Building Bridges

A distinctive feature of Calvin University is our intentional engagement with the world. While the news these days features bleak stories of the Amazon in flames, religious strife in the Middle East, and the breakdown of government in the United Kingdom, Calvin’s mission challenges all of us as we work to equip students to think deeply, to act justly, and to live wholeheartedly as Christ’s agents of renewal in the world. The Center for Community Engagement and Global Learning (CCEGL) exists to help Calvin embody our mission—to have a greater public voice and a wider sphere of influence, to look for ways to promote justice, to practice humility and reconciliation—whether that is in the local community in West Michigan or in the broader global community.

This fall Plaster Creek Stewards will celebrate its 10th anniversary with an event on October 26 (9:00 a.m. –12:00 noon CFAC), “Dwelling: Our Watershed in Image and Word,” in collaboration with the Art and Art History Department (Professor Jennifer Steensma Hoag) and the English Department (Professor Lew Klatt) exhibiting student photography and poetry. Through image and word, the exhibition asks viewers, “What does it mean to dwell faithfully in the Plaster Creek Watershed, and how does our research, education, creativity, and restoration influence the ways we connect with our communities and the places we call home?” After a panel of faculty and students describe their art, the audience will be invited to join in hands-on watershed restoration work as a practice in reconciliation ecology.

On August 30th, Calvin students participated in the 27th iteration of StreetFest, a day of service-learning in which new students participate during their first day of Quest. Through a speech inspired by her theme “Choose Wholehearted Living: Care About Place,” this year’s StreetFest Coordinator, Lindsay Owens, challenged these students “to live with devotion, passion, and commitment... by caring about the local community and caring about place.”

This coming January Calvin students will study water in Ecuador, interfaith relations in Oman, and truth and reconciliation in Northern Ireland. Their experiences during Interim will go far in their quest “to learn the demands of justice, an appreciation for diverse cultures, an attentiveness to the religious meanings of life events, and an awareness of ways to renew the world for God’s glory” as stated in the Expanded Statement of Mission.

These are examples of the ways in which Calvin faculty, staff, and students are learning to build bridges across cultural and religious differences, to foster reconciliation between people and the creation, and to practice how to live faithfully in the world around us.

Calvin’s First Story Table Event: Muslims, Christians, and Interfaith Bridging

Curious, anxious, passionate about the hot issues of our day? Join us for Calvin’s first Story Table event: Muslims, Christians, and Interfaith Bridging. We have an amazing group of invited storytellers—important voices to hear from the Al Amana Centre in Oman, Jordan, DoJustice, Neighborly Faith, and some of our Muslim neighbors. Join us Wednesday, October 2, 7:30-9:00 p.m., for simple food, powerful stories, and passionate voices. Put it on your calendar app now, then watch for further announcements in Calvin News. This event is sponsored by the president’s advisory team and the associate dean for diversity & inclusion.
CARE Team Information

Calvin has established a CARE (Calvin Assessment, Response and Evaluation) Team to identify students who may be in crisis and may benefit from intervention. The purpose of this team is to prevent small problems from becoming larger and to connect pieces of information that may indicate a larger pattern of troubling behaviors. The CARE Team is committed to promoting a healthy and safe Christian learning community at Calvin through a proactive and collaborative approach to situations that may pose a threat to an individual student’s welfare and/or the welfare of the campus community.

The CARE Team receives referrals from the community, develops intervention and support strategies, and provides appropriate assistance and treatment. The CARE Team meets regularly to review and assess these situations and recommend actions in accord with existing university policies and procedures. To submit a concern about a student, please go here.

From the Faculty Activity Reports

- **Kristine Johnson** (English), “Writing Program Administration at Religiously Affiliated Institutions” (lecture, Council of Writing Program Administrators, Baltimore, Maryland, July 27, 2019).
- **Jeremy VanAntwerp** (Engineering), “Current Disciplines and Worldviews are Insufficient to Address Sustainability Challenges” (lecture, 2019 Christian Engineering Conference, Sioux Center, IA, July 11, 2019).

Be sure to fill out your Faculty Activity Reports regularly. If you have questions, see the FAQ page.

Coming Up on Campus (Check the campus calendar for a full list of events)

**Monday, September 23**
- Chapel. Sounds of gospel worship with the Calvin Gospel Choir. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- **Let’s do Lunch.** 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., Commons Knollcrest Room (CM 302)

**Tuesday, September 24**
- Chapel. Worship in Chinese. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Cultural Competency Professional Development (CCPD) opportunity. Cultural Intelligence. RSVP here. 3:30 p.m., SC 382

