

Wendt



UNIVERSITY of
DUBUQUE

Character Initiative

SPRING 2016

Wendt Character Lecture: Rais Bhuiyan



Rais Bhuiyan, founder of World Without Hate, shared “the Courage to Forgive” with a large audience of both campus and community members on March 24. A Bangladeshi, Bhuiyan pursued his dream of an education in America, only to be shot by a white supremacist on a post-9/11 rampage.

“Rais made it very clear that one can forgive, yet not forget; and use suffering transformationally for a greater good,” commented one audience member. Crediting his parents’ teaching, and drawing from both the Koran and Scripture, Bhuiyan forgave his shooter, Mark Stroman. Stroman ultimately was executed, but not before being transformed by Bhuiyan’s forgiveness.

The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.

—Rais Bhuiyan



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CELEBRATING WENDT PROJECT GRANTS

My idea of courage changed.

—TJ Busano, UD Student

The Wendt Tea showcased faculty projects funded by the Wendt Character Initiative. The grants included learning and service trips to such destinations as Cuba, Memphis, and Ferguson, along with campus events such as Dr. Sheldon Fields speaking to the nursing community, panelists of educators from Wisconsin, and other field trips and special guests.

Students, faculty, and staff from across the disciplines came together to discuss their work in promoting a culture of character on campus. The highlight of the event was hearing directly from students impacted by these projects, as they reported on the development of their own senses of compassion, justice, and integrity through the life-changing experiences afforded by these projects.

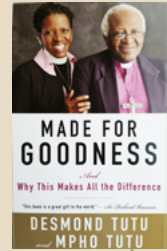


Dr. Kenneth Godwin and UD student Andrew Bestor report on their trip to Cuba.

2015-2016 in Review



September 3: Scholars' Kick-off Picnic



Book Club: *Made for Goodness*



November 30: Wendt Christmas Banquet



October 19: Fall Wendt Character Lecture, Nontombi Naomi Tutu



February 9: Student Involvement Fair



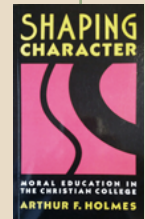
April 18: Wendt Tea



March 24: Spring Wendt Character Lecture, Rais Bhuiyan



Book Club: *Daring Greatly*



New Faculty Orientation



November 2-6: Gratitude Week



Book Club: *Knowledge and Christian Belief*



September 10: First Meeting of Wendt Research Team



January 25: Scholars' Spring Kick-off Pizza Party



April 11: Scholars' Wrap-up and Review



April 25: Wendt Spring Banquet



Book Club: *Who are we?*



Wendt Character Scholars

Completing and Graduating Wendt Character Scholars



Back row: Trevor Stauner, Nicole Toro, Kayla Neff, Michael Salazar, Adam Killion, Zach Marotta, Blaine Snitker, Reggie Cole, Jason Davidson. Middle row: Earl Peterson, Anna Runge, Tiffany Garcea, Sara Sutter, Jessica Link, Cory Kramschuster, Icle Freeland, Dr. Brian Hallstoos. Front row: Alex Eckes, Daniel Morillo, Jack Lindsay, Kasey Benson, Sharon Boer, Robyn Wittkopf, Devin Glenski, Becca Burmahl, Haley Pankratz, Anna Yackshaw, Dr. Franklin Yartey, Cassandra Berger. Not pictured: Brenda Breimon, Dr. Tim Slemmons.

Many Thanks to Our Completing Wendt Scholar Mentors

This spring we are also saying goodbye to three mentors as they complete their three-year terms. Brian Hallstoos, Timothy Slemmons, and Franklin Yartey served the Wendt Character Initiative as mentors from 2013 to 2016, and we are sorry to see them go. Each brought strengths which built community and modeled excellent character. Thank you for all of your dedication and hard work over the past three years, Drs. Hallstoos, Slemmons, and Yartey!



