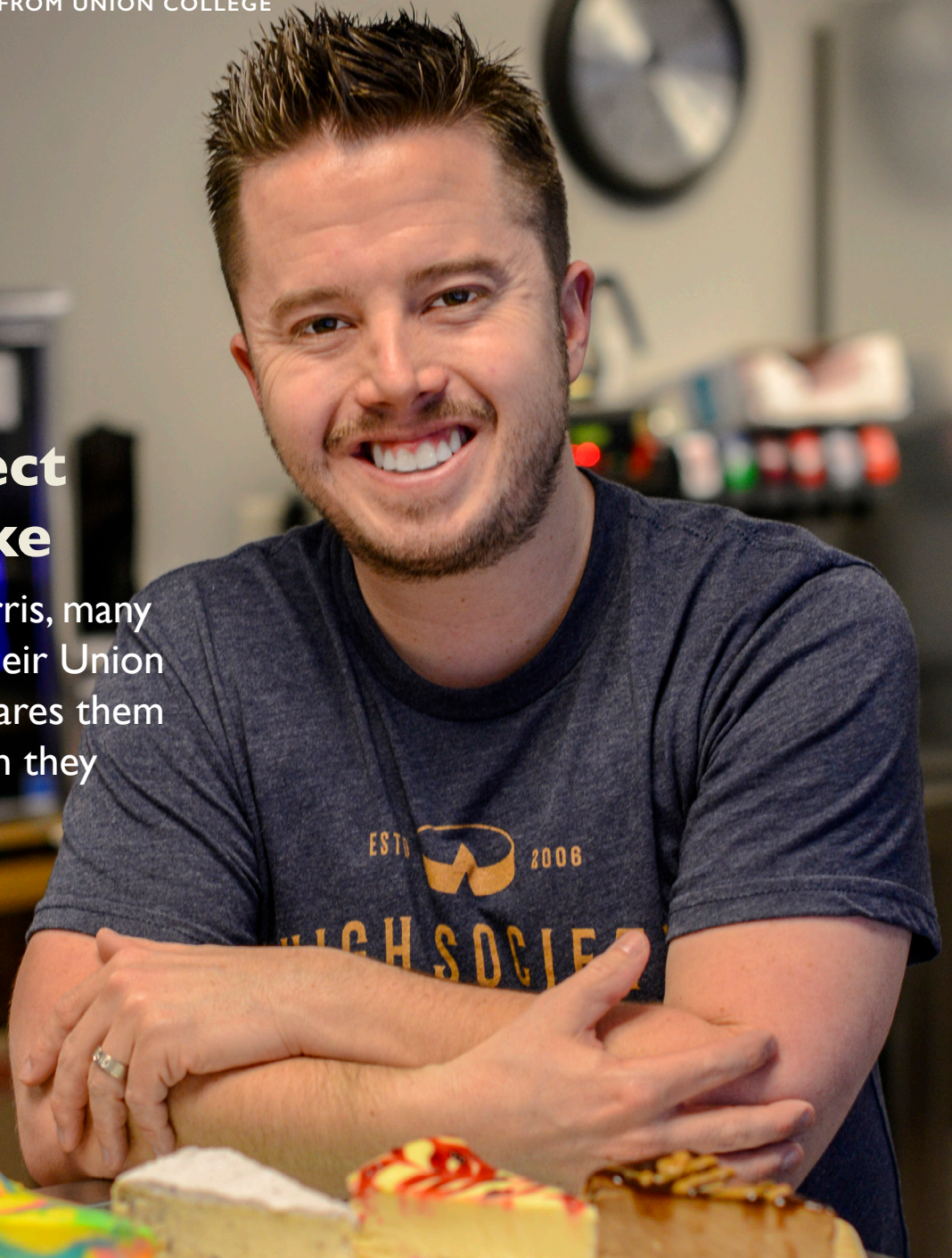


# CORD MAGAZINE

SPRING 2018 | NEWS FROM UNION COLLEGE

## The perfect cheesecake

Like Marcus Morris, many graduates find their Union experience prepares them for far more than they imagined.



UNION  
COLLEGE

## The making of a chair

For Dr. Lisa Forbes, building leaders is about a lot more than teaching them to pursue strong bottom lines and balance sheets, but helping learn to follow Christ-like principles that change the world.

Forbes holds the Adventist Health System Endowed Chair of Business Administration, and specializes in teaching accounting and finance.

In 2015, Adventist Health System gave a \$2 million gift to Union College to permanently endow a faculty position in the Division of Business and Computer Science. "Adventist Health System appreciates the work Union College does to provide a Christian education for future leaders," said Don Jernigan, former president of the health care system that operates 45 hospitals in 10 states. "It is my prayer that this gift will strengthen Union and thus also help to strengthen our company through the future infusion of skilled, spiritual healthcare leaders."

Nearly 50 Union College graduates work in top-level C-suite positions in hospitals and health care systems across the country. "I love being part of an educational experience that prepares students to excel as leaders in health care and many other fields," said Forbes. "I pray what we do inside and outside the classroom mentors students and encourages them to seek God's calling for their lives, and I am thrilled to see the difference our alumni make in the lives of people affected by their institutions."

You may not be able to give an endowment that funds a professor's salary, but every gift matters to the students who receive the benefits of scholarships funding, technology and quality teachers. If you'd like learn more about how you can make a difference in the lives of Union students, contact the Advancement office at [www.ucollege.edu/giving-opportunities](http://www.ucollege.edu/giving-opportunities) or call 402.486.2503.

*Dr. Lisa Forbes has taught finance and accounting at Union since 1997. She now holds the Adventist Health System Endowed Chair of Business Administration, made possible by a \$2 million endowment gift from Adventist Health System.*

Photo: Steve Nazario/Union College

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photo: istock, photography service

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## ABOUT THE COVER

Marcus Morris began developing cheesecake while studying psychology at Union College. His success has led to a line of cheesecakes sold across the city and a in his restaurant known for its soup, sandwiches and desserts. Photo by Steve Nazario.

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We encourage readers to submit letters and article ideas. Please send inquiries, submissions and address changes to:

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photo: Scott Cushman/Union College

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## The operative word is change

by Linda Deibel Skinner '71

It was early 1983. After 15 years working in the office at a local pharmacy, I found myself unemployed when my husband and I sold our short-lived waterbed business. A call came from my friend Cheryl Crawford about an open secretarial position at Larson Lifestyle Center.

After a brief visit, Dan Klein, director of the new facility, asked me to start the next day. "Well, sure," I must have said, amazed at how easy it was to begin a new job. And I soon learned my job entailed much more, and my employment at Union College was literally off and running. From learning to work with students, to helping open an ice rink complete with ice hut and Zamboni, to helping design work spaces for a growing department, my days were full. I loved going to work every day.

### Time to Advance(ment)

In summer 1985 upon my return from a houseboat vacation, I discovered a "welcome back from vacation" envelope on my desk with instructions to redeem my prize at the advancement office. Seriously? The "prize" turned out to be the clever scheming of my friend, LuAnn Wolfe (now Davis), to lure me to a job in the administration building. I snatched the bait and have never looked back.

For 34 years in the advancement office I've had the privilege to serve in many roles—all of which have grown me, endeared me to all things philanthropic and essentially helped me become the person I am today. Changes have taken place, systems have evolved, new skill sets have been learned and I have adapted to the ever-changing world of philanthropy. Little did I know I would grow to be a better proofreader; how studying and living Union's history would



photo: Steve Nazario/Union College

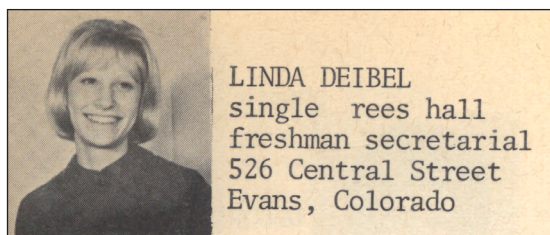


photo: courtesy of Union College yearbook records

This Peanut Gallery image of Linda Deibel Skinner marks her first experience with Union in 1967. Now she is retiring after serving the college for 35 years.

turn me into a walking historical reference, or how working with and becoming friends with a multitude of alumni would be so life giving.

I'm proud to be a part of an amazing team who raised funds for the Ortner Center, the Krueger Center for Science and Mathematics, the PA and IRR renovated spaces, the Nursing Simulation Center, the new front entrance and a host of smaller projects that make the Union experience what it is today.

Buildings are great, but they would be nothing without the people who inhabit them. I know God is here at Union because I've seen him in students who became my friends and again when they brought their own students years later. I've seen him in the generations of alumni who have crossed my path over the years.

It has been a joy to see lives changed and a world impacted for Him. As I leave Union College after 35 years, I can say with surety, "I'm so thankful to have been part of the Advancement office and God's work here at Union." **A**

## Gift options for your IRA required minimum distribution

by Ken Farrow, director of leadership giving

For Union alumni like Patricia Horst '67, celebrating a 70th birthday is a wonderful milestone. But along with this life transition she must now take an annual required minimum distribution (RMD) from her individual retirement account (IRA). These RMDs are taxed as regular income within the year they are taken and can also be subject to state and local taxes.

Horst decided to avoid paying federal and state taxes on her RMD by asking her investment company to gift her distribution to Union College to benefit deserving students.

"When it's time to withdraw the RMD, I tell my advisor I want to support Union College," she explained. "The investment company writes a check payable to Union and sends it to me so I can designate which college fund(s) I want credited when I forward it to Union."


Horst wants to see other students benefit from a Union College experience the way she did. "I'm thankful for the education I received at Union College," she said. "I realize I could reinvest the money and let it become part of my legacy gift, but I enjoy seeing the money put to a good use while I'm living."

