

## **Report of Northwestern College**

Northwestern College is pleased to report another standout year of graduate outcomes with the class of 2021. First destination data shows that 99 percent of the class was gainfully employed or continuing their education within six months of graduation. Graduates have landed in 22 states and 3 countries, with 52 percent of graduates choosing to live and work in Iowa. They are employed by over 140 companies and organizations, including Mayo Clinic, Ernst & Young, Principal, General Motors, and the U.S. Air Force.

### **New Vogel Welcome Center and Renovations to the Bultman Athletic Center**

At the north entrance to Northwestern, the new Vogel Welcome Center provides an immediate sense of Northwestern's brand and heart for hospitality. The college's "Raiders Stand Out" promise is displayed on the wall behind the reception desk, and a reflective glass wall in eye-catching red serves as a backdrop to the building's reception area.

The \$3.1 million, 9,300-square-foot facility houses the admissions, financial aid, and marketing and communications offices, as well as four conference rooms, communal work areas, and a photo/video recording studio.

At the south entrance to campus, the Bultman Center for Intercollegiate Athletics received a \$2.25 million makeover. The facility, built in 1995, now features a new gymnasium floor, bleachers, lighting, and a scorers' table. The athletic department's new branding is highlighted throughout the gym as well as in the lobby and front entrance. A new roof and air conditioning were also installed.

Fundraising is underway for a second phase of Bultman Athletic Center renovations that will include the addition and renovations of locker rooms and remodeling of coaches' offices and the athletic training area.

### **Master's Programs in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling Launched in May 2022**

Northwestern College launched its master's degree programs in clinical mental health counseling and school counseling in May. Both feature 100 percent online coursework and extensive hands-on learning. The clinical mental health counseling program is designed to be completed in two years by taking two eight-week courses at a time. The school counseling program is set up to be completed by working professionals in three years.

The programs are directed by Dr. Gregory Elliott, who served as the 2020–2021 president of the Colorado Counseling Association and has extensive clinical practice experience. He joined Northwestern's administration after teaching in the graduate counseling program at Colorado Christian University.

Elliott says there's a desperate need for more counselors. For example, the American School Counseling Association recommends a 250:1 ratio of students to counselors, while the national ratio is 450:1. Elliott's clinical specialization and research interests have been focused on working with suicidal clients and in training mental health clinicians to do the same. He notes

that suicide rates have been increasing for 15 years. “God is calling people into the counseling profession to help bring hope into people’s lives,” he says.

Northwestern’s counseling programs are aligned with the standards and competencies of the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, from which the college will apply for accreditation after the first cohorts graduate.

### **New Online Early Childhood Program Leading to Teaching Licensure**

In January 2022, Northwestern launched an online bachelor’s degree in early childhood that leads to teaching licensure, preparing graduates to teach pre-kindergarten through third grade. The only Iowa program of its kind, Northwestern’s is designed for students who have already earned an associate’s or bachelor’s degree. It can be completed in three years or less. All coursework will be online, with field experience hours and student teaching arranged in schools near the student.

The bachelor’s in early childhood–licensure program is designed for working adults, with eight-week courses and a flexible pace. Students will explore how their faith interacts with their role as an early childhood educator, and they will be guided by professors with extensive classroom experience.

The new licensure program is part of Northwestern’s growing Graduate School and Adult Learning division. A total of 483 students were enrolled this spring in the division’s programs, which include an online master’s degree program in education, an on-campus master’s degree in physician assistant studies program that will graduate its first cohort in August, and an online RN-BSN nursing program. Those numbers and a 92.2 percent retention rate for freshmen contributed to a record overall spring enrollment of 1,525.

### **Northwestern Begins Offering Micro-Credentials**

Northwestern is offering micro-credentials to help a wide variety of constituents differentiate themselves in the workplace. The micro-credentialing program is a joint effort between Northwestern’s Center for Innovation and Leadership and its Graduate School and Adult Learning division.

Smaller than a minor, certificate, or major, micro-credentials allow individuals to meet their personalized learning needs by gaining knowledge and skills in areas relevant to their academic or professional goals. The micro-credential programs are themed around twenty-first-century competencies and skills identified as essential by national associations and regional employers. Skills include critical thinking and problem-solving, teamwork and collaboration, leadership, professionalism, oral and written communication, diversity and bias, and content more directly tied to technical or performance-based standards such as project management.

