



# BEMIDJI

STATE UNIVERSITY

*A magazine for alumni and friends*  
**SPRING/SUMMER 2017**



## **NATIVE VISION**

*Serving American Indians a rising priority*



# PRESIDENT FAITH C. HENSRUD

**W**hen this magazine reaches you, I will have completed my first year as president of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College. The months have flown by and yet been rich with experience. I am grateful for your support and your friendship, both personally and on behalf of everyone at BSU. I am in awe of our outstanding students, and the outstanding alumni they become, and so impressed by the caring faculty and staff who create a truly transformative environment for learning.

This twice-yearly BSU magazine is like a ladle of water scooped from a stream. The events and accomplishments change from one issue to the next, but what is most striking is the steady flow of achievement, pride and momentum toward an even better future. We have no shortage of successful students to highlight, including the hundreds who participated in this spring's Student Achievement Conference. They benefit from such superb professors as Dr. Mark Wallert in biology and Dr. Dwight Jilek in music, both featured in this issue. We also have an abundance of impressive alums whose lives were shaped by their experiences at Bemidji State. Among them are Fred Baker, Stella Nelson and several others profiled here. Likewise, our ongoing efforts to serve American Indian students and tribal communities – highlighted in the cover story – illustrate our continual determination to do more and do it better.

This theme of constancy in the midst of change is fitting as we prepare to celebrate the university's centennial in 2018-19. We are just getting started with preparations for this historic event and are eager to learn how Bemidji State helped you become who you are. I consider myself extremely fortunate to join you as a member of this wonderful community, and I look forward to sharing many more milestones in the years ahead.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Faith C. Hensrud".

Dr. Faith Hensrud

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**4-9 AMERICAN INDIAN OUTREACH** is a growing priority at Bemidji State, not only to recruit native students, but also to build partnerships with tribal colleges and add Indian-related emphases within academic programs.

**10-11 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT CONFERENCE** participation was up nearly 25 percent, providing a chance to present to a live audience.

**12-13 CANCER RESEARCH** is just one objective of a student team led by Dr. Mark Wallert, who says the laboratory experience is especially valuable.

**30-31 FRED BAKER '61** made his way to BSU almost by accident but treasures the opportunities he found and created during his years on campus.

**32-33 STELLA NELSON '86** was older than most when she earned her B.S. in nursing, but she has since been on the cutting edge of care.



NATIVE VISION



EAGER TO GIVE BACK



SOLVING PROBLEMS

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# BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY

A member of Minnesota State

**BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY** Magazine is produced by the Office of Communications and Marketing and the BSU Alumni & Foundation. It is published twice per year and distributed free to BSU alumni and friends. Direct comments to [sfaust@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:sfaust@bemidjistate.edu) or (888) 234-7794.



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**COVER PHOTO:** American Indian students Christian Taylor-Johnson, left, Naomi Johnson and Sterling Knox are pictured in front of the American Indian Resource Center on June 1.

**VOLUME 34, NO. 1  
SPRING/SUMMER 2017**

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# NATIVE VISION

## *BSU heightens outreach to American Indians*

By Bethany Wesley

**A**mid a surging American Indian political movement, Bemidji State University made history in 1969 when it began the nation's first collegiate Ojibwe language program and matched the University of Minnesota by establishing an Indian studies major.

This May, the university set a new precedent: simultaneous dual-enrollment agreements with four tribal colleges in northern Minnesota. The pacts will establish direct pathways for native

students to move from the two-year schools into a four-year degree.

Strengthening BSU as a magnet for American Indian students, language, culture and pride is evolving from an institutional emphasis into a foundational pillar of the university's mission.

A surge of activity began two years ago with the hiring of Bill Blackwell Jr. as executive director of the university's American Indian Resource Center. That momentum accelerated after Dr. Faith Hensrud became BSU's 11th president last July.

"We're right in the middle of the three largest reservations in Minnesota," said Blackwell, who previously worked in development and marketing at Leech Lake Tribal College in Cass Lake. "We have access to a lot of things that many schools don't. We have a history that most schools don't."

Blackwell's relentless drive to innovatively recruit, encourage and graduate Indian students – and his network of relationships across the region – is strongly supported by Hensrud, who had extensive experience with native education in her previous work at the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

Together, and in alliance with Indian and non-Indian faculty, staff and community partners, they have set out to enroll more native students and serve them better, while also building a bridge to tribal colleges and their corresponding tribal nations and members.

One ambitious objective is to increase American Indian enrollment from a current level of about 4 percent to 10 percent in coming years. Beltrami County's native population is 21 percent, compared with just 1 percent statewide.



**President Faith Hensrud, center, on May 12 signs dual-enrollment agreements with presidents of four tribal colleges, from left, Tracy Clark of White Earth Tribal and Community College, Dan King of Red Lake Nation College, Dr. Patricia Broker of Leech Lake Tribal College and Larry Anderson of Fond Du Lac Tribal and Community College.**



**2017 graduate Madeline Treuer, honored as BSU's 2017 Outstanding Indian Student of the Year, leads an Ojibwe Language Table session on April 26 in the American Indian Resource Center.**

"You can never rest on your past successes," Hensrud said. "We've done some really great things, but now we have to start thinking about – as we do with all of our student populations – how do we begin to improve our student retention and graduation rates."

Blackwell has focused on transforming the American Indian Resource Center (AIRC) into a more active and nurturing hub for native students, and he has been a vocal champion for additional scholarships and other funding to further their success.

"My hands are up to Bill Blackwell because he actually lives in his job minute by minute," said Dr. Vivian Delgado, interim assistant dean for BSU's College of Arts & Sciences and an assistant professor of languages and ethnic studies, teaching Ojibwe. "He's not just a name and an office. He's interacting with students and funders, faculty and staff, and recruitment."

Because of its strategic location, Bemidji State has long been a leader in elevating American Indian studies and seeking to serve Indian students.

To date, BSU has awarded degrees to more than 1,000 American Indian graduates. In

recent years, half of the chairmen and chairwomen leading American Indian nations throughout Minnesota were BSU alumni.

Blackwell also noted that the university's Council of Indian Students last fall presented its 44th annual powwow, meaning the inaugural event was in 1972.

"The (American Indian) Religious Freedom Act came out in 1973, which made it OK for ceremonies to be done and conducted without being arrested," he said, "and so, to think that in 1972, BSU was putting on its first powwow."

"The university was very progressive with Indian people, very progressive in the way they wanted the university to go. Part of my message to President Hensrud, and she has been very receptive, is that we can be cutting edge again. We can be the college that people look for as American Indian students and say, 'I want to go there.'"

BSU's connection to American Indians is increasingly recognized as an essential part of its identity and has emerged as a priority in work now underway on a new university strategic plan beginning in 2018.

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## Blackwell finds satisfaction in support for student success

**W**hen Bill Blackwell, Jr. became executive director of Bemidji State's American Indian Resource Center in July 2015, he was back where he'd earned a bachelor's degree just three years before.

Blackwell previously had been managing private and public fundraising, grant writing and marketing at Leech Lake Tribal College since 2012.

A member of the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, he enrolled at BSU in 2011 to complete an education interrupted by a career in retail management.

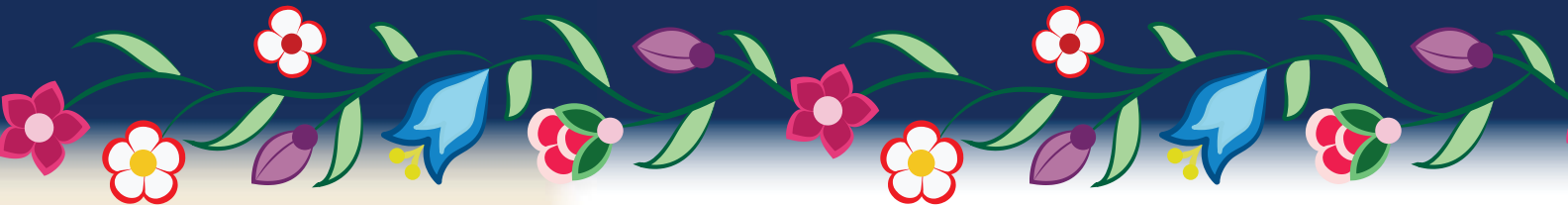
"I used to frequently ask myself, 'What have I done today?'" Blackwell said. "I meant that in the sense of, 'What have I done for my community, for my people?' And the answer was always, 'Nothing.' So one day, I locked up the store and said, 'This is enough.'"

He went on to receive his master's degree in tribal administration and governance from the University of Minnesota-Duluth and is working toward a doctorate.

Blackwell's many initiatives at BSU include forming a group for students with children and organizing a gourmet dinner that featured "Sioux Chef" Sean Sherman. The Feb. 10 event raised \$5,500 to help native students overcome small financial hurdles.

President Faith Hensrud said the benefit illustrates Blackwell's enthusiastic approach to supporting Indian students.

"It was a fun event that brought in community members who could really experience the indigenous foods that were prepared and get them thinking, 'How do we support the American Indian population, the students who are here?'" Hensrud said.



# STUDENT VOICES

These native students at BSU shared observations about their experiences and goals and why they were drawn to Bemidji State.



*"The Council of Indian Students was asked to do a lot this year, but I think it's really cool that people come to us for things like the Blue Ox Marathon or PBS fundraising. I'm glad people think of us."*

— **NAOMI JOHNSON** of Cass Lake, majoring in community health, 2016-17 president of the Council of Indian Students and recipient of the 2017 Roger Aitken Leadership Award for native students at BSU

*"I've lived all over the country. I feel at home when I'm around my people and when there is a cultural competency."*



— **STERLING KNOX** of Minneapolis, majoring in humanities, with a philosophy emphasis, and — like Naomi Johnson — a participant in the McNair Scholars Program that encourages diverse students to pursue post-graduate study.



*"I'm completely and utterly interested in and passionate about politics and creating social change, and showing that it's OK, diversity is OK, different backgrounds are OK, everybody's OK."*

— **CHRISTIAN TAYLOR-JOHNSON** of Cass Lake, majoring in political science and pre-law, who was among students who in September joined the Dakota Access Pipeline protest at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in North Dakota.

# NATIVE VISION

"The piece that gets missed by a lot of people is that Bemidji is treaty land," Blackwell said. "Over the years, it's morphed into being owned by non-Indians, but this was, at one point in time, a very vibrant Ojibwe village. That's the basis of who we are."

He said Hensrud understands the bigger picture — that it isn't simply about recruiting more American Indian students. It comes down to how Bemidji State understands and positions itself.

"It really is a basis of what the university says to our students," Blackwell said. "That comes in having more staff who are American Indian, that comes in more initiatives, that comes in having a president — and she has done an amazing job at this — who can really hear what we're saying."

Talk has been followed by action, both symbolic and otherwise.

During her first weeks on the job, Hensrud hosted the presidents of the region's four tribal colleges at a meeting on campus, gifting them with wild rice, sage and tobacco grown at BSU. By fall, she had made on-campus visits to each of the colleges, as well.

Hensrud included a native drum and singing group in her October inauguration and, for the first time ever, in BSU's commencement ceremony. She also established an American Indian Advisory Board composed of community and regional representatives and followed Delgado's suggestion to form an on-campus Indigenous Advisory Council.

"A lot of native people on campus have never worked together because we've been siloed out," Delgado said. "This is a good place to bring everybody together."

Hensrud said the input from both groups is important in determining how BSU can best achieve its goals for Indian enrollment and outreach with sensitivity for the distinct needs and concerns of native nations and people.

The advisory groups are "designed to make us think of ways to work more collaboratively with our tribal communities," she said, "as well as to think of ways that we can do a better job of recruiting and retaining our American Indian students."

Blackwell said Bemidji State is seeking to be a respectful advocate for native

**President Faith Hensrud welcomes participants to BSU's 44th annual powwow on Nov. 19 in the John Glas Fieldhouse.**





# MILESTONES

Some of the major milestones in the development of American Indian studies and student services at Bemidji State University:



**Dr. Vivian Delgado**

*“We’re using our knowledge of our own nationhood to come together and make education more doable for native people.”*

— **Dr. Vivian Delgado, interim assistant dean, College of Arts and Sciences**

interests. One of his innovations has been the establishment of Tribal College Preview Days – inviting tribal college students to spend a full day at BSU and introducing them to its various services and departments.

“We’re not where we need to be yet – there are a lot of tribal colleges we need to reach out to – but we’ll get there,” he said. “I’m a big proponent of, you strengthen your inner circle first and then we’ll branch out.”

The university has begun adding Indian-related emphases to its majors, including tribal justice with criminal justice and indigenous nations with marketing.

This spring, Bemidji State began a project to deliver courses directly to American Indian students outside of Bemidji. Dr. Elizabeth Hagensen, associate professor of criminal justice, taught a freshman-level Criminal Justice and Society course to students at BSU and Red Lake Nation College simultaneously.

Utilizing new teleconferencing technology to link the classrooms together, Hagensen taught one day a week in Bemidji and the other day in Red Lake while the other class would observe and take part through interactive television.

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**1960s** — Ongoing discussions occur about the potential for an academic program that would better serve the region’s American Indian population.

**1969** — The nation's first collegiate Ojibwe language program and an Indian Studies degree are established.

**1970** — The Indian Studies Center, also known as Anishinabe Family Center, opens in a former residence near campus as a gathering place for students and home to programs such as the Indian Community Action Project, serving tribes in four states.



**Students gather at the Anishinabe Family Center in 1988.**

**1970** — American Indian students form Amerind Club, later renamed the Council of Indian Students. They organize BSU’s first American Indian Education and Awareness Week, featuring Lehman Brightman, director of Indian Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, who took part in the 19-month Indian takeover of Alcatraz island that began in November 1969.

**1972** — The Council of Indian Students holds its first powwow.

**1979** — The Oshkaabewis, reconfigured in 1990 as the Oshkaabewis Native Journal, begins publication as the only academic journal of the Ojibwe language.



**American Indian Resource Center ribbon cutting in October 2003.**

**2003** — The American Indian Resource Center, a replacement for the aging Indian Studies Center, opens with a celebration that includes a powwow, open house and ribbon cutting.

**2015** — The Indian Studies program is renamed Indigenous Studies, offering not only a major but also a minor and emphasis.

**May 2017** — BSU President Faith Hensrud and presidents of four Minnesota tribal colleges sign agreements to offer dual college-university enrollment to qualifying students.



**The Ogidaaki Singers perform at Commencement on May 5.**



# NATIVE VISION

## PAGES 30-31

Fred Baker '61, an American Indian, had a career in public service and is now giving back to BSU.

The experience also deepened her perspective as a scholar. Hagensen frequently cites historical examples of major criminal justice events as she teaches, and she discovered that Red Lake students would cite different events with which she was unfamiliar.

"It was good for the Red Lake students to be able to explain that back to us, so we got to learn a little bit about a different vantage point for the same piece of time," she said.

The course served as a pilot for future plans for a six-campus consortium called "Azhoogan," which means "the Bridge." The collaboration includes Northwest Technical College in Bemidji and also encompasses BSU's dual-enrollment agreements with the four tribal colleges. The consortium emerged as part of a teleconferencing network funded by a \$500,000 grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture's Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program.

While further rollout of the long-distance communication technology will make it easier for tribal college students to take BSU courses on their own campuses, Hagensen said it also should make them more familiar with and comfortable at Bemidji State.

"The interactive video isn't just about trying to deliver the distance-education piece, but it's actually trying to build that relationship and develop that pathway," she said.

There are endless possibilities for collaboration. Blackwell has suggested the possibility of delivering the entirety of academic years three and four to tribal colleges through the Azhoogan network, and Hagensen is excited about the potential for BSU students to hear from tribal educators and leaders.

"Using the tools to collaborate, that's ultimately what the grant was first envisioned to do," said

Lynn Johnson, the university's director of extended learning.

Delgado said the many mutual benefits of increasing tribal engagement are key.

"It actually takes (education) to the next level, and that's really what it should be, where everybody is allowed to contribute intellectually," she said. "That is the future of indigenous studies and indigenous people."

Learning about another culture will also benefit BSU students who do not have American Indian ancestry, said Dr. Anton Treuer, professor of Ojibwe. He pointed out that almost all Bemidji State graduates will work with Indian people throughout the course of their careers.



Dr. Elizbeth Hagensen, associate professor of criminal justice, on Jan. 19 uses teleconferencing technology to simultaneously teach students at BSU while in a classroom at Red Lake Nation College.





Leah Yellowbird works Nov. 9 to complete a mural in the entryway to the American Indian Resource Center.

"If they're going to be working in education, criminal justice, in environmental studies, knowing something about native people will be vital to help them navigate the world they are actually going to land in," Treuer said. "So we should be scaling up our native stuff, not just as a niche service to an underrepresented group, but to the benefit of anybody who comes here."

While preparation continues for expanding Bemidji State's partnerships with tribal colleges, this fall Treuer will use the interactive video at the AIRC to teach elementary Ojibwe to students at Central Lakes College in Brainerd.

"I think the idea of taking what is distinctive and innovative about Bemidji State – because there are very few other institutions who are doing what we do – and making it available to other places will just accelerate our footprint throughout the system and the region," he said.

Ultimately, Delgado said, BSU's objective is to further American Indian education by broadly leveraging the university and its resources to benefit native communities.

"We're using our knowledge of our own nationhood to come together and make education more doable for native people," she said. "We don't see progress for tribes without education. They go hand in hand."



### Aitken's passion for education persists despite his passing

When Roger Aitken of Walker died in February at age 74, the voice of one of the region's most ardent advocates of American Indian education was quiet, but hardly silenced.

Those whose lives he touched say they carry his passion with them.

Aitken, who graduated from Bemidji State in 1973 with a double major in business management and sociology, served 20 years as a member of the BSU Alumni Board of Directors and the BSU Foundation board and participated in two presidential searches. He was named an Outstanding Alumni in 2003.

Dr. Anton Treuer, professor of Ojibwe, remembers how Aitken challenged administrators to construct the American Indian Resource Center, which opened in 2003.

"He was a great, charismatic, charming man who could run a meeting very efficiently and had a gift of pulling people together," Treuer said. "I think his vision and ability to convince people of that vision was pretty impactful."

This spring, in recognition of Aitken's commitment and service, BSU renamed its annual American Indian student leadership award in his honor.

Aitken, who served in the Army during the Vietnam War, made an impact beyond Bemidji. He worked for the Indian Education Section of the Minnesota Department of Education; played a key role in development of Leech Lake Tribal College; and served as chairman of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, superintendent of the Bureau of Indian Affairs-Minnesota Agency and the first executive director of the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes.

### TO GET INVOLVED

The American Indian Resource Center is a resource for anyone interested in outreach to American Indian students, engagement with tribal nations and financial support for native students and programs. Contact Executive Director Executive Director Bill Blackwell, Jr., 218-755-2032 or wblackwell@bemidjistate.edu.



Ryan Welle '03 of First National Bank Bemidji and his wife, Bryn, participated in a Feb. 10 benefit dinner at the AIRC.



Brooke Tader presents her research on April 5 in Hagg-Sauer Hall.

# SHOWCASE FOR ACHIEVEMENT

*Student conference is bigger than ever*

By Andy Bartlett

**H**undreds of students representing the breadth of graduate and undergraduate disciplines at Bemidji State University shared their work during the 18th Annual Student Achievement Conference on April 5.

The conference introduced several new elements and succeeded in its goal of increasing participation, which was up by nearly 25 percent over last year.

