“As a pastor I want to emphasize that all possessions, whatever the estate value, are God’s gift of grace for personal well-being and service to others. Finlandia donors are encouraged to include in their legacy planning a gift to Finlandia and its endowment to further the mission and ministry of a dream initiated over 100 years ago by motivated immigrants. This dream of excellence continues today extending into an exciting future and stimulating students to recognize themselves as equipped by a gracious God to serve humankind in accord with the personal gifts each has received from God.”

Reverend Melvin L. Johnson
Finlandia University Board of Trustees

After finishing high school in Embarrass, Minnesota, Pastor Melvin Johnson enrolled at Suomi College and achieved an Associate of Arts degree. “I owe Finlandia, then Suomi College, a significant measure of gratitude for jump-starting a mediocre high school academic interest into a serious pursuit of quality education,” Pastor Johnson notes. “All credits earned from Suomi College transferred when I enrolled at the University of Minnesota Duluth,” where the Pastor graduated with honors and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature.

Pastor Johnson’s post-graduate studies began with enrollment at Northwestern Lutheran Theological Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Upon graduation with Master of Divinity honors, his first parish was a three-point parish in northeastern Minnesota. “A course in Finnish grammar at Suomi proved to be very beneficial because pastoral Finnish ministry was essential in each congregation,” the Pastor affirms. Following calls to Gethsemane Lutheran in Virginia, Minnesota, and Concordia Lutheran Church in Duluth, Pastor Johnson was called back to Virginia as Senior Pastor where he held the position for fourteen years.

Approached by the Lutheran Church in America in 1983, Pastor Johnson accepted a call to serve as Associate Director for Major Cash Gifts. Five years later, with the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), he began a long-term position as Associate Director of the ELCA Foundation in Chicago. Pastor Johnson retired in 1998 and continues to work for the Foundation on a part-time basis. “I am very pleased to share my over twenty years of planned and legacy gifting experience with Finlandia University,” said Pastor Johnson.

Pastor Melvin Johnson lives in Woodbury, Minnesota, with his wife, the former Norma Laukkonen. They have two daughters.
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When I talked with Communications staff about the theme for this issue of The Bridge we used the word ‘stakeholders’ and thought we might use this term on the cover. Within the not-for-profit world, stakeholder refers to those who have a vested interest in an organization. ‘Stakeholders’ is meant to play on the for-profit term ‘stockholders’ and suggest ownership.

When I travel in foreign countries and sometimes in the United States, people ask, “Who owns Finlandia?” Many people assume that because we are affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the ELCA owns Finlandia. This is not the case.

As an independent, not-for-profit institution, no one technically owns the institution (there is no stock to define ownership). Our Board of Trustees is ‘self perpetuating’ (meaning it selects its own members) and it is our Board that is both responsible and accountable for the management and mission of the institution. It is tempting to say that the Board of Trustees owns Finlandia.

There are, however, many individuals and groups that have a vested interest in Finlandia. Faculty members, for example, are concerned not only with the academic programs and operation of the institution, but with the long-term future and mission of Finlandia. Current Finlandia students as well as graduates have an interest in the university’s academic reputation as it reflects on their degrees and employment opportunities; and many have an affection for their alma mater that reflects a broader interest in the mission, programs and management of the institution.

There are also groups arising from our heritage and location, for example, that identify themselves as stakeholders: those of Finnish heritage, those of Lutheran heritage, people living in or who grew up in the Keweenaw Peninsula or, more broadly, the Upper Peninsula, as well as contributors who have ‘invested’ in the mission and programs of Finlandia through their gifts.

While the Board of Trustees has the responsibility for the mission and management of Finlandia, we have searched for ways to incorporate the ideas and voices of all these stakeholders to enrich our deliberations and planning. In this issue of The Bridge we introduce you to our various advisory groups (i.e., the Finnish Council in America, the International Alumni Board and Community Partners) and their role in the life of Finlandia. We also provide an overview of how the Board of Trustees is organized and works to incorporate the ideas and concerns of our stakeholders in their deliberations.

From the perspective of a president of an independent institution of higher learning, the variety of stakeholders is both a blessing and challenge. It is not surprising that various groups of stakeholders tend to focus on one or a few aspects of Finlandia much as the blind people in a familiar story variously remarked, “An elephant is like a snake,” “An elephant is like a tree trunk”, “An elephant is like a wall,” and so forth, when as a group they first encountered an elephant.

A variety of perspectives are helpful in understanding opportunities and threats facing Finlandia, but seeing the elephant as a whole is also required in order to develop a strategic plan and make operating decisions. For this reason, Finlandia has brought together the President’s Council, a unique group of stakeholders with extensive planning and decision-making experience. It has the primary purpose of advising and counseling me as I face tough and complex decisions.

We hope this issue of The Bridge helps to explain how decision-making is approached at Finlandia, as well as the role and the importance of the contributions made by our various advisory groups. We have been fortunate in attracting many talented people to our Board of Trustees and advisory groups and thus we also view this issue of The Bridge as a way of recognizing and thanking members of these various groups for their contribution of time, talents and resources to Finlandia.
For twelve years, I have been privileged to serve on the Board of Trustees of Finlandia University. There are many things that I affirm about the university and the contributions that it makes to the community, church and society. I would like to begin, however, from an intimate viewpoint that points directly to the mission and ministry of Finlandia.

For the last three years I have served as the chair of the board. In this capacity, I have been privileged to participate in Finlandia’s annual commencement exercises, personally handing each of the graduates their diploma. As I distribute the diplomas I am always impressed by the diversity of students who are graduating, the variety of vocations for which they have trained, and the quality of the graduates who are now embarking on a life of service within society.

What touches the deepest chord, however, is the knowledge that many of these graduating students are the first in their families to earn bachelor’s degrees. I know from personal experience that this can only be accomplished with a great deal of personal discipline on the part of the graduate and the overwhelming support of their families. It’s not uncommon during commencement to look out in the audience and to see tears of joy streaming down the faces of often two and three generations of the graduates’ families.

This is why I count it an honor to serve on the Finlandia University Board of Trustees. As the first member of my extended family who earned a college degree, I know personally how many opportunities are made available through education and I feel that it is a privilege to be a part of making these opportunities available for others.

In my service to Finlandia I have had a first hand opportunity to observe the dedication, competence and vision the administration, faculty and staff bring to the university. Inspired by their example, I am challenged to do all that I can to share my time, talents and resources on behalf of Finlandia. During the past few years Finlandia has made great strides in expanding its curriculum, initiating four year bachelor’s degrees, offering a full athletic program, creating the business incubator laboratory and much more. As Finlandia is mentioned more often in the news media, I am proud to be affiliated with the university and its mission to church and society.

In my position as board chair I am aware that Finlandia University would not be able to continue its mission, or even exist, if it were not for the countless individuals who give of their time, talents and resources. I only wish that every person who supports the ministry of Finlandia could be present at commencement to see the graduates streaming across the stage with a gleam in their eye, hope in their hearts and a vision for service as they go out to serve God and community. I am privileged to be affiliated with Finlandia. I recommend that others embrace its mission and I express tremendous gratitude to the many people who make this ministry possible by their tireless commitments. THANK YOU!

Dale Skogman was born in Iron Mountain, and raised in Felch, Michigan. He received his bachelor’s degree from Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, and in 1965 earned his Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology, Rock Island. In 2000, he received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Finlandia University.

Bishop Skogman served as pastor for several Copper Country and Upper Peninsula congregations including St. Mark’s Lutheran, Toivola; Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, Atlantic Mine; Grace Lutheran Church, South Range; and First Lutheran Church, Gladstone. In Wisconsin, from 1976 to 1991, he led the congregations at Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Racine, and Mt. Zion Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa.

In 1991, Pastor Skogman was elected Bishop of the Northern Great Lakes Synod (NGLS) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). He served in that office for eight years, retiring in 1999. In 2000, the NGLS honored him with the title of Bishop Emeritus.

Bishop Skogman and his wife of 41 years, Josephine, reside in Gladstone, Michigan. They are the parents of three children, Laura, Bradley and Leah, and the grandparents of nine.
FINNISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER
GALLERY SCHEDULE 2006

February 20th – March 30th, 2006
Opening Reception: Friday, March 10th, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

FUISAD Faculty Exhibit
An exhibition featuring the new works of Finlandia University International School of Art and Design faculty members Jon Brookhouse, Yueh-Mei Cheng, Phyllis Fredendall, Rick Loduha, Kristian Venalainen and Seda Yilmaz.

April 4th – April 20th, 2006
Opening Reception: Tuesday, April 4th, 7:00-8:30 p.m.

