



**VALLEY CITY**  
**STATE UNIVERSITY**

# HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2023

DR. ALAN LAFAVE, PRESIDENT

## **Testimony to the House Appropriations Committee**

**January 11, 2023**

Chair Nathe and members of the committee;  
I am Dr. Alan LaFave, and I'm proud to be  
President of Valley City State University.

Thank you for the opportunity to present today.



## Mission

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Valley City State University is a public, regional university offering exceptional programs in an active, learner-centered community that promotes meaningful scholarship, ethical service, and the skilled use of technology.

As an important knowledge resource, the university offers programs and outreach that enrich the quality of life in North Dakota and beyond.

Through flexible, accessible, and innovative baccalaureate and master's programs, VCSU prepares students to succeed as educators, leaders, and engaged citizens in an increasingly complex and diverse society.



### **The Mission of Valley City State University**

Our mission is three-pronged.

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As an important knowledge resource, the university offers programs and outreach that enrich the quality of life in North Dakota and beyond.

Through flexible, accessible, and innovative baccalaureate and master's programs, VCSU prepares students to succeed as educators, leaders, and engaged citizens in an increasingly complex and diverse society.

Our entire team takes this mission very seriously. Our team includes 196 full-time faculty and staff. We have an average of 10.4 years of service across the campus.

I am incredibly proud of the team we have at VCSU. They are dedicated and student focused. You can see the fruits of their labor in our numerous accolades and student satisfaction survey data.

# 133 years of quality educational experiences

- 65 Undergraduate programs and three Graduate degrees
- 11:1 student-to-faculty ratio
- Ranked "Best Colleges" for 25 consecutive years by U.S. News
- "Most Beautiful Campus in North Dakota" by Buzzfeed
- National Register of Historic Places
- Capital campaign underway



## The Work of Valley City State University

VCSU was founded in 1890 as a normal school. We have been known as one of the best teacher preparation schools in the country for more than 100 years.

In addition to our teacher education programs, VCSU has a wide-variety of other programs. From Business to History, Computer Science, Software Engineering, Arts, Communications, Strength and Conditioning, Spanish and Music, we have 65 programs for students to choose from.

VCSU also offers multiple graduate degree options for teaching, and a Master of Science degree in Business Information Systems.

VCSU enhances the learning experience for our students by providing every full-time, on-campus students with their own laptop, and classrooms equipped with the latest educational tools.

Our faculty to student ratio is 11 to 1, offering a very personalized learning experience to help students succeed. Graduates and current students point to this as a highlight of their experience, the close and meaningful relationships they create with faculty and staff.

Our 55-acre campus was listed in 2017 by BuzzFeed as the "most beautiful college campus in North Dakota. To our south is a forested hillside and on the north, the beautiful Sheyenne

River. The campus is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District.

Finally, in 2020 we officially launched the Forward Together Capital Campaign. It is the first-ever capital campaign for VCSU and the effort is working on raising \$25 million.

## Our Vision

As an innovative university, we deliver distinctive, learner-centered experiences.

## What Drives Us?

- Student-centered environment
- High-quality, career-ready experience
- Dedicated faculty and staff
- Supportive alumni and community
- Innovative attitude
- The need for continued investment in our people and historic infrastructure



### Our Driving Forces – We All Row

VCSU has a very clear vision.

As an innovative university, we deliver distinctive, learner-centered experiences.


We strive to make our campus, and all learning environments, focused on student success.

We focus on ensuring every educational experience is of the highest-quality and helps graduates become career ready. This is only possible through the dedication of our high-quality staff and faculty. Faculty and staff help students make multiple connections with the real world, and future employers.

Our success is also a result of a very supportive alumni base. We are incredibly lucky to have so many engaged and committed alumni who support current students through scholarships, internship locations and being brand ambassadors for the university.

We have always been an innovative campus. From our early days of incorporating a lab school for teacher preparation to being the first in North Dakota to have laptop computers for every student, we strive to stay on the cutting edge.

In fact, we were second in the nation in providing laptops for our students.



# Key Takeaways

- We support the NDUS needs-based budget request
  - 6:4 salary request addresses a critical need
- Two critical ways to support students this session
  - McCarthy School of Education project
  - Behavioral Health Initiative
- Challenge Grant success provided \$11.7 million for scholarship support

## Key Takeaways

I would like to thank you for your past and ongoing support of our institution. We appreciate the care and effort you put into helping our state run efficiently.

Today we are going to focus on a few key components. I'll provide an overview of our university and some of the most important data points.

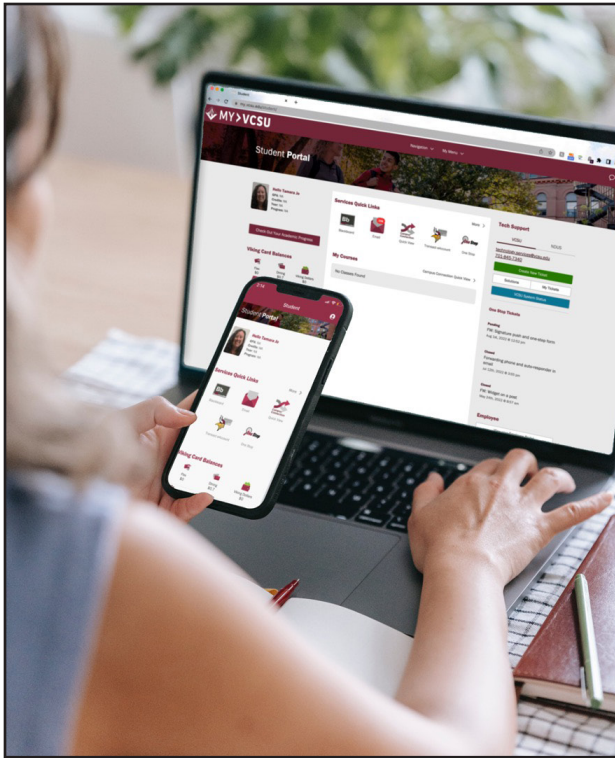
I'd like to start with some of the most important take away pieces.

First, VCSU firmly supports the NDUS needs-based budget request. We have been working hand-in-hand with the system office to ensure the most critical items facing our campus. We are in support of the 6 and 4 salary request, recommended by the executive budget, to ensure we can retain high-quality faculty and staff on our campus.

In addition to investing in our team, we support the investment in scholarship support for our students. There is a clear link between scholarship support and enrollment. Your continued support for the Challenge Grant, and the substantial support from our donors, has made this one of the most important programs on our campus. Since the inception of the Challenge Grant, VCSU has raised \$8 million which qualified for a match from this

body of \$3.75 million. In total, there has been \$11.7 million raised and matched scholarships through the Challenge Grant.

Finally, VCSU has two specific priorities I will mention. We are working to provide a high-quality environment for our School of Education and hope to renovate an existing historic building, McCarthy Hall, to this end. Secondly, the wellbeing of our student population is a top priority. VCSU supports the NDUS Behavioral Health initiative to improve access to counseling services and other mental health support.



## Recent Achievements

- Successful HLC reaccreditation with no areas of concern
- \$600,000 Department of Public Instruction Teacher Shortage grant
- New Master of Science in Business Information Systems
- Viking Mobile ID allows student ID on phone (1st in NDUS)
- myVCSU App (1st in NDUS)
- New strategic plan developed and launched
- Opened the Center for the Arts on time and within budget

### Recent Achievements

We have had multiple exciting things happen during the past months at VCSU. I will touch on just a few of them.

Last year we were reaccredited by the Higher Learning Commission. All criteria were met with no concerns. The reviewers noted that VCSU has a “healthy, forward-looking culture that uses evidence of institutional and program effectiveness to inform decisions and to make improvements.” This was a significant achievement. The HLC accreditation process provides a comprehensive review of the entire campus and assures quality by verifying that we meet standards and are engaged in continuous improvement. This was a proud moment for our entire institution.

VCSU also received a \$600k grant to address teacher shortages. The grant will fund the VCSU Grow Your Own Scholarship Program. This program offers scholarships to individuals aspiring to become a licensed teacher in North Dakota. It is specifically designed for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers working in North Dakota school districts.

Our new Masters of Science in Business Information Systems was launched. This program combines various computer systems skills with software training in Sales Force and other critical business applications. This degree

will provide well-equipped employees ready to step into the workforce with advanced business and IT knowledge. It is important to note that this program was developed as a result of a partnership with local community workforce needs.

The Viking Mobile ID was offered early this year. This is an innovative solution using readily-available technology in a different way. Daily occurrences students need their ID cards for, including access to residence halls, dining, copy services and Viking dollars, are all available via a mobile device now. Not only is it safer, but it also is more convenient.

Our myVCSU app provides a secure way for students and employees to access items like Campus Connection and Blackboard through a single-sign on service with multi-factor authentication. This app makes it easier to access important campus services, and VCSU was the first North Dakota institution to launch a mobile app like this for our campus.

Within the last year, our campus developed and launched a visionary strategic plan. The plan was developed with input from faculty, staff and students. The plan has data-driven goals and will create exciting new opportunities for our students.



## Accreditations

- Higher Learning Commission (HLC)
- Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
- National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)

Finally, last spring we facilitated the opening of the Center for the Arts on our campus. Our team managed the construction of this building on time and within budget and it is a wonderful facility that improves the student experience on campus as well as providing a critical avenue for relationships with the Valley City and Barnes County community. To date, we estimate about 1,200 high school students have come to campus for an activity in the CFA. It has become a wonderful part of our campus.

### Accreditations

I'd like to highlight our accreditation. With the rising cost of education it is important to our students that the education they are receiving is valuable and vetted. As I mentioned before, we recently received our reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission. We have several program-specific accreditations as well including the

Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)

National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)

These accreditations prove that our educational experiences in multiple disciplines are of the highest quality. These are typically reviewed every seven to ten years with various reviews and checks within those time frames.

# National Recognition



- Top ‘Public Regional Colleges in the Midwest’ in North Dakota by U.S. News and World Report in 2023
  - Ranked as a Best Value Schools and Top Performer on Social Mobility
  - U.S. News ‘Best Colleges’ for 25 consecutive years
- Top-ranked Elementary Education program in the nation by Study.com in 2021
- Best North Dakota college for Cost & Financing by Wallet Hub
- Top 25 “Most Affordable Online Bachelor’s Degrees” by OnlineU
- “Best in the Midwest” as listed by Intelligent.com
- Top regional university in North Dakota as listed by EdSmart.com



## Nationally Recognized

Another mark of quality for VCSU is our quarter of a century long ranking as a Best College with U.S. News and World Report. This is one of the most reputable college rankings that is published every year. This year in particular we were ranked as the top regional public college in North Dakota and a Best Value School. We were one of only two public colleges ranked and the top public school on the list. This ranking continues to attract high-quality students and be an important marker for families as they compare secondary education options.

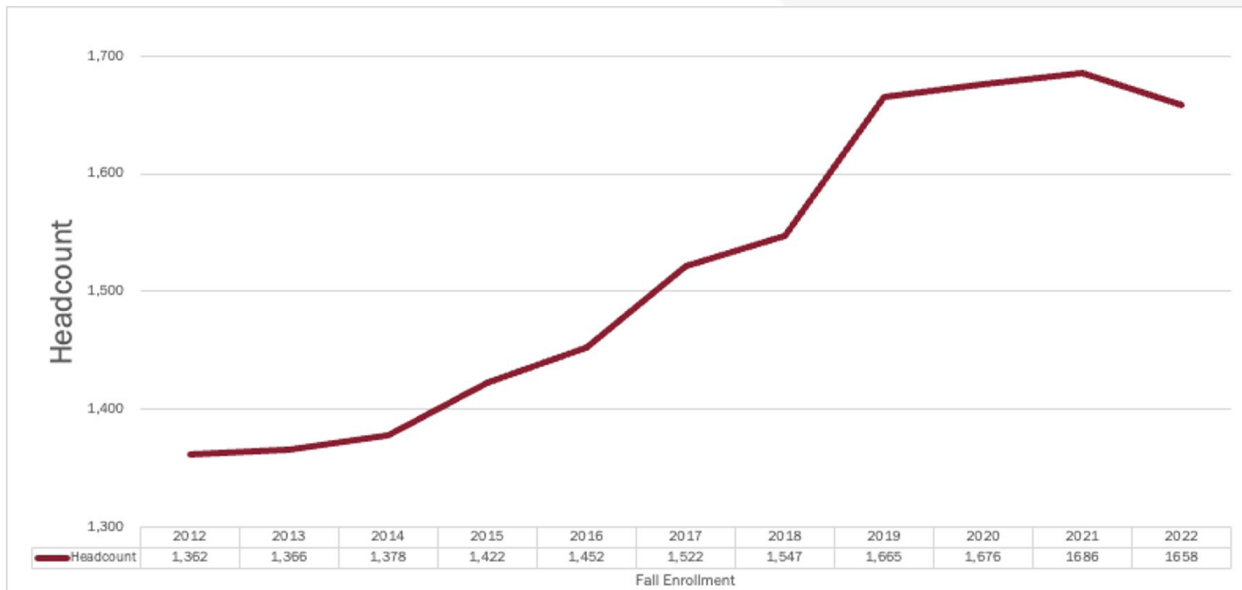
I will mention it many times today, but our School of Education is really a shining jewel in the Midwest and nationally for producing high-quality teachers. Recently we were recognized by Study.com as having the best elementary education program in the nation. We’ve known our education program is top notch, but we also have the numbers to prove it. Our alumni are working in 359 schools in North Dakota alone and make a difference in the lives of students every day.

We know the education provided at VCSU is high-quality, but it is also noted for being affordable. Late last year, Wallet Hub ranked VCSU as the best college in North Dakota in terms of cost and financing. We were lauded by

OnlineU as having one of the most affordable online bachelor’s degrees. Our affordability ensures that education is accessible to all learners, regardless of economic background.



## 20% enrollment growth in past decade



### Enrollment Growth

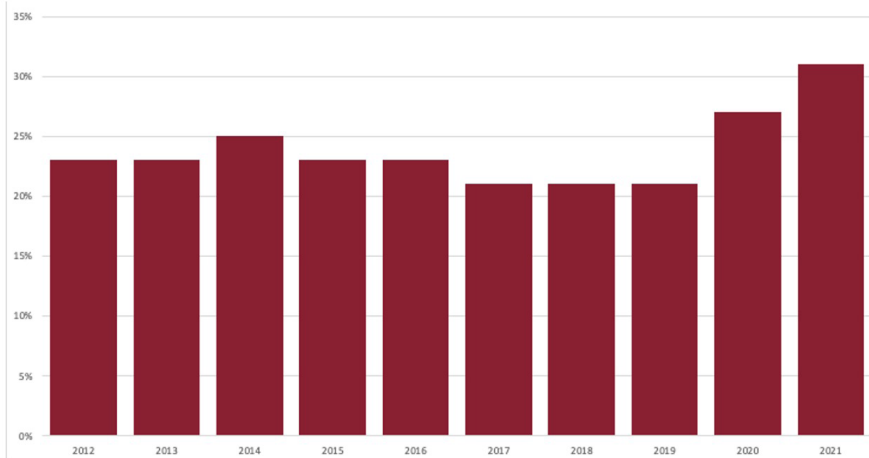
Contrary to national trends, our enrollment numbers are steady. We had a slight dip last fall by about 20 students, somewhat caused by a smaller junior class, but our fall 2023 numbers are looking steady and solid. Our team tirelessly recruits quality and diverse students. You can feel that energy the moment you step on to campus. I may be biased, but I think VCSU has some of the best students I have ever had the privilege of working with during my time in higher education.

Occupancy in residence halls continues to be strong, especially after adjustments were made to rate lock costs for students. We now ensure students who stay on campus, have the option to pay the rate they paid their first year, all four years. This has been an excellent recruiting and retention tool and is a positive cost-saving approach for them as well.

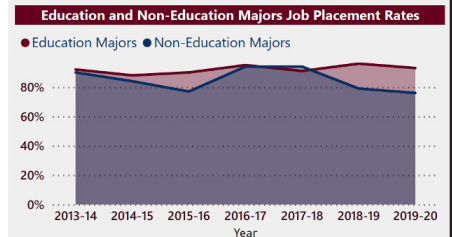
Enrollment growth has been a sign for us that we are offering programs students are interested in, and programs with strong post graduation job potential.

# Graduation Rates and Job Placement

## VCSU graduates who complete their degree in four years



**100% placement rate for 2021-2022 Education Majors that completed post-graduation survey.**



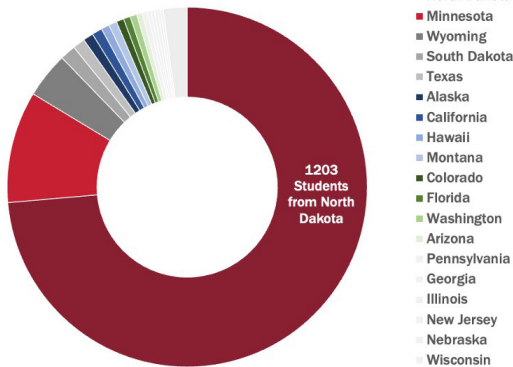
## Jobs Prior to Graduation

Another metric we are proud of at VCSU is our graduation and placement rate. We lead the regional colleges in North Dakota with our four year completion rate. Our focus with students is ensuring they have quality advisors who can guide them to complete their degree on time. Planning and advising helps our students get the courses and experience they need while also getting the most out of their entire VCSU experience.

After graduation, we want to make sure our alumni have multiple job opportunities. Last spring, as I was shaking hands with graduates as they walked across the stage at graduation, I was well aware that many already had accepted job offers across our state and nation. I'll specifically mention education in regards to placement. Last year, 100% of our education majors who responded to the post-graduation survey had a job that fall.

With a hands-on career services office, our students are able to get real world experience and opportunities they may not have had access to prior to coming to VCSU.

## 73% of our students are from North Dakota



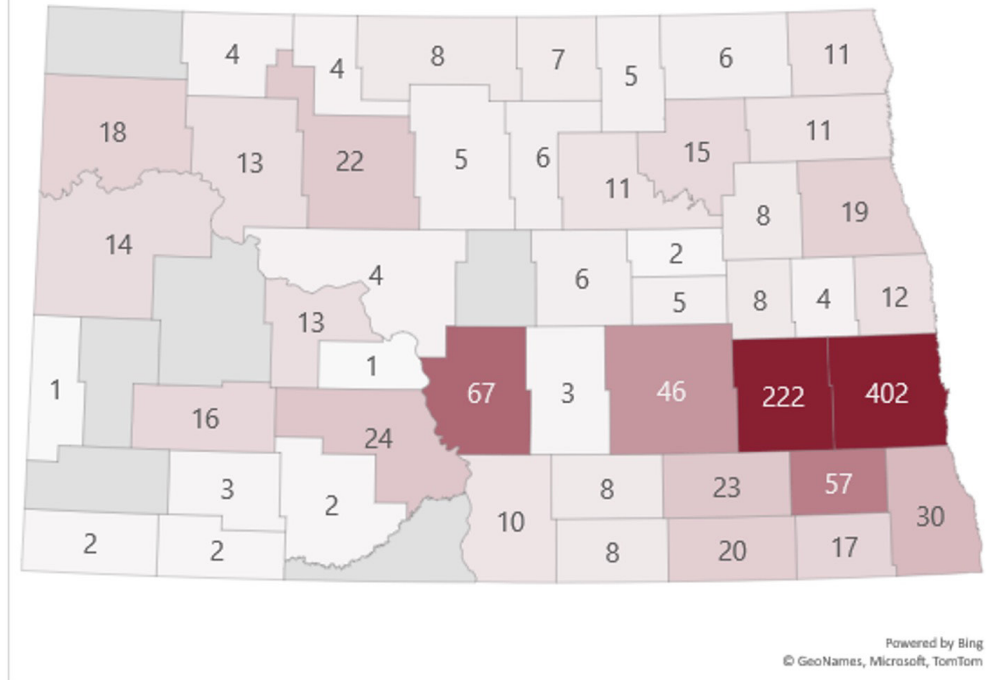
### Serving our State

It's clear from our enrollment that we have a stellar reputation statewide and we are meeting a critical need for our state.

