Away in the Alpine

plus: Candid: Fortepan Iowa  Pressing Forward: North American Review
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Over the past several months, the value of a college education has been questioned. Politicians, parents, and potential students all are asking if the investment in a college education is worth it. As tuition at universities, including UNI, has increased, it is reasonable to ask if the cost of attendance is worth it to students.

Last spring, the Lumina Foundation reported a study concerning this question of the value of a college education. The Lumina Foundation looked to determine if college graduates are successful and, if so, what factors led to their success. The Lumina Foundation began by recognizing that financial success is not the only component of a successful life. Their researchers recognized that having a comfortable income in a position that you find fulfilling and having a satisfying personal life are the essential attributes of success. We want our graduates to be successful in their professions, in their communities, and in their personal lives.

The Lumina Foundation study found that the key to a successful life was not what school the person attended nor the major the person studied. Instead, the value of a college education was found to be in 5 types of experiences. Those experiences include having a faculty member who makes the student excited about learning, having an internship, being extremely involved in extracurricular activities or organizations, participating in an academic experience that spans more than one semester, and having professors who cared about the student as a person.

Students who have such experiences are nearly 250% more likely to be successful.

At UNI and especially within CHAS, we have focused on these 5 types of experiences for years. We have believed that they are critical to the success of our students while in college and to the life-long successes of our alums. We have emphasized the role of a close relationship between students and our faculty and staff, the importance of student activities and organizations ranging from the Top 10 ranked speech team to our student chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma. And, we intend to be even more intentional about these experiences in the future.

In CHAS, our goal is to help our students become alums who are successful professionally, publically, and personally. I look forward to helping students achieve and celebrate these successes. Please enjoy this issue of Communiqué.

Sincerely,

John Fritch, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences
Flipping through the images stored on the Fortepan Iowa digital archive—some portraits, some candid—is similar to browsing a family photo album stretching back generations. The photos chronicle the subtle and drastic changes of life in Iowa, from fashion to technology; however, the faces feel familiar and as much as places change, they sometimes stay the same. Smiling Iowans peer from the tops of drifting snow banks, or gather around a table to enjoy the company of family and friends. The archive reminds viewers of the humanity in our history, and the past we sometime forget.

“This digital archiving project is made for the public and for the public good,” said Bettina Fabos, associate professor of Communication Studies. “It involved a lot of different contributors across Iowa, and allows our students to have a richer understanding of Iowa, and allows for so many people beyond UNI to have a deeper appreciation of our state and what it means to be Iowan. It can be quite thrilling to scroll through particular years and see Iowa unfold through pictures, to see landscapes and fashion styles changing, but to also see core family values represented over and over again. We hope that people get lost in these photos, download them liberally and feel like this project is part of their own cultural heritage.”

Launched this past year, Fortepan Iowa is a digital archive of photos chronicling over 100 years of Iowa’s history. Based on
Through the project our students end up having some of the most valuable and insightful conversations they’ve ever had with their grandparents, aunts and other family members. They see how valuable Fortepan Iowa is as a public resource.” The team of faculty specializes in public history [Leisl Carr Childers, assistant professor, History], digital photography [Noah Doely, assistant professor, Art], interactive digital studies and computer science [Sergey Golitsynskiy, assistant professor, Communication Studies] and interactive digital studies and visual communication [Fabos].

Fabos hopes to train more volunteers and set up scanning centers across the state. “We aim to work with senior centers around Iowa to collect and scan people’s personal collections before these photographs are lost to the public forever,” said Fabos. “We are particularly interested in glass slides and photo negatives because these generate the highest quality scans, and are the most likely to be thrown away.” They also plan to geospatially locate each image on a map of both Iowa and the world, as they also seek photos of places Iowans have visited, either through war, vacation or other means. “We will be building social media features into the interface so people can log in and share comments on any photograph,” she said. This increase of functionality will likely be available by the end of next summer.

The directors of the Fortepan Iowa project plan to promote it as a tool for further education. Eventually, they see the digital archive being utilized by middle and high school teachers across the state as a learning aid when exploring our state’s history. Looking farther down the road, Fabos hopes the project will inspire similar archives across the nation. “We have already presented the project at a number of major conferences, and will continue to do so,” she said. “There is a lot to do, and we’re excited to work on all of these initiatives.”

the Fortepan Project in Hungary, the archive accepts donated photos from Iowans across the state and then digitizes them before storing them on an interactive timeline at www.fortepan.us. The site is designed for visitors to come and browse the growing collection, with the ability to search photos by year. Currently, the collection is home to just shy of 2,000 photos, reaching as far back as the 1860s and all the way up the 2000s.

Fabos got the idea for the archive after spending time in Hungary on a Fulbright research grant in 2013. There she worked with Miklós Tamási, the co-founder of the original Fortepan project. The Hungarian digital archive currently hosts over 60,000 donated photos at www.fortepan.hu. The project’s name is derived from a once staple film company in Hungary, Forte, which until 2001 made the well-known film negative Fortepan.

The digital archive is the first of its kind in the U.S., and similar to its sister project in Hungary, relies on the donation of photographs for content. Housed at UNI, the project is research-based and student-centered. It is a collaboration between three different departments—art, history and communication studies. In doing so, the project stretches across two different colleges on campus and four different disciplines. “I think UNI is the perfect place to build Fortepan Iowa, because most of our students come from Iowa—from towns all across Iowa,” said Fabos. “Through the project, our students end up having some of the most valuable and insightful conversations they’ve ever had with their grandparents, aunts and other family members. They see how valuable Fortepan Iowa is as a public resource.” The team of faculty specializes in public history [Leisl Carr Childers, assistant professor, History], digital photography [Noah Doely, assistant professor, Art], interactive digital studies and computer science [Sergey Golitsynskiy, assistant professor, Communication Studies] and interactive digital studies and visual communication [Fabos].

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In the North American Review (NAR), the oldest literary magazine in North America housed at UNI, celebrated their bicentennial with an academic and creative writing conference. The NAR Bicentennial Creative Writing & Literature Conference was held June 11-13, 2015, and featured many remarkable speakers, including Gary Kelly, Steven Schwartz, Patricia Hampl, Judith Harris and Martín Espada.

Jeremy Schraffenberger (Languages and Literatures) coordinated this event with help from CHAS, the Department of Languages and Literatures, the Department of Philosophy and World Religions, the Department of Psychology, the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Criminology, and many others.

Puppets for Hire

This past February, the theatre department staged a production of Avenue Q, the Broadway musical that places a unique spin on the children’s shows Sesame Street and The Muppets. The show blends the adult themes of sexuality, immigration and post-college graduate life with the cheeky antics of an otherworldly, puppet cast. Featuring memorable songs like “What Do You Do with a B.A. in English?,” “It Sucks To Be Me,” “If You Were Gay” and “The Internet is For Porn,” the musical played to packed houses in Strayer-Wood Theatre.

After the final curtain had fallen, and the UNI cast had taken their final bow, the handcrafted puppets were not retired. Instead, they were patched up and advertised for rent at the National United States Institute for Theatre Technology Conference in Cincinnati and to alumni who were scheduled to produce the show themselves. Dressing lists were also created for companies who wanted to rent the puppets, along with a condensed list for those interested in a scaled-back production.

Since taking the stage at Strayer-Wood, the gang has appeared with Trainwreck Production in July under the direction of UNI alumnus Ryan Decker (B.A. 2012) and has spent the holiday season at Theatre Cedar Rapids. ...
UNI'S SCIENCE EDUCATION

program has expanded its three-year grant from the Iowa Department of Education Title ITB Mathematics and Science Partnerships program. This extended grant will provide a continuation of the Integrated Crosscutting Concepts in Iowa Science Classrooms (ICCISC) program.

The professional development program started in the summer of 2014. The purpose is to help teachers integrate crosscutting concepts in the development and implementation of standards-based science curricula using research-based instruction, which will prepare students in science and other STEM-related fields. Teachers meet virtually once a month and twice in person over the course of the academic year to continue to build their network and further support one another in the implementation of their curriculum.

This year, 2015–16, an additional 21 science teacher colleagues joined the original 24 secondary science teachers from across the state of Iowa. Together the teachers will develop, revise and implement instructional units in their science classrooms in collaboration with UNI science education faculty, Area Education Agency (AEA) science consultants and master high school teachers.

TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIPS

JWCC (John Wood Community College) will allow students en route to a two-year associate of applied science (AAS) degree to easily transition into a four-year applied bachelor’s degree program. The new transfer agreements took effect spring 2016 and include JWCC, Western Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Missouri Western State University and UNI.

"The University of Northern Iowa and the Department of Industrial Technology are excited about this opportunity to expand our regional connections with John Wood Community College," Robert Frederick, UNI community college liaison and executive director of student engagement and outreach said. "Being a leader in Iowa in transfer articulation, the University of Northern Iowa is known as a transfer friendly institution; over 38 percent of our overall student body and 69 percent of our Technology students are transfer students. For nearly 30 years, the Department of Technology has been partnering with community colleges to welcome students into our fields and manufacturing careers."

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THE DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

hosted the Iowa Physics Competition on Thursday, April 17, in the McLeod Center.

ARTS + SCIENCES = BIG BANG

Mayim Bialik visited UNI in April 2016, where she gave a lecture at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center (GBPAC), titled "Arts + Sciences = Big Bang." Bialik, a neuroscientist and actor, discussed her life and career in science and the arts, and the importance of both STEM education and the arts as critical components to her life.

Bialik’s lecture was part of the Joy Cole Corning Distinguished Leadership Lecture Series. Established in 2001 by UNI alumna and former Iowa Lt. Gov. Joy Corning, the series’ purpose is to bring to campus nationally and internationally renowned leaders in such areas as arts, business, education, government and judiciary. It provided students with an understanding of what constitutes leadership across disciplines and helps them discover how people become leaders in their fields.

Bialik is well known for her lead role as Blossom Russo in the early-1990s sitcom Blossom and now appears regularly as neurobiologist Amy Farrah Fowler on The Big Bang Theory for which she has received four Emmy nominations. She earned a B.S. in neuroscience and Hebrew and Jewish studies from UCLA in 2000, and completed her doctorate in 2007, also at UCLA. …
Philosophers nowadays, in addition to their research and writing, should be on the front lines of industry, and push the public to think and do things in new ways,” said philosophy and world religions alumnus Daniel Herrera. After graduating, Herrera has been in the trenches, so to speak, of the fight for social change by volunteering with AmeriCorps and City Year, Inc. and now working as a legal aide in New York City (NYC) where he represents at-risk youth, all while working towards his graduate degree in Urban Policy Analysis and Management at The New School in NYC.

Originally from San Antonio, Texas, Herrera found the move to Iowa a bit of a culture shock. Aside from the difference in food and his first glimpse of a snowy winter, Iowa and the Cedar Valley gave him his first experience away from home. “Like any new change, there were some growing pains,” he said. “I had to get used to a new way of life, but after a while Iowa and UNI felt like a second home, and the experience gave me the courage and confidence to live anywhere.”

