

FALL 2019

UNK TODAY[®]

ALUMNI

MAGAZINE



Forging Friendships

Ambassador Daniel Kritenbrink helps shape US-Vietnam relations



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UNK Today is published twice a year by the UNK Alumni Association and the University of Nebraska Foundation and is the official alumni publication of the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

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UNK TODAY

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY
CAMPUS BOX 21
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Welcome to the Newer UNK

As I walk through campus, I am struck by the number of physical changes over the past months: the new east entrance, new fountain, new addition to Fine Arts. This fall the sounds of construction are coming primarily from completion of the LaVonne Plambeck Early Childhood Education Center and the new STEM Building. The changes that are less apparent are the new faces in our University leadership.

As you turn the pages of this magazine, you will read more about the new members and changes of roles on our team, and I hope

you will go out of your way especially to introduce yourself to Deans Tim Jares and Ryan Teten who are new to Kearney. I hear from newcomers to UNK that the campus and community are warm and welcoming. Along with the newcomers, you'll read about tried and true leaders like Tim Burkink, Grace Mims, Mark Ellis, Marc Bauer and Kelly Bartling, among others, who changed roles. I'm eager to begin our important work together as a new leadership team.

I hope you also will become engaged in the process to replace our University president. I have publicly voiced my sincere appreciation and best wishes to our retiring and departing faculty, the departing deans and to President Hank Bounds. Dr. Bounds has been a great friend to UNK. We should be reminded of his visionary and thoughtful leadership



**Chancellor
Doug Kristensen**

and the culture of excellence and collaboration that he shared.

As the Board of Regents seeks his replacement, we are in fine hands under the interim leadership of Dr. Susan Fritz.

The excitement for our two new buildings is growing as they near completion. You may remember that these buildings, along with the Fine Arts Building renovation, will replace Otto Olsen. Many of you have fond memories of Otto, as do I. As time has passed, however, the structure has become, quite frankly, a detriment to recruitment and a barrier to instruction and departmental collaboration, and no reasonable program of modifications is cost-effective to renovate the building to its needed purpose. If you haven't seen the progress on the new STEM building, or the other improvements, you must come to campus to take a look. We will have grand opening celebrations this fall at the Fine Arts Building and the Plambeck Center on University Village.

These projects and the arrival of new administrators and faculty remind us that UNK is more than bricks and mortar and the people who lead, teach and learn together at a snapshot in time – UNK is about the promise of growth and betterment of all, particularly in greater Nebraska. As you read about the students who with our help have faced the challenges of recovery, and how a one-room teacher inspired the spirit of giving, you'll remember your own passion for this University and how being a Loper makes each student and each graduate truly special.

***Thank you for all you do.
Go Lopers!***

Chancellor Doug Kristensen



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UNK SEASON OF CHANGE

Exciting changes are happening to invigorate UNK with energy for the future.

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UNK OFFERS A HELPING HAND

UNK stepped up to help. From housing and feeding more than 250 people to serving as the make-shift venues for several weddings.



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FROM KEARNEY TO VIETNAM

How the University of Nebraska at Kearney shaped the career of Daniel Kritenbrink, U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam.

FEATURE

Nebraska isn't often considered a window to the world, but for U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Daniel Kritenbrink '91, Kearney catapulted him into an adventurous and meaningful career across the globe.

Growing up in Ashland, Kritenbrink chose to attend the University of Nebraska at Kearney for its size, proximity to home and the honors program. At the time, he was determined to be a math teacher, but two critical factors changed the course of

his life — influential professors and the James E. Smith Midwest Conference on World Affairs.

Dr. Tom Magstadt, former head of the political science department, convinced Kritenbrink to switch majors from mathematics. Kritenbrink explained, "While I was good at math, it became clear during Magstadt's classes that my passions lie elsewhere." At the same time, he was taking Dr. Robert Lind's geography class, which opened his

eyes to international affairs. Kritenbrink was also involved in the honors program under Dr. Richard Jussel who inspired him to a life of curiosity and learning.

However, it was the Midwest Conference on World Affairs at UNK that sealed the deal. Kritenbrink explained, "At that conference, I met a lot of diplomats who flew from Washington D.C. to see what the heck was going on in the middle of Nebraska. I knew then that I wanted to be a part of the American foreign service."

Once his new trajectory was set, Kritenbrink traveled with Dr. Magstadt to the former Soviet Union and then became the first Nebraskan exchange student to a Japanese university.

"International travel changed my life. It changed how I thought about myself, my own country and culture and how I thought about others. It made me more curious, empathetic and probably even more patient," said Kritenbrink.

A firm believer in travel, he has advice to those interested in seeing the world. "Be well prepared. Have the right travel documents, know where you're going and understand the security and health conditions. Also, be open to the

Vietnam was honored to be selected by the Embassy of the United States to assist the Ambassador's family and the Deputy Ambassador for the first time to welcome Tet in Vietnam in the costume of Ao Thu (Anh) (middle).



U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Daniel Kritenbrink '91, who gave the senior response during his UNK commencement in 1991 in what he says is, "One of the greatest days of his life," came back to give the commencement address in May of 2018.



experience and be ready to learn new things, especially new things about yourself," said Kritenbrink.

After graduating from UNK in 1991, Kritenbrink got his master's degree at the University of Virginia and began his doctorate. However, he cut short his doctorate when he received word that he passed his foreign service exam and joined the foreign service in 1994.

Since then, Kritenbrink has become fluent in Chinese and Japanese and served in Kuwait, China and Japan. He's also held positions in Washington, D.C. as senior director for Asian affairs on the National Security Council and senior advisor for North Korean policy at the state department.

He was confirmed as U.S. ambassador to Vietnam in October 2017 and is positioned in Hanoi with his wife Nami and his 15-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son.

It's a job he loves. "My job is to grow our partnership with Vietnam in every way. Given our difficult history there, the job is meaningful, satisfying and often emotional. Every day I get to do

something positive to help both countries grow and overcome a tragic past," said Kritenbrink.

However, living internationally does have its challenges. "It can be difficult being separated from family and close friends. I regret that sometimes, but it does make times back home more special," said Kritenbrink. He tries to make it home to Ashland every one to two years and was able to visit UNK to give the commencement speech in 2018.

While foreign service isn't for everyone, Kritenbrink believes that curiosity and great communication are essential to anyone's success. "Some of the most successful people I know master an area of expertise and then are able to convey their ideas in a compelling way. So be curious, learn as much as possible about the world, travel and put a premium on developing good communication skills," advised Kritenbrink.

Even after 25 years of world travel, a part of Kritenbrink's heart remains in Kearney. "I have an incredibly warm spot for Kearney. It's where I found myself and discovered what I wanted to do. I gained so much from my time there," said Kritenbrink. ▀

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Teegan Nordhues
Writer

UNK
ALUMNI



NEW DIRECTIONS

Marc Bauer named University of Nebraska at Kearney Athletic Director.

Drawing on his success as former UNK wrestling coach to rejuvenate the athletic department, UNK's new athletic director, Marc Bauer, knows what it takes to be the best.

As former head coach of the UNK wrestling program from 2000 to 2016, Bauer led the program to win three national championships, place five-times as national runners-up, win two national duals, and win a combined total of 18

conferences and regional championships. In 2003 and 2008 he was named NCAA Division II Coach of the Year.

However, the wrestling program didn't get there overnight. It was a process that involved intentional, positive changes that turned a mediocre program into a powerhouse.

Bauer plans to use that same approach to breathe new life into the UNK athletic department.

"I'm excited to start changing the program from 'How it's always been done' to 'What's the better way to do it?' It's time to start imagining where we could be and then taking consistent, calculated steps to get there," said Bauer.

After having served as UNK's interim athletic director since April 2018, Chancellor Kristensen announced Bauer the athletic director in April 2019. He was chosen after an extensive national



To learn more about the Lopers schedules and tickets, visit lopers.com



LEFT: New University of Nebraska at Kearney Athletic Director Marc Bauer addresses the media and others at a news conference. "Leading a proud tradition of Loper athletics is a great honor," Bauer said. (Photos by Corbey R. Dorsey, UNK Communications)

LEFT, OPPOSITE PAGE: David Bauer Ed.D., retired in May after 35 years as UNK's director of choirs. Ann Bauer MAE '90 and Joshua Bauer. McKenna Young, Scott Bauer and Elizabeth (Deterding) Bauer studied at UNK until attending and graduating from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Marc Bauer MAE '99 and Julia Bauer, who is currently attending UNK studying nursing. Pamela (Oman) '69 and Douglas Deterding joined together to support Marc during his introduction.

search and from a pool of four finalists. As athletic director, he'll oversee 14 sports with approximately 450 student-athletes and 40 coaches and staff members.

To rejuvenate the program, Bauer has four main areas of focus: reduce turnover in coaches and staff, streamline the program's processes, create a unified vision for the program and build sustainable fundraising, attendance growth and community involvement.

It's a tall order, but the challenge seems custom-made for Bauer. "I enjoy a lot of moving parts. It's like piecing together a huge puzzle. I want to pragmatically figure out what's in the best interest of each piece — athletes, coaches, staff, etc. — and position it for the best possible success," said Bauer.

What Bauer is most passionate about, however, is the student-athletes and improving their experience. Bauer explained, "College athletics is all about community. When everyone comes together to invest in a student-athlete, the athlete remembers how their life was shaped and the support system they had during such a formative time.

