

COURIER

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COE COLLEGE



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We are entering an exciting time at Coe as we put the finishing touches on our initiatives from A Bolder Coe, the strategic plan that has guided the college since 2015, and begin the process of developing our next strategic plan. One of the most critical components of that plan will be a keen focus on enhancing the Coe student experience, and in that spirit, I wish to highlight the many facets that make up that experience, as well as the village of people involved in making it happen.

The relationships students build at Coe are perhaps the most precious aspect of their time here, and they can lead to extraordinary outcomes. Faculty members are some of the most influential people in our students' lives, challenging them in the classroom and encouraging them to reach their full potential. As many alumni can attest, relationships with faculty last long after graduation. Staff members from all areas of the college also make an indelible impact on students by helping them navigate their time at Coe, ensuring their needs are met and making their experience enjoyable. I'd like to call attention to our Office of Student Life and Office of Student Success & Persistence and the phenomenal work they are doing to take the student experience to the next level. Three of the leadership staff members in those offices are profiled in this issue of the Courier, and I invite you to read about them to see how they are changing the lives of students every day.

The facilities and programs on our campus give students the ability to explore their interests, and it is important for us to evolve those spaces and programs to meet the changing needs of our day. The David and Janice McNally Center for Health and Society is a prime example of this, as well as our desire to update residential and performing arts spaces on campus. Such upgrades will provide our Kohawks with the tools they need to hone their talents and give back to their communities and the world around them.

While there is much enrichment to be found on our campus, the Coe experience does not stop there. The variety of off-campus learning opportunities offered at Coe provides our students with real-world experiences that give them an invaluable leg up after graduation. The dedicated staff in our nationally recognized C3: Creativity, Careers, Community center help prepare students for their career paths by connecting them with internships, community service projects and experiential learning opportunities in the Cedar Rapids area and beyond. Off-campus programs in numerous countries and locations here in the United States offer eye-opening experiences for students that can shape their worldview, and it takes many passionate faculty and staff to bring those programs to life.

Our alumni share a special bond with current and future students, and they are woven into the fabric of the college. By attending classes on campus, spending hours studying in Stewart Memorial Library and making lifelong friends through residential living and extracurricular activities, they know what it means to be a Kohawk. When alumni get involved with Coe by volunteering their time and expertise or by providing financial support, the student experience grows ever stronger.

I encourage alumni and friends alike to read more about the strategic planning process in this Courier and see how everyone in the Coe community can impact the future of the college and the experiences of our students.

Alma mater, hail hail hail.

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President

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Visit the Courier online at www.coe.edu/courier.

A photograph of author Viet Thanh Nguyen speaking at a wooden podium. He is wearing a grey suit, a blue patterned shirt, and a dark blue tie. He has his hands raised in a gesture while speaking into a microphone. The background consists of warm-toned, vertical curtains.

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR HEADLINES 18TH CONTEMPORARY ISSUES FORUM

Viet Thanh Nguyen is a storyteller and an expert on words and their meaning. On February 16 in Sinclair Auditorium, the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction winner invited the audience of the 18th K. Raymond Clark Contemporary Issues Forum into his story, one that is defined by his journey as a refugee.

In front of an attentive in-person and virtual crowd, Nguyen spoke about his childhood, his formative years and his professional life, tying together specific stories with larger cultural observations using both wit and a critical eye. He used his experiences to portray the America he knows as

one of diverse people and diverse interpretations of the meaning of America, and posited that thinking America can only be defined in a singular way only will lead to more divisiveness across the country.

“Part of the beauty of this country is the struggle over trying to define what this country is over many different points of view,” Nguyen said.

Nguyen's perspective of America began to form at the age of 4 in 1975 as his family came to the United States from Vietnam as refugees, settling in a refugee camp in Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania.

Nguyen initially was separated from his parents and his older brother, and after being reunited, the family moved to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and then to San Jose, California, where his parents opened a grocery store.

Amid violent crime and racist incidents, Nguyen excelled in school, and his perception of America continued to evolve. He embraced the fact he was a refugee and wanted to use his love of words as his voice to speak about what he was feeling and seeing.

One of many influential experiences occurred as Nguyen was visiting refugees in Boise, Idaho. He asked who identified as a refugee, and no hands rose up; when he asked who considered themselves immigrants, hands came into the air. Nguyen said that's an example of the power of language — immigration has been positioned as part of the American dream, so the connotation is more appealing.

"This is what made me want to become a writer. I understood the power of language to save and to destroy. I became a follower of Muhammed Ali who said writing is fighting. I wanted to be a writer. I wanted to fight through language," Nguyen said.

Education was, and continues to be, a significant part of Nguyen's success as a writer. He is currently the Aerol Arnold Chair of English and professor of English, American studies and ethnicity and comparative literature at the University of Southern California. Like nearly 40% of Coe's student body, he also was a first-generation college student. He recognizes the pressure these students are under but advises them, and all students, to focus on their future and the possibilities education can bring.

"College can prepare you for a person you don't know you'll be 20 or 30 years down the road, so try to maximize the college experience," he said. "Maximize it in terms of meaning — in involvement and opportunities outside the classroom. Add courses that you do for fun and without any apparent immediate benefit because you don't know who you'll become."

Nguyen lauded the learning environment at Coe for creating an atmosphere where students can pursue a wide array of courses and experiences, as well as have meaningful dialogue.



Nguyen responds to questions from the crowd.

*This is what made me want
to become a writer.
I understood the power of
language to save and to destroy.*



Nguyen signed copies of his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel and its sequel after the Contemporary Issues Forum.



Nguyen visited with students in small groups before the Contemporary Issues Forum.



Coe President David Hayes '93 Introduces the Contemporary Issues Forum guest.



The crowd listens attentively as Nguyen speaks from the Sinclair Auditorium stage.

“In an environment like Coe’s you have the opportunity to sit around a table and have a long conversation with people from different backgrounds and of different opinions and hash out those differences. You don’t have to agree, but you need to listen, and this is an ideal environment for that,” Nguyen said.

After letting the audience into his life and sharing perspectives for an hour, Nguyen reinforced the need for everyone to be open to different viewpoints and to share experiences. He left the Contemporary Issues Forum audience with this:

“Words always have more than one meaning. And for me, America, the country and the word, has many meanings, often contradictory. My sense of the word America comes from my refugee experience and my experience with the language. I find myself inside and outside of English, and this is inseparable from seeing this country with the refugees yearning to be on the inside but also seeing this country with the refugees’ experience of being outside. From this position I can see both the inhumanity and humanity,” Nguyen said. “It’s a duality that’s disturbing to some, but it allows for a truer understanding of what this country is.”



Nguyen addresses the Contemporary Issues Forum crowd.

Established by the late K. Raymond Clark '30, the Contemporary Issues Forum presents the views of distinguished leaders whose work has shaped and altered the course of world events. The forum has featured:

2003
GEORGE H.W. BUSH
Forty-first president of the United States

2013
SIR SALMAN RUSHDIE
Celebrated author

2004
LECH WALESA
Former president of Poland, 1983 Nobel Laureate

2014
GEORGE MITCHELL
Former Senate majority leader, special envoy for Middle East peace

2005
ROBERT BALLARD
Discoverer of the RMS Titanic, president of the Institute for Exploration

2015
LAURIE GARRETT
Pulitzer Prize-winning authority on Ebola, global health and disease prevention

2006
MYRLIE EVERS-WILLIAMS
Civil Rights activist, former chairperson of the NAACP

2016
ABBY WAMBACH
Six-time U.S. Soccer Athlete of the Year and LGBTQ equality advocate

2007
EHUD BARAK
Former prime minister of Israel

2017
JELANI COBB
Leading commentator on race in America

2008
GARRY TRUDEAU
Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist of Doonesbury

2018
YVON CHOUINARD
Iconic founder and owner of Patagonia, co-founder of 1% for the Planet

2009
JARED DIAMOND
Pulitzer Prize-winning author and ecological expert

CRAIG MATHEWS
Conservationist and founder of Blue Ribbon Flies, co-founder of 1% for the Planet

2011
KEN BURNS
Award-winning documentary filmmaker

2019
DR. JOCELYN BELL BURNELL
World-renowned astrophysicist

2012
LEONARD PITTS
Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and best-selling author

2020
DR. JOSEPH F. COUGHLIN
Expert on disruptive demographics, director of the MIT AgeLab

With construction progressing, **CHS faculty co-directors already making connections**

While the steel beams to fortify the David and Janice McNally Center for Health and Society swing into place, a sturdy organizational structure already is part of the CHS's foundation.

Scout Kelly, assistant professor of psychology, and Margaret LeMay, assistant professor of English and creative writing, are faculty co-directors of the CHS. They already have begun to implement programming and are holding advising sessions for any students interested in exploring the field of health care.



**SCOUT
KELLY**



**MARGARET
LEMAY**

What is your role within the CHS?

As faculty co-directors, we build structures that support students from any major in pursuing a future related to health and/or health care. We advise students on academic course selection and connect them with opportunities to gain clinical and research experience, and we provide support on pre-professional and graduate school applications. We also build connections with multidisciplinary Coe faculty, as well as professionals who work in a range of health-related fields and industries.

How will the CHS help Coe students?

As you might imagine, the Center for Health and Society supports students who seek careers in clinical health care. But the broader industry of health is highly interdisciplinary with abundant opportunities for students of all majors and interests.

The CHS highlights how opportunities to work in or contribute to health or health care are out there for someone of any major at Coe College, and it connects students with what they need to build a future that fits their interests and feels meaningful to them.

How will the CHS impact society as a whole?

The CHS will prepare students of the liberal arts to be dynamic leaders who can respond adaptively to the ever-changing landscape of health and health care. It supports students in contributing to our collective future health and in making a difference.



10.18.21



11.18.21



2.16.22



2.24.22

Center for Health and Society Donors

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If you have not had a chance to contribute and would like to do so, please visit www.alumni.coe.edu/centerforhealthandsociety or call Barb Tupper at 319.399.8662.

ONCE A KOHAWK ATHLETE, ALWAYS A KOHAWK ATHLETE

Alumni competitions keep Coe connections strong

A new tradition began on January 15 when Coe's track and field and cross country teams hosted their first annual alumni track and field meet at the indoor track in Clark Racquet Center. More than 30 alumni came out to compete and cheer on their friends in a variety of events including the shot put, long jump, high jump, 60-meter dash, mile race and the 4x400-meter relay. Current track and field and cross country student-athletes were in attendance to meet the former Kohawk athletes and take part in the events alongside them. Future Kohawks also joined in the fun in the kids' 60-meter dash and parent/child 2x1-lap relay.

"We had a great turnout, and we really enjoyed getting to meet so many alumni and hear about their experiences at Coe," said Head Men's Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Mat Littleton.

This year's meet included a special event — the dedication of the newly resurfaced indoor track. The resurfacing was made possible through a generous gift from Coe Trustee **Dave Lusson '87** and **Amber Mason Lusson '03**. The old track was replaced by a state-of-the-art Sportflex Super X 720 model, the best surface available from MONDO, the official track surface supplier of the Olympics. The new surface is 13 millimeters thick — in contrast





Head Men's Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Mat Littleton, Coe Trustee **Dave Lusson '87**, **Amber Mason Lusson '03** and Head Women's Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Krista Littleton

to the previous track that was 3 millimeters thick — and alumni and student-athletes alike could feel the difference.

