



**VALLEY CITY**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

# THE BULLETIN

A Publication for Alumni & Friends of Valley City State University

ISSUE 071667 | AUGUST 2024



The Legacy of Coach Jim Dew

## When Little Lessons Become Life-Changing

A look at the life lessons Coach Jim Dew imparted with his athletes that resulted in numerous successful coaches. - PAGE 11



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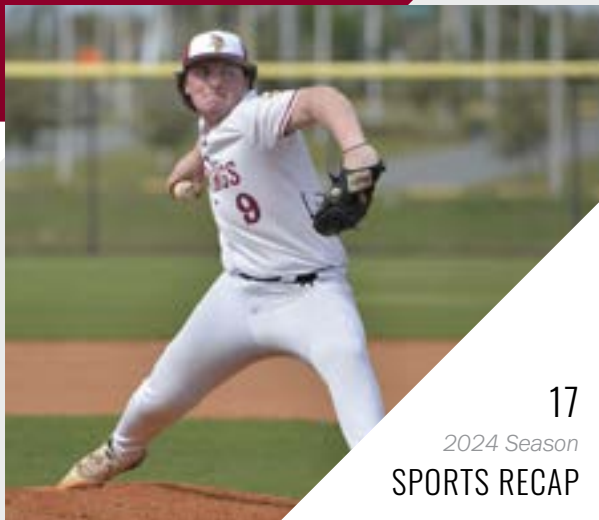


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Learn more at [vcsualumni.org](http://vcsualumni.org)

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# Preparations for Fall 2024 Semester

President Alan LaFave, D.M.A.

Greetings from Valley City State University! I'd like to give a few updates as work continues across campus this summer.

First, construction and renovation work has officially begun on McCarthy Hall. Slated for a July 2025 completion, this historic building will be repurposed to serve as the home for VCSU's School of Education and Technology Education. As you navigate campus, you will notice some important changes in the southeast corner. Work has started on the construction of a new foyer and entrance which will connect McFarland and McCarthy in a climate controlled, updated and welcoming foyer.

Secondly, interior changes and updates are nearing completion in "The Bubble." With added VCSU branding, refreshed painting, refinished playing surface, reconfigured seating, and the addition of a VCSU store in one of the former concession areas, the updated facility will continue to welcome thousands of patrons, students, and members of the public for years to come.

Kolstoe Hall has replaced all mattresses and McCoy Hall has had all new windows installed on the first floor. The Student Center has also been updated with new



ceiling tile, painting, and reconfigured student lounge space on the first floor. Additionally, all classrooms are being cleaned and prepped for the fall semester. Just the other day I was walking through the Larry J. Robinson Center for the Arts and can describe the floors of the building as "gleaming!" We thank all our facilities and grounds workers for continuing the preparations for our Fall semester.

All these updates will welcome our new students and faculty in just a few short weeks. With more than 250 new freshmen and transfer students expected to join us this fall, we look forward to welcoming them all to the community of Valley City and VCSU!

And finally, we invite folks to take a drive by or walk through our beautiful campus before the beginning of the school year. The relative peacefulness will certainly be replaced by the hustle and bustle of students, faculty, and staff in the very near future!

Go Vikings!



## Multiply your gift with the Challenge Grant



Submit gift by December 1, 2024 to make every dollar given go farther

### **NORTH DAKOTA CHALLENGE FUND MAKES YOUR GIFT GO FURTHER**

**Matching dollar pledges are allowed over a seven year period. Leveraging a portion of an estate to receive matching dollars is also available.**

With a minimum \$5,000 endowment gift to VCSU through the VCSU Foundation, you may benefit from a North Dakota income tax credit equal to 40% of the charitable gift AND also qualify for your donation to be matched \$1 for every \$2 you give.

Learn more by calling the VCSU Foundation at (701) 845-7203.

VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION



# Ways to multiply your gift

**Contribute to our annual funds now and get a 50% match before December 31, 2024!**

Cory Anderson '89 | Executive Director for University Advancement

As we approach the end of 2024, I am excited to share a unique and powerful opportunity to amplify the impact of your generosity. Through the North Dakota Challenge Grant Program, your contributions to our endowments or annual scholarship funds will be matched at 50% of the donated amount. This means that your support goes even further in helping VCSU students and programs thrive.

We invite you to consider making a gift before December 31, 2024, to take full advantage of this incredible matching program. Whether you choose to contribute through cash donations, gifts of securities, real estate, or other means, your generosity will be magnified, providing even greater support to our talented students and vital programs.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission and for considering this opportunity to make a lasting difference.

## How you can participate

### IRA Charitable Rollover

If you are 70½ or older, you can lower the income and taxes from your IRA withdrawals with a rollover. This is a great way to satisfy your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year while making a significant impact on our mission.

### Gifts of Real Estate

Donating appreciated real estate, such as a home, vacation property, undeveloped land, farmland, ranch, or commercial property can make a great gift to Valley City State University Foundation.

### Gifts of Stocks and Bonds

Donating appreciated securities, including stocks or bonds, is an easy and tax-effective way for you to make a gift to Valley City State University Foundation.

### Gifts of Cash

A donation of cash is a simple and easy way for you to support our annual scholarship fund.

### Wills and Bequests

A bequest is one of the easiest gifts to make. With the help of an advisor, you can include language in your will or trust specifying a gift be made to Valley City State University Foundation as part of your estate plan. A bequest can be made in several ways: gift a specific dollar amount, asset, or a percentage of your estate.

Once you have decided on a way to contribute, you can make a flat donation or consider naming your own scholarship or establishing one on behalf of someone else who may have had a major impact on your life.

Creating a named scholarship through the VCSU Foundation helps the University stretch our resources. By doing so, you not only honor a special person in your life but also create a lasting legacy that will support our students for years to come.

### How to Create a Named Scholarship

You will need to determine the type of scholarship fund you would like to establish. Available choices include endowed or an annual scholarships.

### Endowed Scholarships

Endowed scholarship funds are designed to be permanent and perpetual. The principal of the fund is invested to produce income, and an annual award is made to students. The principal remains untouched, so the endowment can last for decades.

Because this type of scholarship relies on investment income, it takes at least \$10,500 to create an endowed scholarship that provides a scholarship at its creation. You can provide the full gift amount at the outset or make a smaller initial commitment that you add to over time until the endowment reaches \$10,500. You may add to it at any point.

### Annual Scholarships

Annual Named scholarships can be established with an outright gift of \$1,000 or more and a commitment of 4 years. This allows for an annual gift to be awarded yearly over the four-year period.

Unlike an endowed scholarship, an annual scholarship is not a permanent fund. Awards are given to students only as long as you (or others) choose to contribute to the fund.

We are deeply grateful for your unwavering support and belief in our mission. Your generosity and support are crucial to our mission. By donating now, you not only help our students and programs but also leverage additional funds through this limited-time matching opportunity. Let's work together to create a brighter future!



Anderson

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# Work begins to transform McCarthy Hall into the future VCSU School of Education

VCSU leaders, faculty, staff and community members mark the occasion with official groundbreaking event.

Valley City State University (VCSU) hosted a groundbreaking ceremony outside of McCarthy Hall to officially mark the start of transformational work on the historic building.

McCarthy Hall will become the new home for VCSU's nationally-recognized School of Education and Technology and STEM Education. VCSU faculty, community members and leaders in education attended the event. Work began today on the building and the space is anticipated to be ready for students by the fall of 2025.

"I'm happy that we're able to preserve this historic facility and renovate it to its grandeur. This will modernize McCarthy Hall to serve as the destination school of education for our state and region for the next 50 years. This will have an incredible positive impact for our community, the teacher workforce in North Dakota, and for the incredible cutting-edge educational experiences that our faculty will provide to students," President Alan LaFave said during the event.

Valley City Mayor Dave Carlsrud said "VCSU and the Valley City Public School System are important components of the community, and VCSU is the 'face of education in North Dakota.' We have something over 1,500 alumni represented serving schools throughout North Dakota, and (VCSU) graduates more people in education than any other school in the state," Carlsrud said. "That's significant and you can be proud of that."

"K-12 education and higher education are facing an unprecedented shortage of teachers across the state of North Dakota," Valley City Public School System Superintendent Josh Johnson said. "Valley City State has been at the forefront of helping to address this issue. I think this project speaks again to that effort and will further help address the crisis that we are facing. Thank you President LaFave, Dr. Burgad and all the faculty and staff of VCSU for your leadership in education in North Dakota."

"The modernized renovations of McCarthy Hall will extend 21st-century learning opportunities for current and future educators," Dean of the VCSU School of Education Allen Burgad said. "We are very excited about the state of our technology literacy and STEM classrooms along with the new Children's Literacy Lab. These learning centers will provide tremendous learning opportunities and prepare our next generation of educators."

McCarthy Hall was built in the early 1930s and was used as a training school for prospective teachers attending VCSU. When the training school was closed, the building housed a wide variety of VCSU courses including technology education, art and psychology. The renovation of McCarthy Hall is a part of the first-ever capital campaign project at VCSU.

The \$13.5 million project is made possible through the generous support of donors, VCSU funds and \$11.5 million allocated by the North Dakota Legislature and approved by Gov. Doug Burgum.





## Larry J. Robinson honored after more than 50 years of service to North Dakota

Valley City State University (VCSU) celebrated Larry J. Robinson on Monday, June 10, with an official program recognizing the naming of the Larry J. Robinson Center for the Arts.

Speakers during the program included President Alan LaFave, former president of VCSU Dr. Steven Shirley, and Valley City Mayor Dave Carlsrud. Robinson also addressed the crowd and offered thanks to his colleagues and family.

“I firmly believe no one in life accomplishes anything alone,” Robinson said. “It takes a team.”

His leadership in the North Dakota Legislature helped facilitate funding for a new Veterans’ Home in Lisbon,

flood protection for communities in the Sheyenne River Valley and for the new VCSU Center for the Arts. The \$32 million building officially opened for students in the spring of 2022.

