



President's WEEKLY UPDATE

December 1, 2008

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Good morning. Welcome back from Thanksgiving break. I hope you enjoyed the holiday with family and friends, taking time to give thanks for the many blessings we enjoy.

At the same time, **I am very sad to report that Kathleen “Katie” Wiltgen, a third-year student from Winona, Minnesota, was killed early Saturday morning in an automobile accident.** Katie was a music/business major and was in the Honors Program, as well as involved in many campus activities. Among them, she served as an orientation leader this year, working with new students during Summer 2008 SOAR and with AugSem N this fall, and she worked in the Undergraduate Research and Graduate Opportunity (URGO) office. The thoughts and prayers of the Augsburg community are with Katie’s family and her many friends. This morning during chapel time we remembered Katie and shared our grief and sadness together as a campus community.

This week we mark the entry into the Advent season with our annual celebrations of Velkommen Jul and Advent Vespers. The majestic Advent Vespers service of music and liturgy is a wonderful way for us to connect year after year with our alumni, donors, and friends—and is a meaningful beginning to the Advent season. Someone once said that Advent Vespers was a wonderful gift from Augsburg to our community, and that seems just right.

The requests for seating envelopes for the four services have been heavy so far. The 5 p.m. services on both Friday and Saturday are already full, and the two 8 p.m. services are expected to fill by the end of this week. For seating envelope information, go to www.augsburg.edu/vespers. If you have requested seating envelopes that you will not use, please either return them to the Music Dept. or call 612-330-1265 so that people on the waiting list might be able to attend.

Next week, Abigail and I travel to Oslo, Norway, to attend the ceremony and festivities for the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize. I will have the honor of formally inviting this year’s laureate, international peace negotiator Martti Ahtisaari, to be the honored guest and speaker at the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize Forum, which will be held at Augsburg on March 5-6, 2010.

Abigail and I will also visit the University of Tromsø, where two of our alums teach. (This is the northern-most university in the world, above the Arctic Circle). I’ll also meet with other Augsburg alums in Norway and with representatives of several universities to discuss ongoing and future partnerships.

In the past several months we have been deeply troubled by the unrest and incidents in the Cedar-Riverside area, especially that which resulted in the death of Ahmednur Ali, one of our students. Since then, we have been actively working with community members to keep our neighborhood safe. Recently **I attended a meeting of the Cedar-Riverside Partnership Group, comprised of the CEOs of the various major**

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institutions in this area, where we discussed plans to establish a “safety zone” in this area that would enhance communication and response activities. Such safety zones have proven effective in other parts of the Twin Cities and are used to coordinate and connect various public safety resources within a particular geographic area. I will keep you up to date as these plans unfold in the months ahead.

CAMPUS PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

Velkommen Jul launches the holiday season

“Welcome Christmas,” as Velkommen Jul translates from Norwegian, is a festive and unique celebration recalling Augsburg’s Norwegian roots and the immigrants and their families who settled in the neighborhoods around Augsburg. Each year the Augsburg Associates bring Christensen Center alive with traditions of the Nordic Christmas season in the sharing of cookies, treats, sweets, and music—not to mention one of the largest annual gatherings of Norwegian sweater-wearers outside of Scandinavia.

Velkommen Jul begins on Friday with a chapel service at 10:15, featuring the singing of Christmas songs from the Nordic countries and the traditional visit from St. Nicholas. At 11 a.m., the Augsburg Associates—an organization of alumni, friends, and retired faculty and staff—host a sumptuous spread of Scandinavian Christmas goodies and a boutique of Scandinavian gifts and decorations. **The Christmas boutique will be on the main level in Christensen Center, with the food and sweets upstairs.**

All are welcome to join us for this distinctive celebration, marking our heritage as a college and also reminding us that our own immigrant roots give us an important perspective on the experiences of our neighbors in Cedar-Riverside. See you on Friday morning.