“We were honored to be able to recognize Dave and Amber for their generous gift for resurfacing the track. We are extremely appreciative of their ongoing commitment to our programs, as are our student-athletes and other alumni,” said Head Women's Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Krista Littleton.

Both coaches were happy to host the track meet, and they hope to see even more alumni back again next year.

“We are so glad that we were able to make this inaugural event a reality with the help of Advancement and Alumni Engagement and look forward to holding it annually. It was great seeing alumni finally get the chance to compete on a newly surfaced track, and we love keeping them connected as members of our XCTF family,” Krista said.

“We were honored to be able to recognize Dave and Amber for their generous gift for resurfacing the track.”
— Head Women's Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Krista Littleton

COE BASKETBALL | ALUMNI

played their annual men's and women's games on January 29 and spent some quality time with current Kohawk basketball student-athletes.





Founders' Medal

to be awarded this spring

Coe soon will recognize three of its finest with the college's highest honor, the Founders' Medal. Trustees **Jack Evans '70**, Vince Martin and **Bill Johnson '53** will be honored at a ceremony on campus early this summer. Watch for more information about the event in the coming weeks.

ABOUT THE FOUNDERS' MEDAL

The Founders' Medal was proposed in 1974 by President Leo Nussbaum (1970-82) and is given by the Trustees of Coe College to persons of rare and exceptional distinction. Persons so honored should be distinguished nationally or internationally in their fields of accomplishment, in service to Coe College or exemplify in extraordinary degree those qualities of a liberally educated person.

To date, there have been nine Founders' Medal recipients: **Paul Engle '31** and **William Shirer '25** in 1976; **F. Gaynor Evans '31** and **S. Donald Stookey '36** in 1980; **Don Ebinger '47**, **Russell Knapp '30** and **William Whipple '35** in 2001; **Marv Levy '50** in 2017; and **Bruce Spivey '56** in 2018.



Jack
EVANS '70



Vince
MARTIN



Bill
JOHNSON '53

New Beginnings...Familiar

President **David Hayes '93** and other Coe staff are back on the road, and they couldn't be happier to see Kohawks across the country once again. In his visits, Hayes has been catching up with alumni and providing an update on the current events and future plans of the college.

"It has been so refreshing to meet with Kohawks again. Although the challenges of the pandemic are still present, I am grateful to be able to bring a little Coe spirit to alumni far and near and share news and updates about Coe with them, as well as hear what they have been doing. It makes me proud to see what our alumni are accomplishing in their communities," Hayes said.

Check out all the ground he's covered — and see where he's headed next.

Stay tuned for more info about events in these cities in the coming months:

Denver
Chicago

March 13 | **Aspen at the Kent Herron Reunion** ★

★ February 22 | **Los Angeles**

★ February 9 | **Phoenix**

★ February 10 | **Tucson**



Faces



The key word? **EXPERIENCE**

EXPERIENCED LEADERS ARE CREATING THE IDEAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE FOR KOHAWKS

What kind of memories and emotions come to mind when you reminisce about Coe? The laughter, late nights, connections made? All are a part of your student experience.

Continuing the tradition of exceptional individual student experience for every Kohawk is integral to Coe's future success. Fortunately, the college has experienced leaders setting the tone for engaging and welcoming student life. Meet Keniese Evans, **Lauren Garcia-Pastorek '10** and **Steven Strobe '08**...



KENIESE EVANS

DEAN OF STUDENTS

"I can meet someone on the first day of Orientation, and on their graduation I can say I know them and I have been a part of every step of their journey. It feels really cool to know I am being a successful impact in a meaningful way," Evans said.

The Chicago native left the University of Iowa to join Coe in July 2021 and recently was promoted to dean of students.

"At the University of Iowa, I managed residence halls with more residents than all the students at Coe. It is a huge difference. I like that when I'm walking the halls students seek me out and say hello. I knew this was going to be a place where I would really get to know my students," she said.

Evans' career in higher education took off as a student at the University of Northern Iowa. She was a resident assistant and, for many summers, a staff member of the university's Upward Bound Program, a college readiness program for first-generation or low-income high school students.

She majored in psychology and originally planned to attend graduate school with aspirations of becoming a psychologist, but the life-changing experience of working with students was too strong to ignore.

“I loved it, and even my mentors and supervisors would ask me if I was ready to make higher education my path. There is something powerful about being a figure in students’ lives. It’s a pivotal moment in their lives,” Evans said. “And I didn’t see people who looked like me working in these roles. I wanted students who looked like me to know I was on their side. I had faith there could be something better on the other side if I could pull back the curtain and educate people that diversity, equity and inclusion matters to everyone and not just students of color. Everyone is part of the fabric that makes up diversity, equity and inclusion.”

The power of representation inspires Evans in more ways than one. Inez Murtha, a former advisor and supervisor at the University of Northern Iowa with a career spanning over 50 years in higher education, has been a teacher, mentor and dear friend to Evans. As a fellow Black woman, Murtha’s nurturing and empowering role ultimately inspired Evans to stay and earn a master’s degree in post-secondary education: student affairs from the University of Northern Iowa and accepted a job managing an all-women’s residence hall at the University of St. Thomas.

Evans has dubbed her first school year at Coe as a year of listening. As the dean of students, she considers herself a jill-of-all-trades overseeing a variety of aspects of the Office of Student Life such as housing, campus life, events and student organizations. Her eagerness to collect feedback from every Kohawk is fundamental to her philosophy. Evans believes an exceptional student experience should be centered on making sure every student feels they belong, and as a result, she’s on a mission to make sure every voice is heard.

“I’m here to listen. My door is open because I want students to be heard. And I might not have an answer right away or have the answer they want, but they’ll know they are heard,” she said.

Actually, Kohawks already consider Evans to be more than the dean of students. She has become a mentoring figure.

“For me, it’s the little moments. I really enjoy that students feel comfortable talking to me. They’ll stop me when I’m walking around campus to say hello and we talk. These moments are really important for me because it changes things for students who are having a hard time or simply want to talk. I like being present and making time for them,” she said.

Last fall, Evans was hard at work to meet one of her first priorities for the Office of Student Life. She rolled up her sleeves and recruited new hires to expand staffing and streamline student services and coordinated a Homecoming dance that more than 700 students enjoyed — all in her first term at Coe.

“This is where students come to thrive, grow and find themselves. You’re here to get a degree, but so much of

your life happens outside of the classroom. I want the Office of Student Life to be the heartbeat of the campus because there really aren’t many things that happen on campus that don’t align with student experience,” she said.



LAUREN GARCIA-PASTOREK '10

DEAN OF STUDENT SUCCESS & PERSISTENCE

“Mom, I’m coming here!”

And with that emphatic declaration, Garcia-Pastorek’s time at Coe College began in 2006.

Garcia-Pastorek’s confidence in her choice was immediate, as she knew before even going on a campus tour that Coe felt different and “more friendly.” Now, more than 15 years later she is back on campus exuding the same confidence as the dean of student success & persistence.

In her role, Garcia-Pastorek is leading a team of success coaches, who also happen to be Coe alumni. The team is part of the Office of Student Success & Persistence, holding more than 500 meetings in the fall with first-year students to help guide them as they begin to navigate the new-found freedom of college life.

Garcia-Pastorek's path has left her prepared to be a guiding light for both her team and the student body.

When she was a Coe student, her openness to new experiences and willingness to ask questions helped Garcia-Pastorek's transition to Coe be fruitful instead of stressful. During her first year on campus, Garcia-Pastorek learned to navigate college life and began to develop friendships and find mentors.

Those relationships and experiences revealed plenty of possible professional paths, and law school was a strong contender for her post-Coe plans. However, her enthusiasm for higher education won out.

After graduation, Garcia-Pastorek worked at Mount Mercy University and then at the University of Iowa in a variety of admission roles, while simultaneously earning her Master of Public Administration with an emphasis in personnel management. At Iowa, she spent two years as the university's assistant director of the Center for Diversity and Enrichment, where she planned orientation for first-generation students. Then, in her final two years with the university, she served as the director of pharmacy admissions.

Garcia-Pastorek returned to Coe in January 2021 as part of the Office of Admission. In May 2021, Garcia-Pastorek was named dean of the newly formed Office of Student Success & Persistence. In June, alongside Associate Vice President for Enrollment Josh Kite, she hired four success coaches. All are recent graduates of Coe, so it's a genuine near-peer experience for current students.

The office has generated an immediate impact. Garcia-Pastorek noted there are students who have told her they would have transferred without the success coaches.

"We just want people to have an even better experience than we did," Garcia-Pastorek said.

The day-to-day nature of creating relationships and helping others with a range of questions and issues is rewarding. The team holds individual meetings with students, first just to connect and understand who each student is. Then, they take a proactive approach and discuss common questions like how to get involved. That relationship-building makes it easier for students to express concerns and ask for help.

"When you see students coming back because they feel the care and attention, that means the world to me," Garcia-Pastorek said.

Beyond the individual mentoring, the office has laid the foundation for future traditions that will continue to bring first-year students together during their initial term on campus. In early November, the inaugural Orientation 2.0 took place on the Eby Quad. First-year students were invited to reconvene with face painting, yard games and

even llamas as the background. The event was energizing and a helpful pause for the students to reconnect with each other and the larger Coe community.

Now, Garcia-Pastorek is diving further into the future of the office, discussing the reconfiguration of the physical space to continue to serve Coe's student body.

"I want to help the college grow by helping students come to Coe and then stay at Coe," she said.



STEVEN STROPE '08

DEAN OF RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE

There's an adage that could describe Strobe's path to Coe.

You don't know what you've got until it's gone.

Strobe was a high school athlete who wanted to compete on a college football team. He grew up in Midway, an unincorporated town near Cedar Rapids, and visited Coe as he was researching colleges. He loved everything about that visit, especially after meeting football coach **Larry Atwater '82**.

“He changed my life. He made me want to come to Coe, and throughout that first visit it was obvious I was in the right place,” Strobe said.

But he did not come to Coe, at least not right away. Instead, the allure of playing Division II football took him to Upper Iowa University for a semester. It ended up not being the right fit. He thought about Coe and hoped he hadn’t missed his chance.

So, he went with his gut, transferred to Coe and never regretted it.

“It was an instant connection. Every person made me feel like I mattered and that I belonged,” Strobe said.

It was simple things like being able to just walk into a department chair’s office that allowed Strobe to flourish. And the people made the most difference — even longtime equipment manager **Dougie Peters ’81** still calls Strobe by his football number he wore 15 years ago, number 66.

So, it’s no surprise Strobe wants to be a difference-maker himself now in his role as dean of residential experience. What he wants for Coe students is simple — for everyone to have the best experience they possibly can.

“We have a community of 1,400 students where everyone can be an individual. So I want to be a partner to students in all ways possible, including personally, professionally and academically,” Strobe said.

Strobe began cutting his teeth in the residence life world even as a student at Coe after one of his mentors suggested he might like it. He was a resident assistant in Greene Hall and completed an internship with the Office of Residence Life. He’s been in the field since graduation.

Strobe married fellow Coe alum **Kelsey McCarthy ’08** and has three children. His career began at Augustana College in Rock Island as the residence director, and most recently he was the director of residence life at Cornell College prior to his return to Coe in July.