FUISAD Juried Student Exhibition
This exhibition includes work by Finlandia International School of Art and Design students studying the fine art and design disciplines of drawing, painting and illustration, ceramic and glass, fiber and fashion design, product and interior design, and graphic design and digital media.

April 25th – May 28th, 2006
Opening Reception: Saturday, April 29th, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

FUISAD Diploma Works Exhibition
This exhibit features the “diploma works” of all students graduating with a BFA from the Finlandia International School of Art and Design. The pieces represent a student’s final body of work and take the form of intensive research projects, series of individual artworks, or design prototypes.

The Finnish American Heritage Center Gallery promotes Finlandia University’s mission: A Learning Community Dedicated to Academic Excellence, Spiritual Growth and Service, through exhibitions of contemporary Finnish, Finnish-American and American artists. Beyond advancing the arts in our region, the gallery provides educational resources for our community, and is a gathering place for people to discuss and reflect upon art. One of our goals is to become a leading exhibitor of Finnish and Finnish-American art nationwide.

Carrie Flaspohler
Gallery Director

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Twenty-five years ago it was my impression that in order to survive Suomi College had to revise its mission. It is amazing to see how the present Finlandia University, under the leadership of President Ubbelohde, has grown. It has utilized its Finnish background to establish dynamic contacts with modern Finland and has developed these contacts into sources of new inspiration and new programs. Finlandia has become an institution with an international orientation. It would be desirable for young Finnish students to make increased use of the opportunities Finlandia offers.

It was Bob Ubbelohde who asked me to become a member of the Finlandia Board of Trustees. In the early 1980s I visited Suomi College; Dr. Robert Ubbelohde and the late Rev. Olaf Rankinen were my hosts. I also met twice with the late Dr. Ralph Jalkanen, former president of Suomi College. Although my work for the benefit of Finlandia University has been limited, I have observed Bob’s frequent visits to Finland and he has established an excellent network here. It has been astonishing to see how the doors have opened for him at the highest levels of state, not to mention his contacts with many Finnish educational institutions.

For me it has been a great satisfaction to follow the development of Suomi College towards the present Finlandia, and I am sure that many other Board members share this feeling. The main task of Finlandia is to serve its surrounding community. However, in doing so it has not forgotten its roots. In this respect, the Finnish American Heritage Center is close to my heart.

The Helsinki University Library has always been interested in Finnish-American literature. It has accumulated a unique collection of Finnish language publications printed in North America. Contacts between the Library and the Finnish-American community have also been kept alive. Of course, my contacts also include many other organizations interested in Finnish-American history. For example, in the 1980s a shared program to microfilm many Finnish-American newspapers was carried out in cooperation with a number of North American institutions.

For Finland, it is important to strengthen ties with Finnish descendants in the United States. Although human interest is a strong power, this can’t be done solely on a sentimental basis. To be useful, the new relationships must be based on realism. Finlandia has established an excellent example of how it can be done. As a former university manager, I am convinced that Finnish institutions of higher learning have much to learn from the entrepreneurial spirit of Finlandia.

But what can Finlandia and the educational institutions of the U.S. learn from the Finnish experience? Finland is rather advanced in some areas and long ago the small nation understood that their future depended upon education. Although the basic concepts for the recent social and economic success in Finland are based on local circumstances and can’t necessarily be adopted elsewhere per se, Finlandia has obviously identified and successfully adapted some of them.
The Finlandia volleyball team accomplished many ‘firsts’ this season, including finishing the season with double-digits in the win category, 17-18. Qualifying to compete in the November 5-6, 2005, NCAA Division III Independents Tournament at Russell Sage College, Troy, New York, was another.

The women beat the number one and number two seeded teams at the Independents tournament, capturing two early victories. Their first win against Newbury College (Boston, MA) took only three games. The second win versus Russell Sage College did not come as easily, but the Lions snatched the win in the fifth game with a score of 15-11.

Heading into the tournament’s semi-final matches, the Lions were reseeded number one. The Lions cruised past Mitchell College (New London, CT) in three straight sets (30-18, 30-16, 30-19). In the championship game, the Lions faced Russell Sage College once again. Finlandia gave their opponents four tough games, but Russell Sage came out on top. Departing seniors Mara Bray and Michelle Kuure, and sophomore Samantha Fisher received All-Tournament Team honors.

“I am so proud of how the team rallied behind each other, day in and day out, this season,” says third-year head volleyball coach Victoria Huenink. “We made tremendous strides. Our young team has already made a statement for things to come.”

Another first this season, three separate Association of Division III Independents “Player-of-the-Week” awards were awarded to the Lions. The first went to senior Michelle Kuure (Houghton, MI) for her play the week of September 12-18.

In her final season of collegiate play, Kuure broke several career and season records, many her own. Kuure holds the season records for the most service aces (85), most digs (790) and most digs per game average (6.69). She also holds the career records for the most service aces (185), most digs (1925) and most digs per game (6.27).

“Michelle is going to be a tough player to replace,” says Huenink. “She wasn’t the loudest on the court, but she made up for it by being exactly where she was supposed to be….and even places you didn’t expect her to be.”

The second “Player-of-the-Week” award went to Samantha Fisher (Yakima, WA) for her play the week of October 3-9. Fisher helped lead the team on the offensive end, hitting .177 on the season and averaging 2.61 kills per game. She also broke season records for solo blocks with 48, most total blocks with 81, and the most kills with 295. “I am looking forward to having Sami around for two more years,” states Huenink. “She is a very talented athlete who puts 110% of her heart into the game.”

The final “Player-of-the-Week” honors this season were awarded to senior Mara Bray (Haslett, MI) for her play the week of October 24-30. This season, Bray was second on the team in kills (269), service aces (68) and digs (619). Bray also holds the second position in team records for these categories.

“Mara’s leadership on and off the court is what makes her irreplaceable,” says Huenink. “She is very knowledgeable about the game and has a special kind of energy that you don’t see that often. She’ll make a great coach some day.”

“There were many other firsts for the Lions this year, too many to list,” says Huenink. “Don’t expect it to end, though. Many of our talented athletes are returning next season, including Ashley Sartori (Crystal Falls, MI), Kim Payne (Crystal Falls, MI) and Laura Peterson (St. Ignace, MI). I expect the success to continue!”
“The Finlandia men’s and women’s cross country teams concluded their third season heading in the right direction,” says second-year head coach Curtis Wittenberg.

With three new women and four new men, Wittenberg established three challenging team goals for his team at the beginning of the 2005 season: 1) to improve our times from race to race; 2) to peak at the end of the season; and 3) to get our first and fifth place finishers within one minute of each other.

“All the runners peaked at the end of the season, although not all runners improved their times from race to race,” states Wittenberg. “In our final two races, everyone on the team accomplished their personal best times. We didn’t, however, accomplish our third goal this season. It’s a difficult goal to accomplish, and one that all cross-country teams strive for,” remarks Wittenberg.

Transfer student Kate Abbott (Houghton, MI) made the biggest impact among the new runners, helping the women’s team accomplish the first and second goals. “Kate adds an element we haven’t had,” says Wittenberg. “She’s a lead runner who’s competitive with the lead runners of other schools.” Abbott ran a team and Finlandia record best at the Alma College Invite on October 15, 2005, completing the five-kilometer race in 20:44, and placing fourth among 25 runners.

On the men’s side, freshman Josh King (Marquette, MI) peaked at the eight-kilometer race at the Ripon College Invite (October 8, 2005), where he finished the course in 31:28, the team’s best this season. “Josh was our best men’s runner this year, motivating additional runners to try and catch him,” states Wittenberg.

Three seniors ran their final collegiate races: Crystal Vivian (Ishpeming, MI), Jennifer Viau (Gladstone, MI) and John Mackey (East Orange, NJ). “Not surprisingly, Crystal stepped up in a leadership role this season,” comments Wittenberg. “With three years experience on both the women’s basketball team and the cross country team, she understood how things needed to be done.”

“Jennifer was a reliable and consistent runner. I always knew what to expect from race to race,” says Wittenberg. “John Mackey’s contribution was more mental than anything else. His laid-back attitude and ‘finish-at-all-costs’ demeanor carried over to the rest of the team.”

“Overall, it was a successful season in the history of Finlandia cross country,” concludes Wittenberg. “We set some new records; the men’s team won their first race in the history of Finlandia cross country; and in our final race of the year, three of the women runners placed in the top 15.”
Open House Marks Dedication of Hockey Facilities

The Finlandia University Athletic Department dedicated new hockey locker room facilities in a newly constructed wing of the Houghton Country Arena, Hancock, October 10.