Directing your RMD to a charity will NOT qualify for a charitable deduction, however you will avoid paying federal and state taxes on the RMD. Your RMD cannot stay in a tax-deferred account so directing the funds to charity is a viable option as opposed to spending the money or reinvesting it into a taxable account. Always consult your tax advisor to help determine your best options.

### More about the required minimum distribution (RMD)

By April 1 of the following year after you turn 70½ years old, and by December 31 every year thereafter, you are required to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your Traditional, Rollover, SEP, and Simple IRAs. To calculate the required minimum amount, use the balance of your IRA account and divide it by the distribution period calculated by the IRS and made available at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) (search for RMD worksheet).

For example, at age 72 the distribution period is 25.6, and if your IRA balance was \$100,000 at the end of the previous year your RMD would be \$3,906.25. If you have more than one IRA, you must do this calculation for each individual account, and then add all the RMDs together. The good news: the total distribution can then be taken from any one or more IRAs to satisfy the total required amount.

If you have questions about how your RMD can benefit Union College, contact Ken Farrow, director of leadership giving at 402.486.2600 ext 2200 or [ken.farrow@ucollege.edu](mailto:ken.farrow@ucollege.edu) 

*When retirees are forced to start taking a required minimum distribution from their retirement savings account, one great way to avoid paying taxes on the money is to have it allocated directly to Union College where the funds will make a difference in the lives of our students.*

photo: Scott Culmar/Union College



# CAMPUS NEWS



learn more about child welfare as a possible career choice.

"I want to help them find a passion and a field they want to work in," said Davis. I want to encourage them to explore questions like, 'Do I want to work in the field or in a management situation?' I really try to show them different opportunities."

## Getting involved

In the community involvement unit of the Social Work Practice III course, students participated in nearby Calvert Community Center's after-school program and other activities for community members of all ages. They interviewed the director of the center and surveyed children and adults about what they enjoy and what needs improvement. Students learned how to write survey questions to gather relevant information, and they ultimately presented their findings to the neighborhood association in charge of the center.

"I was able to experience working on my own and seeing the results," said Noemi Flores, a December 2017 graduate with a degree in social work. "That makes me feel a lot better prepared to do this as a job in the future."

"We were able to engage in the community and get that hands-on experience," said senior Bailey Dehning. "I enjoy being able to interact with people, not just books. I was able to learn a lot just doing research and talking to people."

While helping students expand their view of social work, Davis uses other opportunities to help students explore and expand their comfort zone. "I put students in places where they might feel a little uncomfortable, but I will never put them in a place they would be unsafe," said Davis about their trips to the local homeless shelter and other potentially new experiences. "We need to work on why we feel uncomfortable in situations, and be honest about those feelings. Does it come from my core values or is it misinformation I've received?"

Not only does Davis share her good experiences, but the bad ones as well—stories about mistakes she's made and how they helped her grow, because she believes "everything is a teaching opportunity."

For Dehning, these experiences will have a lasting effect on her career. "I don't remember many of the specifics about the assignments I did in class, but I will remember our work in the community center for years to come." **A**

*Union College social work classes have a history of getting involved with a wide variety of community organizations to give the students practical knowledge for their future careers.*

## Putting the social in social work

*by Maren Miller, student writer*

Every educator knows the value of learning outside the classroom. Lizz Davis, director of Union's social work program, found she learned the most from her own experiences—both good and bad—and now she intentionally takes her students out of the classroom so they can do the same.

Davis spent seven years stationed at Ft. Riley Army base as a social worker in the United States Public Health Service—a commissioned service branch. "I transitioned to the Army National Guard when I moved to Lincoln," she said. "I decided when I finished my active duty service, I wanted to give back. Giving is a big part of social work." She guest spoke to a few classes at Union, which ultimately led to an invitation to become part of the program.

Lizz takes her social work students in several classes into the field to illustrate the real world aspects of each unit they study. When studying the child welfare unit in the Intro to Social Work course, they travelled to Boys Town, a thriving organization in Omaha where kids with a range of academic, behavioral and educational issues receive care and guidance. Students were able to interview the head social worker and head psychologist, and

## Writing for real audiences

by Yvonne Kanyi, student writer

For aspiring writers, it's one thing to learn how to use correct grammar and punctuation, and another thing entirely to understand the complete process of getting something published. For sophomore Ashley Bower, the opportunity to create content for *Outlook* magazine gave her and her classmates a peek into the real world of publication editing.

Since 1995, Union College's Magazine Editing class has created feature content for an issue of *Outlook*, a publication with circulation to more than 30,000 Seventh-day Adventist homes in the nine states of the Mid-America Union Conference.

"My end goal is to teach at a university or college, so I will probably find myself teaching an editing class," said Bower, a sophomore English language arts education major. "It was interesting to work in the extra dynamic of creating content for a major publication. I learned tools that a class doesn't necessarily provide—such as learning to work with different people to bring content together."

The class, which was started by Chris Blake and has been taken over by new communication professor Lori Peckham, has varied in size over the years as has the number of pages they have to work with. The four students in the fall 2017 Magazine Editing class developed 10 pages of content for the February 2018 issue.



Photo: Steve Nazario/Union College

Lori Peckham's Magazine Editing class—Yanni Outerbridge, Ashley Bower, Roxi Peterson and Olivia McAuliffe—produced content for the February *Outlook* magazine, an annual tradition started by Chris Blake in 1995.

They brainstormed ideas along the theme *Outlook* had already chosen for the year: Building up the body of Christ. After deciding to focus on "embracing our cultural differences," the students wrote, edited, checked, and rewrote their own and each other's work. *Outlook* editor Brenda Dickerson '86 provided guidance, goals and deadlines, and held them accountable along the way.

The small class size also made it easier to constructively critique each other's work. Bower didn't expect the class to go so deep into the writing process, but was glad the experience of writing for broader audiences motivated them to be even more detailed in their work.

"Once the magazine came out, it felt unreal to see my name in a tagline," Bower said. "I was published!" The publication also proved exciting for her father, a pastor in North Dakota, who was able to showcase his daughter's work to church members and friends.

*Outlook* editors over the years have found their readers appreciate the perspectives of the Union College students in these annual issues. "Each year we look forward to this issue," wrote Joe, a member in his 70s who responded to a recent Union Magazine Editing class issue. "My wife and I thanked and praised God many times as we read through this edition. Our local and national church need to hear out our young people!" **A**

## Planning for the worst

by Michael Rohm '14

One year ago, Meredith Nichols was in the classroom planning for hypothetical disasters. Today, she works for Custer County in Colorado planning for real ones.

The 23-year-old Deputy Emergency Manager never expected to attain such a high position right out of college, but she has embraced the responsibility. Thanks to the comprehensive international rescue and relief program at Union College, Nichols has been training to be an emergency management professional since day one of her freshman year.

### Diving into the field

The first IRR class a freshman at Union College takes is Principles of Emergency Management. More than just a semester of dry theory, the course teaches students the foundation of emergency response and provides them with FEMA-certified credentials.

"We run incident after incident," said Rick Young, program director for IRR. "We believe if you don't practice it, you won't maintain it. We embed muscle memory in the students so they can use these skills in the professional world."

The program also includes disaster management coursework, plus five weeks of field training in Colorado and three months in Nicaragua focused on global health.

Nichols has proven the value of that educational philosophy. Between the months of May and September 2017, the recent graduate was responsible for updating the Emergency Operations Plan for Custer County, a herculean task by any standard. The fact that the existing plan was 14 years out of date made the responsibility even more daunting.

Thanks to the muscle memory built during Principles of Emergency Management, however, Nichols approached the task exactly as she had learned to do.

"In class we ran a lot of exercises and eventually helped rewrite the Emergency Operations Plan for Union College," Nichols said. "Writing the plan [for Custer County], I could think back and see what we had done in class and apply that to my work."

After four months and four drafts, Nichols sent the updated plan to the county commissioners. They approved it without a word of criticism.

The success of that plan was the catalyst that propelled Nichols—then only a paid intern—into her current position as Deputy Emergency Manager for Custer County.

*(continued on page 25)*



When 2017 IRR graduate Meredith Nichols completed an internship for the Department of Emergency Management in Custer County, Colorado, they liked her so much they created a new job for her—deputy emergency manager.



## Following a calling back home

by Maren Miller and Ryan Teller

Sameera Sigdel always knew she wanted to work in health care. At first she thought that meant being a nurse. But now she is following her calling—one she discovered during her time at Union—working in hospital administration in her native Nepal.

After moving to the U.S. for high school, Sigdel enrolled at Union College in 2012 as a pre-nursing major. And while she loved the health-care environment, she quickly realized nursing was not her calling. “I think everything comes back to the health of people,” she said. “Working at a hospital would allow me to make a difference, as long as I wasn’t a nurse.”

After working for Dr. Linda Becker, who at the time served as Union’s vice president for Student Services, Sigdel discovered she loved management and soon honed her skills, earning a degree in business and a minor in leadership while serving as president of Union’s International Club. At the time, she dreamed of returning to her home country, a place she felt needed good health care administrators.

“Nepal has good doctors and nurses, but not the good administrators they need to take care of them,” she explained in a 2014 interview. “I want to go back home and make a difference—I want to make it better.”

### Going home

Now her dream has come true. In August 2017, Sigdel accepted a position as a development and communication officer at Scheer Memorial Adventist Hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal.

After graduating from Union in May 2016, Sigdel completed an administrative internship at Centura Health System in Denver, Colo., and then went to work for the Rocky Mountain Adventist Healthcare Foundation. Sigdel discovered the opportunity to return home through Global Health Initiatives, Centura’s partnership with several hospitals in developing nations around the world, including Scheer.