The Robinson Center for the Arts is the creative hub for all art and music on campus. The art facilities include a ceramics lab, printmaking, painting, and drawing studio, a woodshop, a photography studio and digital design lab. Music facilities in the building include a 350-seat performance hall, 100-seat choral room, a band rehearsal room, piano lab, recording studio and numerous practice rooms of various sizes.



## 2024 North Dakota AI Conference at VCSU in September

Valley City, ND – Valley City State University will host the 2024 North Dakota AI Conference organized by the Dakota Digital Academy. The conference will be on September 26, and will focus on “Being Human and Working in the Age of AI.”

There will be keynote speakers leading research on AI and presentations about AI and humanity. The presentations will also feature hands-on opportunities to explore AI and networking opportunities with industry and education experts.

# VCSU trap shooter brings home 1st in Male Singles Trap at state contest

The Valley City State University (VCSU) Trap Club competed in the North Dakota State Collegiate Trap Shoot on Saturday, April 27. Kaden Schafer, a freshman majoring in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences, earned the title for 1st Place Male in Singles Trap with a 93/100 after a two-round shoot-off to break a three-way tie. VCSU's top shots for the day were Kaden Schafer, Logan Heen, Brooke Gaudry, Grant Larson and Derek Jacobs.

"It was great to participate in this event and compete against other collegiate level teams from

our region," club advisor and professor Dr. Nick Galt said. "Trap is such a competitive sport and it's great to have high-level competitors to compete against."

"It was a windy day and I was glad to hit 93 in those conditions," Schafer said. "It always impresses me how much respect there is between competitors even in a high-stakes shoot-off."

This fall, VCSU will launch an intercollegiate Shooting Sports team for the first time in school history.



## Presidential Service Awards

John Hill '73 and DuWayne Bott '58 were awarded the Presidential Service Award in June. "Both DuWayne and John have demonstrated their tremendous commitment to VCSU during their careers," President Alan LaFave said.

DuWayne has served on the Alumni Board, the V-500 Board and the Foundation Board for many years. "His support of VCSU has been exemplary," LaFave said. "DuWayne has also been a major contributor to the Forward Together Capital Campaign and made a difference in the lives of our students, faculty and staff."

John served on the VCSU Booster Board and Viking Scramble Committee. He and his late wife, Diane '73, supported the refurbishment of the track complex, which now bear their names.

"John has given his time, talent and treasure to support student scholarships and campus, including the Forward Together Capital Campaign," LaFave said. "We are incredibly grateful for his support and he is well-deserving ."



# 2024 Spring Commencement

Valley City State University (VCSU) conferred 170 graduate and undergraduate degrees and three certificates or minors at the spring commencement ceremony on May 11, 2024.

The ceremony was the 132nd commencement ceremony at VCSU, and 153 undergraduate diplomas were awarded. This includes five Bachelor of Arts degrees, 62 Bachelor of Science degrees, four Associate of Arts degrees, 77 Bachelor of Science in Education degrees, five Bachelor of University Studies degrees, and one Minor.

"It's exciting to see our undergraduate students take this important step forward," Vice President for Academic Affairs Larry Brooks said. "Many of our graduates have

accepted a job in their career field before they even walk across the stage. This is a great day to be a Viking."

The graduate degrees awarded included one Master of Arts in Teaching, 15 Master of Education, one Master of Science, and two certificates.

"Our graduates are top notch – we have many young professionals, who today, are ready to enter the workforce and make a difference," President Alan LaFave said. "VCSU attracts incredible students who excel in their academic careers, often times alongside athletics, student government, or other commitments. We are so proud of all our students who graduated today and wish them the very best."









# VCSU announces Mark Nelson as new Vice President for Student Affairs

Valley City State University has announced Mark Nelson as the new Vice President for Student Affairs. Mr. Nelson has taken over for Dr. Erin Klingenberg, who retired this summer.

Nelson, originally from North Dakota, has more than 30 years of experience in higher education and an extensive background working at four-year residential universities, including Research I institutions. He comes to VCSU from Arapahoe Community College (ACC), part of the Colorado Community College System. He was the Executive Director of Advising & Retention. Nelson earned an Associate of Arts degree from Normandale Community College, a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, and a master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Bowling Green State University.

"We are delighted to have Mark in the VCSU community. His vast experience in program development, campus collaboration, and dedication to student affairs will be invaluable as we continue to enhance the student experience at VCSU," President Alan LaFave said. "I am grateful for Dr. Klingenberg and her leadership in Student Affairs, and I am confident Mark will bring the same dedicated leadership and principles to his work."

Throughout his career, Nelson has demonstrated a strong ability to collaborate effectively with campus administration, faculty, admissions, financial aid, residence life, counseling, records and registration, and veteran's affairs, among other departments. He served on the College Care Team for behavioral intervention and threat assessment, focusing on the well-being of both



students and staff.

"I am very excited to be joining Valley City State University as the Vice President for Student Affairs at a time when there have been record enrollment numbers and the university has launched a capital campaign for the improvement of classroom space and technology, the increase in scholarship opportunities for students, as well as improvements to the athletics facilities," Nelson said. "I look forward to continuing to offer a friendly and welcoming campus in my role as the Vice President for Student Affairs and working with the campus community to provide students with an exceptional educational and co-curricular experience as they pursue their academic and career goals."

## VCSU students, alumni and friends travel to Europe

A group from VCSU took a nine-day trip to Europe to learn more about WWII and the Liberation of France. The trip included stops in London, at the Beaches of Normandy, Caen and Paris. The trip was organized by VCSU's Social Science department.





# Employee Recognition

## Retirees

VCSU recognized and thanked eight individuals who retired in the 2023-2024 academic year. All combined, they dedicated over 160 years at VCSU.

Photographed left to right: Larry Robinson, Jackie Owen, Jody Henjum, Paula Larson, Dr. Erin Klingenberg and Kathleen Bennett Zaun. Not pictured: Kaley Mari and Kay Johnson.



## Teacher of the Year

Dr. Travis Knapp was honored as the VCSU Teacher of the Year for 2024.



## Faculty Excellence Awards

This year, three faculty members were awarded the Faculty Excellence Awards. Special Appointment Faculty Award of Excellence was awarded to Heather Peschel, Dr. Travis Knapp was presented the Junior Faculty Award and Dr. Heather Kvilvang was honored the Senior Faculty Award (not pictured).

Left to Right: President Alan LaFave, Dr. Travis Knapp, Heather Peschel and Larry Brooks.



## Student Advocate

Dr. Erin Klingenberg was awarded the 2024 Student Advocate Award.





When the small things become big things

# A Brotherhood of Success

Coach Jim Dew has been lauded for his success on the football and baseball field at VCSU, but his legacy of helping young athletes become hard-working, principled men, leaders and coaches is his real gift.



At first glance, Jim Dew may seem like an unassuming sports enthusiast with a penchant for sharing stories and laughs. As a retiree, he likes to play golf and attend football and baseball games. You can often find him in the stands cheering for the VCSU Vikings and chatting with old friends and athletes.

Just below the surface is an intense mix of competitive

spirit, attention to detail, organization, interpersonal relationship building skills and an ability to lead and encourage others. This is a man drafted as a catcher by the San Francisco Giants in 1966 but chose to play semi-professional football and coach in Wisconsin instead. Dew clearly dedicated his professional career to young athletes. During his time as a Viking, he amassed eight North Dakota College Athletic Conference football titles and five in baseball. He was inducted in three Hall of Fames including VCSU, Mayville State and Mount St. Joseph High School. After coaching for many years, he established a scholarship at VCSU to honor players who have passed away.

Jim Dew is an acclaimed coach, but his resume is superseded by the legacy of his mentorship. He dedicated his career to transforming young athletes into individuals of character and perseverance. Dew is notorious for demanding good manners, as well as hard work.

## Putting Athletes First



Darin Loe

One of those young athletes was Darin Loe. Loe grew up near Georgetown, Minnesota. After some conversations with the personable Coach Dew, Loe landed at VCSU to play as a quarterback, pitcher and occasionally as an outfielder. Loe's remarkable career as a dual athlete

included 6,461 career passing yards and two seasons as an All American. He watched firsthand as Coach Dew crafted a conference championship team in 1988.

"(Dew) was always very organized and really put athletes first over the course of his career," Loe said. "His little life lessons really stick out to me. He is a guy who wanted you to do your sport well and your life in the right way."

Loe graduated from VCSU and was drafted by the Seattle Mariners in 1989. He returned to North Dakota to earn a master's degree in athletic administration and went directly to Missouri. This spring he completed his 31st year of coaching, including 25 years of baseball at Northwest Missouri State. He has won almost 600 games and in 2018, Loe's baseball team won a conference title in a highly-competitive conference.

Loe ties his success back to building relationships with his recruits, just like Dew did with him more than 20 years ago.

"I think it starts with integrity. You always knew where you stood with coach," he said. "Any successful person starts with a high moral standard."





From left to right: Darin Loe, head coach at NW Missouri State, Tyler Schlecht, head coach of VC Post 60, Jeff Ditch - head coach at IUP, Cory Anderson, head coach at VCSU baseball and Steve Olson, before becoming a head collegiate baseball coach and then head collegiate football coach at Michigan Tech.

Coach Jim Dew, left, with the VCSU Baseball Team. Dew coached both baseball and football. An astounding number of players from 1986 to 1988 became successful coaches and leaders of athletes.

### Carrying Lessons into Life



Steve Olson

One of Loe's teammates, Steve Olson, also grew up in western Minnesota. Olson followed his older brother to the ballfield to play for Coach Dew. Steve Olson quickly learned that Coach expected hard work from players regardless of the season. From methodical rotations

at practice to batting practice under Lokken Stadium in January, playing baseball and football became a way of life for many.

"I always talk about (Coach Dew's) organization. The little detailed things he would do that allowed us an opportunity to score extra runs were really unique, and those are the things that I carried along with me," Olson said. But Coach also taught many lessons that didn't specifically relate to baseball. "How do you behave as a team? How do you handle yourself in a restaurant? He taught us that all of those little things are important."

Olson graduated in 1988 with three seasons of All-Conference honors in baseball and went on to coach baseball and football for many years. He spent 12 seasons at Michigan Tech University, five as the head football coach, and has now returned to VCSU athletics. Olson stays in contact with other alumni and teammates like Bruce Nelson.