Thanks to the efforts of the Finlandia Athletic Department and its Hockey Locker Room Fundraising Committee, private donors and local businesses donated 100% of the cost of the completed men’s locker room space. Many contributors are recognized by name in the new facilities. For instance, particular lockers and rooms of the new facility bear the donors’ names.

Completion of identical women’s locker room facilities begins this spring. “Preliminary fundraising plans are underway,” said Finlandia Athletic Director Chris Salani. It is expected that the women’s facilities will be completed in time for the start of the 2006-07 hockey season. This season, the women are using two of the existing visiting locker rooms at the arena.

FAHC Presents Finnish Children’s Opera

The Finlandia University Campus Enrichment Committee presented a local production of a Finnish children’s opera at the Finnish American Heritage Center in October.


Based on a series of popular Finnish children’s books by Tiina and Sinikka Nopola, the opera tells the story of how two young sisters react to their mother’s pregnancy and the eventual arrival of a new little brother.

Winter Community Play Production: The Snow Queen

Danish storyteller Hans Christian Andersen transformed the folk tale into an art form, writing with subtlety, sophistication and humor. His stories were created for adults as much as they were created for children. The year 2005 marked the 200th anniversary of his birth.

Joining celebrations worldwide, the Performing Arts Department of Finlandia University invited the Copper Country to three performances of one of Andersen’s best-known fairy tales, The Snow Queen, December 8-11.

Hundreds of playgoers joined the many puppets and cast members for an evening of word, drama and song as the players traveled from Denmark to Finland, Lapland and Norway. Directed by Finlandia performing arts instructor Melvin Kangas, the play featured many of the cast members from the popular Finlandia University and Finn Grand Fest 2005 productions of Gala Day at the Cooperative Store.

Basketball Team Travels to Finland

The Finlandia men’s basketball team represented Finlandia University and the City of Hancock, Michigan, in Porvoo, Finland, January 2nd and 4th, where they played two exhibition basketball games against the professional Finnish basketball team Porvoon Tarmo.

“None of the team members expected this kind of international play,” said Kemppainen. “It was a great opportunity for these student-athletes. We faced some pretty tough competition.”

The City of Hancock has enjoyed a sister city relationship with Porvoo, Finland, for many years. Porvoo is home to about 46,000 and has an area of 654 square kilometers. It is a thriving business and commerce center for the eastern part of the Uusimaa Province.
Guatemalan Speaks of Economic and Human Rights Struggles

Guatemalan Macaria (Miriam) Jocop Guamuch is at the forefront of her country’s struggle for economic and human rights. Representing the Alliance for Life and Peace of the Petén, Ms. Jocop recently spoke with several Finlandia classes about economic alternatives to recent global trade agreements and the geography and history of the Petén region of Guatemala.

Ms. Jocop is from the Petén, a remote jungle area in northern Guatemala currently under pressure from oil and forestry development interests. The recent “Survivor: Guatemala” TV series was filmed in a nature preserve and archeological park there.

“Miriam spoke about the effects of a global economy on peasant farmers in Guatemala, giving students an inside look at the cultural as well as economic effects of global trade agreements,” said Finlandia assistant professor of English, Suzanne VanDam. “Students were exposed to a unique cultural perspective while learning about the ways in which global trade agreements affect all of us in an interconnected economy.”

Ms. Jocop’s visit to the Copper Country was sponsored by the Finlandia University Campus Enrichment Committee and the Copper Country Guatemala Accompaniment Project, a local group that attempts to strengthen ties between Guatemala and the Copper Country.

Student Seminar Encourages Success and Service

Required for new and transfer students, the “Finlandia Success Seminar” (UNS 100) encourages the learning of strategies to develop and improve study, organizational and time management skills, and hone effective communication and interpersonal skills. The four-week, one credit course is conducted by non-faculty staff members from a variety of university departments.

“The seminar introduces students both to each other and to the many people and services on campus. It’s designed to assist students in achieving a satisfying and successful experience at Finlandia University,” said Kirsti Arko, Finlandia’s director of student retention. “It’s also a good opportunity for new students to meet non-faculty staff members.”

“Attending Finlandia is about more than attending classes and getting a degree,” said Arko. “The seminar helps new and transfer students successfully transition to college life, and introduces them to Finlandia’s ideals for academic excellence, spiritual growth and service.”

Conducting the seminar is also rewarding for involved staff members. This fall assistant librarian Signe Carstens instructed her first section of the class. “The best part of experience was seeing the students grow in their confidence,” Carstens said. “They were timid at first, but by the end of the class they’d really opened up and become more comfortable. I’ve maintained relationships with many of the students, and they ask me for research help much more easily.”

Success seminar students are now required to perform at least an hour of community service. “This was the first time a service activity was required as part of the seminar,” said Arko, “The students were very positive about it and because so many opportunities for service exist in our community, they were able to select something of interest to them personally or academically.”

“I have done volunteer work through the National Guard, but this experience has been by far the most rewarding,” added Bob Jones, a freshman seminar participant. “I plan to continue to do this as long as I can, to learn all I can, to help me in my studies.” Jones, a physical therapist assistant major, volunteered at Body Mechanix, a local fitness and rehabilitation facility.

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Recent Works on Paper

Among today’s most highly acclaimed Native American artists, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith visited Finlandia University as an artist-in-residence October 18-19. An exhibit of her recent work was featured at the FAHC Gallery through mid-November.

Smith conducted several workshops for
students, area educators and community artists, and presented a well-attended public lecture. “It was exciting to see such a great response from the community to a gallery event,” said Gallery Director Carrie Flaspohler of the public lecture. “More than 100 students and community members attended, making it a great arena for thought-provoking conversations about the role of art in Native American culture.”

Smith’s work is included in the collections of The Walker Museum, Minneapolis, Minnesota; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; and the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum, both of New York.

“I am working closely with Dr. Jeanne Rellahan, SCAS dean, on two of her top priorities: the mentoring of faculty members and further development of the Arts, Culture and the Environment (ACE) inter-disciplinary liberal arts degree program,” Jeff said.

“The ACE! program is a terrific concept,” Jeff continued. It could really become a centerpiece to bring additional high quality students to Finlandia.”

Originally from Saline, Michigan, Jeff has earned degrees in sociology at the doctoral, master’s and bachelor’s levels. He has been teaching sociology and researching and writing about rural health and aging for more than 15 years. Most recently, from 1999 to 2003, he was the Director of the Institute on Aging and a professor at the University of Florida College of Medicine.

Funded by a grant from The McGregor Fund, Finlandia’s McGregor Scholar mentoring program strengthens the university’s bachelor’s degree in Arts, Culture and the Environment by giving students and faculty the opportunity to interact with contemporary scholars.

**Finnish Polytechnic Educators Visit Northern Midwest**

Representatives from Savonia Polytechnic, one of Finland’s largest post-secondary polytechnic systems, visited Finlandia University and the northern Midwest the week of November 28. The Finnish educators were exploring the differences and similarities of the Finnish and U.S. systems of higher education, and exchanging information and ideas.

“The European Union is urging Finland’s polytechnics to send more students abroad for international study,” said Heikki Jylha-Vuorio, vice director of the Kuopio Academy of Design, part of Savonia Polytechnic.

“We are networking with U.S. educators, and looking for synergies to accelerate our international exchange programs.”

Joining Jylha-Vuorio were Veli-Matti Tolppi, president of Savonia Polytechnic, and Kari Lehtomaki, director of the technical school at Savonia Polytechnic. Jylha-Vuorio was dean of the Finlandia International School of Art and Design from 2001-2004.

Begun about 15 years ago, Finnish polytechnics concentrate on hands-on, practical learning, collaborating with businesses and other organizations to offer students a practical, interdisciplinary introduction to the working world. Polytechnics are quickly gaining the prestige enjoyed by traditional Finnish universities. Finlandia has adapted the interdisciplinary, practical Finnish polytechnic model in much of its curriculum.

Savonia Polytechnic, with approximately 7,000 students, is one of the largest polytechnics in eastern Finland. It operates three campuses in eastern Finland: Iisalmi, Kuopio and Varkaus.
Lindsey Aarness

Student Knitting Design Selected by National Magazine

Family Album of Knits, a book to be published next spring by Creative Knitting Magazine, will include a knitting project design by Finlandia University senior fiber arts student Lindsey Aarness of Hancock, Michigan. Aarness will complete her Bachelor of Fine Arts in May 2006. She is the daughter of Elaine and Terry Aarness of Iron Mountain.

“I was very excited when I learned my design had been selected for the book,” said Aarness. “I sent it to Creative Knitting for publication in their magazine, but they decided to use it in the book instead.”

