student success

Nine southeast North Dakota school superintendents and principals came to campus on Thursday, June 22, for the second annual Summit on Student Success.

Participants in the summit included Ned Clooten '89, Wahpeton High School principal; Brian Duchscherer '96, Carrington superintendent; Morgan Forness, Central Cass superintendent; Rick Jacobson, Wahpeton superintendent; Josh Johnson, Valley City superintendent; Steven Johnson, Lisbon superintendent; Michael Severson, Barnes County North superintendent; Cory Steiner, Northern Cass superintendent; and Brian Wolf, Maple Valley superintendent.

Joining the educators on campus was Mike Ness, a member of the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education who previously served more than 40 years as a K-12 teacher and administrator.

The annual gathering aims to enhance the high school to college transition process by strengthening partnerships, creating synergy by actively sharing information and ideas, and ultimately adapting practices that make a difference for students.

Conversations included vertical alignment of math and English curricula between K-12 and college, the use of data-driven strategies in college retention initiatives, and the vision of Superintendent Cory Steiner for a new model of education in Northern Cass.

VCSU educational programs available to K-12 classes were highlighted, including the Prairie Waters Education and Research Center, the VCSU Planetarium, and Medicine Wheel Park, along with the CSSE Roadshow in which computer systems and software engineering

professors and students present on technology career awareness in K-12 classrooms.

Other VCSU opportunities discussed included early-entry and dual-credit programs for high school students, as well as professional development and licensure for teachers, including STEM professional development, extended learning for continued teacher licensure, the Master of Education and Master of Arts in Teaching degree programs, and Transition to Teaching, which provides teaching licensure requirements for someone with a college degree who does not wish to complete an advanced degree.

In addition to President Tisa Mason, VCSU participants included students Stephanie McCann (Verona, N.D.), Mikayla Cramer (Amenia, N.D.), Paige Fettig (Bismarck, N.D.), and Tara Von Hagen (Arthur, N.D.), as well as faculty and staff members John Andrick (director of student academic services), David Bass '77 (assistant professor of education), Jim Boe '92 (director of graduate studies), Greg Carlson (director of institutional research and assessment), Margaret Dahlberg (vice president for academic affairs), Rhonda Fairfield '09 (executive assistant to the president), Alan Olson '84 (associate professor of education), Pete Smithhisler (vice president for student affairs), Charlene Stenson '83 (director of enrollment services), Nate Stewart (athletic director), Greg Vanney (director for marketing and communication), Wesley Wintch (vice president for business affairs), and Jamie Wirth (director of the Great Plains STEM Education Center).



Educational administrators attending the second annual VCSU Summit on Student Success included (front, left to right) Michael Severson (Barnes County North), Steven Johnson (Lisbon), VCSU President Tisa Mason, Brian Wolf (Maple Valley), Mike Ness (State Board of Higher Education); (back) Morgan Forness (Central Cass), Ned Clooten '89 (Wahpeton), Rick Jacobson (Wahpeton), Josh Johnson (Valley City), Cory Steiner (Northern Cass), and Brian Duchscherer '96 (Carrington).



## Retirees gather on campus

A group of 17 retired VCSU staff and faculty, along with a few friends and family members, gathered with President Mason and other current staff members in the Student Center Skoal Room for a luncheon on July 20. Larry Robinson '71, executive director of university advancement, and President Mason shared remarks with the group, and Christopher Redfean, assistant professor and chair of music, gave a presentation on the

recent Concert Choir tour of England and Ireland.

Retirees attending the annual luncheon included (front, l to r) Vern Alm-lie, Jan Drake, Joan (Lundholm) Noeske '62, Ellen Kienitz, Connie Reed, Bev McAllister, Betty Gibbons, Meryl O'Connell; (back) Willis Wagar '71, Bob Bruhschwein '57, Dave Melgaard, Allen Siebert, Keith Baumgartner, Larry Grooters '57, Roger Rand, John Keller '55, and Dick Betting.



McFarland Hall serves as the centerpiece of the VCSU campus, recently named the most beautiful campus in North Dakota.



## VCSU named most beautiful campus in North Dakota

The VCSU campus was named the most beautiful college campus in North Dakota by Hannah Loewentheil, writing for BuzzFeed in May 2017. In an article titled "Here's the Most Beautiful College Campus in Every Single State," Loewentheil wrote: "Located in Valley City, which was named 'Most Beautiful Town' in the state by Expedia, VCSU is bordered by the Sheyenne River on one side and lush, forested hillside on the other."

The 55-acre campus features a blend of historic and modern buildings. The central campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District.

The article can be found online at [www.buzzfeed.com/hannahloewentheil/most-beautiful-college-in-every-state](http://www.buzzfeed.com/hannahloewentheil/most-beautiful-college-in-every-state).

She references Valley City's top spot in a March 2017 article on Expedia's Viewfinder travel blog naming Valley City the most beautiful town in North Dakota. Author Chloe Mulliner selected Valley City for her "Most Beautiful Towns in All 50 States" feature, citing Valley City's historic bridges, Medicine Wheel Park and Sheyenne River National Scenic Byway.

## VCSU Foundation recognizes its major donors

The Valley City State University Foundation honored its major donors at a luncheon in the Student Center Cafeteria on Monday, June 12. More than 90 people attended the event which recognizes individuals and businesses for their continued support to the university through donations, volunteerism and other efforts.

The following donors were recognized for reaching a new level of giving over the past year (July 1, 2016–July 30, 2017).

### *Diamond Level* (\$100,000–\$249,999)

Robert and Bonnie Burchill  
Sanford Health

### *Gold Level* (\$50,000–\$99,999)

Paul and Margaret Dahlberg  
FEI, Inc.  
Mary A. and James D. Kielely '59  
Karen Stuverud Lorig  
Bill and Tisa Mason  
Jane (Sinclair) '86 and Douglas Schindele '87  
Alex Stern Family Foundation

### *Regents Level* (\$25,000–\$49,999)

BEK Communications Coop  
Marlys and Floyd Boschee '56  
Amanda and Ryan Botner '05  
Mary Ostenson Broude  
Sheryl and Rudy Hanson '66  
Patricia (Kohler) '73 and Monte Johnson '74  
Marlys (Burgeson) '50 † and Howard W. Langemo  
Carol (Susag) Nelson '77  
Pat and Allen † Nielson  
Matthew and Jen Pedersen  
Carole (Jenson) '74 and Mark Richman '74  
Noreen (Stevens) '81 and Gene Smestad

Jenneice '67 and Myron Sommerfeld '62  
Jeanette and Wallace Stangler '63  
Valley Plains Equipment  
Larry E. Wicks '66

### *Legacy Society*

Shelley L. (Hanson) Williamson '75

† deceased



#### **Diamond Level**

Robert & Bonnie Burchill, and representatives from Sanford Health

#### **Gold Level**

Bill & Tisa Mason, Matt Klabo '05 (representing FEI, Inc.), Margaret & Paul Dahlberg

#### **Regents Level**

(front, l to r) Rudy and Sheryl Hanson, Howard Langemo, Noreen & Gene Smestad; (back) Matthew Pedersen, Keith Johs (representing BEK Communications), Mitch Smith (representing Valley Plains Equipment), Mary Ostenson Broude, Carole & Mark Richman

## Nathan receives VCSU Distinguished Service Award



President Tisa Mason and Jeff Nathan

City State University. A founding member of the VCSU Foundation Board, this fall will mark his 21st year of service with the board. Nathan currently serves the board as treasurer and a member of the finance committee. He has also served on VCSU's V-500 Board.

The university's highest honor, the VCSU Distinguished Service Award

President Tisa Mason presented Jeff Nathan with the Valley City State University Distinguished Service Award at a meeting of the VCSU Foundation Board in the Student Center Skoal Room on Monday, June 12.

In her remarks, President Mason cited Nathan's longstanding commitment to Valley

is given at the discretion of the president in recognition of exceptional contribution to the university's vision. Since its 1975 inception, the award has been given to a total of 25 individuals and organizations, including Nathan.

Owner of Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel in Valley City, Nathan is a member of the Valley City Kiwanis Club, Optimist Club, Eagles Club, and Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

A North Dakota native, Nathan earned a bachelor's degree in mortuary science from Wayne State College in Wayne, Neb. He is also an honors graduate of the Dallas (Texas) Institute of Funeral Service.

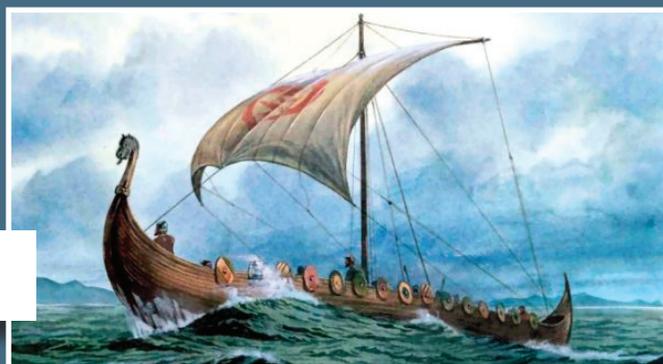
In 1990, Nathan came to work at Oliver's Chapel on Central Avenue in Valley City. In 1991 he bought into the business, and in 1996 he became sole owner of Oliver-Nathan Funeral Chapel. In 1999, Jeff's father, Dennis Nathan, joined him as an assistant.

Nathan and his wife, Teresa, live in Valley City along with her children, Grace and Andrew Tangen. Jeff also has three adult children—son Joshua Nathan (wife JoEllen) of Valley City; Erica Eggers (husband Brian) of Apple Valley, Minn.; and Amber Pederson (husband Carl) of Valley City—along with eight grandchildren.

