

WINTER 2013

Civitas

Central College



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The Courage to Change

by Mark Putnam, Central College president



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Most meetings are not memorable. From time to time, however, something happens that sticks with us. We remember the circumstances not because of the content of the discussion—but for the moment of discovery. For me, these are usually circumstances in which a single phrase can change everything, for better or for worse. Years ago, I served on a project team to prepare for the implementation of a new campus-wide administrative software system. My role was to offer insights into the organization, along with various business needs the system would serve. The project lasted for months, and as it matured there was less and less tolerance for innovative thinking. Gradually I became less popular with my more

technically-focused colleagues as I often thought of an adjustment that could serve the organization well. One day, as we were reviewing the scope and schedule of the project, a team member said in exasperation, “We will get this project done on time and on budget, as long as we don’t have any more bright ideas.” The project indeed was completed on time and on budget, but it failed in many respects to serve the broader needs of the organization. By contrast, I was in a meeting a few years later with a different set of colleagues considering the possibility of developing a new educational program. This was a seasoned group of leaders, and we were quite equal to the task presented. As we deliberated, one of our

“Together, we embrace the possible. For the courage to change is Central.”

team members looked at the rest of us and said, “We know we can do this, and it’s easy. So let’s try something hard.” We all smiled and took up the challenge for the sake of being demanding of ourselves and pushing our thinking to a higher level. Ideas surfaced, and our ambitions were more fully expressed. This project also was completed—but at a level of success beyond what we would have anticipated. Each challenge and opportunity we encounter usually presents us with a range of options. Sometimes it makes sense to keep it simple, remembering that “perfect is the enemy of good.” Yet there are those occasions when, if we don’t push for something more, we lose out on a chance to do something great. Discernment is what separates the two, and it takes collective wisdom to determine the best course. I admire those who push themselves, those who seem willing to step outside a natural comfort zone. Central has an amazing history of developing people who build the courage necessary to say, “Let’s do something hard.” It begins with students who study abroad, undertake a research project, try out for a team or ensemble or run for office. It extends through alumni who become leaders, grow businesses and stimulate creativity. Together, we embrace the possible. For the courage to change is Central.

Read more of Mark Putnam’s writings in President’s Corner at civitas.central.edu.

Civitas

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Civitas is published quarterly by the Central communications office for alumni, parents and friends of Central College. For information on the Civitas mission, visit civitas.central.edu.

Civitas (USPS 096-840) is published by Central College, 812 University, Pella, IA 50219-1999. Periodicals postage paid at Pella, Iowa, and additional offices.

Postmaster: send address changes (PS 3579) to Civitas, 812 University, Pella, IA 50219-1999. Address changes also may be sent to alumni@central.edu.

Production notes:



Corniche is elemental chlorine free (EFC). Civitas is printed with a soybean-based ink by Town Crier, Pella, Iowa.

CIVITAS.CENTRAL.EDU
 641.628.9000



As chief resident, Dr. Sarah Stockton Massey ’06 spends long hours bringing babies into the world.

winter 2013 contents

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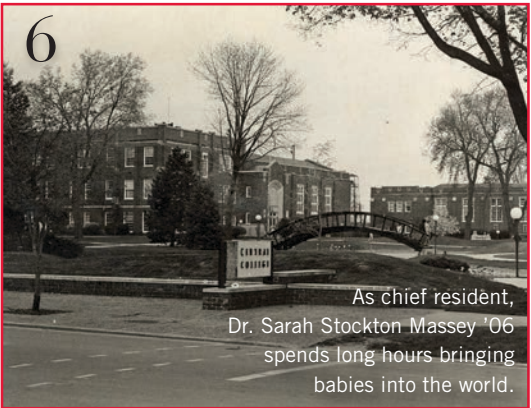
A WHITE COAT KIND OF DAY
 Alumni in the health care industry
 Photo by Paul Gates

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As chief resident, Dr. Sarah Stockton Massey ’06 spends long hours bringing babies into the world.



As chief resident, Dr. Sarah Stockton Massey ’06 spends long hours bringing babies into the world.



Tradition is Central



What's your birthday worth without a dunk in the Pond? It's seemingly random but always awesome traditions like this that make Dutch life truly Dutch.

In the 160 years since Central was founded, faculty and students have created educational and outrageous traditions fondly remembered by alumni and, in some cases, still celebrated by students today.

PIETENPOL CUP

Women's sports weren't always prominent at Central—and women were craving competition! Dean Henry Pietenpol started the Pietenpol Cup to provide such an opportunity to the young ladies. The contest between freshmen and

sophomore women focused on music—all of which had to be original. Gary Timmer '55 recalls the atmosphere on campus. "The competition was intense, and the event was attended by nearly the entire student body," he says. "Many of the male members resented it because during the month before the girls got so involved that they didn't have much time for their boyfriends!"

LEMMING RACE

The much beloved Lemming Race started out as nothing more than a one-off skit. On a fall night in 1977, a

needed something here.



group of second floor Gaass guys were watching the British television comedy "Monty Python's Flying Circus" when an animated scene of lemmings—small rodents—jumping off a cliff into the ocean caught their attention. It was suggested that a lemming race would be a good way for Gaass Hall to contribute to Homecoming. Brian Fegley '80, a race founder, explains the origins of the grand tradition. "For the initial years, the lemming race was, in fact, a race. There were no costumes back then—lemmings just wore running attire. During one of the years, winners even received clay trophies of lemmings made by someone in the art department," he says.

Students had their legs bound together and shuffled to the island on the pond from the library. Back in the '70s, the ground gradually sloped into the pond, so a "cliff" had to be built. "We found an old broken ping pong table in the Gaass basement, and we reinforced it with two-by-fours and formed a version of a cliff that the lemmings had to jump from," says Fegley. "You can visualize a huge mob of lemmings all trying to squeeze onto that little cliff at the same time—mass chaos and lots of lemmings falling into the pond!"

Although the tradition has changed today, the costume-clad participants still carry on the spirit of the original race. "I think it's great. A really fun and totally inane tradition!" Fegley says of today's race. "It's clear that succeeding generations of lemmings, including both of my kids, have had every bit as much fun with the race as we did in the late '70s!"

THE FROSH-SOPH PULL

With juniors and seniors dominating the athletic fields, the Frosh-Soph Pull let the underclassmen guys show off their strength—and maybe impress the ladies a bit. A game of tug-of-war, the losing team was dumped in the Vermeer pond! Held in the fall every year, the Frosh-Soph Pull often didn't include

football players for fear of injury, but many other guys on campus got fueled up to take on the competition. Timmer fondly remembers his time spent out at the pond—and in it. "The water was dirty and often very cold," he says. "I know by experience."

CENTRAL EXPLORES STUDY ABROAD PARTNERSHIPS IN BRAZIL

The Institute of International Education has selected Central for the 2013 Brazil initiative of their International Academic Partnership Program. The college will participate in a year-long series of training activities to learn how to implement and sustain partnerships with institutions in Brazil. The program will culminate with a study tour to Brazil in spring 2013 to meet with potential partner campuses.

"Not only is Brazil rich in cultural and environmental diversity, but it is hard to ignore Brazil's growing influence regionally and globally as a consequence of its rapid economic, political and social transformation," says Lyn Isaacson, associate dean for global education.

Central will explore a range of educational settings in Brazil to identify the best fit between institutions and the types of partnerships that would be of mutual benefit. Options might include student exchanges, short or long-term enrollment options, internships, service-learning, field-based work or other experiential learning options and opportunities for faculty to develop and share expertise.

SON OF ALUMNUS RETURNS FOR HORN RECITAL

In October, Randall Faust, professor of music at Western Illinois University and a hornist of the Camerata Woodwind Quintet and LaMoine Brass Quintet, was in-residence at Central and a guest artist at the Sunday Concert Series.

The son of Claire E. Faust '41, Randall never attended Central, but the college

still holds a special place in his heart as the first campus he ever visited. As a child, Randall attended numerous concerts of his father's former students studying at Central.

Faust offered his recital as a gesture of his family's gratitude to Central, where his father played with the orchestra. Students were able to work with Faust during two recitals in which they received feedback from the original composer, and they also attended master classes and music lessons with Faust.

A number of faculty members contributed to the performances, as well. Associate professors of music Mark Babcock and Cynthia Doggett accompanied Faust on the organ and clarinet, respectively. Claudia Anderson, adjunct instructor of music, accompanied Faust on flute and Paul Kovacovic, assistant professor of music, joined in on piano.

"I really enjoyed my recent residency at Central College," said Faust. "It was a pleasure to meet President Putnam, Maestro Mitch Lutch and the other members of the Central College faculty, as well as working with the students."



Photo by Dan Vander Beek

Highest national finish, first men's cross country conference title for Central



The Central men's cross country team doesn't expect to wait another 32 years for an NCAA Division III national meet appearance. Qualifying for the first time since 1980, the surprising Dutch used an all-underclass lineup to capture 13th at the NCAA meet in Terre Haute, Ind. Nov. 17, the best finish in program history.

Sophomore Eli Horton earned all-America honors with a 29th-place finish. Freshman Cole Decker and sophomore Drew Jackson followed in 40th and 56th

places, respectively, turning in career-best times. Junior Austin O'Brien, junior Brent Ewing, freshman Sloan Beninga and junior Cody Doughan were also part of the elite field, leaving hopes burning bright for the program's future.

Earlier, Horton, Decker and Jackson swept the top three spots as Central used a dominant performance to win the program's first-ever Iowa Conference title. Horton was named the league MVP, and Joe Dunham took coach of the year honors. Central finished with 33 points

with defending champ Loras next at 50.

Unranked in the preseason, the Dutch earned their national berth by finishing second in the NCAA Central Region meet.

THE FROSH-SOPH PULL

The lone senior in the Central women's cross country lineup, Mel McDermott claimed all-Iowa Conference honors.

McDermott, a three-time team co-captain, finished 11th at the league meet, helping her team finish fourth overall. She was 50th at the NCAA Division III Central Region meet in Northfield, Minn., placing 50th, followed by junior Shelby Mendoza in 57th and junior Emma Nelson in 64th. The Dutch were 12th in the team standings.