The design is for a knitted “Juke Box Purse.” Inspired by a photo of an old-time jukebox, the intermediate skill level pattern would take an experienced knitter from 8 to 10 hours to complete. The book will include the design, pattern and graph for the purse, as well as a photo of the completed purse.

“Lindsey completed her internship this summer with local knitting designer Lois Young,” said Finlandia University fiber arts instructor Phyllis Fredendall. “That experience gave her the tools and confidence to submit her proposal and meet the production deadline.”
University's mission and vision, its heritage, and its instructional and student development goals.

"The Advancement Committee serves as a support network for staff responsible for financial goals and practices," said Pastor Melvin Johnson, chair of the committee. "We engage with staff in idea building to uplift the image of Finlandia and strengthen its financial structure and support system – a support system that begins with the committee itself, and encompasses not only the full board of trustees but the entire donor base."

"I believe that taking 'personal ownership' in Finlandia is essential for enthusiastic and effective contribution to work and service," Melvin said. "Serving on the board has been a very positive experience." Melvin shares his over twenty years of planned and legacy gifting experience with Finlandia.

"The Business and Finance Committee deals with the financial aspects of the university," said Ken Seaton, chair of the committee. "The committee's input helps staff balance overall costs with tuition rates and other revenue sources. We are also concerned with fundraising, as a substantial portion of the costs of providing quality education to our students is met through contributions from friends and alumni."

"Finlandia has a substantial economic impact on the community," said Ken. "That's a big part of why I serve on the board. It's an entity that helps the whole area, providing jobs and graduates for the Copper Country community."

Now retired, Ken is past chairman of the board for Detroit and Northern Financial Corp. and director emeritus of Republic Bancorp. He has served on Finlandia's board for close to 40 years.

"One of the goals of the Church Relations Committee is to foster and encourage policies and programs to achieve the institution's commitment to the spiritual growth of its students, faculty and staff," said Ronald Jones, chair of the committee. "I hope that I play a supporting role assuring Finlandia University remains an effective church-related school."

Ronald Jones has been president of the Siebert Lutheran Foundation since 1993. He has served on Finlandia's board for nearly 10 years.

The Heritage Committee supports the university's commitment to preserving and promoting its Finnish heritage. "I'm happy to see the connection between Finlandia and Finland being solidified through the work of the university," said Dr. Gloria Jackson, chair of the committee. "My involvement on Finlandia's board is a natural because of my Finnish-ness."

Gloria is an officer of the Cable America Corporation of Phoenix, Arizona. In 1996, she established the Bill and Gloria Jackson Family History Center at the Finnish American Heritage Center. Gloria also serves on the Executive Committee and is a past board chairman. She has served on the board for 20 years.

An Enthusiastic, Skilled Network
Gift Aims to Increase Awareness of Art & Design Programs

A $100,000 gift from Elsa and David Brule of Iron Mountain, Michigan, will help to bolster the visibility of the Finlandia University International School of Art and Design (ISAD).

Elsa Brule, who serves on the university’s President’s Council, was inspired by a recent tour of ISAD classrooms and studios at Finlandia’s new Portage Campus. “Seeing the energy and work ethic of the faculty there was exciting,” Elsa said. “Dave and I are committed to education and we were inspired to act as a catalyst to add momentum to the program. Finlandia’s art and design program makes sense for the Upper Peninsula and is heading in the right direction. We felt compelled to contribute.”

“The Brule’s generous gift will enhance the art and design degree programs at Finlandia in several ways including two full tuition and fees art and design scholarships,” said President Robert Ubbelohde. “I am deeply appreciative of the Brule’s interest in Finlandia.” In addition, the gift will establish a visiting designer program to bring high-profile professional designers and artists to campus, and a revised recruitment “view book” will be produced.

Elsa Brule has been encouraging student artists in Iron Mountain and the Upper Peninsula for many years. She helped to establish the Association of Student Artists (ASA), a collaboration of high school art teachers and students from Dickinson County, Michigan, and northeast Wisconsin that promotes and validates the study of art and the creative process.

“I am very interested in art and design education and encouraging and affirming the talents and strengths of artists of all ages. Creative thinking is essential in every aspect of life,” Elsa said. “Our gift represents the respect Dave and I have for the creative process as is reflected so acutely in the study of art and design at Finlandia.”

Both Elsa and David Brule are very active in the Iron Mountain and Upper Peninsula communities. David is the former owner, president and CEO of M. J. Electric, Inc. He is the owner of Northern Star Industries of Iron Mountain, a manufacturing concern that includes Systems Control Corp. and THE BOSS Snow Plow. Dave also serves on a number of boards and committees, including the Michigan Tech Board of Control. The Brules live in Iron Mountain and New York City.

The President’s Council ... Bold Perspectives

The Finlandia University President’s Council is comprised of civic and business leaders who share a deep concern for the university. It was established by Finlandia President Robert Ubbelohde in 2003 to elicit a fresh perspective on the issues, challenges and opportunities that face Finlandia.

The council is a unique source of guidance and support for the president. Its members are encouraged to think and advise boldly – with tolerance, wisdom and common sense. “The real purpose of the council is to give Bob frank and knowledgeable advice about the challenges facing Finlandia,” said Marvin Suomi, chair of the President’s Council.

“The President’s Council is an opportunity for the president to voice his thoughts and engage in a free flow exchange of ideas,” added council member Elsa Brule. “In no way do we do the work of the board. We are an advisory body only, an important differentiation.”

“The council’s shared interest in Finlandia’s history, and especially its future, has allowed for a positive dynamic that I feel has been useful to President Ubbelohde,” Elsa continued. “At its best, the council can be described as a catalyst in the pursuit of the mission of the university.”

“It all comes back to my belief that liberal arts, and the humanities specifically, are going to survive and thrive in small schools,” Marvin said of his interest in higher education. “The more I become involved at Finlandia, the more convinced I become that it deserves to survive; it’s the university’s sustainability I’m most interested in.”

“There are all kinds of people like me who can support large universities, but at a smaller school I feel I can add more value,” Marvin said. “There are a lot of tough questions that small schools have to ask themselves. I like to pose the questions that need to be addressed; I also like to find the solutions.”

Marvin Suomi grew up in Wakefield, a community in the western U.P. He is president and CEO of KUD International, a company involved in large-scale public-private projects around the world. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Princeton University. Marvin is active on the governing, advisory and academic boards of a number of universities including University of Michigan, Concordia University, Allegheny College, California Lutheran University and the University of Hawaii Medical School. He was recently awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters by Concordia University, St. Paul.
Responding to a Request...

By Ronald D. Jones

In August of 1993, I had been president of the Siebert Lutheran Foundation for less than three months. It was then that I first met Dr. Robert Ubbelohde from Suomi College, now Finlandia University. Dr. Ubbelohde and I did the usual first-time meeting introductions, exchanged background information, and when he told me about the 270 inches of average snowfall typical of a winter in Hancock, Michigan, I was amazed. Later that same winter, Dr. Ubbelohde wrote that he was thinking of me as he was on his roof with the snow blower. I could not imagine!

In April 1995 my wife and I attended the Suomi College spring graduation where we were introduced to many faculty members and trustees and, of course, to Keweenaw pasties. Our participation in the celebration of graduation and the reception for the families of new graduates was a profound privilege. The next afternoon, we drove to the northern tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula and experienced the amazing sights of the Lake Superior shoreline. Needless to say, my wife and I were enamored with the scenery.

It was in November 1995, during one of Dr. Ubbelohde’s annual visits to the Siebert Lutheran Foundation, that he suggested I consider joining the Finlandia University Board of Trustees. His reasons were that I would represent the Greater Milwaukee Synod, a Board position that was at that time vacant, that as a registered nurse I would be a welcome addition to the Finlandia’s School of Nursing Community Advisory Committee, and that in participating on the Board I would gain a more thorough knowledge of the college for the purpose of grant presentations to the Siebert Foundation Board.

I kept Dr. Ubbelohde’s request in the back my mind and read what information I could gather about Finlandia University over the winter. Sometime in the spring of 1996, Dr. Ubbelohde called to remind me of our earlier conversation, and asked me to join the Finlandia Board of Trustees. I told him that I would be honored and said yes. At my first Finlandia Board of Trustees meeting I was in awe, and to this day I continue in awe, of the many gifted people congregated around the continuous board table in the theatre of the Heritage Center.

I drove home from that first meeting thinking that there was nothing that I could contribute to this Board. I shared my doubts with Dr. Ubbelohde and he assured me that in a short time I would feel comfortably engaged with Finlandia. Indeed, in my short time on the Board, I have developed many friendships, seen Board colleagues retire, and some pass from this earthly life.