Nelson was recruited in 1986 by Coach Dew to play football. During Nelson's time at VCSU, the team earned a NAIA National Playoff appearance after winning the conference championship. After playing for four years, Nelson stayed a fifth year to help coach and finish up his double major in Elementary Education and



Bruce Nelson

Physical Education with a minor in coaching.

"Our team was well coached and everyone knew what their job was," Nelson said, but it was lessons off the

field that stand out in his mind. "It was more about being a good person, a good human. It was about working hard and being a good sport. We knew how to win and how to lose. If wins happen, they happen but it was about doing things the right way."

Nelson, like others, spent time playing for Coach Dew and then working with him as a student coach before graduation. That experience prepared Nelson for years of coaching students in East Grand Forks and leading his 2024 high school football team to an undefeated season and a state championship in Minnesota 3A.

He also works as a principal at the high school and sees how critical having positive role models can be for students. Coach Dew always provided guidance when asked.

"I knew I could always give him a call, whether it was sports related or life related," Nelson said. "He would give me what advice he could and if he didn't know the answer he would somehow point you in the right direction."

### Finding a Path

Direction was one thing Steve Quinn was seeking as he approached his high school graduation. In typing class, he wrote a paper about colleges and cities he had never heard of before. VCSU was on his list.



Steve Quinn

"I wanted to go to college. We had some family issues and my goal was to get out and go make something of myself," Quinn said. He played as a center and long snapper on a state championship team.

He sent film to Coach Dew and soon he was stepping off a plane in Fargo.

As he joined the team, Quinn learned from Coach Dew, but he also learned from other players empowered by Dew.

"I'll never forget my team captain during my junior year told me to get my head on straight if I wanted to be a player on this team," Quinn said. "I never worked so hard as I worked that summer. I stayed in Valley City and painted rooms at the college and worked out."

After months of hard work and sweat, Quinn got a note from Coach Dew that he still has today.

"He said he had never seen anyone work so hard at getting a position and was excited to see how this year was going to go," Quinn said. "It was the first time he told me I was going to be a big part of his team."

That year Quinn earned Honorable Mention All Conference and during his senior year the team earned a national playoff berth. He was a part of the 1988 team that made it back to the national playoffs.

Although not a coach, Quinn followed his dream and began working for a football company and now he is running the largest football camp showcase company in the nation.

Quinn's Football University hosts 40 regional events for middle and high school athletes to workout with current and former NFL coaches and players.

"I didn't get into coaching, but I did the next best thing. I get to mentor kids and watch kids play football," Quinn said. Last season he had 47 athletes sign NFL agreements and hosted the top four quarterbacks in the All-American Bowl.

Quinn, like so many of Coach Dew's team members, is helping students grow and find success. "He taught me how to work and how to be a man," Quinn said of Dew. "He was always there for us, always checked on us and devoted his time for more than 30 years to his athletes. He is a builder of young men."

### The Memorable Times

Many of the players were recruited by Dew or others in the old-fashioned way. Coaches traveled across the nation for in-person visits and phone calls to build strong interpersonal relationships that have lasted a lifetime.

For Dew, there were some very impactful seasons

in the 1980s. The 1980 team was considered an underdog, but came in to beat McMurry College of Texas in the NAIA playoffs. Dew can recall the image of Cameron Dockter lifting his brother Kevin up at the end of the championship game after Kevin made a big play. Dockter retired last year from coaching track and football at Fargo South and Kevin was a coach and teacher for more than 35 years.

"That's what the players were like," Dew said. "They were kids, but they gave of themselves. The big thing with those kids was that they wanted to be there and they wanted to have success."



Coach Jim Dew back row left, with senior football players in the fall of 1988.



Coach Jim Dew discusses strategy with Viking football players during a national playoff victory over McMurry, Tex.



Dockter brothers celebrating the big play.

Many players wanted to give back and helped by coaching a season or two at VCSU before graduation. The list of those that went on to successful coaching careers is astounding.

In three years of teams alone, 1986 to 1988, Dew graduated 10 individuals who became head coaches at the collegiate level. That group also resulted in five assistant college coaches, nine high school coaches with state championships and dozens of long-term successful high school coaches. One graduate, Dan Gnadt, went on to become a professional baseball umpire and advanced as far as the AAA level in his career.

### Playing for a Coaching Legend



Todd Hoffner

One of those collegiate head coaches was Todd Hoffner. He was a farm kid from Esmond, North Dakota and participated in every sport possible. He landed at VCSU and remembers meeting with the "charismatic" Coach Dew.

"If he doesn't know your name, he is going to say, 'Hey big guy,'" Hoffner said. "(Dew) was really good at being engaging and encouraging."

At the time, encouragement was something Hoffner needed. He didn't play his first two years, which was a departure from the amount of playing time he was used to having.

"Coach Dew definitely motivated me to be the best I could when it came to playing football. I wanted to prove I could play," Hoffner said. "Toward the end of the last two summers I trained and earned a spot."

Hoffner cites mentors as an inspiration and motivation for his success. He has coached for many years and currently is entering his 13th season as the head coach of the Minnesota State University - Mankato Mavericks. He has taken the team to eight NCAA playoff berths and national championship games in 2014 and 2019. He has a 122-30 overall record with the team.

"Things I do today are a spinoff of anyone and everyone I've engaged with," Hoffner said. Learning how to be flexible, having second chances and trying harder to do better are things that Hoffner learned from Dew at VCSU.

"Jim Dew is a legend and always will be," Hoffner said.

Hoffner will spend his fall preparing for another football season, just like VCSU Assistant Head Coach Gregg Horner. Horner played for Dew during the famed 1988 season and worked as a student assistant coach for him as well. Near his desk in the W.E. Osmon Fieldhouse, he has a display of golf balls imprinted with some of Coach Dew's most well-known phrases.



Gregg Horner

"It's the small things," "Get Yer Lemon Drops," and "Hey BIG Guy," are just a few of the most well-loved standards. A group of former VCSU football players known as the





VCSU Coach Gregg Horner holds up the golf balls he has collected from various Oarsmen outings.

Oarsmen gather in large numbers every year to catch up and drive a few golf balls with Coach Dew.

But for Horner, Dew's legacy is more than phrases enshrined on golf balls.

Dew's legacy is a vibrant example of the strength and value of relationships.

"The Oarsmen are where we are today because of the relationships Coach Dew and others have made and continue to make with their teams," Horner said. "He has an amazing legacy and is always around to support others."

### Preparing Athletes For Life



Kevin Blaskowski

Kevin Blaskowski knows how life-changing support from Coach Dew can be. Affectionately known as "Lefty," Blaskowski grew up in Valley City and knew Dew from an early age. As a young college student and baseball player he was unsure of what career path to pursue, and changed his major three

times.

"Coach finally told me I needed to be a coach," Blaskowski said. "He knew what I was capable of doing and he saw us where we were at. He is the one that mentored me in becoming a coach and then gave me an opportunity to coach with him."

Blaskowski has now been coaching for more than 30 years, including 25 of those at the collegiate level. He has a podcast where he shares thoughts about the game, and many lessons including some from Coach Dew.

"I owe that man a lot," Blaskowski said. "I realize how much he really cared about all of us and how much he wanted us to be more than just successful on the baseball field. That has been the basis of my coaching. Yes, the game is important but it has a bigger purpose and that is preparing us for life."

Blaskowski was recently inducted into the VCSU Coaches Hall of Fame and credits Coach Dew for setting him in the right direction.

"He did what he did because he believed in us," Blaskowski said. "He taught us how important the little things are and part of me as a coach did not want to let him down. When he stepped on the field, it didn't matter who was in the dugout. He expected us to win and believed we could win."

The proof is in the accolades. Dew's athletes have created playbooks of success and will continue to grow the branches of his coaching tree for generations.



Watch the interview with Coach Dew.  
[bit.ly/coachdew](https://bit.ly/coachdew)

## 1986-88 DEW PLAYERS TURNED COACHES

### COLLEGIATE HEAD COACHES

- '86 **Kevin Blaskowski** (Softball) Phillips U., Southern Ark. University and West Texas A&M
- '88 **Steve Olson** (Baseball) Jamestown College and U. of MN – Crookston, (Football) Michigan Tech
- '89 **Cory Anderson** (Baseball) VCSU
- '89 **Jeff Ditch** (Baseball) Indiana U. – Pennsylvania
- '89 **Todd Hoffner** (Football) Wisconsin-Eau Claire, MSU – Mankato
- '89 **Jim Makovsky** (Wrestling) VCSU, MSU-Mankato
- '89 **Scott Nustad** (Baseball) Bismarck State College
- '91 **Darin Loe** - (Baseball) Missouri Valley College, Baker University, Northwest Missouri State
- '91 **Rich Loomis** (Baseball) Northland CC
- '92 **Mark Dufner** (Football) U. of MN – Crookston

### COLLEGE ASSISTANT COACHES

- '87 **Tim Pinke** (Baseball) Pacific University
- '89 **Kevin Graze** (Football/Wrestling) Missouri Valley College
- '90 **Gregg Horner** (Football) SDSU, VCSU
- '91 **Paul Conrad** (Baseball) St. Cloud State
- '91 **Scott Yates** (Baseball)

### HS HEAD COACHES WITH A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

- '86 **Mark Sand** (Basketball) Steele HS
- '87 **David Haugen** (Football) Pelican Rapids HS
- '89 **Marty Hochhalter** (Football) Carrington HS
- '90 **Kevin Bratland** (Baseball) Enderlin HS
- '90 **Greg Hoeckle** (Track and Field) Carrington HS
- '91 **Scott Milbrandt** (Baseball) Kindred HS
- '91 **Bruce Nelson** (Football) E. Grand Forks HS
- '91 **Tom Smargiassi** (Baseball) Lena-Winslow HS (Ill.)
- '91 **Bret Sorenson** (Football) Fargo North HS

### SUCCESSFUL HIGH SCHOOL HEAD COACHES

- '87 **Tim Pinke** (Baseball) VC Post 60, St. James Post #33
- '90 **Bryan Haugen** (Football) Cando HS
- '91 **Scott Roehrich** (Football) Valley City HS
- '91 **Franciso 'Paco' Rojas** (Football) and FBU
- '91 **Tyler Schlecht** (Baseball) Valley City Post 60
- '91 **Brad Townsend** (Football) Flasher HS
- '95 **Kyle Smith** (Football) Carrington HS
- '89 **Paul Olson** (Football/Basketball) Steele HS
- John Lopez** (Football) G. Holmes Braddock

### OTHER NOTABLE SPORT CATEGORIES

- '90 **Steve Quinn** Managing Partner of Football University
- '91 **Dan Gnadt** Professional baseball umpire, advancing to AAA level

## Support your alma mater during our Viking Day of Giving



Svenningsen-Hesch

This year our Viking Day of Giving will be held on November 14. The Viking Day of Giving is an annual opportunity for alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends of VCSU to come together on one day to support our various funds including scholarships for students at VCSU.

