

THE CONCORDIA COURIER

INVESTIGATE. INFORM. IGNITE. INVOLVE.

Volume 19, Issue 4

Concordia University Irvine

Friday, October 25, 2024

Fall Family Festival tonight! Time to get excited!

TERESA MCLAUGHLIN

STAFF WRITER

Concordia University's Fall Family Festival, a much-anticipated tradition on campus, is set to bring together students, families and alumni for an evening of fun tonight from 6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Organized by the Student Activities and Alumni and Family Relations coordinators, the Fall Family Festival promises an exciting blend of Fall activities for families to experience the warmth of Concordia's close-knit community.

Jessica James, the Assistant Director of Orientation and Student Activities, said that this event "centers on bringing people together." James continued, "We love getting to include families in this event as part of Parents Weekend and a way to celebrate the fall season."

This year's event will build on the success of previous festivals, by bringing back fan-favorite traditions while also introducing new attractions designed to entertain all ages. Some returning activities include a bouquet making station and a cake walk - which James mentioned was "a huge hit" last year. A photo booth and a caricature artist will also be there to capture special moments, giving attendees keepsakes to cherish for years to come.

There will be some new additions to the festival made this year too. James mentioned one of this year's standout additions is going to be axe throwing, which promises to bring an exciting "WOW factor" to the festival. For families with younger attendees, a bounce house will provide endless en-

tertainment. Another exciting addition to this year's festival is Cinema on the Green. The movie selected to play will be Disney Pixar's "Coco."

It should be noted that any Fall Festival would not be complete without seasonal treats, and Concordia's event is no exception. Guests can indulge in caramel apples and coffee as they explore the Festival's different booths and game setups.

James shared that the planning meetings were very intentional about catering to all different types of families, students and alumni. Thanks to their careful consideration "There is truly something for everyone" to enjoy at this year's Fall Festival, said James.

And unlike some university events which might be limited to only students or capped at a specific number of guests, the Fall Family Festival is open to all family members—without any restrictions on how many can attend. There is "no limit, just be sure to RSVP!" James said.

There will not be any formal speakers or presentations during the festival. Instead, the informal nature of the event will allow families to potentially engage with Concordia's faculty and staff in a more relaxed environment. It is this sense of community, combined with the fun-filled activities, that makes the Fall Family Festival such a beloved tradition at Concordia.

As families gather on campus tonight, they will have the opportunity to experience firsthand the spirit of connection that defines Concordia University. From axe throwing to crafting, from cake walks to movie watching, there truly is something for everyone at this year's Fall Family Festival.



PICTURED ABOVE: Attendees at the 2023 Fall Family Festival
Photo courtesy of: Jessica James



PICTURED ABOVE: Students enjoy autumnal activities at the festival
Photo courtesy of: Jessica James

Guiding your future: get to know Concordia's career services staff

KIERSTYN BUSK

STAFF WRITER

Concordia's Career Services is led by a dedicated team committed to helping students achieve their career goals. Mariah Lucas, the Director of Career Development and Vocation along with Katherine Olea, Assistant Director of Career Development and Nadja Novakovic, a Graduate Assistant at the Career Center play crucial roles in opening doors to opportunities for Concordia students.

Lucas holds a master's in science and psychology with an emphasis in life coaching. Driven by a desire

to help others she initially pursued a career in marriage therapy. However, life had something else in store for her. Reflecting on her journey Lucas said, "I decided that marriage family therapy wasn't what I wanted to do, but I wanted to help people and I wanted to focus on practical steps forward and I was interested in academic advising. So, I shifted to career development and working with our undergraduate students and exploring what majors they wanted to do and career outcomes. I really enjoy that part of my job."

Joining Lucas as her Assistant Director is Olea, who attended Concordia and earned a Bachelor

of Arts in Behavioral Studies. Reflecting on her journey to becoming a career service staff member, Olea said, "Life took me to New York City and while I was in New York, I was working at a tech company. During my time there I served as an administrative assistant, I worked in HR and participated in marketing."

When her time concluded in New York, Olea came back to Concordia to implement what she had learned in the Career Center. Olea said, "I wanted to come back to California and use what I was able to do in the corporate world and I wanted to bring that back to students and see if I could provide

any support."

The newest recruit of the career center staff is Novakovic. She graduated from Cal State Long Beach with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Novakovic said, "I always wanted to somehow be a positive influence to younger generations and younger students. Currently, I am an assistant coach for the women's water polo program, where I also found a lot of passion for guiding young ladies and athletes in their life. But, I also realize that I am very passionate about keeping them on a track with academics."

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Grow academically and personally with the President’s Academic Showcase

MADISON ZUNIGA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The sign-up window for Concordia’s annual President’s Academic Showcase of Undergraduate Research is officially open! If you have a desire to dive deep into your discipline, explore innovative research and work one-on-one directly with a faculty member, consider competing this spring!

With an interdisciplinary judging panel and a poster presentation session open to the Concordia community, the academic showcase allows students to pursue high-caliber research and receive recognition for their unique work. “The showcase is such a wonderful opportunity to grow academically and personally,” said Gracie Leininger, junior and winner of the Tier 2 showcase in spring 2024. “I definitely pushed myself, but I learned I am capable of this kind of independent research, which was an incredibly rewarding feeling.”

“I so appreciated participating in the academic showcase. It grew me not only academically in my ability to write and research, but as a person,” said Camille Beeson, junior and finalist for the Tier 2 showcase in spring 2024. “If you are considering participating in PAS, choose a topic that will challenge you and shape who you are as a person. By doing so you will grow, and have so much fun uncovering your passions and your purpose.”

“Participating in the academic showcase was an incredible opportunity that allowed me to have direct research experience in my field and one-to-one mentorship with professors that goes beyond the classroom experience,” said senior Reagan Wagner, whose showcase project placed second in Tier 1 last spring. “Through the showcase I grew in confidence and skills that are not generally available to students until graduate

studies. It is a unique opportunity that is so beneficial and rare for undergraduate students to have such depth of experience.”

Students can register a showcase project until the Jan. 17 deadline. Freshmen and sophomores qualify to participate in Tier 2 of the competition, while juniors and seniors compete in Tier 1. All academic majors and disciplines are welcome, and students are encouraged to investigate topics that they are personally interested in, even if it’s outside of their field of study.

“By choosing a topic that deals with the intersection of ministry and theater I was able to express and define my own mission in my art,” said Beeson. “I have always known that I want to use my art for Jesus’s ministry, but I struggled to put to words the calling on my heart. By choosing a topic that is so vitally important to who I am as a person, and the purpose of my art, I was shaped and can now use my knowledge to defend my beliefs and exhort others into an artistic form of ministry.”