“Ever since I graduated, part of me wanted to come back. It’s our home,” Strobe said.

A desire to give back and provide the same opportunities to the next generation of students is the driving force in Strobe’s work. He insists every student’s experience should be just as transformative as his, if not moreso. For him, the foundation for an exceptional experience is housing and dining because “if those aren’t right, then the rest of the college experience will be off.”

“I love residence life because I get to dabble in everything. Every day is different,” Strobe said.

His days are full, with some of his main responsibilities being resident assistant (RA) hiring and training, collaboration on student conduct, the housing selection process, collaboration with health and wellness and trying to connect and mentor his staff and students.

While his first year back on campus has been mostly about soaking in all the processes, roles and people, he is beginning to make plans to enhance what residence life is doing to impact the student experience.

Revamping the RA training process to improve community-building abilities and examining housing selection to create a more equitable and efficient process are at the top of the list, but creating a cohesive programming plan and facility evaluation are close behind.

“There are so many opportunities to tap into,” Strobe said.

For the time being, Strobe is just focused on being a partner to the student body.

“I know what it’s like to start college and not have anyone check in on you, so for our students at Coe, I don’t want this to be a home-away-from-home, I want it to be home.”

“He changed my life. He made me want to come to Coe, and throughout that first visit it was obvious I was in the right place,”

— Steven Strobe ’08, Dean of Residential Experience



Coe's next strategic plan? TBD, but one key component:

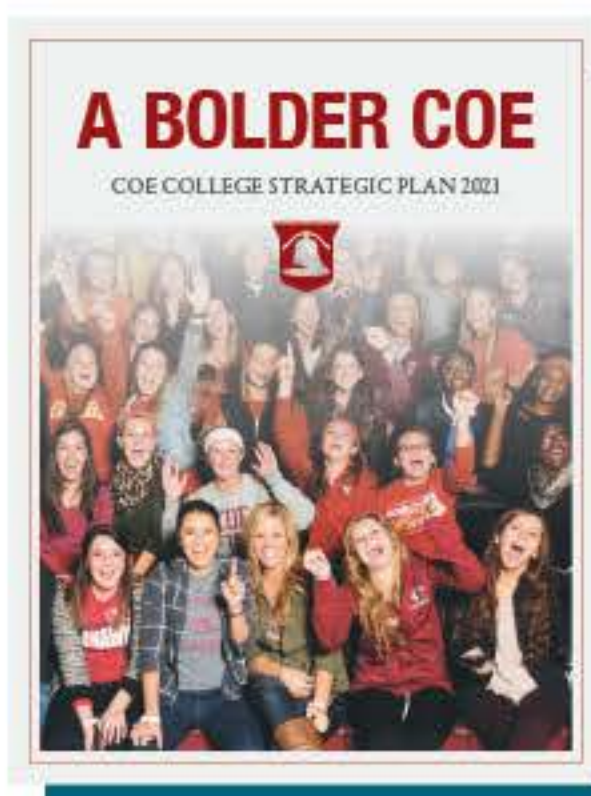
You

One new building that's a gateway to better health care. An immersive new center for creativity, careers and community. New majors. A focus on social, wellness and environmental issues. Updates to buildings and infrastructure across campus. All are recent projects at Coe College.

Clearly, Coe is not a college that simply hopes good things will happen. Since 2015, Coe has been guided by the strategic plan A Bolder Coe. With the initiatives outlined in that plan nearing completion, Coe has begun to reassess the higher education landscape and which future investments will meet students' evolving needs as part of the next strategic plan.

Developing that plan is a process rooted in the shared governance structure of the college's leadership. Senior staff, trustees, faculty, staff, alumni, students and community partners all will have an opportunity to provide input, but one thing is certain: If Coe is to match the success associated with A Bolder Coe, ***your involvement will be critical.***

Alumni play a key role in both spreading the word about Coe and its bottom line. Maintaining enrollment and a healthy endowment will continue to be keys to the scope and viability of any future strategic plan. So consider wearing your Coe gear when out and about, offer to take a relative or family friend on a tour of campus or make a direct financial contribution. (See Page 25 for more ideas.) It's all in an effort to ensure the nature of the Coe experience is enduring in the face of challenges presented by the pandemic.



Coe College President David Hayes '93 recently offered insight about the past strategic plan, current circumstances and what the future might hold:



How would you characterize the success of the A Bolder Coe strategic plan?

Without a doubt, A Bolder Coe moved Coe forward in important ways. At its core, the two main objectives of the plan were to increase enrollment and lower the college's historic overreliance on our endowment for annual operations by lowering the spend rate. Through the hard work and committed effort by the whole campus we knocked it out of the park on both fronts. The fact Coe grew enrollments during a time when nearly all other private colleges in Iowa and the region saw dramatic losses is remarkable. And we have reduced the endowment spend rate by over 300 basis points, which is partly responsible for what is now the largest earning endowment in Coe's history.



In what areas do you feel like the college's leadership had the most foresight?

One of the first opportunities President Emeritus David McNally championed at Coe was to link our academic programs to the Cedar Rapids MedQuarter Regional Medical District. This idea germinated to become the Center for Health and Society, and as I visit with you, I'm excited to look out my office window to watch the physical space being constructed this very moment. The pandemic crystallized how interconnected all our systems are to health — political, social, economic and beyond. Coe's ability to connect every major to careers in the allied health fields, through partnerships with other institutions and organizations in the MedQuarter, presents a tremendous and distinct opportunity for Coe.



Reflecting on the last five years of A Bolder Coe, are there achievements that stand out as being more impactful than others?

There is much to celebrate, but let me highlight two areas. First, we made diversity, equity and inclusion a priority of the plan, and today's Coe has the most diverse student body, faculty and staff in its history. I believe we are on the right path, as our efforts have received national attention, with recognition as a top-scoring institution by Diverse Issues in Higher Education. We continue to work diligently to be as supporting and welcoming as possible for every member in the Coe community, and we still have ground to cover to realize that aim.

Second, A Bolder Coe transformed Coe's relationship with the Cedar Rapids community and, in turn, enhanced our ability to provide external opportunities for our students. Coe is now a rich environment for internships, job coaching and mentoring and is distinct in our ability to connect Kohawks with expansive experiences. The success here has been affirmed several years in a row as our internship programs continue to receive high national rankings. There is lots of credit to go around, but I want to recognize the staff within C3: Creativity, Careers, Community as well as the faculty who pushed students to engage with the community through coursework.





What were some of the biggest challenges of the plan?

The disruption brought by COVID-19 pulled us in a different direction for the last years of the plan. By necessity, we were reactive to the novel conditions that impacted every facet of our operating a residential campus while corralling a deadly contagious virus. Few would have predicted this challenge, but I'm energized by the fact we are capable of quick change. Coe showed great resilience and adaptability, two attributes on which we will have to draw in the coming years.



What are some of the goals that Coe is still working on and perhaps will focus on more deeply in the next plan?

Given the importance of the student-lived experience at Coe, we identified a handful of capital projects to improve our facilities to best serve our community. We are still needing to work on a couple of very important spaces, including Murray, Greene and our performing arts spaces in Dows and Sinclair. It is imperative that our next five-year plan completes this investment.



When describing the vision for the previous plan, leadership noted the rising challenges in higher education, especially for residential liberal arts colleges. With potential students adopting a more pragmatic thought process regarding career preparation in education, it was noted some peer institutions were diminishing traditional liberal arts principles, but Coe doubled down on its commitment to the liberal arts. Five years later, how do you think that decision has held up?

This fall, despite the pandemic and the derecho, we welcomed our third largest class in the history of the college. In some ways, I think we demonstrated the value of an in-person experience more than ever before. Students are hungry for the close, nurturing relationships and opportunities for participating in activities that only a small campus like Coe can afford. We still make it possible, and the students make it happen.



Looking forward, will there be a subsequent strategic plan released? What does the process and timeline look like?

As part of the shared governance on campus, a working group involving senior staff members and faculty are currently implementing an environmental scan, one of the foundational first steps for a planning process. I anticipate as a community, we will identify areas of focus for the plan in May, setting the stage for a

comprehensive planning workshop this summer, much in the same way we worked as a community in 2015. We will have lots of voices involved, including community partners and alumni. Stakeholder input will be critical to the success of the emergent plan. This iterative process should result in a plan ready for final adoption in October 2022.




Many believe the current-day challenges brought on by COVID-19, the derecho, rising supply costs, divisive political climate and social media scrutiny are some of the most difficult challenges since the Great Depression. The timing of your presidency could not be more challenging, frankly. What do you need from the Coe community now to help our college through this time period?

You don't get to pick when a coach puts you in the game, and I'm humbled to have a chance to serve Coe in any way that might help it confront these acute challenges. I absolutely love Coe College and feel deeply blessed to direct all my energies to meet what are generational challenges.



But this unique time does require help from all of Kohawk Nation. I'm in awe of the faculty and staff at Coe. The passion and selfless service they provide our students is inspiring, but it also takes a toll. Although not the only answer, resources from alumni and friends matter. I'm of course talking about gifts and philanthropic support, but it is more than that. We need you to be a cheerleader for Coe. Help reconnect your classmates to Coe if they haven't engaged for a while. Recommend Coe for consideration to anyone looking for a college. We need all alumni to join us on this journey as we build what's next.

 It is unusual among college presidents that you have had the distinct experiences of being a homegrown Cedar Rapiidian, as well as a student, faculty member, staff member and senior administrator at the college you now lead. How will those varying perspectives and experiences shape your leadership in developing a strategic plan for the college?

