Motivation and innovation mark North Park’s emerging leaders.
Many differences, one mission

North Park University enrolls students from all walks of life. They come from across the country and around the world—from the Midwest and the coasts, from cities and small towns, from states and nations. The majority are Christians representing Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox traditions, yet some claim other expressions of faith. Some drift to the left politically, others to the right. Some are richer, and others poorer. Some are first-generation college students and others come from a long line of college graduates. They are African American and Caucasian, Asian and Latino, Middle Eastern and European. All speak English but many also communicate in other languages.

Indeed, North Park is a community of difference. We embrace difference—as represented by each student’s story—because it makes the University a special place. Diversity shapes our educational experience.

Still, we are a learning community with a shared mission. Students dedicate their time here to preparing for lives of significance and service.

It is a goal reached only over numerous years, although many North Parkers are well on their way to this end even before they graduate. A few such students are profiled within these pages. They venture into demanding roles—from tackling a rigorous internship, to establishing a nonprofit business to serve girls in Africa, to tutoring at-risk elementary students, to organizing a program that brings the gift of music to neighborhood children. Still other featured students showcase the myriad cultures and ethnic voices that gather on our campus and foster a rich learning environment.

As you read this issue of the North Parker, we hope you will discover anew how our differences complement our commonality.
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Students balance scholarship and service

Travis Moore C’2009 says he is gaining valuable experience in fundraising and nonprofit organizations through the internship he was awarded through the national American Humanics Next Generation Nonprofit Leaders Program (NextGen).

NextGen Leaders earn a scholarship of $4,500 from American Humanics during their internship, along with access to and support from a network of nonprofit leaders who will serve as career coaches. The program, which is underwritten by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, is designed to help a racially and ethnically diverse group of students with demonstrated leadership potential complete their American Humanics certification requirements, specifically the minimum 300-hour nonprofit internship.

A philosophy major, Moore interns with the ALS Association, dedicated to fighting Lou Gehrig’s Disease. Working in the Office of National Signature Events, he helps chapters around the country organize more than 150 Walks to Defeat ALS.

“We are there to support all the chapter walks, help standardize things, and bring in work with corporate funders to maximize walk potential,” he says.

While he is still unsure of his career goals, Moore says he is “heavily considering” law school so that he can be a lobbyist to promote issues of public concern. He learned of the NextGen award opportunity through the Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management, and was one of two North Park students to receive the scholarship, along with classmate Phillip Bloss C’2010.

A third-year student with a major in nonprofit business administration and a minor in Spanish, Bloss is interning with the fair-trade coffee company Coffee Ambassadors in Winnetka, Ill., and helping to start a nonprofit co-operative to facilitate partnerships among similar businesses.

The nonprofit will “seek higher than fair trade wages for impoverished coffee farmers through direct trade relationships that avoid coffee buying middlemen in order to pay higher prices for the coffee,” he says. His work includes setting up a staff and board of directors, developing proper job descriptions, budget projections, funding ideas, and future mission and vision statements.

Bloss’ professional ambitions remain open, but he says he would love to work in Latin America. He explains, “All I really want to do is give opportunities to people all over the world who were born without the privileges that I was born with.”

Axelson Center plans its 10th Annual Symposium

“Forces for Good” is the theme of the Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management’s 10th Annual Symposium, which takes place May 13 and 14 on the campus of North Park University. The symposium will address the key ingredients that make a nonprofit great—highlighting the value of partnerships, advocacy, and inspiration over big budgets, polished marketing, and even management performance.

The Axelson Center seeks to enhance the effectiveness of organizations and individuals in the nonprofit sector through education, service and resources. It offers undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificate programs, on-site training, and its annual symposium series addressing contemporary issues and challenges that confront nonprofit organizations. For a complete itinerary of the conference and registration details, visit www.northpark.edu/axelson.

One boy Kelly Thoes C’2009 started tutoring had already flunked second grade two times. Now he is getting all As and Bs.

That kind of success is what this elementary education major hoped for when she started an after-school tutoring program in the city’s Humboldt Park neighborhood two and a half years ago. For her work, the Lincoln Academy of Illinois named Thoes a Student Laureate last October. The Academy presented the awards to 44 college seniors across the state, all of whom were nominated by their college or university for excellence in curricular and extracurricular activities.

The after-school program Thoes initiated has since become part of the North Park’s Urban Outreach Ministries, and includes a Bible lesson and group activities in addition to the tutoring. About eight North Park students now volunteer each semester.
Two trustees honored for professional contributions

Two North Park University trustees were recently recognized for innovative contributions to their industries.

Founder and chair of the Alford Group, a leading development consulting firm in the nonprofit sector, Jimmie Alford C’66 received the 2008 Chair’s Award for Outstanding Service from the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP); while Owen Youngman C’75, former senior vice president at the Chicago Tribune, accepted a prestigious chair at Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism.

Alford is one of only 11 individuals to receive the outstanding service award since its establishment by the AFP in 1982. It is an honor given only to individuals who have made landmark achievements in philanthropy. Past recipients include John E. Marshall III of the Kresge Foundation, which is focused on community development through the strengthening of nonprofits; and Ron Carroll of the Boy Scouts of America, a former AFP chair.

An alumnus of North Park and an executive in residence, Alford teaches courses at the University’s School of Business and Nonprofit Management. He was also instrumental in establishing its highly regarded Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. He was North Park’s Distinguished Alumnus in 1998, and received an honorary doctorate from the University in 2006.

“It is a pleasure to celebrate the role that North Park University has played in educating me for a life of significance and service,” says Alford, who accepted the award during the AFP’s philanthropy banquet on March 31 in New Orleans, as part of the organization’s 2009 International Conference on Fundraising. Alford will also appear in a future issue of the magazine, Advancing Philanthropy.

Fellow trustee Youngman began his position as Knight Professor of Digital Media Strategy in April. The chair is funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, which supports 24 chairs at universities across the United States. As a tenured, full professor, Youngman’s responsibilities include teaching, writing, and building networks of scholars and professionals working on challenges in digital journalism.

“My 37 years at the Tribune and my more than 25 years online have taught me a lot about the connections between online and offline media,” says Youngman, a former sports reporter who has also held positions in suburban news, features, interactive media, and corporate strategy. He began his career at the Chicago paper as a copy boy. Later, under his leadership, chicagotribune.com was the first newspaper website to concurrently be named the industry’s best news site by Editor & Publisher magazine and the Newspaper Association of America. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from North Park University in 2005.

“I hope my students come away understanding that for their work to make a difference, it has to reach an audience,” says Youngman. “They therefore need to understand not just the tools we use today to communicate, but the needs and interests of the people they are trying to educate, inform, or entertain.”

Few people have as strong a history of writing award-winning journalism and building creative enterprises that support it as Youngman, notes Medill Dean John Lavine. “[He] is coming to a school whose faculty and students are passionate about learning and experimenting with new ways to engage people with news and information. We’re all eager to learn from his experience, leadership, contacts, and energy.”
Reaccreditation acknowledges School of Music’s excellence

Growing up in crowded Shanghai, China, cellist Wei Yu C’2003 may not have anticipated a distinguished career as a musician with the New York Philharmonic. Likewise, when Deborah Wanderley dos Santos C’2010 was discovered at a music festival in Brazil, the violinist from a disadvantaged family probably did not imagine that she would one day perform for the Pope as a member of the Youth Orchestra of America.

Besides a great deal of talent and tenacity, these two have something else in common. Both traveled a long way to study at North Park University’s respected school of music, which received reaccreditation from the National Association of Schools of Music in December 2008.

The school has nearly 70 years of success stories since it was first accredited in 1940. Today it enrolls 67 undergraduate majors, 13 minors, four concentrations, one certification, 24 non-major/minor scholarship recipients, and 14 graduate vocal performance majors.

“This important reaccreditation reflects 68 years of quality by which North Park University’s school of music conducts its business,” explains Rebecca Olthafer, music admissions counselor and director of the school’s operations. “It speaks to a continued sense of public trust, as well as to professional quality in music.”

