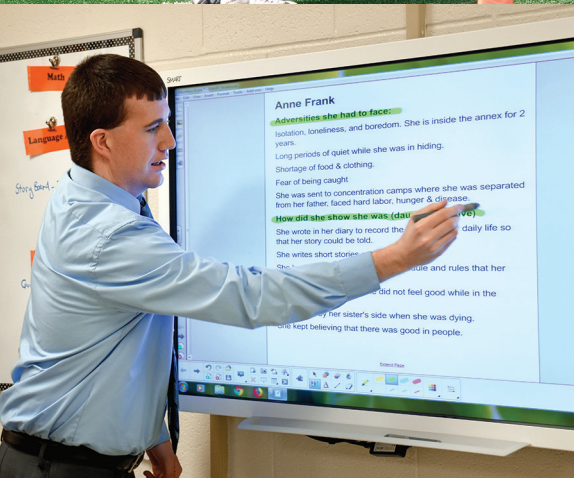


# BLUFFTON

A magazine for Bluffton University alumni and friends | Winter 2019 | Vol. 16 No. 1



**BUILDING MOMENTUM**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The daffodils are starting to sprout, the birds are back in Bluffton's trees and we are excited for spring to continue to unfold on campus. This issue highlights the spirit of positive energy on campus and a number of ways, among many, that Bluffton is building momentum through academic, athletic and student engagement programs that grow from our enduring mission and values.

As I approach the conclusion of my first academic year, I continue to see examples every day of the way Bluffton's mission helps our students shape lives of meaning and purpose with the expert guidance of highly committed faculty and staff. Bluffton University's campus community and their relationship with the surrounding community are among the reasons I am confident we have much to look forward to as we prepare to launch a comprehensive strategic planning process this fall.

I am pleased to share that Bluffton has been reaccredited with no stipulations for ten years by the Higher Learning Commission. Very few institutions are reaccredited without a need for follow-up evaluations, so this is a significant outcome. I am grateful for the outstanding work of the many faculty and staff who helped prepare for the review with the leadership of Dr. Lamar Nisly, our recently appointed vice president for academic affairs.

This issue also marks the removal of Lincoln Hall. This venerable residence hall will be replaced by a new science building at the heart of campus. I appreciate the decades of service Lincoln Hall provided to students, including many of you, and also look forward to moving forward with construction of the Knowlton Science Center, a critical resource for teaching and learning in the natural and health sciences. With over \$14 million of the \$14.5 million project cost confirmed, we are close to realizing our fundraising goal. We are making progress every day and I am hopeful that with the support of many alumni and friends, we can secure the remaining funds needed and break ground sometime this calendar year.

And of course, I am looking forward to my first May Day and Commencement weekend! I hope that many of you can join me and reconnect with classmates and friends on Bluffton's beautiful campus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane M. Wood'.

Jane M. Wood, Ph.D.  
President



# BLUFFTON

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Winter 2019 Vol. 16 No. 1

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BLUFFTON UNIVERSITY MISSION:

*Bluffton University seeks to prepare students  
of all backgrounds for life as well as vocation,  
for responsible citizenship, for service to all  
peoples and, ultimately, for the purposes of  
God's universal kingdom.*

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**We welcome your comments!**

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# BUILDING MOMENTUM

## *A vision for Bluffton's future*

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At Bluffton University, our sense of a greater purpose develops students of exceptional character and expansive vision. Since 1899, we've been learning, experiencing and bettering the world together.

When President Jane Wood first came to campus one year ago, she quickly realized there was something special about Bluffton. Since taking office in July, she's mobilized efforts to share the Bluffton story of success through nine "Momentum Makers"—areas of longstanding accomplishment in academics, athletics and student engagement.

These programs lift up the university as a whole, but we know Bluffton students have a transformative education no matter what major they are studying, organization they are involved in or team they play on. That's because at Bluffton everything begins and ends with mission.

---

*Shaped by the historic peace church tradition and nourished by a desire for excellence in all phases of its programs, Bluffton University seeks to prepare students of all backgrounds for life as well as vocation, for responsible citizenship, for service to all peoples and, ultimately, for the purposes of God's universal kingdom.*

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# NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

*One of two accredited programs  
at private colleges in Ohio*

For Bluffton University's nutrition and dietetics students, the community is really their classroom. Because of partnerships with businesses and organizations ranging from The Food Store in downtown Bluffton to Mercy Health St. Rita's Medical Center in Lima to WIC offices and food banks, students are able to practice their field of study well before they start their careers.

"I think the program is successful because the professors work one on one with you, and you get so many different types of experiences," said Katie Kline, a junior nutrition and dietetics major from Perrysville, Ohio. "Presenting at the wellness events helps you with public speaking, preparing for the Bluffton University Nutrition Association's Harvest Dinner helps you with food service and the clinicals really give you a lot of great experience in a hospital setting."

Dr. Deb Myers, professor of dietetics, says Bluffton's small class sizes are what enables professors to "go outside of the classroom."

**"We do a lot of experiential learning," explained Myers. "Our program has considerable hands-on, internship-like experiences that are built into the undergraduate curriculum."**

Two statistics highlight the program's success. While 50 percent of students nationally who apply for post-bachelor dietetic internships earn placements, Bluffton students who apply boast an 85 percent placement rate. The fifth-year internship program is required to become a registered dietitian nutritionist, and students can sit for the RDN licensure exam upon completion. Bluffton's pass rates are top-notch on the RDN test as well with 98 percent of students passing.

While Kline came to Bluffton because of those outcomes, what she's learning in the classroom and practicing in the community is driving her to make a difference in the world.

"I am super passionate about food and nutrition," said Kline. "I'm ready to share how diet can change how you feel each and every day."