That experience lasts a lifetime." Bauer continued, "It's my goal to have a program that takes care of each student-athlete like that. Each decision will be with their best interest at heart."

One of the changes Bauer hopes to make for student-athletes is to create a thriving alumni community to help them stay connected with their UNK experience long after they've gone. "Our alumni are phenomenal. Building the kind of community where alumni are invested in the lives of the current student-athletes is essential to the transformation of this program," said Bauer.

He knows some student-athletes haven't had the best experience in the past, and he's hoping to learn more about their stories and renew connections. Bauer explained, "We've had a lot of turnover in the program so we've lost a lot of contact with our alumni. Each of our coaches is working to reconnect with those alumni, listen to their experiences, and hopefully make positive changes for our current student-athletes."

But Bauer doesn't stop there. He invites any alumni who have questions

or would like to get involved to talk to him directly, reach out to the coaches or contact the alumni association. He was earnest when he said, "Call me up. I'm serious. I'd love to hear about their UNK experience. Also, get to know our coaches, get to know our athletes, attend events. It's one thing to know about our athletic programs, it's another to know who we are. We can't be successful without our community."

Bauer continued, "In the end, our focus is on the idea of family. When I coached wrestling it was 'our wrestling family.' That included current athletes, alumni plus their actual families. Because it truly takes everyone to create a bond that accomplishes something great. This program isn't about me, but it's about the success that happens when we ask ourselves 'What can we do together?'" ▀

UNK SEASON OF CHANGE

New deans, others introduced as campus leaders.

The retirement and job changes for several in UNK administration prompted numerous searches, and the arrival this summer of new leadership in administration, athletics and the colleges. Here is an introduction to new and familiar faces and their new roles:

Tim Jares, dean, College of Business and Technology. Jares was previously chair and professor of finance at the University of Northern Colorado's Kenneth W. Monfort College of Business.



Tim Jares
Dean College of
Business and Technology

Jares joined Northern Colorado in 2001 and progressed through the ranks in the Department of Finance in the Monfort College. He served as interim college dean in 2007-08. He served as assistant, then associate dean in 2002-07, with budgetary oversight as a primary responsibility. His contributions to organizational focus and evidence-based decision-making played a key role in Monfort College's recognition as the first and only college of business to earn the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. He replaces Tim Burkink.



Tim Burkink
Asst Vice Chancellor
for International Affairs

Tim Burkink, assistant vice chancellor and director International Education. The longtime dean of UNK's College of Business and Technology. Burkink is

beginning his 19th year at UNK and transitions from the College of Business and Technology to a full-time position with the Office of International Education, where he has served as interim director since October 2017.

Ryan Teten, dean, College of Arts and Sciences. A Nebraska native, Teten was associate dean of the University College and Anthony Moroux/BORSF Endowed Professor of Political Science at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Teten was Political Science Department chair from 2014



Ryan Teten
Dean College of Arts
and Sciences

"I think you're going to see our campus get a new shot of energy and excitement."

– Chancellor Doug Kristensen

to 2016 and associate dean for the College of Liberal Arts from 2010 to 2012, all at Louisiana-Lafayette. Teten has designed and taught numerous in-class and online courses and internships. He also has extensive student-advising experience, mentoring nearly 100 students face-to-face each semester. He helped create an online completer program for adult learners and designed an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree that combines classes between colleges and works with private-public partnerships to provide businesses with students who have had the training they need.

Teten becomes the first dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, which was led beginning in 2016 through a reorganization of the colleges of Natural and Social Science and Fine Arts and Humanities by interim dean Peter Longo. Longo returned to political science faculty.

Mark Ellis, dean of graduate studies, formerly Ron and Carol Cope Professor of History at UNK. He had been serving as interim dean

of graduate studies since summer 2018. He replaces Kenya Taylor who retired last summer.

Ellis has been involved in academic administration for more than a decade.

He came to UNK in 2000 as a visiting assistant professor, then hired for a tenure-track position as a Nebraska/Great Plains historian in 2001. He served as a graduate program chair from 2006 to 2013 and history department chair



Mark Ellis
Dean of Graduate
Studies and Research

starting in 2013. Under his guidance, the UNK history graduate program grew from a small residential program to one of the largest online history graduate programs in the nation. Since adding an online option to its graduate program, the history department has admitted more than 400 students, and it graduates on average 40 students annually.

Grace Ann Mims, interim dean of the College of Education, following the retirement of Sheryl Feinstein.

Mims has served as chair of UNK's Counseling and School Psychology Department in the College of Education since 2010. She has been a counselor educator for 26 years, teaching and advising doctoral, specialist and master's students in clinical mental health counseling, school counseling and higher education student affairs. She joined UNK in 2008 and was 2018-19 president of UNK Faculty Senate. Mims holds six state and national professional counseling credentials.



Grace Mims
Interim Dean College
of Education



Kelly Bartling
Vice Chancellor,
Enrollment
Management and
Marketing

Kelly Bartling, vice chancellor, Enrollment Management and Marketing. A new division combining the units

of Communications and Marketing, Academic and Career Services, Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions, First Year Program, and Scholarships and Financial Aid, Bartling previously was assistant vice chancellor, Communications and Community Relations. Academic Services and Enrollment Management had been directed by former dean Ed Scantling, who retired this summer. Bartling is in her sixth year at UNK and her 20th for the University of Nebraska, previously working in news and marketing at UNL and for Central Administration.

John Falconer, senior advisor to the chancellor for executive affairs, replacing Neal Schnoor, who accepted a position at California

State University, Long Beach. Falconer joined UNK in 1999 and previously served as director of sponsored programs and director of the Honors Program. In his new position

he will provide counsel and assistance to the chancellor, serve on the administrative cabinet and lead compliance and special projects. Falconer supervises the Office of Equity and Compliance, works with faculty bargaining agreements, processes and appeals and coordinates communication with the chancellor among the vice chancellors, deans and heads of other units. ▀



John Falconer
Senior Advisor
to the Chancellor,
Executive Affairs

HONORING LOPERS

University of Nebraska at Kearney Distinguished Alumni and Athletic Hall of Fame recipients will be celebrated during homecoming weekend festivities.

The UNK Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award recipients will be recognized during the UNK homecoming festivities the weekend of Oct. 4-5, 2019.

The 39th Annual Distinguished Alumni Awards will be given out during a luncheon on Friday, Oct. 4, at 11:30 a.m. in the Ponderosa Room in the Nebraskan Student Union. Tickets are \$25 per person (\$30 starting Sept.

27) and can be purchased at unkalumni.org/homecoming or by calling the UNK Alumni Association at 308-698-5271.

This year's awards go to Richard Davenport '67, Ph.D., Mark Graff '79, Sandy (Holen) Johnson '67 and Mark Sanders '76, MAE '79. The Distinguished Young Alumni Award will go to Krystle (Faust) Buntmeyer '06, and the Jim Rundstrom Distinguished Service Award will go to Pete '70 and Jane Kotsiopulos.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Richard Davenport '67, Ph.D. of Mankato, Minnesota, is the president of Minnesota State University. Davenport has been an educator since 1968, spending most of those years in higher education, and has served as MSU's president since 2002.

Davenport, a Grand Island High School graduate, earned his degree in education, speech and hearing disorders from Kearney State College in 1967. He went on to earn a master's in speech and language disorders from Colorado State University in 1969, a Ph.D. in higher education from Iowa State University in 1974 and completed the Harvard University IEM Program in 1992.

(Peter) Mark Graff '79 of McCook is the chairman and president/CEO of MNB Financial Group, serving as the chairman of the board of directors for MNB Bank, MNB Financial Group, MNB Insurance Services and Graff Family, Inc. Graff has been with MNB Financial Group (formerly McCook National Bank) since 1983.

Graff is a McCook High School graduate and received his degree



**Richard Davenport
'67, Ph.D.**



**(Peter) Mark
Graff '79**



**Sandy (Holen)
Johnson '67**

in business administration with an emphasis in accounting from Kearney State College in 1979. He also graduated from the Graduate School of Banking program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1989.

Sandy (Holen) Johnson '67 of Omaha recently retired after 28 years in marketing. She spent the past ten years with the Colorado Physicians Insurance Company as the director of market relations. Johnson served as a public schools and community college educator for 13 years after she graduated from college.

Johnson, a Lexington High School graduate, earned her degree in education from Kearney State College in 1967.

Mark Sanders '76, MAE '79 of Nacogdoches, Texas, is the associate dean for the College of Liberal and Applied Arts at Stephen F. Austin State University. Sanders began teaching in 1977, spending three years in Nebraska high schools and 39 years in higher education in Nebraska, Missouri, Oklahoma, Idaho and Texas. He has been at Stephen F. Austin State University since 2008, serving as associate dean since 2018.



**Mark Sanders '76,
MAE '79**

Sanders was born in Creighton, Nebraska, and graduated from Ord High School. He earned his education degree in 1976 and a master's in English education in 1979, both from Kearney State College. He holds Ph.D.'s from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Idaho.

DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Krystle (Faust) Buntmeyer '06 of Kearney is the president of SCORR Marketing. She started as an intern in 2005, working her way to the role of president, a position she started in 2018.

Buntmeyer, a Boone Central High School graduate, earned her degree in journalism advertising with a minor in marketing/management from the University of Nebraska at Kearney in 2006.

