

Civitas

CENTRAL COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

LET'S SAVE THE MONARCHS

Central students help research and restore monarch habitats.

CENTRAL CONNECTIONS IN HD

Two '98 grads created paths from Central to full-time film careers.

P. 13

A WORLD SERIES WINNER

Ben Christian '07 leads partnership marketing for the Kansas City Royals.



The Test of Time

by Mark Putnam, Central College president



In the next stage of the Forever Dutch initiative, Central celebrated groundbreaking for the expansion and renovation of P.H. Kuyper Gymnasium.

“Central College is 163 years old.” I love saying that. We use phrases like “enduring legacy,” “generational commitment” and “rich history” so often we sometimes take for granted our inheritance as a Central family.

There is a special room in the Graham Conference Center recently named for professor emerita Bette Brunsting, '56 through the generous donations of her extended family. This space is a warm and welcoming lounge area that greets members of our campus community and guests as they attend various events and activities. The room displays the portraits of our past presidents throughout Central's history. I sometimes refer to this space as the “Hogwarts” room as it reminds me of the fictional headmaster's office in the Harry Potter series. In that magical office, the past headmasters, through their

portraits, can consult and provide service to the current office holder. From time to time I stand quietly in the Brunsting Room thinking about words like legacy and heritage. I have never been caught speaking to the portraits and I decline to comment on whether any of them have ever spoken to me. What I do know is that Central continues to thrive because we stand on the shoulders of giants.

Even better than the portraits, my great privilege is having my four immediate predecessors still available to me for face-to-face conversations. I can reach back more than 50 years to hear firsthand stories of triumph and challenges each of them faced, and I have spent time with each learning more about my work today that is deeply rooted in all they devoted themselves to achieve. It's an amazing gift.

The hallmarks of enduring quality are everywhere on campus as tradition lives hand-in-hand with innovation.

- Just think...
- This fall we will commemorate 100 years of affiliation with the Reformed Church in America during our Heritage Day celebration. We owe a deep debt of gratitude for the courage it took to preserve this institution.
 - Last year we celebrated 50 years of study abroad and now build on that legacy by diversifying our international programs to embrace Global Experiential Learning.
 - Our TRiO programs, like Upward Bound, emerged with our first federal grant in 1966, and we celebrate half a century of commitment with more than 16,000 students engaged in these programs.
 - Our Forever Dutch initiative was announced this year, and we celebrated our groundbreaking for the expansion and renovation of P.H. Kuyper Gymnasium, commemorating the original groundbreaking in 1968.
 - Programmatic innovations have become campus-wide traditions and live on in examples like Mock Trial (since 1985); The Writing Anthology (since 1981); our Vruwink Glass Blowing Studio (since 1975); and the Candlelight Concert (since 1974).
 - The fun of community gathering for the Lemming Race (since 1977) and the Breakfast of Champions (since 1998) remain as annual traditions.

Our strength is drawn from our history and the ways in which we preserve that legacy. Our creativity is unleashed in the ways we build on that strong foundation. Our possibility is renewed each time we reach farther to achieve more.

Civitas^{Central College}

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Central students participate in several research and service learning opportunities to save monarch butterflies.

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Ben Christian's sports marketing career led him from Central to the San Diego Chargers, then the Kansas City Royals.



Joe Jones '98 and Naji Naufal '98 got their start making short films at Central, using 90s video equipment from the Media Center.



HARRY SMITH INTERVIEWS ACCLAIMED AUTHOR REZA ASLAN

Emmy award-winning journalist Harry Smith '73 interviewed bestselling author Reza Aslan on campus April 7. Smith and Aslan discussed topics including Islam, the Middle East, Muslim Americans and more.

Aslan, author of "Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth" and "No god but God," is professor of creative writing at the University of California, Riverside, and hosts a television series about writing: "Rough Draft with Reza Aslan."

Smith is now an NBC news correspondent and previously hosted "The Early Show" on CBS, as well as A&E's television series "Biography" and The History Channel's "Modern Marvels." His illustrious career has included interviews with international leaders from Richard Nixon to Margaret Thatcher.



GREEN DRINKS CONNECTS STUDENTS, ALUMNI IN SUSTAINABILITY

Central started a new tradition with its first Green Drinks sustainability networking event this spring. It allowed students, faculty and staff to connect with alumni, community partners and others who work in sustainability-related fields. More than 40 gathered at Iowa Taproom in Des Moines' East Village, representing a wide range of sustainability interests and professions. Their fields included: renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, affordable housing, education, urban planning, public policy, environmental engineering, land conservation and more. Students came away

with internship opportunities and connections to many sustainable organizations, such as Antea Group, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Interfaith Power and Light. Central will host Green Drinks again next year to continue expanding sustainability connections and opportunities in central Iowa and around the world.

RECORD-BREAKING CROWD ATTENDS SCHOLARSHIP DINNER

P.H. Kuyper Gymnasium was full for the 16th annual Central College Scholarship Celebration Dinner this year. More than 500 donors, trustees, students and parents gathered to meet and celebrate the spirit of generosity to Central. This celebration provides donors an opportunity to



FOREVER DUTCH CONSTRUCTION OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED

Groundbreaking for the \$15-million expansion of P.H. Kuyper Gymnasium was staged April 22, the next component of the Forever Dutch initiative. College officials honored the family of Pella Corporation founder P.H. "Pete" Kuyper (1913), who played an integral role in the development of the athletics complex. The family and their foundations teamed for a transformational \$4.2-million gift for the Forever Dutch initiative, the largest gift in Central's 163-year history. The donation included a lead gift from P.H. Kuyper's daughter, M. Joan Farver '88H, Chair Emerita of Pella Corporation and a Central College emerita trustee.

The gymnasium expansion will provide a new south entrance with high visual impact, including an atrium, expanded lobby, Hall of Honor and All-America corridor, highlighting more than 200 of the college's most decorated student-athletes. An expansion to the west will create space for new varsity locker rooms for men's and women's squads, a new wrestling room and an enlarged area for a hitting cage for softball, baseball and men's/women's golf. Also included are major infrastructure replacements and enhancements for the 47-year-old building.

Fundraising continues for the second component of phase two, an interior renovation that will provide a new team meeting space, new offices, athletic training room improvements and recruitment space. Additional practice and competition space could follow. The initial expansion is expected to be completed in early 2017.

meet scholarship recipients — and for Central students and their parents to say a personal "Thank you!"

CENTRAL SERVES 2,523 HOURS DURING SERVICE DAY

Central students, faculty and staff served 2,523 hours with community partners throughout central Iowa during Service Day April 26. More than 700 volunteers participated in dozens of different projects in Pella, Des Moines, Knoxville, Newton, Otley, Oskaloosa, Ottumwa and West Des Moines.

Every year since 2006, Central has set aside a day for campus members to volunteer together. Many also participate in service opportunities throughout the year. Last year, Central was a winner of the first Give Back

Iowa Challenge, an honor given to Iowa employers with the highest average number of volunteer hours per employee.

Central has also been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll With Distinction for four consecutive years, the only school in Iowa to do so. The honor roll is the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement.

ARCHIVES PRESERVE STUDENT NEWS SINCE 1876

Central has preserved more than 125 years of history through The Ray and Pelican, its student newspaper and yearbook. Original copies had begun

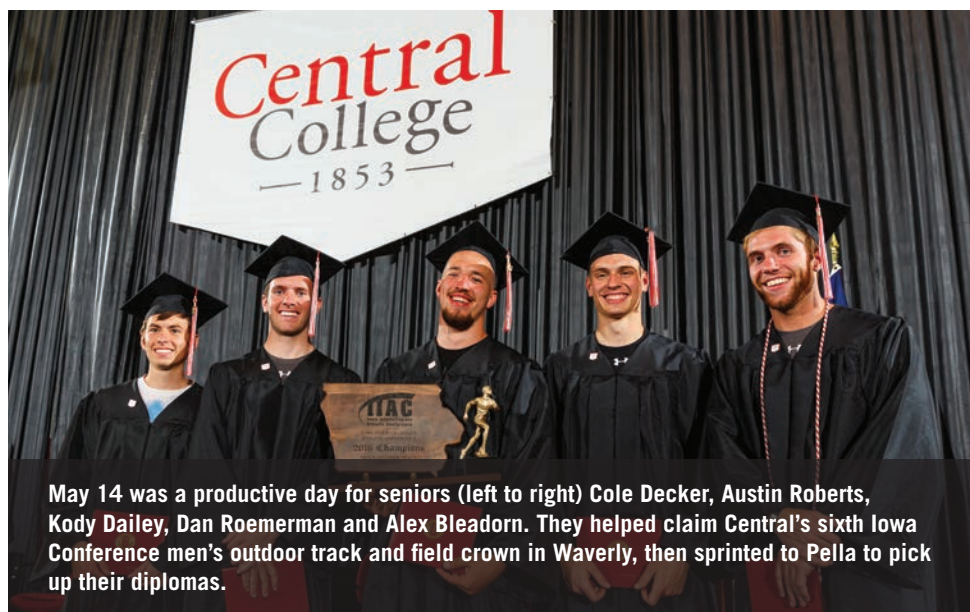
to crumble, but a permanent digital archive now makes these publications available to readers anywhere.