In a short time, I became an active participant on the Board’s Church Relations Committee. One of the committee’s goals, as stated in the university’s mission, is to foster and encourage policies and programs to achieve the institution’s commitment to the spiritual growth of its students, faculty, and staff. Dating back to strong and formative roots with the early Lutheran church’s Suomi Conference, Finlandia University remains a Lutheran, church-related school. I hope that I play a supporting roll in assuring that Finlandia remains an effective church-related school.

The goal of the Siebert Lutheran Foundation is to provide support to Lutheran organizations, including Lutheran colleges and universities, enabling them to be more creative, compassionate and effective in serving people and sharing God’s Word. I’m grateful for the opportunity to serve the Lutheran church and Finlandia University. The continual compassionate leadership role of Finlandia University students, staff, faculty, and trustees in the community motivates me to continue my work. Finlandia’s focus on Servant Leadership is inspiring to me. It is not enough to prepare students only for work. Students must be prepared for life and work. Our Finlandia students need support in their studies, their dreams and their goals.

Ronald Jones has been president of Siebert Lutheran Foundation, Inc. since 1993. For 13 years he served as vice president for Elmbrook Memorial Hospital in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In the 19 years prior, he worked at Elmbrook Hospital as a registered nurse, nurse manager and clinical nursing supervisor.

The Siebert Lutheran Foundation has provided generous funding for the development of a variety of Suomi College and Finlandia University programs. A Siebert Foundation grant contributed significantly to the completion of Finlandia’s Chapel of St. Matthew in 2000.
The members of the Finlandia University Board of Trustees give generously of their time and talents, guiding the university in its pursuit of educational excellence and acting as advisors to university staff and faculty. Their individual careers and personal accomplishments represent many vocations in a wide variety of industries and geographical locations.

Mr. Richard T. Lindgren has served as a trustee on Finlandia's board since 1990. His business career spans more than 50 years and he is active in a number of non-profit organizations. Lindgren earned his MBA at Harvard University and is a current director and past president of the Harvard Business School Club of Detroit. He has served in executive management positions for several international corporations including Ford Motor Company, the Mead Corporation and Allis Chalmers. He was chairman, president and CEO of Koehring Company, and president and CEO of Cross and Trecker Corp. He is currently the president of Lorr Corporation, a private investment company.

Lindgren recognizes the level of expertise among Finlandia's trustees and he wants to share that with Finlandia students. He recently shared his nine ‘building blocks for a successful career’ with Finlandia business students. “The job market has really changed,” Lindgren said. “Many will find themselves changing careers several times in their working life. Even those very well qualified will face tough competition in the job market.” His wise counsel, gleaned from decades of business and manufacturing experience, are applicable to whatever path an individual's career may take.

Lindgren’s practical advice includes nine major points.

1. Continue your education. Learn and accumulate knowledge applicable to your work. Build new skill sets and obtain appropriate training and licensing.

2. Manage your money wisely. Build a cash reserve and put money aside for harder times. Be careful with credit cards and keep your credit history clean. “If you can’t manage your own money, how can employers expect you to manage theirs?” Lindgren asked.

3. Travel an ethical path. Lindgren’s mother cautioned him often, ‘Don’t lie, cheat and steal.’ Simply put, good ethics is good business; bad ethics is bad business.

4. Build a strong team. The lone wolf doesn’t make it anymore. The effective accomplishment of business objectives requires a team effort. Develop and nurture your team, including those you work with, as well as those you work for.

5. Know your God. It is likely that you will be faced with a career or life crisis. To help weather difficult storms, call on a strength beyond your own capabilities. We all need a place to turn in times of great stress.

6. Give of your time and talents. Don’t deny society your own unique contributions. You will be presented with opportunities to give to others throughout your career. These opportunities will help you in your work, bolster your résumé and add breadth and depth to your life and career.

7. Avoid cigarettes, recreational drugs and alcohol. Keep yourself free of harmful, addictive habits. It’s easy to cross the line. Save yourself from embarrassing and harmful situations.

8. Cultivate a wide circle of friends. It broadens your information base, presents multiple opportunities to learn and enjoy life, and lends support in times of need.

9. Choose your mate very carefully. Marriage is a team in which you strive to accomplish similar goals. Divorce can be financially ruinous.

“It can be tough balancing work and family,” said Lindgren. “Recognize difficulties, set priorities, eliminate as much stress as possible, and get plenty of rest.” And finally, if you’re not having fun and enjoying your work, pursue alternate opportunities.
The Finlandia University Finnish Council in America ... Perspectives on Heritage

The Finlandia University Finnish Council in America is a network of Finns, Finnish Americans and others interested in preserving and promoting the Finnish heritage of the university. The group meets once yearly during the summer months, often the weekend of the annual Sibelius Academy Music Festival.

Paul Knuti

“The Finnish Council presents many opportunities to discuss the strategic directions of Finlandia,” said Paul Knuti, current chairman of the council. “The perspectives of the council represent many connections to the university.”

“If members of the council were paid consultants, the university would realize a sizable donation,” said Paul. “It has become an impressive group of people given the personal and professional backgrounds of individual members.”

Paul's interest in Finlandia University is manifold. “First, I became interested because several friends are involved on the council,” he explained. “They spoke of the turn-around of the university and its new beginnings, and were impressed with the new leadership of the organization.”

Paul also felt there should be additional northern Minnesota representation on the council. And his Finnish background lent an almost automatic identification with university goals. “Working with an institution that I personally identify with is a lot of fun,” Paul said.

Paul Knuti is active on the boards of several non-profit organizations. He serves on the advisory committee of the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station and also contributes his time and expertise to economic development and Habitat for Humanity. For 15 years Paul worked as a consultant for Booz Allan Hamilton, an international management consulting firm, and for 15 years was a human resources executive for The First National Bank of Chicago. Paul and his wife Carol now operate a cattle ranch in northeast Minnesota.

Michael Nakkula

“I believe any college or university must strive to be relevant to its key stakeholders,” said Dr. Michael Nakkula, past chairman of the council. “The Finnish Council provides feedback on what we, as Finns and Finnish Americans, value. We work with the president and administration to see that those values are integrated within the curriculum and larger mission of the university.”

Mike has many ties to Finlandia and to the Copper Country. Born and raised in Hancock, he spent much of his youth just two blocks from Suomi College. While he was growing up, Mike's mother, grandmother, aunts and father worked on the staff of Suomi College. His brother, Tim Nakkula, is currently the head of food service at Finlandia.

“As an educator and researcher who focuses on the needs of low-income young people, I am delighted to participate in the growth of Finlandia,” Mike said. “I believe the institution is vital to the well-being of so many youth in the Copper Country, and to Finnish heritage in North America. Meeting with other Finnish professionals from around the country keeps me connected to my own ethnic roots.”

Mike earned a doctorate in counseling and consulting psychology at Harvard University. He developed and co-directs the Harvard University interdisciplinary master’s degree program, “Risk and Prevention.” Mike was the first recipient of the Harvard University endowed chair, “Kargman Junior Professorship in Human Development and Urban Education.” He is the senior author of two books that focus on youth and the training of counselors, teachers and administrators. Mike and his wife Caroline have two young children.

Alice Kellogg

“I'm proud to be Finnish and honored to serve on the Finnish Council,” said Alice Kellogg, a Suomi College alumna and member of both the council and the Finlandia Board of Trustees. “I feel that the opinions of council and board members are very much valued by the university. The work that we do at these meetings really does help and contribute.”

Alice's late grandfather, Rev. Andrew Tuukkanen, was an early supporter of Suomi College. Her work with Finlandia honors his memory. “I also have very fond memories of my time at Suomi,” Alice said. “I wanted to give back to the community and to the university, and I like to be involved.”

Alice graduated from Suomi College in 1980. “My time at Suomi was wonderful,” Alice said. “I was president of the Finnish Club, active on the student council and the dean's cabinet, and I sang in the choir. I'm so thankful for the time that I had there.”

Alice is secretary for the Finnish American Society of the Midwest and she volunteers for several school, youth and church organizations. “My time is a gift,” Alice said. “Anytime that you can contribute to your church, youth or community, everyone benefits.” Alice earned a B.B.A. from Northern Michigan University and attended graduate school at the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. She, her husband Keith, and their three children live in the Chicago area.
Community Partners

Strengthening Area Relationships

“Universities visibly attend to their alumni, students and donors, but the community is important, too,” said Finlandia University Board of Trustees member Ron Helman. “It’s a real plus for any institution to have the community involved and knowledgeable about what is going on.”

At Helman’s suggestion, the Finlandia University Community Partners program was begun in 1997. A retired vice president of advancement for Michigan Technological University, Helman modeled the group after a similar initiative at Michigan Tech.

