

SPRING
2025

LAKELAND

THE MAGAZINE OF LAKELAND UNIVERSITY

VOLUME 16
ISSUE 1

EXPERIENCE - 7

NURSING - 2

ALUMNI - 16

COVER STORY - 8





Musical MUSKIES

We might not have 76 trombones or 110 cornets, but throughout the institution's history Lakeland has boasted outstanding faculty and talented student-musicians.

From the organizing of the first band in 1892 to the founding of the Muskie Pride Marching Band in 2018, Lakeland/Mission House has a rich music tradition that is alive and well today.

The **Lakeland University Marching Band** brings school spirit alive across campus and at Taylor Field. As we grow, it is time to add to the stock of marching band uniforms and update other equipment.

Please consider a gift to keep the music alive on campus by giving to the LU Marching Band.

To make a gift in support of the LU Marching Band and other programs, visit online at **LAKELAND.EDU/GIFT**



LAKELAND

Spring 2025, Volume 16

Lakeland, the magazine of Lakeland University, is distributed to alumni and friends of Lakeland by the Communications Department. We welcome feedback and letters to the editor via email to: gallianettidd@lakeland.edu

LAKELAND UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Lakeland University educates individuals of diverse backgrounds, preparing them to think critically, to communicate effectively, to succeed professionally, and to lead ethical, purposeful and fulfilling lives. Rooted in the values of the United Church of Christ, Lakeland integrates the liberal arts and experiential learning to develop the whole person for success in a dynamic, multi-faceted world.

PRESIDENT Beth Borgen, DBA, MBA '11

EDITOR David Gallianetti, Director of External Relations

GRAPHIC DESIGN Breanna Rae Weber '15 MSLOD '19, Graphic Designer

PHOTOGRAPHY Breanna Rae Weber and Jeff Kernen Photography

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Clip the mailing label from the cover and send it with changes to: Alumni Office, Lakeland University, W3718 South Dr., Plymouth, WI 53073 or email to: gallianettidd@lakeland.edu

ATTENTION POSTMASTER

Please return any pieces that cannot be forwarded that include a new address. If you are unable to forward a piece and there is no new address available, please discard the magazine. Thank you!

2 Vital Signs

Lakeland has launched a new bachelor of science in nursing degree and it's quickly becoming one of the institution's most popular majors.

7 Spreading the News

Lakeland is launching an exciting new marketing campaign that highlights all the academic, work and other experiences that set LU apart for prospective students.

8 Working Toward 175

As higher education endures great changes nationally, Lakeland has introduced several new majors and programs to position the institution for future success.

16 Whatever Happened To...

Weddings, babies, promotions, retirements, awards – learn the latest about Muskies from throughout the years.

*Copyright © 2025 Lakeland University. All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.*





LU’s new nursing program answers the call

For many children, getting vaccinations can be a traumatic experience. Not for Caitlyn Pernsteiner.

The Lakeland sophomore, one of the first students to enroll in Lakeland’s new nursing program, recalls being fascinated by her doctor visits.

“I always loved going to the hospital,” Pernsteiner said. “All of my appointments I would watch them give me shots. I always thought ‘I want to do that when I am older.’”

When Lakeland decided to partner with Moraine Park Technical College last summer to offer a bachelor of science in nursing degree, it had students like Caitlyn Pernsteiner in mind.

Beginning last fall, students could simultaneously enroll at Lakeland and MPTC on their way to earning an associate degree in nursing from MPTC and a bachelor’s in nursing from Lakeland in four years.

Along the way, students will supplement classroom learning through clinical placements via MPTC’s partners and unique to Lakeland’s Cooperative Education program, by working in related jobs which will rotate students between a number of nursing specialties allowing them to explore future career specializations.

Nearly 50% of female prospective students who inquire about Lakeland – students like Pernsteiner – ask about nursing, so the partnership fills a void.

The program is attracting plenty of attention from prospective students. Since launching the degree, the major has rocketed it into Lakeland’s top five in-

demand majors.

Lakeland nursing students can engage in Lakeland’s residential campus experiences including athletics, music and theater experiences, Greek life, service learning and study abroad opportunities.

That’s music to the ears of Pernsteiner, of Arpin, Wis., who was a volleyball standout at Marshfield High School. She wanted to continue playing volleyball in college, and considered numerous schools, including several that had nursing programs.

She settled on majoring in biology with a health science emphasis at Lakeland and playing for the Muskies and head women’s volleyball coach Ryan Schopf. She came to LU knowing she would need some additional schooling after graduating to become a nurse.

When Lakeland announced the new nursing program, Pernsteiner was contacted by Kerry Hamm, an RN and director of Lakeland’s nursing program. Pernsteiner quickly switched her major.

“It’s perfect,” she said. “I’ll be able to graduate with a nursing degree with all the people in my class.”

Pernsteiner will start MPTC classes this fall while also playing her junior volleyball season as a key member of the team. She is an accomplished student who won a Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference Scholar-Athlete Award as a freshman and was named to the College Sports Communicators NCAA Division III Academic All-District Team.

“Coach has really helped me not worry about how my schedule will work and taken the stress off, which is really helpful,”

Pernsteiner said. “He has my back, which is nice.”

This summer will mark two years as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) for Pernsteiner, who worked at Marshfield Medical Center last summer.

After graduation, she hopes to start as an RN in labor and delivery like her sister-in-law and role model, Brittany. In the future, she’s interested in exploring a role as a nurse anesthetist.

“(Brittany) tells me stories about her job and it clarifies what I want to do,” Pernsteiner said. “I love working with patients. You get to really know them sometimes. I’m with some of them for weeks at a time, and you see them at their lowest, then in two weeks you get to see them at their best when they leave. That’s rewarding.”

The new program comes at an important time. The Wisconsin Hospital Association’s 20th annual workforce report found that growth in Wisconsin’s nursing workforce is lagging behind the growth needed to meet current and future demand. The report emphasized the need to expand career pathway options to grow Wisconsin’s health care workforce.

Additionally, nursing topped the 2023 list of the most commonly sought occupations in Wisconsin based on number of job postings.

“MPTC is a perfect partner because our missions align in that we seek out innovative partnerships to improve access to degrees,” said Lakeland President Beth Borgen. “In this case, we will build the nursing workforce within our communities.” ❖



Japanese Association enjoys the spotlight

The City of Sheboygan gave Lakeland University's Japanese Association student organization some unplanned but welcome time in the spotlight this academic year.

Sheboygan Mayor Ryan Sorenson and the Mayor's International Committee created a Journey to Japan event last fall to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Sheboygan's sister city relationship with Tsubame, Japan.

The celebration featured a variety of Japanese-themed entertainment and food, including Lakeland's Japanese Association members performing the traditional Fisherman's Dance, Soran Bushi, which the group annually does at Lakeland's International Night.

Junya Funaki, a 2024 Lakeland graduate from Japan living and working in Sheboygan, contacted JA President Kana Nakano about participating.

Their performance was so well received that JA was invited to be part of a second Tsubami celebration event at Uptown Social in Sheboygan. Nakano was paired with longtime Sheboygan resident and celebrated local chef Marilyn Montemayor to do a cooking demonstration of traditional sushi. JA members also helped with a tea and snack serving

and origami experience.

Nakano, of Kanagawa, Japan, graduated with an associate degree from Lakeland University-Japan and transferred to the Wisconsin campus in the fall of 2023. After being named JA president, a goal has been expanding the reach of JA, which has been a very active on-campus organization.

"I really wanted to go beyond and challenge us to do more," said Nakano, a senior majoring in graphic design.

She has also focused on expanding the membership of JA, which has always been open to all Lakeland students but has historically tended to draw mainly students from Japan.

"Most Japanese students are introverted and don't often speak, interact or get involved with people other than other Japanese students," Nakano said. "It's much easier to speak to others using Japanese."

Nakano's goal is to work in an animation studio in the U.S. and she was drawn to LUJ to help make her dream come true. She knew a bit of English before enrolling in LUJ's English for Academic Purposes program, which helps students prepare to study at LUJ and abroad.



"I couldn't understand what my professors were saying, and I could not understand what I could not understand," she said. "It was so hard, but I got through the difficulty and I feel I'm getting stronger."

Nakano has made the most of her Lakeland experience, serving as a Resident Assistant, working in the registrar's office and as graphic designer for the Alphabet Soup club in addition to her involvement with JA.

