

fall 2016

Concordia

UNIVERSITY TEXAS MAGAZINE



90 YEARS OF MEANINGFUL WORK

Nine alumni share their stories of industry and service

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE

As Concordia changes, our strong foundation remains

SERVING A PURPOSE

Jordan Redmond on volleyball, Africa, and special education



Jeremy knew he needed a positive change in his life, and he was looking for a sign to give him guidance. He received that sign, literally, when he saw a Concordia billboard. He dropped everything and went to the admissions office to inquire about enrollment. Now, Jeremy holds two CTX degrees, is the Director of Operations for an area Chick-fil-A, and his life is forever changed.

BE A TORNADO

Take the world by *storm*

Since 1926, Concordia University Texas has been dedicated to the mission of developing Christian leaders. We are committed to being the premier university where the adventure of faith, learning, and life-changing experiences leads to meaningful work. If you, like Jeremy, want to create positive change by advancing in your current position, starting a new business, or by becoming a community leader, the Concordia MBA is the next step in your journey to success. CTX alumni receive a scholarship when they choose to continue their education by pursuing a Concordia MBA. Find out more or sign up for an info session at concordia.edu/MBA.



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Concordia University Texas Magazine *fall* 2016

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ABOUT CONCORDIA

Concordia University Texas is a private, coeducational institution of liberal arts and sciences offering undergraduate and graduate degrees. Concordia offers adult as well as online degree programs for part-time students and adult returning students. CTX is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and is under the auspices of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

The magazine is published twice a year by the university's Marketing & Communications office. It is provided free of charge. Please send comments, letters to the editor or story ideas to lisa.kessler@concordia.edu.



Greetings from the President

90 years is a long time to be in existence. Consider what has happened in our world since 1926; from communication, to travel, to healthcare, to technology — much of what we know and do today is a quantum leap from what people knew and did back then. While many people look with fondness on the good old days, I am convinced that we continue to live in the best of days, and that God continues to bless us with His grace and goodness just as He did when our beloved school was founded in 1926.

For me, history is a story that helps us understand our current reality (which will be tomorrow's history). Whether it is understanding how and why Concordia was first founded, celebrating the stories of alumni who attended Concordia, reliving the move from downtown to northwest Austin, or simply reviewing a monthly budget report, history helps us understand and make sense of what is happening right now. And for me, what is happening right now at Concordia could not be better.

We began this school year with our highest total enrollment ever. We are seeing unprecedented success from our athletic teams and our nursing program is receiving accolades from across the country. Concordia alumni are being recognized for the outstanding work they do in their com-

munities, a new master plan is being created that will prepare us to start building again in a few years, a Doctorate in Education was launched this past fall with almost 40 students enrolled, and this spring we will see the opening of the Incubator for Innovation and Impact, an incubator for new ideas that serves entrepreneurs both internally and throughout the community. Additionally, multiple Life Groups are meeting across campus in Bible study, prayer and service to the community. The list just goes on and on.

Many of these stories (and others) are highlighted in this magazine, as well as stories from the past that have helped us become the place we are today. For all those who have come before, I give thanks. For all those who currently serve, teach, and learn, I give thanks. And for those who are still to come, I give thanks. I look forward to writing their stories when we celebrate our 100th in 2026.

The best is yet to come! Thanks be to God!

Donald Christian
PRESIDENT AND CEO

ON LOVING CONCORDIA



@_BREK6

WHY I LOVE @CONCORDIATX

@BANANAFANAH

...because I love the small community!

@MADDIESIMPSON96

LOVE THAT I WAS WELCOMED IMMEDIATELY AND THE VIEWS ARE THE BEST!

@FUTUREMRSAGUILAR

I love the relationships created with my professors. They care about you and want you to be successful. They are willing to talk to you not only about school but about you and life. They really do care!

ON THE VIEW AROUND CAMPUS

We've been very blessed to have this campus with so many unique features. It's a beautiful outdoor laboratory and a great place to promote the cause of environmental stewardship. Few other universities have anything like this on their own campus. Thank you, God.

LAURENCE MEISSNER

Was not the view back in the day... thankful for the new campus and the expanded opportunities Concordia has for now and the future!

MIKE RAMEY

Can't imagine what it's going to look like in 10 to 20 years from now. I'm sure it will be phenomenal!

SHANESE HARRIS

Follow Concordia

Connect with CTX via our many social media platforms, where we document the daily goings-on of campus on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and more.

**FACEBOOK**

facebook.com/concordiatx

**TWITTER**

@concordiatx

**INSTAGRAM**

@concordiatx

**SNAPCHAT**

@concordiatx



90 Years of MEANINGFUL WORK

Nine alumni share their stories of industry, economy, and service, and tell us about how Concordia helped them reach new heights.

Leo SYMMANK '46

Leo Symmank was born in a farmhouse near Giddings, Texas, and first heard of Concordia when the local pharmacist, uncle to Rev. John Kilian's grandson, spoke to him about an upcoming visit to the campus. Symmank, the grandson of Rev. Kilian (for whom Kilian Hall of the historic campus was named), and three other friends from Giddings made the trip to the school. Symmank was so impressed with the school and its students that he decided to enroll after graduating from Immanuel Giddings' grade school.

The grandson of Rev. Kilian later became a merchant marine, but his four friends, including Symmank, all became pastors. The pharmacist later remarked that God had used his interest in his grandson's future to bring up four new pastors.

Symmank was captain of the basketball team during his senior year,

and his role as co-editor of the school newspaper led him into the field of journalism. He went on to become the sports editor of the *St. John's Reporter* and had a column in the *Winfield Daily Courier* during which time he received his Associate of Arts from St. John College. He later became the editor of *Resources of Youth Ministry*, a publication of the LCMS Board of Youth Ministry. He graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis with his Bachelor of Arts in 1950, and his Master of Arts in 1953.

Symmank remembers his favorite classes at Concordia were civics and history, both taught by Dr. Beto. He says these courses opened up for him a whole new world beyond that of Lee County, Texas. With this new worldview, he went on to serve on the staff of the Southern District of the LCMS and later as a member of its Board of Direc-



tors. He has pastorally served congregations in Whitehaven, TX, Houston, TX (Bethany and Gloria Dei), and New Orleans, LA. He currently serves on the Religious Task Force for the Boy Scouts of America, as a master naturalist in the Galveston Bay area, and periodically as pastor for local congregations.

Ray MARTENS '49

Ray Martens first came to Concordia from Giddings, TX. Because Concordia was a high school during his time as a student, he studied the prescribed pre-seminary curriculum as well as Spanish and some additional math courses. He was an involved student — participating in the choir, the football team, and in speech competitions. He says that his Greek courses, taught by Professor Viehweg, fascinated him from the very start. He also added that the fact that he was able to master it more quickly than his classmates only added to its appeal. Additionally, he remembers George J. Beto as a particularly interesting and impactful professor. Beto's clever manner of speaking and his attention-grabbing voice helped to thoroughly and memorably communicate his mastery of the subject matter.

After graduation, Martens went on

to two more years of junior college and six years of seminary. His career began by teaching at the seminary in Springfield, Illinois and continued there for 16 years. While he taught there, he continued his education to the level of Doctor of Theology. His career concluded with 26 years of service to Concordia University Austin — the first 20 of them as president.

Martens credits Concordia for teaching him diligent study habits, providing strong support for his ambition to become a pastor, and for allowing him to make lifelong friends. To the current students of Concordia, Martens had this to say: "These are the years in which you choose or confirm worthwhile goals in life. Grow in every way you can toward some kind of servant leadership — but don't miss out on the fun of being a college student while at it!"





