



Ashley Alaniz-Moyer, '14

Ashley knew she wanted to earn her MBA and Concordia was the right fit. Concordia prepared her for leadership roles by helping to fine-tune her management skills and giving her real-world experience, such as a capstone project with Student Loan Genius. Now, she is serving as the Executive Director of the Hispanic Scholarship Consortium, where she oversees financial, program and development activities.

BE A TORNADO

Take the world by

Since 1926, Concordia University Texas has been dedicated to the mission of developing Christian leaders. We are committed to being the premier university where the adventure of faith, learning and life-changing experiences leads to meaningful work. CTX alumni receive a scholarship when they choose to continue their education by pursuing a Concordia MBA. Find out more or sign up for an info session at concordia.edu/MBA.



Women & Diversity







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ABOUT CONCORDIA

Concordia University Texas is a private, coeducational institution of liberal arts and sciences offering undergraduate and graduate degrees. as well as online degree programs for part-time students and adult returning students. CTX is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and is affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

The magazine is published twice a year by the university's Marketing & Communications office. It is provided free of charge. Please send comments, letters to the editor or story ideas to lisa.kessler@concordia.edu.



I hope that this issue will inspire you to reminisce about, pray for and even reach out to say thank you to the women in your lives who have been a part of your CTX journey.

of the Concordia University Texas magazine, an issue which celebrates the impact of the women of CTX past, present and future.

When 20 young ladies were admitted as the first female CTX students in the Fall of 1955, there were no full-time female faculty members or Board members or administrators. When I came to Concordia as a student in 1992, there were five female full-time faculty members, none in senior leadership roles, and none on the Board of Regents. Today there are more female students than male, there are four female Board members and women make up approximately 40 percent of our faculty, and are well-represented on our Leadership and Executive Teams. We know that women have always been a part of this place, whether or not they were here as students or faculty/staff members. Women have always been praying for our students, supporting and encouraging them, and working for the good of this school that we love.

And so this issue celebrates the women of CTX. It celebrates the diversity of women who have impacted, are impacting and will impact this place. You'll read stories of the women of the past who helped make this place what it is today, and blazed a trail for those of us today to follow. You'll see stories of some of our current faculty and staff who continue to mentor, inspire and transform those

around them. And you'll read stories of our alumni and students who are following in the footsteps of the women before them, blazing their own trails into the future.

You'll read stories of women who have overcome obstacles to achieve their dreams, women who are earnestly living out their vocations even though it is challenging, women who are making their names in STEM and other fields not traditionally open to women and women who are intentionally working to create a supportive community where all can thrive. Each of these stories celebrates how the women of Concordia have lived out our core values of christ-centeredness, vocation, caring for people and life-long learning and how they have contributed to our mission of developing christian leaders.

I hope that this issue will inspire you to reminisce about, pray for and even reach out to say thank you to the women in your lives who have been a part of your CTX journey. Woosh!

Dr. Kristi Kirk, '95

PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Kristi Kirl-



ROLE MODEL:

Rosa parks Why? Because she was brave enough to do the right thing #woosh #WooshWednesday

WHY ARE YOU PROUD TO BE A TORNADO?

EMILY SANDLER, @EM_SANDLER I'm proud to be a Tornado because no matter what problems arise there is always someone there to help. We have the best faculty and student body around.

EMMA SUKONNIK,@EMMA_SUKONNIK I'm proud to be a Tornado because of the amazing community and culture it has brought me!! #woosh

WHY ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO CONCORDIA CROSSING?

MEGAN BEUTEL, @MBEUT I'm real stoked for that Pluckers Trivia Night because it's two of my absolute favorite things, wings and Concordia people! #WooshWednesday

C-HAY. @CHRISTIANHAY I'm looking forward to Concordia Crossing because my family is coming to visit me for it! #WooshWednesday @concordiatx

EMILY ELDRIDGE, @EMILYDELDRIDGE Game Night or more specifically Family Feud because I grew up watching it and I've always loved playing along. #WooshWednesday

DESCRIBE SOMETHING YOU LOVE AT CTX IN 1 WORD AND TELL US WHY!

RACHEL BOORD, @RACHELREDFOX Nature-To be able to walk around a campus that is surrounded by nature always makes my day better. The campus is even more beautiful during the spring when all the wildflowers are in bloom and all of the animals are running around. #WooshWednesday #ctx

EMILY VILLINES. @VILLINESEMILY Homework! Just kidding. definitely the Sunrise on campus when I'm walking to class. #WooshWednesday

ALEXANDRIA, @FITNFAB_ALEX I love the professors and staff. They're always so supportive and amazing at theirs jobs!! I mean CTX does have the best everything... come on #ctx #WooshWednesday

Follow Concordia

Connect with CTX via our many social media platforms, where we document the daily goings-on of campus on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and more.























The

OMEN

WHO PAVED THE WAY

BY DR. KRISTI KIRK, '95 PROVOST AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

s I set out to write an article about the history of women at Concordia, I underestimated how deeply personal this subject would become for me. As the first female Provost and Executive Vice President at Concordia, I have come to deeply appreciate even more profoundly the women who came before me. In the more recent past, these are women I knew personally and learned from and was mentored by. But there are also generations of anonymous women who came before them, women whose names are absent from the historical records and live only in the memory of the

Dr. Edna Aguirre-Rehbein

students' whose lives they touched. For example, it took me several minutes of web searches to even find the first name of Lena Studtmann, wife of first President Henry Studtmann, who lived in Kilian Hall with her husband and four children during her husband's tenure as President. While the details of her story are largely absent from the historical records and live only in the memories of those who knew her, I realize that she, like so many others, has her own story, and that she was incredibly instrumental in the development of our Concordia, although we may never know the details of how.



1926, Women in kitchen of Kilian Hall



Concordia College student, Arnold Koke, with a young woman, 1926



▲ Studtmann Hall, 1958, first residence hall to house female students

THE BEGINNING

In 1921, a group of laymen proposed an overture to the Texas District convention requesting the construction of an educational institution for the preparation of young men to become pastors, for both men and women to become teachers and also a business program for young people to prepare to serve the world in lay careers. This request was approved by those in the District presented to the Synodical Convention in 1923, but was not approved exactly as the Texans had requested. Rather than a co-educational institution with business and church preparation courses for both men and women, they were given approval to open what was then known as a gymnasium (a secondary school preparatory for the university), a decision that threatened the future of the school, since this was not what the people of Texas had committed to support.

Despite that inital set back, the people of Texas responded by supporting the founding of a high school for young men and continued working toward their original dream of a co-educational institution. It took nearly 30 years after their first request, but the people of Texas were finally granted their wish when the Synod approved the allowance of a co-education curriculum in 1953. That approval came with one condition. Most funding of expenses at that time came from the Synodical treasury and Synod only agreed to fund the hiring of faculty to expand the teacher preparation program for young women. If the people of the Texas District wanted to have women at their school, they would have to raise the money to build the new residence hall needed to house female students. The people of the District rose to that challenge, and Studtmann Hall, with rooms for 80 female students, was dedicated on April 12, 1955.

1940-60s

WOMEN AS DONORS AND SUPPORTERS:

With that initial request in the 1920s for a co-educational institution, the people of Texas showed their progressiveness in thinking about the role of women in higher education. While it wasn't for almost another 30 years that women were allowed to attend Concordia Lutheran College, women were still involved in the formation of the school, albeit in more traditional roles. A perusal of Concordia of Texas: From the Beginning (Studtmann and Martens) shows various ways that women were involved in supporting the school. Mrs. Babcock painted the picture of Jan Kilian that hung on campus for many years. Miss Emilie Ewert of Waco transplanted hedges from her own home to line the walkways in front of Kilian Hall. Mrs. Ray Smith donated a number of English classics books. The Houston Ladies Circle as well as Mrs. Kunkel from Olney donated cash to help furnish the original rooms. In 1948, while attending the first graduation ceremonies in Memorial Gymnasium, Mrs. Frank Wilkinson (Menard) could not hear the speakers well; she immediately authorized the purchase of a PA system.

During the '50s and '60s, women continued to support, encourage and help sustain the faculty and students of Concordia. Prominent stories, such as "Pie Nights" where wives of faculty members baked pies and the young men on campus vied for records of who could eat the most, and of the annual Ladies Day, where women from around the District came to campus for days of educational opportunities,



▲ Women in ball dresses, 1965



▲ from top to bottom: Edna Fleischauer, Doris Knippa and Dorothy Meyer

Christian fellowship and recognition of the Lutheran Woman of the Year, an award presented by Concordia from throughout the 1960s through 1990s. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League of the Texas District was instrumental in raising funds for the erection and furnishing of Stutsman Hall.

WOMEN AS FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS:

Starting in the 1940s, women began to appear in the lists of faculty at CTX.

