20 YEARS IN CHINA:
Tribute to a partnership

THE START-UP SCENE:
Alumni take on technology
International travel can be intimidating at first, but once you have crossed our nation’s borders, your life will be different. I know this not only from my personal experience, but also from students and alumni who eagerly tell stories of their experiences exploring the world. The details always vary, but the pattern is largely the same. Most either had limited or no experience with the outside world before they embarked on their first global learning experience. The words they use to describe the experience are powerful. Here are a few that have stayed with me:

“It changed the trajectory of my entire life.”

“My whole family was changed by the experience.”

“It changed me as a human being.”

“I learned more about myself than I ever imagined.”

“It was one of the most important experiences of my life.”

Those of us who have traveled these global roads realize that to be a learner is to be dislodged from what is comfortable. Culture shock is inevitable. There comes a point when we can’t remember why we left the couch in the first place. This experience is accelerated by linguistic isolation, if we don’t know the language well; spatial disorientation, as is the case in visiting any new place; and uncertainty about customs, expected behaviors and interpersonal interactions. The amazing thing is that we become learning sponges. All our senses and interpretive frameworks are at maximum, and we learn at a rate we can’t imagine. It’s pure magic.

Getting it wrong is perhaps the most important aspect of developing skills as global citizens. The skills of patience with delays, comfort in almost any setting and contentment in managing expectations are wonderful side benefits. We also learn very practical things like planning ahead, packing lightly and using kind words with others who are trying to help. Eventually, pattern recognition emerges as the skills of international travel, cultural adaptation and global learning become transferable from one setting to another.

These are all important skills, but what we value most is what we learn about ourselves. We can be stretched more than we realize in challenging circumstances—and remain composed and focused. We can learn to embrace others who are different and set aside stereotypes. We can discover, as one student put it, “Routine is not my forte.”

This fall, I gave an assignment to our first-year students during orientation: Have a valid passport by Christmas. For some, this may be just another assignment; for others, this may be the single most important gift they give themselves.

What about you? Perhaps it’s time to extend this assignment to the entire Central College community. Get your passport…pack lightly…and let’s go.
Wade Steenhoek, a former Des Moines Area Community College instructor and experienced businessman, was named director of Central’s new Martin Heerema Entrepreneurship Program, which began this fall. The program is meant to create what Steenhoek calls an “entrepreneurial ecosystem” at Central, allowing students to take risks, manage the results and learn from the outcomes.

“At its core, entrepreneurship is about identifying a problem and solving it in a creative manner,” he says. “An ability to do that effectively is valuable in any career.”

As director of the program, Steenhoek will teach entrepreneurship courses and collaborate with students and faculty on projects. He will also work to form relationships with community partners around central Iowa to develop opportunities for Central students.

The Martin Heerema Entrepreneurship Program features newly designed courses in entrepreneurship and experiential learning on and off campus. “This position allows me to combine three of my passions: entrepreneurship, the energy of a college classroom and the creative problem-solving process,” says Steenhoek.

**STUDENTS CLEAN UP AFTER HURRICANE IRENE**

During fall break, 18 Central students traveled to New York to help clean up damage caused by Hurricane Irene in August. Led by Kristin Sullivan Tremper ’03, coordinator of Reformed Church in America relations, the group left after classes on Wednesday, Oct. 12 and drove through the night to reach New York.

The students worked to clean up the remains of destroyed homes in Esperance, N.Y., trying to make sense of the piles of houses the flooding left behind. They also mocked mud out of basements and removed ruined drywall in Schodack.

During the trip, the group was helped by alumni Tom Patterson ’86, Glenn ’82 and Eileen Quinn Van Cott ’82 and Brenda Austin ’99. Local churches donated meals, and the Bartonville Volunteer Fire Department allowed the students to stay in their building.

“A lot of these students came to Central for this season—to serve other people,” says Tremper.

**PAUL WEIHE EARNS BIOLOGY HONOR**

Associate professor of biology Paul Weihe was named a 2011 BEN Scholar by BioscEdNet (BEN), a digital library portal aiming to develop digital resources for biology study. The recognition is extended by the BEN Collaborative, a collection of 25 life sciences professional societies that promote the use of digital resources and student-centered teaching at the undergraduate level.

BEN selects 15 scholars annually in a competitive application process. “I was thrilled to be selected,” says Weihe. “This is a tremendous opportunity, and I’m excited to participate.”

The scholar program teaches participants how to use digital libraries to make science instruction more student-friendly. They also integrate career exploration into curricula. During the 18-month program, Weihe will receive training from fellow scholars and peer mentors.

“Most people have heard that big changes are underway in the landscape of education, with young people learning differently today than they did in the past,” says Weihe.

**KEY APPOINTMENTS IN STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

As part of the new Integrated Learning model, two experienced professionals have been appointed to lead the new division of student development and its co-curricular and developmental learning initiatives.

Peggy Fitch will be the vice president for student development and will continue as professor of psychology. Charlie Strey, currently associate dean of student life, will serve as dean of students.

Both will begin their roles July 1.

In the new position, Fitch will oversee the full scope of student development opportunities important to providing a rich experience for students outside the classroom. As dean of students, Strey will serve as an advocate for Central students.
ATHLETICS UPDATES

NCAA meet
Horton top freshman

Central’s Eli Horton capped a notable rookie campaign by turning in the top-freshman finish at the NCAA Division III men’s cross country championships in Winneconne, Wis., Nov. 19.

Horton was 52nd in a career-best 24 minutes, 57.81 seconds in a 280-runner field on the 8,000-meter course.

That highlighted a promising season for the Dutch, who next year return their top six runners from a squad that posted a solid ninth place finish at the NCAA Central Regional, their highest since 2006. Another freshman, Drew Jackson, narrowly missed joining Horton as an all-region honoree.

Meanwhile, junior Mel McDermott earned all-region distinction for the Central women with a 6,020-meter time of 23:25, a new personal best. The Dutch were 12th after placing 17th in the region a year ago. The women return six of their top seven runners for next season.

SWARTZ EARNED ALL-LEAGUE WOMEN’S TENNIS HONORS

Senior Emily Swartz pulled a surprise at the Iowa Conference women’s tennis tournament, advancing to the quarterfinals and receiving all-league recognition.

Senior Kayla Donner scored a first-round singles win, then teamed with Swartz for a victory in a Flight doubles.

That followed a sixth-place showing at the conference team tournament. The Dutch posted a 6-9 dual mark.

PAULSON RUNS AWAY WITH THIRD LEAGUE GOLF CROWN

Only a trip to Europe could prevent Central senior Sarah Paulson from becoming a four-time Iowa Conference women’s golf MVP.

Paulson studied in Spain through the Central College Abroad a year ago, after claiming the league title in 2008 and 2009. But Paulson was back this fall and ran away with her third title, carding a 75-72-87-78—312 to win the 72-hole tourney by 12 shots. She was named the league’s player of the week four times in 2011 and 12 times overall. Paulson hopes to return to the NCAA Division III tournament in May.

Her showing helped Central to its fourth consecutive second-place team finishes in the conference.

BREAKTHROUGH SEASON FOR WOMEN’S SOCCER TEAM UNDER KOBYLINSKI

Many were hopeful that new coach Mike Kobylinski could energize Central’s women’s soccer program. Few, if any, envisioned a 10-win season.

