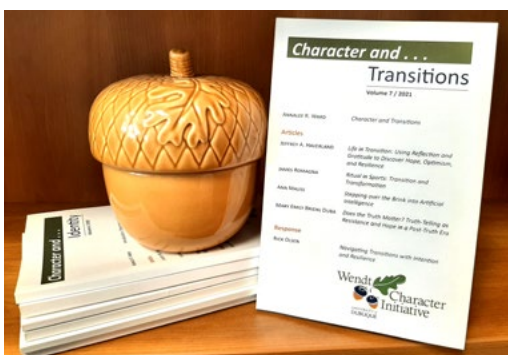


## Character and . . . Transitions



### New Issue on Transitions

The new issue of the Wendt Center's journal *Character and . . .* explores transitions—personal, organizational, and worldwide.

Jeff Haverland reflects on the challenges of a child leaving home. Jim Romagna considers the role of ritual in sports teams' transitions. Our culture's transition to artificial intelligence making decisions for

us and the inherent ethical challenges serve as Ann Mauss' focus. Mary Emily Duba powerfully calls for truth-telling as resistance against a societal push to transition towards post-truth.

The Wendt Center and each research team (see p. 3) works for an entire year to produce an issue of *Character and . . .*, a free resource for you and your students on current issues and their connections to character. You can read the journal at [digitalud.dbq.edu/ojs/character](http://digitalud.dbq.edu/ojs/character) now!

### IN THIS ISSUE

Character in Disciplines	2-3
Character Scholars	4-5
Character Day	6-7
Character/Community	8-11
Director's Note	12

***The authors in this collection offer declarations of power, loving affirmations of self and others, and formal and ritualized communication that invokes core values.***

—Rick Olsen

Issue Respondent

Chair of Communication Studies  
U of North Carolina Wilmington

### Coming up

- **KAITLIN CURTICE, MONDAY, OCT. 25**  
*What the World Needs Now*  
2021 Fall Michael Lester Wendt Character Lecture

As both a citizen of the Potawatomi Nation and a Christian, poet and author Kaitlin Curtice will offer a unique perspective on the intersection of Indigenous spirituality, faith in everyday life, and decolonization within the church.



Kaitlin Curtice

Join us in person in Butler Hall at the University of Dubuque or via livestream at [bit.ly/WendtFall2021](https://bit.ly/WendtFall2021).

- **GRATITUDE WEEK, NOV. 15-19TH**  
See p. 8

### Scholars Celebrate Character Day



Wendt Scholars collect hundreds of items for the UD Food Share Co-Op! See more on p. 6.

# Character in the Disciplines

## Faculty Days Panel on Character Assessment

All majors assess how students apply character and ethics to their disciplines. This fall at Faculty Days, the Wendt Center hosted a panel discussion featuring the work of four departments. Faculty shared strategies and assignments for teaching students ethical decision-making within their disciplines and for aiding development into more compassionate, just, and honest people.

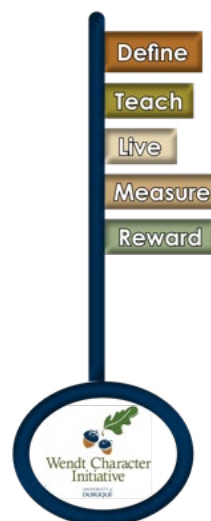
From the lively discussion afterward, it is clear there is much more we can be doing to teach character and ethics to move students from what they would do to what they ought to do. The Wendt Center would love to help you come up with strategies for incorporating and assessing character development in your classes. Contact Annalee Ward to start a conversation.



Linda McKeag shares her experience with character in business.

## Strategies for Engaging Character Formation

1. Name and Frame character as desired outcome
2. Use frequent touchpoints, with scaffolding throughout the major, backward design, curriculum mapping
3. Include visible reminders (e.g. cheating decreases when a statement appears on the top of the test)
4. Highlight exemplars/role models—living or dead, real or fictional, lifetime or single events
5. Get the word out—educate re possible situations: (e.g. bystander effect; learning about helping)
6. Encourage rituals and practices (e.g. Christianity, communal accountability)



***We often confuse “being a good person” with “following the rules.” But it’s easy to see that this is wrong: sometimes the rules are bad, and being a good person means breaking them. There’s a difference between figuring out what “being good” means within a given framework, and asking***

***whether the framework itself is good. It’s not enough to solve ethical problems inside a system; a person of character thinks critically about the system itself.***

**—Adam Smith  
Professor of Philosophy**

***Instead of asking our students “What would you do? What do you value?” the question should be “What should you do? What should you value?” to help them understand right and wrong.***



**—Roger Ebertz  
Professor of Philosophy/Religion**

# Wendt Research Team



## Research Team Composition

Usually two male and two female faculty members:

- available for course release in the fall,
- with a commitment to the University of Dubuque mission,
- who like to research and write,
- who will do so for an audience of non-experts at a freshman reading level,
- who are willing to be collaborative in the reading, writing, and researching processes.