# EDUCATION

*Accredited program with classroom experience starting in the first year*

Students in Bluffton University's education program are placed in area classrooms starting in their very first semester. This ensures that this challenging career is really the place they are called to be.

For senior intervention specialist major Blake McGue, the first-year field experience solidified his choice.

"I was able to picture myself as a teacher and ask myself, 'Can I do this every day for the next 30 years?' Since starting the program, I've never had a second thought," said McGue, who is student teaching at Lima West Middle School.

McGue added that every single class he's taken for his major has included some sort of field experience—whether in the community or through a virtual classroom.

Dr. Gayle Trollinger, chair of the education department, says these experiences make for a well-rounded education program.

"We get them in the schools early and provide them with support and mentorship," explained Trollinger. "We prepare students to become highly effective teachers and they get jobs."

Bluffton's education department also offers some unique opportunities. The 3+1 program enables qualified students to earn their bachelor's degree and Master of Arts in Education from Bluffton in four years, and a partnership with the Chicago Center for Urban Life and Culture allows seniors to student teach in the Chicago Public Schools.

Bluffton also earned a 100 percent pass rate on the Ohio Assessments for Educators in 2018. This shows the university develops teachers who are both qualified and called.

"I chose education because it is a career where each day is different. Each day is a new opportunity to change the life of a student, to shape the future of the world," said Makayla Noble, a senior early childhood education major from Bluffton. "I believe the students in our schools need teachers who care about them now more than ever, and I feel God has called me to meet this need."





## ENDURING VALUES

### *A new approach to the general education program at Bluffton*

Bluffton University's general education program was recently updated to better serve incoming students and reflect the values of the university. The Enduring Values General Education Program features the Mission Core—one class each year connected to one of Bluffton's four enduring values.

**Freshman, Discovery:** *Becoming a Scholar*

**Sophomore, Community:** *Learning in Community*

**Junior, Respect:** *Cross-Cultural Experience*

**Senior, Service:** *Christian Values in a Global Community*

While three of the classes are part of Bluffton's current general education program, the sophomore-level Learning in Community class will be a completely new experience. The class will be team taught by professors in a variety of disciplines and will encourage students to make direct connections between their academic study and community engagement. Students will

learn about nearby Lima, Ohio, and the class will feature both community stakeholders presenting on campus and students traveling off campus to better engage in their learning.

Dr. Lamar Nisly, vice president of academic affairs, believes the approach "pushes forward the concept of the liberal arts."

"We embrace classroom learning," explained Nisly, "but we know students have had a lot of years experiencing education in the same way. We think giving them these significant touchstone experiences through the general education program will allow them to come to their education in a different kind of way."

Nisly believes the Learning in Community class, which includes guided classroom processing of their experiences, will set students up to have even more beneficial cross-cultural experiences, although they already have a significant impact on students.

"I came back with a different mentality and a better understanding that the world is a lot bigger than Bluffton," said Taylor Aurand, a senior from Traverse City, Mich., who spent a semester in Guatemala. "It really pushed me to look at my major in a new way."

Faculty will pilot Learning in Community during the spring 2020 term, before implementing the class for all sophomores in the 2020-21 academic year.



# VOLLEYBALL

*Eight NCAA tournament appearances  
and 11 conference titles*

Before every game, the Bluffton volleyball team envisions their success.

“We get in a big huddle while the opposing team is warming up and each player says one thing they are going to excel at,” explained Brooke Kleman, a first-year defensive specialist. “We hype each other up. The first time I was part of it I was so excited that I thought ‘Oh my gosh, we are going to win!’”

The team also has a mantra that is ingrained into their psyche.

**“We come in and put our hands in the huddle and one of the captains will say ‘together on three,’ said Steve Yarnell, head volleyball coach. “Over the past 14 years, at some point that word is what broke a huddle and it’s tradition now.”**

“We say it before water breaks, during practice or after our huddles during games,” elaborated Kleman, a speech-language pathology and audiology major from Ottawa, Ohio.

Whether it’s on the court, in the classroom or even at lunch, you can often find members of the volleyball team “together.”

Those relationships are cemented each preseason through a team bonding trip that has nothing to do with volleyball. This year the team went whitewater rafting in Ohiopyle, Pa.

“We are graduating a group of eight,” said Yarnell. “It’s great to retain players for four years. They stick around because we are a family. We want Bluffton to be a home-away-from-home, and I think we built that.”

The team is also consistently successful on and off the court. Last season, Bluffton volleyball qualified for the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference tournament for the 11th consecutive year, but they also maintained an in-season team GPA of 3.62.

“Academics are really important to us,” explained Yarnell, “We averaged being on the dean’s list as a team of 25. Fun for us is achieving at a high level.”





# FOOTBALL

## *A new staff and a fresh outlook*

Walk into a team meeting for the Bluffton University football program and the coaching staff looks completely different than it did just two years ago. In his ninth month on the job, head coach Aaron Krepps has recently added Chris Mosley, a former assistant coach for the Miami Dolphins and Tampa Bay Buccaneers; DeVan Hill, who has 10 years of Division I experience; and Josh Runda, a 2014 alumnus who served as a graduate assistant while earning his Bluffton MBA in 2016.

Krepps is also implementing a new team culture.

**“Our program values are family, academics, football,” said Krepps. “Family speaks for itself, academics is a must and football is an option. It’s not guaranteed if one and two aren’t there.”**

He’s strict but student-athletes are responding.

“I’m seeing people push each other to do better in academics, sports and their lives,” said Plummie Gardner, a sophomore quarterback and sport management and marketing major from Lima, Ohio. “Even the coaches are pushing each other to be the best they can be so they can push us to be the best we can be.”

