



Students Step Up to Serve

Many Wendt Scholars have put their lives and concerns on a back burner in order to help during this pandemic.

Alyssa Sommerfeld at Work in the Emergency Room

I have worked in the Emergency Room as an Emergency Room Technician back home in Wisconsin for almost 2 years now. Before that I was a nursing assistant in a nursing home for 2 years. Due to the pandemic I have been working 40+ hours a week. I simply do it because I love my job and enjoy working in the emergency room to help others. Times like these we all need to band together and put in the extra time and effort.



This whole pandemic has been a learning experience for everyone. Every day the guidelines are changing, and everything we were doing 2 hours ago is now thrown out the window. We have large white tents outside our emergency room that are strictly for Covid patients and could hold up to 25+ patients. We also have a large triaging tent to assess patients as well.

It's crazy to be part of something so huge, that none of us thought we would witness firsthand. I understand that there are many healthcare workers who are scared to take on this responsibility, but I feel it's a good thing that they've called on us. You have to stay positive, or you'll lose before it even started.

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Katelyn Howe Serving at Patient Intake and as Traveling CNA

This type of work is crucial to keeping our most vulnerable patients and staff safe from the potentially life-threatening virus.

I have never had any doubts about this kind of work, and I like to think of it as my duty. As a University of Dubuque student of integrity, a Wendt Scholar, and a future health care provider, caring for others is in my nature. I know I am just one person in a world of many, but I believe that any kind of help makes a difference. If I am needed to relieve a nurse who has been screening patients and visitors at the door for twelve hours, I will choose to do so every time. I know this virus is seemingly endless right now, however helping our community in any way possible is what will bring it to an end.

Character in the Disciplines

Character in Fine and Performing Arts

SPRING 2020

Character in the Disciplines

Continued



Character in the performing arts is critical, as the profession is inherently collaborative. Those who truly succeed, both professionally and interpersonally, are those who learn to conduct themselves with integrity and generosity. In the FPA department, we strive to mold honest performers who understand that hard work is a necessary addition to talent and that professional kindness can make all the difference between a few gigs and a full-blown career.

—Dr. Kristen Eby

Department of Fine & Performing Arts Head

Campus has excitedly sacrificed meeting together in John and Alice Butler Hall March through December in order to install a new pipe organ—something that will further campus life and worship together. Professor of Music and University Organist Dr. Charles Barland is deep in planning for its completion and eagerly anticipates sharing the instrument's music with campus.



Artist's rendering of UD's future pipe organ in John and Alice Butler Hall

The reason why I think character is important in band comes down to integrity. For example, when playing a piece you're expected to play your part and other people are counting on it.

—Garrison Frost

UD Band Member, Flight Operations Major

Faculty Character Advancement Awards



Lisa Kragenbrink, Assistant Professor of Nursing

Typically we present the Faculty Character Advancement award at Honors Convocation to a faculty member for advancing excellent moral character in teaching, learning, and living.

We're pleased to announce that students have nominated 23 faculty for the award and that Prof. Sheila Sabers (DART) and Prof. Lisa Kragenbrink (Nursing) have both been selected to receive the awards.

We are encouraged by the character education our faculty are providing and their excellent contributions to building a culture of character on campus.



Sheila Sabers, Assistant Professor of Digital Art & Design

Anyone who has had the opportunity of being [Prof. Kragenbrink's] student will be a better person and nurse because of her.

Through [Prof. Sabers'] teaching I have learned so much in what it is like to be a good designer and a good person.

Academic Integrity in an Online World



Character includes an element of grit. In recent years, grit (resilience, endurance, determination, perseverance, tenacity, etc.) has been examined by researchers. In some contexts, grit has been observed to be more important than skill, intelligence, or other factors.

To truly know oneself, and to be willing to look in the mirror and face who you really are. . . . That takes strength of character. I believe that most people aren't truly honest with themselves. . . actors have to be in order to reach and understand all facets of the human condition.