Once this essay is complete, we encourage team members to pursue research for scholarly articles and/or conference papers and presentations that emerge from this entry-level work.

## Research Team Experience

The research team spends a year writing articles for a non-technical undergraduate audience around a theme agreed upon by the team. The team reads books and articles in the summer about character development and the theme they have chosen.

They meet two hours once a week during the fall semester brainstorming, free-writing, and workshopping the early writing stages. Team members have a draft of their article by end of fall semester.

During the spring semester, team members edit drafts with Mary and Annalee until a final draft emerges. A respondent is given the articles, and the resulting journal comes out the following fall.

## How to be involved

Read the journal articles ([digitalud.dbq.edu/ojs/character](https://digitalud.dbq.edu/ojs/character)). Assign the articles to your students. If you feel you can commit to the expectations listed above, let Annalee know you are interested in joining the team and she'll add you to the waitlist.

***Distilling a broad topic into a concrete and unique idea which imbues the essence of ethics and character was challenging and rewarding!***

—Rafic Sinno

2016-17 Research Team, *Screen Life*

***Each week [with the research team] has its own challenges...but we adapt, we improvise, we overcome our challenges—we discuss, consider, activate, and we push forward.***

—Ken Turner

2021-22 Research Team, *Crisis*



2020-21 Research Team (*Transitions*)

Left to right: Ann Mauss, Jeff Haverland, Jim Romagna, and Mary Emily Duba



2021-22 Research Team (*Crisis*)

Left to right: Michelle Grace, Ken Turner, Josh Thomas, Annalee Ward, and Molly Hein.

## Podcast coming soon!

We are currently recording podcasts featuring interviews with the journal's contributing authors. Watch for them in the new year!



# Character Scholars

## Kick-off Picnic



Wendt Character Scholars Sydney Killeen, Kaelyn Wiegel, and Brady Harnung discover common interests.



Wendt Character Mentors (right) serve the Scholars dinner.

***The picnic was a great opportunity to meet and interact with students who are also a part of Wendt.***

**—Crystal Luna  
1st Year Wendt Character Scholar**

“After the first Wendt picnic, I felt very reassured that I had a group of new friends that I could look to,” Christian Molosz said of his first Wendt Kick-Off Picnic last year. This year, he jumped right into the fray with his Wendt friends, taking part in chit-chat, introductions, frisbee, and helping to acquaint new scholars with this big group of friends.

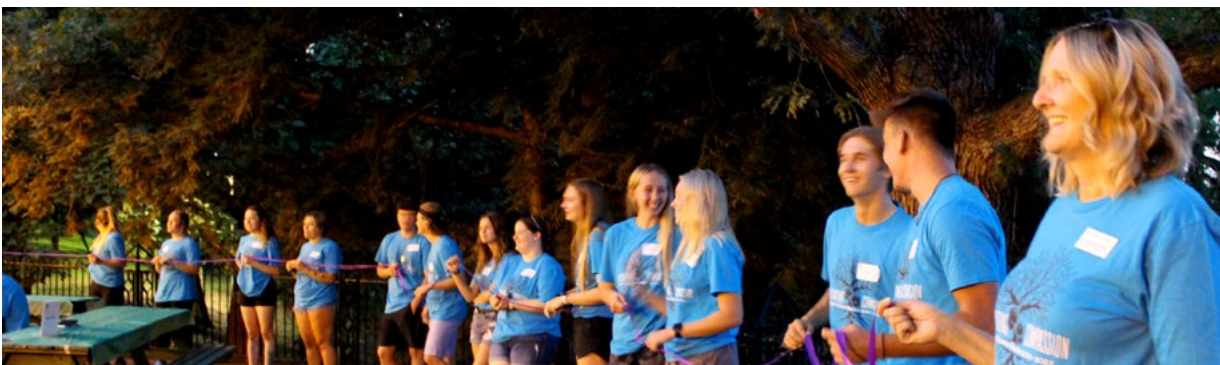
New and returning scholars mix for dinner to discover common ties. After eating, they break into small groups for name games and discussions of the current Bisignano Art Gallery exhibit and our theme. The night concludes with a common thread exercise.

