

# ARTS & SCIENCES SEMESTER STORIES

January 2024

A sampling of news, happenings and updates around the college.



Happy New Year!

As we look back at a year that makes us [#UNDproud](#), the prospects for 2024 continue to be outstanding. Enrollment is strong and our faculty community is active and innovative. Take a look at just a few examples of exciting times here at A&S.

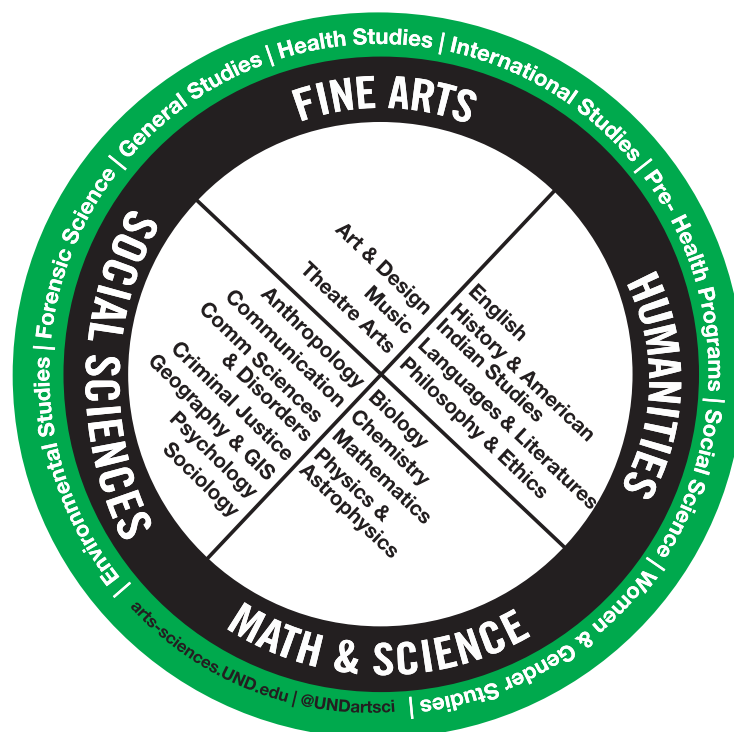
Sending wishes for a happy, healthy 2024!

Brad Rundquist, Ph.D.  
Dean & Professor

## Did You Know?

The College of Arts & Sciences (A&S) is the steward and heart of comprehensive educational experiences that inspire wonder and discovery at UND. A&S includes 4 divisions, 18 departments, 8 interdisciplinary programs, 229 faculty, 43 undergraduate programs and 26 graduate degree programs. Take a peek at our video that highlights recent activities around the college.

[Watch the Video](#)



P.S. Follow us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) for more college news. Plus find more stories about A&S at [UND Today](#).

**JUMP TO** [Student News](#) | [Alumni News](#) | [College News & Updates](#) | [Faculty Success](#) | [Keep in Touch](#)

**Want to explore more?** Be sure to follow the links [underlined in UND green](#) for the stories.



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Want to ensure you hear about upcoming events and news? [Keep your contact information up to date with UNDAAF!](#)

# ARTS & SCIENCES STUDENT NEWS

## Celebrating a Campus Icon

As construction continues for the Merrifield Hall renovation, a new book edited by English graduate students examines the nature and role of this century-old building.

The book offers a reflection on its history, its space, and its people as it embodies the dual role of Merrifield Hall both in campus *building* and as a *campus* building.



This publication is the product of an English graduate seminar on “things” in which Doctoral and Masters’ students explored how we experienced Merrifield Hall as “a thing.” The course included both creative writers and students of literature, and their exploration of the building became an exercise in thinking about Merrifield Hall from a range of theoretic perspectives, traditions, methods, and practices.

Bill Caraher, who published the book, states: “This project is a great example of how our experiences in a place shape how we think, not only about the place, but also about our world. As UND’s campus undergoes exciting changes, its important both to remember how campus buildings once were, and to imagine how new buildings will contribute to life on campus in the future.”

The book is available now as a free digital download and as a high-quality color paperback at [The Digital Press at UND](#).



**LEARN MORE** about the updated educational experiences being created at Merrifield Hall!

## 2023 AAUW Fellow

Toyosi Olola, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Communication, has been named a 2023 American Association of University Women (AAUW) International Fellow - the first UND student ever to achieve that honor!