That’s four more victories than the Dutch produced in the previous three years combined, Central was coming off a 2-13-1 campaign in 2010 after suffering through a 1-18 season in 2009.

But the new direction was evident from the start under Kobylinski, a 2003 Central grad and former all-region player for the Dutch men’s squad. Central scored surprise victories in its first three games, exceeding the 2010 win total by Sept. 7, before finishing at 10-7.

Sophomore forward Abyssa Bailey and sophomore defender Hannah Davy were second-team all-Iowa Conference picks.

CENTRAL LANDS THREE ON MEN’S SOCCER ALL-CONFERENCE SQUAD

Central senior defender Garrett Foxshee, senior midfielder Jonathan Schrader and sophomore midfielder Daniel Peacock gained all-Iowa Conference men’s soccer recognition.

Each was named to the second team. Central posted an encouraging 5-0-1 record, overwhelming Simpson 5-0 in the six-team conference tournament before falling at 14th-ranked Loras in the semifinals, 2-0. The Dutch graduate six seniors but return a deep and talented underclass group, according to coach Gary Laidlaw.

FOOTBALL SQUAD SHARES SECOND AS SNEAD ASSUMES RECORD BOOK

Senior Nate Snead capped a record-breaking career by quarterbacking
understanding of the importance of diversity,” says Beran.
In her hometown of Ames, Beran served for 10 years on the Human Relations Committee, where she initiated the Dialogues Program. It was aimed at fostering interaction between diverse groups of people. “Our goal was to break down class, ethnic, racial and religious borders,” Beran explains. “I hope people see the value of getting to know one another and understand that every person, regardless of background, has value.”

As a sage, Beran cares not just about helping people but truly connecting with them. She and George hosted 15 long-term foster children and more than 60 respite youths, most of them teenagers. “We had an empty room and open hearts,” she says with a laugh, adding that it was a great experience for her family. “I’m impressed by the survivability and flexibility that these teenagers show. It’s been very gratifying to be a part of that.”

In recent years, as a member of the Alumni Advisory Council, she has been thrilled to see Central’s increasing emphasis on community involvement. Beran believes it is creating another generation of people like her, who want to use their wisdom to give back. “Service presents a change in direction for students,” she says. “It opens their eyes to the need around them and lets them see the impact they can have.”

There is a difference between knowledge and wisdom. Some say wisdom must be earned by years of firsthand experience, while knowledge can be pulled from books. But Jann Freed ’77, professor emerita of business management, would say there’s even more to it. To become a sage—one renowned for wisdom—you must pay forward what your knowledge and experience has taught you.

Freed has researched and written extensively on sages. She defines them as people who embrace aging, value their life experience and feel compelled to give back.

As the baby boomers get older, Freed explains, some tend to discount the value of their experience, instead looking for ways to reclaim youth. Sages, on the other hand, recognize the potential of their years of learning. “We talk about becoming elders, not just becoming older,” Freed says. Often this manifests itself through community service.

Service work has become an integral part of a Central education. Since 1996, the Center for Community-Based Learning has paired thousands of students with service-learning opportunities. Many fulfill their graduation requirement for experiential learning by partnering with a community organization for a semester.

The faculty, too, has been crucial in extending Central’s service philosophy. From 1983 to 2008, the Faculty Benevolence Association (FBA) served people from the world’s poorest countries.

The group members were first inspired to action by visiting speaker and social activist Tony Campolo. “He challenged the faculty to do more about social inequality and poverty,” says Dale DeWild, professor emeritus of sociology and former FBA member.

One of their earliest projects was sponsoring refugee families from violence-stricken Latin American countries as they relocated to new homes in Canada. Group members provided housing, food, work, social support and legal aid while the refugees were in Pella. DeWild hosted a family for nearly a year. He and his colleagues went on to develop strong relationships with villages in Latin America with whom they worked.

Perhaps their most recognized effort was the founding of The Work of Our Hands in 1989. The Pella shop sells crafts made by artisans from around the world, providing fair wages for their work. “It just felt great to provide jobs for workers who were very poor, who were selected on the basis of their need,” says DeWild.

WITH AN OPEN HEART

But it isn’t just faculty who volunteer. As Central’s sage alumni are showing, the service culture doesn’t end at the campus borders. Many carry it with them their entire lives.

Such is the case for Jan Van Zomeran Beran ’53. Her passion for service began when she and her husband George moved to the Philippines to do missionary work. They stayed for 13 years, from 1960 to 1973. “That experience led to my understanding of the importance of diversity,” says Beran.

In her hometown of Ames, Beran served for 10 years on the Human Relations Committee, where she initiated the Dialogues Program. It was aimed at fostering interaction between diverse groups of people. “Our goal was to break down class, ethnic, racial and religious borders,” Beran explains. “I hope people see the value of getting to know one another and understand that every person, regardless of background, has value.”
The class was a formative one for Zaffiro, too. Studying global food and agriculture helped ignite his passion for environmental studies and global sustainability.

That has become the defining cause of his professional career. Zaffiro has been one of the most influential figures in Central’s now well-recognized sustainability efforts. For him, the cause includes not only ecological integrity, but also social justice and economic equity.

In 1992, Zaffiro helped introduce an interdisciplinary environmental studies major, making Central just the second college in Iowa with a similar program. He now teaches two interdisciplinary courses focused on sustainability, and he helped to make a global sustainability course a graduation requirement.

Outside the classroom, Zaffiro was appointed to former President David Roe’s first environmental task force in 2000, a group that recommended making a remodeled Vermeer Science Center the first Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED)-rated building in Iowa. McKee Hall and the Roe Center have since received LEED ratings, too.

The result is a group of former and current employees, students, alums and community partners. The group designs and implements projects and makes recommendations for ways Central can become more sustainable. Thanks to SUSTAIN’s efforts, sustainability has become a key part of the Central ethos.

“These commitments are worth a lot for the future of the institution,” says Zaffiro. “Our biggest challenge as we go forward with these efforts is to get student buy-in. We have to communicate a sense of importance, of relevance.”

Lars Larson, a junior art major, says Zaffiro helped him find his passion for sustainability. Working around busy cross country and track seasons, Larson participates in SUSTAIN and has worked in the college’s organic garden. He also appreciates Zaffiro’s teaching style. “He is not only very knowledgeable but is interested in educating,” Larson says. “I find it interesting when he makes connections with what is going on in the real world.”

Other students note his ability to connect current events to his lectures. With the caucus season in full swing, he is examining how important sustainability will be for the candidates. “I’m afraid that energy and the environment will be invisible in 2012,” Zaffiro says. “This election will be about jobs and the economy. These are such overriding public concerns that people don’t just put environmental issues on the back burner—they take them off the stove.”

Still, Zaffiro hopes his students will make themselves heard on Election Day, continuing the trend begun four years ago. “2008 was a special election. It captured the imaginations of young voters, but there is a fear they won’t come back,” Zaffiro says. “I hope students see that political participation in their own country matters.”

The choices his students make at the polls don’t matter to Zaffiro. He only hopes they taught them to reach decisions on their own—and to base them on facts, not mindless media-driven slogans. His students have noticed. “He’s the perfect example of a teacher-scholar,” says Mattiace. “He taught me what it meant to be a scholar but to still love to teach.”

