

the Bridge

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FINLANDIA
UNIVERSITY



DONOR
EDITION



FROM THE PRESIDENT **PHILIP JOHNSON**

I am so glad you are pausing to read Finlandia's fall 2016 edition of the Bridge. It might be that 2016 has been the fullest of all so far. As you flip through these pages I hope you catch a bit of the fullness for yourself.

Earlier this fall one alumnus commented about his recent campus walkabout, "I almost don't recognize this place!" If even as few as five or so years since visiting campus, one may easily feel this way. From the Juttila Center to the Finnish American Heritage Center, from our Paavo Nurmi Center on the hill down to Old Main on Quincy Street, one sees change. At Finlandia we believe that we need to continually seek enduring, positive change in order to remain relevant to our students, the workplace and the world.

If you have lunch in our expanded café in Finlandia Hall you will select your meal from a more diverse and international menu, have a one in four chance of sitting with a student of color, and order with your dessert a cup of Starbucks coffee from the café's new coffee shop. Out the door into Wargelin Hall and you could stop to visit one of our new faculty members, Dr. Emily Geiger, in our newly renovated chemistry lab. Emily designed the renovations and supervised its progress through completion this fall. She would tell you how this project, generously funded through the Portage Health Foundation, will substantially improve our students' learning experiences. Should you attend a competition at our Paavo Nurmi facility, our renovation is now complete with the new strength and conditioning center, sports medicine suite, cardio studio, locker rooms, and furnished Wickersheim student lounge. If attending at McAfee Field, the Terry Talo Lion's Den, which was completed this fall, will certainly catch your attention.

We have launched new degree programs and continually propose new courses that best prepare our students for the workplace and world. Our most recent degree program launches include Health Information Management and Marketing & Graphic Design, an interdisciplinary major resulting from collaboration between our business and art and design schools. We have repackaged our RN-BSN program in our college of health sciences to attract growing numbers of working nurses looking for an affordable option to upgrade their academic credential.

These changes intend to keep us relevant. Yet, we also believe that rootedness matters. Rooted in values that can still speak meaningfully to today's diverse student population: *sisu* and *vocatio*. Perseverance through adversity and calling in life root us and inspire us in our pursuit of relevance.

Finally, among all our features in this issue, be sure to look for Finlandia student, Laura Kent. I mentioned her in my fall greeting to you. Enjoy your read.

A handwritten signature of Philip Johnson in black ink. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Philip' being more prominent than the last name 'Johnson'.

Philip Johnson
President



FEATURES

- 2** FINLANDIA LAUNCHES NEW WEB PRESENCE
- 8** LAURA KENT: NURSE IN TRAINING
- 10** STRONGER TOGETHER – TOGETHER FOR GOOD
- 14** BOLDT'S LEAVE MARK ON FINLANDIA
- 24** HOCKEY BRINGS BACK WINNINGEST COACH
- 25** SIX QUESTIONS WITH CURTIS WITTENBERG

CAMPUS NEWS 3-7

- Marketing and graphic design degree added
- RN-BSN program now available 100% online
- New faculty offers wide variety of experiences

ADVANCEMENT SECTION 11-13

- Stories of Generosity

DONOR SECTION 15-23

- Fiscal Year 2015-16 Donors (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016)

ATHLETICS NEWS 26-27

- Wickersheim memorialized at FinnU with student lounge
- Luke Paul earns top AD31 honors
- Durocher takes reigns of cross country program

NEWS FROM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 28-29

- Terrios come back to help at Servant Leadership House
- Alumni highlighted in new regular feature



Cover Photo:

Senior nursing student Laura Kent poses in the hallway of Aspirus Keweenaw hospital in nearby Laurium. In addition to being a full time nursing student, Kent works full time at the hospital. Learn more about her FinnU experience on page 8.

FINLANDIA

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FINLANDIA LAUNCHES NEW WEB PRESENCE

BY WALKER ENSTAD



Few things can give a university an improved virtual presence like a new website. This is exactly what the folks at Finlandia University set out to accomplish in early 2014 – revamping their current virtual and visual existence to create a more dynamic, interactive and exciting site that engages students and Finlandia supporters.

It all started with the introduction of the new Lions Logo, setting off a firestorm focus of visual and virtual branding. “Our visual branding is more focused now than it has ever been before,” Creative Director Brad Beaudette said. “We’re relying heavily on crisp and authentic video, and breathtaking photography. The ability to showcase awe-inspiring photography and videography is something that wasn’t possible on the old site.”

The new website is built around technology that rivals some of the largest and more prestigious schools in the country. It is constructed on the open-sourced WordPress content management system, making it extremely versatile yet simplistic for users. This was made possible by FinnU’s partnership with Lake Effect Digital, a digital media firm located in downstate Traverse City.

“More than a dozen firms submitted proposals for review,” Director of Marketing and Communications Michael H. Babcock said. “It was an intensive process that took almost a year, but we came to the conclusion that Lake Effect was best for the job.”

Lake Effect Digital integrates a search engine optimization-first attitude that performs well not only on desktop computers, but mobile platforms as well.

The website itself is stunning. Being located in the scenic Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Finlandia is able to showcase students and faculty in the gorgeous surroundings of the school. “We are proud to say that not a single image on our website is stock. We worked tirelessly to feature enticing custom images on every page of our new site,” said Beaudette.

Venturing away from the visual aspect, let’s look under the hood. Fundamentally, Finlandia’s website went from a four cylinder to a

v12 hemi engine (for non-gearheads, this means it has power!). “We focused on accessibility,” said Babcock. “We wanted everyone to be able to navigate the site easily, whether you are a tech-savvy millennial or a baby boomer following your children or grandchildren at college.”

Students and staff can also take advantage of the new quick link icons listed at the top of every page allowing them to efficiently check their email, log in to EMPOWER or use eCollege.

Donating to Finlandia online has also never been easier, simply click DONATE at the top of any page. The site has also introduced new ways to launch advancement campaigns. Visit finlandia.edu/donate to help the university as it continues to progress in its effort to complete strategic goals laid out in Plan 2021.

The website has improved drastically since its unveiling in June, and provides all the tools needed to tell the unique and ever-evolving story of Finlandia University. The new website is a key aspect in the strategic goals of Finlandia University. It is also to be noted that this is a developing tool. Every day Finlandia Staff looks for ways to improve the experience and offer the best possible product. Check out the site by pointing your web browser to finlandia.edu.

INTRODUCING FINLANDIA FRIDAYS!

With an improved website comes a new outlet that the communications and marketing department revealed. Named “Finlandia Fridays,” it is a webcast featuring intriguing guests from around the Copper Country. These brief videos, which are five to 10 minutes long, are produced and recorded in a new studio located in the Jutila Center. These webcasts focus on Finlandia news, events and other stimulating aspects of life in the Upper Peninsula. This program is also a podcast available the same day as the webcast airs. Look for Finlandia Fridays by visiting finlandia.edu/fridays.



MARKETING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN DEGREE ADDED

The Finlandia University Board of Trustees approved a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing and Graphic Design. The new academic program was created collaboratively between faculty in the university's International School of Business (ISB) and International School of Art & Design (ISAD).

"We're excited to be offering this program for our students," ISB Dean Kevin Manninen said. "This will provide students the practical skills to conceptualize and design a wide range of marketing materials while understanding the marketing implications of the material they produce. Students will understand important marketing concepts such as market analysis, buyer behavior and marketing communication, while learning how to develop marketing plans that will enable their organization to achieve its goals and objectives."

Students will take a mix of business and design courses while learning how to apply vital marketing notions and visual concepts to materials such as websites, product illustrations, advertisements, brochures and corporate reports.

"Besides learning how to communicate visually, our Marketing and Graphic Design students will master design thinking and creative problem solving," ISAD Dean Denise Vandeville said. "These are both essential skills for employment in the 21st century."

In addition to lectures in product development and advertising, students will complete hands-on training to gain real-world experience while achieving a fundamental grasp of design as it applies to marketing.

Learn more about the new program by visiting finlandia.edu/marketing-and-graphic-design.

NAVY VETERAN AND ALUM MARIE BONENFANT HIRED IN STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Marie Bonenfant has been hired to the position of Coordinator of Student Accounts. Bonenfant is from Lake Linden, a Navy veteran and Finlandia alumnus. She started at Finlandia in June.



"When I came here as a student it was the first thing I did as a civilian," Bonenfant said. "It felt like home then, and coming here now it once again feels like I'm coming home."



FINLANDIA OFFERING INNOVATIVE NEW AFFORDABLE RN-BSN PRICING STRUCTURE

\$15,000 Price Guarantee – no matter how many credits are needed

Finlandia University has long been known for the strong reputation of its nursing program, and the program is now offering a new affordable and innovative RN-BSN pricing structure. Students beginning during the 2016-17 academic year are receiving a \$15,000 Price Guarantee to advance their associates degree to a bachelor's degree.

