

SPRING 2021

THE INSPIRATION ISSUE

# CENTRAL

CENTRAL COLLEGE

**CIVITAS**

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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# THAT'S **INSPIRING**

BY: MARK PUTNAM, CENTRAL COLLEGE PRESIDENT



A few weeks ago, I was asked, “What inspires you?”

My immediate response was, “Probably not what you think.”

I find myself inspired when I see a strong sense of duty in others. When I witness someone pursuing an ambition or undertaking a cause, particularly a selfless one, I instinctively want to join in the effort. This is in part born of admiration, but true inspiration comes when I see people step forward and say, “Yes,” simply because it’s a task that needs to be done. Even if it’s not a task I can undertake, I want to do something related or supportive of those who are seeking to do the right thing.

Inspiration also comes to me when I see a demonstrated commitment to a value or principle that is greater than one’s own interest or concern. I value steadfastness and a commitment to integrity. When I see the wise application of a principled idea, I am reminded that things are sometimes complicated and inspired to work for the greater good.

I am inspired by those who actively seek to be part of the solution. Critics abound and criticism can be abundant. Inspiration wells up in me when I see constructive engagement lead to creativity and innovation. These are the people who keep the focus forward. The most inspiring people in this category have an amazing capacity to generate positive energy. This makes me want to stand with them and contribute to their success.

Perhaps most commonly I am inspired by people who work really hard. They are focused and disciplined. They never do anything halfway, even if they can only get halfway to the goal. They will not have fallen short due to any lack of effort. We are all talented and able in unique ways, but seeing someone give it everything they’ve got in service of their ambition is truly inspiring.

The simple truth is that I am inspired by the goodness I see in people every day. ■

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SPRING 2021

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Photo by: Paul Joy

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### PILOT POWER

Thank you for the wonderful articles in the Summer/Fall version of Civitas magazine. As a pilot and Central alum, I was particularly interested in reading the story on pilot training, which took place in Pella and at CUI during WWII. Thank you for your good work.

— Kelly B. Shaw '88, Indianola, Iowa



### R-E-S-P-E-C-T

Thank you for the recent and excellent Winter 2021 Civitas. Please allow me to attempt to be brief in saying how proud and impressed I am by my alma mater.

First, President Putnam's piece titled "It's Complicated" once again confirmed for me Central has an excellent leader. He gets it.

Second, I am so proud of Ms. Rouse and Ms. Harrington for seeing something important that needed more attention and having the courage to make this point to President Putnam (Parting Shot: "From Moment to Movement"). I believe Central fosters a great combination of genuine respect for one another and for others, together with a responsibility to think for ourselves and then when called for, to act. It takes fortitude as a college student to call out a president when they see more needs done. As I would expect, he responded positively rather than defensively. I am confident not all academic cultures invite such boldness.

So proud that so many of CUI's students, alumni and staff proactively seek to understand others and then make a difference. GO DUTCH!!

— Terry Haines '86, Waxhaw, North Carolina

# BE FOREVER DUTCH®

## Student Referral Program

Do you know a promising student who would benefit from a Central education?  
Let us know by filling out our referral form.

We'll be in touch to invite them to learn more about Central, visit campus and apply. We'll send you some Central gear as a token of our thanks — first when you refer a student, and a second time if a student you refer enrolls.

[central.edu/refer](https://central.edu/refer)



## ▲ PEACE MALL RECOGNIZED

Central College's latest change to the campus landscape has been honored with an award from the Iowa Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

The renovated Peace Mall, with the additions of the history garden and **Wallace Spencer Stepenske '64** Amphitheater, was presented an award in the Design (Built) category in a virtual presentation in October 2020.

RDG Planning & Design was the landscape architect and nominated the project for the award.

In its nomination, RDG noted: "Central College has a storied past filled with examples of students and staff dedicating themselves to the ideals of our nation through military service. Peace Mall garden and amphitheater, located in the heart of campus, are an opportunity to honor these stories by giving them a physical space dedicated to the remembrance of Central College's past."

You can donate here:

[central.edu/peace-mall](https://central.edu/peace-mall).

## TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICE GRANT

Central was selected to receive funding under the U.S. Department of Education TRIO Student Support Services program. The college received \$338,972 for the first budget period, which began Sept. 1, 2020. The grant is anticipated to be for five years, totaling approximately \$1.7 million.

Through a grant competition, funds are awarded to institutions of higher

education to provide opportunities for academic development and social and cultural opportunities to motivate students toward the successful completion of their postsecondary education. The goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants. It is designed to assist and graduate students and foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of students.

Eligible first-year students can join the SSS community through the first-year, two-credit college course Introduction to College Success. The course helps students make a successful transition into college. Many participants develop their leadership skills through becoming peer instructors for the first-year experience course, members of the SSS leadership team, tutors, group study leaders and student office workers. The program also provides accommodations to assist and help retain and graduate students with disabilities.

The federally funded TRIO programs at Central include three pre-college programs: two Upward Bound programs and Talent Search, in addition to the SSS program.

## JOURNEY SCHOLARSHIP FUND



## ▲ GIVING TUESDAY SUCCESS

Support of Central and its students continues to be strong, evidenced by

the generosity of alumni and friends who donated during Giving Tuesday in December 2020.

Central surpassed its goal by more than \$18,000, raising \$110,011.81 through gifts from 203 donors. Of that, \$107,761.81 goes to the Journey Scholarship Fund, which is celebrating its 10th year.

The Journey Scholarship Fund was created to help students pursue their dreams at Central and has awarded thousands of scholarships to students from around the country. It is 100% donor funded and helps open doors of opportunity by making a Central education affordable to all who qualify.



## ▲ WORMHOUDT ESTATE GIFT

Central received a gift of more than \$100,000 from the estate of **Eugene E. Wormhoudt '47**, helping establish an endowed scholarship.

Wormhoudt's scholarship was created in honor of his parents, Lon and Bess Wormhoudt, to assist students with financial need. It was awarded the first time during the 2018-19 academic year.

A native of Pella, Iowa, Wormhoudt started college in California to study architecture. He returned to help care for the family business, Wormhoudt & Kempkes Clothing Store, following the passing of his father, who was a founding member of the Pella Historical Society and Tulip Time. Wormhoudt was the credit manager for the Rolscreen Company (now Pella Corporation) from 1961 until his retirement in 1984. He died Oct. 10, 2018, at age 95 in Pella.

### NOEL COVER FOUNDATION GIFT

Central once again received a \$50,000 gift from the Noel Cover Foundation of Cozad, Nebraska.

Central is one of four colleges to receive regular gifts from the foundation and the only Iowa institution represented. Since the foundation was established in 1972, Central has awarded \$1.29 million from the Noel Cover Foundation, leading to 287 scholarships for 127 students.



### ▲ SOLAR ARRAY AND PERGOLA COMPLETED

A solar array and pergola in the college garden at Central is finished, creating a new classroom space and research and sustainability education opportunities for students.

The solar array and pergola were funded through the senior class gift of the Class of 2019 in addition to grant funding. The college garden is located near the Garden Cottage kitchen classroom on Central's campus.

According to **Brian Campbell**, former director of sustainability education and partnerships at Central, the solar array is sized to be what an average family home in the United States would consume in electricity. It gives students the opportunity to learn, study and research renewable energy in a real-world setting.

Central's engineering students participated in the design process, comparing different construction materials and analyzing wind and snow loads.

The pergola-style canopy creates a large, shaded space with picnic tables and a grassy gathering space. The solar array is more visible than Central's existing rooftop panels. With access to data from the solar array, students can explore new areas of research, helping test the feasibility of a larger array.



### ▲ WORLD FOOD PRIZE LECTURE

Bram Govaerts, winner of the 2014 World Food Prize, presented Central's annual World Food Prize Lecture via Zoom in October.

The World Food Prize is the foremost international award recognizing individuals who have increased the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world.

Govaerts currently serves as associate director of the Global Conservation Agricultural Program at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center. In developing his vision to help poor farmers increase food production from their existing farmland, Govaerts was instrumental in framing the Mexican government's major initiative known as the Sustainable Modernization of Traditional Agriculture.



### ▲ DOUGHNUT DELIVERY

One of Central's favorite traditions, Breakfast of Champions, was put on pause during the Fall 2020 semester because of the global pandemic. Instead of a late-night breakfast served by faculty and staff, professional and student staff delivered doughnuts within the residence halls and townhouses as a study break the night before finals began.



### ▲ BLOSSOMING TULIPS AHEAD

An exciting scene in October 2020! Tulip bulbs were being planted across campus, meaning only one thing: beautiful tulips in the spring!



### ▲ HAVING A HEART FOR OTHERS

Central faculty, staff, friends and Pella community businesses donated items for care bags to go to Central students who stayed on campus during Thanksgiving break. More than 70 bags were delivered to students.

# MULTI-TALENTED LEADER

Central College track thrower **Yana Rouse '21** balances athletics, academics and campus life.

STORY BY: CENTRAL ATHLETICS COMMUNICATIONS



**Yana Rouse '21** became Central's first female minority student senate president in Fall 2020.

Yana Rouse '21 doesn't play the cello.

It's true, she concedes, almost wistfully, momentarily pondering if maybe she should.

There's little else the weight events competitor on the Central College women's track and field team isn't immersed in as she soaks in every precious opportunity Central offers. A biochemistry major, she's part of that narrowest of cross-sections of the student body with membership in both the Chemistry Club and the Poetry Club, while also involved with Anime Club, Organization

of Latinx-American Students and Black Excellence in Pella when she's not tossing a discus or shot put. And, oh, by the way, in the Fall 2020 semester she became Central's first female minority student senate president.

"I don't really know how it happened," Rouse says. "I kind of just said yes to everything and ended up loving everything. I'm super excited to be in all these roles that I'm in. They add a lot of dimension to my college experience."

They also add some complexity to the daily schedule.

"It's not easy," Rouse says. "It's definitely hard, but I just really like being involved and to always be doing things makes it easier, especially being supported by my professors as well. They're actively trying to get us all involved so they're not going to make it harder for me. If something were to come up, they would definitely say, 'Oh, I understand.'"

Rouse says Dutch Track and Field Coach **Brandon Sturman** is behind her as well.



## YANA ROUSE '21

**HOMETOWN:** Glendale, Arizona

**MAJOR:** Biochemistry

**MINOR:** Political Science

**CAMPUS ACTIVITIES:**

Chemistry Club, Poetry Club, Anime Club, Organization of Latinx-American Students, Black Excellence in Pella, Discus, Shot Put, Student Senate President

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Kressen

**Yana Rouse '21** makes an all-America impact on her track teammates at Central: Her leadership and positive attitude inspires and encourages others to give their best.

"I have a really good relationship with Coach Sturman," she says. "He just understands what I'm trying to get out of my college experience and he's always ready to compromise. So, if I'm not at practice he'll always say, 'Well, you can just do this instead.' You're not demonized for having other curricular things you have to do."

### 'IMAGINE IF I COULD DO THAT'

Rouse is drawing attention for her role outside the throwing ring, as she finds herself a campus leader in what she sees as a pivotal time not only for the college but the nation. Landing the position was more a matter of discovery than design.

"Honestly that was the most random thing," she says. "It was kind of just mentioned to me like, 'Hey, the (senate president) position's open.'"

She was intrigued when she realized the groundbreaking nature of the opportunity, as just the third person of color to serve as Central's student body leader. **Tej Dhawan '91**, now chair of Central's Board of Trustees, served in 1990-91, and **Ed Ollie Jr. '93**, an African American who was a running back on the Dutch football team and later team chaplain for the University of Miami football squad, served as senate president in 1992-93.

"I thought, 'That's super cool. Imagine if I

could do that,'" Rouse says.

She could be the right leader at the right time for Central. Rouse was a part of racial justice protest marches in Phoenix during the summer and packed a lofty agenda for her return to Iowa last fall at a time ripe for change.

"I feel like we need to use this momentum and get what we can out of it," she says. "It's been an overlooked issue because we've just been comfortable where we are. Yes, we were OK, but we can be better.

"I just want there to be a more welcoming environment, as well as more minority students in leadership areas."

She wants to model that.

"I want to be somebody who can show it's not impossible. Just because there's not a lot of us doesn't mean you can't," she says.

Rouse favors conversation over confrontation.

"It's really all of us that need to change," she says. "I'm not trying to point fingers, saying that this is an issue because of you. No, these have just been issues and we're highlighting them. We're not trying to demonize anyone or victimize anyone. It's more just how can we come together so everyone feels good together.

"It's going to take having difficult conversations and being aware of how you think and how you've interacted with people.

It takes all of us."

Rouse found the spotlight when one of her Instagram posts was used by the NCAA in its Division III Twitter feed highlighting the issue in June 2020.

"I was very excited to see it," Rouse says. "I felt grateful that they're really highlighting this issue, and they're supporting their minority students within the sports."

In the post, she referenced "black girl joy," a reassuring phrase for Rouse and her sisters.

"I guess it's just living in your truth and being happy with who you are," she says. "As a Black female in America, it's definitely harder to love yourself with society's standards. People can try to take you down, and situations can, but never let that steal your joy. Always have joy in all the things you do."

Athletics drew Rouse to Central from 1,500 miles away in Arizona after being recruited by Associate Head Coach **Joe Dunham**. But Central is so much more to her.

"I know athletics is what brought me here, but I feel like being a student comes first," she says.

### TEAMWORK

Rouse sees track and field as part of her education.



**Yana Rouse '21** isn't afraid of difficult conversations. The NCAA featured one of her Instagram posts on its Twitter feed in support of minority students in athletics.

"Track allows me to have an outlet," she says. "When school is hard or life is hard, I can just go throw. I can be with my friends. These people are like my family. I just love my coaches and I love my teammates."

Rouse's highest finish during the 2019-20 indoor season was a modest ninth-place effort in the shot put. Yet she makes an all-America impact on her teammates, Sturman says, such as American Rivers Conference indoor weight throw champ **Kennedy Morris '22**, who Rouse calls her best friend.

"The best part about Yana is her presence with her personality," Sturman says. "She's a leader and a support and has a positive attitude with everything. She wants to give her best all the time and she does a lot. It's really good to have her on the team."