Studies have shown that employees who have micro-credentials are viewed as more competitive not only while trying to land a job but also after they are employed. In addition, in a recent survey of human resource managers across different industries, 95 percent were interested in the micro-credentials of potential hires.

Upon completion of a micro-credential, learners will receive a digital badge—a clickable, verifiable credential that showcases their mastery of a skill or knowledge in an area of interest.

Digital badges include information such as the date earned, issuing institution, program criteria, and work samples. The digital badge and data can be displayed on social media sites such as LinkedIn, added as a link on résumés, or embedded in e-portfolios and email signatures for visible recognition.

### **Psychology Graduates Score in Top Four Percent on National Exams**

Northwestern College's latest psychology graduates scored in the top 4 percent on the ETS Major Field Test in Psychology, a national standardized test that assesses mastery of key concepts and principles. Beyond factual knowledge, the test—developed by professors from universities across the country—evaluates students' analytical and problem-solving skills.

"We have a curriculum that emphasizes the material information involved in psychology across many different areas, but we also teach our graduates to think well about psychology and faith, and to apply what they learn to their lives," says Dr. Laird Edman, professor of psychology. "The scores on these tests indicate we are accomplishing a number of these essential goals."

Recent Northwestern psychology graduates are pursuing doctoral or master's degrees in areas such as medicine, psychotherapy, mental health counseling, and child development. Graduates are also performing research for institutions like The Iowa Adverse Childhood Experiences Coalition in Des Moines, Iowa; Boys Town National Research Hospital in Boys Town, Nebraska; and Sanford Medical Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Alumni who become clinical psychologists work in private practices and the public sector, including the Veterans Affairs system.

### **First Year of Legal Interpreting Certificate Program Complete**

This summer, Northwestern's first student cohort will complete their certification training program for legal interpreting. The program is designed for students who are completely bilingual in Spanish and English, enabling them to attain the needed skills to pass the legal interpreting certification exam after only two semesters.

The legal interpreting certificate and a medical interpreting certificate will be offered in alternate years. Both programs can be completed by traditional undergraduate students, who can combine them and other courses to earn a bachelor's degree in translation and interpretation, as well as by adult learners pursuing only the certificate. The certificates will serve those bilingual adults who have been interested in interpreting. Certification leads to well-paying, flexible, and meaningful job opportunities in a rapidly growing field.

Leading the certificate programs is Piet Koene, professor of Spanish, translation, and interpreting. Koene is a certified translator and interpreter who has earned two master's degrees: one in interpretation and translation and the other in Latin American history. He is a federally certified court interpreter, a nationally certified medical interpreter, and a state-certified court interpreter for Iowa and Minnesota. He has also served as president of the Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association.

### **Barker Finished Trilogy of Books about Missionary Nurse**

Jeff Barker, professor emeritus of theatre, has completed his third book about a Sioux Center woman who spent 33 years as a missionary nurse in Africa. *Zambia Home: A Missionary Nurse*

*Endures* tells the story of Arlene Schuiteman's final decade of service in the Republic of Zambia, where she taught health care workers in two rural hospitals. It then follows her as she returns to Iowa, faces a major health crisis, and experiences the death of a dear friend and colleague.

In 2014, when Schuiteman turned 90 years old, she entrusted Barker with complete access to her journals, in which she's recorded—nearly daily—the events, relationships, and spiritual questions and insights she'd experienced. Barker began work on her biography in 2016, publishing the first book of the trilogy in 2018 and the second in 2019.

"We've been on this journey for a long time," Barker says. "I've become like a son to her, and she is a spiritual mother to my wife and me."

Barker marvels at the sacrifices Schuiteman made, living so far from home at a time when there was no regular access to telephones, and computers hadn't yet been invented. "She would go for as much as four years before she saw her mother or sisters," Barker explains. "She knew she was living in dangerous circumstances. She kept the journals so if she suddenly died, her family would have a record of her life."

Schuiteman, now 97, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Northwestern College in 2020.