Lillian Bedichek, scholar, writer and social justice advocate in her

own right (as well as the wife of wellknown naturalist and author Roy Bedichek) taught Spanish throughout the 1940s. She was joined on the faculty of the high school by parttime instructors, Mrs. G.L. Bentrup and Miss Elsie Lois Zabel. Then, through the junior college years, a few more female names begin to appear on the roster of the faculty: Edna Fleischauer, Doris Knippa, Mildred Marohn, Dorothy Meyer, Gretchen Sump, Virginia Erickson, among others. Some of these women were here briefly, others were a part of this community much longer, but they all were among the pioneers of women who joined the collegiate ranks before it was common to do so.

And so 1955 marked a new era for Concordia, with women in the student body and more and more women as part of the faculty and staff. With the admission of women came new roles for staff, including a Dean of Women (Miss Mildred Marohn was first to hold that role) and Studtmann Residence Hall counselors, a position held for many years by first Dessie Zoch and then Laura Weideranders Dinda. Few students who attended Concordia throughout these years look back on those years without the impact these remembering women had on their time as students.



from left to riaht: James Koerschen, Edna Aguirre-Rehbein and Lawrence Meissner receive their doctorates



Linda Lowery coaching volleyball, 1983



Dr. Claudia Teinart applying make-up to a student for a Spring play,1994

Dr. Kristi Kirk,

By the time I graduated, four other women had joined the faculty (Dr. Debra Allen, Dr. Margaret Peterson, Dr. Betty Scrogin and Dr. Claudia Teinert). Pamela Lee also joined CTX as Director of Finance and first women serving on the university leadership council. I knew each of these women personally, and each of them touched my life, and the lives of hundreds of other students, in deep and profound ways.



PAIGE NEWTON

Kristi Kirk, first female Provost and Executive Vice President with daughter, Kori

As the first female Provost and Executive Vice President at Concordia, I consider it a privilege to be a part of this long line of women who have had a role in the development of this place that we love. As I've reflected while doing this research and writing, I've been reminded that women have always been gifted by God to serve His people, although in different ways and at different times. I've been reminded of the power of mentors and "she-ros" who challenge, support, mentor and guide other women along the path of life. And I've become even more thankful the women who went before me. who gave of their time, talents, tears and treasures to make our Concordia what it is today.

As Concordia matured into a fouryear college in the early 1980s, more women appeared on the faculty. When I came to Concordia as a freshman, there were five women faculty and they must be noted here, due to their longevity and impact on the development of Concordia.

- Dr. Edna Aguirre-Rehbein, 1984-1996, Professor of Spanish and Mexican-American Studies, first to serve as Dean of Academic Affairs.
- Dr. Sandra Doering, 1989-2007, Professor of Education, first to serve as Dean of a College.
- ▶ Linda Lowery, 1980-2008, Professor of Physical Education, first full-time female coach and first to serve as Athletic Director.
- Dr. Barbara Morton, 1979 **1994**, Professor of Teacher *Education, first to serve as* Division Chair of an academic department.
- Dr. Susan Stayton, 1963-68 and 1972-2014, Professor of English and Latin, first full-time faculty member in the junior college years and longest tenured female faculty member.

AUTHOR NOTE

The stories of women at Concordia are hard to find in the historical record, although they live on the minds and hearts of so many of you. If you have a story of how women touched your life as a part of this place, please feel free to email those to me at kristi.kirk@concordia.edu for use in further stories about women at CTX and to collect for the Concordia archives.





from left to right: Dr. Elizabeth Medina, Maigan Pearson, Grace Freeman, Rean Vanderbilt and T'asia Williams

Dr. Elizabeth Medina and daughter, Isabelle



BY DR. ELIZABETH MEDINA AVP STUDENT LIFE/DEAN OF STUDENTS

Over the course of this academic year, it has been both an honor and a privilege for me to serve in a leadership role with regard to advancing diversity and inclusion initiatives at Concordia University Texas. For me, a considerable amount of this time has been spent reflecting on the historical foundation that was laid, thinking about the amazing growth we are currently experiencing, as well as planning for the upcoming year, which is most certainly full of opportunity and promise. What has also become apparent to me is that women have contributed to and continue to play an instrumental role in the story of diversity and inclusion at Concordia University Texas. Since the early 1950s when the first female students attended what was then Concordia High School, to a now predominantly female student population, it is impossible to acknowledge the past, recognize the present or explore the future of diversity and inclusion at Concordia University Texas without speaking to the influential leadership of women.

In most recent years women leaders among the faculty, administration and student body have also been at the forefront of our institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion. Through their presence and perspective as a part of the University Executive Team, Leadership Team, Executive Committee of the Faculty, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, as well as the Student Government and Leadership Association, the experience and experiences of women leaders as faculty, administrators, staff members and students have helped shape the campus community with regard to diversity and inclusion as an important aspect of the college experience.

When I began my position as the first African-American female Associate Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students at Concordia University Texas, it was with the strong belief that the institution was at a pivotal point in the development of its identity as an institution of higher education committed to diversity and inclusion. During my approximately four years as a part of the campus community I have also had the pleasure of being able to support the efforts of other women colleagues who have led institutional initiatives focused on education, training, programs, activities and events that promote diversity and inclusion. What has resulted is a series of firsts in the form of campus wide community conversations that have served as a source of motivation for having authentic dialogues and sharing lived experiences. It has been a source of true inspiration for me to be able to witness these women as educators, advisors and mentors work in partnership with student leaders to achieve the goals we have set with regard to diversity and inclusion at Concordia University Texas.

The campus community as whole continues to work to progress our Strategic Plan and the thematic focus of Delivering Our Promise and I am confident that we are beginning to move towards actualizing our vision of being the premier university where the adventure of faith, learning and lifechanging experiences leads to meaningful work by establishing diversity and inclusion as an institutional priority. Our institutional values, Christ-centered, caring for people, vocation, lifelong learning, trust and courage, have also guided my efforts over the last year with regard to diversity and inclusion on campus. For me they are lived out in ways that cross the boundaries of difference, recognize that all people have inherent value, and create an environment where mutual respect affirms our institutional commitment to diversity and inclusion. Another context in which living out our values has become evident to me is in how the role of women as leaders on our campus has expanded over the last few years to include a group of individuals who exist at the intersection of multiple social identities. Their lived experiences have shaped the direction in which the university is headed with regard to diversity and inclusion.

As we approach the tenth year since our transition from the historical to the new campus, Concordia University Texas is also embarking upon a journey that will further lead us to an institutional identity that embraces diversity and inclusion. It is women as leaders in partnership with each other who have contributed significantly to the goal of living out our mission, vision and values. From the first women to attend the University to the first female Provost and Executive Vice President, the legacy of women in leadership on our campus has laid a foundation for growth and development across all aspects of institutional diversity and inclusion. Ultimately, my belief is that in large part it is through the leadership of women who continue the work of those who came before them and strive towards a future of higher education that is both diverse and inclusive that we arrive at the place where Concordia University Texas is an institution where Christ is honored and all are welcome.

SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES CAN BE MADE AT OCONCORDIA.EDU/GIVE



BY DEBORAH CHRISTIAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

I once heard a corporate CEO say, "I hire folks who have had tough stuff happen in their life and made it through. I know they are the ones who can manage the demanding challenges of leadership today. "When I was asked to write an article focusing on three student leaders, I knew I would have a hard decision to make. Ultimately, I asked, Pendergrass, Stewart and Stuewe. No, this is not the title of a local law firm. They are stand-out women who are firmly rooted in the truth of The Bible, who respect and love Concordia, who honor their family and who are steadfast in their future leadership goals.



from left to right: Kayla Pendergrass, Felisha Stewart, Deborah Christian and Kristin

AUTHOR NOTE

Deborah Christian is a career educator. She has a passion for students and helping them find their path to meaningful work. As the wife to President Don Christian, her dedication and service to the church and Lutheran education system has set her apart as a trailblazer for generations of strong women leaders to come.



KAYLA PENDERGRASS

NURSING MAJOR

Nursing major, Kayla Pendergrass joined me at Flores Mexican Restaurant clad in her purple scrubs after her shift at Seton Hospital. With the spunk and humor that I had witnessed during the Life and Leadership class I taught her in, Pendergrass described the hospital challenges of the day.

"I just want to help people, and let them know I care," she told me.

Pendergrass attributes her selflessness to her parents who have made personal sacrifices and work several jobs to provide for their children's education. Her

family has weathered some tough times together, and her mother's perseverance taught her to never give up. When the time came for her to choose a nursing school, Concordia's #4 ranking drew her here. Her heart was set on

GG I just want to help people, and let them know I care."

following her brother, Noah, to Concordia, so she did the work necessary to gain admission to our School of Nursing.

