



President's WEEKLY UPDATE

January 12, 2009

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Good morning. Welcome back to day students, beginning spring semester classes today, and to Rochester students, who begin their winter trimester. I especially welcome new and transfer students to Augsburg, many of whom attended orientation sessions last week.

Just before the holiday break, I was pleased to accept a check from the Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation in the amount of \$229,268 to fund Project IGNITE—Involving Graduates Now In Thoughtful Engagement. This three-year pilot program will link current Augsburg students with more than 1,600 fairly recent Augsburg alumni who, we hope, might become actively engaged with the College.

Project IGNITE's goal is to reconnect these alumni to Augsburg—to encourage them to attend events on campus, to volunteer in alumni programs, and, hopefully, to become supporters of the College. Students will make visits to alumni in the Twin Cities metro area, asking them about their experience at Augsburg, and inviting them to become more engaged.

Our alumni are a strategic advantage for us, and this program will enable us to reach out and include more and more Augsburg graduates in the life of our current students and campus life. Our current students and recent graduates are often our best spokespeople for what's happening on campus.

I'm grateful to Augsburg regents Jennifer Martin and Alex Gonzalez, employed at Thrivent, who have supported us in the grant application process. We expect Project IGNITE to become a model program for alumni engagement at other Lutheran institutions, which in turn will strengthen all of our Lutheran communities.

I look forward to working with Kim Stone and her staff in the Alumni and Constituent Relations Office, who will be leading this important work.

As we hear more news every day of people unemployed, businesses closing, and cutbacks in funding, **I am heartened by the generosity of the Augsburg community and friends who continue to support our mission and work.** Through December 31, 2008, the Augsburg Fund has reached \$399,410.20 from 1593 donors. Total fundraising has reached \$3,411,471.30 from 2958 donors.

Also, **I want to remind you that next Monday, January 19, no classes meet as we honor Martin Luther King Jr. Day. At 1 p.m. in Hoversten Chapel, the 21st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation** features **Hollis Watkins**, co-founder and president of Southern Echo, Inc., a leadership development, education, training, and technical assistance organization dedicated to empowering local residents throughout his native Mississippi and the South. I hope to see you there for this always special event—even more significant this year as it falls on the day before the inauguration of Barack Obama.

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CAMPUS PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Welcome new students!

The day program has a total of 88 new students, putting the total number at 1,667 students. Augsburg for Adults has 113 new students in the undergraduate weekend/evening program, 37 in Rochester, 3 at United Hospital, bringing the total number of undergrads to 1,062. In graduate programs there are 92 new graduate students in five programs (35 in MA Education, 9 in MA Leadership, 2 in MA Nursing, 21 in MSW, and 25 in MBA), bringing total graduate students to 821.

I also welcome new International Partner students—11 from Norway, from nine different schools, joining the seven who arrived in the fall semester, and one student from Germany. One of the Norwegian students comes from Diakonhjemmet University College, a school that Abigail and I visited when we were in Norway in December. Our wishes for safe travel go to Jim Trelstad-Porter, International Programs Office, who is currently in Norway representing Augsburg at a student recruitment fair.

Closing for chapel time

Once more I want to draw your attention to the importance of chapel in Augsburg's life and mission. This is a time for our community—Sabbath time—that we set aside each week day (and Weekend College Saturdays) for chapel services or to worship or reflect in other meaningful ways. I ask all offices to remain closed during chapel time as a sign of our common purpose.

We meet in chapel on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:20 to 10:40 a.m., followed by 20 minutes of community time; and on Tuesday and Thursday from 11:20 to 11:40 a.m. On Weekend College Saturdays, the chapel service is at 7:30 a.m. There is also an informal communion on Wednesday evenings at 9:09 p.m. I draw your attention to the list of chapel speakers and programs in the calendar below.

Wednesday Gathering

I also remind you about Wednesday Gatherings, on the first Wednesday of each month, when soup, salad, and dessert are available to faculty and staff at no cost. These informal lunches are times for our community to get to know each other and share a meal together. The lunch is available from 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m.; for those who work on the night shift, a free meal is available during that shift.

Also, throughout the year, we are pleased to offer faculty and staff subsidized lunches and dinners, so that the cost to them is only \$3.75 for lunch and \$5.75 for dinner. This practice encourages our community (faculty, staff, and students) to come together informally in conversation and fellowship.

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Tuesday Community Time

On the last Tuesday of each month, we set aside time at 3:45 p.m. in East Commons to gather together for conversation, discussion, and to hear about items of interest and concern. I hope faculty, staff, and students will take this time to come together around our common work.

Auggie spirit

On behalf of our student-athletes, I want to encourage you to support the Auggie basketball, hockey, wrestling, and swimming and diving teams as they compete this winter. Our intercollegiate athletics teams are fine examples of teaching and learning across campus and in NCAA Division III athletics. Student-athletes are among the most visible ways Augsburg is represented to the wider community, and they bring a wonderful spirit to campus. Our support and enthusiasm carry them as they represent Augsburg in competition. I'm a big fan of Division III athletics, and I hope you'll join me in supporting our student-athletes and athletics staff. On a related note, later this week, athletic director Jeff Swenson, faculty athletic representative Tracy Bibelnicks, and I will be in Washington, D.C., for the annual NCAA convention, where we will engage in the important governance work for NCAA Division III athletics.

You'll find the complete winter athletic schedule at www.augsburg.edu/athletics/schedules/winter0809.html.

KUDOS

Congratulations to the **wrestling team and coach Mark Matzek** for their victory this weekend in the NWCA/Cliff Keen Division III National Duals Championship at the University of Iowa. They defeated both the No. 3-ranked Delaware Valley College and the top-ranked defending national champion Wartburg for the win.

Kudos to the **StepUP Program** and **Day Admissions** for hosting the second annual Recovery Students Education Fair on our campus last week. About 70 students in recovery had a chance to learn more about Augsburg and other colleges and universities in Minnesota who provide support for those working to overcome alcoholism and other drug addictions.

Kudos to **John Reimringer**, English, who has had an excerpt from his novel published in the Milkweed Editions anthology *Fiction on a Stick*. He will be reading from it on Tuesday, Jan. 20, at 7 p.m., at Micawbers Bookstore, in St. Anthony Park, along with writers Jacey Choy and Ethan Rutherford.

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NOTABLE EVENTS DURING THE WEEK—for a complete listing of Augsburg events, go to the Calendar on Inside Augsburg at <http://inside.augsburg.edu>

Monday, Jan. 19

21st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation, Hollis Watkins, speaker
1 p.m., Hoversten Chapel

DAILY CHAPEL SPEAKERS

M,W,F—10:20-10:40 a.m., Community Time following; T-Th—11:20-11:40 a.m.; Wed—9:30 p.m., Communion; Sat (when weekend classes meet)—First Word Community Gathering at 7:30-7:50 and 8-8:20 a.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 13—Sarah Ruch, Luther Seminary intern pastor

Wednesday, Jan. 14—President Paul Pribbenow

Wednesday eve., 9:09 p.m.—Communion

Thursday, Jan. 15—Thelma Buckner, gospel singer and community grandma

Friday, Jan. 16—Pastor Dave Wold

Monday, Jan. 19—no chapel service; 1 p.m., Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation

Sports results and schedule—www.augsburg.edu/athletics

Have a great week!