"Being busy is so fun for me," she said. "I enjoy being swamped. I'm an overthinker, and being busy helps me keep away from over thinking." ❖





Successful Muskies return to share their stories

Current and prospective Lakeland University students heard the experiences of nine accomplished alums during the annual colloquium series held over three days in December.

Visiting alums included:

► Business & Entrepreneurship Colloquium

Curtiss Dokey '22, field auditor for the State of Wisconsin;
Gaby (Cappaert) Jansen '16, senior integrated communications manager at Sargento; and
Ali Wilson '21 MSLD '21, assistant commissioner of the American Rivers Conference.



► Humanities & Fine Arts Colloquium

Clarice Case '20, editor of the Dodge County Pioneer and its sister publications, The Campbellsport News and Kewaskum Statesman;
Riley Jahnke '22, marketing analyst at Bemis Manufacturing Company; and
Tricia Roberts '14, executive director of the Sheboygan Theatre Company.



► Science, Technology & Education Colloquium

Amber (Koenig) Burzych '11, chemistry instructor at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College;
Carl Garner '19, software developer at Masters Gallery Foods; and
Brianna Johnson '20 M.Ed. '23, coordinator of student activities at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.



The alums shared stories about their time at Lakeland and how they maximized their Lakeland experience to position themselves for post-graduation success.

The annual colloquium events invite prospective students to Lakeland to hear from the graduates as part of a day that also includes interviews for Lakeland scholarships. For current students, the events provide an opportunity to interact with Lakeland grads to build their networks.

The panelists collectively emphasized the importance of mentorship, getting involved and embracing the numerous opportunities that Lakeland offers as chances to grow. They encouraged students to step into experiences that might feel uncomfortable, as those moments often lead to the most valuable learning. ❖

Experiences fuel LU campaign

In today's highly competitive higher education landscape, institutions must continually innovate to meet the evolving needs of students who expect more than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Since our founding in 1862, Lakeland University has pushed the status quo of what an education can and should look like. We recognize that no two student experiences are the same, and we are committed to providing an education as unique as each individual.

Whether a student is a recent high school graduate, a working adult balancing career and family or someone looking to finish what they started, students should have the freedom to shape their college experience.

This spring, Lakeland is launching a campaign that highlights that commitment to customization, showing how Lakeland puts students in control of their education. As part of this initiative,

in early April, Lakeland will introduce a unique tool designed to simplify the college search process.

By answering just a few questions, prospective students will receive curated content tailored to their interests and how they want to experience college – eliminating the need to sift through the entire LU website searching for relevant content. No other institution is offering anything like this, and we're proud to continue to lead the way, making it easier for students to realize if Lakeland is the right fit.

At Lakeland, students choose how they take classes—online, in person or a mix of both. They can participate in a variety of extracurriculars, study abroad, engage in research, earn credit for work experience or transfer credits from a technical college or prior coursework.

In a crowded marketplace, standing out requires more than just offering programs – it's about delivering an experience that is personalized, flexible and built around each student's needs. ❖



WORKING TOWARD 175

Dear Readers,

As we enter the second half of this decade, these are challenging times for higher education. Schools of all sizes, public and private, are facing a variety of issues as people question the value of a college degree. Closures and mergers of universities across the country continue to accelerate. There were an average of two per month in 2023, one per week in 2024 and projections of two per week this year.

What's fueling this shift?

- 53% of the students who experienced a closure did not re-enroll in another school.
- 46% of parents hoped their child would do something other than attend a 4-year college after high school.
- In 2020, 71% of surveyed high school students planned to attend a 4-year college. In 2023, that dropped to 52%.
- Several of the Wisconsin state system campuses have announced closure. The UW System is projecting a \$60m deficit.
- Two private colleges in the state have closed (Holy Family, Cardinal Stritch), and a third (Northland) will close at the end of this academic year. Several others have announced deficits, significant budget cuts, layoffs and program closures.

Lakeland University is not insulated from these challenges, but, buoyed by our mission, we are meeting them head on. This institution was founded by innovators, and we have a proud tradition of entrepreneurialism and innovation. We are using those skills to make sure this is a time for growth and evolution. We understand that the status quo won't work in this climate and we are taking swift action to ensure long-term stability.

» In the next several pages, I'm proud to share with you several of the partnerships and programs that have Lakeland well positioned as we work toward our 175th anniversary in 2037.

With our Cooperative Education program, which allows students to earn up to 25% of their degree through work, complementing what students are learning in our classrooms, a Lakeland education and the connections we are creating for our students has never been more relevant.



Beth Borgen,
President

» We announced a four-year nursing bachelor's degree program in partnership with Moraine Park Technical College.

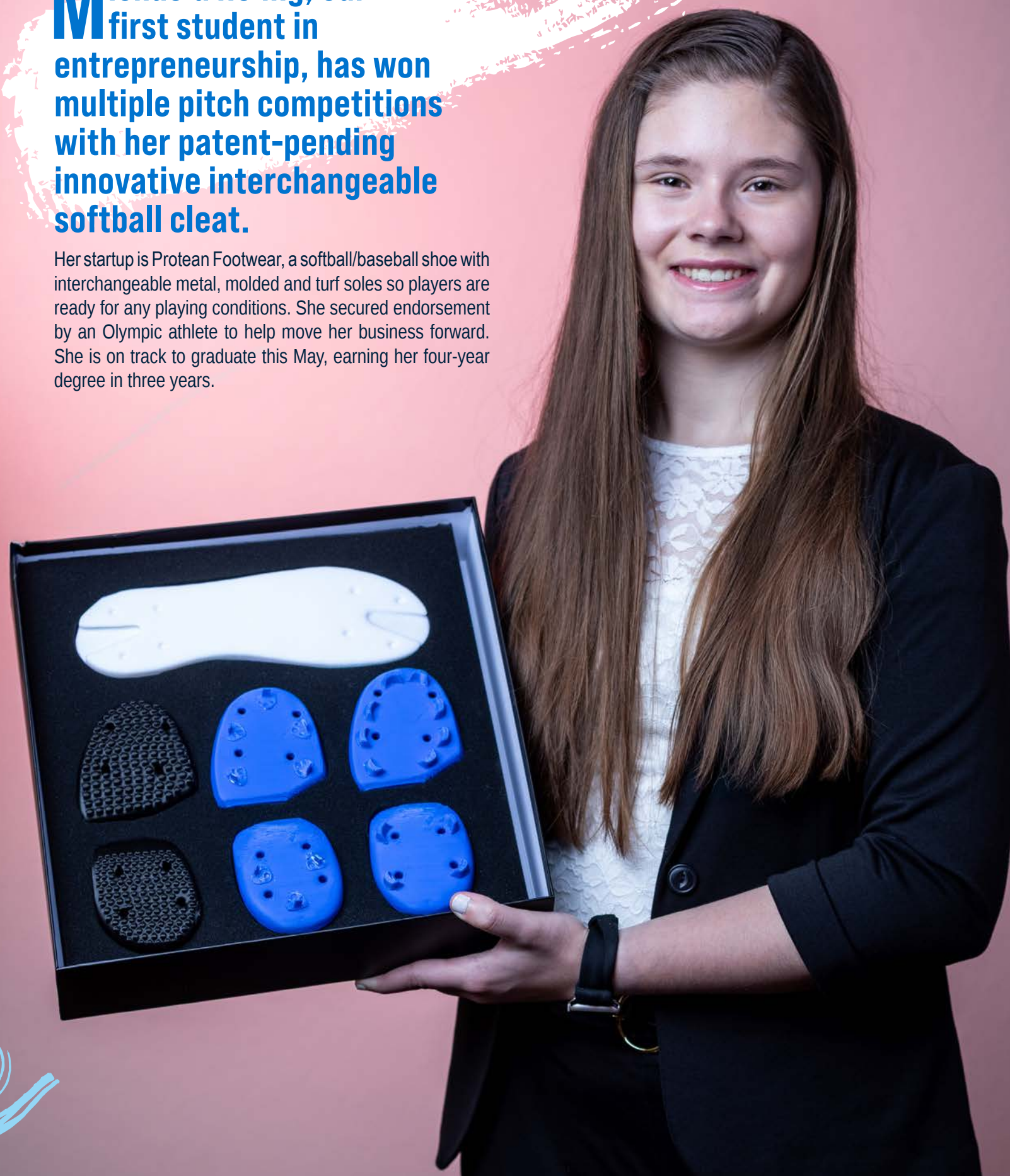
Hands-on classroom instruction, laboratory practice and clinical nursing experiences are offered at MPTC, conveniently located in Fond du Lac, Wis., just a short shuttle ride away. Students will gain real-world skills through clinical rotations at top healthcare agencies in the area, preparing them for a successful nursing career. Check out the story about Caitlyn Pernsteiner, one of the program's first students, in this issue.