"It is definitely a God thing that I am here at Concordia" Pendergrass said.

Her impact in our Nursing program has been evident as she is a representative in our chapter of the National Student Nurses Association. Humbly, she leads those around her with encouraging words and a



FELISHA STEWART

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MAJOR

can-do attitude.

Another student, Felisha Stewart, one day humbly asked, "May I pass a prayer request sheet around our class?" From that day forward, we all gained respect for our prayer warrior, colleague, Army veteran and mother of two. Articulately, Stewart added a mature perspective and Godly wisdom to class discussions.

"I look for God's hand in my life."

Her major, Religious Education, fits perfectly. The life that built this female bastion of strength and faith has been full of hardships. Abandoned by her mother at the age of 13, Stewart spent her teenage years in and out of homes for girls.

"No one could tell me what to do. It was me against everyone else."

At 19, she enlisted in the Army, became a Sergeant

GG I look for God's hand in my life."

and began to transform herself. Three years in Korea taught her to accept advice and lose her fixed mindset. In a male dominated unit, Stewart learned to build upon her mental toughness,

persevere and develop a voracious work ethic.

When she left the Army at 29, she had redefined herself. Marriage, divorce and cancer followed her in civilian life and today she stands out at Concordia as a woman of academic fortitude combined with Biblical backbone. She says her spiritual strength comes from her Aunt Natalie who is also a Reverend.

"She has cultivated me with scripture to deal with problems and to seek growth," Stewart said.

Nothing less than an "A" will suffice for this woman.

'A's' define my hard work and balancing motherhood and studying requires sacrifice."

Stewart's philosophy for healthy eating, watching very little television and family involvement at the YMCA, serve as a testament to her dedication to providing a solid foundation for her children. While she prefers to remain in the background and lead by

actions rather than accolades, a beaming spotlight must be shined on her life as a living testament of God's hand at work in her troubled and formative past. Her goal to serve and bless people in her vocation and her extraordinary trust in God is something that our



KRISTIN STUEWE

SPECIAL EDUCATION MAJOR

university is proud to highlight.

Another extraordinary woman, Kristin Stuewe, has a smile that lights up the room. Coffee, chai and a sunny table at Summer Moon Café across the road from campus, led to a visit that provided us with a conversation that went from classes, to family, to goals. to campus life. Having had the privilege of teaching this bright, positive young lady as a high school English student at Concordia High School of Austin, I could not help but feel the heartwarming reward that comes from

watching a former student take all of life's experiences, find their voice, determine their vocation and serve people in the name of Jesus.

Stuewe wanted to become a teacher, walked on to Concordia's campus and knew that CTX was her new home. Growing up at Zion Lutheran School in Walburg, Texas, Stuewe watched her mother (a Concordia University graduate) teach and lead. When her mother weathered cancer treatment, Stuewe heard her mom lean on her Lord.

GG When making big decisions, my Mom taught me to talk to Jesus first," she said. "She is my role model."

"When making big decisions, my Mom taught me to talk to Jesus first," she said. "She is my role model."

Following in her mother's footsteps, Stuewe not only works at being an Elementary Special Education major, she spends afternoons at Redeemer Lutheran

School's After School Program. She guides 17 kindergarteners to respect each other and respect learning. Every Thursday, Stuewe and her roommates host a gathering of young women known as Helping Hands by providing a meal, leading Bible study and organizing service projects.

"Leaders think about their followers first," Stuewe said.

Stuewe will tell you that she loves Concordia, loves her friends and loves her professors.

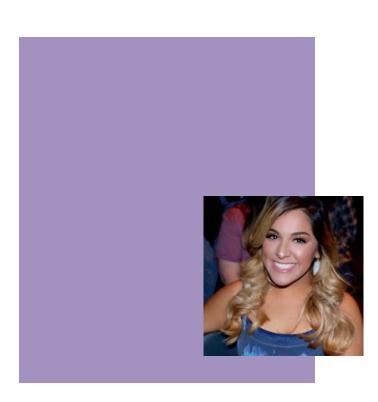
"People really care about each other here," she said.

"My friends love Jesus like I do."

Driven by selflessness, Pendergrass, Stewart and Stuewe engage in our Concordia community with goals that will lead them down the road to their meaningful work. Their life stories prove that goodness, truth and beauty are alive and evident in young leaders of today.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN STUDENT SUCCESS AT CONCORDIA.EDU/GIVE





MOTIVATE BY THE INSPIRING WOMEN AROUND ME

BY KELSEY RODRIGUEZ CTX STUDENT

I'm honored to have the opportunity to attend such an amazing university like Concordia. I'm a sophomore Political Science major with a minor in Public Relations from San Antonio, Texas. I serve as leadership for various student organizations here on campus such as student government and leadership association, DECA, the Latino Student Association and a few others.

In September of 2016 I was an incoming freshman and since then I've grown not only in my education, but as a Christian leader. None of that would be possible without the help of many strong, tenacious, women that are continuously placed in my path here at Concordia. I'm a student worker in the marketing and communications department here at Concordia. On a daily basis as I come into work and observe the women in the marketing and communications department and recognize their passion for their jobs and the people around them. They are hard working mothers that manage to do their jobs exceptionally and care for their families. Being able to witness the behind the scenes action of what they do for Concordia is not only extraordinary, but it inspires me greatly.

I currently work for Jasmyn Booker as her social media assistant. Jasmyn runs all of Concordia's social media platforms, she assists on other projects in the department all while earning her master's degree. She embodies integrity in everything she does and has taught me the value of truly loving what you do. Jasmyn helps me remember daily that I can achieve anything that I set my mind on, she allows me to be creative while working and always pushes me to be the best I can be. The commitment the department has for their work is admirable and makes me excited to come in the office everyday.

I'm extremely blessed with the network of influential women around me and I am reminded by these women that I am creative in my capabilities to speak, to learn and to act in whatever drives my passion.



THIRD

GENERATIO

CONCORDIA WOMAN CARRIES ON LEGACY

BY ASHLEY SAVA

Everyone and their mother (and grandmother!) is coming to Concordia?

This statement is real to Hannah Watson, current Concordia Business student. She's in the third generation of women in her family to attend school here.

The tradition started with her grandmother, Lois Hillegeist Lange, Class of '58. She was among the second class of women who graduated from Concordia.

"I always knew I wanted to teach," Lois said.

She received her degree in Education and spent her life teaching. Her daughter, Theresa Watson, followed in her footsteps.

"I don't think I ever considered another school," Theresa, Class of '91, said. "My mom actually taught next door [to Concordia's original campus] at St. Paul."

Theresa also majored in education,

but she didn't intend on being a teacher going in.

"Had you asked me going into my freshman year if I was going to be a teacher, I would have said no," she explained.

However, by her sophomore year, she decided to follow in her mother's footsteps after meeting a certain future Air Force Chaplain.

"Teaching seemed logical as it was a transferable skill," Theresa said.

Even Hannah considered teaching.

"I considered teaching, but decided to take my own path," Hannah said.

Hannah, Class of '20, is majoring in Business Administration with a concentration in Management.

Interestingly enough, Concordia University Texas was not exactly on Hannah's radar before her senior year.

"I actually had been on

Concordia's current campus for a field day in middle school," she admitted.

However, Hannah did not connect

66 If they did it, I can do it, too!

the dots. After all, when her family attended school at

Concordia, it was downtown.

"During my senior year, Concordia emailed me," Hannah said.

When she mentioned the correspondence to her mom, Theresa informed her daughter that both Hannah's parents and grandparents had also been CTX students. This made Hannah's decision to become a Tornado a no-brainer. She enjoys the tight knit, family-like atmosphere the university offers, just as her mother and grandmother remembered the university being when they were students.

A huge inspiration to Hannah is Provost/Executive Vice President Kristi Kirk

"She's the perfect example of women empowerment," Hannah said. "There is no talk of male dominance here. All of my bosses here have been women."

Theresa said that when she was a Concordia student, there were more female students than males.

"Some women had important positions, but the men still had the more significant roles," she said.

Theresa did feel like she was at the university during a sort of turning point.

"A lot of my female friends were throwing their opinions out there and taking charge of things," Theresa said. "But the male and female student body coexisted in a comfortable atmosphere."

For Lois, times were still changing.

"At that time, women students were only headed toward teaching," she explained.

Theresa was excited when Hannah was accepted to Concordia.

"In your head, you want to tell all these stories of the things you experienced, but it's hard because it's a different location," Theresa said.

In fact, Theresa witnessed the original building being torn down. She even seen her old dormitory demolished.

"It was a poignant moment," she said.

However, Lois and Theresa have fallen in love with Concordia's current location.