Herrera came to UNI in pursuit of a merit-based scholarship. “I also wanted something completely different from what I called home,” he said. “My senior year of high school, I read Jean-Paul Sartre’s ‘Existentialism as a Humanism,’ and it was very powerful. I took away from that reading the message that, you shouldn’t wait for permission to live your life authentically. That really opened up a lot of intellectual doors for me, and so I wanted to study philosophy more in-depth.”

While at UNI, he found many places to fit in and express himself beyond the classroom. He found a small group of other students also from San Antonio, who could share a similar base of references and also took film and theatre classes, which introduced him to other like-minded individuals. He also enjoyed attending No Shame Theatre, which is a student run variety show, held every other Friday in the Communication Arts Center. “I’d write essays and read them,” he said.

Herrera was the first of his family to graduate from college. “As I learn more about U.S. history and the marginalization of people of color in this country, first-generation college graduates are a big deal,” he said. “They can be that catalyst for changing the status quo in a family, and influence future generations.” He hopes his accomplishments will influence other members of his family to pursue further education, and people who may have a similar background to him.

Growing restless with philosophy, Herrera decided to join AmeriCorps. “I realized I’d hit a wall with my academic studies, and I was increasingly interested in social justice and being more on the ground and working directly with vulnerable communities,” he said.

With AmeriCorps, he worked with an organization called City Year, Inc. The group works to bridge the gap between students’ needs and what educational systems in place are able to provide. Working with high-poverty communities, they work to provide students with individualized support. The group claims that America’s schools are designed to provide extra support to just 15 percent of students, while in many high-poverty communities, 50 percent or more require additional academic, social or emotional support. And of the one million students who drop out each year, approximately half of those students come from 12 percent of the nation’s schools. It is in these communities that City Year, Inc. works to improve graduation rates. “It was a positive experience,” said Herrera. “I served as a core member in San Antonio, working in at-risk schools, serving middle school students. I then did similar work for them in Denver and eventually in New York City.” He worked one year with AmeriCorps before working two years as a full-time staff member with City Year, Inc. “I had the opportunity to work with young people from all across the country,” he said, “as well as passionate educators really trying to make a difference in the lives of children.”

His passion for social work and change has driven Herrera to become a legal aide in New York. Working for an alternative to incarceration program called ExperanzaNY, Inc., Herrera acts as a court advocate for teenagers 17 and under. His aim is to get these kids community-based services as an alternative to prison sentences. “I wanted to continue working with at-risk youth,” he said. “Especially because I had seen inequality through an educational lens and I wanted to see it through criminal justice. Some days can be really tough, but it’s all about maintaining perspective. At the end of the day, I can go back to my apartment and recuperate. For a lot of my kids and families, they don’t have anything. Moreover, these are teenagers who are sometimes looking at up to five years of prison time.”

Meanwhile, Herrera is working towards his graduate degree in Urban Policy Analysis and Management at The New School in New York. “One of my specializations is data science and data visualization,” he said. “One of my goals is to be become fluent in the language of all things data and be able to present it clearly to various stakeholders who are making a positive difference in the world. All of my professional experience has revolved around urban issues and I think as our cities around the world evolve, policy makers will be needed to ensure equity and social justice.”
During the hustle and bustle of their 200th birthday celebration, the editors of the North American Review (NAR) worked to relaunch the decade-long dormant NAR Press. To commemorate the bicentennial, and the publication’s history, editor and associate professor Jeremy Schraffenberger edited and published The Great Sympathetic: Walt Whitman and the North American Review, an in-depth anthology, examining the great American bard and his work to shape the longest-lived magazine in North America.

Whitman—having only published seven essays in the NAR—may have appeared an odd choice compared to the long list of notable names whose works live within the magazine: Henry James, Mark Twain, James Russell Lowell, Amy Lowell, William Cullen Bryant, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, just to mention a few. However, when compared to Whitman, it’s hard to find another author whose work had more influence, and as Schraffenberger says in his introduction to The Great Sympathetic, “Walt Whitman feels like the exact right choice as a subject for the celebration of a momentous milestone like a bicentennial, especially for a magazine that has from its very beginning been, like the poet himself, intensely interesting in shaping and defining American literature.”

Poet Martín Espada, who contributed the forward and a pair of poems to the anthology, added to Schraffenberger’s reasoning. “Historically, Whitman had a close relationship with the NAR and its editors. Whitman’s influence has gripped the imaginations of those who write for the NAR since the first publication of ‘Leaves of Grass.’ Whitman’s spirit is still present in the pages of the NAR. This anthology is proof.”

The anthology itself contains the seven original essays by Whitman published in the magazine, along with a staggering amount of scholarship printed about Whitman and a score of creative work inspired by Whitman.

In his forward, Espada celebrates the vast reach and manifestation of Whitman’s work throughout Americana, calling to light noted voices such as Allen Ginsberg, Carl Sandburg, Bob Dylan, Marge Piercy and many others. Espada notes how Whitman’s words stretch beyond the borders of the states, influencing the work of the great Pablo Neruda. However, Espada feels the world remains unready for Whitman, “his humanism, his vision of democracy, his sympathy, especially for the despised, his vow to speak for ‘the rights of them the others are down upon.’”
When asked why he feels this way, Espada said, “Whitman is still an outlaw poet. If we were to adopt the radical egalitarianism that Whitman expresses in his poetry—a radical egalitarianism that today would be dismissed as ‘socialism’—this country would be another country entirely. If we were to embrace Whitman's sexuality, wholeheartedly, half the preachers would be out of a job and half the politicians would be out of work. What would Whitman say about the people who still wave the Confederate flag? What would Whitman who wrote ‘The Wound-Dresser,’ the Whitman who was a nurse caring for dying soldiers, make of those who romanticize the Confederacy?” When asked what it would take for the world to become ready, Espada responded, “I don’t know what has to happen for the world to become ready for Whitman. Maybe we should be reading more Whitman. He wrote: ‘I am he attesting sympathy.’ We could use more sympathy in this profoundly unsympathetic world. He gave good advice. It’s time to listen.”

Espada said his experience working with the NAR and the NAR Press went well. “Jeremy Schraffenberger is an intelligent, insightful, patient and energetic editor,” he said. “I also have nothing but praise for Vince Gotera and Rachel Morgan [other NAR editors].” He finished by saying he would be willing to work with the press or the magazine in the future, “All they have to do is ask.”

The Whitman anthology wasn’t simply a single spark for the NAR Press. Instead, the editors hoped it would be the beginnings of a roaring blaze. “What the press can do for us as editors is remind us that we are participating in a larger conversation,” said Schraffenberger. “With the press we can see ourselves as having multiple avenues for expression and articulation, multiple avenues for us to promote literature, art and culture. The NAR Press is a good reminder that the NAR is a larger entity than just the magazine. That the North American Review is an idea about spreading the word about literature, about celebrating literature, and about celebrating the many diverse voices we find in American literature. The NAR Press compels us and pushes us out there.”

Continuing in that same vein of exploring the NAR’s literary history, the press is moving forward with a new book, tentatively titled Manifold Nature: John Burroughs and the North American Review, which holds unique ties to the previous release. “There is a Burrough’s essay in the Whitman book as he was a friend of Whitman’s,” said Schraffenberger. “He was also a naturalist. He was very prolific, and we happened to publish about 20 of his essays, so this book will probably be a bit more robust. There were also some essays about him and some reviews of his book.”

Although not read as heavily as others who have appeared in the NAR, Schraffenberger said Burroughs was and is a very important writer. As a prominent writer in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, Burroughs’ work was largely non-fiction and centered on themes of nature and philosophy. Today his writing is viewed as a cornerstone to ecocriticism and literary ecology. His legacy is reflected in the John Burroughs Association, which maintains the John Burroughs Sanctuary in Esopus, New York, a 170-acre plot of land containing Slabside—the personal cabin built by Burroughs. The association also awards a medal each year to an author of a distinguished book of natural history.
The Sacrifice Poems released in 1975

"We are collecting all of his essays," said Schraffenberger. "We are also going to annotate them, contextualize them a little bit, and include a preface written by Joan Burroughs, who is John Burroughs great granddaughter." Joan Burroughs' participation in the project stems from the collaboration Schraffenberger has sought with the John Burroughs Association, which highlights another invaluable asset of the press, as outlined by Schraffenberger, "The NAR and the NAR Press are good for creating relationships with other people. [The Whitman book] was blurbed by Ed Folsom, the premier Whitman scholar who works just down the road at the University of Iowa, and Karen Carabiner who is also a very well known Whitman scholar. We reached out to them, and they were kind enough to write blurbs for our book. Now we have a relationship with them, and they know us and what we do, and they'll get in touch with us regarding things they might be doing, and we will reach out to them with future projects."

When the Burroughs book is published in the fall of next year, the plan is to hold a release event at the cabin, Slabside, in partnership with the John Burroughs Association. Schraffenberger said this event would be open to the NAR and the NAR Press' student staff. Currently, there are three undergraduates working with the NAR who are assigned to the press: Katherine (Kat) Smith, Morgan Pratkelis and Theodora [Teddie] Hyde, along with one graduate assistant: Kathryn [Kat] Wohlpart.

Wohlpart said this experience is aligned perfectly with her educational interests. "I'm in the creative writing program so it's interesting to see a book being put together," she said. "I've always been interested in smaller presses—I've worked for an independent newspaper in the past. That's always been my focus, the small, independent hands-on care. So, this has been a really cool insight into that. I couldn't have even imagined this would be my graduate assistantship."

Revisiting their history is merely one avenue the press is pursuing, said Schraffenberger. "I think if we just did that, it would be a noble goal that would draw attention to our heritage. But the bicentennial was something we saw as a pivot point too; where we are not just looking back at the past, but we are trying to do new things, think about new initiatives and still celebrate contemporary literature." Next year they plan to launch a poetry book prize that will eventually publish an entire book of contemporary poetry of a single poet. Also, in the works, a collection of essays edited by fellow NAR editors Grant Tracey and Shelly Criswell about the craft of fiction. The collection will feature chapters penned by Steven Schwartz, Charles Baxter, Joan Silber, Jackson Rodgers and Todd James Pierce, among others. "It's neither a historical work nor a contemporary work," said Schraffenberger. "It rests more in-between, focusing on the craft of writing rather than the writing itself." In essence, there currently exist three distinct routes the NAR Press is pursuing: historical, contemporary and craft-based publications.

But, as Schraffenberger explained, this unique flexibility is one of the benefits of having the press exist in the form it does. Unlike a typical press at a university, the NAR Press is slightly different. It's not a peer-reviewed scholarly press, and as such, the editors are allowed more freedom and are, as Schraffenberger put it, "calling our own shots, and creating what we think are interesting books." Although not like other university presses, Schraffenberger feels UNI only benefits. "Just having a press at a university lends it a little more prestige," he said. "It also will, down the line, offer us opportunities to collaborate across department lines. Say, someone in political science wants to be involved in a book we are publishing, that opportunity is there. The press and the magazine can be, and have been," he continued, "a place where people come together, and they come together for all the reasons a university exists: the love of learning, community, critical thinking and creativity."
Humanities and Fine Arts

Melinda Boyd (School of Music) received a commission from the Royal Swedish Academy of Music (RSAM) to write an article on Swedish-German composer Ingeborg von Bronsart. The article will be published (in English and Swedish) in the RSAM’s online resource, “Swedish Musical Heritage.”

