



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY UPDATE

June 30, 2008

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Good morning. Yesterday at our June Commencement exercises we honored Weekend College, Rochester, and nursing graduates from our partner hospitals, as well as graduate students from five of our six master's programs. Honorary doctoral degrees were conferred upon Ambassador Koryne Horbal and Salvadoran Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez Soto. Ambassador Horbal and Bishop Gomez Soto inspired us as we learned about the courage and commitment to equality and social justice that has characterized their lives. In his Commencement address, ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson '68 urged us to be mindful of the "unfolding story" in our own lives and to look for its intersections with the struggles of others in the world.

Rochester student Stacy Schmitt was honored as the second recipient of the Richard J. Thoni Award. She graduated summa cum laude in two-and-a-half years with a business administration major. In addition to her family, studies, and full-time work at Mayo Clinic, she has served as the marketing director for her neighborhood association, which has been recognized in Rochester for its initiatives to create a safe, friendly, and family neighborhood.

Established in 2007 to honor the retirement of Rick Thoni, founder of the Weekend College and Rochester programs, the Richard J. Thoni Award honors a graduating senior student from Weekend College whose actions, commitments, and future aspirations most profoundly demonstrate a commitment to Augsburg's motto of "Education for Service."

Less than a month after sending off our June graduates, **we'll soon welcome our incoming first-year Day College students and their parents at SOAR**, Summer Orientation and Registration, July 15-19. Students will learn about transition to college, the first-year program, and many aspects of Augsburg's curricular and co-curricular life. For the first time, they'll also have the opportunity to explore the neighborhoods around campus. I hope you'll take time to welcome our first-years and their parents and help acquaint them with campus and our neighbors.

CAMPUS PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Summer research with URGO

Sixteen students who are interested in graduate or professional studies after Augsburg are working 40 hours per week for nine weeks this summer, together with faculty mentors, on research proposals they submitted to the Undergraduate Research and Graduate Opportunity (URGO) office. The URGO students also participate in weekly roundtable discussions, submit progress reports, and present their findings at the Zyzzogeton celebration.

URGO research is spread across disciplines and includes such projects as studying DNA in dragonflies, relational aggression in teenage girls, movement in opera singers, training regimes for runners, and algae for biodiesel production. For a list of the URGO student researchers and their faculty mentors, go to www.augsburg.edu/urgo/

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On target with enrollment

I am pleased to report that Augsburg's enrollment targets for fall are on track. We currently have 429 deposited first-year day students. While the goal was 425, which we have exceeded, we'll continue to accept students to allow for some who ultimately decide not to attend Augsburg. For transfer students, who generally deposit later, the goal is 160, and we are on track toward that with the current number at 133. For adult students (undergraduate and graduate), the goal is 573 new students, and we expect to meet that goal.

Safe travels to study seminars

We wish safe journeys to the short-term study seminars that are either currently traveling or will travel in the next few weeks:

- Exploring Health Care in Guatemala (PA Studies)—led by Donna DeGracia, June 23–July 8
- Exploring Family and Child Welfare Services in Slovenia (social work)—led by Lois Bosch, June 30–July 10
- Sustainable Cities (sociology)—to Portland and Vancouver, led by Lars Christiansen and Nancy Fischer, July 9–29
- Leadership and Universal Responsibility (MAL)—to Nicaragua, led by Velma Lashbrook, July 13–26
- Peace and Reconciliation after Conflict: A Guatemalan Perspective—Hoversten Peace Program for faculty and staff, July 26–Aug. 4

Preparing for the Campaign 2008 Seminar

Planning continues over the next few weeks for The Washington Center's two-week seminar that will bring students from around the country to the Augsburg campus to study the political process and gain experience at the Republican National Convention. Beginning August 25, more than 150 students, including 24 from Augsburg, will spend the first week in seminars on campus and the second week at the convention in St. Paul. Also, during the Labor Day week, public community forums on campus will present speakers participating in the convention.

AugSem design team at St. Olaf

Members of the AugSem Design Team (and alternates) spent a week at the Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning's Summer Institute on Academic Innovation held June 9–13 at St. Olaf College. There the team learned key ideas and strategies about implementing academic change on campuses and began work on developing student learning outcomes, vision, and creative ideas for redesigning the academic component in the context of the entire first-year experience.

Participants included Barb Curchack (Psychology), Darcey Engen (Theatre Arts), Amanda Erdman (Residence Life), Sarah Griesse (Student Affairs), Don Gustafson (History), Lori Brandt Hale (and newborn Caleb) (Religion), Bev Stratton (Religion), and students Ray Kidd

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and John Rodriguez. Several of these people, and student Beth Franklin, continued this work during the following week at Augsburg.

Catch the Auggie train

Watch the Hiawatha Light Rail line for the maroon train wrapped in Augsburg's new "look." Mark your calendars for the kick-off event to see and ride the Auggie train on Thursday, July 24, at 4:30 p.m. at the Bedlam Theatre, 1501 S. 6th St., in Cedar-Riverside.

Weekly Update returns in August

This is the last Weekly Update for the 2007-08 academic year. Watch for the next Weekly Update on Monday, August 25, as we move into the 2008-09 academic year.

KUDOS

Many thanks to **everyone who helped make Commencement a special event** for our graduates, especially the Events and Conference Services team, Dean's Office, A'viands, Public Safety, and all others who volunteered their time.

Kudos to **Carrie Carroll and the Day College admissions team** who hosted 496 guests on campus during Minnesota Private College Week, including 270 students and 226 parents.

Kudos to **Sandra Olmsted**, Chemistry, and **Howard Weiss**, Custodial Services, for promptly notifying the Department of Public Safety about a man behaving suspiciously in Science Hall. Augsburg public safety officers located the man, and after determining he was carrying thieves' tools (e.g., bolt cutters, screwdrivers, and pliers) and did not have a legitimate explanation for his behavior, called the Minneapolis Police. We later learned that this man was a convicted Level 3 sex offender who had failed to register with local authorities. By promptly reporting him, Sandra and Howard have made our campus and the city a safer place. We each have a responsibility to keep Augsburg safe, and promptly reporting suspicious behavior is one important way to keep our campus safe.

NOTABLE EVENTS

July 8–August 8

Summer Session II classes

July 15–19

SOAR, Summer Orientation and Registration for first-year day students.

July 24

Kick-off event for the Augsburg light rail train

4:30 p.m., Bedlam Theatre, 1501 S. 6th St., Cedar-Riverside

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August 25

The Washington Center Republican National Convention Seminar begins

August 26-27

New faculty orientation

DAILY CHAPEL SPEAKERS

Chapel services will resume in September.

For Augsburg athletic news, scores, and schedules: www.augsburg.edu/athletics/

Have a great summer!