

# UNIVERSITY OF SIOUX FALLS

Magazine

// SPRING 2021



University of  
**Sioux Falls**



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# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

This spring issue of USF Magazine comes as usual only six months after the fall's issue, but what a world away it can seem with all that has happened between then and now.

While the University continues to manage the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is by no stretch of the imagination the only work and planning that's been underway. As we look to the horizon, we anticipate and are already addressing that higher education will experience profoundly powerful forces in its future, including but not limited to:

- A demographic decline in the pool of traditional high school seniors projected to continue over the next 10+ years;
- Technology integration continuing to provide opportunities to rethink both access to, and the delivery of higher education;
- Navigating changing societal views and expectations in regard to the purposes of higher education;
- Educational attainment pathways other than the typical uninterrupted four-year bachelor's degree trajectory (*certificates, badges, stackable credentials, etc.*) will likely gain prominence; and
- Demands for greater equity and access to higher education being voiced with increased urgency.

These are among the factors that will substantially impact the higher education environment in which not only USF, but all colleges and universities operate. Fortunately, we—the University of Sioux Falls—have agency. We have the power to decide how we should recalibrate our plans and practices in light of what the future holds. Through the collective wisdom and shared commitment of our stakeholders, we have the opportunity to set a direction and even a magnitude—how far we go in that direction for our future.

As we take action to shape our future, we remain steadfast to our 137-year-old institution's mission of fostering academic excellence and the development of mature Christian persons for service to God and humankind in the world. Blessings.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brett Bradfield  
President, University of Sioux Falls

# Students

# COUGAR FAMILY



**KRISTIN KOTAS '22**

EMERY, SD

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE, &  
SOCIOLOGY MAJOR

"My internship was born from the circumstances presented by the pandemic, and the internship was one of the best experiences of my life," Kristin Kotas says. A triple major honors student, Kristin recently completed an internship at Nichols & Ash, PLLC, a corporate law firm in Jackson, Mississippi. With the fall semester ending at Thanksgiving because of the pandemic and an open interim, Kristin seized the opportunity to utilize the extra-long break for a five-week learning experience. While at the firm, Kristin was exposed to aspects of everyday life as a corporate attorney through participating in hands-on work such as delivering a summons to the county courthouse, preparing materials and attending a city planning and zoning meeting and drafting documents for a business purchase. For Kristin, this internship was a pivotal experience for planning her future. "Starting college, I thought I wanted to practice family law, and soon began to question my decision, wondering if I should even try and be a lawyer anymore," Kristin says. "I thought this internship might guide me to my answer, and it did! This experience opened my eyes to a new avenue of law, one where you can see and help something come to life that was once only an idea and continue to support your clients. With my three majors, it feels like the perfect fit. It solidified my decision to go on to law school, and is excitingly the first step toward my legal career."



**WESLEY OBA '23**

MANCHESTER, UNITED KINGDOM  
APPLIED MATHEMATICS

"Miracles happen in ways we least expect," says Wesley Oba, an international student from the United Kingdom. The past year has made seeing family and friends difficult, especially for students whose families live in another country. This has been Wesley's reality—missing his family, close friends and especially his little brother. Wesley's miracle? His USF teammates turned to brothers, and a family formed on the basketball court. "Basketball has been my safe space during these difficult months of COVID. I thank my teammates because I know they have my back at all times. They are my family away from home." Finding a community of close friends is a consistent treasure for USF students, and this year especially, it has made a difference in Wesley's life. His faith has grown too. "During my time at USF, I gained a closer relationship with God which was a huge impact on me," Wesley says. "There are a lot of opportunities here at the University to establish a relationship with God. I am very happy to have that chance and slowly become the individual I want to be." After his time at USF, Wesley hopes to play professional basketball and motivate others to be the best version of themselves. "I want everyone to look at my story and learn that you will be okay and having faith in the Lord will give you the strength to achieve your goals so you can succeed," Wesley says.



**MEAGAN RASMUSSEN '21**

OMAHA, NE  
NURSING

As Meagan Rasmussen reflects on her time at USF, she feels prepared to enter the workforce with practical nursing skills and strong compassion for her patients. "I truly feel privileged to have learned under our nursing program professors," Meagan says. "I think that my education has prepared me in greater ways than other nursing programs because of the emphasis on servant leadership and Christ-like care. In being members of the body of Christ, servants to do His good, we are immediately pointed to be patient advocates for our brothers and sisters in Christ." Even the pandemic has been a tool to sharpen Meagan's nursing education, forcing her to think beyond what the "normal" is and find caring solutions. "I can give my patient a medication and make them comfortable, but how can I keep their spirits alive when they are stuck inside a hospital alone," Meagan says. "This pandemic has shown me just how impactful a single interaction or single patient assignment can have on both my patient and myself." As graduation approaches in May, Meagan cherishes the friendships she has gained and looks to the future with a passion to impact the world. "I hope to influence the world through nursing by meeting the needs of each of my patients individually and uniquely," Meagan says. "If I can touch their lives in a small way, point them to Jesus and inspire them to help others, I hope they can be motivated to do the same for their families and friends, causing a ripple effect."



# Campus Happenings

## NEW CAMPUS CUPBOARD AIDS FOOD SECURITY

Q&A WITH TE'RON WELCH

USF RESIDENCE LIFE DIRECTOR OF NORTH HALL

*Te'Ron works in the Sampus Life office and has worked closely with the Campus Cupboard initiative.*

### WHAT IS THE CAMPUS CUPBOARD?

**TE'RON:** The Campus Cupboard is a food pantry on campus that represents an initiative to fight food insecurity within our USF community.

### HOW HAS THE CAMPUS CUPBOARD BEEN A POWERFUL RESOURCE FOR USF STUDENTS?

**TE'RON:** The Campus Cupboard has been a powerful resource for all USF students by providing essential foods and goods that students can rely on for their next meal, or to simply grab a quick snack inbetween classes. The Campus Cupboard is used by a wide range of students.

### WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?

**TE'RON:** Food insecurity is defined as the lack of consistent access to adequate food for an active, healthy lifestyle. Typically, it refers to the reduced availability of financial resources for food, but can also include a general anxiety about not knowing where food for the next meal will come from. Food insecurity has the potential to harm college students' ability to achieve their educational and professional goals.

## USF RECEIVES \$300K FEDERAL GRANT

Campus safety has always been a priority at USF, but thanks to a three-year, \$300,000 grant from the United States Department of Justice—Office of Violence Against Women, safety programming is growing even stronger. This grant provided the funds to welcome Rachel Martens onto the USF staff. Martens will be establishing the USF Safe Campus Project, which will implement prevention and education programs, enhance victim services and develop and strengthen security and investigation strategies to prevent and respond to instances of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking crimes. Martens, a 2015 USF graduate, will work closely with University Counseling Services, the Thomas Kilian Academic Success Center, Campus Safety & Security and Student Life.

**NEW \$50M SCHOLARSHIP  
FUND WILL SOON BE  
AVAILABLE TO USF STUDENTS**

South Dakota's first needs-based scholarship fund will soon be available to University of Sioux Falls students and those at seven other South Dakota universities. USF is grateful for the PREMIER Scholarship Fund, a \$50 million endowment gift from T. Denny Sanford and First PREMIER Bank, PREMIER Bankcard. The fund is projected to reach \$200 million with additional financial support. The first scholarships will start in the 2022-23 school year.

**USF VACCINATION  
CLINIC HELPS PROTECT  
COMMUNITY**

On March 23 in partnership with Avera Health, USF offered a 100% voluntary vaccination clinic to students living in residence halls or working on the USF campus. Availability was also opened up to faculty and staff. The vaccinations conveniently took place in Mears Library.

*Continued*

**NEW  
CAMPUS CUPBOARD  
AIDS FOOD SECURITY**

Q&A WITH TE'RON WELCH

**HOW DOES THE CAMPUS CUPBOARD  
WORK?**

**TE'RON:** The Campus Cupboard is open during normal library business hours to all students within the USF community. Students can stop by and grab as many items as they would like. From cereal to vegetables, the pantry provides students food to enjoy for dinner or as a snack. No ID is required. There is a form for suggestions for requested food items.

**HOW DOES THE CAMPUS CUPBOARD  
HELP USF STUDENTS FOCUS ON BEING  
STUDENTS AND COMBATING STRESS?**

**TE'RON:** The Campus Cupboard remains stocked with nutritious foods and canned goods so that students do not have to worry about their next meal. Our goal is to ensure that our USF community has their basic needs met. With students not having to worry or stress about when and what to eat, they can focus on excelling inside and outside of the classroom.



## DIVERSITY PROGRAMMING CONTINUES

The Task Force on Diversity, Inclusion, Social Justice, Civic Engagement & Advocacy has continued with intentional programming and conversation on the USF campus. A special vlog series was published on YouTube in recent months that featured students sharing how their families uniquely celebrate holiday traditions. Additionally, Student Life celebrated Black History Month with a Black History Month virtual trivia night, by commemorating Black icons with biography displays in the student union, and developing and distributing a list of Black businesses to support in Sioux Falls. USF Culture Club continues to gather, play games and have meaningful, open conversations about the importance of race, justice and diversity. Watch the vlog series at [youtube.com/usiouxfalls](https://youtube.com/usiouxfalls).

### WHERE IS IT LOCATED?

**TE'RON:** The Campus Cupboard satellite location is located on campus in the lower level of the Norman B. Mears Library and is open during normal library business hours. Students can also visit the main location at Our Savior's Lutheran Church on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 7 p.m., and on Sundays from 9 to 11 a.m.

### WHO HAS HELPED SUPPORT CAMPUS CUPBOARD?

**TE'RON:** We've had a variety of supporters from USF staff, faculty and alumni. We've also received generous support from our friends at Hy-Vee, Sam's Club, Our Savior's Lutheran Church and First Baptist Church.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BEST LOOKING FOOD ITEMS THAT COME THROUGH THE PANTRY?

**TE'RON:** We have a variety of snacks and food that come and go quickly through the Campus Cupboard. Some notable mentions include pad thai, lo mein, salmon, Pop-Tarts, fettuccine, Fruit Roll-Ups, and apple cider.

### HOW CAN A COMMUNITY MEMBER SUPPORT THE CAMPUS CUPBOARD?

**TE'RON:** Monetary or food item donations and be coordinated with the Student Life office by emailing [student.life@usiouxfalls.edu](mailto:student.life@usiouxfalls.edu).

// **LEFT** USF Culture Club gathers for a time of community and to engage in meaningful conversations on challenging topics like racial inequality and justice.

// **MIDDLE** An Avera nurse administers the COVID-19 vaccine to a USF student.

// **RIGHT** Te'Ron and USF students raise awareness at Hy-Vee about the Campus Cupboard initiative. Thanks to our friends at Hy-Vee for the \$500 donation!











# SEEKING GOD THROUGH THE ARTS

*Submitted by Dr. David DeHoogh-Kliewer, USF Chair of  
Visual & Performing Arts and Professor of Music.  
Dr. DeHoogh-Kliewer has served as USF's Director of  
Choral Activities since 2006.*



Creative inspiration often comes to the artist as a whisper. During a pandemic, a cacophony of sound seems to drown out the attention to such a voice. Just as many people have developed creative responses to COVID-19, the artist, oftentimes in isolation, has attempted to listen for the whisper, a call toward creativity.