"Our nursing program has long been known for its high quality and attention to detail," said Mark Miron, RN-BSN program director. "What people might not realize is that we're competitive price wise with nearly all national and regional industry leaders, even offering a lower price than many."

The \$15,000 price tag includes all credits and student fees, whether that is as low as 30 or as many as 54 credits.

"There are absolutely zero hidden fees in this price," Miron said.

The pricing is available only for courses required for the BSN, and is only available for the university's online RN-BSN program. That program had additional excitement earlier this year when it was approved by the Higher Learning Commission to be offered 100 percent online. Details on that development can be found on page 4.



FINLANDIA NAMED AMONG GREAT SMALL COLLEGES FOR BOOK LOVERS

Finlandia University has been named one of 30 Great Small Colleges for Book Lovers by About Great Books. The article was published on the organization's website in May.

The colleges on this list were chosen for reasons including their extraordinary libraries or other resources for book lovers, their unique dedication to the "great books," or because they are home to a highly sought-after English and literature department.

"I think I speak for all the English faculty at Finlandia when I say that we are very pleased with the recognition from About Great Books," Assistant Professor of English Dr. Mark Lounibos said. "We are committed to encouraging students to pursue their own interests while they develop their knowledge of great works of literature. Lovers of great books will find their passions nurtured in the English major at Finlandia University."

"I am especially excited that Finlandia's English curriculum is evolving to serve an increasingly diverse student body and includes courses that critically explore gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity," Assistant Professor of English Dr. Carolyn Dekker said.

Finlandia also places a keen interest in books every year during its annual Campus Read event, which focused on regional authors during the 2015-16 academic year. Learn more about Campus Read at finlandia.edu/campusread, the Maki Library by visiting finlandia.edu/library and explore North Wind Books, the university's bookstore that includes a vast array of literature, at bookstore.finlandia.edu

PRESIDENT JOHNSON HOSTS SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE, GRIEF AND PROTEST

The Finlandia University community came together for a service of remembrance, grief and protest this summer following the tragic shooting in Orlando. President Philip Johnson led the brief service of readings and meditation.

"This service allows colleagues to gather, pause and in a quiet but authentic way demonstrate solidarity with all those who grieve and to protest against violence and hatred," Johnson said in an invite to the event. "This gives voice to our community's shared grief as we reflect on recent violence in Orlando and elsewhere."



RN-BSN PROGRAM NOW AVAILABLE 100% ONLINE

Finlandia University's RN-BSN program is now approved by the Higher Learning Commission to be available as 100 percent RN-BSN online.

"This is a huge benefit given that most of the students who would enroll in our program are working nurses, and have to fit our program into their very busy lives," Program Director Mark Miron said. "We're excited about this."

Finlandia introduced the program in the early 2010s for associate degree nurses who are looking to advance their careers.

"We've seen some really good growth over the last couple of years," Miron said. "We're hoping to continue that into the future."

The Finlandia University RN-BSN Online Program is fully accredited through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. Finlandia has been an accredited nursing school continuously since the 1980s, with the BSN originally accredited in 2007. The accreditation was last renewed in 2011, and is good through 2022.

The highly reputable program is competitive pricewise with many of the for-profits who aggressively advertise nationally, especially with the recently announced \$15,000 Price Guarantee.



CAMPUS READ 2016-17 SPOTLIGHTS RACIAL JUSTICE

Classes across campus this fall read up-and-coming poet Danez Smith's work in advance of Smith's visit to campus as part of 2016-17 Campus Read. Smith was selected as the Campus Read author because their poetry speaks so powerfully of the need for racial and social justice.

In a list poem called "Alternate Names for Black Boys," Smith supplies "guilty until proven dead" and "monster until proven ghost" as possible alternate names. Students readily catch the echo of the American promise of "innocent until proven guilty" and see how this poem cries out for changes in American hearts, American media and the criminal justice system.

One example was in Dr. Monique Bourdage's Youth, Media and Culture class, which used Smith's poem, "Dinosaurs in the Hood," as part of a unit on racial representation in children's literature. Dr. Bourdage explains, 'Dinosaurs in the Hood' directly addresses stereotyping, the burden of representation, and the need for fully realized characters of color.' The class paired Smith's work with excerpts from Eve Merriam's 1969 book "The Inner City Mother Goose" and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's 2009 Ted Talk "The Danger of a Single Story." Learn more about at finlandia.edu/campusread.

DEKKER HELPS PUBLISH 80-YEAR-OLD JEAN TOOMER MANUSCRIPT

Finlandia University Assistant Professor of English Dr. Carolyn Dekker played the key role of editor in the recently published book *A Drama of the Southwest: The Critical Edition of a Forgotten Play*. The book is put together from a manuscript written by famous writer Jean Toomer, who passed away in 1967. The heavily credited Harlem Renaissance author wrote the play back in 1935. The unpolished manuscript found the hands of Dekker, and was published in February of this year.

"I found it in the archives. It was in the Beinecke Library at Yale," said Dekker. "They have all of Toomer's paper. They have feet and feet of his stuff. There were four acts of his play that were typed, but then three more folders that were handwritten."

Dekker, a New Jersey native, Williams College and University of Michigan alum, started working with the manuscript in 2013. Although she did include back and forth letters between Toomer and his wife Margery, Dekker did not add anything to the historical play.

"In many cases, the manuscript was out of order," said Dekker. "I was able to arrange it properly, and I found there was more there than people gave credit to."

Dekker wants the influential Toomer to get the credit he deserves. "He's an American high modernist like William Faulkner. One of the things that really excited me about this project is that this is only really the second time that a full-length book of his is published."

"To be able to go into the archives and be one of the first people to work with these papers, and have it go out in the world as a book makes me really excited."

JULIA COON ENJOYS STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE TO TANZANIA

As a sophomore at Finlandia University Julia Coon made a bold decision: She was going to study abroad in Tanzania as part of Finlandia's Servant Leadership Program. It was a decision she didn't regret, and one that led her to an amazing once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. To hear all about her experience – including the uniqueness of Finlandia's relationship with the people of Tanzania and the unique foods she experienced during her experience, visit finlandia.edu/juliacoona.





Father Corbin Eddy and President Johnson preside at worship on September 25 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Hancock.

The ecumenical service opened a two-day theological conference commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, an event co-sponsored by the university and the Northern Great Lakes Synod-ELCA, supported in part by Thrivent Financial.

TRIO TALENT SEARCH SECURES \$1.75 MILLION

Finlandia University's TRIO Talent Search is proud to announce it has successfully secured \$1.75 million, or \$349,920 per year for five years, in federal funding that will keep the program funded through 2022, pending federal appropriations.

"We're excited to continue working with the project participants, their families and community partners to ensure students obtain success now, through post-secondary education," Program Director Joe Zerbst said.

The mission of TRIO Talent Search is to stimulate and motivate 729 middle and high school students to pursue a program of postsecondary education coming from families of a modest income where neither parent/guardian possesses a four-year bachelor's degree.

Participants take part in one-on-one, small-, and large-group meetings and seminars to advance their academic acumen and college/career readiness; including tutoring/mentoring, college/career exploration and preparation, assistance finding appropriate educational paths, building study and personal skills, and completing forms to access schools and financial aid, preparation for national standardized tests; participate in one- or multiple-day college and cultural field trips; conduct workshops for parents and students to complete college applications and financial aid documents (i.e. scholarship applications and FAFSA) and learning about personal and postsecondary finances.

TRIO Talent Search has proudly been hosted on the campus of Finlandia University serving students from the western and central UP since the 1980s.

NEW FACULTY OFFERS WIDE VARIETY OF EXPERIENCES

Finlandia University provides an intimate atmosphere for learning, in large part thanks to its small class sizes, focus on whole-person growth of its students and wide variety of personalities that live, work and learn on campus.

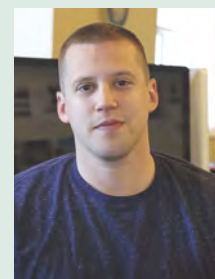
One of the largest groups of those people are the faculty who lead classroom activities. This year Finlandia is proud to be welcoming in 28 new faculty, which includes five assistant professors, two other full-time instructors and 21 new adjunct professors.

We invite you to read brief introductions below, and to learn more about these instructors by visiting finlandia.edu/newprofessors2016.

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

HANCOCK NATIVE LEADING GRAPHIC DESIGN PROGRAM

Finlandia University has hired Tom Adolphs as Assistant Professor of Graphic Design. Adolphs is a Hancock native that had previously exhibited his artwork at FinnU.



"Being able to work here is a dream come true," said Adolphs. "I enjoy being in this town, and adding to it."

Adolphs earned his master's degree from Michigan Tech after earning a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography from Northern Michigan University.

YOUAKIM INTRODUCED AS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY



Meet Dr. Claudia Youakim - a University of Florida graduate who is serving as an Assistant Professor of Sociology beginning this semester.

"Sociology allows us to deepen our thought process," said Dr. Youakim. "It's a subject that allows students to take a look outside of themselves. To examine their surroundings and their relationship to a broader societal context."