Teresa (Dooher) Nathan is a 2003 graduate of VCSU, and Amber Pederson is a 2011 graduate of Dakota College at Bottineau's nursing program, which is hosted on the VCSU campus.

# CHECK OUT THE VCSU STUDENT BLOG THE VIKING VOYAGER

[thevikingvoyager.wordpress.com](http://thevikingvoyager.wordpress.com)



## RECOMMEND A FUTURE VIKING!

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY?

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Last

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Your Information: Name \_\_\_\_\_

VCSU Class Year \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Student \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL COMPLETED FORM TO: VCSU ALUMNI OFFICE, 101 COLLEGE ST. SW, VALLEY CITY, ND 58072**

## 2017 Employee Recognition Dinner

The annual Employee Recognition Dinner was held May 11 in the Student Center cafeteria. Hilde van Gijssel, professor in the Department of Science, served as emcee. A host of individuals were recognized, including those listed below.

### *Years of Service*

#### **FIVE YEARS**

Amber Aberle  
Greg Carlson  
David DeMuth  
Daisy Figueroa  
Gary Ketterling  
Nicholaus Meyers  
Christopher Redfearn  
Lonney Scherr  
Teather Sundstrom  
Jeremy Wiebe

#### **TEN YEARS**

Robin Allebach  
Ben Ferguson  
Peder Gjovik  
Margaret Hammerling  
Jennifer Jenness  
Pat Johnson  
Janice Klein  
Stephanie Roelfsema  
Takayuki Yamauchi

#### **FIFTEEN YEARS**

Anthony Dutton  
Heather Kvilvang  
Hilde van Gijssel  
Everett Walker

#### **TWENTY YEARS**

Erik Kringlie

#### **TWENTY-FIVE YEARS**

Pat Egeberg

#### **THIRTY YEARS**

Gary Thompson

#### **THIRTY-FIVE YEARS**

Tilmer Gienger  
Ralph Hooper

### *Student Senate Awards*

#### **STUDENT ADVOCATE 2017**

Kim Hesch, Assistant Director for University Advancement & Alumni Relations  
Kari Stricklin, Director for Student Center/ Student Activities

#### **TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2017**

Jodi Shorma, Assistant Professor in Language & Literature

### *Staff Senate Awards*

#### **“THE DIFFERENCE MAKER” AWARD**

Pat Horner, Assistant Director for Facilities Services  
Jeremy Wiebe, Assistant Director for Annual Giving  
Erica Buchholz, Controller  
Stephanie Roelfsema, Director for Resident Life  
Joseph Munowenyu, Computer Programmer  
Kathryn Woehl, Associate Professor of Social Science

#### **VCSU STAFF EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER AWARDEES**

Drew Storbeck, Facilities Services General Maintenance  
Misty Lindgren, Graduate Studies Administrative Assistant  
Wayne Hammond, Building Services/Central Stores  
Anna Bratsch, Head Athletic Trainer

### *Completion of Degrees and Professional Certification*

Teresa Cole, Administrative Assistant (M.Ed.)  
C.J. Kotta, Director of Network Services/ITSO (A+ Certification)  
Trisha McElroy, IT Support Specialist (A+ Certification)

Lacey Udem, Payroll and Grants Manager (Grants Management Certificate)

Angela Williams, Assistant Professor (M.A.-Special Physical Education)

### *Faculty Excellence Awards 2016*

(listed with title at time of award)

#### **ADJUNCT/SPECIAL APPOINTMENT**

Laurel Westby, Instructor, School of Education and Graduate Studies

#### **JUNIOR FACULTY MEMBER**

Emily Fenster, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Science

#### **SENIOR FACULTY MEMBER**

Bob Anderson, Associate Professor, Department of Science

### *Faculty Awarded Tenure for 2017-18 Academic Year*

(listed with new title)

J. Gregory Brister, Associate Professor, Department of Language & Literature

Casey Williams, Associate Professor, Department of Science

### *Faculty Awarded Promotion for 2017-18 Academic Year*

(listed with new title)

Bob Anderson, Professor, Department of Science

Joan Aus, Associate Professor, School of Education and Graduate Studies

J. Gregory Brister, Associate Professor, Department of Language & Literature

Steven King, Professor, Department of Social Science

Alan Olson, Professor, School of Education and Graduate Studies

Casey Williams, Associate Professor, Department of Science

Jamie Wirth, Associate Professor/Director for Great Plains STEM Education Center

### *Retirements (see p. 22)*

Patricia Geggelman, Associate Professor in the School of Education and Graduate Studies (May 2017)

Wayne Hammond, Building Services/Central Stores (January 2017)

Ron Pommerer, Director for Facilities Services (June 2017)

Everett Walker, Building Services (June 2017)

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**Honorees are pictured in the photos on the facing page; note that not all were present for the photos.**

#### **Five Years**

(l to r) Teather Sundstrom, Nicholaus Meyers, Greg Carlson, Christopher Redfearn, Amber Aberle

#### **Ten Years**

Peder Gjovik, Stephanie Roelfsema, Ben Ferguson, Robin Allebach, Pat Johnson

#### **Fifteen Years**

Heather Kvilvang, Hilde van Gijssel, Anthony Dutton, Everett Walker

#### **Twenty Years and More**

Gary Thompson (30 years), Ralph Hooper (35), Erik Kringlie (20), Pat Egeberg (25)

#### **Faculty Excellence**

Emily Fenster, Bob Anderson, Laurel Westby

#### **Teacher of the Year**

Jordan Bushaw (Student Senate president), Jodi Shorma, Katelyn Willer (Student Senate secretary)

#### **Student Advocates**

Jordan Bushaw, Kim Hesch, Kari Stricklin, Katelyn Willer

#### **Faculty Awarded Promotion**

Steven King, Bob Anderson, Joan Aus, Alan Olson

#### **Difference Makers**

Stephanie Roelfsema, Joseph Munowenyu, Pat Horner, Kathryn Woehl, Erica Buchholz



5 Years



10 Years



15 Years



20, 25, 30, 35 Years



Faculty Excellence



Teacher of the Year



Student Advocates



Faculty Awarded Promotion



Difference Makers

## Faculty/Staff Retirements



**Patricia Gegelman, Ph.D.**

Patricia Gegelman retired from her position as associate professor in the School of Education and Graduate Studies in May 2017.

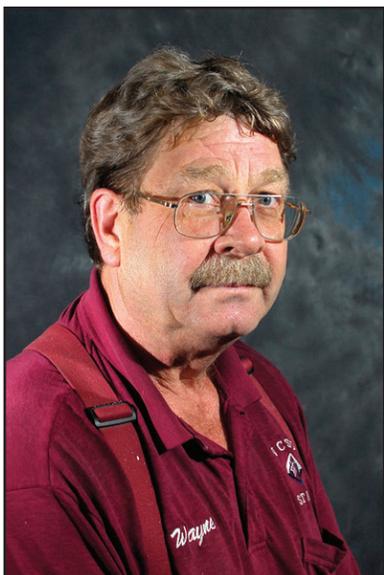
Gegelman joined the VCSU faculty in 1999 on a one-year temporary contract. She was granted tenure in 2005.

According to Sheri Okland, associate professor and elementary education chair, “Dr. Gegelman valued the field of elementary education and worked to ensure that students had authentic opportunities for learning such as embedded field experiments and hands-on activities.”

Over her VCSU career she taught on campus and in VCSU’s Wyoming program and the collaborative program for NDSU students in Fargo. Her recent teaching load included Science Methods for Elementary Teachers, Foundations of Reading Instruction, and Senior Portfolio for undergraduates, along with Supervision and Assessment of Teachers and Learners at the graduate level.

Gegelman holds a bachelor’s degree in special education and elementary education from Minot State University, a master’s degree in educational leadership from North Dakota State University, and a doctorate in education from the University of Wyoming.

Prior to joining VCSU, she taught elementary school in Towner (N.D.) public schools from 1985–97, and prior to that taught in Karlsruhe, Starkweather, Edmore, and Napoleon, N.D.



**Wayne Hammond**

Wayne Hammond worked as the central stores manager and building services for McCarthy Hall before retiring in January 2017.

Wayne started working at VCSU in June 1994 as a building services employee in the Student Center. He has also worked at W.E. Osmon Fieldhouse and Snoeyenbos before settling in his most recent position.

“Wayne took pride in his work and embodied what it means to be a Viking. He was a hard worker and wanted VCSU to look its best,” says Pat Horner, assistant director for facilities services. “He was quick to jump

in and help others where needed and was a good mentor to his student employees and other new facilities services employees.”



**Ron Pommerer**

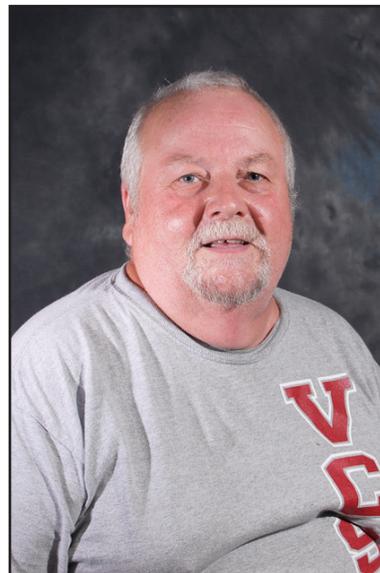
Ron Pommerer retired as director for facilities services in the summer of 2017.

Ron was hired in 1989 as a fireman in the Powerhouse. After a few years, he was promoted to Heat Plant supervisor. A handful of years and many hours of experience later, he became the project manager for facilities services. From there, his title was changed to director and the rest, as they say, is history.