» **Michaela Heling, our first student in entrepreneurship, has won multiple pitch competitions with her patent-pending innovative interchangeable softball cleat.**

Her startup is Protean Footwear, a softball/baseball shoe with interchangeable metal, molded and turf soles so players are ready for any playing conditions. She secured endorsement by an Olympic athlete to help move her business forward. She is on track to graduate this May, earning her four-year degree in three years.



» **We welcomed six new students into our Life & Career Studies program, a residential program for students with intellectual disabilities.**

In its second year, the program is building an exceptional reputation for supporting students who are often not able to experience college. The program provides a complete college experience for young adults between the ages of 18-25 who have an intellectual disability. The program focuses on four areas: academics, employment, independent living and community engagement.

Cyril Hedman (pictured), of Milwaukee, Wis., is pursuing a certificate with a history and literature focus. He would like to work at a museum or music store after his LU experience. He's enjoyed being part of the school play and seen improvements in his grades since coming to Lakeland. "The LCS program has changed my life positively and I have gained professional relationships," he said.





» **We opened a new co-location at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay, Wis.**

Lakeland is now located on technical college campuses in Appleton, Janesville, Marshfield, Waukesha and Wisconsin Rapids, allowing graduates of those institutions to seamlessly earn their bachelor's degree at a campus that already feels like home. Our tradition of educating non-traditional learners that was founded in 1978 is alive and well.

» **We launched an engineering technology completion program in partnership with regional employers and the technical college system.**

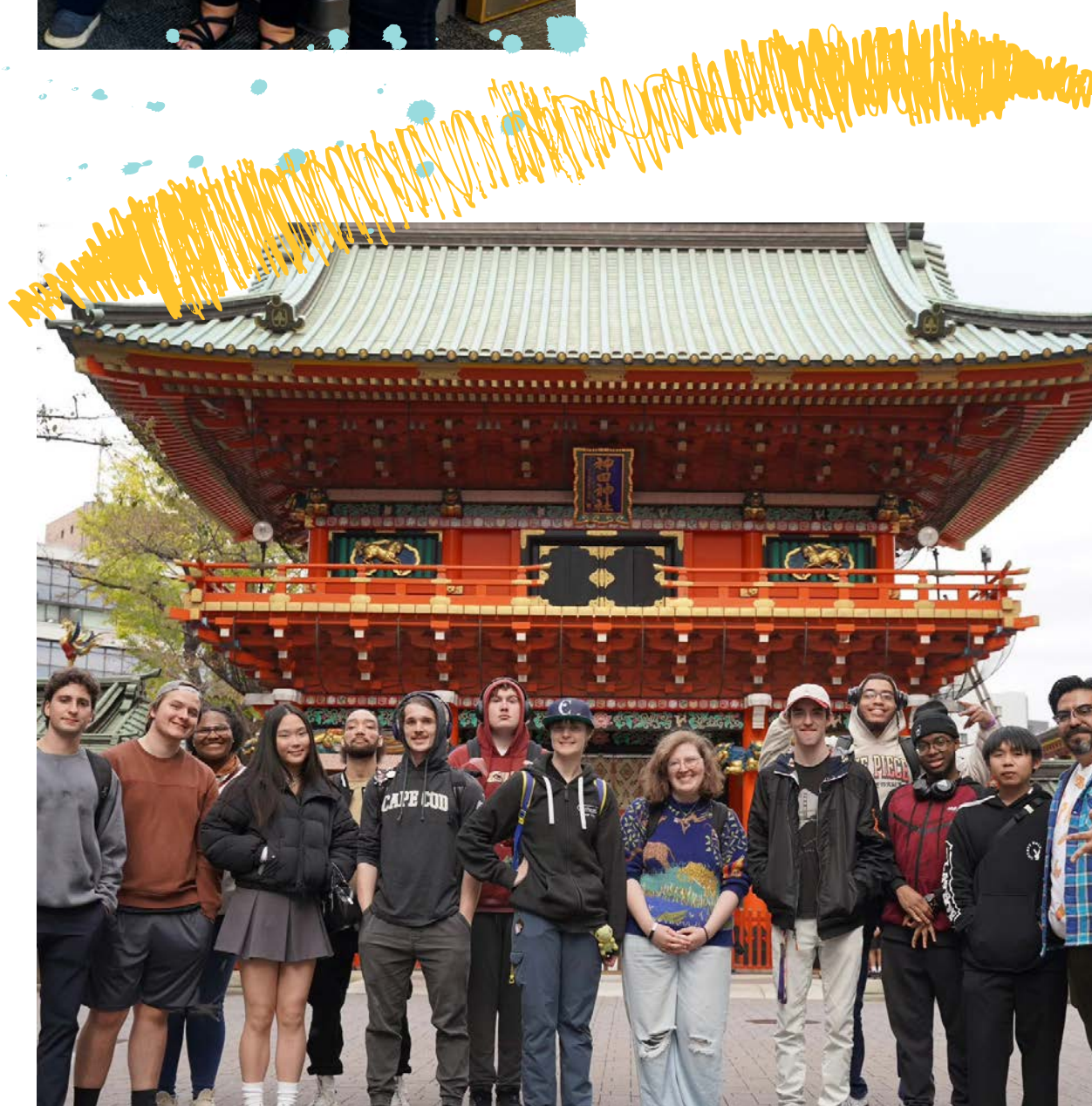
Lakeland's bachelor of science in engineering technology is for students with an associate degree in engineering, engineering technology, industrial engineering, manufacturing engineering or a closely related field. As more companies approach their employees in this field about new roles, Lakeland's program equips those employees to acquire the skills needed to make those transitions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a growing market for engineering technologists between 2022 and 2032, with 188,000 positions needing to be filled annually across the United States.

» **We celebrated the success of our first year of dual enrollment partnership with the Sheboygan Area School District – ensuring every student has access to earn college credit in high school at no cost to the family.**

Nearly 900 students earned more than 5,000 college credits with a value of more than \$2 million. "Students and parents frequently share how the dual-credit program not only better prepares students for their next step following graduation but also saves them valuable time and money when attending college upon high school graduation, allowing them to graduate from college in a timelier manner with less tuition expense," said SASD Superintendent Jake Konrath.



SHEBOYGAN AREA
SCHOOL DISTRICT



» **Our campus in Tokyo, Japan, is a global destination.**

Approximately 400 students are enrolled in Tokyo hailing from more than 40 countries. Much of that growth is thanks to expansion of LUJ from a two-year to a four-year institution, as well as opportunities for students to study abroad in the U.S. at Lakeland's Wisconsin campus or at the Virginia Wesleyan University campus, a partner institution based in Virginia Beach, Va. Additionally, Tokyo, which is rated the safest city in the world, is a premier destination for students at our main campus to study abroad. ❖

Much to celebrate at HOMECOMING '24

Alumni flocked back to campus on a beautiful fall weekend last October to celebrate Homecoming.

The festivities started on Friday night as **LU inducted five standout athletes and one coach into its Athletic Hall of Fame.**

The class included:

- Theresa Falk '03, volleyball.
- Ryan Maiuri '06 MAC '08, football.
- Alli Weiss '08, soccer.
- Adam Sutter '10, wrestling.
- Justin Ward '14, basketball.
- Pete Rogers '04, M.Ed. '08, wrestling coach.

Saturday kicked off with a service in the Ley Chapel followed by a brunch where **LU honored three individuals and inducted the class of 1974** as the newest members into the Emeritus Club.

Membership into the esteemed Emeritus Club is limited to alumni with a Mission House or Lakeland College graduation date of at least half-a-century ago.



Lakeland celebrated the 1968, 2009 and 2014 conference championship football teams, and this year's **Muskies delivered a 42-21 football game win.**



Individual awards went to:

Professional Achievement Award: Mike Kertscher '17: Mike Kertscher brings an unparalleled depth of knowledge to his role as Road America's president and general manager. Under Kertscher's leadership, Road America has thrived as a premier motorsports destination, attracting renowned drivers and enthusiastic fans from around the world. His commitment to upholding industry standards and best practices ensures that Road America remains at the forefront of the racing community.

Outstanding Recent Alumni Award: Alayne Krause MSL0D '19: Alayne Krause is the county administrator for Sheboygan County, where she has worked for over a decade. During that time, she has had the unique opportunity to work in five different departments giving her a comprehensive understanding of the organization. She was recognized as a Top 10 Young Professional of the Year by the Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce in 2023.

