

THE CONCORDIA

• COURIER •

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Get prepared with Life After College Week!

KIARA AZUMA
LOCAL/GLOBAL EDITOR

The annual Life After College Week will take place on campus from March 9 to March 13. Hosted by the Center for Career & Vocation, this week will allow students to explore opportunities in graduate schools and jobs, as well as learn valuable life skills for post-graduation. Each day, the staff and student workers will host events open to all students.

Monday, March 9 – Grad School Fair

Students of all majors should head to the Gym Breezeway from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. to explore graduate programs from various institutions. This event will be the perfect opportunity to learn more about application requirements and timelines, as well as the next steps to pursue an advanced degree.

Monday, March 9 – Networking Etiquette Night with RES

From 4 –5 p.m. at Eagles’ Landing, students can learn how to network in both professional and social settings. Tips regarding how to start conversations, follow up and make lasting connections will be provided.

Tuesday, March 10 – Budgeting 101

This event will be hosted at the Career Studio from 2 –3 p.m. Students can learn practical tips on managing money after college, focusing on budgeting basics, saving strategies and building healthy financial habits.

Wednesday, March 11 – Full-Time Hiring Expo

Head back to the Gym Breezeway and connect with employers hiring full-time roles. Employers from various industries will be attending, and students can learn what companies are looking for. This expo will take place from 11 a.m.– 2 p.m.

“For fairs and expos, I always encourage students to come prepared. Update your resume, take a few minutes to look at the organizations or programs that will be there, and practice a brief introduction about who you are, your major, and what you’re hoping to pursue,” recommended Katherine Olea, Assistant Director of Career Development. “Thoughtful questions and a simple follow-up email

afterward can turn a quick conversation into a strong professional connection.”

Cindy Arentsen, Career Center Program Assistant, will be hosting the career fairs. She explained that there will be some new and exciting employers present. “Some of the exciting employers we have attending this year are OCVibe! It is a great opportunity for jobs in this new development with the Anaheim Ducks. We also have Modern Woodmen of America, Enterprise Mobility, and the San Diego County Sheriff’s. A new employer on campus is TriNet, an HR solutions company,” she said.

Thursday, March 12 – Adulthood with Intention with the Wellness Center

Adulthood means continuing to care for your well-being. Join the staff at the Wellness Center from 2 –3 p.m. and learn how to prepare for life after graduation by focusing on connection, goal-setting, personal strengths and campus and community resources that are available to support your well-being.

Thursday, March 12 – Campus 2 Career: Public Service Panel & Tabling

Take a seat at the DeNault Auditorium from 5 –7 p.m. and hear directly from professionals in public service, education, parks and recreation and law enforcement. Conversations will focus on their career paths, the required degrees to pursue them, and opportunities to get involved.

“For workshops and panels, come ready to engage. Take notes, ask questions and think about how the information connects to your own goals. These sessions are meant to give you practical, realistic next steps that you can start applying right away,” said Olea.

Friday, March 13 – Education Hiring Expo

Students looking to pursue careers in education can meet school districts and education-related employers recruiting for teaching and education-adjacent roles. Available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Gym Breezeway, students can explore the various pathways into the education field. Even if students have participated in Life After College Week before, they are encouraged to

participate again.

“Career goals can shift from year to year. What made sense as a sophomore might look different as a junior or senior. New interests develop, confidence grows, and opportunities evolve,” said Olea. “Each year also brings different employers, graduate programs and panelists, along with updated information about hiring trends and application processes. What you hear this year may resonate in a new way because you’re in a different stage of your journey.”

“I love it when I see students connect the dots between their college experience and what comes next, because that next stage is right around the corner,” added Arentsen. “Life After College brings together everything from career exploration to practical life skills, and it’s exciting to watch students gain confidence – whether they’re networking at the etiquette night, exploring opportunities at the hiring expos, or learning how to step into adulthood with intention and wellness in mind.”



Photo courtesy of: Center for Career & Vocation

Career Studio offers opportunities in College Corps and internships

KAYLA REED

CAMPUS EDITOR

The Career Studio is offering some exciting opportunities for the 2026-2027 school year. College Corps applications are now open until April 1. This program pairs scholarships with volunteering and allows students to earn money to fund their education through working for a partner organization. The Career Studio is also hiring interns both for overseeing College Corps and working in the Career Studio itself.