Jeff Byrd (Art) has exhibited his works of performance art in Berlin, London, Boston and Kalisz, Poland, in the past year. His works are titled “Longing,” “Bleeding Heart,” “Security” and “Enough Stuff.”

Roxanne Heimann (Communication Studies) in her 11th year teaching has been awarded the Iowa Communication Association’s Outstanding Adjunct Teacher Award for 2015.

Angela Burda (Communication Sciences and Disorders) has been awarded the Regents Excellence Award for Faculty in recognition for her excellence in teaching and scholarship. Alison Altstatt (School of Music) presented a lecture as part of the “Musically Speaking” series, titled “Re-membering the Wilton Processional: A Manuscript Lost and Found.” The lecture highlights Altstatt’s efforts to reconstruct, literally page by page, the late 13th- to early 14th-century processional from the women’s Benedictine house of Wilton Abbey in England that disappeared around 1860. Altstatt has assembled 34 single leaves of the original manuscript, which were strewn throughout various libraries. “The manuscript is a primary source that tells us much about the ritual, music and poetic tradition of the women of Wilton Abbey,” said Altstatt. “It significantly adds to our knowledge of religious women in medieval England, and the beginning of the Gregorian chant revival at Solesmes Abbey. This manuscript also serves as a case study in the emerging field of digital fragmentology.”

Jean McDonald (School of Music) has been awarded the Regents Excellence Award for Faculty in recognition for her excellence in teaching and scholarship.

Francesca Seans (Communication Studies) and Robert Neymeyer, student supervisor, Grout Museum District, received the 2014 Loren Horton Community History Award for “Sons of Jacob Synagogue.” The pioneering documentary explores the histories and experiences of the Jewish community in Waterloo, Iowa, from the early immigrants seeking new opportunities and freedom from persecution to the present day. The award was presented by Governor Terry Branstad and Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds during the annual Awards for Excellence in History held by the State Historical Society of Iowa at the State Capitol.

JoAnn Schnabel (Art) received a Fulbright grant to teach abroad. Schnabel taught ceramics in the spring of 2016 at the Anadolu University in Eskisehir, Turkey. She was also a senior lecturer there. The Fulbright Program is a highly competitive, merit-based grants and international educational exchange program for students, scholars, teachers, professionals, scientists and artists. Founded in 1946 by United States Senator J. William Fulbright, the program helps promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries through the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills. Schnabel is among roughly 8,000 students and faculty to receive a Fulbright for the next academic year.
Kyle Gray (Earth Science) has been awarded the Donald and Carolyn Biggs Award for innovative and effective earth science teaching among early career faculty in geoscience education. The award is sponsored by the Geoscience Education Division of the Geological Society of American, and is one of the Geoscience Education Division’s Named Awards.

Joel Haack (Mathematics) was selected by United Faculty as the first recipient of the “Faculty Administrator of the Year” award. The award recognizes UNI faculty administrators who uphold the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) principles of academic freedom, tenure and faculty governance.

Haack returned to teaching in the Department of Mathematics in the fall of 2015 after serving 11 years as Dean of the College of Natural Science, the College of Humanities and Fine Arts and eventually the College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences. He completed a total of 20 years in administration at UNI, having served nine years a head of the Department of Mathematics prior to becoming Dean.

Sadik Kucuksari (Technology) has been awarded $280,897 from the Carver Foundation to acquire training systems for the Electrical Engineering Technology (EET) program. The new training systems will provide students with experience regarding both wind and solar energy. Kucuksari has also been awarded $18,945 from the National Science Foundation-EPSCoR UNI Capacity Building Grant for a real-time simulator of power systems. The simulator will bring a new avenue for students to better analyze future power-system networks.

Aleksandar Poleksic (Computer Science) was awarded an Outstanding Paper award at the 2015 IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) International Conference on Electro/Information Technology Conference in Naperville, Ill. His paper was titled “Towards a Better Measure of Protein 3D Model Quality.”

Sarah Diesburg and Ben Schafer (Computer Science) have received an NCWIT [National Center for Women and Information Technology] EngageCSEdu Engagement Excellence Award for their work designing engaging laboratory exercises for CSCI 1510 Introduction to Computing.

Theron (TJ) Hitchman (Mathematics) was recently interviewed by The Chronicle of Higher Education about his work with inquiry-based learning (IBL) in his university-level mathematics courses.

Ben Schafer (Computer Science) was recognized at the Code.org annual summit for training 570 teachers in Iowa. Schafer ranked No. 2 in the “500 Club,” which is a Code.org affiliate of trainers who trained more than 500 teachers in the first year of the program.

“"I love my time conducting training workshops with teachers,” said Schafer. “The excitement and energy around this curriculum and computer science in general has been fantastic. I have already started conducting workshops for this school year and hope to once again be in the '500 Club.'”

Launched in 2013, Code.org is a nonprofit dedicated to expanding access to computer science and increasing participation by women and underrepresented students. The organization’s vision is every student in every school should have the opportunity to learn computer science, and that computer science should be part of the core curriculum.

Steve O’Kane (Biology) has been awarded the Regents Excellence Award for Faculty in recognition for his excellence in teaching and scholarship.

Andrew Stollenwerk (Physics) has been awarded the 2014-15 Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence in Departmental Programs.
Professional Development Assignments

Spring 2015
Robert Martin Chin (Chemistry and Biochemistry) Synthesis of Diruthenium Alkane Complex.
David Grant (Languages & Literatures) Rhetorical Education: An Introduction to Thinking and Communicating in College and Beyond.
Nageswara Roa Posinasetti (Technology) Optimization Methods for Sustainable Manufacturing Using Biodegradable Metal Working Fluids.
Paul J. Siddens (Communication Studies) Adapting the Epic Poem “Dante’s Inferno” into Contemporary Context for Live Theatrical Production as an Original Play.

Fall 2015
Gretta Berghammer (Theatre) A Spectrum of Collaboration: A Visionary Approach to University and Professional Youth Theatres Working Together to Create, Implement and Sustain Theatre for Youth with Autism.
Jihwa Noh (Mathematics) Teacher Fidelity Decisions and Their Impact on Lesson Enactment.
Chris W. Ogbondah (Communication Studies) A Critical Analysis of Media Coverage of Terrorism in Africa.
Aleksandar Poleksic (Computer Science) Applications of Digital Signal Processing in Drug Discovery.

Spring 2016
M.D. Salim (Technology) A Web-Based Decision Support System for Optimizing Snow Removal Assets in Varying Temperatures.

Final Stanzas
Grant Tracey
In these 11 short stories by a true master of the form, Grant Tracey guides us across a wide expanse of time and place but always deep into the interior lives of the characters we encounter. From 1918 New York to 1971 Toronto to contemporary Cedar Falls, Iowa—instantly we become involved in the complex relationships of movie actors, college professors, school custodians, teenagers, housewives . . . always firmly and richly enmeshed in their cultures via copious allusions to history, literature, cinema, TV, and the slang that punctuates their spot-on dialogue. Final Stanzas is a tour de force by a writer who is always mindful of his craft and attentive to the minutest of details.

Lamentations on the Rwandan Genocide
Pierre-Damien Mvuyekure
Lamentations on the Rwandan Genocide, 2nd Edition, offers a powerful, poetic response to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and its aftermath. This edition of the collection by Pierre-Damien Mvuyekure adds three new poems and additional explanatory notes to his original 2006 collection. Ishmael Reed lauded that 2006 release, stating that Mvuyekure, one of our best critics, uses his rich, eloquent poetic voice to insure that the memories of one of the 20th Century’s most horrific Holocausts won’t be buried as unsung as the victims were.

Finding Fairfield
Jeffrey S. Copeland
Finding Fairfield is the “behind-the-scenes” story of the writing of Copeland’s Ain’t No Harm to Kill the Devil: The Life and Legend of John Fairfield, Abolitionist for Hire. John Fairfield was one of the most gifted and notorious abolitionists fighting for freedom for all in the decade before the American Civil War. In the pages of Finding Fairfield, Copeland recounts his adventures in gathering the details and information needed to write Fairfield’s tale. These adventures took him to historic homes, important landmarks of the pre-Civil War era, Underground Railroad depots/museums, and other sites frequented by Fairfield and others who proudly carried the torch of abolitionism. Finding Fairfield is both the story of a writer’s craft and an engaging travelogue.
Before the start of the 2015 fall semester, 14 students ventured out West on a two-week learning expedition. Led by professor Chad Heinzel, the group embarked on a journey as part of the course, The Geology and National History of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. "The primary goal was to see and experience things we can’t experience in Iowa, or around the Cedar Falls area," said Heinzel. And judging by the extensive photo albums the group returned with, that goal was sufficiently achieved.

Making a large loop, the group—which consisted of Madison Beeler, Jayna Brechwald, Emily Engle, Andrew Evans, Katlynn Luinstra, Matthew McIntosh, Benjamin Nettleton, Dylan Nielsen, Kathryn Patrick, Joseph Reinders, Aaron Schroeder, Robert Spielbauer and Eddie Todd—started by visiting the Badlands National Park in South Dakota, before traveling into Wyoming to Devils Tower, and then into the Bighorn Mountains to see Medicine Wheel. "Medicine Wheel and Devils Tower have interesting Native American and geological aspects," said Heinzel.

The Bighorn Medicine Wheel is a stone structure built by Native Americans sometime between 300 and 800 years ago. It sits nearly 10,000 feet above sea level, and is only accessible during the warmer summer months. It consists of a central cairn a couple feet high and 12 feet in diameter. Twenty-eight stone spokes reach from the central structure and connect to an 80-foot in diameter, outer ring of stones. The spokes point to various
astrological events, such as the sun’s placement during the winter and summer solstices, and the location of certain stars. Native Americans still travel to the Medicine Wheel and leave offerings and prayers, which can be seen tied to the rope fence surrounding the structure.

“Medicine Wheel was completely new to me,” said Brechwald. “I’ve attended a powwow before and felt the spiritual vibe that gave me, but this was something else. Along the fence that keeps people out of the center are lots of little bundles and items that were left behind during ceremonies or visits from the many tribes that still visit the site today.”

After spending time in the Bighorn Mountains, the students traveled into Yellowstone.

“In Yellowstone we did some pretty good day hikes,” said Heinzel. “My trips are pretty strenuous in general. We would go up four or five miles into the mountains. In the Tetons, a group of students wanted to see the Schoolroom Glacier, so they broke off and did a 26-mile loop in one day.” The glacier gets its name from its unique accessibility and its textbook glacial features, making it a great learning opportunity for students. However, given current climate conditions, the glacier is expected to disappear by 2030, if not sooner. “One thing a lot of national parks are studying,” said Heinzel, “is how climate change will affect tourism. Will people still be interested in visiting a national park like Glacier National Park or the Grand Teton if they no longer have glaciers? With the environmental major, I really try, as much as possible, to tie in my background, which is geology and archeology, into future environmental issues for the places we visited. Out West, the big ones are oil and gas use, access to water and how that impacts the ecosystems.”