Our location off I-94 between Fargo and Bismarck, our small campus size and welcoming community provide students the opportunity to receive a solid education in a picturesque North Dakota setting. 73% of our students are from across the state of North Dakota. Our campus is a safe, welcoming place for students to thrive socially, athletically and academically. Once they complete their degree, our students typically stay and join the workforce here.

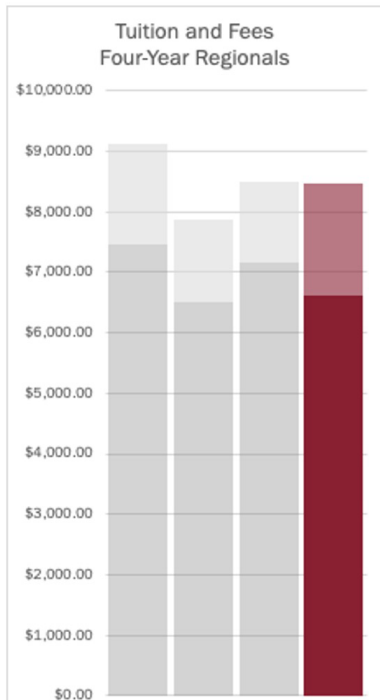
We also have students from 44 states and eight countries that call VCSU their educational home. Many enjoy the charm of our campus and positive pieces about living in our state. Many who graduate choose to stay and continue living in our state.

# Students by Home County



## Students from East to West

The majority of our students are from Cass and Barnes counties. This makes sense given our location, but we have students from across the state. From Bowman County to Pembina County and everything in between, our students have a wide-variety of backgrounds. Our students make the trip to Valley City for many reasons, but they all eventually enroll and find their home as a Viking.



## Maintaining Affordability



**\$1.5 Million saved with OER**  
Open Educational Resources allow students to use resources for free



**Tuition & Fees \$297.25 per credit for ND residents**  
Technology fee reduced even with expanded services



**Room & Board Housing rate locked at first-year rate and most affordable in NDUS system**

### Ensuring Education is Affordable

One of the most important topics on our radar is maintaining affordability for our students. We are committed to ensuring every student has access to a high-quality experience at a rate they can afford. Our tuition and fees are among the lowest of the four-year regional colleges.

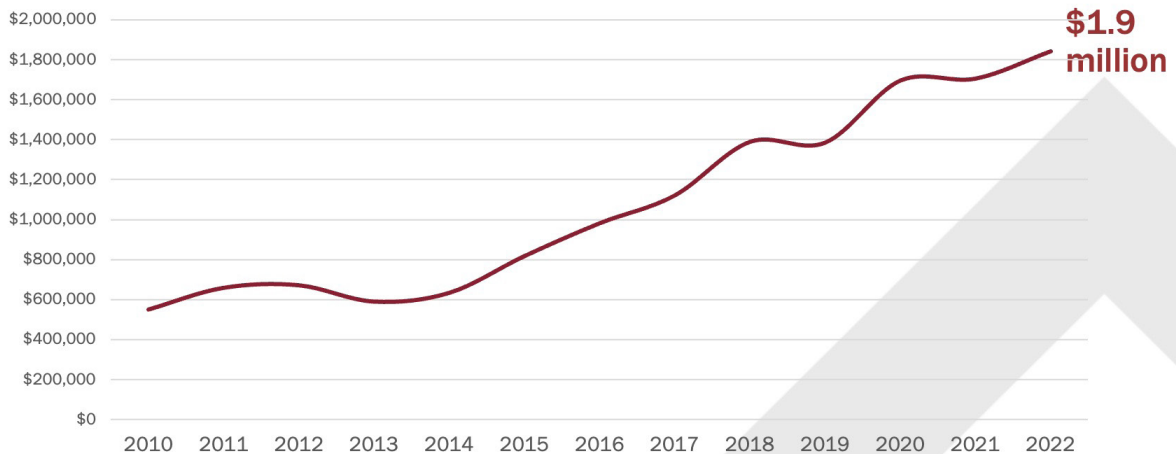
Some ways that we are committed to doing this include using Open Educational Resources. Our campus is proud of our use of OERs, and the fact that it has saved our students \$1.5 million since 2013 is a feather in our cap. These are online resources that students download including textbooks and learning materials for their courses.

Our tuition and fees are just under \$300/credit for North Dakota residents. In fact, our technology fee today is less, in real dollars, than it was the year that the laptop initiative began. We still provide laptops for every full-time student and offer a wide variety of additional technology resources. This is an example of our work to curb costs by operating efficiently.

We have also locked the rate for housing in for students at the price for student housing at the rate they pay their first year on campus. This has been a great retention tool, and having that guarantee for those students is a stabilizing and encouraging piece for them to continue their education.

## Scholarship support for students has increased 245% since 2011

Total Scholarships Awarded



### Scholarship Support is Crucial

There is a definite connection between student financial support and our continued growth.

Often I asked how we have continued enrollment success. Clearly there is a link between scholarship support and enrollment. Our VCSU Foundation has been tremendous in helping our students attain their degrees by providing increasing scholarship support. This year, they allocated \$1.86 million in scholarship assistance, up from \$1.723 million the previous year.

In 2011, we awarded just over \$550,000 in annual scholarships. That number rose to just over \$1.9 million this past year. The escalation was due in large measure by increasing our scholarship values to the highest in the region and by making those scholarships renewable to incoming students. That is a 245% percent increase in scholarships over that period with stated goals of growing enrollment through offering 90% of our incoming freshmen a scholarship; offering 80% of those renewable scholarships.

The following points confirm that we are fulfilling our financial commitment to our students:

Our students graduate accumulating less debt

than our regional counterparts.

We currently offer the most substantial scholarship program per merit in our region.

In the last 10 years we have substantially grown our scholarship offerings by over 245%.

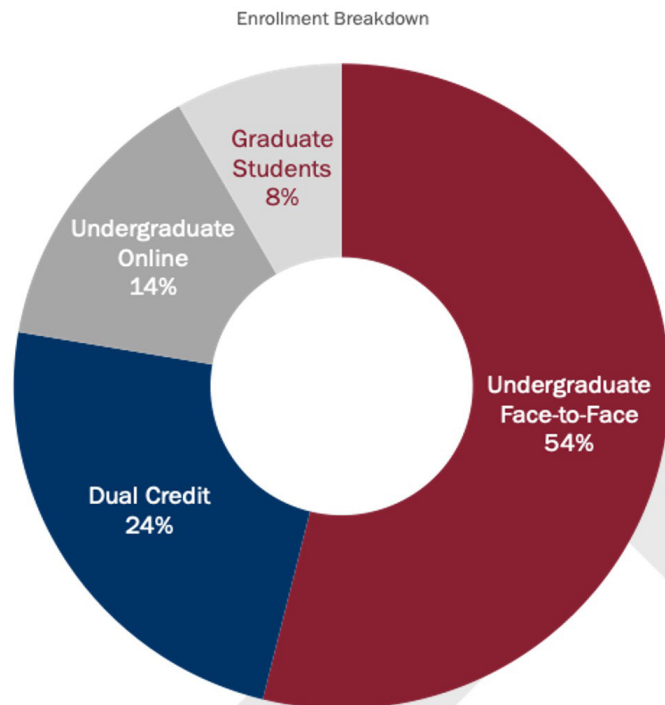
Since 2013 we have increased our endowment by \$11.7 million through the ND Challenge Grant.

We are committed to the same allocation for 2022-23 despite a downward market trend.

The Foundation Office focus will always work on improving our position to help VCSU attract and retain a growing population of students while also providing a quality experience for our alumni, friends, campus and community.

# Meeting Students Where They Are

*Fall 2022 Enrollment Overview*



## Overview of our Students

Like most universities, we are working hard to respond to student needs and preferences in regards to education delivery. As you can see in this chart, we have a majority of students who are undergraduate face-to-face students. This number reflects the continued desire by many students for a “traditional” college experience including living in residence halls and participating in many on-campus activities.

In addition to our on-campus students, we have seen an increased interest in high school students completing VCSU courses before they receive their high school diploma. Dual credit offerings often help students complete general education courses and allow them to earn those credits early. For some, this means they can complete a bachelor’s degree in three years and join the workforce earlier than would otherwise be possible.

Many of our students are taking their classes in an online environment. I’d like to mention the importance of these offerings, specifically as it pertains to our graduate programs. We offer multiple graduate degrees online that focus on education. We have a Masters of Education Program with various concentrations including Elementary Education, Library and Information Technologies, Teaching English Language Learners and more. These courses

allow individuals who are actively teaching to continue their education, earn a masters degree and move up in salary structures. This is an important offering in regards to retaining the teaching workforce in our state.

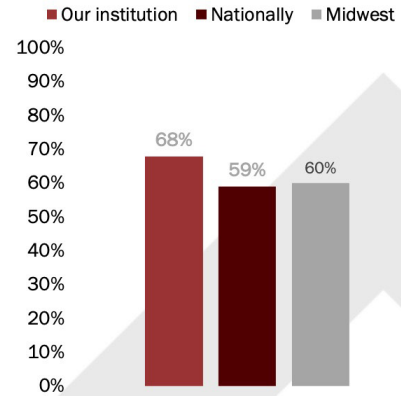


"My career goal is to be an elementary school principal. I want to spend time in the classroom first to work with students to help them succeed and find a love for school."

*Saige Forseth, '24  
Elementary  
Education Major*

## Our Why

**How satisfied are our students compared with students nationally?**



Data source: 2021 Student Satisfaction Inventory

### Satisfied Students

Regardless of delivery type or location, our primary focus is our students. On this slide, you can see Saige Forseth of Hillsboro, ND. Saige is a shining example of an engaged student. She is involved in Student Senate and an excellent softball player. She also is studying elementary education and dreams of one day becoming a high school principal.

Saige's story helps remind us why this work is so important. Our why is founded in our mission, to prepare students to succeed as educators, leaders, and engaged citizens in an increasingly complex and diverse society.

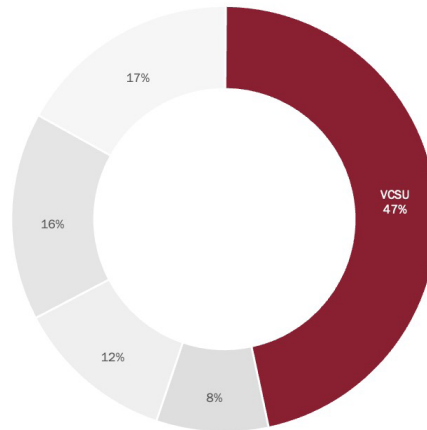
Since 2002, VCSU has conducted the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) during even-numbered spring semesters for our face-to-face students. VCSU has consistently been rated positively by our student population, and in 2022 we scored above the other schools nationally and in the Midwest again. We also receive a snapshot from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). In the most recent NSSE report, 91% of our seniors reported that their experience at VCSU contributed to their knowledge, skills and personal development in thinking critically and 82% in acquiring job knowledge and skill.





## Leader in Teacher Education

146 education graduates last year, VCSU has more education graduates than any other North Dakota college or university



Elementary Education and Teaching degrees conferred by school during 2021-2022

### Leading Teacher Education in North Dakota since 1890

VCSU's School of Education is an important part of our campus and I'd like to focus specifically on this area of expertise.

Last year, VCSU graduated 114 Elementary Education teachers, 31 in secondary content areas.

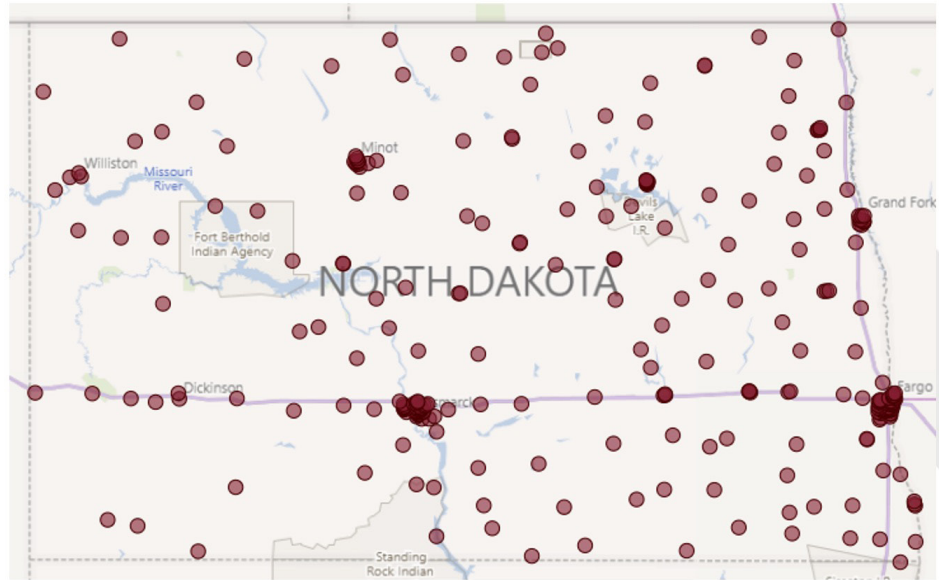
Our students are not only well-prepared for the classroom but prepared for certification exams as well. Teacher Education candidates are required to complete and pass content and pedagogy examinations for graduation and teacher licensure, such as the Praxis II test. Since Praxis II testing requirements for licensure began in 2006, 95% of all VCSU education graduates have passed the content exams and 96% have passed the pedagogy exams. Recent data released by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) shows that Valley City State University (VCSU) continues to be a leader in preparing the next generation of teachers, including helping students of color achieve success.

VCSU has helped 48 individuals earn their Master of Arts in teaching since the fall of 2017. These are individuals who were not teachers, but working in the field and made the choice to return to school to become a teacher.

In September of this year we received a \$600,000 grant to help address the teacher shortage. These funds will be used to help connect those working as substitute teachers or para professionals in North Dakota schools with our online education program so they can become full-time licensed teachers. Our School of Education is working on plans to offer that widely across the state given the enthusiastic response we have received for the program so far.

## Alumni Teaching Across North Dakota

1,514 VCSU alumni are teachers and administrators at 359 schools serving in 151 North Dakota communities



### Alumni Across North Dakota and the United States

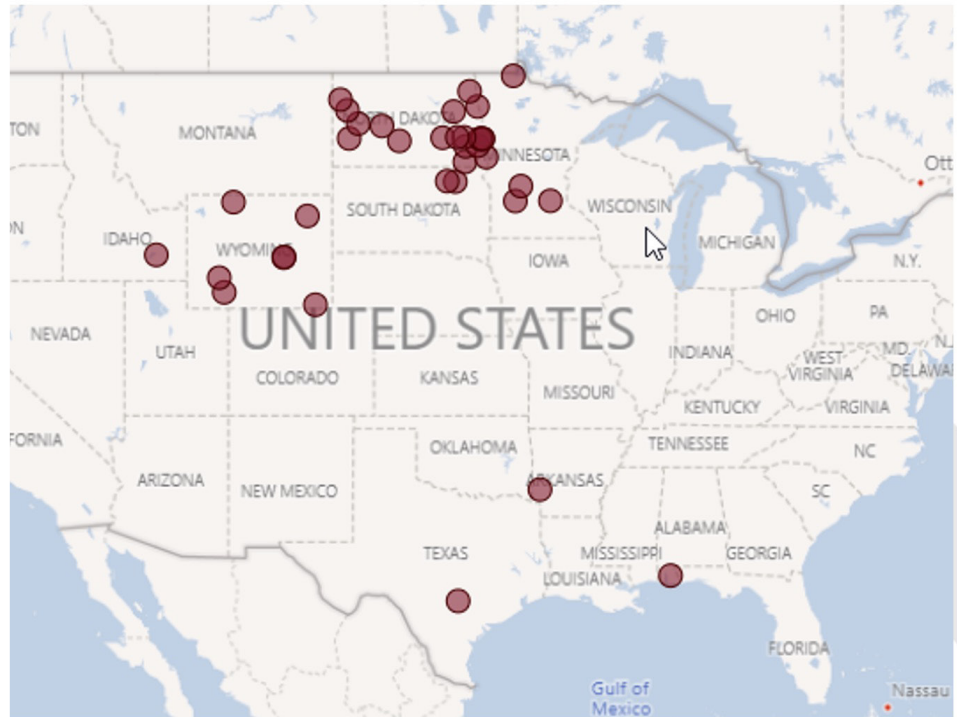
It is hard to find a North Dakota school that does not have at least one VCSU graduate working with students. From teachers to administrators, coaches, counselors and more, our alumni are making a huge difference in the future of North Dakota. Not only are VCSU alumni filling a critical workforce need in our state, but they are also shaping our future workforce.

This year alone, 1,514 VCSU alumni are teaching in 359 different schools in 151 different communities. To break that number down even further, 243 of these alumni have a master's degree from VCSU. 83 of these individuals have an undergraduate and graduate degree from VCSU.

VCSU's educational programs continue to make a huge impact on the teaching workforce of our state.

# Student Teacher Placement

**2021-2022 Locations**



## Student Teaching to Strengthen Success

One of the ways our School of Education ensures graduates are ready for their first day as a teacher is by closely working with students and schools to have great student teaching experiences. Student teaching is an important part of the student experience, and our School of Education faculty and staff ensure candidates are well-prepared and gain a lot of practical experience while in the classroom.

One innovative way our School of Education has helped build on this concept is with students in West Fargo Public Schools. VCSU Elementary Education Students, who are also NDSU Human Development and Family Science students, actually attend college courses taught within an elementary school. This arrangement allows the students to observe classes and quickly make connections between course content and in-classroom usage.

Strengthening the connection between the college courses VCSU offers and real-world, hands-on experiences helps our students, but also assists the school. With this setup, students have the opportunity to observe classrooms in the fall and potentially student teach with the same teacher in the spring.

## Students Gaining Experience as Substitute Teachers

In addition to that unique program, VCSU also has a program that allows students to become substitute teachers while pursuing their degree. Students who can work as a substitute teacher earn money to help pay for school and fill a critical need in our state for substitutes. This is a win-win for the students and for our elementary schools.



**Wayne Stanley '92**

Superintendent at South Prairie School District

**Jamie Worden '19**

Art Teacher at Larimore High School and dual credit instructor

**Paige Fettig '18**

4th Grade Teacher at Miller Elementary School in Bismarck, ND

**Nick Lee '21**

Principal at St. Catherine Elementary School

**Megan Wald '08**

Business Teacher at Linton High School & Adjunct for ND Center for Distance Ed in Fargo

### **Structured to Help Students Succeed**

Helping new teachers succeed in their first five years increases the likelihood they can be retained as part of our teaching workforce. VCSU has developed excellent programs, but we have also excellent students. I'd like to highlight some of our graduates that exemplify what it means to be a Viking. From Wayne Stanley at South Prairie who has led his school district for years, to Megan Wald, runner up for teacher of the year, we have so many teachers and administrators that inspire pride.

One of the graduates we would like to highlight today is Paige Fettig. Paige graduated from VCSU in 2018 and now teaches fourth grade at Miller Elementary here in Bismarck.