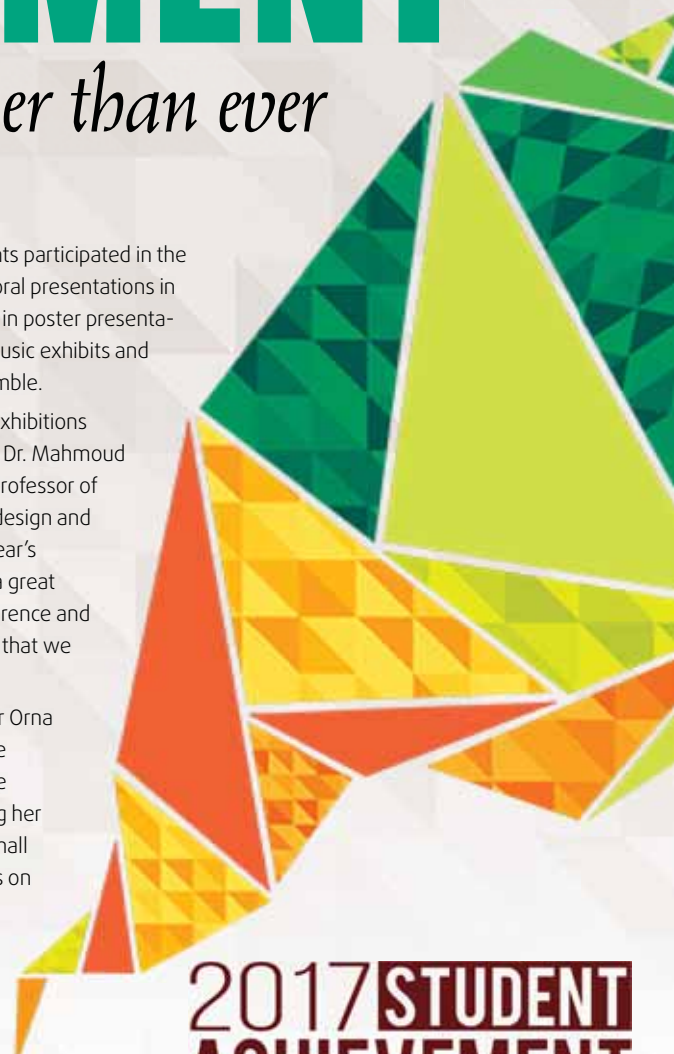
One side of Memorial Hall, home for the conference's poster presentations, featured exhibitions from art and music students, including a performance from five members of the BSU Jazz Band. This year's conference also debuted an "elevator speech" competition in which students had one minute to recap their presentations. The top three finishers won BSU Bookstore gift cards.

Presentations included a Rubik's Cube-solving robot, outreach by the President's Student Commission to encourage college aspirations among youngsters at the Bemidji Boys & Girls Club, a plan for a three-semester college jazz curriculum and an examination of how the Dawes Act of 1887 affected life on American Indian reservations in the early 20th century.

A total of, 281 students participated in the conference – 144 in oral presentations in Hagg-Sauer Hall, 151 in poster presentations, 23 in art and music exhibits and five in the jazz ensemble.

"The art and music exhibitions were amazing," said Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh, associate professor of technology, art and design and coordinator of this year's conference. "It was a great addition to the conference and reflected the talents that we have here at BSU."

Motivational speaker Orna Drawas delivered the conference's keynote address, encouraging her audience to make small changes in their lives on the path to unleashing their inner rock star.



**2017 STUDENT  
ACHIEVEMENT  
CONFERENCE**



## MELANIE CHILDREY — "Exercising Tribal Sovereignty through Lacrosse"

Lacrosse enthusiast Melanie Childrey, a 2017 graduate in indigenous native nations from Minneapolis, shared the challenges faced by American Indians who wish to travel to lacrosse tournaments outside the United States.

Childrey focused on the Haudenosaunee — also known as Iroquois — and the passports issued by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy for international travel. Many North American ports of call reject the passports as invalid or "fantasy" passports,

which creates difficulties when the confederacy's residents attempt to travel across the U.S./Canadian border to participate in tournaments.

"There isn't an understanding of the difference between tribal identification cards and passports issued to Haudenosaunee people," she said.

Childrey said she appreciated the opportunity to share a topic she's passionate about and discuss little-known tribal sovereignty issues related to lacrosse. She also sought to

highlight the game's roots in native culture.

"I wanted to bring lacrosse to a different type of audience and bring the game back to its Haudenosaunee roots," she said. "Too many people only know the misinterpreted version of lacrosse found in rich white communities."



## KYLE PRIEST — "Churchill's Argument Against Democracy"

Winston Churchill famously said, "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter."

Kyle Priest, a 2017 graduate in political science from Columbus, Ohio, used Churchill's statement to explore relationships between political knowledge and media consumption.

"The 2016 election brought out a lot of 'fake news' sites and allegations that certain channels were not truthful," Priest said. "I

decided to focus on those who are not informed and why they are not informed."

His research explored the impact of media consumption on whether people were uninformed about current events, meaning they did not know about current events, or misinformed, meaning they thought they knew but had incorrect information.

Despite having two years of experience doing on-air commentary for Beaver hockey and basketball games, he said presenting at

the conference provided a unique challenge.

"It helped me practice talking in front of people and giving a presentation that has a time limit," Priest said. "I was comfortable talking to a mic, but giving a presentation to a real audience is a different beast."



## BROOKE TADER — "The C-terminal Tail of TCL Localizes the GTPase to the Plasma Membrane of HeLa Cells"

Brooke Tader, a 2017 graduate in biology and chemistry, had a full house when she gave her Student Achievement Conference presentation in Hagg-Sauer Hall.

"I had never done that in front of a large audience," she said. "It was a great experience."

Tader shared research she did with Dr. Michael Hamann, professor of biology, on a

protein called TCL that has been found to be related to size and growth of cancerous tumors.

She is preparing to begin work on her master's degree in biology and took part in the BSU conference to gain experience in making a scholarly presentation.

"Student Achievement Day was good preparation for my honor's thesis defense,

which was the following week, and good preparation for presenting my research at the national Experimental Biology conference in Chicago," Tader said.



## WILL VARELA — "Redd Habitat Selection for Brook Trout in the Necktie River"

Will Varela, who plans to graduate in December with a degree in aquatic biology, used previous experience with a failed research topic to guide his presentation on brook trout habitats.

Originally, Varela's senior capstone research project involved bluegill, a species of sunfish, but that topic proved too broad and unapproachable.

"When asking a research question, there are a lot of logistics to be worked out," he said.

"Some of these logistics can be feasible, and some cannot. So having a narrow topic is important and determines how successfully one can complete research — and this took me a couple of months to figure out."

Varela presented research he completed last fall at brook trout spawning locations in the Necktie River, near Grace and Midge lakes southeast of Bemidji. He identified spawning areas on the river and analyzed why trout selected those locations.

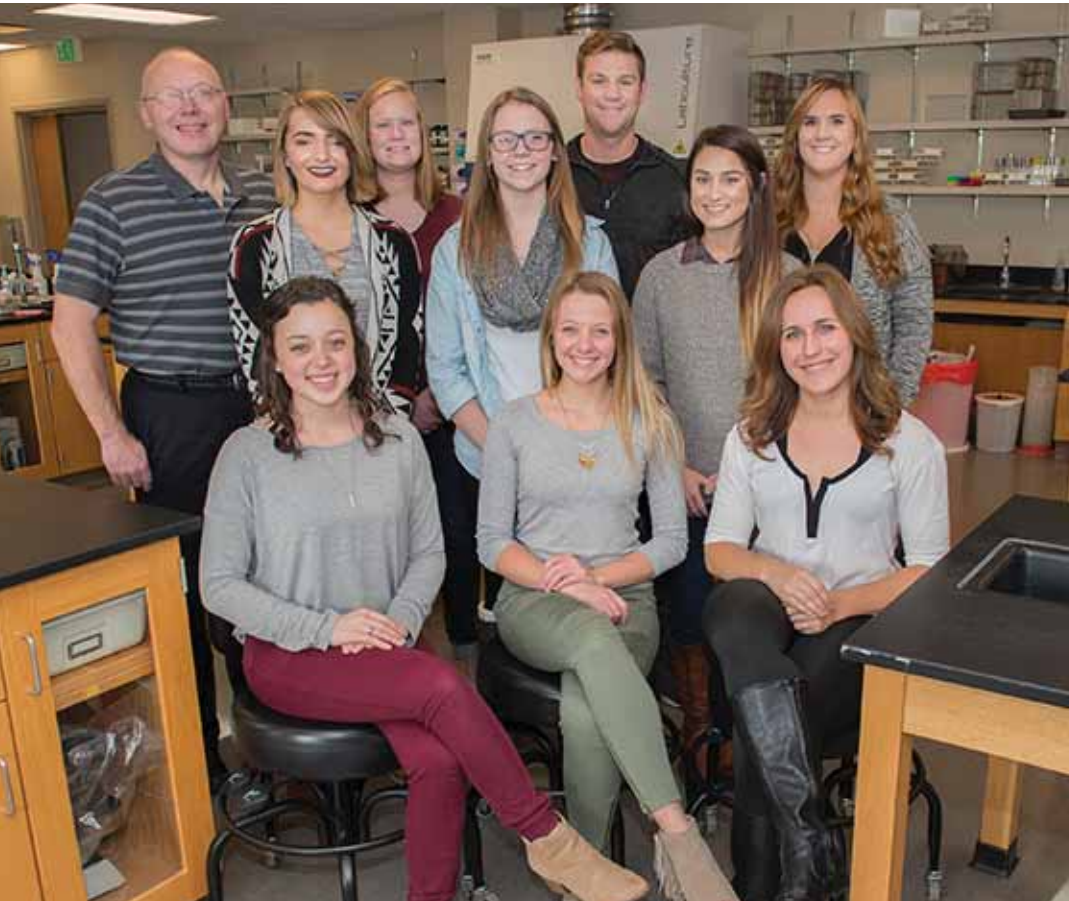
Sharing his findings with an audience increased both his confidence and his ability to communicate clearly, Varela said.

"You're not only disseminating your findings," he said, "but also putting your findings into words the general public can understand without confusing them."



# BREAKTHROUGH LEARNING

*Cancer team delivers experience with a purpose*



Professor Mark Wallert joins student members of his Cancer Research Team in a Sattgast Hall lab last October.

*"You can tell they're proud of the work they've done, and they've worked incredibly hard — harder than I have any right to ask. But they're proud of what they've accomplished, and that's what we want."*

**— DR. MARK WALLERT, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY**

**By Andy Bartlett**

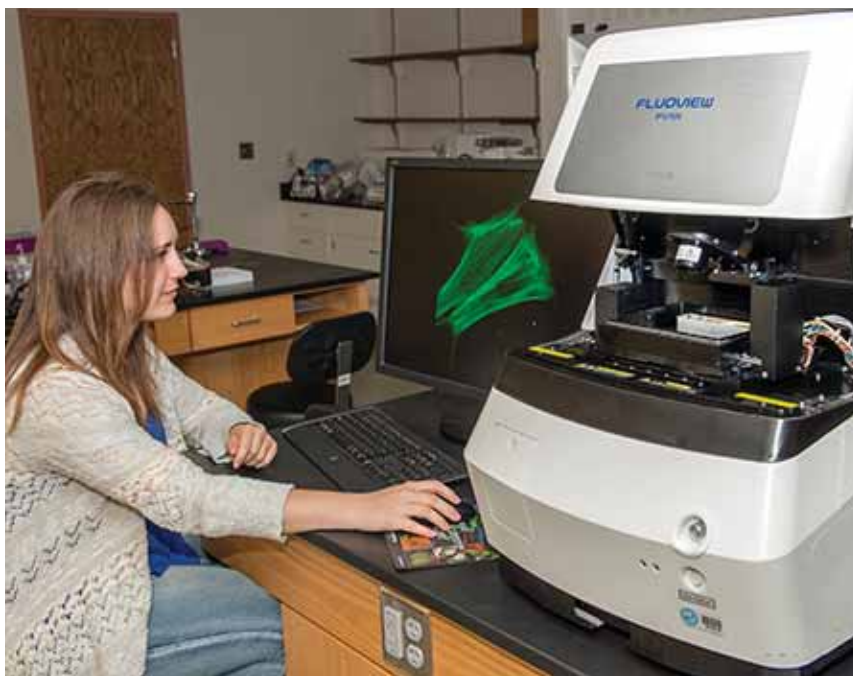
In a far corner of Sattgast Hall, Bemidji State University students volunteer to help Dr. Mark Wallert, associate professor of biology, hunt down a cure for cancer.

The Wallert Cancer Research Team — six undergraduates, two graduate students and a senior at Bemidji High School — studies the behavior of a protein called NHE1 that is found in the edges of both healthy cells and tumor cells. They are exploring its role in the growth and movement of cancer cells in the body.

"We always say you don't die from cancer; you die when that cancer moves throughout the body and invades essential organs that you need to survive," said Taylor Manzella, a junior biology and pre-medicine major from Sartell who has finished her second year on the cancer team.

Clarice Wallert, a cousin of the professor, has finished her sixth year as a member of the Wallert Cancer Research Team — two as a grad student in Bemidji and four as an undergraduate at Minnesota State University-Moorhead. She described NHE1's behavior in cancer cells as a power switch that, when active, helps tumors survive and move through the body.

"NHE1 is found in all of your cells but is found more so in cancer," said Wallert, who will return for a seventh year before completing her master's degree at BSU in 2018. "It basically pumps protons out of the cell, signaling for growth and migration. It's turned on more in cancer, and it helps cells survive in a tumor environment. So we look at its activity and how it affects cancer."



**Student Clarice Wallert demonstrates use of a new \$80,000 confocal microscope in the cancer team's lab.**

By isolating factors that activate or deactivate this protein, Wallert's team may identify ways to slow or halt the growth or movement of cancer tumors. Students are tackling four parallel projects related to NHE1: exploring how two different cellular processes may work to activate or deactivate the protein and observing the protein's behavior in both non-small cell lung cancer and ovarian cancer.

"We try to look at as many on-and-off functions as we can find in this protein, and we give everybody their little piece to research," he said. "They get to be kings and queens, but it's a really small kingdom."

The work has been supported by a pair of grants won by the Department of Biology in recent months – a \$40,000 grant from the George W. Neilson Foundation matched by the Minnesota State system office's leveraged equipment fund and a \$100,000 grant from Regenerative Medicine Minnesota. The Neilson Foundation grant helped the team purchase a confocal microscope that allows observation of individual proteins as they move in a cell wall, and the RMM grant will fund another microscope and equip a new cell culture lab.

Wallert brought his research team to Bemidji State in 2015 after spending 25 years at Minnesota State University, Moorhead. He spent 17 of those years running the Provost/Wallert Research Lab with Dr. Joseph Provost, a Bemidji State alum with degrees in chemistry and biology who is now a chemistry and biochemistry professor at the University of San Diego.

The team's overall purpose is to give undergraduate students hands-on experience with the kind of hard research that is increasingly desired by both employers and graduate programs. As Bemidji State made plans to expand its biomedical science offerings to complement a strong wildlife biology program, the university convinced Wallert to bring his lab to Bemidji.

In two short years, Wallert's lab has given students unprecedented opportunities for hands-on experience with the day-to-day work of planning and conducting significant scientific research.

"When I joined this team I already loved biology," said Emily Hallberg, a sophomore from Solway. "Actually conducting research has increased my love of science. With this experience and learning along the way, I know I want to go further into it. It opens a lot of doors for wherever I go in the future."

Over his 27-year career, Wallert's teams have included more than 170 undergraduate students, nearly two dozen high school students and three high school teachers. He interviews interested students before inviting them to participate.

While the examination of NHE1 could lead to legitimate breakthroughs against cancer, Wallert considers the students who come through his lab to be his biggest contribution.

"For me, it's seeing the response from them," he said. "You can tell they're proud of the work they've done, and they've worked incredibly hard – harder than I have any right to ask. But they're proud of what they've accomplished, and that's what we want. They need this to get to where they want to be in life, to be as successful as they want to be."

"We picked them for a reason, and they work this hard for a reason. They're going to go change the world."



**Taylor Manzella**

*"We always say you don't die from cancer, you die when that cancer moves throughout the body and invades essential organs that you need to survive."*

**– TAYLOR MANZELLA**



**Dr. George Anthony "Tony" Peffer**

## Peffer, of Castleton University, named new VP and provost

Dr. George Anthony "Tony" Peffer has been named provost and vice president for academic and student affairs at Bemidji State University and will begin in July.

Peffer joins BSU from Castleton University, where he has served in a variety of progressively responsible roles since 2007, starting as associate academic dean. He later was dean of undergraduate studies and chief academic officer before assuming his current role in 2016. Previous to his work at Castleton, Peffer held a variety of teaching and administrative positions at Ohio University Eastern, Lakeland College, Prestonburg (Ky.) Community College and Cleveland State University.

"Dr. Peffer is an experienced leader who values relationships," President Faith Hensrud said. "He has extensive program planning and accreditation experience, he values collaboration and has experience recruiting international students and faculty."

Peffer has a bachelor of arts in history from Morehead (Ky.) State University; a master of divinity from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.; a master of arts in history from San Francisco State University and a doctor of arts in history from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pa.

He succeeds Dr. Michael Anderson, who has served as interim provost and vice president for academic and student affairs since July 2016.

## Keillor makes BSU appearance on his "Gratitude Tour" of Minnesota

Former "Prairie Home Companion" host Garrison Keillor brought his unique brand of humor to Bemidji State on April 24, one of five stops on "The Gratitude Tour" of Minnesota.

Keillor performed solo for 2 1/2 hours before a crowd of 500 in the Beaux Arts Ballroom, telling stories, reciting poetry and including his audience in a standing sing-along of spirituals, hymns, carols and folk songs.

The award-winning host worked at Minnesota Public Radio from 1969 until he retired in 2016, just days shy of his 42nd anniversary with "A Prairie Home Companion."



**The Nice Ride bike-sharing program is one of many sustainability initiatives at BSU.**

## Years of sustainability efforts win Green Ribbon award from U.S.

Bemidji State in May became one of nine colleges and universities in the nation honored with a 2017 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability award.

BSU was among 63 total honorees recognized for innovative efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, improve health and wellness and ensure effective sustainability education.

With its unique lakeside location in Minnesota's north woods, Bemidji State University has long been a champion of environmental stewardship, which is enshrined as one of its fundamental values.

"To be able to say we are one of top three campuses in Minnesota when it comes to sustainability is exciting," said Erika Bailey-Johnson, BSU sustainability coordinator. "It speaks loudly to our history and to the decades of work we have done in this area. And it also speaks loudly to our future and who we are as an institution."

**Garrison Keillor gives a solo performance in Beaux Arts Ballroom on April 24.**



## Supreme Court Justice Anne McKeig honored as Distinguished Minnesotan



**2017 Distinguished Minnesotan Justice Anne McKeig addresses graduates at Commencement on May 5.**

Justice Anne K. McKeig, the first American Indian to serve on the Minnesota Supreme Court, spoke to graduates at Bemidji State's 98th Commencement ceremony on May 5 in the Sanford Center.

McKeig, a member of the White Earth nation, was appointed to the Minnesota Supreme Court by Gov. Mark Dayton on Sept. 1, 2016. Dayton called her up from Minnesota's Fourth Judicial Branch, where she was appointed to serve by Gov. Tim Pawlenty in March 2008.

First presented by BSU in 1981, the Distinguished

Minnesotan award acknowledges the contributions of current or former residents of the state who have performed exemplary service to the people of Minnesota or the United States.

In her address to graduates, McKeig told graduates she understood that they may be nervous about their futures and challenged them to set big goals.

"Dream big and do set goals for yourselves," she said. "Remember that 'no' means 'not yet' — it doesn't mean 'never.' If you want your life to be a magnificent story, realize that you are the author — and every day, you have an opportunity to write a new page."

## Students form mental health board after seeing need for more services

The need for increased access to mental health peer support and awareness on campus has brought a group of 11 Bemidji State students together to form a new Student Mental Health Advisory Board.