—Prof. Greg Wolf
Director of Theatre



Cultivating one's character to be strong in honesty, self-reflection, determination, work ethic, and adaptability is critical to success in the Fine Arts. A large component of any career path in the arts is the human element of being consistently critiqued by professionals and novices alike. In order to handle the immense pressure gracefully one must be in touch with their moral compass and refer to it first before acting.

—Dr. Cassandra Bechard
Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music



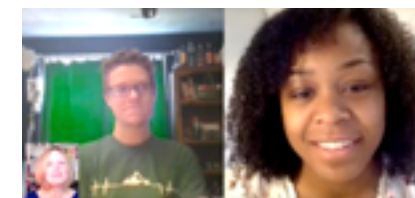
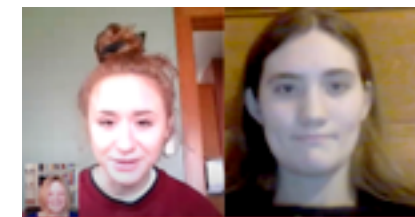
Going fully online is challenging in myriad ways, with major questions revolving around how to ensure continued academic integrity. Four Character Scholars participated in an online panel to discuss cheating and integrity, and the full group of Wendt Scholars shared their concerns about cheating that could happen online in comparison to in-person classes.

We looked at a clear and succinct description of what constitutes academic misconduct from UC Davis: <https://ossja.ucdavis.edu/code-academic-conduct>.

Many scholars noted that, while going online may lead to more instances of cheating due to fewer perceived barriers or added stress, the choice to cheat still boils down to the individual's own integrity, whether in person or virtually.

Academic integrity is essential to not only achieving good grades, but more importantly gaining knowledge in the subject. This lack of true understanding and knowledge retention will eventually catch up to those who have cheated.

—Zac Simanski



It's a bad habit to get into because if you cheat on one little thing . . . you'll continue to do it. It just builds on itself.

—Ireland Hill

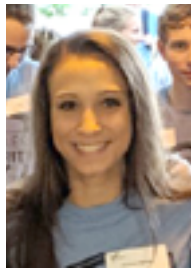
Character Scholars

Students Step Up to Serve (Cont. from p. 1)

Several students work in nursing homes including Kat Mathias, Mia Bruty, Madison Bowers, Lauren Griffith, and Lauren Howe. Doing patient intake for a hospital can be risky, but volunteer Katelyn Howe believes it is a “great experience and I’m thankful to contribute what I can to the cause!”

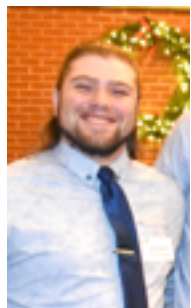
In addition to healthcare, necessary work includes grocery store service and gas distribution. Adam Steingraeber, Joey Ott, and Lydia Kleckner remain busy working to help fulfill our necessities.

In one online assignment this spring scholars considered what good stewardship and responsibility look like during this pandemic. Should they seek to volunteer or would it be more responsible to stay home? As they struggled with their answers, students concluded both answers are valid if thoughtfully chosen and in light of one’s circumstances.



I pick up extra shifts at the manor in my hometown to help those people who can’t work as much because they have to take care of their kids at home. It also helps the residents at the manor who are unable to take care of themselves.

—Kat Mathias, Nursing Home Worker



My current situation has placed me on the “front lines” ... because I work at an “essential business.” This does have its risks coming in contact with thousands of people each day but someone has to stay open so people can eat and get the things they need to survive.

—Adam Steingraeber, Kwik Star Worker



Being the hands and feet for the world is going to involve hard things, and if you just stay safe all the time it won’t help you grow.

—Lauren Howe, Nursing Home Worker



Lauren Griffith,
Nursing Home
Worker



Mia Bruty,
Nursing Home
Worker



Elena
Krasowski,
Nursing Home
Worker



Lydia Kleckner,
Online
Shopper

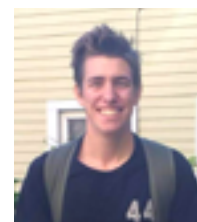
During this time of crisis, I have been serving others by helping ones in need in the nursing homes and hospitals. Being a CNA is something I take pride in and enjoy. I truly care so much for my patients and I feel as though they need me now more than ever. I have done everything possible these past few weeks to make sure all my patients are comfortable and cared for with the best possible care I can give.

