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Business school staff and students remember Dean George Wright



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia Dean George Wright passed at 69. He served Concordia since 2004. Photo courtesy of: Benjamin Wagner

TABITHA JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER

On March 4, George Wright, Dean of the School of Business and Economics, passed away. Wright served Concordia by providing leadership at an important time for the business school and his contributions will have lasting impact. His loss is felt deeply across the Concordia community. Wright was 69.

Prior to joining Concordia, Wright worked as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) with leadership positions in strategic planning, accounting and information technology. He came to Concordia as an adjunct faculty member in 2004. From

2008 to 2019 Wright worked as Administrative Dean and Assistant Professor of Business before transitioning to Dean of Business and Economics.

In a statement, Concordia President, Dr. Michael Thomas, said, "Dean Wright was an exemplary leader who prioritized the student experience above everything else." Thomas continued, "He was one of the most kind-hearted, devoted and joyful faculty at Concordia. He could light up a room, whether filled with students, staff or faculty."

For Avery Casteel, Concordia alum and School of Business & Economics Administrative Assistant

& HR Specialist, Wright was an important mentor for her since high school.

Casteel said, "He was the reason why I came to Concordia University Irvine and joined their business program. He called me and answered all of my questions about the program."

In 2020, Casteel was hired as a student worker for the School of Business and Economics and worked closely with Wright. Casteel said, "He took the time to teach me so much about accounting, finance and processes. He was great about showing me his ideas and I loved bringing those ideas to life."

To Casteel, Wright did more than share advice in their field, he enhanced

their work environment. Casteel recalled, "Dean Wright had a witty, sarcastic humor to him that brought energy into the office. The jokes and laughter we all shared in the office were because of him."

David Sanchez, junior and student worker for the School of Business and Economics, worked with Wright since April 2022, starting each work morning with him. Like Casteel, Sanchez said, "Anytime he had a new student meeting or work meeting, I was with him. He was always able to lighten the room with witty jokes and great stories."

Sanchez recalled Wright saying, "It is okay to say 'I don't know,' and 'ask for help' than to navigate something you don't understand alone." Sanchez said this advice was "a powerful statement as I adjusted to this new learning curve and to ultimately recognize it is okay to ask for help and not know everything."

David Kruse, junior and Business Administration student, worked under Wright for two years to successfully orchestrate the Concordia Business Plan Competition. Kruse said, "I admired Dean Wright's sincere passion to create ways for students to find success in the School of Business and Economics. He worked tirelessly and consistently to open new avenues and connections for those in the business program."

Kruse said, "Wright was always diligent in properly allocating resources and strengths to accomplish the university's main objectives and purpose. He did all of this in the love that Christ taught

him."

Drew Wolf, Director of the MBA Program, met Wright over 12 years ago, holding a close relationship through their roles in the business school.

Wolf noted a value that caught his imagination and admiration; Wright's dedication to being fearlessly thrifty. Wolf said, "He rode the city bus to work at CUI! He used his own chainsaw to trim his trees. He liked handling complaints because he said it was his way to offer 'free consulting.'"

"One of my favorite aspects about CUI is that the interactions with colleagues supersedes the typical definition of 'relationship,'" Wolf recalled, sharing how Wright had offered advice to him for buying a house, celebrated the birth of Wolf's son together and bonded on the court through faculty/staff basketball.

Wolf said, "We even shared our faith together in those quiet times when life and job hurdles seemed to come at us...I will miss my daily interactions with George W. Wright."

Wolf recalled Wright's motto for success as "Prayer, hard work and luck!" Wright's presence in the Concordia community will be sorely missed, but his wisdom, contributions to campus and friendship will be remembered forever. A celebration of life is planned for this spring.

ASL club's first silent dinner raises awareness for Deaf Culture



PICTURED ABOVE: Students at the silent dinner event got the opportunity to participate in different activities such as coloring.

Photo courtesy of: Heather Hershfield

HEATHER HERSHFIELD
STAFF WRITER

On Fri., March 15, the ASL Club hosted the first silent dinner event in the Borland-Manske Center, which everyone was welcome to attend, from club members to those who have never used ASL before. The only requirement was to not talk from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Junior Maddie Durkin, the club president, hosted and prepared the silent dinner. The event consisted of the national anthem performed in ASL, followed by a prayer in ASL, dinner, a joke in ASL and wrapping up with various games.

Silent dinners are prevalent in Deaf Culture to demonstrate how difficult sharing a meal can be for those who are hard of hearing or deaf. It provides a sense of community for those in the culture and allows people to use ASL.

"It's a different language, it's a different culture, even I don't understand it completely.

That's what deaf people are dealing with everyday," Durkin said. "The dinners really bring awareness to it." The food consisted of a baked potato bar with toppings, salad, tomato soup, dinner rolls and the desserts were chocolate-covered strawberries, cream puffs and fruit tarts.

Durkin was grateful for how everything turned out, especially for the alumni fund covering the dinner cost that Bon Apétit catered. "Our food was covered, which was a big part of the event, with everyone being able to eat dinner together," she said. "There was a lot of stuff behind the scenes that did take a while, but it all came together in the end."

ASL club's vice president junior Reagan Wagner, shared her favorite part about the silent dinner event. "It was really amazing to see ASL and Deaf Culture come into the Concordia community. ASL is such a beautiful language and is often underrecognized," she said. "Being able to see people experience it at totally different levels of knowledge was really cool."

At the dinner, they had different activities such as coloring, Pictionary and word-matching games. There was plenty of time to just socialize through ASL, sticky notes or writing on the whiteboards in the classroom.

"You don't really need to use words to communicate; you can have a lot of fun, laugh, play games and experience a new language and culture," Wagner said.

A member of the club, senior Beth Sedgwick, joined last semester when Durkin first started it. Sedgwick mentioned she had always wanted to learn ASL and finally got the opportunity to do so because of the club. All club members are at different levels in terms of their knowledge of ASL.

"I can learn within the community and it's been really helpful going to the weekly meetings. I knew we had this silent dinner coming up and I wanted to be able to communicate," she said. The club meets weekly this semester and anyone is welcome to join.

She mentioned many of the big takeaways from the event that night. "There's so many ways we can communicate," Sedgwick said. "We can even just glare at each other until the point gets across, and eventually, we will figure it out. Tonight showed that community and friendship transcends being able to speak in the same language."

