2020 ANNUAL REPORT

TWO PROUD HISTORIES, ONE BOLD FUTURE.

MEMBERS OF MINNESOTA STATE
Dear Partners,

The 2019-2020 academic year began full of anticipation and excitement to celebrate the 50th anniversary of both Dakota County Technical College and Inver Hills Community College. Unfortunately, the global pandemic abruptly halted our plans and made it impossible to hold a formal celebration.

While disappointing, this disruption provided a beautiful opportunity to witness acts of kindness and generosity from our sponsors, community partners, donors and campus community. Our supporters stepped up by reallocating gala sponsorships, ticket purchases, and offering additional donations to support emergency grants and student scholarships.

In addition, during this academic year our generous donors provided over $400,000 in scholarships and close to $50,000 in emergency grants to students.

As we continue to adapt to the pandemic, we embrace the challenges of the next year. Our focus will be to expand the work of the Foundations, deepen existing relationships, and cultivate new ones. These efforts will ensure that Dakota County Technical College and Inver Hills Community College are well-equipped to provide outstanding and accessible education, as well as support student achievement.

In closing, we are grateful for all the support we have received from you our partners. We look forward to connecting and working with you in the year ahead to create innovative ways to continue the crucial work of raising resources for students and the colleges.

Thank you,

Kim Shaff

Sincerely,

Michael Berndt

Dear Friends,

As colleges dedicated to student learning, we strive to continually improve the ways in which we serve students and our communities. This has certainly been the case this year. Our students and employees have faced unprecedented hardships during this pandemic. However, through it all, our campus community has discovered our strengths and capacity for innovation and resilience.

Students faced challenges when we pivoted to online learning in March. Many had to secure technology and adapt to new learning modalities. In addition, many lost their jobs or had to work under challenging conditions. Our student-parents had to take on homeschooled while managing their own studies.

Thankfully, the federal CARES Act helped both students and the colleges. The funds provided Chromebooks for students, as well as direct emergency student grants. Thanks to the Foundation, we were able to extend emergency grants to students ineligible for CARES funding.

Faculty and staff also experienced immense challenges in the pivot. They redesigned the learning experience for hundreds of courses and significantly expanded online support services in the matter of a few weeks. Their work paid off because student retention rates actually improved this fall, despite the disruptions in our students’ lives.

The key insight we learned from students is that the frequent communication and care shown by our faculty and staff helped students persevere. Additionally, we discovered that a lot of flexibility can be built into instruction and support services. Our strong leadership will help carry these insights forward beyond the pandemic.

I also want to acknowledge the amazing work done by other areas of the college to adapt. From IT rethinking student technologies, to Facilities intensifying sanitation protocols, to Marketing rethinking key messages to prospective students—our team of dedicated professionals delivered. I have seen so much good will, compassion, and resilience among our employees that it makes me proud to work with them.

In closing, our Foundations have worked hard to rethink community engagement and fundraising in a predominantly virtual environment. As we lay the groundwork for a comprehensive campaign, we invite you to join us in this work. We need everyone’s collective creativity and resilience. There is an opportunity in the current pandemic—to see what we can accomplish together.

Sincerely,

Michael Berndt

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

LETTER FROM THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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DCTC.EDU/GIVE | INVERHILLS.EDU/GIVE

Thank you,
Kim Shaff

Thank you,
Michael Berndt

Thank you,
Michael Berndt
Pedagogies of Care
Martin Springborg contributes to WVU Teaching & Learning Series

Martin Springborg serves as director of teaching and learning at Inver Hills Community College and Dakota County Technical College. Martin recently collaborated with Susan Hrach, professor of English at Columbus University in Georgia, to author “Noticing as the First Step”, a podcast contribution to Pedagogies of Care.

Published by West Virginia University Press, Pedagogies of Care is a collection of open resources for student-centered and adaptive strategies in the new higher-ed landscape.

“Noticing as the First Step” is a podcast-style recording of a discussion about object-based learning—a vital component to learning in many disciplines, and adaptable for use in any discipline,” Martin said. “Now more than ever, object-based learning helps faculty and students step away from their computers and engage with their surroundings.”

Martin Springborg
Q & A

How does your podcast, “Noticing as the First Step,” help educators teach more effectively in an online learning environment?

“Noticing as the First Step” is about object-based learning. This is not a new teaching methodology, but it is especially important to consider in this time of relative isolation.

