

spring 2020

Concordia

UNIVERSITY TEXAS **MAGAZINE**



Leading by Example

A tribute to the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens

1933-2019



At my inauguration on October 24, 2014, I mentioned how I was standing on the shoulders of those who had come before me. As the ninth president of Concordia University Texas, I knew that what I did was a continuation of what eight others had done before me. I also knew that my legacy would set the stage for those to come, a responsibility I do not take lightly.

One of the people in the audience that day was the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens, the sixth president of Concordia University Texas. I had seen Rev. Martens, along with his wife, Jane, at many events before that day. The two of them were regular attendees at our choral concerts and would, from time to time, show up for speaker series and other events across campus. As I got to know him more after my inauguration, my esteem grew as I listened to how he navigated the role of president and led this institution for more than 20 years. I will miss our interactions; I will miss learning from him; I will miss seeing him at campus events; and I will miss his words of encouragement, as only a former president can give.

Here's what I know about Ray – he loved Jesus, he loved his family, he loved Concordia and what it stood for, and he loved the students and the employees at Concordia. When we consider those four items, they are reflective of our core values of being Christ-centered, caring for people, being lifelong learners, and living our vocations fully and completely.

Throughout this magazine, you will learn about President Martens and the legacy he left at Concordia of leading by example. In addition to what he did during those years, you will also see what we are doing today to continue that legacy. Students still learn, faculty and staff still interact with students, alumni still do great work in their vocations, and Christ is still honored. When you support Concordia in whatever manner you choose, you are building on that legacy and ensuring it will continue long into the future, even beyond this current president. Thank you for entrusting me with the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens as we seek to be the premier university where the adventure of faith, learning and life-changing experiences leads to meaningful work.

Dr. Donald Christian
PRESIDENT AND CEO

6

ON THE COVER
Remembering
Ray Martens



ABOUT THE COVER
The Rev. Dr. Ray Martens was once described as “tall in the saddle.” Former *Concordia Connections* editor Raye Green explained that the idiom is a reference to both his 6’6” height and his impressive stature in academic and Lutheran communities.

16

Campus
News



LEGACY OF THE Cruciform

12



IN EVERY ISSUE
2 President's Message
5 Concordia Chatter
14 Campus News
28 Athletics News
32 Alumni Notes

Concordia University Texas Magazine *spring 2020*

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Content Specialist

Adriana Thompson

Creative Director

Holly Satsky

Social Media Manager

Alex Walker

Contributing Writers

Fred Bleeke

Pat Fick

Rev. Ken Hennings

Dr. Larry Meissner

Rick Rosenhagen

Dr. Chris Winkler

Staff Photographer

Matthew Brooks

Contributing Photographers

Matthew Lester

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Senior VP of

External Affairs

Beth Atherton

VP of Philanthropy

James Candido

President and CEO

Dr. Donald Christian

Chief Financial Officer,

VP of Finance

Lynette Gillis

Provost,

Executive VP

Dr. Kristi Kirk

Senior VP of Planning

and Quality

Dr. Shane Sokoll

BOARD OF REGENTS

Jim Albers

Quentin Anderson

Christopher Bannwolf

James Cleary, Jr.

Dr. Theodore Crofford

Dr. Mary Beth Gaertner

Peter Hames

Rev. Nathaniel W. Hill

Raymond Kym

Dr. Margaret Landwermeyer

Heidi Lewis

Carol Mueller

Rev. Michael Newman

Charles Requadt

Rev. Dr. Stephen Sohns

Dr. Robert Ssekyanzi

Rev. Alan Taylor

Thomas Zachman

ABOUT CONCORDIA

Concordia University Texas is a private, coeducational institution of liberal arts and sciences, offering undergraduate and graduate degrees. Concordia also provides adult and online degree programs for part-time and returning adult students. CTX is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges and is affiliated with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

The magazine is published by the University Publications office. It is provided free of charge. Please send comments, letters or story ideas to adriana.thompson@concordia.edu.



Dr. Marianne Rader '03, '10, '19

Marianne has taught at Concordia High School in Round Rock, Texas, for more than 14 years. Committed to providing students with the very best education, she decided to earn her Doctor of Education (EdD). She chose Concordia for the third time because of its Lutheran core values and the small, personal learning environment. Marianne is a member of the first graduating class of Concordia's EdD program. Her responsibilities at the school have expanded to include both instructional and administrative roles.

BE A TORNADO

Take the world by *storm*

Since 1926, Concordia University Texas has been committed to being the premier university where the adventure of faith, learning and life-changing experiences leads to meaningful work. The ultimate goal of the Concordia EdD is to help you become a better educator so that you can empower your students to do amazing things. Find out more at concordia.edu/explore/edd.





**REMEMBERING
REV. DR. MARTENS**

BY JEFF FROSCH ('96),
DIRECTOR OF DONOR &
ALUMNI RELATIONS

"Ever since I was a young boy, I knew that Concordia would be my college because of Dr. Martens' influence. One of my earliest memories is a time at Aunt Erna's house in Giddings, Texas, when Ray looked down at me and said, 'Young man, someday you're going to come to Concordia!' Of course, there were other influences, such as the annual field day in late April, the summertime Ministerial Youth Retreats and other church-related activities. But those were looked at through different eyes after that initial pronouncement so many years ago. Thank you, Ray."

FACEBOOK

AMY WINKELMAN

"He will be missed. He was so friendly and always smiled when I would run into him. Sending prayers."

V'ANN GIUFFRE

"Dr. Martens and I were birthday twins, and we always acknowledged it during the years I was there. I have always had much admiration for him. So glad our paths crossed."

FACEBOOK (cont.)

TANYA KLAGES

"What a loss to the Concordia family. Prayers for his family."

TRICIA WATSON

"Prayers for his family. He was an outstanding man."

BRENDA GOLDEN

"Prayers for comfort to his family."

BY REV. KEVIN COOK ('00)
CHAPLAIN SSM DEPAUL HOSPITAL
BRIDGETON, MO

"I met President Martens for the first time as part of an assignment from former religion professor Mike Middendorf. He gave us a list of distinguished people on campus to interview as part of the freshman orientation class. My section of the class was designed for church workers, and I somehow gravitated toward President Martens.

One thing I remember Martens saying in that interview in the fall of 1996 was this: 'Not everyone is meant to be a pastor or a professional church worker. Whatever career you end up in, know that the Lord has placed you right where you are supposed to be for such a time as this.'"



▲ *Top Photo (left to right): Tom Martens, Stephanie Martens, Jennifer Martens, Isaak Bestian, Jane Martens, Dave Martens, Emily Martens & Erik Bestian*

▲ *Bottom Photo: President Don Christian & Jane Martens*

@CONCORDIATX

The annual President's Concert also served as a tribute to the late Rev. Dr. Ray Martens. His wife, Mrs. Jane Martens, and family attended the special concert in his honor.

LINKEDIN

SAM LUSCOMBE

"Dr. Martens pointed me in the right direction more than once, with a good deal of patience. May God bless and welcome you home, sir."

Follow Concordia

Connect with CTX via our many social media platforms, where we document the daily goings-on of campus on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and more.





▲ Ray Martens, Lutheran Concordia College of Texas, Class of 1949



pastor, Martens attended then Lutheran Concordia College of Texas, which was established as a high school to prepare young men to enter the ministry, from 1945 to 1949. This is where Martens' lifelong devotion to Concordia began. He was actively involved as a student, playing football, participating in the Choristers (Concordia's first choir) and speech competitions, managing all of the school's varsity sports, and serving as valedictorian of the class of 1949.

He continued his pre-seminary studies at St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas, and then attended Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in pursuit of his plan to become a parish pastor.

While earning his Master of Divinity, Martens courted Jane Winkler, his longtime family friend, and they married in June 1958.

The Call to Higher Education

Although he wanted to become a parish pastor, God had different plans for his life. Upon graduating, Martens was called to teach English and Latin at Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois. While it wasn't the pulpit he was expecting, Martens leveraged his pastoral training. He prepared his classes like sermons and preached at chapel every month.

In just a few years, Martens advanced to become an assistant professor of Greek and New Testament studies. He served as a professor at the seminary for 16 years. While in Illinois, Ray and Jane welcomed their three sons: Steve, Dave and Tom.