College Corps is a program through the Career Center that gives students the chance to work in one of three fields: K-12 Education, Food Insecurity and Climate Action. Students who are accepted into the program will have \$10,000 of school expenses covered in exchange for 450 hours of service over the course of the school year. The compensation will be broken down into \$7,000 given during the school year and a \$3,000 award once all volunteer hours have been completed.

Lucas Brawner, the Assistant Director of College

Corps, said, "Students should consider joining College Corps because it's more than just a job...it's purposeful service that helps alleviate student debt. Our Fellows grow as servants and as leaders." Brawner added, "I've seen multiple students' worldviews expand more than I could ever have imagined through College Corps."

Katherine Olea, the Assistant Director of Career Development, said, "We recommend students pursue internships so that they have the opportunity to learn valuable skills, expand their network, and either confirm or pivot their career choice with hands-on experience."

The K-12 Education positions typically include tutoring or mentoring students at a partner education program. The Food Insecurity positions often involve working at a food bank or food distribution center to provide proper nutrition to those who are in need. The Climate Action positions partner students with local organizations that aim to implement positive environmental change strategies.

Brawner said, "If you're considering applying to College Corps, know that you won't only be earning work experience, but you'll be asked to grow in professional and personal development and civic leadership. You might

even change as a person after experiencing this program!"

The Career Center is also offering internship opportunities, some of which are partnered with College Corps. These jobs will help monitor and administrate the College Corps program. The other internship through the Career Center is the Center for Career and Vocation Student Intern, a position which will provide experience in Career Counseling and assist in the Career Center for the 2026-2027 school year. Applications are due by Mar. 7 for this job.

Olea said, "It's really amazing to see a student's confidence grow after they've completed their internship. They speak with confidence, whether they've decided to pursue that career path or not, and they've begun learning workplace etiquette."

College Corps is an amazing way to fund your education and learn new skills along the way!

For more information about College Corps applications and Career Studio internships, please visit Handshake. For questions about College Corps, email Lucas Brawner at lucas.brawner@cui.edu. For questions about Career Studio internship opportunities, email mariah.lucas@cui.edu.

How to get ready for Dorm Dibs

KAYLA REED

CAMPUS EDITOR

Dorm Dibs, Concordia's annual system for choosing roommates and housing for the upcoming school year, is changing this year and the information night on March 17 at 8:30 pm in Rho Commons is here to help. The official housing application on StarRez opens March 2. There will also be an info night for Living Learning Communities on March 9 at 5:30 pm.

Concordia has four different buildings for housing-Rho for freshman, Sigma, Upper Quads (Living Learning Communities) and Lower Quads. Dorm Dibs is the time to choose which one you will live in next year and who your roommates and suitemates will be! Rho and Sigma are suite style dorms, while the Quads are apartment style with living rooms.

The information night on March 17 will walk you through the Dorm Dibs process and help with any questions. The Office of Residence Life stated, "All you know about room selection is in the past! This year, room selection is a new process for everyone, so we highly encourage all residents to attend the Dorm Dibs info night. This will be a time to learn about housing placement, the checklist you need to complete to be placed in campus housing, LLC Housing info, etc. Not to mention, we will be giving out free Dibs ice cream!"

After filling out the housing application, make sure to clear any existing holds from MyRecords. At that point, you are ready to participate in Dorm Dibs.

At the Living Learning Communities informational

night on March 9, the Faculty in Residence will talk about their respective communities and provide the opportunity to ask questions and learn about why one of these communities could be the right fit for you next year.

The current Living and Learning communities are Bella Amore (a community of women who enjoy discussing the good, true and beautiful), Creative Edge (a community of artists, musicians and creatives) and Polis Plaza (a community of students interested in ethics, politics, faith and culture). The fourth quad building in the Upper Quads is Global Village, reserved for transfer students. These communities all give students the opportunity to connect with students of similar interests and participate in special events.

Aidan Brown, the Resident Assistant for the Creative Edge LLC, said, "Students should consider joining an LLC because it is a whole different sense of community. The events and people are often very like-minded and interested in similar things. My favorite part of being in an LLC is the events. Every LLC has the most interesting events and are great for students trying to meet new people especially in fields they are interested in."

A separate application from the main housing application is required for living in one of the Living and Learning Communities. This application opens March 2, the same day as the regular housing application. In order to live in a living learning community, all four suitemates must fill out the application and be accepted.

For more information about Dorm Dibs or housing for next year, email res@cui.edu.



