Augsburg’s mission statement says that we educate students to be “thoughtful stewards” as well as “informed citizens, critical thinkers, and responsible leaders.”

I imagine some may read “thoughtful stewards” and think about church fundraising campaigns or care for the environment, the typical places we consider stewardship—and both important causes!

At Augsburg, though, thoughtful stewardship is a much more compelling claim. It goes beyond simple acts of giving or environmental care. It is a way of living, an ethic that teaches us how to live in the world. And it is at the heart of an Augsburg education—from how we engage students with the community to help them discern their gifts and gain a holistic understanding of the needs of our world (see page 16) to the deep listening and conversation we embed in our classes, such as in the Master of Arts in Leadership course that was integrated with this year’s Nobel Peace Prize Forum (see page 20).

Also in this issue of Augsburg Now, you will read about the genuine privilege I had to deliver a major address on stewardship to Cargill employees worldwide.

In that address, I said: “...stewardship involves a practice of standing up, speaking up in a manner that reflects—and makes clear—our values. The challenge for the good steward—as a parent or manager or citizen—is to pursue practices that help connect us with the deeply held values and commitments that characterize our personal and corporate lives.

“The truth is that many people do not think about the reasons for their actions. They act, and they expect others to accept their action at face value. But good stewardship demands reflection, then the courage to act based on our convictions, and to do so overtly so that we are publicly accountable for how our actions reflect our values. Only in that link is there integrity in human life."

At Augsburg—as reflected in the stories that follow in these pages—we educate students to embrace their many gifts, to understand the obligations they have to steward those gifts, and to appreciate the important work of taking a stand for the values and commitments that honor the gifts and contributions of each of us.

Thoughtful stewardship—a way of life for all of us. I give thanks for a teaching and learning community that is blessed with and inspired by our remarkable legacy and mission.

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Faithfully yours,

Paul C. Pribbenow
President

Notes from President Pribbenow
On thoughtful stewardship

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Around the quad
From national hampion to local hero
Beyond the scoreboard
The city: Course content and classroom
Leadership and conflict
Auggies connect
Class notes
In memoriam

On the cover: Construction crews work on the footings for the main lobby of the Norman and Evangeline Hagfors Center for Science, Business, and Religion, an interdisciplinary building that will open in 2018, anchoring the west side of the Augsburg College campus. See page 2.

All photos by Stephen Geffre unless otherwise indicated.
From the ground up

This bug’s-eye view captures the April 2016 groundbreaking ceremony for Augsburg’s Norman and Evangeline Hagfors Center for Science, Business, and Religion. The celebration included hundreds of Augsburg College alumni, students, donors, neighbors, and faculty and staff members, as well as city and county officials. The new academic building is slated to open in January 2018.

Pictured (L to R): Outgoing Augsburg College Board of Regents Chair Dr. Paul Mueller ’84, Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin, Naming Gift Donors Evangeline Hagfors and Norman Hagfors, Augsburg College President Paul C. Pribbenow, National Fundraising Campaign Chair Michael Good ’71, Augsburg College Provost Karen Kainola, and 2015-16 Day Student Body President Duina Hernandez ’16.
AROUND THE QUAD

$50,000 grant funds
RECYCLING PROGRAM EXPANSION

Student-faculty-staff collaboration improves campus sustainability

Augsburg College can boost its efforts to divert organic and compostable items from trash and other recycling thanks to a $50,000 recycling grant from the Hennepin County Environment and Energy Department. The funding will be used to purchase indoor and outdoor bins, rolling carts, and signage to foster increased composting of organic material and the proper disposal of mixed recyclables.

Augsburg’s Environmental Stewardship Committee, Facilities and Custodial staff, and the Augsburg Day Student Government’s Environmental Action Committee collaborated to submit the grant proposal.

“Thousands of people touch the campus in some way during the course of one year,” said Amber Lewis ’17 MAE, an Environmental Stewardship Fellow who supports on-campus sustainability initiatives. “In addition to students, faculty, and staff, guests join our community for graduation ceremonies, sporting events, performances, convocations, summer camps, conferences, and workshops. This presents us with an opportunity to share a clear message about the importance of recycling in our community.”

Go to augsburg.edu/green to learn about Augsburg’s commitment to offering facilities that are welcoming, sustainable, and designed for educational excellence.

AUGSBURG EXHIBITION SHINES in Guerrilla Girls Twin Cities Takeover

World-renowned feminist art activists the Guerrilla Girls recently “took over” Minneapolis and St. Paul to celebrate their 30th anniversary. Augsburg College was among more than two dozen arts and cultural institutions that hosted exhibits and events highlighting gender and race inequalities and promoting artistic expression.

The Guerrilla Girls, who wear gorilla masks and use the names of famous female artists as pseudonyms, were on campus for the opening reception of “Reconfiguring Casta,” a site-specific installation for the Christensen Center Art Gallery. Combining prints and paintings, artist Maria Cristina Tavera addressed the social concept of race and the issue of socio-racial classifications. Tavera, known on campus as “Tina,” also serves as the director of Augsburg’s McNair Scholars program, which seeks to increase graduate degree awards for students from underrepresented segments of society.