In 1973, Martens received the call to lead his beloved alma mater, now Concordia Lutheran College, as president. The family moved into a house on the campus, where they lived throughout his 20-year presidency.

Martens jumped wholeheartedly into his role as president. One of his most significant achievements was transitioning Concordia from a

Remembering Ray

with special tributes from Fred Bleeke, Rev. Ken Hennings, Dr. Larry Meissner & Rick Rosenhagen

66

These are the years in which you choose or confirm worthwhile goals in life. Grow in every way you can toward some kind of servant leadership – but don't miss out on the fun of being a college student while at it!"

The Rev. Dr. Ray Martens was a lifelong Lutheran, a devoted husband and father, a supportive grandfather, and the sixth president of Concordia University Texas. He passed away on Saturday, October 5, 2019. His legacy of leading by example continues to impact Concordia today.

Texas Lutheran Heritage

Martens was born on February 3, 1933, in Hufsmith, Texas. His family has a strong Texas Lutheran heritage with deep roots at Concordia.

His grandfather, the Rev. Dr. G. Birkmann, was president of the Texas District Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) twice and one of the first Concordia Seminary students to be honored with a Doctor of Divinity. He was the namesake for Concordia's Birkmann Chapel on the historic downtown campus. His uncle, the Rev. Dr. John W. Behnken, was president of the LCMS and the namesake of Behnken Hall, a residence hall on the historic campus.

With plans to become a parish

two-year junior college into a four-year baccalaureate-granting college. Martens led efforts to secure the necessary funding, establish the four-year curriculum, assemble a qualified faculty and construct six additional buildings to support the growth.

Another of Martens' significant achievements was designing the Concordia Cruciform in 1983. The symbol became the brand mark of Concordia Lutheran College, and a statue of it sat on top of a two-story tower in front of Kilian Hall on the historic campus.

While not in the form he had envisioned when he first set foot on Concordia's campus as a student, God still allowed Martens to pursue pastoral ministry. He preached every All Saints Day, and Ray and Jane ministered to students by spending time with them. At Christmastime, students would gather in Ray and Jane's home. Jane would bake everyone cookies, and they would sing Christmas carols together.

Continuing to Serve Concordia

Martens remained actively engaged with the University after his presidency to support fundraising efforts. Even in retirement, he continued to support Concordia. Ray and Jane regularly attended Concordia events, both at the historic campus and the new campus. Martens also wrote a biography of his grandfather, *Worthy of Double Honor: The Rev. G. Birkmann, D.D.*, which was published by Concordia University Press.

Outside of professional ministry, Martens had personal passions that included stamp collecting, traveling and hunting. He also enjoyed following the St. Louis Cardinals, singing, playing bridge, and leading Bible studies, and he was a skilled craftsman and gardener.

Martens generously gave both his time and resources to Concordia, a university he loved. We express our deepest gratitude for Ray's service to Concordia University Texas.

Timeline of His Legacy

Texas Lutheran Heritage (1933)

- ▶ Grandson of Rev. Dr. G. Birkmann
- ▶ Nephew of Rev. Dr. John W. Behnken
- ▶ Born February 3, 1933, in Hufsmith, Texas

Lutheran Concordia College of Texas (1945 – 1949)

- ▶ Played football, manager of all varsity sports
- ▶ Member of the Choristers
- ▶ Valedictorian of Class of 1949

Higher Education (1951, 1957, 1974)

- ▶ St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas (1951)
- ▶ Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri (1957)
- ▶ Earned doctorate in theology (1974)

Teaching (1957 – 1973)

- ▶ Planned to become parish pastor, but God had other plans
- ▶ Assigned to teach Greek and New Testament at Concordia Seminary in Springfield, Illinois
- ▶ Married Jane Winkler in June 1958
- ▶ Ray and Jane had three sons: Steve, Dave and Tom

Concordia Lutheran College (1973 – 1993)

- ▶ Called to become president of Concordia Lutheran College in 1973
- ▶ Led Concordia to become four-year college in 1980
- ▶ Dedicated six buildings, including Louise T. Peter Center, and expanded curriculum
- ▶ Designed the Cruciform in 1983
- ▶ Ray and Jane frequently hosted students, particularly for Christmas carols and cookies courtesy of Jane

President Emeritus & Retirement (1994 – 2019)

- ▶ Served as president emeritus of Concordia and continued fundraising for several years
- ▶ Served as president of the Lutheran Educational Conference of America
- ▶ Wrote *Worthy of Double Honor: The Rev. G. Birkmann, D.D.*, published by Concordia University Press

The Rev. Dr. Ray Martens led two successful fundraising campaigns. His first, named "FOUNDING 4," provided facilities that allowed Concordia Lutheran College to become a four-year baccalaureate institution. In celebration of Concordia's 50th Anniversary and as a prelude to the campaign, Ray edited the manuscript of Concordia's first president, the Rev. Dr. Henry Studtmann, recounting the early years of the school.

I traveled with Ray on many fundraising excursions. He held the lantern while the many volunteers and donors chopped the wood. It is always clear, as Proverb 29 notes, "...without vision the people perish." Ray told us how we were going to get there. He held the lantern high

and made sure it was bright.

As the communications programs at Concordia were achieving favorable attention, Ray found the benefactors for the Louise T. Peter Center, which housed the Leonard Schroeder Performance Hall, art facilities, classrooms and music rooms.

President Martens' second successful campaign, "WHO WILL LEAD US," built endowments and renovated the Memorial Gymnasium into the Bokenkamp Student Center.

While he was president, Ray insisted that the front lawn be kept a sweeping green area of St. Augustine. He saw the importance of open space on the 20-acre campus, as he centered the attention of faculty, students, friends and community on his self-designed Cruciform, now standing on the

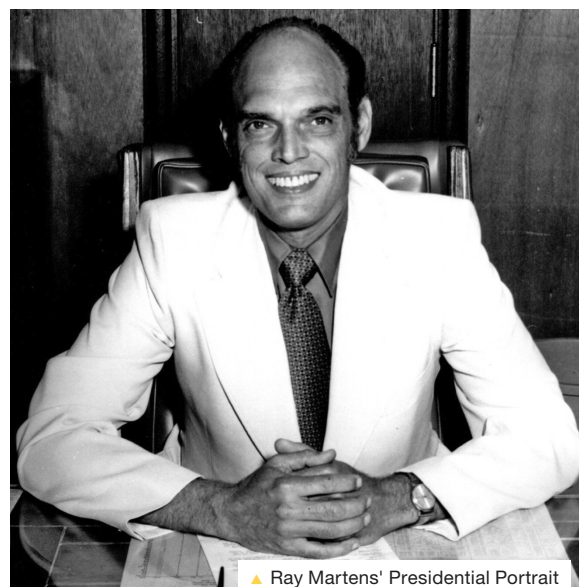
more spacious 389-acre campus.

Ray's six-foot-six-inch presence on campus signaled his complete dedication to his alma mater and to all the students, past and present, who sought and found the best in Lutheran education right here in Texas.

President Martens' leadership did not stop at the end of the day in the office. He and his wife, Jane, lived in a house on campus that was known as the President's House. Many gatherings swirled in and around the home, which was located just below the baseball field. And there were their three boys, Steve, Dave and Tom. They, too, were recruited into the life of the campus. The Martens family supported Concordia in every way they could.



▲ Concordia Football Team



▲ Ray Martens' Presidential Portrait



▲ Ray and Jane in Austin Parade



▲ Lutheran Concordia College of Texas Class of 1949 Reunion

REV. KEN HENNINGS
FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE TEXAS
DISTRICT LCMS

In 1973, the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens accepted the call to be president of Concordia Lutheran College in Austin, Texas. That same year, I received my first call to pastor Trinity Lutheran Church in Uvalde, Texas. Because Ray and I were "first-time pastors" in the Texas District, we both attended the district's New Workers Conference that was held on the Concordia campus. It was quite evident at the conference that Ray Martens was a servant-leader. All through his ministry, he demonstrated humility and leadership.

