

"Let your light shine
before men so that
they may see your
good works and
glorify your Father in
Heaven."

- Matthew 5:16

the **DWC** *World*

Educating Tomorrow's Missionaries

Fall 2019



Did You Know

DWC's Fall 2019 student body is made up of 118 students

- 46 are SVD candidates
- 43 are religious sisters
- The remaining 29 are diocesan and religious priests, seminarians for other orders and laypeople
- Students represent 21 different nations
- 58 percent are men and 42 percent are women
- 45 students are enrolled in the English as a Second Language Program



Divine Word College

Lifelong learners

Oldest DWC student more than three times the age of the youngest

Omar Gonzalez is accustomed to getting an early start at things in life. When he was five, the native Spanish speaker started learning English as a second language in his Mississippi kindergarten class. Then, when he was just seven, he recognized that he was feeling called to priesthood at a time when his peers were waiting for their moms to call them to dinner. This year, Omar is the youngest student at Divine Word College, starting the academic year at just 17 years of age. While he admits that seeing facial hair on many of his classmates was a big change from his high school experience just a few months ago, he says the inter-generational environment at DWC is another opportunity to learn something new.

"They've lived longer than me and I think I can learn a lot from them," he said of his older classmates. "Whether it's life skills or just simply academically, they've been here a lot longer than me." The oldest student at DWC this year is 56 years old. In fact, there are two students who have already experienced half a century of living and learning. One of Omar's classmates in his Interpersonal Communications class is 49-year-old Fr. Antonius Waget, SVD, who was ordained three years before Omar was born. Fr. Antonius said his experience studying

alongside a teenager is unusual because he's spent most of his career teaching English to teens at a seminary in Indonesia. He came to DWC last year to further his understanding of American culture and to experience daily interaction with native English speakers. Now he finds himself in the role of student with some very young people as his educational peers.

"Sometimes it's challenging because of the age difference. I have to adapt myself to their way of thinking and working, since millennials are very advanced at using technology," he said. "I am learning how to be patient and to grow with them all the time." Fr. Antonius said he thinks DWC provides a great starting point for future missionaries because students are exposed to people from a variety of cultures, ages and viewpoints. He plans to complete two years of studies at DWC before returning to Indonesia and continuing his work as an English teacher. As for Omar, he may be at the beginning of his formation process with the Society of the Divine Word but he's surrounded by people who walked the same path not long ago. "I can ask them about their formation," he said. "I'm very lucky to have all of these examples around me. I'll be doing a lot of observing!"

A lasting impact

Developing a system that helps people help themselves in the Republic of Chad

Did you know?

Fr. Huy was inspired to work in Africa after studying at DWC with students who were part of a group known as the Lost Boys of Sudan.



When Fr. Huy Tran, SVD, arrived in the Republic of Chad for his overseas training as a seminarian, he wanted to help build a ministry that would serve the community long after his time in the village.

Divine Word Missionaries had just arrived in the country and were working to establish methods for their ministry there. The 2009 DWC grad was eager to make a difference.

If you teach a man to type

He started in 2015 by establishing and teaching the first computer class available in the region at any educational level. Four students signed up for the first class and eight enrolled in the second. As interest in the class grew, so did the number of people who learned Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

By 2017, Fr. Huy returned to the United States to complete preparation for ordination. In his absence, the computer program continued with his earliest pupils taking over as teachers and educating new groups of young people about the technology. When he returned as an ordained priest, Fr. Huy says he was pleased to see his concept for a sustainable computer class was working. Since then, Fr. Huy has been managing the area's Catholic Elementary school, serving as one of two parish priests to 48 mission stations and pitching in anywhere else he's needed.

Responsibility and sustainability

After his ordination, Fr. Huy says he quickly noticed a harsh

reality about the area. The people in the village were happy to accept help from missionaries but they viewed it as a gift. When Divine Word Missionaries drilled a well to provide clean drinking water, the people were grateful. However, when the hand pump on it broke, they asked the missionaries to fix it rather than looking for a solution.

"If you give them the well 100 percent, they don't appreciate it even though they need funding and they need water,"

Fr. Huy said. "Because it's falling down from the sky. They think it's not theirs, it belongs to the priest."

That's when he says the missionary group decided to take a different approach. They continued to supervise projects like the drilling of wells and construction of new schools but first they required local participation. The villagers needed to come up with 10 to 15 percent of a project's total cost and form a maintenance committee before the missionaries

would start any work. The money often came from collection at Sunday services and could take quite a while to collect but by asking them to invest, Fr. Huy says it ensured that the people of the community would take ownership in the projects.