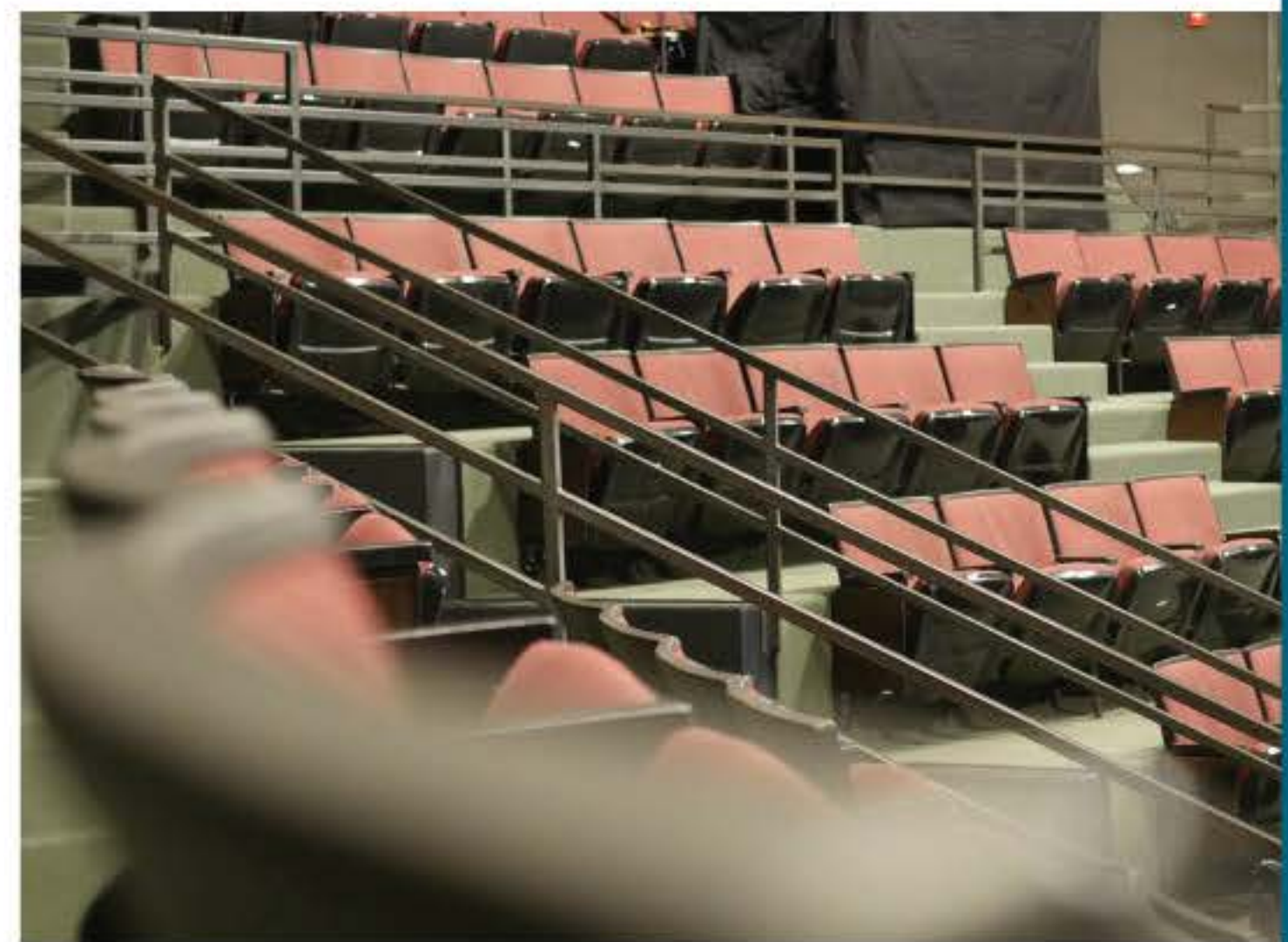
My wife and I consider ourselves and family blessed to have grown professionally in one community, both in careers that don't always allow for roots in just one city. I can't help but think these roots will benefit Coe as we further look to hitch the Kohawk wagon to all that is Cedar Rapids. Our calling card as a small college experience is the opportunities the Creative Corridor makes available to our students. It will require the entirety of the larger community to embrace Coe, support and nurture it, to help us move through the challenges of the day.

 As you assess the landscape of higher education and the world around Coe College, are there areas of focus that seem like a natural fit for a future strategic plan?

Coe's success over the next several years will be defined by how we respond to two dominant themes. The first is continuing to celebrate and support diversity and inclusion. The second is enhancing the student experience for each and every Kohawk.

I've already instructed leaders across campus to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion infuses and defines all of our initiatives so that we create a Coe that is the most welcoming and supporting community possible. And we know that today's young adult is like no other in history. In some ways, they are more connected to the larger world than ever before because of technology. However, the pandemic and other strains have curtailed socialization and bonding, while also limiting educational opportunities in a most unique way. We have to structure Coe to meet each Kohawk where they are as an individual, celebrating their talents and abilities while boosting their potential.

 Read more about the A Bolder Coe strategic plan.



At its core, A Bolder Coe

was about increasing enrollment and reducing the college's reliance on its endowment for operational expenditures.

Here are the strategies and initiatives that comprised the plan:

Strategy **ONE**

Demonstrate the value of the liberal arts and sciences for career preparation

INITIATIVES

-  Establish the Center for Creativity, Careers and Community
-  Establish the Center for Health and Society
-  Enhance the performing arts
-  Enhance environmental sustainability programs
-  Create a social and criminal justice program

Strategy **TWO**

Reflect the changing demographics and cultures in our global society

INITIATIVES

-  Develop a global cultures study program
-  Enhance student diversity
-  Implement a new recruitment process for faculty and staff
-  Restructure student life programs to emphasize the principle of strengths

Strategy **THREE**

Enhance facilities to support teaching and learning and to compete successfully with other colleges and universities

INITIATIVES

-  Develop multiyear comprehensive maintenance and campus master plans
-  Improve technology infrastructure
-  Improve performance spaces
-  Improve student life facilities
-  Focus on campus appearance



ALUMNI SUPPORT



Whether you're new to the alumni family or you've been in the ranks for a while, your Coe memories are probably some of your best, and your days on campus probably feel like they were just yesterday. The wonderful thing about Coe is that it's not just four years — it's for life. Your connection to the college doesn't end when you receive your diploma, and alumni play a key role in the success of Coe and our current Kohawks. There are many ways to support your alma mater and ensure it remains as special and life changing as it was when you were a student.

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

- Whether you moved to a new city, got a promotion or expanded your family, we want to hear about it! Keeping your information up to date with Coe helps us stay in touch and send you information about events in your area. Go to www.alumni.coe.edu/updatesmyinfo to fill us in on any new information about you.

ATTEND EVENTS

- Between fine arts performances, athletic competitions, guest speakers and more, there's always something happening on campus, and attending events at Coe can be a great way to support current students. Not only that, but the Office of Alumni Engagement is always planning fun alumni events, from Homecoming each fall to smaller gatherings in Cedar Rapids and cities across the country throughout the year. Watch your email and the Coe College Alumni social media pages to find out about opportunities to connect with fellow alumni. You also can bring alumni together by hosting an event in your area — just email alumni@coe.edu to find out how!

SPONSOR AN INTERNSHIP

- Create an opportunity for a current student to complete an internship while adding a resource to your organization. Contact Director of Careers Nanci Young at nyoung@coe.edu to learn more about hosting a Coe student intern.

WEAR YOUR COE GEAR WITH PRIDE

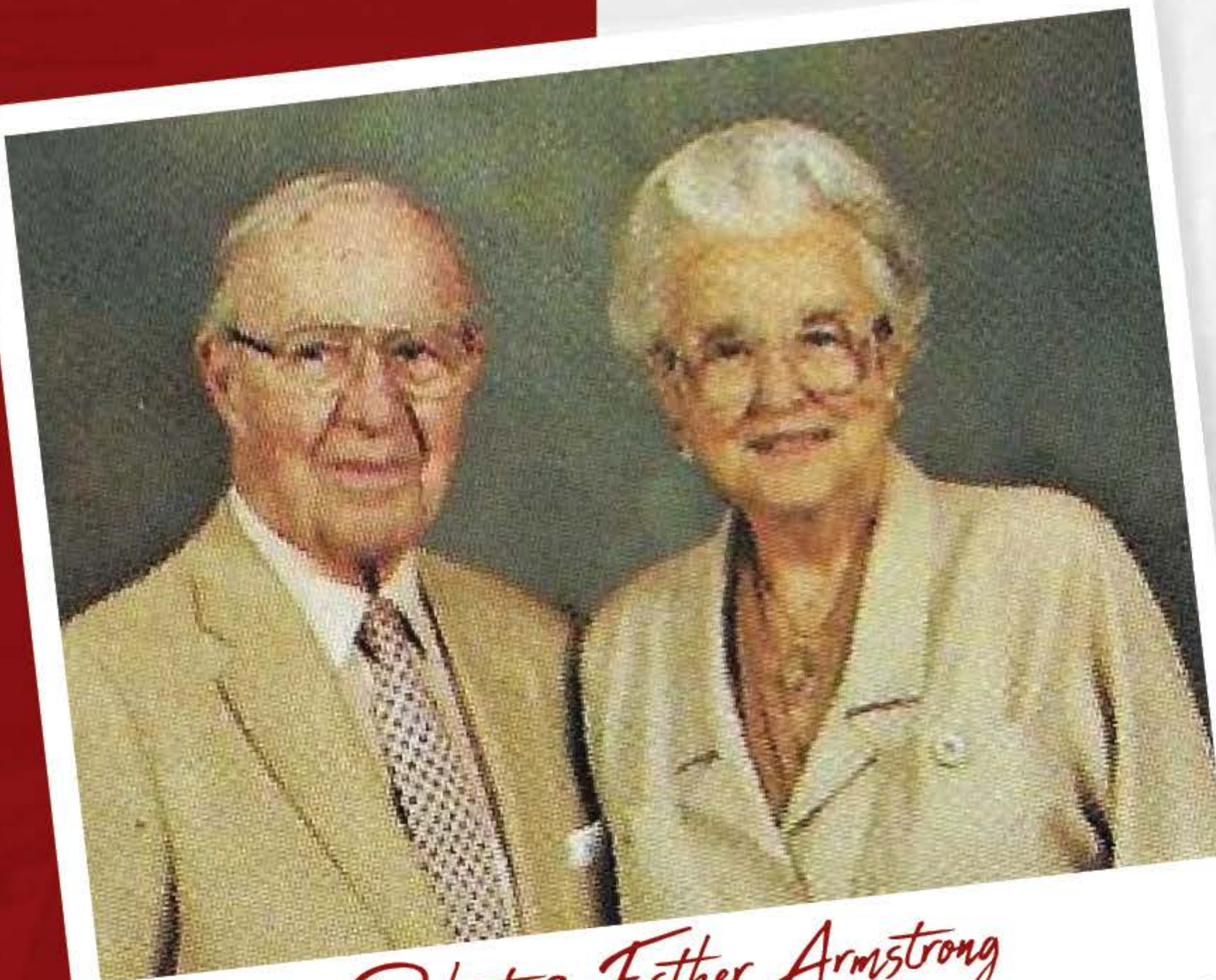
- Sporting crimson and gold is a great way to show your pride and strike up conversations with others who might not have heard of Coe. The KoGo Marketplace & Spirit Store at Coe is a one-stop-shop for all kinds of Coe gear. Stop by or order online at bit.ly/kogostore.

REFER STUDENTS

- You know the qualities of a great Kohawk, so if you know any high school students who would be a good fit for Coe, talk to them about why you love your alma mater and encourage them to check out the college. It might just be the perfect place for them. Refer a Kohawk to the Office of Admission at www.coe.edu/recommend_a_student.

SUPPORT THE COLLEGE FINANCIALLY

- Gifts from alumni and friends fund scholarships, academic and extracurricular opportunities, campus renovations and supportive resources for Coe students. Investing in the college helps us grow and expand our offerings to make Coe one of the best small colleges in the country. Go to www.alumni.coe.edu/makeagift to make the future bright for current and future Kohawks. Every dollar makes a world of difference.