Because Ray was as tall as I am, we would greet each other at district events and make some mention about our height. Watching Ray interact with church workers and

laypeople, one could not miss seeing this tall man's interest and love for people. He would converse with anyone and was especially excited to share about Concordia.

Ray loved Greek, Hebrew and his family's native language - German. He presented papers on Old and New Testament texts over many months. The Austin-area pastors benefitted from his love for languages, as Ray would prepare studies on the Bible text for a particular Sunday of the Church Year. Attending when I could, I was impressed by his scholarship and his willingness to hear the thoughts and questions of the pastors.

As members of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Austin, my wife, Val, and I became more acquainted with Ray and his wife, Jane. The comments about how tall we were continued, and his humbleness and joy were just as present as the day I

first met him. Ray was retired, and with our shared love for playing bridge, Val and I enjoyed games with Ray and Jane at their home or ours when our schedules allowed. Ray and I also shared the same enthusiasm for collecting stamps. These common interests gave us times of enjoyment and times to reflect upon God's blessings over the years.

During retirement, Ray wrote a biography of his grandfather, the Rev. Dr. G. Birkmann. He was also excited to translate his grandfather's newspaper articles written in German. His love of languages was seen once again.

Ray also had an interest in my work as Texas District president. His support and encouragement were very helpful since the district was expanding its mission program by creating partnerships with congregations and groups



▲ Recognition of Ray's 10 years at Concordia Lutheran College



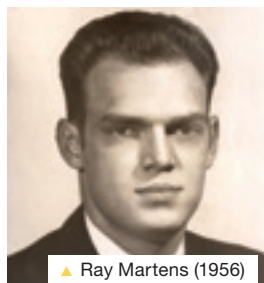
▲ Ray and Jane Celebrating Record Enrollment



▲ Young Ray Ready for School



▲ First Concordia Choir (1948-1949)



▲ Ray Martens (1956)



▲ Ray and Jane with Tom Landry at CLC Golf Benefit

throughout the district.

As president of Concordia, Ray is remembered for his tireless work along with the faculty in moving Concordia from a two-year institution to a four-year college. The foundation he set has allowed other leaders to move Concordia's ministry to where it is today.

Even in retirement, Ray and Jane were often seen at Concordia events, especially at musical presentations. And yes, that's where Val and I would bump into them from time to time. He was no longer the president, but his positive attitude and love for the University were still shining bright.

Whenever Ray and I were present at some function, someone would usually mention our height. Maybe our height had a way of bringing us together, but the blessing of our friendship came from Ray Martens - a distinguished, educated servant-leader who enjoyed supporting students, ministries and the Synod because of Christ Jesus our Lord.

DR. LARRY MEISSNER
PROFESSOR EMERITUS

What an honor it is to write a tribute reflecting on my years of service with the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens during our time together at Concordia Lutheran College! The type of relationship I had with him, though he was my boss and mentor, was one of collegial friendship. His personality and open-door policy invited casual conversation, openness and trust. A young, twenty-seven-year-old high school teacher with only five years of teaching and coaching experience, I was the first faculty member Ray hired after his installation as president a few months before I arrived in 1973. He may have felt that I was worthy of him taking a chance on me, given our common ties to Lutheran Wendish heritage and Lee county ancestry.

I remember Ray's enthusiastic support of sports teams at Concordia. When I was a basketball coach, his voice of encouragement for the team during games, sometimes mixed with a reminder to the referees that they may have seen a game situation incorrectly, stood out among others. And living in a house that was only a few feet from the backstop of the baseball field didn't seem to present a privacy problem. His and Jane's ministry was a 24/7 investment. Their home and backyard were always open, and their support was always obvious. I suspect in the early years that most students had individual conversations with him, and I'm pretty sure he knew most of them by name.

I remember Ray's support of nontraditional approaches to teaching that permitted faculty to take students from campus to experience field courses throughout the U.S. and abroad. Musical groups also extended their outreach to Lutheran congregations throughout Texas and the U.S. He saw that the added risks of student travel and the additional administrative oversight of budgets, vehicle maintenance, and necessary equipment were worth the many positive spiritual and social outcomes that the intimate connections between professors and students yielded.

I remember Ray valuing community worship and faculty fellowship. By blocking out a full hour each morning in which there were no scheduled classes, we worshipped together and afterward enjoyed coffee and donuts. This gave us time to engage in the casual discussion of matters related to our ministries, which seemed to lessen the time needed in faculty meetings for more formal debate and action.

I remember Ray being a risk-taker as he led us along the journey from being a junior college to becoming a baccalaureate-granting institution.

66

I remember Ray's enthusiastic support of sports teams at Concordia... I remember Ray's support of nontraditional approaches to teaching... I remember Ray valuing community worship and faculty fellowship... I remember Ray being a risk-taker... I remember Ray's aura of authority that complemented his usually calm and casual demeanor."

His tireless work leading the funding and construction efforts to build the Louise T. Peter Center allowed for the expansion of the communication and arts programs and set us on the path to becoming the institution we are today.

I remember Ray's aura of authority that complemented his usually calm and casual demeanor. Like waiting for the starting gun at the beginning of a race, I always felt a slight chill of anticipation as I heard his opening statements for new school years, which were similar to "By the authority vested in me as president of Concordia Lutheran College, I declare this 54th academic year to be open and in session. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." What an inspiration he was! By his pronouncements, by his example, and by his strong, aggressive leadership, he took us on the exciting journey leading to what we all enjoy today at Concordia University Texas.

It is with great joy and a sense of humility that I have an opportunity to address the friends and family of CTX with my thoughts of the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens. As one of the first bachelor's degree graduates (1982) of what was then Concordia Lutheran College, I am a living testament to the amazing impact CTX can have on its students. I truly attribute Concordia, the professors and Rev. Martens as godly agents of change that offered me an opportunity to grow significantly closer to God. I carried those influences into my life and continue to do so today.

I believe Rev. Martens envisioned Concordia to be an institution of higher learning where students could connect with others, discover their strengths, develop their skills, and ultimately help lead society from a posture rooted in Christian faith and demonstrated in intentional discipleship.

A few months before Rev. Martens passed away, I had an opportunity to share with him and his wife, Jane, my thoughts of and my experiences at Concordia under his leadership. Here is what I shared with them.

Rev. Martens worked to make sure Concordia would always be:

▶ A place to **belong** to and to be cared for. Concordia would be a place where relationships with other students, faculty and administrators help students navigate life, both while in college and in the years ahead.

▶ A place to be **renewed** in body, mind and spirit. Young adults would be emboldened by faith in the institution that would help them establish plans, goals and directions. The culture and experience on campus would teach

them that faith in Christ is at the core of their being and is the real impetus to their future lives and their accomplishments.

▶ A place to be **inspired**. The programs, the professors, the administrators, the fellow students and ultimately the Christian ethos that permeated the culture would influence students to become model citizens and intentional contributors to society.

▶ A place to experience true **discipleship**. Students would be encouraged to become disciples of Christ, living out their testimonies and sharing His love with those in their paths. Aspiring towards a life of duty and service is the ultimate benchmark for students. With this emphasis, these formidable years would be foundational in helping students meet their career aspirations and their overall plans to fulfill their God-given roles in life.

▶ A place of **growth**. Students would have significant opportunities to witness, explore, and practice leadership roles that would become a part of their future lives at work, at home, at their churches, in their communities and throughout the world.

▶ A place of higher **education**. Students would experience higher education in a broad range of disciplines and in a non-traditional approach, where the Truth and the Word were woven into the fabric of learning and demonstrated through intimate, meaningful classroom dynamics.

Embedded in these six paragraphs are six key words that I believe define several tenets of his leadership. The first letter of each key word spells BRIDGE. Rev. Martens developed and maintained a safe and sturdy structure that was designed to carry students into a future of meaning, purpose and inspiration.

I encourage all alumni to contemplate and share their personal CTX stories with other people. I also encourage alumni to get involved and support Concordia University Texas, to ensure Rev. Martens' impact will prosper in the years ahead.

66

"I believe Rev. Martens envisioned Concordia to be an institution of higher learning where students could connect with others, discover their strengths, develop their skills, and ultimately help lead society from a posture rooted in Christian faith and demonstrated in intentional discipleship."