With almost 30 years of experience and a vast knowledge of VCSU, Ron has been a staple in helping maintain our campus and making sure projects go as planned.

“From late-night phone calls dealing with an emergency, to the daily maintenance tasks, Ron’s work in facilities has made a huge impact at VCSU. He was always willing to get the job done, even when it wasn’t convenient,” said Wesley Wintch, vice president for business affairs.

“In the past 30 years or so, Ron has been a dedicated employee for VCSU. Every building, hallway and classroom has been touched by Ron’s service, which has impacted every person on campus,” Wintch noted. The habit of an early morning drive to Valley City for the Oriska, N.D., resident will be a hard one to change. “I have always loved the people of VCSU. Everything I did was for the students—they are the reason I came to work every day,” Ron said.



**Everett Walker**

Everett Walker worked in both Foss Hall and Allen Memorial Library as a building services employee before retiring in June 2017.

After he started at VCSU in 2002, Walker’s first two years of employment at VCSU consisted of building services work in the Student Center. Once he transferred to the Foss Hall/Allen Memorial Library combination, he felt he’d found his place at the university.

“From changing clock batteries to moving books and furniture..., Everett was not only more than willing to help, but when asked about a task, he wasted no time

in getting it done. The library team will miss him, but at the same time wish him the very best,” said Donna James, library director.

# Valley City State University

# HOMECOMING 2017



The VCSU Alumni Association invites you to join alumni and friends of VCSU for many of the activities we have planned for Homecoming this year!

For up-to-date schedules and more information, visit [alumni.vcsu.edu](http://alumni.vcsu.edu) or call 701-845-7203.

## MONDAY, OCTOBER 9

35th Annual Bill Osmon Fun Run ..... 4 p.m. .... Lokken Stadium

## WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

VCSU Volleyball vs. Dakota State ..... 7 p.m. .... Graichen Gym

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

Class of 1967 (50 Year Reunion)  
and Class of 1992 (25 Year Reunion) ..... 2-3 p.m. .... Allen Pedersen Gazebo  
*Join us for an ice cream social. This informal get together will allow you to renew acquaintances and reminisce.*

Campus Tours ..... 3 p.m. .... Allen Pedersen Gazebo

Hall of Fame Social ..... 5 p.m. .... Valley City Eagles Club  
*Alumni and friends are invited to stop by the Eagles Club and socialize with the Hall of Fame inductees.*

Hall of Fame Banquet and Induction Ceremony ..... 6 p.m. .... Valley City Eagles Club  
*Banquet tickets are available by contacting the VCSU Fieldhouse at 701-845-7161.*

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

Alumni Honors Breakfast ..... 8:30 a.m. .... Student Center Cafeteria  
*The Alumni Honors breakfast provides the VCSU Alumni Association with an opportunity to present the Distinguished Alumnus, Alumni Service, Young Alumni Achievement and Certificate of Merit Awards. We will also recognize the classes of 1967 and 1992. Tickets for the breakfast, available at the door, are \$10 each.*

VCSU Bookstore Open ..... 8 a.m. - noon ..... Student Center  
*The Bookstore will also be set up a Lokken Stadium next to concessions before and during the Viking Football game.*

VCSU Baseball Alumni Game ..... 10 a.m. .... Charlie Brown Field

VCSU Softball Alumni Game ..... 10 a.m. .... College Softball Complex

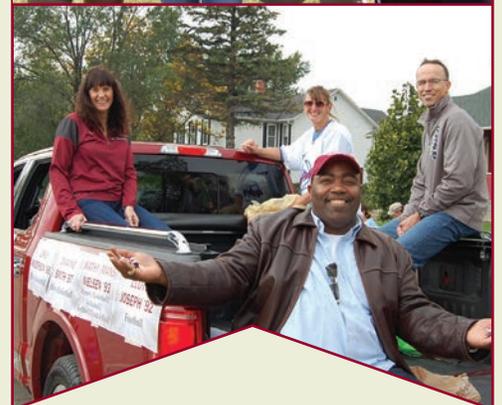
Homecoming Parade ..... 10:30 a.m. .... Central Avenue

Viking Tailgating ..... 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. .... Lokken Stadium

Vikings vs. Mayville State ..... 1 p.m. .... Shelly Ellig Field

Postgame and All-Alumni Social ..... 5 p.m. .... Valley City Eagles  
*This social is open to all VCSU alumni and friends to enjoy an opportunity to socialize and reminisce. No charge to attend this event. (There will be a taco bar set up for attendees and a no-host bar.)*

College Student and Alumni Dance ..... 9 p.m. .... Valley City Eagles  
*This dance is open to all alumni, friends and college students. No charge to attend.*



For up-to-date schedules and more information visit [alumni.vcsu.edu](http://alumni.vcsu.edu) or call 701-845-7203.



ATHLETIC DIRECTOR'S  
**CORNER**  
NATE STEWART



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Twitter: @vcsuvikings  
Instagram: vcsuvikings  
Website: [www.vcsuvikings.com](http://www.vcsuvikings.com)

## Century Club support key to Viking Athletics

As we close the book on a successful 2016–17 year in athletics, excitement is already running high for what’s to come in 2017–18. Our student-athletes have been hard at work this summer training daily for another exciting year of Viking Athletics. We look forward to welcoming back our returning student-athletes this fall while adding more than 100 new student-athletes to the Viking family!

Not only did we have a successful year athletically—winning an individual national championship and sending numerous athletes to nationals—but our student-athletes also worked extremely hard academically to embody the true meaning of the term “student-athlete.” During the 2016–17 school year, we had 100 student-athletes recognized as North Star Athletic Association Scholar-Athletes by the conference. To qualify for this award, students must earn a cumulative 3.25 GPA during their semester of competition.

In fact, we also had 30 student-athletes recognized at the national level as Daktronics–NAIA Scholar-Athletes. To be recognized for this award, students must be either a junior or a senior and have a 3.50 cumulative GPA. Placing 30 students on the Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete team is a departmental record! This is not an easy feat to accomplish while putting in all the hours for practice, games and competition. Our students are dedicated to earning degrees and being champions on the playing fields and in the academic community!

Nine of our 14 teams also earned the NAIA Scholar-Team award with a team GPA of 3.00 or higher. Our women’s basketball team (3.69) and men’s golf team (3.63) both had the third-best GPAs among their NAIA competitors.

Everyone plays an important role in this success of our student-athletes. Our students put in the work, and our coaches and faculty members push them to achieve success daily. Students often comment on the personal attention they receive from VCSU faculty and staff as a major reason for their success.

VCSU alumni and Century Club donors also play an important role in the success of our student-athletes, both on the playing fields and in the classroom. Your financial support for scholarships makes all the difference for our coaches when out recruiting talented student-athletes. As you can see by the success we are achieving athletically and academically, your

gift makes a difference. Our coaches put a great emphasis on recruiting students who want to excel as athletes but most importantly as students.

In August, we will once again begin our Century Club scholarship fund drive. In the brochure describing the program, you will see how your support makes a difference in the success of our student-athletes. I ask that you take time to learn about our students and their stories. You will be excited and inspired by what you find. Our student-athletes are great representatives of VCSU both on and off the fields, courts and track!

Thank you to everyone who plays a role in helping them succeed.



President Tisa Mason (left) and athletic director Nate Stewart (right) are pictured with the 2017 Viking Impact Award winners, recipients of an award presented by the Athletic Department to standout senior student-athletes who are active on campus and successful athletically. This year’s award winners are Georgia Williams (basketball), Morgan Nalley (softball) and Steven Velarde (baseball).

Other major awards presented by the Athletic Department at its annual Awards Night included Athlete of the Year: Lexi Lennon, basketball, and Jared Meiklejohn, baseball; Newcomer of the Year, Megan Johnson, track & field and volleyball, and Austin Dunbar, basketball; and Assistant Coach of the Year, Gregg Horner, football.



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## Track recap: Geisler does it again



Seri Geisler

Valley City State sophomore Seri Geisler won her second straight national championship in May, successfully defending her javelin title during the NAIA Outdoor Track & Field National Championships in Gulf Shores, Ala.

Geisler launched a school-record throw of 52.68 meters (172 feet, 10.25 inches) in the finals as she won the event by more than 12 feet, besting a field of 25 throwers.

A native of Grand Rapids, Minn., Geisler entered the meet with the top throw in the nation at 51.16 meters and delivered on her ranking. Geisler had four of the top five throws in the event, including the top two throws of 52.68 and 49.29 meters. Geisler has now won both national titles in VCSU women's athletics history; last season she also won the javelin championship with throw of 51.37 meters (168 feet, 6 3/4 inches), a school record she has since surpassed.

"Seri has left no doubt that she is one of the most accomplished female student-athletes in the history of this university," said VCSU head coach Chris Johnson. "She is the definition of a competitor. Time and time again, she has stepped up to the plate when it matters. I could not be more proud of the way she responds when the pressure is on."

Geisler's national championship capped off a strong outdoor season for Viking track and field. Three athletes qualified for nationals including Geisler (javelin, shot put), Megan Johnson (long jump) and Mackenzie Huber (shot put). Geisler (shot put, javelin) and Dennis Gonzalez (10k, 5k) each won two conference titles and VCSU athletes picked up 12 all-conference awards at the NSAA Championships. All told, Viking track and field athletes set new school records in seven events this spring.

This summer, Johnson announced the signing of more than 40 track and field and/or cross country recruits for next season, which will more than double the size of the current rosters.