What is object-based learning?
Object-based learning engages students with objects, or primary sources—such as museum pieces, photographs, original texts, rocks (think geology), etc.—in the learning process. Simply put, students observe, touch, listen to, and reflect on these objects while completing assignments.

What did you learn from creating your podcast for Pedagogies of Care?
I learned a lot about the production of podcasts! I’m looking forward to using more podcasts in faculty/educational development programs our Center for Teaching and Learning is planning for the coming academic year.

Teaching and Learning Online during Crisis
Faculty, students and staff adapt to COVID-19 pandemic

On Thursday, March 12, 2020, Chancellor Devinder Malhotra announced that 30 Minnesota State colleges and universities would suspend their in-class instruction due to the COVID-19 global outbreak. Dakota County Technical College and the Minnesota State system office continue to take action to limit the spread of COVID-19, the illness caused by the novel coronavirus.

Students, faculty and staff at DCTC have worked together to make the transition from on-campus instruction in classrooms and labs to teaching and learning online. Technology Services at the college is showing students how to succeed via alternative modes of learning, including D2L Brightspace and Zoom Web-conferencing. Information regarding reduced-cost computers and laptops, reduced-rate data services, and free and reduced-cost software is also available.


Jason Wetzel serves as dean of transportation, construction and manufacturing at DCTC. Jason oversees 16 programs at the college, six in the Transportation department and 10 in the Construction & Manufacturing department. He understands the importance of securing academic continuity during the pandemic.

“This crisis has tested our creativity and initiative as a campus,” Jason said. “Our faculty have answered the call with innovative ways to keep the online classroom fresh and effective. They have used technology to challenge and educate their students in unique ways. It is fun to watch our instructors find new opportunities in a difficult situation.”

ACADEMICS ADAPT TO THE PANDEMIC

DCTC.EDU/GIVE   |   INVERHILLS.EDU/GIVE
In March 2020, the Board of Trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities named Michael Berndt to serve as the president of Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) and Inver Hills Community College (Inver Hills). The new appointment became effective immediately.

“Michael has a long history with Minnesota State that is full of professional and personal accomplishments, and he has performed admirably as interim president of DCTC and Inver Hills,” said Devinder Malhotra, chancellor of Minnesota State. “He understands the importance and benefits of fostering and deepening connections between DCTC and Inver Hills, as well as building relationships with their local communities. He recognizes that we must celebrate the two colleges’ distinct programmatic orientations and identities: one as a technical college and the other as a community college. I know he will lead with the same inexhaustible capacity for hard work, positivity, and passion that has served him in all his roles.”

Berndt has served Minnesota State for 20 years, including his role as interim president of DCTC and Inver Hills, which began in 2018. His accomplishments during this period include expanding equity and inclusion work, increasing high school engagement, supporting academic excellence, and engaging community partners in workforce development planning.

Inver Hills and DCTC gave back to communities that have supported the colleges’ missions for 50 years by teaming up for a Day of Service on Friday, November 1, 2019.

Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members volunteered to contribute two hours of service that included indoor and outdoor projects as well as opportunities for people with different physical abilities. Projects were completed on both campuses and at locations in area communities.

For example, volunteers packed food at Feed My Starving Children, scrubbed food shelves at Neighbors Inc., picked up litter in Rosemount, worked during Fall Fest at Presbyterian Homes Timber Hills, made greeting cards for military service members, and cleaned up yards with DARTS.

Because people can’t always volunteer for a particular afternoon of service, additional ways to contribute were spotlighted, including:

- Donating to the Inver Hills and DCTC Foundations
- Red Cross Blood Drive
- Hunger & Homeless Week
- Toys for Military Kids
- Donating School Supplies
- Dakota County Government Volunteer Search

2019 Day of Service Outcomes

| Volunteers: | 175 |
| Service sites: | 15 |
| Number of hours: | 240 |
| Value: | $6,103 according to Independent Sector |

Chancellor Malhotra recommended appointment to Minnesota State Board of Trustees

In March 2020, the Board of Trustees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities named Michael Berndt to serve as the president of Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) and Inver Hills Community College (Inver Hills). The new appointment became effective immediately.

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Before starting his term as interim president, Michael Berndt served four years as vice president of academic affairs at Century College. He served as dean and vice president of planning and institutional effectiveness at Normandale Community College for four years before going to Century.

Berndt also worked at Normandale as assistant to the president for strategic initiatives for two years and an English UFT faculty member for six years. He taught English as an adjunct at the University of Minnesota and Augsburg University, and he worked as an ABE instructor in southern Illinois.

