

## The Power to Stand

Chris Norton brought hope and inspiration to an eager audience for the Fall 2022 Michael Lester Wendt Character Lecture. His humor and easy demeanor belied his earnest message of responding to adversity with a positive mindset and determination.

After being left partially paralyzed by an injury during a college football game, Norton quickly learned that his life was on a different path than he had planned for himself. He shared with us many of the lessons he had learned through this challenging change of circumstance, including:

- Be radically responsible.
- If you don't like where you're at, then do something about it.
- Your future will take care of itself if you take care of today.
- Most of our painful challenges can't be seen.
- Be like Georgia—use your words to bring hope, be kind.
- You can always find something in your life to appreciate if you put your mind to it.
- Ask yourself: Who is counting on me? Who needs me to succeed so they can keep going? This is where you find purpose.
- Your life is as rich as the lives you enrich.
- Don't give away your power to the thought of "what I can't do."



In September a packed house screened *7 Yards: The Chris Norton story*  
Photo by Mike Durnin

*The power to stand is not about physically standing. It's about getting up in the face of adversity.*

—Chris Norton

Norton emphasized mental health and mindset as essential, noting that although his injury turned him onto an unexpected path, he lives a happy, fulfilled life. Everyone faces serious, often tragic, challenges, even though their struggles may not be visible. What matters is our response when adversity comes our way, even when that response means accepting a new unknown path forward.



Chris Norton with his former football coach and UD's Dean of Student Formation, Mike Durnin.

*One thing I will take away from the story is that there's always two options in life to be positive or to be negative with whatever life hits you with...*

—Alyssa Stevenson  
Wendt Character Scholar

Let us look to Chris Norton as an model of resilience and hope when adversity threatens.

# Character in the Disciplines

## Psychology

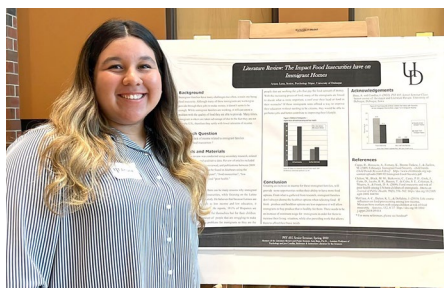
The Psychology Department integrates concern for character and ethics education in its courses. Investing in this kind of education stems not only from commitment to UD's mission, but also to educational principles set out by the American Psychological Association (APA). APA values character concerns in undergraduate instruction, particularly in ethical and social responsibility in a diverse world.



Amy Baus, Assistant Professor of Psychology

The Senior capstone projects for Psychology majors “support student growth in integrity, justice, and compassion” by making students think about their impact as professionals in the world beyond UD—to “take a vested interest, as a future practitioner of the field.” Amy Baus explains, “The topic must clearly respond to a known gap or barrier within the field of psychology and identify a theme related to integrity, justice, and/or compassion, while responding to the question, ‘What impact or consequences have presented within the field due to concerns of the known gap or barrier?’ Students are required to identify solutions that have been extended or identify new solutions that could be provided to close the known gap or barrier.”

In their research, these graduating Seniors learn how they can positively impact communities and individuals with their profession through forward thinking and incorporating their own personal values in their problem-solving. The Seniors are not the only ones who benefit from their capstone, however. Their research is shared with all Psychology Majors and Minors via the Psychology Department's annual newsletter, poster sessions, and class presentations.



Psychology majors present their research at APEX in Spring 2022. From left to right: former Wendt Scholar Patient Jabbah presents on “The Effects of Police Brutality on the Mental Health of Black Americans,” Ariana Luna presents on “The Impact Food Insecurities have on Immigrant Homes,” and Evan Bloyer presents on “The Psychological Process of Criminals with Mental Health Challenges.” Photos courtesy of the Charles C. Myers Library.

## Teaching for Character

Adam Smith, Associate Professor of Philosophy, spent the summer developing *Teaching for Character*. Integrating character and ethics concerns into each discipline remains an on-going opportunity for UD. With the campus learning outcome, “Students will be able to apply character and ethics to their discipline,” faculty appreciate some help.

This resource is aimed at all of the faculty, but it also has specific examples and resources for the First Year class, Worldview 1. This is available in World View I faculty resources on Moodle and will be added to the online Faculty Academy. Thanks to Dr. Smith for his good work.