PICTURED ABOVE: Living Learning Communities Symbols

Photo courtesy of: Concordia University Irvine



PICTURED ABOVE: Rho Commons which will host Info Night

Photo courtesy of: Concordia University Irvine

THE CONCORDIA COURIER

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Music Department events on the horizon

REBEKAH MICHEL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Looking to enjoy some live music? The Concordia Music Department has you covered with concert offerings across choral music, orchestral works and performances by our acclaimed handbell ensembles.

Feb. 22 - Feb. 24: Concordia Handbell Spring Tour featuring Concert Bells, Spirit Bells and Resound Chamber Ensemble

Erik Der and Daniel Ujifusa, directors

The acclaimed Concordia Handbell Ensembles will perform throughout Southern California over the course of spring break at the following locations and times. Each program is approximately one hour and 15 minutes long. All performances are free and do not require a ticket.

Sunday, Feb. 22 at 4 p.m.: Concert at Camarillo United Methodist Church, 291 Anacapa Dr, Camarillo, CA 93010

Monday, Feb. 23 at 6:30 p.m.: Concert at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran, 11650 Perris Blvd, Moreno Valley, CA 92557

Tuesday, Feb. 24 at 7 p.m.: Concert at Christ Lutheran Church, 820 W Imperial Hwy, Brea, CA 92821

March 1: Concordia Choir and Sinfonietta Concert at Zion Lutheran Church at 4:00 p.m.

Michael Busch & Jeff Held, conductors

Experience a beautiful afternoon of music by the Concordia Choir and Sinfonietta, as they combine forces before their Carnegie Hall debut this May. For this concert, they'll present a diverse program that includes traditional and modern works. Highlighting this program will be John Williams' "Elegy for Cello and Orchestra," featuring Concordia faculty cellist Yue Tang.

No tickets required. Free; with donations accepted to sponsor ensembles for their Carnegie Hall debut this May.

Zion Lutheran Church

222 North East Street

Anaheim, California 92805

March 7: Concert in the Gardens at the Nixon Library Gardens (Outdoors) at 12:30 p.m.

Jeff Held, conductor

Jonathan Held, conductor

Enjoy an hour-long concert in the beautiful Nixon Presidential Library Gardens. The Concordia Wind Orchestra will be joined by the Concordia High School Symphonic Band of Tomball, Texas, and the winner of four consecutive state concert band titles. This patriotic concert will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States with joyous brass and wind music. No tickets are required, but early arrival is encouraged to secure a seat.

18001 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Love on replay, students share their favorite rom-coms

TYNA ROMOFF
STAFF WRITER

Romantic comedies have a way of sticking with people; whether it's because of an iconic love confession, a perfectly timed joke, or a character who "yearns to the max." Students across campus shared the films they love and why.

For many, "10 Things I Hate About You" seems to stand out. Lyla Sato, a sophomore in Communication Studies, said she appreciates the film's depth and realism. "The cinematography is amazing, the acting is very intimate and it brings a realistic perspective to romance," she said. "I feel like it's given me higher standards of what to find in a partner... It's not unrealistic."

Olivia Garza Hermosillo, a sophomore Behavioral Science major, echoed that sentiment. She said the film conveys "the romance that a lot of people aspire for," while still acknowledging that "a lot of people are flawed" and make mistakes. At the same time, she appreciates the exaggerated elements, like paying someone to date a sibling, because they allow the audience to "imagine something a little extra while still being realistic."

Other students gravitate towards stories built on unlikely pairings. "The Proposal" was a favorite for junior Psychology major Aubrie Austin-Elliott because it has "a really cute storyline and a good ending," adding that she liked how it "didn't make me sob at the end."

Bethany Wagner, a junior in Business Management, said the movie's fake-dating premise is part of its charm. "Even though she felt like she didn't know him, he knew her really well and saw her more than other people," Wagner said. "I think to be loved is to be seen... and he really saw her."

For some, rom-coms are their best when they blend humor with heart. Jayden Kelsch, junior in Communication Studies, pointed to "She's Out of My League." "The comedy was really funny. His friends are very funny. It kept me laughing the whole time," he said. "The overall true love is pretty cool."

Even students who claim romantic comedies "aren't really my thing"

admitted to being won over on occasion. Chad Hayes, a junior in Communication Studies, said "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" surprised him. "I didn't think I was going to like it... Matthew McConaughey is in it, and I like that he played his role well," Hayes said. "He yearned to the max." Freshman Psychology major Addison Barker also chose this film, saying it taught her that "communication beats mind games," and that "honesty is what matters the most in relationships."