The showcase is an important annual campus academic event that the university supports, as it rewards over \$5,000 in prizes, allows students to earn up to three units in class credit or points for the Honors Program, and grants hands-on research experience with faculty mentors. Besides the prize money, “It’s a sweet bonus to get quality time with your favorite fantastic professors!” said Beeson.

“I was pleasantly surprised to discover how fulfilling it could be to put in the work in an academic project when it’s also a passion project,” said Leininger. “A deep curiosity about my topic made me excited to dig deeper and share my findings with others!”

For more information about the President’s Academic Showcase, contact showcase@cui.edu. Find the digital sign-up form at cui.edu/academicprograms/undergraduate/showcase.

Midnight Madness fuels the hype heading into basketball season

GISELLE PARRA
STAFF WRITER

On Fri., Oct. 18, the Concordia community came together to kick off the Golden Eagle’s basketball season. Thanks to the hard work of The Hunt, our basketball programs and Stunt, the event was a success. There was much to see and do with a delicious taco truck, games and school spirit that carried on throughout the night.

Leah Sugita, senior, said that one of her favorite things about Midnight Madness is “the hype.” She feels that, “Everyone really comes together and celebrates the basketball team and it is a good way to kick off their season.”

Charlie Dalton, a sophomore on the men’s basketball team agreed with Sugita and said that Midnight Madness is a “great start as it puts the school on notice and creates some hype that basketball season is around the corner.”

Matthew Simon, a junior, said that Midnight Madness is important to boost the team’s morale because “it is the first big event of the year for the basketball teams.” Simon also said that “bringing the energy up and partying till midnight is a whole lotta fun!”

Simon was right on point because the school did party till midnight. The gym was packed with students, family members and staff as they brought in the season’s start with the Concordia basketball teams. The players were introduced through a tunnel created by members of the Stunt team. Dalton said that it is “pretty special walking out to a song of your choice and seeing a lot of the school cheering for you.”

There were games such as musical bean bags with bean bags that looked like basketballs, and a half-court shooting competition against the members of the Concordia basketball teams. The school cheered

on their houses as they competed in the games. The atmosphere created was electric. School spirit filled the gym as the night continued and the fun kept rolling. Similar to the way the students did when transporting Marty, the school mascot on a mattress across the gym!

The Concordia Stunt team wowed the crowd with a great performance that got everyone pumped up. Abby Anderson, a junior on stunt said, “It is always super exciting to get to perform in front of a crowd!”

In order to prepare for this event Anderson said that “Stunt took some of [their] skills that [they] have been working on and formed them together to make a longer cheer-style routine.” This was exciting because according to Anderson, Stunt was able to do “more of a fun performance whereas stunt usually focuses on cleanliness and execution.” The hard work paid off as they put on an amazing performance.

Madison Durkin, a Residential Assistant, was at the entire event and thought that the pre-party was her favorite party of Midnight Madness. “I liked watching everyone just have fun playing the games, eating and hanging out.” Durkin also reiterated the importance of the CU Arena this school year, saying that it is “more important and accessible.”

With the seasons starting soon Dalton said that he is “most excited to just compete with the guys.” Dalton said that they have a “great group of guys this year that have formed a fun culture to be around, and after a couple of months of grinding... it’s going to be exciting to compete.”

Don’t forget to come see the Concordia men’s and women’s basketball teams compete this season! For more information and to view the athletics calendar, visit cuigoldeneagles.com

Courier Career Tip of the Issue!

SEARCH FOR VALUE IN ALL CRITICISM AND FEEDBACK:

Manage your emotions when receiving any form of constructive criticism. Feedback is essential to professional development.

THE CONCORDIA

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PICTURED ABOVE: Mariah Lucas and Katherine Olea in Breezeway
Photos courtesy of: Kierstyn Busk

(Continued from page 1)

The career staff is dedicated to guiding students towards successful futures, and students are encouraged to seek out their advice as they prepare for life after college. Lucas said that, “The Career Center staff are experts in helping you navigate how to figure out your next step after graduation and we encourage

students to explore and test potential career paths.” At Concordia the goal is to not only prepare students for their careers but also direct their pathways to employment. “We want to be able to create these pipelines where employers are consistently coming back to Concordia to hire their early talent so that there are these funnels for our students as they go through the program. Here at

Concordia, students are getting an internship and they’re ending up getting hired afterwards,” Lucas said. Take the first step toward your future by contacting Career Center staff at cui.edu/studentlife/career-services and secure your place in the professional world. For more information about the Career Center go online or contact Mariah Lucas at mariah.lucas@cui.edu.

Midnight Madness gets players pumped for upcoming hoops season

KENT BEWLEY
STAFF WRITER

Hundreds of students and student-athletes gathered at the CU Arena on the night of Fri, Oct. 19 for Midnight Madness, the annual hype event that gets everyone on campus excited for the upcoming basketball seasons for the men’s and women’s teams. Activities during the party outside included pop-a-shot basketball, shooting basketballs into garbage cans and a photo area for groups of students to take fun and friendly pics of each other. After roughly an hour outside, all the students were let into the arena, where they were greeted by the cheer squad with light sticks and music. Sitting down in the main gym bleachers, students were introduced to the team rosters for both the men’s and women’s teams. From the perspective of the basketball teams, Midnight Madness was a great way to kick off a new era of competing at the CU Arena, which is an important gathering place as construction is occurring at different spots of campus not too far away from the arena’s location. Kayla Cabaccang, junior guard on the women’s team, said that the CU Arena is “a second home for so many

athletes. It is important because it is a place where all of the campus can come together to support one another in competition.” Connor Gleason, graduate guard on the men’s team, said that this year’s Midnight Madness was a chance for him to “appreciate everything it took to get here and all the people that have helped me get here.” “It’s a cool reflection point,” Gleason said. He is most excited to “have fun and express trust, responsibility and joy” during his final season playing as a Golden Eagle. He also added that he is excited to live out those values that he holds over a full season. This edition of Midnight Madness was Gleason’s fourth and final one as a student-athlete as he was the final player introduced during player introductions inside the CU Arena, which he said was “the best arena in the PacWest, maybe in all of Division II.” In terms of hype for the upcoming season, Cabaccang said that she is most excited about “the new teams added to our conference and seeing what new competition we will face.” She said, “we will bring energy



PICTURED ABOVE: Students standing outside CU Arena during Midnight Madness outdoor party.
Photos courtesy of: Kent Bewley

and excitement to each game as we stick together as a team to navigate the new change.” In describing her favorite part of the Midnight Madness experience, Cabaccang said that her favorite part is “the crowd that comes out. It is so cool to feel supported by the whole community of people who want us to succeed and just have a crazy amount of energy and love in one place.” The women’s basketball season begins on Fri, Nov. 8 with a road game at Cal State San Bernardino before their first home game on

Sat., Nov. 16 against Cal Poly Humboldt. Meanwhile, the men’s team will play their first game of the season at home on Sat., Nov. 2 against Hope International at 2 p.m. Arena access for students and faculty is free as long as a Concordia ID card is shown. For more information on the season schedule for the basketball teams, visit the CUI Sports website and be on the watch for home game schedule sheets for all Golden Eagles winter sports teams.

