

# CONCORDIA COLLEGE

April 2016

Greetings to you, friends and partners in mission, from Concordia College. Below you will find a concise report on life and work in our community of faith and learning.

## **A Global Liberal Arts College of the Lutheran Church**

Concordia's Forum on Faith and Life has received international, national as well as local recognition. In October, Dr. Jacqueline Bussie, director of the Forum and two student Interfaith Scholars were selected to make a presentation on Concordia's newly proposed interfaith studies minor and the importance of interfaith studies for higher education to the Parliament of the World's Religions. The Parliament is an international gathering of diverse faith communities and leaders that has convened once every five years since 1893 for global dialogue among the world's faith and philosophical traditions. This year's keynote speakers included Dr. Eboo Patel, Dr. Karen Armstrong and Dr. Jane Goodall. A second team of three Interfaith Scholars and Dr. Bussie received a grant from the James S. Kemper Foundation in collaboration with Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) to support research that explores religious diversity dynamics in local professional environments. The goal of the student-faculty research project is to create curricula and programs of study on religious diversity and its application in (local) professional environments and determine enhancements for students' education in this area. The Interfaith Scholars are interviewing and surveying Fargo-Moorhead area employers and employees in the education, health care, insurance, and hospitality industries to determine what concrete skills, knowledge, and competencies graduates need to flourish in a pluralistic workplace and to better meet the needs of a religiously diverse clientele. The grant will also help shape the new interfaith studies minor curriculum.

As president of this highly regarded liberal arts college of the church, I have been given the distinct honor to serve Lutheran World Relief and the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). In February, I was elected chair of the Lutheran World Relief Board of Directors. LWR is revered worldwide for its mission of emergency aid and sustainable agriculture, affirming God's love for all people as it works to end poverty, injustice, and human suffering. Since my election to the board in 2013, serving on LWR's board has become for me, as Concordia's students would say, a way to BREWing: becoming responsibly engaged in the world. I embrace the opportunity to serve as chair of the board with humility and with great enthusiasm. In January, I was appointed to the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) board. The Association of American Colleges and Universities seeks to make liberal education and inclusive excellence the foundation for higher education in the United States and across the globe. I am pleased to join its board of directors, bringing the achievements of Concordia's liberal arts tradition and practice to the national and international community. My work with AAC&U began early in my faculty career, as a mentor in its Cultural Legacies program to diversify the American college curriculum and has continued through my current service as chair of the Wye Seminar Council, a partnership of AAC&U and the Aspen Institute.

## **The Integrated Science Complex Renovation**

The \$45 million renovation will update the existing Ivers and Jones Science Center. More than 130,000 square feet of renovated construction will include 19 teaching labs and 16 classrooms. The space includes flexible classrooms, T-search labs designed for both teaching and research, and other specialized laboratories. Science study and health professions preparation are marks of distinction for Concordia and its talented graduates, who regularly become leaders in medicine, nursing, research, and healthcare administration. In February, Sanford Health CEO Kelby Krabbenhoft a 1980 Concordia

College graduate and current member of the Concordia Board of Regents, announced a Sanford match of 10 percent of capital gifts to the project, up to a total of \$3 million. This gift represents the largest corporate gift to date for the project. The College has raised \$27 million to date. Construction will begin in April 2016 with an expected completion date of August 2017.

### **Purpose in Mission, Purpose in Change**

Concordia has responded to the 24 percent drop in the number of Minnesota students seeking a college degree by positioning itself as a liberal arts college of 2,100 to 2,300 students. At this size, we will remain larger than the American private college average of 1920. So that our students, faculty, and staff will thrive, we are directing our resources for strength by:

- Ensuring that we are the right size for the current enrollment market.
- Reviewing existing programs to see if they should be continued in their present form.
- Devising compelling new academic programs and learning experiences.

Our decisions about reductions or closures came after extensive analysis of programs in which the number of student majors had dropped. The majors and concentration affected in these decisions have benefited many Concordia students over the years, and their graduates have gone on to distinguished professional and personal accomplishments.

What then is new? Concordia's faculty and academic administration have created new majors and new forms of learning over the past year to serve student interests, to prepare students for post-college success, and to compete for new students.

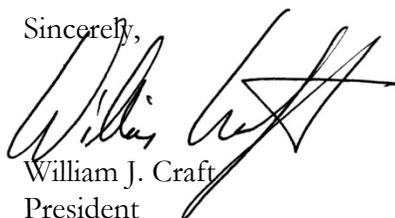
Here are those programs and learning forms:

- New majors in neuroscience and in finance, and a program to infuse digital skills into studies in the humanities and fine arts.
- A new graduation requirement that will lead every student into hands-on learning beyond the classroom.
- The Concordia Career Initiative, a four-year sequence of reflection and real-world work to prepare every student for jobs or graduate school.
- To support student learning, a complete renovation of science facilities is now underway thanks to highly successful fundraising. This project extends the momentum generated by the renovation of the Grant Center and the launch of the Offutt School of Business in 2013.

Finally, what has not changed at Concordia? We are and we will continue to be a global liberal arts college of the Lutheran church. We will continue to lead our students in free inquiry, discovery, and application for their own sake and for the health of the world. We continue to be a college where students study abroad at five times the national undergraduate average. We will continue to offer an outstanding return on the educational investment, evidenced by on-time graduation and high placement rates in jobs and grad school. We will continue to be one of the lowest cost private colleges in our state and region, with an average annual net cost of \$20,401, thanks to \$37 million of our funds underwriting student costs each year. We will continue to be an innovative, vital partner for Fargo-Moorhead, our region, our nation, our church.

Let me close by thanking you for your faithful work on behalf of the church we love and of the world it serves.

Sincerely,



William J. Craft  
President