"To me, it was more of a comfort knowing Hannah was going to a place that the family went to," Theresa said. "There was also a little bit of a pride thing."

So how does Hannah's grandmother feel about being a trailblazer?

"It makes me feel really good," Lois admitted. Hannah is pleased to keep the tradition going.

"Having family that have gone through Concordia makes me feel very motivated to push through to graduation," she said. "If they did it, I can do it, too!"



Redefining tough love

BY HAYLEY CARLOVE CTX STUDENT

Teaching is tough. Time and time again, teachers complain about the long hours spent lesson planning, meeting with parents and just managing their class day-byday. As I am enduring my semester of student teaching, I have definitely experienced it firsthand. I see why people complain. It's a lot of work. I wake up every morning at 5:30 a.m. to get to school by 6:30 in order to prepare for the day, then spend seven hours teaching my students, and

then stay until at least 4:30 p.m. grading, and continue lesson plans until I go to bed, in order to repeat the whole cycle all over again the next day. I refuse to be mediocre for my students as I am striving to teach them to do their absolute best. I work hard to reflect on how I can reach every student in my class and differentiate my lessons to make them interesting. Let's face it, if I am going to be bored teaching it, then they are going to be bored learning about it. However, teaching is a job that rarely receives any praise.

Typically, while my students enjoy learning, they don't generally grasp that it's my preparation that is allowing them to learn. When we are evaluated by peers, principals or even parents, there will always be things that we can do better. Every one of my students is different. They come in with tough home lives, regardless of how well off they are financially, because life is just tough. In fact, people in general are tough - students, parents, coworkers, etc. We all are. Why? SIN. We live in a sinful, imperfect world that is full of imperfect people, and this very profession

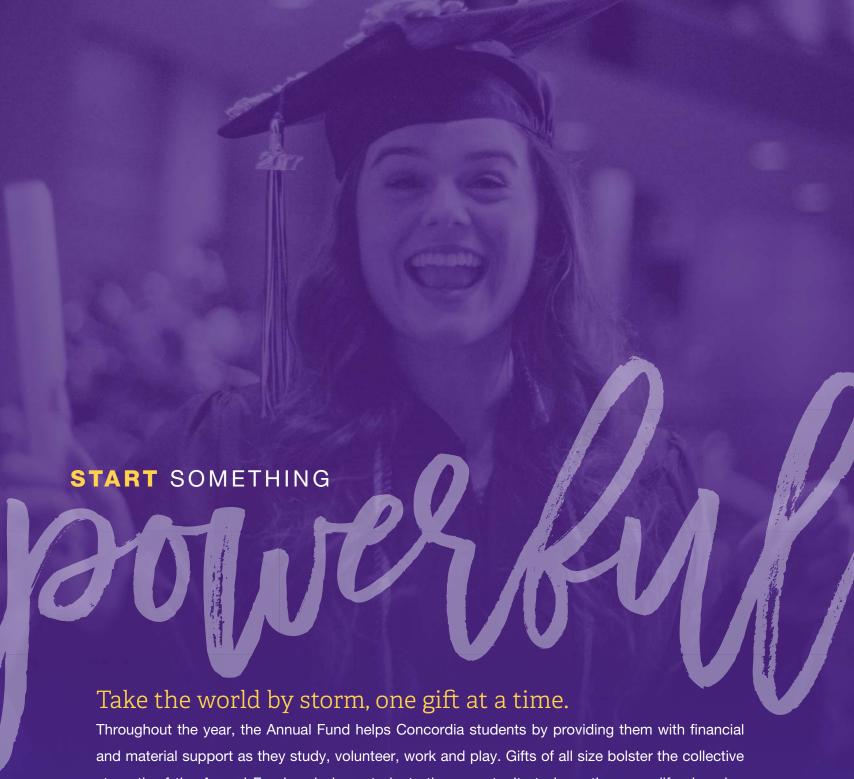
of teaching is working with all different kinds of people all the time. In this imperfect world, I can't help but think this is the way my students must feel, especially those who really struggle.

Teaching is also love. Teaching means waking up at 5:30 every morning in order to spend 12 hours a day teaching and lesson planning in order to show I love my students. It's putting my needs second and putting others' needs first, especially my

56 Teaching is also love... It's putting my needs behind and putting others' needs first, especially my students.

students. It's demonstrating my love of learning to my students and learning to love learning together, despite the tough differences we have and tough experiences we face. Perhaps it's our perspective of teaching that needs to change, rather than searching for the changes that need to be made in our teachers.

Tough love sounds like an oxymoron, right? Merriam Webster's dictionary defines the expression, "tough love," as, "love or affectionate concern expressed in a stern or unsentimental manner to promote responsible behavior." Teaching is a tough love. Tough means that an individual is strong enough to overcome challenging conditions, and I would argue that teachers are doing that every day, and it's fueled by the love they have for their students, and most of all, for their Savior, Jesus. Jesus came down and lived a tough life, just like the rest of us. He was the ultimate teacher. He endured the toughest situation of all when he died on the cross for the imperfect people, us, whom He loved even more. Perhaps teachers view their teaching as tough work, rather than tough love.



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"Women are good at soft skills, but not technical ones."

"BOYS ARE BETTER AT MATH."

"Girls don't know anything about computers.

"Engineering is for men."

Women of STEM

Speak On Gender Bias

BY ASHLEY SAVA

FROM A YOUNG AGE, girls can be negatively affected by misconceptions like these. Although some young women are aware that such biases are false and are able to ignore them, others let that small seed of selfdoubt develop and spread.

Millions of women pursue degrees in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) fields, but the gender gap in STEM fields is among the most persistent gender divide. Some women working in these fields say the workplace is different, and that the environment might be a more hostile one than their male coworkers experience. Discrimination and sexual harassment are seen as more frequent in STEM careers, and gender is sometimes perceived as more of an obstruction than an advantage to career success. This type of scenario can easily be duplicated in classroom environments.

For students like freshman Morgan Dozier and junior Amanda Sigala-Lopez, luckily this has not been the case. While both of these ladies share the experience of being among just a few other women their classes, they have not been in situations where they felt that their gender was hindering them from achieving success in the classroom.

Dozier, a Computer Science major, said her interest in technology spiked during a high school technology course. As an upperclassman, she decided to sign up for a CAD (computer-aided design) programming course, and was one of three girls in a class of 20.

She believes the reason that more boys and men work toward technology careers is because of an interest in video games. Although she is a confident student. Dozier explained that even today when group work is encouraged in the classroom, she sometimes feels singled out.

"I've noticed the boys swamping together," she commented.

However, this sort of behavior has pushed Dozier to put herself out there more.

"I want to show that I'm just as capable of this as they are," she said. "Men need to be comfortable with us in the field, and aware that we

are every bit as capable as they are. Eventually, things will even out."

She is thinking about becoming a computer technology teacher, perhaps for middle school students.

"They should really start learning coding around that age," Dozier said.

Her advice for incoming STEM women is to speak up in class, and to never hesitate to ask questions.

"Put yourself out there," she said. "You have to at least try. You'll need to be able to do that in your future workplace."

Sigala-Lopez started out as a Pre-Nursing major. She had family influence in the nursing field, and even took some nursing courses in high school. However, she also had family influence in the technology field, her Aunt Rosa.

"I had interest in both, family influence in both, so I just picked one," Sigala-Lopez explained.

By the end of her sophomore year, she decided to change her major to Computer Science.

"It's a growing field for women, men don't run it anymore."

"My aunt was always telling me how much she loves what she did," Sigala-Lopez said. "It's interesting to me because it's always changing, and you're always learning."

She also found the problemsolving aspect of Computer Science to be appealing.

"I like solving problems," she said. "I like taking things apart and seeing how they work. I think in general, it takes a very special person who is good with problem-solving to be good in this field."

Sigala-Lopez admitted to noticing that there is a definite impression out there that women aren't patient with computers. However, she thinks women offer a different perspective to the field.

"Men are sometimes one-tracked."

she explained. "They don't always see the different sides of things that women do."

Although she isn't sure what she wants to do with her degree, she hopes she finds something out there that keeps her wanting to go to work every day. She hopes that more women will be encouraged to get out there and show how talented they are in the computer science field.

"If you have the patience for it, do it," Sigala-Lopez said. "People who play video games sometimes are good at it because they it takes a lot of patience to play games."

There's a Wii and a Nintendo in the computer lab that she says gets plenty of action, and not just by the guys.

"It's a growing field for women, men don't run it anymore."





from top to bottom, Morgan Dozier and Amanda Sigala-Lopez

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN STUDENT SUCCESS AT CONCORDIA.EDU/GIVE



PROFESSOR PRAIRIE BURGESS
Teaching leadership as a lifestyle

BY ASHLEY SAVA



TRUE LEADERS DON'T CREATE FOLLOWERS, THEY CREATE MORE LEADERS."