Aside from studying, the group was able to simply enjoy the alpine environment; Heinzel recalls a moment when they first arrived at Yellowstone. “We were trying to find a shower.” It was day four of the trip and they had yet to do so. “We ended up getting free showers at the Old Faithful Inn, which is this beautiful, historic landmark right in the center of Yellowstone. It was right as a storm was blowing in,” he said. “We were standing in this completely native wood structure, windows blowing in, and people are running around all crazy, but we stood and watched the storm come in, finally clean and dry. It was really an epic moment.”

“The Amphitheater Lake hike is one of my favorites,” he said. Having once been a park ranger for the Grand Teton National Park, he and his wife lived there for seven non-consecutive summers. “I know it really well,” he said. “It’s kind of like going back home a little bit, and I just enjoy sharing my second home with the students.”

The learning didn’t end upon the group’s return to the Cedar Valley. “The second half [of the class] was really to try and tie in those observations with current themes,” said Heinzel. “Part of that is trying to communicate what you are seeing to different audiences. That’s a big thing within environmental needs.” To do so, he had the students try and think from different perspectives such as that of Native Americans, and try and communicate what they saw and the importance to others.
Brechwald said her favorite moment happened when her path crossed with a black bear. “The girl I was with was totally flipping her lid because it was just the two of us,” she said. “She asked if she should get out her pepper spray, because that’s basically what bear spray is, so we could protect ourselves if it came toward us. I told her to if it made her feel better. Black bears aren’t the bears you have to worry about,” she added, “grizzlies are. And this one looked like it was born this year, it was very small—I think it’s safe to say my St. Bernard was bigger. But just seeing this bear so close to me, and the fact that it didn’t care I was there because of all the wonderful huckleberries around was probably my favorite moment.”

The trip is partially funded by the students themselves; however, the earth science department works to keep the cost as low as possible. Along with supplying the trip with the majority of its camping gear, the department received a donation to buy a 15-person van, which drastically reduced the cost, allowing the group to travel to these locations without renting a vehicle. The course does have a $500 fee attached, but is open to all students across the university.

Heinzel, who has done many trips like this, plans on doing another one in the future, although it may not be back to Yellowstone. “We try to mix it up,” he said. “We try to go where students want to go, where we think we can get the best experience.” But he feels these trips are important in other ways, “It changes their perspective, in that here [in the Cedar Valley] we are controlled by our technology. You are completely plugged in a lot of the time. But in the alpine environment, you feel very small. You get a truer sense of a different perspective of how the Earth is larger than we are.”

In Fall of 2015, a new printing press was donated to the UNI Department of Art by Dianne Phelps along with other equipment such as a large drying rack, hand rollers and brayers. The press has been installed in the Printmaking Studio and will be used by students enrolled in all upper-level sections of printmaking. The addition of the new press came at the perfect time, and has alleviated the high demand for the other presses in the studio.

Commonly referred to as a Takach Intaglio Press, the new press is designed to print copper and zinc etchings under intense amounts of pressure. The press is also used to print woodcuts and other types of relief printmaking requiring less pressure. Some of the methods in the printmaking area use technology that dates back to the 15th century, so this press design has been used for hundreds of years.

Many artists use the old methods in conjunction with new digital techniques. Aaron Wilson from the UNI Department of Art says the control and directness of the traditional processes appeal to students and helps them develop technical knowledge that translates well to modern mechanisms and digital techniques. “Already this semester the press has been used by many of the print-making students to produce an astounding variety of art from laser-cut woodcuts to hand drawn monotypes,” Wilson says.

“All of this equipment could not have come at a better time for us. The printmaking area has been growing and the demand for press time in our classes has increased as well. Having this press allows our students more focused and dedicated time at the press without working around the schedules of our other offerings,” Wilson says. He also adds that the new equipment has helped to develop a better community among the intermediate and advanced students since it is housed in an area where the students all work together.

A new Takach Intaglio Press retails for around $14,000. It was donated in amazing condition and along with the other equipment Wilson estimates the entire donation was worth around $20,000. Dianne Phelps donated the equipment in the memory of her late husband, Dale Phelps. Dale became an art student at UNI after a career as a surgeon and farmer. He specialized in printmaking while earning his BFA degree in Art and Wilson says his presence can still be felt in the area. A placard for the press acknowledging the donation is being created as a permanent reminder of their generosity.

The philanthropy of the Phelps’ in the Department of Art and the Cedar Valley community has been integral to many cultural institutions. Wilson says the press and other equipment will benefit students in many generations to come. ...
The summer months are often a time for students to return home, relax, maybe work a summer job and take a break from the rigors of academic life. For UNI graduate students Sushil Tuladhar and Junu Shrestha however, the trip home to Kathmandu, Nepal was far from a typical summer vacation. With the help of earth science professor Mohammad Iqbal, the students teamed up with the local university, Tribhuvan University (TU), to begin fieldwork on a project to help clean the polluted Bagmati River.

The river, which runs through the Kathmandu Valley separating the cities of Kathmandu and Patan, is considered holy by both Hindus and Buddhists and holds great spiritual significance for the people of the region. Somewhat ironic however, the water believed by many to purify the spirit has become one of the more polluted bodies of water in the area, which is having countless ill effects on the surrounding population. “Water pollution, in particular, is a global crisis,” said Iqbal. “Close to two million people live in the Kathmandu Valley who are directly or indirectly dependent on the Bagmati River.”

And although the Nepalese government and various private organizations are taking several initiatives to mitigate the problems, a lot of work remains. “If the problem is not adequately addressed, it might lead to an environmental disaster in the area,” said Iqbal. “My team is proud to be part of the broader initiatives to save human lives.”

The students left for Nepal on May 7, 2015, just a couple weeks after Nepal was shaken by one of the deadliest earthquakes on record, and returned to the Cedar Valley on July 26, 2015. Iqbal joined the team for a shortened period of time, from July 7 through 26.

“When Dr. Iqbal shared with me about this opportunity I was really excited about two things: first, getting a chance to see my family after the earthquake, and second, feeling proud to represent UNI for this project,” said Shrestha. “Being an international student, working as a research assistant and then doing a project in my home country was the best experience I could ever have had in my life. I felt that I was doing something important to help monitor surface water quality issues in my own country’s land, where I grew up seeing the Bagmati River change its aesthetic look from bad to worse. Bagmati River pollution is one of the major environmental issues that needs huge attention.”

Iqbal said his involvement with the Bagmati River came from suggestions from the two Nepalese students. “Many Nepalese students worked on environmental research projects at UNI under my supervision,” he said. “They were the ones who brought up the issues of the Bagmati River pollution to me and asked me to consider getting involved.” Some students had worked with faculty from TU previously before coming to the states and helped form the connection between the two universities. “I decided to communicate with the geology department at TU about my ideas. They responded positively and assured necessary help with resources and logistics.”

During their time in Kathmandu, the group hoped to “successfully delineate existing hot-spots of pollution,” explained Iqbal, in order to come up with some recommendations for the city government to help in their surface water cleanup initiatives. But once home, the effort continues. Here the team analyzes their findings as they plan a return trip next year to continue their work.

The project is currently funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), a federal funding agency in charge of promoting high quality scientific research. Along with the U.S.-based research, the NSF has a limited, highly competitive funding for international collaboration. “Although I am currently funded through the end of 2016, I am looking for additional funding to be able to make this a long-term collaboration effort,” said Iqbal.

Although never working in Nepal before, Iqbal found the experience as something to be desired. “I found it professionally rewarding to work in a different country where I am using my knowledge and skills to help them,” he said. “I enjoyed working there. The people were quite helpful. I felt like I should have learned the Nepali language to fully understand the culture, but most people in the city speak good English, so communication was not a problem. I was also quite fascinated by seeing hundreds of western tourists in the streets of Kathmandu, who were mostly there to trek the Himalayas.”

Overall, Iqbal feels this has been a successful year for the project. “We were able to develop sampling protocols and set up important project guidelines,” he said. “I provided all the necessary training to my student team. A lot of the project logistics and ground rules have been finalized. We are already planning for next year. It is not always easy to run a scientific field project in another country, but we gained a lot of experience this year. So, as the project director, I am quite confident that our work will continue as we had planned.”

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EXPANDING Horizons

One of the largest pushes in education in the last decade has been to increase the amount of students going into STEM-related fields—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. In April 2013, at the Third Annual White House Science Fair, President Barack Obama stated the effort as a focus of his presidency. In his speech, he called for an “all-hands-on-deck approach” highlighting STEM as the key to future American ingenuity. And for Obama, and many others, all-hands means all-hands, and this includes helping give women more access to these fields.

STEM jobs have one of the widest gender gaps among any area of the American workforce. In 2011, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce, women only held 24 percent of all STEM jobs despite making up half the workforce. Obama went on to make note of this disparity in that same speech from 2013, saying “One of the things that I really strongly believe in is that we need to have more girls interested in math, science, and engineering. We’ve got half the population that is way underrepresented in those fields and that means that we’ve got a whole bunch of talent...not being encouraged the way they need to.”

And encouragement is one of the largest obstacles standing in the way for young women. “The biggest barriers to girls getting into STEM is not that their family discouraged them, but that their families didn’t encourage them,” said Marcy Seavey, UNI STEM Coordinator. “And it’s probably not like they went, ‘I don’t want my girl to be an engineer’; it’s that they don’t know what an engineer is, or what other STEM fields are. They may know the title engineer, and leaders, expand the image of the engineering profession as a positive force in improving the quality of life, and demonstrate the value of diversity.”

Over the past few years SWE has joined with CHAS and STEM@UNI to hold the annual event, Expanding Your Horizons. The event is designed to help middle school girls become more familiar with the STEM careers available to them, and meet local women working in STEM careers. Expanding Your Horizons is a day dedicated to helping girls become aware of prepared to take advantage of every opportunity available to them, including participation in future math and science courses that will ensure they leave high school prepared to pursue a STEM career.

By teaming up with the college, the event expanded to include technology, science and mathematics, as well as engineering. “A girl who is a biologist is just as much a success to SWE as a girl who becomes an engineer, or just becomes more interested and isn’t afraid of those things,” said Seavey. This year’s event was held on November 14 and close to 150 girls attended the day-long event. The partnership between SWE and CHAS also allows the girls in attendance to meet professionals in both the academic and professional side of STEM. The event is broken into hour-long sessions, and roughly half are led by university faculty and the other half led by women working for local companies—including John Deere, ConAgra Foods, Cargill, and Viking Pump amongst others. “Kids have different interests. So, in order for the event to have a lot of different opportunities available, we’ve opened up the sessions to leaders to many different people throughout STEM, both at UNI and SWE,” said Seavey.

Along with the interactive, hands-on sessions, the students are introduced to women working in the field, and allowed to ask questions and seek their advice. “That was the part of the day I was most intrigued with,” said Seavey. “Because the girls asked really serious, in-depth questions.” She went on to say some students inquired about finding support, preparing and applying for college and career choices available in Iowa as well as other parts of the country. Meeting women working STEM jobs in the area helps break the stereotype. “I also think it’s important that not all the sessions are led by women. Although, it’s important to introduce these students to women role models, it’s important to show them men that are accepting of women in STEM jobs,” she said. ...
Graduating in 1980 from the fledgling computer science program, still housed in the Department of Math, Gary Scholten has applied his education from UNI to reach ever-raising heights. Scholten is currently Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Principal Financial Group (The Principal), a global investment manager located in Des Moines. Today, he works to give back. He and his wife, Mindy, fund the Gary and Mindy Scholten Computer Science Scholarship, which awards one scholarship annually to a sophomore, junior and senior student working towards a degree in computer science at UNI.