As with most positions in nonprofit organizations, Sigdel found herself responsible for more than



Photo Courtesy of Sameera Sigdel

*As a business student at Union College, Sameera Sigdel dreamed of returning to her native Nepal to help manage hospitals and improve working conditions for physicians and nurses. Last fall she returned to Kathmandu to work at Scheer Memorial Adventist Hospital.*

her title would indicate. Her primary role centers around developing marketing strategy, building strong internal and external communication, creating financial models and sharing the stories of visiting medical volunteers.

Sigdel has drawn heavily on her Union experience in her new job. “My experience in Union’s leadership program helped me make decisions and execute them,” she said. “My marketing class directly prepared me in my role as a communications officer. I recently produced my first annual report for Scheer Memorial. I know how to build an annual report because we made one in a business class at Union. In fact, I do miss my business classes and wish I would have paid more attention—it definitely makes a difference.”

More important than particular skills, Sigdel values the life lessons she learned at Union. “I always thought of a career as a job,” she said. “During my time at Union, I realized a career is more about doing what you are passionate about. My job gives me satisfaction that because I work hard so others might

have better health. Although I am not directly related to clinical care in the hospital, my work affects patients because I write their stories and try to raise funds for the ones who cannot afford health care. I wanted to return to Nepal and work as a health care administrator, and I am living that dream today. I can now help people here, and Union enabled me.” **A**

# WHAT'S ONLINE



## #SeniorSunday

On most Sundays during the school year, Union posts a short story from a graduating senior—such as Jacob Cook, who will graduate this May with a business degree.



## #UnionWorldWide

Each Wednesday Union posts a story from a student who is studying abroad or serving as a student missionary—such as Ashton Lair, who will graduate in May with a degree in international rescue and relief. She is currently training in Nicaragua with her fellow IRR seniors for the spring semester.



## Basketball Tournament 2018

Union College hosted the annual Invitational Basketball Tournament 2018, Feb. 14-18, featuring men's and women's teams from 10 Adventist high schools across the country. Peruse hundreds of photos, see the scores and watch the games at [ucollege.edu/BasketballTournament2018](http://ucollege.edu/BasketballTournament2018)



## ucollege.edu

Read the latest news and keep up with events on Union's website.

## Red Cross receives Union's Community Partnership Award

In January, Union presented a Community Partnership Award to the local chapter of the American Red Cross. Through Union's Red Cross Club, students have the opportunity to practice the disaster response skills learned in international rescue and relief and nursing classes. Once each month the club answers all Red Cross calls in the county and surrounding area—including assisting with structure fires or even setting up tornado shelters. Read more at

[ucollege.edu/red-cross-partnership](http://ucollege.edu/red-cross-partnership)



## Student puppetry display at McClelland Art Gallery

Union College student Ethan Fishell recently displayed a collection of his handmade puppets in the McClelland Art Gallery.

Read full story at

[ucollege.edu/fishell-puppet](http://ucollege.edu/fishell-puppet)



# WHAT'S ONLINE



**UCLive**

## Mid-America Union Music Festival

Students from academies and high schools across the Mid-America territory congregated at Union College for the 65th Annual Music Festival. Watch the mass choir performance at

[livestream.com/uclive/maumusic2018-2](http://livestream.com/uclive/maumusic2018-2)



## Christmas Concert

In December, the Division of Fine Arts held their annual Christmas Concert in College View church, featuring music from a variety of college vocal and instrumental performance groups.

Watch the performance at

[livestream.com/uclive/events/7913196](http://livestream.com/uclive/events/7913196)



**Youtube**

## Preparing to be a pastor

Like every Union College theology major, Kolby Beem spent the first semester of his senior year as a pastoral intern under the mentorship of a senior pastor. This immersive opportunity allows students to experience every aspect of pastoral life and graduate ready to lead.

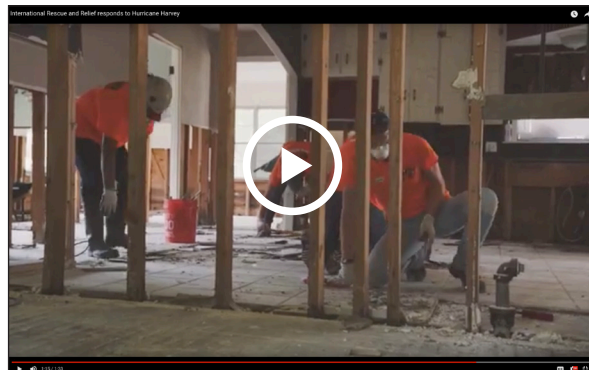
For Beem, that meant spending August through December 2017 working in a church in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Watch the video at

[youtu.be/e4qMDSY-dgU](http://youtu.be/e4qMDSY-dgU)

## IRR Students Respond to Hurricane Harvey

After Hurricane Harvey dropped torrential rains on Southeast Texas in September 2017, a team of 24 Union students and faculty spent a week helping residents of Port Arthur, Texas, clean up their flood-damaged homes. Watch the video at

[youtu.be/NntdgZqIXVE](http://youtu.be/NntdgZqIXVE)



## Project Impact 2017

Every September, Union College takes a day off from classes to serve at more than 60 sites around the Lincoln community—for organizations who serve the community all year long. Over 37 years, more than 20,000 volunteers have given 131,000 hours to our community. Watch the video at

[youtu.be/oE2PXgqSP7U](http://youtu.be/oE2PXgqSP7U)



# Redefining the mission field

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
STUDENTS LEARN TO SEE  
THE WORLD THROUGH NEW EYES

*by Trena Smith Reed '97*

Historically, we picture a mission field as a far-flung place where savages need saving. But for many Union students like international relations major Jonathan Deemer, the mission field is everywhere: in our government, in our schools, in our businesses, in our neighborhoods. The mission field encompasses both the far-flung and our backyard.

Deemer's journey will take him overseas to an internship at the United States European Command in Stuttgart, Germany this summer.

But Deemer's journey to Germany began with a major detour.

Before graduating high school in Lincoln, Neb., he applied to the United States Air Force Academy—a rigorous process with a low acceptance rate.

Deemer was accepted. He started his studies at the Air Force Academy directly out of high school, but returned home for personal reasons after only one month at the Academy.

### Jonathan's journey was rerouted.

Fortunately, Union College held a scholarship for him, and after starting at Union that August, he subsequently enrolled in the United States Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Course, a nationwide program for college students who wish to become commissioned officers in the Marine Corps.

"My plan is to go to law school," Deemer explained. "I have a law contract with the Marine Corps; that means, once I graduate law school, I will become a Judge Advocate. My plan is to do that for four years; then I'd like to work in the State Department's Office of the Legal Adviser for law enforcement and intelligence working on things like treaty negotiations, international terrorism laws, and criminal proceedings with foreign policy implications."

To achieve these goals, Deemer is double majoring in international relations and business finance.

When asked what drew him to international relations, Deemer said, "Being able to understand headlines and being able to understand why things happen, especially on a global scale."

Union professor Christopher Banks, who founded the program, agrees: "If you can understand the news, I've done my job. Part of the thrill of international relations is real time events."

Banks launched the international relations program at Union College, the first offered at an Adventist college or university, because he saw a gap—a discrepancy between diplomacy in the secular world and diplomacy in the Seventh-day Adventist global church. Knowing what the church stands for and knowing what we have to offer the world, he wondered, "How can I get these two worlds interconnected? Where is our international relations program?"

Classes covering regions such as Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Middle East, North Atlantic, and East and Southeast Asia prepared Deemer for some prestigious internships.

- He interned with Nebraska Senator Brett Lindstrom the summer of his freshman year.
- He interned with United States Senator for Nebraska Ben Sasse the summer of his sophomore year.
- He is currently working on a remote internship with the Hudson Institute Center for Political and Military Analysis, a non-profit think tank headquartered in Washington, D.C., where he works with the center's director researching topics like Russian Chinese defense cooperation and Uzbekistan's military developments.
- He will be in Stuttgart, Germany, this summer interning at the headquarters of United States European Command. (While the exact department he will be working with is yet to be assigned, he believes he'll intern with the J5/8 directorate: Policies, Strategy, Partnering and Capabilities.)

### Deemer's journey is just beginning.

These opportunities put him in the perfect position to go into the world and be a change-maker, which is exactly what Professor Banks challenges his students to do. "My job," he said, "is to sharpen students' logic, to sharpen their critical thinking skills and analysis, and to show them the logical process to discover the answer for themselves. If we ask the right questions, know the process in which to do so, and grab God's hand, we can't go wrong. And that's the beauty of the international relations program: it provides the world with an alternative way of understanding itself."

The international relations degree offered at Union College teaches the principles of diplomacy and foreign policy and provides insights into international politics and institutions. Job possibilities include diplomacy, lobbying, political analysis, international law, intelligence, and business consulting. With the ever-growing interconnected global economy these skills are increasingly valuable to governments and businesses.

The journey for Deemer and his fellow students in the international relations program at Union is a global journey filled with opportunities to begin reshaping their world:

- **Karen Braga** recently finished a high-level internship with CYC Magnet Industries, a major Chinese magnet manufacturer in Shanghai, China. She now works in London on an internship with British communications firm SayComms.
- **Maylina Graham** assists in the public relations and marketing department of the Atlanta-based refugee organization FREE REFUGEES.
- **Senga Rutebuka** attended the 2016 United Nations Association of the United States Leadership Summit that was held in Washington, D.C., and has been the catalyst for establishing a chapter of the United Nations Association at Union College in the 2017-2018 school year.