The group came together following the university's annual panel discussion on mental health awareness, which has served an important role in helping to reduce the social stigma surrounding mental health.

The advisory board meets biweekly to organize services and events to promote mental health awareness and will plan and produce the 2017 Mental Health Panel this fall.

## BSU will co-host national collegiate bass fishing tournament Aug. 10-12

Bemidji State and Visit Bemidji, the region's destination marketing organization, will cohost the national championship tournament for the 2017 Carhart Bassmaster College Series on Aug. 10-12.

Top collegiate fishing teams, including a pair of BSU students, will compete for the national title on Lake Bemidji, the Mississippi River and connected lakes.

"Bemidji State University is proud to join with regional and industry partners as host of this high-caliber competition," said Mike Mulry, director

of engagement marketing for the BSU Alumni & Foundation. "We will seize the opportunity to showcase our lakeside campus as an ideal destination for competitive fishermen and all students who love the outdoors."

To qualify for the national championship, college anglers compete in one of five regionals, and in a Wild Card qualifier for a second chance to reach the championship.

Competing for BSU will be Wadena natives Thor Swanson, a senior business major, and his brother, Mitch Swanson, a senior in criminal justice.

## Strategic planning effort aims for launch of new plan for January 2018

With leadership from President Faith Hensrud, Bemidji State's Strategic Planning Committee has identified five major goal areas for a campus-wide, multi-year strategic plan to be implemented beginning in January.

The goal areas are: environment and sustainability, American Indian initiatives, a student- and service-centered culture, identity and academic character, and diversity and campus climate. The committee assumes that the plan also will address enrollment and academic program development.

The goal areas emerged from seven listening sessions with regional stakeholders in February and March. Those sessions covered specific topics including education, trades and workforce development, natural resources, art and humanities, economic development and health care and social services. In addition, about 140 faculty, staff and students participated in two brainstorming sessions on April 6.

Strategic planning subcommittees will meet twice this summer to identify specific action steps and rough timelines to achieve the goals. Highlights of their work will be shared with the entire campus in August before the plan is completed in December.



**Interim Dean of Students Jesse Grant participates in a campus Town Hall on April 6 in Beaux Arts Ballroom to provide input for a new BSU strategic plan.**

## 24/7 computer lab and lounge opens on lower level of Decker

Information Technology Services on Feb. 16 celebrated the grand opening of "Beaver Lounge," a new 24-hour, seven-day student computer lab on the lower level of Decker Hall.

The lab, conveniently located near residence halls and student support services, features 23 fully equipped computer workstations, color printers and charging stations for mobile devices. It also includes glassed-in rooms that students can use for small-group meetings or study sessions, as well as lounge chairs for socializing. Food and beverages are allowed.

Renovation of the space, furniture and computer equipment was financed through the BSU Student Technology Fee.



**Mitch and Thor Swanson after qualifying for nationals in March at the Lake of the Ozarks Midwest Regional in Osage Beach, Mo.**

## Junior wins coveted internship in neuroscience lab at Mayo Clinic

Bemidji State junior Daniela Maltais is among just 120 U.S. undergraduates accepted this summer into a biomedical research program at the Mayo Clinic from among more than 1,400 applicants.

Maltais, a psychology major, is one of two students working under the direction of Dr. Susannah J. Tye, director of the translational neuroscience laboratory at Mayo's Depression Center in Rochester. Tye specializes in depression and bipolar disorder, and Maltais is assisting with her research into triggers for depression and resistance to commonly prescribed antidepressants.

The Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship at Mayo is the next step on a career path that Maltais started as a child in Bemidji. She lived with her Spanish-speaking great grandfather, a World War II veteran who has post-traumatic stress syndrome and experienced schizophrenic episodes late in life. At age 7, she began interpreting meetings between English-speaking psychiatrists and therapists and her mother and great grandfather. Maltais was born in Colombia and moved to Bemidji as an infant.



Daniela Maltais

## BSU recreation director recognized by Minnesota State system trustees

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees on April 19 presented Kierstin Hoven, director of campus recreation at Bemidji State, with its 2017 Professional Excellence in Service Award at a luncheon in St. Paul.

The board noted Hoven's exceptional record of accomplishment over more than 20 years at BSU, where she completed both undergraduate and graduate degrees and began her career as a student worker in the office she now directs.

In addition to her work managing the Gillett Wellness Center and all recreation programs, she serves as a Beaver Success Coach, is a First-Year Experience instructor and led development of BSU's "Best You @ BSU" wellness initiative.

In nominating Hoven for the statewide award, President Faith Hensrud called her a "true standout whose professional excellence is an inspiring example to all."



Kierstin Hoven

## Solar-powered fish house and ice lab fuel student learning

Students and employees dedicated Bemidji State's Fossil Fuel-Free Fish House during a Jan. 28 ceremony on a frozen Lake Bemidji. Again this coming winter, the house will be available for rent for \$15 a day through the BSU Outdoor Program Center.

The concept of a fish house powered entirely by renewable energy emerged in 2014 and grew into a partnership between BSU, Northwest Technical College and several community partners including the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) and Northland Tackle.

The house is based on a 6.5-foot-by-12-foot shell acquired from Parkers Prairie, Minn.-based Firebrand Fish Houses. RREAL installed a solar-powered furnace in the shell, which was then taken to Northwest Technical College, where students installed a 255-watt solar voltaic panel. Leech Lake Tribal College students repurposed pine boards from the OPC's former office into tongue-and-groove interior paneling.



Interim Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs Michael Anderson cuts the ribbon to dedicate the Fossil Fuel-Free Fish House.

Also this past winter, students from the Department of Biology used an ice-borne classroom and lab thanks to a partnership with BSU Athletics and the BSU Alumni & Foundation. A fish house that typically serves as the ticket booth during Beaver Football home games was adapted into a Hardwater Ice Lab, where biology students could conduct experiments through the ice.

## Frenzel to lead enrollment management

Michelle Frenzel in May was named executive director of enrollment management for Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College.

Frenzel, a 1998 BSU graduate, has been with Bemidji State and NTC in a variety of roles since 1999, most recently as interim dean of student support services and interim executive director of enrollment management.

In her new role, she leads the offices of admissions, records & registration, financial aid, the Advising Success Center, TRIO Student Support Services and Upward Bound, disability services and career services.

She also oversees the campus scholarship program in conjunction with the offices of admissions and financial aid.

A member of the president's cabinet and Executive Leadership Team, Frenzel chairs Enrollment Management Teams for both BSU and NTC and manages a Division of Enrollment Management budget of approximately \$4 million.



Michelle Frenzel





## Senior wins chance to design exhibit for German trade show

Hannah Sernett of Bemidji State won a competition to design a booth used by the Exhibit Designers and Producers Association at EuroShop 2017, held March 5-9 in Dusseldorf, Germany. The Shakopee native graduated in 2017 with a degree in art and design.

The contest included exhibit design students from both Bemidji State and its rival, the Fashion Institute of Technology, a graduate-level design program in New York City. The association provided a creative brief outlining expectations and specifications for the booth space and required pre- and post-show marketing materials.

This is the second time EDPA has sponsored a competition to design its booth for the triennial EuroShop exhibit, and BSU students have won both times. Danika Stelton, a 2014 graduate who works at MG Design in Chicago, won the first competition in 2013.

**This winning design earned Hannah Sernett '17 a trip to Dusseldorf, Germany, in March to help represent the Exhibit Designers and Producers Association at the EuroShop 17 trade show.**

## President Hensrud backs campaign to advance women in higher ed

President Faith Hensrud has signed onto the American Council on Education's "Moving the Needle: Advancing Women in Higher Education Leadership" campaign, which will pursue a goal of seeing women hold 50 percent of chief executive positions at institutions of higher education by 2030.

Hensrud joins more than 100 leaders who recognize a generational turnover in higher education leadership as a pivotal opportunity to advance women into chief executive positions at America's colleges and universities.

By signing the commitment, she has pledged that BSU and Northwest Technical College will nominate qualified women to fill senior leadership positions whenever possible, create an environment of opportunity and support for emerging women leaders to gain skills they need to advance their careers, and educate others on the benefits of gender-diversified leadership.

## Business and accountancy gain reaccreditation for high quality

Faculty and staff from Bemidji State's business administration, accountancy and computer information systems programs celebrated successful reaccreditation by the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education (IACBE) at a Feb. 13 reception in Memorial Hall.

The College of Business programs completed a rigorous self-evaluation; underwent a comprehensive, independent peer review; and demonstrated compliance with the IACBE's nine accreditation principles: outcomes assessment, strategic planning, curriculum, faculty, scholarly and professional activities, resources, internal and external relationships, international business education and educational innovation.

IACBE accreditation is valid for seven years but contingent upon the programs remaining in compliance with the assembly's principles and policies.

## Headwaters Film Festival marks fifth year showcasing student work

Wizardry and witchcraft filled the Bangsberg Fine Arts Complex for Bemidji State's "Harry Potter"-themed fifth annual Headwaters Film Festival on March 30-31.

The two-day festival featured work from the Colorado Environmental Film Festival, a Skype conversation with "The Walking Dead" star Keith Harris, and 15 films by student filmmakers from Minnesota. An international film competition included student submissions from Germany, Austria, Spain, Bulgaria, Senegal, Jordan, Singapore and Australia. A feature film from the Harry Potter series capped both days of the festival.

The Headwaters Film Festival is a completely student-run initiative that is planned, produced and operated by students in BSU's Department of Integrated Media. This year, more than 30 students took the course and produced the festival.

## BSU joins nationwide, student-led network to divert food to needy

Students in the BSU Sustainability Office are now part of the Food Recovery Network, the country's largest student-directed movement against hunger that aims to "change the norm from food waste to food recovery."



**Students Dan Vosberg, Camilla Proisie and Caitlin McClellan unload donated food for the Community Table, a soup kitchen in Bemidji, on March 24.**

The Food Recovery Network fights food waste and hunger by recovering unused and perishable food from participating campuses and communities and donating it to people in need.

In BSU's first recovery effort in early March, students saved 95 pounds of food that would have gone to waste but instead was given to Community Table, a volunteer-operated soup kitchen that is open four days a week in Bemidji's Mt. Zion and United Methodist churches.

## Students build modular city for use in criminal justice training

A customizable model city, built by students in the School of Technology, Art & Design, will help Bemidji State criminal justice students assess how first responders might manage emergency situations.

The city features color-coded shapes representing private residences, schools, office complexes and other types of buildings to help students visualize a neighborhood. Buildings magnetically attach to a metal base, allowing criminal justice faculty to reconfigure neighborhoods for different scenarios.

The model city, unveiled Dec. 15, was designed and built by Reid Mordhorst, a senior in engineering technology from Maple Grove, and Kyle Lempia, a senior in engineering technology and applied engineering from Bemidji.



**Reid Mordhorst, a 2016 graduate in engineering technology, designed and built this city model for use by criminal justice students.**

# BSU FACULTY ACHIEVEMENT



**Dr. Michael Anderson**, pictured presenting an Honors Council Lecture on the U.S. Constitution on March 7 in the American Indian Resource Center, will join the Department of Professional Education this fall as an associate professor and director of clinical programs. He has served as interim provost and vice president for academic and student affairs since July 2016.

College. In March, Ellison also directed "Hedda Helmer: Ibsenite Heroine," a 10-minute play by Joe Stollenwerk, for the Dramatists Lab for Mid-America Theatre Conference in Houston.

Four retiring BSU faculty members with a combined 91.5 years of service to the university were granted emeritus status in May: **Dr. Dwight Fultz**, professor emeritus of psychology, 28 years; **Dr. Glen Richgels**, professor emeritus of mathematics and computer science, 24 years; **Ms. Patrice Conley**, professor emerita of library and library services, 22.5 years; **Dr. Blanca Rivera**, professor emerita of languages and ethnic studies, 17 years.



**Dr. Mahmoud Al-Odeh**, associate professor of technology, art & design, has published "Emphasis-Related Capstone Class: The Use of Real-Life Experience to Enhance Workforce Readiness" in the British Journal of Education. He also published an article, "The Viability of Residential Grid-Connected Solar Photovol-

taic Systems In the State of Indiana," in the Journal of Business, Economics and Finance. Al-Odeh co-authored it with researchers from Indiana State University. The article recapped research that sought to measure the financial viability of installing and using a grid-connected residential solar energy system.



**Erika Bailey-Johnson**, sustainability coordinator, presented at the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy's annual Women's Breakfast on April 27. Bailey-Johnson was a panelist for "Be Your Own Environmental Hero: Fresh Strategies Without The Politics," which focused on how women can be agents

for positive social change outside the political process.



**Bill Blackwell, Jr.**, executive director of the American Indian Resource Center, was joined by Erika Bailey-Johnson and **Dr. John Gonzalez**, professor of psychology, for presentations at the Project Graduate "Helping Native Youth Find Success" conference for teachers and community leaders in Bemidji on March 24.



**Dr. Anna Carlson**, assistant sustainability coordinator, and Erika Bailey-Johnson on Feb. 13-17 attended a leadership retreat hosted by the Grand Rapids-based Blandin Foundation. The retreat is part of the foundation's eight-

day Blandin Community Leadership Program, which develops and trains local leaders to build healthy communities.



**Dr. Stephen Carlson**, professor of music, performed on the grand piano Feb. 16 at the University of Minnesota Crookston's Kiehle Auditorium. The concert, which included works by Beethoven, Chopin, Stravinsky

and Rachmaninoff, was sponsored by UMC Concerts and Lectures, Liberal Arts and Education Department and the Music/Theater Department.



**Dr. Season Ellison**, assistant professor of interdisciplinary studies, co-authored a book chapter, "Performative Texts and the Pedagogical Theatre: Alison Bechdel's Fun Home as Compositional Model," in an upcoming edited

collection, "Teaching Graphic Novels," edited by Alissa Burger. She co-authored the chapter with Dr. William Cordeiro from Northern Arizona University's Honors

**Dr. Andrew Hafs**,

associate professor of biology, published "Seasonal Changes in Condition of Appalachian Brook Trout," in the January issue of the North American Journal of Fisheries Management.



**Dr. Janice Haworth**, professor of music, traveled to China from March 3 to April 8 as a participant in the Overseas Teaching Program. She visited Huaihua University, Shaoyang University and Hunan University of Humanities, Science and

Technology. Her activities including delivering lectures, hosting academic forums on ethnic music in education, gathering folk music from neighboring communities and participating in rehearsals for an African djembe drum performance.

**Dr. Kelly La Venture**,

assistant professor of business, traveled to London Nov. 14-17 to present at the London International Conference on Education. She was accompanied by alumna **Lisa**



**Kittleson**, who presented "The Student Perspective: An Exploratory Study to Understand the Skills Gap in a Midwestern Community," recapping the results of a Marketing Assistance and Research

Solutions project to examine Bemidji's skills gap from the perspective of the city's employers. Two more of LaVenture's courses, Marketing Research and Marketing Management, have been certified

**Michael Lane**, assistant professor of Indian studies, on March 7 presented "Indigenous Sovereignty: A Personal and Professional Reflection on the Journey" along with Sharon Heta during Bemidji's spring Adventures in Lifelong Learning presentation series.

**Dr. Michael Murray**, associate professor of economics, edited "The Job Guarantee and Modern Money Theory: Realizing Keynes's Labor Standard." The book supports the theory that a flexible job-guarantee program able to react to a fluctuating economy would stabilize the labor standard, the value of employment in relation to money.

**Dr. Donna Pawlowski**, professor of speech communication, published "Communication Civility Codes: Positive Communication Through the Students' Eyes" in the Communication Teacher journal. The article demonstrates the importance of working with students to understand and appreciate respectful communication and civility in the classroom.



**Dr. Katie Peterson**, assistant professor of chemistry, authored a paper, "Fe- and Ln-DOTA-F12 Are Effective Paramagnetic Fluorine Contrast Agents for MRI in Water and Blood," that was published in a recent issue of Inorganic Chemistry.

**Dr. Cory Renbarger**, assistant professor of music, performed as a soloist with the Bemidji Symphony Orchestra's production of Handel's Messiah in April. He was joined by **Dr. Dwight Jilek** and the Bemidji Choir, which Jilek directs. The choir was part of a 100-member combined chorus that included members of the Bemidji Chorale and Park Rapids Classic Chorale at the performance.



Two faculty members were honored April 27 at Bemidji State University's annual Employee Recognition Celebration, where new Awards of Excellence were presented to faculty and staff. **Dr. Glen Richgels**, professor emeritus of mathematics, received the Excellence in Teaching Award, and **Dr. Sandra Kranz**, professor of accountancy, received the Distinguished Service Award.

**Dr. Anton Treuer**, professor of Ojibwe, won the Denver Public Library's Caroline Bancroft History Prize for his book, "Warrior Nation: A History of the Red Lake Ojibwe," in December. The annual prize is awarded to the author of the "best book on Colorado or Western American History published during the current year." Treuer also was training facilitator for a two-day "Healing the Racial Divide: Native American Color, Culture and Consciousness" session held May 10-11 at Bemidji's Calvary Lutheran Church.

**Dr. Patrick Welle**, professor emeritus of economics, presented at a March 23 forum on the value of clean water hosted by Central Lakes College in Brainerd. Welle presented on the economic impact of clean and healthy waters. The forum was hosted by the Gordon Rosenmeier Center for State and Local Government, Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation and Northern Water Alliance of Minnesota.



**Dr. James White**, professor of human performance, sport and health, published "How to Plant a Food Plot the Happy Health Way" in the April 2017 edition of MidWest Outdoors magazine. The article explores the potential physical risks of planting wildlife food plots, including tips for minimizing the risk of poison ivy, tick and bug bites and becoming dehydrated while working in the woods.



**Dr. Misty Wilkie**, assistant professor of nursing, attended Higher Learning Commission Peer Reviewer Training from Oct. 19-21 in Chicago. She is now able to visit other HLC-accredited institutions as a reviewer and will assist BSU's accreditation as a member of its assessment committee. Wilkie also spoke Oct. 25 at the College of Pharmacy's Convocation in St. Louis, Mo., about a documentary film she participated in titled "Essence of Healing: Journey of American Indian Nurses" and was keynote speaker at the Second Annual Native Nations Nursing Summit on Nov. 4 in Lac du Flambeau, Wis. Her presentation was titled "Capture the Future: Nurture the Spirit — Preparing Successful indigenous Nurses."



**Dr. Marty Wolf**, professor of computer science, has written an article for Communications of the ACM, a monthly publication of the Association for Computing Machinery, describing the importance of the organization's code of ethics. Wolf and three co-authors published "Making a Positive Impact: Updating the ACM Code of Ethics" in the same issue of the publication, describing proposed changes to the code and the motivation for those changes. Wolf also co-authored "Data, Signals and Information in Digital Computation" with Nir Fresco in Logique et Analyse, an international, peer-reviewed journal that publishes research in logic, philosophy of logic and/or mathematics, argumentation-theory and analytical philosophy.



**Dr. Anton Treuer**, professor of Ojibwe, spoke on "Showing Respect" during Bemidji's premier TEDx event on April 14 at the Historic Chief Theatre.



# 'Thrilled for where we are'

A CONVERSATION  
WITH DR. DWIGHT JILEK

By Andy Bartlett

**W**hen Dr. Dwight Jilek arrived in Bemidji last fall with his wife, Alyssa, and their three children, he was prepared to shoulder a Bemidji State University choral legacy that was eight decades in the making.

Since 1937, when Carl O. Thompson was hired to teach vocal music and music theory, BSU has had only four directors of choral music — Thompson, Paul Brandvik, Brad Logan and now Jilek.

