

Dear Faculty and Staff,

We find ourselves at the end of another outstanding academic year, culminating in the celebration of more than 1,800 graduates across eight commencement ceremonies held May 15 to 18. These included two beautiful baccalaureate Masses held in Omaha and Phoenix, and the inaugural commencement ceremony for the Health Sciences Campus – Phoenix School of Medicine as well as the programs in Pharmacy and Physical Therapy. Last year we celebrated the first class of Occupational Therapy graduates from our Phoenix Campus with this year being their second class. I am deeply grateful to all who contributed their time and talents to ensure all the celebrations were so well planned and executed for our graduates and their loved ones.

I would also like to recognize and congratulate two members of our community who were honored during these ceremonies for their exceptional service and contributions:

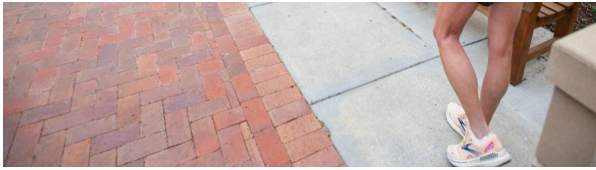
- **Jason Marshall, PhD**, assistant professor of management in the Heider College of Business, received the **Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for Teaching Achievement**, an honor selected and presented by the Creighton Students Union in recognition of true excellence in teaching.
- **Jeffrey North, PhD**, professor of pharmacy sciences, received the **Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award**, an honor selected by the Graduate Student Government.

Several additional faculty were recognized by their individual schools/colleges with awards for their meritorious contributions and support of our Class of 2025.

We also celebrated three exceptional students as Spirit of Creighton Award recipients, whose leadership, character, and embodiment of Jesuit values truly inspire. Congratulations to **Ayden Chavez** (neuroscience and justice and peace studies), **Megan Ptak** (public health and health policy and administration), and **Brooke O'Meara** (occupational therapy), representing Omaha and Phoenix campuses. I extend heartfelt appreciation to all who mentored and supported these students on their journeys.



In the days leading up to these celebrations, two of my favorite traditions —the Provost's Reading Day Run/Walk and Late Night Breakfast where we served over 900 hungry and appreciative students helping to fuel their studying. Both of these events were held the Wednesday before



year. Thank you to all who participated and encouraged students to take part. Events like this speak to the vibrancy and community spirit we value so deeply at Creighton.

Finally, I offer congratulations to the Creighton Bluejays baseball team and Coach Ed Servais on their BIG EAST Championship win and return to the NCAA Tournament Regionals, where they'll face the Kansas Jayhawks this Friday, May 30, in Fayetteville, Arkansas. (You can catch the game at 7 p.m. CT, 5 p.m. MT, on ESPN+.) It is a thrilling moment for our student-athletes and fans alike, and we wish them continued success.

As we now shift into the summer months, I hope each of you finds time for some rest and renewal with family and friends as we gear up to welcome new students in a few short weeks. Thank you for all you do to uphold the mission and spirit of Creighton University.

Blessings to you for a wonderful summer.

Generative AI Finds a Place in the Magis Core

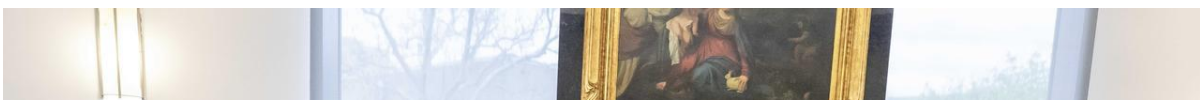
Faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Nursing and Heider College of Business approved the inclusion of generative-AI learning outcomes in the Magis Core Curriculum. [Read about the new outcomes](#) and how, once implemented, they will ensure that Creighton undergraduates are better prepared for an AI-driven world.

Haddix President's Faculty Research Grants and President's Special Grant Award Recipients

The 2025 Dr. George F. Haddix President's Faculty Research Fund awardees have been named, as well as a recipient of a Special Grant award from the President's Office. [See the list of recipients and the project names.](#)

CURAS Announces Summer Research Fellows

The Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship is pleased to announce the 2025 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows. [See the full list of awards and awardees.](#)



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Front row from left: Co-leader Lou Jensen, OTD; Carrie Bose, OTD; Irina Fox, JD; Allison Bethune, EdD; Samantha Senda-Cook, PhD; Maggie Knight, DBA; Rachel Cushing, DMSc; Lori Rusch, PhD; Provost Mardell Wilson, EdD. Back row from left: Co-leader Julie Peterson, DPT, EdD; Jeff North, PhD; Doug Jones, MD; Regina Taylor, PhD; Nathan Pennington, PhD; and Tom Berry, DDS. Not pictured: Diane Uchimiya, JD, LLM, and Gretchen Oltman, JD, PhD.