As our enrollment continues to grow, we are thankful for past support of our Viking Day of Giving.

Your support of our scholarship programs at VCSU has been key to growing our enrollment. Our V-500 and Viking Booster Club scholarship programs have been successful marketing tools for the university in recruiting and retaining students at VCSU.

Our Viking Day of Giving is a 24-hour fundraising campaign and encourages individuals to become donors, regardless of the size of the gift and generates awareness among students about the generosity of alumni and friends of the university.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### How do I make a gift?

Gifts can be made on November 14 or any time during the month of November to be included in our Viking Day of Giving.

**Give by phone:** Call the VCSU Foundation at 701-845-7203

**Give by mail:** VCSU Foundation / 101 College St SW / Valley City ND 58072

#### Where do gifts go?

All gifts made during the Viking Day of Giving will go directly to V-500, Viking Booster Club scholarship programs or other funds as specified. Please consider donating and being a part of something special.

#### How can my gift make a difference?

Regardless of the amount that you are able to provide, we want to encourage you to think about all the opportunities you had at VCSU and think about paying that forward to the next generation. We can't do it without your involvement and support. Your donation is appreciated now more than ever.

#### Is my Viking Day of Giving contribution tax-deductible?

Yes. Your gift will be entirely tax-deductible. You will receive an email confirmation that will serve as your receipt for tax purposes.

#### What are other ways you can help?

Help us create awareness and, more importantly, participating by creating and posting content about the Viking Day of Giving on social media. Follow VCSU on social media to like and — even better — share Viking Day of Giving posts. Send out a personal challenge to your classmates! This celebration of Viking Nation can include friendly competition with your fellow alumni.

The VCSU Foundation and Alumni Office continues to remain dedicated to moving VCSU forward with our strong traditions, programs, experiences, and scholarship support. Please consider supporting the Viking Day of Giving on November 14 and helping us continue making a difference for our students of today.



## SAVE THE DATE: November 13

The Viking Day of Giving is an opportunity for alumni and friends of VCSU to come together on one day to support the scholarship needs at our University.

Your gift can help ensure that our University continues to grow!

**Learn more about the VCSU Foundation  
at [www.vcsualumni.org](http://www.vcsualumni.org)**





# – VALLEY CITY STATE UNIVERSITY – HOMECOMING 2024

The VCSU Alumni Association invites you to join alumni and friends of VCSU for many of the activities we have planned for Homecoming this fall. These are just a few of the events planned.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

42nd Annual Bill Osmon Fun Run | 4 p.m. | Lokken Stadium

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

Volleyball vs. Dickinson | 7 p.m. | Graichen Gym

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Volleyball vs. University of Jamestown | 7 p.m. | W.E. Osmon Fieldhouse

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Alumni Welcome Back Ice Cream Social | 1:30 p.m. | Student Center

VCSU Bookstore Open | 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Student Center

Campus Tours | 2 p.m. | Student Center

Homecoming Parade with VCHS | 4 p.m. | Central Avenue

Hall of Fame Social | 5 p.m. | Valley City Eagles Club

*Alumni and friends are invited to stop by the Valley City Eagles Club and socialize with the Hall of Fame inductees.*

Hall of Fame Banquet & Ceremony | 6 p.m. | Valley City Eagles Club

*Banquet tickets are available by contacting the VCSU Foundation at 701-845-7403.*

All Alumni Social | 8 p.m. | Valley City Eagles Club

*Please join us for a no-host social! Visit with the Hall of Fame inductees and other alumni as we gather in one location.*

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Alumni Honors Breakfast | 9 a.m. | Student Center

*The Alumni Honors breakfast provides the VCSU Alumni Association with an opportunity to present the Distinguished Alumnus, Alumni Service and Certificate of Merit Awards. Tickets for breakfast will be available at the door and are \$15 each.*

VCSU Bookstore Open | 8:30 a.m. – noon | Student Center

Alumni Game VCSU Baseball | 11 a.m. | Charlie Brown Field

VCSU Walking Tour

*Enjoy a self-guided tour as you explore our beautiful campus. The tour will highlight some of our most notable places on campus and a chance to see our newest building, the Center for the Arts.*

Viking Tailgating | 1 – 4 p.m. | Lokken Stadium

Vikings vs. Dakota State University | 4 p.m. | Shelly Ellig Field

Postgame and All-Alumni Social | 7 p.m. | Valley City Eagles Club

*This social is open to all VCSU alumni and friends to enjoy an opportunity to socialize and reminisce. No charge to attend this event, must be 21 to attend.*

College Student and Alumni Dance | 9 p.m. | Valley City Eagles Club

*The dance is open to all alumni, friends, and college students. No charge to attend.*

Watch our website at [vcsualumni.org](https://vcsualumni.org) as we add more events.



# VCSU Foundation recognizes donors at annual luncheon

The Valley City State University Foundation recognized several individuals and businesses at its annual Recognition Luncheon on June 10.

President Alan LaFave presented John Hill and DuWayne Bott with the university's Distinguished Service Award (see p. 5), and a host of others were recognized for their continued support of the university through donations, volunteerism and other efforts year after year. This year's recognition luncheon was held in the Student Center Cafeteria with more than 80 attending.



**Diamond & Clocktower II Level**  
President Alan LaFave with John Hill (Clocktower II level) and Lynn Holcomb (Diamond Level)

## Donors recognized for reaching a new level of giving over the past year

(July 2023 to June 2024)

### Clocktower II Level (\$2,000,000–\$2,999,999)

John and Diane\* Hill

### Diamond Level (\$100,000–\$249,999)

Lynn and Linda\* Holcomb

### Gold Level (\$50,000–\$99,999)

BEK Communications Coop.

Bruce and Karyn Babcock

Professor Don and Sharon Hoff

Kohler Farms

John A. McLees

Steve and Mary Lee Nielson

Offutt Family Foundation

Bill and Mary\* Tyrrell

Tim and Kellie\* Wikenheiser

### Regents Level (\$25,000–\$49,999)

American Family Insurance – Jerry & Kelly Bennefeld

Michael and Kiersten Baughman

Cass County Electric Cooperative Inc.

Lauren and Kyler Harder

Gregg and Kathleen Horner

Kurt D. Rasmussen

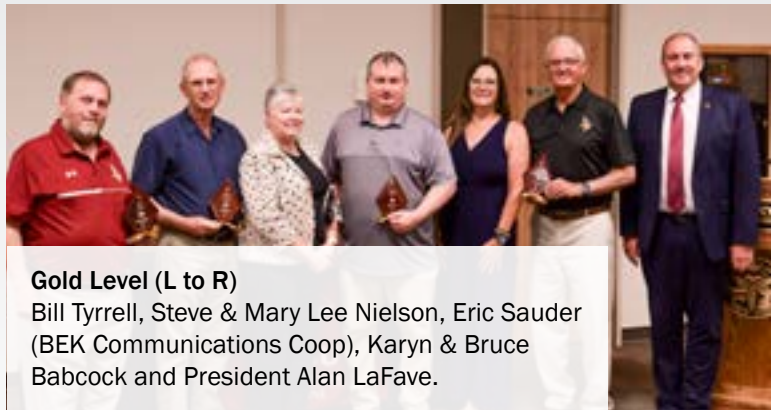
Bill and Michele Trader

Chad and Missy Vollmers

James and LouVay White

### Legacy Society

Gary and Cindy Rufsvold



**Gold Level (L to R)**  
Bill Tyrrell, Steve & Mary Lee Nielson, Eric Sauder (BEK Communications Coop), Karyn & Bruce Babcock and President Alan LaFave.



**Regents Level (L to R)**  
LouVay White, Chad & Missy Vollmers, President Alan LaFave, and Kiersten & Michael Baughman.



**VCSU Foundation Staff**  
President LaFave, Loree Morehouse, Steve Olson, Larry Robinson, Kim Svenningsen-Hesch and Cory Anderson

\* Deceased



## ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP AUCTION

# Largest fundraising event for VCSU Foundation

The VCSU Foundation has announced more than \$125,000 was given by generous donors to support students at the recent Scholarship Auction.

More than 370 people attended the event and donations were made in-person, online and through donating items or time for the event.

“This is our largest annual event, and we are so grateful for the number of alumni, community members, faculty and staff that come out to support scholarships for students,” Cory Anderson, executive director of university advancement, said. “This event brings our community together for a night to celebrate everything it means to be a part of VCSU.”

Proceeds from the scholarship auction support scholarships for students attending VCSU.

“The support our alumni and friends provide for our students is exceptional,” President Alan LaFave said. “It is humbling and rewarding to be a part of this amazing community that prioritizes student success and helping the next generation. We are grateful for the participation and support of all who attended, donated, and bid on items this year.”



**V-500**  
SUPPORTING STUDENTS  
SINCE 1972

“I am very grateful to receive this scholarship as it will go towards my future career. I chose VCSU because it was close to home and very affordable. The people were welcoming and helpful when it came to making my decision.”

**Benét Fronk**  
Jamestown, N.D.

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT VCSU STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS?



**GIVE ONLINE:** Fast, easy and secure. Use our online form at [give.vcsu.edu](https://give.vcsu.edu) to make your gift of choice or scan the QR code above.