Rouse sets the tone in workouts as well. She's more likely to find rewards with a back squat in the weight room on a Tuesday afternoon than in a shot-put heave in a meet on Saturday.

"I like the physical aspect of it," she says. "I like to work out and it's something I do pretty well, so lifting weights is something I really enjoy."

That has translated to steady progress as a thrower, Sturman says.

"The weight room is her jam," he says. "She really loves lifting and she continues to get better (as a thrower). I think this year would have been really interesting to see what she could have done outdoors, but obviously that didn't happen."

What Rouse does away from the throwing cage on campus is even more inspiring to her teammates.

"I think it definitely is awesome to see that and it helps bring our team together," Sturman says. "One of my goals coming here was to make sure that we were more diverse and open. It's great to have someone like Yana be a leader for that."

Sturman says Rouse is evidence that athletes can compete for a top program without surrendering a chance to experience life beyond the A.N. Kuyper Athletics Complex.

Central and Division III "just create that better balance," he says. "We definitely have national-caliber athletes, but at the same time those kids are making a difference in the world. The best part about it is they can have that balance and they don't have to worry about putting one over the other." ■

## ATHLETICS UPDATES

**WOMEN'S GOLF:** Central placed third in the American Rivers Conference as **MacKenzie Biggs '24** and **Delaney Underwood '23** earned all-conference honors after finishing third and ninth at the league tourney Oct. 10-12 in Ames, Iowa.

**MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY:** **Will DeHaan '22** earned men's all-conference honors placing 11th at the American Rivers meet Nov. 7 in Pella. The team placed fifth. **Caroline McMartin '24** was all-conference for the Central women, finishing 15th, while the Dutch were seventh overall.

**WOMEN'S TENNIS:** **Karleigh Schilling '21** and **Alyssa Lewton '22** captured the American Rivers A Flight doubles championship. Schilling also received all-league honors in singles, going 6-2 at No. 1. The Dutch were 5-3, tying for third in the league standings.

**MEN'S GOLF:** A young Central team played in five tournaments during the fall tune-up for its spring season, taking third place in the seven-team Ryerson Fall Classic from Sept. 18-19 in Pella.

**FOR UP-TO-THE-MINUTE NEWS ON CENTRAL ATHLETICS:**  
**ATHLETICS.CENTRAL.EDU.**

For an up-to-date schedule of all sports, visit [athletics.central.edu/calendar](https://athletics.central.edu/calendar).

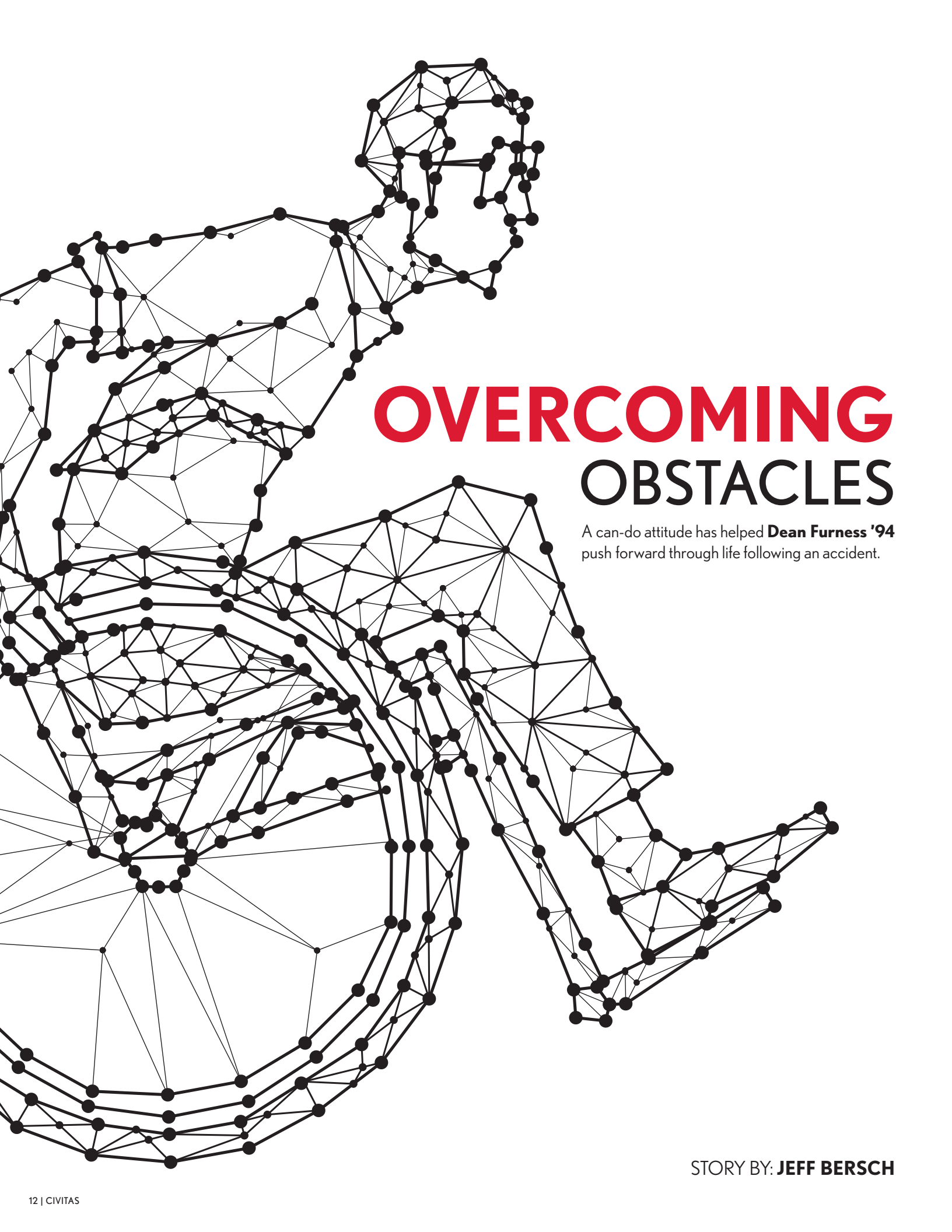




## **CENTRAL SCENE**

**PHOTO BY: PAUL JOY**

Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, for golden waves of tulips,  
for welcomed signs of a global world in front of  
Weller Center for Business and International Studies.



# OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

A can-do attitude has helped **Dean Furness '94** push forward through life following an accident.

STORY BY: **JEFF BERSCH**

His arms wrapped around the steering wheel and his legs dangling as he straddled the middle of his tractor, **Dean Furness '94** yelled out for help.

No one answered.

Inside his house — oh-so-close and yet so far away — laundry was going in the washing machine, a piano tuner had just arrived and his family was in the basement.

It was shortly after 5 p.m. on a warm December day in 2011. Dec. 14, to be exact. Furness remembers every little detail.

That's to be expected when you know you're living in a moment that will change your life forever.

Time ticked by. Slowly. His dogs — “despite what you see in the movies” — were of no help.

His daughter, **Raigen Furness '20**, would be leaving soon for confirmation class. Certainly, someone would hear his pleas for help then. Her ride came and left. Furness hung on.

Those dangling legs? He couldn't feel them.

He knew things were bad. Real bad.

After arriving home from an outing with his father, Furness had gone outside to do a few chores on the family's 10-acre property near Martinsdale, Iowa.

It included feeding the horses, so Furness loaded hay into the bucket of a tractor, strapped it in and began to back up. The warm weather had melted the snow. It was muddy. The tractor began to slide.

“As I was drifting, the hydraulic must have got stuck because the loader went up and the bale fell off,” Furness remembers. “It fell right on me and bounced to the ground. My hat got knocked off. My glasses got knocked off. The seat of the tractor broke.

“I didn't know the extent of it, but I knew I couldn't feel my legs. And it's pretty easy to understand what's going on there.”

Furness hung on until his wife, Deonne, arrived home. When she did, she yelled out the window, as she always did, and asked if he needed help.

“The next thing I knew,” Furness says, “I was getting real help.”

Furness was airlifted to Des Moines from his family's property. He had broken the T5 and T6 vertebrae in his spine, leaving him paralyzed from his sternum down.

He can't remember his initial thoughts. The first 48 hours were a blur. But the doctors had been clear from the start: Furness would never walk again.

“It changed our family instantly, but we have all kept a can-do perspective and



PHOTO BY: **PAUL JOY**

moved on to figuring out different ways to do things,” Deonne Furness says.

Dean's can-do attitude has been on full display the past nine-plus years, whether as a husband and father, a high school coach, with his job at Wells Fargo in West Des Moines, as an inspirational speaker or in his wheelchair completing marathons on some of the biggest stages.

“There was such a small window of time being down about it, thanks to my wife, who was basically saying it was go time,” he says. “It might have been a five-minute moment in the [hospital] room when we shared a few tears. But then it was time to move on. It was time to get going.”

Life has not stopped for Furness. That was never an option.

## **A VIRAL SENSATION**

His wheelchair sitting in the middle of the big red circle on stage, Furness wondered if he belonged.

He was about to give a 12-minute talk about his life, the challenges since the accident and how he's been able to push forward day by day.

According to its website, TED Talks are influential videos from expert speakers on education, business, science, tech and creativity. Their slogan is “ideas worth spreading.”

Furness was involved with TED Institute, which “works with select companies and foundations to identify internal ideators, inventors, connectors and creators.” It was through Wells Fargo that Furness got the chance.



“We had to record a one-minute video to submit,” Furness says. “There were 900 videos submitted and mine was one of 13 selected. My buddies say I cheated because I used the wheelchair. I’m like, ‘That’s right, man!’”

Upon hearing his story had been chosen in November 2019, Furness was given the whole TED experience. He worked with a writing coach who helped with the message and speech. He and his wife flew to Charlotte, North Carolina. The speech was recorded in February 2020 and posted in May.

A year after recording his message, more than three million people have seen Furness’ TED Talk. It was among the 20 most popular TED Talks of 2020, among the likes of Microsoft founder Bill Gates, author

Elizabeth Gilbert and historian and antiracist scholar Ibram X. Kendi. To Furness, it’s simply hard to believe.

“At rehearsal the day before, they had that red circle in front of the room to get used to being on it,” he says. “I started to wonder if what I have to share is worthy. There’s definitely a fair amount of imposter syndrome in there that you don’t belong.

“I’m a dad. I have an undergraduate degree. I’ve dabbled in this and that and whatever. I’m just your average person and I

hoped they could relate.”

Three million people and counting could. “You don’t go into a TED Talk thinking you’re going to have a viral talk,” Furness says. “It’s just dumb. Twelve minutes times three million. How much time has been wasted in people’s lives? But for whatever reason, it seemed to resonate with folks.”

#### **‘I WAS HOOKED’**

Furness was an athlete at Central. He played football — “I was your typical role player,” he

**To hear Furness’ TED Talk,  
visit [central.edu/deanfurness](https://central.edu/deanfurness).**





Twelve minutes on the Ted Talks red dot: More than 3 million people (and counting) have viewed Dean Furness' presentation on overcoming challenges. It was among the 20 most popular Ted Talks of 2020.

PHOTO CREDIT: Ryan Lash/TED

says — and spent a year on the track team, mostly so he could watch his brother, **Mike Furness '93**.

"I am not a runner," Dean insists.

The thought of a marathon and its 26.2 miles — or even a half marathon — never appealed to him. And when his physical therapist suggested he compete in a marathon in his wheelchair, he thought she was crazy.

It was the 2016 Dam to Dam half marathon, which went from Saylorville Dam to downtown Des Moines. It was 10 weeks away.

"There was no way," Furness thought.

His physical therapist learned Furness was exercising while his daughters were at basketball practice. One of the other fathers disappeared each time while waiting,

and Furness learned he left to walk the neighborhood.

"I figured I could do that," Furness says, noting he added a contraption to his wheelchair that turned it into a three-wheeler and allowed him to go wherever he wanted. "I'd strap that on and started going through the empty warehouse parking lots. That's where it kind of started. I was doing a couple miles in the evenings to my physical therapist challenging me to do that half marathon."

At some point, Furness found that competitiveness of a former athlete.

"I was hooked," he says.

He started researching how to train to be a wheelchair athlete. There wasn't much available.

At first, he learned things on his own, like

the need for two sets of gloves — one with more grip to go uphill and another softer pair to go downhill.

"Going downhill in a wheelchair is awesome!" he says.

Furness completed that Dam to Dam race. Since then, he's completed seven marathons and more than 10 half marathons. They include the big ones — from the Chicago Marathon to the Boston Marathon.

When he started competing in marathons in 2016, it changed him. It came after three or four years of trying to get back to normal, including trying to walk again.

"It was three or four years before I realized, OK, this is what it's going to be," he says. "That's when it started to click. This is just life, differently."



Since his accident, **Dean Furness '94** has completed seven marathons and 10 half marathons, including the Chicago Marathon and Boston Marathon.



## NO OTHER WAY

Furness has heard from so many people, including former Central football teammates, how they wouldn't be able to do what he's doing.

"I say, 'Yes you could!'" he says. "Schipper wouldn't have it any other way."

Schipper is **Ron Schipper**, the legendary Central football coach and a member of the College Football Hall of Fame. He coached the Dutch from 1961-96, compiling a 287-67-3 record. His teams won 18 Iowa Conference championships and the 1974 NCAA Division III national championship.

His success on the field speaks for itself. What he did behind the scenes is told through stories from former players like Furness.

"You realize after the fact you weren't really playing football," Furness says. "I mean, that happened on Saturdays and we did pretty well, but there's so much more to it. It's the stuff (Schipper) would talk about, like having the guts to decide if things are better today than they were yesterday and realizing it's up to you to figure out if that's something that can be changed."

"You have a bad play, but you move on. What's the next play? Only you can decide if it was good or bad and what you're going to do about it. You can't wait for anybody else."

In the Furness family's living room is a sign with the message "Stronger Than Yesterday." It's been there since the accident, serving as a reminder to Dean and his family.

"This is what I have learned from my dad: There is no such thing as a bad day unless you let it be a bad day. In the end, it is your choice to change it," Raigen Furness says. "That saying means you can move forward to what's next. My dad always strives to continue rolling forward to what is next."

These are the messages Furness carries with him when he speaks.