Robert & Esther Armstrong



Armstrong

Legends of Coe:

An Armstrong commitment to Coe

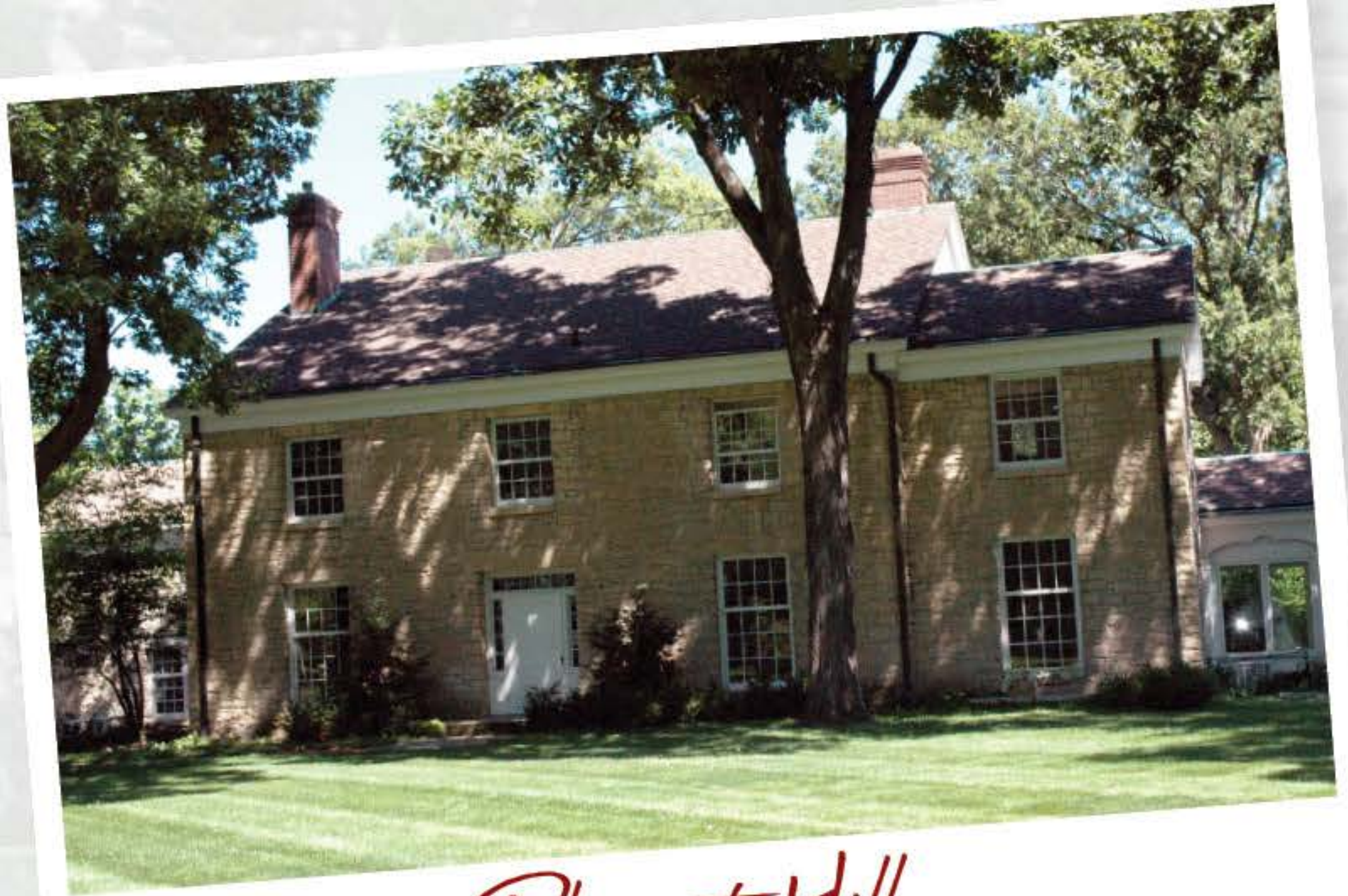
Over 130 years ago, Armstrong's Department Store in downtown Cedar Rapids was a place of wonder as the biggest store and home to the first escalators many shoppers ever had seen. But, every Cedar Rapiidian knows the real awe-inspiring element of the store was the family running it.

Robert Armstrong, Class of 1918, inherited Armstrong's Department Store after the death of his father, Samuel Armstrong, at the start of the Great Depression in 1929. The store survived one of America's most devastating economic crises and prospered for nearly six decades under Robert's leadership until his death in 1990.

"In this city, he was Mr. Downtown. No name compares with Armstrong in the growth and development of downtown Cedar Rapids," Coe College President Emeritus Joe McCabe shared at Robert Armstrong's eulogy in 1990.



Armstrong Hall



Pleasant Hill

Chuck Gardner worked with the Armstrongs for 35 years, starting as the store's first personnel manager in 1954 and eventually serving as the vice president of operations. He remembers the Armstrongs as caring, generous and humble. Those who worked at the Armstrong's store were always referred to as "associates" and never as "employees."

"They always called you by your name. You were always an equal person no matter who you were," Gardner said.

And there's no doubt the Armstrong name is important to every Kohawk. After all, Armstrong Hall was named after Robert.

He graduated summa cum laude and attended the U.S. Military Academy and then Harvard School of Business Administration. After returning to Cedar Rapids he married **Esther Youel, Class of 1925**. The Armstrongs continued to be active members of the Coe community, with Robert following in his father and grandfather's footsteps and serving on the Board of Trustees for 36 years. He also was a member of the board's Executive Committee and a Life Trustee for eight years. Notable leadership positions were as gifts chairman in a Coe Capital Campaign and chairman for the Ford Foundation matching donation campaign in the 1960s.

Robert's and Esther's dedication to Coe was unwavering. In addition to privately helping some students with tuition, their lifelong service to the college and Cedar Rapids culminated in establishing funds from their estates to create the Robert and Esther Armstrong Charitable Trust.

"They were very proud of Coe," Gardner said. "They would do anything possible to support the college."

Following Esther's death in 2002, appointed Robert and Esther Armstrong Charitable Trust Trustees have dispersed funds to area organizations focusing on religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational pursuits per the wishes of Robert and Esther.

Since then, about \$7.5 million in special projects and endowed funds have been donated to Coe College, Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Cornell College, St. Paul's United Methodist Church Foundation, YMCA of the Cedar Rapids Metro Area, United Way of East Central Iowa and Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

Robert and Esther Armstrong Charitable Trust Chairman Ron Olson believes the Armstrongs wanted to establish a trust to continue strengthening organizations in a city that supported their business.



*The David and Janice McNally
Center for Health and Society*

“As expressed by the many grants to both Coe and Cornell, it is obvious they both cared about higher education knowing that education, and especially higher education, is key to a healthy and vibrant society,” Olson said.

Among Robert and Esther’s gifts to Coe are their former residence, which now is used as the Coe College president’s house and affectionately known as Pleasant Hill, and \$885,000 to fund a variety of special projects and an endowed chair and more recently \$630,000 in endowed funds.

Their generosity also will support the health care heroes of tomorrow with a \$100,000 grant to help build the David and Janice McNally Center for Health and Society. The CHS will be a comprehensive student-centered resource where all majors can explore careers in the health care field.

“I believe Esther and Robert would be extremely pleased with the grant to help fund the Center for Health and Society. The academic, health and community aspect of this program would be right in the wheelhouse of what they cared most about,” Olson said.

Robert and Esther’s tenacity to set Kohawks and the Cedar Rapids community on a path for success was strictly outlined in their will. Their instructions have been honored by the trustees. And as a result, the Trust is dissolving after distributing the last remaining assets to the seven favored organizations which will be placed in the organizations’ endowments with a spend rate equal to their respective existing endowment spend rates.

“They always asked ‘Can we help?’” Gardner recalled.

Robert and Esther’s hospitality and generosity are the reason people who got to experience Armstrong’s Department Store continue to marvel at its magnificence, but it’s really their love for the people of Cedar Rapids that makes it all truly unforgettable.

“The Armstrongs’ devotion to Coe is evident in so many ways,” said Coe President **David Hayes ’93**. “Their generosity toward our students and the greater community has been remarkable, and their legacy will endure at Coe through all the days to come.”

We all desire *significance* — TO LEAD HAPPY AND FULFILLED LIVES SURROUNDED BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

For many of us, there is a compelling need to make a difference and leave a lasting impact on the people dear to us and the world in which we live. Creating a will is an important step in your life journey. It's your opportunity to plan how you will benefit your family, friends and charitable organizations after your lifetime.

When preparing a will or trust, your family's well-being will always come first. Once you have ensured your loved ones are provided for, we hope you will include a charitable bequest in your will to benefit Coe College. Including a gift in your will is a great way to support the future of Coe without giving away any of your assets today. A bequest is a gift that can be changed at any time if your circumstances change.

TYPES OF BEQUESTS

A charitable bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. You can create a bequest of any dollar amount, gift specific property or designate a percentage of your estate in your will or trust plan.



A **SPECIFIC BEQUEST** involves making a gift of a specific asset or dollar amount.



A **PERCENTAGE BEQUEST** involves leaving a specific percentage of your overall estate.



A **RESIDUAL BEQUEST** is made from the balance of an estate after the will has given away each of the specific bequests.



A **CONTINGENT BEQUEST** is made only if the purpose of the primary bequest cannot be met.

BEQUEST LANGUAGE TO ASSIST YOU

"I give to Coe College, a nonprofit organization located at 1220 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402,

(choose one of the following to indicate gift amount)

the sum of \$ _____ OR _____ percent OR all of the residue of my estate to be used to support _____ .
(general purposes, endowment, named scholarship, etc.).

If you would like to ensure your bequest will be used for a specific purpose, please let us know. We would be happy to work with you to help you identify ways to give and meet your charitable objectives. We also will work with you and your attorney to craft language to accomplish your goals.



If you have questions or would like additional information, please visit www.coelegacy.org or contact our gift planning officer:

Debbie Green
dgreen@coe.edu
319.399.8592

Emmy-nominated Coe alum fin
IN COSTUME DESIGN



His success IN CAREER

Before **Matthew Hemesath '01** stitched his way to the Big Apple to work with celebrities like Halle Berry, Viola Davis and Keanu Reeves as a costume designer, he sewed his first dress for the CoeAlliance drag show at Coe College.

Growing up in Calmar, Iowa, Hemesath acted in every high school production. He planned to study theatre arts at Coe to pursue a career in acting, and a work-study position in the costume shop proved to be life-changing. At the time, he didn't know how to sew or that costume designing was an art and field of study. This prompted Hemesath to declare an art minor to take full advantage of art history and studio art classes in preparation for graduate school.

"I decided to focus on theater right away. I realized I only had so much time in college," he said. "Coe helped me see costume design as wearable art. The small classes and lots of time with professors were great. [Professor of Theatre Arts] Susan Wolverton even created an independent study for me because I'd already taken every costume design class available. It was treated as a profession, and it helped me see it could be a career possibility and not just a hobby. It was super valuable."

A staple of a Coe education, real-life experience, solidified his career direction if there was any doubt left.

"The single most important and impactful experience was the New York Term my junior year. I can't overstate what that experience did for me. I learned this is where I wanted to be," he added.

Fellow Kohawk **Holly Hynes '78** was the head of costumes at the New York City Ballet when Hemesath was embarking on his New York Term. Hemesath got her phone number before leaving for New York, and she connected him with a three-month internship position at the New York City Ballet working with professional dancers and designers and running errands in the famed Garment District neighborhood in Manhattan.

"I still know and work with the people I met during my New York Term internship. The person I shadowed at the New York City Ballet actually hired me as her assistant after graduate school, so as soon as I graduated I moved to New York permanently with a job secured," Hemesath said.

After Coe, Hemesath earned his MFA in costume design from Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama in 2004.

He worked in theater before landing his first job in television for the "Today" show. And at 28 years old, Hemesath later joined "Saturday Night Live." With four days to plan an episode's entire wardrobe and only three minutes to do costume and makeup changes during the show, Hemesath's experience in theater proved to be a strength.