For students, Olthafer explains, accreditation provides accountability and assurance that the program in which they are enrolled is engaged in continuous review, meeting nationally endorsed standards in the music profession. Typically, the accreditation process includes self-evaluation by the institution combined with an on-site review by a team of evaluators, and judgment by an accreditation commission. Reviews focus not only on educational quality, but also on institutional integrity and educational improvements.

“Graduates of North Park’s music program have gone on to professional music careers as instrumental and choral music educators, leaders of worship, performers with world renowned opera companies and symphonies, composers, and business executives,” Olthafer notes. North Park University’s Dean of the College Charles Peterson C’73 and its Dean of the School of Education Rebecca Nelson A’68 C’71 are also graduates.

Olthafer emphasizes that music is an essential part of a liberal arts education, creating an integrated emotional and intellectual experience that promotes cooperation, collaboration, and community. Regardless of degree or career goal, she says, "music in a liberal arts education can help students maximize learning . . . building well-rounded, intelligent individuals that can adapt to our ever changing and challenging world.”

North Park honored for community service

North Park University was named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for its exemplary service efforts in the Chicago community. Launched in 2006, the Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement.

Honorees for the award were chosen based on a series of selection factors including scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which a school offers academic service-learning courses. In total, 635 schools across the nation were recognized.

“In this time of economic distress, we need volunteers more than ever,” said Stephen Goldsmith, vice chair of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Honor Roll is a program of the Corporation, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation.

“College students represent an enormous pool of idealism and energy to help tackle some of our toughest challenges,” Goldsmith added. “We salute North Park University for making community service a campus priority, and thank the millions of college students who are helping to renew America through service to others.”
Professor raises funds for minority students

North Park University music professor Rollo Dilworth led a unique concert featuring his “Trilogy of Dreams” composition on January 24, benefiting an organization that enables minority students to improve their educational opportunities.

The “I Dream a World” concert raised more than $10,000 in funds for A Better Chance of Wilton, which recruits minority high school students from underprivileged school areas and provides them the opportunity to live with a family in Wilton, Conn., and attend the local public high school. Wilton is considered one of the wealthiest communities in the country. Many of its students have entered schools such as Brown University and Boston College. The concert brought together singers from the choruses of local middle and high schools as well as the Drexel University Gospel Choir from Philadelphia.

“Trilogy of Dreams” was received with critical acclaim and a standing ovation when it was premiered in January 2006 by the Boston Children’s Chorus in a stunning performance at Boston’s New England Conservatory.

School of Adult Learning announces new major in criminal justice

Students pursuing their bachelor’s degree through North Park’s School of Adult Learning will now have the opportunity to major in criminal justice. The new interdisciplinary curriculum is unique, blending a strong foundation in liberal arts with social science and professional coursework to prepare students for a broad range of careers in a growing sector of the economy.

Founded in 1992 and currently serving about 250 students, the School of Adult Learning is one of Chicago’s premier adult degree completion programs. It offers eight different majors, including business administration, nonprofit management, church and ministry management, organizational management and leadership, management information systems, counseling and social services, and human psychology.

The latest degree in criminal justice is intended for sworn police officers as well as students interested in professions such as law enforcement, corrections, probation, parole, victim assistance, and social service agencies.

The curriculum is also excellent preparation for graduate study in criminal justice, law, or social work. As a capstone experience, students complete a practicum that includes observation and hands-on experience within an appropriate criminal justice agency.
University launches latest ad campaign

From the CTA El, to buses, bus shelters, and bridge bulletins, North Park University’s 2009 Chicago-based advertising campaign aims to cultivate name recognition for the University in various parts of the city.

Launched in January, the campaign features three messages that underscore the outcomes of the North Park educational experience and reflect the distinctively Christian, intentionally urban, and purposefully multicultural values of its learning community: “Learn to Lead,” “Listen to Engage,” and “Live to Serve.”

It is in many ways a continuation of last year’s series, which also featured three messages: “Campus to Community,” “Knowledge to Wisdom,” and “Word to Deed.” These focused specifically on North Park’s community involvement and diverse urban identity, its distinct Christian education, and the character of the individuals that share in North Park’s mission—preparing students for “Lives of Significance and Service.”

Graduate Andy Meyer C’2006 noted that the recent advertising efforts accurately reflect his North Park experience, adding that they present North Park in a way that is both “faithful to its history” and “marketable to a wider audience.” The University continues to invite feedback, which may be submitted online at its website.

“Publicity is one of many ways that we engage the public and participate in the dynamic urban community we live in,” explains North Park Director of External Relations Lilian Samaan G’2008. “Authentic advertising comes from the reality of our mission being lived by our students, faculty and staff.”

Student retention remains strong despite economy

In the face of a national economic crisis, North Park University enjoyed a high student retention rate for the spring semester and a growing interest in traditionally strong programs.

Citing the timing of the market’s collapse last fall, Dean of Enrollment Mark Olson C’70 S’75 explains that the retention rate is a figure the North Park is closely watching. The 95 percent of students who returned this year represents a one percent improvement from a year ago.

“Retention is generally understood to be an indicator of student satisfaction,” says Olson. “In the current economic climate, it also can be interpreted as confirmation that an affordable education is important to students.”

Amid the job squeeze, Olson has noticed strong interest in programs with clear vocational outcomes, such as education and nursing. “I think that the interest in areas of study that have fairly clear or direct pathways into careers are especially attractive because of the employment problems in the economy,” he says. “At the same time, these are strong programs at North Park that have always attracted large numbers of students.”

Olson says the tightening economy so far has not had an adverse affect on applications and admission for next fall. To help financially pinched families and new incoming students, North Park has increased its budget for need-based financial aid.

“We have seen a few students that have chosen us over some other schools where their net costs would have been much higher and student borrowing would have been excessive,” says Olson. “Students are much more cautious about taking on inordinate amounts of debt right now.”

While the University is making allowances for more generous financial aid packages, tuition increases are also planned for the coming year. Tuition, room, and board will increase to $26,440, up from $25,180 this academic year. Olson emphasizes that the increases are in line with similar institutions and with North Park’s price increases in recent years.

“If you just look at tuition, we are $7,000 below the national average for private colleges and universities, and we’re $2,100 below the average for Christian schools,” says Olson, noting that North Park is also ranked by U.S. News & World Report among America’s best.

North Park had record enrollment last fall, adds Olson, emphasizing that the University’s actions in recent years have it well positioned for whatever lies ahead.
Students, staff return from inauguration with lasting impressions

“Twenty-four hours ago I stood on the Washington Mall wedged between an African American woman in her sixties who wore her finest fur coat and hat and a white man of the same generation wearing a ski jacket and knit cap,” Campus Pastor Judy (Howard) Peterson C’92 wrote on Wednesday, January 21, following one of the most widely watched and heavily attended presidential inaugurations in history. “When everyone began vying for space I watched as the white man gave deference to the black woman making sure she could see the world about to change.”

Peterson was just one in a group of nearly 50 students and staff with North Park’s University Ministries who returned from the inaugural festivities with more than a few indelible impressions. Two other contingents of about 20 North Parkers—one with the student newspaper, The North Park Press, and the other with the Center for Africana Studies—traveled separately to the nation’s capital, the latter for a weeklong stay that included additional cultural activities in D.C.

Editor-in-Chief of The North Park Press Amanda Dayton C’2009 and photographer Jonathan Nehring C’2009 watched the inauguration from a nearby rooftop, snapping shots of the motorcade leaving the Capitol building. Other Press students watched the parade from the sidelines, cheering as the presidential limousine passed them carrying the nation’s newest commander in chief.

The University Ministries sponsored trip was offered to students on a first-come, first-served basis, and was funded by several campus departments. Donations were also received from the Evangelical Covenant Church’s department of Compassion, Mercy, and Justice, and the denomination’s African American Ministers Association.

For senior Tanikia Thompson C’2009, the opportunity to travel to D.C. was a dream come true. “I was there when Obama won the primary . . . and I was there to see him speak in Grant Park after he won the election,” said Thompson, whose parents came of age during the Civil Rights era, and whose grandmother grew up in Mississippi under Jim Crow legislation. “My grandmother told me she never thought she would see this day,” the Africana Studies minor added.