In addition to the TED Talk, he's talked to a Zoom group in Miami that does logistics to raise money for people with COVID-19. He's been on multiple podcasts in India. He's done radio interviews in New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom. LinkedIn asked him to speak to its interns.

There were times following the accident when Furness admits it took effort just to get through the day. It seems a bit odd to think about now.

"Ever since I've known Dean, he has always been an out-of-the-box thinker," Deonne says. "If one way doesn't work or he doesn't know how to do something yet, he's going to find a solution. I know this mentality has helped



The Furness family: front row left to right: Dean Furness '94, Raigen Furness '20 and Angelina Furness. Back row, left to right: Levi Shepherd, Taylar Furness Shepherd and Deonne Furness.

him conquer his physical challenges.”

The Furnesses have three children, two of whom are adopted. Raigen got a degree in business management from Central and works as a graphic designer for Flynn Wright in Des Moines. Taylar, the couple’s oldest daughter, had planned to attend Central before getting married. She currently works at Wells Fargo and lives in Des Moines. Angelina is a junior in high school and has Central high on her college list.

Central has played a major role in life for the Furness family. **Braden Furness '20**, Mike’s son, majored in biology. Dean’s younger brother, **Kelly Furness '96**, majored in chemistry and met his wife, **Lori Fisher Furness '96**, at Central.

“My dad always talks about everyone from Central who reached out after his accident, which is clearly a symbol of how real the connections made over the four years at Central are,” Raigen Furness says. “I didn’t understand the significance of having connections until I came on my college visit to Central with my dad during my senior year of high school. Everywhere he went, he knew someone or someone knew him. I think it is then when it really clicked how special Central is.”

Dean works as an analytic consultant with Wells Fargo Technology, a job offered to him following his accident. He had previously done consultant work for the company.

He’s served on the school board for Martensdale-St. Marys. He helped coach football for a few years and now is the assistant varsity girls basketball coach.

There are also the inspirational speeches, the marathons and simply the day-to-day desire to be better in everything he does. He still hears Schipper pushing him.

“It became so real, so valuable, so much more about life than football,” Furness says. “You’re learning things about yourself every day. It’s a foundation you can build on. Those things are embedded into you. And if you buy into it when you need to call on them, it’s amazing what can come out of that.”

### YOU'RE THE INSPIRATION

Furness is aware of the outside perception: What he’s accomplished in life is inspirational.

He’s reminded of it often, especially as crowds cheer him and his fellow competitors on during marathons.

“The kudos and attaboys you get at an event like that, I’m not a war hero, none of that,” Furness says. “I was dumb, and a hay

bale fell off my tractor because I didn’t wrap it up right. So, how do you not finish the race with that stuff? How do you not prove, more so to me but also to others, that you can do it?”

Furness remains driven. He knows he’s eight minutes slower than he wants to be and is 25 minutes slower than the best in the world.

“How OCD is that?” he says. “But I’m still getting after it.”

He’s doing it for himself, not for others. An inspiration? He doesn’t see himself that way. In fact, he laughs a little thinking about it.

“I don’t have it all figured out. Not at all, right?” he says.

Still, he knows people are listening. Three million people across the world have heard his story, heard his words. It’s not lost on him what he’s doing could be helping others.

“If what I’m doing inspires you, that’s great for you. That’s awesome,” he says. “Use it, do whatever you can do with it. But understand, for me, it’s just a day. That’s the way I’ve tried to approach it. If I can help you in the smallest way, then that’s awesome. Find out what works for you and then go for it.” ■

# NOT CANCELED

# HOPE AND INSPIRATION

STORY BY: **DENISE LAMPHIER**

If 2020 were a movie, most of us would have pushed the fast forward button. If it were a magazine, we would have canceled the subscription.

For so many reasons, 2020 was uncomfortable. It was scary. It was filled with rolling disasters and collective losses. Fires in California. A devastating derecho in Iowa. A racial reckoning in the United States. A pandemic in every corner of the globe. Just when you didn't think it could get any worse, it did. Over and over again. That was 2020 for you, consistent if only in its persistent wretchedness.

In the midst of this, 2020 had undercurrents of hope, resilience and positive vibes. Air hugs and elbow bumps became a thing. Zoom did, too. We got creative in finding ways to connect 6 feet apart. We delighted in simple adventures and creating new legacies. We looked for courage and inspiration that may not have presented itself in a different year.

We did not have to look far. Take a glimpse at the lives of several members of the Central family and learn how 2020 changed their lives for the positive, dawning unexpected opportunities and inspiration.

*Here is hope.*

## ▼ LOVE IN COVID-19 TIMES

They started dating in Fall 2019, before the world knew about horseshoe bats and deadly viruses with spikey crowns.

Jenae Jenison '11, Central's director of external engagement, and Drew Sikkink '06, residence life area coordinator and assistant football coach, (below) launched their romance on long walks in the evening after football practices and winning games. It was a way to see each other when a typical date wasn't possible because of Sikkink's intense athletics schedule.



"It was a way for our relationship to build. It's how we really got to know each other," Sikkink says.

October turned into November into December. They continued walking regularly, not every day, but often. In January 2020, Jenison printed a calendar to track the days they walked together for the year. It's the hopeful kind of thing people do at the beginning of a new year. To make it on the calendar, the idea was that the walk had to last at least 20 minutes.

From Jan. 1 to March 10, 2020, the duo missed only 11 days walking together. According to the calendar, March 10 is the last day they missed.

"March 11 was the day everything started to really escalate in the COVID-19 world," Sikkink says. "We went for a walk that evening and when we came back all these sports were getting canceled on the national level. The NCAA Tournament was postponed. The NBA shut down. Then the President was banning travel from Europe. From there, colleges started to make decisions to not return from break. It's the day the world changed."

In a realm where restaurants and movie theaters were closed, walking became an even greater source of entertainment for the fitness enthusiasts.

"We just kept walking," Jenison says. In the rain. When it snowed sideways. When they hustled just before a lightning storm. When it was 50 degrees two days before Christmas.

They also run together. Jenison, who turned 30 in 2020, set a goal to run a half marathon. While shopping for new running shoes on March 6, she learned about a half marathon being planned in Des Moines for May.

"I made the decision that day I was going to run the half marathon and we started running together. I told him, 'If I'm going to do this, you're going to do it with me. I'm going to need your support,'" she says.

Because of the pandemic, the half marathon went virtual. The duo ran it together on the streets of Pella. "I think we ran every city street in town to get 13.1 miles in," Jenison laughs.

They typically run together four to five days a week in the morning and walk a 2.5-mile loop together every evening. The runs are for exercise. The walks are a moving attraction.

"It's just good quality time to spend with a person that's uninterrupted. We don't take our cell phones. We have our watches so we can track our progress. We talk about life and what we did that day. We talk about what we read in the news because we're both news

junkies. We love to talk politics. We also talk sports. I've learned a lot about football in the past year," Jenison says.

So much so she won the Sikkink family fantasy football league championship.

The path they take varies only a little. "About 80% of the time we go the same general route to the point where Jenae's picked out our favorite cats along the road and given them names," Sikkink says.

Jenison interrupts, "Like Whiskers and there's Bojangles and Socks."

They talk like they walk, an intricate dance that ebbs and flows. They admit to having his and her sides of the sidewalk. Their favorite place to walk is around the college's football field because "it's just so magical, quiet and serene." Especially when it's snowed and there are no footprints.

The walks can be full of surprises and unexpected views. Majestic sunsets. The Christmas Star. Blue moons.

"We've seen a lot of deer in the middle of Pella. Once we were walking by Garden Chapel and all of a sudden, I looked to my left and there was a baby deer right there in the middle of town. That was the closest I've ever been to a baby deer my entire life, and I grew up in the country. I could have touched it," Jenison says.

Familiar faces along the route help with connections. Almost every day Sikkink and Jenison see Football Coach **Jeff McMartin '90** and **Laurie Rieken McMartin '90**, his wife, on their runs.

"You build this sort of community with other people while you're out there. When we were in such isolation from each other, it was really good to have that interaction," Sikkink says.

At the time this magazine went to press, Jenison and Sikkink didn't have plans on how long they would keep the walking streak going.

"We have talked about stopping once we got vaccinated just to mark it in time. Getting vaccinated might be a fun ending point to encapsulate this moment in our lives. But when it comes down to it, I think we will both be like, 'Oh, we really should walk today,'" Sikkink says.

No matter the decision, one thing is clear: Walking and running have built a strong foundation for their relationship.

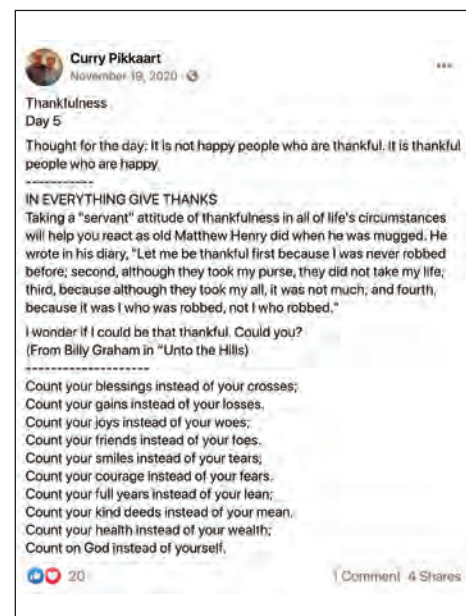
"It's been really special to us," Jenison says. "You learn a lot about someone when it's uninterrupted time. I was looking for someone who is really supportive and who I know will always be there for me and encourage me. This really shines a light on

that. I think it helped me realize a lot faster how much I love him."

"My advice, if anyone's looking for dating advice, is go for a walk," Sikkink adds.

Sikkink is a numbers guy. He keeps track of every mile, how much they do together and what their accomplishments are solo. By his calculation, when this magazine lands in your mailbox April 15, 2021, the couple will have walked 401 days in a row. He shares these additional statistics about their efforts so far:

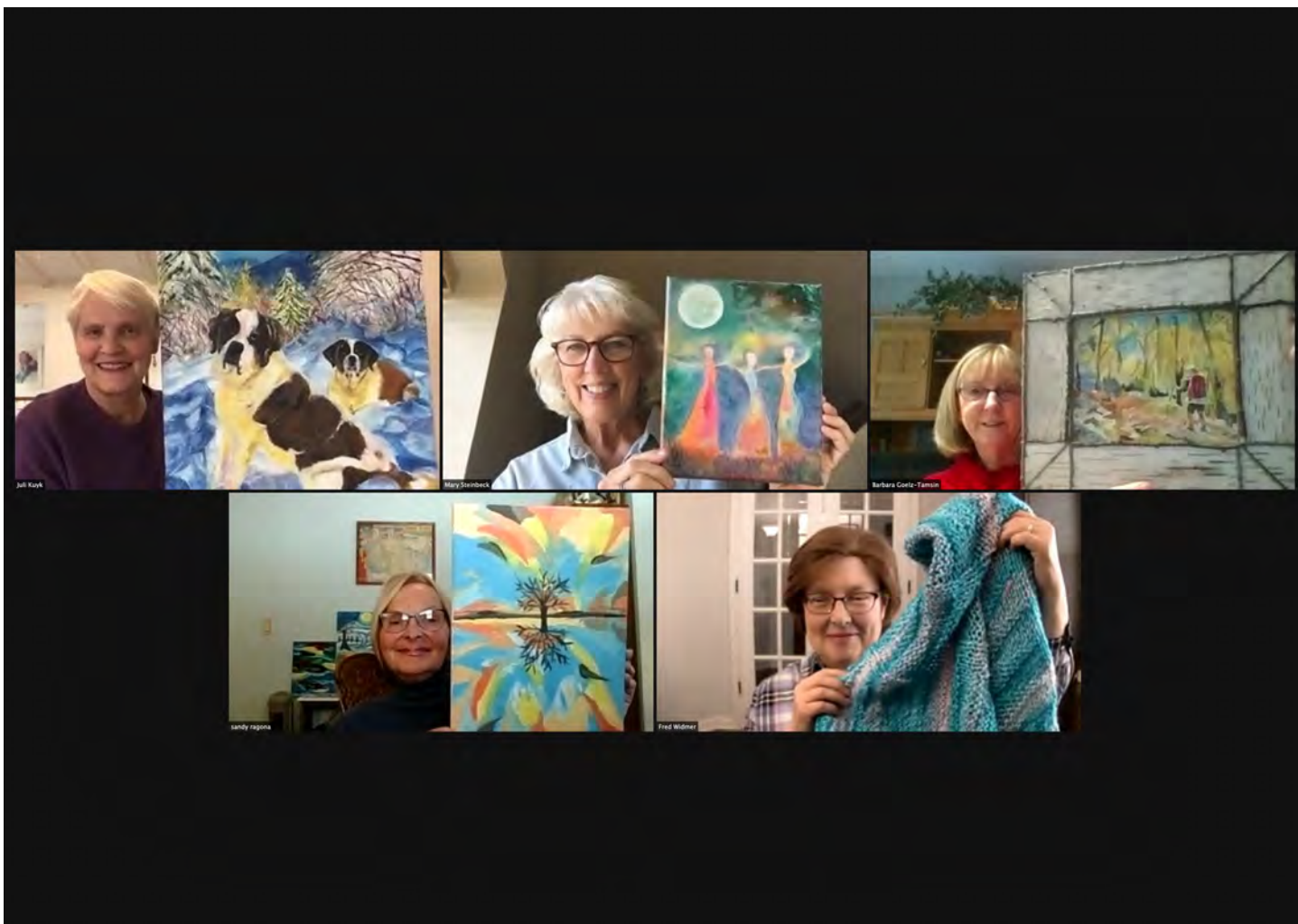
- + Every month, Sikkink averages more than 100 miles running while Jenison does over 75 miles.
  - + In 2020, Jenison completed a total of 1,630 miles walking and running. Sikkink completed 2,290 in both activities. Together they walked over 750 miles and ran another 880.55 together.
  - + The couple went through 10 pairs of shoes between them last year.
  - + Together they've completed one virtual half marathon and 28 10-kilometer races.
- The numbers, while inspiring, don't tell the whole story.
- "That's our love story," Jenison says.



