

ARTS & SCIENCES SEMESTER STORIES

June 2024

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



Places I've Never Been

This semester I had the opportunity to participate in the 18:83 Speaker Series here on campus. If you've seen any of the archived videos, you'd likely agree with me that each speaker took a unique path to leadership and has their own perspective on what it takes to be effective. There is no roadmap to or formula for success. As a geographer, I can't help but relate the concept of using maps to navigate a career. So in my presentation I took the audience on a geographical journey of metaphorical key stops along my path to today, borrowing real but unusual U.S. place names (like Uncertain, TX, and Glory, MN). It was an honor to participate and it was fun to share some lessons and laughs with the crowd.

As you navigate the summer ahead, I hope you make some interesting discoveries and lasting memories along the way. Here at A&S we'll be preparing for the academic year and for the reopening of Merrifield Hall. We'd love to see you at the open house during Homecoming!

Brad Rundquist, Ph.D.
Dean & Professor

[Read about the 18:83 Series in UND Today Story](#)
[Watch the Video of Dean Rundquist's Presentation](#)

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

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ARTS & SCIENCES STUDENT NEWS

Prestigious Scholarships and Fellowships

UND celebrated several firsts this year with regard to national scholarships and fellowships. Supported by dedicated faculty, students are earning unique opportunities to enrich their education with once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Several A&S students were awarded this year, including these shining examples!




Landon Richardson, double majoring in Molecular & Integrative Biology and Norwegian, was awarded the BFF/SSAI Riya Bhakkad memorial Scholarship. The program offers real-world training with leading experts and an award of up to \$10,000. Landon will be working this summer with a senior scientific analyst at NASA's Applied Remote Sensing Training Program.



Kayla Barral, double majoring in Global Studies and Political Science, is one of only 20 students nationwide to be selected as a fellow in the Meridian-Cox Foreign Service Fellowship for Emerging Leaders. The program, held in Washington, D.C., includes activities highlighting diplomacy and international affairs through site visits, workshops and networking opportunities. Kayla has also been awarded a U.S. Department of State Virtual Student Federal Service Internship this summer during which she will work virtually with law enforcement professionals at the U.S. Embassy in Uganda.



Thomas Iken, a Physics graduate student was awarded a 2024 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. The five-year fellowship offers three years of financial support, including an annual stipend of \$37,000.

 You may remember seeing Thomas in the winter edition of the [Alumni Magazine!](#)



Madilyn Lee, a pre-law Philosophy student, was selected as the North Dakota student representative for the 2024 Henry Clay Center's College Student Congress. The College Student Congress is a transformative two-week summer program tailored for undergraduates, meticulously designed to cultivate essential personal character skills vital for future leaders in the realms of public policy, politics, diplomacy, and contemporary leadership.



Scholar and Rifle Champion

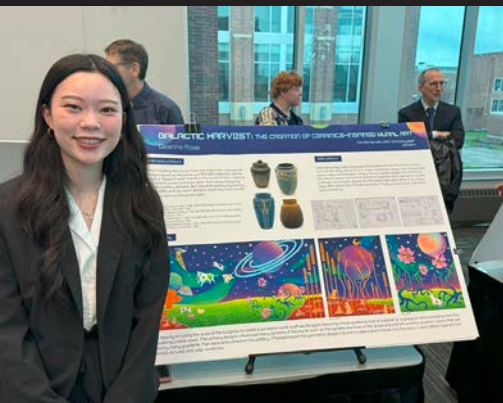
Casia Steinhaus, an Honors student double-majoring in physics and mathematics, was selected as a 2024 Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Spark Russian Recipient. The CLS SPARK scholarship is one of the most competitive scholarships in the U.S. and the most prestigious language program for U.S. citizens.

But that's not all that Casia did this year. She also won gold medals in air rifle shooting and small-bore shooting at the National Intercollegiate Rifle Championships in March.

[Read About Casia](#)



A&S UNDERGRADUATE SHOWCASE



The Spring 2024 College of Arts & Sciences featured more than 100 presentations from nearly 150 students from nearly every department in the college. Research topics ranged far and wide with notable poster titles like “Introduction of Hippos into Columbia,” “Galactic Harvest: The Creation of Ceramics-Inspired Mural Art,” “The Duality of ‘Girlbossing’: Competence Cuts Both Ways,” and “The Influences of Ursula K. Le Guin.”