That's the kind of quote that registers with Prairie Burgess, Concordia leadership professor. While you are more likely to hear about the great people in our history who were "born to lead," or the charismatic and outgoing natures of some of the more infamous leaders, Burgess has a different approach.

"Leadership is not about a management position, but a lifestyle," she said. "I teach how students can become effective, ethical, strong leaders in this world."

A West Texas A&M graduate, Burgess started out working in Student Affairs, teaching students how to live a healthy lifestyle and overseeing cultural programs. Burgess decided to return back to school to continue her education at the University of Arkansas where she earned her EdD. She and her husband Brent Burgess, also a Concordia professor, moved around several times for jobs before relocating to the Austin area.

Last fall was Burgess' first full semester teaching leadership here. She teaches Life Leadership, a one-hour course all first-year students are required to take, as well as Leadership Theory and Practice.

"I often hear the phrase 'I don't want to be a leader, so why do I have to take this course?"

Many of her students often come in with the misconception that this course is geared toward those who want to take on business management positions.

"Society's perception is that leadership is for those who want to be in charge," Burgess explained. "But in my class, we look at unassuming leaders and followership."

So what is followership?

"There's an art to following," she said. "You have to understand this role to function is society."

While there is often a negative connotation of being a follower, Burgess believes that learning how to listen to others has great merit.

"Humility comes from a willingness to follow, connecting with others and listening to leaders," Burgess said. "There are only so many leadership roles out there, and everyone is answering to someone."

Another barrel she has to face with students is the fact that most come into her class with the idea that leaders are born.

"What I really stress is that leaders are not born, anyone can be a leader."

Burgess explained that a lot of the time, leaders do have certain traits and personalities that either developed or that they were born with that confuses students into this mindset.

"We associate being outgoing with leadership," she said. "An outgoing personality doesn't mean a good or effective leader. And someone who isn't extroverted can be a leader while quietly making a change in the community."

She believes that her own leadership strengths come from her faith.

"I'm a much stronger leader when I'm following Christ."

One of her goals is to get her students to embrace leaders of different cultures, genders, races and personalities. She gives her students an assignment called "Who Is" that educates them on powerful leaders from all walks of life.

"I give student a lot of names to pick from," she said. "Strong leaders who are males, females, different ethnicities."

Every semester, she asks her students to throw out some names of people they think of as leaders.

"The male leader names still always pop up first," Burgess said. "But right now is a really such an exciting time for us as we have started embracing and recognizing women in leadership."

Her hope is that in the near future, names of women leaders will come out of her students mouths as fast as men

"I don't want to see men replaced," she said. "I don't want to knock men out of the way, and I don't want women to get hired, elected or promoted just because they're women. Women just have powerful qualities and need to be recognized more."

With a world that seems to be reshaping the way it thinks, Burgess is excited for an increase in women in leadership soon.

"I want it to be seamless integration," she explained. "The less we have it stand out as unique and special, the less unusual it's going to be."



CTX Women A Cycle of Stewardship and Mentoring

BY JENNIELLE STROTHER AVP OF ENROLLMENT

My first job at Concordia University Texas was in 2006 as an assistant volleyball coach making less than it cost me in gas money to drive there each day--hardly the type of position one would naturally identify for professional development and growth.

Now, as I work on my dissertation, I think back to that time when a Director of Admissions I had only just met tasked me with managing graduate admissions before ultimately promoting me to follow her as Director and realize how the seemingly natural evolution of my role at CTX actually came about because my boss at the time, Kristi Kirk, makes a very deliberate effort to identify and nurture future leaders.

Although I left CTX to serve as Dean of Enrollment at the third largest private university in Texas, following a lengthy stint as VP at a boutique private institution, I remained impacted by Kristi's worldview of dedicating oneself to helping others identify their mission and develop as a professional.

"I have never had the opportunity to hear from so many strong, powerful and inspirational women at one conference. I am leaving encouraged knowing I have a support system and a mentor to help me advance in this field." This comment was from a young professional who attended what became an annual "unconference" hosted by CTX, and it changed my fundamental concepts about what our true purpose is as higher education professionals: fostering growth and opening up avenues of understanding and development for those who would not necessarily land in the stereotypical crowd for professional development.

Concordia University Texas has been the host institution of a yearly unconference for women in higher education since 2013. In short, an unconference eschews traditional conference models that are littered with barriers to entry that too often keep junior level professionals and others from attending. Conference fees and over-structuring limits both those who can attend and the ability to participate in a meaningful way.

I have been blessed to be a part of this yearly unconference as one of the founders, working alongside Dr. Michelle Lopez, Dr. Kristi Kirk and Dr. Liz Medina. The idea was born out of our own desire to reach back and mentor the next generation of women who will be leading higher education institutions in the future.

We felt the call to provide young professionals access to a support system of mentors and sponsors--an opportunity we were not afforded when we were first beginning our careers in higher education.

After several cups of coffee and hours of conversation, the Texas Women in Higher Education: Acting, Reflecting, Transforming (TXwHEART) Unconference was created, and five years later, we have heard stories from hundreds of women about how the unconference changed their mindset about advancing in the industry.

In an effort to create the same experience year-round for the women professionals at Concordia, we created CTX Women, where each year a group of women are asked to participate in monthly meetings to discuss topics about leadership.

We have found these discussions to be valuable to all who participate, but more importantly, modeling how reflection leads to transformation in all of us.

In the world of university admissions, the environment has become unnecessarily competitive and that has led to a lack of professional courtesy and a hesitancy to lift up those around you.

This year is my twentieth year working in higher education. When I became disillusioned with the politics and bureaucracy of modern day higher education and planned an indefinite hiatus to research and write, I received a text imploring me to dust myself off and come home to CTX to continue the dual missions of helping students earn a college degree and helping the next generation of higher education professionals develop and grow.

That text came from my friend, my mentor, my colleague, and my "she-ro", Dr. Kristi Kirk.

She is the first female Provost in the history of CTX and she has never stopped looking for opportunities to help other young, professional women reach new heights and realize new achievements.

And, ultimately, that is the calling that we all must realize: to those who much is given, much is expected. We each have an obligation and moral responsibility to look beyond labels and organizational charts to find those who want to do great things and help them on their journey.





Cindy Villanueva Director of Business **Partnerships**

IN BUSINESS, LEADERSHIP AND MARTIAL ARTS

BY ASHLEY SAVA

While some wear many hats, Cindy Villanueva wears many belts. A sixth-degree black belt, a founder, an owner, a director and a professor, Villanueva logs a 95-hour work week and still finds time to journal her Bible readings.

Let's start back 11 years ago, when she took on ownership of Ernie Reyes World Martial Arts, a martial arts studio in Austin. Villanueva and her family had previously lived in San Jose, California, but relocated when the opportunity to open the first Ernie Reyes World location in Texas came along.

"I got into martial arts because my kids were doing it," she said.

Apparently, it stuck. Her location continues to flourish, and so does Villanueva. She is working toward her seventh-degree black belt ranking and will test for it in 2020. Her business also offers self-defense seminars.

"Nowadays, especially, it's really important for women to feel that sense of power," Villanueva said. "Most physical crimes are crimes of opportunity."

She said being trained in martial arts eliminates some of that opportunity.

"It's becoming more and more okay for women to talk about the things the #metoo movement are about," she said. "Women need to learn how strong and capable they are. They need to not be afraid."

The seminars have served Girl Scouts, young women going off to college, schoolaged children and businesses.

"We teach how to stand up for yourself in a mature, powerful way," she said.

Villanueva has served as an Adjunct Business Professor here at Concordia since 2014.

"I fell in love with Concordia while getting my MBA here," she said.

She has found a lot of satisfaction in teaching, and enjoys praying with her students on the first day of class, before finals and if there's something going on in the world that needs prayers.

"To teach ethics and build critical thinking skills in students who are just about to walk out the campus doors is fulfilling," Villanueva said. "To have a little piece in the development of their ethics and spirituality is incredibly rewarding for me."

In 2016, she was named the Director of Business Partnerships here, a position that serves to form partnerships to support local and regional businesses through Concordia's post-traditional degree programs and customized certification and industry-specific educational experiences. Around that same time, Villanueva also decided to start her own business.

"I am Founder and Principal at Knockout Marketing Strategies," she said.

Knockout Marketing Strategies, LLC specializes in brand strategy, employee engagement and company culture.

"I love doing personal brand development," she said. "I'm a storyteller by nature."

Along with brand consultation and speaker coaching, her business provides leadership and project management to ongoing culture teams, ensuring relevant, sustainable and productive programs are delivered across the organization.

"We are eternal beings," Villanueva said. "There's still so much more out there: as a woman, as a leader, as a child of God, I'm really just scratching the surface."



DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC OPERATIONS Jan Whitson

Reflecting on six years of leadership

BY ASHLEY SAVA

Director of Academic Operations Jan Whitson is no stranger to leadership positions. In the six years she has worked for our university, she has served as dean of the College of Science, and dean of the College of Professional Studies. Before coming to CTX, she was a biology professor at Concordia University Nebraska. Whitson received her Doctor of Philosophy from UC Irvine in Neuroscience.

"I came here for the opportunity to make a difference in a big way," Whitson said. "As a faculty member in Seward, I had some frustrations that I wanted to change as a dean."

Whitson said a dean's job is to straddle the line of being the voice for both faculty and administration. She has a special place in her heart for advocating for the things faculty need.

"You have to have the ability to represent people on the faculty side to the administration, and on the administration side to the faculty," she explained.

After being a dean for the majority of her time here, this past June she took on a role that was in a lot of ways invented by her. As director of academic operations, Whitson is now working on getting deans the tools they need to do their jobs efficiently.

"I work on getting procedures and policies organized and in place," she said.

While serving as a dean, Whitson said one of the most difficult things she dealt with was tracking down the policies they needed to review. Petitions were among the biggest problem. Students fill out petitions when they are asking special permission to do something outside of the normal operating procedures of the university. The majority of the petitions the university receives involve prerequisites.

"Petitions were eating so much of our time as deans," Whitson said.

About 700 petitions have been submitted since September of 2017.

With program restructures, sometimes things evolve so quickly that prerequisite changes can affect students who are already mid-program. Whitson wants to put more automatic policies in place for the redundant prerequisite requests the university receives.

"My biggest job this year is tracking data and writing down what the petition is about, whether or not it was granted and why," she said.

As a woman in leadership, Whitson never has felt that her voice hasn't been heard here at Concordia.

"I haven't ever defined myself by gender it terms of my work," she explained. "I never feel like I've had a problem making myself heard."

Although Whitson has bumped into the odd few who have given her the impression that they discounted her opinion because she was a woman, she has never felt ignored.

Whitson will retire at the end of this calendar year, but she wants to make sure she leaves everything in the best place possible before she goes.

"I want current policies and procedures to be in good shape and posted where people can find them when they need them."

What's next for her after retirement? "I tend to write, which is the other end of the spectrum from science," she said. "I'm a novelist, I write romance novels."

She also enjoys fishing, photography and spending time with her grandchildren.



BY JOE FISHER

AUSTIN, TEXAS – The Concordia Texas softball, women's tennis, women's golf and women's track and field prepare for the final month of competition before the American Southwest Conference championships and seek to close out their seasons on a high note.

After sweeping Hardin-Simmons, the softball team continued its winning streak, winning two out of three from McMurry. In the second game of the series, Simone Langland pitched the third no-hitter in program history, throwing seven innings, allowing no hits, a walk and striking out seven War Hawks. It is the first no-hitter for the team since 2011. Next, the Tornados went on the road against No. 3 UT Tyler and Mary Hardin-Baylor. Against the Patriots, CTX came up short, losing two of the three games by two runs or less. They followed that up with a win against UMHB, scoring 10 runs on 13 hits for a 10-7 victory over the Cru. Brittani Whitten is the top hitter for the team, batting over .450 from the plate along with 18 RBIs and two home runs. Jorden Russell, meanwhile, has pitched five complete games and racked 39 strikeouts and holding

opponents to a .196 batting average.

The women's tennis has won back-to-back matches to improve to 6-3 on the season. The Tornados took down LeTourneau 7-2 on March 10 and followed it up with a 5-4 thrilling victory over St. Mary's (Ind.). Justus Aarhus is now 6-2 in singles matches on the season, while the tandem of Alexis Popovich and Camille Kempf are 5-2 in their double matches. Concordia Texas continues its four-match home stand taking on Wisconsin Eau-Claire and then Austin College, before beginning conference play on March 27 with a road match against UMHB.

The women's track and field continued its season, competing in the Marc Randle Classic and the University of Incarnate Word Spring Break Invitational. In Tyler, Texas for the Marc Randle Classic, Emily Villines broke yet another school

record, this time in the 5000m run. Villines would place second overall with a time of 19:24.22, breaking the previous school record set in 2012. It is the second school record she has surpassed after setting the record in the 10,000m earlier this season. In San Antonio, Texas for the UIW Spring Break Invitational, the Tornados would perform well. In the field events, Stefanie Saenz threw a season-best 11.04m in the shot put to finish fifth. Bayli Luke, competing in both track and field events for CTX, placed fourth in the long jump with a distance of 5.34m, ranking 10th best in Division III. In the running events, Luke would take sixth in the 400m, running in a time of 1:00.07, which is 10th-best in Division III. Luke would also compete in the 200m, finishing in a time of 25.67 for seventh-place. The time also ranks sixth among Division III runners.



RONDA SEAGRAVES ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

BY ASHLEY SAVA

HOW HAS THE **ROLE OF WOMEN IN** SPORTS CHANGED **OVER YOUR** LIFETIME?

I grew up during the time when Title IX was adopted and many things changed during that time for participants, coaches and women's sports. Prior to Title IX. most of the women's teams were coached by women, and the sports administered by women (who also coached multiple sports). As Title IX



took hold and equity was sought, it became more lucrative and attractive for males to coach. There was also a big transition when the NCAA accepted women into the organization in the early '80s. This wiped out the AIAW (Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women), which was no longer recognized as universities moved into NCAA or NAIA (both male organizations).

WHAT ABOUT THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN HIGHER **EDUCATION?** WHAT KIND OF **PROGRESSION HAVE YOU OBSERVED** THERE?

While the number of women coaches in women's sports has decreased, there has been a slow and steady increase in female administrators directing athletic programs. More and more females are sitting in the executive seats in athletic departments.

AS A FEMALE **ATHLETIC** DIRECTOR, WHAT KIND OF INFLUENCE DO YOU THINK YOU BRING TO ATHLETICS?

> Experience and great mentors helped me. I came up through the ranks coaching several teams. I can relate to coaches with regard to the grind of recruiting and a long season. I've had to live within a small operating budget, and still try to win games. I work very hard with my staff to show compassion, be transparent, raise expectations and to expect that we are giving the best care and experience to our athletes.





As a freshman at CTX, Custer described herself as rambunctious, loud and wild.

"I was the one always having to do burpees."

However, she was a starter, a rarity for a college freshman.

"I still had a lot of learning and growing to do," Custer said. "But as an 18-year-old starter, I already had the respect from my older teammates."

As a sophomore, Custer was already taking over some captainship duties, and was named team captain her junior year.

"These people are your best friends," Custer said. "They're your family. You have to establish a respect level on the court, but also know you can joke around and be friends off the court."

Now finishing off her senior year, and near completion with her Bachelor of Business Management, and her Psychology minor, she looks forward to spending the remainder of her time here supporting other athletes and players, and being a friend to her fellow teammates.

"The adrenaline, the team memories, being passed out together after conditioning, traveling as a team..." she explained. "Leaving is bittersweet."

She hopes that future volleyball players know what a great bond the team shares at Concordia.

"Never be complacent," Custer advices incoming Tornados. "College is the next level, so don't expect it to be easy."

As for Custer, she has peace with what she has accomplished as an athlete, and looks on to a bright future.

"I know all things have to end, but not many players get four years of actual playing time," she explained, "I'm content with how I played and being so content makes it easier to look back and be happy."



What do you do when the thing you love most hurts you? If you're anything like Concordia University Texas softball player Katie Daniel, you don't give up.

Daniel was severely injured last season after a pitch to the face resulted in a severe concussion.

But after almost a lifetime of being a softball player, Daniel wasn't going to let this traumatic experience scare her off the sport. At just four years old, she started playing softball. By high school, she was one of two freshmen to make varsity where she played first base. Daniel got her first offer to play softball from Williams Baptist College in Arkansas and she accepted.

"Don't go to a school just for sports," Daniel said. "I hated it there. In the summer there were biting gnats, in the winter it was cold."

She transferred to Temple Junior College and played softball there the next semester.

"I learned discipline here," she said. "Six a.m. weights, then breakfast and then three or four hours of practice. We had 6 a.m.-to-7 p.m. days, six days a week."

Daniel knew she was going to continue college at a four-year university, and Daniel's Temple Junior College coach asked if Daniel would mind if she made a call to a university where she could continue playing softball. "I came up here [Concordia University Texas] for a visit, just to check it out," she said. "Once I took a tour and saw the field I was like 'wow, I like it here."

The 2016-2017 season was Daniel's first year here. Daniel was playing exceptionally, and batting over 400.

"I don't know if I ever had a season where I felt more comfortable playing," Daniel said. "As a teammate, I really felt like I was doing the best I could for my team."