Concordia graduate school fair presents choices, options

MADISON ZUNIGA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Oct. 16, Concordia hosted more than 20 schools from across the country in a graduate school fair to help inform and equip students who are considering furthering their education. During the fair, admissions counselors, department heads and current grad students offered their perspectives on why someone should consider attending a graduate program. Aidan Eldridge and Abigayle Duchateau volunteered at the event as current graduate students attending Chapman Law School. “I think that students should really utilize these events,” said Eldridge. “I was unaware that resources such as this were possible, and when you’re going to a school that offers these resources, you’re able to talk to students such as myself. We want to help you learn all you can so you can make an educated decision. Take advantage by talking to as many people and learning about as many colleges as possible!” “I think it’s super important to come to career events like this, that’s how I made my decision,” said Duchateau. “I talked to schools that I wasn’t necessarily interested in, but I just wanted to learn more about them. Because of this, I ended up becoming more interested in the school I ended up choosing. You get more answers than you knew you had questions for, and I think it’s important to explore your options!”

Kelsea Shackelford represented the Townsend Institute for Leadership and Counseling, which is associated with Concordia Irvine. She encouraged students to also consider their options close to home. “Students should take advantage of the grad fair to explore the programs you already have. You do get a discount [for Townsend Institute programs] as an alumni, and we also have really great programs as a whole from the Townsend Institute, within organizational leadership and the behavioral sciences. I would recommend seeing what we have to offer to potentially continue your education at a great school.” Especially for students considering entering specialized fields such as healthcare, grad school may be a necessary career step. Department Head Micah Hernando from Loma Linda University said, “I believe these events are very beneficial to students, especially when we are looking for our future healthcare professionals. We’re looking forward to bringing and creating a better future!” There are also programs that offer alternatives to the traditional paths towards grad school. Advisor Lindsey Banks from the University of San Francisco emphasized their unique programs which seek to create options for prospective students

considering a career change. Regardless of what major you pursued in undergrad or what job you might currently hold, there are schools that want to help you pursue specialized higher education degrees in fields such as business or nursing. Vanguard University admissions counselor Lexi Canner said, “I think it’s super important that students go to grad school so they can continue to be lifelong learners, and then also to interact with the Lord in their fields of education that they want to be in. It’s such a great opportunity

to grow in that way.” With countless unique programs, specialized benefits and accessible options, graduate school is a significant opportunity to consider, especially for upperclassmen who are beginning to plan their next steps. For advice in starting your research and applications, make an appointment with the Career Studio on the top floor of the library, or contact Mariah Lucas at mariah.lucas@cui.edu.



PICTURED ABOVE: Students engage with graduate program advisors
Photos courtesy of: Madison Zuniga

Students engage in new Bible study “Common Ground”

BELLA SAGUM
STAFF WRITER

Abbey west launched a new curriculum for their on-campus Bible studies titled “Common Ground.” Though using curriculums isn’t something new for abbey west’s Bible studies, “Common Ground” was specifically written by familiar faces for Concordia students.

Noks Shabalala, Director of Small Groups and Connections, said, “The Common Ground curriculum is an 8-week experience in a Bible study setting that explores big questions in community through reading, reflection, group discussion, fellowship and service.”

She continued, “It’s theologically sound and with many contributions from faculty, staff, students and local church members” and that, “it ensures that the curriculum is also engaging and relevant for our student body.”

Jessi Borton, junior and Athletics Ministry Leader, said, “Each topic is beneficial, as it includes information that is interesting to both experienced Christians and newer Christians.” She said that the “Common Ground” experience is about, “building a community of fellow Christians by meeting together and discussing topics of our mutual beliefs,” and that “this curriculum allows us to find common ground with each other and spend time together in the Word.”

Ruth Pearson, senior and Beloved Coordinator, said, “This book contains four short daily devotions with reflection questions for each week.” She continued, “This study is about common experiences we have as Christians. Each week, a different topic, such as common struggles, mission, and brokenness, coinciding with a spiritual discipline, is discussed.”

Abbey west is always intentional about the curriculum being used. Having a curriculum written by the professors and contributed to by students and local church members was not incidental, but rather having the students’ hearts in mind. Pearson said, “Concordia professors see and hear common struggles that students have here on campus. The heart is to unite us as a

family of Christian believers and encourage one another.”

Borton said, “Having a curriculum written by Concordia professors allows the readers to feel safe and comfortable with the information they are reading and studying. Since the devotions are written by familiar people, the reader may be more intrigued by the text, yet also more open to the possibilities of what the text has to say if they are not confident in their faith yet.”

What “Common Ground” does is, “have an intentionality in communing together as Christian men and women for our discipleship through the study of the Word, prayer and encouragement,” said Shabalala.

For those who might not know, abbeywest is Concordia’s on-campus ministry that is split into three different Bible studies, “Battalion” for men, “Beloved” for women, and Athlete Bible Study (ABS). Shabalala said, “Bible study groups are a platform for discipleship, and belonging.”

Borton advocated for joining an on-campus Bible study and said, “It allows people to belong to a group and have fellowship with other CUI students. Specifically, joining a Bible study on-campus gives the opportunity to both grow in your faith in Christ and to build relationships that will last a lifetime! No matter where you are in your walk with Christ, any sort of Bible study at CUI is a great place to progress.”

It is not too late to sign up for a Bible study. Shabalala said, “If anyone is looking for a community that gathers around the Word of God and intentionally does life together through worship, and service here at CUI and beyond we invite them to come and join us, there is always room at the table.”

For more information, students can join by downloading the ChurchCenter app and selecting abbeywest as their church or following @abbeywest_cui on instagram to find links to join any of abbey west’s small groups. They also are having a “Common Ground” event on Oct. 28 at 7:45 p.m. in the CU Arena. It is open to everyone for a time of fellowship, worship, reading of the God’s Word.

Freshmen score wins at tournament

HOPE YONEHARA
STAFF WRITER

Over mid-semester break, the Concordia Forensics Team had a remarkable showing at their 11th annual Jannese Davidson tournament. This tournament is an event dedicated to honoring the life of Jannese Davidson, a former speech competitor and coach at Concordia.