In the future, Durkin hopes to host a silent dinner once a semester and wants more people to come and experience the unique event. The club welcomes anyone to join or attend events at any level of ASL knowledge.

Interested in joining the ASL club? Contact Maddie Durkin through email at madison.durkin@eagles.cui.edu. Weekly meetings are held every Wed. this semester from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at Eagles' Landing.

ASCUI on Basecamp Trip

Hello Golden Eagles!

We hope you all had a restful spring break and are ready to finish up the semester strong. Wherever you may have gone, we hope it was a time to relax and enjoy a break from schoolwork.

Some of our students, including myself, had the opportunity to go on the Basecamp Santa Cruz trip through our Outdoor Recreation program, led by Mike Ottenad. Mike runs the Basecamp trips here at Concordia and plans a fall and spring camping trip each semester. This comes at a cheap price of only \$100! This includes transportation, food, camping gear and an experience of a lifetime.

In the past, basecamp trips have been to Yosemite, Joshua Tree, Sedona and other beautiful places nearby. Mike enjoys organizing these trips to get Concordia students off-campus and to explore the beautiful nature around us. Mike said, "I enjoy taking people to places they normally would not have gone to." Mike also mentioned, "We have a lot of people who join us where it is their first time camping. I like helping them come to the realization on the trip that this is something they have the ability to do." This is a great way to experience camping, whether you are a first-time camper or an experienced camper!

This spring break, a group of 27 students and four of our staff members headed north to a campground on the coast of California. This was located in Santa Cruz at Sunset Beach Campgrounds. We set up tents, chairs, kitchen gear and lights to make this the new home for the next four nights. While in Santa Cruz, we explored the beauty around us. Students were able to enjoy a beautiful sunset almost every night on the beach of our campground.

On the first day, we explored Roaring Camp. This is located in the middle of the Redwoods in the Santa Cruz mountains. We were able to ride a train through the Redwoods, take line dancing lessons and explore the beautiful nature around us. Gina Bertaina, a student who came on the trip, said, "My favorite part was being able to smell the Redwoods while riding the train at Roaring Camp." It was a refreshing experience to be surrounded by God's nature.

The next day, we got to explore Pinnacles National Park! This was a beautiful park where we got to hike through caves, climb on rocks and skip rocks on the lake. Dae Lopez, another student on the trip, said, "My favorite part of the trip was going to Pinnacles National Park! This is a newer California National Park so I was excited that Mike was able to get us into the park." After the national park, we explored the town of Carmel-by-the-Sea.

The next day, we headed up to San Francisco! We stopped at the California Academy of Sciences. We spent the morning checking out the building's aquarium, planetarium and many other cool features. After this, we headed to the Golden Gate Bridge! We went to Marin Headlands to a lookout point. It was quite windy, but it was fun to see a great view of the bridge!

We headed back to camp that day. We planned to stay one more night, but due to extreme winds, we had to pack everything up and head back down to Irvine. Luckily, we had a fun group of students and leaders, and we had a fun time no matter what! Even if we had to pack up camp a little early. Mason Dalbeck, another student on the trip, said, "My favorite part is the people. We had lots of good times with good vibes and good people." Whether hiking through a cave, watching a sunset on the beach or packing up camp a little earlier, it was always a fun time!

This is one of the many ways to experience something new through a Concordia experience. Keep your eyes open for more trips! This May, Mike is preparing a trip to Hume Lake for just \$25. If this is something you might be interested in, come by the CSLD and we can get you connected!

We are ready for an exciting last push of our semester. We have some exciting events coming up this spring, such as Theme Verse Day, I Heart CUI Day, and many more activities from all student leadership groups. Stay focused for these last few weeks, everyone. We are almost there!

Until Next Time,

Your ASCUI Secretary

Elise Schult

THE CONCORDIA COURIER

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And the very first Mr. CUI is...



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia's first ever Mr. CUI, Mason Dalbeck!
Photo courtesy of: cui_thehunt

JOSEPH PANETTA
STAFF WRITER

On Wed., March 20, the Hunt hosted a five stage competition for select students to be voted as Mr. CUI. Students gathered at the CU Center to cheer on and vote for their favorite candidates.

This event has been a long time in the making as students have been nominating their peers and helping them to prepare for the event. The contest has come down to finalists: Stefan Bilc, Mason Dalbeck, Miles Gunnett, Frankie Ibanez, Xander Luckett, Caden Merrill, Kevin Shearer, John Simco and Nate Snyder.

These finalists were, of course, enticed by the chance to represent their school, but also secondarily, thanks to the \$300 grand prize for the winner.

"I got a \$280 ticket for driving with my brights on a week ago and [I] need to pay it off," said Mason Dalbeck, senior.

"The ideal Mr. CUI would bring a ton of student engagement, fun energy, and a lot of cheering for contestants," said Christopher Haygood, senior and Hunt coordinator.

Contrary to popular belief, the competition was not inspired by an unofficial student social page. Haygood said that "[the Hunt was] knocking around the idea before [that site] started doing their thing."

Mr. CUI hopefuls made their impact across five different events, and chose a female undergraduate coach to help them be at their best. The winning coach also took home a prize of \$150.

"To win Mr. CUI the contestants have to win two levels of the event. The first is they have to be part of the top four to pass the judges, after that it is up to the student body to vote for the winner of Mr. CUI," said Haygood.

Prior to the events, there was no shortage of confidence among candidates. "I'm the ideal Mr. CUI because I'm a red blooded American winning machine," said Dalbeck, channeling his inner "Talladega Nights" Ricky Bobby. "I'm also very involved in the school through ASCUI and being an RA, as well as having been an athlete the past three years. I have been around, worn a lot of hats."

"I love the school and the people here and [I] just want to make a good impact here. I think that is deserving of being Mr. CUI," said John Simco, sophomore. When asked why he wanted to win, he simply stated "I love winning." Well

said, John.

The first of these events was the formal wear event, where candidates were judged on how well they rocked their Sunday best. Coaches were also a part of this round as they dressed up to complete the look.

The second round was a swimsuit competition. The Hunt took a conservative approach on the swimwear options, so contestants had to get creative for this one. Dalbeck "dressed as a shark" and his coach, Natalie Annunziato, dressed as a surfer. The "Jaws" theme played dramatically over this scene.