Not many kids can say they have a real interest in politics. Jim Zaffiro could have made that claim with a straight face. After all, his 7-year-old self trick-or-treated through his Milwaukee neighborhood in a JFK costume.

That passion helped inspire a 28-year (and counting) career at Central. Originally specializing in African studies, he came to campus to teach comparative politics. Since then, he has created and taught courses in the four major subfields of political science, along with international studies and environmental studies. And he has helped to ignite Central’s commitment to sustainability. All the while, his focus has remained firmly fixed on his students.

“I like making students think in new ways and examine their existing assumptions,” Zaffiro says. “They see how their political and personal values overlap, and I can watch their intellectual growth over time.”

Though Zaffiro is a well-respected Africanist—his work has generated two books and 34 articles—his professional focus has shifted away from research. He prefers projects that more directly impact those around him. “I now refer to myself as a recovering academic,” he jokes. “Early in my career, I was very focused on research, but my priorities and values have changed. I once spent a year researching and writing a book on mass media in Botswana, but now I look back and say ‘So what?’” Today, teaching is primary for Zaffiro.

The result is a group of former and current students who credit him with shaping their intellectual development, says Mattiace. “He was so steady in his purpose to systematically explore topics. I think I responded to his care and determination to educate.”

Mattiace counts the course World Food Issues: Agriculture, Population and the Environment—which was team-taught by Zaffiro and his wife Louise, professor emerita of chemistry—among the most formative of her education. It influenced her so much that she became a Mexicanist.

He is also co-coordinator—with Mike Lubberden, director of facilities planning and management—of SUSTAIN, the Campus Sustainability Working Group, which includes employees, students, alums and community partners. The group designs and implements projects and makes recommendations for ways Central can become more sustainable. Thanks to SUSTAIN’s efforts, sustainability has become a key part of the Central ethos.

“Sustainability efforts are worth a lot for the future of the institution,” says Zaffiro. “Our biggest challenge as we go forward with these efforts is to get student buy-in. We have the trend begun four years ago. “2008 was a special election. It captured the imaginations of young voters, but there is a fear they won’t come back,” Zaffiro says. “I hope students see that political participation in their own country matters.”

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When Ashley Kinkade ’12 and Jonathan Wilson ’12, along with a handful of other students, first arrived in Hangzhou, China, in the middle of the night, they were completely lost—and very jet-lagged. Everything was in Chinese, and they couldn’t distinguish a hospital from a hotel, let alone find Zhejiang University.

Finally, they met Li Shumin, the Central College Abroad (CCA) program director in Hangzhou, and were taken to a large traditional Chinese dinner. “I couldn’t even hold my chopsticks,” recalls Kinkade. “I just wanted to go back to the airport and fly home.”

Luckily, things started to look up after that, and both Kinkade and Wilson began to love Hangzhou and the people they met there. Wilson even decided to stay a whole year. Despite the friendly welcome American students receive in Hangzhou and the impressiveness of the university and the country as a whole, the culture shock is always enormous. Studying abroad in China, as Central students have done for more than 20 years, was an overwhelming, frustrating, mind-bending and ultimately broadening experience.

Taylor Wessels, a junior who studied in Hangzhou last semester, recalls the shock of her first day, a situation a white, middle class American rarely encounters. “It was the first time I was the minority,” she says, “the one foreigner in a sea of Chinese.”

THE EXCHANGE BEGINS

In 1985, when the first Chinese exchange teacher arrived at Central, she was so frightened by what she had seen in American movies that she believed she couldn’t walk safely alone across campus. Seeing the peaceful little college was the first in a series of culture shocks experienced by the Chinese and American pioneers who have taken part in the exchange over the years. None of that learning would have occurred if not for Don and Maxine Huffman, who both taught at Central for more than four decades.

In 1985, Al Poppen ’54, whose wife Geri had taught English at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, approached Maxine about the possibility of an exchange between the two schools. Maxine and her husband Don, who together had helped start the Central College Abroad (CCA) program in Merida, Mexico, were intrigued. They took the proposal to President Ken Weller, who was dedicated to enlarging CCA’s scope in the world, and he quickly agreed to the program.

A few years later, an administrator from Zhejiang came to campus with an even bigger idea: Why not start sending Central students to the Chinese university? Maxine and Dean Hutch Bearce went to Hangzhou to lay the groundwork, and in the spring of 1991, Don and Maxine brought the first 12 Central students to China. “When Central first started the exchange program, it was a superstar,” says Chia Ning, professor of history, who was born in Beijing and started teaching at Central in 1991. “That a small liberal arts college would have an exchange with a major Chinese university—that was groundbreaking.”

THE FIRST YEAR

Joe Pratt ’93 was in that first group of students. He studied Chinese language, painting, history and society. He learned how to go without a hair dryer and how to think creatively to overcome language barriers. Most important, he gained the confidence to face future culture shocks. And there would be a lot. After graduating from Central, he spent almost three years in China mastering the language. He later worked at a law firm in Hong Kong and now teaches law at Beijing University.

“When I first met Maxine and Don, I sometimes wondered if they knew what they were doing,” Pratt remembers. “They had this tremendous faith in their program, but I didn’t think they realized what we were getting into.”

During his year in Hangzhou, he and his classmates struggled to understand the language and had some major culture shocks. “I think they knew Chinese was on the cusp of great change and that it would become very important.”

When Americans want deep roots, we often go straight to Europe. But Hangzhou, China, is 7,000 years old. The museums house kitchen utensils and farming equipment from the Bronze Age. Compared to that rich history, the last 65 years have been a blip. But they have informed so much of what China is today.

HISTORY OF MODERN CHINA

1945-1949

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1949

- People’s Republic of China is established; Mao Zedong becomes chairman of the Chinese Communist Party; nationalists flee to Taiwan

1953-1957

- “Great Leap Forward” People’s communes are created; food shortages due to famine

1958-1960

- “Transition to Socialism” People’s communes are created; food shortages due to famine

CIVITAS CENTRAL.EDU
THE PROGRAM GROWS

Since Pratt first arrived in China, hundreds of students from Central and other colleges have studied at Zhejiang University through CCA.

They have witnessed some astounding changes in Chinese life. The city of Hangzhou, like most metros in China, has grown enormously—from 750,000 people to 5 million.

“It reminds me of the 1950s in the U.S., when I was growing up and going through college,” says Don Huffman about his years teaching English in China. “New campuses were being built at every college, and there was expansion of enrollment and new highway systems. It’s just unbelievable the growth that’s been occurring in China.”

Pratt contrasts the China he first witnessed in 1991 to the country he’s now immersed in. Back then, the shops had just a few crudely-made goods. Today, you can buy just about anything you’d find in the U.S.—Italian fashions, German beer, American electronics.

“With economic liberalizations, the society and politics have become more open,” says Pratt. “China is a large country with a big rural population—and it remains a one-party system—but it seems to me that the country overall is coming closer to resembling any other modern, developed nation.”

The program in Hangzhou flourished throughout most of the ’90s. Don and Maxine taught there for several years and were invited to be the English editors of a textbook, New College English, that sold more than 2 million copies.

Don, along with a team of other writers at the university, is now working on the third edition. Don Huffman about his years teaching English in China.

THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Today’s students find the same welcome in Hangzhou. And they often have amazing opportunities to work in their fields. Wessels, a Spanish and linguistics major, worked for an English-language magazine called that’s Zhejiang. She revised articles by non-native speakers, reviewed restaurants and wrote about her experiences in Hangzhou.

Kinkade, an elementary education major, interned at the kindergarten affiliated with the university. She spoke English with the children and practiced Chinese with the teachers. Language is the biggest barrier for American students studying in China. In Kinkade’s Chinese language class, only one other student spoke English. “I remember how eager I was to learn the language, merely to ask the person next to me if they wanted to go to lunch,” she says.

Language assistants, a key feature of the program, are a huge help to students. Don and Maxine started the practice, assigning each student a pengyou, or friend. Many CCA alumni are still close with their pengyous. “Just practicing my Chinese with Mubin helped me learn so much more,” says Wessels. “I’ve gained a friend out of it, too. He helped us experience the real life in Hangzhou, not just the tourist traps.”

CULTURE SHOCK

Still, China can be a lonely place for a foreigner, especially when it’s so difficult to blend in. Many Chinese people stare or ask to take photos with foreigners, which is an honorable thing in Chinese culture. While walking in the public market, Wilson was often stopped and asked to hold and kiss babies.

The crush of people is intimidating, too. The buses are crammed, and thousands of bikes fill the streets and sidewalks. The riders constantly ring their bells as they cut in and out of traffic. Seeing all this, Wilson had to reevaluate his views on social etiquette.

Overall, he was extremely impressed with Chinese culture, especially the hardworking attitudes of most people. Even the street sweepers and the garbage workers were diligent and positive. “I felt lazy in comparison to them,” says Wilson. “I’m in awe of how hardworking the average person is.”

A CHANGING PERSPECTIVE

China has one-fifth of the world’s population and is on its way to becoming an economic superpower. Pratt believes that, in the future, every profession will be affected by China’s relationship with the U.S. Workers who have spent time in China are a huge boon for private companies and the U.S. government.

“Global education is a key part of our future,” says Chia Ning, whose specializes in East Asian studies. “No matter where you are or what you do, your workplace is the global world.” Many of her former students, including those in the sciences, have told her how valuable learning about Asia has been for their jobs.

But students who study in China gain more than improved career prospects. “My world is so much bigger now,” says Wessels. “It really changes the perspective of a white, middle-class American girl. I think it’s important to experience being in the minority, being uncomfortable and feeling out of place.”

REMEMBRANCES

Two years ago, both Central College and Zhejiang University experienced a huge loss when Maxine Huffman passed away. Her husband Don was moved by the response he received from her former Chinese students. They took up a collection so he could travel to Hangzhou and hold a memorial service for the students she inspired there.

Central is suspending the program in China after the spring semester because of an intrinsic high rate of turnover in the director position. But Hangzhou will always have a special place in the hearts of those who temporarily made their homes there.

“Whenever I go back, I’m greeted on the street like an old friend,” says Don. “It’s like a second hometown.”
As the tech boom sweeps the country, Central students and alumni dive into the start-up scene. In Seattle, home to tech giants Microsoft and Amazon, Kathie Flood is starting a video game company. In Des Moines, Joe VandeKieft is teaching students to develop iPhone apps. Pella, Mark Johnson is teaching students how to develop iPhone apps. They are two separate firms. And on Central’s campus in Pella, Mark Johnson is teaching students how to develop iPhone apps.

IN SEATTLE
Kathie Flood applied to Microsoft because the head of the company where she worked hated the software giant. The year was 1980, and Flood didn’t know much about Microsoft’s business. But if her CEO—who made her work ridiculous hours and fired people at random—hated Microsoft so much, she thought it must be a pretty cool place to work.

After leaving that software company in Des Moines, Flood—who majored in math and computer science at Central—worked at Microsoft for nearly 19 years. She helped develop operating systems like MS-DOS 5.0 and Windows 95 and create popular video games, such as Project Gotham Racing. Then, in 2009, while working on simulation games, Flood’s entire studio—130 people—was laid off. Flood didn’t want to give up on the potential of her video game projects. She was awarded a nice severance package and faced with a life-altering decision: “I could go off and find another job, or I could take that money and try something new,” she recalls.

Flood joined a small group of colleagues from her studio at Microsoft to found Cascade Game Foundry, which creates reality-based video games. Their products are still top-secret, and while Flood has no idea how long it will be before the company takes off, she says she has loved trying new things. “The potential to learn is astounding in your own company,” she says. “I never felt like I was slacking off at Microsoft, but I definitely feel there were parts of my brain I wasn’t using very much.”

But working on so many tasks can be frustrating, especially when it means burning time on things experts handle at a large company, like fixing a busted computer. “The old adage that you have to wear a lot of hats is true,” she says. “But not all the hats look good on you.”

Despite long hours doing the unfamiliar work of business development, Flood enjoys working in a field where new trends are just emerging. At Microsoft, her superiors were hesitant to pursue unproven audiences. But the popularity of Facebook games has proven that it’s not only young men who play video games. There’s a much bigger audience out there, one that Cascade is trying to tap into.

“Coming from the corporate world, being an entrepreneur has been ‘eye-opening,’” says Flood. Like many corporate employees, she was used to people giving her orders. “When you go out to do something on your own, all of a sudden nobody’s telling you what to do,” she says. “You’ve got to figure it out for yourself.” That’s a little bit scary. It’s also how big ideas are made.

IN DES MOINES
Seattle is well-known for its tech industry, but no one from the coasts would expect to find a burgeoning start-up industry in the heart of Iowa. Which makes what’s happening in downtown Des Moines all the more exciting.

A stretch of Sixth Avenue has been unofficially dubbed “Silicon Sixth” because of the many tech start-ups located there. Tej Dhawan ’91, a member of Central’s board of trustees, is deeply involved in the district’s booming industry. He is co-founder of StartupCity Des Moines, a technology incubator launched in October. As of December, the company was hosting seven start-ups.

Support from the state, which is trying to promote job creation, has helped the industry. In 2011, the Iowa state legislature reauthorized tax credits for angel investments in start-ups. And in December, the state-wide initiative StartupIowa was launched to connect local entrepreneurs with the resources they need.

Joe VandeKieft is one of those entrepreneurs. He is co-owner, with Dhawan, of Pikzone, one of the companies housed in StartupCity. They are currently testing secure email software for children, which will allow parents to designate who can send messages to their kids.

VandeKieft is also the technical consultant for My Diabetes Home, a website and iPhone app for diabetics. He built both the website and app for diabetics. He built both the website and app for diabetics.
and the back-end system the phone interacts with. Once the app is launched, patients will be able to manage their medication, track their blood sugar and get dose reminders.

As an entrepreneur, VandeKieft has a big dream: to always be involved in a start-up.

“There are so many of these companies like ours that have maybe two or three people working nights,” VandeKieft says of the Silicon Sixth district. “Some of them are going to make it big, and some of them aren’t. But the sense of community has been really neat to see.”

That’s the thing about start-ups, especially in a volatile industry like technology. You never know if people are going to respond to what you’re doing. VandeKieft advises potential entrepreneurs not to fear failure. “It may take three or four attempts to get off the ground,” he says. “But it’s okay. You learn something. And you can take what you’ve learned to the next opportunity.”