SURPRISING CENTRAL MEN'S SOCCER TEAM REACHES FINALS

A thrilling post-season run propelled Central to the finals of the Iowa Conference men's soccer tournament.

The Dutch were 8-10-3 overall and grabbed the last spot in the six-team league tourney. But they advanced in a shootout after a 0-0 tie at third-seeded Luther College, then got a goal from senior forward Matt Woodcock in the 103rd minute to stun second-seeded Dubuque, 2-1 in double overtime, also on the road.

Central then pushed top-seeded Loras, ranked No. 4 in Division III, to the limit before dropping the title match, 2-1. Loras went on to reach the NCAA Division III final four.

Woodcock was joined by junior midfielder Daniel Peacock and junior goalkeeper Travis Yets as second-team all-conference honorees.

TURNAROUND CONTINUES FOR RECORD-TYING WOMEN'S SOCCER SQUAD

After combining for just three victories in 2009 and 2010, the Central women's soccer team proved last year's dramatic turnaround was no fluke.

Topping last season's 10-7-1 mark, the Dutch were 12-6-2 in 2012, tying the school season wins record. Mike Kobylinski, in his second year, shared Iowa Conference coach of the year honors. Junior forward Alayna Bailey was a first-team all-league pick, while sophomore midfielder Emily Saville was named to the second team. Bailey scored a team-high 15 goals and ranks third on the school career scoring chart.

The Dutch were fourth in the league and won their first conference tourney game since 2007 when Liz Daniels knocked home the winner with just 5 seconds remaining for a 2-1 triumph over Simpson.

SURPRISING CENTRAL MEN'S SOCCER TEAM REACHES FINALS

Injuries and inexperience led to a 2-4 start, but the Central football team flashed potential in winning three of its final four games.

The Dutch defense was especially hard hit, losing five of 11 starters to injury. But Central nonetheless knocked off preseason title favorite Dubuque and perennial contender Wartburg in a 5-5 season. The squad started just four seniors on offense and two on defense.

Sophomore kicker Kevin Sheldon was a first-team all-league honoree for the second time, while junior defensive lineman Danny Samson was also a first-team pick. Junior linebacker Mike Young, junior offensive lineman Travis Hook and sophomore defensive back Eric Larson were second-team choices.

Young topped the team tackle charts with 79. Senior Ross Doehrmann rushed for 584 yards while sophomore quarterback Aaron Eiseler passed for 1,311 yards, taking over as the starter midway through the season.

CENTRAL THIRD IN LEAGUE WOMEN'S GOLF

Central senior Ashley Smith and sophomore Kelsey Van Tasell capped

surprising seasons by earning all-Iowa Conference honors at the league women's golf tournament.

But the Dutch had to play without the team's No. 1 player, sophomore Taylor Hill, who was sidelined by illness. The team still managed a third-place finish. Freshmen Chelsey Shuey and Emily Fisher were 27th and 32nd, respectively.

Smith and Van Tasell made huge strides after finishing 15th and 25th, respectively, a year earlier. They led Central to the Buena Vista Invitational title and a second-place showing at the Central Fall Invitational.

DUTCH WOMEN'S TENNIS TEAM SHOWS PROMISE

Coach Steve Tyler is excited about the future of the Central women's tennis program.

With four freshmen and two sophomores in the team's top seven, the Dutch posted an 8-4 dual mark and were fifth in the Iowa Conference standings.

Rookies Angie Allgood and Megan Davis were the team's top two players while team captain Chelsea Johnson, who played at No. 3, was the lone senior in the lineup. Another freshman, Anna Bowser, reached the finals in the B flight of the league tournament.

ZEMPEL NAMED TO ALL-LEAGUE VOLLEYBALL SQUAD

Freshman libero Tori Zempel earned all-Iowa Conference honors for the Central volleyball squad.

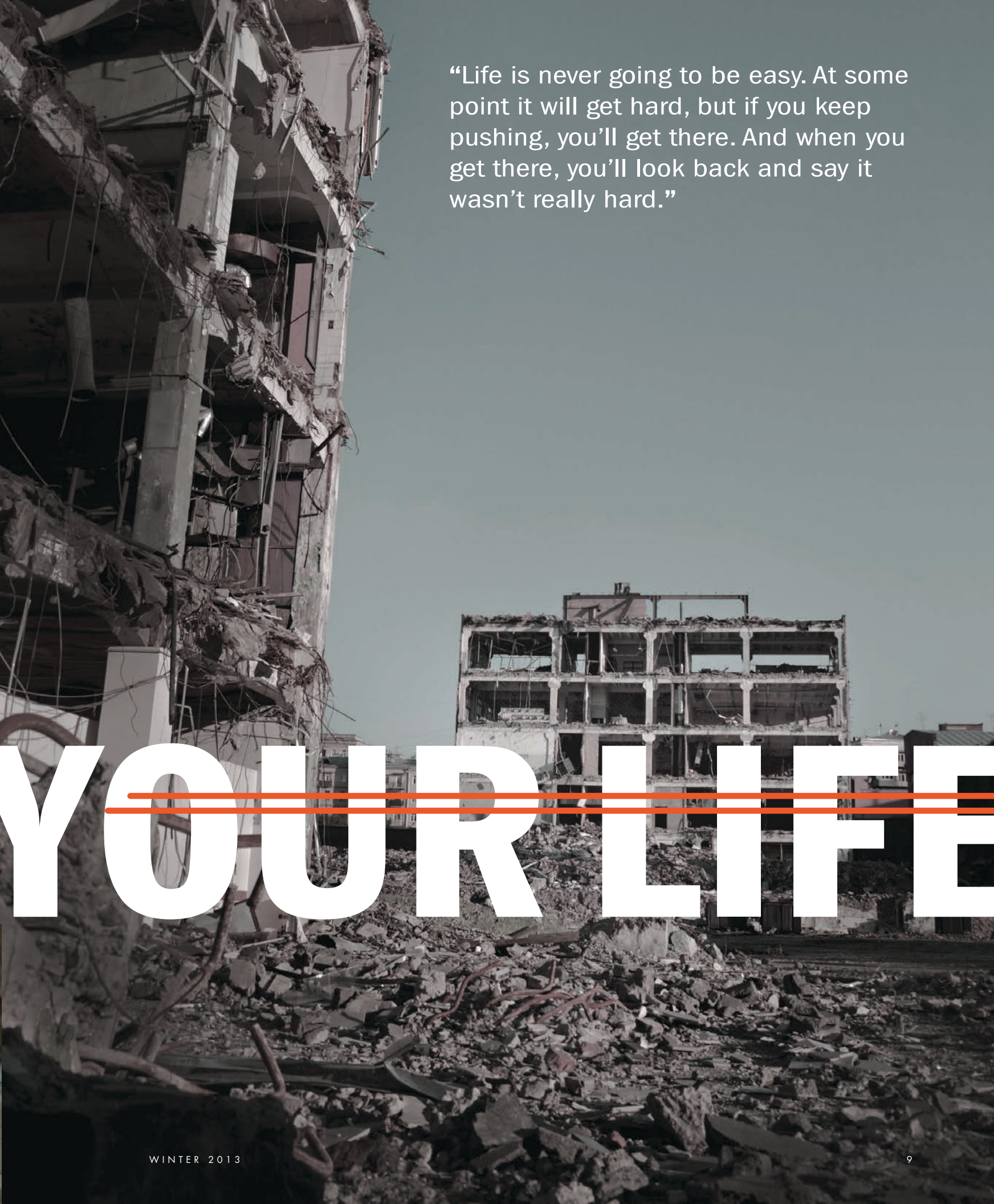
Zempel ranked second in the conference in digs with 4.72 per set, with a season-best 42 against Webster (Mo.).

Central again qualified for the six-team Iowa Conference tournament—the Dutch have never failed to gain a berth—but injuries and a daunting schedule contributed to an uncharacteristic 9-20 campaign. Six seniors will be lost to graduation.

ON THE WORST DAY OF

Photos by Paul Gates

Alumni with unbreakable spirits persevere through adversity most people can't even imagine. In the process, they discover the people and places they call home.



“Life is never going to be easy. At some point it will get hard, but if you keep pushing, you’ll get there. And when you get there, you’ll look back and say it wasn’t really hard.”

YOUR LIFE

THE SOUND OF BULLETS

“I saw the Syrian forces shooting on protesters. I saw three of the nine collapsing on the ground after bullets had run through their bodies.”



The August 2012 day Freenaz '07 presented his master's dissertation at the University of Damascus, he almost died several times.

On his return trip home to a small town near Damascus, Syria, he found all four checkpoints into the city closed. At one, an elderly driver trying to bribe his way through had a Russian rifle held to his head. Freenaz approached the soldier and put his hand on the gun. "Take it easy," he advised. But the soldier yelled that he would shoot Freenaz, too. He backed away. "I don't know what happened to that old man," Freenaz says. "I sometimes see him in my dreams."

At the last checkpoint, a soldier shot 25 rounds above Freenaz's car, as a warning not to approach. As a last resort to get home to his wife and infant son, Freenaz drove through the bushes. A sniper shot his car in the rear.

A SYRIAN IN A DUTCH LAND

Freenaz was always a star student in Syria, earning a spot as one of the top three undergraduate students at Damascus University. (Freenaz is a nickname; for fear of reprisals on his family from the Syrian government, his real name is not being used in this article.) In 2004, he was chosen for a scholarship from the U.S. Department

of State. The goal of the program was to give students from other regions a better understanding of U.S. institutions, society and culture. Central College hosted Freenaz for his junior and senior years. "At Central, I was the ambassador of my country in the U.S., trying to help my American friends understand my culture," says Freenaz. "I tried to mirror the culture of the Middle East, which is the land of the major religions."

To be a better ambassador, Freenaz was determined to get involved on campus. He became a resident advisor, a member of the Student Senate, a student representative on the board of trustees and assistant president of the International Club. "Freenaz was a very bright student and really well-liked on campus," says Debora Hunt '03, former international student coordinator at Central. "He was the kind of person who could break through cultural barriers with ease and educated a lot of American students to have a better understanding of the Middle Eastern people."