14 Faculty Complete Inaugural Leadership Academy

Congratulations to the 14 faculty who recently completed an eight-month Faculty Leadership Academy. This pilot program, implemented through the Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) and supported by the Office of the Provost, was led by **Julie Peterson, DPT, EdD**, CFE faculty associate, and **Lou Jensen, OTD**.

Haddad Establishes Partnership with Pharmacists Association

Ann Ryan Haddad, PharmD, director of the Office of Interprofessional Scholarship, Service and Education and professor of pharmacy practice, has initiated a new cocurricular partnership between the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions and the Nebraska Pharmacists Association (NPA). Through this collaboration, the NPA will host up to five pharmacy students annually, providing opportunities to fulfill cocurricular requirements in the areas of professionalism, leadership, innovation, advocacy and self-awareness. This partnership enhances student engagement with state-level pharmacy initiatives and professional development.

Svolos Elected to Three Posts

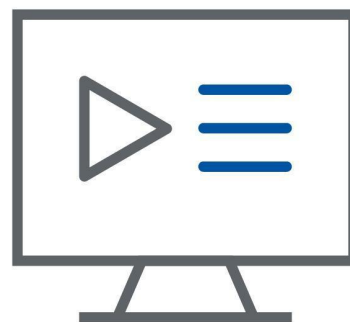
Thomas Svolos, MD, professor of psychiatry and associate dean in the School of Medicine, was elected chair-elect of the steering committee for the Group on Institutional Planning of the Association of American Medical Colleges. Svolos was also elected president of Lacanian Compass, the U.S. group of the World Association of Psychoanalysis. Finally, Svolos was elected to a second term as chair of the board of directors of OneWorld Community Health Centers, which brings healthcare to over 50,000 Omaha residents.

Brink Presents at Popular Culture Conference

Peterson Brink, head of archives and special collections at the University Libraries, presented at the 55th National Popular Culture Association Conference in New Orleans in April. His presentation, "Exploring Popular and Material Culture Through the Carlson Fables Collection," highlighted the unique interdisciplinary potential of this extensive collection housed at the Creighton University Libraries.

myLearning On-Demand Resources

For those interested in accessing presentations or resources you may have missed over the past academic year, register for an on-demand course available in [myLearning](#). Once you hit the "register" button, the course will be added to your personal dashboard, granting you round-the-clock access to all recordings and materials at whatever time suits you best.



Creighton Physicians Bring OB Care to Rural Communities

Across the U.S., OB units are closing—and many rural families are left without essential care. **Chelsea Rambo, DO**, and **Patricia Belle, MD**, are [preparing to help change that](#).

Fershée Interviewed by KMTV

Kendra Fershée, JD, professor of law, did an [interview with KMTV](#) about allegations of unauthorized practice of law levied against an Omaha tenant-assistance organization.

Kletscher and Bergjord Present Poster at Medical Library Association Conference in Pennsylvania

Karina Kletscher, MLIS, research and instruction librarian, Health Sciences Campus - Phoenix, and **Judi Bergjord, MLS**, senior research and instruction librarian – research review, Reinert-Alumni Memorial Library, Omaha campus, presented a poster, “Bridging Borders: Enhancing Global Health Education through a Scoping Review Pilot Program,” sharing the experience of developing and teaching the University Libraries’ pilot evidence synthesis curriculum, at the Medical Library Association Annual Conference held this year in Pittsburgh. Kletscher also presented with her intercollegiate research team on their manuscript, “Exploring the Experiences of Librarians Working with Physician Associate Programs: A Mixed Methods Study,” discussing findings on the roles and value of librarians in physician assistant education.



From left, some of the Creighton students who attended the National Council on Undergraduate Research Conference included Nathan Jobalia, Cleo Zagurski, Olivia Manning, Jeevita Ashokprabhu, Izzie Nielsen, Ashlyn Viereck, Cole Krudwig and Sawyer Leahy.

National Council on Undergraduate Research Conference

Eighteen Creighton students attended and presented at the National Council on Undergraduate Research conference in Pittsburgh in April.

Hasslen Retires from USAF after 25 Years of Service

Lt. Col. Jennifer Hasslen, DDS, interim chair of the Department of General Dentistry and associate professor of general dentistry, has retired from the U.S. Air Force after 25 years of honorable service, including her time with the 155th Air Refueling Wing. Her career reflects a deep commitment to duty, leadership and excellence.

Woodley Published in *The Financial Review*

Melissa Woodley, PhD, associate professor of finance, recently published [“Tax Incentives and Flow-performance Sensitivity: Evidence from National and State Municipal Bond Funds”](#) in *The Financial Review*. This paper offers valuable insights into how tax incentives shape investor behavior in municipal bond mutual funds.