Peterson noted that the peaceful transfer of power that took place on Inauguration Day was not just an example for Americans, but also for the entire world.

“There were cameras and crews from California and Russia, Israel and China, Mexico and England, and they were all broadcasting this event back to those who otherwise would have missed the moment,” Peterson observed. “I felt hopeful that because of that kind of connection that maybe the world in its entirety would one day be able to live and love beyond stereotype.”

Intramural sports flourish on campus

“I have an intramural game at Helwig,” is a common phrase among North Park students since the opening of Helwig Recreation Center in the fall of 2006. The popularity of the University’s intramural sports program has grown tremendously due to increases in the amount of available competition space, state-of-the-art facilities, and the ability to hold games at times that are conducive to student schedules.

The thrill of friendly competition among peers and socializing with friends are also driving forces in intramurals.

“I enjoy seeing people who wouldn’t normally be in Helwig having a great time participating in intramural sports,” says senior Amanda Kline C’2009. “Intramurals can be either highly competitive or ‘just for fun,’ depending what team you are on. I have also met a lot of new people, and it’s been great to see how much the program has grown just within the last couple of years. It’s a nice way to get students active and provides a fun social environment.”

The program continues to see high participation rates this semester. Basketball attracted more than 20 teams and 200 participants, while volleyball drew about 25 teams and 250.

Swedish Covenant Hospital and Athletico Rehabilitation have both sponsored intramural sports at North Park, helping maintain the variety of offerings. Many students have expressed interest in adding additional sports to the program, such as softball, Ultimate Frisbee, and kickball.
Professor receives one of Swedish government’s highest honors

The Swedish government has honored Philip J. Anderson C’76, professor of church history at North Park Theological Seminary, with its highest honor given to “foreign nationals.”

Anderson was presented with the insignia of the Royal Order of the Polar Star from the King of Sweden at the Swedish-American Historical Society’s 60th Anniversary gala on November 8 in Chicago. He was made “Commander of the Royal Order of the Polar Star.”

Anderson was recognized for his many years of scholarship, service to the historical society, and promotion of Swedish relations with North America. The honor is significant in that, typically, it is given to members of Sweden’s royal family or to recognized “foreign nationals.” King Frederick I founded the royal order in 1748.

Other notables to receive the award have been Gen. Colin Powell, Strobe Talbott, and former North Park University president David Nyvall.

Seminary professor authors “Book of the Year”

Christianity Today has named Klyne Snodgrass’s book *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* as the 2009 Book of the Year in the biblical studies category.

Snodgrass is the Paul W. Brandel professor of New Testament Studies at North Park Theological Seminary. He has taught at the school since 1974.

The book covers all of Jesus’ 35 parables and runs more than 800 pages, nearly 200 of which are endnotes. Snodgrass admits he didn’t expect to produce a volume so extensive. “The process takes on its own life,” he explains.

Judges declared, “This is a superb culmination of career-long reflection on one of the most important genres in biblical literature. Readers will be deeply impressed by Snodgrass’ exposition, his command of the relevant scholarship in the field, and the lucid quality of his analysis.”

Grant to fund chemistry lab upgrades for nursing students

North Park University nursing students will soon benefit from state-of-the-art technologies in the school’s chemistry laboratory thanks to a $10,000 grant awarded by the Max Goldenberg Foundation.

Chemistry professor Jonathan Rienstra-Kiracofe applied for the grant after submitting a detailed proposal to the foundation, which supports projects in medical research, laboratory science education, and charitable endeavors.

The funds he received will be used specifically to purchase PDA-like computers that can be connected to probes to measure temperature, pH, color absorption, and conductivity.

According to Rienstra-Kiracofe, not only will these computers enable pre-nursing students to graph data in real time, but they will also allow them to analyze chemical compounds and examine solutions with a sophistication similar to many hospitals and medical laboratories.

While North Park’s school of nursing has previously received funding from the Max Goldenberg Foundation, this is the first grant of its kind to be awarded to the chemistry department. The retooled lab is scheduled to be completed within a year, Rienstra-Kiracofe projects, and is essential to keeping North Park’s chemistry program relevant and effective in educating future nurses.

For Rienstra-Kiracofe, who is in his ninth year of teaching undergraduate chemistry and his second year of teaching at North Park, the greatest satisfaction is seeing students who may have initially felt overwhelmed by the challenge of chemistry realize the joys of scientific discovery.

“It is rewarding to see students understand a chemistry concept by doing a hands-on experiment in the laboratory,” he says. “The new equipment we will purchase through the Max Goldenberg grant will allow us to make students’ laboratory experiences more relevant and instructive.”
Faculty authors release new books

**Footsteps Through Athina** (Palo Albums, 2008) Assistant Professor of Education Angelyn Balodimas-Bartolomei takes travelers on a virtual tour of Athens in this guidebook to Greece.

**Communicating Christ in Asian Cities** (SEANET, 2009) Paul De Neui, associate professor of intercultural studies, edits this resource for missionaries ministering in Buddhist contexts.

**Guide to the Code of Ethics for Nurses** (American Nurses Association, 2008) Dean of the School of Nursing Linda Olson authors a chapter in this volume, which received a 2008 Publications Award of Merit from the Washington, D.C. Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication.

**Practical Theology, Vol. 1, No. 2** (The British and Irish Association for Practical Theology, 2008) Phyllis Sheppard, Seminary associate professor of pastoral care, contributes a chapter in this peer-reviewed journal of pastoral studies.

**Where Wisdom Is Found** (Baylor University Press, 2009) Seminary professor Helen Cepero S’85 and a group of colleagues examine the central virtue of wisdom in this compilation of essays.

**Fasting** (Thomas Nelson, 2009) Professor of Biblical and Theological Studies Scot McKnight addresses the gamut of how individuals make sense of their salvation, interpret Scripture, and understand spiritual disciplines in three of his recent publications: *Finding Faith, Losing Faith*, coauthored with Seminary student Hauna Ondrey C’2004 (Baylor University Press, 2008); *The Blue Parakeet* (Zondervan, 2008); and *Fasting*.

**Stories With Intent** (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008) Klyne Snodgrass, Seminary professor of biblical literature, received Christianity Today’s Book of the Year Award in the biblical studies category for this comprehensive guide to the parables of Jesus.

**The New Interpreter’s Handbook of Preaching** (Abingdon Press, 2008) Paul Koptak S’86, Seminary professor of communications and biblical interpretation, contributes to this essential tool for preachers and church leaders.

Purposefully Multicultural

60625 /eth-nik/ (adj) of or relating to multiple cultures

The 60625 photography exhibit created by three North Park students captures cultural diversity in portraits.

You might call it a virtual conversation. Currently a wall on the second floor of Brandel Library is filled with handwritten messages left by observers of an intriguing photography exhibit that has been on display since January. The photographers—students Eric Staswick C’2009; his wife, Bethany (Crino) Staswick C’2009; and Lucas Larson C’2008—invited the viewing public to respond to the question, “How and where do you experience multiculturalism in your world?”

It is a question they, too, had to ask of themselves when they set out last August to capture in portraits the diversity that characterizes North Park’s Chicago neighborhood. Although it remains a work in progress, the exhibit—titled “60625,” in honor of the area’s zip code—continues to promote dialogue as people come face to face with the challenging and inspiring realities of what it means to be multicultural people living in multicultural community.

“Realizing the incredible multiculturalism and ethnicity that surrounds us, we became filled with the desire to tap into these cultures and
discover the stories of people around us, where they come from, and what dreams and ambitions have brought them to transition their lives to this particular area of Chicago,” the photographers note in their artists’ statement. Such stories, they add, are all too easily overlooked.

The composite portraits represent cultures from every continent, juxtaposing images of the subjects in modern street clothing against images of the same individuals in authentic dress from their native countries. North Park helped sponsor the work, which currently includes a number of photographs of University faculty, staff, and students. The Staswicks and Larson also plan to apply for grants to expand the exhibit and have it displayed in different parts of the city.