# Paige Fettig

4th Grade Teacher at Miller Elementary School in Bismarck, ND





## Workforce-Ready Graduates

Survey data from North Dakota schools found that 97.8% either 'agree' or 'tend to agree' that VCSU first-year teachers effectively teach the subject matter in his/her licensure area.

### Workforce-Ready Graduates

Simply put, our graduates of the School of Education are ready to teach. Survey data shows that almost 100% of school respondents thought VCSU first-year teachers can effectively teach in their subject matter. This is remarkable. The strength of VCSU's School of Education comes from our dynamic faculty, continued connections with local school districts and the hard work from our entire School of Education.

Our education program is successful and known locally, statewide and nationally for excellence. I share these successes with you because we have a need to bring our School of Education into the 21st century. We need your help.

North Dakota has a critical shortage of teachers. We need your investment in VCSU to help us meet this need head-on. As we outline how to make this happen, it's important to note that we have accomplished a great deal in regards to preparing teachers for more than a century. VCSU can be trusted to continue moving forward with this effort, as a reliable and innovative leader.



## McCarthy Hall

### **Facilities Commensurate with Experience**

This is McCarthy Hall, specifically the third floor. This classroom is a photo that was taken recently, but could've been taken years ago. These rooms have been the same for decades and it's time to bring them into the 21st century.

I'd like to provide a little history about this Hall and the effort to make it the permanent home for our School of Education. In 1930, McCarthy Hall was built as a lab school for training teachers. During that year, 30 students were enrolled in the teacher training program. During 2021-2022, 186 VCSU students were awarded either a baccalaureate or graduate degree in education. Currently, the School of Education and Graduate Studies is spread out across campus. The project will bring the entire School of Education under one roof and will allow for better collaboration and enhanced learning experiences for students.

McCarthy Hall is redesigned with the teachers of tomorrow in mind.

There are three important areas to note:

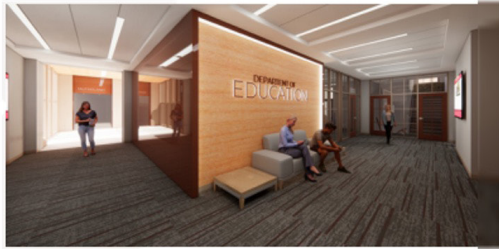
**Technology Education:** Classrooms for technology education include dedicated environments for high-tech machining, assembly, wood fabrication, metal fabrication and a virtual

reality lab area.

**Educational Spaces:** Spaces are designed with flexible seating and updated technology similar to what students will encounter in real-world school environments. The layout will also incorporate a large student workroom, curriculum library and numerous study spaces.

**Faculty Space:** Currently, education faculty have offices spread across various parts of campus. This renovation will allow the Department of Education to bring an enhanced team approach to supporting students as they prepare to become teachers.

# McCarthy Hall Future



The future home of VCSU's School of Education and the Department of Technology



## The Future Home of VCSU's School of Education

Valley City State University is requesting \$11.4 million to renovate McCarthy Hall for the School of Education and Graduate Studies and the department of Technology Education. VCSU will contribute to this effort with \$2 million in private donations. This is a teacher workforce development project and will eliminate more than \$8 million in deferred maintenance.

Based on preliminary design, the total cost of the project is estimated at \$13.4 million. This project renovates existing space and will make this historic building more efficient. VCSU anticipates cost savings for heating, lighting, air conditioning and maintenance. This one-time request will have a positive impact on VCSU's long-term utility budget.

No new faculty or staff will be necessary for this project. VCSU has completed preliminary design and cost of the project. If funded, we will begin implementation immediately. The renovation will be completed in two to three years. This project will enhance the high-quality educational experience students receive at Valley City State University. This will also help attract future teachers to the North Dakota workforce.

I'd like to introduce Dr. Allen Burgad, our dean of the School of Education, to discuss this effort and our education programs in more detail.



# Dr. Allen Burgad

Dean, VCSU School of Education

1989 graduate of VCSU  
Former North Dakota educator and school  
administrator for 32 years



## **Dr. Allen Burgad**

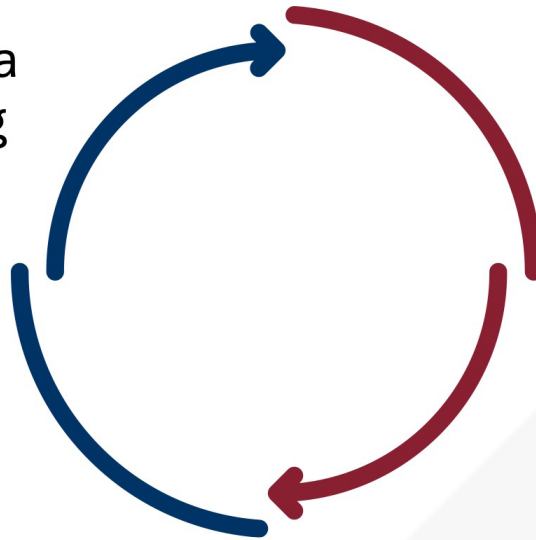
Chairman Nathe and members of the House Appropriations Committee, for the record, my name is Dr. Allen Burgad, current Dean for the School of Education at Valley City State University and a 1989 graduate of VCSU.

I am a retired K-12 Educator that grew up in Strasburg, ND. My career has taken me from Napoleon, to Stanley and Northern Cass, West Fargo and now Valley City.



## Transition cycles in K-12 education

Finding a teaching position in the 1990s was difficult.



Finding teachers to fill vacant positions in 2023 for K-12 school districts is a challenge.



### The Cycle of the Teacher Workforce

As former North Dakota educator and school administrator for 32 years, I have experienced transition cycles in K-12 education. Finding a teaching position in the 1990s was difficult. Finding a teacher to fill vacant positions in 2023 for K-12 school districts is a greater challenge.



## VCSU School of Education Vision

*Prepare highly qualified teachers through a student-centered learning environment focused on relationships, social-emotional learning, and academic relevance.*

### Achieve Vision Through Extensive Partnerships with K-12 Schools

- Applicable and Authentic Field Experiences
- Substitute Program – Supervised by VCSU Faculty
- Preparing Future Educators On-site Program

### Substitute Teaching Program has Positive Impact on Preparing Teachers

- Substitute program partnered with regional schools has also aided in addressing the critical subbing shortages.
- Many of our pre-service teachers have recorded over 75 subbing days with school districts in North Dakota prior to graduating.

## Our Vision of a Successful Future

The picture in the presentation is an example of pre-service teachers in the field at regional elementary school.

The VCSU education program has partnered with many K-12 schools to best prepare pre-service teachers to be successful future classroom teachers. Our field experiences through required practicums and substitute teaching, supervised by university faculty, has resounding data supporting preparing pre-service teachers.

VCSU substitute program, partnered with regional schools, has also aided in addressing the critical subbing shortages. Many of our pre-service teachers have recorded over 75 subbing days with school districts in North Dakota prior to graduating.

## Learning is social and requires relationship-building embraced by reflection.



- These learning components are also applicable for individuals preparing to be classroom educators.
- Students have echoed the importance of being prepared in addressing the dynamic health, wellness, and behavioral needs experienced during their field experience.

### **Our Purpose and Feedback from Students**

Learning is social and requires relationship building embraced by reflection. These learning components are also applicable for individuals preparing to be classroom educators.

The VCSU School of Education has identified our purpose by preparing highly qualified teachers through a student-centered learning environment focused on relationships, social-emotional learning, and academic relevance.

This purpose was established by feedback provided by our student advisory committee who are currently enrolled in the teacher preparation program at VCSU. These students have also echoed the importance of being prepared in addressing the dynamic health, wellness, and behavioral needs experienced during their field experience.

## School District's Needs



- Current ND school educators and administrators have strongly indicated the importance of preparing future teachers with skills supporting student engagement, social-emotional learning, and responsive classrooms through relationship building.
- In addition, 21st century learners have unique learning needs relevant to literacy and innovation.

### Meeting the Needs of North Dakota Schools

Current ND school educators and administrators have strongly indicated the importance of preparing future teachers with skills supporting student engagement, social-emotional learning, and responsive classrooms through relationship building.

In addition, 21st century learners have unique learning needs relevant to literacy through the Science of Reading along with voice, choice, and pace on how they demonstrate their learning framed by Personalized Competency-based Learning (PCBL).



**Effective teaching through modeling and delivery requires large spaces for direct instruction and flexible spaces for differentiated instruction embedded with modern technology.**

**Proposed Renovation of McCarthy Hall**

- Expand on the number of graduates in teacher education.
- Provide pre-service teachers an environment that have proper heating, cooling, and air quality.
- Afford learning spaces enabling faculty deliver instruction modeling engagement, relationship building, reading and math literacies and innovation through a personalized competency-based pedagogy.

**Flexible Spaces for Dynamic Experiences**

Our proposed renovation of McCarthy Hall at VCSU would enable our university to

Expand on the number of graduates in teacher education

Provide pre-service teachers with learning environments that have proper heating, cooling, and air quality.

Afford learning spaces enabling faculty deliver instruction modeling engagement, relationship building, reading and math literacies, and innovation through a personalized competency-based pedagogy.

Effective teaching through modeling and delivery requires large spaces for direct instruction and flexible spaces for differentiated instruction embedded with modern technology.



Our proposed updates will help VCSU in preparing future classroom teachers to be passionate, compassionate and innovative educators.



### **Retaining our Teaching Workforce**

This picture represents our 145 K-12 2021-2022 graduates. These young teachers are meeting a critical workforce need, and it's important to recruit more students to join them. But equally important is retaining them once they become teachers.

A majority in the loss of teacher retention occurs in the years one through five.

Our proposed McCarthy updates will help VCSU increase the number of passionate, compassionate, and innovative future classroom teachers.



## Partnerships and Collaborations

- Nursing with Dakota College at Bottineau
- Elementary Education with NDSU
- 44 Articulation agreements
- Prairie Waters Education & Research Center
- Northern Information Technology Consortium
- Rural School Partner Benefit Program

### Partnering with others to Enhance Success

I'd like to share some partnerships and initiatives we have with other NDUS institutions.

We have been working to meet the need for nursing and healthcare workers by partnering with Dakota College at Bottineau. Students can attend classes on our campus, but receive their nursing degree from DCB.

We also partner with NDSU to offer a dual degree program. NDSU students study Human and Family Development. Then, as juniors, they become VCSU students working toward a degree in elementary education. This is a great program that provides students access to two excellent degrees in a unique way. Our faculty teach in the Fargo metro area and, I'd also like to note, students in this program are able to attend their VCSU classes inside an elementary school. This provides greater access to real-work experiences and hands-on opportunities, increasing their comfort and familiarity with a school environment.

Our academic programs have 44 different articulation agreements. These allow students greater access to courses and degrees in seamless ways.

Faculty and staff at VCSU have partnered to create educational opportunities just south of Valley City at the Prairie Waters Education and Research Center. This center specializes in water education and water-related research. Each year, Prairie Waters hosts students, professionals, and other community groups to educate about water resources and the organisms found in water ecosystems. Summer camps, field trips, and research opportunities are some exciting events that take place each summer. Located about 20 miles south of Valley City, Prairie Waters is a beautiful destination for people of all ages.

I'd like to mention the Northern Information Technology Consortium (NITC). The NITC is a partnership between Valley City State, Williston State, Dakota College at Bottineau, Lake Region State College, Minot State University and Turtle Mountain Community College. This Consortium allows greater access for students in regards to information technology courses.

Finally, the Rural School Partner Benefit Program is an important partnership we have with area schools. This program helps rural ND schools with attracting and retaining their teacher workforce.





## Rural School Partner Benefit Program

- Partnership with regional school districts to help rural ND schools to attract and retain teacher workforce
- VCSU reduces tuition rates for teachers pursuing graduate credits for dual-credit certification or master's programs
- Districts provide field experiences, student teacher placements, and assessments for VCSU preservice teachers. Districts also assist with teacher preparation through panel discussions, mock interviews and guest speaker presentations on VCSU's campus
- Program exists in Lisbon, Valley City, Central Cass, Kindred, Elgin/New Leipzig, Oak Grove, Litchville and Hope-Page high schools



### Retaining Teaching Workforce

The Rural School Partner Benefit Program is designed to create a “dynamic and sustained university-school district partnership that will promote collaboration between the University and partner schools with a focus on student learning and educator preparation.” This effort will include both school district and university faculty and teacher candidates.

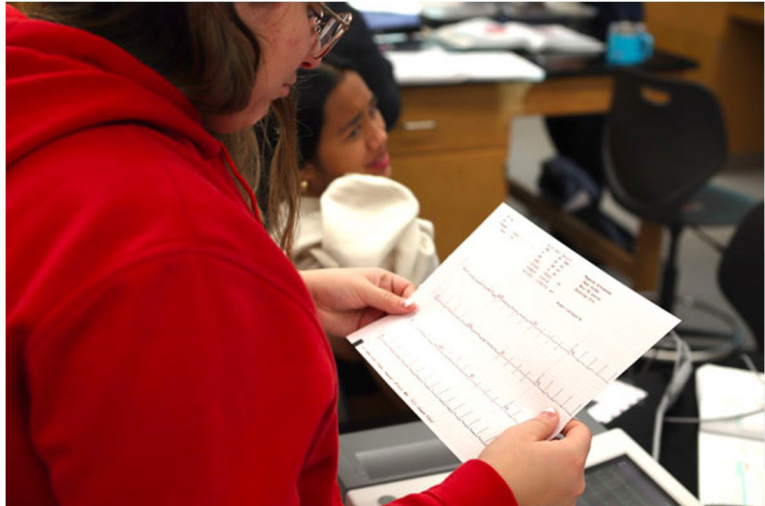
One of the first schools we partnered with was Lisbon Public Schools. Dr. Stephen Johnson, superintendent of Lisbon Schools at the time, said, “The focus will be on offering our students more dual-credit opportunities and preparing future teachers while updating current LPS staff with graduate credit. We will collaborate to place VCSU graduates in our school while helping them supervise and assess preservice teachers in clinical experiences.”

VCSU offers reduced rates for tuition for those Lisbon faculty seeking Master of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching or Content Area Qualifications. In addition, VCSU reduces the tuition for high school students taking dual credit coursework.

Currently VCSU is partnering with eight schools to offer this program, but work is ongoing to add more districts to the program.

# Community Partnerships

- Master of Science in Business Information Systems
- Cardiographic Technician course
- Marketplace for Kids



## Partnering in the Valley City and Barnes County community

I'd also like to highlight some of the great partnerships VCSU has developed within our local community. We are incredibly lucky to have entities like the Valley City-Barnes County Development Corporation and its director Jennifer Feist. In partnership with them, we have had the ability to develop a few key programs to meet workforce needs. Also, we partnered with the Development Corporation for Summer Vikes on Central this year. Hundreds of our students walked across the historic footbridge into downtown Valley City and were welcomed with open arms. It really was an amazing event.

Our Master of Science in Business Information Systems degree was officially launched in 2022. It was developed to meet a workforce need identified at Eagle Creek Software in Valley City. This degree focuses on advancing skills in communication, Salesforce, SAP Business Software, computer software administration, and information technology management. Students can enter the program with a bachelor's degree in any major. The courses in this program help develop leadership skills for any individual seeking advancement or leadership roles in the workforce. Although enrollment is modest in this program, it is still fairly new and we are actively recruiting students for the degree path.

We are also offering a Cardiographic Technician course to meet a very specific workforce need. We were asked to help develop a course for this to increase the number of individuals that can take and pass the Certified Cardiographic Technician (CCT) exam. Individuals with this certification can work as Cardiographic Technicians for a local company monitoring electrocardiogram (EKG) strips. Not only is this an important class, but our faculty developed multiple tools to offer portions of it in an online environment. The online simulator created by our faculty provided an extra way for students to quickly grasp the course material and pass the certification exam successfully.

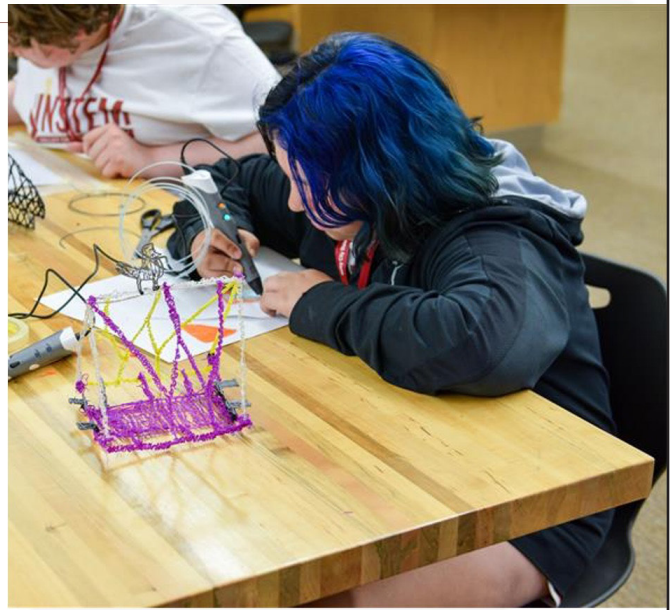
Finally, earlier this month, we hosted the Marketplace for Kids event. This event allows elementary students to become comfortable with new ideas and understand various parts of the economy. It was a great event and we hope to host it again in the future.



## INSTEM Partnership

(Indians into STEM Partnership)

- Increase awareness and interest in STEM careers among ND Native American K-12 students
- Provide an opportunity to live and study on a college campus.
- Increase self-efficacy in STEM academic content and future higher education enrollment
- Cohort model designed to have participating students return each year through high school graduation



### Partnering to Create Opportunity for High School Students

Since 2018, the Great Plains STEM Education Center (GPSEC) at Valley City State University has been conducting week-long summer STEM academies for cohorts of North Dakota Native American middle and high school students. In 2020, the program was officially named INSTEM (Indians into STEM). INSTEM's mission is to increase awareness and interest in STEM careers among ND Native American K-12 students, while also providing them with the opportunity to live and study on a college campus to increase self-efficacy in STEM academic content and future higher education enrollment. The cohort model is designed to have participating students return each year through high school graduation.

The program was developed through the hard work of Lisa Lone Flight (senior environmental scientist with the Mandan, Hidatsu and Arikira nation and Dr. Jamie Wirth (director of the VCSU Great Plains STEM Education Center).

This project is a natural continuation of the Middle School STEM Academy. The intent of this project is to provide the hands on, highly engaging activities that can be used to help encourage Native Americans to pursue college education and particularly in STEM disciplines,

where they are under-represented.



## Our Students are Career Ready

"VCSU really does a phenomenal job in helping a student who wants to be proactive in the career hunt and search, so I already have a job that I am currently working, before even graduating and receiving my degree. "

*Connor Aanderud, '22  
Software Engineering Major*



### **Preparing a Successful Workforce**

Alumni Connor Aanderud states this well, VCSU combines a great environment with excellent faculty to help students achieve personal and career success. Connor is a great example of a student who achieves real-world results before receiving his degree. As part of his senior project, he created software for an office on campus to more seamlessly process a specific type of applications. During his senior year, he spent his summer working as an intern at DigiKey Electronics.