## **Created to Create**

Creative outlets, such as art, media, music and theatre give us perspective, acknowledging the plethora of struggles and challenges while still recognizing inspiration—a theme, a phrase, or simply a word of hope. During a time when creativity could be seen as a frivolous endeavor or even optional, we are reminded that God placed a creative capacity within each person. The very beginning of the Bible, Genesis 1:1, establishes God as the creator. Later (Genesis 1:27), we learn that each of us is created *imago dei*, in God's image as creative beings. People desperately need to be nurtured by the expressive beauty and power that is beckoning through sound and sight, as they are set at ease from all that concerns us.

## **USF Celebrates the Arts**

The University of Sioux Falls continues to celebrate art in new ways. Even the COVID responses themselves can be seen as a “creative outlet,” allowing restrictions to act as inspiration, bringing new perspective into focus. I’ve recently attended numerous productions and events designed to celebrate creativity, express the anguish of isolation and endeavor to demonstrate perseverance.

The Washington Pavilion of Arts and Sciences (WPAS) recently concluded an exhibit of USF students’ work in graphic design, photography, painting, and drawing, that utilizes unique mediums



**// TOP** Joe Schaeffer, Ceca Cooper and Dr. Nick Poppens pose for a photo at their opening reception at the WPAS in March.

**// MIDDLE** Apolonia Davalos shows her award Best Documentary Short for her film "The Making of: LOVING ARMS."

**// BOTTOM** USF choir students share their talent in the Cathedral of Saint Joseph.

and advanced technology to express ideas and passion. The current exhibit at the WPAS displays the work of USF art faculty. Associate Professor of Art Ceca Cooper, Assistant Professor of Art Joe Schaeffer and Assistant Professor of Media Studies Dr. Nick Poppens took the concept of isolation and developed an exhibition entitled On the Edge ([washingtonpavilion.org/on-the-edge](http://washingtonpavilion.org/on-the-edge)). Additionally, Professor Schaeffer, as USF Gallery Director, continues to offer displays, featuring student work and that of local artists, in numerous galleries across campus.

Live and virtual performances for instrumental music (Associate Professor of Music, Dr. Jonathan Neiderhiser) as well as theatre (Associate Professor of Theatre Joe Obermueller and Adjunct Professor Dr. Brenda Paulson) have each featured innovative approaches to highlight student creativity. Sophomore Apolonia Davalos produced a documentary film featuring interviews of USF actors, crew members, the director, and the playwright as they debuted the dark comedy "Loving Arms", written by USF Professor of English Dr. Kevin Cole and directed by Professor Obermueller, just prior to the lockdown. Our Media Studies Department (Assistant Professors of Media Studies, Nancy Sutton and Dr. Poppens) offers creative and practical experiences for students in daily television, radio and print productions. The USF choirs have produced multiple video recordings, assisted by Media Studies faculty, student videographers and student editors. On Mother's Day 2021, the choir students will perform their second "lawn-chair" concert on campus.

Nurturing creativity among USF students and faculty allows each of us, artist and consumer alike, to listen for the whisper. What inspires the artist? How does the art inspire or broaden the perspectives of the consumer? When facing challenges requiring a creative response, USF has always incorporated ingenuity by celebrating and analyzing the past, informing our future. Dr. Sarah Sinnott, associate professor of Spanish and Hispanic Linguistics, has been coordinating professional development opportunities for USF faculty members, recently featuring Dr. Stephen Jackson, associate professor of History, who shared historical perspectives entitled "Transformative Decades: Sioux Falls College from the Jeschke Years to the 1970s". Acknowledging challenges and accomplishments of the past informs our campus community how we might better respond to our current global health challenge in creative ways.

Paul's words in Colossians 3:23-24 remind us: "In whatever you do, do it with all your heart . . . for it is the Lord Christ you are serving." As a USF community, and with God's help, may our future be filled with our best creative efforts and, in all that we do, may we bring honor and glory to God. ■

**"When facing challenges requiring a creative response, USF has always incorporated ingenuity by celebrating and analyzing the past, informing our future."**



# COUGAR

## FAMILY *Faculty*



**NANCY SUTTON**

Assistant Professor of Media Studies

Forty-eight years—that's the time USF Media Studies Professor Nancy Sutton has been editing videos. Her extensive experience points not simply to a diligent career, but a passion for media. "I was incredibly lucky to be a child of the 60s, getting to see the beginning of color television, the birth of the Internet, and the change over from videotape to digital," Sutton says. "I had a very fulfilling career as a broadcast news producer, writer and video editor during all of those changes. Now as a teacher, I share with students that media is always exciting, changing and relevant to everyone's life." Sutton not only brings experience to the classroom but also stays on top of relevant technology and techniques. "I try to make sure I take on a freelance video or graphics projects whenever I have extra time," Sutton says. "It keeps my skills relevant and up to date." For example in 2014, she directed and edited a full-length feature documentary that was accepted into 23 film festivals. This experience and passion for media has blossomed the media studies program as a whole at USF. Alongside Dr. Nick Poppens, Sutton has created new courses and updated classroom technology—which has included adding a brand new computer lab. "Seeing our media graduates on television as reporters and producers and beyond, that is the reason I teach," Sutton says.



**STEVE HORAN**

Assistant Professor of Business Administration / MBA Director

At any given time, Steve Horan is advising 130 students. From traditional undergraduate business students to Masters in Business Administration students, Horan is known for building relationships and creating opportunities for students to connect with real world businesses. "I really enjoy having MBA students mentor my traditional undergraduate students," Horan says. "Often, the traditional students will let me know of a career that they are considering, and I can match them up with an MBA student in that career to visit with." The COO Tycoon Investment club is another example of real world learning that Horan oversees. In 2011, the club started with \$205,000 to invest, and currently, the portfolio is worth \$630,000 due to decisions that Horan's students made. The club withdraws a portion of the funds each year to send students on mission trips. While the business world evolves, Horan has kept USF's programming nimble and competitive. For example all four of the MBA concentrations can now be done 100% online or a combination of online and on-campus, students can fast track their MBA degree to twelve months or take a slower pace of 21 months, and undergraduate students can complete their business degree in three years and use the fourth year to complete their MBA. Through excellent programming, bringing real-world opportunities to the classroom and building relationships with his students, Horan lives out servant leadership.



