Making a Difference: One Smile at a Time

What Makes Teaching at Creighton Special?
An Inside Look at Emotions
The Business of Doing Good
Stress!

Spring 2016
Interfaith Prayer

Emmy Niroula, a freshman from Omaha, carries a candle during Creighton’s annual Interfaith Prayer Service at St. John’s Church in February. This year’s service was titled “Peace: The Heart of Humanity,” and celebrated a common call of all faith traditions to work and pray for peace in our global family. Niroula’s religious faith is Hinduism.
Message from the President

For more than 135 years, Creighton University has been intimately involved with the life and growth of Omaha and the surrounding community. I am inspired by our long history of working with community partners and civic and government leaders to improve the lives of all citizens.

Our Jesuit, Catholic mission calls us to especially reach out to those on the margins — the underserved, the poor, the neglected, the voiceless. It is a life-affirming mission, for it is here that we find the face of God.

I have found the Creighton response to this calling — among our students, faculty, and staff — to be deep in scope and conviction.

In this issue of Creighton University Magazine, we share with you a few of the ways your University is working in collaboration with other entities to reach out and serve the greater community.

Our health sciences programs in dentistry, medicine, pharmacy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and nursing share a tradition of providing care to those most in need in our community.

In this issue, we profile our School of Dentistry, which provides care through its clinics and outreach programs to about 27,000 patients annually — including 5,000 children at 10 low-income public schools through the Healthy Smiles program.

Our students bring renewed enthusiasm to our mission of service. Our student-run, student-founded Magis Clinic is but one example. The clinic is expanding its services to better meet the needs of its clientele at the Siena-Francis House homeless shelter. Our Milton R. Abrahams Legal Clinic, staffed by Creighton law students and providing free legal assistance to low-income residents locally, also will be undergoing a remodeling this summer.

The Heider College of Business has been involved in the creation of the new Business Ethics City Lab, which will study Omaha businesses to find out how companies can be more ethically responsible. (Read more beginning on Page 34.)

Additionally, through a master’s program in the Graduate School, Education Department faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences are developing the next generation of Catholic school leaders in the Omaha Archdiocese and nationwide. Creighton hosted a national conference this spring to discuss opportunities for further partnerships.

In my conversations with alumni at visits nationwide, and in continued dialogue with campus community members, I am struck by this commitment to engaging and bettering communities — locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

It is part of our past and present, and informs our best hopes for the future. I hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine, and may God continue to bless you in this season of reawakening.

Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, S.J.
President

Join Me on RAGBRAI

I will be riding in RAGBRAI, the popular bike ride across Iowa, July 24–30. For individuals registered with RAGBRAI who would like to join me for all or a portion of the ride, please email officeofthepresident@creighton.edu.

You can also “follow” me on the ride through social media.
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Through its numerous outreach and community-based programs, the Creighton University School of Dentistry provides much-needed care to underserved populations, treating nearly 27,000 patients annually.

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Life can be stressful and chronic stress can be detrimental to our health — even deadly. How do our minds and bodies respond to stress, and how can we better manage that response? We turn to Creighton experts and an alumnus conducting cutting-edge research in this area for answers.

Correction: In the fall 2015 Creighton University Magazine story “Laudato Si: A Look at the Papal Encyclical on the Environment,” John O’Keefe, Ph.D., was identified as the holder of the Amelia B. and Emil G. Graff Professor of Catholic Theological Studies. O’Keefe is the holder of the A.F. Jacobson Chair in Communication, and Todd Salzman, Ph.D., is holder of the Graff Chair.

View the magazine online at: creighton.edu/creightonmagazine
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alumninews@creighton.edu | 800.334.8794 or mail to University Relations, Creighton University,
2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68178
Lynch Honored for Lifetime of Achievements

Henry Lynch, M.D., director of Creighton’s Hereditary Cancer Center, recently was honored by the American College of Physicians (ACP) for a lifetime of teaching and research into hereditary cancer. Lynch earned the distinguished “fellowship” designation from the national organization, and the Walter J. O’Donohue Award from the ACP’s state chapter.

Huss Recipient of National Teaching and Mentoring Award

Matthew Huss, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Psychology, was announced as the 2016 American Psychology-Law Society Outstanding Teaching and Mentoring in the Field of Psychology and Law Award winner in January.

Nominees for the award have made substantial contributions to student training in the field of psychology and law and have been teaching for at least eight years.

Many of Huss’ students have distinguished themselves in the field of psychology by publishing research and delivering presentations. Former students also have been admitted to doctoral programs around the country.

Huss studies forensic-clinical psychology with a focus on the prediction of violence, domestic violence and sex offenders. His other research interests include the study of jurors’ notions of insanity and the admissibility of scientific evidence at trial.

Already a decorated educator, Huss earned the 2013 Nebraska Professor of the Year Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. In 2013, he was also the recipient of the Dean’s Award for Excellence in Scholarship.

Help others live healthy, full lives.

Creighton University is renowned for excellence in the health sciences. Our commitment to Jesuit values also demonstrates that we know health care means much more than treating diseases. It means caring for people and helping to create health in all dimensions of their lives. That’s why we’ve established the Center for Health Promotion and Well-Being, with the mission to foster the creation of health across the lifespan. Through the center, we offer outstanding programs in the fast-growing field of health and wellness.

Make a difference in the world—starting with one of our convenient online programs:
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• Bachelor of Arts in Healthy Lifestyle Management

Visit healthandwellness.creighton.edu.
Defying the Odds

Scholarship recipient overcomes obstacles; inspires, mentors first-generation students like herself

Jackie Crawford’s presence on the Creighton University campus is a study in the unlikely.

The child of a single mother and an incarcerated father, who moved with her mother from Florida to a tough Kansas City neighborhood, Creighton was unknown to her. She didn’t know where Omaha was. The demographics of her high school were so daunting, she said, that Creighton didn’t recruit there.

But there she is, in her final semester as a medical anthropology major. A recipient of the Raymond A. Bucko, S.J. Scholarship and the B.J. Roberts Endowed Scholarship, among others, Crawford will graduate in May, having enjoyed a busy and fruitful Creighton experience.

She has worked with Omaha high school students and new Creighton students who, like her, are the first in their families to pursue or attend college.

She serves as president of Peer2Peer, a mentoring program that matches first-generation upperclassmen and incoming freshmen at Creighton to assist with the college transition. She also has been the ambassador-advisor and tutor coordinator for Upward Bound, working with area high school students to help them prepare for college.

In addition to her work with students, Crawford serves as president of the Gamma Xi chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She has also served as president and treasurer of the African American Student Association; student representative of the Black Studies program; and president and parliamentarian of the Association of Multicultural Greek Organizations.

How Crawford got from that tough Kansas City neighborhood to a position of leadership on Creighton’s campus is a story of perseverance, maternal and paternal urging, sacrifice and a fortunate suggestion by a high school teacher.

“It was instilled in me by my mom and my dad that I had to be good in school, but I really wasn’t set on college until I got to my sophomore year of high school,” she said. “My father went to prison when I was 7, so we really had no father figure in the house, but he would call me every day to remind me what I had to do.”

Her mother, Jeanette, proved a lodestar, providing a daily example of perseverance as she fought to raise four children alone.

“She really love her; she did so much,” Crawford said. “I saw her working so hard every day, struggling to take care of four kids and a bunch of nieces and nephews that she was helping to care for.

“It was just hard for me to see my mom struggle like that, and I didn’t want the same thing for me. I wanted to be successful and be in a position where I could give back to her.”

Her mother’s perseverance involved being laid off after 13 years as head cook at a youth correctional facility in Florida, and then founding a cleaning business in Kansas City, which has flourished. It was evidence to Crawford that hard work pays off.

The road to success, though well trod and passing almost invariably through higher education, can seem distant to kids raised in neighborhoods like Crawford’s, where she said gang violence was constant and teen pregnancy common. But she said she decided to rise above the “at risk” label placed on her because of where she lived.

“I told myself that I would graduate high school and go to college no matter what it took,” she said. “I just made sure that I stayed in the top 10 percent of my class and maintained an active involvement in school.”

As luck, and perhaps fate would have it, she mentioned to her high school English teacher that she would like to pursue a career in emergency medical services, and the teacher suggested researching Creighton University.

“I said, ‘I don’t know where that is,’” Crawford said. “But she looked into it, discovered Creighton’s excellent reputation and visited.

“I absolutely fell in love with the campus,” she said. “I felt like I was at home. They were so welcoming. Everything was just great. There were no questions in my mind. And scholarships made it financially feasible.”

Crawford’s career goal has evolved, and she now hopes to become a federal probation officer and work with people much like her father, Cornelius — people whose lengthy prison terms have made the ways of the world strange and hard to navigate upon release.

“I want to be the person who … can help them take the next step once they get out.”
Easy as it is to blame for such epidemics as the current Zika and Chikungunya outbreaks, it’s not entirely the mosquito that’s responsible — the bug is just a vessel or, in biological terms, a vector. In fact, as research being done by Creighton University’s Carol Fassbinder-Orth, Ph.D., is showing, targeting not just the mosquito, but the virus residing in the insect could aid in preventing or predicting outbreaks similar to those in South America and Africa.

By taking aim at the genetics of the virus while it’s in the insect vector, Fassbinder-Orth is hoping to show how stepping back from the study of the virus in a human host and looking at its origin in a mosquito or other insect vector could help break the chain of the virus’ transmission.

“To be able to understand how the replication dynamics are occurring in these insect vectors would be the ideal,” said Fassbinder-Orth, an associate professor of zoonotic diseases in the Department of Biology. “Then, to be able to utilize RNA interference or another molecular technique to interfere with the replication process or even turn the virus against itself, that could help us predict something like what we’re seeing with Zika or Chikungunya and stop it before the crisis develops.”

The two mosquito species that carry Zika and Chikungunya, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*, have made their way to the United States, with *Aedes albopictus* reaching an invasive distribution across much of the eastern and southern U.S.

Fassbinder-Orth is hoping continued research, aided by an NIH IDeA Networks for Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE) grant, will help her lab look at wider samples of the insects and get a better handle on how best to interrupt the virus’ replication process or encourage defective particles to develop in the virus that might help slow or stop its growth in a mosquito and thereby lessen its impact on human populations.

“We want to know as much about these insects as possible,” she said. “It’s a long way from a final application step, but it is a basic science step and we have to start there in order to have a potential end result.”
Educating Catholic School Leaders
National conference draws school officials to Creighton to discuss possible partnerships

“A pipeline of leadership,” is how Patrick Slattery, the superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of Omaha, describes the growing number of potential principals in the institutions he oversees, thanks to a partnership with Creighton University.

Slattery was one of 20 Catholic school superintendents — representing 19 archdioceses or dioceses in 11 states — to attend the Partners for Catholic Leadership conference at Creighton in January.

The conference focused on how Creighton can help foster growth and innovation in educational leadership for Catholic schools — from preschool through high school — around the United States.

“Creighton gets it,” Slattery said. “They know the needs and the challenges Catholic schools face and they are continuously asking us, ‘What do you need? How can we help?’”

Creighton University is the preferred provider for leadership education among the schools of the Omaha Archdiocese, and has forged partnerships with school systems in the Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn., and the Diocese of Manchester, N.H. The University is eager to make more connections around the country.

“It fills a national need,” said Tim Cook, Ph.D., a professor of education and director of Creighton’s online master’s degree program in Educational Leadership. “There are a lot of current and aspiring leaders of Catholic schools out there and this program ensures that training is there for them.”

Spurred by a 2005 directive from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops that higher education do more to support K-12 Catholic education, Creighton became the first institution in the U.S. to offer an online Catholic School Leadership certificate.

Since then, students from all over the nation have enrolled at the University for this specialized curriculum. Some dioceses have started their own aspiring leadership academies to feed into Creighton and help produce more leaders.

Ron Fussell, assistant superintendent in the Diocese of Manchester, said the demands on today’s Catholic school leader require a wide breadth of skill and knowledge.

“The reality is we need leaders who can look at the big picture of enrollment, of accreditation, of ministry, and ensure that we will always be here,” Fussell said.

Dale Hoyt, an administrator in the Archdiocese of Hartford, who also teaches in Creighton’s Catholic Leadership program, said the University does an excellent job of preparing educators for these leadership roles.

“I couldn’t stop thinking how lucky we are that we’ve been able to make this partnership with Creighton and now extend it to more of our potential leaders in the archdiocese,” Hoyt said.

In Omaha, roughly 30 administrators or potential administrators have participated in Creighton’s Catholic Leadership program, as a separate certificate or as part of the master’s degree in Educational Leadership.

“I don’t worry about having zero candidates for principal jobs,” Slattery said. “It’s nice to have the peace of mind that you’ve got this pipeline of leadership.”

He added the University has also found other practical ways to partner with Catholic schools throughout the archdiocese.

With Creighton’s help, the archdiocese schools sponsored an event at which four Omaha corporate leaders with ties to Catholic education participated in a forum to talk about leadership. Foreign language students from the University have translated at parent-teacher conferences and a plan is in the works to provide Creighton nursing students with experience by having them aid in staffing much-needed school nurse positions.

Slattery urged conference participants to tell Creighton their needs and see where the University can provide solutions.

“The University is very willing to talk with any and all dioceses about what the needs are,” Slattery said. “Even if you’re 1,000 miles away, there are resources that can help and Creighton is willing to help.”

Carney Earns International Book Prize


In the book, Carney, whose research interests center on the modern Catholic experience in Africa, explores the church’s role in Rwanda up to the genocide and church leaders’ reactions to mass violence in the 1950s and 1960s that led up to the mid-1990s slaughter. Carney’s is the first English-language study on church history in Rwanda in more than 30 years.
Congress Recognizes Dr. Heaney for Pioneering Work on Vitamin D

As the heart of our solar system and our calendar, the sun fuels life on earth and the human body in fundamental ways. If there’s anybody who deserves his time in the sun, it is world-renowned researcher and Creighton School of Medicine professor emeritus Robert Heaney, BS’47, MD’51. For more than 50 years, the founder of Creighton’s Osteoporosis Research Center and former holder of the John A. Creighton University Professorship has studied and illuminated the vital role of vitamin D — the “sunshine vitamin” — in health and disease.

After training as an endocrinologist, Heaney became interested in bone biology, discovering vitamin D as a key that opens the biochemical machinery to our entire genome, enabling cells to function at their optimal level.

Last November, Heaney was recognized on the floor of the U.S. Congress for his groundbreaking work in vitamin D science, osteoporosis, preventive health and nutrition policy. Rep. Brad Ashford, JD’74, of Nebraska stood before the House of Representatives to commend Heaney for helping lawmakers understand the critical importance of good nutrition for a healthy society.

“His accomplishments speak to his perseverance and commitment to innovation in his field,” Ashford said.

Heaney has written three books and published more than 400 papers, mostly on the field of nutrition and the solutions to vitamin D deficiency, for which he continues to be a global advocate. The foremost theme of his work has been quantitative physiology — e.g., how much vitamin D is synthesized in the skin, metabolized and stored each day — and the extent to which intake levels modify those changes.

At the same time, Heaney has engaged nutritional policy issues on an international scale, radically redefining both intake requirements for various nutrients and how they are determined. Specifically, he has shown that nutrient deficiencies produce long-latency disease as well as their classical acute disorders, and has focused attention on the inadequacy of drug-based research designs for the evaluation of nutrient efficacy.