Richard C. Preuhs '65 Award: Deb Buffington '03: A Lakeland employee since 1997, Buffington took on a key leadership role at a critical time for the university. In 2022, Lakeland's CFO and controller left to pursue other job opportunities, and Buffington agreed to take the interim controller role. She was promoted to director of application services and controller in July of 2022, then was promoted to vice president of finance and operations & CFO the following year. She retired in April of 2024.

Homecoming weekend wrapped up with a special "Power of 3" celebration of the many contributions to the institution by President Stephen Gould, the late Prof. J. Garland Schilcutt and the late Rev. David Lauer. It was organized by members of the Class of 1974. ❖

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THIS OCTOBER 18
FOR THE 2025 HOMECOMING CELEBRATION!**



ALMA MATTERS

Submit your news about employment changes, marriages and babies to advancement@lakeland.edu.

1963

Judy Bredeweg, of Bolingbrook, Ill., served as the grand marshal of the 59th Pathways Parade themed "Bolingbrook - Beyond the Stars," recognizing her efforts in preserving Bolingbrook's history.

1973

Irv Kaage, of Park Ridge, Ill., recently published his first book titled "Extra! Extra! My Route from Newsboy to CEO." It is available on Amazon and includes tales from his time at Lakeland along with stories from his professional career and travels to 38 countries.



Mike Okray, of Stevens Point, Wis., retired after a distinguished 27-year career in the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point athletic department. Over the years, Mike served in various roles, including the first golf

coach, first co-ed trapshooting instructor, games management director and UWSP mascot. His dedication and contributions were recognized with numerous awards, including the Sturgis Award for Excellence in Job Performance, the highest honor at UWSP.

Gary Spielman, of Beaver Dam, Wis., was the longest serving member of the Beaver Dam School Board serving for over 30 years.

Stan Zoller, of Buffalo Grove, Ill., was



honored as the first recipient of the Candace and John Bowen Adviser First Amendment Leadership Award. This prestigious award recognizes his long-standing dedication to supporting and defending student journalists and their advisers at various levels.

1980

Elizabeth Oberreich, of Plymouth, Wis., recently retired as a junior underwriter at National Exchange Bank & Trust. Before joining the bank in 2005, she worked as an underwriter for various financial institutions. She continues to reside in her hometown of Plymouth, enjoying her retirement.



1982

Robert Keebler, of Green Bay, Wis., has been named on the Forbes 2024 America's Top CPAs list.

1991

Jim Arkens MBA '03, of Yuba City, Cal., was promoted to vice president of human resources, education, and talent acquisition at Antelope Valley Medical Center.

1994

Rev. Brian Damrow, of La Grange, Ill., has accepted a call to serve as senior pastor at First Congregational Church of La Grange, Ill.

1995

Barb LaMue, of Green Bay, Wis., was named to the 2024 Wisconsin 275 list, published by BizTimes Milwaukee, which honors the state's most influential business leaders. Barb's visionary leadership in economic development and her ability to foster collaboration have made her a standout figure in Wisconsin's business community.

1996

Staci Schluechtermann, of Random Lake, Wis., recently took on a new role at BDO USA as a senior manager in their tax automation & innovation practice. In her position, Staci leads projects focused on transforming tax processes for clients, including establishing a master data foundation, automating tax calculations and streamlining tax reporting.

1997

Tony Call, of Phoenix, Ariz., was promoted to lead all IT applications operations management at General Dynamics Mission Systems.

Kevin Krutzik, of Howards Grove, Wis., began his role as superintendent of the

Southern Door School District on July 1. With 19 years of experience in education, he has been active in the community and overseeing the completion of several major projects, including a new indoor turf gym and greenhouse.

Jamie Schramm MBA '10, of Grafton, Wis., is the new director of programs and development for the Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce.

1998

Leslie Laster, of Plymouth, Wis., obtained the certification Leading Change from FranklinCovey.

2000

Dale Kooyenga, of Brookfield, Wis., was named to the 2024 Wisconsin 275 list, published by BizTimes Milwaukee. This prestigious honor highlights his impactful leadership and contributions to Wisconsin's economic and business landscape. A seasoned professional with a dynamic career in public service and business, Dale was noted for exemplifying the power of innovative thinking and dedication to community growth.

2001

Jennifer Weber, of Plymouth, Wis., began a new position as associate director of compliance - audit & training at Sargento.

2005

Mark Edmond, of Sheboygan, Wis., was recognized as one of Wisconsin's 40 Most Influential Black Leaders for 2024. He currently serves as the executive director of the Family Service Association of Sheboygan.

Mark Welch, of Green Bay, Wis., has recently joined Bank First as vice president of retail loan underwriting. Mark brings over 25 years of experience in the mortgage industry to his new role where he will lead efforts to enhance loan processes and improve customer experiences. Outside of work, Mark is a committed supporter of the United Way and the Salvation Army.

2007

Rodney Ellison, of Kohler, Wis., has started a new position as studio manager at Bold Cycle, part of Kohler Hospitality.

2008

Danny Ehnert, of Sussex, Wis., has been named dot product leader at Sudoc.

Wendi Ludwig, of Kronenwetter, Wis.,

completed her master's degree at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Rachel (Young) Petrie, of De Pere, Wis., has been named creative director at Baker Tilly US.

2009

Zach Buchman, of Waterford, Wis., began a new position as loan partner at Novus Home Mortgage.

Travis Chell, of Woodruff, S.C., was appointed as the associate commissioner for communications at Conference Carolinas, an NCAA Division II league based in Greenville, S.C. The conference currently comprises 15 member institutions and 30 sports, with plans to expand to 126 members by the 2025-26 academic year.

Ben Kosewski, of Frostburg, Md., was appointed as the next president and CEO of Lorain County Health & Dentistry. Ben brings over a decade of experience from Mercy Health, where he led the oncology service line, and previous roles include executive director of Cancer Services at UPMC Western Maryland.

Kory Theil, of Grand Forks, N.D., director of property operations with The Tailwind Group, married Elizabeth Dornfeld in March 2023 and their daughter Millie was born on January 1, 2025.

2010

Jacob Heinemeyer MAC '15, of Sheboygan, Wis., was named head varsity baseball coach at Appleton West.

Clarissa (Dimel) Reis, of Fort Wayne, Ind., was promoted to director of philanthropy at the Fort Wayne Zoo.

Amie Mae Wentz MBA '15, of Menasha, Wis., director of brand management at Emmi Roth, has been instrumental in rebranding and doubling the company's business model. With over 20 years of success in sales and branding, Amie has also served as an adjunct MBA professor at Lakeland since 2020. Her career spans roles at Johnsonville LLC, Kimberly-Clark, and GSK, and she is the founder of the Women's Network Forum within the Wisconsin Grocers Association.

Sara Willadsen, of Sheboygan, Wis., began a new position as senior graphic designer at Bemis Manufacturing Co.

2011

Carlea Liermann, of Brillion, Wis., welcomed her baby boy, Hayes Lodde Lonergan, on Aug. 2, 2024.

Jodi Schneider, of Centerton, Ark., began a new role as international compliance manager at Grande Cheese in June 2024.

2012

Tom Seaworth, of Rockford, Ill., married Ashley Igo on July 27, 2024.

Dan Wilk, of Brown Deer, Wis., began a new position as senior cardiometabolic educator at Novo Nordisk.

2013

Tiffany Diven M.Ed '24, of Sheboygan, Wis., a teacher at Sheboygan North High School, was awarded the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English (WCTE) Award for Diversity and Inclusion.

Ka Lee, of Sheboygan, Wis., was awarded the 2024 ATHENA Young Professional Leadership Award and was honored at the Sheboygan County Chamber ATHENA Leadership Awards for her impactful work and dedication to her community.

James Trazille, of Milwaukee, Wis., received his doctor of business administration (DBA) degree from Concordia University-Wisconsin. He celebrated this milestone at Lakeland, where his academic journey began.

Amanda Western MBA '22, of Sheboygan, Wis., recently began her new role as compensation manager at Grande Cheese Company.

2014

Tess (Myklebust) Anschutz and her sister, **Lauren Myklebust** '23, are keeping their family legacy alive by running Sognefjord Winery in Baraboo, Wis., celebrating their Norwegian roots and family history.

David Green, of Dallas, Texas, joined the Dallas Trinity FC as the director of sales for the new professional women's soccer franchise.

