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Senior student leaders in First-Year Experience see success with their final WOW

MADISON ZUNIGA

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Concordia's 2024 Week of Welcome (WOW) introduced nearly 500 new students to campus, with major events running from Aug. 16-23. The entirety of the operation was overseen by the First-Year Experience department, and its leadership team has been carefully preparing these impactful experiences for months.

All three FYE (First Year Experience) student leaders will be graduating this academic year, and they were able to reflect on their work in the light of personal growth and fond memories. "It feels a little emotional seeing all these new students coming onto campus and starting their college careers, fresh out of high school," said Grace Sielaff, senior Orientation Coordinator.

"It's very surreal, I remember my freshmen orientation like it was yesterday!" said Jynelle

Contreras, senior Orientation Coordinator. "It's also very rewarding thinking back to who I was freshman year and how I have blossomed into a student leader and seeing the work that I put into orientation throughout this summer in front of my eyes."

"Going through WOW as a senior reminded me of how far I have come and the experiences Concordia has provided me along the way," said Elise Schult, PAL

Coordinator. "It was so fun to have a role in prepping WOW for the freshmen and to play a part in welcoming them to campus in the same way I was freshman year!"

"I am most proud of my coordinators and how far they have come," said Jessica James, Assistant Director of Orientation and Student Activities. "I started working at Concordia during their orientation so I have gotten to see them grow over the last three or four years. They have all grown into such kind and strong leaders and I am honored to have been part of their journey."

The FYE leadership team grew especially close over the summer, as they planned and prepared the various WOW activities in the CSLD office. "We spend all summer planning and prepping for so many different sessions and events. The office was a source of light and laughter over the summer as we all genuinely liked each other and meshed really well!" said Sielaff. "Jynelle and Elise couldn't have been better partners for this humungous task that we had to take on. They are such humble and hardworking people and I absolutely loved working with them!"

"I would love to say a special shout out to Jessica James because she is just an amazing boss and mentor," Sielaff continued. "I really have come to rely and trust in her a lot and I want to thank her for not only all the hard work she puts in every year

but also for having faith in me and helping bring out a different type of confidence and leadership that I didn't know I had. She truly is an incredible influence to me and so many other people!"

From the surfboard game and campus-long conga line at Late Nite to the personal speeches given at the Presidential Welcome, the FYE leaders made a significant and memorable impact this year during WOW. "I'm not ready to let go of my college years quite

yet as it feels like I have so much left I want to enjoy, but I also realized when seeing the freshmen that it's time for a new chapter," said Sielaff. "If I were to share any advice it would be to take it all in and enjoy every moment because it truly does just fly by!"

For more information about First-Year Experience, visit cui.edu/studentlife/first-year-experience, or contact Jessica James at jessica.james@cui.edu.



PICTURED ABOVE: Senior FYE Coordinators Grace, Jynelle, and Elise
Photo courtesy of: Madison Zuniga

ASCUI Update

Welcome back, Golden Eagles!

My name is Emma Agronovitz, and I am your ASCUI Secretary this year. This means I get to write super cool articles for The Courier, updating you on all the events happening around campus!

While it is only the second week of school, a lot has been going on. We had Week Of Welcome for all our first-year students and transfers, amazingly planned by our FYE Coordinators: Grace Sielaff, Jynelle Contreras, and Pal Coordinator Elise Schult. WOW included meeting your PALs, worshiping with abbeywest and even some noteworthy events like Throwdown and Late Nite.

We also have had the Involvement Fair put together by the wonderful Landon McIntire, your ASCUI Club Commissioner. As you may be wondering, ASCUI stands for Associated Students of Concordia University

Irvine. Let me introduce you to the rest of the team!

Your ASCUI President this year is Natalie Annunziato, Carrie Hinrichs is your ASCUI Vice President, Julia Swan is your Communications Director, Nikko Brovick is your ASCUI Treasurer and Landon McIntire is your ASCUI Club Commissioner. Our office is located in the CSLD across from the gym. If you ever have questions or concerns, feel free to stop by!

We just had our Senate information meeting this past Wednesday. If you are interested in Senate but could not attend the meeting, email ascui.vicepres@cu.edu. Senate applications are due this Tue., Sept. 3, and elections will be held Sept. 5-6. Be sure to check your emails to vote for the senators running in your living area!

Sincerely,
Emma Agronovitz, ASCUI



PICTURED ABOVE: The 24-25 ASCUI team. Photo courtesy of: Emma Agronovitz

CUI President's Letter

Dear Students,

Welcome to the start of the 24-25 academic year! The commencement of a new academic year brings anticipation and potential, and I certainly have noticed that our campus is abuzz with excitement.

At this juncture, you've settled into classes, gotten to know your professors, adjusted to your suitemates and started to build a network of friends in your residential halls and beyond. Hopefully, you've participated in a lot of activities, such as Throwdown, Beach Bash, Source, Shout!, etc. And you've likely even explored off campus, by going to Irvine Spectrum Center, Newport Beach, Balboa Island, etc. I urge you to engage fully with all that our university offers: Golden Eagle Athletics, The Hunt, Taco Talks, CUI Bono, CU Active, Unity Center and more.