From newborn babies to elderly seniors, vitamin D is crucial for far more than strong bones. Heaney’s research sheds a penetrating light on the part this essential nutrient plays in reducing the risk of several cancers, heart disease, stroke, Type I diabetes, multiple sclerosis, depression and more.

“Vitamin D probably affects every disease,” Heaney said.

Even protection against the common cold and flu is linked to vitamin D. During the summer months, when sun exposure is highest, the daylight vitamin activates immune cells so they can better fight infection.

Despite the fact that vitamin D is a hormone produced naturally (and freely) through sunlight on skin, the majority of people are deficient, according to Heaney. It’s no wonder; modern life and work have driven us indoors, and when we are outside, we’re slathering on sunscreen, blocking the solar
“We need to keep in mind that under more primitive circumstances, we were getting a lot more [vitamin D] from the sun than we do today. If you can think back to your own grandparents, you’d realize they spent a lot more time outdoors. They hung their wash out on the line to dry; they mowed the lawn. They walked to the bus stop or streetcar stop and they got fresh air. There was just a lot more outdoor time and sun exposure. People are scared to death now of skin cancer, but nobody was dying of melanoma back in those days. I fear we have a problem that’s been created by the cosmetic industry rather than a real problem for cancer prevention,” Heaney told Dr. Mercola of the popular health website in a 2015 interview.

While most people today are relatively sun-shy, fortunately, milk, cereal and other food products come fortified. In the early 20th century, it is estimated that more than 80 percent of children in industrialized North America and Europe had skeletal bone softening due to rickets, a disease caused by vitamin D shortage. (Remember Charles Dickens’ Tiny Tim in coal-polluted London?) Subsequently, many countries began mandating the enrichment of dairy products and promoting the use of cod liver oil.

A walk in the sunshine, a glass of milk and a spoon full of fish oil all seem like old-fashioned advice from the family doctor, but Heaney’s landmark research extends far beyond simple common sense. His probing inquiry into human physiology has taken him around the world to our ancestral East African equatorial home and back in time to the evolution of our species. He says knowing “how much protein or calcium or vitamin D or folate our pre-agricultural ancestors obtained from their environments gives us a good idea of how much might be optimal today.”

And what is the most beneficial level for today’s general population?

Heaney and researchers at the University of California, San Diego, reported last March that, due to a calculation error, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Institute of Medicine (IOM) underestimated the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for vitamin D by a factor of 10.

The IOM recommends 600 IU per day through age 70, and 800 IU per day for those older. In an article published in the journal *Nutrients*, Heaney and his fellow researchers recommended that the RDA be set at 7,000 IU per day.

That’s more consistent with the vitamin D intake of our ancient ancestors, he says, and with data from Grassroots Health, a public health promotion organization, for which Heaney is research director, which has an “accumulated database that is without peer anywhere in the world.”

Answering concerns about vitamin D toxicity, Heaney is emphatic. “It’s safe. 10,000 IU, 15,000 IU is about what you’d get with 15 minutes in July on the beach. It’s important to stress that. That’s physiological. That’s what the body is used to; it counts on getting that much vitamin D.”

In practical application of his research, Heaney, a dynamic and active 88-year-old who takes a vitamin D supplement every day, says he would like to see people in policy-making positions — nutritional, public health, legislative — become comfortable making positions — nutritional, public health, legislative — become comfortable promoting the use of cod liver oil. In addition to Grassroots Health, Heaney serves or has served on the editorial boards of all the major scientific publications in bone biology and chaired the Scientific Advisory Panel on Osteoporosis of the Office of Technology Assessment (U.S. Congress).

Heaney received the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s prestigious W.O. Atwater Memorial, considered to be one of the top honors in the nutrition field. He also was one of two physicians earning the National Osteoporosis Foundation’s first Legends of Osteoporosis Award for his “extraordinary contributions to the scientific body of knowledge about bone biology and osteoporosis.”
Stavas Named Radiology Department Chair

Returning to the place where his medical career began, Joe Stavas, MD’82, is looking forward to helping the Creighton University School of Medicine embark upon its next phase as he becomes chair of radiology in April.

Bridging a career as a community radiology practitioner with one in academe, Stavas said he’s focused on collaboration with the medical community, with students and with the larger Omaha community. As Creighton prepares to open its new University Campus site, Stavas said he sees the effort as linked to a new understanding of personal health care and a way to reach out to a wider group of people seeking to get and stay healthy.

Since 2009, Stavas has been a professor of radiology and taught and practiced in the Department of Radiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Physical Therapy Faculty Honored for Research

Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions faculty in the Department of Physical Therapy have earned recognition for publishing groundbreaking research on clinical reasoning and physical therapy education.


Furze, as first author on both articles, earned the coveted 2015 Stanford Award, bestowed on the writers of a manuscript containing the most influential educational ideas published in the Journal of Physical Therapy Education in the calendar year.

Researchers Awarded NIH Grant to Study Treatment of Hearing Loss

Two Creighton University School of Dentistry researchers have been awarded a National Institutes of Health grant to explore cell processes in the inner ears of mice that may prove beneficial in treating human hearing loss.

Michael Weston, Ph.D., and Sonia Rocha-Sanchez, Ph.D., both professors in the Department of Oral Biology, have earned the three-year, $436,550 grant to study the effects of small noncoding RNAs on the forced generation of sensory cells in the mouse inner ear with the goal of improving the process of cell renewal as a way to treat human hearing loss.

“This study will provide important scientific insights that could translate into future medical treatments for human hearing loss diseases,” said Weston, principal investigator on the grant.

Faculty to Study Youth Brain Development with Help of NSF Grant

The collection of vast stores of data that may unlock new information about the development of the brain as it transitions to adolescence from childhood will soon begin for neuroscientists in Nebraska with funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Two Creighton University psychology professors, Amy Badura Brack, Ph.D., and Maya Khanna, Ph.D., are part of a four-year, $6 million National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) grant. The grant funds neuroimaging research exploring the developing brains of children ages 9 to 14, as well as the development of the Nebraska Cognitive Neuroscience Training Program.

Khanna plans to look more closely at the potential effects of lead exposure in children, while Badura Brack will look at how traumatic childhood experiences and psychological distress affect brain growth.

“We have an exceptional opportunity to bring together neuroimaging, psychological and genetic data to model the process of brain development in children,” said Badura Brack.

Roberts Receives New Investigator Grant

Drew Roberts, Pharm.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor of pharmacy sciences, is one of six recipients of an AcademyHealth New Investigator Small Grant. Roberts received the grant for research he has done on Medicaid prescription drug abuse prevention policy. The grant is funded through a partnership with the Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP).

Roberts is also on the faculty of Creighton’s Center for Health Services Research and Patient Safety, where he has established a health services research program aimed at improving the quality, accessibility, and outcomes of medication use, particularly in low-income populations. Roberts’ current work is focused on improving the public health benefit of policy interventions designed to combat prescription drug abuse and prevent overdose deaths.

The AcademyHealth New Investigator Small Grant Program is designed to support the early careers of new health services researchers.
Five Creighton University online programs have earned rankings in the 2016 U.S. News & World Report Best Online Programs. The rankings evaluated more than 1,000 distance education programs for bachelor's and graduate degrees in business, education, nursing, engineering and computer technology. Creighton’s placement in five categories represents the most programs ranked since the rankings began in 2012, with two University programs earning rankings for the first time: the Online MBA Programs (44th) and the Online Graduate Nursing Programs (64th).

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No. 13  
**Best Online Graduate Business Programs** (Excludes MBA)

No. 20  
**Best Online Graduate Bachelor’s Programs**

No. 36  
**Best Online Graduate Education Programs**

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**Best Online MBA Programs**

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**Best Online Graduate Nursing Programs**

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Magis Clinic Expands Offerings

Creighton’s student-run, student-founded Magis Clinic, located at the Siena-Francis House homeless shelter near campus, has provided quality, compassionate health care to the underserved in Omaha since 2014.

And now the clinic has expanded its offerings. These new offerings include:

- A Student Navigator Program, in which undergraduate students serve as patient liaisons;
- A student-run pharmacy;
- An ultrasound clinic, staffed by medical students and radiology residents;
- And a Sexual Health Clinic, which began offering HIV and Hepatitis C testing in January.

Creighton University Magazine caught up with junior medical students Joel Fuchs, BS’12, and Daniel Dyer, co-directors of the Magis Clinic, and College of Arts and Sciences junior Emma Schaffer, a student navigator, to discuss the changes.

**Q:** Why is it important to offer these new services?

**Fuchs:** Nothing is ever stagnant in the world of underserved health care and there will always be people who need care. Each of our patients comes to the clinic with a unique story filled with triumphs and tumbles. As future health care professionals, it is crucial that we do not overlook these stories. We could miss our chance to be creative in diagnosing, treating and connecting with that person. At Magis, we’re always looking for opportunities to connect with people and make sure nobody falls through the cracks.

**Schaffer:** The goal of the Magis Clinic is to provide health care services to those who cannot easily access this fundamental right. It is important to continue expanding the services of this clinic in order to provide as much support as possible to the homeless population. I believe that to build a strong community, it is vital to take care of the most vulnerable populations. Providing access to health care to people who are homeless increases the overall health of the Omaha community.

**Q:** What has been the response to the Student Navigator Program?

**Fuchs:** Student navigators have enjoyed meeting patients and learning about their lives, which is a very enriching experience. We must continue to develop our avenues of getting in touch with patients. Many patients do not have phone numbers or contact information, but our navigators have been persistent and inventive when it comes to working with referral patients. From the beginning, we have reflected on the need to think outside the box when it comes to working with a transient population. I think it has been eye-opening for many students.

**Schaffer:** As a student navigator, I am privileged to offer my time and respect to people who are so often ignored by society. Homelessness is a large, complicated issue that seems impossible to solve. It is sometimes difficult to reach the patients, and their health care situations can be frustrating for both the patients and us. However, with every failure, there is also progress and a learning experience. I have gained a more personal perspective on homelessness and found that every issue is worth facing when a patient gets access to the services he or she needs.
Q Can you talk about the new student-run pharmacy and its impact?

Dyer: Having an established pharmacy allows collaboration at Magis between students of different disciplines. This is especially important given how closely we will work with these colleagues in the future. As Magis officers, we seek ways to improve the quality and scope of the care that we are able to safely and responsibly provide at the clinic. Our goal is to break down the barriers to health care that our patients face. Over the past year, we started making reflection a designated part of meetings. By being mindful of what is going on at the clinic, we seek to grow in compassion and uphold the idea of being men and women for and with others.

Q How has serving at the Magis Clinic impacted you and your educational experience?

Dyer: The Magis Clinic has taught me that no kind act is small. We had a patient who needed an elbow brace, something we don’t have in the clinic. I purchased a brace for the patient, and didn’t think much of it. Several weeks later, the patient greeted me warmly, and said that he had been waiting at the clinic for me. He told me he had joined the Miracles Treatment Program a while ago, but the last time he and I had met had been a really dark day in his life. He had been thinking about dropping out of the program, but my small act of providing an elbow brace had been enough to keep him going. He told me I had saved his life that day. I was blown away and humbled. I believe it was God showing me how He works through even the smallest acts and the importance of being present for one another.

Schaffer: When I heard about the student navigator volunteer position, I immediately wanted to get involved because of my interests in social justice and medicine. The program has allowed me to learn about the Siena-Francis House, the health care system and the homeless population. The Magis Clinic provides patients with a referral telephone number, bus passes and appointment reminders so they can get the medical services they need. Working closely with patients allows us to gather feedback and determine if the services are successful. Patients are extremely appreciative.

Q What are some future goals for the Magis Clinic?

Dyer: We recently created a five-year vision for the clinic with main goals including education, patient collaboration and interdisciplinary collaboration. We hope to provide more information to our patients about their medical conditions and to medical students about the challenges and difficulties faced by patients. Similarly, we want to develop more ways for patients to have a voice in the care that is available to them, providing them a platform to speak through focus groups, surveys and patient representatives at meetings. We want to shape our services based on feedback from patients. There are also preliminary conversations with social work and dentistry, and one of our officers is working with Creighton staff and faculty to develop a smoking-cessation project.
The mother, Mu Hki, had taken off work from her six-day-a-week factory job outside of Omaha to accompany her daughter. Creighton dental care coordinator Margo Forsythe helped the family arrange transportation to the appointment because the family doesn’t own a car.

The girl, 12-year-old Paw Klay, had been experiencing tooth pain strong enough to wake her during the night. An earlier appointment to the clinic had confirmed that she had a severe abscess, requiring antibiotics. On this particular day, the tooth would be extracted.

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houses some 10,000 refugees in a mountainous region. “We had to walk down the mountain to the city, to the hospital,” Mu Hki said, speaking through an interpreter. “We had to sit all day and hope to be seen.”

Toothpaste was always in short supply in the camp, so Mu Hki used salt to clean her own teeth, saving the toothpaste for her children.

For drinking and cooking, the family would dig a hole as deep as necessary to reach water. They would then boil the water over a campfire, which was also used to cook their food.

“There was not enough work. And there was not enough food for the children,” Mu Hki said. “Only rice and beans and oil.”

In search of a better life for their family, Mu Hki and her former husband applied for United Nations refugee resettlement, and eventually joined a Karen population of several thousand in Omaha.

Paw Klay’s elementary school is among 10 low-income public schools in northeast Omaha served by a Creighton dental outreach program, and that was how the family learned of the Creighton Dental Clinic. More than 90 percent of the students in those schools are eligible for the free or reduced-price federal lunch program.

“I know I have to take my children to the dentist, but it is difficult because I have to work,” said Mu Hki. “I am very glad the dental students come to her school.”

On the day of her follow-up appointment, Paw Klay, who speaks English, broke into a big smile when asked about the care she receives from Creighton. “I really like the dental students. They are amazing. They help us kids a lot and teach us how to clean our teeth.”

“I was very sad that Paw Klay got the tooth infection. I want her to take care of her teeth,” her mother said, “but I can’t always make sure she does it. I am happy that she got treated. It is so important for the kids to have care so they can be healthy.”

Paw Klay is just one of the 5,000 children seen annually through the schools-based program, which is called Healthy Smiles. Last year, 31 percent of the children screened had untreated tooth decay (the national average is 21.5 percent, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and 11 percent had urgent dental needs.

Treating children’s oral health addresses a critical need. According to the CDC, dental disease is the most common chronic illness for children in the U.S., with 68 percent of youth experiencing tooth decay in permanent teeth by age 19. Data
from 2014 show that more than 18 million of the nation’s low-income children went without dental care.

Through Healthy Smiles, Creighton students under the supervision of faculty provide fluoride varnish, dental sealants, screening and oral health education twice a year at each school. If they see a child with untreated tooth decay who needs to see a dentist, the dental care coordinator contacts the family and assists them in getting a dental appointment at the provider of their choice. Many of them choose the Creighton dental clinic.

Funding for the dental care coordinator position and the Healthy Smiles program is through Building Healthy Futures, which is part of the Children’s Oral Health Collaborative. The collaborative creates a continuum of oral health care and education for underserved children in the Omaha area.

On a recent Healthy Smiles visit at Martin Luther King Jr. School in Omaha, four dental students and four dental hygiene students (through a cooperative program with Iowa Western Community College) provided services to 120 first- through sixth-graders.