Mackenzie Huber



Megan Johnson

# 2017 FALL SPORTS

Visit [vcsuvikings.com](http://vcsuvikings.com), to view the latest schedules for all sports.

Home games in **bold**. ♦ All times are Central Time. ♦ \*NSAA conference game

## VOLLEYBALL

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Aug. 25-26	Northwestern Tournament, Orange City, Iowa	
Sept. 1-2	St. Olaf Tournament, Northfield, Minn.	
Sept. 5	@ University of Mary	6 p.m.
<b>Sept. 6</b>	<b>Concordia College-Moorhead</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
Sept. 16	@ Presentation College*	1 p.m.
Sept. 21	@ Grace University	7 p.m.
Sept. 22	@ Bellevue University*	6:30 p.m.
Sept. 23	@ Dakota State*	1:30 p.m.
<b>Sept. 29</b>	<b>Viterbo University*</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
<b>Sept. 30</b>	<b>Waldorf University*</b>	<b>3 p.m.</b>
Oct. 4	@ Mayville State*	7 p.m.
<b>Oct. 6</b>	<b>Dickinson State*</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
<b>Oct. 7</b>	<b>Univ. of Jamestown*</b>	<b>3 p.m.</b>
<b>Oct. 11</b>	<b>Dakota State*</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
Oct. 16	@ Concordia College-Moorhead	7 p.m.
<b>Oct. 20</b>	<b>Bellevue University*</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
<b>Oct. 21</b>	<b>Presentation College*</b>	<b>1 p.m.</b>
Oct. 27	@ Waldorf University*	7 p.m.
Oct. 28	@ Viterbo University*	2 p.m.
<b>Nov. 1</b>	<b>Mayville State*</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>
Nov. 3	@ Univ. of Jamestown*	4 p.m.
Nov. 4	@ Dickinson State*	4 p.m.
Nov. 10-11	NSAA Championships	TBA

## GOLF

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Aug. 30	Jamestown Fall Kickoff	Jamestown, N.D.
Sept. 10-11	Dickinson State Invite	Dickinson, N.D.
Sept. 17-18	Jamestown Fall Classic	Jamestown, N.D.
Sept. 21	UM Morris Cougar Invite	Morris, Minn.
Sept. 24-25	NSAA Tournament	Bully Pulpit

## FOOTBALL

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
<b>Sept. 2</b>	<b>Dickinson State*</b>	<b>3 p.m.</b>
Sept. 9	@ Hastings College	1 p.m.
<b>Sept. 16</b>	<b>Univ. of Jamestown*</b>	<b>1 p.m.</b>
<b>Sept. 23</b>	<b>Finlandia University</b>	<b>1 p.m.</b>
Sept. 30	@ Waldorf University*	1 p.m.
Oct. 7	@ Dickinson State*	3 p.m.
<b>Oct. 14</b>	<b>Mayville State*</b>	<b>1 p.m.</b>
<b>Oct. 21</b>	<b>Dakota State*</b>	<b>4 p.m.</b>
Oct. 28	@ Presentation College*	1 p.m.
Nov. 4	@ Univ. of Jamestown*	1 p.m.

## CROSS COUNTRY

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Sept. 8	MSUM Dragon Twilight	Moorhead, Minn.
Sept. 23	Roy Griak Invitational	St. Paul, Minn.
Oct. 6	Jimmie Invitational	Jamestown, N.D.
Oct. 21	Mount Marty Invitational	Yankton, S.D.
Nov. 4	NSAA Conference Championships	Jamestown, N.D.
Nov. 18	NAIA National Championships	Vancouver, Wash.

## FALL BASEBALL

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
<b>Sept. 12</b>	<b>Mayville State</b>	<b>6 p.m.</b>
Sept. 20	@ Univ. of Jamestown	6 p.m.
Sept. 23-24	NSAA-GPAC Crossover, Fargo, N.D.	
<b>Sept. 27</b>	<b>Mayville State</b>	<b>6 p.m.</b>
Sept. 30	@ Viterbo University (DH)	TBA
Oct. 4	@ Univ. of Jamestown	6 p.m.

## Strong mid-season run drives baseball squad to 3rd in NSAA



Jared Meiklejohn

After starting the season with a 6-17 overall record, VCSU won 18 of the next 21 games to go 4 games over .500 at 24-20. The Vikings finished third in the NSAA regular season standings with an 18-6 conference record and a 27-26 overall mark.

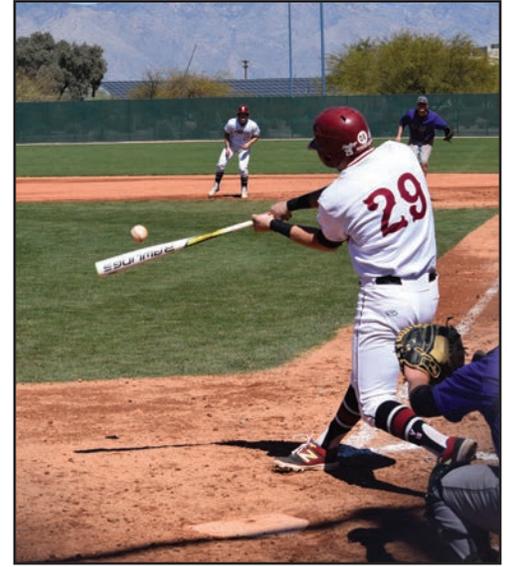
The Valley City State baseball team went 18-3 over a 21-game stretch this spring as the Vikings rode a hot spring to a third-place finish in the North Star Athletic Association.

After starting the season

Valley City State's senior-laden team advanced to the Bracket B Championship of the NSAA Tournament before seeing its season end against No. 2-seed Mayville State University. The Vikings have now posted winning records in two of the past three seasons after having just one winning record in the previous nine seasons.

Brady Anderson, one of 11 seniors, enjoyed a record-breaking season as he set new career records for hits (225), RBIs (156), and doubles (53). He also set a new season record with 19 doubles during the 2016-17 campaign.

VCSU had five seniors named all-conference and two earn Gold Glove awards for their defense. Anderson (catcher/utility) and Jared Meiklejohn (shortstop) were both named first-team all-conference. A trio of Vikings earned second-team all-conference honors: Ben Bruenjes (catcher), Andrew Frank (pitcher) and Anthony Necochea (outfield). Meiklejohn and Necochea both earned Gold Glove awards.



Brady Anderson



Cameron Rall



Nicole Heinitz

## Rall, Heinitz lead Viking golfers

VCSU golfers Cameron Rall and Nicole Heinitz were both named all-conference this spring after finishing in the Top 14 at the 72-hole NSAA Conference Championships. Rall, a freshman, had the top Viking finish at the tournament by taking 13th in the men's competition. Heinitz, a junior, placed 14th in the women's competition.

The conference tournament consisted of 36 holes during the fall season and 36 holes during the spring season. Golfers had to complete all 72 holes to be eligible for all-conference honors. The Viking men placed fourth of six teams, while the VCSU women placed fifth of seven teams.

Overall, the 2016-17 season saw the Viking golf team win four individual titles and four team titles. VCSU also set a new school record for a single round men's team score.

Jared Lentz won an individual title during the 2017 Dickinson State Spring Invite at Bully Pulpit Golf Course. Rall won the individual title at the Minnesota Morris Cougar Invite during the fall, a tournament in which the Viking men won the team title. Kyle Wiebe, Heinitz and the Viking men all won titles during the Blue Hawk Invite in the fall. VCSU's men also shot a modern-day school record round of 291 during that meet.

## Hamade, Moore lead Viking softball squad

The Viking softball team posted a 21-31 record during the 2017 season, advancing to the Bracket B Championship at the NSAA Tournament.

Valley City State was seeded sixth for the NSAA Tournament after going 10-16 in conference play during the regular season. VCSU went 2-2 at the tournament, losing out to eventual champion University of Jamestown in the Bracket B championship game.

One of the season's highlights came on Feb. 26 when junior Kathleen Gallais pitched the 16th no-hitter in Viking softball history. Gallais struck out 10 batters and walked only 2 in a 3-0 victory over Bellevue University. It was the first Viking no-hitter since Emma Nelson did it in 2012.

Juniors Kelsey Hamade and Kelli Moore were both named first-team all-conference. Hamade, an outfielder from Abbotsford, British Columbia, led the Vikings in hits (59), runs (39) and batting average (.362) this season. Moore, a first baseman from Sacramento, Calif., batted .360 for the Vikings, collecting 11 doubles, 1 home run and 28 RBIs. She scored 26 runs and had a .425 on-base percentage.



Kelsey Hamade

## Fall Season Previews

### Football

The 2017 Viking football season begins Sept. 2 as Valley City State University hosts defending conference champion Dickinson State University.

The season opener is slated for a 3 p.m. start at VCSU's Shelly Ellig Field. It is the first of two meetings between the Vikings and Blue Hawks, who have combined to win the last six conference championships. Facing a team like Dickinson State will be an early-season measuring stick for the Vikings as they try to replace 11 senior starters from last year's squad who graduated.

The Vikings are coming off a 6-4 overall record in 2016, during which VCSU knocked off a pair of Top 25-ranked teams. Despite losing half of their starters, VCSU enters the season with high expectations and five returning all-conference players. Perhaps most importantly, the offensive line has remained largely intact with five starters and three all-conference players—tight end Tayler Lentz and offensive linemen Avery Lock and PJ Peterson—returning in the run-block game.

The defensive side of the ball will be anchored by a pair of all-conference players. Middle linebacker Nicholas McBeain is back for one more season after setting new VCSU career and season tackle records last year. The Shakopee, Minn., native was named second team All-American and tops the Viking record book with 446 career tackles. In the defensive backfield Travon Smith returns after intercepting five passes last year in his freshman campaign.