Legacy of the Cruciform

BY ADRIANA THOMPSON

Symbols matter. They serve as points of access – historical, emotional and even spiritual. For nearly forty years, the Cruciform has been a dominant symbol of Concordia, and it started with the Rev. Dr. Ray Martens.

In 1980, eight years into his twenty-year tenure as president, Martens led Concordia Lutheran College (CLC) through the significant leap from a two-year junior college to a four-year baccalaureate-granting college. Martens' next project was creating a symbol synonymous with Concordia's values and its elevated place in the higher education community.

From the mature oak and pecan trees to the stained glass window in Birkmann Chapel, from the committed faculty and staff to the aspiring students, Martens was surrounded by inspiration on Concordia's historic downtown campus. He wanted a unique symbol that was unmistakably Concordia.

Inspired by the acronym "CLC," Martens drafted two mirrored "C"s and "L"s on a notepad. After evaluating his drawing, he realized, "all you need is a base, and you've got a cross." Martens was on to something. That very sketch became the Cruciform we know today.

Martens knew that just having a new symbol wasn't enough. It needed prominent placement to be seen from all over campus and beyond. Placing the Cruciform in front of Kilian Hall was a natural choice, but Martens knew that to elevate the symbol in the hearts of the Concordia community would require literally elevating it on the campus. With that in mind, he chose to place the Cruciform on a two-story tower, reaching above the buildings and oaks of the campus in clear view of all who passed by on I-35 and traversed the neighborhoods along Red River Street. The Cruciform stood as a beacon for Concordia in downtown Austin for more than 20 years.

Today, the Cruciform now sits on our Northwest Austin campus, near a bridge that spans part of Concordia's nature preserve. It prominently stands at the intersection of the library, dining hall, and Science & Technology Building.

For students and alumni, the Cruciform evokes dear memories of an incredible place marked by special relationships. For those who had the pleasure of knowing Rev. Dr. Martens, the Cruciform represents the lasting legacy of a leader whose love for Concordia continues to influence the University.



LEAVE A LEGACY TO INSPIRE THE FUTURE

The Legacy Is In Your Hands.



▶ With proper planning, capital gains taxes can be reduced or eliminated.



▶ Create a charitable legacy supporting the causes important to you while freeing assets for family.



▶ The estate tax may be reduced or eliminated.

Does Your Plan Match Your Priorities?

With recent changes to the tax code, now is the perfect time to review your plan to ensure it achieves your goals to provide for your family and support your favorite charities. With tools such as the charitable remainder unitrust, charitable gift annuity and life insurance, we can help you direct your assets to your loved ones and avoid taxes while also giving to a charitable cause like ours.

Call or email us to discuss the strategies and tools we have to help you reach your goals.

Pay More Taxes or Give More to Your Family - Which Do You Choose?



Jeff Frosch, *Director of Donor & Alumni Relations*

☎ 512.313.4105 ✉ jeff.frosch@concordia.edu ➔ ctxkilianlegacy.org



A note from a **Tornado**

Emily and Jennifer Martens joined their family legacy of Concordians. In addition to the connections through their grandfather (Rev. Dr. Ray Martens), their father and uncles are Concordia alumni.

"When I was considering which university to attend, Poppy (Martens) strongly recommended Concordia, especially when he learned that I wanted to major in nursing. During my years here, I was blessed to be able to spend so much time at Grammy (Mrs. Jane Martens) and Poppy's house."

EMILY MARTENS, '20
NURSING MAJOR

"Poppy was a constant figure of love and kindness. He was one of my biggest fans and constantly supported me. While at Concordia, I developed rewarding adult relationships with both Grammy and Poppy, which I will hold dearly for the rest of my life."

JENNIFER MARTENS, '19
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION MAJOR



Your Gift

Your gift to Concordia University Texas is important to you, and it's important to the university. We believe the greatest thanks we can show is through the responsible use of your gift. That's why being a good steward of your generosity is one of our highest priorities.

Our Donors

Our donors pave the way for the future of Concordia University Texas and create opportunities for students to pursue their education while being prayerfully led to serve Christ through their vocations.

Your Impact

Your impact is far-reaching, enabling us to provide support for our students, such as academic scholarships, research opportunities for environmental science programs, high-level training and education for our nursing programs, mission opportunities, church work training, and support for athletics. Additionally, we are able to provide faculty and staff with valuable resources for training and enrichment activities, recruitment, opportunities to launch degree programs, such as our Doctor of Education (EdD) program, and so much more.

Recognition in The Concordia Club

When you make a gift to Concordia University Texas, you are automatically enrolled in The Concordia Club at the level of support you choose. Recognition occurs on an annual basis, and any gift you give, regardless of which area of the University it supports, makes you eligible for The Concordia Club.

The Concordia Club

Gift Club Level	Gift Range	Honor Roll	Decal	Fan Gear Discount	Special Gift	Special Event Invitations
Active	\$1-99	✓				
Century	\$100-249	✓	✓			
Associate	\$250-499	✓	✓	✓		
Purple & Gold	\$500-999	✓	✓	✓	✓	

The following levels are designated as The 1926 Society

Ambassador	\$1,000-2,499	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Patron	\$2,500-4,999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Visionary	\$5,000-9,999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cabinet	\$10,000-24,999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Executive	\$25,000-49,999	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
President's	\$50,000+	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Become a part of The Concordia Club today by making a gift at Concordia.edu/GiveCCMag.

If you have any questions, please contact **chane**. carlson@concordia.edu.





▲ First graduating EdD class

Concordia's First Doctoral Program

DR. CHRIS WINKLER, SENIOR
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Concordia's first-ever class of doctoral students graduated with their Doctors of Education (EdD) in December 2019. This was a momentous occasion for an institution that has trained young men and women to become educators for decades. Originally established as a high school to prepare young men for ministry, Concordia now offers men and women training at the highest level in the field of education. The Concordia EdD is built for people who aspire not only to teach but also to shape the future of education through administration, policy and leadership.

Launching Concordia's first doctoral program required hard work, collaboration and University-wide support. A team of faculty and staff spent two years developing the Concordia EdD. The core planning committee consisted of College of Education professors Dr. Allen Brown, Dr. Mike Wallace and Dr. Chris Winkler. Leveraging Concordia's values of courage and lifelong learning, a team of faculty and staff built Concordia's first doctoral program.

Doctoral Program Built for Working Adults

Concordia has long sought to meet students where they are, including working adults. Beginning with the Accelerated Degree Program in 1995, Concordia added evening and online-based master's programs in Education and Business. The EdD was also designed for working adults, specifically for teachers who

want to advance into leadership roles and grow their knowledge for the benefit of their students.

Exciting changes were recently made to the degree, with the collaboration of Dr. Stephanie Hartzell, program director, enabling EdD students at CTX to enjoy the benefits of online learning without having to sacrifice the face-to-face experience. Concordia's online EdD now incorporates an on-campus residency. During the residency, students are immersed in the Concordia culture, staying in the residence halls, which back up to the nature preserve, eating in the dining hall and working together in the classrooms. Students meet their fellow cohorts in person and build a strong community of support.

"Students come together to meet with their professors, to meet with each other, to build the team and the emotional support network that's so beneficial for doctoral students," Hartzell explained.

Each EdD candidate selects a specialization. The new Educational Leadership track not only trains students for leadership roles in educational administration but also prepares them for superintendent certification. The Curriculum & Instruction track readies educators to assume leadership roles specific to curriculum design and student interaction, and it also enables them to advance as professors in higher education.

The ultimate purpose of the EdD is to improve education in the Central Texas community and beyond. "We

better our EdD students so that they can empower their students and colleagues to do amazing things," Hartzell said.

Celebrating the First Graduating EdD Class

On December 7, 2019, Concordia graduated its first class of EdD candidates. The excitement was palpable as families, friends and the Concordia community cheered on the graduates being hooded on the stage.

Dr. Chrissy Sampson, an alumna of the first graduating EdD class, explained, "The professors and coursework establish a strong foundation to help propel students to grow professionally. The program prepared me to be more dynamic in my thinking and creativity, which has allowed me to stand out as a leader among other educators."