“This project has become a chance for us to join with our multicultural friends, classmates, professors, and neighbors, and in a small way, help share their stories with our community,” they explain. “We ultimately hope that these photographs will act as a catalyst to cause our community to be curious, start asking questions, and make an effort to get to know the people around us—sharing our life stories and learning from each other.”

by Jessica Allen Bernthal

"Each of us in our own way lives/breathes/exudes our culture. . . ."

“I learn the most about myself when I am in relationship with people who are different from me. . . .”

“Diversity is not what separates us, but what binds us.”

“Culture is beautiful. Experiencing new things eliminates ignorance . . . .”
They have been called “the next great generation”—a group of would-be “community shapers, institution builders, world leaders.”

At the turn of the century, generational theorists Neil Howe and William Strauss predicted an antithesis to the angst-ridden, self-absorbed overindulgence that characterized the youth of Generation X. In their 2000 book Millennials Rising, they envisioned a group of young visionaries—all born after 1980—who, in the first decade of the 21st century, would “entirely recast the image of youth from downbeat and alienated to upbeat and engaged.”

Who are some of the young people of this new generation, and what are they doing to help change the social, political, and cultural landscape of their day?

Meet three North Park students at the forefront of this apparent paradigm shift. They have traveled the world, established outreach programs, and excelled academically and artistically. They are socially aware, civically engaged, multiculturally diverse. And whether helping victims of social injustice overseas or working with the poor and underserved in the Chicago community, each continues to exemplify significance and service.
Deborah Wanderley dos Santos C’2010
Vision: Bring the gift of music to Chicago’s underserved children

Six years ago Deborah Wanderley dos Santos was 17 years old and playing her violin on the streets of Porto Alegre, Brazil, so that pedestrians walking by might toss some coins into the instrument case. She hoped the money would cover the rent for a room in a house that was home to 10 other families.

“It was a very bad structure,” she recalls. “They hated me because I practiced the whole time.”

Today, the 23-year-old junior is pursuing degrees in music and nonprofit management and is considered among the best Brazilian violinists of her generation. She has traveled the world and performed with renowned orchestras such as the Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra, the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, the Porto Alegre Symphony, and the Symphony Orchestra of the National Theater Claudio Santoro.

Discovered on the streets of Brazil by a member of one of the country’s largest symphonies, she was taken from obscurity and supported by those who recognized her extraordinary talent.

“I want to provide the same opportunity I had,” says dos Santos, who, last October, formed an orchestra for poor children in Chicago’s Albany Park neighborhood. She was inspired by Venezuela’s “El Sistema,” a program that has drawn worldwide attention for its ability to raise children from poverty by teaching them classical music. It is funded by a mix of public and private sources. The theory behind it continues to generate interest, and dos Santos was even featured in the Chicago Tribune for her work.

Dos Santos herself began seeking refuge at a government-operated music school in Brazil at age 10 to escape an unstable family life.

Each day after her regular classes, she would take individual and orchestral lessons as well as practice from 1–10 p.m. to avoid going home. “The music school became my home,” she recalls. “The people I played with and the teachers were like my second family.”

Dos Santos’ current teacher, Richard Young, brought her to Chicago and to North Park University, where she received a full scholarship. He also introduced her to the Peoples’ Music School in Uptown and the institution’s founder, Rita Simo.

Simo started the Peoples’ Music School in 1976 in order to provide free music lessons to those who could not afford them. Dos Santos became a volunteer teacher at the school and announced her desire to reach an even greater number of underserved youth. So far, she has raised nearly $30,000 in instruments for the children’s orchestra and recently struck a deal with one of the largest online suppliers of stringed instruments for more.

Every day after school, a host of volunteer teachers—including a Grammy-nominated violist and a Juilliard-educated pianist— instruct the students. They hold group lessons according to instrument three days a week, and then students practice as an orchestra the remaining days. While most of them will not become career musicians, dos Santos says the main purpose is to equip them to be responsible adults—instilling discipline and structure, as well as a general love for music. Dos Santos and fellow North Park students also volunteer to give after-school music lessons to 36 children at Hibbard Elementary School in the Albany Park neighborhood. Her Hibbard students recently held their first performance at Anderson Chapel on March 20.

Young marvels at the dedication of his student, who even visited Venezuela to learn how to implement “El Sistema.”

He says, “This is a girl who really knows how to pay back.”
Sarah Thontwa C’2009
Vision: Help women in the Congo escape a life of abuse

Sometimes it’s the “little things” that have the greatest impact. At least, that’s what Sarah Thontwa hopes.

The first student from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to attend North Park University, Thontwa recently established the nonprofit organization, Little Things, to help abused women from her home country.

What inspired this graduating senior to get involved in this way?

After returning to her hometown of Gemena and visiting other parts of DR Congo in 2007, Thontwa says, “I was just heartbroken by what I saw.” The central African country, which was devastated by war in 1998, remains one of the poorest countries in the world according to the United Nations. It has also been declared the worst in terms of violence against women.

When Thontwa learned that it costs only $150 per year to send a girl to school, she thought to herself, “I can do that.” Returning to the United States, she immediately went to a crafts store, purchased beads, and began making jewelry to sell. The proceeds have now sent four girls to school, and this fall will provide education for an additional five.

Her fellow North Park students became her customers, and they encouraged her to start a nonprofit. Now those students and others hold parties in which they make jewelry that is sold to raise funds for Little Things.

Thontwa plans to return to Africa after graduation to help provide additional opportunities for Congolese to acquire education, escape abuse, and develop businesses through microenterprise initiatives.

She also wants to “break the greatest silence in Congo,” about abuse—especially sexual violence against women. She remembers one high school friend who was raped as a teenager. “No one wanted to talk about it,” Thontwa recalls. “People would say, ‘Don’t talk with her because she was raped.’”

Women, she notes, are often blamed for being raped. Because of the stigma, she explains, “You know to keep your mouth shut because you don’t want to be an outcast.”

A lot of people think the violence is the result of tradition, but Thontwa believes the misinterpretation of Scripture is also responsible. “(Men) will give you quotes from the Bible,” she says—specifically passages highlighting how women were killed for committing adultery. “The church has a lot to learn,” Thontwa adds.

Thontwa also is looking at the possibility of opening a shelter for women for whom the ability to have economic independence is vital to improving quality of life. To that end, she wants to start a nonprofit that incorporates microfinance.

She gleaned valuable experience for these aspirations during a recent internship at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. Thontwa worked with donors to the organization, developing communication strategies as well as initiating new relationships.
between the Council, colleges, and universities. She was the only intern from a non-Ivy League school to participate.

“I expect great things for her,” says Thontwa’s supervisor, John Macha.

Although she could excel at a number of professions in the United States, Thontwa remains focused on her goal.

“I want to inspire girls in my country and stand by them as they struggle to find their own voice.”

**Dan Johnson C’2009**  
Vision: Serve “the least of these”

After the first time Dan Johnson traveled with fellow students to help homeless people as part of the North Park’s Friday Night Homeless Ministry, he decided he wasn’t going back.

“I really didn’t like it,” he says. “I don’t know what I was expecting, but I stopped going.”

The uncertainty of the situation made him uneasy. “You’re putting yourself in an environment where anything can happen,” he explains. “I was scared to talk with people.”

He stayed away for several weeks but others encouraged him to try one more time before Thanksgiving. That turned to one more Friday and then another Friday and then another. Since then, the 22-year-old hasn’t missed a Friday. For the last two years, he has led the ministry.

Each week, students serve the people who live under bridges and have “their own little community” on Lower Wacker Avenue. The students provide food, clothes, and blankets. They also develop relationships to meet social and spiritual needs.

Johnson, a native of Ashland, Mass., had wanted to attend a school in an urban environment. After discovering North Park’s University Ministries department, which oversees the homeless ministry, he was sold. “It was one of the things that drew me to North Park,” he says.

Johnson no longer serves a group called “the homeless,” but ministers to individuals who are homeless. Relationships develop over time. Each week, one of the men asks a volunteer about how she is doing in school.

The ministry has changed the way Johnson relates to others and not just those to whom he ministers. “It has shown me I can’t put myself in other people’s shoes,” he explains. “I have to be respectful and try to understand. Everyone has a story.”