Cody Lemke, of Plymouth, Wis., started a new position as senior financial analyst at Johnsonville.



Several members of the Class of 1973 got together at the Log Cabin in Howards Grove last year to share some food and fellowship. It was also a reunion of the Lakeland College Trap Team, including (from left) Don Cerra, Craig Nelson, Larry Wisman and Mike Okray.



ALMA MATTERS

Ramsey Riehl, of Appleton, Wis., started a new position in sales at Core4 Technologies.

2015

Kurt Jansen, of Howards Grove, Wis., was promoted to senior recruiter at Sargento.

2016

Le'Shay Guy MAC '20, of Sheboygan, Wis., was appointed executive director of Habitat for Humanity Lakeside. She is eager to lead this vital organization, known for its commitment to strengthening the community.

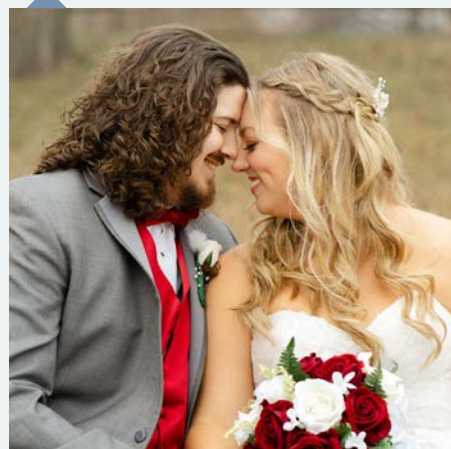
Gaby (Cappaert) Jansen, of Howards Grove, Wis., was promoted to senior integrated communications manager at Sargento.

Rev. Emma Landowski, of Brown Deer, Wis., was installed as pastor and teacher at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Summer Larzelere, of Lily, Wis., started a new position as senior tax accountant at Ardent CPA.

Brooke (Aiazzi) Miller and her husband, Joe, of Chandler, Ariz., joyfully welcomed their baby boy, Maverick, in December 2023.

Stephanie (Burgardt) Schoenfeld, of Cedarburg, Wis., married Adam Schoenfeld in December 2023 and she started a new role as a service coordinator at Rite-Hite in March 2024. The couple celebrated the birth to their son, Becket Allyn, on Jan. 9, 2025.



Mirko Tadic was appointed head of football at Club Deportivo San Sebastian.

Marie Wamsley, of Cuba City, Wis., was named the new CEO of Memorial Hospital of Lafayette County, bringing 18 years of healthcare leadership experience to her role.

2017

Connor Clark, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis., obtained his Commercial Pilot Land Single Engine Certificate. He is working toward becoming a certified flight instructor.

Kaitlyn Kenealy, of Fond du Lac, Wis., was honored with the prestigious Trailblazer Award by the International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP). As the founder of Kenealy Counseling, LLC, Kaitlyn is recognized for her pioneering work in psychotherapy and her dedication to promoting mental health awareness. She received the award at the IAOTP Annual Awards Gala in Nashville.

2018

Greg Berken, of De Pere, Wis., was promoted to senior vice president – finance at Bank First. Since joining Bank First in 2011 as an internal auditor, Greg quickly transitioned to the finance department, where he has made significant contributions.

Callie Delisi, of Oak Forest, Ill., started a new position as digital project manager at DCI Marketing.

Brittini (Scoles) Montgomery, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis., and her husband, JJ Montgomery, celebrated the birth of their daughter, Jaycee Mary, in April 2024.

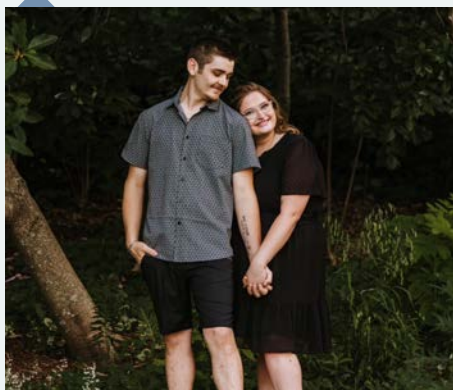
Eric Nygaard, of Riverton, Utah, started a new position as controller at Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Specialists (OSMS).

Michael Whitley was promoted to offensive coordinator for the Benedictine University football program.

2019

Corey Allen started a new role as a Talent Acquisition Specialist at Axxess, a software company located in Dallas, Texas.

Danielle Chismarick, of Morris, Ill., is engaged to Mark Ecklor and planning a wedding for October 2025.



Tali Coleman MSLOD '20, of Austin, Texas, recently marked one year as a logistics account executive at Total Quality Logistics.

Ryan Frankel, of Palatine, Ill., is a teaching assistant at Vernon Hills High School.

Carleigh Johnson, of Appleton, Wis., started a new position as labor analyst at Oshkosh Defense.

Jordan Johnson MSLOD '20, of Oshkosh Wis., is a real estate agent with CENTURY 21 Ace Realty.

Karley (Campbell) Sonneburg, of Sheboygan, Wis., an administrative coordinator for the Sheboygan Fire Department, was married on Aug. 3, 2024. The ceremony was officiated by Lakeland Chaplain Julie Mavity Maddalena in a personalized outdoor setting, with many Lakeland friends in attendance to share in the celebration.

Jared Nummerdor, of Milwaukee, Wis., recently started a role with IRS - Criminal Investigation. He earned the title of special agent after his graduation from Federal Law Enforcement Training in June 2024.

2020

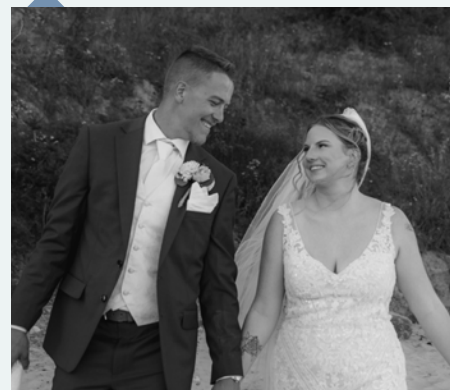
Shyanne (Koski) Barrington, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis., and her husband welcomed their first child, Elaina Lyn Marie, on March 4, 2024.

Natalie Bova, of Chicago, Ill., started as onboarding specialist at J.P. Morgan.

Cailyn Branback, of Kingsford, Mich., started as a purchasing associate at Pierce Manufacturing.

Mitchel Larsen, of Green Bay, Wis., is pursuing a career in medicine as a medical student at the Medical College of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Austin Tanck and Tracey (Sery) Tanck '22, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis., were married on Sept. 27, 2024.



2021

Tralese Campbell-Rivers MSLOD '23 and Larry Rivers III MSLOD '23, of Sheboygan, Wis., were married on June 7, 2024. The couple first met during their freshman year in 2017. Tralese is currently serving as a correctional officer at Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution, while Larry works as an account manager at Ansay & Associates.



Olga Casian MBA '22, of Sheboygan, Wis., began a new position as project manager for Rockline Industries.

Janai' Farr, of Racine, Wis., was named a licensed professional counselor-IT at Professional Services Group, Inc. Last spring she graduated from Carroll University with a master's degree in behavioral health psychology.

Michelle Percudani, of Mount Pleasant, Wis., started as a therapist at Interconnections S.C.

Mason Prunick MBA '22 and Kassidy (Murphy) Prunick MAC '22, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis., were married on Aug. 17, 2024. Mason is a member of Lakeland's football



coaching staff, and Kassidy is an adjunct instructor for Lakeland.

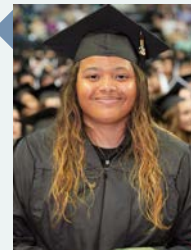
Kayla Potter-Becker, of Sheboygan, Wis., started as branch manager at Kohler Credit Union overseeing the Sheboygan Meijer location.

2022

Chanel Bradford, of Green Bay, Wis., recently earned her master of science in sport, exercise, and performance psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. She is the founder and operator of Bradford's Mental Performance Consulting, LLC, where she works with clients to accumulate the necessary hours to obtain her Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC) credential.

Christian Chatman, of Detroit, Mich., began a new position as transportation manager II at Amazon Fulfillment Center.

Skylar Garza, of Hartland, Wis., started a new position as the email marketing and communications coordinator at the Wisconsin State Fair.



Riley Jahnke, of Elkhart Lake, Wis., was promoted to marketing analyst II at Bemis Manufacturing.

Dylan Penny, of River Falls, Wis., was promoted to outside sales representative at The Outdoor GreatRoom Company.