"Because it is live, there is no room for error. I learned to work with celebrities. I had to keep my cool when they came in for their fittings or if I was helping them with a wardrobe change. I was nervous and starstruck, but I reminded myself they are just people who need help doing their job," Hemesath laughed.

After eight years of weekend and night shifts at "Saturday Night Live," Hemesath joined the crew of daytime soap opera "One Life to Live" shortly before it was cancelled and moved on to work on popular shows like "Dr. Death," "Boomerang," "America's Got Talent" and "Mozart in the Jungle."

His first job in film has been showcased on billboards around the world. The iconic sleek black suit Keanu Reeves wears in the "John Wick" blockbuster franchise was co-created by Hemesath.



“The single most important and impactful experience was the New York Term my junior year. I can’t overstate what that experience did for me.”

Matthew Hemesath '01

“As the costume designer, I create or approve the wardrobe for everyone who appears on camera. It’s a collaboration among many people. I oversee a team of talented people to help me realize my ideas and their ideas. We research, sketch, shop and choose clothes that fit the character and body of each cast member. And I have another crew on set that takes care of actors. They help the cast get dressed and make sure they look the same in each scene,” Hemesath said.

Depending on the size of the project, his crew ranges from a dozen people to about 40. And while traveling around the globe to work on sets in locations like Japan, Mexico and Morocco have been a highlight of Hemesath’s career, it isn’t close to the thrill of learning he was nominated for a Daytime Costume Design Emmy in 2017 for his work on “Sesame Street.”

“My jaw hit the floor. I was shocked and couldn’t be happier. I felt super proud to work with a talented group of people and my brother. My brother is also a costume designer, and we co-costume designed on the show. Our whole crew was nominated for the Emmy,” he said.

Hemesath found the journal he kept during his senior year at Coe. As he works on the new television series “Girls5Eva” on Peacock with actress, writer and producer Tina Fey, he’s been reflecting on his college days.

Coe made it possible for Hemesath to be an A-lister himself in the costume design world. He’s a rising star in Hollywood who can always count on his mentors.

“I could never have imagined leaving Coe. I’m very lucky to be where I am and to have so many wonderful people in my life,” he said.



Exciting upgrades are coming to Coe’s fine arts facilities, beginning with a renovation of the seating and technical equipment in Dows Theatre. These updates will enhance the performing arts experience for students and community members alike and will help more Coe theatre majors find their creative niche just like Hemesath. Learn more at www.alumni.coe.edu/takeaseat.

CLASS NOTES

NOT FOUR YEARS...FOR LIFE. STAYING CONNECTED TO THE COE FAMILY.

1970s

'76 **Marilyn Bliss** of Jackson Heights, New York, was a composer on the album "Woven in Time: Contemporary Orchestral Works."

Karen Davis-Brown of Minneapolis, Minnesota, co-administers Beyond Home Health Care, a company in the Twin Cities metro area that provides direct support for people with disabilities so they can continue to live independently in their own homes and communities. In her role as designated coordinator/manager, she assesses and documents service provision and provides and monitors staff training to ensure state guidelines are met.

1980s

'88 **Grant Eckenrod** of Williamsburg, Iowa, became the third Iowa high school wrestling coach in state history to achieve 600 dual wins.

David Erickson of Chaska, Minnesota, was listed in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal's "People on the Move" section for his role as the director of integrated digital and social media at Tunheim.

Amy McGriff of New Sharon, Iowa, is the pastor at Oskaloosa Presbyterian Church in Oskaloosa, Iowa.

1990s

'94 **Stephanie Siddens** of Westerville, Ohio, was named the interim state superintendent of public instruction for the Ohio Department of Education.

'95 **Drew Davies** of Omaha, Nebraska, is the founder of the design firm Oxide

Design Company, which celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. The firm joined forces with Chicago-based Rule29, and the combined creative agency now has 20 employees and a nationwide client base.

Tara Nance Durant of Fredericksburg, Virginia, was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates to represent the state's 28th district.

2000s

'02 **Will Johnston** of Clarkston, Georgia, is the founder and executive director of MicroLife Institute, which was recognized with a 2021 Regional Excellence Award by the Atlanta Regional Commission for their Cottages on Vaughan housing development.

'03 **Fred Jackson** of Ankeny, Iowa, was the keynote speaker at the Sioux City Bandits luncheon in November. Prior to his NFL career with the Buffalo Bills, Jackson was a running back for the Bandits for two years.

Andy Mollison of Grinnell, Iowa, was featured in the Grinnell College student newspaper in an article about his business, Grin City Bakery, that he runs with his dad, Bill.

Michiko Rehma of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, recently joined the government of Newfoundland and Labrador as media relations manager.

'04 **Ben Stevens** of Jesup, Iowa, is the new CFO of Winneshiek Medical Center in Decorah, Iowa.

'05 **Hailey Edwards** Nelson of Fresno, California, was named first runner-up in the Dr. America pageant and received the Aetna Community Heart Award for her work

on Safe Kids Central California's lunch and learn Facebook Live series. She is a complex care pediatrician and pediatric residency program core faculty member with Valley Children's Healthcare.

'08 **Naseem Shahrivar** of Blue Earth, Minnesota, is a middle and high school special education teacher in the Blue Earth Area School District.

2010s

'11 **Nick Bertelson** of Missouri Valley, Iowa, published the short story "The Linguist's Guide to Eternity: Love is Pain" in an October online issue of The Saturday Evening Post.

'13 **Justin Nylin** of Clinton, Iowa, was promoted to director of cardiac services at MercyOne Clinton Medical Center.



'15 **Marissa Seamon** of Augusta, Georgia, earned her doctor of philosophy in neuroscience from Augusta University (previously known as Medical College of Georgia). Her dissertation was titled "The effects of daily niacin supplements for Parkinson's disease patients."

'16 **Mark Atwater** of Manchester, Iowa, was named an Ed Thomas Coach of the Week in October. He is the head varsity football coach at Beckman Catholic High School in Dyersville, Iowa.

'17 **Ethan Brown** of Correctionville, Iowa, is the assistant director of residence life at Simpson College.

ALUMNI COUNCIL *Update*

Happy spring! We are thrilled with the progress on the new Center for Health and Society building. The center will be a hub for students pursuing careers in the medical/health field and will work closely with local MedQuarter partners to offer internships and help to be a pipeline for new graduates into medical fields.

It is wonderful to have President **David Hayes '93** on his tour of the country to visit with alumni. Hopefully you've had an opportunity to see him and visit with him in his new role.

Just a reminder we have Day of Giving coming up on Thursday, April 7! Look for more information on social media.

As always, the college truly values the input and involvement from alumni, and the Alumni Council is proud to be your voice. If you have any thoughts, ideas or suggestions, please share them with us. And if you'd like to get more involved with Coe, there are many ways to do so!

Contact us at alumni@coe.edu to get started!

Once a Kohawk, always a Kohawk!



Katie Lillibridge Dostal '99 | Alumni Council President



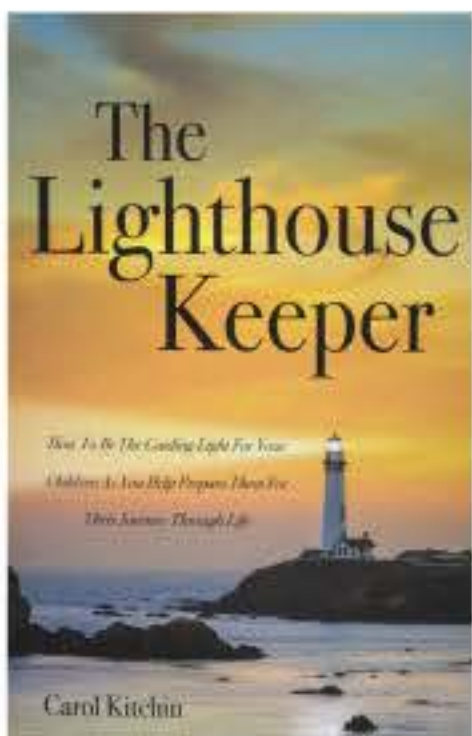
Come back to campus this summer for the Physics Reunion! Reconnect with your classmates, favorite faculty members and Coe students and hear about the latest happenings in the Coe Physics Department. The weekend will be full of presentations, discussions, food and fun. We hope to see you there!

**GO TO WWW.ALUMNI.COE.EDU/PHYSICSREUNION2022
FOR MORE INFO AND REGISTRATION.**

PUSHA DA PEN

WRITTEN ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF COE'S ALUMNI

1980s



'80 Carol Kaiser Kitchen of Mount Arlington, New Jersey, published the book "The Lighthouse Keeper." In this book of spiritual teaching for parents, Kitchen explores the significant value and important role of parenting through a

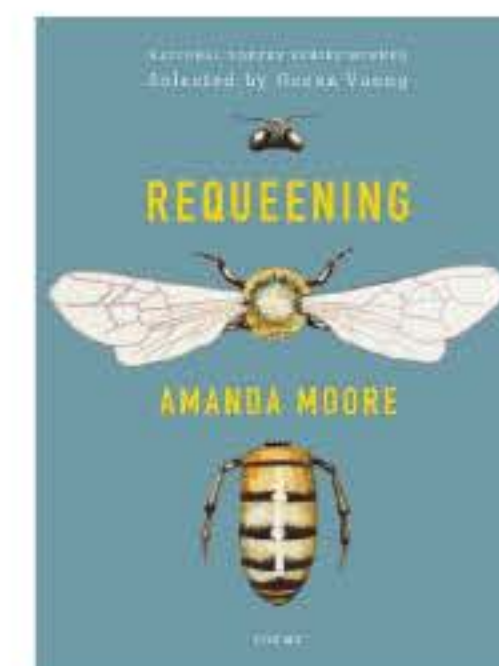
Christian perspective and inspires parents to be the best sources of hope and truth for their children. It is available through Xulon Press, Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Target.



'85 Mark J. Harris of Lucas, Texas, published the book "Magic Dust." Harris, an entrepreneur and businessman, shares the secrets to success through the life stories of people who exude that special quality we all have — a quality Harris likes to call "magic dust." In their

own words, each of the individuals profiled within the book explores how identifying and tapping into their unique talents enabled them to achieve great things. It is available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Target, Walmart and Books-A-Million.

1990s



'97 Amanda Moore of San Francisco, California, published her debut poetry book "Requeening." The book is a collection of bee poems and was a 2020 National Poetry Series winner. Bees are the overarching

metaphor representing motherhood, matriarchy and grief through elements of prose, poetry and lyric essay. Signed copies are available by request through Green Apple Books and The Booksmith. The book also is available through HarperCollins publishers or your favorite local bookseller.

1970s

'74 **Mark Johnson** and Andria Johnson of Glen Burnie, Maryland, on July 11.

2000s

1 '00 **Katie Mohrfeld** and Scott Nowakowski of Chicago, Illinois, on May 22. Kohawks in attendance were **Beth Cook '98**, **Amy Sands '98**, **Mark Simpson '99**, **Trulie Boulton Simpson '00**, **Jessica McGill Mead '00**, **Justin Mead '00**, **Megan Miller Colbeth '01** and **Amy Mohrfeld Kellerman '97**.