After high school in Dickinson, N.D., Jilek weighed a walk-on role with the North Dakota State University football team against a music scholarship from Concordia College in Moorhead — and chose music. That path led him to Northfield High School, where he spent six years as choral director, and then to graduate school at Michigan State University and the University of North Texas before coming to Bemidji.

We sat down with Jilek to get his perspective on a whirlwind first year and learn what comes next for the Bemidji Choir.

**Question: How did you find out about this job at BSU?**

**Answer:** I was familiar with the Bemidji area through my time at Concordia and at Northfield. I knew of the great history here at Bemidji State and that it is a beautiful place to live. It was also very close to our family.

**Q. This past year, the choir has participated in activities all over Bemidji, and you've visited high schools across the state as a guest conductor. What made it such a busy year?**

**A.** Honestly, sometimes all it takes is a question, and the more questions I've asked, the more people have said "yes." That's a clear strength of the Bemidji community. That support is not necessarily present in other places, and it's what is exciting about being here.

Exploring Minnesota, I built on the relationships I had as a high school teacher and have made



many new friends. What's most important to me during these visits is to offer help and an extra set of ears to help students succeed. I want these kids to keep singing when they go to college and into their communities.

**Q. How did the choir's spring tour go?**

**A.** It was a great first-year tour. We were able to perform at some of the more beautiful venues in Minnesota, and that is an excellent educational opportunity for the students. It gives them lifelong memories to then take with them when they graduate. It's powerful when a group of singers has to put up a show every night and has to prepare physically and mentally for a performance. That's professionalism, and that's one of the main reasons why we tour.

**Q. What's coming up next for you and the choir?**

**A.** We'll be celebrating the Bemidji Choir's 80th anniversary with a reunion choir during Homecoming, and Latvian composer Ēriks Ešēvalds will be in residency at Bemidji State in March. He will participate in a Bemidji State Honor Choir Festival featuring his music.

In the spring, I will conduct at Carnegie Hall with MidAmerica Productions. I will be leading the New England Symphony in a masterwork performance of Poulenc's "Gloria." We are seeking funding for the Bemidji Choir to be the core ensemble. We are also scheduled to tour the Baltic States.

**Q. Has this job been what you'd hoped it would be when you came here in August?**

**A.** I am thrilled for where we are and what we have accomplished and with the hope and energy we have for the future. My colleagues here have been great. They're the sort of colleagues you want to be around — ones who can watch the Vikings game with you and at the same time discuss Brahms. It's another example of what makes BSU special — that balance of life, all together.





# SHARE IN OUR CENTENNIAL!

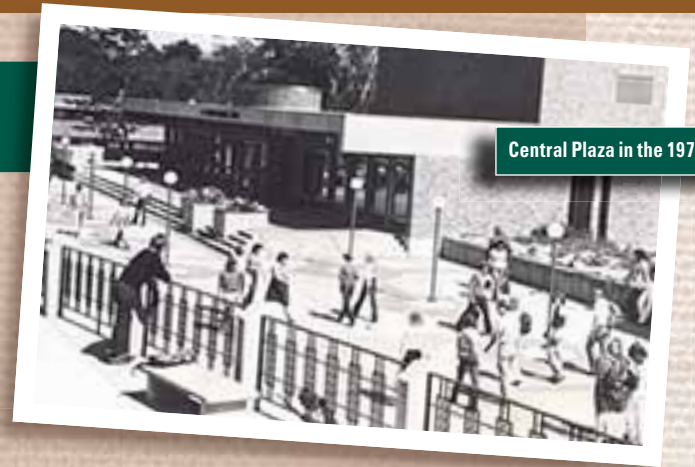
**BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY IS NEARING THE CENTURY MARK, AND WE WANT YOU TO HELP US CELEBRATE.**

Bemidji State opened in 1919 with 38 students as Minnesota's sixth Normal School for teacher education. It became Bemidji State Teachers College in 1921 and began offering a four-year degree and then was renamed Bemidji State College in 1957. In 1975, in recognition of its growing role as a multipurpose institution, it became Bemidji State University.

Because a centennial only comes around every 100 years, BSU envisions an observance that will span a year and a half. Initial plans call for events to kick off next April, corresponding to the school's groundbreaking on April 3, 1918. Activities will continue into the fall of 2019, marking the start of its inaugural academic year on Sept. 2, 1919, and likely will conclude with the 2019 Honors Gala.

A centennial task force of faculty, staff, students and alumni will meet this fall and winter to plan and prepare for programs and activities that honor and illuminate the remarkable history and legacy of the University in the Pines.

Much work is ahead to gather and tell this rich story through the people who lived it, then and now.

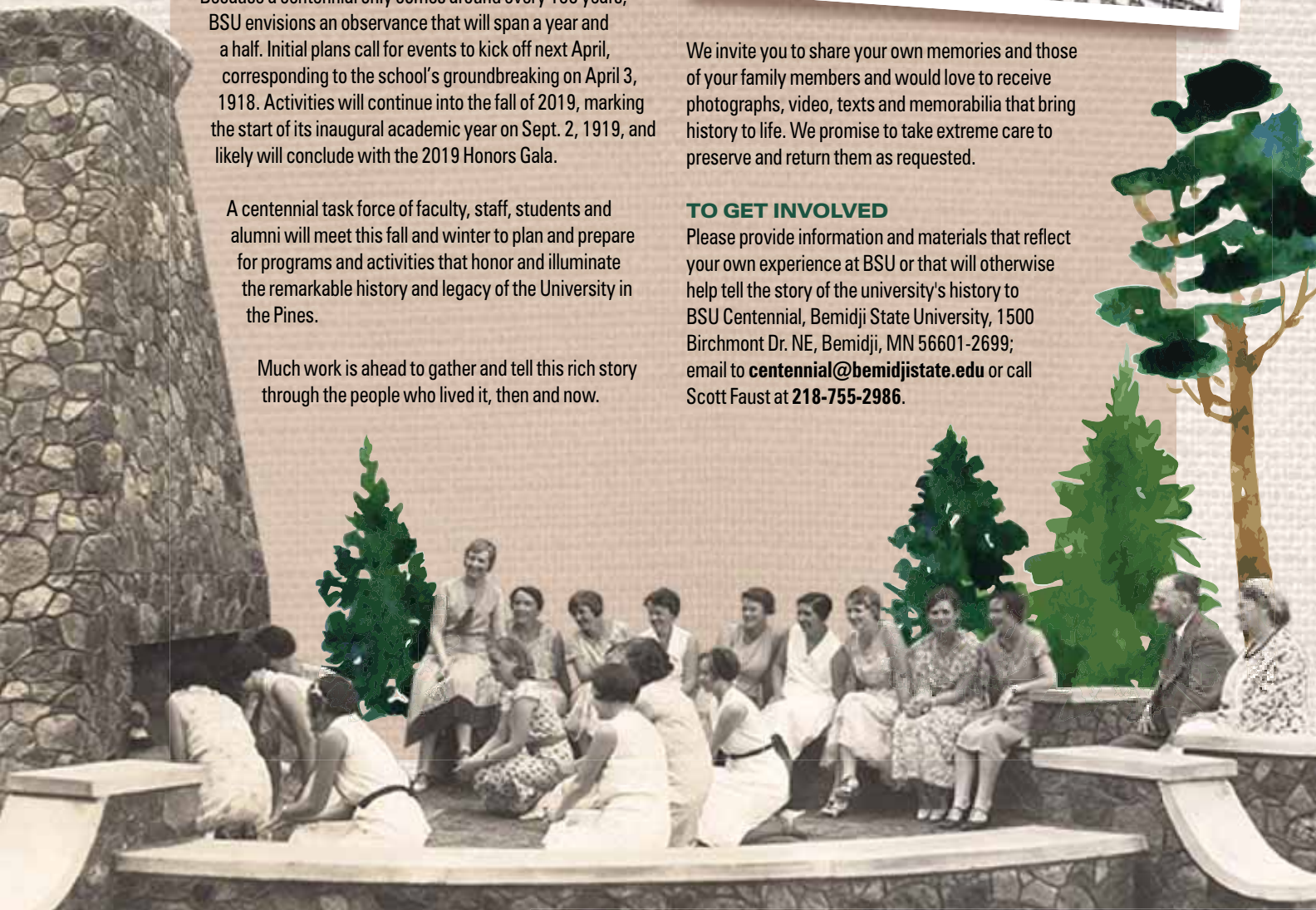


Central Plaza in the 1970s.

We invite you to share your own memories and those of your family members and would love to receive photographs, video, texts and memorabilia that bring history to life. We promise to take extreme care to preserve and return them as requested.

## TO GET INVOLVED

Please provide information and materials that reflect your own experience at BSU or that will otherwise help tell the story of the university's history to BSU Centennial, Bemidji State University, 1500 Birchmont Dr. NE, Bemidji, MN 56601-2699; email to [centennial@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:centennial@bemidjistate.edu) or call Scott Faust at 218-755-2986.



President Manfred Deputy and his wife, Carry, watch the dedication of a new campus fireplace in 1932.



# BEAVERS CLAIM CUP

## — and find redemption

By Brad Folkestad

**T**he Bemidji State University men's hockey team regained both league dominance and national prominence this past season with a 22-16-3 record.

The Beavers paced the Western Collegiate Hockey Association from wire to wire en route to their 22nd conference crown, and they ranked among the nation's top 20 for 14 weeks.

An opening sweep of Bowling Green at home began a 13-game unbeaten streak that led BSU to its first WCHA regular season title. With a 20-6-2-2 league record, the Beavers claimed the historic MacNaughton Cup as regular season champions and earned top seed in the WCHA's new playoff format. After discarding Northern Michigan in a best-of-three quarterfinal, the Beavers fell to Bowling Green in the semifinal.

The season's end brought a flood of individual awards. **Michael Bitzer** became the first BSU player to earn All-WCHA First Team recognition as the league coaches' Player of the Year.

**Phil Marinaccio**, **Gerry Fitzgerald** and **Zach Whitecloud** also received All-WCHA honors. With a team-best 29 points, Marinaccio was named to the second team, while Fitzgerald earned a spot on the third team and Whitecloud was selected to the All-Rookie Team. Head Coach **Tom Serratore** was voted WCHA Coach of the Year.

Bitzer, who ranked among the country's top five goaltenders in every statistical category, including an NCAA-best 1.71 goals against average, picked up All-America First Team West recognition from the American Hockey Coaches Association. He also was a finalist for the Mike Richter Award, annually given to the nation's top goaltender, and was BSU's first top 10 finalist for the Hobey Baker Memorial Award.

In addition, **Brendan Harms** won the Senior CLASS award in a nationwide vote of coaches, media and fans. The prestigious honor goes to the year's most outstanding senior student-athlete in Division I men's hockey.



Former BSU men's hockey coach R.H. "Bob" Peters drops the ceremonial first puck on Jan. 21 in the Sanford Center.

## Peters honored for 50-year milestone

**F**or BSU legend R.H. "Bob" Peters and his wife, Lou, the 2016-17 season marked 50 years of tireless dedication since they accepted the challenge of establishing a men's hockey program in Bemidji.

Peters and his players built a foundation of success that would enable the Beavers' transformation from an NAIA power into a NCAA Division I powerhouse, gaining a women's program in 1999.

As head coach from 1966-2001, Peters was responsible for 702 victories, 17 conference championships and 13 national championships. Under his stewardship, the Beavers produced 80 all-Americans, multiple Olympians, four players who logged time in the National Hockey League and countless coaches at all levels of the game.

"Coach Peters was a great mentor who turned a bunch of boys into men," said Rob Anderson '83. "We couldn't have done it without him, and we believed in him. He's still the man."

In recognition of the couple's milestone and impact on hockey, and with dozens of former players looking on, Beaver Hockey paused Jan. 21 as Peters completed a ceremonial puck drop before a game against Ferris State.

Forever known as "Coach," Peters remains heavily involved in college hockey and continues to provide support to Bemidji State Athletics and the BSU Alumni & Foundation.



# BSUSPORTS

## Yost selected for All-American list

Softball senior **Jessica Yost** of Bemidji became the first Beaver to make the FPN All-American Second-Team Pitchers list. She also made team history by being named a Louisville Slugger/National Fastpitch Coaches Association National Co-Pitcher of the Week for March 30-April 2, which included a perfect game. Overall, Yost posted a 0.29 ERA, allowed one earned run in 24 innings and collected 44 strikeouts with only one walk.

**Senior pitcher Jessica Yost throws for a 7-3 victory in the first game of an April 8 doubleheader against Upper Iowa. She was 25-8 on the season with an ERA of 1.24.**



## Nine Beavers earn Myles Brand

A school-record nine student-athletes received the NSIC Myles Brand All-Academic with Distinction Award this year. They are: **Gena Adams** and **Mitchell Elbe** (football), **Allison Cordes** (women's basketball), **Alayna Krejci** (softball), **Ryan Rumpca** and **Jack Stigman** (baseball), **Sarah Stram** and **Christine Szurek** (soccer) and **Shane White** (men's basketball). The award goes to senior NSIC student-athletes who have a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 or higher.

## Three join football's Hampshire society

Three BSU football players were named to the 2017 National Football Foundation Hampshire Honor Society. Seniors **Gena Adams** (Phoenix, Ariz.), **Mitchell Elbe** (Sayner, Wis.) and **Jesse Hein** (Perham) were among 1,089 players from 297 colleges who maintained a cumulative 3.2 GPA or better throughout their college careers.

## Yost, Bitzer are Athletes of the Year

Senior softball and volleyball standout **Jessica Yost** of Bemidji and goaltender **Michael Bitzer**, a Moorhead junior, were named Female and Male Athletes of the Year for 2016-17. Soccer forward **Tia Neuharth**, a freshman from Prior Lake, and men's hockey defenseman **Zach Whitecloud**, a freshman from Brandon, Man., were selected as the Female and Male Newcomers of the Year. The awards were presented at the Beaver Nation Celebration on April 27.



Michael Bitzer

## Golfer Skaar gets NSIC Elite 18 nod



Ben Skaar

**Ben Skaar** in April became the first Bemidji State student-athlete to receive the NSIC Elite 18 Award in men's golf, which recognizes competitive and academic success.

Skaar, a sophomore from Coleraine majoring in sports management, holds a 4.00 grade point average. He maintained an 81.8 stroke average through 11 rounds this season. Skaar finished 33rd at the NSIC Championship, held April 13-15 in Smithville, Mo., and helped the Beavers place sixth overall.

## 17 Beavers carry a perfect 4.0 GPA

For the Fall 2016 semester, BSU's 353 student-athletes in 15 sport programs posted an average GPA of 3.13. The BSU men's hockey team led with a team GPA of 3.62, and soccer carried a 3.58. Seventeen BSU student-athletes carried a cumulative GPA of 4.0.

## 39 Beavers named All-Academic

Bemidji State landed 39 student-athletes on the 2016 Fall and 2016-17 Winter Academic All-NSIC Teams, which require a grade point average of at least 3.20. The fall contingent was led by soccer, with 10 student-athletes, followed by football and volleyball, both with six, and cross country with two. For winter, women's basketball had seven members named, indoor track had six and men's basketball had two.

## Pelzer achieves first team, 1,000th point



Aimee Pelzer

Basketball senior **Aimee Pelzer** of Upsala capped her collegiate career by becoming BSU's first All-NSIC First Team selection since 2007-08. She averaged 15.0 points, 4.9 assists and 1.6 steals per game and ranked third on the program's single-season three-point list with 73 as a senior. Pelzer also was one of three Beavers to reach the 1,000-point milestone this past season, joining **Tatum Sheley** and **Sierra Senske**.

## Tennis sets winning record at 12-5



Brooke Mimmack

The tennis team, coached by BSU alumnus **Mark Fodness**, posted a program-best 12-5 record and gained its second consecutive berth into the NSIC Tournament by going 6-5 in league play. The Beavers ended at 72-30 (.706) in singles play and 73-13 (.740) in doubles. Newcomers **Brooke Mimmack** of Brainerd and **Ariadna Lopez-Simo** of Barcelona, Spain, were ranked among the NSIC's top five singles players, posting 15-1 and 10-2 records, respectively.



Ariadna Lopez-Simo

## Mineral Water champs look ahead to Aug. 31

The football team is set for an 11-game 2017 schedule with five home dates, including a Sept. 23 Homecoming matchup versus Southwest Minnesota State. The 2016 Mineral Water Bowl champions open on Aug. 31 at Winona State University, followed by a Sept. 9 home opener versus Concordia University-St. Paul. BSU will host University of Mary on Oct. 7, University of Minnesota Duluth on Oct. 28 and St. Cloud State University on Nov. 4.



**Wide receiver Christian Lunde after a catch in this year's Spring Game on April 14.**

# Honors presented at Feb. 18 luncheon

# ATHLETICS HALL of FAME



Lora (Weiers) Angileno



John Backes



Robert Eckert



Malachy McCarthy

**Lora (Weiers) Angileno '88** A four-year letter winner and captain in basketball at Bemidji State, Lora (Weiers) Angileno was a three-time All-NSC selection, earned all-district honors three times and was named an All-American for 1987-88. She finished her career with 1,383 points, 694 rebounds and 81 blocks. She remains sixth on BSU's career blocks list, sixth in career scoring and eighth in rebounds, and her 445 total points in 1987-88 rank 10th on BSU's single-season scoring list. She logged 34 blocks as a freshman to establish a BSU record for blocks as a rookie. Angileno also was the Beavers' lead scorer in 1986-87 (15.4 ppg) and 1987-88 (18.5 ppg), while posting team-leading rebound counts in 1986-87 (7.4 rpg) and 1987-88 (8.7 rpg). She was a member of three BSU teams that qualified for the NAIA National Tournament (1985, 1986 and 1987) and two NSC title teams (1986 and 1987).

**John Backes '74** John Backes participated in both football and track and field at Bemidji State. A four-year letter winner for the BSC football team, he was an All-NIC punter and running back. He led the team during each of his seasons, averaging more than 40.9 yards per punt for his career, including a 42.9-yard average as a senior in 1973, and led the Northern Intercollegiate Conference as a junior and senior. He received the Harry Bangsberg Award as BSC's most outstanding athlete in 1974 and earned a punting tryout with the Minnesota Vikings in 1975. Backes also received four letters in track and field. In 1972, he set the BSC record in the javelin en route to 1973 NIC Championship and NAIA National Championship appearances. He repeated as NIC javelin champion in 1974 while adding a discus title and placing third in the shot put.

**Robert Eckert '79** A four-year letter winner and captain in 1979, Bob Eckert wrestled for Bemidji State Coach Chet Anderson from 1975-79. He won the NIC 190-pound weight class four times and became the fifth wrestler in the NIC Conference history to do so. Eckert was voted most valuable wrestler at the 1979 NIC conference tournament. He also earned All-American honors in 1977 and 1979, placing third at the NAIA national meet to cap his sophomore and senior seasons. In addition, he was a member of the Beavers' 1975-76 NIC championship team (12-2-0) and compiled an 87-13-3 (.859) overall record as an individual. Eckert also lettered in football as a freshman linebacker.

**Malachy McCarthy '82** A four-year letter winner for Bemidji State's swimming team, Malachy McCarthy was a three-time All-NIC Selection, a three-time College Coaches Association All-American pick and a recipient of three NAIA All-American individual honors. He was a member of four consecutive NIC Championship teams and participated in the national meet his final three seasons, earning a seventh-place finish as well as two fourths and a seventh-place spot. He concluded his career as the BSU record holder in the 100- (1:01:0) and 200- (2:10:1) meter breaststroke.