Scholten feels many students overlook the possibilities of an education and career in information technology-related fields. “We wanted something to prod people towards pursuing a field that can be both very rewarding and very lucrative,” he said. Scholten feels that UNI is the perfect place to invest in such a scholarship, not only because he credits that UNI is the perfect place to invest in such a scholarship, but because its graduates are more likely to stay and pursue a career in Iowa. “UNI was the perfect university option for me,” he said. “Coming from a very small Iowa town, UNI was a very welcoming place, provided a great education and definitely opened up my world. It was a time when the computer science program was in its infancy, which gave great opportunities for students to pursue many different tangents—coupled with a great math foundation. In addition, the broader liberal arts focus and a very strong business college rounded out a great educational opportunity for me.” Scholten also points to the liberal arts core as being crucial to his success.

Certainly, the technical knowledge I gained through math, computer science and business courses were foundational to my career,” he said. “Beyond that, my world was opened so much through classes like Foreign Area Studies: India. Little did I know at the time, but in the future I would chair an Indian subsidiary of The Principal with over 1,000 employees.” Scholten’s love for math is what initially drove him to the university’s mathematics department. “I really hadn’t had exposure to computer science but I was intrigued by what I had read about working with computers,” he said. “But the fact that the computer science degree was in the mathematics department at the time was attractive to me because I wanted to be able to fall back to math if I decided not to pursue computer science.”

Along with his education, Scholten is fond of the people he met while pursuing his degree. “One specific memory is that of the first meal ticket I received. It had the photo of a different student on it,” he said. “It took me two years to meet him, but he turned out to be a great friend who ended up being the best man in our wedding.” The other student was Steve Schoon, who appeared next to Scholten alphabetically, which led to the photo mix up.

In addition to funding scholarships, Scholten gives back by serving as a member of the Department of Computer Science Advisory Board. “It’s been great for me to stay connected with the computer science department,” he said. “The department is so important to our state, giving the strong graduates it produces and the propensity for its graduates to stay in Iowa.” Scholten’s motivation to serve on the board is to provide a voice of real business needs to help shape classes and assignments. He feels this element is crucial to prepare students for real world, computer science situations. “One fun benefit I found is through this connection I’ve been asked to guest lecture in a few classes over the years,” he said.

To commemorate his success, in 2011 he received the UNI Alumni Association’s Alumni Achievement Award. As one of four annual Heritage Honours Awards—achievement, service, young alumni and honorary alumni—the Alumni Achievement Award recognized the significant professional accomplishment of a graduate. “Thinking about all the successful and talented UNI alumni, it is obviously a huge honor for me to even be considered as one of them,” he said. “I was especially pleased that a graduate of UNI’s computer science program was recognized—there are so many that have done amazing things across the U.S. The real icing on the cake for me was one my favorite professors (and person who single-handedly started the computer science program at UNI), Dr. Carl Wehner, was able to be in attendance for the award presentation.”

In the end, Scholten said, “There were many reasons that Mindy and I wanted to be involved in the scholarship, but it starts with wanting to give back to a university and state that have done so much for us.”
After three years of writing proposals Jim Demastes and Theresa Spradling, biology professors, have received funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to help fuel their research in the genetics of louse populations that live on pocket gophers.

“We have worked on a variety of subjects,” said Demastes, “ranging from conservation genetics of several endangered Iowa species to our main focus of coevolution between mammals and their parasites.” Currently, most of their efforts are being placed towards the subject of their NSF funding, as Demastes explained, “Perhaps the most sweeping biological effect of global climate change is the resulting shifts in how species are distributed across geography. These shifts occurred in the past, most recently during the climatic oscillations of the Pleistocene ‘ice ages,’ and are occurring today,” he said. “When a species colonizes a new area, there are genetic consequences that are hypothesized to reduce the genetic diversity of populations. Lower diversity is generally thought of as being ‘unhealthy’ and leaves populations vulnerable to various dangers such as disease or parasites.”

Although there are many models for how this diversity reduction occurs along with several studies examining the effects of past colonization and range shifts, very few have done so in real time.

Although Demastes and Spradling have only just recently received NSF backing, their research has been continued for nearly 25 years. Beginning in 1991, the two have been collecting samples and storing them at negative 80 degrees Celsius for future work. Samples have been harvested from the site in 1991, 1996, 2001, 2011 and 2013. “This work has resulted in a time-series of genetic samples that span 22 years and nearly 250 generations for the organisms of interest. Thus, we possess samples that hold a unique opportunity to study evolution as it unfolded and continues to unfold,” said Demastes.

Over the years, NSF funding has been increasingly more difficult to acquire. “[The] NSF requires a research project to be summarized in four pages of text and pictures,” said Spradling. “That seems like it shouldn’t be too hard, but it isn’t easy to convince a reviewer in such a short space that your ‘question’ is an interesting one, that you have enough skill and background to answer, and that knowing the answer will transform some area of biology.” According to Spradling, of the roughly 19 percent of the four-page pre-proposals asked to submit full proposals, only a quarter are funded. This results in a less than five percent approval for funding rate.

With the new funding, the two scientists will be able to continue their research, expand their labs, and extend more learning opportunities to their students. Currently, five undergraduates are assisting in the lab, and some are even receiving financial support through the grant. “One of the reasons I chose UNI was because teaching seemed important here,” said Demastes. “I was right. The students here really appreciate good teaching and most are eager to learn and are open to new ideas. Working with them on an individual basis with their undergraduate research projects is icing on the cake. Getting them involved in real science, and hopefully publishing their work with them, is a fantastic opportunity for them. We have had the opportunity to work with some outstanding undergraduates—and master’s students—who have gone on to careers in research of their own.”

“I really like the fact that UNI has been able to keep class sizes small enough that I can get to know my students a little bit more and have fun interacting with them in class,” said Spradling. “It is even more fun when some of them ask to work in my research lab, and I get to interact with them on a one-on-one basis and see them develop their confidence as scientists.”

Both Demastes and Spradling are looking forward to what their research will unveil and what it might mean for the scientific community at large. “Climate change and other factors are forcing many species to shift in their geographic distribution—losing ground in some areas, but pushing into new territories in some cases,” said Spradling. “Our research helps determine the genetic consequences of the expansion of a species into a new geographic location. I’m always excited to see how things will turn out, what the answer will be and what makes things work, which is probably why I was so drawn to science in the first place. Whenthis project is finished, it will undoubtedly raise new questions, which we will pursue.”

For Demastes the funding from NSF is a clear indicator of their accomplishments. “I want to continue to build on our success as a scientifically relevant research program involving students,” he said. “We plan to continue to do what we are doing. Hopefully, the state funding situation for universities will stabilize and our provost will be able to keep aiding other faculty the same way that many of us were helped in the past.”
On the Move

During the fall, the off-campus portion of UNI Metal Casting Center (MCC) moved to a new location: the renovated first floor of the Cedar Valley TechWorks in Waterloo. Previously, the center was located on the third floor of the same building. "The new space will offer higher ceilings, larger open space for equipment and better material flow," said Jerry Thiel, Director of the MCC. "The new space will also allow the center to develop an additive manufacturing design center with Internet connection abilities throughout the state. This will allow for improved support to our industry and community college partners. The new space will also allow room for the new plastic and metal 3D printers."

The MCC’s proposal for expansion was accepted by the Iowa Economic Development Agency, and $2.7 million was awarded to prepare the move. "We’ve been planning on the move since we moved to the Cedar Valley TechWorks two years ago," said Thiel. "The space became available after the NABL program finished its research and provided the center an opportunity to double in size overnight. It was really a great opportunity for the center, university and state’s manufacturing base."

Surprisingly, moving the equipment only put a temporary hold on the center’s productivity. The move only took a day, and the entire operation was back up and running in four. "Our student employees assisted the equipment manufacturer service manager in both disassembling and reassembling the printer in record time," said Thiel. "We moved the printer on Wednesday and were running Thursday night."

The majority of the MCC is housed on main campus and continues to support the academic manufacturing technology program along with industry research projects. ***

AMS Funds Student Learning

The American Mathematical Society (AMS) awarded $3,000 to University of Northern Iowa mathematics major Emily Wardenburg through the Waldemar J. Tjitzinsky Memorial Fund. The AMS randomly selected UNI and six other universities to receive one-time awards of $3,000 each. Each university’s mathematical department chose one student to receive the funds to help them pursue a career in mathematics.

Wardenburg, a single mother from Williamsburg, is pursuing a secondary mathematics teaching degree. She began her college education at Kirkwood Community College and is now a junior at UNI. She currently teaches classes at her church, mentors a middle school student and works part time.

The Waldemar J. Tjitzinsky Memorial Fund is made possible by a bequest from the estate of Waldemar J., Barbara G. and Juliette Tjitzinsky. Tjitzinsky taught at several institutions, including the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where he remained for the rest of his professional career. He showed concern for mathematical students and made personal efforts to ensure that the lack of adequate financial resources would not hinder their studies. Tjitzinsky was the author of 60 mathematical papers and a member of AMS for 46 years. He died in 1971 at the age of 72. ***
New Faculty

Communication
Jamie Gilbert
Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Laura Pitts
Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Art
Islam Aly
Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Iowa
Philosophy
& World Religions
Abbylynn Helgevold
Instructor
Ph.D., University of Iowa
Technology
Lisa Riedle
Department Head

Transitions

Joel Haack
Returned to Mathematics Faculty
August 2015
John Fritch
Dean
January 2015
Jeff Funderburk
Associate Dean
January 2015
Maureen Clayton
Associate Dean
December 2015
Kavita Dhanwada
Graduate Dean
Associate Provost
July 2015
Lauren Nelson
Interim Department Head
Ph.D., University of Memphis
Shahram VarzaVand
Returned to Technology Faculty
Shoshanna Coon
Returned to Chemistry Faculty

Retirements

Computer Science
John McCormick
June 2015
Communication
Sciences & Disorders
Bruce Plakke
June 2015
Carlin Hageman
April 2015
Mathematics
Ed Rathnell
June 2015
Biology &
Tallgrass Prairie Center
Daryl Smith
June 2015
School of Music
Randy Hogancamp
April 2015
Fred Halgedahl
April 2015
Ron Johnson
April 2015

Office of the Dean
Rita Harris
April 2016
Philosophy and World Religions
William Clohesy
April 2015
Communication Studies
Joyca Chen
April 2015
Languages and Literatures
Cheryl Roberts
April 2015

April 2015
May 2015
August 2015
June 2015
The Dr. Robert E. and Phyllis M. Yager Exemplary Teaching Recognition Award, established by the Robert and Phyllis Yager Education Fund for Excellence, recognized two Iowa teachers with awards.

The 2014 recipients were: Clayton Edwards, mathematics teacher from Grundy Center Middle School, and Lisa Chizek, science teacher from North Tama Elementary School.

The intent of the awards from the Yager Education Fund for Excellence Award is to recognize exemplary K through 12 teaching by UNI graduates. It serves a key role in supporting UNI’s leadership in preparing teachers.