Central's alumni office partnered with Advantage Companies in Cedar Rapids to complete the digitization project, supported by grants and gifts from the State of Iowa Historical Research Development Program, MidWestOne Foundation, Geisler Library, Central College Student Senate and Central alumni.

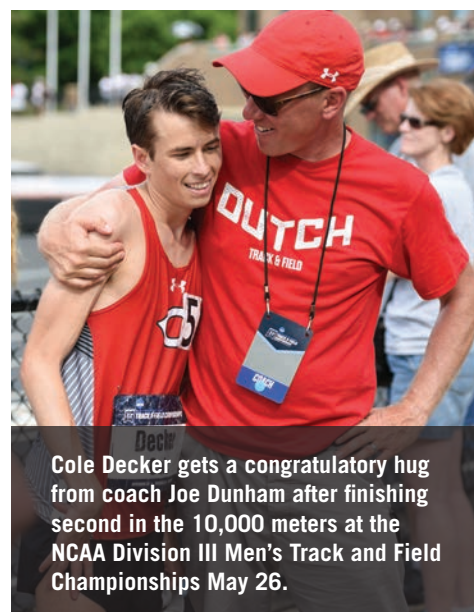
The Ray dates back to 1876 and the Pelican to 1907. Users can search by date, keyword or name at centralcollege.advantage-preservation.com.

by Larry Happel '81

ANOTHER LEAGUE MEN'S TRACK CROWN, TOP-10 NCAA FINISH FOR DUTCH



May 14 was a productive day for seniors (left to right) Cole Decker, Austin Roberts, Kody Dailey, Dan Roerman and Alex Bleadorn. They helped claim Central's sixth Iowa Conference men's outdoor track and field crown in Waverly, then sprinted to Pella to pick up their diplomas.



Cole Decker gets a congratulatory hug from coach Joe Dunham after finishing second in the 10,000 meters at the NCAA Division III Men's Track and Field Championships May 26.

A pair of national runner-up finishes propelled the Central men's track and field squad to a sixth-place team finish at the NCAA Division III Championships in Waverly May 25-27.

Central's seventh top-10 national team finish—and its highest since 2001—followed its sixth Iowa Conference outdoor crown in coach Joe Dunham's eight seasons, after earlier capturing the league's indoor title.

So much for expectations of a rebuilding year in 2016 for the Dutch dynasty.

Senior Cole Decker put the finishing touches on one of the most impressive distance running careers in program history by placing second in the national 10,000 meters in 30:49.33. He followed that with a seventh-place effort less than 48 hours later in the 5,000 (14:42.29). Decker was

a three-time outdoor track all-America honoree and league indoor MVP after earning all-America distinction last fall in cross country, where he was also a two-time conference MVP and Central Region athlete of the year.

The book is not yet closed on junior Logan Mulford, who was second in the NCAA high jump. He soared 6-10.75 inches, losing the title on the basis of fewest misses.

Meanwhile senior Dan Roerman, the conference track MVP, broke his own school record to take third in the 110-meter hurdles (14.19 seconds).

Central shared 58th in the women's division, as two relay squads placed, giving the Dutch eight men's and women's all-America honorees.

The unit of seniors Abi Davis, Ashlee Downs and Monica Ruiz and freshman Hope Heitman was seventh in the 4x100-meter relay in 47.38 seconds, after breaking a 34-year-old school record in the preliminaries at 47.27.

Downs, sophomore Kate Patton, Heitman and Davis were also seventh in the 4x400-meter relay (3:48.94).

Davis also competed in the 100 and 200 at the national meet but failed to place. She was a four-time all-America honoree for the Dutch while claiming seven league outdoor titles and eight indoor crowns. She was the conference indoor track MVP a year ago and took outdoor MVP honors twice.



Senior West Adelman was a four-time all-conference men's tennis honoree in both singles and doubles.

SOFTBALL TEAM FLASHING PROMISE AS NCAA CONTENDER

NFCA Hall of Fame softball coach George Wares loves a challenge.

He's the winningest coach in Division III history. But even Wares conceded that, with a record 10 seniors gone from last year's NCAA regional champions, 2016 wasn't the ideal time to tackle the nation's second-toughest schedule.

However, according to the Division III power rankings, that's what the young Dutch had to endure and they did so successfully with a 23-15 mark, while falling just short of yet another NCAA tournament berth.

Better timed was the arrival of junior transfer pitcher Karly Olson, who was 16-15 with a 2.77 earned run average and

138 strikeouts in 159.1 innings. She was also among the team's top sluggers with a homer and 20 RBIs. Sophomore left fielder Tabitha Taylor hit .357 with a team-high 40 hits, two homers and 20 RBIs. She was a second-team all-region pick while Olson was a third-team choice. Shortstop Paige Schreiner was Central's lone senior starter.

ADELMAN A FOUR-TIME ALL- LEAGUE TENNIS HONOREE

Central senior West Adelman earned all-Iowa Conference men's tennis honors in both singles and doubles play for the fourth straight year.

And he did so despite missing time because of reserve duty in the U.S. Marines as he prepares for officer training following graduation. He played at No. 1 in the Dutch lineup.

Sophomore Garret Taylor also earned all-league distinction in singles while sophomore Jimmy Cunningham did so in doubles.

A young Dutch squad was 11-10 in dual action, placing fourth in the conference.

YOUNG MEN'S GOLF SQUAD FIGHTS INEXPERIENCE

Replacing its entire lineup from last year's Iowa Conference men's golf title winners wasn't expected to be easy for Central.

And it wasn't.

Winners of 32 league championships to go with 33 NCAA Division III tournament berths, the Dutch slipped to fourth at the conference meet. But senior Walker Adams was a nice surprise in his first year of varsity action, tying for fourth to gain all-conference honors. Senior Jared Nepomuceno was 11th but an otherwise youthful Dutch squad is eyeing a return to contender status in 2017.

The team will be led by a new coach after six-year mentor Chad Green accepted a position at an out-of-state school closer to his home.

SCHROEDER GAINS ALL-LEAGUE BASEBALL DISTINCTION

Central senior relief pitcher Mark Schroeder gained second-team all-Iowa Conference baseball honors.

Senior left fielder Spencer Gritsch received honorable mention.

Like many of the Dutch spring teams, the baseball squad was youth-dominated, as reflected in its 10-30 record, including a 7-21 conference mark.

Schroeder posted a team-best 3.16 earned run average, fanning 19 hitters while walking six in 25.2 innings. Gritsch hit .287, including a team-high .309 in conference play.

Freshman first baseman Ryan Bouwman was Central's top hitter with a .310 average while promising freshman shortstop Garrett Saunders hit .298 and junior catcher Michael Reuter cracked six home runs with 29 RBIs.

CENTRAL SCENES

Watch for a series of favorite campus shots in this year's Civitas magazines.

SECOND TO NONE

Central's nationally recognized facilities prove the college is home to a progressive community of scholars. Built in 1978, Vermeer Science Center became Iowa's first LEED rated building after its 2003 renovation. Students continue to pursue independent research and creative projects here, working alongside professors in Vermeer's advanced laboratories and research greenhouse. With many academic opportunities other students won't experience until graduate school, Central graduates have the advantage wherever they go.



LET'S SAVE THE MONARCHS

Kristin Siewert is getting Central students involved in a movement to reverse the decline of the monarchs.
by Jenni Hodges

Monarch butterflies are in trouble. Once they fluttered across North America by the billions. But in the last 20 years, we've lost 90 percent of the continent's population.