Dr. Marianne Rader, a triple alumna of CTX, was cheered on by her husband, mother and children as she crossed the stage. While she earned her EdD for her students at Concordia High School in Round Rock, she also earned it in honor of her father, who passed away and always wanted to obtain an EdD. "It was surreal," she said. "Finishing was a commitment I made to myself in his legacy."

Concordia University Texas congratulates the EdD graduates and looks forward to seeing how they use their EdDs to pursue meaningful work that impacts their communities.



CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY TEXAS ESPORTS

Concordia Unveils New Esports Arena

BY ADRIANA THOMPSON

On July 30, 2019, CTX unveiled the high-tech Concordia Esports Arena to the community. As the first program of its kind in Central Texas, Concordia Esports is a pioneer in this emerging collegiate sport. Marc Valdoria, CTX Esports coordinator and coach, explained, "Our high-tech arena provides the same environment that esports professionals use out in the field, giving our esports players real-world experience while they're still in college."





INCUBATOR CTX

FOR INNOVATION AND IMPACT

▲ Albert Carrion, *Former Chairman of the Board of Regents*

IncubatorCTX is an innovative entrepreneurial hub on Concordia's beautiful campus that offers startups and early-stage companies workspace, mentors and other helpful resources to grow. It also provides CTX students and the greater community with valuable networking opportunities at various events.

The IncubatorCTX Speaker Series is held throughout the academic year and brings successful entrepreneurs and visionaries on campus to share their insights and

experiences. All CTX students and the greater community are welcome to attend these free sessions.

Concordia's students have unprecedented access to community leaders without having to leave campus, and community members have the ability to connect with talented students and industry professionals who can add value to their organizations.

IncubatorCTX was launched in 2017, with initial funding provided through a visionary gift from Mr. and Mrs. Bill Thomas.



Former President Elected to Royal Historical Society

Dr. David Zersen, Concordia's seventh president, was elected a Fellow of the British Royal Historical Society on May 10, 2019. The London society chooses scholars from

around the world who have distinguished themselves in historical research and writing.

A majority of Zersen's articles and books have a historical focus, and many of his publications deal with Concordia's heritage as a university established largely by congregations of Wendish background. His work contributes to the preservation of Concordia's rich history, which spans more than 90 years, two locations and thousands of graduates.

During his presidency from 1994 to 2001, Zersen led Concordia through significant events, including the transition into a university, a name change from Concordia Lutheran College to Concordia University at Austin and the renovation of 12 buildings on the historic campus. Zersen and his wife, Julie, live in Wisconsin, near their children and grandchildren.



La Brea visits Friesenhahn Cave

Friesenhahn Cave is a world-renowned fossil site that is located in the hills of northern San Antonio. Originally a den for saber-toothed cats, bears, turtles and other animals during the Pleistocene epoch, the cave has a rich deposit of fossils that reveal more about the history of Texas during the latest Ice Age.

The preserve encompasses four acres, including the cave chamber and several other unexplored chambers, and is now located in a bustling neighborhood. The site was generously donated to Concordia by the Marceau family. It has been managed by the University since 1997, led by Dr. Larry Meissner with the help of student groups, scientists, faculty, staff and other community members.

The Friesenhahn Cave & Preserve Council of Concordia University Texas was established in 2019 to manage, preserve, protect, and learn

from this unique treasure and the surrounding property. The council, which is composed of faculty, staff and community members with various professional backgrounds, provides the resources and connections that enable Concordia to move forward in exploring and preserving the site with the involvement of people across the University, the greater Texas community and the scientific field.

Concordia recently hosted two representatives from the world-famous La Brea Tar Pits in Los Angeles, California. The fossils collected from La Brea are from the same time period as Friesenhahn Cave, and over a century of work has led to the recovery of more than five million fossils, making La Brea's collection one of the largest in the world.

Dr. Emily Lindsey, the external research expert on the Friesenhahn Cave & Preserve Council and a curator at La Brea Tar Pits, and

Aisling Farrell, co-collections manager at La Brea, made their first visit to Friesenhahn Cave and preserve this past January.

"I was honored to have the opportunity to visit the cave," Farrell said, "as it has been on my 'bucket list' for over a decade. I am thrilled to hear that Concordia is serious about the stewardship of this very important paleontological site and that it will be protected in the public trust for many generations."

Lindsey and Farrell toured Concordia's campus and its 250-acre preserve, visited Friesenhahn Cave and the Witte Museum in San Antonio, and viewed the cave's original fossil collection in the Jackson School of Geosciences' Vertebrate Paleontology Lab at the University of Texas at Austin.

They also examined Concordia's on-campus collection of fossils and toured the Texas Memorial Museum, which houses the original fossils of the saber-toothed cat, *Homotherium serum*, and the long-nosed peccary, *Mylohyus nasutus*, which made Friesenhahn Cave famous. Lindsey also presented a talk to CTX students about the history of Rancho La Brea and the proposed reasons behind the extinction of these magnificent Ice Age animals.

The La Brea Tar Pits team is working with Concordia as the University moves forward with the preservation and continued excavation of Friesenhahn Cave. The La Brea staff will advise the University on best practices for managing fossil collections, how to preserve the cave, and how to proceed with research.

"This collaboration offers the potential to paint a picture of the Southwestern United States in regards to how climate change and human activities impacted animal populations in the past," Lindsey said.

In addition to consulting, the La Brea staff has been training Dr. Jennifer Hofmann (the Friesenhahn Cave & Preserve coordinator) and other faculty members in paleontology techniques and has invited CTX students to apply to their summer fossil school.

The wealth of experience and information that the staff of the La Brea Tar Pits brings to the table is invaluable and provides Concordia with insight and connections to the paleontological world.



▲ *Top Photo:* Aisling Farrell

▲ *Middle Photo (left to right)*
Top Row: Steve Marceau, James Candido, Dr. Jeffrey Utzinger, Dr. Mary Kay Johnston, Dr. Trey Crumpton & Kevin Amft
Middle Row: Dr. Larry Meissner, Shanna Marceau, Alden Suttle (CTX student), Dr. Emily Lindsey & Dr. Jennifer Hofmann
Bottom Row: Zach Stark & Aisling Farrell



Empowering others
to take the world by

storm



MEET ANNETTE

Annette Mata is a Global Public Health and Communications major, and her Concordia experience has impacted her life more than she could have ever imagined. Not growing up in a Christian home, being on a Christ-centered campus was something new to her. But it quickly became a way of life, and she became passionate about growing in her relationship with Christ. One of the things she appreciates most about Concordia is the encouragement from professors and colleagues to love Jesus and to experience all that He has for her life.

As a resident assistant, Annette has been able to encourage other students to experience all that Concordia has to offer. She has also served as a sound

tech for the Refuge (student-led ministry) and an intern with Vocation & Professional Development. Completing mission trips to Ethiopia and Kenya, Annette was able to put her vocation into practice.

Graduating this spring, Annette plans to help provide basic healthcare for communities in need. Thanks to people like you, Annette's incredible experience is something that she will take with her as she follows His calling for her life.

“I have a sense of guidance for my life now, and that is because of the foundation that Concordia has provided for me.”

- ANNETTE MATA

Did you know that tuition supports only 85% of an undergraduate's education?

The rest comes from people just like you. Your gifts support our students and the resources they need.

- ▶ Student Scholarships
- ▶ Classroom Support
- ▶ Advanced Technology
- ▶ Student Organization Support
- ▶ Faculty and Staff Training
- ▶ And More!

Make a gift today to support students like Annette at concordia.edu/give.

Consider setting up a monthly recurring gift. Ease your budget with the smaller, automatic monthly amount, and help us cut down on expenses so that your impact stretches even further.



For more information, contact the **Office of Philanthropy** at **512.313.4108**.

Learning in the Outdoors

Over the Fall Semester 2019, Concordia added new outdoor classrooms, the North and South Annex Courtyards, on either side of the Luther Annex. In addition to learning, these new spaces provide students with a place to connect with friends, study and relax.

Zach Stark, the director of Environmental Stewardship, led the project and collaborated with the creative director, the facilities team, student workers and others to make the spaces a reality. Concordia is committed to protecting the natural setting with which God has blessed the University, so environmental stewardship was prioritized in the design. The team selected sustainably sourced materials, including low-maintenance composite decking for the benches and turf that eliminates the need for irrigation.