The AAUW International Fellowships are awarded for full-time study or research in the U.S. to women who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Both graduate and postgraduate studies at accredited U.S. institutions are supported. Recipients are selected for their academic achievement and demonstrated commitment to women and girls. Recipients return to their home countries to become leaders in business, government, academia, community activism, the arts or scientific fields.

Toyosi was awarded \$25,000 to assist with her research during the 2023/2024 academic year. Toyosi’s research examines using telepsychology as a culturally appropriate communicative approach as a mental health intervention for women in Nigeria.

**READ ABOUT THIS YEAR’S  
UND NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP CEREMONY**



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## Leader In Action: Olivia Rike-Norman



Olivia Rike-Norman is a Mathematics and Secondary Education double-major from Grand Forks who credits her Grandma Else with inspiring her to pursue an education that takes advantage of her knack for numbers. After starting out focusing on science (and not loving it), she combined her affinity for math and a desire to work with children to pursue a career as a math teacher. She has excelled ever since, earning awards and scholarships that have helped shape her journey.

[Read more about Olivia](#)

## Biology Student Elected Student Government President

UND students elected Ella Nelson, a Biology major from Stillwater, Minn., as the 2023-24 Student Government president. Connor Ferguson, an Information Systems major from Maple Grove, Minn., and mellophone player in the Pride of the North band, was elected vice president. The college is proud to have A&S represented once again in the executive ranks of student leadership. Dean Rundquist met with Ella and Connor at the beginning of the semester to hear about their goals and talk about ways the college can support students.

[Watch President Armacost Interview Ella & Connor](#)



## UND bests NDSU in Clay Shoot

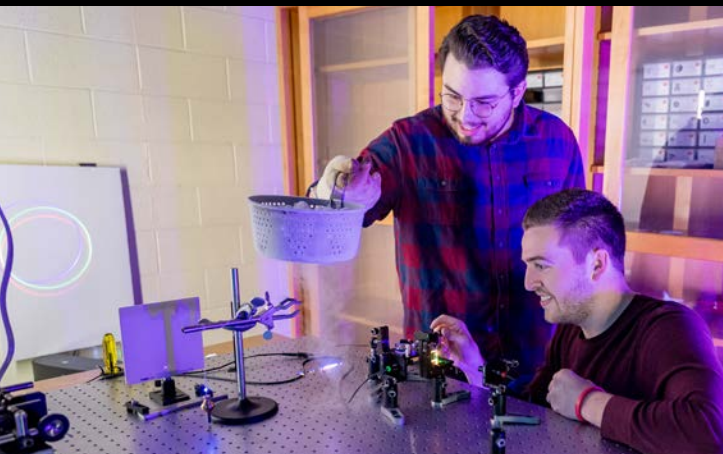
Congratulations to students from the UND Wildlife Society who prevailed in a close match with NDSU Natural Resources Management Club at Dakota Sporting Clays. We were honored to have the event sponsored by Ducks Unlimited, Scheels and Cabela's!

UND alumnus Erik Fritzell was on hand with his mother's shooting vest. Stella Fritzell, a three-term North Dakota state senator, wore the vest in 1969 during her state trapshooting championship win, and NDSU grad student Sophia Maruska, the top women's shooter last Saturday, donned the vest for a photo. [Read the Story](#)



# ARTS & SCIENCES COLLEGE NEWS & UPDATES

## Program Spotlight: Physics & Astrophysics



Offering bachelors, master's, and doctoral programs, UND Physics & Astrophysics is committed to preparing students for fulfilling careers in a range of settings. Faculty supervised research is an integral part of a student's education, and UND has developed teaching labs that include access to cutting edge equipment and experiments that are not often available in other undergraduate programs. With an active Rocketry club and observatory, students have opportunities for experience-based education that enriches their understanding and skill development.

Faculty research interests lie in the general areas of astrophysics and condensed matter physics. In addition, work is underway to launch the UND Nanofoundry in 2024. Research activities in Physics, as well as other A&S departments, enhance UND's capabilities in the Grand Challenge area of National Security & Space.