Achieving success this year will necessitate more than showing up; it requires active engagement, diligent study and judicious time management. Approach each class with intellectual curiosity, seek assistance proactively and engage in academic discourse. These efforts will significantly enhance this journey. And to this end, let me give you the same advice I gave my daughter last year when she was in her third week of her freshman year, which she might even admit was beneficial: Make the most of your professors' office hours.

This advice is not merely procedural but deeply rooted in fostering meaningful academic relationships. Professors, despite their prestigious titles and credentials, teach at Concordia because they want to engage with you. And a brief visit to their office is likely to turn into an enriching conversation. As I told her, prepare a few additional questions beyond the course: "When did you come to Concordia?" "What is your favorite class to teach?" "Why did you fall in love with your academic discipline?" and "What do you like to do for fun?" My daughter, who brought a friend along, was in the office for 45 minutes, and even left with a hint for her first exam.

Success will require more than just attending classes. Amidst your busy schedules, remember to enjoy the journey and stay connected with your family. Their support is invaluable as you navigate this transformative period.

Additionally, please bear with us as we undertake two major construction

projects in the heart of campus. While these developments may bring temporary noise and disruption, they are designed to significantly enrich your student experience. It will be worth it!

In closing, let me encourage you to visit the Moon International Center this semester. Pull out a world map, and let's talk about where you should spend a semester abroad! We have curated many affordable experiences, so don't use that as an excuse – explore your options! Take it from someone who has lived in three foreign countries: It will be one of the most important experiences of your life. Remember the wisdom of St. Augustine: "The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page."

Embrace this academic year with zeal, and you will grow academically, personally and spiritually.

Go Golden Eagles!
For His Students,
Dr. Michael Thomas
President



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Students reflect on Concordia's changing campus with Vision 2025

MADISON ZUNIGA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Concordia's Vision 2025 initiative is long awaited, as it brings two major renovation and construction projects to the heart of campus. Its impact has been felt from the start of the 24-25 academic year, as students, staff and faculty accommodate the new expansive updates to athletic spaces and the beloved CU Center.

Students across disciplines and departments are adjusting to the differences in campus life due to Vision 2025, and have been reflecting on both the ups and downs of navigating construction on campus this year.

"I like the new pathway they've made with the cement around the fences, and I like the way they decorated the fences so that it's still representative of Concordia's goals and structures with the 'wise, honorable, and cultivated,'" said junior Annelise Jackson. She described the new version of Concordia's Golden Eagle mascot, Marty, who wears a construction hat on many of the banners. "It's still a way to liven up the campus in the midst of the disruption."

Johnson did acknowledge that the construction can make navigating campus difficult, especially for new students. "The obstruction it creates through the center of the campus can make it more difficult to find classes," Johnson said, "and navigate to places like the library or the Unity Center."

Other students are curious to know what's happening behind the fences and the progress that's being made. "I do think campus has been handling the construction well," said Maddie Durkin, senior. "However, I just wonder why there looks to be nothing done. I thought they had the whole summer and it looks the exact same as when I left."

While some parts of campus are works in progress, students are enjoying the new campus features such as ice machines in the RES halls, a fire pit by the Library Annex and renovations at Good Shepherd Chapel.

And there's much to look forward to with Vision 2025, such as the Golden Eagles Fitness & Training Center. "I think the athletic center will be so exciting!" Jackson said. "It will be so nice to have the skybridge and the media tower. That will be really neat to be able to benefit the athletes when they use the new facility."

Regarding the updates to the CU Center, Jackson was "disappointed" to know that the church pews will be replaced with built-in seats. However, the change will be significant,

increasing the seating capacity from 500 to 800. "It will be good to be able to fit more people comfortably, especially for Friday chapel. And to make performances more accessible, as far as ticket sales go. I'm glad that we're able to connect and cater to diverse interest groups on campus."

The shift to Good Shepherd Chapel for worship services has been a common discussion point on campus, as everyone adjusts to the new location. "In terms of chapel and other worship services, I'm so delighted to be up there," said Olivia Thaelke, junior. "It's definitely a different feeling from the big auditorium type place that is the CUC. It's nice to feel so close in worship and then to also experience God's beautiful creation. The space is just more intentionally set to have the worshiper focus on God and what He's doing there. I almost wish we could always do chapel in Good Shepherd even if it means that we have to set out chairs everyday (which I've been doing) but I have the privilege to get people connected to chapel life."

"I also like the chapels being up on Good Shepherd," said Jackson. "I was worried that it would be a barrier to people attending chapel, but so many people have been attending, and it's been a great place for community building, as a nice safe haven and place away from classes to be able to worship."

Thaelke did comment on the specific impact the change has had on her as a musician. "As an organist the lack of access to the CUC has been a bit of a hassle. I enjoy practicing organ and playing on the CUC organ was my favorite practice spot. I now have to be super intentional about getting up to Good Shepherd to practice. It will certainly be a test of self-control this semester."