Krepps is keeping this mentality strong in the off-season through biweekly check-in meetings with the entire team.

“At the team meetings we’re talking everything but football,” explained Krepps. “We talk about academics and new gear. We introduce them to the new coaching staff and we give them a sounding board. At the end of the day it’s about building a team culture.”

Junior linebacker Dylan Shaffer says the changes are building a solid foundation for the future

“It gives me goosebumps to see that we have a lot of talent in the weight room right now,” said Shaffer, a marketing major from Shelby, Ohio. “It’s going to be an exciting year coming up.”

By building a family-type atmosphere and holding student-athletes to high academic standards, Krepps aims to build a culture that breeds success on and off the football field.



# WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

## *Six consecutive HCAC tournament appearances*

For the Bluffton women's basketball team, success hinges on one key concept—playing as a team.

“The best teams play for each other,” said Chad Shutler, head women's basketball coach. “They have to buy into that concept and spend time with each other—learn and grow and laugh and cry and do all of that together. That's where the friendships are made and the trust.”

It's a concept Abbie Parkins, a sophomore accounting and business administration major from Bluffton, has bought into.

“We spend three to four hours together every day, which is awesome,” said Parkins. “Being together so often and having the practices together, that's when you build the chemistry.”

The team strengthens these bonds at the beginning of each season by competing in a tip-off tournament. This year, the team traveled to Rhodes College in Memphis, Tenn., where

they beat the Arkansas Ozarks but also bonded during a tour of the National Civil Rights Museum.

They also appreciate the support from the campus community.

**“President Wood really connected with us this year,” said Parkins, “and we have a lot of faculty and staff at every game showing us their support. Even those who can't make it often ask how things are going. They pay attention.”**

While the chemistry and community support was present this season, the 2018-19 team was without three key seniors from the previous season due to graduation, including Bluffton's all-time scoring leader Macey Shearer.

“This year was about bringing the pieces together and establishing new rotations on the floor,” said Shutler. “We have a lot of athletes coming back next season with great experience.”

After three previous 20-win seasons and a 2016 conference championship, the team was able to make their sixth consecutive HCAC tournament appearance in 2019. But after a year of rebuilding, they're focused on the future.

“We expect to be back at the top of the HCAC very soon,” said Shutler.





## THE TRUTH MAKES FREE

*“The Witmarsum” and “Bridge Literary Journal” allow our students publishing experience from their first year*

Having just finished their fifth issue, “Bridge: The Bluffton University Literary Journal” student editorial associates went from reading 75 submissions for their first publication to up to 500 a semester. Submissions come from young writers all over the world. While “Bridge” students choose their favorite short stories, poems and artwork to feature, they also serve as developmental editors, project managers and layout designers. They’re also gaining the administrative and leadership skills that will help them transition to the world of employment.

“‘Bridge’ operates on a consensus model and that’s excellent training for the team-based work that we are seeing more and more of in the 21st century workplace” said Jamie Lyn Smith-Fletcher, assistant professor of English. “A lot of colleges have

literary magazines but not a lot of magazines are run the way ‘Bridge’ runs. We are moving to a student-driven model and our genre editors now lead selection meetings.”

**While “Bridge” flexes the ambitions of creative writers and editors, “The Witmarsum” develops the next generation of convergent journalists.**

“We have a website and a radio station, and we are working to seamlessly blend the two so students learn to adapt their storytelling strategies based on the media through which they are communicating,” said Marathana Prothro, assistant professor of communication. “We are asking, ‘What does a story look like if it is being tweeted or if it involves video or if it’s turned into a podcast?’”

On a practical level, “The Wit” allows students to create portfolio material. This year, students are on track to produce more than 250 pieces of original content. “Employers are going to say, ‘Show me what you can do,’ so having solid samples is a real benefit for them,” explained Prothro.

Involvement in student media also improves written and oral communication. While often thought of as soft skills, Prothro disagrees. “In reality, they are specific skills that employers want and you need to be successful.”



# COMMUNITY

## *Celebrating nature, the outdoors and our relationship with the village of Bluffton*

Sixteen education majors recently took part in a unique teacher training opportunity with Project Wild, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' conservation education program.

Held at the Moyer Nature Center, the location allowed participants to develop new skills in a classroom setting and then practice those lessons moments later during a field investigation of the plants and wildlife at the Bluffton University Nature Preserve.

This is an early example of what Dr. Hans Houshower, vice president for advancement, explains as “extending the classroom” to the Nature Preserve.

“We have a truly wonderful resource in the Nature Preserve that is greatly enhanced by the addition of the Moyer Nature Center, a facility with drinking water, accessible restrooms and ample parking,” said Houshower. “We now have opportunities in not just the sciences but in arts, education and in many

other areas to partner with the external community to create new learning opportunities for our students.”

Students and community members have enjoyed the Nature Preserve for years from hiking on the trails to birdwatching to braving the swinging bridge, and the pond is routinely used by students enrolled in recreational leadership classes. Now, with a new facility, faculty and staff are developing new program opportunities that encourage students to explore this special natural area, as both a learning laboratory and a destination for recreational opportunities.

With storage nearby, use of the pond will be open to current students, faculty and staff for a variety of recreational water activities including canoeing, kayaking, paddleboarding and catch-and-release fishing.

**“We are able to utilize this space in so many different ways,” said Tami Forbes, chair of the health, fitness and sport science department. “It’s fun seeing our students enjoy the pond. You really get to know people while you are sitting on a bank, fishing and talking. You can really build relationships out there. It’s time to get everyone outside in appreciation of nature.”**





## MEANING AND PURPOSE

*It's more than a degree, it's a path toward a life of passion and purpose*

“For the greater purpose. It’s why we do everything we do.”