AGAIN AN AMBASSADOR

After graduation, Freenaz returned home to Syria. "I made a firm commitment to stay there and use my American education to help build bridges between the

American and Syrian cultures," he says. "This time I was the ambassador of the Americans in Syria."

This, if anything, was harder than his first task. Syrians do not have a positive opinion about Western culture, particularly the United States. "They only know Americans through movies and official news, which portray Americans as evil, bloodthirsty, materialistic, ill-mannered people," says Freenaz. "The media brainwash Syrians to hate the Americans."

Freenaz did his best to make the people around him see the true picture of American culture—what he had witnessed at Central. He felt he could connect the two cultures through teaching. Freenaz taught middle school while earning his master's degree. Life was pretty good for him in Syria; he had a job and he was getting an education. But the same could not be said for most of his countrymen. "The close circle around the president owned everything," he says.

THE ARAB SPRING

In the wake of protests and revolutions throughout the Middle East in the spring of 2011, demonstrations began in Syria in March. Freenaz says the first protests were peaceful and that none of the demonstrators were armed, following the lead of other mass protests throughout the region.

"During the first protests that came out in my area, nine people were killed," he says. "I saw the Syrian forces shooting on protesters. I saw three of the nine collapsing on the ground after bullets had run through their bodies. However, the official news of the government claimed it was outsiders. They said it was foreign armed gangs paid by America, who killed Syrians so that the Syrians hate their government."

SNIPERS AND SHRAPNEL

The government responded to the peaceful protests with heavy-handed force. In the summer of 2011, the Free Syrian Army was formed by deserting soldiers and civilians opposed to the government. Since then, the country has descended into full-blown civil war. According to the New York Times, nearly 40,000 people, mostly civilians, are thought to have died in the conflict; tens of thousands have been arrested, and hundreds of thousands have been displaced as refugees.

The rebel forces have been gaining ground, as well as international favor. Although divided by ethnic, religious and political differences, the rebel factions created a unified group in November, which the U.S. has officially recognized.

Freenaz has witnessed much of the violence firsthand. One evening, ten seconds after saying goodnight, his neighbor was shot in the stomach. Other family members and friends of Freenaz have been tortured or injured by shrapnel at protests.

Freenaz says the sound of bullets in the city was scary at first. But then he got used to it. Then he was frightened by the sound of tanks shooting missiles at buildings. But he got used to that, too. Next they started shooting from helicopters. That, he says, is hard to get used to.

DEATH OR ESCAPE?

After witnessing so much violence, nothing else seemed to matter. Freenaz was convinced that he was destined to die in the fight for freedom. He wanted to speak out for freedom and democracy—the ideals he learned in America and at Central. Even though it would mean his death.

It was then that he heard from his dear friend Zach Wagner '10. It was a fateful moment—because Zach had a different perspective. Zach believed that Syria didn't need another voice for freedom right now. The guns would only silence Freenaz. Instead, Syria would need intelligent, free-thinking people to help rebuild the country once the conflict was over, people like Freenaz.

It didn't take too much convincing. After all, Freenaz loved his wife and son. He didn't want to die. He decided to leave Syria.

Wagner got in touch with old contacts at Central, including Jim Zaffiro, professor of political science, who set the legendary Central network moving. Before long, they had raised nearly \$4,000 for Freenaz and his family so they could make the trip to Egypt.

Freenaz and his wife and son arrived safely in Cairo in September. His parents and sister's family, including five children, joined them in November. The alum couldn't be more grateful to his fellow Dutch for what they did for him and his family.

"It is with your help that I decided to get out," he says. "I was preferring death with dignity fighting for freedom with my tongue over ending up in a refugee camp or begging in the streets of another country. However, God has blessed me with a friend called Zach Wagner who insisted that my life is more useful for my country when we get rid of our tyranny than losing my life without a goal. I am more needed for my country in the future. I am needed when the new page of Syria is opened."

TO THE TOP



“Cancer forces us to re-order our priorities. It teaches us that life is a blessing and that we shouldn’t let a single moment go unlived.” That is the philosophy of Above and Beyond Cancer, a non-profit that organizes adventure-based programs for cancer survivors.

It is also what Corey McMordie ’02 has learned from his battle with cancer. And what he reaffirmed by trekking to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro. He was chosen from a large group of applicants by the organization.

Corey’s encounter with cancer has encompassed more than 25 years and several dear family members. When he was just five years old, his grandfather was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. The two were extremely close, and Corey spent long hours working on projects in his grandfather’s garage. The older man continued on with a bright smile and a fierce determination. But 10 years later, he passed away from a rare secondary cancer in his small intestine. “Although he is gone, I still carry his spirit with me, smiling through all the challenges life throws my way,” says Corey.

HISTORY REPEATS

At Central, Corey majored in information systems management and later went on to work at Wells Fargo Home Mortgage. But just as he was graduating in 2002, his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. She had a year of treatment before going into remission.

Her recovery was a great relief to the McMordie family. But three years later, Corey’s father was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and passed away within three months. It was a great loss.

“Cancer forces us to re-order our priorities. It teaches us that life is a blessing and that we shouldn’t let a single moment go unlived.”

While dealing with the grief from his father’s death, Corey began experiencing the first symptoms of what would eventually be diagnosed as Hodgkin’s lymphoma. Before it was over, he would go through two lymphadenectomies, several rounds of intense chemotherapy, a drug trial, a stem cell transplant and, finally, radiation therapy. The pain and frustration he experienced were intense.

Side effects from the stem cell transplant included chills, fever, cramping, nausea, vomiting, aching all over, chest tightness, shortness of breath, headache, rapid heartbeat, decreased blood pressure and much more. Without an appetite, Corey didn’t eat for two weeks and lost 15 pounds. He barely had enough strength to stand. It took nearly two months from the date of his transplant for his sense of taste and strength to return to normal.

Following in the footsteps of his courageous family members, he tried to stay cheerful. “I’ll never forget laughing with friends as we went through a box of wigs that had been donated, despite how I was feeling,” says Corey.

FLAGS IN THE WILDERNESS

Corey’s cancer has now been in remission for more than four years. Filled with a new love for life, he took advantage of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to spend two weeks in Africa last January and climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the fourth-tallest peak in the world and the highest on the continent.

In Tanzania, the Above and Beyond group spent time learning about the culture of the Chaaga and Maasi tribes, which Corey particularly enjoyed. They spent seven days on the mountain, traversing bamboo forests, old lava flows, an immense crater and a barren desert before finally reaching the summit at sunrise.

During the trip, Corey struggled with altitude

sickness, but it was worth the view from the top. At Crater Camp, down inside the non-active volcano cone, the group hung flags across the glacier for those who had passed away from cancer, including Corey’s own family members, and those who were fighting cancer at the time.

“I think I gained a new perspective on life and on being more compassionate,” says Corey. “On this trip, we all shared something in common—we had all been touched by cancer. It was neat to meet other people who had been down that same journey.”

CANCER IS HERE TO STAY

Since returning from Tanzania, Corey has stayed involved with Above and Beyond Cancer, while continuing to work at Wells Fargo in West Des Moines. He participated in Race Across America, supporting eight cyclists as they biked from coast to coast and taking 12-hour shifts as a driver. He also ran the seven-mile Living History Farms Off-Road Race in November with the Above and Beyond team.

In June, Corey plans to push himself even further, participating in a coast-to-coast marathon relay. He will run his first-ever marathon somewhere in the Midwest and then pass the baton off to the next runner making their way across the country. Each of the marathoners, including Corey, is raising money for cancer research in support of his run.

“As a survivor, cancer will always play a role in my life,” says Corey. “I will always carry with me the memories of those I have lost and honor those who have survived. I have my grandfather’s smile, my mother’s drive and my father’s sense of humor. It is those traits they shared with me in the face of adversity that gave me the strength to overcome my own personal battles.”

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE PEOPLE GOING THROUGH HARDSHIP RIGHT NOW?

“Go out there and live each day to the fullest. You never know what tomorrow is going to bring. There’s no limit to what you’re capable of accomplishing. If you can get through some of those hard spots, you can go on to accomplish great things.” – Corey McMordie ’02, cancer survivor

“I think a lot of people are facing hardship. I think everybody is. You have to make yourself get up every day and say one positive thing that’s going to happen today.” – Sheila Holzworth ’84, blind competitive athlete

“Life is never going to be easy. At some point it will get hard, but if you keep pushing, you’ll get there. And when you get there, you’ll look back and say it wasn’t really hard.” – Omer Ali ’12, Sudanese refugee

LONG WAY HOME



“At the time, I just had to accept the fact that this is not my home anymore and I had to get used to it.”

When his uncle came over to say his father would be calling the next day, Omer Ali '12 hadn't seen his dad in more than two years. In truth, the 10-year-old Sudanese boy wasn't even sure his father was alive. Omer is one of eight children and two cousins who for many years lived with him like brothers. He was born in Sudan, right on the border of what is now two separate nations—Sudan and South Sudan. For many years, Omer's father was a high official in the government, until that government fell out of power. He was one of the first leaders kicked out the country. The Ali children were used to not seeing their dad for months at a time, but they always heard from him after a while. Now, it had been two years, and they were convinced the new government had finally caught up with him. When Omer's family finally talked with their father the next day, on the only phone in the neighborhood, his news was surprising—and hard to take. He wanted them to sell the house and move to Egypt, where he had been living secretly for the past two years. His connections with the United Nations could get the family out of Africa. But Omer didn't want to leave his extended family behind. Although life was difficult in Sudan—long walks to school, beatings by the teachers, scarce food, no electricity or running water, the constant threat of violence in the streets, war in Darfur—Omer didn't know anything else. He loved his friends, his aunts and uncles and cousins. He loved his country.

ENERGY AND ENTERPRISE

After two-and-a-half years in Egypt, the United Nations helped the Ali family get refugee status. Omer was 13 by the time the family finally arrived in Des Moines, and he began at Roosevelt High School knowing hardly any English. But he was an enterprising young man. For part of the school day, he took English Language Learning (ELL) classes at Central Campus High School in Des Moines, a regional academy that provides unique learning opportunities for students who need extra help or need to be challenged. Within two years, he was back at Central Campus for advanced computer classes.