President Berndt has a Master of Arts (M.A.) in English Language and Literature from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, and a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in English and Philosophy from the University of Minnesota, Morris.

Originally from Hutchinson, Minnesota, Michael Berndt resides in Eden Prairie. He and his wife, Suzanne, have two children, Reid and Paige.
Chelsea Sagers, 28, is heading back to school this fall at Dakota County Technical College. Chelsea is majoring in Interior Design at DCTC with the goal to earn her Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S) degree. She will add that degree to a Bachelor of Studio Arts (B.S.A.) from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (2018) along with an Associate of Arts (A.A.) and Certificate of Event Coordination, both from Front Range Community College in Fort Collins, Colorado (2013).

“I plan on completing the Interior Design program with flying colors!” Chelsea said. “Each time I’ve gone to school, my study skills and grades have improved. I’ve started setting up a home office so that I have a proper place to do homework and study. I hope to keep this upward trend going. I’m really looking forward to participating in an internship.”

To help pay for her schooling, Chelsea received a $12,500 J & J Trujillo Memorial Scholarship. Established by Amy and Anna Trujillo, the scholarship program is administered by Scholarship America. Applicants must be residents of Arizona, New Mexico or Minnesota.

“Receiving the J & J Trujillo Memorial Scholarship is truly life-changing!” Chelsea said. “Prior to this, I had been working two jobs to save money for tuition—I have used up all of my possible government loans pursuing my bachelor degree. I was very stressed about being able to save up enough. This really eases my financial tension.”

Chelsea added that she can now reallocate her savings to go toward living expenses while enrolled at DCTC. That approach will allow her to cut back on her employment workload.

“In the past I’ve had to work full-time while in school, and it’s utterly exhausting,” she said. “This scholarship allows me to focus on my studies like never before.”

The scholarship also gives Chelsea more flexibility when it comes to extracurricular activities at DCTC. She is open to joining Design Connexion, the Interior Design program’s student club.

“The opportunity to network with students and industry professionals could be invaluable,” she said. “After my first semester, I’d definitely like to join Phi Theta Kappa. I want to be successful in the interior design field. I hope that my fine arts and event planning background are seen as an asset in the hiring process.”

Chelsea works as a production and design assistant at a shop in St. Paul, Minnesota. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected her hours at her other job as a host in a Minneapolis restaurant.

Originally from Maquoketa, Iowa, Chelsea graduated from Maquoketa Community High School in 2010. She is engaged to be married and her fiancé, Mark, works in digital marketing. Mark and Chelsea have a 2-year old, mix-breed dog (possibly part basenji or cattle dog) named Winston.

In her free time, Chelsea enjoys drawing, painting, sewing, baking, crafting, cooking, refinishing furniture, decorating her home, working out, snuggling with her dog, dancing, gardening, and makeup and skincare. She resides with Mark and Winston in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Gabe Krebs, 20, a 2019 graduate of the Heavy Duty Truck Technology (HDTT) program at Dakota County Technical College, will be joining more than 1,300 competitors from 60+ WorldSkills member countries at WorldSkills Shanghai 2021. Taking place September 22–27, 2021, the 46th WorldSkills Competition coincides with WorldSkills Conference 2021, which is expected to draw more than 1,000 educators, government officials, business and industry leaders, and young people from around the world with the goal to discuss best practices in skills development and excellence in action.

As a member of the 2021 WorldSkills USA Team, Gabe will compete in Heavy Vehicle Technology, one of 56 skills featured at WorldSkills Shanghai 2021. He sharpened his competitive abilities at two SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conferences. He brought home a silver medal from the 2019 NLSC in Louisville, Kentucky.

Gabe believes in hard work and continuous training to achieve his goals. “Wishing for something every day doesn’t count as dedication,” he said.

Ken Klassen, an HDTT instructor at the college, recommended Gabe to the 2021 WorldSkills USA Team, noting that he was an outstanding student in all aspects in our HDTT program. “Gabe proved through hard work, having a great work ethic and teamwork that Gabe can accomplish demanding tasks in a timely and professional manner,” Ken said.

Ken reported that Gabe has worked very hard to earn his spot in 2021 WorldSkills. “Gabe will now do internships at different locations within the United States to prepare for WorldSkills 2021,” he said. Everyone is very excited to see where this journey on Team USA takes us—at the awards ceremony, hopefully, on that podium one last time.”