***[My advice to first year scholars is:] show up ready to participate, keep an open mind, look for a role model and try to interact with as many people as possible.***

**—Brady McIntyre  
3rd Year Wendt Character Scholar**



Wendt Character Mentor Ben Bartels (left) discusses character with his group of Wendt Scholars.



Wendt Character Scholars and Dr. Ward (right) hold a ribbon symbolizing a common thread that joins us all together.

# Scholars' Curriculum



## New Mentors

Wendt Character Scholars' Monday evening class typically features a lecture followed by small group discussions facilitated by five faculty mentors. Mentors serve for three years, which covers the three years of our curriculum on integrity, justice, and compassion.

Welcome, Molly Hein, Assistant Professor of Business, and Adam Kleinschmit, Associate Professor of Biology, to the Wendt Character Scholars Program!

*I feel truly blessed for the opportunity to be a Wendt mentor! I look forward to Monday night meetings and enjoy the environment my mentor group has already established—one of trust, friendship, and genuine compassion for one another and for others.*



—Molly Hein  
Wendt Character Mentor

*Our small group discussions are fruitful as we unpack the layers of complexity associated with the perpetual work it takes to strengthen our individual moral character. I look forward to living vicariously through my mentees as they share their diverse experiences giving back to the community through service.*



—Adam Kleinschmit  
Wendt Character Mentor

## So far this semester, the scholars have:

- visited the **Bisignano Art Gallery** display, [Living Proof: Art by Cancer Survivors](#),
- created community at the **Kick-Off Picnic**,
- considered compassion as action ("be moved; be with") with **Beth McCaw**, Professor of Ministry,
- witnessed a life of service in **Judy Wolf**, Resource Development Chairwoman, United Way of Dubuque,
- looked at character and ethics as something deeper than rule-following with **Adam Smith**, Professor of Philosophy,
- and attended the play *Black Boy*.

*There is not a rulebook telling you what the right answer is [morally]. You are responsible for paying attention to what's in front of you [to discern the moral implications].*

—Adam Smith

*Being compassionate isn't just to passively absorb all these emotions. True compassion moves one to movement, to go and join someone in their experience.*

—Beth McCaw

*What I find from service is that the more I give, the more I receive.*

*If we can all find ways to help the most vulnerable, if you can take the time to reflect on your talents and interests and how you can use those to provide compassion and service for those in need, you'll find there's countless opportunities to make a difference.*

—Judy Wolf





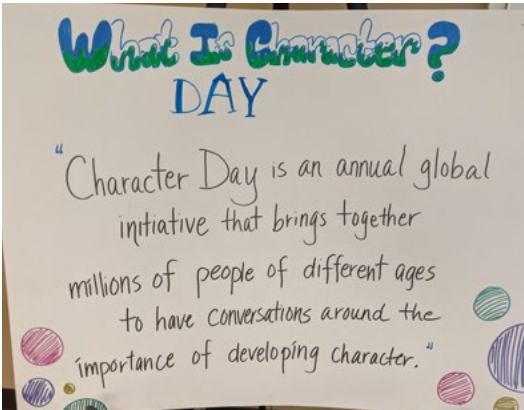
# Character Day

September 27



Scholars took to the sidewalks to spread positivity and awareness for Character Day! Some chalked the walkways on campus, others helped manage a booth in the Heritage Center, where passers-by could complete a character-related challenge in exchange for candy, write down what they believe character is, and learn more about how their actions ripple through their community.

Wendt scholars also participated in a friendly competition among mentor groups to collect donations for the UD Food Share Co-Op. Altogether, they collected over 240 items! Dr. Turner's mentor group collected over 90 items, the most of all the mentor groups, and received donuts to celebrate! They, in turn, generously shared their donut prize with the other four groups.