## Internship locations in 2021-2022

- Aflac
- Barnes County Museum
- Barnes County Sheriff's Office
- Barnes County State's Attorney
- Border States Electric
- Bridges Art Council
- Buffalo Bridges Human Service Zone
- Centrol Ag Consulting
- CHI Mercy Health
- Christian Adoption Services
- City of Fargo
- City of Valley City
- Collins Aerospace
- Community Action Head Start
- Cornerstone Rentals
- Digi-Key Electronics
- Eagle Creek
- Eide Bailly
- Enterprise
- Freedom Machine Group
- Go Promo
- I3G Media
- Inspire Counseling
- Just Kidding Preschool
- Menards
- Miller Motors
- Minnesota DNR
- National Information Solution Cooperative
- Northway Academy
- Open Door Center
- Sodexo
- Solar Steals
- State Historical Society of ND
- Stoneridge Software
- The Arthur Companies
- The Joe Niekro Foundation
- The Office of the State Auditor
- Three Affiliated Tribes Fitness & Recreation Department
- Times Record
- Titan Machinery
- Tri WG
- URL Radio, LLC
- US Federal Government
- Valley City Barnes County Public Library
- Valley City Parks and Recreation
- Valley City Public School
- Ward County Public Library
- Wold Engineering
- Youth Correctional Center

### Internships in Numerous Locations

Our Career Services department helped match students with many internships. This list is internship locations from this past year alone. Students successfully work as interns with some of the best organizations worldwide, and often, are offered employment after their internship is completed.

Of the more than 50 locations, we are constantly hearing about the high-caliber of the students placed in these spots. Internships are an important tool for students to gain real-world experience. They are also meeting a need of our employers by opening doors to new potential employees. Almost 90 percent of our student interns serve North Dakota employers. Follow-up surveys with the internship providers indicate close to 100% percent of the students would be recommended for full-time employment by their internship supervisor. This is a critical portion of the VCSU experience and we are proud to have so many students succeed professionally, in part, due to these internships.



## General Financial Overview

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- Solid financial standing with a 2021 CFI of 5.72
- No financial audit recommendations
- Undesignated Reserves are strong at 7% and total \$1,293,142

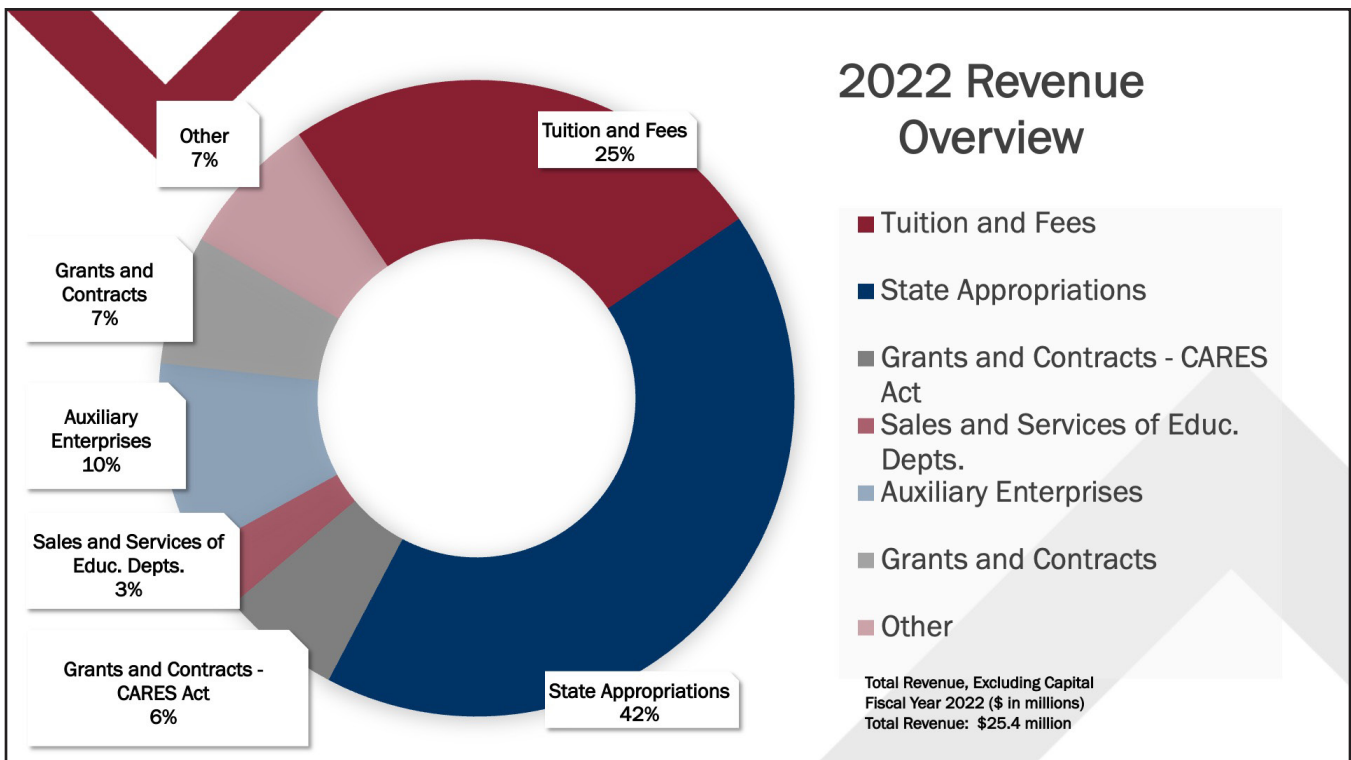


### **Strong Financial Standing**

VCSU had a solid CFI in 2021 of 5.72 which increased from 2.55 in 2020.

We have had six years of no financial audit recommendations. However, during the last operational audit with N.D. State Auditor's Office, we received a finding regarding procurement. We have created a centralized procurement process for campus that has been implemented this year and will help maintain records during turnover and keep a closer eye on required procurement thresholds.

Campuses are required to hold in reserves no lower than 5% and up to 7% in undesignated reserves. As of June 30, 2022, VCSU has a strong undesignated reserve of 7%.



## Revenue Overview

This chart shows VCSU's revenue sources from for fiscal year 2022.

As you can see, the 42% of our revenue is from the appropriation from the State of North Dakota. We are extremely grateful to this body for the continued support and commitment to our students.

The second-largest revenue generator for our campus is Tuition and Fees.

Here is a more detailed breakdown of these revenue numbers.

\$6.9 million Tuition and Fees

\$11.7 million State Appropriations

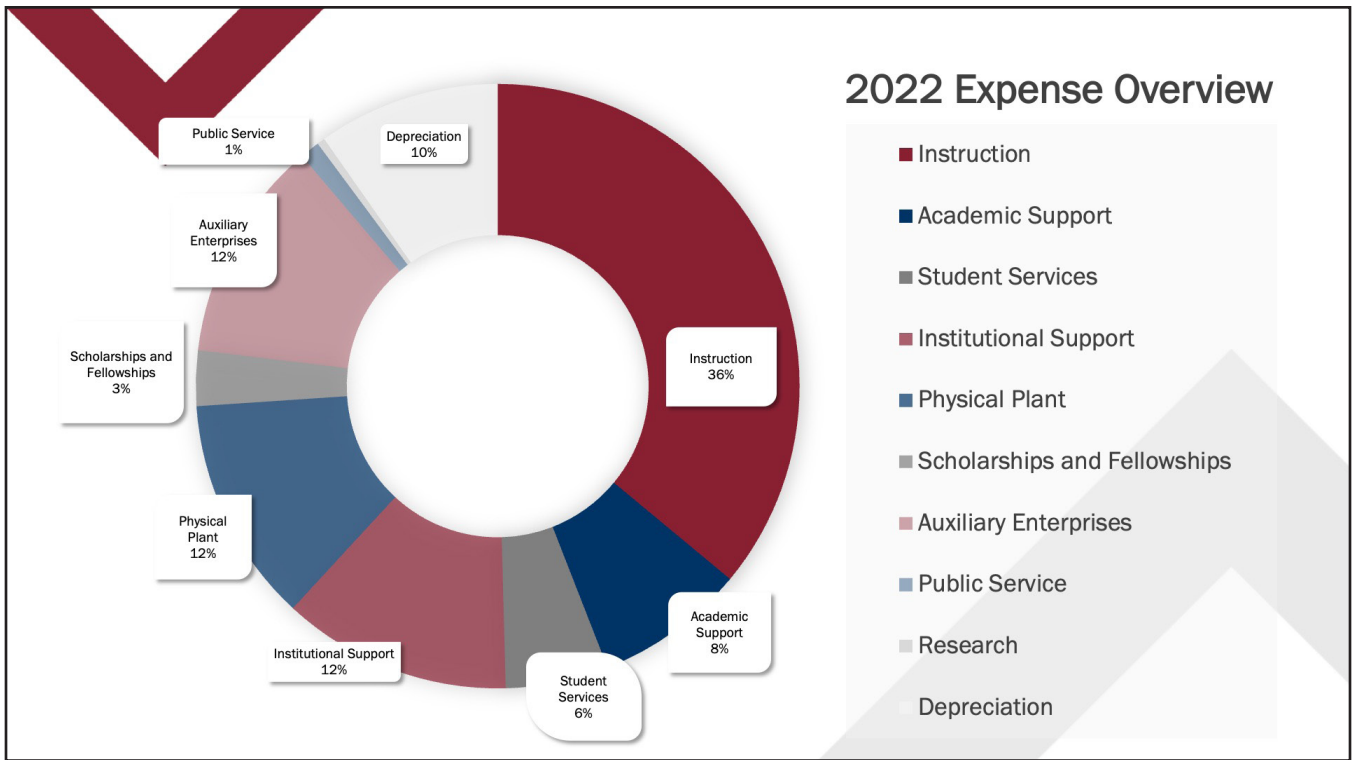
\$1.7 million Grants and Contracts - Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding (HEERF)

\$0.9 million Sales and Services of Educ. Depts.

\$2.7 million Auxiliary Enterprises

\$1.8 million Grants and Contracts

\$2.0 million Other



## Expense Overview

This chart shows the breakdown of VCSU's 2022 expenses.

Here is a more detailed breakdown of these revenue numbers.

- \$8.5 million Instruction
- \$1.9 million Academic Support
- \$1.3 million Student Services
- \$2.9 million Institutional Support
- \$2.85 million Physical Plant
- \$.7 million Scholarships and Fellowships
- \$2.8 million Auxiliary Enterprises
- \$.25 million Public Service
- \$.1 million Research
- \$2.3 million Depreciation





# Extraordinary Repair on Campus

Match Calculation	State Fund	VCSU Match	Total	
2:1 Extraordinary Repair	\$408,318	\$816,636	\$1,224,954	Matched
Tier 2 - 1:1	\$309,137	\$309,137	\$618,274	Matched 200,000
Tier 3 - 2:1	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000	Pending Match
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,217,455</b>	<b>\$2,125,773</b>	<b>\$3,343,228</b>	
<b>Total Matched and Available</b>			<b>\$1,624,954</b>	

## Planned Projects

McFarland Clock Tower Repairs	\$85,000
Classroom and Hallway Remodels in McFarland Hall	\$100,000
Press Box Repairs/Stadium ADA Updates	\$640,000
Other projects to be added after completion and budget update	

Future Project Descriptions	Category	ESTIMATE
McFarland Fire Alarm Upgrade (to complete building upgrade)	LS	\$100,000
Field House Emergency Power	LS	\$60,000
Replace McFarland Fire Escape (East)	LS	\$330,000
Card Access on other buildings	LS	\$100,000
Footbridge Structural Repairs	DM	\$276,500
Campus Tuckpointing	DM	\$2,800,000
McFarland Window Replacement	DM	\$2,454,850
Sidewalk Replacement	DM	\$75,000
Total future planned deferred maintenance		\$6,196,350



## The Importance of Tier Funding

VCSU is in support of the Tier funding match requirement changes to a 1:1 match asked by NDUS. We have a long list of deferred maintenance and life safety projects on our campus and being able to access the tier dollars quicker would go a long way to address the needs of VCSU. During the 21-23 biennium, we have been able to match \$1,016,636 of the \$2,125,773 match required to access all of the tier dollars. Therefore, we have only been able to utilize \$1.6 million of the \$3.3 million available to VCSU.



# Budget Request Overview

	General Funds	Special Funds
2021-23 Appropriation / Authority	\$ 24,161,377	\$26,377,846
Current Funding Formula Increase due to Credit Production	\$480,872	
Cost to Continue 21-23 Salary Adjustment	\$114,005	\$120,170
<b>Total 2023-25 Base Budget Request</b>	<b>\$24,756,254</b>	<b>\$26,498,016</b>
<b>Additional Requests</b>		
Behavioral Health Initiative	\$236,000	
Teacher Workforce McCarthy Project	\$11,439,000	\$2,000,000
Capital Campaign Projects		\$22,000,000
<b>Total optional requests</b>	<b>\$11,675,000</b>	<b>\$24,000,000</b>
<b>Total Request</b>	<b>\$36,431,254</b>	<b>\$50,498,016</b>

## Budget Overview

The VCSU 21-23 Base level state funding is \$24,161,377, of which \$408,000 is set aside for our 2:1 match for capital assets and an additional \$47,823 for equipment purchases on campus.

Our requested adjustments would increase our budget by \$594,877. This is made up of two parts. First, the funding formula increases our state funding by \$480,872 due to our increase in completed credit hours. Secondly, we are asking for an increase of \$114,005 to continue the cost of raises during the 21-23 biennium for our employees.

In our special fund authority, we request an increase of \$120,170 to continue the cost of raises during the 21-23 biennium for our employees paid through these funds.

VCSU also asks for spending authority of our Capital Campaign fundraised dollars of 22 million. These funds will be used to fund two important projects for our campus: a much-needed addition to our Osmon Fieldhouse and updates to the Memorial Student Union.

### One-Time Funding Requests

North Dakota has a critical shortage of teachers in all K-12 content areas. VCSU leads the state

in teacher preparation. 1,514 educators in 151 North Dakota communities are VCSU alumni.

VCSU is committed to bringing our nationally-recognized School of Education and Graduate Studies under the same roof in McCarthy Hall. Classrooms and lab spaces will be designed with flexible seating and updated technology which would be similar to what students will encounter in real-world school environments. The layout will also incorporate a large student workroom, curriculum library, and numerous study spaces.

Based on preliminary design, the total cost of the project is estimated at \$13.4 million. VCSU is requesting \$11.4 million to renovate McCarthy Hall for the School of Education and department of Technology. VCSU will contribute to this effort with \$2 million in private donations.

This teacher workforce development project will eliminate more than \$8 million on deferred maintenance. No new faculty or staff will be necessary for this project. This project will enhance the high-quality educational experience students receive at VCSU while helping attract future teachers to the North Dakota workforce.

# Valley City State University

## Comparison of 2021-23 Base Budget to 2023-25 SBHE Request and Executive Recommendation

	2021-23 Base Level	Requested Adjustments	2023-25 SBHE Needs-Based Budget	Executive Recommendation	Difference from 2021-23 Base Level	Difference from SBHE Needs-Based Budget
Campus Operations	\$ 50,083,400		\$ 50,083,400	\$ 50,083,400		
Funding Formula Adjustment		\$ 480,872	\$ 480,872	\$ 480,872	\$ 480,872	\$ -
Costs to Continue Salaries/FB		\$ 234,175	\$ 234,175	\$ 234,175	\$ 234,175	\$ -
Behavioral Health Initiative		\$ 236,000	\$ 236,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Executive Compensation Recommendation 6%/4% plus health insurance			\$ -	\$ 3,138,342	\$ 3,138,342	\$ 3,138,342
<b>Total Campus Operations</b>	\$ 50,083,400	\$ 951,047	\$ 51,034,447	\$ 53,936,789	\$ 3,853,389	\$ 3,138,342
Capital Assets	\$ 455,823	\$ -	\$ 455,823	\$ 455,823	\$ -	\$ -
Plant Improvement Carryover	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Capital Projects - Non-State Funded	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Capital Projects - Non-State Carryover	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	\$ 50,539,223	\$ 951,047	\$ 51,490,270	\$ 54,392,612	\$ 3,853,389	\$ 3,138,342
General Fund	\$ 24,161,377	\$ 830,877	\$ 24,992,254	\$ 26,330,261	\$ 2,168,884	\$ 1,338,007
Special Funds	\$ 26,377,846	\$ 120,170	\$ 26,498,016	\$ 28,062,351	\$ 1,684,505	\$ 1,564,335
<b>Total Funding Sources</b>	\$ 50,539,223	\$ 951,047	\$ 51,490,270	\$ 54,392,612	\$ 3,853,389	\$ 2,902,342
<b>FTE</b>	<b>202.77</b>	<b>10.17</b>	<b>212.94</b>	<b>211.94</b>	<b>9.17</b>	<b>-1</b>

### Comparison

We support the executive recommendation of a 6% and 4% raise and the request for the increases to be funded by general dollars. VCSU would need to have an annual tuition increase of 4.73% to fund the increase in salary and health insurance if this funding is not paid by general fund which impacts our students in a big way.

VCSU has seen increased cost during the last biennium due to inflation in many areas. One example of this is our Rainbow Gas contract, VCSU saw an increase from fixed price of \$3.97/unit in 2021 to \$7.92/unit in 2022 which may be a \$150,000 direct impact to our reserves. VCSU is in support of the NDUS inflation formula adjustment request.

Additionally, we support the behavioral health initiative proposed by NDUS and recommended by the Executive budget. The VCSU portion of this initiative is \$236,000. During the past two academic years, our students have had an increased wait time to be seen by behavioral health staff due to increased numbers seeking services as well as difficulties in filling an open counselor position. The behavioral health initiative would support 1 FTE for a mental health provider and professional development trainings to help VCSU meet the needs of its students.

FTE counts from last biennium to this have increased on campus. These additions to FTE since the previous budget cuts have been fueled by student growth and have been made strategically, not by bringing back positions in the areas that have been cut, but instead by focusing on areas of strategic importance in academic growth areas, health service, mental health, diversity, and adjunct and dual credit instructors.



## Forward Together

- Support student success in and out of the classroom
- Improve quality of academic offerings and explore additions of innovative programs
- Provide support for best practices in online teaching and learning
- Continue strategic work to positively impact enrollment, retention and completion

### Let's Move Forward Together

Overall, VCSU is in a great place. We are achieving student success on multiple levels and continuing to improve our academic offerings to ensure students are getting the highest-quality education.

Our entire team is working on best practices to offer high-quality teaching and learning.

VCSU is one of the fastest-growing regional schools in the upper Midwest and we continue to have sustained enrollment growth, but that success and growth have helped us realize our current facilities are well-loved, but inadequate. McCarthy Hall is a prime example. With our Forward Together focus, we are making a monumental effort to propel VCSU into the future. The Campaign for Valley City State University is our way of ensuring continued service to our students by providing them with updated campus buildings and scholarship enhancements.

Thank you for your time today and I look forward to partnering with you to continue supporting North Dakota's future workforce.

# Thank you



## **Thank You for your Time**

Thank you, again, for your support of VCSU and Higher Education in ND.

We support the NDUS needs-based budget request and are proud to play a part in the overall success of higher education in North Dakota.



**VALLEY CITY**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

## THE NEED

# North Dakota Needs Teachers

**Our state has a critical shortage of teachers**



In April 2021, the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board declared a critical shortage in all K-12 content areas.

**Teachers are needed in every grade and content area**



Before the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the state of North Dakota had 393 unfilled teaching positions.

## THE SOLUTION

# VCSU Leads the State and Nation in Teacher Preparation



**Ranked the top Elementary Education Program in the United States by Study.com**

**VCSU graduates more teachers than any other university in the state**

### Rural School Partner Benefit Program

Partners with districts to help teachers obtain their master's degree by offering a 50% tuition waiver.

### 1,514 Valley City State University Alumni

Working as teachers and administrators at 359 North Dakota schools.