"[Overall] it's made me realize that I am not the only puzzle piece in the picture. There are so many others and it's beautiful to see it all work together!" said Thaelke. Concordia plans for Vision 2025 to be realized by the school's 50th academic year in 25-26. To find out more about the initiative, contribute to the cause, and view images of the new designs, visit cui.edu/giving/vision-2025.

The Writing Studio welcomes new voices and a new semester

MADISON ZUNIGA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

As papers and assignments start filling up your schedule, one of the best ways to help manage the academic weight is to visit the Writing Studio, found on the top floor of the Schroeder Library. The Writing Studio employs undergraduate consultants from across campus that support the student body with all things writing-related, and this semester, three new voices have been added to the mix.

Junior English major Ellie Harris, junior English and Theatre major Camille Beeson, and sophomore Economics major Matthias Bruggeman have all joined the 24-25 Writing Studio Staff, and they shared their perspectives on the Writing Studio experience.

"As a student, I appreciated how talking with a writing studio consultant helped me understand how a reader experiences my writing," said Harris. "It's easy to start overthinking during the writing process, so being able to discuss how my writing comes across and how understandable my ideas are is super useful. I'm also much less likely to experience writer's block when I brainstorm with a friend!"

"I first used the writing studio my first semester at least in part because it was required, but I rediscover every time I visit how useful these 45 minute sessions can be for honing my writing in novel ways that are still very much mine," said Bruggeman. "This isn't tutoring, and honestly, we don't necessarily know more than you do. We consultants are your peers, equipped with a specific set of tools to help you hone your writing."

"Our goal is to give writers the tools they need to produce work that fully represents themselves," said Beeson. "As a double major in Theatre and English I adore storytelling, and believe that God has given each of us a story to tell! I am most looking forward to helping others tell their own stories, and equip others to confidently express their perspective."

"I think most people assume that tutoring services and the Writing Studio exist as a support just for people who are struggling in their assignments or who are struggling in their grade," said Zoë Litzenberg, Assistant Director of the Writing Studio. "The secret of our services are that we exist for all students at

any point in their writing process, whether they're working on class material or not. Really good writers know they need people invested and engaged in their writing in order to succeed, and we offer that for free, all the time."

"Last year I participated in Tier two of the Presidential Academic Showcase," said Beeson. "As the deadline approached I knew I needed as many eyes as possible on my paper. The Writing Studio pulled me out of my brain, and helped me to analyze my writing from an aerial view. That perspective gave me the tools I needed so I could shape the paper to reach a larger audience."

"As Writing Studio leadership, we make an intentional choice to hire a diverse body of consultants," said Litzenberg. "We like to have consultants that are involved on campus, [and] students who have lots of interests. For example, we have consultants who are majoring in art and business, who are majoring in theatre, and in science. Rather than just one type of person our consultants embody just how diverse our campus is, and the many different disciplines and interests that one can have."

"I'm always excited to continue involving excellent amazing people in our services, and all three of our new consultants are friendly, well-spoken, thoughtful and hardworking," said Litzenberg. "They're people that I would want to work with for my own writing, and people that I would trust to work with any type of writing. They're all really fun!"

"Don't be intimidated to visit the Writing Studio!" encouraged Beeson. "We are in the same spot that you are! Your writing and thought process blesses me and all of our consultants. I am so excited to grow because of your work, and learn more about who you are along the way."

Find the Writing Studio and Tutoring Services space on the top floor of the Schroeder Library, and visit cui.edu/studentlife/writing-studio/make-an-appointment to book your meeting with a consultant or tutor. Email Professor Kristen Schmidt at kristen.schmidt@cui.edu or Zoë Litzenberg at zoe.litzenberg@cui.edu for questions.



PICTURED ABOVE: New consultants Camille, Matthias, and Ellie in the Writing Studio
Photo courtesy of: Zoë Litzenberg

Concordia kicks off WOW with new student move-in

REBEKAH MICHEL

ARTS AND REVIEWS EDITOR

Embarking upon the new school year, Concordia began Week of Welcome, or WOW, with New Student Move-In on Aug. 16. Amongst the Target bags, tool kits and toilet paper, new freshmen students moved into their new dorms in Chi Rho or Sigma, with the help of other Student Leaders, P.A.L.s and faculty.

“I was especially impressed with the move-in process. Thanks to the help of the student leaders and even athletes, I only had to make one trip from my car to the dorm... I immediately felt like I was in a comfortable place that would soon become home away from home,” said freshman Audrey Kaufman.

The first days and even hours of WOW are intentionally crafted to ease the move-in process and to

allow for students to bond with new friends and RA's. “WOW weekend was such a wonderful experience because there were a plethora of opportunities to meet people and become comfortably acclimated to the changes that come with college. The faculty and student leaders that were present exhibited a great sense of care and enthusiasm for new students,” said freshman Alannah Batty.

With events ranging from Late Nite, Throwdown and After Parties in the residence halls, WOW is a result of countless hours put in by student leaders and faculty. However, the long shifts in the days prior always pay off as move in day and WOW allow for students to form new friendships and to settle in before the first day of classes.