Upper Peninsula community leaders, business people and educators gather two or three times yearly to learn more about the successes and challenges of Finlandia University and to hear of the university’s plans for the future. Community Partners are also invited to share their thoughts and concerns about Finlandia as it moves ahead and continues to impact the quality of life in the Copper Country.

“The goals of the Community Partners group are simple,” said Finlandia president Dr. Robert Ubbeebohde. “First, the university wants community opinion leaders to be fully informed of our vision for the university, our goals, our initiatives, our rationale for decisions and actions, and our progress on our strategic plan. Second, Community Partners provides a forum for their input and feedback.”

“The City of Hancock is excited about Finlandia’s growth – where they’ve come to date and where they want to go – the city wants to grow with them,” said Barry Givens, mayor of the City Hancock. “The Community Partners meetings offer a nice atmosphere to get together and share ideas.”

“Finlandia has a lot to gain by being a part of the community,” Givens said. “As much as the city depends on Finlandia, Finlandia also depends on the city. The students that come here expect a lot. To make it attractive to them, the city and university must work together.”

“Higher education is critical to the long term viability of the Copper Country,” said Jim Bogan, president of Portage Health System. “Every trend that you look at talks about the training and brain power we need in this country. It’s important that education rise to a higher level. It helps the Copper Country to ‘raise the bar’ and adds a dimension to our community that every rural community doesn’t have.”

“As a representative of local health care, the Community Partners group gives me an opportunity to understand our patient base from an employer perspective,” said Bogan. “It’s important for us to understand the issues and opportunities presented by a large local entity like Finlandia. Through the hospital’s ongoing collaborations with the nursing and PTA programs at Finlandia, we both better understand each other’s missions. Community Partners gives us an opportunity to discover additional collaborative efforts.”

“The Community Partners group keeps me in the loop of what is going on at Finlandia,” said John Vaara, superintendent of Hancock Public Schools. “It gives the public schools a perspective on where Finlandia is heading.”

Vaara said that updates on academic programs the university is looking at implementing, especially, are useful information for a school administrator to know and pass on to principals and others in his district. And, as a resident of Hancock, he is interested in what Finlandia is doing and how they’re doing it.

“As school superintendents, we’re educational leaders. This is a way to find out what’s going on in our community,” Vaara said. “When parents and students call me, it’s nice to be able to tell them what’s going on at Finlandia, alerting them to employment opportunities or passing on information that will be helpful to them as their children reach college age.”

“If you listed all the things that are important to the long-term viability of the Copper Country, higher education would probably be at the top of the list,” said Ted Fredrickson, president of Michigan Tech Employees Federal Credit Union. “Because Finlandia is such an important part of the community – and is growing in importance – involving the rest of community is critical both for the community and Finlandia,” Fredrickson said. “Finlandia is one of the larger employee groups that we serve; Community Partners strengthens our relationships with them.”

“Finlandia represents two of the largest constituencies – Finnish and Lutheran – in the Copper Country, currently and historically,” Fredrickson continued. “The contributions of the Finns to the Copper Country, especially to education, are manifested in Finlandia and its vision for the school.”
on East Africa

“The initial pull to East Africa began for me in high school,” René said. “While raising money with other students to build a school in Tanzania,” I recognized that there was a need in a part of the world that I knew nothing about. I thought I might be able to do a very small thing about it. My youth pastor helped me recognize in very small ways that faith is not just for my own privilege; it is to be put to work somehow for the greater good.”

René first set her feet upon East African soil in 1984. Following completion of her undergraduate degree, she joined a group of students in Kenya through Campus Crusade for Christ. “It was a very good first introduction to the church in East Africa,” René said. “I gained a broad view of the church there.”

A combination of opportunity, passion and desire have allowed René to live her faith in other parts of the world, although she could have just as easily pursued careers closer to home. “The opportunities were there, and I said yes,” she explained.

In 1986-87, René and her husband, Pastor Phil Johnson, spent a year at an Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania secondary school in the Morogoro Diocese. Rene taught biology and math there, while Phil, completing a seminar studies internship, taught Bible courses and served as campus pastor.

“They were back in the States,” René continued. “My husband finished his education, and I continued mine. I obtained my Minnesota teaching license while Phil served an ELCA congregation in the Twin Cities area. It was during these four years that our two sons were born.”

“In January 1992, we went to Nairobi, Kenya. It was our first call through the ELCA Division for Global Mission,” René said. In Nairobi, René and Phil served with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya (ELCK). “There were only five ELCK missionaries in Kenya at that time, and church membership of only 15,000,” René said. “We liked that it was a smaller entity and felt a more immediate connection with the church identity.”

“Initially, we thought we would spend eight to ten years in Nairobi, but the ELCA Division for Global Mission invited Phil to complete his doctoral degree on a full scholarship,” René said. So in mid-1996, René, Phil and their two sons returned to Minnesota, where Phil completed a doctoral degree in New Testament, and René completed her master’s degree in cross-cultural studies and missiology, both at Luther Seminary.

In 1999, the Johnson family was on its way to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Both René and Phil served as teachers at the Mekane Yesus Theological Seminary. René taught courses in missiology, HIV/AIDS awareness, and study, research and teaching methods. “I was the only person on the teaching staff with formal background in educational theory,” René said. “I wrote several textbooks for the study, research and teaching methods courses.”

“I loved teaching the methods courses, especially,” René said. “The students who came to us had never used a library, written a paper, or even been shown how to use the index of a book. Starting from square one, I had eight weeks to teach these students research and study methods. I saw changes that were marvelous.”

René Johnson completed her undergraduate education in biology at Concordia College, earned secondary life sciences teaching licensure at the University of St. Thomas, and completed an M.A. in cross-cultural studies and missiology (the study of mission) at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. She and her family have spent many years in East Africa as missionaries working on behalf of the ELCA. René, her husband Phil, and their two sons, Simon, 16, and Neal, 14, live in Houghton.
“Ethiopia turned out to be a really good match for us. We had six great years there,” René said, “and now we’re back in the U.S.A. and looking forward to making a life for ourselves here.”

... on Faith

“As followers of Christ, I believe we are here to participate in the transformation of the world. We might do that through our pocketbooks in a quiet way, we might do that by organizing rallies, writing letters to our congressmen, or participating with communities different from ourselves. Most of us will simply do this through participation in the lives of others closer to home.”

“My first calling is to try to be obedient to an understanding of faith as an active thing that both helps me understand how I am particularly called to interact with the world around me, and gives me the energy and the will to it! I’ve had many opportunities in my life to help this understanding of faith grow and blossom.”

“For me, maturation of faith is reaching a place where you can live with the questions that will never be answered. Faith is not something that seals up all the questions of the universe. Faith is not about separation from the world, but about participation in the world. It’s about being teachable, open and inclusive so that we can have meaningful conversations and interaction with others who have different expressions of faith.”

“Faith is not an easy thing. It’s not a comfortable, cozy thing. It’s supposed to be a tremendous challenge, something that pushes us beyond the limits of who we think we are. Otherwise, I think we are diminishing what faith can be.”

... on Servant Leadership

“Finlandia’s receipt of the Thrivent Youth Leadership Initiative grant enables us to uplift the Lutheran identity of the university. Through the Servant Leadership Program and its new courses, students have the opportunity to explore the meaning of faith and vocation. The courses give them the chance to grow in their understanding of faith through service-learning elements both locally and in Tanzania, East Africa.”

“I am hopeful that students who are receptive to messages of faith, but are unsure how their spirituality connects to everyday life, will take advantage of these new courses. I don’t know what kinds of answers they’ll come up with, but I believe it is the responsibility of a Lutheran college to present a venue to explore the questions.”

The Servant Leadership Program currently offers four courses that assist students in the development of their individual servant-leader identity. “The courses enable students to explore the theological, sociological and economic realities that inform faith and service,” says René. Two of the courses are offered in the spring semester of 2006, the second an exciting opportunity for global service.

Servant Leadership (REL 230) is a three credit foundational course required for all successive program courses. The class presents a faith-based approach to the nature, style and skills of servant leadership. “Students will consider contemporary theories and styles of leadership, social justice issues, and vocation in connection with servant leading,” explains René. “The concepts of servant leadership will be applied through participation in and reflection on service learning volunteer work in the local community.”