**LYNDE THELEN**

Assistant Professor of Nursing

Thanks to Professor Lynde Thelen's research, USF will be the first university worldwide to implement an innovative new approach in the pharmacology classroom. "Pharmacology is one of the courses that nursing students dread, and now I found a way to make pharmacology meaningful and interesting," Thelen says. After studying learning preferences, Thelen decided to implement a scrambling active learning method in the pharmacology course by immersing students in simulations and not just lectures—a unique approach to a traditionally lecture-driven course. "I decided a couple years ago to include in-class simulation in some of the pharmacology concepts such as for cardiovascular medications," Thelen says. "After implementing the in-class simulation and listening to the students' feedback, I knew right away that I should include this educational intervention in each and every pharmacology class session. I also decided at that point that this will be my Ph.D. dissertation topic and set a goal that I would try to publish to disseminate my findings." When courses were forced to an online format last spring Thelen remained committed to her simulation teaching method for each pharmacology class session. The results? The teaching method improved students' pharmacology competence and confidence on the topic as proven by improved test scores. Thelen's research was recently published, and it's the only peer-reviewed article worldwide on this topic to-date.





## USF ATHLETES GAIN

# New Perspective

## THROUGH COVID CHALLENGES

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Will we be able to practice? When will we get to compete? What if I test positive? How does travel work? How long will this last?

All these questions and more weighed heavily in the minds of USF's student-athletes as staff and administration worked on a game plan for the 2020-21 school year. There was, and still is, no playbook for COVID-19. Yet despite the many challenges, one truth remains.

Being part of a team is one of the best things about being a student-athlete.

"Across the board, our student-athletes, our coaches and our staff would agree the most frustrating aspect of the pandemic wasn't the frequent COVID testing, quarantines, delayed seasons or even the fear of not competing," says Pam Gohl, director of USF Athletics. "The hardest part was not being together."

This fact is echoed in the words of USF veteran Men's Basketball Head Coach Chris Johnson.

"The single biggest challenge was building and maintaining relationships with the players," he says. "We couldn't see faces through masks. I couldn't have the team over to my house. We had to limit our time together. We met on Zoom. Never before has the value of team chemistry been so apparent."

Junior All-American swimmer Elizabeth Spaans agrees.

"There are fewer people at practices and at meets, and it is hard not having that extra motivation from my teammates. We cheer each other on and push each other, so not having them by my side—mentally—that has been my biggest challenge."

With so many sacrifices being made by people around the world, USF student-athletes and staff are quick to count their blessings—and there are

**// LEFT** USF Softball outfielders Frankie Mickelson and Kylan Straight celebrate a winning play—moments now possible again thanks to consistent COVID testing before games.

# MORE COUGAR ATHLETIC HEADLINES



USF Volleyball welcomes new Head Coach Dan Mathews and Assistant Coach Mariah McPartland.



For the first time ever USF has dual NSIC Preseason Athletes of the Year in golfers JJ Cooney and Lexi Hanson.



USF Swimming produced 36 All-NSIC swimmers, nine with DII qualifying marks and seven champions.



USF shot putter Emma Hertz earned a title spot at NSIC Track & Field championships, automatically qualifying her for NCAA DII nationals.



18 Cougars earn Myles Brand Award from NSIC (3.75 or better GPA).



Women's basketball junior guard Anna Brecht and men's basketball senior forward Teathloach Pal named 1st Team All-NSIC.

[usfcougars.com](http://usfcougars.com)



// **ABOVE** USF Head Men's Basketball Coach Chris Johnson congratulates Teathloach Pal, a first team All-NSIC selection, on Senior Day.

many. Unlike their counterparts at many universities across the country, USF student-athletes were able to return to campus for practice in June 2020, and USF was open for classes in the fall. Every sport was able to compete in some capacity this spring, and seniors were given an unusual opportunity.

"The NCAA instituted a rule allowing senior student-athletes to come back for another year of eligibility. USF President Brett Bradfield and our administration went a step further by extending their scholarships, which is something many schools did not do," Gohl explains.

After the NCAA put a hold on fall sports competition, USF student-athletes continued with limited practices and adhered to CDC guidelines and NCAA safety protocols. This included frequent COVID testing, which was made possible by USF donors as well as some unexpected outside support.

"Hy-Vee of Sioux Falls stepped up to provide two rounds of free testing per week for our student-athletes," Gohl says. "Tests were sent to South Carolina, and we usually had results within 48 hours. In addition, we had nursing alumni and the USF Nursing department performing same-day testing on campus. With both of these options in place, testing was a fairly smooth process."

In addition to physical health, the mental health of the student-athletes has also been monitored.

"A staff member created a Google form with a long list of questions. If someone scored a four or less, coaches and staff would reach out with extra support," Gohl says. "Our president started a COVID task force, using connections



with area physicians to help us navigate through it all.”

Was all the extra work worth it?

“Absolutely,” Spaans says. “I appreciate swimming so much more now. I realize the importance of relationships. I learned to persevere, and now, I feel like I can overcome just about anything.”

**“I appreciate swimming so much more now. I realize the importance of relationships. I learned to persevere, and now, I feel like I can overcome just about anything.”**

In a compromised and shortened season, Spaans defended her NSIC conference titles in the 200 individual medley and in the 100 backstroke. She was also part of first and second place relay teams and competed at the NCAA Division II National Swimming and Diving Championships in March.

With spring athletics in full swing and abbreviated spring seasons for all USF fall and winter sports, the athletics schedule is busy once again.