Hayes also stated that "The Notebook" was his favorite, calling it "undisputed." Jokingly describing it as a "top yearning movie," he admires the main character's dedication. "He literally waits like 20 years for her," Hayes said. "He never gave up."

For Jasmyn Rios, junior in Communication Studies, "To All the Boys I've Loved Before" stands out because of its emotional lessons. The film shows that "sometimes you need to ask for forgiveness and that you have to work for a relationship," she said. "Sometimes we feel that our feelings are small and people are too hard on themselves, but we'll get what we need... what we long for."

Sophomore Jai Viela, studying Communication Studies, takes a slightly different approach to the rom-com genre, naming "Operation Christmas Drop" as a favorite. "I like 'Operation Christmas Drop,'" Viela said. "Because it's funny, the storyline was really good and the ending left me with a sense of joy." He further explained, "It emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community." For Viela, romance isn't just about the relationship, but the generosity and connection beyond the couple at the center of the story.

For many students, rom-coms are more than just comfort movies. They are quite affirmations. They shape expectations, spark conversations and reflect the kind of love people want to give and receive. Whether it's a "top yearner" who never gives up or a fake relationship that turns real, these stories persevere because they show something deeply human.

Review: Stephen Curry's and Sony's "Goat" brings basketball action to the big screen

REBEKAH MICHEL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

What if the greatest of all time, or G.O.A.T. is found not in the largest animals with the greatest strength, but rather in the driven mindset of an animal goat? Sony's latest film, "Goat" is produced by NBA legend Stephen Curry and seeks to answer this very question.

"Goat" is a delightful children's movie that stars "Stranger Things" Caleb McLaughlin voicing the motivated goat, Will Harris. Other notable voice-over performances include Gabrielle Union as the blank panther Jett Filmore, "Stranger Things" David Harbour as Archie Everhardt the rhinoceros, and Stephen Curry as Lenny Williamson the giraffe.

With a major NBA star backing up the film as a producer and voice actor, and an animation company that produced hit movies such as "Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse" and "K-Pop Demon Hunters," the film was set to be a success.

I am happy to report that my high expectations were met.

This film centers on the life of Will Harris, an aspiring roarball player who wants nothing more than to play for the Vineland Thorns and save them from their losing streak. However, he soon finds himself with odds stacked against him as he is categorized as a "small" due to his size, compared to bears and giraffes on the court. Through a heartfelt story and unlikely friendships with a blank panther, ostrich, rhinoceros, dragon and a giraffe, Will Harris overcomes his limitations to end the Vineland Thorn's downward streak.

The story and plot of this film are excellently paced and are simple enough to keep children entertained. Yet, the colorful artwork and design are enough to keep adults intrigued as well. In particular, fans of the artwork

and animation in the "Spider-Verse" movies will thoroughly enjoy this film.

From the beginning of the film, audiences are immersed in a vibrant world of color, with animals ranging from elephants and bears to horses and, of course, goats. The stop motion animation style, combined with the roarball action sequences, makes this film a true visual spectacle. Fans of Disney's "Zootopia" franchise may recognize a similar setting and lively animal worlds in this film.

Another notable element of this film that I thoroughly enjoyed was the action sequences and jumbotron nature of many of the shots. Audiences are transported into several roarball arenas, including dangerous arenas in the vines, the ice, and even in the fire. The attention to detail that went into the design of the roarball arena scenes is truly unmatched, with vibrant shots of the announcers and jumbotron graphics. As someone who grew up attending NBA games, "Goat" beautifully captures the excitement and energy of attending a major league basketball game. By the end of the film, I was cheering loudly for a victory from the Vineland Thorns. Fans of basketball and the NBA are in for a real treat with this film.

"Goat" also includes subtle product placements and nods to basketball culture with clever inclusions of urban streetwear and designer basketball shoes. Sony is well-positioned to begin selling the stylish jerseys and basketball shoes featured in the film. Therefore, the film has the potential to support brand collaborations and effective product marketing.

Whether you are a basketball fan or not, audiences of all ages can enjoy the action, colorful design and underdog story of how Will Harris became the greatest roarball player of all time.

Marketing professor, student weigh in on Super Bowl ad effectiveness

KIARA AZUMA
LOCAL/GLOBAL EDITOR

Beyond the Super Bowl game and the halftime show, America stays seated for the Super Bowl advertisements shown during the game. These commercials by major companies often feature cameos by big celebrities and are typically more unique and high-quality. With millions of viewers watching the Super Bowl, these commercials become beneficial for companies that want to promote their products or spread a message.