“I met some of my first friends at the events and by the time the first day of school rolled around, I already felt like I was part of the campus and community,” said freshman Maddy Chatwin.

No Week of Welcome is complete without the efforts of RES and their student RAs. For freshman RA Grace DeJongh, move-in day is one of the most stressful yet exhilarating days of the entire year. “It didn't feel real until the freshmen moved in. It's not just like I put your name on your door. Now I have a face to your name and I get to build this relationship with you,” said DeJongh.

Before the new students move in, all of the RAs arrive early on campus to receive special training on what to expect and what the year

holds for their respective halls. “We as RAs went into student leadership training for about a week and a half... once Friday hit and all of the freshmen moved in, it such a great time,” said DeJongh.

The efforts of the RES staff to successfully organize an efficient and positive new student move day are certainly not ones to go unnoticed, as move-in day sets the first impression for the rest of students' time here at Concordia. Thanks to all of our student leadership, 2024 WOW and student move-in day was another triumph and example of Concordia equipping students to be fantastic and dependable leaders for new Golden Eagles.



PICTURED ABOVE: Students at Late Nite
Photo courtesy of: Elise Schult



PICTURED ABOVE: RA Grace welcomes new students
Photo courtesy of: Elise Schult



PICTURED ABOVE: Freshman families with Marty
Photo courtesy of: Elise Schult



PICTURED ABOVE: Isa and Mac's PAL team at Throwdown
Photo courtesy of: Elise Schult

Music Bootcamp gives new students a headstart on their studies

REBEKAH MICHEL

ARTS AND REVIEWS EDITOR

On Aug. 13, the music wing of the Borland Manske Center (BMC) was full of this year's newest class of music students. Kicking off the program that is known as Music Bootcamp, freshmen and transfer students spent three full days meeting faculty, participating in placement exams and auditions and building friendships among each other.

Led by the Music Department faculty, Music Bootcamp is a specialized program that is designed to ease the adjustment from participating in high school music studies to a collegiate level of musicianship. "We want music students to thrive at Concordia. The purpose is getting incoming freshmen in the right place to set them up for success. A portion of our time is making sure that they are in the right music theory or aural skills class so that they don't feel overwhelmed," said Dr. Christian Hauser, Director of Music Education.

Taking place before the events of WOW, students in Music Bootcamp attended sessions depending on their area of concentration along with other sessions such as 3D listening in the BMC recording studio. In addition, Music Bootcamp students took part in ice breaker activities such as scavenger hunts around the music building, "get to know you" Kahoot games and leisurely fun at the Laguna Beach Art Museum and the beach.

"One of the other main purposes of bootcamp is to create a culture, build relationships, build connections and for students to find their people. That's part of the reason why the first thing we do is the scavenger hunt... When students have a goal and they are working together, this builds

instant camaraderie," said Hauser.

As one of the most rigorous and time consuming majors at Concordia, the first year of being in the music program presents its own set of unique challenges such as time management, scheduling individual practice time and avoiding mental or physical burn out. "I had to learn how to schedule time to do everything, including eating and resting. You need to take care of yourself," said senior Commercial Music major Kaitlyn Bills.

The sense of community and mutual support is very evident in the Music Department from both students and faculty. Even for upperclassmen music students, the sense of belonging and encouragement found in the department keeps them going, even during the long rehearsals and hours spent in the practice rooms. "Once you find your people, they are going to be able to help you get through the hard times and the long nights of studying," said junior Commercial Music major Amy Held.

The Music Bootcamp program provides a helping hand in the process of becoming acquainted with the department while also creating memories amongst students that will last them even into their upperclassmen years. "My favorite memory that I had was the night that we all met each other. Everyone just wanted to jam. We played music and having that community moment before we all separated into our respective things was really cool," said Bills.

For more information about the Music Department or Music Bootcamp, contact Dr. Hauser at christian.hauser@cui.edu or visit cui.edu/arts/music.



PICTURED ABOVE: This year's Music Bootcamp students enjoyed an outing away from the practice rooms, at the Laguna Beach Art Museum. Photos courtesy of: Dr. Hauser

Concordia Theatre Department kicks off their 2024-2025 season

REBEKAH MICHEL

ARTS AND REVIEWS EDITOR

With the beginning of the school year arriving earlier this month, Concordia's Theatre Department diligently prepares for its newest season of excellent productions. Amongst student-move-in and returning from summer break, the Theatre Department wasted no time in its efforts for the year, as the first show, "The Trojan Women" by Euripides, is set to open on Sep. 6 and continue performances until Sep. 15. Beyond performances of "The Trojan Women," there is excitement throughout the department for this year's season.

During the department's annual kick off meeting on Aug. 22, students got to learn more about the upcoming musical "She Loves Me," directed by Susanna Vaughn. Opening in November, "She Loves Me" provides a heartwarming romantic comedy of unexpected pen pals to lovers. "She Loves Me" is going to have such a beautiful set and costumes. With the talent and people that we have working on that show, the aesthetics are going to be unmatched," said sophomore Nicole Kramer. Kramer is a Theatre and English major

from Phoenix, Arizona and is currently playing Athena and a Chorus Member in "The Trojan Women."