Robert Xiong, of Kenosha, Wis., was honored with the National Association of Esports Coaches & Directors' "Best New Coach Award."

2023

Michael Etheridge, of Manitowoc, Wis., was recognized as one of Wisconsin's 40 Most Influential Black Leaders for 2024.

Karen Feld, of Kohler, Wis., was awarded the 2024 ATHENA Leadership Award and was honored at the Sheboygan County Chamber ATHENA Leadership Awards for her exceptional contributions and leadership in advancing women leaders.

Drew Green, of Sheboygan, Wis., was promoted to watersports manager at The Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, Wis.

Haley Rich, of West Chicago, Ill., started a new position as manager, promotions and game presentation with the Lake Erie Crushers.

Lane Sobieski, of Berlin, Wis., completed his master of arts in sport and recreation management from the University of Iowa.

2024

Connor Kramlich, of Sheboygan, Wis., began a new position as a commercial lines underwriter at Acuity Insurance.

Sara Maple, of Fond du Lac, Wis., began a new position as an after-school behavioral counselor for K-12 with the YMCA of the USA.

Mitch Nelson, of Plymouth, Wis., will begin his master of science in sports management at the University of Florida this August.

Rachel Pagel, of Pulaski, Wis., started a new position as an internal communications specialist at Associated Bank.

Kerstin Sauerbrei moved to Indiana to work as a marketing intern with the Fort Wayne TinCaps, the High-A Affiliate of the San Diego Padres, for the 2025 season.

Brandon Uhlean, of Tinley Park, Ill., started a new role in the food safety and quality rotational program at Johnsonville's Global Headquarters. He will be involved with various functional groups, leading projects in FSQ, R&D, sourcing and supply chain. ❖

IN MEMORIAM

Lakeland University has been notified of the following deaths of alumni and friends:

Nona Arlee Suhr '51, of Verona, Wis., on April 3, 2024.
Florine E. Henning '51, of Miller, S.D., on Aug 15, 2024.
Rev. Roger Wentz '53, of Black River Falls, Wis., on April 28, 2024.
Melvin Birkholz '55, of Hartford City, Ind., on March 23, 2024.
Francis Drake '56, of DeForest, Wis., on Sept. 28, 2024.
Philip J. Fischer Sr. '57, of Suring, Wis., on Aug 21, 2024.
Dr. Richard Wilterdrink '57, of Cortland, Ohio, on Oct. 7, 2024.
Doris M. Fritchen '57, of Columbus, Wis., on Oct. 17, 2024.
Judith Ann Taylor '58, of Brookfield, Wis., on July 30, 2024.
Fredric "Fred" A. Seefeldt '60, of West Bend, Wis., on Feb. 22, 2024.
John Van Der Male '60, of Cleveland, Wis., on Aug 3, 2024.
Ann Tallant '61, of Visalia, Cal., on March 18, 2024.
Earl Wessel Sr. '61, of Chiloquin, Ore., on Oct. 25, 2024.
Theone Neumann '62, of Marshfield, Wis., on Feb. 24, 2024.
Nancy Johnson Laguna '62, of West Bend, Wis., on April 7, 2024.
Gerald Louis Chopp (Jerry) '62, of Sheboygan, Wis., on Dec. 20, 2024.
Ulric Wm. "Bill" Wall '62, of Plymouth, Wis., on Jan. 21, 2025.
Sara Smith Brandt '63, of Bethlehem, Pa., on Nov. 19, 2024.
Sandra J. Schupbach '63, of Oshkosh, Wis., on Dec. 5, 2024.
Wayne Schupbach '63, of Lincoln, Nebr., on Feb. 4, 2025.
Samuel Graber '64, of Rochelle, Ill., on Feb. 23, 2025
Robert Myren '64, of Grinnell, Iowa, on April 6, 2024.
Doris Tayse '64, of Sheboygan Falls, Wis., on Oct. 25, 2024.
Wayne Haas '65, of West Allis, Wis., on May 13, 2024.
James Heinbuch '65, of Beaver Dam, Wis., on Jan. 23, 2025.
Ronald V. Scheele '66, of Houston, Tex., on Oct. 1, 2024.
Robert Slattery '66, of Manitowoc, Wis., on May 15, 2024.
Margaret A. "Marge" Smith '66 of Town of Rome, Wis., on Feb. 18, 2025

Bruce Q. Mackey '67, of Fairhope, Ala., on May 21, 2024.
Stephen K. Baseley '71 of Fond Du Lac, Wis., on May 9, 2024.
Phyllis Ann Orth '71 of Manitowoc, Wis., on Dec. 10, 2024.
Helen Limberg '72, of Neenah, Wis., on June 28, 2024.
Kenneth Puetz '74, of Kiel, Wis., on Sept. 20, 2024.
Rev. William "Bill" Klossner '74, of Punta Gorda, Fla., on Feb. 17, 2025.
Barbara Kraemer '75, of Plymouth, Wis., on June 3, 2024.
Linda L. Rasmussen '76, of Altoona, Wis., on Sept. 29, 2024.
Mary Pazaris '77, of Sheboygan, Wis., on July 26, 2024.
Michael F. Maggio '79, of Schererville, Ind., on May 7, 2024.
Thomas Gajewski '81, of Milwaukee, Wis., on Nov. 17, 2024.
Keith Miller '82, of Sun Prairie, Wis., on March 12, 2024.
Jonathan C. Miller '92, of Franklin, N.H., on Oct. 17, 2024.
Jerry Olson '92, of Green Bay, Wis., on Oct. 30, 2024.
Beverly Jean (Olson) Walker '92, of Madison, Wis., on Dec. 20, 2024.
James F. Plamann '95, of Appleton, Wis., on Oct. 17, 2024.
E. Michele Gutierrez, '96, of Kohler, Wis., on March 1, 2024.
Gary Smits '93, of Appleton, Wis., on Nov. 19, 2024.
Carol Jane Revoir '98, of Kimberly, Wis., on March 19, 2024.
Thomas C. Dernlan '99, of Akron, Ohio, on March 19, 2024.
Jaime LaPlant, '99, of Menominee, Mich., on June 8, 2024.
Lynette Wychesit Turney '00, of Keshena, Wis., on Oct. 12, 2024.
Barbara J. Brzoza '02, of Clarion, Pa., on Nov. 17, 2024.
Joseph "Joe" Ritger '04, of Newport, Tenn., on Dec. 6, 2024.
Pamela D. Key '08, of Sheboygan, Wis., on July 24, 2024.
Jessica A. Kugel '12, of Racine, Wis., on April 29, 2024.
Cindy Noyes '13, of Eau Claire, Wis., on Feb. 18, 2024.
Joshua A. Bradford '23, of Menasha, Wis., on July 26, 2024.

Miriam M. (Priebe) Jaberg died on June 19, 2024. She was 88. She attended Mission House College from 1953 to 1955. Her late husband, Eugene C. Jaberg '48 graduated from Mission House Seminary in 1954 and joined the faculty in 1958. While at Mission House they resided in campus housing, where they raised their children, Scott, Beth, and David. Following the merger of Mission House Seminary and Yankton Seminary in 1962, Eugene became a founding member of United Theological Seminary, prompting the family to relocate to the

Twin Cities. As a faculty wife, Miriam actively participated in the seminary community, frequently welcoming students and faculty into their home. After her children left for college, Miriam completed a degree in Human Services and initially worked in the field of child psychology. A job offer at the Asian Fine Arts (AFA) gallery in Minneapolis steered her professional path in a new direction. After leaving AFA, Miriam opened her own gallery selling Asian arts and antiques in Minneapolis until her retirement. The Jaberg family has deep connections

to the institution that date back to the early 20th century. Miriam's father-in-law, the Rev. Elmer C. Jaberg, enrolled in Mission House in 1912, graduated from the academy in 1914, from the college in 1918 and from the seminary in 1921. Additionally, Miriam's brother-in-law/Elmer's son, the Rev. Vernon Jaberg (deceased) graduated from Mission House with a bachelor's degree in 1944 and from the seminary in 1947. Her sister-in-law, Ruth (Jaberg) Grosshuesch (deceased), was a 1954 Mission House graduate. ❖

The Rev. William Klossner '74 died Feb. 17, 2025, following complications from T-Cell Lymphoma. He was a pillar of the communities in which he lived, especially the past 36 years in Punta Gorda and Charlotte County, Fla.