Round three was a talent show and the finalists brought out all kinds of talents, most (or least) notably of which was Simco's "standing." Fans seemed to love Simco's "less is less" approach, nonetheless.

For the talent round, Merrill, coached by Nikki Lyons, put on a stunning performance of "I'm Just Ken" by Ryan Gosling that had students and Barbie fans alike begging for more.

Round four was a group dance competition. All of the candidates were up on stage together, performing synchronized choreography.

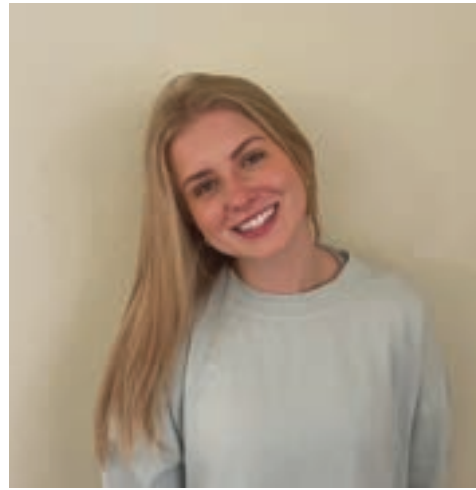
The final round was simply the question round. Contestants were asked questions and had to answer them to the best of their ability. Fans and judges alike were able to discern the personalities of the next potential face of our school. The most memorable answer was Snyder's decision to live in the ancient Rome era out of any time period in history.

After multiple rounds of the hottest talent at Concordia, the winner and the first ever Mr. CUI was Mason Dalbeck! Dalbeck put together a near flawless performance and deservedly went home with the crown and lifelong memories. "Those are my brothers," said Dalbeck. "We've gone through intensive training. It's a bond that'll last a lifetime."

After the heat of the competition cooled down, it was nothing but sportsmanship between the competitors. "I think that Mr. CUI has a chance to become a cool tradition for Concordia, and it's pretty neat to get to be in the first one of hopefully many more to come," said Dalbeck.

Don't forget to congratulate Dalbeck! For more information about the Hunt, please go to <https://www.cui.edu/studentlife/the-hunt>. The next event that students can expect is "The Hunter Games" which will likely decide who wins the Hunt for this school year.

Concordia launches student employee of the month recognition program



PICTURED ABOVE: The first student employee of the month Reagyn Shoop
Photo courtesy of: CUI Career Development

MADISON ZUNIGA
CAMPUS EDITOR

Do you work in the cafeteria? As a tutor? In student leadership? Student employees on campus now have the potential to be officially acknowledged for the work they do, and any student position is eligible!

The Center for Career & Vocation has developed a new initiative that will recognize and feature an outstanding student employee every month. In collaboration with Human Resources, student workers can now be nominated by the faculty or staff member that oversees their department. Each month, the chosen student receives a certificate and a gift from the Center for Career & Vocation.

Mariah Lucas, Director of Career Development and Vocation, said that this is a career building opportunity that allows the school to "identify where our students are succeeding." She said that it can also improve a student's resume, as it highlights stories and achievements "that can be used in interviews."

Resident Assistant Reagyn Shoop was selected as the first

student employee of the month for February. Her supervisor, Mrs. Monique Nunes, emphasized Shoop's "dedication to her job and academics and Christ Centered [attitude]."

Part of the nomination process includes an assessment of the eight career competencies outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). The NACE career competencies are Career & Self Development, Communication, Critical Thinking, Belonging & Inclusion, Leadership, Professionalism, Teamwork and Technology.

Shoop was recognized especially for Leadership and Belonging & Inclusion, for her ability to demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge and skills required to engage and include others, and recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

"Reagyn is dedicated to serving her role as a RA with dignity and respect to all students," said Nunes. "She has taken the initiative to start a new group on campus: Worthy of Joy. Reagyn has the joy of the Lord and the love of Jesus in the RES halls and across campus. She is always willing to lend a hand around campus. I am proud to work alongside her, as we serve the students we come in contact with. It is without reservation that I present Reagyn as student of the month."

The featured student employee of the month will also be celebrated with a poster in the Center for Career & Vocation on the top floor of the library and via Instagram. The March student employee of the month will be announced in April!

For more information about the nomination process and the link for faculty and staff to nominate their student workers, contact Mariah Lucas at mariah.lucas@cui.edu.

Happy Women's History Month!

ANNA WELSH
STAFF WRITER

Women's History Month is dedicated to celebrating women all over the world. Women who have

contributed to culture and society, and advocated for inclusion and equity. The event is celebrated each March.

This month serves as an important reminder to all that women deserve to be celebrated and appreciated.

Women like artist Frida Kahlo, who attempted to normalize female issues such as breastfeeding and miscarriage through her artwork. Or Maya Angelou who used poetry to express her rights as an independent Black woman. And Jane Adams who founded the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1919.

Inspiring women are all around us and it is important to not only recognize their legacy, but continue it into today's world.

Concordia senior and president of the Hawaiian club, Isabella Johnson, says, "If it weren't for the social changes in the last century, I would not be here at Concordia receiving a higher education, nor would I likely be able to have a leadership position."

"Women's History Month is about recognizing the feminist movements that fought to improve the lives of women before us," Johnson explained.

Dr. Kristen Koenig, professor of sociology, teaches a class at Concordia about women and gender studies. Koenig credits this class for her heightened interest in women's history.

"The more that you study the role of women in history, the more that you really understand the many obstacles that women have faced historically, in all domains... obstacles in terms of even being recognized as fully human. I think that sometimes we get lost in contemporary conversation, not realizing the incredible strides we have made," Koenig said.

Some of the role models that Koenig looks up to include historic trail blazers such as Susan B. Anthony, Mary Wollstoncraft and Dorothy Day.

Koenig also recognizes several male voices who have also been outspoken about women's rights throughout history. "I think both women and men have actually played an incredibly important voice in helping women to fight for their civil rights. People like William Loyd Garrison or Frederick Douglass fought for suffrage rights in the 1800s."