In conclusion, Ken Klassen said: “DCTC and our HDTT program are proud of Gabe’s accomplishments. We are honored to have such an outstanding HDTT graduate representing our college.”

Gabe graduated from Lakeville South High School in May 2019. He started at DCTC as a Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) student and earned an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Heavy Duty Truck Technology in December 2019.

Gabe made the most of his time at DCTC. During fall semester 2019, he was awarded a $1,000 Mike Fritzen Memorial Scholarship from Republic Services in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota.

Gabe was also one of three DCTC students who placed in the top three nationally in SkillsUSA competitions at the 55th annual National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC) June 24–28, 2019, in Louisville, Kentucky. Gabe took silver in the Diesel Equipment Technology (High School) competition.

An estimated 18,000 people—students, teachers and business partners—participated in the 2019 NLSC, a week-long SkillsUSA showcase for career and technical education students from across the United States.

Gabe was awarded gold medals in the Heavy Equipment Technologies competition at two SkillsUSA Minnesota Skills and Leadership Conferences. Louisville represented his second appearance at the SkillsUSA Nationals.

“I enjoyed the experience at the NLSC,” Gabe said at the time, “and the opportunity to travel and compete doing something I like to do.”

Gabe worked while going to DCTC as a truck technician at Friedges Landscaping. He has two older brothers, Franklin, 22, who manages a tobacco/vaping shop, and Andy, 21, who started his own marketing company. In his free time, Gabe enjoys working with his friends on their vehicles. He also likes motorcycling and trapshooting.

Gabe resides in Faribault, Minnesota, with his mom, his brother, Andy, two German shepherds, Cooper, 3, and Odie, 2.5, and a 2-foot-long ball python named Ketha.
Not-for-profit electric cooperative supports DCTC and Inver Hills

Dakota Electric Association®, a not-for-profit electric cooperative serving farm, residential and business customers in Dakota County and portions of Goodhue, Scott and Rice counties, is a longstanding industry partner with Dakota County Technical College and Inver Hills Community College. Located 10 miles apart in Dakota County, both two-year colleges are celebrating their 50th Anniversaries.

“Dakota Electric® has a tremendous history of providing essential support and service to both colleges,” said Michael Berndt, president of DCTC and Inver Hills. “Greg Miller, Dakota Electric president and CEO, joined the DCTC Foundation Board in 1998 and served as chair until 2013. Greg received the DCTC Advocacy Award in 2008. This year, Doug Larson, the association’s vice president of regulatory services, is serving as chair of the Inver Hills Foundation Board.”

President Berndt reported that Dakota Electric’s contributions over the years to both colleges are just shy of $670,000 with most of this coming from unclaimed capital credits.

“DCTC and Inver Hills will continue partnering with Dakota Electric Association® to attract business and industry to our region,” he said. “The colleges will be an ongoing resource for workforce recruitment as well as training partners helping companies retain and advance their current employees.”

Greg Miller recognizes how higher education supports the workforce requirements of business and industry while enhancing the economies of area communities. “Our partnership with DCTC and Inver Hills is invaluable,” Greg said. “They are turning out skilled workers ready for employment. We have hired many graduates over the years, and I know there are many of their students in the workforce in Dakota County. We appreciate the roles these colleges have played in the economic vitality in this area over the years.”

A recently completed economic impact study demonstrates how DCTC and Inver Hills generate an economic impact of $334 million each year from supporting and sustaining more than 2,880 jobs to generating almost 20 million in state and local revenue.

Since 2001, Dakota Electric Association® has provided nearly $19,000 to Dakota County Technical College in support for general fundraisers, including the Blue Knights Athletics Golf Outing & Fundraiser. Contributions to the Kopp Endowment, annual galas and various programs are nearly $85,000. The association’s total contributions to DCTC since 2004 are more than $287,000.

The Dakota Electric Association Scholarship provides special consideration for financial need, limited family financial support and/or extraordinary life challenges. All majors are considered.

Dakota Electric Association Scholarships not only provide students with tuition assistance, they also give students a confidence boost knowing that someone believes in them enough to invest in their academic goals.

Since 2000, Dakota Electric Association® has contributed nearly $280,000 to Inver Hills Community College in support of students and academic programs.