Konrad Hack, Director of Speech and Debate, reflected on the legacy of Davidson, saying, “Jannese was the very best of what a forensics competitor should be. She worked incredibly hard, both as a coach and as a student. She had a drive to succeed but never let that come between her friends or her ethics. She somehow loved people in a way that made everyone feel unique and special.”

The team’s success is a testament to her legacy.

This year, freshmen Lilli Strahm, Gannon Strahm and Bryanna Farley all came out on top of their respective divisions: Novice Persuasive, Novice Prose and Open After Dinner Speaking.

Laura Gibson, Deputy Captain and Communications Officer of Concordia Forensics said, “I am especially beyond proud of our freshmen as they all came out on top and did so with humility. Everyone on the team put a lot of time and effort into their speeches, and we have the papers to prove it!”

Rebekah Symank, Director of Speech, echoed Gibson. “I am incredibly proud of my team! I’ve seen so much hard work, and it really paid off this past weekend. I am especially grateful to our new students for being brave and making it through their first tournament, as well as our more experienced competitors for showing the initiative to write incredible speeches,” she noted.

However, Davidson’s legacy goes beyond awards. In a closing speech given at the Jannese Davidson’s award ceremony, Hack said, “Jannese started a tradition of

love notes — team members each got an envelope pinned up in the squad room for other members to tell them how awesome they are. Then, at nationals, when you were feeling lost in the sea of amazing performances, you could reach into your envelope and be reminded that you, too, were amazing.” Her legacy of community continues to impact people today.

Strahm said, “Forensics is new to me, and I can tell that being in a community like this is encouraging, and even though it can be difficult, I am enjoying the process of learning more about forensics and meeting all the people along the way.” Andre Abahamian, a freshman competitor on the debate team, agreed, saying, “A lot of people here do want what’s best for each other, which is unique.”

Boyle, a senior competitor on the debate team, concurred with Abahamian but added nuance. “The forensics community is truly amazing. I have met so many kind people who are incredibly supportive during tournaments. Tournaments can be very stressful and busy, but the friends I have made within the community are always willing to say some kind words of encouragement that make the tournaments so much more fun and rewarding,” he said.

To learn more about Forensics and see how you can get involved, contact Professor Konrad Hack at konrad.hack@cui.edu



PICTURED ABOVE: Bryanna Farley, Hope Yonehara, Gannon Strahm, Rebecca Kadera, Lilli Strahm, and Laura Gibson.
Photo courtesy of: Rebekah Symank

Concordia Intramurals: A chance to play, connect and thrive

ANA GUERRERO RÓDENAS
STAFF WRITER

All students are welcomed and encouraged to join Concordia’s intramural program. Intramurals are a free, student-leadership-based program that involves students getting together and competing in different types of sports, such as volleyball, basketball, flag football and soccer. Intramurals work to bring all kinds of students together, whether you are a commuter, freshman, athlete, theater or art student and anything in between.

The first sport to kick off is volleyball, which started on Oct., 14, and will be played every Monday and Tuesday from 9:30 p.m. until midnight in the CU Arena. Teams are composed of a minimum of six players and a maximum of twelve. Volleyball Intramurals will have playoffs, where the first four teams will advance into championship games.

“This is an opportunity for students to get involved in the school and participate in physical activities without having to be in any athletic program,” said Giovanna Castro, an intramural coordinator on ASCUI. The coordinators have the mission to “organize the team schedule, and additionally promote around the school.”

“We have to make sure everything is

running fine and safe. Some people take intramurals very seriously,” Castro said. With a focus on health and safety for all participants, this is a way for competitive students to find something they are interested in, but more importantly, have fun.

As it is designed for athletes and non-athletes, there is an integration between students in which they can get to know new people and contribute to activities on campus and student life. “In football, there are teams composed of main sports like swim or lacrosse, but people from other sports or non-athletes join their team,” said Castro.

Intramurals can also be “perfect for freshmen or transfers, not to create only a bond with their team, but to create their friendship group,” said Castro.

The competitive and upbeat environment encourages an inclusive and healthy activity for students. “The impact of exercising and keeping your body active, helps a lot,” said Castro. All of these qualities of Concordia Intramurals create the opportunity to stay active, get involved, meet new people and have fun with friendly competition.

To learn more about Intramurals and get involved, contact Intramural coordinator Giovanna Castro @giovanna.castro@eagles.cui.edu

Fall Choral Concert Scheduled to Delight Audience on October 27

KAYLA REED
STAFF WRITER

The leaves have begun to fall, the weather is starting to cool down, and the Concordia choral groups are preparing for their annual fall concert! Sunday, Oct. 27 at 3:30 p.m., the women's chorus, Donne di Canto, and the men's chorus will be performing together in the first major choral concert of the year at Concordia. The concert is directed by Dr. Clarissa Shan, with Gyojin Kim as the pianist.

The concert is titled "Psalms and Promises," celebrating Biblical truth and God's unfailing love through vocal music. The concert will be held at Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Costa Mesa, located at 2850 Fairview Road, is free to attend.

The concert is only about a fifteen minute drive from

Concordia and is worth attending. In prior years, the CU Center has hosted the concert but due to renovations the location was moved off campus this year. The concert looks forward to a return to campus in the future.

Donne di Canto and the men's chorus will treat their audience to an hour of worship, music and fun. The choirs include some of Concordia's best singers, from Music majors aiming to become professional musicians to students majoring in other areas with a passion for singing.

The concert is scheduled to include songs ranging from spiritual anthems to Biblical psalms put to music.

Emma Schwald, a freshman Music major in Donne di Canto, said, "My favorite song

we will be performing is called 'Psalm 23.' It talks about how the Lord is our shepherd and how God is always in control." The concert aims to inspire and entertain, showcasing Donne di Canto and men's chorus at their best through the classical and spiritual selection of songs. Schwald is among the many freshmen excited for her first fall concert with Concordia.

Choir members have been "hard at work" and are getting excited for the concert, according to Donne di Canto member Chloe Keller ('28). They have been busily preparing for the fall concert for the past month after their September concert with the Concordia Symphony Orchestra at the Nixon Presidential Library, which celebrated the piano music of Roger Williams alongside famed singer Pat Boone, a concert which kickstarted the Music

Department's year with great success. Now, the choirs are ready to continue their year with their fall concert, an event beloved by the Music Department.

Come see the concert for free Sunday, Oct. 27 at 3:30 p.m. at Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Costa Mesa, for an event that will delight all who attend with the joyful sound of choral music.