The Viking schedule includes 10 regular season games, including 8 North Star Athletic Association contests. The Vikings play two games each with Dickinson and the University of Jamestown, and with a new conference rule this year, both those games will count in the conference standings.

VCSU will host Jamestown on Sept. 16. Other home games include a nonconference game against Finlandia University on Sept. 23, Mayville State on Oct. 14 for Homecoming, and Dakota State on Oct. 21.

Dennis McCulloch is in his 21st season as Viking head coach. He became the all-time winningest coach in VCSU football history last year with 119 career wins, passing Viking Hall of Fame coach Jim Dew and his 116 victories.



Nicholas McBeain



Dennis Gonzalez

### Cross Country

The Viking cross country teams will feature bolstered rosters for the 2017 season. After not fielding team scores at some regular season meets last year, head coach Chris Johnson has taken care of that problem by hitting the recruiting trail hard and signing more than 45 new athletes to the track and field/cross country program for the coming year, with about 20 of those set to run cross country this fall.

On the men's side, the Vikings will be anchored by returning senior Dennis Gonzalez, an all-conference

performer in cross country last season. He ran an 8k race in under 26 minutes last year, the first time it has been done at VCSU since the cross country program was reinstated in 2009. A deep men's roster could place the Vikings near the top of the conference this season. On the women's team, VCSU will be anchored by a pair of talented junior college transfers joining the squad this fall.

The 2017 cross country season is set to begin Sept. 8 at the MSU-Moorhead Dragon Twilight meet. The Vikings are scheduled to run five races during the season, including the NSAA Conference Championships on Nov. 4.

### Volleyball

A mix of returning veterans and incoming freshman will hopefully be the right combination this season for the Viking volleyball program.

Entering his fourth season as head coach, Adam Longmore brings back a strong core of nine returning players this year. The group has been augmented by the signing of eight true freshman.

The Vikings are coming off a 12-22 season last year that saw them go 7-9 in conference play and finish fourth in the standings. VCSU won its first-round playoff game before losing out to eventual conference champion Viterbo University.

Leading the way this season is a host of talented players at the net. Middle blocker Clarissa Olson, a junior this coming season, received first-team all-conference honors last season. Olson led the Vikings with a .318 hitting percentage to go with 263 kills and 76 blocks last year. Sophomore Taylor Sharp led the team last year with 307 kills, and senior Megan Johnson was second with 266 kills.

Also back are outside hitters Hailie Wilds and Leah Ruter, along with middle Autumn Johnson. The Vikings did lose both setters from last year's team. Head coach Adam Longmore said they'll likely convert a current player to setter to complement incoming freshman setter Rowan Garcia.

The 2017 volleyball season begins Aug. 25-26 with a tournament at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. VCSU's home opener is set for Sept. 6 against Concordia College-Moorhead.



Clarissa Olson

## VCSU Concert Choir tours England, Wales, Ireland

by Dempsey Williams

VCSU student Dempsey Williams worked for the Valley City Times Record this summer. The following article, which first appeared in the June 13, 2017, Times Record, is reprinted with permission of the Times Record and the author.

In what was likely the highlight of the school year for many students, the Valley City State University Concert Choir had the opportunity to visit the British Isles for their England/Wales/Ireland concert tour on May 12–24. The tour included five major concerts across the region, and featured 37 different students as well as conductor Dr. Christopher Redfearn, who is also the chair of the Department of Music at VCSU.

The tour kicked off with a farewell concert at St. Catherine's Church on May 12, and students departed two days later for London. The group spent three days in the capitol, taking a bus tour of the city and later performing at the majestic Southwark Cathedral, a stately sanctuary enhanced by the traditional gothic stylings integrated into the building. After the concert, the group had the chance to participate in Warner Brothers Studio Tour London, which features most of the sets and props from the Harry Potter movie series.

Following their stay in London, the choir traveled to Shakespeare's birthplace of Stratford-upon-Avon, where they performed their set at the local

United Reformed Church and watched a performance of "Julius Caesar" by the Royal Shakespeare Company. They later ventured further north to Wales, staying in the city of Llandudno and visiting 13th century Conwy Castle before performing at St. John's Church. The concert was a benefit for the local St. David's Hospice.

After the performance in Wales, the group packed their bags once again and boarded the ferry to travel to Ireland, where an impromptu performance took place. The ferry landed in Dublin, and the choir briefly stopped in the city of Limerick before departing for their penultimate destination of Killarney.

The tour group spent several days in Killarney, experiencing both the scenery and the arts of the city. One day was spent exploring the oak and yew filled forests of Killarney National Park, while another included a brief exchange day at Killarney Music College where VCSU students learned to play the tin whistle, an instrument closely associated with traditional music of the region. The group concluded their stay in the city with a performance at St. Mary's Church.

For their final stop, the students and Redfearn returned to Dublin to spend a few days in the city before their final performance. The tour group stayed in the residence halls of Trinity College, giving students a taste of how college students live across the pond. Their central living arrangements were conducive to further exploration of the area, with the group visiting the surrounding area and the college library. On display at the library was the Book of Kells, an illustrated collection of the four Gospels of the New Testament that dates back to 800 A.D. considered one of



Christopher Redfearn, D.M.A., director of choral activities and chair of Department of Music



Ireland's greatest national treasures.

The final performance of the tour occurred later at Christ Church Cathedral, and was considered the best performance of the tour. Redfearn says, "By the time we got there, the performance had really gelled. It was a really fun trip and the students performed very well." The tour group spent their last night absorbing the culture of the town and visiting the local pubs, which frequently feature traditional music. One of Redfearn's favorite parts of the foreign tours is their duel nature of performance and cultural experience, commenting, "The music is the reason we're there, but there's also lots of time to experience the culture, and I try to provide students with as many different opportunities as possible to do so."

International choir trips take place every three years. Currently, there are tentative plans for the choir to tour across Italy in spring of 2020.

(left) Concert Choir culminated its tour with a performance in Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin, Ireland.

(right) The tour group poses in front of the Martyrs' Memorial in Oxford, England, an 1843 monument to commemorate the 16th-century Anglican bishops burned at the stake for their religious beliefs.



## Fall 2017 Department of Music Events

Oct. 13	.....Choir Concert.....	7:30 p.m.
	<i>Vangstad</i>	
Oct. 20	.....Instrumental Concert.....	7:30 p.m.
	<i>Vangstad</i>	
Oct. 23	.....U.S. Air Force Brass Group (Guest Artists).....	TBA
	<i>Vangstad</i>	
Oct. 24	.....General Student Recital .....	11 a.m.
	<i>Froemke</i>	
Nov. 6	.....Nick Meyers and Ken Jimenez, Faculty Recital.....	7:30 p.m.
	<i>Froemke</i>	
Nov. 7	.....General Student Recital .....	11 a.m.
	<i>Froemke</i>	
Nov. 18	.....Hannah Gress, Senior Recital .....	3 p.m.
	<i>Vangstad</i>	
Nov 21	.....General Student Recital .....	11 a.m.
	<i>Froemke</i>	
Dec. 1	.....Instrumental Concert.....	7:30 p.m.
	<i>Vangstad</i>	
Dec. 2	.....Tara Von Hagen, Senior Recital.....	3:00 p.m.
	<i>Froemke</i>	
Dec. 5	.....General Student Recital .....	11 a.m.
	<i>Froemke</i>	
Dec. 7	.....Christmas at St. Catherine's .....	7:30 p.m.

For a complete up-to-date list of events please visit  
**[music.vcsu.edu](http://music.vcsu.edu)**

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The VCSU Alumni Association's annual Phone-A-Thon, one of our major activities each academic year, allows our alumni to show their Viking Pride in supporting our university. Donations allow us to stay in touch with alumni in several important ways, including publication of *The Bulletin*, hosting socials and reunions, sponsoring alumni award programs and supporting programs on the campus of Valley City State University. The Phone-A-Thon also provides scholarship support to our current students attending VCSU. By supporting the annual Phone-A-Thon, you can help VCSU achieve the strategic initiatives underway that move VCSU forward.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the 2017 Alumni Phone-A-Thon. The following list includes cash donations and payment on pledges received as of June 30, 2017.

