

February 28, 2025

Dear Faculty and Staff,

What a wonderful taste of spring weather we have been enjoying in Omaha this week after a week of snow and polar cold! I did, however, have the good fortune of being on the Phoenix campus for a couple of days last week and the weather was absolutely perfect. I know that we are all eagerly anticipating the arrival of spring, both in Omaha and in Phoenix, as its abundance of beauty signals opportunities for growth and renewal within each of us.

Celebrating Founders Week

February has been filled with great moments, including Creighton's Founders Week events. Creighton President the **Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD**, delivered his Convocation address in person at both the campuses, highlighting the newly established Government Policy Review Committee, the incredible success the University has achieved through Forward Blue that is allowing continued growth in student programs and facilities, and the addition of two high school tuition discount partners for our Phoenix colleagues.

Honoring Our Award Recipients

Later in the week, we celebrated three amazing women who received the Mary Lucretia and Sarah Emily Creighton Award during the 45th annual luncheon sponsored by the All-University Committee on the Status of Women. Congratulations to this year's recipients: **Jennifer Peter, PsyD**, senior director of Student Counseling Services and the Violence Intervention and Prevention Center; **Regina Taylor, PhD**, chair and associate professor, marketing and management, Heider College of Business; and **Theresa Townley, MD**, course director for Creighton's Institute for Latin American Concern and associate professor, general internal medicine, School of Medicine. What a terrific event as each recipient provided heartfelt comments that were inspiring to all in attendance. Congratulations to these three amazing women.

Upcoming Events to Mark on Your Calendar

We have so much to look forward to in March, including spring break, March 9-16. On Saturday, March 8, Creighton will host the Midwest Student Biomedical Research Forum 2025 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Harper Center, Ahmanson Ballroom. This event offers an opportunity for young researchers from health sciences, graduate, intern and resident programs throughout the Midwest to present their work in the biomedical sciences.

Of course, who can forget March Madness? Our women's basketball team heads to Uncasville

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BIG EAST Men's Basketball Tournament, which begins Wednesday, March 12, in New York City, the conference will host the fourth annual BIG EAST Undergraduate Research Poster Symposium. Creighton will be represented by seniors **Liana Chinen** (mentor **Max Kurz, PhD**, Department of Pharmacology and Neuroscience, School of Medicine), **Nathan Jobalia** (mentor **Jun Xia, PhD**, Department of Biomedical Sciences, School of Medicine), **Zach Onyszchuk** (mentor **James Fletcher, PhD**, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, College of Arts and Sciences) and **Cleo Zagurski** (mentor **Erika Kirby, PhD**, Department of Communication Studies, College of Arts and Sciences) and junior **Alessandra Kakish** (mentor **Juliane Strauss-Soukup, PhD**, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, College of Arts and Sciences). I look forward to seeing our students' presentations and sharing more about the event in next month's edition of the *Provost Digest*.

Please consider joining Fr. Hendrickson and me in celebrating more than 250 of our colleagues during the annual Faculty Staff Service Recognition Ceremony, scheduled at 3:30 p.m. CT on Tuesday, March 25, in the Harper Center, Hixson-Lied Auditorium and via livestream. It is always fun to hear what tidbits of history emcee Mary Ann Danielson, PhD, president of the University faculty and professor of communications studies in the College of Arts and Sciences, shares before the years of service honorees receive their awards. [Registration closes March 18.](#)

Engaging Research and Innovation

The College of Professional and Continuing Education, in collaboration with the Institute for Population Health, is launching an [online course on Human-Centered Design](#) — a problem-solving approach prioritizing collaboration and empathy. Share this opportunity with colleagues and friends interested in driving workplace innovation. Creighton employees, alumni and their families can enjoy a 15% discount. The course begins March 31.

University Research Week annually celebrates students at all levels engaged in research, scholarly or creative projects. This year's event will be held April 1 and 2 in the Harper Center, Ahmanson Ballroom, on the Omaha campus and April 1 in the Doris S. Norton Ballroom on the Health Sciences – Phoenix campus. The events include posters and oral presentations. Watch *Creighton Today* for details.

I also want to make you aware of a new course listing attribute being made available. Departments and faculty will be able to promote courses that include some sustainability content by applying for a "SUST" code to be added to their course description in the NEST. [Read more about designation requirements and how to apply.](#)

Staying Informed on Legislation

Finally, I want to assure you that I am working closely with Fr. Hendrickson to monitor proposed national and state legislation and policies and to assess their potential effects on Creighton's academic and research activities and programs. The Government Policy Review Committee posts [updates on its webpage](#) and in *Creighton Today* weekly. Questions to the committee can be emailed to govpolicyreview@creighton.edu.

each other and our students. Let us continue to engage in meaningful conversations about our shared goals and values at upcoming events and in our daily work.