Dr. Youakim earned a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Florida with a dissertation titled *Racial and Ethnic Identity: Arab Americans in the Chicagoland Area*. She has also earned a certification in Women's Studies from the University of Florida, a master's degree in Sociology from DePaul University and bachelor's degree in Sociology from Loyola University. While earning her doctorate, Dr.

Youakim specialized in Race and Ethnic Relations in a Global Context. Her professional interests also include immigration and acculturation, intersectionality, social inequality, social theory, methods, and sex and gender.

DR. EMILY GEIGER JOINS SCIENCE DEPARTMENT AT FINLANDIA

Finlandia University has hired Dr. Emily Geiger as Assistant Professor of Biochemistry.

"I'm excited to be part of the science department at Finlandia," Dr. Geiger said. "I appreciate the small class sizes, which contribute to a great learning environment."



Dr. Geiger began teaching as an adjunct at FinnU in the spring semester. She leads courses in general chemistry and organic chemistry, as well as the associated labs. The offering of organic chemistry courses is new at the university.

Outside of academics, Dr. Geiger is well known in the craft beer community for her business Craft Cultures Yeast Labs, which cultures and propagates yeast in Finlandia University's Jutla Center business incubator. Learn more about her business at craftcultures.com.



PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT WELCOMES DR. JILLIAN O'ROURKE STUART

Finlandia University and its Suomi College of Arts & Sciences has hired Dr. Jillian O'Rourke Stuart as Assistant Professor of Psychology. Stuart came to Hancock after completing her doctorate studies at the University of Iowa.

"I went to a small liberal arts school for my undergrad degree, and I always wanted to go back to that kind of environment," Dr. Stuart said.

Dr. Stuart earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

BOURDAGE HIRED AS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION

Finlandia University's Suomi College of Arts & Sciences has hired Dr. Monique Bourdage as Assistant Professor of Communication.

Bourdage received her Ph.D. from the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan. She teaches a variety of communication and media courses at FinnU.

"Media is something we engage with every day, and we often do it without thinking about what some of the



underlying messages are," Bourdage said. "I will work with students to develop critical thinking skills to help them navigate the media landscape more consciously. I will help them understand how industrial practices, production techniques, and audience characteristics influence the ways in which we all make meaning through and with media content."

She earned her doctorate after producing a dissertation titled *"Beyond the Centerfold: Technology, Culture, and Masculinity in Playboy's Multimedia Empire,"* and is currently completing a Graduate Certificate in Women's Studies from the University of Michigan's Department of Women's Studies.

OTHER FACULTY LEADERSHIP ROLES

ROTH ADDED TO NURSING FACULTY

Finlandia University's nursing department is proud to announce the addition of Nursing Instructor Paula Roth. Roth is a practicing nurse at Baraga County Memorial Hospital in nearby L'Anse, Michigan. She has more than 15 years of experience.

"The nursing profession is challenging, especially in rural areas like ours," Roth said. "I'm excited to pass along my knowledge and my experiences to the next generation of nurses."

Roth earned her RN from Fayetteville Technical Community College and Bachelor of Science in Nursing through Northern Michigan University. She is currently in the final stages of completing her master's online.



SAINT-ONGE NAMED DIRECTOR OF MA AND MBC PROGRAMS

Samantha Saint-Onge has been named Medical Assistant/Medical Billing and Coding Program Director in the College of Health Sciences. Saint-Onge is a Finlandia University graduate, earning an Associate in Applied Science in Medical Assistant

and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Healthcare Administration.

"I valued the small class sizes Finlandia offers," she said about her time in the MA program. "That allowed us to really get to know each other, and learn and grow in ways that would have been much more difficult with more students around."

Since graduating Saint-Onge has worked as a Clinical Medical Assistant at the Aspirus Houghton Clinic. She also spent time as a receptionist, mastectomy fitter and as a home health aide within the Aspirus system. She is currently completing coursework to become a certified coding specialist. Outside of work Saint-Onge regularly volunteers with Relay for Life and Bowl for Kids.



LAURA KENT: Nurse in Training

Finlandia University has long been known for its nursing program, and for senior Laura Kent, it has been as great as advertised.

"The best decision of my life was coming here for nursing," she said while envisioning the three years she has completed at Finlandia. Those three years included a lot of challenges for the 23-year old student who is also working a full-time job that often includes night shifts at Aspirus Keweenaw in nearby Laurium. However, the promise of a meaningful career and the incredible relationships she formed with classmates and professors are without a doubt worthwhile tradeoffs for the hard work, sweat and late night calls home to talk through the tough times.

"It's a lot more work than I thought it would be," Kent said. "We read every book cover to cover, and we have a plethora of them. The paperwork we do for pre-clinical and post-clinical is thorough. We have a lot of exams, journals and skills tests."

All of that was only after she started the nursing program during her second year at FinnU. Before that came the stresses of trying to get in. "You have to be the best just to get into the program," she said. "You have to have a good GPA, do well in every pre-nursing class - including high grades in some seriously challenging classes. It pushes you. It makes you competitive. You need to be the best."

The training leads to success. Finlandia's nursing class from 2016 is a testament to that. Every graduate that sat for their N-CLEX exam passed on the first try, and are now employed in the always growing healthcare field.

Kent hopes to join those ranks after graduation in May. It's going to be a meaningful end to a six-year higher education journey for the Iron Mountain, Michigan native. The journey started with her attending Wisconsin Lutheran College to play NCAA Division III soccer. After her second year she went through a dramatic shift in her vision of her future. She shied away from the environmental science degree she had been working toward. She debated mortuary science.

Eventually she realized her calling – nursing.

"That was the biggest moment of relief for me. It gave me a chance to buckle down." The difference was immediate, and it was noticeable to those around her.

"I'm not sure what happened, but one day it was there, I knew she had found her passion," said Mary Ellen Kent, Laura's mother. "I knew by her personality that she was made to be a nurse. She was always caring – a compassionate kind of person." It wasn't just her mother who could see it. As you can see in the picture on this page, Laura was a nurse in training from a young age. "At that time I didn't think anything of it, but her grandmother (who gave her that shirt) knew she would follow in my footsteps."

The healthcare field was always a familiar one for Laura. Not only was her mom a nurse, but her father was a physician's assistant. "I started seeing it in Laura after she graduated from high school," her mother said. "I was sure that was the direction she would go in, but she wasn't ready yet."

Her experience at Wisconsin Lutheran was a growing one. It led her to realize her calling, which included moving back north.

"When it came down to it, I wanted to be in the U.P. again," she said. While she grew up in Iron Mountain, she had spent much of her childhood in the Copper Country visiting her cousins and grandparents who lived in Hancock. "The Keweenaw air is fresh. I love being around Lake Superior and seeing the northern lights. Many people take it for granted. To me, it just feels like complete relaxation being here."

It also provides her the opportunity to snowboard at Mount Bohemia, which is widely considered to be one of the best ski resorts west of the Rocky Mountains.

"A bunch of us will go up there for full days of skiing," she said. "You feel free, like there's not a worry in the world. All stresses get lost. I've been to other mountains,

but Mount Bohemia provides an unforgettable experience. It's like many other things up here – it's extreme."

For anyone that's lived in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, that's never been in doubt. It's part of what makes Finlandia graduates tough. It's what brings out the sisu in them.

In Laura's time here she's also witnessed a noticeable change in the culture of the university.

"Campus has improved so much. It's more lively. There's a lot going on. It's a more spirited environment now." Physically it has improved as well, with the biology labs and fitness center examples of advancement that has affected Laura quite a bit. "The new fitness center has been a huge, huge improvement for me. The size and amount of free weights is great, and I love the views from the treadmills."



"I knew by her personality that she was made to be a nurse. She was always caring – a compassionate kind of person."

**– Mary Ellen Kent
Laura's Mother**

Looking her final semester in the face has Kent both nervous and excited. "It's bittersweet because you can feel the end is near," she said.

It's also a sentimental time for her mother. "It's a combination of feelings – it's a relief because you want your child to be happy and find something they'll enjoy, and I'm happy for her because I know she's going to be satisfied as a nurse. I'm thankful she found what she wanted to do. You say you want them to be able to fly on their own – and she's doing it. She found her way."



STRONGER TOGETHER TOGETHER FOR GOOD

PORTAGE HEALTH FOUNDATION AND FINLANDIA UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIP

The Portage Health Foundation (PHF) recently awarded Finlandia University \$235,000 for facility enhancements and scholarship programming in a partnership known as “Stronger Together – Together for Good.” The goal of this ongoing partnership is to identify and promote Finlandia University as a regional leader of health science education, and to assist the university in continuing its tradition through the College of Health Sciences of educating a workforce that is better equipped to meet rural healthcare needs.