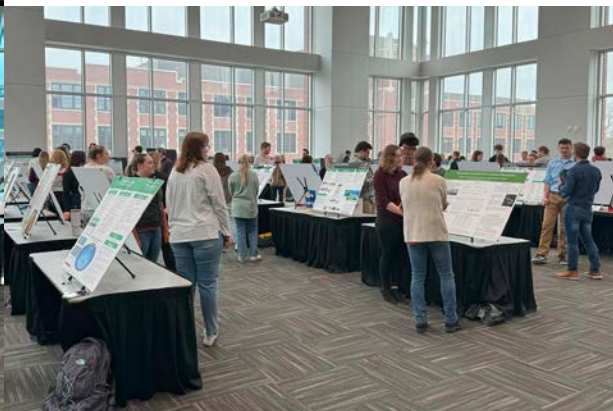
The full list of presentations and presenters is [posted online](#).



Throughout the day, student presenters gained valuable experience in skills that will benefit them after graduation. Learning to effectively communicate complex ideas to others who are not experts will serve them well, no matter the career journey they undertake.



Read the [UND Today story](#) about this semester’s showcase.



Forensic Science Conference Provides opportunities for students, faculty and the program

The American Academy of Forensic Science held its 76th annual conference in Denver this year. And for the first time, featured a six-minute video about UND's Forensic Science program. Shown for the more than 4,000 attendees, the documentary opens with a aerial view of Turtle River State Park as students string yellow caution tape around a mock crime scene, followed by faculty and student interviews, and highlights of the multidisciplinary approach of the program.



Dr. Lavinia Iancu, program director and AAFS Fellow, attended the conference along with UND Forensic Science student Anna Braun and graduates Julia Kochanowski and Nicolette Ras. With dozens of workshops and lots of networking opportunities for the faculty and students, plus the debut of the UND documentary, the conference was a win for all!

[Read to UND Today Story](#)

❖ [Watch the Forensic Science Documentary](#)

COMM Students Promote Healthy Living

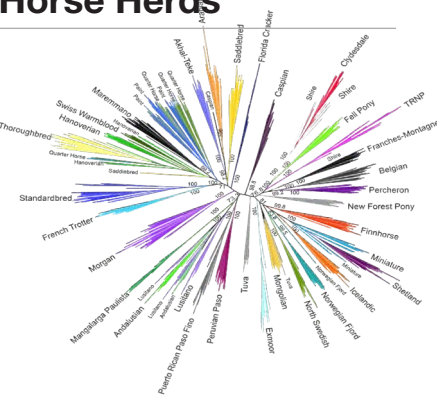


This spring, Emily Gibbens-Buteau, teaching assistant professor in the Department of Communication, and her COMM 430 class hosted an event in the Memorial Union titled “Live by 9 with Blue Zones.” The event was created and organized by the class and the Blue Zones Project to promote wellness to students through information about the various wellness practices of Blue Zones. It featured a variety of vendors and partners, free food samples from Crisp & Green — a new restaurant in Grand Forks serving salads, smoothies and grain bowls — plus activities, crafts and giveaways for attendees.

[Read about the Event](#)

Researching TRNP Horse Herds

Biology master's student Melissa Thompson's recently published research is relevant to the origins & population genomics of feral horses in Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The study determined that the main ancestry of the wild horses in Theodore Roosevelt park are from draft horses, not “indian-type” Spanish horses. Co-authors were faculty mentors Rebecca Simmons & Turk Rhen, in collaboration with UND alum Blake McCann.



doi.org/10.1002/ece3.11197

**Did you know?
UND's Phi Beta Kappa
honor society chapter
dates back to 1913!**

[Learn More](#)



ARTS & SCIENCES COLLEGE NEWS & UPDATES

Program Spotlight: Music

UND.edu/Music



UND Music offers multiple educational programs, undergraduate and graduate, in Music, Music Education and Music Performance. Plus they provide numerous opportunities for students of all majors to come together to make great music.

Music faculty receive national and international recognition for their talents, which they bring back to the classroom to share with students. The music faculty consist of specialists in the major orchestral and band instruments, piano, voice, music history, theory and composition, conducting, and music education. They pride themselves on personal attention to students, high standards, and a close working relationship with the Grand Forks community.



Did You Know?

Music Therapy will be resuming enrollment.

We continue to work closely with our partners to navigate the important steps of reestablishing the program.