Omer had a natural talent for computers, even though he hadn't grown up with them in Sudan. He started fixing friends' computers—and then friends' of friends. He would bike to the neighborhood grocery store to pick up the PCs—where the manager let people drop them off—and then bring them home to fix on the weekends.

The transition to America was tough for the whole family. All of them were students; even his parents attended college classes after work. After the extended family and tribe back in Sudan, the isolation of their new culture was raw and agonizing, even in a crowded home. “At the time, I just had to accept the fact that this is not my home anymore and I had to get used to it,” says Omer.

LONE MAN ON CAMPUS

After high school, Omer was determined to make history and become the first in his family to attend college. But Omer is honest about his first semester at Central—it was the most difficult situation he's encountered in America. He didn't know anyone, and he wouldn't talk to other students. He sat alone in Central Market staring at all the smiling and laughing faces. He was terrified people would find out he could barely speak English, or that he was from another country. He would go back to his room after class and break down in tears.

But Omer wasn't ready to give up. His parents had sacrificed so he could have a good education. Many people had told him he wouldn't succeed in college. “When things got difficult or I was falling apart,” he says, “I had to think that I don't want to prove them right. I don't want to waste all of this time just not to finish college. Every time I fall short, I have to push myself. I can't let up.”

At the end of the first semester came a breakthrough. An English professor told him outright, “You're afraid that you don't speak English, and this is a problem for you. You need to come out of your shell or this is never going to change.”

Omer thought it was harsh at the time, but he now knows the professor was right. “That's when I truly started to open up,” he recalls. “Sometimes I say things differently, and my friends laugh at me, but I just keep going. I finished the first year, and the second year was a lot easier.”

By graduation, Omer says he was a “popular guy.”

In fact, he thinks he knew about 85 percent of the students on campus. He joined the soccer team, was a member of Student Support Services and traveled with Campus Ministries. He got to know all his professors really well, and after that first semester, was not shy about asking for advice.

Reading and writing were still a struggle; he basically translated everything in his head before he did the work and then translated it back. But his English skills improved. When his other friends were out partying on the weekends, he camped out in Vermeer or Weller with his books piled around him.

WIRED IN

Omer has transferred that hardworking lifestyle to his post-graduation life. During the week, he works in information technology at Principal Financial Group in Des Moines. But evenings and weekends, he manages a phone, wireless and computer repair center near Drake University. The business, called O Geeks, is an outgrowth of the work he did for friends in high school and college. The requests kept pouring in, and he realized he could build a business around it.

Omer lives with his family, as is customary in Sudan. There, even after marriage, children stay in the home with parents. Buddies, who see him doing well financially, ask why he doesn't move into his own place. “The family is still the family,” he says. The isolation from the home culture is particularly wearing on his parents. He can see it on their faces. That's another reason he doesn't want to move out.

For years, Omer and his family have had plans to return to Sudan, at least to visit. Back in college, he talked about Sudan nearly nonstop to his professors and friends. But since the country split in 2011 and the violence continues, Omer has changed his mind. Now he's not so sure if Sudan is really his home anymore. Maybe it's Iowa.

The soccer-playing, computer-fixing businessman has come all long way since his lonely lunches at Central. Recently, one of his managers at Principal complimented him on his confidence and social skills, which Omer believes he gained at Central.

“Central really did give me a good sense of who I am and what I needed to do with my life,” he says. “Without Central, I'm not sure I would be the same person.”

CLIMB TO THE CLOUDS

“Whenever it’s a sunny blue day and I’m gone—if I’m gone—and you look up, the biggest cloud will be mine,” says Sheila Holzworth ’85. “Mine and all my friends’.”

Those are difficult words to say for a woman who has already been through so much in her life, but she says them with a smile—and a stubbornness that they’re they not really going to come true, despite the doctors’ prognoses.

Sheila has always been rebellious—had an off-color sense of humor, a competitive edge. It’s what led her to ride horses through the deep waters of Beaver Creek when she was eight years old. It’s what made her hang her roommate’s lingerie out the window of the Alpha Delta Epsilon house at Central. It’s what gave Sheila the courage to climb Mount Rainier in Washington state as a blind 19-year-old college student. And it is giving her the energy to keep living life to the fullest right now—buying a new puppy, riding a jet ski, getting thrown off a horse and breaking seven ribs—even though she has been diagnosed with serious adenocarcinoma, a type of cancer.

A SIGHTED WORLD

Sheila grew up in northern Des Moines, right on the edge of the countryside, where her parents own 10 acres. She describes herself and her five siblings as “pretty wild,” running through the ravines and woods with their hunting dogs and horses.

But the household was disciplined, as well. When Sheila was blinded at age 10 in a freak accident caused by orthodontic equipment, she was expected to keep up with her chores—scooping out dog kennels and cooking dinner on Thursday nights. After spending several weeks in the hospital, she was so eager to get home that blindness didn’t even seem a burden.

“Kids are very resilient,” says Sheila. “I never remember this major bump in the road or this major tragedy. My parents had six kids; they couldn’t treat me different. My dad told me, ‘You live in a sighted world, sweetheart, so you need to act like it.’”

Sheila’s parents hired resource teachers to help her use her cane and teach her to read Braille. She attended Dowling Catholic High School in West Des Moines,



where she played Powder-puff football, ran track and joined the student council. But she admits that her grades weren’t the best. She was accepted to Central on the condition that she attend the Skills Center (equivalent to today’s Student Support Services) three nights a week for tutoring. Sheila credits the center with teaching her how to effectively manage her time. She became a good student and a good studier, but she didn’t forget how to have a good time.

GOING DOWNHILL

It’s true that Sheila’s natural rebellious streak continued at Central—she would stop by Jaarsma Bakery with friends at 4 a.m. for broken pieces of pastries—but she also settled down and discovered better ways to use her competitive nature.

“I was very competitive before I was probably even born,”

says Sheila. At Central, she became president of the Gator Ski Club, which traveled around snow skiing. She then began competitive snow skiing and water skiing. She won gold medals and set world records for slalom and downhill skiing at the U.S. Association for Blind Athletes national competition and the 1984 Blind Olympics.

IT TAKES A CAMPUS

Although taking on steep slopes was par for the course, college classes were a bit tougher. Sheila needed someone to read aloud from textbooks and take notes for her in class. So she hired Donna De Heer, a wife and mother who lived on a farm outside Pella. When taking tests, Donna and Sheila would work as a team. In a different room from the rest of the students, Donna read the questions aloud and Sheila responded with the answer.

“The only good thing about going to heaven is that I’ll be able to see. You go to heaven and you are whole. I will probably look at myself and say ‘Holy Cow! Why didn’t they tell me to comb my hair?’”

Donna was a pillar of support for Sheila during her five years at Central. (She took an extra year because of her competitive skiing). After graduation, Donna remained a close friend as well as Sheila’s personal assistant—buying groceries, paying bills, cleaning the house—until she passed away in 1992, from the same type of cancer Sheila has now.

In fact, everyone at Central was respectful and supportive of Sheila’s academic efforts. The post office would personally deliver her mail so she wouldn’t have to deal with the identical mail boxes. Facilities planted a bush just so she knew where to turn on the

sidewalk to get to her townhouse. The bookstore sent her textbooks to the Iowa Department for the Blind to be transferred into Braille. Staff let Sheila use their own cars so she could travel to give motivational speeches around the Midwest.

Sheila’s roommate Tammy Wilson Evans ’84 often traveled with her to skiing competitions and speeches. The two have remained close since graduation, and their mutual respect and love is obvious. “There wasn’t anything that she didn’t want to do or that she didn’t try to do,” says Tammy. “Nobody was ever going to tell her, ‘No, you can’t do that.’”

GOING UPHILL

Certainly, nobody was going to tell Sheila she couldn’t climb the 14,410-foot summit of Mount Rainier. In 1981, as part of a team of nine physically challenged climbers, and in honor of the International Year of Disabled Persons, Sheila became the first blind woman to scale the mountain.

“It was cold. It was stressful. It was the most grueling, athletic thing I’ve ever done in my life. But it was also one of the best experiences of my life.”

The group reached the summit at 10:42 a.m. She and another climber snuck up a beer, which exploded in their faces from the pressure. But it was a beautiful, sunny day, and Sheila was elated. Until the news came that it was time to start down.

“I’m thinking to myself, ‘Get down!? My goal was to get up here! You’re not helicoptering us down!’”

The achievement was an inspiration to thousands of disabled people, who thanked the climbers for their feat. “It really opened up their eyes to realize they could do things if they could push themselves, get out, get a little help,” says Sheila.

try to do,” says Tammy. “Nobody was ever going to tell her, ‘No, you can’t do that.’”

SEEING CLEARLY

Sheila has continued to inspire thousands in her work as a motivational speaker at events across the country. She also worked at Principal Financial Group for 24 years as a trainer and development leader.

Since her mother passed away four years ago, Sheila’s father, Dr. Paul Holzworth, can often be often at her kitchen table for dinner. A prominent Des Moines physician in his 80s who still works four days a week—he is a testament to the stalwart Holzworth spirit. The two are often together, fishing every



HOW OFTEN DOES A HEART BEAT?

Photo by Paul Gates

For a zebrafish, it depends on the water it's swimming in. Ellen Du Pre, professor of biology, is working with four students, as well as biology colleague Nicole Palenske, to study the effects of triclosan on heart rate. The tiny fish, which can be as small as an eyelash when newly hatched, is transparent, and the students can easily count the heart beats under a microscope.

Triclosan is a chemical used in disinfecting soaps, and it has made its way into tap water systems. In preliminary research, Du Pre and students have learned that when fish are exposed to certain levels of the chemical—specifically the levels found in drinking and surface water—heart rate goes down significantly. This may be linked to a decrease in metabolism, which some scientists have suggested may be a contributing factor for some of the high childhood obesity rates in the U.S.

"It does make me nervous," she says. "I don't think people realize all the chemicals we are being exposed to. I don't think our bodies are prepared to deal with them all."

The research done by Du Pre and her students was recently chosen from more than 3,500 submissions by the National Council on Undergraduate Research for presentation at the 2013 conference. The students will present at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in April.