Facilitated by a generous donation, development of a new dedicated rocketry lab is under way at UND where students will design and fabricate both solid and liquid fueled rockets. Interdisciplinary rocketry research and experimentation will be encouraged, with a testing site nearby. The UND Advanced Rocketry Club has successfully participated in several launch competitions and with new equipment and facilities, the sky's the limit!



### Did You Know?

You can see footage from aurora cameras at UND's Martens Observatory managed by UND Physics & Astrophysics.

[VIEW ON YOUTUBE](#)

UND is hosting the 84th Annual Physical Electronics Conference | June 10-13, 2024  
[LEARN MORE](#)



Physics student Parker Johnson talks about his research experiences.  
[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)



Parker and fellow Physics student Thomas Iken are featured in the Alumni Magazine's "Meet the Flock" feature.  
[READ THE STORY](#)



May '22 grad Vincent Ledvina is featured as a UND Leader in Action  
[MEET VINCENT](#) and learn about his aurora studies.



## 2024 Conferences Hosted by UND A&S

Faculty and staff at A&S are active members of their professional communities. In 2024 faculty from English, Women & Gender Studies and Physics are all exhibiting their commitment by organizing and hosting conferences on campus at UND.

### 31st Northern Plains Conference on Early British Literature

April 12-13, 2024

*For 30 years, the NPCEBL has enjoyed a tradition of convivial, stimulating conferences which focus on teaching and scholarship from the beginnings of British Literature through the 18th Century. Papers on all aspects of teaching, interpretation, and research concerning Early British Literature are invited for the yearly conference.*

### Red River Women's Studies Conference

April 20, 2024

*Seeking to bring together voices across academic fields to build a common framework for envisioning feminist futures – local, national, and global – rooted in equality, equity, diversity, and inclusivity. Using feminist tools to analyze connections between past, present, and future, we hope to begin building pathways and alliances.*

### 84th Annual Physical Electronics Conference

June 10-13, 2024

*This topical conference provides a yearly forum for the dissemination and discussion of novel and fundamental theoretical and experimental research in physics, chemistry, biology, and engineering of surfaces and interfaces.*

## Accreditation Success!

The Department of Art & Design recently completed a Comprehensive Review in order to maintain accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD). An extensive process which includes a self-study and on-site visit, confirms that the department is meeting the degree standards and guidelines that ensure UND provides a quality education for its students. UND has been accredited with NASAD since 1978.

## Another Major Milestone Celebration

The College of Arts & Sciences dates back to the founding of the University in 1883. So it's no wonder that we would have some milestone celebrations. As you may remember, Psychology held a festive celebration marking the department's first 100 years. In 2024, the Department of Communication is gearing up for its own 100 year anniversary.

Plans for the celebration include a student showcase, social networking, a scholarship ceremony, department tour, and presentation of the 2024 Hagerty Lecture on Contemporary Media Issues. Mike Nowatzki, Communications Director for the Office of the Governor of North Dakota, will deliver a lecture titled "Just the Facts: Observations from the 'dark side' on the demise of objectivity in journalism."



Mike Nowatzki

**More good news from Communication:** As of late December, the proposals for the B.A. and Minor in Journalism have been approved at the university level, and will be reviewed by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education in early January. The program is on track to start accepting students in Fall 2024!

# DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTERS

Fall 2023

Read more about happenings around the college in new department newsletters at the links below.

[Chemistry](#)

[Communication](#)

[Sociology](#)



## HANDY EVENT LINKS

[UND Music Events](#)

[UND Theatre Performances](#)

[UND Writers Conference](#)



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# EYE OF THE HAWK

## LECTURE SERIES

A&S was honored to welcome Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Tawakkol Karman to campus in September for the most recent [Eye of the Hawk Lecture](#). The goal of the lecture series

is to bring the UND community together to discuss important topics with preeminent experts. The program is now in its seventh year, and this year's event was the third lecture hosted by A&S and sponsored by Rick and Jody Burgum.

Tawakkol Karman, a Yemeni journalist, politician, and “the mother of the revolution,” addressed a large crowd in UND’s Memorial Union Ballroom with her lecture titled “Tyranny and the Future of Democracy.” She focused on authoritarian threats to democracy around the world, the repercussions of tyranny, and the need for global cooperation and collaboration. She encouraged the audience to be aware of the challenges, to always fight injustice, and to participate in activities that help protect our democracy.