ON CAMPUS

This fall, Central students learned how to build iPhone and iPad apps in a new class taught by Mark Johnson, professor of mathematics and computer science. For the final project, one student designed an app to keep track of assignments. Another created an assistant to manage random information, like long software passwords. One particularly creative student designed a drawing app for kids that erases when it’s shaken, like an Etch-a-Sketch. For only $99, they can submit their app to the Apple store. If approved, the app would be available on 250 million devices. Heerema Entrepreneurship Program, aimed at teaching leadership, communication and creativity to students from all majors. Wade Steenhoek, who began as program director this fall, wants to create an entrepreneurial culture at Central. “This includes a variety of on-campus and off-campus activities geared toward creativity, innovation and problem solving,” he says.

Alumni have found Central’s liberal arts curriculum beneficial as entrepreneurs. Both Flood and VandeKieft value the communication skills they learned at Central. VandeKieft is often praised for being well-spoken, especially for a “computer nerd.”

David Ziemann ’12, a computer science major, is preparing to put his Central education to the test. In addition to taking the iPhone class last semester, he worked for ShareWhere, another company housed in StartupCity Des Moines, developing iFrame Facebook applications and designing web content for their site. Based on what he learned there, Ziemann is considering starting his own web development firm after graduation. “I would love to create something out of nothing and be my own boss,” he says.

Are you involved in the start-up industry? Tell us about it at civitas.central.edu

Lady Leader: 10 Ways to Play in Big Boy Business

L inda Stier was formerly the president and publisher of the Des Moines Register and one of the top executives for Gannett, a media and marketing solutions company.

I was fortunate to attend Mary Stier’s presentation Dec. 6 in the Cox-Snow Auditorium. My first impressions were of a poised, elegantly dressed speaker who addressed her audience with clarity, sharing vignettes from her 25 years of personal experience in corporate management. Her message was motivational and explicit, aiming to inspire women to believe in themselves, overcome their fears and recognize their unique managerial qualities.

Like many in the audience, I decided to learn more and subsequently read her book, Lady Leader: 10 Ways to Play in Big Boy Business. She refers to her three defining Cs—communication, collaboration and compassion—and suggests that women can be true to themselves and still rise to executive positions in corporate America. Stier describes a new leadership model designed to respond to today’s instant, media-driven communication world. In this model, women are effective collaborators—communicating with compassion, multitasking and synthesizing information.

The text cites a gender-related characteristic—that women will wait to be asked rather than take initial steps to further their own careers. To overcome this, Stier encourages women to write their own mission statements, clarify their personal values and refer to these when making life-changing decisions. In the book, she discusses strategies to help women negotiate the often male-dominated board room and upper echelons of corporate management.

Lady Leader is a modern book for modern business women who care about family, colleagues, employees, health issues, values and beliefs. In 10 chapters, Stier guides women to understand gender differences so that they can successfully advance without self-doubt. She encourages them to seek out and become mentors, to develop an audible organizational voice and to communicate effectively with strong verbs. She suggests reducing emails to male colleagues to one clear message, rather than writing lengthy justifications. She also advises women to defuse tensions with humor and to dress stylishly and appropriately for success. Furthermore, she encourages women to become comfortable competing for, seeking out and retaining power in an organization.

In my own life, I will refer to this book as a guide for my personal leadership style and for more effective communication with my colleagues. As a professor in a liberal arts college, I work to inspire both female and male students to realize their potential and define and meet academic and lifelong goals. In my experience, success and advancement cannot be achieved without appropriate knowledge, hard work and social skills. All who strive for success, therefore, need to develop their ability to collaborate, communicate and show compassion, as these are the characteristics of responsible global leaders in dynamic, evolving, media-focused global organizations.
Think back to your time at Central. Your brain probably goes straight to that 2 a.m. conversation in the hallway, a pingpong championship in the basement, an impromptu study session in the lounge. 

I truly believe that you get as much out of college outside the classroom as you do in it.” – Drew Sikkink ’06, hall director

Central is intentionally a residential community; 96 percent of students live on campus in one of six residence halls or a handful of townhouses. The goal of the residence requirement is to create a community of engaged students. National research shows that students who live on campus get better grades, interact more with faculty and are more likely to attend graduate or professional programs.

“They can focus on being students,” says Melissa Shanky, director of residence life. “They’re not worried about that part-time job or making rent. They’re worried about going to class, being in this play. It just changes your whole college perspective when you’re immersed in it.”

What residence life teaches:

Clothes don’t wash themselves.

The magic of a laundry chute is extraordinary. You throw down your clothes, and they reappear clean and nicely folded. But every first-year student must become their own laundry fairy—and grocery fairy, too. “In high school, you take for granted having your parents do everything for you,” says Grant Jansen ’12, a resident advisor (R.A.) in Pietergeld. “And now your fridge is absolutely empty at 2 a.m. when you want a snack.”

Friends are the best people to live with—and the worst.

Everyone’s heard the horror stories about living with friends—friendships broken, windows broken. “You don’t always expect what you get living with your friends,” says Molly Bauman, hall director for the townhouses. “But those are sometimes the best growing experiences too, learning how to adjust and compromise on the unexpected.”

You can’t write a 20-page research paper in one night.

According to Kat Bruxvoort ’12, an R.A. for three townhouses, procrastination is the biggest mistake she sees students make. Even when a student is able to pull an all-nighter (yes, you’ve done it, and you’re proud) the results are underwhelming. Planning ahead—and staying off Facebook when necessary—is an adult task students practice all four years.

This is not a slumber party.

In other words, there are going to be some stressful times. To negotiate them, students learn conflict resolution, such as telling a hallmate to turn down the music or pick up their stuff. Doing this in a respectful way that doesn’t poison the hall environment can be tricky. “This is not high school,” says Bauman. “You have to live with each other as adults. Sometimes that means having to confront your friends. But it’s a great growth opportunity because it translates into other areas of your life, too.”

Travel in hordes.

The core of residence life is an experience you’ll never have again: living with all your best friends. If you want to go somewhere, you just grab the nearest arms and propel them along, no matter the time or the temperature. It’s no more than a five-minute walk, anyway. “I like to see hordes of students going places together,” says Bauman.

Ice is slippery.

So you probably already knew that before you came to campus. But did you know there’s a specific way to fall to avoid hurting yourself? Students found that out last fall when an R.A. gave a program on winter safety—a much-needed lesson in Pella.
Alumni are invited to submit Newsnotes to the alumni office. We want to hear about recent promotions, honors, relocations, marriages and births to keep classmates and friends informed about important changes in your life. Email alumni@central.edu or update information online at civitas.central.edu. News items also are welcome by phone, 800-447-0287 or 641-628-5154.

Or send a note to Central College Alumni Office, 812 University, Campus Box 5200, Pella, IA 50219.

THE ’40S
Verla Wehde '49 and Farlin Caufield of Crystal Lake, Ill., were married Sept. 4.

THE ’50S
Mae Mattes ’57 and husband Richard have lived on their farm near Columbia, Iowa, for 51 years. They enjoy spending time with their five children, their spouses and their 49 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

THE ’60S
George Van de Voort ’66 retired from his position as president and owner of GWV & Associates in Ellijay, Ga., where he lives with wife Julie.