It was April 1, 2017, when tragedy struck. The Tornados were playing against UT Tyler.

"It was the last game of the series," she said. "They beat us the first two games. It was the bottom of the seventh, one out and no one had a hit."

A hit came, but not in the way the Tornados hoped.

"We didn't get a hit, we got hit," Daniel said. "I was up to bat, and I remember seeing it coming at my face."

The next memory she has was Assistant Coach Jeff Stanton telling her to stay down while pools of blood were running off her face.

Daniel doesn't recall anything else until the hospital. She woke up to her mother and grandmother standing over her. It turns out they had seen the whole thing via livestream. AT JUST FOUR YEARS OLD, SHE CHOSE

SOFTBALL.

"I have never felt so helpless and miserable at the same time," she said. "I couldn't walk myself to the bathroom. I couldn't sit up."

She also couldn't remember conversations. Her concussion caused her to repeat the same things over and over. She was nauseated, dizzy and forgetful.

"You don't do rehab for a concussion the way you do it for a broken bone," Daniel said. "There is no set plan. I missed the end of the last semester of classes and had to take incompletes."

Class was the least of her problems, though. Sometimes, her goal for the day was something as simple as successfully getting a glass of orange juice from the kitchen. With help from her roommate, her boyfriend and especially from Athletic Trainer Raiza Aguilar, she started to make progress.

"I think Raiza is my angel here on earth," Daniel said. "She came up with drills for me, did research on concussions and worked with me daily. She even drove me to my doctor's appointments."

Daniel's concussion made it incredibly hard to focus on tasks. She described her concentration as living in a "Benadryl fog."

When Daniel visited her hometown, she got lost driving to the same church that she had attended her entire life. Five months passed by like this, and Daniel was worried she would never get better.

"I still wondered if softball would ever be on the table again," Daniel said. "I was just going to be a student, not a student athlete. I was going to lose that fun fact about myself."

She didn't stay away from her sport while recovering. "I went to fall practice, deciding that I was just going

to be happy being around softball," she said. "But I kept praying, and so did my family and my church."

The more she prayed, the better things got. She worked through physical therapy, cardio and even softball drills.

In January of 2018, Daniel was miraculously cleared to play again.

"I had a will, a want and a drive to be well and to perform."

She ran to the training room after she got cleared to tell Aguilar the good news.

"She cried and cried," Daniel said. "I felt like not a shell of a person, but whole again."

"The rest of the way I have to go is all me," she said. "It's a terrifying feeling."

Daniel said her will to be well is what got her where she is today.

"Every time I get to tie my cleats, I don't take it for granted."

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

With increasing attention on the long-term effects of concussions circulating, we want to reiterate that the health of our athletes is of the utmost importance. The measures we have established for concussion victims to follow before returning to the field are thorough and uncompromising.

- Any student athlete that sustains a concussion at Concordia University must pass a series of tests to determine if they are well enough to play again.
- Symptoms such as headaches, nausea and light sensitivity must be managed first.
- A neurological test called the ImPACT reaction time) must be taken, and the new score is compared to the baseline score that every athlete has from their baseline evaluation as a freshman.
- Next, the student follows Return to Play (RTP) protocol, a test that gradually increases the physical stress the athlete will undergo when they return to practice and completion.
- If all tests are passed, the athlete can return to play.

Off the field, athletes are also taken care of in the classroom. Concussion victims resume a "Return to Learn" schedule, as academic accommodations often must be made which limit exposure to light, computer screens, concentration and memory.

Where Are They Now?

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We want to feature your incredible stories and celebrate all that our alumni are doing. Share your accomplishments and your vocation with friends and fellow classmates. Submit your alumni note at alumni@concordia.edu, and see it in the next issue of the magazine!

Alumna cofounds organization that raises sex trafficking awareness

ANGIE GOEKE, '01

BY ASHLEY SAVA

from left to right: Angie Goeke and Alicia Maroney





The majority of Americans know little about sex trafficking, and most have no idea that it is going on in our country. Sex trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world. In our own state, it has been reported that the Mexican cartels have sent recruiters into Texas schools, churches and malls where they find victims and befriend them, before grooming them for their criminal practice.

Did you know that out of all sex trafficking victims in America, 25 percent are enslaved in Texas?

Did you know the average age of victims is between 11 and 14 and the average life expectancy of these victims is a mere seven years?

Did you know 79,000 youth are being sextrafficked in Texas?

Would you know how to spot sex trafficker and what to do if you did identify one?

2001 Concordia alumna Angie Goeke, and her friend Alicia Maroney, didn't know the answers to these questions before they started Not In Our City, a Houston-based organization that strives to inform and educate people about sex trafficking, while also building a network of resources. In 2015, the two moms discovered that children, just like theirs, were being sold for sex in their very own neighborhoods. Through months of research, they came into contact with victims, parents of victims and activists around the country. They knew they had to do something to help better connect activists and anti-trafficking organizations in order to take care of recovering victims and to educate the public.

Awareness and youth involvement quickly became key for prevention efforts.

"We really focus in on the preventative side of it," Goeke said. "What to look out for, and how to talk to your kids."

Not in Our City zeros in on awareness: preventative education for students, teachers and parents, as well as resources in the Houston neighborhoods with the tools to prevent, respond and recover from this tragedy.

"We were really seeing an educational gap in our schools," Goeke said.

They are in the early stages of developing a mobile virtual reality gaming experience that will raise awareness of domestic sex trafficking and guide participants into how traffickers manipulate, blackmail and brainwash victims.

The women are working with NEST Foundation (a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness on commercial sexual exploitation of children in America) to pilot a six-week trafficking curriculum for eighth-graders in Katy this spring.

"The course will end with a student-led forum, where the student will sit across the table from policy makers." Maroney said.

The curriculum that we are introducing isn't just an hour-long presentation on the facts, it addresses the underlying societal issues that allow the sex industry and trafficking to survive.

"My goal is that we will start receiving government support," Goeke said. "In five years we hope that the curriculum will be mandatory in schools. We want this to take off not just in Houston, but in cities all over the country."

Although it might seem improbable, both ladies

believe that with the right understanding of the issue, an investment in the next generation and a coming together of resources, that they will be around to witness the end of sex trafficking.

"Listening to the spirit and acting unapologetically is what we have to do as women," Maroney said. "We feel called to help address this. We have to ask for what we need, for support. We have to be big in our dreams and

Goeke partially attributes her time at Concordia to her reaching for the stars.

"I think having that biblically-based education and viewing the world through that lens is a big part of why I do what I do." Goeke said. "Our passion and desire for justice comes from Jesus. I really feel like we wouldn't be doing this if we hadn't been prompted by God."



Alum helping autism community with Behavorial Sciences BA

RACHEL FOOTE, '16

Rachel Foote left Concordia with a bachelor's degree in Behavioral Sciences and has taken that degree to serve one of the most vulnerable populations: children with autism.

While there is a widespread misconception that you must pursue a master's degree or even a doctorate to secure a "real" job in any behavioral science field, Foote is working as an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapist at Behavioral Innovations in Austin. She helps children with management of social skills, repetitive behaviors and speech and nonverbal communication, while figuring out the best way to cater to their unique strengths and differences.

"Our goal is to make the children as functional in society as possible," Foote said. "We'll go to school with them if the parents ask us to, we'll sit through their speech and occupational therapy sessions and we will work on their social skills."

According to Foote, children on the spectrum

don't generally seek out interaction from others. To refocus that mindset, she encourages play as it is an integral part of child development. Through sharing, cooperation and turn-taking, social language and self-esteem is learned.

"Typically, they don't enjoy being around peers, so we help them to set up these scenarios with peer-play," she said. "I enjoy peer-play the most."

Foote also works with her clients on things such as focusing on tasks, eating and behaviors.

"A behavior is any sort of resistance," she explained. "Throwing a tantrum, escaping or not listening are examples of some of these behaviors."

Through techniques such as reinforcements, consistency and a little bit of patience, Foote is able to help her clients and their families make progress. She is in the clinic spending time with her clients all day, and even spends time 90 minutes a day with an in-home client.

"Therapists are like the waiters at restaurants," Foote said. "Waiters are blamed for how the food turns out even though they didn't cook it, and deal directly with the customers. Therapists spend the entire day with the child, and even work with them on the things that they learn in their occupational and speech therapy sessions."

Although she loves what she does, there are sometimes challenges with her job that most of us don't have to worry about in our daily lives, particularly when it comes to aggression. She has been hit, bit and even headbutted by children.

"It isn't personal though," she said. "I much rather it be aimed at me than at the child's family. I am trained to de-escalate these sort of things."