***Character Day is an excuse to be mindful of how you engage in life and try to do a small act to improve someone's day.***

**—Sydney Killeen**







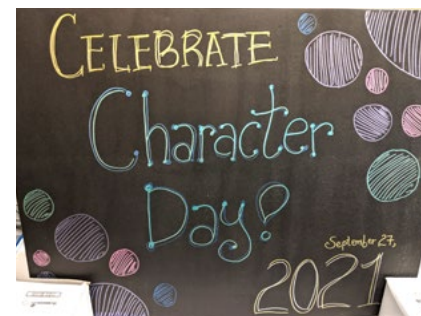
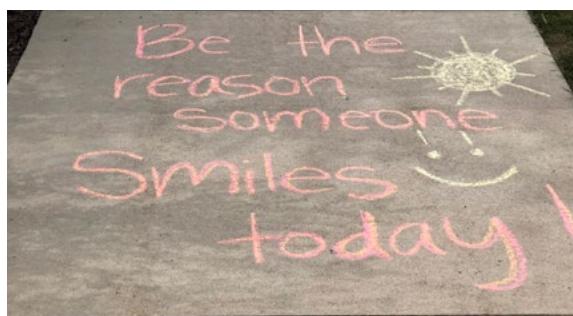
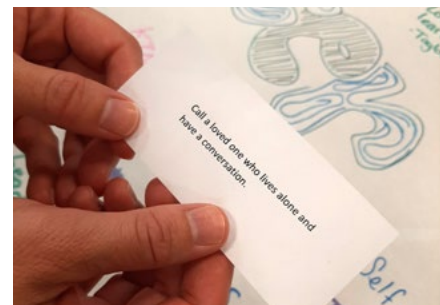
***We did really well  
with our canned  
food drive. We  
definitely got our  
message out!***

**—Bryce Walter**



***My favorite part of Character Day was the challenge and candy bowl. A lot of people responded well to the challenge bowl and were excited to do the challenge.***

**—Isaac Hays**



# Character in Community

## Service

### Scholar Service Spotlight

Character Scholars have jumped right in to their service commitments of 15 hours for the fall semester. Guidelines for service are:

1. Our service should be something freely given; we don't accept pay for it.
2. Our service is something that glorifies God and not ourselves.
3. Our service benefits someone other than ourselves.



Aaliyah Cooper volunteered to speak at UD's Rise Above event for local middle schoolers.

***Once you are able to make time to help others there is nothing more enjoyable and rewarding than that.***

**—Aaliyah Cooper  
1st-year Wendt Character Scholar**

***My favorite service work so far has been helping with my old high school volleyball team. It's fun to work with my old coaches and hang out with the girls, but it's also rewarding because I get to be an active part of that competitive environment.***



First-year Scholar Isaac Hays (left) served by greeting and checking in Wendt Scholars such as Alex Koppes (right), another first-year, at the Wendt Picnic.

**—Abby Scroggs  
2nd-year Wendt Character Scholar**

### Service Options in Dubuque

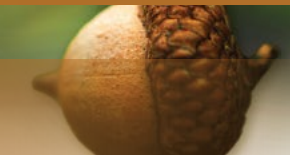
With hundreds of non-profit organizations serving the Dubuque area, there are many ways to help your community!

- Tutor immigrants who are learning English at the Presentation Lantern Center. For more info, contact [JoLynn@theLanternCenter.org](mailto:JoLynn@theLanternCenter.org) or apply to tutor at [thelanterncenter.org/volunteer/](http://thelanterncenter.org/volunteer/).
- Help maintain Convivium's neighborhood gardens, process the harvest, or assemble meals. All training provided. Contact [Natalie@convivium-dbq.com](mailto:Natalie@convivium-dbq.com), 563-557-2900.
- Serve in the Dubuque Rescue Mission's garden, thrift store, or kitchen. For more information, call 563-583-1394.
- Assist at Hills & Dales, an organization dedicated to building meaningful lives for individuals with disabilities. Contact Wendy Sweeney at 563-556-7878, [wsweeney@hillsdales.org](mailto:wsweeney@hillsdales.org).
- Volunteer with the Riverview Center, serving people affected by sexual and domestic violence. To learn more, contact Raechel Breyer at 319-939-9559, [raechel@riverviewcenter.org](mailto:raechel@riverviewcenter.org).
- Build homes for people with low income with Habitat for Humanity. Contact Erica Haugen at [Erica@habitatDJC.org](mailto:Erica@habitatDJC.org), call (563)556-2195 or sign up at [habitatdjc.org/volunteer/](http://habitatdjc.org/volunteer/).

