

# THE LOG

A Bulletin for the Divine Word College Community | Vol. 45 No. 5 - September 16, 2025

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#### **Birthday Corner:**

#### **SEPTEMBER**

18 Angel Rodriguez Fuentes22 Sandy Wilgenbusch





## THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

#### **Vocations - Going Far**

This school year, DWC is thinking about vocations. Naturally, we are always attentive to vocations to the call to religious life and the priesthood among our students; however, what about the vocations of our employees?

A generous professional development grant from the Lily Foundation, facilitated through our partnership with the Council of Independent Colleges, is prompting us to focus on enhancing our understanding of VOCATION in all aspects of the College.

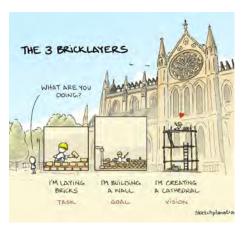
A parable that I have told numerous times comes to mind once again: A bishop is passing by a construction site and observes three workers laying bricks.

He asks the first worker: "What are you doing?"

The worker responds, "What does it look like? I'm laying bricks."

The second worker answers: "I'm building a wall!"

The third worker pauses, looks up, smiles, and says, "I am building a cathedral."



At various times, I find a part of myself reflected in each one of those responses. Nevertheless, I am confident that a great number of DWC faculty and staff primarily identify with the builder of cathedrals. The evidence I have is the considerable number of individuals at the College who have dedicated twenty, thirty, or even forty years and beyond to their service here. Each year, I



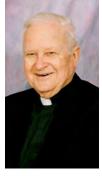
have the honor of presenting "service pins" that acknowledge the long-standing commitment of so many. In October 2021, DWC recognized Ms. Donna Puccio with the first-ever 50-year pin. On that same day, I presented Fr. Bill Shea with a 30-year pin, and Fr. Adam MacDonald with a 10-year pin. Fr. Joe McDermott, whom we buried on Saturday, lived and worked here for over 48-years (not counting his time as a student in the late 1930's). Just last week, I gave another 50-year pin to Ms. Marlene Decker. In the coming two years, I happily anticipate presenting this remarkable recognition to two additional staff members!

The generous contributions of faculty and staff, encompassing both employees and SVD members, are what makes DWC an exceptional place to reflect upon God's call to each one of us. Whether we prefer to it as Call, Mission, or Purpose, we all are all dedicated to doing something good, together.

Recently, I've heard a proverb quoted by members of the staff and faculty of DWC: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." It seems that God intends for all of us to journey very far, indeed – all the way to the Kingdom.







Fr. Joe McDermott



Marlene Decker

#### **Constitution and Citizenship Day**

We the People. On September 17th, 1787, the Constitution of the United States was signed in Philadelphia. Today, people from across the country are gathered into its majestic opening phrase: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." The people, then and now, came from many parts of the world.

Since 2004, the Sept 17th observance has been known as *Constitution and Citizenship Day*. The diversity of "we the people" continues to grow across the nation and in our DWC community. Several students are working toward citizenship. "We the people" are very much encouraged and honored by their decision to make their future together with us.





# VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS Dr. Joshua Young

#### Job or Vocation: What's the Purpose of a College Education?

Over half of the US population questions the value of a <u>college degree</u>, creating and reinforcing a diploma divide in American communities. The questions about the value of a college education are often rooted in the belief that the primary purpose of college is simply to secure a better job. This transactional view reduces education to a mere stepping stone for economic gain, overshadowing its deeper, more transformative purpose. It's a perception that can



leave many feeling let down if their career paths don't immediately align with their expectations, contributing to the broader lack of confidence in universities and colleges across the country.

As I've reflected upon vocation during our NetVUE Professional Development Grant experience, I have been thinking that at Divine Word College, we approach education so differently. We see college not just as a place to acquire skills for a career, but as a journey of personal and communal growth. Certainly, missionaries must have job skills but that is not enough. Our educational philosophy is centered on the idea of vocation—a call to serve and participate in the common good, especially within the context of Prophetic Dialogue. Through a holistic missionary approach, we encourage students to discern and embrace their unique gifts and talents, not just for their own success, but to contribute meaningfully

to the world. This approach recognizes that true fulfillment comes from a life of purpose, and that a college education is a vital part of preparing for that life, regardless of where it leads. It's about becoming a whole person, equipped to make a difference, and seeing your work as a form of service to humanity.