Banks believes the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a message and the international relations program prepares students to be the couriers of that message.

"Union is working on how international relations can grow from the soil of what Christ has given us to take this life-giving message to a world that is dying," he explained.

And the students of Union College's international relations program are going into the world and, armed with the tools to understand and the background of a strong Christ-centered program, they are ready to do the work. **A**

*Trena Smith Reed '97 is a freelance writer based in Lincoln, Neb.*

# The Quest for the Perfect Cheesecake

by Mike Mennard

The perfect cheesecake was born in Lincoln, Neb. More specifically, it was born at Union College's Culver Hall and Cooper's Apartments. For two years, Marcus Morris, an ambitious psychology major, matched wits with cream cheese, sugar, sour cream and eggs.

It all began in Culver Hall where as a student Morris collected, recreated, and, of course, tested recipes from around the world. In time, he sought his own distinct product and his own baker's "voice." His senior year as a village student living in Cooper Apartments, he relished having his own kitchen in which to work. And yet, as Morris recalled, "I still did my best research and development at Culver." With each new variation to the recipe, he'd bring samples back to his home dormitory.

In 2006, after two years of trial and error, Morris knew he had found it—a distinctly Midwestern cheesecake. Unlike the dense and sour cream-rich cakes of New York, his cheesecake was creamy, light, affordable, and yes, delectable.

## But what to call his tasty creations?

"The name came while still living in Culver," recalled Morris. "When you think of good cheesecake, you think classy, refined. That's when the name came—"High Society Cheesecake."

Yet even as he honed his baking skills, he began putting his psychology education to use as a drug and rehabilitation counselor. After classes, he worked at a nearby treatment center, counselling addicts toward recovery. "I loved the work, helping people. I have such a heart for struggling people. But I quickly realized I would need more schooling to continue in the field. Was that what I truly wanted from life?"

Morris graduated with a bachelor's degree in psychology in May '06. Graduation was only the beginning of an amazing year:

Even as a student, he had begun supplying cheesecake to restaurants, coffee hangouts, and pastry shops throughout Lincoln. The reviews exceeded even his high expectations. And yet, maintaining a growing demand for his product while counseling addicts pulled at him. It was as if he had two full-time jobs. One of them had to give.

His passion was customer service. And cheesecake. What's more, by summer 2006, Morris could see he was garnering something businesses crave—a demand.

## A little help from friends

Psychology is not a traditional path to learning about supply and demand, inventories, and bottom lines. Morris needed mentors. It turns out they were there all along.

But an education can take place as much outside the classroom as in. In Morris' case, he learned a lot simply by riding the bus with Jerome Lang.

"Anytime I rode in the bus with Jerome Lang, I made it a point to sit in the seat behind him." There, Morris could learn basics of business and even life. Perhaps more importantly, he gained inspiration. And Lang loved to chat with him, encouraging him.

Morris remembered, "When I contemplated opening an actual shop, I went to Jerome first." Morris told Lang his dream, how people might come to a brick-and-mortar shop for a warm welcome, good food, and the best cheesecake in the Midwest. Lang took him under his wing, offered him all the wisdom he had, plus a five-year lease.

In November '06, a mere six months after graduation, Morris opened shop in a small mall on the corner of 48th Street, just north of Old Cheney Road.

Once he opened shop, Morris recalls how Union's long-time baker Bernie Rieke, whom he considered a baking master, joined in the enthusiasm. He immediately carried Morris' cheesecakes alongside the college's baked goods at Wheatberries.

"I can't tell you," said Morris, "how much it meant to me that he did that, that my own school believed in me enough to carry my product." And it would be an understatement to say his cheesecakes are relished by Union students.

*M*arcus Morris earned a psychology degree at Union—all while experimenting on his classmates to develop a cheesecake now in demand both in his shop and across Lincoln.



Even though Marcus Morris takes cheesecake very seriously, his personality comes through in the décor of his shop and the design of his desserts.



As if the year couldn't be more magical, in 2007, less than a year after launching the shop, he married his Union College sweetheart and the love of his life, Rachel Jahn. She, too, attended Union College, where the two met in 2005 thanks to a mutual friend. From Union, Rachel went to cosmetology school, but eventually returned to finish her business degree at Union in 2011.

Rachel Morris has become his closest friend in life and business. And with that comes perks. She loves nothing more than watching Morris at work—his feisty drive, his determination, and his audacity in the face of any challenge. Plus, as she put it, "I love working next to my hot hubby!"

### A season of sadness

But that year ended with some sadness.

Morris found the greatest inspiration from his dad, Monte Morris, who managed the Adventist Book Center on Prescott Avenue for years. From his dad, Morris learned about making customers feel welcome, about creating an inviting store and about treating people right. Best of all, he was his son's biggest cheerleader from day one.

"I'd come home and say, 'Hey, Dad. I made \$140 today.' And he'd pump his fist and say, 'All right!'" Of course both of them knew \$140 wasn't much, but the encouragement meant everything.

Sadly, in April '07, less than a year after opening the shop, his dad died of a heart attack. Monte had planned to work at his son's shop, and it had been his dream to work alongside his son.

But his dad's influence can be seen all through the shop—in the quality, the service, and now the décor, based on a picture of a unique train Morris found in his dad's things after he died, which now hangs in the shop.

High Society Cheesecake truly is a family affair. Even his mom, Mary Morris, who graduated from Union in 1992 with a degree in nursing, makes the soup each day. "The soup is to die for," explained one frequent patron.

### Started in faith, remaining in faith

Marcus and Rachel Morris are not ashamed of their faith. It took faith to launch the business. It takes faith sometimes to get up early in the morning to meet a day's orders. But it is a faith, not in business acumen, but in God.

To this day, he closes his shop for the Sabbath they value as a family. They serve foods that are vegetarian-friendly. And they remain connected and active in the College View church—a connection that has gotten them through both tough and good times.

This is a legacy Morris received from his parents, his teachers and Union mentors.

### A growing venture

Today, you can find Morris' cheesecake in every Hy-vee and Super Saver grocery store in Lincoln, not to mention dozens of specialty shops. Like all good entrepreneurs, Morris is thinking ahead, and is about to begin shipping nationally and internationally.

"Even if you come into our shop and the tables and chairs seem empty, I guarantee we are hard at work." Indeed, they are busily filling orders that seem to be growing by the day.

However, if you are ever in Lincoln, it is a must that you stop in at Marcus and Rachel's shop, still on the corner of the small mall on 48th near Old Cheney, and enjoy a meal. The *Lincoln Journal Star* newspaper gives the food and the place an A. Patrons attest that it is some of the best food around. And be prepared to be warmly welcomed.

And absolutely plan to have some cheesecake. **A**

*Mike Mennard is an adjunct professor, musician and freelance writer in Lincoln, Neb.*



# Union's guaranteed education enables grad to follow true calling

by Lauren Bongard Schwarz '04

Russell Palmer III '06 and '13 was determined to be a doctor. So he enrolled in Union College as a pre-med major, graduating in 2006 with a chemistry degree and plans to attend medical school at Loma Linda University.

But his first attempt at the MCAT didn't go so well. "I bombed out," he said. "So I went back home, studied all summer, and went to take it again. But something didn't feel right. I stopped at the door of the test and prayed, 'God, if this is what You want for me, let me do well.'"

His second score was even lower.

"I felt like God was closing that door and that chapter of my life," he recalled. Within days, administrators at his alma mater, Thunderbird Academy, called. They needed a part-time science teacher.

"That was it for me. I fell in love," he said "I discovered my calling to be a teacher."

Palmer spent two years at Thunderbird before transitioning to Auburn Academy, where he worked for a year, teaching Bible classes and getting a feel for academy life and a new vision for his own life.

"I knew I had to go back to Union again," he said. Luckily, he was in the perfect place timing-wise. Union's Guaranteed Education program offers a tuition-free bachelor's degree for students between two and six years after graduation.

"It had been three years, so I was able to go back to Union for a completely free degree," he said. He was carrying student debt from his first college degree, and he'd been earning a task-force salary. He wouldn't have been able to go back to school without the Guaranteed Education program. "It changed my life by enabling me to get degrees in something I was interested in," he said. He graduated for a second time in December 2013 with degrees in religion and science education.

A new career wasn't the only thing Palmer found during his second stint at Union. He met his future wife, Sarah Kohls Palmer '14, a physician assistant studies major, a month after school started. "We were both prayerfully returning to Union, trusting that God would lead us into careers and the person He had created for us," Palmer said.

Today, he teaches middle school science, religion and robotics at Mile High Academy in Denver, Colo.

## Learning to Adapt

During his first years at Union, Palmer had noticed a difference in his attitude toward his future career: "The other pre-med students were super passionate, but there was something in the pit of my stomach leading me away from it," he said. "I was stubborn. I didn't prayerfully consider whether God had something else in store for me."

But when he started teaching, he realized he was on to something better: "Teaching was so freeing," he said. "My days of trying to be a doctor were over, and I could embrace God's will for me."

Dr. Charles Freidline, longtime chemistry professor who died in 2013, had given Palmer a hint at his true calling on Palmer's first graduation day. "Dr. Freidline knew I was struggling with my major. He wrote something on my graduation card that I will never forget. He told me the story of a pre-med student who could have fallen into the path of medicine. But that student was now the longest-serving, most-impacting college chaplain in the world—Dr. Rich Carlson. Dr. Freidline told me that if God leads you away from medicine, don't be afraid to follow His pathway. I had no idea the wisdom he was speaking to me."