JIM RUNDSTROM DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Pete '70 and Jane Kotsiopulos of Kearney are the recipients of the service award. Both Pete and Jane are retired after 50 years in the public and private sector. Both have been long-time volunteers for the University of Nebraska system, UNK and the UNK Alumni Association.

Pete, a Kearney High School



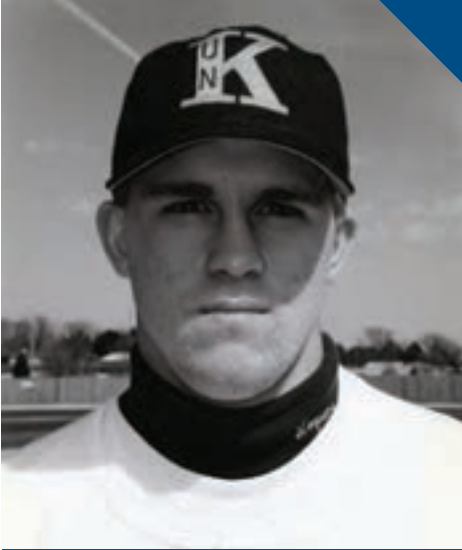
**Krystle (Faust)
Buntmeyer '06**

graduate, earned his business administration degree in 1970 from Kearney State College. Jane, a Davenport High School graduate, earned a degree in English secondary education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1967 and a master's in reading specialization from Newark State University (now known as Rutgers University) in 1970. ▀

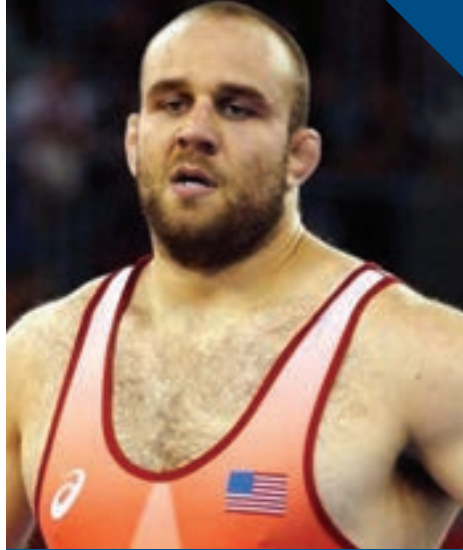


**Pete '70 and Jane
Kotsiopulos**

UNK Athletic Hall of Fame



Neal Arnold '97
Baseball



Tervel Dlagnev '09
Wrestling



**Lesley (Crutcher)
Hulett '06**
Track & Field

Four former student-athletes and one coach will be inducted into the UNK Athletic Hall of Fame during the homecoming weekend. The Athletic Hall of Fame banquet begins at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4, in the Ponderosa Room with a social hour. A dinner follows at 6:30 p.m. To purchase a ticket for the banquet, visit unkalumni.org/homecoming. Tickets are \$35 per person (\$40 starting Sept. 27).

Those being inducted are Neal Arnold '97 for baseball; Tervel Dlagnev '09 for wrestling; Lesley (Crutcher) Hulett '06 for women's track and field; Mary Iten for coaching women's track and field; and Roger Suelter '85 for football. More information on the award winners can be found at lopers.com. ▀



Mary Iten
**Women's track
and field coach**



Roger Suelter '85
Football



Alumni, it's time to come home to Kearney and celebrate being a Loper for life!

There are several events throughout the weekend where you can reconnect with fellow alumni:

Thursday, October 3

5:30 p.m. Kearney Quarterly After Hours
 Younes Pavilion, Kearney
 RSVP at unkalumni.org/instate

Friday, October 4

11:30 a.m. Distinguished Alumni Awards Luncheon*
 Nebraskan Student Union, Ponderosa Room

2:30 p.m. Chemistry Department: Annual Don Fox Lecture
 Copeland Hall, Room 131

3:30 p.m. One Room, One Teacher Induction Ceremony
 College of Education Atrium

5:30 p.m. Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet*
 Nebraskan Student Union, Ponderosa Room

Saturday, October 5

10 a.m. Homecoming Parade
 Downtown Kearney

Noon Loper Alumni Brews & Brats Tailgate
 Loperville Fan Fest Tailgate, Cope Stadium Parking Lot
 A football game ticket is required for admission or \$5 payable at the gate

2 p.m. UNK vs. Northeastern State University
 Cope Stadium, Foster Field (Game tickets available at lopers.com)

***Tickets for the Distinguished Alumni Awards Luncheon and Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet may be purchased at unkalumni.org/homecoming.**

UNK OFFERS A HELPING HAND

UNK provides temporary housing to Kearney area July flood victims.

Bob Sulser didn't plan on spending part of his summer vacation on a university campus, but he was making the most of the experience.

"This is my first chance to stay in a college dorm, so it's kind of neat," Sulser said as he and his wife Jan shared a laugh.

The Madison, Wisconsin, couple were exceptionally upbeat considering just 24 hours earlier they were forced from their Kearney hotel by rising floodwater from the nearby Turkey Creek.

They didn't know the condition of their vehicle, which was still parked at a now-swamped Hampton Inn where they stopped on the way home from Denver, yet the Sulzers expressed gratitude while discussing their situation.

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive," Sulser said. "It's just remarkable."

The couple raved about the first responders, free hamburgers served by the Knights of Columbus and the woman who gave them a ride to the University of Nebraska at Kearney, which opened two residence halls to provide free, temporary housing for people impacted by the flooding.

"Did you go in there and see all the stuff they put out for everybody?" Jan said. "It's unbelievable."

Continued on page 16 >>>



Kearney Police Officer Derek Payton assists Leslye and Terry Taylor of Pueblo, Colorado, and their 3-month-old grandson as they walk through the floodwater July 9 after evacuating a local hotel. (Photo courtesy of Kearney Police Department)

See more stories and pictures of the flooding and recovery efforts at unknews.unk.edu



CAMPUS NEWS

Inside Centennial Towers West – one of the two UNK residence halls that housed nearly 300 evacuees Tuesday night – cases of bottled water were stacked alongside tables filled with flip-flops, toiletries, snacks, pet food and other items available at no cost thanks to donations from community agencies and good Samaritans.

UNK staff were assisting stranded travelers with rental car arrangements and the city of Kearney's public transportation program had shuttles ready to take people to local stores and restaurants while they waited to learn the fate of their own vehicles, most of which were left in submerged hotel parking lots.

Michelle Warren, an assistant Spanish professor at UNK, spent part of her day translating for Spanish speakers, many of whom arrived on campus with nothing but the clothes they were wearing.

She wasn't surprised by the

community's willingness to step up and provide support during a time of need.

"That's just Kearney and UNK," Warren said. "That's how Kearney people are."

George Holman, associate dean of student affairs and director of residence life at UNK, shared the same sentiment.

"The response has been amazing," he said. "This is what I'd expect from Kearney residents and my colleagues here at UNK. That's our mentality. We make people feel welcome."

UNK made the decision to open the residence halls around 9 a.m. that Tuesday, and the first evacuees began arriving about an hour later. Sodexo, the campus dining services provider, had meals prepared by 5 p.m. that day and entertainment was lined up for the Nebraskan Student Union.

"Everyone mobilized so quickly," said Holman, who credited a number of departments for the university-wide effort.

About 200 evacuees – a mix of area residents and hotel guests – remained on the UNK campus Wednesday evening.

Leslye and Terry Taylor of Pueblo, Colorado, were among the travelers preparing for the possibility of a second night inside Centennial Towers West.

They stopped in Kearney while moving their daughter Kai'li and her 3-month-old son and golden retriever from Minneapolis to Colorado. Kai'li's possessions were in a rented U-Haul trailer in a flooded hotel parking lot, but that didn't dampen their spirits.

"It could have been so much worse," Leslye said. "We have two rooms with bathrooms and we're being so beautifully cared for. I'm very grateful."

"The people of Kearney are unbelievable," Terry added. "The way everyone is being treated is just fantastic."

That positive experience may lead to future visits down the road. ▀

BELOW: Water nearly covered some of the vehicles in the parking lot at Kearney's Holiday Inn. (Photo courtesy of Nebraska Public Power District)

RIGHT: Nearly 300 people impacted by Kearney flooding stayed in UNK residence halls, which were opened free of charge to provide assistance for area residents and travelers. (Photo by Corbey R. Dorsey, UNK Communications)





Celebrating wedding day with help from with UNK

Megan Woeste couldn't hold back the tears of relief as she walked into the Ponderosa Room inside the University of Nebraska at Kearney's Nebraskan Student Union.

Less than 72 hours earlier, the bride-to-be didn't know where she and fiancé Levi Streit would be celebrating their big day.

Woeste, a Blue Hill native who attended UNK before graduating from the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing located here in 2015, was working at Kearney Regional Medical Center on Tuesday as water from the rapidly rising Turkey Creek began flooding the city's south side.

Streit, a respiratory therapist with Frontier Home Medical, started sending her photos from the Holiday Inn and Convention Center – the venue they originally booked for their wedding reception. It didn't look good.

Later that day, an equally emotional hotel employee called Woeste's mother Sharon to confirm their concern. The building had sustained significant damage and wouldn't be able to host the reception.

"What else are you going to do? It's a natural disaster," Woeste said. "We were scrambling."