Gwen Mathes Krueger ’67 retired after 44 years as an elementary school teacher in various school districts in three states. Gwen and husband John live in Plymouth, Wis.

FOUR GENERATIONS OF FELDTS
Robert Feldt ’65 and wife Trudy Huizenga Feldt ’65 of Fulton, Ill., are the grandparents of Andrew Johnson ’15. Andrew is in the fourth generation of Feldts to attend Central College. The Feldt tradition began with Andrew’s great-grandmother Alice Boot Feldt ’33. The Johnson tradition began with Andrew’s grandparents Doug Johnson ’67 and Charlene Faye Johnson ’68 and continued with his parents Brian Johnson ’94 and Jannelle Feldt Johnson ’94.

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Gregory Christian '19 and wife Kathleen live in Hopatcong, N.J. Gregory is a freelance writer, published author and historian with contributions to numerous magazines, journals and newspapers. His autobiography Sworn to Remember, a personal history and memoir that includes recollections of his years at Central, was released in February and is now available on the Amazon Kindle and the Barnes and Noble Nook, as well as in print, Iris, Truth by Terror and Other Short Stories was published by Politch America in September. Gregory is awaiting the 2013 publication of an anthology of early baseball history.

THE ´70S

Sylvane Taisson Cenney '71 is working as a tour guide in Paris, France. Lynn Cootes Davis '71 remained in 2007 after 30 years teaching French in the Buffalo, N.Y. public schools. Lynn and husband William live in Myrtle Beach, S.C. John Hamelink '71 retired from his position as teacher and librarian at Perry Elementary School. Johnn and husband Don Hamelink '71 live in Perry, Iowa, where Don is a scheduling manager at Desertmond Management.

Soren Wolff '71 gave up the helm of city manager in Holland, Mich., after completing 23 years of service. He is currently a consultant for a year before he and wife Susan Garbler Wolff '71 retire to their family home in Cape Cod, Mass.

Park Woodle '76 owns and operates Home Check, offering services to landlords, businesses, banks and home owners in the Pella and Knoxville area. wife and Parker Woodle '76 have been teaching French and teaching French in the Jacksonville, Fla., area. Their children, Joel and Nathan, are enrolled in the University of Florida.

Randy Caldwell '77 is the chair of the trust and estate planning section of the Iowa Bar Association Probate. Randy practices law at Caldwell & Brierly in Des Moines. Randy Caldwell '77 practices law at the Cottrell, Brierly & Brierly firm in Des Moines, where he lives with wife Tammy. They are the parents of two children, Kyle and Nichole.

THE ´80S

For information about Mike Dewitt '80, Brian Fogley '80, Lori Hamelink Fogley '80, Darren Asian '81, Randy Shinse '82 and Milli Dewitt '80, see the 100s.

Gary Neil '81 is a co-founder of DSG, LLC in Des Moines.

Jackie Haas Hughes '82 is the community relations outreach person for the Army Support Center Command at the Rock Island Arsenal in Rock Island, Ill.

Gary Meyer '82 is working on a temporary assignment in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, setting up planting processes for a banana tooling solutions group. Gary and wife Betty live in Antelope, Calif.

David Pape '83 is a project manager at Principal Financial Group in Des Moines. David and wife Jan live in Grimes.

Steven Turrin '83 is a classical music coordinator and host of “Morning Musicals” for Indianola Public Radio in Muncie, Ind., where he lives with wife Elizabeth.

Diane Logan '84 of Gilbert, Ariz., is vice president and CAD of Area, LLC in Phoenix.

Mark Coffey '85 was promoted to vice president of affiliated business units at Homefield Corp. in Austin, Minn., where he lives with wife Tammy. They are the parents of three sons.

Joe DiBernardo '85 is the owner of DiBernardo Construction, an employee of the company of IHOP and Applebee’s restaurants. Joe and wife Claudia live in Olathe, Kan., with their two children.

THE ´90S

For information about Brian Johnson '94 and Janella Feld Johnson '94, see the 100s.

James Montoya-De Smidt '96 is the administrator at the City of Forest City. James Montoya-De Smidt '96 is the administrator at the City of Forest City. James Montoya-De Smidt '96 is the administrator at the City of Forest City.
Maasie Carr ’08 and David Pettengil ’09 of Des Moines were married July 30. Maasie is an associate academic coordinator at Iowa State Athletics. David is an associate HRIS sales engineer at Johnson Controls in Des Moines. Pictured front row (left to right): Amber Smith Madison ’09, Darla Heugh-Belforst ’08, Lindsay Zylstra ’11, Allison Knott ’08, David Pettengil ’09, Maasie Carr Pettengil ’08, Ashley Barneson ’10, Brittany Zare ’10, Kelly Masters ’08, Natalie Jones Metzger ’07, Ben Metzger ’04. Second row: Jeremy Kippley ’08, Lisa Tankin Kippley ’08, Justin Madison ’07, Ben Barnett ’07, Jeni Owens Delousia ’07, Zak Clark ’07, Siwone Long ’07, Brian Laughlin ’10, Blake Scott ’10, and Nick Phillips ’10. Back row: Nate Nee ’10, Brent Land ’10, Clint Belforst ’07, Dake Jensen ’09, Jeff Corson ’07, Chris Nielsen ’07, and Greg Lavenhagen ’09.

Patricia Galvan ’05 and Christopher Streeper ’02 of Columbia Heights, where Shelli owns and operates Stewarts Central Florist, were married Aug. 13. Shelli is a client service consultant for community outreach and relations at Wells Fargo Home Mortgauge. Suzanne Stoltze ’05 of Iowa City is a paralegal at Leff Law Firm. Wendy Mieker Butler ’06 is a supported living coach at Prospect Village, a residence for adults with developmental disabilities in Marshalltown.

Jennifer Klebsche ’08 and Aaron Bloodworth ’07 of Ankeny, Iowa, were married Aug. 27. Jennifer practices chiropractic medicine at her office, Natural Health Chiropractic and Acupuncture, in Ankeny and Aurora. She is employed by EMCO Enterprise in Des Moines. Pictured front row (left to right): Jordan Bryson Benard ’07, Leri Redwine Bloodworth ’08, Dani Sester DeForest ’08, Katie Bossena Owens ’05, Jennifer Klebsche Bloodworth ’08, Aaron Bloodworth ’07, Ayla Taas ’07, Natalie Rody Faust ’08. Back row: Randy Sikkena ’82, Dennis Adam ’81, Kyllie Hake Sander ’08, Ben Sander ’07, Lacey Richter ’08, Cole Adam ’08, Jacinda Davis Schipper ’08, Milli DeWitt Toon ’88, Mike DeWitt ’80, and Jeff Faust ’07.

Ashley Rottinghaus ’08 and Jeff Keen of Exira, Iowa, were married Oct. 9, 2010. Ashley is a registered nurse at Allen Hospital in Waterloo. Pictured front row (left to right): Christa Stoock Nelsen ’08, Kayla Schipper ’10, Sara Abbas ’05, Katherine Reifel ’09, Ashley Rottinghaus Keen ’08, Melissa Myer ’08, Sara Wade ’08, and Natalia Christensen Skuster ’08. Back row: Eric Neilon ’08, Thon Mahon ’08, Joe Cerwinske ’07, Enory Drase ’07, Nicole Rottinghaus Knoper ’02, and Luke Knoper ’03.