Looking back, Palmer believes the message was crystal clear: "That could be me. I could have been stubborn and forced my way into medicine and be plugging away as a doctor somewhere," he said. "Instead, I'm changing kids' lives and building God's kingdom."

Palmer said he learned adaptability through the process of finding the place God wanted him. "You have to listen for God's voice and for His leading," he said. "You have to be willing to go down the pathway on which He leads you. When God's will links with yours, there's no feeling like it. Finally, after all of these years, I'm on God's path for me."

Palmer sees the long way around was part of God's plan. "God smoothed out some of my rough edges at Thunderbird and Auburn," he said. "That prepared me to be a teacher and to meet my wife. Before those experiences, I wasn't ready. But I adapted to what He wanted for me, and now I'm living His plan." **A**

*Lauren Bongard Schwarz '04 is a freelance writer in Boseman, Mont.*





photo: stock photography service

# Union College to launch **occupational therapy assistant program**

by Emily Wood Roque Cisneros '16

**U**nion College has always adapted to the needs of the students and communities it serves. In 1891, that meant offering classes in German and Danish, training students to preach the gospel in the immigrant communities of the Great Plains. Today, the college's commitment to its students and community means extending the healing mission of Christ through a new associate's degree for occupational therapy assistants.

The OTA program will be a two-year program, and students may enroll at Union College and begin the general education part of the program in fall 2018. Pending accreditation approval, students may apply for the OTA-specific portion of the program in December 2018, begin classes in August 2019 and graduate in December 2020.

## OTA is an in-demand profession

"It's important for any educational institution to be constantly assessing what they're offering," said Michelle Velasquez-Mesnard, vice president for Enrollment Services. "We need to offer new majors and improve our education so students will succeed in the marketplace." Velasquez-Mesnard began the process of creating the new program as a part of her previous role as associate vice president for academic initiatives. "Union has developed a strong reputation in the health sciences, and we excel in experiential learning. Occupational therapy is all about practical, hands-on learning. It's the perfect fit."

One of the fastest growing careers in the U.S. according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, demand for occupational therapy assistants is projected to grow 28 percent by 2026. Entry level salaries for graduates of the two-year program are significantly above average and the occupation as a whole enjoys a median annual wage approaching \$60,000 per year. In fact, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked OTA as #1 "Best Health Care Support Job" and #12 in "The 100 Best Jobs" for 2017.

## What is an occupational therapy assistant?

Occupational therapy assistants work alongside occupational therapists to help the injured, ill or disabled develop skills needed for daily life, such as using assistive technologies, adaptive equipment, recovering motor function and developing therapy interventions to help clients become more independent. In addition to being the second college in Nebraska to offer an OTA program, Union will also be the second Adventist college to offer an OTA program in the U.S.

## Building a new program

Good programs require good leadership, and an exhaustive, year-long search lead Union College to name Cami Hollins as the program's first director. Hollins will be responsible for ensuring the program's success as the program

seeks accreditation. "Getting to be involved in the development of the program from the ground level is an amazing opportunity," she said. "Union's faith-filled environment along with our commitment to service blend well with the healing nature of the profession of occupational therapy."

Hollins completed a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy at the University of Mary in Bismarck, N.D. Since then, she has worked in hospital care, acute rehab, long-term care, school based settings as well as home health and has held both treatment and management positions. "I am eager for the opportunity to inspire others as they pursue the profession of occupational therapy," she said.

Her varied experiences will help build the education our students need. Her multi-field knowledge and administrative background will help as we work to get accredited," said Velasquez-Mesnard.

Curriculum for this program is grounded in the sciences with students studying anatomy and physiology, human movement and occupations, which all help to develop a foundation for more in-depth courses that expand on humans as occupational beings across the lifespan." Our program is unique in that we focus not only on the development of knowledge, but on real-life experience. Our graduates will have the knowledge and experience to be highly sought graduates in the field," said Hollins.

Because occupational therapy is a hands-on field, "our program will utilize hands-on learning experiences in a simulation lab, during volunteer experiences as well as during required fieldwork experiences to reinforce didactic learning," she continued.

"In a constantly changing world, occupational therapy has a vital role of facilitating quality of life," said Hollins. "I can't think of a better way to spend the next phase of my career than by helping Union College students learn the adaptability, critical thinking skills and compassion they will need to be a light in the lives of their clients." **A**

*Cami Hollins has been building Union's two-year OTA program from the ground up to prepare students for one the hottest jobs in health care.*



photo: Steve Nuzano/Union College

# SWAPPING lesson plans for less plans

By Emily Wood Roque Cisneros '17

When Danica Eysten arrived at Union College as a sophomore, she came from New Jersey sight unseen with only two suitcases and a goal: become an elementary teacher. "I became an Adventist in the fifth grade and attended a small, one-room school for two years," she said. "I loved it so much I thought teaching was my calling."



Now nearing her last semester as an undergraduate, Eylenstein is a communication major with an emerging media emphasis and minors in marketing and English. She switched majors as a junior after her experience at Union helped her discover a hidden passion. “Adaptable describes my entire college career,” she said. “God really led me in places I didn’t expect to go.”

## Connecting to Union

Eylenstein first learned about Union from her former camp counselor, Tash Copenig ’13. Hearing about their education program, she tucked the thought away. “I knew I wanted to start college close to home,” she explained. “I moved halfway across the country for academy, so I didn’t want to go so far away again for college.” She began at her local community college.

Yet when the time came to start school, Eylenstein applied to Union out of curiosity—and was accepted. Enrollment counselors tried hard to recruit her even while she completed her spring semester at the local community college. “I ultimately didn’t think I could afford a private education,” she admitted. “Ignoring God’s call would be putting it mildly. I didn’t tell them ‘no’ but I didn’t want to tell them ‘yes’ either.”

Fast forward to the end of July, and while attending a friend’s wedding, Eylenstein’s mom happened to answer one of Union’s calls. Ecstatic, she immediately called her daughter and shared her determination to make an Adventist education possible. “I was already registered for another fall at community college and I had two weeks to get to Union at that point!” she remembered. “But Union really wanted to work with me. Everything really came together.”

## Learning to be a teacher

Eylenstein loved her first year in the education program. “Allowing me to observe and teach classes right away made a monumental difference in how I learned here versus at community college,” she said. She also credits her excellent professors and their personalized instruction for helping her succeed that year.

Over the summer, Eylenstein wasn’t sure if she could afford another year of private education. But she came across the opportunity to experience Union in a different way—as a task force volunteer. “The principal of Maplewood Academy, Stacy Stocks, is my friend,” she said. After seeing a post from Stocks on Facebook about prayers because they didn’t have an assistant dean, Eylenstein felt impressed to pray for her. “I messaged her that I was praying...and then I couldn’t stop thinking about the job.”

“I didn’t even like high schoolers,” joked Eylenstein. “But everything fell into place within just a few short weeks.”

While working as assistant dean in Minnesota, Eylenstein began questioning her quest for teaching. “I substituted in a lot of classes and felt I wasn’t sure this was what I wanted.”

## Communicating a new mission

A mission trip ultimately tipped her toward a new path. The female sponsor dropped out only weeks before takeoff. “I already had a plane ticket home for spring break,” said Eylenstein. But after being asked by the trip’s leader and with her mom’s firm insistence to go, she spent break in Belize with a group of teenagers.

“I wrote an article for the Minnesota Conference newsletter when we returned and I loved it,” she said. “It reminded me of when I worked on the school newspaper in middle school and I started thinking that maybe I wanted more experience in communication.”

Fear made her hesitant to change her educational track. “Switching majors can be like starting over. My friends were in the education program, I knew all the professors, and I knew my graduation would be set back,” she said.

Dr. Robison, a writing and history professor, talked Eylenstein through her concerns. She saw how communication combined her interests—writing, photography, design—and switched. “Emerging media sounded like a perfect fit,” she said of the emphasis that helps communication students learn to use the internet and other digital tools to communicate effectively.

Her first semester back at Union, Eylenstein took a magazine editing class from now retired Chris Blake and knew she made the right choice. “I learned so much in that one class. I felt engaged, confident, and sure this was where God wanted me.”

Eylenstein also experienced her favorite part of being in the communication program—the hands-on experience—just as she had in the education program. “We submit work to magazines, work with organizations, and learn about general skills that apply to a variety of careers,” she said.

With her new calling also came new challenges. Between juggling classes, a social life, and sleep, Eylenstein holds several on-campus jobs to help strengthen her skills. “My jobs take me out of my comfort zone because they require in-depth application and practice of my communication skills,” she said. Currently Eylenstein works as head resident assistant in Rees Hall, the women’s residence; editor of Union’s yearbook, the *Golden Cords*; and as news editor for *Clocktower*, Union’s student newspaper.

For example, Eylenstein knew only basic graphic design when accepting the yearbook position. She had to ask dozens of questions and sought help from many mentors to make the project come to life. She originally wasn’t sure she wanted the position, but is thankful now she said yes.

Even as a head RA, Eylenstein finds her graphic design and interpersonal skills useful. “Daily I engage in complex situations, often speak publicly, and when someone needs help with various dorm publications and little things like door hangers or Christmas cards, I’m there.”

Eylenstein isn’t exactly sure where she sees herself going come graduation but she knows she’s prepared for wherever God leads. “A high school teacher once told me, ‘Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken or bent out of shape,’” she said. “I feel God is preparing me for my future to be adaptable for any situation.” **A**

*Emily Wood Roque Cisneros '17 is a freelance writer in Cedaredge, Colo.*



# CHANGING THE FACE OF EDUCATION

UNION GRADUATE  
DRAWS ON HER  
BACKGROUND TO  
GIVE HER HOLBROOK  
STUDENTS A CHANCE  
AT SUCCESS

*by Michael Rohm '14*

**J**ovannah Poor Bear-Adams remembers all the students who have come through Holbrook Academy. In her seven years there—first as girls' dean and English teacher, then as vice principal, and now as Dean of Student Services and Programming—she has worked with hundreds of students, each with their own unique narrative.