“We recognize that a healthy and vibrant community has a well-trained workforce, which requires that individuals have access to post-secondary education opportunities,” said Kevin Store, Executive Director at PHF. PHF remains committed to ensuring that scholarships and quality learning environments are available to students, which is precisely what the “Stronger Together – Together for Good” partnership represents. The partnership is rooted in two of PHF’s Pillars of Giving: Health Education and Healthcare Leaders. These pillars focus on providing educational and learning opportunities that expand, develop, and educate students’ knowledge of health issues in order to improve an individual or a community’s health.

\$225,000 of the grant supports biology and chemistry laboratory renovations in Wargelin Hall. PHF understands that to support and promote Finlandia as a leading educational institution, enhanced facilities are

required, which are conducive to learning and can attract and retain health science students and faculty. Updates to the laboratories include new countertops, cabinets and student tables as well as new equipment including computers, centrifuges and a mass spectrometer. The laboratory renovations also enable Finlandia to offer additional curriculum such as courses in organic chemistry.

“The renovated labs will provide a great atmosphere of learning for Finlandia’s students, who will have immediate access to incredible technology,” said Assistant Professor of Biochemistry Dr. Emily Geiger, who helped design the labs and is instructing the new organic chemistry course this fall. The investment in Wargelin Hall’s science labs is part of FinnU’s strategic vision, Plan 2021. This plan represents the university’s commitment to campus growth by updating, renovating, and building campus facilities, which best supports student success and absorbs enrollment and program growth.

The remaining \$10,000 of the grant supports student scholarships, which are critical success mechanisms for students. A prior scholarship agreement between PHF and Finlandia serves as the basis of this year’s scholarships; whereby financial awards will support three students who are seeking health science degrees and come from Baraga, Houghton, Keweenaw or Ontonagon County.

Finlandia believes every person desiring to earn a college degree ought to be given the opportunity to do so. Finlandia also believes that higher education at its best is often delivered by the little guys. It's the smaller institutions, like Finlandia, that can best offer an up-close and personal learning experience that is personally formational for students and faculty alike. Keeping private higher education affordable for all is a core

commitment at Finlandia. As Lutherans like to say, this is our vocation, our calling.

What follows here, and can be seen elsewhere in this issue, are a handful of stories of those who have more recently, and in various ways, supported Finlandia. All such gifts allow Finlandia to do her best to remain affordable for students and families in the Upper Peninsula and beyond.

STORIES OF GENEROSITY



JOHN AND PAULINE KILTINEN "Roots and Relevance"

John and Pauline Kiltinen of Marquette, Michigan, are members of the President's Circle for cumulative giving and the Nikander Club for distinguished giving. They were recently asked why they choose to support Finlandia so generously. There are several reasons according to John, a retired math professor from Northern Michigan University. "One of them," he says, "is that it is an institutional part of our Finnish heritage with its Finnish American Heritage Center, its Finnish American archives and the publication of the Finnish American Reporter. A second is that Finlandia values study away in places like Finland, Tanzania and elsewhere." "We are firm believers," John and Pauline commented, "that the perspective on the world one gets by reflecting on an international experience is an important part of a person's education."

Finlandia's affiliation with the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) also matters to John and Pauline. Borrowing from Finlandia's strategic document, *Plan 2021*, John believes that "They are doing a good job of balancing roots and relevance—keeping its roots alive while being relevant to today." Pauline and John have done so much to ensure that Finlandia continues to champion and evolve its Finnish American roots in ways that further serve our educational mission within a multicultural context. Finlandia is grateful.

LISA R. AND NATHANIEL F. BRADLEY IV "Naming Gift Opportunities"

Finlandia's *Resourcing Plan 2021* is offering friends and alumni both individual and family legacy opportunities on campus. Recently Lisa and Brad (Nathaniel's nickname) named two spaces in Finlandia Hall. Their gift of \$20,000 this fall allows Finlandia to refurbish two popular lounges in our residence hall. These projects are part of Finlandia's larger, campus-wide strategy to create more attractive gathering spots for students across campus. "We didn't actually consider at first such a gift as this" Brad commented during a recent phone conversation. He and Lisa came to their decision to do more while, over time, talking with another former classmate and current trustee, Al Fries. Others like Lisa and Brad have selected such naming opportunities from *Resourcing Plan 2021* which is available on Finlandia's website.





DON AND JOANN HAUTALA ('62) ***"We honor their sacrifice"***

A gift to the Finlandia Fund is one of the most helpful ways you can support Finlandia's students. These gifts support annual student scholarships and our commitment to offer the day-to-day quality experience our students expect and deserve. Finlandia Fund gifts supporting annual scholarships remain the #1 need of our students. An annual scholarship gift of \$500-plus makes a big difference for Finlandia students. A gift of this size or larger can be made in honor or memory of a loved one. Don and JoAnn ('62) Hautala, for example, of Newberry, Michigan, have supported annual scholarships through the Finlandia Fund since 1993. "My parents were people of very little means," Don shared in a recent phone conversation with him and JoAnn. "I know the sacrifices required for them to send me to college. We honor their sacrifice and want to do the same for other students." The E.J. and J.S. Hautala Scholarship has been making a difference in the life of Finlandia students for nearly a quarter of a century.

How you can help

Generosity comes in many shapes and sizes. Finlandia benefits greatly from the diverse expressions of support it receives each year from friends and alumni. When choosing to support Finlandia financially, it is most helpful to begin with a gift for the Finlandia Fund, our most comprehensive fund. Then, in addition, consider a project or idea you read or hear about that would also be meaningful for you. So many friends and alumni choose to support Finlandia in this way. Together these gifts help us realize most fully Finlandia's vision: to foster expansive learning that best prepares graduates for the 21st century workplace and world.

Matching Programs

Year after year matching gifts make a big difference for Finlandia. These matching funds available through a donor's employer, former employer, or other association allows alumni and friends to exercise faithful stewardship when multiplying their gift in this way. Help us this year to realize \$20,000 in matching gifts.

Thrivent

Thrivent Choice Dollars® continues to make a difference for Finlandia as well. We are so grateful to all Thrivent Financial members who designate Finlandia University as their Choice Dollars® recipient. Last fiscal year we received over \$8,700 from Thrivent Financial members. We can do better. We wish to surpass \$20,000 this year. Among Finlandia's friends and alumni there are sufficient numbers of Thrivent members to reach this goal. Thank you for designating Finlandia as a recipient of your Thrivent Choice Dollars®.

Student Ambassadors (Student Calling Program)

During this academic year, four students selected by President Johnson will be reaching out to alumni by phone. These Finlandia Student Ambassadors will be eager to share their stories as well as to hear stories from Suomi College and Finlandia University alumni. Beyond their desire to share and hear stories, the purpose of their call will be to ask alumni to support the Finlandia Fund this academic year. Our hope is to increase the number of alumni gifts and total alumni giving by 10 percent for 2016-17. You will enjoy this phone call.



New Leadership

Beginning January 1, 2017 Finlandia's board of trustees will be led by Ms. Julie Badel, a Chicago native and part-time Yoooper. Julie has practiced law in Chicago for nearly 40 years. She has been a

trustees since 2011, most recently serving as vice president. Julie says she looks forward to leading Finlandia's board "to ever greater levels of achieving our goals for academic success and community engagement."

Joining Julie on the executive committee is vice president, Paul Knuti of Embarrass, Minnesota; treasurer, John Perras ('73) of Grand Rapids, Michigan; secretary, Jeanne Kempainen (attended '58 and '59) of Durham, NC; and

Peter Vorhes of Calumet, Michigan. Newly elected to the board with his term beginning in January 2017 is Dan Niemi of Marquette, Michigan.

Retiring Board Chair, John Stierna

At the September meeting of the Board of Trustees John Stierna was recognized for his legacy of leadership as Chair since 2011. "I retire from Finlandia's Board," John says, "with a deep admiration for Finlandia's durability. If any institution has *sisu*, Finlandia does." This would need to be said of John as well, of course, as he competently led Finlandia through several years of growth and challenge. He and his wife, Ruth, will be enjoying retirement near family in California.





Old Main

This past summer the Finlandia Alumni Board enthusiastically targeted Old Main for their fundraising efforts this coming year. This first phase, with a goal of \$45,000 by Spring 2017, will replace the roof and complete needed landscaping and driveway upgrades. This project builds on a previously successful alumni initiative called "Windows on Education," that replaced the basement windows in Old Main.

With \$10,000 in lead gifts raised by alumni and friends to date, including \$5,000 from alumni Sandra (Tamminen) and Harry Giltz, as well as \$1,500 by Old Main's neighbor, Mary Nominelli, this project has a head of steam. To learn more about how you can support this exciting project, visit the alumni page on Finlandia's website at finlandia.edu/alumni.

Estate Gift

Over the decades Finlandia's students and academic programs have benefited in extraordinary ways from friends and alumni who have included Finlandia in their estate plans. In 2015-16 alone Finlandia received nearly \$216,000 from the estates of Carl Nelson, Marie Scheel and Helvi Walkonen. All three of these Finlandia Fund estate gifts supported annual student scholarships and various academic program needs across campus. Contact Doreen in our Advancement office (906-370-6698 or doreen.korpela@finlandia.edu) to request an estate gift commitment form or ask for more information.