Johnson, an art education major who hopes to teach in a public school, has also grown more comfortable in leadership over the last two years. In the beginning, “I got nervous a lot,” he says. “I was afraid something was going to happen and it was going to be my fault.”

Although he isn’t sure whether he will continue in some form of homeless ministry after he graduates this spring, or whether another opportunity will come his way, he isn’t anxious about the future.

“I’ve learned to trust God,” he says. “I’m much more at peace.”
The Torch Still Burns

Alumni of North Park Academy, the high school once housed on the North Park University campus, still carry a flame for their alma mater. Forty years after the school's final commencement, they reunite to celebrate its legacy.
“North Park is not merely a building called Old Main. It is a spirit that will live on forever in the hearts of many. . . .”

Alumni of North Park Academy, one of Chicago’s premier high schools from the 1940s through the ’60s, may remember these parting words inscribed in The Torch yearbook by the Academy’s last graduating class in 1969.

But that’s certainly not all they remember. Homecoming floats and bonfires, Sadie Hawkins Day, Key Club, honor societies, debate, and the Varsity Singers, not to mention Chapel, sports competitions, and Junior-Senior banquets are among countless traditions that would make any Academy alum chuckle with nostalgia.

For the first time since 1994, the Academy classes reconvened for an All-Academy Reunion from April 17-19 on the campus of North Park University. It is where the high school was housed since its official opening, which coincided with the dedication of Old Main in 1894.

Originally a three-year institution, the Academy grew over time and transitioned to a four-year high school by 1910. Drawing students from Chicago and across the United States, it shared a campus with North Park Junior College (which later evolved into North Park College and Theological Seminary, and was subsequently renamed North Park University).

By World War II, Academy enrollment had reached 400 students, and in the decades to follow the school continued offering a rich curriculum to increasing numbers. In fact, many of its alumni returned to North Park to complete their undergraduate studies.

Since those early years, and until the closing of the Academy in 1969, thousands of students came to see Old Main as a home—full of happy experiences and friendships that characterized school life.

The following pages reveal the lasting impact of the Academy on its graduates, and the resulting influence many of these alumni have had on North Park University.

by Rick Yngve C’97

(Photos courtesy of Covenant Archives and Historical Library, North Park University, Chicago, Ill.)
Herbert Hedstrom A’58 S’67

**HOME:** Elgin, Ill.

**FAMILY:** Married to Louise (Westberg) A’58 C’63, with three children (Elizabeth, Mark, and Matthew) and four grandchildren

**HOBBIES:** Reading, woodworking, gardening, fishing, “goofing off”

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** “None! I am retired after 39 years as a pastor. For those who have not yet tried it, I recommend retirement.”

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** “Realizing, after it was too late to do anything else, that there was really nothing else I would rather do.”

**IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY:** “I learned how to write, I had good friends, I was prepared for what was next.”

**FONDEST MEMORY OF THE ACADEMY:** “Meeting Herb, a moonlight cruise on the Chicago River, basketball games.”

**MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER:** “Arne Bolin (religion), Vernoy Johnson (math), and Betty Nelson C’44 (speech), because they were simply very good and devoted teachers.”

Louise (Westberg) Hedstrom A’58 C’63

**HOME:** Elgin, Ill.

**FAMILY:** Married to Herbert A’58 S’67

**HOBBIES:** Various kinds of needlework, reading, visiting children and grandchildren, occasional travels

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Retired after teaching at North Park University in the School of Nursing for 30 years

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** “Being involved in the beginning of the program, teaching the first class of nursing students, and still being there more than two decades later when offspring of the early classes started enrolling!”

**IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY:** “I came from Congo my senior year and found I could fit in. I made some lifelong friends.”

**FONDEST MEMORY OF THE ACADEMY:** “Meeting Herb, a moonlight cruise on the Chicago River, basketball games.”

**MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER:** “I think of Evelyn (Ramgren) Swanson because of her sense of humor, of Ray Vann because of how much he loved chemistry, and of Betty Nelson C’44 because she helped those of us who were reluctant to speak in public to do so more comfortably.”

Becky Nelson A’68 C’72

**HOME:** Libertyville, Ill.

**FAMILY:** Married to Craig Lindley C’71, with one daughter, Erika

**HOBBIES:** Music—singing for the Chicago Symphony Chorus and church choirs

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Dean of the School of Education at North Park University

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Served as superintendent of School District 69 of Skokie/Morton Grove; and as principal of Green Briar High School in Northbrook, Ill., and Markham Park High School in Markham Park, Ill.

**IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY:** “The Academy shaped the direction of my life. Teachers were models of effective educators and they were the reason why I chose my career.”

**MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER:** “Vernoy Johnson taught math and that teachers care for students. Greg Athnos arrived and brought a blend of excitement and service through the Varsity Singers. That experience launched me into the music side of my life.”
Betty Nelson C’44, Academy faculty

**HOME:** Chicago, Ill.

**HOBBIES:** “During my retirement I’ve enjoyed traveling to the Congo and to the South Pacific on a freighter trip. I also speak at women’s retreats and Elderhostels, and volunteer at North Park Covenant Church.”

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** Taught speech and communications at North Park Academy, College, and Seminary for 42 years

**IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY:** “It was a Christian family—the faculty were involved with each other’s lives and worked together to find solutions. We all got involved with chapel, athletics, and music.”

**FONDEST MEMORY:** “As assistant principal, I had to write recommendations and prepare transcripts. Ninety-five percent of our students went on to college so it gave me the chance to see students reveal themselves and their dreams. I also directed senior class plays for 10 years and I really got to know students through the extensive work.”

**MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER:** “Being on faculty was a rich experience with so many prize student experiences and electric moments. Our reward was to hear what students were able to do in their transition to college and careers.”

Bruce Bickner A’61

**HOME:** Travels between Sycamore, Ill., Conover, Wis., and La Quinta, Cal.

**FAMILY:** Married to Joan (Johnson) C’65 with three children (Kevin, Brian, and Julie) and four grandchildren

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Independent consultant and member of the North Park University Board of Trustees

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** “In 2002 I retired as executive vice president of Monsanto Company, a position I assumed after serving as chairman of DEKALB Genetics Corp. since 1988. Prior to entering business management, I was a partner in the Chicago office of Sidley and Austin and served as a captain in the United States Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps. I continue to serve on a number of company boards including North Park University.”

**IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY:** “I wasn’t an ‘A’ student back in school, but the quality of the Academy education wasn’t reflected by my grades. The Academy instilled values like honesty. . . . Academy students learned how to be thoughtful and kind to others.”

**MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER:** “Coach Ted Hedstrand A’39 C’41 was a disciplinarian who taught that to be good you need to put in the effort. Norma (Gibbs) Brandel C’45 taught biology and was a great, encouraging teacher. We looked forward to class because she made us want to learn.”

Dirk Willms A’53

**HOME:** Flat Rock, N.C.

**FAMILY:** Married to Paige with two children (Dirk and Karen) and five grandchildren

**HOBBIES:** “Golf, hiking, and traveling, including two ‘round the world cruises hitting 35 ports each trip.”

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:** “After college, I served in the Navy for four years. After that I returned to Chicago to work as an investment analyst and portfolio manager for Harris Trust & Savings, Stein Roe & Farnham, and Firstar Corporation. I became chief investment officer at Michigan National Investment Corp. before returning to First National Bank of Chicago. From 1989 until I retired, I worked for Brinson Partners and even got to live in Switzerland while working with Swiss Bank.”

**IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY:** “I wasn’t an ‘A’ student back in school, but the quality of the Academy education wasn’t reflected by my grades. The Academy instilled values like honesty. . . . Academy students learned how to be thoughtful and kind to others.”

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Rich Fattes A’64 C’69

HOME: Evanston, Ill.