Both classrooms are fully equipped, complete with dual bench seating, electrical outlets, Wi-Fi, purple and gold solar sails, and programmable party lights. The new learning spaces leverage one of Concordia's most unique features — the beautiful natural setting. All members of the Concordia community are invited to enjoy the spaces.



▲ New outdoor classrooms

— specifically learning to follow Jesus and love one's neighbor. Concordia intentionally engages in building disciples who will carry this way of life into their vocations, thereby changing lives and communities across the globe."

Greg and Susan Finke founded Dwelling 1:14 to help Jesus followers connect in their neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools for discipling and missional living. *"The Word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood"* (John 1:14 *The Message*). This reminds us that Jesus is at work all around us, redeeming and restoring human lives, and He invites us to be conduits of His love and grace. The Holy Spirit creates faith, and we have the opportunity to enjoy the people in our neighborhoods as we seek, recognize and respond to what Jesus is already doing in their lives.

On January 3, 25 people (our first group of faculty, staff and students) gathered with the Finkes to be trained in the Joining Jesus discipleship process. To help one another stay focused, participants meet weekly to share stories of where they see God at work in the lives of fellow students, faculty, staff, neighbors, family and other friends He has put in our path. It's called a Take 10 Conversation because you take 10 minutes to chat with a fellow Jesus follower and then pray for each other.

Simple? Yes! Effective? Yes! Want to join us? If your answer is yes, please email Patricia. Fick@concordia.edu for more information.

How have you seen God at work in your life this week?

CTX Is Joining Jesus on His Mission

BY PAT FICK

How is God messing with you? What is He inviting you to believe? Where do you see Him at work around you? What opportunities have you had to speak with, serve or pray for others?

These are just a few of the questions we are considering as we join Jesus on His mission to redeem a world hungry for hope, grace, truth and love!

Why have an intentional discipleship program at Concordia University Texas? Don Christian put it this way: "As an institution rooted in the Lutheran tradition, Concordia brings together faith and learning to build the whole person — body, soul, mind and spirit. Discipleship is a process of learning



BASEBALL CLUBHOUSE

PROJECT



BY ADRIANA THOMPSON

Concordia University Texas continues to expand the resources available to our student-athletes. The Concordia Baseball Clubhouse is the newest addition to the University's excellent athletics facilities. The project was made possible through the generosity of our donors, and the Williams family was one of our foundational supporters.

CTX senior Matthew Williams is an accomplished student and pitcher for the Concordia Baseball team. He was a pivotal team member in the 2019 season when the Tornados reached the NCAA Super Regionals, claimed the program's most wins since 2012, and achieved their deepest playoff run since 2002.

Approached two years ago by Coach Tommy Boggs, Richard and Tish Williams were asked to participate in supporting a new facility for baseball players. "We've always supported programs and institutions that have helped to develop and mold our children in a positive way," Mrs. Williams said.

"What I've found as a financial advisor is that people give money to programs they have an affinity for," Mr. Williams explained, "which share their values and further their vision. Donations follow the heartstrings, and our heartstrings are attached to the baseball program," he said.

The Concordia Baseball program is a cause the entire family supports. In addition to his parents, Matthew Williams' grandparents generously supported the program. Tish Williams' mother, Martha Daniel, said, "Matthew's grandfather, E. J. Daniel, loved baseball so much, and it brings me joy to be supporting the Concordia Baseball Clubhouse Project in his memory."

Richard Williams' father and his wife also donated to the program. "We understand the importance of quality Christian education and are proud to support the University and especially proud to support the Concordia Baseball program," Wendell and Carolyn Williams said.

The Williamses expect the new facility to help Concordia recruit and develop young men who will build upon Concordia's winning legacy while preparing them to be successful beyond graduation.



▲ *Top Row (left to right): Daniel & Matthew Williams*
Bottom Row (left to right): Lacey, Tish & Richard Williams, Madison Taggart

The ultimate victory for Concordia's athletes is to be prepared with the faith, leadership skills and knowledge to pursue meaningful work. The new baseball facility supports this admirable vision. Using a quote from Yogi Berra that Mrs. Daniel shared with us, "You can't lose if you win."

Concordia Baseball, like all of the University's athletics programs, is constantly striving to improve and reach higher levels of achievement. The enhancements that the new clubhouse provides will create an opportunity for CTX to stand out among peer institutions as the leading program with premier baseball facilities, which will play a huge role in the program's notoriety.

"By creating an atmosphere that is conducive to winning, we will lead the conference in our ability to train and provide the best possible outcomes for our players. This, in turn, will give us a significant upper hand when it comes to recruitment. Concordia Baseball is going places, and I can't wait for the journey."

- COACH TOMMY BOGGS

"PEOPLE GIVE MONEY TO PROGRAMS THEY HAVE AN AFFINITY FOR, WHICH SHARE THEIR VALUES AND FURTHER THEIR VISION. DONATIONS FOLLOW THE HEARTSTRINGS, AND OUR HEARTSTRINGS ARE ATTACHED TO THE BASEBALL PROGRAM."

-RICHARD WILLIAMS

If you would like to join the Williams family in contributing to the Concordia Baseball Clubhouse Project, please contact James.Candido@concordia.edu.



2019

CTX HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

BY JOE FISHER
SPORTS INFORMATION DIRECTOR

Five new members were recently inducted into the Concordia University Texas Athletic Hall of Fame. The inductees span three decades of Concordia Athletics history and represent four sports.



The 2012 **women's basketball team** won a program-best 23 games on their way to claiming the program's first-ever American Southwest Conference (ASC) Championship. They defeated Louisiana College 73-64 in the title game and reached the NCAA Tournament for the first time in CTX history.

CTX CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Led by Head Coach Rust Rainbolt and six All-ASC selections (a program record)

- ▶ 23-5 on the season, including school record of 18 wins in conference play
- ▶ Clinched program's first ASC West Division title
- ▶ Rainbolt named ASC West Coach of the Year
- ▶ Shamika Singleton selected to ASC All-Conference team

They are the fourth team to be inducted, joining the 2002 baseball team, the 1982-83 men's basketball team and the 1999 volleyball team. Additionally, the team is the first representative of the women's basketball program to be inducted.

Concordia Athletics has always provided student-athletes with life-changing experiences, and this team was no exception. One of the players accepted Christ as her Savior going into her senior year.

The team's shared commitment to a common goal led to their success. "It was God's provision, the way He produced and provided amazing young women with great talent and passion for the game," Rainbolt said.



Scott Berkman was a four-year letterman for the baseball team, playing from 2000 to 2003. He was part of the 2002 team that made a run to the NCAA Division III College World Series. Berkman was superb for the Tornados on the mound and in the batter's box.

CTX CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ 59 appearances, 51 starts
- ▶ Record of 25-13 over 320.2 innings
- ▶ Holds program's career records in games started (51), innings pitched and strikeouts (291)
- ▶ Ranks fourth for wins and complete games (20)

- ▶ Lifetime .330 hitter; scored 135 runs, 33 doubles and 63 RBIs
- ▶ Ranks top 10 in program history for most runs scored and most doubles
- ▶ Three-time All-ASC selection
- ▶ Earned dual All-ASC honors during senior year (infield and pitcher)
- ▶ Named to America Baseball Coaches Association/Rawlings All-West Region Second Team during final season

"He was a leader with his actions. He wore off on all of us," former teammate David White explained. "Scott didn't goof around. He was there to work."

Leveraging his Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from CTX, Berkman has worked in the financial industry for nearly 17 years. Advancing into management just three years into his career, he currently serves as the manager of project controls for Houston-based Kinder Morgan, one of the largest energy infrastructure companies in North America.

"As a friend who knows him off the field, he's consistent as a husband, a parent and a friend," former teammate Max Robbins said. "You always know he's going to be there, and he's going to be ready."

Berkman and his wife, Nicole, have two children. Their daughter plays softball, and their son plays baseball.



Rusty Segler coached the men's basketball team from 1988 to 1996. During the 1991–92 season, Segler coached the Concordia Stags to 21 wins, the third-most wins in a single season in program history.