“By providing a large number of scholarships each year, Dakota Electric helps students reduce the stress of paying for college,” said Kim Shaff, Interim Executive Director of the Inver Hills and DCTC Foundations. “For many students, Dakota Electric scholarships are life-changing. Receiving these funds means they can stay enrolled full-time and graduate within two years. Students with jobs are able to cut back on their work hours so they can focus more on their education. The funds also reduce their out-of-pocket college costs, thus freeing up money in their budgets for living expenses.”

“Our partnership with DCTC and Inver Hills is invaluable.”

Greg Miller
Dakota Electric president and CEO

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I.T. 3D-Printing Ear Guards for Face Masks
Todd Jagerson, DCTC and Inver Hills CIO, read a news article about how the straps on protective face masks cause pain and ear damage to healthcare personnel. IT specialist, Jason Dean, took the lead on figuring out how to employ the department’s 3D printers to produce protective-mask ear guards, which were distributed to area senior living facilities.

Jonathan O’Hara Receives 2020 DCTC Staff of the Year Award
Jonathan O’Hara began his tenure at DCTC in March of 2013 and serves as an academic advisor and financial aid specialist. He received an overwhelming number of recommendations including, “Jonathan … has been instrumental in process improvements, providing extraordinary student service, role modeling top notch service to colleagues, and selflessly sharing his many gifts and talents.” Congratulations!

Unity in Community at DCTC
DCTC hosted Unity in Community, an outdoor event, Tuesday, June 23, 2020, on the college’s main campus in response to the crisis caused by the death of George Floyd during his arrest by Minneapolis Police Department officers. The event was held to discuss strategies on eliminating systemic racism.

Graduate Drive-By Celebration
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the college’s 2020 Commencement ceremony was cancelled. Honoring the achievements of DCTC graduates, faculty and staff held a drive-by celebration on the DCTC campus Friday evening, May 15.

Brenda Lyseng Sews Masks for Front-Line Staff
Brenda Lyseng, grant director at Inver Hills Community College and Dakota County Technical College, has been sewing protective masks for front-line employees working during the COVID-19 pandemic. Brenda is ideally suited for her volunteer project: she owns and operates a small business called Sew Together.

Jeremy Clark Receives Inver Hills 2020 Staff of the Year Award
Jeremy Clark is described as a well-respected academic advisor who is often sought out by students because of his amazing ability to connect with them on a personal level. He serves as the co-advisor for the Black Student Union and is committed to providing student members the opportunity to gain leadership skills. In addition, Jeremy is a member of both the Minnesota State Indigenous Men and Men of Color Workgroup and the Employee Resource Group for Indigenous Employees and Employees of Color. Congratulations!

Kneel-In for Justice
One month after George Floyd died during his arrest by Minneapolis police officers on Monday, May 25, 2020, Inver Hills honored Floyd’s memory by gathering faculty, staff and students from Inver and DCTC along with community members to participate in a Kneel-In for Justice. The event was held to share ideas and discuss solutions regarding the impact of systemic racism on black communities in Minnesota.

Rainbow Flag Flying over Inver Hills Campus
The Philadelphia Rainbow Pride Flag, or Philly Pride Flag, is flying over the campus of Inver Hills Community College during the month of June to celebrate Pride Month 2020. The college’s LGBT+ Club made the request to fly the rainbow flag because all planned Pride activities were canceled due to restrictions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Student Honored by Minnesota Campus Compact
Dereje “DJ” Lajebo, a 21-year-old sophomore at Inver Hills, was recently recognized by Minnesota Campus Compact with the 2020 Presidents’ Student Leadership Award. DJ formed a new Student Senate committee to combat student housing and food insecurity, and has effectively engaged students, faculty and campus committees in its work.
Melina Myhre, 24, is earning her Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) in the Nursing program at Inver Hills Community College. A working mother of four, Melina is on track to graduate from Inver Hills in spring 2022. She is looking forward to completing her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) through the Minnesota Alliance for Nursing Education (MANE) at Metropolitan State University.

“My dream since I was little has been to follow in my mom’s footsteps and become a registered nurse,” Melina said. “I hope to work as a labor and delivery nurse at a hospital in the Twin Cities metro area after graduating from Metro State in 2023.”

Melina has been exceptionally active as an Inver Hills student. She participated in the Nursing and Psychology clubs during fall semester 2019, and was invited to join Phi Theta Kappa. She made the Dean’s List for fall semester 2019 and is waiting to hear about the Dean’s List for spring semester 2020. She earned a 4.0 GPA both semesters.