**MAIL YOUR GIFT** to the VCSU Foundation at 101 College St SW Valley City, ND 58072 or call our office at 701-845-7203 to make a donation over the phone.



*Your gift, no matter the size, can make all the difference. In supporting student scholarships, you are creating a lasting impact.*



# I N S I D E ATHLETICS

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



[vcsuvikings](https://www.facebook.com/vcsuvikings)

## VCSU joining Frontier Conference

Dennis McCulloch, Athletic Director



McCulloch

Since August of 2023, with the announcement of Waldorf and Viterbo leaving our conference, we have felt very unstable about our future. We've spent many hours trying to figure out the right path for us to move forward and get back on solid ground. It is a relief and exciting to finally have a stable home in the Frontier Conference for the foreseeable future of Viking Athletics. Many

challenges still face us but now we can start to build a better structure when the ground we are standing on is stable. We look forward to setting a new direction for our Viking Ship to sail when we join the Frontier Conference in 2025-26. Read more about our plans below.

### VCSU to move with four other NSAA schools

Valley City State University and the Frontier Conference announced on May 21 that VCSU will join the athletic conference starting in the fall of 2025.

VCSU's athletic teams will compete for one more season in the North Star Athletic Association before joining the Frontier Conference for the 2025-26 season. The Frontier Conference – currently made up primarily of NAIA schools in Montana – is regarded among the top leagues in the NAIA and gives VCSU immediate stability for its athletic programs after a tumultuous few years in the NSAA.

The Vikings are making the move with four other NSAA schools. The Frontier Conference also announced the additions of Dakota State University, Mayville State University and Bellevue University on May 21. Dickinson State had previously announced it was joining the Frontier Conference starting in 2025-26.

"We're excited for this new adventure with a well-respected and highly competitive conference in the NAIA," said VCSU athletic director Dennis McCulloch. "With our five NSAA schools making the move together, the conference can get creative with scheduling to help lessen the anticipated increase in travel time and costs."

"The daily competition we'll face in the Frontier is a challenge that our programs will be forced to rise

to," said McCulloch. "With support from our campus and a passionate fan base, we're confident we can elevate our programs to become more competitive nationally as a member of the Frontier."

Within the last two years, the North Star Athletic Association has slowly de-stabilized with two schools closing – Presentation College and Iowa Wesleyan – and two schools leaving for other conferences: Waldorf University and Viterbo University. That forced the remaining NSAA schools to look for homes elsewhere with the conference dropping to just five members.

"We are excited to join the Frontier Conference and I am looking forward to seeing many of our long-standing competitors as well as some new faces," VCSU President Alan LaFave said. "Keeping the five NSAA schools together helps to preserve traditional rivalries for our students, alumni and fans. As with all large decisions at VCSU, we evaluate how options will affect student experiences. I'm certain this move will enhance and elevate the experiences of our athletes and supporters."

The Frontier Conference currently sponsors 12 sports, including football, women's volleyball, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's indoor and outdoor track and field, and men's and women's golf. With the addition of the five NSAA schools – who all play baseball and softball – the Frontier Conference will also likely begin sponsoring baseball and softball as an official conference sport in the coming years.

The Frontier Conference currently has six full membership schools and four associate member schools in football only. Starting in 2025-26, the conference now projects to have 11 full member schools and a total of 14 football-playing schools.

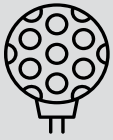
### FRONTIER FULL MEMBERSHIP SCHOOLS

- Carroll College (Helena, Mont.)
- Montana Tech (Butte, Mont.)
- University of Montana Western (Dillon, Mont.)
- MSU-Northern (Havre, Mont.)
- University of Providence (Great Falls, Mont.)
- Rocky Mountain College (Billings, Mont.)

### CURRENT ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP – FOOTBALL ONLY

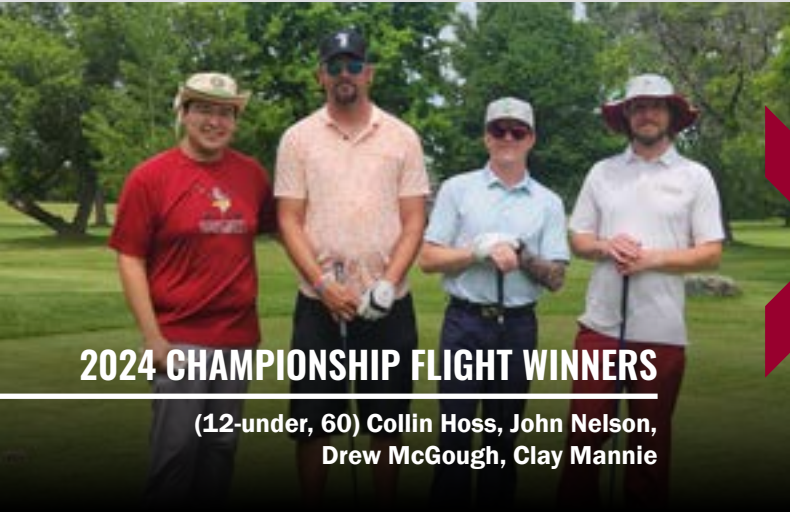
- Arizona Christian (Glendale, Ariz.)
- College of Idaho (Caldwell, Idaho)
- Eastern Oregon (La Grande, Ore.)
- Southern Oregon (Ashland, Ore.)





# Viking Scramble Recap

The annual Viking Golf Scramble was held June 21 with 19 teams and 76 golfers competing. All proceeds benefit the VCSU Viking Booster Club and VCSU athletics.



## 2024 CHAMPIONSHIP FLIGHT WINNERS

(12-under, 60) Collin Hoss, John Nelson, Drew McGough, Clay Mannie



## 2024 VIKING FLIGHT WINNERS

(3-under, 69) Jeff Brown, Lynn & Brent Gustafson, Megan Beck



# 2024 FALL SPORTS SCHEDULE

## VOLLEYBALL

**AUGUST 16-17**  
KEISER TOURNAMENT  
WEST PALM BEACH, FLA.

**AUGUST 21**  
VCSU SCRIMMAGE  
TBA

**AUGUST 24**  
SCRIMMAGE AT U-MARY  
11 A.M.

**AUGUST 30-31**  
SIOUXLAND INVITATIONAL  
SIOUX CITY, IA

**SEPTEMBER 7**  
VITERBO TOURNAMENT  
LACROSSE, WIS.

**SEPTEMBER 10**  
CONCORDIA-MOORHEAD  
7:00 P.M.

**SEPTEMBER 13**  
@MORNINGSIDE  
7:00 P.M.

**SEPTEMBER 18**  
DICKINSON STATE\*  
7:00 P.M.

**SEPTEMBER 19**  
UNIVERSITY OF JAMESTOWN\*  
7:00 P.M.

**SEPTEMBER 25**  
MAYVILLE STATE\*  
7:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 2**  
@DAKOTA STATE\*  
7:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 3**  
@BELLEVUE\*  
7:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 10-11**  
NSAA/FRONTIER CROSSOVER  
BILLINGS, MONT.

**OCTOBER 15**  
@DAKOTA WESLEYAN  
7:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 18**  
@DICKINSON STATE\*  
2:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 19**  
@UNIVERSITY OF  
JAMESTOWN\*  
1:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 24**  
@MAYVILLE STATE\*  
7:00 P.M.

**OCTOBER 30**  
DAKOTA STATE\*  
6:00 P.M.

**NOVEMBER 1**  
BELLEVUE\*  
7:00 P.M.

**NOVEMBER 2**  
DORDT  
5:30 P.M.

**NOVEMBER 9**  
1ST ROUND NSAA  
TOURNAMENT  
#3 & #4 HOST

**NOVEMBER 15-16**  
NSAA FINAL FOUR  
#1 HOST

## FOOTBALL

**AUG. 29 - 6 P.M.**  
@ MINOT STATE

**SEPT. 6 - 8 P.M.**  
@ AUGSBURG

**SEPT. 21 - 4 P.M.**  
**VS. DAKOTA STATE\***

**SEPT. 28 - 2 P.M.**  
@ MAYVILLE STATE\*

**OCT. 5 - 3 P.M.**  
@ DICKINSON STATE\*

**OCT. 12 - 1 P.M.**  
**VS. UNIVERSITY OF  
JAMESTOWN\***

**OCT. 26 - 4 P.M.**  
@ DAKOTA STATE\*

**NOV. 2 - 3 P.M.**  
**VS. MAYVILLE STATE\***

**NOV. 9 - 3 P.M.**  
**VS. DICKINSON STATE\***

**NOV. 16 - 1 P.M.**  
@ UNIVERSITY OF JAMESTOWN\*

## CROSS COUNTRY

**SEPT. 13 - MSUM TWILIGHT MEET**  
@ MOORHEAD, MINN.

**SEPT. 21 - DICKINSON STATE INVITE**  
@ DICKINSON, N.D.

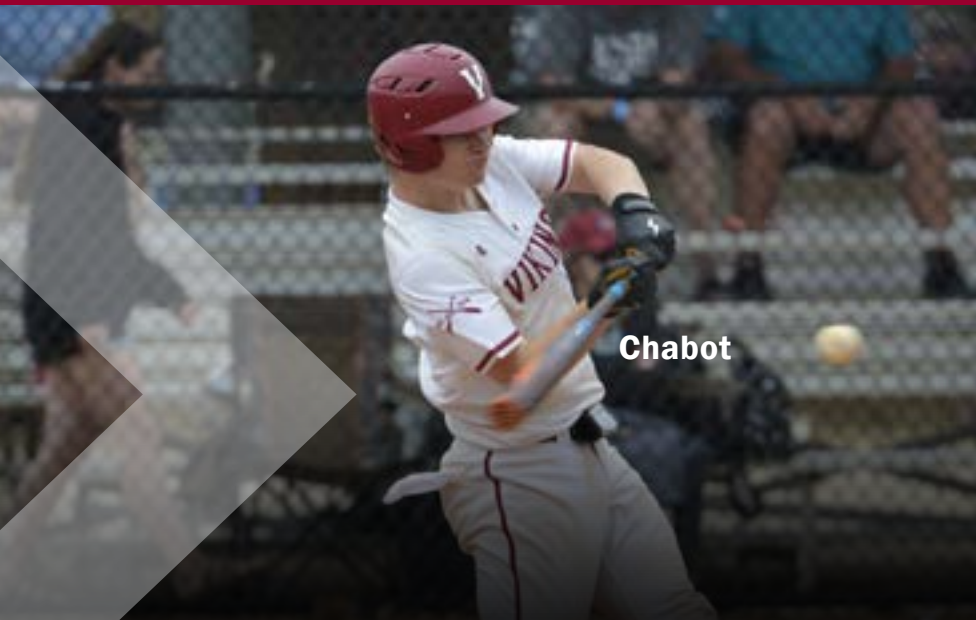
**OCT. 4 - JIMMIE INVITE**  
@ JAMESTOWN, N.D.

