



WENDT CHARACTER INITIATIVE
UNIVERSITY OF DUBUQUE

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Wendt Character Scholars Closing Banquet

Graduating Scholars Reflect on Wendt Experience



"I take with me the thought that I must hold myself to a higher standard and lead by example, so that I can be a role model for my family, my community, and myself." *Vincent Obah*



"Our discussions on ethics, character, and leadership have transformed into important tools. Leading with integrity in the professional world requires a lot of empathy, mindfulness, and tolerance – skills that I've fine-tuned through the Wendt program." *Christine Hagerty*



"I will take into my future the importance of Integrity and doing what is right when no one is looking." *Jeremiah Ziebert*



"Service is something that is done out of the good of our hearts, not because we are forced to do it!" *Eric Nie*

"The scholar program is much more than a scholarship and a great time, but a personal development opportunity that has made a positive impact on me." *Ashley Stackis*

"Living a life of integrity isn't just a theoretical idea but something that can have a significant impact on our own lives as well as all of the lives around us." *Molly Christian*

I learned about how to be a good leader and a good steward of God's gifts and take away a deep sense of gratitude and valuable lessons on becoming an authentic servant leader and acting in honorable ways even when no one is watching. *Paul Both*

"Regardless of differences in people, there are always connections to be made and those differences can strengthen and challenge our core values." *Lucas Van Norman*

Michelle Finnegan strongly feels when put in a situation now or in the future that tests her patience and resolve, she will always remember and apply the important lessons received from the Wendt program, which include "The Golden Rule."

DAYLC 2014

Dubuque Area Youth Leadership Council



Take 100 Dubuque area high school juniors from 11 high schools. Add 11 UD Wendt Scholars and UD/UDTS student mentors, and campus speakers. Bring them together for a day of learning about leadership, character, values, and tough ethical choices organized and led by the Wendt Center. Mix. The result? “It was an absolutely amazing day.” “Very fun, memorable experience!” “Awesome conference, it helped me better understand character and leadership.” “Thank you!” “Thanks!”

The Dubuque Area Youth Leadership Council, DAYLC, has a vision “to make tomorrow’s world better by developing leaders today.” They oversee an application process to select the top 100 students who then come to UD for a day and continue on to Clarke University in the early fall.

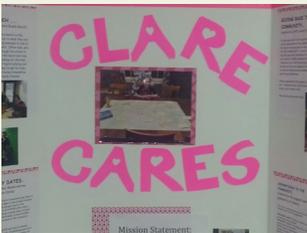
“Awesome conference, it helped me better understand character and leadership.”

After all evaluations are submitted, the top student leaders are identified. Dr. Ward, a DAYLC Board member, and a Clarke representative interviewed the 2013 students to identify and rank the top 5 who then received scholarships at an award ceremony in September. The interview process and awards will happen again in September for this year’s 2014 students.

CLARE VOSBERG PADGET HONORARY WENDT CHARACTER SCHOLAR

Clare Vosberg-Padget is an 8 year old who wants to change the world. A third grader at Hoover Elementary in Dubuque, Clare has a huge heart, a passion for spreading friendship and kindness, and lots of ideas.

In February, on behalf of the Wendt Center, President Bullock awarded Clare an Honorary Wendt Character Scholar plaque during the Loras vs UD basketball games. Wendt Scholars helped collect donations and sell T-shirts for her projects.



An anti-bully advocate, Clare read about a boy in another state who came up with a Buddy Bench and immediately knew she had to get one at Hoover. Clare noticed that some kids have a difficult time making friends on the playground at school or in the lunch room and it reminded her of her sister. Clare's older sister Maddie has epilepsy due to a brain tumor from when she was a baby.

A Buddy Bench is a place on the school playground where anyone can sit when they don't have anyone to play with. The other kids will notice and make friends with that person. Clare raised awareness and funds to obtain a Buddy Bench by speaking to the Dubuque Community School Board, creating a Facebook page, and reaching out to the community. Because of her passion, the first Buddy Bench at Hoover became reality in April. Her goal is to help provide Buddy Benches at every elementary school in Dubuque County, for a total of 23 benches.



To build friendships, another great thing Clare is doing are Buddy Play Dates every month. The Buddy Play Dates take place at various businesses in Dubuque and kids can come and make new friends.

It is not very often that you come across a young individual with such an incredible passion for serving others. On Wednesday, February 12th, the Wendt Character Scholarship Program had the pleasure of working with Clare by promoting her Buddy Bench Project and collecting donations for the Clare Cares Campaign.

It was easy to see what all of the talk was about. She was a bubbly and pleasant young girl who just wanted to make a difference in world. She was not only eager to talk about her plans for the future, but she was humble enough to state that this event- hosted to honor her and her accomplishments- was not for her benefit alone, but for the benefit of those who may be impacted by her projects.

Many say that she is a great example for her peers, but I think that statement limits her influence. She is an example for people of all ages and teaches us that there is no age limit for showing compassion and respect to others. All it takes is a purpose, a voice, and a loving community to support you, and it was an honor to have been a part of that supportive community.