Following a recommendation from the hotel, one of those phone calls went

to Jon Watts, vice chancellor for business and finance at UNK.

The request Watts received was unique for the university, until he got another, and another, and another.

"Each call arrived with the voice of an overwhelmed bride, mother or father," Watts said. "The story was the same, the hotel has flooded and they gave me your number."

Watts had simple instructions for the panicked callers: take a deep breath and he'll come up with a plan.

"The callback wasn't always ideal, as a wedding reception for 450 on a basketball court isn't exactly the dream of most brides, yet the relief for nearly every bride was instantaneous as they realized they had found an option," he said. "It's a powerful reassurance when you can tell a bride that UNK has several thousand employees and they all want to help make your special day a reality."

At least three couples will celebrate their marriages on campus this summer, and UNK is also working with local hotel properties to relocate business meetings, trainings and other events.

Woeste, who met her four bridesmaids in UNK's Alpha Omicron Pi sorority, was also impressed by her alma mater's willingness to step up.

"It makes me tear up," she said. "Kearney is just an amazing community. I'm overwhelmed by the generosity." ▀

ABOVE: Megan Woeste, center, and her bridesmaids, from left, Bree Adams, Chelsea Leggott, Mackenzie Edgar and Fredde Reed all attended UNK and were members of the Alpha Omicron Pi sorority. They celebrated Woeste's wedding July 13 during a reception at UNK's Nebraskan Student Union.

BELOW: Levi Streit and Megan Woeste celebrated their wedding July 13 in UNK's Nebraskan Student Union after flooding forced them to move the reception from the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Kearney. (Photos by Corbey R. Dorsey, UNK Communications)





- Well - ADVISED

Rosanna Vail, eCampus
Writer

Clinton Zegers '19
Online degree recipient

Supporting online students every step of the way.

Two years ago, Clinton Zegers '19 made a decision that changed everything. The alcohol addiction that had placed him in and out of treatment centers and the intensive care unit that had reached every part of his life would be a thing of the past. On March 20, 2017, he got sober—and that sobriety meant following through on everything else that would improve his life.

Back in 2010, Zegers stopped attending his classes at the University of Nebraska at Kearney as he battled his private struggle with alcohol. He decided to return as an online student in the bachelor of science in the business administration program which he would complete from his current location in Arizona.

"The degree was important to obtain for a few reasons," Zegers said. "I felt

limited due to my lack of education. I had a good career at the time, but I was starting to get comfortable. There is no growth in the comfort zone, and there is no comfort in the growth zone—that is what I learned early on in sobriety. The second reason is personal satisfaction. I

knew I was capable of obtaining it, but alcohol had always been in the way.”

One of Zegers’ strongest motivators for going back to school was that others knew his plans to do it. Keeping his word and doing what he promised became a staple of his recovery.

But the road to finishing a degree was daunting.

“I had not been enrolled in school in about eight years at the time I enrolled again, and that was frightening in itself. I felt I may have lost all of my prior knowledge,” he said. “I had only taken one online class before, and I dropped it. Some of my concerns were not being able to connect to the professors or material. Those fears were amplified being that the classes would all be online.”

Stacey Schwarz, online program recruitment specialist at UNK eCampus, helped Zegers work through those fears. From application to graduation, she provided information, advising and encouragement to finish his degree.

“Sometimes I live in fear, and Stacey squashed many of those by being available. I was able to explain my situation and story to her ahead of time. She was compassionate and interested. She did not make me feel like a number. I explained my vision and graduation timeline to her, and she made it happen,” he said.

She didn’t only do this for Zegers.

“At the graduation ceremony, I was explaining my story to another nontraditional online student, and he said that Stacey was his advisor and did the same for him,” Zegers said.

This support system helps online students succeed, and it also drives home the reputation that UNK does everything possible to put students first—even if those students cannot set foot on campus. Going a step beyond is what made the difference to Zegers.

“There was a course I was required to take that would have been beneficial for most students, but Stacey saw that I

was already in a management capacity, staffing and training a residential treatment center in Scottsdale. She had me provide a resume, and she got the class requirement lifted by going through each respective department. She went above and beyond by doing this—being the one who noticed and who did all the work behind the scenes to make sure I didn’t have to do additional work. This effort showed me that she cared for my goal and vision as much as I did.”

With his new degree, Zegers moved back to Nebraska for a new career in the law enforcement field, something he’s always been interested in along with business. The skills from his online business degree translate well to his new role in probations.

“Some of the skills that come to mind quickly are leadership, data analysis, time management and teamwork ability,” he said. “I directed the residential component of a treatment center in Arizona and served as a recovery manager in a halfway house. I felt probation was a great career choice that blended my experience in corrections, working in recovery and my own personal recovery to help keep Nebraska communities safe and positively impacting people’s lives.”

Throughout his recovery and education, Zegers’ family supported him through the dark times as well as the triumph of walking across the commencement stage last spring.

“I’m not sure where I would be without their love and support,” he said. “I was hesitant to share my story, but after I spoke with my sponsor, he said that if I’m able to help one person from it, then it was worth it.”

And although they’ve never met in person, Zegers and Schwarz developed a bond that will not be forgotten—an online student who overcame every obstacle, and an advisor who stopped at nothing to help him thrive.

Learn more about UNK’s online programs at unk.edu/ecampus. ▀

For more information, visit
www.ecampus.unk.edu



“She was compassionate and interested. She did not make me feel like a number. I explained my vision and graduation timeline to her, and she made it happen,” Clinton Zegers '19 said of Stacey (Plautz) Schwarz '03, online program recruitment specialist at UNK eCampus.

Honoring Mom

Why we chose to honor my mom and what it has meant to my family and me.

By Monty E. Nielsen, Ed.D.

My mom, Neva (Nelson) Nielsen '70, decided as a second-grader that she wanted to be an elementary school teacher. Thirteen years later, she became one!

Neva mused then that she preferred teaching to housekeeping for someone else at the rate of \$3 per week. In 1936, teacher salaries in rural Nebraska were meager. From a monthly wage of \$40 the first semester and \$45 per month the second semester, Neva allocated \$10 per month for room and board, \$15 for a car payment and \$15-20 for other essentials. The completion of Normal Training in high school had launched Neva into a teaching career that was just beginning.

Neva, like her five older and two younger siblings plus her mother, were all products of a one-room, one-teacher, eighth-grade education. Routinely, she experienced a new and different teacher for each of the eight grades. Disciplinary problems were frequently the main reason a teacher might stay only one year, Neva said. Nonetheless, she had many good role models among her eight elementary school teachers in addition to an aunt who taught at the University of Washington in the 1930s and an older sister who also was a one-room teacher



Neva Nielsen '70

in rural Nebraska.

While Neva had graduated high school in 1934, she immediately began pursuit of her first teaching position without success for two years. It was the Great Depression complicated by the Dust Bowl, and the competition was fierce with as many as a dozen

candidates for the same position and most with previous teaching experience. However, she persisted and secured her first teaching position in 1936. Through the remainder of the 1930s and most of the 1940s, she juggled teaching and the necessary pursuit of her baccalaureate degree. Neva married Ervin Nielsen, a Nuckolls County farmer and my dad, in 1947, at which time she stopped teaching to raise a family. She resumed her formal education and teaching career in 1961. Following multiple summers of attendance at Kearney State College, Neva earned a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education in August 1970 and in her words, "That was a very special day!"

Not uncharacteristically, when reflecting in retirement on her 30-year teaching career that started in 1936 and concluded in 1982, she said in a hometown newspaper interview, "I would not have traded it for any other career that I know."

So, why did we choose to honor my mom? Most simply, Neva loved her profession and her students. She was an elementary teacher who understood from an early age the importance and value of elementary education for all children. She

One Room, One Teacher Honors Rural Educators and Students


The University of Nebraska at Kearney's roots run deep in preparing teachers for the classroom. The One Room, One Teacher scholarship program at UNK honors those teachers who taught in a one-room school as well as students who were fortunate enough to learn from them.

This program offers the unique opportunity to recognize past and current teachers, while helping future ones. Honorees have their name placed on the Wall of Honor in the College of Education, as well being recognized during a special program during UNK Homecoming week.

If you, a family member or friend is interested in honoring a one-room school teacher or student through the One Room, One Teacher program, contact Kristin Howard at the NU Foundation, (308) 698-5276.

ate, drank and slept teaching! Neva never forgot her family or all of her teachers, mentors and friends who encouraged and supported her as a student and a teacher.

Like so many of her era, she made countless sacrifices to become and remain a teacher throughout her humble career. Neva spent all of her teaching years sharing with her students. She was giving back to them what had been given to her as an elementary school pupil, then a teacher. Our gift to the One Room, One Teacher scholarship fund and the Neva Nielsen Elementary Education Fund, which endowed a scholarship in her name is our way of giving back to those at UNK who aspire to teach as she did. The plaque on the wall in the UNK College of Education is a lasting reminder of her commitment and dedication to teaching.

I vividly remember my time and experiences at KSC like it was yesterday. I am eternally grateful for the undergraduate education and the professional opportunities that KSC gave me. None of what I've done since would have been possible without either. My sincerest thanks to KSC, now UNK. We will continue to contribute to this scholarship — it is extremely meaningful and important to us. 



Neva Nielsen '70

Even as young as a second-grader, Neva Nielsen '70, knew she wanted to be an elementary school teacher.