ALUMNI NEWSNOTES

THE '50S

Helen Van Zante Boertje '54 of Pella is the published author of *When One Room Fit All*, the Country Schools of Marion County, Iowa, available for purchase on Amazon. Using excerpts from old news clippings and interviews conducted with former teachers and their students, Helen provides a glimpse of what life was like in the 145 country schools that existed from 1845 until the last one closed in the early 1960s. After 26 years as a biology teacher at Pella Community High School, Helen retired in 1992. She serves on two boards interested in history preservation and is a freelance writer.

THE '60S

Alumni are invited to submit Newsnotes online. We want to hear about recent promotions, honors, relocations, marriages and births to keep classmates and friends informed about important changes in your life. Update information online at civitas.central.edu or email alumni@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.

For information about **Bob Vermeer '66**, see the '00s.

Lesley Diehl '65 of Morris, N.Y., signed a three-book deal with Camel Press to publish her consignment shop mystery series. The first book, entitled *A Secondhand Murder* will be released this winter, as will *Angel Sleuth*, published by Untreedreads, and *Grilled, Chilled and Killed*, published by Oak Tree Press.

Gregory Christiano '69 is at work on his next two books: a collection of one- and two-act plays and short stories and a chapter book of poetry. His fifth book, *Trial by Terror and Other Short Stories*, a collection of 50 short stories ranging from horror, romance, westerns and detective yarns, was released several months ago. Gregory and wife Kathleen live in Hopatcong, N.J.

THE '70S

For information about **Neil Schuerer '77**, see the '00s.

Richard France '70 retired from Information Technology Service in Iowa City, where he lives with wife **Susan Robertson France '70**. Susan is the director at St. Mark's Kids Care.

Rick Ryan '70 is CEO of Apertus Pharmaceuticals in Ballwin, Mo., where he lives with wife **Sarah Drexler Ryan '71**.

Gerald Piester '73 teaches at Harmony High School in the School District of Osceola County in Saint Cloud, Fla., where he lives with wife Pamm.

Lisa Juliano Contini '79 just missed hurricane Sandy when a new job with the Department of Defense took her to Seoul,



South Korea, for a two-year assignment teaching high school Spanish to children of parents in the United States military.

Kathy Groenendyk Johnson '79 is a student success specialist at Iowa Valley Community College in Grinnell, where she lives with husband Stan.

THE '80S

Mark Coast '82 changed careers in June after 30 years in the newspaper business to accept a marketing position with Esri, a leader in the geographic information systems industry located in Redlands, Calif. Mark and wife Judith live in Murrieta.

Deb Sonner Hubble '88 is the assistant principal at Morton Ranch Elementary School in Katy, Texas, where she lives with husband Tom and their four children. Deb is working toward a master's degree in public school administration from the University of St. Thomas.

Erik Methlie '89 is a sales executive at Acxiom Corp. in West Des Moines. Erik and wife Julie live in Urbandale with their two sons.

Kristy Drolema Vander Wiel '89 serves as vice president of people and culture at WesleyLife in Pella and has been on the leadership team since 2009. In September, Kristy was selected to participate in the national LeadingAge Leadership Academy. Kristy and husband Marvin live in Otley; they are the parents of two children.

THE '90S

For information about **Justin Hagerty '99**, see the '00s.

Tammy Williamson Chase '90 was named director of communications and media relations for the Chicago Transit Authority. Tammy and husband Brett live in Chicago with their two children.

Bonnie Slykhuis '90 of Knoxville is a lean consultant at Des Moines Area Community College in Des Moines. She is the recipient of the Outstanding Process Improvement Award for helping departments and campuses improve work processes to save the college time and money and improve services.

Kris Brandt Vaughn '90 and 14-year-old daughter Grace joined several teachers from Grace's school for an amazing trip to Europe in June. Kris and husband **Trent Vaughn '90** live in Flower Mound, Texas, with their two children. Trent is an actuary at Republic Insurance in Dallas.

Arlan Herzberg '91 of Cumming is a customer service engineer at SumTotalSystems in West Des Moines.

Thomas Robbins '91 was appointed special assistant to the president and executive director of the University of Dubuque's Performing Arts and Campus Center, which is slated to open in the spring of 2013. Tom and wife Barbara live in Dubuque, Iowa, with their son.

Lori Owens '92 and Shane Thomas of Denver, Colo., rode their bikes to the summit of Mt. Evans in Colorado, where they exchanged vows on August 19. In January they moved to Melbourne, Australia, with Lori's company eNett International, where she is the general counsel.

Wilbert Breeden '93 is a lieutenant commander serving in the United States Navy. He is stationed in Aiea, Hawaii, with wife Karla and their four children.

Jill Piittmann Poock '94 is a Title One reading teacher at Kalona Elementary School in the Mid-Prairie School District in Kalona, Iowa. Jill and husband William live in Kalona with their two daughters. William is a curriculum director for the College Community School District.

Claudia Gomez Cruz Rivera '94 was recognized by the University of Iowa Board of Regents with a Staff Excellence Award for her contributions to programs that benefit the university and have a significant positive impact on the state of Iowa. Claudia and husband Diego live in Coralville.

Christopher McMorran '95 is a lecturer in the department of Japanese studies at the National University of Singapore. He teaches courses on Japan's geography and history, including a field study trip to Japan each year. The course reminds him of his study abroad experiences to Hangzhou, Yucatan and San Sebastian. This fall Chris received two teaching awards for his overseas course. Chris and wife Hisako live in Singapore.

David Wilkie '95 is a fabrication shop foreman at Mid-States Mechanical Services, Inc. in Mankato, Minn., where he lives with wife Chrystal and their two children.

Brian Meyers '96 of Ankeny is a quality control tech II at Siegwark in Des Moines.

Julie Wiley Weinstein '96 is an information technology specialist for the Department of the Navy at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. Julie and husband Brian Weinstein live in Portsmouth N.H., with their two sons.

Brian Rowe '97 is a human resources business partner at Vermeer Corp. in Pella, where he lives with wife Sara and their two children.

Lisa Jeremiah '98 and Tim Keosababian of Redmond, Wash., were married Nov. 19, 2011. Lisa is a senior analyst at FLT

Consulting in Olympia.

Jamie Kercheval Wisse '98 was named market president at U.S. Bank in Pella. Jamie and husband **Patrick Wisse '97** live in Pella with their two children.

Jamie Hiscocks Cash '99 is the office coordinator at Russell J. Meade, CPA, in Tiffin, Iowa. Jamie and husband Rob live in North Liberty with their two sons.

Annique Kiel '99 is assistant director of administered programs abroad at Drake University in Des Moines. She was named Honorary Fellow of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Professional French Masters Program. She received her master's degree in French studies from the university and remains active in the programs affairs. Annique and husband Adam live in Des Moines with their daughter.

THE '00S

Kirstin Van Rooyan Hagerty '00 is a proposal specialist at Rockwell Collins Inc. in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where she lives with husband **Justin Hagerty '99** and their two daughters. Justin is a bank examiner at FDIC in Hiawatha.

Scott Honken '01 was promoted to vice president, clinical consulting at Catamaran in Lisle, Illinois. Scott and wife Mindi **Langstraat Honken '02** live in Aurora with their two children.

Carrie Westra Schwab '01 is an administrative assistant to the president at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Carrie and husband Martin live in Abington, Pa.

Nicholas Brougham '02 is a lead solution architect for Aspect Software based in Omaha, Neb. Nicholas works from his home office in Phenix City, Ala., where he lives with wife Emma and their three children.

Angela Willis Carlson '02 is financial aid associate director at Capri College in Dubuque Iowa, where she lives with husband Leif and their son.

Jill PirkI Vande Noord '02 is a product launch coordinator at John Deere Des Moines Works. Jill and husband **Todd Vande Noord '01** live in Des Moines with their two children. Todd owns and operates DogPro Kennels.

Jon Van Heukelom '02 is an assistant professor and program director with the Department of Emergency Medicine at University of Iowa in Iowa City. Jon and wife Stefanie live in Coralville with their daughter.

Corey Vorthmann '02 was named to the Midlands Business Journal's "40 under 40," the Omaha metro area top executives and professionals list. Corey is the supervisor of



Bill Julian, a political science professor in the '70s and '80s, as well as associate academic dean, served Central for almost 20 years before moving onto Monmouth College in Illinois. He remembers his time at Central fondly—everything from debating marijuana's legalization to sleeping through a final exam.

"I had an eight o'clock final, and I slept through the thing. I get up, and I'm absolutely frantic. Fortunately it was a fairly small entry-level class so we worked out a rescheduling of it," he says with a laugh.

Retiring after more than 40 years in academia, Julian moved to mountainous Loveland, Colo., to be closer to two of his daughters and granddaughter. But there are a few things he misses about the Midwest.

"What I liked about Iowa is that I was treated very well by just about everybody while I was there. We have very good memories of Pella."

Read the full Q&A with Bill Julian online at civitas.central.edu. civitas.central.edu.



secondary education for the Council Bluffs Community School District. Corey and wife Annie live in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Alexis Marshall '03 and Justin Shipman were married July 20. Alexis teaches third grade in the Oskaloosa School District. Alexis and Justin live in Oskaloosa with her son.

Amanda Cox Struthers '03 is senior health informatics solutions coordinator at Telligen in West Des Moines. Amanda and husband Phillip live in Norwalk with their daughter.

Jamie Hosek '04 of Marshalltown, Iowa, is an information center analyst at Emerson Process Management.

Matthew McCombs '04 is EVP/chief operating officer at DHCU Community Credit Union in Moline, Ill. Matthew and wife Angie live in Bettendorf, Iowa, with their two daughters.

Megan Trotman Eaton '05 is a part-time preschool teacher for Highland School District in Riverside, Iowa, where husband **Clay Eaton '06** is an elementary physical education teacher. Megan and Clay live in Washington with their son.

Rachel Bohan '06 and Matt Murphy of Coralville, Iowa, were married Oct. 6. Rachel is a physical therapist at Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Iowa City.