“This has been the hardest year I’ve ever had to coach, without question,” Johnson says. “But I’ve learned that student-athletes at USF are extremely resilient. I have been so impressed by how they’ve

handled this whole situation. It hasn’t been easy, but they have shown the ability to adapt, stay together and grow through an unbelievably difficult time.”

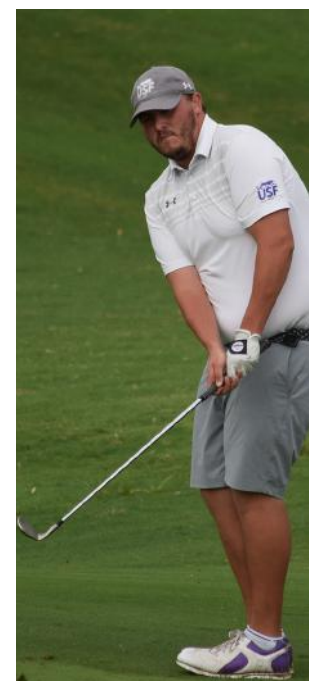
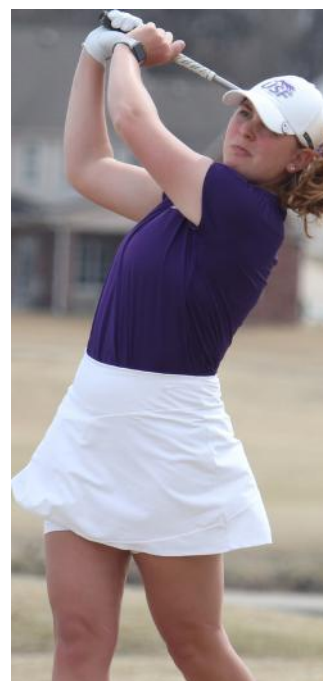
And that’s a win in our book.

If you would like to learn more about COVID-19 protocols or the upcoming schedule for USF Athletics, visit [usfcougars.com](http://usfcougars.com). ■

**// TOP** At the NSIC Swimming and Diving Championships, USF captured the 400 medley relay title with a team of Elizabeth Spaans, Chantal Kasch, Valerie Childs and Jenna Krahn.

**// MIDDLE** USF Golf’s Lexi Hanson (left) and JJ Cooney (right) became USF’s first-ever NSIC Preseason Golfers of the Year for the men’s and women’s programs, respectively.

**// BOTTOM** Junior Emma Hertz is the first-ever USF Track and Field throw specialist to earn first team NCAA DII All-American honors in the shot put (8th) and weight throw (7th).



Alumni

# COUGAR F A M I L Y

The University of Sioux Falls is dedicated to honoring the outstanding achievements of our alumni. Each year, the Alumni Achievement Awards are presented during Cougar Days to alumni who have made outstanding contributions to their fields of endeavor, their communities and their churches.

Each award has its own unique criteria, and three are named after an important member of the USF community who has exemplified USF's motto of Culture for Service within their field. A committee of alumni reviews nominations and selects the recipient for each award.

## Meet USF's 2020 Alumni Achievement Award Recipients



### TAYLOR '09 and HEIDI CALMUS '08

Alumni Pacesetter Award

Taylor and Heidi (Wolff) Calmus are a dynamic duo who use their jack-of-all-trades talents and hearts of service to help others and bring joy. From the rural community of Howard, South Dakota, Taylor now has over 2.6 million followers for his Dude Dad persona and video blog and is a major influencer in the parental video world. His videos have been seen by millions and have been featured on NBC and other national networks. Heidi, a native of Fargo, North Dakota, has spent her entire career fighting for the marginalized and has been serving and advocating for victims of human trafficking and homeless youth in the Los Angeles area for the past decade. In 2019 Dude Dad challenged Celebrity DIYer Chip Gaines to a competition for charity and went on to raise \$1.5 million for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Following that endeavor, Taylor began working with Chip and Joanna Gaines and a team of producers to create a new TV show, "Super Dad", on the Magnolia Network. They continue to make videos for the Dude Dad platform and find ways to invest in their community.



### AL JOHNSON '64

Dr. A. O. Larsen Distinguished Alumni Award

Al Johnson began teaching for the Sioux Falls Public School District following graduation from Sioux Falls College. He taught civics at Whittier Middle School, coached wrestling at Washington High School and worked evenings at McCrossan Boys Ranch. Just eight years after beginning his teaching career, Johnson was named Sioux Falls Teacher of the Year. Shortly thereafter he entered the world of real estate and was named Realtor of the Year by the Sioux Falls Realtor Board in 1985 and was later honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award. Johnson has served as a Trustee for the University of Sioux Falls for more than 10 years. He supports USF athletics and fine arts and has often participated in prospective faculty and administrator recruitment by introducing candidates to Sioux Falls. He and Carol '65, his wife of more than 57 years, were married at First Baptist Church while students at SFC.

Nominations for USF's 2021 Alumni Achievement Awards are being accepted until MAY 15 and can be submitted at [usioxford.edu/alumni/awards](https://usioxford.edu/alumni/awards).





## KRISTINE PETERSON

Lois Harchanko Distinguished Music Award

Kris (Armstrong) Peterson attended Sioux Falls College from 1981-1983 and finished her degree at William Jewell College in 1985. She began her teaching career in 1985 and for the last 18 years has been a music teacher for Linn-Mar Community Schools in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Every year since 2001, Peterson has had students qualify and participate in Iowa All-State Youth Choir. For 25 years she led a children's choir at New Covenant Bible Church, has taught private piano, violin and cello lessons, and played cello throughout the community in groups and as a soloist. She has also been honored as Teacher of the Week for the Cedar Rapids area. In the summer of 2020, she completed her master's degree in music education and graduated as class vice president from VanderCook College of Music in Chicago. Many generations of this family have graced the USF campus. Kris is one of two daughters of Dr. Kerchal Armstrong, a USF Music Department faculty member and department chair from 1972-1988.