He graduated from Lakeland with degrees in theology and sociology and was a member of the track team. Lakeland is close to the Klossner family. At Lakeland, Bill met his first wife, the former Christine Engebrecht '96, who died in 2014. Bill's brother, Tom, is a 1980 Lakeland graduate, his son, Jacob, graduated in 2000 and Jacob's wife, the former Jenna Kistler, graduated in 2003.

Bill hosted a Lakeland alumni event in Punta Gorda and was a faithful supporter of Lakeland's baseball program during the annual spring break games in Florida, often hosting the team for dinner at his home.

Bill served Wisconsin churches in Bloomer, Janesville and Cleveland, before being called to be the first pastor of the newly formed Congregational United Church of Christ in Punta Gorda. He was also a fixture in the community serving numerous local organizations. ❖

The Rev. Richard D. Leach, Th.D., a beloved Lakeland faculty member for more than three decades, died on October 21, 2024. He was 90. Leach came to Lakeland in 1968 and was named Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Religion when he retired in 1999.

A well-regarded scholar of the humanities, Leach was principal architect of Lakeland's then-innovative and acclaimed programs in the humanities and general studies as well as the honors program. He was named Lakeland's fourth winner of the Underkofler Excellence in Teaching Award in 1994.

A longtime financial supporter of the institution, in 1993 Leach created the Majorie and Richard D. Leach Professorship in Christian Theology and Ethics, which honored his late first wife, Marjorie. The late David Lauer was the first faculty member to hold the title. ❖

Student success is her legacy

Dozens of students benefit from alumna's generosity



Ben Kosewski '09 is just one example of the legacy of Nona (Mani) Suhr '51. Kosewski was recently named chief executive officer-elect at Lorain County

continue as she made plans in her estate to give additional support to Lakeland for the arts (especially music) and LU science programs.

Shortly after Arthur's death in 1982, Nona established the Aruthur G. Suhr Memorial Science Scholarship. Her son, Mark, died two years later, and she renamed her gift the Arthur & Mark Suhr Science and Music Scholarship.

Arthur worked as a science teacher and department chair at Sussex-Hamilton High School and served as president of the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers. Mark was an engineer actively involved in the sciences.

Nona was one of the first music majors to graduate from then-Mission House College in 1951. She worked for more than three decades as a music education teacher and her program was awarded statewide exemplary status. She served her church as choir director and member of the choir, pianist (solo and accompanist), church council and adult programming director.

Nona remained close to her alma mater. She was a longtime member of the Lakeland Founder's Society and a major donor to Lakeland's science and music departments. From marimbas and pianos to a fluorometer and growth chamber for zooplankton, she donated tens of thousands of dollars to purchase new, cutting-edge equipment for the music and science programs.

She reflected on her relationship with Lakeland prior to the institution's 150th anniversary celebration in 2012:

"As I prepare to write a few lines regarding the sesquicentennial of my alma mater, my mind is filled with nostalgia. A Cappella choir, Prof. Ellerbusch, colleagues Don Greibnow and Don Rowlands, Madam Bauer, Hansel and Gretel, many professors, the return of World War II vets to campus and the many good friends I continue to have through Lakeland." ❖

Brotz Foundation grant supports Sheboygan County Scholars

The Frank G. and Frieda K. Brotz Family Foundation has pledged \$500,000 to support Lakeland University's Sheboygan County Scholars program.

Previous Brotz Family Foundation gifts have helped support full-tuition scholarships to more than 35 students who have been awarded entry into the program after meeting rigorous academic standards and completing a competitive application process.

The goal of the program, which was launched in 2014, is to retain some of Sheboygan County's most promising young people and prepare them to assume future leadership positions within the region. All scholars have either graduated or are on track to graduate.

"We believe in the mission of Lakeland University and the Sheboygan County Scholars program," said Brotz Family Foundation President Stuart Brotz. "The program has a proven track record of success, and we are pleased to continue to partner with Lakeland to invest in young people in Sheboygan County to develop tomorrow's leaders."

Kohler Trust grant benefits student-centered programs

Lakeland received a \$365,000 grant from the Kohler Trust for the Arts and Education to fund several student-centered programs and initiatives.

The grant will support Lakeland's Kohler Teaching Scholars program, the Lakeland Promise Program and the Sheboygan County Scholars program.

"The Kohler Trust for the Arts and Education continues to be an important partner for us, and we are grateful for their ongoing support of our mission and programs," said Lakeland President Beth Borgen. "Their investment in our students is helping us create the next generation of leaders and contributing citizens



Pratikshya Bhandari '11 returned to campus to deliver the Opening Convocation address and kick off the academic year.

Bhandari is associate vice president of asset liability management and investment risk at Nationwide Insurance. An active member of the Lakeland campus, the Nepal native graduated from Lakeland with a bachelor's degree in international business with an emphasis in mathematics and economics and won the Clarence H. Koehler Campus Senior Award. In 2016, she generously created the Bhandari Travel Fund, which helps Lakeland students cover the cost of a study abroad experience. ❖

in our region."

Lakeland Promise Program: This program provides qualified Wisconsin students an opportunity to attend Lakeland's residential program tuition/fees free through to graduation. The program was recently expanded to include any students and families in the state with an adjusted gross income of \$80,000 or less.

Kohler Teaching Scholars: Funds will be used to recruit the next cohort of Kohler Teaching Scholars. This program provides scholarship support that, coupled with Lakeland's Co-Op program, creates a unique, competitive pathway to home-grow more multicultural teachers for the Sheboygan Area School District.

Sheboygan County Scholars: This program is

an effort to retain the area's most promising young people and prepare them for leadership positions within the region.

Lakeland, UK school create exchange program

Lakeland University and Cardiff Metropolitan University in Wales, a country in the United Kingdom, signed a partnership agreement creating a wide range of study abroad opportunities for students at both schools.

The agreement allows students from both institutions to participate in exchange programs and learn from leading faculty and experts in the field, gaining cutting-edge innovations and practices in another country, expanding their knowledge and skillsets and positioning them *(Continued on next page)*

LU science students present at national conference

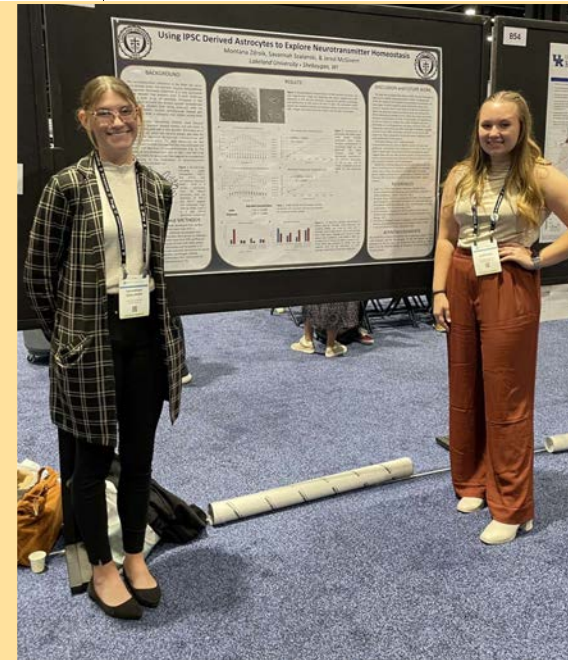
A pair of Lakeland students presented research in the fall at the Society for Neuroscience meeting in Chicago.

Lakeland juniors Savannah Szalanski and Montana Zdroik presented their poster entitled: "Using IPSC Derived Astrocytes to Explore Neurotransmitter Homeostasis." The students worked in the Lakeland Undergraduate Research Experience (LURE) with Associate Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry Jered McGivern, Ph.D. over the summer and this fall.

The team used adult human derived tissues to examine astrocyte uptake of the neurotransmitters GABA and Glutamate. The hope is to be able to utilize these types of cells to better understand the physiology of the system and eventually use it as a model system to understand defects that may cause disease.

Szalanski, of Watertown, Wis., is a biology major with minors in chemistry, Spanish and biochemistry. Zdroik, of Stevens Point, Wis., is a chemistry and biochemistry major.

Lakeland's LURE research program allows students to work closely with a Lakeland faculty member to design a project, conduct all publishable research, troubleshoot, analyze data and eventually present findings at a state or national scientific conference. ❖



to bring back fresh visions and experiences to their home institutions.

The agreement originated through the efforts of Leili Afsah-Hejri, Ph.D., LU assistant professor of chemistry and food safety & quality and program champion of food safety and quality. She leveraged her national and international connections to expand Lakeland's partnerships and collaboration with the food industry and other institutions.