Adam Gregg '06 began his duties as legislative liaison for the Governor Branstad Administration in December. Adam and wife **Cari Rehder Gregg '07** live in Johnston. Cari is a commercial banker at Wells Fargo in Des Moines.

Trent Powers '06 and Kimberly Johnson of Newton, Iowa, were married Aug 18. Trent teaches math at Berg Middle School in Newton.

Jamee Russell '06 and Christopher King of Des Moines were married March 17. Jamee works from home as a processor for Nationwide Insurance.

Rodger Blum '07 is a systems engineer at Rockwell Collins Inc. in Cedar Rapids,

Iowa, where wife **Chelsey Keller Blum '07** is a software engineer. Rodger and Chelsey live in Anamosa with their daughter.

Zac Bailey '08 is the recipient of the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for Valor in Combat for actions taken during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Zac is a lance corporal with the 3rd Battalion 7th Marines as an 81 mm mortar forward observer in Weapons Company stationed at 29 Palms, Calif.

Lindee Russell Jeneary '08 is an income maintenance supervisor with the Iowa Department of Human Services in Des Moines, where she lives with husband **Phillip Jeneary '07**. Phil is a loan document specialist at Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.

Michael Luce '08 of Shizuoka, Japan, is the oral communications teacher at Seiryō High School.

Elizabeth Davis VeDepo '08 is a wellness

coach at Mercy Medical Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Elizabeth and husband Lance live in Mount Vernon with their daughter.

Garra Williams '08 of Lincoln, Neb. is youth specialist III at CEDARS Home for Children.

Elizabeth Wilson '08 of Green Lake Wis., teaches seventh through twelfth grade science at Green Lake Community Schools.

Ashley Blin '09 and Scott Stronck of Omaha, Neb., were married Oct. 6.

Sarah Frese '09 of Washington, D.C., is a client relationship associate at Oxford Analytica and is working toward a master's degree in foreign service with an emphasis in Russian and Eurasian studies at Georgetown University.

Erin Kiefer '09 and Nicholas O'Halloran of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, were married Sept. 22. Erin was promoted to youth



RESPELIERS WEDS BENDA

Brian Respeliers '07 and Charlotte Benda of West Des Moines were married Aug. 4. Brian is a sales representative for fixed income sales and trading at Wells Fargo Securities in Des Moines. Pictured in the front row (left to right): **Brian Respeliers '07** and Charlotte Benda Respeliers. Second row: **Kathy Pilling Hagewood '04**, **Josh McCollam '08**, **Brett Jones '07**, **Andy Green '08**, **Ben Bollard '07**, **Dave Schildberg '09**, **Brianne Schumann Schildberg '09**, **Teddy Clark '09**, **Bryan George '06**, **Marty Hagewood '07**, **Matt Hagewood '06**, **Jake Pearson '05**, **Alex Miller '10**. Back row: **Adam Wolf '07**, **Brett Dietrich '08** and **Michael McLoughlin '06**.



Nicholas Rohner '08 of Pella and **Neil Schuerer '77** connected at Eagle Lake outside of Colorado Springs in October, thanks to a few phone calls from **Britt Cooper '12**, who is on staff at Eagle Lake Camps. Neal, who is director of development at Glen Eyrie in Colorado Springs, and Nick, who is the worship/ministry team director at Central College, both brought volunteer groups to help with forest restoration after Britt informed them of the need. **Bob Vermeer '66** and brother Stan of Pella helped them acquire a Vermeer chipper, which was used to complete the project. Nick's group of volunteers are pictured, first row (left to right): **Hillary Stintzman '14**, **Anna Dickerson '13**, **Brandon Fritz '15**, **Aly Garwood '15**, **Kacie Carpenter '15** and **Blair Berhow-Goll '14**. Second row: **Megan Utterback '16**, **Patsy Snead '14**, **Allison Wood '16**, **Ashlyn Huegel '16**, **Alicia Huegel '15**, **Whitney Abrahamson '14**, **Tayler Keitzer '13**, **Sarah Calderwood '14**, **Bekah Docter '15** and **Jordan Drake '16**. Back row: **Alan McCleary '14**, **Aaron Grieger '15**, **Jakob Steenhoek '15**, **Michael DeJode '15**, **Caleb Edgerly '13**, **Ricky Boyle '14**, **Elizabeth Benson '14**, **Palmer Scott '13**, **Nick Rohner '08** and **Jake Klopfenstein '14**.

development coordinator for Jane Boyd Community House and is the summer camp director.

THE '10S

For information about **Kerry Van Hemert '10**, **Jameson Rosien '11**, **Aaron Steenhoek '11** and **Justin Von Ahsen '11**, see Class of 2012.

Angela Berry '10 and Nathan Chaney of Ottumwa, Iowa, were married on Sept. 15. Angela teaches history at Ottumwa High School, where she is also the head cross country coach.

Lindsay Sevde '10 is an intermediate service representative at Transamerica Life Insurance in Denver, Colo.

Austin Patton '11 is a direct loan servicing coordinator at Aspire Resources Inc. in West Des Moines. Austin and wife **Megan Ewoldt Patton '10** live in Ankeny; Megan is an admission counselor at Mercy College of Health Science in Des Moines.

CLASS OF 2012

For more information about **Britt Cooper**, see the '00s.

Ashley Albaugh of Waterloo, Iowa, is

math in the Pella Community School District.

Paige Blythe teaches eighth through twelfth grade Spanish at Sioux Central High School in Sioux Rapids, Iowa.

Anna Boelman is working toward a degree in nursing from Northern Iowa Area Community College in Mason City.

Jessica Bonthuis is a lab technician at Aerotek in Ames, Iowa.

Timothy Bosch is pursuing an advanced degree from the University of Iowa.

Nicole Boyd teaches in the Pella Community School District.

Eric Bridges is a member of The Rose Theatre Company in Omaha, Neb.

Travis Brooks is a personal trainer at Aspen Athletics in Des Moines.

Kathryn Bruxvoort of Bondurant is a claims customer service representative at Nationwide Insurance in Des Moines.

Chelsea Catalano is a volunteer with AmeriCorps St. Louis Emergency Response in St. Louis, Mo.

James Celeste is a staff auditor at Deloitte and Touche in Davenport, Iowa.

Deanna Chapline of Ogden, Iowa, is a teacher, counselor and mentor at Woodward Academy in Woodward.

Ben Chestnut of Dulce, New Mexico, teaches physical education and is also the head football coach at Dulce Independent School.

Emily Ciha is an assistant athletic trainer at Central College.

Alyssa Cobie is pursuing an advanced degree from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Elizabeth Cook is pursuing a degree in physical, occupational and speech therapy at Midwestern University in Downers Grove, Ill.

Britt Cooper of Colorado Springs, Colo., is at rez counselor at Navigators Eagle Lake Camps.

Morgan Darrow is in a full-time sales position at Hibbett Sports in Storm Lake, Iowa.

Sarah David is a teller at Peoples Savings Bank in Carlisle, Iowa.

Angela Davis is a district manager at Aldi in Davenport, Iowa.

Danielle Dickinson teaches English and speech at Coon Rapids-Bayard High School in Coon Rapids, Iowa.

Allison Drees teaches secondary science at Saydel High School in Saylor, Iowa.

Bethany Druvenga of Norfolk, Va., is a graduate student at Old Dominion University and a graduate assistant athletic trainer at Norfolk State University.

Tyler Duff is working toward a master's degree in accounting and business at

Thunderbird University in Phoenix, Ariz.

Taylor Eaton of Dallas Center, Iowa, is a service coordinator at Candeo.

Jessica Edler is working toward a master's degree in education from Indiana State University in Terra Haute.

Christopher Ellerston of Pella is director of choral activities grades 5-12 at Eddyville-Blakesburg-Fremont Community School District and choral director at First Baptist Church in Pella.

Shelby Elscott is a behavioral health intervention specialist at Advanced Therapy Solutions in Newton, Iowa.

Adriana Espinosa is a customer service representative for Aviva USA in Des Moines.

Adam Feenstra of Ames is pursuing a doctorate in analytical chemistry at Iowa State University.

Samantha Fink is a strategist I special education teacher in the Bettendorf Community School District in Bettendorf, Iowa.

Haley Fischer is a level III special education teacher at Berg Elementary School in Newton, Iowa.

Teresa Fox is a community living assistant at Behavior Intervention Services in St. Louis, Mo.

Megan Fry teaches English as a second language for ELIC.

Brandon Geib is pursuing a juris doctorate from Drake University Law School in Des Moines.

Mallori Ghent teaches third grade in the Marshalltown Community School District in Marshalltown, Iowa.

Jacob Gillespie is an estimator at Cornerstone Commercial Contractor in Corning, Iowa.

Sarah Glendening is pursuing a master's degree in social work at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Amy Goehring of Fairfield, Iowa, works in the department of data administration at Cambridge Investments Research.

Amy Golly is working toward an advanced degree from the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Brent Goodenow is assistant men's golf coach at Central College.

Dustin Green of Pella is desktop system administrator in the IT department at Central College.

Chelsea Grieger of Pella is a copywriter intern in the Central Communications office at Central College, where she is also an assistant volleyball coach.

Kendra Haack of Newton, Iowa, is an AmeriCorps Vista.

Whitney Halder teaches high school Spanish in the Pleasantville Community School District in Pleasantville, Iowa.

Adam Hale and **Jacqueline Hauber '13** of Pella were married June 9. Adam is a substitute teacher in the Pella area and also works part time at Royal Amsterdam Hotel in Pella and Image First in Grinnell, while Jacqueline completes her last semester at Central.

Seth Harris is a tennis teaching professional at Ames Racquet & Fitness Club in Ames, Iowa.

Stehanie Heiken is pursuing an advanced degree from American University in Washington, D.C.

Brady Hill is pursuing a master's degree in strength and conditioning at Siena Heights University in Adrian, Mich.

Miranda Holdsworth is a youth associate at Lutheran Services in Iowa in Ames.

Matthew Ibbotson of Newton is a grounds utility worker II at Central College.

Shayna Jacobs of Pella is an assistant volleyball coach at Central College.

Celeste James of Davenport, Iowa, is an auditor at Deloitte & Touche.

Jenae Jenison is deputy communications director in the office of Governor Terry E. Branstad in Des Moines.