# 25 years

in a row VCSU has been ranked by U.S. News and World Report

DEDICATED SPACE FOR THE VCSU SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

# Preparing a Teaching Workforce



McCarthy hall was built in 1930 as a lab school for training teachers. In 1930 the entire program had 30 graduates.

During 2021-2022, 304 VCSU students were awarded either a baccalaureate or graduate degree. Currently, the School of Education and Graduate Studies is spread out across campus. The project will bring the entire School of Education under one roof and will allow for better collaboration and enhanced learning experiences for students.

## McCarthy Hall is redesigned with the teachers of tomorrow in mind.

### Faculty Space

Currently, education faculty have offices in various parts of campus. This renovation will allow the department to collaborate and bring an enhanced team approach to supporting students as they prepare to become teachers.

### Technology Education

Spaces for technology education include dedicated environments for high-tech machining, assembly, wood fabrication, metal fabrication and a virtual reality lab area.

### Educational Spaces

Spaces are designed with flexible seating and updated technology similar to what students will encounter in real-world school environments. The layout will also incorporate a large student workroom, curriculum library and numerous study spaces.



Re-purposing a historic building with student experience in focus.



Valley City State University is requesting \$11.4 million to renovate McCarthy Hall for the School of Education and Graduate Studies and the department of Technology Education. VCSU will contribute to this effort with \$2 million in private donations.

This is a teacher workforce development project, and will eliminate more than \$8 million in deferred maintenance.

Based on preliminary design, the cost is estimated at \$13.4 million.



This project renovates existing space and will make this historic building more efficient. VCSU anticipates cost savings for heating, lighting, air conditioning and maintenance. This one-time request will have a positive impact on VCSU's long-term utility budget.

No new Full Time Equivalent (FTEs) or staff will be necessary for this project.



VCSU has completed preliminary design and costing of the project. If funded, we will begin immediately. The renovation will be completed in two to three years.

This project will enhance the high-quality educational experience students receive at Valley City State University. This will also help attract future teachers for the North Dakota workforce.



**McCarthy Hall will be renovated and dedicated for VCSU education programs.**





IN THE NEWS

# VCSU receives \$600,000 teacher preparation grant to address teacher shortage

Scholarships available for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers seeking a teaching license

Valley City State University (VCSU) has received a \$600,000 grant from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction to help prepare more teachers to fill critical teaching needs across the state.

The grant will fund the VCSU Grow Your Own Scholarship Program. This program offers scholarships to individuals aspiring to become a licensed teacher in North Dakota. It is specifically designed for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers working in North Dakota school districts.

“Valley City State University has one of the best teacher preparation programs in the nation. This grant allows us to offer scholarships to cover tuition costs for individuals working toward their teaching degree in North Dakota,” VCSU President Alan LaFave said. “We lead the state in preparing future educators and this grant opens doors for more individuals interested in joining the education workforce.”

Scholarships of \$3,200 will be awarded through this program. This amount covers tuition costs for an entire semester for a full-time student.

Scholarships available include:

- Scholarships for two semesters for currently enrolled, or electing to enroll full-time, in VCSU’s Online Teacher Education Program. This program includes content areas of Elementary, Business, English, History, Mathematics, Spanish, Social Science, and Technology Education.
- Scholarships for three to four semesters for students seeking a teaching degree with a specialized endorsement area. Endorsements available include English Language Learners (ELL), Early Childhood/Kindergarten, and Special Education.

“Our graduates in the field change the lives of students every day,” Dean of the VCSU School of Education Allen Burgad said. “We are proud to have 1,514 VCSU alumni teaching or serving as school administrators in 359 schools in 151 different North Dakota communities. Our hope is this scholarship program will help more individuals pursue teaching as a career to inspire the next generation of leaders in our state.”



**VALLEY CITY**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

# 2022 Campus Snapshot | Valley City State University

## MISSION

Valley City State University is a public, regional university offering exceptional programs in an active, learner-centered community that promotes meaningful scholarship, ethical service, and the skilled use of technology. As an important knowledge resource, the University offers programs and outreach that enrich the quality of life in North Dakota and beyond. Through flexible, accessible, and innovative baccalaureate and master's programs, VCSU prepares students to succeed as educators, leaders, and engaged citizens in an increasingly complex and diverse society.

## SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

### Teacher Preparation

- 322 students enrolled in elementary education and 188 students enrolled in secondary education majors (Fall 2021)
- 163 students enrolled in online Master of Education (M.Ed.) and Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) (Fall 2021)
- Offer the only online elementary education degree program in North Dakota to increase access for teacher preparation
- Unique program in which junior/senior elementary education students serve as substitute teachers in Valley City, Fargo, and West Fargo schools
- 1,438 VCSU alumni serve as teachers and school administrators in 323 schools/education units in 148 North Dakota communities (Fall 2021)

### Integration of Open Educational Resources (OER)

- Faculty encouraged to replace expensive textbooks with accessible OER in curricula
- OER have saved VCSU students more than \$1.5 million in textbook costs since spring 2016
- State audit showed VCSU as a leader in OER use

### Three-Year Programs

- 28 students who completed graduation requirements in less than four years were recognized during the 2021-2022 school year.

### Academic Specialties

- Elementary and Secondary Education
- Fisheries and Wildlife Science
- Technology Education
- Health Science
- Music
- Software Engineering

### Academic Centers

- Don Mugan Career and Technical Education Leadership Center
- Great Plains STEM Education Center
- Prairie Waters Education and Research Center

## COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

### Articulation Agreements with Community Colleges

- More than 27 articulation agreements with two-year schools for baccalaureate completion in face-to-face and online programs

### VCSU and North Dakota State University

- Collaborate on human development and family science/elementary education program
- VCSU faculty teach elementary education coursework on NDSU campus
- Students who complete program earn degrees from both institutions

### VCSU and Dakota College at Bottineau

- DCB students reside on VCSU campus and participate in DCB two-year degree and certificate programs
- Popular DCB nursing program hosted in Rhoades Science Center on VCSU campus
- DCB delivers developmental courses needed by some VCSU students

### NEtX (Network for Excellence in Teaching)

- Valley Partnership of VCSU, NDSU, and Minnesota State University Moorhead participates with 11 other colleges and universities in Minnesota and South Dakota
- Funded by Bush Foundation grant to prepare more effective teachers; provides continuing support for new teachers in classroom

### COMPETITIVE POSITION (REGIONAL/NATIONAL)

- Top regional college in North Dakota as ranked by U.S. News and World Report for 2022
- A U.S. News "Best College" for 24 consecutive years
- Ranked the No. 1 Elementary Education program in the nation by Study.com

### STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

#### Strengths

- Close-knit, personal campus: students and faculty/staff know each other, work closely together
- 26-plus years of leadership in integration of technology in learning, accentuated by laptop campus
- New Center for the Arts building opened in 2022
- Innovative and responsive program offerings
- Strong town-gown relationship
- Highly active, supportive university foundation, allocated \$1.9 million for student scholarship support in 2021-22
- Long-term history of fiscal responsibility and unqualified audits
- Renowned teacher-preparation programs
- Successful athletic program with true scholar-athletes
- Attractive campus in picturesque community

#### Challenges

- Oldest average-aged buildings of NDUS campuses carry significant deferred maintenance
- Extending prospective student market beyond traditional recruiting region
- Recruitment and retention of faculty and staff
- Adjustments to state budget realities

#### Needs

- Life safety improvements: fire alarm system upgrades, emergency egress and ADA accessibility improvements, emergency power enhancements, card access for academic buildings
- McCarthy Hall updates and renovation to serve as the home for the school of education and technology education
- McFarland Hall (main building) tuck-pointing, air-handling systems, classroom renovation
- Student Center renovation/repurposing

#### Priorities

- Providing students with high-quality educational experiences and engaging co-curricular activities
- Student recruitment, retention and completions
- \$25 million capital campaign
- Physical plant improvement

## ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

**President:** Alan LaFave

### Leadership Team *Effective 7/1/2022*

- Larry Brooks, VP for Academic Affairs
- Erica Buchholz, VP for Business Affairs
- Erin Klingenberg, VP for Student Affairs
- Erin Heide, Director for Enrollment Services
- Cory Anderson, Executive Director of University Advancement
- Joseph Tykwinski, Chief Information Officer
- Dennis McCulloch, Interim Athletic Director
- Tammy Jo Anderson Taft, Director for Marketing and Communications

### FACULTY/STAFF STATISTICS

- Total faculty/staff FTE: 215
- Tenured faculty: 57%
- Full-time faculty with terminal degrees: 52%
- Student-to-faculty ratio: 12:1

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

#### Total Undergraduate Students (Fall 2021): 1,523

- Full-time undergraduates: 819
- Part-time undergraduates: 704

#### Total Graduate Students (Fall 2021): 163

- Full-time graduate students: 7
- Part-time graduate students: 156

#### Total Enrollment (Fall 2021): 1,686

#### Online Only (Fall 2021): 26%

#### Degrees Conferred in 2020-21 (408)

- Certificates: 74
  - Undergraduate certificates: 58
  - Graduate certificates: 16
- Master's degrees: 36
- Bachelor's degrees: 295
- Associate's degrees: 3

#### Student Achievement Measures (SAM)

**Completion Rates at 6 Years (Starting Fall 2015):** 53% first-time, full-time (49% transfer cohort)

## FINANCIALS

### FY21 Operating Budget (2020-21)

\$10,270,710 State General Fund  
\$ 7,712,945 Tuition & Fees  
\$ 9,058,545 Other Funds  
\$27,042,200 Total

### Special Budget Considerations

- \$32 million Center for the Arts (opened spring 2022)
- \$408,000 Extraordinary Repair 2:1 Match (match completed)
- \$309,137 Tier 2 Building 1:1 Match (match completed)
- \$500,000 Tier 3 Building 2:1 Match

### 2020-21 Completed Student Credit Hours:

33,526

### 2021-22 Cost to Attend (Tuition and Fees)

- In-state: \$6,364
- Out-of-state: \$11,137

# McCarthy Hall CLASSROOM SPACE

CURRENT



RENDERING



# McCarthy Hall COLLABORATION SPACE

CURRENT



RENDERING



# McCarthy Hall SCHOOL OF ED ENTRANCE HALL

CURRENT



RENDERING



# McCarthy Hall SCHOOL OF EDUCATION SPACES

CURRENT



RENDERING



# McCarthy Hall TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

CURRENT



RENDERING





**VALLEY CITY**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

# THE BULLETIN

A Publication for Alumni & Friends of Valley City State University

ISSUE 071662 | NOVEMBER 2022



## **The Changing Landscape of Education**

VCSU is a leader in preparing teachers. Alumni serving at schools across the state offer their thoughts on the state of education, how prepared new teachers are to face challenges and bright spots they see in their field. [Read More - PAGE 6](#)



# THE BULLETIN

ISSUE 071662 | NOVEMBER 2022

## Features

- Page 1 *Message from President LaFave*
- Page 2 *A Message from the Foundation Director*
- Page 3 *VCSU News*
- Page 6 *Feature Story*
- Page 10 *News from the Capital Campaign Director*
- Page 11 *Fine Arts*
- Page 12 *Alumni Corner*
- Page 18 *Viking Athletics Highlights*
- Page 28 *In Remembrance*
- Page 22 *Just Married*
- Page 25 *Lil' Vikings*
- Page 26 *Vikings on the Move*
- Page 29 *Continuing the Connection*



Cover Photo - Caitlyn Fischbach of Aberdeen, S.D. works with a child. Photo by Jerilyn Beckman



The Bulletin is published in spring, summer and fall by the Valley City State University Alumni Association.

Learn more at [vcsualumni.org](http://vcsualumni.org)  
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16



13



3



12



6

Challenging Times Produce Innovation & Inspiration  
**FEATURE STORY**



20  
Fall Sports Highlights

**ATHLETICS INFO**

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# VCSU leads in education and innovation in teacher preparation

President Alan LaFave, D.M.A.

Greetings from Valley City State University!

Wherever I travel in North Dakota and surrounding states, one of the most



recognized and celebrated centers of excellence on the VCSU campus is the School of Education. With over 1,438 educators serving as teachers and administrators in 323 schools throughout North Dakota, we are proud to be positively known for this excellent program and continue to find ways to lead from the front.

Here are just a few additional data points illustrating the success of our program:

VCSU was ranked as the top elementary education program in the nation by Study.com in 2021.

Our Rural School Partner Benefit program continues to build collaborations with partner schools to help teachers obtain a master's degree by offering a 50% tuition waiver to qualified applicants.

We graduated 115 elementary education students in 2021-22, more than any other North Dakota institution.

Our collaborative elementary education program with North Dakota State University is providing real-life in-classroom experiences and valuable experiential learning for our students in West Fargo.

The innovative substitute teacher program provides hands-on experiences for our students at an early stage in their coursework, preparing them for successful student teaching experiences and careers as educators.

The success and placement of our graduates are positive performance indicators of the program, but we all know we must do more to encourage, recruit, prepare and retain teachers for the workforce needs of today and future years. With nearly 400 unfilled teaching positions available in North Dakota at the beginning of the 2022 school year, this need is more apparent than ever. Teachers are needed in every grade level and content area.

Under the leadership of Dr. Allen Burgad, Dean of the VCSU School of Education, we were recently chosen as the recipient of a \$600K grant from the Department of Public Instruction to provide scholarship assistance and a pathway for current paraprofessionals and substitute teachers to obtain their licensure. This grant helps illustrate the confidence that many stakeholders have in our ability to make a difference in this important work. Congratulations to all who helped develop the innovative proposal and secure these funds to address the ongoing teacher shortage.

Those choosing a career path in education have our deepest respect and gratitude for their willingness to join a noble profession and help address one of the most critical workforce needs in our state, region and nation. Valley City State University is dedicated to continuing the important work to which we have been committed since our founding and we pledge to continue leading in this effort.

Go Vikings!

## 58th Annual North Dakota Suncoast Luncheon in Florida

**Saturday, February 25, 2023 – Social hour begins at 10:30 a.m.**

The annual luncheon will be at the newly renovated River Wilderness Country Club in Parrish, Florida. Luncheon and Program – 12 noon (Everyone chooses from a menu and pays at the event).

Please join us! Call Jay Morgan, 941-378-4444 to RSVP and for more information.

# Moving The Needle

Cory Anderson, '89  
Executive Director for University Advancement

Campus is alive with construction and innovation and our vision has never been clearer. The numbers prove there has never been a better time to be a Viking.



Anderson

Support from our alumni and friends has resulted in VCSU becoming one of the fastest growing institutions in the Midwest.

As we approach an enrollment of 1,700 students many contributing factors have played a role, but none so great as your investment in prospective and current VCSU students.

In 2011, we awarded just over \$550,000 in annual scholarships. That number rose to just over \$1.9

million this past year. The escalation was due in large part to increasing our scholarship values to the highest in the region and by making those scholarships renewable to incoming students. That's a 245% percent increase in scholarships over that period.

Thank you for helping us move the needle.

The best way we can raise ourselves up is by doing something for someone who will benefit from the Viking experience. The Foundation Office focus will always be to improve our position and help VCSU attract and retain a growing, diverse population of students. We will also provide a quality experience for our alumni, friends, campus and community.

It's indeed a GREAT time to be a Viking.

## 2022-2023 VCSU Alumni Board of Directors

### PRESIDENT

Zach McBeain '15

### FOUNDATION REPRESENTATIVE

Dave Bass '77

### VICE PRESIDENT

Kendra Krueger '12

### PAST PRESIDENT

Paul Keidel '86

### BOARD MEMBERS

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Wendy (Reidman) Hogue '85

Robert Keller '89

Nicholas Lee '16 MAT '21

Paul Leier '85

Stacy Wendel-Monilaws '02

Tristan Ross '08

William Tyrrell '83

Brianna (Johnson) Walsh '16

## 2021-2022 VCSU Foundation Board of Directors

### CHAIR

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### VICE CHAIR

Matt Pedersen

### TREASURER

Jeff Nathan

### SECRETARY

Dave Bass '77

### BOARD MEMBERS

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Bob Bergan '82

DuWayne Bott '58

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Mark Finstad

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Larry Robinson '71

Paul Sandness '76

Jerry A. Topp '74

*Cory Anderson '89, ex officio*

*Alan LaFave, ex officio*

*Erica Buchholz, ex officio*

## By the Numbers

**8.6**

million dollar increase  
in our endowment  
through the  
ND Challenge Grant  
since 2013

**90%**

of our incoming  
freshmen receive  
a merit-based  
scholarship

(80% are renewable)

**37.8%**

of new students received  
renewable scholarship  
that covered more than  
50% of in-state tuition

**SUBSTANTIAL  
SCHOLARSHIPS**

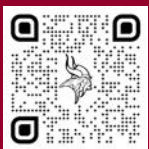
per merit in our region

**LESS DEBT**

accumulated by VCSU graduates  
upon graduation than our  
regional counterparts

# Summer Vikes on Central a Success

In a symbolic and visible display of the important connection between VCSU and the Valley City community, the 2022 incoming freshman class, with current students, athletic teams, staff, faculty, and VCSU Viking family members met at the footbridge and walked as a group to join Summer Vikes on Central. The event was coordinated by the Summer Nights on Central Committee and included many participating local businesses and community members. The event featured live music, shopping and food vendors.



Watch a Summer Vikes  
on Central recap video



*Forward  
Together*

## The perfect match

VCSU's Capital Campaign + Your IRA

Consider VCSU's Forward Together Campaign when making your Year End Planning decisions.

Your IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) would make an excellent gift to VCSU's Capital Campaign.

If you are 70 ½ you can roll over up to \$100,000 tax free to the charity of your choice, tax free.

For further information contact your tax accountant or the VCSU Foundation at 701-845-7203.

# VCSU enrolls 4th largest freshman class in school history and sees growth in on-campus student population

## 21% enrollment growth over past decade; Increase in students living on campus

Valley City State University (VCSU) has, for the fourth time in school history, a freshman class of more than 200 students.

Overall enrollment at the university is 1,658 with 205 freshmen. Also included are upper-class students, students pursuing graduate degrees and dual credit students. For the fourth year in a row, the student body has eclipsed 1,650, and there are almost 300 freshmen and transfer students enrolled this fall.

“One of the areas we have seen positive momentum in is the number of students choosing to live in our residence halls. We are very pleased with a 22% increase of students living on campus this semester,” VCSU President Alan LaFave said. “This positive occupancy rate reflects an increase in our freshman class size, along with more interest from our returning students to be an active part of our university community.”

VCSU has seen enrollment grow by 21% in the past decade. In that time frame, multiple programs and

partnerships have helped ensure VCSU continues to meet student and community needs. This includes launching the new Master of Science degree in Business Information Systems and continued collaboration with North Dakota State University to offer a dual degree in Elementary Education. VCSU continues to assist, educate and retain teachers through the Rural School Partner Benefit Program and the innovative substitute teaching component for students admitted to the VCSU School of Education.

“There are so many great things happening on our campus. Our full-time student population has increased from last year. It’s also important to note that our retention rates increased from last fall, indicating strong student satisfaction,” LaFave said. “You can feel the energy of full-time, on-campus students every day. We are fortunate to have so many wonderful students actively engaged on campus and in our community.”

## JOIN VCSU ALUMNI & FRIENDS FOR GATHERINGS IN ARIZONA

For more information or to be added to the Arizona mailing list, please call the VCSU Foundation Office at 701-845-7203.

To RSVP, contact Kim Hesch at 701-845-7403 or [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu).

### FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2023 – PEORIA, ARIZONA

#### No-Host Luncheon @ 11:30 a.m.

The Links Neighborhood Grill  
18823 North Country Club Parkway  
Peoria, Arizona

### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2023 – MESA, ARIZONA

The Terrace Green at Viewpoint Golf Resort  
650 North Hawes Road  
Mesa, Arizona

#### Alumni Social & Luncheon — \$15 per person

11:00 a.m. — Reunion Social  
12 noon — Luncheon  
1:00 p.m. — Program

*Bring a friend! These events are not restricted to VCSU alumni.*

# Alumni Anecdotes



## VCSU selected as top public regional college in North Dakota by U.S. News and World Report

25th consecutive year VCSU has been ranked by the publication

Valley City State University (VCSU) announced it has been ranked as the top regional public college in North Dakota by U.S. News and World Report.

VCSU has been ranked for 25 consecutive years. This year, VCSU also earned the top public college ranking for Best Value in the Midwest.

"This accolade reinforces the fact that VCSU offers a valuable and high-quality educational experience for every student," VCSU President Alan LaFave said. "For a quarter of a century, we have been ranked by U.S. News and World Report as one of the best colleges in our region. Our faculty and staff are proud to continue that tradition."

The report is based on retention, peer reviews, graduate rates, measures of student excellence, alumni giving rates and the educational expenditure per student.

"VCSU continues to rank in the upper echelon because of the hard work of our faculty, staff and generosity of our supporters," LaFave added. "Our commitment to a quality educational experience reflects in everything we do at VCSU. We are so grateful to have the support of our community, alumni and state as we continue to strive to help prepare students for the future."

The ranking also showed VCSU alumni had the highest amount of giving as compared to all other public colleges in the Midwest.

VCSU was ranked No. 4 in the Midwest category of public regional colleges. The Midwest region includes North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri and Kansas.



### Tyler Manske '22

At VCSU, Manske pursued a degree in music. He paused in 2015 to spend time narrowing down what he wanted to pursue. He met Michael J. Glasgow, a talented North Carolina composer and conductor. The two struck up a conversation about music. Without hearing Manske sing, Glasgow offered him a choir spot for a performance in 2017. Manske later discovered it was scheduled in Carnegie Hall. Manske seized the opportunity, and had a wonderful experience. He returned in 2022 for the world premiere of another of Glasgow's songs.

"To walk the same steps as legends like The Beatles and Tchaikovsky was an honor," Manske said. "As I walked back to the hotel with my tuxedo jacket slung over my shoulder, I was grateful for the experience and excited for the cheap, greasy New York pizza that awaited me."

Manske graduated from VCSU in 2022, and is a communications specialist for Grand Forks Public Health. "Though my degree in music is not in line with my career," he said, "that isn't to say that the broad scope of my education didn't help get me where I am today. Because I had such a solid educational foundation, I was able to take advantage of whatever career opportunities came my way."



# Challenging Times Producing Innovation & Inspiration

Five VCSU alumni share their thoughts on the wins, challenges and hope they see in new teachers graduating from their alma mater

VCSU alum and elementary school principal Sara Schafer, '89, loves her job.

"I have a front row seat to the greatest show on earth," she says, laughing. Schafer loves working with students, teachers and parents as the principal at Bennett Elementary within the Fargo Public School system.

In the 33 years she has worked in schools, some things have not changed.

Kids still need a high-quality education and adults who genuinely care about them. Educators still dream



Schafer

of helping every student find their greatest potential and need support from administration and their community to achieve that goal.

But it is clear that education is changing. Filling open positions at schools is challenging. Technology creates opportunities and multiple pressures for teachers and students. Political debates and mental health concerns are all pressures that, at times, rest squarely on teachers' and administrators' shoulders.

We spoke with five administrators about their views on education, what they see in new teacher graduates coming from their alma mater and what brings them the most hope on hard days.

## IF NOT US, THEN WHO?

Brandon Bata, '07, started his college career as a basketball player, became a professional as a math teacher and now serves as a high school principal in Oakes, N.D.



Bata

Although he has only been in education for 15 years, he has already seen many things change.

"There are a lot more things to be aware of now with mental health issues with students and teachers coming to the forefront," he said. "The demands on teachers with technology has increased and it is hard to disconnect."

Finding a balance that offers connection with students, but the ability to disconnect is a narrow path.

"In our district, we are committed to three things: genuine relationships, respect and growth mindset. We have really tried to focus on relationships at the forefront," Bata said.

Those relationships are strengthened through activities, athletics and being involved.

But sometimes it's not enough, and that has impacts on hiring and retention.

"Hiring has been challenging," Bata said. "We have been fortunate to fill all of our vacancies, but it's been extremely difficult."

Bata said there are numerous stressors being placed on teachers' shoulders, that could be contributing to the shortage.

"It's a hard lift and not easy work, but if we are not here doing this important work, then who comes behind us," he said. "If not us, then who?"

One answer to that question could be in classrooms at VCSU.

"VCSU grads are top notch. They are student-first and want to build relationships," he said. "They are extremely prepared. It's one thing to have the skills and another thing to learn how to adapt those skills when changes come up."

## FINDING FANTASTIC PEOPLE

Schafer has also seen the number of applications for open positions at her school decline.

As a principal, she said, the most important job she has is to "hire really great people."

She said it is encouraging to know that many school districts are all trying to come up with solutions for this issue. One way Fargo Public Schools, including Bennett Elementary, have filled some of those gaps is by having future teachers enter the classroom as substitute teachers.

VCSU offers this opportunity to students and partner schools, which helps students gain experience and schools fill critical substitute teacher needs.

Although the future teachers do not have the necessary coursework, it does give them a clear picture of what life as a teacher is like, Schafer explained.

Schafer has also seen bright spots by partnering with colleagues at VCSU to bring practicum students in for reading or science.

Bringing VCSU students in to help elementary learners not only gives the future teachers experience, but also allows full-time teachers time to participate in professional development and other important activities.

"Teachers are all working very hard and they have kids on their minds and hearts all of the time," she said.

"We are expecting teachers to have an average of 20 to 30 students and be everything for them," Schafer said. "You can't pour from an empty bucket. It's important to carve out time for your family and yourself to do those things that make you you. You can't do that if you are doing school 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

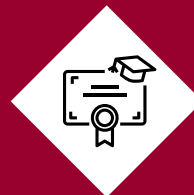
*Continued on page 8*

# Teaching and the Numbers



**1,438 teachers**

and administrators in North Dakota are VCSU alumni in 323 schools and 148 communities.



**142 graduates**

received degrees in education last year from VCSU.



**Critical shortage**

On March 10, 2022, the North Dakota Education Standards and Practices Board declared all content areas as "critical shortage" for the 2022-2023 school year.



## IT TAKES A VILLAGE, EVERY DAY

As superintendent of South Prairie School District just south of Minot, Wayne Stanley has also experienced the challenge of hiring crucial employees.

The district tries to keep pay competitive, as to not lose staff to larger markets like Minot, but things are markedly different from when he first graduated from VCSU in 1992.

"It's a totally different hiring landscape," Stanley said. When he graduated, teachers would take jobs wherever one was offered. Now, applicants have the luxury of choosing where they want to be partially because there are so few candidates. He noted they typically get applicants from the region, and rarely beyond.

This has led districts like South Prairie to prioritize investing in people, infrastructure and building a strong sense of community. There is no main street, but they have worked hard to build a strong culture, Stanley said.

"We pride ourselves on being community-oriented. Our expectations are high and we have a good support system of parents," he said. "That is what can make or break a school system. The adage about 'it takes a village' is true."

Part of Stanley's village includes maintaining ties with VCSU. Last school year he was asked to supervise a VCSU student teacher. He agreed instantly. "The world of education requires a level of support within and for each other," Stanley said. "It requires networking between superintendents and colleges."

This type of partnership allows a school to see a student teacher in action with a classroom before potentially offering them employment.

"We see how prepared they are," Stanley said. For Stanley, one of his VCSU student teachers was "hands-down our number one choice."

"What she came out of VCSU with was above and beyond," he said.

Superintendent Stanley with students at South Prairie School.



## PROMOTING EDUCATION AS A CAREER

Retaining new teachers and changing the conversation about education as a profession has been a top priority for fellow superintendent Dr. Michael McNeff, '04.

"Recently there has been this push to talk about education and why people are leaving. We must do a better job talking about why we are staying in education," McNeff said. "We have to think about how we are promoting education as a career."

McNeff has led Rugby Public Schools for more than a decade and described how the district uses a grant to offer instructional coaching and mentors. Building a team approach to help everyone improve has worked well.

That team mentality can also help others working in the school, like paraprofessionals, find the support they need to go back to school and get a degree to become a full-time teacher.

This fall, VCSU announced a grant-funded scholarship program to help individuals working as substitute teachers or paraprofessionals in North Dakota schools return to college. The online education courses would help those individuals get their teaching degree.

Creating pathways for more potential teachers is important, but ensuring they have knowledgeable, experienced and caring professors is critical.

"There are several people I think of still like Al Olson, Dave Bass, and many people I have served on various committees with," McNeff said. "When we have hired VCSU graduates they do very well in the classroom."

McNeff also acknowledges that first-time teachers have a different set of pressures when approaching a classroom than when he started as a social studies teacher at Dakota Prairie High School in 2004.

"Educators have a challenging environment to navigate," McNeff said. "Our top educators are working year-round to create a great atmosphere for every student."

That atmosphere creates opportunity for all students, regardless of background.

"I wouldn't be anywhere without a great public education," McNeff said. "Education gives everyone an opportunity to be whatever they want as long as they work hard and have supporting individuals."



McNeff

## BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES

Building a community with a strong network of support is what Greg Dobitz, '05, is trying to craft at Oakes Elementary.

"First-year teachers are required to have a mentor," he explained. "Mentors can help with the little things and that is important."

Oakes, located about 60 miles south of Valley City, has multiple VCSU alumni on staff.

"Our first-year teachers from VCSU are very well prepared," he said. "Valley City does such a great job not just with student teaching, but with other practicums and requiring their students to be in classrooms. The more teachers can be in the classroom during their college preparation, the more they will learn because of the practical application."

Graduates with classroom management skills because of their undergraduate student teaching or substitute teaching can help them succeed in their first few years as a professional.



Dobitz

Keeping a new teacher is also a part of the community network Oakes has been building.

To recruit and retain teachers, Dobitz explained Oakes has a retention bonus written into their

contract.

Even with incentives, sometimes it is not enough.

"Last year we had a teacher leave halfway through the year and the students finished online," Dobitz said.

Some of the pressures he sees teachers facing include the need for help with overall staffing, mental health and special education support.

"We need more resources to handle complex situations," Dobitz explained. Planning is important, but sometimes the best plan can be sidelined.

"Sometimes as a teacher you think you are prepared on Monday for the whole week but by 9 a.m., what you planned is totally out the window," he said laughing. Winging it is sometimes required to be adaptable, all in the name of helping a kid "get it."

"It's that bright spot and why I want to be a teacher," Dobitz said. "It's what keeps you coming back, that moment the lightbulb turns on. When you can help facilitate that, there is nothing better, and that hasn't changed."



New teacher and VCSU alumna Hannah Dockter, '22 in her English classroom in Oakes, N.D.

IN THE NEWS

## VCSU receives \$600,000 teacher preparation grant to address teacher shortage

Valley City State University (VCSU) has received a \$600,000 grant from the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction to help prepare more teachers to fill critical teaching needs across the state. The grant will fund the VCSU Grow Your Own Scholarship Program. This program offers scholarships to individuals aspiring to become a licensed teacher in North Dakota. It is specifically designed for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers working in North Dakota school districts.

# The Future of Education

McCARTHY HALL RENOVATION



## VCSU's Capital Campaign *Forward Together* – The Case for McCarthy Hall

Larry Robinson '71, Capital Campaign Director

Significant progress has been made raising the dollars necessary to meet the *Forward Together* capital campaign goals. One of those goals is prioritizing the use of McCarthy Hall as our School of Education and Graduate Studies. This highlights our mission in teacher education. VCSU was founded as a Normal School to train teachers for the schools across the state of North Dakota in 1890, and has remained true to that mission.

Built in 1930, McCarthy Hall served as our College High School until 1965. Little has been done to update the facility to meet the educational needs of today. Our plans for a complete refurbishment of McCarthy include modern classrooms, learning labs, updated technology, HVAC improvements, energy efficiency updates and much more. According to Dr. Allen Burgad, VCSU's Dean for the School of Education and Graduate Studies, "The current facility no longer meets the needs of our students. The proposed renovation of McCarthy would enable our university to expand the number of students attending and graduating from our education program."



Robinson

VCSU's School of Education and Graduate Studies is the largest academic department on campus. With increased enrollment, the need for expanded space for the School of Education is without question. VCSU graduates more teachers than any institution in the state.

In 2021, VCSU's Elementary Education program was recognized as the **number one Elementary Education program** in the nation by Study.com

This fall, North Dakota K-12 schools opened with more than 400 teaching vacancies. VCSU is working hard to respond to this need. The renovation of McCarthy Hall is a critical component necessary to provide the additional updated space for growth in the department.

According to VCSU President, Dr. Al LaFave, "We are excited about our capital campaign and the tremendous impact the improvements identified in the campaign will have on VCSU. These improvements will position us for the next 50 years. We encourage our alumni and friends to join our campaign as we move *Forward Together*."

For further information, contact the VCSU Foundation Office at 701-845-7203.



# VCSU FINE ARTS 2022-2023 CALENDAR

## NOVEMBER 2022

**Friday, Nov. 18**  
Instrumental Concert  
Center for the Arts - 7:30 p.m.

## DECEMBER 2022

**Friday, Dec. 2**  
Christmas at St. Catherine's  
St. Catherine's Church

**Tuesday, Dec. 6**  
Non Major Student Recital  
Center for the Arts - 11 a.m.

## FEBRUARY 2023

**Friday, Feb. 17**  
Instrumental Concert  
Center for the Arts - 7:30 p.m.

**Friday, Feb. 24**  
Intercollegiate Band  
Center for the Arts - Noon

**Saturday Feb. 25**  
Intercollegiate Band Concert  
Center for the Arts - 3 p.m.

## MARCH 2023

**Friday, March 3**  
Choral Showcase Concert  
Center for the Arts - 7:30 p.m.

**Friday, March 10**  
Lydia Watkins, piano Sr. Recital  
Center for the Arts - 7:30 p.m.

## GALLERY SHOWS

**Nov 7 - Nov. 18**  
Senior Art Show  
Hannah Aberle  
"Let There Be Light"

**Nov 21 - Dec. 2**  
Senior Art Show  
Laken Chase  
"One Step Closer"

**Dec. 5 to Dec. 16**  
Senior Art Show  
Nicole Hurt  
"Hidden Underneath"



## One Step Closer

Laken Chase will have her artist talk presenting her senior exhibit, One Step Closer. Her virtual artist talk is scheduled for November 30, at 2 p.m. and can be viewed on YouTube and Facebook.

A reception will follow in the Center for the Arts Gallery on the Valley City State University campus. For anyone unable to attend the show, a virtual exhibit is available on the VCSU YouTube channel.

Laken's artwork consists of close up photos of flowers, insects, animals and more. Photography has always been one of those things that brought joy to Laken's life. When it came time to choose a topic for her art show, Laken knew right away that she wanted to incorporate her close family dynamic into her photos. By combining her love for the little details and her relationships with her family, the concept of close photography was formed. One thing that fascinates Laken about close photography is the thrill of seeing how close one can get to their subject.

Laken's art show invites you as the viewer to look within your surroundings and be able to take One Step Closer. After graduation, Laken is excited to pursue opportunities and hopes to find professional work as a photographer in the region. She is looking forward to what the future holds for her.



## James D. Ployhar Honor Band

The 19th annual James D. Ployhar Honor Band performed in the VCSU Center for the Arts Performance Hall on Friday, Oct. 28, 2022. A variety of classical and modern band literature was performed by 95 students selected from 20 schools across North Dakota and South Dakota, featuring selections arranged by Ployhar.

"We are once again humbled by the regional support for our event," said Jerrold Heide, festival director and music department chair. "Thanks to the efforts of directors and students, we once again offered two quality instrumental ensembles as part of the Ployhar event."

To mark the first Ployhar event in the newly completed Center for the Arts, the event featured Shawn Sudduth, professor from the University of the Cumberland (UC) and Tammy Goerger, the instrumental music teacher at Wahpeton Public Schools.

# ALUMNI CORNER

Kim Svenningsen-Hesch, '91

Asst. Director for University Advancement and Alumni Relations



Svenningsen-Hesch

We are halfway through the semester and it's been busy! It was nice to see alumni during homecoming. I hope your return to campus was great and you enjoyed the activities and reconnecting with fellow Vikings. If you have ideas for future events please let us know.

For those that attended the banquets, socials or the Honors Breakfast, thank you for coming and know your presence made them special. Out of all the activities, the Honors Breakfast stands out in my mind. Honoring alumni and listening to the award recipients explain how VCSU helped shape their personal careers is very rewarding. Congratulations to our Viking Hall of Fame inductees and I'd like to give a special shout out to the 2006 softball team. They were inducted into the Viking Hall of Fame. Thank you for coming back for homecoming and attending all the events with your families.

In September we revved up the 3rd Annual VCSU Alumni Motorcycle and Car Cruise and started our VCSU Tuesday social events (photos on the right). Throughout the year, the VCSU Foundation & Alumni has several opportunities to get out and renew friendships, volunteer and get involved. We have VCSU Tuesday social events, music concerts, athletic events, the Scholarship Auction, and the always lovely Medicine Wheel Park. There are many ways to participate. Check out our website for an updated list of events.

Finally, this fall the university launched a mobile app for both Apple and Android devices. Soon there will be a way for alumni to use this app as well! The app is designed for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and prospective students to stay connected and access important VCSU information, as well as provide a single sign-on for all VCSU services. Please watch for details in early 2023 in how you as an alumni can access this new mobile app and get reconnected with VCSU!



## 3rd Annual VCSU Alumni Motorcycle/Car Cruise

The VCSU alumni association hosted its 3rd annual motorcycle/car cruise on Saturday, September 24. The cruise headed north of Valley City this year and stopped at Lake Ashtabula (Hungry Pelican at the Crossing) and the communities of Dazey and Sanborn. It was a beautiful fall afternoon for the cruise and a fun day visiting with alumni and friends of the University.

# Alumni Honored

Seven Alumni were honored during the Valley City State University Alumni Association 2022 Homecoming celebration Saturday, September 17.

On Saturday morning, an all-Alumni Honors Breakfast was held at the VCSU Student Center. The Honors Breakfast provides the VCSU Alumni Association with an opportunity to present fellow alumni with Certificate of Merit, Alumni Service, and the Young Alumni Achievement awards.

## Young Alumni Achievement Award

The Young Alumni Achievement Award was established in 2012 to recognize VCSU's more recent, outstanding alumni as they embark on their chosen paths and strive for greatness. The award is presented to recognize leaders under the age of 40.



Young Alumni Achievement Award: President Alan LaFave, Nicholas Lee, and Zach McBeain, President of the VCSU Alumni Association.

### Nicholas (Nick) Lee '16, MAT '21

Nick has earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees from VCSU. This fall, Nick became the Principal at St. Catherine's Elementary School in Valley City. He is also the Director for the Community School of the Arts and Arts Administrator of the Bridges Art Council.

Prior to taking the principal position, Nick taught 7-12 grade science at North Sargent Public Schools and was the head Speech Coach and Student Congress Coach for Valley City Public Schools. He has been named 2017 and 2021 State Class A Speech Coach of the Year while coaching the speech team to four state championships and coaching 27 state champions. Nick was recognized with the Distinguished Service Award by the National Speech and Debate Association and achieved one of the highest honors by the National Speech and Debate Association by receiving the Diamond Coach Award.