NEW RESIDENTS SET MEMORIAL HALL ABUZZ

Hives installed to bolster honey bee population

It has been decades since the last students moved out of Memorial Hall; the dormitory was converted to office space in the late 1960s. However, a new group of inhabitants moved in this spring when The Beez Kneez organization installed beehives on the building’s rooftop as part of an urban apiary partnership program. Augsburg joined the program to further the College’s commitment to environmental stewardship and to creating green spaces within the city.

Recently, honey bee populations have been decreasing due to parasites and the misuse of pesticides. The on-campus hives will help rebuild the local population and pollinate Augsburg’s plant life. Those worried about getting stung can rest easy—honey bees are not aggressive and will not sting unless threatened.

HONORING Retiring Faculty

KATHY ACCURSO
Instructor, Department of Education—with the College since 2012

KATHERINE BAUMGARTNER
Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing—with the College since 2005

RONALD FEDIE
Professor Emeritus, Department of Chemistry—with the College since 1996

FEKRI MEZIOU
Professor Emeritus, Department of Business Administration—with the College since 1987

VICKI OLSON
Professor Emerita, Department of Education—with the College since 1987

Read about the wide range of prestigious academic achievements and awards earned by Auggies during the 2015-16 year at augsburg.edu/now.

STUDENT SUCCESS CELEBRATING

Augsburg College President Paul C. Pribbenow delivered the keynote address for Cargill’s annual ethics week this spring. Pribbenow is recognized as one of the nation’s most engaging commentators and teachers on ethics, philanthropy, and American public life. His talk, “Promises to Keep: An Ethic of Stewardship,” reached Cargill employees located in Minneapolis and around the world.
Augsburg College celebrated students completing degrees in the traditional undergraduate, adult undergraduate, and graduate programs through commencement ceremonies held April 30. The 2016 traditional undergraduate class is the most diverse in the College’s history and comprised of more than 42 percent students of color.

Commencement keynote speaker Michael Botticelli, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, addressed ceremony attendees and was awarded an honorary doctorate. Michael Good ’71 also was awarded an honorary degree in recognition of his service to the College. Eleanor Barr ’16 earned the Marina Christensen Justice Award, and Kim Chisholm ’16 received this year’s Richard Thoni Award, recognizing his service to the College.

Augsburg was awarded an honorary doctorate.

Michael Lansing, director of Latin@ Studies and writes about history and law. His most recent book, “Degrees of Freedom: The Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota, 1865–1912,” chronicles conditions for African American Minnesotans and others in the half-century following the Civil War. Today, Minnesota and the nation are very different than they were in the postbellum period that Green examined, but tightly woven threads unite contemporary events with those occurring more than a century earlier.

ELCA college conference

Students, faculty members, and staff from two dozen colleges and universities affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America came together this summer as Augsburg hosted the annual Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference. The event featured a partnership with Interfaith Youth Core—an organization renowned for uniting young people of different religious and moral traditions for dialogue around shared values. IFYC Founder Eboo Patel [pictured speaking] discussed the colleges’ role in preparing students for life in a religiously diverse world.

Q: What prompted your interest in studying the history of African Americans in Minnesota?
A: In 1860, a slave woman was freed in a Minneapolis courtroom. In the aftermath, citizens in the communities of St. Anthony and Minneapolis for days walked the streets eying their neighbors, waiting for the smallest provocation to spark violence. We were on the verge of seeing our own little civil war erupt in Minnesota over the issue of slavery. Ultimately, Minnesotans’ attention was averted by news of the Confederate bombardment of the federal installation of Fort Sumter. Upon hearing the news, Minnesota was the first state to send volunteers into the Union Army. Seven years later, it would be the first state to extend voting rights to black men, pre-dating the ratification of the 15th Amendment. I felt compelled to understand this dynamic.

Q: When Minnesota granted suffrage to people who are black, what implications did this have in citizens’ lives?
A: In a practical sense, the implications were non-existent. There simply weren’t enough black voters in Minnesota to influence political leaders or affect public policy. Symbolically, however, during a time of mounting economic dislocation coupled with the spread of white supremacy, it raised the bar, not just in terms of the broader virtue of racial equality, but more fundamentally, stressing the need for true leadership that called on ordinary people to overcome their baser instincts and choose to act with common decency.

Q: And yet you’ve said that race is “written between the lines” of early Minnesota history, rather than spoken about directly. What do you mean?
A: The fact that the black population was so small made it easy for historians and opinion makers to draw nary pictures of racial exceptionalism without needing to be checked by a more balanced reality. Without the “significant other” whose history was hidden in footnotes, it became easy to believe what one wanted to believe. But could it really be true that Dred Scott was the only slave to live in Minnesota? Could Frederick Douglass be the only African American to be denied service in a prestigious hotel in St. Paul, even though the proprietor was a friend of his and an officer in the Union Army? Could the paucity of discrimination lawsuits in the 19th century really mean there was no discrimination in restaurants and taverns?