## ▲ DAILY DEVOTIONS

In March, I was in the role of part-time interim pastor for a small church in our area. When the shutdown hit, I needed to figure out a way to stay in touch with and keep encouraging the members. I decided I would put a brief daily devotional on the church Facebook page each day "until the pandemic was over." I posted them on my personal Facebook page as well. The pandemic is still with us and I am still writing each day.

— **Curry Pikkaart '71**, South Haven, Michigan



### ▲ ZOOM PAINTING

The friends from my college days remain so special to me. We live far apart: West Virginia, Connecticut, Iowa and Texas. We have kept in touch. Since retirement we have managed to travel and see each other more frequently. So here comes COVID-19. We are stranded at home. Someone suggested a weekly cocktail hour call. In our cocktail conversations we talked about our hobbies. I am an oil painter. Another friend a watercolor painter. Two more have dabbled and want to paint again. Another prefers crochet. So began our Zoom painting. Once a week, often for several hours, we paint and crochet together via Zoom. We get cut off. We log back on. It is like being in the same room. Conversation waxes and wanes. We encourage one another, share life stories, cry sometimes. Despite the COVID-19 catalyst, through the sharing of our art and friendship, our time spent together has been joyful. I know I speak for all. *Pictured top row, left to right: Juli Kuyk '74, Mary Ter Beest Steinbeck '74, Barbara Goetz-Tamsin '74, Pictured bottom row, left to right: Sandy Moldenshardt Ragona '75 and Paulette Vogelaar Widmer '74*  
— Juli Kuyk '74, Charleston, West Virginia

### TEACHERS

I'm a consultant at the University of Minnesota's teaching/faculty development center. Who inspired me in 2020? The faculty, instructors and TAs who I have been so privileged to work with. With less than a week's notice, they, like instructors across the country, made the switch to online learning. Time was a scarce and valuable commodity, yet so many of them prioritized learning more about effective online pedagogy and the tools that would help them connect with their students. The care and compassion that they showed their students, their creativity and their dedication to quality learning experiences brought me to tears more than once.  
— Mary Valentine Jetter '89, St. Paul, Minnesota

### VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

I work at WorldChicago, where we manage international exchanges sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. In March, we were just about to board a plane to Bosnia and Herzegovina to host a conference with entrepreneurs in the Balkans when the pandemic changed our plans for the year. I am grateful the state department embraced virtual exchanges, which has opened the field of international exchanges to a wider audience.  
— Peggy Fiedler Parfenoff '90, Chicago, Illinois



### ▲ VIENNA IN THE BASEMENT

Feb. 25, 1993, was a day that changed my life. I set off on my study abroad semester in Vienna, Austria. (above, top) Twenty-seven years later (to the day), I was at the airport saying goodbye to my daughter, **Abby Malecha '22**, as she set off to Vienna for her study abroad semester. (above, bottom)

I spent five months growing, learning, studying and traveling all over Europe. Abby got 18 days.

Meeting her at the airport March 15, 2020, was not what any of us expected. No hugs, no celebration. We dropped off her car at the airport, she drove home and went straight into the basement to quarantine for 14 days while the rest of us navigated the switch to distance learning and working from home. Gone were the plans of filling up her passport with visits to other countries. Gone was the opportunity to complete an independent study project in

Ghana over spring break. Instead of bemoaning all that was lost, Abby made the best of the situation.

My job as a library media specialist for an elementary school required I work long hours to support staff, students and families as they navigated the new realities of distance learning. Abby stepped up and took responsibility for making sure her 11-year-old sister got logged into her Google Meets and spent many hours working with her to complete daily homework assignments. While doing that, she went to school in the basement. She had Zoom calls with classes in Pella, as well as Vienna. She continued to complete an internship she started in Vienna and had weekly check-in meetings with her team. Her spring break independent study project about single mothers in Ghana turned into a research paper she wrote from the basement in Minnesota.

We had planned to reunite June 30 in Vienna and spend 10 days traveling Europe. I was looking forward to re-exploring a city I grew to love while getting the opportunity to see what Abby had discovered. Instead, we spent a weekend in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, watching her brother play baseball.

While neither of us had the semester we planned, I did get to watch her continue to grow her relationship with her younger sister and learn more about the global world we live in – even if those lessons were learned from the basement.

Abby is thinking a trip to Europe after graduation next year would be in order. I sincerely hope we can make that a reality!  
— **Jennifer Eckerle Malecha '94**,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota



### ▲ EPIC ADVENTURES

Father and son **Bill '86** and **Ryan Strauss '20** of Dubuque, Iowa, are avid backpackers. They try to take one epic trip a year together. COVID-19 put some uncertainty into whether that was possible in 2020.

With Ryan's graduation in 2020, Bill "realized it's possible this could be the last chance we'd have to take one of those life-changing trips together given the uncertainty where a job may be and if/when he could get time off."

During Summer 2020, they agreed to take a September trip to Alaska. In 11 days and 10 nights they drove more than 1,400 miles and hiked hundreds of miles up and down 70-degree pitches — in knee-deep snow, in boulder fields and across glaciers. Highlights of the trip included stops at Exit Glacier in Kenai Fjords National Park; Denali National Park; Denali Highway; Wrangell-St. Elias National Park; McCarthy, Alaska; and Palmer, Alaska.

In Denali, the pair opted to do a backcountry overnight.

"When we found a camping spot, it started to snow and pretty soon it was a whiteout. We were pretty well prepared. Throughout the night we had to push snow off the tent. We awoke to a beautiful view of the sun hitting the surrounding mountains and valley — and 4 inches of snow on the ground," Bill says.

"The 'silver lining' to all of this is that, ironically, if it weren't for the pandemic, it's very likely this trip wouldn't have happened. Perhaps Ryan would have found a job and would be somewhere else and would not have time off," Bill says. "Instead of taking the 'easy road' and staying home, we decided to take the 'road less traveled' and had a trip of a lifetime!"

They returned just in time for Central's graduation Sept. 27 to see Ryan, now in the Army Reserves, receive his diploma.

### NECESSITY BREEDS INVENTION

**Kendra Haack Weston '12**, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, founded Lavender Legal Center in October 2020.

"I found myself with a high-risk child who could not attend daycare during the pandemic. My current job was unable to afford the flexibility I needed to balance work and family," Weston says. "The creation of Lavender Legal Center is a direct result of 2020."

The nonprofit provides direct representation, advocacy and referrals for LGBTQ individuals. "We advocate for LGBTQ people to make sure they are supported on all fronts and can thrive in our communities," Weston says. "The community support we have received has been overwhelming. Our community understands that allyship requires action, and they are not shying away from that. Because of this support, we began some of our services at the start of 2021."



### ▲ PROKUPEKS ON PINE

In 2020, my husband Josh Prokupek '18 and I had planned to travel to Europe for the A Cappella Choir alumni tour. It became more and more apparent travel abroad was not going to be possible. Eventually, the tour was postponed.

We saw countless friends and family on social media using this additional time at home for renovations, updates and all sorts of home improvement projects. We were sitting in the duplex we were renting, frustrated we didn't have something we could add value to, nothing to call "our own."

Because we were home, not going and doing, and certainly no longer going to Europe, we'd saved up a good amount and thought we'd inquire about what we'd need to do to buy a house.

Our search began in March. A few months and several showings later, we thought we found the one, but we were faced with hiccup after hiccup and roadblock after roadblock. We decided to walk away, and the hunt was on again.

In August we saw a house come on the market. It was over our budget. Since there's always wiggle room when negotiating, we asked our agent if we could take a look.

The homeowner was there when we walked through. He told us about all the updates and work that had been done to the house in his family's time there. The more we walked around the house and talked with the homeowner, the more we liked the home and could visualize friends and family there, as well as how we could make the space our own.

We told our agent we wanted to submit an offer. We included a letter about ourselves, our goals and plans for the future, all the exciting things we thought and felt as we toured and that we'd be honored to be the next family to live in and take care of this home.

Another party was interested in the property and wanted the chance to present a higher offer. The owner appreciated our letter and especially loved that we'd be able to see his late wife's painting at the Catholic church we attend and knew we'd take care of

the home. The homeowner said he wanted to work with us before he entertained the second party's offer.

We crunched some numbers with his counteroffer and notified our loan officer only to find out the type of loan was no longer available. We thought we were hitting roadblocks again, but we ended up finding a better interest rate that same day. Just in time to respond to the homeowner's counteroffer. He accepted!

Even after we'd finished negotiations and took ownership, we were amazed how renovations for the house fell into place as well. We were able to get a lot done in a short amount of time thanks to our fantastic family and friends. What a weird time to buy a house, but we were shown time and again it certainly was the right time for us!

— Brittany Carlson Prokupek '16,  
Pella, Iowa



### ▲ MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

Joshua Noonan '08 of Burnsville, Minnesota, celebrated a long list of triumphs in 2020:

- + He was presented the 40 Under 40 Rising Star award in July for his work getting fresh produce to Americans as supply chains were pressed. (He's a senior manager of supply chain services with C.H. Robinson, a Fortune 500 provider of multi-modal transportation services.)
- + In August, he married his bride in their backyard during a small family gathering.
- + He became a licensed wedding officiant and officiated his sister's wedding in September.
- + In October, he and his wife, Barie, welcomed daughter Adyn James Noonan.

"As someone who in a typical year travels 100,000-plus miles internationally for business, travel restrictions allowed me time to slow down. I was able to spend more time with family and those closest to me. Instead of FaceTiming my family from a faraway hotel at night, regular evening family dinners together became the new normal and something I feel blessed to enjoy," says Noonan, who also spent the year perfecting his golf grip, building an in-home gym and remodeling a bathroom.

"Not everyone has been as lucky as I have during the last year, and my heart and continued prayers go out to those less fortunate. For everyone out there, my advice is to take advantage of the opportunity by reinventing your dreams, thinking BIG and appreciating all the beautiful blessings around you."



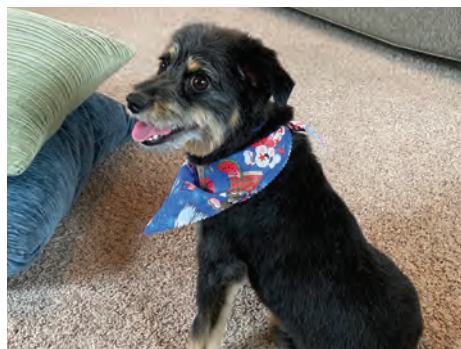
### ▲ HOOKED ON HIKING

Renee De Boef Simon '84, Central admission representative from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, started visiting area state parks and hiking with her husband during COVID-19. "It was a good way to get outside several times a week and check out a new hiking trail. Hiking has saved our sanity, kept us in shape and introduced us to beautiful parks in Iowa. Pinicon Ridge Park in Central City, Iowa, is one of our favorites."



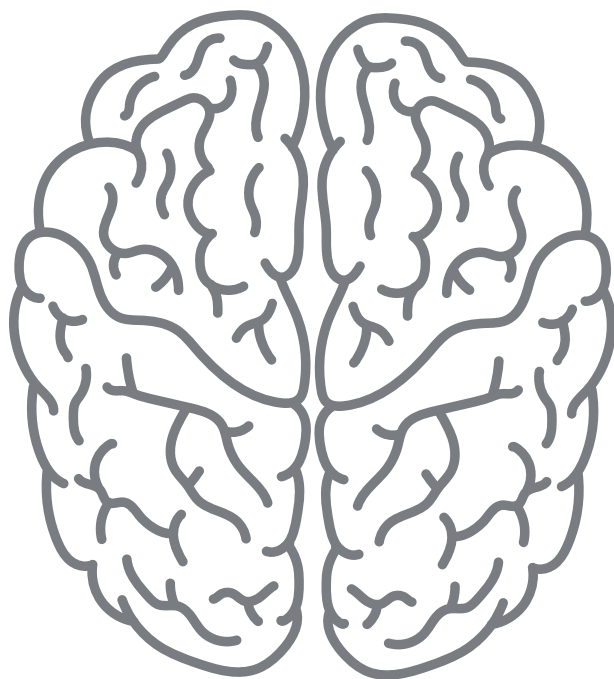
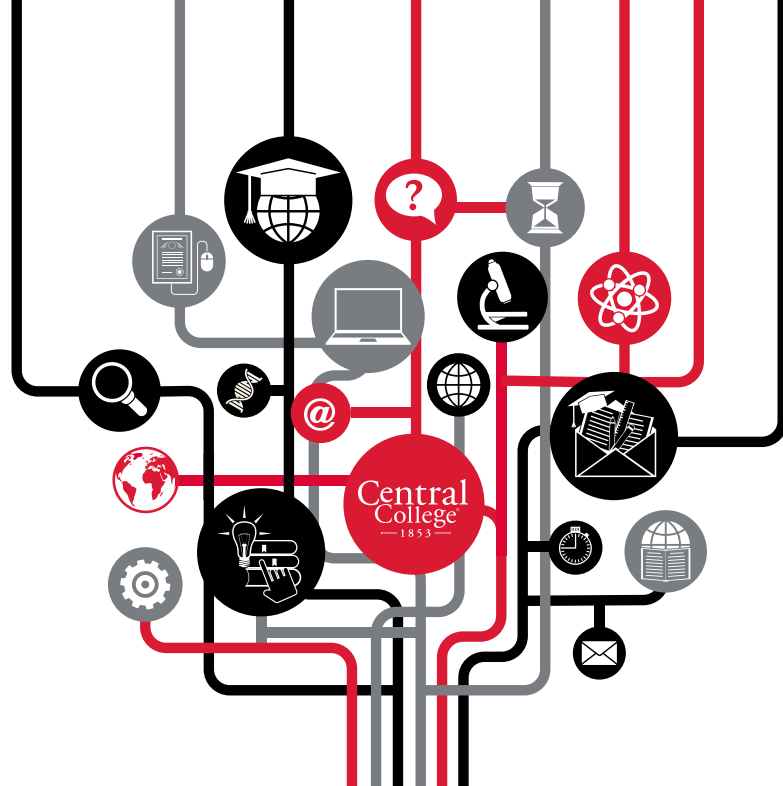
### ▲ KEEP ON RUNNING

Russ Goodman, runner and professor of mathematics, set a goal to run (at least) 1,000 miles in 2020. "The pandemic was both a blessing and a curse, with the curse part being pretty obvious. The blessing, as far as running was concerned, was that I had more space in my life to get out on the roads and trails to meet my goal. In the end, my bride surprised me with a cool trophy to commemorate the accomplishment," he says.