FOUNDATIONS

Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation

This past summer Finlandia was awarded a \$211,000 grant from the Towsley Foundation. With this most recent generous grant Finlandia's students in the college of health sciences will soon have the benefits of two new high-tech patient simulators and other equipment targeted for the nursing and physical therapist assistant programs. These upgrades will greatly enhance the learning experience of our health science majors and better prepare them for careers in health care.

Paloheimo Foundation

For over 16 years this close and enduring relationship has provided Finlandia with over \$1 million to support its various Finnish and Finnish American expressions on campus and in our curriculum. Again this year the Paloheimo Foundation is supporting the Paloheimo Fellows program with a grant of \$55,000. Led by Dr. Hilary Virtanen, this competitive fellows program sends four upper class students to Finland each May to conduct undergraduate research.

Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation

The Gerstacker Foundation generously supports academic programming through our Finlandia Fund. Over the life of this relationship, more than \$800,000 has been granted. Again this year, the Finlandia Fund received \$30,000. Annual funding for academic support at this level is crucial for Finlandia. The Gerstacker Foundation has demonstrated extraordinary generosity toward Finlandia.



Other Foundations

This past year several smaller grants supported a variety of important student-centered programming totaling over \$13,000. These include the Keweenaw Community Foundation, the Plum Creek Foundation, the Samuel L. Westerman Foundation, the Superior Health Foundation and the Charles M. Bauervic Foundation. This vital support funded student scholarships, outdoor winter courses, art and design initiatives, entrepreneurial learning, and campus safety and emergency equipment. Finlandia cannot offer its quality programming without the support of these community and family foundations. We are so grateful for these relationships and the good will and generosity offered toward Finlandia and her students.



Pat and Oscar (OC) Boldt live generously. They have done so together as a couple for over 67 years. Marilyn Hamar, Pat's sister-in-law, says it best: "You can't talk about the one without the other. They are a team. They have always been a team." This Appleton, Wisconsin couple made their annual pilgrimage to the U.P. this past summer to visit family and celebrate their wedding anniversary. They also arranged to visit with President Johnson and René on campus at the Hoover Center. During their visit Pat presented a check for \$100,000 as a first payment on a \$1 million pledge to be fulfilled in spring 2017. Recently Pat and OC offered thoughts on their decision to support Finlandia with this extraordinary gift and pledge.

Pat's Christian faith has always been important to her. "We have been blessed to be a blessing," she says. "Gratitude has a lot to do with it." Growing up, she, together with her two brothers John and Ed, was always in church, attending Sunday school, with mom and dad usually singing in the choir. While living in Ontonagon, Michigan, Pat's mother was the choir director for their church and her father served on the village board. She talks about the formative influence of her parents' church and community involvements. She couldn't help, she says, but "absorb" their everyday, often ordinary, daily patterns of giving, serving and sacrifice. But

her parents were not the only ones to leave an enduring mark from her childhood. Whenever visiting her grandparents in Chassell, Michigan, she observed how they reached out to help neighbors as well as strangers during the years of the Great Depression. Whether forgiving rent or helping people find jobs or hiring seamstresses to sew clothing for the family, Pat observed and absorbed. Today she speaks passionately about how she and OC, over the decades, have been deeply touched by the joy of giving.

OC too reflects on his own memories of the Great Depression and its lessons. He learned the importance "of handling money," he says, and "about doing more with less." When asked recently why the two of them have chosen to support Finlandia through the years he remarked that "Finlandia seems to be able to do a lot with just a little." "I value that," he said. "We like what we see in Finlandia students and we know many of them need help." OC is right. Many of Finlandia's students are the first in their family to attend college. They arrive on campus with a good bit of grit and a healthy dose of apprehension. They know the rigors of collegiate study will stretch them. Finlandia graduates do not enter graduate study or the workforce with a sense of entitlement. Rather, they tend to start their life's next chapter grateful and confident.

Pat and OC believe in value-driven higher education that champions the ideals of the liberal arts, or as Finlandia calls it, "expansive learning." Their commitments to higher education reach beyond Finlandia to other Midwest institutions as well, that similarly seek to advance the notion of personally transformative education. The two of them understand that a college degree is to reflect more than the successful accumulation of credits. Rather, at its best, it reflects durable, positive change in how men and women have come to think, feel and act in terms of the self, others and the wider world.

Pat and OC have touched many lives. They have done so by living generously, for sure. But they have also inspired others by living positively. Norma Nominelli, a close friend, recently shared how Pat's positive posture toward life, even when living through seasons of personal adversity and difficult challenge, has been an inspiration to her. Living positively and generously leaves its mark. And now in their 90s, this couple, who teamed up when gas was 17 cents a gallon, the first Poloroid camera hit the stores and men's ties were going at \$1.50, still continues to touch others. Marilyn, this time reflecting on Pat's father, Kenneth Hamar, remarked that he was apparently fond of telling his children, "Remember who you are and where you came from." She remembers that she belongs to a strong family tradition of practicing generosity. And, she remembers her roots belong to the Copper Country. Finlandia's learning community is deeply grateful that generosity and roots have come together in this extraordinary gift and pledge.

DONOR RECOGNITION

In each donor edition of the Bridge, we are pleased to recognize and thank the many individuals, organizations, churches, clubs, associations and businesses that generously donated to Finlandia University in the preceding fiscal year ending June 30. Some have pledged deferred giving, or named the university in their wills. Some have given in memory of loved ones or to honor a special date, event or person.

Others have made donations out of a sense of loyalty—cherishing their time at Finlandia University or Suomi College. We are grateful for the thoughts and prayers of our friends and alumni, and for their gifts in support of our students' educational goals.

Sincere thanks to all who have supported Finlandia University between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016, and in years past.

CUMULATIVE GIVING

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE

(\$50,000 AND ABOVE)

Lifetime membership in the President's Circle is granted to those who have given \$50,000 or more to Finlandia University during any five-year period, and to those who have named the university in their estate plans for \$50,000 or more and informed the university of their intentions. The list excludes deceased President's Circle donors and entities which no longer exist.

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WE CONTINUE TO RECOGNIZE THOSE WHO HAVE DIED WITHIN THE LAST YEAR AND HAVE LEFT A LEGACY OF GENEROSITY AS MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE. THESE INCLUDE:

NORMAN BERG
WILLARD COHODAS
RUDOLPH KEMPPAINEN
W.W. FINNEY MARTIN
ROGER MATTSON
LORENA QUASIOUS

DISTINGUISHED GIVING

NIKANDER CLUB

(\$10,000 AND ABOVE)

Juho Kustaa Nikander (1855–1919), born in Lammi, Finland, helped found Suomi College and served as president from 1896 to 1919. An ordained Lutheran pastor, Nikander traveled to the Copper Country from Finland in the fall of 1884. As a national leader of Finnish-American communities, he helped advance local congregations and fight the discrimination many of the immigrants faced.

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NISONEN ASSOCIATES COUNCIL

(\$5,000-\$9,999)

In 1922 Martti Nisonen (1891–1946) left Finland with his wife and four children to become Suomi College's music instructor. He created a music program that drew many Finnish-American musicians. A noted composer and arranger of cantatas, operas and several orchestral works, Nisonen is remembered as a tireless and dedicated instructor, not only of music, but also of cultural and moral development.

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SAMUEL L WESTERMAN FOUNDATION, BLOOMFIELD
HILLS, MICHIGAN

WARGELIN COUNCIL

(\$2,500-\$4,999)

Dr. John Wargelin (1881–1970) was president of Suomi College from 1919 to 1927 and 1930 to 1937. In 1896, at the age of 15, Wargelin enrolled in the college's first class, graduating in 1904. In 1906 he graduated from Suomi's former seminary. Wargelin served as a Suomi College trustee for 36 years. In 1966 the university's library and science building was officially named for him.

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WAINO "POP" LEHTO LEAGUE

(\$1,000-\$2,499)

Waino "Pop" Lehto graduated from Suomi College in 1918. From 1920 until 1962 he served as instructor and dean of the business, commerce and liberal arts programs at Suomi College.

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OLD MAIN SOCIETY

(\$500-\$999)

Built in 1899, for many years Old Main was the sole Suomi College building. In its early years it housed classrooms, a chapel, offices, a cafeteria and a dormitory. Today it is the home of administrative offices.

MR GLENN E BECKMAN
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MR LLOYD E RUONA
MR & MRS JAMES E SANDERSON

continued on page 17

OLD MAIN SOCIETY (continued)

(\$500-\$999)

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QUINCY CLUB

(\$250-\$499)

Quincy Mining Company helped develop the region that Finlandia University serves. The company employed thousands of Finnish immigrants, including many who helped establish and support Suomi College. Finlandia University's campus on Quincy Street in Hancock sits on a hillside once mined by the Quincy Mining Company.