Looking ahead to spring 2025, the Theatre Department is set to produce a comedy entitled "Over the River and Through the Woods" at the end of January, and a modern drama "Wings" opening in March. "Over the River and Through the Woods" is a charming comedy about family dynamics, growing up and how we embrace change. "I'm looking forward to being involved in something that is comedic and light-hearted while still having a central message, like 'Over the River,'" said Kramer. On the contrary, "Wings" takes an introspective look into the head of a former stunt pilot who experiences a life-altering stroke.

From Italian family dinners in "Over the River and Through the Woods" to tackling the tragedy of medical strokes in "Wings," the Theatre Department plans to offer another season of diverse storytelling across multiple genres. "Our department is dedicated towards providing sixteen genres of shows throughout the four years, just so you become exposed to as many kinds of shows as possible. For audiences, it is

really good to see the variety of shows that we have because it emphasizes how creative and capable our department is," said senior Isabella Mangahis. Mangahis is a Theatre major with a double emphasis in Acting and Directing as well as Design and Technical Production.

For new students, the adjustment to collegiate theater can be rather overwhelming or daunting, with musical auditions right around the corner. However, returning students and faculty of the Theatre Department are dedicated to creating a positive atmosphere for all students to take part. "I think that it's important to really have confidence in yourself and what you can bring to the table while also doing your best to maintain an attitude of humility in knowing that there is so much to learn," Kramer said, adding, "That was the central theme of my freshman year."

While the actors, technicians and designers prepare for performances, the essential component of theater is the audience members. This year, the Theatre Department invites all students, staff and faculty to see all of the performances this season and to get students involved in

various ways. "Whether you are a Theatre major or not a Theatre major, if you are ever interested in learning about our department, feel free to take classes, audition or try tech," said Mangahis.

Concordia students can

reserve one free ticket for any theater performance by using the code CUISTU at checkout. For more information on the Theatre Department season, or to purchase tickets for an upcoming performance, visit simple.tix.com.



PICTURED ABOVE: This year's theatre season includes works from guest director and adjunct professor, Susanna Vaughn, pictured here. Photo courtesy of: Rebekah Michel



PICTURED ABOVE: The Theatre Department prepares to launch their 2024-2025 season with "The Trojan Woman" opening on Sept. 6. Photo courtesy of: Rebekah Michel

Women's volleyball welcomes head coach Eryn Leja-Martin

EVA PREWITT
SPORTS EDITOR

Women's volleyball has been preparing for an exciting season, after welcoming a new coaching staff led by head coach Eryn Leja-Martin. Leja-Martin graduated from Concordia in 2012 with a Master's in Coaching and Athletic Administration and returns to Concordia after leading Vanguard and Saint Katherine to a collective 212 wins as head coach.

"Coaching is what I was meant to do," said Leja-Martin, who is joined alongside her sister, Alex Leja, as assistant coach. This season will mark the duo's ninth year coaching together. During those years, they have become an unbreakable team that continues to strengthen and complement each other's abilities as coaches. "I think what's really special is I was also her college coach. She knows me better than anybody and has the experience of playing for me, what I would expect from a player, how to perform, and what it means to play in my program," said Leja-Martin.

Leja-Martin said, "I'm really proud of the staff we've been able to bring in...we have four other really strong women that are part of this, Alex included, that I can already tell are the perfect personalities for this group and for me to help guide this group."

Senior captains and stellar athletes Kennedy Farley and Kawehi Chang will help drive the Golden Eagles toward success this season. "Coach Eryn and her coaching staff have made the transition very easy," said Farley. "They are such a great fit for the culture we have already

built as a team, but they also add so much value and bring their own ideas that make us better."

This team has been focusing on creating an unbreakable foundation that will strengthen them throughout the season. "To me right now, volleyball is important, but it's kind of secondary to the heartbeat of this team and who we are," said Leja-Martin. "What we are building on right now when there are no games, no stats, no win-loss record, is what will create longevity to get through the next three months."

Leja-Martin said, "Who can we always revert to and say, 'This is our team, this is our culture, this is our standard, and this is our heartbeat,' and that's never going to change throughout the course of the year. Volleyball is a product of that."

Farley echoed these values, saying, "In our first weeks of the season, we have talked a lot about who we want to be as a team and what we want to be known for. Everyone contributes to our culture and it's really great for keeping everyone accountable."

As the Golden Eagles welcome a new coaching staff, the returning athletes welcome a large freshman class of eight to their roster. As the only seniors on the team who have been

part of the Concordia women's volleyball program for four years, Farley and Chang strive to lead this team with excellence.

Chang said, "I am focused on leading this team with a positive mindset that will also push my teammates to compete to the best of our abilities. This starts with building our team culture off the court, which will translate into our gameplay."

The Golden Eagles are fine-tuning their skills today, Fri., Aug. 30, and tomorrow, Sat., Aug. 31, as they face CSULA and San Marcos for preseason scrimmages. Before diving into conference play, this team will look toward hosting the annual, three-day Golden Eagle

Classic tournament in the CU Arena starting Thu., Sept. 5.