# Coaching Awards

## William "Charlie" Scanlon '75



A four-year letter winner in men's hockey, William "Charlie" Scanlon played 101 games at goal for Bemidji State. He posted a 62-34-3 overall record, with four shutouts in 5,977 minutes. He ranks

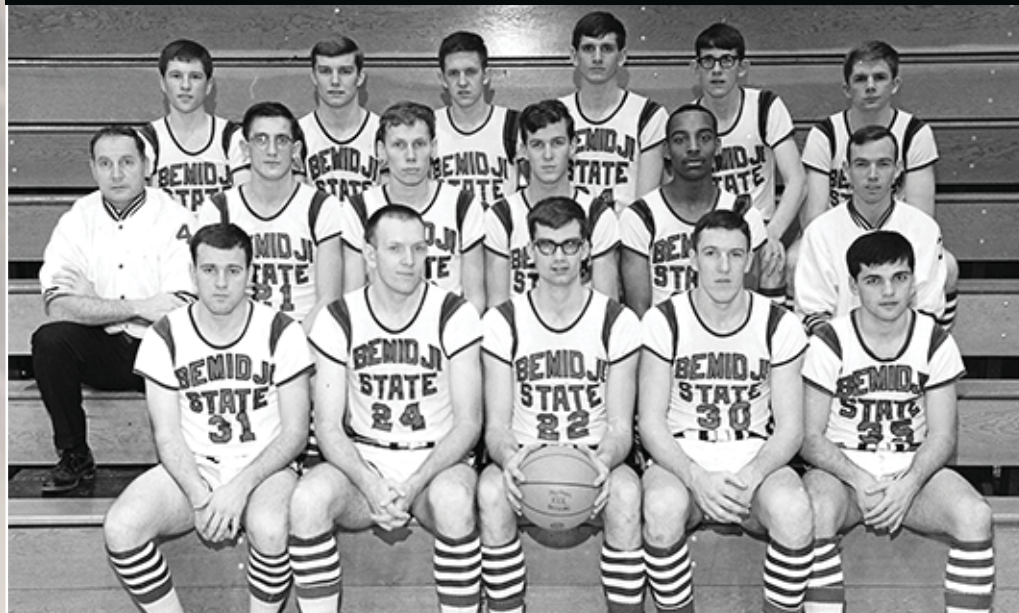
fifth on BSU's single-season saves list with 804 in 1973-74, and his 2,657 career saves place him third on the university's all-time list. Selected as one of BSU's 50 Legends for 50 Years, Scanlon was a two-time NAIA All-American. As a member of two ICHA title teams (co-1973 and 1974), he helped lead the Beavers to a 1973 NAIA national championship and an NAIA national runner-up in 1974. Since graduation, Scanlon has a 564-103-53 record as head coach of the Apple Valley High School boys' soccer team, and he guided the AVHS girls' hockey team to a 217-167-28 record in 18 years (1992-2010), making him the winningest coach in Minnesota high school soccer history. With a perfect 9-0 record in state title games, his teams have won 17 section and 20 conference championships.

## Donna Palivec



When Donna Palivec became Bemidji State's head volleyball coach in 1994, she had an immediate impact on a team in need of a fresh start after a 11-26 season. By the end of her second season, the Beavers recorded more

wins than they had in six years, finishing 19-17. The team topped that in 1997 by going 21-12, and its 25-7 record in 1999 was the most wins for BSU volleyball since a 28-17 season in 1989. Palivec, who ranks second on BSU's all-time coaching win list, led the Beavers to 119 total victories, including four seasons of at least 18 wins and two second-place NSIC finishes, and was NSIC Volleyball Coach of the Year in 1995. Including her previous years coaching at North Dakota State University and Montana State, she finished her career among the top 15 active NCAA volleyball coaches, with 484 victories.



The 1966-67 Bemidji State men's basketball team went 19-5 overall and became the third team in the history of the North Intercollegiate Conference (NIC) to post an unblemished record, going a perfect 12-0, in league play. Head Coach Wesley "Zeke" Hogeland's team rattled off 14 consecutive wins down the stretch to secure the program's seventh conference title and make a push into the NAIA District 13 Playoffs, where the Beavers' season was cut short by defending champion St. Thomas. Led in scoring by Mark Carlin, who graduated in 1967 as the program's all-time

leading scorer with 1,410 points and logged a program-best 39 points versus Augustana that season, Bemidji State averaged more than 79 points per game and defeated its opponents by 12 points per game.

At the conclusion of the 1966-67 season, Carlin and John Phillips were named to the All-NIC First Team, while Dale Rettker earned a spot on the All-NIC Second Team as BSC led all member teams with three postseason awards. In addition to Phillips and Carlin, Norm Manselle served as the team's tri-captains.

## John S. Glas Honorary Letterwinners

### Cindy Holter



A decade ago, Cindy Holter established a great tradition in Beaver Hockey, the annual Tom Serratore Spaghetti Dinner. This fundraiser for the BSU men's hockey team gives Beaver Pride

members and other fans a chance to share a meal with coaches and student-athletes and hear an insider preview of the upcoming season. Holter's love of Beaver Athletics is not limited to hockey. She and her husband, Terry, attend nearly every home basketball game and several road games each season. She also is a dedicated volunteer at the Galen Nagle Memorial Golf Tournament. BSU Athletics would not be the same without her support.

### Willie Stittsworth



Whether cheering from the bleachers, enjoying Beaver Pride luncheons or sharing his enthusiasm at pregame tailgating, Willie Stittsworth remains an omnipresent champion of BSU Athletics. His love for the university

and its teams began as a BSU student, graduating in 1953. Stittsworth continued to be a proud fan as a faculty member in professional education and health/physical education from 1967-89. His support of the Beavers takes many forms, including his work on the annual Shrine Game and yearly donations to BSU football. In October 2016, accompanied by his wife, Arla, he was rightfully honored as grand marshal of the Homecoming parade. He has truly made his mark on BSU Athletics.

# PHONATHON

## TEAM *connects for success*

By Scott Faust

**W**hen alumni receive a call from a current student in the evening or on the weekend, they're hearing from the BSU Phonathon Team, a group that has seen phenomenal success under the leadership of Jana Wolff, director of annual giving.

Wolff, who joined the BSU Alumni & Foundation staff in August, managed a similar team in her previous work at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash.

Getting the Phonathon up and running for the new academic year was one of her first priorities, and the results speak for themselves. Phonathon students raised \$104,000 in donations to the university's annual Lakeside Fund, nearly triple the previous year's total.

The 14 student callers – who come from all class years and a variety of majors – have benefited just as much, Wolff said.

"It builds confidence and phone skills that translate into any field that they could potentially go into," she said. "Their ability to interact and engage with a wide constituency is huge."

One member of this year's team, Aleah Egenes, said she has learned much more than she expected, both from the training Wolff provides and from the people she calls.

"It's opened my eyes about all the scholarships there really are and made me apply for them this year," said Egenes, a sophomore from Benson majoring in social work. "And then hearing all the stories from the alums, there are so many things you can do around Bemidji and on campus that I didn't know about."

Starting nearly from scratch last fall, Wolff used flyers, emails and departmental meetings to promote the opportunity,

and she won approval to pay the students \$10 an hour, more than other campus jobs.

Wolff also wrote to Bemidji businesses and followed up in person, soliciting prizes she could use as incentives that ranged from coffee mugs and stress balls to coupons and gift cards for Bemidji Bowl, Leuken's Village Foods, Cherry Berry frozen yogurt, car washes and restaurants such as J.J. Dockside.

Phonathon students work from prepared call lists to reach out to a variety of people, including past donors, non-donors and parents of current students.

The team operates from a small room in the basement of the David Park House decorated with progress charts, motivational messages and a "Best of BSU Board" that contains stories alums have shared about romance, friendships and funny moments.

"We've had a lot of people that could really connect with the alums and make good conversation with them," Egenes said.

Wolff coaches the students to follow the LASC method – listen, ask, support and continue.

"Our main objective is to get alumni talking about their experience at BSU, update contact information, share current events on campus and ask for support," she said. "Alumni support is critical to helping provide student scholarships – both need and merit."



Jana Wolff



Members of the 2016-17 BSU Alumni & Foundation Phonathon Team pose in their call center in the David Park House.

### ABOUT THE BSU PHONATHON

Students make calls from 6-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday from September through April, except during testing and holiday breaks. We hope you will answer the call!

Sophomore Baylee Johnson produced this winning design for exterior branding of a dealer-loaned truck to be driven by members of the BSU collegiate fishing team.



By Scott Faust

**M**embers of Bemidji State University's fishing team hope to convince an auto dealer to provide a BSU-branded truck to haul a boat and trailer already sponsored by Bemidji Marine.

Those same students will promote the sponsors – and BSU – as they drive the truck and trailer to collegiate bass fishing competitions across Minnesota and throughout the Midwest and South. One of those events is the 2017 College National Championship, to be held Aug. 10-12 on Lake Bemidji.

Students in a spring course on logos and branding competed to design the vinyl wrap for both the truck and trailer.

In similar efforts, Bemidji State is involving Marvin Windows and other firms in a tiny house to be built this fall by construction management students – and working with several companies on a winter Hardwater Lab for aquatic biology students.

It's all about engagement – of students with businesses and businesses with students – and encouragement from Mike Mulry, director of engagement marketing for the BSU Alumni & Foundation.

Such partnerships offer multiple synergies that provide real-world learning while giving sponsors valuable exposure and bragging rights.

Mulry cited the fishing team truck-trailer sponsorship as an example.

"You have the design students, I think there are 23 in the class, who got to add this to their portfolios," he said. "And the student whose design was chosen may have her work featured on ESPN when they cover the national tournament in Bemidji this summer."

# BUSINESS PARTNERS

*engage in excitement*

Also, the winning designer, Baylee Johnson of Bemidji, in April joined several fishing team members to pitch a Bemidji-area dealer on the merits of sponsoring a new or late-model truck to haul competitors and their 18-foot Ranger bass boat and its trailer.

The team hopes to get a Toyota dealer on board because the auto manufacturer is a leading sponsor of the Carhartt Bassmaster College Fishing Series. Competitors receive bonus prize money if they are driving a Toyota truck, Mulry said.

In the case of the tiny house, construction management students plan an all-day fall field trip to Warroad, where they will tour Marvin's headquarters, watch demonstrations on new designs and technology and network with Marvin staff.

"It's an opportunity for Marvin to have input into what the students are learning in order to make them more hireable in the future," Mulry said.

Then, as students assemble the tiny house, Marvin representatives will visit campus to assist with installation of energy-efficient windows and doors.

Extreme Panel Technologies in Cottonwood, the Simonson Lumber Companies,

the Potlatch Corp. and Northwoods Lumber Co. of Bemidji are also supplying materials and expertise for the house, which Mulry said is intended to be sold to a private buyer to raise money for future ventures.

For the Hardwater Lab, Glacier Trailers of Bemidji has agreed to provide \$11,000 to match a university leveraged equipment grant for the ice house structure; Innovative Office Solutions in Bemidji is providing exterior graphics and interior furnishings; and the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance may furnish solar panels to generate electricity.

The finished lab should be ready for students' study and research when Lake Bemidji freezes next winter.



Mike Mulry

## TO LEARN MORE

Contact Mike Mulry, director of engagement marketing, at 218-755-2122 or at [mmulry@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:mmulry@bemidjistate.edu).

# ALUMNINEWS

## New decals highlight Holt donation for aquatic biology pontoon boat

When a pontoon boat used by Bemidji State's aquatic biology program was launched on Lake Bemidji May 4 for the 2017 season, it featured new decals highlighting donation of the boat by Lynne Holt in honor of her late husband, Dr. Charles Holt, who was an emeritus professor of biology at BSU. Over the past five years, the pontoon has been used for research and study by faculty and students in the aquatic biology program.

## Lakeside Luncheon reinforces importance of annual giving

Alumni, donors and community partners gathered April 25 for the annual Lakeside Luncheon at the Sanford Center in Bemidji. The fund for annual giving is a key source of support for student scholarships. Attendees also watched a video interview with new graduate **Jordan Morgan '16**, who this fall will begin pursuing a master's degree in public policy as a DOVE scholar at the University of Minnesota. To learn more about becoming an annual donor, contact Director of Annual Giving Jana Wolff at [jwolff@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:jwolff@bemidjistate.edu) or 218-755-2872.

**Jordan Morgan '16**, who has a full scholarship to pursue a master's in public policy at the University of Minnesota, thanked donors at the April 25 Lakeside Luncheon for their support.



Bunkhouse manager Ted Murray '13, owner Derek Kringen and manager Dan Haugen '99 show off a check to Beaver Pride with Adrian Dunn of the BSU Alumni & Foundation on April 4.

## Bunkhouse Bar donates earnings for Beaver Pride scholarships

When Bemidji's new Bunkhouse Bar and restaurant opened near campus in February, they immediately began sharing 50 cents of every transaction over \$10 with the Beaver Pride organization to help fund athletic scholarships. As of early June, the total raised was \$4,000. The Bunkhouse is also contributing to the BSU Council of Indian Students to support their annual winter powwow.

## 2017 alumni award recipients to be honored at Honors Gala

Bemidji State University will present the 2017 Distinguished Alumni awards at the Honors Gala on Sept. 22 in the Sanford Center.

The four Outstanding Alumni are:

- **Jason Edens '07** of Backus, founder and executive director of the Rural Renewable Energy Alliance, a non-profit organization dedicated to making solar energy accessible to communities of all income levels.
- **Dr. Dale Greenwalt '75** of Washington, a volunteer research scientist with the Smithsonian National Museum of History.

- **Brian Maciej '86** of Mankato, president of Lime Valley Advertising.
- **Dr. Gene Ness '66** of Tampa, Fla., retired researcher and professor of molecular medicine at the University of South Florida College of Medicine.

The Young Alumni Award recipient is **Dr. Guylaine Haché '04** of Chicago, patent litigation attorney, Rakoczy Molino Mazzochi Siwik LLP.

## Dunn promoted to gift officer after two years in athletics role

**Adrian Dunn '11** in June was promoted to the position of gift officer with the Bemidji State University Alumni & Foundation and will work with alumni and donors to support scholarships and programs at BSU. Since 2015, Dunn has served as director of annual giving, athletics, coordinating the Alumni B-Club, the Beaver Pride membership program and other athletic fundraising events and activities. "Adrian has been a great asset for our organization," said Marla

Patrias, executive director of university advancement. "He will continue to ably serve the university and its students in this important role." **Jake Sobiek '13**, '16 will replace Dunn in athletic giving.



## Alumni survey shows growing favor and opportunities to raise awareness

Drawing on positive results from an alumni engagement study conducted in November, the BSU Alumni & Foundation will continue varied efforts to keep alums engaged with the university and well informed about its successes and plans.

The survey, distributed by email and completed by 687 alums, found that 84 percent have positive or very positive feelings toward BSU, with the university's location (25 percent), affordable cost (18 percent), size (12 percent) and academic excellence (11 percent) ranked as its greatest strengths.

Responses also showed improving attitudes compared with a previous survey in 2013. For example, 49 percent of respondents in November said they believe BSU's educational opportunities are better than those available at most Minnesota colleges and universities, compared to 38 percent who said that in 2013.

Interest was particularly high in the university's outlook and new and emerging programs, with both identified by 43 percent of respondents.

One key indicator going forward will be the percentage of alumni willing to refer students to BSU and speak positively about it. In November, 52 percent said they would recommend the university without being asked, and 34 percent said they would do so if asked for their opinion.

The research, shared with the Alumni & Foundation Board of Trustees in February, was conducted and analyzed by the Minneapolis-based firm of Russell Herder.



Alumni and friends gather Feb. 24 for the Brainerd Lakes Alumni Chapter's hockey viewing party at the Black Bear Lodge & Saloon in Baxter.

## Two welcome events for frosh among chapters' summer plans

Bemidji State University's Twin Cities Alumni Chapter is launching an initiative to welcome incoming freshmen and their parents, and a newly formed Brainerd Lakes Area chapter continues to gain momentum.

Twin Cities alums will host two "BSU Bound" freshman send-offs — on the evenings of July 27 at Lebanon Hills Park in Eagan and on Aug. 3 at Elm Creek Park in Maple Grove.

New students can meet other freshmen and chat with alumni, as well as with current students and admissions staff in case they have any questions about life at BSU.

The Twin Cities chapter is sponsoring the free programs, which will include a picnic, BSU prizes and the chance to win a season pass to Beaver Hockey.

The Brainerd Lakes Area Chapter held its second event on June 22, a gathering at the new Jack Pine Brewery in Baxter, with food provided and door prizes.

The chapter's inaugural event was Feb. 24, a BSU hockey viewing party at the Black Bear Lodge & Saloon in Baxter. About 32 alumni and friends cheered the Beavers on to a 2-1 victory over Mankato.

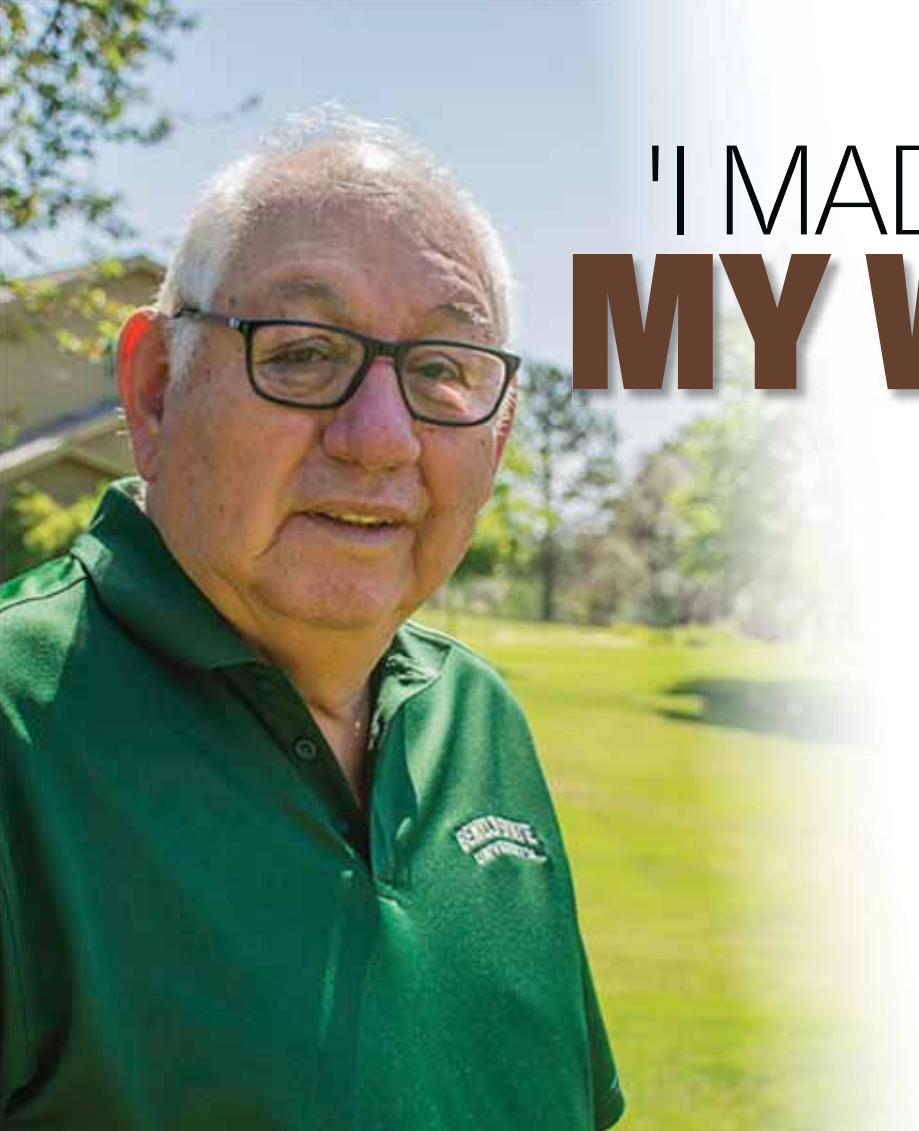
Chapter Chair **Kathy (Bydal) Hegstrom '72** is working with other members to plan additional events this summer, such as a golf outing and Gull Lake cruise. Watch the BSU Alumni and Friends e-newsletter for more information.