Nominees are selected by UNI faculty members and are UNI graduates in at least their fifth year of teaching in a K through 12 classroom. Awardees are selected based on teaching materials and student performance.

Chizek was nominated by Jody Stone, professor of chemistry and biochemistry. Stone noted that Chizek, who earned her undergraduate degree in elementary education and her masters degree in science education at UNI, began her teaching career as a third grade classroom teacher and transformed into a highly effective science teacher. She also successfully lobbied her principal to increase the time spent on science instruction at the third grade level and incorporated activity-based, student-centered learning into her science teaching.

Edwards was nominated by Brian Townsend, associate professor of mathematics. A desire to improve his classroom practice and his students’ understanding of mathematics led Edwards to UNI’s Middle Grades Master’s Program. Townsend noted that Edwards is an innovator in his classroom through the use of technology and problem-based instruction.

Robert E. Yager, professor emeritus of science education in the College of Education at the University of Iowa where he taught for 50 years, received his B.A. degree in biology from UNI in 1950.

Yager went on to earn his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in plant physiology from the University of Iowa. His research interests have focused on student motivation and attitudes toward science. ...
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Bailey Knudson (Communication Sciences & Disorders) was awarded the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) graduate student scholarship. The scholarship of $5,000 is awarded annually to an undergraduate senior with an active NSSLHA membership who will begin as accredited Speech Pathology Master’s program upon graduation. All graduate student scholarship recipients were recognized at the 2014 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention in Orlando, Fla.

Aaron Van Fossen (Art) was showcased in the Communication Arts (CA) Magazine as one of “the fifteen most promising design, photography and illustration students in visual communications programs from all across the country.”

Jason Vizzini (Communication Studies) received an Award of Achievement at the 2015 Iowa Motion Picture Awards for his documentary “A Beautiful World.” The documentary explores his family’s experience with deafness in a world focused on hearing.

Professors Tim Dooley (Art) and Aaron Wilson (Art) guided a group of UNI printmaking students to the Southern Graphics Council International Conference in Knoxville, Tenn. in 2015. At the conference, students participated in a number of events, including a juried art exhibition, a portfolio exhibition and the creation of a massive installation/print piece, complete with the playing of the song “Free Bird.” Participating art students included Ashlie Coady, Mariah Coffey, Desiree Dahl, Ashley Fisher, Morgan Gibbins, Nick Hall, Mary Pat Lawler, Dana Potter, Randy Timm, Ben Uhl and Kaylee Wellik.

The 2015 National Conference on Undergraduate Research was held at Eastern Washington University from April 16 through 18. More than 3,000 students and over 1,000 advisors were in attendance at the conference. Students from UNI submitted their research through a competitive process and were selected to present their research at the conference. They presented their work at oral sessions and poster sessions throughout the time of the event. Participating students included Derek Bradley (Biology), Hannah Carr-Murphy (English), Kiana Cullnan (Biology), Danae Dieken (Communication), Allison Dreyer (Biology), McKenzie Flick (Communication), Peter Ickes (Biology), Stormie Johanson (Biology), Kyle Kaiser (Physics), Courtney Keiser (Physics), Hallie Kucherea (Biology), Elizabeth McCulloch (Biology), Jacob Meade (Communication), Kristi Newhall (Communication – Electronic Media Production), Gina Owens (Communication), Jade Simpson (Biology), Alex Smith (Biochemistry), Kyle Spurgeon (Physics), Whitney Stoolman (Communication), Celeste Underriner (Biology), Jordan Weber (Biology) and Zhipeng Ye (Physics).
Breast Cancer—nearly everyone has strong associations with this illness, as many have seen the disease affect a friend, family member or even themselves. One in eight women across the country will receive the diagnosis within her lifetime. Every year however, many work to turn the tides against breast cancer, each in their own unique way. At UNI, the members of the UNI Women in Computing group waged their battle through code, computer coding to be exact.

For one of the group members, the disease has recently struck close to home. In the summer of 2015 Sarah Diesburg, associate professor of computer sciences and faculty advisor for the student organization, was preparing for her third year teaching at UNI when she was diagnosed. But to her surprise, the young professor’s support system at UNI was both strong and responsive, and the club decided to become involved with her fight in a personal capacity. Michaela Leinen, a senior and president of the UNI Women in Computing group, announced they would hold a Coding Against Cancer event in the fall 2015 semester. “I was surprised and honored,” said Diesburg. “My students have big hearts, and they decided to take this situation and do something with it for the greater good.”

The October event would be held in association with the Beyond Pink TEAM, a local advocacy organization. The goal of the event was to raise breast cancer awareness in a techy way,” said Diesburg. “Most of us don’t know that one out of eight women will develop this disease sometime in her lifetime, with the ratio in Iowa being even worse, at one out of seven women,” she added. The event drew a sizable crowd, around fifty people in attendance. Guests were welcome to take part in logic puzzles, a bake sale and even learn some programing skills with the aid of Lego Mindstorms—a relatively user-friendly, yet comprehensive introductory tool to robotics. Volunteers taught some basic robot programming skills, and attendees were allowed to build, program and then test their creations by running an obstacle course. “It was great to see people my age enjoy programming as much as I do,” said Leinen, who helped guide interested guests.

“Even though our turnout was small, we ended up working with multiple student groups, and reached a lot of people with our advertising,” said Diesburg. With representation of the Beyond Pink TEAM in attendance, the event’s impact reached further, beyond the UNI community. Along with spreading awareness, the event was even able to raise some money to support the fight against breast cancer. The success of the event has planted the seeds for potentially holding similar events in the future. Although there are no solid plans, the notion isn’t beyond consideration, said both Diesburg and Leinen.

As for the UNI Women in Computing, Coding Against Cancer was just one of many events this active student group participated in. In previous years, the group has sent members to the 2014 Grace Hopper Celebration, the world’s largest gathering of women technologists. The group also reaches out to middle school students, sends women to regional and national conferences, provides social events for women in their department and continues to educate members on professional self-promotion through resume and social networking workshops. “Specifically, we want to work on retention and recruitment of women into computing careers and majors. We hope our presence in the department and community will encourage women to consider computing and technology as a valid career choice, and we wish to provide an encouraging presence for female students already in these majors,” said Diesburg in a previously published article by Stefani Keller, UNI STEM Program Associate, which you can read in full at uni.edu/stemed/women-computing.
THE DEAN’S FUND DONOR LIST

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The success of many of our students relies heavily on the contributions, involvement and guidance of our alumni.

To further assist in the achievements of our students, please visit uni-foundation.org, or contact one of our CHAS Directors of Development:

Dan Breitbach, CHAS Director of Development
319-273-7727
dan.breitbach@uni.edu

Cassie Luze
CHAS Sr. Director of Development
Natural Sciences
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1940s, '50s & '60s

'48 Rosie [Maiden] Bolstad, BA, Bremerton, WA, is continuing work on her upcoming release, Remembering Bernie, in honor of her late husband, as well as two other recording projects.

'50 Ted Herbst, BA, Germantown, WI, is enjoying retirement and summers in Rhinelander, WI, at his summer home on Lake Thompson.

'53 Shirley [Anfinson] Collins, BA, Decatur, IL, is excited to see the third generation in her family attend UNI.

'56 Jerry McRoberts, BA, Charleston, IL, retired from Eastern Illinois University in 1998, where he served as professor of art history, and earned a faculty excellence award.

'60 James Rigs, BA, Hilton Head Island, SC, published his first novel, titled Freedom Run, which depicts the story of four escaped prisoners attempting to establish new lives and avoid the law.

'64 Joyce [Silka] Koch, BA, Lumberton, NJ, retired first in 1998 and then again in 2014 when she moved to be closer to her daughters. She stays active in writing, singing and was recruited by the AFLCIO for a project.

'66 Gene Driscoll, BA, MA '74, Washington, IA, is retired and resides with his wife Judy in Washington, IA.

'67 Janet [Giese] Harvey, BA, Summer, IA, is spending retirement playing violin with the Summer Strings.

'67 Phyllis [Harmon] FisherPeet, BA, Cedar Rapids, IA, retired from doing taxes for H&R Block for 28 years. Her husband, Jerry, also recently retired from Mercy Hospital.

'69 John Steffes, BA, BB '78, Mars Hill, NC, climbed to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in 2000, and to base camp of Mount Everest in 2003. Other adventures have included skydiving in 2015, which was on his bucket list.

1970s

'70 Linda [Frey] Bayliss, BA, Iowa City, IA, is a guidance counselor at TRI-County School in Thornburg, IA. Linda also serves as organist at Genesee (Illinois) Congregational Church.

'70 Barbaraillian, BA, Hoffman Estates, IL, was presented with a Great Citizen Award by the Mayor of Hoffman Estates. In appreciation of her 24 years of commitment and dedicated service as a library trustee of the Palatine [IL] Public Library District.

'71 Steven Ainsworth, BA, MA '75, Pensacola, FL, retired after 44 years of band directing, and moved to Florida to be closer to children and grandchildren. Because teaching has been his occupation and hobby he will be teaching music education courses two days per week at Pensacola Christian College.

'71 Dennis Burkle, BA, North Platte, NE, retired in May 2015 after teaching journalism and English for 44 years—18 in West Bend and 26 in North Platte, NE.

'72 Pamela [Goeb] Jordan, BA, Spirit Lake, IA, is in her 12th year as county supervisor of Dickinson County. Her husband, Michael, continues to win awards for his writing and photography for the Lakefield Standard newspaper in Minnesota.

'72 Tom Sandholm, BA, Grinnell, IA, retired in 2012 following 40 years of teaching instrumental music in Bennett, Montezuma and Grinnell, IA.

'73 Patricia [Henderson] Higby, BA, MA '77, MA '99, Cedar Falls, IA, was a finalist in the STEM Champion award category for the 2015 Women of Innovation Awards presented by the Technology Association of Iowa.

'73 Craig Pomeran, BA, MA '77, Denver, CO, recently published a book, titled Shenonignas: The Curious and Romantic Experiences of a Young Chemist. The book combines humor with tales of the numerous difficulties he had to overcome in order to complete classes while working full-time, and the work he did that eventually led to his first US patent for a chemical process to recover silver from waste discharge.

'74 Xuchitl (Nodarse) Coso, BA, MA '80, Lakeland, FL, was named executive director of PACE Center for Girls, Inc., which works to improve the lives of girls through education, counseling and life skills training.

'74 James Miller, BM, BA '77, Ames, IA, is retired and stays busy volunteering at an elementary school, working with Scouts, teaching Sunday school and giving guitar lessons.

'74 Brian Ney, BA, Ankeny, IA, retired in June 2014 after 40 years as an Iowa educator. He is now enjoying retirement, and driving a school bus for Durham School Services in Ankeny.

'74 Mary (Hoffner) Oelmann, BA, MA '81, Greene, IA, enjoys traveling, and spending time with her grandchildren.

'75 John Taylor, BA, Saint Louis, MO, was named 11 of 100 on the Medicine Maker’s Power List for 2015.

'75 Mary (Bedicka) Humston, BA, Iowa City, IA, cowrote a book, titled Mary & Me: A Lasting Link Through Ink, with fellow UNI grad Mary Potter Kenyon. BA ’90. The book is about their nearly three decades of friendship and letter writing.