While attending VCSU, Nick was the Student Senate President and a member of the EBC fraternity.

When asking Nick what graduating from VCSU means to him, he said, "VCSU provided me with a skill set necessary to be successful and helped shape me into the person I am. I graduated with my undergrad and my oldest was in the audience. When I got my master's, all my kids were there. VCSU allowed me to be successful and raise my family. That is so special."

When asked about a special memory of his time at VCSU, Nick had many and wasn't sure how appropriate they might be but settled on being asked to give the Commencement Address on behalf of the students at the December 2021 ceremony.

Nick and his wife, Kaitlen, live in Valley City with their three children (Micaiah, Eliam, and Ezra).



Alumni Service Awards: President Alan LaFave, Rhonda Fairfield, Charlene Stenson, and Zach McBeain, President of the VCSU Alumni Association.

## Alumni Service Awards

The Alumni Service Award was created to recognize alumni or university friends who have attained exceptional achievement in their careers and have made significant contributions to the University through dedicated service, promotion, financial support or other efforts.

### Rhonda (Hansen) Fairfield '09

Rhonda has been part of our VCSU family for 42 years! She was hired in August of 1980 as Secretary for the Division of Education & Psychology. After 18 years, she took an administrative assistant position with the Title III grant office and in 2000 moved to the Vice President of Academic Affairs office. Then in January 2008, Rhonda moved to the VCSU President's Office, where she was the Executive Assistant until her retirement in 2021.

Rhonda was part of offering ropes course team building to our VCSU freshmen for 25 consecutive years. She also served as a Learning to Live (L2L) instructor and offered training to the L2L student mentors annually.

The Student Senate named Rhonda the Student Advocate of the Year in 2014. She has been a member of the V-500 Board of Directors helping raise dollars for academic scholarships and coordinating the silent auction for the annual VCSU Scholarship auction.

When asked what being a VCSU graduate meant to her, Rhonda replied "Completing my degree was a 29-year process that I will never regret. Learning in the classroom and on the job were invaluable to becoming the person I am today."

Her special memory of her time at VCSU includes being part of the 2009 graduating class with her son, Matthew, and being able to present him with his diploma that same day.

Rhonda and her husband Dan, also a graduate of VCSU, live on a farm near Valley City and have three grown children along with one granddaughter.

### Charlene (Stromsodt) Stenson '83

Charlene first came to VCSU as a freshman in 1979 and was recruited to the campus to play basketball. She also participated in softball and track and field and graduated from VCSU in 1983 with a teaching degree in physical education. Following a career of teaching and coaching at various schools and levels in North Dakota as well as in Limon, Colorado, Charlene returned to begin her career at VCSU as an admissions counselor in 1999. Charlene retired this summer as VCSU's Director of Enrollment Services, a position to which she was appointed in 2008. Under Charlene's leadership, the University has seen a jump in enrollment growth.

During her time at VCSU, Charlene has served on the Viking Booster Board, was named Fan of the Year in 2010, and received the Employee of the Quarter award in Spring of 2012.

Charlene was inducted into the Viking Hall of Fame in 1995 for her role on the VCSU women's basketball team from 1979-1983.

When asked what being a VCSU graduate meant to her, Charlene replied, "I am so proud to be a VCSU graduate. The university gave me the opportunity to build my confidence and develop my leadership skills. When I think of VCSU, I think of family because that is what it was for me as a student! Support, encouragement, going the extra mile and dedication to being successful encompasses the VCSU family."

Charlene and her husband Dean reside on a farm near Sanborn. The Stensons love the outdoors and engage in various outdoor activities throughout the year such as hunting, fishing, gardening and snowmobiling.



Certificate of Merit Award: President Alan LaFave, Jason Edwards, Annette Beattie, Marcy Svenningsen and Zach McBeain, President of the VCSU Alumni Association. Not pictured: Kim Schneider.

## Certificate of Merit Awards

The Certificate of Merit was established to recognize alumni for accomplishments, service or other noteworthy honors. This year's alumni honorees, listed with their accomplishments and accolades, include the following:

### Annette (Peterson) Beattie M.Ed. '08

Annette is the Technology & Engineering teacher and the Robotics Coach at Valley City Public Schools.

- Valley City Public School Teacher of the Year
- ACTE New Tech Ed Teacher of the Year
- ITEEA Teacher Excellence Award
- ITEEA Program Excellence Award
- Technology Student Association Chapter Excellence
- Technology Student Association Advisor of the Year

### Jason Edwards M.Ed. '09

Jason is a 7th Grade Life Science Teacher along with Head Girls Cross Country and Assistant Girls Track Coach at Fargo Public Schools.

- EDC Girls Cross Country Coach of the Year – 2018
- ND State Girls Cross Country Coach of the Year – 2018
- USA Track and Field Coach of the Year for ND – 2018
- Five-Time Teacher of the Year Nomination for Fargo Public Schools
- “40 Under 40” Recipient at National High School Coaches Convention – 2019
- Five State Championships in Girls Cross Country
- Four State Championships in Girls Track & Field

### Kim (Ihry) Schneider '96

Kim currently serves as the Title I/Reading Interventionist with Langdon Area Schools.

- Cavalier County Teacher of the Year – 2021
- Langdon Area Schools Teacher of the Year – 2012

### Marcy (Borg) Svenningsen '81

Marcy is the State Director with the ND Farm Service Agency. Prior to that she was the Financial Director for 35 years at the Open Door Center in Valley City.

- Marcy has received recognition for her time and contributions she's made on the various boards she has served on and been an advocate for the ag community. She was appointed by President Joe Biden as the State Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency this past February.



# 2022 HOMECOMING

The Valley City State University Foundation and Alumni Association welcomed alumni back to campus for VCSU Homecoming the weekend of September 16 and 17.

“We loved seeing familiar faces and welcomed our Viking family back to campus,” Executive Director for Advancement Cory Anderson said. “It was a great chance for our Alumni to catch up with old friends, and to see what has happened on campus and in the community.”

“There were many events planned for the weekend. Many of our alumni, community members, students, faculty and staff attended,” Assistant Director for Advancement & Alumni Relations Kim Svenningsen Hesch said.

The 40th Annual Bill Osmon Fun Run kicked off VCSU Homecoming week on Monday, September 12.

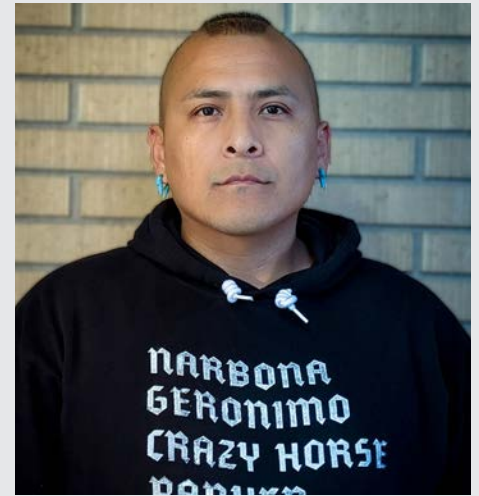
On Friday, Sept. 16, alumni were welcomed back with an ice cream social in the Student Center Lounge. A Hall of Fame Social, Banquet and Ceremony honored inductees on Friday evening at the Valley City Eagles.

New this year was a VCSU Walking Tour. The tour highlighted some of our most notable places on campus along with the chance to see our new Center for the Arts.

The Alumni Honors Breakfast took place Saturday morning followed by the parade. VCSU Football took on Dickinson State University. There was a post-game All Alumni & Friends Social following the football game at the Valley City Eagles with a college student and alumni dance after.



# Alumni Anecdotes



## Dewayne Dale '07

Sports had always been part of Dale's life—personally, academically and professionally. Growing up, he participated in athletics across the board, eventually earning a baseball scholarship from VCSU. In school, Dale earned a health science degree and went on to pursue a master's in athletic training.

Eventually, Dale's love of athletics—and sneakers—turned into a passion that could not be contained to a hobby. He returned to school and earned a third degree in industrial design, going on to work for an innovation team that served brands like KEEN Footwear and Chrome Industries. Dale's own signature sneaker line, FIFTH, was created in 2020. In an interview with Nice Kicks, he said "I honestly want to be able to influence a lot of Indigenous artists and designers, but at the same time, I also want to just keep pushing the envelope in terms of the industry." FIFTH combines authentic Native American design with contemporary style.



# I N S I D E ATHLETICS

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



## Recognizing Viking Greatness

Dennis McCulloch, Interim Athletic Director



It's inspiring to witness greatness. Whether it's Michael Jordan on the basketball court or Tom Brady on the football field, whenever we're able to witness an athlete make history it can be inspiring.

At Valley City State University, we have the honor of recognizing Viking greatness every year when we induct a new class into our Viking Hall of Fame. This year was no different as our Hall of Fame Committee

selected five individuals and one team who were among the best ever to play at VCSU. The committee, the Foundation Office and our emcee Cory Anderson all put together a great format to help honor our inductees.

Molly (Anderson) Welstad '03, Loni (Hall) Thilmony '07, Josh Kasowski '05, Matt Johnson '01, Karalea (Morris) Hoyano '07 and the 2006 softball team are all truly deserving of this honor. I had the pleasure of personally watching all of them compete for the Vikings and to see it come full circle with an induction into the Hall of Fame was fitting.

I think anyone who has been around Viking Athletics would confirm their talent level and impact to their programs. They are all truly great representatives of what it means to be in the Viking Hall of Fame. I look forward to seeing their faces looking at me in our Hall of Fame room for many years to come.

All the inductees were terrific athletes, but what we sometimes forget is that they are all amazing people who have represented their family name at a high level on and off the field. All the parents and people (teachers, coaches, etc.) involved in their lives can be very proud of the people they have become and how they are still impacting the world.

Every year that I've been able to attend a Hall of Fame event I'm always inspired by the stories behind how they got to this point in their lives. It's also fun to hear their memories of being a Viking and the types of things they remember. Most of the time, it is not the games or success but the people that they bonded with. It's a reminder that the experiences our athletes take with them are more about relationships and not just about getting that next win. Those relationships help shape who our student-athletes become. And when they become great people, that's inspiring.



## 2022 Hall of Fame

Valley City State University added five individuals and one team to its Vikings Athletic Hall of Fame during Homecoming Weekend.

The Class of 2022 was officially inducted during a ceremony at the Valley City Eagles Club on Friday, Sept. 16. This year's inductees include Molly (Anderson) Welstad '03, Karalea (Morris) Hoyano '07, Loni (Hall) Thilmony '07, Josh Kasowski '05, Matt Johnson '01 and the 2006 softball team.



Read more about the inductees at [www.vcsuvikings.com/halloffame](http://www.vcsuvikings.com/halloffame)

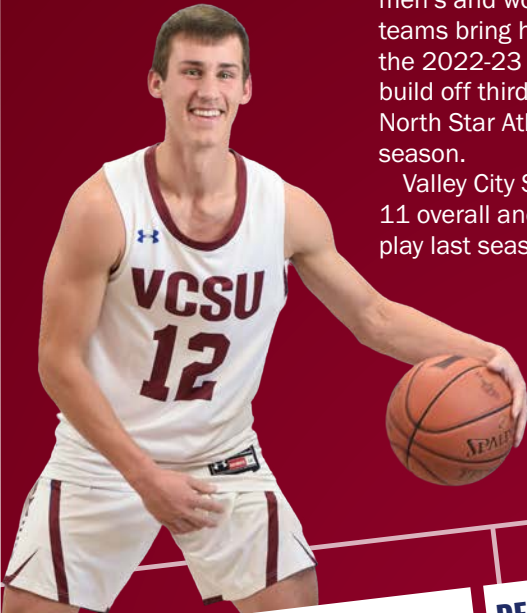
# Viking Basketball Starts New Season

The Valley City State University men's and women's basketball teams bring high expectations into the 2022-23 season, looking to build off third-place finishes in the North Star Athletic Association last season.

Valley City State's men went 18-11 overall and 8-6 in conference play last season, while the Viking

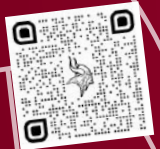
women were 10-15 overall and 7-7 in conference play.

Combined, the teams have bolstered their rosters with 11 new faces joining the programs. The Vikings started their seasons in late October. Conference play begins on Dec. 3 when the Vikings host Dickinson State University for a doubleheader.



All Athletics News at [VCSUVikings.com](http://VCSUVikings.com)

2022-2023 VIKING BASKETBALL SCHEDULE



MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

<b>NOV. 23</b> Oak Hills Christian College Men - 6 p.m.	<b>DEC. 30</b> University of Jamestown Women - 6 p.m.	<b>JAN. 20</b> @ Presentation College* Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.	<b>FEB. 11</b> Bellevue University* Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.
<b>NOV. 26</b> @ Augustana University Men - 3 p.m. Oak Hills Christian College Women - 3 p.m.	<b>JAN. 4</b> @ Martin Luther College Men - 7 p.m.	<b>JAN. 21</b> @ Mayville State* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.	<b>FEB. 12</b> Dakota State* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.
<b>NOV. 30</b> Trinity Bible College Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.	<b>JAN. 6</b> @ Dakota State Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.	<b>JAN. 27</b> Mayville State* Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.	<b>FEB. 16</b> @ Dickinson State* Women - 6:30 p.m. Men - 8:30 p.m.
<b>DEC. 3</b> Dickinson State* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.	<b>JAN. 7</b> @ Bellevue University* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.	<b>JAN. 28</b> Presentation College* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.	<b>FEB. 22-26</b> NSAA Postseason Tournament
<b>DEC. 7</b> @ University of Jamestown Women - 6 p.m. Men - 8 p.m.	<b>JAN. 13</b> Viterbo University* Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.	<b>FEB. 3</b> @ Waldorf University* Women - 5:30 p.m. Men - 7:30 p.m.	<b>MARCH 7-8</b> NAIA Opening Round Campus Sites
<b>DEC. 17-19</b> Hawaii Classic Hilo Hawaii	<b>JAN. 14</b> Waldorf University* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.	<b>FEB. 4</b> @ Viterbo University* Women - 3 p.m. Men - 5 p.m.	<b>MARCH 13-18</b> NAIA National Tournament Women - Sioux City, Iowa Men - Kansas City, Missouri

# Fall Sports HIGHLIGHTS

The Valley City State University fall sports seasons have been in full swing our teams have enjoyed great weather during the first half of their seasons. A few highlights included a large crowd on hand for the annual VCSU Ag Bowl football game, and Viking Volleyball earning a four-set victory over Dakota State University – a team that was receiving votes in the national poll. Riley Gerhardt (football), Bailey Nelson (volleyball) and JayCee Richter (volleyball) have all earned conference Player of the Week honors this season. For the latest results, stories and photos, follow the Vikings at [www.vcsuvikings.com](http://www.vcsuvikings.com).



2022-2023

# VCSU TRACK & FIELD



## INDOOR

**Dakota Alumni Classic**  
Dec. 2-3 - Fargo, N.D.

**U-Mary Indoor Opener and Multi**  
Dec. 9-10 - Bismarck, N.D.

**Mike Thorson Open**  
Jan. 14 - Bismarck, N.D.

**VCSU-UJ Dual**  
Jan. 17 - Jamestown, N.D.

**Cobber Open**  
Jan. 21 - Moorhead, Minn.

**UND Indoor Open and Multi**  
Jan. 28 - Grand Forks, N.D.

**Bison Open and Multi**  
Feb. 3-4 - Fargo, N.D.

**SDSU Indoor Classic**  
Feb. 10-11 - Brookings, S.D.

**NSAA Indoor Championships**  
Feb. 19 - Brookings, S.D.

**NAIA Indoor National Championship**  
March 2-4 - Brookings, S.D.

## OUTDOOR

**Yellow Jacket Spring Open**  
March 24-25 - Spearfish, S.D.

**Al Bortke Open**  
April 1 - Bismarck, N.D.

**Blue Hawk Games**  
April 14 - Dickinson, N.D.

**Al Cassell Classic**  
April 15 - Jamestown, N.D.

**Bison Open**  
April 21-22 - Fargo, N.D.

**VCSU Viking Twilight Meet**  
April 26 - Valley City, N.D.

**Ron Masanz Classic**  
April 29 - Moorhead, Minn.

**NDSU Tuneup Meet**  
May 5 - Fargo, N.D.

**NSAA Outdoor Championships**  
May 11-12 - Madison, S.D.

**NAIA Outdoor National Championships**  
May 24-26 - Marion, Ind.



MEN'S INDOOR SCHEDULE



WOMEN'S INDOOR SCHEDULE

## Join VSCU Students in Costa Rica and Argentina in 2023



**Volunteer your time and talents.  
Practice your Spanish skills.**

VCSU has two upcoming travel opportunities this year for students and alumni with the Global Exploration Club.

**Heredia, Costa Rica - March 2023**

**Buenos Aires, Argentina - May 2023**



More information is available by contacting Dr. Kiersten Baughman at [kiersten.baughman@vcsu.edu](mailto:kiersten.baughman@vcsu.edu), and the club accepts donations of any amount via their university fund at <https://vcsu-ndus.nbsstore.net/study-abroad-trips>

# Just Married

Send us your wedding photo so we can include it in the next issue of **The Bulletin**. Email the photo and a short description to [kim.hesch@vcsu.edu](mailto:kim.hesch@vcsu.edu).



**1 - Ryan McCulloch '10** and Kristin Mussar were married July 23, 2022. They live in Bellevue, Wash. where Ryan works as a software engineer for Microsoft, adding buttons and bugs to your favorite business software, and Kristin works as a data scientist for Seagen, developing cancer treatments and convincing her fellow Ph.D.s that PowerPoint is not an appropriate data storage solution. They are cared for by their two cats, Jasper and Zarya, who live wonderful lives not working at all.

**2 - Jenna Guttormson '12** and Dan Edenborg were married September 9, 2022 in Fargo, N.D. Jenna not only gained a husband, but three bonus sons as well, Liam, Bennett and Mac. The family lives in Hillsboro, N.D. Jenna is a school psychologist for the Area Special Education Cooperative in East Grand Forks and Dan works for BNSF Railway.

**3 - Diane Le** and **Nick Faure '12** were married September 17, 2022. Nick is a 2012 graduate of VCSU and went on to earn his Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) from Oregon Health and Science University, in Portland, Ore. in 2016 where he practices general dentistry at Pike Creek Dental. Diane works as a Ph.D. Senior Scientist in Merck pharmaceuticals discovery process chemistry department. She works on developing green and sustainable chemistry towards long term manufacturing routes of pharmaceutical drug candidates. The couple currently reside in Wilmington, Del.

**4 - Kelsey Labodi '16** and Zach Hennes were married September 18, 2021.



5

**5 - Barbara Ector '16** and Erick Dameron were married March 25, 2022, and live in Phoenix, Ariz. Barbara is a CPA working for Troon, and Erick is a director of IT.



6

**6 - Jessica Burns '18 and Isaac Yturalde '19** were married July 9, 2022.



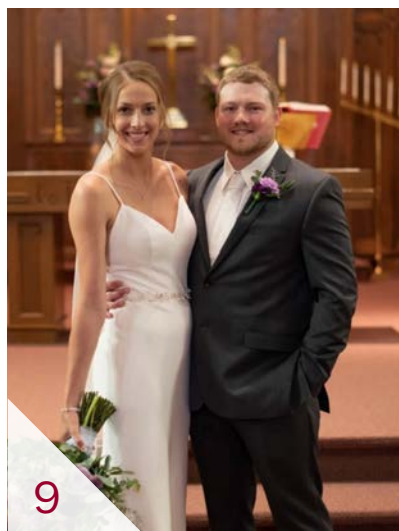
7

**7 - Harley Mairs '19 and Jesse Vavra '17** were married May 21, 2022. They met in college and started dating in 2016. They still live in Valley City where Jesse works at Smith Lumber Company managing the warehouse and selling Winkler Structures. Harley will start her 4th year teaching mathematics. She started in a new position at Valley City Public Schools teaching 7th grade math.