Teaching for Character

ADAM SMITH





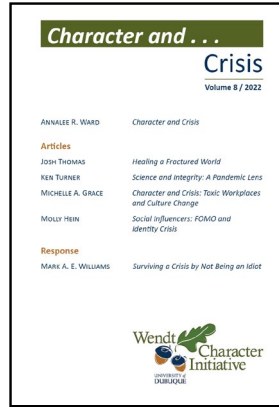
# Wendt Center Happenings

## New Issue: *Character and . . . Crisis*

We have published our latest journal issue *Character and . . . Crisis*. *Character and . . . Crisis* represents the eighth journal issue.

Authors Josh Thomas, Ken Turner, Michelle A. Grace, and Molly Hein grapple with questions of both large and small scale crises, ranging from the loss of civility in our society to the crisis of the global pandemic, to the crisis of toxic workplaces and the crisis of identity that stems from dependence on social influencers.

Read the new issue at [www.dbq.edu/WendtCharacterJournal](http://www.dbq.edu/WendtCharacterJournal).

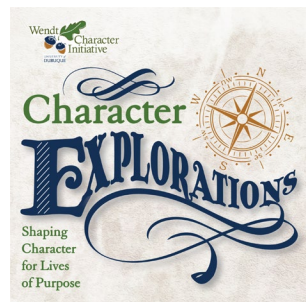


## Podcast Series Expands

Need a good podcast for your commute? Or maybe you're looking for an alternative mode for your students to engage with the content of our journals. We continue to publish interview-style episodes in our podcast series, "Character Explorations."

- "Does the Truth Matter? Truth-Telling as Resistance and Hope in a Post-Truth Era" with Mary Emily Briehl Duba
- "Science and Integrity: A Pandemic Lens" with Ken Turner
- "Social Influencers: FOMO and Identity Crisis" with Molly Hein
- "Courageous Compassion in a Time of Terror" with Roger P. Ebertz
- "Courageous Compassion and Interfaith Friendship" with Bonnie Sue Lewis
- "Character and Crisis: Toxic Workplaces and Culture Change" with Michelle A. Grace
- "Healing a Fractured World" with Josh Thomas

Listen to recent titles at [www.dbq.edu/Wendt/Publications](http://www.dbq.edu/Wendt/Publications) or search for Character Explorations on your favorite podcast app.



Josh Thomas and Annalee Ward record a podcast episode on Josh's article, "Healing a Fractured World"

## Wendt Center Updates

The new research team is hard at work investigating the connection between character and play.



Research Team for Issue #9 (Coming in 2023): Adam Kleinschmit, Kristen Eby, Mary Bryant, and Brian Hallstos

Faculty/Staff book discussions continue with *Restless Devices: Recovering Personhood, Presence and Place in the Digital Age* by Felicia Wu Song.



Faculty and staff from across disciplines come together for discussion

Our work study students help on a variety of projects, assisting with the smooth flow of our daily work in the Wendt Center.



Savannah Stookey organized our Character Day activities and works on social media.



Kaitlyn Kuhl enters and filters data so we can assess the Center's impact.

# Character Scholars

## Curriculum



Scholars and mentors get ready for the kick-off picnic's closing activity.

Scholars enjoyed a beautiful evening at Eagle Point Park to kick-off the new year, catch up with friends, meet new Scholars and Mentors, and enjoy a meal together.



Mentors served food to the scholars



Makenzie Knapp, Garrett Johnson, Ashley Viveros, Caden Swoboda



Abdelakim Baba Traore, Sharon Moscoso, Emily Gross, Brady Harnung

*Living integrity is having the power to stand up for what you believe is right despite unwanted circumstances. . . . I want to work on standing up for integrity because it is in the center of creating a world that all people want to live in.*

—Makenzie Knapp  
Wendt Character Scholar

*Living integrity to me is living as a whole or complete human and also living one's values through words and actions.*

—Abdelakim Baba Traore  
Wendt Character Scholar



Welcome, new Wendt mentors Dan Fleming and Lori Welsh!

## Who are the Wendt Character Scholars?

Have you ever wondered what it meant to be a Wendt Character Scholar?

- 50 Scholars annually receive a conditional scholarship, renewable for up to 3 years.
- They exhibit an interest in life-long learning and attend a not-for-credit class every Monday night.
- They perform at least 15 hours of community service each semester.
- They form a community of reflection and encouragement for their fellow scholars and on campus at large.
- They commit to the Wendt Character Scholar Pledge:

### Wendt Character Scholar Pledge

With God's help, as a Wendt Character Scholar, I pledge to strive to be the best person I can be.

I will seek to be a person of integrity, being honest, true, and responsible for my words and actions.

I will seek to be a good steward of the beautiful and diverse world God has entrusted to us.

I will seek justice and fairness, respecting the God-given value of each person and practicing sacrificial love toward all.

I will seek to be compassionate, accepting the self-discipline required to serve others.