Cardiff Met offers a food science and nutrition - BSc (Hons) degree program, a natural partner for Lakeland's FSQ degree program.

As the schools neared completion of the partnership, both institutions expressed interest in making the agreement institution-wide to include any major.

Initially, the centerpiece of the agreement is the respective food programs for each school. Afsah-Hejri said Cardiff's program has a strong focus on baking & confectionery technologies and innovations, while Lakeland's program focuses on food safety and quality with strong industry partnerships with the dairy and meat sectors.

LU Junior wins statewide business competition

Lakeland junior Erin Rank won the 10th Annual Internship Draft Day, hosted by the Northeast Wisconsin Manufacturing Alliance. She earned a \$2,500 scholarship, announced by Green Bay Packers President and CEO

Mark Murphy, topping a field of more than 250 students.

She placed second in the competition last year and used what she learned in that experience to her advantage. Students participate in interviews with employers – Rank did five – and earn points based on their performance as well as other items like grade point average, campus participation and recruiting peers to attend the event.

The 2024 Lakeshore College graduate from

Manitowoc, Wis., is majoring in accounting and making the most of the programs and services at LU along the way. Rank is earning four academic credits for her work as a client accounting and advisory services intern at CliftonLarsonAllen.

She is also earning two academic credits through a Co-Op role as time management skills coach with Lakeland's Life & Career Studies program, which provides a complete college experience for young adults who have an intellectual disability.

Athletics director enjoying first season with the Muskies

Dan Artamenko, a veteran athletic administrator with a wide range of successful leadership experiences, is in his first year as Lakeland's director of athletics.

Artamenko came to Lakeland after serving athletic director tenures for over a decade at a pair of junior colleges, first at Williston State College in Williston, N.D., and for the past five years as AD at Seward County Community College in Liberal, Kan.

An experienced fundraiser, Artamenko has led numerous facility improvements including a new softball field, indoor hitting facility, multiple LED scoreboards and remodels of existing facilities. He has served in regional leadership positions, including chair for NJCAA D2 Softball.

Prior to Williston State, he served three years as the athletic coordinator of academics and eligibility at Blinn College, Brenham, Texas. He served on the Brazos Valley Football Bowl Committee, which was responsible for creating and hosting a junior college football bowl game.

He has also worked for the NJCAA headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo., for USA Wrestling, the Colorado Avalanche, Denver Nuggets and at Lubbock Christian University in Texas. ❖



Rank will soon be starting a new role as chief financial officer for Launch: Lakeland Student-Run Businesses, which gives LU students the tools and support to create, develop and manage income-generating businesses.

Two longtime Lakeland employees retire

Two longtime Lakeland employees recently retired.

- Patty (Kaestner) Taylor '87, senior director for financial aid and educational funding, retired in December after 38 years of service to the institution.
- Jane Bouche, senior director of recruitment and marketing for the evening and online programs, retired from a full-time position at the end of February after 36 years of service to the institution.

Taylor, who started working for the institution in 1986, was instrumental on a statewide level to push for the Financial Aid Modernization Act, a state law that made it easier for deserving students to sign up for financial aid to pay for school.

Taylor worked tirelessly to educate students and parents, and she challenged the system to better serve those needing aid.

For more than three years, Taylor played a critical role in the 2023 passage of the Financial Aid Modernization Act, which made several improvements to Wisconsin's financial aid programs to support economically disadvantaged students who enroll in college. The changes made Wisconsin's financial aid programs more user-friendly.

In the wake of the 2024 challenges with the new FAFSA platform rollout, Taylor led the creation of a plan to have Lakeland ready to award aid packages as quickly as possible while also communicating with students and families to try and keep them calm.

In 2018, Taylor received The President's Richard C. Preuhs '65 Award which goes to an alumnus who has worked for the university and shown extraordinary commitment to the mission of the university through noteworthy achievements in fostering student success, campus community or stewardship of campus resources.

She was named winner of Lakeland's 2024 Big Fish award in recognition of her

outstanding work in a challenging role filled with deadlines, compliance, precision, management of people and processes, supporting students, families and staff.

Bouche, who previously served as director of admissions and an admissions advisor, recruited and advised countless students for Lakeland and played lead roles in program development. She joined Lakeland in 1989 as a softball and basketball coach after making a name for herself as a successful high school coach and administrator in Green Bay.

In five seasons as Lakeland's head women's basketball coach and eight seasons as head softball coach, she helped position Lakeland's programs among the best in the region.

Bouche was named Lakeland's athletic director in 1993 and led some of the most significant changes in the athletic department's history. In 1997, Bouche helped guide the transition from Lakeland being a longtime member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) to a Division III member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

In 2005, Lakeland opened a dramatic expansion of the Todd Wehr Athletic Center, including a new gymnasium and fitness center. In 2006, Lakeland became a charter member of the Northern Athletics Collegiate Conference. The Muskies won conference titles and made national tournament appearances in nearly every sport during her tenure.

She was inducted into the Lakeland Athletics Hall of Fame in 2014.

LU-Japan teacher authors third book

A new, well-received book by Patrick Parr, a faculty member for Lakeland University-Japan's English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program, entitled "Malcolm Before X" is now available.

Drawing upon interviews, correspondence and nearly 2,000 pages of never-before-used prison records, "Malcolm Before X" is the definitive examination of the prison years of civil rights icon Malcolm X. It is Parr's third book.

"Malcolm Before X" has been named a "Kirkus Reviews" Best Nonfiction Book of 2024 and a Spectator Best Book of the Year.

Parr made several appearances in the U.S. to

celebrate the publication, including Chicago at City Lit Books talking with author Jonathan Eig about the book. Other dates included Montgomery, Ala., at NewSouth Books, and the Harvard Bookstore and Brookline Booksmith.

Those interested can order the book at umasspress.com as well as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Kinokuniya, or Bookshop. ❖



Freshman writing major wins award

Lakeland freshman Nailah Jones presented a creative nonfiction essay in the fall at the Riveredge Nature Center's Student Research Symposium. She won first place in the undergraduate presentation category.

Jones, of Milwaukee, Wis., is majoring in creative writing. Lakeland has the state's only bachelor of fine arts in creative writing program.

Riveredge invites college students to submit an abstract of a current research project to present in oral or poster form at their Student Research Symposium. This year's theme was "Signals, Systems, and Seasons."

Jones was among undergraduate and graduate students from colleges and universities in the region that presented their research. ❖

PIECE MAKER

Lakeland University student Max Wheeler has turned his passion for puzzles into a business.

Diagnosed with Apraxia at age 3, Wheeler, of Appleton, Wis., found puzzles to be a way to relax and build family connections. Inspired to share his love for puzzles, he launched Platypus Puzzles, which includes custom Lakeland-branded puzzles that make the perfect gift for family, friends and fellow Muskies.

Wheeler, a second-year student in Lakeland's Life & Career Studies program, is working toward an academic certificate in business and entrepreneurship.

He audited BUS 150: Pathways to Success, Introduction to Business in spring 2024. He impressed the course instructor, Stephanie Hoskins, with his creative product ideas and his marketing pitch for the Green Bay Blizzard. She invited him to participate in an independent study in entrepreneurship this fall, and Platypus Puzzles was born.

Wheeler and his LCS program academic coach, Lakeland senior Gabe Ascher, spent the fall developing a business plan, researching production and sourcing supplies and went into production.

Lakeland employees were each gifted a puzzle made by Wheeler at the annual Lakeland Christmas gathering, and a limited number were sold through

Musko's Campus Shop with proceeds supporting the LU Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

Wheeler is just one of a growing number of Lakeland students making their mark in the entrepreneurial world, balancing academics while building successful businesses. ❖





W3718 South Drive
Plymouth, WI 53073

Lakeland students learn through amazing experiences. It makes sense... and a lot of dollars for our students.

Our award-winning **Cooperative Education** program allows Lakeland students to earn academic credit working in full- and part-time jobs at Co-Op partner companies and organizations while earning wages to help pay their tuition.

From the program's start in the fall of 2018, Lakeland students have worked in 3,580 placements earning 12,473 academic credits and working more than 668,000 hours. That's an average of more than 35,000 hours per semester with a **total value of \$10 million***!

Co-Op has helped Maddy Rathsack (pictured), of Manitowoc, Wis., **graduate** this May **in just three years** with a bachelor's degree in accounting and no tuition debt. She accepted a post-graduation job with CliftonLarsonAllen in March of 2024 during the second of her three tax season internships at CLA.

**Value is based on students earning an average of \$15 per hour.*