**Wednesday, September 25**
- Chapel. Hymn Sing. 10:00 a.m., Chapel

**Thursday, September 26**
- Chapel. Lectio Divina with Sharon Bytwerk and Neil Carlson. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- **Let’s do Lunch.** 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m., **NOTE LOCATION CHANGE:** Knollcrest Dining Hall Conference Room (KD 119)
- Chemistry department seminar. Linda Columbus (U. of Virginia), “Membrane and Membrane Proteins: What Do They Look Like and How Do They Work Together? 11:30 a.m., SB 010
- Nursing department seminar. Deb Driscoll (Johns Hopkins), “Exploring Adventures in a Nursing Career—Where Can I go after my Bachelor's Degree? 3:00 p.m., SB 110

**Friday, September 27**
- Chapel. Student worship team. 10:00 a.m., Chapel
- Biology department seminar. Deanna Geelhoed, “The Urgency of Climate Change: Frontline Solutions in East Africa.” 1:30 p.m., SB 010
Welcome to New Faculty and Staff

Please welcome the following faculty and staff who have joined Calvin throughout the summer and this fall:

Javonna Allen, student success specialist, Center for Student Success
Javonna graduated from Kuyper College and is currently finishing her master’s in theology from Fuller Theological Seminary. In previous years, she worked with high school/middle school students at Oakdale Park CRC as the youth director before moving to California to pursue her studies at Fuller.

Laura Damon, student success specialist, Center for Student Success
Laura graduated from Michigan State University and started work as a case manager with refugee adults and families at Bethany Christian Services. She most recently returned to Grand Rapids after two years of living abroad, traveling, volunteering, and trekking in 20 countries. Major highlights of that time were working for ANSWER-Nepal, an education program in Kathmandu, Nepal and with refugee youth in Nairobi, Kenya through Xavier’s Project.

Traci Rohl, graduation advisor, Center for Student Success
Traci moved to Grand Rapids about a year ago after living in England for the previous 10 years with her husband, Darrell, a faculty member in the History department. Her two oldest sons are currently sophomores at Calvin. She has worked in a number of higher education institutions in the US and UK over the past 15 years in professional support roles.

Julia Vander Molen, student success specialist, Center for Student Success
Julia graduated from Calvin and attended Taylor for her master’s in higher education. She then worked at Indiana Wesleyan University as the honors college program coordinator. She likes thinking about words and infinity and how to create spaces for student learning.

Christian Sorensen, wood and machine shop technician, Science Division
Chris joins Calvin’s facilities department with experience in tool and die construction, plumbing, electrical, roofing, automotive, as well as 17 years as a patternmaker. He has been married for 33 years, and he and his wife perform music. He plays guitar, and she plays mandolin.

Mark Christner, women’s basketball coach
Mark is a Calvin graduate with a master’s degree in physical education—pedagogy emphasis from Western Michigan University. His wife Sara is a guidance counselor at Holland Christian High School and they have 3 children. He most recently was the head men’s basketball coach and assistant athletic director at Waynesburg University in Waynesburg, PA. Calvin is home for him in many ways and is very grateful to serve the players and athletic department. Go Knights!

William Sall, men’s basketball coach
Bill was the head basketball coach at Northern Michigan University for the last 6 years, before moving his family to Grand Rapids this summer. He has been involved in college coaching for over 25 years. Previous stops include Calvin, Hillsdale, and Ferris State. He has 4 children at Grand Rapids Christian High School this year; 1 senior and triplets who are freshmen. Last year he survived 245” of snow in Marquette, so he’s hoping he doesn’t bring that type of weather to Grand Rapids this winter.

Taylor Hartson, research specialist, Center for Social Research
Taylor grew up in Pella, Iowa, before coming to Grand Rapids in 2015 to attend Calvin. She graduated in May with a degree in sociology, and previously worked as a research assistant at the Center for Social Research.
Bolu Olayemi, research specialist, Center for Social Research
Bolu calls Nigeria home even though she lives in Grand Rapids now. She is a 2019 May graduate from Calvin with a B.S. in Information Systems. Prior to working at CSR, she worked on a project with the Grand Rapids Public Library and interned at Walmart eCommerce in California as a business analyst.

Keila Pieters, research specialist, Center for Social Research
Keila grew up in Mexico City, Mexico, and studied sociology and international development at Calvin. Prior to working at CSR, she was a data analyst intern at Habitat for Humanity of Kent County, a TA in the Biology department, and a barista at the Fish House (RIP).

Melinda Higley, assistant professor, Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies department
Melinda studied geology at Calvin and the University of Toledo before going on to the University of Illinois to receive her PhD in 2018. Like most geologists, she enjoys spending time outside, especially if it involves hiking, gardening, and sports on two wheels. Melinda is married to a high school biology teacher and has a very energetic chocolate lab/australian mix named Kona.

Beth Byma, assistant professor, Nursing Department
Beth is returning to Calvin after spending a year at Mary Free Bed as a clinical nurse educator. Besides her previous 7 years at Calvin, she has worked as a registered nurse in a variety of clinical settings, including serving in the U.S. Navy. She received her PhD from Michigan State University in 2010, where she studied pain and pain management. Her other scholarly areas of interest are the use of liberal arts content in nursing education and simulation.

To be continued ...