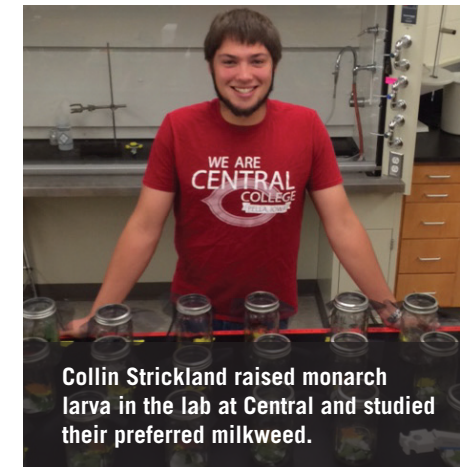
It's not just the monarch, of course. Many other creatures have declined in the face of similar threats — habitat loss, climate change and more. But the monarch is an important indicator for many species — plus the health of our American landscape.

According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the monarch's decline points to larger environmental problems that also threaten food production, natural wonders and our own health. Likewise, efforts to preserve the monarch population benefit many other plants and animals — humans, too.

That's why Kristin Siewert, Central College lecturer of biology, is connecting students to the monarch conservation movement. Students are participating in multiple research and service learning opportunities to protect monarchs, enrich their education and discover the difference they can make.



Central students helped tag monarchs for a service project — this way, researchers can track how many survive migration.



Collin Strickland raised monarch larva in the lab at Central and studied their preferred milkweed.



Kristin Siewert gets Central students involved with monarch conservation through research and service learning.

The plant has an unfortunate name, observes senior Collin Strickland, a biology and environmental studies major participating in several of Central's monarch projects. "It's not a weed — it's a really beneficial plant. There are several species, and butterfly milkweed has such a gorgeous flower."

A NATIONAL ICON

Besides serving as portents of environmental change, monarchs are famous for their eye-catching splendor. Millions of Americans have raised monarchs in grade school classrooms, learning about metamorphosis, mimicry and many other biology concepts while watching their caterpillars become black-and-orange beauties.

"Monarchs help get people excited about conservation," Siewert says. "They're an exciting species for kids — a lot of adults remember that."

RETURN OF THE MILKWEED

Saving monarchs means restoring America's milkweed, Siewert says. This objective is included in President Obama's national strategy for protecting honey bees and other pollinators. One of the proposals involves lining Interstate 35 with milkweed and other habitat plants, making a highway for monarchs on their way from Mexico to Canada.

"As a nation, we're trying hard," Siewert says. "The monarch itself is important, but it stands for much more. This is eco-system level restoration."

In Iowa, the heart of the monarchs' flyway, Central students have many opportunities to conduct research and help restore lost habitats. Their first link to the monarch movement came when Siewert connected with The Iowa Monarch Conservation Consortium. The consortium, established by Iowa State University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, investigates monarchs' use of nine milkweed species at sites throughout Iowa. With three study sites — one at Carlson-Kuyper Field Station and two at Pella Community High School — Central has the most research plots of any participating group.

Central students are helping collect three years of data to discover which milkweed species grow best — and which monarchs prefer. Pella High School students are also getting involved, making regular observations of plants, eggs, larva, caterpillars and butterflies.

Siewert says she was excited to get Central students involved with the consortium because she has a passion for restoration and engaging students in meaningful work. "This work is endearing to me personally because monarchs helped spark my passion for science at a young age," Siewert says. "It will also help students develop contacts and partnerships, gain research experience, and participate in community outreach and education."



A famous and eye-catching species, monarchs help get people excited about conservation, says Kristin Siewert.

Last year, Siewert and Strickland also studied monarchs' preferred milkweed in the lab at Central. Strickland raised monarch larva and conducted tests with two plant species to learn the critters' tastes, later presenting his results at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.

REST STOP AT CENTRAL

Iowa's vast swaths of prairie may be gone forever, says Siewert, but monarchs can still survive if they have enough stepping stones to complete their migration. Milkweed can be planted in gardens, ditches, schoolyards, parking lots — any available space — and provide an oasis for monarchs on the move.

Many at Central helped create a monarch waystation in the organic garden, adding to thousands of registered milkweed habitats. Central's project is certified by Monarch Watch and the University of Kansas as a valuable habitat site, and Central staff and faculty continue to strengthen it with additional milkweed and nectar plants.

Siewert hopes the waystation will become an exciting place for community members to observe monarchs and other pollinators. A monarch refuge also provides educational opportunities for local schools — and a wealth of research projects for Central biology students.

ALL THINGS MONARCH

Several Central students volunteer their time with Siewert to support monarch conservation projects in other ways, too. Siewert hopes to increase student awareness of "all things monarch" through service-learning. In a recent project, students helped tag monarchs so researchers can track their survival en route to Mexico (besides the loss of milkweed, about 90 percent of monarchs die before reaching adulthood thanks to enemies like spiders, ants, wasps and other predators).

Students also recently collaborated with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, helping Siewert collect native milkweed seed and cultivate plants. Siewert says the group learned through this project just how severely milkweed has been reduced, searching for weeks to find mature milkweed pods. The group overwintered and germinated the native seed, then presented plants to the college for the Graham Center parking lot and other campus locations, alumni who attended Green Drinks (see page 4) and Pella community members for private gardens.

Strickland hopes people who love Monarchs will be motivated to avoid using pesticides and herbicides — and plant milkweed. "It would be cool to see them make a comeback. I'd like to see more monarchs around and loving life — they're beautiful," he says. "It's like the bald eagle in a way."

BUMPER CROP OF BUTTERFLIES

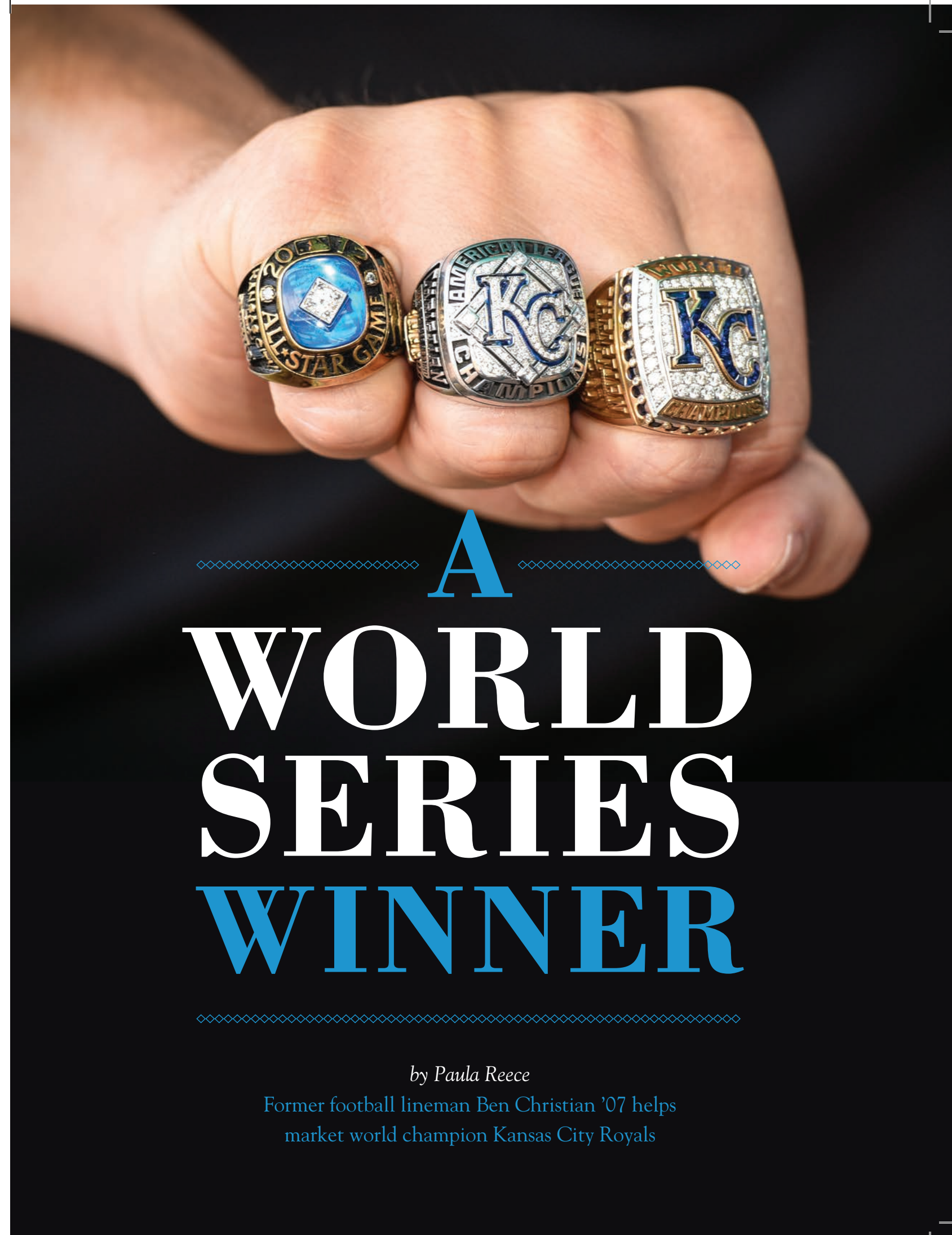
Monarchs are also beloved in Mexico, where they make a spectacular entrance in early November while Mexico celebrates Day of the Dead. Last winter, researchers celebrated monarchs' largest overwintering population in five years — an encouraging reversal of many years' decline. As the spring migration began, however, a deadly winter storm killed millions of the butterflies still in Mexico.