## RICHARD MERKOURIS '04

Dr. Firman A. Early Distinguished Ministry Award

When Rich Merkouris sees a need, he works to meet it. In 2010, he planted a church in Sioux Falls and has been the senior pastor at King of Glory since its inception. Merkouris, along with a team of board members, developed the Sioux Falls Ministry Center, now known as Empower Campus, a central location for numerous ministries serving people in need. He serves as the chairman of the board of directors for Empower Campus as well as for one of its largest ministries, Compassion Child Care. He is the chairman of the board of Sioux Falls Hope Coalition and also serves as president of Kingdom Capital Fund. In addition to his leadership roles, Merkouris spends time with families during crisis situations as a member of the Sioux Falls police chaplain team. In 2019, he was featured in a Sioux Falls Business article and was later the recipient of the SIOUXPERHERO Award from the Sioux Falls City Council. When asked who his personal inspiration is, Mayor Paul TenHaken named Merkouris, adding that the city could use a thousand more like him.



## KATHY SUNDVOLD '92

Lois Harchanko Distinguished Music Award

For nearly 3 decades, Kathy (Lashly) Sundvold has been teaching students the art and mechanics of music. Sundvold began her career teaching Kindermusik and private voice at the University of Sioux Falls, taught vocal music part-time at Edison Middle School for two years, and then transferred to Memorial Middle School where, for the past 26 years, she has taught choir, general music, speech and drama, and directed the Signature Show Choir. Sundvold has hosted 15 student teachers during their residencies, three of which were USF students. A passionate advocate for the arts, she has served as both the president of the South Dakota American Choral Directors Association (SDACDA), the southeast area representative, and is the current repertoire and resources chair for middle and junior high choirs. Sundvold is a two-time Teacher of the Year nominee and the 2004 SDACDA Encore Award winner. Her choirs have performed at multiple SDACDA conferences, at the South Dakota State Music In-Service Conference, and her choirs have earned many honors and accolades at competitions around the region.

USF'S NEW

# CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

HIGHLIGHTS ASSOCIATE DEGREES  
AND THE ABILITY TO  
“STACK” DEGREES

Traditional bachelor's degrees are the cornerstone of the Christian liberal arts experience at the University of Sioux Falls. However, increasing demands for expanded educational opportunities have brought exciting new options to people of all ages and interests.

The new Center for Workforce Development at USF allows people to pursue professional credentials, associate degrees, degree completion programs and more in a highly supportive environment, that prioritizes flexibility and a top quality academic experience. Here, dedicated University professors and instructors will teach relevant and marketable skillsets designed to empower people in jobs across the region.

“When it comes to professional certificates and associate degrees, we knew there was a niche to provide these program options in the Sioux Falls region and beyond,” says Dr. Brett Bradfield, president of USF. “We’re seeing more and more players especially at the associate degree level in Sioux Falls, and what makes USF unique is that our





# An Experience for Everyone



## Transfer students

Credits from other accredited universities are accepted and used to help you earn your associate, bachelor's or master's degree.



## People seeking a two-year associate degree

Associate degrees are available in two years or less and the credits can be used toward a bachelor's degree if you decide to continue your education in the future.



## Businesses and employees seeking professional development

Boost current job skills or pursue a new path with an undergrad or master's certificate, which can be rolled into an associate degree, a bachelor's degree or a master's degree at USF.



## People wanting to complete a degree

USF's longstanding Degree Completion Program allows you to flexibly earn credits to complete a bachelor's degree in an accelerated format in one of four fields.

degrees and credentials are built to be fully stackable. Also, USF has a longstanding and solid reputation for supplying area businesses with graduates at various degree levels who have the common threads of being not only highly skilled, but are also positive, ethical, responsible and caring citizens."

The new Center for Workforce Development allows employers a convenient way to provide employees with expanded training in a private university environment. It's also a great solution for people looking to switch careers or further their education.

### A Custom Experience

Credits obtained through the Center for Workforce Development are fully stackable, which means they seamlessly roll forward if and when students decide to continue their degree path, with opportunities on the undergraduate and graduate tracks at USF.

"Everyone was so friendly and inclusive that I knew almost instantly that USF was where I belonged,"

recalls Amanda Hamil, a business major who took advantage of USF's unique 3+1 program, in which she earned her undergraduate degree in three years and, now in her fourth year, will finish her MBA in Organizational Leadership and graduate in May. "The 3+1 program allowed me to get 150 credits in four years where a traditional program only requires you to graduate with 120. This is beneficial as it saves both time and money while I graduate with two degrees instead of one, making me more marketable as an employee."

"USF offers students the unique ability to upgrade their degrees immediately or even years down the road," explains LuAnn Grossman, director of USF's Center for Workforce Development. "For example, students can roll an undergrad certificate into an associate degree, and then apply those credits towards a bachelor's degree at any time. It's completely seamless without the need to transfer any credits or retake any classes."

## A Growing Program

The current list of certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's certificates and master's degrees offered through the Center for Workforce Development are listed below, but that list will continue to expand in the future and can be viewed at [usiouxfalls.edu/workforcedevelopment](http://usiouxfalls.edu/workforcedevelopment). A Doctorate in Leadership—the first of its kind from a Sioux Falls university for the Sioux Falls region and beyond—will also be available starting summer 2021.

“USF offers opportunities at every point of education for various walks of life,” Grossman says. “We are proud to meet the diverse needs of higher education by restructuring some of our programming in a more customized and flexible way. USF is deeply invested in education, and now people seeking certificates or associate degrees can benefit from a well-rounded and thoughtful university experience in Sioux Falls.” ■



## Roll Credits Forward

Credits earned through Center for Workforce Development programs stack and build on themselves. For example a short-term 12-credit certificate rolling seamlessly into a master's degree, or an associate degree rolling seamlessly into a bachelor's degree. Take weeks or years between certificates and degrees. Waste zero credits, zero time and zero dollars.

