



## 2022 Annual Report to the Synods

*Wartburg College is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students  
for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning.*

Guided by our vision, we are answering the call to prepare resilient leaders of positive change for service in a complex world. This will be realized by building on our distinctives and embracing new opportunities to be the leading institution in educating the whole person.

### Changes in Senior Leadership

- President Darrel Colson retired effective June 30, 2022, after 13 years at Wartburg.
- Dr. Rebecca Neiduski was introduced to the campus in March 2022 as the 18<sup>th</sup> and first female president of Wartburg. She began her service on July 1, 2022, and was inaugurated Oct. 14, 2022. President Neiduski came to Wartburg from Elon University where she was the dean of the School of Health Sciences. The daughter of Lutheran educators and a certified hand therapist, President Neiduski is known for her commitment to global health equity, including humanitarian work and education of health care providers around the world. She sits on the board of directors for the Guatemala Healing Hands Foundation and has participated in 19 medical missions.
- Greg Kneser was named vice president for student life and dean of students in August. Prior to his work at Wartburg, he was vice president of student affairs at Lourdes University and vice president for student life at St. Olaf College.
- Krystal Madlock was named the college's first associate dean of inclusive community. She has been with the college since 1998 and most recently served as the director of multicultural student services.

### Strategic Planning

- President Neiduski and Advancement Office staff engaged Wartburg alumni and friends around the country in a series of strategic dialogues to help shape and strengthen the college's priorities within the new strategic plan, *Our Brightest Days: Realizing Purpose, Leading Change*.
- Institutional priorities focus on four guiding themes: Educating Mind, Body, and Spirit; Inclusive Community; Student Success; and Competitive Advantage.

### Enrollment

- Fall 2022 enrollment was 1,444 students from 38 U.S. states and 55 countries and more than 20 world religions. This number included 92 international students and 196 U.S. students of color.
- The five majors with highest enrollment are business administration, psychology, elementary education, journalism and communication, and biology. The online Master of Arts in Leadership program enrolled a new cohort of eight students.

### Academic and Co-Curricular Programs

- The Ubuntu Center (formerly Centennial Complex), comprising Slife, Vollmer, and Hebron halls, was dedicated in August 2022. The \$11 million project included the renovation of Vollmer Hall; Slife Hall will undergo similar updates in 2023. Ubuntu, an African philosophy often expressed as 'I am because we are,' represents the college's renewed focus on how community is developed on campus.
- Michaelleen Golay, associate professor of biology, was named the assistant dean for academic innovation, and Michael Gleason, director of the Institute for Leadership Education and Irving R. Burling Distinguished Professor in Leadership, is the new associate dean for graduate studies. Both will continue to teach in their respective areas.

- Longtime Waterloo resident and teacher Joyce Redman '56 gifted the college \$1.5 million from her estate to fund academic scholarships and support initiatives emerging from the strategic plan, such as new academic and co-curricular program development.

### **Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry**

- The Rev. Halcyon Bjornstad continues to serve in an interim capacity as Wartburg searches for a new dean of spiritual life.
- Jacqueline Bussie, an award-winning author, professor, theologian, and advocate for justice, received the 2022 Graven Award in its 33<sup>rd</sup> year. The annual award for Christian vocation highlights the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world.
- The International Loehe Society held a portion of its fifth annual conference on Wartburg's campus July 26. The Society promotes study of the life, theology, work, and continuing significance of Wilhelm Loehe. In 1852, Loehe sent Pastor Georg Grossmann to America to found a teacher-training school for German immigrants in Saginaw, Mich. The college moved several times before making its permanent home in Waverly in 1935.

### **Recognition**

- Dr. Ann Adams Bullock, dean of the Dr. Jo Watt Williams School of Education at Elon University, was elected to the Board of Regents.
- Longtime Wartburg supporters June Rickhoff Mehlhaus '61 and Fred Ribich received the Wartburg Medal in recognition of sustained service to the college. Mehlhaus is a generous donor and volunteer and Ribich is a professor emeritus of psychology and former director of institutional research and assessment. They both live in Waverly.
- Dr. Michael Bechtel, associate professor of science education, received a third round of funding from the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council's STEM Scale-up Program to make available an aquaponics program to PK-12 teachers, libraries, and other educational programs.
- Jared McLey, a senior in religion, received the ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship, which covers full tuition for students of tremendous promise attending ELCA seminaries. He will attend Wartburg Theological Seminary.
- Soniya Sanam Tamang was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Davis Projects for Peace program to carry out a summer humanitarian effort that funded a community-run shower for girls and women in the Mahawai Rural Municipality of Nepal.
- The historic core of the Wartburg campus was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The 25-acre plot includes 17 buildings that contribute to the designation and the columns that were salvaged from the original Wartburg Hall.

Wartburg continues to deliver on a vibrant mission that transforms the entire college community as together we learn, serve, and demonstrate care for each other. Thank you for your prayerful support of our efforts to strengthen Lutheran higher education and our community of learning.

**Dr. Rebecca Neiduski, President**