If none of the options listed sound good to you, check out many more options shared by Resources Unite at [www.resourcesunite.com/volunteer/](http://www.resourcesunite.com/volunteer/) or United Way at [dbqunitedway.galaxydigital.com/need/index/](http://dbqunitedway.galaxydigital.com/need/index/).



# Character and Citizenship



Character Scholars have a service requirement in order to build the habit of lifelong service and citizenship. Good citizens act to ensure the well-being of their whole community. Two community members who stand out as serving citizens are Judy Wolf (UD C '86, MBA '89; *Telegraph Herald's* First Citizen Award winner for 2020) and Anderson Sainci (UD C '10, MA '12).

***Life's most persistent and urgent question is "What are you doing for others?"***

**—Martin Luther King Jr.**

Judy Wolf spoke to Character Scholars on September 20. She has devoted much of her time and resources to helping others, including through United Way, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Dubuque, and Steeple Square. She has a heart for children and takes special interest in supporting low-income families. Her advice is to think about the time you have and how you want to use it—and she asks that you reserve a little time for showing compassion and serving others.

Anderson Sainci, Director of the City of Dubuque's Office of Shared Prosperity and Neighborhood Support, is also glad to serve on the Board of the Dubuque Community School District. He works hard to cultivate an equitable community with citizens who care for each other.

University of Dubuque alumni take their service commitments beyond Dubuque after they graduate, too. Brian Beverly (C '13, MDiv '15) and Amanda Beverly (C '12, MDiv '14), alumni of the Wendt Character Scholar Program, have continued their commitment to character and citizenship and serve their community through their ministry in Texas.



***Opportunities are not equally distributed among kids who are hoping to all grow into thriving, productive adults.***

**—Judy Wolf  
Resource Development  
Chairwoman  
United Way of Dubuque**

Judy Wolf



***If you want to know what the future will look like, ask yourself, who or what are you investing in. Let all serve one another in a more equitable way that will result in shared economic and social prosperity for all.***

**—Anderson Sainci  
Director of the Office of Shared  
Prosperity & Neighborhood Support  
City of Dubuque**

Anderson Sainci

***Character is really embodying Christ for your neighbors... it definitely involves action.***

**—Amanda Beverly  
Wendt Character Scholar  
Alumna**



Amanda and Brian Beverly

***There are things that people are dealing with that are injustices but they think they're normal... How do we open our eyes more to see the injustices of the world?***

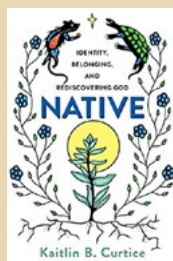
**—Brian Beverly  
Wendt Character Scholar  
Alumnus**

# Character on Campus

## Book Discussion

This semester, roughly 20 faculty and staff gathered together to read and discuss *Native* by Kaitlin Curtice, our Fall 2021 Michael Lester Wendt Character Lecture speaker.

Jeannine Pitas enjoys the book discussions, “[in which] we have touched on some difficult topics: structuralism racism, the legacies of colonization in the US, militarism, and the reality that this country is the seat of a global empire. We do not always agree, and discussions can be challenging, but we manage to find common ground and gain insights that we can bring to our teaching.”



***As a member of the UD faculty and this book club I find that I am intellectually challenged and appreciative of the various different viewpoints on campus. I like the variety of books we have read over the years, some better than others. It aids my understanding of what and how character influence our students. It aids me in being more open and willing to listen to others and our students. Additionally, I find myself surprised at many of the issues our students face.***

**—Neil MacNaughton  
Professor and Dept. Head of Nursing**



Pictured (top photo): Neil MacNaughton, Jane Kuhle, Katie Boyer, Annalee Ward, James Sizer; (bottom photo): Becky Canovan, Jonathan Barz, Jeannine Pitas, Sara Ellert-Beck, Annalee Ward, Sheila Sabers



## New Board Member

We welcome Franklin Yartey to the Wendt Advisory Board! Franklin has served as a Wendt Mentor, a contributor to the Wendt Journal, *Character And . . . Screen Life*, and has received grants from the Wendt program for his research and teaching.



## New Faces at the Wendt Center



The Wendt Center is happy to welcome our new Graduate Assistant Sasha Zainal! Sasha says, “I am very excited to learn more about character excellence and engage others to do the same through our social media and on-campus events.”

You may also see Crystal Luna, Wendt Scholar and student worker, greeting visitors in the Wendt Center this semester. We are grateful for her help!