HOBBIES: Golf, collecting music, and attending concerts

CURRENT OCCUPATION: Retired, but working part-time as director of School District 65’s Ron Risch Invitational Track Meet, serving as football and basketball scorer in Evanston School District 202, and volunteering with the Diamond Club

FONDEST MEMORY OF THE ACADEMY: “Winning the Private School League football championship under head coach Dan McCarrell C’61 and assistants Jim Matson A’56 C’60 and Mike Young C’64, and winning the Walther Invitational Tournament in basketball under Ted Hedstrand A’39 C’41 that same year. But my strongest memory is from fall 1963. Ron Magnuson C’52 S’58 announced in religion class that Kennedy had been assassinated. He was marvelous in leading discussion and allowing us to express our feelings. I’ll never forget that day.”

MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER: “Dan McCarrell. He is the best coach—a master motivator, teacher and great person. Dan is the reason why I chose teaching and coaching as my profession. He set the bar high but always let you know that you were going to be successful.”

Ed Fattes A’59 C’64

HOME: Lake in the Hills, Ill., and Florence, Wis.

FAMILY: Married to Donna C’67 with two children (Edwin and Debra) and four grandchildren

HOBBIES: “I enjoy spending time with the grandchildren. I also enjoy travel, boating, and golf.”

CURRENT OCCUPATION: Retired after being president and CEO of Trustmark Insurance and chairman of Coresource

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: “After being in the U.S. Navy, I worked for Trustmark Insurance for 36 years. I also served on multiple boards within Lake County and the insurance industry. For North Park, I’ve served on the Corporate Foundation Board and the advisory board of the School of Business and Nonprofit Management, and am a member of the Diamond Club.”

FONDEST MEMORY OF THE ACADEMY: “I played baseball all four years at the Academy. For two consecutive years, we won the conference championship.”

Jim Hawkinson A’47 C’49 S’55

HOME: White Bear Lake, Minn.

FAMILY: Married to Alyce (Larson) C’53 with five children (Peter S’92, Paul C’92, Judy C’77, Mary C’83 and Eric)

HOBBIES: reading, writing, speaking, and blogging (www.rootedwings.com)

CURRENT OCCUPATION: Retired in 1994, but serving part-time as the visitation pastor at Salem Covenant Church

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: “I began as pastor for churches on the south side of Chicago and in California. I also served for 28 years as editor-in-chief of Covenant Publications in 1966 and then executive secretary of publications in 1970. After retiring, I worked on the Covenant hymnal, served five churches as interim pastor, and compiled the book Gladhearts: Voices from the Literature of the Covenant Church.”

FONDEST MEMORY OF THE ACADEMY: “The connections at the Academy created a spirit that seemed like home, and the alumni have gone on to do marvelous things.”

MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER: “I remember Viola Lindberg in math, Ray Vann in chemistry, and Betty Nelson C’44 in speech. Ted Hedstrand A’39 C’41 and Bib Sanderson were coaches that made a difference. Clifford Turin was my first voice coach and sang in chapel.”
Donn Engebretson A’69 C’73 S’78

HOME: Deerfield, Ill.

FAMILY: Married to Sally with two children (Kristen C’2008 and Karl C’2010)

HOBBIES: “Enjoying the outdoors”

CURRENT OCCUPATION: Executive Vice President of the Evangelical Covenant Church

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: “I was a pastor for 20 years. In 1998, I became executive minister of ordained ministry for the Evangelical Covenant Church until 2001, when I stepped into the executive vice president role.”

IMPACT OF THE ACADEMY: “Teachers and the academic community have a tremendous impact on the trajectory of our lives. I’m very grateful for my years at the Academy.”

FONDEST MEMORY OF THE ACADEMY: “I played basketball and ran cross-country. It was a wonderful group of students to be around.”

MOST INFLUENTIAL ACADEMY FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER: “Ted Hedstrand A’39 C’41 was a caring coach that poured his life into his teams. Ron Magnuson C’52 S’58 challenged us in our faith but allowed us to ask tough questions. Don Olson was deeply committed to the students and was a caring presence on campus. Sandra Witt opened our minds and hearts in great writing. She set a trajectory for my whole life.”

The Douglass family has its own Academy legacy. After Ruth Nehlsen A’33 married W. Bernard Douglass, they lived near campus operating the Warner Candy Company. Because of Bernard’s dedication to hiring Academy students, he was named an honorary alumnus. Ruth was a lifelong music advocate and athletics fan.

From 1954 to 1969, all six Douglass children were enrolled at the Academy, and four of their spouses are also alumni. Today, son John A’64 serves on the Board of Trustees and others volunteer for class reunions. Many of the 17 grandchildren, including James Sandstrom C’89, are regular supporters. The following are some of the family’s reflections. Read their full profiles at www.northpark.edu/academy.

“Because the school mirrored Christian teachings and unconditional love, it became the model of moral imperatives in my home. North Park combined the finest education with the power of committed, affirming teachers.” —Susan (Douglass) Sandstrom A’58 C’62

“The Academy made an incredible impact, and provided an excellent education. Teachers provided motivation and support at a critical age. Fantastic coaches taught discipline pays off while Pastor Magnuson integrated faith and learning.” —John Douglass A’64

“The faculty was distinguished by their knowledge, care, and Christian character. Through this rigorous yet supportive faith-based education, I came to value service to others.” —Bob Douglass A’68

“I am the teacher I am today because the faculty demonstrated that teaching is not just about the subject material but about caring.” —Terri (Stenberg) Douglass A’68

“The Academy put me on the right path for success in college and my career. Classes were challenging with dedicated teachers like Miss Leach for Latin and Mr. Johnson in biology.” —Dan Douglass A’70

“Those were the days. Being young, I thought everybody had this wonderful life within a warm, sharing environment.” —David Douglass A’70

“Until Ron Magnuson sat down during my organ lesson, I knew nothing of the Academy. He promised I would play weekly at chapel—which I did for eight years.” —Sue (Limper) Douglass A’69 C’73
No president used the Bible better than Abraham Lincoln, and never did he use it so well as in his Second Inaugural Address. At the end of a fratricidal war, he appealed to “the providence of God” to reconcile his fellow citizens first to the terrible losses they had suffered, and then to each other, the authors of those losses.

He could have appealed to reason. The injustice of slavery, an injustice in which both sides participated, caused the war—"charity for all" and "malice toward none" was rationally the nation’s best hope for recovery. But Lincoln appealed not to reason but to “the judgments of the Lord” because he understood the power of faith. "You are the salt of the earth," Jesus told those drawn to him by a "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Matthew 5:13). It is to these people that Lincoln wisely turned in the nation’s hour of need.

Markets, when policed to prevent fraud and structured so that no one enjoys any advantage that does not derive from productive capacity, are institutions that contribute powerfully to a society’s benefit. If that society embraced the world, then such a market would benefit all humankind. In the middle of the last century, following World War II, the United States, as the most powerful of the victorious nations, took the lead in constructing such a market. At that time, we enjoyed a relative advantage in productive capacity that resulted in enormous wealth. With the passage of time, two things happened: we came to take that wealth for granted (as if it were a birthright, not something earned); and as more nations entered the world market we constructed, we became relatively less competitive. The result is the crisis in which we now find ourselves, a product of complacency and self-deception. And not just the economy but every sector of society seems infected: we tell each other what we know to be untrue, we substitute words where only substance will do, and we seek personal gain at society’s expense forgetting that we are society. The solution is the sober resolve to be honest in every aspect of our lives.

In this crisis the community of believers must be the salt that savors the whole. As people of faith, our treasure is not of this world. We labor in our vocations because of God's call—not because of reward. Honesty is not policy but the aim, and when believers pursue it as such, others may at least practice it for policy’s sake. And in this way, like Kierkegaard’s knight of faith, we will find the good of the world we forsake restored to us in full measure.

Joseph Alulis earned his Ph.D. in political science at the University of Chicago. He has been at North Park University since 1996, having held prior appointments at Loyola University Chicago and Lake Forest College. He has edited two books, on Tocqueville and Shakespeare, and published essays on both of these thinkers as well as Lincoln and the filmmaker, Whit Stillman. He is currently at work on an essay on Dostoevsky’s "Grand Inquisitor."
Ask David C’84 & Maria (Varalli) Otfinoski C’84 why they appreciate their North Park experience, and the answer may not be very surprising. Like many of their fellow alumni, the Otfinoskis agree that the community, family, and rich inheritance of faith that North Park provided were just as influential as the education they received.