Service Learning in a Global Context (REL/SOC 236) applies the leadership philosophies and skills explored in REL 230. In cooperation with the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the ELCA, and at the invitation of the Eastern and Coastal Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, the primary learning experiences of the spring 2006 section of the course will take place May 2-21, 2006, in Tanzania, East Africa. “Five preparatory seminars will explore the culture, history and language of Tanzania,” says René. “Students will also examine their own cultural identity in preparation for the intense cross-cultural experience.” In a sixth post-trip seminar participants will reflect on learning gained. In Tanzania, students will participate in a service project that benefits a school in eastern Tanzania.
Three years ago, Kathleen Lakanen, vice president for advancement at Finlandia University, asked me if I would be interested in serving on the university’s International Alumni Board (IAB). The thought intrigued me. Of all the colleges I attended, Suomi College, now Finlandia, was certainly the one that contributed more to my personal, spiritual, and professional development than any other institution. It was undoubtedly the college to which I had the strongest ties. I still marvel at my parents’ good sense in encouraging me to consider Suomi College, which still had a seminary on its premises when I enrolled. How fortunate I was to attend an institution that emphasized Christian values and encouraged a deeper awareness of my Finnish heritage. Saying “yes” to Kathleen’s request came easily. I felt it was a fitting way to say, “thank you” and give something back to an institution that provided me with such a rich educational foundation. Drawing from my experience with Florida’s community colleges and their state-level board, I hoped to bring a unique perspective to the IAB. In May 2005, after serving one year as a member, I was elected president of the IAB. By then, I had had ample opportunity to learn about the university and the significant changes in programs and mission that had taken place since I graduated in 1958.

Having recently retired from a 40-year career in education, I welcomed this opportunity to promote the mission and goals of Finlandia. To watch Finlandia grow and prosper by providing quality higher education is gratifying to me both personally and professionally.

The Role of the IAB

From my perspective, the role of IAB is four-fold: 1) to maintain and strengthen an active link between the university and its alumni; 2) to support Finlandia through IAB member time, talents, and resources; 3) to foster an alumni network; and 4) to serve in an advisory capacity to the Finlandia Board of Trustees.

To support these roles, the primary goals of the IAB for 2006 are to establish an alumni database accessible from Finlandia’s website, and to publish a periodic web-based alumni newsletter. The newsletter will share the interests and accomplishments of alumni, foster a greater sense of connectedness between alumni and the institution, while also providing current students with an awareness of how Finlandia has impacted the lives of its alumni. Steps are now being taken to accomplish these goals. My hope is that the more connected alumni members feel with the institution; the more supportive they will be of its mission.

As I continue to fill my term as IAB president, I welcome the opportunity to be a “cheerleader” for Finlandia. For me, the rewards come from being a part of something larger than oneself. If I can encourage one person to attend Finlandia; if I can help to invigorate alumni support of Finlandia; and if I can witness the graduation of satisfied Finlandia students, what better reward is there?

Dr. Sylvia Saari Fleishman has been actively involved in secondary and post-secondary education for the past 40 years. She has worked both as a faculty member and an administrator for the Florida Community College System and the Florida Department of Education where, prior to her retirement in February 2005, she served as the director of Community College Teacher Preparation Programs and College Ombudsman for the Division of Community Colleges and Workforce Education. Her areas of interest and expertise include teacher preparation, developmental education for under-prepared college students, program assessment/evaluation and implementation, policy development and leadership, and library automation.

Dr. Fleishman earned her liberal arts degree from Suomi College (Finlandia University), her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Northern Michigan University, and her Ph.D. from Florida State University.
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News: I was a student at Suomi College during the school year 1975-1976. After my year at Suomi I transferred to Michigan State University where I graduated with a B.A. in liberal arts. I’ve been employed by Zondervan, a Christian publishing company, since 1980. My current job is in international licensing and I’ve done some extensive world travel. I live with my 2 cats, Millie and Porsche, and have never married, so no kids. I’d LOVE to hear from any of my friends from the Old Main dorm, especially Susie Galbraith, Robin Snyder, Patti Packard, Cindy Schubert and Lisa Wuori. I still remember all of you fondly!!

Susanna Smoot
4303 N. Troy St.
Chicago, IL 60618
773-267-9857

News: I received the recent Suomi/Finlandia newsletter and wanted to share some fun news. Bernadette (Barnella) Finch and I celebrated 20 years of friendship - which started at Suomi as roommates in 1985-86 - with a weeklong trip to France. We visited Paris, Giverny and Versailles - with the majority of time spent in Paris. We saw many sites, museums etc. and had a wonderful time. Thank you to Suomi/Finlandia for “introducing” us.

Copper Country Postcards
Suomi College alumna Nancy Ann (Erkkila) Sanderson has been collecting historical postcards of the Keweenaw Peninsula for over thirty years. Close to 300 of these postcards are included in a book she has recently authored.

Published this year by the Keweenaw County Historical Society, Copper Country Postcards: A View of the Past from the Keweenaw Peninsula is meant to be a visual history of the Copper Country between the years of 1900-1950.

Nancy graduated from Lake Linden High School in 1959 and completed an associate degree at Suomi College in 1961. She earned a bachelor of arts in teaching and history from Northern Michigan University in 1963. She and her husband James live on Lake Charlevoix in East Jordan, Michigan.

Copper Country Postcards is available at North Wind Books, and through the Keweenaw County Historical Society website at www.keweenawhistory.org. Proceeds from the sale of the book benefit the preservation projects of the Keweenaw Historical Society.
Armstrong of Summersett, IL, Tami graduated from Soumi College in 1994. She currently works for Wal-Mart Corporation in Jacksonville and is planning to transfer to the Houghton, MI, store.

Rob is the son of Dale and Dana Waters of Lake Linden, MI. He graduated from a St. Clair Shores, MI, high school in 1973. He is retired.

Following a spring wedding, the couple plans to make their home in Chassell.

**Molly Steele & Jason Wilks**

LAURIUM, MI – James and Barb Steele of Calumet, MI, announce the engagement of their daughter Molly to Jason Wilks, son of Jerry and Barb Wilks of Laurium.

The bride-to-be is a 2000 graduate of Calumet High School. She is pursuing a rural human services degree at Finlandia University and will graduate in April 2007. Molly is currently employed at Copper Country Mental Health in Houghton, MI.

The future groom is a 1999 graduate of Calumet High School. He is currently employed at Great Lakes Plastics of Hancock, MI.

A July 7, 2007, wedding is planned.

**John R. Olson**

HANCOCK, MI - John R. Olson, 88, of Hancock, MI, and a former Houghton, MI, resident, died October 23, 2005.

He was born April 11, 1917, in Oskar, MI, a son of the late Alexander and Hilda (Lahnala) Olson. He attended the Stanton School and was a 1938 graduate of Hancock High School.

John was employed as a farmer and also worked for 25 years in food service at Michigan Tech University. After his retirement he worked as a night watchman at Suomi College.


John was a veteran of the United States Army Air Force serving in Italy during WW II.

**Russell Joseph Winnen**

CALUMET, MI - Russell Joseph Winnen, 85, of Calumet, MI, passed away October 14, 2005.

He was born May 30, 1920, in Calumet, a son of the late Joseph and Emma (Blom) Winnen.

Russell graduated from Calumet High School with the class of 1939. He attended Suomi College and Michigan Technological University.

He was employed by Calumet & Hecla Mining Company until its closure in 1968. In 1969, he moved to New Mexico and worked for Molly Corporation until retiring in 1981, when he returned to Calumet.

He was a veteran of WW II, having served as a paratrooper with the U.S. Army.

**Evelyn Mary Finch**

PALM CITY, FL. - Evelyn Mary Finch (formerly Evelyn Stewart) passed away July 29, 2005.

She was born September 9, 1922, in Hancock, MI. Evelyn graduated from Hancock High School in 1940, and attended Suomi College. She served in the U.S. Navy during WW II.

**Mae E. Wiitanen**

HOUGHTON, MI - Mae E. (Melvin) Wiitanen, 80, a former resident of Houghton, passed away November 15, 2005.

**SHARE YOUR NEWS**

Did you bump into a classmate while on vacation?
Were you recently married? Do you know of the passing of an alumni?
Are you continuing your education? Have you started your own business?

We’d like to hear about it! Please take a minute and fill out this simple form - if you care to elaborate, please do so via e-mail or snail mail!

Name: ______________________________ Year graduated or attended: __________
Address: ____________________________ Field of Study: ______________________
City: __________________ State: _______ Zip: __________________
E-mail: ____________________________ Phone: ____________________________
News: ____________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
A L U M N I  N E W S

The former Mae Emma Raisanen was born in Redridge, MI, on May 6, 1925, a daughter of the late August and Lena (Rothlesberger) Raisanen. She graduated as salutatorian of her class at Houghton High School and was also a graduate of the former Suomi College.

She worked as an accountsupervisor for the Detrex Chemical Corporation for 34 years.

On October 22, 1949, she was united in marriage to K. Melvin Wiitanen.