# ASSESSMENT LOOP

Ms. Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth

Instructor	Assignment/Class	Faculty Evaluator	Assessed PLOs
Fr. Stephen Nguyen	THM 277 Catholic Social Teaching	Round 1 - Dr. Joshua Young Round 2 - Fr. Simon Hoang Round 3 - Dr. Jason Reed Round 4 - Dr. Ben Wintress	CORE #4
Dr. Ron Condon/Dr. Jason Reed	PHI 499 Philosophy Capstone Paper	Round 1 - Sr. Aprilia Untarto Round 2 - Mr. Mike Mason Round 3 - Fr. Stephen Nguyen Round 4 - Fr. Simon Hoang	PHI/BA/1 PHI/BA/2 PHI/BA/3

#### Faculty Evaluations of Spring 2025 Collection (Assessed Fall 2025)

#### 1. Dates for Assessment Rounds:

- ✓ **Round 1:** August 25 to September 1
- ✓ **Round 2:** September 1 to September 8
- ✓ **Round 3:** September 8 to September 15
- O Round 4: September 15 to September 22

#### 2. Evaluation Periods:

Open from Monday 8:00 A.M. to the following Monday 8:00 A.M.

#### 3. The login link for OAP is as follows:

https://www.watermarkinsights.com/client-resources/signon/

You might have to click "log in" twice.

#### 4. Watermark Support Contacts:

support@watermarkinsights.com

Customer Service Hotline: 1-800-311-5656





## VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD



#### **Mission Sunday Taste of DWC**

World Mission Sunday is one of the main celebrations that Divine Word College hosts each year. This year, the celebration is on Sunday, October 19, 2025, with the theme *Missionaries of Hope Among All Peoples*. Friends, family, and people from the neighboring cities will come to this event to enjoy the liturgy, entertainment, and good food of different cultures. As usual, the college is looking for at least 40 dishes for the Taste of DWC following the World Mission Sunday liturgy. I have posted a signup sheet on the board and ask you to sign up as soon as you can so that we can get the ingredients for you. Please sign up by Tuesday, September 30, 2025.

#### **Garage Sale**

Just a reminder that the SVD community is working along with the Student Senate for the Epworth City-Wide Garage Sale. Students will be selling used items and



eggrolls in front of the Arkfeld House on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, and Wednesday, September 17, 2025. The Student Senate wants to express its gratitude for the donation, as well as for helping to make egg rolls. All the money will help the Dubuque County Backpack Program. If you have time, please come out to help.

#### **DWC Soccer Tournament**

Our sports coordinators are organizing the annual DWC soccer tournament, and the first game will begin this Wednesday, September 17, 2025. The coordinators will post the game schedule on the bulletin board to let us know the dates and the teams that will be playing. Please come out to the soccer field to cheer for your favorite team.

#### Flu Vaccination

Just a reminder that the flu and COVID-19 vaccination will be on Wednesday, September 24, 2025. For those who need the vaccination, please sign up by Monday, September 22, 2025, so that Br. Mike Decker, SVD, can have a count.

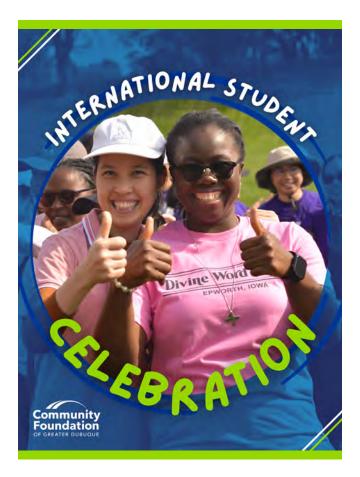








## VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS Len Uhal



#### **International Student Celebration**

The Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque is hosting a gathering for international students that includes free food and music by the river this Friday September, 19, 2025.

The event takes place at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium and is supported by all of the local colleges and universities, including Divine Word College.

An invitation to the event is posted on the student bulletin board along with a registration from. Please sign-up by Wednesday, September 17 by Noon is you plan to go.

Thank you!

#### Proposed Changes by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for F1 Student Visa holders

As noted in last week's issue of The Log, DHS published a "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the Federal Register" that would make changes to F1 Student Visas. The statement reads in part:



"Under the proposed rule, F and J nonimmigrants will be given a date certain for admission to the United States based on the length of their program or length of assignment not to exceed four years for F and J nonimmigrants. Those unable to complete their program during this time will be able to apply to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services for an extension of stay."

Divine Word College published a response to this proposed rule change, which was signed by Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD.

There is still time to make your opinions known! DHS will accept Public Comments through September 29. Click here to make your voice heard. In addition, please consider writing our local elected officials and make them aware of your opinions on this issue:

#### Senator Charles Grassley:

https://www.grassley.senate.gov/contact/questions-and-comments

#### Senator Joni Ernst:

https://www.ernst.senate.gov/contact/email-joni

#### Congresswoman Ashley Hinson:

https://hinson.house.gov/zip authentication?form=/
contact





#### **International Day of Peace**

This year's International Day of Peace event will take place on September 22 in the Alumni Campus Center at Loras College, beginning at 7:00 PM. Marie Dennis, an international teacher of peace, will speak on the theme "Persistence: A Pathway to Peace." I highly encourage you to attend this event.