MONTY E. NIELSEN, Ed.D

Monty E. Nielsen '71, Ed.D., served as the university registrar at Kansas State University and retired in June. Anne (Slattery) Nielsen '73, Ph.D., retired in June 2017 after a more than 30-year career in teaching infants and toddlers and school-aged children who were blind or visually impaired. Monty spent 48 years in student and academic services in higher education starting at Kearney State College in August 1971.

THE ART OF DESIGN WORK

The Art of Building a Reputable Program

RIGHT: Chris Cox's '00 artwork was on display throughout May at the Walker Art Gallery inside UNK's Fine Arts Building and was auctioned off with the proceeds going toward the purchase of supplies and equipment for the department of art and design.

Being a Kearney High graduate and son of a university employee, Chris Cox is thankful for the simple choice of enrolling at UNK that gave him a great education. His experience at UNK inspired him to dream big and look towards future trends in design.

"Creativity is valuable," said UNK graduate Chris Cox '00, who studied communication design. "There's no limit to what you can do with a creative mind."

Cox started drawing at age four and traveled to art shows with his work by age nine. He was told growing up that he wouldn't make any money being an artist. Consequently, Cox started his studies in health sciences at UNK because his mom worked at the university and scholarships were enticing. Cox quickly switched back to art following his first drawing class because he knew it was what he loved.

"I was in denial about being good at art. I wasn't sure what I could do with it," Cox said. "Going to UNK really made me value my passions for art by my professors



who inspired me." Cox was influenced by professors like Richard Schuessler and Mark Hartman because they were realistic in preparing him for working in the field with professional critics.

After graduation, Cox worked for

Webster Design in Denver, Colorado, where he worked on advertisements, branding and design, which brought new



Chris Cox '00

LEFT: Chris Cox's notoriety became apparent when he started drawing political cartoons during the Bush presidential era. Cox has since worked on masterpieces from posters to TV commercials to building murals.

opportunities for learning new skills in high demand areas such as web design and commercial production.

"At the time, UNK wasn't offering courses about learning code so that was something I taught myself out of college," Cox said. "Learning new things doesn't stop when you graduate."

Initially, Cox was hesitant to create graphic designs on computers because he was worried it would ruin the artistic value of a piece. However, design has evolved to integrate new and more technology and so has the designer.

Cox said the need for creative art majors is growing in large cities. Every project uses artificial intelligence by understanding how things are constructed and creating solutions. Since creativity is desired for all types of businesses, Cox encourages students to continue in fields of design and problem-solving.

"The best students start with typography," Cox said. "It's really

hard to succeed without type and historical context to understand design. UNK really emphasized history and typography which I value now in my professional career."

Developing branding, creating TV commercials, constructing animation, painting murals, writing scripts and designing movie posters are a few of Cox's areas of expertise. In a creative field, Cox emphasizes understanding that there's no limit to what can be learned and mastered.

Working on murals is one of Cox's favorite projects because he rationalizes that it brings a physical emotion that can make people feel connected to his art. "People often lose sight of the meaning of being an artist because of the money, but I do it because of my passion for it," Cox says.

With the goal of bringing beautiful artwork to the stark contrast of blank buildings, Cox recently created and painted several murals for Adams County Health and Human Services in the Denver area. His proudest moment was hearing how his artwork affected others and brought joy to the empty spaces.

"Murals are something physical that I can show someone," said Cox. "Projects are emotional and make people feel connected to it and each other. That's what I love about art. That's what it is all about."

Cox has collaborated on projects throughout Omaha, Denver and across the nation. His work was recently recognized at "Kindred," an art and design alumni event and social at UNK, which highlighted and auctioned off his movie poster collages to raise money for art projects and equipment, and create a connection between past, current and future students and faculty.

"The Kindred events at the Museum of Nebraska Art and UNK's Walker Art Gallery are a great opportunity for the current art and design faculty and students to connect with UNK's past art faculty and alumni," Rick Schuessler said. "Kindred is all about developing our art and design community at UNK, in Kearney, across Nebraska and the Midwest."

"People I've met through UNK are incredible, who have all gone on to do bigger and better work in bigger cities," Cox said. "We are lucky because UNK has consistently put out phenomenal students and outstanding artists." ▀



COLLEGE DAYS LIFE AS A LOPER

Three students from varying backgrounds talk about the one common bond of becoming a Loper to reach their goals.

UNK students from all over Nebraska, the U.S. and worldwide are impacted by the generosity of donors who are compelled to give and are passionate about education. A few UNK students recently expressed their thoughts and gratitude for the help they've received while attending UNK.

Haley Pierce is a junior journalism major with a political science minor from West Point.

"I was fortunate enough to be on campus many times as a high school student, and I was continually impressed by how welcoming the UNK community is," said Pierce. "When meeting with professors, I could tell they truly cared about the success of students. I also consistently saw involved student

leaders, and I knew I wanted to attend a university where I could do something that mattered.

"I have so much optimism for the coming school year and the future of UNK. I am incredibly excited for this year's Blue & Gold Welcome and the opportunity to greet incoming students as the Blue & Gold Coordinator. I am continually amazed by the ways faculty, staff, upperclassmen students, and the Kearney community help us welcome new students" said Pierce. "Their willingness to help is why I will gladly smash cake in my face for student retention.

"The absolute best part of attending UNK is the people I get to work with. Staff consistently go above and beyond the requirements of their jobs to ensure students are thriving at UNK, and professors work tirelessly to craft an excellent education for students" said Pierce. "I am particularly thankful for

the people I work within enrollment management and my academic departments. Students also care for and support one another.

"I ultimately plan to work as a college professor, and I would hopefully return to UNK or a similar university emphasizing undergraduate education" said Pierce. "My professors in the communication and political science departments and Honors Program have encouraged me to pursue research and presentation opportunities that have prepared me for applying to and attending a doctoral program. Dr. Rowling, in particular, has guided me in reading literature in the field and has encouraged me to apply to top political communication programs."

The support of UNK donors is immeasurable to students. Scholarships from the Honors Program, the communication department, and the political science department have made my



Haley Pierce is majoring in journalism and minoring in political science, with the goal of pursuing a doctorate degree.

research, work at the *Antelope* newspaper, and campus involvement possible. Students are genuinely appreciative of the support they receive, and I am incredibly thankful to UNK's donors.

Faith Kowalski, a junior from Kearney, has a dream of working for the Nebraska Schools Activities Association (NSAA) or the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), planning and coordinating championship tournaments. Her double major - sports management comprehensive and business administration is equipping her with the skills to fulfill this dream.

"With donor support, my dreams are becoming a reality at UNK. Our campus is a special place, one where friendships are formed that last a lifetime, where countless memories are made, and where dreams are conceived and solidified by experienced faculty and staff. The kind and generous contributions from donors do not go unnoticed and are celebrated and appreciated each day," said Faith.

Jachob Wiedeburg, an elementary education major from Sidney, is grateful to UNK where he is learning and honing his teaching and coaching skills.



Faith Kowalski from Kearney has a dream of working for the Nebraska Schools Activities Association (NSAA) or the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), planning and coordinating championship tournaments.

"My favorite thing about UNK are the people that have impacted my journey along the way. Professors, employers, friends, and coaches have all influenced me to work to be the best version of myself. When I felt unsure or doubtful of what was ahead, they assured me to embrace the opportunity and they supported me each step of the way! The UNK and surrounding Kearney community embraces each student with open arms," said Jachob, who is currently receiving a Chancellor's merit scholarship, UNK Thompson Foundation

Jachob Wiedeburg, an elementary education major from Sidney, is grateful to UNK where he is learning and honing his teaching and coaching skills.

Scholarship, an athletic scholarship for men's cross country and track, and the Army Emergency Relief Scholarship.

"I can't thank donors enough for allowing me to become the best, most educated version of myself while at UNK. Not only are they impacting me by investing in my future, but they are impacting the future students I will teach, the future athletes I will coach, and the future teachers I will work alongside. I want donors to know their generosity is appreciated and that their belief in me has driven me to do all that I can in college to be a successful teacher and coach." ▀



To learn more about how you can support students and make their dreams become reality, visit nufoundation.org



Did you miss an event?
Register at
unkalumni.org/login

LOPERS LIVING LIFE

Whether you come home or live far away, you can always find a friend,
good conversation and reminisce with Loper alumni.

LOPERS GATHER



Kansas City Lopers After Hours in March. Pictured are (back row) Dan Prichard '92, Christa (Boroff) Spencer '92, Mark Spencer, Rich Brodersen '94 (NU Foundation), (front row) Jana Fitchett '83 and Lori (Harms) Prichard '93.

Lopers stopped by Overland Park, Kansas, where Scott Jochum, NU Foundation, reconnected with several of his former industrial distribution students. Alumni events are a great opportunity to catch up to classmates and even former professors. Pictured are Joel Shafer '18, Peijie Li '14, Jeff Foster '09, Scott Jochum '96, MAE '00, (NU Foundation), Payton Fluckey '17, Tanner Sapp '15, Nick Behrends '16, Tanner Cappello '17, Anthony Kratke '01, Blaine Murbach '13, Travis Jones '05, Scott Graham '02.





Loper football coach Josh Lynn, Lynn Parsons MSE '90, Lexie (Hollertz) Frahm '00 and Shane Frahm had a good showing at the annual Scrambling for Scholarships.