### ▲ PUPPY LOVE

Nelson '16 and Madi Gause Wiese '16 welcomed a puppy, Walter, in April. "He's been a joy to have around the house during long days working from home," Madi says. ■



# CURIOUS MINDS WANT TO KNOW

From studying genetic barcoding to synthesizing indirubin,  
Central students conduct relevant research as undergraduates.

STORY BY: **EMILY HAWK, CYVANNAH VECCHIO**  
AND **ALEX WILSON**

Joshua Cheek '21 came to Central College anticipating the smaller class sizes would create opportunities to interact with faculty in more direct ways. Research was at the top of his list to accomplish exactly that.

Cheek, a biochemistry major from Panama, Iowa, found research was in his DNA after his first research opportunity presented itself in the form of genetics research with Associate Professor of Biology **Paulina Mena**.

"A really good thing about Central is there are so many research opportunities," Cheek says.

He's not alone in thinking that. It's no secret Central students find success during their time on campus and after graduation. Unique research options offered through coursework and individual outreach allow students to get a foot in opportunity's door at Central and beyond.

## RESEARCH IN THE CLASSROOM

Students can engage in individual research under the guidance of faculty instructors as part of their course assignments.

In the psychology classroom, for example, research is an important part of the curriculum. Most students already are starting to learn psychological research methods by their sophomore year.

Before running an actual research study, students read and synthesize professional literature, generate research questions, develop hypotheses and curate a methodology to test those hypotheses.

By the fall semester of their junior year, students are equipped to do a deep dive into research. Working in groups they create, design, execute, analyze and report the results of their semester's study.

"It's a pretty daunting task," says **Keith Jones**, the Mark and Kay De Cook Endowed Chair in Character and Leadership Development and professor of psychology.

It's for that reason students first real experiences with research are done in a group.

"There's a developmental step to get ready to do this work on their own for a course that's coming up," Jones says. "Also, it's a great class to do together because they're also learning collaborative problem-solving skills."

Once students have collaborated and worked in a group, it's time for individual research. Students are encouraged to choose a topic that interests them and design the study while a faculty member supervises and guides the project.

"The range of research our department does is really expansive, given the interest of

our students and the way our curriculum is set up,” Jones says.

The real test of success: presenting at a conference. Each year Central offers students the chance to present research findings at the Celebration of Undergraduate Scholarship and Creative Inquiry. Traditionally, students in all disciplines were invited to present their research projects at the end of each semester. Now, the celebration will kick off as an annual day-long event at the end of each academic year as a way of underscoring the importance of collaborative undergraduate research with faculty as a high-impact experience for students.

### SEEKING RESEARCH

Students also find research opportunities through word of mouth, faculty recommendations or simply reaching out to their advisor. These research opportunities are considered independent studies or undergraduate research modules.

**Sara Shuger Fox**, associate professor of exercise science, typically has students reach out to her for research opportunities.

“It’s really word of mouth by students, and finding out that I love nutrition,” Shuger Fox says.

Shuger Fox is known for the research projects she has led in Costa Rica, which sparks interest with students of multiple disciplines across campus.

“Students know I want to do something nutrition-based,” Shuger Fox says. “Most of the time they want to work on something that I’ve already been doing.”

### ALL THAT AND A BUNCH OF RESEARCH

Cheek is in the thick of his fifth and final semester of research in his undergrad career. His research has grown through a variety of STEM fields — his roots with biology sprouted into research with Professor of Chemistry **James Shriver** and blossomed into exercise science research with Shuger Fox. The transitions between scientific focuses were natural segues for Cheek’s innate curiosities. He was first introduced to Shuger Fox on a summer study abroad research trip to Costa Rica.

“I hadn’t taken any classes in the exercise science department at all,” Cheek says.

After spending that summer looking at markers of what could be warnings of diabetes and other health concerns, he was fascinated. And Shuger Fox noticed.

“I guess she must have liked the work that I was able to do with her in Costa Rica,” Cheek says. “She asked me to stay on and continue to do research with her.”

At its core, research at Central is about student exploration, growth and discovery.

“The range of research you can do will help hone your interests,” Cheek says. “It definitely helps anyone looking to go to grad school to get an idea of what research is like.”

Research at Central gave Cheek the ability to branch out beyond campus borders.

“I have a lot of interests at Central and in the Pella community,” Cheek says. “Research allowed me to pursue all of those.”

### HYPER PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCES

Conversely, **Katie Wang ’21**, a biochemistry and Spanish double major from Minneapolis, Minnesota, chose a professor to do research with based off previous experience.

Wang was ready to start research her freshman year and, at the time, Shriver was the only science professor she knew from her classroom experience.

Research in the chemistry department differs from other areas. With a faculty-determined focus, students experience a more guided research experience. Students may collaborate on a larger scale project, but the components get broken down into smaller pieces students work on individually.

“Students take ownership of what they’re doing; they’re independent and get to make some decisions as they work through the project,” Shriver says. “In the end, they bring all the pieces together as needed.”

Much of this research is derived from work the guiding faculty member is working on. Essentially it is a continuation of a previously established project. Wang worked on the same research project — synthesizing indirubin — with Shriver the past two summers.

Wang acknowledges choosing Central allowed her to enjoy an early start to her research journey — something not a lot of other schools offer.

“Research projects take time,” Wang says. “It’s not a ‘one semester and done’ thing. So, if students can’t even start until late in their junior or senior year, there aren’t as many opportunities as there would be if they were able to start earlier.”

Wang isn’t alone in seeing the uniqueness of Central’s student research opportunities.



**Katie Wang ’21** makes time to get in the research lab despite a heavy class load and full soccer schedule.



**(L-R):** Rogelio Barrantas Arias; **Sara Shuger Fox**, associate professor of exercise science; **Cierra Rustad '20**; Jorge Vindas; and **Sarah Casterline '20**. Shuger Fox, Rustad and Casterline traveled to Nicoya, Costa Rica, to study blue zones. There they met with Vindas, founder of the Blue Zone Association of Nicoya, and were led by Arias, a local guide. Photo supplied by Shuger Fox.



**Sara Shuger Fox**, associate professor of exercise science, researching centenarians and their health in Nicoya, Costa Rica. Photo supplied by Shuger Fox.

## FRESH INTENTION

Bridget Lynch '23, an engineering and mathematics double major from Northglenn, Colorado, got started on her first research project the summer after freshman year.

"Getting into my field of study introduced me to everything," Lynch says. "Research at Central is just one more thing that gives students an edge up."

Students' field of study doesn't necessarily matter when it comes to choosing a research area.

"If you find a passion or interest, reach out to these professors," Shuger Fox says. "You don't have to have them in class. You don't have to have that relationship already."

## BEYOND CENTRAL

Research opens doors for students during their time at Central, and those experiences enable Central students to make the world their oyster after graduation.

Take **Daniel Flaherty '05**, for example. He was once a chemistry major at Central. He moved on to graduate school at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha before tackling a post-doctorate at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. Now he's an assistant professor of medicinal chemistry in molecular pharmacology at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

"I run a research lab and teach undergraduate organic chemistry," Flaherty says. "I spend about 75% of my time running a lab consisting of undergraduate and

## SUMMER RESEARCH

One-on-one research builds strong relationships between Central College students and faculty members. **Bridget Lynch '23** had the opportunity to make those connections through Central's summer research program.

Lynch participated in summer research with **Liz Golovatski**, assistant professor of physics, focusing on computational physics. This ongoing research project of Golovatski's has an overarching goal to improve the storage of information for computers without a moving hard drive. The research involves coding and connecting nanoscale magnets to control the flow of electrons, much like moving train cars on a track.

"Students learn how to code, and we play with some of the problems on the existing code," Golovatski says. "That has the benefit of introducing students to a higher level of physics they might not have encountered before."

An exceptional student, Golovatski's research brought Lynch out of her comfort zone and taught her how to work independently.

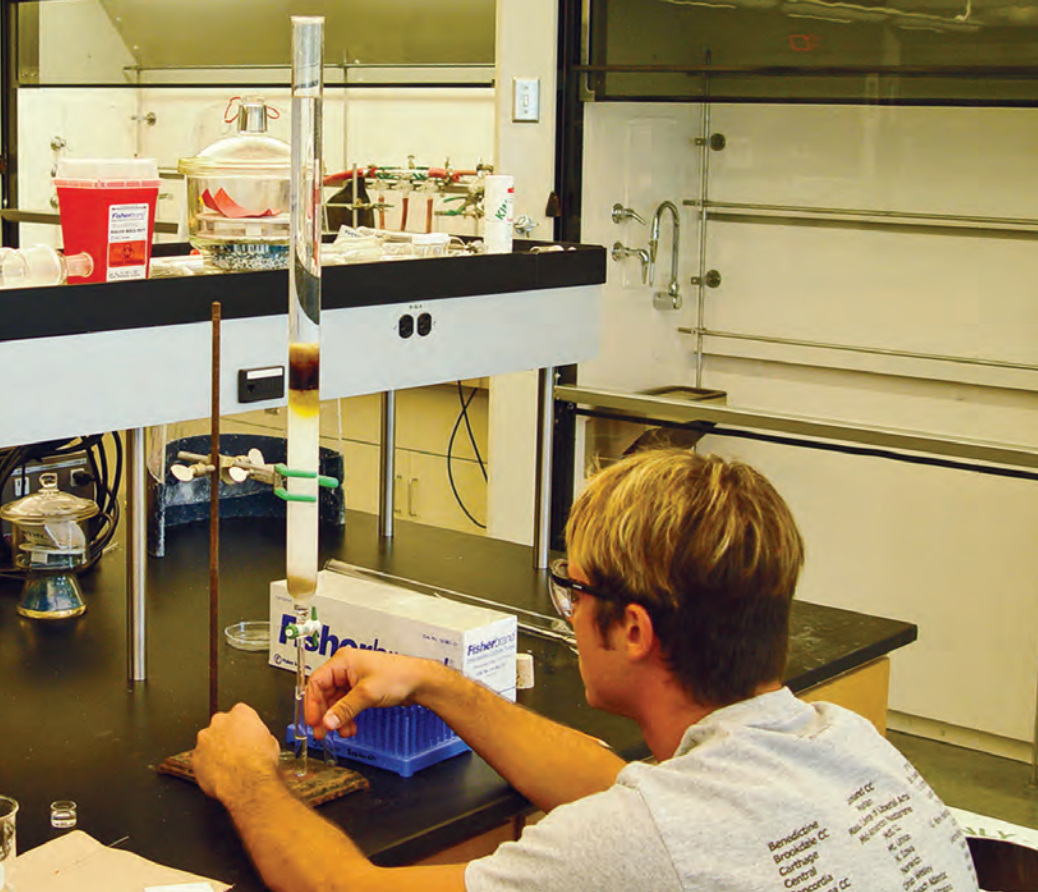
"Some of the topics we talked about this summer were about things I hadn't learned in classes yet, so I had no idea what was happening," Lynch says. "Through research, I've learned how important it is to ask questions, which I hadn't really had to do in classes."

Lynch since has declared a double major in engineering and mathematics — the only female engineering student in the Class of 2023. Today, women make up just 28% of the workforce in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

"It's nice knowing that I can go to Liz and have that female connection," Lynch says. "Liz knows how hard it can be sometimes. She tries to be a resource for all of us and keeps us connected."

Still, summer research doesn't stop at computational physics. Projects span the liberal arts, including humanities, arts, natural sciences and social sciences. A 10-week summer experience typically attracts 10-25 students, whose research ranges from studying the genetic barcoding of bees and the role of public schools in addressing student anxiety to the geographic distribution of Iowa's bat populations.

"Some of my biggest breakthroughs have been a result of summer research with students," Golovatski says.



**Daniel Flaherty '05** spent time in the chemistry lab working on research with Central Professor of Chemistry **James Shriver**. Photo supplied by Flaherty.



**Daniel Flaherty '05** now spends his time running a research lab at Purdue University and teaching undergraduate organic chemistry. Photo supplied by Flaherty.

graduate researchers as well as post docs and 25% of my time teaching.”

Central — and chemistry research with Shriver — had a huge impact on Flaherty and the trajectory of his future.

“I came into Central as a lot of domestic students coming into undergrad do — ready to go and pursue a professional school degree,” Flaherty says. “Shriver’s lab was the first time I had real, directed, guided research and an introduction to something other than professional school.”

Flaherty’s undergrad research experiences and current leadership experience give him the authority to distinguish the difference in research at Central from other schools. His take? Mentorship and accessibility to faculty.

“Having close contact to a mentor to help you along the way makes research successful,” Flaherty says. “That was obviously a big benefit of a small liberal arts college — you have close contact to mentors.”

Research reflects life in its ability to be unrestricted by how growth occurs. Failure is a part of life — and research — and is often a form of success. Failure also makes projected success that much sweeter.

“Ninety percent of your great research ideas are going to fail,” Flaherty says. “It’s the 10% that makes it really worthwhile.”

However, it’s not just about the research itself; it’s about the created opportunities through hands-on research that set Central students apart when applying to graduate schools. Flaherty knows. He sits on the graduate school admissions committee for his department at Purdue.

“A student can have a 4.0, but if they don’t have good research experience, they’re not at the top of the list for admissions,” Flaherty says.

## MAKING RESEARCH POSSIBLE

Funding for one-on-one research is key to opening new doors for students at Central. Funding provides necessary resources for students and their faculty mentors to make new discoveries, find solutions to complex problems and present research to a broader audience.

“Financing research during a regular course or as part of the larger curriculum will typically come from individual departmental budgets or from the office of academic affairs,” says **Brian Peterson**, associate dean for curriculum and faculty development at Central. “While more extended opportunities are funded by other sources.”

Case in point: Students can apply for a **Bette Brunsting '56** Student Project Fund grant to present their work at conferences, and faculty members can apply for a Faculty Research and Development Grant to present research with students.