8

**8 - Miriah Yoder and Eli Luna '19** were married June 18, 2022.



9

**9 - Leah Ruter '20 and Chris Brogdon '19** were married June 25, 2022.



# Just Married CONTINUED



**10** - Sean Beilke and **Kayla Brademeyer '20** were married September 3, 2022. Kayla is working as the executive assistant at CHI Mercy Hospital in Valley City. Sean is graduating from VCSU in December with a degree in social science education and is currently student teaching at Maple Valley High School.

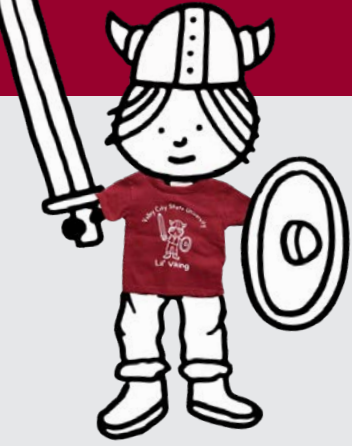
**11** - **Yariel Rivera '21** and **Marielle Villarin '20** tied the knot on January 1st, 2022. After living in Fargo for the past year, Yariel will be returning to school for a degree in nursing. Marielle continues to work as a lab scientist in Fargo, N.D.

**12** - **Joelle Aiello '21** and **Hunter McCalla '21** were married July 22, 2022, with many VCSU alumni and current students in attendance. Joelle graduated from VCSU with a degree in health science and spent her time on the softball team. Hunter graduated from VCSU with a degree in business administration. They met at VCSU's freshmen year orientation and have been inseparable ever since! They live happily in Clear Lake, Minn. with their dog, Drake, and cat, Parmesan!

**13** - **Djuana Harvey** and **Dr. Kendall Coleman MAT '21** were married April 9, 2022. Kendall and Djuana work in the Chicago Public Schools and the couple also live in Chicago, IL.

Not Pictured

Paige Emmel & **Marc Wagner '19**, July 30, 2022  
**Jenna Pommerer '22** & **Daniel Biggers '20**, August 6, 2022  
 Becca Eberle & **Ryan Sand '19**, August 6, 2022  
**Tasha Piehl '18** & Eric Thomas, August 26, 2022  
 Mallory Twete & **Christian Kvilvang '19**, September 4, 2022  
**Tara Von Hagen '18** & Thomas Tabatt, September 17, 2022  
**Mackenzie Huber '20** & **Carter Buelow '21**, September 24, 2022  
**Nisja Bass '17** & Terrion Bell, September 24, 2022



# 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) 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**.



## Ephraim Patrick Atiemo

**February 27, 2022**  
**6 lbs, 14 oz., 19 in.**

Amanda (Aune) '13  
and Peter Atiemo



## Lena Jo Degenstein

**July 3rd, 2022**  
**8 lbs, 12 oz., 21 ½ in.**

Nicole Heinitz '18 and  
Brian Degenstein



## Hudson Marvin Preston

**June 1, 2022**  
**8 lbs, 11 oz., 21 in.**

Ethen '16 and Cassandra  
(Pautz) '18 MAT '22 Preston



## Reginald "Reggie" Jens Jensen

**December 26, 2021**  
**6 lbs, 14 oz., 20 ½ in.**

Preston '13 and Chelsey  
(Dockter) '13 Jensen



## Owen Stephen Bitter

**November 13, 2021**  
**6 lbs, 11 oz., 20 ½ in.**

Katherine (Gerntholz) '16  
and Alex Bitter



## River Patricia Ann Miller

**September 17, 2021**  
**8 lbs, 3 oz., 21 in.**

Dustin '19 and Clarissa  
(Olson) '19 Miller



## Stella Grace Ingberg

**June 16, 2022**  
**7 lbs, 13 oz., 21 in.**

Siblings: Selah (7) and  
Olivia (1)

Elisa (Ailie) '11 and  
Devlan Ingberg



## Bentley Waylan Erickson

**May 5, 2022**  
**6 lbs. 11oz., 19.5 inches**

Amanda Starr '18 and  
Christopher Erickson







On Monday, Aug. 8, 2022, VCSU professor **Lisa Krumwiede '08, M.Ed '17** was named Teacher Educator of the Year by the North Dakota Association of Career and Technical Education. The winners were announced at the N.D. Career and Technical Education Professional Development Conference in Bismarck.

## CLASS OF 2013

**Marissa (Oestreicher) Motschenbacher '13** and her husband just finished building a new house in Lidgerwood, N.D. Marissa teaches 6th grade at Lidgerwood Public Schools and coaches fastpitch softball.



## CLASS OF 2019

**Dierra Diegel '19** began applying to different law schools during her senior year at VCSU, ultimately deciding to stay in-state and attend a three-year program at UND's law school. After graduating from UND School of Law in the spring of 2022 with her juris doctorate, she sat for and passed the North Dakota bar exam. Finally, after also making it through the character and fitness process, Diegel was admitted to the ND Bar Association.

On September 23, Diegel, along with 36 other new lawyers, were admitted to the North Dakota bar. She is currently at SW&L Attorneys in Fargo, ND practicing criminal defense for both adults and juveniles. She serves in N.D. and is currently in the process of earning licensure in M.N. and the N.D. Federal Court.

**Hannah Schlecht '19** and **Beau Diegel '16** were married August 6, 2022. They celebrated with several people from the VCSU family. Once a Viking, Always a Viking.



# Alumni Anecdotes



## Tracy Yorks '17

Tracy's career spans two decades with experience in the Technology, Hospitality and Beauty industries. Since her days at VCSU, Yorks has had a successful career in marketing working with several companies including Estee Lauder Companies and L'Oreal USA. While working for L'Oreal, she served as the Associate Vice President of CRM and Loyalty for The Body Shop USA (TBS). TBS fights for a fairer world through community trade, sustainability, all-natural products and showing that business can be a force for good. When L'Oreal sold TBS to Natura & Co., a Brazilian cosmetics group, Tracy was promoted to Head of Marketing, U.S. During her tenure, the company initiated in-store recycling and was awarded the inaugural Compassionate Corporation Award by Born Free USA. Tracy is now with SeaWeed Naturals where she shares her knowledge of sustainable practices and environmental action with impact focused brands.

# In Remembrance

Helen (Winter) Noeske '51, Valley City  
Jacquetta (Personius) Stricklin '51, Valley City  
Ken Schatz, Linton, N.D.  
Lois (Berg) Wieck '56, Marion, N.D.  
Jacob "Jack" Sitter '59, Marion, Iowa  
Irene (Langdahl) Visby '60, Fargo, N.D.  
Robert Rieth '62, Valley City  
Anita (Wessels) Woodbury '63, Wahpeton, N.D.  
Douglas Ferguson '64, Fort Benton, Mont.  
Deloris (Boschee) '64, Wishek, N.D.  
Susan (Kapaun) Taft '64, Minot, N.D.  
James Vetter '67, Bismarck, N.D.  
Charles Salvi, Fargo, N.D.  
Judith (Stuart) Andahl '70, Katy, Texas  
Liv (Lundebj) Bjorlie-Halvorson '72, Grand Forks, N.D.

James Fuhrer '74, Devils Lake, N.D.  
Joyce (Sad) Gardner '76, Horace, N.D.  
Julie (Brosz) Wayne '76, Jamestown, N.D.  
Lorri Isakson '84, Sheboygan, Wisc.  
Dorothy (Swanson) Reiten '88, Valley City  
Amy (Fossen) Anderson '96, Heimdal, N.D.

Pat Barr, Moorhead, Minn.  
Bonnie Byberg, New Rockford N.D.  
Wayne Fiebiger, Cooperstown, N.D.  
Robert Miedema, Valley City  
Lee Samson, Fargo, N.D.

## Former Faculty & Staff

July 26, 2022 – Marjorie Eggert, Valley City  
July 28, 2022 – Leslie (Hovel) Sullivan '87, Fargo, N.D.

## Margie Eggert - Accounts Receivable Specialist 1989–2011



Marjorie (Margie) Ellen Eggert, 70, of Valley City, North Dakota, passed away, Tuesday, July 26 surrounded by her family and dear friends.

Marjorie was born December 20, 1951, in Valley City to Wayne and Shirley (Stroh) Hanson. She grew up in Kathryn, ND and at the age of five, moved to Rogers, ND, where she was baptized and confirmed, at Bethel Lutheran Church in Rogers, ND. She graduated from North Central High School in 1969. Following high school, she attended and completed her year course at Wahpeton State School and was proudly a "Wildcat Kitten."

On May 1, 1971, Margie married Gale (Buzz) Eggert at Trinity Lutheran Church in Valley City, N.D. and celebrated 50 years of marriage before Buzz passed away on August 22, 2021.

Margie enjoyed spending time in Arizona and at her lake home on Lake Lizzie in Minnesota, but most importantly quality time with family and friends. She was a pillar of strength for her husband, children and loved ones. There was never any doubt that her faith and her family were her main priorities in life.

Margie valued life on the farm while also working in the offices of 1st National Bank, Washington Elementary School and then retiring after 21½ years on December 15, 2011 from Valley City State University.

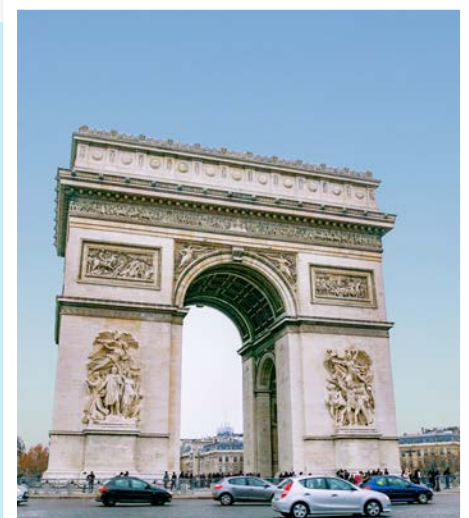
In 2024

## See WWII History In Person

Travel with VCSU through Europe  
Explore WWII and the Liberation of France



VCSU would like to invite alumni and friends to join us on a nine-day trip to Europe. The trip includes a visit to the War Room in London, the Imperial War Museum, a ferry trip across the English Channel to the Beaches of Normandy, the town of Caen, Paris, along with many other sites. For more information contact Dr. King at [steven.king@vcsu.edu](mailto:steven.king@vcsu.edu).



# 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).



## 1965

Beverly Anderson  
Margaret Corrigan  
Nancy (Foley) Kjelgaard  
Kenneth May

## 1966

Kenneth Hanson  
Janet (Fitzgerald) Hunter  
Judy (Botnen) Krush  
Susan (Lloyd) Pederson  
Candace (Vail) Quick  
June (Gale) Wicks

## 1967

Arla Johnson  
Harold Kjelgaard

## 1968

Carol (Amoth) Aamodt  
Betty (Salzwedel) Anderson  
Gwen (Berger) Arnold  
Linda Groth  
Shirley Jorgensen  
Alan Lindemann  
Joyce Rice  
Chuck Sjoström

## 1969

Linda (Hood) Field  
Ronald Haugen  
Peggy (Lipp) Larson  
Christy Miller  
Lucille Olson  
Orville Olson  
Judy (Torson) Olson  
Glen Roberts

## 1970

James Koch  
Ellen (Robinson) Larson  
Patricia Moe

## 1971

William Albert  
Phyllis (Hanson) Christianson  
Vance Gillette  
Ruth (Anderson) Goll  
Larry Hehr  
Laura Jacobson  
Kathryn Jones  
Astrid Mills  
Glende Olson  
M. Pederson  
Richard Pederson

Albert Ruckaber  
Marland Sarles  
Mari Shaw  
Jane Thoenke  
Linda Thompson  
Daniel Welander

## 1972

Linda (Evanson) Blasczyrk  
Dennis Clark  
Larry Exner  
Susan Ferguson  
James Friskop  
George Hanna  
Steven Hoffer  
Muriel King  
Bill Martell  
Sandra Olson  
Marlys Palmer  
Susan (Roller) Selle  
Marilyn (Sims) Sudbeck  
Rita Vandrovac  
Richard Wright

## 1973

Lane Bergman  
Debra (Scouler) Broome  
Rayanne (Doyle) Dahl  
Hidemasa Ioka  
Nancy (Raveling) Persons

## 1974

Robert Becker  
Rachel Koehn  
Gerald Nagel  
Rosemary Olson  
Phillip Schmidt  
Thomas Weinmann  
Marcia (O'Brien) Weisser

## 1975

Robert Dahl  
Larry Hanson  
Edna Olson



## Your Gift Multiplies with the Challenge Grant

Submit gift by December 1, 2022 to make every dollar given go twice as far.



Gerald and Cindy Urlaub  
West Fargo, N.D.

### 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.

**\$700,000**  
TOTAL MATCH AVAILABLE

VCSU IS ALMOST THERE  
THROUGH THE HELP OF  
GENEROUS DONORS.

**\$608,736**  
HAS BEEN RAISED TO  
DATE.



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Valley City, ND 58072

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**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.

## SIMPLE WAYS TO GIVE BACK

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



**PLEDGE:** A pledge of \$1,500 or \$3,000 over four years provides a scholarship in that value for a deserving student. You choose the frequency of fulfilling your pledge.



**RECURRING GIFT:** Monthly gifts, spread out over the year, make a BIG impact and are a convenient, affordable and flexible way of supporting VCSU.



**ONE TIME GIFT:** Cash, gifts of grain, commodities, marketable stocks, bonds or mutual fund shares have an immediate impact on VCSU and for you. Contact the Foundation office if this is your preference.

## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT VCSU STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS?



**GIVE ONLINE:** fast, easy and secure. Use our online form at [give.vcsu.edu](http://give.vcsu.edu) to make your gift of choice.



**MAIL YOUR GIFT:** give by check or credit card using the enclosed form. Choose your frequency of payment and return to our office.

**V-500**  
SUPPORTING STUDENTS  
SINCE 1972

**“The V-500 scholarship played a big role in my decision to attend VCSU. It demonstrated they cared about my education and my future.”**

**Sam Rieger**  
Lisbon, N.D.



# Forward Together

VCSU Strategic Plan 2022-2025

VCSU will be the region's preferred institution for students seeking transformative, quality experiences, and meaningful connections.

## **Institution of Choice: Ensure VCSU grows its regional reputation as the preferred institution for an increasing number of students**

This objective involves strategically utilizing a variety of our resources for growth, development, and retention.

### **1.1 Recruitment: All campus departments will identify program capacities, optimization options, potential markets, and employ growth strategies to diversify and increase student enrollments by an average of 3% per academic department each year of plan to reach projected enrollment targets, which will be reported in program updates and reviews**

- Strategize further utilization of scholarship funds to broaden impact
- Add or update articulation agreements and utilize them effectively for transfer students

### **1.2 Advising and retention: Engage Retention Task Force and other efforts to improve student retention by 1% or more in each IPEDS cohort each year of plan**

- Enhance academic advising program to improve student success
- Engage academic departments and the entire campus in the recruitment, retention, and success of our students

### **1.3 Marketing and outreach: Actively promote VCSU's strengths, value, contributions, and distinctive attributes to existing and potential stakeholders and markets, making VCSU the university of choice to work, learn, and grow**

- Clearly illustrate student-to-career pathways by utilizing labor market information in catalog and website
- Strengthen connections among alumni and employer partners, expanding number of programs utilizing advisory boards
- Increase and align marketing efforts with departmental communication plans developed with Enrollment Services and the campus marketing plan to clearly articulate our value proposition for our stakeholders
- Build interest and excitement through hosting a variety of campus activities to expose potential students and stakeholders to our campus
- Strengthen Esports and explore adding or maximizing capacities of athletic teams
- Maximize utilization of the new Center for the Arts

## **Quality: Create quality experiences through innovation**

This objective builds on our strengths and tradition of innovation and quality to expand solutions for helping students succeed as career-ready graduates.

### **2.1 Learning and instruction: Improve program quality through instructional design standards within the digital course content environment, investment in programs and instruction, and agile and responsive curricular processes that support academic innovation and career relevance to transform career-ready graduates in a changing world**

#### **Process improvement and standardization:**

- Document in all academic program reviews external validation or alignment with national specialized accreditation standards and best practices as defined by professional organizations
- Continue faculty development using Quality Matters programming and complete peer reviews according to QM rubric of one course per online program per semester
- Establish common syllabus and LMS course template for consistency and quality
- Hire Director of Online Learning to implement online standards according to nationally established best practices



## **Quality Continued: Create quality experiences through innovation**

### **New programs and innovation:**

- Enrich and update academic experiences and programs into high-demand degrees and credentials utilizing our expertise, labor market data, advisory boards, and alumni feedback
- Assure all students have at least one practical experience opportunity for employment-based engagement and application of learning as part of their academic program
- Encourage innovative programs that energize and inspire using forward-looking technologies and alternative deliveries

### **2.2 Innovation: Develop and pilot at least one project that encourages and supports continuous innovations leading to improved quality, efficiency, and culture**

- Develop process for innovation to support VCSU's mission and vision
- Implement integrated planning model and cycle to align other plans and initiatives for improved effectiveness and regularly evaluate progress
- Implement technology advancements maximizing efficiency and quality
- Improve use of data analytics and organizational information through establishing regular data sharing sessions and dashboard availability to provide actionable insight that enhances student success and administrative effectiveness

### **2.3 Facilities and technology: Evaluate and align improvements in facilities and technology with campus and information technology master plans and innovation strategies**

- Increase the quality of student life through enhanced safety, security, aesthetics, and functionality of campus-based services
- Renovate and modernize buildings that enable cutting-edge, quality experiences for employees and students
- Integrate IT systems for safety of personal information and ease of access to information

## **Culture and Community: Cultivate an engaged community that supports innovation, growth, and quality**

This objective involves all parts of a community-engaged university - our people and culture, programs and processes, financial resources, and facilities – and how we will continue to cultivate a campus culture where all members of the VCSU community are valued and contribute to a kind, personal atmosphere.

### **3.1 Student engagement: Develop and implement long-term phased planning to enhance quality of place, resulting in a thriving and vibrant campus community to attract and retain students**

- Improve student inclusivity, engagement and belonging, measured by increase in student organizational participation
- Create a campus culture task force with students to invoke and assess transformations

### **3.2 Employee engagement: Design and implement human resources policies, procedures, and business processes enabling us to recruit and retain outstanding employees who perpetuate a flourishing culture where all stakeholders work and learn**

- Provide professional development and fulfillment opportunities fairly and regularly to develop and retain satisfied, quality employees
- Identify and address employee issues through adoption of effective data-gathering, measuring tools, and effective processes ensuring maximum participation and transparent communications
- Increase employee engagement in shared governance and “Viking Pride” in campus community

### **3.3 External engagement: Seek, build, nurture, and reinforce external relationships for VCSU's future**

- Generate involvement and collaboration with the Valley City community to improve and support engagement among VCSU students, employees, and community members
- Engage our alumni and partners to inform and provide opportunities for students in a variety of ways and settings that enrich the student experience and improve the quality of life on campus, in the Valley City community, and throughout North Dakota
- Pursue strategic partnerships to strengthen the education pipeline and to assist learners who seek challenge for professional preparation and growth
- Provide premiere service that reflects our Viking Pride to every visitor, student, employee, and community member