I accept that character growth is a life-long journey, and I will strive to be all that God created me to be.

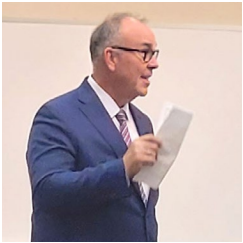
I recognize that I will sometimes fall short. But when I do, I will take responsibility for my failings and accept discipline and forgiveness.

These things I pledge as a Wendt Character Scholar.

If you think you or someone you know would make a great Character Scholar, mark your calendars! Applications open December 1st and close January 31st.

For more information about the Scholars and the application, visit: [www.dbq.edu/Wendt/CharacterScholars/](http://www.dbq.edu/Wendt/CharacterScholars/)





President Bullock shared the history of the Wendt Character Initiative with the Scholars.



Mary Emily Duba gave the Scholars tips on how to lead with integrity as college students.

This year, the Scholars are exploring the theme “Living Integrity.” So far, they have experienced:

- the kick-off picnic
- a discussion about Character and Living Integrity from President Bullock
- the one-man play *Wiesenthal: The Nazi Hunter*
- a screening of the documentary *7 Yards* (see pg. 1)
- a discussion about Integrity and Truth from Prof. Mary Emily Duba
- a lecture from our Wendt Character speaker, Chris Norton (see pg. 1)

Still to come:

- Gratitude Week planning
- Trustee Kent Peterson—Career Advice on Truth-telling
- Honors lecture from Joel Carillet, journalist in Ukraine
- Gratitude Week
- Review and reports
- Christmas Banquet



Scholars watched *7 Yards* in anticipation of Chris Norton’s lecture.

## Leading with integrity in college

1. **Go Lower**—bend low in service
2. **Tell the Truth**—seek, discern, speak, act on the truth
3. **Stand up**—even when it costs you something

### WIESENTHAL: THE NAZI HUNTER

A one-man play by Tom Dugan

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2022**  
**7:30 P.M.**



**10** Heritage Center

Scholars learned more about the Holocaust from the play *Wiesenthal: The Nazi Hunter*.

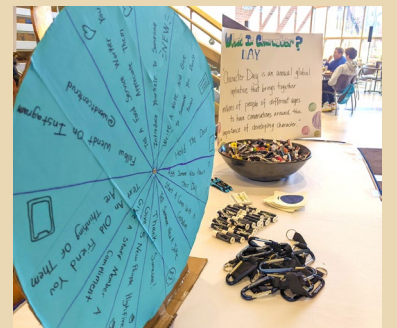
## Character Day Encouragement

by Savannah Stookey

What does character mean to you? That was the question for Character Day on the preceding Friday, September 23rd. We asked students around campus to answer with sidewalk chalking. Students responded, filling the Cafe stairs and patio. We also covered the sidewalks in positive and encouraging words and messages, preparing us for the big day. September 27 was Character Day this year, and scholars ran booths that engaged students in challenges to encourage character on campus. Students also had another opportunity to comment on character on our poster this year.

Here is what some of our students came up with this year:

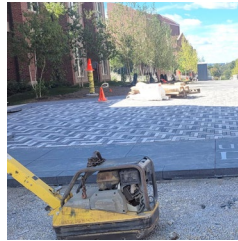
- Being Kind
- Honesty
- Having Perseverance
- Doing what is right even when it’s difficult
- Telling the truth



# Character on Campus

## Navigating with a Positive Attitude

The months-long construction of Grace Plaza split our campus, turning a simple walk from one end to the other into a round-about path. But we persevered. We anticipated a beautified campus and sweet reunion with our colleagues on the other side. The detour brought us longer walks and the discovery of parts of campus we sometimes overlook. The inconvenience of the closures led us to the celebration of a beautiful, improved campus space.



## Rodney Giles Serves the Rescue Mission

by Kaitlyn Kuhl

Rodney Giles, Assistant Manager in Food Service, volunteers several times a week at the Dubuque Rescue Mission. There he serves food and cleans up after meals.



Rodney started working there during the pandemic, since there wasn't as much to do here on campus. "I really missed serving people," he says. "It's my philosophy that instead of complaining about something, you should do something about it." He says that he gives so that he can receive for himself, and also give back to others.

*It's my philosophy that instead of complaining about something, you should do something about it.*

—Rodney Giles  
Assistant Manager, UD Food Service



Track athletes collect seeds for Dubuque County Conservation on Make A Difference Day.