[READ THE STORY](#)
[Program Info](#)



WATCH A PERFORMANCE

[UND Music Event & Livestream Info](#)

Follow [UNDMusic](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for more stories & updates!



Kétina François, a Music Education major who sings and plays double bass, was awarded 2nd place in UND's Got Talent competition this year. Kétina also won 1st place in the 3rd Year Classical category at the ND National Association of Teachers of Singing competition in Minot and was a finalist in the Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Competition.

Thank you to Donna Hastings and Jonathan Geiger who support students with concert series in their home.

[READ THE STORY](#)



Hannah Thorlakson, double major in Music and Accounting, is featured as a UND Leader in Action

[MEET HANNAH](#)

Hannah was also awarded the Gilman International Scholarship to study in music in Salzburg this summer!



UND STEM COMPLEX

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY SYSTEM

The university is embarking on a \$161.5 million campaign to build a new STEM Complex on campus. The facility will impact more than 40% of UND's student body and help A&S and the College of Engineering & Mines to provide enhanced opportunities for synergy among the sciences, engineering, and mathematics.

The complex will benefit students, offering advising, tutoring, a student lounge and other student success spaces. Phase I of this two-phase project also features spaces for lectures, events, eSports tournaments, and a makerspace for competitive building and robotics teams. Collaboration in this STEM complex will be at a premium, promoting interdisciplinary work between the Departments of Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Forensic Science and Biomedical Engineering, with even more disciplines added during Phase II of construction.

The goal of this facility is to prepare the STEM workforce in North Dakota's most collaborative, state-of-the-art STEM facility while providing the best educational experience for our students. We want to meet the critical program needs for corporate and industry partners to maintain strong pipelines for our students to leave UND prepared to impact the workforce. The more than 96,000-square-foot UND STEM Complex will be a beacon for inspiration, discovery and innovation for the next generations of UND students and faculty.

UND.edu-stem-complex



“From a lab bench in Abbott Hall to developing new cancer treatments as part of a multidisciplinary team to leading a clinical research organization focused on autoimmune disease, the UND Chemistry Department provided me with the foundation, confidence and inspiration to make in impact in our world. This was fostered by opportunity and collaboration.

The **UND STEM Complex** will provide a state-of-the-art center for multidisciplinary learning and direct partnership to develop the next generation of STEM leaders for North Dakota and beyond”

— Stacie Bell, Ph.D.
1991 UND Chemistry Alum



ARTS & SCIENCES ALUMNI NEWS

Scott Mourtgos, Assistant Professor



Congratulations to 2016 Forensic Psychology alum, Dr. Scott Mourtgos, on his upcoming appointment as Assistant Professor at the University of South Carolina. After completing his M.S. in Forensic Psychology at UND, Scott worked

as a deputy chief of the Utah Police Department while completing his Ph.D. in political science at the University of Utah. He has published extensively and will serve as an assistant professor in criminal justice starting this fall. [Learn More about Dr. Mourtgos](#)

Geography Alum: Research at 20,000 feet

Geography alum and current Earth System Science & Policy Ph.D. student Anaí Caparó Bellido spent 7 days in Peru to study the glacier of interest up close and in person. Camping on the edge of the glacier, Anaí explored and planned for her continued study using satellite images to capture the effects of climate change in the Cordillera del Vilcanota range.



Recently published in *Theoretical and Applied Climatology*, Caparó Bellido co-authored an article about modeling vegetation phenology in the Great Plains. [Read the Article](#)

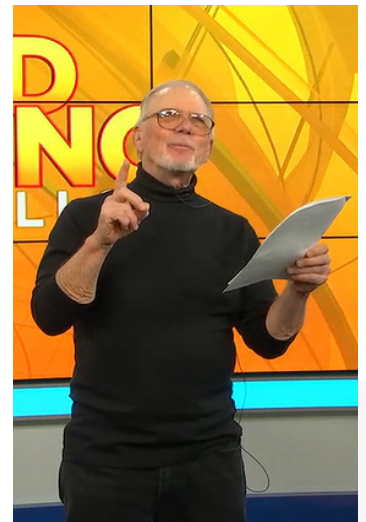
Philosophy Classmates Earn Tenure-Track Positions

Two Philosophy B.A. alums who spent time together here at UND are both starting new tenure track positions this fall. Dr. Benjamin Davis, '16, will join Texas A&M as Assistant Professor of Global Languages & Cultures. And Dr. Caleb Faul, '17, will begin at Westfield State University in Massachusetts as Assistant Professor in the Department of History & Philosophy. Both credit early experiences with UND faculty for getting them “hooked” on Philosophy. Caleb is looking forward to teaching “How to Live the Best Life Possible” (an introduction to Ethics course), and Ben is excited to teach graduate seminars on Caribbean Philosophy and Intro to African American Studies. Congratulations to Ben and Caleb!