Bella Amore, the living and learning community for women located in the Upper Quads, hosted an event to celebrate International Women's Day. Koenig gave a presentation on the idea of "re-imagining women's narratives around the world. We discussed some of the societal narratives and historical narratives that women have maybe internalized. We talked about how we could re-imagine those narratives that we tell ourselves or tell others."

To wrap Women's History Month, Diversity Awareness hosted an event in the Unity Center on Thurs., March 21 to discuss women who have been an inspiration. Prizes were awarded in a raffle, and snacks and drinks were provided.

Concordia students gather at the Getty

MADISON ZUNIGA
CAMPUS EDITOR

In partnership with two of Concordia's Living Learning Communities (LLCs), 20 students ventured out to Hollywood Hills on Sat., March 9 to visit the famed Getty Center for a beautiful cultural experience.

Polis Plaza and Creative Edge visited the Getty Villa in the spring of 2023, and continued the tradition this semester, opening up the opportunity to students from across Concordia's campus. The group was diverse, consisting of eight seniors, eight juniors, three sophomores and one freshman. The group was not limited to the LLCs, being well-attended by commuters and residents from Sigma, Rho and Lower.

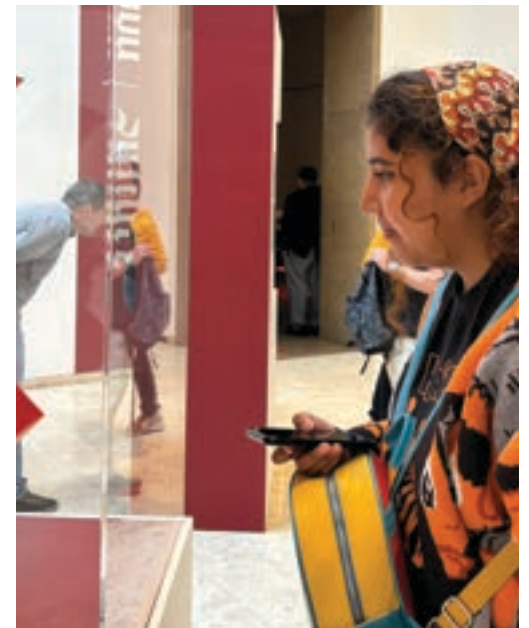
The group enjoyed Chick-fil-A, gorgeous weather and artwork from across history. "I believe it is important for Concordia to offer trips like this because it gives us a context and scale to what we are learning," said John Fritz, freshman International Business major. "From visiting the Getty Museum, we see the perspectives and priorities of many people, giving their stories a sense of tangibility and emotion beyond what could be taught in a semester course."

"I have gone in the past and absolutely loved it. I like how they always have new exhibits, but they keep the more historical exhibits," said Maddie Durkin, junior Lutheran Education major. "I think it is important to get off campus and learn about interesting places in the area. It also fosters community. My favorite part was visiting the gardens. It was really relaxing, and I had time to sketch."

"I love that Concordia offers different trips and opportunities

to meet new people and have experiences in a way that is convenient for college students," said Beth Sedgwick, senior Business Management and Finance major. "Getting to go to the Getty, hearing different professionals come speak at events and having fun weekly get-togethers are all reasons I have loved living in an LLC and have benefited from the built-in community. It's been an amazing part of my college experience!"

"The reason I came today is because the Getty Center really speaks to me as a person," said Katherine Gildea, senior Business major. "It's a very unique experience, it's great to connect with other students, to look at art and appreciate something that's outside of the school. I currently don't live in the LLCs this year, though last year I did. It's great because the LLCs really connect with what the Getty Center offers."



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia students exploring the Getty Center
Photos courtesy of: Madison Zuniga

Chapel music is changing lives

JENNA HOFFMAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
JOSEPH PANETTA
STAFF WRITER

While music fills the air through speakers all over campus, there is nothing quite like the melodies heard from 10:30 to 11 a.m. during chapel in the CU Center. Worship music is a big part of life at Concordia and has affected the listening tastes of students in many ways.

Chapel Coordinator Olivia Thielke said, "Worship music has had a huge impact on me. I am studying church music with a director of parish music." She added, "The hymns of the church have always affected me and have led me to study church music here at Concordia. The hymns have provided a powerful way for me to understand and share my faith."

Concordia is no stranger to music, as worship music is played five days a week at chapel, at Sunday Source, daily in the cafeteria and Eagles' Landing and at student events.

Thielke said, "Abbey west is dedicated to providing a 'vibrant and diverse' worship experience; each chapel throughout the week looks a little different." On Monday

they "use contemporary band arrangements that are more reflective and use a smaller band sound." Thielke continued, "Tuesday we open with acapella doxology and then have hymns accompanied by the piano. Again, Tuesday is a little more reflective and can be a bit more improvisatory. Thursday, we use the organ which provides a little more structure. Often different liturgy settings are used as well as hymns accompanied by the organ."

A big draw for most students is Friday chapel. "Friday stands in contrast to Thursday chapel where we have a full contemporary band with a bigger sound and generally more upbeat music. While there are people who attend each chapel regardless of music styles, there are certainly people who come to only certain chapels because of the type of music," said Thielke

Every Friday, Concordia's sports teams gather at chapel together to take part in worship music and a sermon. The worship team delivers what sophomore Jackson Barrie refers to as "bangers" weekly which have incorporated themselves into the lives of student-athletes who make up a large percentage of the Concordia community.

As a Christian school, Concordia's mission is to help students grow and walk with Jesus Christ, and these songs allow students to remain in His presence often. "Singing along to worship music is the most fun and fulfilling way to give praise to Jesus. It feels incredible and it's just a blessing, I mostly do it when I'm on a walk," said Alexander Burns, sophomore. "I used to listen to a lot more extreme music, lots of rock and metal, I've mellowed out a lot since coming to Concordia."

"My primary instrument is organ," Thielke said, "The hymns of the church have always affected me and have led me to study church music here at Concordia. The hymns have provided a powerful way for me to understand and share my faith."

Students are not leaving these songs at the door once the clock strikes 11, as some are adding these tunes to their own music cycles. "I know most of the songs at chapel, but some of them, if I like them, are added to my worship playlist," said Nicole Ihlein, sophomore.

Another student mentioned her newfound love for Firm Foundation due to the singing talents of the on-stage students at chapel, specifically praising student singer Kaity Bills '25.