She remembers those rare students who are academically prepared for the school year, and whose parents are supportive and involved, but more common are the students of abusive families and minimal education: the freshman who couldn't read the alphabet; the orphaned kindergartner who slept on the floor at her grandmother's house; the young woman whose mother took her and her three siblings to a Walmart and said, "I'm done being your mother," and drove away; the straight-A student who went home for the summer and came back suicidal because of the sexual abuse she had suffered at the hands of her uncle.

These are the students Adams remembers, and it is for them that the Holbrook alum continues to work in a school whose turnover rate is so high that last fall the staff celebrated the fact that no one had quit.

Considering her own background—both as a native American and as a victim of sexual abuse—it is not hard to understand why Adams works with one of the most disenfranchised populations in America.

"There is a huge gap between where I started and where I am now," Adams said, recounting her childhood of homelessness, drug use, and sexual and physical abuse. "I want to bridge that gap for the students. I want to give them what I wish I had when I was their age."

## A tailor-made career

When Adams graduated from Union College and returned to Holbrook in 2011 as the new girls' dean and English teacher, she saw the need for more than scholastic education.

"There is such a wide range of students in the dorm," she said. "Some don't have electricity or running water at home, and they use outhouses. Every year we've had a student who will not use the restroom here because they're afraid of the toilet."

As the dean and teacher, Adams observed how difficult it is for students to learn from a textbook when they don't understand or trust their environment. When she became vice principal in 2012, Adams continued to notice fundamental obstacles that restricted students from an education.

"As vice principal, a lot of my work was pure discipline," she said. "We were so busy trying to deal with behavioral issues that I didn't have time to do anything proactive. I wanted to be able to teach and work with students in a positive way."

So great was the need—and Adams' desire to address it—that in 2016 she wrote a proposal for a job description and presented it to the principal. The proposal outlined the challenges she had observed at Holbrook, and the ways in which she could begin to overcome them. The principal and the school board approved the proposal, and in July of that year Jovannah assumed her new role at Holbrook: Dean of Student Services and Programming.

The title is suitably broad, but even it does not carry the weight of what Adams does for the students at Holbrook; her role is nothing less than

to provide for the safety, success, and sense of wellbeing in her students, now and in the future.

"The role is a lot of picking up things that can get overlooked," she said. "But they are things that are very, very important to the students' success."

## Helping students thrive

On the surface, Adams' new tailor-made role seems typical of what one would expect at an academy: working with the deans, parents, and students.

Look deeper, however, you see that Adams' interactions are more profound than typical academy coordination. Her work with the deans includes teaching a dorm curriculum that gives students proper health and hygiene skills—how to use a toilet and to brush their teeth, for example—among other lifestyle skills that are often overlooked in abusive homes. Her work with parents is to encourage deeper involvement and safer homes, the latter of which is addressed with classes that include healthy cooking and self-defense for women.

But it is her work with students that has begun to reshape Holbrook Academy.

"I've been where these students are," Adams said. "When I came here as a freshman, I had no idea that people actually ate three times a day. I thought that was just in the movies. That's where these kids are now, but I know I can offer them a link between this and where they can be."

The challenge is not only to perform the duties typical of a dean of student services—a laundry list of planning, researching, coordinating and interacting—but also to give shape to a world in which each student believes he or she can succeed. Adams is not only a resource; she is a beacon of hope.

"Once these kids adapt to the structure, they realize they are free to be themselves," she said. "Holbrook is a very good place to be."

Holbrook is such a good place to be that last summer eight students elected to remain on campus for a brand new six-week summer program designed by Adams that included classes in horsemanship, Spanish and pottery, in addition to a daily regimen of games, activities, and camp meetings.

"There isn't much to do on the reservation except get into trouble," Adams said. "The majority of the students who want to stay here do so because it is safe." The sense of safety that Adams and other Holbrook staff strive daily to impart on students is not limited to the physical. Adams has recently designed and implemented programs that bolster spiritual, mental and emotional wellbeing as well.

Among the numerous components added to Holbrook curriculum in recent years are lessons on how to pray, how to abstain from drugs and alcohol, how to study for a test, how to deal with

*"There is a huge gap between where I started and where I am now. I want to bridge that gap for my students. I want to give them what I wish I had when I was their age."*



*Jovannah Adams has created a curriculum at Holbrook that goes far beyond reading, writing and arithmetic—including many necessary life skills such as healthy eating, hygiene and self defense.*

photo courtesy of Jovannah Poor Bear-Adams

grief, how to write a resume and how to grow vegetables. Additionally, Adams organizes health fairs with the physical education staff, drug free weeks with the counselors, and college weeks with the teachers.

"Holbrook has progressed so much since I was a student," Adams said. "We still serve the same number of students, but we are offering them so much more."

### **Educated for a life of service**

That philosophy of deep, holistic education is nothing new to Adams. When she went to Union College to pursue her degree in Language Arts Education, she saw firsthand the value of a broad, student-oriented curriculum. But it was the compassionate community endemic to Union College that got Adams—then pregnant with her first child—through her senior year.

"My husband and I were sleeping on an egg crate mattress on the floor of our apartment," Adams recalled. "I was six months pregnant at the time, and we didn't have much."

When a Union staff member learned the pregnant student was sleeping on the floor, she rallied the campus.

"By the time that day ended, we were sleeping on a real bed," Adams said. "We also had a couch, a chair, a kitchen table, dishes

and more. We had a home all because people I didn't even know came together to help."

"I finished college because of the people at Union," she added.

That experience so moved her—and restored her faith in a God she had grown distant from—that Adams made a contract with God to return to Holbrook after graduation.

"I felt like God wanted me to work with native people," she said. "I wanted to show them that they could go to college too."

When she graduated from Union, Adams followed through on her commitment and returned to Holbrook.

"Everything at Union worked together for me," she said. "Now, God's plan has revealed itself." **A**

*Michael Rohm '14 is a freelance writer in Hubbard, Ore.*



*(Planning for the worst continued from page 8)*

"Meredith has a valuable skill set," said Cindy Howard, Emergency Manager for Custer County. "From writing and editing plans, sharing documents and inviting collaboration among stakeholders, her education and her experience in training and exercise are bringing essential skills to the program."

### **Moving up in her career**

Following the success of the updated Custer County Emergency Operations Plan, Nichols has moved on to her next project: to develop a working hazmat plan for the county. As a member of the hazmat committee, Nichols will help create a tabletop exercise based on the most current response protocols, followed by a full-scale, county-wide simulation.

"The hope is to get as many people involved as possible," she said. "We want to make sure we have the right resources to manage a hazmat disaster."

To accomplish this goal, Nichols has begun to develop relationships with key players in the county. The recent graduate now interacts with fire chiefs, sheriffs, county commissioners and behavioral health specialists.

"It's kind of insane because I'm only 23 and newly graduated," Nichols said. "But Union helped me to feel prepared. My communication skills really developed at Union. Rick Young made a point of how to communicate in front of people and how to get your point across."

If Nichols has gotten one point across, it is that she is an invaluable member of the emergency management team in Custer County. She is so well-regarded, in fact, that the county offered her an all-expense-paid enrollment in the Emergency Management Academy in Denver this April. The six-month program is a crash course on how to function as an emergency manager. By the end, Nichols will be qualified to lead emergency preparedness at the county level.

"You learn a lot information about emergency management," Nichols said. "They teach all the fundamentals for ways to do the job well. I definitely feel honored that the county wants to send me."

### **A future in emergency management**

For someone who initially never wanted to go into emergency management, Nichols has taken to her surprising new career with passion.

"I just stumbled into it," she recalled. "I wanted to go into public health, but somehow I shifted into this career."

Such career adaptability is as much testament to the IRR program as it is to Nichols' own identity – the range of opportunities for the dedicated IRR student is as wide as the imagination.

"IRR is so versatile," said Nichols, who graduated with a personalized IRR degree in International Community Development. "You can go so many directions. I know it can be intimidating if you don't have a plan by senior year, but the type of person who makes it through IRR is a great candidate for almost any job."

Rick Young agrees. Rather than prescribing a one-size-fits-all curriculum, the program director encourages IRR students to think big.

"If we can mold a program to your specific career and academic goals rather than the usual academics that college throws at you, I'm all for it," he said. "Some students don't like the medical aspect of IRR, and that's fine. We will build a program around the direction you want to go."

Nichols is thankful to have graduated with exactly what she needed to succeed.

"Being able to transform my degree into what I wanted was super helpful," she said. "I saw each class as an opportunity to grow. Union really did help me." **A**

*Michael Rohm '14 is a freelance writer who lives in Hubbard, Ore.*



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'67 denotes graduation year

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## 1960s

**Henry '67 and Mary Jane Albertsen Zollbrecht ('67)** celebrated 50 years of marriage on June 18, 2017, with all their family and friends. They met at Union College and married after Henry's graduation. Henry earned a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University and a Master of Public Health degree from Loma Linda University. Mary Jane earned a secretarial degree and worked for many years for various CPA firms. Together they have pastored in Minnesota, Idaho and Oregon. While Henry pastored the Tabernacle Church in Portland, Ore., Mary Jane worked in the Oregon Conference office. They have enjoyed gardening and cruising, and Mary Jane enjoys quilting. Since 2013 they have been retired in Oregon City, Ore.