SD Poet Laureate is UND Sociology Alum

Bruce Roseland, poet laureate of South Dakota from 2023-27, earned his master's degree in sociology from UND. Roseland, a fourth-generation cattleman, is a prairie poet whose poetry has won four national awards. [Watch the Roseland Interview](#) and hear him recite his poem “Celebrate: We want to know.”



ARTS & SCIENCES HONORARY DEGREES

Two A&S alums were conferred with honorary degrees at the Spring 2024 commencement ceremonies.



Lynn Luckow

'71 B.A. German, English
'24 Honorary Doctor of Letters

Hailing from Hettinger, ND, Lynn Luckow has had a successful career as a senior advisor, consultant, executive, and four-time President & CEO. His expertise in organizational leadership with nonprofits has resulted in him being sought out to serve on more than 50 nonprofit boards. He has a long history of philanthropy, including co-chairing the campaign to build the new UND Delta Upsilon house.



Chuck Klosterman

'94 B.A. Journalism
'24 Honorary Doctor of Letters

Spring 2024 Commencement Speaker

After growing up on a farm in Wyndmere, ND, Chuck Klosterman attended UND where he majored in Journalism and wrote for the student newspaper, *Dakota Student*. After graduating in 1994, Chuck first had success as a rock music journalist and critic. He went on to write several bestselling books, as well as columns and commentary on topics of popular culture and sports for many national publications.

In addition to receiving the honorary degree, Chuck spoke at both spring 2024 commencement ceremonies.

Chuck sat down to tell us about his experience at UND.



[Watch the Video](#)



“Never aspire to be a completely finished person.”

[Read Chuck's Commencement Speech](#)



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ARTS & SCIENCES FACULTY SUCCESS

Faculty Advocacy for Humanities

A&S faculty Dr. Adam Kitzes (English), Dr. Michelle Sauer (English), and Dr. Amanda Nagy (Languages & Global Studies) attended the National Humanities Alliance Meeting & Humanities Advocacy Day in Washington D.C. The event provides opportunities for humanities advocates from around the country to connect and explore ideas for year-round advocacy.

As part of their outreach, they met with team members from the ND Senate and House offices, including Ty Kennedy (Senator Hoeven) of Grand Forks, Gina Seifert (Senator Cramer), and Kevin Cheng (pictured, Representative Armstrong).



Biology Faculty Member Dishes Dirt for Kids



Associate Professor Brian Darby, Biology, shares his soil expertise for the “Curious Kids” series at The Conversation. Initiated by real kids’ questions, the series seeks to answer their curiosity with answers from academic experts. Dr. Darby helps kids think about not only soil composition, but about the whole wriggling world beneath our feet.

[Read What is dirt?](#)

A&S Awards & Initiatives

A&S is pleased to offer a number of significant, internal research funding opportunities for faculty to collaboratively address the State of North Dakota’s critical needs, support creative activity and scholarship of faculty in the fine arts and humanities, and provide undergraduate students with research and creative experiences to enhance their learning. In addition, donor funded endowments like the Joyce and Aqueil Ahmad Endowment for the Promotion of Peace and Nonviolence, the Itterman Professional Development Endowment, and the Hoekstra Leadership Award provide funding to support faculty research, professional development, and leadership speakers across the college.

2024 Awardees

Ahmad Endowed Scholar

Tiffany Russell, Psychology

Fine Arts & Humanities Scholarship Award

Eric Burin, History & American Indian Studies
Bill Caraher, History & American Indian Studies
Alejandro Drago, Music
Marc Gandarillas, Languages & Global Studies
Justin Montigne, Anne Christopherson, Music;
Emily Cherry-Oliver, Kylie McDonald,
Emily Wirkus, Theatre Arts
Justin Montigne, Music

Helene Weldt-Basson, Languages & Global Studies

Multi-Investigator Seed Grant Initiative

Weixin Huang, Chemistry
Tiffany Russell, Psychology
Melissa Schmitt, Turk Rhen, Rebecca Simmons,
Biology