[Read about the Lecture](#) or [View the Lecture Recording](#)



## ARTS & SCIENCES COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS

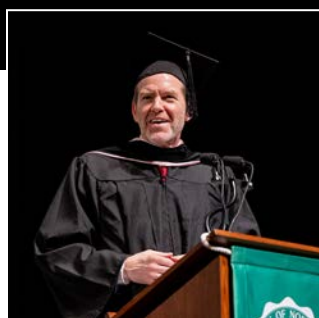


Summer 2023

**Susan Felege**  
Professor,  
Fisheries & Wildlife Biology

“No matter which way you fly, spread those wings and fly with a passion, pick your flock carefully, embrace your journey, and remember your roots gave you all you need to impact the world in amazing ways you may not have even planned.”

[More from the Address](#)



Winter 2023

**Mark Pfeifle**  
'97 B.A. Communication

*President, Off the Record Strategies and deputy national security adviser for strategic communication and global outreach at the White House from 2007-2009*

“Remember those who gave a hand along the journey. Say ‘yes’ to new skills and never stop learning. Expose yourself to ideas you don’t agree with. Learn from mistakes along the way and be ready for those moments where it all comes together.”

[More from the Address](#)

As a special recognition, Mark was invited to walk across the stage to receive his diploma - an honor he originally missed out on due to the 1997 flood. [Watch the Clip](#)



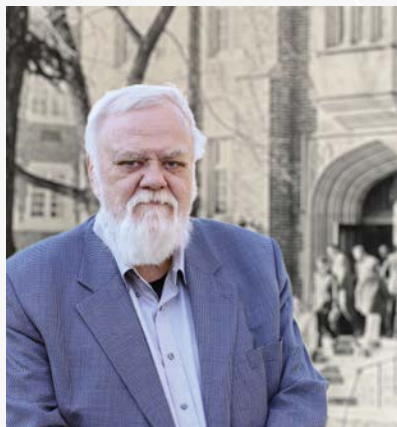
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# ARTS & SCIENCES ALUMNI NEWS

## Chuck Haga's "My University"



In the Winter 2023 edition of the UND Alumni Magazine, alum Chuck Haga, '76 and '78, writes about his "memory places," the places he recalls with affection and pride. Among them, UND. Chuck served as editor-in-chief of the Dakota

Student while at UND, went on to a successful career as a journalist, and now is a columnist for the Grand Forks Herald and teaches part-time in the A&S Department of Communication. Chuck reflects on his UND experience and looks to the future, encouraging students to embrace the "smorgasbord of ideas and experiences" that UND offers.

### [Read "My University"](#)

**Bonus:** Read more about Chuck in this 2022 interview in the [Dakota Student!](#)

## A&S Alum Wins Duck Stamp Art Contest

Chuck Black, '10, won the 2023 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. A wildlife biology major at UND, the Montana-based artist said, "Art, to me, is a way that I can communicate my passion for our natural world."

Chuck credits the hours spent gathering video and photos of the northern pintail as instrumental to his ability to capture details so well. Federal Duck Stamps are purchased by waterfowl hunters and help to raise millions each year to protect wetland habitat. This is a prestigious win for Chuck, and is a fitting combination of his two great passions - outdoors and art.



### [Read About Chuck's Journey](#)

**Meet Chuck at UND!** Chuck will be the featured speaker at this year's Glen Allen Paur lecture on April 26, 2024. Watch for details soon!

## Launching the First Accredited Ph.D. Program at a Tribal College



Sociology alum, Dr. Franklin Sage, has been instrumental in launching the new Doctor of Philosophy degree in Diné Culture and Language Sustainability at Navajo Technical University in Crown Point, New Mexico. Sage, assistant professor and chairperson of the new Ph.D. program, is a scholar in the fields of Diné education and research. He notes that adding the Ph.D. program not only supports the ability of Navajo people to preserve and protect their traditions, but also helps to break down barriers and encourage more Indigenous people to enroll in doctoral programs.