Henry and Mary Zollbrecht



*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.*

**Proverbs 22:6**

## Births

Caydy Jo Riley Harvey was born to Rick and **Regina Wehling Harvey '96** on Sept. 21, 2017. She weighed 6 lbs 5 oz and was 19.5 inches long. Rick and Regina are semi-retired, own rental properties in Hastings, Neb., and live on three acres in the country. Regina taught 12 years in Iowa and Nebraska Adventist schools, and Rick farmed their families' homestead acreage near Orchard, Neb., for over 20 years.



**Christie Eisendrath Cain ('07)** and her husband James are pleased to announce the birth of Adelyn Luisa "Addy Lu" Cain on Jan. 6, 2018, weighing 7 lbs 6 oz. James is a chiropractor and owner of Champion Family Chiropractic in Lincoln, Neb. Christie is office manager for his office as well as a special education paraeducator at Scott Middle School.



Jedidiah Eszler Styron was born to **Jeana Styron ('08)** and her husband Andrew in September 2017. They live in Bismarck, N.D., where Jeana is academic vice president and registrar at Dakota Adventist Academy.

**Denton Underwood '11** and his wife, Alesha, welcomed Spencer Lee Underwood on Nov. 12, 2017. He weighed 6 lbs 14 oz and was 21 inches long. Denton is a computer technician at Union College, and Alesha is a trauma/critical care nurse at Bryan Health in Lincoln, Neb.



# WEDDINGS



**Naomi Woods '04** and Edgar-Aaron Fernández were married Dec. 22, 2017, in New York City. Edgar-Aaron works in IT management at Thornton Tomasetti in Manhattan, N.Y. Naomi will finish the school year as music teacher and department chair at Portland Adventist Academy before relocating to New York City in June.



**Bryan Hardin '12** married Annie Li in the Arvada Church in Colorado on August 3, 2017. On August 6, they had a second celebration in Yangzhou. They live in Foshan, China. Bryan is a math teacher at Mile High Academy's sister campus in Shunde, China.



**Jayne Anderson '13** and Matthew Blaire were married Oct. 29, 2017, in Littleton, Colo. They live in Brighton, Colo., where Matthew is an engineer for Swanson Rink and Jayne is looking for employment with the Denver Public Schools.



**Sandee Shirokova ('17)** and **Matthew Froemming ('17)** were married Oct. 22, 2017. They live in Minneapolis, Minn., where Sandee is in a doctoral program for chiropractic at Northwestern Health Sciences University. Matthew is starting business classes at the Carlson School of Business while owning and operating his limousine company, Agape.



**Hannah Jaster '15** married David Brown on May 7, 2017. They live in Seattle Wash., where David is director of revenue growth management for Neal Analytics and Hannah is client relationship manager at F-Squared, a financial planning and investment firm.



**Audrey Hatfield '17** married Adam Cheever on Nov. 20, 2017, at Prairie Creek Inn in Walton, Neb. They live in Noble, Okla., where Adam is an aircraft mechanic for Will Rogers World Airport. Audrey hopes to work as a nurse's aide and plans to be a midwife.

# IN MEMORY |



*Union College was built on the strength and the sacrifice of those who have gone before. We thank God for the blessed hope that we will see them again soon.*

**Death dates and/or obituaries have been received for the following individuals.**

## 1930s

**Evelyn King Swann ('35)**, Walnut Grove, Mo., died Sept. 9, 2017, at age 99. She was born in Woodward, Okla., on Dec. 20, 1917, to Chet and Dora Van Dorn King. After she attended Union College and received a teaching certificate, she taught elementary school in Woodward, Okla. While teaching there, she met a hardworking taxi driver, Ralph Swann, who regularly drove her to her job at the school. In 1937 they were married and began their family. She was a member of the Springfield Seventh-day Adventist Church for over 65 years. She was active on the church prayer chain, taught weekly Sabbath School lessons and traveled throughout the state of Missouri giving Bible and health lessons. She is survived by her daughter;

**Fonda McMillen '60**; five grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

## 1940s

**Maxine Hill Ordelheide ('44)**, Denver, Colo., died March 16, 2017, at age 91. She was born Sept. 12, 1925, in Longmont, Colo., to Jake and Nita Hill. After graduating from Johnstown High School in 1943, she completed the pre-nursing program at Union College and earned a nursing degree from Boulder Sanitarium in 1947. In 1949 she married Walter Ordelheide, and when he completed medical school, they settled in LaSalle, Colo., for three years before serving in Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam; then 20 years in California. Upon retirement they returned to their native Colorado. During retirement Maxine and Walter did volunteer medical work in Jamaica, Pakistan and Nepal. Throughout her adult life she volunteered at Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Prison Fellowship, Angel Tree, WGA and various church-related activities. Survivors include her husband, Walter; sons, Karl, Kris and Peter; daughters, Carol Meidinger and Karen Mason; sister, Doris Nashland; 12 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

## 1950s

**Berneice Schield Lunday ('53)**, Bismarck, N.D., died Aug. 2, 2017, at age 82. She was born July 19, 1935, to Jacob and Margaretha Schield and grew up north of Dodge, N.D. After attending Union College, she worked for the civil service as a stenographer and for the Corps of Engineers, where she met and married **James Lunday ('61)** in 1957. In 1987 Berneice earned a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Mary in Bismarck, N.D. She was active in the Women's Christian Temperance Society and helped care for her own aging parents. She quietly battled Parkinson's for many years. She is survived by her husband, James; daughters: **Marga Carlson ('79)**, **Amy Hinger ('80)** and Bernelda Lehmann; and sisters, Ruth Larson, Evangeline McKeel and Fran Armstrong.

**Dorothy Drake Simmons ('53)**, Westmoreland, Tenn., died April 30, 2017, at age 83. She was a member of the Highland, Tenn., church. Survivors include her husband, **Charles Simmons '55**; two sons, Mark and Mike; two

daughters, Vicki Nelson and Deborah Escandon; two brothers-in-law: **Jess Simmons '59** and **Mike Simmons ('59)**; 11 grandchildren, three step-grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Ruth Brenneise Duerksen '54**, Loma Linda, Calif., died March 9, 2017, at age 92. Born Jan. 28, 1925, to Henry and Katie Brenneise in Greenway, S.D., She graduated from Plainview Academy and then Union College in 1954. She taught in New Mexico and Texas for the next ten years before marrying Jimmie Duerksen. While raising her family, she continued to teach in New Mexico and Arizona. She graduated with a master's degree in education from the University of Arizona in 1975 and continued teaching until she was 70. After retirement she volunteered at the Friends of the Library. Survivors include her children: Penny Duerksen-Hughes and Russell; seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**Corrine Beck Gillham ('57)**, Bowdon, N.D., died Oct. 6, 2017, at age 83. She was born to Walter and O'Linda Wagner on May 2, 1934 in Manfred, N.D. When her parents died early, she was adopted by her aunt and uncle, Jake and Alvina Wagner Beck and was their only child. She went to Sheyenne River Academy and then to Union College, where she met her husband, **Chaney Gillham ('55)**. After her husband's tour of duty at Fort Riley, Kan., they purchased a farm in Progress Township near Bowdon, N.D., and farmed together until they retired in 2010. In 1985 they started Little Iron Toys and appreciated the friendships gained through this endeavor. Survivors include her husband, Chaney; daughters, **Melodee Kerr ('77)** and **Corleen Gillham ('91)**; and six grandchildren.

**Vernon Thompson '57**, Lincoln, Neb., died Dec. 30, 2017, at age 86. Born in Albert Lea, Minn., to Herman and Elsie Thompson. He graduated from Maplewood Academy and Union College and earned a Master of Business Administration degree and a doctorate from Columbia University. His professions included taxi driver, baker, teacher, dean of men, healthcare consultant, preceptor, foster parent, author and elder. In July 1952 he was drafted into the U.S. Army and planned to be a medic because of his religious convictions. But he was mistakenly assigned to a tank company. His company commander reassigned him stateside when his talent for baking cinnamon rolls was discovered. He is survived

by his wife, **Jill Johnson Thompson '64**; son, Michael; daughters, Janelle Simpson and Michelle Pedigo; stepdaughters, Patricia Walters and Kristina Scott; 13 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

## 1960s

**David Copsey '60**, Deridder, La., died June 9, 2017, at age 84. He was born July 25, 1932, and was a Seventh-day Adventist pastor for 35 years. Throughout his career he was a singing evangelist. He was a skilled carpenter and an avid reader. Survivors include his wife, Nell; son, Kenny, six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren; two stepdaughters, Sheryl Hubenak and Sylvia Williams, and stepson, Jim Golson.

**John Deming '65**, College Place, Wash., died Nov. 29, 2017, at age 75. He was born July 2, 1942, in Gary, Ind., to Murray and Dorothy Hanson Deming. He graduated from Union College Academy in 1960 and from Union College with a bachelor's degree in history education in 1965. In 1971, he earned a master's degree in counseling from Western Michigan University. John married **Joan McTaggart ('63)** in 1964. In the summer 1992 the family moved to College Place, Wash., where John was principal for Walla Walla Valley Academy until his retirement in 2012. Following his retirement, he combined his love of service and books and worked part-time at the Book and Game Store of

Walla Walla. He is survived by his wife, Joan; sons, John Michael, Joel and **Jeff '92**; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; sisters: **Charlene Scott '57**, **Corrine King '56**, **Billie Jewett '58**, **Natalie Dodd '62**, Regina Nestell; and brother, **Michael '66**.