Q: How does race function as an organizing principle of the Black Lives Matter movement?
A: In 1965 when the civil rights movement pressed for voting rights, the powerful symbolism of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X joining forces placed pressure on the President of the United States to shepherd through Congress the Voting Rights bill and sign it into law. Federal protection of the right to vote was a moral issue. But it was the union of two leaders who embodied opposing approaches to advancing civil rights that heightened a sense of urgency to enact the bill. The moral: As long as there are no “inside”-“outside” forces simultaneously pursuing the same ends but through different means. This isn’t the fault of BLM, but the absence of a “significant other” should be a concern to them, nonetheless. History can only provide suggestions on how or even whether to proceed.

Q: What does it mean to matter? What does it look like to matter?
A: With the Black Lives Matter movement, questions of racial equity have ignited important—and difficult—conversations in communities and courtrooms, on political campaign trails, and on college campuses.

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Devean George ’99 was the first NCAA Division III player ever selected in the first round of the NBA Draft—and he played professionally for more than a decade. Now retired from basketball, he’s gone back to his roots to help revitalize the Minneapolis neighborhood where he grew up.

BY CHRISTINA HALLER
November 3, 1999. The Los Angeles Lakers are debuting in their brand new home, the Staples Center, with an unveiling ceremony followed by a game against the Vancouver Grizzlies. A crowd of 20,000 fans is packed inside, waiting for NBA stars Kobe Bryant or Shaquille O’Neal to make opening remarks.

But instead, the Lakers players decide to encourage their newest rookie to address the crowd. The lights go down, and all becomes still. In less than 30 seconds, it’s go time.

“No, guys, don’t make me do this! I don’t know what to do," whispers a 22-year-old Devean George ’99. But his pleas were met with laughter.

“I just remember shaking in my boots. There are tens of thousands of people here, and I’m going to be out at center court—all eyes on me," recalls George. “So I get out there, and it just clicked. It was easy.”

George credits his education in communication studies from Augsburg for helping to prepare him for that life-changing moment, as well as all of his public speaking engagements from that point forward.

“As an NBA player, you have a camera with that big, red light in front of your face every day,” George said. “You have to know how to conduct yourself and communicate effectively. And all those communication classes I took at Augsburg come into play.”

From 10,000 lakes to Los Angeles Lakers

After high school, George enrolled at Augsburg assuming he would play basketball for the Auggies, earn a degree, and find a job in business. But his “hoop dreams” became a reality pretty early on in his Augsburg career.

“When I recruited Devean, he was about 6’2” and 170 pounds,” said former Augsburg basketball coach Brian Ammann ’85. “Fortunately for Devean, he grew about five inches and put on 50 pounds by his sophomore year. And his hard work paid off in big ways.”

George was the first NCAA Division III player ever selected in the first round of the NBA Draft. He was the 23rd overall pick in 1999, chosen by the Los Angeles Lakers—one of the most storied franchises in NBA history.

George is now retired from the NBA after playing 11 seasons and becoming only the seventh player in history to win a league championship in each of his first three seasons. He has since found a successful career in real estate development and a passion for giving back.

George was raised by devoted, hardworking parents in the Willard-Hay neighborhood of north Minneapolis and still calls the Twin Cities home—a place he loves for its friendly people and four seasons. His current work focuses on helping to improve his childhood community.

Building a firm foundation


George was the first NCAA Division III player ever selected in the first round of the NBA Draft.
After George joined the NBA, he started volunteering his time in schools and after-school programs. He noticed many of the children he visited didn’t have stable housing, which significantly affected their security and education.

“That’s when I decided helping kids and families would be the foundation of what I do,” said George, who has two young sons. He founded Building Blocks, a nonprofit organization committed to providing quality housing, community development, and programming for youth and families.

“If you don’t have stable housing, you’re not going to care about schooling, safety, or eating healthy. If we get those families into stable housing, then they can focus on those other things,” George said.

A slam dunk

George’s first affordable housing project opened this spring—the Commons at Penn in north Minneapolis, an income-restricted, 47-unit workforce apartment building that also includes an on-site health and wellness facility, an after-school program, a fitness center, a toddler playground, and a grocery store.

Long-term, George would like to help create a more family-friendly community in north Minneapolis—a community that provides greater amenities for its residents. So far, The Commons at Penn has been a successful addition to the neighborhood.

“The Commons at Penn achieves multiple city goals: creating new, high-quality, affordable housing options (and) increased residential density along a key commercial and transit corridor, and bringing in commercial activity and services,” said Andrea Brennan, director of Housing Policy and Development for the City of Minneapolis. “This project sets us on a promising course to continue development at this important north Minneapolis node.”

George is planning phase two of The Commons at Penn, which will go up right across the street from the existing mixed-use building. He also is developing housing complexes in South Carolina and Louisiana, and has been contacted by fellow professional athletes who would like to see a change in the neighborhoods where they were raised.

Investing in our future

In addition to literally helping build a solid foundation for families through stable housing, George also helps build a strong foundation for young people through mentorship programs like Read to Achieve.