The concert is the first of four major concerts involving choral music annually hosted by the Concordia choral ensembles. The upcoming concerts include the Concordia Christmas concert, the Valentine's Concert, and the Spring Concert. Visit <https://www.cui.edu/arts/music/events> for more information on these exciting events!

Concordia Symphony Orchestra brings grand works of Beethoven closer to audiences than ever before

REBEKAH MICHEL
ARTS & REVIEWS EDITOR

On Oct. 19, the Concordia Symphony Orchestra performed one of Beethoven's most grand symphonies to a sold-out audience in Zhang Hall. Conducted by Dr. Jeff Held, Assistant Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, Concordia's orchestra took on Beethoven's Third Symphony "Eroica" which is made up of four separate movements and stands at an astounding hour-long duration.

Accompanied by program notes, written by Held, audience members were able to follow along and read information about each of the four contrasting movements. Unlike traditional concerts, where there may be an intermission or applause within songs, "Eroica" was performed with no stops, creating a demanding performance for the musicians involved. Yet, the performance remained engaging as they contrasted faster and more cheerful works with more solemn moments such as the funeral march movement.

Notably, "Eroica" allowed certain student performers to highlight their talents in solo sections for oboe and horns. Senior Theology major, Jen Loeber, came to this concert to see her peers who had featured sections. "My favorite part of the symphony was all of the little solos. My friend invited me to come watch and the French horns really had a leading role in this symphony... It's always great to support my friends and see what they do," said Loeber.

Over 20 students, several alumni and a handful of resident performing artists make up this year's Concordia Symphony Orchestra. This academic year has already proven to be one of great accomplishments for the Music Department, as they gave a spectacular concert in honor of Roger Williams, a few weeks prior to performing this symphony. This year, the Music Department's

orchestral performances will reach a grand finale in May as the symphony will tour throughout Japan and South Korea alongside the Concordia Choir.

Additionally, this year has brought the unique challenge of having to relocate concerts to other venues as the CU Center continues to go through renovations. The Borland-Manske Center's Zhang Hall provided an intimate environment and acoustic experience for the symphony attendees. What resulted was an immersive experience for audience members as the orchestra and conductor were notably very close. "As an audience member, I was a lot closer to the action. The sound was a lot less resonant than I'm used to hearing since it is a smaller room. Overall, it sounded great," said Loeber.

The experience and seating for this concert was a treat for many audience members, as other concert halls would charge a high price to sit that close to the action. However, it appears that the relocation to a smaller room was an intentional choice made by Held as the room where "Eroica" was first performed in the 1800's, was very similar to the size of Zhang Hall.

Additionally, Held made an effort to mention that the newly renovated CU Center will include an acoustic system that was previously used only in European music halls. As students and faculty continue to navigate the challenges of the CU Center renovation, the excitement of being the first American institution to have this state-of-the-art acoustic system is definitely present in the Music Department.

To find out more information or to purchase tickets for upcoming Music Department events and concerts, please visit simple.tix.com



PICTURED ABOVE: The Concordia Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Dr. Jeff Held one of the Music Department's premiere ensembles and is made up of students, alumni and resident artists.
Photo courtesy of: Concordia Music Department



PICTURED ABOVE: The Concordia Symphony Orchestra is excited for another year of bringing orchestral music to the local area, around the country and even overseas.
Photo courtesy of: Concordia Music Department

“Smile 2” is a chilling sequel

JOSE RODRIGUEZ
STAFF WRITER

“Smile 2” is a horror sequel that successfully captures its predecessor's eerie atmosphere and suspense. While it may be different from the original, it delivers a solid follow-up that will leave audiences on the edge of their seats.

Variety magazine said, “Smile 2’ is a worthy successor to its predecessor, offering a satisfying blend of horror and suspense.”

I found “Smile 2” terrifying and incredibly enjoyable when watched with friends. The shared experience of watching a scary movie can amplify the fear and suspense, creating a more immersive and unforgettable experience.

The Hollywood Reporter said, "The film delivers on its promise of scares and chills, thanks to a strong cast and a well-crafted story."

The film's ability to build tension and deliver effective jump scares perfectly suits a group viewing. The collective gasps, screams, and laughter can add an extra layer of excitement to the film, making it even more thrilling.

One of the film's strengths lies in its ability to maintain a constant sense of

dread. The director skillfully utilizes sound design and cinematography to create an unsettling and immersive chilling atmosphere. The jump scares are well-placed and effective, but the underlying tension keeps the audience engaged.

Empire magazine said, "While it may not reinvent the wheel, ‘Smile 2’ is a solid horror sequel that will leave audiences wanting more." While ‘Smile 2’ is primarily a horror film, it offers deeper themes and messages that viewers can interpret. One of the central themes explored in the movie is the idea of contagious fear. The sinister smile that spreads among the characters can be seen as a metaphor for how fear can be transmitted and amplified in society.

Additionally, ‘Smile 2’ can be seen as a commentary on the power of the mind. The film suggests that our thoughts and beliefs can profoundly impact our reality and that fear can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. This raises questions about the nature of reality and how our perception of the world is shaped.

If you're looking for a fun and frightening night out with your friends, “Smile 2” is worth checking out. Just be prepared for a few screams and a lot of gasps.

Concordia welcomes back the PBS Christmas Special, “Come and See”

ANA GUERRERO RÓDENAS
STAFF WRITER

Concordia’s Music Department has been working diligently since the middle of September and will do so until November for the preparation of “Come and See,” the next Christmas Television Special for PBS SoCal. Students and professors are working on recording the variety of music that will be heard in the special, and watched frequently in the two weeks before Christmas.

This special was held at the university in previous years, and the Music Department faculty are in charge of organizing it. Dr. Jeff Held, the co-artistic director said, “We select the music for the program, organize all aspects of the recording process, and make final decisions about mixes and inclusions in the program.”

Held, and other Music faculty, maintain a structured schedule so that the special goes as planned and the students can learn and work on the recordings.

The PBS special features a wide variety of musical genres, “Jazz,

Americana, commercial, orchestral, choral, handbell and some other individual contributions,” Held said. Some of these genres will be represented by university members such as the choral ensembles or the Music faculty.

There are 18 musical works selected for the special. Among them are some better-known ones such as fragments of “The Nutcracker,” directed by Held, or others such as “Spirit of the Season,” by Glen Ballard and Alan Silvestri.

Members of Concordia are recording in the Borland-Manske Center, filming videos for the special and, additionally, performing. For the recording sessions, one site or another is used depending on the size of the musical pieces. “We mostly use the recording studio in the BMC for smaller ensembles or solo sessions,” said Ana Carvalho. Carvahlo, a student and singer participating in the project said, for a full choir or orchestra, “we use Choral Hall or Zhang Hall.”