#### Flu/Covid Vaccinations at DWC

Bro. Mike has posted on the main bulletin board and the SVD bulletin board the sign up list for receiving the Flu/Covid vaccinations for everyone in Divine Word College.

It is **highly recommended** that everyone receive the Flu vaccination to stay healthy during the winter time. Covid vaccinations will be for people over the age of 65.

This will be done on WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 in the GYM from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Students who have their own medical insurance: please bring your card. Employees, bring your medical insurance card. New SVD, please bring your medical insurance card.

Please sign your name only once.

If you have any questions please see Bro Mike. The deadline to sign up is Monday, September 22, 2025.







# externalaffairs

We invited alumni to share their reflections on the All-Alumni Reunion. Alumnus Chester Novitt (DWC '85-'89) responded with a heartfelt account of his experience returning to Divine Word College after many years. His story not only captures the joy of reconnecting with classmates, but also offers the DWC community—students, staff, and friends—a glimpse of how the spirit of Saint Arnold Janssen continues to guide the mission of DWC today.



# Reflections on the 2025 DWC Alumni Reunion

By Chester Novitt

My name is Chester Novitt, and I attended Divine Word College from 1985 to 1989. I live in Portland, Oregon, and I now work as a nurse on the neurovascular unit. My initial thoughts about attending the alumni reunion were mixed. Although I had kept in touch with several SVD teachers and classmates over the years, I had never participated in previous gatherings. I decided to attend this time not only because it was the 150-year celebration of the SVD, but also as a gesture of gratitude—for it was at Divine Word that I received the personal and spiritual foundation that has carried me throughout life.

The weekend began with a social gathering at the Grand River Conference Center in downtown Dubuque, along the Mississippi River—a lovely venue to start the celebration. Dubuque is more developed than I had anticipated, but familiar sights still surfaced along the way. Driving west on Highway 20 toward the college, I wondered how the weekend would unfold.

As I approached, the familiar outline of the college came into view above the sloping lawn, its iconic spire rising over the campus and the international flags welcoming visitors at the entrance. Turning off at the Jacoby Drive exit, I followed the driveway up to the circle and entered the main foyer, where the sound of lively conversation immediately brought back memories. As I mingled through the crowd, I spotted four familiar faces, classmates and near-classmates from just a year or two apart. We all looked different, of course. One classmate even admitted he would not have recognized me without my nametag. I chose to take that as a compliment—grateful that time has been kind and that my Polish genes continue to preserve a measure of youth and vitality.

The weekend program was well organized and engaging—from campus tours and games to a picnic and banquet. Alongside wonderful meals, we were entertained by cultural dances from students representing countries in Africa and Vietnam.

The welcome Mass was celebrated by the college president, Fr. Tom Ascheman, S.V.D., and the closing Mass by Fr. Adam Oleszczuk, S.V.D., provincial of the Chicago Province. Fr. Tom and Fr. Ed Peklo, SVD, gave inspiring homilies that truly made us feel at home. I was equally moved by the warmth of the current students, who welcomed us and interacted throughout the weekend. Watching them, I couldn't help but recall myself doing the same many years ago.

The college itself has changed. Hallways and classrooms now feature updated technology, ergonomic desks, carpeted flooring, and polished corridors. Display cases highlight the core competencies that students are expected to achieve, tied closely to the mission of the Divine Word Missionaries. The wall of past graduates has been



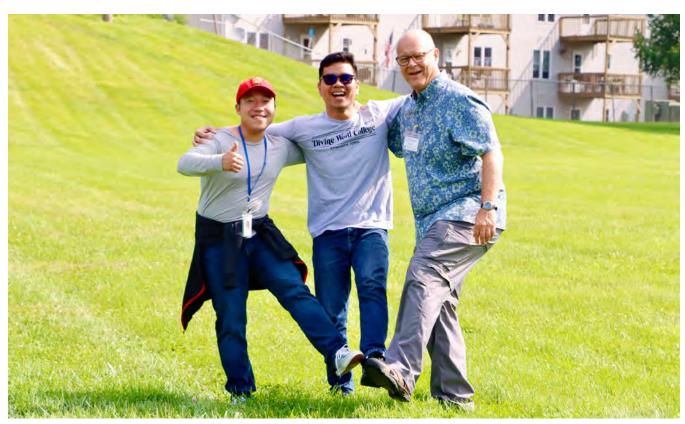


relocated near the recreation area to make space for the growing number of alumni. Outside, the courtyard bloomed with carefully manicured gardens, creating the perfect backdrop for our picnic.