“The kids think that NBA players are not human beings because we know how to play basketball,” said George. “If I can tell a kid to go to school and not to do drugs, and just because I can play basketball he’ll listen to me, I’m going to try to use that to my advantage.”

George is also busy instilling the values of compassion and service in his own two sons, ages 7 and 4. For starters, they learn to share by donating their toys to kids who otherwise wouldn’t have any.

“They’re still young, but I started teaching my boys early on a way of giving and understanding. I explain to them that this lifestyle isn’t normal; they’re in a blessed situation,” George said. “I’ve been able to achieve a lot of things. But I know I’ve had a lot of help along the way.”
Beyond the Scoreboard

Each year, Augsburg College athletes sprint, skate, dive, throw, swim, and leap countless times as they prepare for and compete in athletic contests. Because competition records and stats generally offer only a glimpse of what happens on the court, field, or mat, we compiled some lesser-known facts to boost your AuggiePride and to showcase the teamwork, collaboration, celebration, and effort that converge in Augsburg athletics.

5 Teams in Conference Playoffs during this record-breaking year

7,395 Pounds of weights added to strength and conditioning facilities

57 Community Service Events at which athletes volunteered

300 Pounds of candy served at the Auggie Awards ceremony

4,320 Rolls of athletic tape and pre-wrap used

2,840 Loads of laundry washed

3.22 Cumulative GPA earned by athletes — and 14 student-athletes achieved a perfect 4.0 average**

7,5357 Miles traveled for games, meets, and international trips

2.9 Auggie Eagle’s sneaker size as per Red Wing Shoe

36,430 Hours spent working out which is equal to 1,518 days, or 217 weeks, or 4 years, 1 month and 3 weeks

1,230 Jerseys worn

7,2604 Fans present at home, away, and neutral-site events*

102 Minutes played in three overtimes during the men’s hockey MIAC championship game win over Saint John’s University

3,284 Social media followers on @AugsburgAuggies platforms as of June 6

*Represents events where attendance was taken, not all contests with spectators
**2015-16 academic year
Each semester, painting and drawing classes typically occur in what originally was an Augsburg College chapel. Old Main 100 is an inspiring place with 25-foot ceilings and soaring windows. On-campus studios offer focused spaces for students to learn about visual art media, methods, and creative expression. For 25 years, Associate Professor and Art Department Co-Chair Tara Sweeney has taught foundational drawing principles in Old Main with what she calls “as few spectators and distractions as possible,” and in recent years she also has led short-term international travel courses in which students develop the same skills without the support of a traditional studio.

This spring, Sweeney and her Minneapolis-based students traveled close to home as they stepped beyond the boundaries of the campus studio, choosing to forgo a controlled setting to embrace learning opportunities present in public areas that are as complex and challenging as they are diverse.

“Instead of creating a still life with the same old props, I utilized the city as subject matter and classroom,” Sweeney said. “Students were as actively engaged in creative placemaking as they were in making drawings—effectively shaping the physical and social character of whatever neighborhood, museum, coffee shop, or landmark we chose as a drawing site.”

A CORE CHALLENGE

In the article “The Power of Experiential Education,” nationally recognized education scholar and professor Janet Eyler noted that a central challenge for liberal arts educators like Sweeney—and indeed the entire Augsburg College faculty—is to “design learning environments and instruction so that students will be able to use what they learn in appropriate new contexts.” That is, to successfully “bridge classroom study and life in the world and to transform inert knowledge into knowledge-in-use.”

In a drawing course, for instance, students develop technical skills while exploring individual subject matter and creative expression. It is perhaps the latter of these elements that came into clearer focus when Sweeney took her students out in the community.

The artists “made connections with strangers and learned things about themselves in the process,” Sweeney said. They become comfortable creating art in the midst of daily life and finished the course with “real skills and the right tools to continue drawing wherever they find themselves and wherever inspiration finds them.”

JUST A GLIMPSE

At Augsburg, students across disciplines and degree programs benefit from faculty instruction that integrates experiential learning opportunities with traditional instructional methods, thereby linking course concepts with real-world applications. The pages that follow offer a glimpse at a small sample of the faculty and students who use Minneapolis as their classroom.
Students speak with Abdirahman Mukhtar, a youth program manager at Pillsbury United Communities’ Brian Coyle Center. Mukhtar oversees the Sisterhood Boutique, a secondhand clothing store that serves as a training ground for young women to learn about entrepreneurship, business, community partnerships, and sustainable fashion. Through their discussions with Mukhtar, the Auggies began to apply some of their fundamental course concepts in a real-world setting.

ENV 120: Students clad in safety gear and earplugs to dampen the deafening noise weave their way through a Eureka Recycling processing plant. Environmental Science focuses on understanding and resolving problems humans have created in the natural world. The course includes hands-on learning opportunities that make complex scientific concepts more approachable and applicable for students.

“The city is the perfect place for these types of experiences to happen—it’s all right at our fingertips: a wastewater treatment plant, power plant, recycling center, and public transit,” said Assistant Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies Emily Schilling. “We can observe the detrimental effects humans are having on the environment, and we also can see some of the ways we are trying to mitigate that impact.”