While Dave studied history and Maria, English, both say they learned lessons that extended far beyond the walls of the classroom, challenging them to develop their moral and ethical compasses and become independent critical thinkers.

“The environment on campus was a breath of fresh air,” recalls Maria, who was struck by the depth of faith she found in her classmates. Even though she came to North Park as a transfer student and didn’t know anyone, she immediately felt at home and jumped headfirst into student life. Dave, too, took advantage of a variety of service opportunities as a student, from adopt-a-grandparent to tutoring. These experiences, he says, were central to his faith and career development.

After completing his undergraduate degree, Dave spent two years studying at North Park Theological Seminary until he felt called to pursue an M.B.A. and a career in business. This led him to start his own network of medical education and communication agencies, MedKnowledge Group.

Maria, who went on to receive her master’s in education, spent several years teaching junior high and high school English, and now enjoys teaching English as a second language to adults. She is also actively involved in a puppet ministry, Puppetunes, which serves churches, schools, and libraries.

The Otfinoskis currently reside in Chester, Conn., with their two children, Ben and Annie. They continue to volunteer with Covenant ministries including Pilgrim Pines, their local Covenant church, and several other social service agencies, and are grateful for the family of faith that they found at North Park through the Evangelical Covenant Church.

They are quick to express their gratitude for North Park, which allowed them the freedom to grow in their faith and grapple with life’s tough questions. Today, they give generously to their alma mater so that future students will have an equally rich experience. They also credit North Park with helping instill a desire to support organizations that serve a world in need. Both say they have faith in North Park’s future as it prepares students to contribute to society in meaningful ways.

“We are confident that North Park is uniquely positioned to create the leaders of tomorrow in a way that is consistent with the gospel,” Dave and Maria explain. “We give because we are part of North Park’s history, and we give because we want to be part of North Park’s future.”
1950s

Ted Sares A'55 published the book *Reelin’ in the Years: Boxing and More*. After retiring from the business world, Sares became a member of the International Boxing Research Organization (IBRO) and Ring Four Boston-Veteran Boxers Association International. He specializes in articles that capture the pathos and ambivalence of the sport. Sares lives with his wife Holly in northern New Hampshire.

1960s

Dallas K. Larson A'60 C'64 has retired after a 42-year career as president and CEO of seven different hospitals, including two in Chicago. He was named a Life Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives—the highest level of his profession. In his retirement, Larson currently holds four board positions, two of which are chairs. He is also the father of the late Reed G. Larson C’2002.

1970s

Randall K. Thomas C'71 received his doctorate in educational psychology in 2008 from Northern Arizona University. Thomas has worked for the Scottsdale Unified School District for 33 years, 19 of which he has served as a psychologist with students who suffer from low-incident disabilities. On October 23, 2003, he received the Exemplar Award from the Scottsdale Mayor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. His wife, Sally (Liljegren) C’71, also works in special education as a resource teacher.

Charles and Leslie (Nelson) Thorpe C’79, along with Arvid A’53 C’55 S’62, and Karen (Akerlund) Adell C’61 enjoyed the camel races in Qatar, an Arab emirate. Charles is the dean of Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar and a former North Park board member. Arvid, a retired professor of philosophy at Milliken University, was a visiting professor at Carnegie Mellon in Qatar last fall.

1980s

Bonnie (Bladel) Sparrman C’82 C’86 wrote *Meditations for Mom: Simple Reflections on Faith, Grace, and Motherhood* (2009). The collection of stories communicates the real-life experiences of a mom integrating her faith with the daily challenges of mothering.

Jeff Saville S’87 is a commander in the United States Navy Chaplain Corps and was recently assigned to serve as fleet chaplain for the U.S. Third Fleet in San Diego. He supervises ship-based chaplains operating along the West Coast outward to the International Date Line. He also recently received a doctor of ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary. His wife Rebecca (Cravens) Saville C’87 is a stay-at-home mother to their three children, Brianna (13), Kaylee (10), and Quinn (5).

Carol Manley C’88 won the Rudy Pickens Tartt Award Competition from Livingston Press at the University of West Alabama. Her short story collection *Church Booty* has just been included in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch*’s list of “Best Books of 2008: Fiction.”

1990s

Gary Noble C’93 and his wife, Jenna, welcomed Elijah Cash on November 28, 2008. He joins sisters Maja (7), Georgia (5), and Reagan (2).
Jennifer (Swanson) C’95 and Magnus Hillbo C’97 welcomed their second daughter, Signe-Linnea, on May 21, 2008. Jennifer completed her doctorate in human learning and psychological development in May 2008, and Magnus is attending North Park Theological Seminary to become a chaplain. Their older daughter, Emma, is in second grade and studies piano, violin, and karate.

Deborah Gambs C’96 graduated from the Graduate Center at the City University of New York (CUNY) with a Ph.D. in sociology in May 2008. She now teaches sociology full time in the social science department at the Borough of Manhattan Community College–CUNY.

Chiara (Jasinski) Hemsley C’99 and her husband, James, welcomed Norah Claire Hemsley on May 31, 2007. The family currently resides in Iowa City, Iowa. Chiara works as an assistant in instruction for biology at the University of Iowa. James is in marketing at ACT, Inc.

Peter C’99 and Liz (Mosbo) VerHage C’99 S’2002 G’2002 welcomed Eva Margaret VerHage on March 25, 2008. Liz is a Ph.D. candidate at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and an adjunct professor at North Park University. Peter is a systems analyst at North Park and a computer consultant.

Colin Kihnke C’93 is making a name for himself in the world of Chicago real estate. The president of CMK Development Corp. was recently named to Crain’s Chicago Business’ “40 under 40” list of up-and-coming individuals in their 20s and 30s.

In October 2007, Kihnke launched the biggest condominium project of his career—a 714-unit tower now in construction in the South Loop. Scheduled to be completed this year, the 48-story building is the biggest downtown condo project since the mid-1970s.

Since establishing his own development firm at age 24, Kihnke has developed a reputation for “offering good-looking design at a great price point,” Crain’s reports. He learned the real estate business on his own, rehabbing his first house in the Ravenswood community. Today, he works with a staff of 22—including Scott Hoskins, president and managing broker of the firm, whom Kinkhe met when both were undergraduates at North Park.

CMK targets the low end of the market with condos in the $200,000–$400,000 range. Now Kihnke is also working on a 2,500-acre resort development in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

“I’m having the time of my life,” he tells Crain’s. “There are so many components that are moving at the same time, and I love the energy that’s created in this industry.”

Kihnke is the second North Park graduate to be featured in Crain’s “40 Under 40.” In 1995 Claudia (Sena) Freed C’85 was among the honorees.

Katie (O’Connor) Isaza C’2000 and her husband, Julio, welcomed Samuel Andres on December 11, 2007.

2000s

Katie (O’Connor) Isaza C’2000
Mary Maryland GC’2000 has been elected president of the Illinois Division of the American Cancer Society for a two-year term. This is the highest medical and scientific volunteer office in Illinois. Maryland will direct strategies on research, education, advocacy, and patient service, as well as serve as the Society’s chief spokesperson on all medical and scientific matters. She has played key roles in many public health policy initiatives in Illinois, including the Smoke-Free Illinois Act and the promotion of cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment. In addition, Maryland has served the American Cancer Society for more than 20 years, and has been a registered nurse for more than 30.

Andrew Beckstrom C’2001 and his wife, Erika, welcomed Annika Ariño on June 12, 2008 in Seattle.


John Lommel C’2002 began work as the academic vice president at Alaska Christian College on December 29, 2008, serving native Alaskan students. He is married to Kristen (Kaiser) C’2001, and their daughter, Lydia, loves the Alaskan moose.