Women's volleyball will be a team to look out for this fall. "We have big goals this season, and we are determined to work hard and do the small things that will make us successful," said Farley.

To review the women's volleyball schedule and save the dates, visit cuigoldeneagles.com and follow @cuiwvolleyball on Instagram for more behind-the-scenes information on our Golden Eagles.



PICTURED ABOVE: Head coach Eryn Leja-Martin
Photo courtesy of: Eva Prewitt

Bring your school spirit and support the Golden Eagles

EVA PREWITT
SPORTS EDITOR

Classes are back in session and Concordia Athletics are in full swing. Grab your calendar and school spirit and make sure you don't miss out on all these season openers.

Starting off full speed ahead is cross country with their season opener on Fri., Sept. 6 racing in the Irvine Invitational at Great Park. The women will start their 6k at 8 a.m. and the men will follow their finish, starting at 9 a.m. to compete in the 8k. More information about the course and location is available at cuigoldeneagles.com.

Women's soccer will make their debut after finishing last season with multiple record-breaking streaks and finishing with an astounding 13-3-2 record. The Golden Eagles will face off against San Bernardino for the home opener on Fri., Sept. 6, at 6:30 p.m. If you miss the home opener, the Green and Gold will stay on home turf to compete against Dominguez Hills on Fri., Sept. 13 at 6:30 p.m.

Men's soccer will look toward their home opener on Sat., Sept. 7 facing The Masters at 4 p.m. Make

sure to show your support at home because the Golden Eagles will travel down to San Marcos for their next game on Wed., Sept. 11.

Women's volleyball will be hard to miss as they host the three-day Golden Eagle Classic tournament in the CU Arena. They will begin day one, Thu., Sept. 5 by facing Colorado Christian at 7 p.m. On Sept. 6 they will play at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. against Northwest Nazarene and Alaska Fairbanks. To close out the last day, the Green and Gold will compete against Dominguez Hills at 7 p.m. Before conference begins on Sept. 19, women's volleyball will also travel north to San

Francisco for the East Bay Classic on Sept. 13 and 14.

Men's water polo will be at UC San Diego in La Jolla for the annual Triton Invitational tournament to mark their regular season opener. They will face a lineup of DI schools including UC Santa Barbara, UCLA, Stanford and UC Irvine on Sept. 7 and 8.

Show our fall sports some love and bring your roommates, your Concordia gear, Green and Gold face paint and your loudest cheers to pack these student sections and get rowdy.

Men's soccer strives to excel under new leadership

EVA PREWITT

SPORTS EDITOR

Men's soccer has been battling through preseason scrimmages and training toward the start of their regular-game season on Sep. 7, leading up to conference. After finishing 5-5 in the PacWest last season, the Golden Eagles are focused on making changes and putting in the work necessary to come out on top this Nov.

Concordia soccer recently underwent coaching changes in the spring. Previous assistant coach, Erik Kirsch has been with men's soccer since 2015 and has stepped up to fulfill the role of head coach this season.

With this change in leadership, this team is doing what they can to surpass their opponents and shift

focus to the team culture. Justin Nodarse, who is playing his fourth year with the Golden Eagles said, "We needed to rebuild our foundation on what we want to accomplish and what kind of legacy we want to achieve. We needed to set and establish a new standard through our program that echoes who we are. This meant that our trainings were specifically curated to help us become fit, play the brand of soccer we want to play and most importantly bond as a team."

This transition has helped motivate the Golden Eagles toward a commitment to excellence in all aspects. "Our preseason training this year has looked much

different than it has before. We've been putting a huge emphasis on being in sync with each other both on and off the field," said junior, Joseph Panetta. "Coach Kirsch has really been getting us dialed in and pushing us to believe that we really can achieve anything with this team."

Coach Kirsch is leading these men with faith and confidence in their talent and abilities. "The biggest thing that stands out about this team is our vision. From day one as a program, we had one goal in mind and that was to win a national championship and league. You can truly sense the belief from the entire program and the drive to make that happen," said Nodarse.

In his sixth season competing for the Golden Eagles, graduate student Wyatt Burris is leading as

team captain. Nearing the end of their preseason scrimmages, Burris said, "The team did really well incorporating the things we've been drilling in training leading up to the games and it's set up a great baseline for us to build off of for the games that count towards qualifying us for our postseason aspirations."

As the Golden Eagles come together and refine their play, Burris said, "Something that stands out with this team is the potential we have as a group and the work ethic guys are showing to be great and realize that potential."

Men's soccer capped off their scrimmages on Tuesday against Chapman and will look toward Sep. 7 for their home opener against The Master's.



PICTURED ABOVE: #21 Justin Nodarse looking toward Coach Kirsch in a team huddle
Photo courtesy of: Eva Prewitt



PICTURED ABOVE: #9 Kevin Sanchez and #11 Jonathan Moreno battle against IVC to gain possession
Photo courtesy of: Eva Prewitt

Athlete Bible Study kicks off the school year

EVA PREWITT

SPORTS EDITOR

Athlete Bible Study, familiarly known as ABS, celebrated the start of the school year with their kick-off event last Wed. Aug. 21. ABS creates an environment on campus for student-athletes to make connections with fellow athletes, explore and deepen their faith.