The Twin Cities chapter is chaired by **John Armbrust '76** of Woodbury, and the Bemidji Area chapter is led by **Michael Meelhouse '12** of Bemidji.

"We are grateful for their passion for BSU and willingness to invest their time," Alumni Director Brett Bahr said. "These chapters make it so much easier to reconnect with Bemidji State, and that wouldn't be possible without their great leadership."



A foursome enjoys the 8th Annual AIRC Golf Classic on May 19 at Tianna Country Club in Walker. See the Alumni & Foundation Calendar on p. 47 for other BSU golf events this summer.



# 'I MADE IT MY WORLD'

**Fred Baker '61 is pictured June 1 outside his home in Bismarck, N.D. He is a Hidatsa-Mandan Indian whose career centered on Indian health care and education.**

**By Scott Faust**

Intent on the Air Force after high school, Fred Baker landed instead at Bemidji State University through the intervention of an official on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, who happened to be a BSU alum.

It was 1957, and Baker had just graduated as the only American Indian student at a Benedictine boarding school two hours from home, which he attended at the urging of a reservation priest.

"My folks were really adamant about me getting off the reservation," Baker said of his early years on a ranch near New Town, N.D. "We lived in poverty, and the only way they saw out of poverty was to get an education and get out into the world."

Grateful for forces that guided him to become the first in his extended family to attend college, the 78-year-old is eager to help others complete a degree at Bemidji State and take full advantage of all it has to offer, as he did.

Baker, who is three-quarters Mandan-Hidatsa Indian and one-quarter Irish, remembers his younger self as

"a simple little Indian boy trying to make it in the white man's world."

Through his college experience and a lengthy career in American Indian health, education and development, he said, "I made it my world, and I had the right to do whatever."

Baker wasted no time building a world at BSU, though he had never even heard of Bemidji until a month before he moved into Birch Hall. He ran cross country and track, joined the band and glee club and became assistant editor of the Northern Student newspaper.

He arrived in Bemidji with only enough money for one semester, thanks to a grant and loan from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, so he quickly went to work at multiple jobs — in the kitchen at Birch, on the hall switchboard and as a night janitor in a savings and loan, among others.

"I kind of jumped in when I got to Bemidji," said Baker, who was one of only a handful of native students. "I made up my mind, 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do,' so I got involved in all kinds of stuff. I didn't sit back and wait for someone to invite me."

He also got married, to a fellow student from Roseau, and two of their four children were born in Bemidji before he graduated with a degree in education.

Baker went to work as a teacher and coach in Naytahwaush on the White Earth Nation reservation before becoming a health educator with the U.S. Indian Health Service on reservations in North and South Dakota.

He briefly attended the University of Michigan on a public health fellowship and brought his young family to Los Angeles, where he helped implement what he now calls a "crazy" Bureau of Indian Affairs plan to move Indian households into metropolitan areas without employment or an adequate support system.

While doing post-graduate work as a Danforth Fellow at the University of California, Los Angeles, Baker seized an opportunity in 1969 to become a BIA employment assistance officer in Fairbanks, Alaska, where two years later he became the nation's youngest BIA superintendent.

# Baker wants students to think big

Then his father became severely ill, so he returned to North Dakota, taking a student services post at the University of Mary in Bismarck so he could keep the family ranch going. He was determined that his two younger brothers be able to stay in college.

"There were days when I had to leave work at 5 p.m., drive to the ranch to do chores half the night, and drive back to Bismarck to be at work the next morning," Baker said.

He continued his career in public health and health care administration, always with some direct or indirect connection to American Indian communities.

Even in retirement, Baker has stayed active in tribal leadership and advocacy, serving as chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Elders Organization and as a member of the North Dakota Governor's Committee on Aging, among other roles.

In 2002, he testified in Washington before the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, helping win federal funding for a new Indian health center in New Town.

Baker, who learned the Hidatsa language as a child, has also lectured on the history and culture of what are known as the Three Affiliated Tribes, which helped the Lewis & Clark Expedition survive the winter of 1804-05.

Now divorced, he remains close to his daughter in Utah and two sons in British Columbia and Texas, as well as three grandchildren and members of his extended family. He lost his oldest son to a heart attack about five years ago.

Baker himself is a cancer survivor. In November 2015, surgeons at the University of Minnesota Medical Center

removed his right kidney and an 11-pound malignant tumor.

In addition to family travel, Baker pursues his passion for high school and college track and field, attending major events such as the NCAA Track and Field Championship in Eugene, Ore., in early June.

His background as an athlete and an educator helped reconnect him to Bemidji State through Rob Bollinger, BSU's former executive director of university advancement. Bollinger recalled his father's career as a respected teacher and coach on the Standing Rock, S.D., reservation, and the two bonded as they discovered their overlapping backgrounds.

Last fall, Baker returned to BSU for Homecoming and served on a panel of American Indian alumni at the American Indian Resource Center. He has since chosen to support scholarships for Indian students and make a financial commitment to BSU Athletics, as thanks for his years competing in green and white.

Baker sees the opportunities available at Bemidji State through the lens of his own experience, and he wants to open doors for other native students who need a boost, just like the one he got 60 years ago.

"BSU has a commitment to educating Indian students, and I support that very

*"BSU has a commitment to educating Indian students, and I support that very much."*

– FRED BAKER '61

much," he said. "There's a need on the reservation for students with good academic training to come back and work. But I also think Indian students should not feel restricted to any particular thing. The world is open to them.

"They should look at the world and say, 'I'm part of this world.'"



**In this 1960 yearbook photo, Fred Baker (back row, third from left) was a founding member of the Bemidji State College cross country team, and became its captain. At far left is coach Bob Montebello, who had no prior experience with cross country.**

# CLINICAL PIONEER

## NURSING SHOWED NELSON THE WAY

By Maryhelen Chadwick

**S**tella Nelson remembers when procedures like gallbladder surgery required a large incision and recovery in the hospital.

The idea of outpatient laparoscopic surgery to accomplish the same goal seemed like science fiction.

But Nelson has made a career out of overcoming obstacles. She has helped refine technology to reduce medical errors in surgery and a system to monitor blood loss and thereby improve outcomes during childbirth.

"If you're not comfortable with change, you don't belong in nursing," said Nelson, who graduated from Bemidji State University in 1986 with only the second group of students to complete a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing. She was 38 years old at the time.

### Night classes and carpools

Before deciding to seek the degree, she was working as a licensed practical nurse in Bemidji while her daughter and son were young. A single remark from a colleague, a woman physician, changed her life.

"You could do what I am doing," the doctor told her. A few weeks later, Nelson was enrolled at Bemidji State.

"I had been thinking about going back to school to become a registered nurse on and off for years," she said, "It was that one little thing that tipped me over the edge."

Nelson began taking English classes at night to fulfill her general education requirements. At that time, BSU did not

yet have a nursing program, so when the time came, she carpooled to Thief River Falls two days a week with three other students until she earned an associate degree in nursing in 1984.

Conveniently for Nelson, her efforts aligned with the opening of the baccalaureate nursing being developed at BSU.

The new program was constantly breaking ground, she said, trying fresh approaches and providing highly relevant learning opportunities. After a visit to BSU a few years ago, Nelson noted that BSU's "amazing and wonderful simulation lab" showed the program was still innovative.

Nelson, who now lives in Woodbury, was quick to point out that while access to technology is crucial, the personal attention she received from BSU professors was even more important. She found teachers and mentors willing to share their experiences and knowledge.

"What could be better than to have your teachers make themselves available to ensure the success of your educational experience?" she said. "The human element makes the difference."

Nelson's education and pioneering spirit prepared her to balance the "human

element" of nursing with technology as her career evolved.

After graduating from BSU, Nelson worked as a surgical first assistant for Dr. Bruce Wilson at the Bemidji Clinic and learned the benefits of getting to know patients well. She saw them when they first came to the clinic, assisted during procedures and followed up with them after surgery.

### Back to school for master's

Nelson returned to school, at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth to earn a master's degree in management in 1996. Throughout her studies, she did homework with her children at the kitchen table and looks back on those times with gratitude for her husband, Paul.

"Fortunately, I have a husband who supported me and wasn't afraid to use the vacuum and fill the dishwasher," Nelson said.

After their children graduated and moved away, the couple moved to Chapel Hill, N.C., where she accepted a position as manager of the Ambulatory Surgery Center at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.





**Stella Nelson on June 2 holds an iPad that uses an app she is helping refine for Gauss Surgical. The app photographs surgical sponges to assess patient blood loss.**

### Stepping into consultant's role

In 2001, Nelson became a project manager in the Surgical Services Division at UNC. She was part of a team that conducted a formal trial of a system using radio frequencies to detect overlooked surgical sponges in patients, thus minimizing potential errors from manual counting. The yearlong, 2,500-patient study resulted in no retained sponges.

In 2012, RF Surgical Systems of Bellevue, Wash., which developed the sponge-detection system, asked Nelson to join them as a consultant. She helped the company, later acquired by Medtronic, conduct further trials to refine and implement the technology. Also as a consultant, Nelson has spoken at national conferences to educate audiences about the potential impact of retained sponges on patients and medical facilities.

Her first clinical/technology collaboration led to her most recent opportunity. A former RF Surgical employee with whom she worked is now on the sale force of Gauss Surgical of Los Altos, Calif. This startup has developed an innovative blood monitoring system called Triton — essentially an iPad app that photographs used surgical sponges to estimate blood loss.

Prior to this FDA-approved system, doctors could only make an educated guess about blood loss, which affects recovery time and medication. Nelson said the new method enables more accurate, real-time analysis that may prove significant during childbirth, including vaginal delivery, Caesarean sections and other procedures where risk of blood loss can be high.

In her consulting role, Nelson works with engineers to identify clinical applications

*“What could be better than to have your teachers make themselves available to ensure the success of your educational experience? The human element makes the difference.”*

**– STELLA NELSON '86**

and potential problems, as well as contribute her “what if” ideas.

“As clinical support, we sit down with the engineers to see what the app is doing — what could be done to make it better,” she said.

Nelson enjoys the challenge of working with 20-something engineers who have never been in an operating room. They sometimes come up with cool ideas that would not be cool in a delivery room, she said. Likewise, she and other clinicians ask the engineers to find ways to make the method more user friendly.

“We challenge each other,” Nelson said.

### Emphasis on communication skills

She credits her nursing degree at BSU with preparing her to thrive in work with cutting-edge technology. The in-depth education and insight into human physical and psychological systems informs her critical thinking to this day, she said.

She also is grateful to her English professors, particularly the late Margaret Thorbeck, for helping her hone her writing and communication skills — something she believes today’s students should make a priority.

“I was challenged to open my senses and develop greater critical-thinking skills,” Nelson said. “I learned to look beyond what was right in front of me.”



1



2



11

- 1 Computer science professor Dr. Marty Wolf discusses course options with an incoming freshman at Academic Advising & Registration on March 24.
- 2 Graduate Nicole Valsich and her service dog, Buddy, prepare for Commencement at the Sanford Center on May 5.
- 3 Saxophonist instructor Benjamin Cold performs with the BSU Wind Ensemble on April 23.
- 4 State Sen. Justin Eichorn meets with students

- 5 2016-17 Student Senate President Kayley Schoonmaker strikes a pose during De-Stress with Pets on April 26 in the lower Hobson Union.
- 6 2017-18 Student Senate President Ash Hullah makes a point on April 5 during a debate on KBSU-TV.
- 7 Honors Program graduates show off their stoles on May 4.
- 8 President Faith Hensrud snaps a selfie with the Class of 2017 as she begins her welcome address

# CAMPUS

BEMIDJI  
STATE UNIVERSITY



10



9



3



4

on May 5 in the Sanford Center. **9** Faculty share experiences during a Jan. 5 "Teaching Today" workshop on millennial students in Bridgeman Hall. **10** Nepalese students Alisha Ghaju, left, and Neshina Giri from share their cultural heritage at Festival of Nations on April 7 in the Beaux Arts Ballroom. **11** Kathryn Freyberg chooses her date during the BSU Opera production "Speed Dating Tonight" on March 3 in the Main Theatre.



6



5

# HAPPENINGS



8



7

# CLASS NOTES

Towns are in Minnesota unless noted.  
Alumni names appear in bold. Send  
information to [alumni@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:alumni@bemidjistate.edu)  
or call toll free: (877)278-2586.

'16 **Carole Holm** teaches fourth grade in the Ulen-Hitterdal school system. A resident of Ulen, she also coaches the C-squad volleyball team at the high school ... **Carol (Thompson) Vik** is Indian education coordinator for the Bagley School District. Vik, who previously held positions for the White Earth and Red Lake tribal councils, has three children, two stepchildren and three foster children. She and her husband, Gary, live in Mahnommen ...



Carole Holm



Carol Vik

**Missy Mickelson** is teaching second grade



Ryan Pietruszewski



Jennie Buegler



Chanel Gangestad

at St. Henry's Area School in Perham. She lives in Frazee with her husband, Alex, and three children, ages 10 to 13 ... **Erica Trafas** commutes from Brainerd to teach second grade at Nisswa Elementary School ... **Ryan Pietruszewski** is a sports writer covering area high schools and other sporting events at the Echo Press in Alexandria, where he now resides ... **Jennie Buegler** has joined the staff at Bank Forward in Bemidji as a personal banker ... **Chanel Gangestad** of Brainerd is teaching second grade at Nisswa Elementary School

... **Jacob Winter** of Albert Lea has joined the staff of the Wells Mirror newspaper as a general reporter ... **Jack Myers** of Brainerd joined Baratto Brothers Construction as a residential project manager ... **Tom Tessier** is a project engineer in the Bemidji office of Kraus-Anderson Construction ... **Carolyn Sem** has been hired as an administrative assistant at Dominion, an apartment development and management company based in Plymouth ... **Courtney Johnson** was hired as a preschool teacher at St. Timothy's Catholic School in Maple Lake.



Jacob Winter



Carolyn Sem

'15 **Katrina Hess** is a new employee of the Warren-Alvarado-Oslo School District, where she has a fifth-grade classroom while also teaching science and math for fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders. She makes her home in Warren ... **Megan Bergeson** has joined the West Central Tribune in Willmar as a marketing consultant. She previously worked as a graphic designer and advertising consultant at Clara City and Raymond newspapers ... **Jacklin Hedtke** is teaching sixth grade at Fairfax Middle School in the Gibson-Fairfax-Winthrop School District. She previously served as a kindergarten teacher in Willmar ... **Anne Jo Voorhees** is a preschool instructor at Kingsland Elementary School in Spring Valley. She lives in Chatfield with her husband, Jordan



Katrina Hess



Megan Bergeson

... **Allison (Kluver) Beach** is teaching kindergarten at the elementary school in Parkers Prairie, where she lives with her husband, Matthew, and two young children.



Allison Beach

'14 **Chloe Streeper** of Mandan, N.D., will spend two weeks this summer as a volunteer physical therapist in Guatemala, where she will fit patients for wheelchairs, canes and crutches; help build a school; and work with disabled children. Streeper is a doctoral student in the physical therapy



Chloe Streeper

program at the University of Mary in Bismarck, N.D. She is engaged to former BSU student Nathan Sandberg, who works as an environmental and operations support technician for a road construction company. They are planning an October wedding ... **Cal Oldenburg** has earned water treatment plant and wastewater treatment operator certifications from the state of North Dakota. He lives in Watford City and works for the city of New Town. Both communities are in North Dakota ... **Charlie Stier** is teaching band and choir at Browerville High School, where he also works with the district's 5-12 Band, 7-12 choir, drama department, pep band, jazz band and pop singers. He and his wife, Laura, live in Eagle Bend ... **Jordan Oien** has moved from preclinical to clinical studies at Northwestern Health Science University, where he is studying chiropractic. He lives in Bloomington and plans to graduate in one year ...



Charlie Stier



Shannon & Mason Walters

**Shannon (Thompson) Walters** teaches K-4 physical education and seventh-grade health in the Litchfield school system. She also coached the girls' basketball team last season to an 18-10 record. She and her husband, **Mason**, live in St. Augusta. He works in dental sales for Henry Schein, a worldwide distributor of medical, dental and veterinary supplies ... **Jill Wittrock** is the new oncology care coordinator at the Cuyuna Regional Medical Center. Working at the clinic in Crosby, she assesses patients' needs, makes referrals and helps coordinate care. She and her husband, **Dennis**, live in Ironton ... **Veronica (Schmidt) Soine** of Paynesville is a special education teacher in the Eden Valley-Watkins School District.



Jill (Pribyl) Wittrock

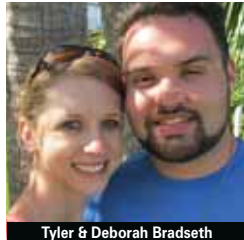
**'13 Rebecca Graves** is executive director of the Leech Lake Area Boys and Girls Club, which conducts programs in Cass Lake, Walker and Deer River. Graves, who lives in Cass Lake, had served the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe in different capacities for 23 years. She has two children ... **Justin Edmundson** is the school resource officer for Grand Rapids police at Robert J. Elkington Middle School. An officer for three years, Edmundson also serves as the resource officer at the district's elementary schools. He lives in Grand Rapids.

**'12 Dr. Krista Blomdahl** is serving as a chiropractor at the Minser Chiropractic Clinic in St. Cloud. Blomdahl, who lives in Sartell, is certified in performing the Webster Technique when working with pregnant women ... **Tyler Bradseth** is teaching general biology,



Dr. Krista Blomdahl

science, anatomy and physiology in the Lac Qui Parle Valley school system. **Deborah**, his wife, operates an online business specializing in designing covers



Tyler & Deborah Bradseth

for books, [www.tugboatdesign.net](http://www.tugboatdesign.net). They live in Madison ... **Bryce Tesdahl** teaches physical education at New Prague High School. He also guided the boys' basketball team to an 18-4 record during his inaugural year as head coach. He lives in New Prague.



In December Professional outdoor photographer **Benjamin Olson '12** had an image of a yawning fox selected as the winner in the wildlife category of the Windland Smith Rice International Awards competition conducted by Nature's Best Photography magazine. Taken on the Gunflint Trail, the photo was among 82 selected for an exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington. The magazine annually receives 20,000 to 25,000 submissions for the competition from around the world.

**'11 Ryan Johnson** has joined Morgan Stanley as a financial advisor at the firm's wealth management office in Duluth. He has nearly five years of experience in the financial field with Edward Jones. His wife, **Alexandra (Ehlert, '14)**, is an executive leader at the Target store in Duluth. The couple resides in Hermantown and has a young child.



Alexandra & Ryan Johnson

**CHELSEA FROEMKE '12** of Duluth was part of a four-woman crew that raised \$109,000 to help rebuild the Wilderness Canoe Base, which lost half of its building to a forest fire. The quartet earned the money from pledges given for each mile they canoed from the Boundary Waters Canoe Area to Hudson Bay. Froemke is a part-time youth minister at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and a full-time volunteer working with the homeless at the Loaves and Fishes Community.



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# CLASS NOTES



## PAULSON FINDS CALLING IN NATURE EDUCATION

Bemidji State was a natural for **Jess Paulson**, who grew up exploring the cedar wetlands around her Steamboat Lake home near Laporte.

As a teen, she spent summers teaching other kids how to camp, canoe and live in the wilderness through Laketrails Base Camp.

“(That) was an integral piece of my childhood and helped nurture my love for nature and teaching others about its wonders,” Paulson said.