When prospective students receive a viewbook in the mail or check out the recently updated website, this is the first message they see. These words sum up the Bluffton experience—where students are challenged to excel as well-rounded graduates prepared for a life of passion and purpose.

“We have the opportunity to shape lives,” said Dr. Jane Wood, president, “to prepare the next generation for a future that is different than anything we can imagine.”

At Bluffton, lives are shaped with a careful focus on vocational discernment. This work is highlighted at Bluffton’s Center for Career and Vocation.

“The center takes career development to the next level,” explained Shari Ayers, director. “It’s a place where people can ask questions such as: ‘What are my gifts?’ ‘What are my

strengths?’ ‘What am I passionate about?’ ‘What do I want to share with the world?’”

Ninety-nine percent of Bluffton’s most recent graduates are employed, in graduate school or completing long-term service. It’s an impressive statistic, but Ayers is most proud of another point in the graduate outcomes report.

**“We ask graduates in their first positions about the long-term potential of their position,” said Ayers. “Ultimately, we’re looking to see if this is a temporary stop, but we find many of our students right out of the gate are doing the type of work they want to do.”**

This doesn’t mean students are expected to stay in one career field their entire lives.

“We used to say students will get a myriad of jobs, but stay on the same general path,” explained Dr. Wood. “Now, we expect students to jump lanes. Maybe they start out as a social worker and then become an entrepreneur and that leads to a position as an executive in a hospital. Now, we need to look at the skillsets that help our graduates lane change.”

Ayers added, “It’s the kind of preparation Bluffton does extremely well.”



# Looking back on LINCOLN HALL

Bluffton's first residence hall for men opened in early 1924 and was named after U.S. President Abraham Lincoln. A presence near the center of campus for nearly a century, Lincoln Hall will endure in the memories of many Bluffton alumni and friends.

While the cornerstone was inscribed with the words, "Dedicated to God for Men, 1923," at times in the 1940s and 50s, women lived in Lincoln Hall. It was also home to the university's first student computer lab during the mid-1990s.

Lincoln Hall closed its doors following the 2011-12 academic year and was demolished in December 2018. However, the memories remain as do a number of artifacts held in the cornerstone including: a Bible, editions of "The Witmarsum" and "Bluffton News" newspapers, college and seminary catalogs, coins, correspondence, and lists of alumni and committee members.

Take a walk down memory lane. A digital timeline of Lincoln Hall can be found at <https://libguides.bluffton.edu/lincolnhall>. Pictures, artifacts, and past editions of the ISTA and "The Witmarsum" can also be found in the Bluffton University Memory at [www.bluffton.edu/library](http://www.bluffton.edu/library).

## 1920s – 30s

**1923**

Lincoln Hall cornerstone ceremony



**1923**

Building of Lincoln Hall



**1924**

Students approach Lincoln Hall via the steps and sidewalk from College Avenue



**1920s or 1930s**

Lincoln Hall next to Berkly Science Hall and heating plant



## 1940s – 50s

**1930s or 1940s**

A view of Lincoln Hall from the driveway intersection at College Avenue with the beaver sculpture, "Accomplishment" at the left foreground



**1943-44**

Students gather near the Lincoln Hall lobby fireplace



**Late 1950s**

Students in a fourth-floor Lincoln Hall corner room



## 1960s – 70s

**1961-62**

Students rake leaves near Lincoln Hall during Clean-up Day



**Mid-1970s**

Lincoln Hall as seen from College Avenue and Rosenberger Drive



**1970s**

A group of students gather on a snowbank in front of Lincoln Hall



## 1980s – 90s

**1981**

Lincoln Hall homecoming display



**1981-82**

Lincoln Hall residents



**1999**

Lincoln Hall in winter as seen from the Berky Science Hall driveway



## 2000 – 2018

**2008**

A view of Lincoln Hall with students



**Summer 2016**

Drone view of Lincoln Hall



**Fall 2018**

Future home of Austin E. Knowlton Science Center



# ALONG THE RILEY

## Bluffton reaccredited by the Higher Learning Commission

Bluffton University has been reaccredited with no stipulations for 10 years by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Bluffton met the requirements without a need for any follow-up evaluations from the committee before the next accreditation visit during the 2028-29 academic year.

"I believe Bluffton University is an institution that lives out its mission more than any other of which I've been a part," said Dr. Jane M. Wood, president. "This positive step in our journey only solidifies that belief."



The HLC is an independent corporation tasked with accrediting higher education institutions in six regions across the United States. Accreditation allows students to receive financial aid, provides eligibility for students to apply for graduate and professional schools, and aids the transfer of credits and degrees from other institutions. Bluffton University began its reaccreditation process in 2016 and welcomed the HLC committee to campus for an onsite visit in fall 2018.

## Voices of Conscience exhibit

From Feb. 17 through March 31, Bluffton University hosted the traveling exhibit "Voices of Conscience" in Musselman Library. This dramatic exhibit remembers



the witness of peace-minded people against the First World War from 1914-18 and immerses visitors in the historical experience of the time. "Voices of Conscience" also suggests parallels to the culture of war and violence in our world today. The exhibit was developed and produced at the Kauffman Museum in North Newton, Kan., and was underwritten for Bluffton University by Jacob T. and Lola Friesen in memory of Jacob L. and Helena Friesen and Jacob J. and Eva Friesen.

A complementary exhibit showcases the Bluffton College experience during the Great War. "Of Bronze and Bravery: Local Voices of Conscience," features selected works by artist John Peter Klassen, with archival documents and artifacts illustrating Bluffton's unique perspective. A self-guided art trail of Klassen's work on campus and several related presentations were also developed.