**Andrea Arthofer '17** experienced firsthand how beneficial conference presentations are for her future in medicine. During her time at Central, Arthofer had the opportunity to present a Vitamin D research project in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, with Shuger Fox.

"Working with Dr. Shuger Fox, I learned how to write an abstract and submit that in the style that people prefer for conferences," Arthofer says. "It's a good skill to have because you need to submit an abstract before you can even be accepted to go to a conference. I also felt more comfortable having seen conferences work before and taking note of what presentation styles are well-received by an audience."

Summer student/faculty research collaborations receive the most funding annually, as students receive a stipend and summer campus housing to accomplish the work they do. Summer research is made possible through funding from the Moore Family Foundation Faculty Development

students and our talented faculty together to conduct research."

Faculty can apply for funding through a new grant source to engage in research at domestic or international locations.

**Tej '91** and **Karen Spencer Dhawan '91** established the Franks-Mahmood Fund for Undergraduate Research in April 2019.

Cheek and Shuger Fox were the first to be awarded the new grant in 2020 with the goal to conduct research in Okinawa, Japan. However, the global pandemic continues to put a halt on international travel. Through past research opportunities, Cheek has learned the valuable skill of writing grants for projects, an important step in obtaining necessary funding.

"There's a lot of research and work that goes into applying for funding," Cheek says. "I know there's plenty of good research being done by people at Central, so I'm sure it's competitive. It's so beneficial to know the research we're doing is important to other people and they can see the benefits of bringing this information to the world."

Learning to write grants is a practical way for students to benefit from research at Central.

"Grant writing is something I didn't get

## "HAVING CLOSE CONTACT TO A MENTOR TO HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY MAKES RESEARCH SUCCESSFUL." – DANIEL FLAHERTY '05

Program for Teaching; the Arthur J. Bosch Endowment for Student Research; and the Office of Academic Affairs.

Additional monetary contributions from generous donors make research opportunities a reality for many Central students. For the 2020-21 academic year, the Moore Family Foundation Faculty Development Program for Teaching funded 14 faculty projects, totaling more than \$76,000. Since 1998, 62 donors have contributed to the Arthur J. Bosch Endowment for Student Research fund. To date, donors have contributed \$160,230 to the fund.

Donors have contributed more than \$1.43 million toward research in the past five years alone.

"We have so many generous donors," says **Sunny Gonzalez Eighmy '99**, Central's vice president for advancement. "For those who like to provide an experience for our students, it doesn't get better than pairing

when I was going through undergrad, and I wished I could have," Shuger Fox says. "I did not realize then how vital that skill would be for my future work."

Opportunities to build relationships, learn, grow, test, try and open new ways of thinking are provided to both students and faculty through donor support of undergraduate research.

"It's so impactful and increasingly popular, it sometimes feels as though we could never raise enough to fund all of the incredible research ideas," Eighmy says.

Inspired to support student research? Make a donation at [central.edu/give](https://central.edu/give). Interested donors also can call the Central College Advancement Office or mail contributions to Central College, Office of College Advancement, Campus Box 5200, 812 University St., Pella, IA, 50219. ■

## WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

**JOSHUA CHEEK '21**

**HOMETOWN:** Panama, Iowa

**MAJOR:** Biochemistry

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Presidential, Trustee, Journey

**CAREER GOAL:** Physician with an interest in neurology and pediatrics

**QUOTE:** "Collecting information and learning things the right way has made my research successful at Central. Learning how to do research is going to be one of my biggest takeaways as I go into my future in healthcare and medical work."

**NAME:** Katie Wang '21

**HOMETOWN:** Minneapolis, Minnesota

**MAJOR:** Biochemistry and Spanish

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** M. Joan Kuyper Farver

**CAREER GOAL:** Enter an M.D./Ph.D. program and become a clinical researcher at an academic medical center

**QUOTE:** "Once I started doing research, it was like a switch flipped. It taught me how to do things and how you can apply it to other things. I think it gives a real-world perspective."

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

**DANIEL FLAHERTY '05**

**LOCATION:** West Lafayette, Indiana

**MAJOR:** Chemistry

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Distinguished, Van Doornick, VerDught, Central Heritage Grant

**OCCUPATION:** Assistant Professor of Medicinal Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology, Purdue University

**QUOTE:** "Successful research, especially in an undergraduate program, is having close contact to a mentor to help guide you along the way. Those relationships are important not just for research, but for facilitating further opportunities after graduation."

**ANDREA ARTHOFER '17**

**LOCATION:** Iowa City, Iowa

**MAJOR:** Pre-Med, Health and Exercise Science

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Pella Rolscreen, C.V. Starr Foundation, Central Spanish Award  
**OCCUPATION:** Medical Student, University of Iowa Roy H. and Lucille A. Carver College of Medicine

**QUOTE:** "My research opportunities at Central made me realize I am more motivated to continue my education when I'm with other people that are as equally excited as I am about a subject."



# DRONE SOLUTION

A Central College class project led to a career flying drones.

Jakob Steenhoek '15 promises no geese were harmed in the making of his career.

But the Canada geese on the island near the pond on Central College's campus certainly took an interest in what was buzzing near them one spring day in 2014.

It was the first time Steenhoek, along with friend and class partner Nick Rozendaal '15, took their built-from-scratch drone out for a test run.

"We were flying it real low and slow, trying to get some cool footage of the bridge over the pond," Steenhoek remembers. "It was maybe 10 feet over the water and all of a sudden these two geese took off flapping and honking. I let go of the controls for a bit and the drone was just hovering. Finally, one of the geese went in to attack it and there was just a poof of feathers."

The drone flipped over and crashed into

the pond. The goose followed. There were flashes in the water. Controls were short circuiting and smoke was bubbling up.

"We were just devastated," Steenhoek says. "Not only did we think the drone was destroyed, but we didn't know what was going to happen with the goose."

Luckily, both were OK.

"It was 100% not on purpose," says Steenhoek, who rarely has shared the goose story. Canada geese are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, a reminder sent out yearly across campus.

"We just felt terrible, but the goose climbed back up on the bricks. The next time we saw them, they were both there and both fine."

The drone ended up fine, too. After fishing it out of the pond, Steenhoek and Rozendaal took it apart and put the parts in rice to dry them out. After a few days and a few

replacement parts Steenhoek estimates cost only a few hundred dollars, they put it back together.

Steenhoek was able to fly the drone again and headed toward his future career.

## WHAT HE'S DOING NOW

Seven years later, it remains the only incident Steenhoek has had flying a drone.

Now a much more experienced drone pilot, Steenhoek works as a drone UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) specialist for Shive-Hattery, an architecture and engineering firm with headquarters in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He works out of an office in West Des Moines.

His job is flying drones over potential and planned construction sites to collect photos, measurements and other important data used by Shive-Hattery in planning its projects. It's called photogrammetry – "the process of



**Jakob Steenhoek '15** works as a drone UAV (unmanned aerial vehicle) specialist, making surveys and maps through the use of his photographs and video.

making surveys and maps through the use of photographs, especially aerial photographs.”

Steenhoek’s work helps bring to life 3D models so stakeholders have a better vision before, during and after construction. According to the Shive-Hattery website, these “help tell the story of a project through artistic photo-realistic renderings, video fly-throughs and immersive virtual spaces.”

“I love it,” Steenhoek says. “It’s ended up being a great fit.”

Steenhoek started as a full-time employee with Shive-Hattery in February 2018, when the firm essentially bought his drone business.

He had been working on his own, doing the same kind of work on a contract basis for many different companies. Knowing he needed to become a licensed surveyor, Steenhoek reached out to Shive-Hattery

about working part time with its surveyor to collect the appropriate hours.

Quick to recognize the quality of his work and the importance of it to its clients, the company instead wanted him to come on full time.

“We had some meetings and came to an agreement and they bought out my business,” Steenhoek says. “They bought all my equipment and made me a full-time employee.”

#### **CENTRAL CREATES THE CHANNEL**

That failed first drone voyage was for a class project required for the **Martin Heerema '34** Entrepreneurship Program at Central. In it, students are paired together to start an actual business from the ground up.

It was Fall 2013 and drones were just starting to become a bigger deal. A friend studying agriculture had told Steenhoek

about drones’ usage in agronomy, the science of soil management and crop production.

Steenhoek’s father is a farmer, so he recognized a potential business opportunity with drones and farming.

“But we were also seeing people flying drones and taking cool video of wildlife, like in the mountains in Colorado or somewhere like that,” Steenhoek says. “We decided that’s what we wanted to do for our business. So it started off that way.”

In a class. At Central. After stumbling on a flier for the entrepreneurial program.

“It’s crazy to think about now,” Steenhoek says. “If it wasn’t for that, who knows what I would have done at Central? It’s crazy, the path that got me here.”

Perhaps it was simply by chance, but Steenhoek also credits Central and its liberal  
(continued on page 34)



**Jakob Steenhoek '15** draws upon the lessons he learned at Central to solve problems and create a life.  
"I'm super thankful and so grateful for my experience. It had a huge impact on me."



## LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

The business management major has traditionally been a stepping stone to future success for Central College students.

Of the nearly 500 students who had declared majors heading into the 2020-21 academic year, 74 were seeking a degree in business management. Among students who graduated following the 2019-20 academic year, 33 earned degrees in business management.

"Having an educational background in business is helpful no matter what a person chooses to do in life," says **Jaclyn Rundle**, associate professor of business management. "For instance, I teach management. It doesn't matter whether someone is managing a business, a government agency, a nonprofit organization or a household. Management principles are needed in all of those areas. Business is a very practical and useful discipline."

Central's EAM department offers a diverse range of programs, including business management, economics and accounting. The business management major offers emphasis areas in administration, finance, international business and marketing. Students also have the option to develop their own emphasis areas.

In addition, the EAM department partners with other academic departments on campus to offer different opportunities for students. For example, the department collaborates with mathematics and computer science faculty to offer majors in information systems and actuarial science. Or students can be certified at Central to teach secondary-level business classes.

The array of choices offered within the EAM department's majors gives students the chance to discover exactly what suits them. Students who complete a business major are prepared to enter their chosen career fields right after college but also have developed skills that will enable them to transition to new areas of endeavor later in their careers.

Central also offers the **Martin Heerema '34** Entrepreneurship Program, which seeks to prepare students to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers.

The program was established by the late **Bruce Heerema '63**, Central trustee emeritus, and **Sandy Klein Heerema '62**, in honor of Bruce's father. Mart Heerema served as treasurer of Central from 1963-70.



The first drone voyage **Jakob Steenhoek '15** led was on Central's campus for a project required for the **Martin Heerema '34** Entrepreneurship Program.

arts education leading him there. He came to college one of those students unsure about what he wanted to do with his life.

"My problem was that I liked everything," he says. "I ended up minoring in a whole bunch of different fields — math, global sustainability and entrepreneurship. It all started to come together and incorporated all these classes I was taking at Central. Things started to fall into place."

Part of the class project involved a "customer discovery process" during which Steenhoek and Rozendaal had to meet with potential customers, present the product and ask if it was something they'd pay for in the real world.

Steenhoek's girlfriend at the time — **Alicia Huegel Steenhoek '15**, now his wife — had an uncle working at Shive-Hattery. During a holiday gathering, they were introduced. He suggested to Steenhoek taking what they had done, calling Shive-Hattery and showing it to the higher-ups in civil engineering and architecture.

"They were all about it and super excited," Steenhoek says.

Shortly after and while still at Central, Steenhoek helped on a project near Maquoketa Caves in Eastern Iowa. It was the first of many combined projects, the start of a relationship going strong today.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Steenhoek has learned valuable lessons along the way, one of the first coming from his father, Daniel.

Needing money to get the business off the ground, Steenhoek approached his father about borrowing enough to purchase a drone. His father agreed to the loan, the only stipulation his son and Rozendaal build the drone rather than purchase it.

"We spent probably a month or two watching YouTube videos and trying to wire everything up and put this drone together," Steenhoek says. "We'd get it together and it wouldn't work, it wouldn't fly and we'd have to take it back apart and put it together again. It taught me a lot about how drones work."

That certainly came in handy after the drone crashed into the pond.

"I just remember us staring at the water for like five minutes, our jaws to the floor," Steenhoek says. "We were freaking out about how we were going to explain this to my dad, too. Our first day flying it, and we wreck it!"

It was then Steenhoek was able to draw upon things he learned at Central. Professors had challenged him every step of the way, encouraging him to face adversity head on, solve problems and take things on himself.

"That turned out to be a good experience, just knowing tough things are going to happen," he says. "You have to keep going,

keep trying and things eventually will work out."

Even now, Steenhoek uses things he learned at Central, like communications skills or the ability to juggle work in different areas. It's the benefit of a liberal arts education.

Steenhoek also thinks about and uses the relationships and connections formed at Central. A math minor, he recently reached out to **Mark Mills**, professor of mathematics, for help with a difficult math/engineering problem.

"I wasn't even a student at the time, and he took a lot of time to help me work through it," Steenhoek says. "Where else do you get that and have that kind of relationship that you can call on them even after you graduate?"

Steenhoek was a local kid from Pella who took a chance on Central. In return, Central opened doors and presented opportunities of which he took full advantage.

One of his first drone jobs was with Central. He met his wife at Central. And through one simple class for a minor, Steenhoek found his passion and his future.

"Central has been huge," he says. "I'm super thankful and so grateful for my experience. It had a huge impact on me." ■

Watch more of Jakob's story at:  
[central.edu/steenhoek](http://central.edu/steenhoek).



# NEWSNOTES

## THE '60s

**Jim Redeker '63** published his second full-length novel, "Tears, Cheers and Jeers," which can be purchased through all e-book platforms and Amazon. Jim and wife, Nancy, reside in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

## THE '70s

**Ignaz Staub '71** is a member of the board of the international organization, The News Ombudsmen and Standards Editors, co-founder and writer of the Swiss news website "Journal21.ch" and co-curator of the art space "KunstKubus" in Cham. Ignaz and wife, Monica, live in Cham, Switzerland.

**Kathleen Smith Boswell '75** has been accepted by the Missouri Humanities Council Speakers' Bureau for 2021-23. Kathleen does portrayals of Laura Ingalls Wilder and George Whiteman's Aunt Mildred.