—Madison Bowers, Nursing Home Worker



I work at the grocery store so I am aware that I have a pretty high chance of, if not already, becoming a carrier. But I think there are a lot of ways to serve people that don’t all involve physical assistance. There are a lot of confused, scared, hurting, and lonely people right now. We don’t have to be in person to check in with them. Give people a call, serve them by being there for them.

—Joey Ott, Grocery Store Worker



Character Scholars

SPRING 2020

Service Happens In Many Ways

Scholars also shared with each other what they were doing to continue to serve during times of isolation. Shabnam Schmidt has been contacting her grandpa, isolated in his assisted living unit, everyday for about an hour. She is also tutoring online. “I am still getting the reward of helping someone else even though I have to tutor virtually.”

Character Scholar and Young Adult Ministry Scholar Zach Bloom has been reaching out to his students to “to check in with their online progress, but even more importantly to check in on their health and wellness.”

Many scholars emphasized the need for continued human interaction and found ways to serve by utilizing technology to remain virtually in touch with others.



Shabnam Schmidt and her grandfather

I think that it is our responsibility as citizens right now to stop this virus from spreading. This means limiting human contact and staying home as much as you can.

—Lauren Griffith

As time goes, I am increasingly more aware of the hardships that people around the world are going through, and I am increasingly more grateful of how I can still get to comfortably stay at my house with my family and still experience goodness throughout this time. I am indeed privileged, and I should be a good steward of these blessings.

—En-Yu (Sam) Wu

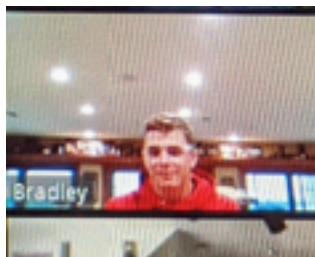
My mom and I walk a few miles each day, and sometimes we head over to my grandma’s house. We talk through the window on her door and try to radiate positivity. We greet her with smiles and seeing her smile makes our day! It’s the little things we can do to make a difference during these challenging times.



—Nicolette
Evans

My grandparents have been awful lonely lately, so I make it a daily thing for me to call both of them, and just talk for a little bit.

—Bradley Buechel



I made the decision that once I start to work at the nursing home that I would stop going out to places like the grocery store just to protect those in my community and my family.

—Elena Krasowski

I needed to go out and clean the parks. I really feel that in this crisis there is a limit to the opportunity to serve, but it is also very possible.

—Brady McIntyre

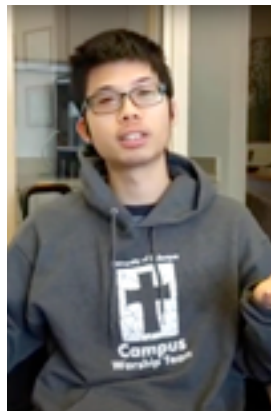
Character Scholars

Scholar Curriculum

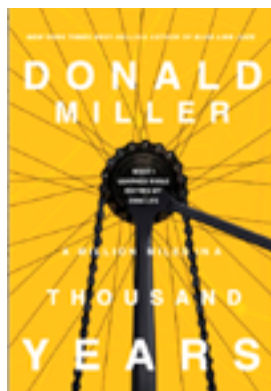


Despite unprecedented challenges, we had a productive spring semester full of thought-provoking questions and respectful conversation.

- We kicked off our spring semester with a group service project, again putting together and delivering candy cane bombs to the community on behalf of Resources Unite.
- President Bullock reflected on civic engagement. He reminded us that people of faith need to engage in areas of significant need as servant leaders. We should be a faithful presence in the spheres of our influence.
- Dr. Susan Forshey challenged scholars to care for our brains by building healthy habits of technology use, thus creating better stories of our lives.