HON 230: Students in Augsburg College’s Honors Program join Minnesota Orchestra performers onstage following a symphony event at Orchestra Hall. As an interdisciplinary course, “Arts and the Cities” unites film, music, theater, and visual art—offering students the chance to peruse Picassos, soak in Shakespeare, and mingle with musicians. Together, students and teachers explore the role of the arts in a culturally dynamic urban setting.

“Students enjoy the experiential nature of this course,” said Associate Professor of Music Merilee Klemm ’75. “They often comment that it presents them with opportunities that they would not have on their own and deepens their understanding of the role of the arts in their lives long after the course is over.”

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

E-COMMERCE

MIS 375: Students speak with Abdirahman Mukhtar, a youth program manager at Pillsbury United Communities’ Brian Coyle Center. Mukhtar oversees the Sisterhood Boutique, a secondhand clothing store that serves as a training ground for young women to learn about entrepreneurship, business, community partnerships, and sustainable fashion. Through their discussions with Mukhtar, the Auggies began to apply some of their fundamental course concepts in a real-world setting.
Conflict is a pervasive characteristic of human interaction.

This is the opening line of the summer syllabus for Augsburg College’s Master of Arts in Leadership course, “Navigating Local & Global Conflict: Interfaith Dimensions.” The statement underscores how important it is for leaders to develop the ability to navigate and inspire others in the face of conflict and sets the stage for the work of analyzing leadership in the context of real-world situations.

By design, the course is integrated with the annual Nobel Peace Prize Forum, for which Augsburg is the host sponsor. “The Nobel Peace Prize Forum is a gem,” said history and leadership studies professor Jacqueline deVries. It’s a one-of-a-kind event that allows students to learn through direct engagement about the contexts and complexities involved in conflict. deVries, who also serves as director for Augsburg’s general education program, co-taught the course with Martha Stortz, Bernhard M. Christensen Professor of Religion and Vocation, and Tom Morgan, professor of leadership studies.

Held annually in Minneapolis, the Nobel Peace Prize Forum is one of only three programs officially associated with the Norwegian Nobel Institute. The Forum’s mission is to inspire peacemaking by focusing on the work of Nobel Peace Prize laureates and by engaging students and the wider community with national and global leaders in the process of peacebuilding.

The Forum provided the students in the graduate course with direct access to leaders from businesses, nonprofits, and government organizations whose work involves navigating complex, real-world challenges that range from food security to civil unrest to poverty and climate change. The students used examples from the Forum, as well as from their own lives, to analyze conflict involving religious diversity in their communities, examine contemporary issues in a historical perspective, and develop a view on what effective leadership looks like (or might look like) in actual situations.

Students come to the Master’s of Arts in Leadership program with experience...
Augsburg College President Paul C. Pribylow noted that Sabo’s “life-long commitment to public service is an inspiration to all of us. The Sabo Center gives Augsburg the ongoing opportunity to celebrate the life and work of our dear friend.”

One year after graduating from Augsburg College, Sabo—then 22—was elected to serve in the Minnesota House of Representatives. During his tenure, he became the first member of the Democrat-Farmer-Labor party to serve as Speaker of the House—a post he held from 1973-78. He went on to serve for 28 years as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, retiring in 2007.

At the same time that Sabo served in Congress, he volunteered 12 years to Augsburg College as a member of the Board of Regents. The College named Sabo a Distinguished Alumnus and awarded him its first-ever honorary degree. Sabo was distinguished in all he undertook and, in 2006, was appointed Commander of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit for outstanding work and dedication to Norwegian-American relations.

Congressman Sabo and Sylvia Sabo are parents of Auggies Karin Mantor ’86 and Julie Sabo ’90.

For example, some students thought that business was potentially the most powerful force for addressing the issues discussed at the Forum; others argued that the biggest changes will come when consumers demand it, quoting comments by Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, who, in his opening remarks, said, “We have to change the demand.”

Another student observed that every person has a powerful “what’s in it for me” filter and noted that, if we don’t translate the message in a way that addresses this filter, it will not be effective. And, although the class agreed, the students also recognized that people are often motivated not just by what benefits them directly, but also by generosity and helping others—by what, as one student phrased it, satisfies a need of the heart.

“We have to change the demand”
Augsburg Now

your gifts online at givemn.org
around the world.
research and scholarship on campus, across the United States, and Graduate Opportunity, which connects students with new and existing legacy of music, research, and civil service at Augsburg. Gifts are being Fine Arts in Creative Writing program; and trips by athletic teams for the expansion of on-campus research; the purchase of a 3-D printer for supports new opportunities for students. Funds raised last year supported Minnesota colleges and universities, and earned a $10,000 bonus. As a result, Augsburg ranked first among all participating were first-time donors—generously stepped up to give more than $240,000 to Augsburg. In 2015, in just 24 hours, more than 1,000 Auggies—many of whom were first-time donors—generously stepped up to give more than $240,000 to Augsburg. As a result, Augsburg ranked first among all participating Minnesota colleges and universities, and earned a $10,000 bonus. Alumni support on Give to the Max Day has a lasting impact and In 2015, in just 24 hours, more than 1,000 Auggies—many of whom were first-time donors—generously stepped up to give more than $240,000 to Augsburg. As a result, Augsburg ranked first among all participating Minnesota colleges and universities, and earned a $10,000 bonus. Alumni support on Give to the Max Day has a lasting impact and Supports new opportunities for students. Funds raised last year supported the expansion of on-campus research; the purchase of a 3-D printer for the mathematics and statistics department; production costs for Howling Bird Press, the student-run book publishing project in the Master of MAKES LASTING IMPACT

Anyone can donate any amount on Give to the Max Day. Schedule your gifts online at givemn.org, beginning November 1.