“Some of the students have lots of damage,” said the school’s principal, Stephanie Black. “This program is amazing. We love it. It’s serving kids who often don’t get dental care and it’s a way to get them some help. We ask our teachers to encourage the students to bring the parent permission forms back that allow them to be treated.” Black said sometimes the lack of dental care is due to a family’s financial situation or sometimes a parent has a fear of the dentist.

“Students all over our school talk about brushing their teeth now. Some students ask for permission to brush their teeth after lunch so we have gotten toothbrushes donated to our classrooms.”

As if on cue, a first-grader proudly walks up to dental school faculty member Linda Woodruff following his dental treatment. Woodruff plants a Creighton Bluejays sticker on him and hands him a packet containing an electric toothbrush, toothpaste and dental floss. “Have a great day, bud,” she says, and Principal Black chimes in, “Have a good day now, and make good choices.”

The schools program is just one facet of the many ways the School of Dentistry shapes future dentists to be community-service minded, not only in dental school but in their dental practices.

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The dental school provides care through its clinics and outreach programs to about 27,000 patients annually, including approximately 12,000 people at the on-campus Creighton pediatric and adult dental clinics.

Students and faculty additionally provide care to underprivileged adults and children and volunteer hundreds of hours through a variety of programs (see sidebar articles).

“For more than a century, the students, faculty and staff of the School of Dentistry have taken community service to heart, providing for the oral health needs of the underserved in Omaha and the surrounding areas,” the Rev. Daniel Hendrickson, S.J., Creighton president, said. “In particular, our dental students learn how to be compassionate professionals who serve their patients as well as their communities.”

Mark Latta, DMD, dean of the School of Dentistry, is proud of the community work the school does in addition to training competent, ethical general dentists. “This is not only an educational program,” Latta said. “We deliver care to an enormous number of people in need.”

“The mission of the dental school is the mission of Creighton University — to help transform our students into women and men for others,” said James Howard, DDS, senior associate dean for clinical and external affairs. “You get immediate gratification
Making a Difference: One Smile at a Time

when you help other people, and you become someone who wants to keep getting that good feeling.

“Service is such a huge part of their clinical training,” Howard said, “and it is important to society — that type of dentist is different.”

There are only three Catholic dental schools in the United States and Creighton is the farthest west. Creighton is also the only one that chooses not to offer graduate programs so CU dental students get more hands-on clinical experience. “Our students are very clinically oriented,” said Howard. “Here, they get to do it all. There are no graduate students who get to do the majority of care.”

Howard, who has lectured internationally, joined Creighton in 1995 following career service in the U.S. Air Force Dental Corps. He said when he was an Air Force colonel, long before he ever worked at Creighton, “I needed dentists who could do it all. I worked with dentists who graduated from every school and few prepared young dentists who could do dentistry the way Creighton students did. So when I was offered a position here at Creighton, I was thrilled for the opportunity.”
Community Programs Reach Thousands

In addition to community outreach through the Healthy Smiles program in Omaha public schools and the volunteer care at the St. Francis Mission Dental Clinic on the Rosebud Reservation, the students and faculty of the School of Dentistry are involved in a number of other community-based programs.

Give Kids a Smile
For over a decade, the School of Dentistry has hosted the annual Give Kids a Smile event to celebrate National Children’s Dental Health Month in February. More than 120 volunteers provide education and care for local children and families in need.

ILAC Dental Program
The Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) dental program sends six teams of Creighton dental students, faculty and alumni to the Dominican Republic annually. The dental teams provide sealants, extractions, fillings, cleanings and other dental services for more than 1,200 patients in need annually. Creighton dental has been involved since ILAC was founded in 1973.

Night Clinic
Patients prescreened at OneWorld Community Health Center and the Magis Clinic (a health clinic founded and run by Creighton medical students for homeless men, women and children) receive treatment twice a month in the evening at the Creighton Dental Clinic. Volunteer students and faculty make this service possible.

Special Olympics: Special Smiles
In partnership with the Special Olympics Healthy Athletes program, dental faculty, staff and students provide noninvasive oral health screenings, dental hygiene education and nutritional counseling to scores of Nebraska’s Special Olympics athletes.

Project Homeless Connect
Dental students and faculty volunteer at Project Homeless Connect, which is held on the Creighton campus and offers a variety of services for the homeless. Acute care and more than 300 sets of dentures have been provided at the annual event.

Classroom and Community Presentations
Students and faculty volunteer at community health fairs and students provide educational presentations to Omaha public and Catholic schools, senior centers, refugee centers and homeless shelters.

Senior Service-Learning Program
The Senior Service-Learning Program is offered in partnership with Omaha’s Charles Drew Health Center, Fred LeRoy Health and Wellness Center and the OneWorld Community Health Centers. Each senior dental student spends two weeks providing dental care at a local public clinic. Basic preventive, restorative, diagnostic and surgical care provided by the students increases the capacity of the dental safety net in Omaha.

Exploring Dentistry
This 10-week educational program for high school students who have expressed an interest in dentistry is offered to more than 400 youth annually.
Creighton’s well-rounded training and its emphasis on mission have led many graduates to choose rural dentistry, helping fill a critical shortage of dentists in rural America. In fact, Creighton is the top private dental school in the nation for percentage of graduates (2005-2014) practicing in rural communities, according to a report published in The Journal of the American Dental Association.

One alumna who has been doubly formed in the Jesuit tradition and gone on to a distinguished career in public health dentistry is Kim Wieckert McFarland, BA’83, DDS’87, chair of the Department of Community and Preventive Dentistry. McFarland graduated from Creighton with her bachelor’s degree as well as her DDS.

She is past president of the American Association of Public Health Dentistry; the first woman to chair the American Dental Association’s Council on Access, Prevention and Interprofessional Relations; and the former dental director for the state of Nebraska. She joined Creighton last year and currently teaches dental public health, ethics and professionalism.

“It has been an incredible journey,” McFarland said. “If you had told me 30 years ago that I would be back at Creighton, helping the underserved, I would never have believed it. It just shows you that God has a plan.”

McFarland decided in third grade that she wanted to be a dentist and shortly thereafter that Creighton was the place for her. “I grew up in Colorado and at age 9 I was thinking that I wanted to be an oceanographer, archaeologist or dentist. I asked my dentist, if he could do it all over again, would he choose the same profession? I got a big smile and he said, ’In a heartbeat.’ I asked him where he went to dental school and he said Creighton, so I decided right then and there that’s what I wanted to do.”

She came to Creighton for undergrad with her sights set on dental school. But she majored in theology because she found it “so rich in thought.

“Of course, I took all the sciences,” McFarland said, “and a lot of people thought I should major in one of the sciences, but majoring in theology gave me good balance.”

When McFarland was in dental school, she participated routinely in the Thursday night student-run volunteer clinic that Terry Wilwerding, DDS’77, MS’00, MS’08, professor of prosthodontics, coordinated (and still does) for low-income and uninsured and underinsured patients.

“I remember one night my little patient fell asleep while I was treating him and I asked Dr. Wilwerding what I should do. He said, ’Don’t worry about it. It’s probably the first time he’s gotten to rest all day.’ We also went into the schools to talk to them about oral health, and it gave me glimpses of what was possible.”

McFarland said it was the work she did on an American Indian reservation one year out of dental school that gave her insight into the importance of public health. “Public health was a nebulous term to me at that time. I just thought, ‘Of course the public should be healthy.’ I was doing private practice but I wanted to have more of an impact. The Omaha tribe at the Omaha Indian Reservation in Macy, Neb., needed someone part time one day a week, and then two.”

McFarland went to work at the reservation full time for five years, becoming the only dentist for 5,000 Native American patients. She said one-third of the tribe was diabetic with another possible 25 percent undiagnosed diabetic, adding that diabetes leads to periodontal disease and poor wound healing.

“I saw at least one broken jaw a month, and there were drug and alcohol struggles, so it was multifaceted care. I found out not everyone has insurance and not everyone is healthy.”

McFarland saw 18 to 20 patients a day. “They said ‘the big white woman’ is our dentist,” she laughed. One of the procedures she initiated was providing dental sealants, which has been shown to reduce tooth decay by 30 to 40 percent.

“Community-based programs are so important,” McFarland said, “so rich in thought. Of course, I took all the sciences,” McFarland said, “and a lot of people thought I should major in one of the sciences, but majoring in theology gave me good balance.”

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

**Creighton ranks first among** private dental schools nationwide for the percentage of **graduates** from 2005 to 2014 who are **practicing in rural communities** across the United States, according to a report published in the October 2015 issue of The Journal of the American Dental Association.
Creighton dental students drive six hours north four times a year to volunteer at the St. Francis Mission Dental Clinic. St. Francis Mission is a ministry of the Society of Jesus serving more than 20,000 Lakota people on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in south-central South Dakota. The Jesuits founded the mission in 1886, and it is the largest nonprofit, nongovernmental organization on the Rosebud Reservation. It is located in one of the poorest counties in the U.S.

In 2012, the dental clinic opened to provide much-needed care: 40 percent of children and 60 percent of adults on the Rosebud Reservation have moderate to urgent dental needs and the population has the highest dental decay rate in the nation. Volunteer dentists and dental students provide exams, X-rays, fillings, cleanings, treatments, follow-up checkups and education in preventive care.

The Rev. John Hatcher, S.J., president of St. Francis Mission, said the help the Creighton dental students provide “is a real boost to us. They stepped up right away. Being able to say that Creighton is involved has given us a lot of credibility.”

Fr. Hatcher said he has been impressed with the students.

Many others — including Paw Klay and her mother — apparently agree with her, and are glad that Creighton is taking such a leading role in providing these services.

“Children need to be healthy in order to learn,” said Jeanne Weiss, chief executive officer of the nonprofit Building Healthy Futures, which seeks to improve the health of underserved children and youth in Omaha through collaboration and advocacy.

“Creighton and the School of Dentistry have been great partners with Building Healthy Futures from early on. They stepped up to the plate and understood the importance of connecting with the community.”

Charles “Fritz” Craft, DDS, dental health director in Nebraska’s Division of Public Health, said thousands of Nebraskans lack the personal resources to receive professional dental services on a regular basis due to “economic, geographic, educational or even cultural obstacles.”

Craft said, “Creighton is committed to making an important impact on the overall dental health status of underserved populations in our state,” noting that, at the same time, the University is “allowing their dental students to gain valuable clinical experience in the career field of public health dentistry.”

Third-year dental students Nick Samuelson of Omaha and Devon Rasmussen of Grace, Idaho, both participants in the recent Healthy Smiles program at King Elementary School, view Creighton’s role in the community personally.

“Working at the school opened my eyes to the fact that some of the kids have no support at home for oral hygiene,” Samuelson said.

“But I was really impressed with how enthusiastic they were about learning about oral health. They asked a lot of questions and they really wanted to be there. It made me glad that we were able to provide this service, and I know I will be able to apply what I learned about motivating kids to have better oral hygiene in my future practice.”

Rasmussen, who has four children of his own, said he now has an appreciation for the complexity of community service. “I never imagined the work, organization and thoughtfulness that is given to a simple community event. These experiences expose me to a model of community dentistry and provide a small infrastructure to build upon in my future practice.”

He said he sees the benefits for all involved. “The patients are provided with a service and learn that ‘going to the dentist’ is not as frightening as they may have assumed. We students, on the other hand, learn the importance of delivering care to the community and how to better communicate with patients. And we have the opportunity to perform service for those who otherwise may have been devoid of such opportunities. It is a win-win relationship.”

Third-year dental student Nikki Nelson says she formed “immediate bonds” with the patients she helped at St. Francis Mission Dental Clinic.
“I like their attitude. They are very eager to help and very compassionate. The people trust them.”

Third-year dental student Nikki Nelson, from Tuba City, Ariz., and the Navajo Nation, was one of those who recently spent two and a half days at St. Francis. “Our days were consumed with seeing patients and providing services ranging from simple, comprehensive exams to more complex procedures like root canals,” she said.

“I formed immediate bonds with the people with whom I spoke. Although we are from different tribes and different areas of the country, there was an understanding, a commonality. I felt like I was at home and I thoroughly enjoyed it.”

Nelson plans to work for the Indian Health Services after she graduates, so she was grateful for the opportunity to provide care to Native people. “I spoke to a Lakota woman while at St. Francis and the words of encouragement she shared and the pride she had in knowing that, of the eight students there, two of us were Native students was empowering. The words she shared with me I will hold onto for the rest of my career.”

The School of Dentistry and the St. Francis Mission Dental Clinic recently received a $5,000 grant from the American Dental Association (ADA) Foundation. The E. “Bud” Tarrson Dental School Student Community Leadership Award highlights significant dental student outreach to vulnerable communities. The grant will help with costs to send the students to the mission clinic.

With more than 4.5 million Native Americans in the United States but fewer than 150 Native American dentists, the School of Dentistry has long had a special interest in addressing the disparities seen in the oral health of Native Americans. The first American Indian dentist and the founder of the Society of American Indian Dentists, George Blue Spruce Jr., DDS’56, graduated from Creighton in 1956 and went on to become an assistant U.S. surgeon general. Also, through a partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Creighton was part of a pipeline collaborative to recruit and retain Native American dental students.
What Makes Teaching at Creighton Special?

By Eileen Wirth, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Journalism, Media & Computing

After years of teaching at Creighton, Tim Dickel, Ed.D., a professor of education, can sense when one of his students has a problem. He notices small changes in the ways students act and how they respond in class. Often, he makes it a point to walk out of class with the student he’s concerned about just to check out what’s happening.

And Dickel sensed that something was very wrong with one of his students. On the way out of class, the student broke into tears and said he had become homeless. Dickel walked him over to the Creighton Counseling Center and told the scheduler that the student needed immediate assistance — no waiting for a standard appointment. Taken aback, the scheduler asked if the student could wait 20 minutes. Dickel said this would be fine; the student got the help he needed.

About 10 years later, Dickel encountered this same student in the Skutt Student Center and received a warm greeting. “I just wanted you to know that I’m in medical school,” he said. Today, said Dickel, this formerly homeless student is the medical director for a substance abuse clinic.

This is one of many examples of the way that the caring interaction between Creighton faculty and their students, based on Creighton’s Jesuit mission and values such as living as women and men for others, changes lives. At its best, the chemistry between professors and their students creates a sort of magic for both.

“Teaching at Creighton is not just about conveying facts,” said Robert Dornsife, Ph.D., an associate professor of English who has received the University’s top teaching award. “It’s about allowing our students to become who they want to be. At Creighton, there’s a moral and social and personal element to what we do together. It’s easy enough to see a university as a repository of facts, but Creighton is so much more than that.”
Dornsife said he never stops thinking about his students and tries to be open to their needs. "I'm in contact with students and alumni all day every day.

"You have to be vulnerable, to be willing to take the risks of reaching students meaningfully," he said. For example, if Dornsife sees that a student is underperforming or is distracted or overwhelmed, after class he might ask the student how things are going — just reaching out.

The close connections between faculty and students start by professors "becoming aware of who students are and where they are," he said.

And students respond to such caring.

One alumnus even asked Dornsife to officiate at his wedding in Denver. This required obtaining an online ordination certificate, which turned out to be a five-minute process. The alumnus flew Dornsife to Denver for the ceremony.