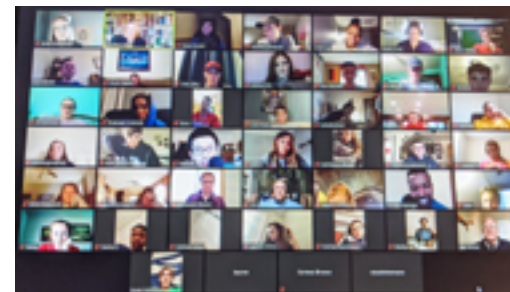
- Scholars read *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years* by Donald Miller and contemplated making their life a better story.
- Scholars prepared exhibits on the virtues that have shaped them for the Bisignano Gallery. Hopefully someday we'll be able to show them!
- We canceled Service Week due to the pandemic, so Scholar En-Yu (Sam) Wu led scholars through the ethical dilemma posed by physical distancing and the desire to serve. This prompted a discussion of ways to continue serving without risking family, community, and our own health.



Scholars watched the video, *Stewardship: Living out Our Values*, which highlighted UD faculty and staff's experiences dealing with imbalance, the definition of success, and faithful stewardship of energy, time, resources, gifts, voice.

Watch UD faculty grapple with these concerns at https://youtu.be/R_deo21nv5Q

- Scholars Tyler Glenski, Mia Bruty, Natalie Dienstbach, and Ireland Hill participated in an online panel focused on academic and relationship integrity, which served to spark a broader conversation among the Character Scholars (see p. 3).
- We researched historical figures who showed great courage to practice integrity such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Malala Yousafzai and Mahatma Gandhi.
- We rounded out the year together with a mass Zoom meeting!



Character Lecture

SPRING 2020



Lifelong friends Justin Skeesuck and Patrick Gray have thought a lot about community and working together. After a progressive neuromuscular disease caused Justin to lose the use of his arms and legs, Patrick took on a major role in supporting Justin and his family.

Justin and Patrick shared their story of friendship and personal growth, highlighting lessons they learned through the journey they took together following Spain's Camino de Santiago, Patrick pushing Justin's wheelchair over 500 miles of rough and sometimes mountainous terrain. The challenging trek taught them both the importance of accepting help and working together to achieve what one person alone cannot.



They gave me a sense of hope and helped me to remember not to give up when obstacles come in the way.

**—Lauren Donaire
Wendt Character Scholar**

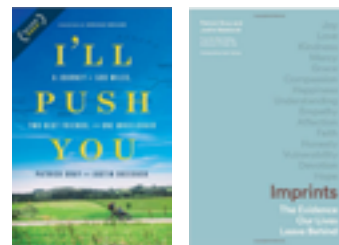


When you deny someone the opportunity to help you, you actually deny them joy in life.

—Justin Skeesuck



Justin and Patrick stayed after the lecture to greet audience members and sign books.



Justin and Patrick shared stories from their documentary and books.

We are capable of so much as a community when we set aside —just for a moment— some of the struggle we have and press into somebody else's. Because we're better together.

—Patrick Gray



Faculty and staff who read their book, *Imprints*, met Justin and Patrick for coffee and conversation.



Character Scholars

End-of-Year Celebration

Congratulations to All of Our Completing Scholars!



Zachariah Bloom



Mia Bruty



Natalie Dienstbach



Michael Drbul



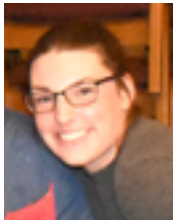
Tyler Glenski



Shelby Hibbler



Ireland Hill



Lydia Kleckner



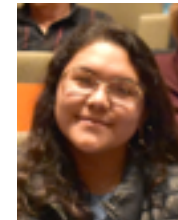
Kate Meyrick



Mason Nebel



Joshua Nsenga



Evelin Ortiz



Joseph Ott



Brandon Ramos



Zachary Zimanski



Emilia Skeen



Adam Steingraeber



Josephine Thomas



Sasha Williams

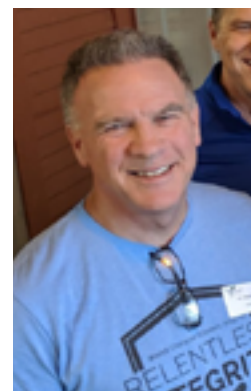


En-Yu (Sam) Wu

Thank you, Scholar Mentors!