**Anita Moore Townsley '76**, school counselor at South Tama County Elementary School in Tama, Iowa, was named the 2020 Iowa Elementary School Counselor of the Year. The Iowa School Counselor Association presented this award to her at the annual ISCA conference held virtually Nov. 2-3, 2020.



▲ In August, **Taunya Van Surksun Westhoff '89** hosted a Stauffer reunion weekend at her farm in Alexander, Iowa. These women all lived together in Stauffer for three years in the late 1980s. *Pictured are front row, left to right: Rita Bushbaum Taylor-Stewart '89, Kris Brandt Vaughn '90, Sue Porterfield Nielsen '89, Gretchen Morrison Baldwin '90 and Heidi Hanssen Hoffman '89. Back row: Taunya Van Surksun Westhoff '89.*

## THE '80s

**Gail Blaney Aurand '81** recently retired after teaching elementary music for 22 years. She also celebrated the 35th anniversary of ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Aug. 5, 2020. Gail and husband, Joel, reside in Elkhart, Iowa.

**Karen Tallman Vannatta '85** of Guthrie Center, Iowa, married Darrin Kelly on June 20, 2020. Karen is retired after teaching for 35 years.

**Justin Kolenbrander '89** is an FBI assistant legal attaché at the U.S. Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands, until August 2023. Justin and wife, Angela, are the parents of six children.

**Michael Stumberg '89** is a property claims adjuster at Grinnell Mutual in Grinnell, Iowa.

## THE '90s

**Michael Carroll '91** was elected partner at Faegre Drinker in Des Moines, Iowa. Michael is an attorney in the firm's product liability and mass torts practice group.

**Michael Debije '91** is an assistant professor in chemical engineering and chemistry at Eindhoven University of Technology in Eindhoven, Netherlands, where he lives with his wife, Audrey, and son. Michael recently published his 110th research paper in an academic journal.

**Scott Barth '92** is an instructional coach at Ballard Middle School in Ballard, Iowa. Scott also is Ballard High School's cross country coach. His girls team recently won its second consecutive state Class 3A title in 2020. He was named

the Class 3A coach of the year for the second consecutive season and also was named the state of Iowa Cross Country Coach of the Year by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association in 2019.

**Ed Ollie Jr. '93** is a campus pastor and teaching team member at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois.

**Kevin Sanger '93** was inducted into the Iowa High School Athletic Association Football Hall of Fame in November 2020.

**Bridget Roll Penick '95**, co-lead of Fredrikson & Byron's office in Des Moines, Iowa, has been appointed by the judges of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa to its Merit Selection Panel.

**David Reutter '97** was the judge of The Visual Artists' Society "Best of the Season" exhibition at the College of Central Florida in Ocala, Florida, which opened Nov. 23, 2020. David is the museum registrar at the Appleton Museum of Art in Ocala.

**Mark Woodley '99** was named the 2020 Iowa Sportscaster of the Year by the National Sports Media Association. Mark serves as weekend sports anchor and weekday sports reporter for KWVL in Waterloo, Iowa.

## SHARE YOUR NEWS

Talk to us! Did you get a graduate degree? A promotion or a new job? Get married or have a baby? We want to hear from our alumni. Share your updates and your news will be included in the Newsnotes section of Civitas and online. It's easy! Just fill out the form at [civitas.central.edu/newsnotes](http://civitas.central.edu/newsnotes).

## THE '00s

For information about **Kristin Stecker Brady '02**, see the '10s.

**Brad Graving '01** is a marketing liaison at Family Rx Pharmacy in Tomball, Texas.

**Abbe Brunink Stensland '02** is an attorney and chief risk officer at Central State Bank. She also has coached Cornell College's Mock Trial team since 2009. Abbe and husband, **Ryan Stensland '00**, live in Lisbon, Iowa, with their four children.

**Jill Pirkl Vande Noord '02** is an operations manager at Amazon in Bondurant, Iowa. Jill and husband, **Todd Vande Noord '01**, live in Winterset, Iowa, with their three children. Todd is the owner of DogPro Kennels in Adel, Iowa.

**Beth Manne Ingersoll '03** is a kindergarten teacher at Lake Country School in Hartland, Wisconsin. In December 2019, she received a national board teacher certification in early childhood generalist. Beth and husband, Brad, live in Sullivan, Wisconsin, with their two children.

**Krysten Wormley Osby '05** is a third grade teacher at Newton Community Schools in Newton, Iowa. She was honored recently as the recipient of the IMT/WHO Golden Apple Award to honor her years of dedication and willingness to help students during the difficult year.

**Tyler Sandersfeld '05** resides in Iowa City, Iowa, while working remotely as a psychometrician for Measurement Incorporated, based in Durham, North Carolina.



▲ **Diana Carr '06** and Daniel Westwater married June 12, 2020, in Adel, Iowa. Diana is a data management consultant at Wells Fargo in West Des Moines, Iowa.



▲ **Callie Carstens '08** and Kendal Owen of Urbandale, Iowa, married Nov. 3, 2020, in Islamorada, Florida. Callie is the owner and president of Commodity Services, Inc., in Clive, Iowa.



▲ **Kyle Michel '10** and Anna Fischer married Oct. 17, 2020. Kyle is the city administrator for the City of Van Meter, Iowa.

**Andrew Kinney '06** is the director of instruction at Legacy Golf Club in Norwalk, Iowa.

**Lacey Ritscher Lefere '08** works from home as the Ascension Michigan nursing practice transformation director at Ascension Health. Lacy and husband, Kyle, live in Detroit, Michigan, with their two children.

**Andrew Lehn '08** is an assistant principal at Ottumwa High School in Ottumwa, Iowa. Andrew and wife, Suzanne, live in Davenport, Iowa, with their daughter.

**Joshua Noonan '08** and Barie Tish married Aug. 9, 2020. They live in Burnsville, Minnesota, with their two children.

**Austen Schueler '08** is a talent acquisition lead at Vermeer Corporation in Pella, Iowa.

**Lindsey Epkes Cobie '09** was promoted to project manager, dealer communications and visualization at John Deere in Davenport, Iowa.

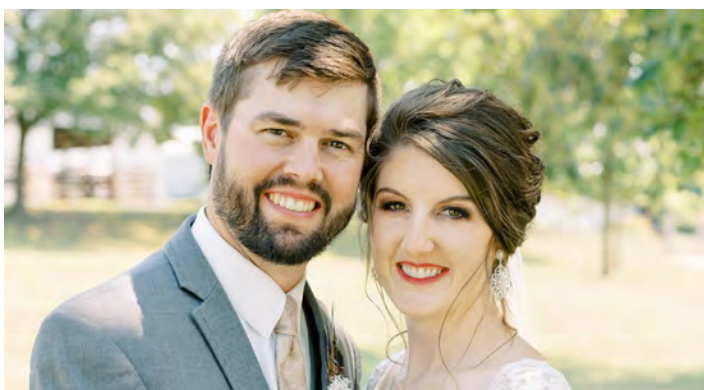
**Sarah Freese Nickel '09** is an independent international business consultant.

## THE '10s

**Brandon Geib '12** is a government relations counsel at Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Des Moines, Iowa.

**Samuel Parker '13** is a global product marketing manager at Blue Yonder in Denver, Colorado.

**Drew Readell '13** was named to the Latinos Unidos of Iowa Board of Directors as a scholarship liaison.



▲ **Shane Weinberg '13** and **Elizabeth Bauman '15** of Garden Grove, Iowa, married Aug. 8, 2020. Shane is a farm bill biologist for Pheasants Forever and Elizabeth is an office manager at Thomas Funeral Homes in Centerville, Iowa.



▲ **Lisa Langenberg '14** and **Chad Tiemeyer '14** married May 30, 2020. Lisa is a foundation development coordinator at Shenandoah Medical Center in Shenandoah, Iowa, where the couple resides. Chad is the director of parks and recreation for the City of Shenandoah.



▲ **Kelly Cavner Kroeger '19** and **Joel Kroeger** married Sept. 19, 2020, in Okoboji, Iowa. Pictured front row, left to right: **Andrea Kroeger Irwin '13**, **Kelly Cavner Kroeger '19**, **Marie Hakeman '19** and **Monica Powers '18**. Back row, left to right: **Andrew Gorman '19**, **Hannah Reussner '19**, **Lucas Phillips '20**, **Brandon Ryerson '19**, **Hillary Hamilton '19** and **Kristin Stecker Brady '02**.

**Grady Carson '15** is a corporate training and recruiting specialist at Precision, Inc., in Pella, Iowa. Grady and wife, **Jessica Ryals Carson '16**, live in Pella with their son. Jessica is a mortgage loan officer at Fairway Independent Mortgage in Pella.

**Ashton Mayer Johnson '15** was recognized by The Iowa Restaurant Association as one of 40 "Women to Watch" in the hospitality industry. Ashton is the director of hospitality at Cedar Ridge Winery & Distillery in Swisher, Iowa. She lives in Coralville, Iowa, with her husband, Max.

**Devin Mandi '15** and **Amanda Casson '17** married Sept. 19, 2020, and live in Des Moines, Iowa. Devin is a police officer for the City of West Des Moines and Amanda is an epidemiologist at the Iowa Department of Public Health in Des Moines.

**Kate Johnson Tiskevics '15** is a research coordinator at Caelus in Kirkland, Washington.

**Mackenzie Sutton '16** lives in Ankeny, Iowa, and is a family support specialist at Mid-Iowa Family Therapy Clinic.

**Brandon Zumbach '18** and **Ariana Gremmels Olson** of Waverly, Iowa, married Oct. 24, 2020. Brandon is a minor league athletic trainer for the Houston Astros.

**Madison Van Gilst '19** is a cheerleading coach at Pella Community School District in Pella, Iowa.

## THE '20s

**Raigen Furness '20** is a graphic producer at Flynn Wright in Des Moines, Iowa.

**Anna Overla '20** is a teacher for TAPIF, Teaching Assistant Program in France.

**Cheyenne Scholl '20** is a research and development technician in the soybean genome engineering lab at Corteva in Johnston, Iowa.

## ADVANCED DEGREES

**Wendy Walton Schuh '99**, Doctor of Education from A.T. Still University, May 2020.

**Tyler Sandersfeld '05**, Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Iowa, August 2020.

**Ashley Snyder '10**, Doctor of Education from Georgia Southern University, 2020.

**Lisa Langenberg Tiemeyer '14**, Master of Public Administration from Upper Iowa University, May 2019.

**Amanda Casson '17**, Master of Public Health from Des Moines University, 2019.

## NEW ARRIVALS

**James and Hilary Hekel De La Cruz '02**, son Jericho Magnus, Nov. 24, 2020.

**Vinny and Lacy Klapperich Bove '04**, daughter Ella Iris, June 7, 2020.

**Adam '05** and **Trichelle Velky Jackson '08**, son Otto James, Oct. 3, 2020.

**Tara and Justin From '06**, son Rowdy Robert, Oct. 1, 2020.

**Jon and Aimee Schmidt Lane '07**, son Max David, Oct. 2, 2020.

**Suzanne and Andrew Lehn '08**, daughter Violet Ann, July 10, 2019.

## NEW ARRIVALS (continued)

Barie and Joshua Noonan '08, daughter Adyn James, Oct. 9, 2020.

Kyle and Lacey Ritscher Lefere '08, daughter Elsey Jo, June 15, 2020.

Austen '08 and Ashley Lippincott Schueler '10, son August Robert, Aug. 24, 2020.

Jackson and Amanda Whittle Drost '10, son Andrew Warren, June 6, 2020.

David and Jessica Williams Fisk '11, daughter Aliyah Kay, Jan. 3, 2021.

Michael '11 and Cyndi Johnson O'Rourke '11, daughter Madden Leigh, Nov. 13, 2020.

Tyler and Sara Hugley Rolffs '11, son Jack Lawrence, Aug. 2, 2020.

Curt '11 and Chelsea Grieger Toppin '12, daughter Lena Jean, June 16, 2020.

Tracy Nuss and Alyssa Cobie-Nuss '12, daughter Clara Jean, June 30, 2020.

Joseph '13 and Rhiley Huntington Binns '13, son Ewan August, Nov. 6, 2020.

Greg '13 and Elizabeth Cook Ellingson '12, son Ezra Blake, Dec. 29, 2020.

Jared and Melony McDermott Gerber '13, son Oliver Declan, Dec. 8, 2020.

Eric and Julie Wunder Evans '14, daughter Evelyn Ann, Nov. 6, 2019.

Justin '14 and Amanda Meacham Livingston '14, daughter Allison Joanne, Aug. 29, 2020.

Cameron '14 and Laura Draheim Macdonald '15, son Elliot James, Nov. 27, 2019.

Grady '15 and Jessica Ryals Carson '16, son Nash Bowen, May 14, 2020.

Brian '15 and Katie Canney Fyfe '15, son James Patrick, Dec. 5, 2020.

Gunnar '15 and Alyssa Eaves Johnson '15, son Colt Wyatt, Nov. 23, 2020.

Zach and Camie Kibbee Thornblade '15, daughter Adaline Marie, Dec. 3, 2020.

Josh '16 and Jordan Mauer Stalsberg '16, son Henry La Verne, Dec. 4, 2020.

## IN MEMORIAM

Ruth Sikkink Lee '41, Balaton, Minnesota, Oct. 5, 2020.

Marvin Baker '46, San Diego, California, Jan. 27, 2020.

Maxine Huenink Griep '47, Dubuque, Iowa, Jan. 3, 2021.

Ellsworth Ten Clay '47, Zeeland, Michigan, Dec. 5, 2020.

Harry Ostendorf '49, Salem, Ohio, Dec. 13, 2020.

John Vander Wert '50, Pella, Iowa, Nov. 29, 2020.

Bernice Reynen Ferwerda '51, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Dec. 23, 2020.

Ruth Bentley Reich '52, West Covina, California, Jan. 20, 2020.

Edwin Kragt '53, Spirit Lake, Iowa, Nov. 3, 2020.

Jack Thomassen '53, Pella, Iowa, Nov. 8, 2020.

La Donna Bieshaar Rooda '55, Newton, Iowa, Jan. 9, 2021.

John Harmelink '56, Sioux City, Iowa, Nov. 21, 2020.

Greta Palmquist Van Hemert '56, Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 4, 2020.