Melina took part in an Inver Hills Learning Community called “Eighteen and Nowhere to Go” during fall semester 2019. This Learning Community, or LCOM, is a combination of English 1108: Writing and Research Skills and Psychology 1210: Lifespan Development. Students in the LCOM were given the assignment to write persuasive letters to stakeholders in the foster care system. Melina Myhre wrote an impressive letter to U.S. Representative Angie Craig, who represents Minnesota’s Second Congressional District. Melina’s letter urged legislative leaders to address racial, economic and sociological discrimination in the child welfare and foster care system.

Melina received a reply from Angie Craig April 10, 2020. “I strongly agree that discrimination has no place in the foster care system,” Congresswoman Craig wrote. “Poverty or cultural practices alone are not valid reasons to remove a child from their family, and I appreciate the work you are doing to learn about and fight for positive change to this practice. I also agree that the Minnesota Legislature should closely examine this issue, and because I am a federal representative, I encourage you to reach out to your local legislators.”

“I was absolutely humbled,” Melina later said. “I put so much of not only my heart into the letter I wrote to Congresswoman Craig, but the hearts and voices of the foster youth we worked with in class from Ampersand Families. It was one thing for me to be heard, but to be able to give them a voice when that’s all they wanted... that made me so happy.”

Originally from Lakeville, Minnesota, Melina graduated from Lakeville North High School, Class of 2014. She has extensive experience working as a mental health advocate and counselor.

“I’ve worked for a few wonderful agencies,” she said. “I worked with clients who have severe and persistent mental illness and chemical dependency issues. I have A LOT of training in the field, and I am hoping to use what I have learned in my nursing career.”

Melina has been married two years. She and her husband, Zack, who works as an automotive technician. Melina and Zack have four children, Layla, almost 9, Ivy, 5.5, Malachi, 3, and Ezekiel, almost 2. Melina and her family reside in the Lakeville/Farmington area. See the complete letter at news.inverhills.edu. Search “Melina.”
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: STEVE YAEGER

1988 graduate working as Star Tribune chief marketing officer

Steve Yaeger, 52, graduated from Inver Hills Community College more than three decades ago in 1988. For perspective, 1988 was the year Rain Man took home the Academy Award for Best Picture, Whitney Houston, George Harrison and Michael Jackson topped the popular music charts, the Los Angeles Lakers won the NBA Finals, and the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw 120,000 troops from Afghanistan.

Steve earned an Associate of Arts (A.A.) at Inver Hills, where he played forward on the college’s varsity basketball team. He reported that he had a wonderful experience playing for the Giants. The college discontinued competing in NJCAA sports following the 1988–1989 season. Steve also worked on the Inver Hills student newspaper.

“I had no ‘plan’ when I graduated high school,” he said. “Inver Hills offered a chance to gain broad exposure to subjects, get my bearings, experience college life, and save money while still making progress toward a four-year degree.”

The A.A. is a transfer degree that allowed Steve to continue his education at St. Olaf College, a private liberal arts college in Northfield, Minnesota. He majored in English and Latin at St. Olaf, graduating magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in 1990. He played varsity basketball for the Oles and belonged to Phi Beta Kappa andEta Sigma Phi.

Steve sharpened his editing, writing and marketing skills at Thomson Reuters, first as an editor at West Publishing and later as a senior corporate communications representative at West Group. He continued his career by taking on director of marketing roles at Adaytum, a software company, and Cognos, a business intelligence provider, before co-founding Aspyrion, a marketing consulting agency, in 2004.

Seven years later in May 2011, Steve arrived at Star Tribune, the largest news organization in Minnesota, serving as vice president of marketing and public relations. Steve’s strategic brand management and marketing expertise quickly helped bring recognition to the paper, including “Hottest Newspaper” from Adweek, “Publisher of the Year” from Editor & Publisher magazine, and “Business of the Year” from the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce.

Today, Steve Yaeger is Star Tribune’s senior vice president of circulation and chief marketing officer, or CMO. Steve’s duties are focused on the company’s digital subscription growth, newspaper home-delivery distribution, retail sales, customer service and fleet operations. He is also in charge of PR, consumer marketing and brand oversight.

Originally from South St. Paul, Minnesota, Steve graduated from St. Croix Lutheran High School, class of 1986. Steve has been married 20 years to his wife Sara, a museum consultant. Steve and Sara have three children, one son, Carl, 18, and two daughters, Julia, 16, and Hannah, 13.

The family has one dog, a rescue mutt named Scout, and one rescue cat named Frisbee.