The Wendt Character Scholars Program relies on the excellent work of UD faculty who commit to serve three-year terms as mentors to our scholars. We are grateful to all five of our mentors and honor especially those who are completing their terms, Dr. Jonathan Barz (who stayed on for a fourth year) and Dr. Adam Smith.

Dr. Annalee Ward, Director of the Wendt Character Initiative, describes Dr. Barz as “kind and thoughtful . . . an encourager of the power of art to transform us and a gentle challenger when needed.” She appreciates that Dr. Smith “loves a good conversation and the opportunity to challenge us to think.” Thank you, Drs. Barz and Smith!



Dr. Jonathan Barz



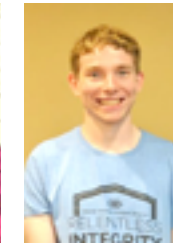
Dr. Adam Smith

Character Scholars

SPRING 2020

Scholar Awards

This year we named five students our Scholars of the Year. Each of these students fully honored their commitments to the Wendt Character Scholars Program, with perfect attendance and faithful completion of assignments and service hours: Zach Bloom, Austin Butson, Shelby Hibbler, Katelyn Howe, and Andrew Newberry. Thank you for your consistency and commitment to character!



This year Evelin Ortiz received our Community Service Award, with 107.5 hours of service for the academic year! Congratulations, Evelin!

Six Scholars received an Honorable Mention for completing more than 50 hours of service: Will Kowalewski, En-Yu (Sam) Wu, Zach Bloom, Tyler Glenski, Shabnam Schmidt, Adam Steingraeber. Congratulations, and thank you for serving the community!

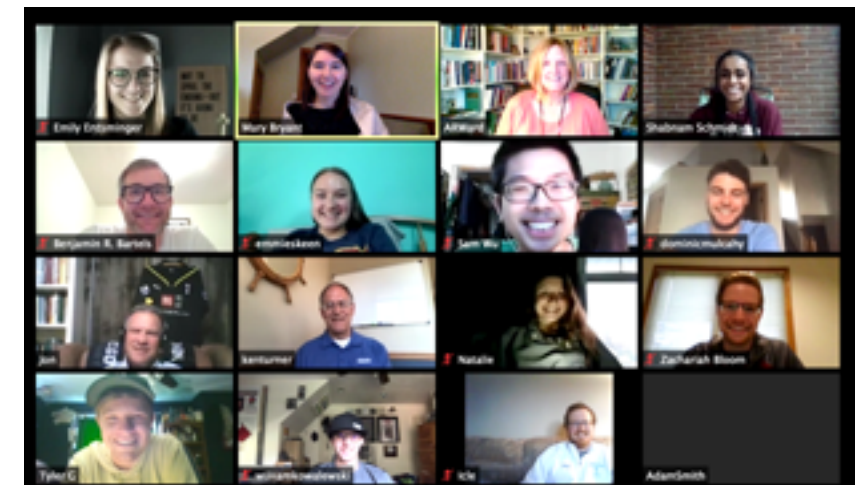
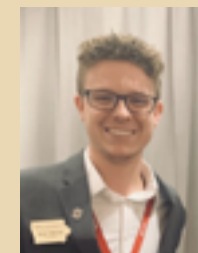


Wendt has impacted me in many ways, one of the biggest ways I have been impacted by Wendt is that it has taught me the importance of community and service.

**—Mia Bruty
Completing Wendt Scholar**

Being a Wendt Scholar has . . . given me new eyes to see the virtues of integrity, justice, and compassion. Its allowed me to see these are more than just a word, but virtues and values to live by.