Bettie (Harris) Horn BENDEWALD '57

Bettie Bendewald was born on Galveston Island and thereafter moved to San Antonio, TX. She graduated from Brackenridge High School in San Antonio and went on to enroll at Concordia Austin as part of the first class of students to include women in 1955.

While at Concordia, Bendewald studied Elementary Education and was heavily involved with extracurricular activities. She served on the staff of the student newspaper, called *The Record*, as well several student committees. She was the first chair female soprano soloist in the school choir, was head cheerleader, acted in the Drama Club, and was part of the girl's musical group, the "Gay Niners." During her time here, her favorite classes were her Education ones, where she learned how to teach children and how to bring Christ into every subject. Her favorite professors were Dr. Beto and Dr. Lester Bayer. Dr. Beto was much like a father figure to many of his students, and Dr. Bayer taught Bendewald to always have respect for her students, regardless of how difficult they might be. Dr. Bayer was also always willing to listen and give advice, even after Bendewald graduated.

The Lutheran school Bendewald established in Baton Rouge will celebrate its 60th anniversary next year. After her work in Baton Rouge, Bendewald went on to teach in St. Louis, MO and Florissant, MO. She married her Concordia sweetheart, Rev. Clifford Horn, and moved with him to Japan, serving a call to be a missionary there. She served abroad for 18 years by teaching at the Urawa Lutheran School and in several public Japanese schools.

After her long and successful career as a school teacher and missionary, Bendewald moved back to Texas and helped to establish Concordia's Alumni Association. This same Association will celebrate its 20th anniversary this year, and Bendewald continues to enjoy serving on its board today.

Bendewald's advice to the current students of Concordia is this: "Listen to your professors — you never know when you will need that which they taught you later in life. Remember God's presence in your life, and above all, remember to thank God for Concordia. There aren't many universities like it."

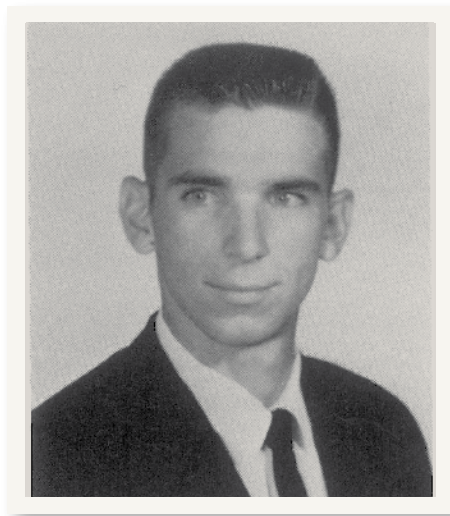
Alan ABEL '64

Abel likes to say that he was from the big city of Riesel, TX when he first attended Concordia. As a student, he studied pre-theological courses and participated in the touring choir. He was known as the "Light Bulb Man," or, as a student worker with the maintenance office. He says that it would be tough for him to pick a favorite professor, but Professors Dinda, Goltermann, Tschatschula, and Gummelt stand out in his memory.

After graduating from Concordia Austin, Abel attended Concordia Senior College and Seminary in St. Louis, MO. After this, he was ordained and spent four and a half years in the Philippines as an evangelistic missionary. He returned from the Philippines in 1975 and became a student at Texas A&M University, completing pre-medical work and a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy. He then went on to the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston in 1977 and graduated with his Doctor of Medicine in 1980. After a five year residency in General Surgery at the University of Nevada, he began

his private practice. He has also gone on four medical mission trips to provide surgical care to the underserved in Africa and Madagascar.

Abel credits Concordia with giving him his start. It provided the firm foundation he needed to pursue higher education. He would like to tell the current students of Concordia: "Use your professors. These are people who are truly concerned about you and



Use your professors. These are people who are truly concerned about you and about helping you. Make the most of the time you have.

about helping you. Make the most of the time you have. But, as a wise person once said, 'Don't let school get in the way of your education.' There are many more things to learn that can be taught outside of a lecture hall than you will ever learn within."

Kurt SENSKKE '79

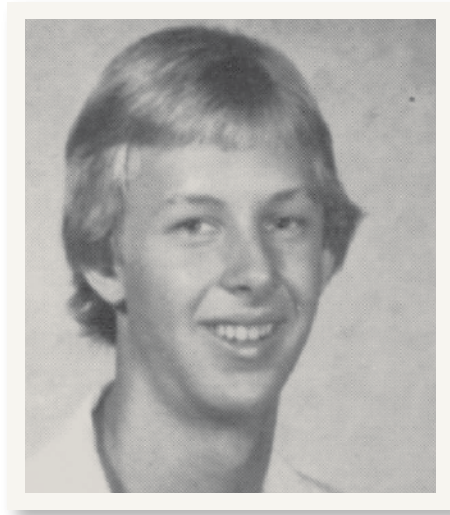
Senske, a Midwest native of Chicago, IL and St. Louis, MO had his first Texas experience when he decided to attend Concordia Texas.

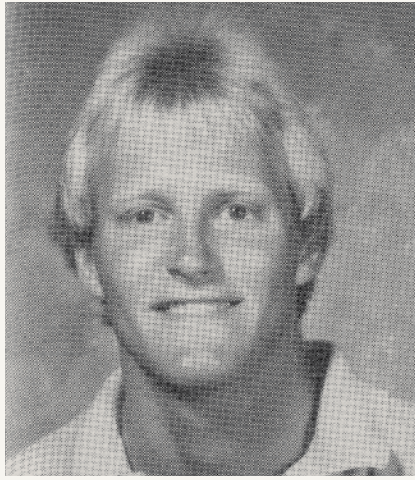
During his time here as a student, he played baseball and founded a student newspaper, of which he was also co-editor. When asked if he had a favorite professor, Senske remarked that as he thought back on his days at Concordia, he was thankful for many amazing professors who all deeply cared about him. Meissner, Dinda, Faszholz, Wahlers, and Zielke were five of many that came to mind.

He graduated in 1979 after earn-

ing an Associate of Arts degree. After leaving Concordia, he went on to earn several more degrees and practiced law in Chicago. He also worked on political campaigns, wrote several books, served as Assistant to the President at Concordia, as Chairman of Thrivent Financial, and for the past 20 years, has had the privilege of serving as CEO of Upbring, the new Lutheran Social Services of the South.

Finally, Senske would like to share this with the current students of Concordia: "Being a leader is not what we do, but rather, how well we serve those whom God has placed in our path."





Paul LARSON '84

Larson, who graduated from Concordia in 1984, currently lives only minutes from the main campus. As a student, he studied Business Management and Administration and was active in student government and intramural sports.

Larson recalls that his two favorite professors (among many) were Professors Vorwerk and Graham. Both were true Christian leaders to him, and they both had a genuine interest in each student's progress. "This helped me academically and with my own personal confidence in business after graduation," noted Larson.

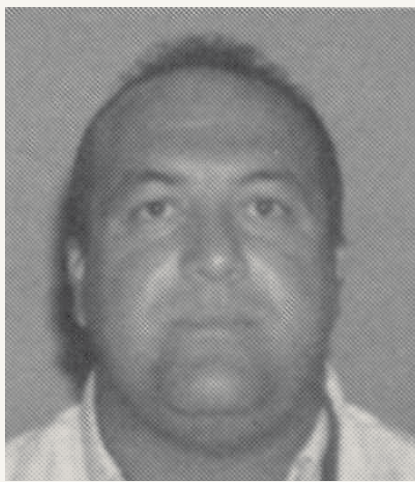
Larson currently works at SAP, a leading enterprise software company. He leads the North American Consumer Products Division; he travels often in this role, spending time with customers and sitting on various Business Councils and Steering Committees.