Loper Gradfest 2019 was a new event to celebrate the spring graduates and welcome them to the UNK Alumni Association. The graduation party was hosted by UNKAA, several campus departments and Cunningham's Journal. Spring '19 graduates pictured here are Shelby Webster, Miranda Miller, McClain Narber, Madi Millsap, Maison Carlson, Maci Wingard and Shelby Hinrichs.



Loper football alumni and coaches attended the football reunion held in Omaha. Keep connected to your teammates and organizations by updating your info at unkalumni.org. Pictured are (standing) Nate Reicks '11, Matt Goldenstein '10, Mike Muma '02, Tim McGeorge '07, Darrell Morris MAE '87, Brandon Lindau '01, Ross Gardner '04, Craig Neuhaus '02, Danny Ostransky, (kneeling) Monte Meadows '89, MAE '91, Dick Collins '76, Scott Kutschkau '02, Kurt Nielsen '05, and Eric Sorenson '05.

Former Loper football players met again on the field while their sons played in the Shrine Bowl. They are Justin Norblade '93 with son #1 Chase Norblade who played for Papillion LaVista South; Pat Schaben with son #57 PJ Schaben who played for Seward High School; Ken Terry '93 and his son #10 Carter Terry who played for Grand Island Northwest.



Alpha Xi Delta and Zeta sororities met this summer. Those attending were (standing) Karen Humphrey, Deb King, Mary Kenney '65, Diana Wubbenhorst, Maxine Erpelding '66, Carrie Prososki '16, Nora Lindner '63, Marcia Trimble '66, Joyce Gohl-Speckelmier '70, Sharron Altmaier '55, (sitting) Pat Schuster, Kay Obermiller, Jan Beck '64, Karen Prososki, Joan King '58 and Marion Mirehouse '55.



The Don Welch Teacher's Conference was earlier this spring on campus where many notable alumni spoke and remembered one of UNK's great poets, the late Don Welch. Pictured from left are Jay Garrison '81, MA '02, Rick Marlatt '06, MA '08, Marilyn (Andrews) Zysset '84, MS '14, Ryan Pollock '93, Jason Miller, '93. MA '00, Tom Martin, Sherri (Mohr) Miller '92, John Lee '07, David Rozema, Angie Oberg '93, Shannon (Welch) Vesely '77, Elin Petersen '13, Marcia (Zorn) Welch '52, Linda Martin, Kaye Linn (Golden) Albrecht '76, Kael (Welch) Sagheer '90, '96.

Alpha Omicron Pi Celebrates 50th Anniversary on UNK Campus

The Phi Sigma Chapter of Alpha Omicron Pi was founded in May 1969. Originally formed as Phi Sigma Phi in 1967, its founding members are Joyce (Bryan) Strout '70, Cristy (Best) Koch, Glenna (Johnson) Derr '69, Kathy Lewis, and Betz (Powers) Quincy '69. There were 14 women in the first pledge class.

Cindy (Lichtenberg) Rademacher '72, member of the 1970 pledge class, has been actively involved with Alpha Omicron Pi on UNK's campus for the majority of its existence. Following graduation from Kearney State College, Rademacher has served in various advisory roles since 1975.

Rademacher states one of the hallmarks of Phi Sigma is its membership of a "diverse and unique group of women" which has been characteristic to this organization since its roots. "We've grown with the ages and it's quite an accomplishment that we've been a thriving organization for 50 years," Rademacher said.

Phi Sigma's success as a chapter is due in part to the group of hardworking alumnae who have supported the chapter

throughout the past five decades. Lori Moore '84, MAE '88 has been actively involved in advisory roles since 1986.

As a collegiate member, "I felt the opportunities I had given to me because of strong females role models was something that impacted my life. I've tried to be a strong role model for everyone that has come since then. And I've made great friends. It's about the relationships you build and the lives you've touched, and knowing you still have the common bond of sisterhood," Moore said.

To commemorate 50 years as a campus organization, the Phi Sigma Chapter of Alpha Omicron Pi will be holding a celebration in Kearney on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019, with a banquet that evening at the Holiday Inn.

The Phi Sigma Chapter encourages all AOII alumnae to submit updated contact information to phisigmaalum@gmail.com as well as follow the Facebook page AOII Phi Sigma Alumnae for more information. ▲



1951

Phyllis (Shafer) Kantaras of Kearney celebrated her 90th birthday April 4.

Raymond Kolbo of Callaway celebrated his 90th birthday on July 31.

1958

Doris Mae Maurer of Kearney celebrated her 90th birthday on June 13.

1965

Barbara (Oberg) Cotter of Stromsburg retired as the City of Stromsburg clerk and treasurer.

1966

Jerry Ed.S. '82 and **Kim (Hanson)**

Gronewold MSE '72 of Kearney celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 21.

1967

Kay and **Doyle Lavene** of Kearney celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 28.

1968

William '68 and **Mary Ann (Gilster)**

Styskal '69 of Boerne, Texas, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary on June 6.

1969

Steve MAE '90 and **Judy (Cassidy)**

Fisher MAE '87 of Kearney celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Jan. 24.

Dann and **Pat (Yost) Sharp** of Kearney celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 28.

Dale and **Theone (Larson) Stengel** of Kearney celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Feb. 1.

Patti (Cross) Withers of Houston, Texas, retired from teaching. Patti and her husband, Ben, recently celebrated their 49th anniversary.

1972

Andrea and **Bob McAlevy** of Plattsmouth celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 28.

George Hoagstrom MSE '77 of Kearney celebrated his 80th birthday on May 31.

Betty and **Alan Young** of Kearney celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary June 15.

1974

Connie (Fischer) Jelkin MSE '01 of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools. **Scott Maul Ed.S. '88** of Georgetown, Texas is a volunteer with the Rotary Club and the Devil Dog Squadron of the Commemorative Air Force.

1975

Deb (Freeburg) Schroeder of Shelton retired from UNK after 41 years of service.

1976

Kim (Tigges) Abegglen MSE '03 of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 23 years of service.

Tim Hedges MAE '89 of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 42 years of service.

Jane (McNeel) Searcey MAE '11 of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 21 years of service.

Deb (Mills) Malone of Bennington retired from Kearney Public Schools with 29 years of service.

1977

Steve Altmaier of Kearney was inducted into the Nebraska Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame on Aug. 13. Altmaier got his start in 1974 as an announcer on KGFW and KQKY stations in Kearney and was promoted to sports director for KGFW in 1981. In 2005 he was

named KGFW's associate news director before becoming news director in 2009; a title he held until his retirement in 2016. Steve is known by many as "The Voice of the Lopers" where he called more than 2,500



Steve Altmaier '77

UNK athletic contests during a 24-year span, along with countless high school football and basketball games.



Mary Lou Drake has definitely lived by her family's motto: "We cannot remain static in a dynamic society."

"We usually quoted that motto when we were encouraging the children to meet new challenges each year," she said. "We had the philosophy that we, as parents, needed to teach the kids how to work and they would learn how to play on their own. And they did." Graduating from Kearney State College in 1984, she was unable to attend her graduation. So her children surprised her on her 89th birthday with a cap and gown to celebrate her legacy of hard work and love of learning.

His passion for sports broadcasting resulted in recognition as the Nebraska Coaches Association "Media Person of the Year" in 2005 followed by his induction to the UNK Athletics Hall of Fame in 2006.

Lori Potter of Kearney earned second place in the National Federation of Press Women's 2019 Professional Communications Contest.

1979

Debra (Miller) Schauer of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 30 years of service.

1980

Bill and **Trish (Sultzbaugh) Kenagy MS** of Elkhorn celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 29.

Jack Gutierrez MAE of Columbus retired from Central Community College after 39 years of service.

1982

Winona (Fitz) Maxon MSE of Lincoln has written "Water in the Word: Daily Bible Reading and Activity Workbook" which was published by Christian Faith Publishing.

Pam Abbott of Ogallala is a board member for the Nebraska Community Foundation.

Judy (Theiler) Witte MAE '04 of Kearney was honored as an outstanding volunteer by the Nebraska Hospice and Palliative Care Association.

1983

Brad Archer of Kearney is head coach for Kearney High Baseball.

1984

Dean Franzen of Yankton, South Dakota, is the commercial lines specialist for the South Dakota Bankers Association.

1985

Cindy (Toline) Klein MSE '99 of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 27 years of service.

1986

Brad Bauer of Grand Island is a board member for the Nebraska Community Foundation.

CLASS NOTES

1987

Tom Jochum MAE, Ed.S. '91 of Axtell retired from Kearney Public Schools with 16 years of service.

1988

Mary (Kuk) Rosenthal of Omaha has been elected vice president of the First Responders Foundation. She is also the liaison to the Omaha Fire Department.

1989

John Falconer of Kearney is senior advisor to the chancellor for executive affairs at UNK.

1990

Mike Young of Kearney was promoted to captain with the Kearney Police Department.

1991

Kris (Kennicutt) Friesen MAE '00 was named the Nebraska Association of Elementary School Principals Nebraska's 2018 National Distinguished Principal of the year. Friesen is Principal at York Elementary School.

Kevin Thompson of Kearney was promoted to lieutenant with the Kearney Police Department.

Rena (Riddle) Zimmer of Kearney is assistant director of leadership and student engagement at UNK. Rena's husband, **Dave Zimmer '92**, is a teacher and coach with Kearney Public Schools.