"Sometimes it breaks my heart, asking poor people to chip in but you have to take that route, there's no other way around it," he said. Since implementing the new model with local participation, Fr. Huy said the tribes in the villages are stepping up and taking responsibility for the projects, schools and churches in their communities.



Go to
www.dwci.edu/FrHuyVideo
to hear about
Fr. Huy's
experience
in Chad.

All 2019-2020 Novices hail from DWC

This summer, five young men embarked on the next phase of their religious formation as they entered the Divine Word Novitiate in Techny, Ill.

Kodjo David Emon, Huy Hoai Nguyen, Marc Declama, Ryan Agbim and Thong Tran each started their journey at Divine Word College. Now, they're spending a year together learning about the charism of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), discerning their call to missionary life and preparing to take vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

Novice Director and Former DWC President Fr. Tim Lenchak, SVD, says the novitiate year is unlike any other part of the formation process. The primary goal is to prepare the novices for vows by helping them to better know themselves, the SVD community and God.

The formation program at DWC prepares students for the next stage of their religious development.

"The pre-novitiate program helps to instill a sense of community in the incoming novices, since seniors in the program live in the same house, work together at chores, cook together, have Mass and prayer together, and start developing a



l-r, Bro. Mathew Zemel, SVD, Huy Hoai Nguyen, Thong Tran, Kodjo David Emon, Marc Declama, Ryan Agbim and Fr. Tim Lenchak, SVD.

sense of community," Fr. Tim said. Each day in the novitiate year, the men spend time in silence to reflect and listen to God. For the first half of the year, the emphasis is primarily on prayer, discernment and personal reflection. The second half of the year focuses more on their preparation to profess vows.

"This is a major decision that they're making," Fr. Tim said. "And they have to know their background, to know everything about themselves and to appreciate the gifts and talents they have, as well as the limitations."

Family Feast celebration feels like coming home



Origin of the celebration

When St. Arnold Janssen founded the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) in 1875, it was common to celebrate the feast day of the saint for whom

each person was named. So the spiritual sons and daughters of Fr. Janssen celebrated the day of their founder on July 18, the feast day of St. Arnold.

In 1906, Janssen declared that in the future, the celebration of his name day would be replaced with something he called Family Feast — a single day to honor every member of the Arnold Janssen spiritual family. Today, the members of each of the three religious congregations he founded, the SVD, the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters, celebrate together on Sept. 8.

A college tradition

The annual Family Feast celebration at Divine Word College is filled with a mix of reverence and pure joy. It starts in the morning with a prayer service. Then students head outside to play games and unwind after a long week of classes. The teams are divided by formation groups, giving students a chance early in the school year to develop relationships and get to know one another.

In the afternoon, they gather for a liturgy followed by a formal banquet. Members of the SVD serve students during the meal as a reminder that Divine Word Missionaries dedicate their lives to serving others.

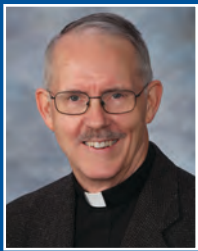
Homecoming — Mark your calendars!

DWC President Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD said Family Feast is a lot like homecoming for the SVD. Next year, we're excited to invite all alumni of SVD educational institutions to an

All-Alumni Reunion on Labor Day weekend 2020, coinciding with Family Feast.



A Word from the President:



Fr. Tom Ascherman, SVD

Something missionary happens every time we form a friendship. The many small steps of invitation, welcome and showing up are the foundation upon which the Kingdom of God is built.

Developing missionary friendships is one of the primary goals of mission. These are the rather unusual friendships between people whose home groups are often at serious odds with one another. Think of Jesus' unusual friends. He befriended Samaritans and centurions. He befriended the wealthy and the poor. He counted both Jews and Gentiles in his company. And he constantly reached out to those whose faith was weak or self-righteous.

At DWC, Missionary Discipleship is one of our core competencies. In part, it's about befriending people who are on the margins of Church and society. For instance, reaching out in friendship to Muslim neighbors is mission. Cultivating deeper relationships with people who are unchurched, even members of our own families, is mission. Reaching out across barriers of culture, race, class, language and way of life are all practical moments of missionary discipleship. These moments happen at Divine Word College every day. As we approach the holidays, it might be good to ask ourselves, who could be our friends on the margins?

Fr. Tom

Philosophically speaking

DWC Senior reflects on experience at prestigious program



Tomerot Lambert

Tomerot Lambert is introspective and naturally curious. He doesn't spout off canned responses to everyday questions like, "How are you?" and he never misses an opportunity to engage in a careful and strategic dissection of ideas.