Prior to joining SAP, Larson held management and executive positions for leading Consumer Products companies, including PepsiCo, Miller Brewing Company, Faust Distributing Company, and STS.

The culture is uplifting and contagious, and I am proud to be an alumnus.

"Concordia made a tremendous difference in my life," Larson says. "I tell others that I see the same joy in the faces of the faculty and students that I experienced over 30 years ago. The culture is uplifting and contagious, and I am proud to be an alumnus. Now, more than ever, I realize the positive impact and difference Concordia made in my life."

Farhad MADANI '93

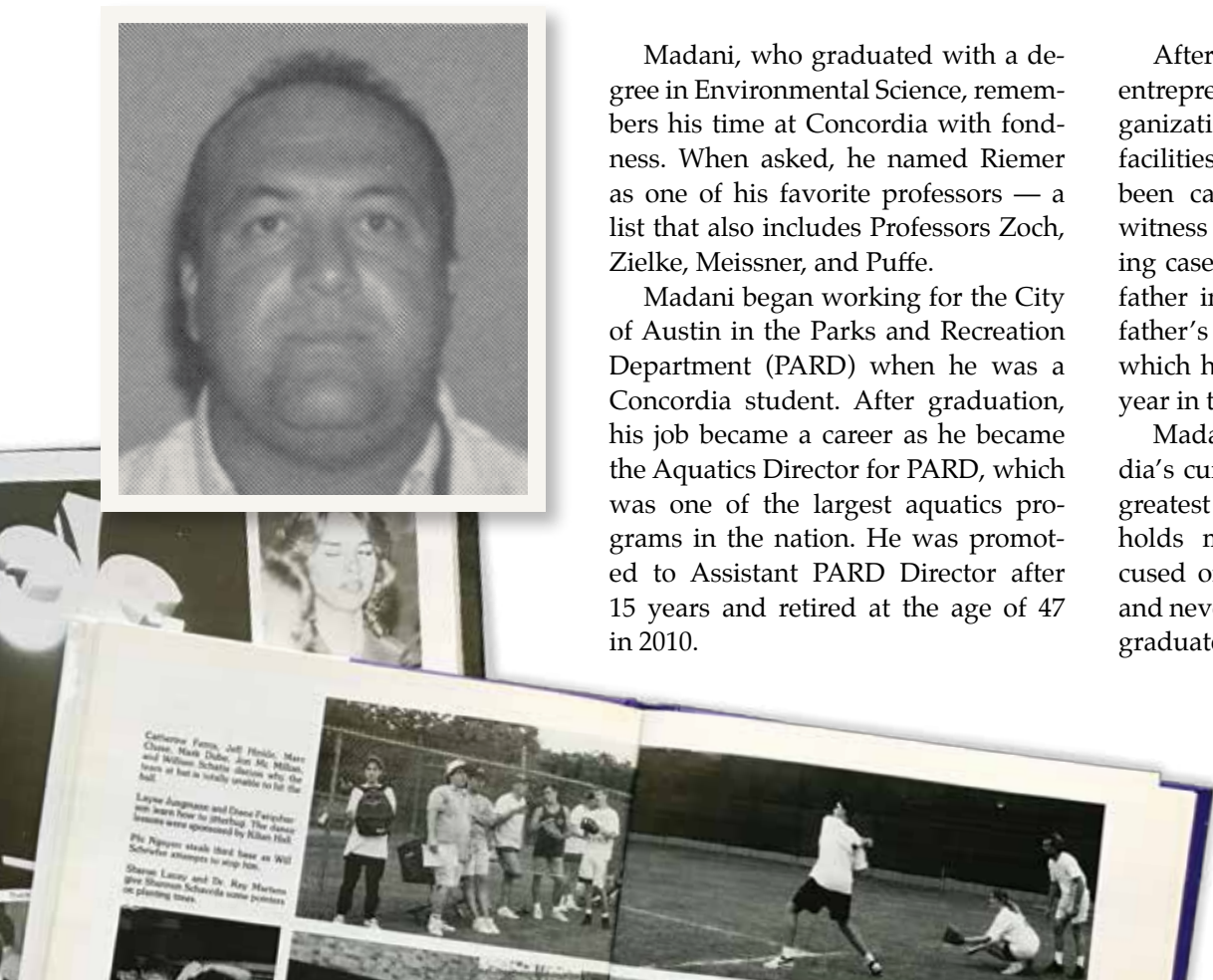


Madani, who graduated with a degree in Environmental Science, remembers his time at Concordia with fondness. When asked, he named Riemer as one of his favorite professors — a list that also includes Professors Zoch, Zielke, Meissner, and Puffe.

Madani began working for the City of Austin in the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) when he was a Concordia student. After graduation, his job became a career as he became the Aquatics Director for PARD, which was one of the largest aquatics programs in the nation. He was promoted to Assistant PARD Director after 15 years and retired at the age of 47 in 2010.

After retirement, Madani became an entrepreneur, establishing several organizations which help to keep aquatic facilities safe across the nation. He has been called upon to provide expert witness testimony in several drowning cases, and, after the passing of his father in 2012, Madani took over his father's parking lot striping company, which had a 300% rate of growth last year in the Austin area.

Madani had this to say to Concordia's current students: "We live in the greatest country in the world, which holds many opportunities. Stay focused on your studies, finish college, and never stop learning, even after you graduate."



Jonathan ZOCH '08

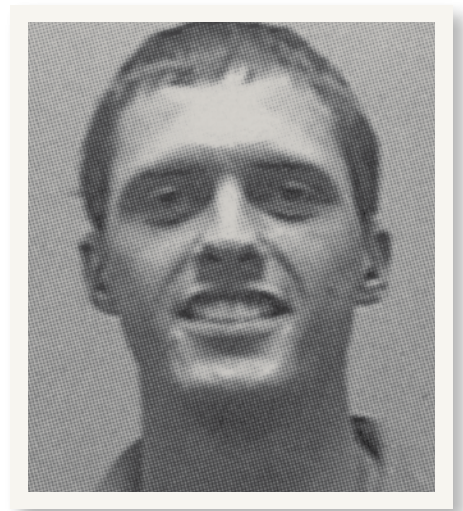
Jonathan Zoch, who is an alumnus of the last traditional graduating class of the historic campus, studied Religious Education. He was an active student, participating in several intramural sports and student organizations. He also likes to say that on most days, he could be found on the sand volleyball court near the old Student Center.

Zoch named Professor Brian Mosemann and Dr. Joel Heck as two of his most memorable professors and classes — Lutheran Doctrine and Christian Imagination, respectively. “Dr. Heck’s background and expertise in all things C.S. Lewis was a great asset,” he says. “I kept all the books from that class.”

Upon graduation, Zoch moved to

Cypress, TX to complete his Director of Christian Education internship at St. John Lutheran. He served there for seven years as Student Minister to middle and high school youth. In 2014, he took a call as a Missionary-at-Large for the Texas District of the LCMS and moved to Georgetown, TX, to help fellow alumnus Rev. Ted Doering '09 plant a new Lutheran church. The plant, called Narrative Church, just celebrated its one year anniversary.

“Concordia connected me with incredible thinkers and leaders,” Zoch said of his time at CTX. “I learned from people who were thoughtful and engaging, and who taught me to be the same.”