The two-time Bemidji State graduate still loves teaching others about the natural world. She is the science advisor at Jane Goodall Environmental Sciences Academy in Maple Lake, a public charter school for grades 6-12 that focuses on project-based outdoor learning.

“My students are my favorite part of my job,” said Paulson, who has 21 students in grades six through 10 and serves on the school’s finance and personnel committees.

In 2009, she earned her bachelor’s degree in environmental studies from BSU, with an emphasis on outdoor education and a minor in space studies. She was a teaching assistant in geology and founding president of the Bemidji State Women’s Rugby Club, through which she met her husband, Tyler, a player on the men’s team.

Paulson spent a year studying environmental education at the University of Minnesota Duluth, working as a graduate assistant with the Great Lakes Worm Watch, and went on to earning a master’s in education online from BSU in 2013.

Her thesis involved development of an expansive invasive species curriculum, drawing on the connection between Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge and a nearby school.

“I evaluated students’ behavior, attitude and knowledge towards the environment before and after curriculum implementation,” Paulson said. “Being dubbed the ‘worm girl’ in some of my naturalist circles, I am always drawn to expand the invasive species learning of each place I have worked.”

**'10 Jena Rosemore** is the Gifted and Talented Education teacher at Heart of the Lakes Elementary School in Perham. She lives in Ottertail with her husband, William ... **Tyler Lehrke** was inducted into the Park Rapids Athletic Hall of Fame this spring. Lehrke lettered for the Panthers four years in hockey and three years in basketball. He continued playing hockey at Bemidji State, helping the Beavers win two conference championships and advance to the NCAA Frozen Four tournament in Washington. He lives in his hometown with his wife, Nicol, and works as a carpenter with Tretbar Construction in Osage.



Nic Johnson

married to Claire, and they live in Fergus Falls with two young children ... **Nic Johnson** has been promoted to internal auditor and compliance officer at Security Bank USA in Bemidji, where he

has worked since 2015. He is married to **Emily (Justin '11)**, a library media specialist at Red Lake Middle School. They live in Bemidji with one young child ... **G. Bradley Nelson** of Guthrie authored the book “A Conversant Existence,” which presents an argument for the determination that God is real. He is married with three children

**'09 Hannah Anderson** recently opened a home and gift boutique with a north country theme called Compass Rose in Bemidji, where she lives. She continues running her firm, Yunique Marketing, which works with clients in branding, marketing, social media management and other services ... **Apryl (Klaphake) Fischer** is teaching eighth-grade art, and her husband, **Jacob**, teaches industrial technology at Sauk Centre Secondary School. Both also have duties in the district’s agricultural classroom. The couple recently moved from Wyoming to Sauk Centre with their two young children ... **Zach Stich** has been named managing editor of the Fergus Falls Daily Journal. He had worked for the newspaper as sports editor since 2012 and also coached football at Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Fergus Falls. He is



Hannah Anderson



Apryl Fischer



Jacob Fischer



Zach Stich

... **Chris Citowicki** has joined the coaching staff at the University of North Dakota, where he will be assistant head coach of the women’s soccer team. Citowicki previously served as head coach at St. Catherine University for six years as well as assistant coach at both Augsburg College and Bemidji State. His wife, **Aryn (Sillman '06)**, oversees the training program for the Emily Program, a national leader in the treatment of eating disorders. The couple resides in Grand Forks ... **Angela Liedke** is now serving as director of member engagement at the Bemidji Chamber of Commerce. She previously worked at the chamber as special events coordinator and will now focus on member retention, the Young Professionals Network, volunteers and the Chamber Ambassadors. She lives in Bemidji



Chris Citowicki



Angela Liedke

... **Jesse Bullock** is teaching social studies in the Sebeka school system, where he also will serve as an assistant coach for girls’ softball. He previously taught social studies for four years at Stephen-Argyle Central School ... **Rob Gamache** was recognized as a Top Teacher by Fox 9 News in the Twin Cities. Nominated by a parent of a student, Gamache teaches English language arts at



Rob and Rosemary Gramache

(Hanggi), works at General Mills as a social media engagement supervisor. The couple lives in Champlin.

Lincoln Elementary School for the Arts in Anoka. He also teaches an after-school literacy program called Neighborhood Bridges. His wife, Rosemary

'08

**Christopher Lian** is teaching third grade at Newfolden Elementary School. He also serves as the assistant baseball coach in the district. He and his wife, Kayla, live in Thief River Falls with their three young children.



Christopher Lian

'07

**Denae (Fisher) Alamano** was named executive director of the United Way of the Bemidji Area after serving as the senior community manager in northern Minnesota for the American Cancer Society since 2012. She is married to **Orlando ('09)**, who works at Security Insurance USA in Bemidji, where the couple lives with their two toddlers.



Denae and Orlando Alamano

**BRENDA FRITZ '07** of Plymouth is playing for the Minnesota Vixen, a professional women's football team. Now in their 19th season, the Vixen play in the 15-team Independent Women's Football League, a full-contact, tackle circuit with a schedule that runs from April through June. A cornerback and wide receiver for the squad, Fritz is an assistant manager of Three Stars Sportscards.



'06

**Mychal Stittsworth** received a \$10,000 prize from the IDEA competition to develop a new business plan for his company. Stittsworth, who operates Stittsworth Meats in Bemidji, will use the funding to buy a USDA-inspected mobile slaughtering unit, which will allow his company to go directly to the farmer to process meat. Stittsworth lives in Bemidji with his wife, Danielle, and two grade-school aged children ... **Katie (LaPorte) Heisserer** has been promoted to director of Bridges of Hope, a faith-based, nonprofit connecting families in crisis with assets to strengthen, stabilize and support their needs. She has served the organization in several capacities since 2004, most recently as the development manager. Her husband, **Nick ('04)**, is enrollment services director for Central Lakes College. The couple has two elementary-age children and makes their home in Pillager ... **Brandon Boyd** of Warroad has changed law enforcement jobs, ending a nine-year career with the Warroad Police Department and becoming a deputy with the Roseau County Sheriff's Department, where he had also worked part-time for three years. He and his wife, Kristen, have three young children.



Katie Heisserer

'05

**Sally (Ohman) Heier**

teaches first grade in Little Falls, where her husband, Matt, was recently named postmaster. The couple resides in Little Falls with their four children, all under 10 ... **Jason Groth** is a reporter who now covers sports for the Wadena Pioneer Journal and the Perham Focus. Groth spent 10 years in Grand Rapids covering sports for newspapers and radio in Grand Rapids before moving to Perham.



Matt and Sally Heier



Jason Groth

{ continued on next page }



## LEFFELMAN HUNTS FOR CRIME'S MISSING PIECES

**Michelle (Schlotfeld) Leffelman** compares her job as a detective in the Bemidji Police Department to putting together a complicated puzzle, only without the box as a guide and often several missing pieces.

Leffelman has been recognized for work on two high-profile cases of deadly domestic violence. In February 2015, a woman was killed in Bemidji by her boyfriend, who fled the scene. He was apprehended, and Leffelman's investigative efforts helped send him to prison. She received the Outstate Excellence in Performance Award from the Minnesota Association of Women Police.

She then assisted in solving an October 2015 crime in which another woman was killed and her body taken to a remote site, where the remains were burned. Several people with the Bemidji police and the state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension gathered evidence, and three men were convicted and imprisoned. The team received the Distinguished Service Award from the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association.

"We knew there was more than one person involved," Leffelman said of the latter case. "We had to make sure we had a solid case on each of the suspects before we went to trial."

A 2000 BSU grad, Leffelman started in the Marshall Police Department before moving to Bemidji as a patrol officer. She also worked as a school liaison officer and in field training before being promoted to detective in 2013. At any given time, her caseload has 40 puzzles to solve, with assignments covering all types of crime.

"I am a very competitive person, and this is my competitive outlet," said Leffelman, who lives in Bemidji with her husband, Jeremy ('98) and their four children. "It is hard not to take it personally until I can solve a case for the families."

# CLASS NOTES



## KAHMANN OFFERS HOPE TO YOUNG IMMIGRANTS

When **Katy Kahmann** graduated from Bemidji State in 1980, she immediately began working as a customs inspector at U.S. ports of entry.

She then became an inspector with Immigration and Naturalization Services. The formation of Homeland Security in 2003 merged both into the current U.S. Customs and Border Protection agency.

Kahmann eventually landed in the deferred inspections office at Boston's Logan International Airport, where the most difficult immigration cases ended up. She typically dealt with lawful residents returning to the United States who had a record of a conviction. Some were paroled for a hearing and others were deported.

She studied the law while enforcing it, eventually earning a law degree. Kahmann retired in 2015 and opened a private practice that included pro bono work for youth or young adults seeking to remain in the United States to avoid persecution or danger in their home country.

"Now I'm on the other side of the fence," she said. "Besides being neglected or abused, these kids have all witnessed gang violence, and two had people murdered on their doorstep."

They are so desperate, they endanger their lives trying to reach relatives in the United States. Federal regulations allow those who were harmed in their own country to seek asylum or some other status. Kahmann's work involves helping these individuals stay in the United States.

"I work with the small percentage that has relief available to them by law," she said. "They have a chance to become legal. It is much better for them to have a secure start, and better for our economy if they are legal, work and pay taxes. It is humbling when you see the impact this has on someone's life."

Kahmann lives in Middleton, Mass., with her husband, Matt Farrell. They have three adult children.

'04 **Mandie Aalto** is executive director of Advocates for Family Peace, which supports victims of domestic abuse in Itasca County and part of St. Louis County in northeast Minnesota. Aalto had served the organization in a variety of capacities, most recently as business manager. She and her husband, Daniel, live in Grand Rapids with their four young children ...

**Tyler Burke** has been promoted to sergeant in the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office. Burke, who lives in Cross Lake, has been with the department 10 years, including stints as a dispatcher and a deputy. He also is a part-time officer for the Shore Lake Police Department ... **Rick Looker**

was inducted into the Northland Community and Technical College Athletic Hall of Fame. Now enrolled in a graduate program at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks,



Rick Looker

Looker completed a prestigious career of officiating hockey that included games in the World Championships, German Elite League and tournaments in Asia and Europe ... **Blake Johnson** teaches ninth-grade physical science and seventh-grade STEM classes at South Ridge School in Culver. He spends his summers traveling as a wildland firefighter for the DNR. He lives in Duluth with his wife, Stephanie, and their children.

'03 **James Jotter** of Hibbing is the principal of Mountain Iron-Buhl High School. He previously was principal at the Mesabi Academy ...

**Steven Kovacic** was nominated by students to be considered for the Professional Excellence in Service Award from Minnesota State. A law enforcement teacher at Hibbing Community College, he was one of 31 nominated from the state universities, community colleges and technical colleges in Minnesota. He and his wife, Kym, live in Bemidji.



Steven Kovacic

'02 **Stephanie (Graham) Winjum**

returned to her hometown to work as the business manager of the Frazee-Vergas School District, where she oversees finances and budgets. Winjum previously held the same position at Pelican Rapids. She and her husband, Mike, live in Perham with their two young children ... **David Hanson** has been appointed to serve as the Clearwater County Attorney.



Stephanie Winjum



David Hanson

Hanson, who was an assistant attorney in the office prior to being elevated to the top post, brings several years in private practice as well as four years of county experience to the job. He and his wife, Julie,

have three preschool children and live in Bemidji ... **Scott Wolla** is a senior economic education specialist at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Mo. A former teacher of history and economics at Hibbing



Scott Wolla

High School, Wolla now develops personal finance curricula and gives presentations on topics related to social studies, economics and personal finance education. He and his wife, Dawn, live in St. Louis and raised two children ... **Aron Levandowski** and his wife, Jena, have started the Levandowski Pottery studio in Dassel, where they live. A potter, Jena gave Aron a gift membership at a studio in Minneapolis to learn the art. The couple started creating functional pieces, and in 2003 sold their first works. Now they go through four to five tons of clay each year to keep up



Aron Levandowski



with demand. Aron also works in graphic design and marketing at American Time and Signal Company in Dassel. They have two young children.

**'00 Gail Larson** retired following a 28-year career with North Valley Public Health, a primary-care facility consisting of a critical-care hospital and clinic in Warren. Larson performed a variety of duties, retiring as its public health director. She lives in Warren with her husband, Don. They raised three children ... **Nick Hudson** is co-owner of Success Fitness in Maplewood. Hudson and the staff are developing a television program, tentatively called "Give Me



Nick Hudson

Strength," to showcase interaction between trainees and trainers. He lives in White Bear Lake ... **Jon Passer** is a commercial loan officer at Security State Bank in Aitkin. He is a former City Council member in McGregor, where he lives with his wife, Sara, and their three children ... **Marty Costello** has been named offensive line coach for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers professional football team. Costello moved to Winnipeg after two years as an assistant coach at Wisconsin-Stevens Point and three years as offensive coordinator and offensive line coach at Valley City State College in North Dakota.



Marty Costello

**'99 Dan Jones** gave a presentation in March on Ojibwe spiritual practices and how history has affected them during a program at the Grand Rapids Area Library. He teaches Ojibwe at Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College in Cloquet, where he lives with his wife, Gail. The couple has four adult children.



Dan Jones

**'98 Travis Hensch** is teaching high school English at Parkers Prairie High School after spending time in the classroom and administrative offices at New York Mills, Wadena-Deer Creek and Northome. His wife, **Shana (Pazdernik)**, teaches science at Sebeka High School. They and their family of three children live in Henning ... **Jeremy Leffelman** was a finalist in the IDEA competition, a program that helps entrepreneurs in northwest Minnesota achieve innovative approaches to their business plan. He received a \$1,000 prize to develop Raptor Rack, a universal system allowing users to mount specifically designed attachments to any ATV, UTV or vehicle. Leffelman is director of the 360 Manufacturing and Applied Engineering Center of Excellence, based at BSU. He and his wife, **Michelle (2000)**, live in Bemidji with their four children ... **Cameron Koenen** is teaching band at Bertha-Hewitt school after having taught various subjects in Boulder, Colo., and Leeds, N.D.



Jeremy Leffelman

**'97 Cathy (Paslawski) Osterman** is interim executive director of the Northfield Historical Society, where she developed exhibits, catalogued the city of Northfield collection and managed educational programs for five years. Her husband, **Brian ('97)**, works in sales for Minnesota Pipe & Equipment. They live in Dundas ... **Norma Thorstad Knapp** has authored two books in retirement. "Missing My Best Friend" is a book for children experiencing loss and grief. Her second, "Scoria Roads: Twenty Houses in Twenty-One Years," is a memoir and comparative studies contrasting growing up in western North Dakota in the 1940s-60s with the recent oil



Norma Knapp



## POST-RETIREMENT JOB PULLS RESLAND ABROAD

By the time he retired in 2015, **Dr. Randy Refsland** had done just about everything a person could do in education.

The 1981 graduate of Bemidji State taught 18 years at the high school and college levels in such subjects as world and U.S. history, psychology, law and geography. He coached three sports. He spent nine years as a principal and finished as a superintendent for seven years.

Somehow, Refsland snuck in a year at an educational foundation in China, helping students prepare for college-level courses in the United States.

His varied resume led to Bahrain, an island nation in the Persian Gulf between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The Bahrain Bayan School needed a director general for its pre-school-through-secondary program.

"I had a wonderful experience in China during the 2012-13 school year," Refsland said of his motivation to return overseas. "People are people, no matter where they are from, what language they speak, what religion they worship or what clothes they wear."

He proved a good fit for the school in Bahrain, where students speak Arabic and English. A self-contained facility, it is independent, non-profit and co-educational. Graduating students receive an international baccalaureate diploma, and 75 percent go to college in the United Kingdom, the United States or Canada, with the remainder enrolled at colleges in the Gulf Region.

"China helped me understand that every country is different, and expecting the same conditions as we find in the U.S. is a mistake," Refsland said. "I learned about being flexible in everything — travel, food, living conditions and expectations."

He is completing the first year of a three-year contract in Bahrain. He and his wife, Jie Fang-Refsland, have five adult children. When not overseas, they reside in Milton, Wis.

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# CLASS NOTES



## BESSER FINDS COMFORT IN PROTECTING WATERS

**Steve Besser** finds comfort just about any time he's in the great outdoors, and he says nothing is more therapeutic than water.

"Woods and water are my psychologists," Besser said. "Especially water. I love being on it, looking into a clear, northern lake and hearing waves hitting the boat."

His affinity for Minnesota's greatest natural resource was one reason Gov. Mark Dayton appointed the attorney to serve as the fishing representative on the state Water Council, and his BSU education contributed as well.

A native of Frost, just 10 miles north of the Iowa border, Besser was drawn to Bemidji State by his interest in the outdoors and biology. He furthered his study at North Dakota State University. After exploring employment options, he decided to become a lawyer.

"I thought about environmental law but really got interested in tort law," the 1979 BSU graduate said. "I have described myself as a biologist gone bad after abandoning science for the law."

Now a partner in the general practice firm of Dolan & Besser, he lives in Litchfield with his wife, Tracey. They have two adult children.

The Water Council advises Minnesota government on implementation of the Clean Water Legacy Act, which is a major undertaking with, more than \$200 million in recommendations for the 2018-19 biennium alone.

"By using the term 'clean water,' nobody in this state will argue with you," Besser said, hinting at the complexity of stakeholders and opinions involved in the issue. "My assigned task is to report what is important to fishing interests."

He remembers advice from his father, an educator and financial advisor who encouraged him to stand up for his beliefs and give back. "Clean water is not just good for us," Besser said. "It is essential for life on Earth."

boom. It earned the Heritage Education Commission's annual Beverly Paulson Family History Award. Knapp retired following work as a registered nurse, educator and crisis counselor. A resident of Alexandria, she has two grown children ... **Tim Longie**, a social studies teacher at Hutchinson High School for 20 years, has begun his second stint as head coach of the Hutchinson boys' golf team. Now that his three children are older, he returned to the links. He and his wife, Laura, live in Hutchinson .... **Todd Williams**, an outdoor and action photographer based in Venice Beach, Calif., and Jackson Hole, Wyo., was nominated in the 2017 Daytime Emmy Awards' Outstanding Special Class — Short Format Daytime Program category for "The American Dream Project" on Netflix.



Tim Longie

'96 **Jason Carlson** is the new administrator at CentraCare Health in Paynesville. A licensed LPN and nursing home administrator, he previously served



Jason Carlson



Derek Hanson

as CEO of Lutheran Sunset Home in Grafton, N.D. After returning to Grafton on weekends, he, his wife Renee, and two young children will be relocating to Paynesville over the summer .... **Derek Hanson** was slotted into a prime broadcast niche when KFGO radio in Grand Forks created the "Afternoons Live with Derek Hanson" show that airs daily from 2-5 p.m. Hanson will discuss current local and national topics, politics and sports. KFGO is the top AM station in the Fargo-Moorhead market. Hanson also broadcasts an occasional evening radio program titled "Couch Potato" and writes a weekly "Couch Potato" column for the newspaper in Barnesville, where he lives.

... **Marta Underthun** received the Exceptional Educator Award from the Western Bank for her work in the Cass Lake-Bena school system. Underthun has worked 21 years in the district, with the past 18 spent teaching first grade.



Marta Underthun

'95 **Josh Bettcher** was inducted into the Bulldog Hall of Fame at Lester Prairie High School for winning 13 letters in five sports. Among his honors were twice captaining the football team, being named conference MVP three years in basketball, and participating in the state track meet. He now teaches biology in Detroit Lakes schools and is an assistant coach in football, as well as the junior high basketball coach. His wife, **Kimberly (Algoe '96)**, is marketing director at the Detroit Lakes Community and Cultural Center. They have three school-aged children and live in Frazee.