**—Tyler Glenski
Graduating Wendt Scholar**



Our end-of-year celebrations moved online with a virtual award ceremony and slideshow. Afterwards, those who were available gathered for one final Zoom meeting for the year, shared special memories and thanks, and shared bittersweet goodbyes.

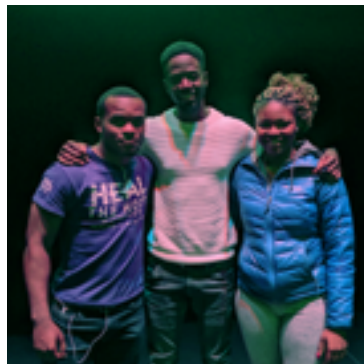
Character Scholars

Scholars Will Remember . . .

Genuine conversations.
—Sasha Williams

To be truthful in every aspect of my life.
—Nicolette Evans

I would also like to remember the Justin and Patrick lecture.
—Lauren Donaïre



The two cores I will remember from this year is the “show up and be present” talk by Dr. Beth McCaw and the “sphere of influence” talk by President Bullock. The show up and be present is a commitment of integrity of myself to give all I have to the life I am living in. The sphere of influence mindset is an act of integrity for myself to start making the the world a better place. If I can only remember these two things from this year, then I am on the right start for integrity.
—En-Yu (Sam) Wu

I want to remember from the year that there are always ways to be a better person not just for yourself, but for the goodness of others more importantly.
—Kat Mathias

All of the new friends I made this year and the lessons in integrity.
—Bryce Walter

Meeting Patrick Gray and Justin Skeesuck.
—Brady McIntyre



To always pay attention to who is in my sphere and how they affect me and how I affect them.
—Tyler Glenski

To put others before myself and don’t ever be afraid to do anything that may be difficult or hard. The lectures have taught me this. Also, with this whole pandemic I want to remember to always be so appreciative of everything and everyone around me.
—Madison Bowers



To stay true to my values and understand my sphere of influence.
—Dan Bacskai

The small group conversations.
—Zach Bloom

What I want to remember from the group is the dynamic speakers and how we don’t have to have a large expansive plan to create a difference. Our small habits lead these changes too, so being authentic in our values and actions. We just have to reach out and simply take initiative, let’s stop waiting and start acting.
—Evelin Ortiz

The connections and interactions.
—Alyssa Klawitter

All the guest speakers we had and big lectures!
—Mia Bruty

I want to remember from this year seeing everyone’s smiling/ tired faces during our Monday meetings and just how powerful presence and being in the moment can be.
—Andrew Newberry

Character Athletes

SPRING 2020



Congratulations to our Character Athletes of the Year, Josie Thomas (Women’s Basketball) and Isalino (JJ) Valencia (Baseball). The Wendt Character Athletes of the Year best demonstrate qualities of excellent moral character, good sportsmanship, and the virtues of integrity as characterized by truthfulness, honesty, and stewardship; justice as characterized by treating all people fairly, respecting diversity, and practicing Christian love; and compassion as characterized by living by the Golden Rule in service of others.



JJ Valencia displays a high level of integrity on a daily basis. He is humble, dependable, trustworthy, and mindful of others.

—Baseball Head Coach Paul Wyczawski

Josie Thomas exemplifies what it means to be a Wendt Character Athlete. She approaches each day with integrity, justice and compassion for all. Josie is a captain on our women’s basketball team, and she has earned this title by being trustworthy, reliable and someone who everyone on the team respects.

—Women’s Basketball Head Coach Mark Noll



Wendt Character Athlete Awards

We also celebrate the recipients of the Wendt Character Athlete Award for each team. Congratulations, all! Thank you for practicing excellent moral character on and off the field.