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 ♥ Jim & LouVay White  
 Mark A. Wieland  
 Robert & Kristi Wieland  
 Betty J. Winston  
 Vinton & Darlene Zabel  
 ♥ Deborah J. Zaun  
 Gary W. Zick  
 Michael T. Zick  
 Duane A. Zwinger

**Under \$50**

Sylvia L. Adam  
 ♥ Laurel R. Alber  
 Denise W. Anderson  
 Fern F. Anderson  
 M. Jane Anderson  
 Rita A. Anderson  
 ♥ Tiffany & Brooks Anderson  
 Frances M. Arusell  
 Hilmer & Janet Backhaus  
 Karen J. Baeth  
 Carol J. Baillie  
 Delores L. Baltrusch  
 Shirley A. Barreth  
 Brandon & Alicia Bata  
 Marilyn J. Baumann  
 Timothy & Lorilyn Beck  
 Laura & Mark Becker  
 Patricia & John Beil  
 Ellen M. Berg  
 Ruth L. Berg  
 Ryan & Kelly Bergan  
 Douglas A. Bertsch  
 Gay M. Blazek  
 Shirley E. Boom  
 Calvin & Connie Boyd  
 Louise H. Broten  
 Kent H. Brown  
 R. Mark Brown  
 Lynn C. Brubaker  
 Lois A. Bruce  
 Karen M. Bueling  
 Jean R. Busta  
 Linda M. Bye  
 Patricia A. Carpenter  
 Todd & Teresa Christiansen  
 John & Colleen Clancy  
 Andrea Corbin  
 Sheila D. Cummings  
 Jeronald Davis  
 Marlys A. Davis  
 Vern W. Davis  
 Alpha A. DeKrey  
 Janice M. Delano  
 Nancy M. Deutsch  
 John P. Dewey  
 Mark S. Dufner

Carol A. Duggan  
 ♥ Chris & Heidi Eckart  
 Gene A. Edwards  
 Dale & Theresa Carlson  
 Elfman  
 ♥ Ron & Joanne Ellingson  
 ♥ Don & Bev Enger  
 Jerald & Patricia Enstad  
 Laurie L. Erickson  
 Mary Ellen Erickson  
 Michael & Beverly Even  
 ♥ Kayla & Chris Evenson  
 Kevin & Debra Evenson  
 Wade & Margery Faul  
 Patsy J. Fearing  
 Deanne R. Fedje  
 Leona Feist  
 Joe & Elaine Felchle  
 Janice M. Fiebigger  
 Dustin & Jodi Flaten  
 Steven & Rhonda Fode  
 Steven J. Folmer  
 Sharon K. Ford  
 Eunice I. Fornes  
 Janel Fortney  
 Marcia J. Foss  
 Kevin M. Froeber  
 Gary M. Garman  
 ♥ Teresa R. Garrahy  
 Barbara A. Gendreau  
 Penny & Randy Gengler  
 Barbara A. Gilbertson  
 Eleanor Glenney  
 Sandra K. Goeller  
 Dianne K. Graff  
 Captain K. Gray  
 ♥ Robert & Michele Green  
 JoAnn Gregory  
 Harriet Greuel  
 Shirley A. Grondahl  
 Alan W. Grothe  
 Wendy K. Gullickson  
 Dick & Debra Gulmon  
 Howard J. Gusaas  
 Steve & Jacqueline Hallsten  
 Lyle L. Halvorson  
 Rickie & Mary Halvorson  
 Jason C. Hanson  
 Richard D. Hanson  
 Troy A. Hanson  
 Ralph & Deanne Haugen  
 ♥ Kelli Heath  
 Daryl & Becky Heise  
 Gregory A. Heitkamp  
 ♥ Alisha A. Henderson  
 Meggen Y. Henderson  
 Brenda L. Hill  
 Laura J. Hirvela  
 Thomas C. Holiday  
 Curt & Brenda Holmstrom  
 ♥ Duane & Rose Hovland  
 Ronald L. Humphrey  
 ♥ Tami S. Hunt  
 Russell J. Huschka

Debbie Jensen  
 Marjorie A. Jensen  
 Scott & Erin Jepsen  
 Margaret A. Johnson  
 Mary J. Johnson  
 ♥ Nathan & Nicole Johnson  
 Elvie I. Jones  
 Susan M. Jorgenson  
 ♥ Susan E. Judd  
 Lorell & Renae Jungling  
 ♥ Leslie & Andy Kalmbach  
 Robert J. Keller  
 Douglas & Ann Kelly  
 Alan M. Klefstad  
 Sandra L. Kleinknecht  
 ♥ Jenner L. Klemme  
 ♥ Mel & Erin Klingenberg  
 James & Judith Knauss  
 ♥ Kim & Rhonda Knodle  
 ♥ Dianne & Leslie Koll  
 Patricia A. Korf  
 Mary M. Kreidelcamp  
 Donna M. Krisch  
 Lori A. Kuzel  
 Jeane R. Lang  
 Melvin S. Lang  
 Russ & Pat Larson  
 Ivan A. Lehman  
 Letha E. Lewis  
 Ardis A. Libak  
 Lowell I. Linder  
 ♥ Roger & Kim Lipetzky  
 Darlene F. Loewen  
 Chuck & Linda Luessen  
 ♥ Craig R. Lunde  
 Kent A. Luttschwager  
 Edward & Joy Lyter  
 Judith L. Mains  
 John A. Marshall  
 Lawrence L. Maslowski  
 Louise Max  
 Laura J. McLean  
 ♥ David & Beverly Melgaard  
 Mary Ann Metcalf  
 Jason Metzger  
 Kathy B. Michael  
 Kathryn H. Mikwold  
 Lorraine E. Milford  
 Robert D. Mitchell  
 Brenda R. Mitzel  
 Jeanine M. Moffitt  
 Patricia A. Moore  
 Verna V. Moos  
 ♥ Angela M. Morford  
 Paul A. Morth  
 Shirley M. Moulton-Bachini  
 Curry G. Mund  
 ♥ Stacey A. Nathan  
 Felix P. Ndugwa  
 Jay M. Nitschke  
 ♥ Melinda Olauson  
 Rod & Judy Olin  
 ♥ Cara L. Olson  
 Roger D. Olson

Kaye M. Omdahl  
 Susan K. Paulson  
 Tammi Paulson  
 Franz D. Pedersen  
 Jean M. Peterson  
 Douglas L. Pieske  
 Jean M. Piper Burton  
 ♥ Mark & Cora Potts  
 Delores B. Quigley  
 Jane T. Radig  
 Mike Rasmussen  
 Kurt & Maria Reidman  
 Jeff & Kleda Rerick  
 ♥ Annie M. Retka  
 Barbara J. Richards  
 ♥ Dave & Patti Rickford  
 Brian T. Ringdahl  
 Bonita J. Roswick  
 Lynn A. Rudolph  
 Senator David Rust  
 LaVonne G. Rustad  
 Lisa A. Ruter  
 Shirley D. Ruud  
 Mark & Jody Sand  
 ♥ Scott & Traci Sand  
 Doris A. Sanden  
 Sharon S. Scharberg  
 Donna J. Scherr  
 Harvey & Diane Schilling  
 Tim & Janet Schilling  
 Leo & JoAnn Schmidt  
 Terry A. Schock  
 ♥ John Schonert  
 Becky & Darrell Schroeder  
 Russell L. Schuldheisz  
 Donald H. Schuler  
 Betty & Alvin Schumacher  
 Brenda J. Seher  
 Darlene J. A. Short  
 Janet Simon  
 David A. Smith  
 Pat Smith  
 Shirley L. Sobolik  
 Peggy Sola  
 JoAnn D. Spickler  
 David A. Steele  
 Bruce & Cyndi Stein  
 Dean & Charlene Stenson  
 Carlyn A. Stevens  
 Thomas S. Stingl  
 Barbara A. Stockstad  
 Amy V. Strasser  
 ♥ Janna C. Strege  
 Bradley E. Sufficool  
 Boyd & Kathy Sussex  
 Elaine K. Theisen  
 William & Pat Thomas  
 Herb A. Tillapaugh  
 Kaye L. Topp  
 Delores C. Tracy  
 Matthew Trapp  
 James C. Trett  
 Otto & Linda Uhde  
 Jessie B. Urlaub

Carolyn Utke  
 Kathleen A. Van Sickle  
 Irene R. Visby  
 Everett & Miriam Vogel  
 Linda J. Wagner  
 Janis & Brent Wallender  
 Alice L. Walz  
 Beverly A. Weigel  
 Jeff D. Weigel  
 Roberta K. Werchau  
 Kenneth P. Weshnevski  
 ♥ Scott Westby  
 Gary L. Whiteman  
 ♥ Jeremy & Kara Wiebe  
 Mary L. Wiens  
 Theodore W. Wieser  
 ♥ Kellie M. Wikenheiser  
 Trista J. Williams  
 James & Lucy Wire  
 Cathy M. Wollitz  
 Alan L. Worrel  
 ♥ David & Rhondalyn Wyum  
 Stuart E. Wyum  
 ♥ Brian & Brooke Yanish  
 ♥ Timothy J. Ziemba in  
 memory of Jim Ziemba  
 Davy & Sheila Zinke

**These donors gave on Giving Hearts Day to other VCSU Funds:**

♥ Dale & Liz Hoskisson  
 ♥ Kenneth Lettenmaier  
 ♥ Dan & Katherine McRoberts  
 ♥ Isaac & Katie Olson  
 ♥ Carl Evelyn Peter  
 ♥ Dick & Marilyn Twete

# ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE!

**Deadline: December 1, 2018**

With a minimum \$5,000 endowment gift to Valley City State University through the VCSU Foundation, you may benefit from a federal tax deduction, a North Dakota income tax credit equal to 40 percent of the charitable gift **AND** also qualify for your donation to be matched \$1 dollar for every \$2 dollars you give.

## **NORTH DAKOTA ENDOWMENT GIFT CREDIT**

The endowment credit makes it possible for individuals, businesses and financial institutions to give more, and through their contributions, have a greater impact on the state's quality of life. An endowment is a fund held by a tax-exempt organization where the principal of the fund is not wholly expendable. Only the interest and appreciation earned in an endowment fund can be used for current operations.

An individual may receive a 40 percent tax credit for contributions of \$5,000 or more (lump sum or aggregate in one year) to a qualified North Dakota endowment. If a donor is in the 28 percent federal tax bracket, the tax benefit may look like this:

<b>YOUR GIFT AMOUNT</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
Federal Tax Deduction (28%)	-\$1,400	-\$7,000	-\$14,000
N.D. State Income Tax Credit (40%)	-\$2,000	-\$10,000	-\$20,000
<b>NET COST TO YOU</b>	<b>\$1,600</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>\$16,000</b>

## **NORTH DAKOTA CHALLENGE FUND MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM**

The 2017 North Dakota legislators have once again created the North Dakota Challenge Fund Matching Grant Program. VCSU has been allocated up to \$200,000 of matching dollars if we can raise \$400,000 in private dollars. The VCSU Foundation is using this program to enhance more than 170 scholarship endowment funds.