Salzman, Lawler Publish Book with Paulist Press

Todd Salzman, PhD, professor of theology, and **Michael Lawler, PhD**, professor emeritus of theology, published a book with Paulist Press titled "Sexual and Gender Doctrinal Language: A Source of Pain and Trauma in the Catholic Church."

Fernandes, McHendry Present ‘Humanity at the Brink of Artificial Intelligence’

Earlier this month, **Steven Fernandes, PhD**, assistant professor of computer science, and **Guy McHendry, PhD**, associate professor of communication studies and director of the Magis Core Curriculum, spoke at a conference at the Saint Benedict Center in Schuyler, Nebraska. Their presentation addressed how AI works and is being used today, as well as the advantages and drawbacks of future developments in the areas of machine learning, deep learning and generative AI. It also explored how AI as a tool is both a complement and a threat to human intelligence and the moral and ethical standards Christians can apply to determine its use.



Peth Published in *Journal of Emergency Medical Services*

AJCU Connections Features Creighton Story

Creighton is featured in an article printed in the AJCU *Connections*: Spring 2025 edition: [Creighton University Launches Flexible Care Hybrid Model](#).

Hermann Published in *Nursing Made Incredibly Easy*

Maureen Hermann, DNP, associate professor of nursing, published her manuscript, [“Chocolate or Citrus? Research Can Be Fun!”](#) in *Nursing Made Incredibly Easy*.



Gutierrez Serves as Keynote Speaker

Moises Gutierrez, OFM, PhD, assistant professor in the EdD in Interdisciplinary Leadership program, was a keynote speaker (plenary speaker) at the 81st Conference of the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools held in Indianapolis in April. His innovative keynote, “Reimagining New Identities and Exploring New Frames of Reference for Graduate Education,” aligned with the conference theme “Restart Your Engines to Renew, Refresh, and Reimagine Graduate Education.”

Jensen Presents at American Education Research Meeting

Gail Jensen, PhD, vice provost for learning and assessment and professor of physical therapy, presented papers at the recent American Education Research Association meeting in April as part of a Division I (Education in the Professions) symposium, “Creating Community, Navigating Boundaries, and Traversing Diverse Landscapes: Evolving Education Research Identities in Rehabilitation Professions,” and served on an invited panel, “Ethical Challenges in Professional Practice: Balancing Responsibility and Accountability.”

Scheidel Appointed Vice President of Nebraska Dental Association

president of the Nebraska Dental Association. He was officially sworn in by Brett Kessler, DDS, president of the American Dental Association.

Batenhorst Article Published in *Emergency Medical Services*

Ryan Batenhorst, EdD, assistant professor of paramedicine, published his manuscript, "[Are Paramedicine Students Experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress as a Result of Clinical Rotations?](#)" in the *Journal of Emergency Medical Services*.

Seeger Named Laureate for Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics

Janet Seeger, PhD, professor of physics, was among the prize laureates for the 2025 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics for her research on the [ALICE](#) experiment group. The prize money will be used by the collaborations to offer grants for doctoral students from member institutes to spend research time at CERN, giving the students experience working at the forefront of science and new expertise to bring back to their home countries and regions. [Learn more about the Breakthrough Prize.](#)



Revolutionizing Nursing Education with Virtual Reality

Sarah Ball, PhD, faculty chair of the College of Nursing Traditional BSN Program and assistant professor of nursing, is transforming nursing education at Creighton with immersive VR simulations. By integrating AI-driven patient interactions and innovative assessment tools like C-CEI 2.0, she's reducing student anxiety, enhancing clinical judgment and improving competency evaluations. With new research on Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) integration and VR technology, Ball is paving the way for a more efficient, engaging and standardized approach to nursing training and forming practice-ready nurses. [Read more about the immersive VR simulation program.](#)

Dallon Participates in IDEA Forum Panel

Craig Dallon, JD, professor of law, participated on a panel at the Second Annual IDEA Forum: AI Beyond the Buzzwords, presented by Koley Jessen, PC, LLO, in May. The panel was titled "Future of Creativity: Cross-Industry Insights."

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Family and Community Medicine Hosts Annual Lipid Screening

The School of Medicine Department of Family and Community Medicine hosted its annual lipid screening event at the Black Family Health and Wellness Fair in Omaha. Interprofessional teams of students provided 115 screenings to community members.



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QUEST: A Journal of Undergraduate Research

The Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (CURAS) announces the return of *QUEST: A Journal of Undergraduate Research*. The 10th volume is published and ready to read. Please contact CURAS if you would like a hard copy of this volume.