Itterman Faculty Professional Development Award

Diane Darland, Biology
Joonghwa Lee, Communication
Lavinia Iancu, Forensic Science

Undergraduate Research & Creative Activity Award

Wayne Barkhouse, Physics
Alejandro Drago, Simona Barbu, Music
Todd Hebert, Art & Design
Lavinia Iancu, Forensic Science
Mark Kaemingk, Biology
Manu, Biology
Adam Matz, Criminal Justice Studies
Scott Sandberg, Music



Faculty Honors & Awards

A&S faculty are overwhelmingly high achievers. We often get news about awards, accolades, and accomplishments. It would be impossible to include them all, but we thought we'd give you a glimpse at some recent examples of excellence around the college.

Dr. Nuri Oncel and Dr. Deniz Cakir, Physics, have been awarded a \$500,000 Air Force Office of Scientific Research grant. The three-year project will utilize molecular beam epitaxy to grow high-quality vanadium nitride thin films, known for their superconductivity, on a silicon substrate. Practical applications of their work, including quantum computing, quantum interference devices, and single-photon detectors have the potential to revolutionize areas such as cryptography, secure communications, intelligence gathering, and complex problem-solving.

Dr. Michael Wittgraf, Chester Fritz Distinguished Professor of Music, recently returned from Warrensburg, Missouri, where his video *Trains of Grand Forks* was selected to be presented in the fixed media listening room during the MOXsonic festival at the University of Central Missouri.

Dr. Robert Newman, Biology, has been selected as a Chapter Author for the [National Nature Assessment](#), the first-ever holistic report that will take stock of U.S. lands, waters, wildlife and the benefits they provide to our economy, health, climate, environmental justice, and national security.

Dr. Cynthia Prescott, History, is developing an extended pedagogical role-playing game, "Memory Reconsidered: San Francisco Pioneer Monument, 1991-1996." The game has been approved by the Reacting Editorial Board and is now included in their online database for worldwide playtesting. Meanwhile, UND faculty and students have been enthusiastic playtesters.

Dr. Alena Kubatova, Chemistry, has been selected as a national award winner for the Council of Undergraduate Research. She is recognized as a national leader for mentoring undergraduate students in Chemistry and for making these opportunities accessible to underrepresented students.

Dr. Soojung Kim, Communication, together with Dr. Gary Schwartz, Population Health, have been awarded a nearly [\\$500,000 US HUD grant](#) for their research on radon communication strategies. With this grant, they hope to engage North Dakotans directly on identifying factors that will help them take action on radon testing.

Dr. Ashley Fansher, Criminal Justice, was cited in new [DOJ framework](#) for prosecutors of sexual assault and domestic violence cases. [Law360](#) also asked for her thoughts on the guidance.

A quick review of the [2024 UND Founders Day](#) award list gives you an idea of the great work happening at A&S. In addition to individual and collaborative awards, A&S won Departmental Excellence awards in Service and in Research & Creative Activity.

Broadway in the Badlands



In May, Theatre Arts and Music faculty brought a fabulous performance of beloved Broadway compositions to the historic Old Town Hall Theater in Medora. Accompanied on piano by undergraduate Music student Kaden Dowling, faculty members Emily Cherry Oliver, Emily Wirkus, Anne Christopherson, and Justin Montigne wowed the crowds with soaring vocals and lively renditions.



K-State Geography and Geospatial Sciences
@kstate_geog
Welcome back to our own Brad Rundquist and his family. Brad is Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of North Dakota and was honored as a KSU Alumni Fellow representing the College of Arts and Sciences! #UNDproud



Dean Rundquist Honored by his Alma Mater

The Kansas State University Alumni Fellows Program recognizes alumni who have distinguished themselves in their careers. Since 1983 the program has brought successful alumni back to campus to meet with students and faculty, and to share their expertise. Dr. Rundquist was selected as a 2024 K-State Alumni Fellow and traveled to Kansas in April. Congratulations, Brad!



KEEP IN TOUCH

Did you have classes in the Merrifield third floor south lecture hall? If you did, you'd likely remember it for its yellow carpeted walls. I taught some classes in what was a very nostalgic feeling classroom. As you can see in the photo of that room under renovation, windows were previously bricked over. Soon, students will be enjoying the updated classroom 300 with beautiful new windows. We hope you get a chance to stop by and see it for yourself and celebrate with us at the grand reopening this fall!

Brad Rundquist
Dean & Professor

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