**NOV. 8 - NSAA CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
@ VALLEY CITY

Home games in bold

\* = NSAA contest

# SPORTS RECAP



Chabot

## Viking Baseball takes 3rd in NSAA

The Valley City State University baseball team finished third in the conference standings this season during their first year under new head coach Alec DeMaria.

The Vikings finished with a 21-33 overall record and an 11-13 mark in conference play as they earned the No. 3 seed for the postseason. Valley City State won its first two postseason games before being eliminated from the conference tournament with another third-place finish.

“We still have a long way to go to achieve what we want to accomplish, but our coaching staff and players feel like we really got things turned around this year,” said DeMaria, who took over as head coach last summer.

VCSU’s pitching staff set a new school record with 494 strikeouts this season, shattering the old team record by 135. A highlight of the season included a four-game series sweep over Mayville State in April. The Vikings finished the season with a 7-0 record against the Comets.

Junior starting pitcher Hunter Magnuson earned 1st Team All-Conference after leading the NSAA with 105 strikeouts in 79.1 innings pitched.

Freshman pitcher Takao Cookson, junior shortstop Jaden Babiuk and freshman catcher Jamel Chabot were all named 2nd Team All-Conference. Cookson was also named the North Star Athletic Association Freshman of the Year after posting a 2.96 ERA in 67 innings pitched.

Sophomore pitchers Christopher Dietrich and Connor Nelson both earned Honorable Mention All-Conference.

Viking Baseball is making plans for an alumni game on Sept. 21 during Homecoming Weekend. If you’re a Viking Baseball alumni interested in attending, email Alec DeMaria at [alec.demaria@vcsu.edu](mailto:alec.demaria@vcsu.edu).



Carlson

## Golf Update

The Valley City State golf teams competed in four tournaments this spring, including its own VCSU Spring Invite where Sydney Carlson earned individual medalist honors. Carlson (81-81) paced the VCSU women to a season-best 342 team score on Day 2 of the VCSU Spring Invite. The men also carded a season-low round 308 at CrossRoads Golf Course in Carrington, led by Grant Inniger’s career-low 70 (-2).

The Vikings also competed at the Dakota Wesleyan Spring Invite and the Dickinson State Spring Invite before competing at the NSAA Championships which was hosted by Viterbo University at The Golf Club at Cedar Creek in Onalaska, Wis.

VCSU golfers Sydney Carlson and Kathleen Vetter each earned Honorable Mention All-Conference after placing in the Top 14 at the NSAA tournament. Vetter finished in ninth place at the NSAA Championships after firing a 168 (84-84), the best conference finish by a VCSU women’s golfer since Jocelyn Braunberger’s ninth place finish in 2019. Sydney Carlson moved up eight spots after firing a final-round 82 to secure her second career All-Conference honor. Carlson finished with a two-day 180 (98-82) to place 14th overall.

VCSU’s golf teams each placed fifth out of six teams at the NSAA Championships. Senior Grant Inniger was the top finisher for the Viking men with a 164 (81-83) to tie for 17th place.

Sydney Staus and Henrik Jacobsen were each named Champions of Character, which recognizes the student-athletes who best represent the NAIA’s five core values of integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship, and servant leadership.



# Softball advances to postseason play

The Valley City State softball team finished the 2024 season with a 28-22 overall record and earned a No. 2 seed for the NSAA Postseason Tournament after going 17-6 in conference play. The Vikings fell to top-seed Bellevue University to end its season at the double-elimination NSAA Tournament.

Valley City State led the North Star with 10 All-Conference nods this spring. Eight Vikings earned 1st Team All-Conference including Maddy Zander, Sierra Crocker, Saige Forseth, Alyssa DePoorter, Kennadi Stone, Makenzee Stone, Logan Gronberg and Joelle Lamontagne.

Ashlyn Diemert and Maerin Dartnell each earned 2nd Team All-Conference. Diemert and DePoorter each earned a NSAA Gold Glove award for outstanding defense.



Diemert

Logan Gronberg, a sophomore transfer, led the NSAA with a .430 batting average while Sierra Crocker led the conference with 46 RBIs on the season. The pair tied for second in the NSAA after smashing eight home runs each. Zander finished the season ranked second in the conference with 123 strikeouts in the pitcher's circle for VCSU.

The Vikings finished the season atop the conference in team batting average (.333), total hits (459), doubles (74), home runs (36), RBIs (267), on-base percentage (.392) and slugging percentage (.480).

Senior catcher Sierra Crocker finished her Viking career with school records for career home runs (34), doubles (59), RBIs (206), and slugging percentage (.630). Pitcher Joelle Lamontagne ended her career ranked third in school history for wins (46), sixth in career strikeouts (298), and fourth in complete games (36).



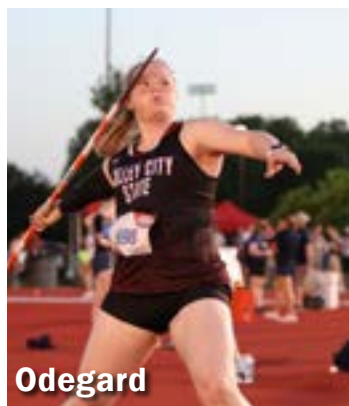
Peraza

## Odegard and Peraza earn All-American honors

Kendra Odegard and Jaiden Peraza both earned All-American honors this season to highlight Valley City State University's outdoor track and field season.

Peraza – a sophomore from Kindred, N.D. – placed fourth in the nation in men's high jump, clearing a personal-best 2.08 meters (6 feet, 9.75 inches) at the NAIA Outdoor National Championships in late May.

Odegard – a junior from Lisbon, N.D. – placed 6th in the women's javelin with her throw of 41.84 meters (137 feet, 3 inches) at the NAIA



Odegard

National Meet. Odegard had the farthest throw in the entire NAIA this season with her personal-best throw of 46.55 meters (152-9) at the NSAA conference meet.

VCSU junior Sadie Hansen also qualified for nationals in

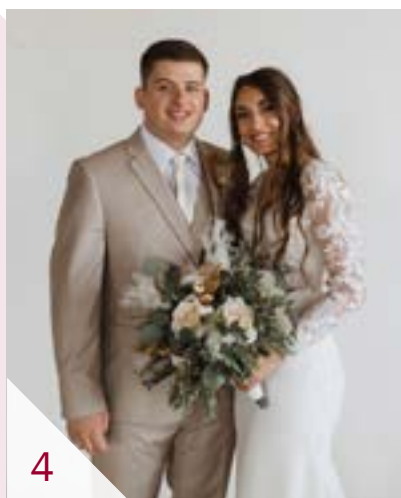
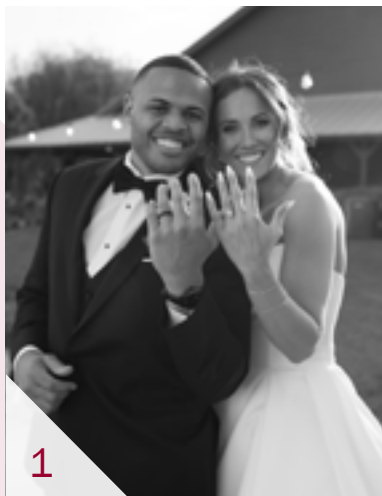
the javelin and placed 26th in the nation.

At the conference level, the Vikings won two individual conference titles and had 14 All-Conference (Top 3) finishes. Freshman Aaron Cutshall won the men's long jump conference title (6.88 meters) and Odegard won the women's javelin.

VCSU's women scored 103.75 team points at the conference meet and placed fourth out of six teams. The Viking men scored 82 points and took 5th out of six teams.

# Just Married

Send us your wedding photo so we can include it in the next issue of **The Bulletin**. Email the photo and short description to [alumni@vcsu.edu](mailto:alumni@vcsu.edu) or scan the QR code and fill out the Weddings Form.



**1 - Jawuan Pugh '17** and Carlee Turner were married April 6, 2024.

**2 - Hannah Gress '18** married Alex Privratsky on June 15th, 2024 in their hometown of Fargo, N.D. Alex and Hannah met when they were in 6th grade. Their paths continued to cross over the years until they officially started dating in 2019. After finishing her masters degree, they finally tied the knot!

**3 - Joslyn Hoyt '21** and Daniel Gleason were married July 15, 2023. Joslyn graduated from VCSU with an Elementary Education degree and is the 1st grade teacher at Midkota Public School. Daniel farms and ranches.

**4 - Hannah Felchle '23 and Shayden Luna '23** were married April 29, 2023.

**5 - Lexi Ondracek and Seth Hanson '22** were married July 20, 2024. Lexi graduated from UND with a bachelors in medical lab science and currently works as the head of chemistry in the Jamestown Regional Medical Center lab. Seth is an account manager with the John Deere dealer in town, Valley Plains Equipment. They live in Valley City and plan to remain there going forward.