### [Read More](#)

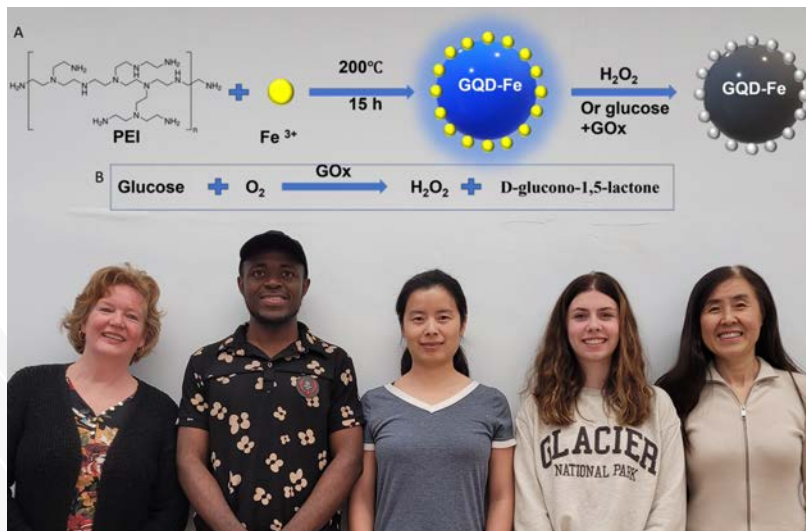


# ARTS & SCIENCES FACULTY SUCCESS

## Biology and Chemistry Team Up for NSF Grant

This semester we celebrated an interdisciplinary, inter-departmental grant between Chemistry and Biology! The project is titled, “Graphene/Polymer-based Fluorescent nanozymes for Sensitive Detection of Metabolic Biotargets.” The NSF grant, with co-Principal Investigators Dr. Diane Darland from Biology and Dr. Julia Zhao from Chemistry, will involve several graduate, undergraduate and high school students, as well.

The researchers are devising a new approach toward nanomaterial-based sensors (“nanozymes”) for detection and quantitation of key metabolic biomolecules, such as glucose. They seek to create sensors usable in a range of environments and characterized by high sensitivity, easy synthesis, and good biocompatibility. The goal is to develop these nanozyme sensors to detect biotargets that can shift in metabolic distress, such as diabetes and neurodegenerative disease. In conjunction with this work, Drs. Zhao and Darland are reaching out to engage Tribal High Schools and Colleges as well as other Universities in the North Dakota University System, to encourage students from groups underrepresented in STEM to consider science as a career option. Additional efforts target development of hands-on advanced science lessons which seek to help middle- and/or high-school students connect concepts from atoms to ecosystems with nanomaterials and cells.



*Pictured from left: Diane Darland, Herbert Che Mughe, Yingfen Wu, Reagan Gaukler, and Julia Zhao*

## A Scholarly Look at The Beatles

With a little help from his friends (a quartet of UND Music students), associate professor Chris Gable shared his Beatles expertise at the Randy Rasmussen Lecture at the Chester Fritz Library. Gable discussed his lifelong love and scholarship of The Beatles, and examined in detail the “Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band” album.

Gable shared his academic background in theory and composition, and how he has evolved into teaching to Rock & Roll History courses at UND.

[Read the Story](#)





## A&S Strategic Plan Published

Initiated by Dean Rundquist in May 2022, the strategic planning process concluded in Fall 2023. The Strategic Planning Committee members, representing a variety of constituencies, met regularly, held listening sessions with stakeholders, and shared their progress widely to ensure that the strategic planning process was open, inclusive, and collaborative.

The plan, **published online**, serves as an evolving road map for A&S over five years (2023-2028), adapting as goals are achieved and new challenges arise. This plan dovetails with the UND LEADS strategic plan to promote the university's mission and vision. A&S continues to be instrumental to the success of UND's efforts to provide exceptional educational experiences that enrich the lives of North Dakotans and the global community through excellence in teaching, innovative research and creative activity, and meaningful engagement.

“  
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”

## KEEP IN TOUCH

One of the best parts of my job as dean is to share the great things happening at A&S. Thanks for taking a few minutes to get a glimpse. I hope to have the opportunity to share more news in person with you in 2024. Maybe I'll see you at an event or have the honor of welcoming you to campus. Either way, I hope we have a chance to chat this year. In the meantime, sending wishes for a happy, healthy year.



Brad Rundquist  
Dean & Professor

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