### GRADUATE

#### 4. Graduate Certificates

Enroll in USF's MBA program to earn one of four MBA certificates, which can stand alone or roll seamlessly into your MBA degree. Professional certificates can be earned in as little as fourteen weeks.

- Innovation and Marketing (12 credits)
- Healthcare Management (12 credits)
- Management (12 credits)
- Organizational Leadership (12 credits)

#### 5. Graduate Degrees

Roll credits from an MBA certificate or enroll in our MBA program after earning a bachelor's degree (whether that was weeks or years ago). USF offers a total of nine MBA and Graduate Education programs.

#### 6. Doctorate Degree

Turn an MBA or Master's degree in any field from USF or another institution into a Doctorate in Leadership. Program requirements apply.

### UNDERGRADUATE

#### 1. Certificates

Become certified in a high demand field in about one year or less.

- Accounting Professional (16-23 credits)
- Accounting Specialist (12 credits)
- Business Certificate (12 credits)
- Social Media Marketing (18 credits)

#### 2. Associate Degrees

Earn an associate degree in just two years (less if you bring forward certificate credits).

- Accounting
- Business Administration
- General Studies
- Graphic Design
- Media Studies
- Radiologic Technology
- Social Media Marketing
- Social Science

#### 3. Bachelor's Degrees

Over forty different bachelor's degrees are available from USF. The following can be seamlessly earned by rolling credits from an associate degree or certificate:

- Accounting\*
- Art
- Business\*
- Business Administration
- Criminal Justice
- Health Administration\*
- History
- General Studies\*
- Media Studies
- Psychology
- Radiologic Technology (requires off-campus training)
- Social Science
- Social Work
- Sociology

\* Available in an accelerated online or evening in-person format





# C L A S S

## Notes

All notes are based on information received between  
September 1, 2020 – February 28, 2021.

### // IN MEMORIAM

## ALUMNI

**Bea (Woertink) Grotey '45**, Oct. 10, 2020, San Marcos, CA

**Helen (Hutchens) Yeatts '45**, Feb. 21, 2021, Santa Fe, NM

**Ruth (Hines) Merry '50**, Oct. 25, 2020, Dell Rapids, SD

**Rachelann (McFarlin) Plucker '50**, Oct. 8, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Dee (Kop) Nelson '53**, Aug. 25, 2020, Claremont, CA

**Elsie (Joffer) Schmidt '54**, Oct. 29, 2020, Marion, SD

**Erma (Nelson) Tuttle '54**, Oct. 11, 2020, Winner, SD

**Loretta (Varns) Miller '55**, Sept. 22, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Clinton Jesser '56**, Dec. 11, 2020, Dekalb, IL

**Tom Niehus '57**, July 20, 2020, Le Grand, IA

**Margy (Clark) Rubick '57**, Dec. 23, 2020, Indianapolis, IN

**Cal Sorensen '58**, Feb. 11, 2021, Eagan, MN

**Flo Kapaun '62**, Feb. 9, 2021, Ames, IA

**Evelyn (Seitz) George '63**, Oct. 25, 2020, Mesquite, TX

**Cathy (Burge) Harper '64**, Jan. 3, 2021, Gillette, WY

**Jim Clutts '65**, Nov. 13, 2020, Wilsonville, OR

**Duane Johnson '66**, Oct. 24, 2020, Pocatello, ID

**Leona (DeNeui) Sheard '68**, Sept. 26, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Lew Christensen '69**, Nov. 7, 2020, Brookings, SD

**Jan (Krause) Kostner '69**, May 31, 2020, Mukwonago, WI

**Maxine (Knutson) Leaders '69**, Jan. 13, 2021, Sioux Falls

**Betty (Thompson) Newberg '69**, Nov. 22, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Bonnie (Hollmann) Lewin '70**, Oct. 4, 2020, Hartford, SD

**John Ring '70**, Feb. 3, 2021, Sioux Falls

**Bruce Iwerks '71**, Jan. 31, 2021, Sioux Falls

**Bentley Odom, Jr. '71**, Dec. 13, 2020, Long Branch, NJ

**Ethel (Hassebroek) Augsburger '73**, April 9, 2020, Sibley, IA

**Maxine Ortman '73**, Oct. 24, 2020, Marion, SD

**Art Bollaert '76**, Oct. 1, 2020, Rosemount, MN

**Elizabeth Flanagan '79**, Jan. 3, 2021, Chandler, AZ

**Tracy Thorpe '84**, Oct. 24, 2020, Yukon, OK

**Sherri (Sanderson) Sanderson '86**, Jan. 3, 2021, Aberdeen, SD

**Diana (Boyd) Pederson '90**, Nov. 27, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Michael Standing Soldier '98**, Sept. 1, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Herman Bos '00**, Oct. 10, 2020, Edgerton, MN

**Trisha Lombard '03**, Jan. 19, 2021, Inwood, IA

**Donald Hough '08**, Feb. 14, 2021, Sioux Falls

## FRIENDS

**Rachel Crowley**, Nov. 16, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Gordon Fosness**, December 15, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Bob Larsen**, Nov. 10, 2020, San Diego, CA

**Jeffrey "JO" Okerlund**, November 6, 2020, Sioux Falls

**Howard Paulson**, Feb. 11, 2021, Sioux Falls



# CLASSES

## Notes

All notes are based on information received between  
September 1, 2020 – February 28, 2021.