By Nichole Fein

The 2013-14 year began with 59 Wendt Scholars and 5 Wendt Mentors at a kick-off picnic at Eagle Point Park in September.

December: Christmas Banquet with the Bullocks



Character and... Social Media: Wendt Research Team formed in September



October 12: Homecoming Alumni Affinity Group

Fall 2013

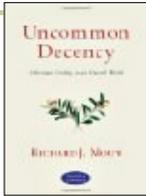


September: Character Matters and Athletics

October 14: Wendt Lecture Series presents Dr. L. Ripley Smith



Fall Faculty/Staff Book Club: *Uncommon Decency*



November 11-15: Gratitude Week



Over 1,700 service hours

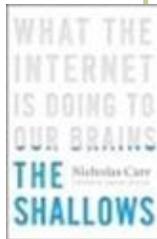
April 28: Wendt Scholars Spring Banquet



March 10: Wendt Lecture Series presents Mr. Nicholas Carr



Spring Book Club: *The Shallows: What the Internet is*



May 1: Honors Convocation



February 24: *Fahrenheit 451*—Technology in Theater Art

Spring 2014



March 31: Character & Social Media - Wendt Research Team

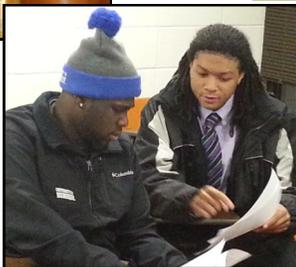
February: Clare made Honorary UD Wendt Scholar



May 5: Athletic Banquet Wendt Character Athlete Sport

April 10: DAYLC Character & Leadership Workshop

April 21: Wendt Tea for Grant Reports



24 Wendt Scholar meetings

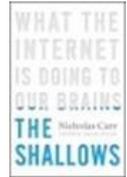
Wendt Character Initiative Lecture Nicholas Carr

The Mind in the Net: How Our Gadgets Shape Our Thoughts

In March, the Wendt Character Initiative featured guest lecturer, Nicholas Carr, author of *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*.



While Mr. Carr visited University of Dubuque he enjoyed lunch with students, staff, and faculty, signed books, spoke with Dr. Alice Oleson's Sociology Senior Seminar class, and lectured to over 300 people in John & Alice Butler Hall.



"What matters in the end is not our becoming but what we become," urges Nick Carr. Stop and look around. Very likely someone nearby is staring into a screen. Our mobile, digital technologies offer us endless connectivity, bringing people together. They also are shaping us into technologically driven people of distraction and trivia. One more message to read. One more text to send. One more update to check. One more game level to achieve. One more search and the answer will be had.

Carr examines historical changes in technology and the resulting changes in society. But he doesn't stop there. He also researches brain science and gathers the results from various studies to show that our very brains are changing with increased use of the internet. He fears that if we descend into the "frenziedness" of technology, our capacity for being compassionate, engaged, and thoughtful people may be threatened. As John Culkin, writing in 1967 about Marshall McLuhan's work observes, "We shape our tools, and then our tools shape us."



If we seek to be compassionate, caring people living lives of service to God and others, we need the ability to reflect and discern how to best spend time and which activities to get involved in. Making conscious choices is only possible if we can set our technology aside from time to time and think about who we are, who we want to be, and how to use our tools wisely.

Wendt Research Team

The Wendt Research Team diligently worked this year to produce publishable essays on Character and Social Media. They presented their work to a public audience that included the Wendt Scholars who have been studying the topic this spring. In addition, MDiv student Gary Panetta and Communication Professor Jenn Supple Bartels presented their work at the Popular Culture Association Conference held in Chicago in April. We are in the editing stage and hope to publish them this summer.

This spring's focus on social media yielded many fruitful discussions and raised concerns about the insidious subtlety with which this amazing technology not only opens up opportunities to do good and to be good but, like a Trojan horse, brings such change that even our brains are affected. For this technology can quickly disintegrate into virtual distraction, dominating real time, real relationships, and precluding deep reflection.

*Coming Soon!
A new journal
Character
and . . .
Social Media
on a new library
page—
Digital UD*

Racing Past the Color Line

By Brian Hallstoos



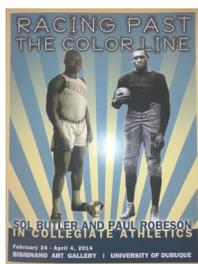
One of our most celebrated alums, Sol Butler, entered UD nearly a century ago in 1915. That same year, but 1000 miles away, Paul Robeson entered Rutgers. The story of these two men's college experiences was the focus of a recent exhibition "Racing Past the Color Line" in the Bisignano Art Gallery in the Heritage Center. A grant from the Wendt Center made possible an accompanying exhibition catalog that highlighted the exceptional strengths of Butler and Robeson's character.

"This exhibit was visually arresting. The catalog contributed to the power of this exhibit by chronicling the thoughts of current students as they challenged themselves to reflect the character and courage of Sol Butler and Paul Robeson," observed Dr. Mark Ward.