Some might call him a philosopher. In fact, some did.

In July, the DWC senior was one of just 15 people from across the country chosen to attend the 2019 Rutgers Summer Institute for Diversity in Philosophy in New Jersey.

The seven-day program introduced areas of specialization within the discipline of philosophy. Participants explored what it means to be a professional philosopher.

Tomerot was the only Catholic participant and the only seminarian. He opened up his notes from the experience and shared four of his biggest takeaway lessons:

Who are you when no one else is looking?

Tomerot's encounters with the other program participants in the secular environment made him reexamine how seriously he takes his faith and prompted him to start praying more about it.

"It's really hard to hold yourself accountable, especially when you're with people who are not striving for the same ideals," Tomerot said. "You kind of fall into the masses. It really tested my authentic interest and my seriousness of the faith."

Philosophy invites the most daring questions into her house.

"You have to be willing in a seminary to ask yourself questions that are challenging," Tomerot said. "Why do I want to be a priest? Can I be a missionary without being a priest? Philosophy has helped me open up to questions but also to refine my questions. The answers usually are contained in the question."

There's always someone who knows more than you.

While in New Jersey, Tomerot said he thought a lot about comparisons and self-knowledge.

"You need to accept yourself as you are with both your weaknesses and your strengths and to see that there is more to you than what you yourself see," he said.

The true consequence of seeking knowledge should lead one to serve and to love.

Deep discussions about philosophical concepts intrigued Tomerot throughout the week-long event but he said he started to realize that for most participants, there was no plan to put those abstract ideas into action.

"There was no concrete way to get involved in justice," he said. "If you know these things and are aware, it should bring you to act."

DWC Photo Gallery

Seven DWC students in the English as a Second Language program had a unique opportunity this summer to practice their writing and speaking skills with area children. As part of their ESL coursework, students wrote stories and presented them to kids at Carnegie-Stout Public Library in Dubuque. ESL Lecturer Paola Armfield helped students prepare for the storytelling event. She and the students also organized games, activities and a magic show that kept the wiggly audience members engaged and eager to learn more.



Faculty, staff and students participated in DWC's annual Labor Day Weekend 5K Walk and Run on Monday, Sept. 2. After a short stretch session to loosen muscles and hype the crowd, the group hit the road. Some participants ran for time, some ran for fun and some simply came to socialize and support their school. No matter what brought them out, a good time was had by all.

There was no shortage of reasons to celebrate during DWC's annual Family Feast event in September. Fr. James Bergin celebrated 50 years of priesthood and Fr. Adam MacDonald and Fr. Nick Hien Nguyen both celebrated their 25th anniversary of professing vows in the Society of the Divine Word. The three jubilarians concelebrated the Family Feast Mass and were showered with gifts and entertainment at the banquet that followed. Congratulations to the jubilarians and thank you for your commitment to DWC and the SVD!



How does your garden grow? DWC President Fr. Tom Ascherman, SVD, likes to say that "God is the gardener and I just pull the weeds." On any given day, you can find Fr. Tom thoughtfully sculpting the landscaping around the campus and keeping a watchful eye on plants and trees. He and the maintenance staff keep the college looking bright and inviting for all who visit. It seems that Fr. Tom and God make a pretty good team.



World Mission Sunday

On Sunday, Oct. 20, the DWC community joined Catholics everywhere in commemorating World Mission Sunday. Each year on this day, we renew our commitment to missionary activity and invite the public to the college's largest annual event — a multicultural liturgy and Taste of DWC.

We were pleased to welcome Fr. Quang Duc Dinh, SVD, Provincial for the Society of the Divine Word's Chicago Province, who served as presider. Pope Francis designated October 2019 as Extraordinary Mission Month, giving this year's celebration an even deeper meaning. Students and staff shared their favorite cultural dishes with all who attended, filling the gym with rich aromas and a very satisfied crowd.



Support from DWC Friends enhances educations

Teachers come in many forms. At Divine Word College, we are blessed to have a faculty made up of talented, highly-educated instructors who dedicate themselves to the academic and spiritual education of our students. We are equally blessed to have DWC Friends who volunteer their time, talents and treasure to reinforce lessons and aid those educations.

The FAN Club, short for "Friends Across Nations," matches DWC's international students with area families. Students learn about life in the United States and participating families have an opportunity to learn about other cultures. Students and their FAN Club families meet up during college events and on their own, just to enjoy and learn from one another.