## Not Pictured

**Hannah Wittenburg '18 and M. Ed. '24** & Brandon Hoenhouse, November 18, 2023

**Hadley Steffen '18** & Matt Plank, May 11, 2024

**Chelsey Gentzkow '15** & Graham Power, June 8, 2024

**Clarissa Hilary '24** & Matt Schlottman, June 8, 2024

**Kaia Beil '22** & Paxten Wahlund, June 22, 2024

Kelsey Elness & **Jason Beilke '10**, June 28, 2024

Dara Narlock & **Scott Westby '15**, June 29, 2024





# Lil' Vikings

Have you had an addition to your family?  
Share your good news with the Viking family!



Contact Kim Hesch at [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu) or scan the QR code and fill out the form to receive a free t-shirt for your new Lil' Viking. Include your baby's name and birth date. After you have your Lil' Viking shirt, send a photo to [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu) so we can include it in the next issue of **The Bulletin**.



## August Dean Miller

**December 25, 23**  
7 lbs. 15 oz., 21 in.

Caitlyn (Broden) '16  
& Justin Miller



## Harvey Lawrence Preston

**December 1, 23**  
7 lbs. 4 oz., 20 in.

Siblings: Hudsen  
Ethen '16 &  
Cassandra (Pautz)  
'18 M. Ed. '22  
Preston



## Iva Jolene Smith

**April 1, 24**  
6 lbs. 14 oz., 19 in.

Austin '20 & Sydni  
Smith



## Dace Christopher Dechant

**September 12, 23**  
9 lbs. 7 oz., 21 in.

Siblings: Drey (5) &  
Ari (3)

Amanda (Brown) '11  
& Damon Dechant

Grandparents: Kathy  
& Mark Brown '84



## Jaela Degenstein

**March 29, 24**  
8 lbs. 15 oz., 21 in.

Nicole (Heinitz)  
Degenstein '18 &  
Brian Degenstein

Grandparent:  
Lorraine Schneibel  
'83



## Dezi Lou Dale

**May 24, 23**  
7 lbs. 4 oz., 19 in.

Siblings: Ezra (12),  
Zoey (10) & Jozy (4)

Dewayne '07 &  
Sarah (Hiebert)  
Dale '08



## Brooks Ravnaas

**December 5, 23**  
6 lb. 14 oz., 19½ in.

Taren (Braunberger)  
'20 and Kyle  
Ravnaas

Grandparents:  
Jeffrey '93 & Michelle  
(Hagen) '96  
Braunberger



## Rhett Louis Nelson

**January 23, 24**  
7 lbs. 11 oz., 21½ in.

Siblings: Leo &  
Reese

Zach '17 & Kelsey  
(Gaukler) '17 Nelson



## Mickie Virginia Paulsrud

**July 8, 23**  
5 lb. 5 oz., 19.5 in.

Nick & Lakken  
(Rufsvold) '12  
Paulsrud

Sibling: Stevie







**Shelley Balkan-Grant '75** retired from the educational world after 44 years as a middle school teacher, middle school principal, and an assistant professor at Winona State. She is presently living on Gull Lake in Brainerd, Minn. with her hubby, Peter. She is loving a blended family of 6 children and 10 grandkids! Sharon and **Glen Schmalz '76** are their lake neighbors and partners in fun! What a great small world!

**Peder Gjovik '77** stayed busy with some home remodeling projects after retiring from VCSU as an Emeritus Professor in June 2020. He was just hired back at VCSU on a part-time basis to serve as Director, Don Mugaan CTE Leadership Center and Chair, Department of Technology and STEM Education. In June, Pete, his wife, Gail, and their grandson, Reed, took a tour of England and France with the VCSU Department of History tracing the Normandy invasion route of the Allies. He is also running for the District 24 Senate seat which consists of Ransom and Barnes counties. Someone recently commented he is not letting the moss grow on his north side. Pete says "It is shaping up to be a busy summer and fall!"

**Janis (Paulson) Wallender '77** and her husband are enjoying retired life and all the time spent with their daughter, twin grandsons and son-in-laws and grandpuppies. When not with them, Janis keeps busy quilting, riding bike and swimming. Brent stays busy golfing.

## CLASS OF 1980s

**Ronda (Carlson) Moszer '83** retired in September of 2023 after 41 years with Farm Service Agency. She is keeping very busy watching her 2 year old grandson while his parents find daycare. Ronda is looking forward to taking more vacations with friends and family. She still lives in Bismarck and her son, Harley, and his family live with her. Ronda's daughter, Mikayla, is attending grad school in Massachusetts.



**Karen (Albrecht) '84 and Richard '85 Dufault** have both retired after 38 years of teaching! Rich was a business education teacher at Greeley West High School and Karen was a primary elementary teacher at University Schools. Most of their teaching years were in Killdeer, N.D. where they taught/coached for 24 years before moving to Colorado. Rich and Karen currently live in Greeley, Colo. and have 3 grown children all married, along with 5 grandchildren! Their children all have great careers; their daughter is an occupational therapist and lives in Eaton, Colo.,

son, Austin, is a player development coach with the Chicago Bulls and lives in Chicago, Ill. and their youngest son, Zach, is a GIS specialist and lives in Anchorage, Alaska. They both enjoyed their years of college/sports at VCSU!



**Tim Johnson** is the executive director and music director of the Kicks Band of Fargo Moorhead. [www.fmkicksband.com](http://www.fmkicksband.com). Tim attended Valley City State University from 1984-1986 and is an EBC Alumni! He holds a

Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of North Dakota (1990) and a Master of Arts degree in Trombone Performance from Minnesota State University Moorhead (1998). Johnson is the Initiating Incorporator creating the Articles and Bylaws for the Kicks Band of Fargo Moorhead to become a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. He is a retired middle school band director for the Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton Public Schools and plays trombone and bass in the Fargo Moorhead area. Tim founded the Jazz Nickel Combo in 2009 and has been the Music Director of the Kicks Band since 2011. Tim has served as Honor Band Chair and President of the Minnesota Band Directors Association NW Region. Johnson's performance experience includes 10 years with the Greater Grand Forks Symphony, Dick Kick Classic Swing Band, UND Faculty Brass Quintet, FM Symphony Orchestra, FM Jazz Arts Group, Jazz Nickel Combo, 10 years as a variety band bassist/vocalist, and numerous performances with various professional and freelance jazz and classical groups. Tim and his wife Amy (27 years) have two adult children in their 20s, Elizabeth and Zachary. Tim and Amy have lived in Moorhead since 1998 and are currently remodeling a 1915 home in North Fargo.

**Howard Mintz** lives in south Florida. He is married and has a family of eight children. Howard taught in Miami-Dade public schools for 35 years. He graduated from FIU, Miami's State University, with a Bachelor of Science in physical education. In addition to teaching physical education, he taught other subjects, including indoor suspension for students who were not behaving in school. Howard was fortunate to coach wrestling, cross country, and track and field. He says he had a very rewarding career in education.

**Lorrie (Kirsch) Milford '87** lost her dear husband, Richard, on January 15, 2024. They had just celebrated 62 years together and all that goes with that.

**Mary Halvorson '89** finished her 35th year of teaching! She moved closer to home 7 years ago after teaching in Carrington and Valley City. Mary currently lives in Devils Lake and teaches Title I at Lakota Elementary.

## CLASS OF 1990s



**Becky (Blasey) '92 and Brent '92 Keith** moved to Pfafftown, N.C. with their 2 children in 2009. Brent has been working as a nurse with an anesthesiology group for 10 years. Becky has been a Clinical Research Coordinator at Wake Forest School of Medicine for the past 1.5 years. Their oldest son, Derrick, works for Nabisco and lives in Atlanta with his new wife Corinne. Kaleb, their youngest son has been working as an automotive technician at a Honda dealership in Winston Salem, N.C. for 5 years. Family photo from their son's wedding this past March in New Bern, N.C.

## CLASS OF 2000s

**Megan (Wolbaum) Weigel '09** lives in Bismarck with her husband, Kyler, and two children Raelynn 6, and Rhett, 4. Megan is a 2nd grade teacher at Lewis and Clark Elementary in Mandan. They enjoy spending time on their pontoon in the summer months and attending their children's various activities.



## CLASS OF 2010s

**Margaret (Wilson) Krueger '11** and Seth Krueger were married in June 2023, They have a 3 year old, Annabel, and recently welcomed a new baby. Margaret started teaching 6th grade at St. Mary's School in Breckenridge, Minn. in the fall of 2023. She loves the change to a private school coming from a public school.



**Jean (Garcia) '12 and Coty '11 Beck** renewed their vows this year for their 10 year wedding anniversary. Their children are Landen 13, Layken 11, and Lawsen 10. Jean will be going

into her 13th year of elementary teaching and Coty will go into his 10th year as the middle/high school phy ed teacher. The Becks live in Seward, Alaska.

**Lakken (Rufsvold) Paulsrud '12** works with the North Dakota Public Service Commission as the first woman gas pipeline safety inspector in North Dakota. She is also a volunteer firefighter for the Valley City Fire Department. She has been married for 12 years to Nick, an agricultural consultant for Centrol, and they have 2 daughters, Stevie 2 ½ and Mickie 11 months.



**Karl Sorby '13** just finished his 3rd season as the Head Men's Basketball Coach at Dakota College at Bottineau. He turned around a losing program into a program that has won 50 plus games over the past 3 seasons and made the region championship game this season. Karl is working to make the program a championship-winning program.

**Garrett Anderson '14** is currently living in West Fargo, N.D. with his wife Shelby and their two children, Lilliana (4) and Beckham (2). Garrett is currently moving into his 6th year of teaching Special Education and 3rd year at Liberty Middle School. Garrett is also one of the assistant coaches for the Sheyenne High School soccer team and one of the head coaches for the Liberty Middle School track and field team.

**Cassandra Klos '14** is a librarian at West Fargo Public Library, working specifically with the Red Reading Bus library outreach program. She lives in North Fargo with her husband, Tyler, and their cat, Lincoln.



**Jessica (Sanden) Enstad '15** and her family live in Valley City. Jessica and her husband have a two year old daughter, Eleena. She is a K-6 STEAM/Library Media Specialist for Jefferson and Washington Elementary. She also runs the 2-6 STEAM After School programs and the elementary robotics program. They love their Valley City community!