"Super Bowl advertising transcends viral, short-term social media engagement by providing mass audience visibility beyond a brand's target market," said Ashley Kosonen, a senior majoring in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing. "With over 100 million viewers, a successful ad offers an unparalleled reach that helps sustain brand equity and deliver the company's purpose to viewers."

The 2026 Super Bowl commercials featured celebrities like Jennifer Aniston for Dunkin', Sabrina Carpenter for Pringles, Adrien Brody for TurboTax, Emma Stone for SquareSpace, and Bradley Cooper and Matthew McConaughey for Uber Eats.

Carolyn Shiery, Professor of Marketing, shared her insights into whether these advertisements are effective. "It has been researched by Stanford Research (2015) that companies actually receive a sales bump (Budweiser, for example) over a period of time. However, if you have competing brands (Coke and Pepsi), those ads virtually nullify any gains."

Pepsi's commercial, titled "The Choice," went viral this year as it depicted Coca-Cola's mascot, the polar bear, doing a blind taste test and choosing Pepsi as the better soda than Coca-Cola. The ad continued the ongoing rivalry between the two companies.

"I believe Super Bowl ads are more about brand impressions and brand favorability, rather than absolute sales," added Shiery. "Will they get their investment back? Maybe, over a period of time."

Kosonen shared that cameos from big celebrities were not the only driving factors for advertisements' success. "Ads that are purpose-driven and emotionally resonant tend to perform better and provide higher brand recall and recognition. My favorite ads from this year that truly captured this emotional essence were Budweiser, Google Gemini, and Lays."

Budweiser featured a connection between a Clydesdale horse and a

bald eagle, celebrating the 150th birthday of Budweiser and the 250th birthday of America. Google Gemini promoted its company through a conversation between a mother and son about designing their new home. It showed heartwarming clips of the young boy growing up that they found using Google Gemini.

Lays' commercial, "The Last Harvest," was an emotional commercial that celebrated the retirement of a farmer, and his last time working the field with his daughter, as memories of when they used to work together when the girl was younger were shown.

"[The ads] successfully highlighted product effectiveness along with an emotional storyline over the usage of celebrity cameos. They connected with audiences through shared values of heritage, family and nostalgia," said Kosonen.

While Super Bowl ads remain popular, Shiery commented that much has changed in their production and release. "It used to be that Super Bowl ads were of a higher quality, using interesting humor and special effects. Now, many Super Bowl commercials are 'pre-released,' taking away any element of surprise. There is a lot of pressure on companies that do advertise to produce 'the next big ad,' but any creative endeavor can produce a hit or a miss—this really depends on how the ad is received by the target audience," said Shiery.

Another noticeable shift in this year's Super Bowl ads was the use of AI and its promotion. In addition to Google Gemini, companies like Artlist, Meta, Amazon, Anthropic and Ring promoted and used AI in their advertising campaigns.

"AI has been in the marketing space for a very long time, which has been predictive. The 'new' AI is generative, and right now it is the Wild, Wild West – no rules, no curbs, no regulations," said Shiery.

While AI use is debated, Shiery explained how Concordia students are learning how to use it properly when creating their ads.

"In our Ad Agency class, students are learning how to make their ideas come alive with the use of AI, but they have done all the creative work, and it is based on their ideas (not something generated by AI)," said Shiery. "There is so much pre-work that has to be done before you even think about producing an ad, and I don't believe this can be done by AI solely. AI certainly can help in production, especially doing mockups, but not so great for the final product."

Concordia leadership and faculty present at national Best Practices Conference

REBEKAH MICHEL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

From Feb. 12 to Feb. 16, faculty and students from Concordia joined Lutheran Church Missouri Synod church workers from around the United States at Christ Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Arizona, for the Best Practices Conference. Christ Lutheran Church describes the Best Practices Conference as “a free conference to encourage ministry support workers as we reach out with the gospel of Christ”. With a wide range of breakouts, keynote speakers and powerful worship, the Best Practices Conference continues to be one of the leading events in the Lutheran church for current and future church workers, reminding them “You are Not Alone.”

For Senior Director of External Relations, Bil Hood, the Best Practices Conference is something he looks forward to every year. “It is the largest annual gathering in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and one of the most energizing events of the year for church workers. It brings together leaders from every corner of our church body, including pastors, teachers, principals, district presidents, university

and seminary leaders, DCEs, musicians and deaconesses. It really is a cross-section of the whole church in one place,” said Hood.