Students “are the recording artists.” After having the audio of the pieces recorded, “We also do video recordings, which is a really fun part

Creative Collective supports students to write creatively in community

HEATHER HERSHFELD
STAFF WRITER

The Creative Collective is a creative writing group that meets weekly on Monday nights in the Writing Studio from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The group spends time during each meeting to brainstorm ideas, discuss technique and write creatively.

Jules Carew leads the Creative Collective and is on staff at the undergraduate Writing Studio. She recently received her MFA in Creative Nonfiction, and this is her second year leading the writing group. Carew wanted to create a safe space for writers to come together in a non-academic setting and provide support and community.

“I am recreating what I wish I had in undergraduate,” Carew said. “It’s so easy to give up in creative writing, and I want to be a testament that this is possible. I’ve been exactly where students are, in college, no idea what they are doing, but they just want to be a writer of some sort. I want to be the proof that you can do that.”

Carew values learning about students through their writing and getting to know them on a personal level. She also enjoys hearing about students’ creative writing ideas and helping them develop further. “I love what students come up with. I am always surprised by how much brilliance is in the room, and a lot of times these students don’t even know it,” Carew said. “It’s amazing.”

The meetings start off with casual conversations about each other’s weeks and lives and then moves into responding to writing prompts. Each meeting focuses on different writing styles and genres from poetry to short stories.

Freshman Maximo Candamo Jr.

is a History and Political thought major with a Philosophy minor and has enjoyed participating in the Creative Collective for his first year at Concordia. He joined because he has a passion for writing, specifically poetry, and wanted to improve further. “This group can help me develop my skills further and help give me feedback on creative writing,” Candamo said.

While the Creative Collective focuses on writing, it also allows students to bond and collaborate. “We engage together in our writing, collectively work on a prompt and discuss about it,” Candamo said. “You’re getting to learn a little bit about each other and their creative process.”

Students also appreciate the opportunity to submit their work to The Aerie, which is Concordia’s annual literary and art journal. Carew helps writers discover new ways to share their work with the world through the submission and publishing process. However, while submission to journals such as The Aerie is an important part of the writing life, the Creative Collective also wants students to have freedom to generate pieces without the pressure to turn anything in.

Carew reiterated that the Creative Collective is open for all students with any experience or level in writing. “We meet writers where they are at. You can come and play around with the prompts and hang out or you can take it really seriously,” Carew said. “We are meeting people wherever they are on their creative journey.”

For more information on Creative Collective, email julianne.carew@cui.edu or attend a weekly meeting in the Writing Studio from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. every Monday.



PICTURED ABOVE: Jules Carew with the Creative Collective group
Photo courtesy of: Heather Hershfeld



PICTURED ABOVE: 2020 - All is Bright!
Photo courtesy of: Concordia University Irvine YouTube

Silver Telly Awards

			
REPEAT THE SOUNDING JOY! A CONCORDIA CHRISTMAS	REPEAT THE SOUNDING JOY! A CONCORDIA CHRISTMAS	REPEAT THE SOUNDING JOY! A CONCORDIA CHRISTMAS	NAVIDAD! A CONCORDIA CHRISTMAS
2022 Silver Telly Winner Television Craft-Directing	2022 Silver Telly Winner Television General-Educational Institution	2022 Silver Telly Winner Television General-Music Video	2024 Silver Telly Winner Television Craft-Use of Music

PICTURED ABOVE: Telly Silver Awards
Photo courtesy of: Concordia University Irvine Arts Website
<https://www.cui.edu/arts/music/pbs-christmas-special>

Women’s soccer looks to stay hot

JOSEPH PANETTA
STAFF WRITER

Concordia Women’s Soccer is off to a flier this season as they’ve started the season ten games unbeaten. They look to improve upon their 4-0-1 conference record and finish out what could be a historic season.

Much of this success has come on the back of their lockdown defense, which helped the Lady Eagles to garner 12 clean sheets over a school record 13 game winning streak that carried over from last season.

“Our defense has been something [that] we’ve taken pride in the past years and [we] want to continue that,” said Sophia Munoz, senior defender. “We’re at a point where we don’t want to focus on stats but want to dial in to keep our position strong for postseason.”

The women have scored 19 goals so far this season and only conceded two. They have had two players win PacWest Defensive Player of the Week: junior goalkeeper Riley Urquiza and junior defender Madison Hall. Junior forward Hailey Havican who leads the team with nine goal contributions has also earned a PacWest Player of the Week. Sophomores Sarah Venegas and Bella Barrett are the next leading contributors on the scoresheet.

Concordia has won one PacWest Team of the Week award and is

currently ranked number 11 in the nation, having reached as high as number five in recent weeks. A lot of this success can be attributed not only to the pure talent of the team, but their bond as a sisterhood as well.

“At this time we have to focus on ourselves and remember what we all want to accomplish,” said Munoz. “We want to make sure we’re taking care of ourselves first before anything else.”

Although it’s great [to win], we all care about each other and want to make sure we’re all good too.” The women are no strangers to being in a position of success following two successive national tournament berths. This year, they’ll be hungry for silverware.

“Over the past two years, we were in the same position where we made it to the national tournament but fell short when we knew we could have won the national championship,” said Kayla Murakami, senior forward. “I think our team is using this as motivation and [it] is what is pushing us to continue to work hard and reach our full potential.”

The women’s team is achieving all of this despite the departures of longtime coach Cheyne Gordon and graduate assistants Rodrigo Selingardi and Daniela Filipovic. Their departures have led to an updated coaching staff with new arrivals Humberto Villegas and Brianna Guerra, along with an



PICTURED ABOVE: The Lady Golden Eagles circled up in prayer before a match. Photo courtesy of: @goldeneagledropbox on instagram

increased role for Madison Stenslie. the PacWest title and national championship but we try to take everything day by day and focus on the game that is in front of us.”

The women are currently tied with Hawaii Hilo for least points dropped in the PacWest and will have many opportunities to get back to winning ways, with four away games in a row coming up, starting on Sat., Oct 26 against Azusa Pacific.

“If we continue to do our job and stick to our system and core principles, I think that we can be a very dangerous team going forward and hopefully in the end win a national championship,” said Murakami.

Following a statement victory over reigning national champions Point Loma Nazarene University, the season’s steamroll stalled a bit with a tie against Chaminade University, another top team. “It’s important to recognize our strong start and the stats that we have put out this season, however, I don’t think that it is something we idolize or focus on,” said Murakami. “Obviously our end goal is winning

Cross country makes great strides towards conference

SOFIA DOMINGUEZ
STAFF WRITER

The Concordia Golden Eagles men’s and women’s cross country team strives toward conference championship after gaining confidence as a unit in their most recent invitational event. Both the men and women placed top ten at the UAH Chargers Invitational in Huntsville, Alabama.