In his free time, Steve enjoys collecting vinyl records from every era and genre of music. He is a Richard Nixon and Watergate enthusiast; he is also interested in the history of comics and cartooning. Steve and his family reside in Eagan, Minnesota.

Steve Yaeger, CMO
Star Tribune

Why should students work hard to improve their writing skills?

Fairly or unfairly, others—teachers, managers, colleagues, customers and clients—will judge you by the quality of your writing. All your writing—tests, emails, texts, reports, presentations. Good writing forces you to organize your thoughts. And, in the real world, even one seemingly dominated by audio-video media, most persuasion depends upon solid writing.

Steve Yaeger
CMO
Star Tribune

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Community partner perspective:
River Heights Chamber of Commerce
Nicole Bengtson, IOM, RHCC director of marketing and communications, worked with Emily Johnson to make Pedro’s internship a reality.

“Pedro’s technical skills were critical to helping the Chamber jump-start its response to the sudden shift in business operations,” Nicole said. “He was instrumental with assisting with members’ videos, getting our webinars and videos on our YouTube playlist, and researching new ideas and implementing content for the Chamber’s South Metro Living Guide.”

Pedro’s technical skills were critical to helping the Chamber jump-start its response to the sudden shift in business operations.

Nicole Bengtson
Q & A

Why did RHCC decide to continue Pedro’s internship virtually?
Just as the rest of the Chamber staff had to adapt and pivot to do our work remotely, we knew Pedro’s help would still be needed now, more than ever. It was very evident we wanted him to continue the internship with us. Communication is a key element within our staff, and it was so essential when COVID-19 hit. Pedro was a great fit with our staff as he always communicated effectively and efficiently with our team.

How did RHCC adapt to an online mentorship role?
We kept our line of communication open by having weekly staff Zoom meetings and being responsive to email and text messages to answer questions and conduct check-ins on our tasks at hand.

Pedro’s technical skills were critical to helping the Chamber jump-start its response to the sudden shift in business operations.

What challenges is RHCC meeting to serve clients virtually?
Cashflow to local small businesses is one of the greatest challenges we have heard. The Chamber is committed to supporting its local businesses in any way we can. Most importantly, we want to make sure to push out the messages of what businesses are open and who’s opening soon—businesses can share how they are operating right now through the Chamber’s online publications and social media.

The Chamber also loves to share success stories and how businesses and people are helping each other in time of need. “A lot of the folks that make up these businesses are local residents, when you’re supporting those businesses you’re supporting your neighbors,” stated Adam Bengtson, chairman of the board for the River Heights Chamber.
DCTC FOUNDATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joel Trinkle
Board Vice Chair
Senior Air Quality Consultant Vice President
Barr Engineering Company

Ann Byre
Board Secretary
Vice President of Pharmacy Services
Allina Health

Lowell Miller Stohle
Board Chair
Environmental Technical Leader
Ecolab

Dr. Amy Diode, M.D.
Family Medicine
Apple Valley Medical Center

Scott Kadlik
Board Treasurer
CPA/Managing Partner
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Bernard Kolnberger
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Dakota Electric

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DCTC 2019–2020 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Foundation Financials

College Financials

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DCTC FOUNDATION
2019 - 2020 ORGANIZATIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

$50,000–$99,999
DuSmier Trucks North America LLC
Ziegler/CAT

$25,000–$49,999
Dakota Electric Association
Kopp Family Foundation

$10,000–$24,999
Caterpillar Foundation

$5,000–$9,999
Allina Health System
Allstate Petersen Group

$1,000–$4,999
Barr Engineering Co.

ENDOWMENTS
Achievement Fund
Allied Health Endowment
Automotive Endowment
Basa Andrews Endowment
Carl Enevold Endowment
David Lindberg Memorial Endowment
DCTC General Endowment

John Papandrea Endowment
Karen Ames Memorial Endowment
Landscape/Nursitc Care Endowment
Met Con Endowment
Nathan Blenquisit Legacy Endowment
Oberta Family Endowment

Peggy Basmajian King Memorial Endowment
Rhodes Family Endowment
Sheryl Busse Endowment
The Carl Enevold Fund of DCTC
Thommasen Endowment
Ziegler/CAT Endowment