A typical night attending ABS starts off with a fun, upbeat game or activity to get to know your peers and bond over the shared interest of competition. Following the game, a devotional is shared by one of the leaders. Then the group will break into small-groups to further discuss the devotional. These small groups initiate connection and the option to open up and share personal stories, thoughts or beliefs within the small-group.

Olivia Highstreet is a senior on the women's beach volleyball team. Highstreet has attended ABS since her freshman year, then became a small-group leader and is now the ABS Coordinator. Highstreet said, "I have deeply enjoyed watching ABS grow and being an active member over the last four years."

"Our mission is 'Making Disciples of Every CUI Generation,'" Highstreet said, "Our vision is to bring together the athletes across our campus that want to grow in their relationship with God. Athlete Bible Study provides space for our athletes to build community over a common desire for a relationship with God and learning how to invite God into their athletic journey."

ABS leader, and a junior on the women's lacrosse team, Jessi Borton said, "My favorite part about ABS is the small group setting where we sit down with a couple friends and discuss the devotion. Everyone tends to get pretty vulnerable, and it's so amazing to hear how God is working in their individual lives. Everyone has their own story, and once we break down those walls, we become like a family."

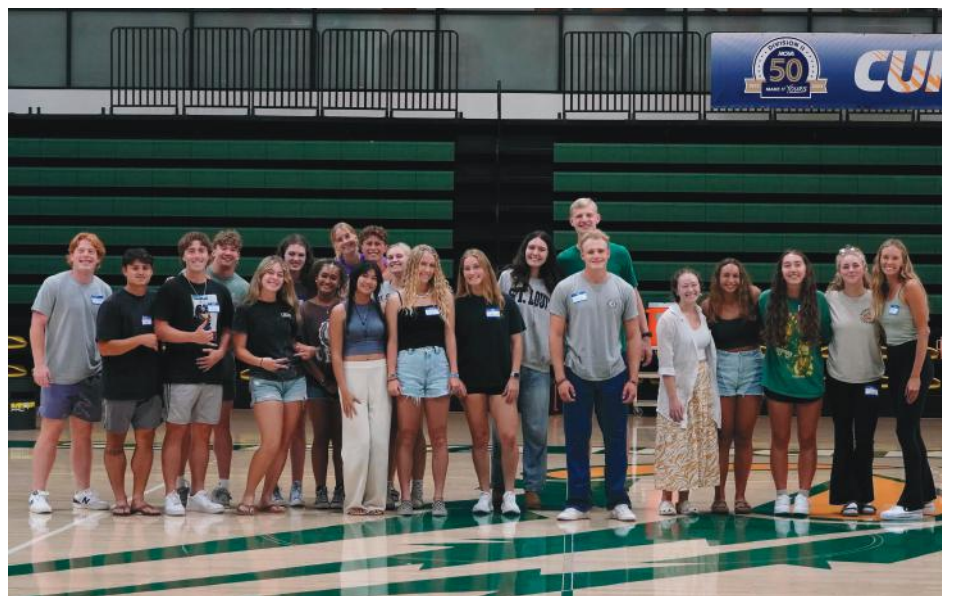
Borton said, "To me, ABS is an important environment to have on campus so that the athletes can attend a Bible study and feel like they can belong to a group. With athletes from different sports attending every Wednesday, they are able to meet new friends and build a community in Christ—

while all having something in common."

You do not need to have a previously established faith to attend ABS, as the group welcomes all athletes with open arms regardless of background or previous faith experiences. Highstreet said, "The best part of leading Athlete Bible Study has been the opportunity to come alongside fellow Concordia athletes and meet them where

they are in their faith journey and grow closer to the Lord with them through our shared experiences."

"ABS cultivates an amazing community that welcomes everyone and provides a place of belonging to all," said Highstreet. ABS is held in the CU Arena, in the Eagles Nest, every Wed. night from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. The ABS crew would love to see you there!



PICTURED ABOVE: Athlete Bible Study leaders and attendees pose for a group photo
Photo courtesy of: Eva Prewitt

Your next off-campus adventure

RYN CASTEEL
ONLINE EDITOR

Looking for some new places to visit and celebrate kicking off the new semester? Look no further. Orange County is filled with a series of fun and reliable locations to participate in year-round, whether that be on your own, with your family, or with any number of your friends. Whether you have a car, a bike or just your own two feet, these spots are sure to be of access.

Just shy of a mile from Concordia, Tanaka Farms sits on 30 acres of land in the midst of Irvine. It is composed of an interactive farm, a market stand and a seasonal pumpkin patch and animals. This 2024 season, Tanaka Farms will be hosting its annual Pumpkin Patch. The Pumpkin Patch and Fall Harvest season opens Sep. 14. Here, you can pick out your own pumpkin, enjoy wagon rides, arts and crafts, a corn maze, barnyard animals and even pick out your own vegetables.