### // CELEBRATIONS

## ALUMNI

**Clarke (Hutchinson) '58** and **Gayle Hoover '58** celebrated 65 years of marriage on Feb. 3, 2021.

**Evy (Tormodsgaard) '72** and **Doug Schneider '73** celebrated 50 years of marriage of Sept. 5, 2020.

**Stephanie (Harder) '03** and **David Cone '03** welcomed Julia Noel on Aug. 31, 2020.

**Abby (Deinert) '11** and **Doyle Burnside '12** welcomed Benjamin William on Jan. 31, 2021.

**Danae (Elrich) Fritza '11** and Tylor welcomed Jaxson Arthur on March 30, 2020.

**Mary (Egstad) Juliot '11** and Aaron welcomed Lucille Twylah on Jan. 14, 2021.

**Courtney (Marshall) '12** and **Jeff Ballard '11** welcomed Wilke McClain on Jan. 17, 2021.

**Stephanie (Swenson) '13** and Kameron Brooks welcomed Boston Wyatt on Dec. 31, 2020.

**Nathan Lippert '13** married Sarah Miller on July 25, 2020, in West Sunbury, PA.

**Kristin (Killough) '13** and **Taylor Majerus '13** welcomed Gideon Gregory on July 8, 2020.

**Tyler Odens '13** married Kelsey Downs on Sept. 12, 2020, in Canby, OR.

**Naomi (Tesar) '13** and **Eric Sazama '13** welcomed Newton James on Feb. 18, 2021.

**Megan (Morthland) '14 Bares** and Ryan welcomed Micah Ryan on Dec. 9, 2020.

**Rachel (Olsen) Halsey '14** and Travis welcomed Lucas Valor on Dec. 5, 2020.

**Chris Nichols '14** married Kendra Minser on Dec. 5, 2020, in Minnesota.

**Lori Rensink '14** married Kyle Weiss on Oct. 24, 2020, in Sioux Falls.

**London (Avery) '14** and **Grant Schouten '13** welcomed Carter Lee on Nov. 9, 2020.

**Sierra (Harder) '14** and **Ethan Tabbert '16** welcomed Naomi Galia on Feb. 18, 2021.

**Rachel Haas '15** married Jacob Martens on Aug. 1, 2020.

**Denise Ferguson '16** married Kayilu Pfoze on Oct. 10, 2020, in Ten Sleep, WY.

**Paige TeGantvoort '16** married Chase Weeden on June 20, 2020, in Clear Lake, SD.

**Miranda Cain '17** married Tyler Basye on Sept. 19, 2020, in Viborg, SD.

**MacKenzie Ball '17** married Sean Benz on Oct. 24, 2020, in Canton, SD.

**Grace (Bootsma) '17** and **Alex Collins '17** welcomed Henry Davis on Sept. 18, 2020.

**Jada (Plath) '17** and **Witt Dobesh '17** welcomed Marek Reign on Oct. 11, 2020.

**Ben Loosbrock '17** married Haydn Becker on Nov. 7, 2020, in Anoka, MN.

**Hailey Clark '18** married Brock Baade on Oct. 17, 2020, in Sioux Falls.

**A.J. Garrow '18** married Molly Sundvold on June 20, 2020, in Lake Cochrane, SD.

**Madison Meyer '18** married **David Schoenfish '16** on Oct. 16, 2020, in Sioux Falls.

**Andrea Manning '19** married **Tyler Kopp '20** on May 30, 2020, in Stillwater, MN.

**Julia Kohles '21** and Tyler welcomed Hadley James on Dec. 3, 2020.

**Alyssa Micke '21** married Jon Bausch on April 4, 2020, in Waterbury NE and welcomed Ashtyn Irene on Jan. 26, 2021.

Send us **your** update today at  
[usioxfalls.edu/keepintouch](https://usioxfalls.edu/keepintouch)



Thank you Donors!

USF GIVING DAYS

GIVE2COO

MARCH 23-25

Results

48 HOURS

18 CHALLENGES

345 DONORS

\$ 218,825

During this year's 5th annual Giving Days, a record number of donors came together and made a huge impact on our students. At a time when our students were counting on our community more than ever, the USF family showed up.

Empowered  
to Impact

+ USF FUND \$137,002  
+ ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS \$41,878  
+ FINE ARTS \$15,980  
+ ATHLETICS \$23,965

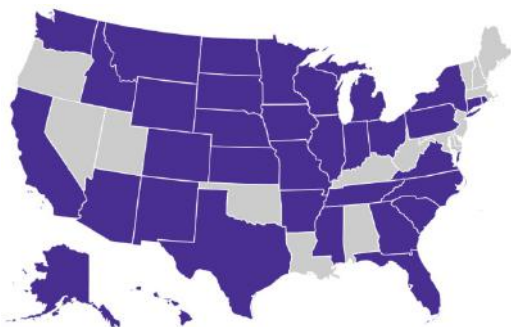
## SMALL GIFTS = BIG IMPACT

69% of all gifts were \$100 or less. Working together, gifts of every size add up to make a BIG impact.

See all results at [give2coo.usiouxfalls.edu](https://give2coo.usiouxfalls.edu)!

### TURN THE MAP PURPLE

Gifts were received from 35 states!



### Alumni Donors by Decade

Decade	Donors
2010-2020	41
1960-1969	36
1990-1999	36
1980-1989	32
1970-1979	29
2000-2009	23
1950-1959	8

### WHAT IS GIVE2COO?

GIVE2COO is the University of Sioux Falls' online Giving Days—a celebration of generosity in our COOmmunity! Each year, for 48-hours, alumni, students, parents, friends, staff and faculty come together to invest in what matters most to them at USF.

### \$114,533 IN CHALLENGE FUNDS UNLOCKED

This year 14 challenge gifts issued by our generous donors were unlocked for a total of \$114,533. These challenges created opportunities for donors to unlock gifts and additional matching funds to increase the power of their gift.

### WHY IT MATTERS.

By donating during GIVE2COO, every gift, no matter the size, is amplified by matching and challenge funds. Not only is it a powerful time to give, but it is a fun time to donate. This year, one challenge unlocked a video of Campus Pastor Dennis Thum performing a new parody.

C O N N E C T

# WITH US

*on social media*

@USIOUXFALLS



University of  
**Sioux Falls**