Josh Bettcher

'94 **Lisa (Kavanaugh) Barnett** joined MicroNet as its chief operating officer after serving Atomic Learning in a similar management position. Located in Nisswa, MicroNet is a leading developer of management software allowing chambers of commerce and other organizations to run their associations effectively. Lisa and her husband, Ryan, reside in Brainerd with one teenager ... **Mike Bauck** was named Teacher of the Year for Bertha-Hewitt School. During his 17-year tenure in the business classroom, he taught personal finance, careers, desktop publications, accounting, technology and



Lisa Barnett

even gaming. During that time he also coached football and basketball, earning two Girls' Basketball Park Region Conference Coach of the Year Awards. His wife, **Teri (Hanson)**, teaches second grade in New York Mills, where they live with their three children.



Terri & Mike Bauck



John Damjanovich

Roseau and raised three children, including Machaela, who is attending BSU and majoring in education ... **John Damjanovich** is vice president and commercial real estate loan officer for Northrim Bank in Anchorage, Alaska. He has more than 27 years of experience in the financial sector with banks and companies in Minnesota. He lives in Eagle River, Alaska, with his wife Karen. They have a blended family of four adult children.

'79 **Ruth (Runyan) Hayden**

was inducted into the Minnesota State High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Hayden, who teaches physical education and health in the Ada-Borup school system, stepped down this year after coaching volleyball for 36 years and track and field for 37 years. She was named the region track and field Coach of the Year eight times, and her volleyball accomplishments included eight trips to the state tournament and an overall record of 730-248. She and her husband, Dan, live in Ada, where they raised two children.



Ruth Hayden

'92 **Nancy (Marcotte) Williams** of Owatonna received the Community Change Award presented by the Steele County Safe and Drug Free Coalition. Williams is the Owatonna High School social worker and also serves as the advisor for the organization, Students Helping Others Choose. She was selected to receive the award for her dedication to the wellness of youth and promotion of a safe community. She and her husband, Jeff, have two teenage children.

'85 **Randy Tabatt** was named Employee of the Month by the Little Falls Chamber of Commerce. Tabatt has spent 32 years teaching social studies, psychology, sociology and ethics at the city's high school. He and his wife, Lynn, have two adult children and live in Little Falls.

'78 **Jerry Cleveland** was inducted into the Hall of Fame for the Minnesota chapter of the National Wrestling Coaches. A longtime mat mentor at Cass Lake-Bena schools who also led programs at Elbow Lake and Cambridge, he coached 38 state entrants and 14 place winners in Minnesota tournaments as well as nine entrants with three place winners during one year in Onida, S.D. He lives in Bena.

'90 **Mark Franta** of Winnebago was selected Teacher of the Year in the Blue Earth School District. Franta is in his 36th year of teaching physical science, physics and ecology, mostly in Blue Earth. He and his wife, Mary, have six adult children.



Mark Franta

'81 **Ken Hauan** of Greenwood, Ind., will retire from teaching at the end of the current school year. Hauan has spent the past 26 years as choir director and vocal music teacher at Columbus East High School. His choir won one state choral title and was selected to perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City ... **Dr. Jane Harmon** is serving as interim chancellor of the Yosemite Community College District, which is based in Modesto, Calif., and includes two institutions. Harmon began her career with stops in Minnesota and New York before relocating to California in 2001, where she has held administrative positions at several colleges, including Gavilan, Kern and Contra Costa. She and her husband, Roger Kemp, live in Los Angeles.



Dr. Jane Harmon

'77 **Ric Dressen** is retiring as superintendent of the Edina School District after serving in that post for 11 years. Dressen's career started in the elementary classroom 40 years ago and included stops as superintendent in Alexandria and Waconia. His public service included running the statewide Minnesota Education Finance Reform Task Force under



Ric Dressen

former Governor Tim Pawlenty; leading the Superintendency Institute to provide ongoing training for administrators; and serving as director of the University of St. Thomas Board of Engineering. He and his wife, Kerry, live in Edina and have two grown children.

'86 **Brenda (Blomberg) Dahl** was named Roseau Teacher of the Year. A third-grade teacher at Roseau Elementary School, she has taught in the district for 27 years. Dahl and her husband, Mike, live in



Brenda Dahl

{ continued on next page }

## IN MEMORIAM *in order of class year*

Stai, Conrad '39, Montevideo  
Wright (Chilton), Lorraine '41, Park Rapids  
Spaulding, Willis "Buster" '47, Bemidji  
Stelter (Wickstrand), Emma '48, Bemidji  
Olsen, Raymond '51, Oak Park, Ill.  
Roy (Meinzer), Joan '51, Ely Lake/Eveleth  
Roy, Sidney '51, Ely Lake/Eveleth  
Hepola (Porkkonen), Sarah '52, Perham  
Steinhauer (Landin), Marjorie '53, Thief River Falls  
Grover, Patricia J. '55, Spring Lake Park  
Engen, (Orin) Arvid '57, Los Angeles, Calif.  
Ozment (Davis), Dianne '57, Cathlement, Wash.  
Marten, Dwaine "Marty" '58, Moscow, Idaho  
Roberts (Burton), Dianne M. '58, Eveleth  
MelGeorge, Val '59, Eveleth  
Scaife (Hansen), Bonnie Jean '59, Minnetonka  
Cox, Martin E. '60, Park Rapids  
Stiglich (Karl), Arlene E. '60, Hibbing  
Dye (Collins), Shirley A. '61, Coon Rapids  
Price, Dennis L. "Tony" '61, Burlington, Wis.  
Schullo, John E. '61, Bemidji  
Schmidt, Delroy '62, Great Falls, Mont.  
Matanich, Joseph T. '63, Iron Mountain  
Dahlstrom, Allan '64, Chaska  
Haguen, Lowell G. '64, Fosston  
Kangas, Rev. Norman '65, Wolf Lake  
Knutson, Jon Henry '65, International Falls  
Albrecht, Lee '66, Bemidji  
Burkman, Terrance H. '66, Menahga  
Gajewski (White), Joan K. '66, Solway Township  
Rubash, Bonnie Jean '66, Laporte  
Carlin, Mark '67, Fosston  
Cary, Thomas D. '67, Park Rapids  
Glade, Frederick '67, Hastings  
Guida, Daniel P. '67, Red Wing  
Johnson, Allan T. '67, Fosston  
Ostlund, Emily J. '67, Grand Rapids  
Abelson, Glenn C. '68, Zimmerman  
Boyd (Heather), Charlotte '68, Verndale  
Hanson, Marvin D. "Marv" '68, Grand Rapids  
Haugen, Sharon "Sherry" '68, St. Cloud  
Krohn (Salvevold), Sandra A. '68, Bemidji  
Sawyer, Edward A. '68, La Crescent  
Miller (Paulson), Anna '69, Aitken  
Panian, Dean D. '69, Tower  
Todd, Glora G. '69, Deer River  
Erickson, Jeannette '70, Roseau  
Ferraro (Bonacci), Janette '70, Cohasset  
Haavisto, Douglas '70, Pine City  
James, Richard J. '70, Britt  
Rouzer, Daniel B. '70, Fergus Falls  
Soboleski (Walls), Renee '70, International Falls  
Trout, Lorraine '70, Browerville  
Thompson, David A. '71, Bemidji  
Wourms, Randy R. '71, Roseville  
Lilya (Severson), Marilyn '72, Moose Lake  
Aitken, Roger '73, Walker  
Barnes née Orrison, Joyce E. '73, East Grand Forks  
Murphy, Conrad '73, Bemidji  
Sonnee, Douglas D. '73, Faribault  
Aaserude, Melvin '75, Cass Lake  
Backe, Jim '75, Grand Rapids  
Hart (Gullekson), Cindy '75, Apple Valley  
Haugstad (Voelker), Elizabeth "Beth" '75, Bemidji  
Whitney (Colton), Helen A. '75, Brandon, Fla.  
Blais (Berryman), Mavel E. '77, International Falls  
Fitch, Sr., Donald M. '77, Tucson, Ariz.  
Foster, Lyle E. '77, Brainerd  
Frazier, Daryl '77, Detroit Lakes  
Kiewatt, Robert W. '77, Bemidji  
Stahl (Murphy), Olive '79, Virginia  
Weinberger (Wetherill), Nancy Jo '79, Eden Prairie  
Felix (Andol), Sara Jane '80, Bemidji  
Klein, Thomas R. '80, International Falls  
Bryngelson, Karen '81, Bemidji  
Wiens, Lorna M. '81, Staples  
Miller, Ronald R. '82, Cohasset  
Gilman (Hermansen), Karen '84, Maple Grove  
Ruud, Daniel '84, Belle Plaine  
Christensen, Jeffrey '85, Otter Tail Lake  
Ball (Dunning), Lois Mae '86, Fosston  
Vant Hof, Joan K. '89, Edgerton  
Inkel (Meyers), Vicki '92, Bemidji  
Pederson, Geraldine L. '92, Bemidji  
Haack, Judith '94, Bemidji  
Swank (Kriner), Marilyn '98, Aurora  
Maxwell, Clint '13, Bemidji  
Johnson, Timothy W., Eagle Lake  
Tate, Daniel W., Boca Raton, Fla.

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**'76 Tom Westberg** of Spring Lake Park had an exhibit of his art displayed at the Atrium Gallery of the Bloomington Center for the Arts. His paintings utilize the qualities of both negative and positive space found in newsprint. His previous showings included the Tweed Museum in Duluth and the Minnesota State Fair.



Thomas Westberg

**'72 Beryl (Paul) Wernberg** retired as 911 communications supervisor in Beltrami County. Through more than 42 years in law enforcement, she handled calls to the Bemidji Fire Department, Bemidji Police Department and Beltrami County Sheriff's Office. She and her husband, Myron, live in Bemidji and have a blended family of two adult children.

**'70 Rich Glas** became the 95th head men's basketball coach in NCAA history to record 600 wins when his Concordia Cobbers beat St. Olaf last December. Glas, who retired this spring with a career 608 wins, has coached for 47 years, 37 of those as a head coach at Minnesota Morris, Willamette (Ore.) University, the University of North Dakota and Concordia College. At Bemidji State, he was a member of the first team in history to notch an unbeaten conference season during the 1966-67 campaign. He and his wife, Sandy, are planning to move this summer from their home in Moorhead to their lake cabin in Nevis and spend winters on the West Coast near the family of one of their two adult children.



Rich Glas

**'69 Duane Carlson** has been inducted into the Centennial Hall of Fame for 38 years of distinguished service as a teacher in the district that serves Blaine, Centerville and Circle Pines. He taught middle-school math for seven years before finished his career at the high school level. He and his wife, Denise, reside in Circle Pines and have three grown children.



Duane Carlson

**'67 Margaret Kern** was featured in a newspaper article that chronicled nearly 48 years she spent educating students in the Wadena, Bluegrass and Sebeka areas. Kern began teaching at age 16 in a country school before earning a degree from BSU that allowed her to take a position in Sebeka, which she held until retiring after the 1986 school year. Her only break from the classroom was two years in the mid-1950s when she was recuperating from a stroke. A widow, she and her husband raised seven children from their farm in Bluegrass.

**'62 Bob Brunfelt** was inducted into the Mountain Iron-Buhl Football Hall of Fame. A former educator and real estate broker, he competed in three sports for Mountain Iron and earned four letters in football, where he twice earned all-conference honors. He and his wife, Carol, live in Scandia and have four adult children.

**Other John Buckanaga**, youth services coordinator for Bemidji Area Schools, has been chosen as the Regional Community Educator of Excellence by the Minnesota Community Education Association. A 20-year employee in Bemidji Community Education, he has secured more than \$5 million in grants for the district. He and his wife, Lisa, live in Bemidji.

Towns are in Minnesota unless noted. Alumni names appear in bold. Send CLASS NOTES information and photos to [alumni@bemidjistate.edu](mailto:alumni@bemidjistate.edu) or call toll free: 1-877-BSU-ALUM.

# I BSU

**IN MARCH, THE BSU ALUMNI & FOUNDATION INVITED ALUMS TO SHARE THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES THAT REFLECT WHY THEY LOVE BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY. HERE ARE EXCERPTS FROM SOME OF THE MANY RESPONSES:**

"It provided me with a solid foundation on which I built a successful career in education. The setting, small classes and great instructors combined to provide me with a positive atmosphere in which to learn. Just a great experience."

**– ROBERT LYKINS '62,  
HUTTO, TEXAS**

"I have so many wonderful memories of professors, classes, the tunnels!, the incredibly beautiful positioning of the campus on the lake, being locked out of the dorm (do they still have "hours"??), but No. 1 on my list has to be the college's (it was BSC for me) first-ever European tour, orchestrated by Professor Henriques. Six weeks for about \$800, plus four credits in our major field. It was eye opening for most of us small town kids."

**– SANDY (MYRMEL) HAECHEL '68,  
THE DALLES, ORE.**

"I met my wife (Karen) of almost 50 years now at Bemidji. We both enjoy visiting the "north", Bemidji and the campus when possible. Both of our children also graduated from Bemidji. I made many friends during the four years and still keep in touch with several."

**– TERRY FREDIN '69,  
RETIRED TECHNOLOGY  
AND CONSTRUCTION TEACHER,  
WINDOM, WIS.**

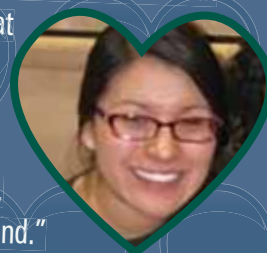
"I loved the campus and the smaller class sizes and the personal feel of my classes. I came back from Alaska, where I seriously considered going to school at UAA, because of the great accounting program at BSU. Some of my favorite memories are: Circling for what felt like hours outside Decker Hall in search of a parking space – and being excited when the lake finally froze, because it meant less circling time thanks to the lake/parking lot; getting stuck in the tunnels when the lights went out; a great education that helped prepare me for the real world."

**– ANGELA PINSONNEAULT '98,  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**

"First off, I met my husband while at BSU. That made the time extra special there. Then I loved the small class sizes, especially when I got deeper into my major. My professors knew me by name, and took a personal interest in me as a person. I loved my time at BSU, and it definitely helped shape me into the person I am today."

**– SARAH (DZIENDEL) NOVACEK '07,  
WHO TEACHES FIFTH GRADE IN KARLSTAD**

"I always felt comfortable asking questions during class and was able to connect with my classmates. I made friends at BSU in Track & Field and from my courses in what was called Indian Studies back then. It was actually from those courses I developed strong writing skills because of the technical language used in tribal laws, codes and regulations we had to understand."



**– PEARL WALKER-SWANNEY '11,  
NATIVE NATIONS REBUILDERS PROGRAM,  
GRAND FORKS, N.D.**

# BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY HOMECOMING 2017



## THIS IS BEAVER TERRITORY



### FRIDAY, SEPT. 22

#### Come to the gala – and dance

Friday night's Honors Gala at the Sanford Center will continue the buzz generated at last year's celebration of the Imagine Tomorrow campaign. The Alumni & Foundation will honor alumni award winners and hear their inspiring stories, recognize its most generous donors and share pride in Bemidji State and the positive difference it makes in the world. Social hour will start at 5:30 p.m., with dinner and the program beginning at 6:30 p.m. The evening will continue with dancing to live music. Tickets are \$50.

#### Also Friday:

- Alumni Leaders in the Classroom, various times and campus locations TBD
- BSU Alumni & Foundation Annual Meeting, morning, campus location TBD
- Beaver Pride Luncheon, 11:30 a.m., Upper Deck lounge, Walnut Hall

### SATURDAY, SEPT. 23

#### Parade in downtown Bemidji

People of all ages will gather and cheer from storefront sidewalks and front yards for the traditional 11 a.m. parade north on Beltrami Avenue from Second Street to 15th Street. All are welcome to enter a float, musical unit, student organization or community group – and especially to come downtown and watch. The parade will feature distinguished alumni, BSU President Dr. Faith Hensrud and a grand marshal.

#### Before, during and after football

Another Homecoming tradition is Beaver Bash Pre-Game Tailgating which will begin at noon in Diamond Point Park. Bring your favorite food and beverages or enjoy what is provided with a free-will offering. (Must be 21 to consume alcohol.) After the Beavers' 2 p.m. game against Southwest Minnesota State, a football alumni reunion will be held in the Beaux Arts Ballroom, followed by a 5 p.m. Football Alumni Social in BSU's American Indian Resource Center. Other alumni athletes should check with program coaches to determine whether gatherings are scheduled. New this year is a casual, all-years Greek (fraternity-sorority) Reunion & Social at 6 p.m. in the Beaux Arts Ballroom.

#### Street Dance with The Front Fenders

Barricades will close Beltrami Avenue between Third and Fourth streets for the 10th Annual Beaver Block Party/Street Dance. The Bemidji Area Alumni Chapter is bringing The Front Fenders back to keep things rockin' with classic favorites from 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Alumni are encouraged to get involved with planning and presenting this popular event that extends the Saturday celebration. (Must be 21 or older to attend.)





Football Cheer Team members walk in the 2016 Homecoming Parade on Oct. 15

## SUNDAY, SEPT. 24

### Carl O. Thompson Memorial Concert

A perfect way to wrap up the weekend, this 3 p.m. concert in the Thompson Recital Hall at the Bangsberg Fine Arts Complex will feature the university's performing ensembles, as well as the instrumental and vocal Carl O. Thompson Scholarship winners.

## HOMECOMING 2017 INFORMATION

More Homecoming information, including discounted Bemidji-area lodging, will be shared over the summer by mail and in the alumni e-newsletter.

218-755-3989 or 877-278-2586

alumni@bemidjistate.edu

www.bsualumni.



# ALUMNI & FOUNDATION

# 2017 CALENDAR

## JULY

- 13 BSU Night at the Races**  
BSU Twin Cities Alumni Chapter, Canterbury Park, Shakopee
- 21 20th Annual Galen Nagle Memorial Golf Tournament**  
7 a.m. registration,  
7:35 a.m. tee time;  
11:30 a.m. registration,  
12:30 p.m. tee time,  
Bemidji Town & Country Club
- 22 Sixth Annual Jeff "Bird" McBride Memorial Golf Tournament**  
11 a.m. registration, 12 p.m. tee time, Oak Marsh Golf Course, Oakdale
- 27 "BSU Bound" Freshmen Send-Off Event**  
Lebanon Hills Park, Eagan
- 28 Ninth Annual Men's Basketball Alumni & Friends Golf Outing**  
12 p.m. registration, 1 p.m. tee time,  
Blueberry Pines Golf Club, Menahga

## AUGUST

- 3 "BSU Bound" Freshmen Send-Off Event**  
Elm Creek Park, Deer Picnic Site, Maple Grove
- 26 Ninth Annual Ed Sauer Golf Tournament**  
10 a.m. registration, 11 a.m. tee time,  
Tianna Country Club, Walker
- 31 12th Annual BSU Community Appreciation Day**  
4:30 p.m., Lakeside Lawn, BSU

## SEPTEMBER

- 16 Lake Minnetonka Boat Cruise**  
Twin Cities Alumni Chapter, 5 p.m., Excelsior
- 22-24 BSU Homecoming 2017**

## OCTOBER

- 7 Fifth Annual Scholarship Appreciation Breakfast**  
8:30 a.m., Sanford Center, Bemidji

## ALUMNI EVENT INFORMATION

218-755-3989 or 877-278-2586 (toll free)  
alumni@bemidjistate.edu  
www.bsualumni.org/alumni



**BEMIDJI**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

1500 Birchmont Drive NE  
Bemidji, MN 56601-2699



**MINNESOTA STATE**

*Bemidji State University,*  
A member of Minnesota State



# THE GREEN & WHITE

*Dinner & Auction for BSU Athletics*

## SAVE THE DATE

*Sanford Center Arena*  
**Saturday, April 14, 2018**  
**5 p.m.**

For more information: [www.bsualumni.org](http://www.bsualumni.org)