Nathan and Amy (Wojtanowicz) Windt C’2002 are expecting their second child, who will join four-year-old son, Ethan Lleyton. Nathan taught elementary and middle school music for a year in the Chicago area, and then moved to Cincinnati to pursue graduate studies in music. He completed his doctorate last summer and is now assistant professor of music and director of choral activities at Tennessee Wesleyan College.
Emily (Manning) C’2005 was married to Frederick Betcher III on August 30, 2008, at Kalamazoo First Assembly of God in Kalamazoo, Mich. North Parkers in the wedding party included Emily (Nelson) Peterson C’2005, Megan Gilmore C’2005, and Megan (Houglum) Topping C’2005. Carissa Esmon C’2005 also assisted. Emily taught art for three years at Parchment High School, until the couple relocated this fall to Troy, Mich., where Fred is now the youth pastor at Troy Assembly of God.

Emily (Nelson) C’2005 was married to Bryan Peterson on October 18, 2008, at Roseville Covenant Church in Roseville, Minn. Emily (Manning) Betcher C’2005 was in the wedding party, and Jared Lucht C’2010 and Benjamin Fullen C’2010 ushered for the ceremony. The couple now resides in St. Francis, Minn. Emily is in her fourth year of teaching seventh grade English and Bryan works as a mechanical engineer.

While he studied communication arts and theater performance at North Park, Guy Cooper C’2008 says he has always been interested in politics. So when the recent grad was offered an internship at Senator John McCain’s presidential campaign headquarters in Arlington, Va., last August—as Alaska Governor Sarah Palin might say—he “didn’t blink.”

“I knew this was a historical election,” says Cooper, who received word about the internship position via email and quickly applied. “I figured, ‘what better election could I be a part of?’”

While he doesn’t deny receiving his fair share of photocopying duties and coffee-run responsibilities, Cooper notes his role also included networking with leaders of evangelical and Catholic churches from around the country. He was well suited to the task, having volunteered for other faith-based outreach efforts in the past.

“It was a challenge and a joy all at the same time... I saw everything as a learning experience.” —Guy Cooper C’2008

And what was the most exciting part of it all?

“Meeting Senator McCain and Governor Palin,” Cooper says unequivocally. “The first time I met him I was caught off guard. I didn’t realize he had walked into the room until everyone started applauding. All of a sudden there he was, right behind me—Starbucks coffee in hand, waving at everybody.”

Cooper’s introduction to the vice presidential candidate was just as memorable, although he says he was literally at a loss for words when the governor shook his hand. “She’s a very sweet lady and down-to-earth,” he describes.

Other unforgettable moments included meeting former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney, and Rick Heil, the leader singer of the Christian band, Sonicflood, while attending political conventions in the nation’s capital.

Now back home in Middletown, Del., (where his parents moved three years ago), Cooper is becoming more heavily involved with ministries and small groups at his church and enjoying establishing roots in his new community.

“I think that’s the best way to learn about yourself and what your gifts are,” he says, noting he’s still trying to determine his “dream job.”

“I’m just growing in faith, growing as a Christian, meeting a lot of people, and learning where God is taking me... Although it may sound cliché, I just want to use my gifts and talents to make an impact in whatever I do.”

Who knows? Perhaps one day it could be politics.
Obituaries

Paul Westburg S’34, a retired Evangelical Covenant Church pastor, died on October 13, 2008. He was preceded in death by his wife, Alice (Johnson). Westburg served churches throughout the country and even after retirement continued his work as a visitation pastor at First Covenant Church in Lincoln, Ill. He also previously served as a chaplain at Covenant Palms, a retirement community in Miami.

Rev. John M. Sergy C’38 died on December 29, 2008, at the age of 91. He participated in “Words of Hope,” a worldwide religious radio program with airwaves reaching the former Soviet Union. In 1950, he became the general director of the World Fellowship of Slavic Evangelical Christians, a position he held until his death.

Ruth Nelson C’44 died on December 13, 2008, at the age of 91. She served as a missionary for 15 years, as well as a teacher at North Park Academy and Luther North High School in Chicago. Nelson later worked as the administrative assistant to the vice president for business affairs at North Park College.

Hans Roald Amundsen S’45 died on December 2, 2008. He helped lead the expansion of the Evangelical Covenant Church’s work in Alaska since 1945, and began serving the denomination, thereafter being called by the Department of World Mission to Nome.

David Ryburn Hampton A’47, a retired colonel of the U.S. Army, died on February 14, 2008. Born in Chicago, Hampton spent 30 years in the army, and later became the personnel director at Davidson College. He also served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher at Hopewell Baptist Church.

Phillip Danielson C’48 S’51 died on December 13, 2008, at the age of 89. He was a member of the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, and was ordained in 1953. Danielson served in churches in Chicago; Buffalo, N.Y.; Kingsburg, Calif.; Omaha, Neb.; and St. Petersburg, Fla. He also spent five years as a chaplain at Covenant Village of Turlock in California.

Clifford H. Johnson C’52 S’60, a retired Evangelical Covenant Church pastor, died on November 21, 2008, at the age of 75. He served as a pastor of Covenant churches in Rumford, R.I.; Worcester, Mass.; New York; and Rockford, Ill. Johnson was also a chaplain in the U.S. Army reserves for 22 years, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel.


Paul Mars C’57 died of cancer on December 7, 2008, at the age of 70. He taught at North Park College in the education department in the 1970s, but his teaching career included positions at the Omaha public schools; Pershing College in Beatrice, Neb.; Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, Iowa; and Peru State College in Peru, Neb. He was married to Charlotte (Easterling) C’58, who survives.

Thaddeus S. “Ted” Lechowicz C’60 died on January 5, 2009. Lechowicz served in the Illinois House of Representatives and Illinois State Senate, and on the Cook County Board of Commissioners. He was also the Democratic committeeman of Chicago’s 30th ward for more than 25 years.

Paul “PJ” Larson C’33 died on January 10, 2009, at the age of 95. He worked at North Park College from 1940–1976. A professor of English, Larson was also advisor of The Cupola, the college news, and the literary publication Pegasus.

“He was an exuberant teacher and a stickler for the proper use of English language,” recalls former student Joanne (Young) Soderstrom C’65. “He was always interested in people and knowing more about them.”

Larson spent several years as the director of the summer and evening school, and was serving as associate dean of the college at his retirement. His wife, Gladys, who also taught at North Park for 35 years, survives. Together the couple financed the Paul and Gladys Larson Woodlands, a 180-acre nature preserve near Peoria, Ill.
Bruce Edwin Elmer A’62 died on October 26, 2008, after a nine-week battle with cancer. He was vice president of Gustafson-Lindberg Co. until 2001, and most recently worked for SelectBuild of Hanover Park, Ill.

Friends of the University

Ariel Choynicki, a 12-year employee of ARAMARK, died in February 2009. Known by many as “the Angel of ARA,” Choynicki was hired in the spring of 1996 as a full-time cashier.

Anita Hillin passed away in December 2008 at the age of 54, after a long battle with cancer. Hillin taught in the School of Business and Nonprofit Management for the past two years, prior to which she served as the director of development at the Roycemore School in Evanston and worked at Northwestern University.

Dorothy Gaumont, the grandmother of Ian Barbo C’2007, has been creating original oil paintings since she was a young girl. In honor of his graduation, she wanted to present her grandson with a special gift—an oil painting that would commemorate his accomplishment at North Park University. Her inspiration was a picture postcard of Old Main that Ian had sent her. She presented the finished painting to him on his graduation day in May 2007 on the steps of Old Main.


For more information, please contact Sue Gost, Director of University Events, at (773) 244-6262, or sgost@northpark.edu.

Space is limited; early registration is encouraged.

www.northpark.edu/golf
Pictures are worth a thousand memories.

Orders can be placed through the North Park University bookstore. Please visit www.northpark.edu/bookstore, or call (773) 244-4570.
Homecoming 2009: September 26–October 4

Join fellow alumni, students, families, and friends as we celebrate the Chicago city development plan created in 1909 by Daniel Burnham. As we revisit the plan for Chicago, we will also look back at the big plans that transformed North Park University over the last 118 years. Events will include a bus tour of Burnham’s Chicago, athletic events, theater and music performances, nightly speakers, the Reunion Breakfast, the Block Party, and much more.

For more information, contact the Alumni Office at (773) 244-5273, alumni@northpark.edu, or visit www.northpark.edu/alumni.