James Jensen is a family support worker with the Child Abuse Council in Rock Island, Ill.

Russell Katz is a personal trainer at Anytime Fitness Corp. in Pella.

Patrick Kelley is a help desk specialist I at Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company in West Des Moines.

Ashley Kinkade is a volunteer with AmeriCorps: Iowa State of Promise in Ames.

Lydia Kosbau is a bilingual tutor at Rogers School in Marshalltown, Iowa.

Caitlin Kouba is an accountant in the financial development program with John

Deere in Torrance, Calif. **Johnathan Kowalik** is a research assistant at CRD Advisors in Kelley, Iowa.

Sarah Kramer teaches second grade at Prairie City Elementary School in Prairie City, Iowa.

Robert Kreiser of Minonk, Ill., is an assurance associate at McGladrey Pullen.

Ashley Kruger of Lawrence is a grad assistant in the University Career Center at University of Kansas.

Michael Lamos of Montezuma, Iowa, is an e-commerce coordinator at Brownells, Inc.

Heath Larsen is working toward a master's degree in health sciences at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Trinh Le-Coulter is a legal assistant at Rittgers Law Office in Des Moines.

Melanie Louis of Davenport, Iowa, is a day camp teaching assistant at Taproot.

Abby Lukensmeyer of Hampton, Iowa, is employed by the Chewonki Foundation.

Christine Lundgren teaches Kindergarten through third grade special education at Pella Community Schools.

Kelly Martin is a milieu treatment counselor at Orchard Place in Des Moines.

Justin Marx is a loan specialist II at Wells Fargo in West Des Moines.

Kristin Mathews is a preschool teacher at Koalaty Time in Urbandale, Iowa.

Renae Mauk of Windsor Heights is a marketing specialist at Marsh & McLennan Companies, Inc. in Urbandale, Iowa.

Bo McBee is a personal trainer at Aspen Athletic Club in Des Moines.

Donnie McMahan is an IT specialist at Mahaska Bottling Company in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

Alison Miller is working toward a master's degree in health sciences from Miami



Cassie Elsloo and **Dustin Hagen** of Knoxville, Iowa, were married May 26. Cassie is a veterinarian's assistant at Knoxville Vet Clinic. Pictured (left to right): **Sarah Glendening '12**, **Megan Walker '13**, **Cassie Elsloo Hagen '12**, **Kailea Fry '12**, and **Liz Hasenmiller '12**.



KLEIS WEDS ROSIEN

Alexandra Kleis and **Jameson Rosien** '11 of Grimes were married Aug. 4. Alex is an office assistant at Work Systems Rehab and Fitness in Ames, and Jameson works as an executive mortgage specialist in the Office of the President at Wells Fargo Home Mortgage in West Des Moines. Pictured First row (left to right): **Kurtis Brondyke** '11, **Jameson Rosien** '11 and **Alex Kleis Rosien** '12. Second row: **Lacey Merfeld** '12, **Stephanie Brammer** '12, **Mallory Sturtz** '13, **Shayna Jacobs** '12, **Ashley Ellingson** '11, **Stephanie Hasken** '13, **Molly Potts** '14, **Liz Clancy** '13, **Gabbi Muse** '15, **Morgan Gray** '13 and **Mike Kobylinski** '03. Third row: **Barbara Hoekstra Brondyke** '78, **Taryn Pennington** '13, **Alyssa Brobst** '09, **Kristi Klatt** '11, **Samantha Retz** '13, **Ashley Veigelt** '07, **Haley Brillhart** '12, **Shane Wong**, **Kiley Meyers** '12, **Maggie Snyder** '12, **Carmen Siert Alexander** '10, **Drew Kleis** '14, **Brent Schumacher** '06, **Mackenzie Taylor** '10, **Tess Reinig** '13 and **Denise Eley Brillhart** '84. Fourth row: **Sam Vande Weerd** '86, **Kay Van Wyk** '85, **Jill Van Zee Vande Weerd** '86, **Drew Cinelli**, **Liz Arentsen** '10, **Craig Wassenaar** '84, **Kelsey Schuring Boot** '12, **Lyle Van Wyk** '85, **Sage Van Wyk**, **Jack Shipley** '14, **Colton Smith** '13, **Jackson Leuschen** '12, **Cole Henderson** '11, **Travis Smith** '11, **Tyler Alexander** '11, **Greg Best** '11, **Zack Bandow** '11, **Matthew Patrick** '10 and **Jordan Gegner** '10. Fifth row: **Jeff Rosien** '80, **Mike Kleis** '86, **Ann Isgrig** '81, **Dawn DeBoer Kleis** '86, **Austin Hill** '11, **Matthew Graber** '11, **Joey Shoemaker** '11, **Joel Mudd** '11, **Stan Sturtz** '81 and **Jeff Isgrig** '81.

University of Ohio in Oxford.

Allison Miller is working toward a juris doctorate from Drake University Law School in Des Moines.

Phillip Miller is working toward an advanced degree from Dakota County Technical College in Rosemount, Minn.

Svitlana Korostelova Miller is a site specialist at Buena Vista University.

Elizabeth Moore of Clarion, Iowa, is assistant grain merchandiser at North Central Grain Cooperative.

Michelle Ness is working toward a degree in medicine including physician's assistant at Des Moines University in Des Moines.

Abbie Nielsen teaches third grade in the Hampton Dumont School District in Hampton, Iowa.

Abigayle Norman is working toward a master's degree in communications and international marketing at University of Surrey in Guildford, England.

Virginia Norrgard teaches IB algebra, trigonometry and general math at William C. Hinkley High School in Aurora, Colo.

Kayla Northup is working toward a

master's degree in physical, occupational and speech therapy from Midwestern Illinois in Downers Grove.

Will Overlander of Argyle, Texas, is an outreach staff assistant for Congressman Michael Burgess in Lewisville.

Tori Paris is a volunteer with Iowa Public Health Association AmeriCorps HealthCorps in Des Moines.

Mathew Patten is a lead android developer at Pongr in Des Moines.

Emily Phillips of Cedar Falls is a youth specialist with Lutheran Services in Iowa at Bremwood Lutheran Children's Home in Waverly.

Ryan Phipps is working toward a master's degree in health sciences from University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Kathryn Quandahl is a milieu treatment counselor at Orchard Place in Des Moines.

Kirby Rock is clubhouse manager at Clinton LumberKings Baseball Club in Clinton, Iowa.

Nate Rouse teaches high school Spanish at Red Oak High School in Red Oak, Iowa.

Elizabeth Sanders is a preschool

associate at Pella Community Schools in Pella.

Heidi Sartorius is an athletic trainer intern at Northwestern Oklahoma State University in Alva.

Ryan Schmidt is a temporary prairie specialist with Iowa Department of Natural Resources in Lehigh.

Amy Schmitt is a volunteer with AmeriCorps Vista in Marion, Iowa.

Joel Schnell is the youth director at Trinity Reformed Church.

Patrick Schroeder of Urbandale, Iowa, is an accountant at Iowa Realty Company.

Taylor Schuelke volunteers at Many Hands for Haiti in Pignon.

Jason Schultz is a principal analyst at Cambridge Investment Research, Inc. in Fairfield, Iowa.

Maxwell Seeman is a physical education instructor in the Baxter Community School District in Baxter, Iowa.

Lauren Setterdahl is working toward a degree in physical, occupational and speech therapy at Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines.

Rachel Shaffer works at Living Court Assisted Living in Enumclaw, Wash.

Sarah Shimon of Iowa City is a master PLAYologist at Iowa Children's Museum in Coralville.

Alex Shockley is a member of the Iowa Theatre Artists Company in Amana, Iowa.

Kailey Short is a customer service representative at ING in Des Moines.

Arica Siglin is a youth development specialist at Children and Families of Iowa in Des Moines.

Casey Silvers is a hospice and home health office manager at Pella Regional Health Center in Pella.

Nate Snead of Altoona is sales manager at American Concrete/OMG Midwest in Des Moines.

Margaret Snyder teaches Spanish and physical education at St. Mary's Elementary School in Alexandria, Minn.

Erin Sondag of Ottumwa, Iowa, is a Title I reading teacher at Evans Middle School.

Abigail Sparks of Austin, Minn., is a tax accountant at Hormel Foods Corp.

Bailey Steere of Tipton, Iowa, teaches fourth grade at Tipton Community Schools.

Megan Stoullil of Austin, Minn., is a staff accountant at Hormel Foods Corp.

Megan Strait is a research associate, tumor immunology at NewLink Genetics in Ames, Iowa.

Kayla Swartzendruber teaches social studies and reading at Keota Junior and Senior High School in Keota, Iowa.

Alexandria Swigart is a resource center

coordinator at Cambridge Investment Research Inc., in Fairfield, Iowa.

Coilin Tadlock is employed by the Republican Party of Iowa in Davenport.

Rachelle Talbott is a volunteer at the Iowa Campus Compact AmeriCorps Program in Pella.

Casey Tanner teaches fourth grade for Orient-Macksburg Community Schools in Orient, Iowa.

Riley Taylor is an accountant and data processor at LI Leonard Logistics in Cedar Rapids.

Lucy Thoms is an AmeriCorps VISTA and program assistant at Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation in Grinnell, Iowa.

Joseph Toale is attending dentistry school at University of Iowa in Iowa City.

Emily Tonarelli is employed by Iowa Health Systems in Johnston, Iowa.

Hannah Totten teaches seventh grade language arts at Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Amanda Tower teaches secondary science at Carlisle High School in Carlisle, Iowa.

Amanda Trusty of Ankeny, Iowa, is a staff member at InterVarsity Christian Fellowship USA. Health Systems in Johnston, Iowa.

Hannah Totten teaches seventh grade language arts at Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Amanda Tower teaches secondary science at Carlisle High School in Carlisle, Iowa.

Amanda Trusty of Ankeny, Iowa, is a staff member at InterVarsity Christian Fellowship USA.

Jessica Uren is pursuing an advanced degree from the University of Sheffield in Sheffield, Okla.