Dorothy Newendyke Walvoord '60, Cameron, Missouri, Nov. 15, 2020.

Elaine Heusinkveld Soerens '61, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Oct. 2, 2019.

Ellen Gosselink Cochran '63, Sacramento, California, Sept. 29, 2020.

Doris Veldhorst De Smidt '64, Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, Dec. 19, 2020.

Vernon Kooy '65, Hastings, Nebraska, Oct. 23, 2020.

Michael Gates '66, Ellston, Iowa, July 16, 2019.

Thomas Patterson '66, Hudson, New York, Oct. 22, 2020.

Howard Wolff '67, Bartlett, Tennessee, Feb. 21, 2020.

Marney Edwards Brown '68, Austin, Texas, April 8, 2020.

Cheryl Fresh Snyder '72, Pella, Iowa, Jan. 1, 2021.

Lee "Ken" Walker '72, Newton, Iowa, Nov. 10, 2020.

Bill Werle '73, Staatsburg, New York, June 4, 2019.

George Bradley '75, DeKalb, Illinois, Oct. 21, 2020.

Sheryl Young Mattern '75, Des Moines, Iowa, Dec. 30, 2020.

Donna Gilchrist '76, Pella, Iowa, Nov. 21, 2020.

Halsey Onthank '76, Apache Junction, Arizona, Nov. 28, 2020.

Randy Keeler '77, Grahamsville, New York, April 15, 2020.

Kendra Shirley Van Liew '79, Temecula, California, Oct. 30, 2018.

Peggy Gainor James '81, Brandon, Iowa, May 17, 2018.

Mary Kottenstette Sickles '81, Fort Madison, Iowa, April 5, 2020.

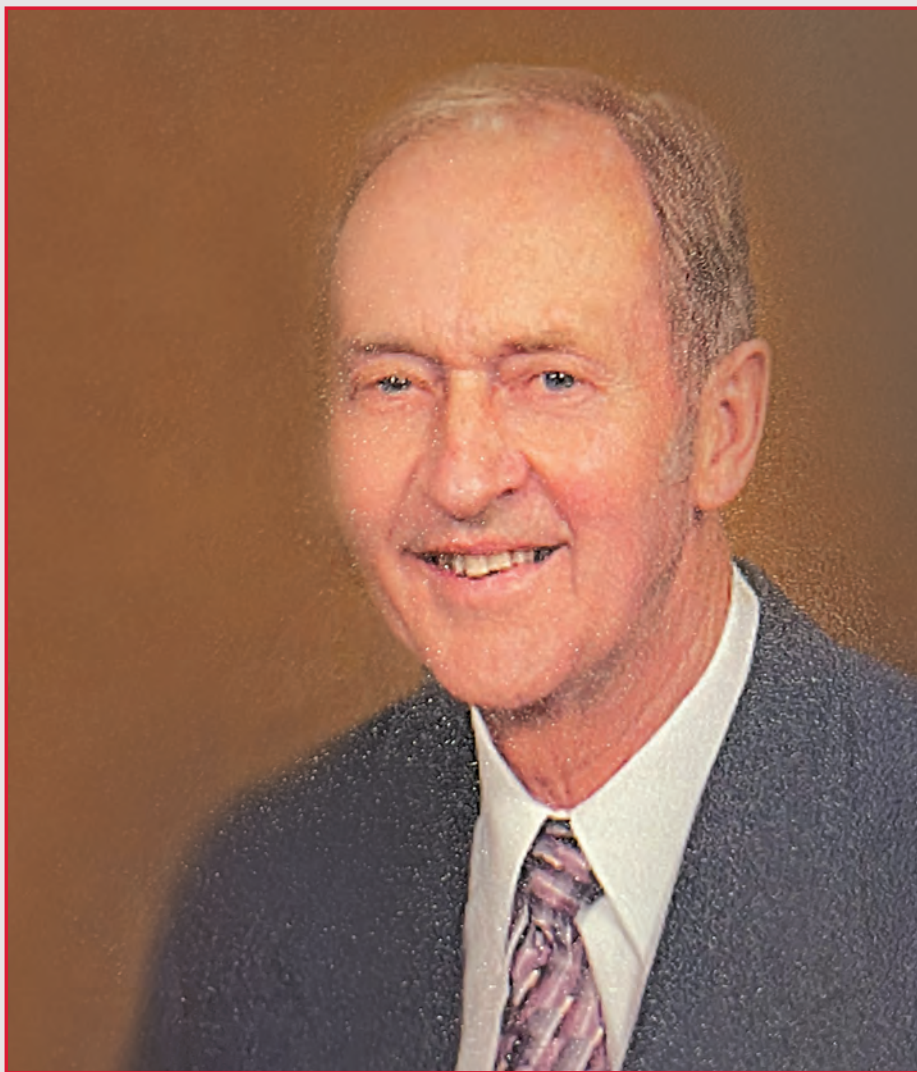
Scott Sankey '83, Mebane, North Carolina, April 9, 2020.

Scott Nienow '84, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Oct. 27, 2020.

Karen Jensen Vander Horst '88, Pella, Iowa, Nov. 11, 2020.

Lorie Barber Thompson '95, St. Paul, Minnesota, Nov. 27, 2020.

## IN MEMORIAM

**DONALD MEYER '57**

**Donald Meyer '57**, professor emeritus of mathematics at Central College, died Dec. 17, 2020, in Pella, Iowa. He was 85.

A native of Bristow, Iowa, Meyer earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics at Central. While there, Meyer met the love of his life, **Mildred (Millie) Ratmeyer '57**. They were united in marriage in 1957 and have three children: **Timothy Meyer '85**, **Susan Meyer Brown '86** and **Sara Meyer Phillips '88**.

After graduation, Meyer earned a Master of Science and a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Iowa in Iowa City. He returned to Pella and began his teaching career at Central in 1963. Meyer served as the mathematics and computer science department chair for 18 years, splitting his time between research and teaching. He retired in 1999.

Meyer's honors include the Outstanding Faculty Performance Award (1984), numerous National Science Foundation grants for research, the Mathematical Association of America's Certificate of Meritorious Service (1996) and Central's 2004 Professor Emeritus of Mathematics. He served on the MAA Board of Governors and was the founding editor of the Iowa Section of the MAA newsletter. Meyer helped create the general studies major at Central.

The Donald V. Meyer Mathematics Scholarship was created by family to provide need-based aid to students majoring in math or computer science.

Meyer is survived by his wife, Millie, their children, five grandchildren and numerous family members.

## IN MEMORIAM



# JAMES T. SCHULZE

**James T. Schulze**, associate professor emeritus of psychology at Central College, died Dec. 23, 2020, in Pella, Iowa. He was 78.

Born in Sunnyside, Washington, Schulze grew up in Idaho where he returned each summer to hike and fish in the mountains surrounding McCall. He loved to travel, enjoy good food, listen to music, ride fast motorcycles and scuba dive in Yucatán cenotes.

Schulze earned a B.A. in psychology at Valparaiso University and obtained a Ph.D. in general experimental psychology from the University of Nevada, Reno. He taught one year at Eastern Montana College before joining the psychology department at Central College in 1968.

When asked to reflect on his 39 years of teaching at Central, Schulze said, “I intended to stay only a few years before getting back out West where I belonged. It was the opportunity to teach and conduct research with students studying in Yucatán that kept me in Iowa. Following his retirement in 2007, Schulze continued arranging student homestays in the Mayan village of Tinum as an in-kind contribution to Central’s Mérida Program.

Back on campus in Pella, Schulze connected students to Iowa's Latinx community through an experiential service-learning course he developed in cultural psychology. His Elementary Principles of Behavior and Psychology of Parenting and Teaching courses offered students lifelong skills in managing their environments to create success in future careers and relationships. Psychology students recall his patience and humility in teaching statistics.

While at Central, Schulze was a member of the Iowa-Yucatán Partners of the Americas Advisory Council, Iowa Psychological Association, Midwestern Psychological Association and North Central Council of Latin Americanists. He also was active with Hospice of Pella and Witness for Peace. Schulze strongly supported student organizations, fine arts and cultural events on campus. He served as faculty advisor to Common Ground and chaired the Diversity Task Force subcommittee responsible for drafting Central's Welcome Statement.

When Schulze retired, psychology alumni and friends contributed artifacts, memories and gifts to commission a Tilly Woodward portrait in his honor. "The Schulze Spirit," located in the Roe Center psychology office suite, features his favorite mugs, best-loved books, flying pig, a Mayan hammock and is bordered by Ralph Waldo Emerson's creed, "This is to have succeeded."

Schulze's spirit lives on in his partner, **Lisa Rock '87**, and all those who remember their beloved teacher, mentor and friend.



# HOMECOMING

**WE HOPE TO SEE EVERYONE!**

**OCTOBER 1-3, 2021**

Plan to join us for special cluster reunions as we celebrate alumni from class years ending in 0, 1, 5 and 6.

**[central.edu/homecoming](https://central.edu/homecoming)**



# DONOR PROFILE

## A LEGACY OF LOVE AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Central College always held a special place in the hearts of **Rev. Edwin '51** and **Luella Rozeboom Mulder '51**.

The couple spent their lives serving churches across the country but left a gift of more than \$113,000 to Central — the place they met — in their estate as part of a living trust. The gift helped establish the Edwin G. and Luella B. Mulder Endowed Scholarship, given to students interested in theology. It was first awarded during the 2018-19 academic year.

"We are grateful for donors like Ed and Luella, who kept Central close to their servant hearts throughout their lives," says **Sunny Gonzales Eighmy '99**, vice president for advancement. "Some of the most meaningful gifts are those that support and open doors of opportunities for students; scholarships certainly allow future students access to a Central education."

A history and philosophy major, Edwin Mulder graduated from Central in 1951. He

was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity in 1979 and an Alumni Achievement Award in 2001 by the college for his service to the church and world. He graduated from Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, in 1954 and was awarded that institution's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2003.

A major figure in global Protestantism in the 20th century, Mulder served the Reformed Church in America as president of the General Synod, president of the Regional Synod of the Mid-Atlantics, minister of evangelism and general secretary. He also was chair of religion in American life and chair of U.S. church leaders. He served on the executive committees of the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. He also was interim president of New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

As a pastor, he served the English

Neighborhood Reformed Church in Ridgefield, New Jersey; Marble Collegiate Church in New York City; Second Reformed Church in Hackensack, New Jersey; and founded the Christ Memorial Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan.

Mulder worked for women's ordination in the RCA, a conclusion of apartheid in South Africa and the Reformed Church there, nuclear disarmament and inclusion and respect for the LGBTQ community within the church.

Luella attended Central for one year and graduated in 1952 from Hope College in Holland, Michigan. In addition to being a homemaker, hostess and musician, Luella taught school for 20 years.

The couple was married for 66 years. They served churches in New Jersey, Illinois, Michigan and New York before retiring to Holland, Michigan, in 2005.

Ed died May 1, 2018. Luella died Sept. 23, 2018. ■

# YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVISTS LIKE ME NEED SUPPORT FROM OLDER GENERATIONS

STORY BY: TIFFANY VAN GILST '23



As a student passionate about environmental sustainability, I find sustainable living very empowering. I navigate this empowerment through the values within my faith. Although a sustainable lifestyle isn't an easy journey, it is very rewarding. Faith calls each of us in our own way across all generations to work together to end the climate crisis.

Young climate activists look up to older generations. When you see us fighting for systems to be changed, we are doing it because of what you have taught us. The systems that worked in the past are not working anymore. That's why my generation is trying to change them to work for all of

us. You have taught us to be hard workers, uphold our core values and fight for what we think is right. When you see us in the streets, you are seeing us fighting for a positive change.

I go to Central College, where sustainability is not just talked about, it is lived. I thrive in that environment. When the COVID-19 pandemic sent us back home in March (2020), the sustainable lifestyle I was living ceased.

At home, my efforts weren't appreciated. My natural cleaners weren't deemed effective enough to help clean the house. I went back to a home that doesn't recycle. I went back to being told my efforts weren't

going to change anything. I witnessed items that could be reused or repurposed get thrown away. I am not alone in this. Often the values of my generation are overlooked by older generations.

As a student of sustainability, a Gen Zer, a woman and a person trying to navigate my faith in all of this mess, I'm tired of having my values overlooked. A lot of us young people are trying to make more sustainable switches to our lives, but our parents and other members of older generations only see the actions they don't understand. They don't ponder what these actions stand for. We are trying to live out our values that we have been taught by you, our parents and older generations. They just look different from how you saw them.

We refuse to give up on saving the world. It is our responsibility to make more sustainable choices in our own lives and change the world so those choices are the norm. It is our responsibility to speak out against the policies we have in place that make our environment worse and cause others to suffer from it.

In addition to these practices, young people like me are interested in political solutions. We must hold our elected officials accountable to work toward climate action. Our faith, the same faith that so many of us share with our parents, calls us to make change. We need to stand together to stop doing harm and make a positive impact on our planet.

Moms, dads, aunts, uncles, grandpas and grandmas, we want to say thank you for teaching us to uphold these important values. You taught us to help people in need and fix problems that need to be solved. Climate change is the problem we young climate activists are trying to fix, and we need your help. We want you to know that we are taking what you taught us and changing the world.

We have gotten to this point because of what we have learned from you, so we are asking you to stand with us to tackle the climate crisis. ■

*This column originally appeared in the Marshalltown Times-Republican and Iowa Capital Dispatch. Van Gilst is majoring in environmental studies and minoring in German studies. She was a Called to Climate Action student leader in Summer 2020 with Iowa Interfaith Power & Light.*



## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!

PHOTO BY: PAUL JOY

**Logan Price '21** won't be able to walk at Central's Commencement ceremony in May because he has been called to duty for the U.S. Army. In early February, President **Mark Putnam** gave a special commencement speech to Logan and his dad and took photos with them to celebrate the occasion. Central appreciates all of our current and former service members, including **Jonathan Masiello '21**, who won't be able to attend Commencement this spring because he joined the U.S. Army in January. Central provides photo opportunities and Commencement ceremonies on a one-on-one basis for graduating students who for one reason or another are unable to attend the formal event. All it takes is a phone call or an email to the president's office. That's the Central way.