Isalino (JJ) Valencia, Baseball
Josephine Thomas, Women’s Basketball
Henry Thompson, Men’s Basketball
Alexandra Packard, Cheer & Stunt
Michael Orcutt, Men’s Cross Country
Lucy Syverson, Women’s Cross Country
Keyshawn Carr, Football
Bradley Bueschel, Men’s Golf
Sydney Killeen, Women’s Golf
Ethan Senesac, Men’s Lacrosse
Gloire Luwara, Men’s Soccer

Carissa Brown, Women’s Soccer
Gabrielle Marchese, Softball
Sincere Davis, Men’s Tennis
Samantha Heins, Women’s Tennis
Clayton Hahn, Men’s Indoor Track & Field
Caroline Ferguson, Women’s Indoor Track & Field
Zachary Naatz, Men’s Outdoor Track & Field
Alyssa Skrove, Women’s Outdoor Track & Field
Kendra Witte, Volleyball
Ethan Cain, Wrestling

Character Sightings

On Campus

We are so grateful that we were able to hold Spring Convocation when we were still together, before the pandemic hit the U.S. Especially now that we are apart, we appreciate all the more the time we took for community, cultural exchange, and shared meals.



Sam Wu and Keyshawn Carr led the prayer at Spring Convocation.



Students organized a fashion show for Spring Convocation's African cultural program.



Sam Wu demonstrated the Diabolo, or Chinese yo-yo, at Spring Convocation's Asian cultural program.



Congratulations to our EdD graduates. It took perseverance to work full time while pursuing a graduate degree.



Melissa Gunnelson and Amy Gaffney work hard for the LIFE program.

I, like every human, have bought into the fallacy that we have control. This semester didn't end the way I would have planned it, it didn't end the way I wanted it to.

God writes better stories than we could ever imagine. Life is weird right now and I wouldn't entirely say that I enjoy it, but I'm at peace. I hope you can find peace too.

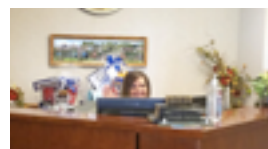
—Joey Ott
Wendt Character Scholar

Character Sightings

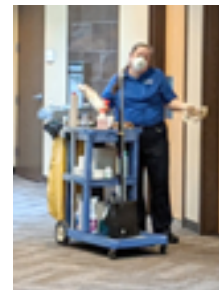
SPRING 2020

From a Distance

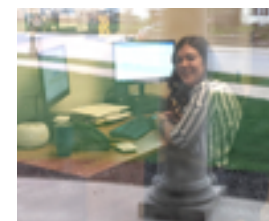
UD administration, faculty, and staff continued to work hard even as the campus went online. The COVID-19 Campus Operations Team has kept everyone safe and informed. The Technology Dept. has also risen to the challenge to help everyone get online in a short amount of time! Maintenance and Housekeeping keep campus clean, and library staff continue to support students online and by appointment. We are grateful for everyone's good work!



Jennifer Edminster, Office Manager to the President's Office



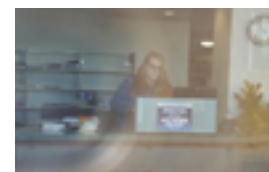
Wendy Kish, Custodian



Ivey Edson, Admission Counselor



Dr. Mark Ward, Vice President for Academic Affairs



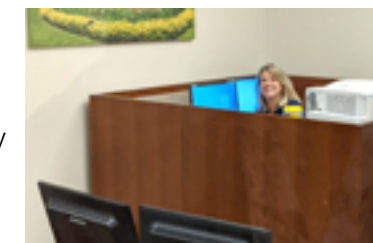
Molly Zogas, Library Secretary



Construction continues on the new Welcome Center



Dennis Stillmunkes, Groundskeeper



Kari Bonnet at the switchboard. She is a teacher in the UD Daycare, currently helping out where needed.



Congratulations to those virtually inducted into the Iowa Zeta chapter of Alpha Chi! Wendt Scholars inducted: Natalie Dienstbach, Alyssa Klawitter, Morgan Meerstein, and Alyssa Sommerfeld

Wendt Center Updates

We are pleased to announce that Vanessa Espinosa joined the Wendt Center team as our new Administrative Assistant in January. Vanessa has a PhD in Classics and also teaches Latin at Loras College. She is in the Wendt Center in the afternoons and will work August through May. See you again in the fall, Vanessa!