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MRS JUNE E ANDERSON
MR FREDERICK H APPOLD
DR WAINO E AUKEE
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MINNIE PERTTULA-MAKI CIRCLE

(\$100-\$249)

Minnie Perttula-Maki (1880–1957) was Suomi College's only woman president to date, serving from 1922 to 1923. She was born in Lohtaja, Finland, and was a member of the college's first class, graduating in 1904. She continued her education in Chicago, Duluth and at the University of Helsinki.

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continued on page 18

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continued on page 20

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continued on page 22

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These videos, which are now carefully preserved within the archive, were among nearly 150 donations received during the past 12 months; the donations came from 25 states, the District of Columbia, and Finland, proving that the Finnish American Heritage Center (FAHC) "Home and Hall" campaign truly has national outreach.

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Ellen Eskola Kehoe, Royal Oak, MI
Margaret Kekko, Hancock, MI

Donna Wargelin Kennard, Norfolk, VA
John & Pauline Kilinen, Marquette, MI
Mauri Kinnunen, Lappeenranta, FI
Jim Kippola, Negaunee, MI
Lucille Kirkeby, Brainerd, MN
Ruth Koehler, New York Mills, MN
Wayne Kokko, Hancock, MI
Jerry Kotila, Houghton, MI
Donald & Dorothy Kristola, Skandia, MI
Gene Kuiper, Toivola, MI
Ray & Kay Kulla, Ironwood, MI
Anders Kurtti, Hancock, MI
James & Debbie Kurtti, Painesdale, MI
Kris Kyro, Hancock, MI
Linda Kyro, Houghton, MI
Vienna Laine, Escanaba, MI
John Laine, Blanchard, ID
Rainer Langstedt, Spencer, NY
Barbara Larkie, Quaker Hill, CT
Paul & Lillian Lehto, Birmingham, MI
Jane Lepisto, Duluth, MN
Ray & Lois Lescelius, Elmhurst, IL
Eve Kangas Lindsey, Calumet, MI
John Lopez, Kansas City, MO
Timo & Diane Mahonen, Linwood, MN
Beth Maki, Negaunee, MI
Maija Maki-Laurila, Madison, WI
Laura Malkamäki, Fairport Harbor, OH
Paul Marin, Marquette, MI
Jean Wanhä Martin, Hopkins, MN
Leo & Marian Mattila, Toivola, MI
Susan Mattila, Toivola, MI
Cheryl Mattson, Dollar Bay, MI
Jeanne Medlyn, Hancock, MI
Keith Meyers, Chassell, MI
Maija Miettinen-Harris, Columbus, OH
Robin Alanen Mosher, Galesburg, MI
Emily Newhouse, Calumet, MI
Edith Niederer, Mukwonago, WI
Les Niemi, Lake Havasu City, AZ
Doug Niemi, Calumet, MI

Hannu Niklander, Karkkila, FI
Robert & Norma Nominelli, Hancock, MI
Beatrice Ojakangas, Duluth, MN
Dan Ojala, Calumet, MI
Oiva & Mildred Pakka, Golden, CO
Teresa Palosaari, Chassell, MI
Brenda Papke, Houghton, MI
Tuula Pasola-Alberino, West New York, NJ
Ruth Anne Paul, Eugene, OR
Esther Pekkala, Hancock, MI
Mary Pekkala, Hancock, MI
Carl & Doris Pellonpää, Ishpeming, MI
Eleanor Penny, Adrian, MI
Diane Peterson, Bessemer, MI
Ossi & Karin Rahkonen, McLean, VA
George Rasula, Clemson, SC
Gerri Roberts, Bruce Crossing, MI
Mika Roinila, Mishawaka, IN
William Romo, Ramsey, MI
Sara Rousseau, Houghton, MI
Jonathan Rundman, Minneapolis, MN
Nona Ruohonen, Houghton, MI
Christina Saarinen, Buffalo, NY
Leanne Scarffe, Ishpeming, MI

Ken Seaton, Hancock, MI
Kay & Hal Seppala, Chassell, MI
Paivi & Jarmo Setälä, Luvia, FI
Sharon Sibilsky, Wabasha, WI
Harry Siitonen, Berkeley, CA
Verna Smith, Mesquite, TX
Maija Stadius, Hancock, MI
Lotta & Jay Stewart, Marquette, MI
Victoria Stoppiello, Nehalem, OR
Ron Studer, Hancock, MI
Barton Sutter, Rochester, NY
Dennis Torkko, Cedarburg, WI
Carl Vaara, Hurley, WI
Helmi Vilieis, West Barnstable, MA
Arlene Vincent, Bettendorf, IA
Hilary Virtanen, Hancock, MI
Hanna Wagner, Washington DC
Linda Weston, Grand Blanc, MI
Fritz Wilson, Chassell, MI
Phil Wilson, Bush Prairie, WA
Stella Wilson, Battle Ground, WA
Debbie Winqvist, Calumet, MI
Jerome, Faith, & Steven Yoman, Beaverton, OR

GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Bruce Crossing Apostolic Lutheran Church, Bruce Crossing, MI
City of Hancock, Hancock, MI
Finlandia Foundation National, Pasadena, CA
Finn Spark, Inc., Washington DC
Keweenaw National Historical Park, Calumet, MI
Ladies of Kaleva Aion Tupa No. 13 & Auvon No. 10, Mass City, MI
Little Finland Gift Shop, Bessemer, MI
Northwind Books, Hancock, MI
St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Marquette, MI
Suomi Seura, Helsinki, FI

LIONS HOCKEY BRINGS BACK WINNINGEST COACH

Welcome Back Joe!

The memories were flooding in quickly for Joe Burcar as he stood in the spot he had been so many times before. He thought of the young men he'd trained for years. Those guys gave him everything they had to become elite players. Many of them, now adults with careers and families, had been in touch with him over the previous few weeks to congratulate him. He thought of the packed crowds – especially from that magical day in 2007 when his team won the Midwest Collegiate Hockey Association championship. It was so crowded inside of the arena that day that fans were stacked four deep all the way around the rink.

It all seemed so distant. But so close. For the first time since 2008, Joe Burcar was standing behind the home bench of Houghton County Arena.

"This entire experience has been humbling and overwhelming," Burcar said. "I've heard from so many people, including many former players. I've had nothing but great feedback and welcoming – not just as a hockey coach, but as a person. There are amazing people here, and they've been so welcoming to me since I've been back."

Burcar was a huge part of the hockey team's formation at the university. He was around before the team was affiliated with a conference, when they had tough seasons with only a couple home games, before they moved into a locker room he calls "the best in the league" – a room that, of course, includes a sauna. Even with all those difficulties – his teams had success. He led the Lions to a 104-96-11 record over seven and a half seasons. In 2007, they celebrated the program's only conference championship.

In the six and a half seasons without Burcar, the formerly up-and-coming program struggled. Despite four straight 10-plus win seasons to finish Burcar's tenure, the team hasn't had one since. In fact, the team only won 29 games without him, while it lost 130. Last season the team bottomed out, finishing with just one win.

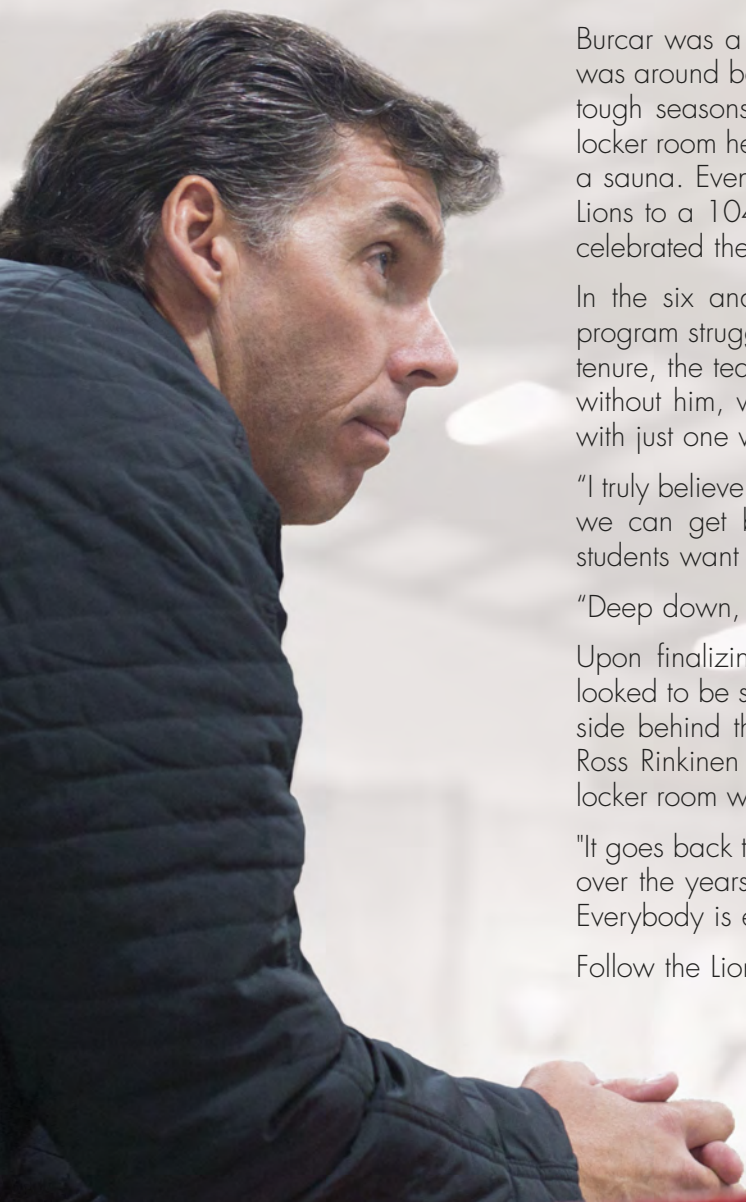
"I truly believe we can make this a competitive school," Burcar said. "I believe we can get back in the playoffs, and make it a well-known school that students want to be at."