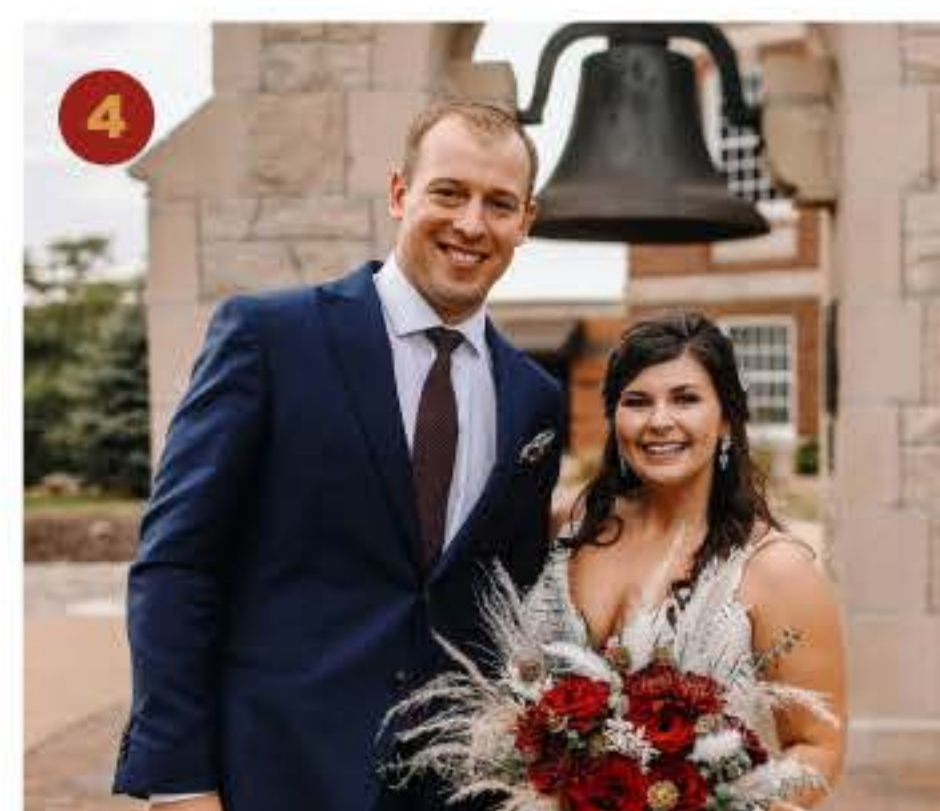
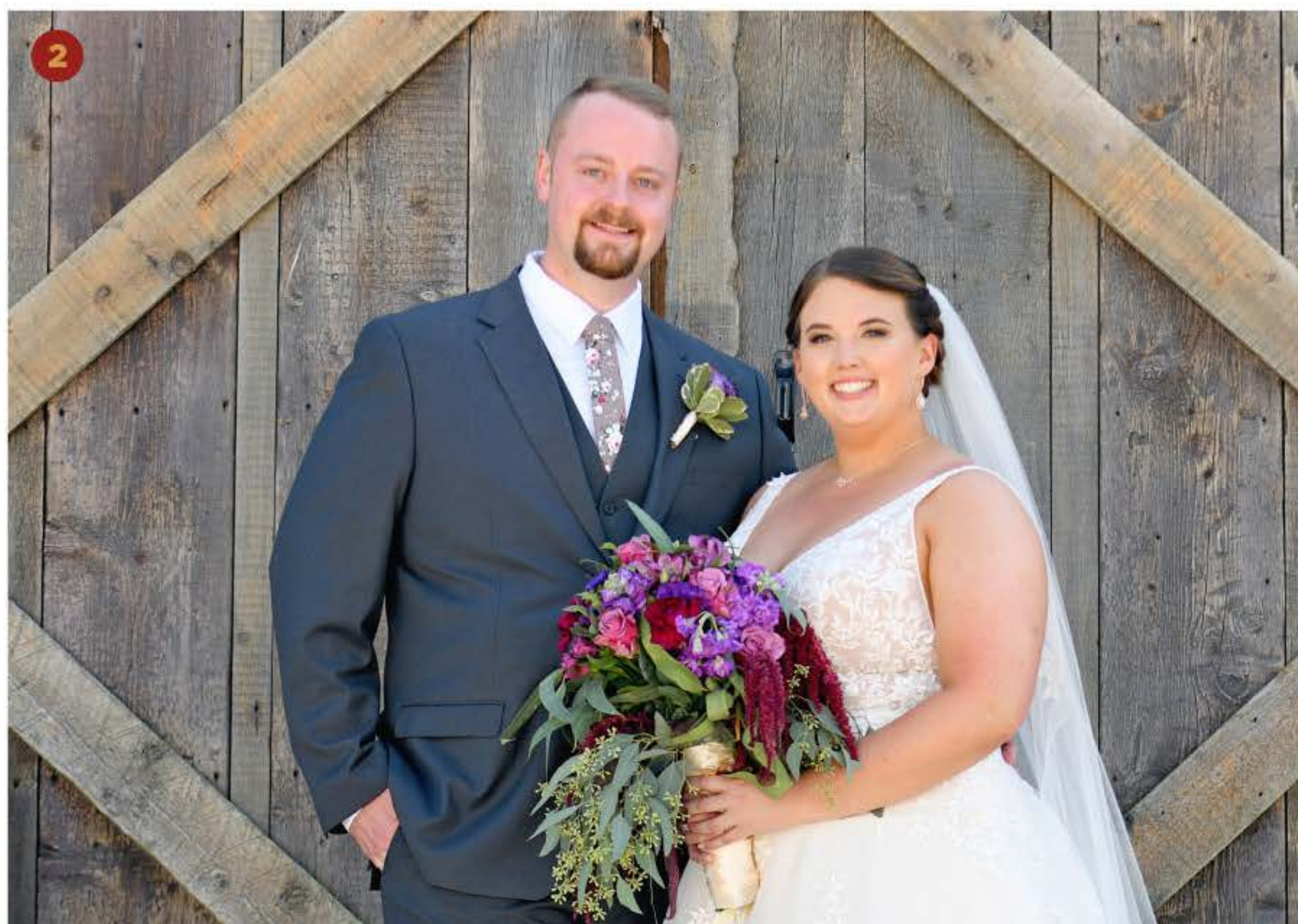
'09 **Anastasia Schifler** and Kevin Yeo of Downers Grove, Illinois, on July 27.

2010s

2 '13 **Justin Nylin** and Megan Anderson of Clinton, Iowa, on September 18.

3 '15 **Taylor Rowell** and Dustin Toner of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on December 3.

4 '16 **Connor Jordan** and **Abby Hanson** of Marion, Iowa, on October 2.



2000s

- 1** '01 **Amy Nyert** Duru and her husband, George, of Baltimore, Maryland, a daughter, Marlee, on January 4, 2021.
- 2** '05 **Dana Lede** of Fife, Washington, a son, Lloyd Edmond, on September 20.
- 3** '06 **Page Fineran** Humphrey and her husband, Ben, of West Des Moines, Iowa, a son, Miles Garrett, on October 25.

- 4** '07 **Andrew Hinds** and **Beth Curley** Hinds '13 of Fridley, Minnesota, a son, Jesse Michael, on July 31.
- 5** '08 **Justin Hoyt** and **Allie Brown** Hoyt '09 of Council Bluffs, Iowa, a son, Calvin Harold, on July 26.
- '09 **Lorne Jeff** and **Boyi Dong** '11 of Fair Lawn, New Jersey, a son, Ian, on June 7.



Share your news!

Information compiled in "Class Notes" comes from a variety of sources, including direct correspondence from alumni, clipping services and news releases. The college received these class notes by January 1. **The deadline for the Summer 2022 Issue was March 15.** Announcements older than one year at the time they are submitted will not be published.

Please follow these basic guidelines when submitting information:

NEWS

At least the following basic information should be provided with any submission: name and class year, spouse name and class year if Coe alum, city and state of residence and your news. Please spell out acronyms. Milestones (anniversaries, birthdays, etc.) will be noted only in five-year increments (25th, 30th, etc.).

MARRIAGES & ANNIVERSARIES

Include both spouses' full names (including birth/maiden names, where applicable) and complete date. Please notify us after your wedding; we cannot publish based on an engagement announcement.

BIRTHS & ADOPTIONS

Include child's first name, legal names of parents (mother's birth/maiden name will be published if Coe alum) and complete date.

DEATHS

Include full name, complete date and city/state of residence at time of death. Please include a newspaper obituary, if possible.

PHOTOS

Digital photos must be at least 300 dpi when sized to 3.75 inches wide. Please save the file as a TIFF or JPEG file. We must have the photographer's permission to print a copyrighted photo. Please indicate if you would like prints returned.

Submit information via email to courier@coe.edu or mail to 1220 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. Information also may be submitted online at www.alumni.coe.edu.



Indicates decedent was a member of the Coe College Heritage Club. For information, contact Director of Planned Giving Debbie Green at 319.399.8592 or dgreen@coe.edu.

Full obituaries for all decedents can be found at www.coe.edu/courier.

1940s

1941 Florence Van Winkle Ramsay, 101, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on August 22.

1943 Edith Gensicke Miller, 97, of Astoria, Oregon, on August 21.


Betty Shafer Scheible, 99, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on October 17.

1944 Ruth Clark Grom, 98, of Sioux Center, Iowa.

Crystal Knox Budd, 98, of Daytona Beach, Florida, on May 9.

1945 Genevieve Moulds Lee, 96, of Alexandria, Virginia, on August 17.

1947 Gail Whitford Bochek, 94, of Garden City, Idaho, on October 15.

 **1948 Richard "Dick"** Cook, 98, of Arlington Heights, Illinois, on October 9.

1949 Virginia Stouffer Nelson, 96, of Mount Morris, Illinois, on August 30.

1950s

1950 Earl Altmeyer, 94, of North Olmsted, Ohio, on October 7.

1951 Florence Jablonski Lehman, 91, of Clarksville, Indiana, on May 25.

Doris Pascoe Niemann, 92, of Asbury, Iowa, on December 21.

1952 Elizabeth Hunter Hoft, 90, of Huntsville, Alabama, on August 26.

1953 Stanley Cejka, 90, of Mesa, Arizona, on August 11.

Virginia Verburg Johnson, 90, of Plano, Texas, on December 23.

1954 Duane Devlin, 91, of Ypsilanti, Michigan, on July 31.

Gerry Lorenzen Johnston, 89, of Solon, Iowa, on November 16.