Dr. Slemmons interacts with scholars at the Wendt Character Scholar Spring Kick-off Pizza Party.

Dr. Yartey chats with students at the Fall Kick-off Picnic.



Dr. Hallstoos encourages his mentor group to consider the meaning of Courageous Compassion.

SPRING 2016



Wendt Spring Banquet



Dr. Roseanne Wolf's Mentor Group



Dr. Franklin Yartey's Mentor Group



Prof. Kathleen Saleh's Mentor Group



Dr. Tim Slemmons' Mentor Group



The Wendt Character Scholar Pledge



Dr. Brian Hallstoos' Mentor Group

Spring Banquet Speaker: Temwa Phiri

Temwa Phiri, Wendt Scholar Alumnus, returned to the UD campus to speak at the Wendt Spring Banquet. Mr. Phiri spoke of the impact that the Wendt Character Scholars Program had on him, particularly at a time when he was searching for his calling and purpose in life.

Although he had long dreamed of becoming a physical therapist, he found himself repeatedly drawn to work with at-risk high school students, which led him to reassess his goals and led him to his current profession as a re-engagement coach for the Dubuque Community School District.

Mr. Phiri urged scholars to continue developing their character, growing in compassion, justice, and integrity as they go out into the world. He also had special advice for graduating scholars: "be true to your calling."



Wendt Character Scholars

Guest Lecturers

Immigration and the Law

Professor Bram Elias, University of Iowa immigration lawyer, along with two of his students, explained the complexities of our current law. Their experiences in their legal clinic helped us see the need for legal reform, for consistent enforcement of the law, and for more immigration lawyers.



Imagine, if you can, a typical day. Your children are at school. And then it happens—a bomb drops—and hits the school. What do you feel? How do you react?

If you're fortunate enough to find them and bring them home alive, what will you do after that? How can you ever feel safe again?



Sr. Corine Murray of Presentation Lantern Center, Dubuque—on teaching English

Hala Hilal's Story

Mrs. Hilal's presentation startled me with the humanity that continues even during the evils of war. No matter what, she continued to mother her children. She cared about both their big needs, such as safety, and the simple desires of their hearts, such as ice cream. She truly embodied Christ in her selfless love for her children.



—Katrina Richardson, Wendt Character Scholar



Listening to stories like this challenged us to grow our moral imagination and empathy.

Topics this semester included everything from Biblical perspectives on compassion and the other, to immigration law, to immigration in Dubuque, to the film, *Abrazos*, on Guatemalans, to workplace lessons for life.



Mr. Art Gilloon shared 7 Tips for Success

We're grateful for another semester of learning and serving together.

An Evening at the Ecopolis

Dr. Jeff Biggers, writer in residence at the University of Iowa, performed an environmental tale of Dubuque with the help of the Awful Purdies. He helped us imagine our city in ways that promote community, sustainability, and wise use of resources.



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Service

Third-year Scholar Anna Runge knows what it means to serve. This semester alone she has logged 39 hours of service, with a total of 65.5 hours for the year.



Volunteering is a good way to promote good character. Young kids copy what they see older people doing. They see us giving up our time to make sure they get what they need. It opens their eyes.

—Anna Runge, Wendt Character Scholar

As a biology major, Anna is comfortable in the sciences and was drawn to serve by tutoring high school students in Chemistry as well as volunteering at STEM events.

Anna loves seeing the transformation in her students after a tutoring session. "We see kids walk in and they're confused about the work, but by the end of the night they leave and they're so much more calm and they feel good about themselves."



Scholars Zach Marotta (left) and John Klaes (below) assist in activities at recent STEM events.