<b>YOUR GIFT AMOUNT</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
State Match	\$2,500	\$12,500	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL GIFT TO VCSU</b>	<b>\$7,500</b>	<b>\$37,500</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>

*As you can see, your charitable gift can cost LESS and do MORE than ever before thanks to the North Dakota Tax Credit and Challenge Grant Match Program! Please consider making a gift today, and as always, this information is provided for educational purposes only. Please consult your own attorney, accountant or financial adviser for advice on your individual situation.*

**Learn more by contacting the VCSU Foundation at [alumni@vcsu.edu](mailto:alumni@vcsu.edu) or (701) 845-7203.**

## Vikings On The Move

### 1950s

**Marlys (Knutson) '52 and W.L. "Chris" Christianson '52** met at Valley City State Teacher's College in the fall of 1950. Following their graduations in 1952, Marlys went on to teach at Sheldon, N.D., while Chris enlisted in the Navy Air Corps in Pensacola, Fla. In early August 1953 while Chris was still training with the Navy, he and Marlys eloped and were married in Biloxi, Miss. Marlys continued teaching, while Chris flew anti-submarine patrols during the Korean War. Since those days, Marlys and Chris have lived in the four corners of the United States, including Maine, Texas, northern California and Florida.

They welcomed three children. Throughout, Marlys kept the home fires burning, and worked for numerous causes, including significant volunteer activities for their children's schools. She also worked for the American Cancer Society for a number of years. Chris logged 37,000 hours of flight time, both in the Navy and as a commercial pilot for Braniff International Airlines. He flew to Asia, South America and Europe, throughout the United States, and during the Vietnam War, into and out of Saigon, delivering soldiers and supplies.

At the time of his retirement from Braniff in 1989, Chris was qualified to fly on all of the most current airplanes of the times, including the Boeing 747. He also worked in the insurance industry, and owned and operated a mortuary in Dallas, Texas.

Marlys and Chris are celebrating their 64th

wedding anniversary this year in the home they built in northern California in 1967. Their three children and six grandchildren are all thriving, and their youngest grandson graduated from high school this year. They have traveled often and seen many wonderful parts of the world. Above all, they have been blessed with good health, a strong family and dear friends. They send their greetings from California to all of their fellow Vikings from the class of 1952!

**Genevieve (Johnson) '55 and John Richardson '53** live in Camarillo, Calif. Gen still occasionally plays the piano, and John frequently plays pool.

**Ben Richardson '50** is now living within driving distance of his daughter in Ventura, and Gen and John in Camarillo.

**Melvin Lang '57** earned his master's degree from the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) in 1958 after graduating from VCSU. He taught math at Minot State University until 1967. He then went to Walla Walla University (WVU) and taught mathematics and statistics, and served as department chair and assistant academic dean. In 1972, Melvin earned his Ph.D. from UNC. Upon retiring in 2001, he served as the project manager and fundraiser for a \$6 million elementary school. He also started a freshman mentoring program at WVU. Now Melvin is a director of a dental clinic for the needy.

### 1960s

**Beulah (Liudahl) Sears '61** is retired from a teaching career that included a stint with the U.S. Department of Defense on Okinawa. She has served in a variety of positions: English teacher,

physical education teacher, librarian, and college English teacher. Beulah enjoys traveling and recently toured Norway and Russia as an extension of a Blue Danube cruise. She retired to Casselton to be near family.

### 1970s

**Carol (Hurley) '74 and Richard Schmidt '71** will both be fully retired this summer. Richard taught full-time for 41 years and part-time 3 years. Carol will have completed 41 years. They plan on being in North Dakota until the end of September and then will head back to Florida for the winter.

**Cyndi (Levi) '77 and Bruce Stein '76** are still living on the shores of Lake Elsie just south of Hankinson, N.D. Cyndi teaches kindergarten at Hankinson Public School. Bruce retired from teaching in May 2017 after 40-plus years.

### 1980s

**Ruth (Komrosky) Berg '85** is a third grade teacher at Litchville-Marion Elementary School. She also teaches English to students in China. Ruth is married to Ken Berg, and they have five children.

**Meggen (Zinke) Henke '85** still works for the Foundation for Advancement of Christian Education at St. John's Academy in Jamestown. She also works part-time as an administrative assistant at Trinity Lutheran Church. Meggen has been married to her husband, Randy, for 28 years. Their son, Logan, is a junior at Jamestown High School and their daughter, Erin, is a 5th grader at St. John's Academy. They have two dogs, three cats and two guinea pigs.

## HELP US LOCATE THESE LOST ALUMNI

If you know the address of any of these individuals, please contact the VCSU Foundation Office at 1-800-532-8641 ext. 37203 or email [alumni@vcsu.edu](mailto:alumni@vcsu.edu).

### 1945

June (Chapieski) Martin

### 1946

June Olson  
Betty (Norbo, Holmes) Shepard  
Marcia (Sortland) Strom

### 1947

Phyllis Anderson  
Dorothy (Brown) Ells

### 1948

Maxine (Howe) Tait

### 1949

Barbara (Rue) Hoehne  
Wayne Law  
Martha (Nordahl) Meidinger

### 1950

Margaret Born

### 1951

Ruby Berg  
Agnes Fritz  
E. Duane Holly  
Marilyn Murphy  
Phyllis Oien  
Loretta Schneider

### 1952

James Anderson  
Jeanne Fiedler  
Ellen (Webster) Olson  
Bernice (Ferguson) Schutt

### 1953

Doris (Christianson) Andrews  
Carol Carlson  
Ninita (Phillips) Kings  
Marilyn Nelson

### 1954

Marilyn Barr  
June (Slagerman) Polk  
Grace Williams

### 1955

Edwin Carlson  
Marie Eissinger  
Georgena Ertelt  
Rose (Kunkel) Krush  
Dorothy Mattson  
Beverly Meyer  
Lois (Hollinberger) Michelson  
Roy Schultz

### 1956

Cheryl Amundson  
Janet (Freeman) Anderson  
Shirley Bratlie  
Carol Brown  
Arlene Cichos  
Jo Hanson

Arlis Hanson  
Robert Johnson  
Vivian Kalmbach  
Eleanora (Jangula) Lund  
Mary Olmstead  
Vera Olsen  
Arlene Olson  
Montell Romine  
Carol Schultz  
Marjoline Struxness  
Dorothy Suda  
Teresa Weniger  
Gladys Wright

### 1957

Clara Buchfink  
Shirley Dahl  
Gail Fitzpatrick  
Rhoda (Funston) Genzel  
Nellie Giles  
Helen (Hendricks) Harper

Arthur Keller  
Dolores (Reese) Mattheis

Alice (Johnson) Miller  
JoAnne Monson  
Grace Naatus

Patricia Renault  
Verlyn Ricketts  
Julie (Nelson) Seavert  
Cara Thompson  
Beryl Ulven

### 1958

Betty Braa  
Donavon Coleman  
Mark Cory  
Arlene (Walberg) Fail  
Barbara (Strand) Goodyear  
Joyce Harstad  
Jeanette Haskell  
Cleo Johnson  
Gertrude Keller  
Lois Nagel  
Helan (Witt) Oswald  
Jean (Keeling) Rose  
Lila (Shipe) Shaffer  
Lila Shyse  
Marlene (Hoerauf) Walth

### 1959

Dayananda  
Abeywickrama  
Mary (Kitsch) Armentrout

Elizabeth Barnett  
Marlene Bodell  
Bernard Collins  
Kathleen Flados  
Carol Halvorson  
June Johns  
Violet Johnson  
Anna Johnson  
Maryce (Widener) Miller  
Alvin Odegaard  
Isabel Prescott  
Beverly Smith  
Lilly Swenson  
Betty Walby

### 1960

Dale Cameron  
Dale Christiansen  
Grace (Anstrom) Feyereisen  
Isabella Huson  
Eugene Johnson  
Frank Kruger

**Wendy (Reidman) Hogue '85** began working for AARP North Dakota as a senior operations administrator in January 2017. Prior to joining AARP, Wendy worked at USDA Rural Development. She lives in Mandan with her husband, Lyle.

**1990s**

**Mark Dufner '92** was named head football coach at the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC). Mark has been on the UMC football sidelines over the last 15 seasons, serving in a variety of capacities for the program, most recently as defensive coordinator before being named interim head coach in February 2017.

**Kyle Bauer '93** was selected as CEO of Cuyuna Regional Medical Center (CRMC). He will lead a staff of 950 and manage a budget of \$115 million. Kyle has been serving as CRMC's interim CEO for the last six months in addition to his chief financial officer position, in which he served the last 12 years. CRMC is located in the Brainerd Lakes area of Minnesota.

**2000s**

**Trista (Haberman) Gemar '06** was promoted to assistant vice president/loan officer at First State Bank of North Dakota (FSBND) in Oakes, N.D. She has been with FSBND since 2007.

**Derrick Rogers '08** was promoted to vice president/branch manager of First State Bank of North Dakota (FSBND) in Buffalo, N.D. He has been with FSBND for five years, most recently as a loan officer.

**2010s**

**Ashley (Gierke) Horner '12** graduated with a doctor of medicine degree from the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences in May 2017. She will be completing her three years of family medicine residency in Fargo. Ashley and her husband, Nick, live in Valley City.

**Kayla Jilek '12** graduated from the University of Mary in 2016 with a master of science degree in occupational therapy. In April 2017, Kayla joined Therapy Solutions in Dickinson, where she provides services in their outpatient clinic focusing on pediatrics and in their skilled nursing facilities.