1956 Richard "Dick" Andersen, 87, of Muscatine, Iowa, on November 3.




1950 Merle Buck, 95, of Columbia, Missouri, on September 20. Merle served in the U.S. Army during World War II and was stationed in Germany. After the war ended, he played football for the Ninth Infantry Division, which won the U.S. Army European Championship. After being discharged from the Army in 1946, Merle enrolled at Coe. That same year, he married **Jean Benner** Buck '49. In his time at Coe, Merle was voted president of his junior class and was named to "Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities." A standout football player, he made the Mid-America Athletic Conference football team all four years, was nominated to the Small College All-American football team and was named by the

International News Service to the All-Midwest team, where he was only topped at his defensive guard position by players from Notre Dame, Minnesota and Indiana. His talents on the football field earned him induction into the Coe College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1976. After graduation, Merle went to work for the Department of Agriculture in Des Moines selling federal crop insurance. He later earned his master's degree in accounting from Drake University. In 1954, Merle and his family moved to Omaha where he worked as a public accountant for Arthur Anderson & Co. While there, he passed his CPA exam and became a certified public accountant. In 1959, the family moved to Gallatin, Missouri, where Merle entered into a partnership with Joe Roberts, who owned the local telephone company. In 1960, Merle moved the business to Columbia where he opened the Columbia Service Bureau. He grew a sizable business acquiring billing and accounting services for independent telephone companies in Missouri, Illinois, Kansas and Louisiana. While in Columbia, Merle began 50 years of service to the Presbyterian church, serving in the Synod and as elder and deacon to multiple Presbyterian churches. In 1972, Merle sold his business and joined Continental Telephone Company (later known as Contel and eventually Verizon). His employment with Contel led the family to Reston, Virginia; the corporate headquarters in Bakersfield, California; St. Louis and eventually Seymour, Indiana. Merle retired in 1991, and he and Jean pursued one of their dreams by moving to the oceanfront and golf community of Hilton Head, South Carolina. Hilton Head was the family homestead for 19 years. Merle and Jean hosted contestants each year during the International Piano Competition. They traveled the world extensively, visiting every continent except Antarctica. Merle was a lifelong Chicago Cubs fan and a Mizzou football fanatic. He is survived by his wife of 75 years, Jean; a brother, Dan Buck; two sons, Craig (Donna) and Rod Buck (Lynn); a daughter-in-law, Patricia Buck; four grandchildren; and three great-grandsons.

Thelma Loeck Perry, 87, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on December 18.



 **John Skogsbergh**, 92, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on December 23. John enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served four years with Navy Patrol Squadron P2V, stationed in Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and Japan. After completing his service, he enrolled at the University of Dubuque before transferring to Coe. He married **Nancy Lamb** Skogsbergh '52 on December 19, 1953, and was a much-beloved son-in-law to her father, the late **Harris A. Lamb** '27. John began his career in banking and also worked in financial management before owning his own printing company. He ultimately retired from the Cedar Rapids Planning and Relocation Department after

18 years of service to the city, where in 1997 he was recognized for his work on the new Cedar Rapids Police Station. In 2006, he was honored by the Coe College Alumni Association with the Distinguished Service Award. In addition to his many community activities, he served St. Paul's Methodist Church, Aging Services and Cottage Grove foundations. John was a devoted father and felt fortunate to live long enough to be a major part of his grandchildren's lives and to meet his five great-grandsons. He loved his golf and tennis games, and he and Nancy enjoyed their special trips with dear friends. John is survived by his wife of 68 years, Nancy; his daughter, Susan (Dan); his son, Jim (Diana); five grandchildren; five great-grandsons; two nephews; three nieces; his sister-in-law, Jane Lamb McGinn; and his cousin.

1957 Sally Casey Clancy, 86, of Washington Island, Wisconsin, on August 27.

Barbara Grow Lebsack, 86, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 11.

Chris Pappas, 88, of Denver, Colorado, on October 26.

1958 Roberta Arthur Sandercock, 85, of Lake Ozark, Missouri, on November 8.

1959 Max Fitz, 91, of Marion, Iowa, on September 15.

William "Bill" Lonergan-Highley, 88, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on November 13.

Joyce McAfee Hamilton, 83, of Hendersonville, North Carolina, on September 22.

Rita West Brown, 83, of Hiawatha, Iowa, on October 10.

1960s

1962 Dolores Erger Svoboda, 94, of Sun City, Arizona, on December 1.

Charles Johnson, 81, of Fort Dodge, Iowa, on November 7.

1964 Jane Sneden Gould, 78, of Naperville, Illinois, on March 31, 2021.

1965 Fred Wehmeyer, 81, of DeKalb, Illinois, on December 9.

1967 Paul Kriese, 77, of Richmond, Indiana, on March 6, 2021.

Thomas "Tom" Vavra, 76, of Ely, Iowa, on October 12.

1968 Larry Sovern, 77, of Marion, Iowa, on September 29.

1969 Lawrence "Bud" Reading, 75, of Middletown, Connecticut, on November 6.

1970s

1970 Cheryl Abernathy Cage, 72, of Chicago, Illinois, on September 16.

John Reinheimer, 73, of Galena, Illinois, on November 27.

1971 Terry Hull, 72, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 13.

1976 Myrna Green Ginther, 92, of Hiawatha, Iowa, on September 20.

1980s

1981 Marietta Seckel Heller, 93, of Marengo, Iowa, on October 17.

1990s

1995 Jeffery "Jeff" Gunther, 49, of Omaha, Nebraska, on October 30.

Gary Wilhelm, 71, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 29.

1999 Debra Walton Quinlan, 44, of Marengo, Iowa, on September 21.

2000s

2000 Terrie Popp McCarthy, 68, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on September 6.

2006 Brian Barkdoll, 37, of Marion, Iowa, on November 26.



1954 Bill Fitch, 89, of Montgomery, Texas, on February 2. Bill served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He coached basketball at four colleges: Coe, University of North Dakota, Bowling Green State University and University of Minnesota. In 1970, he began his NBA career as the first head coach of the expansion Cleveland Cavaliers. He earned his first NBA Coach of the Year honor in 1976 by guiding the "Miracle of Richfield" team to 49 wins and the Eastern Conference Finals. After leaving the Cavaliers, he was named head coach of the Boston Celtics where he won his second NBA Coach of the Year title and the NBA Championship in 1981. Bill then went on to coach the Houston Rockets from 1983-1988, leading the team to win the Midwest Division title along with the Western Conference, only to lose to the Boston Celtics in the NBA finals in 1986. Bill wasn't done helping turn franchises around and went on to coach the New Jersey Nets from 1989-1992, taking them to the playoffs. His last stop was the Los Angeles Clippers from 1994-1998, and he led them to the playoffs as well. It was during his time with the Clippers that he underwent triple bypass surgery after suffering a heart attack. He formed and cherished a lifelong friendship with his cardiac surgeon, Dr. Connie Hutton. There was never a day he did not state that if it wasn't for the grace of God and the "great Connie Hutton," he would not be here. During his 25-year pro coaching career, he led his teams to the NBA playoffs 13 times and mentored countless players and coaches. In 1996, Bill was named one of the NBA's 10 greatest coaches of all time. In 2013, he received the Chuck Daly Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2016 was honored by Rick Carlisle with an honorary bench by the Hall of Fame in honor of great coaches. Bill was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2019. He also was inducted into the Coe Athletic Hall of Fame in 1998. Everyone called Bill "Coach," but to his kids he was just Dad, Grandpa or Pop-Pop who gave his love and wisdom. He was a Christian and strong in his faith. Well known for his sense of humor, he loved to challenge anyone to a game of checkers. Bill is survived by Margaret Fitch; his children, Tammy (Bob) Palmer, Lisa Fitch and Marcyann (Ron) Coville; four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Associate Professor of Physics **Ugur Akgun** had his manuscript “Development of a dosimeter prototype with machine learning based 3-D dose reconstruction capabilities” accepted for publication in Biomedical Physics & Engineering Express.

William P. and Gayle S. Whipple Associate Professor of History **Brie Swenson Arnold** presented the paper “‘There is a great work going on here’: Daniel Coe and Higher Education in the Midwest and South during the Civil War era” at the Northern Great Plains History Conference in September. She was appointed to the executive council of the Northern Great Plains History Council, an organization for historians in the Midwest and Canada studying all aspects of history. She also was appointed to its Undergraduate Student Prize Committee.

B.D. Silliman Professor of Physics **Steve Feller** published “Hybrid Machine Learning/Physics-Based Approach for Predicting Oxide Glass-Forming Ability” (with **Collin Wilkinson '18** and **Rebecca Welch '20**) in the journal Acta Materialia. He published “Structural origin of the weak germanate anomaly in lead germanate glass properties” and “Lead silicate glass structure: New insights from diffraction and modelling of probable lone pair locations” (with **Adam Vitale '11**) in the Journal of the American Ceramic Society. He also published “Performing Undergraduate Research on Glass at Coe College” in Physics and Chemistry of Glasses - European Journal of Glass Science and Technology

Part B and “Robert A. Millikan and the Oil Drop Experiment” (with **Isabel Diggins Bishop '19** and **Siyu Xian '17**) in the journal The Physics Teacher. In addition, Feller and Fran Allison and Francis Halpin Professor of Physics **Mario Affatigato '89** received a \$40,876 grant from the National Science Foundation and a \$15,000 grant from Johnson Energy.

Coe Costume Designer and Adjunct Instructor in Theatre Arts **Emily Ganfield '06** created the costumes for Iowa Stage Theatre Company’s production of “It’s a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play.”

Visiting Assistant Professor of Communication Studies **Shawn Harmsen** was elected to the Iowa City City Council in November.

John William King Professor of Literature and Creative Writing **Gina Hausknecht** received an Iowa Humanities Project grant for Coe to host a free film discussion series to create conversation in the Cedar Rapids area about the impact of incarceration on individuals and their communities. She will organize the series and facilitate the opening and closing discussions.

Director of TRIO/Academic Achievement Program and Academic Coach **Tom Hicks** participated in a panel discussion in an episode of the Inter-Religious Council of Linn County’s program “Ethical Perspectives on the News” titled “Meet the Students Where They Are.”

Retired Assistant Professor of Biology **Tom Lackner '96** presented the paper “Waltzing with Bears” at the Chicago Literary Club.

McCabe Professor of Philosophy **John Lemos** published the article “The Indeterministic Weightings Model of Libertarian Free Will” in a special “Free Will” issue of The Journal of Philosophical Theological Research. He also presented the article in a guest lecture for the University of the South. In addition, he presented the paper “Libertarian Free Will, Luck, and the Deliberative Weightings Model” at XIV International Ontology Congress: Natural Determinism and Free Will.

Assistant Professor of English and Creative Writing **LaTanya McQueen** was one of 35 writers awarded a 2022 National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship.

Assistant Professor of Spanish **Laiisa Rodríguez Moreno** published the chapter “Colombia - Making Other People’s Memories Your Own: Theatre Practices and Citizenship” in the book “International Perspectives on Drama and Citizenship Education: Acting Globally.” She also published the chapter “Teatro La Candelaria” in the book “Fifty Key Figures in LatinX and Latin American Theatre.”

Associate Professor of Economics **Drew Westberg '05** was named chair-elect of the Linn County Early Childhood Iowa Board.





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Parents: If this issue of the Courier is addressed to your son or daughter who has established a separate permanent residence, please notify us of that new address. Call 319.399.8745 or email advancementservices@coe.edu.

We are no longer resending the magazine to corrected addresses provided by the U.S. Postal Service unless specifically requested by the addressee. Circulation will resume to the corrected address with the next issue.



COE'S ANNUAL DAY OF GIVING

APRIL 7, 2022

**CONTRIBUTE TO THE COE DIFFERENCE
AND MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

MAINTAINING
AND
EXPANDING
STUDENT
SERVICES

SCHOLARSHIPS
&
AID

BOLSTERING
OUR ABILITY
TO ADDRESS
OUR GREATEST
NEEDS

CREATING
LIFETIME
RELATIONSHIPS
AND BONDS