## Senior earns full graduate scholarship

Jordan Stutzman, a senior from Millersburg, Ohio, is Bluffton University's seventh

recipient of a full scholarship to Bowling Green State University's Master of Accountancy program.

Stutzman has earned the Beaver-Falcon MAcc Scholarship, a Bluffton-Bowling Green partnership that includes a full-tuition award plus a paid graduate

assistantship for a Bluffton accounting graduate.

A 2015 graduate of West Holmes High School, Stutzman is majoring in both accounting and business administration. He is a member of the baseball team where he has earned Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) All-Academic honors two years in a row. He has also been involved in the Student Athletic Advisory Committee (SAAC) and the Financial Investment Club on campus.



## 1971 alumnus shares MLK Day message

Nate Fields '71, senior organizational development consultant at Development Source

International in Alexandria, Va., presented, "Reflections on Community Service and Servant Leadership: Then and Now," during Bluffton's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Forum. Fields came to Bluffton the same year King gave his powerful "Blueprint" speech and shared how the message is as relevant today as it was more than 50 years ago.

He shared this advice with students: "Never shy away from telling your story. All of us have a unique story and, believe it or not, it's a hero's journey from where you came."

Fields has spent four decades serving poor and marginalized communities in more than 60 countries. His career path was directly impacted by an MCC experience to Africa with President Elmer Neufeld.

## #SameHere Sit Down

Bluffton University hosted the #SameHere Sit Down on Feb. 10. Bluffton was one of 15 schools on the college tour and the only Division III school involved in the interactive event produced by the Global Mental Health Alliance "We're All A Little Crazy."





The alliance brings together athletes, celebrities and influencers to talk about mental health in a way that's appealing to college students and athletes.

The event filled Founders Hall with more than 200 students taking part, including Joey Grega, a sophomore business administration and criminal justice double major from LaGrange, Ohio.

"Talking about it to people who care about you is important," said Grega, who is a member of the men's soccer team. "It gives people an outlet to express how they feel and a chance to feel less alone about everything."



### **Nisly named vice president and dean of academic affairs**

Dr. Lamar Nisly has been appointed Bluffton University's

vice president and dean of academic affairs. Nisly has served as the interim vice president and dean of academic affairs since June 2017.

As a member of the President's Cabinet and the university's chief academic officer, Nisly will oversee the academic program of the university including faculty development, assessment and general education. He will also guide the Center for Career and Vocation, Learning Resource Center, Lion and Lamb Peace Arts Center, library and registrar's office.

"Dr. Nisly's extensive academic and

administrative abilities position him well to creatively lead academic affairs at Bluffton University," said Dr. Jane Wood, president. "He is an accomplished scholar with significant publications in his field and has led the university in many ways since joining Bluffton's faculty."

Nisly joined Bluffton's faculty in 1996 after earning master's and doctoral degrees in English from the University of Delaware. At Bluffton, he has served as a professor of English, chair of the humanities division and associate dean of academic affairs.

### **New student organizations**

Two new student organizations will soon enrich the campus community. Starting in fall 2019, Bluffton will have a competitive cheer/STUNT team in addition to the current football and basketball cheerleading squads.

During the inaugural year, the new cheer/STUNT team will compete against other

NCAA DII and DIII schools from across the Midwest, as well as in NCAA STUNT competitions. There are only 29 other schools offering this exciting sport but demand is growing.

Eports is an exciting new student activity being added to the already vibrant and diverse community at Bluffton.

Currently being developed on campus, the already 40-member strong group plays games like Madden, Rocket League and more. Bluffton's esports organization seeks to create a competitive, yet supportive, environment in which students learn teamwork, leadership, strategy and real-time problem solving skills.



### **Who is in the Suit?**

Bluffton University's J. Denny and Jenny Beaver mascots were revealed in January. The students in the suits included Takayla Gadberry '20, Cara Echols '19, Jena O'Brien '19 and Amryn Dover '21. An additional Beaver will entertain the crowds at student and alumni events for a second year. Learn more about the students at [Bluffton.edu/jdennybeaver](http://Bluffton.edu/jdennybeaver)





Larry Cress  
Bluffton '76  
Major: Psychology

Ginny (Baldauf) Cress  
Bluffton '77  
Major: Sociology, Social work

## Bicycle ministry meets transportation need

### Service in retirement

In Lima, Ohio, there are agencies that fill the need for hunger, clothing and shelter. But a few years ago, Larry and Ginny Cress, both retired educators, realized there was a gap in transportation needs.

“When people leave a halfway house, they are supposed to get a job right away, but of course most don’t have licenses,” explained Larry. “Job and Family Services sponsors transportation for 45 days, but when the transportation money runs out, the people we see were losing their jobs.”

So the couple, who have a passion for service and an interest in bicycles, started The Wheelhouse, a Christian bicycle cooperative, in the basement of Elm Street Church of the Brethren in Lima. The ministry quickly expanded, grew out of its original space and moved into a newly-built location behind the church. In 2018 alone, the ministry repaired and donated more than 150 bikes.

### A simple idea takes off

The idea for The Wheelhouse started during the 2013 Mennonite Church USA convention in Phoenix where Larry visited a bicycle ministry. After multiple weeks of providing support with Mennonite Central Committee’s SWAP (Sharing with Appalachian People), the couple also wanted to serve in a way that was easier on the knees and closer home. The Wheelhouse fulfills both of those requirements.

“Our careers were with the Lima City Schools, and we felt like we were part of the community back then,” said Ginny. “When we retired, we kind of struggled to feel part of the community. This has gotten us very involved.”

The ministry is run similarly to Habitat for Humanity. Bike recipients are referred from agencies such as Job and Family Services, an appointment is scheduled and participants are required to help repair their bike.