“Our students see faculty not just in a professional capacity but in a personal, collaborative, helpful capacity," he said.

Charles Austerberry, Ph.D., an assistant professor of biology and director of pre-health advising through the Creighton EDGE, said he thinks that “part of the magic at Creighton is in the synergy between teaching and advising. “We’re here to serve the students. We’re here primarily because we want students to be a success,” he said. This caring approach to teaching, advising and research models a life of service to others that many students adopt.

“We’ve had students who choose to practice medicine with the economically disadvantaged, both urban and rural,” he said, noting that medical students who mentor pre-med students pass on the culture of service.

“The Magis Clinic at the Siena-Francis House homeless shelter was started and continues to be run by medical students, and they reach out to pre-meds,” he said. Dental students do the same for pre-dental students at the Creighton Dental Clinic. “The dental school wants students who want to serve the underserved.”

The Rev. Richard Hauser, S.J., assistant to the president for mission and professor emeritus of theology, said Creighton's embrace of its Ignatian identity lies at the heart of such faculty-student relationships. The University's mission statement says that Creighton exists for students and learning, and professors take this seriously.

“We see our students as gifts given to Creighton, and we have the responsibility of developing their gifts of body, intellect and spirit," he said. “A difference between Creighton and a lot of other universities is that students are not interruptions in faculty lives. They are the reason Creighton exists.”

Fr. Hauser noted that the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Nursing, the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, the School of Dentistry and the Graduate School have adopted Jesuit charisms — such as cura personalis (care of the individual), finding God in all things, magis (doing more for God’s glory and the betterment of humanity), and men and women for and with others — as part of their mission statements.

In the College of Arts and Sciences, each department has a “mission catalyst” who works to promote the mission in all aspects of department life, including the curriculum. Candidates for faculty positions are required to explain how they would promote the Creighton mission and new faculty member orientation includes discussion of how faculty members integrate it into their work.

Dornsife said it is important that the “Ignatian tradition withstands fleeting fads and changes. Ignatian tradition asks our students to find their passions and pursue them, and that is why we are here.”
What Makes Teaching at Creighton Special?

When I clean out my office to retire from Creighton this spring, I’ll take with me a file drawer of notes from students that capture the essence of what it means to teach at Creighton: forming deep relationships with your students — something that is hard to explain or quantify but means more to me than my 30-page curriculum vitae (CV).

I came to Creighton in 1991 because I needed a job and wanted to teach after a 20-year career in news and public relations. At the time, I didn’t know that the rewards of the next 25 years would be less about teaching writing (though I’ve done a ton of that) and more about falling in love with my students. Let me introduce you to a few special alumni and daily life as a Creighton faculty member:

Student Memories

Dale Hoeffel, BA’15

When Dale Hoeffel, BA’15, of the Twin Cities area, left Creighton to travel to many campuses as a sorority adviser, she learned how fortunate she had been.

“Creighton is different and special. You don’t have to be scared when you need help,” she said. “I’ve seen a lot of students (at other universities) be afraid to talk to their teachers. It’s amazing how many kids could call it quits if they couldn’t figure out things on their own.”

In contrast, Hoeffel noted that her professors were there for her when she needed them most. “Creighton challenges you and makes you grow. It gave me a better understanding of who Dale is.”

Kassaundra Hartley, BA’14

Kassaundra Hartley, BA’14, a project associate with Paul J. Strawhecker of Omaha, has particularly fond memories of her freshman theology class with Thomas Kelly, Ph.D. Hartley, who grew up in Spaulding, Neb., (pop. 500) said Kelly was one of the main reasons she “stuck it out at Creighton.”

“I only took his class once first semester freshman year, and he still remembered who I was second semester senior year. He caused me to think outside of my small-town box and view the world in an entirely new way. He challenged my beliefs and made me stronger in my faith as a result,” she said.

Tammi Spiezio Creed, BSChm’02

Tammi Spiezio Creed, BSChm’02, who juggled playing varsity softball with her chemistry major, remains grateful to her favorite professor, Juliane Strauss-Soukup, Ph.D., BSChm’93, for sharing her own undergraduate struggles. One professor had even told Soukup that he didn’t believe in her ability.

“She told me no one can stop you if you want to persevere,” said Creed, of Washington, Ill., who did research with Soukup. Creed later earned an MBA at Bradley University and worked for Caterpillar before becoming a stay-at-home mother to four children, one of them with special needs.

A Personal Reflection

Creighton alumni share memories of their ties with faculty members
• An All-American soccer player who told me he didn’t care what grade he got. He just wanted to learn.

• Advises who made me feel like a genius for giving them simple assistance during registration and at other times. I want to hug all of you who have left saying, “I feel so much better when I come in here.”

• An alcoholic student who worked up the courage to ask permission to return after being in jail and quitting drinking, and another troubled student who sent a surprise email years later to tell me about his successful career on Capitol Hill.

• An alumna who asked if I could find a Jesuit in Buenos Aires to marry her and her Argentine fiancé. (I connected with a Jesuit friend at Santa Clara who found a Jesuit in Buenos Aires to marry the happy couple — all in a day’s work!)

• A student who needed help getting permission to retake the national law school entrance test so he could get into Creighton School of Law. The testing group had not taken his learning disability into account but did so on appeal. My student graduated from Creighton law and is a successful attorney.

• An alumnus who grew up in North Omaha has gone on to cover professional sports and the Olympics for the Associated Press.

I think of the alumni who have cried in my office when they didn’t get an internship they wanted but left smiling when we found an immediate alternative. I think of those who come in to talk because they just needed an ear and a hug.

Can 25 years really have passed since the spring of 1991 when I stopped regularly at St. John’s to pray that Creighton would hire me for the full-time teaching job?

As I sit at the computer doing work that an accountant can quantify (preparing lectures, filling out administrative reports, writing for publication, etc.), student after student wanders through my seldom-closed door. What’s our most important work?

Give me the days when I’ve made a difference in the life of a student. Give me the smiles that light up the faces of alumni when we reconnect or the way students and alumni show their love for faculty who have helped them when such faculty members need support.

Give me the Jesuits who have taught faculty and students alike how to live cura personalis and to value what’s most important in life — living as women and men for and with others and making God’s world a better place.

Give me colleagues who constantly go the extra mile or 10 for their students.

THIS is what teaching at Creighton has meant to me. To all who have made these years a blessed adventure, thanks for touching me beyond measure.

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Rita Peterson Foral, BA’64

Rita Peterson Foral, BA’64, was an English major and a member of the De Porres Club that fought for civil rights. She recalled pickinget a real estate board with the Rev. John Markoe, S.J. A St. Louis native, she has especially high regard for the Jesuits she knew, such as the Rev. Ed Sharp, S.J., of the math department.

“I hated math, but my husband, Jerry, was a math major. Fr. Sharp maintained contact with us and would come out to our house,” she said. Both Rita and Jerry Foral eventually taught at Marian High School in Omaha. “My Creighton days were wonderful.”

Javier Argamasilla, BA’96

Javier Argamasilla, BA’96, of Miami, also has fond memories of the Jesuits from his work in the Jesuit kitchen. He recalled the flexibility of professors who helped him graduate on time despite taking a semester off to do service work in the Dominican Republic.

However, Argamasilla, whose parents are natives of Cuba, discovered that he could not fool a Spanish professor into letting him take a remedial Spanish class. “It would have been an easy A, but he knew I wasn’t remedial in Spanish.” Argamasilla is state sales and marketing manager for Bacardi USA, his family’s firm.

Sara Gentzler, BA’14

Sara Gentzler, BA’14, credited Carol Zuegner, Ph.D., of the Department of Journalism, Media & Computing (JMC) for forming her as a “professional, a student and a person.”

Gentzler, a native of Gretna, Neb., who is now a graduate student in social psychology at the University of Washington in Seattle, said Zuegner mentored her through a website on child soldiers in Uganda that won first place nationally for Online In-Depth Storytelling from the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ). Gentzler did her research under Zuegner’s supervision on the Backpack Journalism trip to Uganda co-sponsored by JMC and theology. Later, Zuegner guided her through applying for a grant to attend the SPJ Conference in Anaheim, Calif., so she could receive the award in person.

Zuegner also helped Gentzler obtain one of 30 American Society of Magazine Editors internships in New York.

“Without Carol’s relentless support and encouragement to push my boundaries and discover my potential, none of the unique experiences that I had in undergrad would have been brought to my attention, let alone achieved.”

By Ann Freestone, BA’89

Anne Ozar, Ph.D., right, associate professor of philosophy, conducts scholarly research on the philosophy of emotions.
Whether you need to “get a grip” or be more expressive, our feelings and emotions can send us over the moon, strike a raw nerve, leave us weak in the knees or bring us to tears.

Emotions are fundamental to the human condition — but also complex and somewhat mysterious. What do emotions tell us about ourselves, as individuals and cultures? How do they give meaning to our experiences? How much should we pay attention to them, or look to “control” them?

Perhaps, the Disney Pixar hit animated movie Inside Out — where emotions serve as the main characters — can provide some initial perspective.

In the movie, Joy desperately tries to run the brain of an 11-year-old named Riley. But when the family moves from Minnesota to San Francisco, the emotion characters (Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger and Disgust) fight, and Riley’s inner-world gets shaken up as she navigates her new home, school and city.

So it is with our emotions.

“When anger is driving the brain, it colors how Riley sees the world, so part of Inside Out captured how different emotions color our experiences and how they embody different conceptions of what’s good or bad,” explains Anne Ozar, Ph.D., associate professor of philosophy, whose scholarly research includes the philosophy of emotions. “Emotions do, I believe, have a very significant role in giving and disclosing the meaning of daily experiences as they tend to ‘run ahead’ of our attention, coloring our experience in important ways, making some things more salient than others.”
THEY'RE UNIVERSAL

The six basic emotions are happiness, sadness, fear, anger, surprise and disgust. These basic emotions cross cultures and have been part of the human experience from day one. Complex emotions, which involve cognitive elements and cultural influences, include shame, guilt, love, compassion, sympathy and empathy, among others.

Praveen Fernandes, M.D., associate professor of psychiatry at Creighton, describes emotion as a stirred-up state in response to a situation or trigger. He says emotions are a product of our own mind or external stimuli, as well as a combination of feelings, thoughts and experiences, topped off with physical components, such as increased heart rate and muscle tension, making them very complex.

Emotions, he says, tell us a lot about ourselves.

“The way we react to the internal or external stimuli depends on the nature of the stimuli, what we’ve learned growing up, what experience we’ve had with similar stimuli (whether we learn they’re a good thing or bad), our life experience — the idea of how we are shaped to respond to various stimuli,” Fernandes says.

“Humans are creatures of habit,” he continues. “And the guides are our past experiences. Most experiences are usually a replica of a similar emotion with a similar situation.”

For example, if a soldier in Iraq experiences a bomb exploding in a trash can, when he returns to the U.S. and drives past a trash can, his heart beats fast, he gets a sinking feeling — because of his past experience — and that triggers emotions in a very negative way even if it’s very unlikely a bomb is in the trash can.

“Past experience with that stimulus will dictate your future response if there were strong emotions associated with that stimulus in the past,” explains Fernandes.

So were human emotions passed down genetically in natural selection? The short answer is yes,” Fernandes says. “Darwin’s work in the 1800s teased out similarities in animals and humans. Basic emotions, such as happiness and anger, are transmitted, but the degree to which they are expressed is shaped over a lifetime.”

Deniz Yilmazer-Hanke, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor of biomedical sciences, adds that because of the similarities and organization of human and animal brains, we can assume animals also experience emotions.

“Animals have similar facial expressions and behaviors,” Yilmazer-Hanke says. “Imagine a monkey that lost a child. She might sit in the corner and not communicate. We know how we would feel in that situation.”

Yilmazer-Hanke studies genes that specifically influence fear behavior. To measure the effects of genes on this emotion, her research takes place in a “very artificial” setting where she controls the gender, time, age and all the factors in the environment.

“There are certainly genetic influences, but the environment, learning, feelings and experiences play a major role,” Yilmazer-Hanke says.

EXPRESSING OUR EMOTIONS

While all human beings experience emotions, the big difference is in how we express — or repress — them.

Britta McEwen, Ph.D., associate professor of history, studies the history of emotions. “They do cross cultural lines, but each culture in time and space has particular ‘emotional regimes’ — ways it asks citizens or subjects to feel about certain issues, problems, life-cycle events and relationships,” she says.

“So some cultures value and express emotions that others repress or deny.”

Think about anger. In American culture, it’s more accepted that men express anger, but more surprising when women do.

“Donald Trump expresses anger and outrage, but we wouldn’t see Carly (Fiorina) having the same tone as effective because it would undermine her credibility to take on that demeanor,” says Sherianne Shuler, Ph.D., associate professor of communication studies, who examines emotions in the workplace. “We give
men a pass with anger.”

Consider other cultures. In certain Asian cultures, shame and guilt are to be avoided at all costs. High-ranking officials who have done something shameful will go to extremes and even commit suicide. And throughout history, we see how people express or repress emotions.

According to McEwen, medieval knights were not allowed to express their fear, but could write about their unrequited love for a married woman. The Vikings did not express emotions, even when talking about the reason to heinously murder someone, saying something as terse as “She was hot-headed.” (See “An Emotional Affair in 1920s Vienna.”)

From the earliest of ages, children learn what emotions to express. Shuler points to the time when a baby is learning to walk and what happens when he or she falls down: “They look at the parents — ‘Am I crying? Am I okay? — to see how they should react. If the adult says, ‘Oh, honey! Are you okay?’ then the child cries.”

Ozar adds that having certain emotional responses to some things may be instinctual and not learned, but this is not the case with complex emotions such as guilt or shame.

Most complicated emotions, she says, are “tied up with our understanding of emotion concepts and our learning of language.” An example of the complexity of emotions is responding to the good fortune of a friend with the emotion of envy. “At the same time, you recognize that such a response is not characteristic of being a good friend, and so you respond to what you recognize as your own envy with another distinct emotion, shame,” explains Ozar.

THE BIOLOGY OF EMOTIONS

Past research describes the brain as having two compartments — the emotional side and the cognitive rational side — that are separate and acting in opposition to each other with one winning.

“Now research says that’s not entirely true,” Fernandes says. “The cognitive thinking part and emotional brain are very intricately connected and they influence each other. The mind tries to make sense of what happened and tune down or tune up the emotions. Rational thinking kicks in quickly.”

Going from an outer stimulus to inner feelings is a mix of instinct and cognition. “People are realizing it’s complex,” Fernandes says. “It’s a networking between the cognitive and emotional parts of the brain, which are always communicating with each other and trying to make sense of the stimulus and what to do about it.”

According to Yilmazer-Hanke, it is mainly subcortical brain regions that are responsible for the instinctual or, in other words, implicit learning of emotions.

Here’s what happens in the brain: Novel information or fearful stimuli activate the amygdala, which communicates with the limbic cortex and prefrontal areas. Together with the limbic cortex and prefrontal areas, the amygdala then controls the expression of emotions by activating “hard-wired” brain circuits in the hypothalamus and brainstem. The hippocampus also is involved in the emotional learning process and emotional memory.
COLORING OUR WORLD

Emotions affect our day-to-day experiences. “They tell us we are alive,” McEwen says. “Emotions give meaning to our world by tethering us to something bigger than just our intellect’s ability to perceive things. We value them as highly personal, but also devalue them as subjective.”