Ava (Baird) DARNELL '11

Ava Darnell grew up in Houston, TX, but has lived in Austin for over nine years. As a student, she studied Communication with a concentration in Media Production and especially enjoyed all of her film classes.

After graduation, Darnell planned on pursuing a career in film or television. She was hired as a film editor for a wedding videography company right out of college and then worked in the Photography and Film Department at Austin Monthly Magazine. During this time, she also volunteered her time and skills as a video producer for a non-profit in Kenya called the Kibera Penda Project, traveling to Kenya several times a year to help document videos to spread awareness of the extreme poverty there. She developed deep friendships with the women who lived there, and through this, met a woman who regularly knitted sweaters for school children.

It was in the midst of this volunteering that the idea for Slumlove Sweater Company was born. Darnell wanted to bring her friend’s sweaters back to the United States to try and sell

them as a way to provide work for the seamstress, as well as to try and raise funds for the organization with which she volunteered.

It’s been over three years since Slumlove Sweater Company first began, and it has now become a full fashion brand, creating stylish, ethically-made clothing for men and women. Darnell owns a knitwear facility in Kenya that employs more than 20 knitters, where



It’s great to set goals, and if you happen to know exactly what you want to do, that’s awesome.

But if you don’t, that’s okay, too.

they are paid fair wages, treated with respect, and given the resources needed to provide a better life for themselves and for their families. The mission of Slumlove is to give people the opportunity to make a difference through their purchases, selling responsibly-made, environmentally-friendly clothing.

“Where you think you’re headed is not generally where you will actually end up,” said Darnell when asked what

she would pass on to Concordia’s current students. “It’s great to set goals, and if you happen to know exactly what you want to do, that’s awesome. But if you don’t, that’s okay, too. As you learn and grow, you’ll start to figure out where it is you’re supposed to be. Follow your passions and don’t let fear keep you from trying new things.”

Pieces of our Past

Time Capsule

This time capsule, which was closed in 1926 (when Concordia opened), contains a Book of Concord, a hymnal, a Bible, and a Small Catechism — all in English and German. It also contains a church bulletin from St. Paul Lutheran in Austin from June-July 1926, and a copy of the Austin American-Statesman from April 1926. A rendering of Kilian Hall is on the front page.



Kilian Tile

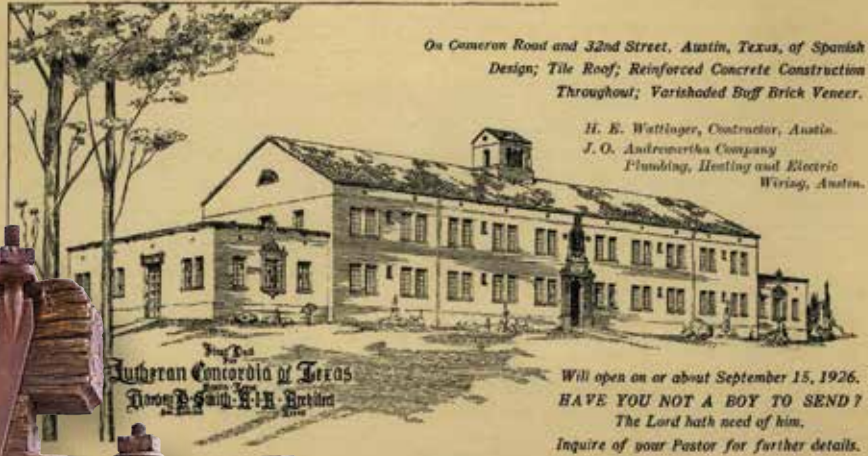
Kilian Hall (named for Rev. John Kilian) was the first and only building at Concordia for several years. It stood on what was in 1926 the northernmost outskirts of the capital city, but would quickly become part of the downtown landscape as Austin grew. The tile is described as “of Spanish design” in the archives, and photos of these tiles now hang on several walls of our main campus.

Martin Luther Statue

This life-size bronze statue of Martin Luther was dedicated on our historic campus in 2002. Artist Eloiese Krabbenhoft was asked by Dr. David Zerzen to cast the statue to depict Luther as he appeared as a university student. Thus, Luther is depicted with a full head of hair — that is, how he would have appeared before becoming a monk, and wearing robes similar to those he wore as a Doctor of Divinity. The statue now stands outside the Welcome Center on our main campus, looking down toward the preserve.



OUR LUTHERAN CONCORDIA COLLEGE OF TEXAS



Lutheran Concordia College of Texas Opening Announcement

This mailing was sent to area churches and their parishioners, urging them to send their sons to Concordia for their education and training to become pastors.



Ben Nevis Bell

This bell was part of the ship (called the Ben Nevis) that brought a large group of Wendish immigrants to Texas in 1854. The group was led by Rev. John Kilian, for whom Kilian Hall is named. It reads: "God's word and Luther's teaching will never pass away."



Letter Jacket

An athletics letter jacket from Concordia Lutheran College—back when we were called the Stags.



Cruciform

The cruciform — which is first seen in our school logo in 1975 as a cross with two C's to represent Concordia Lutheran College — was erected on a tall pole on our historic campus in 1981. It now stands at ground-level on our main campus between Building D, the Dining Hall, and the picturesque bridge toward the Library and residence halls.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE

BY KRISTI KIRK, PhD

At first glance, it is hard to feel the echoes of Lutheran Concordia College when walking through the halls of Concordia University Texas. So much has changed from that day 90 years ago when 26 young men moved to the outskirts of Austin to embark on their educational journey toward their futures as Lutheran pastors or teachers. Today, there are many hundreds more students: less than half of them are men, fewer than that are preparing for LCMS church work, and they are as a whole enrolled in undergraduate, Masters' and Doctoral programs across the state. Even the historic campus those 26 young men and hundreds of their supporters celebrated that day in October 1926 has been gone for over eight years now.

And yet, for those of us who pay attention, so much remains the same about our beloved Concordia.

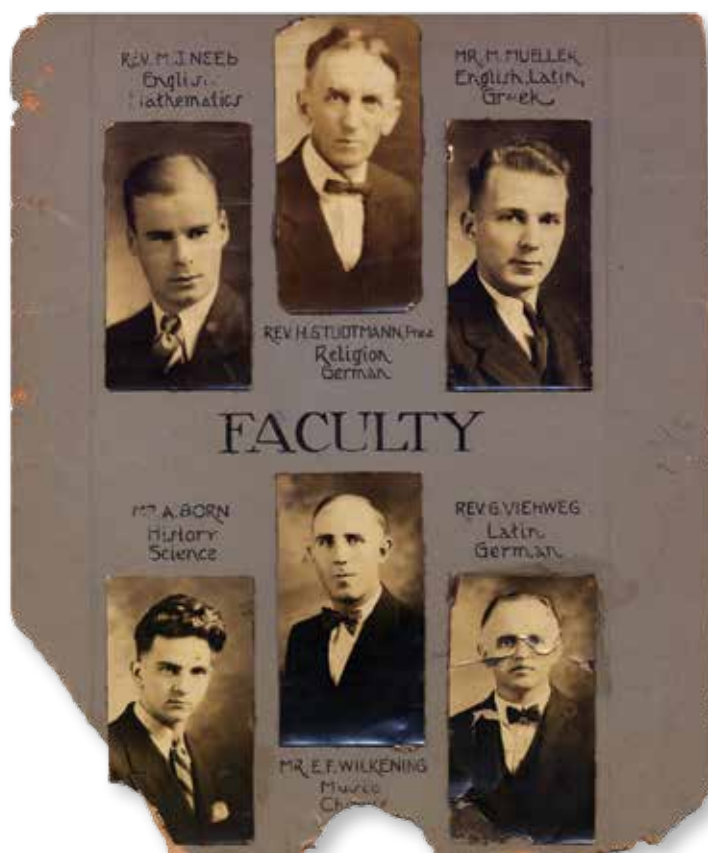
MISSIONAL & PURPOSEFUL

Although formal mission statements come and go, the work Concordia does has stayed very much the same. The 1927-28 Academic Catalog describes the first purpose of LCC as preparing young men for the ministry, but it also clearly points out that “students who have not the above purpose in view are welcome to attend, and will find good opportunities at Lutheran Concordia College for their preparatory work.”