In 1983, the monarch migration was listed as an "endangered phenomenon" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. It's difficult to protect monarchs in the same ways as endangered species, Siewert says, because they migrate across such a vast area. The monarch's essential habitat stretches from Canada to Mexico.

The journey, as long as 3,000 miles, requires several generations of monarchs to complete, since most of the butterflies live only three to four weeks. One special, migratory generation is born late each summer and lives eight months, flying all the way back to Mexico. These winter in native forests, semi-dormant until warm spring winds draw them north again. No one knows how the monarchs do it. New generations of butterflies find their way to the same places at the same time each year — the first time for each generation completing the journey.

Despite the challenges of protecting a species that migrates 3,000 miles, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reviewing a legal petition filed by The Center for Biological Diversity and Center for Food Safety, in conjunction with the Xerces Society and Lincoln Brower in 2014 seeking protection for the monarch under the Endangered Species Act.

Siewert, students and many more are working toward another good year for the monarch — and another, and another. "And if the monarch is having a good year," Strickland recalls, "it's a good year for other plants and animals, too."



A WORLD SERIES WINNER

by Paula Reece

Former football lineman Ben Christian '07 helps market world champion Kansas City Royals

Not everyone can say they've contributed to the success of a World Series Championship team — but Ben Christian '07 can. As senior manager of partnership marketing for the Kansas City Royals, Christian traded the traditional 9-to-5 grind for something a little more exotic. "When I get to walk into work each day, I don't feel like I'm walking into an office," he says. That's because instead of a skyscraper or nondescript office unit, his office is Kansas City's Kauffman Stadium, affectionately known as "The K."

After graduating from Central, Christian started his sports marketing career as marketing assistant for the San Diego Chargers before being promoted to coordinator of marketing partnerships in 2009. But when the Royals came calling, Christian and his wife, Laura Nanninga Christian '07, jumped on the opportunity to return to the Midwest and take on a new challenge.

"The Royals were rebuilding their entire organization from the baseball side as well as the business side, so the timing was right in 2010," he says. In his current position, Christian helps corporate partners utilize the Royals' visibility and community ties to grow their business or help them in some way. "The objectives of each partnership are so different," he says. "You could have Budweiser, whose objectives are really geared toward a beer-drinking segment, and then you could have a bank, who is just trying to generate more credit card users." Other partners may have a recruitment or community relations goal.

Such client diversity means that Christian's days can all look very different. His team leverages the Royals' 81 home games to help their corporate partners gain visibility and meet their individual goals. But non-game days can be just as busy.



Ben Christian's sports marketing career led him from Central to the San Diego Chargers, then the Kansas City Royals.

"We also take partners to various events, even spring training and road games — really, wherever makes sense from both a Royals and a corporate partner perspective."

In many ways, Christian's job is the same, working for a professional baseball franchise as well as a pro football team. Companies use both types of teams to gain visibility, attract new customers and develop a deeper connection with their current customers. However, baseball's rules and calendar are very different from those of football. "In football, you have eight games across the course of a season, where in baseball you have 81 games based at home," Christian says. "This gives us a lot more flexibility in terms of time and space for a client to really own a particular game or part of a season."

Christian says the NFL's rules also presented more of a challenge when it came to marketing. "In the NFL, you can't have advertising signage on the field level, where you can really sell it in baseball. From a business standpoint, there are a lot of advantages in baseball in terms of how you can demonstrate return on investment and value in your business partnerships."

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VALUABLE.”

Christian says working with Central's longtime communications and sports information director Larry Happel '81 gave him practical experience and a solid foundation to walk into an NFL franchise right out of college. He worked with Happel for three semesters, performing daily office work for sports information. "Having the ability to help manage information and think about how Central presents itself as an athletic department and overall organization was really valuable," Christian says.

Christian's advice to students interested in sports marketing is to

"be available and be hungry." He says businesses really need problem-solvers who can recognize problems, work hard to find solutions and consistently keep up motivation and tempo. "I think the days are long gone of just knowing someone, and that someone gives you a job," Christian says. "There's got to be a corresponding value to what you do. If you can solve problems, you can make yourself valuable."

Being part of the organization that won a World Series championship has been quite a ride for Christian. He remembers the 2014 season feeling very different from that of 2015. "In 2014, we would win a game or a series early in the playoffs and feel elated about moving on. In 2015, it was more of a focused type of attitude." After losing in game seven of the World Series to the San Francisco Giants in 2014, the Royals knew what they wanted in 2015 — not just to make it to the World Series again, but to win. "Every win in 2015 was something we'd already done before, until we got back to the World Series," Christian says.

Christian describes the 2015 season as an exhausting journey back. "Winning the American League twice was kind of a validation for the team and the organization," he says. "Getting back to the World Series was the hardest part, and so from that point on it was just letting it ride and knowing that whatever happened, we'd at least climbed the mountain again."

The Royals' win was even sweeter for Christian because they come from a smaller, Midwestern market. "I've always kind of had a soft spot for the smaller teams in baseball," he says, "and the challenges they face to win." Christian finds his greatest job satisfaction in knowing that every move he makes and everything his department does contributes to the team "hanging in there and staying competitive with the New York, Chicago and L.A. franchises.

Knowing our contributions make an impact — and that as an organization, we can win without unlimited resources — that's probably the most rewarding."

Christian isn't planning on leaving the small, Midwestern franchise any time soon. Both from Iowa, he and his wife enjoy bringing up their two-year-old daughter in nearby Kansas City. They even turned down an opportunity in 2014 to move to New York and work for the Mets. "I think we're very happy where we're at," says Christian. "You know, five or 10 years down the road, I think there will be new challenges and opportunities to pursue, but the business changes so much right now that you can experience a lot of growth without necessarily having to move or be promoted."

It may be fate — the first major league game Christian ever attended as a boy was in Kansas City, between the Royals and the Texas Rangers. Truth be told, Christian says his first love is probably football—he was an offensive lineman at Central before an injury ended his career. "But I hardly even watch football anymore," he says. A World Series championship will do that to you.



Ben and Laura (Nanninga) Christian, both Iowa natives, enjoy living in Kansas City with their two-year-old daughter, Emily.



CENTRAL CONNECTIONS

IN HD

by Cindy Deppe

Joe Jones and Naji Naufal started making short films at Central. Now, full-time film careers take them around the world.



Joe Jones '98 and Naji Naufal '98 got their start making short films at Central, using 90s video equipment from the Media Center. Both Central grads now have full-time careers in film, based in Beirut and Chicago.



Naji Naufal '98 is now a documentary and multimedia producer based in Beirut.

"Cameras at that time recorded to VHS," Jones recalls, "so we had to dub in order to edit. It was a cumbersome process that could take three weeks or more. Now with digital, you can create and edit a five-minute short within hours, compared to weeks in the old format."

Still, Naufal remembers that the friends "really supported each other and pushed one another to dream big."

CUT TO DREAMS REALIZED

Those big dreams have led both to full-time film careers: Jones as a documentary artist based in Chicago and Naufal as a multimedia producer based in Beirut.