Jordan offers creative and client services throughk Mister Fly Media in Des Moines.

Traic Dyer ’08 of Pella is the assistant volleyball coach at Central College. Sarah Dijoleijn Foonsmeunster ’08 of West Des Moines is a business development coordinator for Serena Companies in Des Moines. Sarah and husband Kyle Foonsmeunster ’08 live in Des Moines, where Kyle is an assistant manager at US Bank.

Olivia Jank ’08 and Chris Stoner were married June 11.

Jemie Maramel ’08 is the learning center teaching assistant with 31 special education students for grades 6-12 and the assistant crosscountry coach for the Low Trest Community School District.

Abby Schwerzen Sherman ’08 is a special participation student with the 11A Group in West Des Moines. Abby and husband Daniel Sherman are of Ankeny, Iowa, where Dan is an outbound sales specialist at Wells Fargo Financial.

Jacinda Verkerk ’08 of Pella is a hardware and software analyst at Vermeer Corp.

Julia Balmer ’08 and Ben Tozu of North Liberty were married Sept. 24. Julie is a student ministry associate director at Parkview Church in Iowa City.

Eric Haendossa ’03 of Marshalltown, Iowa, is a elementary special education teacher at Marshalltown Community School District in Marshalltown.

Danielle Jacobsen ’09 and Brian Burmeister of Des Moines, Iowa, were married Nov. 12. Danielle is a professor in the department of English at Ashford University in Clinton.

Daniel Krell ’09 teaches junior high English and is co-head football coach for Southeast Warren Schools in Liberty Center, Iowa.

Danielle Lindsey ’09 of North Liberty, Iowa, is the campaign coordinator at Yellowbook USA in Cedar Rapids.

Scott Moris ’08 of Shellsburg, Iowa, is an assistant city manager at Collins Community Credit Union in Cedar Rapids. In September he opened a 24/7 fitness club in Shellsburg.

Darianne Nowendong ’09 and Jeremy Hinkel ’08 of Iowa City, Iowa, were married Sept. 17. Danielle teaches English as a second language and head LSO in the West Liberty Community School District. Jeremy works in technical support and sales at Go Daddy in Cedar Rapids.

Jeff Schoenfield ’08 of Earlville, Iowa, teaches high school Spanish at Maquoketa Valley Community School in Delhi. This summer she took 17 students to Mexico, where they traveled to several locations in the Yucatan, including a visit to the program house. Jen’s sister, Jeannie Schoenfield Clark ’96, accompanied the group as chaperone. Jeannie teaches Spanish at Okawaska High School in Okawaska, where she lives with husband Michael and their son.

Ashley Rottinghaus Keen ’08, Melissa Myer ’08, Sara Wade ’08, and Natalia Christensen Skuster ’08.

Enda Broadan ’00 is a professional playwright, director, movement coach, and teaching artist at Honolulu Theatre for Youth in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he lives with wife Sandra.

Sandra and Harsha Phukan of Des Moines were married July 30. Sandra is a workforce advisor at Iowa Workforce Development in Ottumwa, and Harsha is a physical therapist at Scottsdale Healthcare.

Enda Broadan ’00 with wife Sandra.

Jenniferlynn DeForest ’08, Katie Bossena Owens ’05, Jennifer Klebsche Bloodworth ’08, Aaron Bloodworth ’07, Ayla Taas ’07, Natalie Rody Faust ’08, Randy Sikkena ’82, Dennis Adam ’81, Kyllie Hake Sander ’08, Ben Sander ’07, Lacey Richter ’08, Cole Adam ’08, Jacinda Davis Schipper ’08, Milli DeWitt Toon ’88, Mike DeWitt ’80, and Jeff Faust ’07.
Thomas Cook ‘69 spent 10 years as a faculty member in the music department. Alumni will remember Cook’s role as associate professor of music and director of the mighty CUI Marching Band. Even after leaving campus in 1979 for the University of Montana, Central remained special to Cook. His doctoral dissertation, finished in 1983, was titled “A History of Music at Central College During the Nineteenth Century.”

Now retired and living in Missoula, Mont., Cook recalls many fond memories from his time at Central, not least of which was meeting his wife, Jamie Hennessy Cook ‘74. The couple celebrates their 40th wedding anniversary in the summer of 2012.

“In the end, I have enjoyed a tremendously gratifying career in the arts, making some great music and learning to become a more appreciative consumer of the arts,” Cook says. “I’m a lucky guy!”

Read the full Q&A online.

The Gift of Music

The Hoekstra family loves music. All four of them—Jim ‘66, his wife Bev ‘64 and their two sons, Steve ’92 and Tim ’95—performed in the A Cappella Choir at Central. Jim and Bev especially loved attending their sons’ concerts, though they didn’t stop going after the boys graduated.

Jim met BevMinMax in the trombone section of the band, where he talked to her while they counted measures of rests. The two married after Jim graduated from Central, and he immediately went on to earn his Ph.D. in solid state physics at Iowa State University, where he has worked for more than 39 years, most recently as a senior systems analyst in Information Technology Services. After 40 wonderful years together, Bev passed away in 2006 after a long battle with cancer. Jim, too, had been fighting prostate cancer, until he joined a trial for a new drug. He was almost cancer-free a few weeks later. “One of the things that motivated me to give to Central was my medical miracle,” says Jim.

Central College has been named a major beneficiary of Jim’s TIAA-CREF retirement plan. Because Central is a non-profit organization, the funds will be passed to the college without any income tax consequences; thus freeing Jim, if he chooses, to give his heirs other assets that are not as heavily taxed. “I decided to do this because of what Central gave to me—and my kids,” says Jim. “They have been able to contribute to society and do what they wanted to do with their lives.” Jim is particularly proud that both his sons are still involved in fine arts—Steve plays baritone horn in his city band, and Tim sings in the Dubuque Chorale.

Recently, signs of Jim’s cancer have returned. He has begun treatment with a newly FDA-approved drug, and he is hopeful. Jim is grateful for what Central College meant for his family. “College is part of training for a lifetime,” says Jim. “It’s not just going to school, and then it’s over.”

Like Jim Hoekstra, you too can give a gift that will help Central College today or with a deferred gift for tomorrow.

To confidentially discuss all giving opportunities, contact the advancement office at 641-628-5154 or email morrisond@central.edu.

If you have already included Central in your will or through other estate provisions, your notification will allow us to properly thank you.