PICTURED ABOVE: The CU Center where students can enjoy worship music
Photo courtesy of: Anna Welsh

While some students say that their music taste has changed due to chapel music, others admit that their personal listening patterns have not been affected much. Regardless of whether or not playlists get changed, the widespread melodies have still worked their way into the hearts of students. "It has definitely begun to grow on me a lot more," said Isaiah Gutierrez, freshman. Gutierrez, who "simply loves music" is just one of many Concordia students to have a similar reaction to the music played in chapel.

With Easter coming up, specific music will be played

and sung to fit the different days of Holy Week as we look forward to celebrating His resurrection. Thielke said, "In Lent we refrain from certain songs in order to maintain a more penitential and reflective setting. This allows us time to reflect on the Christ's passion. Come Easter, we will sing more upbeat and joyful hymns and songs."

For information about chapel times and more, please visit www.cui.edu/studentlife/student-leadership/abbey-west.

College Corps writes Easter letters to teens and children

KIARA AZUMA
STAFF WRITER

With Easter around the corner, Concordia's #CaliforniansForAll College Corps fellows hosted an Easter service event on Mon., March 18. College Corps invited students to write encouraging letters and Easter wishes to teens and children receiving treatment and education at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. The event took place on the Student Union Patio from 11 to 1 p.m.

This event was "fellow-run" by the College Corps fellows, who are dedicated to various on-campus services about once a quarter during their weekly "Debriefing Meetings." The meetings often have a community service component.

A large table with chairs was set up for students to stop by and write their letters. Colorful cardstock papers, envelopes, pens, markers and stickers allowed students to personalize and decorate their Easter cards. Students wrote letters decorated with flowers, bees and Easter eggs. The fellows provided all the supplies during the event and will mail the letters to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

According to the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch website, the program "is a Christ-centered residential treatment and educational center for children and families. [They] help the most troubled, complicated and amazing kids by providing best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care, where [they] look kids in the eye, walk with them, and help them become their best selves."

Located in North Dakota, the program focuses on children between the ages of 10 and 18. The program is affiliated specifically with the LCMS, which allowed Concordia to connect to them.

"While the students at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch don't know about our College Corps fellows personally, they can know that they are connected to a much "larger" family outside of themselves. They are not alone. We stand together with them. This unique event also partners our fellows with other students at Concordia and then taking one step further, serving others outside together. It's a gift to all involved," said Jennifer Sheek, College Corps Coordinator.

College Corps originally connected with the ranch over Christmas through their "Notes of Hope" program. This program allowed College Corps to send letters of hope and encouragement to the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch students. Last year, College Corps also hosted a similar Easter event with Concordia Cares. Concordia students were able to sign or create Easter Cards for local nursing homes and care programs.

The College Corps program provides college funding of \$10,000 in exchange for 450 hours of service over the academic year. According to the College Corps' website, this service fellowship engages students in "community problem-solving in the fields of education, climate action and food insecurity."

"I think that on-campus service is a wonderful gift for the fellows in our College Corps program. It is an opportunity for them to 'give back' by hosting an event on our campus, as their primary service is at a particular host site in the community. It is also an opportunity for those who are organizing the event and helping lead to practice the skills they've learned and take greater responsibility," said Sheek.

For more information regarding College Corps, visit <https://www.cui.edu/studentlife/career-services/californians-for-all-college-corps>



PICTURED ABOVE: Concordia students writing Easter letters
Photo courtesy of: Kiara Azuma

Concordia hosts the 'Great Conversation' at virtual humanities conference

MADISON ZUNIGA
CAMPUS EDITOR

On Sat., March 16, student scholars from across California gathered for Concordia's annual Questions that Endure Virtual Undergraduate Conference to spend the day participating in the ongoing Great Conversation of the liberal arts.

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Concordia University was joined virtually by student and faculty representatives from Fresno Pacific, Biola and Pepperdine, as nearly 30 undergraduate students responded to the questions "What is Beauty?" and "How Shall I Live?" After an engaging keynote address on brain science and beauty from neuroscientist and biology professor Dr. von dem Bussche, the students gave ten-minute presentations over Zoom on a breadth of topics, ranging from feminist literature, modern sculpture and ancient Roman texts.

"We hold the conference to talk about how we should live in light of the Great Conversation — the great books and big ideas and enduring questions that shape civilization, history, art, society and scientific thought," said Dr. C.J. Armstrong, Director of the Honors Program and founder of the conference. "Concordia scholars have peers around the nation that want to join in that conversation, and a conference like this allows us to exchange ideas, welcome new scholars and enjoy a reunion of curious people pursuing the good, true and beautiful."

"I found the event genuinely exciting," said Noah Shifter, a freshman presenter from Pepperdine. "This was my first time experiencing a college-level academic conference, and I found that, especially in a Christian liberal arts context, the exchange of ideas was valuable. Some papers invited me to read new texts, but I was most influenced by those papers that exposed me to insightful new interpretations of texts I've already read."

"It's awesome to get the opportunity to speak about such topics that can often be overlooked in today's society," said Josiah Chin, a sophomore presenter at the conference. "Exploring beauty and how it affects our culture, literature, philosophy and life was such a privilege. It opened my mind to different viewpoints and perspectives on beauty!"

"I love the way students and professors get to act as colleagues, and how connections can be made outside of the walls of the school," said Dr. William M. Johnston, Professor of Ancient

History and Classics at Fresno Pacific University. "One can see that we are part of the Great Conversation!"

Concordia students were able to gather together in person for the midday lunch break, where they debriefed and discussed the previous sessions. "The chatter between sessions with real live people on campus is probably my favorite part," said Armstrong. "It's a nice counterpoint to the virtual mode that reminds us a scholarly community can exist in lots of spaces, but there's nothing quite like being together face to face."

"Without the discussion that took place in this conference, I don't think I would have thought so deeply about how to live with beauty," said Paloma Banto, junior moderator for the conference. "What I found is that beauty starts with relationships, and it only grows with intentionality."

"It was great presenting my paper on an alchemical view of beauty," said Dylan Arant, junior. "Being part of a larger conversation on the nature of beauty with other students from Concordia, Fresno Pacific, Biola and Pepperdine really showed the many perspectives and facets of this topic. I found a common theme of beauty as relational and ethical among many papers across disciplines. Last year's conference had a similar effect regarding humanity, which led me to participate this year too."