As a quickly growing ministry conference, hundreds of new attendees participate each year, and Concordia Irvine’s presence at the conference grows. Every day of the conference, members of the Concordia faculty were at a booth, ready to talk to current and future church workers.

Additionally, this year included sessions led by President Dr. Michael Thomas, Dr. Sandra Mercier, Dr. Lori Doyle, and Dr. Michael Schulteis.

President Thomas presented a session on how Concordia University Irvine transformed from a small college on a hill to a university deeply engaged with the Orange County community. Thomas wrote in his description for the session, “This session will show how a confessional Lutheran university moved from ‘best kept secret’ to visible partner, offering practical lessons for ministries seeking to align mission, brand and bold community engagement.”

Mercier and Doyle

from the Master of Arts in Education program were also present and led a session titled “Servant Leadership and Self-Efficacy as Protective Factors Against Burnout.”

Another area of the Best Practices Conference focuses on children’s ministry and Directors of Christian Education (DCEs). Schulteis has continually led conference sessions on this topic for many years. “My co-presenters, Becky Chaplin and Sam Reinhard, and I have been presenting on how to create meaningful Children’s lessons and Chapel talks that are more than just an object lesson. We have people from around the country who learn our stuff and have used it to great success in their ministries,” said Schulteis. The wide variety of topics discussed in these sessions is a testament to the fact that the Best Practices Conference is for everyone and anyone called to work in the Lutheran Church.

Beyond the excellent keynote speakers, current and future church workers are given the opportunity to network and build professional relationships.

With the theme of the conference being “You Are Not Alone,” Best Practices aims to create a unified community within the Lutheran church. “The overarching theme of Best Practices is ‘You are not Alone,’ which is meant to be a statement of comfort that no matter where you serve, there are others who are engaged in the mission to spread God’s word along with you. Sometimes church workers can feel isolated, and this message is to say we are one body,” said Schulteis.

As Concordia’s Christ College continues to educate and lift up the next generation of church workers, conferences like Best Practices allow like-minded Lutherans to come together, share what is working in their churches and encourage one another. Adjunct Professor, Rev. Michael Eschelbach, noted, “Perhaps most importantly, this is a time and place for meeting old friends and classmates, plus making new friends. It is like a family reunion where you connect with people you have just met because we are part of the same family.”

Women’s swim and dive wraps up their shortened season

JOSEPH PANETTA
SPORTS EDITOR

It was a year of ups and downs for the women’s swim team. After being informed that their program was being eliminated, it was reinstated midway through the year and the women got to compete and enjoy their sport once more.

“To get my team reinstated despite it being cut means so much to me. I’m so grateful to have an opportunity to compete again,” said senior Aliyah Treadwell.

The ladies pursued legal avenues to fight for their program and ended up receiving a judgement that allowed them to continue for at least one more season. “My

favorite memory of this year was attending our first swim meet back after being reinstated and having so many people come up to us and congratulating us on fighting for our program, expressing how proud they were!” said Treadwell.

Due to the late reinstatement of the program, it meant that the team needed to compete with a much smaller roster than usual. This led to the team being able to collect less points than they normally would’ve been able to, but that did not deter the women from having a great season.

“The season this year with a smaller roster was amazing,” said Treadwell. “Us girls were able to bond and get to know each other

on a whole different level due to only having 12 girls. It was a very unique and fun experience.”

The ladies were able to grow very close with each other on a personal level and improve greatly in their abilities as a team. The team performed much better than the scoreboard would suggest and likely would’ve come away with many wins had they had their typical sized roster.

“Overall as a team I thought we did great, due to the circumstances of the late reinstatement and having our season cut in half. We all gave our best efforts and were able to swim season best times and personal best times,” said Treadwell.

The roster had seven seniors this year who all got to celebrate their senior night as they finished their sport at the collegiate level.

“As a senior, swimming has shaped the person I am today and has taught me so many values of life. I’m definitely sad that I’m done swimming competitively but I’m ready to start a new chapter of my life and pursue my career goals,” Treadwell added.

For the women’s swim and dive team, it was a season shaped by the events surrounding it and the values that came from it. It was definitely a season that each of these ladies will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Hungarian water polo player Anna Tyukasz speaks on her time at Concordia

JOSEPH PANETTA
SPORTS EDITOR
& SOFIA DOMINGUEZ
STAFF WRITER

Concordia is home to many international students, especially within our sports teams. Women's water polo is no exception to that. Sophomore Anna Tyukasz took the time to do an exclusive interview with Sofia Dominguez to speak on her transition from Hungary to the United States.