After graduating from Central, Jones completed an M.F.A. at Columbia College, where he taught film studies. He also taught digital photography, graphic design and other visual design courses at The International Academy of Design and Technology.

"I found that it was difficult to work as an artist with the demands of teaching. I also worked in music production and started a small business for entertainment venues. That's where I cut my teeth as an entrepreneur. Now I'm producing films independently and with In the Light Studios in Chicago as an independent artist," Jones says.

"I chose documentary, instead of narrative filmmaking, to be the eyes and voice for other people. Documentary is live, and you are capturing the situation in its fullness, in the moment, in the process of discovery. The role of the documentarian or storyteller is to spread awareness so others understand a particular issue or situation, to incite change and empathetic response. I like to call it spontaneous composition. You compose as you go, adding artistic principles to real life. There is no luxury of preconceived shots. The empathetic response you will get from storytelling depends on the way you edit," he explains.

Jones' most recent work carries a strong social justice theme. "I like to tell stories for the voiceless, those who might not be able to tell their own stories," he says, as he talks about "But Not Forgotten," a feature-length documentary expected to be released this fall about a mother's quest to find the truth behind her son's mysterious death.

"When I was first introduced to this, I could see how the family was facing obstacles to get to the basic truth and awareness. We are telling the story of the mother's courage and persistence, to get an intimate understanding of what family and friends have been through. We want to show what's really going on behind the scenes and provide insight in order to effect change. The way I approach the story has to be objective, which is ironic because I feel strongly about the injustice."

Naufal produces feature documentaries and communication campaigns that include TV commercials, billboards and 2D/3D animations. He also produces the opening and closing ceremonies of the Beirut International Film Festival and leads the festival's film selection committee. His Beirut festival work recently took him to the renowned Festival de Cannes in France, where he networked with film distributors and other festival organizers.

"I have made my home in 27 places around the world. After graduation, I had to do compulsory military service for a year in Lebanon. As soon as I was done with the service, I enrolled in an



Joe Jones '98 recently returned to campus to screen "Lakay," his documentary about two brothers from Chicago who return to Haiti to reunite with family after the 2010 earthquake.



CENTRAL IN THE CREDITS

**"WE REALLY SUPPORTED EACH OTHER AND
PUSHED ONE ANOTHER TO DREAM BIG."**

NAJI NAUFAL '98

**"THE
RICHNESS OF A
FILMMAKER'S
EXPERIENCE
IS DIRECTLY
RELATED TO THE
RICHNESS OF
THE FILM HE/SHE
MAKES."**



Joe Jones '98 recently returned to campus to screen his documentary "Lakay." He is pictured with Annique Brown Kiel '99 and Sunny Gonzales Eighmy '99.

intensive film directing program at the New York Film Academy. By the end of 2000 I was back in Lebanon where I taught theatre for all grades (K-12) in an American school in Beirut," Naufal relates. "In 2003, I began work as a TV commercials producer and later focused on producing documentaries and political campaigns. Now, my wife Nora and I produce short documentaries and TV segments for French national TV stations. We just finished a TV pilot for a fashion program, and we are also in the middle of a communication campaign for the French Embassy in Beirut to encourage more parents to enroll their children in French-speaking schools."

CALLING IT A WRAP

To aspiring filmmakers Naufal would give much the same advice he gave Jones in 1996. "The richness of a filmmaker's experience is directly related to the richness of the film he/she makes."

- Read as many books as possible. There is nothing better than books to truly educate us in the art of storytelling and character development.
- Watch as many films, from as many countries as possible. It's the best way to study editing, rhythm, music, and visual composition.
- Study acting and theatre. Understanding the dichotomy of a character's motivation and how to block a scene are all major theatrical tools that are a must in film."

Jones concurs with his friend's advice and adds from his own experience, "Pursuing a career in the arts is challenging. If you love it, stay committed. Continue to master your craft. Keep learning and growing. There's an infinite amount to learn. Have as broad an education as you can because what fuels art is not just skill, but the wisdom, ideology, philosophy and will behind it that make it great."

Naufal says, "Central College was the best experience for me. The kindness, generosity and openness of everyone, from the first day, I just don't know that I could have found anywhere else. The quality of the faculty was exemplary. I remember a faculty member telling a group of international students during orientation that 'you have a bigger scope; you have to reach out to others who may not have that experience.' That's how Joe and I connected." And it's how the producer pair reconnected, across decades and continents, through the lens of cinematography.

CENTRAL IN THE CREDITS

Another of Jones' documentaries prompted Central connections to reunite the longtime friends. Jones returned to campus last spring to screen "Lakay," his documentary about two brothers from Chicago who return to Haiti to reunite with family after the 2010 earthquake.

At the campus screening, professor of theatre Mary Jo Sodd recalled her former students' close friendship and asked Jones if he had been in touch with Naufal recently. He hadn't, but Sodd's inquiry spurred him to reach out to Naufal.

"When I reconnected with Naji after years apart, we had so much to talk about; we talked for nearly an hour. We would like to collaborate now that we are both producing," Jones says. "Producing allows you to choose your own projects and decide what stories to tell."

Naufal, too, was grateful for the Central reconnection prompted by Sodd. "Hearing from Joe really took me back," he said. "It was like yesterday because of our true friendship. Dr. Sodd remains a mentor. The values I saw in her I use every day. She always gave you the chance but asked you to be very frank with yourself about what you could and could not do, which is a good life lesson. I remember her saying 'you should never

tell someone they are good just to give them a response. That may not be good for their life."

For Jones, professor of sociology Jon Witt was an early influence. "His passion for sociology had an effect on me. I was curious and began to see why he was so passionate about human behavior in the larger context. Faculty members Steve Ybarrola (sociology) and Art Johnson (English) also influenced my approach to filmmaking. Ybarrola helped me develop understanding of the nuances of different cultures, while Art Johnson taught me how to observe the nuances of people. Both skills have helped with my writing, character development and approach to multimedia work," he says.

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LORA THINKS OF CENTRAL.

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ALUMNI NEWSNOTES



▲ Several Central grads from the class of 1980 were among those gathered for the wedding of Rachel Long, daughter of Ann Sammon Long '80 and Dave Long '80, in Urbandale June 4. Left to right: Monty Willyard '80, Jill Blasius '80, Lori Hirsch Willyard '80, Maureen Friskey Tanis '80, Ann Sammon Long '80, Paul Tanis '80, Dave Long '80, Beth Verdoorn Draheim '80, Ned Draheim '80.

THE '50s

John Young '52 retired upon celebrating his 11-year work anniversary with Enterprise and National Rental Car, where he worked on a part-time basis. John and wife Joy live in Shreveport, La.

Gordon De Jong '57 received an Emeritus Faculty Distinction award

from Penn State University for his work in developing the nation's first online graduate certificate and master's in professional studies program in applied demography, and for his research on a four million-dollar National Institute of Health grant on the health of children of Mexican immigrants. Gordon and wife Caroline live in State College, Pa.

THE '70s

Sue Ebbers '74 of Brighton, Minn., retired in August after 30 years at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, which included 21 years as director of the library and two as dean.

Timothy Schipper '77 and Sue Hubers of Holland, Mich., were married April 30.

Wilbur Washington, former associate professor of philosophy and religion, received an honorary degree at New Brunswick Theological Seminary commencement. From 1969-1980, Washington also served as Central's director of counseling services, coordinator of Afro-American studies and chaplain.

Washington was the Reformed Church in America's (RCA) first African-American president of the General Synod, elected in 1988. He is known for building unity and pursuing social justice in the church and his community.

THE '80s

Lola Garcia '80 of Madrid, Spain, is CEO at ArgentaComunicacion.

Jim Langstraat '81 is vice president of finance and administration for Portland Community College. Jim and wife Lisa live in Portland, Ore.

Pam Sagraves Soltis '80 is distinguished professor and curator at the Florida Museum of Natural History at the University of Florida. In May she was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of her distinguished achievement in original research. Among her most cited contributions are papers on plant evolution and the role of genetic and genomic attributes in the success of polyploids. Pam lives with husband Doug in Gainesville.

Rick Stahl '87 officiated at the NCAA Division I Wrestling Championships at Madison Square Garden in New York, N.Y. Rick has been a collegiate official for 27 years, 17 consecutive NCAA Division III national tournaments. He and wife **Stephanie Ricklefs Stahl '84** live with their family in Marion. Stephanie is a dental hygienist at Lyndale Dental Care in Cedar Rapids.