Wishing you a spring break filled with renewal for mind and spirit. Go Jays!

Open Call for Faculty Associates Program

Creighton benefits-eligible faculty/professional staff who teach, with a passion for teaching and scholarly work, are invited to apply to the Center for Faculty Excellence Faculty Associates Program for 2025-2027. The application deadline is March 7. [Associates will be notified of the award March 28.](#)

University Research Week 2025 Call for Judges – Omaha

Creighton will host its annual University Research Week celebrations on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 1 and 2, in the Harper Center for the Omaha campus. The Health Sciences Campus – Phoenix will host its event on Tuesday, April 1, in the Doris S. Norton Ballroom. This annual event celebrates research across the University, and its success hinges on volunteer judges to assess the students' presentations. Organizers have a call for judges. [Sign up to help judge.](#)

Sandstrom, Bramble and Lohman Publish 4th Edition

The latest edition of [Health Services: Policy and Systems for the Therapists](#) by **Robert Sandstrom, PhD**, professor of physical therapy, **James Bramble, PhD, MPH**, associate professor of pharmacy, **Helene Lohman, OTD**, professor of occupational therapy, offers a comprehensive guide to the U.S. healthcare system and the application of private and government insurance across various clinical practices. Additionally, OT faculty members **Anna Domina, OTD**, associate professor and vice chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy, and **Ashley Fecht, OTD**, assistant professor of occupational therapy, have contributed chapters focusing on the role of therapy services within educational settings.

Kelly Publishes Piece on Rule of Law in *Jurist*

Mike Kelly, JD, professor of law and the Senator Allen A. Sekt Endowed Chair in Law, published a piece in [Jurist](#) that was then [quoted by MSNBC](#).



Feden Joins Creighton as Director of Academic Success

Kristy Feden, EdD, is Creighton's new director of academic success in the Success Center. She brings more than 30 years of experience in advancing equitable learning environments, creating pathways of success for diverse learners and fostering student success. Her expertise includes strategic program development, professional learning facilitation and team development, working with individuals with disabilities and system-wide implementation of multitiered support frameworks. Feden holds a doctorate and a master's degree in educational leadership from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, an educational specialist degree in school psychology from the University of Kansas, and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Silent Ignatian Retreat with Fr. Gillick

[Join the Rev. Larry Gillick, SJ](#), director of the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality, on retreat to deepen your relationship with God as we enter the Lenten journey. The March 13-16 retreat of prayer and reflection will center on God's meeting Abram and three of His Apostles as they are. Cost is \$425 per person, including room and all meals. [See more information and register.](#)

Interprofessional Practice and Education Summit Set in July

The virtual Heartland Innovations in Interprofessional Practice and Education Summit will be July 17-18. Call for abstracts is open through Monday, March 31. Authors are encouraged to submit proposals for posters or oral presentations on innovations and best practices related to health professions education, learning and assessment. [Read more online.](#)

School of Dentistry Named Among Bank of America's 2024 Regional Neighborhood Champions

The School of Dentistry was recently named one of 2024's Neighborhood Champions by Bank of America for the community dentistry and access to oral healthcare it provides in Nebraska. As a regional Neighborhood Champion, the school received \$50,000 and virtual nonprofit leadership training from Bank of America.

Cook's Book Cited in National Standards for Catholic Education

Tim Cook, PhD, professor of education, is making a significant impact in the world of Catholic education. His latest book, *Charism and Culture*, was cited in the second edition of the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools*, published by the National Catholic Educational Association. Cook's publication stands out as one of only four references included in the [revised national standards](#). These new national guidelines will shape the future of Catholic elementary and secondary education across the United States.



Vivekanandan Provides Infectious Disease Expertise

Renuga Vivekanandan, MD, professor and associate dean for clinical affairs in the School of Medicine and chief medical officer at CHI Health, spoke with the [Omaha World-Herald](#) about Nebraska seeing a steep increase in cases of influenza and stomach bugs.

Honor Society Recognizes Do with Annual Lecture Award

The Creighton University Alpha Alpha Chapter of the Rho Chi Pharmacy Honor Society presented its prestigious annual lecture award to **Emily Do, JD, PharmD'06**. Do, a California patent attorney, pharmacist and chief pharmacy officer for San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, is the outgoing director and incoming president-elect for the California Society of Hospital Pharmacists. Do traveled to Omaha to deliver her presentation, "The Power of Possibility: Redefining What's Possible."