'Library-Centric Generative AI' Session Recording Available

In April, the Center for Faculty Engagement and University Libraries hosted "Transforming the Library Experience Through Library-Centric Generative AI." The session introduced innovative AI research tools such as Keenious, Scite.ai and Scopus AI, showcasing their potential to enhance academic research through generative AI. A [recording of the sessions and related resources](#) is available for review.

Anesthesiology Innovates for a Healthier Future

Mark Reisbig, MD, PhD, chair of the Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine and associate professor of anesthesiology, [explores techniques to more efficiently utilize anesthetic gases without compromising patient care](#).

New eLearning Innovation Grants Awarded

The Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) announces the teams recently awarded eLearning Innovation Grants. The grant projects are a close collaboration between the awardee with an

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Brian Kokensparger, PhD, MFA, associate professor of computer science, design and journalism, and **Erica Lamm-Denny, PhD**, eLearning, CFE; and **Jinmei Yuan, PhD**, professor of philosophy, College of Arts and Sciences, and **Natalie Boulton**, eLearning, CFE. Visit the [CFE Grants + Awards page](#) for more information.

Russell Published in *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health*

Marion Russell, OTD, associate professor of occupational therapy, her husband and colleagues in Austria recently published, [“Are We Truly Client-Centered? The Importance of Transgender Considerations in Occupational Therapy Curricula,”](#) in *Occupational Therapy in Mental Health*. The article emphasizes the need for transgender inclusion in OT curricula for client-centered care.

Wendling Receives Patriotic Employer Award

Amy Wendling, PhD, associate dean for humanities and fine and performing arts in the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of philosophy, was recognized in April as a Patriotic Employer by the Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve for contributing to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting employee participation in America's National Guard and Reserve Force.



Begley Co-Authors Study on Readiness Assessments

Kimberley Begley, PharmD, professor of pharmacy practice, and colleagues recently published a research article titled [“Current State of APPE-readiness Assessments in Schools or Colleges of Pharmacy”](#) in *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*. The study explores how pharmacy programs evaluate student preparedness for Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPEs), highlighting trends, challenges and opportunities for improvement in pharmacy education.

Pastoral Care Associates Symposium Registration Open

[Registration is open](#) for the Second Annual Pastoral Care Associates Symposium, scheduled from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. MT on Friday, Sept. 26, in Chandler, Arizona. The event is for all healthcare professionals and learners. The theme for the symposium is “Finding Inner Strength: How Spiritual Care Helps Healthcare Professionals Cope with Stress.”

College of Nursing Partners with Children's Nebraska

The College of Nursing and [Children's Nebraska](#) are working to address Nebraska's pediatric nurse shortage. This partnership, funded through the Ryan Foundation, offers full tuition scholarships to 40 future students who enroll in Creighton's Accelerated Bachelor of Science (ABSN) program. Students commit to two years of work at Children's Nebraska post-graduation. [Read more about this partnership.](#)



UPDATES

Health Policy Seminar Series

The Institute for Population Health (IPH) will launch a Health Policy Seminar Series in collaboration with the School of Medicine this fall. The first seminar will be held in early September featuring [Jeanne Lambrew, PhD](#), director of health care reform and a senior fellow at The Century Foundation. Lambrew served as a senior official in President Obama's administration, first as director of the Office of Health Reform at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she worked on passage of the landmark Affordable Care Act, and then, from 2011 to the end of his administration, she served as President Obama's deputy assistant for health policy, guiding the implementation of the ACA as well as initiatives to improve the quality and value of Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and public health. Watch *Creighton Today* for more information about the Health Policy Seminar Series and for registration details for the first seminar.

Dixon Named Director for North Omaha Community Engagement

April Dixon, MPH, has been promoted to full-time director of North Omaha community engagement for the Institute for Population Health based at the Creighton at Highlander offices. Dixon has served as part-time, interim director for the last year. Working in partnership with **Alejandra Rebolledo-Gomez, MSHP**, community engagement coordinator, Dixon will continue to promote and guide efforts to ensure that the Creighton at Highlander space serves as a resource for community engagement and capacity-building among Creighton students, faculty and staff. Dixon and the IPH community engagement team strive to establish and sustain Creighton-

better health for the community.



IPH Collects Health Survey Data at South Omaha Cinco de Mayo Event

In a successful effort, the Institute for Population Health hosted a booth at the South Omaha Community Care Council's annual Cinco de Mayo Health Fair to facilitate attendees' completion of a health survey. The data collected from this survey will provide insights into the health needs and concerns of this community, enabling the IPH and its partners to better tailor services and outreach efforts to meet their needs. The survey was developed in collaboration with the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Douglas County Health Department and Children's Nebraska. Together, we are fostering a healthier and more connected community.

Sincerely,



Mardell A. Wilson, EdD, RDN

Provost, Creighton University

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UNIVERSITY

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