Ozar says they disclose the world as having meaning as good or bad, and often more specifically as, for example, beautiful or dangerous. Take a sunset. “The meaning of the emotion joy is that this is wonderful — highlighting a feature of the world,” she says. “That’s part of what they do in our lives: They’re one of the avenues through which the world has meaning for us.”

In fact, they can shape our world in terms of race, class and gender, according to McEwen. “Emotions can be used by our society to pigeonhole you, such as the differences between men and women and what they can express,” McEwen says. “Women have freedom emotionally, but the price is women can be counted out because of those emotions. If a female cries, it’s indicative of weakness.”

CONTROLLING EMOTIONS

What are some tips to better manage our emotions? “It’s the million-dollar question,” Fernandes says. “Recognize

AN EMOTIONAL AFFAIR IN 1920s VIENNA

Britta McEwen, Ph.D., recently wrote “Emotional Expression and the Construction of Heterosexuality: Hugo Bettauer’s Viennese Advice Columns” for a prestigious journal, The Journal of the History of Sexuality. The article features emotions and the construction of heterosexuality in 1920s Vienna. McEwen used an advice column to get at how people describe the emotions they feel about the opposite sex — love, fidelity, confusion, etc.

Hugo Bettauer’s advice column caught McEwen’s attention because it appears in a very lighthearted magazine full of fashion, sports events, etc. — articles that were meant to be enjoyed.

“The letters were so painful, sometimes funny, but most were heartfelt and upset at their prospects of love, so it stuck out,” she explains. “For any culture, we have to remember everyone has to learn the appropriate expression, even for love. The appropriateness is changing constantly.”

According to McEwen, love is not natural and internally understood by all. “It is mediated by our culture. In 1920s Vienna, their expression is special to time and culture,” McEwen says. “It’s okay to express confusion in the way that they did, and it suggests their culture is in crisis politically and economically and morally changing. No wonder they were confused about the proper form of love.”

The column created an alternative emotional community in which readers could speak their minds, without fear of judgment, but within the content of certain accepted norms about sexuality — what McEwen calls “emotional regime.”

“Your’re asked to accept that people are going to cheat, that men have more power than women, that women’s roles are changing and you have to accept that or you’ll be left behind,” McEwen says. “Companionate marriage is the goal, which was completely new, as opposed to arranged marriages.”

McEwen says what makes her research unique is these simple letters offer a concrete entry point into the complex mentalities, discourses and cultural practices of the period, which historians have previously investigated primarily through high culture, such as drama, music, theater and art.
the stimulus — the triggers that set us off, especially anger, sadness or fear. Step back, stop what you are doing, and buy yourself time to know what’s really going on.”

According to Yilmazer-Hanke, emotional responses that are induced in the body, such as increased heart rate or breathing, are signaled back to the brain, positively reinforcing ongoing emotions.

“Regaining control of these bodily responses through slow deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) disrupts this feedback loop and helps us calm down,” she says.

Fernandes says slow deep breathing and PMR go a long way to tone down the emotional response.

Here’s how to use these techniques.

Go to a quiet place, dim the lights, sit in a relaxed position and breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. This breathing exercise decreases the adrenaline in the body. To do PMR, tense and then relax each muscle group from the face to the toes for a few seconds. If you relax yourself, you can’t be tense, so it tones down your emotional state,” Fernandes says.

He says psychotherapy can help individuals see things in a different light so that when an emotion occurs, the person can reappraise and analyze what is going on and whether to get away or approach the situation.

Yilmazer-Hanke adds that in severe situations, such as panic attacks or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), blocking adrenaline-related mechanisms with medicine in the body (through disruption of positive feedback) and/or in the brain (through blockade of learning/reinforcement of adverse events) can assist psychotherapy and other measures aimed at tuning down emotions.

**INSIDE OUT GETS IT RIGHT**

In the movie Inside Out, the emotion characters all want to be heard and the movie reveals that all the emotions have something to contribute, not just Joy. We find out Sadness is actually good because she allows Riley to grieve and move on. So no matter where you are in the narrative of life, emotions play key roles, some even leading ones.

**WORKING WITH OUR EMOTIONS**

Sherianne Shuler’s main area of research focuses on the role of emotions in the workplace and how we manage them.

“Anyone who works with the public is doing emotional labor and managing their own emotions as well as others’ emotions,” Shuler says. “If you are a nurse helping a patient in the emergency room in a serious situation, you manage your fear, your revulsion and, at the same time, you are trying to calm the person by telling them it will be okay.” Another example: customer service representatives have to be calm even when the customer is angry and work to de-escalate the situation.

“Managing your emotions and the other person’s is hard work. It’s a skill and it’s crucial, but not a highly paid skill,” she says. “We assume the cashier at Jimmy John’s is capable of doing that without valuing it very much.”

Some argue that certain people have better skills than others and more seamlessly manage emotions, which is known as emotional intelligence. Although it’s not a perfect correlation, lower-level employees are expected to be better at managing emotions.

“We’re intimidated by leaders and let them be gruff, but the secretary has to be very accommodating and so forth,” Shuler says.

According to Shuler, individual coping tips for employees who do emotional labor are similar to those for dealing with stress: taking deep breaths, counting to 10, realizing it’s not really about them, or walking away from the situation for a moment to collect their thoughts and feelings.

“In my research, however, the more important coping strategies are more communal and interactive in nature,” Shuler says. It is important for employees to have a “backstage” area away from customers or clients where they can do what is needed to recover from and cope with the difficulties of emotional labor.

Employers play a role. “It is important for employers to recognize the toll that emotional labor can take and to create for employees backstage time and space for venting and commiserating — my research participants usually call this ‘bitching’ — sharing humor about the situation, and for co-workers to provide social support,” Shuler says.

She says it’s often helpful to lean on teamwork, and maybe have another employee step in to provide backup. These latter strategies require forethought on the part of the employer and co-workers, she says, and a recognition that laboring with ones’ emotions can be difficult, but sometimes also rewarding. In order to receive the rewards, however, the emotional work needs to happen in a supportive environment.

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<th>Coping tips for employees who do emotional labor are similar to those for dealing with stress:</th>
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In the past, earning a business degree meant taking a slew of accounting and statistics courses, and then studying models of how big-name companies became successful.

But things have changed at Creighton University, where the Heider College of Business has created innovative ways of teaching business practices — where principles are just as important as profits, and top-notch thinking means just as much as bottom-line numbers.

And just as medical schools now teach how the mind-body relationship is key to patient wellness, at Heider College of Business, students learn how the ethics-entrepreneurship connection creates the foundation of a successful company.

Here are just a few of Heider’s groundbreaking business programs.
Experiments in the Laboratory

It’s possible for a business to be profitable and ethical, says Bev Kracher, Ph.D., holder of the Robert B. Daugherty Endowed Chair in Business Ethics and Society at Heider College of Business. And she wants to prove it.

Kracher, who is also the executive director of the Omaha Business Ethics Alliance, has another lofty goal — to restore people’s faith in capitalism. To meet both of her goals, she has led the creation of the Business Ethics City Lab, a research arm of the Business Ethics Alliance. Data-driven, evidence-based behavioral ethics research will be used to show the causal connection between good business practices and profit.

Omaha has a supportive business environment for conducting this research because of the success of the Business Ethics Alliance, a consortium of more than 250 regional small, medium and large companies; members include nonprofit and for-profit corporations. Based at Heider College of Business, the Alliance currently has a staff of seven employees and six Heider College student interns.

The Alliance has attracted the attention of national leaders in the field of business ethics, such as Jonathan Haidt, professor of ethical leadership at New York University’s Stern School of Business and author of The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion. Haidt is the director of Ethical Systems, a group of 22 university professors around the country who study business ethics.

Haidt recently addressed the Business Ethics Alliance’s annual trustee meeting held at the Heider College of Business and said his group is collaborating with the Alliance to test ways that could improve business ethics nationwide and even worldwide.

“We want people around the country to think of Omaha as the beacon of business excellence.”

Bev Kracher, Ph.D.

He praised the Business Ethics City Lab concept because it can generate much-needed data on creating ethical organizational systems. Currently, researchers don’t have the means to test their hypotheses across multiple firms, and the lab is the way to fill that void.

Kracher says Omaha businesses are eager to help out.

“We want people around the country to think of Omaha as the beacon of business excellence,” she says.

For example, one firm recently discussed with the Alliance its interest in improving its security. “They were especially interested in protecting their clients’ data, and were also concerned about the physical safety of their buildings,” Kracher says. “They wanted to motivate their employees to ensure security, not from a compliance perspective, but because they have embraced their company’s core values. So we have connected this firm with a team of researchers from Ethical Systems. This year, they will be doing experiments to discover values-based security strategies. Then we will take the outcomes and develop products that other firms can use.”

In announcing its goals and objectives, the Business Ethics City Lab’s initial report states, “We live in a community ‘where people’s word is their bond, they fulfill their commitments and their character is greater protection than a team of lawyers checking every comma in a contract.’ We should use our strength to help our country realize the finest form of capitalism.”

Kracher notes that capitalism has taken a hit due to scandals in the banking and mortgage industries, and consumers’ feelings of distrust are often reinforced through the media in movies such as Wall Street, where devious corporate executives run roughshod over people’s lives — all in the name of profit.

“One people have high hopes that capitalism can alleviate poverty and provide jobs, but others have the perception that capitalism is intrinsically bad and naturally leads to employee abuses and corporate greed,” Kracher explains. “As Aristotle said, ‘A hammer can be used for good or evil.’ That’s also true for capitalism. We want to make sure it’s used for good, and we can do that by using behavioral science to prove that ethics is the foundation of the kind of capitalism that we desire for ourselves and our future generations.”
Reclaiming Native Crops

What started out as an experiment with 150-year-old seeds could turn into a method for Native groups to become self-sufficient by marketing food products to the general public, believes Taylor Keen, lecturer in strategy and entrepreneurship at Heider College.

Inspired by Native and green activists, and a move by an agricultural firm to obtain intellectual property rights on corn seeds, Keen, a former tribal council member of the Cherokee Nation, planted seeds from the 1860s he obtained from stock held at history museums. He harvested corn, beans, squash and sunflowers in three Omaha locations: in Creighton's Stuppy Greenhouse, managed by Andy Waltke; at Omaha Permaculture; and in Keen’s backyard.

Keen’s project has created food for his soul. “I’d sit out every night on my porch and watch everything grow,” he says. “Gardening is beautiful for contemplation. And the first time I pulled back the husks to look at the corn, I said, ‘Oh, my God! Look at them!’”

Growing corn has also helped Keen connect with his Native roots, because corn was considered one of God’s first gifts to First Nations people. He explores this idea in the book he’s writing: Rediscovering America: Sacred Geography, the Ancient Earthenworks and the Real Story of America. And he’s creating a course at Heider College titled “The Economics of Sacred Seeds.”

He foresees Native peoples using these pure, unadulterated seeds to create marketable food products. “If Native people ate more real food, we wouldn’t have so much Type 2 diabetes,” he says. “We could turn the corn we’d raise into cornbread, or create a seed bank that would empower others to grow fresh, natural foods that, eventually, we could sell to markets.”

“Gardening is beautiful for contemplation. And the first time I pulled back the husks to look at the corn, I said, ‘Oh, my God! Look at them!’”

Taylor Keen
Heider College students get the chance to turn the theories they’ve been studying into practical business experience when they volunteer to be part of a Business Community Assistance Team. Maryanne Rouse had served as program advisor for the Community Assistance Teams until her retirement in December; Kelsea Gilespie now oversees the program.

“Working in real-life situations exposes students to communities they’ve never had the opportunity to experience,” Rouse says. “By doing that, students learn about themselves, and how to work with skill and grace with people from different backgrounds.”

The program began in 2004 as a way to offer leadership training to undergraduate business students, and runs from October through March. Typically, teams have four members, and each team chooses its own leader. Upon the completion of each team’s project, members create a 15-minute demonstration in which they explain their methodology and make recommendations on improving their chosen organization.

Recent Community Assistance Team projects included creating awareness for a homeless shelter, producing a video for a cancer support group, designing fundraising efforts around a marathon for a local charity, and developing a method for making telephone appointments for the Legal Aid Society. Some of the organizations students have worked with are Wings of Hope, Catholic Charities of Omaha and the American Cancer Society.

Though students relish the experience of working outside the classroom, Rouse says the students’ greatest joy comes from seeing the end-product of their work. “They’re often amazed to actually see the outcome and the good they’ve done in helping others.”

Read more about additional Heider College of Business programs at creighton.edu/creightonmagazine.
You BOLT upright out of bed. **You’re LATE!**
You STRUGGLE to rouse the kids. **You toss some bagels in the toaster.**
**The baby starts CRYING.**
Smoke fills the kitchen. **You’ve BURNED the bagels.**
**You can’t find your CAR KEYS.**
Little Jimmy can’t find his shoes. **Your cell phone is RINGING.**
**It’s your BOSS.**
You’re late for a meeting. **It starts to RAIN.**
**You CAN’T FIND the umbrella.**

Life can be stressful.

And stress over a prolonged period — known as chronic stress — can be detrimental to your health ... even deadly.
At his laboratory at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, where he is an associate professor of anesthesiology and neuroscience, Creighton alumnus Michael Bruchas, BS’99 (biology), PhD’04 (pharmacology), is studying stress — specifically as it relates to the brain’s pathways of reward, aversion, addiction and depression. It’s something that’s interested him since his days as a graduate student working in the lab of Creighton pharmacology professor Peter Abel, Ph.D.

“We’re trying to understand, ‘What are the receptors in the brain that coordinate different types of behavioral responses?’ By understanding those receptors and understanding the pathways and circuits that mediate behavior, we might be able to uncover new therapies,” Bruchas says.

Yeah, a cure for stress.

“If we can understand it better, perhaps we can not only understand how the brain works and how we make decisions and how we engage with our environment, but also produce treatments for these diseases known to be widely impacted by stress.”

Bruchas is making, excuse the pun, headway — discovering, among other things, how calming a neural circuit in the brain can alleviate stress in laboratory mice.

That’s a big deal, because whether mouse or man, stress is a killer.

“We know that stress is a major contributor to most chronic conditions now,” says Thomas Lenz, Pharm.D., director of Creighton’s new Healthy Lifestyle Management degree program. “Upwards of 85 percent of most diseases have a connection with stress.

“I think it’s fair to say in our current society, compared to our former way of living, that we are in hyper-stress mode compared to what our bodies are genetically used to. We’re in a new era of our culture, and stress certainly has a contribution to the chronic diseases we’re seeing, like obesity and diabetes and cardiovascular disease, in a way we’ve never experienced before.”

An Epidemic

In a 2013 Gallup poll of people in 138 countries, one in three said they had experienced stress the previous day. And it’s particularly prevalent with women and Millennials. In the annual American Psychological Association (APA) Stress in America survey in 2014, 51 percent of women said they’ve lain awake at night because of stress in the past month versus 32 percent of men. Among Millennials — which includes Creighton students — 36 percent say their stress has increased the past year, more than any other generation.

The latter statistic doesn’t go unnoticed at Creighton’s Center for Health and Counseling, where staffers are seeing an increase in students seeking help for anxiety-type disorders.