CTX CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Coached men's basketball team for 8 seasons
- ▶ Record of 91-152
- ▶ Third-most coaching wins in program history

During his coaching tenure, Segler oversaw the development of some of Concordia's best players, including 2009 Hall of Fame inductee Wendell Homes and three other thousand-point scorers, including Kevin Dydalewicz, Clay Cole and Todd Redmond. Segler is the sixth coach to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, joining Mike Gardner, James Keller, Jack Faszholz, Linda Lowery and Tom Orton.

Segler has been a coach for more than 30 years and has claimed more than 600 wins.

"The men's basketball program was a vehicle to teach them to become great students, great husbands, great daddies," Segler said. "If I'm going to practice what I preach, I've got to do it myself."

Segler and his wife, Deb, have been married for more than 38 years. "The good Lord sat us next to each other at a faculty meeting," he explained. "And she has been my backbone and my associate head coach ever since." They have two sons and multiple grandchildren.

"He exemplifies what Concordia stands for as a coach, as a man, as a husband, as a father and as a friend," Wendell Homes said.

Segler retired from coaching last year, finishing his career leading Little Elm High School to 181 wins over nine seasons.



Four-year letterman **Mike Tate** pitched for the Concordia Stags baseball team from 1983 to 1986. During his collegiate career, Tate tallied a record of 15-20, posting a 4.42 ERA and totaling 249 strikeouts, which ranks second in program history.

CTX CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ 56 appearances on the mound, 35 starts
- ▶ Tossed 23 complete games (ranks second in program history)
- ▶ Senior year: 93.1 innings with 7-6 record and 2.80 ERA

- ▶ Set single-season record for most complete games (10) and strikeouts (110) during senior year

Following graduation, Tate served as Concordia's assistant baseball coach for nearly two years. He went on to play professionally with Boise Hawks Baseball Club for two seasons. He became the all-time career pitching leader in team history, achieving 133 strikeouts over 118 career innings pitched.

God then led him down a different path. After he and his wife, Karla, got married in 1988, Tate utilized the knowledge he gained with his Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration and Management from Concordia to become a business office manager. Less than a year after transitioning into insurance, Tate became an agency manager of Texas Farm Bureau Insurance Companies, a role he has held for more than 25 years.

"My parents were key in my life," Tate explained. "The most important thing they did is make sure I knew the love of the Savior. And that's been important my whole life. God has used me for eternal purposes."

Mike and Karla have two grown children. They attend the First Baptist Church of Lockhart and recently welcomed their first grandchild.



Megan Wagenaar finished her collegiate career as one of the most decorated runners in cross country as well as track & field. Competing for the Tornados from 2010 to 2014, Wagenaar racked up multiple individual accolades in both sports.

CTX CROSS COUNTRY CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Part of 2011 team that captured program's first-ever ASC Championship
- ▶ Four-time All-ASC selection; named First Team selection in 2011 and 2013
- ▶ NCAA All-South/Southeast Region selection senior year

- ▶ First Tornado to compete at NCAA Cross Country Championship
- ▶ Holds program record in 5K run with time of 18:38.8

CTX TRACK & FIELD CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▶ School record holder in 800m (set at 2012 ASC Championship) and 1500m events
- ▶ Claimed six ASC individual titles in the 800m and 1500m events
- ▶ Part of the 4x400 relay team that won the ASC title in 2014
- ▶ Three-time ASC All-Conference selection
- ▶ Named the 2012 ASC Female Track Athlete of the Year
- ▶ First cross country and track student-athlete to be inducted

"She has that drive to keep working at it until you get where you want to be," former CTX coach Alex Aldaco said.

Wagenaar joined Concordia as a graduate assistant in 2016 and now serves as Concordia's head cross country and track coach, a position she's held for nearly 3 years.

"The more I run, the more I realize that you have to love what you're doing to be able to continue doing it," Wagenaar said.

Where Are They Now?

SEND US YOUR NEWS

We want to celebrate all that our amazing Concordia alumni are doing. Share your accomplishments and your meaningful work with friends and fellow classmates. Submit your story at alumni@concordia.edu, and see it in the next issue of the magazine!



Jeremy de Alcala,

BA '13, MBA '15

Jeremy de Alcala is a restaurateur, entrepreneur and double CTX alumnus. He has worked for nearly 20 years at CKM Restaurant Group, a multi-unit Chick-fil-A franchise in South Austin, and he was recently promoted to chief people officer. He's responsible for talent acquisition, human resources and company culture.

But his vocational accomplishments don't stop there. De Alcala and his wife, Melissa, launched Green Space, TX, which is a food trailer that provides the community of Buda with healthy juices, smoothies and small bites.

"Throughout the Concordia MBA, all of our professors spoke to the power of getting out, networking and getting involved in your community," de Alcala said. The support of Concordia and the Buda Area Chamber of Commerce helped make Green Space a reality.

The de Alcalas will use Green Space to support their new tech startup, Cloudbites, which will connect the community with local chefs through a networking app.



Kassi Kincaid

BBA '16

Kassi Kincaid earned her Bachelor of Business Administration in 2016, graduating summa cum laude. In September 2019, she received the 2019 Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TXAEYC) Administrator of the Year award for her work in early childhood education.

Kincaid is the administrator at Cornerstone Connection, a Christian preschool in Round Rock, Texas, which offers children from 12 months to five years old Christ-centered programs, including Abeka curriculum, a sensory lab, Bible stories, prayer and lessons on how to make right choices.

She is also part of Sensory Smart Solutions, an education nonprofit through which she founded a literacy program called Book Days. The program inspires a love of reading in children by bringing books to life through multiple modalities, including theatrical performance. Book Days received its first commercial sponsors — Round Rock Donuts and Kerbey Lane Café. Kincaid plans to develop curriculum for childhood professionals that encourages students to enjoy reading.



Annette Parkhurst

MED '07

Graduating with her Master of Education from Concordia in 2007, Annette Parkhurst entered the field of teaching, and in 2019, she became a published author.

Released on August 13, 2019, *The Legend of Theodore E. Bear* originally began as a baby shower gift 35 years ago. The story is about God's first teddy bear, "Teddy," who has been caring for children for nearly 500 years. It comes time for Teddy to rest, so God enlists his help to create the perfect new teddy bear. "God, Who can do everything on His own, chooses us to work with Him because He loves the delight He takes in us and that we take in Him," she said.

The Legend of Theodore E. Bear can be purchased on any online bookstore. "God has always been there," Parkhurst said. "In a lot of ways, this is the reality of my relationship with God."



Dr. Sandra Doering

'69

Dr. Sandra Doering graduated from Concordia Lutheran College in 1969. She also taught at Concordia in the College of Education for 19 years, during which time

she served as dean of the college and led efforts to establish Concordia's first graduate program, the Master of Education.

Doering currently teaches at Concordia University Chicago, where she helped plan and develop the Doctor of Education for reading specialists. She was recently recognized as a Distinguished Professor, elected by the faculty and confirmed by the Board of Regents, for her exemplary service to the university for nearly 12 years.



Sara Smart

BA '11

Sara Smart earned her Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education from Concordia in 2011. She now serves as an elementary school teacher in Galveston.

Smart took to Facebook to ask for book donations so that she could give one to every student in her third-grade class for Christmas. Through overwhelming community support, she was able to give every student in third grade three brand-new books.

She learned more about the literacy gap and that just eight percent of low-income families utilize public libraries. To help close the gap, she launched the nonprofit Books Within Reach, which provides books for economically disadvantaged kids and families. Once a bookcase is built and enough books are donated to fill it, Smart and her team host a celebratory gathering where the bookcase is installed.

Books Within Reach recently installed a seventh bookcase, expanded to Texas City and has connected kids with thousands of books.



Michael BA '11
& **Torri Sherlin** BA '12

Michael and Torri Sherlin both earned their Bachelors of Arts from CTX. Marrying soon after graduation, they moved to San Diego, California.

Since graduation, the Sherlins have accomplished great career success. Michael is now the director of channel management for Zego, a company that handles payment processing, resident billing and utility management for property management companies. Zego serves around 6,000 residential real estate companies and works with all portfolio types, from single-family home developers and homeowner associations to property developers.