“A big goal for Alabama was to gain confidence in our athletic ability. We had a goal of where we wanted to finish, and understood what would happen if we did not race to the best of our abilities. The race showed us what could be accomplished if we believe in our fitness,” said Priscella Gomez, a senior from Downey.

Mariza Chavez, a freshman from Red Rock, Arizona said, “Alabama was an amazing opportunity and a great race to get some good experience. As a freshman it was very nerve wracking, but I learned that I am capable and fit to be running with our top girls. As a team we learned that we are strong together and I believe that this race proved that along with how much confidence we should have in ourselves.”

As the Golden Eagles look forward to hosting the PacWest Conference Championships for the first time, the athletes are putting all their effort into preparing both mentally and physically to achieve their goal of being conference champions.

“One specific goal that the team

and I want to achieve this year is placing top two at conference along with top six at regionals. If everything goes smoothly, we have a chance of going to nationals which would be amazing considering we finished top four in Alabama and beating other teams in our division,” said Fernando Aguirre, a graduate student from Whittier.

Gomez added, “I have been practicing mental toughness leading into conference. All I have left to do is believe I am capable of being part of something great. Which in turn, makes me push myself during practices.”

The conference championships will be held in Irvine at OC Great Park on Sat., Oct. 26.

Although the Golden Eagles are competing as a team, each athlete strives to achieve individual goals as the season is coming to an end.

“As a freshman, a main goal I want to carry with me for the duration of my collegiate career is being confident in not only myself and my capabilities, but having confidence in the team and knowing that we can work through tough races, workouts and hardships together,” Chavez said.

Chavez hopes that, “We as a team will always give each other that support and push each other to be better as individuals and as a whole. I look up to our top women and hope that one day I can give the same confidence and support to a younger athlete like they have for me.”



PICTURED ABOVE: Men’s XCountry training Photos courtesy of: CUIXC



PICTURED ABOVE: XCountry in Alabama Photos courtesy of: CUIXC

Concordia students affected by recent Hurricane Milton storm

AUDREY KAUFMAN
STAFF WRITER

Late on Wednesday night, Oct. 9, Hurricane Milton hit land near Siesta Key, Florida, causing catastrophic damage to many gulf and inland towns across Florida and affecting families across the country.

While Concordia University may be separated by thousands of miles from the dangers of Hurricane Milton, some students are still affected by the storm's aftermath. The family of junior, Rebekah Michel, is currently living in Palm Coast, Florida and they were impacted by Hurricane Milton. Days before the hurricane reached landfall, local and national weather stations announced storm warnings and various counties began issuing evacuation notices to Floridian residents.

"Thankfully, my family did not have to evacuate. However, many other neighborhoods in my family's county did have to evacuate as they were closer to the ocean and were in danger of storm surge," Michel said.

Warnings were sent out to prepare Floridians for potential property damage, power outages and health and safety concerns. In a report by CBS News, Hurricane Milton was initially forecasted as a Category 5 storm, but was later downgraded to a Category 3 storm by the time it hit land. This downgrade did not lessen the danger of Hurricane Milton however; according to the National Hurricane Center, Category 3 hurricanes are still considered life-threatening and can cause a substantial amount of damage due to the massive flooding and intense wind speeds the storms can produce.

Aside from the concerns about life and property, other reasons for evacuation included a limited supply of necessities like food, drinking water and gasoline as well as the chance of long-term loss of power. "Living in Florida required my parents to invest in a generator that would help to recover power and electricity due

to a hurricane," Michel said. In preparation for a hurricane, Michel said "it's also important to stock up on bottled water and non-perishable food items."

To aid the communities affected by Hurricane Milton, students at Concordia can offer support in many ways. There are various disaster relief charity organizations to donate to, including American Red Cross, Center for Disaster Philanthropy and Global Giving. For Michel, donating to animal relief funds is an important and often overlooked aspect of a hurricane's aftermath. "Oftentimes, animals can be subject to being left behind during hurricanes. Giving a donation or providing supplies to a Florida animal shelter is a great way to aid animals who are at risk of being left behind," said Michel.

To support on-campus individuals who have been affected by Hurricane Milton, students can offer care by reaching out to let them know they can talk about their current stress levels and mental well-being. Vincent Nunez, Clinical Supervisor of the Wellness Center Counseling & Psychological Services, suggests simply being present for others during difficult times. "Don't feel like you have to find a magic phrase that will make it all better. Simple words such as 'I am here for you' can mean the world to someone struggling," Nunez said.

Knowing about available resources can help mitigate feelings of distress. By finding student support groups or by visiting the Counseling Center, external stressors can become less overwhelming or upsetting. "Any amount of love or support that we can give to Milton victims from across the country means the world to people in Florida," Michel said.

For help managing natural disaster-related stress levels, or to find or begin a support group, contact the Wellness Center's counseling services. For more information on how to offer aid in Hurricane Milton relief, go to charitynavigator.org for a list of charity and volunteer organizations.

Ask An Eagle: Favorite Greasy Food Indulgences

TERESA MCCLAUGHLIN
STAFF WRITER

National Greasy Foods Day is celebrated today, Oct. 25, and is a day dedicated to indulging in the guilty pleasure of our favorite greasy, "forbidden" foods. Whether it's a classic In-N-Out burger or Raising Cane's famous chicken strips, these "forbidden" foods are more than just a treat—they're a trip down memory lane, a taste of nostalgia and a reminder of the simple joys in life.

The closest In-N-Out to Concordia's campus is about a 10 minute drive and it is certainly an Eagle favorite. Lyndsay Devargas, a sophomore studying communications, said that she enjoys In-N-Out because, "It's good and simple." Devargas fondly recalled going to In-N-Out with her dad when she was younger, making their food a source of cherished memories.

Savannah Medina, a senior studying Behavioral Sciences, also expressed her love of In-N-Out's burgers. Medina said, "In-N-Out is my favorite fast food place because of the quality of the food and the simplicity of the menu." Medina enjoys hanging out with her friends at In-N-Out, especially after a long night out—which In-N-Out's hours permit since they close at 1 a.m.

In-N-Out is loved by students and professors alike. When Communications Professor Kristen Andersen was asked what her favorite greasy foods were she said, "If we're talking burgers, it's In-N-Out." If you have never been to In-N-Out and you're undecided on what to get, you might want to take a cue from Medina's go-to order: a cheeseburger with grilled onions and no tomatoes, paired with a side of fries. The address of the closest In-N-Out to campus is 4115 Campus Dr, Irvine.