These young men not only accomplished amazing athletic feats, lettering in multiple sports and leading their teams to unprecedented greatness, they also set a powerful example by their very presence as African Americans in institutions which otherwise lacked students of color. They were, in the terminology of their day, "race men," who sought to open up opportunities for others of their race by excelling in a world misshapen by white supremacy.

The Wendt funded catalog for "Racing Past the Color Line" enabled faculty and students to tell the compelling story of Butler and Robeson crossing racial lines and achieving glory in athletics and beyond.

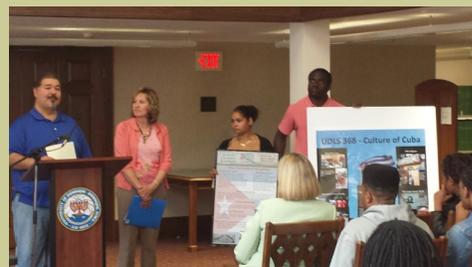
Like the exhibition itself, one of the catalog's goals was to get people to reflect on what it took for these two men to succeed in those particular colleges at that time. To this end, the opening pages clarify what the color line was: the name for those forces, including segregation and racial violence, which excluded people of color from full and equal participation in society. Athletics offered one means through which some African Americans could partially transcend stultifying racial realities to reap the benefits of higher education.



Students contributed short essays addressing the challenges Butler and Robeson faced both on and off the field; some essays also drew attention to the ethical choices of the white students and staff, whose actions varied from support to discouragement of their black peers. The final pages of the catalog invited readers to reflect on the parallels between the story of the exhibition and their own experiences.

WENDT TEA Grant Reports

Wendt Character Grants encourage character growth and reflection by enabling encounters and experiences with people, places, literature and art which challenge and enlighten. We were privileged to hear these stories at the Wendt Tea and to be a small part of making them happen.



- Angela Brandel (Fort Berthold, Service Trip)
- Adam Hoffman (Sustainability in Sweden: Ethical issues in Science)
- Kim Hilby (Ethics in Principle and Practice in the Workplace, Trafficking in Persons)
- Amy Ressler (Compassionate Action: The Golden Rule Players)
- Alan Garfield (Ethics of Les Miserables)
- Brian Hallstoos (Racing Past the Color Line)
- Julie Phillips / Ken Godwin (Service and Cultural Challenge in Cuba)
- Sean Benson / Jonathan Barz (Ethics and Shakespeare, Spring Green)
- Jonathan Barz / Mary Anne Knefel (Immigration Experience in New York)
- Jessica Schreyer (Character and Conservation)
- Mishereen Ellis (Service Project in Jamaica)
- Liza Johnson (Women's Leadership Connection)

Wendt Center for Character



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A Note from the Director

Thank you. Such simple words, but they don't begin to communicate how important this community is to making the Wendt Center work. We want to pause and acknowledge the village it takes to make the Character Initiative meaningful. So very many people have gone beyond their daily work to help us out this year from the Maintenance Department, to Ameriserve, to the Athletic Department including all Coaches, to the Heritage staff, to University Relations to Residence Life to the Library to the Seminary.

We've had a variety of speakers in the Scholar sessions and volunteers in programs we sponsored: Amy Baus, Roger Ebertz, Kent Peterson (trustee), Ripley Smith, David Rollins, Andre Lessears, Paul Jensen, Matthew Schlimm, Nicholas Carr, Jenn Supple Bartels, Chaminda Prelis and his entire Leadership class, Ashley Karayannis, Michael Jelinski, Mark Ward, President and Mrs. Bullock. Thanks to Sheila Sabers, Jonathan Helmke, Samantha Serd, Amanda Iburg for your help on Digital UD and the new character journal.

Scholar Mentors faithfully meet week after week and include Brian Hallstoos, Adam Hoffman, Lindsey Konken, Timothy Slemmons, and Franklin Yartey. A special shout out to Lindsey Konken who has contributed significantly to the Wendt Scholars program for the last four years and whose commitment is concluding.

DAYLC volunteers included Adam Yakich, Rachel Dollins, Christine Hagerty, Rachel Wright, Anna Yackshaw, Jennifer Martinez, Brett Aspenson, Carter Albrecht, Jessica Wetherall, Vanessa Carlson, Matthew Kilburg, Jonathan Hazelwonder. We've had office help from Brenda Nava, Shauna Schmitt, Jeremiah Ziebert, Alex Eckes, and Sharon Boer, and of course, Sara Sroka.

An Advisory Board of Bonnie Sue Lewis, Roger Ebertz, Mike Schmidt, Mic Miyamoto, Adam Hoffman, and Mary Anne Knefel contribute oversight and advice.

And where would we be without Media services? Thanks for the consistent work Mike Willis, Miguel Silva, Alan Alfaro, and Nathan Ripperger.

It's dangerous to mention names as inevitably significant people are inadvertently missed—please forgive the oversight. To the entire UD Community, thank you for a great year!



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