## Hays Serves in Ukraine

Isaac Hays, a Wendt Scholar majoring in Human Health Science and Wellness & Exercise Science, served on the Polish-Ukrainian border this summer, helping people who were fleeing the war. He assisted with translation/interpreting, carried bags, handed out water, and played with children while their parents dealt with matters such as paperwork and permissions.

For Isaac, Jesus is the ultimate example of good character, and he hopes he was a light in the lives of the people he helped as he shared Jesus' love with them.

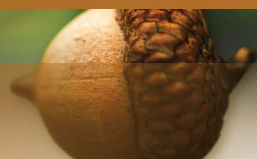
*Everything that I do, every part of my character, is driven by my faith in Jesus.*

—Isaac Hays  
Wendt Character Scholar



Isaac Hays' service group assist Ukrainian refugees at the Polish border with paperwork and provide needed supplies.



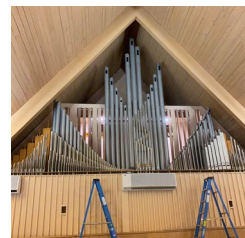


## Athletes Volunteer



Khari Anderson

This summer, the UD football and track teams came together to help Westminster Presbyterian Church reassemble their newly refurbished organ. The church was very appreciative of the help, which not only sped up their timeline for completion of the project, but helped lower their costs as well. The service project was not only beneficial to the church, however. As jumper Khari Anderson says, his team reaped the benefits as well. “Helping the church when they needed us the most helped us become a bigger and better family and I am truly blessed that they gave us the opportunity to come together and build a better relationship with each other.”



Refurbished organ. Photo courtesy of UD organ student, Riley Sindt.

Track Coach Chad Gunnelson was excited to see UD students give back to the church that he sees as a part of the UD community. “Helping the congregation with their organ renovation was simply how we pay things forward. Our team believes in music as one of many ways to worship God so they were quick to lend a hand. We are excited for Westminster and grateful for them!”



## Wendt Character Initiative Logo

Have you ever wondered why the Wendt Character Initiative logo is an acorn? The acorn represents the God-given potential embodied in each person under the care of the initiative.



To quote the English proverb, “Great oaks from acorns grow.” Through education and reflection, potential is realized.

We strive for all of UD to have the opportunity to grow, develop, and mature into people of strong and enduring character, rooted in the values of integrity, justice, and compassion in the context of the University’s Christian identity.



The new Grace Plaza includes a prominent oak tree in front of the library.

## Wendt Advisory Board

*Administrivia.* Isn’t that how it’s sometimes derisively referred to? Administrative work may seem tangential to the task at hand, but when done well, it makes all of our jobs run smoothly. The Wendt Character Initiative Advisory Board might be one of those administrative tasks—frequently unseen, but vital to the health of the organization.

Wendt Advisory Board members meet as needed to review grant applications, help with policy decisions, and inform the strategic planning. Over the last year or so, these dedicated people worked on a new strategic plan with the director. This plan sets the vision for the next years of the Initiative and informs priorities.

Thanks to Adam Hoffman, Mike Durnin, Jonathan Barz, Beth McCaw, and our newest members, Franklin Yartey, and Adam Smith for their good work in this role.



Adam Hoffman



Franklin Yartey



Jonathan Barz



Adam Smith



Beth McCaw



Mike Durnin

# Director's Note

## Seasonal Potential



Photo by Kay Munson

It's that time of year on this campus—a time that leaves me awed and melancholy. Seasons' changes bring new wonders, but leaving the warmth and colors of warmer days can make me nostalgic for previous months.

We human beings often struggle to accept change. New processes, different offices, new paths around campus—even when we knew it would bring a beautiful new plaza—all take effort and thought. Change stops the old in preparation for the new. Change calls for discomfort, even death of old habits and ways of being.

Nature teaches us this every year, particularly in the Midwest. Seasons change. Leaves fall. Plants die. Seeds fall to the ground. The landscape takes on a monochromatic hue as signs of life diminish.

But we know there is life beyond those signs. Dormancy, hibernation, transformation—all hidden from our eyes. The potentialities simmer. We live that out in education. We await growth and transformation, sometimes needing to watch the limitations of bad habits, and ill-formed ideas first die. We plant seeds. We may water. We watch the seasons change and may even get glimpses of transformations.

Friends, be encouraged by the long, slow work of change—in others and in ourselves. Know that there is more happening than what we may see.

Jesus reminds us of this:

*Unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground, dead to the world, it is never any more than a grain of wheat. But if it is buried, it sprouts and reproduces itself many times over. In the same way, anyone who holds on to life just as it destroys that life. But if you let it go, reckless in your love, you'll have it forever, real and eternal. (Jn. 12:24 The Message)*

—Annalee



### WENDT CENTER FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION



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