Kelsey Howard Van Hemert is a children's ministry leader at theBridge in Ottumwa, Iowa, where she lives with husband **Kerry Van Hemert** '10. Kerry is systems administrator at theBridge and manager of The Vine Coffeehouse.

Courtney Van Wyk teaches middle school science in the Newton Community School District in Newton, Iowa.

Kimberly Van Zee is a behavioral health intervention specialist at Advanced Therapy Solutions in Pella.

Matthew Vegter is an operations trainee at Farmers Cooperative in Yale, Iowa.

Danielle Vesneske is an elementary special education teacher at West Central Valley Community Schools in Stuart, Iowa.

Chrystal Belz Von Ahsen of Creston, Iowa, teaches Kindergarten through twelfth grade music at Orient-Macksburg Community Schools in Orient. Chrystal's husband **Justin Von Ahsen** '11 is a graduate teaching assistant at Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo., where he is pursuing a master's degree in music with dual emphases in music theory and trumpet performance.

Holly Von Fumetti of Johnston is a marketing intern at American Concrete/OMG Midwest in Des Moines.

Brandon Wagner of Pella is a training and development specialist at Vermeer Corp.

Cynthia Walker is a DLS loan counselor at Aspire Resources Inc., in West Des Moines.

Margaret Wehde is a Title I reading specialist at North Cedar Community School in Mechanicsville, Iowa.

Rachel Whiteside is employed by the Iowa Juvenile Home in Toledo, Iowa.

Liberty Wickman teaches English at Associazione Culturale Linguistica in San Remo, Italy.

Michael Wiederin is an accountant at TD&T in Pella.

Beau Williams is a sales and marketing assistant at Iowa Speedway in Newton, Iowa.

Brennan Williams teaches junior high social studies in the Mt. Pleasant School District in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa.

Caitlin Wilson is a behavioral health technician at Boys Town Research Hospital in Omaha, Neb.

Nathan Wolff of Urbandale, Iowa, is employed by Pepsi Beverages Company.

Hannah Worrall is working toward an advanced degree from Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines.

Justin Wyckoff of Carlisle, Iowa, is an insurance agent at Goodhue Nolte Insurance.

David Ziemann is a web developer at Hatchlings in Des Moines.



SAMPSON WEDS SCHIPPER

Kylie Sampson and **Leland Schipper** of Iowa City were married May 25. Kylie is a preschool teacher at Lone Tree Community School. Pictured front row (left to right): **Kylie Sampson Schipper** and **Leland Schipper**. Second row: **Paige Blythe**, **Sarah Shimon**, **Lindsey von Gillern** '13, **Jessi Steward** '10 and **Shayna Jacobs**. Third row: **Taylor Schuelke**, **Amanda Tower**, **Megan Gray**, **Elizabeth Cook**, **Lindley Roorda Visser** '11, **Felica Shunk** '13, **Tyler Schipper** '09, **Kara Sampson Schulte** '98 and **Rich Schulte** '92. Back row: **Jodi Svendsen Bosscher** '97, **Mark Bosscher** '98, **Hunter Viedenkamp**, **Lucas Sampson**, **Spencer Meyer**, **Mark Visser** '11, **Jack Bruns**, **KJ McQuerrey** and **Jon Schroeder**.

ADVANCED DEGREES

William Pooock '93, master's degree in educational leadership with Iowa Principal License, University of Iowa, July

Rachel Bohan Murphy '02, doctorate of physical therapy, Des Moines University, May, 2009

ARRIVALS

Xiaobo Li and **Harsha Pelimuhandiram '87**, son Milan Li, June 4

Ben and **Rebecca Koning Perry '97**, daughter Elizabeth Grace, Nov. 27

John and **Julie Vander Woude Worden '98**, daughter Lydia Ann, Aug. 8

Justin '99 and **Kirstin Van Rooyan Hagerty '00**, daughter Laiken Rose, March 20

Josh and **Julie Wisse Lautenbach '01**, son Drake Jonah, Feb. 20

Todd '01 and **Jill PirkI Vande Noord '02**, son Field Thomas, April 30

Jake '03 and **Nichole Rottinghaus Knepper '02**, daughter Leah Ane, Nov. 21, 2011

Nick and **Amber Turner Schenck '03**, son Dawson Thomas, May 5, 2011

Clay '06 and **Megan Trotman Eaton '05**, son Charley David, Oct. 18, 2011

Nic and **Jennifer Rinehart-Lynch '05**, son Callen Nicolas, Sept. 7

Rodger '07 and **Chelsey Keller Blum '07**, daughter Addison Denae, Aug. 17

Lance and **Elizabeth Davis Vedepo '08**, daughter Madeline Elizabeth, Sept. 23, 2011

Ashley Vajgrt '10, son Sawyer Emerson, May 11

Paul '10 and **Brooke Nederhoff O'Kane '07**,

daughter Emma Rae, Oct. 3

IN MEMORIAM

Dorothy Roelofs Poppen '29 of Orange City, Iowa, Oct. 21

Shirley De Haan Afman '45 of Santa Barbara, Calif., Sept. 19

Marian Brown Kempkes '47 of Urbandale, Iowa, Oct. 17

Emma Beans Mack '48 of Hatfield, Pa., Oct. 14

Richard Jordan '60 of Boerne, Texas, Sept. 27

Robert "RD" Brown '76 of St. Paul, Minn., Oct. 7

Rochelle Inman Davis '96 of Davenport, Iowa, Oct. 21

Bethany Phichit '13 of Des Moines, Nov. 21

Meet the Future

For the November Meet the Pros event, alumni who work for the government returned to campus to meet with future professionals in their field—Central students.



Neeeeeee Caption.



Photo by Linda ???

The Cheerleader

"It has been a wonderful relationship since I found out about Central, and I have been totally connected ever since."



In 1977, David Merriman '79 was in the library at Lincoln College, where he was finishing his associate's degree, when he pulled a random college catalog from the shelf. There on the cover was the Pond. "It was a magical moment," says Merriman. "I somehow knew this was the place for me."

Looking to transfer, Merriman visited Central, where he fell in love with the beautiful campus and charming town. Coming in as a junior, he majored in business and history and made lifelong friends and a lifelong connection to the place.

"It has been a wonderful relationship since I found out about Central, and I have been totally connected ever since."

Merriman now lives and works in the Chicago suburbs, doing technical training for a fleet management company. "I always feel that I owe part of my salary back to Central because I wouldn't have that salary without it."

That's one reason Merriman chose to include Central in his estate plan, naming Central a beneficiary of his trust, a decision he calls a no-brainer. He believes everything in his life revolves around his Central degree.

It's this kind of enthusiasm that makes Merriman jest he could be a male cheerleader for the Dutch.

"Central is a kind of Disneyland for me! It's a wonderful place a lot of people have never experienced."

Like David Merriman, it's easy to include Central in your estate planning.

To confidentially discuss all gift planning opportunities, contact the advancement office at 800-447-0287 or email morrisond@central.edu. To find out if a planned gift will work for you, visit www.central.edu/go/plannedgiving.

For most of the time Phil Jeneary '07 was at Central, Meet the Pros wasn't yet a reality. It would have been the kind of event this account associate at LS2group, a government and public affairs firm, would have loved to attend.

Instead, he returned in November, as a professional who works in government, this event's theme. "This is a way I could give back, in a sense, to Central," Jeneary says. Students asked about his involvement in presidential campaigns, what the campaign lifestyle was like and how to get involved in the field. "Overall, the students had really insightful questions, and I feel I opened some of their eyes to how the real world is and what employers expect."

The Career Center began Meet the Pros five years ago and hosts 2-3 events a year, inviting alumni from specific fields to campus to talk about their jobs and network with students. On Nov. 13, nearly 30 alumni who graduated from

1978 to 2011 participated.

The most illustrious alumna in attendance was Bernadette Allen '78, former U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Niger, who spent 30 years in the U.S. diplomatic service. She was a favorite of the students, too, who picked her brain on how to get involved in Foreign Service.

Scott Peasley '95, a special agent with the Division of Criminal Investigation in Iowa, advised students to take advantage of what they already have—the solid written and verbal communication skills Central excels at teaching. Sharing the impact of the Central experience in the classroom, abroad and in extracurricular activities with a prospective employer can land students a job, says Peasley. "Central's liberal arts education with opportunities to study abroad can make graduates stand out when applying."

Sophomore Isabelle Hicks came to

Meet the Pros because she has no idea what she wants to do after graduation. She ended up talking to Ronnie Cyrus-Jackson '02, a budget analysis at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "She told me to strive to make the work I do fun and that if I don't like what I choose to do at first, not to feel pressure to stay," says Hicks. "I learned that as a young professional, you have time to switch jobs and look for opportunities that are enjoyable."

Everyone in Graham Hall that autumn day had one thing in common: a shared Central experience. That connection was enough for the alumni to see something of themselves in the students—and to see a future for them, too. "Connections are one of the most important things to accomplish while in college," says sophomore Allison Zuel, "because they help students go farther than they ever imagined."



Alumni Spotlight



Chartering a Radical Course

Justin Tiarks '06 knew he would dedicate his life to service, but he didn't know how much of an impact he would make after just a few short years. After graduating from Central with an elementary education degree and endorsements in special education and

reading, Tiarks snagged a job in Des Moines teaching fourth and fifth grades at a school with underprivileged students. Soon realizing he couldn't understand what his students' lives were really like, he took a year off and worked full-time in a homeless shelter.

"I learned what it was like to live in a neighborhood ravaged by drugs and gangs," he says. "I befriended broken men at the homeless shelter and saw what life could turn into for my students without the radical intervention a quality education can provide."

After finding his true passion, Tiarks got hitched and moved to St. Paul, Minn., with his wife and began teaching at a charter school, St. Paul City School. A pre-K to eighth grade school in the Frogtown neighborhood, Tiarks teaches fifth grade, where two-thirds of the students are English language learners and the population is primarily Latino, Hmong and African American.

After just a few years at the school, Tiarks was nominated to be the board chair of the board of directors. He feels privileged to take on the role and help students find their passion in life. "We have a huge population of immigrant families at our school, and we are the hope their children have of making a better life for themselves," says Tiarks. "It's a blessing to be a part of every day!"

Read more about _____
at civitas.central.edu!