“So they’re vested in the bike, and it also gives us a chance to talk with them and build relationships. We invite them to church,” explained Larry. “A lot of times, we get multiple chances because unfortunately bikes break down. They’re built to be ridden 30-50 miles a month. These guys ride them 30-50 miles a week.”

The recipients are also given helmets, locks and lights along with the bikes. The facility can hold 100 bikes at a time, but because of wear and tear, many donations are used for scrap parts. Each bike is fitted to the rider. At first, the couple thought they would fix up 50 or so bikes a year. Instead, 160 were repaired and distributed in the first year. This volume of work is completed with a team of weekly volunteers who regularly serve at The Wheelhouse.

### Responsibility to the world

Ginny says service was emphasized during her years at Bluffton, but she really started reflecting on her education after a prompt from Dr. J. Denny Weaver, professor emeritus of religion.

“He said ‘What is it that college gave you?’ I can’t point to one specific thing and say that is what I learned at Bluffton, but I know I learned how to think about the world and how to find my place in the world. My responsibility in the world.”

Through The Wheelhouse and their many years in education, the Cresses are following through on that responsibility.



# ALUMNOTES

## 1970-79

**Gary Rinehart '71**, McComb, Ohio, married Charlene Ede on July 20, 2018. He has retired from farming but is now becoming an ordained minister. He enjoys playing chimes and leading the hymns at his church.

**Joan (Amstutz '72) Kasotis**, Marion, Ohio, was re-elected for a fourth term in 2019 as the Marion County auditor.

**Tucker Lott '72**, Overland Park, Kan., describes his CD, *The Soul of Santa Music*, as a family affair. The concept is a divine inspiration for the purpose of celebrating Christmas through the eyes of one's own culture. Tucker is the lyricist and his daughter Aria provided the vocals.

**Steve Smith '74**, Angola, Ind., is a board member for the international NGO Potters for Peace, an organization that assists developing countries to establish small factories and workshops to produce low-cost ceramic water filters. Potters for Peace operates in more than 50 countries worldwide.

## 1980-89

**Robert Wilds '81**, Ironton, Ohio, was inducted in October to the first class of the Rock Hill School District Hall of Fame. Bob graduated from and taught, coached and served as an administrator there for 32 years. He and his wife Angie have three children, including **Shayne '16** and **Trey '17**, and two grandchildren.

## 1990-99

**Kris Walter '91**, Lake Mills, Wis., is one of only two MX4 master trainers in the Midwest, and is celebrating 19 years with Lake Country Racquet & Athletic Club as the fitness director and personal trainer. Kris is an assistant football coach at Lake Mills High School. He and wife Christa have twins, Bennette and Braxton.

## 2000-09

**Mandy (Brown '02) Stechschulte** and her husband Eric welcomed their first child, Birch Patrick, on Nov. 4, 2018. They reside in Canton, Ohio.

**Brienne (Wyndham '03) Sprunger**, Auburn, Ind., and husband Sam adopted a sibling group of brothers in October through the Indiana foster care system. Brienne is in her seventh year as the work-based



## OUR LEGACY.

### *Bluffton alumni in the world*

The Pannabecker and Yost families, including six Bluffton alumni, converged in Auckland, New Zealand, and made a point to get together. Pictured in their Bluffton clothing are **Jo '13**, Mia, Kate, Seth and **Tim Pannabecker '87** and **Joni (Martin '11)**, Laurie (Kauffman '82), Aaron '11 and **David Yost '83**.



## IN MEMORY OF LUTHER SHETLER



Luther Shetler, emeritus professor of mathematics, died on Dec. 15, 2018, at the age of 101. He taught at Bluffton for 34 years, from 1950-84. A graduate of Goshen College, Shetler earned an Ed.D. from Indiana University. He was born on July 1, 1917, on a dairy farm near Goshen, Ind. In 1940, Shetler married Geneva (Stamm '67) who survives.

Shetler was a quirky, inventive and endlessly curious teacher who was loved by many of his students. He saw math everywhere especially in nature and art.

After retiring, Shetler volunteered for 25 years at Bluffton Hospital and Mennonite Memorial Home. He also enjoyed traveling with Geneva and learning with the Elderhostel program in the United States, Central America and Europe.

He was well-known in Northwest Ohio and Indiana as "The Bubble Man" for his lectures to churches and school groups linking mathematics and nature. The presentation usually ended with an audience member being enclosed in a bubble.

In 1959, he started building the family's unusual house in the woods with his friends. Along with the house, Shetler enjoyed woodworking and he built mathematical models, his desk and classroom furniture for teachers in the family.

Shetler was a member of Bluffton First Mennonite Church and cared deeply about justice and alleviating oppression and suffering in the world.

Along with his wife of 78 years, Shetler is survived by five children: **Joenita (Stanley '63) Clemens '63**, Bluffton; **Terry (Bonnie Wolfe '68) Shetler '69**, Bellvue, Colo.; **Lu Derstine '78**, Bluffton; **Peter (Jan Bender) Shetler '78**, Goshen, Ind.; and **Tami (Michael) Hardy '84, MAEd '02**, Bluffton. He has 14 grandchildren and 31 great grandchildren.

learning coordinator at Garrett High School. She is also a Dekalb Chamber Partnership board member and performs with their local theatre as time allows.

**Jason Ohlemacher '06**, Fayette, Ohio, completed a master's degree in education at Marygrove College in August 2018. He continues to teach at Napoleon Elementary School and is a member of the Building Leadership Team, alongside his wife, **Ariel (Selby '06)**. She teaches at Swanton Middle School. They have two young sons.

**Zack Canfield '08**, Mansfield, Ohio, is in his 11th year teaching sixth grade social studies at Ontario Middle School. He and his wife Kelly have been married for seven years. They have two children, four-year-old Landon and two-year-old Jillian.