## Faculty Character Grant

Michele McKinlay, English professor, took students to a production of Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* in Spring Green, WI. She engaged the students in ethical questions raised by the plot. One student wrote, “Something that I took from this story about honesty in not only myself but also society, was how important honesty/trustworthiness is. It makes me wonder how many different issues occur because people lie/are untrustworthy.”



UD faculty and students waiting for the play to begin.

Have a project that furthers the mission of the Wendt Character Initiative? Apply for a grant to help cover costs! For more information visit [www.dbq.edu/Wendt/Resources/FacultyCharacterGrants/](http://www.dbq.edu/Wendt/Resources/FacultyCharacterGrants/).



# Athletics



## Women's Soccer Team Honored

Congratulations to the Women's Soccer Team, recipients of the United Soccer Coaches Bronze College Team Ethics and Sportsmanship Award for 2020-21.

Jason Berna, Women's Head Soccer Coach, believes an athlete's approach to gameplay is tied directly to their character: "How you play the game and the ethical values you live by says everything about who you are as a person. I believe and try to stress the importance of making the right choices in life/sport and to never sacrifice your values for a win or to gain an advantage."

We are encouraged by the excellent work of UD's athletes and echo Coach Berna's advice on making good character a priority in all endeavors.

***Honesty, hard work, empathy, and compassion are all good character traits people should have in life. We as coaches can teach and reinforce these traits in training and matches as playing a sport teaches you how to deal with adversity and defeat day in and day out.***

—Jason Berna  
Women's Head Soccer Coach

## UD Athletes Serve

UD student athletes participated in the annual Park Clean-A-Thon, when each team tidied up local parks by weeding, clearing debris, and picking up trash. This partnership between the UD Athletic Department and the City of Dubuque supports the Sustainable Dubuque Initiative.



***When people think of cleaning, they often don't perceive that as being a fun experience. Our softball team has gained a really great appreciation for making our city look nice and we have fun doing it.***

—Nicolette Evans  
Softball Team Member  
3rd-year Wendt Character Scholar

UD's Softball Team cleaned up Miller Riverview Park.

***The Park Clean-a-thon is a great event! Getting to spend time with these people is always fun on and off the court but doing it in a way that helps keep the community clean and a better place was meaningful.***

—Alyssa Stevenson  
Women's Tennis Team Member  
1st-year Wendt Character Scholar



The Men's and Women's Tennis Teams worked together to clean up Allison-Henderson Park.

# Director's Note

## Cultivating Compassion

"Why are you so giving?" I asked. The student looked at me in confusion. "I've watched you these weeks," I said, "and I've seen you volunteer, step up and help, engage thoughtfully, listen carefully, and generally radiate a spirit of kindness."

Perhaps you've met this person or had the student in class. Perhaps you are this person—someone whose everyday habit is compassion. The Wendt Scholars' theme for the year focuses on *Cultivating Compassion*. As we unpack ways to think about this, we discover many qualities or virtues encompassed within it. Compassion requires attentiveness and a choice to really see others, imagination, discernment, a willingness to suffer for someone else, habitual practices of kindness, gratitude, and service-mindedness. And this is only the beginning of our year!

The theme also includes the word *Cultivating* which seems appropriate for a stereotypical Iowa image. We grow things here. We carefully prepare the soil, sow the seeds, water, fertilize, and weed, all in order to bring about a harvest. The work of cultivating character and, in particular, compassion takes a "campus village." We have an opportunity to accept the responsible (and rewarding) work that cultivation entails.



You might be wondering what the student's response to me was. "I have a long story, but it comes down to the fact that I've been given so much. I want to give back." You see, cultivating compassion can also be understood as that compassion which in turn cultivates compassion. Let's be a campus where we pass on the good, where we cultivate compassion that cultivates more compassion.

—Annalee

## Gratitude Week, November 15-19

When we recognize the giftedness of life itself, we are more mindful of ways to connect compassionately with others.

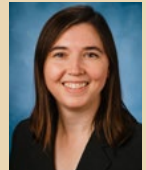
Please join the Wendt Scholars the week of November 15-19 as they dream up ways to celebrate Gratitude Week.



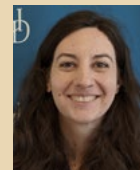
## WENDT CENTER FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION



**Dr. Annalee Ward**  
Director



**Mary Bryant**  
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**Vanessa Espinosa**  
Administrative Asst.



**Sasha Zainal**  
Graduate Assistant



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