'76 Dave Little, BA, MA ’66, Clive, IA, retired in June, 2015, following 38 years of teaching.

'77 Gregory Lauterbach, BA, Jackson Heights, NY, was a soloist in several recent concerts: Brahms German Requiem at New York’s Symphony Space with the Dessoff Choirs under conductor Christopher Shepard.

'77 John Cole, BM, Clermont, FL, celebrated 25 years with Walt Disney World in July, 2015. For the past 10 years he has been responsible for operations of Disney PhotosPass photographers at US and international sites.

'78 Terry Hancock, BM, Cleveland Heights, OH, received the Professional Excellence Award from Cuyahoga Community College, and is a graduate of the Chair Academy Leadership Development Program.

'79 Diane [Dewall] Ballard, BM, Columbus, OH, conducted the Scarlet Honor Band at The Ohio State University Middle School Honor Band Festival in February, 2015.

'79 Thomas Riter, BA, Yankton, SD, is still serving as associate farm news director at WNAK radio, and is also a 20-year-member of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters.

1980s

'80 Russell Alexander, BM, Festus, MO, is now Reverend Alexander and has been a pastor since July, 2014.

'81 Kevin de Regnier, BA, Winterset, IA, was named the president of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians.

'81 Ellen Dostal, BM, Los Angeles, CA, is the director of arts and communication for Mount Wilson FM Broadcasters.
“83 Randy Atkinson. BM, MM ’89. Cedar Rapids, IA, was named the 2015 Karl L. King Distinguished Service Award recipient by the Iowa Bandmasters Association.

“83 Elizabeth [Brooks] Brooks Michael. BA, Antioch, TN, is the director of the Small Business Development Program in the Tennessee Department of Transportation, Civil Rights Office.

“83 Bret Lee. BM, Marshalltown, IA, recently completed his 32nd year as a band director.

“83 Michael Tatoian. BA, Middletown, DE, was promoted to president of the Dover International Speedway.

“84 Matthew Haven. BA, Cedarburg, WI, is president of Telsmith Inc., a manufacturer of mineral processing equipment for the aggregate and mining industries.

“84 Anne Healy. BFA, Mansfield, TX, is an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Texas at Arlington. She is the director of the new BFA musical theatre program, and has served as stage director and music director for multiple full-scale productions at University of Texas and for the Dallas Theatre Center.

“85 Jay Cherry. BA, Batavia, IL, retired from the FBI after 21 years, and recently started his own polygraph business called Eagle Eye Polygraph.

“85 Lisa [Andersen] Chizek. BA, MA ’12, Toledo, IA, received the 2015 STEM Education Award for Inspired Teaching.

“85 Debra [Bruhn] Hedden. MA, PhD ’97, Lawrence, KS, is professor and director of music education at the University of Kansas. She received the prestigious Byron T. Shultz Excellence in Teaching Award in 2011, was promoted to full professor in 2014 and published Threading the Concept: a text for general music methods courses in 2010.

“85 Melody [Turnquist] Steed. BM, Lindsborg, KS, recently completed her first year as the assistant academic dean of Bethany College. In addition, she continues to serve as the college organist and director of the handbell ensembles.

“86 Sara [Walker] Etzel. BA, Saint Paul, MN, is the director of STEM and career and technical education (CTE) for the Minneapolis Public Schools. She over-sees the K12 continuum educational opportunities for 35,000 students.

“86 Austin Jones. BA, Grinnell, IA, is a proud new grandchild of Jacob N. Nicholas Mc Culley, born March 11, 2015.

“86 Dan Rouse. BA, Cedar Rapids, IA, is the creative services manager for OnMedia. He has been with the company since 1993, and frequently hires interns and full-time producers from UNI’s communications and electronic media program.

“86 Debra Shapiro. BA, Suffolk, VA, is the former president of the Virginia Technology and Engineering Education Association [VTEEA]. In 2012 she received the Presidential Citation for her work as the chairperson of the Electronics Communication Committee and her work to create a members only portal to share teaching strategies within the VTEEA.

“87 Jeff Lorber. BA, Springfield, IL, received the 2014 Outstanding Fundraising Professional award from the Capital Area [IL] Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

“88 Johanna Baedke. MA, Parkersburg, IA, retired from Aplington-Parkersburg Community School District in June, 2014, after 36 years of teaching and coaching. She now plans to travel and volunteer.

“88 Jeffrey Liebmann. BA, Iowa City, IA, is the assistant vice president for the campus development at the University of Iowa Foundation.

“90 Dirk Halupnik. MA, BA ’02, D 13, Des Moines, IA, was named superintendent of the Southeast Polk Community School District.

“90 Jody [Phd] Ingwersen. BM, Spirit Lake, IA, currently serves as middle school band director for grades fifth through eighth at Spirit Lake Community Schools.

“90 Scott Slechta. MA, Libertyville, IL, was named the 2016 Iowa Teacher of the Year. He has taught English language arts at Fairfield High School since 1984.

“90 Friedi Rathmell. BS, Nashville, TN, was named a professor of pathology, microbiology and immunology at Vanderbilt University, and will serve as the co-leader of the Host Tumor Interactions Research Program at Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center.

“91 Kim [Meyer] Rathmell. BS, Nashville, TN, was named director of Vanderbilt University’s division of hematology and oncology.

“93 Jodi [McMann] Buchan. BA, Johnston, IA, is an instructional coach and mentor coordinator for the Johnston Community School District.

“93 Mark Schurztein. BA, Ankeny, IA, is a teacher learning coach at Hiatt Middle School in the Des Moines School District.

“94 Aaron Hansen. BM, MM ’04, Cedar Falls, IA, is teaching K-B general music at Cedar Heights Elementary School. This follows 18 years at Waverly Shell Rock.

“94 Jay Judas. BA, Boston, MA, was named managing director with Crown Global Insurance Group LLC.

“94 Sonia [Cuvelier] Walsh. BA, Carroll, IA, is very appreciative of her theatre education from UNI. Last year she opened an acting studio in Carroll for kindergarten through high school kids.

“94 Jeffrey Weekley. BA, Wellington 6011, took a deferred retirement from the US Naval Postgraduate School to accept a position as manager for science and education outreach at the Research and Education Advanced Network of New Zealand.

“94 Mark Johns. MA, Dubuque, IA, was named private banking relationship manager for The Bank of America Personal Client Group of US Bank.

“95 Alan Gift. BA, Omaha, NE, received a special Outstanding Teaching Award from the University of Nebraska at Omaha Alumni Association in honor of distinguished teaching in the classroom.

“95 RaeMyra Hilliard. BA, Deerfield, IL, sang in an improvised opera with Renee Baker and her Chicago Modern Orchestras Project at the Museum of Contemporary Art in May 2015. She also recorded her first CD, which will be all works by Black-American composers, and was released September 8, 2015.

“95 Jeff Smith. BM, New York, NY, celebrated a development workshops performance of his new one-act opera, Why is Eartho Ktt Tryng to Kill Me?, at the American Lyric Theater in New York. The workshop was met with high praise and critical acclaim.

“96 Alan Gift. BA, Omaha, NE, received an Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award from the University of Nebraska at Omaha Alumni Association in honor of distinguished teaching in the classroom.

“96 Jeff Schurztein. BA, Johnston, IA, is an instructional coach and mentor coordinator for the Johnston Community School District.

“96 RaeMyra Hilliard. BS, Deerfeld, IL, sang in an improvised opera with Renee Baker and her Chicago Modern Orchestras Project at the Museum of Contemporary Art in May 2015. She also recorded her first CD, which will be all works by Black-American composers, and was released September 8, 2015.

“96 Brian Kiser. BM, Youngstown, OH, is the associate professor of tuba at Youngstown State University, and this marks his 10th year teaching there. He maintains an active performance schedule with the Mr. Jack Daniel’s Original Silver Cornet Band, River City Brass and the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. As an active studio musician, Kiser regularly records diverse musical projects in Indianapolis and Cleveland area studios, including projects for the Hal Leonard Corporation, De Haske Music Publications, FJH Music Company and Ludwig Music Publishers. He can be heard performing on more than one thousand Hal Leonard demo recordings since 2002.

“97 Shannon [Furlong] Saherty. BA, Dubuque, IA, was named private banking relationship manager for The Private Client Group of US Bank.

“97 Kerrie (Meyers) Michael. BA, Portage City, IA, received the 2015 Gold Star Award for Outstanding Teaching.

“97 Alan Gift. BA, Omaha, NE, received an Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award from the University of Nebraska at Omaha Alumni Association in honor of distinguished teaching in the classroom.

“98 Linda [Reines] Ferjak. MM, Forest City, IA, was honored with the Outstanding High School Teacher award at the Wartburg College commencement ceremony. She is currently with Bishop Garrigan Schools in Algona.

“98 Brian Kiser. BM, Youngstown, OH, is the associate professor of tuba at Youngstown State University, and this marks his 10th year teaching there. He maintains an active performance schedule with the Mr. Jack Daniel’s Original Silver Cornet Band, River City Brass and the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. As an active studio musician, Kiser regularly records diverse musical projects in Indianapolis and Cleveland area studios, including projects for the Hal Leonard Corporation, De Haske Music Publications, FJH Music Company and Ludwig Music Publishers. He can be heard performing on more than one thousand Hal Leonard demo recordings since 2002.

“98 Dave Lisik. MM, Wellington, was promoted to senior lecturer [associate professor in U.S.] at the New Zealand School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington. Most recent CD release is a quintet project of original music featuring Alex Sipiagin and Donny McCaslin.

“98 Mike Maddox. BS, Madison, WI, received the University of Wisconsin Colleges/University of Wisconsin Extension Chancellor’s Award for Excellence.


“99 Drew Buhrow. BA, Norwalk, IA, was named one of Des Moines 40 under 40 for 2015.
'09 Brooke [Brill] Fischels, BA, Ottumwa, IA, is president-elect of the Iowa Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

'09 David Hildahl, BA, Waterloo, IA, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier for 2015. He is currently a web content strategist for Far Reach Technologies.

'09 Nate Noble, BA, Clive, IA, was named by the Des Moines Register as one of “15 People to Watch in 2015.” He is currently the director of Blank Children’s Hospital’s new Children’s Development Center.

2000’s

'00 Amanda Schroder, BA, Minneapolis, MN, is the manager of individual giving for the Minnesota Orchestra.

'00 Aaron Wherry, BA, Bakersfield, CA, was named Wrestling Coach of the Year by The Bakersfield Californian.

'01 Jill [Bree] Bar, BA, Spencer, IA, was crowned Mrs. Iowa International 2001. She was named Miss Iowa International in Jacksonville, FL in July.

'01 Jason Franzenburg, BA, Davenport, IA, received the 2015 STEM Education Award for Inspired Teaching.

'01 Suzanne Hendrix, BM, MM ’08, Overland Park, KS, performed with Wiener Staatsoper (Vienna State Opera) in April, 2015, covering a variety of roles including, Suzuki/Wiener Staatsoper (Vienna State Opera)…

'02 Cory Mixdorf, BA, Fayetteville, AR, is a professor of trombone at the University of Arkansas.