"It's an interesting story because before I found out I had the opportunity to come here, I was dealing with a really hard injury in my spine, so I almost gave up water polo," said Tyukasz. When asked when she first knew she wanted to play in the United States. "My mentor reached out to me and asked if I would be interested in coming here to the U.S. and play water polo and study. That gave me hope and is why I am here."

Choosing a school for international student-athletes can be difficult, but it seemed that everything lined up perfectly for Tyukasz. "[Concordia women's water polo head coach] Casey Greenawalt reached out to me, and before that I had never heard about this college, but then he reached out, and I was

searching for more answers to see what it would look like to come here and what the college looked like."

Tyukasz had conversations with Fresno State and the University of Hawaii, but ultimately landed on Concordia as her home.

"I was nervous when I had my first meeting with Casey because I had never done this before." While the legal aspects of being an international student weren't an issue, the cultural transition from Hungary to the United States was one that Tyukasz had to get used to.

"I learned English in my high school and thought I spoke really good English, but I clearly didn't, which was the fun part. My mentor helped me with all the paperwork, so I feel I didn't struggle with that, but it definitely took a while to adapt to the language, even though I was still home."

The hardest part of transitioning between countries is saying goodbye to your comfort zone and loved ones, even if just temporarily.

"They were supportive, and when I had doubt in myself, they told me that I should still try and pushed me, telling me to try because if I never try it I am going to regret it for

my whole life and they were right," said Tyukasz. "It is also hard because I am the first one in my family [to] study across the world. It is really hard for every parent to let go of a child, especially when they come across the world. It is still hard sometimes, but easier than it was the first time."

Along with her life out of the pool, American athletics are also quite different from those of her home country. "In Hungary, we don't have athletics in high school and only a few in college, but it is not the same level as here. The whole system is very different... We are playing in clubs, and it was a huge thing for me when I found out that every year a bunch of girls are going to leave the team because they are graduating, and a bunch are going to come in. I never experienced that much change after only one year."

Tyukasz went on to explain that the water polo back home is more physical and "they let us play more than here."

Tyukasz's adjustment has been greatly aided by her teammates. "I made a lot of good memories with my team, friends, and coaches. Sometimes I forget that I am actually here in the U.S... I have a really good time with

the team."

"My coaches are my parents, my teammates are my best friends," said Tyukasz. "I am so grateful for everyone, and it is crazy that I came here alone without knowing anyone and they accepted me and helped me without having to ask or do anything."

Living in Southern California also plays a helpful hand in the transition. "Going to the beach, the first time I have seen the ocean was here. The closest sea I have at home is in Croatia, so a different country."

Life for an international student-athlete is always ever-changing and exciting. "It would be awesome if we win the championship this year and maybe the following years too, but I don't want to look that far ahead," said Tyukasz. "Stay in the present' is my motto, and do the best I can. I like being here, but I also miss home and have always seen myself at home doing my work and starting my business."

You can stay up to date with Tyukasz and her teammates by following @cuiwwp on instagram. Be sure to attend all of their home games at William Woollett Jr. Aquatic Center.

Concordia lacrosse is up and running

JOSEPH PANETTA
SPORTS EDITOR

We're midway through the spring semester which means that one of Concordia's most exciting sports is out in full swing. Both men's and women's lacrosse have gotten going with mixed results so far.

The women are off to a flyer so far starting their preseason tournament 4-0. Senior midfielder Jessi Borton said, "I think we can go even further than 12-7 this year. We may have less numbers this season, but there is so much more talent and grit and we are closer as a team than ever before."

"I believe this team this year will accomplish much more than last year, not only on the field but also on campus as well!" said senior attacker Riley Finch. "I've played lacrosse here for four years now and this roster has been the most consistent and driven team by far."

The women have grown as a unit both on and off the field, and they're ready to put it all together this year. "The key to our success in this season so far has been the fact that we are bonded

more as teammates," said Borton. "We had so much confidence going into the Santa Barbara tournament, and that definitely played a role in our overall record."

"I believe this team is closer than ever. You can see on campus, and we are in continuous contact and want to be together," said Finch.

Effort and discipline are the message for these ladies and none of them are sleeping on the importance of hard work.

"Coach Dylan is emphasizing E+R=O, which is our events plus our reactions to those events will be our outcome," said Finch. I believe this phrase for our team will help us grow together and get us further down the road, especially when the teams grow tougher in competition."