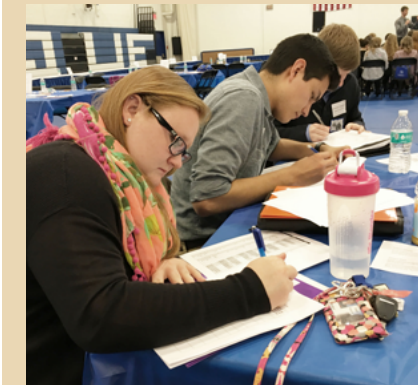


Each time I see our students in action out in the community, I'm reminded how good it feels to express love by serving others. These experiences have drawn us closer together as a group and motivated us to keep serving!

—Brian Hallstoos, Wendt Character Scholar Mentor



Scholar Anna Runge (above) tutors a high school student.



Scholars Tara Wright, Caleb Chincoya-Velasco (above), Tyana Mumm and Kayla Neff (right) assess growth and development of the high school students attending DAYLC.



Scholar De'Shaun Madkins (below) feels good after a full day serving as a volunteer at UD Day for DAYLC (Dubuque Area Youth Leadership Council).



Character on Campus

Character Sightings on Campus



The Bisignano Art Gallery featured the work of ten Wendt Character Scholars as part of the exhibit "In My Backyard" in April. Scholars provided photos of their backyards along with reflections on the significance of their yards.

Amazing, really, how so much like a self-portrait these backyards are.

—Alan Garfield, Bisignano Gallery Director



Scholar Caleb Chincoya-Velasco ministers to fellow students through his music in chapel.



Scholar Sharon Boer shares information about the Wendt Character Initiative at the New Student Orientation Fair.



Scholar Dani Morillo serves UD as a student ambassador.

In January, Pentecost Carolers surprised us here at the Wendt Center with carols and a blessing: "*Christus mansionem benedictat*, May Christ Bless this House!"



SPRING 2016



Character and Education

Character development matters greatly for educators, with potential for far-reaching impact. Fourteen Wendt Character Scholars this year are studying to be educators and instructors. Kasey Benson (3rd-year Scholar) and Brenda Breimon (2nd-year Scholar) shared their thoughts on how good character impacts their ability to instruct and educate students.

Kasey Benson, Teacher Education Major



Before this year I have always thought that compassion is something that you learn from the people who raise you, and that determines the amount of compassion you have. I believe that I have compassion for people, but I learned that being a truly compassionate person takes great courage.

Teaching can become difficult when students do not focus or struggle to learn. Having compassion in teaching is having patience and love for all students.

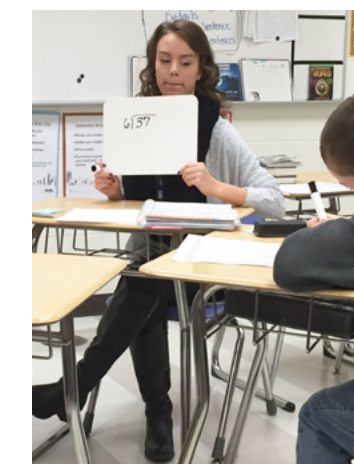
All students have different backgrounds and situations at home that can affect how they act and learn in school, and it can be easy to become frustrated. Learning about different family situations humbles me and reminds me to be grateful for the life that I am blessed with and to be a strong supporter for all my students.

Brenda Breimon, Elementary Education Major



As a student teacher I spend a lot of my spare time planning for instruction, but being a Wendt Character Scholar has helped me implement instruction that teaches my students so much more than academics.

I am able to show my students compassion with one-on-one attention as I monitor behavior. I



show forgiveness every single day when my students step into the classroom. Anything that has happened in the past is forgiven, and we move on with our day.

God has given us a brand new day to make strides towards love and kindness.

Wendt Character Scholars 2016-2017

This year we received a record number of applications, 173, for the Wendt Character Scholar Program. With the help of 14 UD faculty and staff, as well as four graduating current Wendt Character Scholars, we reviewed and scored the applications. We will welcome 31 new students to join those returning to the Wendt Character Scholar Program next August.

My students have shown me what courageous compassion really is.