To view more planned gift information, go to www.central.edu/go/plannedgiving or www.poenvironment.org.
Melissa Dunlap is a customer service representative at American HomePlanner in Marshalltown, Iowa. Swathik Elzwicker is pursuing a master’s degree in health sciences at Drew University in Philadephia, Pa. Logan Englan is a staff accountant at Hormel Foods in Austin, Minn. Leah Farrington teaches high school social studies and is the assistant volleyball coach for the Montezuma School District in Montezuma, Iowa. Peter Fogley is a treatment counselor at Tanagers Place, a children’s psychiatric mental health institution in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Kathryn Freed is an auditor at Ernst & Young of Urbandale in West Des Moines. Kaitlin Huff is an auditor at KPMG in Coralville, Iowa. Andrew Hopper teaches high school English in the Newton Community School District in Newton, Iowa. Trevor Hixon is awarded a Fellowship in Writing for the 2012-13 class at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop in Iowa City. Shani Kassell of Brooklyn, N.Y., is a territory sales representative at Clorox. michelle Kienzler is a research laboratory technician at Abbot Laboratories in Illinois. Christopher Klevens is pursuing a master’s degree in physical therapy from Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. Hannah Hitchcock is pursuing a medical degree from Des Moines University. Ashley Kressin is a research coordinator at the University of Michigan. Britney Huber is pursuing a master’s degree in primary physical therapy from Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn. Natalie Huff of Des Moines is a settlement attorney at John Deere. Sara Hugley is an auditor at Ernst & Young in Des Moines. Natalie Hulings of Des Moines, Iowa, teaches creative writing and is in charge of the yearbook and the TAG program at Northwest High School. Kristin Huggins is a chaplain intern at the George R. Roberts Hospice. Maria Jaramillo is a social work intern at the University of Texas, Austin. Zachary Elsbecker is a junior buyer at Brown’s Inc., in Montezuma, Iowa. Mark Martin is an engineering co-op at Fisher Controls in Marshalltown, Iowa. Andrew Hopper teaches high school English in the Newton Community School District in Newton, Iowa.

Sara Stephensson is an onsite meeting and event coordinator at Lincom in Marion, Iowa.

Ashley Tupper is a physical therapy assistant at Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines.

Alyssa Taylor is pursuing a master’s degree in occupational therapy at the University of Minnesota in Rochester.

Emily Taus is a special education teacher at Capitol View Elementary in Des Moines.

Kate Testor is manager of Grotz 2 A Tea in Pella.

Jessica Thomas is a registered pharmacy technician at Wal-Mart in Krossville, Iowa.

Emily Thompson is an AmeriCorps Vista volunteer at the Campus Compact, working at Children and Family Urban Ministries in Des Moines.

Court Toppie is a customer support analyst at Overland Convoy in Pella.

Stephanie Terzgoz and Neil Reasland of Cedar Rapids were married December 18, 2010. Stephanie is a service and support coordinator at ARC of East Central Iowa.

Taylor Treaden is an assistant financing consultant at Principal Financial Group in Des Moines.

Elizabeth Urba is a health screening technician at Health Sciences in Owing Mills, Md.

Adam Van Arkel teaches fifth and sixth grade instrumental music at Grinnell Middle School in Grinnell, Iowa.

Kevin Vander Horst works in the accounts receivable and collections department at Grand View University in Des Moines.

Tanner Vander Weerd is a youth counselor at Woodward Academy in Woodward, Iowa.

Mara Venetič is a postdoctoral researcher at Kossuth Regional Health Center in Algona, Iowa.

Justin Von Arken is pursuing a master’s degree in music with dual emphasis in music theory and trumpet performance from Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo. He received a graduate teaching assistantship and is teaching freshman aural skills.

Molly Van Helten is employed by Pioneer Hi-Bred Research Center in Princeton, Ill. Jordan Waddell is a marketing specialist in the multicell aminopeptide division of Aviva and lives in West Des Moines.

Tyler Wallingford is pursuing a medical degree from Creighton University in Omaha, Neb.

Ashley West is a volunteer with AmeriCorps in Des Moines.

Lori Westen is a client representative at Marsh US Consumer in Urbandale, Iowa.

Stephanie Willcock is a One-On-One Associate in the Pella Area Community School District in Pella, Iowa.

Bradley Williams is a loan servicing specialist at Wells Fargo in West Des Moines.

Jessica Williams is pursuing a master’s degree in sciences from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls.

Katie Williamsness and Matt Ness ’10 of West Des Moines were married July 23. Katie is a reporting process specialist at McAlester in Schaumburg.

Kristie Wilson is a recruitment and benefits administrator at Community 1st Credit Union in Ottumwa, Iowa.

Eric Willis is a co-coordinator at Persimmon Project in Schenectady, N.Y.

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Erin Zylstra of Sully, Iowa, is an admission counselor at Central College.
Tyler Wentworth '13 spent his summer interning with the production company dphilms, helping to produce commercials and TV shows, including the History Channel’s American Pickers.

Wentworth got the chance to work on some high-profile projects for dphilms. He met head men’s basketball coach, Fran McCaffery, and head women’s basketball coach, Lisa Bluder, while filming at the University of Iowa, where he ran the teleprompter.

The most recognizable project he worked on was the History Channel program American Pickers. The show follows an Iowa-based crew as they travel the country salvaging antiques. Wentworth worked on two shoots with co-star Danielle Colby-Cushman at the pickers’ Le Claire office.

“I sort of felt famous,” Wentworth says with a laugh. Crowds he helped to quiet outside the shop assumed he was a major Hollywood player. “Danielle came up and talked to me like we were already friends.”

Wentworth also quickly learned the amount of work it takes to get a major TV show ready to air. He watched his dphilms co-workers put in three hours of work to finalize a 10-second segment for American Pickers. At times his work days started at 3:30 a.m. and lasted 16 hours.

Despite the chaotic schedule, Wentworth says his working atmosphere was relaxed and collaborative. “It was really motivating. I could see very clearly the direct impact my efforts had on the project.”

Though he’s not sure his future lies in film, Wentworth is grateful for the experience the internship provided. “It helped me realize there are a lot of jobs out there,” he says. “I can do what I want to, and I don’t have to compromise on my career.”

Ten Tough Questions

10. Where in the world should Central College be?

9. What opportunities do technology and social media create to enrich and enhance learning opportunities on the Central campus and beyond?

8. What would be the evidence that Central is innovative, entrepreneurial and creative?

7. What is the future of the library at a liberal arts college?

6. What is the responsibility of a liberal arts college in an economy in which a growing and significant percentage of jobs will be in the health professions?

5. Does Central today foster habits of mind and behaviors that contribute to a sustainable society?

4. How well do the key concepts of The Blue Zones and their role in well-being inform Central today?

3. What does Central College have to offer an international student who wants to spend a year abroad (reverse study abroad)?

2. How do you know if an institution is a leader in undergraduate scholarship?

1. What tough questions should we have asked, but did not?

Visit “The Planning Year” at civitas.central.edu to read the community’s responses. It’s not too late to add one yourself.

Over the past three months, the Central community has been pondering the future of the college—in conjunction with the seven planning teams and the Planning Year Steering Committee. Mary Strey, vice president for academic affairs and dean of faculty, posed a question each week to alumni, current students and other Central friends and family members. Their collective responses illustrate the deep, diverse thinking done by the community.

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Brian Cretin ’99 won’t be coming home anytime soon. He quit his job as a web developer and took off for... the world.

Cretin has been traveling since August and hopes to be on the road for at least a year. Long-term travel has been a dream ever since he studied in London as a computer science major at Central. His friends convinced him to take that first trip, but no one had to persuade Cretin to embark on his dream this time.

So far, Cretin has spent time in London, the Middle East and Asia, including a seven-week stay in Thailand. Highlights of his trip have been visiting holy sites in Jerusalem, scuba diving at the island of Ko Tao in Thailand and seeing King Tut’s tomb and treasures in the Valley of the Kings.

“The nice thing about traveling long-term is that you get to take your time and don’t feel the pressure to cram everything into a week or two,” says Cretin.

To follow Cretin around the globe, visit his blog at www.viewfromacretin.com.