**Tyler Kosel '13** has been named the head football coach at Fargo South High School. Previously, he was head coach at Gila Ridge High School in Yuma, Ariz.

**Cameron Lentz '13** and Haley Arvidson of Stanley, N.D., were married on July 15, 2017. Cameron has accepted a new job as district technology director in Grafton, N.D., so they planned to move following the wedding.

**Wayne Engelhard '14** graduated from the University of Mary with a degree in physical therapy. He will be working in Sturgis, S.D.

**Brittany (Lehner) Evans '14** completed a master's degree in physical therapy from St. Catherine University. She is married to **Josh Evans '12**.

**Sadiqah Jihad '15** earned a master's degree in education from the University of Minnesota. She is a teacher in the Minneapolis Public School District.

**In Remembrance**

- Warren Ernie '40, Wimbledon, N.D.
- Irene (Braisted) Wiklund '40, Eden Prairie, Minn.
- Helen (Albrecht) McHattie '44, Longview, Wash.
- Lillie (Christ) Hartl '45, New Rockford, N.D.
- Miles Smart '48, Plymouth, Minn.
- Warren Loberg '50, Grand Forks, N.D.
- James Odden '52, Audubon, Minn.
- Marilyn (Paulson) Sather '53, Valley City
- Owen Wallace '54, Fessenden, N.D.
- Robert Mart '57, Washburn, N.D.
- Stanford Grothe '58, Hawley, Minn.
- Brenda (Smith) Bjorklund '59, West Fargo, N.D.
- Vernon Wieland '60, Hankinson, N.D.
- Lyle Storbeck '65, LaMoure, N.D.
- Sharon Falk '66, Jamestown, N.D.
- Roberta (Kringler) Mundahl '69, Cando, N.D.
- Robert Kelly '81, Valley City
- Dorothy Roorda '85, Valley City
- Michael Pfeifer '88, Cummings, N.D.
- Frances (Cornwell) Kamstra '93, Valley City
- Scott Bekken '95, Bismarck, N.D.
- Joyce (Carter) Bolme, Jamestown, N.D.
- Betty (Grabinger) Hoyer, Jamestown, N.D.
- Frank Johnson, Fargo, N.D.
- Janel (Rudel) Gaugler, Wishek, N.D.
- Kenneth Shimota, Fargo, N.D.
- Zola (Reardon) Williams, Jamestown, N.D.

*Former Faculty & Staff*

- Timothy Wagar '77, Asuncion, Paraguay
- Dean Fritch '82, Valley City
- Gerald Norberg, Valley City
- Lloyd Schmidt, Valley City



*Just Married*

◀ Megan Groen and **Matt Karlgaard '10** were married on May 6, 2017. The couple recently moved from Fargo, N.D., to Willmar, Minn.

**Alyssa Hummel '13**  
and Luke Poppel.....June 16, 2017

**Katelin Wadeson '13**  
and Michael Schwanke.....June 24, 2017

**Cameron Lentz '13**  
and Haley Arvidson .....July 15, 2017

**Adam Palowski '13**  
and Amanda Beezy .....July 15, 2017

**Summer Romine '15**  
and **Derek Burchill '14** .....July 29, 2017



# Lil' Vikings

Have you had an addition to your family within the last six months? We want to know!

Contact Kim Hesch at [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu) to receive a free t-shirt for your new Lil' Viking. Please be sure to tell us your baby's name and birthdate. After you have received your baby's Lil' Viking shirt, send us your baby's photo so we can include it in the next issue of *The Bulletin*. Email the photo to [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu).



**Hattie June Beckman**

August 1, 2016  
7 pounds 7 ounces,  
20 inches  
Jerilyn (Bruns) '15 and  
Brady Beckman



**Charles Vern Ostgarden**

April 14, 2017  
8 pound 13 ounces,  
22 1/2 inches  
Joins brothers Nate (4)  
and Eli (2)  
Theresa (Foertsch) '11  
and Joseph Ostgarden '12



**Aubrey Josephine Boone**

November 5, 2016  
7 pounds 6 ounces,  
20 inches  
Jacob '07 and Amber  
Boone



**June Violet Retka**

December 4, 2016  
6 pounds 2 ounces,  
20 inches  
Annie (Klingenberg) '10  
and Matt Retka



**Ember Rae Kane**

January 18, 2017  
8 pounds 4 ounces,  
21 1/2 inches  
Tina (Greff) '03 and  
Jeremy Kane



**Jed Walter "JW" DeDobbeleer**

January 17, 2017  
7 pounds 9 ounces,  
21 inches  
Joins sisters Ellery (6)  
and Stella (2)  
Brooke (Daly) '03 and  
Josh DeDobbeleer



**Emily Lorraine Anderson**

November 21, 2016  
7 pounds 8 ounces,  
20 3/4 inches  
Joins sister Laura (2)  
Lisa (Gader) '12 and Joel  
Anderson



**Bo Douglas Daugherty**

July 16, 2016  
7 pounds, 20 inches  
Grace Daugherty '08



**Jett William Peschel**

November 16, 2016  
7 pounds 4 ounces, 21  
1/2 inches  
Brittany (Olson) '09 and  
Mike Peschel



**Jacob Joseph Rerick**

October 18, 2016  
8 pounds 2 ounces,  
20 1/2 inches  
Joins brothers Jackson  
(11), Quinn (9), Perry (6)  
Mark '01 and Jessica  
Rerick



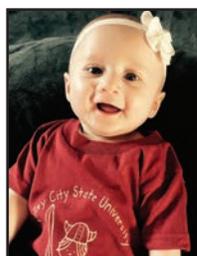
**Lily Marie Buchholz**

October 12, 2016  
7 pounds 3 ounces,  
19 inches  
Erica (Bunn) '10 and  
Casey Buchholz



**Elsie Joy Jorissen**

December 31, 2016  
8 pounds 5 ounces,  
21 inches  
Courtney (Halverson) '13  
and Matt Jorissen



**Zahra Gabrielle Metzger**

January 13, 2017  
7 pounds 1 ounces,  
21 inches  
Carissa (Neumiller) '06  
and Patrick Metzger '06



**Elle Christine Lindemann**

September 1, 2016  
7 pounds 7 ounces,  
20 inches  
Dana (Remboldt) '10 and  
Paul Lindemann



**Elodie Ann Larsen**

February 3, 2017  
8 pounds 10 ounces,  
20 1/4 inches  
Sarah (Rhyan) '13 and  
Justin Larsen

## VCSU Game Night a success!

The 23rd annual Valley City State University Scholarship Auction—with the theme “VCSU Game Night”—was held Friday, April 28, at the Valley City Eagles Club.

The Eagles Club was transformed with decorations featuring a variety of game board and game show themes. With over 480 people in attendance, there were a variety of costumes including Hungry Hippos, Scrabble, Guess Who?, Oregon Trail and Monopoly. Kim Hesch, assistant director of advancement at VCSU, said, “It was fun to see our auction attendees get into the theme this year by dressing up. It’s what makes the atmosphere of our event so fun.”

A social hour and silent auction began at 5 p.m. with participants checking out and bidding on a large variety of gift baskets and other items.

The live auction kicked off at 7 p.m. Attendees had a chance to bid on some great deals while contributing to an outstanding cause. “The scholarship auction is the single biggest event in terms of generating scholarship dollars that the VCSU Foundation Office works on each year,” said Hesch. “Scholarships are vital to VCSU’s success, and all proceeds from the auction go directly to V-500 and Century Club scholarships.”

The Scholarship Auction is a collaborative effort of the VCSU Booster Board and V-500 Board. All proceeds from the event are split 50/50. Items up for bid included a six-course authentic Italian dinner for four, golf packages, UND hockey tickets, Minnesota Vikings tickets, tools, car washes, quilts, a barbecue dinner at the athletic director’s home, a John Deere gun safe and more.

“We continue to have record enrollment numbers, and scholarships play a large role in our continued success in attracting students to Valley City State,” said Hesch. “We were able to reach our goal this year raising over \$80,000 for scholarships.”

The scholarship committee wishes to thank all the businesses and individuals for donating items to the auction; they play a key role in its success. The committee also thanks all those who bought tickets and attended the event; the successful auction contributed much to the support of the V-500 and Century Club scholarship programs.



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1) Thank you to the many volunteers who helped plan the VCSU Scholarship Auction. These are just a handful of the volunteers: (l to r) Tara (Triebold) Praska '05, Rhonda Fairfield '09, Wade Hesch, Loree (Meyer) Morehouse '89, Angie (Jones) Williams '97, Kim (Svenning-sen) Hesch '91, Kevin Kamphuis, Erica (Bunn) Buchholz '10, Jeremy Wiebe '08, Patti Rickford, Brian Yanish and Mary Bostrom.

2) Auction set-up and ready to go!

3) Cards Against Humanity: Erica (Bunn) Buchholz '10, Kelli Heath, Loni Trapp, Katie (Heath) Sather '14 and Andrea (Kelsch) Jensen '08

4) Deal or No Deal: Howie Mandel (aka Tyler VanBruggen) and briefcase model (aka Angela VanBruggen)

5) Loree (Meyer) Morehouse '89 (Candyland Kid) and Kim (Svenning-sen) Hesch '91 (Mr. Monopoly)

6) Guess who? Kathy (Burchill) Lentz M.Ed. '07, Chad and Missy (Stowman) '89 Vollmers, Jan Stowman, Amber Stowman and Mike Lentz '88.

7) Attendees playing a game of Heads or Tails for \$500.





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