Marie E. “Nannie” Sikkila

L’ANSE, MI – Marie E. “Nannie” Sikkila, 74, of L’Anse, passed away October 20, 2005.

She was born in L’Anse on May 26, 1931, the daughter of the late Kermit and Marie E. (Seavoy) Stein. Following the death of her mother, Marie was raised by her maternal grandparents, Edward and Sophie Seavoy. She attended L’Anse area schools and graduated in 1949.

Marie attended the former Suomi College and received her business degree in 1951. While at Suomi she traveled with the Suomi College Choir. On September 3, 1955, she married Bernhardt Sikkila. He preceded her in death on January 2, 1980.

Marie worked at the former Chevy garage, the Houghton County Court House, and was a clerk for the L’Anse Sentinel for over 25 years, retiring in 1995.

Keith W. Karinen

ASKEL LOCATION, MI - Keith W. Karinen, 59, of Askel Location, MI, passed away October 18, 2005.

Keith was born May 20, 1946, in Detroit, MI, a son of the late Robert and Ethelyn (Tulppo) Karinen. He graduated from the John A. Doelle Agricultural School of Tapiola in 1964, and earned an associate degree in liberal arts from Suomi College.

On August 26, 1967, he married the former Gloria Saari.

Keith worked as a heavy equipment operator, mechanic and shop foreman for several different companies over the years.

On-Line Alumn i Directory

The Finlandia University International Alumni Board is working to establish an on-line database of Finlandia University and Suomi College alumni. In the coming months, members of the Alumni Board will also begin to publish and distribute via e-mail a periodic web-based alumni newsletter.

The Alumni Board invites all alumni to share contact information, accomplishments and interests with other Suomi College and Finlandia University alumni. Send an e-mail to alumnidirectory@finlandia.edu or visit www.finlandia.edu/alumni.html to join the on-line alumni network and receive the newsletter. There is no charge to add your contact information to the database or receive the newsletter.
**UNIVERSITY EVENTS**

**MARCH**

1st-30th  International School of Art & Design (ISAD) Faculty Exhibition (FAHC Gallery)

9th  Nordic Film Series: *Land of Love (Värnalla Maailma)*, 6:00 p.m. (FAHC Theatre)

10th  Opening Reception: ISAD Faculty Exhibition, 7:00 p.m. (FAHC Gallery)

**APRIL**

4th-20th  International School of Art & Design Juried Student Exhibition (FAHC Gallery)

4th  Opening Reception: ISAD Juried Student Exhibition – 7:00 p.m. (FAHC Gallery)

13th  Nordic Film Series: *Hedvalon ja Quiltshoe (Heinahattu ja Vilttitossu)*, 6:00 p.m. (FAHC Theatre)

25th-30th  International School of Art & Design Diploma Works Exhibition (FAHC Gallery)

29th  Opening Reception: ISAD Diploma Works Exhibition, 7:00 p.m. (FAHC Gallery)

29th  2006 Baccalaureate Worship Service (Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Hancock)

30th  2006 Spring Commencement (Paavo Nurmi Center)

**MAY**

1st-28th  International School of Art & Design Diploma Works Exhibition (FAHC Gallery)

19th-20th  Spring 2006 Board of Trustees Meeting

**SPORTING EVENTS**

**FEBRUARY**

**Women’s Basketball**

18th  Northland Baptist Bible College

22nd  Michigan Technological University

24th-25th  NCAA D-III Independent Regionals

**Men’s Basketball**

18th  Northland Baptist Bible College

24th-25th  NCAA D-III Independent Regionals

**Women’s Hockey**

17th-18th  University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire

24th-25th  University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

**Men’s Hockey**

17th-18th  Milwaukee School of Engineering

**Nordic Skiing**

18th-19th  NCAA Regionals

**MARCH**

**Women’s Hockey**

3rd-4th  NCHA Playoffs

**Men’s Hockey**

2nd-5th  MCHA Final 6 (at Lawrence University)

12th  Great Bear Chase, Calumer, MI*

**Women’s Softball**

3rd-5th  Finlandia Dome Invitational (at NMU)

11th-18th  Tucson, AZ Invitational

31st  Lawrence University

**Men’s Baseball**

1st  Macalester College

17th-22nd  Gene Casic Classic, Ft. Myers, FL

*Open Race

**APRIL**

**Women’s Softball**

1st  Concordia University

2nd  Lakeland College

5th  Northland College

7th  Maranatha Baptist Bible College

8th  Lake Superior State University

22nd  Cardinal Stritch University

23rd  Mount Mary College

29th-30th  Mount Mary College Tournament

**Men’s Baseball**

5th  Lakeland College

9th  Olivet College

10th  Henry Ford Community College

15th-16th  Rochester College

17th  Cardinal Stritch University

19th  University of Wisconsin-Superior

23rd  Carleton College

**MAY**

**Women’s Softball**

2nd  Northland College

6th-7th  NCAA D-III Regionals

**Men’s Baseball**

1st  Wisconsin Lutheran College

2nd  Trinity International University

6th-7th  Illinois Institute of Technology

8th  Northland College

Home Games in Bold

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**Memorials & In Honor List**

**MEMORIALS** - 7/1/05 - 11/30/05

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Becvar
Tyyne Chamberlain
Dolores Sormunen Fennell
Martha Johnson Fischer
Bertha Eskola George
Rev. David Hartman
Paul Hartman
Lorraine Rodda Heino
Rev. Michael Hellier

Elma Kemppainen Hogyra
Dr. Armas Holmio
Mildred Hovind
Helle Jarvinen
Dolors R. Johnson
Rev. Ray G. Johnson
Toivo & Mildred Keto
Dr. Sylvia Hivala Kinnunen
Dorothy Koskela
Allen Lahti

David Lawson
Rev. & Mrs. K.V. Mykkanen
Jon Edward Nissila
Mary A. Pifer
Ralph G. Pifer, Sr.
Rev. Dr. E. Olaf Rankinen
Mr. & Mrs. John Saukkonen
Pearl & James Savolainen
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Simmerer
Anna Stoole

Alvin E. Tuohino
Dr. Arthur Tuuri
John Raymond Tuuri
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Simmerer
Anna Stoole
John Raymond Tuuri

**IN HONOR** - 7/1/05 - 11/30/05

Ken & Lois Seaton - 75th birthdays
Bishop Thomas & Mrs. Luanne Skrenes - 25 years of service
New Lion’s Den Spring Items

**Finlandia University Women’s Tee** –
Screen print slim fit women’s tee shirt. 80% cotton, 20% polyester, by Gear For Sports.
Available in gray, navy or pink.
Sizes: S, M, L, XL
Women’s Tee ........................................... $14.95

**Finlandia University ABC Onezie** –
Navy baby onezie with ABC screen printed blocks. 95% cotton, 5% spandex, by Third Street.
Sizes: 6M, 12M, 18M, 24M
Baby Onezie ........................................... $15.95

**Finlandia Lions Athletic Shorts** –
Shimmer athletic shorts with “LIONS” printed on both sides. Royal and white. Nylon/polyester. Made by Dodger.
Sizes: S, M, L, XL, XXL
Finlandia Athletic Shorts .......................... $29.95

**Finlandia University Women’s Sweats** –
Women’s spirit sweatpants with drawstring waist.
Screen printed Finlandia University and FU on upper left leg. 100% interlock cotton, by Gear For Sports.
Available in navy, black, and pink
Sizes: S, M, L, XL
Finlandia Women’s Sweats .......................... $28.95

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A fresh novel describing one man’s journey into the past and his reflections on his marriage, early childhood and relationship with a distant, difficult father. A family story set in upper Michigan about deep love and self-examination through solitude.
Sweetwater Fiction, 2005.
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If You Lived Here, I’d Know Your Name: News from Small-Town Alaska, by Heather Lende.
An exhilarating journey to the far north, Alaska to be exact, with widely known NPR commentator Heather Lende describing in rich detail the many quirky characters she met while living in Haines, a town similar to many U.P. communities.
Hard Cover ...................................................................................................................................... $23.95

Copper Country Postcards, by Nancy Ann Sanderson.
Sanderson’s unique, historical collection of postcards provides readers with an excellent taste of the Keweenaw Peninsula’s background from 1900-1950. A pleasure for anyone interested in learning about Copper Country history. A portion of the proceeds from the sale this book are donated to the Keweenaw County Historical Society.
Keweenaw County Historical Society, 2005.
Hard Cover ...................................................................................................................................... $24.95

Rapala: Legendary Fishing Lures, by John E. Mitchell.
Mitchell’s biography of Lauri Rapala and his fishing lure empire will intrigue both young and old readers interested in one man’s success in turning poverty into a renowned lure manufacturing company.
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See order form on other side.