THE '90s

Tammy Williamson Chase '90 joined Navy Pier, Inc. as its director of communications and public relations — just in time to help Navy Pier celebrate its 100-year anniversary. Tammy and husband Brett live with their family in Chicago.

Chris Vlahakis '90 is senior research associate at DuPont Pioneer in Johnston. Chris and wife **Andrea Crabb Vlahakis '91** live in Ankeny with their family. Andrea completed a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Grand View University in 2012.

Grant McMartin '93 of Chicago was among a select group of artists whose work was selected for juried exhibits. "Early Morning Autumn" was part of a group exhibit at the University of Iowa's Old Capital Museum, in which only seven out of the possible 3,000 were selected for exhibit. His painting "A Midsummer Night's Dream" was on display at "Chicago Artists Interpret Shakespeare"

exhibit at Addington Gallery in Chicago's River North Art District through April.

Manuel French '94 has been appointed director of counseling in the office of College and Career Success for the Chicago Public Schools. Manuel and wife Sonia live in Chicago with their son.

Kevin Stittsworth '95 of Knoxville is a change agent at the Change and Innovation Agency.

Laura Peterman Gallo '96 is assistant professor and coordinator at the School of Counseling Cognate, Boise State University. Laura and husband Sam live in Boise, Idaho, with their family.

Rick Sanger '96 is director of technology at FullCount in Des Moines. Rick and wife Danielle live in Urbandale with their two daughters.

Jess Burroughs Burger '99 was named Iowa Elementary Principal of the Year by the School Administrators of Iowa. She is principal at Hoover Elementary School in West Branch Community School District. Jess and husband Thomas live in West Branch with their two sons.



▲ **Greg Oldsen '13** (back) visited the third grade classroom of **Krysten Wormley Osby '05** in the Newton Community School District. Greg, an environmental studies graduate who works as a naturalist II for Jasper County Conservation, visits classrooms and teaches students to love science. "I am so grateful for him and his expertise," said Krysten. "My students never want him to leave!" Greg is pictured with two of Krysten's students; Ella, daughter of **Meggan Machin '02** and Zane, son of **Malissa Penning Munger '05**.

THE '00s

Sara Cerwinske Johnson '00 teaches kindergarten at Lynnville–Sully Schools. Sara and husband **Kevin Johnson '99** live in Sully with their family. Kevin teaches middle school language arts at Lynnville–Sully Schools.

Samantha Smith Clinkinbeard '02 is associate professor of criminal justice at the University of Nebraska–Omaha. Samantha and husband **Justin Clinkinbeard '02** live in Omaha with their two children. Justin is a patient care technician at Nebraska Medical Center.

Michelle Vobr '06 and Duane Tlusty were married July 5, 2014. She teaches preschool in the Turkey Valley Community School District in Jackson Junction. Michelle and Duane live in Cresco with their daughter.

Angie Schnedler Appelgate '07 is a therapist at New Life Counseling in Des Moines. Angie and husband **Travis Appelgate '07** live in Pleasant Hill with their son and daughter.

▼ **Dannielle Lindsey '09** and Grant Herink of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, were married April 30. Dannielle is an associate manager of search marketing at hibu. Pictured first row (left to right): Audrey Harris, **Brittany Harris '09**, **Megan Anderson '09**, **Dannielle Lindsey Herink '09** and **Bree Castle Zinkel '09**. Back row: **Eric Harris '08**, and **Brian Zinkel '08**.



Joe Cerwinske '07 is news assistant at radio station KCII in Washington.

Andrew Cheers '07 and Erin Cook were married May 30, 2015. Andrew and Erin live in Madison, Wis., where Andrew works at Hormel Foods Corp.

Steven Dickey '07 is revenue manager at Carlson Hotels, Inc., in Minnetonka, Minn. Steve and wife Heather live in Delano.

David Felton '08 of Indianola is home preservation specialist at Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.

Jennifer Brammer Lindsay '08 is psychotherapist at Water's Edge Counseling and Healing Center in Saint Paul, Minn., where she lives with husband Michael.

Jenny Owens '08 and Cory Delavan were married Oct. 16, 2010. Jenny is physical

therapist at Jennie Edmundson Hospital's satellite clinic in Glenwood. She assisted in introducing a full-time athletic trainer to Glenwood Community High School and provides coverage as an athletic trainer as needed. Jenny and Cory live in Tabor with their two daughters.

Jared Fritz-McCarty '09 has been elected vice president to the National Association of Graduate Admission Professionals' regional chapter. Jared and husband Christopher live in Chicago, where Jared is director of graduate enrollment at Roosevelt University.

Meghan Swella Norton '09 is a grassroots trainer and curriculum specialist at Americans for Prosperity Foundation. Meghan and husband Nicholas live in Fort Collins, Colo.

THE '10s

For information about **Greg Oldsen '13**, see the '00s.

Lindley Roorda Visser '11 teaches fifth grade at Regina Elementary School in Iowa City. Lindley and husband **Mark Visser '11** live in Coralville with their son. Mark is a financial analyst at West Liberty Foods in West Liberty.

Rachael Barrett '13 and **Jared Baker '13** were married Sept. 2015. Rebecca is lab manager for Flint Hills Resources in Menlo and Jared is production operator at DuPont cellulosic plant in Nevada.

Rebecca DeYoung '13 is staff accountant at Central College.

Jared Hottle '13 is football offensive coordinator at Dakota State University in Madison, S.D.

Regan Jamieson '13 of Lenexa, Kan., is administrative manager at Berkshire

▼ **Danielle Aldridge '13** and Zach Cole of Woodward were married at Blank Park Zoo in Des Moines May 14. Danielle is secretary and fitness specialist at Mercy Wellness Center. Pictured (left to right): Allison Webb, **Danielle Aldridge Cole '13**, **Megan Overton Bouska '13**, and **Stephanie Holtkamp Vallone '13**.



Hathaway Home Services Kansas City Realty.

Karleigh Miller '13 of Eau Claire will sit for the Wisconsin Bar in July, after which she will practice criminal defense.

Jazmyn West '13 of Mingo is project manager at Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance in Grinnell.

Morgan Baustian '14 of Brooklyn is assistant branch manager at QPS Employment Group in Grinnell.

Kevin Kaerwer '14 is assistant basketball coach at Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas.

Keegan Overbey '14 of Waterloo is an intensive care unit nurse at Unity Point Health. He is in his second semester in the master's program at Allen College and plans to graduate in 2018 as nurse practitioner.

Gabriel Sandler '14 of West Des Moines is legislative correspondent for Senator Chuck Grassley.

Grant Seuferer '14 is winner of the 2015 Elijah Watt Sells Award. The prestigious award was earned by just 0.08 percent of 2015 CPA candidates.

Grant is tax consultant for Deloitte in Des Moines.

Annette Dean '15 was among 2,000 students awarded the National Science Foundation GRFP Fellowship from the 17,000 who applied. The award funds up to three years of her graduate training at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she is pursuing a Ph.D. in genetics, studying the innervation of the mammalian lung in the lab of Xin Sun.

Hannah Gettes '15 of Clinton is interim membership assistant at the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce. This spring Hannah was a featured guest on Paula Sands Live (KWQC_TV6), where she talked about being named the winner of the Oh So Sweet Cupcake Challenge and featured some of her signature cupcakes.

Chelsey Pierce '15 and **Chris Sirridge '15** of Pella were married May 7. Chelsey teaches kindergarten at Prairie City Elementary and Chris is an admission counselor at Central College.

Blaze Smith '15, of Honolulu, Hawaii, is office administrator and immigration advisor at the Academia Language School.

Blaze also serves as vice president at The Outdoor Circle-Next Generation Branch, a non-profit organization whose mission is to bring different perspectives to environmental issues in Hawaii.