"Organizing the conference is a delight because our students pitch in with their good scholarship, organization and hospitality, and the faculty and students at the other schools are so enthusiastic about the opportunity," said Armstrong. "It's wonderful to see the work our students have done shared publicly, and it's gratifying to see the preparation and professional presentation of that work discussed and extended to others."

The Questions that Endure Conference is hosted annually, and all students are welcome to participate, whether by moderating panels, presenting papers, or simply viewing and contributing to the conversation. For recordings of the presentations, as well as more information about the conference, contact Dr. Armstrong at clinton.armstrong@cui.edu.

Concordia handbells delivers joyous music to the East Coast



PICTURED ABOVE: With rehearsals twice a week the Concordia handbell ensembles strive for excellence in their instruments, while also providing new and innovative handbell repertoire.

REBEKAH MICHEL
MUSIC COLUMNIST

As the Music Department prepares for their final concerts of the semester, the Concert and Spirit Bells ensembles are rehearsing for their Home Concert and performance tour across North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and

their first exposure to the instrument was in church settings. "I didn't start playing handbells until my senior year of high school. Back then, I was just playing with my church's handbell choir," said Hannah Springer. Springer is a freshman Church Music major and is preparing for her first tour with the handbell ensembles.

For senior English and Theatre major Meg Rocha, handbell performances often provoke surprised reactions from the audience. "A compliment we get most from people who watch us perform is how they've never seen a bell choir play like us," said Rocha. As an instrument whose roots are often tied to church settings and praise, Concordia's handbell program provides an enriching musical experience that cannot be found at many other universities. "Alex Guebert and Erik Der are true handbell devotees. They pick amazing repertoire with techniques and styles that defy the status quo of ringing," said Rocha.

For many students in the handbell ensembles,

East Coast performance tour, students are excited to share the unique gifts and talents with audiences. "The handbell community is very niche and small, but they are so passionate about the art form. It's so fun to visit other states to meet people in corners of the world that share handbells in common. It's always in the name of God and using our instruments to praise," said Rocha.

In preparation for their

East Coast performance tour starting days after finals week, a great deal of time management and effective rehearsal strategies are required for the students and directors involved. "Preparing the tour repertoire has been a bit stressful and a lot of work. However, I know that it is all going to pay off in the end," said Springer.

Highlights of this year's handbell performance tour from May 7 - 12, include a concert hosted by the famous Raleigh Ringers of North Carolina, a handbell invitational featuring high school ringers from the state of Virginia, and a final tour concert at

St. Mark's Episcopal on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. In addition, the tour repertoire of the Spirit and Concert Bell ensembles can be heard from our own CU Center for their Home Concert on April 26 at 7 p.m.

For their upcoming Home Concert on April 26, students hope to highlight the growth that they have made over the course of the school year. "One of my favorite pieces from our set is called 'Passages.' I love it because I think it's really going to show how far we have come as an ensemble," said Springer.

For more information or to purchase tickets for the Handbell Home Concert on April 26, please visit simpletix.com. Please note that tickets are free, but are required to gain entry. In addition, there will be donations taken to help fund further handbell performances at Concordia.

Graphic design student exhibition

JENNA HOFFMAN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On display in the John and Linda Friend Art Gallery in Grimm Hall is an exhibition presenting the work of students in Concordia's Graphic Design program. The colorful and varied display of art pieces can be seen until April 10.

The student exhibition contains work from graphic design students from every class from both the fall 2023 and spring 2024 semesters.

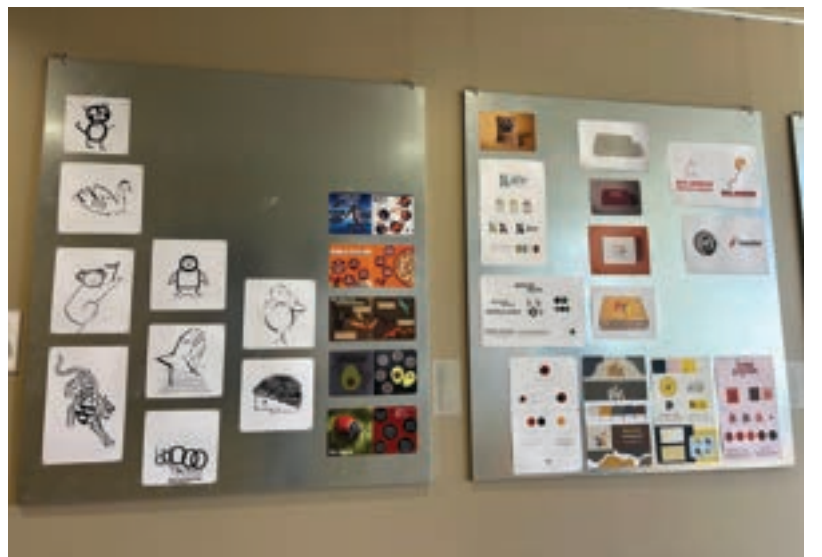
Visual Arts Department Chair, Rachel Soo said that the works displayed were primarily created by sophomores, juniors and seniors "because there are so many pieces and not enough space in the gallery to fit them all." However, there are a couple of pieces by freshmen on display.

Almost all of the pieces were created in the various Graphic Design courses that Concordia offers like Graphic Design I, Digital Image Manipulation, History of Graphic Design, Typography I and more.

To see all of the student work, visit the student exhibition in Grimm Hall.



Maddie Jahshan '24
Devlin Typeface Design



PICTURED ABOVE: Art pieces in the student exhibition
Photo courtesy of: Jenna Hoffman



Marie Genesis Malign '26
Inspired by "Late Summer Oranges" by Kristen Schmidt



PICTURED ABOVE: Art pieces in the student exhibition
Photo courtesy of: Jenna Hoffman



Natalie Annunziato '25
Propagate Branding Guide



PICTURED ABOVE: Art pieces in the student exhibition
Photo courtesy of: Jenna Hoffman

Softball dominates the diamond with undefeated play in conference

ARIANA ROSALES
STAFF WRITER

The softball team proves, yet again, that they are a force to be reckoned with. As the season progresses, the team is 22-5 overall and 14-0 in conference.