By 1936, the catalog references classical education for those “who desire to pursue their pre-professional studies under distinctly Christian influences,” and this emphasis is further developed by the early junior college years. At this time, the college begins to describe itself as a place which fosters the education and skill set that “will equip the individual with the requisites for professional life in modern society.”

This belief in a liberal arts education, rooted in a Lutheran learning model, has come to be described in our current mission statement of developing Christian leaders. While that wording has only been specific to Concordia since the late 1990s, the principles are much more deeply rooted in how Concordia has gone about its education. From the 1973-74 catalog, we see that Concordia described its programs as “designed to challenge and guide students in their quest for knowledge, to motivate them toward self-realization, to improve their skills

Photos of the first group of faculty of Concordia Lutheran College include Professors Neeb, Studtmann, Mueller, Born, Wilkening, and Viehweg.



“What makes Concordia different is that we have a purpose for that learning, a purpose which serves the neighbor and gives glory to God...”

and to enable them to develop a life of highest values and service.” By 1982, the purpose was described as to “equip students for ministry in the church and for service in a broad range of careers in society. The programs also encourage students to develop caring, sharing and serving attitudes toward others...in response to God’s love, man is motivated to service in the Christian community and the world.”

The language around the purpose has changed over the years, yet the spirit of what Concordia strives to do has not changed significantly. Today, Dr. Christian reminds us that “What makes Concordia different is that we have a purpose for that learning, a purpose which serves the neighbor and gives glory to God. As an institution of Lutheran higher education, we believe that everyone has a voca-

▼ Kilian Hall, c. 1926



▼ Historic Campus, c. 2003



66

tion and calling. How that vocation is lived out makes a difference in people's lives. Students at Concordia are challenged to think deeply; to engage fully; to dialogue thoughtfully; and to bring their whole selves to the learning process...and that can make all the difference in the world."

Students at Concordia are challenged to think deeply; to engage fully; to dialogue thoughtfully; and to bring their whole selves to the learning process...and that can make all the difference in the world."

This concept of vocation is one of Concordia's core values. It is a driving force for who we are and what we do that was true even prior to 1926, when citizens of the Texas District requested permission to include a "business" or "secular" course in its original offerings (a request which was denied by Synod), and it remains true today as CTX students are encouraged to "take the world by storm," living into their God-given vocations of lives of service to their communities.

FAMILIAL

"He was a like a father to me" is a phrase oft echoed whenever anyone reminisces about their time at Concordia in the early days. When men from the high school days remember their time at LCC and reflect on names like Studtmann, Neeb, Viehweg, and Beto, they can't help but speak about the way these early faculty members shaped not just their academic formation but also their lives. These men weren't just concerned with their students' academic development; they invested their lives into the growth of their students.

Perhaps this is best described in a paper entitled "The Image of a Faculty Member" by Dr. Richard Dinda, presented in 1963, which is an enduring description of the calling of a CTX faculty member. Its final encouragement to the faculty is to "Be prepared, be relaxed, be funny, be serious, be demanding, be generous, be enthusiastic, be sympathetic, but above all, be a real minister of the Word, a child of God refreshed by his redemption."

When faculty members approach their work with that kind of purpose, a relationship is sure to develop between teacher and student. As Concordia no longer has high school students living away from home, the paternalist phrase "like a father to me" is rarely heard any more.



Yet the same sentiment regarding our dedicated faculty remains true, whether they are teaching college freshman or those enrolled in graduate programs. As Dr. Milton Reimer described it when asked about Concordia's Lutheran ethos, this care and concern for the whole person of the students we teach "translates into the classroom by being attentive and alert to when you see changes in students' behavior and attitude."

Current CTX senior Josh Weiser describes his experience as meaningful primarily because of the "life-giving relationships he has with his educators." In this type of learning community, something special happens. Relationships are created, the truth of the gospel is shared, and learning is accelerated; a sense of family-like community blossoms. That part of Concordia — the heart of who we are and have always been — remains true and unchanged.

DIVERSE

There seems to have always been a prevailing notion of a past Concordia that was homogeneous, a hearkening to the days when we were all of German descent, all Lutheran, and all preparing for church work.

And yet, Concordia has always been more diverse than we might think. A 1958 report to the faculty on "Characteristics of the Student

Population" took on a study of "the stereotype of a Lutheran pre-theological student at one of the preparatory schools of the Synod." Its conclusion was that "our student body, like our constituency, is growing increasingly more cosmopolitan and heterogeneous. As the individual differences among our students increase, both in number and in magnitude, it will be necessary more and more to be concerned about the active communication of concepts which previously may have been taken for granted as having been assimilated in the homogeneous culture of German Lutheranism. And this fact patently represents on the one hand a problem and on the other hand an opportunity."

What was true in 1958 is even truer today. The Concordia of today is diverse in any number of ways, and rather than weakening our community, we believe that we are stronger because of it. In fact, our Lutheran lens of learning and our understanding of the liberal arts require that we bring a variety of voices to the table for engaged conversation from diverse perspectives.

Today's Concordia population numbers over 2,600: from high school students co-enrolled in our college classes to doctoral students, of all races, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, academic preparation and goals, ages, and religious understandings. Some of them live on



▲ The cruciform is one of many pieces in our 90 year history that was carefully preserved and brought over to our new campus.



LANCE HOLT

▲ Above: Part of Concordia's 2016 class—the largest yet—poses for a 90th birthday celebration.

Below: A photo of the entire Concordia class of 1926.

campus, some take classes at off-site locations, and some study online. Nearly 60 years after the “Report on Characteristics of the Student Population” was written, we can say what was true then remains true now. Our student body is more “cosmopolitan and heterogeneous” than ever before, and this remains both a great challenge — to provide a high quality, Lutheran liberal arts education to people in different ways that meets different needs — and a great blessing — in that we get to engage with and experience a rich variety of perspectives, all while carrying out our mission of developing Christian leaders with more people than ever before.

EXPANSIVE

When Dr. Henry Studtmann, Concordia's first president, stepped down from office in 1948, he left his constituents with these words: “Great are Concordia's possibilities, tremendous its opportunities under God. In fact, I bespeak for our Concordia an era of unprecedented expansion and growth in the years that

lie ahead.” Nearly 70 years later, one can only assume that Dr. Studtmann would be pleased with the expansion and growth of his “little school” and the ways that Concordia has faced its possibilities and opportunities. While much has changed in the 90 years since he opened the one-building “college” housed in Kilian Hall, the spirit of what Dr. Studtmann began is still alive and well, having been carried on so faithfully by so many who worked with him and after him.

If you haven't been on campus recently, I encourage you to visit. Walk our halls and watch what happens in the classrooms and the offices; witness the powerful learning that happens and the relationships that develop. Come to campus worship and hear the same God worshiped and the same grace bestowed. Stop at the bell or the cruciform and remember those who came before, the sacrifices they made, and the vision of the future they had.