Hours of operation vary, with Mondays through Sundays being 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., until Oct. 4, where the patch will then be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Prices also vary depending on the day of the week. Weekend admission is \$22 a ticket. For more information on hours, costs, and activities, visit tanakafarms.com.

A 20-minute drive from campus will land you at Irvine's vast and multifaceted Irvine Regional Park. Admission per vehicle to the park is \$3 on weekdays and \$5 on weekends. Here, you can find a well taken care of facility that is filled with walking and running trails, picnic spots, a zoo and a large pond as the centerpiece. The park is open from the hours of 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

There are a variety of amenities to indulge in, including fishing, renting a bike, barbecues and more. The OC Zoo is also located within Irvine Regional, where anyone can experience the wildlife for an admission fee of \$2 a person.

The zoo is home to animals who were injured or not able to be released back into the wild.

There is an abundance of opportunities here for spending some leisure time in the outdoors without committing to a long trip into a scenic and remote area. For more information regarding Irvine Regional Park, visit the website ocparks.com.

If you're opting for a good cup of coffee and a delicious brunch with a stunning view, Parakeet Cafe might be for you. This coffee shop is about 25 minutes from campus, perched right above the water in the Crystal Cove shopping center. The cafe opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 7 p.m., open seven days a week.

Parakeet is home to both a broad food and drink menu, with many in-house specialty items to choose from. Brunch is served all day. The food menu consists of dishes such as overnight oats, açai bowls, the charcoal waffle, green scrambled eggs, shakshuka, a variety of loaded toasts, soups, salads, the surfer burrito and so much more. Many of these choices are unique to the café.

For drinks, items such as the iced mint latte, lavender matcha latte, blue magic latte, mushroom cacao chai, moon milk, the mango bliss smoothie, cold-pressed juices, as well as a traditional selection of teas and coffees and additional options, are available at this Newport location.

Grab a drink or a bite to eat and choose to dine in, with the option of both indoor and outdoor seating, or even perhaps take it to go and enjoy a stroll along the paved sidewalk that lines Pacific Coast Highway. This will grant the opportunity of a beautiful view of the ocean as it dances and shimmers beside you.

For more insight and details, visit parakeetcafe.com and select the Newport Beach Cafe location.

The 2024 Paris Paralympics deserves an audience too

RYN CASTEEL
ONLINE EDITOR

As the Paris 2024 Olympics came to a close, there were many remarkable feats to reminisce and dwell on. Athletes from all over the world came together to show off and go toe to toe with one another for an Olympic title.

However the excitement isn't over just yet. The Paris Paralympics started Wed., Aug. 28, and will be happening until Sun., Sep. 8. Here's what you need to know!

This is the 17th time the Summer Paralympic Games will be taking place. Just like the 2024 Summer Olympics, the Paralympics will be held in Paris, France. There are a whopping 549 medal events happening over 22 sports, and around 4,400 athletes from all over the world that will be participating. Some of the sports to look out for include wheelchair basketball, para archery and sitting volleyball.

There are many ideas that may come to mind when asked about the Paralympic Games. Senior Dustin Berger, a kinesiology major and member of the Golden Eagles' Cross Country team, said, "When I think of the Paralympics, I think of the track athletes that run with prosthetic legs. It's inspiring to me as an athlete myself to see others overcome their potential disadvantages."

When asked about the teams he's interested in watching compete, Berger said, "I'm looking forward to seeing Team USA and Italy compete this time around. I have family from Italy."

Just like the Olympic athletes of Paris, the Paralympic athletes who place in the games will be receiving medals with a piece of iron from the Eiffel Tower. In addition, the medal design includes distinct touch features, with both engravings and Braille.

The Paralympic athletes are known for their hard work and impressive performances on the track, on the court, in the pool and on the field. But what sets this competition apart from the Olympics and the Special Olympics, are

the variety of impairments that athletes are impacted by. Athletes may live and compete with impaired muscle power, limb deficiency, ataxia, vision impairment, and cognitive impairment, among many other conditions. The Paralympics has a heavy focus on physical disabilities.

"When I see that these athletes can do the same things as those without disabilities, it shows me that there's no room for excuses. The Paralympic athletes train just as hard, if not harder, and have the determination and drive to persevere. I want to be the same way," said Berger.

The Paralympic Games will be broadcasted on a series of NBC networks, but they can also be watched via Peacock and the Paralympic YouTube channel. For further information and consistent updates, you can go to olympics.com.



PICTURED ABOVE: Student athlete Dustin Berger
Photo courtesy of: Ryn Casteel

MARTY THE GOLDEN EAGLE IN: The End in the Beginning


<p>At the CU Center Ruins</p>	<p>I thought I'd find you here.</p> 	<p>Ancient Marty the Eagle</p> 
<p>The CUC is gone, and my era is over. It's your turn now, young Marty. Stay golden...</p> 	<p>Oh this'll be easy. I'm just gonna</p> 	
	<p>HAVE FUN GRADUATING IN THE GYM LOL!</p> 	<p>Good thing I love basketball!</p> 

Photo courtesy of: Dylan Arant