Terry and Paula Friedman got involved when the club was first formed and over the years, they've taken DWC students to visit the House on the Rock in Spring Green, Wis., a Milwaukee Bucks basketball game and various Dubuque restaurants. They've also attended a number of school events, like musical performances and Mission Sunday.



FAN Club participants Terry and Paula Friedman with Fr. Bau Nguyen, SVD, at his first mass.

"We have met some smart, hard-working and holy men and women from a variety of countries and the United States over the span of 23 years," Paula said. "They have been grateful for the opportunity to converse with us, spend time with us and come to know us. We also are thankful for our relationship with them."

For more information:

FAN Club

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Community Tutoring

Dr. Seo Hyun Park
Director of the Intensive
English Language Institute
spark@dwci.edu

Community tutors also work to reinforce classroom lessons at DWC. Anyone who speaks English and is willing to meet regularly with students qualifies to join.

Each week, a tutor meets with a student for one hour and practices conversational English. It's a chance for students in the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI) to talk with a native speaker and learn culture outside of the classroom.



Area residents help ESL students learn the language from native English speakers.

Community volunteers, along with prayers and gifts from supporters around the world, help ensure that DWC students receive the well-rounded education they will need to pursue lives of missionary service.

A message from the Development Office by Fr. Linh Pham, SVD

Sharing in the Lord's Great Commission



Every time you send a gift of any amount to Divine Word College, our development staff considers it an honor that you trust us to pursue the college's goals and mission.

With each contribution, you take part in the missionary work of the Church. You are rightly regarded as a trustee of the Lord's Great Commission, which is "Go into the world and baptize the people in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." (Mt 28:16-20)

The Great Commission can't be handled by individual Christians alone. Rather, it requires the collaboration of every member of the Church. While Divine Word Missionaries engage themselves directly in tasks that spread the Good News, they need the material, financial and spiritual support from lay partners like you to fulfill their callings.

Each Christian is called to spread the Good News. Friends and benefactors of DWC are true partners in the Great Commission through their prayers and financial support of the human, spiritual, academic and missionary formation of our students.

Each time you pray for the success of evangelization, you are intimately connected to the missionary workers who are laboring for the bountiful harvests of heaven.

What sets you apart from Divine Word Missionaries does not lie in the nature of their participation in the Lord's Great Commission, but in the diverse missionary settings where they work. A woman with means in the United States can help a poor student from Africa who seeks to achieve his goal of becoming a world-class, modern-day missionary; a man with limited means can lend a hand to a student who is rich in knowledge as she strives for professional competence in the global Church; an Anglo woman can be of assistance to an Asian student struggling to overcome language and communication barriers. The list goes on and on.

Without a doubt, friends and benefactors of Divine Word College are instruments of God's constant wonders. You go beyond all cultural, social, political and educational barriers. We thank you all for your generous gifts and your contribution to the Great Commission.

Golf Event Helps Drive Donations

The Fifth Annual Divine Word College Benefit Golf Outing on July 26 at Timberline Golf Course raised more than \$7,600 to assist DWC students with the cost of their education. All DWC students receive some level of financial support, which totaled more than \$1.2 million last year.

The four-person, 18-hole best-shot tournament started with a shotgun start and was followed by a social and dinner. The event was dedicated to the memory of Epworth, Iowa resident Bud McGovern, a long-time friend of the college and supporter of the golf outing, who passed away last year.

Thanks to the 52 golfers and 60 dinner guests who came out and helped make this event a success!



For more information about Divine Word College, call 563-876-3353, email info@dwci.edu, or visit: www.dwci.edu



DIVINE WORD MISSIONARIES HERITAGE TOUR

Join your host, Divine Word Alumni Director
Fr. Thang Hoang, SVD
on this amazing tour!

November 2-14, 2020

\$3679 per person from New York

Tour highlights include:

- Accommodations at first class/select hotels
- Professional English-speaking tour guide
- Transfers to and from airports by private motor coach
- Most meals included



***Travel to places of
great significance to
the SVD including:***

- The home of SVD Founder St. Arnold Janssen in Goch, Germany
- Steyl, the birthplace of the SVD
- The home of Divine Word Missionary pioneer St. Joseph Freinademetz, SVD in Oies, Italy

Additional destinations include Amsterdam, Rhine Valley, Bavaria, Venice, Rome and Florence



***For more information go to www.dwci.edu/heritagetour
Or contact Associate Development Director
Mark Singsank at 563-876-0097 or singsank@dwci.edu***