In-N-Out is not the only Southern California specialty chain that Concordia Eagles enjoy. Raising Cane's, located just 10 minutes from campus, is another popular choice. The closest Raising Cane's to Concordia's campus can be found at 23971 El Toro Rd, Laguna Hills. Kate Neyer, a junior studying theater, shared that Raising Cane's famous chicken strips are her go-to indulgence for greasy foods.

Neyer's order while she is at Raising Cane's is the "three count chicken strip meal with toast and lemonade."

This meal is fantastic on its own but coupled with some amazing memories makes it even better. Neyer's family enjoys taking her to Raising Cane's to celebrate her theater, dance or choir performances. Neyer said that between the great music and disco ball paired with their famously delicious toast and specialty Cane's sauce, Raising Cane's is unbeatable.

As Devargas reflected on her visits to In-N-Out with her dad, or Neyer recalls family celebrations at Raising Cane's, it's clear that these foods are intertwined with cherished memories and a sense of home. This emotional connection is why these "forbidden" treats hold a special place in the hearts of so many students and professors at Concordia.

Whether it's a student's fondness for crispy chicken strips or a professor's craving for a well-made burger, National Greasy Foods Day is all about celebrating the comfort and joy these "forbidden" foods bring into our lives. Today, take the opportunity to indulge in your favorite greasy delight without any guilt. It's the perfect day for everyone at Concordia to savor these beloved treats and perhaps relive some of the happy memories they hold with each bite.

Marty the Golden Eagle in:

REFORMATION FRUSTRATION

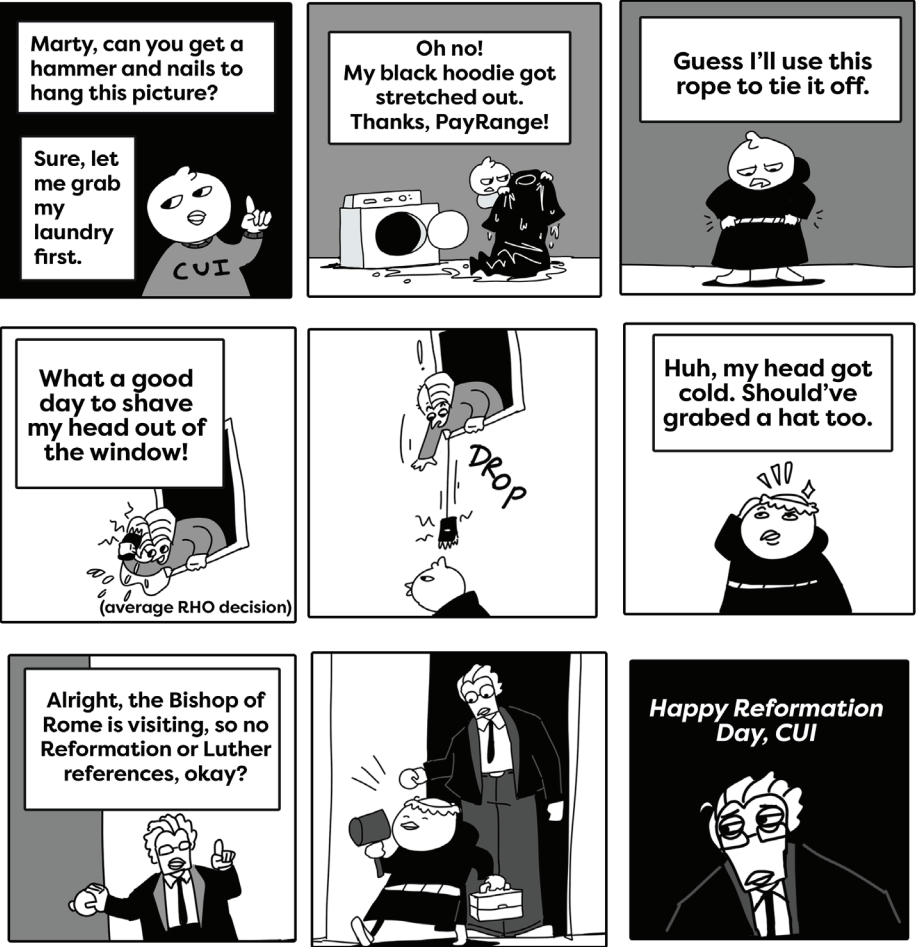


Photo courtesy of: Dylan Arant

Voices of Concordia: Navigating the 2024 Election Landscape

HOPE YONEHARA
STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 5, 8.3 million young Americans, including students at Concordia, will participate in a pivotal election. As students expressed a variety of perspectives, their views reflect broader national concerns and divisions. Director of Speech and Debate, Professor Konrad Hack, emphasizes a unifying principle in this context: "We are all created in the image of God."

Senior Greta Jones, a History and Political Thought major, reflected on the election with a sense of disillusionment, stating, "My personal views are pretty generally reflected by the apathy towards both candidates. We are asked to vote for two different candidates who don't necessarily reflect what most people are interested in. Both of them reflect establishment value."

Similarly, junior Lucy Swan, a former member of the Speech and Debate Team at Concordia, expressed concerns about the polarization of the election, saying, "I think that the election is super polarizing and people care too much about presidential elections."

Andrew Reeder, a junior History and Political Thought major, weighs his voting options carefully, saying, "Both [presidential candidates] are not an ideal choice." Reeder plans to vote for Trump because he feels Harris "has a lot of problems with her policies."

Junior Jackson Merrick, another veteran of the Speech and Debate Team at Concordia, agreed with Reeder but added nuance saying he feels Trump is "better for

the country."

Despite the varied views on the election, Jones highlighted the importance of dialogue, saying, "I don't have a generalized opinion. It depends on the person. I evaluate people on an individual level. Not necessarily just by who I know they vote for. I prefer to have discussions with people who vote differently than me but also people who vote the same. I would like to know their reasoning for doing either."

Freshman Speech and Debate member Bryanna Farley echoes this statement. "It's fine. Everyone has different views on things. That's the whole point of the election... that we can disagree on things," she noted.

Freshman Lillie Strahm agrees saying, "I wouldn't judge a person just because they vote for a party I don't align with. Just because they vote for a party doesn't mean they follow all the beliefs of the party. It doesn't make them a bad person just because we don't agree on things."

Hack concurred with this approach, saying, "We all bring with us a certain level of brokenness. None of us have it together. While you may disagree passionately, it does not mean you should invalidate someone else's humanity." Hack's emphasis on recognizing each person's inherent dignity serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining respect and understanding in political discourse.

As Concordia students prepare for the election, their diverse viewpoints and the emphasis on respectful dialogue reflect the broader importance of engaging with and understanding different perspectives in today's political environment.