“What we see commonly are the expectations that students are putting on themselves to be perfect,” says Stephanie Stockham-Ronollo, a center counselor. “Really focusing more on the future of what they’re going to be, more than realizing that it’s important who they are right now and taking care of themselves.”

The leading cause of stress away from campus isn’t likely to raise eyebrows — money.
In the APA survey, 72 percent of adults reported being stressed about money some of the time and 26 percent most or all of the time. Those are typical results since the survey began in 2007.

Other top sources of stress in the APA poll were work (60 percent), the economy (49 percent), family responsibilities (47 percent) and personal health (46 percent). Technology also gets mentioned by stress experts.

“We’re constantly being connected to something like a device or messages or just external stimulation,” Lenz says. “It might be from TV, might be from the phone or computer ... those seem to make people more stressed (rather) than less.”

The odd thing about stress, though, is how subjective it is.

“Stress is something very unique to each person,” Lenz says. “It really is, for the most part, a perception.”

And how it is perceived influences its impact.

“If it’s good or bad it can have totally different affects on the brain and lead to totally different outcomes,” Bruchas says.

Consider bungee jumping, says professor Deniz Yilmazer-Hanke, M.D., Ph.D., director of Creighton’s Master’s in Clinical Anatomy Program.

“Bungee jumping might be very stressful to one person because it’s unpleasant while it’s very stimulating to another person and the reward areas in the brain are activated,” Yilmazer-Hanke says.

Or, notes, Geri Moore, director of Creighton’s Exercise Testing and Training Laboratory in the Department of Exercise Science and Pre-Health Professions, one person might thrive giving a speech while another person “breaks out in hives or vomits.”

Here it’s important to note that stress ... is good.

Or at least can be.

Back when lions and other scary things roamed free, stress kicked in hormones prompting a fight or flight response whenever our life was in danger.

“We’re grateful we had that because if we didn’t, we might not be around,” says Tom Guck, Ph.D., director of behavior sciences in the Department of Family Medicine.

Good stress still comes in handy today. Guck, who has given campus presentations about stress and its effect on the heart, points to athletes: “You hear about teams, for example, that come out flat. Their stress level and motivation are not where they need to be, at their peak. You have to have a certain amount of stress, or anxiety, for being up for something.”

It can even be good for students. Yilmazer-Hanke cites studies that show how the right amount of stress hormones can improve learning. But too much stress, and learning begins to deteriorate. Or a team’s performance suffers.

“Look at stress and performance and it’s a U-curve,” Guck says. “Typically if you have some moderate level of stress, you maximize your performance. If you’re under or over, your performance is a little bit less.”

The real problem is when stress comes to stay. With chronic stress, bad performance on the field or on a test becomes the least of worries.

“When it goes on for a long time, it can even elicit some sort of physiological damage,” Guck says.

**Beginning in the Brain**

The damage starts in the brain, something we’ve only recently begun to understand, says Sanjay Singh, M.D., chair of Creighton’s Department of Neurology. “We didn’t know much about it until the last 10, 15 years.”

Tools such as functional MRIs have helped. Researchers can look at the brain as it’s solving a mathematical problem or getting angry and see what parts are firing.
Stress!

With stress, the hormones adrenaline and cortisol are released throughout the body. With chronic stress — stress that doesn’t go away — cortisol floods the body in large amounts, killing brain cells and restructuring areas like the hippocampus, our memory and learning center. Cognition begins to suffer. Singh says the amygdala, the fear center of the brain, “actually increases in size, physically.”

Not good. “Some of the new, late-breaking information is the kind of stuff which really puts a physiological perspective to how dangerous this can be,” Singh adds.

Some of the most recent and cutting-edge research on stress is being done by Bruchas in his Washington University lab. There, he explores how stress can lead to anxiety disorders, panic attacks, depression, addiction and more.

He’s found a way to shut off the bad effects of stress — in mice, at least.

Bruchas did so in mice genetically engineered with brain cells that have special receptors that can be activated by light (optogenetics) or synthetic chemicals (chemogenetics) to trigger or block neuronal activity. He and other researchers targeted a small structure in the brain called the locus coeruleus (LC). There, neurons secrete the hormone norepinephrine, which surges under stress.

Bruchas and other researchers observed mice moving through mazes and roaming freely in an open box. “Mice usually move toward the wall and try to stay out of the open area, just like a mouse in your house,” Bruchas says.

When his team selectively controlled the firing of LC neurons in stressed mice, lowering norepinephrine levels, the animals were more likely to venture into the middle even when stressed. They also discovered that by activating LC neurons with light, mice in the mazes behaved as if they were stressed, even when they had not been exposed to a stressful event.

Wireless micro-LED devices are allowing Bruchas and other researchers at Washington University in St. Louis to use optogenetics to uncover information about molecular and cellular events in the brain that underlie stress, addiction and depression.

Stress in America*

SLEEP – awake at night in the past month because of stress

51% women vs. 32% men

MONEY – leading cause of stress

72% adults

Stressed about money some of the time

26% adults

Stressed about money most or all of the time

Other top sources of stress

60% work

49% economy

47% family responsibilities

46% personal health

*Source: 2014 American Psychological Association Stress in America Survey
“Stress is unique in its relationship with sleep. If you’re stressed, you can’t sleep. And if you can’t sleep, your body induces a stress response. It’s a pretty bad cycle.”

Thomas Lenz, Pharm.D.
Director of Creighton’s Healthy Lifestyle Management degree program

Stress-busting techniques
> Exercise
> Sleep
> Meditation

Bruchas also has studied the brain region called the dorsal raphe nucleus. There, he discovered that after stress exposure, mouse brains activate a protein called p38α MAPK, lowering serotonin levels and triggering depression-like or drug-seeking behaviors. Stressed animals stopped interacting with other mice. In animals previously given cocaine injections while in specific places, stress made them more likely to seek out those locations.

When that protein was disabled only in cells of the brain’s serotonin system, stress-exposed mice no longer withdrew from social interactions, displayed depression-like behavior or sought drugs.

Body Blows
As the brain goes, so goes the body.
“We used to think that the mind and the body are separate,” Guck says. “Now we’re seeing it’s more integrated with reciprocal interactions among the environment, thoughts, emotions, physiology and behavior.”

With chronic stress, that can be devastating below the neck.
Creighton students observe this firsthand during Moore’s senior capstone course Laboratory Methods and Procedures. Students stress fellow students by giving them time-sensitive tasks or mathematical equations to solve. Then they measure what happens to the body. Often they see heart rate and blood pressure rise. Respiration increases, and skin temperature dips as blood flow is diverted to the heart.

Stress can be particularly devastating on the cardiovascular system. Over time, blood vessels harden and arteries are blocked.
Problems arise elsewhere in the body. The risk of developing diabetes increases. Energy dips, weight rises. Inflammation courses throughout the body. The immune and reproductive systems can be suppressed. The stomach can take a hit. “GI (gastrointestinal) disorders are on a huge rise,” Lenz says. “There’s a direct connection with stress and the GI system.”

De-Stressing
So what to do with all this stress wreaking havoc on our brains and bodies? There’s good news. First, “stress reduction techniques are almost all free,” Singh says.

The bad news: “When people are stressed or feeling an intense pressure, anxiety,” Stockham-Ronollo says, “they tend to stop doing all the things that help them decrease anxiety.”
Two remedies for stress are mentioned most frequently — exercise and sleep.

Of the two, Lenz says, he’d start with exercise. “Because exercise helps promote better sleep,” Lenz says. “Stress is unique in its relationship with sleep. If you’re stressed, you can’t sleep. And if you can’t sleep, your body induces a stress response. It’s a pretty bad cycle.”

Exercise looks like it helps with stress in two ways, he says. “One, it helps you rest more comfortably and get better sleep in better quality and quantity. But it also induces stress, physical stress, and research points to it in helping your body deal with stress. You are putting yourself in a controlled stress environment for a period of time — 15, 30, 45 minutes. Whatever your body physically gets, it is more able to deal with emotional stress.”

If exercise doesn’t induce sleep, another stress-busting technique might do so — meditation.

Lenz says it’s a “very Ignatian” approach. Every day, he practices the Jesuit Examen, a technique of prayerful reflection on the events of the day. Others mention meditation alongside “mindfulness,” or being aware of the events of a day. Lenz asks clients he sees to journal about their days.

“This sometimes people have to learn how to do that, how to be mindful,” Lenz says. “This is really a way for them to stop what they’re doing and think about where it comes from and how they are coping with it and get to the source of what the stress is.”

Even counting your blessings — being grateful — can help.

The impact of such approaches is real and can be rather dramatic. Singh cites a study on people with multiple sclerosis who were asked to practice regular meditation/mindfulness. Cortisol and adrenaline levels dropped and MRIs showed a decrease in harmful brain lesions by the end of the 24-week study. When the meditation ceased, the lesions returned.

“This, we didn’t know could happen,” Singh says. “A biological thing in a major neurological disorder. How does that happen? Now we have good data, especially in the last three to six years, which tells us that meditation leads to long-term changes in brain structure.”

Creighton students can practice mindfulness without leaving home thanks to the Virtual Mindfulness Clinic Stockham-Ronollo established last August. It’s an online resource available any time of day and offers students numerous ways to de-stress via guided meditation, breathing exercises, movement practices and even apps (like Fluid Monkey, which gets users to interact with smooth, responsive pools of liquid).

But just as what stresses individuals can be subjective, so is what calms us.

“What works for me might not work for you or someone else or could even have the reverse effect,” Moore says. Yoga might relax one person but spike anxiety in another.

A few other ways to bust stress, as cited by Creighton sources include:

> Eat Better

“Some foods you eat can actually induce a stress response,” Lenz says. Especially foods high in refined sugar or flour. “It can almost immediately, within a very short time after eating it, give the stress response where you have a shorter fuse,” he says. Avoiding drugs, alcohol and tobacco also helps.

> Socialize

While being around some people might induce stress, being with others — especially friends — can calm us. In the APA survey, 43 percent of those who say they have no emotional support report their overall stress has increased in the past year, compared with 26 percent of those who say they have emotional support. And those connections are best in person rather than over the phone or online. “Partly because of the physical presence,” Lenz says. “When we do a lot of connecting without that physical presence, we’re not getting the same effect.”

> Relax Your Body

At Creighton, Moore teaches a stress management technique called “Jacobson’s Progressive Relaxation.” Students in the class are asked to tense then relax parts of the body, starting at one end and working toward the other. “It’s the idea of becoming aware of our body’s tension,” Moore says.

> Have a Good Laugh

It really is the best medicine, says Singh, who often tunes into “The Big Bang Theory” for his dose of chuckles. “I like the comedy shows,” he says. “That does decrease your stress.”

> Take a Day Off

From technology, that is.

Again, most of this is free.

If Bruchas succeeds, though, blocking stress might be as easy as popping a pill. He mentions pharmaceutical clinical trials looking to place a blocker in the stress system that could benefit not just stress sufferers, but addicts, too.

“It’s very exciting,” Bruchas says.
Each morning Michael Scott Jr., MD’46, reports for work at his dermatology office in Seattle, even though this year he will turn 95 years old.

“If you enjoy what you’re doing, it’s not work,” Scott said.

And why shouldn’t he enjoy what he’s doing? He operates a medical practice with his son, Michael Scott III, M.D.; his profession and his avocation, table tennis, have taken him around the world; and he has been a part of revolutionary changes in the field of dermatology.

Scott was the second generation of his family to go to Creighton for medical school. His father, Michael Scott Sr., MD’1903, was a surgeon and the founding benefactor of Creighton’s medical library, which was named the Dr. M.J. Scott Medical Library in his honor. Scott Sr., who died in 1985, is also credited by historians as the person who called for “the creation of an all-University alumni association” in 1913, and he became an officer in Creighton’s inaugural alumni association later that year. Scott Sr.’s family was from Carroll, Iowa, and several other members of the extended family had gone to Creighton in the early days of the 20th century as well.

Scott Jr. chose dermatology as his specialty because of the influence of faculty member John Borghoff, M.D., a dermatologist. He said Borghoff told him he was the first student to be interested in dermatology: “Everyone thought everything was contagious and didn’t want to go into it.”
At that time, the field was called dermatology and syphilology, Scott said, and a significant part of the profession was treating venereal diseases.

During his residency at Bellevue Hospital in New York, he was involved with groundbreaking research on the treatment of syphilis. What had previously been a year-and-a-half protocol was brought down to 10 days with penicillin, revolutionizing the treatment of syphilis.

Scott had been in an accelerated program at the School of Medicine as a member of the U.S. Army. After the residency at Bellevue, he served in the military for five years, which included being the only dermatologist in Europe at the Army Hospital in Munich, where he was the chief of staff. He then attended Cornell for two more years of training for a super residency in dermatology.

Although he had offers in New York, he settled in Seattle to practice because he liked that part of the country. Life is good in Seattle. He and his wife raised four children, all of whom are professionals — two attorneys, one R.N. and one physician.

In 1971, his life began to take another interesting twist. A recreational table tennis (also known by the trademarked name Ping-Pong in some parts of the world) player, Scott that year entered and won the 50-years-and-older competition in his home state of Washington.

His table tennis playing had started in high school. An official table tennis surface is 5 feet wide by 9 feet long, but he couldn’t afford to buy such a table, so he learned to play on a 4-by-4 piece of plywood, which improved his game. He didn’t play in college, the military or medical school, but began playing again in Seattle for recreation. He still plays several times a week.

Scott became known as a top player in the Northwest in the 1970s — coaching, officiating, chairing the USA Table Tennis (USATT) Disciplinary Committee from 1973 through 1982 and being named chair of the first USATT Sports Medicine and Science Committee in 1982. Shortly thereafter, the U.S. Olympic Committee asked him to assist with drug testing, and he then began a relationship with the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Sports Science Committee and drug testing program that continues today.

He has been an official in one capacity or another for every Olympic sport except equestrian since 1985; served as team physician for many Olympic sports; umpired at national and international table tennis championships; and has officiated at the Special Olympics World Games, USA Wheelchair National Championships, Paralympic Games and the Pan American Games.

Two-time table tennis Olympian and five-time U.S. champion Sean O’Neill, who is currently the communications director for USATT, said Scott has had a profound impact on the sport of table tennis, both nationally and internationally. “As a player, coach, team leader, tournament director and drug-testing expert for the U.S. Olympic Committee and International Table Tennis Federation, Dr. Scott has truly earned his spot in the sport’s Hall of Fame.”

This year, Scott said he has tapered off somewhat as a competitive player. But there is one thing on his calendar already for May 2017: He is one of only five in the world to be invited to compete in the World’s Veterans (over 40) Table Tennis Championship in Alicante, Spain.

“In the U.S., table tennis is a minor sport, but in Europe it’s a professional sport and in China it’s the No. 1 sport. Table tennis has shown me a cross-section of humanity. Everyone is considered equal in the sport.”

Michael Scott Jr., MD’46
Alumni Notes


Anne M. Fangman, BSN, Port Ludlow, Wash., published a memoir, Mustard Every Monday. The book chronicles Fangman’s eight years as a Sister of Mercy, her time as a stewardess for Braniff International and her two years on the hospital ship the USS Hope.