## 2010-18

**Peter '11 and Rachel (Harris '12) Kidwell**, Findlay, Ohio, welcomed their second child, Galilee Raine, on Oct. 10, 2018.

**Christopher Malkowski '11**, married Amy Feltner on Aug. 11, 2018. They bought a home in Sandusky, Ohio, and share it with their rescue dogs and cats. Christopher is the director of pre-trial services and the house arrest unit for the Erie County Adult Probation Department. He is also a Cedar Point police officer.

**Philip C. Maurer '11**, Northampton, Mass., has started a full-time MBA program at the Isenberg School of Management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. His interview with poet Nate Marshall will appear in "The Christian Century."

**Eli Passage '11**, Akron, Pa., collaborated on a feature-length documentary film called "Barn Burner," which was selected to be shown at the Philadelphia Independent Film Festival.

**Aaron '11 and Joni (Martin '11) Yost** reside in Goshen, Ind. Aaron is a data services manager at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS). Joni is an English-as-a-second-language teacher at Waterford Elementary School.

## STAY CONNECTED

Visit [www.bluffton.edu/update](http://www.bluffton.edu/update) to stay in touch!

### Sign up to receive email communications

Regular emails are sent with news of interest to alumni, parents and Beaver athletics fans. Additional invitation emails are sent on occasion to let you know of alumni events in your area.

### Update your contact information

When you move, make sure to let the alumni office know your new address so you can continue to receive the "Bluffton" magazine and invitations to events.

### Send an alumnote

New career move? Promotion? Marriage? Birth? Retirement? Fill out the alumnote form online or send us an email at [alumnote@bluffton.edu](mailto:alumnote@bluffton.edu) and we'll include it in the next issue of "Bluffton" magazine.



**Joel '16 and Jenna (Moreo '17) Schmidt** were married on Nov. 17, 2018. They reside in Berne, Ind.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Frances (Criblez x35) Scoles**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Dec. 3, 2018, at age 105.

**Margaret (Triplett '39) Bixler**, Woodbridge, Conn., passed away Nov. 24, 2018, at age 101.

**Ruth (Burtchin '39) Bruschaber**, Glendale, Calif., passed away April 29, 2018, at age 101.

**Esther (Ramseyer '39) Miller**, McAllen, Texas, passed away Oct. 30, 2018, at age 102.

**Floyd Hugus '43**, South Bend, Ind., passed away Nov. 7, 2018, at age 97.

**Margaret (Shelly '43) Weaver**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Jan. 20, 2019, at age 97.

**J. Norman Beidler x46**, Turlock, Calif., passed away Sept. 19, 2018, at age 93.

**Lila (Moon x46) Schlavin**, Portland, Ore., passed away Nov. 18, 2018, at age 94.

**Barbara Ann Sprunger '48**, Berne, Ind., passed away Sept. 23, 2018, at age 91.

**Janice (Welty '49) Block**, Thompson, Iowa, passed away Oct. 9, 2018, at age 91.

**Burton Yost '49**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Jan. 7, 2019, at age 90.

**J. Stuart Lehman '51**, Berne, Ind., passed away Sept. 25, 2018, at age 90.

**Alice Ruth (Pannabecker '51) Ramseyer**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Nov. 5, 2018, at age 89.

**Mary (Rich '53) Blosser**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Jan. 3, 2018, at age 88.

**Thomas Blackburn '54**, Tampa, Fla., passed away July 24, 2018, at age 86.

**Ada Cortner '54**, Indian Harbour Beach, Fla., passed away Oct. 5, 2018, at age 86.

**Dorothy (Young '54) Metzler**, Nappanee, Ind., passed away Oct. 31, 2018, at age 86.

**Charles Sprunger '54**, Lansdale, Pa., passed away Jan. 9, 2019, at age 86.

**Phoebe (Cookson '59) Plassman**, McComb, Ohio, passed away Dec. 14, 2018, at age 90.

**John Yerick x60**, Sidney, Ohio, passed away Oct. 20, 2018, at age 82.

**Larry Joseph '64**, Van Wert, Ohio, passed away Dec. 29, 2018, at age 76.

**Philip Sprunger '64**, Bluffton, Ohio, passed away Oct. 4, 2018, at age 75.

**Clarence Pfaadt '66**, Anna, Ohio, passed away Nov. 11, 2018, at age 77.

**Don Hamilton '68**, Waynesfield, Ohio, passed away Dec. 12, 2018, at age 72.

**Ruth Speakman '79**, Delphos, Ohio, passed away May 28, 2018, at age 63.

**David E. Wren '91**, Lima, Ohio, passed away Nov. 20, 2018, at age 62.

**Linda (Waggoner '98) Schumacher**, Columbus Grove, Ohio, passed away Oct. 5, 2018, at age 65.

## IN MEMORY OF BURTON YOST



Burton Yost, emeritus professor of religion, died on Jan. 7, 2019, at the age of 90. A 1949 graduate, he taught at Bluffton from 1961-63 and 1966-93. Yost was born March 5, 1928, in Lansdale, Pa., and married Elnore (Rosenberger '49) in 1949.

Yost received his Master of Divinity from

Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago in 1953 and his MA and Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University.

He was ordained as a Mennonite pastor and served at Upper Milford Mennonite Church from 1953-61 before starting his first teaching engagement at Bluffton. While completing his graduate studies, the family lived in a federal housing project where Yost also served as an outreach pastor at an inner city Methodist church.

Yost's sabbatical leaves included a year of teaching at Taiwan Theological College in Taipei, a winter at Union Biblical Seminary in Yavatmal, India, and two trips to Korea where he taught at Yonsei University and contacted MCC vocational school graduates to establish a Mennonite ministry in Korea. He also participated in an archeological dig in Israel.