'03 Jennifer Betts, BA, ’09, Des Moines, IA, opened Fresh Mediterranean Express in West Des Moines, May, 2024, with husband Hassan Atarmal. BA ’03. The restaurant offers a variety of Mediterranean fare and 9 homemade sauces and dressings.

'03 Anne [Maiden] Duncan, BA, Waverly, IA, was named one of the Cedar Valley’s 20 under 40 by the Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier for 2015. She is currently the sustainability coordinator at Wartburg College.

'04 Sarah [Miller] Diesburg, BS, Waterloo, IA, was a finalist in the Academic Innovation and Leadership award category for the 2015 Women of Innovation Awards presented by the Technology Association of Iowa.

'04 Eugenia Furneaux, BA, Brooklyn, NY, is the producing supervisor at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts. She received an MFA in scenic design from the University of Arizona, 2007, and was previously an adjunct assistant professor at Laguardia Community College.

'04 Benjamin Klemme, BM, Davenport, IA, earned a promotion to associate conductor with the Quad City Symphony Orchestra. In this role, he will conduct pops, family and education concerts, and has been invited to lead the QCSO’s subscription concerts in March, 2016, which will feature the world premiere of a new work for solo bassoon and orchestra by Jacob Bancks. Klemme will continue to lead the Quad City Symphony Youth Ensembles as music director and the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies as concert orchestra conductor.

'04 Go Yamamoto, MM, Cologne, plays as a core member of the critically acclaimed early music ensemble larte dal mondo in the vibrant German scene.

'05 Eliza Bangert, BM, Chicago, IL, is an active freelance flute and piccolo player in Chicago, performing with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Lyric Opera, Milwaukee Symphony, Grant Park Symphony and others as a substitute musician. This is her second season as librarian of the Illinois Philharmonic. She also works in the library at Grant Park Symphony and WDR Music.

'05 Roxanne [Shontz] Heimann, BA, MA ’07, Dike, IA, won the Iowa Communication Association’s Outstanding Adjunct Teacher Award for 2015. She is currently teaching in UNI’s Department of Communication Studies.

'05 Katie Patterson, BA, Des Moines, IA, is the founder and owner of Happy Medium, which was ranked by Inc. Magazine as the fastest growing private company in Iowa in 2015. It is a full-service à la carte advertising agency.

'06 Christian Anderson, BM, Chicago, IL, enjoys a busy performance calendar each year, including performing with the Milwaukee Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, South Bend Symphony and numerous regional and Chippewa orchestras.

'06 Laura [Rutt] Jordan, BA, Ames, IA, received two awards from the Graphic Design USA magazine in 2014, American Graphic Design Award and Inhouse Design Award.

'06 Brenda Liddle, BM, Waterloo, IA, teaches full-time in the Waterloo Schools.

'06 Anna [Hass] Ranbarger, BA, Center Point, IA, is an elementary teacher in the Cedar Rapids School District. She has been married to her high school sweetheart for more than 11 years and they have two children, ages six and nine.

'06 Sarah [Duvel] Rueber, BM, MA ’10, Cedar Falls, IA, was named worship director for Orchard Hill Church’s two campuses in Grundy County. She also does script writing and administrative support for Around the Corner Productions.

'06 David Schmitz, BFA, Dubuque, IA, was named executive director of the Dubuque Museum of Art.

'06 Brooke Stevens, BM, Arlington, VA, completed her DMA in trumpet at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music in December, 2014. She also serves as bugler in the United States Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps in Washington DC.

'07 Weisbrod Chen, BA, West Des Moines, IA, joined the Davis Brown Law Firm as an associate in the business division.

'07 Mark Wagenaar, MA, Denton, TX, won the 2015 CBC Poetry Prize for “String Theory.”

'08 Nicholas Hillman, BS, Cedar Falls, IA, was named project manager at Peters Construction Corporation.

'08 Kelly Keegan, BA, MA ’13, Cedar Falls, IA, was selected for a 10-month fellowship project teaching English in the Philippines. She is one of 165 U.S. citizens selected for the 2015–2016 English Language Fellow Program.

'09 Kari Cox, BM, Cisne, IL, recently wrapped up her work at Centralia High School in Illinois in order to pursue a doctoral program at the University of Texas. The music program at Centralia grew substantially under her direction.

'09 Jeff Fountain, BM, Cedar Rapids, IA, is a band teacher at College Community School.

'09 Josh Mahoney, BA, Chicago, IL, was inducted into the UNI Athletics Hall of Fame on September 9, 2015 as the inaugural Merin Taylor Academic Hall of Fame award recipient.

'09 Phill Nieman, BS, Cedar Falls, IA, was named project manager at Peters Construction Corporation.

'09 Angela Staron, BM, Marshalltown, IA, is teaching lower school music at the Shanghai Community International School.

2010’s

'10 Wade Arnold, BA, Cedar Falls, IA, was named the 2015 Business Hall of Fame Young Entrepreneur by Junior Achievement of Eastern Iowa. He is currently the CEO of Banno, LLC.

'10 Sean Enb, BA, Waukee, IA, was appointed CAD specialist by QA Graphics.

'10 Whitney Jackley, BA, Cedar Falls, IA, is the marketing director and River Valley district executive for the Boy Scouts of America Winnebago Council.

'10 Sean Mattys, BA, Iowa City, IA, is the associate director of development health sciences for the University of Iowa Foundation.

'10 Michael Thursby, MM, Owatonna, MN, is the director of athletic bands and percussion at Minnesota State University Mankato.

'11 Jenny [Peters] Adam, BM, New Hampton, IA, is entering her fourth year of teaching. She is the band teacher at the beginning/middle school level and feels fortunate to be able to collaborate with her husband, who is the high school band teacher, and build a program from the ground up.

'11 Michael Conrad, BM, Greeley, CO, is starting his doctorate in jazz studies at the University of Northern Colorado.

'11 Hannah Leffler, MM, Denton, TX, won the University of North Texas Concerto Competition in the fall of 2014. As a competition winner, she performed with the UNT Symphony Orchestra on March 11, 2015.
11 Allison Offerman, BA, Coralville, IA, completed her Master's degree in voice performance at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2013, and is now finishing her last year of DMA coursework at the University of Iowa. She has taught at the Five Season Chamber Music Festival in Cedar Rapids for two years, and teaches weekly woodwind lessons at the Marion Music Academy in addition to her private studio.

12 Kevin Shannon, BA, Ankeny, IA, was promoted to IT application analyst lead at The Principal Financial Group in Des Moines.

13 Isaac Brockshus, BM, Charlotte, NC, will travel to Macagno, Italy, in the summer of 2015 for the premiere of his piece, Cognates featuring UNI student musicians.

14 James Healy, BM, Jefferson, IA, currently serves as the grades 9–12 vocal music director at Waterloo West High School.

15 Samantha Kantak, BM, MM '14, Webster City, IA, won the University of North Texas Concerto Competition in the fall of 2014. As a competition winner, she performed with the UNI Symphony Orchestra on March 11, 2015.


17 Spencer Walrath, BA, Arlington, VA, is now a consultant in the energy and natural resources practice of FTI Consulting's strategic communications division.

13 Erica Canfield, BA, Cedar Rapids, IA, is a manager at Premier Staffing in Waterloo, IA. She opened this office in January, 2014, and it has been going well.

14 Jordan Lockband, BM, Guthrie Center, IA, is the choral director at Guthrie Center. He teaches high school choir, junior high choir, show choir, music theory and K-B general music. The GCHS Choir returned to Des Moines in December, 2014, to perform the National Anthem at the Iowa Wild hockey game.

15 Xingzimin Pan, MM, Salt Lake City, UT, earned third Place at the fourth ChinaASEAN Music Festival Composition Competition, hosted by Guangxi Arts Institute, and celebrated numerous performances of original compositions in China, Germany, Australia and throughout the United States.

16 Stephanie Hogan, BM, Goyangsi, Gyeonggido, South Korea, is a graduate student in the renewable energy program at Dongguk University in Seoul.

17 Maddle Pike, BS, College Station, TX, is enrolled in the geology graduate program at Texas A&M University.

18 Olivia Randolph, BA, Cedar Falls, IA, works in human resources and as the administrative assistant for the UNI Culture and Intensive English Program. She also serves as an assistant at the Hearst Center for the Arts, where she raises funds for music student scholarships, and recently launched the Lunchtime Concert Series, featuring UNI student musicians.

14 Claudia Restrepo, MM, Salt Lake City, UT, conducted the Utah Philharmonic in their spring 2015 performances of Prokofiev's Cinderella. She is currently pursuing her doctorate of musical arts at University of Utah, and was accepted into a competitive conducting competition in London for the summer, 2015.

14 Nick Wills, BM, Bloomington, IN, is a second year graduate student in horn performance at Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University.

15 Aaron Ottmar, BA, Bloomfield, IA, was selected from more than 3,700 applicants to present his paper, Performing Solo Concerto with Wind Ensemble, at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research in Cheney, WA.

16 Andrew Quandt, BM '14, on July 26, 2014.


18 Megan (Radig) Pray, BA, married Larissa Pray, BA '10, on July 12, 2014.


15 Kyle Bukbe, BA, and Leslie [Spalding] Bukbe, BA '08, MA '10, Victoria, MN, son Noah Everett Bukbe born February 27, 2015.

16 Emma [Reinertson] Westrum, BA, and Adam Westrum, Boone, IA, son Reid Adam Westrum born February 6, 2015.


18 Samantha [Rupe] Mall, BA, married Justin Mall, BA '14, on October 18, 2014.


18 Emily [Linder] Wills, BA, married Nick Wills, BM '14, on July 26, 2014.

Births


Passings

15 Beverley (Smith) Davis, BA, died January 15, 2015 in Mechanicsburg, PA.

16 Earl Dunn, BA, MA '54, died December 15, 2014 in Muncie, IN.

17 Newt Draheim, BA, died September 13, 2015 in Clarion, IA.

18 Jack Gillikin, BA, died February 14, 2014 in Arnold, MD.

19 Robert Wilson, BA, BA '63, died September 13, 2015 in Iowa City, IA.

20 Wayne Stark, BA, died May 20, 2015 in Lawdale, CA.

21 David Fagle, BA, MA '56, died October 16, 2015 in Marshaltown, IA.

22 Raleigh Magee, BA, died December 20, 2014 in Cedar Falls, IA.

23 James Harmon, BA, died October 16, 2014 in Fallon, NV.

24 Kenneth Gordon, MA, died January 8, 2014 in Austin, TX.

25 William Taylor, BA, died October 31, 2014 in Waverly, IA.


11 Gideon born March 11, 2015.

12 JoAnn (Johnson) Barnes, BA, died November 22, 2014 in Ankeny, IA.

13 John Sailer, BA, died July 7, 2015 in Roanoke, VA.

85 Kimberly Ver Steeg, BA, died November 14, 2015 in New York City, NY.

19 Chance Finegan, MA, married Kate [Hein] Finegan, MPP '14, on July 7, 2014.

14 Samantha [Rupe] Mall, BA, married Justin Mall, BA '14, on October 18, 2014.


14 Emily [Linder] Wills, BA, married Nick Wills, BM '14, on July 26, 2014.