1992

Jenna Christensen MSE '95 of Pender is the secondary counselor at Walthill High School on the Omaha Indian Reservation.

Angela Salas MAE of Sellersburg, Indiana, is the provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at Framingham State University.

Catherine Kingsley MAE of Kearney is a CASA (court appointed special advocate) volunteer.

1993

Tracy (Ferguson) Schall MAE '97 of Kearney is principal of Glenwood Elementary.

1994

Alison (Earley) Warner of Kearney is a farm manager and licensed real estate salesperson for Farmers National Co.

1996

Chad Vokoun, M.D. of Omaha has been named acting section chief of hospital medicine in the UNMC Department of Internal Medicine and medical director for hospital medicine for Nebraska Medicine.

1997

Tara (Christensen) Naprstek of Lexington is finance director for Lexington Regional Health Center.

1998

Scott Steinbrook MAE '07 of Kearney is entering his 20th year as the Kearney High School soccer coach. Steinbrook was a finalist for the National High School Athletic Coaches Association coach of the year award.

1999

Marc Bauer MAE of Kearney is the new athletic director for UNK.



Kris (Kennicutt) Friesen '91, MAE '00, Nebraska's 2018 National Distinguished Principal of the year with Nebraska's 2011 National Distinguished Principal of the year Barry McFarland, '00, MAE '05, ES '12.

2000

Brice Krohn of Kearney is president of Platte River Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust.

2001

Katie (Beck) Mathews Ed.S. of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 23 years of service.

2002

John Bonk MAE of Kearney retired from Kearney Public Schools with 27 years of service.

T.J. Isaacs of Monrovia, California, is the vice president of corporate philanthropy for City of Hope. City of Hope is a National Cancer Institute located in Duarte, California.

2003

Vicky DeWald of Crawford is the theater teacher at Kearney High School.

Julia (McDonald) Beckstrand MS '09 of Lawrence, Kansas, is an elementary school counselor with Kearney Public Schools.

Ben Rowe was the keynote speaker at the UNK College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Seniors ceremony on May 2 at UNK. Rowe graduated with a degree in visual communication and design.

2004

Jesse Arens of Kearney leads the agricultural lending in the Riverdale branch of Heartland Bank.

Jason Calahan of North Platte is principal of Buffalo Hills Elementary in Kearney.

Riley Mollard MBA '05 of Amherst is vice president of the Town & Country Bank branch in Kearney.

2006

Clint Edwards MAE of Kearney is the principal at Horizon Middle School.

2007

Marty Demoret of Ankeny, Iowa, spoke at the UNK Department of Psychology 50th Anniversary celebration on April 18. Demoret works for the law firm Faegre Baker Daniels in Des Moines, where he is a member of the product liability group, specializing in complex agribusiness litigation.

Jenn (Jameson) True MA '12 of Kearney is the principal of Emerson Elementary.

Ashley Stuhr of Omaha is art director for KidGlov, a group of boutique advertising agencies located in Lincoln, Omaha and Denver.

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CLASS NOTES



On April 24 through April 27 of this year, Mr. George Hicks, former vocal music instructor at then Kearney State College, held a reunion of his former Kearney students in Omaha. Hicks currently lives in Jackson, Mississippi, and rode the train from Jackson to Chicago to Omaha to meet with his students. Former students from as far away as Utah, Colorado and Nebraska spent several days with Hicks reminiscing and enjoying Hick's company. A majority of Hick's former students spent their professional careers teaching and leading music ensembles in education and professional music endeavors.

Hicks spent his time at KSC working to enhance and grow an operatic division of the Fine Arts Department. Under his leadership and direction, students performed in Mame, Canterbury Tales, Play of the Risen Christ, Tales of Hoffmann, Lucia Di Lammermoor, Rigoletto, Gianni Schicchi, Die Fledermaus, Coronation of Poppea, The Magic Flute and The Barber of Seville. He diligently worked to enhance and grow the voices of students through private voice lessons and tutelage. His personal dedication and devotion to Fine Arts while at KSC is truly generational, from the lives he personally enriched to the thousands of individuals impacted by his former students through their careers in education. The group plans to continue to get together on an annual basis.

Hicks created a wonderful legacy through his students, who in turn touched countless young people through education. Hicks is and will always be and richly treasured by his former students who gathered to honor him. Taking time out for a picture are from left Don Johnson, (kneeling) Max Richardson, Deanna (Slater) Johnson, Terri (Saum) Winchell, Mr. George Hicks, Barb (Braun) Hinrichs and Mike Shelton. Beth Wieland and Tim Fisher attended but are not pictured. *Thank you Max Richardson for sharing your experience.*

2008

Randi (Reimers) Broekemeier of Kearney is a realtor with Kearney Realty.

Amber Lewis MA '11, MAE '17 of Kearney is assistant principal at Horizon Middle School.

Justine (Derr) Tschetter of Kearney is the director of community engagement and The Storehouse at Kearney e-Free Church.

Shannon (Niemann) Peard of Phillips is manager of finance and administration for Dawson Public Power District.

2009

Melissa (Brown) Herrmann MAE of Kearney is the director of 6-12 education at Kearney Public Schools.

2011

Chelsea (Anderson) Feusner MAE of Kearney is director of student services for Kearney Public Schools.

Emily (Geschwentner) Garrick of North Platte is co-owner of TopTier MMA and Boxing, and just opened a production company called RA Productions. Emily is also an adjunct instructor at Mid Plains Community College.

Bergan (Carr) Schumacher of Kearney is a partner in the Bruner Frank Schumacher law firm in Kearney.

2012

Jason Boyd MA of Kearney is assistant principal at Kearney High School.

2013

Staci (Adams) Cahis Sanchez of Kearney is an 8th grade science teacher at Horizon Middle School in Kearney.

2014

Angie Fransk MA of Kearney was selected as the recipient of the 2019 Nebraska Career Education Outstanding Administrative Leader Award by the Nebraska Department of Education Entrepreneurship Education/Work-based Learning Group.

Brett Douglas of Ravenna is owner and president of Kearney Winnelson Co.

Joshua Redman of Grand Island is a social studies teacher at Kearney High School.

2015

Brian Riley of Minden is director of operations at West Pharmaceutical Services in Kearney.

Ashley Whitley of Kearney has been named volunteer of the month by Kearney/Buffalo County CASA for her advocacy for abused and neglected children.

2016

Jackson Osborn of Kearney graduated from the University of Nebraska College of Law. He has accepted a position as deputy county attorney for Cheyenne County in Sidney.

2017

Allison Kasperek of Ashland is a social studies teacher at Hastings Middle School.

2018

Sydney Norris of Papillion is the media director for the State of Nebraska Natural Resources District in North Platte.

Danielle May MAE of South Sioux City is an 8th grade science teacher at Horizon Middle School in Kearney.

CLASS NOTES

Kirk McLeod of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, is a 5th grade teacher at Emerson Elementary with Kearney Public Schools.

Marriages

Megan Schutt '12 of Ashland married Adam Zobel on June 30, 2018.

Shannon Fox '14 of Axtell married Brandon Howell on July 6.

Haley Allen '15 of Omaha married Joe Mendick on June 8.

Finding COPE

Soon after she received her cancer diagnosis in 2015, Diane Simard '88 began to capture her thoughts and feelings in a detailed journal, parts of which she shared in email updates to friends and family during treatment.

"My goal was to bring more attention to the often-overlooked long-term psychological impact of a traumatic health experience such as cancer."

COPE, which Simard seed-funded and launched in 2016 at Denver University's Graduate School of Professional Psychology, is the first specialty in the country to offer psychosocial oncology training at the graduate level. To date, 70 DU students have taken some or all of the classes in the four-course COPE specialty.

Simard's story, which culminates in the founding of COPE, is intended to inspire those who go through a traumatic health experience to discover and transform to their authentic selves.

The Unlikely Gift of Breast Cancer has received a five-star rating from Readers' Favorite® and is available through Simard's website dianemsimard.com/book/, Amazon, and other major book retailers.



Tim Brayton '06 of Lexington and **Brenda Tinchler '01** of Kearney married July 13.

Births

Andrew '05 and **Sarah (Emal) Bartling '08, MS '16** of Kearney are parents of a son, Beckett Andrew, born March 12. He has a sister, Macie.

Scott MBA '09 and **Abbie (Weidner) Benson '10, MS '16** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Fiona Abigail, born July 21.

Christopher '14 and **Christina (Ritz) Brown '14** of Arcadia are parents of a daughter, Heidi Rosemarie, born Dec. 14. She has a brother, Milo.

Justin '08 and **Melissa (Ripp) Caha '03, '08** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Emersyn Mae, born March 6. She has a sister, Avery. Kara and **Luke Choyeski '09** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Karsyn Hayes, born Nov. 7. She has a sister, Kinlee.

Kelly '12 and **Katy (Evans) Cooksley MAE '17** of Broken Bow are parents of a son, Kyler Steven, born April 26. He has a sister Kennedy. Kaitlin and **Corey Cruzan '14** of Kearney are parents of a son, Cutler James, born June 10. Chris and **Angela (Reynolds) Davidson '09, MBA '10** of Grand Island are parents of a daughter, Brooklyn Jalene, born May 24.