—Brenda Breimon, Wendt Character Scholar

Character on Campus

Book Discussion Groups



Once again this spring, the Wendt Character Initiative invited UD faculty and staff to read and discuss two books: *Daring Greatly*, by Brené Brown, and *Who Are We?* by Jean Bethke Elshtain.

Thirty-six participants considered how *daring greatly*—finding the courage to be vulnerable—can be freeing from the burden of shame and bring purpose and meaning to life.

Then, 22 participants explored what it means to live in hope, despite humankind's fallen state, questioning "who are we?"



COMING FALL 2016:

Father Gregory Boyle, author of *Tattoos on the Heart* and founder and CEO of Homeboy Industries, will deliver the Michael Lester Wendt Character Lecture on October 24th. Mark your calendar!



The Wendt Character Initiative's second journal issue will make its debut in August 2016. Watch for upcoming announcements about its launch date.



Athletics

Congratulations to Arantxa Martinez and JT Cunningham, 2015-2016 Wendt Character Athletes of the Year!

The Wendt Character Athlete of the Year Awards are given to the male and female athletes who best exemplify excellent moral character, good sportsmanship, and virtues such as integrity, justice, and compassion.



Arantxa goes out of her way to get the job done or simply help others get better.

—Claudio Giraldi, UD Tennis Coach

JT has shown great compassion for his family and team. He is a man of outstanding integrity.

—Jon McGovern, UD Wrestling Coach



Wendt Character Scholar Athletes By the Numbers

- 7 Wendt Character Scholars named the Wendt Character Athlete for their team
- 27 Wendt Character Scholars on UD athletics teams:
 - Baseball: 3
 - Basketball: 2
 - Cheer & Stunt: 1
 - Football: 5
 - Golf: 1
 - Lacrosse: 7
 - Soccer: 5
 - Tennis: 1
 - Track: 2
 - Volleyball: 2
 - Wrestling: 1

This year the University of Dubuque Women's Lacrosse Team included six Wendt Character Scholars! Kendall Loggins, coach of the UD Women's Lacrosse Team, finds that excellent moral character is an integral part of the team experience. "We're truly lucky to have so many Wendt character scholars on our team," Loggins reports, "because they lead by example both on and off the field. They help to not only better themselves as individuals



The UD Women's Lacrosse Team includes Wendt Character Scholars Emily Barwa, Cassandra Berger, Alora Esparza, Ashlyn Ptasienski, Breann Tjarrda, and Robyn Wittkopf.

but they help their teammates become the best versions of themselves they can be. I couldn't ask for a better team, the girls strive for excellence every day and we are continuing to build our lacrosse program and find more and more success each year!"

A Note from the Director

Courageous Compassion

Spring warmth—budding new green emerges all around. Bright yellow daffodils bear their sunny heads upward. We read the signs of hope which promise longer, brighter days ahead. We dream of summer produce rich in color and flavor, while gardeners' first dreams begin with the smell of dirt and the cultivating of soil and sowing of seed.

At UD our very Mission privileges us with opportunities to cultivate lives—to dig in the soil of hearts and minds seeking to learn, grow, and blossom into the people God created them/us to be.

The Wendt Center focused on the “seed” of courageous compassion this year—a virtue critical to good character and lives of purpose. We also examined the complexities of the immigration discussion and heard powerful stories. Solutions aren't easy, but we continue to live in the conviction of the need to both obey the law and practice compassion.

We reached one conclusion. Without courage, compassion's reach is limited (usually to our own circles). Without compassion, courage stumbles on pride. Courageous compassion transcends barriers, reaches beyond difference, and unites us in our

common humanity. Courageous compassion sows seeds of hope.

Cultivate courageous compassion.
Cultivate hope.

—Annalee

Courageous compassion transcends barriers, reaches beyond difference, and unites us in our common humanity.

WENDT CENTER FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION



Dr. Annalee Ward
Director



Mary Bryant
Administrative Assistant



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