New to the Alumni Board

Five Auggies elected to serve three-year terms on the Augsburg College Alumni Board will network with and mentor current Auggies, build community with alumni, and provide a vital link between the College and graduates.

Derek Francis ‘08
School counselor, Minneapolis Public Schools

“Through the awesome community and volunteer opportunities at Augsburg, I realized I was passionate about working with youth. Augsburg’s value of service to the community transformed my life.”

Lori Higgins ‘94, ’12 MAL
President, MetroNorth Chamber of Commerce

“I am eager to give back to the school that has given me so many opportunities, such as political internships with (former U.S. Rep.) Martin Sabo ’59 and MN Sen. Bill Luther, which began my career.”

Josh Kroh ‘08, ’15 MBA
Business development, Gravie

“A continuing passion of mine is to grow our networking efforts, both for employers and individuals as they connect with Auggie alumni.”

Janeece Oatman ‘05
Development director, American Diabetes Association

“I have a passion for committee-building, and I am interested in networking opportunities, reconnecting with campus, and fellow Auggies.”

Brad Randall ‘13
Mechanical maintenance planner, Xcel Energy

“As a graduate of Augsburg’s Adult Undergraduate program, I am interested in mentoring Augsburg alumni in all fields.”

Q: How many times have you traveled to Thailand? What keeps bringing you back?

A: My husband and I lived in Thailand as Peace Corps volunteers for two years and have returned eight times since. We return because we feel Thailand is our “second home.” We love Thailand’s beauty—from the huge city of Bangkok to the mountains of northern Thailand in Chiang Mai to the small beach town where we lived. We also have many dear friends, some former students and colleagues, with whom we love to reconnect.

Q: Can you share with us a memory from a trip you led with Augsburg students?

A: We have shared our love of Thailand with Augsburg students during five trips and have so many good memories. Former Auggies still share their memories and pictures of the trips with us. Some of these students became English language learner teachers because of their experience teaching English in our former school. I remember one student, for example, who was hesitant about going so far away from home and to such an unfamiliar place. She had been my student in several classes and seemed to trust me when I encouraged her, so she took the big step. We are still in contact after many years and she has written about her trip to Thailand as being “life-changing.” She stepped out of her comfort zone and experienced things she could have never imagined, gaining confidence and self-awareness.

Q: Who should take this trip?

A: Anyone who values expanding a worldview, learning about a new culture, and experiencing beauty.
Travelers EDGE grant affords students pathway to success

In March, Augsburg was awarded a $115,000 grant to continue offering Travelers EDGE (Empowering Dreams for Graduation and Employment), a program that provides underserved students with scholarships, paid internships, and mentorship in an effort to break down barriers and provide long-term opportunity. The highly successful program, now in its sixth year at Augsburg, is poised to have 15 Travelers EDGE scholars on campus this fall—its largest cohort yet.

This prestigious program—open to only 12 colleges in the United States—has lifetime payoffs for students, including the chance to find challenging and rewarding careers in the insurance and financial services industry. To get there, each Travelers EDGE scholar works with a career coach and a professional mentor at Travelers and participates in financial literacy programming.

Marlene Ibsen, vice president of community relations at Travelers, said Augsburg was already doing great work and made for a natural Travelers EDGE partner.

“Everything and everyone we encountered at Augsburg, including President Pribbenow and throughout the organization, made us think, ‘This is a team of people who really get it and care about their students,’ ” said Ibsen. Students in the program receive financial scholarships and something that, in the long run, pays even greater dividends—networking contacts.

“Once they begin immersing themselves in the professional development workshops and start to build relationships with Travelers employees, students quickly learn that the networking and professional coaching they are getting will be of significant use to them in the long term,” said Janet Morales, Augsburg’s director for the program.

So far, Augsburg has had 23 Travelers EDGE scholars participate in the program and some have gone on to accept full-time positions with Travelers.

Dustin Stroh, ‘14, is one of the Travelers EDGE alumni who works at Travelers. Grunland had two internships at the company, including one in Hartford, Connecticut. As an intern, she helped develop new and more efficient reporting systems that are still in use today.

Grunland said her mentor helped her understand how school applies to the real world by encouraging her to accept and take on challenges, to network, and to push herself beyond her comfort zone.

“My Travelers EDGE scholar work taught me business etiquette, interviewing techniques, and resume writing,” she said. “It helped connect me with resources at Augsburg that I didn’t really know about.”