## 1970s

**Elaine Hagelgantz Johnson, '70**, La Crosse, Kan., died Sept. 25, 2017, at age 70. She was born Nov. 20, 1946, in Great Bend, Kan., to Wesley and Ruth Miller Hagelgantz. On May 21, 1978, she married Daniel Johnson in Peaceful Valley, Colo. Elaine taught home economics for many years in Chicago, Ill., Colorado, Florida, Washington, and Bazine, Kan. She also was a social worker for SRS family welfare. She is survived by her brother **Robert Hagelgantz ('63)** and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Carolyn Pritchett Daniels '73**, Lee's Summit, Mo., died Sept. 29, 2017, at age 64. Born July 4, 1951, to Sterling and Alice Pritchett in Kansas City, Mo., she grew up in Lee's Summit, Mo., graduating from Lee's Summit High School in 1969 and from Union College in 1973 with a bachelor's degree in social work. She earned a master's degree from Baker University in the 1990s. She was a social worker for Baptist Medical Center and the state of Missouri. Survivors include her daughter, Kira; son, Colin; one grandson; mother Alice Pritchett; and sister, Dorothy Kilmer.

**Annette Wyman Parrish '73**, Boulder, Colo., died June 11, 2017, at age 64. She and her twin sister Anita were born March 20, 1953, to Homer and Frieda Riegel Wyman. She graduated from Champion Academy in 1971 and earned an associate degree in office management from Union College in 1973. She met Larry Parrish that same year and they were married on Oct. 19, 1975. For the next ten years, she managed the medical office for a local ophthalmologist, **Dale Marcotte '51**. For the next 15 years she assumed the full-time role of mother and homemaker; while volunteering at her daughter's school and church as well as pursuing her passion for fine art. She helped in the family construction business for many years. She is survived by her husband, Larry; sister, Anita Smith; brother, Bob Wyman; daughter, Lindsay; and one granddaughter.

## 1980s

**Sharon Standridge '81**, Dayton, Ohio, died Nov. 12, 2017, at age 64. She was born Feb. 3, 1953, in Chico, Calif. After graduating from Union College with a degree in nursing, she worked in Florida, California, Tennessee and Arizona during the next 30 years. She enjoyed reading her Bible, cross-stitching, needlepoint, traveling to historical sites and college football. Survivors include her aunt, Sue Fandel; adopted sisters: **Phebe Fagala '81** and Esther Mastbaum; adopted brothers: John, Charlie and Reuben Fagala; brother, David Standridge, and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Chris Gaines '89**, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, died Nov. 13, 2017, at age 51. He was born March 16, 1966, in Auburn, N.Y., to Sue Slater. When he was three, he and Sue moved to Greeley, Colo., where she met and married Roy Gaines, who adopted Chris. He graduated from Champion Academy and Union College, and on Sept. 26, 1993, married **Ene Beattie '89**. Chris had a beautiful tenor voice and sang in church and at school. He loved

# IN MEMORY

any Colorado athletic team but especially the Broncos. Chris and Ené moved their family to Idaho in 2011 and opened a Home Instead Senior Care franchise. He is survived by his wife, Ene; children: Johnny, Bianca, Garrett, Kathryn and Ella; four grandchildren; mother, Sue Gaines; father, Bill Strong;

and siblings, Andrew, Adam and Holly Rose.

## Notice of the following deaths has been received:

**Dorothy Marsh Jewell ('50)**, Springboro, Ohio, died April 10, 2017.

**Pauline Klady Mazat ('48)**, Hendersonville, N.C., died Aug. 17, 2017, at age 98.

**William Hubert '50**, San Jose, Calif., died Feb. 15, 2017, at age 92.

**Lonnie Leui '65**, McDonald Tenn., died Sept. 26, 2017, at age 75.

**Myron Beltz ('68)**, Hermosa, S.D., died June 2017, at age 88.

## Former Union employee Marilyn McCluskey passes

**Marilyn McCluskey** of Keene, Texas, died Nov. 28, 2017, at age 89. Born in Battle Creek, Mich., she married **Richard McCluskey (former biology professor, division chair and academic dean)** in 1951. Working for many years as a registered nurse, Marilyn took on new roles when the family came to Union College in 1979. Working first as bookkeeper and secretary at the college press, she transitioned to the alumni office in 1983. She is survived by her husband, Richard; children: Cheryl Jacko, **Linda Lewis ('81)** and **Brian '87**; two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



## Former religion professor dies suddenly

**Dr. Siegfried Roeske, professor emeritus of religion**, died suddenly on Dec. 11, 2017, following a heart valve surgery. A professor at Union College from 1975-2004, Roeske was loved by students for many things, among them his Friday sing-alongs, the (mostly true) true or false tests and unforgettable accent. Roeske and his wife, Carol, were known for opening their home to students on Sabbath afternoons, and he was a friend and mentor to a generation of Union College students.

Born in Kolberg, Germany (now Kołobrzeg, Poland), Roeske and his family were among the millions of Germans expelled by the Red Army from Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries between 1944-1950. It was the largest forced migration in history until the current crisis in Syria. On the harrowing journey west, Roeske's grandparents and two of his sisters died. The family eventually found safety as refugees in Alberta, Canada.

Roeske earned his bachelor's in theology at Canadian Union College (now Burman University) in 1965. By 1969, he had earned his Master of Divinity degree at Andrews University, and he later completed his doctorate at Andrews in 1997 while teaching at Union. He served as a pastor in North Dakota and Iowa before starting his teaching career.

Carol and Siegf have three children, **Reiner '89**, **Richmond ('92)** and **Lana Cusick '92**. Since retirement, the Roeskes have lived in the Loma Linda area.

Photo: Steve Nazario/Union College

# THE LAST WORD

## Union events

### April 5-8 - Homecoming Weekend

Plan now to attend a simply unforgettable weekend reconnecting with classmates and making new friends. This year we're honoring the classes of 1948, 1958, 1963, 1968, 1978, 1988, 1993, 1998 and 2008, and celebrating the 75th birthday of the Union College gymnasium and the faculty who taught there—including Wayne Fleming, Fordyce Koenke and many more. Learn more at [www.ucollege.edu/homecoming](http://www.ucollege.edu/homecoming)

#### Homecoming highlights

- **PA Open House**—Sabbath, 2:00-4:00 p.m. Hear from the staff, visit returning PA classmates and tour the facilities.
- **International Rescue and Relief Open House**—Sabbath, 2:00-5:00 p.m. Tour the renovated space and unique layout for one of our newer programs.
- **Krueger Center Open House**—Sabbath, 3:00-5:00 p.m. Visit the newest building on campus and compare with science labs experienced years ago.
- **President's Award Reception for Barry and Lisa Forbes**—Sabbath, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Celebrate Dr. Barry and **Dr. Lisa Gerrans '92 Forbes**, for the impact they have made here at Union College as they are presented the 2018 President's Award. Remarks will be at 5:00 p.m.

### April 12-15 - Preview Days

High school students, visit Union for free! Experience classes, meet professors and find out how Union may be the perfect fit for you. Learn more at [www.ucollege.edu/visit](http://www.ucollege.edu/visit)

### May 4-6 - Commencement Weekend

Join us to celebrate as another class of Union students completes their education and joins the ranks of alumni. Learn more about the weekend at [www.ucollege.edu/graduation](http://www.ucollege.edu/graduation)

#### Publication policy

Personal submissions for publication from college alumni and friends will be printed at Union College's sole discretion. The college may choose not to publish any information that will conflict with the values of Union College and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

## LEARNING to be resilient

I love the biblical story of Joseph found in Genesis 37-42. The favorite son of a wealthy chief had his whole life laid out before him. But then he woke up a slave in a foreign land.

For many, this would have been the breaking point. But not Joseph. He decided to make the best with what he had, and with God's blessing, soon became the most favored servant of his master.

Again disaster struck. Joseph chose to stay steady and be principled, and after refusing the inappropriate advances of his master's wife, he again found himself at rock bottom—left to rot in a prison cell. Joseph chose to rise above his circumstances and be a friend, and was soon put in charge of the entire prison.

God used all these really tough situations to help Joseph build a strong character and resilience. He honed his ability to cruise through crisis and disaster, strengthening him for the challenges of leadership and the calm discernment to make tough decisions.

Then in one final stroke, God used Joseph's wisdom and experience to make him the top official in the country and save a whole civilization from starvation.

### Resilience and adaptability

Despite having to start over again and again in worse circumstances than before, Joseph displayed two of the key qualities today's employers value highly: resilience and adaptability.

With massive amounts of information at our fingertips, most anyone can learn technical skills—how to speak a language, write software, or sell a product.

But how do you learn to develop your character? How do you develop who you are? How do you learn to bounce back from bad news and tough situations? How do you learn to stay calm and make principled decisions?



Employers know you can't learn these key qualities on the internet or by listening to lectures. They also know that if employees display resilience and adaptability, they are more likely to be successful and productive.

At Union, we strive to create an educational experience that teaches our students to develop resilience and adaptability. Sure, we teach students all the technical skills so they are ready for their chosen career—that's a given. But more importantly, we give them the personal mentorship and experiences that help them strengthen key qualities that will make them successful and strong.

Like Joseph, each graduate will encounter challenges—at work, in relationships, in their faith. And we believe their experiences here at Union and their connection with God will help them to be ready.

*Vinita Sauder*  
Vinita Sauder, President

# 2018

## HOMECOMING

**UNION COLLEGE HOMECOMING**  
**April 5-8, 2018**

Join us to celebrate the 75th birthday of the gymnasium  
and remember the people who taught there.

### HONORYEARS

1948	1958	1963	1993	2008
1968	1978	1988	1998	

**Learn more or Register today**  
[www.ucollege.edu/homecoming](http://www.ucollege.edu/homecoming)

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