----- **ADVANCED DEGREES** -----

Laura Peterman Gallo '96, master's degree, school counseling, University of Iowa, 2005; doctorate, counselor education, University of Iowa, May

Michelle Vobr Tlusty '06, master's degree, special education, University of Northern Iowa, Dec. 2013

Andrew Cheers '07, master's degree, business administration, Creighton University, May

Karleigh Miller '13, juris doctorate and master's degree in negotiation and conflict resolution, Creighton University, May 14

Kevin Kaerwer '14, master's degree in education, coaching, sport, recreation and fitness administration, Angelo State University, May

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- Mark Putnam, President

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Jessica Riebkes '14, master's degree, biology, University of Northern Iowa, May

NEW ARRIVALS

Justin '02 and **Samantha Smith Clinkinbeard '02**, daughter Josephine Elizabeth, Aug. 28

Mallory and **Matt Brandt '03**, daughter Aubrey Mae, April 20

Brita and **Jacob Oyen '04**, son Henry Lawrence, April 12

Steffanie and **Kevin Bonnstetter '05**, son Kade William, March 16

Steve and **Melissa Miller Brock '05**, son Kyle Stephen, April 16

Adam '05 and **Trichelle Velky Jackson '08**, daughter Hazel Mae, Nov. 13

Jonathan and **Jennifer Erickson Schoeberl '05**, son Lincoln Clarence, Feb. 8

Eriko Sasaki Ishii '06, daughter Rina, March 16

Duane Tlusty and **Michelle Vobr '06**, daughter Madelynn Ann, May 14, 2015

Janet and **Dawn Nissen '07**, daughter

Hattie Ellynn, Oct. 17

Cory and **Jenny Owens Delavan '08**, daughter Lucy Owens, Jan. 31

Monica and **Jonathan McWilliams '10**, daughter Stella Jane, March 16

Mark '11 and **Lindley Roorda Visser '11**, son Coen Lee, Aug. 17, 2015

Kirby '12 and **Abigail Sparks Rock '12**, son Jackson David, March 4

Matthew Stoner and **Kasandra Humble '16**, son Jackson Dean, March 16

IN MEMORIAM

Janet Dykema Broadwell '39 of York, S.C., March 15

Bernace Vander Linden Cherkala '41 of Kent, Ohio, May 16

Viola Knox '47 of Knoxville, Feb. 18

Armand Renskers '50 of Urbandale, April 4

Myrna Guthrie '51 of Newton, March 1

Robert Ellsworth '52 of Alexandria, La., March 23

Beryl Bellmeyer Hoff '54 of East Stroudsburg, Pa., Feb. 24

Lois Archer Keerl '55 of Evansville, Ind., April 27

Marlin Daniels '61 of Belmond, May 15

David Damkot '65 of Jericho, Vt., April 18

Vic Manussier '65 of Auburn, Ala., Feb. 28

Gary McClimen '65 of Urbandale, May 2

James Hoekstra '66 of Ames, May 2

Gloria Radmaker Baun '72 of Lebanon, Mo., Feb. 20

Michael McDonald '76 of Iowa Falls, Feb. 24

Charles Koons '79 of Newton, March 23

Michael Nieland '79 of Ankeny, April 21

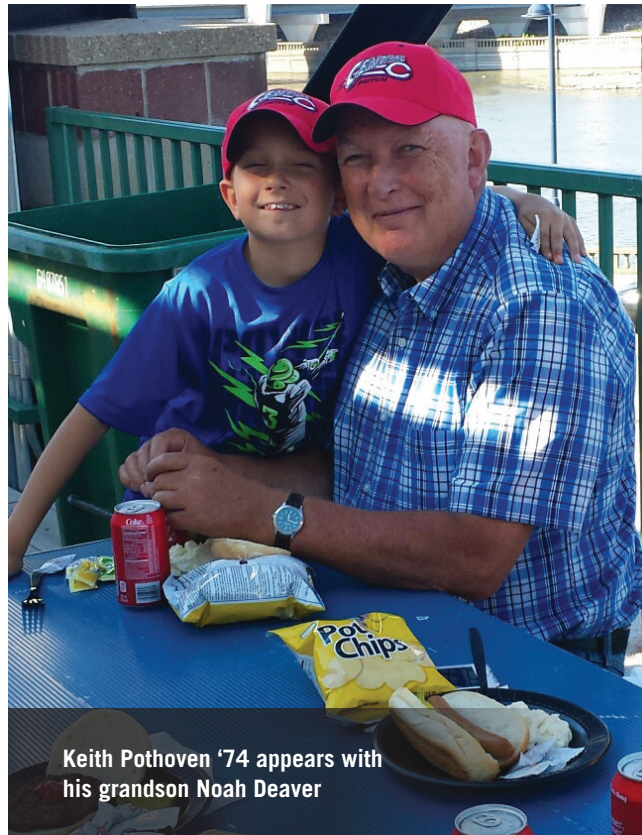
Michael Lunasco '82 of Waiialua, Hawaii, Jan. 18

Jeffrey Pogemiller '84 of Cave Creek, Ariz., April 14

Gary Lubbert, former assistant professor of management (1988-96), May 16

Jay Huitsing '09H of Tucson, Ariz., April 16

Central alumni, families and friends celebrated summer with a June picnic and Iowa Cubs game at Principal Park in Des Moines.



Keith Pothoven '74 appears with his grandson Noah Deaver



Melody Van Zee Miller '80, Adam Rodriguez, Amy Meyer '11, Juliana Dryer '11 and Emily Miller '10 with daughter Bianca Mendez



Children of Laura Petty Wickham '04: Alison Wickham, Tayler Wickham and Hadley Wickham.

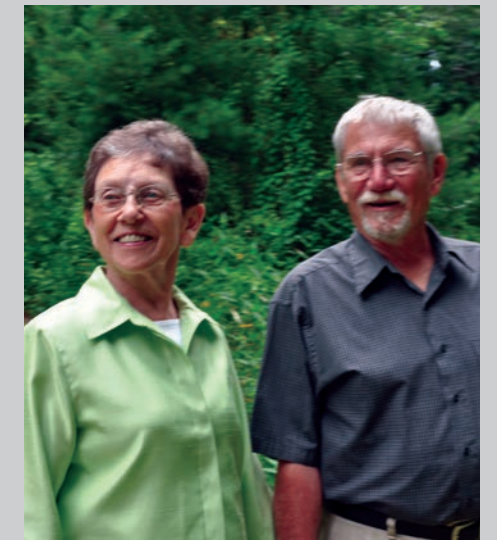
WHERE ARE THEY NOW

John and Carol Vruwink

by Jenni Hodges

John '58 and Carol Dulmes Vruwink '60 graduated from Central with degrees in art and biology. John returned in 1965 and taught art for 37 years. Carol also joined Central's faculty, teaching accounting for 23 years.

After retiring, John and Carol lived on an acreage between Pella and Knoxville for 10 years. While there, they volunteered at Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge and developed an art gallery at Second Reformed Church. Carol also served as treasurer for Habitat for Humanity of Marion County. In 2010, the Vruwinks moved to North Carolina to be closer to family.



What do you miss most about Central?

Carol: Long term friendships — and the students. I loved the diversity of my department — gender, ethnicity and areas of study. My best memories as a student were A Cappella Choir and band tours, and early morning birding expeditions. As a faculty member, the highlight was moving into Weller Center after many years of planning.

John: I miss having access to the art department — especially the glass studio — and comradery with faculty and students. I loved the small classes. As a student, serving on CAB was a favorite memory.

What are you doing now?

We serve on the Liturgical Arts Committee at First Presbyterian Church in Asheville. We've developed an art gallery and are involved with several ministries with our homeless neighbors, including Saturday Sanctuary, a ministry that provides a safe, warm place on Saturday afternoons with hearty food during the winter months. Carol rings handbells with the Blue Ridge Ringers (just completed our spring series of seven concerts during May) and volunteers with Habitat for Humanity. John rents studio time at Asheville Glass for flame working and is still active with his horses. We enjoy the beauty of nature and art in the Asheville area and Blue Ridge Mountains — and we enjoy activities with our kids and grandkids.

Do you miss anything about Iowa and Pella?

We miss Second Reformed Church, Jaarsma's Bakery, Christmas Candlelight Concerts, long-time friends. The weather? Not so much!