Mary Bryant also transitioned to the full-time position of Assistant Director of Programming & Media for the Wendt Center.



Wendt Center staff have been meeting remotely in order to keep programs going while physically distancing. Pictured: Icle Freeland, Dr. Vanessa Espinosa, Dr. Annalee Ward, Mary Bryant

Even though I have only been here a few months, I already feel like I am part of the Wendt Family! It is a wonderful feeling to work with faculty and students so devoted to the discussion and cultivation of their character and values. I'll see you all in the fall!

—Vanessa Espinosa
Wendt Center Administrative Assistant

Relentless Integrity

Fall Semester



Scholars' Kick-off Picnic Character Lecture: Alex Kotlowitz Journal Issue: *Character and Discomfort* Christmas Banquet

August September October November December

International Character Day Wendt Book Discussions Gratitude Week



A Year of Impact

SPRING 2020

Spring Semester



Scholars' Spring Kick-off and Service Project Scholars' Group Book Read Scholars' Spring Celebration

January February March April

Spring Involvement Fair Character Lecture: Justin Skeesuck and Patrick Gray Wendt Faculty Grants Celebration



Director's Note

Liminality

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24-25

Our vocabulary strains to name these unknown days of sheltering at home, social distancing, quarantine. Uncertainty and niggling anxiety, existential dread—whatever we call it, we're hounded by an underlying feeling that often blooms in the dark of night daring us to try to sleep. Here we are, waiting. Waiting for the virus to hit or pass us by. Waiting for healing. Waiting to see our loved ones. Waiting for routines to return. Can anything good come of this?

Anthropologists studying rituals and rites of passage name the transitional state, the "betwixt and between," as *liminality*. This state disorients, encouraging us to leave the past while offering hope of transformation. One does not exit this experience as the same person. Change occurs—perhaps a vision of something better, perhaps a recognition of something we would rather leave behind.

It is fitting that the pandemic hit at the particular time of year in the church calendar of Lent and Easter. The season of Lent culminated in a week of in-betweenness with reflection on how suffering grows and leads to death. After Easter, Christ followers continue living in the *already* of Christ's salvific work and the *not yet* of his return. We celebrated Easter as the reality of a living Christ, but also of one who promises his full reign is yet to come.

The country, even the world, has been living in the hard to bear liminal state. Will this be a threshold to positive change? We have seen the creation of communion/community so characteristic of liminality. The spirit of comradeship has grown. We're all in this together. We all need to work together to flatten the curve, to help provide protective gear, to run errands for those who shouldn't go out, to connect to family and loved ones.

And in the middle of the horror of the disease and the economic despair, stories emerge of kindness, of service, and of hope. Perhaps we are all discovering a better priority of values. Perhaps we will emerge as people of character, people who have known suffering and who rejoice in hope. In the meantime, don't hesitate to embrace the opportunity to change for the better.

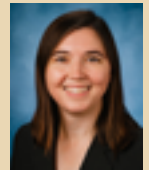
I leave this with poet Mary Oliver's prose poem that aptly speaks into our experience.

—Annalee 

WENDT CENTER FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION



Dr. Annalee Ward
Director



Mary Bryant
Asst. Dir. of
Programming & Media



Vanessa Espinosa
Administrative Asst.



Icicle Freeland
Graduate Assistant



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Don't Hesitate

If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it. There are plenty of lives and whole towns destroyed or about to be. We are not wise, and not very often kind. And much can never be redeemed. Still, life has some possibility left. Perhaps this is its way of fighting back, that sometimes something happens better than all the riches or power in the world. It could be anything, be very likely you notice it in the instant when love begins. Anyway, that's often the case. Anyway, whatever it is, don't be afraid of its plenty. Joy is not made to be a crumb.

From Mary Oliver's *Swan: Poems and Prose Poems*