Yost once reflected on his life's work: "I'm grateful to God for the opportunity to do all three: serve as a pastor, teach the Bible and do a bit of missionary service."

In retirement, Yost taught and participated in Bluffton's Institute for Learning in Retirement and enjoyed playing doubles tennis. He was a First Mennonite Church member and served as interim pastor from Jan. 1994-May 1995. He also taught adult Sunday school for many years.

Yost was preceded in death by his eldest son Philip in 2014.

He is survived by his wife and children **Elizabeth (Ross) Sheldrake '75**, Calgary, Alberta; Anita (Tim) Reimer, Wichita, Kan.; **Peter (Deborah Proffitt '84) Yost '84**, Stillwater, Minn.; daughter-in-law Susan (Wimmers) Yost, San Jose, Calif.; five grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and two step-great-grandchildren.



Save the Date — MAY 3–5, 2019



# JOIN US FOR MAY DAY

*and reunite with friends and classmates*

## FRIDAY, MAY 3

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Annual Juried Student Art Exhibit**, Sauder Visual Arts Center
- 4 p.m. **Class of '69** reception and dinner, Marbeck Center
- 4:30 p.m. **Class of '79** reception and dinner, Sommer Center
- 7:30 p.m. **May Day Musical**, "Guys and Dolls," Founders Hall  
*Underwriter: The Family of Dale and Carolyn Dickey*

## SATURDAY, MAY 4

- 7 a.m. Check-in and registration for **May Day 5k and Nature Preserve Walk**, Salzman Stadium
- 8 a.m. **May Day 5k/Walk**, Salzman Stadium (start and finish)
- 9 a.m. **Cross country and track alumni reception**, Sommer Center
- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Annual Juried Student Art Exhibit**, Sauder Visual Arts Center
- 9:30 a.m. **Alumni Choir sing and student honors recital**, Yoder Recital Hall
- 9:30-11:30 a.m. **Guided campus tours** leave every 30 minutes from Marbeck Center
- 11:30 a.m. **Alumni reunion luncheon**, Marbeck Center
- 1:30 p.m. **May Day Ceremony**, Centennial Hall lawn
- 2:30 p.m. **Class of 2019 reception**, Centennial Hall lawn
- 2:30-4:30 p.m. **Guided campus tours** leave every 30 minutes from Marbeck Center
- 2:30 p.m. **Ultimate Frisbee**, Alumni Field
- 7:30 p.m. **May Day Musical**, "Guys and Dolls," Founders Hall

## SUNDAY, MAY 5

- 10:30 a.m. **Baccalaureate**, Founders Hall
- 1-5 p.m. **Annual Juried Student Art Exhibit**, Sauder Visual Arts Center
- 2 p.m. **Commencement**, Sommer Center



For more information, visit [www.bluffton.edu/mayday](http://www.bluffton.edu/mayday)

# Cross-cultural gift comes 'full circle'

## A new opportunity

During his junior year at Bluffton, computer science major Cory Goldfuss '03 immersed himself in the Jamaican culture. The experience is something that made a lasting impact. "I still have the journal we kept," said Goldfuss of Woodstock, Ga. "Even today, I pull it out and reflect on the experience I had and the connections I made."

Sixteen years later, Goldfuss' cross-cultural experience has come "full circle." The server operations lead at the Atlanta office of VMware was selected to participate in a Good Gigs Trek, the software and support company's immersive service learning and leadership development opportunity.

## Making an impact

Goldfuss and an international team of VMware employees updated infrastructure and accelerated the use of technology with a rural school district in Havre, Mont. One-third of the student population in the district is American Indian with more than 30 tribes represented. The team also spent a day at the nearby Chippewa-Cree Rocky Boy's reservation, which has the largest tribal representation at the school.

"One thing that was very impactful to me was that just 10 percent of the experience was the work—updating technology, installing networking switches and upgrading virtualization—90 percent was being in the community," said Goldfuss.

The team also explored Glacier National Park with community members and connected with students and teachers during a technology fun day.

"The teachers and students took time out of their summer vacation for this day," explained Goldfuss. "Seeing the students' excitement and the joy on their faces as they were learning to do hands-on technology was awesome."

## Giving back

The experience also provided Goldfuss with an opportunity to give back to Bluffton. At VMware, employees who contribute 40 hours of service learning in a year are eligible to recommend a donation to any nonprofit. Goldfuss chose Bluffton.



"I immediately logged into the system to see if Bluffton was on the list, and I requested the gift to be specifically for Bluffton's cross-cultural experience," Goldfuss said. "It was an easy choice for me, and I'm excited to see it go there."

Now back in Atlanta, Goldfuss is able to reflect on both his time in Jamaica and Montana.

"Something I learned at Bluffton that has stayed with me—it's far more than just you in the world," explained Goldfuss. "Everything you do in your daily life or career could have an impact on the other side of the world."

## Making a gift to Bluffton's cross-cultural fund is simple.

This May, Bluffton students are going to Bolivia, Botswana, Israel/Palestine, Appalachia and Chicago. Were you transformed by your cross-cultural experience? Help a Bluffton student have that same opportunity.

Visit [www.bluffton.edu/make-a-gift](http://www.bluffton.edu/make-a-gift) and select cross-cultural experience in the designation field. These gifts allow Bluffton's students to explore and grow while immersed in a new culture.





**Saturday, July 27, 2019**

10 a.m. start  
Bluffton Golf Club



**Registration due by  
July 20, 2019**

*Register online with a credit card!*  
**[www.bluffton.edu/golf](http://www.bluffton.edu/golf)**