"Deep down, I know this is the right place for me."

Upon finalizing his new contract, Burcar led a rallying of the troops that looked to be straight of the script of Disney's Mighty Ducks trilogy. Back at his side behind the bench at Houghton County Arena will be trusted assistants Ross Rinkinen and Brian Hannon. These are the same two that were in the locker room with him when he left for what looked like the final time in 2008.

"It goes back to the friendships," Burcar said. "We've been such good friends over the years, and we want to work together again. We do well together. Everybody is excited to be back."

Follow the Lions all season at fulions.com.



On October 19 Curtis Wittenberg was promoted to the position of Director of Athletics at Finlandia University. Curtis has served in a wide variety of positions during his 10+ years here at Finlandia. You can read his staff bio, but who is Curtis Wittenberg really?

We sat down to ask him a few questions to find out.

Congratulations on the promotion. What attracted you to Finlandia in the first place?

I was attracted by the opportunity I was given when Steve Nordstrom brought me in as a volunteer assistant coach with the women's basketball program. That put me on a new career path in athletics - primarily basketball as it has always been a passion of mine.

Along those same lines, what has kept you passionate about athletics at Finlandia University?

The opportunity to work with young adults here at Finlandia is probably the key thing that defines my positive experience here at Finlandia. I have had the opportunity to coach and work with some great students and student-athletes over the years. Watching their transformation from an incoming freshman to a responsible graduate of the university is quite satisfying.

What are some of your most memorable moments during your time here?

Some of my most memorable moments are:

- Helping coach the 2003-04 women's basketball team to the USCAA National Championship.
- The traveling this job has allowed me to do. I have been able to travel to the following states with teams: Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, North Carolina, Vermont and Washington.
- Having a couple of the women's basketball teams ranked in the top five in the country of NCAA Division III women's basketball for team GPA.

Was a career in athletics the game plan?

Having a career in athletics was never in the plan, as I received my bachelor's degree in actuarial science. My plans were to pursue a career as an actuary, which changed when I decided to live in the Upper Peninsula.

When you're away from the office, what do you like to do?

When I'm away from my office, I like to spend time with my wife, Kelly, and our two rottweilers, Zoe and Ziggy. Beyond that, I like going to classic car shows with my 1978 Ford Bronco.

Complete the sentence:

If I wasn't the AD at Finlandia, I would

I'm not sure what I would be doing if I wasn't the AD here at Finlandia, possibly coaching high school basketball, or I've always thought it would be fun to try to make a living at restoring classic cars.



**6 QUESTIONS WITH
DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS
CURTIS WITTENBERG**

WICKERSHEIM MEMORIALIZED AT FINNU WITH STUDENT LOUNGE

Crowdfunding led by friends and family

A busy Saturday in September was filled with heartfelt tears, unreserved laughs, solemn prayers and unforgettable shared memories as teammates, friends and family members of the late Shawn Wickersheim ('08) gathered together on the campus of Finlandia University. Shawn's memory will live on forever in the new Wickersheim Student Lounge that was completed in the Paavo Nurmi Center in his honor.

"Shawn's memorial was important to us for a number of reasons," said Tucker Thoreson, one of Shawn's best friends and one of the leaders who made this possible. "First and foremost, we wanted to do something for his family that would carry on his legacy, and something that would bring a sense of joy to their hearts. We succeeded in doing so – now and anytime they come back to visit. As Shawn was a roommate, teammate, best friend, groomsmen, and more, I wanted to express how important Shawn was to me personally as well. I'm very pleased with how everything progressed."

In total more than \$8,000 was raised in the Shawn Wickersheim Memorial Fund. It took a lot of work to bring it all together, but the finished product and meaningful moments that were shared between those who made it to campus in September made it all worthwhile.

"I learned charity is alive and well, and not only in the monetary sense of the word," Thoreson said. "Time, effort and hard work was put into this project by multiple people. Seeing the outcome of the project and the



happiness it provided Shawn's family, has made me want to give my time to good causes in the future."

It also gives Thoreson hope that others will step forward.

"I'd ask others to go and see for themselves the space that has been created in Shawn's name, and know it is going toward existing and future students of FinnU," he said. "I'd also ask them to look in the mirror, and imagine it was someone close to their heart. As little as \$10 can make a difference, allowing us to keep Shawn's legacy in place and add to this educational space."

The space includes comfortable couches and chairs, a large HD television set that's already been used by groups of students for event-viewing parties and a large number of spaces perfectly suited for the busy student athlete to study. However, as Thoreson mentioned, it still has room to be improved. If you would like to donate to this cause, or see photos of the new student lounge, please visit finlandia.edu/wick.

LUKE PAUL EARNS TOP AD31 HONORS

Finlandia University pitcher/first baseman Luke Paul earned top honors on the 2016 All-Independent Baseball teams named by the Association of Division III Independents (AD31). Paul, a senior from Hancock, Michigan, was named the Player and Pitcher of the Year after helping lead the Lions to their most wins in school history. The senior batted .318 on the year with 12 RBI and 14 runs scored in 66 at bats. Paul also excelled on the mound, going 5-1 with a 2.40 ERA in 45 innings pitched with six complete games. The senior struck out 37 batters on the year and allowed just 24 hits in his 45 innings.

"Congratulations to Luke, who proved hard work and dedication over four years resulted in an outstanding senior year," Lions coach Steve Nordstrom said. "It is rewarding for him to be recognized by his peers as the Player and Pitcher of the Year."



HEWITT NAMED FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR HONORS

The Great South Athletic Conference (GSAC) announced Caitlin Hewitt (Ishpeming, Mich.) won the Freshman of the Year distinction for the 2015-16 season. Hewitt, enjoyed a stellar inaugural season en route to capturing Freshman of the Year honors. Hewitt demonstrated great shooting range in ranking second overall in the league in 3-point shooting percentage at 36.0%. Despite only starting four contests, Hewitt's tireless work on the defensive end of the floor yielded 24 thefts on the campaign.

Other honors included Julia Daavettila being named to the All-Conference Team, Hewitt rostered on All-Freshman Team, Haley Makela on the All-Sportsmanship Team and Daavettila, Mikayla Hakala and Kelsie Richards earning All-Academic Team Honors.

LOCKER ROOM LEGACIES EXPANDED

Finlandia University athletics is excited to announce the expansion of its Locker Room Legacies program to include an opportunity for individuals and/or businesses to support Lions football by purchasing the naming rights of a locker in the new Terry Talo Lion's Den.

The program allows individuals and/or businesses to purchase the naming rights of a locker for \$600. The program opened up in the early 2000s with the men's and women's hockey teams at Houghton County Arena, and was expanded to include the varsity locker rooms in the Paavo Nurmi Center in 2015.

Please contact Doreen Korpela (906-487-7201) or visit fulions.com/legacies to learn more or donate.

MARCHEL PROMOTED TO PERMANENT WOMEN'S HOCKEY COACH

Matt Marchel has been named permanent head coach of the women's ice hockey program. Marchel served as interim coach throughout the 2015-16 campaign.

Marchel graduated with honors from FinnU in 2010, earning a bachelor in business administration with an emphasis in marketing. Prior to taking the interim job with the women's team he served as an assistant coach for the men's team.

CHASE LEADING WOMEN'S SOCCER

Brent Chase has been named the head women's soccer coach. Chase's new duties are in addition to his established and successful role at the university as the head men's soccer coach.

In two seasons with the men's soccer team, Chase has lead the team to a combined 17-16 record. That record includes the program's first winning season at 11-7 in 2015. During that season the Lions ranked No. 29 in the nation in scoring, and Chase earned Association of Division III Independents (AD3I) Coach of the Year honors.



DUROCHER TAKES REIGNS OF CROSS COUNTRY PROGRAM

The Finlandia University cross country teams had new leadership this fall as Houghton-native Bridget Durocher took over as the coach of the program.

"I have a strong passion for running, and the sport of cross country," said Durocher. "I'm excited to bring that passion to the student athletes at Finlandia."

Durocher attended Finlandia as an undergraduate, studying nursing and playing for the volleyball team. While at FinnU she earned the Lion Award for the most dedicated athlete.