Spotlight on Assessment: Upcoming Programs

The Center for Faculty Excellence invites faculty to engage in upcoming programs centering on assessment. Programs will focus on working to align your programs with assessment plans and curriculum maps and using an academic service-learning model. March programs are "Building Successful Assessment Plans and Curriculum Maps" and "Road Goes Ever On: Assessing and Revising an AcSL Course – Lunch and Learn." [Register in Bridge](#). An earlier session, titled "[Assessment Strategies for Student Learning in Competency Based Education](#)," is available on demand.



Zuzenak Presents at International Academic Forum Conference

Kim Zuzenak, EdD, assistant dean for student success in the College of Nursing, presented on the topic of "College Is Not One Size Fits All: A Study of First-Generation, Low-Income, Commuter Students and Their Sense of Belonging" at the International Academic Forum's Education Conference in Honolulu, on Jan. 5, and at the Hawai'i International Conference on Education on Jan. 6.

Fazilatfar Wins New Voices in Dispute Resolution Award

Hossein Fazilatfar, JD, associate professor of law, presented in person and online at the University of Kansas School of Law in January as part of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) New Voices Presentation series. Notably, Fazilatfar won the AALS Alternative Dispute Review Section's New Voices in Dispute Resolution Award for the paper he presented.

Faculty and Staff Inducted into Alpha Sigma Nu

Alpha Sigma Nu, the Jesuit honor society, inducted faculty and staff as members during its February ceremony. Congratulations to **Andrew Baruth, PhD**, professor and director of the Office of Sustainability Programs; **Elizabeth Flott, EdD**, assistant dean of faculty development and associate professor of nursing in the College of Nursing; the **Rev. Eric Immel, SJ**, vocation promoter, Midwest Province; **Amy Keller**, senior program coordinator, University Relations; **Rebecca Murray, PhD**, associate dean and professor in the College of Arts and Sciences; **Marion Russell, OTD**, assistant professor in the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions; the **Rev. Jeff Sullivan, SJ**, associate director of campus ministry; and **Minh Vu**, assistant director for operations and technology for the Department of Student Life.

Bartz Talks on Chronic Wasting Disease in *Scientific American*

Jason Bartz, PhD, associate dean and professor in the School of Medicine, provided expert insights to a [Scientific American story about Chronic Wasting Disease](#) (CWD) and how many disagree on the threat it poses to humans. Bartz explains how the prion responsible for CWD attacks the nervous system and discusses how the disease's spread to southern regions with feral swine populations could increase the risk of a human case emerging.



Faculty Article in Top 39 for Advancing Healthcare Simulation

Congratulations to College of Nursing faculty **Julie Manz, PhD**, professor; **Martha Todd, PhD**, professor and O'Brien Endowed Chair in the Health Sciences; **Lucas Manning, DNP**, assistant professor; **Lindsay Iverson, DNP**, associate professor; and **Sarah Ball, PhD**, assistant professor. Their article, "[Conceptual Framework and Content Validity for the Creighton Competency Evaluation Instrument 2.0](#)," was selected as one of the top 39 Society for Simulation in Healthcare's Articles of Influence for 2023-2024 for its impact on advancing healthcare simulation. This prestigious recognition was highlighted at the International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare conference in January. *Pictured above at the conference are Manz, Todd, Manning, Luke Palacio, instructor in the Department of Paramedicine and lab and simulation coordinator, and Lea Ann Palmer, instructor.*

Borchers Report Published for International Academy

Pat Borchers, JD, professor and Lillis Family Endowed Professor in Law, had his report "The Role of the Locus of Damages in Tort Jurisdiction and Choice of Law in the United States," for the International Academy of Comparative Law published by Brill Publishing. His report was one of 17 national reports from both common law and civil law nations.

Center for Faculty Excellence Launches Teaching Effectiveness

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The Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) is excited to launch a Teaching Effectiveness Framework and provide faculty formative tools to develop and assess their own teaching effectiveness. Visit the [Teaching Effectiveness page of the CFE intranet site](#) to access a full description of the framework as well as resources to formatively assess and document teaching effectiveness.