Andi '13 and **Katie (Swett) Diediker '13** are parents of a daughter, Emersen (Emmy) Lynn, born July 10.

Stephen '14 and **Alexis (Hinrichsen) Friesell '12** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Nelle Marie, born May 15. She has a sister, Rowan, and a brother, William.

Jason '03 and **Lynelle (Snider) Fritzen '08** of Kearney are parents of a son, Ledger James, born June 18. He has two sisters, Finley and Sutton. Steven and **Megan (Jones) Gewecke '07** of Kearney are parents of a son, Mason Cole, born Jan. 23. He has a brother, Ryker. Bryan and **Jenny (Hamilton) Gibbs '10** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Audrey Grace, born May 18. She has a sister, Kaitlynn, and brother, the late Caleb.

Adam and **Valerie (Aspen) Jameson '06** of Kearney are parents of a son, Caden Lucas, born Dec. 16.

Ryan '07 and **Megan (Lauer) Killion '09** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Olive Kinsley, born Jan. 26. She has a sister, Penelope, and brothers Leaf, Theodore and August.

Paul '11, MBA '12 and **Roxanne (Steinbrink) Knutson '11** of Omaha are parents of a daughter, Avery Autumn, born Dec. 7. Matthew Johnson and **Elizabeth**

Krause '00 of Kearney are parents of a daughter and a son, Allison Savannah and Alexander Tyler, born March 8.

Adam '13 and **Paige (Beiermann) Liess '13** of Kearney are parents of a son, Isaiah Thomas, born Feb. 24. He has a brother, Noah.

Andrew '09 and **Skylar (Leatherman) Loseke '11** of Lincoln are parents of a daughter, Talia Eve, born April 22. She has a brother, Ellison.

Natalie and **Aaron Madsen '01** of Kearney are parents of a son, Bodie Kyle, born March 18. He has a sister, Halle, and a brother, Burke. Jason and **Nicole (Henning) McNeil '99** of Shanghai are parents of a son, Jaxton Harvey, born March 6. He has a sister, Collette.

Nelson '11 and **Bethany (Shinn) Micek '11** of Gibbon are parents of a daughter, Margaret Leigh, born Jan. 15.

Cole Frasier and **Amber Morris '09** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Collyns Alivia, born Jan. 4.

Lori and **Matthew Mullen '10, MBA '11** of Riverdale are parents of a son, Noah Paul, born March 27.

Jared '12 and **Angela (Heiden) Samuelson '12** of Kearney are parents of a son, Colton J., born March 19.

Ryan '07 and **Faith (Maschmann) Schneider '09** of York are parents of a daughter, Maggie Lynn, born Dec. 19. She has older siblings Joel, 7; Mollie, 5 and Bode, 18 months.

Jared and **Ashley (Wolf) Schroeder ME '10** of Kearney are parents of a daughter, Atlee Rose, born Dec. 27. She has a sister, Brynlee,

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and brothers Traven and Kyler.

Matt and **Morgan (Sims) Simpson `09** of Holdrege are parents of a son, Noah William, born Feb. 10. He has a brother, Grant.

Zachary `12 and **Bridget (O'Meara) Volquardsen `09** of Kearney are parents of a son, Knox Joseph, born May 22. He has a brother, Oliver.

Kristy and **Chase Wolf `06** of Lexington are parents of a daughter and son, Haven Marie and Boden Aaron, born Nov. 5.

Deaths

Lynn Artz `76 of Kearney died March 8. He was 65.

Pat Avey `65 of Kearney died May 23. He was 79.

Bryan Bachkora `61, MSE `65 of Hays, Kansas, died March 15. He was 88.

Richard Barlow `62, emeriti faculty, of Kearney died March 25. He was 78.

Gary Barth `71 of Culbertson died July 11. He was 71.

Russell Best `79 of Lawrence, Kansas, died June 22. He was 68.

Gwen (Gould) Bilsend `77, MAE `89 of Shelton died Feb. 20. She was 63.

Mildred (Heitmann) Gerdes Bliefernich `73 of Kearney died Jan. 29. She was 91.

Myrtle (Freeman) Bowers `60 of Norman, Oklahoma, died Dec. 6. She was 102.

Jeff Bullock `93 of Kearney died May 16. He was 49.

Joan (Graf) Burbach `71 of Holdrege died July 2. She was 79.

Thomas Candy Sr., `51 of Kearney died June 18. He was 90.

Tom Carman `71 of Omaha died July 9. He was 70. Tom was recognized with the UNKAA Distinguished Alumni award in 2008.

Shad Carpenter `89 of Overton died Jan. 12. He was 54.

Robert Creighton `69 of Silverthorne, Colorado, died Jan. 31. He was 73.

Bradly Dimmitt `92 of Kearney died June 15. He was 59.

Leslie "Lee" Drake `57 of Holdrege died June 21. He was 83.

David Durnell `63, MSE `67 of Lawrence, Kansas, died Dec. 1. He was 77.

Becky (Lammers) Gellerman `99, MS `13 of Sterling died April 4. She was 54.

Thelma (Johnson) Gilson `70 of Kearney died Dec. 10. She was 71.

Louis Hagan `51 of Mason City died March 12. He was 92.

Arlene (Rath) Hanthorn `67 of Lincoln died April 11. She was 96.

Ivan Henderson `60 of Lexington died Dec. 16. He was 83.

Edward Herzog `58 of McCook died Jan. 23. He was 87.

Helen Hinz `91 of Culbertson died July 29. She was 51.

Loene Hollis MSE `00 of Lincoln died March 7. She was 49.

Dennis Holmes `72 of Livingston, Texas, died Jan. 14. He was 69.

Faith (Lee) Hueftle `90 of St. Paul died June 26. She was 50.

Karen (Mills) Ibach `63 of Ansley died Jan. 4. She was 77.

Olive "Beth" (Simms) Jackson `87 of Kearney died Jan. 25. She was 71.

Hilda (Gibbons) Jeffers `75 of North Platte died May 8. She was 90.

Deborah (Fish) Kamrath `74 of Lincoln died April 20. She was 66.

Pam (Albro) Karr Niemeyer `70 of Blue Hill died April 24. She was 70.

Maurine Lydiatt `41 of Ogallala died Jan. 12. She was 98.

Rae Matlock-Graham `90 of Omaha died July 14. She was 52.

Wayne McKinney `48 of Kearney died July 30. He was 94.

David Meier `92 of Elm Creek died Jan. 11. He was 50.

Barb Nabower `74 of Kearney died May 3. She was 66.

James "Brad" Nelson `66 of Kearney died Dec. 25. He was 76.

Ronald Nelson `58, MSE `66 of Kearney died Dec. 11. He was 82.

Bette (Lovitt) O'Meara `81 of Kearney died Feb. 16. She was 59.

Elaine (Drew) Pape `68 of Kearney died May 9. She was 90.

Sharon (Hoback) Peterson `58 of Kearney died July 20. She was 80.

Carol (Gruber) Poland MSE `88 of Kearney died Dec. 23. She was 79.

Marvin Rader `57 of Lincoln died July 3, 2010. He was 78.

Bette Rathe `73 of Lincoln died June 8. She was 68.

Edward Reiman `57 of Holdrege died Jan. 4. He was 90.

Karma (Gronewold) Ripp `77 of Kearney died Dec. 13. She was 63.

Dawn (Petty) Salyer `07 of Kearney died Jan. 10. She was 36.

Janet Shoemaker `89 of Omaha died March 14. She was 51.

James "Jim" Sintek `77 of Kearney died Jan. 24. He was 64.

Harvey Soderholm `50 of Lincoln died June 11. He was 89.

Mark Staroscik `96 of Columbus died Dec. 30. He was 45.

Eric Stelk `74 of Grand Island died July 1. He was 67.

Colleen (Johnson) Street `75 of Grand Island died July 4. She was 64.

Harry Strohmeyer `66 of Cypress, California, died August 18. He was 74.

Leah Sutherland `88 of Kearney died March 26. She was 59.

Elton Teter `67, MSE `69 of Amherst died Dec. 15. He was 83.

Dan Traudt `69 of Grand Island died June 29. He was 72.

Karen Triplett `71 of Kearney died May 16. She was 69.

Dewayne Triplett `51 of Green Valley, Arizona, died April 9. He was 92.

Connie (Burtis) Wakelin `82 of Kearney died Feb. 25. She was 76.

Ilia Wright `61 of Kearney died June 6. She was 94.

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Leave a Lasting Loper Legacy

For more than 110 years, Kearney State College and the University of Nebraska at Kearney have provided students with the education they needed to help our state and our nation grow and prosper.

With a planned gift to the University of Nebraska at Kearney, you can be a significant part of the next 110 years and beyond.

To find out how to include UNK in your future plans, visit us online at nufoundation.org/giftplanning. Or you may email gift.planning@nufoundation.org or call a gift planning officer at the University of Nebraska Foundation at 800-432-3216.

Events



SEPTEMBER

5

Lopers After Hours & Football
Game Watch, Grand Island

SEPTEMBER

19

Lopers After Hours in Hastings,
Lochland Country Club

OCTOBER

3

Kearney Quarterly After Hours,
Younes Pavilion

OCTOBER

4-5

Homecoming 2019

OCTOBER

17

Lopers After Hours,
North Platte

NOVEMBER

1-2

Gold Torch Society

NOVEMBER

14

Lopers After Hours,
Lincoln

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