Perhaps the most striking change was the student body itself. Divine Word College may be small—fewer than seventy undergraduates—but it is remarkably rich in diversity, with students representing more than twenty countries alongside men and women from across the United States. I also noticed a strong presence of women, particularly sisters, attending classes. Their joyful witness added a distinctive dimension to the community, primarily through their angelic voices in the music ministry during Masses, lifting the liturgy with reverence and beauty. Some of these sisters belong to missionary congregations founded by Saint Arnold Janssen, including the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) and the Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters (SSpSAP), as well as other religious orders dedicated to serving the Church worldwide. Watching them sing alongside seminarians and lay students reminded me that the true spirit of the reunion was not in the numbers. I was glad to hear it was well attended, but what mattered most were the connections—sharing experiences, listening to stories, and recognizing that, in many ways, we were brought together in the spirit of Saint Arnold Janssen, inspired to carry the collective mission in our own individual ways: to love, to serve, and to share our journey with others.

Though I thought about visiting nearby attractions—the famous Pizza Factory or the new "Field of Dreams" site in Dyersville—I found I didn't need to. The reunion itself was more than enough. I ended the weekend with a visit to several of my former Bordentown teachers, now residing at Techny, Illinois, who remain lifelong friends.

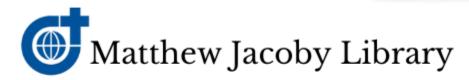
As I boarded my flight home, I reflected on the days at DWC and felt deeply grateful for the encounter. I am thankful to the Divine Word Missionaries for the impact they have had on my life, and I will continue to carry their missionary zeal forward.



Chester Novitt, right, got in on the action during the traditional Family Feast games. Chester, Nhat Minh Nguyen and Peter Duc Ngo grouped together during an ice-breaker game.







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Periodicals Checkout Gets a Tech Upgrade

We've upgraded the checkout system for periodicals to make borrowing easier and more efficient. Users can now check out magazines, journals, and newspapers using an iPad and barcode scanner located in the Periodicals Room. In addition to this new system, users may now check out the latest issue of all periodicals—except the Telegraph Herald—with an extended loan period of 14 days. We hope this change encourages greater use of our print collection and helps us better understand usage patterns. To learn more, visit the library's website: <a href="https://opac.dwci.edu/">https://opac.dwci.edu/</a>.

#### **Dubuque County Reads Receives** \$17,000 in Support

Elizabeth Winter, President of the Dubuque Area Library Information Consortium (DALINC) and lead grant writer for DALINC's Dubuque County Reads program, is pleased to announce that the initiative has received \$17,000 in grants and donations over the past few weeks. This includes a generous \$10,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque (see TH announcement) and \$7,000 in donations from the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Sisters of St. Francis. DWC community members interested in learning more about the DCR program can visit the DALINC website: <a href="https://dalinc.org/wp/dubuque-county-reads">https://dalinc.org/wp/dubuque-county-reads</a>.





September 5, 2025

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
Federal eRulemaking Portal: https://www.regulations.gov

RE: Rulemaking, DHS docket number (ICEB-2025-0001), Fixed Time Periods for F and J classifications

#### Divine Word College Statement on Proposed DHS Rule Changes for F1 Student Visa Holders

Divine Word College is a Catholic institution dedicated to educating a student body composed of nearly 90% international students from 21 different countries, friendly and supportive of the United States of America.

The proposed changes to F (academic) and J (exchange) visas, which would replace "duration of status" with fixed terms and impose new restrictions on program changes and transfers, are a direct threat to international students training for life-long commitments to Christian missionary service in the US and abroad. We believe these proposals are counterproductive to our nation's long-standing tradition of welcoming international students and fostering global understanding.

Current research from the <u>National Center for Education Statistics</u> shows that 64% of all college students across the US need six years to complete undergraduate education across four-year, public, and private institutions. International students often need additional time to adapt to instruction in English-only formats. We believe the US federal government should reconsider the time limits to allow for greater flexibility for international students who legitimately need extra time to complete their studies before leaving the US. Especially in the case of students who first study English as a Second Language and then matriculate into undergraduate studies, there should be flexibility to move smoothly from one program into the next. The current system of "duration of status" provides the flexibility and stability that our international students need to complete their studies.

We urge the Department of Homeland Security to reconsider these proposals. Implementing too limited terms, a shorter grace period, and severe restrictions on program changes would not only hinder the academic success of students, but also weaken the cultural and economic contributions they make to our local community. We stand with higher education institutions across the US to call for policies that support, rather than undermine, the pursuit of education in the United States.

Sincerely,

Rev. Thomas J. Ascheman SVD, PhD President – Divine Word College **Participating Schools** 

# ကို Clarke











## FREE FOOD AND MUSIC BY THE RIVER



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CELEBRATION

Meet students from six regional colleges Connect with local leaders and community members Experience a new part of Dubuque

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2025 6:00 TO 8:00 PM**NATIONAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER
MUSEUM & AQUARIUM

To RSVP and for details on transportation to the event contact your international student office.