Creighton Accounting Program Ranks 5th in Success Index

The CPA Success Index, which is a metric to evaluate how well accounting programs prepare students to pass all four sections of the CPA exam, was recently updated to reflect 2023 data. The accounting program in Creighton's Heider College of Business is now ranked fifth in the country for its size (i.e., medium-sized programs). More information about the CPA Success Index is available in [this article in Accounting Today](#).



DiLeo Earns Grant for Decarbonization in Catholic Dioceses

Daniel DiLeo, PhD, associate professor and director of the Justice and Peace Studies Program, chair of the Department of Cultural and Social Studies, earned a \$20,000 Victory Noll Sisters grant through Catholic Climate Covenant to fund decarbonization in the Archdiocese of Omaha, Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana, and Diocese of Gary, Indiana. The grant will contract Constellation Energy to assess and appraise the carbon pollution of 800 buildings across the three dioceses and identify pathways to reach net-zero carbon.

McMahon Publishes Study on Charismatic Leadership

Timothy McMahon, PhD, associate professor of practice in marketing and management, recently published the book [Comparing Charismatic Leaders' Communication Styles: A Study of Barack Obama and Donald Trump](#) (Routledge—Taylor & Francis Group; 2025 Copyright), which provides a foundation for understanding charismatic leadership through an examination of presidential communication styles.

Creighton Retreat Center Spring-Summer Ignatian Retreats

The Creighton Retreat Center will offer three [3-day silent, directed Ignatian retreats](#) this spring and

[reservation.](#)

Selvam Co-Authors Oral and Maxillofacial Handbook

Niranzena Panneer Selvam, DDS, director of oral and maxillofacial radiology and assistant professor in the School of Dentistry, has co-authored the *Handbook of Oral and Maxillofacial Giant Cell Lesions*, a comprehensive guide that explores various giant cell lesions in the oral and maxillofacial regions. This essential resource offers in-depth clinical, histological and radiographic insights, along with the latest trends in diagnosis and management. [Read more.](#)

Witmer Presents Research Papers on Native American Politics

Rick Witmer, PhD, professor of political science and international relations and the Rev. John P. Schlegel, SJ, Distinguished Professor of Government and Politics, presented two papers at the 2025 Southern Political Science Association Conference in January in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Witmer's paper on Native American amicus briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court was co-authored with **Joshua Johnson, PhD, BA'08**. Their research findings suggest that Native Americans use interest-group strategies, including the submission of amicus briefs, on salient Native cases before the Supreme Court. A second paper examined Native Americans' trust in federal and tribal governments. Witmer and co-authors identify higher levels of trust in tribal governments when compared to relatively low levels of trust in the federal government.



McGreal Speaks About Supreme Court and the TikTok Ban

Paul McGreal, JD, professor of law, [spoke with KMTV Omaha](#) about the U.S. Supreme Court upholding the TikTok ban.

Gupta Recognized for Innovative Surgical Techniques

Ranjan Gupta, MD, professor and chair of orthopedic surgery in the School of Medicine and medical director of the orthopedic department at CHI Health, was featured in the [Omaha World-Herald](#) about his innovative surgical techniques to repair and preserve nerve function.

Peck Presents at IGNITE for Equine Athletes Seminar

The second annual [IGNITE for Equine Athletes](#) seminar focused on sports science for high-performance equine disciplines. The event targeted veterinarians, riders, trainers, groomers and physical therapists. **Kirk Peck, PhD**, associate professor of physical therapy in the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, delivered presentations on topics such as horse-rider interaction, equestrian fitness and building successful team cultures.



UPDATES

Student Photo Contest Deadline Extended

The deadline for the second annual Envisioning Population Health Student Photo Contest has been extended to March 5. [Information and submission instructions](#) are available in the myCreighton portal. Please encourage your students to participate.

Four Proposals Receive President's Fund Grants

The **Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD**, announced four recipients of the special President's Fund in Population Health grant during his Founders Week Convocation message. The grantees, supported by the Institute for Population Health, all focus on health and health equity issues among specific underserved populations within the Omaha and Phoenix communities. [Read more about the projects and teams receiving funding.](#)

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in-depth reporting on health policy, public health and infectious diseases, health technology, science, biopharma and life sciences as well as access to exclusive events and other benefits. We encourage you to use this opportunity to visit the site and learn about the health policy issues being discussed today and how they impact our work. Visit the [Creighton Libraries page to find STAT+ listed under the New/Trial Databases](#). Please email pophealth@creighton.edu if you find the content useful or have questions.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mardell A. Wilson".

Mardell A. Wilson, EdD, RDN
Provost, Creighton University

Creighton
UNIVERSITY

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