Durocher is a veteran, having served in the United States Army from 2006-2014 when she was primarily stationed in Landstuhl, Germany. While serving she earned the Army Commendation Award for outstanding work in the field.

BIDANCE SETS CROSS COUNTRY RECORD

Freshman George Bidance set a new school record as the Finlandia University men's cross country team competed at the St. Olaf Invitational early in the season. Bidance ran 30:57, breaking the school record of 31:19.80 set by Eric Monticello in 2011.

VOLLEYBALL ADDS HAVLICHEK TO STAFF

Former Michigan Tech volleyball player Aubrey Havlichek has joined the Finlandia University volleyball team's coaching staff this fall, and midway through the season was named acting head coach following the resignation of Kristan Schuster.



Havlichek played four years of volleyball for the NCAA Division II Huskies, including being a part of the school-record 10-0 start during her senior season. While with the Huskies, she was twice recognized on the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference's All-Academic Team. She graduated with a major in sport and fitness management, and a minor and certificate in coaching.

Prior to attending MTU, Havlichek was a standout at Horizon High School in Thornton, Colorado where she was twice named to the all-conference team.

Gerald Takala ('63), retired in July 2015 after nearly 40 years of medical practice. After graduating from Suomi College Dr. Takala attended Michigan State.

Amanda Rogers ('11), BFA in Sustainable Design, recently took on the role of Marketing Coordinator at Pewabic, a ceramic non-profit organization in Detroit.

Major Shannon Way ('97), Registered Nurse, was recently assigned to Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia as a Strategic Planner. He was previously assigned to U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command / Army Forces Strategic Command in Colorado. In addition to his nursing degree Major Way has earned a Master's of International Public Policy from Johns Hopkins in 2013.

Heather Dunne ('15), B.A. Communication, was recently promoted to Digital Services Specialist at Michigan Technological University overseeing the website needs for the College of Sciences and Arts.

Joe Lewis ('08), Physical Therapist Assistant, is celebrating his third anniversary at Active Physical Therapy in Marquette, Michigan this December.

Cole Workman ('14), Liberal Studies, was named head coach of the expansion Thief River Falls Norskies over the summer. The Norskies are Junior "A" hockey team competing in the SIJHL.

FINLOVEDIA

Samantha Saint-Onge ('14) and Collin Saint-Onge ('14) met as undergraduates at Finlandia University. They went on to date for years before marrying in August of 2015 inside of the Finnish American Heritage Center with President Johnson serving as officiant of the ceremony. Currently both of them are employed by the university.

CARE TO SHARE YOUR STORY?

Have you wondered what became of your college roommate, or the study-buddy with whom you spent so many hours? Chances are good that someone is thinking of you, too. Now is the perfect time to send a note and provide FinnU with your professional, personal or Finlovedia update to publish in the next edition of the Bridge. Enquiring minds want to know what you've been up to! We also invite you to connect with the Suomi College/Finlandia University Alumni Association on Facebook.



ALUMS COME BACK TO HELP AT SERVANT LEADERSHIP HOUSE

It was a beautiful summer day in August when Gary ('61) and Jean Terrio ('61) made it back to Finlandia's campus. The five-hour drive from northern Minnesota took its wear, but the end product was well worth all of the pre-trip work and the installation that was about to happen for these proud alumni of the university that went by Suomi College when they were students.

"I have a passion for woodworking, and a passion for Finlandia University, an ELCA school of higher learning," Gary said.

That passion for woodworking will be making a difference for Finlandia students for years to come as his handcrafted shelving unit is now a main fixture in the kitchen of the Servant Leadership House at Finlandia University. The unit is four feet by seven feet, and took Gary about six weeks to make in his Cloquet, Minnesota home.

"My wife and I did most of the work, with our daughter, her husband and two children pitching in when possible, and giving moral and verbal support," he said.

The unit was then packed up and brought to the Keweenaw. Once on campus, the Terrios were joined by students and staff to install it and work on a couple other projects.

"It was a pleasure to interact with the young people, to see their enthusiasm for school and life, and to work alongside them," Jean said.

The unit was financed by Thrivent Financial and its Action Team Funds program. Servant Leadership House Director René Johnson helped connect the dots and complete the installation.

"The Terrios are amazing people," she said. "Having them on campus working with our students was truly a blessing for everyone involved. I cannot thank them enough."



ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTED IN NEW REGULAR FEATURE

Finlandia University alumni are being highlighted in a regular feature on finlandia.edu named Finlandia Success. Early highlights have included a 2015 graduate working for Mayo Clinic, an art and design major who owns and operates a studio in Nashville and a 2013 graduate who works for the National Hockey League's Tampa Bay Lightning.

Check out all of those stories, and more, by visiting finlandia.edu/success.

OBITUARIES

BOARD EMERITI

This past year we grieved the loss of three Finlandia University Board of Trustees emeriti, Rev. Dr. Rudy Kemppainen, Dr. Willard (Bill) Cohodas and Norman (Norm) Berg.

Rudy died at the age of 84 on March 27. He was a 1951 graduate of Suomi College who served on the university's board of trustees from 1998 to 2007. He received an honorary doctorate from Finlandia in 2004. His daughter Sarah served as Finlandia's commencement speaker in May of 2016, and currently serves on the board.

Bill died July 7 at the age of 101. He served on the board from 1979 to 1996, and was conferred an honorary doctorate from Finlandia in 1977. For the past three years he and his wife, Lois, lived in San Antonio,

Texas. A memorial service was held July 12 at Temple Beth Shalom in Ishpeming.

Norm died January 11 at the age of 78 in Wheaton, Illinois. He served on Finlandia's board from 1986 to 2006 and was elected emeritus upon his retirement. Sheree, his wife, and Norm for many years hosted an annual reception for Finlandia at the Fiddlesticks Country Club in Ft. Meyers, Florida and provided hospitality for Sibelius Academy Music Festival events when held in Chicago.

Rudy, Bill, and Norm, together with their spouses, remained close with Finlandia after serving on the board. Finlandia's learning community is deeply grateful for their legacy of leadership and generosity.

ALUMNI

JUDITH "JUDY" WINQUIST

82, Copper City, MI, Oct. 19, 2015

GEORGE DEAN FRANKI

53, Houghton, MI, Jan. 14, 2016

HELEN SPEAR

65, Houghton, MI, Jan. 20, 2016

MARION ESTHER STIERNA

99, Ironwood, MI, Feb. 3, 2016

WALTER (SONNY) P. ARK

75, Mass City, MI, April 30, 2016

JOHN CHARLES LABYAK

75, Ontonagon, MI, May 9, 2016

SANDRA (BOB) BACKON

67, Houghton, MI, June 8, 2016

JONATHAN MERLE LUSE SR.

66, Dollar Bay, MI, June 22, 2016

SHIRLEY MACINTOSH

79, Lake Linden, MI, July 7, 2016

MARJORIE M. SYMONS

95, Frenchtown Location, MI, July 14, 2016

ELLEN P. BAKKA VARNEY ('70)

65, L'Anse, MI, July 20, 2016

WELDON JURVA ('53)

94, Princess Point, MI, Aug. 31, 2016

HELEN S. (NIKKILA) RANKINEN

89, South Range, MI, Sept. 14, 2016

GAIL EVELYN POUTTU

62, Hancock, MI, Sept. 19, 2016

VIOLA J. (JARVENPAA) BROWN ('40)

95, Duluth, MN, Sept. 20, 2016

KATHERINE MARY (BYNOE) MCKAY ('88)

51, Mackinac Island, MI, Sept. 27, 2016

PAUL S. PERREAULT ('82)

61, Lake Linden, MI, October 10, 2016

FRIENDS

DONALD A. PERYAM

67, Hancock, MI, Aug. 29, 2015
Donald was the longtime director of food services at Suomi College.

DR. ROGER A. MATTSON

77, Duluth, MN, Nov. 18, 2015

JOHN H. KASPALA

78, Chassell, MI, Dec. 23, 2015

LORENA NAYBACK QUASIUS

63, Sault Ste. Marie, MI, July 14, 2016

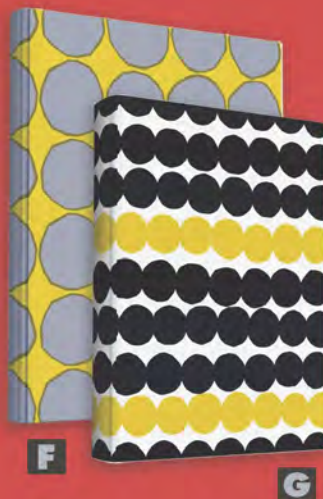
RITVA (RISTOLAINEN) HEIKKILA

96, Helsinki, Finland, Aug. 11, 2016

RUTH MAE AMANDA FRANTTI

87, Calumet, MI, Aug. 11, 2016

Note: In the Fall 2015 edition of the Bridge it was incorrectly stated that James L. Zurcher was a 1985 graduate. His son was a 1985 graduate.



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