The Golden Eagles are ranked No. 22 in the country in this week's NFCA DII national Top 25 poll, and they are also undefeated in conference play. This

includes their four-game sweep against Academy of Art, Dominican and Hawai'i Hilo.

The team's experienced and talented lineup is the main contributor to their wins. Cortney Koelmans, a senior and pitcher on the team, was the pitcher of the week for two shutouts and no earned runs in 10 innings against Art U.

Koelmans said, "Pitching comes with a lot

of pressure, as every pitch matters. If you do not hit your spot or spin the ball to the correct location, the hitters are more likely to get a hit and score runs." She added that there are many factors to think about when pitching that also comes with pressure; such as protecting the lead late in a game. Koelmans said, "I just continue to tell myself to focus on one pitch at a time, and if they end up hitting, I know that my team will have my back and pick me up."

Missy Nemeth, a grad student and first baseman on the team, was player of the week for the third time this season after the sweep against Art U. She currently has 23 RBIs in 2024. Nemeth attributes her consistent performance to her team. She said, "We have put in a lot of hard work to continue to be successful. Our practices are very intentional and we spend more time working on the things that we did not do as well in the last game or practice."

The Golden Eagle's success is built on a foundation of trust and communication. Koelmans

said, "The chemistry I have with my teammates contributes to our success, as we are all super close on and off the field. We are always rooting for each other to succeed, whether in softball or life in general."

Nemeth noted that each player brings something unique to the diamond. She added, "We always have each other's back out on the field. If someone is not having their best day, we know that one of our teammates will step up and be what we need to win the game."

The accomplishments of the team showcase the leadership of head coach, Crystal Rosenthal, who is also the university's athletics director. Koelmans said, "Our coaching staff also does a great job preparing us for our opponents and helping us improve." She added that the support and preparation from coaches allow the team to relax and focus on having fun.

Rosenthal has instilled confidence and fostered a winning mentality in her players. Nemeth said, "Something we talk about a lot is playing every game like it's the most important

game. That is the mindset we take into every game and I think it really helps in our success." She noted that if the team wants to reach their end goal they have to continue to win.

As the season advances and stakes continue to rise, the Golden Eagles show no signs of slowing down. Koelmans said, "There is pressure to maintain an undefeated record, but each game is just as important as the next, so we focus on our opponents as they come up and do not spend a lot of time looking to the future or focusing on the past."

The softball team is fueled with determination as they gear up for the Otter Softball Invitational this weekend, Fri., March 22 through Sun., March 24 in Marina, California. Look out for the next home game and double header against Chaminade on Tues., March 26. The first game is scheduled for 3 p.m. followed by the second matchup at 5 p.m.

Follow @cuisoftball and @cuigoldeneagles on Instagram to keep up with the latest updates. To stream the live games, visit cuigoldeneagles.com.



PICTURED ABOVE: CUI softball team

Photo courtesy of: PC Crash Kamon, goldeneagledropbox

Men's lacrosse looks to finish the season strong

BRECKYNN WILLIS
STAFF WRITER

The men's lacrosse team has entered the RMAC conference for the 2024 season after being named national champions at the MCLA level last year. Men's lacrosse is now an NCAA sport, which has brought a whole new set of competition.

The team had a challenging start to the season, playing some of the top-ranked schools in the conference. "Obviously it hasn't been the start we were hoping for but it was trial-by-fire playing the top-ranked teams in our conference and seeing what it takes to compete with and beat teams at this level," said Chad McFadden, senior.

McFadden has been a key piece to this team in his time at Concordia. So far this season, McFadden has had 20 points and five assists. McFadden has also stepped up as team captain this year. "I've been extremely fortunate to have had great captains in my time here, who have been role models for me both on and off the field and if I can provide that for any of my teammates it will be a complete success," he said.

"We have all the pieces to be a great team this year, we just have to continue to learn and get better every day," said McFadden.

Even after some tough losses, the team remains confident in its ability to be a top competitor at the NCAA Division II level. "It is only motivating us to become better and turn the season around to end on a high note," said Daniel Yang, a junior goalie on the team.

Yang already has 66 saves so far this season. He's also set big goals for both himself and the team. He hopes to become a Division II All-American and for his team to win another conference championship.

The team just had a two-week break from games, giving them time to make any changes or improvements they needed. "It's all about us right now, and once we figure out how good we can be, we will be a dangerous team," said

senior defensive player, Braden Schneider. The men chose not to focus on what other teams were doing, but to work on their own areas of improvement.

Schneider began contributing to the success of the team immediately after transferring to Concordia during his sophomore year. He was named Third Team All-American in 2023, after an impressive season on the team's defense.

To start the second half of the season, the men will hit the road for a series of games in Colorado and Utah, which start today, before returning for their next home game on April 12 versus Colorado State Pueblo for Staff & Teacher Appreciation Night at Golden Eagles Field. For more game times and other season details, head to cuigoldeneagles.com.



PICTURED ABOVE: #43 Senior Braden Schneider playing defense
Photo courtesy of: Crash Kamon

Track & field is flying high



PICTURED ABOVE: Crenshaw throwing the hammer
Photo courtesy of: Crash Kamon

EVA PREWITT
SPORTS EDITOR

Track and field is back to breaking records and personal bests as they closed out their indoor season and launched outdoor season on the same day, March 8. A select group of athletes traveled to Pittsburg, Kansas for the NCAA Indoor National Championships while the rest of the team competed in Fullerton at the Ben Brown Invitational.

At the NCAA Championships, competing in the women's distance medley relay for the first time in Concordia history were Porshe Eismann, Bethany Schmidt, Maria Sartin and Jori Paradis. Passing off the baton for 4,000m, the Golden Eagles secured an 11th place finish at 11:38.89, just shy of their all-time school record.

Eismann said, "Since I was the first leg of the DMR, I wanted to put my team into the best position possible, and to do that I had to have confidence in myself and my ability that I do belong there and deserve to compete against the best in the nation." Eismann has been part of the track and field program for four years of her collegiate career and has made her mark on the team after breaking an 18-year-old record in the 800m.

"After going to nationals twice, I know I'm capable of going again and becoming an All-American, and even winning a national title," said Eismann. "But to do that, I have to continue with discipline in my training and recovery, having confidence within myself and trust in the Lord."