Most importantly, join us in a prayer of thanksgiving for the last 90 years, the hundreds of faculty and staff who have served this place well, and the thousands of students whom Concordia has served.

Give thanks that “With God, we shall do valiantly.” Ps 108:13 🙏

START SOMETHING

powerfund

Take the world by storm, one gift at a time.

Throughout the year, the Annual Fund helps Concordia students by providing them with financial and material support as they study, volunteer, work, and play. Gifts of all size bolster the collective strength of the Annual Fund and gives students the opportunity to have the same life-changing experiences you remember. Help to empower them to join you in taking the world by storm! Make your gift today at concordia.edu/give.





MISSION
SERVICE
LEADER
PURPOSE

SERVING A PURPOSE

Jordan Redmond On Volleyball, Africa, and Special Education

BY CHELSEY DOERING

"I hear so many people talk about life at a massive college and how they feel lost or like 'just another number,'" said Redmond. "But not me. Concordia has shown me what real community looks like."

This is only one of the reasons why Jordan Redmond decided to transfer to Concordia from Southern Arkansas University. Redmond, who is from Liberty Hill, TX and whose parents are alumni of CTX, played basketball at her previous school. When she found out she would no longer be able to do so, she decided to give Concordia another look.

"Honestly, the great transfer scholarship Concordia offered me was one of the main reasons," she said. "But because my parents also went there and had good experiences, the decision was simple."

Jana, Redmond's mother, and Todd, her father, played volleyball and basketball for CTX, respectively. Jordan didn't join the CTX volleyball team until her junior year, but she finished the season with 442 kills and 150 blocks and was awarded all-American Southwest Conference accolades. She was co-captain during her senior year and took home Concordia's 2016 ASC Scholar-Athlete Medal of Honor, as well. This award is selected by Concordia's faculty athletics representative and sports information director. It is designed to go to a graduating male and female student-athlete who has compiled the most outstanding academic, athletic, and leadership record as an undergraduate.

Redmond, who is on track to graduate in the spring of 2017 with her Lutheran Teacher Certification in Special Education, got the chance to volunteer on a mission trip to Nairobi, Kenya in the summer of 2016 with Upbring, the new Lutheran Social Services of the South. The experience was like nothing she had expected. She worked with children who lived on the streets, people who lived in impossibly small spaces in a slum, and with the teachers and students of a special needs school.

"Often, special needs children or parents of special needs students are outcasts in their society," she said. "This school not only serves the students but also helps to provide jobs for their caregivers."

"The kids just got so excited to see people come and visit them," she continued. "A lot of the time, they don't get much attention. It was heartbreaking to see the lack of resources they have, especially for special education. In America, we have so much technology and ways we can support the students, but in Kenya they just have to make do with what they have."



Tornado Athletics Headlines

Redmond's dream job would be to help a Lutheran school start a special education program.

"Many Lutheran schools do not have big special education programs, so they cannot provide services for students with more severe disabilities," she said.

"I so desire for students with special needs to go to a school where they can get an education while also learning about their Savior. There is something so special about the ability to explicitly share the name of Jesus with students."

Redmond's favorite class during her time as a CTX student was Introduction to Exceptional Learners, which every education major takes and in which they learn broadly about different disabilities that could be present in their future classrooms. In the class, each student works in the field with the Self-30 Program (in which college-aged students with special needs learn life skills) on campus. This allows education students to gain experience working with people who have special needs, and is the ultimate reason why Redmond decided to change her major from General Education to Special Education.

Dr. Cari Chittick, who leads the Special Education program for Concordia Texas, has had a huge impact on Redmond's education and life.

"She has a heart for Lutheran education and she pushes people to their highest potential," said Redmond. "She doesn't allow anyone to be anything less than their best."

Redmond also named Coach Nicole McCoy and Coach Dave Taylor as playing large roles in her formative Concordia experience, saying: "They made playing volleyball such an enjoyable experience. They pushed us on and off the court to be the best people we could be. It was so encouraging to have coaches who wanted our team to play hard, but also to study hard and build relationships with other students outside of volleyball."

Coach McCoy had nothing but positive things to say about Jordan, herself: "She was a phenomenal leader on our team; every coach's dream player. She had the mentality to be the best — she learned her position very quickly and became one of the top middle blockers in our conference. On top of all that, she was also the best teammate. She celebrated others' success more than her own."

Future students of Redmond's will no doubt be blessed by her ability to teach, encourage, and celebrate their successes. These are only a few among the many of Redmond's admirable qualities, but perhaps it is this spirit of strength and teamwork — unique to CTX student-athletes — that will make the biggest impact on those she serves in the future.

Quality higher education is made more accessible to transfer students like Jordan because of our generous scholarships. To support other future Christian leaders, make your gift at concordia.edu/give.

1 Men's Golf will enter the spring ranked No. 8 in Division III by GolfStat and have the top freshmen class in NCAA Division III, according to the site. The Tornados won two fall events and also had the individual medalist twice.

2 The women's golf team finished the fall ranked 52nd by GolfStat and have the 12th-best freshmen class in NCAA Division III, both of which are program records. The Tornados also set new records for single round and 36-hole scores.

3 The women's soccer team made its eighth consecutive American Southwest Conference Tournament and finished the season at 8-7-1 and 6-5 in ASC play.

4 Concordia University Texas hosted the American Southwest Conference Cross Country Championships for the first time in program history.

5 The men's soccer team matched its program record in wins during the regular season (12), set several new standards in goals scored, assists, goals allowed, shutouts and compiled a program-best 7-3-0 tally in ASC play.

6 Basketball season tips off Nov. 15 for the women's team, who are at home against Schreiner. The men open the home slate Nov. 26 vs. UT Dallas.

For more stories and updates, visit athletics.concordia.edu or follow [@CTXAthletics!](https://twitter.com/CTXAthletics)



In early 2016, Spirit 105.9 in Austin sponsored a city-wide contest to name Concordia's Tornado mascot. Dozens of entries poured in—everything from Tsunami to Twister—but after the dust settled, the winner was clear: **Vortex**.

MEET VORTEX

BIRTHPLACE Austin, Texas
AGE 21 (since 1995)
COLORS purple & gold
HEIGHT/WEIGHT Category F5

FAVORITE ACTIVITIES
Cheering on the 'Nabos
Wooshing around campus
Taking the world by storm!

DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 3 WORDS
powerful, fierce & friendly



HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Tom Orton

Men's Basketball Coach, 1980–87

Jessica Rattan Fetzer '11

Softball Player

'99 Tornado Volleyball Team

Inaugural ASC team

Concordia Unveils Hall of Fame Class of 2017

The Concordia University Texas athletics department and hall of fame committee has announced the inductees for the 2017 Hall of Fame: Former men's basketball coach Tom Orton, the 1999 Tornados Volleyball team, and softball player Jessica Rattan Fetzer.

Coach Orton guided the then-Stags for nearly a decade, collecting over 150 wins and steering the team to the 1982–83 National Little College Athletic Association Championship. During his tenure, Orton also saw back-to-back district championships as the team was transitioning into the NAIA. Prior to becoming a coach, he had a brief stint in the Detroit Tigers minor league system during the 1960s.

The 1999 volleyball team was the first to play an American Southwest Conference schedule. The Tornados won the ASC Volleyball Tournament that season and is so far the only team to do so. The team ended the year on a 12-match winning streak.

Jessica Rattan Fetzer is the most decorated softball student-athlete to ever pass through Concordia. She owns nearly every career batting record in the program, including a .400 career batting average. She was the 2011 ASC West Player of the Year and a three-time All-ASC West selection. She holds several single-season records, including her .488 batting average in 2008, her .894 slugging percentage in 2011 and shares the single-season home run record.