Travelers EDGE connected Grunland with staff in Augsburg’s Clair and Gladys Strommen Center for Meaningful Work who helped Grunland become more comfortable seeking regular advice on graduate school.

Morales sees that the value of the program goes far beyond job experience.

“Travelers EDGE is confidence building,” she said. Our scholars do not typically have any corporate experience prior to becoming a part of Travelers EDGE, nor do they have family members with that experience, so starting their professional journey within insurance and financial services can be intimidating. However, Travelers EDGE gives the scholars opportunities to learn and build their skills within a safe space. The end result is that they can imagine themselves with a career in insurance and financial services, which they couldn’t before.”
1999 Althea sisters, Kaja Foo ‘96 and Zoe Foo ‘96 have shared a total of 35 years at Augsburg and set a national record in the hammer throw that still stands. He went on to compete nationally and internationally in Highland games. He competed in states including California, Florida, and Texas, and then he also competed in Iceland. He traveled to Gye, Hungary, as part of Team USA for the 2005 World Highland Games Championship where he squared off against 15 athletes from around the world. He was pleased to record one of his best performances ever in cossing (throwing a 175-pound wooden beam), and finished in seventh place. Dahnlin lives in Minnetonka, Minnesota, and works as a software developer at Barr Engineering, focusing primarily on creating web applications. He also is a sports photographer who covers NFL games.

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2007 James Lekatu ‘07 wrote the music for “The Secret Queen,” which was presented at Stages Theatre in Hopkins, Minnesota, in March. This summer, Lekatu worked with a group of students with autism on a production of “The BFG” as part of a program called CAST, Creative Accepting Sensory-friendly friendly theatre. He will be assistant director on a production called “Twinkle Twinkel,” as part of Stages Theatre Company’s theatre for the very young, and he will compose Stages’ next dance ballet piece, “The Velveteen Rabbit,” to be performed next spring.

Building hope
In March, Bob Strommen ‘74 volunteered for a Habitat for Humanity project in Nicaragua. He joined cousins Tim ‘70 and Dave (Hotte) ‘70 Strommen, and Judy (Knudson) Strommen ‘77, and was overwhelmed by the magnitude of poverty in the small village where they worked. The trip was Tim’s third visit to the area.

Bob writes, “Prior to our venturing out, we had an orientation led by our Nicaraguan Habitat leader, Alvarado, who shared that there was a need for more than 600,000 homes in Nicaragua—either new builds or fixing up existing homes in desperate need of repair. And we were going to build one. At the time I thought, ‘What difference will this make?’ How do you tackle such an overwhelming need?”

Upon meeting the eventual homeowner, her daughter, and grandchildren, Bob soon learned that their work in that one week would make a life-changing impact for the family.

He plotted the impact they would make on the family of the house, but did not comprehend the impact that the people and families of Nicaragua and the family of the house, but did not comprehend the impact that the people and families of Nicaragua and the family of the house, but did not comprehend the impact that the people and families of Nicaragua and the family of the house, but did not comprehend the impact that the people and families of Nicaragua.

2009 Tanzania ‘99 builds neighborhood kids along side currently living in both Minneapolis and St. Paul.

2001 Augsburg theater alumni Stephanie Weinthal ‘01, Queens Bachman ‘15, and Jorge Rodriguez ‘15, and Professor Emerita Martha Johnson participated in the Full Circle Theater Company’s return engagement of “Theater: A Sacred Passage.” Lein Walthall and Johnson are two writers of this original performance piece, devised by the core artists of Full Circle who bring these stories into theater. Their stories embody the challenges and transformative experiences they have had in becoming theater artists and how their lives and work reflect the changes in the theater community during the past two decades. The piece incorporates acting, story telling, choreography, and music. Bachman was production coordinator, stage manager, and sound designer. Rodriguez served as artistic director and lighting designer. Johnson was dramaturge and assistant director.

2008 Andrew Welsh ‘08 furthers his interest in local and global communities and organizations as they recover from natural disasters and tragedies. He encourages others through a letter-writing campaign and invites groups, such as area high schools, to join him in his dedication to this mission.

2010 Jennifer (Madawig) Orlando ‘10 became (jlt) owner of the public accounting firm of Peterson, Juergensen Hemrick & Co. in Hutchinson, Minnesota, after five years with the firm. Prior to becoming owner and earning an accounting degree at Augsburg, she worked on the administrative side of the company. Orlando is a native of Brownwood, Minnesota, and worked for the city of Brownwood while completing her degree.

2003 Megan and Jay Howard ‘03 welcomed their son, Max, on April 28.

2001 Ross Murray ‘00, has been issued an invitation from the Metropolitan New York Synod in New York City to be consecrated as a diocesan minister and focus on LGBTQ advocacy at ALAA. He and Richard Samuel ‘01, MBA were married in April.