Torri is an attorney for the plaintiff's law firm Baron & Budd. She recently resolved a high-profile wildfire case for \$360 million with Southern California Edison on behalf of 23 public entities that suffered taxpayer losses as a result of devastating fires and debris flows. She is part of a team that has resolved more than \$1.385 billion for public entities in wildfire claims over the past two years.



Dr. Chrissy Sampson

EdD '19

Dr. Chrissy Sampson was part of the first graduating cohort of the Doctor of Education program in December. "Concordia's doctoral program has made me more assertive and effective as an educator," she said.

Sampson is currently working as a secondary English teacher while actively applying for positions in school administration and universities. Praying and trusting that God will direct her to the right opportunity, Sampson explained, "I feel confident that my doctoral degree from Concordia will give me the edge that I need to stand out among other candidates."



Dr. Marianne Rader

EdD '19

Dr. Marianne Rader is a three-time graduate of Concordia. In 2019, she graduated with her Doctor of Education in Curriculum & Instruction. Rader has worked at Concordia High School in Round Rock, Texas, for 14 years and serves as a teacher and the assistant principal. "I want our kids to have the very best education," she said. "I had it within my power to meet that need by earning my EdD, and I felt a responsibility to become as educated as I could for our students."



Elaene Mae Abella

BSN '19

Elaene Mae Abella graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from Concordia in December 2019. She is the first medical professional in her family.

Abella immigrated to the United States of America in 2015, joining her family in Austin, Texas. The move was a complete transition for her, but she persevered through the obstacles. After earning her associate degree, Abella searched for a BSN program that would allow her to earn her degree quickly.

She found Concordia's Accelerated BSN, which is a 16-month program that blends rigorous online coursework with hands-on learning through simulation labs and clinical rotations. She chose Concordia because of the short duration and because of its focus on Christian leadership. "This was like my home away from home when it comes to my beliefs and values," she said.

In January, Abella began her career as a trauma ICU nurse in Houston, Texas.



Teddy Vickers

BA '18

Originally from Ethiopia, Teddy Vickers moved to the United States during high school. He transferred to CTX and joined the men's soccer team, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Behavioral Sciences in 2018.

A year after graduation, Vickers received the sign from God he had been seeking to start a soccer academy. In 2019, he opened First Touch Soccer Academy, a high-quality indoor training facility in Austin for soccer players of all ages and skill levels.

First Touch Soccer Academy is unique because of Vickers' commitment to developing the whole player, helping them develop their skills while teaching them manners and how to respect others.

As a proud parent of his son, Mattios, Vickers understands the perspectives of both the players and their parents. "Concordia laid the foundation for me of how to talk to kids and adults," he said. "I find out what their need is and then go from there."



▲ **Top Row** (left to right): Lois Schroeder Bohot ('61), Lis Kugel Behrend Bennett ('62)
Front Row (left to right): Cynthia Klenk Woodlee ('62), Janet Socha Kasper ('62), Lois Johanningmeier Thies ('62), Jane Pederson Klauser ('62), Eva Schmidt Zoch ('62), Marlene Bellhorn Tesinsky ('62)

1960s

In April 2019, eight classmates from Lutheran Concordia College of Texas gathered together at Big Cedar Resort on Table Rock Lake in Missouri.

1990s

Clay Cole ('92) was promoted to division director of unemployment insurance at the Texas Workforce Commission, which is the state agency that provides workforce development services to the employers and job seekers of Texas.

2000s

Jeremy and Margie (Pacey) Clifton ('01) are pleased to announce the birth of their son, James Mighell Crowell Clifton. Born on September 17, 2019, James weighed 10 lbs. 13 oz. and was 21 inches long.

Erin Albrecht ('04) earned her MEd from Concordia and is the executive vice president of J&R Tile, Inc., an NTCA 5 Star commercial tile contractor that recently won National Tile



▲ Jeremy and Margie (Pacey) Clifton ('01) and their son, James Mighell Crowell Clifton

& Stone Project of the Year. Albrecht, a Pro Wedi installer herself, became a member of the board of directors of the Ceramic Tile Education Foundation in January.

2010s

John Griffin ('12) earned his MBA at Concordia and was recently promoted to vice president of communication and people integration for the John Maxwell Company, which provides professional training and coaching to corporations based on the John C. Maxwell curriculum.

Matthew Brooks ('17) joined Concordia full time as a staff photographer. Graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Public Relations, Brooks brings more than 10 years of professional photography experience and more than four years of marketing experience to the University.

SAVE THE DATE

Celebrating 100 years of Concordia

June 27, 2026

MORE DETAILS TO COME

In Memoriam



Eric R. Gerstmann and his twin brother, Albert, were born to Karl and Elsie Gerstmann on September 3, 1924, in Puyallup, Washington. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps

as a sheet metal apprentice and air cadet until 1945. After earning his bachelor's degree, he received his master's degree in social work.

He became a caseworker at the Lutheran Children's Home. Gerstmann met and married Mildred Pauline Engeling in 1952. They had two children, Carol Marie and Gerald Mark.

The family moved to Austin, where Gerstmann served the Lutheran Social Services of Texas for 15 years and directed two nursing home expansions. He joined Concordia Lutheran College in 1981, where he taught sociology until his retirement in 1991.

A lifelong Lutheran, he participated in Sunday school, the Luther League and more. Gerstmann and his wife enjoyed traveling and visiting loved ones, and he was an avid gardener.

He is survived by his daughter, Carol Crader, daughter-in-law, Marilyn Gerstmann, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Clyde Daniel "Dan" Jones III was a multi-generational Texan born to C. Daniel Jones, Jr. and Martha McKay Jones in Houston.

Jones earned his undergraduate degree from Concordia (magna cum laude) and a law degree from South Texas College of Law. He served in the police force for more than 30 years as an officer, detective and commander.

He investigated some of the largest drug cases in the history of the Brazos Valley, and he led a conventional police detective division of the College Station Police Department. After becoming licensed as an attorney, he joined Gray and Jones Attorneys at Law, leveraging his experience in criminal justice.

Jones is survived by his wife, Steffani, his four children (Hunter, Amanda, Heidi and Alison), his parents, his brother and sister, and other family members.



Thomas Orton was born on July 4, 1938, to Ellsworth and Mary Orton in Detroit, Michigan. An avid athlete, he lettered in three sports in high school, earned a bronze medal

in the 1959 Pan American Olympic Games as starting catcher for the United States Baseball Team, and played with the Detroit Tigers' minor league.

He earned his bachelor's degree from Valparaiso University and married Lois Kruse Orton. While earning his master's degree from Wayne State University, he began coaching and teaching.

Orton joined Concordia in 1979, coaching and teaching at the University for 32 years. As head coach for nearly a decade, he led the 1983 men's basketball team to win the Little College National Championship. In retirement, he served as assistant basketball coach at Concordia High School in Pflugerville, Texas.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Lois, two of his three children, his grandchildren and other family members.



Malton Leroy "Chatt" Tschatschula was born in 1928 in Winchester, Texas, to Oswald and Esther Tschatschula, growing up on a farm.

He went to Lutheran Concordia College of Texas (1943–47) and then attended Concordia Teachers College (Concordia University Chicago). In 1953, Tschatschula married Virginia Texanna Anderson, a teacher he recruited as the principal of Mt. Olive Lutheran School in Houston. He then became the principal of Pilgrim Lutheran School and continued his education, earning a master's degree and later a PhD.

Moving the family to Austin, Tschatschula joined Concordia Lutheran College as a professor, teaching for 33 years. He also launched a custom home building business with his family. Leroy and Virginia retired in Houston to be close to their daughter and her family.

He is survived by his son, Terrance, his daughter, Holly, their spouses, Kelly and Philip, respectively, and his four grandchildren.

Give today!

Yes, you can support the mission of Concordia University Texas.
Let us help you meet your philanthropic goal and plan your generosity.



Ways to Support the Mission of
Concordia University Texas:

IRA Rollovers • Estate Plan • Life Insurance

[CONCORDIA.EDU/GIVE](https://concordia.edu/give)

THE OFFICE OF PHILANTHROPY | 512.313.4108