Daniel E. Monnat, JD, Wichita, Kan., of Monnat & Spurrier, Chartered, was honored by the 2016 edition of Best Lawyers in America for his legal expertise in criminal defense. Best Lawyers in America has honored Monnat every year since 1989. Monnat also was recognized among the region’s most distinguished criminal defense attorneys by Missouri and Kansas Super Lawyers 2015.

Richard K. Morgan Jr., MD, Ripon, Calif., was recognized for his outstanding clinical care in the Community-Based Outpatient Setting by the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in Livermore, Calif.

Michael G. Lyon, BS’75, MD, Belmont, Calif., received the award for outstanding care by a subspecialist from the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in Livermore, Calif.

Hon. Michael E. Groom, BA’77, JD, Arlington, Va., has retired as a judge of the Employees’ Compensation Appeals Board in Washington, D.C.

Martin A. Diaz, BSBA’80, JD, Swisher, Iowa, was the recipient of the Iowa Association of Justice’s Verne Lawyer Outstanding Member Award in November 2015. The award recognized Diaz for seeking justice for injured Iowans, especially victims of medical negligence.

Kathleen Liddell Arnold, BSPha, Snohomish, Wash., was appointed to the rank of clinical instructor at the University of Washington School of Pharmacy.

Mark Ostrowski, BSBA’86, JD, La Grange, Ill., was named the 2015 International Masters of Gaming Law North American Regulator of the Year. Ostrowski is the administrator of the Illinois Gaming Board.

Anthony J. Cook, BA, Rochester, Minn., was the 2015 recipient of the Book of Golden Deeds Award presented by the Exchange Club of Rochester. The award recognizes those who give unselfishly for the betterment of their community.

Linda Ash Richards, BA, Omaha, received the Ann Mactier Leadership for Learning Award at the 2015 Nebraska Association for School Boards Conference. Richards has served on the Ralston (Neb.) School Board for 20 years.

Do you have alumni news to share? Have a new job? Recently married? Earned a promotion? Had a new baby? Received special recognition? If so, we want to know about it! Please send to alumninews@creighton.edu.

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- Project Management (certificate)
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- Finance (MFIN)
- Investment Management and Financial Analysis (MIMFA)

Visit business.creighton.edu/graduate.
A few years ago, standing in a backroom at the London studios where he creates what can best be described as luminous alchemy, Tupac Martir, BFA’00, heard a voice.

“It was through the radio we’ve got, a voice saying, ‘You’re needed up front, someone wants to see you,’” Martir remembered.

“So I walk up front. And there, standing at my desk — it’s … yeah. And she just reaches a hand out and says, ‘Hi, I’m Beyoncé.’”

It was far from Martir’s first handshake with a leading member of the glitterati but, after about three hours talking with her about how he could bring her 2011 performance at the Glastonbury Festival to light, the reigning Queen B stopped and asked him, “Are you hungry? Do you want some chicken soup?”

“I said, ‘I don’t really think we can get chicken soup,’” said Martir, who returned to Creighton briefly this past fall to display an exhibit in Creighton’s Lied Art Gallery. “And she took my hand and said, ‘Honey, there’s always chicken soup.’”

It wasn’t until a few weeks later, well into his design process and Beyoncé’s rehearsals, that it dawned on Martir he was working with one of the world’s all-time luminaries.

“She was in the middle of rehearsing ‘All the Single Ladies’ and it just kind of hit me,” Martir said. “‘I’m working with Beyoncé.’”

Martir, the man dubbed “The Light Magician” by Tony Chambers, editor of London-based Wallpaper magazine, a leading design periodical, has had similar moments of dawning before.

In 2009, the artist was asked to design lighting for an Alexander McQueen fashion show presenting the celebrated designer’s fall 2010 collection. The show turned out to be the final one for McQueen (known popularly as Lee), as he died Feb. 11, 2010.

Not long after, London’s Victoria and Albert Museum dedicated a retrospective exhibit to McQueen’s famously extravagant and visually rich runway shows, the final piece of which was a large screen displaying the catwalk bathed in brilliant color and images from the final show.

“I’m at the gala at the V&A and there are a lot of things going on, there’s a lot to see there and take in,” Martir said. “But then you come to this giant LED screen of Lee’s last show and I’m watching it and I’m utterly captivated by it and I’m thinking, ‘I know what’s going to happen next because I designed it.’ But it was truly epic and amazing to see it in that way. I really couldn’t believe what I was seeing and had to stop and say, ‘Wait. I did that.’”

From Beyoncé and McQueen to Elton John and Sting, Martir’s career has taken him around the globe, but he’s quick to remember that it was the globe’s most popular sport that helped get him his start.

Martir came to Creighton on a dual academic and soccer scholarship to study painting. And he remained convinced, even in the final year of his undergraduate career, that a blissful, bohemian life of painting and playing soccer was all he really needed.

But almost from the day his senior thesis show closed, Martir found himself getting involved in new avenues, new media, new ideas, ever making himself and his art new. From painting, he delved into light installations and from there, into lighting design.

“I thought that was it — soccer and paint a little — and I thought that was just beautiful,” Martir said. “From playing soccer, I got here, and from here, I’ve gone all over the world. I love it. The camaraderie I found here at Creighton still sticks with me.”
Compassion to Bridge the Gaps

Working for justice has been a familiar theme for **Jillian Husman, BA’08**. After earning a bachelor’s degree from Creighton in political science and French with a minor in economics, Husman has served as a Human Rights Fellow at Nebraska Appleseed, worked with Sudanese refugees in Omaha and traveled to Africa in various service capacities with the Peace Corps. She currently works for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. “My travels have made me realize we are all equal citizens of the world,” she says. Read more about her story online at creighton.edu/creightonmagazine.

Jillian Husman, BA’08, during her time in the Peace Corps in Koumpentoum, Senegal.

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Shad E. Sumrow, JD, Dallas, was selected for inclusion in *Texas Super Lawyers* 2015. Sumrow is an attorney at Thompson & Knight LLP in Dallas.

Stephen E. Carr, JD, Napa, Calif., is tax director at Treasury Wine Estates in Napa. Brandi Buggi DiGiorgio, BSBA, Shawnee, Kan., was promoted to partner at MarksNelson LLC accounting and consulting firm in Kansas City, Mo. Hon. Ryan W. Rosauer, BA, Junction City, Kan., was appointed district court judge in Kansas’ Eighth Judicial District by the Kansas governor in March 2015. Rosauer continues to serve as a judge advocate in the U.S. Army Reserves, where he was promoted to lieutenant colonel in May 2015.

Stacy J. Fisher, DPT, Las Vegas, assistant professor at Touro University in Henderson, Nev., received the 2014 Healthcare Hero Award from Nevada Business Magazine.

Peggy Dineen Reall, BA, Omaha, is director of marketing and public relations at the Omaha Community Playhouse.

Amy K. McLaughlin, BA, Omaha, was selected for the Midlands Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 Awards. McLaughlin is vice president for programs and operations at ICAN in Omaha.

Bill J. Druffel, JD, Pullman, Wash., was promoted to major in the U.S. Army Reserves. Druffel currently serves as a judge advocate in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps in addition to his duties as chief deputy prosecuting attorney for Whitman County, Wash. Dr. Angela Morrison Swan, BA, Litchfield Park, Ariz., professor of criminal justice at Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, published “Masculine, Feminine, or Androgynous: The Influence of Gender Identity on Job Satisfaction Among Female Police Officers” in the journal *Women & Criminal Justice*.

James B. “Brody” Deren, BS, Omaha, was selected for the Midlands Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 Awards. Deren is president and co-founder of Dynamo, LLC, in Omaha.

Lauren R. Goldstein, BA, Las Cruces, N.M., received her Ph.D. in rhetoric and professional communication in December 2015 from New Mexico State University. Kathryn Hogan Gurnett, BS’79, MBA, Omaha, was the 2015 recipient of the Robert W. Lennon Award from the Association of Insurance Compliance Professionals. Gurnett is the compliance manager for Physicians Mutual Insurance Company in Omaha. Justin W. High, BA’02, JD, and Frank Younes, BSBA’09, JD’11, Omaha, formed the partnership High & Younes, LLC, in 2012 and have purchased a new office building at 69th and Dodge streets in Omaha. Marc T. Wisdom, MBA, Omaha, was selected for the Midlands Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 Awards. Wisdom is president of First Westroads Bank in Omaha and is a member of the bank’s board of directors.

Kristine M. Hull, MBA, Omaha, was selected for the Midlands Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 Awards. Hull is chief financial officer for Heartland Family Service in Omaha.

Erin Swanson Russell, BA’02, MA, Omaha, was selected for the Midlands Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 Awards. Swanson Russell is vice president of development at Goodwill Industries, Inc. Serving Eastern Nebraska and Southwest Iowa.

Marianne M. Junck, MD, Oregon, Wis., completed her residency in dermatology at the Medical College of Wisconsin in June 2015. She has joined Affiliated Dermatologists, S.C., in Brookfield, Wis. Frank Younes, BSBA’09, JD, and Justin W. High, BA’02, JD’05, Omaha, formed the partnership High & Younes, LLC, in 2012 and have purchased a new office building at 69th and Dodge streets in Omaha.

Grant D. Klise, BA, Wichita, Kan., joined the law firm Triplitt, Woolf & Garretson, LLC, in Wichita in November 2015.


Laura G. Jablonski, BSBA, St. Louis, is serving with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps NorthWest working at Catholic Charities of Yakima in Wanatchee, Wash. Kimberly A. Thies, BA, St. Louis, is serving with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps working at Catholic Charities Austin in Austin, Texas. Theodora L. “Ted” Wheeler, MA’08, MFA, Omaha, has placed two books with publishers: *Kings of Broken Things* (a novel to be published in spring 2017 by Little A) and *Bad Faith* (a short story collection to be published in July 2016 by Queen’s Ferry Press). Wheeler also won a writing contest sponsored by the 1877 Society, a group of library enthusiasts and advocates in their 20s and 30s who support the Omaha Public Library Foundation. Wheeler won the fiction prize for his story “Violate the Leaves.”

Courtney J. Kern, BSW, Leawood, Kan., is serving with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps working at Aoyikuyi School in Chukun, Micronesia. Jay D. Koehn, BA’12, JD, Omaha, joined the law firm McGrath North Mullin & Kratz in December 2015 as part of its litigation group. Joseph A. Kromrey, BS, Rochester, Minn., is serving with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps working at St. Martin’s in Albuquerque, N.M.


Madeline M. Clarke, BS, Aberdeen, Wash., is serving with Jesuit Volunteer Corps NorthWest working at the YMCA of Grays Harbor in Aberdeen. Taylor M. Hansen, BSBA, Norfolk, Neb., is serving with Jesuit Volunteer Corps NorthWest working at Heritage Living Center in Ashland, Mont. Emma R. Hoppe, BS, Lincoln, Neb., is serving with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps working at the Community Asset Preservation Corporation in Newark, N.J.

Jeanne M. Kutilek and Ian S. Simons, BS’01, BA’15, May 9, 2015, living in Omaha.

Rachel E. Jensen and Ian S. Simons, BSA’15, May 2, 2015, living in Omaha.
Alumni News

Spring 2016

and Calif., a daughter, Berlin, June 02, 2015.

Christine E. Thomson, BSBA, and Scott Hartlieb, Aug. 28, 2015, living in Minneapolis.

Brittanie E. Fredrickson, DPT, and Logan D. Klingselhofer, Aug. 7, 2015, living in Kearney, Neb. Cagney A. Shuttuck, BS'06, MBA, JD, and Craig Jensen, Nov. 21, 2015, living in Omaha.

Lindsay Jeratowski and Michael P. Noonan, BSBA'05, MSAPM, Sept. 18, 2015, living in Omaha.

Abigail A. Kunkel, BS'11, DPT, and Collin W. McCormack, BS'11, June 20, 2015, living in Seattle. Kimberly A. Utzig, BS'12, JD, and Daniel Latus, Aug. 7, 2015, living in Madison, Wis.

Sally J. Breining, BS'11, MD, and Alexander D. Zanotto, BS'11, MD, and June 13, 2015, living in Minneapols. Claire E. Zach, BS'11, MD, and Andrew G. Ives, BSBA'11, June 6, 2015, living in Minneapolis.

Mary Harrah Conry, SCN, Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 7, 2015.


Margaret Flaherty Canny, SCN, Denver, Nov. 7, 2015.


Mary Frances “Fran” Janusiewicz Greene, SJN, Omaha, Sept. 26, 2015.


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We remember Creighton University faculty and Jesuits who have recently died. *

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Saving Consumers Money on Prescription Drugs

For Michael Rea, PharmD’07, what began as a goal to help one customer has turned into a mission to serve millions. After graduating from Creighton, Rea was working as a pharmacist in Kansas City when he met a customer who was struggling to pay for her medications. “She had enough money for six of the medicines, and she asked me which of her [eight] medications were least important,” Rea says. Rea believed all of her medications were equally important, so he spent more than six hours after his shift at the pharmacy navigating the system trying to find a solution.

He researched medications, pricing information, and therapeutic options and available alternatives. He compiled his research and made recommendations to his customer, who then consulted with her doctor and transferred her prescriptions to another pharmacy. Because of his work, Rea’s customer was able to pay for all of her prescriptions, and save $250. “It changed her life and, in time, it has also changed mine,” Rea says.

Through his research, Rea found the prescription drug process difficult to navigate — even for a professional medical provider. He knew he could do more to help others. “I knew I had to find a way to get the process out to all consumers in a way that could change their lives, especially for those who couldn’t afford their medications,” Rea says.

In 2008, while continuing his full-time work as a pharmacist, Rea founded Rx Savings Solutions and began doing similar consultations with customers until 2012.

The evolving and changing landscape of health care led Rea to understand how Rx Savings Solutions could benefit self-funded employers and health plans. Four years ago, Rea switched the direct-to-consumer model of Rx Savings Solutions to a model that sold its software to employers and health plans, which helped the company grow.

In 2014, Rx Savings Solutions saw success when it contracted with the state of Kansas and the BH Media Group, a Berkshire Hathaway company that operates more than 70 newspapers in 10 states, to provide prescription medication advice to their employees.

According to Rea, 2016 is set to be a “blockbuster year.” During the past year, Rx Savings Solutions has more than doubled its staff and revenue. The company employs 31 people, five of whom (including Rea) are Creighton graduates. Rea’s wife, Brandy Kopecky Rea, JD’07, serves as chief legal counsel. Other Creighton alumni with the company are Heather Green Epps, PharmD’07, and Shahryar Qadri, BSCS’02, chief technology officer.

The overarching goal of the company is to allow people to be better stewards of their prescription drug costs. Possible cost-saving solutions could be as simple as switching pharmacies or buying a high-strength pill for the same price and cutting it in half. Rx Savings Solutions alerts its members to potential savings through text messages and emails.

“In a recent Consumer Reports poll, one-third of Americans surveyed said they were paying an average of $39 more out of pocket for their prescription medications, and 10 percent reported paying an extra $100 or more. Of those whose prescription drug costs went up, nearly one out of four said they had skipped filling a prescription due to cost. “We are excited to be able to be saving millions of dollars of consumers’ money and allow them to lead better, healthier lives,” Rea says. “We’ve sat with people of this country as they make decisions about whether they pay rent, buy food or buy their medications. That’s not right, and we’re here to fix it.”
Alumni and friends, share your pictures showing your Creighton Bluejay pride at locales near and far through the social media campaign #BluejayWorld. Tag your Twitter or Instagram photos with #BluejayWorld, and visit bluejayworld.hscampaigns.com.