Christine Myrah
Lash Nguyen
Randy Nicoll
Jason Oechsli
Melon Ongel
Jennifer Pabst
Dale Quamme
Elizabeth Satter
Megan Schrader
Max Stelmen
Wendy Smith
Leah Sorensen
Heidi Swanson
Yvetsky Team
Renee Thurnes
Julia Taer
Kristin Vanrenenov
Persman Vinschts
Renebath Voight
Walmart (Apple Valley)

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College communities step up to support students

Dakota County Technical College and Inver Hills Community College are celebrating 50th anniversaries in 2020. One important way to celebrate and commemorate the anniversaries and support students at both colleges was to hold a 50th Anniversary Gala. Scheduled for April 23, 2020, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Bloomington, Minnesota, the historic joint gala had the theme, A Lasting Legacy. Unfortunately, the colleges had to cancel the gala due to risks posed by the novel coronavirus. Although faculty and staff, current and former, as well as alumni, community partners and friends of the colleges could not attend the 50th Anniversary Gala, many stepped up to show their support for students during this exceptionally difficult time.

Kim Shaff, Interim Executive Director of the Inver Hills and DCTC Foundations, reported that many people with plans to attend the gala donated to funds that help students stay in college and reach their academic goals. One hundred percent of sponsors kept their donations with the colleges to help students with emergency grants or scholarships.

‘Although we had to cancel the event due to orders from Governor Tim Walz and Chancellor Devinder Malhotra, the spirit of the Gala was kept alive through the unwavering support of our partners and campus community,’ Kim said.

Thank you to our donors!

$3,500 Ticket price donations to emergency grants

$3,000 Ticket price donations to scholarships and greatest needs fund

$15,000 Sponsorship donations to emergency grants or scholarships

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$3,500 Ticket price donations to emergency grants

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$15,000 Sponsorship donations to emergency grants or scholarships

THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

Donating to the Dakota County Technical College (DCTC) or Inver Hills Community College (IHCC) Foundation transforms lives, ensures college is accessible for all students, and helps make dreams come true.

Ways to contribute

CASH DONATIONS

We are grateful for cash donations and any matching gifts offered by your employer. Your gift can:

• Support an existing scholarship, emergency grants, or a program that touched your life;
• Create a named scholarship in honor of a loved one or mentor; or
• Establish a permanent scholarship endowment of $25,000 or more

SHOP

Use www.smile.amazon.com and select either Foundation as the beneficiary of 0.5% of your eligible purchases at no additional cost.

EQUIPMENT DONATIONS

Donate equipment, or funds to purchase equipment, to support an academic program.

THE LEGACY SOCIETY

The Legacy Society is an exceptional group who generously include the Foundation in their estate plans. Please contact the Development Director if the Foundation is a named beneficiary of your:

• Will
• Revocable living trust, charitable remainder trust, or charitable lead trust
• 401k, IRA, or other qualified plan
• Charitable gift annuity
• Life insurance policy
• Savings account or certificate of deposit
• Stock, real estate, or other assets

TAX-FREE GIFT FROM YOUR IRA

If you are 70½ or older, use your IRA charitable rollover to make a tax-free gift. This allows you to transfer any amount up to $100,000 directly to the Foundation without paying income tax on the distribution.

DONATE NOW

DCTC.EDU/give
Amy Eppen
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Amy.Eppen@dctc.edu
651-428-8265

INVERHILLS.EDU/give
Elsbeth Howe
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Elsw@inverhills.edu
651-450-3407

AMELIA EPPEN
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
DCTC FOUNDATION

Amy joined DCTC in August of 2009 as an Enrollment Advisor and Financial Aid Specialist, following her role as a One Stop Services Counselor at the University of Minnesota. While there, she completed her Master’s degree. Amy is married to Matt, a high school teacher and basketball coach, and they have two daughters. The Eppens enjoy spending time at the beach each summer.

Elsbeth began as Development Director in 2020. She is responsible for grant-writing, fundraising, event-planning, the alumni association and scholarship administration at Inver Hills Community College.

Prior to this, Elsbeth served as Executive Director at Students United, an advocacy and scholarship nonprofit organization. The majority of her career has been in higher education, and her roles have included lobbyist, instructor and student senate advisor. She graduated from Drake University with a B.A. in History in 1990 and earned her J.D. degree in 1994 from the University of Iowa. Elsbeth and her husband have two children in college, and one in high school. She enjoys spending time with family and friends.
DCTC and Inver Hills are affirmative action, equal opportunity employers and educators.

This information is available in an alternate format by calling 651-450-3884 or TTY/Minnesota Relay at 1-800-627-3529.