AUSTIN *Learns Local* ONLINE

We Have Your Next Degree...Online. You already know about the high-quality education and supportive community Concordia University Texas provides. Now, experience all the benefits of a Concordia education online. We offer online graduate degrees in business, education and nursing. At Concordia, you're always a part of our family. Join us again for an online degree program.

Key Benefits Include:

- Fully online degrees in in-demand fields
- No GMAT or GRE requirements
- Rolling enrollment
- Competitive tuition
- A curriculum grounded in Christian principles



Learn about our graduate degrees today at [ONLINE.CONCORDIA.EDU](https://online.concordia.edu)

Inaugural Doctor of Education Cohort Begins Classes



Concordia's inaugural cohort of students seeking to earn their Doctor of Education began meeting this fall. The three-year degree, an EdD, has two specializations and will be offered in a blended delivery of on-ground classes and online.

"The successful creation of this new doctoral program is clear evidence of Concordia's continued dedication to serving our students and community," said Concordia President and CEO Dr. Don Christian. "I congratulate every-

one who worked hard to get the program designed, fully accredited, and implemented."

Students may choose a specialization in Educational Administration or Curriculum and Instruction. The Educational Administration specialization

emphasizes leadership at the district or central office level, and students who successfully complete this specialization become eligible to take the Texas Superintendent Exam. The Curriculum and Instruction specialization emphasizes leadership and focuses on curriculum and strategies for teaching.

Concordia's EdD students will meet one weekend per month in an on-campus setting, while also satisfying other course requirements in an online format. All students enrolled in the program take 24 credit hours of "core courses," and then complete an additional 37 credit hours after successfully completing a qualifying exam.

"The successful creation of this new doctoral program is clear evidence of Concordia's continued dedication to serving our students and community..."

Growth Leads to New University Academic Structure

Concordia University Texas is at a new beginning. We as an institution are implementing a new strategic plan to help us strengthen the foundation of our institution and to build a sustainable future. In light of this, the academic leadership team has deliberated on and implemented a series of changes to the overall academic structure of the university. These changes took effect on July 1 of this year.

Erik Ankerberg, Provost and Chief Academic Officer, expressed that this new structure accomplishes several important goals, chief among which were to help Concordia to institutionally reflect the complexity of the student population and increasing collaboration across the university. These changes are largely due to Concordia's growth as we become a doctoral institution and as we integrate professional and liberal arts studies.

The university is now divided into two colleges: Professional Studies (led by Dr. Lynette Gillis, AVP and Dr. Janet Whitson, Dean) and Arts & Sciences (led by Dr. Allen Brown, AVP and Dr. Carl Trovall, Dean). These two colleges are divided into six schools: Business & Communication (led by Dr. Erik Green, Director), Education (led by Dr. Michael Wallace, Director), Fine Arts (led by Dr. Kelly Gordon, Director), Humanities & Social Sciences (led by Dr. Marchelle Scarnier, Director), Natural & Applied Sciences (led by Dr. Philip Schielke, Director), and Nursing (led by Dr. Kathy Lauchner, Director).

COLLEGE of PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

- School of Business & Communication
- School of Education
- School of Nursing

COLLEGE of ARTS & SCIENCES

- School of Fine Arts
- School of Humanities & Social Sciences
- School of Natural & Applied Sciences

INCUBATOR
FOR

INNOVATION & IMPACT

BY AUDRA PARKER

As part of our ongoing mission and strategic vision of helping people find true vocation and meaningful work, Concordia University Texas is excited to announce the opening of the Incubator for Innovation and Impact on our main campus. By partnering with Tech Ranch, an Austin-based business focused on entrepreneurship, Concordia will have one more way of positively impacting the lives of our students, our community, and the world.

INCUBATOR

Taking advantage of our location in northwest Austin, the Incubator will be a place for community entrepreneurs, student entrepreneurs, and company intra-preneurs to amplify resources, opportunities, and impact. The facility will have co-working, small group collaboration, and large group working spaces. More than simply a space to work, the Incubator will also provide an accessible ecosystem connecting entrepreneurs to professors, student workers, and mentors, as well as development programs, and networking opportunities provided by Tech Ranch. According to Dr. Lynette Gillis, AVP of Academics for Graduate and Professional Studies, “The value add of the incubator is in the ecosystem; the interconnected parts working together contributing to a thriving community.”

Additionally, members of the Incubator will enjoy 24/7 co-working space, and access to benefits including entrepreneur training, academic classes, audio/video production, and onsite printing and mailing services, and the serenity of Concordia’s nearly 400 acres of wooded campus.

INNOVATION

Incubator members and students will have access to lectures from angel investors, successful serial entrepreneurs, venture capitalists, and other prominent individuals from the start-up community. One unique aspect of the Incubator will be what the professors and students bring to the table.

“I am excited that the partnership with Concor-

dia provides access to an untapped and fresh talent pool,” said Kevin Koym, CEO of Tech Ranch. “One that can provide a new perspective not historically tied to the start-up community, creating new opportunities for growth and impact.”

IMPACT

“One of Concordia’s strategic priorities is to partner deeply with our community,” noted Concordia President and CEO Dr. Donald Christian. “Partnering with Tech Ranch in this new venture allows our university to take advantage of the strength of Tech Ranch’s brand in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship and to promote Concordia’s mission of developing Christian leaders in new and exciting ways.”

Building the Incubator will help make Concordia a destination university for students interested in entrepreneurship. Professor David Aronica believes our students have the intellect, interest, desire, creativity, and drive to be successful entrepreneurs, and that the Incubator will be one more resource to help them achieve their dreams of starting a business.

With its framework, the Incubator will enable entrepreneurs to discover and execute impactful business practices and ventures that benefit local and global communities. The goal of the Incubator is not only to have an impact on Austin and Central Texas, but to have an impact on the world. It will be one more way Concordia strives to be the premier university where the adventure of faith, learning, and life-changing experiences leads to meaningful work.

All interested entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, students, service providers, donors and sponsors, are encouraged to visit incubatorctx.com or email info@incubatorctx.com for more information.

Meet Rev. J. Brown

CONCORDIA'S NEW DIRECTOR OF CHURCH RELATIONS

Tell us about yourself. Where did you grow up — where were you baptized and confirmed?

I grew up in a small church just outside of Erie, PA. With many family connections to the congregation, I was grateful for the support and encouragement my family gave me as the Lord was calling me into ministry. I thank God that He worked through my hometown pastor and the people of my church. They believed in me and gave me many opportunities to get involved with worship, which helped me to figuratively “dip my toes” in the water of church work before discerning that the Lord was leading me to be a pastor.

Where did you go to school?

I'm a 2005 alumnus of Concordia University Texas. However, I didn't go to college straight out of high school. After graduating from Northwestern High School in Albion, PA, I spent time as an entrepreneur (owning martial arts studios and also a silk-screening business) until I pursued the ministry at age 30. I then left the North for sunny Austin. Little did I know that my positive experience in Austin would be due to far more than the warm weather and barbecue. It was the community at Concordia and my spiritual growth on campus that helped to make those four years among the very best of my 47 years of life. I enjoyed CTX so much that I chose to attend Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne because, of the two seminaries, it reminded me most of the atmosphere back in Austin.

What has your career been like before coming to work for CTX?