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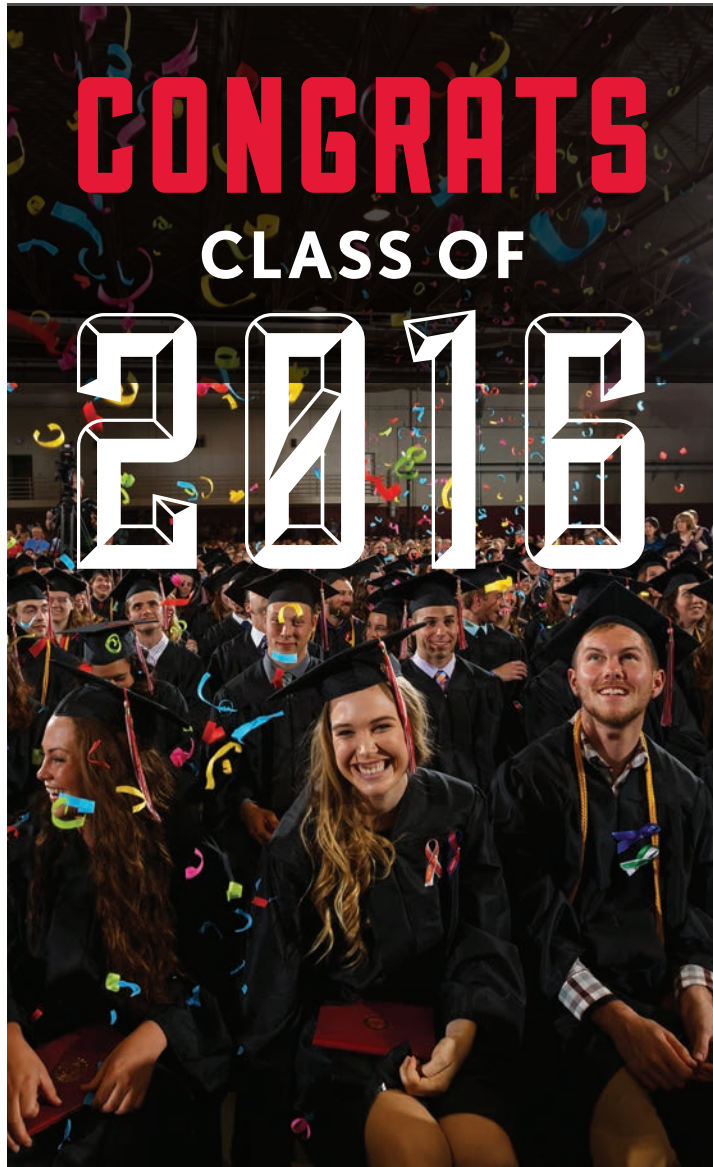
Register online or mail in your registration card.

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www.central.edu/alumni/homecoming.



Alumni are invited to submit Newsnotes online. We want to hear about recent promotions, degrees, 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.



Hungarian-Style Math

During her semester in Budapest, Paige Wilkin developed new ideas for teaching math in Iowa.

by Jenni Hodges



Junior Paige Wilkin was Central's first participant exploring math education in Hungary through a new partnership.

Hungary knows how to teach math. The country's reputation draws math majors from across America — and last spring, its first student from Central. Junior Paige Wilkin, a math major from Center Point, participated in Budapest Semester in Mathematics Education, a partner program now available to Central math and secondary education students.

The chance to study math education is rare and valuable, says professor of mathematics Wendy Weber. In Iowa, and especially at small colleges, math and education coursework are separated. Weber says Wilkin, who hopes to teach math in Iowa after graduation, gained a significant advantage through Central's new partnership. "She's going to be far ahead of other teachers because of this experience," Weber says.

It was a difficult time for Wilkin to leave home — just one week after her stepfather died from pancreatic cancer. "If there is one thing that I knew that Mike wanted me still to do, even after receiving the diagnosis, it was to continue my plan to go abroad," Wilkin wrote in her blog while in Budapest. "I have been doing my best to make the most of this opportunity."

Wilkin began her semester abroad with two weeks of intensive Hungarian language study. Then a three-week shopping period began, when students can try as many classes as they want before deciding which interest them most.

During the semester, Weber and assistant professor of education Melissa McAninch received a Moore Family Foundation grant to spend a week experiencing the program. "I was so impressed — those classes are really

special," Weber says. "The instructors are top notch, and they're practicing teachers, too. I can't even explain how good they were and how masterfully they set up problems and guided students through them."

In Hungary, math is taught as one subject, and students are prepared to use geometry, algebra, trigonometry, etc. together to solve problems. "I have really enjoyed learning math in a way that I never have before," says Wilkin. "I am really excited to join American and Hungarian teaching ideas in my future classroom."

While abroad, Wilkin also surprised herself by finding teaching ideas in new ways. "I was dreaming about class one night, and I thought of a game for my lesson plan in the dream," she wrote. "I wonder if this is how my life will be as a teacher, that I think of an idea or new way to explain things and wake up in middle of night to write it down."

Wilkin also immersed herself in Hungarian life. She ran her first half marathon in Budapest, trained by the Danube and learned to give directions through Budapest. "Experiencing a new culture has been the most important part of my time here," she says. "I have loved getting to call Budapest my new home."

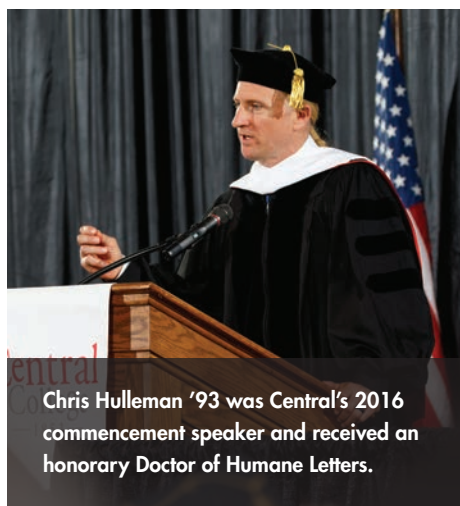
After Wilkin returned, Weber received an email from her instructors in Budapest, expressing how Wilkin impressed them. "They want more Central students," says Weber, "which is way cool."



Alumni Spotlight

Research Professor Improves Learning Experience

by Michelle Chalkey



Chris Hulleman '93 was Central's 2016 commencement speaker and received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

Chris Hulleman aims to make a difference in people's lives with his career. Hulleman designs and develops interventions in classrooms that lead teachers, students, coaches and athletes on paths to happy and healthy lives. The 1993 Central graduate is now research associate professor at the University of Virginia (UVA). Hulleman also co-coordinates the Motivation Research Institute and teaches as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Graduate Psychology at James Madison University.

"The world needs a lot of help," Hulleman said of his current research. "I get to use what I know to help people become motivated and learn about themselves so they can enjoy

what they're doing and have a more positive outlook. These interventions are meant to help people find value, meaning and purpose in what they're learning."

Hulleman entered his college education in the same predicament as many 18-year-olds — unsure what he wanted his career to be. Starting with a degree in general studies from Central, Hulleman has continued to add higher degrees, prestigious awards and valuable experience to his resume.

As a junior at Central, Hulleman first realized psychology was "cool", and he wanted to use his education to help people achieve their dreams. After graduating from Central, he first earned a graduate diploma from the University of Western Australia, then went on to earn a master's degree and Ph.D. in experimental social and personality psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2007. In 2009, he won the Paul R. Pintrich Outstanding Dissertation Award from the American Psychological Association.

At UVA, Hulleman now conducts research on education interventions grounded in theories of social and personality psychology, motivation and human development. His recent research on intervention fidelity has focused on preschool science classrooms and on the contribution of the Responsive Classroom Approach to children's social and academic growth.

"We're finding that these interventions are effective and we're trying to get them in the hands of more teachers," Hulleman says, adding that he loves what he is doing.

Hulleman admits he was not overly excited to fulfill the request of his parents, both Central alumni, to visit Central College as a teenager — but the relationships he formed right away set him on a path for intellectual growth and success. After his first meeting with Ed Willis, retired psychology professor, Hulleman was sold on going to Central.

"He didn't try to recruit me," Hulleman says. "He tried to get to know me. That's what you wanted coming into college—someone to care about you."

This May, Hulleman returned to Central as commencement speaker for the graduating class. He shared an idea from his research, which he has focused on for 15 years: mindset as GPS. Hulleman encouraged graduates to use their skills to persevere in unfamiliar situations, such as new jobs and relationships, which will enable them to enjoy life and have more success.

"I'm thankful for my Central College experience," Hulleman says. "I know that these students have so much to take with them. I don't want them to let obstacles hold them back."

Hulleman says he learned how to be an intellectual and a deep thinker in his time at Central. Now, when people ask which Ivy League school he came from, Hulleman says he is proud to tell people he is from Iowa and went to Central College.

"You really can go and live your dreams and do whatever you want to do," says Hulleman. "Central helps you figure out how to do that."