1. Twin Cities Alumni Club Bulls Game – Left to right: Joe Schaefer, BSBA’09, Julie Kennison Schaefer, BS’11, MD’15, Andrew Ives, BSBA’11, Sarah Mittet and Robert Mittet, BSChm’11, MD’15; 2. Rachel Knust Millard, BSBA’08, and Alexander Knust at the men’s Bluejay soccer game vs. Georgetown in Washington, D.C., last November; 3. Los Angeles Alumni and Friends Reception Hosted by the School of Medicine – Left to right: Arash Taghavi, MD’15, Catherine Nguyen, MD’15, School of Medicine Dean Bo Dunlay, MD’81, Jessica Hoffmann, MD’15, and Daniel Kim, MD’15.
Effect a greater change in education.

Education alumni from Creighton University serve public, Catholic and other private schools in local and global communities. They bring distinctive gifts to their schools that are rooted in Creighton’s Jesuit values of service to others. Make an even greater impact in education with one of our top-ranking graduate programs:

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Visit [creighton.edu/educators](creighton.edu)
**Giving Back**

By Sarah Smith, BA’07

**Helping Future Students Goal of Longtime Educators**

Ask Creighton alumni Greg, BA’84, MS’88, and Mary Lou Batenhorst, BA’86, what they loved most about attending Creighton, and they would be hard-pressed to give you only one answer.

Both count their time at Creighton as immensely rewarding, and have a mile-long list of what they enjoyed: the close-knit community, Jesuit values, strong academics and lifelong friendships. All of this came to mind when they recently sat down to tackle the important task of planning their estate. They decided to include Creighton in their estate and are excited to help future students have the fulfilling experience they did at the University.

Education has always been close to their hearts. Both are educators in the St. Louis area; Greg is an assistant superintendent and Mary Lou an English teacher. They remember both sets of parents emphasizing the importance of education early on.

Mary Lou recalls her parents’ pride when she became the first in her family to graduate from college. Greg’s parents emphasized the importance of education by example. For instance, Greg’s mom worked at his high school as a cook and librarian, and his dad served on the school board and guided efforts to help the school remain financially viable.

“That pretty much sent the message that education was important,” Greg says.

In addition to including Creighton in their estate, Mary Lou and Greg have made scholarship gifts to Creighton’s Graduate School and College of Arts and Sciences in the past. The University has been a constant presence in their lives and they want to give back to the school that gave them so much.

“All that we have been able to accomplish is largely because of our experience at Creighton,” Mary Lou says. Though they attended at the same time, they didn’t meet until after graduating.

“We want future students to have the same experiences and opportunities we did, so anything we can do to pass on that positive experience to another student, we’re more than happy to do.”

**Mary Lou Batenhorst, BA’86**

while teaching at the same Omaha school. They married at St. John’s Church on campus with several Creighton professors in attendance. Both were contacted by members of the Creighton community when they lost loved ones over the years. They say they are touched at the continued compassion and care shown by those at Creighton.

They often encourage their students and family members applying to college to consider Creighton.

“If you were to take the family tree of both of our families, you would see siblings, nieces, nephews and cousins who have gone to Creighton,” Greg says. “All have had positive, extraordinary experiences there.”

They still have friendships with people they met at Creighton.

“My best friends in the world are still the ones I made at Creighton,” Greg says.

They are also loyal Bluejays fans and rarely miss basketball games.

“We’re definitely hardcore Jays fans,” Greg said. “We bleed blue.”

Greg and Mary Lou do not have children and hope their donations can help others obtain an education and have a great college experience, just like they did.

“We want future students to have the same experiences and opportunities we did, so anything we can do to pass on that positive experience to another student, we’re more than happy to do,” Mary Lou says.

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**Consider an Estate Gift to Creighton**

If you have not yet included Creighton University in your estate plans and would like to explore the best option for you and your family, do not hesitate to contact the Office of Gift and Estate Planning. If you have already included a gift to Creighton through a bequest or other planned gift, please let the University know of your intentions.

You may contact the Office of Gift and Estate Planning at 800.334.8794 or giftplanning@creighton.edu. All information will remain confidential, including your identity, if you desire.
As a member of the Creighton community, your support of Creighton students is crucial. We challenge you to help us fill the gap before June 30, 2016. Any gift, no matter the size, is beneficial to Creighton students.

Show your support today. creighton.edu/springchallenge #CreightonGAP | 800.334.8794

Late nights in Reinert Library. Fall and Spring Break road trips. Coffee with friends in Skutt. Lectures in Rigge 120. Mass in St. John’s. Intramurals on the baseball lawn. Breakfasts in Brandeis. Bluejay Birdcage—victories and heartaches, Fallapalooza in the KFC. Walks on the Mall with roommates...

Alumni support helps make the Creighton experience possible. Just as when you were a student, donors help fill the financial gap between the cost of tuition and the actual cost of a Creighton education. By supporting the Creighton Fund, you help provide current students the same Creighton experience you were afforded.
“Mom, I’m single … not ‘footloose and fancy free.’”

Dealing with exhausting comments by parents makes good fodder for FECH (Friday Evening Comedy Hour) — an hour-long sketch comedy podcast written, acted, produced and edited by Creighton students. The show runs weekly on BLUJ Radio, Creighton’s student-run Internet radio station.

The idea for the podcast started with a casual conversation between Josh Prenosil, Ph.D., assistant professor of English, and Ryan Cameron, a staff member in Creighton’s Division of Information Technology who serves as program moderator for BLUJ Radio.

“He was telling me about BLUJ Radio, and how awesome it was," Prenosil recalls. “I told him how I was teaching this humor class and asked if he’d be interested in programming.”

He was, and Prenosil’s class got to work, developing two FECH episodes as a final class project. First, they listened to similar podcasts to better understand the genre. Then they began drafting scripts. Peer reviews and script readings followed. Finally, they learned to use a program to record and produce their skits.

Now, roughly two years later, what began as a class project is now overseen by three students, who gain academic credit for their work: an executive producer, who keeps the production on schedule; a head writer, who works with a team of four or five student writers; and a media producer, who puts it all together.

In the process of working on FECH, students learn how to create professional-quality audio programming for a contemporary audience, think visually through an oral medium, and interact with each other on what’s actually funny.

“Through my involvement with FECH, I have learned to write scripts, work with a team, work with local talent, manage others effectively, and deal with the University,” says Leslie Majda, an English major and film studies minor who serves as FECH’s executive producer.

“But more than all that, FECH has taught me about myself and who I am as a person. It gave me lifelong friends, and helped me find a place here at Creighton.” Majda is currently applying to graduate programs with an aim of getting her master’s degree in screenwriting.

The show has also been extremely successful. BLUJ Radio “now ranks in the top 10 of all college radio programs on Internet streaming,” says Cameron. “Dr. Prenosil’s excellent leadership turned the program into a virtual ratings powerhouse. Between FECH and BLUJ Radio, there are close to 75 students involved, in some way, with the digital humanities.”

Prenosil will teach his humor writing class again in the fall of 2016, and hopes to introduce a new group of students to FECH and Internet radio.

“What we were doing, at first, might have seemed a bit odd to people who aren’t stand-up comedy fans, but Creighton has an open disposition toward new creative projects, especially when students get excited. It’s such a student-centered environment. It has been a pleasure directing these students.”

Creighton students prepare for a weekly FECH show. Pictured, from left, are Sean Crowell, Adam Sadiq, Alexa Walker, Leslie Majda and Breanne O’Reilly.
In 1976, Omaha attorney Stephen Bruckner was assigned to the introductory political science course taught by a new Oxford Ph.D., the Rev. John Schlegel, S.J., and found a “teacher, mentor and lifelong friend.”

Schlegel, Creighton’s president for 11 years, was remembered with affection by Bruckner and other former students after his death in November. Schlegel asked Bruckner to speak on behalf of all his former students at his funeral at St. John’s Church; at least 40 students from Bruckner’s era attended.

“I eventually majored in Fr. Schlegel,” said Bruckner, BA’79. “He was a world-class scholar and teacher. He was brilliant and he demanded excellence, yet his classroom style was engaging and approachable because this man related to students like no one we had ever encountered.”

Bruckner recalled that Fr. Schlegel said 10 p.m. Sunday Mass “to a packed house. Those Masses, definitely part social event, kept us grounded in our faith and the homilies, always brief, with three points, resonated for students struggling with the transition to adulthood.”

Dennis Crawford, BA’82, an attorney in Lincoln, recalled the day that Schlegel, his academic advisor from 1978-80, mapped out a blueprint for him to get his degree. “I took a class from him my freshman year. He was a brilliant and erudite man.” Crawford called Schlegel a “super professor” and a great lecturer.

Elizabeth Woerdeman Rea, BA’70, said she never had Schlegel as a professor but joined him on Fellow Travelers Creighton Alumni trips to South Africa and Zimbabwe and India when he was president.

“Pope Francis and Fr. John Schlegel represent the ‘best of the best’ when it comes to fighting for social justice and caring about what people need to live full and productive lives,” said Rea, a retired Omaha Public Schools teacher. “Every day, I’m proud of my education at Creighton and the chance to follow the example of these wonderful priests.”
Maureen (not her real name), a single mother of three, always seemed to be living six inches above the poverty line. At the end of every month, she barely had enough money left to take her kids out to a movie. Where did her earnings go?

Desperate to gain financial control over her life, she enrolled in the Financial Success Program, a Heider College of Business program that teaches low-income single mothers about how to improve their financial situation. Through the program, women attend a nine-week class on topics about managing credit, tracking expenses and the value of saving money. Afterward, they meet one-on-one for a year with a financial coach.

“When they finish classes, they tell me the wolves are no longer at their door because they know where their money goes,” says Julie Kalkowski, executive director of the program. “(Maureen) said she got into the program because she wanted to create a better life for her kids. Now, she says her life is better, and that having a savings account reduces her financial stress.”

Interestingly, the program not only helps improve people financially, but their health and mental outlook improves as well, Kalkowski adds. Because participants learn how to empower themselves and feel more in control, they exercise more and eat healthier, while “25 percent of our clients received promotions at work, and about 50 percent went back to school for more education,” she says.

Kalkowski estimates the program has helped about 450 women since its inception in 2009. And now, the program has broadened to include single dads. “Men need financial education, too,” she says.
Haidier College also has courses for students who aren’t business majors, but still want to learn how to organize, create and manage a venture to make social change. The Social Entrepreneurship minor offers a course of study that includes five courses in creating and financing a new business, and one elective on the societal impact of doing business.

“The program connects our expertise in business and entrepreneurship with our Jesuit heritage,” says Matt Seevers, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Marketing and Management. “The courses acknowledge that profitable organizations have the option to contribute to society through contributions to another organization, or to the local community. Profits don’t necessarily have to go back into increased spending on things like research and development, or CEO pay.”

Seevers stresses the word “option,” because it’s more significant to business people when they consciously choose to contribute to the public good.

The goal of the program is for students to have a strong nuts-and-bolts understanding of how to create a business from the ground up, Seevers says. “Plus, we want them to have a heightened sensitivity to the important contributions that business can make in the world. There are many fine organizations that have an impact on employees, their community, and we hope to encourage students to talk about social justice and care for the whole person.”

“Teaching students the importance of creating ethically based businesses is also one of the goals of the Creighton Institute for Economic Inquiry, led by Ernie Goss, Ph.D., the Jack A. MacAllister Endowed Chair in Regional Economics and professor of economics.

Through this program, students undertake research projects and read seminal works on economics, with the goal of amassing a personal library of knowledge about how free-market systems work. Currently, some of the research projects include the effects of raising Nebraska’s minimum wage; introducing autistic individuals into the labor market; and Chinese currency manipulation.

“It’s important for students to be exposed to various economic models, and to see how those models generate the best measure of income in terms of well-being, and other measures of happiness,” Goss says.
Compassion to Bridge the Gaps

By Ann Freestone, BA'89

Jillian Husman, BA'08, during her time in the Peace Corps in Koumpentoum, Senegal.
Jillian Human, BA’08, has always appreciated strong female leaders, whether it’s Lucille Ball paving the way for women in television, Margaret Thatcher in government or her grandma teaching in a one-room school house in Sioux Falls, S.D.

“I’ve always been drawn to women leaders and pioneers in our history — strong women who have compassion for humanity and strong leadership,” she says. “My grandma pursued what she wanted to do and didn’t box herself in to one certain role. Following my own interests came from that.”

Husman’s interests have taken her thousands of miles from Sioux Falls, but on the way, she earned her bachelor’s of arts from Creighton in political science and French with a minor in economics. While in college, she studied in southeast France and Cameroon.


“The professors encourage you to think beyond yourself, to think about economic problems and to contribute for the better,” Husman says. “They were incredibly encouraging from day one and gave me confidence to seek opportunities.”

While at Creighton, she researched children’s health care policy as an intern for Nebraska Appleseed, a statewide non-profit organization that fights for justice and opportunity for all Nebraskans. After graduating, she became a Human Rights Fellow at Nebraska Appleseed, tackling workers’ health and safety conditions in Nebraska’s meatpacking industry. “I loved applying the analytical tools I learned as a political science major,” she says. The result? A 2009 report that ignited a series of investigations and calls for policy change across the U.S. meatpacking industry.

In October 2008, Husman spent a year with AmeriCorps in Omaha as a refugee resettlement specialist at the Southern Sudan Community Association, where she supervised 75 refugee cases. “When the financial crisis was deep in its misery, contributions plummeted,” she says. “Jobs were scarce for all Americans, but especially for refugees.” She ensured the association provided excellent services and expanded community partnerships to provide additional cultural and job skills services.

Having learned about the Peace Corps while studying abroad, Husman joined in March 2010 as an environmental education volunteer in Koumpentoum, Senegal, a mainly Muslim country in Africa. Her projects varied. Husman worked on a waste management strategy, helped villagers grow vegetables more efficiently, and empowered middle-school aged girls to pursue an education.

After two years in the village, she moved to the capital city of Dakar, where she served for a year as the communications manager for Stomping Out Malaria in Africa Initiative. “We eradicated malaria in the U.S. in a decade, but still this disease impacts poor countries, primarily in Africa,” Husman says. In her role, she organized international training programs and mobilized 3,000 Africa Peace Corps Volunteers to engage in malaria prevention work.

Husman then pursued and earned a Master of Public Administration from Columbia University and traveled abroad while working on her advanced degree. Again, she headed to Africa. This time, she went to Ghana to provide safe reliable drinking water in rural areas and to South Africa and Botswana to help a supermarket chain improve operations.

Recently embarking on a new chapter, Husman works as a program analyst for the Office of Inspector General in the Office of Evaluation and Inspections for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She analyzes the efficiency and effectiveness of Health and Human Services programs. “We’re making an impact for the long-term and society as a whole,” Husman says.

Husman’s interest is in improving and equalizing socioeconomic disparities in the world, not only in Africa, but domestically as well. “My travels have made me realize we are all equal citizens of the world. I’m not more entitled to a good life because of where I was born. Everyone deserves a fair shot at living the best life they can.”
OH, THE PLACES JAYS GO!

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