**Harvey McMahon '16** is currently the head football coach and head track and field coach at Horace High School in Horace N.D. Harvey and his wife, Allie, have two daughters, Marci (4) and Reni (1). He also

teaches physical education at Heritage Middle School in Horace, N.D.

**Brooke (Breckheimer) Mears '18** lives in West Fargo and just finished her 4th year teaching health and physical education and coaching softball at West Fargo high school. Brooke and Amanda have a 1 year old daughter named Lily who is the light of their lives!



### CLASS OF 2020s

**Holly (Zirnhelt) Reinsel '20** is getting ready for her third year teaching at Sargent Central Public School as the high school math teacher. Holly and her husband celebrated their third anniversary in July.



**McKenna Briggs '21** is currently attending graduate school for clinical psychology and will graduate this December. She is currently working in the social services field and hopes to move toward work in the corrections field after she graduates from the masters program.



**Marcus Overacker '21** graduated with a MA in music - composition option from California State University Fresno in May of this year. He is currently performing in a local production of Jersey Boys on guitar and played with the FOOSA Philharmonic on classical guitar in June.

**Jordan Ramsey '21** received his bachelors degree from VCSU in music online. He lives in central Florida with his wife, daughter (6), son (4) and two bulldogs. Since graduating, Jordan has started his Masters degree in music education at Eastern Washington University (he will graduate in December) and has been in talks with the University of Florida to start his DMA in wind band conducting. Jordan has been teaching high school band at Vanguard High School in Ocala, Flor. going on his 3rd year now. The band program under his direction has improved greatly. In his first year, he had 26 musicians and this upcoming year he will have 66 students (31 freshman). The marching band found great success this past year, placing 2nd in the state of Florida in their class and look to improve in the coming years!

# VCSU AG BOWL

presented by First Community Credit Union



## SATURDAY, OCT. 12

### VALLEY CITY STATE VS. JAMESTOWN



**11 A.M.**

**FOOD | GAMES | TAILGATING**



**1 P.M.**

**KICKOFF VS. JAMESTOWN**

# In Remembrance

**Warren Christianson '52**, Santa Rosa, Calif.

**Florence (Pikarski) Klosterman '52**, Wahpeton, N.D.

**Bernice (Dewald) Schauer '57**, Jamestown, N.D.

**Clare (Chesirre) Williams '57**, West Fargo, N.D.

**Don Nelson '59**, Valley City

**Jerry Pederson '60**, Ames, Iowa

**Wanda (Personius) Anderson '62**, Silver Lake, Minn.

**Darlyne Brunsvold '62**, Waconia, Minn.

**Joan (Schultz) Krei '64**, West Fargo, N.D.

**Claude Sheldon '64**, Fargo, N.D.

**Audrey (Dohman) Gaukler '67**, Valley City

**Willard Jantzen '67**, Valley City

**Ardyce (Topp) Meier '69**, Chandler, Ariz.

**Daniel A. Anderson '70**, Jamestown, N.D.

**Deborah (Gackle) Krueger '70**, Fargo, N.D.

**David Campbell '74**, Watertown, S.D.

**Byron Hoeckle '74**, Binford, N.D.

**Joyce (Jorgenson) Saji '74**, Saint Paul, Minn.

**David Larson '75**, Oakes, N.D.

**Darla (Eggum) Lueb**, Sioux Falls, S.D.

**Jeffery France '76**, Loretto, Minn.

**Lenae (Olson) Haas '82**, Coon Rapids, Minn.

**Linda (Wegley) Ova '82**, Pingree, N.D.

**Nyle Burchill**, Valley City

**Wayne Current**, Fargo, N.D.

**Alvin Schumacher**, Valley City

**Howard Svenningsen**, Page, N.D.

## Vernon Edward Almlie



Vernon Edward Almlie was born to Edward and Esther (Wager) Almlie January 16, 1935, at St. Cloud, MN. He married Marie Talberg in 1958 at the Glendorado Lutheran Church. She passed away on April 1992 in Valley City.

He taught school in Rochester, Winona, and St. Paul, MN. In 1975, the family moved to Valley City, ND,

where he was on the faculty of VCSU for over 25 years. He was made Professor Emeritus. He retired in 2001 but continued supervising student teachers in the Fargo area. He also drove school bus for the Fargo School System.

He was active in music and theater in the colleges he attended and in the communities he lived. He also sang with his family and in church choirs. He was a member of the Valley City Troubadours for 25 years. He was a charter member of the Valley City Optimist Club and served on the Community Theater Board. He sang in the church choir, taught Sunday School and was on the Council at Trinity Lutheran Church, Valley City. He was a member of First Lutheran Church, Fargo where he served on the Property Committee; sang in the Men's Choir; and was an active member of Helping Hands.

He married Glenda Sanford on August 12, 1995 at First Lutheran Church, Fargo, ND. Glenda passed away December 24, 2023.

He is survived by his daughter Ann (Jon) Strausser, Anamosa IA; sons, William (Lande) Almlie, Everson, WA and Jurgan Almlie, Ellendale, ND.

## Steven D. Olson

Steven D. Olson, 73, Valley City, ND passed away at his home surrounded by his family June 4, 2024.

Steven Douglas Olson was born February 13, 1951, in Valley City, ND to Oscar O. and Anne (Grotting) Olson. He grew up on a farm south of Valley City and was a 1970 VCHS graduate. Steve "Sugar Bear" played football for the Hi-Liners and for the VCSU Vikings.

In 1972, he married Gaylene Overbeck in Valley City. They raised their children, Chris and Nicole on the farm south of town.

His first career was as a farmer, alongside his father and brother, Gary. They had the largest hog farm in the state of ND, at one time having 2000 pigs and 100 cattle. Throughout their years on the farm, they were given various awards. Later, he worked alongside his longtime friend, Marlin Pfeifer at Valley Radiator (The Best Place to Take a Leak). Steve finished his working life in facility services at VCSU, retiring in 2014. He also became a "world renowned" (well locally anyway) blackjack dealer at the VFW Post 2764 and City Lights Supper Club.

Steve was a jack of all trades. He could fix anything and was always willing to lend a hand when you needed help. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, and golfing. After his retirement, he started his favorite "job", taking care of his grandchildren. He attended every activity he could, and it wasn't hard for the kids to talk him into a trip to Dairy Queen.

He is survived by his wife, Gaylene; and children, Chris (Nicole) and Nicole (Jerrod) Kneeland.





## President Emeritus Charles Brewer House Jr.



On April 7, 2024, Charles Brewer House Jr. died peacefully in Santa Rosa, California. He was 96 years old. His optimism, his sense of humor, his intellectual curiosity, and above all his genuine love of life, are memories that will live on long after his passing, cherished by all who knew him.

Charlie was born on June 24, 1927, in Galesburg, Illinois. He loved the life on the farm, and attended the University of Nebraska. It was here that he was finally able to pursue his love of learning, and it was also here that he found June, the true and lasting love of his life. After college, he spent three memorable years serving his country in the Pacific, before and during the Korean War, and on April 9, 1950, Margery June

Hornby became his wife. Their love affair continued until the day he died, a marriage lasting more than 73 years.

House earned a master's degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, and a move to Grand Rapids, Michigan began his career as a clergyman and a theologian. He then moved to Alma College in Alma, Michigan to work as a teacher and lecturer. By this time he was also the head of a family which included 5 sons, an unruly brood that frequently caused him great consternation.

His appointment as head of the Department of Humanities at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka faced him with one of his greatest challenges yet, to which he rose admirably, establishing the first African Studies curriculum in the newly independent nation. His tenure as a lecturer, administrator, and cultural ambassador in Nigeria was abruptly cut short at the outbreak of the Biafran war of independence.

Returning to the US, the family relocated to Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan, where he resumed his career as a dedicated teacher. He earned his doctoral degree in Education. House joined the faculty of Central Michigan University, in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

In 1983, he began his tenure as President of VCSU. Under his leadership, VCSU emerged as a leading small institution of higher learning. In the vast open spaces of the prairie, he led efforts to transform isolation into connectivity, anticipating the power of long-distance learning in the pre-internet era.

After retiring from this position in 1993, he and June made the transition to a home in the woods of northern Minnesota. He was able to pursue his love of sailing, woodcarving, and carpentry, playing the organ, and, as always, faithfully following the fortunes of his beloved "Cornhuskers" on the gridiron. In 2014 he and June relocated one last time, to Santa Rosa, California, to be closer to family in their later years. He died peacefully on April 7, 2024. He was 96 years old.

## Continuing the Connection

If you know the address of any of these individuals, please contact the VCSU Foundation Office at 1-800-532-8641 ext. 37203 or email [alumni@vcsu.edu](mailto:alumni@vcsu.edu).



### 2011

Kendria (Orvik) Chowdhury  
Brice George  
Jesse Martin  
Bethany Myles  
Philip Russell  
Katherine Swanson  
Terrance Velazquez

### 2012

Hantao Bian  
Stephanie Conley

Greg Di Stefano  
Samantha Hendrickson  
Karissa (Keever) Koehler  
Candace Kraft  
Amanda Norris  
Oluwatoyin Oladosu  
Ashley (Walker) Peterson  
Keah (Jawaski) Pratt  
Sidney Simons  
Di Wu  
Jing Yang

### 2013

Destinee Capman  
Kelly Jo (Campbell)  
Dickmann  
Azbayar Enkhbayar  
Lyle Hager  
Cody Hutchinson  
Devon Lura  
Shauna Nissen  
Stevie (Hagen) Ostenson  
LeTheo Proctor  
Benjamin Snyder

Robert Sorensen  
Michelle Vaughn  
Jessie Wagler  
Colin Waldner

### 2014

Damchaabadgar  
Batchuluun  
Susan Brown  
Johnathan Brown  
Josiah Churchill  
Casey Colemer



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**PARENTS:** If this issue is addressed to your son or daughter who no longer lives at this address, please contact the Alumni Office with an updated address at [alumni@vcsu.edu](mailto:alumni@vcsu.edu) or 701.845.7203. Thank you for your help in keeping our records current.



Know a high school junior  
or senior who could be a  
future Viking?  
[VCSU.edu/visit](http://VCSU.edu/visit)