Celebrating Brian Krohn—Augsburg’s first Rhodes Scholar

On Thursday we’ll celebrate Augsburg’s first Rhodes Scholar, Brian Krohn, in the Oren Gateway Center atrium, from 2-3:30 p.m. Brian, a senior majoring in chemistry, is one of only 32 Americans selected for the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship. He will spend the next two years at Oxford University, pursuing a master’s degree in environmental science and management. You’re invited to hear more about Brian’s research that initiated new discoveries in biodiesel production, leading to national recognition, as well as his many other great accomplishments. A short program will begin at 2:30 p.m.

A Turkeypalooza bonanza

This year, the Campus Kitchen Project, with donations from the campus community, served approximately 700 meals at the Brian Coyle Community Center Multi-Cultural Dinner, Secure Waiting Men’s Shelter, Peace House, the Minnesota Indian Women’s Resource Center (MIWRC), and local seniors in partnership with the Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly (LBFE).

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For the traditional Thanksgiving dinners served, donations included 21 turkeys, 10 cans of cranberries, 9 cans of pumpkin, 7 pie crusts, 115 boxes instant potatoes, 20 lbs raw potatoes, 96 packages gravy mix, 30 cans evaporated milk, 92 cans cream of mushroom soup, 64 cans green beans, and 6 boxes of stuffing. Also, nearly 50 other cans, boxes, and packages of vegetables, soups, mixes, rice, and other foods were given.

Contributions were received from the following offices and departments: Administrative Accounting and Finance, Institutional Advancement, President's office, CLASS office, Admissions, Chemistry, Physician Assistant program, Education, Athletics, Marketing and Communication, Dean's office, and the Enrollment Center. **Thanks to everyone who helped provide holiday dinners for many of our neighbors in the community.**

KUDOS

Congratulations to **head coach Greg Holker and the men's soccer team**, who finished a great season and post-season, winning two games in the NCAA Division III playoffs before a difficult loss in the quarterfinals.

Also, congratulations to **cross country runner Brent Haglund and head coach Dennis Barker** for a great performance at the NCAA finals—Brent's 57th place finish is the best ever in Augsburg cross country history.

Kudos to **Brian Noy, Beth Ringer, the Campus Kitchen Project, departments and offices that contributed, and others** who organized this year's Turkeypalooza, which provided hundreds of meals for our community neighbors.

NOTABLE EVENTS DURING THE WEEK

Wednesday, Dec. 3

Wednesday Gathering lunch for faculty and staff

11 a.m.–1:30 p.m., East Commons, Christensen Center

Thursday, Dec. 4

Celebration for Brian Krohn, Augsburg's first Rhodes Scholar

2–3:30 p.m., Oren Gateway Center atrium

Friday, Dec. 5

Velkommen Jul—Nordic Christmas traditions

10:15 a.m., Velkommen Jul chapel service, Hoversten Chapel

11 a.m., Scandinavian food tasting, East Commons, Christensen Center

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Friday-Saturday, Dec. 5-6

29th Annual Advent Vespers Services—"At the Name of Jesus"

Friday and Saturday, 5 and 8 p.m., Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis

For seating envelopes, www.augsburg.edu/vespers

Friday-Sunday, Dec. 5-7

WEC, MAE, MAL, MAN, MSW hold final classes and exams for the fall trimester

Saturday, Dec. 6

Augsburg for Adults Holiday Lunch—for faculty, staff, and students

11:30 a.m.–1 p.m., Oren Gateway Center atrium

Monday, Dec. 8

2009 Legislative Session Preview with Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Lawrence Pogemiller, and Martin Sabo.

4–5:30 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.

Tues., Dec. 2—Joe Midthun, Luther Seminary intern pastor

Wed., Dec. 3—Lori Brandt Hale, Religion Dept.

Wed. eve—Communion

Thurs., Dec. 4—Sarah Ruch, Luther Seminary intern pastor

Fri., Dec. 5—10:15 a.m., Velkommen Jul chapel

Sat., Dec. 6—First Word Gathering, Rosemary Link, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies

Mon., Dec. 8—Kristin Anderson, Art Dept.

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

Have a great week.