The team has a lot to be excited for this season as they want to continue their hot hand moving forward.

"I am most looking forward to playing USD this season, as they have been one of our close rivals for a few years now. They have a lot of talent and athleticism across the board, so it will be a great matchup," said Borton.

"I think Santa Barbara, for our playoffs in April," said Finch when asked what game she's most excited for. "It's always an enjoyable time together when we go away and stay in a hotel and also a way to test our abilities together on a big stage."

Stay up to date with the lady Eagles on Instagram @cuiwlax and make sure to attend their first home game vs UCI on March 4.

On the other side, it's been rough sledding for our men's team so far. They started the season 1-2 after narrowly falling to Lees-McRae in Tennessee.

The team knows that this record is not reflective of how the rest of their season will go.

"What we believe we are capable of is to win the RMAC conference and go to the NCAA Div II National Tournament," said junior attackman Reece Lapham.

Lapham netted a goal in their second game victory over Alabama Huntsville. "What changed was being disciplined in what we do and playing hard," said Lapham when asked how they bounced back from their

opening loss. "We all played to our strengths and for one another."

The team is working hard to ensure that that win is the first of many.

"The key for us to take another step in the right direction is to keep adding to our game individually and as a team," said Lapham. "Another thing that we focus on is that we need 100% commitment from all our teammates to be a successful program. This starts with creating a brotherhood so we are willing to go all out for the guys next to us."

That culture is going to be needed from top to bottom for the team with Lapham citing Jake Cloutier, Joseph Switzer and Matt Carresi as key leaders for this team.

Coach Jesse Foss is working hard every day in practice to make sure that the men are at the top of their game mentally and physically, practicing "quality" play with "intent."

Make sure to come support the men in their next home game on March 12 against Northwest Nazarene University and say up to date on instagram @cuiilax.

Concordia goes 3-1 in Conference Opener

MAKAMAE DU PONT
STAFF WRITER

Concordia's 2026 baseball season has officially started. The Golden Eagles won their opening conference game 3-1 this past weekend against Chaminade. They are looking to keep making positive strides and prepare for a busy schedule ahead.

Starting junior pitcher Matthew Kaiser was an essential part of the puzzle last year and will be a leader heading into the 2026 season. He was recently voted to the NCBWA (National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association) Preseason All-West Region team.

Kaiser spoke about the team's conference opener. He said, "I think our grit and determination have allowed us to be in the position we are now. I believe we can stand with any team just based on how hard the guys around me work each and every day."

He also added that "satisfaction is a hard feeling to have this early." Just because the team had early success, they still need to work hard.

Kaiser said the team is "hungrier than ever for their next series and know [they] have a long season ahead."

While Kaiser leads on the mound, the Golden Eagles will also rely heavily on their offense.

Senior second baseman Dylan Knowles, who transferred from Cal Poly, will be a bat to look for in this season's lineup. Concordia's cleanup hitter talked about the team's chemistry thus far. Knowles said, "I think our chemistry has been long-established since the fall. One thing I've found unique about our team is how close we've all been since the first month together." For a team just beginning its season, the chemistry is impressive, with a bond that was built months ago in the fall.

Knowles also said, "I think that our identity was put to the test a little bit with a rough second week, but if we can survive that, we can survive anything." The baseball team went 0-4 against Cal State Dominguez Hills two weeks ago. Coming back with a 3-1 record in their conference opener

marked a major turning point, highlighting the team's resilience and ability to respond to adversity.

Despite rainy weather disrupting preparations this week, the Golden Eagles remained focused. When asked about the upcoming midweek series against Hawaii Pacific University, Knowles remained confident. He said, "We feel ready. The rain has moved a few things around and added a few extra things to our pregame to-do lists, but we're ready to compete."

With momentum on their side and a long season ahead, Concordia looks prepared to compete whether rain or shine.

The Golden Eagles will be heading up to Rocklin, California, to take on Jessup on Mon., Feb. 23. You can also look up the baseball team's remaining schedule on Concordia's website, cuigoldeneagles.com. Make sure to follow @cuigoldeneagles and @cuibaseball on Instagram for updates and the latest announcements for their 2026 season.



PICTURED ABOVE: Matthew Kaiser throwing a pitch.
Photo courtesy of: Crash



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia hitters having a pregame meeting.
Photo courtesy of: Crash



PICTURED ABOVE: Dylan Knowles swinging.
Photo courtesy of: Crash