The Lord blessed me with eight wonderful years of serving His people as a parish pastor in Indiana. I came to CTX directly from Concordia Lutheran Church and School in Fort Wayne. Although I miss certain aspects of life as a pastor, I still get to preach and teach as I travel around from congregation to congregation doing pulpit supply and celebrating Concordia Sundays in Texas. With that, and also partnering and working with church workers and congregations, I still get to have a hand in working inside the church. My work actually allows me to experience the best of both worlds. As the Director of Church Relations at the Concordia University Texas, I get to impact churches and also make a difference and give back to the university that impacted my life in such a powerful way.

What are your goals for your new position and for relations between CTX and churches?

Because I love churches and believe in the mission and vision of the university, I want nothing more than to see both continue connecting and working together to glorify Jesus as they advance His kingdom. My goal is to build the relationships between churches and CTX even further. In doing so, I want to find out how Concordia can serve congregations and partner together with them in ministry. One important way we do this, among many others, is to take the students we get from churches and send them back to serve and live life in the congregation after being trained as a Christian leader.



What is it that you love about Concordia Texas?

I love that CTX is a safe place for students to come and learn while being exposed to and grow in historical Biblical Christian faith. This is a nurturing and supportive community that is both faithful to our Lutheran heritage and allowing of students to test and explore the boundaries of who they are in the Christ.

What do you love about visiting churches?

I do a great deal of traveling around Texas and love visiting churches and church workers. One of the amazing things about what I do is the chance to learn about the ministries of the churches and to discover how the Lord is working through His people to accomplish His purposes. I also find it fascinating to listen to a person's story and especially love hearing from so many how their time at Concordia was a life-changing experience.

Where Are They Now?

SEND US YOUR NEWS

We want to feature your incredible stories and celebrate all that our alumni are doing. Share your accomplishments and your vocation with friends and fellow classmates. Submit your alumni note at alumni@concordia.edu, and see it in the next issue of the magazine!

1960s

Bruce Elliott '66, '68 retired in May of 2015 after teaching Computer Science for 31 years with the rank of Associate Professor of Computer Science from Tarrant County College in Fort Worth, TX.

Dr. Roland Jones HS '62, JC '64 recently retired from parish ministry and moved with his family to Coon Rapids, MN.

1990s

Susan Miller '93 has announced her retirement after a career of 25 years. 23 of these were spent as a Budget Analyst with the Department of State Health Services (Texas Department of Health) in Austin, TX.

Bobby and Debbie Powell '95 are proud to announce that their Daniel has received his Eagle Scout Award from the BSA Capital Area Council, Troop 256 in Austin, TX.

2000s

Linda Medina-Lopez '05 has joined MassMutual Southwest as the Assistant Vice President of Recruitment & Business Development.

Rev. J. Brown '05 has recently become the Director of Church Relations at Concordia University Texas.

Clark Tevis '08 won the School Bell Award in Laredo, TX for Outstanding Performance as a Teacher in the Classroom.

Kerrie Carter '09 was nominated for National Teacher of the Year and met President Barack Obama on May 3, 2016.

2010s

Victoria Sherlin '12 has recently graduated with a Juris Doctorate from the University of San Diego School of Law. She has been hired as an attorney representing Stokes Wagner ALC.

Randi Askew '14 received a full-ride scholarship to Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston, TX.

Sairam Pathi '14 is proud to announce that he has founded a new company named Voyage Solar Energy, LLC.

Vicki Hill '15 began a new teaching position in the autumn of 2016 at Immanuel Lutheran School in Giddings, TX.

Nicole Tayrien '15 is now teaching eleventh grade science in Chuuk, Micronesia.

MARRIAGES

Dana (Casas) Nelson '11 married Michael Nelson on April 9, 2016.

BIRTHS

Brian Rustan '03 and his wife welcomed their first child, a daughter named Ruby Devine, on March 28, 2016 at 1:31 AM. She weighed eight pounds and was 20 inches long.

Karl Winkler '07 and his wife Alicia are overjoyed to announce that they are expecting their third child, a daughter, at the end of December 2016.

Mike and Audrey Tonsing '12 welcomed their third child, Matthew Michael, into the world on January 17, 2016. He weighed 10 lbs, 0 oz, and was 21 3/4 inches long.

Aric Allen '14 and his wife Angela '15 are proud to announce the birth of their new daughter, Amy. She was born on April 2, 2016.

Patricia Brown '15 and her husband Ian are proud to announce the birth of their first child, a son, named Elijah. She also took on a new teaching position at Westside Elementary in Leander, TX this autumn.

Stacy Peterka '16 and her husband are proud to announce the birth of their son Grayson, born March 17, 2016.

Christopher Votaw '16 and his wife Jessica are proud to announce the arrival of their first child, a daughter, named Parker Lynn.

In Memoriam

Rev. Dr. Walter Rubke, former president of Concordia University Texas from 1964-1969, passed peacefully away in July 2016.

He was an alumnus of California Concordia College and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO. He taught at Concordia Portland and served as pastor in many places in California. He earned a doctorate in Educational Psychology from UC Berkeley before serving as president at Concordia Texas. Following that, he served as vice president for student affairs at Valparaiso University.

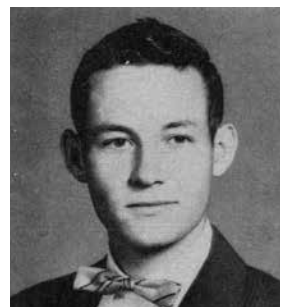
He is preceded in death by his wife Gudrun (Gudie), who passed away in 1996. He is survived by his wife Louise, by his three daughters and sons-in-law, by his stepdaughter, and by seven grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren, and many nephews and nieces.

Dr. Michael Weiss '60, who was in hospice care, passed away in the summer of 2016. After graduating with his AA from Concordia, Dr. Weiss went on to receive his BA from Concordia University in Seward, NE before enrolling at Baylor University, where he earned his JD and PhD in Urban Planning. He was active in Washington, DC on several important House and Senate subcommittees, due to his expertise in Urban Planning and Law. He is survived by his wife, Dr. Marina Weiss, and their two daughters.

Donald E. Carpenter, former Concordia student and Austin Police officer who was killed in the line of duty in 1964, has been honored by having a road named after him in the Circle C Metropolitan Park of Austin.

Officer Carpenter was responding to a burglary in progress on South Congress when shots were fired at him and his partner, fellow officer Bobby Sides. Officer Carpenter's partner survived and said that in 1964, only two patrol cars and a traffic car were needed to patrol south Austin.

"This street named in his honor is a small way for the city he served to recognize the ultimate sacrifice he made while protecting the people Austin," Chief Art Acevedo said in a statement. "The legacy of brave officers such as Donald Carpenter continues to inspire us at the Austin Police Department."



▲
From top to bottom:
Rev. Dr. Walter Rubke,
Dr. Michael Weiss, and
Donald E. Carpenter

66

Through its many name changes, mascot changes, and its change in location, two facts remain: Jesus Christ is our foundation and that foundation will never change."

Donald Christian

'29



'67

'78



'86

'87



'92

'16



'03





COME +

CONNECT

FEB. 23-26, 2017

Please join us for Concordia Crossing, our university's annual community celebration! Our long and varied history of crossing through change — of different mascots, locations, and generations — is also one of faithful commitment to education, service, and God. With specialized programming for alumni, clergy, current and prospective students, families, and friends, this event is an opportunity for everyone to come together.

We would especially like to invite you to attend Celebrate Concordia, a formal celebration of Concordia's 90th anniversary. Visit concordia.edu/crossing for a detailed agenda of Concordia Crossing events, and to register for a variety of sessions designed specifically for you. Can't wait to see you there!

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER:

CONCORDIA.EDU/CROSSING