Dylan Fox represented the Golden Eagles on the men's side competing in the Long Jump

event. Fox returned to Concordia ranked the 16th best long jumper in the DII nation.

Previously ranked 8th, Fox's jumps were scratched by a matter of centimeters and were disallowed. "Scratching two of my biggest jumps and failing to make finals and top 8 was as much of a motivator as it was frustrating," said Fox. "I intend to bring a national title back to Concordia in the outdoor season."

Back in Fullerton at Ben Brown, Tayla Crenshaw celebrated smashing a school record in the hammer throw by almost a meter. Marking 50.09m, Crenshaw is the first woman in school history to ever throw over 50m.

Crenshaw said, "The Concordia track and field team work ethic and everyone's contribution to wanting to be the best team in the PacWest makes us stand out. We all want to be the best team athletically, and we all push one another to do that."

The Golden Eagles will be back on home turf for the Team 4 Titus and Ely Meet on March 23. This annual meet was created to honor the Bowman family. Danny Bowman became Concordia's track and field head coach in 2014 and left a significant impact on the program.

This meet raises awareness for Coach Bowman's sons, Titus and Ely, who were diagnosed with a rare genetic disease called Batten. After losing his oldest, Titus, to the disease at 6-years-old, Bowman's younger son, Ely, continues to undergo treatment to slow the progression of the disease. This meet is to honor Titus and Ely and give the athletes the opportunity to celebrate their sport with joy and compete for those who can't.

Men's volleyball set out for upcoming conference competition

EVA PREWITT
SPORTS EDITOR

jobs easier," said Reilly.

Men's volleyball has been battling a lineup of tough competition and are making all their final preparations as they approach the final stretch of their season. Currently 6-10, the Golden Eagles are hungry for success and are striving to finish strong as they look toward the MPSF conference tournament in April.

Led by a trio of freshmen, Yotam Briger, Ties Cornelissen and Christian Galoppo have stepped up into crucial roles for the team. Running the offense at the net is Briger, who tallied a total of 530 assists this season. Briger's crafty and fiery playing style also makes him a force at the net, with six solo blocks and 11 kills. At this rate, Briger is bound to make Concordia history and will soon find himself joining teammates in the record books.

Cornelissen is having a standout season, leading the offense with 173 kills. The 6'6" outside hitter from Holland had a career-high against Charleston with 24 kills in four sets and has been on an upward trajectory all season. "As a team, we have improved a lot over the course of the season," said Cornelissen. "Even though we had a lot of ups and downs over the season, we kept our heads up and are trusting the process."

Galoppo is a key all-around player, tallying 135 kills, 71 digs and 35 total blocks. "The goal for our team is to keep on fighting to reach a better position in the MPSF so that our chances of winning the title are bigger, said Galoppo. "This will be possible if we keep our heads high and work hard every practice, which is the mentality we all chose to approach."

Jacob Reilly is a sophomore libero and the glue of the back row with 78 digs and 25 assists. Reilly said, "Our team has battled a lot of adversity this year, but we are committed to each other and trust that whatever situation that we are thrown in, we will stick with each other and get through it together."

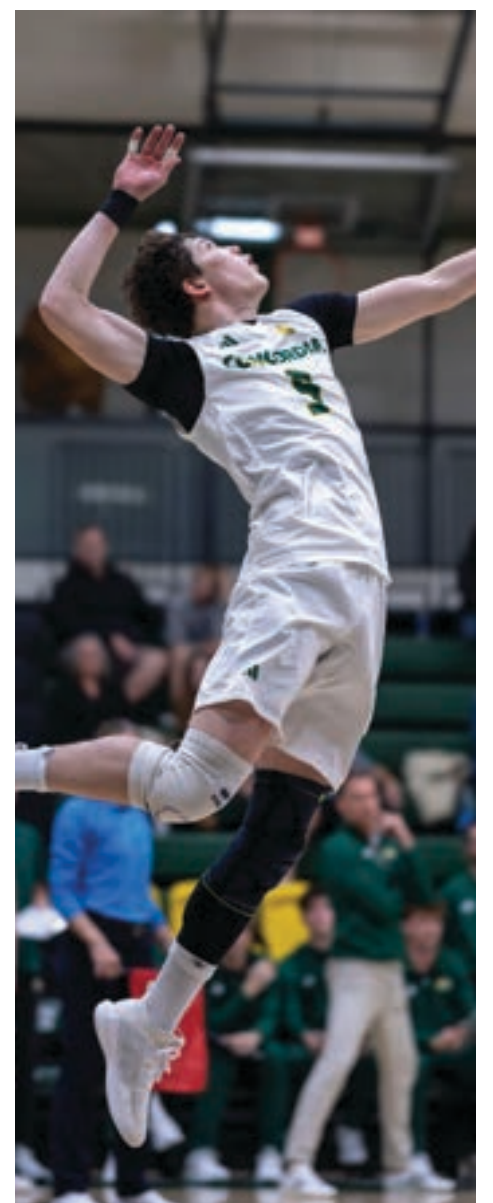
Last summer, Reilly represented the country, competing on the U.S. Men's U21 National Team. His skill and undeniable work ethic lead the team and set the standard for excellence. "Personally, I am working on consistency and steadying out the back court to make my setters and hitters

As the Golden Eagles approach this crucial stretch of conference competition, they will reassess and refine to come out stronger. "We are really focusing on maintaining a high level of volleyball while staying healthy," said Reilly. "We have been pushing ourselves these past few weeks in practice to get stronger and figure out how to play when we are tired or under pressure."

Briger said, "The team will continue to focus on our controllables, growth mindset and the ability to execute what we are working on in practice."

Cornelissen said, "Going forward, we will focus on being as best prepared as possible for upcoming matches by giving our maximum effort in practice and the weight room because it is the last few weeks in which we can prepare ourselves for the MPSF tournament."

Men's volleyball caps off two meetings against No. 1 ranked Grand Canyon tonight in the CU Center at 7 p.m. Then the Golden Eagles will fly east to Utah to face Brigham Young University on March 29 and 30. Keeping an eye on the MPSF tournament in April, the Green and Gold will work to take down these teams and continue training to prepare for the conference tournament.



PICTURED ABOVE: Galoppo jump serving
Photo courtesy of: Crash Kamon