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2012 Patrick Siegel ‘11 is the proud owner of Robusto & Brier cigar store and lounge in Lakewood, Ohio. The establishment is made for all who appreciate a fine cigar and conversation-worthy decor. He got hooked on the cigar business when, as a student at Augsburg, he was hired by the Golden Leaf shop, where he bought his cigars. He and wife, Nicole, who grew up in Rocky River, Ohio, decided to settle in Lakewood. Robusto & Brier specializes in hand-rolled products that are kept in a 15-by-30 foot humidor. The shop offers about 400 types of cigars and about 50 kinds of tobaccos.

2012 The Minnesota Women’s Press published an article on Interfaith Youth Connection, a program for high school and college-age youth that promotes interfaith understanding and service. The article includes comments from Fantasia Hassan ‘12, a college student program associate at Augsburg College and program coordinator of Interfaith Youth Connection. By holding regular conversations and yearly service days, the program has made significant progress in their work.

2014 Allison Zank ‘14 has been named a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow for 2014-16. Zank will receive a $34,000 annual stipend and $12,000 cost-of-education allowance to assist her in achieving a research-based graduate degree. An NSF GRFP indicates to graduate schools that a student is a top undergraduate scientist in the nation. Zank conducted summer research on biofilms with Augsburg Associate Professor Jennifer Barkers-Fulbright as well as at the University of Minnesota’s Dental School. Zank also has spent time conducting research in industry. At Augsburg, she was named an URGSD Scholar, McNair Scholar, AugSTEM Scholar, and Goldwater Scholar. She plans to pursue a master’s degree in clinical microbiology at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse this fall.

2015 Jordan Hult ’15 competed in the 2015 Olympic trials in the 85-kilogram weight class for Greco-Roman wrestling at Caravel-Hawkeye Arena in Iowa City, Iowa, on April 6. Hult was one of three athletes automatically earning the No. 1 ranking. He graduated from Augsburg with a business degree in marketing.

Diana Hernandez ‘16 Kicks off an Augsburg Graduating Class Career. See page 2.

Entrepreneurial leader recognized

Nic Thyen ‘06 MBA was named to the 2016 Class of Henry Crown Fellows and the Aspen Global Leadership Network at the Aspen Institute. This growing network unites a worldwide community of entrepreneurial leaders from business, government, and the nonprofit sector who share a commitment to enlightened leadership and to using their creativity, energy, and resources to tackle the foremost societal challenges of our time. Thyen is an accomplished entrepreneur in the human services industry and the founder of companies that provide an array of services to persons with disabilities and senior citizens. Thyen is the founder and CEO of Morning Star Financial Services and the founder and chairman of Summit Fiscal Agency and Pinnacle Services, Minneapolis. Thyen was named a 2015 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist, and in 2006, was named to Inc. Magazine’s “30 Under 30, America’s Coolest Young Entrepreneurs” list and to the Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal’s “40 Under 40” list. In 2010, Thyen was presented with Augsburg’s First Decade Award, which honors graduates of the past 10 years who have made significant progress in their professional achievements and contributions to the community.

2009 Benjamin Austin ‘09 and Michelle (Anderson) Austin ’11 were married December 10 in St. Paul. They met at Augsburg during her sophomore year and his senior year.

2010 Mike Peis ‘10 has joined Backboard Media, based in Northeast Minneapolis. Check it out at backboardgroup.com.

2010 Schyler (Dashaupt) Hixson ’10 graduated from Mitchell Hamline School of Law in St. Paul in January with a focus in Indian law. She recently passed the Minnesota bar and became a staff attorney for the Ho-Chiric Nation Trial Court. She holds undergraduate degrees from Augsburg in history and American Indian studies.

2013 Kush Wilt ’13 co-founded the Nyaden Foundation, a nonprofit that aims to provide basic survival necessities to disadvantaged women and children throughout Africa. She is an artist, model, and humanitarian whose debut film role was in “The Good Lie,” a drama starring Reese Witherspoon that tells the story of a group of Sudanese refugees who are offered shelter in the United States. Wilt was born to a Sudanese mother and Swedish father at a refugee camp following her parents’ escape from war-torn Sudan. As a young girl, Wilt moved to Minnesota to attend Augsburg and study social psychology. Visit nyadenfoundation.org to learn more about the organization’s work to foster girls’ and women’s safety, empowerment, independence, dignity, self-esteem, and self-respect.
In memoriam

Chester R. Heikkinen ’40, Robbinsdale, Minnesota, age 99, on November 24.

Heine (Quanbeck) Nichols ’44, Monticello, Minnesota, age 94, on April 27.

Mary (Mortensen) Nelson ’45, Minneapolis, age 92, on January 22.

Hein E. (Berg) Peterson ’46, Minneapolis, age 92, on November 23.

Doris M. Rear-Hustad ’46, Blanchardville, Wisconsin, age 90, on March 18.


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The Augsburg Choir joins Barry Manilow on stage

The exceptional talent and hard work of the Augsburg Choir was rewarded with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sing backup during Grammy-award winner Barry Manilow’s farewell tour. Members of the choir sang three of his hits in an encore at the Xcel Energy Center: “I Write the Songs,” “Miracle,” and “Copacabana (At the Copa).”