Through even the roughest of encounters, Foote feels she is in the right place at the right

"I get to see improvements in these kids every single day," she said. "But it's most important that the families see those improvements at home. If the child is doing great all day with me, but at home there is no change, then we really did nothing."

Foote is blown away by how God has provided for her in this stage of life.

"I'm really open to what God has in store for me," she said. "I might get into ministry one day. For now, I have seen God meet all of my needs. I don't have stress going into work, and what I do is rewarding. I know I'm transforming lives of the children and their families."

She wants current Behavioral Science students to know that there are jobs out there for those who aren't sure continuing their education after a bachelor's degree is for them.

"A lot of times it's really more important who

you are as a person, than what your degree says," Foote explained. "Be willing to start at the bottom, but find joy in whatever you are doing."



Programmed for success: Tornado grad chases computer science dreams

JENNA FRANZ, '17

Jenna Franz hasn't slowed down since she left CTX. In fact, she's currently getting her Master of Science in Management Information Systems at Texas A&M University.

"I was always interested in pursuing engineering or a field related to information technology," Franz said.

Before started her freshman year at Concordia, she didn't have technical training in computers and had never taken technology classes in grade school. However, Franz had a passion.

"I got recruited to play softball at Concordia, so choosing Computer Science as my major was an easy choice."

Her love of technology carried her through the challenging courses.

"Technology forces you to become a lifelong learner," Franz said. "Information is constantly changing and evolving, and there is a need for professionals and experts in the field. There is something really rewarding about treading uncharted waters, and that's what it means to be studying technology."

During her time as a student here, she figured out that she had chosen the right major.

"Computer Science encompasses many different occupations, and I was able to learn what was a best fit for me," she explained.

Franz served as a technology intern for Camp Gladiator Headquarters in Austin for more than a year.

"I was in charge of hardware documentation, software installations, device troubleshooting and prioritized backlogs for all departments," Franz said. "I was able to work closely with the chief

technology officer (CTO,) and the two developers that worked there."

As a graduate student, she is now studying Management Information System: the study of how information systems are used within a business.

"This encompasses the technical, security, financial and network aspects of an information system," she said. "I have been taking classes about systems analysis and design, as well as accounting and business information security."

Her future courses will dive into project management and organizational change. She describes it as 50 percent business and 50 percent IT.

"I have always known that I wanted to be on the client-side of projects," Franz said. "I enjoy working with people, and establishing a relationship in order to meet their needs as a company."

Franz hopes to become a consultant, eventually growing into a project management role. This summer she will work at KPMG as an IT Risk Consultant.

"I will get to apply my knowledge of IT, and use it to help clients assess their information systems."

As far as gender equality goes, Franz understands the feeling of being outnumbered in her courses

"Statistics do show that women are greatly outnumbered, but I have not seen that as a barrier for learning," she said. "STEM is an intimidating field, but it's a matter of preference."

She hopes that she will hear from more women in the field in the future.

"It could be something as simple as having a women recruiter or keynote speaker at conferences, where there is a heavy presence of young women," she explained. "It's really encouraging to know that women before me have succeeded in attaining a degree, and continue to thrive in their careers."

While she recognizes the lack of women representation in the field, she believes she has been treated equally as a woman in STEM.

"I have been intimidated, and felt like I was not intelligent enough to be in a course, but that was never because I am a woman."

She doesn't believe gender should "lag" one's career choice, so to speak.

"STEM is such an incredible field, and it is worth the consideration when brainstorming about careers," Franz said. "Just because women outnumber men in the field, it doesn't mean that women are unable to succeed. If you like science, technology, engineering or math, I highly encourage you to try it out!"

1950s

Bettie Ann (Harris) Horn Bendewald ('57)

Bettie has relocated to a new living community in Georgetown, Texas and enjoys serving as a docent at the Wendish Heritage Museum in Serbin, Texas and also has returned to sit on the Concordia Alumni Council, an organization she started in 1997.

1960s

Jean (Laumann) Short ('68) and husband Paul ('68) have returned to Katy, Texas from Cape Girardeau, Mo. and are settling into their new home and ministry at Memorial Lutheran in Katy, Texas.

Donna (Wagner) Coppersmith ('69) has written and published a book called "Seven Skirts for Seven Sisters. Real-Life Lessons on Prayer and Listening to God." Donna and husband Michael live in Georgetown, Texas and can be contacted at coppersmith.donna@gmail.com.

2000s

Kelly (Naville) Sundsvold ('04) recently accepted position at LifePoint Church in Maryland as Communication Director. She and her husband, Shawn Sundsvold ('01), and four children now live in Westminster, Md.

Elizabeth (Troutman) Meissner ('05) and husband Duane ('03) recently welcomed new daughter Abigail into their family, which also includes Marci, Maverick and Ayana. The Meissners serve as LCMS Missionaries in Belize. Learn more of their journey at christinbelize. com.

Kimberly (McLean) Battle ('08) and husband Ben recently welcomed son Blake into their family. Blake joins sister Aubrey on Team Battle. Kim serves on the administrative team at Plucker's Wing Bar and oversees construction of new restaurants in Texas and surrounding states.

Ana Christina Rodriguez- Bowers ('09) is currently serving as TV host and Producer of The Dish, a lifestyle and entertainment show and host of Local Living, a real estate show, both on ABC affiliate, WJBF in Augusta, Ga. She and her husband Ryan have one son, Boston, and are expecting their second child this fall.

Cynthia Garcia ('09)

Cynthia Garcia was a Behavior Intervention Specialist for two years before moving on to Edgewood ISD to start working within the disciplinary alternative education program. Two years ago, she became an instructional coach in that same district.

Sara Keithley Karlik ('09)

Sara Keithley Karlik graduated from Concordia with a BS in Kinesiology. She is a certified sports massage therapist, and lives in Colorado Springs with her husband, Paul, and two children, Tavin and Ezra.

Shelia Kidd BA ('09) MBA ('13)

Sheila Kidd is graduating with an MA in English from Youngstown State University this May. She is a graduate teaching assistant for the YSU's English department. She plans to teach collegelevel English courses at YSU after graduation.

Christy (Wawrzyniak) Spiegel ('09) is finishing her ninth year as a high school mathematics teacher. She proudly serves Lutheran East High School in Cleveland, Ohio where she also serves as Dean of their Honors Academy, as well as assistant Athletic Director.

Shelley Payne Stout ('09)

Shelley Payne Stout is in her ninth year of teaching math at Tomball Memorial High School. She coaches freshmen volleyball there. She has been married to Concordia alumnus Shane Stout for seven years, and they have a five-year-old son named Logan.

Sarah Walker ('09)

Sarah Walker graduated from Concordia's School of Education, and now is in her ninth year teaching second grade at Redeemer Lutheran School in Austin. She has two children, Trey Michael Walker, age three, and Brooklyn Grace Walker, who was born this past October, She is married to Brad Walker, a 2010 Concordia alumnus.

2010s

Ava (Baird) Darnell ('11), founder of Slumlove Sweater Co., was recently awarded the "Emerging Leader Award" from Concordia University Texas for her company's service to women in the Kiberia slum region in Kenya. Ava and her family live in Austin. Learn more at slumlove.com.

Sara (Tullos) Middleton ('11) is a certified Project Management Professor, working for NEXT Consulting, where she works on training course development, execution and project management. She and her husband, Philip Middleton, ('10), live in Kingsville, where Philip is assistant baseball coach and recruiting coordinator at Texas A&M-Kingsville. They have one daughter, Sally Ruthadel Middleton.

Shina Bharadwaja, ('14)

After graduating from Concordia with a BA in Behavioral Sciences in May of 2014, Shina Bharadwaja started graduate school at Conrad N. Hilton College at the University of Houston, and graduated with an MS in Hospitality Management in May of 2016. She was hired full time at the Houston Zoo as a Program and Events Coordinator and spent two years in that role. Last year, she launched her own events services business, Harmony Happenings. She is currently writing and research full time, and writing her first novel.

Emily Parsons ('14) is finishing her first year of a Master's Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at UTSA. She has worked as a statewide intake worker for DFPS and as a Mental Health Technician a residential facility for 11-17 year old girls with neurobehavioral disorders, and is excited to use what she is learning in her master's degree to continue to serve others.

Hannah (Folgate) Kasper ('15) recently completed the San Antonio Fire Academy and is proudly starting her career as a Firefighter. She and her husband, Andrew Kasper ('11), are living in San Antonio.

Angelina Johnson ('17) has taken on the vocation of Assistant Guide and Marketing Coordinator for Ascend Outdoor Adventures. Angie's found her niche in showcasing God's grand design in nature. To learn more, visit ascendoutdoor.com.





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Concordia University Texas celebrated Concordia with a week packed full of activities involving prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors and community members. Nearly 500 people helped make this event memorable.











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